



Freight Advisory Committee Meeting #36

Nov. 4, 2022, 8 a.m.

In-Person at 125 E. 11th St., Austin, Texas 78701

ATTENDEES

Committee Members	Organization	Attendance
Ed Emmett – Chair	Rice University	Present
Ron Beeson	The Lubrizol Corp.	-
Randy Brogoitti	Brogoitti Construction	-
Clint Chelbitski	Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)	-
Drew Crutcher	Landgraf, Crutcher & Associates	-
Adriana Cruz	Office of the Governor	-
Michael Dyll	Texas International Freight LLC	-
John Esparza	Texas Trucking Association	Present
Roger Guenther	Port Houston	Present
John LaRue	United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce	-
Charlie Leal	Texas Farm Bureau	Present
Tiffany Melvin	North American Strategy for Competitiveness	-
Lindsay Mullins	BNSF	Present
Rolando Ortiz	Killam Development Ltd.	Present
Keith Patridge	McAllen Economic Development Corp.	-
Gerry Schwebel	IBC Bank	Present
VJ Smith	Marathon Petroleum Company	-
Todd Stewart	Gulf Winds International	-
Sean Strawbridge	Port of Corpus Christi Authority	-
Paul Treangen	TNW Corporation	Present

Committee Members	Organization	Attendance
Matt Woodruff	Kirby Corporation	Present
Todd Wright	H-E-B	Present
Robert MacDonald	TEMPO	Present
Vacant	-	-
Ex-Officio Members	Organization	Attendance
Andrew Canon	Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	-
Brenda Gunter	City of San Angelo	-
Phyllis Saathoff	Port of Freeport	-
Mayor Pete Saenz	City of Laredo	-
Sean Stibich	Port of Victoria	-
Cameron Walker	Permian Basin MPO	Present

Count of Ex-Officio Members Present: 1

Total Count of Committee and Ex-Officio Members Present: 12

Texas Transportation Commission

No commissioners were present.

TxDOT

Loretta Brown
Kale Driemeier
Juan J. Flores
Yvette Flores
Claudia J. Lagos Galindo
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez
Mildred Litchfield
Caroline Mays
Travis Milner
Sherry Pifer
Casey Wells
Marc Williams

Cambridge Systematics Consulting Team

Elizabeth Welch	Cambridge Systematics
Michael Williamson	Cambridge Systematics
Daniel Wong	Cambridge Systematics
Janna Rosenthal	Atkins
Paula Dowell, Ph.D.	HNTB
William Long	Poznecki-Camarillo, LLC
Joe Bryan	WSP

Other Attendees

Eduardo Calvo	El Paso MPO
Genevieve Bales	Federal Highway Administration
Juan Pena, Jr.	RGV MPO
Rudy Zamora	RGV MPO
Don Rodman	The Rodman Company
Tim Juarez	Stanley Consultants
Bill Eisele	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Allan Rutter	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Jason Wallis	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Dana Moore	Texas Trucking Association
Tyson Moeller	UPRR

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Ed Emmett with Rice University began the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) meeting at 8:12 a.m. First, he commended the staff who have worked on the freight plan and thanked all those who have helped the plan get to this point. He then acknowledged Tito Gonzalez as the new Transportation Planning and Programming Director for TxDOT. Mr. Gonzalez joined the meeting by phone, and after giving a brief background, he thanked the committee for their hard work on the plan.

Chair Emmett also acknowledged TxDOT's new Director of Freight Planning, Juan J. Flores. Mr. Flores thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.

2. Meeting Overview

Sherry Pifer, Freight Branch Manager with TxDOT, thanked everyone for their time developing the freight plan. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review the revised draft Texas Delivers 2050 report, draft recommendations, executive summary, and the PowerPoint that will be presented to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). She then provided a safety moment on driving in the rain. She encouraged individuals to check their wipers and headlights. She also detailed how best to drive when it is raining.

Ms. Pifer stated that TxDOT held many meetings with various stakeholders over the past couple of months, and their comments have been incorporated into the current draft plan.

Chair Emmett requested that a cover letter be included in the Texas Delivers 2050 Freight Plan highlighting the TxFAC members. Ms. Pifer acknowledged the request for incorporation.

Ms. Pifer then asked Michael Williamson and Elizabeth Welch with Cambridge Systematics to provide an overview of the changes made to the draft Texas Delivers 2050 report.

Note: Only sections that were updated based on feedback received by TxFAC members were presented and discussed.

3. Texas Delivers 2050 Draft Plan, Response to Comments, Recommendations, and TxFAC Approval

Ms. Welch provided an overview of the freight plan, noting that the document's structure was updated to clarify what portion of the freight plan is being read. She then described the changes, as summarized below.

