

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:11A.M.

February 19, 2021

PRESENT:

**Neoma Jardon, Reno City Council Member, Chair
Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks, Vice Chair
Vaughn Hartung, Washoe County Commissioner
Oscar Delgado, Reno City Council Member
Bob Lucey, Washoe County Commissioner**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Kristina Swallow, Director of NDOT**

The regular monthly meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by Chair Jardon. Following the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our country, the Board conducted the following business:

Item 2 PUBLIC INPUT

Vice Chair Jardon 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. Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. February 18^h are included in this record of the meeting.

Ms. Jane Fox submitted in writing February 13, 2021, at 8:20 p.m., a request for the Board to consider adding ADA (ACCESS) service to the Spanish Springs area as her neighbor has a need for it. She was referred to the RTC's FlexRIDE program in the meantime, as it provides door-to-door service for those in the various service areas.

Mr. John Locke submitted in writing February 16, 2021, at 12:24 p.m., a letter stating that Keolis Transportation is not following up on driver call-in complaints as they should be.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Chair closed public input.

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RTC Executive Director Bill Thomas requested that Item 4.11 be pulled from the agenda.

Commissioner Hartung requested that Item 4.8 be pulled for discussion.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Delgado, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Jardon ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved with the aforementioned changes.

Item 4.1 thru 4.11 CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes

- 4.1 Approve Minutes of the December 18, 2020 Meeting (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.2 Approve Minutes of the January 15, 2021 Meeting (*For Possible Action*)**

Reports

- 4.3 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation and Operations Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.7 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Summary Report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees (*For Possible Action*)**

Planning Department

- 4.8 Acknowledge receipt of a report on the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program and funding for safety projects on local roads (*For Possible Action*) – ***Item pulled for discussion*****

Engineering Department

- 4.9 Approve a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Kimley-Horn and Associates to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the ITS Phase 4 Project in an amount not to exceed \$397,607; authorize the RTC Executive Director to execute the agreement (*For Possible Action*)**

Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments

- 4.10 Acknowledge receipt of the Investment Committee report for the quarter ended December 31, 2020 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.11 Approve a new Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Management Policy #63, Real Property Disposition (*For Possible Action*) – ***Item pulled from the agenda*****

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that Consent Items 4.1 through 4.10 be approved, with the exception of Item 4.8 which was pulled for discussion.

4.8 Acknowledge receipt of a report on the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program and funding for safety projects on local roads (*For Possible Action*) – Under discussion

Commissioner Hartung first thanked staff for the Set-Aside program, then asked for a brief explanation as to how this program will work.

E.D. Thomas said the program is to use a funding source targeted toward safety for use on safety issues within the transportation network. He then introduced Deputy Executive Director Amy Cummings to explain further.

Ms. Cummings stated that these are federal funds that flow through the RTC and are distributed by the RTC. A call for projects is put out to the jurisdictions and there is a formal application process, after review of the applications, the Board makes the awards. Each jurisdiction must pursue a Stewardship Agreement or Local Public Agency Agreement with NDOT to spend those funds in their jurisdiction.

Commissioner Hartung would like to eventually know how long the process will take once a project is decided upon for submittal, and can funds roll over fiscal years or do they need to be expended in one year, two years, etc.

Chair Jardon wants to make sure there is some level of structure regarding the distribution of dollars. She wants it to be a fair but flexible program.

E.D. Thomas said RTC staff will work with NDOT and local jurisdiction staff to determine the best process for the program.

Commissioner Hartung then made a motion to approve consent Item 4.8, which was seconded by Commissioner Delgado and passed unanimously.

