

Interagency Transportation Report
RTC / TxDOT-TCEQ / NTTA / DART / DRMC / DFW Airport / HSR
January 2019

Regional Transportation Council (RTC)

Five RTC Policy Initiatives for 2019. The last few years, Michael Morris, NCTCOG's Director of Transportation, has highlighted a list of five RTC policy priorities each January to help focus work efforts for his staff and the region. He presented his initial list of priorities at the January RTC meeting and asked for feedback from RTC members:

- High-Speed Rail engineering and planning work linking the Dallas-Fort Worth region to the rest of the state with a system of improvements that connects Houston-Dallas, Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth, and Fort Worth-Waco-Austin-San Antonio-Laredo.
- Advances in Public Transit engineering and planning throughout the region:
 - Collin County transit
 - Southern Dallas County transit
 - Tarrant County transit
 - Social service transit pass program
 - First mile/last mile nodes
 - Passenger rail/freeway interface
- Continued work on the role of toll roads and tolled managed lanes in the delivery of reliable mobility options for residents.
- Evaluation of Technology Advances in people mover systems, technology-based transit, technology-based carpooling, and autonomous vehicles will expand.
- Groundwork for the next "Amazon" will occur through the review of the appropriate institutional partnerships necessary to increase the region's abilities to attract the appropriate mix of employers and employees within the region.

Funding Approved for Strategic Partnerships Projects. The RTC approved \$171 million in Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) transportation funds under their "Strategic Partnerships" program. The projects include a variety of project types: roadways, intersections, bicycle/pedestrian, complete streets, ITS/traffic signals, and strategic partnerships. Projects identified for funding within the City of Dallas account for about \$50 million in federal funding and include:

- Southern Dallas County Transportation Management Association (Inland Port)
\$1 million CMAQ / Local funding match from DART
- SOPAC Trail from Greenville/Meadow to Northaven Trail
\$4 million CMAQ / Local funding match using TDCs
- KCS Trail Connector from LBJ/Skillman DART Station to Richardson City Limit
\$4 million CMAQ / Local funding match using TDCs

- West Commerce from Fort Worth Avenue to Riverfront Complete Street
\$3.27 million CMAQ and \$5 million STBG / Local funding match using TDCs
- Park Lane from Greenville to Hemlock Complete Street
\$8.2 million CMAQ / Local funding match using TDCs
- Klyde Warren Park Expansion from St. Paul to Akard
\$30 million STBG / Local funding match from City of Dallas and private sector sources

NOTE: The “Klyde Warren Park Expansion” project was briefed to the City’s Mobility Solutions, Infrastructure & Sustainability (MSIS) Committee on November 12th. At that meeting, several Council members shared concerns about using the suggested tax increment financing (TIF) funds to reimburse the RTC for a portion of this funding. Michael Morris indicated that the burden will be on NCTCOG to work with the private sector and public agencies (including Dallas County) to identify the funding to reimburse the RTC. TIF funds could only be used for this purpose if the City Council approved their use – this action does not obligate the City to reimburse the RTC with TIF funds.

Legislative Program Approved. The RTC approved their (1) 2019 Principles for the Federal Surface Transportation Authorization and (2) Legislative Program for the 86th Texas Legislature. Both documents are attached to this report and have been transmitted to federal and state elected officials. Some key issues at the state legislature this session include active support for local decision-making regarding the use of toll managed lanes, opportunities for debt financing and public-private partnerships; clarification on the definition of toll roads in regard to the use of Proposition 1 and 7 revenue for non-tolled portions of projects with toll managed lanes; and, reinstatement of LIRAP/LIP (air quality programs) funding with increased project flexibility.

Alternative Fuel Corridor Nomination. The federal FAST Act requires the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) to designate corridors for improved notification and access to alternative fuels: electric charging, hydrogen, propane and natural gas. The USDOT is updating these corridors and TxDOT is coordinating a submission for Texas. The RTC approved a recommendation to add several corridors including the IH 635 loop around Dallas. Most interstates have already been designated. The recommendation also encourages TxDOT to provide general signage that identifies each corridor and the type of alternative fueling stations available on that route.

