Texas Department of Transportation

MEETING AGENDA

Public Transportation Advisory Committee

Thursday, October 29, 2019 | 10:00 A.M. (local time)

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

200 E. Riverside Drive, Room 2B.1, Austin, TX 78704

1.	**Call to Order.**
2.	**Safety Briefing.**
3.	**Approval of minutes from July 25, 2019 meeting. (Action)**
4.	**TxDOT's Public Transportation Division (PTN) Director's report to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee regarding public transportation matters.**
5.	**Presentation and discussion on upcoming work to determine 2020 Census impacts to public transportation funding for Texas transit providers.**
6.	**Presentation and discussion on TxDOT-PTN's Intercity Bus Program Strategic Direction Final Report. (Action)**
7.	**Public Comment – Public comment will only be accepted in person. The public is invited to attend the meeting in person, attend via Webex link https://txdot.webex.com/txdot/onstage/g.php?MTID=e1fab4192d2a73e5b8d9e090648efe94f or listen by phone at a listen-in number: 1-415-655-0003 [US] with attendee access code: 598 304 40. The meeting transcript will be placed on the Internet following the meeting.**
8.	**Propose and discuss agenda items for next meeting; confirm date of next meeting. (Action)**
9.	**Adjourn. (Action)**

I certify that I have reviewed this document and that it conforms to all applicable *Texas Register* filing requirements.

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL: Becky Blewett, Deputy General Counsel, (512) 463-8630

AGENDA ITEM 3

MINUTES FOR ADOPTION
Public Transportation Advisory Committee – Teleconference Meeting
200 E. Riverside Drive Room 1A.1, Austin, Texas
July 25, 2019 9:00 A.M.

Committee Members Present and Participating:
Jim Cline, Vice Chair
J.R. Salazar
Ken Fickes
Marc K. Whyte

Committee Members Participating via Teleconference:
John McBeth, Chair
Dietrich M. Von Biedenfeld

TxDOT Present and Participating:
Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division (PTN)
Donna Roberts, Section Director, PTN
Josh Ribakove, Communications Manager, PTN

AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to Order.

Jim Cline called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Safety Briefing.

Josh Ribakove gave a safety briefing for attendees at 9:06 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Approval of minutes from April 30, 2019 meeting (Action).

Jim Cline opened this item at 9:07 A.M.

MOTION Marc K. Whyte moved to approve the April 30, 2019 meeting minutes.

SECOND John McBeth seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously at 9:08 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 4: TxDOT's Public Transportation Division Director's report to the committee regarding public transportation matters.

Eric Gleason began his report at 9:08 A.M. The report touched on fleet replacement funding, recent Texas Transportation Commission action, the SmartBuy program, the Circuit Rider Technical Assistance program, and a future training program for grant subrecipients.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Presentation and discussion on transit agency risk assessment.

Jim Cline introduced this topic at 9:19 A.M. After a brief introduction from Eric Gleason, the presentation was given by Donna Roberts.

Questions and comments: Ken Fickes, Jim Cline, Eric Gleason, J.R. Salazar.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Presentation and discussion on Capital Area Rural Transportation System's intercity bus service program.

Jim Cline introduced this topic at 9:43 A.M. After a brief introduction from Eric Gleason, the presentation was given by Dave Marsh, General Manager, Capital Area Rural Transportation System.

Questions and comments: John McBeth, Ken Fickes.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Presentation and discussion on Intercity Bus Program Strategic Direction Report.

Jim Cline introduced this topic at 10:18 A.M. After a brief introduction from Eric Gleason, the presentation was given by Dave Marsh, General Manager, Capital Area Rural Transportation System.

Public Comment: Vince Huerta of East Texas Council of Governments commented at 10:31am.

Questions and comments from Committee: Jim Cline, Marc K. Whyte, Eric Gleason, Ken Fickes, J.R. Salazar, John McBeth.

MOTION Marc K. Whyte moved to share the draft report with, and solicit comments from, Texas Intercity Bus service providers at 10:57 A.M.

SECOND Ken Fickes seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously at 10:58 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Public Comment

Jim Cline introduced this item at 11:00 A.M.

There were no further public comments.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Propose and Discuss Agenda Items for Next Meeting; confirm date of next meeting (Action).

John McBeth initiated and led this discussion beginning at 11:01 A.M.

The committee desires to continue the Intercity Bus Strategic Direction Report conversation at their next meeting.

The committee selected Tuesday, October 29 at 10 A.M. for the next meeting.

No action taken.

AGENDA ITEM 9: Adjourn (Action).

