

Transcript of the Testimony of
Quarterly Meeting

Date:

January 25, 2019

Case:

TxDOT BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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TxDOT BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(BAC)
QUARTERLY MEETING
Friday, January 25, 2019
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
125 East 11th Street - Greer Building
Ric Williamson Hearing Room
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701
9:00 AM

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A P P E A R A N C E S
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BILLY HIBBS, CHAIRMAN
ROBERT GONZALES, VICE CHAIRMAN
DAWNELLA RUST
MARGARET O'BRIEN-NELSON
DAVID HAMM
JEFF POLLACK
KARLA WEAVER
SHAWN D. TWING (VIA PHONE)
FRANK ROTNOFSKY

ALSO PRESENT: Commissioner Jeff Austin, III
Bonnie Sherman
Noah Heath
Teri Kaplan
Donna Roberts
Carl Seifert
Casey Dusza
Rebecca Van Dyke
Robin Stallings
Kenneth Mora (VIA PHONE)

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. HIBBS: Welcome everyone. So glad
3 that everybody traveled far and large all across the
4 great state of ours to have our Bicycle Advisory Meeting
5 for the month of January. I'm Billy Hibbs.

6 We have a new stenographer today, and
7 we're glad that you're with us.

8 And so I want to remind you to try and
9 repeat your name for her when you're speaking.

10 And at this time I'd like for Bonnie to
11 give us our safety briefing, please.

12 MS. SHERMAN: All right. Welcome to
13 TxDOT Headquarters in the Greer Building.

14 For medical emergencies, we will contact
15 911. There is an automated external defibrillator up by
16 the guard desk, and first-aid kits are marked as located
17 on the floor.

18 In case of a fire, evacuate. Fire alarm
19 locations are in the lobby of every floor. The primary
20 exit is the front door that you all probably came in.
21 And then we have secondary exits at Brazos, west towards
22 Congress Avenue. The Greer gathering area is across the
23 street on the Capitol lawn in case we have to evacuate.
24 And we have fire extinguishers marked on every floor.

25 In case of a tornado or inclement

1 weather, we'll shelter in place. The stairwells and the
2 basement are the most protected from windows.

3 In case of an active shooter or a bomb
4 threat, follow instructions from the PA system; and
5 let's have a safe and productive meeting.

6 Quickly, the restrooms are out this door
7 in this hallway, on the other side of this wall.

8 And with that...

9 MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Bonnie. We
10 appreciate that.

11 At this time I'd like to approve the
12 minutes from last time. They were forwarded to you in
13 advance. If anyone has any changes to the minutes or
14 provisions, we'll entertain those at this time.

15 If not, we'll entertain a motion to adopt
16 the minutes.

17 MS. WEAVER: So moved.

18 MR. HIBBS: So moved by Karla.

19 MR. ROTNOFSKY: Second.

20 MR. HIBBS: Second by Frank.

21 All in favor, "Aye."

22 (Chorus of "ayes.")

23 MR. HIBBS: The motion carries. All
24 right. Thank you very much.

25 The next item on the agenda is remarks

1 from Commissioner Austin. We are thrilled to have
2 Commissioner Austin with us today. I believe this is
3 his fourth meeting with our committee, which I think is
4 probably unprecedented for a TxDOT Commissioner to go to
5 the Bicycle Advisory meetings.

6 And for those of you that don't know a
7 whole lot about the other related oversights of
8 commissioners, they include all of our ports, all of our
9 airports, all of our roads and bridges. And to many,
10 cycling is probably not as important as some of those;
11 but it's important to Commissioner Austin. He's been
12 certainly a big proponent of the work of this committee.

13 And it is my great pleasure to turn this
14 over to him as he gets ready to conclude his term on the
15 TxDOT Commission.

16 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman. It's an honor to be here.

18 How many of y'all this is your first
19 or -- first or second meeting? It's your second?
20 Anybody? Okay. You're new. Oh, that's good. Well,
21 welcome.

22 And I know we still have a vacancy as
23 well that we will be filling hopefully sometime here
24 very shortly on the committee.

25 Thank y'all, first of all, for your

1 service. And let me just say: The importance of
2 advisory committees to the state and us is extremely
3 important. You give a lot of input. TxDOT has several
4 advisory committees, one, the Bicycle Advisory
5 Committee.

6 The Aviation Advisory Committee, they
7 help work with the general contract airports around the
8 state, facilitating the FAA discretionary grants that
9 come back in to help, whether it's safety around the
10 airport, lane pavement, or building the facilities.

11 Also, we work with the Port Advisory
12 Committee. We work with the Border Trade Advisory
13 Committee. We also have Public Transit that Eric works
14 with quite a bit. You know, many of those appointees
15 are named by, I guess, the lieutenant governor and the
16 speaker and the governor by the members on that
17 committee.

18 We also have a Freight Advisory
19 Committee, a very important committee. What's
20 interesting, the way that started, years ago we had a
21 charge -- TxDOT had a charge from the Legislature to
22 look at the impact of the Panama Canal on the state and
23 the state's transportation system. I remember attending
24 that hearing right after I came on the Commission. That
25 hearing was in '12.

1 And what was fascinating, we were
2 looking -- Judge Emmett chaired that committee; and I'll
3 never forget his words when he opened this as we're
4 looking at freight: It's great to look at what's
5 happening with all these big ships bringing cargo
6 containers and things coming back in; but before we
7 worry about what's coming in, let's focus also on
8 protecting what we already have.

9 And I think as we look at the state,
10 looking at the infrastructure condition, we want to
11 protect what we have to keep those businesses here and
12 our citizens happy. With this advisory that's what we
13 need to do in the permanent Freight Advisory Committee
14 that we publish the freight plan. And the advisory
15 committee's work -- a lot of our work is on the web
16 page, as is mentioned of the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

17 So with that, I want to say thank y'all
18 for serving in your time.

19 And just a couple of comments: We are
20 going to be discussing in our meeting next week the
21 beginning of our UTP, Unified Transportation Plan.
22 That's our budget, our construction budget, where we go
23 out and we select projects statewide. And there's a lot
24 of discussion as to who gets what, who's left out, why
25 funding increased or it decreased.

1 And it comes back to a lot of -- many of
2 y'all are from areas where there's an MPO, Metropolitan
3 Planning Organization; and they receive a lot of the
4 funding through formula. Some receive more based on the
5 input. If population goes up, that MPO may receive more
6 than if somebody's didn't go up as much. So a lot of it
7 comes back to MPOs. MPOs are a very important partner
8 with TxDOT. They make recommendations and solve
9 transportation issues locally to figure out how to
10 distribute those monies. And on projects where there's
11 not enough sometimes, we will match that or make up,
12 fill in a gap from another category, through Commission
13 discretion.

14 And -- I don't know -- some of y'all have
15 probably experienced our state parking lot out here
16 today, I-35. I'm sorry for that. Hopefully there will
17 be a solution down the road; but just to give you a
18 perspective and a laugh at 35, regardless of what the
19 solution is, that is between a 5- to 7-billion-dollar
20 fix. So 5 to 7 billion.

21 Now, I want to put that into perspective.
22 Our UTP is about 75 billion over a 10-year period. So
23 think about that. If we were to just fix this road out
24 here, that would take away from maintenance. That would
25 take away from improvements to the U.S. highway system,

1 maybe the interstate system or a lot of others around
2 the state. This shows you the complexity of the funding
3 and the challenges that we face when we come back in to
4 look at that.

5 And I hear concerns. I've heard from
6 members of the committee and from those outside; and
7 Robin, wherever you are, I've heard from Robin before as
8 well, is that: Hey, what about us?

9 And sometimes it does get overlooked; but
10 it's because of competing priorities, one to maintain a
11 safe system. That is job one. That's what these orange
12 ribbons represent, safety. And by the way, I do believe
13 that last year bicycle/pedestrian fatalities did go down
14 just a little; but if there's one, that's still too
15 many.

16 Under Senate House Bill 20, we put in
17 goals each year for what we want to maintain. Some of
18 them are really quantifiable that are good numbers; for
19 example, pavement condition, you know, road miles at
20 different criteria. One that we struggle with as a
21 Commission, fatalities. We like to put in zero because
22 one is too many, but it's not a reality. It's going to
23 be a long-term journey. You've probably seen us and
24 heard us talking about ending the streak. Texas --
25 something we're not proud of -- since November of 2001,

1 there has not -- how many of y'all have teenagers or
2 know teenagers? Do you know anybody that's 18 years old
3 or younger? And you think about that. In their
4 lifetime there has not been a single day where there's
5 been a death-free day on a Texas highway. And that
6 comes from a multitude of sources, and rural areas are
7 some of the worst. Think about that.

8 So we have a shared responsibility in
9 what we do. Safety's Number 1. And a lot of things
10 that we've put in place, sometimes people may not agree;
11 but we have a lot of great engineers with a lot great
12 input from within TxDOT to try to make these safety
13 improvements. These all factor into the funding
14 allocations, and it's tough. I know there's tough
15 decisions.

16 But I want to really compliment Billy
17 with your term as chairman. What y'all have done is
18 really create a focus on creating things statewide and
19 using -- beginning to come back, I look forward to some
20 of your discussion items of using what we have and how
21 to maximize the system, what we have, with a long-range
22 vision.

23 Eric's going to get into this a little
24 bit later; but very shortly we're going to have another
25 call for TAP grants, TAP funding. And Eric will get

1 into more details. But, from what I understand, there's
2 been some really good discussion as to what's the best
3 use for that.

4 Everybody always says, "Well, in my
5 area." But how do we look at it as a state and begin to
6 complete the system? And let me give you an example:
7 Over the last couple of UTPs -- some of y'all have seen
8 this -- we want to complete projects; and we've tried to
9 end where we had a gap in, I call them lane miles, roads
10 from a four lane down to two lane back to a four lane.
11 Well, that bottleneck will create some problems; and we
12 want to complete that.

13 And what we've been able to do, there
14 were two big systems in the last UTP update last summer.
15 One was 175 from Dallas to Jacksonville, Texas. It's
16 now going to be funded for four lanes. Stop the bottle
17 necks through the rolling hills.

18 Another one is U.S. 75 north of Dallas
19 going into Collin County, up into Denton and Sherman.
20 Stop the two lanes. We're going to add capacity.

21 Our presentation, if y'all have a chance
22 to watch, next Wednesday we're going to have a
23 commission workshop. We're going to talk about the
24 interstates outside the MPO boundaries. And there's one
25 I love to talk about. It's Interstate 10 between

1 Houston and San Antonio. You come outside the Katy
2 Expressway going towards San Antonio, you've got, like,
3 22 lanes from access road to access load -- maybe 24 --
4 22, I believe; and then it comes back down to 2 when you
5 get out past Sealy and Brookshire.

6 Well, coming from San Antonio you've got
7 wide and then it comes back down outside of where I'm
8 talking, outside the MPO boundaries. That's a choke
9 point for business, commerce, trucking, and safety. So
10 we're going to talk about that.

11 And Commissioner New is wanting to -- oh,
12 if some of y'all have not met our newest commissioner,
13 Alvin New from San Angelo, he was the former mayor there
14 in San Angelo. So he really gets and understands a lot
15 of the things we're talking about. He's going to talk
16 about the truck systems and filling in some of the gaps
17 with our truck systems, like the Texas interstates,
18 using U.S. highways. They're alternative routes to the
19 use of the interstate. So there's going to be a lot of
20 good discussion as we come into the UTP and talk about
21 that.

22 Now, how this relates here, sometimes
23 there's a right-of-way. If it's an overlay or a
24 right-of-way that could potentially be used for some of
25 your projects, that's always going to come back down --

1 and I want to encourage y'all to help frame something as
2 we look at these funding sources outside the TAP grants.
3 There's a lot of other sources of matching funds to help
4 do this, like potentially other agencies. There's the
5 Parks & Wildlife that could do something.

6 I want to use another example. I was
7 visiting with Congressman Brian Babin from Woodville.
8 He's on the Federal Transportation Committee. One of
9 these U.S. highway systems that we're looking at
10 completing with four lanes is from Beaumont, coming out
11 of the port, coming north on U.S. 69. That is a relief
12 route for those that want to miss Houston and Dallas,
13 going up through Greenville. As we come through there,
14 there's consideration of wanting to make it like a
15 parkway. And I think of the Neches Nacogdoches Parkway.
16 I think of the Appalachian Trail Parkway.

17 Well, we're not going to fund all that at
18 TxDOT; we can't. So what other sources could there be?
19 Well, you're going through a national forest. And I'm
20 sure there are some people who think outside the box.
21 If you're going through a national forest, maybe there's
22 federal funds from the Department of the Interior that
23 could manage all that -- not during a shutdown, by the
24 way. But you can start thinking outside the box. What
25 about industry? What about land donations? There's a

1 lot of ways to get funding other than just from state
2 funds. And state funds or TAP funds can fill in a gap.

3 So these segments, as you begin,
4 Mr. Chairman, to look at the statewide corridor, think
5 of other ways to fund these routes; and also look at the
6 low-hanging fruit. And I say that, "the low-hanging
7 fruit," what section -- I'm really proud of what y'all
8 have done from the work that I've seen; you've come
9 together with a statewide plan. Ultimately, you're
10 going to get to all of it. And the more you can
11 complete what I call the bookends or in the middle, it
12 makes it easier to fill in the gaps. Pick that
13 low-hanging fruit where it will score well on the system
14 to get it done.

15 And one of the biggest challenges -- I'm
16 going to make two comments. One of the biggest
17 challenges that we face is that when we give money,
18 whether it's TAP grants -- and they've tightened the
19 rules in the last couple of years -- is that it goes to
20 a community and they don't use it, for whatever reason.
21 It may be a good project, but they don't have the
22 talent, the execution, or they don't come up with their
23 match; and they don't use that. That's not fair to the
24 rest of the state because our direction from the
25 governor, wherever we get the money, is to execute and

1 get it spent. We don't want to hear: Hey, TxDOT has
2 this money that's sitting on a balance sheet that we
3 can't use. Well, sometimes when we allocate this money
4 to a community and they can't use it, that's part of the
5 criticism we may receive.

6 I just came back from Washington, DC; and
7 I heard rumblings from both sides of the aisle that -- I
8 can't believe I'm saying this -- but from both sides of
9 the aisle that they're considering bringing back
10 earmarks. They're going to use that name for designated
11 funds. And when asked about it, my response -- I had
12 two responses. When I first joined this Commission back
13 in 2011, we had about almost 800 million -- well over
14 700 million in unused earmarks.

