TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2016

10:00 A.M.

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<tr>
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<th>A P P E A R A N C E S</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Billy Hibbs, Chair, Tyler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russ Frank, Vice-Chair, Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Karla Weaver, Dallas/Fort Worth</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Teri Kaplan, Statewide Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Donna Roberts, Program Services Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Allison Kaplan, Austin (Via Telephone)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Josh Ribakove, PTN</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Joseph Pitchford, Dallas</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Allison Blazosky, San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Stephanie Lind, CH2M Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Shawn Twing, Amarillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Robert Gonzales, El Paso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>David Steiner, Lufkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Anne-Marie Williamson, Wichita Falls (Via Telephone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ramiro Gonzalez, Brownsville (Via Telephone)</td>
</tr>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Michael Sledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Jeff Taebel</td>
</tr>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Anita Hollmann</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Mark Stine</td>
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MR. HIBBS: It's 10:00, and we will convene with the first meeting of the year for the TxDOT Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting. I'm Billy Hibbs, the chair. We appreciate Donna reminding everyone to mention your name before you start speaking so that they can record it properly in the minutes. Also, please, if you've got handheld devices, if you will put those on mute we would appreciate that.

And we want to welcome Joseph Pitchford to your first meeting. He was on the phone with us last time. We're glad you're here, a good experience for you and we learn from you as well.

So we will get started with the safety briefing. And, Josh, are you doing that for us today?

MR. RIBAKOVE: Sure I will. I'm Josh Ribakove for TxDOT. If you haven't been in this room before, you'll find that in between these two doors is a hallway extending straight back that way. If we should need to evacuate the building for any reason, that's the hallway to use. Just walk straight down. You will see an exit on the left. Just go right out. Go across the parking lot to the sidewalk, and we'll meet up over there.

Just past that exit are the restrooms and water fountains, easy to find. We are not expecting
any inclement weather obviously, but if something just
comes out of the sky and we have to shelter in place in
this building, the place to do it is in the auditorium.
That is right here on the first floor. You will go to
the second hallway. So you'll go to that second
hallway down there, turn left, and walk all the way
down and you'll see the auditorium, and that's where
we'll shelter in place.

A couple of really brief notes. There is
a lot of construction going on in Austin for you folks
who are here from out of town. If you see those
55-mile-an-hour signs on the highway, they do mean it.
They do enforce. Be aware. Be careful. We also have
a handheld cell phone ban if you're driving a vehicle
in Austin. They do enforce, a big fine. They do mean
it. Be careful and, you know, don't do that. That's
your safety briefing.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Josh.

Time to approve our minutes from the
October 27 meeting. Hopefully everyone has had a
chance to read the minutes. And first of all, do we
have any changes? Is there anything that anyone needs
to modify in the minutes? If not I will entertain a
motion to accept the minutes.

MR. FRANK: I'll move.
MR. HIBBS: A move by Russ Frank. Do we have a second?

MS. WEAVER: Second.

MR. HIBBS: Second by Karla Weaver. All in favor say aye.

("Aye" spoken in unison)

MR. HIBBS: Motion carries. All right.

So it's time for me to give you guys some updates on some things that have been going on and help kind of provide some continuity from one meeting to the next. First, we're going to see a little later a presentation from Michael Sledge and his group. They came to Tyler to talk about the website. And the website is a very integral part of what I believe and many of you believe is the future of TxDOT and how we interconnect not only from a tourism standpoint, but from a safety and a mobility standpoint for bicyclists.

And they have made a lot of progress on the website, but one of the things that all of you can appreciate is a lot of times what they think is important that should be on the website is not necessarily what you may think is important. And so as we get closer to refining the website and it being a true tool for people in the state of Texas, whether they want to bike stripe their local community and see

Page 5
a flowchart in terms of how to go about the steps to get paint on the road or whether it's about some new event that's coming up in your region or if they want to click on and see the road's grid of where all the striped lanes are, just know that there's going to be some responsibility on all of you to get involved in this. And just like in that bicycle strategic report where we spent a lot of time trying to get ready for the future, this is another one of the things. And it's ongoing. For those of you that have website responsibilities, you know, it's never a one and done.

One of the things that I talked about with Michael in Tyler was, you know, has TxDOT dedicated the human resources to keep it updated, because there's constantly new things going on in our communities, there's constantly evolution going on, new bike lanes, new types of information that needs to be shared with the public out there. And so TxDOT does have a commitment to keep it updated. And the responsibility for any updates is probably going to come from the people on this committee. So once it's up and running we'll be asking for your very frequent visiting of this website so that you can kind of look and see what all's going on and help us with that.

There's about to be another presentation
before the TxDOT commission in February. I'm going to have -- at that point in time Eric will have a flowchart that we're designing together in terms of how to get bike stripe implemented. We're going to go through that. We're going to go through many of these other things that we just discussed in terms of the website. We're going to show the commissioners the progress we've made on the strategic plan. I think they're very excited about what's going on. And it's very, very helpful that we can get in front of them and let them know the work that's going on here and how important it is. And I think I got to give them a lot of credit for being very, very highly interested in what is happening here in this committee.

We will, in a little while, talk some more about bike stripe. One of the things that in the last BAC meeting that we had, we set pilot programs, with an S. And so -- thank you, Karla. I think that was up to you. And so the programs, with an S, implies that we're going to potentially get to consider multiple areas in the state of Texas for bike stripe as pilot programs.

So one of the things we're going to talk about a little more today is what areas seem to make the most sense geographically and from a strategic
standpoint with all of the resources, admittedly limited, that all of us have in terms of time and ability to get this pulled off to where we can maybe have two to three programs going simultaneously across the state. So all that's been cooking, and at that point I will move us on to the next point.

On No. 5, we have a report now from the division director regarding statewide bicycle and pedestrian matters.

MR. GLEASON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm Eric Gleason, TxDOT director of public transportation. I will mention one thing briefly, and then I'm going to turn my portion of the meeting over to Michael Sledge to talk with the committee about the progress on the website that you just mentioned.

Real quickly, the department and the commission did act on the remaining balance of transportation alternative program funds that we have at their December commission meeting. At that meeting they approved funding for 33 projects in the areas of the state of under 5,000, so the most rural areas of the state. If you recall, a similar action took place at their September meeting when they approved 17 projects for areas of the state of over 5,000 and less.
than 200,000.

So we now have, as a department, moved out on all of the funding we have for the program from fiscal years '13, '14, '15, and what we anticipate to receive as a part of FY 16. So that's all out the door. Our work's not done. It's just starting. We now have to take all 50 of those projects, and we have a year to get all those projects under what we call an advance funding agreement and up and running from a construction standpoint. So we've got a lot to do, done a lot.

And I guess just anticipating moving forward with that program, what I -- I think it's reasonable for y'all to expect to see us not do anything for another year or so. We might even let one or two years accumulate again before we go out again for a call. So we're going to take a little breather, focus on what we've got, and then learn the lesson from that and visit with you on what we think those lessons are before we jump out again on another call for projects.

MR. HIBBS: So 50 -- I'm sorry. This is Billy Hibbs. 50 different projects; is that correct?

MR. GLEASON: Yes, sir.

MR. HIBBS: In communities with
populations of 5,000 or less?

MR. GLEASON: No. 33 in communities of 5,000 or less and 17 in communities between 5,000 and 200,000, for a total of 50.

MR. HIBBS: Is it possible for us to get a list of those communities and how much money was spent in those particular areas?

MR. GLEASON: Yes. Absolutely.

MR. HIBBS: I think it's very important that the members of this committee know -- if TxDOT is making investments in their particular geographic region, that they have some sense of what's going on.

MR. GLEASON: You bet. And we'll provide a map as well.

MR. HIBBS: Oh, that will be great. If you can provide us with a map and show us where those things are taking place, because we may want to go and check it out, so that would be great.

MR. GLEASON: Perfect. And with that I will turn it over to Michael to talk with the committee about improvements -- or actually a new website for us focusing on the bike program.

MR. SLEDGE: Good morning. My name is Michael Sledge, and I'm the director of creative services here at TxDOT, and what I'd like to do today
is spend a few minutes talking about a website that we're putting together, and we want to work with you guys to build out this content on this website.

What we're showing you here -- we may want to get the lights. So hopefully everyone can see. There we go. So basically what we've been doing is we've kind of made a first pass at putting together a website with the focus around bicycle and safety. And what we have is we're kind of starting out talking about safety at the very beginning of the website. We talk about places to ride. We talked about other ways to get there commuting.

Of course, it would have a link to places like Drive Texas, how to get involved and then other ways you can contact various people on the website to share information. It also has an FAQ component to it, which is what you see down here on the left. And then if there are events occurring around the state, we can highlight those on this page.

Now, what I'd like to do is kind of move over to the next page, again just kind of giving you a real quick preview of kind of what we have done so far. Once you click past the home page you will come into what we call a content page. As you can see, it kind of has -- this talks about how to ride safely, is the
topic of this page. And again, when the page is actually filled out we can have safety tips on this is how you ride safely, wearing helmets and everything else. Of course, on a website like this you're going to have a lot of visuals. And then what you see on the right is just one way we can lay out the content. On the left side of this is another way that we can lay out the content for this particular design. And really in a nutshell that's kind of where we are right now.

This website, of course, can have its own unique web address, meaning that it won't have TxDOT.gov in it. It will have its own unique address. We have also made a pass at the type of content that we envision on this website. So what this handout here is -- we probably can get those lights now -- is a quick snapshot of the type of information that you can find on this website.

Again, this is a very rough pass, and what we want is we want feedback from you guys working through Eric to feed that information to us, and when we get to this point where you are guys are ready, we will be ready to start to build this website out. Again, this is a very important project to the organization, and so it's very important to work with you doing it. We look forward to working with you to
get this done.

MR. HIBBS: Michael, a couple of questions. One of the things that I think I just heard you say is that this is not going to be on the TxDOT website.

MR. SLEDGE: It's going to have its own Web address.

MR. HIBBS: Own Web address.

MR. SLEDGE: In other words, the Web address could be something like www.bikestripe.com, or it could have the TxDOT web address. We can do it either way.

MR. HIBBS: I think it's going to be a whole lot easier for people to remember TxDOT than it is any other possible arrangement of anything.

MR. SLEDGE: Okay.

MR. HIBBS: And it would be -- certainly y'all's marketing budget to get the word out, it's going to be tremendously greater than virtually anyone else who want to try to tell the public about this, so I want to try to encourage you guys to have, you know, even just a link. If you could just go onto the TxDOT website and then it says the bicycle, you click on that and it carries you someplace else, that's fine.

MR. SLEDGE: Certainly can do that.
MR. HIBBS: But I -- what I'm always trying to do as a guy in the half century class is make sure that I don't have even more passwords and special -- you know, all kinds of things I have to remember. And people can remember TxDOT because it has to do with transportation, and I think that's kind of a logical thing.

I think what would help the committee a lot, Michael, is for you to tell them what you need and how you need it so that they can provide you with the kind of constructive feedback that will enable you guys to ramp this thing up quickly.

MR. SLEDGE: Okay. Basically what we need is for you guys to kind of give us an idea of what type of information you envision on the site. We started off with this page. We can certainly get you guys a copy of this page, and you can take the page and kind of mark it up and give it your feedback. If there are other websites that you know of that you really like, share those with us, because we want this -- at the end of the day we want people to come to the website and quickly find the information they're looking for, and we also want to kind of keep to a minimum the number of clicks that people have to click through to find content. So in other words, we don't
I want people to come to this Web page and have to go in five or six clicks to find content. We want to put it right up front, right in their face.

Another thing that we can do as we build the site out, we can give you guys metrics so as you guys meet quarterly or whatever we can share those statistics with you on how often people access this page, where they're coming into the page, where they're exiting the page. So we'll be able to give you guys some data on this also.

MR. GLEASON: Mr. Chair, if I might. I think our purpose today was to alert the committee as a whole that this work is going on, an invitation from us as you go home and go back to your office, whatever, you have ideas on what you can see on it, let me know. And we're not looking for any kind of extended discussion or even approval on the site, but just to let you know it's there, this is it, and please give us your input. We will be as flexible as we can be to accommodate that.

MR. HIBBS: This is Billy again, and I want to reiterate what I said earlier. A lot of times what TxDOT thinks is going to fit the need of the cycling community at large is not necessarily what y'all think, and so they do need the input, and I want
to encourage y'all to be a really important part of this process because the architecture of how this is built is really an important piece of where the -- this committee is going to help pave cycling in the state of Texas.

And I can see this being promoted from a tourism standpoint. When somebody wants to think about coming to Texas, they log on here. They find out a particular area of the region where the trails are, maybe the mountain bike trails, and then a list of the cities that have been striped on there. So you can click on that city, and the grid comes up where they can literally, you know, on their phone be able to find out where the striped bicycle lanes are in a particular community and really start using this as a tool to help engage the public and help them understand what we have available here in Texas.

And there is no doubt that TxDOT is very excited about doing this because there's some -- there's some economic advantages to tourism in the state of Texas. There are some economic development reasons why communities want this on it. And so if you got a small community and you're trying to market yourself to the -- to the country at large, what a great place to have the information about where to go.
and do cycling events on there, and then that way
basically all that has to do is someone has to
remember, you know, TxDOT, plug it in and go and see
what's there.

So Michael and his team has been working
hard on this, and I'd appreciate it if everybody would
give this a lot of thought. And should we e-mail you,
Eric, or Michael? Who do you want --

MR. GLEASON: I think Michael would
prefer if it came through me. So we will -- either
myself or Teri, actually.

MS. WEAVER: Could we set a goal for
maybe you guys to send it to the committee within a
week and then maybe in two weeks we send back all of
our comments or something like that so we have check
points?

MR. GLEASON: We will do that.

So that concludes my report, Mr. Chair,
and --

MR. HIBBS: Thank you. That's a great
idea, Karla, because that will give us a chance to
tweak it a little bit before the big presentation to
the commission, and I would like to -- when we put it
up there, to at least be able to tell them that the
committee's had a chance to review this and provide
some input.

Yes, sir.

MR. TWING: Mr. Chair, this is Shawn Twing. I have one question and one real quick comment. First question is, do you envision corroborating with vendors as well as governments? Like in Amarillo you have Palo Duro Canyon, so I would think you'd have the county, city, City of Canyon, and a park service. You know, as if you click Amarillo or places to ride, it will show you that. But we also have bike shops, people who might want to be, you know, somehow linked into that Web page. I have no idea if we're even allowed to do that with a private vendor.

MR. GLEASON: So just off the top of my head I think we might have a link to a city page that might have all that information. And my guess is that --

MR. SLEDGE: That's a part of this.

MR. GLEASON: We'll be able to -- so if the city has something that they'd like, we'll provide a link, and whoever is interested can go at that point to those types of things.

MR. TWING: And the second is more of a comment but something to think about. For safety training, this Web page could be a very good resource
so when you go to a school or go to a group to talk about cycling laws, very easy to go there, pop it up, rather than have to reinvent the wheel of a PowerPoint every time you go give a talk.

MR. GLEASON: Again, of course, at the state level those kinds of things. Communities might have their own. And so yes, but absolutely. So those are the kinds of things we're interested in hearing from the committee about over the next several weeks.

MR. TWING: At least once a month I'm told bikes are not -- it's illegal to ride a bike on the roadway. I'm going to start carrying the transportation code section in my pocket and just hand it to them. Trust me, we had the right long before your pickup was --

MR. GLEASON: We have different challenges in different parts of the state, yeah.

MR. SLEDGE: Thank y'all for the invite.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

And, Eric, you're concluded, right?

MR. GLEASON: That concludes my report, yes, sir.

MR. HIBBS: All right. So next what we're going to talk about is the strategic direction
MS. TERI KAPLAN: Good morning, everyone.
Teri Kaplan here. I wanted to bring to you the strategic direction report. We want to move forward in implementing the goals of the report, but I wanted to first -- I'm having a little trouble getting this going today.

First of all, at our last meeting we discussed the strategic direction report, and the committee endorsed the report. And at our next -- at the next commission meeting our chair, Chairman Hibbs, is going to give a presentation to the commission at their February meeting, and we're excited about that to be able to share with them what we've accomplished.

And just for those of you that have recently joined the committee, this is an effort that has been continuous through 2015, and we started with hiring our consultant and giving them an outline of what we wanted to accomplish. We had a workshop with internal staff at TxDOT covering various disciplines, and then we conducted a Bicycle Advisory Committee workshop in May, followed by a follow-up report to you all in July, and then in October we brought it to you, the document, for your endorsement.

At today's meeting I want to look at the
focus areas that are within the report. You all have had an opportunity over the months to review the report. And in my e-mail to you I asked if you would look at the potential action items within this list and what the actions that you as a committee would like to see TxDOT move forward with, what are your -- what are the most important action items to this committee.

So I'm going to turn it over to the committee to begin discussion on this, and we can actually lift the lights because the people in the room here have a copy of the list. And I've asked Robert Gonzales here to start that discussion with the committee members of what he found to be the most important item on the list for him.

MR. GONZALES: Thank you, Teri. And good morning, committee members. I -- I mean, they're all important. It's --

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Let me back up one moment for the benefit of those that are on the phone with us. We did highlight in orange what you see on the screen here what TxDOT found to be some of the important areas, and we wanted to get your feedback. So excuse me, Robert. Let me let you begin again.

MR. GONZALES: Robert Gonzales, El Paso. Certainly the highlighted items are definitely
critical. I think education is extremely important. But -- and although all these efforts are important towards our strategic goal, there is one item I feel is extremely critical, specifically for our rural areas in each of our respective communities, and that's the funding for safe routes to school.

We've had numerous pedestrian accidents, not just pedestrian-bicycle accidents, straight accidents in the El Paso and the outlying areas. And, you know, in normal weather when you have -- when the children or pedestrians or others are walking -- or not -- walking on the dirt shoulders because they're not paved, you know, they can get to their destination relatively safely.

However, in inclement weather, whether it's snow or rain, those shoulders become nonusable, and so they're walking on the edge of the pavement. And I think this is really, really critical -- I think it's a critical component that should also be seriously considered for this goal. It's definitely on the list. Like I said, when you look -- when you look at the list, it's really hard to pick one above the other, but I think for -- for myself I think that would be very critical.

MR. GLEASON: This is all about getting
started, where do we start.

MR. GONZALES: Right.

MR. GLEASON: Got a lot to do.

MR. GONZALES: There is a -- there's no question. But what I'm saying is that's a key component.

MR. STEINER: I'll comment. David Steiner from Lufkin. I agree wholeheartedly with Bobby around, you know, safe routes to school. I would just -- I would expand it, just safe routes not only to school, but just around the communities is I think, you know, vitally important, so I think all of that. And a couple of reasons, you know, why I say that. Certainly, you know, kids trying to access, you know, to school, going from school and having access.

