

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
August 12, 2021

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration which was renewed through August 29, 2021, and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the August 12, 2021, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) was conducted as a videoconference via Zoom. Staff conducted a roll call of members, and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the videoconference: Tennell Atkins, Richard E. Aubin, Dennis Bailey, Elizabeth M. Beck, Gyna Bivens, Mohamed Bur, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Pat Deen, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Barry L. Gordon, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Moji Haddad, Roger Harmon, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Brandon Jones, Ray Smith (representing John Keating), Mike Leyman, Alison Maguire, B. Adam McGough, Raj Narayanan (representing William Meadows), Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Cary Moon, Philip J. Ritter, Barbara Odom-Wesley (representing Jim R. Ross), Chris Schulmeister, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Duncan Webb, and B. Glen Whitley. Individual attendance was not taken for non-RTC member attendees.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to give input on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Theresa M. Daniel asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak.
2. **Approval of the July 8, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the July 8, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. B. Glen Whitley (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** There were no items included on the Consent Agenda.
4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris reviewed items in the Director of Transportation Report. He introduced Nadine Lee, the new President and Executive Director of Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC). Paul N. Wageman, DART Chairman, welcomed Ms. Lee to her first RTC meeting. Ms. Lee thanked the region for its warm welcome and noted she was happy to be a part of a true partnership to improve transportation for everyone. Mr. Morris also noted the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) recently named Brian Barth, P.E., as Deputy Executive Director for Program Delivery. In addition, he noted that members who recently left service on the RTC would like to attend a future meeting in person for their recognition. RTC Chair Theresa M. Daniel will coordinate with staff each month regarding the format of the next meeting and planned to hold RTC Member Orientation the morning of the next RTC business meeting, September 9, 2021. Additional details will be provided to members. He discussed a recent request by members to present a comprehensive list of projects, as well as an update on the east/west equity process and noted that the information was being developed and would be presented at a future meeting. Mr. Morris also discussed a news release regarding a potential electric vehicle manufacturing site in the region and noted that staff would bring back to the Council information about funding improvements that may help the company select the Dallas-Fort Worth region as the location for its manufacturing facility. As follow up on letter to the Secretary of Transportation, he noted the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program had been approved. All projects in the state were permitted to proceed except IH 45 in Houston. In addition, at the July 8, 2021, RTC meeting, members approved a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission on Phase 2 of the IH 35E project. He noted that project was able to proceed, and Texas Department of

Transportation meetings have begun on SH 183. A letter to the region on the Margaret McDermott Bridge was provided in Electronic Item 4.1. In addition, it was noted that progress continued on the Fort Worth Bypass Channel and information about the project was included in Electronic Item 4.2. A press release regarding the early completion of IH 635/SH 121 was provided in Electronic Item 4.3. Electronic Item 4.4 included information on a Green Transportation Infrastructure Workshop scheduled for August 24, 2021, and he also noted that the deadline for Blue-Green-Grey proposal submittals was 5:00 pm on Friday, August 13, 2021. RTC Chair Daniel recognized Transportation Department Air Quality staff for their commitment to the region and presented a resolution passed at the August 4 Dallas County Commissioners' Court meeting supporting Clean Air Action Day. A copy of the resolution was provided as an electronic handout in Electronic Item 4.13. Chair Daniel noted the importance of taking a moment periodically to recognize actions of the region, communities, and individuals that impact the region. Current Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events were provided in <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events> and air quality funding opportunities for vehicles in <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>. Electronic Item 4.5 contained a status report for the current ozone season. Information on the North Texas Unmanned Aircraft Systems Safety and Integration Initiative's Community Integration Working Group was provided in Electronic Item 4.6 and opportunities to attend a monthly Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops were provided at <https://www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops>. The most recent Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Subsidy Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.7, and Electronic Item 4.8 contained the August online input opportunity notice. The current Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.9, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.10, recent new articles in Electronic Item 4.11, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.12.

