



## **MEETING SUMMARY**

**Regional Freight Advisory Committee  
North Central Texas Council of Governments  
November 14, 2017  
12:30 pm-2:00 pm**

The Regional Freight Advisory Council (RFAC) convened at 12:30 p.m. on November 14, 2017, at NCTCOG Offices.

### **Attendees**

Steve Boecking, Hillwood  
Jason Brown, NCTCOG  
Kale Driemeier, Texas Department of Transportation  
Huong Duong, NCTCOG  
Jose Grimaldo, University of North Texas  
Ernest Huffman, NCTCOG  
Mike Johnson, NCTCOG  
Dan Kessler, NCTCOG  
Lisa Key, NCTCOG  
Gus Khankarli, University of Texas Arlington  
Dan Lamers, NCTCOG  
Mark Rhea, Frozen Food Express  
Allan Rutter, Texas Transportation Institute  
Seyed Mohsen Shahandashti, University of Texas Arlington  
Lauren Trimble, Dallas County  
Amir Tabesh, University of Texas Arlington  
Jonathan Unger, NCTCOG

### **Meeting Summary Outline**

1. Welcome/Previous Meeting Recap
2. INFRA Grant Submissions
3. Aviation and Air Cargo
4. Underground Short-Haul Freight Pipelines
5. Freight Program Update
6. General Discussion/Announcements

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

Mike Johnson opened the meeting with a recap of the August meeting noting the importance of the regional truck routes that will be utilized in the Hazardous Materials Study and freight land-use analysis.

### **2. Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grant (INFRA) Grant Submissions, Mike Galizio, NCTCOG**

Mike Galizio presented the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grant project submittal noting that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) had submitted three projects for the INFRA Grant; one in Tarrant County, the IH 35W North Tarrant Express. Additionally, NCTCOG staff has proposed three other projects for submittal by the Regional Transportation Council and NCTCOG including IH 635 LBJ East, DFW Connector at IH 635/ SH 114 or SH 121 and the IH 20 Y- Connection. If awarded, the INFRA Grant funding would cover a portion of the total project cost for each project. Mike pointed out that projects were selected for submittal from the east and west regions of the Metropolitan Planning Area and that the partnership opportunity with TxDOT allows NCTCOG to submit projects that TxDOT did not choose to submit. Once these projects are approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), and if selected to receive funding through this grant, these projects would be included in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as well as the Statewide TIP.

### **3. Aviation and Air Cargo, Ernest Huffman, Ernest Huffman, NCTCOG**

Ernest Huffman presented on Drones (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) and Freight with emphasis on Last Mile and Long Haul. Companies such as Amazon and United Parcel Service (UPS) are interested in utilizing drones as part of the delivery process for last-mile deliveries from a distribution center or delivery vehicle, to the end customer. Expansion for deliveries in rural areas is a real possibility as well as improved delivery times in inner cities.

The technology exists today to launch a drone from a UPS vehicle to deliver a package to a nearby customer. However, federal, state and local drone regulations are still being identified. Last-mile distribution by drones could not only improve delivery times but could also lower costs for the distributor and positively impact the environment by taking some measure of delivery vehicles off the road or reduce their drive time. There are however potential negative impacts on this type of delivery such as perceived safety issues, the need for more infrastructure, and potentially fewer delivery jobs. Last-mile operations are forecasted to be feasible within the next three years. The technology for long-haul operations by large unmanned drones does not yet exist although Nautilus and others are examining the feasibility of such operations. Large startup costs and the need for infrastructure are two major obstacles.

### **4. Underground Short-Haul Freight Pipelines, Amir Tabesh, University of Texas Arlington (UTA)**

Amir Tabesh presented the study conducted by UTA on the feasibility of an underground short-haul freight system to transport goods from an airline cargo terminal to a distribution hub on airport property. This system would potentially reduce truck traffic, improve safety, enhance efficiency, and improve air quality. Amir illustrated the site proposal and the engineering design. The proposed functionality of the freight system was discussed in detail. The financial cost was also illustrated yet the financial feasibility is still being investigated.

### **5. Freight Program Update, Mike Johnson, NCTCOG**

Mike Johnson discussed current and future freight initiatives including the Hazardous Materials Study, Land Use Study, 2045 Mobility Plan freight section, truck routing possibilities in the Cities of Cleburne and Ennis, the Freight Safety Campaign and the Regional Rail Study.

## **6. General Discussion/Announcements**

Jeff asked if there were other items of discussion and having heard no further items, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Regional Freight Advisory Committee is February 13, 2018.

More information is available at [www.nctcog.org/rfac](http://www.nctcog.org/rfac).