



Freight Advisory Committee Meeting #37

January 18, 2023, 2 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

ATTENDEES

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

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

Count of Ex-Officio Members Present: 2

Total Count of Committee and Ex-Officio Members Present: 14

Texas Transportation Commission

Commissioner Alvin New

TxDOT

Darran Anderson
Robin Ayers
Loretta Brown
Emily Clisby
Chad Coburn
Jeffrey Davis
Kale Driemeier
Juan J. Flores
Yvette Flores
Claudia Lagos Galindo
Tyler Graham
Krista Jeacopello
Sondra Johnson
GeirEilif Kalhagen
Cary Karnstadt
Kris Knoll
Erika Kunkel
Eduardo Hagert
Mildred Litchfield
Terry Martinez

Travis Milner
Sherry Pifer
Robert Ramirez
Paul Truban
Tim Wright

Cambridge Systematics Consulting Team

Elizabeth Welch	Cambridge Systematics
Michael Williamson	Cambridge Systematics
Paula Dowell, Ph.D.	HNTB
Carlos Lopez	HNTB
Dan Seedah	Jacobs
Nishant Kukadia	Novus

Other Attendees

Jennifer Shepard	Alliance for I-69 Texas
Roberto Tinajero	City of El Paso
Corpus Christi MPO staff	Corpus Christi MPO
Eduardo Calvo	El Paso MPO
Genevieve Bales	Federal Highway Administration
James Garland	Houston-Galveston Area Council
Anita Hollmann	Houston-Galveston Area Council
Sydni Ligons	Houston-Galveston Area Council
Craig Raborn	Houston-Galveston Area Council
Brayan Cervantes	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Jeff Hathcock	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Kevin Hernandez	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Michael Johnson	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Collin Moffett	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Morgan Tavallaee	North Central Texas Council of Governments
Joe Kiely	Ports-to-Plains Alliance
Don Rodman	The Rodman Company
Benjamin Abeto	SH 130 Concession Company
Bill Eisele	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Curtis Morgan	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Jolanda Prozzi	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Michael Bomba	University of North Texas
Tyson Moeller	UPRR

1. Introductions and Opening Remarks

Chair Ed Emmett with Rice University began the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC) meeting. He acknowledged the additional meeting was necessary to review final edits to the Texas Delivers 2050 report in preparation for presentation to the Texas Transportation Commission for final adoption on January 26, 2023.

2. Meeting Overview

Sherry Pifer, Freight Branch Manager with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), thanked everyone for their time developing the freight plan. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review the final modifications to the Texas Delivers 2050 report, request a recommendation for the adoption of the report from the Texas Freight Advisory Committee (TxFAC), and obtain input on key actions to guide the implementation of these initiatives.

3. Texas Delivers 2050 - Changes and Current Status

Updates and Current Status

Ms. Pifer provided an update that TxDOT coordinated with peer states on freight planning needs and opportunities and is actively developing material to include in the final plan to address Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements and public comments.

Public Outreach

Ms. Pifer explained the public outreach methods used to communicate the public comment period for the plan, including:

- Three social media posts via NextDoor, Facebook, and Twitter on December 30, 2022, January 6, 2023, and January 9, 2023.
- One e-blast to over 2,000 identified stakeholders.
- Coordination with multiple metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and university staff.

The public comment period opened on December 12, 2022, and closed on January 10, 2023. Texas Delivers 2050 was presented to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) on December 13, 2022.

Summary of Public Comments

Ms. Pifer stated that 24 comments were received during the public comment period. These comments were categorized as related to trucks, maritime, rail, or multi-modal, as shown in **Figure 1**. She explained that although every comment was reviewed, some topics were outside TxDOT's purview.

