

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

**FRIDAY**

**9:00 A.M.**

**October 18, 2024**

**PRESENT:**

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks  
Alexis Hill, Vice Chair, Washoe County Commissioner  
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner  
Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director  
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel  
Tracy Larkin Thomason, Director of NDOT**

**ABSENT:**

**Devon Reese, Reno City Council  
Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno (Via Phone)**

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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 Chair Lawson. The Board conducted the following business:

***Item 1            CALL TO ORDER***

- 1.1    Roll Call
- 1.2    Pledge of Allegiance

***Item 2            PUBLIC INPUT***

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.

Juan Martinez, my wife and I are both artists, writers, and past couple of weeks ACCESS has been sending us taxis. The taxi drivers do not give us the same ADA services as the ACCESS drivers do. The cab driver doesn't come out and help blind folks to open the door or show us where the door is. Their cars reek of cigarettes, sometimes the seats are ripped and there's wire coming out of the seat where you put your thigh area. Can we please start getting our ACCESS shuttle buses back and our drivers back. Um. Thank you.

Dora Martinez, I just want to make sure that you guys remember to put a bench at McCarran and Mae Anne at the Safeway shopping center for Route 11. They moved the bus stop further west, so it's tighter and some of the shoppers put carts perpendicular to the sidewalk, so when we walk there, we can't move them because if we move them, it could cause accidents on McCarran. If RTC could put the benches there and move it back where it was, it would be very helpful for us blind folks who utilize this. Also, to what Juan Martinez was talking about, some of the taxi drivers are not trained for ADA. I'm the one receiving the services or lack of ADA services. They don't do what the bus drivers do. They don't escort us to the door and sometimes I go to a new place and I don't know where the door is. It's really annoying and it gives me anxiety when I know it's a taxi that's coming. Sometimes they reeked of cigarettes and then they try to cover the

cigarette odor with perfume, and that triggers my migraine. I know that you all don't understand because you're not blind and you're not disabled yet. If we put these precautions and protocol in place now and give us adequate services, then when you guys are blind or disabled, you'll have the same services and safety regulations that we are asking for today.

Also, if I'm using FlexRide the app does not allow me, as a disabled person, to know where the bus is, so if you're making people with disabilities use Flex, please make it accessible so that way we can utilize it. I want to thank Mayor Lawson and all of you guys sitting up there and Alexis Hill and everyone for listening to us and please, we just want to travel. We just want to go where we need to go safely with our dog and our only child who's 18 and going to go to UNR soon. So, if you could all hear our plea, that would be very helpful and thank you and please go vote. Thank you.

David Frear of Mill Street, LLC, via email, October 16, 2024, at 5:57 p.m. On behalf of Mill Street, LLC, I respectfully request that Agenda Item 4.4.1, which is scheduled to be considered at the October 18, 2024, meeting of the RTC of Washoe County, be moved to the next meeting on November 15, 2024. Agenda Item 4.4.1 pertains to the approval of a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a fee simple interest in, and a temporary construction easement on, portions of APN 013-052-26 to construct the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project. I submit that the RTC's power of eminent domain should only be used in extreme circumstances, where negotiation with the property owner for the acquisition of property rights is not possible. In this case, Mill Street, LLC is committed to engaging in good faith negotiations with RTC to reach an agreement. To that end, Mill Street, LLC will provide a counteroffer to RTC not later than Friday, October 18, 2024. Postponing Agenda Item 4.4.1 to the next RTC meeting will provide the parties the necessary time to negotiate and hopefully avoid litigation altogether. If negotiations are unsuccessful, the Board will still have the opportunity to consider the filing of an eminent domain action at the next meeting on November 15, 2024. However, allowing time for negotiation could save significant attorney fees and costs for all parties involved and ultimately conserve taxpayer money. Since I am unable to be there in person for public comment, I respectfully ask that this letter be included in the meeting minutes and be considered by the Board as the property owner's public comment. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

### ***Item 3            APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

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

### ***Items 4            CONSENT ITEMS***

Chair Lawson asked for clarification from Adam Spear, RTC Legal Counsel on Item 4.4.1, which was requested to be pulled via public comment.

