



Texas Freight Advisory Committee

July 11, 2019, 8:30 a.m.

IBC Bank, Austin, Texas

Attendees

Committee Member	Organization	Attendance
Judge Emmett, Chair	Rice University	Present
Ron Beeson	Lubrizol Corp.	Present
Russell Boening	Texas Farm Bureau	Not Present
Randy Brogoitti	Brogoitti Construction	Present
Paul Cristina	BNSF Railway	Designee Present (Lindsay Mullins)
Drew Crutcher	Landgraf, Crutcher & Associates	Not Present
Bryan Daniel	Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism	Present
Michael Dyll	Texas International Freight	Not Present
John Esparza	Texas Trucking Association	Present
Roger Guenther	Port of Houston Authority	Present
Luis Hinojosa	Uni-Trade Forwarding, LLC	Not Present
Judge Clay Lewis Jenkins	Dallas County	Not Present
Carson Landsgard	H-E-B	Not Present
John LaRue	Port of Corpus Christi Authority	Not Present
Brenda Mainwaring	Union Pacific Railroad	Present
Kevin McIntosh	Kansas City Southern (KCSR)	Not Present
Jeff Moseley	Texas Association of Business	Not Present
Rolando Ortiz	Killam Development, Ltd.	Present
Keith Patridge	McAllen Economic Development Corp.	Not Present
K. Alan Russell	The Tecma Group of Companies	Not Present
Carlton Schwab	Texas Economic Development Council	Not Present
Todd Stewart	Gulf Wind International	Not Present
Jack Todd	Trinity Industries, Inc.	Not Present
Texas Transportation Commissioners		
Alvin New	Texas Transportation Commission	Present

Laura Ryan	Texas Transportation Commission	Present
Ex-Officio Members		
Christopher Evilia	Waco MPO	Present
Erin Ford	Retired – Houston County	Not Present
Senator Sylvia R. Garcia	Texas State Senate, District 6	Not Present
Clark Greer	Coca-Cola	Present
Rep. Armando Martinez	Texas House Member, District 39	Not Present
Rep. Sergio Munoz, Jr.	Texas House Member, District 36	Not Present
Rep. Poncho Nevarez	Texas House Member, District 74	Not Present
Mayor Pete Saenz	City of Laredo	Not Present
Gerry Schwebel	IBC Bank	Designee Present (Eddie Aldrete)
Danny Smith	United Parcel Service	Not Present
Paul Treangen	TNW Corp.	Present
Matt Woodruff	Kirby Corporation	Not Present

TxDOT and Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI)

Caroline Mays	TxDOT
Loretta Brown	TxDOT
Kale Driemeier	TxDOT
Sondra Johnson	TxDOT
Sherry Pifer	TxDOT
Roger Beall	TxDOT
Marty Boyd	TxDOT
Carlos Calle	TxDOT
Emily Clisby	TxDOT
Chad Coburn	TxDOT
Yvette Flores	TxDOT
Patrick Gant	TxDOT
Tricia Hasan	TxDOT
Noah Oaks	TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez	TxDOT
Emily Shelton	TxDOT
Robert Travis	TxDOT
Yolanda Prozzi	TTI
Allan Rutter	TTI

Cambridge Systematics Team

Paula Dowell	Cambridge Systematics
Dan Stock	Cambridge Systematics
Isabel Victoria	Cambridge Systematics
Elizabeth Welch	Cambridge Systematics

Brian Stewart	Cambridge Systematics
Marie Lewis Adams	Atkins
Joe Bryan	WSP

Other Attendees

Jimmy Aguirre	H-E-B
Jessica Attas	Waco Chamber
Mark Borskey	Texas Trucking Association
Ingrid Brown	Rollin' B LLC
Gary Bushell	Alliance for I-69
Jeff Hathcock	NCTCOG
Brian Hill	MARAD
Allie Isbell	H-GAC
Mike Johnson	NCTCOG
Georgi Ann Jasenovec	FHWA
Kimberly Leggett	Texas Trucking Association
Mark S. Lewis	H-E-B
Carlos Lopez	HNTB
James Lovett	SH 130 Concession Co.
David Martinez	H-E-B
Mike Meyer	TLG Transport
Jonathan Sierra-Ortega	Texas Senate
Darin Stanley	Perkins STC
Sean Stibich	Port of Victoria
Lisa Weston	Univ. of North Texas
Mike Wilson	Port Freeport
David Womack	Bigge Crane

1. Welcome and Introductions

Judge Emmett welcomed the group and reminded them of the important process in which they are engaged. Some might say the Texas Freight Mobility Plan (TFMP) is complete and it is time to move on to other priorities, but the work continues. While TxDOT remains in front on the issue of freight mobility, it is highly important that the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) continue to meet and push things forward.

Eddie Aldrete of IBC Bank welcomed the TxFAC. He noted that IBC is highly involved in the public policy and regulatory issues that impact its customers. As IBC is headquartered in Laredo, transportation and freight are key concerns. TxFAC member Gerry Schwebel was not able to attend today's meeting, as he is in Mexico working on various issues. The TxFAC's work is very important. Mr. Aldrete thanked Judge Emmett for his leadership. In a time of bridge slowdowns at ports of entry, and with the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) at stake, these issues are critical and IBC Bank is happy to lend its support.