MOTION Ken Fickes moved to adjourn.

SECOND J.R. Salazar seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 A.M.

Prepared by:	Approved by:
_____	_____
Josh Ribakove Public Transportation Division	John McBeth, Chair Public Transportation Advisory Committee

AGENDA ITEM 5

Analysis of Census 2020 Impacts to Public Transportation Providers in Texas

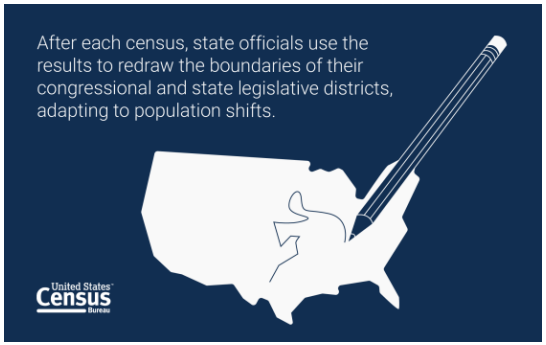
Public Transportation Advisory Committee

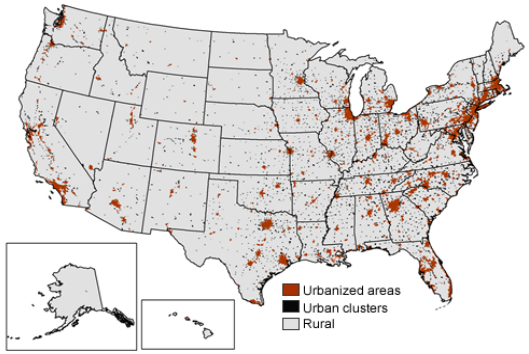
October 29, 2019

IT'S COMING…

U.S. Census 2020 Schedule

United States® Census 2020





April 1, 2020
Census Day. Every home will receive a Census 2020 invitation.

March 31, 2021
Redistricting counts will be sent to states and used to redraw legislative districts.

Spring 2022*
Urban and rural update will be released and used by FTA in FY2023 apportionments.