Adam Spear, RTC Legal Counsel, staff has recommended that this item not be pulled and that the Board consider and approve the item. Thank you.

#### **4.1    Minutes**

- 4.1.1 Approve the meeting minutes for the 09/20/2024 RTC 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**

- 4.3.1 Approve the RTC staff recommended appointments/reappointments to the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC) with terms through June 2025. (For Possible Action)

## **4.4 Engineering Department**

- 4.4.1 Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a fee simple interest in, and a temporary construction easement interest on, portions of APN 013-052-26 from Mill Street, LLC, which are needed to construct the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.2 Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a fee simple interest in, and a temporary construction easement interest on, portions of APN 013-081-29 from Golden Valley Holdings, LLC, which are needed to construct the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.3 Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a fee simple interest in, and a permanent utility easement and a temporary construction easement on, portions of APN 013-082-16 from South Revocable Trust, which are needed to construct the Mill Street Capacity and Safety project. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.4 Approve a contract with Eastern Sierra Engineering, P.C. (ESE) to provide engineering services for the 7th Street, 6th Street and West Street Pavement Rehabilitation Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$482,840. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.5 Approve a contract with DOWL, LLC for design services and engineering during construction for the White Fir Rehabilitation Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$725,667. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.6 Approve a contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., to provide engineering services for the Moya Boulevard Safety & Capacity Project from Red Rock Boulevard to Echo Avenue, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,682,506. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.7 Approve a contract with CA Group, Inc. for construction management services related to the Arlington Avenue Bridges Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,898,475. (For Possible Action)

- 4.4.8 Approve a contract with Nichols Consulting Engineers, CHTD, for the 2025 Pavement Condition Data Collection Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$221,583. (For Possible Action)

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

- 4.5.1 Approve an update to the RTC Safety Management System Plan (Safety Management Plan) as required by 49 C.F.R. Part 673 and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) General Directive 24-1. (For Possible Action)

On motion of Vice Chair Hill to approve the consent items, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that all Consent items be approved.

#### ***Item 5 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS***

- 5.1 Receive an update on future plans for improvement at 4th Street Station for discussion and possible direction. (Informational Only)

Jim Gee, Director of Public Transportation, I'm here to give a presentation on the importance of Fourth Street Station and future improvements for that area.

Fourth Street Station is our key transit hub in the heart of downtown Reno. It was built in 2010 and serves 17 of our 20 routes. Approximately one third of our passengers flow through that station every day, and quite simply, it is the largest, busiest location in our RTC network. It's where our two BRT lines cross and it's where our two main corridors cross. Again, one third of our passengers flow through that station.

A lot has changed since 2010, and those changes have been accelerated because of Covid 19. There are some operational deficiencies that have occurred and developed over the last 15 years. The station has been opened along with the changing needs of our passengers that we also wish to address.

Operationally, the station lies bounded by Lake Evans and Fourth Street, so it's landlocked on three sides by large, busy thoroughfares. What we have seen over time is an increase in passenger circulation and people moving around the neighborhood due to increased walkability. We have certainly more micro-mobility at the station with scooters and bicycling, and all of those create conflict with our buses. Additionally, we have the need for additional bus bays, additional parking for our customers and contractors, and additional charging opportunities. In 2010, when the station was built, we had zero electric buses. We now have one-third of our fleet as electric, and while we have some overhead charging at the station, that overhead charging itself is antiquated due to technology and the newest form of charging depot charging really takes more real estate than an overhead system.

To address those operational needs, we are proposing a potential expansion to land to the south. There are currently three parcels that are owned by the City of Reno that extend between the existing Fourth Street Station and the railroad tracks. Those three parcels would allow us room to look at additional charging opportunities and at the same time, give us an opportunity to look at how our passengers and how the neighborhood flows through and around that station by walking and micromobility. I would just like to note that we have such limited opportunities for expansion

because of where the station is, that we really should try to take advantage of expansion when we can.

