

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
April 8, 2021

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration which was renewed through May 5, 2021, and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the April 8, 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, Mohamed Bur, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Pat Deen, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Barry L. Gordon, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Moji Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Jungus Jordan, John Keating, Laura Mackey (representing Mike Leyman), B. Adam McGough, William Meadows, Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Bruce Archer (representing Robert Miklos), Cary Moon, Ignacio Nuñez, Philip J. Ritter, John Ryan, Chris Schulmeister, Mark Aldredge (representing Casey Thomas II), Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Duncan Webb, Devan Allen (representing 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 March 11, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 11, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. Tennell Atkins (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** There were no items on the Consent Agenda.
4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris recognized Flower Mound Assistant Fire Chief of Emergency Medical Services, John Glover and Traffic Incident Management Course instructor, for his commitment to freeway incident management. Mr. Morris also recognized Dallas City Council for efforts to help resolve transportation projects near downtown and highlighted a map of the D2 alignment, provided in Electronic Item 4.1. He also thanked Kevin Feldt, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Program Manager, for his service to the region and noted he would be leaving the organization to work in the private sector. In addition, he discussed the proposed Regional Single Occupancy Trip Reduction Target. A draft Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution to be presented at the May 13, 2021, meeting was provided in Electronic Item 4.2. He noted the resolution proposes a 20 percent reduction in single-occupant vehicle (SOV) travel. He highlighted the impacts of setting a SOV trip reduction too high or too low, both positive and negative, provided in Electronic Item 4.3. Too high of a reduction could increase fatalities and negatively impact rail ridership, lifestyle/tourism, and transportation revenues. A reduction that is too low could have implications to future right-of-way, not have enough impact on emissions or climate change, and would be a lost opportunity. He also noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is up for review. Details on the schedule were provided in Electronic Item 4.4. Mr. Morris also provided a brief overview of Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery, provided in Electronic Item 4.5. He highlighted travel behavior by mode, and specifically noted that freeway volumes decreased in February due to inclement weather. Transit ridership and aviation passenger numbers have leveled out,

but aviation passenger numbers are expected to improve as residents are vaccinated and begin to travel for vacation. Transit ridership may not improve until employers begin to transition employees back to offices. Full details are available through the online dashboard at www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19. Information on a training opportunity for prosecutors and judges regarding Commercial Motor Vehicle Violations: Enforcement, Prosecution, and Reporting (May 18 and 19, 2021) was provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/safety/transportation-safety/commercial-vehicle-enforcement>. Electronic Item 4.6 contained an announcement for the Spring 20201 Virtual Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course. Upcoming Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events were provided at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings> and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>. Electronic Item 4.7 contained a status report on the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding programs. March online input opportunity minutes were provided in Electronic Item 4.8 and the April online input opportunity notice was provided in Electronic Item 4.9. The current Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.10, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.11, recent new articles in Electronic Item 4.12, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.13.

- 5. COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program (Round 4):** Christie Gotti presented recommendations for the fourth round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program, an initiative implemented to stimulate the economy after setbacks resulting from COVID-19. Proposed projects meet one or more of the policies outlined in Mobility 2045, assist in reaching the region's federal performance measure targets, as well as include projects that have been the subject of ongoing discussions and submitted by local governments for consideration. Project types include roadway, complete streets, bicycle/pedestrian, intersection improvements, and strategic partnerships. A summary of the eligibility and selection criteria was presented. Ms. Gotti noted that the specific criteria/process used for each project type was included in Electronic Item 5.1. Also discussed was recent stimulus funding totaling \$9.8 billion that was set aside for transportation infrastructure as part of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA). Of that amount, \$803 million was allocated to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and \$164 million was allocated to Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Texas. Approximately \$54 million was allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region and staff anticipates those funds will be awarded to the region through the 2022 Unified Transportation Program. In addition, staff proposed to incorporate these funds into existing project selection efforts through this and future rounds of COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure, as well as the Regional 10-Year Plan. Ms. Gotti also highlighted the current east/west funding distributions as a result of the proposed projects. She noted that balances are slightly off target and that selection of projects through future rounds of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program will help bring funding percentages closer to the targets of 32 percent in the west and 68 percent in the east for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds and 34 percent in the west and 66 percent in the east for Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement Program funds. A summary of proposed funding recommended through COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Round Four was highlighted by project type and funding category for a total of approximately \$40.5 million recommended for roadways, \$43.18 million for complete streets, \$21.85 million for bicycle/pedestrian, \$19.5 million for intersection improvements, and \$50.62 million for strategic partners for an overall total funding of approximately \$175.65 million including local funds. Transportation Development Credits will also be used by many cities. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. If approved, staff anticipated projects will be included in the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program modification cycle, with Federal Highway Administration approval expected in October 2021. Additional details about the program and proposed projects were provide in Electronic Item 5.2. Lane