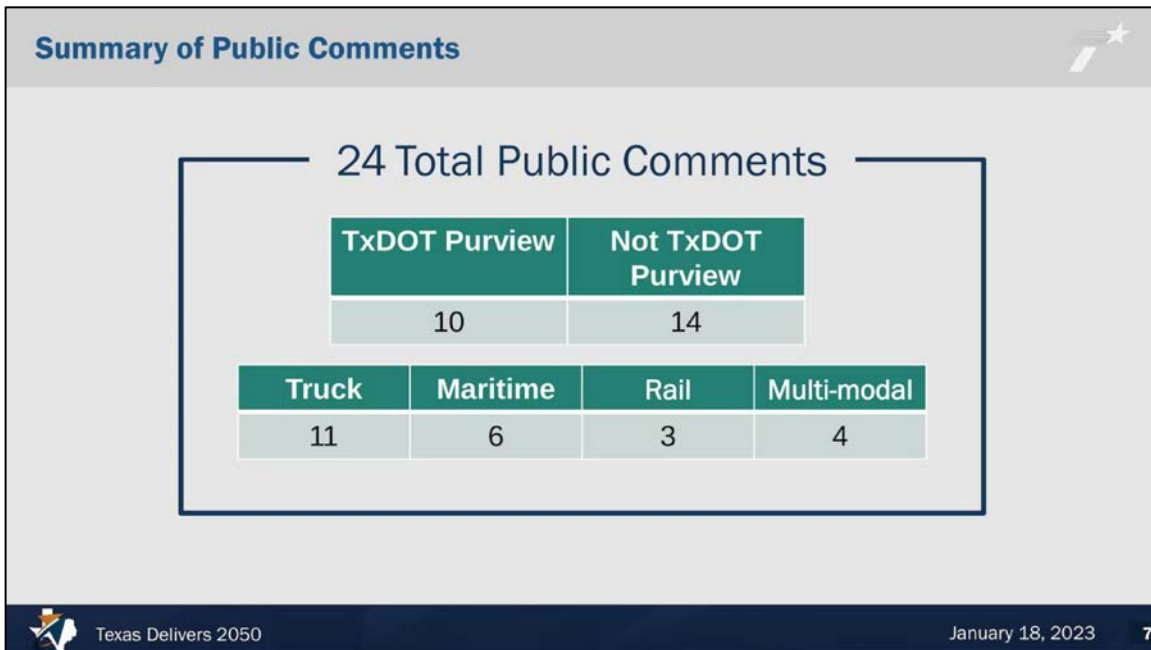


Figure 1. Slide 7 from TxFAC #37 Presentation

Key Themes from Public Comments

Ms. Pifer summarized key themes from the public comments, including:

- The significance of Texas ports should be strengthened, and waterborne growth projections are too low.
- Rail should be prioritized to move goods and help mitigate highway congestion as part of a multi-modal freight system.
- Effective management of truck traffic is critical to roadway safety.
- Toll roads should be used to manage truck traffic better.
- Ensure Texas eases into alternative fuels and emerging technologies and maintains capacity for existing energy markets.
- “...this is the best version yet” and does a good job of laying out what we need and what we want.

Update to Maritime Forecast

Ms. Pifer then explained that updates were made to the maritime growth forecasts, as shown in **Figure 2**. She explained that the Transearch data purchase was for 2019 due to 2020 not being a viable year to use.

