

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE October 22, 2021

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, October 22, 2021, at 1:30 pm by videoconference. The Regional Transportation Council Bylaws establish that the Technical Committee approved membership in attendance at a meeting shall constitute a quorum for action to be taken, therefore individual attendance was not taken for committee members or other attendees.

1. **Approval of September 24, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the September 24, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. Melissa Baker (M); Mike Galizio (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1 **Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council Action on SH 121 Wrecker Service Funding: Replacing Federal Funds with RTC Local Funds:** Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to utilize RTC Local funds in an amount not to exceed \$750,000 to pay for the staging of wreckers along the SH 121 technology lane for services rendered December 2020 through 2021 was requested. The requested action included administratively amending the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed.
 - 2.2. **Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council Action on Klyde Warren Park Extension Cost Increase:** Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council action to approve funding the federal share of an \$8.5 million cost overrun (\$6.8 million federal and \$1.7 million local) for the previously funded Klyde Warren Park Expansion project was requested. The City of Dallas will cover the local match for the cost increase. This action includes approval for North Central Texas Council of Governments staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes. A summary of existing and proposed funding was provided in Electronic Item 2.2.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Daniel Vedral (M); Clarence Daugherty (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3-Project Funding:** Shawn Conrad presented the Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3 funding opportunity, proposals received, and evaluation process. The purpose of the Blue-Green-Grey funding initiative is to promote the planning and construction of green or sustainable infrastructure in the region and to advance small projects with innovative outcomes that can be replicated regionally. Previous funding rounds for the initiative were highlighted. For Round 3, up to \$300,000 in Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Local funds were available with a maximum award of \$75,000 to each applicant. The proposal period opened July 19, 2021, with proposals due August 12, 2021. Applications received were scored based on team qualifications; impact; innovation/significance; applicability, adaption, transferability, and practicality; and collaboration with various stakeholders. Other considerations included

equity, geographic distribution, and diversity of disciplines. Three projects were recommended for funding: Allen Inlet Floatable Filter, \$75,000; Bottom District Neighborhood Beautification, \$74,910; and University of Texas Arlington Biofiltration Swales Testing, \$51,500. The City of Allen Inlet Floatable Filter project will address the City's need to upgrade to Phase 2 of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ's) stormwater permitting requirements. Proposed project elements will include the development of a modified inlet design for the collection and removal of debris and floatables during active construction and is intended to be inexpensive and provide a more effective and permanent solution. The Bottom District Neighborhood Beautification project will address a historically underserved neighborhood located in a flood plain which is more susceptible to environmental issues such as flooding and has a history of under investment. Project goals will be to establish a green infrastructure network by developing a plan that is intended to potentially function as an alternative to a standard stormwater plan. The project team expects to incorporate a small-scale pilot implementation project as part of this overall project. The final project is the University of Texas Arlington Biofiltration Swales Testing project. This proposed project will address stormwater contaminants. TCEQ recommended best practices are often difficult to implement in larger urban areas so this project is seeking to install, monitor, and test an expanded shale alternative for use in biofiltration swales. Equity considerations, geographic distribution, and diversity of disciplines considerations for each project were highlighted. Additional information on application scoring was provided in Electronic Item 3.1 and staff recommendation details were provided in Electronic Item 3.2. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of the proposed list of projects to fund through the Blue-Green-Grey funding program Round 3 provided in Electronic Item 3.2. Action also included a recommendation to authorize administratively amending the Transportation Improvement program/Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate the changes. Britney Farr (M); Robert Woodbury (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **2023-2026 Management, Operations, and Safety Program:** Brian Dell provided an overview of the 2023-2026 Management, Operations, and Safety Program. The Committee and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) typically consider extending existing and funding new air quality, management, and operations projects/programs every few years. Projects/programs funded through this effort were last considered in 2018-2019 and funded through fiscal year (FY) 2022. The next round of funding will cover fiscal years FY2023-2026 and will also consider funding for safety projects/programs. Mr. Dell noted that the program provides funding in addition to Transportation Planning funds for staff to conduct various operations, planning, and implementation activities. As in previous years, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Regional Toll Revenue (RTR), and RTC Local funds will likely be proposed for FY2023-FY2026. Beginning efforts early ensures that existing programs and projects that are continued can do so without interruption. He noted staff is in the process of determining both the amounts of funding and the specific projects and programs to be proposed with approximately \$15-20 million programmed per fiscal year. As noted, this amount may decrease with increased federal planning funds. In addition, he noted that a significant portion of the funding is passed through to other agencies with the remaining used to cover North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff time to coordinate, plan and lead various activities. Program and project types typically included in this initiative are management and operation activities such as the Mobility Assistance Patrol program and Transit Operations. Also included are NCTCOG-implemented projects such as project tracking and planning efforts to assist local governments. Regional/air quality projects and programs include a variety of activities such as Freeway Incident

