

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
December 10, 2020

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration which was renewed through January 5, 2021, and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the December 10, 2020, 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, Mohamed Bur, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Pat Deen, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Barry L. Gordon (representing the Cities of Duncanville, DeSoto, Lancaster, Cedar Hill, Glenn Heights, and Hutchins), Lane Grayson, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, John Cordary (representing Carl L. Johnson), Jungus Jordan, John Keating, Mike Leyman, B. Adam McGough, Cara Mendelsohn, Robert Miklos, Cary Moon, Ignacio Nuñez, Phil Ritter, John Ryan, Chris Schulmeister, Bobby Stovall (representing Rockwall County and the Cities of Rockwall, Heath, Royse City, and Fate and Hunt County and the Cities of Greenville and Commerce), Casey Thomas II, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Gary Roden (representing Dennis Webb), Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, W. Jeff Williams, and Ann Zadeh. 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 Roger Harmon asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak.

2. **Approval of the November 12, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the November 12, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (M); George Fuller (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.

- 3.1. **Grand Prairie Incident Management Vehicles:** Approval to use \$65,900 in Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Local funding to fund the Grand Prairie Incident Management Blocking Equipment Pilot Project was requested. Additional information about the request was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.

A motion was made to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. Theresa Daniel (M); Richard Aubin (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris discussed the leadership and commitment of Rockwall County Commissioner David Magness and a moment of silence was held in his memory. In addition, Mr. Morris highlighted items on the Director of Transportation Report. Correspondence regarding comments on the Mid-Year Fiscal Year 2021 Unified Transportation Program, as well as correspondence to the Texas Transportation Commission on the six-point partnership program with the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), was emailed to members and posted to the RTC website as Electronic Item 4.8.1. Regarding the upcoming legislative session, he noted the marketing version of the RTC Legislative Program has been developed. In addition, representatives from Dallas requested a summarized version of the RTC's legislative position for use when communicating to the legislative delegation and the legislative mapping table has been

emailed to members. Mr. Morris also provided an overview of slides from Electronic Item 4.2, Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery. He highlighted impacts by mode of travel, noting that transit ridership remained a concern. In addition, he discussed the negative impacts to revenue as well as the lower cost of construction. The region continues efforts to implement projects in order to take advantage of the reduced construction costs. Detailed data is available through the online dashboard at www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19. The 2021 RTC meeting schedule was provided to members in Electronic Item 4.1. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities upcoming event information was made at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings> and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles was provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>. Electronic Item 4.3 included the status of various Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding programs. Additional comments received for the October public input opportunity were provided in Electronic Item 4.4 and November online input opportunity minutes were provided in Electronic Item 4.5. The December online input opportunity notice was included in Electronic Item 4.6. The current Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.7, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.8, recent news articles in Electronic Item 4.9, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.10.

Whitney Vandiver presented the recipients of the 2019-2020 Air North Texas Partner Awards: Outstanding Advertising, City of Plano; Outstanding Initiative, City of Garland; Outstanding Outreach, City of Dallas; Arlo Ambassador, City of Denton; and Partner of the Year, City of Grand Prairie.

