## Attendees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ed Emmett, Chair</td>
<td>Rice University</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Beeson</td>
<td>The Lubrizol Corp.</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Boening</td>
<td>Texas Farm Bureau</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy Brogoitti</td>
<td>Brogoitti Construction</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Cristina, P.E.</td>
<td>BNSF Railway</td>
<td>Designee Present (Megan Shea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryan Daniel</td>
<td>Office of the Governor</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drew Crutcher</td>
<td>Landgraf, Crutcher &amp; Associates</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Dyll</td>
<td>Texas International Freight LLC</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Esparza</td>
<td>Texas Trucking Association</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Guenther</td>
<td>Port of Houston Authority</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Hinojosa</td>
<td>Uni-Trade Forwarding, LLC</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge Clay Lewis Jenkins</td>
<td>Dallas County</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carson Landsgard</td>
<td>H-E-B</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin McIntosh</td>
<td>Kansas City Southern (KCSR)</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Moseley</td>
<td>Texas Association of Business</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolando Ortiz</td>
<td>Killam Development, Ltd.</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Patridge</td>
<td>McAllen Economic Development Corp.</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Alan Russell</td>
<td>The Tecma Group of Companies</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Schwab</td>
<td>Texas Economic Development Council</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Stewart</td>
<td>Gulf Winds International</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Strawbridge</td>
<td>Port of Corpus Christi Authority</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Todd</td>
<td>Trinity Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clint Schelbitzki (and Paul Rathgeber)</td>
<td>Union Pacific Railroad</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.J. Smith</td>
<td>Marathon Petroleum</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adriana Cruz</td>
<td>Office of the Governor for Economic Development and Tourism</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Leal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiffany Melvin</td>
<td>NASCO</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Texas Transportation Commissioners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin New, Commissioner</td>
<td>Texas Transportation Commission</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Ryan, Commissioner</td>
<td>Texas Transportation Commission</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex-Officio Members</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Evilia</td>
<td>Waco MPO</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Ford</td>
<td>Retired-Houston County</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark Greer</td>
<td>Coca-Cola</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John LaRue</td>
<td>United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Armando Martinez</td>
<td>Texas House Member, District 39</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Sergio Munoz Jr.</td>
<td>Texas House Member, District 36</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor Pete Saenz</td>
<td>City of Laredo</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Schwebel</td>
<td>IBC Bank</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Stibich</td>
<td>Port of Victoria</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny Smith</td>
<td>United Parcel Service</td>
<td>Not Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Treangen</td>
<td>TNW Corporation</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Woodruff</td>
<td>Kirby Corporation</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Count of Ex-Officio Members Present: 8**

**Total Count of Committee and Ex-Officio Members Present: 17**

**Cambridge Systematics Consulting Team**

- Paula Dowell, Cambridge Systematics
- Isabel Victoria, Cambridge Systematics
- Elizabeth Welch, Cambridge Systematics
- Lauren Canales, Nancy Ledbetter & Associates, Inc.
- Joe Bryan, WSP

**TxDOT & Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI)**

- Caroline Mays, AICP, Director of Freight, Trade and Connectivity Section, TxDOT
- Marc Williams, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT
- Roger Beall, P.E., Deputy Director, TPP Division, TxDOT
- David Salazar, P.E., Laredo District Engineer, TxDOT
- Pedro Alvarez, P.E., Pharr District Engineer, TxDOT
- Carol Johnson, P.E., Fort Worth District Engineer, TxDOT
- John Speed, P.E., Odessa District Engineer, TxDOT
- Jessica Butler, P.E., TPP Division Director, TxDOT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loretta Brown</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Pifer</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale Diemeier</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casey Wells</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Mora</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Airiohoudion</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aisa Showery</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberto Guevara</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Mao</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad Coburn</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Hehr</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie Valtier</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eduardo Hagert</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorena Echeverria de Misi, P.E.</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvette Flores</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto Rodriguez, P.E.</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melba Schaus</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Almanza</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah Oaks</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norma Garza, P.E.</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Milner</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darran Anderson</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Truban</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giacomo Yaquinto</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rex Costley, P.E.</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey Strittmatter</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marty Boyd</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Clisby</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtis Jones</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricia Hasan</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geir-Eilif Kalhagen</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allan Rutter</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Turnbull</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Middleton, P.E.</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Rodriguez</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtis Morgan</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason Wallis</td>
<td>TTI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Attendees**

- Andrew Canon, Rio Grande Valley MPO
- Bruce Mann, Port of Houston Authority
- Brian Hill, U.S. Maritime Administration
- Caitlin Hughes, FHWA
- Cameron Walker, Permian Basin MPO
- Carlos Calle, Office of the Texas House of Representatives
- Carlos Lopez, P.E., HNTB
- Chad Burke, Economic Alliance
- Chris Nelson, Steven’s Transport
- Clay Barnett, P.E., Sherman-Denison MPO
Clay Jenkins, Judge, Dallas County
Darrin Willer, P.E., HNTB
David Coronado, City of El Paso International Bridges Department
Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO
Eva Garcia
Genevieve Bales, FHWA
Georgi Ann Jasanovec, FHWA
Gretchen Ivy, HNTB
Janie Havel, Office of the Governor
Janna Rosenthal, Atkins
Javier Dominguez, Keller North America
Juan Jose Pena, Jr., Hidalgo County
Joe Bryan, WSP
Lisa Weston, University of North Texas
Luis Diaz, Rio Grande Valley MPO
Melany Rodriguez
Michael Bomba, University of North Texas
Mike Johnson, NCTCOG
Mike WilsonPort Freeport
Morgan Tavallaee, NTCOG
Patrick Mandapaka, Houston-Galveston Area Council
Paul Stresow, El Paso International Bridges
Rudy Zamora, Covenant Transportation Services
Scott Scheffler, Permian Road Safety Coalition
Susan Atherton, Freight Insights
Tyson Moeller, Union Pacific Railroad
Veronica Green, H-GAC
Yvette Limon, City of Laredo International Bridge System

1. Meeting Overview & Introductions

Chair Ed Emmett, Rice University, opened the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) Meeting at 8:10 a.m. He took the first few minutes to do a quick introduction of the first TxFAC meeting of 2021 and mentioned there was a lot of work being done despite a challenging past year, and the meeting today would display some of the tremendous work that has been produced by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the consultants. He continued that the work put together is finally being utilized in a tangible way. He also noted that TxDOT will be starting a new freight plan this year.

