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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE -
TELECONFERENCE MEETING

3712 Jackson Avenue
Building 6, Room 324
Austin, Texas 78731

Tuesday, March 31, 2015

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT and PARTICIPATING:

Michelle Bloomer, Chair
J.R. Salazar, Vice Chair
Rob Stephens, Transportation Provider Representative
John McBeth, General Public Representative
Glenn Gadbois, Transportation User Representative

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PARTICIPATING VIA TELECONFERENCE:

Christina Melton Crain, General Public Representative

TxDOT PRESENT and PARTICIPATING:

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division (PTN)
Ryan Granger, Federal Relations Representative
Kris Dudley, Public Transportation Division
Josh Ribakove, Communications Manager, PTN

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MS. BLOOMER: And we'll go ahead and call the meeting to order.

I'm going to turn it over to -- is it Bobby? Who's going to do our safety briefing?

MR. RIBAKOVE: I'm going to do our safety briefing today.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay, Josh is.

Okay, Josh?

MR. RIBAKOVE: Okay. This is our little safety briefing. If we need to evacuate the building, we'll go down the stairs, which are right there by the elevators. We'll come out and head out into the parking lot and walk around the building. There's an area with some trees and we'll muster right over there by the trees.

If we need to shelter in place -- and we're not expecting any inclement weather today -- we should -- that same stairwell is a good place to do that.

Restrooms are just past the elevators or just before them, if you're lady.

And that's about everything you really need to know.

MS. BLOOMER: All right. Any questions for Josh on our safety briefing?

(No audible response.)

1 Okay. Moving on to Item 3 on the agenda is
2 approval of the minutes, and that should say from the
3 January 22nd, 2015 meeting.

4 I will open it up for either a discussion or a
5 motion.

6 MS. MELTON CRANE: This is Christina.

7 So moved.

8 MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R.

9 Second.

10 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I have the first and the
11 second, so we'll go ahead and call the vote.

12 John?

13 MR. McBETH: I'm all for it.

14 MS. BLOOMER: Steve -- I mean Rob?

15 MR. STEPHENS: Yeah, sure.

16 MS. BLOOMER: J.R.?

17 MR. SALAZAR: Yes.

18 MS. BLOOMER: Oh, my gosh, I just lost it.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Christina.

20 MS. BLOOMER: Christina, thank you.

21 Christina?

22 MS. MELTON CRANE: Approved, yes.

23 MS. BLOOMER: And Michelle, yes.

24 Item 4 on the agenda is the TxDOT Public
25 Transportation Division Director's Report.

1 Eric?

2 MR. GLEASON: All right. Well, for the record,
3 this Eric Gleason, TxDOT's director of public
4 transportation.

5 Y'all received a report from me in your packet. I
6 won't go through it extensively. Best just to highlight a
7 number of things and then if individuals have questions on
8 some of the contents, we can discuss those, as well.

9 Significantly, at the Commission's
10 February meeting, we did push out the first portion of the
11 FY15 federal 5311 Program; that's the formula award, the
12 \$20.1 million. And so that did go out, and the Commission
13 also approved funding to help support TTA's rodeo that is
14 scheduled for April 11th in Dallas.

15 Busy time of year for us. As I mentioned before,
16 we have recently completed two Calls for Projects. Our
17 annual Coordinated Call for Projects closed on
18 February 9th, as did our annual Call for Projects for our
19 5310 Program. And so we are in the process of reviewing
20 proposals submitted for both of those. With respect to the
21 5310 Program, Districts have submitted, recommended programs
22 of projects from the stakeholder committees in each of those
23 districts, and those recommendations are being reviewed here
24 in Austin. And there's a lot of back and forth going on
25 right now with both of these Calls for Projects as we try to

1 fine-tune proposals and ask some clarifying questions of
2 folks who submitted project ideas.

3 We are looking at -- we are targeting the May 2015
4 Commission meeting from both of these efforts; that's our
5 target right now. As we get closer, we may find that we
6 need -- that one or two of them may need to slip to
7 June depending on whether or not we're ready for May, but
8 right now we're looking at May.

9 You know, you can see here, in terms of the
10 coordinated call, we got about \$68 million of requests and
11 somewhere just under \$10 million is available. About half
12 of that typically goes to support operation of intercity bus
13 routes, so not a lot of money. We have a couple of big
14 project proposals that came in that we're going to need to
15 enter in some rather lengthy conversations on with those
16 proposers to talk about how best to proceed with those.

17 The third item is the 2015 Transportation
18 Alternatives Program Call for Projects. This is a Federal
19 Highway Administration program that the Division is
20 responsible for and it is construction funds for areas of
21 the state under 200,000 for bicycle and pedestrian
22 facilities. We are going out with four years' worth of
23 awards this time -- of dollars this time, about \$50 million,
24 and we are looking at project proposals being due on
25 May 4th, and then sometime late summer, early fall, for

1 awards for that program.

2 And, finally, we also have a Call out for the next
3 round of Coordination Planning, which is focused on a
4 significant update of the 24 plans that exist in the state.
5 And so we're anticipating, you know, over a two-year time
6 frame or two years' worth of funding, about \$1.8 million for
7 those efforts, and then as this committee has discussed,
8 following that update of the plans, we will shift gears with
9 the program and focus on implementing projects with
10 measurable outcomes that will allow us to identify things
11 that work and things that don't work and step back a bit
12 from funding an ongoing planning effort. So that is what's
13 happening on the Discretionary Program front.

14 We did include in the packet a summary of the time
15 of where things stood in the State Legislature, and, you
16 know, very fluid environment. Jay Bond is here to join us
17 from our State Legislative Affairs Office, and, you know, at
18 this point, I'm not going to go through each bill which is
19 listed, but would entertain questions from members on any of
20 them specifically, if you have any; if you'd like an update
21 on where it stood, things like that.

22 MS. BLOOMER: Are there any questions for Eric?

23 MR. McBETH: I would make one note on the HR 20.

24 MR. GLEASON: John, can you identify yourself?

25 MR. McBETH: John McBeth with Brazos Transit.

1 On HR 20 by Simmons, the Association for Community
2 Transportation has discussed the bill with the author and he
3 has agreed to take an amendment to that bill that will add
4 the chairman of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee
5 to the bill to the advisory committee that is established in
6 this bill. So we thought because rural and small urban
7 transit use lots and lots of highways in this state, it was
8 very critical that the message from the public
9 transportation providers be heard on that particular
10 committee, and he got that language just today and will
11 probably put it on the bill today or tomorrow.

12 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. This is Michelle.

13 Thanks for the update, John.

14 Any other questions for Eric, either on the
15 funding portion or the legislative portion?

16 MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R.

17 I just had one question. It's kind of a broad
18 question, but how is the 5310 stakeholder process scoring
19 committee, how is that process going or how did it go, being
20 that we had a lot of changes in the 5310 Program?

21 MR. GLEASON: I've not yet sat down with staff to
22 go over the program of projects that we have received from
23 each district. I know in some cases we felt like it went
24 reasonably well. In other cases, we actually had trouble
25 pulling one together. I think everyone, to a certain

1 extent, struggled with the new distinction, and the federal
2 guidance --

3 MR. SALAZAR: Sure.

4 MR. GLEASON: -- on eligible providers and, you
5 know, which category of funding that they could apply for.

6 So I think -- I am being told that there will need
7 to be a fair amount of tweaking done once we look at all of
8 them.

9 MR. SALAZAR: Okay.

10 MR. GLEASON: I am not aware of any major
11 breakdown in the process --

12 MR. SALAZAR: Good.

13 MR. GLEASON: -- and I think I probably would be
14 if there had been one. But I don't think it was, in most
15 cases, I don't think that it was very easy for people.

16 MR. STEPHENS: Eric, this is Rob Stephens on a
17 follow-up. Do you have a timeline of when the local
18 districts will be announcing awards?

19 MR. GLEASON: Well, as I said, we're targeting the
20 May Commission meeting --

21 MR. STEPHENS: Okay.

22 MR. GLEASON: -- for award, and that is going to
23 largely depend on how much tweaking we need to do once we
24 get a chance to look across all projects.

25 So what I would anticipate is -- you know, nothing

1 is final until Commission action -- I would anticipate if we
2 are going to be awarding funds in June -- in May, at the end
3 of May, that around the first of May that we would be able
4 to describe what our recommendation will be, somewhere in
5 that time frame.

6 MR. STEPHENS: Thank you, sir.

7 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And did we have somebody join
8 us on the phone? Glenn? No?

9 Did we lose Christina?

10 MS. MELTON CRANE: No, I'm here.

11 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I thought I heard a --

12 MR. RIBAKOVE: I think that was somebody signing
13 in on the public line.

14 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And if there are no more
15 questions for Eric, we will go ahead and move on to Item 5
16 of the agenda.

