

AMENDED

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL December 9, 2021

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, December 9, 2021, 1:00 pm at the Irving Convention Center. The following members or representatives were present: Richard E. Aubin, Dennis Bailey, Adam Bazaldua, Elizabeth M. Beck, Ceason Clemens (representing Mohamed Bur), Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Pat Deen, Janet DePuy, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, Raul H. Gonzalez, Barry L. Gordon, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, J.J. Koch, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Brandon Jones, Mike Leyman, Alison Maguire, B. Adam McGough, William Meadows, Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Cary Moon, Philip J. Ritter, Jim R. Ross, Chris Schulmeister, William Tsao, Duncan Webb, and Michele Wong Krause.

Others present at the meeting were : Angela Alcedo, Vickie Alexander, Tom Bamonte, Natalie Bettger, Michael Bort, Lori Clark, Chris Coffman, Rebecca Diviney, Chad Edwards, Marcia Etie, Staron Faucher, Chris Flanigan, Rebekah Gongora, Christie Gotti, Jeff Hathcock, Robert S. Hinkle, Kristina Holcomb, Joel James, Jim Jarratt, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Paul Knippel, Dan Lamers, April Leger, Eron Linn, Mickey McGuire, Ed Moore, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Jenny Narvaez, Jeff Neal, Mark Nelson, Johan Petterson, John Polster, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Josh Shane, Walter Shumac III, Gary Slagel, Karla Windsor, and James Wood.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Today's Agenda:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to comment on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Theresa M. Daniel asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to comment.
2. **Approval of the November 11, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the November 11, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. Richard E. Aubin (M); Cary Moon (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.

- 3.1 **Air Quality Funding Recommendations Related to the Environmental Protection Agency National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program:** Regional Transportation Council approval of funding recommendations for the Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 Call for Projects was requested. An overview of the call for projects and staff recommendations was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.1. Detailed project listings were provided in Electronic Item 3.1.2.

A motion was made to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. Cary Moon (M); Adam Bazaldua (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris welcomed members to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting. He noted that staff would continue to work with the RTC Chair to determine if future meetings would be held in person, and that the 2022 RTC Business Meeting schedule was provided in Electronic Item 4.1. He also reviewed RTC Member Orientation material provided to members at the meeting, as well as Progress North Texas and other publications from the last year that were provided to members. Items contained in the Director of Transportation Report were highlighted. The Texas Transportation Commission recently awarded the Southeast Connector project in Tarrant County to a contractor, and he noted the project is moving

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forward. In addition, he noted the RTC Chair transmitted a letter to the Legislative Budget Board regarding SH 183 Segment 2E encouraging project approval, requesting direction as to whether Segment 2E approval is needed since the project is included in an active Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) agreement, and explaining the safety implications due to lane imbalances. Mr. Morris also provided an update on the \$800,000 loan to Texas Central Partners approved by the RTC in November 2021 to advance engineering of the City of Dallas Floodway Extension. He noted that collateral for the loan was not able to be secured by the deadline, so Texas Central Partners paid the \$800,000. Texas Central Partners may still need the loan once collateral can be secured. He also noted he had been asked to co-chair the TxDOT Statewide Safety Task Force created to reduce the number of fatalities and the fatality rate in the state. The task force will be engaging local governments to reengage enforcement on the transportation system, as well as to discuss other strategies to respond to safety issues statewide. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant awards were highlighted. In addition, Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events were available at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>, and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>. A status report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding was provided in Electronic Item 4.2, and information on fraudulent vehicle temporary paper tags was provided in Electronic Item 4.3. Monthly Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshop information was provided at <https://www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops>. Electronic Item 4.4 contained additional comments to the October public meeting minutes and the December online input opportunity notice was provided in Electronic Item 4.5. The current Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.6, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.7, recent news articles in Electronic Item 4.8, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.9. Chris Schulmeister noted Changing Mobility presentations previously provided to the Council that documented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and asked if staff would provide a follow up presentation for members at a future meeting. Mr. Morris noted that staff would prepare a presentation for the January 13, 2022, RTC meeting.