Chair Emmett took a couple of minutes to reference an upcoming Global Freight Summit co-hosted by Rice University Baker Institute and the Port of Houston on May 18-19, 2021. The summit will host many speakers from around the world bringing attention to freight in the state of Texas, economy freight across the world and moving freight in a low-carbon world. All TxFAC members will receive an invite.

As a housekeeping item, he asked all committee members to use the “Raise Hand” feature in the Webinar for comments, and for non-members to use the chat-box that is monitored throughout the meeting. Chair Emmett then passed the floor to Marc Williams, Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT.
Marc thanked the group for the continued leadership and participation from the TxFAC members. He applauded the efforts and the information that has been put together from the project team – he recognized that the information continues to get better while providing insight on the significant role freight has in moving our economy. He continued that while much was disrupted during the pandemic, the demand for freight and movement of freight on the transportation system was not. As things continue to evolve, more updates and planning studies will be needed to stay abreast with what is going on around the state. These studies help TxDOT as an organization, allocate resources and plan for projects. He looks forward to the upcoming discussion.

Chair Emmett took a moment to recognize the TxDOT Commissioners on the call, which at this point in the meeting included Commissioner Alvin New. Commissioner Laura Ryan was not present at this time, however, did join the meeting later.

Commissioner New provided a quick thank you and looked forward listening to the meeting to learn current and future progress of the freight plan. Chair Emmett thanked Commissioner New for his time and participation on the call.

Caroline Mays, Director of Freight, Trade and Connectivity Section, TxDOT, thanked Chair Emmett, Marc Williams, and Commissioner New. She then introduced Jessica Butler, TPP Division Director, TxDOT.

Jessica provided a welcome statement and thanked everyone for their time and participation. She commended the ongoing dedication of the committee and project team and looked forward to a great agenda for the meeting.

Caroline briefly welcomed and thanked the committee members for their participation on the call. She recognized the commitment from the members, especially those that have been on the committee for many years; their feedback and work has made a difference in what have become tangible elements moving forward in this process. She noted a full agenda highlighting all the work to come. Caroline then passed the floor to Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, to do roll call.

Sherry then performed roll call of the committee members to mark their attendance on the call and confirmed the group had quorum.

2. Recap of Nov. 5, 2020 meeting

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, provided a recap of the Nov. 5, 2020 meeting and topics discussed including the Freight Network Technology and Operations Plan (FNTOP) which highlighted six actionable strategies including: (1) Safety Warning Detection System, (2) Statewide Traffic Operations Center, (3) Smart Freight Connector, (4) Blocked Rail Crossing Traffic Management System, (5) Automated Vehicle Infrastructure, Connected Signing & Data, and (6) High-Resolution Freight Traveler Information System. She recapped the panel discussion which helped to define what the FNTOP was and where to focus implementation. She stated that the previous meeting also discussed an update on freight planning tools, the economic role of freight in Texas and a high-level overview of the Panama Canal Expansion.

Sherry reviewed the agenda for the meeting and special guest speakers. She turned over the presentation to Katie Turnbull, TTI, to present more detail on the Panama Canal expansion.
3. Impacts of the Panama Canal Expansion

Katie Turnbull, TTI, presented a detailed overview of the Panama Canal (the Canal) expansion impact on Texas ports and landside transportation infrastructure. She reviewed the project objective which documents the impact of the three-year operation of the expansion of the Panama Canal. She went into detail on trade with Pacific Rim countries via Texas deep-draft ports through the Panama Canal. She provided a comparison of the different locks, comparing the initial locks versus the new locks – they are now deeper and wider to accommodate larger vessels. She also took time to discuss the March 2021 Suez Canal Blockage and what happened to the vessel to cause the issue and mentioned that the Panama Canal would not have this problem specifically, but other types of crashes could occur due to the Panama Canal locks.

She presented the background and focus of the Panama Canal Stakeholder Working Group and project activities involved, which included six information-gathering meetings, development of findings and recommendations to increase imports and exports through Texas. For this effort, interviews were held with 35 different stakeholders, from Panama Canal Authority and Department of Energy and other sources. The effort also reviewed the national, state and regional reports. She showed a slide that highlighted individuals interviewed in the process.

Next, she discussed the Canal and Texas freight related events since 2012 which included a detailed timeline from 2012 through 2020, and stated Panama Canal has made numerous adjustments and operational improvements throughout those years.

Next, she delved into the annual Panama Canal Universal Measurement System. She noted that the larger ships since 2016 have resulted in increased tonnage and the amount of goods moving through the Canal, as well as a slight increase in number of vessels. She noted there was also a slight increase to and from Gulf Coast Ports. She expanded on the Texas benefits resulting from the expanded Canal and provided examples of increased exports and imports to Pacific Rim countries. The Texas Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) exports were reviewed in more detail, including the Sabine Pass in Sabine Louisiana which was the first vessel through the Canal/LNG exports. She also provided more information on LNG export facilities and Gulf Coast LPG (Liquid Petroleum Gas) exports from 2016 – 2020 mentioning that Texas has the largest number of ports and LPG export facilities in the country, and there is an increase in LNG vessels through Panama Canal from Texas. As displayed on the slide, there was a large increase of LPG exports in 2020 due to winter/Texas exports. She reviewed the container imports/exports through the Canal including more detail on Port Houston and Port Freeport detailing there was almost 80% growth of containers through the canal in Port Houston and 58% growth in Port Freeport. She also discussed the increase in plastic resins exports, roll-on/roll-off imports and exports, and agricultural products/process foods and beverages through Texas ports.

She continued to present on the Texas Multimodal Network and what it means for ports, roadways, railroads, and pipelines and that Texas Ports are critical assets to these networks. She expanded on various projects and improvements to the ports which included deepening and widening projects, Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), and property expansions and improvements. Additionally, she described the TxDOT funds distributed to ports for the Port Access Improvement (Rider) Program including Riders 48, 45, and 38, a program that includes 34 projects with $100 million for projects to improve access to maritime ports and $41 million in port contributions. She outlined examples of Rider 48, 45, and 38 projects which included
projects in Port Houston (Jacinto Port Blvd./Peninsula St. Improvements, expand port road from 4-lanes to 6-lanes and Sheldon Rd. improvements), Port Freeport (widen SH 36 from 2-lanes to 4-lanes in a roadway from Brazos River Bridge to RM 1495), Port of Galveston (improvements and repairs to Old Port Industrial Rd, 33rd St. and 26th St. and Harborside Dr.; construction of new cruise corridor and three 4-lane access roads from SH 275), Port of Corpus Christi (adding access to Joe Fuller International Trade Corridor (JFC), expansion of Rincon Road to extend to the JFC), Port of Beaumont (new lighted truck queuing and staging area), and Port of Port Arthur (two truck queuing areas). She also outlined Unified Transportation Program (UTP) projects which included: I-10 widening and improvements (Beaumont), US 69 widening and improvements (Beaumont), US 77 upgrade sections to freeway (Corpus Christi and Pharr), SH 36 widening (Houston), and SH 146 widening (Houston).