17 MR. GLEASON: If I may, Madam Chair, just a couple
18 things -- point out a couple of other things that were in
19 your -- one other thing that was in your packet. This is a
20 one-pager that we developed in response to some questions
21 from our administration on the 5310 Program, and we hope to
22 be in a position of doing more of these in the future for
23 other elements of our program.

24 Anyways, thank you.

25 MS. BLOOMER: And then Item 5, briefing and

1 discussion of federal funding authorization efforts?

2 MR. GLEASON: Yes, Ryan Granger from our Federal
3 Affairs Office is with us today. I accompanied Ryan on a
4 trip back to D.C. in March --

5 MR. GRANGER: I think -- yeah, three weeks ago.

6 MR. GLEASON: -- yeah, early March, to not only
7 attend the American Public Transit Association Annual
8 Legislative Conference, but to use that as an opportunity to
9 brief a number of committee, staff, and individual Texas
10 congressional delegation offices on the Department's
11 authorization priorities for public transportation.

12 And what we thought we would do today is that Ryan
13 and I would do kind of a tag team and he would begin with an
14 overall summary of the Department's authorization efforts
15 and things like that, and then more specifically, you all
16 got information in your packet about the issues that we
17 talked directly to congressional staff about while we were
18 there.

19 So, Ryan?

20 MR. GRANGER: Well, for the record, my name is
21 Ryan Granger with TxDOT Federal Affairs and thanks for
22 inviting me to come and speak today. Eric just asked that I
23 just give a broad overview of current reauthorization
24 efforts and timetables, as well as best thinking on how all
25 of that's going to unfold.

1 So, as of right now, MAP-21 expired in
2 September and Congress passed an eight-month extension,
3 which expires two months from today on May 31st. So USDOT
4 floated its own proposal, the Grow America Act last year, I
5 believe it was introduced by one of the members of the
6 House. It was referred to, I think, several dozen
7 committees where it went absolutely nowhere. But as a
8 sidebar, they did introduce their follow-up, which was Grow
9 America Act 2.0 yesterday.

10 There haven't been any reauthorization bills
11 introduced yet.

12 MR. GLEASON: 2.0, huh?

13 MR. GRANGER: 2.0, yeah. But we may see something
14 in days to come.

15 So, let's see, well, as far as where things are
16 headed, I guess I kind of like to think of it as in terms of
17 certainties and uncertainties, and I think the one certainty
18 that we're hearing more and more is that there is not going
19 to be a full bill before the MAP-21 expires -- well, the
20 extension expires in two months from. That is almost near
21 certainty.

22 And I guess my reasoning for that, and that's my
23 opinion, but even Pete DeFazio -- he's the ranking member on
24 the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee -- on
25 February 26th, I think he made an announcement that if

1 Congress were to pass an extension -- not a full bill, but
2 just an extension -- it would need to do so by mid-March.

3 So, here we are at the end of March and not only
4 has not, you know, both Houses passed it, but neither House
5 has even introduced even an extension. So, we are behind,
6 even as far as an extension goes, so the chances of there
7 being a full bill in the next two months are pretty slim,
8 especially considering that the House and the Senate are
9 both in their spring recess right now and they won't be back
10 until April 13th. So that means they have about six weeks
11 to cobble together some sort of extension -- and I can go
12 into more of that in just a second.

13 The second certainty that we're hearing more and
14 more about is that tax reform is going to be Plan A, as far
15 as funding the reauthorization. We heard this, Eric and I
16 heard this in D.C. three weeks ago from the committee staff
17 that we met with, and more importantly, House Chairman,
18 Chairman Paul Ryan of the House Ways and Means Committee,
19 which is the main tax-driving me in the House, he announced
20 last week that it would be Plan A.

21 So that's our second certainty that tax reform is
22 going to be the defining mechanic, which brings us to our
23 first uncertainty, which is tax reform. It's not only a
24 certainty, but it's also an uncertainty, because not only is
25 it the way that they're going, but it's also kind of filled

1 with land mines and pitfalls. This is currently the fifth
2 year of ongoing tax reform. Nothing much has happened
3 previously. The Hill, actually, just a couple weeks ago,
4 called it the fifth year of the "tax reform purgatory." So
5 not a whole lot going on there.

6 National Journal released a -- did a poll on
7 March 12th and they asked democratic and republican insiders
8 how likely Congress was, during this congress, to pass tax
9 reform. And I think, let's see, 78 percent of the 77
10 Democrats said they were not -- the Congress was not at all
11 likely to pass anything this congress; whereas, 65 percent
12 of the 87 Republicans asked said that Congress would not be
13 likely at all to pass tax reform this congress. And that's
14 not even just its current year. You know, congress goes
15 until the end of next year, so not good polling statistics,
16 as far as tax reform happening this congress.

17 And as I mentioned before, Chairman Paul Ryan of
18 House Ways and Means said last week that any kind of tax
19 reform would have to wait several months for House Ways and
20 Means to make more progress on tax reform, which is going to
21 push us way beyond the May 31st's deadline of current
22 extension. The tax-writing committees just haven't shown
23 any urgency, I guess, would be the word, in laying the
24 groundwork for any kind of tax law changes or spending
25 reductions that he needed to cover the \$90 billion in

1 additional Highway Trust Fund deposits that you would need
2 for a baseline six-year transportation bill, which brings us
3 to the second uncertainty, which is the Highway
4 Transportation Fund.

5 So it's \$90 billion of additional deposits that
6 are needed for a six-year bill. The Congressional Budget
7 Office foresees that it will probably stay solvent until
8 about July which is good in one respect, because it gives a
9 little bit of -- it lights a little bit of a fire under the
10 members to get somebody done, but on the other hand, it's
11 also something that introduces a lot of uncertainty into the
12 process.

13 So having gone through all the certainties and
14 uncertainties, how is this all going to unfold? Well, the
15 House recently just passed a very drama-free passenger rail
16 bill. Because transit is part of the service transportation
17 reauthorization, it is unlikely to be as drama-free as that
18 passenger rail bill. You know, my short-term prognosis is
19 that we're very likely to see a short-term extension before
20 May 31st, and I guess there's a very slight chance that
21 there could possibly be a new reauthorization bill before
22 the Highway Trust Fund runs out in about July or so, but I
23 would put that at very slight, at this point, so -- and
24 that's with the tax reform, you know, having to be done
25 first, that's a very heavy lift, so it makes it pretty

1 unlikely.

2 And I guess to give some context with SAFETEA-LU,
3 the previous service transportation reauthorization, when it
4 expired, it has ten extensions that lasted, let's see, I
5 think two years and nine months, so, you know, it's
6 difficult to say whether these MAP-21 extensions will go a
7 similar route or something will come together with a new
8 bill fairly quickly.

9 But, luckily, because it's only been a few years
10 since MAP-21 was being worked on, you know, much of the same
11 staffers that helped write that bill are still there.
12 Usually, by the time a six-year bill, plus a three-year
13 extension, you know, comes around, most of those staffers,
14 they come and go like mayflies on Capitol Hill, so they're
15 pretty much gone. So, luckily, it's only been a few years
16 and hopefully, you know, most of the same staff will be
17 there and that will help the process.

18 So that's my overview of transportation
19 reauthorization. I'll hand it back over to Eric.

20 MR. GLEASON: So in that environment, and having
21 impacted it dramatically, as far as I can tell, off we went
22 to Washington and we talked to staff from Senate Banking and
23 Finance, majority and minority staff from that committee.
24 We talked to the majority and minority staff from House
25 Transportation and Infrastructure. We talked to

1 Representative Farenthold's office, and the other
2 Representative was --

3 MR. GRANGER: I believe Brian Babin --

4 MR. GLEASON: Brian Babin, that's correct. And
5 then we talked to Senator Cornyn's staff, as well.

6 MR. GRANGER: Uh-huh.

7 MR. GLEASON: So a couple themes -- and there's
8 not universal consensus on this, but, for example, Senate
9 Banking and Finance staff, many of whom wrote -- or both of
10 them were involved in writing MAP-21 -- so from their
11 perspective, this effort is not about changes in policy to
12 MAP-21, since it's only been in effect for two years and
13 many of the programs aren't in full implementation yet.
14 They did not see this as an opportunity to make policy
15 changes to MAP-21. Their entire focus with our conversation
16 was on just, you know, sustaining the Highway Trust Fund,
17 finding a way to sustain and fund the Highway Trust Fund.
18 House T & I was a little more receptive to our
19 ideas in terms of other things that we might do. I think
20 ultimately, though, they will be constrained by the same
21 conversation. So, anyway, we talked to them about three
22 issues that are, in our minds, very important to us and the
23 programs that we manage in Texas and some of these -- well,
24 we have talked about all of these to one extent or the
25 other.