- 5. Federal Highway Administration – Pavement/Bridge Condition Target Reaffirmation or Revisions:** Jeff Neal presented a recommendation to reaffirm support for adjusted statewide pavement and bridge condition (PM2) targets on National Highway System (NHS) facilities. The status of the various federally required performance measures was highlighted, and it was noted that in November 2018 the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) affirmed the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) statewide targets for 2020 and 2022 for NHS pavement and bridges. Based on rulemaking, 2020 marks the mid-point of the performance period for PM2 with reports from State Departments of Transportation due October 1, 2020. When submitting its report, TxDOT adjusted five out of six of its targets for 2022, opening a new 180-day review period for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to either affirm its support of the adjusted targets or set new regional targets for 2022. Mr. Neal highlighted NHS pavement good condition targets noting an increasing trend reflects improvement. TxDOT has updated the statewide targets for good pavement condition on both interstate and non-interstate NHS facilities from 66.4 percent to 66.5 percent, and 52.3 percent to 54.1 percent, respectively. He noted that North Central Texas Council of Governments staff evaluated regional NHS pavement data for both on-system and off-system NHS facilities and linear trend projections particularly for off-system NHS pavements in both good and poor condition differ from those statewide. It was also noted that the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) information represented is received directly from NTTA's Condition Rating System (CRS), and staff is working to find compatible ratings and thresholds between what is reported to the federal government and how TxDOT and local governments manage their pavement information systems. Mr. Neal also highlighted NHS bridge good and poor condition targets. For good condition targets, TxDOT did not revise its statewide good bridge condition target for 2020, which means reevaluation by the Metropolitan Planning Organization for this target was not opened. However, TxDOT did change its statewide poor bridge condition target from 0.8 percent to 1.5 percent. While the number is low, staff will continue to monitor bridge conditions since

bridge condition trends in the region are different from those statewide. In the region, 34 bridges have been identified as in poor condition. After review of projects included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and TxDOT's Unified Transportation Program (UTP), approximately 25 bridges will be addressed through a maintenance or construction project within the next 10 years, leaving 9 bridges remaining in poor condition in the region. Based on analysis of observed regional and statewide performance trends and the fact this is the first performance period, staff recommended reaffirmation of support for TxDOT's adjusted statewide PM2 targets. Collaboration activities with partners that would further contribute toward accomplishment of NHS pavement and bridge performance goals will continue. Details of the pavement and bridge condition targets were provided in Electronic Item 5. Mr. Neal also highlighted recent action to expedite improvements of NHS off-system arterials in poor condition through the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program and Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant funding received to expedite improvements for NHS bridges in poor condition. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. A motion was made to reaffirm North Central Texas Council support for adjusted Texas Department of Transportation statewide 2022 good condition National Highway System pavement and bridge targets, as well as adjusted statewide 2022 poor condition NHS pavement and bridge targets as highlighted in Electronic Item 5. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will work with local governments to expedite improvements for NHS off-system arterials in poor condition and with TxDOT/local governments to expedite improvements to NHS Bridges in poor condition. Theresa Daniel (M); George Fuller (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **2020 Metropolitan Planning Organization Milestone Policy (Round 2):** Christie Gotti presented next steps for implementing the second round of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Milestone Policy. She noted the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has been selecting projects since 1992 and in 2015 initiated the first round of the Milestone Policy to ensure that funded projects are being implemented in a timely manner and funding is available for other projects in the region. Round 1 of the policy reviewed projects selected from 1992 to 2005 that had not yet gone to construction and was successful in getting 51 out of 57 projects to construction. In this first round, the RTC granted a deadline extension to one project. The project's funding was obligated in October. All projects from Round 1 have either advanced to construction or were canceled at the request of the project sponsor. A second round of the Milestone Policy was initiated in 2019 for the next increment of projects and similar to the first round, the initiative is intended to move projects to construction. Round 2 affects projects there were funded between 2006 and 2010 that have not let or obligated as of December 2019; funded prior to 2006 that have let but have had implementation issues (e.g., re-bid, utility delays); funded with RTC-selected sources; locally funded and added to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prior to 2010; and funded with Congressional Earmarks that are subject to rescission for a total of 41 projects that need to be reconfirmed or cancelled. Agencies with projects on the Milestone Policy Project list must reconfirm projects as a priority by providing a realistic and achievable schedule, documentation of policy board support, and documentation of availability of local matching funds. A summary of the number of projects and funded projects proposed for cancellation, as well as projects under construction/complete or letting in the future was provided. The draft list of proposed recommendations for these projects were provided in Electronic Item 4.1, and additional details of the Milestone Policy were included in Electronic Item 4.2. In the Round 1 effort, the action included a one-year grace period after the fiscal year in which each agency indicated their project would be ready. Now that the program is established and agencies understand the implications of setting their schedules, staff proposed the grace period is not continued. Also, when North Central Texas Council of

