TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING

3712 Jackson Avenue, Building 6
3rd Floor, Room 323
Austin, Texas

Tuesday
November 26, 2013

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN AUSTIN:
Michelle Bloomer, Chair
J.R. Salazar, Vice Chair
Glenn Gadbois
Brad Underwood

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT BY TELEPHONE:
Rob Stephens

TxDOT STAFF:
Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division (PTN)
Bobby Killebrew, Deputy Division Director, PTN
Kris Dudley, Section 5310 Program Manager, PTN
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PROCEEDINGS

MS. BLOOMER: All right. Okay. So call the meeting to order. First item of business is approval of the minutes from the September 24th, 2013 meeting. Do I have a motion to approve the minutes?

MR. SALAZAR: I'll make the motion to approve.

MS. BLOOMER: All right.

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. I'll make the motion to approve.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Alrighty, and we'll second.

MS. BLOOMER: All right. We have a motion and a second. J.R.?

MR. SALAZAR: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: Michelle, aye. Brad?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: Motion passes. Minutes are approved. We're going to go ahead and move around on the agenda. Eric is not here yet, and I believe we don't have folks from TPMP here, either. So we'll go ahead and move on to Item 5 on the agenda, presentation and discussion of the Texas Regional Coordination Public Transportation Planning, and I'll turn that over to Bobby.

MR. KILLEBREW: Absolutely. And welcome to the few that braved today, and drove the distance.

For this item, we do have Steve White with us, who's
going to be walking you through the presentation. There are items in your packet that he'll be going over briefly. I don't think he's going over all the items in your packet, but he certainly is here for, you know, discussion purposes. With that, I will turn it over to Steve.

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Bobby. Well, it's certainly my pleasure and honor to be here to share some information with you all. The Regional Coordinated Transportation Planning effort began in a formal way in Texas in 2006. Of course, agencies across the state have been cooperating and collaborating long before that. But in a formal way, that was started in 2006. Since then, we have -- TxDOT has awarded just more than $11-million to eight agencies across the state to support this effort.

In your packet, you have a map of the 24 planning regions in Texas. As you know, each planning region has a designated lead agency. And on the back of that map is a contact sheet with information on a contact person and contact information for each of the 24 lead agencies.

A lot has occurred in these past several years. Twenty-three of the 24 planning regions currently have an updated regional plan. The regions have gone through considerable effort in doing any assessment and transportation resource inventory and various other activities to complete those plans. In most of these regions, a huge success is that
there is infrastructure in place. There is a process where stakeholders gather on a regular basis, primarily to identify transportation problems and identify solutions.

There are dozens, or probably hundreds of individual successes across the state in each of the 24 regions. And the way that this effort has worked to date is that each region works under kind of a big umbrella regional plan that's updated every five years. And then, in those interim years between big plan updates, regions do one of two things: They either start implementing that plan, or they do additional, more in-depth planning; studies, research, what have you to move them further along to achieving the prior needs that they set forth in their plan. So that's typically what happens in the in-between years. And in each of those years, each agency has an annual work plan, and the successes are, in many ways, measured region by region, work plan by work plan.

The types of projects vary considerably. Many of those are related to increasing access to services, serving areas or vulnerable populations that heretofore lacked access. Some of the activities focused on addressing inefficiencies in services. There has been a considerable emphasis heretofore on serving specific, priority, vulnerable populations that have been identified by federal statute; and that, in particular, has been an emphasis on individuals with disabilities, senior citizens, and persons with low income, as
well as there's been a considerable emphasis on employment-related transportation, which the JARC Program has been a major player in that.

Each of the regions has -- the way that this has operated to date is that each of the 24 regions have established their own set of performance measures and metrics, depending on their unique plan and their unique annual work plan. We expect, during the coming year, to specifically address performance measures in a bigger way, looking at metrics, not only for local areas, but also statewide, as well. And this stems from a pending recommendation of the Statewide Working Group that recently convened to make recommendations to TxDOT -- TxDOT on the direction of regional planning in Texas. And Brad sits on that working group.

Lessons learned, kind of essential elements to date. This could be an extensive presentation unto itself, and so I just wanted to give a few highlights, kind of very high-level observations about what we have learned seems to work.

One, that this be a locally driven process. The decision was made at the very beginning that in Texas that would be our approach, and that seems to work very well. Rather than a top-down approach, we have very much been a bottom-up, grassroots approach.

Obviously, state-level agency collaboration is essential, as well. We have learned that those areas that
seem to really be succeeding most are those that have a truly interdisciplinary and interagency team that meets and functions regularly.

Critical to the success of this effort is the issue of capacity. I can't understate that. Those areas that have the capacity, that have the resources, both financially and staff-wise, find that to be an -- a necessary piece of this effort; in addition to creativity, flexibility, and communication. Those all play into major lessons learned.

One key strategy that has to be mentioned, that we have learned over these past few years, is the essential link between mobility management and case management, especially with the emphasis that we've had on human service transportation needs. In example after example we can point to, there are very -- there's a very definite correlation between connecting the case management operations of human service agencies and organizations with the mobility management operations of transportation organizations, so that it becomes systemic. What the case managers do and what the mobility managers do becomes part of their day-to-day routine and process.

Current activities. We are into the state's Fiscal Year 2014. We -- almost $420,000 was awarded for regional planning activities. For FY '14, one of your attachments includes -- it's a front and back, and it includes selected
activities requested for funding in 2014. This is not a comprehensive list. It is a selective list, but I tried to list out a variety of different types of projects that are being funded this year. So at your leisure, you might want to look through those and get a sense of the type of activities that TxDOT is funding for regional coordination this year.

Another significant note for current activities is there is increased attention to veterans' transportation needs, and that is happening at the state level. We are interacting much more with the Texas Veterans Commission and at the regional level. Any number of these local regional contracts that we have in place for this year include veterans' transportational related projects in the regions.

And then, finally, again, the -- another significant activity that is ongoing is the working group that I mentioned a couple of minutes ago, that has spent a considerable amount of time and effort in discussing the future direction of this project. And two other handouts give you a sense of what this group is considering.

There are two handouts. One says -- one says consensus, recommendations, October 10th, 2013. These, the group has already reached consensus on, so these are sure things.

There's another handout that says final recommendations, November 13th, 2013. This is a pending list.
And this week is actually the deadline. The group is supposed to finalize which of these there will actually be consensus on by the end of this week, so we will be able to report on that in December.

And our plan is, once we have the consensus recommendations from the working group, those will be accepted by TxDOT; and then we will, in turn, share those recommendations with all of the lead agencies and other stakeholders for additional input. I would say that, on the working group itself, there are 30 or 31 members. There's a very diverse representation, including seven lead agency representatives. And there's a host of other representatives. It's very well rounded, and we feel quite representative of this effort in Texas.

So those are the plans. And the recommendations of -- there's -- time doesn't allow us to go into these, but they cover a variety of issues from membership and engagement of local stakeholders to the role and expectation of lead agencies, to outreach, to what should the content and components be of the big umbrella regional plans, and then again metrics.

And I anticipate, although I don't know, but based on the discussions that were had, I anticipate that we will be considering pulling together another working group to specifically address the matter of metrics and performance.
measures.

As far as challenges, metrics, of course, will be one of them. Capacity, which I mentioned earlier, is an ongoing challenge. Leveraging resources, a lot of the regions have become really skilled at figuring out how to leverage other resources because there's never been enough funding for the dollars that have been earmarked for regional planning; there's never been enough to actually sustain this for a new region. So it calls -- it necessitates leveraging of the resources.

And then, finally, I mentioned case management and mobility management. It's an ongoing challenge to develop ongoing mechanisms in each region for informing the clients. Quite often, there is kind of an institutional memory problem when there's turnover, staff turnover at the local level, because you know, we offer training and workshops from time to time, and provide guidance. But then, when the local staff changes, and someone new comes in, it's often, you know, foreign. So that is a challenge. So the more that these processes can be institutionalized for lack of a better word, at the local level, the least likely that things will slip through the crack when there's a, you know, staff turnover and change.

So I hope that gives you a very brief, high-level overview of where that effort is right now in Texas, and I
would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Steve. Did you want to --

MR. SALAZAR: I had a question, maybe more towards
Bobby, on the determination of funding level. How is that
done?

MR. KILLEBREW: And this is Bobby. You know, we've
handled that a variety of different ways over the years. As
you'll see in the early years, when this effort was first
kicking off, we invested quite a large amount of funds into
this process. Things were new. People had to gear up towards
this.

We are entering a more cyclical type of environment
now, where we call it "spikes and valleys." There are years
in which individual plans need to be updated, and we'll call
that the "spike years," where we think that there needs to be
more resources, financial resources, dedicated to the lead
entities and the systems doing this. And the years in which a
plan doesn't need to be updated, we think those are more the
valley years, where perhaps the funding levels are -- should
be more appropriately at a maintenance-type level.

Each year, as we go into the process -- and Steve
will correct me if I say this wrong -- we do collect the plans
from the lead entities, lead agencies out there, and we do
review those, and we go over those together with those lead
agencies. And through that back-and-forth discussion, we
determine amount of funding level that is appropriate for that plan, for that area, and for that particular year. So there's not a preconceived amount of money that we know we're going to put towards that. We do recognize there are scarce resources at the state level. And it's one of those things, if you put more funding towards this effort, it has to come from somewhere else and some other programs that we're working on, as well.

We do look at the overall picture of what we're funding completely in the State of Texas; and again, we try to evaluate individual plans on those spikes and valley years, to make sure we do cover the needed basis. And we know we have some federal programs that are still tied to the plan. We know we still have a state requirement in the state statutes here in Texas to do this. We don't want to back off of that effort. We want to make sure we can provide enough resources where it's applicable. Did that answer your question close enough there?

MR. SALAZAR: It did.

MR. KILLEBREW: It is very much a collaborative effort, J.R. I've not sat in on very many of those conversations. A lot of those Steve has with individuals. And I would say, for the most part, it's been working pretty good with the agencies being very honest about what they intend to do with the funding, where they're spending it. You
know, it's not just about plan updates, but some of these people, you know, may be paying salaries with it, may be paying other types of expenses, so we recognize that. And it is a cost of doing business. And we don't want to put anybody in a position where they have to make a difficult choice; do I pay the light and water bill this month, or do I update my plan. So we do -- we are cognizant of that fact.

MS. BLOOMER: And Bobby, this is Michelle. What's the source of the funding?

MR. KILLEBREW: That, too, has -- Michelle, that's also kind of evolved over the years. In the early years, we used a lot of program funds from JARC, from our administrative piece of JARC. In the most recent times, we've used some hundred percent state funds we've had, and a lot has come from the planning program. So that's why --

UNIDENTIFIED: And we --

MR. KILLEBREW: -- I was talking about those scarce resources. As we take from those different programs, or as those program funding, like JARC, have previously gone away, as those sources are not available, you know, we have to look at the overall picture and where we're getting the funds from.

MS. BLOOMER: And so in the last nine years, we spent 11 million on regional coordination. Have we seen significant improvement in the number of trips provided, the trip -- any of the metrics? Nine years; $11-million. What
has that bought?

MR. KILLEBREW: And I think that's -- well, you know, if Eric was here, he would be -- I know Brad, you were -- I don't remember if you were at that workshop or not -- they had a workshop here very recently -- in fact, in the spring wasn't it?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Right.

MR. KILLEBREW: And Eric stood right up here at the front, and that was one of the things that he wanted to demonstrate. He said, we need to start seeing some results. You know, it's one thing to do a plan; it's another thing to come together and talk about it, but here's the results. Am I seeing any increase in trips? And if we look at the stats over the year, you don't necessarily see those increase in trips.

Now does that mean that we'd still have the decrease whether we put the plan with it or not? Perhaps the plan number is addressing other things, other than just trip count. Maybe it is making those meaningful connections. Perhaps there's other parameters out there that causes trips to increase and decrease over a period of time.

Steve, you were in those workshops more than I was, so I know y'all probably delved in to that because Eric kind of gave that as a charge at the beginning of the meeting. He said, I want you to talk about this as a group. Is this
planning effort actually resulting in more trips, are we
making those meaningful connections, are we able to fill those
gaps in service that's been identified in each individual area
of the plan?

MR. WHITE: Well, and that did -- as Brad shared,
that did prompt a robust discussion about metrics and
performance measures, and that is what clearly brought to our
attention the need to address this in a bigger way. But one
of the questions that -- or one of the observations that
became obvious with the group is that there isn't one way that
folks are using to measure success. Some --

MR. GADBOIS: Well, again, it seems to me dissecting
out increase in trips is really tough to do because the trips
will go up and down. You know, it could be carried by this
program, it could be carried by somebody else.

One of the things I find as interesting, if not more
interesting, is are -- is this program resulting in increased
partnerships that gives either more money or more human
resources involved in helping connect people to transit.

MR. WHITE: Yes. And that's what some of the
working group members could share, too. It's right on target
with that observation, that there are a number of different
ways we could consider measuring success. One of them would
be process measures. Are there new stakeholders being
engaged? A couple -- or three examples that I have jotted
For instance, in one part of the state, where they've got a veterans transportation project going on, one of their performance measures is the number of veterans who report using public transportation to access jobs. Another one is reduced no-shows at the VA hospital in that area for appointments due to lack of transportation. Very legitimate metrics for that area and that project. Certainly ridership, expanded access, percentage of populations with access to public transportation.

And your point about, you know, it's not always easy to isolate what to contribute ridership increases or decreases to, because it does take resources and a level of sophistication. I did pull -- it came to my mind one region that did a particular project, where they really did some heavy-duty evaluation. And in that area, in this particular year, they had a special intervention where they were specifically having intensive trainings and workshops with the case managers and mobility managers in their area. It was an intensive intervention, specifically with that group of folks. They did a multivariate analysis comparing the pre-intervention data with post-intervention data. And they looked at ridership, rides provided, and passenger miles traveled, doing a multivariate analysis where they controlled for other factors. After that intervention with the intensive
training with mobility managers and case managers, their ridership went up seven and a half percent, their rides provided went up 12 percent, and the passenger miles traveled went up 16 percent, which I think is just hugely valuable information.

Now, is each region and each lead agency able to do that level of evaluation for every single project? It's probably not realistic. But it gives you an idea of what could be done. And it certainly opens up a really interesting discussion about what should the metrics be.