Grayson thanked staff for their assistance through this program and noted the Cities of Midlothian and Waxahachie were in full support of the recommendations. RTC Vice Chair Theresa Daniel also expressed her appreciation to staff and asked if a map identifying the projects funded through this program was available. Staff noted that a map identifying projects funded through each round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program could be created and provided to members. A motion was made to approve the proposed projects for the fourth round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program outlined in Electronic Item 5.1 and direction to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents to include the projects. Lane Grayson (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **2021 Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emissions Grant Program:** Lori Clark presented details of a proposed regional submittal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low or No Emissions Grant Program. The program is expected to award \$180 million nationwide in funding for advanced technology transit projects that reduce energy consumption, harmful emissions, and direct carbon emissions. Eligible projects include acquisition of low- or no-emission buses, related equipment and facilities, and workforce development. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is an eligible applicant and staff proposed submittal of a project, on behalf of the region, to electrify the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Link that connects the CentrePort Station to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. The project would include the purchase of electric buses, charging stations, and project administration costs. Ms. Clark noted that since the meeting mailout material was developed, updated funding amounts were received for charging equipment infrastructure, with an anticipated award of up to \$8 million in federal funds to be matched by up to 1.6 million in regional Transportation Development Credits. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. If approved, the application submittal deadline is April 12, 2021. Ms. Clark noted that the proposed projects would support four of the air quality emphasis areas, as well as federal performance measures related to air quality and transit. The project would also be consistent with several policies include in the long-range transportation plan. Details were provided in Electronic Item 6. A motion was made to approve staff submittal of a proposed project application for the Fiscal Year 2021 Federal Transit Administration Lo and No Emission Grant Program requesting up to \$8 million in Federal Transit Administration funds, including the use of up to 1.6 million regional Transportation Development Credits as match. Action also include approval for staff to administratively amend the transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include the proposed project, if awarded. Jungus Jordan (M); Theresa Daniel (S). The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Legislative Update:** Rebekah Hernandez provided an update on federal legislative actions related to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area. President Biden has laid out an infrastructure plan that includes \$2.3 trillion in infrastructure investments over eight years, of which \$571 billion is allocated for transportation. The American Jobs Plan's expansive definition of "infrastructure" is controversial as it includes funding for water, the electric grid, broadband, and others. There are many unanswered questions regarding language in the bill, and details will be left up to Congress. A partisan vote is anticipated in the Senate, so the bill must move forward through a budget reconciliation. A separate surface transportation reauthorization bill will still be needed, with the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act expiring on September 30, 2021. Ms. Hernandez highlighted some of the major transportation funding allocations in the American Jobs Plan, which include electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, fixing highways, roads, and bridges, Amtrak, mega projects, historic inequity projects, road safety,