Item 5.1 thru 5.3 PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

5.1 Conduct a public hearing on proposed services changes to add a pilot FlexRIDE transit service connecting the Truckee Meadows area to the Incline Village area along with miscellaneous time adjustments to other RTC RIDE routes, beginning on or after May 1, 2021; approve a May 2021 RTC RIDE Service Adjustment, currently scheduled for May 1, 2021, including a pilot FlexRIDE transit service connecting to the Lake Tahoe area and miscellaneous time adjustments (*For Possible Action*)

- a. Staff presentation**
- b. Public input**
- c. Action**

Mr. Jim Gee, RTC Service Planning and Innovation Manger, addressed the Board to give a presentation on the May service changes planned for RIDE, but specifically, the proposed FlexRIDE pilot program to Incline Village. The purpose is to entice drivers to get out of their cars and use the service while ultimately, lessening some of the traffic in Lake Tahoe. FlexRIDE technology and vehicles will be used and the park & ride area at the Summit Mall will be the

location for pick-up/drop-off. This will be an on-demand service where passengers may be grouped together to make it as efficient as possible. The service will run between Memorial Day and Labor Day, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 pm., which follows the hours of Sand Harbor State Park. Trips should be pre-reserved and will cost \$5.00 per person, with an extra \$2.00 per person for trips to Sand Harbor which will cover the park's walk-in fee. Mr. Gee then explained some details planned for public outreach and related support and/or concerns. There will also be a joint contract with TMRPA for marketing purposes. He then offered to answer questions.

Chair Jardon asked if there are multiple trips per day or one each way per day. Mr. Gee responded that there will be multiple rides as it is an on-demand service.

Commissioner Lucey is very happy to see this service coming to fruition and believes it will be beneficial to the community.

Commissioner Hartung asked if a bicycle or a water "toy," such as a paddleboard, can be brought on the trip.

Mr. Gee said yes on the bicycles, as each vehicle has a bicycle rack that can hold up to 3 bikes. He further explained that with the on-demand software, the reservationists can ask what will be brought on the trip and determine space requirements that way. The service runs up and down Mt. Rose Highway.

Mr. Gee added that Sky Tavern is interested in being considered for the service as a destination location as well as at the various trailheads.

Commissioner Hartung thinks this is a great idea to get some drunk drivers off the road also.

Commissioner Lucey asked what software is being used for scheduling.

Mr. Gee said that passengers will initially book their rides via phone call. If the program is successful, it will be switched to a software program.

Commissioner Lucey would like to have a conversation with the executive director about some potential opportunities for this program.

Chair Jardon believes transitioning to a software program will be a key priority if the program is successful.

Commissioner Lucey would like this topic brought to the Board workshop in March for further discussion on a software transition for the program.

E.D. Thomas mentioned that there is a stop at the lake that is controversial, but that it is not the RTC, it is another service provider's stop.

Mr. Mark Maloney, RTC Public Transportation and Operations Director, agreed that existing microtransit runs extensively off of software, but for this program, the app currently being used

does not have the option to add a bicycle, a cooler or other beach toy, so once use of the service is better known, those items can be added into the app as needed.

Commissioner Delgado asked if the fee is \$5.00 per person and the response was yes, \$5.00 each way + \$2.00 if going to Sand Harbor State Park. There will be reduced fees for ADA qualified passengers and seniors.

Commissioner Delgado asked if there will be bilingual outreach available and Mr. Gee responded that currently, reservations may be taken bilingually and there will be bilingual outreach once an official outreach program is put into action.

There was a general consensus that this could be a pretty costly option for some lower income families. Commissioner Lucey suggested there possibly be a family price option or some other way to make the program usable to a broader group of potential riders.

Mr. Maloney explained that there are cost differences, such as children under five being free and seniors having a reduced fare that may also make the program more affordable for families riding together.

Commissioner Hartung added that it will be important for the public to understand exactly how the service works to determine if it is for them or not.

This item being a public hearing, Chair Jardon opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak.

There being no comment on this topic submitted prior to the deadline of February 18th at 4:00 pm, the Chair closed public input.

On motion of Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that the May 2021 RTC RIDE Service Adjustment, currently scheduled for May 1, 2021, including a pilot FlexRIDE transit service connecting to the Lake Tahoe area and miscellaneous time adjustments, be approved.

