

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA
BOARD WORKSHOP**

FRIDAY

10:03 A.M.

March 22, 2024

PRESENT:

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks, Chair
Alexis Hill, Washoe County Commissioner, Vice Chair
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner
Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno (Arrived 10:07 a.m.)
Devon Reese, Reno Councilman (Via Zoom, Left @ 11:30 a.m.)**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Tracy Larkin Thomason, Director of NDOT**

**Dale Keller, Director of Engineering
James Gee, Director of Public Transportation/Operations
Christian Schonlau, Director of Finance/CFO
Laura Freed, Director of Administrative Services**

The annual Board Workshop meeting was held at the Reno Sparks Convention Center, Rooms A1/A6, 4590 S. Virginia Street, Reno, and was called to order by Chair Lawson.

**NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AT THIS WORKSHOP
EXCEPT TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, CONSENT ITEMS AND TO ADJOURN**

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Roll Call

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lawson opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda. There being no one wishing to speak, Chair Lawson moved to Approval of Agenda.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Vice Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved.

4. CONSENT ITEMS *(For Possible Action)*

Administration

4.1 Approve a contract with Simmons Group to conduct a classification and compensation study for the agency, in an amount not-to-exceed \$182,000. *(For Possible Action)*

Executive

4.2 Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a funding agreement with Placer County to contribute \$150,000 for the provision of the TART Connect (micro transit) service in the Washoe County portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin for a one-year period. *(For Possible Action)*

On motion of Vice Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the consent items for this meeting be approved.

5. WORKSHOP *(No Action Will be Taken at this Workshop)*

The purpose of the workshop is to discuss and give general direction regarding policy and strategic objectives of the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County for the current and coming years. Erica Olsen with OnStrategy Consultants will be moderating this workshop.

5.1 Welcome, Opening Remarks & Stage Setting – Chair Lawson/Bill Thomas/Erica Olsen

Chair Lawson: Thank you all for being here. This is the second workshop that I've done, and it's kind of interesting to talk about what we did last year and where we are today. We're going to talk about a lot of things that we wanted to do last year, but we didn't set any goals or measurements for it. This year, I want to really set some incremental goals so that we can revisit at three, six, nine, 12 months, and come back together to see how we're doing.

Bill Thomas: I want to echo the Chair's thanks and appreciation for everyone setting time aside to be here. This is the most important meeting of the year, because it gives everyone the chance to have conversations with each other. There are no decisions that will be made today and what we are looking for is general direction. I wanted to start by thanking some particular staff members who pulled this together. Lee Anne, Michelle and John did a great job setting up the workshop. I want to thank Amber for being the architect of all of this and pulling it all together.

I feel very good as your Executive Director, that this format and this process is one that's very beneficial to us. We've engaged with Erica Olsen, and she's done a great job working with us, not only in running this meeting, but also as she'll go through how we follow through. I'm going to let Erica get into the details and hand it over to her.

Erica Olsen: Good morning everybody, thank you Chair Lawson and Bill Thomas and thanks for everybody for being here. We are styled as we have been for the past couple of retreats to walk through strategic issues and topics that we're looking for the Board's direction on. Based on that, we will pull measurable outcomes together, we have great topics to get into, and we have staff that will be co-presenting with us. We will have discussion on the following topics:

- RTC's Vision, Strategic Goal and Progress to Date
- RTP Process and Community Input
- ITS – The Intelligent Transportation System
- Active Transportation Plan

Bill Thomas: We recently completed the Culture Study and one of the things we heard from our staff is that are very interested in a stronger engagement with the Board. It is intentional that we've changed the way we're doing it this year and that we'll have staff members who will be talking about their particular projects. The employees will be able to engage with you and also give you a greater understanding of

the project process. We are not talking about Public Transportation today, but that doesn't mean it's not a very important part of us. We will be coming back in the very near future with the update to the TOPS Plan, which is your five-year look at how we provide Public Transportation. It doesn't mean we can't talk about it today, but again, the reason we don't have it as one of the items is because of the upcoming TOPS Plan.

5.2 RTC's Vision & Strategic Goals + Progress To Date – Bill Thomas/Erica Olsen

The strategic roadmap we have in place for the organization includes four goals, which we built based upon input from the Board in 2022, and have been using since, which include: valued public transportation, future transportation needs, network experience and financial and organizational stewardship.

