

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:00 A.M.

January 17, 2025

PRESENT:

**Ed Lawson, Chair, Mayor of Sparks
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner
Clara Andriola, Washoe County Commissioner (Alternate)
Devon Reese, Reno City Council
Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director of NDOT (Alternate)**

ABSENT:

**Alexis Hill, Vice Chair, Washoe County Commissioner
Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno
Tracy Larkin Thomason, Director of NDOT**

The regular monthly meeting, held in the 1st 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.

Heidi Soper, resident of Sun Valley for 37 years. I'm also the Vice Chair of the Sun Valley Cab. Commissioner Garcia has been wonderful keeping us updated on the grant situation for Sun Valley. I want to thank the staff of the RTC for submitting the Reconnect Community Grant. Unfortunately, we didn't get it, but they're finding project grants to apply for. I know that the that the application process is a lot of work, and I appreciate you all. Not many infrastructure improvements have been made during the past years, and we are growing so quickly. We are in desperate need of major improvements in Sun Valley and are thankful that this need has been recognized, and federal financial assistance is being sought. I know the RTC staff and Commissioner Garcia are working hard to bring the infrastructure needed to Sun Valley and on behalf of the Valley, I want to tell everyone thank you for your hard work and you are appreciated.

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Reese noted that Item 5.1 should be changed to “informational only”, as it was not possible for action at this time.

On Motion of Commissioner Reese to approve the change, seconded by Commissioner Mariluz Garcia, Chair Lawson ordered the change to Item 5.1 be approved.

Items 4 CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Andriola pointed out that since she did not attend the December 20, 2024 meeting, that she should be removed from making a motion on Item 4.1.1.

Commissioner Reese motioned to remove Item 4.1.1 from the Consent Agenda and then to approve all remaining items, which was seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that all remaining items be approved, less Item 4.1.1.

Commissioner Reese motioned that Item 4.1.1 be approved, with Commissioner Andriola abstaining from that agenda item, which was seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that Item 4.1.1 be approved.

4.1 Minutes

- 4.1.1 Approve the meeting minutes for the 12/20/2024 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 Engineering Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation and Operations Activity Report. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Outreach Report from the Communications staff. (For Possible Action)
- 4.2.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly summary report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees. (For Possible Action)

4.3 Planning Department

- 4.3.1 Acknowledge receipt of information on the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program award and execution of the grant agreement. (For Possible Action)
- 4.3.2 Approve the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CTP). (For Possible Action)

4.4 Engineering Department

- 4.4.1 Acknowledge receipt of information regarding an automatic annual increase of 4.3% to the Regional Road Impact Fees as allowed by NRS 278B.225 and required by ordinances adopted by Washoe County, the City of Reno, and the City of Sparks. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.2 Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a temporary construction easement interest on a portion of APN 037-020-26 and 037-020-33 from Prime Park Vista, LLC, which are

- needed to construct the Sparks Blvd Capacity Improvement 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 easement and a temporary construction easement interest on, portions of APN 036-540-08 from RJ Plaza, LLC, which are needed to construct the Sparks Blvd Capacity Improvement Project. (For Possible Action)
 - 4.4.4 Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire a fee simple in, and a temporary construction easement interest on, portions of APN 037-400-10 from Surf Thru, Inc., which are needed to construct the Sparks Blvd Capacity Improvement Project. (For Possible Action)
 - 4.4.5 Approve a contract with HDR Engineering, Inc., to perform construction management services related to the Sparks Boulevard Capacity Improvement Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$6,598,061. (For Possible Action)
 - 4.4.6 Approve Amendment No. 2 to the contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., for engineering during construction and construction surveying for the Arlington Avenue Bridges Project, in the amount of \$609,891, for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$5,005,639. (For Possible Action)
 - 4.4.7 Approve a contract with Parametrix, Inc., for environmental and design services related to the Sixth Street for All Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,720,536. (For Possible Action)
 - 4.4.8 Approve a contract with Construction Materials Engineers, Incorporated for construction management services associated with the Mill Street Capacity and Safety Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,340,788. (For Possible Action)

Item 5 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 Receive a presentation on the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Update (RTP). (Informational Only)

Vanessa Lacer, RTC Planning Director, gave a presentation and overview the draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

This effort has been going on for about a year and a half, you've received several updates along the way, and we are now in draft. I just want to commend our RTC staff for all their hard work and dedication to this project and thank our community members and stakeholders for all of their time and energy that they've provided along the way. This is a guiding document of the RTC, and it is truly a team effort.