5. **Ensuring Equity: Dallas Opportunity Zone 1 Funding Partnership and Federal Transit Administration Areas of Persistent Poverty Grant:** Michael Morris presented details of the Dallas Opportunity Zone 1 funding partnership to address transportation investment equity in the region. As part of its action on the Assessment Policy in April 2019, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) committed to additional funding for improvements in the opportunity zone. This funding would continue the RTC's investments to promote community revitalization in Environmental Justice neighborhoods and improve various deficiencies. The first proposed project was Lancaster Road from Keist Boulevard to Ledbetter Drive to improve pedestrian connections along the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light-rail line and near the Veteran's Administration hospital. Approximately \$2 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds were proposed. The second proposed project would include reconstruction, sidewalks, drainage improvements, and streetlights on Eads/Hutchins Avenue from Eads/Colorado to Hutchins/8th Street in the historic Bottoms neighborhood. Proposed funding included approximately \$5.6 million in Regional Toll Revenue funds matched with local funds. The final Dallas Opportunity Zone 1 proposed project would extend from IH 35E along 10th Street to Clarendon Drive. Staff proposed \$2.4 million in Regional Toll Revenue funds plus local match to construct roadway and drainage improvements in the historic 10th Street neighborhood. In addition, approximately \$500,000 in STBG funds was proposed to initiate a study to identify transportation and rehabilitation improvements in the South Boulevard/Park Row historic district. Mr. Morris also highlighted the Federal Transit Administration Fiscal Year 2021 Areas of Persistent Poverty Grant. Details of the funding opportunity were provided in Electronic Item 5.1. He noted funding was available to improve transit service to increase job accessibility and healthcare, as well as access to food and other services for environmental justice communities. Staff proposed submittal of a grant application to study transit access to food, jobs, healthcare, affordable housing, and other needs as identified by the residents of the

76104 zip code in southeast Fort Worth. This zip code is an area of persistent poverty as well as a food desert and was identified by University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center as having the lowest life expectancy of any zip code in the state. The schedule for these efforts was highlighted. Details were provided in Electronic Item 5.2. Cara Mendelsohn thanked staff for their efforts and advocacy to ensure citizens in areas of persistent poverty and the Dallas Opportunity Zone 1 receive the resources needed to improve their quality of life. Gyna Bivens also noted that while the designation of the 76104 zip code has not been uplifting to the community, the attention focused on the community through the grant proposal was worth celebrating. Rick Grady also thanked staff and members for their focus on underserved areas and the elimination of barriers. A motion was made to approve the partnership with the City of Dallas for Opportunity Zone 1 and the proposed Federal Transit Administration Area of Persistent Poverty Program grant application, including the use of Regional Transportation Development Credits as match, outlined in Electronic Item 5.2. Action also included approval for staff to bring back Phase 2 recommendations in Fort Worth zip code 76104 to the Regional Transportation Council and to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative /planning documents as needed. Gyna Bivens (M); Rick Grady (S). The motioned passed unanimously.