Governments staff briefed the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) and RTC about the status of projects in Round 1, further extensions were offered to projects that had missed their deadlines. Now that the program is fully understood, staff proposed that failure to meet the schedules set forth will result in automatic removal of funding from a project. The schedule for this effort was highlighted, with action proposed at the January 22, 2021, STTC meeting and February 11, 2021, RTC meeting. Mo Bur, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Dallas District Engineer noted there is a lot of pressure on RTC and TxDOT to make sure that Category 5 and Category 7 funds are obligated before additional funding is requested. It is imperative that when funding is assigned to projects that the projects cross the goal line in a reasonable timeframe so entities outside the region know that when the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region commits to funding a project it will deliver. He noted this puts the DFW region in a better position to compete statewide and nationally for additional funding.

7. **End of Ozone Season, Compliance with Federal Requirements, and Future Outlook:**

Chris Klaus presented a summary of the 2020 ozone season activity and other air quality updates for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region. The region remains in nonattainment for both the 2008 and 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. The attainment dates for both standards are in 2021 and will be based on ozone data from 2018, 2019, and 2020. The design value, which is the regulatory test that considers the three-year average of the fourth highest value for individual monitors, was reviewed for 2020. The design value for the Grapevine monitor had a design value of 76 parts per billion (ppb) which exceeds both the 2008 and 2015 standards. A one-year extension can be granted by the Environmental Protection Agency if in the milestone year (2020) all monitors in the region fell below the 75-ppb value, but this did not happen. As a result, the region will likely be reclassified from serious to severe for the 2008 standard, the most critical at this time. With the reclassification comes additional federal emission control strategies which were detailed in Electronic Item 7. Additional requirements related to transportation include low volatile organic compound (VOC) gasoline, which is already in use in the region, and a new requirement for vehicle miles travel (VMT) growth offset. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff are continuing to assess the VMT growth offset requirement and verifying the methodology, which evaluates if the region's transportation control strategies are sufficient to offset anticipated emission increases due to VMT growth from a base year to the attainment year. Mr Klaus highlighted impacts of COVID-19 restrictions in the region, which have included increased bicycle/pedestrian trips and reduced congestion. However, despite the reduction in vehicle traffic and congestion, improvements to air quality were not as significant as expected. In a comparison of 2019 and 2020 ozone exceedance data, there were several examples of higher ozone exceedances in 2020 versus 2019. Staff is investigating reasons this may have occurred and are reviewing the impacts of background emissions, the accuracy of nonattainment boundaries, comprehensive multipollutant interactions, and potential changing of nitrogen oxides (NOx)/VOC ratios. He noted the State forecasted 72 ppb for 2020 and that even with COVID-19 behavior changes this did not occur. Staff is also working with the Transportation Research Board, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and Texas Department of Transportation to better understand the effectiveness of additional control strategies and programs that reduce emissions. In conclusion, Mr. Klaus noted if the region is reclassified to severe, staff will be working on new emissions inventories to support the State in development of the new air quality plans. It is anticipated that the deadline for the 2008 standard will be no later than July 20, 2027, (severe classification) and August 3, 2024, (moderate classification) for the 2015 standard. Details were provided in Electronic Item 7. He noted staff will continue to provide updates to members. Regional Transportation Council Vice Chair Theresa Daniel discussed efforts

implemented to affect the ozone levels and noted it does not seem the region is making significant progress. Michael Morris discussed design value trends over many years and noted data is trending downward. He added that staff will be discussing analytically how the region could have higher exceedances despite COVID-19 behavior changes, and the reasons that the current geography of the nonattainment boundary may not be the most accurate measure of air quality for the region. The historical ozone trend data will be provided to members by email. Barry L. Gordon discussed aviation emissions and the economic benefit of the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. He asked if there was a way to parcel out aviation emissions to determine the overall air quality impact in comparison to automobiles. Mr. Klaus noted that at the ozone monitor level, readings are generated from all emissions sources and that aircraft emissions contribute to less than 10 percent of the total emissions. Even an 80 percent reduction in air travel would not have a significant impact, although any impact is important. Modeling helps staff to understand, based on emission inventories for each emission source, their individual contribution and how they interact with the atmosphere. Mr. Morris discussed the potential emission differences between idling planes and those in flight and noted these are the types of questions staff are investigating and working with partners to address.