Another thing that came out of the focus -- the working group is that perhaps we should look at local metrics, in addition to Texas establishing some statewide metrics. Because we have to recognize that each region's plan will be tailored for their needs. They'll have a different set of local metrics. But is there value in Texas, as a state, having a common set of metrics, so we can answer your question more precisely, Michelle, what can you show from this $11-million, State of Texas.

MS. BLOOMER: Well, and I was -- what I was trying to get at, too, is I'm hearing two different things. I'm hearing it's a local grassroots process, and the locals should develop the metrics, and then I'm hearing we should have statewide metrics. And again, I heard more trips provided and filling gaps, but then I also heard, well, maybe it's not just
about that, it's about more partnerships, it's about coordination. So before we develop metrics to measure something, we have to figure out what our ultimate goal is. Because if it's not actually providing more trips, then what should we be measuring? And we've had this metrics discussion before, and it was like no metrics, let us at the local level determine it. And now, when I heard that we had started a statewide working group, that was the first I had heard about that. So I'm a little concerned that we're working to develop a future for mutual coordination, but yet, this is the first time we've heard about a statewide working group working to come up with it. And they've already come up with recommendations and metrics. And I'm not sure that, you know, other than Brad -- are you on the committee?

UNIDENTIFIED: No.

MS. BLOOMER: That any of the PTAC members are on the committee, are aware of what was going on. And my understanding is that's PTAC's role, is to help PTN sort of provide the guidance and direction and input of where things are going. So I was a little surprised when I heard about that, and wanted to learn more about who's on that committee, what they're being asked to do, what they're coming up with, how that fits with sort of the committee's idea as to where we were wanting to take regional coordination. So that's still
what I'm trying to wrap my hands around.

And just looking at -- just as a note, we only have
the November 13th draft in our packet. So whatever the,
quote, "finalized recommendations" are, we don't have those.

MR. WHITE: So you don't have one titled "Consensus
Recommendations, 10/10/13"?

MS. BLOOMER: No.

UNIDENTIFIED: No.

MR. WHITE: Well, I'll personally make sure that
those are sent to you, as well as a roster of the working
group membership. And they have not come up with recommended
recommendations; they've only come up with a recommendation
that we address the matter of metrics and performance measure.
So those are all to be determined.

And like I said, I -- it's premature for me to say
what we will or will not do, but I'm inclined to think that we
will address that in some way. And one option that has come
up is that we can pull together a working group of
stakeholders to specifically answer the questions that you
posed: What are the metrics that we want to look at? Do we
want to look at statewide for real; and if so, what would that
be, or does it stay strictly local and region by region?

MR. KILLEBREW: And in all fairness, too, we
actually were bringing this item to PTAC as -- in this plan
for a later PTAC meeting. This one kind of popped up at the
last minute on the agenda.

We haven't -- we had the assistance of the University of Texas to help with the work group. They made -- and there was a lot of people in this room. I only stuck my head in for five minutes. But there was a lot of people in this room. The idea was coming from the lead entities themselves, and I think they were all represented. Some of the lead agencies were represented, and there were other categories, you know, of local human service provider in the rural area.

UNIDENTIFIED: Rural.

MR. KILLEBREW: Yeah, and we started to collect that information from that working group. We had hoped to have a more polished version of this at the January PTAC meeting, to present to you what happened in that working group. And UT is, you know, helping us polish up that type of presentation, as well.

So it's -- what you see in your packets today is very preliminary. The Department hasn't settled on anything from the work group, we've not enforced it, we've not made any movements out on that to do anything, take any type action on it right way. But we do -- we agree with you, we do think this is a PTAC weigh in matter too.

MR. GADBOIS: And Bobby, let me interject here for a second, because you were around when Michelle and Michelle's
boss, spent a good bit of time thinking through this, how this
might work and start up initially.

MR. KILLEBREW: Uh-huh.

MR. GADBOIS: And so I think some of what -- I hope
I'm not putting words in your mouth. But some of what
Michelle's laying on the table is some consistency of
implementation on those original decisions that were made,
which were really made with a focus on let's allow for as much
flexibility locally, to experiment, as we possibly can.

There's still an opportunity, as your example just
pointed out, to develop metrics around that and ask for
metrics around what's being -- what's happening locally. But
to the extent you change that, some of those basic
presumptions about how this works, there ought to, number one,
be very full conversation about it; and number two, some good
reasons to be able to say we're ready to evolve and come up
with more, you know, consistent, statewide kind of service,
something along those lines, and so I hope you all think about
that as you're going along. You know, the pointed questions
are: What's the time line and what's the process?

MR. WHITE: The process is -- well, first of all, my
impression from -- and Brad can chime in. My impression from
the working group meetings and the preliminary set of
recommendations -- and even once the recommendations are
finalized, they are only recommendations. My sense is that it
would still, by and large, remain the same as it is, as far as being very heavily, locally driven.

In the discussion of metrics, it was brought up by the room full of stakeholders that should we consider, would there be value, would it be helpful to all parties concerned if there be local performance measures, in addition to maybe a common set of state measures, so when we're asked the question, what can you show as far as your performance measures for the State of Texas for $11-million, we can have an answer.

So it just came up as -- it organically came up. We didn't expect it; it may not go anywhere. But my clear impression is that it's very much remaining a locally driven process.

Now the process, the consensus on which of these recommendations will actually be finalized is this week, is the deadline. Following that, as Bobby said, we're contracted with UT, that is going to compile the -- you know, synthesize and kind of shape everything up. We will then, in turn, share that with all the lead agencies across the state, not just the seven who were on this working group; other stakeholders, and we will encourage each lead agency to, in turn, share with their respective stakeholders, for additional input and -- review and input. So even though this working group's life, their task will have been accomplished and, you know, they'll
move on, the project and the opportunity for input is absolutely still there.

So TxDOT will take all of this under advisement, then we will make decisions as we look at future years and those cycles that Bobby referred to, and anticipating the next big plan update, which I believe is due in 2016 now, already. It seems like we just finished the other one. You know, what that might look like, process-wise and it's still a very open process.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Here's a couple of things that we talked about in the work group that stood out to me, and I hope maybe they'll address some of your concerns, too, Glenn. I've been a part of both what I consider in the last four years kind of a good side of a good working RTC group. I take it someone had some issues in the very beginning of this process. I'm kind of -- I feel like I've been on the other side of some better working RTC group. I don't think we're perfect, but I think we get some things done pretty decent up in our area. We are the lead agency when we're doing it, so I guess I can say that about myself.

But anyway, some of the problems that I have, just as this process moves forward, is the lack of resources that's in this program. It's -- we gather together once a month, and we have different variety of agencies, and that sort of thing, all around the table and we talk about needs, we talk about
gaps in service, and then it used to be we kind of had sort of
a -- you know, we've got kind of a light at the end of the
tunnel. We've got JARC money, we've got new Freedom money.
Let's all go out, let's apply for a project to address this
specific need. You know, let's go out -- oh, you're right,
that is a huge need, we need to fill that, let's write a grant
application to the coordinated call process, let's go out,
let's apply for it, we'll implement it, and we've seen a
couple of those come through. We've been doing this a little
while now where we actually have some projects that have
happened through that.

The problem is now those projects are gone because
you've got no JARC money, you've got no new Freedom money.
It's all rolled into the one. Transit hasn't had an increase
in state funding since 2001. So we're trying to keep up with
what we're doing, much less adding on new things.

And so it's almost like we all get together, we
identify needs, and then it's like, now what are we going to
do about it. Nothing. Nothing. It's like, well, we've
identified this as a huge need. I agree, we have. But
there's nothing we can do about it to move forward. And so it
almost seems like we're moving people down a path, through
this process, where there is no end in sight. It's just we're
going to walk this path all day long together, and we're
really not getting anywhere, where this actually rubber meets
the road.

I would -- I spent a little time in Oklahoma just because of our -- one of our projects up there. And so I asked them one day, I said, well, how do you guys handle your regional coordination. Because we actually have two members from Oklahoma that attend our regional coordination meetings from the Durant area. And they said, we don't have these in Oklahoma. I said, well, what do you do? I said, you have to have a plan, it's a federal mandate, so what do you do. It's done at the statewide level.

And I said, why is done at the statewide level. They said, well, at the statewide level, our DADS, DARS, HHSC, all these different individuals, they can talk amongst one another, they have -- they know what funding they have available, they know how it can interchange, what federal won't match with other federal, that sort of thing, they put it all together, we do a statewide update every five years. We complete some local surveys at our local level, figure out what some of our needs and gaps are, and then the state -- it's done at the statewide level once a year.

And I said, okay. And they said, but if we want to do something like this, we have planning funds. And I said, for what. And the example was given, well, a couple of years ago, we updated some of our fixed routes. And they said, I don't have a planner on staff, and so I applied for a special
grant to have a study done -- I forget what consultant did it for them -- but we were able to create an extra fixed route by cutting some of our weak stops off, adding some additional ones on; and so, therefore, we actually provided a better service for the community as a whole by doing something like that.

And so that just kind of got me thinking that we've spent $11-million in this amount of time, what if we had some resource to do true public transportation planning money? Most agencies that I'm aware that are spending rural dollars -- correct me if I'm wrong here, Mr. Gleason -- do not have a planner on staff. They don't have someone that sits in the back room that says, I'm going to be your planner, you know, what do we -- do we need to look at your fixed routes, do we need to look at some of your demand response service, do we need to look at different packets of -- or pockets of individuals that need public transportation.

When we went into Collin County, the COG had already started a process. Nelson/Nygaard did the study for us. They gave us a report this thick, surveyed individuals with -- people with disabilities, we know where they're at. We know that in the fixed route there's a whole pocket of the city or the town we're not even hitting with the fixed route. So as we prepared to do greater fixed routes in that area, I've got a complete, planned-out study that shows me exactly where
these are. So that's something I can use now to put rubber on the road to make a difference. Does that make sense?

    In concept, I agree with what we're doing here, but I think there might be better ways to go after it than a group of stakeholders. That's my two cents. I hope that make sense. I know that's a lot of information at one time, but.

    MR. GADBOIS: It does, and I understand -- I mean, the idea always, right or wrong, was creating an infrastructure by which the regions could experiment with new partnerships, look at -- you know, have some resources to look at planning and the such.

    MR. UNDERWOOD: Sure.

    MR. GADBOIS: And what you're telling me is that the availability of funding to do that, whether it gets passed down to the locals for them to find ways to spend it, or the state allocates it out as needed, on a kind of more systemic plan, it's just not -- it's not --

    MR. UNDERWOOD: It's not realistic.

    MR. GADBOIS: -- there --

    MR. UNDERWOOD: And to me, what Eric is doing now has probably been the greatest advancement towards regional coordination by attending the statewide veterans deal that you're doing. Now you guys are able to talk. Because when we get down to the local level, what the local -- use the VA, for example. And we say, you know what, here's what we could do
if we had something from you. And they look at it and they
go, that's a great idea, let me recommend that up. And
eye've got 17 layers of hierarchy to go through, by the time
it gets to the top, they go, I don't even know what that is.
You know what I mean?

Whereas, at the statewide level, if Eric's talking
here to the veterans on this side, they can start agreeing and
push this down. And so there was some -- there's some
advantage of meeting locally and deciding some of these
things. But as far as actually being able to get something to
break free and do something, huge amounts of work that I think
could be accomplished much easier and simpler a different
direction.

MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. I think part of
the PTAC work plan, one of the items was the regional
coordination. And so I think, when we get back together in
the new year, is to pick this up and start from PTAC's
perspective, where do we think, and what -- where would we
like regional coordination to go. And then, similar to how
we've done the rule-making with working groups of
stakeholders, is how do we do that, what are the
recommendations, and then come forward with something.

But I think -- I'm just feeling like whatever this
working group is has sort of gotten up ahead of. So we're
coming up with recommendations and metrics when we haven't
really decided what we're trying to measure. And that makes it hard to determine whether or not we've spent the 11 million sufficiently.

And then my other question is, so 23 of 24, who's the 24th? And sort of what's the issue? Why don't we have a plan? We have 23 of 24 planning regions that have updated plans.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Who's the cheese that stands alone?
MR. WHITE: That's Planning Region 19, which is the Laredo area.

MS. BLOOMER: And so --
MR. WHITE: They developed a plan in 2006, but they have not updated their plan.
MS. BLOOMER: And what's the plan to have a plan in place with the Laredo District?
MR. WHITE: We have a meeting on that scheduled for December. So exactly how that will be resolved is to be determined. But it is definitely on our radar screen. It's more than on our radar screen, and it will be addressed.

UNIDENTIFIED: Steve, who was the lead agency in 2006?
MR. WHITE: The lead agency in 2006 was the same lead agency that's there now, and it's South Texas Development Council.
MS. BLOOMER: And, are they recommended for funding?
MR. GADBOIS: And so, Michelle, your message is it's on our work plan and we're interested, and we want to engage.

MS. BLOOMER: Sorry. Yes, is that -- it's in our work plan. And I think that's the next item. We sort of put the work plan on hold with the revision to the administrative rules to address the funding. But I think that's something that whatever this work group has done, we'd like to hear to come back. But I think we need to start fresh, as from our perspective, what do we think we're trying to accomplish with regional coordination, where we've been, where do we think we would like to go, so we can provide that direction and guidance, and then see how the recommendations from this work group either do or don't fit into that direction.

MR. UNDERWOOD: And I'd like to hear from the industry on this too, Glenn. In January, our semi-annual meeting, maybe we could set some time aside, or maybe in your update, you could talk about this, that we're going to consider this, and we can get comments and feedback.

MR. GADBOIS: Can we schedule our meeting near that, one way or the other?

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'd like to do it following. Could we do that?

MS. BLOOMER: That's January --

MR. WHITE: And you'll also see when I provide you all the roster, that many of the members are transit
providers, too.

MR. KILLEBREW: Michelle, this is Bobby. As far PTAC engagement on this, if we pull together as an agency, you know, this work group again, or we're -- as Steve is suggesting, we throw -- you know, as UT helps us put a more polished version out, we throw this back towards the work group to see, you know, does this stick on the wall like macaroni should, without creating a PTAC quorum -- which is going to be easy to do these days because we have fewer PTAC members -- does the committee have a desire -- I know Brad is already part of the work group. Is there a desire for any of the other members to also be part of that process, so we can include you as well on that?