1 The first one, and at the end of the day, if I had
2 to pick one, the most important one, is on the Section 5339
3 Program, bus and bus facilities. This is the program where
4 when Congress came to the rural program, to the rural
5 subrecipients of this program, they established a
6 flat-funding amount for every state. So Texas got \$1.25
7 million. We have the largest rural population in the
8 country by far, approaching the 6.3 million, and the second
9 place is North Carolina with 4.3. And then Rhode Island,
10 which has the smallest non-urban population also got \$1.25
11 million. And so, you know, you can have fun with the
12 numbers and look, see -- look how unfair this is, Rhode
13 Island got \$12.40 a person and we got \$0.20 a percent;
14 clearly this is wrong.

15 And one of the things we heard was -- I think we
16 had a general acceptance of the issue. Solving the issue
17 will take more money and there was some feeling that the
18 \$1.25 million represented a floor to whatever future
19 solution there might be. So in the end, no one would end up
20 getting less than what they got today. Our point was that
21 that program ought to be distributed proportionately based
22 on population like virtually every other program is.

23 And if you were to take the current \$62.5 million
24 associated with the program and distribute it based on
25 population, Texas would get close to \$5 million, instead of

1 \$1.25. And so, we talked them through that. We also
2 provided them with some basic information that showed
3 them -- this is the chart at the bottom of the paper you
4 have -- that shows the impact of the 5339 Program and its
5 current funding levels on our ability, as a state, to keep
6 our fleet in a state of good repair, with the message being
7 that in two years, 60 percent of the fleet associated with
8 the rural and small urban programs in Texas will be beyond
9 their useful life from a mileage standpoint.

10 So, you know, I think this is the issue that we
11 got the most traction with back there. We also, subsequent
12 to that meeting, we sent them two tables, which you have.
13 Table 1 is the per capita distribution, based on the current
14 funding, and that shows you the ranking, beginning with
15 Rhode Island at \$12.44 and ending with Texas. You know,
16 interestingly enough, if you look at the membership of the
17 Senate Banking and Finance, there is a fairly large rural
18 area representation on it. So you might think there would
19 be some openness to this issue on the committee.

20 The second table associated with this that we sent
21 them is -- said, Look, let's look at a couple different ways
22 of slicing the pie here with more money admittedly. The
23 first way was, let's hold everybody at their -- everybody
24 gets the floor of \$1.25 million, and then if in a
25 proportional distribution based on population you should

1 have gotten more, you got more. And that's the A
2 alternative. And what you'd see is that you would need
3 almost \$89 million -- no, I'm sorry -- you would need \$80
4 million to give everyone at least \$1.25 million, and then if
5 you got more than that based on your proportional share, you
6 would get more than that.

7 And then the second thing we did is say, Look, it
8 doesn't take a lot of money to make us have a big impact on
9 this program. You could double it, so you could add another
10 \$62 and a half million to this program, and if you also
11 held, you know, everybody gets at least \$1.25, and then you
12 distributed based on proportional share, for \$133 million,
13 you know, for example, Texas, rather than getting \$1.25
14 million would get \$8.7 million. So, you know, whether or
15 not they're going to find the resources to add funding to
16 this program, the message was that the current distribution
17 is unfair, it's ineffective, and it doesn't take a lot of
18 money to fix it.

19 The second issue that we discussed with them --
20 and this is the one with the map called "Transit Without
21 Borders." This is the population growth issue and the
22 census impact issue where we have urbanization taking place
23 on a yearly basis, around our major metropolitan areas and
24 the census comes along and it re-establishes urbanized area
25 boundaries, and this is what we went through with the 2010

1 Census.

2 And we -- this map that you see down here is an
3 illustration of that, where the orange area was the
4 urbanized area boundary for the 2000 Census and the green
5 area is the urbanized area boundary associated with the 2010
6 Census. Now, if you look at the state of Texas, there's an
7 estimated 2.8 million people in green areas. So if you
8 attempted to get an estimate of how many people were
9 affected by this, it's about 2.8 million people, and these
10 are the areas where, you know, formally rural, now large
11 urban with no relationship with an existing provider. And
12 what we are looking for in authorization is the flexibility
13 and the funding, in some cases, to deal with this. The main
14 message here, I think, was flexibility, giving us the
15 ability at the state or the regional level to put together
16 multi-year transition plans around this change so that, you
17 know, critical services weren't impacted by sudden overnight
18 changes in designation.

19 The additional funding issue -- this is where we
20 brought in what has historically been a significant
21 difference in per capita funding levels for the Urban
22 Program versus the rural program -- and, you know, if you
23 looked at the currently Urbanized Area Program, the 5307
24 Program translates to about \$15.74 per capita, and the Rural
25 Program is about \$6.81. So there's a huge gap in the per

1 capita funding level.

2 And there may be justification for that based on
3 the role public transportation may play in some of the more
4 heavily urbanized area, the additional expense associated
5 with operation and maintenance of systems in those areas.
6 But our point is that this gap is larger than it really
7 ought to be, and that if over the course of the next
8 authorization, progress could be made to close that gap,
9 that would give these rural programs resources to address
10 these growing population issues in between censuses that
11 they don't get credit for.

12 This is a tough one to imagine getting too much
13 headway on with authorization. It's kind of a hard issue
14 for people to wrap their hands around. So I wasn't
15 really -- I didn't really feel like we got a lot of traction
16 with it. So it's hard to say where this will go, but in a
17 growing state like Texas, this is hugely important for us.

18 MR. GADBOIS: So, Eric, Foxx is the about to roll
19 out a new administration bill this month. Have y'all talked
20 to his staff, DOT staff?

21 MR. GLEASON: USDOT staff?

22 MR. GADBOIS: Uh-huh.

23 MR. GLEASON: Ryan?

24 MR. GRANGER: You know, I believe that the Grow
25 America Act 2.0, as they were calling it --

1 MR. GLEASON: Is this 2.0?

2 MR. GRANGER: -- just came out yesterday. So
3 Federal Affairs is in the process of taking a look at the
4 bill and we should have our analysis hopefully done and to
5 the Divisions and Offices at TxDOT that it affects by
6 Monday, we hope.

7 MR. GADBOIS: And it's not that that's necessarily
8 going to go anywhere, but it would help if staff were
9 framing this correctly.

10 MR. GLEASON: Okay. I'll take a look at that.
11 Address these issues in that as well, makes sense, okay.

12 The third issue we talked about was with respect
13 to the 5310 Program, which is something this committee has
14 talked a lot about, and we chose to focus on the allocation
15 issue, a curb in the program with MAP-21. So under
16 SAFETEA-LU, 5310 was a statewide program; TxDOT received the
17 entire amount of funding for the entire state of Texas and
18 decisions were made in TxDOT districts on how to spend that
19 money, irrespective of urban areas versus rural areas.

20 Under MAP-21, the program was divided and large
21 urban areas received their funding directly from FTA and
22 then TxDOT received the remaining portion of the state
23 funding for areas under 200,000. We continue to do our
24 efforts at the district level for areas under 200,000.
25 Large urban areas conduct their own processes with those

1 funds.

2 So that, in and of itself, introduced challenges
3 for us from transitioning from a statewide program to a
4 program that was not any longer statewide. And a couple of
5 things really made that more difficult. First was that when
6 they did that, they also decided that 60 percent of the
7 funding for the program should go to with the large
8 urbanized areas. Twenty percent was small urban and
9 20 percent was rural.

10 And that's a formula that they use in other areas.
11 The issue, when it comes to the 5310 Program is that the
12 program itself is designed to be an overlay onto existing
13 services. And in practice, as a statewide program, we had
14 actually put in place investments that were almost the
15 mirror opposite of that allocation. And it makes sense if
16 you think about it, because the rural area is where there is
17 no service to speak of, and so this program was -- we had
18 made a significantly larger investment in the rural areas
19 with this program, than the 20 percent allocation would
20 allow us to make. And so what we heard from, I think it was
21 Banking and Finance staff, was when they got to this
22 question, they had a choice: they could keep it statewide
23 or they could go 60/20/20 and they chose 60/20/20, and that
24 was it. So our point to them was that they got it wrong,
25 that they needed to flip that allocation, and then the

1 obvious discussion that ensued was, gosh, that's going to be
2 really hard to do unless we have more money.

3 The other point that we made with them is
4 increased flexibility of use, and this was specifically
5 related to the almost firewall that exists between the large
6 urbanized funding and our ability to use it in an area other
7 than the large urbanized area. We have the flexibility
8 within the funds that we receive for the small urban and the
9 rural portions of the state to make determinations that
10 needs have been met, and that we can move money between
11 those two programs as needed, based on recommendation from
12 stakeholder committees and what we think needs to happen.

13 Not so much so, that ability, to work that way
14 with the large urbanized area funds. We can do workarounds.
15 We can assume that one end of the trip is in the large
16 urbanized area. We can talk about using funds for that
17 trip, but it's much more difficult to achieve any sort of
18 coordinated effort through funding across those boundaries.
19 So we talked to them about more flexibility there.

