

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
November 11, 2021

The November 11, 2021, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) was conducted as a videoconference via Zoom. Staff conducted a roll call of members, and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the videoconference: Richard E. Aubin, Chad West (representing Adam Bazaldua), Elizabeth M. Beck, Gyna Bivens, Mohammed Bur, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Janet DePuy, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Raul H. Gonzalez, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Roger Harmon, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Brandon Jones, Mike Leyman, Alison Maguire, B. Adam McGough, Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Omar Narvaez, Philip J. Ritter, Jim R. Ross, Chris Schulmeister, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, and Gary Slagel (representing Michele Wong Krause). Individual attendance was not taken for non-RTC member attendees.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Today's Agenda:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to comment on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Theresa M. Daniel asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to comment.
2. **Approval of the October 14, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the October 14, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. Richard E. Aubin (M); Duncan Webb (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 3.1 **Blue-Green-Grey Applications for New Ideas Round 3-Project Funding Recommendations:** A motion was made to approve award of funding for implementation of selected projects in the Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3. Additional information on application scoring was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.1, and staff award recommendations were included in Electronic Item 3.1.2.

A motion was made to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. Dianne Costa (M); B. Glen Whitley (S). The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Whitney Vandiver presented the recipients of the 2021 Air North Texas Partner Awards: Outstanding Advertising, City of Grand Prairie; Outstanding Initiative, City of Dallas; Outstanding Outreach, City of Plano; Arlo Ambassador, City of Grand Prairie; and Partner of the Year, City of Cedar Hill. Michael Morris noted that he continued to work with Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Theresa Daniel regarding holding the December 9 RTC Orientation Meeting and Business Meeting in person at an offsite location. He noted the orientation meeting material and video will be provided to members before the December meeting for their review. He discussed various items recently presented within the region noting that he was recently asked to represent the City of Dallas on the presentation of the World Cup 2026 location in North America. He also noted that Chair Daniel and several members attended the recent Greater Dallas Planning Council meeting. In addition, he noted the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Statewide Safety Task Force was moving ahead on efforts to reduce the number of fatalities and the fatality rate in the state. The status of Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

Grant applications submitted by RTC/TxDOT was also highlighted and he discussed efforts to provide safety vests to RTC members for use in the field. Mr. Morris also noted that staff was asked to submit comments on House Transportation Committee interim charges and that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was approved on November 6 and becomes effective October 1, 2021. The bill totals \$1.2 trillion with approximately half as the five-year surface transportation reauthorization. The remaining half is for other infrastructure spending such as water, broadband, and SmartCities technology. He noted that staff would continue to monitor the internet component. In addition, he noted that efforts were still underway to have an electric vehicle manufacturing facility locate within the region. Remaining items in the Director of Transportation report were flagged. The Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.1. Crash Responder Safety Week will be held November 8-14, 2021. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events were available at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>, and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were available at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>. Electronic Item 4.2 contained a status report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding and Electronic Item 4.3 contained the current ozone status report. Information about upcoming monthly Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops was provided at <https://www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops>. October public meeting minutes were provided in Electronic Item 4.4. The current Public Comment Report was provided Electronic Item 4.5. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 4.6, recent news articles in Electronic Item 4.7, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.8.

5. **Endorsement of Economic Development Grant Opportunity Project Applications:** Michael Morris presented project applications submitted as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding opportunities through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC). The first project submittal is the North Texas Information Technology Workforce Collaborative, submitted in partnership with Southern Methodist University (SMU) who would lead the project. SMU's application included eight total project clusters. The Creating Equitable Opportunities in Automated Vehicle Freight Applications project cluster will be led by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The project will address first mile goods movement through automated trucks and last mile goods movement through automated aircraft delivery. The second project application was submitted and will be led by the Center for Houston's Future, titled Becoming a Global Hydrogen Hub. Included in the application is a proposed project to add a hydrogen fuel station to the IH 45 corridor. NCTCOG will provide support as a project partner. The final project is to Lead the Transition of Freight Transportation in the Texas Triangle through Advanced Technologies and Innovative Policies on Equity and Sustainability. Submitted and led by the University of Texas at Arlington, the project would advance freight-oriented automated surface and aerial transportation applications and be supported by NCTCOG as a project partner. Mr. Morris noted that the projects were submitted for Phase One of the BBBRC competition and that staff hoped to learn of project selection to proceed to Phase Two by the end of 2021. A motion was made to endorse project applications submitted for the Economic Development Administration Build Back Better Regional Challenge. Cara Mendelsohn (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.
6. **Letter of Support to Advance SH 183 Segment 2E in Tarrant and Dallas Counties:** Michael Morris provided an update on the status of the North Tarrant Express (NTE) Segment 2E project on SH 183. He noted the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has