Management, Employer Trip Reduction, data collection, Regional Traffic Signal Retiming, and others. The importance of these types of programs to air quality were highlighted. As a nonattainment region, these projects contribute to emissions reductions and help the region to pass air quality conformity. Mr. Dell noted that in addition to the three project groups, staff proposed that the region take a leadership role and partner with the State as part of a larger statewide safety program to improve safety and reduce fatalities on the transportation system. A more detailed proposal will be brought back to the Committee for review, along with details of the project recommendations. As part of that presentation, staff will also present details of the plan to utilize Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding that was added to the region's STBG allocation in FY2022. Mr. Dell noted that staff will continue to finalize the amounts of funding to be requested, along with the specific list of projects and programs to be recommended for funding. The information will be provided to the public, as well as the Committee and Regional Transportation Council, for review. Details were provided in Electronic Item 4.

5. North Central Texas Council of Governments Demographic Forecast Status Report:

Dan Kessler provide an update on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment for the Metropolitan Area, which will be used to support development of the Mobility 2045 Update. Draft forecasts have been developed and provided to local governments for their review and comment. Forecasts provide a common base for regional planning for use by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), cities, counties, and partner agencies. The forecasting process is data-driven, usually developed on a four-year cycle, and includes a comprehensive inventory of individual parcel data for the 16-county region. Mr. Kessler highlighted the demographic forecast process which includes determining control totals for population and employment by reviewing external forecasts from national demographers and economists relative to other metropolitan areas across the state. New control totals for the region out to 2045 were received which estimated 11.5 million people by 2045. Related employment for the same time period is expected to reach approximately 8 million jobs. This ratio of population to employment creates challenges regarding the impacts to the travel models based on changes in behavior such as telecommuting and working multiple jobs. Mr. Kessler highlighted slides created from parcel inventory data of the 12-county metropolitan area. The model breaks the land area into 28 million units and shows changes in the predicted build area out to 2045. He noted development around the perimeters of Dallas and Tarrant counties, as well as growth in Collin, Denton, southern Dallas, southeast Tarrant and western Parker counties. The location of population and employment activities out through 2045 were also highlighted. He noted that during development of demographics, staff has been sensitive to density. In order to have 12 million persons and 8 million jobs in the region, higher densities will be necessary. Local governments that focus on transit, mixed-use development, and travel reductions may be more comfortable with higher densities, while other local governments plans may be more compatible with lower densities. Images of forecasted density out to 2045 were highlighted. Also highlighted was household population data from the 2020 Census, draft 2045 forecasts, and the compound annual growth rate for the 12 counties. Maps identifying the location of current and future employment and employment density out to 2045 were also highlighted. Staff will continue to closely look at the relationship between where people live and work and how trends may change in the future based on recent behaviors. Dallas County remains the economic employment center increasing to over 3.5 million employees by 2045. Allocations from Perryman suggest there will be 200,000 more employees in Collin, Denton, Tarrant counties than previously and approximately 300,000 additional employees in Dallas County. Next, changes in population and employment estimates from 2015 to 2025 were highlighted. As expected, the centers of