20 MR. GADBOIS: So, and again, Eric -- and you
21 probably don't know this, but just ask -- is there
22 administrative rulemaking flexibility, such that you don't
23 have to wait for the legislation to change, and that the
24 administration and/or DOT staff could, through rulemaking
25 change, to create more flexibility in that allocation?

1 MR. GLEASON: I don't know -- is that in statute,
2 federal statute?

3 MS. DUDLEY: I believe that the division is --
4 this is Kris Dudley for the record -- I believe that
5 division is in statute.

6 MR. GLEASON: I know the allocation is in statute,
7 Kris, but what Glenn's getting at is this ability to move
8 the money from a large --

9 MS. DUDLEY: I think that just might be circular
10 language.

11 MR. GLEASON: Let's take a look at that.

12 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah, because a lot of times the
13 division will be in statute but then there will be a
14 provision that allows administrative flexibility in how
15 that's implemented, and if they could convey that
16 administrative flexibility to the state level, that might
17 solve your problems, or at least some of them.

18 MR. GLEASON: And then we had put together for
19 them at the bottom of the page, some pictures that went
20 toward this issue of the allocation. And the first one is,
21 on the left, you know, for the small urban and rural area,
22 we're talking about almost 98 percent of the geographic area
23 of the state. And, you know, in a business where time is
24 money, distance is huge and it rolls up pretty quickly.

25 The other two on the right are an effort to get at

1 this notion of current service availability and these are
2 both calculated on the formula service investment in area.
3 So not the 5310 Program, but the 5307 and 5311 Programs, the
4 already-existing general purpose public transportation
5 system, which is in place at the 5310 funds are being added
6 to, as a complement.

7 And so two ways to look at current service
8 availability. If you look at vehicle revenue miles per
9 square mile, and this is straight from the statistics that
10 we collect from everyone every year. Again, in the large
11 urbanized areas you see 33,000 revenue miles per square mile
12 and you see 196 in the rural and small urban areas. And
13 then if you go down and then you look at vehicle revenue
14 miles per capita as another measure of service availability,
15 you can see it's, you know, 12 in the large UZA and 4 in the
16 small combined UZA and rural. Again, it gets at this issue
17 of the need for the allocation to change.

18 Now, anyways, those are the three items that we
19 talked to them about. I guess I emerged most optimistic
20 about the 5339. I think that's the one they're hearing a
21 lot about. Now, they're hearing a lot about "Please restore
22 the Discretionary Program" and there's a -- it's very
23 difficult to separate decision from their earmark.

24 MR. GADBOIS: From what?

25 MR. GLEASON: Earmark.

1 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

2 MR. GLEASON: And so it's hard -- there didn't to
3 be a lot of receptivity, at least in our conversations, to
4 restoring the discretionary element, but that is something
5 that they're hearing a lot about from people. And they're
6 certainly hearing a lot about the larger system's need for
7 more funding as well, under this.

8 So that is my report. Any questions or comments
9 from any committee members?

10 MS. BLOOMER: Any questions or comments for Eric
11 or for Ryan?

12 (No audible response.)

13 No? Okay.

14 MR. GLEASON: Thank you.

15 MR. GADBOIS: Thank y'all.

16 MR. RIBAKOVE: Michelle?

17 MS. BLOOMER: Yes?

18 MR. RIBAKOVE: Before we continue, let's just let
19 Christina know that Glenn Gadbois has joined us here in the
20 room, and let me also say to anybody who came in after the
21 beginning of the meeting, that we've got a sign-in sheet on
22 this table, and also a speaker card. If anybody would like
23 to address the meeting, there's a little thing to fill out.
24 Just hand it to me, and we'll make sure that you get your
25 chance.

1 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Thank you, Josh.

2 MS. MELTON CRANE: Thank you.

3 MS. BLOOMER: I think that concludes Item 6 --
4 whoops, sorry, getting ahead of myself -- Item 5.

5 That moves us on to Item 6 on the agenda, which is
6 discussion and development of PTAC Work Plan, based off the
7 guiding principles and comments made at the January 22nd
8 meeting.

9 Before we proceed can either Eric or Josh remind
10 us of the conversation at the January 22nd meeting?

11 MR. GLEASON: Yes, and we have minutes, as well,
12 that would cover that?

13 MS. BLOOMER: Yes.

14 MR. GLEASON: At that meeting, we opened it up to
15 sort of hear from members, anything -- any ideas in their
16 mind that they'd like to see us address in a work program.
17 I do know we had a discussion around looking at the whole
18 issue around large urbanized areas, areas of the state that
19 transition through growth from being small urban areas and
20 then the next census, the population exceeds 200,000. We
21 continue to provide state funding to those areas of the
22 state until such time as they choose to reorganize
23 themselves where they would no longer be eligible for that.

24 So there's a conversation about wanting to look at
25 that as a phenomenon that we need to address from a policy

1 standpoint, in terms of how do we want to move forward with
2 that. That's the one that sticks in my mind that was added.

3 There's that part and then there's just growth in
4 general. Any sort of policy direction associated growth,
5 how to deal with these areas that are in the urban gap. You
6 know, the areas that -- where urbanization continues,
7 they're funded through the Rural Program until the census
8 comes and then, you know, the next day they wake up and
9 they're part of a large urbanized area. What kinds of
10 policies might we want to talk about having in place to get
11 us ready even for the next census in that regard.

12 MR. GADBOIS: And one thing we discussed was TTI
13 did all that research two, three, four years back --

14 MR. GLEASON: Exactly.

15 MR. GADBOIS: -- coming in presenting to us, we
16 probably ought to ramp up to see if we can get that level of
17 analysis, you know, for what's going to happen in 2020, to
18 inform the group.

19 MR. GLEASON: Right. So I think ideally, in my
20 mind, if I can, you know, we'd like to have a pretty
21 open-ended conversation today on, not only that idea, but
22 the ideas that were also part of the work done the last time
23 we did this, which are the guiding principles. And,
24 ideally, if we were to emerge with two or three key items,
25 key policy-area items that the committee was interested in

1 pursuing next, that would be ideal. And this meeting would
2 be the opportunity for the committee to brainstorm about
3 what those efforts might be, the kind of things they might
4 look at, and what we would do, then, is go away with that
5 brainstorm and put together something a little more formal
6 that we could put in front of you at your next meeting.

7 MS. BLOOMER: All right. So I think we tackled
8 sort of our top two or three, based off of the guiding
9 principles, which we finalized early in 2012. I think we
10 want to take a look at these and see if there's anything on
11 here that we'd like to take up, like Eric said, or if
12 there's new items that we would like to add to be addressed.
13 We could start there.

14 MR. McBETH: This is John McBeth.

15 Eric, where would you, in this document, where
16 would we tackle the issue of the cities that surpassed
17 199,999, because as you know, there are six of those systems
18 in place today and they're using 35 percent of the entire
19 5307 of the state.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thirty percent.

21 MR. McBETH: Thirty percent, yeah.

22 So, with the population growing the way it is,
23 we're going to see more of those cities come in, and I think
24 we were talking about having TTI taking a look at it and see
25 what impact that's going to have -- currently, what impact

1 it would have. I mean I know for sure Bryan College Station
2 is already over 200,000 population; they would be
3 grandfathered in under our UTP if we continued to have this
4 policy that once you go over 200,000, if you have existing
5 small urban UTP, you could continue to receive the funds.

6 And we have discussed, you and I have discussed,
7 the small urbans that are at that level, their population is
8 capped at 199,000. They're not going to get any more
9 population money, but their performance is so high that they
10 can take a large chunk of the performance money, thus, when
11 you have some of the rural areas move from rural into small
12 urban, there's going to be less money for them to share with
13 the small urbans that are already there.

14 So I think it's really a critical problem and I
15 think it's something that really needs to be addressed, and
16 I think TTI is the perfect group of people to do a financial
17 forecast and tell us where we're going so we can then go to
18 the leadership of the state of Texas and say, Something's
19 got to give. You either have to create a new category for
20 these people and move them out and fund it or you've got to
21 phase out their money somehow, because they're going to eat
22 all the money up.

23 MR. GLEASON: You asked where I would put it. I
24 would probably put it under the first bill under support
25 public transportation, goal number one, because this notion

1 of sustainable public transportation systems --

2 MR. McBETH: Yeah.

3 MR. GLEASON: -- I think it probably falls in
4 there, and you know, I can see a fairly -- as long as we can
5 structure it, a fairly broad-ranging conversation, and then
6 we could ultimately end up, the committee could ultimately
7 end up recommending some specific actions that might relate
8 to, you know, as you suggested, funding issues, there could
9 be administrative code issues coming out from this. There
10 could be -- and I don't want to presuppose what the outcomes
11 would be, but that's where we'll end up.