Next, she reviewed the Class One and Shortline railroads in Texas, major crude oil, hydrocarbon gas liquids (HGL), and natural gas pipeline networks in Texas. She discussed future influences on exports and imports through the Panama Canal (E-commerce, freight distribution centers and patterns, completion of port deepening and widening projects and the global economy). Finally, she discussed the future direction for the Canal, which included maintaining focus on trade-related multimodal transportation improvements; pursuing tech initiatives; continuing support for port improvement programs; serving as a resource to Texas ports; identifying ways to increase use of GIWW (Gulf Intracoastal Waterway); working with railroads, ports, and other groups to support needed rail capacity; and considering developing and implementing the Texas Global Gateway marketing and information program.

Chair Ed Emmett opened the floor for questions.

Matt Woodruff, Kirby Corporation, via chat said, “For the Brazos Floodgate and Colorado River Locks on the GIWW, the barge industry pay the "match" for the federal investment through a fuel tax.” He also added via chat, “The barge industry pays 29 cents per gallon for inland waterway. Inland waterway trust fund. Congress has adjusted, but it pays 35% of costs of waterways, treasure waterways would be 65%. 35% through fuel.” Matt elaborated on his comment by stating that the barge industry pays 29 cents per gallon on the propulsion fuel that it burns on the inland waterways, and that goes into the Inland Waterway Trust Fund. He noted that Congress has recently adjusted that fund it pays 35% of costs of waterways and treasury would pay 65%. And by the end of those projects, they would be funded 35% through fuel tax.

Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO, via chat questioned, “Is there any evidence that the expansion of the Panama Canal has resulted in diverting ship traffic from the Ports of Los Angeles (LA)/Long Beach (LB) to TX ports?”

Katie replied that she was unsure if there is evidence of diversion, but it was more about getting a larger share of the increase in goods. Looking at intermodal rail traffic, there was a slight re-adjustment when the expansion occurred. Texas captured more of the increase in those years that might have otherwise gone to other West Coast ports, such as LA/LB ports.

Chair Emmett weighed in that in the new global world, a lot of major shippers do not want to be tied only to the West Coast for many reasons, including labor issues. He continued that there has been an expanded amount of traffic, as Katie mentioned, more so than diversions. He highlighted that Texas picked up more shares of the increase in goods and that will likely continue, dependent on what happens with continued trade lanes in South America. He then asked about having an “agreement” with “Panama”, and what do those agreements amount to
because Panama doesn’t own any of the freight, and why do an agreement with “Panama” specifically?

Katie responded that the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), like many others, focus on joint marketing or promotions, such as looking for the “go forth and do good things” approach. She continued that Texas has a general agreement to work closer with Panama and generate more traffic for the ports in Texas, as well as traffic through the Canal.

Marc Williams, Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT commented that the presentation included timelines of activities dating from the original TxDOT Panama Canal study. He noted it was interesting to see the evolution over time and highlighted the impact of committees/working groups have had on TxDOT departments and directives. In particular, he listed the Brazos River and Colorado River flood gates on the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway—those are projects he believed directly contribute to the work of the Panama Canal Working Group and TxFAC. He continued that TxDOT got a jumpstart on environmental work and feasibility study for the Brazos River and Colorado River flood gates. The work and initiative of these committees helped TxDOT make progress. He asked a question for Katie or Roger Guenther, Port of Houston Authority, stating he noticed reports of increased delay going through the Panama Canal over the past year, and an increase in fees to ships transiting through that the Canal. He asked if they knew the degree of how those fees and delay increases impact TxDOT Gulf Coast Operations?

Katie responded that yes, the Canal has experienced different issues over the past year including delays, water issues, and fees. The Canal has transitioned to reservation systems for LNG vessels. She provided an example from a couple months ago where an LNG vessel arrived at the Canal without reservation and was told it would be 2-3 days, so the vessel had to go the long way around South America because they got turned away from Canal access. The Canal is trying to manage those types of situations and traffic as well as maximize resources. How the Canal moves forward will impact the number of imports/exports through the area—it is an ongoing balancing act.

Roger expanded on Katie’s response stating that from the container side, he has not seen/heard of the increased fees the Canal is charging. He continued that the volume of vessels traveling through the Canal keeps growing and there is pent-up demand for even larger ships in the Canal. The limitation is the Canal channel, which is narrow. It needs to expand quickly for two-way traffic and larger cargo coming from Houston. There has been diversion, when Houston had very little cargo demand a decade ago, but container cargo is now half of the Houston import business and growing. During that decade-long period, more distribution centers have been constructed in the area and the cargo becomes captive to the region. More people have diverted to the gulf/Houston because of issues on the West Coast, and they make their way over here and stay. In many cases cargo is cheaper to come through those areas. The recent impact of e-commerce has put additional strain on ports throughout the nation. Port Houston had its biggest quarter/month ever in March 2021 in terms of cargo coming through the area, and we need to make sure it is prepared for those increases. Ten years ago, the ports were 65% export and 35% import, and the recent surge of imports has switched, to where there are more imports than exports, recently. The impact has been tremendous and will be even greater when the channel is widened.

Katie added one final comment. In 2021, the comments from shippers, carriers, exporters and companies were generally positive about working with Texas ports. That same sentiment came
through the interviews/comments. Other ports across the nation also commented about Texas ports being a different, a better experience.

Chair Emmett thanked Katie for a great presentation and followed with a final question about the LNG tanker that diverted to South America because of a 2–3-day delay and was interested in more information.

Katie in response said that the window for LNG tankers is very narrow and timing is everything. She said she will find a supporting article about it to confirm that.

Outside of the presentation, Michael Bomba, University of North Texas, asked via chat, “Do you have any information on how other ports in the Gulf of Mexico (those outside of Texas) have fared? Has Texas benefitted disproportionately from the expansion or have all gulf ports benefitted?”

