

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

**FRIDAY**

**8:00 A.M.**

**June 21, 2024**

**PRESENT:**

**Alexis Hill, Vice Chair, Washoe County Commissioner (Via Zoom)  
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner (Via Zoom)  
Kristopher Dahir, City of Sparks Alternate (Via Zoom)  
Dale Keller, RTC Deputy Executive Director  
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel  
Tracy Larkin Thomason, Director of NDOT (Via Zoom)**

**ABSENT:**

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks  
Devon Reese, Reno City Council  
Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno  
Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director**

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The regular monthly meeting, held in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Great Room at Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Vice Chair Hill. The Board conducted the following business:

***Item 1           CALL TO ORDER***

- 1.1   Roll Call
- 1.2   Pledge of Allegiance

***Item 2           PUBLIC INPUT***

Vice Chair Hill 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, Vice Chair Hill moved to Approval of the Agenda.

***Item 3           APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

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

***Items 4          CONSENT ITEMS***

**4.1   Minutes**

- 4.1.1 Approve the meeting minutes for the 05/17/2024 RTC Board meeting.  
(For Possible Action)
- 4.1.2 Approve the meeting minutes for the 05/23/2024 RTC Special Board meeting.  
(For Possible Action)

## **4.2. Reports**

- 4.2.1 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.2 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.3 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly summary report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation and Operations Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Outreach Report from the Communications staff. (For Possible Action)

## **4.3 Planning Department**

- 4.3.1 Approve Cooperative Agreement No. PR284-24-802 between the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for fiscal year (FY) 2025 federal planning funds. (For Possible Action)

## **4.4 Engineering Department**

- 4.4.1 Approve an administrative settlement in the amount of \$109,336 authorizing RTC to acquire certain property interests related to APN 013-084-02 from Galantuomini Family Holdings, LLC, for the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.2 Approve an administrative settlement in the amount of \$123,631 authorizing RTC to acquire certain property interests related to APN 012-201-21 and APN 012-201-22 from Vaughn, Rory R., for the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.3 Approve a contract with J-U-B Engineers, Inc., to perform a feasibility study, conceptual alternatives analysis, and environmental studies for the Geiger Grade Realignment Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,373,975. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.4 Approve a Regional Road Impact Fee (RRIF) Offset Agreement between RTC, Lemmon Drive Villas Property LLC, and the City of Reno for offset-eligible improvements to be made to the intersection of Lemmon Drive, Vista Knolls Parkway, and Sunset View Drive. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.5 Approve a Regional Road Impact Fee (RRIF) Offset Agreement between RTC, Lemmon Drive Villas Property LLC, and Washoe County for offset-eligible improvements to be made to the intersection of Lemmon Drive, Vista Knolls Parkway, and Sunset View Drive. (For Possible Action)

## **4.5 Public Transportation/Operations Department**

- 4.5.1 Approve a contract with Qual-Econ U.S.A. LLC., for janitorial and porter services for the RTC facilities, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$3,162,190.12 beginning FY25 for four years. (For Possible Action)

## **4.6 Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments**

- 4.6.1 Authorize the Executive Director to bind annual insurance coverage effective July 1, 2024, for automobile liability, general liability, public officials' errors and omissions (E&O), property, earthquake/flood, crime, cyber, pollution liability, social engineering, fiduciary liability, employment practices liability, and workers' compensation; and approve the RTC's continued membership in the Nevada Public Agency Insurance Pool (POOL) and Public Agency Compensation Trust (PACT). (For Possible Action)

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

***Item 5 PUBLIC HEARING***

- 5.1 Conduct a public hearing regarding approval of Amendment No. 3 to the FFY 2023-2027 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP); adopt a resolution approving Amendment No. 3 to the FFY 2023-2027 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). (For Possible Action)
- a. Staff Presentation
  - b. Public Hearing
  - c. Action

Graham Dollarhide, RTC Planning Manager, made a presentation and spoke on this item.

The RTIP is a federally required program of projects document. It advances the goals from the long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and prioritizes projects and advances them forward into the shorter-range program of projects prior to the implementation phase. The programed amounts do not need to be amended retroactively to match actual expenditures to the document itself, however, as projects evolve, any significant changes to things like scope, budget limits, things like that will need to be reflected in this document.

There are five projects included in this proposed amendment. The first one is Tahoe Pyramid Trail East feasibility study. This is a new project to the RTIP and is being used to identify the feasibility of filling in some of the gaps in the trail and creating connections between Sparks and the Tri Center with a bit of a spur, so to speak, between Wadsworth and Fernley. This project was awarded through NDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program and is proposed to be included in this amendment so that the project can move forward with that study.