Just in the paper a week ago -- and the government did a study around food deserts and not having access, and they talked about these small communities. And in the paper locally in Lufkin it talked around people in North Lufkin that had to walk, and not only did it talk about what was interesting, it talked about having to walk 30, 45 minutes, but there were no sidewalks. They either walked in the road or on the grass. So, you know, I think in our communities that's very important.
The second aspect for me I think that's equally important is around -- and the comment was made around being recognized and having -- as belonging on the road, that bicycles do belong on the road also, and that may be -- you know, we all stopped and see signage on the road that say share the road with a motorcycle. It's pretty rare when I see it that actually has a bicycle. And, you know, yeah. So we all live it. I don't have to repeat that. But I think that that recognition is not -- getting around the community is important. We also have a lot of people on kind of the outlying roads, and having bike striping, access ways, or at least just signage to share the roads, that type -- I'm not saying that's the only thing, but that type of stuff I think is also important.

MS. BLAZOSKY: David, this is Ali, or Allison Blazosky. One of the first points that you were making especially I wanted to springboard off of because the -- the safe routes to everywhere I think can -- we can start to continue, I guess, making progress toward that with the TxDOT Complete Streets policies, so I think that it would start on our handout, but I would agree that if we can start reviewing those best practices from around the country, then getting one in place here for the state of Texas,
that would be a great foundation.

MS. LIND: That's one that if staff could kind of prioritize as a good starting point for a lot of different initiatives.

MS. WEAVER: So I would second the Complete Streets for TxDOT policy. I think that's one of the top priorities. And then my second item would be developing materials for law enforcement education, but adding to that also driver education. That's a really hard component we haven't been able to capture in Dallas/Fort Worth. That takes a lot of coordination and effort. I think coming from a state agency opens doors and connects to other state agencies and processes. So I think that would be a huge one where the state could have a great impact.

MR. GLEASON: Karla, could you go into both those elements a little further for me? I don't want to make assumptions, that I know exactly what they are.

MS. WEAVER: Sure. So the two big issues are cars interacting with bikes is not taught in driver's ed classes. It's not part of the test. It's -- we're not training new drivers, and definitely current drivers don't understand how to interact with bikes on the streets. So that's one way to sort of get
that information in the training classes, in the schools, et cetera.

And then the counterpart to law enforcement is most of our police departments don't understand the laws about bikes on streets. Nine times out of ten the bicyclist is going to be found at fault and get the ticket. So there's an education there that's needed to kind of create materials that could go out to police departments, county sheriff's offices, DPS, sort of all those different levels of enforcement.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Did that help clarify, Eric?

MR. GLEASON: Yeah.

MS. LIND: And if I'm not capturing something, let me know.

MR. HIBBS: Anyone else have any comments?

MR. TWING: I do. Two, one on the education programs regarding cell phones and safe distance is very important. I would add to that law enforcement training on their use of computers while they drive. They are as distracted as individuals texting, and there has been some tragedies, and I think the more they become aware that, you know, they -- they need to be extremely careful.
The second -- and this is covered somewhere, but it's a big problem in our area, is alternatives for crossing busy streets that didn't involving building a bridge. In Boulder they have very -- for those who have been there, they have a great system, big flashing lights that really alerts people.

But to interconnect our city we're going to have to get very focused on pretty creative ways to have safe passage, because I've talked to parents, and they don't want their children riding bikes, because there's so many thoroughfares. They say it's just not safe. And so, of course, you can't get the funding for the bridges.

So any help in that area -- I don't know. My guess is you probably have very smart people who have already figured this out; somewhere there's a report. I would certainly hope so. If not, I know y'all are smart enough to figure it out.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Shawn. Any other comments?

MS. ALLISON KAPLAN: Billy, I have some comments.

MR. HIBBS: Please.

MS. ALLISON KAPLAN: Thank you. This is
Allison Kaplan from Austin, and I have three comments that I'd like to offer. One is when I think about what Texas can do from a tourist perspective, I think establishing a statewide bikeway network is vital. If somebody wants to get across the state on a cross-country bike tour, they need to know where those safe routes are. And if there aren't safe routes, then they -- then that's something that Texas can do -- that Texas can improve on.

And I know that maybe intercity by travel is not huge right now. I just -- I think it's -- I think it's an essential thing that we have a state bike network and a state bike map that goes along with it to show where we can get from city to city.

The second thing I would say is I would support the law enforcement education. When we train people to drive on the roads they need to be -- they need to be made aware of bicycles and the law that states how they need to behave around bicyclists to keep the bicyclists safe. And so there's that. I agree with that one.

And then a third thing is the adopting design guidelines that support safe facilities. There are several examples of those out there. The NACTO -- which applies to cities, so I believe it could be
applied to the state as well. The NACTO design
guidelines, the ITE designing walkable thoroughfares,
and I can't remember the third one.

But there's several examples of -- FHWA
did a recommended best practices for designing
protected bike lanes. So there's a lot of safety
guidance out there that TxDOT could adopt that would
build safe facilities.

MR. HIBBS: I agree. And those were --
those were comments. I'd like to follow up with a
couple as well. In regards to adopting the design
guidelines that support safe facilities, I know that
from the very first time I came to my first meeting at
this committee Robin Stallings has been bending my ear
about this, and I want to give him the credit for
educating me that it really is important that TxDOT
begins to adopt cycling in all of their plans going
forward for building highways and looking at future
transportation, that it doesn't need to be an
afterthought where we come in with something like a
bike stripe and try to fix the problem, but it needs to
be on the front end of the engineering.

And that's a kind of a two-part thing.
It needs to be included within the design phase, but
then secondly -- and I was glad to see this in here
too -- review how the staff considers bicycling accommodations during all phases of project development. And that is critically important because the engineers who are in these various offices have basically been building highways pretty much the same way for quite some period of time, and they've actually talked to me about this.

And so it is a major culture shift within TxDOT and within the -- in these various regional offices to all of a sudden start with, "All right. Well, where are the bicycles going to go on this new route? And if we go back and improve this surface, how can we best accommodate cyclists." And that is a fundamental problem we have in business, and I think it's a fundamental challenge we have in government, and that is anytime something new is put forth, there needs to be a lot of training and there needs to be a lot of information-sharing so that these people that are making the decisions at the very beginning understand what the new model is. And so, you know, for me personally -- and thank you, Allison. I think those kind of played off of some of the things that you said. And frankly, whether it's safe routes to school or anything, if you've got those two things, if you've got the staff educated on cycling issues and they're
thinking about it from the design stage of new
construction going forward, I tell you what, we could
all leave right now and be done with the Bicycle
Advisory Committee, and we will have done a magnificent
job of really bending the curve, I think, when it comes
to bicycle transportation.

Any other comments?

Russ?

MR. FRANK: I was actually going to say
something similar to that. To me the Complete Streets
and some of these guidelines are important. If you're
really going to have a long-term fix, it's just got to
be from the beginning when you talk about a project.
The bike striping is fine, but you would have an after
piece how you fix it. But with the long-term of Texas
if you're going to be able to have better bike
accommodations you just think about all these projects
from the very beginning to the end. Part of that's the
engineering teams, but part of that's going to have to
be the TxDOT commission say this is what the
policymakers think are important so it can trickle
throughout TxDOT. But I think that's the most
important probably for the long term of how we fix all
these problems.

MR. PITCHFORD: Mr. Chairman, Joseph
Pitchford. I want to second what Allison said about bicycle tourism. I don't think the word "bicycle tourism" is really anywhere in the strategic plan, and perhaps it ought to be. Bicycle tourism is a growing force in our country and has a disproportionately positive impact on rural areas that have a small amount of business or semirural areas if -- where a couple of bike vendors for the small business means an enormous amount.

And I would say no state agency in Texas has a greater potential to positively impact bicycle tourism than TxDOT. I don't think anybody would necessarily argue with that. So I think it's very important perhaps about bicycle tourism, the statewide bike map as part of that.

In addition, I don't know how it would be incorporated, but TxDOT's ability and willingness to work with existing rail bank agencies, rails to trails, is a huge part of that. If TxDOT facilities that cross or run parallel to existing rail bank facilities where existing rails to trails can be recognized, encouraged, and develop mutual respect, it will be a twofer for those trails and bicycle groups.

MR. HIBBS: Great comments, everyone. Anyone else?
MR. STEINER: Billy, I just want to add a little comment to what you mentioned around, you know, how staff considers bicycle accommodations. One thing I think worked very well and that I got involved in is actually some folks I know on TxDOT, they were considering longer term plans and actually reached out to us, reached out to folks and said, hey, which routes do you use, what are important features, gave that feedback, which I thought was outstanding, and I applaud them for doing it. I don't know if that's a regular activity, but I just wanted to share that. I think it's good. It's something to consider and maybe build in because there's a lot of knowledge in all of our communities there. And it fits very well. So something to consider.

MR. HIBBS: Eric, this information now, what's the next step?

MR. GLEASON: So we -- just to review what you're looking at today, these are all things y'all have helped us create, all these statements on this page. Our highlights and stars were just our way of provoking the conversation, not intended to suggest that we'd already made up our minds. What I'm hearing -- I like to kind of summarize things into groups of three, so if I tend to run over something let
me know.

But I'm hearing an emphasis in sort of a safety and education emphasis, safe routes to school program, extending that to beyond the safe routes everywhere, a big emphasis on safety and then the education element of that, law enforcement. Design is another big area, you know, Complete Streets, as well as reviewing our own department practices so that how can bicycling be incorporated from the beginning throughout our entire design process.

And then I'm hearing around the notion of a statewide bike network, if you will. I think, Joseph, we -- I think that that's predicated on the notion of tourism and expanding that. I think as we get into that, not only is it information piece for people, but I think it's going to trigger issues around how do we make it happen, and I think some of the things you said are drawn into there.

So given what I've heard I have a tendency to kind of put those -- everything we've talked about in those three general categories. I think we can -- we can fire out of here with that information from the committee. We don't meet again until April, so we'll start working on that stuff in some fashion. We won't wait for the next meeting to
confirm what we heard today, if that's a regional -- if
that's a reasonable outcome for us to walk away with.

Have I left something out or does that
seem like a reasonable approach?

MS. BLAZOSKY: Can I add or maybe ask for
a clarification? The safety and education, I heard it
to, especially on the education just -- maybe of just
everybody's rights and responsibilities. The safety
portion, I wanted to reiterate that Safe Routes to
School requires the funding, so in addition to
identifying safety as a priority funding safety plus
education.

MR. STEINER: I was just going to add on
exactly the same thing for clarification if I may.
Safety and education that I heard was education
especially around drivers and law enforcement, and the
safety aspect is especially -- I view it as a funding
infrastructure, the routes, whether it's striping or
whatever. Anybody else, please correct me, but that's
what I -- I heard and that's -- I agree with and would
add also.

MR. GLEASON: Can I ask a clarifying
question of the committee? So we talk about educating
drivers. Is there anything to educate a bicyclist as a
part of this as well?
MR. STEINER: Yes.

MR. TWING: That's a big part that we start -- well, in our experience it's very small. We actually start with the cyclists. We actually talk to them about helmets, riding on the correct side of the road, having lights, the things that are actually legally required. So that is just as important.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MR. TWING: May I ask another question? And again it's a clarification since I'm new to the committee. Is there a way to partner up with vendors that are private entities as part of the funding issue? For example, on the bicycle tourism, bike shops, for example, or Chamber of Commerce type organizations are willing to put money in.

Is that something we can partner up with, or does that just open more problems than it solves?

MR. GLEASON: I think that's something we would absolutely consider as we go through this.

MR. TWING: So there is no kind of overriding ban or --

MR. GLEASON: We will probably run into something somewhere along the way, but the concept of partnering with private sectors, entities, and others to bring additional funding to solve problems is
clearly something we're all about.

MR. TWING: For example, the Web page, my first thought was I know three bike shops, a running store, they would pay to be able to be linked in somehow.

MR. GLEASON: I'm sure we probably can't or won't put that on our Web page, but that's not to say we couldn't link to the others that you may have locally that would.

MR. TWING: I understand. Thank you very much.

MR. HIBBS: Very good. Any final comments on the strategic direction report? If not, we'll move along.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: I did want to add one comment before I wrap that up to tell everyone on the committee that the Northeast Texas trails that Joseph Pitchford has been so much a part of, we did fund three segments in the TAP call for projects in December.

MR. PITCHFORD: That's a huge thing for --

MS. TERI KAPLAN: And they are very excited about it, all of the community, the communities at large, and the bicyclists we heard from them.

MR. PITCHFORD: It will pay off in
bicyclist tourism, no doubt.

MR. HIBBS: Joseph, since you're new to -- this is the first time you've been here, what we will do later on is have kind of a roundtable where everyone reports on what's going on in the region, and if you would, be prepared to share some more specifics with us about that particular project.

All right. So at this point we're going to progress and go to No. 7 on the agenda item.

It does say action item. Do we need to -- on the strategic report do we need to take a vote or bless it or --

MR. GLEASON: I guess that's up to you. The committee could confirm my summary with the two additional comments at the end, or I'm fine. I mean, I guess it just depends.

MR. HIBBS: Is there a compelling reason to do that? I mean, I don't think there is necessarily.

MR. GLEASON: Yeah.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. So presentation on emerging guidance from FHWA and implementation on bike stripe initiatives.

MR. GLEASON: So these seemed like two different things, but I assure you they're all part of
same notion.

And, Teri, how are we handling -- I know I'm in charge of this one, but how are we handling the federal highways emerging guidance? Is that something that Genevieve is going to --

MS. TERI KAPLAN: We're going to provide you some of the new documents that have been approved in 2015. I will send them out to you for you to review. Karla mentioned a few of them. In discussion we had some significant guidance that has been created from FHWA just very recently, in the last month. So I'm going to put together an e-mail of all of the information out there. It's so much that we aren't going to cover it here today.

MR. GLEASON: So how does it relate to bike stripe? How does -- specifically. That's why these are together.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Well, I didn't bring the -- Karla, did you want to say something?

MS. WEAVER: May I add? So the federal government came out with protected bike lanes guidance, a new manual that's been published, and it's great. It's a wonderful resource for cities and TxDOT and communities on sort of the mechanics of putting down these facilities that I think are tied into this
And then I brought -- I had sent this to Teri. I brought today out of the new transportation bill -- there is an emphasis on Complete Streets looking at on-street and making all those safer, and I think that also supports sort of the bike stripe and where that set it and implementation for that. So I just brought -- it's a quick fact sheet front and back for you guys that you might want to review at your own time.

MR. GLEASON: Thank you, Karla. And I might say this is exactly why you guys are here, because in fact you do know more about this than we do. So perfect. I appreciate the help.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: And Karla and I had discussed this, and I had asked her to help me out in this area because I have been so busy with the TAP that I haven't had an opportunity to read all of the emerging documents that have come out from FHWA.

MR. GLEASON: So let's turn our attention to bike stripe and our pilot. And, you know, I view bike stripe -- the bike stripe pilot program I tend to work singular because I would consider three projects being part of a pilot program. It's a nuance. So the committees had a presentation. They talked about bike
stripe and it's -- we have commission level interest in
pursuing a pilot program for bike stripe.

And we wanted to spend some time with the
committee today before we just fire off and did
something, making sure that we had some level of
consensus about what the purpose of a pilot was, what
were we trying to test, what kinds of outcome would we
be looking to try and measure so that we get this thing
conceived of properly from the beginning so that as we
go through then the next steps, which we'll also talk
about today about how we will envision the process
happening around it, we make sure we're focused on the
right stuff.

So what I'd like to do is just have a
very open-ended conversation, if you will, about what
the purpose of a pilot program for bike stripe would
be. Then after that we'll talk more about selection
criteria, what kinds of locations might fit the ticket
here, and how do we solicit interest in the program and
all those things. But before we go any further I want
to leave here with a really good understanding of what
the committee believes to be the purpose of a pilot on
bike stripe.

MR. HIBBS: Eric, this is Billy Hibbs,
and I'd like to take that first question, and
particularly for the new members on the committee here
to help them understand kind of the history. Until
very recently there was virtually no representation on
the committee from anyone from rural areas, and as a
result, across the state of Texas the urban areas --
and y'all all know where those are -- they all
progressed. They had striping. They had resources
allocated to them so that they could have bike lanes.

And during the course of kind of the
evolution of this committee to where there is now a
considerable amount of some smaller community
representation, there was a great interest in taking a
lot of the things that had been done in these urban
areas and taking it to some of the smaller communities.

And I want to say that again because one
of the things that you notice up here in the orange bar
on your handout is population. And so bike stripe was
designed or I should say envisioned originally as a way
for a community that had very little money and very
little ability to attract millions of dollars in
funding to pull off what I kind of refer to as the
low-hanging fruit, and that is in these communities.

In those smaller communities there are
already lanes that are overly wide. Some of them have
medians in them. Some of them have medians that can be
squeezed. But most of them have some areas where there can be striping that can take place at a very low cost.

And where most of the challenge has occurred in the past has been engineering because to engineer all that takes money. And I can tell you from the standpoint of a small community like Tyler, the engineering study that put this together for our community -- Tyler is roughly a hundred thousand in population, probably 250 if you include the county. The engineering studies alone were in excess of $800,000. And I can assure you there is no small-town budget anywhere in Texas that is going to have that money for engineering.

And thanks to Bobby Gonzales and his work as a civil engineer and working to basically stripe El Paso, he developed a software program that allows communities to take data, put it in there, and come up with a plan where you use the overly wide roads, and what we used was kind of a hub and a spoke layout where the city was downtown and it had feeder spokes that went in.

And so my thought was we'll take that and take it to a local university or community college or some higher education area that has engineers that are like in training and will work for free because this...
would be a fantastic resume credit. So we did. We took it to the University of Texas at Tyler. We found an associate professor there that was very interested in a hands-on, real-world learning experience for his students. And they absolutely poured themselves into this project.

Again, I want to give Bobby a tremendous amount of help because if I had just gone to them and said, "Okay, guys. Here's the idea. Take off with it," it probably wouldn't have gone anywhere. Once they had the tools necessary to pull it off, they did. So they came up with a plan. That plan was presented to the mayor and to the city manager. They looked at it. They said, "Well, you know this looks a lot like the plan that we have been talking about over the years but never really officially adopted."

And I'm so glad that all of y'all are going to get to hear from Russ today because smaller communities don't have these thick bicycle plans like Austin and -- and this is new information to us. And so they took that. They looked at it and blessed it. And we found that through using basically connections within the community we were able to get the engineering done. I think maybe I bought pizza for the kids that were working on this. But they did a great
job. And as the work started to be known outside of Tyler, my phone started ringing, and other people in other communities had interest in talking about this. So the purpose, Eric, which was the first thing that you wanted to try to accomplish, from my perspective is to have a project that shows a smaller community from start to finish how to get paint on the roads so that they can stripe their community and to do it at virtually no cost to the taxpayer and with a mind-set that this is going to be done in communities that really want this. In other words, the community embraces it. We're not out there trying to force anybody to do anything they don't want to do, and there's probably some communities that aren't particularly bicycle friendly. But for those that want to do it, put a plan together, have it on the website. If you want to bike stripe your community, click on that link and walk through that flowchart of all the different things that it takes to get there.