Katie Turnbull responded via chat, “Texas ports have benefited the most. The LNG and LPG vessels are from Texas ports. New Orleans has seen an increase in some ag products (soybeans).”

4. The Economic Role of Freight in Texas

Chair Ed Emmett transitioned the presentation over to Kale Driemeier, TxDOT, and Paula Dowell, Cambridge Systematics, to speak about the Economic Role of Freight in Texas.

Kale provided a brief introduction and mentioned that the study started in 2019 and was guided by a working group of eleven TxFAC members. He mentioned the various workshop meetings that have been held up to this point and thanked the members for their participation in those working group sessions. He turned the presentation over to Paula.

Paula reminded the group that Menti Polling will be used for the presentation and referenced where to find the login information. She began her presentation with an overview of the study, which included the following elements: (1) The Economic Impact of Freight, (2) Freight Modes, (3) Freight Congestion, (4) Freight Investments, (5) E-Commerce in Texas Triangle and (6) Economic Impact of Cross Border Trade (across 25 districts). She continued to review the key statewide findings and summarized the analysis process which included the breakdown of enterprise operations, freight transportation, and the producer and consumer industries – and disclosed the key data and key tools used in the analysis. Additionally, she discussed the 2018 economic role of freight which displayed tangible numbers of annual jobs, income, Gross State Product and tax revenue produced. The economic costs of freight congestion were discussed along with visualization of cost comparisons between 2018 vs. 2050 in terms of truck delay, fuel waste, and overall congestion cost. Next, she reviewed the return on investment (ROI) on the Texas Highway Freight Network (THFN) in more detail and disclosed data on travel time saved, crashes avoided and other benefits.

The next portion of the presentation reviewed the outreach materials from the study. Paula talked about the one-page fact sheets that were prepared and available from the study. The one-page fact sheets include more information on statewide, district and Texas Triangle freight; as well as one-pagers with information about the ten corridors, freight modes, and a variety of special topics. She also noted the executive summary was prepared and details and key findings are contained within the 16-page brochure. The final report was outlined on a slide which included four key sections: (1) Texas in Global Commerce; (2) Economic Role of Freight
Across the State; (3) To Invest or Not Invest – impact of congestion, ROI; and (4) Moving Goods in Texas Means Business – freight modes, cross-border analysis and e-commerce in the Texas Triangle.

Paula paused at this point to ask for any questions, before moving onto the Menti Poll. No questions were asked.

**Menti Question 1: One Page Summaries will be useful for:**

One page summaries will be useful for outreach to:

![Diagram showing the number of votes for each category]

**Options for selection included:**

- State legislature
- Congressional delegation
- TxDOT leadership
- TxDOT division and districts
- Planning partners
- Local and regional officials
- Economic development agencies
- Private sector/industry associations
- General public
- Other

Paula summarized the results. The most popular answer was state legislature, with 16 votes; followed by private sector/industry associations, local and regional officials, and economic development agencies all with 14 votes; and congressional delegation 13 votes. Texas leadership, general public, and “Other” got the least number of votes, but still garnered half of the member votes. Paula elaborated about what the “Other” selections included.

Paul Stresow, Texas Parking & Transportation Association, via chat, mentioned “neighboring states” could find them useful.
**Menti Question 2: How can we best use information and materials from this study**

**How can we best use information and materials from this study?**

- We will use in recruiting new business to Texas.
- Used by Economic development agencies.
- Obtain support for freight construction projects for border communities that might not have the population base to tap other formula funding.
- Convert fact sheets to be available in digital and interactive media to use for promoting via social media and other non-traditional channels. Also for tourism and business development/lead generation purposes.
- Employment agencies, job seekers and employers for the need of people willing to work to move freight and accessorial jobs that come with it.
- Share with our neighbors to the south, Mexico, since goods flow between Texas and Mexico - railroad and trucking industries not already operating in/out of Texas for future planning expansion.
- Reach out to media.
- Outreach presentations to industry associations and business leaders.

**Responses in Menti included:**

- Use in recruiting new business to Texas
- Use by Economic Development agencies
- Obtain support for freight construction projects for border communities that might not have the population base to tap other formula funding
- Convert fact sheets to be available in digital and interactive media to use for promoting via social media and other non-traditional channels. Also, for tourism and business development/lead generation purposes
- Employment agencies, job seekers and employers for the need of people willing to work to move freight and accessorial jobs that come with it
- Share with our neighbors to the south, Mexico, since goods flow between Texas and Mexico - railroad and trucking industries not already operating in/out of Texas for future planning expansion
- Reach out to media
- Outreach presentations to industry associations and business leaders

**Open Discussion from this question included:**

Chair Emmett commented that media is an option for sharing these materials. For example, on I-45 in Houston, the media were shocked when talking about freight as an issue along highways. It is not a commonly debated issue, but it needs be discussed due to the interstate’s importance on the economic boom in Texas.
Paula responded that many times when freight is discussed in the media, it is negative – like truck crashes. Media is a great addition to continue to build awareness of the importance of freight.

Paula asked if there were any other questions.

Commissioner Alvin New commented that he did not see if the study covered the traffic between land ports, traffic between seaports, and traffic between land and seaports. He said TxDOT needs to understand this information as it relates to building connectivity. He also asked if there was any focus on that or anything TxDOT could use as a resource for this information.

Paula replied that a corridor analysis was performed and noted that those were corridors in large part that connect to various trade gateways, whether they be international ports of entry, seaports or air cargo terminals. She said within the corridor analysis it was touched on, but did not call it out specifically, and agreed that is a great topic we can take a deeper dive into with the new freight plan.

Commissioner New commented that could be helpful. There is a lot of activity between Laredo and Houston. He mentioned if he understands more about this, as a commissioner, he can advocate for connectivity along the border, along the coast and in between.

Paula agreed noting some of the corridor analysis talks about that connectivity but needs to go into more detail in the new freight plan.

Chair Emmett in response to Commissioner New agreed it was a good point. He continued that when talking about Laredo and Houston, for example, once I-69 gets completed - what will be the impact on places like Victoria, Texas – would it make sense to move the port more inland to Victoria? He highlighted that in Savannah, Georgia, the freight traffic is handled 100 miles inland from the port, resulting in fewer trucks coming to the port itself. The railroads and trucking companies will need to be innovative in how they move freight to make it more efficient.