12 MR. McBETH: Well, we would at least have the data
13 that shows us what the projections are going to be --

14 MR. GLEASON: Yes.

15 MR. McBETH: -- in five years and how that's going
16 to affect all the other small urban areas.

17 MR. GADBOIS: And, John, so the second objective
18 under the first goal, transit stability, you know, your
19 example is the epitome of instability, where every ten years
20 you just take a meat cleaver and re-divide the same pot.

21 MR. McBETH: Right.

22 MR. GADBOIS: So that would be my definition of
23 instability, so I'm perfectly fine adding that under that
24 conversation and let's figure out if we can't make some
25 recommendations to stabilize that, whether it's separate pot

1 or transitions or what.

2 MR. GLEASON: And the other thing is we have
3 coming up, in the current administrative code, currently,
4 there are these state funds for census impact funding, and
5 the current administrative code, if I recall correctly, has
6 those funds being used for those purposes, specifically,
7 until 2017, I believe it says, at which point it would
8 either simply expire for those purposes or perhaps, based on
9 a conversation here, there might be a recommendation to
10 extend or to work differently with those monies.

11 MR. GADBOIS: So that ought to be part of the data
12 that we gather is how has that worked and is it stabilizing,
13 is it allowing enough time for transition, is it getting us
14 where we intended it.

15 And remind me, Eric, how much was that money?

16 MR. GLEASON: It's \$1.6 million each year.

17 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

18 MR. GLEASON: And about \$900,000 of that goes out
19 through formula, which was based on a one-time calculation
20 done back in 2013 of the impact of the shifting proportional
21 shares amongst rural and small urban cities and that was
22 holding them harmless from those changes.

23 MR. GADBOIS: Right.

24 MR. GLEASON: And so there's about \$700,000 that
25 actually is available each year for discretionary

1 application. We typically lump that into two years and go
2 out once every other year for a call for ideas for how to
3 use that money.

4 MR. GADBOIS: And that amount was set because we
5 had looked at what the differentials might need to be --

6 MR. GLEASON: Uh-huh.

7 MR. GADBOIS: -- and a projected amount of money,
8 right?

9 MR. GLEASON: Yeah, it's a totally different
10 assumption on the urbanized areas, but we ended up with a
11 pot of money based on research, and I think it was the
12 strength of that statistical and mathematical analysis that
13 resulted in the willingness to put that extra money into the
14 program.

15 MR. GADBOIS: So we're not stuck with that amount
16 of money, we could come up with a different answer and a
17 different request --

18 MR. GLEASON: We could come up with a different
19 request.

20 MR. GADBOIS: -- going into the future if we
21 needed to.

22 MR. GLEASON: Yes.

23 MR. GADBOIS: Now that we have data.

24 MR. GLEASON: Whether we'll get the money remains
25 to be seen --

1 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah. Yeah.

2 MR. GLEASON: -- but, yes.

3 MR. GADBOIS: Okay. So the other one is I see our
4 planning director here. I think it's probably time that --
5 because y'all have now approved the Long-Range Plan that you
6 were doing presentations to us on; is that not correct?

7 (No audible response.)

8 That's now approved, so part of what we ought to
9 do is be looking for what opportunities or what, you know,
10 implementation steps we ought to be recommending to feed in
11 and support that plan. From what I remember in the
12 presentations, the plan did a good job of creating a
13 rationale for transit investment and we ought to be looking
14 for opportunities in that.

15 MR. GLEASON: Okay.

16 MR. GADBOIS: Again, we don't know whether we'll
17 get them or not, but we can ask.

18 MS. BLOOMER: It never hurts to ask, right?

19 MR. GADBOIS: Right.

20 MS. BLOOMER: Any other thoughts from the
21 committee members, J.R. or Rob, from our transit providers?

22 MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. for the record.

23 The only thing I would like to add is I do like
24 the conversation about the 5310 Program. When you talk
25 about transparency and that kind of issue and stability in

1 the program -- John, you can help me out on that -- we know
2 from the rural perspective we used to -- were able to get
3 into the JARC Program. JARC has gone away and New Freedom
4 has gone away.

5 Now, through the 5311 Program -- and you know,
6 that slides up and down as well -- we used to -- were able
7 to count on the 5310 Program for, you know, our systems, and
8 now even the 5310 Program is sliding with the new changes,
9 and I'm aware of that, but it does seem like it's getting
10 harder and harder for rural systems to maintain their
11 systems and where they're at, much less any increases with
12 that.

13 MR. GADBOIS: Help me understand that more. Can
14 you give me a little detail or some examples of what's
15 happening? Because in concept, I understand; we are
16 transitioning a lot of things. That makes it kind of hard
17 for the old arrangements of how you financed, et cetera, to
18 work steadily. I get that in concept, but help me
19 understand what that looks like in reality, because I don't
20 operate a system.

21 MR. SALAZAR: Well, in reality, a couple years
22 back with the 5310 Program -- I'll give you an example of us
23 in Hill Country and the Brownwood District where, typically,
24 when the 5310 Program came out, and we have a long history
25 of working with each other, and let's just say there was

1 \$100,000, Carol would get \$50,000 and then we would get
2 \$50,000 to provide service for 5310. And we used to be able
3 to maintain or know where we're at in the future years with
4 that.

5 Now, with the changes under 5310, we're nowhere
6 close to that \$50,000. It's a lot of changes in that
7 program, and John can talk about that, too. So we wipe out
8 that \$50,000 that we used to get in that district and we
9 wipe out the \$20,000 or \$50,000 that we used to get in
10 another district -- and we actually have four districts that
11 we operate in -- so we're taking away from a lot of the
12 things that we were able to do with that, because we're just
13 getting less money.

14 MR. GADBOIS: So that's the real issue, if I
15 understand it correctly -- and I'm going to kind of repeat
16 it back -- your overall budget is decreasing with all these
17 transitions and that may be nickel and diming it a little
18 bit from this program and a little bit from that program,
19 but the net result is your budget has got less money in it.

20 MR. GLEASON: Let me see -- let me just add -- and
21 J.R., correct me if I say anything that's not consistent
22 with what you're saying. I would say three things here.
23 Some of this is the impact of the allocation that's been
24 made at the federal level, because while all of a sudden we
25 didn't have as much money in total to work with.

1 Secondly, we have -- we, TxDOT -- at some
2 prompting from the federal level, have gone in and we have,
3 I think, deliberately engaged more people at the table with
4 the intent of having the process be as inclusive of
5 stakeholders as it can possibly be and those additional
6 people at the table aren't necessarily supporting the same
7 outcomes as what used to happen.

8 And then, finally, this year being the first year
9 that the federal government also introduced a split in the
10 program in terms of -- and I'm not going to get this exactly
11 right -- but they made some distinction between traditional
12 and nontraditional providers. And they lumped the
13 traditional provider into the 55 percent of the program, and
14 the nontraditional provider into the 45 percent of the
15 program. The traditional provider looks a lot more like a
16 nonprofit than it does a Transit District, and that is just,
17 yet another twist in things that reduces the amount of money
18 that you might have available.

19 And really what J.R. is talking about is this
20 whole thing around stability and certainty, where how do you
21 know -- with those three things, how do you know from one
22 year to the next that you can count on anything? You know,
23 we've opened up the process, more people at the table, not
24 as much necessarily predictability in the outcome there as
25 there used to be. It probably a good thing that we've got

1 more people there, but it has disrupted that predictability.
2 You've got less money to work with and you have this twist
3 in the program from the feds that, you know, almost make it
4 unmanageable to work with.

5 That's what we're faced with, and it is probably a
6 program that bears some element of review and resetting for
7 a while, almost on an annual basis, based on what you've
8 learned the last time out. And folks have to keep their
9 fingers crossed that no more dramatic changes come.

10 MR. McBETH: Or reset it back to the way it was,
11 because our real-life example is that we had a system that
12 was working very, very well. Every year we issued a Call
13 for Projects across three districts that wanted 5310
14 vehicles. We fully vetted the people that told us they
15 wanted a 5310 vehicle. We made sure they had the financial
16 solvency to operate one and they had the wherewithal to
17 operate one, and then we awarded to those. We had a waiting
18 list of those who didn't get it, that we would get them one
19 the next time around.

20 And with this new process in our Bryan District,
21 we have a provider -- fortunately, we're working with a
22 really good provider -- and they came to us and included us
23 and they want to do it. But in our Deep East Texas rural
24 areas, that doesn't exist. It doesn't exist.

25 And so unfortunately, it's hard to say what's

1 going to happen in that area. If we aren't seen as the
2 provider, then there's no telling, like you said, if it's
3 just one of the classical nonprofits. We know how that used
4 to work. They got the vehicle. They parked the vehicle,
5 and then in five years they put 10,000 on the vehicle and
6 they only took their clients to their location while other
7 people couldn't -- that's why we always try to coordinate
8 it.