Judge Emmett thanked IBC Bank for hosting the meeting. TxFAC members introduced themselves.

Marc Williams mentioned that TxDOT is in the middle of an update to the Unified Transportation Program (UTP). Some of the work was influenced by the TFMP and there is important work to be done in between the TFMP update cycles.

Caroline Mays thanked members for their continued participation. She also encouraged the group to stay engaged.

Judge Emmett thanked the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) for their work and dedication. Commissioner Laura Ryan introduced herself, thanked TxDOT for its involvement and hard work, and thanked Judge Emmett. She noted the TFMP is referenced often; the TTC could not do what they do without the information in the plan. Commissioner Alvin New introduced himself and discussed a current effort underway to make sure Texas is the safest place to be when driving. The goal is to reduce the number of fatalities on Texas roads to zero by 2050. Truck parking is an important part of achieving safety goals.

2. Recap of Nov. 28, 2018 Meeting and Summary of Today's Agenda, Objectives, and Expected Outcomes

Judge Emmett stated the last TxFAC meeting was held on Nov. 28, 2018 in Laredo, TX. Laredo has a huge impact on freight transportation in Texas and the nation. It was very interesting that the meeting was held at the site of an old fort, which is part of Texas heritage. Many of the things the group will talk about today may take legislative leadership to accomplish. Hopefully the TxFAC will help define an agenda for the next legislative session.

Caroline Mays recapped the November meeting, reiterating her thanks to Laredo Community College for hosting the session. The Laredo meeting set the stage for today's discussion, which will include more in-depth discussion based on analysis conducted over the past seven months. The previous meeting outlined several initiatives born out of the TFMP, as well as their steps and approaches towards further progress. The group discussed upcoming stakeholder engagement as well as truck parking and freight infrastructure design. A panel discussed the USMCA; the next meeting will probably have a status update on that issue, which is critical for freight movement. The TxFAC also heard from the TxDOT Rail Division, and the next meeting will include an update on the 2019 Texas Rail Plan.

3. Implementation of the TFMP 2018 – Statewide Truck Parking Study

Sherry Pifer introduced herself and thanked members for attending. Truck parking was identified as a statewide problem during the 2018 TFMP process, but it is really a nationwide problem. Safety is the first and foremost concern. Drivers have strict hours of service restrictions and need places to park or stage their trucks. TxDOT has talked with extensively with drivers and stakeholders during this process.

Brian Stewart of Cambridge Systematics delivered a presentation on the Statewide Truck Parking Study. He discussed the study approach, and displayed maps showing the location and quantity of truck parking spaces. He then discussed a heat map showing the density of locations

where trucks are actually parking; the map displays trucks parked for longer than 15 minutes, so as not to include short stops.

Clark Greer asked if the team overlaid the heat map with the map of actual parking locations; Mr. Stewart said yes. Mr. Clark also asked if there was a different pattern shown for trucks stopped for less than 15 minutes. Mr. Stewart said the team does have that data, and there is an online mapping tool available for the TxFAC to drill down into the data.

Brian Stewart discussed an example of a TxDOT Rest Area in Sutton County, where many more trucks are parking than there are available spaces. Judge Emmett said one of the main reasons for this study is the new regulations on hours of service. Truck drivers must make tough decisions on where to stop so as not to violate the rules. That particular facility in Sutton County has no amenities – no restrooms, no Wifi, no ATM, no food. It is just a paved lot. We need a plan to make these places more habitable. Alvin New noted the map uses GPS data from the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), but in Sutton County there are many local trucks without GPS. There may be more trucks parking than are shown on the map. Mr. Stewart acknowledged this and added that Cambridge Systematics is in the process of developing expansion factors to apply to the ATRI data so that it will be more representative of the total population of trucks.

Randy Brogoitti asked what the study considers a “truck”; Mr. Stewart replied trucks are defined as Class 8 and up. Mr. Brogoitti noted that definition eliminates many of the oilfield vehicles. Alvin New stated that the data are useful, but we need to be aware that it is not the whole story. Clark Greer said there may be data available from drivers using their phones, but it is harder to obtain and costly. John Esparza added that it is important to use data available from e-logs. Brian Stewart noted the methodology also does not capture small delivery trucks in urban areas.

Mr. Stewart said the team's next steps would include further analysis on unauthorized parking, including detailed study on top areas of concern.

Elizabeth Welch of Cambridge Systematics discussed stakeholder input received during the truck parking study outreach process. Data can tell us where the trucks are, but not why they are there. Stakeholder input can also help TxDOT decide what policies would actually work to solve problems. Drivers need a place to stage, and shippers/receivers only operate during certain hours. Some facilities are up to 70 miles away. Judge Emmett noted that privately-owned food services cannot operate at state-owned interstate facilities (rest areas). Maybe we can lobby the federal government to give us a break on those regulations.

Ms. Welch continued, discussing the most common driver comments heard during the outreach process. These comments included overall lack of capacity, lack of amenities, safety concerns, policies/regulations on truck parking, and the need for better signage and information about parking availability.

Clark Greer asked if there was a difference in needs between “day drivers” who go home every night, and over-the-road (long haul) drivers. Ms. Welch noted everyone still needs a safe place to park, and the same basic design features. The need for higher-level amenities, such as

showers, is greater for over-the-road drivers. Caroline Mays noted the proportion of short-term parking is much greater than overnight parking. There is a greater need for overnight parking and staging areas, particularly at the border.