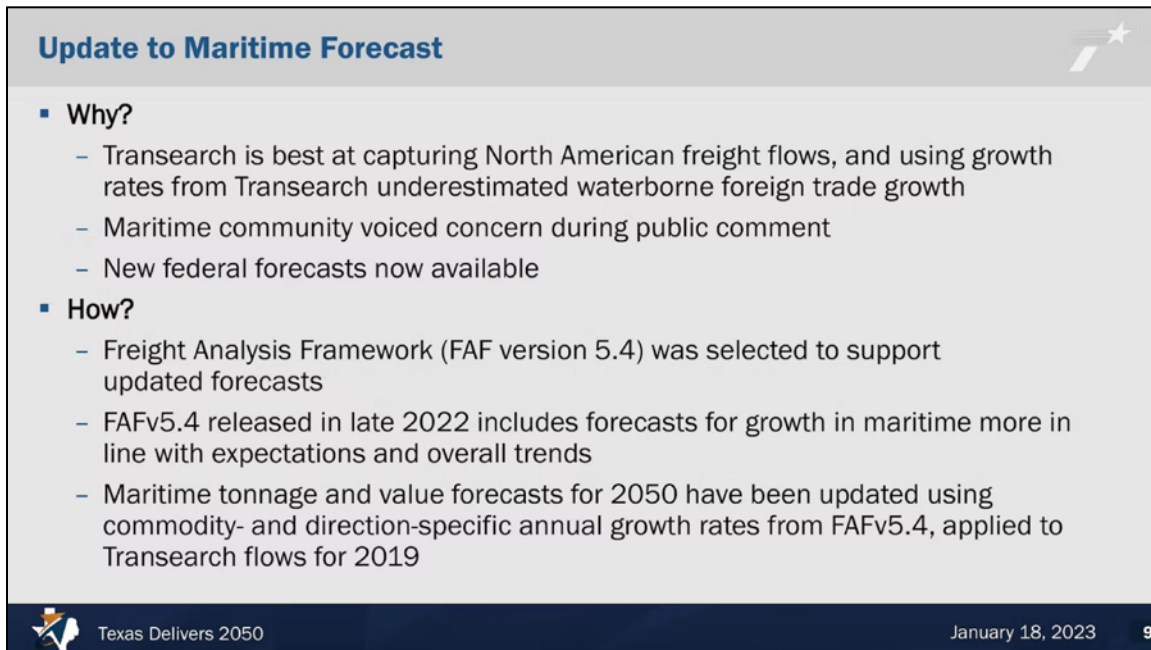


Figure 2. Slide 9 from TxFAC #37 Presentation

Elizabeth Welch, Cambridge Systematics, provided an overview of the updated maritime forecasts using the Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) 5.4, as shown in **Figure 3**.

