

MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL January 20, 2016

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, January 20, 2016, at 2 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Bruce Arfsten, Brian Barth, Rudy Durham, Charles Emery, Gary Fickes, Robert Franke, Roger Harmon, Clay Jenkins, Greg Giessner (representing Ron Jensen), Jungus Jordan, Lee Kleinman, Stephen Lindsey, Tito Rodriguez (representing Scott Mahaffey), Cary Moon, Mark Riley, Greg Johnson, Amir Rupani, Kelly Selman, Gary Slagel, Lissa Smith, Mike Taylor, Stephen Terrell, Oscar Trevino, Oscar Ward, Duncan Webb, Glen Whitley, Kathryn Wilemon, Sheri Capehart (representing W. Jeff Williams), and Ann Zadeh (representing Zim Zimmerman).

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, Berrien Barks, Randy Battey, Natalie Bettger, Brandi Bird, Kristina Brevard, Michael Bridges, Bob Brown, Chris Burkett, Sally Cain, Jack Carr, Angie Carson, Dave Carter, Jim Cline, John Cordary, Clarence Daugherty, Kim Diederich, Mike Eastland, Marshall Elizer, Lauren Freriks, Keinith Fuller, Chuy Gonazlez, Christie Gotti, Jerry Haddican, Wade Haffey, Heather Haney, Tony Hartzel, Tommy Henderson, Rebekah Hernandez, Mark Hilderbrand, Jodi Hodges, Karen Hunt, Air Hunter, Yagnesh Jarmarwala, Megan Kenney, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Dan Lamers, Brian Lee, April Leger, Paul Luedtke, Stanford Lynch, Ricky Mackey, Barbara Maley, Wes McClure, Monte Mercer, Cliff Miller, Cesar Molina, Amy Moore, Susan Morgan, Michael Morris, Ron Natinsky, Jeff Neal, Markus Neubauer, Jen Newman, Andy Nguyen, Mickey Nowell, Todd Plesko, John Polster, James Powell, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Stephen Ranft, Molly Rendon, Cristal Retana, Gary Roden, Steve Salin, Russell Schaffner, Lori Shelton, Cory Shipman, Walter Shumac, Randy Skinner, Gerald Sturdivant, Dan Vedral, Karla Weaver, Sandy Wesch, Marc Williams, Amanda Wilson, Jim Wilson, Bruce Wood, and Ed Wueste.

1. **Introduction:** Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Mark Riley introduced Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg, Jr., from the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). Michael Morris presented the RTC construction pin to Commissioner Bugg, Chuy Gonzalez, Office of the Governor, and Marc Williams, Interim Executive Director of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as a representation of the partnership among TTC, TxDOT, the Governor's Office, and RTC. Mr. Morris thanked them each for taking the time to meet with the region.
2. **Presentation by Texas Department of Transportation:** Members of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) members introduced themselves to Commissioner Bugg in order to show the diversity of elected officials and agencies that represent the region. Michael Morris welcomed Commissioner Bugg to the region and thanked him for presenting the congestion relief initiative from the Governor's Office and the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC).

Commissioner Bugg introduced himself and thanked Chair Mark Riley for holding the special RTC meeting. He noted that it is a privilege to have been appointed to the Texas Transportation Commission by Governor Greg Abbott in February 2015. Since that time, the Commission has been working on the concept of congestion relief. One of the five tenants on which Governor Abbott ran for office was the need to improve funding for transportation infrastructure. Commissioner Bugg noted that he believed that citizens of Texas spoke loud

