

Interagency Transportation Report
RTC / TxDOT / NTTA / DART / DRMC / DFW Airport / HSR
June 2019

Regional Transportation Council (RTC)

2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) and Regional 10-Year Plan Update. The UTP is TxDOT's tool for allocating funding for a 10-year period. It is updated and approved annually by the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). The Regional 10-year Plan is a plan that is required by HB 20 (passed by the Legislature in 2015). The RTC approved updates for these plans for the 2020-2029 timeframe at its May meeting. This is primarily an exercise to plan for the allocation of highway construction funding from three TxDOT funding categories:

- Category 2 – projects chosen by the RTC
- Category 4 – projects chosen by TxDOT
- Category 12 – projects chosen by the TTC

Projects included in the RTC-approved UTP and 10-Year Plan within the City of Dallas include:

- IH 635 LBJ East / Skillman-Audelia Bridge
- Reconstruction of SM Wright Connections
- IH 20 Frontage Roads
- IH 30 from the CBD to IH 635
- Northwest Highway / Skillman Interchange
- SH 78 (Garland Road) / Gaston Intersection

National Highway System (NHS) Review. The NHS is a network of nationally significant roadways that support the movement of people and goods between population centers, international border crossings, major military installations, and intermodal facilities. The NHS was created in the early 1990s after Congress declared that the Interstate Highway System was substantially complete. The NHS includes all interstate highways, but also includes other strategic highways designated by the Department of Defense and high-priority corridors designated by Congress. Other urban and rural arterial roadways are designated through coordination with local transportation officials.

NCTCOG is working with TxDOT and local governments on a review of NHS roadway designations. Designation as an NHS roadway would make it eligible for federal funds targeted to the NHS system, but it also requires the road to be built to federal design standards and for its maintenance to be monitored against national performance management measures. Since local arterials are not likely to receive NHS funding, there is not much benefit to a city thoroughfare being designated on the NHS system.

2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development. The TIP is a listing of all regionally significant transportation projects that already have funding commitments. It is updated every two years. NCTCOG and TxDOT staff will be meeting with city and county staff over the next few months to review the status of these projects and update their scope, schedule and funding sources. Final approval by the RTC will not occur until May 2020.

New RTC Officers to be Named in June. Council member Kleinman was named to the nominating committee tasked with making recommendations for 2019-2020 RTC officers. The

RTC has three officer positions: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Nominations are announced and voted on at the RTC's June meeting and the new officers begin their terms at the end of that meeting.

Clean Air Action Day. Air North Texas, the regional public awareness campaign for air quality, has designated June 21st as "Clean Air Acton Day". On this day, all North Texans are asked to do at least one thing to help improve air quality – examples include carpooling or using transit... biking or walking... bringing your lunch to work... or switching to energy efficient light bulbs.

Ozone Season Update. At the end of May, there had been five ozone exceedance days in 2019 – compared to nine by this time in 2018. The three-year average of the "design value" for ozone is currently 74 ppb (parts per billion) which meets the 2008 standard of 75 ppb, but exceeds the 2015 standard to be equal to or less than 70 ppb.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Update: IH 635 LBJ East. At its May 30th meeting, the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) authorized conditional award of a \$1.7 billion design-build contract for the IH 635 East project to Pegasus Link Constructors headed up by Fluor Enterprises and Balfour Beatty. Next steps include negotiation of final terms, federal concurrence with final award, and final contract execution in August 2019. The project will be completed by late 2024.

Proposition 1 Funding. The Legislature passed two bills that will stabilize the revenue stream from Proposition 1 and allow TxDOT to plan for the expenditure of these funds for the entire 10-year period of the next Unified Transportation Program (UTP). SB 962 extended the expiration date for Prop 1 funding from 2024 to 2034 and SB 69 set the sufficient balance at seven percent of certified general revenue which takes the politics out of a committee having to meet prior to any Prop 1 transfers to the state highway fund. Proposition 1, approved in 2014, authorized a portion of existing oil and natural gas production taxes (also known as severance taxes) to be transferred to the State Highway Fund for roadway construction.

North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA)

Fourth Lane Projects Update. The NTTA has an ongoing program to add a fourth lane in each direction on several facilities. The fourth lanes are being added by widening into the median and have not required additional right-of-way.