The South Meadows Connector Alignment Study Project is another new project to the RTIP. This is a very preliminary phase of a proposed project. It is an alignment study looking at the preferred alternatives and the feasibility of extending South Meadows Parkway from its current terminus just east of Veterans Parkway and carrying through to connect to USA Parkway. Again, very preliminary. This would determine the feasibility of moving to next steps, including environmental and NEPA design and then eventually construction.

The I-580 Bowers to Mount Rose Highway Preservation Project is an existing project in the RTIP. It is being amended to increase the funding, add federal funds to the funding mix, and to move back the construction date.

The SR659 North McCarran Intersection Improvements Project is also being amended. This project would decrease the total project cost and change the project limits. This project will add safety improvements to the area of North McCarran and Keystone.

The I-80 East final design project is being amended to fund the design phase only of the capacity project between Vista Boulevard and USA Parkway. The construction phase is not yet included, however, the RTC is working with NDOT to amend the RTP to change the model year. There will be a hearing on that potentially next month, so more details to come on that project.

This proposed action does require RTC Board Approval, as well as State and NDOT approval, and Federal approvals. We had a public comment period from May 29th to June 18th that was advertised through RTC typical channels, including a Spanish language newspaper and the RTC website. It was also reviewed by CMAC and TAC, and today's meeting includes a public hearing of this item.

A letter was received from Northern Nevada Public Health Air Quality Management Division, which is included in your packets and makes comments specifically on the I-80 project. The bottom line is that the letter is not in opposition to this action item. A presentation on transportation issues related to the Tri Center will be included in item 6.1.

Public comment was received from Michael Gawthrop-Hutchins on June 20, 2024, at 8:20am, as follows: I would like to provide public comment on agenda item 5.1. In particular, the amendment related to the widening of I-80 between Vista to USA Parkway. While I can definitely appreciate the concerns of traffic delays and congestion on I-80, widening I-80 is not the best way to address those concerns at this time. While I personally would advocate for transit-based solutions, I must begrudgingly concede Councilwoman Duerr's point that we are still a very car dependent community and that isn't going to be a problem that I solved overnight, we are going to need car-based solutions for the near-term future. With that in mind, there are really two problems plaguing I-80 between Vista and USA Parkway. One of those problems is indeed the volume of traffic relative to the capacity of the road, which adding an additional lane would, at least temporarily, alleviate (I say temporarily because we need to remember that induced demand is a very well documented phenomenon). The second problem is reliability. Far too often there are extended delays due to crashes completely closing the freeway. Adding another lane will do little to alleviate this problem. The only solution for this is to offer viable alternative routes (such as the ones discussed in Agenda Item 6.1). Offering alternative routes would also allow a significant portion of the people currently driving along that section of roadway to use the alternative route, addressing the capacity concern by reducing the demand on that particular roadway (though, I will note, doing nothing to reduce overall demand for our road network, which is what the long term goal should be). Given that only the construction of an alternate route, as described in Agenda Item 6.1 will address both of the greatest concerns for the I-80 corridor between Vista and USA Parkway, it seems most prudent to postpone the widening of I-80 and to instead put additional resources into being able to complete one (or more) of those alternative routes sooner.

Vice Chair Hill asked how comments received from the CMAC, TAC and Health District were incorporated for the concerns and recommendations like carpool lanes and studies like this?

Graham Dollarhide, there are several recommendations in the letter from the Air Quality Management Division. The RTC is already enacting a lot of those recommendations, as there are employer shuttles and RTC Vanpools that go out there. We'll be looking to undertake a feasibility study of passenger rail in the coming months.

Dale Keller, Deputy Executive Director, I believe they looked into different solutions on I-80 East through NDOT study. Director Larkin Thomason can probably speak further about that.

Vice Chair Hill That's helpful. Thank you for putting that on the record so community members can understand why we're looking at alternatives, including the trail connectivity out to TRIC, which is exciting.

Being no public comment, on motion of Commissioner Garcia to accept the report, seconded by Commissioner Dahir, which motion unanimously carried, Vice Chair Hill ordered that Item 5.1 is approved.