9 So there needs to be a resetting somewhere. I
10 don't know how you do it. I know it's not y'all's fault. I
11 know it's at the federal level, and I've been on this
12 soapbox in Washington, D.C., but the unintended consequences
13 are going to negatively affect people that had a continuity
14 of service and they're not going to have it any more; that's
15 the bottom line. And it wasn't intended. I don't think
16 anyone wanted it to happen, but it did and it didn't just
17 happen, it's happening and there are going to be people that
18 are disenfranchised, and when they get disenfranchised, the
19 first person they call is their state representative and
20 then they call me and want to know, why won't you give them
21 a vehicle.

22 MR. GLEASON: I tell them to call you.

23 (Laughter.)

24 MR. MCBETH: I tell them that you need to talk to
25 Eric at TxDOT; that's who you need to talk to.

1 MR. GADBOIS: So I should stop telling them to
2 call you, too?

3 MR. McBETH: Yeah.

4 MR. GADBOIS: So as I understand it, John, you
5 know, the feds reducing the money is dysfunction that we
6 can't fix.

7 MR. McBETH: Yeah.

8 MR. GADBOIS: But the other two categories that
9 Eric talked about, I think that part of the idea, whether
10 it's happened or not in reality or whether there were
11 unintended consequences, we ought to look at that, but the
12 idea was, you know, under the old system, yeah, there was
13 kind of stability, but it was stability with a narrow set of
14 people that were coming to the table dividing up money and
15 there was thinking that there were more partnerships to be
16 had out there that could, if brought to the table,
17 contribute more service in the long run.

18 Now, that's going to go -- I think the philosophy
19 behind some of that, certainly bringing in partnership in
20 some places has increased the overall level of service and
21 has increased the overall investment, and in some places it
22 may not have. What we don't really have much of is any data
23 on how that's working and where there are unintended
24 consequences and what might need to be adjusted.

25 MR. McBETH: Yeah, I think the data that you would

1 have, just from the three of us that are sitting up here as
2 providers, is we could give you descriptions like I just
3 gave you of what's happening. There's not any hard data.
4 It's data that we do need to -- I don't know how you put
5 that data together, but if it's definitely have an effect --
6 I mean we're already seeing it, it's definitely going to
7 have an effect.

8 MR. GADBOIS: Well, I don't think, you know,
9 with -- I mean the general proposition is I don't think that
10 anybody wanted to reduce the level of investment in public
11 transportation providers. I don't think that was the intent
12 at all, you know, and so I think at a minimum we ought to
13 look at that, J.R., and see if there is some solution that
14 allows us to get both, you know, kind of an enticement for
15 other people to come in and start having buy-in ownership
16 and investment in this transportation service. But, at the
17 same time, you know, looking at a way to make sure that we
18 continue investing as well as we can in the structure that
19 we have built.

20 Is that --

21 MR. GLEASON: Well, that is -- when you look at
22 the administrative code that exists today and you look at
23 the description that goes out requesting projects, service
24 continuity is an objective and it's a very important one. I
25 think that finding out what's really going on is going to be

1 important and I think, you know, one of the things that's
2 going to make it difficult is how creative people are about
3 actually figuring out how to solve problems, even though
4 they've not been able to do it the way that they're used to.

5 But I do think we are going to try to have to get
6 at where are the gaps? Where are they happening? Where are
7 the missed opportunities? What are we doing differently now
8 that we weren't doing three years ago and why?

9 MR. GADBOIS: And part of this -- and y'all will
10 recognize this that the world is changing, right?

11 MR. GLEASON: Uh-huh.

12 MR. GADBOIS: The way people transport themselves
13 is changing. The way they do business is changing.
14 Everybody has got to change their business model. Some that
15 worked ten years ago isn't going to work ten years from now.

16 And so part of it, you know, was let's start
17 figuring out ways to explore that, but at the same time, I
18 think everybody wants to be sensitive to the fact that you
19 guys still have infrastructure investments that you've made
20 that we don't want going away where you're harmed.

21 MS. BLOOMER: Eric, how would you suggest that we
22 proceed in looking at that, sort of identifying what the
23 objectives were and then how well that's actually happening.
24 Like you said, where are the gaps? Where are the missed
25 opportunities?

1 MR. GLEASON: So I'm trying to -- I'm looking for
2 a way to phrase this effort from a policy standpoint. You
3 know, what are we trying to do from a policy standpoint
4 before we dive into the middle of some results and then
5 figure out what we're trying to do with them. I guess I
6 would need some help in understanding how to phrase what the
7 policy areas are that you would like us to put together a
8 scope of work under.

9 MR. GADBOIS: So we've made some transitions in
10 programs, right, and/or planning them.

11 MR. GLEASON: Uh-huh.

12 MR. GADBOIS: And we've asked for evaluation
13 pretty consistently.

14 MR. GLEASON: And this is in the coordination
15 planning area, going?

16 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah, I think it is.

17 MR. GLEASON: Okay.

18 MR. GADBOIS: So when we do transition -- so I
19 think we've asked for evaluation on more broadly than just
20 coordination, but let me -- so under encourage and reward
21 innovation --

22 MR. GLEASON: You're looking at the principles
23 now?

24 MR. GADBOIS: -- there's the last goal, conduct
25 regular evaluations of funding initiatives, for example.

1 And so I would think as we're looking at doing transitions
2 of programs and money that we would be constructing some way
3 to evaluate whether that's achieving the objectives for
4 which we made the adjustments.

5 MR. GLEASON: Okay.

6 MR. GADBOIS: Is that -- is that not doable?

7 MR. GLEASON: That's a loaded question.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. GADBOIS: So let me turn it around. It might
10 be easier, is it doable? Do you know of a way to do it?

11 MR. GLEASON: Sure. And I think we can take that
12 general interest on the part of the committee, because I'm
13 assuming that might also apply to, when the time comes, the
14 transitions we plan to make in the coordinating planning
15 effort. Now, those aren't going to be on the table for now
16 because folks are updating their plans first and then we're
17 going to transition.

18 But with the idea toward there are transitions
19 taking place, how do we measure, how do we evaluate, what's
20 going on.

21 MR. GADBOIS: Well, let's look at starting this up
22 for that, because an important part of an evaluation is the
23 baseline, right?

24 MR. GLEASON: Let's not leave 5310 behind just
25 yet. Let me -- how would you phrase what you wanted to look

1 at from a transitioning standpoint?

2 MR. McBETH: I think you can start off by finding
3 out from each of the systems how it's negatively affected
4 what they were doing and negatively affected their
5 coordination efforts, because it's definitely negatively
6 affected our coordination efforts.

7 MR. GLEASON: So we want a balance of both. We
8 want to find out the negative, but we would also be
9 interested in the positives.

10 MR. GADBOIS: And the positives.

11 MR. McBETH: And any of the positives, yes. Has
12 it made it easier -- I mean we stumbled into a great group
13 in the Bryan College Station area that have their act
14 together, but that's two communities out of the 94 I serve.

15 MR. GLEASON: Hang on to that.

16 (Laughter.)

17 MR. McBETH: We're not going to let it go. We're
18 trying to get them to start other ones in other places.

19 MR. GLEASON: Yeah.

20 MR. GADBOIS: And so budget, what's been the
21 impact on budget. What's been the impact on -- how would
22 you assess coordination, what would you evaluate?

23 MR. McBETH: I think you can start with just the
24 number of different entities that you have shared services
25 with that you're actually working with. I know we had a

1 list of those, the number of 5310 vehicles that we have
2 placed over the years.

3 MS. BLOOMER: And I guess I'd also be interested
4 in capital -- if the funds are used to purchase capital,
5 what's the utilization on those vehicles?

6 MR. GADBOIS: Uh-huh.

7 MS. BLOOMER: Because I feel like every ten or
8 twelve years we sort of go back and forth. We I first
9 started, we were funding the small nonprofits with vehicles
10 and there was a realization that they weren't utilizing them
11 effectively or efficiently, so then we went to we weren't
12 funding them and now it seems like we're going back around.
13 And so, generally, we don't necessarily want transit
14 providers to do what they do best, which is provide
15 transportation; we want the nonprofits to do what they do
16 best, which generally is not transportation, but we seem to
17 be mixing those two again.

18 So I would be curious if we're providing them with
19 anything related to capital vehicles operating PM, sort of
20 what's their sort of metric for providing service versus --

21 MR. GLEASON: So we can do some general breakdown
22 of where the money is going, you know, traditional versus
23 nontraditional. We can go back three years and look -- you
24 know, we can kind of do that stuff. We can look at the
25 different categories of investment. We can additionally

1 track fleet, PM, purchase of service, you know, see how
2 those might be shifting over time.

3 MR. STEPHENS: This is Rob Stephens.

4 Eric, could we also introduce maybe a metric of --
5 maybe we're talking about different levels of service here.
6 Maybe a level of service that folks are providing. Maybe
7 they're -- you know, it goes to the issue of how you're
8 utilizing the equipment, because being effective and being
9 efficient are two different things.