Clark Greer stated drivers start looking for spots to take their 30-minute mandatory breaks about 6 hours after starting their shifts. It is important to look for hot spots by time of day. Randy Brogoitti added that TxDOT should be looking at future corridors in rural areas to give relief to urban corridors; rural roadways will need the same types of facilities.

Elizabeth Welch stated stakeholder interviews are currently underway. Laura Ryan asked whether the potential strategies recommended to address needs were study team-developed or stakeholder-developed; Ms. Welch said both. The team is asking stakeholders about what types of solutions will fit their issues, and which organizations need to be involved. Caroline Mays echoed that some of the recommended strategies have come from stakeholders, as well as national best practices.

Brian Stewart discussed potential truck parking strategies, including increasing overnight parking capacity, increasing short-term staging capacity, and developing a Truck Parking Information Management System. Judge Emmett noted I-95 on the east coast of the U.S. has “travel centers” along the highway that include restaurants. Are they off the right-of-way (ROW)? Mr. Stewart stated the I-95 centers were built before the current regulations were in place.

Marc Williams said TxDOT can legally install vending machines along interstates, and if TxDOT-owned facilities are located off the ROW, such as at a ramp entrance, they may be able to be commercialized. TxDOT has explored these types of opportunities in the past and received pushback from commercial establishments, who see it as an overreach of government responsibility.

Mr. Stewart led the group in a polling exercise, where participants logged in and provided input via their smartphones. TxFAC members were asked how they would distribute 100 “points” across six potential strategies. Overall, participants were most supportive of combined public/private efforts to increase parking capacity. Results included:

- Public-private partnership (P3) investment in parking capacity (28%)
- Encouragement/support of private investment (22%)
- Truck parking information system (18%)
- Zoning and land use requirements (16%)
- Direct public investment in parking capacity (15%)
- Other (1%)

Roger Guenther discussed how the Port of Houston has addressed truck parking. The port is a big generator. The private sector is mainly in charge; there is a parking center down the street. In general, we have day drivers, but we do have some drivers coming from 6 to 8 hours away and spending the night. As a public entity, we have talked about building our own center, but it has been met with resistance from the private sector. We need to make sure all the modes and government agencies are at the table and understand the issues. This is an opportunity for

economic development. Paula Dowell noted the Port of Brownsville has opened a parking center.

Elizabeth Welch reviewed the study schedule and next steps. Judge Emmett said it was a fascinating topic. A small truck stop developed on its own near the Port of Victoria, as the need arose. Sometimes the private sector meets the industry's needs, but sometimes not.

4. Panel: A Driver's Perspective on Truck Parking

Sherry Pifer moderated a panel including three experienced truck drivers: Ingrid Brown (owner/operator), Jimmy Aguirre (H-E-B), and David Martinez (H-E-B). Alvin New noted that the private sector will always be reactive; they will not build before they know a center will be profitable. Clark Greer added that the local communities must be involved and get on board. Love's is building a station in Sutton County, but they did not begin until they were certain it would be profitable. Laura Ryan suggested the Truck Parking Study will provide valuable information to the industry and justify the need for more parking.

Ms. Pifer asked the panelists about the #1 issue they face regarding truck parking.

Jimmy Aguirre said capacity is the main issue. Safety comes first; when a driver gets fatigued, he/she is less likely to operate safely. Having a place to stop is very important. Drivers have more foresight in the daytime, but things change at night.

Ingrid Brown reiterated that safety is the top priority. It's important to not have to back up when exiting a parking lot. Bathrooms are critical. Even small details like striping for parking spots can make a big difference; if you find a lot with no striping and no lighting, and it starts stacking up, all of a sudden you're in a situation where you cannot move around.

Mr. Aguirre mentioned an app called "Allstays" which provides truck stop information. He said he would like to see an app that identifies medical facilities along routes if drivers have an issue (high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.). I-35 has improved substantially from San Antonio to Hillsboro, but north of that is a whole different ballgame. Some facilities allow daytime but not overnight parking. If trucks had a place to park legally every 100 miles or so in rural areas, it would be a great improvement.

David Martinez said back in the 1980s, you could park on the shoulder and check your truck for mechanical problems, but that is not possible anymore. Drivers need safe places to park. There is not enough space at these rest areas. Safety comes first, especially with distracted drivers on the roads. We need more and larger rest areas.

Clark Greer asked Mr. Martinez to expand his comment about mechanical issues. Mr. Martinez said if a truck gets a flat tire and must stop on the shoulder, that's ok, but if we can get off the road that would be the best bet. Jimmy Aguirre said H-E-B drivers operate trucks with "super single" instead of the traditional dual tires. If you have a flat, you're stuck. Construction areas are a safety issue. The barriers are often too narrow to fit two big trucks side by side. If you have a blowout there, it causes huge problems. A lot of that is communication. He praised TxDOT for the I-35 improvements between San Antonio and Hillsboro.