and ports (including land ports). Michael Morris noted it is important to point out that many are debating what is labeled “transportation infrastructure” in the plan and that when future funding is identified, there will be those that state transportation infrastructure was already funded, when in fact nearly 70 percent of the funding in the plan is not actually transportation. If Congress labels funding as transportation and because of the magnitude of the proposed funding, there may be significant negative impacts to the level of funding authorized in future transportation reauthorization. In conversations with Representative Beth Van Duyne, member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, staff was asked to prepare information in the event the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is asked to weigh in on the proposed transportation infrastructure funding. Ms. Hernandez also provided an update on State legislative actions. The Texas Legislature will adjourn on May 31, 2021. Over the past several weeks, committee hearings have increased, and staff continue to track bills related to the RTC Legislative Program. She noted staff was recently asked to be a resource witness and there may be additional requests for testimony in committee hearings. Members will be provided weekly emails on Friday that will include updates on high-priority bills related to the legislative program and asking if RTC members are in Austin to testify or drop a card supporting or against a bill depending on the legislative program. She noted that many bills with a chance of dying are anticipated to be amended onto other bills, and that staff will be monitoring those amended bills closely as they move through the legislative process. Bill topics related to the RTC Legislative Program were highlighted. Related to transportation funding, Senate Bill 1 (State Budget) was approved on the Senate Floor and will be moving to House Appropriations. The bill includes slightly over \$30 billion for transportation, which is similar to the last biennium. She noted additional federal stimulus funds are expected that may not be included in the bill, so the bill currently includes language to incorporate any federal funds that are received after the bill is passed. In addition, two other transportation funding bills have been heard in committee, but both were left pending. Related to high-speed transportation, bills have been introduced related to eminent domain, landowner rights, property for highspeed rail, and creation of a High-Speed Rail Legislative Review Committee, but all bills were left pending. A number of bills have also been introduced regarding safety and include reducing speed limits and pedestrian safety. Although left pending, committee action is anticipated. A bill approved in House Transportation would update terminology and remove the accident and replace it with crash in many different statutes. Air quality-related bill topics include electric vehicle charging infrastructure, as well as vehicle emissions inspection for which staff was asked to provide resource testimony. In addition, HB 2539 addresses Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) funds and is set for a House Environmental Regulations hearing. The bill proposes that LIRAP funds be allocated back to the counties from which they were collected to be used for air quality and transportation purposes, for which staff has also been asked to provide testimony. Ms. Hernandez noted that legislative updates will continue to be provided to members during the legislative session. Theresa Daniel asked about HB 2539. Ms. Hernandez noted that the bill was schedule to be discussed in the House Environmental Regulations Committee on April 12, 2021. Details regarding the time were unclear, but she noted the information would be provided to members by email. No action was requested for this item.

8. **Status Report on the North Texas Tollway Authority’s Desire to Place SH 360 South in the NTTA System:** Michael Morris provided an overview of SH 360 and the North Texas Tollway Authority’s (NTTA’s) desire to place SH 360 South in the NTTA system. The Regional Transportation (RTC) approved action to advance the SH 360 toll road from approximately Green Oaks to US 287 in December 2013 and provided the financial backstop to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) loan to NTTA in case traffic

demand did not meet the loan repayments to TxDOT. The project has been opened to traffic since May 2018. He noted that tollway transactions have been reported to the RTC as part of COVID-19 impacts to the region, and that transactions on the SH 360 South project have recovered more quickly than the rest of the NTTA system. Mr. Morris noted NTTA has informed the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) that it would like to pay off the loan for the SH 360 project and place the project into the NTTA system. This would eliminate the RTC's need to financially backstop the project. There is some urgency for NTTA to move forward due to increasing interest rates. Refinancing is expected to lower the interest rate from 4.25 percent to approximately 3.25 percent for a savings of approximately \$50 million through a larger refinancing effort. Currently, there are two agreements related to the SH 360 South project. The first is a project agreement between NTTA and TxDOT that is related to the \$300 million loan and the interest accumulated, for a balance of \$330 million that NTTA would pay to TxDOT. The second is a backstop agreement that includes TxDOT, NTTA, and the RTC. A summary of the benefits to NTTA repaying the loan early and placing the SH 360 South project on its system were highlighted. This would release the RTC from the financial backstop for the project and eliminate RTC risk. In addition, NCTCOG previously set aside \$15 million as a contingency in case the loan backstop were utilized, so the \$15 million contingency funds could be released for project selection in the western subregion with Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds. Other benefits include the elimination of possible SH 360 toll rate increases due to low project performance, potential for next stage SH 360 improvements beginning sooner, and consideration for some portion of the \$330 million being returned to the region by the Texas Transportation Commission in the next Unified Transportation Program. Mr. Morris also highlighted remaining items being discussed with NTTA. The first item being discussed is extension of the wayfinding sign pilot program. Cities along the SH 360 South corridor preferred the use of wayfinding signs to identify amenities at exits versus large billboards due to aesthetics. Since NTTA does not use wayfinding signs, there are ongoing discussions about extending the wayfinding sign pilot from five years to ten years. The second item being discussed is the next phase of improvements for SH 360. Currently, improvements on SH 360 are guaranteed but with significant delay. Moving the project to system finance makes earlier advancement of improvements a possibility. Finally, the RTC took a risk by backstopping the project and staffs are working to reach agreement about whether the backstop is considered compensable and how the compensation would be paid. One option is that revenue sharing begins earlier than the original 2053 date. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. Mr. Morris noted that a financial decision is needed from TxDOT by April 21. In addition, staff will be scheduling a meeting with Tarrant County, Grand Prairie, Arlington, and Mansfield to brief the cities on the negotiations and discuss wayfinding signs. In addition, TxDOT and NTTA will continue efforts on its agreements. Action by the RTC will likely be requested at the May 13, 2021, RTC meeting.

