



MEETING SUMMARY

**Regional Freight Advisory Committee
North Central Texas Council of Governments
November 12, 2019
12:30 pm-2:00 pm**

Attendees

Huong Duong, NCTCOG
Jose Grimaldo, UNT
Jeff Hathcock, NCTCOG
Mike Johnson, NCTCOG
Lisa Key, NCTCOG
Gus Khankarli, City of Dallas
Dan Lamers, NCTCOG
Tyson Moeller, UP, Remote
Linda Pavlik, City of Ennis Rep.
Mike Rader, Prime Rail Interests

Meeting Summary Outline

1. Welcome/Previous Meeting Recap
2. Fort Worth Grade Crossing Evaluations
3. Truck Lane Restrictions Expansion 2019
4. Freight Land-Use Compatibility Analysis
5. Discussions/Announcements

1. Welcome/Previous Meeting Recap, Jeff Hathcock, NCTCOG

Jeff Hathcock recapped the previous meeting from May, noting that NCTCOG had been awarded the INFRA Grant for the North Texas Strategic National Highway System Bridge Program. He discussed the possibility of future meetings being held via WebEx/conference call.

Huong Dong with the Transportation Department's Air Quality team briefed the Committee on the North Texas Freight Terminal Electrification 2019 Call for Projects. NCTCOG will administer almost \$40,000 in funding through the Environmental Protection Agency's National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program. Anticipated benefits include reductions in Nitrogen Oxides and Particulate Matter. Eligible applicants include freight terminals and distribution centers. Eligible activities are electrified parking spaces, power monitoring equipment, and electric power kits. Anyone interested in applying for this funding should submit their application by December 13, 2019.

2. Fort Worth Grade Crossing Evaluation, Mike Johnson, NCTCOG

Mike Johnson presented an overview of the Fort Worth Rail Crossing Evaluation initiative. The objective is to review and evaluate all at-grade crossings within the City of Fort Worth to identify the highest priority rail crossings in terms of safety and efficiency, identify recommendations for specific crossings and strategies, and develop policies for mitigating future rail crossing conflicts. Staff will also create a template for evaluating all rail crossings in the North Central Texas region. Data collection of crossing attributes will be housed in a rail crossing database along with GIS maps for each crossing. Scoring criteria will be developed to prioritize crossings based on available data and best practices.

Staff will reach out to industry stakeholders, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of Fort Worth to seek additional information and discuss any concerns, as well as crossing priorities. Site visits will also be conducted at every rail crossing in the City to identify potential physical or traffic signal issues. Once completed, analysis will identify and prioritize a comprehensive list of rail crossings. Recommendations will

be formulated along with associated assigned costs. Findings will be shared with the Committee, the Regional Transportation Council, and the Surface Transportation Technical Committee. The aim is to establish potential policies and strategies for rail crossings in North Central Texas.

3. Truck Lane Restriction 2019 Expansion, Corey Mitchell, NCTCOG

Corey Mitchell briefed the Committee on the Truck Lane Restrictions initiative. Based on previous truck lane studies, truck lane restrictions have been shown to improve mobility, safety, and air quality. On roadways with three or more traffic lanes, the restrictions prohibit trucks, with three or more axles, from using the inside left lane, except when passing traffic. The 2005-2006 Truck Lane Demonstration Corridor Project established dedicated truck lanes on IH 20 in the Dallas District and IH 30 in the Fort Worth District. A study conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute showed a reduction in crash rates through the designated corridors. Additionally, air quality data showed reductions in Nitrogen Oxides, in these corridors.

In 2013, truck lane restrictions were expanded across the region. Measurable benefits in congestion, air quality, and safety were observed. In 2019, further truck lane expansion was proposed to include more corridors region-wide. The analysis of traffic flow indicated that small but measurable improvements in speed can also be expected, as well as a reduction in accidents, which will remove periods of non-recurrent congestion on the region's highways. Expansion was approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in October of 2019.

4. Freight Land-Use Compatibility Analysis Update, Mike Johnson, NCTCOG

Mike Johnson presented an update on the Freight Land-Use Compatibility Analysis. In preparation for the analysis, extensive literature was reviewed from the Federal Highway Administration, Transportation Research Board, regional city comprehensive plans and development codes, and other Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Data collection was achieved through site visits, freight facility and foreign trade zone inventory, potential freight land-use identification, and policy research.

Freight staff collaborated with other program areas in the Transportation Department to gather information and expertise on sustainable development, air quality, environmental justice, and the modeling/roadway team. Recommendations include conducting analysis of regional freight-oriented-developments (FOD) to identify potential incompatible land uses in and near regional FODs, identify city ordinances governing land-use types, and building a policy toolkit.

Results and recommendations from this study will include regional data on an inventory of warehousing, distribution, and shipping centers, among other critical factors in an urban freight land-use preservation assessment. Staff will include public involvement as an important step in the process and develop factsheets and other educational materials to illustrate the importance of compatible land uses. Staff will also coordinate with cities to gain their unique insight and collaborate to develop recommendations towards ensuring freight land-use compatibility for our communities and the freight industry. Preserving freight land uses within the urban core of the North Central Texas region is more important than ever, as freight land use is pushed to the periphery of the region.

5. General Discussion/Announcements

Jeff thanked participants for their attendance and contributions. As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.