*Estimation based on Census 2010 timeline

IT'S IMPORTANT…

Significance of Decennial Census for Public Transportation in Texas

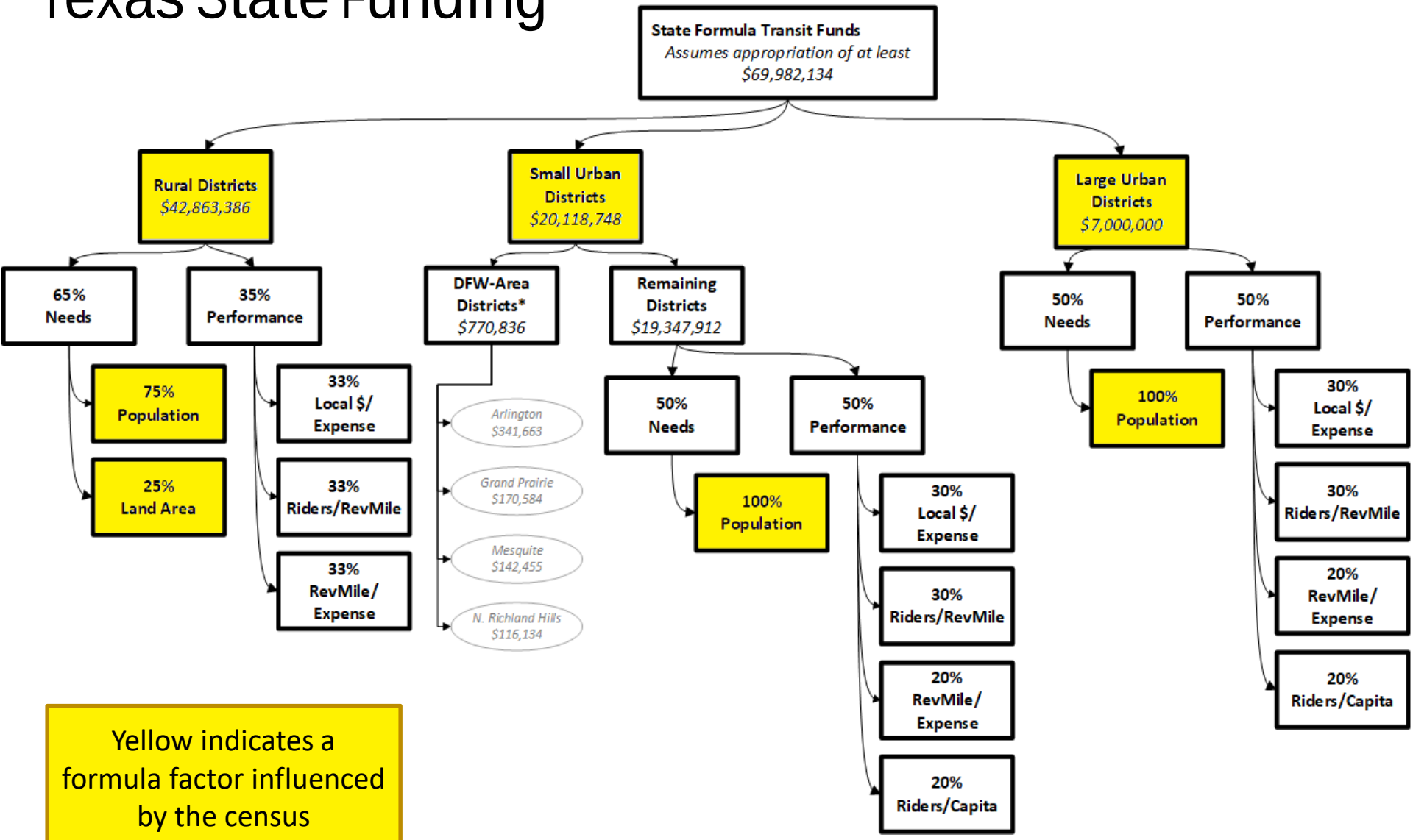
Federal Transit Administration

Used by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to apportion formula funds by state and urbanized areas

Texas Department of Transportation
TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Used by the TxDOT to sub-allocate FTA funds and to allocate Texas state transit funding

Texas State Funding



Yellow indicates a formula factor influenced by the census

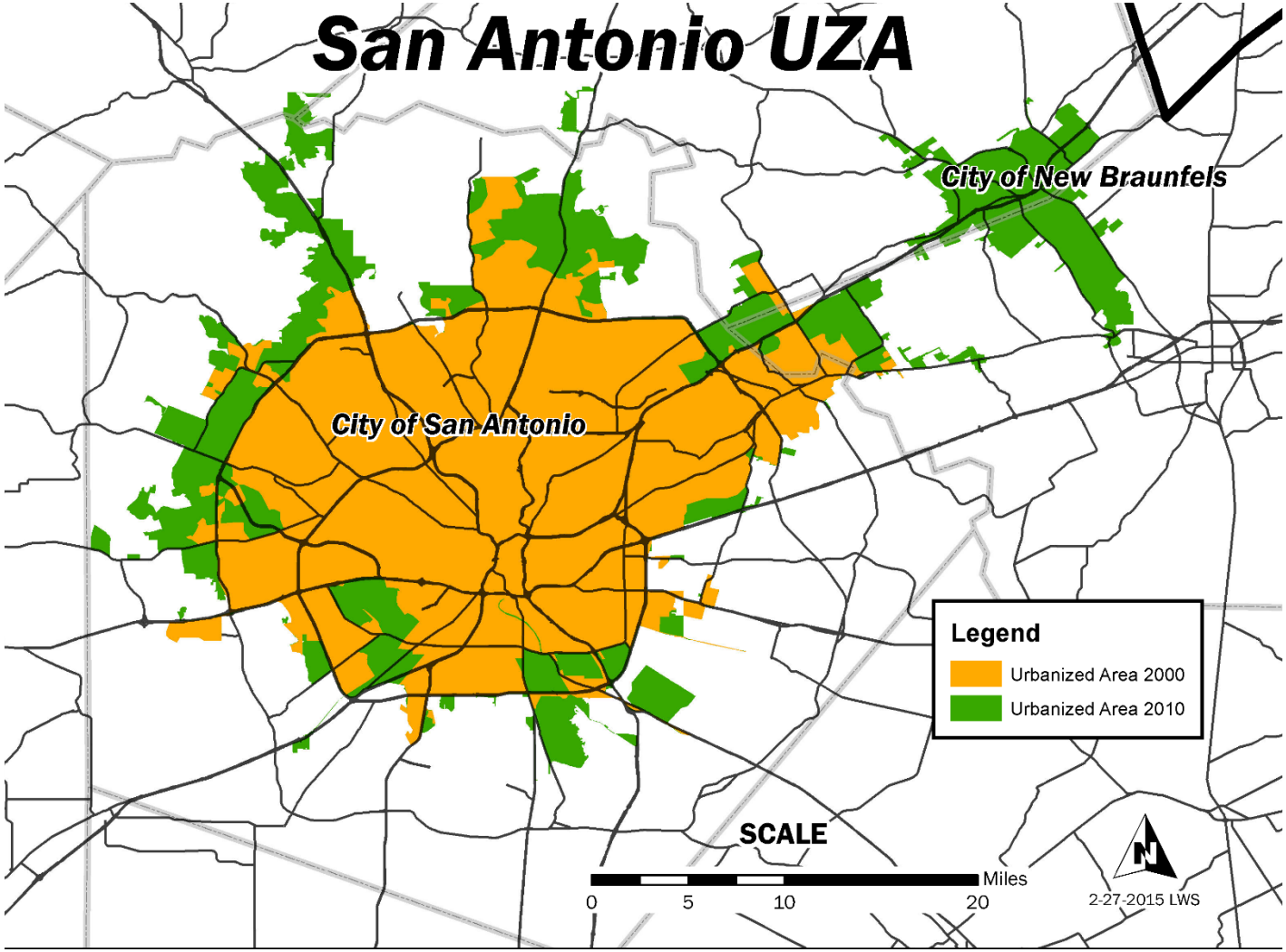
(Biennium values shown. Source: Texas Administrative Code.)