Rolando Ortiz, Killam Development, Ltd., added to Chair Emmett’s point about completing I-69 Laredo and Houston that there will be more transportation use of freight mobility when it is complete. He noted the relief from San Antonio and Houston will be noticeable and it will be a great alternative route.

Paula concluded this segment of the presentation, detailed when the reports and summaries will be available and where to find them. *(Link to materials was shared with TxFAC members prior to the meeting and also again in the chat box)*

Adriana Cruz, Office of the Governor for Economic Development and Tourism, commented how great the materials are. She continued that the Economic Development and Tourism Office will be using this data extensively. She also asked about the relevancy of the 2018 data and asked what the plans are for updating them. Additionally, she asked if a statewide e-commerce report has been considered, considering more than just the “Texas Triangle”.

Paula replied that 2018 is the latest commodity flow database that was available and was consistent across all freight modes – that is why it was used. She noted the analysis was set up to automate updates, and as TxDOT procures information and more data becomes available, along with the freight forecasting tool, it will allow for a more current, base year data. This will be discussed when conversations occur of what to include in the new freight plan. She added that in terms of the e-commerce study it was considered to do one statewide, but due to resources, it
was decided to choose the “Texas Triangle” as a baseline and foundation for expanding the analysis statewide.

Caroline Mays, TxDOT, added that the team wanted to at least get a proof of concept and a good understanding of e-commerce in the “Texas Triangle” to help paint a statewide picture. This will be noted in a set of initiatives to move forward with and can follow up to shape that idea.

Mike Wilson, Port Freeport, via chat asked, “Will the materials/presentations be available online?”

Chair Emmett replied that yes, they will be posted to the TxDOT website. Chair Emmett also recognized that TxDOT Commissioner Laura Ryan had joined the call.

Commissioner Ryan commented that everything so far has been informative. She is looking forward to the next steps and asked if there is anything she can do to follow up on the information presented. She then thanked everyone for their time and effort.

**BREAK FROM 9:45 - 10 a.m. **

During the break a few comments were posted in the chat box.

Brian Hill, U.S. Maritime Administration, commented “Just want to remind everyone that the RAISE Grant application period is open (Formerly called BUILD Grants, also formerly called TIGER grants). $1 Billion is available for Transportation Infrastructure (road, rail, port, transit) and freight-related projects, and 50% will go to rural applicants this year. Also, the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) is also open for applications. $200 million+ for port infrastructure. Both deadlines to apply are in July. One other note, small port applicants for the PIDP will not have to do a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) for their applications this year! Texas ports have been very successful in getting these grants the last few years.”

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, shared via chat access to the materials presented using the following link: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/k033teuk8cvyry8/AAAEw9j3uyB7Z1T1t9kUeYR0a?dl=0. She added that due to the large file size, the 47 one pagers for the Economic Role of Freight study should be accessed separately at https://camsys.egnyte.com/dl/hEDrR4TzcW.

5. Freight Infrastructure Design (Updated Roadway Design Manual)

Chair Ed Emmett welcomed the group back from the break. Kale Driemeier, TxDOT, mentioned that Freight Infrastructure Design study came out over program and policy recommendation in the freight plan to evaluate design standards with respect to commercial vehicle movement on Texas Highway Freight Network. In preparing the study, the project team is working with TxDOT’s Design division which guides the development of construction projects from concept to bidding, develops design policies and safety criteria. The Design Division has been updating the Roadway Design Manual (RDM). Kale introduced Ken Mora, Section Director, Roadway Design TxDOT Design Division, TxDOT, who will be presenting on the updates. He also introduced Joe Bryan, WSP, that will present on the freight infrastructure design considerations.

Ken began his presentation on the updated Roadway Design Manual (RDM). He provided a background on the updates, which were broken into three categories (Revisions 1, 2 and 3). The RDM is being updated for American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Greenbook concurrence, TxDOT polices, safety, new material, technical
corrections, technical corrections, and overall restructuring. He also discussed the recent progress on those updates which included over 200 edits. He specifically noted updated bike guidance that was released in April 2012 and stated the RDM target release date for the update is July 2021. He referenced where to find the link to new bike guidance through the internal TxDOT web resource which was displayed on the slide.

Ken continued with more discussion on bicycle facility types, bicycle guidance implementation dates and projects to be expected, with respect to the new bicycle guidance. Next, he presented a timeline of the RDM editing process and noted the final draft is going through review by technical content reviewers. Lastly, he reviewed the next steps in the process. TxDOT will be doing a more robust update and reorganization of Revision 3 with a target release date of Fall 2022. Those revisions included performance-based practical design (PBPD), expanded context classification, updated managed lane guidance, updated roadside safety guidance and an overall RDM manual re-organization (including better information flow, design, formatting, graphics and adding an index). Ken concluded the presentation by providing points of contact for questions.

Following the presentation, Kale Dreimeier, TxDOT, commented that freight and bicycle movements are not often viewed together and with high-volume roadways, there will be many freight truck and bicycle interactions.

Ken replied that those kinds of interaction points are incorporated in planning. The draft of the guidance, with respect to freight corridors and shared-used paths (or side paths), include proposals where bicycles and pedestrians are outside of the areas of traffic which will help with those heavy volume roadways and bicycle/freight interactions.

Chair Emmett commented that freight is going to interact with bicycles. He also commented about the impact of COVID-19, which has resulted in more employees working from home and less commuter traffic on the roadways.

Chair Emmett introduced the next section of the agenda.

Next, Joe Bryan, WSP, presented on freight infrastructure design considerations and highlights of the project and final report. He provided a project overview which included the purpose of the project – to address roadway functional design and operation issues related to the movement of freight in Texas and the four goals, which include recommended design considerations; developing freight factors for the RDM; enhancing safety, addressing congestion, efficiency; and identifying freight infrastructure design issues on the Texas Multimodal Freight Network. He delved into the project development process and presented an overview on data collection, evaluation of existing conditions, identifying freight needs and design considerations, and finally, the coordination, outreach, and documentation that took place throughout the project. He added that the outreach efforts were a large effort including coordination with the TxDOT Design Division, District Operations, performing regional forms, an industry needs survey, and truck driver attributes survey.