There are really four main reasons why we do this plan. RTC is a unique organization and we have three core services. We build roadways and transportation facilities, we run transit and we're also the Regional Planning Organization and the Metropolitan Planning Organization for our region. The majority of which is Washoe County and is also a federal designation. It's also required by state law, so our counterpart here in the region for land use planning is the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency. They develop long range plans for land use and they are required to have a transportation element of that plan. This RTP is that transportation element. Third, this plan is required for us to be eligible to receive federal dollars for our region. Then finally, this plan is required for project implementation.

The RTIP is a five-year outlook, but it is updated every two years. All the projects included in RTIP must be in the RTP. Everything starts with a high level look that RTP. Another key consideration are the Street and Highway ICAs. While they are a two year look, they do get updated annually. So, while we're starting with this long range look out to 25 years. We do keep an eye on the projects and we are revising every single year.

We developed goals and we have a scoring tool. We're now ready to dig into the project development process and we started with our current RTP projects to see if any are ready to move forward or if we need to adjust any for today's current situation? We then had a call for projects from our member jurisdictions, that way they all had the same bite at the apple, the ability to submit projects to us that perhaps weren't on that draft list or had emerged since the current projects were created four years ago. We took all that information and created a very long draft list. We then developed a project scope and an estimated cost for each one of those projects to really understand what they were and how much potentially they would cost. We developed four broad categories of projects during this process and I would like to mention that NDOT projects are also included in this. We had freeway capacity, spot intersection and multimodal which multimodal is the bike and pedestrian project.

From the project list developed, we sent those projects through the scoring tool to develop a prioritized project list to understand which projects were going to best achieve our goals that we'd set out and the intention here is to get to a fiscally constrained project list. That is a required element of the plan. Basically, that means that the project list we're providing is not a wish list. These are projects that can actually be built with the money coming into the region.

The Draft Project List is in Appendix B of the draft plan. First the projects are going to be listed in two time frames. The first 10 years, 2025 to 2034 and then the next 15, 2035 to 2050, then there is a list of unfunded projects. I want to note that there are many needs in our community. We were not able to identify funding for all of them, however, we have included them in this plan as that unfunded project list. You can think of this as the short list should more funding become available or grants become available, then we can go to this unfunded list and know what's next. On our website <https://rtcwashoe.com/planning/regional-planning/rtp/> there is a clickable map for folks to take a look at the projects. You can click on the dots and lines and see what kind of project they are, if they're funded, and if so, in what time frame. There is also a comment form where folks can leave some comments.

We're currently in our public engagement round two that concludes on February 1st. We also have the plan being reviewed by three advisory groups; our Plan Agency Working Group, our Technical Advisory Committee, and our Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee are all going to provide comments. We'll take all of that information and put that into a final plan and then bring that back to you in February for adoption.

Commissioner Garcia, Thank you Vanessa. When you took the call for proposals and you did the scoring tool and applied the financial projections to it, what was the initial list and how many projects were listed?

Vanessa Lacer, the sort of laundry list of projects was quite long, being close to 200 or so and was drilled down to a little over 100. We were able to take a hard look at developing the scope of the projects and we were able to identify alternate funding for some and able to move some to our programs. So, all the projects that were moved up had alternate funding identified.

Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director, there's two things that jumped out to me. The most overwhelming issue the majority of people had was with congestion. The other one was driver behavior. A lot of people were quite upset with the way people drive on the road. So that one's a little more challenging because we're talking about behavioral and not physical improvements, but certainly it does weave back into the safety component of the priorities and the goals. I just wanted to share that as kind of the overriding ones. I don't think this is shocking to anybody, but that's what the community told us were the most important concerns.

Commissioner Reese, thank you so much for the excellent presentation, the work has been incredibly well done. On behalf of the City of Reno and their staff, all of the staff level issues were addressed and all of them were answered and worked through. It wasn't that everyone always agreed at every moment, but I think there were ways to find room for agreement. So, I just want to thank you for that. I think it's important because when we sit on these bodies where we are regionally focused and therefore have three different jurisdictions, we also have at times different thoughts about roadway policies. One of the things I'm grateful for, though, is there is just a true sense of collegiality among the staffs. They are professionals towards one another, the work that they do and so I really just want to say thank you from me to you. It's really from them who are making those thanks, but also to my colleagues on the Board.

Everyone seems just focused on the goal, which is a greater transportation infrastructure, mobility for our bus users and our fixed route users, and some growth in the area of environmental sustainability, which I think has been very much a key to this Board's effort. These are important documents, and they will guide our decisions for many years.