MR. GLEASON: So the ultimate test to this process will be implementation.

MR. HIBBS: That's right.

MR. GLEASON: Got to kind of complete that --

MR. HIBBS: Completes the circle.
MR. GLEASON: -- circle, that one purpose.

MR. HIBBS: There will be pictures on that website of paint on the ground, and it will talk about this is how you go about getting it done.

MR. GLEASON: So that can be one purpose --

MR. HIBBS: Because they need some help. I'm convinced that there are many smaller communities in more rural areas who really want to do this, but they've got to be led there. It's not going to happen by osmosis.

MR. GLEASON: So one of the purposes in a more general fashion would be, then, to be able, through the experience with the pilots, to better understand the range of issues and opportunities associated with implementing a bike stripe.

MR. HIBBS: That's exactly right.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. Other thoughts on the purpose of the pilot?

MR. FRANK: This is Russ Frank from Houston. I don't want to veer off. Billy has given us lots of his thoughts on this over time, but since this is TxDOT, I mean, some of these communities I guess -- would that mostly be on TxDOT highways or do you get --
at some point you get to wherever the small city is if it's in city limits? I don't know how that impacts this as far as what TxDOT could do or couldn't do. Normally y'all would have to spend money or help out on things that are on the TxDOT right-of-way or highways, right? I guess it's kind of a question for how do you do something like this. Does -- I don't know from Tyler. Was this all on TxDOT roads or was it on City of Tyler right-of-way, or how did that work?

MR. HIBBS: Great question, Russ. It's a combination. And so I think that's one of the issues that we're working through right now. And I found that the City of Tyler was very anxious to look at ways where they can share funding in some of these various areas. And I think because there is some interest with TxDOT in seeing this done, I believe we can get it -- I believe we can get it done probably more so now than we could have five or ten years ago. And I think a lot of it has to do with kind of evolving perception and need for bike lanes in, you know, transportation grids.

MS. WEAVER: I just -- this is Karla Weaver. I wanted to ask for a small clarification. Would it be locations without bicycle plans or locations that maybe have a plan but are smaller and haven't had resources to implement the plan or
either-or? Because then you have to do the planning, then the funding.

MR. GLEASON: Yeah, I think, Karla, that's one of my ideas for this conversation that we get to next about target locations. I think in the context --

MS. WEAVER: She wrote "without a plan."

I just --

MS. LIND: I'm just trying to write down kind of what I'm hearing. So I'm not -- this is just -- some of it's even questions to you all --

MS. WEAVER: Oh, okay.

MS. LIND: -- I think, just to kind of note. But I think that's a great question. So is it localities without bicycle plans or resources, question mark.

MR. GLEASON: I just want to hold that to the next part of the conversation if I can.

MS. WEAVER: Yes.

MR. GLEASON: Obviously there's a readiness question, interest versus readiness versus doability.

MS. WEAVER: Or planning funds versus construction funds.

MR. GLEASON: So I get the notion of we
just got to try it in a number of locations and we'll learn about all of the issues associated with it.

Other purposes?

MR. TWING: Between Amarillo and Canyon there are frontage roads that are the main cycling area. And this type of striping, it seems to me that that's a way to follow up on the connecting cities. I think Allison pointed that out. That -- as part of this project it would include not just intercity -- inner city, but intercity, in other words, connecting communities and that they can even come together perhaps.

MR. GLEASON: So that's an interesting kind of extension, I think, of the fundamental concept, which I think is more community centered, is whether or not a pilot -- whether we'd want to try and expand that concept in a limited fashion to address an intercity connection.

MR. TWING: Specifically, in Amarillo and Canyon on I-27 you can go from Amarillo to Lubbock on frontage road, all the way, and that is the primary place people ride, both from Amarillo to Canyon and back, and there is probably three -- you have about three or four cities along the way. You could literally at some point link up by striping on the
frontage road. We've had a lot of interest in that.
You could literally link Amarillo to Lubbock.

MR. GLEASON: So I'm going to take that idea. It's a good idea. But I'm going to challenge the committee and say that I think that's outside the scope of this pilot. I'm perfectly willing to be told differently. To me it's a significant variation on the concept that we've discussed. I'm okay with going with it, but I want to make sure that the committee grasps that and tells us what they want to do.

MR. HIBBS: Eric, this is Billy. And I will tell you it fits perfectly with the longer term goal of connecting these cities, and it makes a lot more sense to have cities who are bike striped connected than just a striped frontage road between two cities that are not striped. And so I think that it all fits into the longer term plan very, very well.

And I really like the idea, too, Shawn, of maybe -- maybe Amarillo and Lubbock, you know, need to be part of this bike stripe conversation because that would then enable us to have a Point A and a Point B and go back to Eric next year or the following year and say, okay, now it's time to connect those two.

MR. GLEASON: So let me -- for this, the strategic direction report embraces the notion of using
pilot projects to test out ideas and concepts that may have statewide application. Bike stripe is an example of that. Using the same idea to connect communities might be another pilot. Is that consistent with what -- I sort of heard you at the end suggest it as a next step and not necessarily part of this.

MR. HIBBS: I think we can kind of get overwhelmed here unless we try to eat the elephant, you know, kind of one sitting at a time. And there's a lot going on across the state. So yes, I think that would be maybe Phase 2.

MR. STEINER: I'm just going to add -- David Steiner. As to the purpose, you know, very interesting things are heard around providing the resources, understanding what the tools need. Size of community is important. It might be good if you look at one or two where you actually try to take it all the way to implementation. But part of the purpose from the pilot would also be to understand what help does the communities need, and it may be on TxDOT right-of-ways or in the communities. So part of it -- part of the pilot I would just suggest is maybe just to talk to a few others, the small communities, the medium size communities -- Lubbock's 200,000-plus -- and understand those pieces.
MR. GLEASON: So let me try -- let me just challenge you again. How about use, performance, outcome? Is that part of the pilot? Yeah, I've heard let's figure out how we get these things in place. What about results?

MS. WEAVER: Before and after?

MR. GLEASON: Yeah. How does that fit into what we're trying to do with the pilot?

MS. LIND: Can I go -- you're talking about resources, David. What resources are you talking about? Staff resources? Just money like technically -- Billy mentioned, like, having technical support from university. Is that something that you -- you want to prioritize that?

MR. STEINER: That's what I was referring to. We've talked about providing the resources and tools at these small communities that don't have that. My suggestion is around understanding what they really need. I can't sit here and say I understand what the 50,000 in the local area truly need, what their real barriers are. So part of it is understanding it.

MR. HIBBS: That's one of the reasons why this flowchart I keep referring to is so important, because it enables the community to figure out, okay, we're going to have to have some interaction by bicycle
club members. They're going to need to have contacts at city hall. They're going to need to engage the city manager and all the things that we've had to do in Tyler to get it to this point. There is a lot of laying the groundwork in order to get it pulled off.

And you're exactly right. You can have the greatest idea in the world, but if you don't have a plan to get it implemented, it's going to fail miserably. And the website is a very important part of this because those of us on this committee don't have time to go to all these communities and educate these people how to do it. There is going to need to be a resource where they can go to it and they can see how to pull this off.

And I think one of the most important things, it gets back to Eric's question about the purpose. I think they need to be able to see some tangible results. They need to be able to see a community that's been striped. They need to be able to pull up the grid and see where they are on there, and they need to say, "I want that for my community. This is great. This will bring tourism to our area. It will be an economic development tool for our Chamber of Commerce." And I think if you will put it in their hands like that it will take off. And they will -- the
people who are interested in these kinds of things, I think they will embrace it and embrace it warmly.

MR. STEINER: Just to be clear if I can, I agree with you wholeheartedly. My point was only taking those to a couple of communities just to validate, yes, this is -- this really helps you. You can do two, but you might be able to just go to No. 3 and No. 4 and say, hey, this is what we're working on, let's validate this is helpful for you, you know. That was my only point, to help validate exactly that.

MR. HIBBS: Oh, absolutely. And it needs to be validated because it will be so much more impactful for a city to be able to say, I'm going to commit my local college engineering department to work on these plans for the next nine months because we sent a search and rescue team to Tyler and we had them ride around on it out there, and it works. We've seen it, we've seen the paint on the ground, and, you know, we want this for our community too.

MR. GLEASON: Russ?

MR. FRANK: I think there needs to be some -- we talked -- you mentioned about performance or something like that. There's got to be some way to know there's going to be community support, there's going to be some kind of usage. I don't know if -- you
know, we were talking about there is bike clubs or people who are pushing for it. But if it's just a community that says -- like two people say, I want this test pilot, and then no one ever uses it, it's not going to be successful to be implemented over again somewhere else.

So we've got to have some way to show community support or cycle community support or something to make sure you know people are going to actually use it.

MR. GLEASON: Does that qualify maybe as a selection criteria?

MR. FRANK: I think it's got to be something like that so -- because to me if you have one community that says we have all these people who are really pushing and they're going to help push their local officials to be supportive of it, it's different than, like, just a couple of people trying to get a project in their community. You've got to have some people that will help push it over the hump to make it successful.

MR. GLEASON: So let's shift gears and kind of talk more specifically, then, about what's on the page in front of you, and then maybe that conversation will also yield some ideas more so back to
the purpose, kind of work our way through this, since that's where folks seem to want to go.

So when we think of this, are there target locations, are there areas in the state that are more amenable to solicitation of interest for a pilot, or do we just want to go statewide? Anybody's interested -- do we have any idea of how to focus at least for the selection of a pilot community? Do y'all have any thoughts for us? For example, should we focus on communities between 50 and 200,000 just because we think the resources are not more readily available in those communities as opposed to sending something out to all -- you know, all communities under 200,000 in the state of Texas? I mean, I'm just trying to -- I don't know the answer to that.

MS. WEAVER: One thing that you could require is that cities have a -- just as a starting place, that cities have an adopted bike plan that's been approved by their city. In the Dallas/Fort Worth region we have 200 cities. We only have 25 that have adopted bike plans. So it's not a -- I don't think you're going to get hundreds of responses because it's a very small group that's gone this direction. Five years ago I had one city. So this is a -- it's evolving, but it's moving slow. So there's that.
MR. TWING: One thing you might be able to formulate a metrics is -- it's going to be hard to get really hard data about bike usage, that I would suggest smaller communities with colleges, community colleges. You are more likely to have people on bikes as opposed to just the city. For example, as we're having this discussion I'm comparing Amarillo to Canyon, and Canyon's smaller, but it's got a pretty good size university. Canyon would almost be a better place to start, you know, and because there are more people using bicycles, a lot of schools. It's very congested. The schools have a lot of trouble keeping the traffic down. So again, that would just be one element.

MR. GLEASON: I actually thought you were going to go toward the resource end of things with the university presence to help with the design and engineering. You're actually focused on use and interest.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: It serves both.

MR. GLEASON: It's both.

MR. TWING: If we were going to do the pilot and say what about the Amarillo area, I'd go to the West Texas A&M, which is in Canyon, go to the engineering department and then contact the city.
manager, get all three of them talking and then start it in Canyon. Rather than go from Amarillo down to Canyon, I would focus from Canyon up to Amarillo. And you have to understand, there's so much traffic between the cities. I mean, they will see the striping. They will see -- they will see that happening, and it could result in a lot of interest.

MR. PITCHFORD: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Gleason, to respond to your direct question, it seems totally appropriate to support a bracketing of population. This is a pilot program, so you're not saying never. You're saying for this pilot program if we said it appears to -- this committee appears, TxDOT, that it makes sense to bracket it throughout -- actually sounds like a very reasonable bracket in the 50, 200,000, you could have language in there that says, look, if you're outside this range and you have a special reason why your community ought to be eligible for this pilot program, go for it, tell us, but that's the bracketed target.

I think that gets actually, Mr. Chairman, to what you were saying about by bracketing it properly you get the notion that some communities don't have the resources. You also avoid it being too small a community where, look, there just aren't that many bike
riders in a town of 5,000, at least not today, at least not that I'm aware of. So that seems like a totally appropriate selection criteria.

MR. HIBBS: Eric, this is Billy Hibbs again, and I think that it would be most helpful, maybe not a requirement, but most helpful for members of this committee to be willing to kind of take the lead in a community because a community's not going to know anything about bike stripe at this point.

And so -- and I'm going to use David for an example. There is a professor at Stephen F. Austin who has been in contact with me for several months wanting very much to be a part of this. Stephen F. Austin's in Nacogdoches. It's outside of Lufkin obviously, and it's outside of Tyler. But David has reached out to him and has engaged him. And this fellow is very, very excited about the work we're doing here on the committee. He's a cycling advocate, and I think he's got some credentials maybe, David, that puts him way up the food chain in terms of knowing and understanding cycling advocacy issues.

And what I would like to see is if -- if that was a particular area that met the qualification guidelines, is have David be the liaison where he could sit down and walk them through the various steps, and
when questions came up and when they needed maybe
resources, not monetary resources, but intellectual
capital resources, they would have someone like David
to lean on, and David could run it up the flagpole and
get them things that they need to be a pilot project.

MR. GLEASON: So let me -- I think
there's a boundary here we probably have to talk about
as committee members. At least I would advise you all
to talk about it, is, one, we're all as an ambassador
to ideas and efforts of this group in your local
communities. I think you would want to stay at arm's
length, though, from the perception that somehow being
on this committee favored a project being selected
versus not. That's what I would be concerned about. I
think it's important the committee kind of understand
that there's a risk if committee members get associated
with, "Come on with me. I'll get my pilot." But I
think clearly committee members can be ambassadors.
They can play the role of this is the notion behind the
pilot and this is the idea, this is what the Tyler
experience, where we have the most experience to date,
has shown, all those kinds of things. But I would be
reluctant to suggest that committee members become
advocates for projects in this process because --
certainly after one is picked, certainly if one is
picked, then that's great. But I think we need to maintain some subjectivity in the selection so that there's no criticism of that.

MR. HIBBS: Right. No, I totally understand. And at the same time, if you just put this out there as a project, they're not even going to know, you know, what it is. I mean, someone's got to be able to go out there and explain it to them and again be a conduit for questions and resource materials and how to do this.

MR. GLEASON: Absolutely.

MR. HIBBS: And so I just -- I think that it is a -- it's a unique time, really, in Texas history. Thanks to the gentleman here on my left, Bobby Gonzales, we had extraordinary resources for free. And however we can leverage those into some things in some communities where they just don't have the funding and it's never going to happen, that we need to be talking about that.

And while it may not be the advocacy kind of word and maybe the language isn't quite right on that, I think we still have to understand that it's probably not going to be done until David goes to the guys at Stephen F. and says, hey, this is how you do it and this is what you need to know and this is how to
pull it off.

MR. GLEASON: How do we -- I guess the next, how do we solicit interest in the program? It's kind of what we're talking about.

MS. BLAZOSKY: Before you move on to that, can I -- this is Allison Blazosky. I wanted to go back to the target population.

MR. GLEASON: Sure.

MS. BLAZOSKY: So where I'm envisioning your -- the vision of bike stripe really being successful is when there -- there's not connection right now. There might not be really anyplace that people could feel safe riding on the road, but this is giving a connected system to that community. And there are some communities in Texas that they might not feel like they have a lot of riders right now potentially, populations like Seguin, Gonzales. They have 30,000, 7,000 people. It might not be right now that there is a lot of people riding, but those are communities that you could basically stripe or add connection to a whole community because they're smaller, and it would make a huge impact for that type of geography. You can really bike from one end of town to the other easily. A mom could. An eight-year-old with their grandparent could do that.
And so I'm wondering if a target audience or target community might be a little smaller than the 50 to 200,000, maybe not to limit it to that, maybe minimum up to 200 exactly.

MR. GLEASON: I'm just trying to imagine the correspondence where it says, fundamental with that, how do we get this into the right group of potential locations, how do we get that notification out, then what are we biting off from a process standpoint. Our purpose is just to make sure we get two or three really great pilots. I'm wondering if there isn't some way to, you know --

MS. WEAVER: Could you use the regions and if people had an adopted bike plan? Because if they don't have a bike plan, they're not going to have time to do this program.

MR. GLEASON: Does Tyler have an adopted bike plan?

MR. HIBBS: It does. And that's an important point, Eric.

And, Karla, I really appreciate you bringing that up, because they actually took that long-range strategic bike plan that they had and they have been working on, and they took the information -- the college did -- and they married it up together, and
it was -- you know, it was even more, I guess, validating because there had been some thoughts on it.

    MS. WEAVER: I would agree with the zero to 200 but with the caveat -- well, maybe we shouldn't --

    MS. TERI KAPLAN: Population of 200,000 or less.

    MS. WEAVER: The up to 200,000, but I do think you've got to limit it to people that have already had the conversation and have already developed consensus and have kind of -- they're ready to move forward. That would be my weigh-in.

    MR. GLEASON: So I've probably spent too much time on this, so why don't we shift gears to selection criteria real quickly. It doesn't have to be a complete, exhaustive list of what we can do, but we want to be able to give folks some idea of how we'll evaluate different places. So, I mean, you know, obviously bikes, bike plan. We've got --

    MR. HIBBS: You need to have the ability to get the free engineering studies done. That is probably a single most important part because you have to identify a partner who is willing to invest the time to do the engineering study.

    MR. GLEASON: Then Russ was talking about
community support, some evidence of broad-based
community support, bicycle groups, whatever.

MS. WEAVER: Maybe just timeliness or
project readiness, because even within a plan you may
have key corridors that you want to focus on, so you
might not be able to do 40 miles, but you might be able
to do 10 or 15 really well, depending on the type of
on-street facility you want to do. So it will all look
a little different depending on the context.

MR. HIBBS: I think, Eric, one of the
criteria needs to be support from the city, be it a
mayor, city council, city manager, or some combination
thereof. You need to know that they are in support of
the project.

MR. GLEASON: City traffic engineer?

MR. HIBBS: Probably, at least.

MR. GLEASON: Yeah. Very important.

Yeah. Okay.

MR. STEINER: Just to comment on it, on
some of these I agree. You know, we talked about the
support and the bike plan and stuff. You know, the
bike plan, I would add that not as a requirement, but
as a plus if you have one already. That in itself
indicates support and interest. But what we're talking
about is communities that don't have it. But if they
have a lot but haven't had the resources to even get
the bike plan, is that an instant out?