Joe continued his presentation on the highlights of freight infrastructure design considerations. He detailed the concerns from truck drivers with roadway design, the top ten design attributes from truck drivers, roadway freight design attributes/key geometrics and roadway design attributes (intersections, bridges, pavement, operations and work zones).
Next, he discussed the characteristics that could be evaluated on a systemwide basis and the minimum and optimum considerations which are inputs into the Design Divisions work. The study looked at lane width, outside shoulder width, and features systemwide. He defined an example of the accelerated lane length as a freight design attribute, including the definition, function and existing RDM guidelines for the minimum acceleration lane lengths. Next, he highlighted the new recommendations for the accelerated lane lengths and benefits (such as safety) and key corridors (of the 289 entrance ramps examined) that match the minimum/optimum for acceleration lane length. To display how the analysis worked, a “below minimum”, “match to minimum” and “match to optimum” lane length example was displayed on the screen. The three different examples were real examples of statewide entrance ramps. As improvements are made, this sort of analysis needs to be built in.

A comment came through the chat from Chris Evilia, Waco MPO, “Would the merge length need to increase if an uphill grade is present? Are there guidelines to suggest when a grade is enough to warrant this increase and the amount of additional distance?”

Joe replied yes, both freight and other traffic would be slower in the climb of an uphill grade. Every combination of scenarios like that were not evaluated. The RMD does address uphill grades on acceleration lanes as it relates to freight.

Joe asked if there were more questions.

Clark Greer, Coca-Cola, asked about public service announcements (PSA) on merging? He continued that there is some confusion amongst the general public on the expectations of trucks/vehicles and merging. He asked if a PSA can be created to help clarify what a true law-abiding merge is with the general public.

Joe replied it would make sense for that kind of information to be disseminated as public education.

Clark also added a comment about preferred truck pass (through toll roads) and using providing discounts to trucks that divert to toll roads instead of through town.

Joe replied that road charge/road pricing does have an impact on road selection and can be used differentially to encourage driver behavior and route selection. Roadway conditions influence how route selection takes place.

Caroline Mays, TxDOT, replied that the charge to use roads is not a design issue but a policy inclusion. She continued that this study focused primarily on assessing existing infrastructure and design challenges that freight faces. The charging/toll prices is another topic in regard to congestion issues through the state.

Joe added, it does point to an issue/direction to be addressed in the future.

Caroline added that public awareness/public campaigns and are a big part of what has been focused on to date on how to monitor truck and safety issues. This was not a part of this study but is related and could be incorporated. She concluded that design can be complimented by public awareness and education and discussed what can be done in the interim to help address some of the current design flaws.

Chris Evilia, Waco MPO, via chat asked, “Should we make use of variable speed limits, for instance during icy or wet conditions?”
Caroline, in a follow up to Chris’ question, asked whether the study looked at speed limits.

Joe replied that speed limits were looked for design considerations as an operational function.

Joe wrapped up his presentation discussing the organization of the final report and concluded his presentation.


Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, provided a brief introduction to the next segment of the meeting. She talked about the new, revised freight plan and how it will be a big undertaking. She continued that a refresher will be provided on what will be needed in the new freight plan, including federal requirements, and overall what should be incorporated into the new plan. She introduced Caitlin Hughes, FHWA (Federal Highway Administration), to provide a federal perspective on state freight planning and freight planning tools available.

Caitlin provided a quick introduction and continued to present an overview of the state freight plan update, which has not changed since the last update, barring any updates that could come from Congress. She also discussed the implementation toolkit which is a module developed to assess a states’ freight plan and show where it can go deeper. The toolkit includes case studies from other state freight plans as well and provides a wider view of requirements in each state. She added that FHWA is also looking at giving division offices the authorization for approval, instead of having to run through headquarters to approve state freight plans. She noted that the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) is in still in an extension period which has additional funding available, with other funding sources having over 17 billion dollars toward freight projects.

She presented on the new freight mobility dashboard available on the FHWA website. She displayed a map that shows the delay per mile for each state, as an example, and encouraged the use of the tool for the development of state freight plans. The tool provides congestion costs and bottlenecks across the area currently being analyzed. She provided more examples of Texas to show the top 996 bottlenecks based on delay/mile around the state and suggested it is useful for creating the new state freight plan. The next few slides provided snapshots of the kind of analysis the tool provides. The tool will provide a local and nationwide comparison of how congestion and delays compare to other areas across the state and nation.

She presented information on the truck parking survey performed and available for nationwide participation. She discussed that the data and highlights of the survey are available on the FHWA website. She noted there was nothing too shocking in the data that was collected from the survey and that there are still truck parking shortages throughout the country, especially in large metro areas. Since the previous survey, there have been new efforts put in place to develop truck parking management systems in many states, such as efforts along I-10, and a Texas and Florida statewide project. FHWA is looking at whether continuation of the national federal highway freight funding yields more investment to truck parking capacity expansion and they will be looking to see whether that makes a difference in truck driver satisfaction. FHWA is offering facilitated dialogue on truck parking solutions through division offices.

She continued to review the federal size and weight laws for trucks and noted that only Congress can change these laws. She reviewed the federal vs. statewide restrictions for size and weight adding that FHWA is creating a brochure that will help to explain the different networks and size and weight restrictions for each, and those will be on the website soon. She reviewed how the FHWA enforces size and weight laws, manages and monitors certifications/permits, and provides analysis on the enforcement of size and weight violations in the state of Texas.
She closed her presentation with providing resources to different reports available on the FHWA website.

Caitlin opened the floor to questions.

Chair Ed Emmett asked a question related to the new transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg (and the new administration) and how the Secretary has made it clear that sustainability and equity are going to be front and center. He added that the Biden administration is going to be there throughout 2023 when Texas is supposed to have their new freight plan completed. He asked what the impact of this would be, even without activity by Congress. He also asked if this is going to look different for the freight plan moving forward. He added that there is going to be a slightly new direction than from the previous administration.

Caitlin replied that the new administration is looking at elements such as racial equity and climate change (which has elements to support a new grant program). She noted there is leeway to take freight plans in new directions. She called out that other states did do some environmental analysis and there was some environmental and climate guidance for the state freight plans back in 2016 but may see more. She noted for example, in New York state, there have been a couple roadway facilities that have been removed from the state highway system and redesigned to be more accessible to communities. It remains to be seen how it will be tackled it other states. Every state can be flexible in how they are put together their plan. Also, a state can extend flex funding from other federal programs for more opportunity to invest in a wide variety of freight projects. She noted that the percentage of National Freight Program Funds that can be spent on multimodal investments is being increased and some states are taking advantage by investing in these types of projects. She continued that there could be a more multimodal focus in future freight plans and regional planning. The FHWA believes their new tool points out different ways to improve utility and thinking in how to develop the state freight plan.