5.2 Receive a presentation on the RTC Communications and Outreach Program. (Informational Only)

Josh McEachern, RTC Public Information Officer and Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer gave a presentation and discussed the following.

Josh McEachern, we wanted to give a bird's eye view of the communications and outreach strategies/activities that we typically employ as the comms team.

Some of the highlights this year included the Arlington Bridges groundbreaking with Secretary Buttigieg. We do a lot of work with the media on ribbon cuttings, things like the Reno and Sparks events, public pop-ups and presentations. Many of you have attended these and I hope that you had a good time when you did. We work through these with the help of our FM Department and our Agency Services Department, and we did about 70 events in 2024, which is amazing.

Paul Nelson, when it comes to media availability, we have built a very good relationship with our local media. My realm was in the media for a long time, so once Josh started, we were able to schedule meetings with the three local TV stations. I was able to introduce Josh to the news directors, the assignment managers, and he has really taken that and ran with it. He's done a great job with the media, getting to know each and every one of them. They also like to call us impromptu and ask us to come over and do live interviews. So, we have a good relationship with them.

When it comes to presentations with Government Affairs, this was a pretty busy summer with growth and infrastructure. We did five presentations back to back talking about various issues. We also did a presentation in Carson City with the Silver Haired Committee talking about some of the programs we have for seniors. We are very proactive when it comes to getting out into our community to talk to the

different Citizen Advisory Boards, Neighborhood Advisory Boards, Citizen Advisory Committee and the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. Between those, we did about 12 presentations, and then a couple of them invited us back to do some follow-ups as well.

We partner with a lot of people and we also have some very good community partnerships. The School District Safe Routes to School, we did the poster contest with them last year, which was a lot of fun seeing these kids that won these prizes, they were pretty excited. We did three Stuff-A-Bus events, one of them is strictly by RTC and that is the food drive we do every December. We also have one coming up next week with Washoe County for Foster Kids, and then the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, who are great partners. Vision Zero and Truckee Meadows, we are very active with them and we also do a lot of work with the Truckee Meadows Bicycle Alliance.

Josh McEachern, we do a lot of public meetings and pop ups. The Neighborhood Network plan is coming up on January 29th, and then on the 30th is our North Valleys North Virginia Project Public meeting, which is a very popular project. We partner with local news agencies, things like The Road Ahead with RTC, which you guys have probably seen or been asked to do by Paul on Channel 8. Those get great traction. They usually run about three times each on the news station. We have trade agreements with different news stations. So, when you see a KTVN ad on the side of the bus, that's usually in trade for a certain amount of airtime that we receive on those stations. We also have advertising contracts outside of those new station agreements.

Some of the things that were requested prior to me starting as the Public Information Officer was beginning the Spanish First campaign, a campaign focusing on ED Pass, which is our program that provides free rides for students and faculty at several campuses here in the area, and kind of an increase to our social media presence overall as RTC.

The ¡Sí RTC! campaign is, cross your fingers, soon to be award winning because we did submit for an APP to have the award. It focuses on Spanish speaking bus ridership. As a lot of us know, about 30% of the population here is primarily Spanish speaking. We were able to partner with Celtuce to make sure that we're creating authentic content, mostly in Spanish around Spanish family themes. Visiting areas that are more Spanish based in the Valley, we've seen just kind of unbelievable numbers at times. You can see the web stats, and you can see some of the social media reach.

Of course, my favorite part is we get a ton of positive comments from the Spanish community. They're very big RTC fans.

ED Pass is kind of a different campaign. A lot of it focuses on UNR/TMCC, I believe DRI as well, and its free rides. The whole point behind free rides for college students and faculty is a huge part of our community and the University of Nevada. The goal is to really get people introduced to the transit system early.

We have a higher reach that follows Facebook and Instagram more than Twitter and YouTube, because it's a more age appropriate demographic for a lot of our audience.

Commissioner Reese, excellent presentation and I think you're doing an outstanding job. I noticed this morning at about 7:00 a.m. someone responding to a rider on Twitter. I appreciate that, I mean we all answer texts, emails, those sort of things at inappropriate hours, but I'm hopeful that our staff is not doing that because that's a little early to be working the internet. In any event, I appreciate the response to the concerned resident and we communicate where we have to, so thank you and I think you're again doing an excellent job.