UNIDENTIFIED: Well --

MS. BLOOMER: In that work group? At this point, no.

UNIDENTIFIED: I'll be there.

MS. BLOOMER: Are you still --

UNIDENTIFIED: I'll be on it.

MR. GADBOIS: Well, and correct me if I'm wrong, but y'all's working group sounds like what I'd call a brain trust. Y'all are sifting through and sorting, deciding what experiences have happened out there and what you might take from that to -- in going forward to develop some guidance or recommendations or, you know, activities that should be done,
correct? In which case, you can bring that back to us, and
we'll do data points that we can -- that can and should
consider and talk about and decide how we plug in on that.
Okay.
MS. BLOOMER: Yeah.
UNIDENTIFIED: Okay.
MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We do have three public
comments on this item. We'll go ahead and take those now.
The first one -- I'll just go in alphabetical order -- is Dave
Marsh from HEARTS.
MR. MARSH: Do you mind if Wendy goes, Michelle?
MS. BLOOMER: What?
MR. MARSH: Do you mind if I have Wendy start up?
MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Sure.
MS. WEEDON: I got nominated to go first.
MS. BLOOMER: Wendy Weedon with Brazos Transit
District.
MS. WEEDON: Hello. My name's Wendy Weedon, I work
for Brazos Transit District. I am Director of Marketing and
Quality Assurance. In that role, I'm responsible for
attending all of the regional coordination meetings within our
service areas. BTD services 16 counties; so, with that, we
have three different COGs that we contend with, and three
councils I sit on.
Over the past five -- I've worked for Brazos Transit
for five years. So over the past five years --

UNIDENTIFIED: Wasn't me.

UNIDENTIFIED: Wasn't me.

UNIDENTIFIED: Excuse us.

UNIDENTIFIED: Sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED: If you could pull that just a little closer to you?

MS. BLOOMER: Rob, are you on the line?

UNIDENTIFIED: Can you hear?

MR. STEPHENS: Yes, Michelle.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. STEPHENS: I'm sorry. I was going to announce myself, it was kind of at the beginning of Steve's presentation, I didn't want to interrupt.

MS. BLOOMER: That's okay.

MR. STEPHENS: But I've been here. Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you for joining us. We also -- just so you know, we also have quite a few members that are listening in, but we can't -- they can hear us, but we can't hear them, just so you know. Okay. Sorry, Wendy.

UNIDENTIFIED: Go ahead.

MS. WEEDON: That's okay.

MR. STEPHENS: Okay. Thank you.

MS. WEEDON: So I've worked for Brazos Transit for five years, and over just the five years that I've worked
there, I figured it up, I've spent over 1,000 hours attending
these RTC meetings and work groups. That equates (sic) to
a half-time position, staff position. And in that same time
period, based on the minute orders I’ve reviewed, TxDOT has
expended about $480,000 supporting these RTCs in my service
areas.

The amount that TxDOT has expended is the equivalent
of three full-time bus routes, operating 12 times a day -- 12
hours a day, I apologize. So if the money that was spent on
the RTC groups had been, instead, utilized to provide service,
we could have carried over about a half a million more trips,
serviced 500,000 more patrons in our service area alone. We
have had to cut routes in the past five years, several of
them, because of lack of funding.

From my perspective, I have not seen one productive
result come from any of the RTC work in planning, in the areas
that I serve. Instead, the time spent in these meetings is a
complete waste of time, and the program itself is a complete
waste of funds; that could otherwise have been included in
annual formula apportionment, where they could have direct --
have a direct effect on our service for our patrons.

The plans themselves have always proposed creating
new services at a time which we are financially hard-pressed
to maintain what we currently have on the street, and that, of
course, the proposals never include any new local funds to
support these plans that the RTC wants to accomplish.

We've wasted far too much time, far too much money, and I think we need to stop this program now and redirect the funds to the RTD as part of their annual formula distribution, and allow them and their local boards to make the decisions on how to best utilize the funds within the established service plans in their respective areas. Thank you.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Wendy, are you in 16? Is that HGAC? Is that correct? Is that the lead agency?

MS. WEEDON: HGAC, DETCOG and BVCOG.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED: And Wendy, so there's a federal law requiring coordination and planning, and a state law requiring coordination and planning. And you're telling us to ignore that?

MS. WEEDON: No, sir. I just don't feel as if the $480,000 that have been spent have accomplished anything.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, and, I got that part. I'm just wondering what you're actually suggesting we do about the law.

MS. WEEDON: Well, I don't know. I do think that what Brad said did make more sense to me; to -- and again, what Steve said. The metrics, there's been no measurements. And I've been in the work groups, and they come to us. They want us to tell them what we should do to make the plans, and we're the service provider, which is fine, but we're -- you
know, everything always reverts back to the service providers
to make the plans anyway. So in my opinion, the funds are
just being thrown down the drain.

MR. SALAZAR: And I can tell you, there are areas --
and I visited with Steve beforehand -- that, in our area, we
are the lead agency, but we did not apply for any money. So
we are complying with the federal mandate, but we're not
asking for any money. So there are ways around that, that you
can -- you can get that done.

MS. WEEDON: And I don't want to negate in any way
the work that some of these areas probably have done or
possibly have done. I'm just saying I haven't witnessed it.
And I have spent a lot of hours in all of these plannings.
The last one I went to was maybe two weeks ago, maybe a week
ago -- I can't remember one from the next -- but we spent --
in a two-hour meeting, we spent two minutes talking about
regional coordination; two minutes.

MR. UNDERWOOD: What was the rest of the time used
for?

MS. WEEDON: You know, projects that didn't have
anything to do with it, presentations from the propane
company. So when -- were you there?

MR. WHITE: No, I wasn't there. But to back up
J.R.'s point -- and I should have clarified up front -- every
year we don't necessarily contract with all 24 regions. We
currently have no contract with Brazos Valley COG or HGAC. So whatever they're doing is with some other source of funds.

MS. WEEDON: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED: No, we do have --

MS. WEEDON: We do --

UNIDENTIFIED: We do have a BVCOG contract.

MR. WHITE: Not for regional planning, that's another --

UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, that's 14.

MR. WHITE: -- that's another -- it is a PT grant.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, we just -- yes.

MR. WHITE: But it's -- it's not considered part of this regional planning grant --

UNIDENTIFIED: Right.

MR. WHITE: -- that we --

UNIDENTIFIED: But they just finished the 13 -- the 13 planning.

MS. WEEDON: And that combined 480,000, it's for all three COGs. BVCOG, I think, was 290,000 of it. DETCOG was about 130,000, and HGAC was 60,000. And HGAC, they do take their roles a lot more seriously than the others, but -- any more questions?

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Wendy.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you for coming.
MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. Just to sort of follow up on that comment, in looking at the selected activities that are requested, funding in 2014, it does seem like a lot of them are planning studies.

MR. WHITE: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: And that could be funded elsewhere, or as Brad had mentioned, maybe as part of a planning to implement a particular project. I think it gets back to, really, the crux of it is what are we trying to accomplish. And if we don't know that in the very beginning, then how do we know -- if you don't know where you're going, how do you know if you've gotten there?

MR. WHITE: Well, these --

MS. BLOOMER: And I think that's where we really need to establish that --

UNIDENTIFIED: Focus on.

MR. GADBOIS: Or you can always claim you haven't gotten there or you have.

MS. BLOOMER: Or -- or we've got there, it's a success, we've done it. But what did we do?

MR. GADBOIS: Right.

MS. BLOOMER: And we don't all agree on what we're trying to accomplish. So I think that's probably the first thing, at the beginning of the year to work on, is what -- you know, in the very beginning, our goal was very clear: Come up
with a regional coordination plan. And we were successful when we had done that. Now we've moved beyond that, we have the plan, we've met the federal requirement, and we can continue to meet the federal requirement, but what are we really trying to do by having the regional coordination councils or committees and developing the plan?

Hopefully, the end goal is not to create a plan that gets stuck on somebody's shelves, and we never do anything about it. But to Brad's point is, if we do all this, we identify the gaps, we come up with the strategies --

MR. GADBOIS: Right.

MS. BLOOMER: -- and we have no funding to implement, what's the point? And then we've put this pressure on transit providers to address the gaps identified, but provided no resources to do that. And I think that's where --

MR. UNDERWOOD: And there is frustration amongst the lead agencies. I mean, Steve, when you were in the meeting, they get frustrated. They said, you know what -- at one point, and I cannot remember exactly who it was, a part of this work group, but they made this statement. They said -- when I would bring that up, well, where are we supposed to come up with additional funds to address some of the things that you want done. And the response was, well, maybe, before you spend any of your program money, that should come to the RTC first, to approve it. And that was when I said, whoa,
whoa, whoa, we have boards that are made up of local elected
officials, that are -- no way. And so anyway, so that was --
there is some frustration level out there.

MR. WHITE: I would clarify, too -- and again, I
should have pointed this out in the presentation -- the
projects that were funded in 2014, especially since we had
such limited funding this year, there were two criteria before
we would even consider a project for funding. One of them is
that we would only fund projects that were identified as a
priority in the big regional plan. So all of these fit that
category. So these are all strategic. The decisions were
strategically made.

So the other criteria was, if -- that we would
provide funding to sustain quarterly meetings of the regional
stakeholder group. So all of these decisions were based on
that. So all of these activities support some priority that
was identified in the regional -- in the respective regional
plan, that needed to be further addressed.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Our second comment, public
comment, is from Dave Marsh.

MR. STEPHENS: Michelle?

MS. BLOOMER: Yes, Rob. Go ahead.

MR. STEPHENS: Just for clarity, who was that, that
gave that first comment?

MS. BLOOMER: That was Wendy.
MR. STEPHENS: Wendy; was it --

UNIDENTIFIED: From Brazos.

MS. BLOOMER: From Brazos.


MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Dave?

MR. MARSH: Hi, y'all. First of all, thank y'all so much for letting me be here. It's very important that we have you guys being our advisory committee. I really appreciate your work. And I have kept up with your conversations over the years remotely through the wonderful transcripts that are provided of your meetings, and I find your service to be quite admirable.

I'm here to talk more globally and locally today about the issue before you all. First of all, I regret that I missed Dr. Abeson's tour of duty. Abeson, Evison?

MS. BLOOMER: Abeson.

UNIDENTIFIED: Abeson.

UNIDENTIFIED: Abeson.

MR. MARSH: Abeson. I understand he's retired from the group. But he and I were one of 31 people that came together two times in 2003, at the invitation of the federal government, to devise what was called the National Coordination Plan that became United We Ride. And I was honored to be among that group. And, however, I was just one
-- I was Jeremiah, wandering in the wilderness.

And I found the -- what I call the "industrial coordination complex" to have gotten a lot of momentum since that time. United We Ride, which is also called Blah Blah We Ride is an organization that has great intent, but no result. And I charge our local effort or our state efforts with a similar charge.

I think that people really enjoy getting together quarterly and talking about stuff. And I think that they, most dutifully, every five years, put together a new plan to talk about more stuff. And I don't mean that to be critical of the people involved, the organizations, or the institutions. I'm talking about the dynamics of the events that we go through to try to arrive at coordination. So that's my global comments.

Now back to my local comments, which is really all I know, and that is that I think I remember Rob -- Rob, you there? You're not there.

MR. STEPHENS: Yes. Yes, I'm here.

MR. MARSH: Yes. Saying at one of the previous meetings, perhaps I've been here too long, but I remember. Well, no, you haven't been here too long, nor have I. I've been here long enough to know some stuff that probably not everybody else knows. And whether that's important information to other people or not, I can't judge.
But I know that the rural transportation was set up particularly to coordinate disparate resources to build one cohesive transit operation. That's where we came from, that's how we got here, that's what we built over the years. We started out putting together little pieces of Title 3 money, Title 19 money, Head Start, MHMR, everything we could, so that everybody could ride -- get a ride, and there would not be four vehicles running around doing not much, instead of having one doing a lot.

And so from 1982 -- or the early '80s to now, we've built on that. So when the -- when the FBL-461 or whatever it was, came into fruition, we thought, oh, coordination, oh, man, I wish we would have thought of that.

So it gained us momentum, the groups were formed. I have a very stellar group in my region because we're in Austin. We always -- we always achieve great things with -- in our capital city because we -- you know, we really are lucky in having some talented people in this area.

But the problem is, is that we already did that. We are coordinated. We're less coordinated now than we were in the past, but that's not our fault. That's because things have been done, like Head Start buses have to be yellow, and things like that, things that were done to dis-coordinate services that aren't going to change.

So in our area, what we mostly talk about -- and I
think you'll probably find that to be true in many metropolitan areas, is what Capital Metro doesn't do. Because metropolitan areas are not coordinated because they never had a mandate to or the desire to or the need to, because there's always been this -- this plethora of resources available where they have to do things that ended up in the end, perhaps not making coordination a high element on their plans.

So we've rolled along now for seven or eight years, and we've -- you know, we continue to roll along. But when I heard the number $11-million, I had never heard that before. I was just alarmed. Not that it's not people's intent and aims and understanding of the situation that's not -- everybody -- nobody is wrong here. But something is wrong because, as anyone knows that works in a country bus company like myself, you're -- you're doing all you can to get service on the street, even as large -- we're a larger organization -- to get service on the street every day and try to forecast and have a vision for what your future is.

And if I were Capital Metro, and I had $200-million every year, and I could say, I'm going to get that from now on, I could do a lot of big plans like Project Connect and things like that, which are all great. But I'm not. I can count on $2-million a year. And anything else I get, which is eight or nine more million, I have to go get.

And so we plan by opportunity. There's a
coordinated call, which is a great thing, that was instituted by PTN several years ago, that lets you go out and dream for a year, and try to figure out how to be the one that gets the money to do what you want to do. And that's a good thing. That's close to being able to plan.

But what we don't have is the ability to -- and I noticed J.R. had a contract on the street recently which I quite admired, which was to have a consultant on call, have someone you can depend on to say, I've got to figure out how to redo my fixed route in Bastrop. What am I going to do, who's got a chance to do it? Well, you go hire a consultant, because that's what they do. I don't really need a planner on staff, but I need to have the ability to have planning assistance when I need it.

