



**Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition
Minutes of Meeting February 11, 2011**

Call to Order

The Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC) Chair Rob Franke called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Friday, February 11, 2011.

Minutes

The Minutes from the regular monthly meeting, December 10, 2010, and the joint meeting with Tarrant Region Transportation Coalition on January 20, 2011, were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report for December 2010 and January 2011 were approved as presented.

Urban Mobility

The Texas Transportation Institute has released their Urban Mobility Report for 2010. This year's Urban Mobility Report includes new traffic speed data from INRIX, a private sector provider of travel time, that includes a speed profile for the major roads. That information is combined with traffic volume to provide a more detailed picture of congestion and constricted mobility.

Nationwide delay per commuter continues to increase and now averages 34 hours per year. That delay amounts to a fuel waste of 3.9 billion gallons and a cost of \$114 billion per year. To quantify those figures, 3.9 billion gallons of fuel is the equivalent of 130 days of oil flow in the Alaska pipeline. 4.8 billion hours wasted is the average time an American relaxes over a ten week period of time. Rush hour, when peak travel is incurred extended to six hours in 2009.

Mobility data for DFW, Houston and Austin is provided. One commonality of the data from the three cities is a "travel time index" which shows the percentage of additional time required for the commute. For instance, 1.2 would mean 20% longer than the standard commute at posted speeds. Using that index Austin is third worst in the country. Houston is seventh and Dallas is sixteenth.

Federal Funding

The Congressional Budget Office tracks a number of trust funds that are contained in the Federal Budget. The largest trust funds in the Federal Budget are the Old Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and Disability Insurance for Social Security and Medicare's Hospital Insurance Trust Fund. In the absence of legislative action, CBO projects three major trust funds will exhaust their balances during the five and ten year periods beginning in 2010.

Those three trust funds are the Disability Insurance Trust Fund (Social Security) and the Hospital Insurance Part A Trust Fund (Medicare) and the Highway and Mass Transit Trust Fund. The Highway Trust Fund shows a negative \$7 billion balance in 2011 with a cumulative five year (2011-2015) \$70 billion deficit and a ten year deficit (2011-2020) of \$167 billion.

A Continuing Resolution was passed extending current funding levels for the federal government through March 4, 2011. The enabling act was a Senate amendment to House Resolution 3082 which continued funding at the fiscal year 2010 funding levels. The amendment offered by Senator Reid (NV-D), SA 4885, was published in the Congressional Record December 19, 2010 (S10742-S10744). The extension date is found in Title 2, Subtitle (A) Federal Aid Highways of the amendment.

Interstate 35 East

The public hearing on the middle segment of Interstate 35 East extending from the George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181 was held November 18, 2010. On January 28, 2011, TxDOT received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and final net benefit determination and approvals. The document clears the 12 mile segment (Middle Section) finding it an essential element of a regional transportation system. A sampling of average daily traffic from Beltline to Valley Ridge Blvd. is 200,300 and projected to increase to 288,000 in 2030.

There is an environmental justice and socioeconomic impact section of the FONSI that delayed the TxDOT submittal. The environmental justice reviewed displacements that occur and the ability of low income populations to afford tolls in the managed lanes. 88% of the displacements did not occur in lower income census tracts and the report found both negative and positive impacts to "community cohesion".

Additionally the report noted the identification of Texas garter snakes in Hickory Creek on the west side of I-35E. Even though the garter snake is not a species of concern or rare, a preconstruction meeting will be required to clear the area of the Texas garter snake.

The I35 Stakeholder Coalition has been active under the direction of Stakeholder Chairman County Judge Mary Horn. Resolutions of support have been obtained from the adjacent cities and letters of endorsement from constituent business proximate to I-35E. A copy of the draft legislation from Legislative Council (page 202) authorizing public/private partnership for I-35E is enclosed.

The Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) created the I35 Corridor Advisory Committee in 2007. The Committee conducted a series of hearings and meetings along the entire I35 alignment. The final report was released January 27, 2011. The I-35E component is

found in Segment 1 of the Report. The Segment 1 subcommittee included Collin County Judge Keith Self, John Brunk, City of Dallas, Mark Burroughs, Mayor of Denton, Bill Whitfield, Mayor of McKinney. The improvements were recommended as a near term project at a projected cost of \$3.8 billion at the time of drafting the report.

On the Segment 2 committee was Duncanville City Councilmember and DRMC board member Grady Smithey. The Southern Gateway Project was a mid-term project to increase the capacity of both Interstate 35 East and US Highway 67 with an estimated project cost of \$2.35 billion.