We also have a significant change, especially since Covid with our passenger needs. This photo is of the inside of our station at 11:00 in the morning and it's pretty empty. What we've noticed with our passengers is the old model of walking up to a customer service window, and talking to a live customer service person simply doesn't happen that much anymore. What we have now is technology, and so our passengers pull out their apps, they look at their phone, they look at their technology board and they use that instead of personal interaction with customer service.

The other thing we've noticed is the needs of our passengers have changed from a transportation need to almost a social need. They're stressed in their lives, and they have trouble accessing information and services, either because they don't have the time or they don't have the wherewithal to access them. What we currently do is we partner with the Downtown Reno Partnership and have their folks come on site to our facility approximately 200 times a month to give services to our passengers. I'm very proud of this relationship because it really flips the model that instead of telling passengers, sorry, you have to go somewhere else to get services, we're allowing the services to come to our passengers where they are in their daily lives.

With us this morning is the Executive Director of the Downtown Reno Partnership, Neoma Jardon, and I'd like to ask her to come forward, if she would, to make a few comments.

Neoma Jardon, Executive Director, Downtown Reno Partnership. Thank you, Jim, and good morning, everybody. For about the last two years I've been at the helm of guiding our 36 Ambassadors and staff that work 24/7 to help connect individuals in the public realm to the myriad of services that we have in the community. That means everything from somebody needing their driver's license, going to the Social Security office, needing a ride to a shelter, or they may need to the VA Hospital. We are generally the first point of contact that assesses and figures out what the need is, and then we transport those individuals to that need.

Our relationship with the RTC over the last 4 or 5 years now has been really great in the sense of augmenting some security at the Fourth Street Station. Connecting with individuals and the demographics at the Fourth Street Station is exactly the clientele that we work with intimately every single day. I saw that window up there that's not being used. Imagine if we could be there as a guide and a service for somebody who got off the Amtrak Train and they knew that there was a bus stop, but they didn't know where things were? They didn't know services. They didn't know anything. We could be that guide to help them get to that point. I see this partnership that we have with the RTC as a great thing, and I see its potential to being even greater.

Just a couple of quick stats over the last year, we have done over 482 wellness checks of the ridership at the Fourth Street Station. What that means is making sure that people there are okay, because sometimes you see somebody and they might be slumped over, they might need medical assistance, they might be having a mental health crisis, they might be having some other issues, and they might need our help. We help 482 people on average in a year. We made 98 referrals to a myriad of services and 204 safe walks. Over 1,400 directions were provided and we collected over 36,000 pounds of trash from the RTC location. That's the information I have and Thank you.

Jim Gee, our next steps are for the property acquisition, we will finish a NEPA Analysis, that follows all the Federal rules and looks at the potential for acquiring that property. Coming to the Board next month will be an updated contract with the Downtown Reno Partnership to extend our current agreement years into the future. We're also working on updating the graphics and looks at both of our facilities to quite simply, make them more cool looking and make them more visually appealing to our customers. New information kiosks are being installed at the end of the year. New call center is being established here at the Terminal building, which has more parking for our passengers and has better accessibility for a lot of the seniors who need services that aren't directly related to RIDE. As I mentioned, we're looking at not only having a contractual relationship with the Downtown Reno Partnership, but actually having them physically at our facility, which I think is just a great model for transit in general to have them there, providing services for passengers that are outside of our expertise. With that, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Commissioner Garcia, this is an incredibly efficient and hard working team, who have a very strong presence in the community, and I don't think you get enough kudos for the amount of work and heavy lifting you do downtown. So, thank you. I would like to know what the configuration of the space is and what your operational needs are from an Ambassador standpoint?

Neoma Jardon, as far as operational needs are concerned, our Ambassadors are constantly in and out of the facility and they do have equipment, but most of the time they're on foot. However, they do use Segways and bikes sometimes. It really is a centralized location where they can have a meeting space, have a place where they can get their equipment, a place to deploy from, a place where they can do briefings from shift to shift. We do work 24/7, so the ability to just have some area for them to have some meeting spaces would be fantastic. I'm not sure the configuration currently works out ideally because it is just such a big, vast open space, but I think a place for storage and for 45 people to be able to come in and out of is really kind of the needs and some administrative offices and conference space as well.