Chapter One:

- Page 6 – Updated to include how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the freight planning process.
- Page 15 – Added information on the freight and logistics industry workforce.
- Page 16 – Added geopolitical effects on freight in Texas.

Chair Emmett asked Lindsey Mullins, BNSF, and Tyler Moeller, UPRR, if they would like to add anything to the workforce topic. Ms. Mullins responded that the workforce topic covered in the plan reflects what BNSF is experiencing. Mr. Moeller stated that UPRR is reaching its hiring goals.

Chapter Two:

- Page 21 – Updated the resiliency goal to read “Resiliency and Security.”
- Page 23 – Added a new goal for “Sustainable Funding.”
- Pages 25-26 – Revised to reflect that all TxFAC organizations guided the plan’s development.

Chapter Three:

- Page 33 – Added a callout box that discusses the value of freight.
- Section 3.3 – Updated to cover the value the railroad system brings to the freight network and the short-line rail network.
- Section 3.3 – Removed the verbiage regarding the merging of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern since this is not yet final.
- Section 3.4 – Added infographics to help explain the text in the section.
- Section 3.6 – Added additional background and details on pipelines in Texas.
- Section 3.7 – Added a discussion on international border crossings in Texas.

Mr. Moeller requested that the map on page 36 have bolded colors that are easier to see.

Ms. Mullins stated that the sustainable funding goal on page 23 should include a statement that develops or encourages public policy that incentivizes private investment.

Gerry Schwebel, IBC Bank, asked if the map on page 36 reflects a shared or unified rail line network or if multiple companies make up the rail network in Texas. Mr. Moeller stated that multiple companies make up the rail network, and agreements are in place that facilitate the movement of goods on the rail network. Mr. Moeller and Ms. Mullins recommended the inclusion of language on what the railway network is comprised of, including private businesses and agreements in place.

Chair Emmett recommended that the map on page 36 use symbols such as squares, circles, and crosses to help differentiate between the rail lines, in addition to the different colors.

Mr. Flores requested that the rail lines that cross into Mexico be highlighted on the map on page 36.

Chair Emmett requested that the introduction to Section 3.4 on page 38 be reworked to describe the contributions Texas ports play in the Gulf of Mexico.

Matt Woodruff, Kirby Corporation, asked if the map shown on page 39 should reflect Port Orange, given the freight tonnage moving through the port. Ms. Welch responded that the consultant team is working with the TxDOT Maritime Division to address published tonnage data discrepancies from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to see if Port Orange needs to be added.

Roger Guenther, Port Houston, stated that the takeaway on page 41 in the first paragraph speaks to the shifts in exports and imports that need to be removed or updated as it is no longer correct. Ms. Mullins agreed with Mr. Guenther, stating that the plan needs to be proactive and reflect the freight network today, even if the freight plan relies on 2019 comparative data. Ms. Welch agreed, stating that the takeaways from the plan would be updated to reflect Mr. Guenther's and Ms. Mullins' comments.

Mr. Woodruff asked that the Mexican sister cities at the U.S.-Mexico border crossings be captured in the list of entities participating in the plan on pages 25 and 26.

Rolando Ortiz, Killam Development, LTD, requested that it be clear on page 38 that not all ports are waterways.

Cameron Walker, Permian Basin MPO, asked for the definition of a strategic petroleum reserve. Ms. Welch stated that a strategic petroleum reserve is a federally based designation and that the consultant team will get back to Mr. Walker with additional information.

Chair Emmett asked that the order of the border crossings on the map be corrected to reflect the legend in Exhibit 19 on page 50.

Mr. Ortiz requested that the table for World Trade Bridge be updated to reflect passenger vehicles and not rail in Exhibit 18.

Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO, stated that the Bridge of Americas in El Paso does not have a rail crossing, as it is reflected in Exhibit 18.

Mr. Schwebel stated that the West Rail Bridge is shown in Exhibit 18 in Laredo when it is actually in Brownsville.

Paula Dowell, HNTB, stated that the consultant team would review Exhibit 18 to ensure that it is accurate.

Chapter Four:

- Introduction – Added a new introduction highlighting the supply chain's importance.
- General – Added different color schemes and icons so that readers know which topic they are reading.
- Schematic Maps - Updated to reflect the comments received at the Oct. 4, 2022, TxFAC Meeting.

Charlie Leal, Texas Farm Bureau, stated that a sentence should be added to all maps within Chapter 4 that, given the map scale, not all supply chains and industries are captured. He also requested that the text "with a focus on greater sustainability" be removed from the fourth bullet point in the "Key Trends Impacting Industry" section on page 64.

Mr. Ortiz stated that warehousing is not accurately captured along the I-69 corridors.

Mr. Leal stated that cotton is shipped out of Port Houston and is not reflected on the map.