**Item 6            *DICUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS***

- 6.1     Discuss transportation issues and needs in relation to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center as requested by Chair Lawson and provide input and direction to the Executive Director. (For Possible Action)

Dale Keller, Deputy Executive Director for the record. One of RTC's FY24 goals is to lead a multi-county effort to define transportation future related to Washoe County and the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center (Tri Center) in Fernley. With this goal in mind, RTC staff have been working with various public agencies as well as private stakeholders to better understand and address some of the unique regional challenges that is presented. Today's presentation will discuss those transportation challenges and needs related to the Tri Center, and we'll jump right into it.

The area between Reno-Sparks and Fernley is rapidly developing, the most significant development, the Tri Center encompasses approximately 160 miles. This area is larger than the entire Reno-Sparks proper city limits. Tri Center is one of the largest industrial developments in the World. Tri Center has sold out its roughly 30,000 developable acres and is slated to accommodate roughly 300,000,000 square feet of building space. Major companies with land ownership in the Tri Centers include Tesla, Google, Blockchain, and Switch. Tri Center has created over 15,000 jobs and is estimated to produce roughly 35,000 to 50,000 jobs by 2040. All that job growth results in about 40,000 average annual daily trips by 2050. Interstate 80 is the primary access to and from the Tri Center, and with this increase of traffic, it will push the existing I-80 beyond its current capacity. Current high traffic volumes and incidences of weather, crashes and vehicle breakdowns cause delays lasting for hours.

For the existing transportation challenges, safety is the highest concern. The Safety Division collected and evaluated crash data for the corridor, and crashes have nearly doubled in the last three years compared to the two previous three-year periods. As for congestion, RTC's regional traffic travel demand model predicts major traffic growth in the corridor, with a roughly 30% increase by 2050. The freight movement is significant, and roughly about 20% of the vehicles on I-80 are trucks. It's interesting to note that I-80 is the second longest Interstate highway in the nation. With the unreliability and instability, and with those adverse impacts we talked about from safety and congestion, it really hinders some of that significant freight corridor between California and Utah. This transportation bottleneck is limiting the economic growth of our region.

NDOT performed the I-80 Corridor Study, which was a comprehensive evaluation of studies and ideas for feasibility and to establish a performance-based priority option. The study concluded that widening I-80 east between Vista Boulevard and USA Park was the most feasible option. Other alternatives were also considered in this report and are currently being explored. We talked about alternative modes of transportation being RTC Vanpool Park and Rides and commuter rail. There are roadway alternatives being considered besides the widening of I-80, which is the South Moses Parkway extension, as well as the La Posada Drive connection.

Currently the RTC Vanpool sees roughly 1800 passengers a day utilizing roughly 257 vans on the private side. My Ride to Work sees roughly 2000 passengers a day. In addition, RTC is working with private industry and exploring a commuter rail transport service, so funding for this commuter rail study is included in our FY25 budget. Staff are currently finalizing that request for qualifications to have a firm support that study.

NDOT is leading the I-80 East Widening project, where the project proposes to widen I-80 from two lanes to three lanes in each direction for 13 miles. The project would also improve safety and interchange operations. In 2023, NDOT initiated the environmental clearance or environmental study process, and they anticipate a finding of no significant impact by early 2025. This project cost is roughly over \$500 million. I do want to applaud NDOT for being aggressive in pursuing different USDOT mega grant opportunities, and we hope to hear some good news later this fall.

NDOT is also evaluating a new alignment that would provide a connection from South Meadows Parkway to USA Parkway in Southeast Reno, otherwise known as the South Road. This alternative would mostly go through privately owned property. The alignment would provide an alternate route for commuters traveling from South Reno to the Tri Center, as well as reducing the number of vehicles on I-80. Having a secondary route to Tri Centers would significantly benefit should I-80 be closed, or if there's an incident that does occur on the roadway.

Another solution being considered would be a new alignment from the La Posada Drive in Sparks to the Tri Center, otherwise known as that North Road. This would provide an alternate route for commuters traveling from the Sparks and Spanish Springs area.

Commissioner Dahir, thank you for that presentation. I think by 2050, we're going to need all of this and it's exciting actually. I would like to see us be able to direct staff to proceed with the process of acquiring the roadway easement for permit from BLM for the connection of La Posada and USA Parkway, because that easement would make such a difference. I want to add that on my Health District Board side, we're also dealing with air pollution and that as cars sit there, we're already very close to nonattainment. Making sure our cars are moving will also affect our economic development pretty quickly.

