TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)
FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2016
10:00 A.M.
125 EAST 11TH STREET, GREER BUILDING
AUSTIN, TEXAS
APPEARANCES

Billy Hibbs, Chair, Tyler
Russ Frank, Vice-Chair, Houston
Allison Blazosky, San Antonio
Robert Gonzales, El Paso
Ramiro Gonzalez, Brownsville
Allison Kaplan, Austin
Stephanie Lind, Vince Mantero, CH2M Hill
Joseph Pitchford, Dallas
David Steiner, Lufkin
Shawn Twing, Amarillo
Karla Weaver, Dallas/Fort Worth
Anne-Marie Williamson, Wichita Falls
Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division
Teri Kaplan, Statewide Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator
Josh Ribakove, Communications Manager, PTN
Beth Noble, Deputy Director, Bike Texas
Robin Stallings, Executive Director, Bike Texas
Mark Stine, Bike Texas
Genevieve Bales, Federal Highway Administration
Donny Hamilton, Federal Highway Administration
Jeff Austin, III, Commissioner, Texas Department of Transportation
Tim Ginn, Texas Department of Transportation
Megan Kenney, Texas Department of Transportation
MR. HIBBS: Welcome, everyone. I would like to call the meeting to order. It's 10 o'clock and so we'll go ahead and get started.

As you-all can tell, we have quite the upgrade in rent. It's just temporary. It's a wonderful chance to have a meeting here today next to where the commissioners sit in the room beside us. Thankfully, I had a chance to get to appear before them a couple of times, and when I do it's in there. And so we are very, very excited to have Commissioner Jeff Austin with us today, one of the five commissioners who is appointed by the governor of the state of Texas to help control the budget for the Texas Department of Transportation, which I think would be the 35th largest county in the world, based on -- yeah. So it's a big responsibility. And they've got a lot going on.

And let me tell you what. We are absolutely thrilled that we have a commissioner who has taken time out of his busy schedule and other department matters to join us today for what I think is going to be a very historic and important meeting. Not that all of them aren't important. But I think there are some things going on today that are really going to be exciting.

So with that, call to order. I'd like for
Josh to give us our safety briefing since we're in a new spot and we need to know where the exits are and what to do if the building catches on fire.

Josh.

MR. RIBAKOVE: Absolutely. Folks, welcome to the Greer Building. I know this is a different venue than we're usually at, so I'll give you all the information that you need.

Should we need to evacuate the building for any reason, fire, et cetera, we're going to go out the door straight back there, and then turn left and that will take us out to the main corridor. Right across from that door you'll see a little hall that goes to the ladies room, should you need it. If you need to evacuate, just turn right. You'll see the security desk where you came in. Just go right out the front door, takes you right out here onto the sidewalk. We go across the street onto the capitol lawn and meet up over there.

Should we need to shelter in place -- we're not expecting any inclement weather, but, you know, suppose a tornado shows up. Those two hallways that lead to the bathrooms are the best place for that. There are no windows there, and plenty of room.

In the event of an active shooter, and we
haven't had it, but just listen for instructions from
the security personnel or coming over the PA.

Anything else you want me to cover right
now?

MR. HIBBS: The cell phone policy in
Austin.

MR. RIBAKOVE: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Austin is a hands-free city. And our law enforcement
watches for that and they mean it. So don't be driving
around and be on your cell phone. It won't go well for
anybody.

And I have to say that last week I got
rear-ended in my car by somebody who did not look up, on
their cell phone. Traffic slowed on I-35; the guy
behind me did not. Same thing happened to my wife a
month ago. It's a bad coincidence, but it's good to not
be on the phone.

MR. GLEASON: I personally am not riding
with Josh.

(Laughter)

MR. RIBAKOVE: If you're riding with me,
you're kind of a sitting duck, apparently. We didn't
crash into anything, but people seem to want to crash
into us. So I advise not taking a ride with me.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Josh. We
appreciate that.

  MR. RIBAKOVE: Thanks.

  MR. HIBBS: Everyone has had a chance to have the minutes sent to them. Do we have any changes to the minutes?

