

**MEETING OF THE RTP SUBCOMMITTEE
HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL
TELECONFERENCE PARTICIPATION VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

February 10, 2021

1:30PM

Minutes

Member Attendance:

Primary Member	Present	Alternate	Present
Maureen Crocker, Chair	Yes	Jennifer Ostlind	Yes
Perri D'Armond, Vice Chair	No	Stacy Slawinski	No
Monique Johnson	No	Krystal Lastrape	Yes
Ruthanne Haut	Yes	John Powers	No
Clay Forister	Yes	Karen McKinnon	No
Adam France	Yes	Chris Bogert	No
Christopher Sims	Yes	Chad Tressler	No
Ricardo Villagrand	No	Francisco Carrillo	No
Loyd Smith	Yes	Bryan Brown	No
Nick Woolery	Yes	Frank Simoneaux	No
Yancy Scott	Yes	Bobby Pennington	No
Charles Airiohuodion	Yes	Jeffrey English	Yes
Lisa Collins	Yes	Scott Ayres	Yes
Alberto Lyne	No	Priya Zachariah	Yes
Ken Fickes	No	Vernon Chambers	Yes
Harrison Humphrey	Yes	Stephanie Thomas	No
Jonathan Brooks	Yes	Bakeyah Nelson	No
Elijah Williams	Yes	Irma Sanchez	No
Bruce Mann	Yes	Rohit Saxena	No
Roger Rees	No	Brett Milutin	No
Janis Scott	No	Paulette Wagner	No
John Tyler	Yes	VACANT	-
Bill Zrioka	Yes	David Leslie	No

Others Present:

Andrew Mao, Adam Beckom, Michelle Canton, David Balmos, Jim Dickinson, Diane Domagas, Elizabeth Whitton, Carrie Evans, David Fink, Ben Finley, Stephan Gage, Patrick Gant, Shixin Gao, Thomas Gray, Donte Green, Veronica Green, Sandra Holliday, Allie Isbell, James Koch, Ayo Jibowu, Sharon Ju, Megan Kennison, Neely Kim, Justin Kuzila, Vishu Lingala, Patrick Mandapaka, Deborah Mayfield, Carlene Mullins, Karen Owen, Jamila Owens, Frank Pagliei, Patrick Gant, Craig Raborn, Alan Rodenstein, Sean Middleton, Sue Theiss, Chris Van Slyke, Kathryn Vo, Veronica Waller

Staff Participating:

Mike Burns

1. Call to Order

Maureen C called the meeting to order at 1:32PM

Mike B read a statement of how the meeting would be conducted via remote participation and the ground rules for any discussion.

Mike B conducted the roll call for attendance and confirmed a quorum was present.

Maureen C confirmed a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes

Bruce M made a motion, seconded by Vernon C, to accept the minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion of Requested RTP Amendments:

- a. IH 10E
- b. IH610W
- c. SH288
- d. SH36A
- e. SH6
- f. SH99
- g. SL8

Maureen C asked about the schedule for the requested amendments.

Mike B summarized the anticipated schedule and noted the summarizing of projects would be completed at the March meeting. The subcommittee would be asked to recommend the TAC and TPC approve the amendments at the March meeting in anticipate of TAC and TPC action in April.

Maureen asked if the public comments and fiscal constraint could be summarized at the March meeting prior to recommending approval.

Mike B noted he will discuss providing summaries of the public comments and fiscal constraint with staff.

Jonathan B asked if the subcommittee recommendation could include a notation that the approval would not eliminate the need for on-going coordination.

James K clarified that the request is not for funding the construction, rather to include the amendments in the RTP to continue developing the design of the projects.

Maureen C noted that the amendments could be advanced from the planning stage and a needs identification and into a call for projects sooner than is currently being requested.

James K responded that since the RTP is a plan and a living document that projects should be documented and then be developed through a public process.

Priya Z requested that the METRONext recommendations be considered as part of the requested TxDOT amendments.

James K agreed and supported inclusion of METRONext projects as part of their long-range plan and then introduced Patrick Gant to summarize the 610W Loop Express Lanes.

Patrick G summarized the 4 mile project, including a background and history of the corridor from early 2000s to present and noting on-going coordination with METRO and the Uptown Management District to develop the dedicated bus lane project, know as the Silver Line, along 610W in the early 2010s. He noted that the corridor is one of the top most congested highways by the Texas Transportation Institute, he noted the use of the corridor as the only north-south connection over Buffalo Bayou after the Hurricane Harvey storm event, and also noted public support of a separate Express Lane project at a

December 2015 public meeting. He summarized the details of the project, which included four elevated Express Lane one level above the existing main lanes and in the center of 610W with the dedicated bus lanes on the west side of the corridor. The Express Lanes would add capacity to the congested corridor in a manner that managed access through restrictions on the access points along the corridor, and he provided renderings of the potential elevated segmented bridge structures, which would help buildability. He then described various connectivity scenarios for the Express Lanes, including the Galleria, Northwest Transit Center, and other transit services along area roadways.

