

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:00 A.M.

October 17, 2025

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair, Washoe County Commissioner
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner
Devon Reese, Vice Chair, Reno City Council
Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director of NDOT (Alternate)**

ABSENT:

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks
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 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

Matt Rossi, Reno Resident discussed safety and accessibility issues at the recently completed project near Seventh Street and McCarran Boulevard. He expressed concern that the relocated bus stop near Save-Mart forces riders to cross a busy driveway without a crosswalk, and that the “smart” pedestrian signal at the new crosswalk serving the Vintage Hills Senior Facility confuses users due to delayed response times. He requested an on-site review with RTC staff.

Chris Fuqua, Teamsters Local 533, raised concerns about the new AI “Emily” system used for RTC ACCESS reservations, emphasizing that the artificial voice does not clearly identify itself as AI and makes it difficult for riders to reach a live operator. He stated that the system may reduce union jobs and frustrate clients, particularly long-term users who rely on human assistance. He also noted scheduling issues with reservationist shifts and asked that at least one traditional weekend-off schedule be reinstated. Mr. Fuqua reported that while the Teamsters maintain a generally positive relationship with MTM, these staffing and automation issues warrant review before contract renewal in 2026.

Dora Martinez echoed prior comments and invited Councilmember Reese to walk blindfolded with her and her guide dog at the Seventh and McCarran crossing to experience it firsthand. She stated that AI scheduling is less accessible for individuals with developmental disabilities who use

government-subsidized phones with limited minutes. She requested improved accessibility of RTC documents and surveys, reinstatement of a designated “shopping route” to reduce travel time for paratransit riders, and assistance for passengers who need help carrying groceries to their doors. She urged the RTC to ensure equity and compassion in its technology and service design.

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Bill Thomas, Executive Director requested that Item 4.5.3 be pulled for correction to clarify the funding amount.

Vice Chair Reese moved to approve the agenda with Item 4.5.3 pulled for separate consideration. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Items 4 CONSENT ITEMS

4.1 Minutes

- 4.1.1 Approve the meeting minutes for the 09/19/2025 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 RTC staff recommended appointments/reappointments to the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC) with terms through June 2026. (For Possible Action)
- 4.3.2 Approve an update to the Public Participation Plan. (For Possible Action)
- 4.3.3 Approve the Central Sparks Neighborhood Network Plan. (For Possible Action)

4.4 Engineering Department

- 4.4.1 Approve a Regional Road Impact Fee (RRIF) offset agreement between RTC, Touchstone Living, Inc., and Washoe County for offset-eligible improvements to the intersection of Highland Ranch Parkway and Midnight Drive. (For Possible Action)

- 4.4.2 Approve a contract with Eastern Sierra Engineering, P.C., for design services and optional engineering during construction services for the Corrective Maintenance 2027 Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$743,150. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.3 Approve Amendment No. 4 to the contract with CA Group, Inc. for additional engineering during construction services needed for TE Spot 11 - Package 3 - Steamboat Parkway Improvement Project, in the amount of \$97,387.50, for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,479,015.50. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.4 Approve an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the University of Nevada Reno (UNR) Civil Engineering Department to provide funding for UNR's Transportation Engineering Program, in an amount not-to-exceed \$400,000. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.5 Approve a contract with Wood Rodgers, Inc., for design and optional engineering during construction services for the Sierra Street / 9th Street Intersection Improvement Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$516,930. (For Possible Action)

4.5 Public Transportation/Operations Department

- 4.5.1 Approve the following Senior/Disabled Transportation Program Funding agreements totaling \$1,211,397.47, in amounts not-to-exceed \$483,269.32 for the University of Nevada Reno, Senior Outreach Services; \$458,056.94 for Access to Healthcare Network; and \$270,071.21 for Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada. (For Possible Action)
- 4.5.2 Approve an agreement with the City of Reno granting RTC a right of first refusal to purchase three parcels of real property located adjacent to RTC's 4th Street Station in Downtown Reno. (For Possible Action)
- 4.5.3 Approve a contract with Pavion for Security Camera Cloud Migration, in an amount not-to-exceed \$118,646.37. (For Possible Action)

Bill Thomas, Executive Director explained that the staff report for Item 4.5.3 accurately reflected a total cost of \$156,598.14, but that the recommended action at the top incorrectly listed \$118,000. He clarified that the not-to-exceed amount should be corrected to \$156,598.14.

Vice Chair Reese moved to approve Item 4.5.3 with the corrected amount. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- 4.5.4 Approve RTC's purchase of two commercial parcels and a building adjacent to its Sutro Maintenance Facility in Downtown Reno for an amount not-to-exceed \$1,850,000; authorize the Executive Director to finalize and execute a purchase and sale agreement in consultation with legal counsel. (For Possible Action)

4.6 Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments

- 4.6.1 Acknowledge receipt of the Asset Donation Log for the second quarter of calendar year 2025 through the third quarter of calendar year 2025. (For Possible Action)
- 4.6.2 Approve the revised job description for the RTC's General Counsel position. (For Possible Action)

On motion of Vice Chair Reese to approve all consent items, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Hill ordered these items be approved.