8. **Overview of Next Steps Involving Travel Demand Management Program:** Sonya Landrum presented an overview of the regional Travel Demand Management (TDM) Program and efforts regarding the future direction of the program based on outcomes of travel behavior changes resulting from COVID-19 restrictions. The main goal of the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) TDM Program is to reduce the demand for single-occupancy vehicle travel by implementing alternative forms of commute transportation. Examples include carpooling/vanpooling, transit, biking, walking, teleworking, compressed work weeks, as well as flexible or variable work schedules. As a result of COVID-19, the region has experienced drastic changes in commute patterns. There has been a large increase in the number of people who telecommute/work from home, as well as a large decrease in the number of people that drive and take transit. Positive impacts of these changes include decreased congestion and a small improvement in the region's air quality. However, the same commute pattern changes have had a negative impact on transit ridership which has shown a significant decline in comparison to the same months in 2019. Ms. Landrum reviewed private and public sector trip reduction targets and goals and noted that each are motivated to implement trip reduction strategies for different reasons. Staff have reviewed public and private sector strategies for various entities. Public-sector trip reduction strategies range from a 20 percent reduction up to an 80 percent reduction. In most cases, the reasons for implementing these strategies is motivated by the need to reduce congestion and improve air quality and many entities have ordinances that require employer participation. For the private sector, trip reduction targets range from 30-50 percent. Although the private sector reductions highlighted in the presentation reflect reductions made through teleworking, employers utilize a variety of TDM strategies to achieve the benefits of implementing a trip reduction program. Many private employers are motivated to reduce trips to reduce the company's carbon footprint, to affect climate change, or simply to save money. Because TDM is not a one size fits all solution, NCTCOG's TDM Program encourages employers to select and implement TDM strategies that work best for their needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many employers, including NCTCOG, to test wide-scale, long-term teleworking which has proven to be achievable without sacrificing work quality and quantity. Staff recommended the Regional Transportation Council and NCTCOG take a leadership role in establishing a mandatory trip reduction goal for the region. To lead by example, NCTCOG is currently working to update the agency's alternative commute program to incorporate a mandatory trip reduction for staff in every

department. Considerations for a mandatory trip reduction target include possible public policy tradeoffs. Setting a target too low, a 5-10 percent reduction for example, may result in no change at all to congestion levels or air quality benefits. However, setting a higher target of 50-80 percent may result in drastic improvements to air quality and decreased congestion levels but could also result in unintended consequences such as the increase of fatal crashes as a result of higher speeds on less congested roadways. Other unintended impacts of implementing aggressive telework requirements that completely remove trips into an urban center or central business district may result in negative impacts to transit usage, decreased sales tax collection and possible negative impacts to growth in the urban center. The goal is to set a regional target that is high enough to be meaningful, but not so high that it causes unintended consequences. Additional information regarding recommended mandatory trip reduction target will be presented to the Council in the first quarter of 2021. Members were welcomed to provide feedback to staff.