and clear in passing Proposition 7 by 83 percent. He complimented the RTC on how the region has worked together over the years to put transportation issues forward and noted the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) now has a focused Congestion Relief Initiative. Commissioner Bugg thanked Chuy Gonzalez, Office of the Governor, and various members from TxDOT for traveling with him to present to the metropolitan regions and provided an overview of the Congestion Relief Initiative. On September 23, 2015, Governor Abbott called on the Texas Transportation Commission to take on the congestion relief initiative to not only address congestion relief, but also address quality of life, economic development, and keeping Texas a vibrant state. The following day, Chairman Lewis and the TTC appointed him to lead the effort statewide. He noted that this is the first time a statewide strategic plan has been put together that has focused on one major initiative, congestion relief. In addition, he noted that this is not a one-and-done deal. This is a long-term initiative that the Governor has asked the Commission to address. He noted this is not only from the Governor's office, but also the top 20 executives within TxDOT that have been in congestion relief task force meetings. He discussed the listening tour in the region and interest in hearing feedback from each of the five metropolitan areas of Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston. He discussed the structure of the listening sessions in each area and the request that communities tell the Commission the location of its most congested areas. Commissioner Bugg noted that the origins of the Congestion Relief Initiative go back to something familiar to the region. A map was displayed of the Dallas-Fort Worth area in 1974, the year the interstate highway system was completed. In 1974, the State of Texas had a population of approximately 12 million. In comparison, a map of 2015 was displayed with Texas currently having a population of 27.7 million. The density for each time period was highlighted. In February 2015, State demographers projected that in the 35 year period between 2015 and 2050, the population in the State of Texas will double from 27.7 million to 54 million. TxDOT put together a map, working with the State demographer's office that shows where the anticipated population will be in Texas. The location will drive planning considerations. Present day Dallas-Fort Worth and the projected Dallas-Fort Worth region in 2050 were highlighted. He noted that while others areas begin to grow, the primary population growth is anticipated to be concentrated in the five metropolitan areas targeted by the Congestion Relief Initiative. Two-thirds of Texans live in these five metropolitan areas. On average, congestion costs Texans \$1,200 per year in addition to frustration, time wasted, and lost productivity. Current congestion, as well as future congestion is the reason for focusing on the five metropolitan areas. One of the things that makes this initiative possible is Proposition 7 being passed with an 83 percent approval rate, Proposition 1, and the ending of diversions bringing some firepower to bear on congestion relief. Along with these funding options, Representative Simmons also championed HB 20 which requires TxDOT to have performance measures on project selection. TxDOT staff believes the proposed efforts comply with the requirements of HB 20. Prior to the 84th Legislative Session, TxDOT had a budget of approximately \$12 billion with two-thirds of the budget dedicated to maintaining and improving the existing infrastructure in the state highway system. TxDOT will continue to address safety, maintenance, connectivity, and freight/border infrastructure in addition to the focused congestion relief initiative. He noted that one of the efforts to focus on congestion that has a low investment and high reward is bringing technology into this phase to see how congestion and traffic flow can be improved with traffic management system improvements. Austin is being used as a beta test site and positive results have been observed. Next steps are for TxDOT to work with the districts and local communities to identify future project opportunities for congestion relief. He requested that areas submit their congested areas, and also projects that are ready for implementation but simply need funding to move them forward. He again emphasized that this initiative is not a one-and-done deal, but a long-term and well thought-

through effort. As mentioned, TxDOT is focused on the five metropolitan areas and will be meeting in Houston January 25-26. TxDOT executives will be working on the information to be presented in a workshop fashion to the Texas Transportation Commission on January 27 where there will be discussion regarding what was learned on the listening tour. On January 28, the mayors and county judges from each of the five metropolitan areas have been invited to Austin to address the Commission at its meeting on January 28. He noted the importance of the Texas Transportation Commission hearing from representatives from the metropolitan regions. In February, the Commission will meet for its regular quarterly update of the Unified Transportation Program and will take a formal vote on the proposed Congestion Relief Initiative. He thanked members for the opportunity meet in the region.

3. **Response from the North Central Texas Council of Governments:** Michael Morris discussed proposed project approved by the RTC on January 14, 2016. He noted that Councilmember Lee Kleinman, would be representing the City of Dallas in Austin, along with Judge Clay Jenkins, Dallas County; Judge Glen Whitley, Tarrant County; and Mayor Betsy Price, City of Fort Worth at the January 28, 2016, Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) meeting. The region has been working closely with its Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) district engineers over the last 60 days to determine appropriate projects. The proposal includes no tolled projects. Mr. Morris thanked the Governor and Texas Department of Transportation for the opportunity to expedite congestion relief projects. The allocation will be between \$1.0 billion and \$1.3 billion. Early construction timeframes are needed and the program will only be available in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, and Fort Worth. Commission discussion is anticipated on January 28, 2016, with action on February 25, 2016. Efforts will create a funding partnership to implement priority projects in the eastern and western subregions. Project performance measures will be provided as an example supporting HB 20 requirements. Mr. Morris discussed the proposed congestion relief projects in the western and eastern subregions. He noted the regions efforts to build a system, and the importance of expressing this concept to the Commission at the January meeting. In the western subregion, projects include the SH 121/SH 360 Interchange, SH 199, and IH 820 from SH 121 to Randol Mill. The three projects are staged, but due to lack of funds have not been completed. Securing congestion relief funding will allow for the creation of a system of improvements. The projects have individual benefits, as well as the benefit to complete the originally planned system. In the western subregion, projects include the Southern Gateway (IH 35E and US 67) and Lowest Stemmons (IH 35E). Mr. Morris reviewed western subregion projects in more detail. The first proposed project is the missing section of SH 121 at SH 360. It is a \$60 million project and construction can begin in the summer of 2016 since the design build concessionaire is ready to proceed. The second project, SH 199, is a \$56.5 million project that also improves the system and construction can begin in the summer of 2016. The last project is IH 820 from north of SH 121 to Randol Mill Road. The proposed project will be scoped to \$111 million or \$137 million if the upper range of funding is allocated. Construction on the project can begin in 2017. This is also a standalone improvement for which the completion of the system has other benefits. Mr. Morris also reviewed eastern subregion projects in more detail. On the first project, IH 35E/Southern Gateway, the RTC is contributing approximately \$240 million to the project, which is anticipated to let in summer 2017. This amount does not include the \$50 million for US 67 from IH 20 to the south. Kelly Selman is working on a specific approach for this section, so it will proceed using a different construction method. The base cost of the project is \$655.54 million. The second project, Lowest Stemmons, is approximately \$100 million. Potential revenue will be \$20 million in congestion relief funding or up to \$100 million if the higher amount is allocated by TxDOT. The project is expected to let in summer 2017. Many positive comments have been received from the public on completed projects such as