Via chat, Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, provided a link to the tool Caitlin discussed during the presentation, https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/freight_analysis/mobility_trends/index.htm.

Casey Wells, TxDOT, also added via chat, “We are developing a similar tool with TTI: Truck Congestion Analysis Tool TCAT - https://tcatwebprod.z14.web.core.windows.net/. Report Cards - https://tcatanncongrep.z14.web.core.windows.net/anncongrep/dashboard.”

Via chat, Caitlin added “Sherry, thanks for posting the link. Our Freight Mobility Trends Tool will also be expanded to include MOVES data so you can see the emissions associated with the bottlenecks and system delay. This should be available in the fall.”

Chair Emmett closed out this segment of the presentation and segued into the next section to the overview of the 2018 plan and looking forward to the 2023 plan.

7. Overview of the 2018 Texas Freight Mobility Plan – Looking Ahead to the 2023 Plan

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, introduced this segment stating that the freight plan is an important document, and it is time to develop the new plan. She added that so many great things came from the 2018 Texas Freight Mobility Plan (TFMP) and that this segment of the presentation is meant to be an open discussion about successes and areas of opportunity from the 2018 plan as well as collect feedback and ideas for the new 2023 plan.

Paula Dowell, Cambridge Systematics, started the presentation and reminded the group that Menti Polling would be used again for this portion of the discussion. She discussed that there
was some turnover on TxFAC since the original TFMP. She reviewed the timeline for the 2018 TFMP from kick-off to final plan approval. The new plan will need to be complete by early 2023. She discussed what is needed to not only check the boxes of federal highway guidelines, but also make it a useful blueprint for Texas. She reviewed the 2018 TFMP topics addressed, as well as the TxFAC and stakeholder coordination and outreach performed to develop the plan. She continued to review the organization of the 2018 plan by providing a brief overview of each chapter in the TFMP (Chapters 1-14) and the topics included. Additionally, she reviewed the TFMP implementation efforts that came from the plan which included:

- The Truck Parking Study
- The Permian Basin Freight and Energy Sector Transportation Plan
- The Rio Grande Valley Freight and Trade Transportation Plan
- The Presidio Freight and Trade Transportation Plan
- The Freight Network Technology and Operations Plan
- The Weigh in Motion/Vehicle Classification Strategic Plan
- The Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan
- Economic Role of Freight in Texas
- Freight Infrastructure Design Considerations
- Freight Planning and Programming Training and;
- Texas Freight Optimization Tools and Oversize/Overweight Report.

After reviewing the 2018 TFMP, Paula presented on the new 2023 TFMP, which included a potential schedule/timeline including an expected kick-off plan in June 2021, a draft to the TxFAC in September 2022 and final approval by the FHWA in January 2023.

Paula then began the Menti Polling tool to garner participation from the group about the previous 2018 TFMP and recommendations for the new 2023 plan.

**Menti Question 3: What do you think the last TFMP did well? (content and process)**
Responses in Menti included:

- Raised awareness of the importance of freight and identified corridors
- Prioritizing freight specific highway improvements
- Were some of the meeting topics and feedback based on industry – specific key impacted stakeholders or were they only focused by region?
- The number of stakeholders reached, and the number of deep dive meetings was important
- Included short line railroads in plan, discussed needs and impact, first time in Texas.
- Captured the corridors not on the radar before
- Focus on freight network, impact to state, really drove home importance of freight to Texas and the nation - Great argument for not being a donor state

Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO, via chat asked, “Does TxDOT plan to develop the new plan with in-person stakeholder meetings (COVID allowing, of course)? Is there value in continuing to have virtual meetings (as much as we are sick of them)?”

In response, Caroline Mays, TxDOT, said that right now it is primarily a virtual environment, but as conditions change TxDOT will be holding in-person meetings. Most likely, meetings will be a combination of both virtual and in-person meetings. There is a benefit in virtual meetings in that more people can participate – but we will continue to strategize on what methods work best. TxDOT would like to hear from committee members as to what would be the best way to communicate with members across the state.

Paula also responded to the question from Eduardo. She mentioned that there would be a Menti question about this coming up next. She added the suggestion of hybrid of in-person and virtual meetings could be used to take advantage of both.

Via chat, Eduardo replied, “ Seems that a hybrid model will work well. Thanks for the answer.”
Responses in Menti included:

- Focus on new directions regarding environmental and equity concerns by including representatives from various organizations and residents.
- Include rural connectivity.
- Tailor each outreach initiatives by industry and key stakeholder versus regional based.
• More discussion on private sector infrastructure and public benefit
• Freight movement at night and how do we get there effectively?
• Review members to assure commitment to participate in process.
• Similar to the Permian Basin, do deep dive sessions with key industries to fully understand their freight needs and future impacts.
• Add truck parking as a component of the plan.
• More consideration of alternative energy trucks
• Growth of freight delivery during the pandemic and what the long-term implications are for future of Texas
• Public safety training in regard to handling truck traffic

Bruce Mann, Port of Houston Authority, commented that with change in the Presidential administration with prioritization and policies, the new plan suggested a deeper dive into freight alternatives with emission reductions at some of the high density /low distance freight points.

Paula replied that when the project team goes into some of the extensions in terms of deep dive topics, freight operations and technologies may be included.

Via chat, Veronica Green, HGAC, commented, “Zero emission corridors are a part of the new legislation, as well as commercial vehicle tolling.”

Via chat, Charles Airiohoudion, TxDOT, provided an option to “Include Connected Autonomous Vehicle (CAV)”.  

Via Chat, Mike Wilson, Port Freeport, provided a suggestion that “Transportation Planning should be an element of our economic development process.” And “Expansion of Freight Traveler Information”.

Via chat, Veronica Green, H-GAC, added a suggestion for “Expansion of Freight Traveler Information.”
Menti Question 5: What are the “can’t miss” items for the new plan?

Responses in Menti included:

- E-Commerce
- USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement)
- Resiliency
- More use of rail and intermodal to relieve highway congestion
- How do we incentivize moving freight to night when there is available capacity on freight network?
- Vehicle automation: infrastructure and policies to support and prioritize corridors for max benefit
Menti Question 6: How should TxFAC be involved in the development process?