Replacing Highway Signs

The FHWA has updated their Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices effective December 16, 2009. The changes were pursuant to the Federal Highway Administration notice of proposed amendments published in the Federal Register (75 Fed. Reg. 20935-2094, April 22, 2010; in materials 204-212).

Senator Al Franken (MN-D) has objected to the FHWA mandate which requires: a plan of implementation by 2012; all safety signs replaced by 2015; and, all road signs by 2018. He estimates the cost to the state would be \$55+ million and over \$80 million for the 1,785 townships in Minnesota.

Congressman Sensenbrenner (WI-R) has introduced HR 348 which would preclude FHWA from requiring replacement of any highway signs that are in upper case letters.

State Highway 183

The SH183 Stakeholder Coalition had its initial organizational meeting on Thursday, February 3, 2011. Councilmember Koop from Dallas and Stopfer from Irving underscored the task ahead for the Stakeholder Coalition.

The Coalition was created by DRMC by Resolution dated January 20, 2011 to assist with the seeking of solutions, legislative options and financing mechanisms to address the capacity and funding issues that have constrained the SH183 improvements.

The initial Stakeholder Coalition was held in the Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce offices. A copy of draft resolutions of support were provided. A presentation was made by TxDOT. The importance, process and procedures of the Coalition were underscored by Michael Morris, Director of Transportation North Central Texas Council of Governments. DRMC will facilitate and implement the recommendation of the SH183 Coalition.

Commissioner Bill Meadows

Chair Franke introduced Texas Transportation Commissioner (TTC) Bill Meadows as the keynote presentation to the DRMC monthly meeting. During the recent ice storm, TxDOT dedicated 600 employees to clearing the streets and highways. 200 volunteers slept on cots in maintenance facilities to provide round the clock service. 74 snow plows were utilized, many from outside the district.

For the 82nd Legislative Session, TxDOT formed the 2030 Commission to quantify transportation needs through the year 2030. TxDOT will have to prioritize not only its projects, but also the associated funding.

Senator Williams has raised publicly the option of increasing vehicle registration fees as a funding source. Senator Ogden has proposed an increase in the gas tax to retire the debt service for Proposition 14 bonds. A letter was sent to TxDOT before the Session from Senator Ogden, Senator Williams and Lt. Gov. Dewhurst pledging an additional \$1 billion of Proposition 12 bonds to fund the projects that have currently been planned by TxDOT. Additionally TxDOT will seek \$1 billion for funding the State Infrastructure Bank and perhaps a third \$1 billion for additional projects.

Commissioner Meadows notes that I-35E is his number one project in the region that does not have a solution. TxDOT is committed to working with the region, but I-35E currently does not have an exception from the DCA moratorium. He appreciates the work of the Coalition and DRMC to sponsor a bill that would authorize innovative financing and access to private sector equity. TxDOT has received the FONSI on the middle segment and has allocated \$30 million for preliminary engineering at FM 407 and I-35E.

State Highway 183 is really an extension of the North Tarrant Express from State Highway 161 to I-35E. It also requires legislation to exempt it from the moratorium. TxDOT has, to date, spent more than \$187 million on construction and right-of-way. 50% of the right-of-way has been acquired.

TxDOT provided a Toll Equity Agreement to facilitate the construction and improvements to State Highway 161. It has been a joint effort to conclude the TIFIA loan between NTTA and US DOT.

With the North Tarrant Express, DFW connector and LBJ Express projects, \$1.5 billion of TxDOT public funds has allowed the completion of \$10 billion worth of projects. That is the ability to leverage public investment with private equity.

45% of the state population lives within 25 miles of I-35E. TTC recently authorized \$1.2 billion of Prop 12 funds for the 91 miles of I35 from Hillsboro to Waco.

When asked what can we do, Commissioner Meadows suggests supporting the \$1 billion funding for the State Infrastructure Bank and \$1 billion for additional infrastructure funding. \$150 million from Proposition 12 bonds was used to provide preliminary engineering for the Pegasus project. 33% of that funding came from the City of Dallas.

TxDOT is in the process of making changes to the \$2 million Grant Thornton study suggested. The Grant Thornton report was reviewed by the Restructure Council and certain changes have occurred as a result of that report. Executive Director Saenz and Deputy Director Simmons will retire at the end of the current Fiscal Year. The organizational chart will be modified to reflect increased importance of financing and technology.