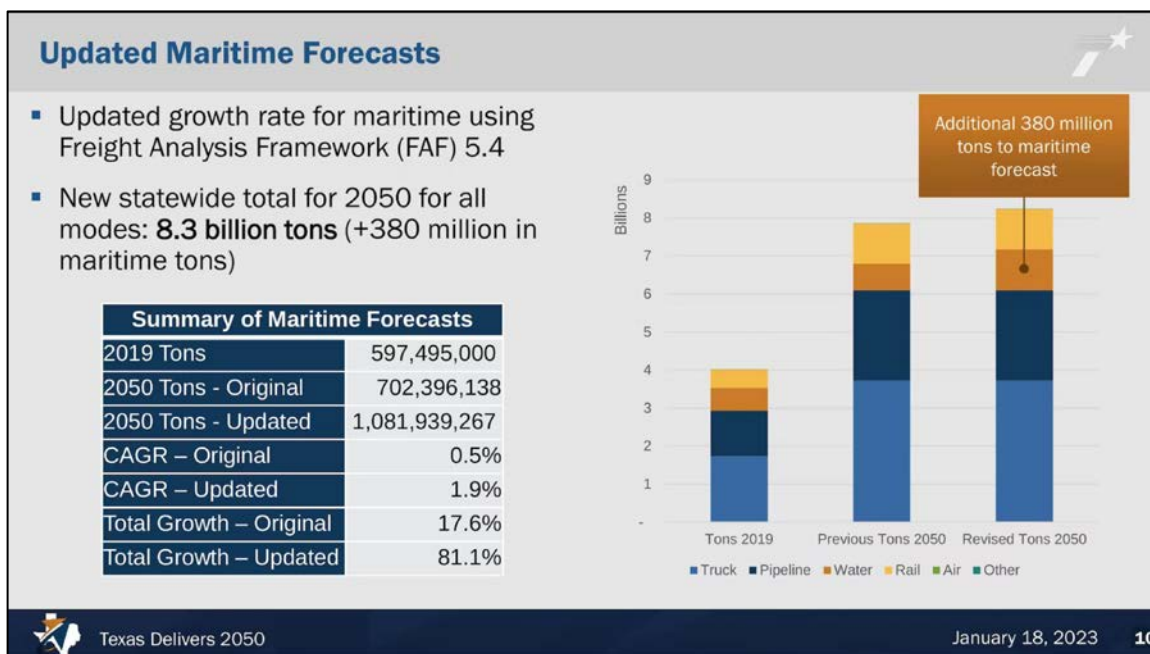


Figure 3. Slide 10 from TxFAC #37 Presentation

Ms. Welch explained that previously, the 2050 tonnage was significantly lower than the updated 2050 tonnage. With the updated forecast, the 2050 tonnage more than doubles the 2019 tonnage.

Ms. Pifer asked TxFAC members if they felt the updated forecast better reflected anticipated maritime growth. Below is the feedback received.

- Bruce Mann with Port Houston stated the addition of 380 million tons to the maritime forecast reflects the extraordinary growth he anticipates in Texas.
- Chair Ed Emmett noted that estimating this far into the future is difficult and depends on how various ports develop over the years. He added that the previous total growth of 17 percent was an unbelievable number. He stated that there needs to be recognition of the port traffic being double counted when goods come off the ships and onto trucks or trains. He stressed that having input from the ports and realizing impacts on the highway and rail systems should not be underestimated.
- Ms. Pifer noted that TxDOT recognizes that growth is occurring much faster in maritime than in other modes.
- Geir Eilif Kalhagan with TxDOT stated that he appreciates the feedback from the ports because they impact the legislature. He added that TxDOT is looking at the concept of “nearshoring” and stated that the growth potential is exponential. He mentioned the geopolitical aspects around the globe and said Texas is recognized as Europe’s current energy service provider. He added that the growth could be greater, but he feels the numbers provided are a good representation.
- Chair Ed Emmett added that many people believe more traffic will come from India and Africa in the future. If so, this traffic must utilize the Gulf Coast to serve the western United States. He stated that he is pleased that a more reasonable number is reflected now in the forecast.

Guidance Received from FHWA

Ms. Pifer then covered additional guidance provided by the FHWA on state freight plans. This guidance was received by TxDOT on January 12, 2023, from the Office of the Secretary and included some of the following topics:

- Extreme weather/natural disaster or stormwater runoff.
- Changes in air quality.
- Siting of freight facilities in or near wildlife areas or population centers.
- Impacts of freight emissions and increased freight volumes on communities and wildlife.

The goal of the guidance is to ensure state freight plans set quantifiable goals to decrease the impacts of extreme weather on freight mobility and the impacts of freight movement on local air pollution, flooding/stormwater runoff, and wildlife habitat loss.

Ms. Pifer explained that TxDOT is working on addressing the guidelines to ensure that federal requirements are met. She mentioned that she would send an excerpt following the meeting and offered to forward the state freight plan guidelines to anyone interested.

4. Recommendation for Adoption

Ms. Pifer provided a timeline for Texas Delivers 2050. She stated the plan would be presented to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) for adoption on January 26, 2023. If the plan is adopted, it will be submitted to FHWA for review and approval on January 27, 2023. She explained that the deadline for approval by FHWA is March 31, 2023.

Once the plan is approved, Texas Delivers 2050 will move toward implementation. Ms. Pifer asked if TxFAC recommends that TTC adopt the plan. Below is the feedback received from this portion of the presentation:

- Matt Woodruff with Kirby Corporation agreed to the motion that TxFAC recommend that TTC adopt the plan. He added that he sent Ms. Pifer updated numbers for maritime cost estimates that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provided. He questioned if there would be an opportunity to tweak the numbers to the latest but added that the numbers would constantly change.
- Phyllis Saathoff with Port of Freeport agreed to the motion that TxFAC recommend that TTC adopt the plan.