Texas as a percent of the United States

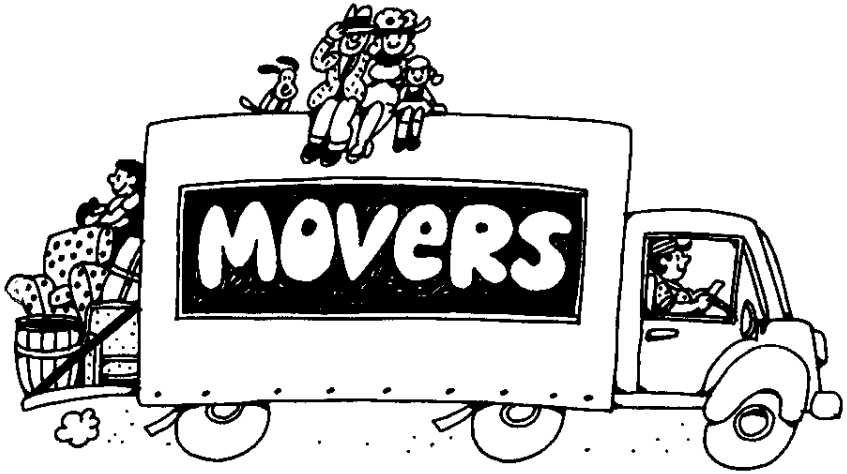
	Census 2010	ACS 2017 5-Year Estimates	Percent Growth
United States	308,745,538	321,004,407	4.0%
Texas	25,145,561	27,419,612	9.0%
Texas as % of the U.S.	8.1%	8.5%	