Trinity Railway Express Shuttle. The RTC approved a shift of responsibility for operating the bus shuttle service between the TRE Centerport Station and the airport from DFW Airport to Trinity Metro. The ongoing RTC financial commitment to the program will remain the same and the local match for federal funds will be shared by Trinity Metro, DART and DFW Airport.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program. The RTC was briefed on a new call for projects for the STBG Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program. Eligible projects include shared-use paths, on-street bikeways, bicycle/pedestrian signalization, traffic controls and calming measures, sidewalks/crosswalks/curb ramps, signage and road diets (incorporating pedestrian and bicycle elements). Available funding is fairly limited for this round – only \$5.2 million for the eastern subregion. Evaluation criteria emphasize regional network connectivity, mobility improvement/congestion relief, and safety. The deadline to submit projects is March 1st and RTC action is expected at their June 13th meeting.

NCTCOG staff also announced that TxDOT plans to issue a Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside call for projects in February that will be limited to “Safe Routes to School” projects.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Design Chosen for SH 78 and Gaston Intersection. TxDOT spent almost three years evaluating different designs and seeking community input for a much-needed update of the SH 78 (Garland/Grand) and Gaston intersection. TxDOT held a final public hearing on November 13th and received environmental clearance to proceed with the preferred “Reverse-T” design in December. Construction on the \$9.4 million project is expected to begin in late 2020 and take about one year to complete.

Garland Road Intersection Improvements. TxDOT let an \$8.46 million contract to construct nine intersection improvements on Garland Road between the Casa Linda Shopping Center and Northwest Highway. Construction will begin this spring and is scheduled to last 22 months.

Texas Freight Mobility Plan Meetings. TxDOT held two workshops in the Dallas area in December regarding truck parking and roadway design considerations for freight. The lack of truck parking in urban areas was the major concern identified by the freight industry at the meetings. It was noted that the NCTCOG completed a truck parking study in April 2018 for the North Texas Region that outlined several initiatives to address this problem.

North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA)

New NTTA Board Appointees for Dallas and Denton Counties. Marcus Knight and Pete Kamp have been appointed to the NTTA Board of Directors from Dallas and Denton County, respectively.

Mr. Knight succeeds Carl Sherman, who stepped down after he won election to Texas House of Representatives, District 109. Knight served as the first African-American mayor of Lancaster from 2008-18, and served on the Lancaster Economic Development Corporation Board, the Lancaster Planning and Zoning Commission and the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce Board.

Mr. Kamp succeeds Michael Nowels, who served on the NTTA Board since 2007. Kamp was a member of the Denton City Council for 11 years, serving as mayor pro tem for 8 years and as chair of their mobility committee. He also served on the RTC for 10 years, including a year as chair of the Council.

NTTA Board Annual Retreat. The NTTA Board of Directors held its annual retreat at Rough Creek Lodge in Glen Rose on January 11th and 12th. The retreat is largely an information and update session on every aspect of agency operations. The Board discussed long-term planning for the agency, evaluated performance metrics for the last year, and received reports from the main department heads – Operations, Project Delivery, and Finance. No action items were scheduled during the retreat.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)

Upcoming DART Board Retreat. The DART Board retreat is scheduled for February 1st and 2nd (Friday and Saturday) at the Omni Mandalay in Las Colinas. As of this report’s writing, the agenda had not been set, however, it is expected that some of the major topics will include (1) fare structure modification to include additional low-income discount fares, (2) bus system route

and frequency updates to improve service, and (3) Board policy on the provision of contract transit services in non-member cities.

Briefing on City of Dallas Comprehensive Housing Policy. Maureen Milligan, Assistant Director (interim), Department of Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization briefed DART's Planning Committee on the City's Comprehensive Housing Policy. The briefing was well received by the committee and generated discussion about locating housing on frequent bus routes that serve employment centers. A question was raised about DART's ability to discount the price of land it owns in exchange for affordable housing units. There was also a comment that there needs to be more density around transit stations and consideration of "maximum" parking requirements to help lower development costs. It was noted that Jack Wierzenski, Manager of DART's transit-oriented development (TOD) program is serving on the Infrastructure Committee of the City's Housing Taskforce.

Proposal to Double Track the Cotton Belt. DART's Capital Construction Oversight Committee was briefed on a proposal to increase the design-build contract for the Cotton Belt rail line to complete double tracking for the entire length of the corridor. The initial contract only included double tracking where it was necessary to facilitate train scheduling. Since DART was able to secure funding for the project at a lower than expected interest rate, it was thought that the savings could be invested in the double tracking now so that the corridor wouldn't have to be disrupted with track construction at a later date. The committee took no action on the proposal.