MR. GLEASON: So, David, if I can put you
on the spot, because I think that's important. If we
were to list requirements versus desirables, what's
your thinking on what might be requirements?

MR. STEINER: I think you know,
requirement, the support, the community support,
whether it's the city, the county, the local
organizations there. Certainly the size. I think, you
know, having that range of size is, you know, to help
kind of limit how many we go out after, right, to just
find a pilot to start with even.

You know, as requirements, I think as a
requirement having some partner -- some method of
getting the engineering is a critical piece, you know.
And then the other, we talked about, you know, the bike
plan is a desirable.

MR. GLEASON: Karla, is that consistent
with your thought, that it's a desirable, or is that a
requirement?

MS. WEAVER: If I'm speaking from in my
implementation hat, if they don't have a plan of what
they want to do, I think you could select somebody that
would be less successful or it could take a lot of time
to show success. So either they would have to have
something that says, we might not have an adopted plan,
but we've met lots of times, and here's the corridor,
and here's what we want and here's what we know, it
looks like -- because that can take months and months
to develop. You know what I mean? But there might be
a signature project of one community that's not in an
adopted plan but it's still gone through lots of
conversations. Yeah. You have to sort of -- how could
you supplement that.

MR. STEINER: So all else being equal,
it kicks you over. It's like the job interview.

MS. WEAVER: Right.

MR. STEINER: Bachelor's is required, but
a guy comes in with a master's, that's a positive.

MR. GLEASON: Yeah. No, I understand.

Joseph.

MR. PITCHFORD: I support Karla's point
about it being required in part because this is a pilot
program. You're only going to do a few, and if someone
misses out because they didn't have a bike plan, then
they get to go to city hall and say, "See, we missed
out. We need to have a bike plan." So it has a bit of
the carrot and the stick approach and I would support
that.
MS. WEAVER: Two things that you could consider are safety, so will it -- are you putting projects in where there are safety concerns that this might help address. Everyone would have safety data available. And then the other I think you could look at is employment or population or where we're connecting people to, so centers of use, so universities or the shopping malls or -- you know, we're interested in this as a mode of transportation, and so are we getting people by a different mode to different places of where we want them to live, work, shop, all that kind of stuff.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Karla. This is Billy Hibbs again, and I want to get back to what Russ had said about measuring, and in my day job I haven't measured a lot of things, so I'm very much attuned to that. And I know in our particular community it's so dangerous, Karla, in terms of being able to get around that people typically don't commute by bikes because there are no accommodations to do that.

And I think that once we get -- and so there's really no way to say, okay, well, we had, you know, 500 bicycle commuters before we scribed it and now we've got 5,000. I think it's a little bit of one of those situations where you're going to need to
monitor the usage after it's done because a lot of people that it's geared for, you know, were having to drive cars because there just simply was not a way to get around. If they've got a safe way to do that, I'm certain that that would go well.

Now, how you measure all that I don't really know, and we need some input from the department to help us understand that.

MR. TWING: Mr. Chairman, this is Shawn Twing. The -- I was -- I was doing a quick search to see if there was some census data correlating certain factors to bicycle use, and U.S. Census does have data on bicycle uses in urban cities. Now, I don't know how far down this goes, but certainly in the larger cities.

But I guess it's really a question. Does TxDOT keep any of that data? Has it ever done any census surveys to try to correlate certain factors to, you know, probability of bicycle use? What makes me think of this is Half Price Books, for example. If you want to open a franchise in a community, one of the very first things they look at is the percentage of people with graduate degrees because there is a correlation to book buying. Of course, it's not a direct cause and effect. But is there any kind of data like that that could be looked into, A, to measure
someone for a matrix as part of the pilot program, you can show actually show a number, and, two, you can measure an increase of bicycle use over time to link it to the effectiveness of the program?

MR. GLEASON: I'm sure we can get whatever data is available from the census on that.

MS. LIND: Yeah. There's -- American Community Survey data is nationwide, and you can get some information on usage, but it's commute based. I think it might be more beneficial to do -- maybe throw some counters down and count a facility before and after, but you can work that out as the program progresses.

But yeah, it might be good to get a baseline of how many -- or even going out and having some -- there's different ways to do it. There's a lot of ways to count the actual usage before you put it in and then afterwards. It would be great.

MR. GLEASON: Let me do a time check because I think we can probably talk about this all day. We have a lot on the agenda. I've heard a lot of very, very helpful information. What I will do is -- I now have enough where I feel like we can put a concept together and push it through my administration and leadership and get general BIOP from them that this is
something to commit to, because obviously if this thing plays out, you know, the department is going to have to make -- I've got enough now where, beyond the general conversations, Mr. Chair, you had, I feel like I can sit down and scribe what this thing looks like, who would be -- we'd be trying to get to the table for a pilot, and what we'd be thinking about to measure for results. So great conversation today.

I don't think there's a specific action needed from the committee at this point, and I think we probably need to move on if that's all right.

It's totally up to you, sir.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Eric. All right. So at this point Russ is going to make presentation on the City of Houston's bike plan and give us kind of an idea of what's going on in Houston.

And, Russ, we appreciate you doing this for us because it's like all of these meetings are fascinating to me because I learn so much, and I know that I am going to learn a tremendous amount based on what you guys are doing in Houston.

MR. FRANK: Well, I was just going to say this all kind of came about because we heard from -- at least talked about Tyler a lot, and there has just been some questions about what's happening in some other big
cities across the state. And so basically -- and my name is Russ Frank. I work at the Metropolitan Transit Authority, so I do buses and trains and light rail. We're doing lots of things to figure how we do better bike accommodations.

But I thought if we're going to talk about Houston, really there's a much bigger organization and bigger people who are working on bike things than just me. So Houston-Galveston Area Council is our MPO, or metropolitan planning organization, in the region, so Jeff Taebel's here. He's going to talk first kind of about regionally about what's happening with bikes in our eight-county region. And then I have someone here from the City of Houston from Public Works who is the City of Houston bike coordinator going to talk about the City of Houston and the City of Houston's facilities and City of Houston new bike plan that's being updated right now. And then I'm going to talk a little bit about what METRO's doing just trying to connect some of our facilities and having a focus on bikes.

So Jeff's going to come up and really kind of go first. We'll kind of have three little -- three presentations. We can have questions and answers about what's going on in the Houston area.
So, Jeff, come on up.

MR. TAEBEL: Thank you, Russ.

Good morning, everybody. It's my pleasure to be with you today and especially to hear some of the discussion that has preceded this presentation. And I think you will find that elements of almost all of it will recurve as we talk about what we're doing in the Houston outskirt.

We are both the MPO and the council of governments for the Houston region, and sometimes those overlap. Sometimes they don't. Our role in pedestrian and bicycle planning is really traditional planning. We also want to provide data, and we want to provide resources and technical assistance.

That shows our service area, if you will. We have 13 counties and 134 cities, and eight of the counties are in the MPO boundary, and we've got five that are not. And that can create some interesting issues. Of course, the budget that we have to do planning and implementation projects -- and I see some people smiling out there -- varies vastly. But the interest I would say is equal or if not higher in our rural counties, so we've been finding some ways to work with them through our economic development programs and some other grants we've pursued.
I would say that there is really unity and vision, though, that improving our bikeability as a region is a key to sustained economic development. Two reasons why. Houston is not blessed with mountains. We don't even have any hills. It could be a tough sell recruiting a student from Stanford or somewhere else against places like Seattle or Austin for that matter.

What we do have is 16,000 miles of rivers, streams, bayous, and coastlines. Another possibly shocking fact is we already have over 1,300 miles of bikeways, several hundred more in planning and development. So if you're a company in the energy corridor trying to compete for that new engineering grad, you are selling them on the fact that even though this is a suburban location, we have hundreds of miles of off-street bike facilities that connect the office to the park to your subdivision.

In our rural communities bike tourism is essential. They're really seeing -- we've got this captive market of over 6 million people needs things to do on the weekend. We've got beautiful roads, like to come and spend some money and maybe think about retiring here or starting a business here.

So the first thing I'd like to talk to you about is sort of our philosophy on bicycle
planning. I think a lot of times I have noticed in talking especially with our policy council is we think of bicycle travel as this linear prospect, and it is to an extent, but most people who take purpose bike trips or certainly walking trips are functioning in a much smaller zone of travel. So we really believe that it's at the place level, then it's sort of at the district level, and then finally we get up to the network level.

And I'm going to share with you a new concept in the bike plan that we just adopted earlier this year, but I'm going to reverse the order on that. We for the very first time have outlined a conceptual regional bikeway network. Now, those lines can be a bit daunting and scary to people, some people in our neck of the woods. Let me just state these are not specific alignments. We haven't identified any facility types. But we did work with advocates from throughout the region and the city and county engineer, federal officials, and tried to identify where are the places we would want to connect if we could. Not just weekend recreational trips, but how would we get the rider from that location into a city bikeway network. Those points of entry are really important.

And as to the -- Allison on the phone, a fun exercise I like to do is maybe someday a tourist...
will fly into Intercontinental Airport and rent a bike for two weeks and check out the bird migration at High Island and then catch some surf in Galveston, come on down to Lake Jackson, ride through the Columbia bottomlands and up through Bellville in Austin County and catch some wildflowers. That is a compelling economic and tourism vision to me. I think it is to some other people too.

We did some back-of-the-envelope calculations just estimating what types of facilities might be usable in these different corridors. This would be about a thousand-mile network. We did a quick and dirty cost estimate of about $400 million. $400 million on bicycle facilities? You got to be kidding.

Let me just put that in perspective. Familiar with Houston freeway system, 290/610 interchange, important project, necessary project, going to improve safety throughput. That's about 300 million. I would just ask us to think about which has a greater long-term potential for the economic impact on a region, a project like that interchange or the ability to complete this network. Just saying.

So these ideas will take a long time to build support, but we're very happy that our policy
council adopted the plan and at least this is out there as a concept. As pieces of it become implemented I think we'll have a little bit better idea of what this will look like, how long it will take, what it will really cost. These are some examples of how we might treat that in different settings.

Moving down to the district level, we have worked with the City of Houston and other local governments in creating what we call pedestrian-bicycle special district plans, because we recognize that in addition to this trunk line system along our bayous and signed shoulder roadways and the like, really people need to be able to get to the school, get to the library, get to the park and get through those subdivisions. So this is much more focused on kind of last mile issues, on-street facilities, and we're excited that we have been able to work in a variety of different communities.

This is the Clear Lake area which is where NASA is located. But a project that has a very soft spot in my heart is in North Houston along Airline Drive. This is a four-lane I'd say '40s or '50s era thoroughfare, poor, discontinuous sidewalks, no midblock crossings. Over time this area has evolved into kind of the flea market district of Houston.
The people who designed those roadways never anticipated that thousands of pedestrians would be using this facility. And so what we tried to do is come up with a plan for prorationally retrofitting at least the sidewalks and some of the safe crossing opportunities in this area. We funded a couple of these projects getting under way and very excited to see the progress it's made and the excitement in the community that's resulted from this.

Talked about data a little bit earlier. It's very hard to justify projects. You know, we have five decades of sustained traffic counts, detailed travel demand modeling, so when we present a road project to our policy council there's very definitive plus benefit metrics that we can use, very hard to do. It's a faith factor with the ped-bike projects.

Well, we have positioned two permanent counters within the city of Houston, and we fought to purchase some temporary counters that in conjunction with Texas Transportation Institute we have been deploying in different locations throughout our region. Permanent counters are up all the time, rigor data readout. These counters are up usually for about a week. We have got a hundred data points so far. Our goal is to step that up. We're buying some more of
them. We're going to have 250 data points this year in a variety of locations measuring both ped and bike.

Just a few examples of some different projects where we've had counters. Some of the numbers are disappointingly low perhaps. Some of them are shockingly high to us. But it's important we believe to begin to tell our policymakers just what is the use. On the places where we have the daily data is quite interesting, just looking at the weekday hours of use, different days of use. And we've even done some checking on how much weather has an impact on usage, and I didn't bring that slide. I'm kind of wishing I did.

But we had some areas on White Oak where we've had I think almost a thousand users on very hot days in August. So I think it is possible to establish that culture even in our challenging climate.

We've also worked with 22 communities to do what we call livable center studies. We talked about network, district, and place. So you see the green dots, those are places where we have done the district plans, and then the orangish yellow dots are places where we have done much more intensive plans. These tend to be more sidewalk-intersection safety oriented, generally in places where we've got a high
employment, lots of transit, residential density.

And it takes a while, as you all know, to
go -- we hear sometimes from our policy council, you're
spending all this on planning, planning, planning,
planning. Where is -- well, we did the first plan
about seven years ago, and that entity has completed
almost $30 million worth of projects to implement. So
they are building what we help them plan over time. As
far as our MPO as a whole, we have either funded or
programmed about $56 million worth of implementation
projects either out of our bike plan or out of our
local centers plan.

Final thing I just want to mention, we
think that education and capacity building is a very
important role for us. I didn't have enough copies or
enough space in my car to bring enough for everyone of
all these, but we've got some -- these aren't detailed
design guidance, but just things to think about in
different settings when planning pedestrian facilities,
bikeways.

The new one that we're very happy about
is end-of-trip facilities. This is more focused on
private development, bike racks, showers, a way to get
them through your parking lot. Believe it or not,
there are some people who still like paper maps, so
we've got a nice paper map of the current bikeways in the region and tips to potential bike commuters. We go out to various fairs and events in the community and try to distribute -- make sure that we're educating a safe generation of potential bike commuters.

One other comment based on the Half Price Books analogy, if you're interested, on our website we did a study -- and Teri will remember this -- back about seven or eight years ago where we tried to come up with some of those factors. If you go to h-gac.com/go/pedbike, you can find the study on there, and I'd be happy to work with you or any of the rest of you who would be interested in some of the methodology we use.

I will just close it there, and I'd be happy to take any questions.

MR. HIBBS: That was an outstanding presentation.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: It was.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much.

MR. FRANK: You can have more questions also here in a minute. Jeff is going to be around here. But we're going to move a little bit closer in, so now Anita is going to talk about the City of Houston and give us some information about what the City of
Houston is doing with the bikes.

MR. HIBBS: Hey, Russ, if I could, just a minute.

Eric, could you please give us a time check? Does this room have to be out at 12:00, or if we were to go over an extra 10 or 15 minutes today is that all right?

MS. TERI KAPLAN: It is all right. I have it booked an extra hour beyond. If people are willing and able to stay, we can continue beyond the noon hour. Does anyone have an issue? Okay.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. Thank you.

Please proceed.

MS. HOLLMANN: Well, I'm glad you guys said that because my presentation I have been encouraged to continue to whittle down every time I look at it. There is just so much going on in the city of Houston.

So I'm Anita Hollmann. I'm the ped-bike coordinator for the City of Houston, and I'm really happy to be here with you today. I'm actually relatively new to this position. I've been the bike-ped coordinator for about seven months now, so it's been a lot of fun to be on the implementation side of things.
Prior to this, though, I was in the planning and development department, so I have lots of experience with the major thoroughfare and freeway plan. I managed a couple of the Livable Centers studies that Jeff was talking about, and I also managed subregional planning studies, so within the city of Houston we actually broke down the city and looked at how mobility works with the different neighborhoods. So we looked at transit bikes, pedestrians, and vehicular usage.

So today, though, I'm going to talk a little bit about the Houston bikeway program which takes in both the planning and the implementation. So the three things I'm going to talk about is just a quick historical overview, so what is this bikeways program. And wait, we have one in Houston? We do.

The other thing I'll talk about is about the Houston bike plan, and I know you guys -- I'm kind of preaching to the choir. You know that we are doing this. And then the third thing is what are some of the examples of current projects and implementation, and I probably didn't give enough information on this last bullet point, but again, come to the Texas Trails and Active Transportation Conference, and you'll see the whole presentation.
So just really quickly, historical overview, the Houston bikeway program was actually established back in 1992, so it's not too surprising that within the next year we actually wrote our very first bike plan. This was written largely to accommodate congestion and also a federal mandate to start targeting air quality and think about how we can start to adjust air quality.

So the good thing about this plan, this one that was developed in 1993, is it helped kind of develop a structure for the city of Houston in terms of coordination. So within the city of Houston, anything that's an on-street bike facility is managed by Public Works and Engineering, which is the department that I'm in. Anything that's off-street, though, is actually managed by our parks department in partnership with a group known as Houston Parks Board, which is a private-public partnership. So with this plan, this tool, it was really, really great. We actually were able to implement 300 centerline miles of bikeways. So that's kind of a quick little history.

So what's interesting about Houston is that, you know, whenever I go anywhere I say I'm from Texas, the first thing they ask me is, "Oh, you're a bikeway coordinator in Texas"? When I say I'm in
Houston, "Oh, you're a bikeway coordinator in Houston?"
And I kind of get these question marks. But what's really, really interesting -- and you guys know this -- finding data about biking period, regardless of where you are in the United States, is difficult.

What's really great, in 2007 METRO started their bikes on buses initiative. So we can actually collect data and start to see trends within the city that are not necessarily bike counters per se but we're still getting counts. So we started evaluating the data that METRO produced, and we found out from 2011 to 2014 the number of bikes boarding on buses has more than doubled. So we know people are out there using bikes because they're putting them on buses, so they must be riding somewhere.

The other thing is Houston does have B-cycle. I want to say we were the first city, but I might be wrong, so don't quote me on that in the notes. I already see notes. But -- so back in 2013 we actually started. It was our former mayor, Annise Parker's initiative to help get three locations, I guess, launched. And it turns out they were pretty popular. Today we have 29. And what's really, really exciting is that now we have been approved for 76 more stations, so we are going to have 100 stations in
total. So what I always tell my public works employees is if you have a headache with biking now, just imagine what's going to be down the line. So we -- you know, we need to prepare for this, and we need to be able to accommodate our population. And what our population is telling us is that they are out there biking, and although, again, we don't have necessarily counts, we do have evidence in other ways.

So I think Jeff did a really good job talking about our trunk system. So historically within the city of Houston we're bayou, we're swampland, and because of that we have these wonderful spokes that kind of go out from Downtown Houston. The nice thing is that I guess -- I also want to say it was in 2013, about three years ago, there was actually a bond initiative that was passed. 65 percent of our voters within the city of Houston encouraged a bond that would allow for -- let me look at my numbers really quickly. I told some of you I put this presentation finally together last night. Okay. It was a $100 million bond that was passed. And so 65 percent of our voters said, "We want biking in Houston. We like what you've done so far with the off-street trail network, and we want you to continue it." 65 percent, that's really significant. Then on top of that, 115 million
donations of private investments were also given to us to continue this initiative. So this is also -- I mean, this goes outside of the city of Houston. It's not just all within our city limits.