Now back in the dark ages, we had what was called a circuit rider here in Texas that we talked about before, and we're looking at again, to where you could -- TxDOT had consultants on staff that could do things for us. But the -- what I've heard today about how the program has evolved, we use JARC money, we use state money, and so on and so forth, I got to say that planning is okay, but maybe it needs to be locally driven. Maybe it needs to be locally funded.

In our area the MPO does it. And the MPO, as you may or may not know -- I know Kelly and Minnie do, they got a lot on their plate already. They got a 2040 plan, they got
this, they got that, they got the TIP, they got a policy
board; they got a lot to do. So it's kind of a sideline for
them, and they're doing it because somebody has to do it. But
maybe -- maybe it should be locally driven. Maybe, if it was
locally driven, the MPO could more focus on what they're doing
and what needs to be done in their area.

But I do appeal to the group to consider that the
needs that we have in rural transit for planning, to use
statewide planning money to do local plans that may or may not
be effective, that end up primarily addressing problems in
metropolitan areas that don't -- that does not address -- I
don't like that. The statewide planning monies should be used
to help rural systems do planning.

And I -- you know, again, I'm not here to say RTCs
are bad and we're good, I'm just saying that we really have
to, in these days, think about how we're going to plot the
future. Like, right now, my RTCC -- the RTCC in my area, all
good, well-intentioned people, but they don't have a clue
about what's happening to us right now.

And right now, half our budget is about to go down
the tubes because of the insanity of -- well, let me rephrase
that -- because of the misguided plans of a state agency that
funds a lot of transportation in this state. If I had that
money to get somebody to plan what we need to do in our
region, to make sense of that program, to put route service in
place, the dream that we have for a public-coordinated brokerage, if I had that money to turn into plans to make us -- help us do that, we could solve a lot of problems in our region, easily.

But when I made my presentation at the last RTCC meeting, and I brought it up, including an ATAC representative there, they all looked at me like, oh, okay, next, next. So again, they're all great, they're interested in what they're doing. But if I remember 461, the purpose of that was to coordinate human service transportation needs and the public transit assets, correct? Was that -- is that pretty much correct?

Well, that's not that hard. It's not something that we have to perpetuate indefinitely. The federal plans that Mr. Gadbois refers to, the federal requirements, that doesn't have to be done by a -- that council, it can be done by anyone. The state mandate, I think, is something that we can very well easily do, as well. Give me the money to plan and do things, and I can make sure that I do, as a normal course of event, the community is involved. That's what we do.

I work for a board of elected officials. Every four years, they have to go out and get reelected. Their constituents and what they -- their constituents think about us is damned important to them. We are connected to communities. We are at the basic level of government, with
county commissioners that hear from people if we don't do right. And we take our job very seriously, what we do. And our coordination of activities we do are, as I said, not as precise as they were in the good old days. But we still -- it's what we do every day.

Coordination is a daily activity. What we need more than anything else now is the other C word, and that's "connectivity." We need to have connectivity. We need to make sure people can travel. Coordination is done; we do it every day. It's like a revolving circle. You can keep going around it, and you do. But until you connect to other systems, until you connect in your communities, until you connect your own services, you're not accomplishing anything.

So help us, consider us. Consider us when you make your decisions on what to do going forward, and finding a way for us to really do things, not talk about them, but do things. Thank you very much. And again, thank you for what you do.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you, Dave.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Dave.

UNIDENTIFIED: Appreciate it.

MS. BLOOMER: Lyle, did you still want to speak?

MR. NELSON: After Dave speaks?

(Laughter.)

UNIDENTIFIED: Absolutely.
MR. NELSON: Have pity on me for following Dave Marsh. Dave, I'll get your phone while I'm here also.

MR. MARSH: Thank you very much.

MR. NELSON: You bet.

(Laughter.)

MR. NELSON: Blah, blah, blah, everything Dave said. And then, also, when we first started this process, it was -- it was pretty exciting because you had the large groups of people, and in some cases over a hundred people sitting in a room going, all right, let's work together, let's identify these gaps and barriers. So for the past eight years, we've identified gaps and barriers, put them in a great plan, put them up on the shelf, and then waited for the appropriate time to update them.

To reiterate -- to reiterate what Dave said, we need to learn to start connecting people to goods and services, pure and simple. We can coordinate, we can plan, but until we connect people to the needed goods and services, we're not doing anything except meeting and saying hello to everybody. So again, blah, blah, blah, everything else Dave said.

(Laughter.)

MR. GADBOIS: Well, let me -- because Dave said this, and then you blah, blah, blah repeated it.

MR. NELSON: Correct.

MR. GADBOIS: But then you also just said something
in your own words --

MR. NELSON: Uh-huh.

MR. GADBOIS: -- that -- that begged this question.

When we had originally started out, the -- part of the idea was bring more money in by getting human service investment in the services and transportation, as well as connecting to transit's resources. So invest human service money in the existing transportation services, right?

And then the flip-side of that was, but also get transit understanding how to work better with human service clients, something that was talked about earlier in terms of using case managers --

MR. NELSON: Uh-huh.

MR. GADBOIS: -- for example. And what I'm understanding both of y'all to say -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- is that ain't really happening; neither one of those pieces are really happening very well. Is that accurate?

MR. NELSON: That would be really accurate, absolutely. Absolutely. Bringing people to the table to discuss what are your needs, and how can we fulfill those needs has kind of been set off to the side, in the -- in the interest of creating what are the gaps, what are the barriers, what can we do. But we never ask what can we do.

MR. GADBOIS: Just really rote stuff, without ever getting to a solution.
MR. NELSON: And a perfect example is the -- and I'm sorry to use this kind of language -- the MTP Program. The fact that there is a parallel program being created in complete opposition to the provision of public transportation, and you can't marry the two because there are some sort of contrived requirements that disallow such, is asinine. So you're creating these parallel programs and bringing out-of-state brokers into play, to create a whole new transit program that's taking money out of the state, which could be used to enhance access to goods and services.

MR. GADBOIS: Right.

MR. NELSON: So...

MR. GADBOIS: Thanks.

MR. NELSON: You bet. Thank you all.

MR. GADBOIS: Thank you, Lyle.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Lyle.

Okay. I think we've had a lot of discussion on this item. I think, if there's no objections, the direction we'll take is we'd like to come back in our January -- Bobby, when is our next meeting, January, February?

MR. KILLEBREW: January.

MS. BLOOMER: January? And I guess see the finished product from the working group, but also add it as an agenda item for PTAC to start taking up the work plan, with this probably being the first item of significant interest.
MR. MARSH: And try to line up our meeting after the annual meeting.

MS. BLOOMER: After the TxDOT semi-annual meeting.

MR. MARSH: Such that we -- such that we could talk to other transportation providers.

MS. BLOOMER: Right. And so I guess add that we’d like an item on the agenda at the TxDOT semi-annual meeting related to regional coordination and getting sort of comments and feedback from those in attendance on experienced direction --

MR. MARSH: Don’t recognize him, because Shelly is going to cause trouble.

(Laughter.)

MS. BLOOMER: Yes, Eric.

MR. GLEASON: On the semi-annual meeting agenda item, that is an item that you will lead the discussion on, or do you want staff -- again, staff to lead the discussion?

MS. BLOOMER: I think we’ll have to talk about that off-line. I have a conflict that day, and I haven’t yet learned how to be in two places at one time. So we can --

MR. GLEASON: Okay. And then, also, with respect to the next meeting, there were a lot of different suggestions or different directions the program might go that we talked about today. To what extent did you want our preparation for that meeting to include some additional thinking on those? I heard
finish up the work group product, but I wasn't sure whether or not I heard you all wanted us to do anything with some of the ideas that had been brought up today. Unless you were interjecting them into the work group product or...

MS. BLOOMER: No. I think -- my -- I think we started the work group project, and we just need to finish it up. What level of impact or has --

MR. GADBOIS: It's data.

MS. BLOOMER: It's information, it's one option.

MR. GADBOIS: It's -- it's --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: We'll take that under consideration. So if there are other ideas or options or thoughts on direction to move forward that PTN would like to present, I think that would be beneficial, as well; so when PTAC comes back in January, we have all the options and ideas on the table.

MR. GLEASON: But what I was focused on was some of the ideas that you all brought up.

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: And I didn't -- I wanted to make sure they were -- and I may have missed this part of the presentation, and I apologize.

MR. KILLEBREW: And presen -- yeah. When we started the conversation, PTAC was interested in bringing back what
their work plan is in January. And Michelle was suggesting at that point in time that this item is already on the work plan, it just needs to be their next focus area.

MR. GLEASON: Right. I heard that.

MR. KILLEBREW: And --

MR. GLEASON: But for example, Brad brought up a specific suggestion.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Yeah.

MR. GLEASON: We heard some public comment --

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: -- some specific suggestions today. To what extent do you want any of those suggestions in any more detail for your January meeting. That's what I'm trying to ask.

MS. BLOOMER: I think we want to see all those suggestions.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. I mean, we can -- we can replicate them from the minutes because we’ll be back in front of --

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED: That would be great.

MR. GADBOIS: That would -- that would be sweet.

MR. GLEASON: But we won't do any additional work on it.
MR. GADBOIS: Yeah. Thank you.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Unless PTN staff has other ideas that haven't been talked about here or the work group doesn't bring forward, or you know, if you guys have talked about it and thought about ways you would like to move regional coordination forward -- I just -- I want to make sure before we start the discussion, we have a lot of the options or ideas already on the table --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- in front of us.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: And since the holidays will be between now and here, if they were on paper, that would be extremely helpful.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. All right. Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: So we'll finalize the work group, we'll present an item at the TxDOT semi-annual meeting to be determined if it's PTAC or PTN, and then we'll just prepare like a white paper on what we have talked about to date.

MR. GLEASON: Yes. And then the semi-annual meeting will include some of the lead agencies, because they are also service providers, but not all of them. And it is not your intent to invite those others to that meeting.

MS. BLOOMER: No, not at this point. I think part
of the conversation in January can be how we proceed forward on getting all stakeholders involved --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- involved in the process.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Similar to how we did with the rules. Because if we're going to go out with some sort of change or recommendation for a change, I want to make sure everybody that has a dog in the fight has had an opportunity to comment and weigh in before we present something. Okay.

Okay. So I think that concludes Item 5. So we will go back up to Item 4, the presentation and discussion of TxDOT's Texas Transportation Plan 2014. And I believe we have somebody here from TPP.

MS. CONKLE: Good afternoon. Sorry about the miscommunication. Would you all prefer that -- I've been giving this presentation up at the front of the room, but I can certainly sit at the table here and --

UNIDENTIFIED: We'd love you to be up there. We can see you that way.

MS. BLOOMER: Or maybe --

MR. KILLEBREW: Can we just -- can we just -- because we are recording this meeting and we're going to place an audio version.

MS. CONKLE: Sure.
MR. KILLEBREW: We need to make sure that you are close to a microphone.

MS. BLOOMER: Over here or over there.

MR. SALAZAR: There's a chair over -- right there, with a microphone at it right there.

MS. CONKLE: Perfect.

MR. SALAZAR: We don't mind not seeing Eric, but we just --

MS. CONKLE: Is -- can you hear me? Okay. I can set up right here. We had some problems at our public meeting with these types of speakers, people couldn't hear them very well.

Again, my name is Michelle Conkle. I am a planner with the Transportation Planning and Programming Division of TxDOT. Currently, for the entire month of November, we've been out in the public and with stakeholders doing a presentation for update of our statewide multi-modal plan. Some of you may know that plan as the SLRTP 2035. The acronym was actually Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan 2035. You may also be familiar with the Texas Rural Transportation Plan, the TRTP 2035.

So we're currently out soliciting input from stakeholders and the public on the update of those two plans, which are going to come back together to form the Texas Transportation Plan 2040, and address the metropolitan and
rural components.

Is -- do you actually have the presentation up?

MR. SALAZAR: Just let me know when.

MS. CONKLE: Okay. The first thing that we've been talking to the public and stakeholders about are the implementation of TxDOT strategic plan goals alongside the MAP-21 goals for transportation in Texas. The TxDOT strategic plan goals are to maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and become a best in class state agency.

We also will be addressing other planning and environmental requirements, state and federal requirements, planning process requirements that you're all very familiar with, that go back many, many years. We're going to build on the two plans I talked about, the SLRTP 2035 and the Rural Transportation Plan 2035. And for both of those plans, we'll be giving updates on any progress we made towards goals or the completion of projects that were actually identified in the rural areas.

We're going to advance performance-based planning concepts, link planning goals to programming decisions, which basically means that as we define our goals and our targets for the first time, we're going to produce a plan that's performance-based, that's actually going to tie itself to the programs that we have, where we'll look at the projects we
built to see what type of progress we made toward the goals; in other words, tying our goals and our policies towards the money that we're actually spending on projects to meet those goals. And we're also going to integrate TxDOT's current initiatives for performance management, again under MAP-21, asset management, and customer service, being a best in class state agency.

This is actually just our schedule, our Gantt chart. If you got copies of the presentation, you could probably see it better in front of you than up on the screen. But basically, we're in the very beginning steps of the process to update the plan. What we've done is we're collecting current information, current plans and programs from all modes, from all modal representatives. We're looking at those plans and programs, we're collecting MTPs from current metropolitan transportation plans from the metropolitan planning organizations, and pulling in all current system data, to evaluate and inventory our current system.

We're also looking at needs, current needs and needs in the future. And as we're doing that, we're currently coming out and asking stakeholders and the public what our goals and priorities should be. We do have the strategic plan -- the TxDOT strategic planning goals, and then we do have goals that we're mandated to look at under MAP-21.

But we're experiencing, at least in my career as a
planner at TxDOT, a sea change; in that, you've actually got
an administration and you've got people looking at what should
you do -- what should we be doing above and beyond our
strategic goals and our MAP-21 goals, you know, to improve the
system. Because frankly, this is your system. TxDOT is here
to help maintain that system and to move people and goods
safely across the state. So we're coming to you and we're
asking you, what should the priorities be.

    We did -- again, on the top of the schedule, we're
in the October/November/December time frame where we're coming
out and asking -- we're bringing -- going to bring a set of
draft goal areas that we'll talk about in just a moment, ask
you if we've identified all the goal areas that are important
to you; or if not, if we need to add other goal areas, and
then talk a little bit about those -- the priorities that are
under those goal areas, to help us better form the plan moving
forward for the TxDOT administration, to be able to tell us
where we should be putting our assets.