Tracy Larkin Thompson, NDOT Director, I wanted to add a couple of comments. Obviously, this is under our jurisdiction, and there's a lot of things that we've been putting into it. We have been very aggressive both on our own and working with RTC to go after grants and mega grants to help this project move forward. The project is expected to be between \$500 and \$600 million at this time, and we will be looking at dividing it into three projects. There are significant canyons, so there would be structures. We're looking at the potential of using some private land that could reduce some of the cost. The alignment study still needs the environmental part, but after the environmental part is done, then we need to put a fiscal note on it and there is no funding for that. We certainly support the efforts that have been made by RTC and the City of Sparks.

Again, I thank RTC for their partnership and also for kind of putting this in front of all of us as we look regionally at how we can actually promote interconnectivity and get a more robust network in the area.

Commissioner Garcia, I really appreciate the multi-county effort and thinking of it in that way. I agree that we're going to need all possible solutions on deck, and the investment is going to be significant. I think a lot of our constituents would really be interested to learn more about the commuter rail study or being able to utilize that option. I'm on the NDOT Nevada State Rail Plan online and there's already existing infrastructure there. Have we ever done a commuter rail study going out this direction? If so, what were the findings and what is the process moving forward? I know that with 80% coming from Reno-Sparks, this could truly be a viable option for a lot of folks.

Jim Gee, RTC Director of Public Transit. We did a commuter rail study about 6 or 7 years ago, but it was an in-house staff director study that basically documented just the expected costs. It was also pre-growth of TRIC, and the world has changed quite a bit since then. We think it's really important to have a more robust study now that will have participation from our friends in the private side, participation from other governmental units and an outside consultant to really quantify the costs and the benefits of such a project. Our staff are already working on that.

### **Public Comment:**

My name is Will Adler on behalf of Story County. Story County is in conversations with RTC, Washoe County, NDOT, and officials coordinating assistance with the road projects and the transit corridors. We just discussed a substantial amount of effort and submitted deregulatory code efforts to ease the housing efforts in the southern part of the county towards the Highway 50 side of the NDOT corridor access. I thought it was pretty relevant that Director Larkin Thomason brought up the expansion of the Highway 50 side of traffic, because in the future, I do think that will be a big part of the formula on how to relieve Highway 80, which will relieve the stress burden on the whole region. I think having additional housing on the Story County and Lyon County side of 50 ultimately will help with that drawdown of the mass traffic we see. That is where we want to see mass coordination throughout the region to address these issues as they come up. Story County is in conversations with the region about the east-west corridor as well. The Board has approved the resolution for the Truckee Meadows Lands bill, and we are looking into the rail corridor for commuter traffic. Basically, we're here at the table for all these issues, and we'd like to be part of the solutions of the future. So, thank you very much for having us and thanks for having this discussion today.

Laurie Rodriguez, Reno resident. In 2019 I approached NDOT, this Board and all the counties involved; Story County, Lyon County, Churchill County, and cities of Fernley and Fallon, and they were all interested in the rail project. If we took into account when designing the I-80 widening, putting an elevated system down the center of it and get it funded as part of our widening that would be great. I understand you would have to have stations, parking lots, and bus routes that would go to these stations to bring the people in, but I would just like to remind you that there are alternative systems other than just on the ground passenger rail. Thank you.

## ***Item 7           REPORTS (Informational Only)***

### **7.1     RTC Executive Director Report**

1. Last Monday, we hosted Even Wessel from the U.S. Department of Transportation.
  - Commissioner Hill joined RTC Staff and Evan for a meeting and tour of some of our projects that are receiving federal funding – or could receive funding in the future.
  - The tour included the Villanova Maintenance Facility, our three downtown bridge projects, and some of the projects that the board designated as federal priorities.
  - We think this was a valuable chance to show what the RTC is doing to improve transportation in our region.
2. We are very happy to provide free transit for kids during the summer break.
  - We launched this pilot program June 8<sup>th</sup> and it will run through August 11<sup>th</sup>, a day before school starts back up.
  - This program is for anyone 17 and under and it allows them to get to the Kids Café summer meals program to get free lunch while school is out.
  - It also helps teens get to and from their summer jobs.