Item 5 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Receive an update on the RTC pavement management program, pavement condition on regional roads, and tri-annual data collection process. (Informational Only)

Jeff Wilbrecht, Engineering Manager, and Scott Gibson, Engineering Project Manager, presented an overview of RTC's pavement preservation program, emphasizing cost-efficiency achieved through applying the right treatment at the right time to maintain roads in good condition. They described the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) system, semi-automated data collection every three years, and RTC's use of the StreetSaver program to analyze 450 lane miles of regional roads across Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County. Approximately 79% of regional roads remain in very good condition, maintaining the agency's target PCI of 80.

Mr. Gibson detailed RTC's decision process for prioritizing roads based on PCI, average daily traffic, treatment history, and policy guidance. He explained the differences between rehabilitation, corrective, and preventive maintenance and how these contribute to maximizing lane-mile years. He further compared preservation-first strategies versus "worst-first" maintenance, showing that preventive work yields higher long-term value per dollar spent.

Vice Chair Reese praised the jurisdiction-neutral process and highlighted the broader community benefits of the \$22.5 million program, including local job creation and economic reinvestment. Commissioner Garcia supported showcasing the economic ripple effects of local contracting and requested future presentations include bidding process details.

Mr. Gibson confirmed that RTC relies on competitive low-bid contracts and that local contractors have a strong record of quality and integrity.

Sajid Sulahria, NDOT Deputy Director, commented that NDOT follows a similar preservation model statewide, though at a larger scale. The Board discussed coordination among agencies and funding challenges for statewide roads.

5.2 Receive an update on the current condition of the RTC Terminal Way Office Building and provide direction to the Executive Director to complete a due diligence process regarding options for RTC's administrative offices and potentially relocating from the RTC Terminal Way Office Building. (Informational Only)

Jim Gee, Director of Public Transit and Operations, reported on the condition of RTC's 42-year-old administrative office building, constructed in 1983. The facility is 20% vacant, with significant issues including roof failure, outdated electrical systems, aging heat pumps, and code deficiencies. A professional appraisal valued the building at \$3.5 million, while short-term repairs were estimated at \$2.5 million, not including code upgrades or tenant improvements.

Mr. Gee recommended authorizing due diligence to explore alternative options, including leasing, purchasing, or constructing a new facility. He emphasized that repairs would exceed the building's value and that relocation would better align with RTC's current staffing of approximately 70 employees.

Commissioner Garcia supported conducting due diligence, noting the importance of planning for future space needs while right-sizing operations.

Vice Chair Reese concurred, stating that renovation costs outweigh the building's worth and encouraged exploring partnerships with other agencies for potential co-located government facilities, possibly near the downtown government complex.

Chair Hill suggested assessing zoning options, including possible redevelopment for multifamily housing, and confirmed that current office lease rates are favorable.

Mr. Thomas agreed and said staff will coordinate with local jurisdictions on co-location opportunities, emphasizing this will be a multi-year process.

Item 6 REPORTS (Informational Only)

6.1 RTC Executive Director Report

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

- RTC completed its Triennial Review in August and had no findings.
- RTC wrapped up a survey as part of the "Move More with RTC" campaign, which is part of the TOPS Program.
- Veterans Day is Tuesday, November 11, RTC is offering free transit on RIDE and ACCESS services for the holiday.
- RTC welcomed Ashlie Encinias as the newest member of the team. Ashlie started her new job as Human Resource Analyst on Monday.
- Congratulations to Justin Doerr, Customer Service Associate, who celebrated 10 years at RTC on September 21st.
- Congratulations Sara Going, Engineering Project Manager, who celebrated five years at RTC on October 5th.
- Congratulations to Thomas Connel, IT Analyst, who celebrated 1 year at RTC on September 25th.

6.2 RTC Federal Report

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer, briefed the Board on federal issues, noting that the government shutdown had not yet been resolved. He stated that federal highway programs remain funded through the Highway Trust Fund and IIJA appropriations, though discretionary grant approvals are delayed. DOT issued an interim rule modifying the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, removing race- and sex-based presumptions while developing a new certification process. Approximately 3,000 grant awards from the prior administration have been reviewed, with only a few potentially subject to cancellation.

6.3 NDOT Director Report

Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director NDOT, provided an update on NDOT's ongoing work and readiness for the winter season. NDOT's maintenance teams perform roughly 75 distinct operational tasks year-round, from debris removal and sweeping to snow removal and equipment preparation. A short

video was played illustrating the department's 24/7 maintenance cycle and the vital work of NDOT's equipment shop in maintaining fleet readiness.