discussed the project benefits many times and approved a \$3 million RTC financial backstop for design elements of the project. Lane imbalances were a result of capacity improvements on the North Tarrant Express that were included under the current Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) agreement. Mr. Morris noted that direction from the Legislative Budget Board may be needed regarding whether its approval to complete Segment 2E is necessary due to the current TxDOT agreement and highlighted proposed RTC action for staff to communicate with the cities along SH 183 to request letters of support to the Legislative Budget Board for the project and to draft a letter from RTC Chair seeking direction from the Legislative Budget Board. He highlighted three elements of the proposed letter: 1) direction as to whether Segment 2E approval is needed since the project is included in an active TxDOT agreement, 2) explanation of the safety implications due to lane imbalances, and 3) showcase of the benefits of tolled managed lanes for the region. Letters of support assembled to date were provided in Electronic Item 6. A motion was made to approve staff communication to entities along the SH 183 corridor requesting letters of support for the North Tarrant Express Segment 2E project and for the Regional Transportation Council Chair to communicate with senior State officials and members of the Legislative Budget Board. T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (M); Janet DePuy (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **High-Speed Rail Support for Texas Central Partners:** Michael Morris provided a report on high-speed rail from Houston to Dallas and presented a recommendation to aid in advancing the engineering of the City of Dallas Floodway Extension. He highlighted the levee expansion south of downtown Dallas implemented to protect downstream neighborhoods in the area. Dallas to Houston high-speed rail design near the levee requires a concrete slurry wall instead of a traditional dirt levee. Advancement of the engineering for the floodway extension is estimated at approximately \$800,000 and needed by the end of November 2021 to prevent project delay. Texas Central Partners is unable to release the funding at this time and has requested assistance from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC). Staff proposed to loan Texas Central Partners \$800,000 in RTC Local funds at the standard interest rate of 2.4 percent, to be provided to the City of Dallas for the floodway extension. He noted staff was negotiating the loan timeframe, which is expected to be approximately one year. In addition, negotiations on collateral to ensure repayment of the loan was being discussed as part of the loan agreement. Mr. Morris noted that it was important at this point in the planning process that the project is not held up and that the station location remains in the City of Dallas. RTC Vice Chair Duncan Webb asked for details of the repayment security. Ken Kirkpatrick noted that the security interest would be a promissory note secured by parcels of land to which the RTC would be the first lien holder. Staff is working on the valuation of the parcels to ensure they would be sufficient collateral to cover the \$800,000 loan in the event of nonpayment. Repayment is expected to be the earlier of December 31, 2022, or upon permanent financial close on the project by Texas Central, debt or equity financing, or sale of the parcels held for collateral whichever is earlier. Cara Mendelsohn thanked staff for their efforts to support rail while also considering the importance of protecting citizens from flooding concerns. A motion was made to approve a loan of approximately \$800,000 in RTC Local funds to Texas Central Partners to advance the engineering of the City of Dallas Floodway Extension in partnership with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The loan will include a 2.4 percent interest rate and legal agreements for ensuring repayment to the Regional Transportation Council. Dianne Costa (M); Cara Mendelsohn (S). The motion passed unanimously.