9. **Update on Air Quality Initiatives – Electric Vehicles and Energy Reporting:** Lori Clark provided an update on local electric vehicle (EV) initiatives. Initiatives presented address air quality emphasis areas for high-emitting vehicles/equipment, idling, and energy/fuel use, as well as federal performance measures for air quality and policy within Mobility 2045. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff continues to encourage EV adoption as a strategy to improve air quality and monitors the number of registered light-duty electric vehicles in the region and statewide. Over 13,000 vehicles are currently registered in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region. Additional information is available online through an interactive tool at www.dfwcleancities.org/evnt. In addition to consumer adoption, Mr. Clark highlighted local fleet successes. A case study with the City of Lewisville, one of the largest EV fleets in the region, was provided in Electronic Item 9.1. In addition, Everman ISD began roll out of EV buses in October 2020. Also highlighted was this year's virtual National Drive Electric Week which included a livestreamed event and workshops for local governments. Recordings of all events are available through www.driveelectricdfw.org. Also highlighted was Volkswagen incentive money for level-two electric vehicle charging stations available on a first come, first served basis. Staff is working on outreach strategies to inform multifamily housing areas and major employers of the funding availability. Ms. Clark also provided information on local government energy reporting. Nitrogen oxides emissions sources were highlighted. Related to comments earlier in the meeting, she noted off-road mobile emission sources include both planes and trains. Local governments in and near nonattainment areas are required by law to set a goal to reduce electricity consumption by five percent year over year and report annually to the Texas State Energy Conservation Office (SECO). Local government reporting often does not occur so to increase awareness and compliance, NCTCOG staff worked with colleagues in the agency and across the State to help achieve the goal of reducing energy consumption. Data from the reports are used by the Texas A&M Energy Systems Laboratory who estimated that in 2018 approximately one ton per day of ozone forming nitrogen oxides emissions were reduced through energy efficiency. This is approximately half of all measures credited in transportation conformity that are implemented by the Regional Transportation Council. This information is submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and included in the biennial report to the Texas Legislature. Increases in reporting have been realized following increased outreach and were highlighted. A white paper summarizing reporting challenges and best practices was provided in Electronic Item 9.2. She noted 2020 reporting is due February 2021. Correspondence detailing changes in reporting, requirements, and information on an upcoming webinar was provided in Electronic Item 9.3. More information on efforts presented at the meeting was provided in Electronic Item 9.4.

10. **Unmanned Aircraft Systems Safety and Integration Update:** Ernest Huffman provided an overview of a mechanism to support the safe and efficient integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) into the Dallas-Fort Worth transportation system. He highlighted the various uses for UAS technology within the metropolitan areas, as well as in urban areas. As a result of growing UAS operation, planning for efficient UAS integration is important. Mr. Huffman highlighted considerations for the metropolitan area. These include policies to facilitate safe and efficient UAS operation throughout the region, operational safety within the regional aerospace, public engagement and equity within the region, land use regulations versus municipal priorities, mitigation of adverse impacts associated with varying vehicle types, economic impact, urban transportation system integration with existing urban transportation ecosystems, and privacy of data/network security. Also highlighted were proposed deal points for a mechanism to involve the Regional Transportation Council (RTC). Staff proposed to utilize the current transportation planning process for the integration of UAS, support safe and responsible UAS activity, encourage agencies to support their public safety services use of UAS systems, adopt pilot programs to demonstrate properly operated technologies, and provide UAS-oriented educational opportunities to prepare workforce development. Members were also encouraged to participate in the North Texas UAS Safety and Integration Task Force Community Integration Working Group. The Community Integration Working Group is being developed for cities to work together to categorize community concerns; inventory available applications, funding mechanism, and training; supplement existing transportation methods; and prepare for natural disasters and other emergencies. Mr. Huffman highlighted the schedule for this effort and noted that support for a coordinated approach to UAS integration may come in the form of a resolution and is expected to be presented to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee in January and the RTC in February. Jeff Williams discussed use of UAS technology following the recent tornado and also thanked members for their support during cleanup. RTC Chair Roger Harmon also discussed the use of UAS technology in Johnson County and the growth of its use in the region.
11. **Transit Oriented Development Survey Results:** This item was postponed until the January 14, 2021, meeting. Michael Morris noted that an update regarding communications with the three transportation authorities about transit ridership impacts of COVID-19 may also be added as part of the presentation.
12. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 12.1 and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 12.2.
13. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
15. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, January 14, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.