9. **Fiscal Year 2021 Project Tracking Update:** Christie Gotti presented an update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative implemented to help track obligations against Regional Transportation Council (RTC) funding sources. Since approximately 2012, carryover funding balances have occurred each year due to projects that are not ready for implementation, which has created significant carryover balances. At the beginning of FY2021, staff provided the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and the RTC a list of projects by phase that were schedule to advance or obligate funds during the fiscal year. Agencies would be required to report project status on a more frequent basis in order for staff to address issues that might be hindering progress on projects and ensure funds are being obligated in a more timely manner. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) project funding was highlighted. Of the approximately \$110 million programmed, only approximately \$16 million has obligated for

FY2020 and approximately \$24 million has obligated for FY2021. For Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, approximately \$26 million for FY2020 and approximately \$11 million for FY2021 has been obligated out of the total \$179 million programmed. Also highlighted was funding for the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program. She noted some funds could be obligated more quickly since the State now allows projects to be handled outside of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process. In addition, she noted the FY2021 negative balance is a result of project closeouts, withdrawals, and changes. TA Set-Aside must be obligated within three years of award or the funding lapses, with approximately \$7 million at risk of lapse if not obligated by the end of the fiscal year. Of the 23 project phases, 19 have passed their estimated start date and although some may obligate on time, the risk of the lapse of funds remains a concern. Ms. Gotti noted that some TA Set-aside funding has been allocated to the Cotton Belt Trail project, which may advance in FY2021 versus FY2022, which help bring down the balance of funds. Mo Bur requested that staff provide to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) the list of projects that were at risk for the TxDOT Dallas District. Ms. Gotti noted that staff has an email stream that can be provided to TxDOT. Mr. Morris noted that staff would send to the district the two critical projects and also send information to RTC members who represent the entities for those projects. Ms. Gotti noted that although FY2021 is halfway over, only 22 percent of CMAQ, 7 percent of STBG, and 0 percent of TA-Set Aside funds have been obligated. Since projects have not progressed as quickly as needed and STBG funds have the largest balance, staff will be proposing a STBG/Category 2 funding partnership as part of the region's 10-Year Plan that could help bring down STBG balances substantially. Michael Morris added that in the fall, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff drafted a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission encouraging a partnership to advance STBG projects. No response has been received to date, so staff are working with the local TxDOT districts to get projects obligated. Ms. Gotti noted projects listed in Electronic Item 9.1 are sorted by status with projects already obligated listed first and projects expected to obligate in FY2021 next. Also included are original and revised start dates. Members were encouraged to work with staffs within their agencies to move projects along.

10. **Regional Transit Performance Measures: Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and Transit Asset Management:** Shannon Stevenson presented information on the proposed Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) performance measures. She highlighted recent presentations by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) regarding the various federal performance measures. PTASP regional safety performance measures are new and will be set on a four-year schedule. Recent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations require operators of public transit who receive Section 5307 Urbanized Area funds to adopt and implement safety plans, which include safety targets. All of the providers in the region adopted their individual plans/targets by December 2020, which began a 180-day clock for the Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt transit safety targets at the regional level. NCTCOG staff recommended the targets be consistent with those adopted by transit providers, with seven targets relating to the four performance measures: fatalities, injuries, safety events (collision, derailment, fire, etc.) and system reliability (mean distance between major mechanical failures). Proposed targets include the total number of fatalities and the rate of fatalities per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles (VRM), the total number of injuries and the rate per 100,000 VRM, the total number of reportable safety events and the rate per 100,000 VRM, and the mean distance between major mechanical failures. All targets strive for a reduction, except the average distance between breakdowns for which an increasing number indicates improvement. Ms. Stevenson described the process staff used to develop regional targets and a baseline for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 targets. The baseline average for the seven targets were