6. **2021 Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment Call for Projects:** Sonya Landrum presented a request to fund the regional Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment Call for Projects (CFP). This proposed CFP is an extension of the Incident Blocking Pilot Project that was a part of the 2020 Incident Management Equipment Purchase Call for Projects approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in July 2020. As part of the pilot project, three agencies received a total of \$132,000 in Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds to purchase blocking equipment that would assist in improving the safety of first responders at crashes along high-speed roadways. Based on local government interest and new requests received since the pilot project was initiated, staff proposed that \$1 million be made available through a new 2021 Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment Call for Projects. Public sector agencies in the 10-county nonattainment area are eligible to submit applications for the purchase of scene management blocking equipment such as crash attenuators, barriers, and cushions. Personnel, staff chargers and the purchase of fire trucks/engines are not eligible. As standard practice, fire trucks have been used for blocking purposes when first responders are responding to crashes along high-speed roadways, however the use of blocking equipment should minimize the need for the use of fire trucks in the incident scene strictly for blocking purposes. As part of the call, projects submittals that place blocking equipment on non-fire truck vehicles will be scored higher than equipment placed on fire trucks when ranking projects. Project scoring criteria included Traffic Incident Management (TIM) training attendance, crash data jurisdiction, adoption of an incident management resolution, adoption/implementation of regional performance measure standard definitions, and explanation of how equipment will be used to mitigate crashes. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. Based on the schedule, it was anticipated that agencies would be able to purchase equipment by winter 2022. Details were provided in Electronic Item 6. A motion was made to approve the allocation of \$1 million in Regional Toll Revenue funding to implement the 2021 Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment Call for Projects. Action included approval directing staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed. Rick Grady (M); Richard E. Aubin (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Supplemental Environmental Project Funding Recommendation for Comprehensive Air Quality Planning:** Lori Clark presented funding recommendations for the North Central Texas Clean School Bus Program which is approved by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as a third-party initiative under its Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP). Contributions are received as a result of TCEQ enforcement actions against an organization that commits an air quality violation and are received for the region's Clean School Bus Program for the replacement of 2002 or older diesel school buses. She noted approximately \$275,000 was available for school districts operating in the 10-county Dallas-Fort Worth ozone nonattainment area. Staff identified 12 independent school districts (ISDs) in the 10-county ozone nonattainment area who had eligible model year diesel school buses and solicited interest in school bus replacement projects. Requests were received from Kemp ISD and Cedar Hill ISD. A total of three school bus replacements met funding requirements and staff recommended award of up to \$89,600 in SEP funds for Kemp ISD to replace one diesel school bus with one new diesel school bus and up to \$216,000 in SEP funds for Cedar Hill ISD to replace two diesel school buses with two new propane school buses. Ms. Clark noted that a slightly higher level of funding was proposed for propane buses because of their increased emission reduction. In addition, she noted that the available \$275,000 falls short of fully funding the proposed projects and that SEP contributions are received on a regular basis. Staff recommended assigning any additional SEP funds received to cover the shortfall in funding. She also noted staff would be negotiating a new SEP agreement with the TCEQ to allow the region to continue to take advantage of this type of funding in a way that benefits a broader spectrum of the region. The schedule for this effort was reviewed and Ms. Clark noted this effort supports the air quality emphasis areas for high emitting vehicles/equipment and energy/fuel use, the federal performance measure for air quality, as well as Mobility Plan policies. Details were provided in Electronic Item 7. A motion was made to fund up to \$89,600 in Supplemental Environmental Projects funds for Kemp ISD to replace one diesel school bus and up to \$216,000 in SEP funds for Cedar Hill ISD to replace two diesel school buses. Action included approval to apply additional SEP contributions to the awards to cover the shortfall in currently available funds. Barry L. Gordon (M); Clay Lewis Jenkins (S). The motion passed unanimously.
8. **Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiatives Grant Program:** Thomas Bamonte provided an overview of a request for regional support for the City of Fort Worth's application for a grant under the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) 2021 Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) Grant Program. Through the grant program, \$60 million is available for transportation technology projects. Details of the grant opportunity were provided in <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334272>. The City of Fort Worth has proposed submittal of a grant application for a project on the North Tarrant Express (NTE) corridors (I-35W/SH 180), which will include a variety of connected vehicle technologies and infrastructure upgrades to improve safety and operations for all road users and provide a supportive operational environment for the operation of automated and connected vehicles. He highlighted the proposed budget of \$14 million and noted that \$2 million in regional support was requested. The project extends on IH 35W from north of IH 30 to US 81/US 287 and eastwards on IH 820 and SH 121/SH 183. Communication technology will be included in the corridor with a goal to provide information about roadway hazards to motorists and the driving systems of automated vehicles. The project will include all lanes (managed, general purpose, and frontage) with emphasis on several intersecting arterials with bike/pedestrian improvements. In addition to technology elements, there will be emphasis on infrastructure improvements such as enhanced striping, enhancements to dynamic message signs, and the use of

sensors in various barriers and guiderails that will detect incidents faster, improving operations and safety. A motion was made to approve up to \$2 million in Regional Toll Revenue funds in support of the City of Fort Worth's application for the FY2021 ATCMDT Grant Program, if selected. Action also included approval to authorize staff to take all necessary and appropriate steps to advance funding and provide technical support to the City of Fort Worth and other project partners to help ensure successful delivery of the project for the region. T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (M); Mike Leyman (S). The motion passed unanimously.