15 Now, what does that mean?

16 MS. WEAVER: A problem.

17 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: It's a problem.
18 It's sitting in a balance -- in a fund balance that we
19 could not spend. For example, if you had a hundred-
20 billion-dollar project, \$2 million may have been granted
21 and earmarked that we couldn't use; and that project was
22 not even on our UTP. It wasn't even ready to go. But
23 some of the Congressional leaders said: Hey, I want to
24 put it on this project, show this community X, Y, Z.

25 We spent a lot of time working with the

1 sponsors, saying: Hey, can we unwind that and use it on
2 something else where we can use that money in the state?
3 If it ever comes back, we want to make sure that, for
4 better or worse -- we're not asking for them; we can't
5 lobby. But if asked, we want to make sure that a
6 particular grant, demonstration fund, whatever it is --
7 looks like it's TAP grants -- is there. It may fill
8 in a gap in funding; and it's a project that is
9 supported locally by TxDOT, by the leadership of a city
10 or county -- wherever it is -- or a COG, and the
11 Congressional leaders and all the way up, where it's
12 defined it can be used right away, pretty quick, in one
13 or two years, where it's not just out there. We want to
14 stop that. So our Federal team is also trying to
15 protect funding.

16 And the last comment I want to make --
17 and I'm sorry I'm going a little bit longer -- we have
18 asked our Federal delegation where we use these Federal
19 grants that come back to Texas -- Texas is a donor
20 state. And gas tax, every time we pump a gallon of gas,
21 we pay 38.4 cents. Twenty cents is the state gas tax;
22 and when that comes to the state, 5 cents automatically
23 goes to education. That leaves 15 cents left for TxDOT.

24 At the Federal level of the 18 cents that
25 we send back up to DC, we get just barely over 80% of

1 that back for highway funding. If you add in transit
2 and some of the other things, it goes a little higher,
3 you know, the percentage. That's what we're faced with,
4 with a deficit.

5 So there's only eight donor states in the
6 country, which means we're paying for everything else in
7 California, Montana, Alaska, Louisiana, everywhere else.
8 We're a donor state, and that's not fair to us. So
9 we're competing for Federal highway funds, and we just
10 don't have the funding. We're talking hundreds of
11 millions of dollars when we're trying to fix maintenance
12 first with the population growth. And we want to try to
13 get our fair share back; and hopefully with the next
14 transportation bill, we'll be able to improve that.

15 I know I kind of went on a little bit,
16 and I'm trying to hopefully set the stage and share some
17 of the challenges that we're faced with.

18 I have two people I want to introduce.
19 Where's Noah? Oh, there he is, right back there, Noah
20 Oaks. Noah is a policy analyst who works with us in the
21 Commission office, sitting before the Commissioners,
22 working with staff. Noah, welcome.

23 And Allegra Hill is here. She's with the
24 Governor's office. She is the liaison between TxDOT and
25 the Governor's office relating to policy and everything

1 that we do. So I'd like to welcome them.

2 And, Mr. Chairman, for your term, thank
3 you; and thank each of you for volunteering your time to
4 give a lot of input. I'll be happy -- I'll probably be
5 here until about 11:00 or so. I'll be happy to answer
6 any questions or comments. I hope I've given you an
7 overview of some of the things we're faced with.

8 MR. HIBBS: Again, thank you very much,
9 Commissioner Austin, for taking your time to come here
10 today.

11 Does anyone have any questions for the
12 Commissioner?

13 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Don't hold back.

14 (Laughter.)

15 MR. HIBBS: Did we have a little
16 something special that needed to be on the agenda here?
17 I believe that we're going to add it last minute. And
18 so what I'd like to do is ask Robin Stallings from Bike
19 Texas to come forward, please, and make a little
20 presentation for us.

21 MR. STALLINGS: Thanks. I'm going to sit
22 down here so I can be on the mic for recording and
23 stuff.

24 At Bike Texas we have the luxury of
25 concentrating on one transportation issue. So we seem a

1 little bit focused on that; and that's a good thing
2 because that's really what our job is, both bikes and
3 pedestrians. So we recognize the pressure that the
4 Commission has because you're dealing with ports and
5 planes and roads and public transit, and there are so
6 many issues in addition to ours. And through all that,
7 you're all trying to think about safety, just like we
8 are.

9 And so I just want to take a moment to
10 thank you for the time that you have been there because
11 your attention to this issue and your attending these
12 meetings as often as you have has made it clear to the
13 people on this commission -- or this committee that the
14 Commission is watching and paying attention. And it's
15 given a gravitas to the work here that's enabled the
16 staff and these members to get more done in the last few
17 years than in the previous long history of this whole
18 committee. Many of those years I served and so I have
19 to say that they have clobbered any previous work and so
20 much of that has to do with your leadership. And so we
21 really appreciate it.

22 We just want to give you a token of
23 appreciation from Bike Texas. There are about 4 million
24 Texans that ride bikes at least once a year. We'd like
25 to think we support them, but at least 20,000 of them

1 pay some attention to us. So I think we can say that
2 they're our supporters. And so with that, on their
3 behalf, thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Thank you so much.
5 It's not pizza, is it?

6 (Laughter.)

7 MR. HIBBS: I don't even think it's a gag
8 gift.

9 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Oh, that's
10 wonderful. Thank you, Robin.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. STALLINGS: And it's functional.

13 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: A chopping block.

14 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: We've had some
15 difficult conversations in the past because of difficult
16 topics; but with that, I think that better outcomes have
17 come through. And a lot of it started with this
18 committee bringing a different level of understanding.
19 There's not always an easy solution; but you bring a
20 level of understanding and focus to what can be done
21 instead of all the things that can't be done. And
22 that's how I would hope that y'all continue on, those of
23 you that will continue to serve in going on.

24 And whoever succeeds Billy, look at what
25 can be done instead of all the reasons we can't because

1 when we're sitting up on the dais, instead of being out
2 here with you, Robin, the communities that bring
3 consensus make it a lot easier for us and our staff to
4 recommend to take action than those that don't. And
5 it's easy to say; it's hard to execute in different
6 communities. Those working on the local MPOs or local
7 leaders on any project, "how can we" versus all the
8 reasons we can't goes a long way, even with our kids.

9 Robin, I want to say thank you. I really
10 appreciate this. This means a lot.

11 MR. STALLINGS: Oh, and one other thing,
12 to go with your orange ribbon, an orange bicycle.

13 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: I will use that.
14 Thank you, sir.

15 MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Robin.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. HIBBS: Moving right along, it's time
18 for a report from the Chair. As we have been discussing
19 Commissioner Austin's term on the Commission, we have
20 Teri Kaplan, who is retiring after 33 years of service
21 to TxDOT. For those of you who aren't counting, that's
22 a third of a century.

23 (Laughter.)

24 MR. HIBBS: That can seem like a long
25 time to some. I've actually been married for 33 years;

1 and when people ask me what it's like, I tell them
2 sometimes it seems longer.

3 (Laughter.)

4 MR. HIBBS: So, hopefully, it hasn't
5 seemed longer than 33 years; and it's all been good.
6 Thank you, Teri. You've been a huge blessing to me.
7 You're behind the scenes getting me ready and getting
8 the meetings ready and making sure that all the trains
9 run on time and all that. I mean, I just don't even
10 know how someone could step into this role without
11 having you; and we just so appreciate all that you've
12 done for us. I don't even know all the other things you
13 do for TxDOT, but I'm just saying it from the standpoint
14 of, you know, the selfish interests of those of us on
15 this committee that get to interact with you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much.
18 Everyone's invited to stay for lunch for Teri
19 afterwards. We'll enjoy beer -- I mean, pizza.

20 So I want to talk about the committee
21 here for just a moment because we've got a couple of
22 things that I need to make y'all aware of. Right now
23 there are two vacancies on this committee. Cristian had
24 some other things come up, so he's no longer on it. So
25 there's two vacancies. There are three of us that are

1 going to roll off in June and -- August. I'm sorry.
2 Yeah, June is our last meeting. So that is five
3 vacancies on this committee. That's a lot of vacancies.
4 In fact, right now we're short enough that I was really
5 sweating whether we were even going to have a quorum
6 today until about five minutes before we started.

7 One of the things that I talked to Eric
8 about -- and this is important -- these positions, you
9 know, are recommended by the Commissioners, presumably
10 approved by the Governor's office and these different
11 kinds of things. If you know someone that you feel like
12 has got the ability to step in and help lead us forward,
13 by all means, talk to that person about serving on this
14 committee. Share the name with Eric. You don't have to
15 go, you know, and do all the legwork on it. They can do
16 it and reach out to them and talk to them about it, but
17 we've got to get effective leadership to keep things
18 going on the committee; or else, a lot of the work that
19 we've done is going to be just idling along. And I
20 don't think that's a good thing. I don't think it's
21 anything anybody wants. We need to keep pushing the
22 ball down the field.

23 And so be thinking about some folks that
24 you can help identify. I know that all of you have
25 great connections inside the community and can come up

1 with some names if you need to. So I want to encourage
2 you to do that.

3 The second thing is at the last quarterly
4 meeting, apparently I scared everyone to death about
5 being the chairman; and as a result, today we're not
6 even having an election because no one put their hand up
7 and said, "I'd like to do that."

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. HIBBS: So now I want to put my sales
10 hat on and tell you why you need to think about running
11 for chairman, because, Number 1, I believe that
12 probably -- and I can thank Robin publicly for him
13 talking about what a great job this committee has done;
14 but I fully believe in the next few years, as all these
15 things that we've been working on become real, the
16 actual best years for the committee are ahead. And the
17 most significant things that will happen maybe in the
18 next 50 years will probably happen in the next 5 years,
19 and it is going to be a very exciting time to be a part
20 of this committee.

21 And so if you want to commit the time to
22 it -- and I don't want to take away from the fact that
23 you've got to be committed to this and even to the point
24 that at the beginning of the year when you start talking
25 about dates and all that stuff, you just get them on

1 your calendar; and they supersede family vacations that
2 may pop up or other things. I mean, this is what you do
3 and you take care of that for a term or two so it
4 doesn't become all-encompassing and your entire life's
5 work, but be committed to it.

6 Approach it from the standpoint of you
7 want to see the kind of things that you've been a part
8 of put into action. So instead of them being plans,
9 instead of them being surveys, instead of them being
10 discussion topics, we want to see where we go with this
11 stuff because in business one of the toughest things is
12 there's lots and lots of good ideas; but getting them
13 implemented and the follow-up -- follow-up usually is
14 where there's a lot of breakdown. Any of you that have
15 been there, you know exactly what I'm talking about. So
16 it does take the necessary oversight, which this
17 committee is charged with doing, to make sure that we're
18 actually following through and doing the kinds of things
19 that are put in place.

20 So there is going to be an election next
21 quarter and somebody's got to step up because I'm
22 running out of meetings and I'm not being reappointed.
23 So somebody else has got to come along. Think about it
24 seriously. I know all of you pretty well at this point
25 and know you would do a great job, whoever wants to take

1 this on; but I do think, again, make sure you've got
2 your own personal house in order so that you can
3 dedicate the time to these things.

4 So with that, I'd like to turn it over to
5 Eric.

6 MR. GLEASON: Thank you. I appreciate
7 that.

8 I was misinformed on the number of August
9 roll-offs; it's four. Four plus two is actually the
10 quorum we need for the Committee to function. So it's
11 even more important that we get some names in
12 circulation and start making some movement that way.

13 I want to take a moment in my comments to
14 also recognize and thank Teri for 33 years and 3 months
15 of serve; and now she's down to next Friday. Correct?

16 MS. KAPLAN: (Nodding head.)

17 MR. GLEASON: She'll actually still be on
18 the payroll through February; but in terms of Teri's
19 presence in the office, we're really coming down to the
20 final days; and it's difficult to know where to start
21 with Teri. I actually have only had the privilege of
22 working with her, I think, for probably five --

23 MS. KAPLAN: Five and a half.

24 MR. GLEASON: -- five and a half years.

25 But I can't even begin to imagine Houston and the impact

1 you have had on --

2 MS. KAPLAN: These bike lanes are all
3 over.

4 MR. GLEASON: Right, and I'd name at
5 least one of them after you.

6 But Terri is one of these people that --
7 I've been in a professional capacity for too long -- but
8 I've been in a position of leading people for about 25
9 years in one capacity or another; and you run into a lot
10 of really good, kind people when you're in that role.
11 And then, every once in a while, you run into people
12 that are just outstanding; and Teri is one of those that
13 goes on to that hand when it counts to five of
14 outstanding individuals that I've encountered in my
15 career.

16 And, really, it's a combination of
17 unbelievable knowledge; and it's just a question of
18 being able to get it out. Commitment and then just this
19 sheer energy level that she brings to the job that has
20 the ability to transform. When I took over the
21 responsibility of the program, the program was mired in
22 mediocrity. I think really these committee meetings are
23 so different than the ones we first had when I came on
24 board, and really it's not me. It's Teri. And now
25 Bonnie and Noah will be stepping in, and I have all the

1 confidence in the world they will carry it forward. But
2 Teri has transformed it, and there really is no other
3 explanation for it.

4 And we joke about it in the office. We
5 joke about how slow we are in our office because she
6 moves faster than anybody on the floor, and you really
7 have to look two ways before you exit your office
8 because she might be coming down the hall.

9 (Laughter.)

10 MR. GLEASON: But she's just been a true
11 force of nature in terms of moving this program forward.

12 And we really appreciate everything
13 you've done, and we're going to miss you tremendously.

14 We're also, not going to miss a beat.
15 Bonnie has stepped in as the Statewide Program Manager.
16 Noah Heath, who I will now introduce, started working
17 for us on Tuesday. So he's fresh energy and is on the
18 uptake here. Noah comes to us from the City of
19 Fort Worth, and Karla has had the opportunity to work
20 with him before.

21 We actually talked to Karla before we
22 hired you, so we know a little bit about you.

23 But he was in both urban planning and the
24 police departments in Fort Worth. He's got a master's
25 from UT Arlington.

1 And I guess your family is in the process
2 of relocating to Austin?

3 MR. HEATH: Yes, they'll be down the end
4 of February.

5 MR. GLEASON: Good. Excellent.

6 So we are glad to have him on board.
7 We're looking for a little more overlap before Teri
8 leaves in the last couple of days.