highlighted, as well as the initial proposed regional targets. Most targets recommend a 5 percent improvement over the baseline to be achieved by FY2023. For fatalities, the recommended target was proposed in line with the established regional safety position that even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable. Existing efforts to improve transit safety have been put in place by agencies and NCTCOG and include a recent cooperative camera procurement that put cameras on buses for small providers throughout the region, grade crossing improvements, employee safety training, vehicles inspections, between-car barriers, and solar-powered bus stop lighting. In the future, staff will analyze data and work with providers to identify programs and projects that enhance transit safety on an individual level as well as the regional level. Efforts may include enhanced vehicle lighting, infrastructure monitoring, and sidewalk improvements. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.

Ms. Stevenson also provided an update on regional Transit Asset Management (TAM) targets and performance. TAM is a business model that prioritizes funding based on the condition of transit assets to achieve or maintain transit networks in a state of good repair. NCTCOG coordinated with public transportation providers in the region to ensure all agencies either developed their own TAM plan or participated in a group-sponsored plan offered by NCTCOG or the Texas Department of Transportation. Regional targets for the four TAM performance measures, adopted by the Regional Transportation Council in 2018, were highlighted and will be revisited for adoption in 2022. All targets were approved at 0 percent of the various metrics: rolling stock, percent of transit vehicles that meet or exceed the industry standard defined as the FTA's default useful life benchmark; infrastructure, percent of rail track segments are under performance restrictions; equipment (any non-revenue vehicle owned and operated by providers) percent that meet or exceed the industry standard also defined by the FTA useful life benchmark; and facilities (buildings, stations, park and rides, etc.) percent of transit facilities rated below adequate on the industry standard Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) scale. Regional performance, as reported in the National Transit Database for each of the four measures was highlighted and details were provided in Electronic Item 10. Rolling stock performance has been consistent or improved for several of the asset types. However, there has been a decline in performance for the small bus asset type. Ms. Stevenson noted that a Request for Proposals was currently underway for vendors as part of the cooperative vehicle procurement program with subrecipients. Staff expects small bus performance to greatly improve over the next couple of years as vehicles that exceed their useful life are replaced. For rail infrastructure, regional performance has improved significantly, particularly for commuter rail and hybrid rail modes. Equipment, non-revenue vehicles, have seen a large decline in performance between FY2018 and FY2019 for all three asset types. For this target, staff will be coordinating with providers in the region to discuss the performance and if additional funding is needed to help facilitate performance improvements. Finally, overall transit facilities meet or nearly meet the regional target as measured by the TERM assessment tool. She noted that performance is relative to the assessed facilities. Approximately 65.5 percent of total facilities have undergone a conditions assessment since FY2018. The timeline for this effort was highlighted, with action on the proposed PTASP targets expected at the May 13, 2021, meeting and TAM targets in 2022.

11. **Regional Vanpool Program Modifications to Improve Overall Efficiency:** Shannon Stevenson presented information on the North Central Texas Regional Vanpool Program operated by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Trinity Metro, and the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) for the entire North Central Texas region. The program helps reduce congestion and lower overall emissions by removing single-occupant vehicles from roadways. Funding was previously approved by the Regional Transportation Council

(RTC) to support this program, and over the past six-to-nine months staff have worked to review the program and identify areas for improvement with the transit agencies. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will be seeking temporary flexibility regarding the subsidies paid by the RTC during the transition to a more cohesive vanpool program over the next year. The goal is to improve overall efficiency, reduce rider confusion, and eliminate unintended competition between providers. After extensive coordination with the transit agencies, staff proposed three major modifications that will help simplify the program. The first proposed modification would be to establish clear provider boundaries that are consistent and resolve overlap among providers. In addition, DART has made a formal request to define boundaries. Boundary modifications will also help to ensure Section 5307 Urbanized Area funding is appropriated accurately since funding is generated based on origin the vanpools. The second proposed modification would be to address rider equity concerns through temporary flexibility for subsidies. Subsidy percentages are based on the funding year being used by each agency, not by fiscal year, which can vary. In addition, depending on contract terms and timing, there is variation on vendor costs among transit agencies which causes a wide range of prices. Finally, a regional cooperative vanpool procurement would be proposed to help create a regional program to be administrated by each of the agencies. Mobility 2045 contains language that vanpools should not complete, so introducing a regional procurement will help provide consistency among the three transit agencies, lower costs for riders, reduce administrative costs, and eliminate confusion. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. Ms. Stevenson noted if recommendations were approved by the Regional Transportation Council at its May 13, 2021, meeting, program transition would be expected to begin in summer 2021. Details were provided in Electronic Item 11.