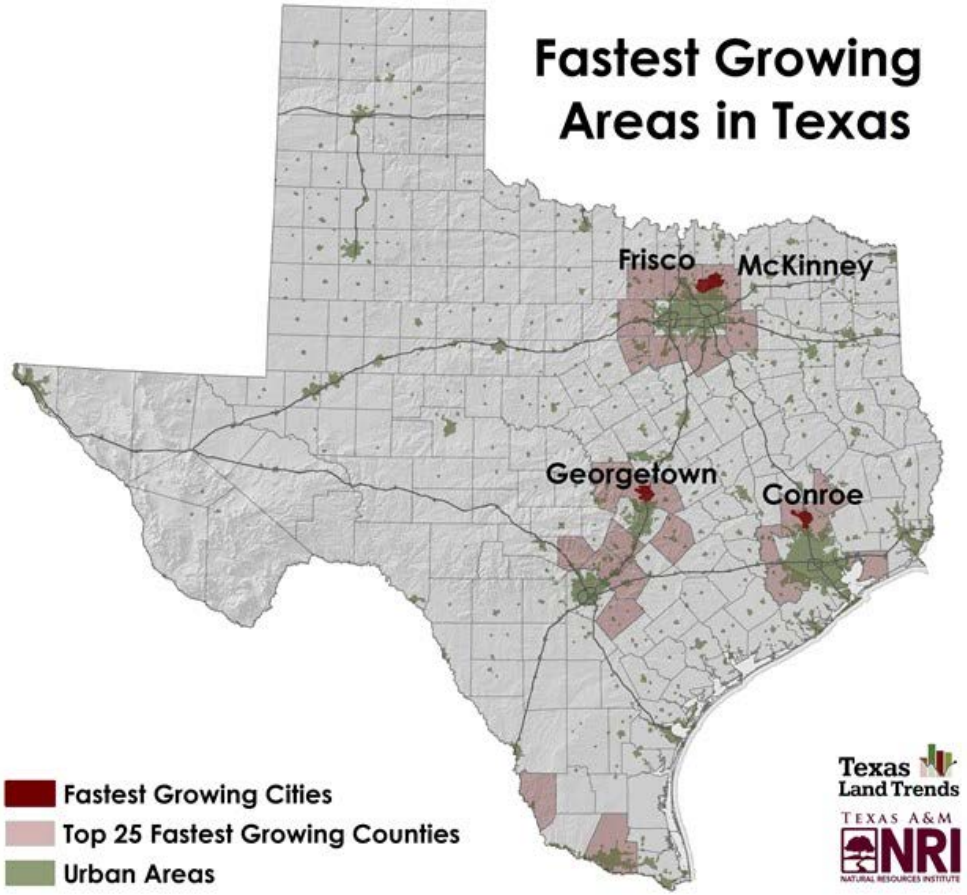
THE URBAN DONUT

SAN ANTONIO DONUT



GROWTH AREAS





TIMELINE

• October – December 2019	Analysis
• Next PTAC Meeting	Anticipated Impacts
• March / April 2020	Mitigation Recommendations (Authorization, FY 22/23 LAR)