Commissioner Andriola, I really appreciate not only the planning, but also being really forward thinking. For instance, you've reached out to present at the February 5th Spanish Springs CAB, and it's not the first time, but certainly that's my district. It's very enthusiastically attended and being able to provide information and facts is really, really important. I also want to give you a huge amount of thanks for really representing the community to which we all are serving, whether it's Stuff-A-Bus, free rides, foster kids, Seniors or vulnerable populations, whoever it might be, you have a small but mighty team. To Commissioner Reese's point, I also see activity and I'm like, wow, those folks are on it. So, kudos to you, I hope you get some sleep. The fact that you really are trying to be proactive and trying to share information that's fact based so that people can actually understand what's coming or how their feedback can be considered as you're moving through with the planning that we've seen is fantastic.

- 5.3 Elect a Commissioner representing Washoe County to serve as RTC Chair for calendar years 2025 and 2026, and elect a Commissioner to serve as RTC Vice Chair for calendar years 2025 and 2026. (For Possible Action)

Commissioner Garcia, I wanted to say thank you Chair Lawson for your leadership and being so welcoming. I'm one of the newer RTC commissioners, and I just wanted to tell you what a joy it is to serve with you on all of these regional boards. Today as we hand off the torch, I would like to recommend that we nominate Alexis Hill as Chair and Devon Reese as Vice Chair. And that is my motion.

Chair Lawson, we have a motion, do I have a second?

Commissioner Andriola Seconded.

Chair Lawson, I got a second. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All those in favor signify by saying aye. All Aye. Motion carries unanimously.

Ed Lawson, before I hand over the gavel, I want to say thank you to the staff and everybody who works with us on the Board. I got almost two and a half years as chair, so it was a long time and you guys have been a joy to work with. Not that I'm going anywhere. I'm just not going to be in the hot seat anymore, but I can't thank you enough for all you do and the professionalism that you show to our community. So, thank you and with that, Vice Chair Reese, you have the gavel.

Vice Chair Reese, nothing like having to take over and fill those shoes. I'll echo some of the comments made by Commissioner Garcia and that is to say, Mayor Lawson, we have the privilege of serving on a number of boards together, and all of them are gracious and easy interactions. It's a privilege to serve with you and it's been a privilege to have you as the Chair of the RTC. Thank you so much.

Item 6 REPORTS (Informational Only)

6.1 RTC Executive Director Report

This is my chance to thank Mayor Lawson for all the help he's given me in the past. I hadn't realized, but you're right, it's been two and a half years. I think we've done a lot of good things, and a lot of that is really attributable to his leadership and you all working as a group. I appreciate Mayor Lawson's approach to all the more challenging issues I've brought to him. He's always been consistent about looking at what is the right thing for the community. He's been a great mentor and a guide to me. I am

really happy that he's still on the board. So that's even better, right? You have a change of leadership, but you also have the same people. I'm very blessed and I just wanted to start by thanking you, sir for your efforts.

1. First of all – I want to congratulate Commissioner Hill in her new role as the RTC Board Chair.
 - We know her knowledge and experience will help us move forward and continue our success in regional transportation.
 - I also want to thank you, Mayor Lawson – for your service over the last two years.
 - We have been very successful under your leadership and we've accomplished a lot of good things for our region.
 - Even though your term as chair has come to an end – we are still very lucky to have you continue as one of our board members.
2. We are participating in Transportation Day at the legislative building on Tuesday, February 4th.
 - We are looking forward to discussing some of our legislative priorities with our state lawmakers.
 - We'll also be giving a presentation to at least one of the Growth and Infrastructure Committees.
 - We expect a good event with a lot of stakeholders attending.
 - Thank you to our partners and consultants for sponsoring this event.
3. We also met with some of our local legislators, earlier this week.
 - This was a great opportunity to give them a better understanding of what we do at the RTC – and what our priorities are.
 - We had a very good discussion on some of the things that they can do during the legislative session to help us – and improve transportation in our community.
 - They asked a lot of good questions and our directors were there to answer each one of them.
 - The legislative session begins two weeks from Monday.
4. As you know, many transit agencies are having challenges when it comes to hiring bus operators.
 - One of those challenges is that drivers have to pass a mechanical portion to get their Commercial Driver's Licenses.
 - It's called the "Under-the-hood" testing requirement.
 - That doesn't make a lot of sense for most transit agencies who have hired mechanics who can quickly respond when a bus breaks down.
 - The American Public Transportation Association is requesting a five-year exemption from this testing requirement to improve their ability to hire drivers.
 - We agree with this waiver, so Jim Gee is writing a letter on our behalf to make this request.
5. Once again, the RTC is partnering with Washoe County for a Stuff A Bus event.
 - Next Friday, we will have a bus at the Sparks Target from noon to 4 o'clock to collect donations of winter clothing for adoptive and foster children throughout the Truckee Meadows.
 - We know foster parents take on additional financial responsibilities, so this is a great way to help our neighbors and keep these kids warm during the winter months.
6. Our second annual Pedestrian Safety Message Poster Contest is underway.
 - This is a partnership with Safe Routes to School to encourage kids to think about pedestrian safety.
 - Washoe County students of all ages can participate in the contest.
 - Our staff will judge the posters and choose a winner from the elementary, middle and high school groups.
 - Safe Routes to School will provide an iPad and a new bike to each of the three winners.
 - We will enlarge those three winning posters to display on the side of a bus.