- 5. Mobility 2045 Update and Demographic Assumptions:** Dan Kessler provided an update on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment forecasts for the Metropolitan Area. He noted that draft forecasts have been provided to over 500 local governments and partner agencies for review and that North Central Texas Council of Governments staff are continuing review of feedback. Control totals estimate the region will add another 4.5 million people and approximately 3 million jobs by 2045 and updated demographic forecasts will help guide transportation policy decisions in the region to accommodate anticipated growth. Control totals for population received from the Perryman Group were highlighted and indicate the region will continue to grow at a rate of approximately 150,000 people per year through 2045. Compound annual growth rate by county was highlighted. Growth is expected to continue in the core counties, but also in perimeter counties as some areas of the region reach capacity. Regional control totals for employment were also reviewed, with approximately 8.1 million employees allocated across the region. Employment growth is largely a result of the diversity of the region's economy. Dallas and Tarrant counties continue to be the growth leaders, but significant employment growth is also occurring in Collin and Denton counties. He noted that staff continues to focus on density and how much density a community is willing to plan for in order to accommodate continued growth. In addition, predicted built area was highlighted and he noted that by the 2060 timeframe, the four core counties could ultimately reach over 3.5 million people based on data. Mr. Kessler noted that based on 2020 city boundaries, the region is adding

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1.8 million people into currently unincorporated areas which provides an outlook for the demand for fire, police, water, sewer, roads, and other infrastructure that will be needed in the region. As the demographic staff finish their work and provide data to travel modelers, staff are running early scenarios of traffic and levels of service in peak hours under varying allocations to determine future travel patterns. Early simulations demonstrate the challenge the region will be facing regarding congestion. The schedule for the effort was reviewed. Finalized forecasts are expected in late December with approval requested by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Executive Board in January 2022.

Dan Lamers provided an update on ongoing efforts to update Mobility 2045. He noted staff has been working to overlay updated demographics into the existing Mobility 2045 plan and will soon begin to provide updates on recommendations to the Council. The metropolitan transportation plan is the region's blueprint for transportation over the next 20 years. The current plan, Mobility 2045, was adopted in summer 2018 and federal law requires the long-range transportation plan to be updated at least every four years. The proposed update will include new demographics as well as funding adjustments resulting from the new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Recommendations will also reflect any updates from the planning process. The Mobility 2045 Update will focus on projects that need attention over the next four years in order for them to move to implementation or their next phase of development. He noted that staff has been working over the last 18 months and expects to present draft recommendations to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in March 2022 and for final action in June 2022. The Mobility 2045 Update will then go through the air quality conformity analysis. Major roadway recommendations in Mobility 2045 were highlighted. Staff is working with partner agencies to implement the projects contained in the current plan, and a map identifying proposed changes to major corridor recommendations was presented. Changes included projects that have been completed or substantially completed in the last four years, new projects, projects with scope changes, and one project for which alignment planning is ongoing. Current Mobility 2045 arterial capacity improvements to be completed in the next 20 years were also highlighted. Next Mr. Lamers highlighted current transit major corridor projects and proposed changes such as the extension to the Frisco rail line extension, realignment of the D2 project in downtown Dallas, and removal of the Silver Line which will soon be under construction. Recommended new transit capacity projects were also highlighted including projects for high-intensity bus and technology projects. Mr. Lamers noted that the summary was a brief overview of only some of the major components of the plan update. Other plan components will be presented at the next meeting. Additionally, three major initiatives that will be included or expanded in the Mobility 2045 Update are an expanded safety program consistent with the statewide initiative, expanded unmanned aircraft system recommendations, and new access to internet. Staff will continue to provide updates on the Mobility 2045 Update development.

Rick Grady noted that the current Mobility 2045 document includes 2010 data which understates population in the region and asked that as staff moves forward the new demographic data be added into the document. Michael Morris discussed how agency demographics are developed using land use plans and other data submitted by local governments. In addition, forecasts used for demographic development area based on economic projections from independent sources. He noted that the region must be innovative in the ways it delivers the transportation system of the future and that although all issues may not be solved in the Mobility 2045 Update, the North Central Texas Council of Governments will maintain its strategic focus.