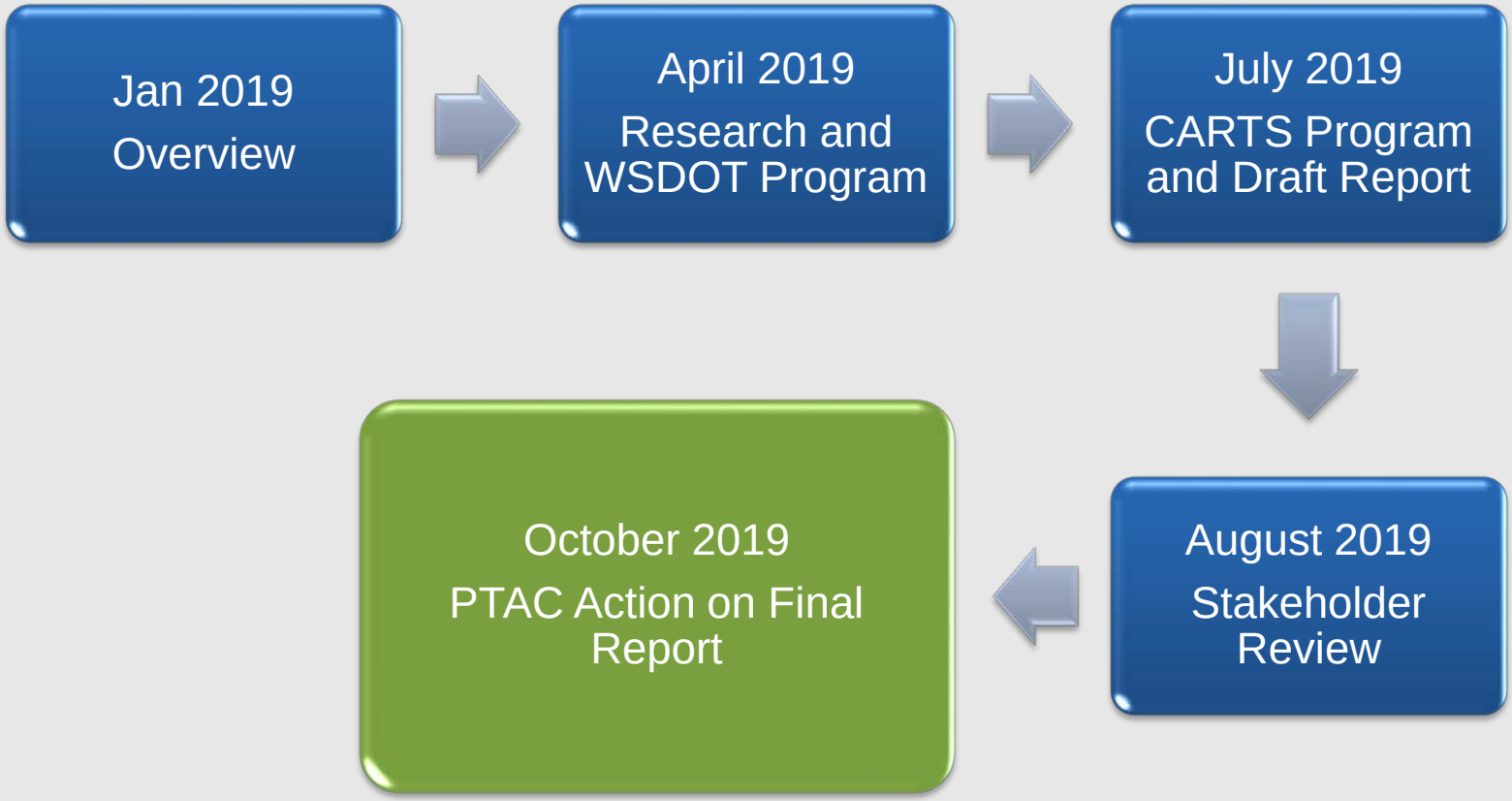
AGENDA ITEM 6

TX Intercity Bus Program

Strategic Direction Report
Public Transportation Advisory Committee

PTAC Meeting – October 29, 2019

PTAC – ICB Program Strategic Direction Timeline



Summary of Comments

- Prescriptiveness vs. Flexibility
- Retain focus on connections to national ICB network
- Mode-appropriate performance measures
- Emphasize trip and ticket integration among connecting services
- Identify freight delivery as part of the program
- Program branding and marketing

TX Intercity Bus Program Delivery Model

	Current	Proposed
Characteristic and Delivery Model	Applicant driven; providers apply for funds based on their demonstration of need	Applicant driven in response to state priorities included in biennial competitive call for project proposals
Minimum level of service	No	Target levels by service type
Evaluation Criteria	– Project Description – Planning efforts – Demonstrated need – Benefits – Timeline – Personnel – TxDOT state goals	– Demonstrated need/benefit: consistency with state priorities / local plans – Coordination/integration with supporting services and stakeholders – Anticipated performance outcomes – Readiness: implementation timeline – Partnerships – Sustainability
Performance Measures	None	<u>Establish targets / outcomes impact funding</u> – Ridership – Cost/rider – Cost/hour; cost/mile – Farebox recovery
Subgrantees	– Private carriers – Public carriers	– Private for-profit carriers – Public providers (Transit Districts)

Intercity Bus Program: Next Steps

- **Coordinated Call for Projects**
  - Modifications to application (November)

- **ICB Study**
  - Scope of work (January 2020)
  - Study (TBD)
  - Coordinated Call Modifications (Fall 2021)

- **Review Texas Administrative Code (TAC)**
  - Identify changes necessitated by the revised ICB program approach (September 2021)

Intercity Bus Program Strategic Direction Report

Public Transportation Advisory Committee Final Document

October 29, 2019

Summary

Review of current program approach, performance, and market changes argues for a greater degree of strategic direction from TxDOT to ensure outcomes that maximize the use of intercity bus funding to address rural area mobility needs. In general, moving to a program delivery model with characteristics more in line with Colorado and North Carolina DOT programs is described.

Committee action on this report will initiate subsequent efforts on the part of TxDOT to determine appropriate actions to address recommendations of the Committee.

Report Purpose and Scope

The Intercity Bus Strategic Direction Report describes how ICB service is currently provided in Texas, identifies alternative approaches used in other states, and discusses a desired future state of the ICB program. The focus of this document is on providing context for overall program approach, key conclusions, goals and objectives, and short-term and long-range planning efforts.

Each federal fiscal year, 15 percent of the total Section 5311 apportionment is required to be used to develop and support continuation of intercity bus services in the state of Texas. In Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) the set aside amount was approximately $7.1 million. Historically, TxDOT has requested applications for ICB and various public transportation projects via a biennial Coordinated Call for projects. The next call Coordinated Call for projects opportunity will take place in the fall of 2019. The Coordinated Call is used to solicit operating and capital project proposals from private, intercity bus carriers as well as Rural Transit Districts (RTD) in support of program goals identified in federal program guidance.

Committee Discussion Topics

Material presented and provided to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) covered the following information:

- Current program investments and performance,
- An overview of alternative program approaches used in other states,
- Description of the ICB market,
- Methods for estimating demand, and a
- Detailed look at Washington State's program delivery model for greater insight into an alternative model and results.

Presentation materials for these topics and meeting minutes of Committee discussions can be found on the TxDOT Public Transportation website. https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/public-transportation/committee.html

Conclusions

Current Program Delivery Model

Non-prescriptive. Federal program goals are embraced in their entirety, and project proposals drive investment decisions. Funding is used to provide operating subsidy for services in lower density areas of the state, to support Interurban operations in the growing metropolitan regions of the state, and for capital assets supporting the service investment. In all cases, the emphasis is on connecting rural area passengers with intercity bus services providing access to market-driven urban area destinations and/or national intercity bus passenger services, as well as other national passenger services such as Amtrak.