Chair Emmett asked that the map on page 77 reflect the freight modes.

Mr. Moeller stated that rail should be shown with a plastic resin icon in Houston on page 73.

Chapter Five:

- General – Reorganized content by freight mode and covered mobility, reliability, safety, security, asset conditions, capacity, and clearance where applicable.
- Starting on Page 98 – Included additional information for each mode, with new or updated introductions.

Mr. Moeller stated that Exhibit 33 should be a stylistic example for the other rail maps in the plan. He also said rail sidings should be considered for incorporation into the report.

Mr. Guenther asked the consultant team to verify if unfunded projects for maritime are reflected in the plan and the executive summary. Mr. Williamson stated that unfunded projects are reflected in the plan.

Mr. Guenther stated that drainage infrastructure is critical for resiliency at maritime ports and their regions. He asked the consultant team to verify the width of the Texas City Ship Channel.

Mr. Woodruff stated that Section 5.3.3 needs to include text highlighting the lack of funding to improve waterway dredging.

Chair Emmett asked the consultant team to rework the last sentence in the resiliency section on page 105, as it is unclear.

Chair Emmett recommended adding a sentence that explains what security and occupational safety at intermodal facilities have to do with pipelines.

Ms. Mullins asked to verify if “intermodal facility” is the right terminology in the pipeline industry.

Chapter Six:

- Section 6.2 - Updated to include additional subsections to provide additional details on the impacts and needs for freight and the supply chains for each case study.

Ms. Dowell stated that the case studies would be branded to make it easier for the reader to understand which case study they are reading.

Chair Emmett stated that COVID-19 caused an economic event through policy shifts. Ms. Pifer acknowledged this and shared that the COVID-19 case study would be moved to the end of the case studies subsection.

Chair Emmett asked to verify if “George Bush Intercontinental Airport” should be “George H.W. Bush Intercontinental Airport” throughout the freight plan.

Chair Emmett stated that the impacts of flooding from hurricanes on the freight network could be significant without the proper drainage infrastructure. Ms. Pifer responded, stating that there are recommendations to help mitigate flooding because of hurricane events in the freight

plan. Chair Emmett stated that recommending alternative routes to avoid flooded areas should be part of the recommendations.

Mr. Walker asked that the economic impacts on maritime because of Hurricane Harvey be reviewed for accuracy.

Mr. Woodruff asked that The Woodlands be considered for inclusion on maps discussing Hurricane Harvey.

Todd Wright, H-E-B, stated that mobility and access to their stores are important in many of the case studies covered in Chapter Six.

Mr. Leal requested that the farmer protest on page 143 be noted as a Mexican farmer protest. He asked that an additional citation be provided on impacts instead of FreshFruitPortal.com on page 146.

Caroline Mays, Director of Planning and Modal Programs, TxDOT, asked that the text discussing the international bridge disruption on page 142 be reviewed for how the migrant crisis in Del Rio and increased commercial vehicle inspections are conveyed.

Chapter Seven:

- General - Updated to discuss emerging technologies, such as truck parking, autonomous and connected driving systems, fuel efficiencies, and alternative fuel sources.
- Page 176 – Added additional funding programs for ports.

Ms. Mullins asked that the text of the graphic on page 170 that states “Blocked Rail Crossing Traffic Management System” be updated to read “Occupied Rail Crossing Traffic Management System.”

Mr. Schwebel asked if any reference to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is included as a funding program. Mr. Williamson stated that it is included throughout various chapters of the freight plan.

Chapter Eight:

- General - Updated to reflect how the recommendations build upon the previous freight plan and any progress made.
- General – Reorganized policy recommendations into three categories: supportive, stimulative, and transformative.

Chair Emmett asked to clarify how the policies are being organized to reflect the eight policy recommendations. He asked for clarification on what the supportive policy categories are conveying. Ms. Pifer responded that the supportive policy recommendations reflect feedback from TxFAC members and tie into the goals identified for the plan.

Ms. Dowell recommended a matrix layout for the goals and policy recommendation categories that better convey the information for the reader. Ms. Mays requested that the overarching policy recommendations are presented first, followed by additional details for each category.

Ms. Dowell stated that Exhibits 50, 51, and 52 could be placed earlier in the chapter to clarify the policy recommendations and goals.

Chair Emmett asked that it be made clear which policies are associated with each freight goal.

Mr. Ortiz referred to the callout box on page 177 and how the recommendations presented are difficult to find in the chapter, specifically prioritizing funding and projects for freight mobility. Ms. Dowell agreed, stating that breaking down funding sources beginning with federal dollars to identify sustainable funding for the freight network would be helpful. Ms. Pifer clarified that this content is included throughout the chapter, but the chapter will be reorganized for readability.