  MS. WILLIAMSON: The spelling of my name is still A-n-n-e.

  MR. HIBBS: Okay. Teri, can we get that corrected for Ms. Williamson?

  Are there any other changes to the minutes?

  Then the chair will appreciate a motion to accept.

  MR. STEINER: Make a motion.

  MR. GONZALES: Second.

  MR. HIBBS: Motion made by Robert, seconded by -- I'm sorry. Motion made by David, seconded by Robert.

  All in favor say aye.

  ("Aye" spoken in unison)

  MR. HIBBS: All right. So at this point, we're going to change up the order just a little bit, and I'm going to ask Eric to go ahead and give us his report.

  And Eric the floor is yours.
MR. GLEASON: Thank you, Eric Gleason with the Public Transportation Division.

I am going to turn the first part of my report over to Commissioner Austin and allow him to make some comments at the beginning of our meeting -- I'm glad he's going to be with us the entire way through -- and encourage him to participate in our conversation all the way through as well. So thank you.

MR. AUSTIN: Thank you, Eric. And on behalf of the commission and the staff here, welcome to the Greer Building. I know many of you I have met before, some I have not, some I've known for long time.

Russ, we were out in Texas -- I appreciate what his efforts have been with Metro, working on a lot of other efforts as well. Some I've seen -- some of you have appeared before us before for different things. Sometimes we can comment; sometimes we can't. Sometimes there's good information; sometimes there's not. So there's a lot of things that, believe it or not, we're not here from the commission to work against. There's a lot things we're limited in what we can do, but we're here for you.

And let me -- I want to kind of back up just a little bit. I want to talk about, you know, the role of the advisory committee. And we've had several
advisory committees, working groups at TxDOT. Some have provided great results; some have been there on a short-term basis.

I want to note our Aviation Advisory Committee. We have five folks on there. These are not military or -- oh, what am I trying to say? -- commercial pilots. We provide grants to our Aviation Committee to a lot of the -- you know, Sugar Land or Temple, a lot of different airports to keep them open. And we also provide grants that we push through for local match. You know, we don't really put a lot of money into it, but they help coordinate.

Our facility out here, you know, one could argue that's one of our most profitable venues in there because we do maintenance on the other planes of the state, whether it's a UT system, A&M system, Parks & Wildlife, and, most notably, we do all the maintenance work, everything, for DPS. So there's a lot of things that they do that really help provide and coordinate great efforts.

Interstate 69. Working on I-69. One of my colleagues, who became a former colleague a couple weeks ago, Jeff Moseley, when he was Denton County Judge, he was a commissioner. That's his picture up there. Like I said, those are the has-beens. I'll be
there soon.

Commissioner Moseley helped start a group called I-35 -- My35, years ago, to start working on segments of Interstate 35 where you can make improvements. That committee has kind of come to the conclusion -- because a lot of it is done now by the district -- but there's a lot of work and effort -- and, by the way, for those of you in Austin, there's not enough money to put it on I-35.

But we did look at a report that if we were to fix from the Oklahoma border down to Laredo -- this is our working group on Thursday -- just the construction cost to add what we've already identified is about 27, 28 billion. That's construction costs only, not planning, no engineering, no right-of-way. You're getting to a pretty big number. To put that in perspective, thanks to y'all, the voters, who passed Prop 1 and Prop 7, that would almost be our entire allocation up to 2029, just for construction dollars on Prop 7. So there's -- just to put things in perspective with the funding category. We can come back and talk about funding in just a second.

Also, Interstate 20 working group and I-69. I know we're beginning to work on 45 here shortly, then we're going to work on Interstate 10.
Some of our major corridors where we need help.

We have a -- we were charged four years ago -- four and a half years ago by Speaker Strauss -- they formed a working group to ask TxDOT, "What is going to be" -- well, they were charged and we were a big part of that -- "What's going to be the impact on the state with the Panama Canal opening up?" That working group became -- you know, concluded and became, at the end of MAP-21, our national -- our Freight Advisory Committee chaired by Judge Emmett from Houston. That is looking at how we're moving freight. We have to find other means because we can't keep putting everything on the roadways. We're going to have to find other means of transportation and moving people.