9. **Regional Automated Transportation System Guidelines Development:** Brendon Wheeler provided information on the Regional Automated Transportation System (ATS) Guidelines Development Project, part of the regional people mover initiative in Mobility 2045. The purpose of this initiative is to develop homogenous regional infrastructure and next generation ATS technologies that will provide first and last mile applications for both passengers and goods. Previous and current generation infrastructure in the region include Skylink at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and the Las Colinas Area Personal Transit system. Next generation people movers are expected to be systems that are not confined to proprietary guideway systems and that have the flexibility for expansion and change in operation opportunities. As part of Mobility 2045, staff has analyzed and compiled potential sites for ATS deployment throughout the region. The people movement side will focus on passenger circulator systems in denser urbanized developments and goods movement may focus more on sites such as inland ports, intermodal centers or other type of industrialized applications. Previous work by North Central Texas Council of Governments staff was highlighted, which included two studies that helped provide the foundation for the ATS Guidelines Development Project. Key elements of the ATS Guidelines Development Project are to evaluate and short list ATS technologies focused on people and goods, develop standardized designs and guidelines for an elevated guideway system, and to evaluate wireless vehicle charging technologies that could be incorporated into the pavement to charge vehicles as they are moving. As part of the project, staff has procured consultant assistance through Lea + Elliot. This guidelines development project provides the foundation for follow-on, site-specific efforts such as those identified in the COVID-19 Infrastructure Round 3 funding program approved in November 2020 as part of \$11 million set aside for Tarrant County goods movement ATS engineering and construction, as well as \$10 million for a Midtown People Mover system. Staff will continue to provide updates to the Council and the technical committee in the future. Michael Morris discussed two previous pilot studies and noted focus is now on the new Mobility Plan and future potential sites. Technology to recharge vehicles while traveling may be brought back to the Council in the near future. He encouraged members to work with North Central Texas Council of Governments staff as it works to advance the new locations as part of the Mobility 2045 Update. RTC Vice Chair Duncan Webb noted he was supportive of this initiative and mentioned areas in Collin County at which the technology may be beneficial. Mr. Morris requested that RTC Vice Chair Webb contact Mobility Plan staff about future locations.
10. **Status Report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding:** Lori Clark provided an update on the progress of Volkswagen Settlement activities. As a reminder, the State of Texas received approximately \$200 million through the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program, which was split among seven geographic areas of the state with the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region being one of them. In addition, some funding was set aside for statewide distribution of electric vehicle charging stations. An overview of Volkswagen Settlement funding programs that recently closed was provided. Ms. Clark noted that for each of the programs, the DFW region submitted the greatest number of applications and requested all funding made available to the region. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 10.1. Nearly \$40 million was left available in

other parts of the state and the North Central Texas Council of Government has been vocal that the region was not allocated its fair share of the funding based on the State's proposal to allocate funding. Comments were recently submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as it anticipates the next cycles of funding under this program, including criteria that may help ensure the best projects are selected, encouraging how TCEQ may distribute remaining funds from previous funding cycles, and also encouraging funds to be used for zero emission vehicle projects. A copy of the correspondence and accompanying analyses was provided in Electronic Item 10.2. Ms. Clark also highlighted an ongoing funding opportunity for Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations. She noted the number of applications submitted statewide and that access to this type of infrastructure is increasing. The deadline for funding is September 9 and more than \$6 million remained available. Members were asked to share information with their workplaces and to help ensure that property owners are aware of the opportunity. Most of the electric vehicle charging happens at home and those living in multifamily properties must rely on the property owner or workplace to provide an opportunity for vehicle charging. Additional information was available at www.dfwcleancities.org/workplacecharging and www.dfwcleancities.org/multifamily. Members were also encouraged to consider properties where these types of charging stations could add value within their organizations such as libraries, parks, community centers, etc.