At this time, committee members vocalized their motion to recommend that TTC adopt the plan.

5. Moving to Implementation

Ms. Pifer provided an overview of the key actions that guide implementation, which include 23 short-term policy recommendations, 13 short-term program recommendations, and eight short-term technology and operations recommendations.

TxDOT requested the committee's input on the potential benefit and ease of implementation of each short-term action via a Mentimeter exercise. The Mentimeter exercise was limited to TxFAC committee members only, and nonmembers were encouraged to send their responses to Ms. Pifer. Michael Williamson with Cambridge Systematics explained that the purpose of the exercise was to obtain a two-dimensional score on the potential benefit of the action, as well as the ease of implementation of the action. The scores were on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the smallest benefit and hard to implement and 5 being the largest benefit and easy to implement. The results of the Mentimeter exercise are summarized below.

Questions 1 through 3 focus on 23 short-term policy actions. The short-term policy actions considered are listed below each Mentimeter question.

Question 1: What are the potential benefits of and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Policy Actions?



Answers represented for Question 1 are based on 11 responses.

1. Continue to expand and administer a comprehensive multi-modal freight planning program that integrates freight considerations into project selection.
2. Ensure effective implementation of Texas Delivers 2050 through a commitment to staff and resources, subject to legislative appropriations.
3. Comply with federal requirements for freight planning and future project funding eligibility.
4. Integrate freight considerations into TxDOT district and MPO planning project development, programming, and implementation efforts.
5. Include freight considerations in the Unified Transportation Program Project development and prioritization process.
6. Identify, preserve, protect, and invest in the Texas Multi-modal Freight Network across the state.
7. Support strategic incentives of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development & Tourism.
8. Address freight movement safety “hot spots” in coordination with planning partners.

Chair Ed Emmett stated that the benefit scale is separate from the implementation scale and explained that some short-term policy actions could have a large benefit but could be hard to implement.

Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with a benefit and mid-way point for ease of implementation for all of the short-term policy recommendations in Question 1.

Question 2 – What are the potential benefits of and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Policy Actions?



Answers represented for Question 2 are based on 13 responses.

1. Monitor and support appropriate policies that encourage technology deployment while ensuring public interests are protected.
2. Explore funding for existing freight programs, such as the Texas Rail Relocation Fund, Port Access Account Fund, and the Ship Channel Improvement Fund.
3. Further the understanding of the role of the Texas Multi-modal Freight Network in supporting the state's key supply chains.
4. Identify opportunities to advance high-priority multi-modal projects based on the increased availability of National Highway Freight Program funds.
5. Support emerging e-commerce and urban freight delivery technologies such as drones and delivery robots in coordination with public and private partners.
6. Advance the 3rd Coast Global Gateway concept of a one-stop information portal for all transportation modes in coordination with planning partners.
7. Pursue federally available funds through discretionary grants for multi-modal freight projects.
8. Improve communication between agencies to streamline project delivery and build consistency in regulations to preserve the freight network.

Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with a solid benefit but harder to implement for all of the short-term policy recommendations presented in Question 2.

Question 3 – What are the potential benefits of and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Policy Actions?



Answers represented for Question 3 are based on 13 responses.

1. Expand stakeholder outreach for freight planning efforts to include high- and low-tech techniques, especially in vulnerable communities.
2. Designate an Automated Freight Vehicle Network in coordination with the private section to help identify and prioritize technology investments in the Texas Multi-modal Freight Network.
3. Develop guidance for MPOs and local planners on how to update complete streets policies to include the full range of passenger and freight modes.
4. Establish a 3rd Coast Global Gateway task force in coordination with planning partners.
5. Support the establishment of a statewide Supply Chain Council consisting of industry representatives to advise agencies on challenges and opportunities.
6. Monitor the development of policies, programs, and infrastructures necessary to accommodate fuel diversification by freight network users.
7. Encourage a robust community impact assessment and outreach program that evaluates and communicates equity considerations related to freight movement.

Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with a solid benefit and easier to implement for all of the short-term policy recommendations presented in Question 3.

Below is the feedback received from this portion of the Mentimeter exercise:

- Rolando Ortiz with Killam Development, Ltd. commented on the supply chain recommendation. He stated that it would not be under their purview because it is not necessarily transportation driven. He added that electronic components are in dire straits.
- Randy Brogoitti with Brogoitti Construction stated that they have a project underway that supports Mr. Ortiz's position. He added that he has been waiting nearly six months for a transformer industry to be brought to northeast Texas.
- Keith Patridge with McAllen Economic Development Corporation stated they had experienced the same issue and recently received a quote stating it would take 43 weeks to obtain the electrical supplies needed for a project.
- Mr. Ortiz stated that other industries, such as utilities, manufacturing, material sourcing, etc., should be included.
- Mr. Brogoitti stated that the materials distribution companies play a vital role. He stated that on another project, they were missing multiple overhead doors.

Question 4 through 5 focus on 13 short-term program actions. The short-term program actions considered are listed below each Mentimeter question.

Question 4 – What are the potential benefits and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Program Actions?



Answers represented for Question 4 are based on 13 responses.

1. Develop a Texas Delivers 2050 roll-out plan to include TxDOT divisions and districts, MPOs, other planning partners, and the private sector.

2. Partner with stakeholders to further the understanding of the economic role of freight.
3. Advance the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Plan implementation program.
4. Continue to facilitate binational collaboration through the Border Trade Advisory Committee (BTAC), binational regional advisory councils, and dialogue with the Mexican entities.
5. Create a rural freight connection program focused on the development and implementation of the corridor master plans.
6. Create a Texas Highway Freight Network Safety Program to improve safety and mobility on the Texas Highway Freight Network.
7. Deliver freight planning training on incorporating freight into planning and operations to TxDOT divisions, districts, and regional and local partners.

Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with a solid benefit and easier to implement for all of the short-term program recommendations presented in Question 4. Ms. Pifer noted that program action number 5, creating a rural freight connection program, was considered difficult to implement. She then invited participants to share their reasoning behind these responses.

Below is the feedback received from this portion of the Mentimeter exercise:

- Mr. Brogoitti stated he probably represents the most rural area within the committee. He added that if TxDOT plans to create a freight plan that eases congestion in urban areas, it would have to move to rural areas. He explained that the corridors would have to be available and implemented.
- Commissioner Alvin New stated that there are a lot of projects in the works that concentrate on rural corridors. He provided many examples of corridors that move people and freight around big cities in Texas. He added that congestion relief needs to be improved because the Texas population will continue to increase. He explained that the rail system is private and there is not much railway work, but this could be used to assist with multi-modal freight transportation. He mentioned the Key Corridor, a process where they choose a corridor and build it from one end to the other without gaps.
- Mr. Brogoitti mentioned they adopted US 79 from Austin to East Texas to handle freight and avoid Waco, Temple, Dallas/Fort Worth, etc. He added that he was pleased to see it included in the plan.

Question 5 – What are the potential benefits of and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Program Actions?



Answers represented for Question 5 are based on 13 responses.

1. Develop a Texas Multi-modal Freight Network grant program targeting federal discretionary funds for high-priority multi-modal freight projects in coordination with partners.
2. Implement the safety warning detection program.
3. Continue coordination with rail partners to identify funding programs to implement railroad improvements and technology advancements on the Texas Multi-modal Freight Network.
4. Partner with ports and other private partners to identify and implement technology solutions to improve mobility and reliability at Texas ports.
5. Develop an Automated Freight Vehicle Network program to assess and ensure the technology readiness of the state's key trade and commerce routes.
6. Elevate the "3rd Coast" concept as a key gateway to North America in coordination with planning partners.

