

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:01 A.M.

August 15, 2025

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair, Washoe County Commissioner
Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks (Departed Meeting @ 10:43 a.m.)
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner
Devon Reese, Vice Chair, Reno City Council (Departed Meeting @ 10:47 a.m.)
Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno
Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director of NDOT (Alternate)**

ABSENT:

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 Hill. The Board conducted the following business:

Item 1 CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Hill opened the public comment period. No public comment was received.

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Lawson to approve, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Hill ordered that this item be approved.

Items 4 CONSENT ITEMS

4.1 Minutes

- 4.1.1 Approve the meeting minutes for the 07/18/2025 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 Approve the Central Reno/Midtown Neighborhood Network Plan. (For Possible Action)

4.4 Engineering Department

- 4.4.1 Approve a contract with DOWL, LLC to provide design and construction services related to the Smithridge Drive Rehabilitation Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,385,009.02. (For Possible Action)

4.5 Public Transportation/Operations Department

- 4.5.1 Acknowledge receipt of this quarterly Construction/Maintenance update on Transit Stops as presented to the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee on August 6, 2025. (For Possible Action)

4.6 Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments

- 4.6.1 Approve two contracts with Clarity Partners, LLC: 1) a contract to refresh RTC's website in an amount not-to-exceed \$99,620; and 2) a contract for maintenance and support of RTC's website for a three-year period in an amount not-to-exceed \$84,400. (For Possible Action)

On motion of Commissioner Schieve to approve, seconded by Vice Chair Reese, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Hill ordered that this item be approved.

Item 5 PUBLIC HEARING

- 5.1 Conduct a public hearing regarding approval of the Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2025-2029 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP); adopt a resolution approving the RTIP and approve a self-certification regarding the metropolitan transportation planning process. (For Possible Action)
 - a. Staff Presentation
 - b. Public Hearing
 - c. Action

Graham Dollarhide, RTC Transportation Planning Manager, presented the final FFY 2025–2029 RTIP.

Mr. Dollarhide explained that most changes from the previous 2023–2027 plan were administrative in nature, with a small number of amendment-level changes. Two projects were removed: the Moana Lane Multimodal and ADA project (reprioritized during the RTP update) and the Rosewood

Trailhead project (lead agency unable to accept funds). Thirteen new projects were added, along with several programmatic efforts.

Mr. Dollarhide emphasized that the plan remains fiscally constrained, requires no additional air quality conformity analysis, and has undergone the required public review process.

The public participation period closed earlier in the week with no public comments received. Minor administrative updates will follow, including updated public health data and revised language to satisfy Section 5307 requirements.

Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director, added that the project list reflects the priorities of the region's jurisdictions and highlighted that needs continue to exceed available resources.

Chair Hill emphasized the importance of Pyramid Corridor improvements and bus stop upgrades. Vice Chair Reese thanked staff for their iterative and transparent process. Commissioner Garcia praised the balanced approach and commended staff for addressing diverse priorities.

Chair Hill opened the public comment period. No public comment was received.

On motion of Commissioner Schieve to approve, seconded by Commission Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Hill ordered that this item be approved.

Item 6 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Receive a Guinn Center report regarding available funding alternatives to construct and maintain regional roadways and provide direction to staff regarding policy option(s) that could be pursued. (Informational Only)

Christian Schonlau, RTC Director of Finance, introduced Executive Director Jill Tolles of the Guinn Center.

Ms. Tolles explained that the Guinn Center is an independent, nonpartisan, data-driven research organization affiliated with the University of Nevada, Reno, and had partnered with RTC to study alternatives for funding roadways given declining revenues from fuel taxes. Ms. Tolles introduced Interim Director of Economic and Fiscal Policy, Mark Krmpotic, who delivered the presentation.

Mr. Krmpotic reviewed the rise of electric and hybrid vehicles (EVs and HEVs) in Washoe County and the corresponding decline in taxable fuel sales. He summarized three major policy alternatives implemented in other states: (1) additional registration fees, (2) vehicle miles traveled (VMT) taxes, and (3) electric charging station taxes. He also reviewed existing statutory options such as the Supplemental Governmental Services Tax (SGST) and optional sales tax increases. The Guinn Center concluded that additional registration fees may be the most viable short-term option due to ease and timeliness of implementation.

Director Thomas noted the need to work with local managers and the legislative delegation before the next session.

Commissioner Schieve stressed the public safety risks associated with EV lithium battery fires and urged that local governments remain actively involved in legislative discussions.

Commissioner Garcia compared the 400% growth in EV adoption to similar surges in education or healthcare, saying such numbers would compel immediate policy action; she also inquired about state-level EV incentives. Mr. Krmpotic responded that he was not aware of state incentives beyond past Volkswagen settlement funds used for charging stations.

Vice Chair Reese, an EV owner, stressed the need to balance road funding with continued support for clean transportation. He supported finding solutions that do not disincentivize EV adoption, which he described as the future of transportation.

Commissioner Lawson noted that previous legislative studies on this issue have gone nowhere and warned that until road conditions deteriorate to an unacceptable level, the legislature may not act. He specifically raised concerns about heavy delivery trucks like those used by Amazon operating without contributing fuel tax revenue.

Sajid Sulahria, NDOT Deputy Director, confirmed that statewide transportation funding remains under review.

6.2 Receive a presentation on RTC's Public Transit Ridership. (Informational Only)

Jim Gee, RTC Director of Public Transit, reported that RTC has achieved 36 consecutive months of ridership growth, which is the longest streak since 1989. He noted that population growth and service hours increased only modestly, while ridership rose significantly (21% on RIDE, 35% on ACCESS, and 170% on FlexRIDE). Mr. Gee attributed this success to technological improvements (mobile app usage, new BRT station signs, fare system upgrades), service adjustments that enhanced reliability, and expanded FlexRIDE coverage. He highlighted strong ridership gains among younger riders, partnerships with UNR and WUSD, and growing adoption of the RTC Transit app, which saw the nation's highest increase in usage last year.