A copy of the full presentation is available by contacting Denise Thompson (dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

Item 6.1 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Acknowledge receipt of a report on the Arlington Bridges Project Update and Public Engagement Direction (*For Possible Action*)

Ms. Judy Tortelli, RTC Project Manager, addressed the Board to give a presentation on the status of the project and an overview of the recommended concepts for the bridges. She said the purpose of this presentation is to revisit the goal of this study, to review design options and feasibility, and purpose and need. Five design options were shown, along with the benefits and drawbacks of each. Ms. Tortelli then reviewed the project timeline, which began in 2019.

To date, there have been three Stakeholder Working Group meetings, one public outreach meeting and two Technical Advisory Board meetings. In early 2021, the project is going to the RTC Board (today's meeting) and to the Reno City Council. There is another public outreach meeting planned for the first quarter of 2021 and the feasibility study should also be completed.

Ms. Tortelli continued, explaining why the underdeck arch, tied arch and elevated bridge alternatives were eliminated, then showed the two remaining alternatives and their benefits. She then turned the presentation over to Barb Santer, Sr. Landscape Architect for Stantec, who discussed aesthetic design goals and elements.

Goals for aesthetics are as follow:

- Cohesive Design Language
- Enhancement of the Pedestrian Experience
- Contextual and Historical Relevance
- Innovation and Sustainability

Suggested elements incorporate modern design elements with historical features, specific lighting design and bridge accent lighting, and pedestrian safety lighting in the walkway. Ms. Santer concluded with various textured surface options and designs, and their individual benefits, and then Ms. Tortelli discussed next steps.

Chair Jardon asked how long the public participation process will run.

Ms. Tortelli said she plans to record a presentation similar to today's presentation that the public can review through the month of March and provide input.

Commissioner Hartung serves on the Flood Management Authority and asked if recommendations are being requested or is it just feedback. He is concerned that there may still be obstructions during flooding events that will need to be removed, so the Clear Span option is the best of the two remaining options.

Chair Jardon asked if the option with reduced height on the pathway will hinder anyone.

Ms. Tortelli said they have not gotten into that level of design yet. That will occur once a preferred option is decided upon.

Chair Jardon asked who makes the ultimate decision if there is an equal split on design choice.

E.D. Thomas responded that because it is currently an RTC project, this body would have the ultimate decision. The decision on who should be in charge of this project is anticipated for discussion at the next City Council meeting.

Chair Jardon asked if the amphitheater and basketball courts are impacted, will the reparations be paid for out of project funds or by the city.

E.D. Thomas said that again, it is up to the Board if they would like to add additional funding to the project or to let the City take the lead on that. He added that getting the NEPA process going could make a difference on the outcome of this project.

Chair Jardon doesn't think that the elevated bridge design that impedes on the amphitheater and potentially the basketball courts is really feasible because no one has \$10 million sitting around to relocate amphitheaters, etc.

Commissioner Lucey asked if there are Public/Private Partnership (P3) opportunities with this project.

Commissioner Hartung said that this is one of the projects that's been under discussion at the Flood Management Authority for some time, as all the bridges, except Virginia Street, need to be replaced. He suggested that the project could potentially be funded by bonding it.

E.D. Thomas reminded everyone that we don't want to spend all funds on just one bridge and ignore the others, so great thought needs to go into the funding mechanism used.

Commissioner Hartung said he looks forward to that conversation.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Delgado, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that receipt of the report be acknowledged.

A copy of the full presentation is available by contacting Denise Thompson (dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

Item 7.1 METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ITEMS

7.1 Acknowledge receipt of a report on the draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) (For Possible Action)

Ms. Amy Cummings, RTC Deputy Executive Director and Director of Planning, addressed the Board to provide an update presentation on the draft 2050 RTP. A preliminary map was provided in the agenda packets for this meeting. The hope is to put the Plan out for public comment and then bring it back to the Board for approval, hopefully in March. She then provided an update on the guiding principles of the RTC.

There had been a suggestion during a public input meeting to remove "healthy communities" from the guiding principles and Commissioner Hartung spoke up to say he disagreed and thinks it should be left in. Chair Jardon agreed with him.

Next, Ms. Cummings provided maps of proposed projects for 2021 – 2025 in South Reno, the North Valleys and the Downtown Reno Circulation area.