12. **Air Quality Program Report:** Jenny Narvaez presented information on the 2021 ozone season that began March 1 and ends November 30. She noted the region did not meet attainment for either the 2008 (equal to or less than 75 parts per billion) or the 2015 (equal to or less than 70 parts per billion) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The Dallas-Forth region is expected to be reclassified from serious to severe for the 2008 standard and from marginal to moderate for the 2015 standard and will have until no later than July 20, 2027, to meet the new attainment deadline for the 2008 NAAQS and August 3, 2024, for the 2015 NAAQS. Attainment for both standards will be based on the three-year average of the fourth highest monitor readings from the 2021-2023 ozone monitor data. Ms. Narvaez highlighted the federal attainment requirements for the region and the ozone monitors design values for the 2019, 2020, and the 2021 seasons that would be needed in order for the region to reach attainment for both standards. In addition, she highlighted the 8-hour ozone NAAQS historical trends for the region. Details were provided in Electronic Item 12. Staff will continue to investigate how to more accurately alert the public of predicted exceedance days, impacts from background emissions, as well as continue efforts to help bring the region into attainment. Additional information was made available to members at www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone.

Jason Brown provided an overview of a growing trend in Texas that involves the improper use of Texas temporary tags or “paper tags” and the impacts to the region. A temporary tag is intended to be used as a temporary form of vehicle registration until permanent plates are issued for a vehicle, should be tied to the sale of a vehicle, and are only valid for 60 days. There are a number of varieties, but the predominant version seen in the region is the Texas Buyer tag. Abuse has become widespread since implementation of the Two Steps on Sticker program, elimination of the Mobile Emissions Task Force, through abuse of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) database, and easy access to online merchants of temporary tags. Although the process to produce a temporary tag is created in the system

that is a legitimate record, the widespread abuse is related to the fact it is not associated with the sale of a vehicle. Abuse of temporary tags circumvents mandatory emissions inspections, allows users to avoid tolls, leads to state revenue loss, increases risk to officer safety, funds illegal activities, and conceals the identify when used in crimes. It is estimated that over 1.1 million fraudulent tags have been created resulting in nearly \$80 million in lost revenue. Some potential solutions to this problem include rule changes within the DMV limiting the number of tags that can be created, as well as through bills that have been introduced at the Texas Legislature that would allow the DMV flexibility to deny dealers access to the database and a bill that would resume the Mobile Emissions Task Force and allow counties to use previously collected funds for the effort. Details were provided in Electronic Item 12.

13. **National Aeronautics and Space Administration Advanced Air Mobility Community Planning and Integration Proposal:** Ernest Huffman presented information on a submission for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Advanced Air Mobility Research and Demonstration (ARMD) Announcement of Collaborative Partnership Opportunities. NASA is interested in engaging with MPOs and representatives in the region interested in early drone activity/integration, in particular to demonstrate and prepare for early adoption of Advance Air Mobility and Urban Air Mobility development. He noted this would be a non-reimbursable partnership agreement where the only activity will be staff time. Strategically, the community planning and integration effort is focused on two main areas: 1) addressing key barriers with Advance Air Mobility (AAM) community integration towards adopting AAM services in urban areas and 2) addressing technical barriers across vehicle design and operation, airspace design, and airspace integration that would benefit from inputs provided by local, regional and or state decision makers. Staff believes this will be a transformative program that will allow opportunities for future funding. He noted the proposal team includes NCTCOG, Hillwood/Alliance Mobility Innovation Zone, Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, Mineral Wells Innovation Zone, Cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Frisco, and Richardson, Bell Textron, University of North Texas, University of Texas at Arlington, University of Texas at Dallas, Southern Methodist University, Transportation Research Alliance, AECOM, and Swanson Aviation Consultancy. In closing, he noted the opportunity will bring significant engagement to the RTC and the Task Force.
14. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 14.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 14.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 14.3.
15. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
17. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, May 13, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.