The top items from last year's Vision board included:

- Connected Network - Since migrating to the Transit App, we've had 350% growth in use and over 3,400 users.
- Bike Network – River & Downtown Connection – Adoption of the Downtown Reno Micromobility project.
- Transit - Transportation System Maintenance – Sustainable Maintenance Study
- Safety
- Broad Long-Term Planning
- Culture and People, Communication and Collaboration

Proposed New Goals:

- Transit
- Neighborhood Approach to Multi-modal
- River Corridor
- Manage Congestion
- Sustainable Maintenance of Current Roads
- Financial Stewardship
- Safety
- People & Culture

New Input included:

- New Generation of Riders
- Ways to Engage with Seniors other than Technology
- Campaign to Reach Influencers
- Ethnic Diversity – Communication in Spanish
- All Students Riding for Free

NDOT would like us to connect a little more about our progression of projects. NDOT looks more regionally and statewide, but they want to be sensitive to growth in our area. If RTC and NDOT could be more connected on project preparation, we could have more connectivity and use resources for areas simultaneously.

The Board then went through creating a “Heat Map” of everyone's top priorities in our Region. Identified areas included: Verdi, Lake Tahoe, UNR, Sun Valley, North Valleys, River Corridor, La Posada to USA Parkway, 4th Street/Downtown Connection, McCarran, & Downtown.

5.3 RTP Process & Community Input – Bill Thomas/Xuan Wang/Graham Dollarhide

Bill Thomas introduced the RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) update, which is a process we do every four years. The Plan is a foundation that will be used over the next four years in terms of guiding and ultimately deciding which projects get built and which projects move forward.

The purpose of the RTP is to identify the transportation goals and principles that direct regional transportation investments through 2050. This is federally required by MPO's. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a federal construct for communities of 50,000 or more people and we are designated by the Governor to be an MPO. We expect to have a draft for review in the fall of 2024, with Plan completion by March 2025.

Xuan Wang, RTC Planning Manager, discussed how the RTP update is founded on public and community outreach. We're currently working on public kickoff and later this month will launch a project website. We will include a video that shows the overview of the process, as well as include an online survey, so the community can give us feedback and input. The survey will be available in different languages, from a drop down menu where you can choose your language.

In discussing the Agency Working Group (AWG), which includes regional partners, school districts, and many others, Vice Chair Hill would like to see the Tahoe Truckee District (TTD) included in the AWG going forward. The Board also acknowledged that their role as Commissioners is to be the voice of their local jurisdictions.

5.4 ITS Desired Outcomes, Vision & Funding Agreement – Dale Keller/Alex Wolfson

Dale Keller and Alex Wolfson presented an overview of the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Plan Implementation, which includes:

- Decision Making, SMP recommendations and Oversight Committee
- Operations
- Maintenance
- Develop and Adopt Standards and Specifications and Asset Management

Alex Wolfson then showed two videos on how providing proactive and reactive management of arterial operations from one consolidated location could greatly improve the timing of traffic in the North Valleys.

The timeline of what comes next is starting here at this March 22nd Board Retreat, where we have presented the ITS SMP and MOU, with no action being taken. April 19th will be the next RTC Board meeting where there will be a request to approve the MOU and a tentative budget will be presented. April/May, we will present the MOU to the Reno and Sparks City Councils and the Washoe County Commission. We are looking at a final SMP report to come in June.

The Board was supportive of this effort.

5.5 Active Transportation Plan – Marquis Williams/Sara Going

Marquis Williams and Sara Going gave a presentation on the Active Transportation Plan, which is where we focus on active modes of walking, biking and micromobility, which includes E-bikes and E-

Scooters. We want to shift from looking at this corridor by corridor and focus on the connectivity between and to each corridor.

The preliminary staffing needs would be to hire an FTE program manager in the Planning Department to manage the whole.

The Board was supportive of this effort.

5.6 Close Out & Summarize Direction

Our main goals going forward are:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Neighborhood Approach to Micromodal
- Exploring free rides for kids/students
- River Corridor
- Managing Congestion
- Safety
- Financial Stewardship
- People and Culture, to include communications

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Lawson opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda. There being no one wishing to speak, Chair Lawson moved to Adjournment.

7. ADJOURNMENT (*For Possible Action*)

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.



ED LAWSON, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission

Presentations copies are available upon request. Contact mkraus@rtcwashoe.com.