    Again in the chart, we'll be working through --
we'll be working through the winter months to pull together
all of the data that has been submitted and take all of your
comments. That's going to help us finalize a needs assessment
and put a quantitative dollar amount to the different modes
for the needs that have been identified by you and by other
modal representatives. And we're going to come up with an
asset management plan that basically takes the assets that we have and comes back to you and says, where should these be put, based on the priorities that you -- that you gave us.

We've also had some very interesting discussions out in the public. Actually, we've had very, very good participation by users of public transportation. We've had very good participation and attendance by providers. We've actually had folks that -- we've had some assisted-living representatives. We've had some folks that use wheelchairs. We've had pedestrians.

We've actually -- I actually was able to assist three folks at our Abilene meeting who are sight-impaired take a survey for us and talk to us about how important public transportation is to them. And if you can believe this or not, when we got to the point about how are you going to pay for that, they were perfectly willing, for the first time in my career, not to have fares reduced. They said they'd pay more money if they could get more reliable transportation to get them where they wanted to go, and actually put that on a comment form.

So we really are seeing -- we're seeing attitudes out in the public change, across my career. Because what we've always said is, we're going to have to do more with less. And I think that people are starting to understand, from our perspective and from a user perspective, that that's
not acceptable anymore. We're going to have to do more, and we're going to have to come up with more money to do more because we're at a state where some of the system is just -- is not holding up.

And it's not just roads. It's, again, providing services, especially out in the rural areas. And these people were perfectly willing to have that hard conversation about who's going to pay for that, and perfectly willing to say they were willing to pay for it.

Anyway, next slide. I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Stakeholder and public participation schedule. We've been out -- part of this -- this is all my bad. We had talked with Eric about coming to talk to the PTAC. And then somewhere along in the last three weeks, where I've been making myself crazy traveling all over the state, I just -- I just needed to get the PTAC back on my schedule. Not to mention, I had -- my Blackberry service is not very good out in the hinterlands, so I might have even missed an email or two.

But anyway, we've been to San Antonio, Pharr, Houston, Bryan, Lubbock, Wichita Falls, Dallas, and Abilene. In each of those cities we've held two meetings. So we've had 16 meetings over the last three weeks, and they -- again, they've been very well attended. I would say that -- I'll look back to Casey to confirm this, but I'd say they were as
well attended by folks that represented users of public transportation and providers than they've been attended by anybody else, which is absolutely amazing to me.

Next slide. The TPP -- TTP goals and objectives development process. Now this is not the development for the entire plan. This is just the development process for the goals and objectives that we're going to carry forward before we do asset management scenarios. As we took TxDOT's priorities -- again, we've already discussed those, those were the strategic plan priorities -- we married them to the MAP-21 priorities -- and we'll show that slide here in a minute. And we took it to the -- to the -- what -- our internal technical advisory committee, on which some folks in here sit.

And it was basically the straw man to bring it out to the public and the stakeholders to say, these are the six draft goal areas that we came up with, looking at TxDOT's strategic plan and the MAP-21 goals. I go back to my original question that I'm going to pose to you. Did we miss any goal areas? And if we have the right goal areas, what are your priorities under those goal areas?

So once we collect those, we're -- we're finishing up our round one outreach. We're going to spend a month or two analyzing those goals and priorities, and looking at the -- I guess what you would call the first pass at the needs assessment, taking that to the administration, and having them
finalize those priorities, based on how the needs match up
with the priorities that have been given us from folks outside
the Department.

The administration will then review and approve
those. We anticipate that to be done sometime early in the
winter, possibly January or February time frame. Those will
become the Texas Transportation plan goals and objectives and
we will proceed with the data we're collecting from that point
on, to come up with measurements based on those goals.

We -- although we did have some folks out in the
public say, well, you've already come out with goals, so
you've already decided them. And I wanted to reiterate that,
in several of the areas, when we get to the goal areas, I'm
going to mention to you other goal areas that were brought up,
and then I also reiterated, we've gotten calls already, now
that we've come back, from people that attended the meeting,
that were interested in adding goal areas, and that we -- we
very definitely have been told that, that's a distinct
possibility and we should be open to all of those.

And I think that, in talking with Eric and talking
with PTN, we're particularly interested in what you think
about the goal areas, to supplement those. Because as has
been pointed many times, statewide plans are highway-centric,
and we're trying very hard not to be highway-centric.

And again, I'm just going to fall back on the fact
that the people that have been taking time out of their busy
schedule, and by no means people who have a harder time
getting to us to give us comments have showed up. It's very
touching to me to see someone get on a bus and come over on a
-- in his wheelchair, to spend half a day with me, to tell him
[sic] what his problems are getting around Houston. I have
all day for that.

And we've had -- like I said, we had some folks that
came in that were sight-impaired, and Casey -- all they asked
of us was Casey read every one of the tables on the slide, so
they would know what are on the slides. And they were very,
very helpful in helping us to understand issues that are not
common sometimes on the highway side.

So anyway, the first goal area is safety. Safety is
the number one goal of TxDOT. It's also the number one goal
of federal legislation under MAP-21. And it's -- and that is
across all modes. TxDOT's priorities for safety include
highway, bridge, transit, aviation, rail, highway, at-grade
crossings, infrastructure preservation; basically make sure
the roads are safe and that we, you know, have shoulders where
needed, or at least have safe ingress/egress onto our system,
so that the entire system is safe.

And so the group discussion -- and again, the format
we presented this before is we had flip-charts, and we
actually did a facilitated session, is what are your
priorities for multi-modal safety, both today and in the long
term. And what we want to do for you, since there was a
little bit of a miscommunication on my part, is we're going to
leave you with comment forms, and we'd like to get those
priorities or goal areas on those comment forms, if you
wouldn't mind. And you can send those back to us. But that's
-- that's what we want to know from you on safety. Again,
that's the first goal area.

MR. GADBOIS: Can we ask questions along the way, or
are you -- do you want to roll through this?

MS. CONKLE: No, you certainly -- you certainly may
ask questions along the way.

MR. UNDERWOOD: That was a mistake.

MR. GADBOIS: That was a big mistake.

MS. CONKLE: Okay. That would not be the first
mistake I made today.

MR. GADBOIS: I gave you an out and you didn't take
it.

MS. CONKLE: Including not having this very
important meeting on my calendar.

MR. GADBOIS: So -- and this is going to be one that
I just personally am struggling with some, but I kind of want
to help -- you help me understand how TxDOT is going to deal
with this. So right now, integrating several modes into a
road profile ends up looking like separating or segregated
those with actual infrastructure between, such that there's
the least amount of conflict possible between, say, bicycles
and cars, buses, and bicycles -- you know, et cetera, is the
safest way to do it. But at the same time that then kills
your capacity for cars, right?

So assuming TxDOT is going to look at that seriously
in this plan, how does that shake out for an agency that
hasn't seriously provided services for anything on their
roadways but cars?

MS. CONKLE: Well, I don't -- I don't think there's
one -- any correct answer to that question, but what I will
say is we have had a lot of folks over the course of 16
meetings tell us how that's worked really well for them, and
how that's not worked really well for them. In larger cities,
we've had a lot of comments where the roadway profile that
includes other modes has created a more dangerous situation
than it has solved a need, you know, addressed a need, and --

MR. GADBOIS: It certainly can if it's done poorly.

MS. CONKLE: Correct.

MR. GADBOIS: Yeah.

MS. CONKLE: And then we've had some other areas,
some smaller cities, talk about how they've really worked
together, say their bicycle/pedestrian coordinators with
TxDOT, to determine -- even though TxDOT has a policy, I'm
just going to talk about bike/ped for a second. It's the one
that has come up the most in conversation talked about.

We have had a policy for quite some time that every
time that we upgrade a roadway, we look at the feasibility for
bicycle and pedestrian facilities adjacent to that -- to that
roadway. What some areas have done is, instead of there being
an insistence that a certain -- a certain type of mode be put
in alongside the roadways, they've come together, and they're
making decisions that it might not be safe to do that, we'd
rather have that money on an enclosed trail, we'd rather do --
so there's actually conversations taking place at the local
level about TxDOT's policy, where they're coming to a
consensus and a win/win instead of, you know, pushing a
facility that might not be safe for one -- you know, one or
more of the users. Because other comments we've been hearing
is that when those are not -- those -- those facilities are
not separated, it makes it dangerous for the driver, as well.
And so there's a lot of discussion being had.

And again, I don't know that there is a -- and I
certainly don't have a TxDOT-approved answer for that. But
what I will say is that out in the public we've heard both --
we've heard success stories and we've heard stories that, when
these facilities come together and they're not -- they're not
meshed properly, they're more dangerous. And then we've heard
success -- you know, from smaller -- and granted, smaller
cities, that have been able to do this and keep their
bicyclists and pedestrians safe on the same roadways, same
facilities as the cars.

So in terms of -- that is very definitely something
that is going to be addressed in this plan. The policy -- the
bicycle/pedestrian policy is not something that is something
that exists outside the plan. But it is something that has
come to the fore so much, with folks wanting other modal
choices, that we're -- we need to be looking at bringing that
into the plan as a goal of the plan, to find a way to bring
these together, instead of just having a policy, you know,
that sets a side of the plan.

So I think that we're making progress. I'm one not
to -- people who know me know I'm one not to over-promise.
But I tell you, it is progress. It's huge strides since the
last time I went out with a statewide plan. We have just
heard from so many people. They want modal choices. It's not
just about highways for them anymore.

If they're the only ones showing up for the first
time in history, maybe the comments will be -- you know,
they're usually disproportionate to folks that show up and
want to talk about roadways. And what I can say is that we're
going to have to figure out how to deal with a
disproportionate number of comments for the non-roadway users.
But I'm not at all upset about that because this is a -- this
is -- these are folks that we typically don't have
participation from, so we're very, you know, excited about that.

But yes, it will have to be looked at. And I think it's going to be a case of -- I think it will be case studies. Some of these folks have actually agreed to come together in another venue, and talk to each other and share these stories. And I think that is most important, too, because it's not always a TxDOT answer, and it's not always TxDOT-funded. It's two groups of people that never -- you know, have never gotten together before, coming together and saying, well, we'd like to hear what you're doing. It's pretty -- it's pretty awesome what's happening right now with the public involvement on this plan.

So -- and we'll come back to you with more as we -- as we pull this together and go to the administration because it's going to be -- the goals that have been set up and the priorities are very interesting. They're very different from any other plan I've ever worked on. They very much have to do with users of our system who are challenged in some way. They very much have to do with wanting choices other than vehicular transportation, or motorized transportation. And they very much have to do with people coming in and saying they know we're going to have to pay for this, we know we're not going to be able to depend on the money that we're currently getting to enhance our system. So it's going to be very interesting
moving forward.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Michelle, having said that, kind of what Glenn was saying, that's why that was a mistake, because we're never short on words on this committee. Saying that you, you know, have all of these different -- especially public transportation coming forward and asking, when I look at this Gantt chart --

MS. CONKLE: Uh-huh.

MR. UNDERWOOD: -- where are we going to be involved? I see this is a ongoing coordination with TxDOT Technical Advisory Committee.

MS. CONKLE: Uh-huh.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'm assuming that's not us. But when -- because there is going to be that big emphasis placed on nontraditional roadways. Are we going to be involved and hear more to see the progress of this?

MS. CONKLE: I will say that I have to coordinate that through public transportation. But I'll tell you what our plan is. All of these comments have been taken by our public involvement consultant and are being scanned in, so I can take a look at them. They're going to be provided to Eric, to be provided to you and anybody else who wants them. Because again, the promise we've made out there is, if we accept comments on something we can't deal with directly, which I can't in TMMP, kind of all modes, is that we get them
to the persons or person, persons, who can address them, and they get a chance to look at them. I think you're going to be very interested to see these comments.

At any time, I could be asked to come back and speak at your January meeting. We could -- I know there are certain rules that have to go with a committee like this, and I have to work through Eric. But he -- I can pass information along through him that he can give to you during the whole process. You can make comments all along the process as you start seeing the comments come in.

And again, I want to be -- I want to also tell you that, currently, Title 6, we're trying to meet some Title 6 requirements, and it's coming from the federal transit side, before -- federal highway just hasn't caught up to it. And I will tell you, I've collected more demographic forms than I know we've ever collected in the entire department. Because I've gone to every meeting asking if I could just have you do one thing for me, please fill this out, because this is very important for public transportation funds, then the survey, then the comment form. And we have had almost a 100 percent response rate to that. So we've got some very interesting things to show you. And as soon as I get them scanned in and send them to Eric, they will come through him.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay. I just -- I'm just saying -- I don't want to speak for the group, but to me, this is
something that we definitely would like to have more input in
and --

MS. CONKLE: And you should.

MR. UNDERWOOD: -- along the way, and so...

MS. CONKLE: And you should.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I mean, I don't want to take up all
of our meetings, but I think this would be good for us to kind
of stay involved in this, for sure.

MS. CONKLE: Yeah.

MR. GADBOIS: At least given this chart, at least in
the May to July time period, where things start getting
fleshed out a little more, I mean, if not sooner, at least by
then we ought to look at having something come back here. If
we can.

MS. BLOOMER: Yeah.

MS. CONKLE: And again, and for time purposes, maybe
what we could do, you have this presentation, correct? Bobby,
could I have you go ahead to the table and let's just -- let's
just summarize that. Because they can provide the comments.
The questions we're asking for here are the group discussion
questions. You can go back to those and provide us a comment.
But basically, what we have here is the summary of the draft
goals, and again, we start at the top with the strategic
planning goals that we discussed already. The ones on the
bottom are the MAP-21 goal areas. And we want to emphasize
that all of these goal areas are going to be analyzed in terms of people and freight.

And then we have the draft Texas transportation goal areas, those six in the middle, safety, asset management for all modes, mobility and reliability for people and freight, multi-modal connectivity for people and freight, which goes back to the question of, you know, parallel facilities, and we've had a lot of discussion about that, stewardship and customer service.

I will briefly tell you that stewardship, in the context of what we're trying to gauge with our constituents, is our ability to come to you and give you information, tell you what we're going to do, and be able to follow through on those commitments. That's what stewardship is to us; if we say that we're going to do something, that we follow through on that. And if we're not able to follow through on it, then we come and we tell you why.