SM Wright, the Horseshoe (IH 30/IH 35E), TxDOT CityMAP, the IH 30/SH 360 Interchange, and the US 377 Cresson Bypass. Comments were also received for projects that need additional funding such as comments made by Judge Clay Jenkins regarding the importance of Loop 9. He noted that no comments have been heard suggesting that the proposed projects approved by the RTC are not the appropriate projects for the initiative. He noted that the region is prepared to work with the district engineers to prepare the next group of potential projects for future funding opportunities. Mr. Morris noted that the proposed projects were presented at January public meetings as part of Mobility 2040 and initial RTC action was received on January 14, 2016. With support from the RTC, elected officials can present not only their opinion of the initiative but that of the RTC. He again expressed appreciation to Commissioner Bugg, TxDOT, and the Governor's Office for taking time to hold listening sessions in the region. Mr. Morris noted that he will be in Austin for both the workshop and the Commission meeting if there are questions with regard to the region's proposed projects. Questions and comments were requested.

Rob Franke expressed appreciation for the Congestion Relief Initiative, specifically the formula allocation of funds which he believes allows the region to maintain priorities and good practices, without straining relationships. He encouraged the four RTC representatives to express the RTC's appreciation to the entire Commission for its formula allocation approach to the congestion relief funding. Oscar Ward also thanked Commissioner Bugg for attending and willingness to hear input from the region. He noted he supported the projects presented for congestion relief funding. In addition, he discussed frustration from the City of Irving regarding the Midtown Express/SH 183 project which is not eligible for funding because of its tolled components. He discussed various phases of the project, funding needed for completion, and asked how the State planned to provide funds to other congested projects in the region that are not eligible due to tolled components. Commissioner Bugg discussed funds from the 84th Legislative Session, including ending diversion, Proposition 1, and Proposition 7. He noted that these funding streams are not compatible for uses on projects with tolling elements. Mr. Morris noted that the point discussed by Mr. Ward was an important, but separate conversation. In the future, it will be important to bring questions to the Commission about other funding strategies. Clay Jenkins recapped comments from the January 19 listening session in the east. Comments received during the listening session included appreciation for CityMAP, support and alignment for the proposed projects, and the importance of looking at redevelopment as well as development when addressing congestion mitigation. Comments also included Loop 9 and its connection to the outer loop, IH 635, US 75, having comprehensive development agreements (CDAs) as a part of the toolbox, as well as discussion in opposition of CDAs. Additional comments also included ramp metering for IH 635, and the Southern Gateway, Lowest Stemmons, IH 30, and US 380 projects. He expressed appreciation for Commissioner Bugg coming to the region and noted that those who spoke about the projects advocated them moving forward. Glen Whitley also thanked Commissioner Bugg for visiting the region. He spoke about the listening session in the west and the projects presented by Brian Barth, as well as projects that are moving forward such as the SH 360/IH 30 interchange, IH 820, and SH 360. He also discussed the area of congestion at the US 287/IH 820/IH 20 Interchange. In addition, he noted concern from the outlying counties of Wise, Parker, Johnson, Summerville, and Hood. These communities are looking for options to commute to Fort Worth. It will be important to address the existing and non-existing state highways as those communities are developing and coordinate with the cities to build arterials as the areas continue to mature and grown. RTC Chair Riley thanked the Commissioner for his time. He noted that in Parker County it is said that partnerships build better roads, which is true throughout the region and is exemplified in how the RTC moves

projects forward. Commissioner Bugg thanked Lee Kleinman, Glen Whitley, Clay Jenkins, and Michael Morris for agreeing to attend the January Commission meeting and workshop in Austin.

4. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for Thursday, February 11, 2016, 1:00 pm, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3 pm.