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6. **Freight Safety Campaign:** Jeff Hathcock provided an overview of results from the recent Freight Safety Awareness Campaign that concluded in September 2021. The campaign focused on safe driving habits near large freight vehicles on the highway and at railroad crossings. Truck and rail safety data for the region was reviewed. On average, 289 truck crashes have occurred per month over the last five years. In 2020, accidents significantly increased to 369 crashes per month. Conversely, at-grade railroad crashes have decreased with only 31 crossings incidents in 2020, continuing the downward trend. The goal of the 2021 Freight Safety Awareness initiative was to create a safer environment for freight and passenger movements through physical improvements and safety awareness initiatives. The Safe Driving and Operation Lifesaver campaigns was merged into one larger Freight North Texas marketing campaign targeted at all road users to increase awareness about truck limitations with regard to stopping distance and sight line availability, strategies and simple adjustments for driving near large trucks, and the importance of freight and its role in our daily lives. A section of the campaign focused on educating truck drivers about truck lane restriction locations and safety benefits, as well as air quality and mobility benefits. Examples of outreach efforts conducted throughout the campaign included Fact Sheets, social media ads, search engine optimization, billboards, radio ads, podcast ads, and website updates. Details of the impact of each outreach effort were highlighted. A total of nine billboards were placed in freight-oriented corridors within the region with a total estimated impressions of over 34 million throughout the campaign. Facebook ads resulted in over 863,000 total impressions, Google ads in over 26,000 total impressions, approximately 3,000 radio commercials, and over 218,000 Spotify (podcast) ads. Safety messages were also included on the Freight North Texas website available at www.freightntx.org. Freight staff will be working with Communications staff to improve the next safety initiative planned for 2023, as well as continue to make improvements to the website. Philip J. Ritter asked about the safety consequences of the proposal to lower the age for licensing commercial truck drivers from 21 to 18. Mr. Hathcock noted the proposal to lower the age limit for commercial truck drivers has been geared towards individuals in the military and that he was happy to continue further discussion following the meeting. RTC Vice Chair Duncan Webb noted the increases in crashes from 2019 to 2020 and asked when 2021 data would be available so that staff can determine the effectiveness of the safety campaign. Mr. Hathcock noted that the 2021 data was not yet available, and that staff could provide an update once the data had been received. Michael Morris discussed the increases in crashes experienced during COVID-19 as a result of lower congestion and increased speeds. He also discussed lack of enforcement due to officer shortages and social change, and the increase in driver confidence resulting from the lack of enforcement. Mr. Morris noted that many initiatives, including education, will be necessary to improve safety and that staff will be working on an initiative to aid in an enforcement program to improve driver behavior. In addition, lack of attention by truck drivers will also need to be addressed. Gyna Bivens discussed radio advertisements and the importance of ensuring that the appropriate audience is being targeted. Barry L. Gordon recommended that staff consider options to provide educational materials to truck driver training companies in the region.
7. **Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County Transit Studies Recommendations:** Michael Morris discussed recent transit studies conducted within the Dallas-Fort Worth region and noted that presentation of the recommendations for the Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County transit studies would be postponed until the January 13, 2022, meeting for staff to also include results of the Collin County transit study. The Regional Transportation Council previously approved funding to conduct studies to develop a comprehensive approach to planning and implementing transit services in Collin, Southern Dallas, and Tarrant counties focusing on areas outside of transit authority service areas.

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Local elected officials have expressed the need for grass roots support for access to additional transportation modes, including transit, in order to be successful and are seeking partnerships with the transportation authorities. As the demographics estimate continued growth in the region, transit will become an increasingly important transportation mode and roadways will not be able to handle all future transportation. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff have begun conversations on options to grow membership in transportation authorities or through local government corporations to have transit needs met. He noted that in 2020, 47 percent of the region's population resided within the boundaries of the three major transportation authorities. New demographics indicated that currently 40 percent of the region's population resides within the boundaries which have not changed significantly in the last 30 years. Results of the transit studies indicate that those outside the service areas are interested in participating in transit. In addition, as the population begins to expand into unincorporated areas, it will be important for counties to also become involved in transit. He also noted that the Texas Department of Transportation will need to consider options to become a multimodal transportation agency and provide funding for transit activities as the region nears 12-13 million people. He noted the importance of transit as the region continues efforts on the mobility plan, and that staff would bring back the recommendations for all three transit studies to highlight the interest of cities moving forward.

8. **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Overview:** Rebekah Gongora presented an overview of the new federal infrastructure bill, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The bill passed in early November 2021 and totals \$1.2 trillion for fiscal years 2022-2026. This includes a five-year surface transportation reauthorization, as well as additional funding for other infrastructure spending not related to transportation. The surface transportation reauthorization portion provides \$567.5 billion in funding and of that amount \$274 billion is for new transportation funding. The reauthorization increases overall funding throughout programs, expands some programs, and also creates new formula and grant programs. New elements will address equity, climate change, resiliency, and electric vehicle infrastructure. Also included in the bill is approximately \$550 billion for other infrastructure projects such as water, broadband, cyber security, and energy. A table identifying guaranteed funding by agency and mode for fiscal years 2022-2026 was highlighted, as well as funding for apportioned programs and their percentage of increase. Of note, Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding will increase 24 percent, Highway Safety Improvement Program funding by 34 percent, STBG Set-Aside (Transportation Alternatives) funding by 71 percent, Metropolitan Planning (Highway) funding by 32 percent, and Metropolitan Planning (Transit) by 42 percent. Ms. Gongora also highlighted new and expanded formula programs included in the bill. New programs include PROTECT (both formula and grant programs), which will focus on resiliency projects for a total of \$8.7 billion. The new Carbon Reduction Program will fund \$6.4 billion for projects to reduce emissions in transportation. In addition, the new Bridge Investment Program will contain \$40 billion in both formula and grant funding and \$7.5 billion will be available through the Electric Vehicle Charging Program for investments in low and no emission buses and facilities, as well as charging infrastructure. Current programs that have been expanded include new resiliency eligibility for National Highway Performance, overall increases in STBG funding and expansion to add wildlife crossings, electric charging, cybersecurity, and ferryboat facilities. The Transportation Alternatives Program has been expanded to increase funding and the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) suballocations, and also expands project eligibility. Similarly, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program includes expands project eligibility for micro mobility, diesel engine replacement, zero emission vehicles, as well as prioritizes minority and low-income populations. Additional