9 So, Teri, thank you.

10 And, everyone, please, please join us for
11 the luncheon.

12 I'll give her a chance to say just a few
13 words. She said so she can use the microphone.
14 Everyone has to at least once while they're at TxDOT.

15 (Laughter.)

16 MS. KAPLAN: I'll be nice. I want to
17 check and make sure I don't talk too loud. Is it good
18 right there?

19 Okay. First of all, I just want to let
20 y'all know that I wrote this because I want to make sure
21 and convey my message clearly and concisely. So I am so
22 excited to be here to thank my colleagues. I want to
23 start off with Billy Hibbs, our Bike Chair, for the
24 passion and guidance that you've brought us. To
25 Commissioner Austin for his support and voice on the

1 Commission. To Donna Roberts, the Public Transportation
2 Division Section Director, who had the confidence in me
3 and hired me.

4 Okay. I'm going to need a tissue, I
5 think. Does anyone have one? I'll take a deep breath.
6 I am rather emotional.

7 To Eric Gleason, our Public
8 Transportation Division Director, who's had the forward
9 thinking and encouragement throughout all of our
10 initiatives. To Mark Williams, who's not here today.
11 He had the confidence in the Public Transportation
12 Division to move the Transportation Alternatives Program
13 to our division, the Public Transportation Division.
14 That was awesome. That gave us the foundation to fund
15 the bike and ped projects through our division. To the
16 members of the Bicycle Advisory Committee, who have
17 played a vital role in advancing bicycle and pedestrian
18 initiatives across the state, I want to thank each and
19 every one of you.

20 To Stephanie Lynn -- stand up. Y'all
21 haven't met Stephanie because she's been away from us
22 for a couple of years, but Stephanie was the first
23 person to join me and work side by side. She comes from
24 a consulting firm called Jacobs; and she was the one
25 that wrote the Strategic Directional Report with the

1 help of the members here, Eric, Donna, and myself, the
2 four of us together. And we all produced that document,
3 and we are using that document to move our program
4 forward.

5 To Carl Seifert -- Carl, I want you to
6 stand up and be recognized -- also a planner with
7 Jacobs, who moved his family all the way from
8 New Orleans to join the team two and a half years ago.
9 In addition to leading the Bicycle Tourism Trails Study,
10 he is now spearheading the Bicycle Design Initiative and
11 supports all of our bike programs, along with Bonnie.

12 Sorry I'm so emotional, guys.

13 To Bonnie, our new Statewide
14 Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, who, by joining the
15 Public Transportation Division, has brought over a
16 wealth of experience and has become the lead on all
17 current bike/ped initiatives and is advancing our
18 research projects, most notably the Bicycle/Pedestrian
19 Count Program. I want to thank Bonnie. She's doing a
20 wonderful job and has helped in all transitions with
21 every aspect of the activities we've got going on,
22 consultants out there included.

23 Also, to Bike Texas, to Robin Stallings
24 and to Mark Stein, who have been supportive since the
25 day I came to this. And my very first day on the job

1 was a Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting with y'all. It
2 was the first time that we all worked together. Eric
3 decided that he should soon join this committee.

4 (Laughter.)

5 MS. KAPLAN: So I just want to say that
6 I've had the pleasure of working across a number of
7 TxDOT divisions who have provided valuable insight and
8 leadership to help build our program, which includes
9 Transportation, Planning and Programming, the Design
10 Division, Traffic Safety, Environmental, Right-of-Way,
11 Railroad and Bridge divisions.

12 The work we do in Austin would not be
13 possible without the 25 districts, and it has been a
14 pleasure to work with most of our champions -- I was
15 supposed to strike that --

16 (Laughter.)

17 MS. KAPLAN: -- with all of our champions
18 at the district level across the state. I want to thank
19 all of you individually for your participation and
20 support to grow TxDOT's Bicycle/Pedestrian Program. I
21 know the seeds we have helped plant are well rooted; and
22 I am excited to see the bike program continuing to grow,
23 making Texas a better place to walk and bike.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

1 MS. KAPLAN: And I lost 20 pounds this
2 past year.

3 (Laughter.)

4 MR. GLEASON: That's on the record.

5 MR. HIBBS: Nice job, Teri. Thank you.

6 MS. KAPLAN: Thank you.

7 MR. GLEASON: So just to advise this
8 committee with an update on our construction efforts
9 with the bicycle/pedestrian projects, so back in the
10 fall and early winter of 2015, the Commission awarded
11 funds to 43 projects in areas of the state of under
12 200,000. Nineteen of those have been completed.
13 Another 18 of them are under construction, and the final
14 6 are moving forward, letting here very shortly. So
15 we're making tracks. We're building things.
16 Communities are using those funds and getting them
17 built.

18 And then we have another similarly-sized
19 group of projects coming from the award that was made in
20 the fall of 2017 in areas of the state of under 200,000
21 that are moving forward on schedule, getting under
22 contract housing districts in local areas; and those
23 projects will be under construction for the next several
24 years as well.

25 Now, to rest on those and moving ahead

1 with identifying the next package of projects, on
2 February 8th we will be announcing another call for
3 projects. This one is a little different than the one
4 we've had in the past. We have three different -- well,
5 not three different sources of funding, but three
6 buckets of funding, if you will, associated with this
7 call.

8 The first bucket is actually a statewide
9 bucket, which is the state school program call for
10 projects, about \$8.7 million for those projects. That
11 is a statewide call. And so we'll be looking for
12 project applications in the vicinity of schools and
13 communities in K-through-8 schools looking to group
14 safety and access for biking and walking to school.

15 There is another pot of money, which is
16 some remaining funding that we have from previous calls
17 for projects in the areas of the state of under 5,000,
18 what we call rural in the Transportation Alternatives
19 Program; and I believe that amount of money is about
20 10 million.

21 MS. SHERMAN: Yeah, 10 million.

22 MR. GLEASON: About \$10 million. So we
23 will be looking for projects that are ready to go to
24 construction in those areas.

25 And then we're also going to be asking

1 for project proposals anticipating the next bunch of
2 federal funding coming from a new authorization bill for
3 fiscal year '21 and '22. So that will be a call for
4 projects in areas of the state between 200,000 and 5,000
5 and then lower than 5,000; and two years' worth of
6 funding will be about \$13 million for each of those two
7 areas of the state for a total of about 26 million.

8 The way this is going to work is up
9 front -- we're going to approach this call differently
10 than we have in the past. We're asking people to
11 provide us with what is called a preliminary
12 application, just a brief description, so that we can
13 make sure we get it in the right bucket of money
14 because, depending on the source of the funding and the
15 timing of those funds, we may ask you to fill out a more
16 detailed application that's more specific to that.

17 And so we're hoping to be in a position
18 to go to the Commission for their consideration with the
19 Safe Routes to School Program of projects and projects
20 in areas of under 5,000 by December of this year. And
21 for those projects look for '21 and '22 federal funding,
22 it will be sometime, I think, late winter, early spring
23 of 2020 that we'll be looking to have the Commission
24 take action on those. I'm pretty excited about that.

25 And with that, that concludes my report.

1 MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Eric.

2 At this point in time, out of respect to
3 Commissioner Austin's time -- he may need to leave a
4 little early -- I want to go to Agenda Item Number 10
5 and discuss the discussion and possible recommendation
6 to the Commission for use of a portion of the TA funds
7 to develop the Bicycle Tourism Trails. This is an
8 action item. When the agenda was sent out, there was a
9 copy of a letter that was included in there.

10 I want to give you a little background on
11 this. First of all, I would love to claim authorship on
12 all of this because I think it is some great work.
13 Unfortunately, the reality is I'm just not that smart.
14 There are some really, really bright people working
15 behind the scenes who understood my concern that we need
16 to now advance the Bicycle Tourism Trails study to the
17 planning stage; and once we do that, what is the best
18 way of being able to tie a bow on this project and get
19 it going so that it's not like this legislation that we
20 discussed where it was passed in '04 and it took 15
21 years to getting around to doing anything about it.

22 In your packet you will find a letter
23 with the TxDOT logo on top of it. This is a letter that
24 I respectfully would like for each committee member to
25 sign and put your name on as part of the authorship of

1 this plan; and, hopefully, all of you had a chance to
2 read it. So I won't go through and read it to you, but
3 I will tell you that there's basically three things in
4 this letter that I think you need to be very well aware
5 of; and that is: Number 1, moving this from a study to
6 a plan. And in the first paragraph it talks about the
7 reasons why we think it's time to do that.

8 The second thing has to do with: How do
9 we begin to start getting some money rolling towards
10 this project in an organized way? And part of it comes
11 from being from the city of Tyler where we had kind of
12 an ad hoc bicycle plan and we had striping on one road
13 that was 5 miles away from another road that was 2 miles
14 away from another road, nothing connected; and it was
15 just an unorganized mess. So there was no bike lane
16 striping unless you wanted to ride a hundred yards on a
17 striped path and then it ended because there was not any
18 comprehensive plan that linked all of them together.

19 So I want to, again, congratulate Carl on
20 the great work that he did, his team, on putting this
21 together; but we've got routes now that I think can and
22 should be funded in segments. And this is a project
23 that we knew when we first started that you can't eat
24 the whole elephant in one sitting; you're going to have
25 to eat it in bites. And so by segment we've reached the

1 conclusion that there needs to be an organized way of
2 knowing what segment to recommend.

3 And in talking to a lot of different
4 people, the obvious way to do that is to use the assets
5 that TxDOT has to identify segments that look like
6 they're pretty far along, bringing those to the bicycle
7 committee, and let the bicycle committee then make a
8 recommendation to the Commissioners that we think that
9 Segment X or Segment Y or Segment Z should be funded
10 with up to 50% of the TA funding. And that's very
11 important because we know that that funding is there.
12 We don't have to go to the Governor's Office and get
13 more funding. And we can at least begin an organized
14 way of getting this project started.

15 Now, here's the part for me where I've
16 seen things like this kind of take on a life of their
17 own. Once this gets out and once the information is
18 widely reported to the general public, then if you can
19 imagine funding that first segment, whoever is adjoining
20 that on either side is probably going to look at that
21 first segment and say: You know, if we get our act
22 together, maybe we'll get funding for our segment.

23 So they'll go to their private developers
24 to see if they can get some land donated; I'm sure
25 they'll do that. And if you can get organized locally

1 with additional in-kind contributions and all, it will
2 give them a chance to get organized. And then they can
3 make their case to TxDOT. TxDOT can then recommend
4 whatever different parts of this trail need to be
5 developed yet. We can discuss it and debate and then
6 make a recommendation to the Commission.

7 And I believe one of the goals of doing
8 it that way is it can potentially take some of the
9 political pressure off the Commissioners from saying:
10 Okay. Well, I'm going to recommend this segment. It
11 may be in my district. And, rather, it puts the
12 responsibility on the committee to say who's far enough
13 along, who's got enough build-out that it makes sense to
14 fund this without you having to start from scratch in a
15 particular segment. And I think that there will be a
16 race of money and efforts to try to get these things far
17 enough long that they'll be seriously considered.

18 So at the end of the day, I look at this
19 letter as kind of tying the bow on the work that Carl
20 did and that this committee did and all of those years
21 of voice -- or conference calls that we had and actual
22 meetings and drawing on the maps with markers and
23 everything else, I just feel like as the outgoing
24 chairman we need to have something that can keep the
25 momentum going on this. And I believe that, based on

1 the people that I've talked to, this is probably the
2 best way of doing it.

3 So at this point I'll entertain any
4 questions or suggestions or comments, but I'd like to
5 have a vote on this with approval of the committee
6 today. I would like to have everybody's signature on
7 the letter before you leave today, and I would like to
8 get this in the Commissioners' hands just as soon as
9 possible.

10 There is a draft resolution in here,
11 which is a very important part of what you would be
12 voting on. It's a short thing on a single piece of
13 paper that, "The TxDOT Bicycle Advisory Committee
14 recommends adoption of the Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails
15 Study by the Texas Transportation Commission. The
16 Bicycle Advisory Committee also requests that the
17 Commission allocate up to 50% of Federal Transportation
18 Alternatives Program money to fund trail segments as
19 recommended by the BAC."

20 Jeff?

21 MR. POLLACK: Do we need a motion before
22 we have a discussion?

23 MR. HIBBS: I'm sorry?

24 MR. POLLACK: Do we need a motion before
25 we have a discussion?

1 MR. HIBBS: I think we ought to have the
2 discussion first.

3 MR. GLEASON: According to Robert's Rules
4 of Order, you can entertain a motion --

5 MR. HIBBS: Okay.

6 MR. GLEASON: -- then you have a
7 discussion. Then you have a vote.

8 MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

9 All right. So we have a motion.

10 Do we have a second?

11 MS. WEAVER: Second.

12 MR. HIBBS: Second by Karla.

13 MS. WEAVER: I have a question.

14 MR. HIBBS: Okay.

15 MS. WEAVER: So I think that this is a
16 great idea. I think this is a wonderful way to make
17 sure this plan doesn't sit on the shelf. That's
18 Number 1. I fully support this.

19 I want to make sure I understand the
20 language as it's recommended; and if it's prescribed a
21 certain way. "50% of federal Transportation
22 Alternatives Program money," so with the State's hundred
23 percent, 50% of that goes to areas under 200,000 by a
24 competitive process; 50% goes with any area funded
25 within the state. Is it 50% of the 50% or is it the fee

1 50% of any area funds? How is that intended to be
2 interpreted?

3 MR. POLLACK: Likewise, that's exactly my
4 question, and at what point it's extracted from that
5 total federal allocation.

6 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: The way I read this
7 and the way I interpreted it -- let's go to the map here
8 because when you look at this map -- let me just start
9 with what I call the Texas Triangle, going from Dallas/
10 Fort Worth to Houston to Austin and San Antonio. First
11 of all, when you look at the large areas, this
12 connects -- you have elements of micro-connecting each
13 of these large metropolitan areas. So do you have
14 inclusion? Yes. But look at what's outside those
15 boundaries. And you're going to have a lot of rural
16 area, and there's going to probably be more lane miles
17 or trail miles outside.

18 So when you look at getting there, the
19 way I took this, not the way it's written, but the way I
20 perceived this is that when you look at all of it and
21 they use both categories, it's going to take both
22 categories to fill it in. And my only encouragement
23 would be: Regardless of what this committee votes and
24 how it comes up, when you look at this to adopt the
25 plan, you know, that's up to the fellow Commissioners

1 and staff to recommend it -- also to the committee.
2 This is a very important letter. An adoption versus
3 receiving and recognizing the plan, adoption would be
4 the way to go. I think it's a great recommendation.

5 It's going to be key -- one thing I would
6 look at when we receive a recommendation like this for
7 funding other projects, the committee supports it,
8 Number 1. So what support does this committee have?
9 And I'm just going to use some examples here. Do the
10 advocacy groups of bicycles statewide, wherever it is,
11 i.e., Robin, does their organization support this
12 recommendation? Do you have the MPOs, who are the
13 recipients of a lot of these funds, supporting this
14 recommendation? And maybe that's the next step because
15 when you look at adopting this, that's going to make
16 Eric's job a lot easier to do because you have the right
17 support and tentacles to take that future step if this
18 is adopted.

19 Is that a fair statement?

20 MR. GLEASON: Yes. Let me provide a
21 little more detail to the committee about the funding as
22 it comes down to the state. So we actually get -- the
23 Transportation Alternatives funding comes in in four
24 buckets, if you will. There is a bucket that is for the
25 areas of the state of under 5,000; we get a specific

1 number for that. We get a bucket for the areas of the
2 state between 5,000 and 200,000. There's a bucket for
3 the areas of the state that go to MPOs below 200,000.
4 Those three buckets add up to half of the total that
5 comes to the state.

6 The other half under the TAP Program is
7 for statewide project purposes. Under federal guidance,
8 that half can also be flexed out of the Transportation
9 Alternatives Program over into the Public Transportation
10 Program for purposes. So it's up to the committee to
11 identify what the intent of that is, but that's the way
12 the program is thought of. We often refer to -- that
13 half of the total that is flexed over and out of it, we
14 have come to refer to that as TAP Flex. So if it is the
15 intent of the committee to say, "Those are the funds
16 we're talking about," then my recommendation would be
17 you might want to call it TAP Flex in the letter. If
18 it's something different than that or if you
19 deliberately want to leave it open for interpretation,
20 you can choose to do that as well.

21 Does that help?

22 MS. WEAVER: Yes.

23 MR. GLEASON: So leaving it up to the
24 committee to decide what that means, that's how it gets
25 talked about.

1 MR. POLLACK: So to completely clarify --
2 for the record, Jeff Pollack -- as a recovering MPO
3 Director, I feel like I --

4 (Laughter.)

5 MR. POLLACK: -- I have to advocate for
6 the protection of those funds in the urban area; and
7 when I look at the routes we're discussing, the majority
8 of it falls in rural areas. And we know, historically,
9 rural communities have had a tough time utilizing --
10 applying for, let alone utilizing TAP funds that are in
11 the pot for rural communities either under 5,000 or
12 between 5,000 and 20,000.

13 So if I understand this correctly, this
14 would -- the flexibility to utilize up to the full
15 allocation of flex funds would be completely independent
16 of the pots that go to the MPOs or to the rural
17 communities in and of themselves.

18 Is that an accurate interpretation?

19 MR. GLEASON: Yes.

20 MR. POLLACK: I think we may want to
21 modify the language on the table to make it apparent to
22 anyone who's not privy to this discussion that in no way
23 are we suggesting pinching off the top of what is
24 already a very scarce allocation to other pots.

25 MS. WEAVER: I would second that.

1 MR. HIBBS: So, Jeffrey, what language
2 would you change in there in order to be more
3 comfortable with that?

4 MR. POLLACK: I was afraid you were going
5 to ask me that.

6 (Laughter.)

7 MS. WEAVER: I think you could add "flex"
8 after the word "program." "...up to 50% of federal
9 Transportation Alternatives Program flex money..."
10 because the 50 that's already in the bucket for the
11 three categories that Eric described, they have a
12 process to go out the door; and any areas that have
13 those projects ready can go through that path.

14 And then this provides those dollars for
15 other -- now, is the 50 right? Are we cutting ourselves
16 short already, or are we asking for too much if we don't
17 have 50?

18 MR. POLLACK: Again, that's up to
19 interpretation. Are we saying up to 50% of the 50 --
20 and sorry if you just literally raised that question --
21 or is the intent to say up to a hundred percent of the
22 50%? Because if we add the word "flex," then we may
23 have just shorted ourselves 50%.

24 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Well, maybe; maybe
25 not. Let me ask Eric: Hypothetically -- and, again,

1 looking at this map, if a part of this trail is within
2 the MPO boundaries that receive the allocation formula,
3 part of that project could come up under the other
4 formula as well. So in the definition you're not really
5 cutting it off. It's just going to come back to: Who
6 is the sponsor, and are they going to sponsor the trail
7 within that?

8 MR. POLLACK: Sure. The unintended
9 consequence there being that if an MPO in an urbanized
10 area applies for funding -- you see where I'm going with
11 this -- through a different pot and we've already
12 allocated all of the flex funds then, theoretically,
13 we're over the 50% of the total pie that we said we
14 would allocate. So we may be creating a situation of
15 complicated accounting unnecessarily there.

16 MR. GLEASON: Let me try and clarify it a
17 little. If the committee's interest is in trying to
18 focus on funding that the Commission is responsible for
19 making a decision on, then the Commission awards funds
20 for areas under 5,000. The Commission awards funds for
21 areas between 5,000 and 200,000. And then the
22 Commission will also be making a decision on that part
23 of the program or half the State's total, which is
24 flexed each year. So the only portion of the overall
25 program that the Commission does not make a decision on

1 is in the areas of over 200,000.

2 MR. POLLACK: Again, I mean, I just am,
3 you know, thinking through the math here. In theory,
4 the Commission could be getting over 50% of the total,
5 right, because of the various pots, because three of
6 four pots do come through the Commission. So I think we
7 just want to be really careful with the way we say "up
8 to 50%," less our good friends have to do a lot of math
9 to make sure that we have...

10 MR. GLEASON: One more thing: The
11 portion of the program that's under 200,000, those
12 projects need to be competitively split. So we would
13 have to be more direct in our guidance during that part
14 of the project proposal to achieve the results through
15 that. If the part that can be flexed is flexed where
16 there is the opportunity I think to say: Over and above
17 whatever else might be going on with these processes,
18 we're recommending that this investment be made, that's
19 the intent of how this ends up, then my advice to the
20 committee would be to be clear about identifying that
21 you would want the funding consideration to be from the
22 element of the overall program which is flexed.

23 MS. WEAVER: I would suggest that we add
24 the word "flex" and we take out the 50% because "up to"
25 is a cap -- it could be more; it could be less -- and

1 then the flex is the category that has open options,
2 depending on where it goes.

3 MR. POLLACK: Yeah, I agree. That does
4 preclude any of the competitive funds being allocated to
5 a segment in the plan if one of the sponsoring entities
6 chooses to spin it; but the onus, that would be on those
7 competing for those funds rather than on the State with
8 respect to the allocation plan. So I agree totally that
9 "flex" makes sense in the resolution.

10 MS. WEAVER: We still need good projects,
11 but the ones that have to go out on a timeline, because
12 the federal bill is tracking those. So we still need
13 really good projects because this calls for projects.

14 MR. HIBBS: All right. So based on the
15 recommendations made by Karla and Jeffrey, I want to
16 re-read the draft resolution as my understanding is now.
17 "The TxDOT Bicycle Advisory Committee recommends
18 adoption of the Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails study by
19 the Texas Transportation Commission. The BAC also
20 requests that the Commission allocate 50% of federal
21 Transportation Alternative Program flex money to fund
22 trail segments as recommended by the BAC."

23 MS. WEAVER: The only modification was,
24 "...the BAC also requests the Commission allocate
25 federal Transportation Alternative..." And we're

1 suggesting to take out a specific amount.

2 MR. POLLACK: Which, in theory, allows up
3 to a hundred percent of those flex funds if there are no
4 other --

5 MS. WEAVER: Projects --

6 MR. POLLACK: Yeah.

7 MS. WEAVER: -- amazing one year --

8 MR. POLLACK: So it actually allows for
9 flexibility to include the 50%.

10 MS. WEAVER: In the years that there
11 aren't that many.

12 MR. HIBBS: So, Karla, if you would,
13 please repeat that again.

14 MS. WEAVER. "The TxDOT Bike Advisory
15 Committee (BAC) recommends adoption of the Texas Bicycle
16 Tourism Trails Study by the Texas Transportation
17 Commission. The BAC also requests that the Commission
18 allocate federal Transportation Alternative (TA) Program
19 flex money to fund trail segments as recommended by the
20 BAC."

21 MR. HIBBS: Okay. So you want all the
22 language of the "up to 50%" stricken?

23 MR. POLLACK: If I may just offer one
24 suggestion for the matter of carrying this in front of
25 the Commission, you know, I spent years working on the

1 TAP program; and I didn't understand that there was a
2 50% pot elsewhere. That was entirely lost to me. So I
3 assume that's the case for many of those who are going
4 to be tracking this.

5 So I think communicating explicitly in
6 front of everyone who's paying attention that these
7 funds are independent and are not at the expense of the
8 other three pots for rural communities and for TMAs, I
9 think that making sure that's on record for anyone who
10 is going to look back at this is trying to anticipate
11 what their allocation, their MPO, is going to be is
12 really important.

13 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: What I'm thinking
14 is I kind of heard you say this, but I think this is
15 implied: You're not going at the expense of what the
16 MPOs or the other cities were doing --

17 MR. POLLACK: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: -- but it could be
19 within this committee's recommendation to consider an
20 additional waiting with preference for that, for those
21 other projects. Does that make sense?

22 MR. POLLACK: And to that end, it would
23 be a great compliment and help --

24 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: In essence, you
25 could go over that 50%.

1 MR. POLLACK: Yeah.

2 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: So if this
3 committee were to hypothetically -- let's say you've got
4 under 5,000 rural and you've the 200,000 plus, if there
5 was in the scoring for this next round that comes up --
6 and, Eric, help me here -- still, maybe if you added an
7 additional or changed the scoring to include 10%, for
8 example, of additional points if it meets -- if that
9 trail, whatever it is, is on the statewide plan. Does
10 that make sense?

11 MR. GLEASON: Absolutely. It's already
12 called out in the guide --

13 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Right.

14 MR. GLEASON: -- and would be recognized
15 by us.

16 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: So say you've got
17 two plans -- take Fort Worth as an example. Fort Worth
18 has two plans they're going to submit. Now, this one
19 could get an additional 10% because it's on that court,
20 if that makes sense.

21 MS. WEAVER: You're prioritizing this.
22 Prioritizing, as you said, is important.

23 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Well, it's just
24 kind of a recommendation of what I'm hearing from the
25 committee: We want 10% or whatever it is. That's got

1 to come back to: Will the MPOs support something like
2 that to back up this resolution?

3 MS. WEAVER: I can speak for the Dallas/
4 Fort Worth MPOs I took straight in to my board. So
5 Dallas/Fort Worth is a hundred percent on board on how
6 it's going to affect the MPOs.

7 And so I think Houston did something
8 similar.

9 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: Yes.

10 MR. POLLACK: And I would expect the MPOs
11 would be on the positive side of neutral because I think
12 in a lot of cases the routes we're talking about in the
13 tourism study really -- I mean, such a small portion of
14 those fall in the urban areas, I think what -- if an MPO
15 is paying attention and see the action taken by the
16 Commission, they should be encouraging and will inform
17 those routes that if they put forth as priorities in the
18 budget pots because they will be trying to create
19 connectivity with the state routes. So prioritizing
20 those is a natural thing to do. I just think it's a
21 really different animal when you're prioritizing routes
22 in urban areas; and the connectivity to the statewide
23 tourism trails, it's relatively a minor relative to the
24 full extent of that network.

25 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: I have just one

1 question. Would it be valid or work in any way to have
2 a footnote to this because I think that that's
3 important, what you were saying, that many of the people
4 who serve don't realize this is 50%, I mean, if there is
5 that other 50% aside. And I'm just wondering if that
6 would be valid because a lot of times if you're seeing
7 something, that's going to be the first thing in your
8 head. If you don't have somebody around to discuss it
9 with and find out more, it might be your inclination to
10 just form a negative opinion of it.

11 MR. POLLACK: You're asking if the
12 definition of the flex --

13 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: Yes.

14 MR. POLLACK: -- for example, if that
15 wouldn't help.

16 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: And that's all.

17 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: I really appreciate
18 what you're saying. I have the benefit of sitting here
19 listening to this discussion. There are times when I'm
20 sitting up there where I don't have the benefit of
21 sitting in discussions and something comes forward and
22 the staff, a lot of people who haven't been in a lot of
23 the discussions -- and we ask questions: Who, what,
24 where, when.

25 Kind of coming back to your comment, a

1 footnote or an explanation, "This is not intended to
2 take away from that. Here's what that formula is," as
3 you said, Eric, the 50% and kind of the criteria that
4 goes into the flex funding, but it really kind of comes
5 from three ways, Commission preferences; consultation
6 with MPOs, their recommendation; and really one big
7 thing is scoring. How does it score in its ability to
8 execute and move forward? It's a fluid deal.

9 Is that fair, Eric?

10 MR. GLEASON: It is fluid, yes.

11 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Okay. So that
12 would help clarify when somebody looks at this: Here's
13 50% of that flex fund that we're talking about and it is
14 not intended to take away, but we want a preference.
15 It's just real simple.

16 MR. HIBBS: So in terms of --

17 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: We're not taking
18 for granted that somebody understands.

19 MR. GLEASON: Yes. So I want to make
20 sure I'm hearing within the element of the overall
21 program that at the MPO level that we administer in
22 areas of under 200,000. We call that a competitive part
23 of the program. And we're going to find ways to express
24 a preference for projects that contribute to this.
25 Okay. Now, what about the other half, the part we call

1 TAP Flex? Is that how --

2 MR. POLLACK: You can spend up to all of
3 it.

4 MR. GLEASON: And in addition to what's
5 going on on the competitive side, then there's also
6 this, which is where -- okay. Got it. So both are part
7 of the consideration.

8 MR. POLLACK: But I think the message
9 from those of us on the MPO side is: The more clearly
10 you can communicate that flex funds are and will remain
11 independent of those competitive pots and that the
12 allocation of those flex funds at the discretion of the
13 Commission has nothing -- is not at the cost of
14 availability of those competitive funds, the more you
15 communicate that verbally and perhaps with a footnote
16 explaining the allocation of the aggregate four pots,
17 the less you're likely to see MPO directors' blood
18 pressure go up.

19 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Well put.

20 MR. HIBBS: So to Margaret's point, if we
21 have a footnote that details what this flex fund means,
22 would that satisfy your concerns?

23 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: Yes because, to me,
24 it's just a footnote for those people who don't
25 automatically understand that.

1 MR. HIBBS: Eric, your team is coming up
2 with all this Star Wars stuff. Can you come up with a
3 definition of flex funds as a footnote?

4 MR. GLEASON: I think the way they're
5 referred to in the program are statewide. What's the
6 formal name for it?

7 MS. SHERMAN: TA funds available anywhere
8 in the state.

9 MR. GLEASON: So we could say
10 Transportation Alternatives Program funds, statewide
11 Transportation Alternatives Program comma -- or
12 parentheses -- flex. And then I don't think there's any
13 question from anyone reading it what the intent is.

14 So, Carl, if it says federal Commission
15 allocate --

16 MS. ROBERTS: (Inaudible.)

17 MR. GLEASON: Okay. Statewide
18 Transportation Alternatives Program parentheses flex.
19 TA flex, yeah. Does that work?

20 MR. SEIFERT: (Nods head.)

21 MR. POLLACK: The decision that the
22 allocation to those four pots is at 50% of the federal
23 TA funds going into flex, is that fairly prescribed or
24 is that at Commission discretion?

25 MR. GLEASON: So the 50% statewide is

1 prescribed; the option of flex is at the DOT level.

2 MR. POLLACK: Sure. But the allocation
3 in that flex pot is a federal prescription?

4 MR. GLEASON: The allocation of the
5 statewide pot comes from federal funding. That's all
6 four buckets, my understanding, come to us from the
7 federal level; and we can't go from one to the other.

8 MR. POLLACK: And I wonder if that's
9 worth having it on a future agenda. For me, just
10 thinking through what possible candidates other than
11 this there are for those funds, I mean, given that the
12 rural community and the urban areas have their own
13 separate allocation makes me wonder, you know, how,
14 what...

15 MR. GLEASON: Right. And just to be
16 clear, once funds are flexed into this, bike/ped
17 projects are completely eligible for those funds.
18 There's a broader --

19 MR. POLLACK: Sure.

20 MR. GLEASON: -- scope of eligible
21 projects when they are flexed into that.

22 MS. ROBERTS: We've had previous
23 presentations on that to this committee in the past that
24 we have available that we could resend.

25 MR. POLLACK: Forgive me for not...

1 MS. ROBERTS: Yeah, a big discussion some
2 years past when the program first came out of the FAST
3 Act. So we can bring those presentations to distribute
4 to the group to refamiliarize that information. Will
5 that be --

6 MR. POLLACK: That would be great. Thank
7 you.

8 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: See what I'm
9 saying?

10 MR. GLEASON: I do.

11 I'm hoping we can -- the minutes from
12 this and the new wording in the motion will capture the
13 intent and that we can put together some sort of a one-
14 page clarifying piece for the committee that will
15 maybe --

16 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: For the benefit of
17 the group, let me show you what I was showing to Eric.
18 I just pulled out a spreadsheet here. TAP Funding is
19 the title. The top portion shows competitive funding in
20 three spots: Number 1, population less than 5,000;
21 Number 2, population 5,000 to 200,000; Number 3, MPO
22 population greater than 200,000. That equals 50%.

23 And what this motion is talking about is
24 the next 50%, which is Category 4 -- or the fourth
25 funding category, which is statewide TAP Flex. Together

1 it equals a hundred percent of what we call -- whatever
2 the amount is. And that's what I want to footnote and
3 then add the language that y'all are suggesting: At no
4 cost will Category 1, 2, 3, 4 TA be compromised, or
5 however you said that.

6 MR. POLLACK: Nor are we prescribing said
7 percentage of that flex.

8 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Right.

9 MR. POLLACK: It's at the discretion of
10 the Commission. It could be 10%; it could be a hundred
11 percent of that. The thing I think is anyone who's
12 paying attention here should be aware that we've built
13 in a lot of layers of clarity.

14 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Clarity's always
15 good.

16 MR. HIBBS: All right. Are there any
17 other questions or concerns?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. HIBBS: So at this point...

20 MS. SHERMAN: So this is the revised
21 resolution language here. It mentions "The BAC also
22 requests that the Commission allocate federal
23 Transportation Alternative Program flex money to fund
24 trail segments as recommended by the BAC and BTTS
25 statewide Transportation Alternatives Program funds and

1 tourism (TA) flex."

2 MR. HIBBS: Now, I think the footnote
3 sign ought to be by the word "flex" up there.

4 MR. POLLACK: I totally agree.

5 MR. HIBBS: The little star thing,
6 whatever that's called. Okay. Thank you.

7 MS. SHERMAN: And then do we want to pull
8 up the letter? The one change in the letter would be
9 that highlighted sentence, "We request TA flex funding
10 be allocated to development of the BTTS."

11 MR. HIBBS: All right. Are there any
12 further comments or questions? Is everyone okay with
13 that?

14 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: It might be best to
15 put that asterisk and that note in the letter itself.
16 It just seems to me, wouldn't it be the same
17 recommendation? I mean, I don't know. Maybe that's
18 overkill.

19 Okay. That's just the letter. Sorry.
20 Never mind. Never mind.

21 MS. WEAVER: A quick question: Is the
22 right word highlighted there "allocated" or "allowed" or
23 "available" or something like that? Allocation, to me,
24 is, like, you've got a number amount; and it's being set
25 aside. "We would like to request TA flex funding to be

1 eligible" or --

2 MR. HIBBS: "Use."

3 MS. WEAVER: -- "available" to develop...

4 MS. SHERMAN. "...be allocated to use..."

5 MR. HIBBS: That's a nice catch there,
6 Karla. You're right. That changes the way it reads.

7 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: "...used to develop"
8 or "for development," maybe?

9 (Simultaneous, indistinguishable
10 speakers.)

11 MR. POLLACK: Computer man, what's the
12 verdict?

13 MR. HIBBS: You've got this, Carl. No
14 pressure, right, Carl?

15 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Mr. Chairman, just
16 one other thought: What is the timeframe? Is this for
17 current UTPs or future UTPs?

18 MR. HIBBS: That's a good question,
19 Commissioner. I would say that the timeframe is ASAP.

20 (Laughter.)

21 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: I think the intent,
22 the way I would see it, is for future, correct?

23 MR. HIBBS: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: I was just asking
25 for those that may later express a desire.

1 MR. HIBBS: I'm not sure.

2 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Well, not only that
3 express a desire. Is this just general for all future
4 calls, putting the one coming up; or is this just...

5 MR. HIBBS: So the Commissioner is
6 raising an important timing question about this; and I
7 think it's valid, given the fact that we do need to --
8 there's a certain amount of, you know, homework and
9 legwork that's going to need to be done to get these
10 projects ready for consideration.

11 And, Carl, if you don't mind, can I call
12 on you for just a moment for you to explain to everyone
13 the discussion we were having prior to the meeting about
14 how you guys have already begun to put some things in
15 place that identify possible segments?

16 MR. SEIFERT: Commissioner, if you don't
17 mind, I'll defer to Bonnie.

18 MS. SHERMAN: We understand your need for
19 the committee to advance this study and so we have gone
20 into discussions with a consultant to look at a
21 prioritization of the BTTS network segment, but that
22 hasn't kicked off yet. We were excited to see your
23 letter because it would tie into that effort. So we
24 want to be responsive.

25 MR. HIBBS: So back to the Commissioner's

1 point in terms of timing, I think that it's going to be
2 probably very helpful for the committee to receive a
3 recommendation from a consultant or at least a
4 presentation from a consulting firm that these are the
5 ones that we feel like are ready to be considered. And
6 how long -- what do you expect the timeframe to be on
7 that?

8 MS. SHERMAN: About a year.

9 MR. HIBBS: About a year?

10 MS. SHERMAN: It will be less than a
11 year, maybe mid year, so maybe in July.

12 MS. WEAVER: If there are communities
13 with facilities on the network, maybe there are
14 wonderful partnerships already in place that would
15 leverage the State's money and get us out ahead of the
16 game. Would it be necessary to wait a year for those to
17 come to this board?

18 MR. POLLACK: Competitive pots already.

19 MS. WEAVER: If competitive pots are not
20 available at the time.

21 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Some of the
22 projects that I've seen in this scope of work didn't
23 quite make the list; some that did. And I'm not trying
24 to pick or choose; I'm just going from memory. I
25 believe in the metroplexes of Houston and then in the

1 Austin area, I believe there were some available that
2 didn't quite make it. And I'm not sure that they are on
3 this trail; but I think in looking at the map, the
4 northeast Texas trail comes into the north part of the
5 metroplex in Collin County, up in that area, that was
6 already in there but didn't quite make the funding. So
7 that leaves us with some corridors that were already on
8 there as part of this plan where applications have been
9 made that didn't score last time.

10 To your point, if they're there, use
11 what's there for those that can participate if that's
12 your objective, to advance this project sooner than
13 later. I think it's important for this committee to
14 say: Hey, let's work with the low-hanging fruit where
15 it exists; somebody may get something sooner than later.

16 What's the long-range plan? When you
17 have MPOs coming back in saying, "What about me?
18 Where's my money? We deserve some of this," that's
19 always going to be a challenge. Because it's part of
20 the long-term plan, every step we complete gets us down
21 that road. Where the facts may be kind of haphazard,
22 this is a real plan or main focus that y'all are to be
23 commended; and you need to start bringing it together.

24 MS. WEAVER: I think that's great. My
25 point for saying this is we may have a project where

1 environmental is being cleared and design is underway;
2 and if we waited a year to get the funds, we'd miss an
3 opportunity to partner with construction, perhaps. And
4 so we're building it five years later and prices have
5 doubled.

6 So the State's development of statewide
7 priorities for implementation in urban areas will have
8 to have quite a bit of discussion because it's all about
9 partnership and who's already got money and who's got
10 tons of developers, who's got leverage. And sometimes
11 something jumps ahead because of the ten things that are
12 ready to go and the money's there and 5,000 jobs are
13 coming or something like that.

14 So I wouldn't want to preclude us to the
15 top 20, only the first top 20 if they're ready to go
16 because Number 21 is just as important; but these things
17 are all falling in place at the right time due to
18 elected officials or due to communities and things of
19 that nature.

20 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: You sound like our
21 chairman, Chairman Bugg. In looking at Clear Lanes, we
22 rated the priorities looking at the top 100 most
23 congested roadways. Well, something may jump ahead.
24 Number 36 may jump ahead of Number 12 because of the
25 different variables. So that's a really good point.

1 MR. HIBBS: All right. Well, Director
2 Gleason has recommended some language that I think will
3 enable us to wrap this up. If you'll notice up under
4 the yellow line where it says "up to 50%" and there's a
5 line that's drawn through that, he has recommended "your
6 ongoing consideration" as language to replace that which
7 I believe will enable us to get around the concerns
8 about timing and when and everything else.

9 And thank you for saving me there.

10 MS. SHERMAN: Where do you want that
11 language?

12 MR. HIBBS: Where it says "up to 50%,"
13 it's going to need to say "your ongoing consideration."

14 MS. ROBERTS: "For the use of"?

15 MR. GLEASON: Yes. "We would like to
16 request your ongoing consideration..."

17 MS. ROBERTS: "That TA flex funding
18 be" -- "that TA flex funding be used to develop..."

19 MS. RUST: It needs to be reflected in
20 the resolution, also.

21 MR. HIBBS: And we need to put it on the
22 draft resolution as well on the second sentence where it
23 says, "The BAC" --

24 MS. SHERMAN: "Ongoing"?

25 MR. HIBBS: "Ongoing."

1 All right. Any other final thoughts on
2 this?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. HIBBS: All right. So at this point
5 we've got a motion and a second. We've made our
6 revisions. I guess I can call for a vote on this.

7 All in favor say, "Aye."

8 (Chorus of "Ayes.")

9 MR. HIBBS: Are there any opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. HIBBS: All right. Thank you-all
12 very much.

13 I want to remind everyone that because
14 we've taken the time to do this in real time here today,
15 it is with the intent that everybody's signature gets on
16 the letter today. So make sure you sign the letter
17 before you leave; and this will be, I think, a great way
18 to provide some clear direction after Carl's work and
19 all the work that's been done by the committee on the
20 Texas Tourism Trails, which if I believe my memory
21 correctly, we can give a big shout out to Mark Stein,
22 who was the one who gave us the program about the
23 Ontario Grill.

24 Is that correct? Are you the one that
25 did that? I'll bet when we were back there and you did

1 that program, you didn't think it would eventually wind
2 up to this. Thank you. Appreciate your work on that.

3 (Applause.)

4 COMMISSIONER AUSTIN: Mr. Chairman, I'm
5 going to have to exit. But I want to say: Thank y'all
6 for that. What a great discussion that was. It showed
7 the breadth and expertise on this committee to offer
8 suggestions, clarify, and bring forth really good
9 consensus. I really encourage you to go back and
10 whether it's MPOs or other bodies -- Robin, y'all's
11 organization -- and add support and value to this
12 resolution. The way it's come back up, that will bring
13 a lot of clarity. I hope Eric's team, when they start
14 analyze this, will bring a lot of clarity to make
15 recommendations to complete a plan. And y'all have
16 taken a concept to a plan; and I really applaud y'all
17 for doing this. So thank you.

18 MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.
19 You're welcome anytime. We appreciate all that you do
20 for us.

21 The next item on the agenda is Carl
22 Seifert. So, Carl, you, or Bonnie or someone's going to
23 be tending to this.

24 MR. GLEASON: There's a possibility of a
25 very, very -- like, a three-minute version of this one.

1 Then they can go home.

2 MR. HIBBS: Oh, yeah.

3 MR. GLEASON: So why don't we go with 9?

4 MR. HIBBS: So, excuse me. We are going
5 to go to Agenda Item Number 9, which is a presentation
6 on the Texas Transportation Plan 2050, a very short
7 version of it. So we'll have a brief program on that.