Laura Ryan said she agreed that narrow lanes are a safety issue in construction areas. She asked the panel to weigh in on the safety of current rest areas. Are there any issues with safety at TxDOT's current rest areas? For new facilities, what should we consider to ensure they are safe? Ingrid Brown stated she travels through Texas frequently. The Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS) does a great job patrolling rest areas and checking for issues. Once the rest areas are provided, it is also the drivers' responsibility to protect themselves. Lighting is very important, as well as the design of certain amenities like the access to bathrooms and the placement of doors. She noted she has been designated as the face of the Texas Motor Carriers safety campaign and a Voice of Safety by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association (FMCSA).

Laura Ryan asked about emergency buttons, like those seen on college campuses, which can be pressed to alert authorities. Ms. Brown said some of the newer facilities have those buttons. Jimmy Aguirre also noted the advantage of trucks' onboard computer systems is drivers can still communicate without a cell phone. Ms. Brown noted not all drivers have that capability. Clark Greer said telematics capability is provided at a cost to the individual driver or company.

Randy Brogoitti asked if security cameras are used in rest areas. Clark Greer asked about cameras on the trucks themselves. Ingrid Brown and Jimmy Aguirre stated the trucks have dash cams, but they are only activated if there is a collision or another issue with the truck.

Sherry Pifer asked the panelists how parking affects day-to-day operations.

Mr. Aguirre said as a local day driver, he can pre-plan his trips and knows the facilities available. Apps and signs that show parking availability are helpful.

Ms. Brown said for over-the-road drivers, no two days are alike. Pre-planning does not always work out; other circumstances get in the way. She said she cannot access most facilities until one hour before her scheduled delivery. If she runs behind schedule, the facility starts charging \$200-\$500 per hour. After two hours, she can lose her appointment slot until 24 hours later. Trips are scheduled so tightly that small glitches can ruin them. Also, up until recently, there was soft enforcement of the Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs) and hours of service; now, it is in full force. Clark Greer added that issues can cascade; one issue causes further problems down the line.

Mr. Aguirre said traffic congestion is a major challenge; it burns your driving time. David Martinez recommended free or reduced toll fees for trucks; Judge Emmett said he also suggested that option.

Mr. Martinez noted a lack of facilities between San Angelo and San Antonio, particularly near Junction. The facilities available are always full. There was a good facility in San Marcos, but it closed. Alvin New said he was not sure what TxDOT's plan was regarding conversion of old sites. Small stops are being removed from the system because they are not very usable. Jimmy Aguirre stated there was a facility in Itasca, which will be reconstructed. There is not much available between Hillsboro and Fort Worth.

Sherry Pifer asked the panelists how often they park in areas without restrooms or water. Mr. Aguirre reiterated that I-35 has improved, but in rural areas there is not much to choose from. Drivers are forced to use convenience stores. Some places are beginning to incorporate truck parking, even restaurants. Buc-ee's does not allow truck parking, although it seems like a good business opportunity.

Ingrid Brown stated the private sector must keep up with cleanup, lighting, security, etc.; there is a lot that they take on. It seems that very few people spend enough to cover the costs of the parking facility. She said she would be happy to pay for parking if it means showers, restrooms, food, etc. Heading west from Amarillo, it is tough to find parking. Different ends of the state are more difficult.

Judge Emmett discussed the importance of hearing from drivers, which provides a human perspective. He noted he was glad the Coca-Cola facility in Houston is moving to a more truck-friendly location.

5. Implementation of the TFMP 2018 – Freight Infrastructure Design Considerations

Joe Bryan of WSP introduced himself and presented an agenda for the Freight Infrastructure Design Considerations discussion. He reviewed the peer state benchmarking process, which compared Texas with six “peer” states (Arizona, California, Florida, Michigan, New York, and Washington) on key freight design considerations.

Alvin New noted Texas had over 100 bridge strikes in 2018, by far the most in the country.

Caroline Mays noted during the outreach process, many drivers mentioned the importance of safely navigating through work zones.

Mr. Bryan discussed observations gleaned from the stakeholder workshops held across the state, as well as TxDOT district webinars.

Judge Emmett noted local/rural roads were the biggest issue for stakeholders across the state.

Laura Ryan asked how many TxDOT districts participated in the webinars. Caroline Mays said the team invited all the districts, but they did not all respond. Joe Bryan noted it was odd that work zones did not register as a safety concern with districts in the West region; that is contrary to what the team heard from stakeholders.

Brenda Mainwaring asked if the team considered breaking out the data as urban vs. rural, rather than by region. Mr. Bryan said no, the team did not associate the data with any specific respondent so it would be difficult to re-categorize the responses.

Joe Bryan presented data collected during a safety analysis of eight key corridors in the state. Interestingly, truck-involved crashes (both overall rates and severity) are highest where truck percentages are lowest, and rates steadily decrease as percentages climb. Laura Ryan asked if “percentage” referred to truck volume or density. She said it would be helpful to see the

numbers that underlie the analysis. Judge Emmett said the data suggests that trucks play better together, because in high-freight areas other drivers (truck and auto) are looking out for each other. Mr. Bryan said he realized the findings are counterintuitive. He reiterated that the analysis was based on eight corridors, and the data includes only truck-related crashes (truck alone, truck/car, or truck/truck).

Joe Bryan continued discussing safety findings, including breaking down truck crashes by object struck. Randy Brogoitti asked if the team analyzed any corridors east of Dallas on either I-20 or I-30; Mr. Bryan said no. Brenda Mainwaring asked if the analysis included looking at rail/truck incidents; Mr. Bryan said yes, but those types of incidents barely registered. Marc Williams noted the eight study corridors do not really have rail issues.