- Dallas North Tollway (DNT)
 - US 380 to SRT – planning underway
 - SRT to PGBT – construction complete
 - PGBT to Belt Line (Dallas) – construction complete
- President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT)
 - SH 78 to DNT – construction complete
 - DNT to IH 35E – construction to be completed by late 2019
 - IH 35E to Belt Line (Irving) – construction to begin summer 2019
 - SH 183 to IH 20 – design underway
- Sam Rayburn Tollway (SRT)
 - US 75 to west of Denton Tap in Coppell – construction began January 2019

Board Mid-Year Retreat. The NTTA Board will hold its mid-year retreat on July 12th – additional information on meeting agenda, time and location will be announced soon.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)

Website addresses for Cotton Belt and CBD Subway (D2) Projects. DART maintains websites where the public can access historical and current information on these important projects – there are options on the websites to sign up for email or text alerts about new information and public meetings:

- Cotton Belt – www.dart.org/cottonbelt
- CBD Subway (D2) – www.dart.org/d2

Jarrett Walker Briefs DART Board on Bus Service. Jarrett Walker and Associates was recently tasked with doing an assessment of the current DART transit system focusing on the concept of ridership versus coverage. Mr. Walker is a leading transit planning specialist who worked on the Houston bus system redesign.

Mr. Walker emphasized the importance of “frequency” in the provision of bus service. Frequent service means riders can go when they want to go, make connections easily to get more places and have less risk of being stranded due to a disruption.

He discussed an approach to bus planning that focuses on two competing goals: (1) a “ridership” goal that seeks to maximize ridership at the lowest possible cost (business orientation), and (2) a “coverage” goal that seeks to provide some service for everyone (public service orientation). He evaluated the DART bus system and found that 55 percent of the routes primarily serve the “ridership” goal and 45 percent of the routes primarily serve the “coverage” goal. He found very little duplication of service which indicates that there is not much inefficiency in the bus system. He encouraged the DART Board to think carefully about their goals for ridership versus coverage as they move forward with their bus system planning. Recent bus system redesigns in other cities have increased their emphasis on “ridership” routes.

D2 Subway Tunnel Construction. The Board’s Planning Committee was briefed on the issues associated with building a tunnel through downtown Dallas. The briefing covered four areas: tunnel construction, station construction, staging areas for removed material, and hauling routes. Staff indicated that the design team is still examining possible construction techniques for the project including cut-and-cover, sequential excavation, and tunnel boring machine.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Market Assessment. The Board’s Planning Committee was briefed on an updated market assessment of the potential for TOD on DART-owned property near transit facilities. The study was conducted by Cushman and Wakefield and ranked 47 properties based on criteria assessing property attributes, development readiness, and market support for TOD. Ten of the fifteen highest ranking properties are in the City of Dallas with the Mockingbird Station area ranking the highest – each property’s ranking is shown in parenthesis:

- Mockingbird Station (1)
- Park Lane Station (4)
- LBJ Central Station (5)
- Westmoreland Station (6)
- CBD East Transfer Center (7)
- Cedars Station/Powhattan (8)
- Forest Lane Station (9)

- Market Center Station (10)
- Inwood/Love Field Station (12)
- Pearl Arts District Station/San Jacinto (14)

Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC)

The **May meeting of the DRMC** featured a presentation by **Chris Wallace, President and CEO of the North Texas Commission (NTC)**. The NTC is a public-private organization dedicated to advancing the North Texas region. Mr. Wallace identified three major challenges for the region: development of a workforce pipeline (education), infrastructure to handle rapid growth (including transportation), and housing attainability (especially in the larger metro areas). Regarding transportation, he indicated that the NTC supports the RTC's vision of an integrated multi-modal system that emphasizes choice, use of toll lanes to provide options for reliable travel times, and development of high-speed rail.

DRMC staff has recently begun distribution of a weekly email called the "**DRMC Weekly Wire**" that provides links to published articles on transportation issues and trends both locally and from around the country.

DFW International Airport (DFW)

DFW Airport Prepares for Big Summer Season. DFW has been growing at a record rate and that trend is expected to continue with more than 20 million customers this summer, a 7.6 percent increase from last year. Travelers have access to 27 new destinations since this time last year, nine of which are international. Some of the most highly anticipated additions include service to Dublin, Ireland and Munich, Germany, which began service on June 6th. American Airlines also announced new service to Acapulco and Huatulco, Mexico and St. Thomas, US Virgin Island.

DFW Airport releases 2018 Environmental, Social, and Governance Report. DFW released its third annual Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) report. The report details the airport's efforts in areas such as environmental sustainability, community engagement, and responsible governance. The report can be viewed at www.dfwairport.com/esg.

High Speed Rail (HSR)

Impact of Texas Legislature on HSR. The Legislature did not approve any bills that would have an adverse impact on the development of high-speed rail in Texas.

Texas Central Releases Updated Ridership Study. An updated ridership study conducted by L.E.K. Consulting estimates that more than 6 million passengers would be expected to ride high-speed rail between Dallas and Houston annually by 2029 and more than 13 million by 2050. They also found that 72 percent of frequent travelers, and 49 percent of non-travelers said they would either "probably" or "definitely" use the high-speed train on a Dallas-Houston trip if it were an option today. In general, they found that several characteristics of the Texas Central HSR project could help them achieve success: significant travel time savings versus auto, connecting large cities, being the optimal distance apart to be competitive against road and air, and having commercial freedom to maximize profit rather than passenger volume.