Dallas and Tarrant counties are essentially built out and have minimal population change. Changes are expected in western Tarrant, western northern Denton, northern Collin all of Rockwall. Regarding employment, significant employment growth is seen in Collin and Denton counties creating the challenge of how to put a transportation system in place over the next 30-40 years to address that employment growth. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. Members were encouraged to work with their respective staffs to review the forecasts and provide comments to the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Presentation of the final demographic forecasts to the Executive Board is anticipated in late 2021/early 2022. Chad Edwards asked what level of zones were used in the maps displayed for changes in population and employment from 2015-2045. Mr. Kessler noted that the map displays data for block groups for the purposes of summarizing data. Actual forecasts are done at a microscale level, but staff can aggregate at any level that entities would like to view. Kelly Porter discussed recent developments in the cultural districts of Fort Worth and asked if those new developments have been incorporated. Mr. Kessler noted that the demographic forecasting process is ongoing, and that staff are continually incorporating parcel inventories to capture new developments as well as incorporating data from comprehensive, zoning, and land use plans. He encouraged review of the demographics sent out to cities and counties. Eric Fladager asked to what extent the raw data from Perryman may have projected the impacts of COVID-19 and working virtually. Mr. Kessler noted that regional demographic control totals from the Perryman Group were developed and delivered prior to COVID-19. Perryman's report focuses on the national economy of the Dallas-Fort Worth region in comparison to other metropolitan regions and estimates employment based on their economic modeling. He noted that staff continues to discuss how travel behavior changes are impacting the region. Chad Edwards discussed employment and the possibility that many jobs may not be at typical business locations. He noted this is something being considered by transit agencies when thinking of commuter trips and how to include flexibility to meet future behavior. Mr. Kessler noted staff is working to determine how shorter trips, non-work trips, trips in the off-peak period, and other changes if behavior related to jobs should be handled in the travel model. Mr. Fladager asked the deadline for local governments to provide comments to NCTCOG. Mr. Kessler noted that end of October 2021 would be ideal, and that flagging significant discrepancies or errors was of most importance.

6. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update:** Amy Johnson provided an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045. Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2018. The associated air quality conformity determination was received November 2018 and expires November 2022. Staff has begun development efforts for the Mobility 2045 Update and are currently working through project refinements, policy and program updates, as well as updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle. A request for RTC adoption is expected in June 2022. Major components to the plan update will include updated travel and demographic data; undated financial forecasts; project, program, and policy refinements; an updated performance-based planning framework; and updates to the MTP Policy Bundle. She noted the projects, programs, and policies included in the plan work towards achieving the nine goals in the four themes of the plan: mobility, quality of life, system sustainability, and implementation. In the Mobility 2045 Update, staff expects to incorporate new policies and programs, as well as update existing programs. In addition, new State and federal policy or legislation will be reflected in the update, as well as the progression of studies and advances in technology. Key updates include reference to the new Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, new Executive Orders on equity, environmental considerations, and Travel Demand Management strategies. Advances in technology will also be incorporated such as the latest recommendations for

high-speed rail, advanced automated transportation systems, integration of vertical mobility technology, new automated vehicle initiatives, and broadband access/infrastructure.

Ms. Johnson noted that within the mobility plan is the MTP Policy Bundle. Updates to the policy list will be proposed. Due to timing conflicts, the next round of the MTP Policy Bundle recommendations will be brought to the Committee earlier to allow entities enough time to review and consider policies. Staff will be proposing to extend Round 4 Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) by an additional year to be used in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. Round 5 will open in FY2023 for use of TDCs in FY2024 and FY2025. Ms. Johnson noted that additional information on the Mobility 2045 Update was available at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress and on the MTP Policy Bundle at www.nctcog.org/policybundle. Chad Edwards asked how or if the travel demand model will be modified to apply some of the thoughts and ideas that help prioritize projects and other elements in the plan. Staff noted that early efforts have begun to incorporate the demographic forecasts into the travel demand model and basic strategies related to Travel Demand Management (TDM). Estimated reduced trips as a result of TDM strategies are used, and it was noted that North Central Texas Council of Governments is typically conservative in its estimates because it is difficult to capture all elements of human behavior that is expected to occur 20-25 years in the future. Impacts of COVID-19 will allow for additional behaviors to be considered and staff will work to capture resulting strategies.