8. **2023-2026 Management and Operations, Regional/Air Quality, and Safety Funding Program:** Christie Gotti provided an overview of the 2023-2026 Management and Operations, Regional/Air Quality, and Safety Funding Program. Both the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and Regional Transportation Council (RTC) typically consider extending existing and funding new programs in these categories every few years. Projects/programs funded through this effort were last considered in the 2018-2019 timeframe and were funded through fiscal year (FY) 2022. The next round of funding will cover fiscal years 2023-2026 to coincide with the timeframe of the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Staff has begun reviewing a subset of projects within the agency and coordinating with local partners to ensure that existing programs and projects can continue without interruption. The purpose of the program is to supplement Transportation Planning Funds to enable operations, planning, and implementation activities to be conducted by North Central Texas Council of Governments staff, as well as activities that are above and beyond those allowed using federal planning funds. In addition, it assigns resources for air quality and operational activities identified by the RTC either through the air quality conformity process or the mobility plan. In general, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Regional Toll Revenue (RTR), and RTC Local funds will likely be proposed for FY2023-FY2026. Approximately \$15-20 million is expected to be programmed per fiscal year, dependent on the amount of federal planning funds received. It was noted a significant portion of the funding is passed through to other agencies with the remaining used to cover North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff time. Program and project types typically included in this initiative are management and operation activities such as the Mobility Assistance Patrol program and Transit Operations. Also included are NCTCOG-implemented projects such as modeling and planning efforts, as well as air quality programs and projects such as Freeway Incident Management, Employer Trip Reduction, data collection, Regional Traffic Signal Retiming, and others. The importance of these types of programs to air quality were highlighted. As a nonattainment region, these projects contribute to emissions reductions and in the past have been one of the factors that have helped the region to pass air quality conformity. Ms. Gotti noted that in addition to the three project groups, staff proposed to include efforts to be conducted as part of the statewide safety program and that a more detailed proposal will be brought back to the Council for review. As part of that presentation, staff will also present details of the plan to utilize Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding that was added to the region's STBG allocation in FY2022. Ms. Gotti noted that staff will continue to finalize funding amounts and the list of projects and programs to be recommended for funding. The information will be provided to the public, as well as the Committee and Regional Transportation Council, for review. She noted the item may not be finalized until January 2022, and that staff may bring back FY2023 projects separately in order to include those projects in the TIP so that funds are available at the beginning of FY2023. Details were provided in Electronic Item 8.
9. **North Central Texas Council of Governments Demographic Forecast Status Report:** Dan Kessler provided an update on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment for the Metropolitan Area. He highlighted the demographic forecasting process which includes determining control totals for population and employment by reviewing external forecasts from national demographers and economists. In addition, a comprehensive inventory of individual parcel data for the 16-county region is incorporated, as well as land use and comprehensive plans laid out by local governments. New population control totals for the region out to 2045 were received which estimated 11.5 million people by 2045. Draft population estimates by county were highlighted, and the average compound

annual growth rate of 2 percent was noted. By 2045, Dallas and Tarrant Counties are projected to add over one million people. Perimeter counties are also predicted to have significant growth. The location of current population was shown comparing 2015, 2030, and 2045 to help provide a visual of the changes in density expected to occur in the region. A map showing changes in household and future population from 2015-2045 was also discussed. Mr. Kessler noted that control totals for employment estimate approximately 8.1 million jobs by 2045, which is faster growth rate than population. Employment data from the 2020 Census, draft 2045 forecasts, and the compound annual growth rate for the 12 counties was noted. Employment growth rate is impacted by the fact that people have multiple jobs but also due to the diverse economy of the region. Dallas County remains the economic employment center increasing by over 1.2 million additional jobs by 2045. Significant employment growth is also expected in Tarrant, Collin, and Denton counties. The location of current and future employment for 2015, 2030, and 2045 was also shown. He noted this anticipated growth creates challenges for the transportation system and staff continues to focus on efforts to provide employment access within the region. Built area, including combined population and employment data from 2015 compared to predicted data for 2030 and 2045, were compared. As expected, the centers of Dallas and Tarrant counties are built out and have minimal change. However, changes are seen in the perimeter areas of Tarrant, Denton, Collin, and Rockwall counties. Mr. Kessler reviewed the schedule for demographic forecasting efforts. Draft forecasts have been provided to local governments for their review and comment, and staff expects to finalize forecasts in the next month for presentation to the Executive Board in the spring for approval. Members were reminded that the demographic forecasting process is a joint effort between the Research and Information Services and Transportation Departments using control totals provided by external forecasts from national demographers and economists. Staff noted a copy of the slides would be provided to members of the Regional Transportation Council and Surface Transportation Technical Committee following the meeting.

10. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update:** Brendon Wheeler presented an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045. Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2018. The associated air quality conformity determination was received November 2018 and expires November 2022. Staff has begun development efforts for the Mobility 2045 Update, which will continue through the next year with an anticipated request for RTC adoption in June 2022. Major components to the plan update will include updated travel and demographic data; updated financial forecasts; project, program, and policy refinements; an updated performance-based planning framework; and updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle. Key updates will include reference to the new Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, new Executive Orders on equity, environmental considerations, and Travel Demand Management strategies. Other updates to address advances in technology will also be incorporated, including the latest recommendations for high-speed rail, advanced automated transportation systems, integration of vertical mobility technology, new automated vehicle initiatives including first and last-mile connections, and broadband access/infrastructure. Mr. Wheeler noted that as part of the Mobility 2045 Update, the MTP Policy Bundle will also be updated. The policy bundle provides opportunities to utilize Transportation Development Credits for those agencies meeting the requirements of the program and allows for those credits to be used towards local match on projects. Staff will be proposing to extend Round 4 Transportation Development Credits by an additional year to be used in FY2023, as well as updating policies as part of the Mobility 2045 Update. Details will be brought back to the Council for review before opening the next round of the MTP Policy Bundle. Additional information was provided at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress.

11. **Fiscal Year 2021/Fiscal Year 2022 Project Tracking Initiative:** Brian Dell presented a final report on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative. The project tracking initiative was implemented to address a series of project delays across the region and prevent future delays to the extent possible. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds was provided. Approximately \$94 million of the \$115.5 million in CMAQ funds allocated in FY2021 has obligated, including 29 out of 46 project phases. The remaining 17 phases were moved into subsequent fiscal years. For Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, of the \$186 million allocated approximately \$162 million has obligated including 37 out of 57 phases, with the remaining 20 phases moved into a later fiscal year. In addition, the status of FY2021 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds was highlighted. Of the \$12.4 million programmed, approximately \$9.5 million has obligated and 18 of 25 project phases. Remaining project phases were also moved to the next fiscal year. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2021 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 11.1. In summary, approximately 82 percent of CMAQ funds, 88 percent of STBG funds, and 77 percent of TA Set-Aside funds obligated in FY2021, a considerable improvement in the percentages from recent fiscal years. He noted the STBG/Category 2 funding partnership contributed to the reduction of the region's STBG carryover balances, and that sufficient TA Set-Aside funds obligated to avoid lapsing in FY2021. Mr. Dell also provided an overview of the FY2022 project funding. Approximately \$71 million in CMAQ funds is programmed across 44 project phases, \$171 million in STBG funds across 76 project phases, and \$17 million in TA Set-Aside funds across 18 project phases. Staff will continue monitoring FY2022 project progress and work with implementing agencies to resolve any issues that may be causing delays. Periodic updates to the Council will also be provided, as well as continued monitoring of projects for possible funding lapses. He noted that staff also plans to propose another STBG/Category 2 funding swap in the future to ensure that STBG carry-over balances do not accumulate. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2022, and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 11.2. Additional details on both initiatives were provided in Electronic Item 11.3. Christie Gotti discussed with members the pressure from the Texas Department of Transportation Austin to obligate funding. She thanked the Regional Transportation Council for its continued support and the progress made to date but noted that carry over balances remained and continued focus is needed.
12. **Status Report on Local Government Energy Reporting:** Lori Clark provided an overview of local government energy reporting requirements. Local government energy reporting is a State-mandated requirement in the Texas Health and Safety Code. Agencies in or near ozone nonattainment counties in Texas are required to establish a goal of reducing electricity consumption by at least 5 percent each year with a baseline of 2019 and submit an annual report to State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) regarding progress and efforts to meet the reduction goal. The North Central Texas Council of Governments staff began conducting outreach at the local level to help increase the rate of reporting and accuracy of reporting among local governments. Reporting has increased substantially since that time and a map illustrating 2020 reporting cities and counties was highlighted. Ms. Clark encouraged local governments to make members within their organizations aware of the reporting requirement and begin to prepare data for the upcoming reporting deadline on February 1, 2022. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 12 and available online at www.conservenorthtexas.org/item/local-government-energy-reporting-toolkit.
13. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 13.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 13.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 13.3.

14. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was discussion on this item.
15. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, December 9, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.