Jim Gee, on our current configuration, we have two buildings at that facility. The north building is the larger of the two facilities and it holds our customer service. It has restrooms and a lobby area for passengers. There is currently a large empty room along the north side of it that is frankly not used at all. Then the customer service section will be moving here to the Terminal building, which will free up a lot of space in that building. The south building, which is smaller, that's where we house our security and our drivers for breaks and reliefs. The drivers have a lounge that they can use to watch TV and eat their lunch. There's a quiet room for drivers and also some workout equipment for them, for those who like to work out during the break.

Vice Chair Hill, I love this partnership, it reminds me of when the RCA partnered with Reno to have a visitor's center downtown. I feel like the DRP is a great partner to lead with empathy and ensure that we treat everyone with dignity and get our guests to where they need to go, and also support them in additional services. I know this model has been on our podcasts about how do we serve our really low income residents, homeless residents, because they're on the buses? We know where they are and where to find them, so how do we make sure that we're interfacing with them? I love this partnership because I know that DRP has been such a great partner with the CARES Campus and with the County, and making sure that we have that warm handoff when we get folks into that Campus. So, thank you for working together. I really admire the innovative approach with this. I'm really excited about it and I think the community should be really excited.

Chair Lawson, I have a question, is Plaza Street part of the purchase? I was just thinking, if we own Plaza Street to close that off on either end, it makes it even more secure.

Jim Gee, I know the map is a little misleading. Plaza Street is the cut through for our buses and would probably continue to be. So, we have a couple of bus bays on the south side of that south building, and then parking for employees, contractors and passengers who need services on the south of that. So, right now we have passengers cutting through bus lanes, and it's just simply not a great configuration for safety reasons.

## ***Item 6           REPORTS (Informational Only)***

### **6.1    RTC Executive Director Report**

1. As you know, Nevada's Legislative Session begins in February.
  - We are looking at Bill Draft Requests that could potentially affect us. Once again, we will put a legislative subcommittee together that will include our Board Chair, Vice Chair, and RTC staff. The subcommittee will discuss our support or opposition to specific bills as they come up without violating open meeting law. Legislative committees often hold hearings on bills with very little notice, so this allows us to respond quickly. Mike Hillerby and our team will be paying close attention throughout the session and will keep us in the loop as legislation comes up.
2. I would like to thank our Facilities and Fleet Maintenance team for their great work on a recent project.
  - They installed three bus shelters at the Washoe County "Our Place" Campus last month. Mark Schlador, Derek Campbell, Robert Boisvert, James Ross and Wes Hall did a lot of this work on their own time. Wes even took on the task of piecing together about dozen wrecked shelters to make three usable ones out of them. My thanks to the Reno Rotary and the Director of the facility – Elizabeth Pope for presenting this opportunity to help our community in a meaningful way – and former RTC Executive Director Jerry Hall for bringing this to our attention. And thanks to Jim Gee for giving the green light to accomplish this job. The RTC is always looking at ways to improve the quality of life in our community.
3. Speaking of F-M, congratulations to Robert Boisvert.
  - Robert is celebrating his fifth anniversary at the RTC. He does a great job to help maintain our facilities and he's a very valuable member of the team. Thanks for all of your work, Robert.
4. Please, welcome the newest member of the RTC team – Thomas Connell.
  - Thomas started September 25th as RTC's new IT Analyst. He studied computer science at TMCC and has various IT certifications. He comes to us from a local company called URBN, where he supported various Windows, Linux, and Mac workstations, servers etc. His duties include user & technical support functions for our network and systems. Welcome to the team, Thomas. We look forward to your expertise and success here at the RTC.
5. The RTC has been making it a priority to engage with the community on what we do here.
  - We have had several public meetings on various upcoming projects. We are also focusing on specific neighborhoods by giving presentations at all of the NABs and CABs where we operate. We know how important it is for the public to be aware of what we are doing. Staff from our Engineering, Planning, Public Transit, and Comms Teams are doing a great job to get the word out about these important projects.