The following table outlines key conclusions on the current delivery model from the presentations.

Item	Description
Characteristic	Applicant driven
Delivery Model	Demonstrated need
Minimum level of service	No minimum service level
Evaluation Criteria	• Project description • Planning efforts • Demonstrated need • Benefits • Timeline • Personnel • TxDOT goals
Performance Measures	Performance measures reported; not formally used
Subgrantees	• Private carriers • Public carriers

Program Markets

Traditional rural area intercity markets are a diminishing share of the overall intercity bus market nationally. Highly competitive choice traveller markets continue to be the focus driving changes and innovations in intercity travel and intercity carriers.
TxDOT Program investments focus on passengers in more traditional markets with lower incomes, low car ownership, mobility impairments, and senior citizens. Typical trip purposes include:

- Connections to state and national travel networks including Amtrak, intercity bus, and airports
- Educational institutions
- Government offices and facilities such as Veterans Affairs, military bases, and social service agencies
- Healthcare

- Vacation/special event travel

Program Performance

The current program does not have formally-established, measurable performance expectations or targets.

Current service performance varies widely within and between general categories of ICB services. Low density, basic connectivity services such as those operated in West and Northeast Texas, generally exhibit lower performance (cost per passenger and mile) than those operating in higher density rural areas surrounding growing metropolitan regions, such as CARTS' Interurban Service program.

Using the most current, available data from West Texas and CARTS Interurban services, the following table documents service performance in lower and higher density areas of the state:

Summary of Current Service Performance*

Service type	Cost per passenger	Cost per mile	Daily passengers
Lower Density	$65.89	$9.11	134
Higher Density	$49.13	$3.43	91

*Averages across multiple routes in each instance. Routes within each service type contribute a range of performance outcomes to the average.

Individual route revenues (fares and other sources) cover a broad range of operating expenses (OR/OE). Reported data from 2017 show a range from less than 1% (ATCOG Bowie and Lamar County services) to 77% (Greyhound service between Amarillo and San Antonio).

Discussion Proposal: A Revised Strategic Direction

Program Intent

Integrate and leverage ICB funding with general rural program funding to support and sustain access to intercity service connections for rural area residents to longer distance urbanized area destinations, including, but not limited to, connections to the national intercity bus, passenger rail, and general aviation networks.

Service Profile and Target Markets

Intercity Bus service characteristics:

- Provides rural area access to and among urbanized areas with concentrations of employment, healthcare, and educational opportunities as well as connections to state and national travel networks

- Integrates ticketing, scheduling, marketing and coordination of services among service providers and stakeholders to maximize convenience of access and use for the customer and performance outcomes
- Allows for the transport of luggage, baggage and, in some cases freight, generally associated with longer distance travel needs
- Operates as a fixed route, fixed schedule service

Performance

Use available rural ICB market and performance data to forecast, evaluate use and effectiveness, and guide ongoing operating subsidy investments. Evaluate against established performance expectations. Progress towards performance expectations is a condition of continuation funding.

Integration and Coordination

Through selection criteria and performance expectations, prioritize investments demonstrating high levels of service integration and coordination among stakeholders and providers benefitting from the intercity program investment. Encourage seamless trip and ticket integration between carriers.

Capital Investments

Support cost-effective, proportional share-based capital investments in facilities, fleet, and equipment necessary to maintain a state of good repair and expand rural area access to intercity travel options.

Innovation

Research and pilot innovative shared ride services, technology applications, and marketing and advertising models to assist in addressing longer distance rural area mobility needs as alternatives to, or in support of, traditional intercity bus service investments.

Program Delivery Model

Applicant driven in response to state-identified access and connection priorities, and target service levels. Key characteristics include:

- Maximize potential impact of investment by targeting areas of highest need based on a more detailed study of rural area intercity travel
- Encourage local and regional initiatives/priorities through competitive processes emphasizing coordination among stakeholders and integration of services
- After establishing initial performance measure baselines, progress towards established performance expectations as a basis for continuation of funding
- Identified priority areas for program growth, should additional funding become available

Table one (last page) provides a comparison of this model with information compiled from other states.

In general, the Texas program moves from a non-prescriptive model to one relying on research and analysis to identify strategic program priorities and then using competitive processes to solicit project proposals to be evaluated against those priorities. In this respect, it becomes more closely associated with approaches taken by the Colorado and North Carolina DOT's, stopping short of the route specific, prescriptive nature of the WSDOT program.