8 MS. DUSZA: Good morning. My name is
9 Casey Dusza, and I'm with the TxDOT Transportation
10 Planning and Programming Division. We are currently
11 updating our Texas Transportation Plan 2040 to Texas
12 Transportation Plan 2050.

13 In order to keep things rolling, I'm just
14 going to give you a two-minute update. We're not going
15 to go through the presentation that's in your packet.
16 What we're really here just to say is that we're
17 updating the plan.

18 We are starting our outreach efforts
19 shortly and we will be going out throughout the state
20 for the next month and a half and we would like y'all to
21 be a part of our outreach efforts. We would like to get
22 your opinions on our draft goals and objectives to make
23 sure that you, as the stakeholders, feel that we are
24 incorporating your needs into the plan. And we would
25 love to have your comments, questions, concerns included

1 in our plan going forward.

2 We are more than happy to come back to
3 your next meeting in April to discuss what we've done to
4 prepare for all this outreach and that we will be
5 working very closely with the PTN to get you any
6 information, the exact location of our meetings.

7 We have web access information available.
8 So if you're not able to attend in person but you are
9 able to join in and attend one of our 14 meetings via
10 Webex, we will provide any information that is pertinent
11 along the way with you-all.

12 And we would like also your help in
13 spreading the word about our outreach efforts if you
14 have stakeholder groups or the general public that you
15 know that you think would be interested in participating
16 in our long-range plan. So thank you. And I'll work
17 closely with PTN to make sure you get all of the
18 information.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. GONZALES: Thank you.

21 Any questions?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. GONZALES: Thank you-all very much.

24 We're going to move up to Item Number 7
25 for the Bikeway Design Effort.

1 Carl, are you here?

2 (No response.)

3 MS. SHERMAN: Let's do Safe Routes to
4 Schools.

5 (Laughter.)

6 MR. GONZALES: We're going to move to
7 Number 8 then.

8 MS. SHERMAN: All right.

9 MR. GONZALES: On to Number 8, TxDOT's
10 Safe Routes to Schools evaluation criteria.

11 Bonnie, is that you?

12 MS. SHERMAN: Yes, it's me.

13 All right. So, as many of you recall,
14 the Bicycle Advisory Committee has an important
15 community outreach role in the selection of Safe Routes
16 to Schools funding here for TxDOT. When the Federal
17 Government wrote the guidance for the Safe Routes to
18 Schools programs back in the early Two Thousands, they
19 wanted an outreach component.

20 And so when TxDOT wrote their rules, they
21 identified the BAC as a committee that would review and
22 evaluate proposals. And so to start that effort, we
23 took the evaluation criteria that -- well, as a quick
24 reminder, we have \$8.7 million of Safe Routes to Schools
25 funds that will be available in this upcoming call for

1 projects that Eric mentioned earlier that opens on
2 February 8th, along with a couple of pots of existing
3 and future TA funding.

4 So we presented the evaluation criteria
5 that were documented in TxDOT's Administrative Code in a
6 survey to our BAC members, and we asked y'all to rank
7 them one to ten. There were ten criteria identified in
8 the Texas Administrative Code. They were in a different
9 order than you see here on the handout in your packet,
10 but this is all ten of them. And based on the results
11 of the survey, this is the order that y'all put them in.
12 And you can see there's a clear break between the first
13 four criteria and the next three, and then it kind of
14 tapers off from there.

15 So the way that we will use this ranking
16 is in weighting the evaluation criteria. So we will
17 have explicit questions that speak to the measures that
18 were provided in the survey handout or survey document
19 you use, and we will use those questions to determine
20 whether a project is meeting the specific evaluation
21 criteria. And then we will weight those based on the
22 results from the BAC's prioritization.

23 So as you can see, safety is first.
24 Number 1 and Number 2 are safety issues and safety
25 countermeasures. The next two are the encouragement,

1 the support of other Safe Routes to Schools programs
2 within the community that will help the success of the
3 project to promote children walking and biking to
4 school. And Number 3 is economic need. So those will
5 definitely be the highest ranked or highest weighted.

6 So, again, this handout puts them in the
7 new order; and we'll apply the weights accordingly. You
8 might notice in our program guide that instead of ten
9 evaluation criteria, we have eight because we're
10 combining TA criteria and Safe Routes to Schools
11 criteria for purposes of the application. And so we'll
12 kind of put some of these under an umbrella, like safety
13 will include three different categories in it; but we
14 will use the metrics that we provided to you, with some
15 input that Karla provided us, to help our scoring.

16 So, with that, I think I can go ahead and
17 turn it back over to Billy for the next number on the
18 agenda unless anyone has any questions.

19 MR. HIBBS: Does anyone have any
20 questions of Bonnie?

21 MS. WEAVER: When is the due date for the
22 project that opens on February 8th?

23 MS. SHERMAN: The preliminarily
24 application will be due April 12th; and at the back of
25 your handout -- or packet, you will find an invitation

1 to our workshops that will run from February 12th, I
2 believe, to March 13th around the state. There are 14
3 of them. We encourage y'all to participate or encourage
4 your local entities to participate in the workshops.
5 And let's see. I think that's all.

6 MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much.

7 At this time we will go to Agenda Item
8 Number 7. Carl Seifert is going to be giving us a
9 presentation on Bikeway Design Effort.

10 MS. SHERMAN: One more thing, back to
11 Safe Routes to Schools, we did present this as an action
12 item. So if y'all want to take action on the
13 prioritization that is provided in the handout, it's...

14 MR. HIBBS: So you're asking us to adopt
15 this prioritization as shown based on the surveys?

16 MS. SHERMAN: If you wish.

17 MR. HIBBS: All right. Do we have a
18 motion?

19 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: Yes.

20 MR. HIBBS: By Margaret.

21 Do we have a second?

22 MR. HAMM: Second.

23 Second by David.

24 Any further discussion?

25 (No response.)

1 MR. HIBBS: All in favor, "Aye."

2 (Chorus of "Ayes.")

3 MR. HIBBS: Any opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. HIBBS: Motion carries.

6 MS. SHERMAN: All right. Thank y'all.

7 MR. HIBBS: Carl, take it away.

8 MR. SEIFERT: Good morning. Thank you,
9 guys. What a meeting so far. Ya'll are handling it
10 well. Thank you for your input.

11 I'm here charged with kind of giving
12 everyone an update on our progress so far, on y'all's
13 latest big effort, the Bikeway Design Effort, which
14 attempts to make recommendations to TxDOT on how to
15 better incorporate bikeways into the development
16 process. So just to give you -- which, of course, you
17 have all this in your packets -- I will try and make
18 this brief -- originally I was trying to make it really
19 quick; but we've done such a good job of abbreviating
20 other presentations that I think I can kind of go at the
21 right speed.

22 We're going to distribute really quick
23 for those of you who aren't in the working group what
24 the intent is, why we're doing this, our goal and scope
25 of work. We've had two working group meetings since

1 October when we kicked this off. So I'll go over the
2 content of those in summary fashion and talk about some
3 of the discussion that we had during those meetings and
4 then I'll give a few status updates in the world of
5 bikeway design at the national level that are kind of
6 neat and cool vaguely related to the AASHTO bikeway
7 design guide update and then I'll talk about where we're
8 going to go next.

9 Our goal in this effort is to effectively
10 institutionalize a collusion of safe, reliable, and
11 integrated bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure through
12 the traditional TxDOT planning and project development
13 processes. That really summarizes the effort we have
14 and where we're going. As far as the scope goes, we
15 have only started tackling Item 1 and that is
16 understanding what TxDOT does and also included in there
17 is what other states do and how we can learn those
18 lessons.

19 This is a slide similar that helps to
20 kind of break out that scope item in a little more
21 detail, and I'll just briefly skip over that.

22 So in meeting one, we actually had Casey,
23 who you guys just met, give us a good understanding of
24 TxDOT's planning and programming efforts. You'll notice
25 there are two words, "planning" and "programming." And

1 on the slide here we've done a good job of kind of
2 focusing in on, as the boxes get smaller, the focus and
3 the level of detail also gets more precise.

4 The big box is the 30-year level, the
5 effort that Casey was talking about, the Texas
6 Transportation Plan. There are no projects listed. It
7 is a TxDOT vision document. And then we get smaller and
8 smaller; and you'll notice I have three numbers here,
9 which we'll talk about on the next one.

10 Commissioner Austin mentioned the UTP
11 earlier today; and that's a budget document, I think, is
12 a good way to describe it, because projects are
13 definitely listed. The caveat is it is a larger
14 project. It is specific categories in projects, in
15 TxDOT's projects, that are the largest. Bike/ped
16 projects don't tend to be the largest. You won't find
17 too many UTP projects listing bike/ped. We'll talk
18 about some details of that.

19 Casey didn't get an opportunity to talk
20 about the Texas Transportation Plan in a lot of detail.
21 I believe she'll probably have another opportunity later
22 this year to talk about their efforts. They're going
23 out for community engagements around the state and this
24 is one of their stops along the way and they're going to
25 come back and do it again. But they're still in the

1 goal-setting exercise of that 30-year document, which is
2 a big task to take on just to set the goals, as it is.

3 But how does it relate to us, the Bicycle
4 Advisory Committee? As I mentioned, there's no projects
5 listed in the TTP; but that doesn't mean that bike and
6 ped can't be considered. Bonnie actually sits on a
7 technical working group that's helping to advise the TTP
8 of those goals in working to kind of craft opportunities
9 for bikes and measures related to bike infrastructure
10 and how those can get incorporated into that long-range
11 document.

12 Additionally, that UTP document, you
13 know, as these things move, you'll notice those have the
14 word "plan" in them; and the third one has
15 "programming." So there's the effort of thinking and
16 planning and then you start talking about particular
17 projects and it becomes more of a programming document.

18 This presents our first good opportunity
19 for input at the project level. The UTP has a community
20 engagement effort that goes out to all the MPOs
21 throughout and across the state for the actual projects
22 to get listed.

23 Lastly, on this slide, the opportunity
24 for engaging with bike/ped accommodations, this is the
25 best opportunity. This is a complicated process and I'm

1 trying to summarize all these really big documents in
2 one slide and that's really hard to do. So I'm not
3 going to pretend like this is all the answers. If
4 anyone wants more detail, we'll happily send y'all the
5 working group presentations and contact information for
6 more information. But I won't pretend that this is
7 comprehensive.

8 But, again, there's a community
9 engagement process that before projects are added to
10 this step, there is opportunity for the community to
11 actually stand up, raise your hand, and ask: Why is
12 there not a bike project on your list?

13 One really interesting thing that we
14 learned in this working group exercise was we talked to
15 the district staff, which this presents another
16 opportunity for how bikeways can be considered at the
17 state level. There's 25 districts in the state.
18 There's three of them that actually have developed bike
19 plans.

20 So that means they've gone through the
21 effort of analyzing, doing the talking to communities,
22 trying to understand a little better about what the
23 community needs. And, for one example, San Antonio uses
24 this to prioritize their resources, to eliminate system
25 gaps, to understand design considerations in a

1 particular context, how this could be an appropriate
2 bikeway for one and not be appropriate for another.
3 Additionally, to determine locations for future funding
4 that becomes available. If you don't have that plan,
5 then you don't have a way to use it.

6 But I wanted to point out the two items
7 in the box at the bottom there, which this may be a
8 really key opportunity because some of the folks on the
9 Bicycle Advisory Committee work in the regional level
10 government level. They work with these projects, and I
11 understand these kinds of plans may represent a good
12 recommendation for the BAC to move forward to recommend
13 that these districts have opportunities and are pushed
14 to produce these plans so that bikeways can be
15 incorporated in the future.

16 Actually, this afternoon we're going to
17 hear a presentation from TxDOT's design division staff;
18 and it's going to be about the nitty-gritty of the
19 actual project development process. We will see a lot
20 of fun engineering terms up there, and we're going to
21 talk about that in a lot more detail this afternoon.

22 One other neat thing we did is we started
23 to look at how other states are incorporating bikeways
24 into their design. This table just provides kind of a
25 big overview analysis of who does what and what they do,

1 but I'll just go ahead and skip to the next slide.

2 This talks a little bit about the summary
3 of what we found because some states do specific
4 guidance. Some states do tracking well. Some states
5 understand context a little better than others; but as
6 far as takeaways go, most states expect engineers to
7 consider bikeways. How well that's done is shotgun; who
8 knows. This way, that way. It doesn't always get
9 consistently implemented.

10 Additionally, state-level policies don't
11 necessarily translate into this. You can make a policy
12 that says all bikeways must be considered in every
13 project, but that doesn't necessarily mean that that
14 inclusion is going to occur.

15 There's a variety of tools that bring
16 attention at key points in the project development
17 process. Some bikeway design guidelines are more
18 descriptive and tells you exactly where and how the
19 bikeways should be built; others rely on engineering
20 judgment and are less descriptive.

21 In general there's not a state that's
22 doing it the best. Tracking of bikeways appears to be
23 cumbersome for a lot of states. Not everyone is doing
24 it well. None of these things probably surprise anyone
25 who's been involved in this for a while.

1 And the general concluding observation
2 might be that instead of mandating the consideration of
3 bikeways, many state DOTs are instead giving guidance
4 documents to engineers and tools to them to make
5 educated and informed decisions, which I think may be a
6 good example for us to follow.

7 Other discussion items that came out of
8 BAC working groups -- and I'll just kind of go through
9 these, and we can talk about it in more detail this
10 afternoon. I know there are some working group members
11 who have some comments to bring to bear this afternoon
12 which would be related to these things, but appropriate
13 bikeway design guidance should be contact sensitive.
14 There should be an understanding of the urban-versus-
15 rural context and how that might impact the bikeway in
16 how it may be designed.

17 Implementation tracking tools and
18 performance measures, we need to investigate those a
19 little more. Project development tools that other
20 states are using, that's a topic we're actually going to
21 cover in next month's work group.

22 A chapter in TxDOT's roadway design
23 manual, I'll talk about an update related to that in a
24 moment -- and here's that moment.

25 (Laughter.)

1 MR. SEIFERT: Actually, the Design
2 Division is in the process of updating their roadway
3 design manual; and they have an intention to add a
4 specific chapter that is related to bikeway design.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. SEIFERT: So the schedule identifies
7 that they are, I believe, still going out in the
8 selection process to run the update; but we will hear
9 from the Design Division staff this afternoon in the
10 working group meeting. And y'all can quiz them on
11 anything they know, but I do think it is a very exciting
12 opportunity because that roadway design manual provides
13 a lot of direction on how roads are built here in Texas.
14 So that's exciting.

15 From a national perspective, another
16 update on the active guide for the development of
17 bicycles, from some of our working group members and
18 those in this room had the opportunity to be part of
19 training in December on the 12th in which the AASHTO
20 consultants who are updating the AASHTO Guide, which
21 it's not only a roadway design manual important to
22 Texas; but it's important to the nation. And this is
23 the guidance for building bikeways everywhere. Anyhow,
24 there were a lot of interesting opinions. I'll let
25 y'all read those.

1 It does appear that we're getting closer
2 to building things and recommending things for that
3 group of cyclists that are interested but concerned.
4 The guidance is moving away from bikeways that are just
5 for the fearless and more for how we get people who are
6 less likely to be on the roads to feel safer, for all
7 general abilities, low stress bicycle network, 72% of
8 the public. It's progress in the right direction. We
9 will see what that guidance has for us in the future.

10 This kind of gives you a little idea of
11 where they're at. They've produced two drafts so far.
12 It is currently out for review in several AASHTO
13 committees. There will be a revised draft after that
14 and then, of course, has a balloting process throughout
15 the state. So we aren't looking until the fall -- I
16 suspect it will probably be after that -- but this year
17 we'll have a new bikeway design guide.

18 So there are a lot of things kind of
19 coalescing here. We have the roadway design manual
20 chapter, which will not be done by the time this process
21 is over with the BAC; but maybe recommendations from the
22 BAC can help that process. Also, the AASHTO design is
23 happening. So there's some exciting things occurring.

24 Next month we are -- excuse me, not next
25 month -- in April we anticipate coming back and having a

1 discussion with the BAC to help start facilitating
2 recommendations from y'all based on the efforts we've
3 had in the first few months. So we'll work with the
4 working group to get some good ideas down on the table
5 for when we see y'all in April. And today's working
6 group meeting about the project development process is
7 after our pizza lunch.

8 And the other things I did want to
9 mention is, as Cristian has left us, Frank has been
10 generous to volunteer to be a part of the working group
11 and replace him.

12 Also, some changes -- the Traffic
13 Operations Division project team member has gone to a
14 different division, and so Mr. Dustin Wiggins will be
15 joining us. So we'll have a new kind of design expert
16 on the project team there.

17 For project schedule we still have a ways
18 to go. But as you see, we've been focusing on that
19 first scope item; and we anticipate still having a good
20 opportunity for recommendations in the next BAC meeting.

21 So do I have any questions?

22 Thank you so much.

23 MR. HIBBS: Carl, referencing back to our
24 discussion on the Tourism Trails Study, one of the
25 things that we have kind of informally discussed has to

1 do with this concept of having like a gold standard type
2 of a facility through your community and being able to
3 advertise that because you want more people to stop
4 there at the bed and breakfasts or you want more people
5 to go there to lunch. They want it to be known that
6 they have the very best pavement and the very best
7 facilities and the very best cycling infrastructure with
8 the most accommodations for cyclists.

9 So as this working group is beginning to
10 start to coalesce around some of these different things,
11 I would encourage y'all to be thinking about how you can
12 take the information which you're getting from the
13 committee and maybe stratify it in such a way because
14 not everybody's going to be able to build the best,
15 right? We'll probably have different levels. But we
16 want to encourage everybody to build the best that they
17 possibly can.

18 And so it seems to me that we probably
19 need to start thinking in terms of A, B, and C; and they
20 need to have probably catchy names like a gold standard
21 or a platinum standard or, you know, our poor community
22 can only afford the silver route, something like that,
23 putting them in the context that we want to encourage
24 everyone to build the very best; but there may be some
25 limitations on that. I thinks that's roughly what y'all

1 are doing here. So that potentially could be an added
2 benefit that we could then overlay with the study.

3 And when communities get ready to start
4 vying for these projects, be able to give them some
5 direction by saying, all right, the cost per mile for
6 the gold standard is triple of what it is for silver.
7 And I don't know enough about this to go any further
8 with that discussion; but with those of you that are
9 actively involved in looking at this, that would be a
10 really, really important consideration right now at this
11 particular point.

12 MR. SEIFERT: I know as part of the
13 AASHTO bike guide, there's a facility selection. I know
14 Jeff has talked about this in the past, a context-
15 sensitive metrics of sorts that prescribes a certain
16 facility based on the existing condition or perhaps
17 future conditions. So that's something that I think
18 would be -- as we understand more within that guidance
19 document, maybe that's something that we can then build
20 upon with recommendations of the BAC.

21 Additionally, something that happened
22 this week after we sent the presentation out, we
23 actually learned that FHWA was publishing a bikeway
24 facility selection guide; and that's happening
25 apparently at the end of February. So I think that's

1 also going to influence this work, work of the working
2 group; and so that's something else exciting to look
3 forward to.

4 MR. HIBBS: Good.

5 MS. RUST: Carl, can you clarify for me:
6 I haven't heard you mention the manual for the use of
7 control devices. Is that obsolete?

8 MR. SEIFERT: Oh, no. There's a national
9 version, and then there's a Texas MUTCD -- I'll shorten
10 it -- and that helps guide the engineers in identifying
11 where pavement markings, differences between signage,
12 what signage looks like, what dimensions they should
13 have. The traffic operation staff through here, they
14 could tell you more. I'd say they probably have
15 memorized it.

16 There is a specific chapter in there that
17 is related to bicycle accommodations. And one of the
18 tricky things is there's experimental bikeways that are
19 always coming up, opportunities. Like, I'm not sure
20 that green paint is observed in the MUTCD. So there's
21 things that -- you know, that document is going to get
22 updated probably after AASHTO is updated; and we'll have
23 competing updates that will have to try to match each
24 other at some point. But, yes, it is a different set of
25 guidance from AASHTO.

1 MS. RUST: Thank you.

2 MR. HIBBS: Any other questions of Carl?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Carl.

5 Appreciate your hard work.

6 MS. KAPLAN: I would like to add one
7 clarification: The definition for bikeway placed in the
8 AASHTO guide and in the MUTCD up to recently was aligned
9 so that they're the same. We would expect that moving
10 forward.

11 MR. HIBBS: So it's time for Agenda
12 Number 11, which is an update from the committee members
13 on local and statewide issues.

14 Frank, since you're relatively new on the
15 committee, I won't start with you. I will start with
16 Jeffrey to give you a chance to get organized.

17 So, Jeff, tell us what's going on.

18 MR. POLLACK: I don't have a whole lot to
19 report. Relative to jurisdictions in the Corpus Christi
20 area for the MPO, it's very short of staff; but they're
21 trying to rally around that new CAP funding for Safe
22 Routes to Schools, in our case continuing implementation
23 of the plan adopted in 2016 that I shared with y'all
24 eight months ago. Not a whole lot new to report.

25 MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

1 Bobby.

2 MR. GONZALES: El Paso is currently
3 working on a mountain to river trail project, the first
4 of its kind in El Paso, which is kind of cool.

5 MR. HIBBS: For those of us who don't
6 have mountains...

7 MR. GONZALES: There are a series -- and
8 it's a state park. So there are series of trail systems
9 in the state park. They want to connect that trail
10 system to the river, the Rio Grande. So it will
11 include a series of off-road systems, i.e., trails,
12 paths, et cetera, coupled with the bike lanes that will
13 eventually connect. And we might be going underneath
14 TxDOT's culverts and bridges to get to the river; but
15 that's the intent and, you know, that's --

16 MR. HIBBS: Don't call it a tunnel.
17 Don't refer to it as a tunnel.

18 Okay. Please strike that from the
19 minutes.

20 MR. GONZALES: "Culvert" is what I said.
21 But we are very fortunate to get the planning and design
22 of that project. So that will be my next project for
23 the next several months. So it's all good.

24 MR. HIBBS: Would you entertain making a
25 presentation on that before your term expires?

1 MR. GONZALES: I certainly will. We just
2 had our first public meeting a couple of weeks ago --
3 actually, last week; I'm sorry -- and I'll know more
4 moving forward.

5 MR. HIBBS: Good. Thank you.
6 Margaret, tell us what's going on in
7 Houston.

8 MS. O'BRIEN-NELSON: It's coming along
9 very well with the 50/50 program with the 50 additional
10 miles. And so far they've got 32 miles, and they're
11 already at 50%. So that's really good.

12 Again, I know there's some comments that
13 have come in from biking related to TxDOT about
14 regulations related to biking. That would have been in
15 this past week or so; but HGAC, the way that's
16 structured, has proved to be a really good influence on
17 that area. Now we're seeing a lot more interaction
18 between some of the areas, say, like to the south, to
19 the north so that everybody can get together and really
20 look at the trails and how everything is coming
21 together. So right now I know there's concern about
22 funding, how that's going to work exactly.

23 Also, one thing that I've asked for
24 independently is some more guidance about what's
25 happening with Highway 146. That's a highway to the

1 south of Houston but works in that NASA/Clear Lake area.
2 It's very, very well traveled; and it's going to be
3 under construction for a period of time. So I've been
4 contacted by somebody, but I also bike that area and
5 have some concerns about that to be looking at. But,
6 again, it seems like we're moving along very quickly.

7 And it's come out that in District 1 that
8 one of the county commissioners has come up with a nice
9 block of money that would bring some grants to this
10 area.

11 And, again, I thank, also, Bike Texas for
12 constantly staying in touch with the cycling groups.
13 That's very, very important.

14 MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

15 DawnElla.

16 MS. RUST: In East Texas we've currently
17 got two groups that are working. Parks Forward embraces
18 bicycles and pedestrians. They're kind of a rouge
19 committee of people that really get things done in
20 Nacogdoches in working together on trails. One of the
21 groups has applied to the Texas Parks & Wildlife to be
22 an extension group.

23 Probably on a sad note the one bike shop
24 in Nacogdoches went out of business, and it's just sad
25 we don't have anybody to service bikes. So we're trying

1 to address that somehow. We don't know how quite yet.

2 MR. HIBBS: Karla.

3 MS. WEAVER: Things of interest: We are
4 hosting next week a Transit Street Bike Design Guide
5 Workshop. So NACTO's coming in for two days and our
6 plan's about context sensitive, how do bikes and buses
7 and cars and everybody fit within this urban shared
8 space. So there will be designs from the TxDOT
9 districts and our city cabs coming to that. So that
10 should be exciting.

11 We are about to publish our annual bike/
12 ped count report for 2018. So we're looking forward to
13 that and just kind of seeing if our numbers went up. It
14 was a wet season, so we don't know if that affected
15 anything or not; but we'll see.

16 We had finalized funding for the
17 Fort Worth/Dallas Regional Trails. So our elected
18 officials took final action on the last remaining piece
19 of construction. So we are now working, I believe,
20 coming up next month with the Visitors and Convention
21 Bureaus of Fort Worth, Dallas, Arlington, Grand Prairie,
22 and Irving. We say, Okay. We've got this huge regional
23 trail. How do we make it the showcase for the state and
24 country and how do we have events and bike rides and
25 marathons and all of those things? So the visitors

1 bureaus are first, and then we're giving a presentation
2 to the five mayors at our Board meeting in April. So
3 we're kind of like, Okay. Now, we've done it. Let's go
4 brand it and market it and get our name on the map. So
5 that's exciting.

6 We're moving forward with our Regional
7 Safety Plan, which is under data collection right now.
8 We have a cool engineering project that just started.
9 We call it the Denton to Dallas Trail, if you're
10 familiar with Dallas/Fort Worth. So DTPA is the transit
11 authority in Lewisville; and they've got a really
12 significant, impressive trail. It's a cool place to
13 ride if you're ever up in the area.

14 So this brings to the gap piece, which is
15 three cities, two counties, and two transit -- a
16 partridge in a pear tree. So we've got an agreement
17 with those three cities, two counties, two transit
18 agencies to study all of that jurisdiction block. And
19 if you can figure out that part, you can connect from
20 Denton to Dallas. It's something like 56 miles. So
21 when that gets forward for engineering, it will really
22 figure out what we need and get that part moving.

23 And then the final thing that's exciting
24 for us, we are partners with the City of Fort Worth for
25 what they call their Active Transportation Plan and it's

1 going to their Council for adoption next month. So this
2 takes their thoroughfare plan, which is developing a
3 trails plan for the City of Fort Worth, which didn't
4 have one; their sidewalk plan; their transit plan; and
5 all of these layers. And in their bond programs in the
6 CIP when they do a project, how many boxes does it
7 check.

8 So this will be sort of revolutionary for
9 our region. We don't have anybody sort of looking at
10 capital projects that way; and coming out of that, a
11 level of stress for pedestrians and cyclists was
12 developed. So they took every road and were almost
13 coding it like ski resorts, the green, the blue, and the
14 black; and what does someone feel in the experience of
15 riding or biking or walking within those corridors. So
16 then they're going to try to replicate that in other
17 cities around our region as well. So we're very excited
18 to get that wrapped up.

19 MR. HIBBS: David.

20 MR. HAMM: All right. In Midland
21 recently we passed a 3-foot safe passing bill.

22 (Appause.)

23 MR. HAMM: So we've got that in place.
24 We've got to start publicizing a little bit.

25 We are about to finish our planning stage

1 for a bike corridor between Midland and Odessa. So
2 probably by next month we should have that plan in
3 place. We've got to start finding funding for all of
4 it. A lot of it will be private, I'm sure.

5 MS. WEAVER: What's that distance?

6 MR. HAMM: It's 25 miles, depending on
7 how it squeezes through there.

8 And then we've started with the City of
9 Midland, also, of their revision of their 20-year parks
10 plan, which will include -- the first meeting, at least,
11 there's a lot of emphasis on bike and pedestrian stuff.
12 Hopefully that will include a lot of our parks
13 department working with us on different ways to connect
14 the park access. So we have a few things going on.

15 MR. HIBBS: Great. Okay.

16 Frank.

17 MR. ROTNOFSKY: Okay. So I mentioned in
18 my first meeting I'm a part of Bike Laredo, which is our
19 advocacy group. We're relatively young. We started a
20 year ago last May. We've been making really, I think,
21 incredible strides in our community since it is a
22 relatively new idea to the border of Laredo.