Judge Emmett said the graph showing truck crashes by object struck was not helpful as it does not include “another vehicle” as an option; it only includes stationary objects. The percentages only add up to about 10 percent.

Mike Wilson of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) found in his research that most truck accidents are caused by other cars traveling too fast or distracted/impaired driving. Clark Greer noted that overturned/jackknifed trucks are not a root cause; we need to know the root cause of these accidents. Laura Ryan reiterated that the underlying data would be helpful. The TTC wants to understand what the data is telling us and how we can use it to make good decisions.

Clark Greer noted “vehicle changing lanes” could mean two things: true lane changes and merging on/off the highway. We need to understand the differences.

Paul Treangen said he was concerned about how some of the statements on safety findings would be perceived; e.g., they could be used to argue that more, longer, or heavier trucks are beneficial, etc. We need to be careful about the hypotheses that may flow from the analysis.

Mr. Bryan led the group in a polling exercise, asking them to prioritize where to focus investment in design of freight infrastructure. Results included:

- Upgrading local and rural roads (33%)
- Improving intersections and interchanges on the Texas Highway Freight Network (THFN) (26%)
- Adequate lane and shoulder width on the THFN (26%)
- Expansion of access control on THFN (14%)
- Other (1%)

Alvin New suggested access control could be expanded even beyond the freight network. In the oilfields, there are frequent entrances to/from Farm-to-Market (FM) roads, creating many conflict points. Access control would also help in rural areas.

Rolando Ortiz stated he chose “other”. He would prefer to prioritize developing alternate routes, such as Ports to Plains, which could help to alleviate traffic on interstate highways.

Randy Brogoitti said one of the reasons for designating the rural freight network was to take loads off the urban corridors. It took 27 years to get a bypass around Kilgore, and it is already exceeding its design capacity. Communities may have a tough time on their own justifying the need for relief routes, but relief routes need to be evaluated as part of a larger cohesive freight network. Alvin New noted there is often significant resistance to relief routes within local communities; they worry about businesses being displaced as traffic moves out of town.

Joe Bryan led the group in a second polling exercise, asking what policy issues the TxFAC considered important for freight infrastructure design. Like the previous question, TxFAC members prioritized improvements to local and/or rural facilities. Results included:

- Adequacy of funding for non-TxDOT facilities (30%)
- Adequacy of funding for best design on the THFN (26%)
- Sufficiency of land use and freight network plans for growing cities (26%)
- Adequacy of freight system investment in non-growth regions (18%)

Judge Emmett stated the adequacy of funding for non-TxDOT facilities was recently made harder by the Texas legislature. The new revenue cap will hamstring counties from being able to deliver transportation improvements. Property taxes are the only source of county income. Clark Greer asked if counties could utilize fees from developments like industrial parks; Judge Emmett said maybe.

Lindsay Mullins of BNSF asked if the group thinks local roads are a major issue, whether the TxFAC could make a policy recommendation to issue low-interest loans to local governments as a lifeline. Judge Emmett said that was a possibility.

Judge Emmett said a new issue has arisen regarding trucks and safety: the railings on bridges. Two eighteen-wheelers have fallen from bridges in the Houston area, and the media are asking why the rails were so low. They were built long ago. There are limited funds for retrofitting old facilities, but it needs to be done. It might make sense to focus on Hazmat routes first.

6. Implementation of the TFMP 2018 – Freight Network Technology and Operations Plan

Caroline Mays introduced Dan Stock of Cambridge Systematics. Mr. Stock presented an overview of the Texas Freight Network Technology and Operations Plan, including the need for the plan. He discussed the proposed goals and objectives, and asked the TxFAC if there were any other goals/objectives the project team should include.

Brenda Mainwaring asked how in-vehicle automated technology will communicate with other modes; for example, how will a truck communicate with the rail system?

Roger Guenther stated there are technologies available that can complement all modes of transportation, such as grade-separated drayage corridors. Freight shuttle technology is being developed. Judge Emmett stated that any time we can take freight to a remote location and put it on a train to Dallas, that would help. Mr. Guenther said moving containers to/from the port

causes congestion and inconsistent freight reliability. How do we go about getting trucks off the road for those long-haul trips?

Clark Greer suggested the private sector can help take trucks off the road, if heavier truck weights were allowed on highways. We can run fewer trucks if the individual trucks can be heavier. Adding 5,000 pounds of weight could take one out of every seven trucks off the road.

Lindsay Mullins noted the Port of Houston recently raised the allowable truck weight. Has there been any reduction in truck traffic? Roger Guenther said he did not think there has been much of a change; very few trucks coming in are overweight. John Esparza stated fewer than 500 permits have been sold.

Ingrid Brown said there are three factors involved. 1) When trucks get heavier, roads start to break down. 2) An additional axle is needed to accommodate the extra weight. At a 91,000-pound limit, a truck can only take on 3 more pallets, which adds more equipment weight than product weight. 3) Stopping distance is also affected; it takes more time to stop a heavier load, which raises safety concerns. Alvin New added that bridges cannot handle the extra weight. The state would have a major infrastructure problem if heavier loads were allowed.