The 2026-2030 time period highlights improvements on both Greg Street and McCarran. The Pyramid/US 395 Connector will be in its third phase, but funding may be moved to some needed McCarran Blvd improvements.

Chair Jardon asked if the Pyramid/US 395 project is removed from the Plan, can it be put back in later if needed. Ms. Cummings confirmed.

Both the Chair and Commissioner Hartung said they still do not understand the purpose of that project and would like further studies done to see how it will ultimately help the residents of the area.

Commissioner Hartung would like an additional lane on southbound Pyramid Hwy., from Integrity to Egyptian. He is very passionate about having that lane added for safety because it alleviates the truck traffic. He also believes the Pyramid/McCarran intersection will eventually need improvement to make more room for increase traffic. He thinks there are opportunities for the property on the NW corner of the intersection that should be looked at.

Chair Jardon asked what was needed from this conversation (direction, approval, etc.).

E.D. Thomas explained that the most important result of today's presentation is to get direction, then the final Plan will be brought in March with the adjustments requested today. With regard to the Pyramid/US 395 project, he thinks it should stay on the Plan but scale it back. It ultimately pertains to the overall network design.

Chair Jardon asked what "scale it back" means.

Ms. Cummings explained that best efforts are being made for projections into the out years, but things may change in the next 10 and require reevaluation. She added that the design for the Pyramid/US 395 connector can definitely be pushed out and that construction would be in the 15-20 year timeframe. The connector is also part of NDOT's Spaghetti Bowl analysis, so is part of the design for their planned US 395 improvements.

Chair Jardon agrees to pushing it out and scaling it back.

Commissioner Hartung agrees that the lines should be left on the map for future evaluation and review to see if the project is still viable. He would like the focus to be on current needs.

Ms. Cummings said capacity projects that are currently in development are desperately needed, so they are definitely the immediate focus.

The RTC continues to be as efficient as possible with limited funding and the long-term vision for the RAPID is to extend the Lincoln Line to West 4th Street and the Virginia Street BRT to the Summit Mall area. It will most likely take years to be able to fund the operation of the BRT though.

Commissioner Lucey thanked RTC staff for all of their work on the Plan and reminded everyone that this is a living document that can be molded when necessary.

Commissioner Hartung said he didn't see the southern or northern alignments out to TRIC and would like those lines to stay on the map.

Ms. Cummings explained that these maps only show Washoe County and pointed out the lines for those alignments that are in Washoe County.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Delgado, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that receipt of the report be acknowledged with the direction provided.

A copy of the full presentation is available by contacting Denise Thompson (dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

Item 8.1 thru 8.3 REPORTS

Item 8.1 RTC Executive Director Report (*Informational*)

1. E.D. Gibson announced the upcoming service anniversary milestones for the following employees:
 - Tina Wu, Senior Technical Transit Planner – 25 years of service on March 1st
 - Sharon Britt, Senior Financial Analyst – 20 years of service on March 12th
 - Lee Anne Olivas, Office Administrator – 20 years of service on March 19th

Our thanks and appreciation to Tina, Sharon and Lee Anne for their public service to the RTC and our community.

2. As of February 16, 2021, 35 out of 75 Keolis transit drivers have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. The remaining bus drivers will be scheduled for vaccination when the Washoe County Health District adds additional vaccination dates.

Commissioner Hartung thanked Commissioner Lucey for his help in getting our transit coach operators their Covid-19 shots.

Chair Jardon added that Commissioner Hartung was also an integral part of making that happen and thanked him and E.D. Thomas for their hard work as well.

Overall, reported rates of positive infections among bus drivers have dropped significantly. To date, there are 19 COVID-19 positive reports of which only one employee is presently not on the job - having reported their positive test result. For everyone's safety and as a matter of practice, any employee expressing symptoms of COVID-19 is asked to stay home until a negative lab test result is provided to Keolis. No employee may return to work without first providing a negative lab test result.

While this is a far more stringent requirement than most employers, we believe Keolis' low infection and transmission rates are a testament to their rigidity in this matter, ensuring a safe and healthy workplace.