MR. GADBOIS: Just quickly on the congestion stuff.

MS. CONKLE: Yes.

MR. GADBOIS: And this is really just to kind of understand what you're doing with it. If TTI's Metropolitan mobilities work has done anything for us, it's to help us understand that you don't really reduce congestion, you only reduce the level at which it increases or --

MS. CONKLE: That's right.
MR. GADBOIS: — speed with which it increases. But they also have now started doing — look at demand management. Aside from the supply side, what are we going to build. The -- how do we shift people to other modes and change their behavior. So the question is: Where in this is the demand management?

MS. CONKLE: Well, demand management is -- is -- I mean, we can certainly -- and I should have a pen to write this down. Like I said, this is not the normal format. Demand management is a part of congestion reduction. And even though MAP-21 has congestion reduction, what we've had people telling us is this is not really congestion reduction; it's congestion management, as you said. So demand management is a part of -- and it's also a part of reduced project delivery, because again, projects that we can implement sooner to improve congestion, that we can draw, you know, folks off of the -- off of the roadway system, other projects we should be focusing on.

What I can tell you is those -- the ones under MAP-21, they just are what they are. But we've had several people, such as yourself, redefine that for us. And we will be looking at travel demand. But the other interesting part of this conversation has come up, is that most of the providers and the other modal representatives that have been here, is they've encouraged us -- not only encouraged us,
they've more or less made a request that we start looking at
other modes differently when we talk about allocating money,
than just benefit/cost.

Because it's been rightly pointed out to us -- and I
know this from many years of being in this business -- that
you're not going to ever be able to compare a roadway to a
pedestrian facility, to a transit project, and be able to come
up with -- you know, measure those on a level playing field.
And what they want us to take to our commission is to look at
the fact that you're not going to -- those modes are not ever
going to win on a head-to-head comparison when you're just
doing benefit/cost, in terms of moving people or goods, but
that, for the greater good, and because that is what we do
here is move people and goods, that's what we should be
looking at.

MR. GADBOIS:  Well, it's -- so I want to make the
argument that you're more explicit about the demand management
side. And here's the for example that will catch the
attention of the other people around the table.

So when we have a toll facility that we're looking
at putting in, TxDOT's usual response to that is it's a
leverage finance opportunity, it's a way to build the
infrastructure without all the up-front dollars out of the
state fund or whatever. And that's okay, and that's one way
to look at toll roads.
The other way to look at toll roads is they are a demand management facility that as you price it, it gets people to change their behavior. But it only does that if you give people a way to change their behavior, i.e., you have the transit — you know, and transit priority lanes or HOV lanes or something like that along the way. And if you're explicit about the demand management element and the modal options that are needed to make that really work, then part of the financing also becomes the transit operations that would be needed for that demand management.

MS. CONKLE: Sure.

MR. GADBOIS: But that side of the discussion never really happens, because all we look at is the finance side.

MS. CONKLE: No, it absolutely is happening. I will tell you that, really, it has come more under multi-modal connectivity. Because what we've been hearing is, even if you wanted to change your behavior, and you wanted to take, you know, one element of the multi-modal system, it lets you off somewhere, where you have -- where you're going to be forced to get back in a car, or you're going to be forced to find some other way to get to your actual destination. That's been a very, very lively discussion, about the fact that we don't -- in a lot of places, you don't need a lot of infrastructure, you just need a way to connect the existing infrastructure, and it would work a whole lot better.
And we've been told that -- you know, and we've asked for the data to show us, because that's what we're gathering right now, for folks to demonstrate what it is to us that they're talking about, what they need for that connection. And if they've already done the work, and they've already paid for a consultant to cost that out, we'll take that into consideration.

Because again, it's like there's really -- there's really -- well, there are several things going on. But the discussion is, you know -- it seems to be focused on we need more multi-modal choices. And what we're hearing is you have the modal choices, they're just not connected in a way that you can use them most efficiently. And that's why people won't change their behavior. If they can't get off of one mode and have another mode to get them where they're going safely, they won't use the first mode to begin with, that's been the discussion, and that we should be looking at a way to connect the existing facilities, and stop trying to insist that it's new infrastructure that we need, and then try to gauge that, as you said, against highways. Because that cost benefit, in terms of ridership is -- is not going to -- that's not ever going to come out in the favor of another mode.

But it makes absolute sense to me when someone is saying, we've got it there, we just don't have it well connected, and it wouldn't take that much money or -- you
know, to get these connected and change people's behavior. That's where we need to be focusing.

MR. GADBOIS: I agree.

MS. CONKLE: So yeah, it's been brought up.

MS. BLOOMER: Before we move on since we kind of -- I did just want to -- sort of some general comments. But I did want to thank you for a couple of items, one is the cover page. I don't know how many people remember the last cover page, but I do appreciate that transit is on the cover, and it's multi-modal and not highway-centric, so I do appreciate that.

I also appreciate that you're coming to us much earlier in the process, which will allow for much more, I think, meaningful input than what we experienced last time, so I do appreciate that.

On the goals and priorities, I would just sort of -- this has been an ongoing concern, is, to me, I think -- and please don't take this the wrong way. I do -- I -- safety is important, congestion is important. But in my mind, TxDOT's number one goal is not safety. TxDOT's number one goal is to move people from Point A to Point B; it's access, it's mobility. It's not safety, it's not congestion. Those are things you do as part of providing that service.

And so I think, back to focusing on that. But I would agree with the comments you made. It can't solely be a
cost/benefit analysis, and it can't solely be a through-put, which is typically, when we're looking at the highway, it's how many people can you move, and that's the evaluation. So I think that's an important point.

And then you had mentioned that you're analyzing current and forecasted conditions and demand and needs, and that you're taking -- and excuse me if I get these acronyms wrong -- the SORP and the RTP to make the TTP. And then you're looking at the MPO plans.

I also wanted to suggest maybe looking at the regional coordination plans, the item before. We talked about, you know, transit -- each -- not transit providers. But each of the 24 regions are required to put plans together. A lot of those plans have identified needs and have demographics in them that might be helpful as far as understanding the transportation component; and then the system data, if any system data for transit will be included.

And then sort of the quantitative amount of dollars. And I know PTN has done work to determine what we really need in order to provide service, if that has been, or will be included, as well. And I believe last time we did sort of a quick-and-dirty assessment of what would really be needed. And we might want to share the letter, the last two letters to the commission and the legislative budget board on what the true needs are. Because I think, from PTAC -- and you all can
correct me or add on. But sort of the priorities we have talked about, at least as it comes to funding is, like Brad mentioned, there has not been a funding increase since 2001. So again, we're asking -- we've been asked to do more and more and more and more, with technically, less and less and less and less, not even the same, because inflation, it's not worth what it was in 2001. And every time we go to the legislative budget board, I think we got an additional 3-million over the biennium, related to the census.

MR. UNDERWOOD: That was just for census.

MS. BLOOMER: That was just for the census impact.

So that's restoring the per capita funding for Texas. I mean, Texas has grown. So not only are we expecting to serve more people, but we now have less money in 2001 dollars to do it with.

State of good repair. We all got an influx of funding from ARA, which was great. We're four, five, six, seven years down the road. Now what? All those vehicles need to replace. What's the plan to do that?

And then multi-modal. Like you said, making those connections. If we have a commuter rail line that stops in the middle, and there's no system that connects once you get off, what's the point of building this lovely, beautiful commuter rail line that won't get you anywhere except downtown.
And then inner-city bus connections. We're losing a lot of our inner-city carriers --

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

MS. BLOOMER: -- in the State of Texas, and that's something that PTAC has sort of raised on the item, is how do we continue to keep that connectivity when we're losing the private, for-profit inner-city carriers.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle, when we get the minutes, or the transcript from the meeting, we'll forward this section of them to you, so you'll have them.

MS. CONKLE: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: In addition to --

MS. CONKLE: I just -- that's as much for us as it is for you, so that we're -- because we're -- I mean, I think that -- again, I can't express enough that it's been -- we've gotten a really interesting mix of folks coming to the meetings, and they're asking for the things that you -- you promote and the dollars you fight for every day. It would be -- it would be a shame not to, you know, while we're in this process -- we only do this every four years -- not to try to work cooperatively to have some folks that actually know -- because again, I know what I'm handed, I work with the STIP, I understand some funding categories. But it would be a shame not to have the folks that understand this better than anyone,
which are the people in this room, not be involved with the,
you know, public involvement and stakeholder workshops going
forward.

Because again, we've invited -- we've invited all
the modes, you know, to give us -- to provide us with
stakeholders that they would like at the stakeholder
workshops. We've invited all of the stakeholders to provide
plans. Like you said, I'm not -- I'm not familiar with all of
your plans. I know some of those plans. But if it's provided
to us, then we're going to give it to the consultants who are
going to be working this through the asset management.

If we don't have it, that's a missing piece, in my
mind. And it's not something that we are going to be able to
recover from very easily as we're spending two or three months
on asset management, if we don't get it until, say, May.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

MS. CONKLE: So we need to be very, very conscious
in working with our PTN division to identify all the plans
that are relevant to this issue, you know, issue that you're
having with funding, or this issue you're having with
capacity, and make sure that we get those in early and often,
as new numbers come out, while we're doing asset management.

MR. GADBOIS: Although Michelle, in -- actually, the
way I see more money happening is different than that. I just
happened to, for another reason, see Maryland's DOT's long-
range plan of late. And they simply set goals. We're going
to reduce single-occupant vehicles by 30 percent, right?
Well, as soon as you do that, whether you hit it or not is not
near as important as, all of a sudden, that starts really
directing serious money. Are we going to get to something
like that in the performance side?

MS. CONKLE: I -- that's absolutely. If we set a
goal, we're going to have the money that we receive on both
sides of the table, whether we receive it from FTA or FHWA,
both come out of the Highway Trust Fund; you know, are going
to be -- they're going to be looked at, in terms of, did you
-- did you even come close? Did you set targets and goals
that you could meet.

This is -- this is exactly -- I'm not going to sit
here and say I know what our commission is going to do. But
they've gone out and tasked us with -- with you all and the
users to tell us what those goals should be. If there were --
we need to reduce single-occupancy vehicles by 30 percent --
I'm sorry, you said Maryland -- like Maryland did, then -- and
there's a loud enough voice, and that's adopted, well, of
course, that's going to drive it, because it absolutely has
to. That is the federal mandate, is that these targets are
met with the money that comes back to us. And if they're not,
we're going to get to explain why they weren't.

And the only way to -- if you set that as a priority
and a goal, and we set it as a target, I'm just going to assume we're all going in to this, you know, well meaning, and that we're actually going to try to do that. And we're going to match up the projects -- that's, again, part of this process, is matching up the projects and the plans with the goals and targets.

Now again, there's been a lot of discussion out in the public -- and you'll see this when you start seeing the comments. They realize there's no more money, and they realize we can't continue to do more with less. And you understand -- we understand inflation all too well because we never indexed the gas tax, and what we're collecting right now at 38 cents doesn't go nearly as far as it did in 1990, which was the last time we had an increase.

So this is on the forefront, with providers, with users. And they are not -- despite what you may think, they are not opposed to talking about that, they have not been hostile. They have been saying, what do we have to do to get this system improved or that system improved, which is just -- I mean, that's -- like I said, that's incredible for me, having done this for 27 years. It's usually, we don't want a this or we don't want a that. And it's like, what do we have to do to get improvements in the system. So they're talking to us.

And like I said, a lot of them are public transit
users, they're people that would use public transit if the
connectivity was there. And they're bicycle -- bicyclists and
pedestrians that need all types of modes to get where they're
going because they have needs.

So we need to have -- we need to have folks out
there that represent these modes, that represent the providers
that need these funds out there talking to the folks that want
to help us with a solution. Do you see what I'm saying? It's
like they want to help, they want to know what they can do.
And some of the success stories we've heard is because they've
already gone to their local TxDOT office or their local MPO,
and they've already done things at a local level that's
improved, you know, their system, evidently they have a -- I
didn't get to see it, but the next time I'm up in Wichita
Falls, they just opened up a public transit hub that is
supposed to be -- and again, it's amazing to me because it's a
smaller city, where typically all during my education and
planning we've heard, that won't work because you don't have
the capacity, that won't work. Well, it's working. And it's
-- and they don't have a congestion problem, which is also
kind of antithetical to the way that you learn planning in
school, is that -- is that we put it in here, because we know
we're going to need it. We know we have an aging population,
and we know we have folks that are not, you know, going to be
traveling in cars much longer. So we're building it before we
need it, while we can afford it, and we know that it's going
to get -- be well used, and it already is. They're just
really awesome comments we're getting.

And the great thing would be that the next time we
go out, is that we have folks that then can talk to them about
their particular needs. And so we should -- you know, we
should work together to make sure that you have an opportunity
to get something out of, not only the public involvement but
that you have a larger role in our plan. If --

MS. BLOOMER: So you hadn't -- sorry, Glenn. You
had mentioned demographics. So is that being taken into
consideration, the fact that we have this coming tsunami of
older adults that are going to be reaching the age where --
hey, I'm in there, too.

(Laughter.)

MS. CONKLE: No, absolutely.

MS. BLOOMER: That either don't want to drive
anymore, or shouldn't be driving anymore, and that we provide
them the options available to them, sort of like the demand
management. If we're going to put a tollway to move you off,
well, then we have to give you options, versus we move those
folks into assisted-living facilities, which ends up, as a
state and as taxpayers, costing us more than if we were to
provide the resources they need to be able to maintain their
independence, by having different modes of transportation, not
an automobile.

MS. CONKLE: That has come up. And it is -- it's been told to us that this is not -- that's not really -- it's not really an option to be considered, you know, in some mathematical formula. It is -- it is our responsibility as a DOT to make sure that there are options. And we've had people comment on that. And again, we've -- that's very much come up.

We -- irrespective, we do have a very large population, aging population. We have a very large population of folks that aren't old enough to drive yet. We have a thousand people a month moving into Texas. It -- it is -- this is absolutely driving the discussion. It's driving the discussion about we can't do more with less because it's not sustainable.