Roger Guenther said there are still first/last-mile oversize/overweight (OS/OW) issues. Randy Brogoitti suggested building at least some lanes or corridors to handle those weights, but not trying to accommodate heavier loads everywhere.

Brenda Mainwaring said the whole point of this exercise is to figure out how the state will handle massive amounts of freight. TxDOT needs to convene multimodal conversations to break modes/organizations out of their respective siloes and force these difficult conversations. The “crisis” point is not quite here yet, but we all know it is coming.

Judge Emmett stated this discussion is really about technology and operations. Can the Port of Houston implement on-dock rail, like in Rotterdam, where containers are loaded directly from ships onto trains? Roger Guenther said perhaps.

Judge Emmett said TranStar-type systems with congestion alerts and route planning capability would be very helpful statewide.

Laura Ryan said these discussions should become an “objective” bullet point. Solutions will be siloed within individual modes. One objective should be looking at what we would do if we could start from ground zero. What types of improvements make sense? That’s what technology can help us do.

Alvin New stated TxDOT used to provide maps; now it’s all online, but in a freight-only environment that kind of mapping would be useful. Public entities could help us provide that, like drivetexas.org, in a manner focused on truck drivers.

Rolando Ortiz asked where the data comes from for the changeable message boards along highways, like congestion information. Caroline Mays said it comes from cameras, loop detectors, or live shots. The point of this project is to identify technology and operational gaps

that impede us from providing truck parking, work zone information, incident information, etc. TranStar and other systems like it are only regional, not statewide. They also do not provide dedicated freight information. We will have to embed sensors at rest stops to provide information for drivers on parking availability. Technology can also help maximize use of existing infrastructure.

Dan Stock discussed the project approach. Judge Emmett said the discussion on this project would continue at a future meeting.

7. Lunch Panel: Oversize/Overweight Perspective

Sherry Pifer introduced the three panelists for a discussion on OS/OW freight challenges: Mike Meyer of TLG Transport, Darin Stanley of Perkins STC, and David Womack of Bigge Crane and Rigging. She asked the group to describe the biggest issue they encounter in moving large-scale freight.

Mike Meyer said the biggest issue is delays in the permitting process. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) which oversees permits for OS/OW loads is understaffed and overtasked.

Darin Stanley agreed, noting it can take six months to get approved for a super-heavy permit. Those delays are extremely expensive, and the costs get passed on to the customers.

David Womack said it was difficult to get good routes through state of Texas for OS/OW loads. Much of the time the loads are moved on routes other than interstates. We need routes without bridge restrictions and with plenty of overhead clearance. Turning radius is a big deal; turning can be even more of an issue than weight. Often, the routes end up with 20-30 percent circuitous mileage. This is costly and creates safety issues. In addition, getting a reroute is very difficult if something goes wrong. TxDMV has been good to work with, but there is a disconnect in the process. Permits are received, then getting cancelled within a couple a couple of days of receipt. It's difficult to recover from that.

Laura Ryan asked Mr. Womack if he receives reasons for the cancellations. He replied it is usually because of construction that happens at the last minute, or that did not show up on the schedules that TxDMV uses to issue permits. TxDMV will notify carriers that the permit is no longer valid. Often times the delay comes from the TxDOT districts, and the carriers work with TxDOT through TxDMV.

Sherry Pifer asked the group how these delays affect the business done in Texas.

Mike Meyer said it was a hindrance. There are charges associated with cargo sitting somewhere and not moving as planned.

Darin Stanley stated the cost associated with holding a ship are extraordinary. He noted one instance where the TxDOT district did not want to accommodate his company's cargo. Laura Ryan asked why; Mr. Stanley said he did not know for sure, but probably because of the

inconvenience of accommodating such a large load. The loads are mostly routing using FM roads.

Judge Emmett asked how the companies coordinate with county roadway authorities.

Mr. Stanley said he usually does not use county roads; the vehicles cannot make the turns.

David Womack said his firm often uses county roads. His team meets with county officials, local law enforcement, school districts, etc. and proactively plans times to travel. Judge Emmett asked if the permits issued by TxDMV cover county roadways; Mr. Womack said no, he must reach out to the county separately if the route includes non-state facilities. The biggest issue he faces is route restrictions popping up with little to no notice, which can cause dangerous situations.

Clark Greer asked whether particular TxDMV agents are dedicated to permits and/or particular customers. Mike Meyer said he thought there are three agents who handle super-heavy permits. When the regular permit technicians are busy, they pull these three agents in to help out, which adds to delays. TxDOT used to hold regular meetings between the state and the freight movers, where everyone would talk through their problems and needs. Those meetings were very helpful, but they stopped several years ago. At the last meeting we heard about a doubling of permit fees, and how the service was going to improve. The increase in cost happened, but the service improvement did not.

Clark Greer asked if the companies track any metrics about the locations of slowdowns. Mr. Womack said no, their business is so dynamic it is hard to track anything over time.

Laura Ryan asked the panelists to provide three suggestions that would solve their problems. David Womack said more permitting staff, and timely/more accurate information from the civil engineering side (construction, etc.) to avoid last-minute cancellations.

Clark Greer asked about the root causes of the last-minute cancellations. Mr. Womack said sometimes they are caused by a catastrophic event, but most often it is due to construction that was not on the agencies' radar.

