



MEETING SUMMARY

Regional Freight Advisory Committee North Central Texas Council of Governments

**August 8, 2017
12:30 pm-2:00 pm**

The Regional Freight Advisory Council (RFAC) convened at 12:30 p.m. on August 8, 2017, at NCTCOG Offices.

Attendees

Steve Boecking, Hillwood
Georgi Ann Jasenovec, Federal Highway Administration
Minh Le, Texas Transportation Institute
Mike Johnson, NCTCOG
Dan Kessler, NCTCOG
Lisa Key, NCTCOG
Gus Khankarli, UTA
Dan Lamers, NCTCOG
Martin Molloy, Halff Associates
Mark Rhea, Frozen Food Express
Russell Schaffner, Tarrant County
Seyed Mohsen Shahandashti, University of Texas Arlington
Lauren Trimble, Dallas County
Amir Tabesh, UTA
Jonathan Unger, NCTCOG

Meeting Summary Outline

1. Welcome/Previous Meeting Recap
2. Air Quality Update
3. Regional Truck Routes
4. Freight Events Update
5. Automated Trucks
6. General Discussion/Announcements

1. Welcome/Previous Meeting Recap, Mike Johnson, NCTCOG

Mike opened the meeting with a recap of the May 24 meeting noting Tiffany Melvin's NASCO update and the information shared by Kale Driemeier on the Texas Freight Mobility Plan.

2. Air Quality Update, Lori Clark

Lori provided an update on the Volkswagen settlement and the Environmental Mitigation Trust monetary distribution along with Air Quality Funding Opportunities and the state of alternative fuels. Texas' share of the \$14.7 Billion Volkswagen settlement to date, is \$209 Million to owners, former owners, and lessees in the form of buybacks lease terminations, emissions repairs and additional payments. A certified emissions repair will bring the vehicle into full compliance with originally certified emission standards.

Current eligible NO_x mitigation actions have funding available to replace/repower specific classes of freight and port drayage trucks, freight switchers, freight trucks, forklifts and port cargo handling equipment. The Texas Emission Reduction Plan has upcoming funding available for Alternative Fueling Facilities, Natural Gas Vehicles, Seaport and Railyard Emissions Reduction and Diesel Emissions Reduction.

Under Section 1413 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Texas' Alternative Fuel Corridors, as illustrated in the presentation map. The benefits of this designation include the ability to prioritize future fueling station investments, accelerate public interest/awareness with signage, and engage/collaborate with the Volkswagen settlement to qualify for CMAQ funding priority (EV and CNG). Additional Alternative Fuel Corridors will be proposed by NCTCOG including US 678, US 75 and US 287. NCTCOG staff asks that RFAC members support TxDOT's approach of submitting remaining interstates and recommend that TxDOT include non-interstate segments providing regional connectivity.

3. Regional Truck Routes, Jonathan Unger

Jonathan gave an update on efforts to increase freight movements in North Central Texas, by focusing on connectivity between designated truck routes, commercial vehicle routes, and freight-oriented developments. Route data, sourced from municipal codes, identifies truck routes and commercial vehicle routes based on local designations. These designations are intended to direct the travel of trucks through and around municipalities for the safest most efficient freight movements possible.

Utilizing this data, NCTCOG staff created GIS maps to identify and illustrate regional route data connectivity between designated routes and freight-oriented developments. The resulting maps demonstrate the need to increase mobility between commercial vehicle routes and local truck routes and state and federal freight networks in proximity to freight-oriented developments. This information will be utilized in an upcoming Hazardous Materials Study and freight land-use analysis.

4. Freight Events Update, Mike Johnson

Mike shared recent NCTCOG staff participation in the local TxDOT Freight Stakeholder workshops and Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) Committee meeting in Houston, noting an upcoming TxFAC Committee meeting and the Great American Truck Show (GATS), both In August. NCTCOG staff will have a booth at GATS.

5. Vehicle Automation and the Freight Industry, Thomas Bamonte

Tom shared insights, potential scenarios, and the latest technology surrounding the push towards Autonomous Vehicles (AV). The levels of autonomy range from 0-5, level 0 having no automation and level 5 with fully automated functionality. Some manufacturers of automobiles are predicting that by 2025, as many as 100 cities will operate Level 4/5 AV fleets and that by 2030, as many as 25% of U.S. miles will be driven in AVs. Although some disagree, there seems to be a consensus that fleets will lead AV deployment and powertrains will be electric. By 2040, some predict that 75% of all vehicles will be autonomous.

The concept of truck platooning works through the use of on-board sensors and communications devices, allowing two to three trucks to travel closely together, with synchronized speeds and braking patterns. It is believed that these platoons of smart trucks will attract drivers and save fuel. Telematics data combines wireless communication with GPS or other navigation systems and can track and collect road driving behavior and performance. Last-mile future freight deliveries may be accomplished through the integration of autonomous delivery robots and drone air deliveries.

The U.S. Department of Transportation has named Texas a national testing ground for Autonomous Vehicles for testing, development, and deployment. As such, recent legislative and regulatory developments include Senate Bill (SB) 2205 that allows AVs to travel across Texas roadways and implements safety requirements and restrictions. SB 2205 provides that AVs will be regulated by the State so that cities and counties will not be able to have different regulations. Self-driving trucks were not included in the Bill. Federal legislation for autonomous trucks is in the process of being defined.

NCTCOG's Automated Vehicle program has multiple initiatives in work including a partnership on the campus of the University of Texas at Arlington, a second AV shuttle deployment, and the IH 30 Test Corridor. Ongoing regional transportation data infrastructure initiatives include traffic signal data sharing between regional municipalities and transportation partners, as well as transportation data sharing through the WAZE/511DFW program.

6. General Discussion/Announcements

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

More information is available at www.nctcog.org/rfac.