Proposed Near-Term and Longer-Term Actions

Steps consistent with a desire to make adjustments to the ICB Program in Texas may begin as early a fall 2019, depending on outcomes from Committee discussion in July and possibly October 2019. Near-term and longer-term actions will likely include, but not be limited to the following:

- Make minor modifications to 2019 Coordinated Call for Projects, accommodating program adjustments associated with moving towards a different program delivery model
- Engage program stakeholders in dialogue about a different program model based on outcome of PTAC discussions
- Procure consultant services to identify investment priorities and expectations
- Amend the Texas Administrative Code as necessary to reflect changed program approach

Subsequent efforts associated with bulleted items 2,3, and 4 will be done in conjunction with an appropriately scoped, cooperative effort providing sufficient opportunity for engagement of key stakeholders in development and review of outcomes.

Table 1: Types of Program Delivery Models (Comparison of State DOT 5311(f) Programs)

	Texas (current)	Florida	Colorado	Texas (proposed)	North Carolina	California	Washington
Characteristic and Delivery Model	–Applicant driven –Providers apply for funds based on their demonstration of need.	–Applicant driven –Market-based: Providers apply for funds based on their demonstration of need.	–Applicant driven –Demonstrated need –Additional separate process where state selects providers for specific routes.	-Applicant driven in response to State priorities included in biennial competitive call for project proposals.	–Grantor led –State issues call for projects. State has prioritized list of intercity bus needs.	–Grantor led –State issues call for projects. State emphasizes filling gaps with ICB network.	–Grantee led –State issues call for projects. –Fill gaps with ICB network.
Minimum level of service	No	Yes, within threshold criteria; regional/national system connection.	No	Target levels by service type	No	Yes	Yes, contractors must provide minimum runs.
Evaluation Criteria	– Project Description – Planning efforts – Demonstrated need – Benefits – Timeline – Personnel – TxDOT state goals	– Improvement to ICB service – Support "feeder" service – Fill gap where service has been reduced or lost – Improve Amtrak facility – Proposed high-speed rail facility	– Financial justification – Demonstrated need – Coordination with other organizations	–Demonstrated need/benefit: consistency with State priorities/ local plans –Coordination/integration with supporting services and stakeholders –Anticipated performance outcomes –Readiness: implementation timeline –Partnerships –Sustainability	– Anticipated ridership – Serves areas without existing intercity service – Potentially self-sustaining	– Operations – Vehicle purchase – Transit infrastructure – Planning studies – Marketing studies	– State evaluated intercity bus and established service priorities
Performance Measures	None	None	Yes. Meet 40% farebox recovery.	<u>Potential targets</u> –Ridership –Cost/rider –Cost/hour; cost/mile –Farebox recovery	None	Yes. NTD reporting.	None
Subgrantees	– Private carriers – Public carriers	– Undetermined	– Public agencies – Private providers	– Private for-profit carriers – Public providers (Transit Districts)	– Public agencies – Private for profits – Non-profits	– Public providers – Rural providers – County transit providers	–Private providers

Source: 2015 Intercity Bus Policy Options Report. Prepared for Texas Department of Transportation by CH2M Hill. The terms used are based on individual states' responses to report.

Summary of Comments

Commenter 1:

General support for a prioritized approach to ICB rather than an application-driven process.

Commenter 2:

Real potential for expanded access for the traveling public regarding ICB. Opportunity for RTDs to interline with ICB routes and if advertised properly, more access for more people could be realized. Agree that technology will play a role per the report, but will need further study. Current levels of service and a map of current routes is a great place to start an ICB study.

Commenter 3:

Existing ICB network must be continued. New projects must ensure that meaningful connections are an essential product of the project. Freight delivery should be a component of any new ICB service. An assurance should be made that any proposed service does not replace, supplant, or substitute any existing service provided by an applicant. Concerns over performance measures and how effectiveness is measured. Each application must be reviewed for 5311(f) compliance. Seamless ticket integration between carriers is an important part of the national ICB network.

Commenter 4:

Passenger counts for new service are hard to obtain or estimate. Curious about entering ridership statistics in a revised coordinated call application. Happy to participate in service analysis or ICB study. Existing services must maintain integration with the national ICB network and include seamless ticket integration. Capital funding for facility projects should only receive a pro-rata ICB share. A transition to a competitive process should consider impacts to established passenger markets, particularly in less densely populated areas. Performance measures should be mode-appropriate, as urban performance measures do not necessarily translate to rural intercity service. The incorporation of marketing and branding should consider travel patterns that may cross state boundaries. TxDOT should consider the impacts to “contractors” and “subgrantees” when designing the ICB process.