Topics to vote on in Menti included:

- Progress updates
- Promote stakeholder outreach activities.
- Review materials
- Individual interviews
- Sub committees for specific topics/elements
- Plan approval
- Other (please specify)

(Question for TxFAC members only)

The most popular options included progress updates, subcommittees for specific topics and plan approval. The least popular option selected was individual interviews.

Chair Ed Emmett provided additional feedback as he provided the “other” response. He mentioned that the TxFAC members can all be involved in finding new technologies for improving freight mobility.

Caroline Mays, TxDOT, added that on the interviews it would be important to identify people that are not on the committee who can provide input for the plan development. There is a large network of folks not on the committee that could be involved.

In response, Paula mentioned that the “promote stakeholder outreach activities” would be inclusive to others as well.
**Topics to vote on in Menti included:**

- Progress updates
- Workshops (open to the public)
- Industry forums (invitation)
- Individual interviews
- Committees for specific topics/elements
- Surveys
- Other (please specify)

*(Question for TxFAC members only)*

The most selected topics included industry forums workshops, committees and surveys. The least selected topic was individual interviews (although it was voted on by half of the advisory committee members on the poll.

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, commented that she was happy to see the “industry forums” getting so much support because those were such a huge success in the Permian Basin and Rio Grande Valley Freight Plans.

Paula agreed and added that it makes the industry feel that they are in a room with other peers, and they can help drive the conversation.

Paula summarized the results by stating that there does not seem to be a one-size-fits-all for stakeholder outreach. A freight stakeholder tool was created by the project team for TxDOT to assess previous outreach efforts. An inventory of outreach tactics and performance metrics were documented to allow TxDOT the opportunity to examine what works best for various
stakeholders and regions to help develop targeted outreach. Paula continued the presentation to discuss the 2023 TFMP potential new topics. Those topics included Scenario Planning with the goal to development more robust recommendations. Other topics included freight network resiliency, equity (social and economic, modal and geographic), strategic/critical supply chains, emphasis on multimodal corridors and gateways (connectivity), freight operations and technology, and climate change and trend awareness.

Additional questions raised during this time via chat:

Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO, asked a question via chat, “As a result of COVID, do we anticipate any major shifts in global trade patterns that may drive different needs to the TX transportation network?”

Paula in response noted that when looking at the executive order signed by the current administration on some of the strategic supply chains and initiatives, she anticipates major shifts. She added that the private sector is talking about lessons learned from the slowdown in production from COVID-19 and impact to the supply chains. She noted the private sector is discussing what they can do to become more resilient and what that they can adopt into this plan for the future to account for those scenarios.

**MENTI POLL 8: How important is addressing the following topics in the new plan?**

![Poll Image]

**Topics to rate in Menti included:**

- Scenario Planning
- Network resiliency
- Equity

---

April 20, 2021 via WebEx Webinar

May 6, 2021
• Critical supply chains
• Multimodal corridors and gateways
• Freight operations and technologies
• Climate change

The top selected topics included critical supply chains, multimodal corridors and gateways, network resiliency, and freight operations and technologies. The least selected topic was climate change; although ranked lowest, it was still considered somewhat important with an average ranking of 3 out of 5.

Other potential topics to add included the following responses from meeting attendees:

Paul Stresow, Texas Parking & Transportation Association, via chat commented, “Charge network for electric vehicles” and “Texas Mexico corridor connections improvements to existing and/or future or potential new corridors.”

Chris Evilia, Waco MPO, via chat commented, “Subtopic under resiliency: identify vulnerable facilities and necessary improvements to reduce risk.”

In the chat, Gerry Schwebel, IBC Bank, added “Impact on international supply chain network by CBP policies, POE disruptions, driver shortages, etc.”

Paula replied to Gerry that that topic would fall under multimodal corridors and gateways (connectivity) piece.

Via Chat, Chris Evilia, Waco MPO, commented “I think there’s some overlap between climate change and resiliency. That influenced my rating a bit.”

Chair Emmett commented that when talking about supply chains there tends to be a lot of intermediaries involved, but when talking to the carriers directly (ocean shipping, rail or trucks) which are considered links in the supply chain, each of those links has to be addressed separately. In terms of the overall supply chain, a lot of shippers and intermediaries want to know how long from (point) a to (point) b only. He believes talking to trucks, railroads, ports, etc. - they are still the right people, but the supply chains will continue to move around so meeting with them separately is important.

Paula in response mentioned that the transportation part of the supply chain has already been touched in the last plan. She noted with technology changes, COVID-19, etc. would it make sense to broaden discussions on with stakeholders on how they are changing sourcing, distribution, their own supply chains (example, their business to business versus business to consumer) and what are the implications of how/when/where freight moves.

Clark Greer, Coca Cola, commented that they (Coca-Cola) have had to do a lot of supply chain shifts this past year. If Houston/Fort Worth cannot produce cans, they have to get supplies from other areas and this is tied to ability of the workforce, not just raw materials. He added that it is all tied up in the supply chain which is a complete circle. It is a big issue for Coca-Cola right now.

Bruce Mann, Port of Houston Authority commented that when looking at the rankings, that climate change and equity came lowest. It will be important because the current Presidential administration has that as part of their focus therefore it needs to be a focus or a big part of the new plan.
Paula replied that although ranked lower, both are still considered important, but others were ranked more highly and justify a deeper dive. She noted there could be changes in requirements in the new bill and the project team will be monitoring for those.

V.J. Smith, Marathon Petroleum, commented that he agreed. He added his rating for climate change and equity was a 3 but thought it could be higher. He agreed with Chair Emmett on the supply chain point and believed there is opportunity to engage the supply chain to be a partner with his company in those two areas.

Paula responded that if there are additional stakeholders from other key industries, they can figure out where to focus their investments, technologies; and what do they need to be prepared, and what do they need from TxDOT and the state to remain competitive.

8. Next Steps and Wrap Up

Sherry Pifer, TxDOT, wrapped up the discussion. She thanked the group and mentioned that all ideas discussed in the meeting were good and helpful for moving forward with the new freight plan. She added that they hope to reach out to the Districts with this information on freight infrastructure and design. Also, materials for the economic role of freight in Texas should be shared with the group soon, to use for their needs. She thanked the presenters from the meeting and reminded the group that the next TxFAC meeting will be on Thursday, Aug. 19, 2021 and reminders will be sent for that as well.

Chair Ed Emmett provided final remarks and thanked the group, thanked members, Commissioners and the project team.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.