10 I mean it may be effective for those small, little
11 organizations to do the two trips they do a day that's
12 important to them at the certain time and they get them
13 there and that's all they do. But is that what we're -- but
14 that's a high-level of service for them because that's their
15 mission. So, I don't know, maybe were talking about a level
16 of service -- you know, maybe there's a metric to measure
17 moving forward looking at some kind of policy to figure out
18 where we're at.

19 MR. GADBOIS: Well, it's not to discount that at
20 all, but the first thing that I think we ought to look at is
21 what data do you have that might be useful and then let's
22 start deciding what additional data going forward we might
23 need. Because my suspicion is that level of service is one
24 that we don't have any data on.

25 MR. STEPHENS: And that may be true, but I have

1 filled out those applications before, so from a provider's
2 standpoint, you can provide information in an application
3 process that provides these guys with information about what
4 we're trying to do.

5 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

6 MR. STEPHENS: So, how many trips do you think
7 you're going to provide? How many miles are you going to
8 travel? How many hours are you going to operate?

9 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah.

10 MR. STEPHENS: In our environments, we do kind of
11 a mixed-use vehicle setting where these folks are just
12 usually a very focused individual, kind of -- well, you
13 know, just the problem we've always had: The client's needs
14 versus from a systematic network need. So your client-based
15 needs served are different than a network, you know, shared
16 ride experience. So maybe we look at that as a level of
17 service as a metric, I guess, and then evaluate what we're
18 trying to do.

19 MR. GADBOIS: And without a doubt it's an
20 important factor. I've got companies that are providing
21 shuttles because Transit will never provide the level of
22 quality of service that they want, giving their people
23 things to eat and coffee along the way and whatever else.
24 Well, Transit will never do that, right, but we don't
25 collect that kind of information from people now, is, I

1 guess --

2 MR. STEPHENS: Right. Yeah, there's WiFi on
3 board -- I see where you're going. You're going to some
4 other data that may not be gathered.

5 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah, so level of service is
6 important, whether it's the individualized -- if I need a
7 caseworker going with or something along those lines, but I
8 just don't know that we collect that data now. My suspicion
9 is we don't.

10 MR. GLEASON: That means yes, we don't.

11 MR. STEPHENS: Right.

12 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

13 MR. GLEASON: I mean yes, we do -- I mean, yes, we
14 don't.

15 (Laughter.)

16 MR. GADBOIS: Yes, we don't, for the record.

17 (Laughter.)

18 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So what I'm hearing from the
19 group are really two issues going forward. One would be the
20 5310 Program and one would sort of be the growth, learning
21 from the last census and starting to prepare for the next
22 census, rural-now-urban, and how do we gear up for that
23 transition, based off of what we learned from the last
24 transition.

25 MR. GLEASON: And I also heard a third, Madam

1 Chair, ongoing into the Department's Long-Range Plan and
2 identifying a way that this committee can track progress.

3 So those are the three that I heard and --

4 MR. GADBOIS: So the evaluation is not just 5310,
5 it's also looking to set up for coordinated call and an
6 evaluation of the --

7 MR. GLEASON: What I would suggest to the
8 committee -- because your next meeting is going to be -- you
9 meet every other month, so it will be the end of May -- is
10 that from a practical standpoint, we can make progress on
11 the growth and organization issue for you, and we can
12 probably take a look at the Long-Range Plan, not so much on
13 the 5310 yet, because the entire focus for the next two
14 months is going to be getting ready for Commission action on
15 those things.

16 So I'm going to say that it won't be until your
17 meeting -- not next meeting, but meeting after that, that we
18 can come back to you with some more thinking on that.

19 MR. GADBOIS: So May, June, and then July,
20 August they should --

21 MR. GLEASON: Yeah, just from a practical
22 standpoint, because staff isn't going to have a chance to do
23 anything with that.

24 MR. GADBOIS: And then that would leave census for
25 fall?

1 MR. GLEASON: No, we'll do census and Long-Range
2 Plan at your next meeting.

3 MR. GADBOIS: Oh, okay.

4 MR. GLEASON: We'll take the next step with those
5 two.

6 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

7 MR. GLEASON: And then --

8 MR. GADBOIS: I would have thought it would take
9 TTI longer than that.

10 MR. GLEASON: No, no, no. Let me be clear about
11 what you'll be getting at your next meeting.

12 (Laughter.)

13 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

14 MR. GLEASON: I think what we'll be able to get in
15 front of you for the next meeting would be basically a scope
16 of effort, a plan, kind of like this is where we see going
17 with this.

18 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

19 MR. GLEASON: And similarly with the Long-Range
20 Plan, I haven't gone into it to see if we can't tease out
21 some kind of an ongoing relationship for that plan with this
22 committee.

23 But that same level of detail for 5310 is going to
24 have to wait.

25 MR. GADBOIS: Okay. That's fine.

1 MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

2 MR. STEPHENS: Eric, this is Rob Stephens for the
3 record.

4 One more question for you, I guess in this work --
5 what are we calling this -- Work Plan?

6 MR. GLEASON: Sure.

7 MR. STEPHENS: Where will we put in here the
8 anomaly of the impact that both rural and urban providers
9 are seeing in some parts of the state, due to the energy
10 sector activity, you know, like that you'd have like in my
11 area, an area where Sara's at. So there's like a handful of
12 us who are having a unique experience in dealing with the
13 economic conditions.

14 Some would call it a prosperity kind of situation,
15 but some of us are dealing with the employment issues, you
16 know, not being able to get staff and those kinds of things,
17 competing with the private sector. So would there be a
18 suitable place in here to kind of put that to discuss or
19 talk about, maybe?

20 MR. GLEASON: Well, I think it goes under the
21 first principle, again.

22 MR. STEPHENS: That's what I was thinking, but I
23 would --

24 MR. GADBOIS: So is the problem that you've got so
25 much competition for staffing that you're having trouble

1 keeping your operations going?

2 MR. STEPHENS: Yeah, it's the -- yeah, the
3 unemployment rate is one of the lowest. And our area is
4 probably one of the lowest in the state and in the nation,
5 so I mean there's just more work than there are people, so
6 that's one of the problems. I mean there's lots of problems
7 there, but that's just one of the things that kind of
8 cascades into many others and causes more problems.

9 So, yeah, we have struggled with staffing levels
10 in both of the areas where we need operators with skill
11 sets, technical skill sets and mechanics and those kinds of
12 things, so, yeah, we struggle there.

13 MR. GADBOIS: So I understand that, we're going to
14 talk about it. So help me think about it. As a committee,
15 what would we do?

16 MS. BLOOMER: Well, this is Michelle.

17 Didn't we talk, was it late last year before the
18 last semiannual of getting together a workgroup or did I
19 just dream that up? I thought we talked about it at the
20 semiannual in July or maybe it was January and we were going
21 to get a group -- the Division was going to get a group of
22 providers that were impacted by it to start working on a
23 white paper and what the issues were and options to address
24 that.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Wow.

1 MS. BLOOMER: Did I make that up?

2 (Laughter.)

3 MR. GADBOIS: It's the first I've heard of it.

4 (Laughter.)

5 MS. BLOOMER: Because I know we've discussed this
6 issue before on the impacts of the energy sector and you
7 can't -- the impact on -- subject to higher housing,
8 traffic --

9 MR. STEPHENS: It's a whole unknown/known thing.
10 You know, the same kind of thing happens when you shift
11 programs and do different things with 5310 that impacts your
12 infrastructure, budgets, and things.

13 So how do we, as a committee, help the staff kind
14 of figure out how to help move something forward to
15 stabilize our fund levels?

16 MR. GLEASON: Well, I think --

17 MR. GADBOIS: Let me just jump in before you for a
18 second because you'll be amused by it. So part of why I ask
19 the question I ask is because most of the time we just get
20 to tell Eric to do something. And Eric isn't hiring people
21 away from you; that's the private sector doing that, right?

22 And so we could say we need to bring awareness to
23 the problem. We could say we need you know, a statewide
24 kind of recruiting effort for the industry. We could say
25 things like that.

1 I'm just wanting to know what you think of, in
2 terms of solutions that this committee might be able to do.

3 MR. STEPHENS: Well, I'd rather not move into
4 solutions right now. I think it's a good time to come up
5 with solutions -- I think it's a little premature -- but
6 those things that you mentioned are good. Those are good
7 ones.

8 But it wouldn't be unlike any other solution that
9 the Department would help with in trying to find out how to
10 fill a gap when you've got transitions between funding
11 programs and people trying to stabilize their budgets. So
12 it wouldn't be unlike any other kind of solution that we
13 come up with, it would be similar. So all of those things
14 would be good.

15 MR. GADBOIS: Okay. Sorry, Eric, for
16 interrupting.

17 MR. GLEASON: No, I think -- I don't remember the
18 forum exactly that we talked about this in, but what I do
19 remember is talking about it at the semiannual meeting
20 extensively.