6. As you know, the election is Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - Once again, we will provide free transit for everyone on Election Day to give voters a convenient option to get to polling locations. We encourage every eligible voter to cast a ballot – and public transit is a great way to do that. In addition, we will provide free public transit for Veterans Day on Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. This free service is available to everyone – and it's a great way for us to show our gratitude to our veterans and active military members.
7. The MTM Employee of the Month is Michael Medina.
  - Michael has been driving for MTM since March 2018 – so six-and-a-half years. He enjoys being his own boss when he is out on the road and likes to make a positive impact on his passengers by giving them a way to get around. He is a big football fan and supports the Kansas City Chiefs. Michael lives with his wife and youngest son. He also has two other sons who live in Modesto and Sparks – and a daughter in Georgia. Since he has five Grandkids, his other hobby of playing in the Casinos is now a thing of the past. Congratulations, Michael – and thank you for your hard work.
8. The Keolis Driver of the Month is Sean Mahoney.
  - Sean's accomplishments in September included a 95 percent on-time performance, zero preventable accidents, and no customer complaints. Sean has worked as a bus operator for RIDE since 2019. He's originally from Chico, where he also worked as a bus operator. Sean is hoping to eventually become a road supervisor and works hard to accomplish that goal, every day. His hobbies include watching football and spending time with his daughter.

## **6.2 RTC Federal Report**

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer. Congress is in recess until after the election, but there has been some pressure to possibly bring them back a little bit early to deal with some of the loan funding because of the recent hurricanes. Speaker Johnson says that that's probably not going to happen because they don't expect to have any funding available until mid-November anyway, so more than likely that won't happen. The election is obviously top of mind right now with the presidency and who's going to control Congress. We'll see how that could potentially affect funding down the road. The FTA and NHTSA issued a recall on some Proterra buses, and these are just a few models that were built between 2020 and 2022. RTC has two of these buses, but it's just a simple software update to slow down a radiator fan, which is in process and should be completed by the weekend. Federal district courts in Kentucky and Texas ruled against a proposed emissions measure that basically kills the rule that would require state and local governments to track emissions. The Biden administration has appealed that decision. The Congressional Budget Office came out with projections for the Highway Trust Fund over the next decade, and the shortfall is forecast to be about \$210 million for the highway account and \$73 million for the transit account. Coming up with that funding has been debated for quite a while, because Congress hasn't raised the fuel tax on the federal level, and they also haven't come up with new funding for things like road user charges.

## **6.3 NDOT Director Report**

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

- Pyramid Highway – 75% Complete
- The Davis Fire Collaboration
- Three Major Fires in July, August and September
- Lithium Battery Fires – US 95, I-80 and I-15



- Lithium Summit
- NDOT Received a \$275 Million Grant for the widening of I-80 from Vista Boulevard out to USA Parkway. We are very excited about that.

**Item 7            COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

Vice Chair Hill, on the public comment we received on the ACCESS shuttle and getting shuttle drivers back. I don't know what that means and I would like us to get an update at the next meeting, so we can understand what is going on.

We did our Youth Ride Free Pilot this summer, and I'd love to receive some data on how that went. I'm hearing from some high school principals that kids who don't have transportation are not able to stay after school for their sports, and so they'd like to have RTC support kids to get home on the buses, but that's an additional expense. Any information on that to see if there are partnerships and if that was a successful program and if we want to do that further, that would be great.

Regarding the public comment on the benches. I know we've done some amazing improvements this year to many of our bus stops, and it would just be great to get an update on how we're going to continue those improvements through the rest of the bus stops and the community.

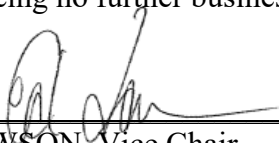
I want to give Maria Paz Fernandez a big shout out for the Liberty Bell Wagon Preservation. Incredible work and that was a great story that ran in the local news. That's an icon for locals like me and I'm excited that it's preserved. Those are my comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Item 8            PUBLIC INPUT**

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. Being none, he moved to adjournment.

**Item 9            ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.



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ED LAWSON, Vice Chair  
Regional Transportation Commission

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