Formula allocation of bond proceeds was first raised as a result of the \$1.2 billion funding grant to central Texas. TxDOT needs to meet regional problems to make the system efficient statewide. Without discretionary funding, that segment of I35 would not have been

improved until sometime in 2030-2035.

There is simply not enough funding for all projects. The 81st Session of the Legislature did recognize the importance of the SH121 funds. Commissioner Meadows was on NTTA at the time that NTTA agreed to pay the regional toll revenue.

The new CEO of TxDOT will have a broader reach of experience than just engineering. He should have management abilities, financial expertise and experience as a Chief Executive Officer.

The department needs CDA authority. Planning requires selection of primary travel corridors in the regions statewide. Lt. Gov. Dewhurst, along with Senator Williams, have suggested increasing vehicle registration fees.

Most Texans pay between \$60 and \$70 a year to register their vehicles. An additional \$25 would raise \$623 million a year and borrowing against that could monetize \$8.3 billion in bonds. Senator Williams' presentation earlier this year is provided for reference purposes.

The Cross Border Trucking Program may be reinvigorated. The program was established as a result of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It was limited to the 20-25 mile border corridor.

The administration has released a Concept Document that would allow implementation of cross border trucking. The two major trading partners of the United States are Canada and Mexico. The administration proposal would put electronic recording devices to monitor safety and carriers' records would be checked.

The Attorney General released (GA-0836) in January 2011 finding that the Regional Transportation Council did not have the authority to seek repayment of federal funds from the City of Richland Hills should the City have voted to withdraw from the Trinity Railway Express.

TxDOT

The Supplemental Report of 2030 Commission, which was presented to TTC January 26, 2011, is provided. The Commission focused on the cost of maintaining an acceptable quality of the roads rather than allowing their deterioration. As the roads deteriorate the cost to consumers for both use and maintenance to their vehicle increases. To continue current 2010 conditions would require an increase of \$280 in taxes and fees per year by a household but would save approximately \$2,500 in additional yearly expense.

A funding primer for the Texas Department of Transportation was prepared by the Legislative Budget Board for use by the Legislature. It provides a concise summary of the complex federal and state funding mechanisms for TxDOT (page 269-284).

A summary of the state agency debt service payment over the biennium is provided (304).

Houston

In January the City of Houston repealed its exercise of primacy for the Grand Parkway (Loop 99). The 15 miles segment from Interstate 10 to Highway 290 is estimated to cost \$425 million. The Texas Transportation Commission agreed to build and fund segment E of the Parkway.

Additionally, TTC agreed to convert five high occupancy vehicle lanes (I45 North Freeway; I45 Gulf Freeway, US 59 East Tex Freeway, US 59 Southwest Freeway and US 290 Northwest Freeway). The Minute Order adopted by TTC allows the conversion to high occupancy toll, while Minute Order 112558 exercises the department's option to develop, finance, construct and operate segment E of State Highway 99.

NTTA

The TIFIA loan should be executed by the parties in the next two weeks. They are anticipating a March 3, 2011 approval.

TxDOT

Pass through tolling has been approved for Highway 67.

DCTA

Passenger service will begin June 2011. Positive Train Control cost is estimated to be \$17 million. DCTA has projections of \$320 million in of Transit-Oriented Development along the line.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the governing body, DRMC adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

The Minutes of the February 11, 2011 Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition Executive Committee Meeting were approved March 4, 2011 by the Governing Body.

Grady Smithey
DRMC Secretary

Members in Attendance:

Name	Entity
Rob Franke	Cedar Hill
Mary Horn	Denton County
Linda Koop	Dallas
Kimberly Lay	Addison, Farmers Branch, Highland Park
Steve Mitchell	Richardson
Geralyn Kever	McKinney
Grady Smithey	Duncanville
Karen Hunt	Coppell and University Park
Martin Molloy	Dallas Regional Chamber
Stan Pickett (Jerry Dittman)	Mesquite

<u>Ex-Officio Members Attending:</u>	
Charles Emery	DCTA
William Hale	TxDOT
Allen Clemson (Carrie)	NTTA
Michael Morris	NCTCOG
Gary Thomas	DART
Mike Baggett	Dallas Regional Chamber

<u>Additional Guests</u>	
Luis Shelton	NTTA
Tom Burke	Chamhill
Greg Jones	Jacobs
Mark Goode	Dunaway
Andy Rittler	LBJ Express
Elizabeth Jones	UT Dallas
Amy Gibson	DRC
Rick Lindsay	Dean International
Gary Savanyu	