21 MR. STEPHENS: Yeah.

22 MR. GLEASON: I have described on previous
23 occasions that energy sector impacts are on our radar as
24 very important to address, and you know, it's inclusive of
25 what people think of the medium, which is the cracked

1 windshields, the damage to the vehicles. But it's also
2 meant to broaden the scope of understanding around that to
3 include the competitive wage issue, to include additional
4 congestion translated into additional travel time costs, you
5 know, it takes significantly longer to get between A and B
6 than it used to, and needing to be able to articulate those
7 impacts in a quantitative way, as best we can so that when
8 people are talking about energy sector, we're at the table
9 and we're able to say something about it.

10 Again, you know, when I've talked to people --
11 some of this stuff like the competitive wage issue is a
12 systemic issue; that's a community issue that's pervasive
13 throughout. You know, the school district can raising their
14 rates, you know, paying their drivers more, so, you know,
15 that's yet another competitor for drivers and they're
16 already paying more for that. You know, it's the wealthy
17 element of this, but there are significant community impacts
18 which are much larger than public transportation.

19 And now, of course, I'm not sure how people look
20 at this issue right now because the price of oil has gone
21 down and, you know, I don't know. I mean just when we're
22 about ready to deal with this, the oil will drop and people
23 will focus their attention elsewhere and then, boom, we'll
24 be back in it again, you know, two years from now.

25 So in terms of what this committee can do, I think

1 it has to do perhaps around just simply quantifying a
2 description of a complete set of impacts.

3 MR. MCBETH: We could write a letter to the king
4 of Saudi Arabia --

5 (Laughter.)

6 -- requesting that he do even more production and
7 drive Texas intermediate crude down to \$28 a barrel.

8 MR. GLEASON: We'll probably have you do that not
9 on TxDOT letterhead. That will probably not be on TxDOT
10 letterhead.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MR. GADBOIS: Well, but what could be done -- I
13 mean the first step that could be done is, is there anybody
14 doing the analysis on impacts? Because everybody from
15 County Courts to the Legislature is at least discussing that
16 issue. Somebody's got to be doing some research on it
17 already. I don't know who.

18 Rob, there's your homework.

19 (Laughter.)

20 MS. BLOOMER: Is that an item we wanted to add to
21 the three existing?

22 MR. STEPHENS: Are you talking about Item 1 under
23 the task list?

24 MS. BLOOMER: No, I'm sorry, under our priorities
25 going forward with the 5310 Program, the urbanization and

1 growth, the Long-Range Plan. Did we want to add a fourth,
2 which would be the energy sector impacts?

3 MR. GADBOIS: See, and I would think that's a
4 subset under one somewhere, one of the goals. Because
5 really what you're trying to get at is, number one,
6 stability, and number two, people that are coming in doing
7 that kind of impact, paying their fair share to kind of
8 bring stability to the region, period. Right?

9 MR. STEPHENS: Right.

10 MR. GADBOIS: And so I would think that it comes
11 under one somewhere.

12 MR. STEPHENS: I wouldn't disagree with you. I
13 just want to make sure that it's an item that we don't lose
14 focus or just forget about. I know that the oil prices have
15 gone down, but I think it's going to be an impact that going
16 to last in those areas for a while and there won't be a
17 really easy solution to find to move it forward.

18 So, if there's an idea or tools or concepts that
19 can help us move a solution forward, I'd like for us to at
20 least be thinking about it. Thank you, sir.

21 MS. BLOOMER: Any other discussion on Item 6?

22 MR. GLEASON: So, now, this is an action item, so
23 does the committee want to --

24 MS. BLOOMER: Just don't make me put it in the
25 form of a motion.

1 MR. GLEASON: I'm fine with you not doing that,
2 specifically. We can just draw from the nets. I just want
3 to make sure that if you wanted to, you had an opportunity
4 to.

5 MR. GADBOIS: So, let me make sure I understand.
6 This Work Plan, Michelle, is our Work Plan to help guide us,
7 right?

8 MS. BLOOMER: Yes, and initially we drafted the
9 three-page document here sort of with everything and then we
10 focused on one or two items with regional coordination being
11 one, the census impacts, et cetera. So we can take a stab
12 at updating it to incorporate what we've listed here or we
13 can just say they kind of fit under there. But it was to
14 help us with -- this is more of the broad vision, and what
15 we've just talked about is sort of the more specific
16 elements under the broad topics.

17 MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R.

18 I was telling Rob, also, that this is something we
19 started many years ago before John and Rob were on here. We
20 started losing PTAC members and we just kind of lost our way
21 for a little while.

22 MS. BLOOMER: Well, we kind of lost the document
23 itself.

24 MR. SALAZAR: Yeah.

25 MS. BLOOMER: Glenn, I think we only have a hard

1 copy. We've lost the electronic version.

2 MR. RIBAKOVE: Well, I believe we've got it. I
3 can certainly reproduce it for you as a Word document, if it
4 will make it easier to work with.

5 MS. BLOOMER: But I think this is something
6 originally Glenn and Al had worked on, so I mean we can open
7 up again taking a look at this or we can agree that this
8 still pretty much lays the large higher vision of what we're
9 trying to accomplish and focus our efforts on, the three or
10 four items that we identified today.

11 MR. GADBOIS: Yeah, so I wouldn't suggest we need
12 any formal adjustment to the language here. What I would
13 suggest is we formally agree to ask Eric of the things he
14 just said he would provide, to give all kinds of coverage
15 that we're in agreement, that's actually what we want from
16 him as a way to, you know, do our work according to this
17 Work Plan.

18 Is that fair enough?

19 (No audible response.)

20 MR. GADBOIS: He shook his head.

21 MR. GLEASON: Well, I -- yeah, I mean --

22 MR. GADBOIS: He's not responding for the record
23 very well today.

24 MR. GLEASON: Hey --

25 (Laughter.)

1 -- that hurt.

2 MR. GADBOIS: All this body language doesn't get
3 recorded.

4 MR. GLEASON: That's exactly right.

5 MS. BLOOMER: And I think we were in agreement
6 with the two items for the next meeting, which would be our
7 meeting in May, the end of May. It would just sort of be a
8 plan or a scope of work, a starting point for the growth and
9 urbanization issue and the Long-Range Plan issue that you
10 had brought up.

11 And I see --

12 MR. GADBOIS: 5310 bumps to the second meeting --

13 MS. BLOOMER: To the next meeting in July.

14 MR. GADBOIS: -- or much the same --

15 MS. BLOOMER: Right.

16 MR. GADBOIS: -- of the, you know, consideration.

17 MS. BLOOMER: I'm seeing a little -- I'm seeing
18 quite a bit of head-nodding here.

19 Christina, does that sound consistent with the
20 discussion?

21 MS. MELTON CRANE: Yes.

22 MS. BLOOMER: Great.

23 MR. STEPHENS: Energy sector?

24 MS. MELTON CRANE: Yeah, sounds great.

25 MS. BLOOMER: And I think we're all in agreement

1 that we can add the energy sector into that as well?

2 MR. STEPHENS: Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Michelle.

3 MS. MELTON CRANE: Yes.

4 MS. BLOOMER: All right. I think that's about as
5 formal of an action that we're going to get on that item.

6 So Item 7, public comment, do we have anybody from
7 the public that would like to make a comment?

8 MR. RIBAKOVE: We have the not received any
9 speaker cards.

10 MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Propose and discuss agenda
11 items for the next meeting. Do you have the actual date of
12 the next meeting, Josh?

13 MR. RIBAKOVE: Currently, the next meeting is
14 scheduled for the last Tuesday in May; that's Tuesday,
15 May 26th, and it is the day after Memorial Day.

16 MR. GLEASON: Monday's the 25th?

17 MR. RIBAKOVE: Yeah.

18 MS. BLOOMER: Well, we have plenty of time to plan
19 ahead. You all can plan a vacation in Austin.

20 (Laughter.)

21 MR. GADBOIS: Oh, yeah, what a good time.

22 MS. BLOOMER: And I think we already covered items
23 for the next agenda, so we should be good there.

24 Are there any other questions or comments before I
25 adjourn the meeting?

1 MR. GADBOIS: May 26th was the date?

2 MS. BLOOMER: May 26th at one o'clock.

3 MR. RIBAKOVE: May 26th is currently the date,
4 unless you want to adjust that.

5 MR. GADBOIS: So I just want to formally take this
6 opportunity to thank all of TxDOT's staff for sitting
7 through and putting up with our discussions. Thanks.

8 MS. BLOOMER: Anything else?

9 (No audible response.)

10 All right. Then the meeting is adjourned.

11 (Proceedings concluded at 2:29 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, William J. Garling, CET, certified electronic transcriber, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages 1 through 66 constitute a full, true, and accurate transcript from electronic recording of the proceedings had in the foregoing matter.

DATED this 8th day of April, 2015.


William J. Garling, CET
Certified Electronic Transcriber
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