The other thing I want to acknowledge is in 2014 through the State of Texas we actually had our -- I guess we have a bunch of utility corridors with CenterPoint, and CenterPoint has agreed to allow us to put bike facilities on there, so these are all off-street. So what you see here is the bayous in the background, and then you see those recently approved CenterPoint Energy corridors. So, man, off-street we look great, don't we? Like we're really moving forward. We're really, really excited.

But then why do we need a bike plan, right? Obviously people must be biking and we have this really great off-street network. Well, Jeff hit on it a little bit. Well, one, it's been 20 years since we did our last bike plan, and I don't know about you guys, but a lot has changed in 20 years. Not only is it the population of Houston that's changed, but what we understand about bikeway planning and bikeway implementation has changed.

You're talking about these pilot projects. We have things to pull from to learn from,
to figure out how we can do it better within our city. Also we have limited resources. So every time a City of Houston goes out to do anything, we only want to do it once. So we go to this roadway and we're going to pull it up to replace piping and electrical wire and all of that stuff, and we're going to lay down pavement. We want to know how we're supposed to lay it down so we only go out there once.

Also economic benefit. We talked about competing with peer cities, Seattle, Austin. We want people to move to Houston, too, and then honestly there's health benefits with it. So what does that mean? Well, through different -- I know Bike Texas is in the room. We have a Bike Houston. Advocacy groups as well as other groups kind of all got together and said, well, what is our case for action? If we want to do a bike plan, what do we want to achieve? We talked about providing safer facilities for one, to get people out to bike, make sure that it's accessible, that it's getting us to where we want to go. Again, community health and wellness, competing with peer cities.

And then we wanted to benefit everybody. This bike plan is not just for the four or five people who bike. It's really for the whole city. It's for the tourists to come. It's for the people who live
there. It is also for the vehicles, because let's face it, within the city of Houston, vehicles get very frustrated because they don't necessarily know what they're supposed to do when they're around a bike. So we want to acknowledge that. It's not necessarily that vehicles hate bikes and bikes hate vehicles. I drive a vehicle. I drove one here to get here today. So it's kind of -- it has to benefit everybody.

So we throw in the partnership. We got everybody on board. Again, I mentioned that the planning and development department, which is my training coming through the city, is actually managing the day in, day out bike plan. Public works and engineering/parks department were the implementer, so we've all been in this together. We've attended so many public meetings I can't even count. We're partnering with Bike Houston, H-GAC. And then thank you to the Federal Highway Administration; to you guys, TxDOT, because we've gotten a lot of the funding that we are moving forward with through you guys as well; and then, of course, Parks Bayou, who manages our off-trail network.

So what are we designing for? This is a really, really interesting question and something that I have to admit that I didn't necessarily think about.
So when you're out on the road, especially in rural communities or wherever you may be -- and in Houston you see droves of them. They have their helmets on, they're in spandex, right, and they're going like 30 miles per hour down the road. Right. They're probably like the strong and fearless rider. Every once in a while you'd see one of them by themselves, but they always are in packs it feels like. Right?

And then you have this. Noway, nohow. This is a guy, if he wants a bag of Doritos and CVS is across the street, he's still going to drive his car, or she. Right? And then you kind of have everybody in between.

And what was really interesting for the City of Houston is we started to think about everybody in between. And I personally probably fall somewhere between this enthused and confident and interested and concerned, right, because I'm the bikeway coordinator, so I'm enthused and I'm confident. I'm going to go get out on the road if I hear somebody complain about it so I can understand it. But if I don't feel safe I'm going to get right off that road, right, because I'm interested, but I'm also concerned about my well-being.

And so what we found is that the majority of people who are out there are the interested and
concerned, which means they probably own a bike, it
sits in their garage, it might be flat, you know, and
if they had somewhere to ride and they felt safe they
would. They're interested and concerned.

So I mentioned the 300 centerline miles
that were as a result from our 1992 plan. We now have
500 centerline miles. They consist primarily of,
again, the off-street network, but then we also have --
let me look at my numbers. I'm going to say something
about 35 percent of shared use facilities, so share --
where the bike and car share the road, and then we have
something a lot less of these striped bike lanes.

So -- so we were like, well, we have --
that looks pretty extensive, doesn't it? I mean, we
have some gaps, but for the most part, with the bayous
and all of that stuff, it seems like we're covering a
lot of the city, so why do people keep telling us --
why do we get phone calls that there is nowhere to bike
in Houston and the off-street facilities are not
viable.

Well, so we decided to do something, to
start looking at what we call level of comfort. So
from -- anybody who is an engineer and looks at traffic
planning, you grew up on LOS, level of service. The
idea with level of service is that our roadway
extension's at X capacity, and in order to have it function at optimal it needs to meet all these different criteria.

Level of comfort kind of works the same way, but what we see from a -- for a bicycle you're not going to bike necessarily to congested or not congested. You're going to bike if you feel comfortable. So what are those elements that are going to allow you to feel comfortable? I have the chart with me. It's at the very back of this presentation. I'm not going to explain it to you because I have a time limit.

But essentially we took these set of criteria and we looked at them and we evaluated our network based on these criteria. And what we -- with kind of a consultive direction -- we have a BAC. We have our own Bicycle Advisory Committee -- we decided, you know what? Level one and two are probably where people feel the most comfortable to ride.

So then what we did is we looked at our network and we said, okay, based on this evaluation, based upon this criteria, let's just check out what these 500 centerline miles look like. So what then we realized is that we probably only have about 250 miles that are actually comfortable to ride on. I mean,
that's mind-blowing. Not only is it not comfortable to ride on, but look how disconnected this network becomes, so no wonder we don't see droves of individuals out riding. They feel more comfortable in a pack.

So, you know, this is a bike plan. You need to go to the public. You need to make sure you're getting it right. So we took it to the public, and the public gave us some really good feedback. Turns out we're getting it right. So we did some modifications. You can see we had a women and biking focus group.

I think one of the biggest critiques we get is the stereotype tends to be the guy who rides the bike is in his 20s and is white male. That's the stereotype, hippyish kind of guy. But what we found out is that everybody's out there biking, all shapes, all sizes, all forms. It was just really, really cool to go. I think we had something like five public meetings, a list over 14,000. We went to Sunday Streets, et cetera, which brought in I think 26,000 people at one Sunday Street event. So we're really reaching out to a lot of people.

So this is really cool. Then we came up with our vision, and we said by 2026, so ten years, the city of Houston will be a safer, more accessible, gold
level, bike-friendly city. Turns out we're a bronze. Did anybody know that? City of Houston is a bronze based on educational components from the past. So in 2013 we were awarded this.

If you go to bikeed.org, that's the City of Houston initiative. It says City of Houston. So if you ever got your LCI training or any of that, you got it kind of through an initiative that we had started way back when. So we're really, really proud of that bronze, but we're ready to go to the next level.

What's really great about deciding to go with this established set of matrix is that it gives us something to measure ourselves on. We know what a gold is. We know how to get to a gold. We understand that there is a silver between the gold. And then if we ever decide that we're just really ready to go, then maybe we'll do a platinum one day. So again, improve safety, increase access, increase ridership, and develop and maintain facilities. Maintain is that big word.

So next step, how do we reach goals. Again, we've come up with a bike plan which, by the way, will be released for public comment this coming -- in the early year, so keep your eyes out for that. We're coming up with policies, programs, and projects.
We're prioritizing the projects, and then we're trying to think about implementation of funding.

So the product of this will actually be two essential maps. One is one that we think what that kind of shows what's in program for the next five years and then those opportunities that maybe we can find funding on. So that's kind of our five-year map. And then we're going to have a long-range map. What's interesting about the long-range map is the City of Houston does have a major thoroughfare and freeway planning map which shows that even though there is not a road existing there today, we know potentially -- we don't know what it's going to look like yet, but we know there might be one someday. So we kind of see the bike map in that way as well.

And then we will also have pilot projects. These pilot projects, though, are only funded through conceptual design. They will not be necessarily engineered, and if you guys have any money we would love to figure out ways to get some of these amended. So the pilot projects, again we want to do on-street facilities. We really want to find a way to connect to our really awesome, robust, off-street facility.

And then what's new for us are the
intersection treatments. So this is just facility type. We're really, really excited about how we can use striped bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, separated facilities within the city of Houston, but then also neighborhood bikeways, sharrows on neighborhood streets. Intersections, a whole new concept for us. We've never really thought about how you can get a bike through the intersection. Any facility now you just kind of see the sign and stop at the intersection, and then you know you got to figure it out.

And then we talked about end-of-trip facilities. At the end of the day you get on your bike, you go somewhere, and then you have to leave your bike somewhere. So what's really, really interesting -- and I'll say this because I don't think many people know this -- our very first plan, which was written in 1993, was written for two work trips. Right? Does anybody know what percent of all trips -- what percent of all trips regardless if you're going to -- what percent of all trips, so grocery store, church, friend's house, whatever it might be, versus work, what percent of trips are actually to work? This is a --

MS. ROBERTS: 65.

MS. HOLLMANN: 65? Okay. Any public
1 meeting I ever had had a water bottle, and I was like,
who is going to get this right, because then everybody
started filling out numbers. 14 percent. So we're
trying -- the original plan, which made sense at the
time -- because, again, it's census data. But here we
are spending all this money to collect 14 percent of
all trips. We're missing 85 percent of the trips out
there. That was also something we realized.

So for us within the Houston bike plan,
this end of trip is really important. We're trying to
target one to three miles. Where are people going in
one to three miles? The longest commute is probably to
work. But then what are you doing after work and how
can we plan infrastructure for that.

So getting ready -- and I know I'm going
to go a little long. Everybody knows what these are.
These are our design manuals that tell us what to do.
We have updated our infrastructure design manual. That
basically says -- the infrastructure design manual is a
guideline. It is not the set standard. So you city
engineers, if you have an idea or if there needs to be
consideration of how this bike lane needs to be handled
to be accommodated, bring it to us.

The other thing is that whenever we think
about a bike we're thinking about the land use, the
type of facility, and then also the major thoroughfare, freeway planning class. All these things need to come together in order to determine -- you know, you want to look at things like level of service, but you also want to look at level of comfort, and you need to recognize that it's level of service and level of comfort in order to determine what kind of roadway you're going to have and who is the population that you're serving.

The other thing that's changed for us is that we are looking at design speed, so that design and target speed need to match. It used to be that, you know, you would design for a 50-mile-per-hour roadway but then you would put down a 30-mile-per-hour sign, and then you wouldn't understand why the two did not match. So I'm glad we're moving forward on that.

And then the other thing is we used to only have 12-foot lanes in the city of Houston. Now we have 11 foot, which gives us a little bit more of design flexibility. We've added all these definitions in our infrastructure design manual. The other bonus is now at the end with the Houston bike plan we'll be modifying these definitions and bringing in new definitions. But also what's really important is that we did find that bike lanes really should be at least 5 feet, if not 6. And then if there are buffers, you
need at least a 3-foot buffer. And then the engineers
work with us, and if there needs to be a variance,
there's a variance.

Pending considerations, "Share the road."
We all know what that sign looks like. We don't like
that in Houston, because I've talked to so many vehicle
users and they're like, what does that mean, share the
road? Who am I sharing it with? How do I share the
road? So now we're doing "Bikes may use full lane."
So that's a very clear indication to the vehicle user
that they are sharing it but the vehicle is not -- the
bike's not required to stay in the rightmost part of
the lane. If they feel insecure they can move over.

The other thing is no more 14-foot lane
width for major thoroughfares. Our city engineer is
not supporting it. So that's anything that --
sometimes on a major collector, but major collector and
above, including things like anything that would
interface with a highway. We just don't -- it doesn't
feel safe. There have been many, many accidents, and
that's what we're hearing through the Houston bike
plan, that this is what the public is wanting.

So future projects. I'm almost done.
This is just a project by the University of Houston and
historic Third Ward, which is culturally an
African-American area and lots of turning movements, et cetera. So this is just to kind of show you what we do. We go out to the public and we say, "These are the existing conditions. This is what your cross section currently looks like. These are your needs. Hey, community, here are the alternatives. Tell us what you want."

And essentially what will happen -- and this is the one that got picked. Alternative two got picked because the community felt like this best helped represent what their needs are for that corridor. So what's interesting is that this will then go -- this is a conceptual design that will then go into engineering. This is funded through ReBuild Houston, which, again, is a Public Works and Engineering funding source. But City of Houston doesn't necessarily have specific funding for bikes.

This is just a pretty picture, our Lamar cycle track. It's our first separated cycle track in Downtown Houston. If you ever have been in Downtown Houston, this is George R. Brown, which is our big event space, and then this is actually city hall, so it's considered a park connector. It's our very first one, and we're really excited about it, and we get more phone calls about what's that green thing downtown than...
anything else.

This is just one of our side paths to show you the very different facility sites as part of our bike Tour de route. Jeff Taebel was talking about some of the TIP funds we've received, and we actually were able to sell TIP [phonetic] a portion of the corridor which takes and then connects to the various highways.

And the last slide. And I hope I didn't take too long, maybe 15 minutes. I just want to say a huge thank you to TxDOT, actually, for this. The Houston district is actually working with us to do a detour plan. So since I have moved into Public Works and Engineering I also review all mobility permits, and I actually reviewed a permit that was a project with TxDOT, and I noticed that there wasn't any bicycle consideration for how we were going to move the bicycle traffic around.

Because of H-GAC we do have permanent counters right at this location, so we know in the August month this thing gets thousands of users. It's really a bike highway. So thank you to H-GAC for having those permanent counters out there. Because we're -- have been able to talk to TxDOT what's really exciting is we're moving forward with a separated bike
lane detour on Houston Avenue. So that's coming to us
soon, and that's in partnership with the Houston
district.

     So there's lots of other stuff that I
probably missed, but I would say check out the Houston
bike map, check out the Houston bikeway program, and if
y'all have any questions, that's my contact.

     MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Anita.
That was an extraordinary presentation.

     So, Russ, do you think there's a chance
that these materials can be e-mailed to the committee
without there being a problem with confidentiality or
anything?

     MR. FRANK: I think you already got them
in your e-mail, didn't you?

     MR. HIBBS: Okay.

     MR. FRANK: I'm just going to talk real
quickly about -- we talked about kind of the broad
perspective, and then since I work at the transit
authority there is a lot of this -- part of it is about
what happens to the last mile or if you're taking a bus
or a train how do you get to your final destination.
That could be on a bike.

     We work with H-GAC, and we have a plan we
came up with that's called the bike and ride plan. So
basically it looks at short- and long-term ways that
you can connect transit better to the bikeways and the
bike facilities. And so we've kind of taken this
document and looked at internally how do we look at
things better for transit and for bikes, so how do we
communicate to -- sometimes -- we've talked a lot about
TexDOT staff with safety with METRO staff, how do we
make sure that METRO staff look at bicycles when
they're looking at projects and facilities as we move
forward, and then how do we integrate all these
facilities into our projects along the way and connect
to the other things that the City of Houston is doing
with all of our projects.

So this is just kind of -- I'm going to
go kind of quickly through this, but basically how do
we implement these projects into our facilities. You
can kind of see this picture here. This is a bike rack
on a bus. One of the things we did starting I think
about in 2007 is we put bike racks on all of our buses.
We have 1,285 buses. Every single bus either has a
rack on the front if it's a local bus; if it's a
commuter bus, our commuter system or over-the-road
coaches, underneath the bus where the luggage goes
there's a special rack. It's like a drawer that pulls
out where the bikes can be put underneath those
commuter buses. And so all of our buses you can take bikes.

We have our light rail system. Originally we were very crowded because we have tons of ridership on the rail line, and so we limited bikes to the off-peak time. Now we bought 39 more railcars, and so we allow bikes to ride on the trains at all hours of our rail operation. And so that's a really big piece of getting things integrated into our facilities.

Our internal processes, like at TxDOT we have all different departments, and we're trying to make sure because we have this bike plan that we integrate better bicycle usage as we're moving through the process of all of our projects through facility maintenance and our engineering and then even making sure that all of our departments understand bikes are important.

This is a project we did, took several years, but in 2013 it was finished. We had a really big park-and-ride lot on the west side of town off I-10, the Kingsland Park & Ride. I think it has about 3,000 cars. It's a very highly used facility for cars to park, get on our buses. We have a HOV system where you get on the bus. There is a direct lane that goes from the bus, its own bridge to the freeway. You take
the freeway in. The bus never gets in the traffic to
Downtown Houston. That's how our commuter system
works. But if you're on a bike you couldn't even get
there.

Across the bayou on the back side of it
was a bayou system we talked about. There was a
multi-use path there, but you couldn't get across the
bayou across the chain-link fence into the
park-and-ride facility if you were on your bike. So we
worked with Harris County. It was a Harris County bike
path. We own the park and ride. And we spent $84,000
and we built a bridge and built new fencing and
lighting and security.

So this is the back side of the park and
ride where really it's an entrance for cyclists or
pedestrians to get from the path into where you can get
on the bus to commute to downtown, which makes it much,
much easier. These are the kind of things we need to
do at the local level, how do you make the facilities
you already have connect better for bicycles.

This is another one that we still are
working on how to implement, but you can see it's a
gigantic parking lot. People leave their cars there,
and they get on a bus and go to Downtown Houston. We
want to make sure all these paths connect better to
where you board the bus or your bicycle.

We've been working with the City of Houston and Harris County on how do we do facilities better. Maybe you don't want to take your bike on the bus but you want to leave your bike at one of our transit centers or park and rides, so how do we have bike racks or bike facilities. And we're still trying to figure that out. We don't have a lot of those yet.

The city gave us six BikeLids we've installed, and Harris County is working with us to get bike racks along our rail lines, and we're still kind of in infant stages of that. We have a new bike locker we just put in at one of our rail stations, and we're trying to figure out -- we talked to LA Metro. They actually just rent out the lockers to somebody over like a month lease, would lease the locker, leave their bicycle there before they board the train. So we're going to do something like that as a pilot program to figure out how we have people renting the locker at the rail station to keep it there all the time.

Also, safety is a big thing for us. Our operations folks want to make sure that people on bicycles don't have a problem with the buses and so -- or the trains. A lot of our metro system on the rail is an in-street running system, so it's not like
crossing a freight track. When you're on your bike I know many times you cross tracks and you sort of slow down. You cross a railroad track on your bicycle. Well, we're a street-running system. You might be riding your bike in the same lane, shared lanes with some of our trains. So if you're riding parallel to where the track goes and it's an embedded track, there's a groove in there that your bicycle wheel can get caught in. So we want to make sure that people watch out for the rail when they're riding along those rail lines.

One of our chief spokesperson for METRO, she's our media relations person, is an avid cyclist, and she had a bicycle wreck when she was crossing a track one time, so she was wanting to make sure we push really hard to make sure we do good education where people ride near the tracks.