Randy Brogoitti posited that there is a breakdown in communication somewhere between TxDOT and TxDMV on construction information; Mr. Womack said yes.

Judge Emmett asked how permitting was removed from TxDOT and given to TxDMV in the first place. Laura Ryan said it was moved in phases. The TxDMV was created to handle public-facing aspects of TxDOT's operations. It could have been a recommendation from a sunset review. Judge Emmett said it does not make sense for TxDMV to handle permitting when all the information comes from TxDOT.

Laura Ryan asked whether these concerns have been shared with TxDMV, so they can meet with TxDOT and remedy the problem. David Womack said yes, TxDMV is aware of the problem. He believes they are doing everything they can, but there is a breakdown somewhere in the information flow.

Alvin New clarified that permitting has become a bigger problem within the last 18 months. Mike Meyer said yes, partially because many more permits are being filed.

Caroline Mays asked the panelists to comment on topics relevant to the TFMP, like parking and design issues.

Mike Meyer noted better communication with TxDOT on route planning is crucial. He described an example of a refinery customer based in Mont Belvieu, TX, which placed an order for very large parts. FM 3180 was our main route across I-10; now that bridge is going away. We never heard about any meetings or ways to provide input on that project. It will limit the size of cargo that can move through those areas. Our companies need to be consulted before those decisions are made. If we still held common interest group meetings, we could discuss those things.

Darin Stanley discussed the difficulty of parking oversize vehicles. There is some parking at border crossings, but it is not substantial enough for large loads. It is tough to maintain a schedule without viable parking options.

David Womack stated parking will always be a challenge since OS/OW is such a unique market. If we could just pull off the road, that would help. Safety is our top priority as well. If our drivers park in unsafe locations, they are terminated. For design, we utilize AutoTURN (an overlay on AutoCAD); we can share that information with TxDOT. Sometimes just moving the guardrail one foot, or adding gravel to the inside of a turn, can allow us to make a turn. This benefits everyone.

Darin Stanley said in years past, the permit office tried to maintain a north/south or east/west corridor orientation. That does not appear to be the case anymore.

Mike Meyer noted there are success stories for infrastructure improvements. For example, there is a rest area in Livingston, TX (on both the north and southbound sides of the highway) that is serviced, and the access and amounts of parking will allow even our trucks to get in and out. That rest area should be a model for other facilities. In Houston, they concrete the apron on the side of the roadway, which is very helpful. Those improvements were not intended for our use, but they work well.

Laura Ryan asked if that feedback on the concrete apron has been communicated to the design divisions. Caroline Mays said the team would follow up with the panelists and schedule a meeting with the district engineers.

Judge Emmett thanked the panelists for participating. Thirty or forty years ago no one would have known what type of equipment we would have today, and today we don't know what will exist 40 years in the future.

8. Implementation of the TFMP 2018 – Permian Basin Regional Freight and Energy Sector Transportation Plan

Paula Dowell presented an overview of the Permian Basin Regional Freight and Energy Sector Transportation Plan. This region was identified early on in the TFMP process as crucial for freight movement, both in terms of the intensity of freight activity as well as persistent safety issues. Energy sector activity in the area is expected to grow steadily in the long term; stakeholders felt the boom-and-bust cycle of oilfield production was a thing of the past. Ms. Dowell discussed the extent of the study area, plan development approach, and draft goals and objectives.

Brenda Mainwaring noted rail collisions with sand or water trucks in energy-sector areas can cause derailment. At-grade crossings need to be minimized at all costs.

Judge Emmett stated the Midland-Odessa area still has two-way frontage roads. TxDOT got a lot of pushback when recommending changing them to one-way. Ms. Dowell said the energy industry would like to convert them to one-way, but local communities and businesses resist due to access concerns. Alvin New said the elimination of two-way frontage roads is in motion now, but it depends on overpasses and turnarounds. Accommodating one-way frontage roads often requires huge restructuring of the interstates. It can be an \$800-\$850 million project. TxDOT gets pushback not necessarily on the need for the project, but on why that project is prioritized ahead of other needs.

Laura Ryan asked if any TxFAC members are also members of the Permian Basin Regional Freight Plan Steering Committee. Caroline Mays said Drew Crutcher is a member of both groups; he has also been involved in the stakeholder outreach process. We have also extended the invitation to railroads; Ivan Jaime from Union Pacific may participate.

Judge Emmett noted that while the plan focuses on the Permian Basin, it will likely have implications for other energy-sector areas such as the Eagle Ford Shale. Ms. Dowell agreed.

Randy Brogoitti said the suppliers for the Permian Basin area are located in various areas across the state. Paula Dowell added that labor for the area is sourced statewide as well.

Rolando Ortiz suggested the plan presented a good opportunity to look at freight issues as a whole, including technology, parking, infrastructure, etc.

Paula Dowell discussed the extensive stakeholder outreach effort for the project. Several meetings and interviews have already occurred, with more planned within the coming months. Key issues identified so far include infrastructure not keeping pace with oil and gas sector growth; the need for better overall connectivity, particularly north/south; and high incidents of truck-involved crashes.

Judge Emmett stated frac sand is coming in to the Port of Victoria via truck and going out on rail; it is not actually using the port but is traveling through port facilities. Randy Brogoitti noted local water wells have not actually diminished the number of water trucks in the area, they have just been helping to manage the growth and allow for faster growth.