Fare Structure Modifications. The Board was briefed again on potential modifications to their fare structure policies. The changes contemplated would address the frequency of fare increases – currently every five years – and the potential to increase the number of low income persons who could qualify for a discount fare. These changes could affect the 2020 budget and 20-Year Financial Plan, so they need to be addressed before DART begins its budget process for next year.

Public Hearing Set for Bus Service Changes. The Board called a public hearing for March 12th to consider bus service changes that would be implemented in August. The 2045 System Plan is being developed to address all aspects of DART's transit services – early work on the System Plan has focused on bus and mobility-on-demand service improvements. Goals for the bus service are to establish a core frequent route bus service and to overhaul the bus operations to create faster more direct bus service. The August changes will implement a first set of the core frequent route bus routes and make other operational changes that fit within the current FY19 Financial Plan. The Board will work through the summer to develop the full bus plan and identify financial resources to implement it.

CBD Rail Replacement. The Board approved a \$14.2 million contract to Delta/Peoples Joint Venture to complete rail replacement through the CBD, and to install crossovers and make street intersection improvements. The new crossover at the St. Paul Station will provide operational flexibility while the rail replacement will address on-going maintenance issues.

Contract Award for Mobility Management Services. The Board approved a three-year contract for \$105.4 million to MV Transportation Inc. to provide paratransit services. MV Transportation will manage dispatch for the services which will be provided by sub-contractors who specialize in different service types such as accessible taxicabs, shared-ride shuttles, and transportation network companies like Lyft. Customers will be able to book trips through a call center, smartphone app, or computer website. There were concerns expressed about the operators and mechanics who currently work directly for MV Transportation and will lose their

jobs under this new contract arrangement. DART staff indicated that they will work to place these workers in DART positions that are being created through expanded service.

Mockingbird Station TOD Update. A status report was delivered to the Board regarding negotiations with the Trammell Crow Company for a ground lease to develop a parking garage and mixed-use project on the DART-owned parking lots that serve Mockingbird Station. Staff is currently working on the ground lease and development agreement and expects to bring them back to the Board for approval by November. Construction would likely start in the first quarter of 2021.

Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC)

State Senator Nathan Johnson. The DRMC held its first meeting of the year on January 4th. Nathan Johnson, the newly elected State Senator from District 16 was the keynote speaker. District 16 encompasses most of northern Dallas County including a significant portion of IH 635 LBJ East between US 75 and Garland Road. Mr. Johnson expressed his desire to move the political discussion in the legislature toward the center and said that he will seek reasonable approaches to problem solving. He indicated that he is “bent” in the direction of deferring to local authorities on local issues. He also said that he had been “weakly” anti-toll road at one time, but has gotten more information and now supports the use of tolled managed lanes as a local option.

Harvey Kronberg, long-time editor of the Quorum Report, provided his unique perspective on the legislative session. He sees a tectonic shift as a result of the November election. He noted that the new House Speaker, Dennis Bonnen (R) from Angleton, is an effective leader that has seemingly not made promises to get the speakership. The composition of the Senate has changed somewhat and there are enough democrats and free agents that republicans will need to work harder to ensure support for their agenda.

Texas Transportation Commissioner for North Texas. DRMC members expressed frustration that it has been almost a year since Victor Vandergriff left the Commission and Governor Abbott has not appointed a new Texas Transportation Commissioner to replace him. It was noted that there are vacant commission positions across state government and that this may indicate that the Governor is inclined to drive policy positions out of his office rather than investing that responsibility in the various commissions.