This is what we -- Anita was talking about the wide boardings. We have over 20,000 boardings on the bikes -- on our buses for bikes on average right now. It's gone up dramatically from 2007. People thought no one's going to use the racks. Bike Texas and Bike Houston pushes to really use these racks. We implemented them, and it's been an overwhelming success because people are really putting
their bikes -- you drive all over town you see bike racks on the bus being used.

MS. WEAVER: How do you count that, Russ?

MR. FRANK: We're like almost every transit. Our people boardings are all electronic, but bikes are not, so our bus operators keep track of how many people board the bus with their bike, and they report it back in every day so we can keep track. So it's not as technical as our other types of counting, but we want to make sure that we keep counts of how many people are using the racks, and so they do that and report the information.

And we work with all of our other partners, H-GAC and the city and Bike Houston to continue to work on their committees and stakeholders. We all want to work together. Like Jeff mentioned, the management districts, we work with them as well. Some of the things that they're doing, there are transit facilities. They're good for bikes. They're good for pedestrians. They're also good -- if you're going to ride a bus you want to make sure that you can walk to the bus stop, can have a safe place at the bus stop, and then load your bike onto the bus if you want to. So those are kind of efforts that are more closely connected to what we do as a transit, work, you know,
practical things, I guess, right at a facility.

So that's kind of the state of cycling in Houston. I don't know if Anita and Jeff want to come, if y'all have any other questions, but we tried to sort of say this global thing down to what the city's doing and then, like I said, what we do at METRO trying to look out for bikes, better than we probably did in the past, because probably in the past we didn't really think very much about bikes, and now it's a very integrative part of what we do all the time. So if y'all have any questions --

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Russ. That was an extraordinary presentation.

I might suggest that we do questions and comments after we're finished with the meeting to try to respect everyone's time. I know Bobby's got a plane to catch, and there may be some others, and I want to try to respect Bike Texas and the presentation that's coming up. But hopefully you guys see value in having the other major metropolitan, highly developed areas coming and giving us these presentations because there is just so much new information, and I know for me here it is such a great learning opportunity, and I want to encourage those of you on the committee to share this information with the people who are in your region you
have contact with. That's the reason I was asking
about the slides earlier, because obviously Houston has
a very sophisticated deal. And you're probably 20 or
30 years ahead of the rest of us, and so it will help
us get up the learning curve quicker.

So at this point in time I would like to
ask Mark Stine to come up. He's with Bike Texas. And
one of the things that we had discussed pretty early on
last year was the value of having bicycle tourism as a
component of some of the things that we're doing here.
We've actually touched on it several times today, Mark.
And so we would like at this point for you to tell us
what's going on in Quebec's Route Verte connectivity
project.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Let me, before Mark
gets started, apologize. We didn't have Mark's
presentation when I sent out the meeting notice last
Friday, so I will forward a PDF of Mark's presentation
to all the committee members.

MR. STINE: Thank y'all very much. It's
very nice to be here. I'm Mark Stine. I'm with Bike
Texas, and I have been on Bike Texas for about ten
years as staff, and I'm now retired, but I'm on what we
call retirement reserve, and I've kept up with a couple
projects and -- you know, from time to time, and so I
do spend a fair amount of time in Bike Texas. Matter of fact, tomorrow I will be up in Paris at a workshop for the Northeast Texas Trail, and on Monday I'll be in Nacogdoches talking with Dr. Forbes at Stephen F. Austin.

So it's good to catch up with everything you guys are doing because a good part of it's very timely, and I greatly appreciate all the work that all of you are putting into this, obviously a lot of heart and soul and time and blood, sweat, and tears going into this. So thank you very much.

I'm going to go through these slides. It's going to be kind of a quick trip through. The Quebec route there, it started back in the '90s. I visited during kind of an interim visit ribbon cutting in 2003, so I saw the system when it was kind of halfway developed. Robin was up there I believe in 2013, and so he was there at the final ribbon cutting, so we've had good contact with these folks. And one of the vice presidents, Jean-Francois Pronovost, came and presented at the Texas Trails & Active Transportation Conference in Fort Worth in 2014, so I'm using a subset of his slides.

And also, just for your information, the next conference is March 9 through 11 in Houston coming...
up this year. It's every other year, but it's not the
year of the legislature. And so here's our contact
information, and you will have that when Teri gets you
the electronic --

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Wait. I don't want you
to just breeze through that that quickly. Bike Texas,
their conference that they put on, the Texas Trails &
Active Transportation Conference, is huge. It is one
of the best conferences nationally, and we have it here
in Texas. I can't tell you -- I encourage you and your
communities to attend their conference.

MR. STINE: Thank you, Teri. And I have
plenty of these little fliers, too, so I appreciate
that very much.

So we're going to go through this pretty
quick. But Quebec, as you know, is a large province in
Canada, French speaking, up in the northeast corner,
and it's twice the size of Texas in area, but it's
about 8 million, which is about a third of the
population of Texas. It's -- as you know, most of it
is concentrated down towards the southern part, and
they have more polar bears but we have more armadillos.
So there's a fun fact for you.

And they have large cities, like
Montreal. Think Houston. And they have very historic
cities, like Quebec City. Think San Antonio and El Paso. And they have a lot of old-world infrastructure, but they also have a lot of cars and automobile-oriented infrastructure too. They have congestion just like we do. And guess what. They have a season where it's kind of tough to ride bicycles. You know, imagine that. Several months out of the year. But they do it anyway, including the kids. At Bike Texas we're required every presentation to have at least one photo of a really cute child on a bicycle, so there it is.

During much of the year it's very nice, and bicycling in Montreal and other cities -- and I was in Sherbrooke when I was there -- is increasing nicely, people out and about. It's becoming part of the culture, especially among the 20- and 30-something-year-old as it is here.

And I'm going to go through. Jean-Francois had a number of slides here, and I'll kind of interpret them. I do want to say I have some slides -- we did it a year ago -- of kind of the bicycle tourism and economics in Texas, and I have about four of these, of some of the key slides that I can -- whoever wants to pick one up afterwards can.

But you can see that cycling is
increasing. The graph on the right is Montreal by hour of day, and you can see with the commutes that bicycling is gradually becoming more and more popular and used. And over here you can see that bicycling is about 2 percent in Montreal. That's roughly what it is in Austin. I'm not sure of the current stats. Houston, Dallas, those places have been I believe like 1.5, 1.6, maybe up to 2 percent right now. I'm a little bit behind on the statistics.

But you can see also this is by the boroughs in Montreal and in the center city it's up higher. It's like 8.6 is the highest. In Austin several years ago they did a study. The highest percentage of bicycle commuting in the central area was 10 percent, and then it becomes less as you go out. And I'm sure that's true in Houston and Dallas and all that. So you can see some of the same dynamics going on here.

Well, they had a dream. We had a dream. They had a dream, and we have a dream, too — actually it's similar to this — of creating a bicycle network across the province, set up a project that mobilizes the regions. I interpreted that to mean basically get partnerships going between the regions, boost the local and regional economy and build an international class...
facility, things that we want to do here in Texas, as a matter of fact.

And so Route Verte to the greenway was born, and here is kind of a starting map back in early '90s. You can see the solid lines. There's a little gnarly area there, right there where Montreal is, but other than that there is just a few segments and then they started drawing dotted lines on the map.

And they set up different agreements. They broke it up into time periods of -- you can see '96 to '05, '6 to '8, and '8 to '13, to go ahead and gradually implement this system. And there it is in '96, and then as we go to 2000 you can see more, 2005 starting to look like a real network there, 2013. There it is. I believe it's about 95 percent finished. They're still going to be filling in, and I assume that there will always be some expansion too. But by 2013 they cut the ribbon, declared it complete but to be improved on an ongoing basis.

And off road is about 40 percent, and it's mainly, as I understand, rail corridors. I'm not sure if they had like a -- they might have even had a lot of logging railroads and things like that. But rail corridors is mainly off road. And then 60 percent of it is on road, and you can see that some of it is on
highways and then some of it is on, you know, very
likely used country lanes, you know. So a combination.

And the system in between the cities
connects with the systems in the city. You can see
that this is Montreal and the green lines are Route
Verte, and, of course, within Montreal you know there's
plenty of cycle tracks and bike lanes and pathways and
all that. But the main idea is to connect the two.

And that's one point I'll make real quick. Even in Texas when we talk about intercity
bikeways, if you think of the interstate and you look
at the TxDOT data on interstates, I-10, for example, a
lot of the usage is closer to cities. And you get out
to West Texas and that's a key link across our nation,
but it's much lighter. So it's not like everybody's
using the entire length of the system. It's heavier in
places than others.

And the thing that we've always tried to
do in Texas when talking about this bikeway is it's for
the local -- as much for the locals, if not more,
really, than it is for the people who are going to come
and do 200 miles or so. So this serves everybody, not
just tourism.

MR. HIBBS: Mark, quick point of
clarification. On the -- you mentioned a certain
percentage is off road. Does that mean that it's just not on the roadway or does that mean you have to have a mountain bike?

MR. STINE: I'm sorry. Off road means not on the roadway.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: It's a paved facility?

MR. HIBBS: So you can ride that grid that you just showed with a road bike on street tires without a special bicycle?

MR. STINE: Right. Now, I'm not sure -- the parts I saw were paved, but I wouldn't be surprised if there was some kind of, you know, a hard-packed -- but, of course, you can still ride that with a hybrid or even a road bike. We see people with road bikes down here on our lake trail which is crushed granite. So thank you for bringing that up. So it's not -- I'm not really -- I'm sure they have plenty of mountain bike facilities, but I can't really report to you anything on the technical-type trails that mountain bikers like, but all of this should be passable by our normal riders on a normal bicycle.

And they have signage which is, of course, very important and not a small expense. They have international borders. They have -- with New York where the system meets with New York infrastructure,
and their other national border is with, if you know
Quebec, the rest of Canada. So this is over -- Ottawa
is on the border of Ontario with Quebec. And, of
course, in Texas we have international borders too. We
have Mexico and we have Oklahoma, and so we can learn
from them.

And this slide, this is really meant to
be in your packet. I don't mean to read through all
this verbiage, but I wanted to put something up here
which kind of -- a short story of how they got from the
very start to the very end. And if -- there's the
reference there. When Teri sends you the electronic
copy you'll have it, RouteVerte.com and slash the
history. And so what I did was I broke up the
paragraphs, and then the little lead-in is me
interpreting what that paragraph means.

So basically they went through a
visioning process which really started back in the late
'80s. That's something we're doing here right now.
And then in '92 they developed a plan and the plan --
the first plan was shooting towards year 2000. And
then they developed partnerships between the
governments and the municipal entities and business and
other groups, too, and Velo Quebec, which is a group
that's dedicated to the green route.
And then the next one is -- I put in there "partnership nurtured" because you can't just develop a partnership. You all know this. You have to just continue to nurture it. And there needs to be a champion and that is Velo Quebec. They, according to the verbiage that they have, oversee the development and coordinate the planning, regional cooperation, communication, and promotion. So, you know, we've got a number of -- Bike Texas certainly would serve as a champion as would many of the -- Bike Houston and Bike DFW and many of the other groups around the state. So I think we have all the elements.

So what have we learned, what have they learned and we've learned? They brought more people to cycling. And here is just a little statistic, about 760 bicycles per thousand. That's roughly the same as in Texas. I think we're a little bit higher than that. And good for health. We have some data here on health. It's -- 17 percent of the GDP in the U.S. roughly is for health care. In Canada it's about 11 percent. But that's still an awful lot. So people can reduce their health costs by a fraction over the whole population. That's a tremendous -- that's a tremendous benefit for the community.

And then safety in numbers. We all know
that the more bicyclists you have the more used to you
the cyclists -- excuse me -- motorists become and you
can see drops in your fatalities and injuries. Good
for local business. And you can imagine along some of
the rail corridors they -- you know, lots of stations,
lots of infrastructure still there that can be
attractive to tourists.

Return on investment. Oh, here is the
money slide. They have invested $250 million total.
The first part of the plan was about 88 million, and
according to this it's about 250 million, and I assume
that's Canadian dollars, which is about, what,
10 percent higher on the exchange rate than U.S.
dollars. And they're estimating $134 million per year
by users.

And we have got -- again, you know, in
here we have some studies that show same ballpark
numbers for areas of the U.S., Wisconsin and the outer
banks in North Carolina and all that, that show a
tremendous contribution by tourists who come to bicycle
because, among other things, they bring their own food
and eat it all and they're still famished, so they're
good folks to have around. They spend more. Here we
go. $102 a day, $83 in 2005. So that's up. Again, we
have some data from University of Wisconsin that they
did for the state legislature there in Wisconsin that are in the same ballpark.

Still challenges, still lots of people want to bike, lots of people in cars, lots of constraints and lots of problems to be worked out. But, you know, here is the future. Here's why we do all this. And so here is the website. Again, you will have this when Teri sends you the electronic copy, but it is velo.qc for Quebec, .ca for Canada. So there's plenty of information there.

And if you go to Bike Texas' website and look at the TTAT conferences, look at 2014. You can actually -- Jean-Francois had like 140 slides. You can download the whole set and take a look at it, too, but this is a very brief overview.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Mark. That was outstanding.

Anyone have any questions?

MS. WEAVER: I have a question.

How many miles total was it did you say?

MR. STINE: Oh, I'm sorry. I forgot to say. It's 3,000 miles, or 5,000 kilometers. So 40 percent is off road and 60 percent is on road.

MR. HIBBS: Well, listen, I appreciate you coming to Austin, sharing this with us. This is
incredibly important information as we're talking about
tourism and the future of cycling in Texas, and knowing
that those Canadians seem to have already got it
figured out, that's great. Thank you very much, Mark.

MR. STINE: Thank you, Billy.

MR. HIBBS: All right. So we'll move
right along and get wrapped up here fairly quickly,
although this particular part of the meeting is
extraordinarily important. It's a chance for everybody
to get to share with the others what's going on in your
region, any problems, concerns, or anything that you'd
like TxDOT to know about.

Shawn, we'll start with you down there at
your end of the table. Do you have anything you would
like to share?

MR. TWING: Nothing more than I said.

MR. HIBBS: All right. Russ?

MR. FRANK: I think you've already got my
full report, so I'm good.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. Bobby Gonzales told me
that there were two things going on that he wanted the
committee to know about. Number one, El Paso is
presently updating their bicycle plan, and it has not
been updated since 1997. So for those of you that are
in the bike plan component, you might take a look and
see when the last time you had your plan updated.

He said the second thing that they're doing is they are actually developing a commuting plan for their students. So they looked at the colleges and they looked at where the housing is around it, and so they're going to put resources into figuring out ways for those students to commute back and forth to school without having to have a car. And it's a pretty big plan and I know -- based on his engineering expertise I'm sure it will be fantastic.

I certainly don't have anything to afford beyond what we've discussed.

Karla?

MS. WEAVER: Two quick items. So we have up for draft review our long-range transportation plan, mobility 2040, for the region. So this is the first time we've talked about Complete Streets, and we have updated our transportation network for bike-ped. This is the first time we're adding on-street. This is the first time we're looking at community trails. So there has been lots of changes to the bike-ped world.

That will be up for draft until like the last week of February, and then it will go to our committee for action and our elected officials in March for action. So that is the framework for that, well,
until we do another plan in five years, but it's a
20-year planning horizon.

And then the second thing I will mention
is our Look Out Texans campaign is going to start their
spring cycle, and this is our safety tips for
motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists, so we're working
on our commercial development right now and adding that
to our billboards and transit and radio and all that
kind of fun stuff. So yeah.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Look Out Texas?

MS. WEAVER: Look Out Texas, Texans. I
think we bought the other name too.

MR. HIBBS: Allison?

MS. BLAZOSKY: All I want to say is I'm
looking forward to the Texas Trails and Active
Transportation Conference. So if you serve on this
board or if you have elected officials or staff members
in your district you represent, encourage them to come.

MR. PITCHFORD: Joseph Pitchford, Dallas.

Just to second what Teri said about the TAP funding for
the Northeast Texas Trail, real quickly, if you don't
know about the Northeast Texas Trail, I hope you will
soon. It's the longest rail to trail opportunity in
Texas, running 30 miles from Farmersville to New
Boston, goes through Paris and some other towns you
probably never heard of but you will, and it will be
the fifth longest in the United States when developed.
It needs more funding, more opportunities with TAP
funds and other funds to be complete, but amazing rural
bike tours and opportunities long-term for Texas.

Second thing, more Dallas-focused, a
group is formed in Dallas called the Circuit Trail
Conservancy. It's a private business. They do get
some private money, public money to complete the loop
around Dallas, which would be 50 miles when they are
complete.

Like you pointed out about Houston, there
is a lot already in place but it's disconnected. These
are some of the same people who put together Klyde
Warren Park, a hundred million dollar undertaking. So
we have a lot of faith. We need some help.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Joseph.

Do we have anyone on the phone that would
like to add to the conversation?

MS. ALLISON KAPLAN: Sure. This is
Allison Kaplan in Austin, and the only thing I wanted
to mention was at the -- our last meeting we -- I
brought up and y'all, I believe, knew that the NACTO,
National Association of City Transportation Officials,
national conference was happening in Austin the
following day and in the next few days, and that obviously has happened. And one of the main panels was on Vision Zero. Austin adopted a Vision Zero policy last year, which is the vision that all traffic deaths on the road are preventable, and our staff is now working on an action plan. The draft action plan was presented to our public safety commission I believe earlier this month, and we are continuing to refine that action plan. That's all.

MR. HIBBS: Very good. Thank you. All right. So we'll proceed now with the public comment. I don't see a lot of public here or a lot of comment. So since there's no one that is asking to be recognized, we'll talk about our meeting schedule.

Teri, what are your thoughts on that?

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Well, I solicited the members. I heard back from seven or eight on the various dates. I had solicited for April, for July, and October. And we're having some trouble with everybody being available, and so I'm going to look and say is anyone -- would anybody consider having a Monday meeting? I'd like to reevaluate -- no?

MR. HIBBS: It's okay with me.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: I'd just like to have everyone -- it was kind of a split. Half the people
were available on the 8th and half the people available on the 29th and not everybody at the same time, so I'd like to resolicit for some dates to include Monday or Friday.

MR. HIBBS: That's fine.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: And come back to you once I -- right now the tentative date would be April 8 for the next meeting, tentatively set if I can't find an appropriate conference room or can't get everyone scheduled, but I'll follow up with you all via e-mail. I can only ask that you please respond to my e-mail in a timely manner. I will put that e-mail out early next week, and if you would respond within ten days, that will give me an opportunity to schedule.

Some people have asked that we schedule the entire year -- it's only four meetings -- so that they can plan their vacations. They know some of their schedules. So I need your help to schedule these meetings.