To date, RTC ACCESS contractor, MTM, has not had any drivers test positive for COVID-19. Of their 38 drivers, 24 have signed up to receive the vaccine.

For additional information, signage has been posted advising riders that federal law requires the use of masks on transit vehicles and property. On average, there is 99.9% compliance by riders. (Medical and age restrictions may apply)

Chair Jardon asked if the reports of refusal to wear a mask are being tracked or recorded somewhere.

Mr. Mark Maloney, RTC Public Transportation and Operations Director, said that yes, it is tracked electronically as each call comes in. He then explained how each variable is handled, dependent on their location and whether they are inbound or outbound. Nothing has arisen to the police level. There is currently no “secret shopper” type of program to have people ride on the bus to keep an eye on things; however, Mr. Maloney and his staff do randomly ride the buses to see what’s going on first hand.

Chair Jardon thanked the coach drivers and called them heroes for stepping up the way they have.

3. The final component of the Virginia Street Bus RAPID Transit Extension Project is ready to launch. On Saturday, March 6th, RTC will open the RAPID Virginia Line extension with service from Meadowood Mall, through Midtown and Downtown Reno to the University of Nevada, Reno.

On Monday, March 8th at 11 am, there will be a small, in-person media-op event at the new University RAPID station to mark the official launch of the RAPID Virginia Line Extension, weather permitting. The media-op will feature a handful of speakers giving brief remarks, supplemented with media interviews as requested. The media-op will not be a public event, as we are being mindful of public safety during the ongoing pandemic. But the media op will be streamed live on Facebook. Chair Jardon and Amy Cummings will give remarks on behalf of the RTC.

To celebrate the new extension service, rides on the RAPID Virginia Line will be free to everyone from March 6 through March 19.

A Zoom virtual celebration is also being planned and details will be provided in the coming weeks.

Chair Jardon asked if, when the time comes, that an official kick-off event can be planned.

E.D. Thomas said that he isn’t sure how far out that will be, but yes, it can be planned at that time.

4. The RTC Board Retreat is scheduled for March 15th at 9:00 a.m. and will be held in-person with the commissioners at the Washoe County Chambers *and* via ZOOM to accommodate staff presentations and our federal lobbying partners who will present. Board Commissioners were asked to bring their laptop or tablet to the retreat with them.

The regular March Board meeting will be held Friday, March 19th, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Item 8.2 RTC Federal Report (*Informational*)

A written report is provided, as set forth in the briefing materials for this agenda item. E.D. Thomas also mentioned that there are potential funding opportunities out of Washington DC that staff is currently watching.

Item 8.3 NDOT Director Report (*Informational*)

Ms. Kristina Swallow, NDOT Director, addressed the Board to give a presentation containing updates on current Nevada safety statistics, the Spaghetti Bowl SBX project, Tahoe Basin improvements, and the 2021 NV State Legislative Session.

Unfortunately, fatalities in the first month and a half have already increased by 4% throughout the state.

Dir. Swallow then talked about the “Big Merge” project near the Spaghetti Bowl that will begin later this spring and will last approximately 14 months.

Dir. Swallow also said that Mr. Jeff Lerud has accepted the position of Acting Deputy Director of Operations and Maintenance. She then concluded her report and offered to answer questions.

Commissioner Hartung would like a status on the road safety audit he requested for Pyramid Highway, just south of Egyptian, to the end of the valley.

A copy of the full presentation is available by contacting Denise Thompson (dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

Item 9.1 *COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES*

Commissioner Hartung would like continuing updates on the TA Set-Aside program at future meetings.

Chair Jardon would like a bigger discussion on the FlexRIDE software, potential and platform.

Item 10 *PUBLIC INPUT*

Chair Jardon opened the meeting to public input pertaining to topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda.

There being no additional comment submitted prior to the deadline of Feb. 18 at 4:00 pm, the Chair closed public input.

Item 11 ***ADJOURNMENT***

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Delgado, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that the meeting be adjourned.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



NEOMA JARDON, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission