

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

June 28, 2024

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) met on Friday, June 28, 2024, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following STTC members or representatives were present: Melissa Baker, Nathan Benditz (representing Daniel Vedral), Shon Brooks, Tanya Brooks, Daniel Burnham, Farhan Butt, Brenda Callaway, Travis Campbell, Clarence Daugherty, Chad Davis, Pritam Deshmukh, Caryl DeVries, Phil Dupler, Chad Edwards, Eric Fladager, Chris Flanigan, Ann Foss (representing Jana Wentzel), Ricardo Gonzalez, Gary Graham, Scott Hall, Tom Hammons, Barry Heard, Alan Hendrix (representing Stanford Lynch), John D. Hudspeth, Jeremy Hutt, Thuan Huynh, Joseph Jackson, Joel James, William Janney, Major L. Jones, Gus Khankarli, Eron Linn, Clay Lipscomb, Paul Leudtke, Chad Marbut, Alberto Mares, Brian McNulty (representing Ron Hartline), John Mears, Mark Nelson, Jim O'Connor, Alfredo Ortiz, Rifat Alam (representing Dipak Patel), John Polster, Than Nguyen (representing Tim Porter), Elizabeth Reynolds, Jeff Kelly (representing Davis Salmon), David Salmon, Brian Shewski, Walter Shumac, III, Ray Silva-Reyes, Chelsea St. Louis, Errick Thompson, Caleb Thornhill, Jennifer VanderLaan, Caroline Waggoner, Todd Weinheimer (representing Shannon Hicks), and William Wiegandy (representing Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize).

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, Nick Allen, Natalie Bettger, Joslyn Billins, Jesse Brown, Carolyn Burns, Jackie Castillo, Aaron Ceder, Lori Clark, Dina Colarossi, Shawn Conrad, Tara Crawford, Alyssa Cunningham, Brian Dell, Kevin Feldt, Justin Galloway, Rebekah Gongora, Irlenia Hermosille, Chris Hoff, Alicia Johnson, Amy Johnson, Zachary Joseph, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Siddheoh Kudale, Dan Lamers, Travis Liska, Gregory Masota, James McLane, Anthony Moffa, Michael Morris, Jenny Narvaez, Dylan Niles, Joseph O'Brien, Donald Parker, Roman Rangel, Hailey Richardson, Chris Schmitt, Samuel Simmons, Toni Stehling, Jill Van Howeyk, Whitney Vandiver, Brendon Wheeler, Brian Wilson, Jared Wright, and Alexander Young.

1. **Approval of the May 24, 2024, Minutes:** The minutes of the May 24, 2024, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. John Polster (M); Jim O'Connor (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda:
 - 2.1. **Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Unified Planning Work Program:** A recommendation was requested for Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) approval of Amendment # 3 modifications to the FY2024 and FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and direction for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program, along with other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, to reflect the approved modifications.

- 2.2 **Opportunity to Support Sponsorship of the Infrastructure Summit 2024 in Recognition of Metropolitan Planning Organization 50th Anniversary:** A recommendation was requested for Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) approval to utilize \$25,000 in RTC Local funds to support sponsorship of the Infrastructure Summit 2024.

A motion was made to recommend the Regional Transportation Council's approval of Items 2.1 and 2.2 on the Consent Agenda. Gus Khankarli (M); John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Application to the Environmental Protection Agency Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Grant Program:** Lori Clark requested a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC's) approval of a grant application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (CHDV) Grants Program, which is a brand-new program created under the Inflation Reduction Act. There are two sub programs, a school bus program and a vocational trucks program. Vocational vehicles are things like dump trucks, refuse haulers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, and for the purposes of this program also transit buses. There's an opportunity to replace existing trucks that are fueled by anything other than battery electric or hydrogen fuel cell with something that is battery electric or hydrogen fuel cell. If it's a truck in that category, there's an opportunity here for public agencies to apply directly to EPA. Lori highlighted there's value in pursuing a regional proposal because the private sector is not able to apply directly to the EPA. Also, a regional proposal opens up opportunities for an organization to request a small pilot project because EPA requires a minimum of three vehicles in a single application. Each individual application can request anywhere from 500,000 to \$60 million per proposal. Lori presented additional technical details about the existing vehicle versus what the new vehicle would have. This program provides new opportunities for the region, including increased funding levels for hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and electric vehicles, allows for replacement of non-diesel (gasoline, compressed natural gas, propane) vehicles, flexible scrappage alternatives, funding for infrastructure, renewable on-site power generation systems, and workforce development activities related to zero-emission vehicles. The proposed NCTCOG application would request up to \$60 million from the EPA CHDV grant vocational vehicle sub-program on behalf of the region and reserve all EPA funds for project implementation by using the NCTCOG Grants Management and RTC Initiative Fund to fund project administration/grant management. Lori provided a schedule including seeking approval at the July 11, 2024, RTC and July 25, 2024, Executive Board meetings; the EPA application deadline is July 25, 2024, anticipated notification of selection in November 2024, anticipated awards in February 2025, and if awarded, NCTCOG opens Call for Projects during the April-May 2025 timeline. An overview of the additional details was contained in Electronic Item 3. John Polster requested to explore opportunities on how entities like North Texas, who have always been ahead of the curve, can have more local flexibility, creativity, and what they do as opposed to having to be hit in these silos that we're always finding ourselves in.

A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of North Central Texas Council of Governments application to the Environmental Protection Agency Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Program for up to \$60,000,000, and amendment of the Unified Planning Work Program, along with any other planning/administrative documents as necessary if awarded. John Polster (M); Daneil Burnham (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Blue-Green-Grey Round Four Application for New Ideas:** Sydnee Mangini requested a recommendation of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC's) approval of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to open the Blue-Green-Grey (BGG) applications for New Ideas Round 4 on July 15, 2024, pre-application workshop on July 17, 2024, with applications due on August 16, 2024. The application for New Ideas funding amount of \$250,000 total; with no local match required with three anticipated awards. The purpose of the BGG program is to promote the planning and construction of green or sustainable infrastructure in the region, to advance small projects with innovative outcomes that can be scaled and/or replicated regionally with the focus on three elements: blue = water, green = environment, and grey = transportation. Sydnee briefly went through what the BGG program is and the previous funding rounds that have been allocated a total of \$449,080 in RTC Local. She mentioned project examples that may be either a feasibility assessment and/or planning for a BGG project or project is ready for construction and implementation. The project deliverables may look like: guidelines or planning documents for a pilot construction project that other entities can use, various test sites for a specific project, development/feasibility assessment of new technology or processes that could be integrated into any project. Sydnee presented the evaluation criteria in detail provided in Electronic Item 4.1 with the pre-application workshop flyer provided in Electronic Item 4.2. The schedule Round 4; opening the call on July 15, 2024, host the pre-application workshop on July 17, 2024, and while the call is open, will be accepting questions from applicants for a Frequently Asked Questions that will then publish online for anyone to review, if interested. Applications will be due on August 16, 2024, at 5:00 pm with taking September to review and score everything, and then bring back final recommendations for projects to be awarded at Surface Transportation Technical Committee and RTC in the October and November timeframe.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation of the Regional Transportation Council's approval of the opening of the Blue-Green-Grey applications for New Ideas Round 4. John Polster (M); Chad Edwards (S). The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Director of Transportation Report on Selected Items:** Michael Morris announced he's drafted a memo to go to the 16 city managers for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) for Transit 2.0 to engage with consultants and ask a series of questions around 7 tasks. Those seven tasks were provided in Electronic Item 5.1. Michael hopes with some consensus, in regard to Transit 2.0, for more collaboration and following the strategy that was requested by these cities. Michael highlighted high-speed rail with regard to ten years ago, Texas Central Partners working with the City of Dallas that came up with on how high-speed rail would get to Arlington and Fort Worth. Recently, the City of Dallas eliminated that quarter. He mentioned there are two paths to proceed, however we're in the middle of a \$10 million Environmental Study led by Dan Lambert's team and HNTB, who is our geometric consultant. He noted a July workshop of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is scheduled for July 11, 2024. Michael presented a brief overview of a few maps that were provided to the RTC members at the request of an Executive Board/RTC member, on the high-speed rail station. Additional details provided in Electronic Item 5.2. Michael mentioned that Friends of the Safety Committee met in Austin. He expressed appreciation to Natalie Bettger and Karla Windsor, along with encouraging anyone who would like to join this group if interested in reducing fatalities. Michael announced with the survey results from the June Surface Technical Transportation Committee meeting; two Committee meetings will be held virtually. Those meetings are scheduled for August 23, 2024, and March of 2025. Michael reminded the Committee of the 50th anniversary at the Irving Convention Center, on August 8, 2024. Michael mentioned that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) wishes to

maintain a hold on the suspension of the dynamic pricing changes of Managed Lanes during reconstruction. Michael noted that Electronic Items 5.3 and 5.4 were provided, as well as the list of other projects, by Natalie Bettger. He reminded everyone, these are intended to be innovative where major employers, or someone has a need for the next generation advice from universities. They engage with Natalie to get approval to get support from the universities to help generate great ideas to advance either technology, get a large employer, or someone to come to our region. Michael also announced that North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) won the \$25 million Beltline Sunrise Rebuilding American Infrastructure with sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant by partnering with Dallas County. Michael briefly noted Dan will give you more information when he brings demographics. It was noted that the Regional Information Services Department announced the region grew by a little less than 200,000 people in the last year, when there is typically a high growth rate of 150.

6. **2025 Unified Transportation Program and Regional 10-Year Plan Update:** Brian Dell briefed the Committee on the proposed changes to the Regional 10-Year Plan. Texas House Bill (HB) 20 requires that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) develop 10-Year Plans using performance-based planning and project selection methods. The 10-Year Plan includes projects funded with Category 2 (MPO selected), Category 4 (Texas Department of Transportation [TxDOT] District selected), and Category 12 (Texas Transportation Commission [TTC] selected). The Regional 10-Year Plan was originally approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in December 2016. This plan is updated annually in conjunction with the development of TxDOT's Unified Transportation Program (UTP). Brian noted that TxDOT began developing the 2025 UTP in fall of 2023 and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff coordinated with the TxDOT districts regarding project updates (e.g. costs/funding, environmental clearance and let dates), potential new projects, and 2024 projects that need additional funding to cover cost overruns at letting. Brian provided the principles for the development of the Regional 10-Year Plan: project should be included in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and be something that is supposed to be implemented by 2036, focus on "system" versus new, stand-alone projects, fully fund existing projects before funding new projects (with a focus on projects letting in the next 2-3 years), ensure equity of county allocations, maintain toll lanes/toll managed lanes on selected corridors, re-fund previously unfunded projects when possible, ensure all RTC projects are approved in 2025 UTP (including "placeholders"), and projects must be scored and should have a score sufficient to qualify for funding. Brian briefly provided an overview of the historical funding allocations for Category 2 and 4 and the amounts awarded by the TTC for Category 12 over time going back to 2017. Brian reminded the Committee that the RTC has a policy that for mobility funds such as Category 2, the Eastern subregion is supposed to get about 69 percent of the funding and the West gets the remaining 31 percent. He noted that NCTCOG staff is working with TxDOT on tracking all transactions related to Category 2 going back to 2014 to determine carryover as well as tracking non-formula funding, with more details to be provided in the future. Brian provided an overview of the next steps in the process, including incorporating changes to listings if the region receives any Category 12 funding from the TTC, finalizing project listings in coordination with the TxDOT districts and TxDOT headquarters, bringing back the listings for approval, including Category 12 amounts and changes to the let/completed projects list (e.g., 2024 cost overruns), providing an update on the region's Category 2 carryover balances and latest information on West/East non-formula fund tracking, and bringing back any project changes to the committees if the TTC action is different than proposed project listings. The timeline for the program was covered. Electronic Item 6.1 included additional information about the process. Electronic Item 6.2 contained the

proposed list of planned projects for the Regional 10-Year Plan. Electronic Item 6.3 contained the 10-Year Plan projects that have let or been completed.

7. **Nonregulatory Monitoring for Health and Attainment Policy:** Jenny Narvaez presented for Daniela Tower by briefing the Committee on an overview of a new policy that will encourage the continued development of a monitoring network to track movement of air pollution into the Dallas-Fort Worth counties that are in near-nonattainment for the ozone and fine particulate matter standards. Jenny introduced the new policy as Vision Zero for Health. By putting this policy in place, it would allow the ability to support a comprehensive air quality monitoring network in partnership and continuing development with local governments and industries to better identify suitable locations for these monitors. Jenny highlighted through this policy, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would also identify funding sources through the federal government, maybe the state and local, and focus on implementation along with deployment of these different monitors. NCTCOG would ensure proper installation and maintenance, data management, and storage. She mentioned most importantly would be the public engagement and communication part to show the data that is collected to the general public and develop educational materials, as well as engaging the residents and stakeholders to evaluate and report to basically assess the impacts of these monitors and the performance of them. Jenny noted the region is now in severe nonattainment for ozone for the 2008 standard, and serious non-attainment for the 2015 standard. If we don't reach attainment for the severe standard, in 2026, there will be Section 185 fees that will kick into effect in 2028. If attainment isn't reached for this severe standard, fees will kick in place and there will be an annual charge for owners of major point sources every year and that could deter people from wanting to come to our region. More information will be provided in the coming months.
8. **National Zero Emission Freight Corridor Strategy:** Jared Wright provided a brief update of the recently released National Zero-Emissions Freight Corridor Strategy and projects in the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) region that align with the strategy. The strategy and phases were developed by the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Energy, Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The strategy lays out a structured approach to accelerating sustainable and scalable deployment of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, aligns with where the market is at today and upcoming projects, and prioritizes federal investments in zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and infrastructure, and ensures best outcomes for communities, operators, and economy. Jared highlighted the phases for the Corridor strategy with phase 1 to establish hubs based on freight volumes, phase 2 by connecting the hubs along critical freight corridors, phase 3 to expand corridor connections and phase 4 with a complete network by linking regional corridors for ubiquitous access. He mentioned the local construction synergies with the NCTCOG Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Corridor Award to construct up to 5 publicly accessible medium/heavy duty hydrogen refueling stations across the Texas Triangle with a \$70 million award announced in January 2024. He briefly provided an overview of the local planning synergies: the completed NCTCOG Interstate Highway (IH) Zero Emission Vehicle Plan, Houston to Los Angeles IH 10 Corridor project, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Medium-/Heavy-Duty Charging Infrastructure Task Force. Local governments can utilize the NCTCOG region's inclusion in plan to leverage federal investments. Inclusion in the plan, alternative fuel corridor designations, and national freight corridor designations provide opportunities to prioritize federal funding that may be useful for

comprehensive plans or economic development corporations. Electronic Item 8 provided more information as presented.

9. **Surface Transportation Technical Committee/Regional Transportation Council**

Officers: Dan Kessler announced the new Surface Transportation Technical Committee officers for the 2024-2025 term: G. "Gus" Khankarli, P.E., Director of Transportation Department, City of Dallas (Chair); Ricardo Gonzalez, Director of Transportation Planning and Development, Texas Department of Transportation, Fort Worth District (Vice Chair); and Brian Shewski, P.E., PTOE, Transportation Manager, Transportation Engineering, City of Plano (Secretary). The STTC officers were approved by the NCTCOG Executive Board at its June 27, 2024, meeting. In addition, the new Regional Transportation Council officers for the 2024-2025 term are Clay Lewis Jenkins, County Judge, Dallas County (Chair); Rick Bailey, Commissioner, Johnson County (Vice Chair); and Brandon Jones, Councilmember, City of Lewisville (Secretary).

10. **Fast Facts:** The following fast facts were provided by NCTCOG staff:

Aliyah Shaikh noted the deadline to submit Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modifications for the November 2024 TIP Modification submittal was June 28, 2024.

Brian Wilson provided the Progress North Texas handbooks for each member. Progress in North Texas, the annual transportation State of the region that is organized around the theme of technology using technology to get you there. Brian congratulated the art contest winner, Kaylee Gibson, a student at Fort Worth Independent School District, if you would like additional copies, please let Brian Wilson know and it's also available at: Online@nctnctcog.org/ourregion.

Jesse Brown briefed the Committee on the Auto Occupancy/High Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy report provided in Electronic Item 10.1, regarding the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) tolled managed lane policy. In particular, the High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) +2 subsidy amount. The subsidy is to help offset the cost of the discount that is given to HOV users that travel on tolled managed lanes during peak periods. The RTC is responsible for the subsidy on the North Tarrant Express, as well as the LBJ Express facilities. As of June 2024, that subsidy is about \$9.8 million. In the packet, a managed lane system map for the region, the subsidy amount broken out by corridor, as well as the status and some statistics on the Go-Carma program that was implemented in 2020. Our next report to this committee is expected in September of 2024.

Alyssa Cunningham briefed the Committee on air quality planning and funding. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, or TCEQ, under the rebate grants program, is accepting applications for the grants for heavy duty vehicles and equipment program until July 29th, 2024. Eligible projects include the replacement, repower or electrification of heavy-duty vehicles, the purchase of new near zero or zero emission heavy duty. Schools eligible purchased fuel types include newer diesel vehicles, hydrogen, compressed natural gas, liquid natural gas, propane, methane and electricity. There is \$9.5 million in funding available for small business projects and \$14.7 million for new purchase projects. For more information, please visit the website located at: www.nctcog.org/aqfunding. The upcoming Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Clean Cities event will be hosted on August 6, 2024, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments offices from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. Vendors will present information on their products, services, showcase light, medium and heavy-duty

vehicles, and answer questions from local stakeholders. Please visit our website for more information and to register at: <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>.

Carolyn Burns highlighted information on the Clean Air Quality Project Spotlight: GUMBO Workforce. Gumbo stands for the Guaranteeing access to Underserved and Marginalized Populations by Building employment Opportunities. North Central Texas Council of Government's Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Clean Cities is working to expand technician training at local colleges to include installation and maintenance of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging equipment, meaning EV charging stations. This program supports the Justice 40 initial by targeting benefits towards disadvantaged communities. If anyone knows of any community-based organizations, community colleges, and workforce development programs, they are invited to get involved by spreading the word on this program. To participate, please e-mail cleancities@nctworkntccog.org. Additional details were provided in Electronic Item 10.2.

Jenny Narvaez presented for Daniela Tower by providing the 2024 ozone season update design value of 78 at the monitors of Pilot Point and Eagle Mountain Lake with a total of 13 exceedances, 11 orange and two red. More details were provided in Electronic Item 10.3.

Jackie Castillo announced a hybrid public meeting was held here on Monday, May 13, 2024. Staff presented information related to the planning advances for high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth, 2025 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program, and the new National Air Quality Standard, fine particulate matter. Additional details were provided in Electronic Item 10.4. On the mentioned topics, additionally, a public meeting will be hosted at North Central Texas Council of Governments, on Monday, July 8, 2024, at 12:00 pm. For more information, please see Electronic Item 10.5. The public comment report is a collection of general comments submitted by members of the public from Saturday, April 20, 2024, through Sunday, May 19, 2024. Comments and questions can be submitted via Facebook, Twitter, fax, e-mail, online and in person. Comments related to walking, biking, sustainable development, and transit conditions were in the majority. For more information, please visit Electronic item 10.6.

Written Progress Reports were provided in Electronic Item 10.7.

11. **Other Business (Old or New)**: There was no discussion on this item.
12. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on July 26, 2024.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 pm.