MR. HIBBS: That is very helpful, Teri, if we can know with as much advance notice so that we can organize our lives.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: So I'll put a solicitation for these meetings, again, out on Monday and I'm going to -- and I'll ask that you -- I'll give
you a deadline to respond, and I'm going to have to go with the majority.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much. With that, I would just like to apologize to everyone for it going long today. I'm supposed to be the official timekeeper, and we're about 45 minutes over, but we have some extraordinarily important information we had to cover today. And I just want to personally thank all of you for what y'all are doing for cyclists for the state of Texas. You guys are really sewing the seeds for the future. As you saw in that Quebec plan, you know, these don't happen overnight. They happen over sometimes decades. So the things in the works that we're doing right now is going to pay a lot of dividends down the line.

So thank y'all very much, and we'll see you again soon. Safe travels.

MS. TERI KAPLAN: Billy, you need a motion to adjourn.

MR. HIBBS: Oh. Motion to adjourn, please.

MR. FRANK: So moved.

MR. TWING: Second.

MR. HIBBS: All in favor say aye.

("Aye" spoken in unison)
MR. HIBBS: Motion carried.

(Proceedings concluded at 12:41 p.m.)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Marsha Yarberry, Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing contains a true and correct transcription of the proceedings taken on January 29, 2016, all of which was reported by me.

I further certify that I am not related to nor employed by any of the parties to which this proceeding was taken, nor do I have a financial interest in the actions taken.

Certified to by me on this the 18th day of February, 2016.

[Signature]

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114:15 116:12
120:13
100 85:25 86:20
102 120:24
10:00 1:10 3:1
11 98:18 111:25
119:20
115 86:25
12 98:17
12/31/17 130:17
12:00 82:5
12:41 129:2
13 9:4 73:16 115:11
134 73:16 120:14
14 9:4 97:3 69:14
14,000 93:19
140 121:13
15 9:4 65:7 82:6
101:10
16 9:5
16,000 74:8
1600 130:19
17 8:24 10:3 119:19
18th 130:13
1992 84:3 91:6
1993 84:10 96:17
1997 122:24
2
2 51:11 114:5,8
20 87:18,20 110:3
113:16 124:2
20,000 107:19
200 1:11,11 56:20
63:4 46:4 116:22
200,000 9:1 10:4
51:24 56:10,13
58:16 63:3 64:6,8
2000 115:13 118:21
2003 111:16
2005 115:13 120:24
2007 85:6 103:19
107:22
2011 85:12
2013 85:19 86:14
94:4 104:19 111:18
115:14,17
2014 85:12 87:6
111:22 121:12
2015 20:17 39:8
2016 1:9 130:8,14
2026 93:24
2040 123:16
20s 93:14
22 79:18
25 56:20
250 43:9 79:1 92:24
120:9,11
26,000 93:20
27 4:20 49:20
29 1:9 85:23 130:8
290/610 76:17
29th 127:2
3
3 54:7 99:1
3,000 104:22 121:22
30 23:22 80:7 90:5
98:13 110:4 113:17
124:24
30,000 62:17
300 76:19 84:20
91:5 130:19
33 8:21 10:2
35 91:10
39 104:6
4
4 54:8
40 65:6 115:20
121:23
400 76:13,14
40s 77:22
45 23:22 128:6
5
5 8:7 98:25
5,000 8:22,25 10:1,3
10:3 59:1 68:24
121:22
50 9:7,22,23 10:4
56:10 58:16 63:3
98:12 125:10
50,000 52:20
500 68:23 91:7
92:23
50s 77:22
5100 130:17
55 4:12
56 80:10
571 130:18
6
6 74:20 98:25
115:11
60 115:24 121:23
65 86:16,21,24
96:24,25
7
7 38:9
7,000 62:18
76 85:24
760 119:16
76102 130:19
8
8 112:19 115:11,11
127:7
8.6 114:12
800,000 43:11
800-336-4000 130:20
9
9 111:25
90s 111:14 115:5
92 118:20
95 115:15
96 115:11,13
a
a&m 57:24
a.m. 1:10
ability 8:3 32:17
42:20 64:20 76:23
able 15:9 16:13
17:24 18:19 20:14
25:10 31:16 37:4
44:23 46:14 53:17
53:18,19 54:7,13
57:1 61:7 64:17
65:6,6 68:18 77:13
77:17 82:10 84:20
86:4 101:6,24
absolutely 10:8 19:7
36:19 44:5 54:11
61:11
accept 4:24
access 15:7 23:14,15
23:18 24:12 94:18
accessible 88:19
93:25
accidents 22:7,8,9
99:20
accommodate 15:20
30:13 84:6 86:5
accommodated 97:23
accommodations 30:2 31:17 33:3
68:20 72:5
| **accomplish** | 20:19 | 45:5 |
| **accomplished** | 20:14 |
| **accumulate** | 9:16 |
| **achieve** | 88:17 |
| **acknowledge** | 87:5 |
| **act** | 8:18 |
| **action** | 8:23 21:4,7 |
| **actions** | 21:5 130:12 |
| **active** | 83:24 111:21 |
| **activity** | 33:11 |
| **actual** | 70:17 |
| **add** | 26:20 33:1 35:5 |
| **additional** | 36:25 |
| **address** | 12:11,12 |
| **adjust** | 84:8 |
| **administration** | 70:24 89:18 |
| **admit** | 89:25 |
| **admittedly** | 8:1 |
| **adopt** | 29:7,17 |
| **adopted** | 44:16 56:18 |
| **adopting** | 28:22 |
| **advance** | 9:9 127:21 |
| **advantages** | 16:20 |
| **advise** | 60:8 |
| **advisory** | 1:8 3:3 |
| **advice** | 20:21 31:4 92:17 |
| **advocacy** | 59:21 |
| **advocate** | 59:18 |
| **advocates** | 60:24 |
| **afford** | 123:11 |
| **african** | 100:1 |
| **afterthought** | 29:20 |
| **agencies** | 25:13 |
| **agency** | 25:12 32:10 |
| **agenda** | 38:9 70:21 |
| **ago** | 23:16 47:18 |
| **agree** | 23:8 24:23 |
| **agreement** | 9:9 |
| **agreements** | 115:9 |
| **ahead** | 110:4 115:11 |
| **air** | 84:7,8 |
| **airline** | 77:21 |
| **airport** | 76:1 |
| **alert** | 15:12 |
| **alerts** | 27:6 |
| **ali** | 24:16 |
| **alignments** | 75:16 |
| **all's** | 6:24 |
| **allison** | 2:9,12 24:17 |
| **allocated** | 42:8 |
| **allow** | 86:18 87:8 |
| **allowed** | 18:13 |
| **allows** | 43:16 |
| **alternative** | 8:19 100:9 |
| **alternatives** | 27:3 100:6 |
| **amarillo** | 2:14 18:7,9 |
| **african** | 50:19 |
| **ambassador** | 60:9 |
| **ambassadors** | 60:18 |
| **amenable** | 56:5 |
| **american** | 70:7 100:1 |
| **amount** | 32:6,9 |
| **answer** | 85:20 |
| **answered** | 56:15 |
| **anticipate** | 9:4 |
| **anticipating** | 9:12 |
| **antonio** | 2:12 113:1 |
| **anxious** | 47:13 |
| **anybody** | 32:12 |
| **anita** | 2:21 81:24 |
| **apologize** | 110:16 |
| **approve** | 4:19 |
| **approved** | 8:21,24 |
| **architect** | 16:2 |
| **area** | 16:9 27:2,15 |
| **arm's** | 60:11 |
| **armadillos** | 112:22 |
| **arrangement** | 13:15 |
| **asked** | 21:3,11 40:16 |
| **asking** | 6:22 110:1 126:13 |
| **aspect** | 24:1 35:17 |
| **associate** | 44:3 |
| committee's 17:25 | company 74:12 | confident 90:17,19 |
| committees 40:25 | comparing 57:7 | confidentiality 102:12 |
| 108:15 | compelling 38:17 | confirm 35:1 38:14 |
| communicate 103:6 | compete 74:13 | congested 57:12 |
| communication 119:8 | competing 88:10,21 | 92:6,7 |
| communities 6:16 | complain 90:20 | congestion 84:6 |
| 9:25 10:2,3,6 16:22 | complete 24:21 25:6 | 113:5 |
| 19:6 22:5 23:11,19 | 31:10 34:7 40:4 | conjunction 78:19 |
| 43:17 44:19 45:3,10 | 125:4,9,11 | 95:23 103:2,11 |
| 51:3 20,21,23,24 | completes 45:25 | connected 50:15 |
| 62:15,19 65:25 | components 94:3 | connection 49:18 |
| 90:2 112:11 | conceived 41:9 | connections 44:22 |
| community 5:25 | concentrated 112:21 | connectivity 110:13 |
| 15:24 16:15,23 | concept 36:23 49:14 | connector 100:23 |
| 42:19 43:6,8,23 | 75:10 77:2 96:6 | 101:7 116:4 |
| 44:23 45:7,8,11,17 | concepts 51:1 | consensus 41:6 |
| 49:15 51:16 52:24 | conceptual 75:12 | 64:11 |
| 53:19,21 54:19,24 | 95:18 100:13 | conservancy 125:8 |
| 55:3,8,8,15,19 56:8 | concerned 60:14 | consider 7:20 33:12 |
| 62:14,21 63:2 65:1 | concerns 68:3 | 68:2 126:21 |
| 65:2 66:8 67:7 | 122:11 | considerable 42:11 |
| 68:17 69:20 70:8 | concluded 19:21 | consideration 97:22 |
| 78:9 81:3 88:20 | 129:2 | 101:17 |
| 100:6,10 119:24 | concludes 17:18 | considerations 99:4 |
| 123:20 | 19:22 | considered 22:20 |
| community's 59:8 | conditions 100:4 | 100:23 |
| commute 68:19 70:9 | conducted 20:21 | considering 33:6 |
| 97:12 105:17 123:7 | conduit 61:9 | considers 30:1 33:3 |
| commuter 103:22 | conference 83:24 | consist 91:7 |
| 103:22 104:1 105:2 | 111:22,25 112:7,8 | consistent 51:4 |
| commuters 68:23 | 112:11 124:16 | 66:19 |
| 81:2,5 | 125:25 127:9 | constantly 6:15,16 |
| commutes 114:2 | conferences 112:9 | constraints 121:5 |
| commuting 11:12 | 121:12 | construction 4:10 |
| 114:14 123:3 | | 9:10 31:2 48:24 |

Page 6

AcuScribe Court Reporters, Inc. - A Veritext Company
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>correspondence</th>
<th>63:6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>corridor</td>
<td>67:3 74:13</td>
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<td></td>
<td>100:11 101:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corridors</td>
<td>65:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76:11 87:7,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>115:21,24 120:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corroborating</td>
<td>18:6</td>
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<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>43:2 45:9 76:13</td>
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<td>77:5</td>
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<td>costs</td>
<td>119:22</td>
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<td>65:12 72:9</td>
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<td>73:9 75:2 77:1</td>
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<td>78:14 80:3</td>
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<td>count</td>
<td>70:11,17</td>
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<td>89:16 108:3</td>
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<td>counterpart</td>
<td>26:3</td>
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<td>counters</td>
<td>70:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78:18,19,22,23 79:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85:9 101:20,23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counties</td>
<td>73:16,17,23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>108:9</td>
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<td>28:6 32:5 116:2</td>
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<td>43:9 66:9 72:13</td>
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<td>75:18 76:5 105:10</td>
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<td>105:10 106:3,10</td>
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<td>54:5 55:18 78:6</td>
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<td>11:13 12:4</td>
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<td>117:23 118:4</td>
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<td>39:14 128:8</td>
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<td>41:18 55:12</td>
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<td>59:3 64:15 65:11</td>
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<td>92:3,14,15,22</td>
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<td>critical</td>
<td>22:1,4,18,19</td>
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<td>cross</td>
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<td>107:1,14</td>
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<td>crossings</td>
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<td>104:4</td>
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<td>111:15,18</td>
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<td>126:18 127:3</td>
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<td>91:21 92:17</td>
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<td>definitions</td>
<td>98:19,22</td>
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<td>98:23</td>
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<td>78:14</td>
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<td>69:22</td>
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<td>83:2 84:14,16 89:11</td>
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<td>departments</td>
<td>26:4,9</td>
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<td>104:11,16</td>
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<td>depending</td>
<td>65:7,9</td>
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<td>depends</td>
<td>38:16</td>
</tr>
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<td>deploying</td>
<td>78:21</td>
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<td>deserts</td>
<td>23:17</td>
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<td>design</td>
<td>12:8 28:23</td>
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<td>29:1,11,24 31:1</td>
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<td>34:6,10 57:17 80:18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>95:18 97:17,18,19</td>
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<td>98:10,12,19,20</td>
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<td>100:13</td>
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<td>designed</td>
<td>42:18 78:1</td>
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<td>7:3 29:2,5</td>
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<td>89:23</td>
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<td>desirable</td>
<td>66:18,20</td>
</tr>
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<td>desirables</td>
<td>66:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destination</td>
<td>22:13</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>102:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detailed</td>
<td>78:12 80:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determine</td>
<td>98:3,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detour</td>
<td>101:13 102:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develop</td>
<td>32:22 67:6</td>
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<td>84:11 94:19 119:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developed</td>
<td>43:16</td>
</tr>
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<td>64:10 84:10 109:20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>111:17 118:20,22</td>
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<td>125:2</td>
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<td>25:8</td>
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<td>development</td>
<td>16:21</td>
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<td>30:3 53:23 73:24</td>
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<td>74:12 87:12</td>
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<td>4:13,15</td>
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<td>25:8</td>
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<td>26:4,10,21 28:16</td>
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<td>34:6 35:16</td>
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<td>16:16 53:2</td>
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<td>59:16</td>
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<td>43:5,15</td>
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<td>65:15 75:18 91:23</td>
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<td>95:19</td>
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<td>34:10 116:16</td>
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<td>36:12,24</td>
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<td>76:9</td>
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<td>62:9</td>
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<td>67:11 73:22</td>
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<td>82:4</td>
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<td>eric's</td>
<td>53:16</td>
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<td>especially</td>
<td>24:18</td>
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<tr>
<td>35:7,16,17 73:4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>75:2 90:1 113:16</td>
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<td>essential</td>
<td>28:12</td>
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<td>28:4</td>
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<td>76:13</td>
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<td>26:2 93:20 100:1</td>
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<td>3:19</td>
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<td>64:18</td>
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<td>92:14</td>
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<td>85:11</td>
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<td>92:21</td>
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<td>6:3 93:21</td>
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<td>events</td>
<td>11:18 17:1</td>
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<td>81:3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>everybody</td>
<td>17:6 73:3</td>
</tr>
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<td>88:22 89:8,10 90:12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90:15 97:2,16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116:22 122:9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>126:20 127:2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>everybody's</td>
<td>35:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93:16 116:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>everyone's</td>
<td>109:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evidence</td>
<td>65:1 86:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evolution</td>
<td>6:16 42:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evolved</td>
<td>77:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evolving</td>
<td>47:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56:25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exactly</td>
<td>25:18 35:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40:12 46:18 53:6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54:10 63:4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example</td>
<td>36:13,14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37:2 51:2 56:9 57:6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59:11 69:19 116:12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examples</td>
<td>28:24 29:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77:5 79:3 83:21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excess</td>
<td>43:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exchange</td>
<td>120:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excited</td>
<td>7:9 16:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:13 37:23 59:17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77:17 78:7 87:14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96:2 100:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excitement</td>
<td>78:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exciting</td>
<td>85:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101:25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excuse</td>
<td>21:23 120:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exercise</td>
<td>75:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exhaustive</td>
<td>64:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existing</td>
<td>32:18,20,21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95:12 100:4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exit</td>
<td>3:21,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exiting</td>
<td>15:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expand</td>
<td>23:10 49:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expanding</td>
<td>34:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expansion</td>
<td>115:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expect</td>
<td>9:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expecting</td>
<td>3:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expense</td>
<td>117:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td>3:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36:3 44:4 46:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60:21,21 83:3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expertise</td>
<td>123:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expiration</td>
<td>130:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explain</td>
<td>61:8 92:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extended</td>
<td>15:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extending</td>
<td>3:18 34:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extension</td>
<td>49:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extension's</td>
<td>92:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extensive</td>
<td>91:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extent</td>
<td>75:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra</td>
<td>82:6,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraordinarily</td>
<td>122:9 128:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraordinary</td>
<td>61:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102:9 109:13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremely</td>
<td>22:1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26:25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eyes</td>
<td>94:24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| f | 59:11,13 61:24 |
| face | 15:3 89:1 |
| facilities | 28:23 29:8 |
| 29:12 32:19,20 |
| 39:25 72:17,20 |
| 74:16 76:10,14 |
| 77:16 80:19,22 87:9 |
| 88:18 91:10,19 |
| 94:19 95:22 96:4,12 |
| 103:3,9,11,16 104:9 |
| 105:19 106:3,7 |
| 108:19 117:18 |
| facility | 65:8 70:11 |
| 75:17 78:3 84:13 |
| 95:24 96:1,8 98:1 |
| 101:3 104:14,22 |
| 105:9 109:1 115:1 |
| 117:6 |
| fact | 40:8,13 74:10 |
| 74:14 111:2 112:23 |
| 115:2 |
| factor | 78:16 |
| factors | 69:12,17 |
| 81:10 |
| fail | 53:8 |
| fair | 111:1 |
| fairly | 122:7 |
| fairs | 81:3 |
| faith | 78:16 125:16 |
| fall | 90:16 |
| falls | 2:17 |
| familiar | 76:17 |
| famished | 120:22 |
| fantastic | 44:1 |
| 123:10 |
| faq | 11:16 |
| far | 11:22 47:3 69:14 |
| 78:24 80:9 86:23 |
| farmersville | 124:24 |
| fascinating | 71:19 |
| fashion | 34:25 46:14 |
| 49:17 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fatalities</th>
<th>120:3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fault</td>
<td>26:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>favor</td>
<td>5:5 128:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>favored</td>
<td>60:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fearless</td>
<td>90:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>features</td>
<td>33:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>february</td>
<td>7:1 20:13 123:23 130:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federal</td>
<td>39:4 20 75:19 84:6 89:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feed</td>
<td>12:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback</td>
<td>12:19 14:11,18 21:22 33:9 93:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feeder</td>
<td>43:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feels</td>
<td>90:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feet</td>
<td>98:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fellow</td>
<td>59:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>felt</td>
<td>91:3 100:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fence</td>
<td>105:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fencing</td>
<td>105:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fhwa</td>
<td>29:4 38:22 39:11 40:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifth</td>
<td>125:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>figure</td>
<td>27:19 52:4,24 72:4 88:1 95:20 96:10 106:8,14,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>figured</td>
<td>27:17 122:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>figuring</td>
<td>123:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>filled</td>
<td>12:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>filling</td>
<td>97:3 115:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final</td>
<td>37:12 80:13 102:22 111:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finally</td>
<td>75:8 86:19</td>
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<td>130:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding</td>
<td>73:23 85:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finish</td>
<td>45:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finished</td>
<td>104:19 109:15 115:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>34:22 41:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firm</td>
<td>130:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fiscal</td>
<td>9:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fit</td>
<td>15:23 21:41 18:52 7:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fits</td>
<td>33:14 50:12,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fix</td>
<td>29:21 31:12,15 31:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flagpole</td>
<td>60:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flashing</td>
<td>27:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
<td>91:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flea</td>
<td>77:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexibility</td>
<td>98:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexible</td>
<td>15:19</td>
</tr>
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<td>fliers</td>
<td>112:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floor</td>
<td>4:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flowchart</td>
<td>6:1 7:3 45:18 52:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td>76:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focus</td>
<td>9:18 11:8 21:1 56:7,9 58:3 65:5 72:20 93:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focused</td>
<td>27:9 41:12 57:18 77:15 80:22 125:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focusing</td>
<td>10:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>folks</td>
<td>4:10 33:5,7 56:2 64:17 106:22 111:19 120:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follow</td>
<td>20:22 29:10 49:7 127:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>followed</td>
<td>20:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>following</td>
<td>50:22 126:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food</td>
<td>23:17 59:20 120:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foot</td>
<td>98:17,18 99:1 99:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forbes</td>
<td>111:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>force</td>
<td>32:5 45:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foregoing</td>
<td>130:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgot</td>
<td>121:21</td>
</tr>
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<td>formed</td>
<td>125:7</td>
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<td>85:20</td>
</tr>
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<td>forms</td>
<td>93:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formulate</td>
<td>57:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fort</td>
<td>2:5 25:11 56:19 111:22 130:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forth</td>
<td>30:16 123:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fought</td>
<td>78:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>found</td>
<td>21:13,21 26:6 44:2,22 47:12 85:11 90:24 93:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundation</td>
<td>25:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fountains</td>
<td>3:25</td>
</tr>
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<td>fraction</td>
<td>119:22</td>
</tr>
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<td>framework</td>
<td>123:25</td>
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<td>franchise</td>
<td>69:20</td>
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<td>francis</td>
<td>111:20</td>
</tr>
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<td>francis</td>
<td>111:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funds</td>
<td>8:19 48:23,24 101:5 125:4,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Page 10**