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funding is also included for safety, transit, and rail programs. New grant and pilot programs include opportunities for bridge investments, congestion management, emissions reduction, additional funding for RAISE and INFRA, and others. Ms. Gongora also highlighted MPO policy changes included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. MPOs are encouraged to coordinate with housing officials and to include housing as an optional scenario planning factor. MPOs may also integrate housing with transportation and economic development strategies, as well as develop a housing coordination plan and use technology and web-based tools for public participation in the developing a transportation plan. It was noted that these policy changes will be optional. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will continue to monitor outcomes of the new legislation as proposed rules and guidance are released in the new weeks and months. Additional information is available at www.nctcog.org/legislative.

9. **End of 2021 Ozone Season: Focus on Flat Progress:** Jenny Narvaez presented a summary of the 2021 ozone season, which began in March 2021 and ended November 30, 2021. A map identifying the nonattainment area and ozone monitors was highlighted. In 2021, the monitor driving the ozone design value in the region was the Pilot Point monitor for the design value of 76 parts per billion (ppb). The five highest monitors were highlighted, and it was noted that the design value is calculated as the three-year average of the fourth highest ozone monitor value. For 2021, a total of 31 ozone exceedance days were experienced in the region, including one purple day which the region has not experienced in nearly ten years. The 2021 design value of 76 ppb exceeded both the 2008 (75 ppb) and 2015 (70 ppb) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. Ms. Narvaez flagged to members that over the last few years, the ozone design value for the region has remained relatively flattened. As a result, staff is meeting internally to develop additional programs and projects that yield air quality benefits to help lower future design values and will bring ideas before the Council in the future. Since the region did not reach attainment of the 2008 or 2015 standards, the region will be reclassified from serious to severe for the 75 ppb standard and will have until July 20, 2027, to come into attainment. For the 2015 standard, the region will be reclassified from marginal to moderate and will have until August 3, 2024, to reach attainment for the 70 ppb standard. Reclassification of the region from serious to severe for the 2008 standard results in stricter standards for the region. The major source threshold will decrease from 50 tons per year to 25 tons per year for precursor emissions such as nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) and will impact businesses in the region. Staff have been working with businesses with higher emissions to determine options to offset the emissions. There will be a penalty fee program for major sources if an area does not meet required reductions. Additionally, stricter standards include low VOC reformulated gas for which the region has already opted in, and a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) growth offset analysis which the region has already completed and determined no transportation control strategies are needed. Ms. Narvaez noted that staff will continue to assess reasons for the increases in exceedances for the 2021 ozone season, as well as continue to assess the regional implications of the stricter standards. She highlighted the various air quality strategies implemented in the region that continue to help reduce emissions from transportation sources. Chris Schulmeister asked staff the magnitude of the impact of stricter standards and if staff expected impacts to funding availability. Michael Morris noted that businesses impacted by the lowering of major sources from 50 tons per day to 25 tons per day are being contacted by the State. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is responsible for submitting the State Implementation Plans (SIPs) in which the air chemistry analysis demonstrates attainment. If TCEQ cannot demonstrate attainment, the region would then be at risk of being sanctioned in its ability to advance transportation projects. Mr. Morris also discussed the flattening of the

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region's design value of the last few years. He noted that little has been seen from TCEQ regarding new items in the SIP to help address the flattening design values. With approximately 1 million people being added to the region every eight years, any air quality gains resulting from technology are being offset by the demographic growth, resulting in the flattening of the design value's downward trend. He noted that staff will bring back to the Council a policy item requesting greater assistance from the State for a more aggressive, comprehensive, and innovative air quality projects and programs. In addition, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will be working on more aggressive air quality strategies to help pass air quality conformity and will engage with the RTC over the coming months. George Fuller asked if other regions in the state are experiencing similar flattening of their design values. Ms. Narvaez noted that San Antonio is now in nonattainment and that Houston is seeing similar flattening of ozone design value trends.

10. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 10.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 10.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 10.3.
11. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was discussion on this item.
12. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, January 13, 2022

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.