

Interagency Transportation Report RTC / TxDOT / NTTA / DART / DRMC / DFW Airport / HSR September 2017

Regional Transportation Council (RTC)

Update of RTC Bylaws and Operating Procedures. The RTC is forming an ad hoc subcommittee to review its Bylaws and Operating Procedures. This is done every four years. Council member Kleinman will represent the City of Dallas on the Bylaws Subcommittee.

The RTC has one standing subcommittee at this time – the “Multimodal / Intermodal / High-Speed Rail / Freight subcommittee.” Most of its work over the past couple years has focused on the development of high-speed rail projects. Council members Kleinman and Greyson are members of this subcommittee.

Big Projects in Texas and the Dallas-Fort Worth Region. Last year, the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) allocated funding in its 10-year Unified Transportation Program (UTP) using formula allocations that honored longstanding commitments for fair share funding to the major urban areas. However, since the state legislature has not provided additional tools (e.g., Comprehensive Development Agreement authority) to finance large projects, the TTC is in the process of identifying any unallocated funding in their 10-year plan – expected to be around \$12 billion -- to fund several mega-projects around the state. Houston (I-45) and Austin (I-35) have large projects that are being targeted for this funding. TTC Commissioner Vic Vandergriff and Michael Morris led a discussion at the September RTC meeting on how the DFW region can position itself to secure about one-third of these funds. NCTCOG staff and the local TxDOT Districts have identified three large projects that could be recommended for this funding. One of the projects would be a \$1.16 billion project to rebuild I-820 in Fort Worth, but the other two projects would be mostly in the City of Dallas: (1) \$800,000 to complete funding for I-635 LBJ East project, and (2) \$1.66 billion focusing on the Lower Stemmons / Mixmaster-Canyon / I-45 corridors. This was presented as an information item that will be brought back for more discussion and action at an upcoming meeting.

Regional Traffic Signal Retiming Program and Minor Improvement Program Call for Projects. The RTC approved a “call for projects” to improve signal timing along primary travel routes, and to make minor improvements to enhance traffic flow (e.g., new traffic signal controllers, restriping at an intersection). A total of \$4.9 million will be available for the two programs and projects will require a 20 percent local cash match.

Recovery Assistance to Texas and Evacuees to the Region. The RTC authorized the NCTCOG Director of Transportation to take action to support recovery efforts related to Hurricane Harvey in South Texas. The proposed actions would generally be transportation-related activities such as the provision of transit passes for evacuees that have come to the DFW area, assistance for the City of Dallas emergency operations center, etc. “RTC Local Funds” would be the source of funds used for these efforts.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The Texas Transportation Commission approved the 2018 UTP at their August meeting in what amounted to a minor update. However, the Commission will be working on a major update to the UTP over the next four months in order to deal with a number of serious issues, including how to accommodate Proposition 12 debt

service which the legislature directed to be paid out of Fund 6 (Highway Funds) instead of using general revenue as well as how to fund several large projects in urban areas around the state (see the “Big Projects” item under the RTC).

Repairs Scheduled for LBJ Bridge over Park Central. The LBJ Infrastructure Group, which reconstructed LBJ Freeway between US 75 and I-335E, and is responsible for maintenance and operations, has been performing major surface rehabilitation on the main lanes of LBJ Freeway where they bridge over Park Central Drive. The Park Central bridges were not replaced when the freeway was reconstructed. Most of the work has been scheduled over weekends using selective lane closures.

North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA)

Dallas North Tollway (DNT) at Preston Center. An interagency working group is looking at ramp modifications and operational improvements that could improve access to/from the DNT and ease congestion along Northwest Highway in the Preston Center area. The group includes staff representatives from the NTTA, TxDOT, NCTCOG and City of Dallas. The improvement strategies came out of the recently approved Northwest Highway and Preston Road Area Plan.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)

Debt Resolutions Approved for D2 Subway and Cotton Belt Projects. On September 12th, the DART Board approved parameter resolutions authorizing the agency to sell bonds for the D2 Subway and Cotton Belt projects. The structure of the resolutions ensures that the D2 Subway project will not be delayed if DART is unable to obtain a federal grant to cover half of the project’s costs. Both resolutions were approved through a single vote of the Board.

COTW Approves FY2018 Annual Budget and 20-Year Financial Plan. The DART Board’s Committee-of-the-Whole (COTW) voted unanimously to approve their annual budget and 20-year Financial Plan on September 12th. The Financial Plan includes funding for major capital projects including the D2 Subway, Cotton Belt rail line, and the Dallas Central Link Streetcar. Final approval is scheduled for September 26th.

Cotton Belt Commuter Rail Meetings. DART has completed a second round of Area Focus Group (AFG) meetings along the corridor and has scheduled three “Open House”-style public meetings in September. The AFG meetings are intended to provide an opportunity for DART staff and consultants to share project information that is being developed and obtain feedback directly from community representatives. The public meetings are open to everyone in the community. Council member Greyson and Board member Michele Krause have asked DART to use a group presentation and Q&A format for the North Dallas public meeting scheduled for Monday, September 25th at 7:00 p.m. in the Parkhill Junior High School Cafeteria at 16500 Shady Bank Drive.

Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC)

The next regular meeting of the DRMC is scheduled for October 6th.

Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (DFW Airport)

WOW Air Announce Service. Customers from DFW Airport will have new non-stop access to Reykjavik, Iceland, when WOW Air begins service in May 2018. WOW Air will serve the route three times per week on a seasonal basis, utilizing an Airbus 330 aircraft. The new route will

open up more travel choices for DFW customers via the WOW Air hub in Reykjavik, which serves 22 destinations in Europe and the Middle East. When service begins, WOW Air will be the 16th International carrier to serve DFW International Airport.

Completion of Major Renovations in Terminal E. With the Terminal Renewal and Improvement Program (TRIP) coming to a close, Terminal E is the latest to receive enhancements to update the customer experience. Customers who visit Terminal E will be welcomed with a refreshed travel experience now that all customer-facing upgrades and enhancements are complete. The grand opening of all gates at Terminal E marks the second completed terminal under the TRIP program. Terminal A was completed in January 2017, and Terminal B will be complete within the next six months. In addition to the terminal improvements, the parking garage features a state-of-the-art parking guidance system, as well as eight electric vehicle charging stations.

High-Speed Rail (HSR)

Texas Central Announces Agreement with Fluor and Lane Construction. Texas Central, developer of the investor-owned high-speed train project between Dallas and Houston, announced an agreement with Irving-based Fluor Enterprises and the Lane Construction Corporation. They will be assisting with refinement of the project's construction planning and sequencing, scheduling and cost estimates, procurement and other design and engineering activities related to the civil infrastructure. Under the agreement, after the development phase and financial close, Fluor and Lane would be the preferred design-builder of the project.