AcuScribe Court Reporters, Inc. - A Veritext Company
(800) 497-0277
| greatest 53:7   | h 81:11 89:17 |
| greatly 111:8  | 101:19,22 102:24 |
| green 79:21 100:25 | 108:14 |
| greenway 115:3 | 126:25 127:1 |
| grew 91:24 | halfway 111:17 |
| 117:7 | 100:22 |
| grids 47:20 | hallway 3:18,20 4:5 |
| grocery 96:20 | 4:6 |
| groove 107:8 | hand 19:13 |
| ground 46:4 54:18 | handheld 3:7 4:14 |
| groundwork 53:5 | handled 97:22 |
| group 5:12 19:1 | handling 39:2,3 |
| 56:23 60:10 63:7 | handout 12:14 |
| 125:7 | hands 44:4 53:25 |
| groups 32:23 33:25 | hanging 42:22 |
| 65:2 88:14,15 | happen 34:17 46:11 |
| 118:24 119:11 | 61:18 100:8 128:12 |
| growing 32:4 | 128:12 |
| guess 9:12 18:16 | happened 126:2 |
| 24:20 27:16 38:13 | happening 7:14 |
| 62:2 64:1 69:15 | 72:12 125:25 |
| 85:22 86:14 87:7 | happens 102:21 |
| 109:1 113:5 | happy 76:25 80:21 |
| guidance 29:7 38:22 | 81:12,16 82:21 |
| 39:4,10,21 80:18 | hard 17:6 22:22 |
| guideline 97:20 | 25:10 57:2,3 78:11 |
| guidelines 28:23 | 78:15 107:16 |
| 29:2,12 31:11 59:24 | 117:12 |
| guy 14:2 67:15 | harris 105:10,10 |
| 90:10 93:13,15 | 106:3,10 |
| guys 5:8 11:3 12:19 | hat 66:23 |
| 12:21 13:21 14:11 | hate 89:6,6 |
| 14:14,17 15:5,6,9 | head 18:15 |
| 17:13 40:9,12 44:9 | headache 86:2 |
| 61:24 71:21 82:14 | health 88:12,21 |
| 83:18 85:3 87:20 | 119:18,18,20,22 |
| 89:18,20 95:19 | hear 44:18 73:4 80:3 |
| 109:19 111:7 | 90:20 | heard 13:3 34:19 |
| 128:10 | 35:1,6,15,20 37:24 |
| 125:7 126:14 32:20 | 51:5,14 52:3 70:21 |
| 128:24 129:1 | 71:23 125:1 126:17 |
| 125:17 126:10,23 | hearing 19:8 33:24 |
| 128:24 129:1 | heart 77:21 111:9 |
| high 76:2 79:6,25 | heavier 116:16 |
| higher 43:24 73:22 | helmets 12:3 36:5 |
| 114:12 119:17 | 90:3 |
| 120:13 | help 5:9 6:24 14:8 |
| highest 114:12,13 | 16:4,15,16 26:11 |
| highlight 11:19 | 27:15 40:14,16 42:2 |
| 21:20 | 44:8 46:8 47:4 |
| highlighted 21:25 | 51:19 54:10 55:16 |
| highlights 33:21 | 55:20 57:17 66:11 |
| highly 7:13 104:22 | 68:4 69:8 80:8 |
| highway 4:12 89:18 | 127:18 |
| 99:19 101:22 | helped 33:20 84:10 |
| highways 29:18 | 100:10 |
| 30:5 39:4 46:25 | helpful 7:10 54:9 |
| 47:5 101:8 116:1 | 59:5,6 70:22 127:20 |
| hill 2:13 | helps 54:6 |
| hills 74:5 | hey 33:7 54:8 61:24 |
| hippyish 93:15 | 82:2 100:5 |
| hiring 20:18 | hibbs 2:3 3:1,4 4:18 |
| historic 99:25 | 5:1,4,7 9:22,23,25 |
| 112:25 | 10:5,9,15 13:2,8,13 |
| historical 83:15 | 13:17 14:1 15:21 |
| 84:1 | 17:20 19:19,24 |
| historically 86:10 | 20:11 26:16 27:20 |
| history 42:2 61:14 | 27:24 29:9 32:24 |
| 84:21 118:14 | 33:16 37:12 38:2,17 |
| hit 87:17 | 38:21 41:24,24 |
| hold 48:17 | 45:22,25 46:3,8,18 |
| hollmann 2:21 | 47:10 50:11 51:7 |
| 82:14,19 96:25 | 52:22 54:11 59:4,4 |
| home 11:23 15:14 | 61:4,12 63:19 64:20 |
| honestly 88:11 | 65:10,16 68:13,14 |
| 124:22 | 82:12 102:8,16 |
| hopefully 4:20 11:5 | 109:12 116:24 |
| 109:19 | 117:7 121:16,24 |
| horizon 124:2 | 122:6,17,20 124:13 |
| hot 79:15 | 90:5 98:12,13 114:1 |
hours 79:9 104:7
house 96:21
housing 123:5
houston 2:4 46:22
71:16,21 72:7,9,14
72:15,16,17,25 73:8
73:10 74:4 76:17
77:8,21 78:18
81:24 82:1,18,20
83:7,12,16,18 84:2
84:11,12,17,22 85:1
85:1,16 86:11,13,17
86:22 87:3,21 88:3
88:11,14 89:2,17
90:2,15 91:19 93:25
94:2,6,6 95:10 96:4
97:9 98:17,21 99:6
99:21,24 100:14,16
100:20,21 101:12
102:1,2,5,6 103:12
105:2,24 106:3
107:23 108:14
109:3 110:2 111:25
112:25 114:7,16
119:10 125:12
houstons 71:15
72:17
hov 104:23
hub 43:19
huge 25:14 28:11
32:19 37:20 62:22
101:11 112:8
human 6:14
hump 55:20
hundred 43:8 74:11
78:24 125:15
hundreds 125:15
74:15
hybrid 117:13

idea 14:14 17:21
18:12 44:9 50:4,4
50:18 51:3 53:7
56:7 60:20 64:17
71:16 77:3 91:25
97:21 116:8
ideas 15:15 48:4
51:1 55:25 60:10
76:24
identified 75:16
identify 64:23 75:19
identifying 35:11
illegal 19:11
imagine 63:5 86:2
113:7 120:4
impact 25:15 32:6
32:11 62:22 76:21
79:11
impactful 54:13
impacts 47:2
implement 47:25
80:7 84:20 103:16
105:22 115:12
implementation 38:22 40:7 51:3
60:20 64:17
33:8 36:7 51:16
33:8 36:7 51:16
52:23 53:9,15 60:15
63:20 64:22 65:17
66:4 75:23 76:18
79:6 80:15 97:10
98:23 104:17
117:23 122:1,9
128:7
improve 28:9 30:12
76:19 94:17
improved 115:19
improvements 10:21
improving 74:2
inclement 4:1 22:15
include 43:9 49:9
127:3
included 29:24
including 99:18
113:8
incorporated 32:17
34:9
increase 70:3 94:18
94:18
increasing 113:14
114:1
incredibly 122:1
indicates 65:24
indication 99:10
individuals 26:22
93:4
infant 106:12
information 6:17
11:16 12:16,20
14:15,22 16:25
18:16 26:1 30:18
33:16 34:15,23
39:13 44:20 63:24
70:9,22 81:25 83:22
108:12 109:22,25
111:24 112:3
121:10 122:1 128:7
infrastructure 35:18 97:14,18,19
98:20 113:2,4
117:25 120:6
initiative 85:7,21
86:16 87:2 94:6,8
initiatives 25:4
38:23
injuries 120:3
inner 49:10
input 15:19,25 18:1
69:7
insecure 99:13
installed 106:10
instant 66:2
institute 78:20
integral 5:14
integrate 103:10
104:13
integrated 104:9
integrative 109:10
intellectual 60:2
intended 33:22
intensive 79:23
interact 25:24
interacting 25:21
interaction 52:25
interchange 76:18
76:22
intercity 28:10 49:9
49:10,17 116:10
interconnect 5:16
27:8
intercontinental 76:1
interest 41:1,19
42:12 45:3 47:15
48:21 50:1 56:5
57:19 58:7 62:3
65:24 73:22 130:12
interested 7:13
18:21 19:8 44:3
54:1 56:7 68:9 81:7
81:13 90:17,23,25
91:4
interesting 23:21
49:13 51:14 73:18
79:9 84:22 85:3
89:24 90:14 95:9
96:15 100:12
interface 99:19
interim 111:15
internal 20:20
104:10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>large</th>
<th>15:24 16:24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37:24 112:16,24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>largely</td>
<td>84:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>larger</td>
<td>69:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late</td>
<td>118:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>launched</td>
<td>85:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law</td>
<td>25:8 26:3,20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>opportunities</td>
<td>46:16</td>
</tr>
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<td>opportunity</td>
<td>21:2</td>
</tr>
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<td>56:12 57:6</td>
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<td>optimal</td>
<td>92:2</td>
</tr>
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<td>orange</td>
<td>21:20 42:16</td>
</tr>
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<td>79:22</td>
</tr>
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<td>order</td>
<td>53:5 75:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92:1 98:3,7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>organization</td>
<td>12:24</td>
</tr>
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<td>72:8,10</td>
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<td>organizations</td>
<td>36:14</td>
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<td>organize</td>
<td>127:22</td>
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<td>original</td>
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</tr>
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<td>originally</td>
<td>42:18</td>
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<td>46:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>118:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ought</td>
<td>32:4 58:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outcome</td>
<td>35:2 41:7</td>
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<td>52:3</td>
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<td>120:18</td>
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<td>75:12</td>
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<td>outlying</td>
<td>22:9 24:12</td>
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<tr>
<td>outside</td>
<td>45:1 50:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58:17 59:14,15 87:3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>outskirts</td>
<td>73:8</td>
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<tr>
<td>outstanding</td>
<td>33:9</td>
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<td>81:17 121:17</td>
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<td>42:24 43:18</td>
</tr>
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<td>119:6</td>
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<td>overview</td>
<td>83:15 84:2</td>
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<td>51:8</td>
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<td>page</td>
<td>11:19,21,23,24</td>
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<td>12:1,1 14:16,17,17</td>
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<td>15:1,8,9 18:12,15</td>
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<td>6:2 45:7 46:4</td>
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<td>126:2</td>
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<td>80:25 81:1</td>
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<td>104:20,21,23 105:9</td>
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<td>11:7 12:13,18</td>
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<td>percent</td>
<td>86:16,21,24</td>
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<tr>
<td>91:10 96:18,19,20</td>
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<td>96:22 97:3,6,7</td>
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<td>114:5,8,15 115:15</td>
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<td>115:20,24 119:19</td>
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<td>121:23,23</td>
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<td>percentage</td>
<td>69:21</td>
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<td>114:14 117:1</td>
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<td>perception</td>
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<td>60:12</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

AcuScribe Court Reporters, Inc. - A Veritext Company
(800) 497-0277
perfect 10:19 40:14
perfectly 50:6,12
performance 52:2
period 30:6 85:4
periods 115:10
permanent 78:17,22
permit 101:15
permits 101:14
person 107:13
personally 30:21
90:16 128:8
perspective 28:3
45:6 76:16 102:19
phase 29:24 51:11
phases 30:2
philosophy 74:25
phone 3:10 4:14
16:13 21:19 45:2
75:24 91:18 100:25
125:18
phones 26:19
phonetic 101:6
photo 113:10
pick 22:22 113:24
picked 60:25 61:1
100:9,10
pickup 19:15
picture 100:18
103:17
pictures 46:3
piece 16:3 31:15
34:15 66:16 104:8
pieces 51:25 77:2
pilot 7:17,22 40:21
40:22,24 41:2,6,16
41:22 46:20 49:16
50:6 51:1,4,19,22
52:3,8 55:4 56:5,8
57:23 58:11,12,19
60:5,17,20 66:13
67:19 70:1 71:7
87:24 95:16,17,21
106:18
pilots 46:15 63:11
piping 88:5
pitchford 2:11 3:9
31:25 32:1 37:18,20
37:25 58:8 67:18
124:19,19
pizza 44:24
place 4:2,3,8 8:23
10:17 16:25 24:25
43:2 49:22 52:4
56:18 57:10 75:7
79:20 108:22
125:13
places 11:1,13
18:10 64:18 68:11
74:7 75:20 79:8,21
79:23,25 114:7
116:17
plan 7:8 32:3 43:18
44:12,15 45:16
47:24,25 48:7 50:17
53:8 56:18 63:14,15
63:18,23 64:19 65:4
65:21,22 66:2,18,23
67:2,8,21,23 71:15
72:17 75:10 77:1
78:4 80:5,8,11,12
83:4,18 84:5,9,18
87:15,19 88:17,23
89:13 91:6 93:6
94:22 96:16 97:4,9
97:14 98:21 99:22
101:13 102:24,25
104:12 118:20,20
118:21 120:10
122:23,25 123:1,3,9
123:15 124:1 126:6
126:6,9 127:17
128:11
pointed 49:8 125:12
points 17:16 24:17
75:23 78:24 79:1
polar 112:22
police 26:4,9
policies 24:22 94:25
policy 25:6 75:2
76:25 78:14 80:3
126:3
policymakers 31:21
79:7
poor 77:23
pop 19:2
popular 85:23 114:3
population 42:17
43:9 58:11 62:7
64:6 68:6 86:5,5
87:21 98:8 112:20
119:22
populations 10:1
62:17
portion 8:13 35:9
101:6
position 82:22
positioned 78:17
positive 32:6 67:15
positively 32:11
possible 10:5 13:15
79:16
possibly 74:10
potential 21:4 32:11
63:8 76:21 81:2,5
totentially 7:20
62:16 95:12
poured 44:5
powerpoint 19:3
practical 109:1
practices 24:24 29:5
34:8
preaching 83:19
preceded 73:5
predicated 34:13
prefer 17:10
prepare 86:4
prepared 38:6
presence 57:17
present 78:13
presentation 5:12
6:25 17:22 20:1,12
38:21 40:25 71:15
73:6 81:18 82:15
83:25 86:19 92:10
102:9 109:13,18
110:17,18 113:9
presentations 72:24
109:21
presented 44:12
111:21 126:7
presently 122:23
presidents 111:20
pretty 24:7 27:9
30:5 57:8 85:22

Job No. 2216283

perfect - pretty

[perfect - pretty]
[soul - supportive]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>transportation</th>
<th>1:7</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2:6 8:12,19 14:6</td>
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<td>19:14</td>
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<td>77:11 86:10</td>
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<td>tremendous</td>
<td>44:7</td>
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<td>71:20 119:23,23</td>
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<td>13:19</td>
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<td>13:20,21 29:21</td>
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<td>41:8 45:5 49:1,16</td>
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<td>51:8,17 52:1 69:17</td>
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<td>81:4 109:15,18</td>
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<td>95:1 97:4,10 104:11</td>
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<td>42:5,13 69:13</td>
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<td>87:7</td>
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<td>127:17</td>
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<td>vacations</td>
<td>54:6,9,10</td>
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<td>validated</td>
<td>54:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>validating</td>
<td>64:2</td>
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<td>value</td>
<td>109:19 110:9</td>
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<tr>
<td>variance</td>
<td>99:2,3</td>
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<td>73:21</td>
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<td>4:14 89:7</td>
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<td>89:1,2,6,6</td>
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<td>118:24 119:5</td>
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<td>118:9</td>
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<td>veritext</td>
<td>130:18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[work's - zone]

| work's  | 9:6 |
| worked  | 33:4 77:8 79:18 105:10 121:5 |
| workshop| 20:19,22 111:2 |
| world   | 44:4 53:7 113:2 123:21 |
| worth   | 2:5 25:11 56:19 80:7,10 111:22 130:19 |
| wrap    | 37:16 |
| wrapped | 122:7 |
| wreck   | 107:14 |
| write   | 48:9 |
| written | 84:5 96:17 96:17 |
| wrong   | 85:18 |
| wrote   | 48:7 84:4 |
| www.bikestripe.c... | 13:10 |
| x       | |
| x       | 92:1 |
| y       | |
| y'all's | 13:18 |
| yarberry| 130:4,17 |
| yeah    | 19:17 24:8 26:13 38:20 48:3 |
| yellow  | 79:22 |
| yield   | 55:22 |
| york    | 117:24,25 |
| z       | |
| zero    | 64:3 126:3,3 |
| zone    | 75:6 |