23 We've been getting a lot of help,
24 actually, from Bonnie on some surveying and we have just
25 launched our first survey online; and we actually have

1 members in the streets talking to cyclists, their only
2 means of transportation. So it's getting a lot of play.
3 We're getting a lot of information coming up in February
4 on that.

5 I'm also happy to report that at our last
6 City Council meeting we adopted Vision Zero in our
7 Council as well as we were able to get our City Council
8 to fund 15 staff members of the city to become League
9 Certified Instructors primarily in our Parks Department
10 to educate our community on cycling. So they funded
11 that.

12 Thanks to our newly appointed City of
13 Laredo Bicycle District Coordinator, we have our first
14 painted bike lane, which is a first. Now, we're moving
15 towards: If all is well at our next district MPO
16 meeting, we will be launching an RfQ for a district
17 bikeway fund.

18 And we're also working with Council
19 members themselves. One of our Council members kind of
20 came up with the great idea of looking at high-wire
21 easements that went through our community, which usually
22 are grassy areas. We're working with him on converting
23 them into bike and hike trails. So now we're working
24 with other Council members to actually come up with a
25 network based on that idea and making that connectivity.

1 So I'm pretty happy with our progress.

2 MS. SHERMAN: Excellent. Awesome.

3 MR. HIBBS: Well, no one brought up
4 electric scooters today; and so since Cristian is not
5 here, I felt compelled to tell you that the City of
6 San Antonio is apparently going to have to get real
7 serious about electric scooters. And they've been
8 apparently reproducing like they did in Dallas for a
9 period of time. And so the news is reporting that
10 they're about to launch pretty strict regs applying to
11 usage. I can tell you the insurance industry has really
12 just gotten keen on this because there's so many serious
13 accidents happening right now with people in regards to
14 electric scooters.

15 And I want to thank Robin for showing me
16 a folding bicycle helmet, which my daughter got for a
17 Christmas present, thanks to you directing me in the
18 right place. But the reality is that, you know, as we
19 have these different modes of transportation -- we're
20 going to get a demo here. These things are cool. You
21 can stick them in a backpack. That way you can jump on
22 a scooter and still have your helmet. Those are really
23 cool.

24 And, anyway, I think that we're going to
25 have a lot of and see a lot of evolving, probably, local

1 ordinances regarding electric scooters because of the
2 fact that they are becoming very congested in some areas
3 because there are so many of them.

4 So thank you-all for the reports. It's
5 always the most fun for me to get to hear and see what's
6 going on around the state.

7 It's time for our public comment part of
8 the agenda, Item 12. We have one speaker, Robin
9 Stallings, who has requested some time to comment on
10 Number 8, Safe Routes to Schools, and Number 10, the TA
11 funding of the BTTS.

12 Take it away, Robin.

13 MR. STALLINGS: Thank you very much,
14 Committee Members, for the chance to speak and for
15 sharing your fantastic progress in your communities.
16 It's really exciting for us at Bike Texas to hear of all
17 of this work.

18 And I want to thank Teri Kaplan. We gave
19 her an award for her amazing work at TxDOT and as
20 TxDOT's Bicycle Advisory Statewide Bicycle Coordinator
21 in May; and that included this bicycle trails plan, the
22 data collection, the work that was done on identifying
23 all the shoulders, the work on the Transportation
24 Alternatives Program. Really, I was going to say
25 transportation enhancements. I go back a ways.

1 MS. KAPLAN: The old name.

2 MR. STALLINGS: But basically fantastic
3 work. As everybody's been saying, you are tireless.
4 We're all a little bit fatigued, in a really good way,
5 with your work. You've worked circles around all of us.
6 Thank you. Everybody's brought their best game because
7 of you. Thank you. Really appreciate it.

8 MS. KAPLAN: And thank y'all, too.

9 MR. STALLINGS: And I wanted to say the
10 Safe Routes to Schools money, we're so excited to see
11 this used. It's the 8.7 million infrastructure money,
12 but that is so little to spread so thinly for so many
13 different important categories.

14 And so we have a friendly suggestion to
15 offer. And I don't know if it's too late, but we hope
16 that it's not. And that is that that money be used for
17 either -- maybe both, but maybe either -- a Safe Routes
18 to Schools plan so that a lot of communities could do
19 plans, you know, 10,000 there, 50,000 there, a hundred
20 thousand there. Almost every community that wanted to
21 could do a Safe Routes to Schools plan. And some of
22 those become city bike plans because when you connect
23 all the schools, you've connected your city; but
24 planning, it would go a very long way.

25 And the other thing that could go a long

1 way is for bicycle racks because there's a lot of cities
2 out there and we hear people and we get calls from
3 schools that, We have a nice community. Our kids can
4 bike to school, but there's nowhere to lock their bikes.
5 And our city and our ISDs don't have that kind of a
6 budget line item except for brand-new schools. So it's
7 very hard for them to get bike racks, even though it's
8 not that much money; but with \$8.7 million -- I did a
9 little bit of bar napkin estimating -- probably every
10 school in Texas that wanted a bike rack could get that;
11 and maybe fewer than all of them get a lot of racks if
12 they had a lot of need.

13 But either one of those, that's enough
14 money to make a big difference everywhere; otherwise,
15 how do you limit it to just a few communities because
16 once you start building sidewalks and these other
17 important things, it's just not going to go very far.
18 So that's our recommendation on how that construction
19 money could be used.

20 I noticed, just to clarify, these
21 community workshops don't include the
22 non-infrastructure; is that right? That's separate?

23 MS. SHERMAN: Correct,
24 non-infrastructures.

25 MR. STALLINGS: That's what I thought.

1 Okay. In commenting on the excellent
2 letter and the resolution that you-all are forwarding to
3 the Commission, we so much appreciate that. We think
4 it's a really good idea. One thing that we would
5 suggest is that, typically, when consultants or
6 communities see anything to do with bicycle funding,
7 they're going to look at this flex money that might be
8 30 or \$40 million in a given year -- a couple of years'
9 worth might be twice that -- and they're going to
10 imagine that this is a bunch of 2-million-dollar
11 projects because that's usually what's happened with,
12 you know, with transits in the past or Transportation
13 Alternative Programs.

14 And if there was some way that you-all
15 could emphasize, you know, fewer, bigger projects so
16 that it's a 40-million-dollar project or an
17 80-million-dollar project so that you could begin to
18 tackle significant projects in this really ambitious
19 plan or soon to be a plan, the Texas Bicycle Tourism
20 Trail Study. But if that was done in 40-million or in
21 80-million-dollar chunks, we'd begin to get people's
22 attention; and it's appropriate use of the money.

23 There's no other concern that we have
24 about match that didn't seem to be addressed. And in a
25 lot of small communities, they don't have their match;

1 and if that's something that -- like, now, TxDOT is able
2 to find the match when the money is used on sidewalks
3 near state roads, on system roads, if that same money
4 could be used to match or provide most of the match for
5 these TAP Flex projects so that of the 20% required
6 match, maybe 15% of it came from the state. And that
7 would basically make it very competitive, possible for,
8 say, in the 19 rural communities along the northeast
9 Texas trail or the 10 communities in Cameron County that
10 are really an ambitious connection project.

11 You know, over and over across the state
12 that match is going to be a problem, especially when you
13 include multiple jurisdictions, which another thing we
14 could encourage, is that that money be prioritized when
15 there are multiple jurisdictions involved like that
16 fantastic project which includes Dallas/Fort Worth,
17 Arlington, Irving, and Grand Prairie. Now, when you get
18 that many cities together, all of them having a 20%
19 match lined up is really unlikely. Especially in small
20 communities, they're going to have more or less
21 commitment to the project. Coming up with a lot of that
22 match could really be a game changer. So hopefully that
23 gets worked in.

24 And that's the only small modification
25 that we would have to your fantastic recommendation.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Mr. Stallings.
3 I'm not exactly sure how we incorporate all that. Let's
4 start with the Safe Routes to Schools. I think what
5 you've done is recommend some evaluating criteria. Is
6 that the best way to put it?

7 MR. STALLINGS: Well, no. Bike racks
8 would fall under Encouragement. And plans might fall
9 under Safety or Network or Planning. And so I think
10 that your criteria is very solid, but it's just how do
11 these things fit into that. And I do believe that those
12 are all high priorities, especially for the safety and
13 encouragement.

14 MR. HIBBS: What's the best way of
15 executing what you want done?

16 MR. STALLINGS: Well, I would have to
17 defer to the pros; and I'm not suggesting any changes to
18 the TAP portion. But one way to do that would be to
19 make one big winner. It's a huge amount of work, but if
20 there was a way to do a single call for bike racks and
21 then somebody would coordinate every school that wanted
22 to order a bike rack could order it from whoever won the
23 project so you're not having to deal with 300 projects.
24 So there could be a third body that -- it could possibly
25 be TxDOT itself. It could be the Parks Department. It

1 could be the Texas Education Agency. It could even be a
2 nonprofit organization, like Bike Texas. They'd
3 basically bid, get that, and then just deliver bike
4 racks with pretty much a phone call.

5 The schools might, for example, commit to
6 providing the space and the installation so that they're
7 providing an in-kind match; and that money doesn't
8 require an actual 20% match based on federal rules. So
9 that would be an in-kind match, and they could all get
10 the bike racks that they needed. And bike racks could
11 be bought in massive quantities so that they would
12 really go a long way. That's the advantage with that
13 one.

14 The planning is a little different but
15 this has happened before where there was a lot of plans
16 done through the Safe Routes to Schools program. This
17 committee was able to evaluate who would get the
18 planning money; and I think that before you do the call,
19 you put it out there that this is what's going to happen
20 with this money because if this committee had a tendency
21 to go one way or the other, whether plans or the bike
22 racks or somehow a combination -- I'm not sure -- that
23 could be reinforced at meetings around the state; and I
24 think it could work.

25 MR. HIBBS: That's kind of more of a

1 communication, almost PR kind of thing, where you are
2 promoting: This is the way we're going to get it done,
3 and this is what you're going to have to do in order to
4 participate.

5 MR. STALLINGS: We've got some planning
6 money coming. That's really hard money for a lot of
7 communities to come by; and if some communities already
8 have plans, they might need an update. So it's more
9 people that are going to be eligible for that money, and
10 lots and lots of communities are going to be eligible
11 for the bike racks.

12 MR. HIBBS: Back to the Tourism Trails
13 Study thing for just a moment, the reality is it's a
14 complex network; and it's a multiyear build-out with a
15 lot of information that has to be disseminated. One of
16 the things we haven't focused on as a committee is
17 what's the best way of letting these communities know
18 about it, helping them get organized, helping them
19 understand what their responsibilities were in terms of
20 in-kind donations, getting offers to go, and things like
21 that. And I know that the time is short today, but I'd
22 like to recommend that that's an agenda item for our
23 next meeting because I believe that the way that we
24 promote this across the State of Texas is going to be
25 very, very important.

1 And your concerns, I think, need to be
2 first and foremost when we're talking to these
3 communities and saying, Look, if you want to have your
4 segment considered, then you need to understand these
5 are the rules; and these are the things you're expected
6 to bring to the table. And these are the things that
7 TxDOT can bring to the table, and this is how we'll go
8 about it. And because of the complexities of it, I
9 think it's essential to come up with a plan to deal with
10 that.

11 MR. STALLINGS: I'm going to give a shout
12 out to TxDOT staff. That's exactly what they do on
13 these calls, and they communicate what the criteria is
14 for different given stuff. So that's right in their
15 wheelhouse -- I don't know if I can jump in and say
16 that -- and when there is money like, We're going to
17 give out a 40-million-dollar project or we're going to
18 give out an 80-million-dollar project, one or the other,
19 that it's going to get focused a lot because when you're
20 sending it out through those MPOs and through those
21 planning bodies, the word's going to get around pretty
22 quickly. And then after that first round and somebody
23 actually wins the project and after it becomes
24 newsworthy and that gets built, that's going to give you
25 future projects. So I think that will take care of

1 itself.

2 MR. HIBBS: Okay.

3 MS. WEAVER: If I may add a comment to
4 Robin's statement, I also see the value of letting the
5 Safe Routes to Schools. The ship may have sailed due to
6 the timing of this program. But we had a city within
7 our metroplex that invested in 20 Safe Routes to Schools
8 plans. They had one consultant to do 20; and in their
9 next bond program, they got several million set aside to
10 implement those plans. So then they had a guide or a
11 roadmap for their elected officials via lots of
12 community feedback -- lots of ISDs participated -- and
13 now, this is how we need to move forward. And it was
14 fairly successful, just a comment.

15 MR. STALLINGS: It's not always the
16 money; it's the plan because once they know that they
17 need the sidewalks and becomes aware of what the
18 impact's going to be, suddenly they're finding a lot of
19 that money here and there.

20 MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

21 All right. So any other agenda items
22 that anyone would like to put forth for our next
23 meeting?

24 (No response.)

25 MR. HIBBS: All right. So we have a date

1 for the next meeting; is that correct?

2 MS. SHERMAN: April 15th.

3 MR. HIBBS: April 15th, tax day. All
4 right. Wonderful.

5 (Laughter.)

6 MR. HIBBS: All right. So do we have any
7 other items or information that needs to come before the
8 committee before we adjourn and celebrate Teri?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. HIBBS: I'll entertain a motion to
11 adjourn. Was that by David?

12 MR. HAMM: Sure.

13 (Laughter.)

14 MR. HIBBS: All right. Do we have a
15 second?

16 MS. WEAVER: Yes.

17 MR. HIBBS: Second. Thank you.

18 All in favor say, "Aye."

19 (Chorus of "Ayes.")

20 MR. HIBBS: We're adjourned. Thank
21 you-all very much.

22 (Proceedings concluded at 12:04 p.m.)

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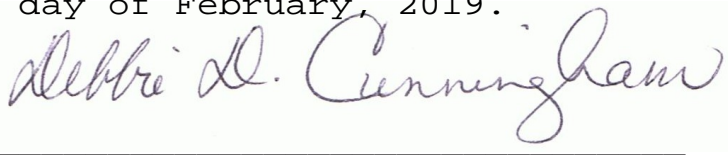
C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF TEXAS)
COUNTY OF TRAVIS)

I, Debbie D. Cunningham, Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the above-mentioned matter occurred as hereinbefore set out.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT the proceedings of such were reported by me or under my supervision, later reduced to typewritten form under my supervision and control and that the foregoing pages are a full, true, and correct transcription of the original notes.

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