Laura Ryan noted that as TxDOT looks at increases in roadway accidents and deaths in the area, it would be helpful to understand if they are caused by the same or different factors than statewide.

Paula Dowell asked the TxFAC members to provide their thoughts on the region's main challenges.

Clark Greer asked how many trucks are coming in to supply the region, including service industries. If the growth is sustainable, how does the region accommodate the growth for all services? It can be hard to find staff.

Alvin New stated TxDOT needs to be careful in case two "siloes" develop. The Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP), made up of big energy firms and local officials, has an infrastructure committee, a grant writing committee, etc. That group is very influential, and they are developing plans for what they want to accomplish. We need to make sure our freight plan is not being created in a separate silo.

Lindsay Mullins asked how the PSP was created. Alvin New stated there is a private piece and public piece. Bruce Bugg, TTC chairman, is also the chair of the PSP. He is supposed to be coordinating between groups involved. Caroline Mays added that TxDOT is very plugged into PSP and other organizations there. Last week TxDOT met with the PSP in Austin. They are working on education, health care, etc.; they have a much bigger scope than just transportation.

Alvin New said 27 percent of registered vehicle growth in 2017-2018 was from just two counties, Midland and Ector.

Paula Dowell asked the TxFAC members how energy sector activity in the Permian Basin impacts their region and/or the state. Randy Brogoitti said it was a key driver of the economic sector in east Texas.

Ms. Dowell also asked what elements of the plan might be transferrable to other parts of the state. Brenda Mainwaring stated the coordination between the public and private sector – breaking the modes/organizations out of their respective siloes – would be an important lesson.

Paula Dowell closed out the discussion by reviewing the project schedule and next steps. The plan is expected to wrap up in summer 2020.

9. Implementation of the TFMP 2018 – Other Study Overviews and Timelines

Judge Emmett stated the 86th Texas legislature took action on the Ports-to-Plains corridor. The TFMP did not include Ports-to-Plains as a priority but listed it as something to consider. Marc Williams stated the legislature heard from local stakeholders, and members passed legislation requiring TxDOT to undertake a feasibility study as well as form an advisory committee and segment committees for the corridor. By the end of 2020, TxDOT should have a report for the legislature that discusses Ports-to-Plains feasibility.

Paula Dowell discussed the upcoming Rio Grande Valley Regional Freight and Trade Transportation Plan. This area of South Texas including Brownsville, Edinburg, Harlingen and McAllen is a major center of freight activity. She discussed the project approach and asked for input on key issues for the team to focus on during plan development.

Marc Williams said the creation of a combined MPO in the Rio Grande region is a big step. Separate MPOs in the past has led to differing/competing priorities. We need to understand what those priorities are.

Brenda Mainwaring noted the increasing fragility of cross-border operations. Brownsville is not the center of those problems, but it could be an issue in future. She urged the project team to pay attention to border issues.

Paula Dowell discussed an upcoming project to better define the economic importance of freight in Texas, and as many have recommended, lay out the “business case” for freight infrastructure investment. The plan will present the economic importance of freight from a number of geographic and modal perspectives, and will also provide information on the direct and indirect impacts of e-commerce. She asked the group to comment on desired outcomes from this project.

Randy Brogoitti asked if the team would look at the impact of the pipelines that will be coming online, from the Permian Basin to Corpus Christi or down to Mexico. What will those pipelines open up in terms of economic activity? Ms. Dowell said the team would try; it depends if we can obtain actual data or just talk qualitatively.

Brenda Mainwaring said one of the railroads’ priorities is to give TxDOT the information they need to communicate the importance of funding for multimodal solutions. Marc Williams noted much of TxDOT’s funding is dedicated to highways, but this is important.

Rolando Ortiz said he wanted to see a path towards a funding mechanism for freight mobility. It is hard to get projects funded if they don’t fit into UTP categories. TxDOT needs to make the business case for improvements.

Paula Dowell discussed another upcoming project involving developing and administering a comprehensive multimodal freight planning program to improve the freight transportation network in Texas. The project team will be creating a customized computer-based freight investment optimization tool for implementing the TFMP and developing freight training capabilities for State staff and planning partners, including MPOs. The tool will include several modules: stakeholder engagement, freight network identification and assessment, freight flow forecasting and scenario planning, and freight investment assessment and prioritization.

Brenda Mainwaring said the development of tools to standardize freight planning across MPOs would be very valuable.

10. Open Discussion

Judge Emmett thanked Commissioners Ryan and New for attending the entire meeting. We need to discuss what topics the group will cover in future meetings. San Antonio is the second largest city in Texas, with Austin closing in. He urged TxFAC members to let Caroline Mays know of topics they would like to discuss in upcoming meetings, as well as desired meeting dates or locations.

He mentioned that several TxFAC members have been absent during recent meetings; we need to address the attendance issue. The TxFAC also needs a new vice chair. Potential volunteers should contact Caroline Mays. Ms. Mays said the TxFAC would likely meet once more in 2019.

Clark Greer suggested the group could meet at Coca-Cola in Fort Worth. Caroline Mays also suggested the possibility of meeting in San Angelo.

Judge Emmett thanked TxFAC members for their participation.

Meeting adjourned 2:06 p.m.