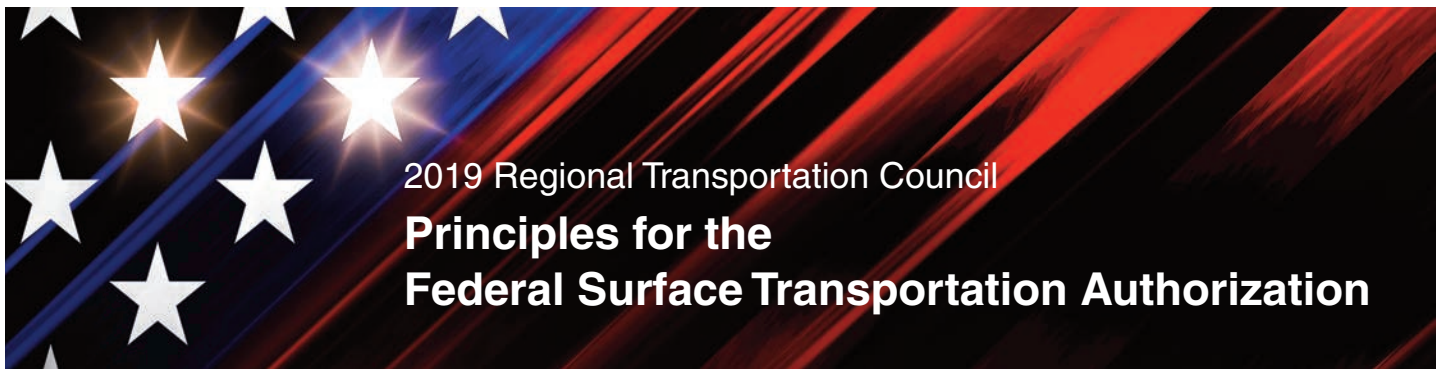
The **February meeting of the DRMC** will be the annual joint meeting with its sister organization, the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition (TRTC), at 10 a.m. on February 15th at NOAH'S Event Venue, 6101 Campus Circle Drive East in Irving. A speaker has not been announced for the meeting.

DFW International Airport (DFW)

DFW Airport Awarded Global Airport of the Year. DFW has been recognized as the 2019 Airport of the Year by Air Transport World (ATW), the leading media brand serving the global airline and commercial air transport industry. The coveted honor recognizes DFW's innovation in providing a world-class customer experience, global leadership in sustainability, cost effective and efficient operations, excellent partnerships with airlines, and collaboration with local communities to further develop the economic benefits of aviation in the region. DFW joins an exclusive list of global gateway airports that have recently won Airport of the Year, including Hong Kong International Airport, London Heathrow and Singapore-Changi Airport. Mayor Mike

Rawlings, Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, DFW Board Chair William Meadows, and CEO Sean Donohue shared the news and thanked the airport's nearly 2000 airport employees.

TEXRail Service begins at DFW Airport. On January 10th, Trinity Metro's TEXRail officially began service from downtown Fort Worth to DFW Airport's Terminal B station. Rides on the new commuter rail will be free for the month of January. The arrival of TEX Rail provides DFW customers another option for transportation to Fort Worth and compliments the DART Orange Line service in Terminal A.



Adequately Fund the Transportation System

- Pass a long-term bill (6 years) to provide stability for transportation planning
- Increase traditional revenue – Identify additional revenue to maintain and improve the system and address the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund
- Allow flexibility in traditional funding and collect revenue smarter – update outdated allocation formulas, resolve the donor state issue
- Provide adequate funding for air quality, congestion mitigation programs and all modes of transportation
- Allow for the use of innovative funding, such as toll roads, TIFIA and infrastructure banks, and seek opportunities to leverage funds
- Implement a vehicle miles traveled fee pilot program

Define a National Transportation Vision

- Continue to implement regional, state and national goods movement policies and programs along with a multimodal freight network with highways, freight rail, seaports, inland ports and airports
- Expand the MPO role in the freight decision making process
- Preserve and renew transportation assets

Increase Efficiency

- Continue to support environmental and project delivery streamlining
- Give greater funding and responsibilities to large MPOs
- Encourage partnerships between federal agencies to break silos and solve multiple problems simultaneously
- Streamline and simplify the air quality regulatory process
- Continue support for performance-based planning

Expand Options

- Maximize transit-oriented developments and promote transit ridership
- Connect land use and transportation decisions and promote the availability of transit and bicycle-pedestrian options
- Support public and private shared mobility solutions
- Improve air quality; ensure eligibility clean vehicle and technology programs and congestion relief projects and programs eligible for federal highway funding



Pursue Innovation, Technology and Safety

- Support innovation and technology to improve the transportation system; increase safety and relieve congestion
 - Support the development and deployment of advanced-technology and alternative-fuel vehicles
 - Encourage high-speed rail development and expansion in Texas
 - Support a safe, consistent implementation of technological advances, such as autonomous vehicles, data sharing and unmanned aircraft systems, through dialogue and collaboration of Federal, State and local governments
 - Examine the effectiveness of statewide or local bans on use of wireless communications devices while driving and, if deemed ineffective, improve roadway safety and reduce distracted driving through measures such as technology to disable use of a driver's cell phones for purposes other than emergency or navigation uses while a driver is operating a vehicle in motion.
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Regional Transportation Council Legislative Program
86th Texas Legislature