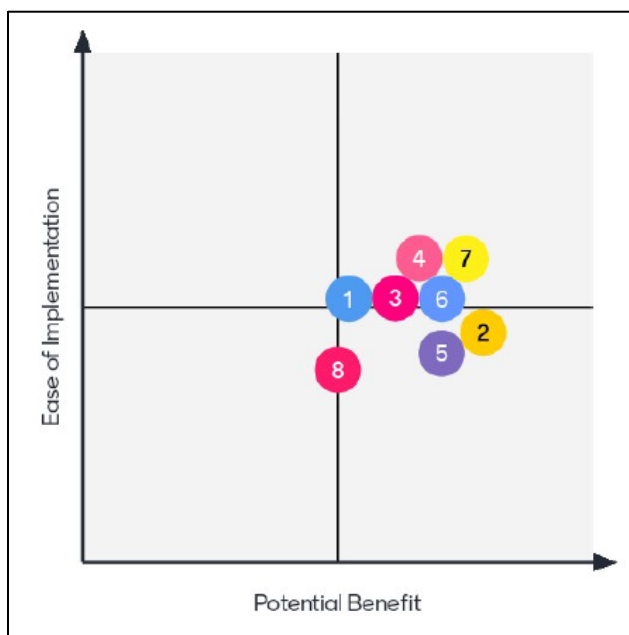
Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with a solid benefit and easier to implement for all of the short-term program recommendations presented in Question 5. Ms. Pifer noted that action number 2, implementing the safety warning detection program, was viewed as having a benefit but difficult to implement. She then invited participants to share their reasoning behind these responses.

Below is the feedback received from this portion of the Mentimeter exercise:

- A participant stated that there are early warning detection systems on I-10 for bridge height, but people go through them anyway, and the bridges still get hit.

Question 6 focuses on eight short-term technology and operations recommendations, which are listed below the Mentimeter question.

Question 6 – What are the potential benefits of and ease of implementation of the Short-Term Tech & Ops Actions?



Answers represented for Question 6 are based on 13 responses.

1. Implement Weigh in Motion/Vehicle Classification Strategic Plan.
2. Expand Truck Parking Availability System to interstates.
3. Expand the safety warning detection system.
4. Assess the feasibility of integrating statewide traffic management information into existing Transportation Management Centers.
5. Develop integrated traffic management and operations data exchange platforms.
6. Continue to test and deploy the Texas Connected Freight Corridor System.
7. Support private sector development of innovative freight mobility hubs.
8. Develop a freight automation program to invest in the Automated Freight Vehicle network in partnership with the private sector.

Mr. Williamson shared that participants primarily responded with some benefits and harder to implement for all of the short-term technology and operations recommendations presented in Question 6.

Below is the feedback received from this portion of the Mentimeter exercise:

- Chair Ed Emmett commented on recommendation #2. He stated a conflict exists between private and public truck parking. He added that there is a concern when finding available public truck parking.
- Commissioner New added that there are efforts underway for truck parking and looking at current rest areas to see if there are areas available for parking to be paved and striped.
- Ms. Pifer stated that there is the I-10 Truck Parking Availability System Program, where truck parking availability is implemented on I-10 with 18 public sites. She added that the program would not notify the driver of available parking in the private sector but would provide an opportunity to explore. She explained that TxDOT's Maintenance Division is working on expanding several rest areas. She added that many drivers are not from Texas and aren't familiar with where parking is located.
- Mr. Brogoitti stated that items #2 and #7 work hand-in-hand together and that one way to expand truck parking is to take advantage of the private sector because they know where the business is located.

6. Wrap-up and Next Steps

Chair Emmett thanked the TxFAC members, nonmembers, and staff for participating. He advised attendees that he would be out of the country on January 26, 2023, and unable to attend the meeting. He encouraged committee members to attend.

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.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.