- We plan on bringing one of the buses to an upcoming board meeting and we'll announce the winners at an assembly at each of their schools.
7. Congratulations to Austin McCoy on his first anniversary with RTC.
 - Austin is one of our engineers and is the project manager of several of our active projects – including the Pyramid/Highland Ranch interchange and the Military Road Capacity project.
 - He is off to a great start and we look forward to his continued success in the years to come.
 8. The MTM Employee of the Month for December is Jerico White
 - Jerico has been part of the MTM team for a year, has a perfect safety record, doesn't call in, and his passengers like him. He enjoys driving and meeting new people – so he says this job is just right for him. Outside of work he enjoys photography, gaming, and trying new foods. He's even prepared to travel to taste something new. Jerico enjoys watching motor sports and follows the Steelers and Raiders in the NFL.
 9. The Keolis Driver of the Month is Harold Smith.
 - Harold is originally from San Francisco but moved to Reno in 2017. He started working as a RIDE bus operator back in August. His accomplishments in December consist of a 97 percent on-time performance, zero preventable accidents, and no customer complaints. Harold enjoys playing sports like basketball and football – and he used to be a professional boxer. When he's not driving a bus, he works as a D.J.

6.2 RTC Federal Report

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer. The new Congress is officially in session and President Biden will be leaving office Monday when Donald Trump has his inauguration day. The Senate held confirmation hearings this week for many of the secretary nominees, including Sean Duffy for Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Duffy didn't receive a lot of push back from the Senate, but we did get a little more insight about how he plans his approach in the role. His main priority is highway safety, and a big part of that is because his wife survived a head on crash when a driver fell asleep at the wheel. Duffy did vote against Amtrak funding as a member of Congress, but he said he will work to continue funding and approve projects and expend money from the IJA in the future. Trump has also picked Stephen Bradbury as Deputy Secretary. Congress will have three major priorities in the coming months. The first one is raising or suspending the debt limit, and Republicans will be passing 1 or 2 reconciliation bills as part of Trump's agenda, including extending the 2017 tax cuts, repealing parts of the Inflation Reduction Act, and bolstering border security.

Congress will also have to pass the appropriations bills by March 14th. The NOFO closes February 24th, and as you know, we are in the process of applying for that grant for the Sun Valley Community Gateway project for \$40 million.

6.3 NDOT Director Report

NDOT Deputy Director Sajid Sulahria gave a presentation and a summary on the following topics:

- Traffic Safety
- Interstate 80, West Reno Improvements anticipated for 2026
- Statewide Wildlife Infrastructure Evaluation. Feral Horses are not included, because they are managed by the Department of Wildlife
- Honorary Highway Signs for Washoe County Deputy Sheriff Frank Minnie, Sr. and Pyramid Lake Tribal Officer Anthony Francone.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

None

Item 8 PUBLIC INPUT

Vice Chair Reese 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.

Ms. Cynthia Cooper, local resident, I just had a couple of ideas about Outreach for bus riders that may be helpful. Don't forget about your radio audience. After all, when we're driving in our cars, many of us listen to the radio stations. Maybe you can get UNR and some of the commercial radio stations to participate in encouraging ridership. I am aware that the Truckee Meadows Bike Alliance have been initiating communications with the Aces staff for Aces Baseball games and suggesting that maybe they can provide an incentive for people to attend the Aces Baseball games. With Aces games you could address congestion, protect air quality, and potentially expand your ridership. I bet everybody drove their car to this meeting this morning, right? Also, we have 25,000 employees, something like that out at TRIC. I don't know what the current statistics are, but I would love to see ridership increased by carpooling, van pooling, and also the bus lines.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.



DEVON REESE, Vice Chair
Regional Transportation Commission

****Copies of all presentations are available by contacting Michelle Kraus at mkraus@rtcwashoe.com.**