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MS. CONKLE: And one of the goal areas that was proposed, and then I got a call from Bike Texas today that wanted to -- they decided they wanted to officially get on that, let's add a goal, you know, I guess a thread in the discussion was that it was pointed out that none of these goals is going to be attainable if we don't add a goal for sustainable funding across all modes. And that makes absolute sense. It's the one that -- it's the one everybody knows needs to be there, but nobody wants to talk about.
MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MS. CONKLE: But it's the one that the public has been telling us we're ready to talk to you about it. And I'm saying if you're ready, and you're having polite, you know, discussions with us, we should be talking to you about that, you know, while you are in amicable mode to talk about that.

And then also, I had someone call from the biking community today saying we need to talk about economics, we need to talk about what bicycle and pedestrian facilities bring to local economics. Because if you are able to -- you know, if you're able to enhance the economy in a local area, they might be more willing to come to the table for these public/private partnerships, as long as they can keep their money in their area, which makes perfect sense to me. So just discussions I've never, ever, ever been broached about.

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MS. CONKLE: And so this is good stuff, I'm telling you it's good stuff. And we need the people that are representing these modes out there. And that's why when I send -- we did tell people, when you send these comments in, you know, unless you want to remain anonymous, we're going to give them to people who might be able to get in touch with you and talk to you, and I would encourage you to do so because they want to talk. I just can't -- I can only talk about things that I know about --
MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MS. CONKLE: -- and then tell them I can get this to -- you know, by -- well, I know some about that. But you know, public transportation or aviation or rail, we've had a lot of discussion about rail, so I'm going to have to get that over to our rail division, and Caroline Mays is working on the freight plan. But it's -- we've got a -- we've got a really good opportunity here, and you should be involved, absolutely. So we'll work through Eric to make sure that happens.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And then once you have the plan, am I correct in assuming that the Commission will approve or adopt the plan?

MS. CONKLE: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: And then how does the plan then impact the annual or biennium funding decisions that are made?

MS. CONKLE: Part of -- part of becoming a performance-based plan is we'll have to come up with an implementation. I hate plan, plan, plan. But a plan to implement the plan, an implementation plan. Because, again, we're going to have to come back and annually, starting in 2015, we're going to have to report back to the federal government how we're -- how we're managing our money towards those goals we identified. They're self-identified goals, so there really won't be a good excuse for not -- you know, and we're allowed to set our own targets.
So we're going to have to show how we spent that money that came to us, you know, in reaching those goals and making those targets. So there will be an implementation part of this plan that -- it's a natural -- I guess a natural byproduct, if you will, to be able to connect the plans and the policies to the actual programs that are going to be funding the projects that are supposed to meet those goals.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle?


MR. GLEASON: If I could suggest to the committee, so in the spirit of commenting, if the committee wishes to comment as a committee --

MS. BLOOMER: Committee.

MR. GLEASON: -- then they'll either need to take some action today, and one option is, as you've done in the past, there are a handful of you that are comfortable enough with the conversation to reflect it in a comment on behalf of the committee, that would be one approach. The other approach would be to come back in January and work with the transcript and put something together then.

But I think one of the -- I think weighing in on this formally sooner, rather than later, is always a good idea. And I don't know if December is a better time for you all to hear from the committee formally, or whether it can wait until the end of January.
MS. CONKLE: Well --

MR. GLEASON: Given -- I mean, in terms of being most --

MS. CONKLE: Sure.

MR. GLEASON: -- influential, and the next time this becomes public, what it looks like --

MS. CONKLE: Right.

MR. GLEASON: -- when do you need something from these guys?

MS. CONKLE: We're going to be pulling these together over -- again, you know, December is just a hard month to do anything because of the holidays. And January, we have TRB, we have a bunch of different, you know, things going on. I think that our hope is to get this to the Commission sometime late January, early February. So January certainly wouldn't be late.

I think, also, I want to point out, if you were to comment today on it, if you have some things that you want to comment today on, it's not going to preclude you from commenting, again, more -- you know, with a more thorough discussion of the issues in January. As a matter of fact, it's just more support, you know, and shows that you had a comment to make today, but that, you know, given some time to process the things we've said -- and also, you haven't seen the comments yet. You haven't seen the comments from the
public, and I think you really want to see those. It's really, really good information. You could come back and comment more formally, you know, after you've seen those comments, as well. Whatever you want to do, we're going to take them both, we'll take anything you send us.

MR. GLEASON: But the commission may see the results of this process, around this level of information, they may see it as soon as their January meeting.

MS. CONKLE: Yes, end of January.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. And our semi-annual is -- typically is not until the third week in January.

MS. BLOOMER: Right. I think it's the 18th.

MR. GLEASON: My recommendation to this committee is that you either take some action today or delegate to a subset of your group to pull together some comments that can be forwarded to Michelle in the December time frame, just so that those are in front of them as we move through the holidays and into the first part of January.

MR. GADBOIS: Can we do development and review over email?

MR. GLEASON: Not as a committee. What you can do today is have a conversation that would outline what the comments should deal with. And Bobby, you'll need to help me out here.

MR. GADBOIS: We can't -- we can't approve an item
over email?

MR. GLEASON: Not as a committee.

MS. BLOOMER: Well, we --

MR. GLEASON: You can send in your individual thoughts on it.

MS. BLOOMER: So we can submit our comments as individuals.

MR. GLEASON: You can --

MS. BLOOMER: We can submit our comments --

MR. GLEASON: But it -- but it would not be as PTAC.

MS. BLOOMER: Right. But I think what we're interested in is submitting our comments as PTAC. And based on what I heard Eric say and Michelle say is -- what I would propose is we submit, sometime in December, preliminary comments at a very high level --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- based off some of the conversation we had today that -- the areas that we're interested in, some of -- you know, and the ideas that we've talked about today, and that we reserve more detailed comment pending receipt of the other comments.

But I do think it's important that when we acknowledge that this is going on, and that -- and to thank for including us in the beginning, since that was an issue we had last time, and providing some general, high-level guidance
at this point. And then once we can get the information, have
the semi-annual meeting and get more feedback, provide more
detail, more detailed comments.

MR. GADBOIS: But now we would have to have some
discussion to agree on at least the bullet points of what
would be in that communication, and decide one or two people
to actually develop it --

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MR. GADBOIS: -- as a PTAC action.

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: Correct.

MS. BLOOMER: But we can go back and do all the
writing and wordsmithing outside the meeting.

MR. GADBOIS: Right. Got it.

MS. CONKLE: If it doesn't come in until January,
though, we're not going to exclude it. If we have it --

MR. GLEASON: I know it won't be excluded. And
we've talked about this before.

MS. CONKLE: Right.

MR. GLEASON: But my interest is, is in when is it
going to be the most helpful.

MS. CONKLE: Yes. When does it have the most
impact? It -- obviously, we all know, working in some sector
of this business, early, often and the more often you can do
it, and the earlier you can do it, the more impact it has. So I -- I absolutely agree with what -- with any of the scenarios that you've talked about.

And again, we will -- if we get into a discussion where we really need to, you know, maybe go to the commission as a discussion item, but there needs to be more time, we're not adverse and we've talked to Eric about this, with, you know, sliding the schedule a little bit. I mean, if we -- all of a sudden, we're starting to get a whole lot of comments -- we were getting to the point of identifying the goals, and then people just got really motivated across the state, whatever, in January, this is not a process in my mind that should ever say your comment was due by close of business on this day. And we're -- that's not -- that's not what we do. I know that project specific --

MR. GADBOIS: And we get that, and I appreciate that. So I'm going to make a motion on process.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. GADBOIS: And then, as the discussion on the motion, we can flesh out what the bullet points would be.

I move that Michelle take charge of drafting, with -- you select the person, I'll volunteer myself if you want my help with it. But that two people from this committee, Michelle leading that, draft a letter to be delivered on behalf of PTAC in mid-December, with the bullet points as
discussed and agreed to by this group. I would add the one item that we send around for -- to -- we get staff to send around to PTAC what we draft to make sure we didn't miss any points. And then it's ready to send out. Can we do that?

UNIDENTIFIED: Bobby, did you hear all that?

MS. BLOOMER: Is that an official motion?

MR. GADBOIS: That's not -- that's not a PTAC vote. That's just getting their -- getting their input to confirm that's what they agreed to. Can we do that in an email?

MR. KILLEBREW: You can make that motion. There still needs to be content to your motion, so the bullet points that you're getting to, yes.

MR. GADBOIS: And the discussion is going to add the bullet points. It -- but we can do that part of the process?

MR. KILLEBREW: The discussion --

MR. GADBOIS: Develop --

MR. KILLEBREW: -- is going to happen outside of --

MR. GADBOIS: No, no, no.

MS. BLOOMER: It's part of the motion.

MR. GADBOIS: The motion is Michelle and with Glenn develop a draft that will then be emailed to the group, to make sure that we got the bullet points right in text. And then we will send that off by mid-November. The discussion --

MS. BLOOMER: December.

MR. GADBOIS: -- on this motion -- December. We
will -- the discussion on this motion will supply the bullet points.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Since you are now involved in that, I will second that motion.

MS. BLOOMER: Can I just --

MR. UNDERWOOD: Put a vote on the floor.

MS. BLOOMER: Can I just make a clarification. So this letter will be the preliminary comment letter, with a subsequent, more detailed comment letter to be -- opportunity to provide a second, more detailed letter, upon receipt of the general public comments received.

MR. GADBOIS: We can clarify that in the letter. That's the first good discussion point. And yes, we would put that in the draft.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So we have a motion and a second, so now opening it up for discussion on the bullet points, with one of them being it's the first --

MR. GADBOIS: Of many.

MS. BLOOMER: -- first letter; provide additional detailed comments upon receipt of public comments from the meetings. Okay.

Some of the other things we threw out is just expressing appreciation for allowing PTAC to provide comment, and to provide it early on.

MR. GADBOIS: Also with that, I appreciate the
process generally. I mean, what I heard today, this process has been more open and engaging than what I have seen at times in the past, and so, you know, I think we ought to recognize and applaud that.

MS. CONKLE: We are -- we are -- I think at -- I think it's important to note, too, the process is more open. And what we've been allowed to do is we've been allowed to have discussions, where we acknowledge that we're not just TxDOT employees, we're using the system. We're no different than anybody else. And those things that are important to our users are important to us, as well. And we -- you know, we have to acknowledge, we appreciate the administration, and I appreciate my director Marc Williams, because he's out there telling us to engage, telling us to engage, but I guess giving us -- giving us the atmosphere to be able to do that. So we're very appreciative to new ways of looking at things.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. GADBOIS: We won't talk about that part since Marc didn't come to talk to us directly.

MS. BLOOMER: Back to the bullets of the letter. Is everybody good with the key priority areas of restoring the per capita spending levels, state of good repair, multi-modal, and inner-city bus? Are there others?

MR. GADBOIS: I don't -- I don't disagree with the intent. I don't think that's an appropriate level for what
this plan usually is. I mean, I think that we ought to be --
we ought to be asserting that this plan should prioritize
multi-modal, should seek both traditional and nontraditional
ways to increase investment in transit, but detailing out
specific programs as an implementation issue.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. J.R. or Brad, do you have any
--

MR. SALAZAR: Concur.

MS. BLOOMER: On what?

MR. GADBOIS: To what? You weren't paying
attention.

(Laughter.)

MS. BLOOMER: On what?

MR. SALAZAR: I'm reading the survey. I'm --

MR. UNDERWOOD: It's very similar to our LAR, I
think. I mean, what we're talking about here are some of the
same things we've been talking about for a long time, so I'm
-- I'm good with it. You know that. I think the survey is
very good. Can I comment on that? I think it's really good.

Public transportation has its own section.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED: We like this, Michelle. We like
this.

MS. CONKLE: We are listening. We are listening.

We are.
UNIDENTIFIED: This is great.

MS. CONKLE: Thank you very much for allowing us the opportunity to present. We've got another -- someplace we have to be at 4:00, but we'll come back to you --

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

MS. CONKLE: -- and we'll work through Eric and Kelly, and work through Bobby.

(Participants confer.)

MS. BLOOMER: Can you -- you took the white board.

MS. CONKLE: Oh.

MS. BLOOMER: Can you just write it down --

MS. CONKLE: You know what?

MS. BLOOMER: -- and shoot it to Bobby or --

MS. CONKLE: You know what? We --

MS. BLOOMER: -- vice-versa.

MS. CONKLE: That was force of habit, that we take it.

(Laughter.)

MS. CONKLE: But you know, it's probably all been discussed since you all have a court reporter, so I'm going to leave it with you.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Thank you.

MS. CONKLE: All right? Sorry.

MS. BLOOMER: Because we can use that as part of our --
UNIDENTIFIED: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- letter and discussion.

MS. CONKLE: I'm going to take your notes away from you. Thank you again for letting us present to you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MS. CONKLE: Have a good afternoon and safe driving.

MS. BLOOMER: So before we take a final vote on the motion, can I just go back?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, you can.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. In addition to the letter, I'd just make sure that we're going to share the PTAC minutes with Michelle Conkle and her staff, and asking Eric, can you please share the regional coordination plans with them as well, if we haven't already?

MR. GLEASON: Now question for the committee.

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MR. GLEASON: All right to share the unapproved minutes --

MS. BLOOMER: I think --

MR. GLEASON: -- with them?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Yes, or the transcript, when it's available.
MR. GLEASON:  The transcript.

MR. KILLEBREW:  The transcript.  Just an excerpt from the transcript that we talked about earlier.

MS. BLOOMER:  Uh-huh.

MR. KILLEBREW:  So not necessarily the minutes.  The minutes won't capture the level of detail.

MR. GLEASON:  Just the excerpt from the transcript.

MR. KILLEBREW:  Right.  So I think you're actually going to provide the excerpt.

MS. BLOOMER:  Right.

MR. GADBOIS:  Point of order, Madam Chair.  We have a motion on the table.  Is that a discussion item for the motion?

MS. BLOOMER:  Okay.  Well, no.

UNIDENTIFIED:  Point founded.

MS. BLOOMER:  I've been schooled in Roberts Rule's of Order.  So we have a motion and a second.  We will call the vote.

MR. GADBOIS:  Well -- well, I think what I'm trying to get at is we probably have more discussion, I mean, more bullet point items we want on the letter.

MS. BLOOMER:  Oh.

MR. GADBOIS:  And we have to finish that first.

MS. BLOOMER:  I thought we were done with that.