Mr. Sulahria then summarized key updates on the following:

- US 395 North Valleys Project
- I-80 West of Reno Project
- USA Parkway Maintenance
- Trunk or Treat Community Event on October 26th

Vice Chair Reese thanked NDOT for its strong partnership and for the clarity of the video presentation. He remarked that while NDOT manages a vast statewide network, the agency's responsiveness to local issues in Washoe County is particularly valued. He observed that many public concerns during winter storms stem from confusion over which jurisdiction owns or maintains specific roadways, and he requested clarification of NDOT's snowplow responsibilities within the Truckee Meadows.

Mr. Sulahria responded that NDOT is responsible for interstates such as I-80 and I-580, sections of McCarran Boulevard, Mount Rose Highway (SR 431), and several state routes through the region. He added that NDOT often coordinates with local agencies, including the City of Reno, City of Sparks, and Washoe County, to share plowing resources during significant weather events.

Vice Chair Reese further inquired about NDOT's staffing levels, referencing community concerns about snowplow shortages in recent years. Mr. Sulahria confirmed that post-pandemic recruitment challenges had affected staffing statewide, but conditions have improved substantially. NDOT currently maintains approximately a 10–15% vacancy rate, with District II (Washoe County) trending slightly better. He credited the use of new CDL training programs, simulation tools, and cross-training within maintenance teams for improving workforce readiness.

Chair Hill expressed appreciation for NDOT's proactive coordination with local governments and asked whether NDOT communicates real-time snowplow deployment information to the public. Mr. Sulahria explained that NDOT's public information office provides frequent updates through social media and the agency's website, including project-specific text alerts for highway closures and lane changes.

Commissioner Garcia commended NDOT for its work on the I-80 project west of Reno, noting that the addition of merge lanes and sound walls has already improved traffic flow and safety. She encouraged continued public outreach as the project nears completion.

Vice Chair Reese emphasized the importance of coordination between NDOT, RTC, and local jurisdictions during winter months to ensure efficient resource use and clear public communication, noting that unified messaging can help mitigate community frustration during heavy snow events.

Vice Chair Reese then reflected on the challenges of long-term transportation planning, noting that population growth often outpaces infrastructure capacity. He remarked on the difficulty of explaining to the public why projects weren't initially built to larger scales, using the Spaghetti Bowl as an example. Reese emphasized that the community is in a continual cycle of expansion and adaptation to growth demands.

Mr. Sulahria acknowledged the concern, explaining that transportation agencies nationwide face similar limitations. He clarified that infrastructure cannot simply continue expanding due to constraints in land availability, right-of-way, and funding. Instead, planning efforts must focus on collaboration among cities, counties, and the state to anticipate and guide future development. He highlighted that Nevada remains one of the fastest-growing states, which will continue to present these challenges. Mr. Sulahria suggested that improving travel time reliability, rather than continuous roadway widening, should become a key planning priority as space for expansion diminishes.

Vice Chair Reese then turned to a local construction update on the McCarran Interstate Project in West Reno, expressing appreciation for the progress but seeking clarification on project timelines, particularly regarding the reopening of Stoker Avenue and lane configurations.

Mr. Sulahria responded that contractors determine the construction sequence and traffic shifts to ensure worker and driver safety, especially with high-speed traffic nearby. He assured the Board that lanes and sections would reopen as soon as they are safe and ready, emphasizing the contractor's incentive to complete the project efficiently. He noted that certain pavement layers or temperature conditions may be delaying completion but confirmed that updates would continue to be provided through the project's website and public communications.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Vice Chair Reese began by acknowledging Mr. Rossi's earlier public comments and encouraged collaboration between the City and relevant staff, including Dale Keller, RTC Engineering Director, to address the concerns raised. Mr. Reese also expressed his willingness to personally visit and walk the affected sites to better understand the issues, per Ms. Martinez's earlier public comments.

Vice Chair Reese then shared an update on a traffic safety project in northwest Reno at Avenida de Landa and Mae Anne Avenue, which originated from community concerns after a student was struck in a crosswalk. He described receiving numerous calls from parents urging action and commended City and RTC staff, including Reno Public Works Director Karrie Koski and Mr. Keller for their swift response.

The team investigated and identified several contributing factors, including overgrown trees, sun glare, and suboptimal traffic patterns. While a permanent traffic signal is already scheduled for installation within 16 months, interim safety improvements were completed within a week. These included new bollards, restriping, and added pavement markings.

Vice Chair Reese praised the team's responsiveness and efficiency, noting that despite common perceptions of government delays, staff acted decisively to improve safety. He concluded by expressing gratitude and commendation to the team for their outstanding work and positive impact on the community.

Chair Hill expressed a desire to better understand the AI customer service system used by MTM, noting frustrations with automated phone trees that make it difficult for callers to reach a live representative. She suggested discussing potential improvements with the provider, especially since

issues arise when callers use different cell phone numbers that may connect them to the wrong user profile.

Item 8 PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexis Hill', written over a horizontal line.

ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission

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