Ms. Mays stated that the State Legislature and Governor are focused on moving goods throughout the state to keep and grow private sector investment. She asked the consultant team to identify which entities are responsible for the policy recommendations. Ms. Pifer shared that this information can be found in Chapter Twelve but can also be included in Chapter Eight.

Mr. Walker asked that the consultant team review the content on page 191 to replace “alternative fuels” with “energy sources.” Chair Emmett asked that “alternative fuels” be maintained in the sections on page 191.

Mr. Walker asked for an explanation of the term “freight health impact,” shown on page 191. Ms. Pifer responded that through the IJJA, greenhouse gas emission impacts should be reduced or stay in industrial zones instead of near residential areas, for example.

Ms. Mullins asked to verify if the “Rail Replacement Program” should be “Rail Relocation and Improvement Fund” on page 184. Ms. Pifer stated that the consultant team would verify.

Chair Emmett asked that program recommendations be clearly tied to the policy recommendations.

Ms. Mullins asked that the verbiage on page 189 that discusses railways and highway traffic congestion should also include county or municipal roadways, where traffic congestion as a result of rail crossings may be more significant. Ms. Pifer agreed and stated that this would be updated.

Chapter Nine:

- General – Included summaries of the recommendations to align with the supportive, stimulative, and transformative policy categories.

Mr. Graham stated that Chapter Nine would also be updated to reflect the organizational changes discussed as part of Chapter Eight.

Mr. Schwebel asked where Truck Parking Availability Systems would be included. Mr. Graham responded that TxDOT would explore all relevant locations, not just those on the Texas Highway Freight Network.

Chair Emmett asked if private sector investment is being considered for truck parking. Mr. Graham responded yes.

Mr. Ortiz stated that trucks often stop where they need to, along roadways on the shoulder. He asked what could be done to help accommodate this safely. Ms. Pifer stated that her team works with her colleagues in the Right-of-Way Division to explore safe solutions.

Mr. Woodruff cautioned that Chapter Nine looks at Texas-specific solutions that involve data that may be separate from the neighboring states or the rest of the nation, which can complicate freight movements for the private sector. He asked if a national standard for data sharing and management is being considered as part of the program recommendations. Mr. Graham stated that TxDOT works with neighboring states but cannot speak to a national standard. He shared that Mr. Woodruff's comment can be captured as part of the recommendations outlined in Chapter Nine. Mr. Williamson stated that industry and national standards exist, but data compatibility remains a challenge. Ms. Dowell added as an example that the Florida Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Transportation recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding that would create a freight operations exchange platform to ensure data accessibility and compatibility.

Ms. Mays stated that Section 9.2 mentions a statewide traffic management system for the Texas Highway Freight Network. She recommended that the text needs to be made clear that this system is an integration of existing traffic management systems.

Mr. Ortiz asked if there were any examples of binational freight traffic operations. Mr. Graham responded that there is an example of binational freight traffic operations on page 212. Ms. Dowell added that this content was developed as part of the Texas Freight Network Technology and Operations Plan.

4. Texas Delivers 2050 Draft Executive Summary

Ms. Dowell then covered the plan's executive summary and provided an overview of its content. She asked if the executive summary captured the right message or if information needed to be added, enhanced, or removed.

Chair Emmett asked if the goals in the executive summary are listed in the plan. Ms. Dowell responded that the goals are captured in Chapter Two.

Chair Emmett asked for the title page to be updated to read "Texas Delivers" instead of "Texas Delvers."

Mr. Schwebel asked that the first sentence on page 21 be rewritten to reflect that Texas is driven by trade and commerce.

Mr. Calvo asked that the executive summary be written to be mindful of who the reader may be. Ms. Mays added that in addition to the elected officials in Texas, Mexicans are also interested in the border and freight plans.

Mr. Ortiz asked that the executive summary presentation of project prioritization be evaluated, as this information was better presented in the 2018 executive summary. Ms. Dowell acknowledged the request stating that the team would revisit the executive summary for the 2018 freight plan.

Note: At this meeting, there was no formal vote or recommendation for TTC consideration.

5. Texas Delivers 2050 Commission Presentation

Kale Driemeier, TxDOT, briefly covered the TTC presentation.

Chair Emmett stated that the presentation would be circulated for review and comment after the meeting.

6. Closing Remarks

Chair Emmett, Ms. Pifer, Mr. Flores, and Ms. Mays thanked the TxFAC members for their participation. Ms. Pifer asked that everyone submit their comments by Nov. 8, 2022.

Chair Emmett stated that there would not be additional time to make a formal recommendation or vote on approval for TTC consideration. He shared that all documents discussed today will be forwarded to the TTC for review once comments are addressed.

Ms. Pifer stated that the TTC would cover the freight plan in December 2022. The meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.