- And it provides another option to get to various recreational activities throughout the Truckee Meadows.
3. Last week, the Trail Fire burned near the Raleigh Heights and Golden Valley areas.
    - RTC requested transit contractors Keolis and MTM to identify transportation staff and assets for possible emergency evacuations.
    - Both organizations were responsive and timely in their preparation for an emergency response.
    - Fortunately, no evacuation assistance was needed. Thank you Keolis and MTM for being such a great resource to our community!
  4. Earlier this week, we held a media event for the groundbreaking of the South Virginia Street and I-580 Exit 29 Capacity and Safety Project.
    - Thank you to Commissioner Hill, Maria Paz Fernandez and Vice Mayor Duerr for letting the public know about this important project.
    - We are adding a northbound lane on South Virginia Street, installing a traffic signal and a second right-hand turn lane at the northbound offramp, and improving sidewalks, bike lanes, and ADA facilities among many other upgrades.
  5. I would like to introduce you to our newest employees, LaShonn Ford and Brandon Kase.
    - LaShonn is our new Traffic Engineer who came to us from NDOT.
    - He worked there as a Senior ITS Project Manager in the Traffic Operations Division.
    - Brandon is our new Engineering Technician.
    - He is currently attending the University of Nevada, Reno.
    - He will be with us through the summer.
    - Welcome, LaShonn and Brandon to the RTC Team!
  6. I would like to congratulate Austin McCoy and his wife Erin on the birth of their baby boy.
    - The McCoy's welcomed Jackson into their family on May 2nd.
    - Austin is one of our Project Managers in the Engineering Department.
    - We wish them all the best in their adventures as parents.
    - We're already scouting Jackson to join the RTC Engineering team in about 22 years.
  7. Please join us congratulating Jules Powell as the MTM Employee of the Month for May.
    - Jules has been with MTM for a year and has made a good impact with her passengers. She has also received multiple commendations. She finds the job very calming and "Zen" like.
    - She enjoys interacting with her customers and goes home with a sense of pride knowing she has helped her community. Jules is a gamer at heart, and occasionally delves into the world of Dungeons and Dragons. We want to thank Jules for her first year with us and hope that there are many more to come.
  8. Earl Brynson is the Keolis Driver of the Month of May.
    - Earl has worked for Keolis since April of 2008. His accomplishments last month consist of a 93 percent on-time performance, zero preventable accidents, and no customer complaints. Earl is originally from Chicago, so he's a big Cubs fan and enjoys spending quality time with his family.
  9. The Keolis Driver of the month receives a 250-dollar gift card and a parking spot.
    - The Technician and Utility Worker of the month both receive a \$250-dollar gift card, as well.

## **7.2 RTC Federal Report**

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer. We submitted an application for the Safe Streets and Roads For All Planning Grant this week. We're asking for \$1.6 million, and this is really to go towards



our planning efforts in terms of making our road network safer for all users. We should find out if we were successful in August.

The Senate Public Lands, Forests and Mining Subcommittee held a hearing last week that included 20 bills, and one of them was the Truckee Meadows Lands Management Act. Senator Cortez Masto chairs this committee, and she gave a brief overview of the bill. There is written testimony online that you can look at from the BLM and the USDA. We are definitely following this bill, and we're hoping to see some progress over the next few months. Congress is turning its attention to appropriations, and the House GOP has a plan to pass all 12 bills by the end of July. Five of those bills failed to pass last year, and we're kind of expecting the same kind of scenario this year. The Senate is moving a little bit slower on appropriations, so it's kind of a wait and see. Hopefully they can get this stuff done before the fiscal year ends. The House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing last week where it discussed post pandemic lessons. Topics covered ridership, safety and other post pandemic concerns. The upcoming FHWA August redistribution is a chance for states to flex funds from FHWA to FTA to support transit projects, and we'll be looking at this moving forward. We'll discuss whether or not this is something that RTC would be interested in doing. That concludes my report, Thank you.

### **7.3 NDOT Director Report**

NDOT Director Tracy Larkin Thomason gave a presentation and spoke on the following:

- AGC Work Zone Safety Campaign
- Tour of Pyramid Highway Project
- Routine Bridge Inspection Program: We are required by law to inspect every single bridge in the State of Nevada every two years
- Political Signage – Federal and State Regulations: Just a reminder that political advertising is not allowed within State run highways. I do want to point out that if you have a question about whether it is our property or not, please contact our District office and we'll work with you.

### ***Item 8 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES***

Being no commissioner announcements, Vice Chair Hill moved onto public input.

### ***Item 9 PUBLIC INPUT***

Vice Chair Hill 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, Vice Chair Hill moved to Adjournment.

### ***Item 10 ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.



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ALEXIS HILL, Vice Chair  
Regional Transportation Commission

**\*\*Copies of all presentations are available by contacting Michelle Kraus at [mkraus@rtcwashoe.com](mailto:mkraus@rtcwashoe.com).**