7. **Fiscal Year 2021/Fiscal Year 2022 Project Tracking Initiative:** Brian Dell presented a final report on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative. The project tracking initiative was implemented to address a series of project delays across the region to provide opportunities for entities to raise issues that may be preventing a project's progress and help ensure that funds are being implemented in a more timely manner. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds was provided. Approximately \$94 million of the \$115.5 million in CMAQ funds allocated in FY2021 has obligated, including 29 out of 46 project phases. The remaining 17 phases were moved into subsequent fiscal years. For FY2021 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, of the \$206 million allocated approximately \$312 million has obligated including 35 out of 55 phases, with the remaining 20 phases moved into a later fiscal year. In addition, the status of FY2021 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds was highlighted. Of the \$12.4 million programmed, approximately \$9.5 million has obligated and 18 of 25 project phases. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2021 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 7.1. Mr. Dell noted there were marked improvements in obligations over the previous fiscal year. The STBG/Category 2 funding partnership contributed to the reduction of the region's STBG carryover balances. In addition, more STBG funds were obligated than programmed due to the State requesting to obligate additional STBG funds in the region since other regions in the state left STBG funding on the table. It was also noted that sufficient TA Set-Aside funds obligated to avoid lapsing in FY2021. Mr. Dell also provided an overview of the FY2022 project funding. Approximately \$71 million in CMAQ funds is programmed across 44 project phases, \$178 million in STBG funds across 77 project phases, and \$17 million in TA Set-Aside funds across 18 project phases. Staff will continue monitoring FY2022 project progress and provide periodic updates to the Committee, as well as continue monitoring for possible funding lapses. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2022 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 7.2. Additional details on both initiatives were provided in Electronic Item 7.3.
8. **Status Report on Local Government Energy Reporting:** Dorothy Gilliam provided an overview of local government energy reporting and the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG's) efforts to increase the rate of local government energy reports

submitted to the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO). Local government energy reporting is a State-mandated requirement in the Texas Health and Safety Code. The requirements aid efforts to attain federal air quality standards by reducing demand for energy generation. Political subdivisions, institutes of higher education, or State agencies in or near ozone nonattainment counties in Texas are required to establish a goal of reducing electricity consumption by at least 5 percent each year for seven years beginning on September 1, 2019, and submit an annual report to SECO regarding progress and efforts to meet the reduction goal. An overview of the reporting website was provided, with details included in Electronic Item 8. Once submitted, a copy of the submitted data is available through the energy consumption reporting dashboard. The deadline for 2021 reports is February 1, 2022. An overview of the reporting statistics for the region was provided. Staff began conducting outreach and offering technical assistance to entities in early 2019 and in 2020, a total of 76 cities and 2 counties submitted a local government energy report. To increase compliance, an energy reporting toolkit has been developed to help local governments understand and prepare for report submittal. The toolkit is available online at www.conservenorthtexas.org/item/local-government-energy-reporting-toolkit. Additional information was also provided in Electronic Item 8. Melissa Baker thanked staff for the presentation. She noted the City of Irving completes reporting each year and asked if the deadline has changed. In addition, she asked if a best practices or similar webinar might be available for entities to help share experiences for other local governments who are reporting. Ms. Gilliam noted that SECO reporting deadline did recently change to February 1. In addition, she noted a webinar was scheduled for January 2022, and that although not planned staff would consider how this information could be included.

9. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.

1. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles
(<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
2. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
3. Status Report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding
(Electronic Item 9.1)
4. Status Report on Ozone Season (Electronic Item 9.2)
5. Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops (www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops)
6. Deadline to Submit Requests for Transportation Improvement Program
Modifications through the February 2022 Cycle – October 22, 2021
(<https://rtrinternal.nctcog.org/login>)
7. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report (Electronic
Item 9.3)
8. 2021 Texas Department of Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program
Call for Projects Submittal Deadline for Applications Due to District Offices
November 17, 2021 (<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/forms-publications/publications/highway-safety.html>)
9. 2021 Fall Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement
(Electronic Item 9.4)
10. Immediate Action Freeway Projects-State Contingency (Electronic
Item 9.5)
11. Economic Development Administration Grant Opportunities: Four Projects
(Electronic Item 9.6)
12. September Online Input Opportunity Minutes (Electronic Item 9.7)

13. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 9.8)
14. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 9.9)
 - Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 9.10)

10. **Other Business (Old and New)**: There was no discussion on this item.

11. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on December 3, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.