Priya Z asked for clarification on the terminology and use of the Express Lanes for both private vehicles and public buses.

Patrick G responded that the dedicated bus lanes for the Silver Line is a separate facility, but there could be opportunities for regional buses to use the Express Lanes to connect to an access point along Westheimer Rd for transfer options.

Lloyd S asked if there were plans for intermediate exit between I-10 and I-69, and also asked if there would be a connection with I-10 Inner Katy project.

Patrick G responded that the access points are being evaluated and there could be other exits between I-10 and I-69 by working with H-GAC on an origin/destination analysis. And noted a high percentage of users of the 610W Loop have the Galleria area as a destination with traffic passing through the area being equivalent to about one to one and a half lanes of demand along the corridor. He also noted that with connectivity improvements to the I-10 corridor, there could be a higher demand for the Express Lanes to improve regional traffic flows between I-10 and I-69.

Lloyd S asked about the impact of the project on the IH-610W/IH-69 interchange.

Patrick G responded that the intersection is one of the highest volume interchanges in the country and the Express Lanes could channel demand away and reduce congestion levels in the interchange.

James K added that the restricted access would improve reliability of this area of the network, and future noted field changes during construction of the interchange to facilitate the passthrough of the Express Lanes.

Carlene M asked if the Express Lanes would extend from IH-10 and SH290 to IH-45.

James K noted that the intent is to connect with the IH-45 corridor as part of a separate project.

Maureen C noted that the City of Houston's concern would be that the amendments propose the implementation of portions of a larger concept of elevated segments of highway that were not contemplated in the previous update of the RTP and has not been discussed publicly.

Jonathan B mentioned that the project could be setting a precedent to facilitate driving anywhere at any cost or are we trying to provide alternatives to traveling reliably, such as the Silver Line that doesn't require the parking which is more beneficial. Electric vehicles should be available for air quality benefit, so air quality impacts are not a great concern. Walking and biking facilities would offer other beneficial mode accommodation that would have less impacts and align with City of Houston goals. Access to the Uptown area should be through investments that promote behavior change and accommodate other more beneficial modes like public transit, walking, biking, and carpooling. Some level of congestion is a healthy outcome as it means there is high use.

James K responded that the project is trying to accommodate demand of today and electric vehicles could help improve air quality. The REAL plan provides mobility around the region and between multi-modal centers to provide mode choice.

Harrison H mentioned that adding more lanes miles is not the solution and is not a fan of using mobility data for justifying the project.

Bruce M mentioned that it seems the intent is to include the project to advance the planning and offered a motion to support.

Maureen C mentioned that a recommendation would be made after reviewing all amendments.

Mike B confirmed that a recommendation may be requested at the March meeting.

James K mentioned the presentation was completed and is anticipating the presentation of the 610S and SH35 would be discussed at the March meeting.

Maureen C asked about the status of the 610S PEL and why the 610W project was not at the PEL stage.

James K responded that the initial review of 610S was related to structural issues and was determined to need to include other considerations covered by a PEL process due to costs of rehabilitation. The Inner Katy and West Loop were recently rebuilt and would not require reconstruction and study through a PEL process.

Lloyd S asked about the SH 6 and SH99 project descriptions.

James K responded that SH99 included widening and also experience a lot of crashes that required safety improvements. SH 6 includes potential elevating the facility and other intersection improvements.

Lloyd S asked about SH99 design review due to tolling.

James K responded that it was a regionally significant project, so it is being reviewed by TxDOT and funded by the toll authority for SH99.

Bruce M asked about 610 Sydney Sherman Bridge was still part of the 610/I-10 study.

James K responded and confirmed it was part of that study.

Maureen C asked for clarity on using a PEL or NEPA process for the 610W and Inner Katy projects.

James K responded that the 610W Loop project is more of a feasibility study and the I-10 Inner Katy study is in conjunction with the METRO BRT project and using a combination of both NEPA and PEL processes.

4. Announcements

- Next TAC Meeting – February 17, 2021 at 9:30AM (Teleconference)
- Next TPC Meeting – February 26, 2021 at 9:30AM (Teleconference)
- Next RTP Subcommittee Meeting – March 10, 2021 at 1:30PM (Teleconference)

Maureen C mentioned the future meeting dates and times for TPC, TAC, and RTP Subcommittee

5. Adjourn

Maureen C declared the meeting adjourned at 2:52PM.

Minutes submitted by: Mike Burns