Okay.  So more items.  Because all I got out of -- was concur.
MR. GADBOIS: Him was survey.
MR. UNDERWOOD: And I'm the same.
MS. BLOOMER: And -- okay.
MR. GADBOIS: Okay. So we've talked about -- and I just want to confirm that these are bullet points -- more money for -- more investment in transit and multi-modal; that the plan ought to seek ways to provide stronger connectivity between modes; that demand management needs to be an element.
MS. BLOOMER: Options to make demand management viable needs to be --
MR. GADBOIS: And then it ought to be such a -- it ought to be sufficient priority in this plan, such that it reframes the relationship between things like toll roads and investment in options. I mean, but -- you know, but even broader than that.
You know, looking at, for example, behavior change. We've got a number of people that are -- y'all are used to carrying now that are completely transit dependent. But you have a lot of other people you could serve, if we're talking about serious change in travel behavior.
UNIDENTIFIED: Uh-huh.
MR. GADBOIS: And then it needs to direct the funding accordingly. What else did we --
MS. BLOOMER: Can we weigh in on their goals?
MR. GADBOIS: Yeah, and I think we ought to. I
mean, so the congestion, for example, you were taking -- and
safety, I don't -- you were taking issue with safety. I don't
have as much an issue with that because people actually really
care about that. But on the congestion --

MS. BLOOMER: Well, I care about safety.

MR. GADBOIS: I know, but -- but --

MS. BLOOMER: But to me it's not the primary goal of
TxDOT. It's a secondary goal.

MR. GADBOIS: We can argue over drafting points over
that.

(Laughter.)

MR. GADBOIS: But on the congestion stuff, without a
doubt, you know, congestion has driven a lot -- reducing
congestion has driven a lot of what they do, the Department
has done thus far.

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MR. GADBOIS: And to the extent that we can reframe
that --

UNIDENTIFIED: I would just say, I don't think you
want to get it so lengthy that it's, you know, something
that's not to the point.

MR. GADBOIS: Oh, we're still at half a page, maybe
a page.

UNIDENTIFIED: I was going to say you think.

MS. BLOOMER: Well, and I think what I'd like to do
is, you know, sort of just -- we can talk about the general
letter off line, but hit just really the high points and the
key things, is -- you know, maybe it's just reframing the
focus.

MR. GLEASON: If I could, this page is what they
really --

MS. BLOOMER: Want.

MR. GLEASON: -- are looking for comments on right
now.

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MR. GLEASON: You want to boil it down to the
simplest thing.

MS. BLOOMER: Yeah.

MR. GLEASON: And so I think, if the committee has
some consensus, thoughts around -- in addition to what you've
said, but specifically on this page, or wants to frame those
points in the context of this page, that will make sense.

MR. GADBOIS: Well, it's just so -- so -- and I was
trying to figure out how to say this, to see if you all agreed
with it. Maybe this is back to your point that the Department
needs to be looking at moving people and goods, not vehicles;
and congestion, therefore, kind of misses the point.

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

MR. GADBOIS: How about something like that?

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.
MR. GADBOIS: Because moving people then gets it back to we're going to look at effective ways to move people, not build roads for cars, but look at transit as a real option, et cetera.

The other one that bugged me up there is economic vitality. And so let me just ask you all's opinion on this. I actually think what they ought to be looking at is economic value or economic development. Economic vitality I don't get as a goal, much less something that you could actually measure. I mean, it -- because that then becomes very relative to, you know, who thinks what's vital.

MS. BLOOMER: Yeah.

MR. UNDERWOOD: One thing I don't really understand, since we're talking about things we don't understand, customer service. Am I missing that? What is that?

MS. BLOOMER: What does that mean?

MR. UNDERWOOD: What does that mean?

MS. BLOOMER: Well, we skipped those slides.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: I think there's --

MR. UNDERWOOD: Oh, they're in here? Oh, yeah.

MS. BLOOMER: And I'm sure we all read this before we came.

"Includes educating all transportation stakeholders on the plan decision-making process, soliciting and
providing opportunities for input, then integrating customer feedback into the transportation plan and project delivery process."

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: So I think, in that context, that would be something we would continue to encourage TxDOT to do, to be open. And I think, you know, linking it back to this process, it's much more, I would say, inclusive and customer service oriented than the past processes.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Glenn, do you -- I feel we have enough for at least our first high-level --

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- comment, since we moved do that.

Are we read to take the motion?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Call the vote.

MS. BLOOMER: All right. I have a motion and a second. We will take a vote. Rob?

MR. STEPHENS: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: All right, Rob. Glenn.

MR. GADBOIS: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: J.R.?

MR. SALAZAR: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: Michelle, aye. Brad?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Aye.
MS. BLOOMER: Motion passes.

Now since we've taken care of that, Eric, just for my notes, the follow-up items I have is to share the PTAC transcript, just that portion of it related to this conversation with TPP; to share the regional coordination plans with TTP. If we have transit asset management plans or vehicle capital replacement data to share with them -- because that was one thing she mentioned -- if we don't get it in now, as far as what the financial need is to maintain the existing system --

MR. GLEASON: Okay. Yeah.

MS. BLOOMER: And then, at the point when TPP has the public comments, that you will share those with PTAC.

MR. GLEASON: What was the thing on the regional coordination plans?

MS. BLOOMER: Well, she mentioned that there -- you take -- that they've gone to the MPOs and gotten the metropolitan transportation plans, and they have the TIP and the STIP.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: And they're looking at all plans available. And my --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Is we should be sharing our regional coordination plans with them; hence, the consultant, because
there's a lot of ideas, needs, gaps --

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: -- that they could pull from.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: They're going to love us. They have to read all that. But I think if we want to be part of that, that would be a good opportunity. Were there any other things related to that?

MR. GLEASON: Unh-unh.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. If not, we will close Item 4.

And we're working our way up the agenda. So Eric, if you'd like to give your division director's report, with the laser disc version.

MR. GLEASON: I'll just go over these real briefly. I think they're pretty straightforward. The administrative code changes are in effect. Good job, everybody. Coordinated call projects is out. We've extended the application due date until February.

MR. GADBOIS: Excuse me. Excuse me. How did Brad do?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Thank you very much.

MR. GADBOIS: Inspiration.

UNIDENTIFIED: He was inspirational.

(Laughter.)

MR. GADBOIS: Thanks to Brad.
UNIDENTIFIED: Something about it taking a long
time, and it was finally over.

(Laughter.)

MR. UNDERWOOD: Plenty of industry participation.

MR. GLEASON: Program workshops. We are -- you
know, this is part of our new and improved -- Chris is not
here -- new and improved 5310 effort, where we are kicking off
our process a little later than we normally do, just to allow
us to take advantage of the new administrative code, pieces of
that. And we're attempting to make some improvements in our
outreach efforts for that.

And then, at the November meeting, just last week in
Tyler, the Commission did expand the membership on the Bicycle
Advisory Committee from seven to 11. They added members from
the Tyler area, Houston, San Antonio, and El Paso.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Those have to be appointed by the
Governor and Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House?

MR. GLEASON: No, just -- this committee --

MR. UNDERWOOD: Oh, gotcha.

MR. GLEASON: -- has that requirement.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Thank you for that clarification.

MS. BLOOMER: And Eric, have we had any luck --

MR. GLEASON: No.

(Laughter.)

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.
UNIDENTIFIED:  No.

MR. GADBOIS:  This is the only commission that isn't appointed by commissioners, TxDOT commissioners?

MR. GLEASON:  To my knowledge, all of the department advisory committees, with the exception of this one -- I don't know for sure -- that all the ones I'm familiar with, the Commission does -- the Port Advisory Committee, the Freight Advisory Committee, the Lone Star Rail we have appointments. So the Commission does all those. The Commission used to do this committee.

MR. GADBOIS:  This committee.

MR. GLEASON:  And then, several sessions ago, there was a change put in place that actually --

MR. GADBOIS:  Well actually --

MR. GLEASON:  -- took it back to the way it used to be before the Commission did it, so it's --

MR. GADBOIS:  Well, and I thought that was supposed to be for all of the commissions, not just this one. That's why I'm surprised.

MR. GLEASON:  No, it's just this one, it was singled out.

MR. GADBOIS:  Okay.

MS. BLOOMER:  And Eric, the fifty-three --

MR. GADBOIS:  What does the industry do, guys?

(Laughter.)
MS. BLOOMER: It was -- never mind. The 5310 program workshop, those are for the 5310 funding that the Department has to award, correct?

MR. GLEASON: That's correct.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: That is correct.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Any questions for Eric on the director's report?

MR. SALAZAR: I don't have a question, Eric; just a comment. I know, on the 5310, it seems to get bogged down here. And I don't mean to do that. But I have heard some comments of -- and I don't know why transit providers are being upset over the public outreach. You know, why are we trying to invite more people to the table? There's not enough money to begin with. Why are we asking Bobby's MHMR to come to the -- to the meeting, and that kind of stuff. It just -- just so you know.

MR. GLEASON: Well, and part of it is because the new MAP-21 requirements actually are much more explicit about needing to do that. So it's not just because we're trying to, you know, get people to coordinate.

MR. SALAZAR: Right.

MR. GLEASON: It really is much more explicit about the need to have those folks at the table, and so part of it is that.
MR. GADBOIS: Well, and I'll be less politic than you will be, which won't surprise you at all.

(Laughter.)

MR. GADBOIS: Some places -- I mean, is -- you know, Dave sat here and kind of showed in his discussion, some places do, you know, a really good job of trying to be -- coordinate, and bring people in --

MR. GLEASON: Sure.

MR. GADBOIS: -- and be innovative and all that sort of stuff, and other places don't. And you know, and as a state you've got to deal with the whole range, right?

And so some people that are doing well have to suffer a little bit more process, and others have more process than they want.

MS. BLOOMER: Is -- since we now have the new 5310 process established and all that, and I don't believe we had it in place at the July semi-annual, is that an item on the January --

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: -- semi-annual? So maybe it could be explained to folks that are there why, if it's a requirement for MAP, this is why we're doing it, so they don't just think it's --

UNIDENTIFIED: But I -- there are some things in there that I do like. For example, there's -- Brad and I are
in the Fort Worth/Dallas district, that I'm not -- no longer judging his application, and he is no longer judging my application.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Yeah.

MS. BLOOMER: Yeah.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I look forward to doing that every year, generally.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We already had -- any more public comment? We've lost our public.

UNIDENTIFIED: They're not there.

MS. BLOOMER: Next meeting date. Bobby, do you happen to know? It's the last Tuesday of --

MR. KILLEBREW: January, that's what's scheduled. Y'all had communicated you might want that closer to the semi-annual meeting. The last Tuesday in January is January 28th. The semi-annual meeting is the 14th.

So it's that --

UNIDENTIFIED: Or the 15th.

MS. BLOOMER: I think it's the 15th.

UNIDENTIFIED: It's the 15th.

MS. BLOOMER: 15th.

UNIDENTIFIED: And just so you know, too, on that, the RFP for the MTP is January 16th.

UNIDENTIFIED: 16th.

UNIDENTIFIED: Well, you know, it was the 6th.
UNIDENTIFIED: I know that. I know.

(Laughter.)

UNIDENTIFIED: And we made all the plans and then I just talked to Dimitri a couple weeks ago --

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh.

UNIDENTIFIED: -- and, oh, it's going to shift up two weeks.

(Laughter.)

UNIDENTIFIED: There it is.

UNIDENTIFIED: Hey. You know what, if you don't have it done by the 15th, you're probably not going to make the 16th, either, right?

UNIDENTIFIED: Probably not going to have it done anyway, so I'll be there anyway.

MS. BLOOMER: Are we going to need time, though, between the semi-annual and the PTAC meeting to prepare the comments or thoughts that we'd want to keep the meeting at the 28th?

UNIDENTIFIED: I could do the 28th or the 21st. It doesn't matter to me.

But I mean, I kind of like having it be more fresh on my mind, the things we heard at the semi-annual; so therefore, it would lend itself to the 21st, but that's -- either way, I'm fine.

MR. KILLEBREW: So you're looking at the week
following the semi-annual.

UNIDENTIFIED: Uh-huh.

MS. BLOOMER: But as far as PTN staff time and being able to turn that around.

MR. KILLEBREW: Turn what around, the comments from the PTAC?

MS. BLOOMER: The comments from the semi-annual.

MR. KILLEBREW: Or from the semi-annual?

MS. BLOOMER: Uh-huh. And the comments from today, and the comments from the working group finalized on a regional coordination piece, in addition to the TTP.

MR. KILLEBREW: What I would say is anything coming out of the semi-annual you may not see until the day of your meeting.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. KILLEBREW: If it's the 21st. We won't make a commitment to get that out to you the Thursday before -- we'll try. But it may be that, with everything else happening, that you may see that for the first time --

MS. BLOOMER: At the meeting? Does anybody have issue with leaving it at the 28th?

UNIDENTIFIED: I don't think so.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. GADBOIS: The 28th is --

MR. KILLEBREW: And if it's the 28th --
MR. GADBOIS: The 28th is close enough, and with staff notes, that will keep Brad's mind fresh enough.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's not that old.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: All right.

MR. KILLEBREW: So we'll leave it at the 28th.

MS. BLOOMER: Leave it at the 28th.

MR. KILLEBREW: All right.

MS. BLOOMER: All right. Anything else from anybody or Rob?

(No verbal response.)

MS. BLOOMER: All right. Hearing nothing --

MR. STEPHENS: No, I don't have anything to add.

UNIDENTIFIED: Move to adjourn.

MS. BLOOMER: Move the meeting to adjourn. All those in favor, say aye.

PARTICIPANTS: Aye.

MS. BLOOMER: Aye. Meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: And members, Michelle Conkle asks -- they're looking for input on these, if you can. But if you all can fill out this survey sheet today --

UNIDENTIFIED: Right.

UNIDENTIFIED: -- and I can get that to her. It's part of that Title 6.
MR. GADBOIS: And is that in the --

UNIDENTIFIED: It is.

UNIDENTIFIED: That's part of the three pages that she handed out.

(Whereupon, at 3:37 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)
CERTIFICATE

I, KIMBERLY C. McCRIGHT, CET, certified electronic transcriber, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages 1 through 119 constitute a full, true, and accurate transcript from electronic recording of the proceedings had in the foregoing matter.

DATED this 15th day of October, 2013.

[Signature]

Kimberly C. McCright, CET
Certified Electronic Transcriber