Mr. Gee recognized the great team at RTC, noting all 17 department staff members have contributed directly at some way in some point to these 36 straight months of growth. Likewise, Geo Jackson at MTM and Don Swain at Keolis, RTC's two contractors were recognized.

Board members congratulated staff on achieving growth despite industry challenges nationwide and emphasized the importance of technology, partnerships, and safety investments.

6.3 Approve a contract with CA Group, Inc., to perform design and engineering during construction services in connection with the Bus Stop Improvements 26-01 Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$300,295. (For Possible Action)

Ashley Hurlbut, RTC Project Manager, and Sai Sun, RTC Transit Planner, gave a presentation on the Bus Stop Improvement project, which will modernize stops across the region, with a focus on accessibility, passenger safety, and compliance with ADA requirements.

The nine stops that are planned to receive improvements are: E. 2nd Street at Walmart, Robb Drive at McQueen High School, El Ranch Drive at Hug High School, Terminal Way at Golden Gaming, Glendale Avenue and Demin Way, Wedekind Road at Helena Avenue, Wedekind Road at Whitfield Way, Wedekind Road at Clear Acre Lane and Sun Valley Boulevard at W. 1st Street.

These sites were picked as having the greatest priority at this time, and more routes will be evaluated going forward and be prioritized for future improvements.

The early phases of design are starting now and going through the end of this year, anticipating the final design in the spring of 2026.

Vice Chair Reese expressed specific concern over the Sharlands Avenue and Robb Drive bus stop.

Board members supported the contract, noting that improving bus stops enhances both safety and ridership. Commissioner comments emphasized that quality stops are critical to the overall passenger experience.

On motion of Commissioner Schieve to approve, seconded by Commission Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Hill ordered that this item be approved.

6.4 Receive a presentation on the Truckee River Path Inventory Study. (Informational Only)

Vanessa Lacer, RTC Planning Director, presented the Truckee River Path Inventory Study. This is a direct result of the FY 25 RTC Board Strategic Roadmap Goal No. 3, which was to explore the Truckee River as a mobility corridor.

The study area started at River Haven Drive in Reno extending to Larkin Circle in Sparks, which was 11.2 miles in total.

The study provided a comprehensive inventory of conditions along the multi-use path, including surface quality, lighting, signage, and safety features. It identified areas with erosion, flooding risks, and accessibility barriers. The study also evaluated opportunities to close gaps in the path network to improve continuity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Board members expressed strong interest in prioritizing safety improvements and ensuring the path remains a viable commuting and recreational option. They emphasized the importance of coordinating with the City of Reno, City of Sparks, Washoe County, and environmental agencies to implement recommendations.

Commissioner Garcia would like the report distributed to Parks staff at the County and Cities, as another study regarding park districts is in process, and this is an important piece of the data. Ms. Lacer will make sure they have access to it.

6.5 Receive a presentation on the Sparks Intelligent Corridors Project. (Informational Only)

Alex Wolfson, RTC Project Manager, outlined the Sparks Intelligent Corridors Project, which introduces advanced traffic management technology in key areas of Sparks. The project integrates adaptive traffic signal systems, real-time traffic monitoring, and data-sharing infrastructure.

Goals include reducing congestion, improving travel time reliability, and enhancing safety for all modes of transportation.

Commissioner Lawson praised the project as a major step forward for Sparks, highlighting community support and the opportunity to improve traffic flow in growing corridors.

Board members noted the potential for regional benefits through data sharing and integration with the Cities and Counties traffic management systems. With this being an exciting way to work together on the same system to reroute traffic during events and high peak congestion times.

Item 7 REPORTS (Informational Only)

7.1 RTC Executive Director Report

Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director, reported on the following items:

- The flooding event at the Arlington Avenue Bridges replacement project delayed the project by a few days, but no significant damage occurred.
- Staff recently attended an American Public Works Association Forum in Washington D.C. with public works leaders and directors from communities with populations of more than 400,000.
- The groundbreaking for the Sparks Boulevard Capacity Improvement project was last week, and had a great turnout from staff, contractors, consultants, and elected leaders at the local, state and federal level.
- RTC is the winner of two national awards for the Ed Pass advertising campaign: the APTA AdWheel Award and the Association for Commuter Transportation National Award.
- Jennie Murray joined the RTC Finance Team as Accounting and Payroll Specialist last week.
- Congratulations to three employees on their recent promotions. Lolita Davis was promoted to Administrative Assistant III in Agency Services. Derek Campbell was promoted to Facilities Maintenance Specialist III, and Lee Anne Olivas was promoted to Management Analyst.

7.2 RTC Federal Report

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer, provided updates on federal legislative matters.

Congress is now in its August recess and won't return until after Labor Day. The House and Senate Appropriations committees have both passed their tax bills for FY 26 and both fully fund transit. They are looking at legislation to address delays in property acquisitions for FTA grantees, and that includes allowing the acquisition of right of way before the NEPA process. This is something staff discussed with some of RTC's Federal Delegation as a priority for RTC moving into the Surface Transportation Act. The Senate confirmed former congressman Marc Molinaro as FTA administrator. It is expected that he'll focus on accessibility and fiscal responsibilities.

7.3 NDOT Director Report

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

- Kenny Guinn Peak Named July 30th
- Reno Flash Flooding on July 27th
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Art Contest
- Event Season is Here: Reduced Construction Traffic Control through Season.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

No announcements or requests were made by commissioners.

Item 8 PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.



ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission

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