Actively Seek and Support Legislation to Meet Transportation and Air Quality Needs

- Allow for the ability to utilize tolling, managed lanes, debt financing and public-private partnerships in large metropolitan regions through a local decision-making process of the MPO, County Commissioners Courts and City Councils; ensure fair-share allocation of funds to metropolitan regions.
- Define toll road in statute to clarify the difference between toll roads and tolled managed lanes and allow Proposition 1 and 7 revenue on non-tolled portions of projects with managed lanes.
- Clarify definition of Comprehensive Development Agreement as a public-private partnership, separate from public sector partnerships through Design-Build contracting.
- Authorize the use of a Comprehensive Development Agreement for specific needed projects.
- Identify additional revenue for transportation. Options could include, but are not limited to:
 - o Allow counties in the Dallas-Fort Worth region the ability to adopt the \$10 optional registration fee allowed in various other counties across the state.
 - o Implement a temporary local transportation revenue source to be voter approved.
 - o Study the increase in alternative fuels vehicles and the effects on the gas tax.
 - o Implement a vehicle miles traveled fee collection pilot program.
 - o Support the Texas Legacy Fund concept as a use for the Economic Stabilization Fund and allow investments in an infrastructure bank.
 - o Index the motor fuels tax to fuel efficiency.
 - o Examine regional or corridor transportation reinvestment zones.
 - o Reinstate making repayments of general obligation bonds issued for transportation from the General Revenue Fund, rather than TxDOT revenues.
- Reinstate the appropriation of dedicated revenues to the Low Income Repair and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP) and Local Initiative Projects (LIP) through a restructured and modernized program focused on transportation and air quality improvements.






Regional Transportation Council Legislative Program

86th Texas Legislature

- Appropriate LIRAP's residual balance of previously collected funds; modernize and increase flexibility in LIP.
- Reinstate and protect TERP revenue; ensure funds are utilized for projects that meet the intent of the program and provide equity among fuel types.
- Give transportation agencies and local governments the authority to make property available and receive compensation for use in building out next generation communications networks that will support transportation systems and provide broadband coverage as well as the authority to make airspace over transportation corridors available for land development to help generate revenue for the transportation facility.
- Examine the effectiveness of the statewide ban on use of wireless communications devices while driving and, if deemed ineffective, improve roadway safety and reduce distracted driving through measures such as technology to disable use of a driver's cell phones for purposes other than emergency or navigation uses while a driver is operating a vehicle in motion.

Support Progress Made Toward Improving Transportation and Air Quality During Recent Legislative Sessions

- Support full appropriation of Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 revenues to fund transportation.
 - Oppose any attempt to backslide from the ending of diversions. Consider a constitutional amendment to protect revenues for transportation uses.
 - Retain eminent domain authority to allow planning and development of new and/or expanded transportation corridors including high speed rail, commuter rail, freight rail, roadways and trails.
 - Support efforts to utilize performance-based planning to select high-quality transportation projects and continue to recognize that different areas of the State have different needs and solutions to improving transportation and maintaining critical assets.
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Regional Transportation Council Legislative Program

86th Texas Legislature

Provide Support for Other Transportation Topics to be Addressed in Legislation

- Plan, fund and support the implementation of all modes of transportation, including transit
- Improve air quality
- Increase safety, including but not limited to texting while driving, speed limits, driving under the influence, bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Relieve congestion
- Maintain local and regional decision-making
- Support legislation to create countermeasures to residential displacement due to gentrification through initiatives such as preservation districts, housing trust funds, zoning assistance and property tax strategies
- Utilize innovative technology in transit, high-speed rail, and autonomous vehicles
- Support the collaboration between local governments, the military, the State and FAA to advance regulations for the safe operations of unmanned aircraft vehicles
- Support land use and transportation connections
- Maintain active operations and management of the system; ensure continuing state of good repair for the transportation system; increase resiliency due to extreme weather
- Enable transportation data sharing and accessibility with appropriate privacy protection
- Plan for shared mobility solutions
- Encourage compatible development around military installations and training areas



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