MINUTES
Regional Transportation Council
PUBLIC MEETING

Regional 10-Year Plan Update
Alternative Fuel Highway Corridors

Meeting Date and Location

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) held a public meeting as follows:

1. Monday, July 23, 2018 – 6:00 pm – North Central Texas Council of Governments (Arlington); attendance: 9; moderated by Christie Gotti, Senior Program Manager

Public Meeting Purpose and Topics

The public meeting was held in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and amended on February 12, 2015. Staff presented information about:

1. Regional 10-Year Plan Update – presented by Wade Haffey
2. Alternative Fuel Highway Corridors – presented by Bailey Muller

The NCTCOG public meeting was held to educate, inform and seek comments from the public. Comments were solicited from those present who wished to speak for the record. The presentations made at the meeting are available at www.nctcog.org/input, and a video recording of the public meeting was posted at www.nctcog.org/video.

Each person who attended the meeting received a packet with a meeting agenda, a sheet on which to submit written comments and copies of the presentations.

Summary of Presentations

Regional 10-Year Plan Update presentation:
Handout:

In December 2016, the Regional Transportation Council approved a 10-year plan identifying major projects to be implemented in the region by Fiscal Year 2026. Ongoing activities include reviewing funding allocation changes since the initial target setting. Project timing, project cost updates and adjustments due to revised construction costs have already been completed.

In addition to 10-Year Plan updates, staff is modifying the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a list of transportation projects with committed funds from federal, State and local
sources. TIP modifications include project additions, cost increases and decreases, delaying projects not ready for implementation and the changing of funding sources or shares.

Staff is seeking public review and comment on the draft update of the Regional 10-Year Plan and proposed TIP modifications. Comments are due by August 21, 2018.

**Alternative Fuel Highway Corridors presentation:**

As part of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has begun designating highway corridors for various alternative fuels. The goal is to establish a national network of alternative fueling and charging infrastructure along national highway system corridors to improve the mobility of alternative fuel vehicles. Charging stations must be within five miles of the highway and publically accessible. TxDOT is developing a policy to guide signage placement, and the first installation phase comprises 92 natural gas signs in 51 locations. Other fuel types are expected to be processed upon request once the policy is final. The first round of corridor nominations took place in 2016 and the second in 2017. The third round of corridor nominations will take place in late 2018. TxDOT is coordinating the submittal and NCTCOG will provide technical assistance as needed.

**ORAL COMMENTS RECEIVED AT MEETING**

**Regional 10-Year Plan Update**

1. Luther Harris, Texas Department of Transportation

A. Transportation planning priorities

**Question:** Which transportation projects are the highest priority right now?

**Summary of response by Christie Gotti:** We’re always focused on different modes of transportation. A month or two ago, our biggest priority was IH 635E. We have gotten that project across the goal line and can now focus on the contractor selection process. Our biggest priority currently in the western region is the Southeast Connector. On the transit side, we’re working with DART to move the Cotton Belt Rail Corridor across the goal line. On the bicycle and pedestrian side, we’re linking Dallas and Fort Worth trails. You will see a recommendation in upcoming public meetings about this particular initiative. Additionally, as we build the Cotton Belt Rail Corridor, we’re identifying certain walking and biking trails that will run alongside the tracks.

B. DART services in South Dallas

**Question:** Have you all discussed DART services in South Dallas?

**Summary of response by Christie Gotti:** We’ve talked to Dallas about several initiatives, and we’re particularly focused on Dallas’s GrowSouth program.

2. Gary Hennessey, Citizen

A. Connectivity throughout the region
**Question:** Are you accepting suggestions on connectivity throughout the region? I’m a retired air traffic controller and would like to see high-speed rail collaboration with all of the airlines servicing Dallas and Fort Worth.

**Summary of response by Christie Gotti:** We are currently conducting environmental clearance and welcome your comments. I think the industry in general is heading in the direction you’re referring to. The Dallas to Houston portion of the high-speed rail recently created a partnership with Amtrak. It’s a good suggestion.

**Alternative Fuel Highway Corridors**

1. Gary Hennessey, Citizen
   
   **A. Distance between charging stations**
   
   **Comment:** Providing distances between charging stations throughout the corridors would be useful. People would know whether to stop or keep driving.

   **Summary of response by Bailey Muller:** That information is not incorporated into the plan at this particular point in time. However, it is definitely something we can consider in future conversations.

2. Luther Harris, Texas Department of Transportation
   
   **A. Hydrogen stations in Dallas-Fort Worth**
   
   **Question:** I’ve noticed we don’t have many hydrogen stations in the State of Texas. How do you plan to incorporate these stations into the plans?

   **Summary of response by Bailey Muller:** Hydrogen fueling infrastructure isn’t necessarily available in Texas.

   **Summary of response by Lori Clark:** You have probably heard about the Volkswagon Settlement. Volkswagon produced diesel-powered vehicles that weren’t as clean as they advertised them to be. As part of the settlement, a portion of money will be set aside for hydrogen infrastructure. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) will release more information in the near future and host a public comment period.

3. Leah Ray, ELS
   
   **Question:** Will you all make sure charging stations accommodate all of the different electric vehicle makes and models?

   **Summary of response by Bailey Muller:** Tesla is really the only manufacturer whose charging stations won’t accommodate other makes and models. I know there is an adapter available, but I don’t think it’s mainstream. However, we don’t consider Tesla’s charging stations to be publicly accessible.
Regional 10-Year Plan Update

Email

1. Luther Harris

I went to the meeting on 7/23/18 to witness the ultimate plan for all of the DFW metroplex which I call home. My comment is my opinion on the matter.

What I would like to see the area invest more time in is studying the potential of more transit/bike lanes in cities across the metroplex, especially in residential neighborhoods. I live in Dallas near a major street with all kinds of traffic coming by during rush hour. The design of the street is 6 lanes in each direction, as its normal for a lot of cities to have that design for any major street. But I believe the designs of the streets should be changed to a 4 lane configuration with one turning lane in the middle, 2 bike lanes on each side mixed with a bus transit lane. Doing this in residential zones like Lake Highlands, Preston Hollow, Oak Cliff, could be making our neighborhoods quieter and much easier to live in.

At the same time, we should be looking for potential corridors to update to accommodate traffic as an alternate for highways. For example, Gaston Ave is used more by people going to Downtown Dallas from Garland of SH 78, so the street should be updated to accommodate that and potentially moving the highway off of Grand, as historically, Old Highway 67 would follow Gaston to Abrams and go south right into Downtown. The point is to get people to not use the highways as much but to do that, the lights need to be updated to sense where the traffic is and calculate when it should turn green and when it should turn red. The point is to have traffic rarely and keep moving though green lights so it feels as fast as the freeway. This should also alleviate highway congestion a little.

We should also be doing more for public transportation by giving more bus lanes and there own lights to buses can move faster than traffic. DART and The T should study potential corridors for this.

Laws should be changed so Hybrid, Electric, Hydrogen, or Natural Gas Vehicles can use HOV or HOT lanes for free with only one person in the car. The NTTA, TXDOT, and the LBJ and NTE groups should be offering discounts on tolls for use of alternative fuels to encourage more people to buy electric, alternative fuel, or hybrid cars and make our air cleaner.

I would like to see DART move from a Cities run Government entity to Dallas/Collin/Ellis/Kaufman/Rockwall County run transit agency as Public transportation can reach more people.