11. **North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts Coalition:** Tamara Cook presented information regarding the North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition, an advisory committee of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) focused on regional sustainability and environmental initiatives. Key topics for Fiscal Year 2021 were highlighted and it was noted that NCTCOG and member cities have focused their efforts and resources on two programs. The first effort, Regional Emissions Assessment, is a regional greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory being developed in conjunction with ICLEI and Jenny Narvaez of the Transportation Department is leading efforts to develop the first GHG inventory in the region. Ms. Narvaez is also leading the effort to develop a tool kit of strategies to reduce various emissions in the region through the Emissions Impact Analysis and Mitigation/Adaption Strategy Development effort. Ms. Cook noted focus on the Urban Heat Island Reduction Strategy and Food Diversion and Waste Reduction Programs will begin in the next fiscal year. Current voting members of the RISE Coalition were highlighted, and local governments interested in discussing sustainability on a region level were encouraged to join. Participation is open to local governments eligible for membership in NCTCOG. She noted that the Bylaws are structured to include non-voting membership options for the private sector, universities, non-profits, and others. In-person meetings are held quarterly, with the next meeting schedule for October 15, 2021. Ms. Cook presented some additional information on the NCTCOG Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Program. A regional call for cities interested in participating in a GHG emissions inventory cohort was recently completed. The call was opened to cities only because the ICLEI software (ClearPath) is not designed for operational formats other than that of a city government. Ten cities submitted interest and will begin training in August/September. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 11 and at <https://www.nctcog.org/envir/development-excellence/rise-coalition>. Michael Morris noted this would be a great opportunity for the region to lead in sustainability efforts and encouraged members interested in joining to contact staff. Gyna Bivens asked if collateral pieces were available to local governments. Mr. Morris noted that staff would provide information to Ms. Bivens.

12. **Fiscal Year 2021 Project Tracking Initiative:** Brian Dell provided an update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative. Due to implementation delays on projects across the region, a more robust project tracking effort was initiated to help highlight and prevent delays on projects and help reduce existing carry over balances due to funding that does obligate in the year it was programmed. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) were provided a list of projects by phase scheduled to advance during the coming year and since that time North Central Texas Council of Governments staff have been providing quarterly updates on the statuses of those projects. This process provides opportunities for sponsors to raise issues that may hold up a project's progress and prevent additional issues. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds was provided. Approximately \$75 million of the \$110 million in CMAQ funds allocated in FY2021 has obligated, including 19 out of 43 project phases. For FY2021 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, of the \$205 million allocated approximately \$190 million has obligated, totaling 26 phases out of 53. In addition, the status of Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds was highlighted. Of the \$12.4 million programmed, approximately \$8.8 million has obligated, including 15 of 25 project phases. Mr. Dell noted that approximately six weeks remained in the fiscal year and highlighted the recent STBG/Category 2 funding partnership that helped to rapidly reduce the balance of STBG funds. In addition, he noted that as of August 2, 2021, sufficient Transportation Alternative Set Aside funds have obligated to prevent of lapse of any funds for FY2021. Staff will continue to monitor project progress and provide quarterly updates, as well as begin tracking of FY2022 funds.
13. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 13.1 and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 13.2.
14. **Other Business (Old or New):** William Tsao noted that in review of the agenda, many items have an overlapping relationship such as technology and efforts to improve persistent poverty, availability of food, access to medical care, and others which could be mitigated by the use of technology and asked if there may be some way to provide benefits across several efforts. Michael Morris noted that he and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair have met about this focus area of equal access to the internet, food deserts, and transportation needs in low-income neighborhoods, and that staff has worked with the North Central Texas Council of Governments Executive Director on a related funding program. He noted that RTC Chair Theresa M. Daniel would like to hold a conference or workshop with the RTC on these topics in the future. He noted staff is engaged with the Secretary of Transportation's office and the idea that internet may be the next generation transportation mode. Mr. Morris noted that many strategies will be presented to determine the best options for many different situations and may include both traditional and innovative transportation elements. RTC Chair Daniel discussed the interrelationship of many items discussed by the RTC and the importance of being open minded and using the insight of others.
15. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, September 9, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.