Eric in his role with working with different, you know, transit authorities, you know, there's a place for this and we've got to find ways to move it. I know, Russ, as you know so well -- before I forget. I know there will be part of a presentation from Dallas. But there's a wonderful plan that they put together called City Map. I know one of my colleagues, Victor Vandergriff, has worked hard on this, and it includes all modes of transportation. And it's a great venue regardless of the size of the city or area, to really help prioritize and integrate. And I think
that's a key thing, is integration.

With these committees -- and I know we're going to have a presentation in a little while looking at, you know, what if we were to bike across Texas, or what would these corridors look like. The Interstate 20 working group was one that was about 20 -- 18 to 20 months. They were tasked from -- on Interstate 20 from Dallas to the Louisiana-Texas border over by Marshall. What do we need to do, first, for safety, and, number two, for wanting to help move commerce?

Now, you've got Dallas County Judge, Van Zandt, Kaufman, Wood, Smith, Harrison, Gregg. You've got different opinions and different needs. They came together and put together a 10-year plan to prioritize the segments. Not everybody is going to get everything right away. But they put together and did -- did some work that makes it easier for our staff and for -- as commissioners, when we're looking at things, we have that grassroots support. And you're going to hear me talk a lot about that. I'll come back, instead of hit and miss all around.

What they also did was came back and said, "We don't have to widen the road and make it six lanes all the way down. Maybe in three- or four-mile stretches we put some passing lanes, maybe we put some
access roads in, maybe we change a few other little
things that are small, work on some interchanges; these
all add up to make things safer."

And with that, think, as we go through
your presentations and you're looking at these things,
how do we prioritize, how do we break into small groups
and small segments. And the more consensus you guys can
reach, as the Advisory Committee, that makes it easier
for our staff, for Eric and Teri, to bring something
forward, whether it's a corridor, a plan, what have you.
So I'm really proud to see what Billy -- what y'all have
done in really bringing some things together.

I want to talk just briefly on funding. A
lot of our workshops in the last couple days -- or the
last few months, we're looking at -- this is kind of a
historic time. We're adding 38 billion dollars to the
UTP; that's the Unified Transportation Plan. There's
pros and cons about that. The majority of that are the
dollars that -- I think y'all voted for Prop 1 and
Prop 7 -- it's all restricted to highway construction.
So that's a negative. About 10 million of that over the
10 years is from the FAST Act. It doesn't have all the
restrictions, but most of it is for roadway.

For those of y'all that have been in
Washington, or talked or really studied the bills,
there's been a lot of restriction and people want to pull out transit, people want to pull out everything else and just have road construction because there is a need. There is a place for all modes. And I want to say we are a transportation department, not an old highway department. So that's where your advisory really comes in and plays a great role.

But the funding, what's interesting is we were looking at our budget. It's the LAR, Legislative Action Request; that's what we submit to the legislature. Our last one we had federal reimbursements, federal funds that came in for all sources that equated for about 42, 45 percent of our entire budget. Now, that's down to less than -- probably a little less than 35 percent. What that means is we're not depending on D.C. as much as we did before; we're finding Texas solutions. Now, there's different buckets that that goes in and there's a lot of buckets that we don't have enough for, and we recognize that.

We're also faced with another challenge; it's a good challenge. It's the FTE count. We were losing a lot of people that were going to work in the energy sector all across the state in different capacities. And so we had to budget up. You know, if we needed to have a level at 11,000 -- we were kind of
planning for 11,250 or 500. Because by the time you
hire somebody and somebody else is gone, the
attrition -- well, whoops. We got caught. People
weren't leaving as rapidly. And so we had to go the --
this is public -- we had to go to our bosses, the
Legislative Budget Board, and ask for approval for a
temporary increase. So we are constrained and we're
trying, but we're going to need your help. We've asked
everybody else, "How can we be more efficient in what we
do? What can we stop doing and do something else?" So
there are some constraints.

And I know with the things -- with the
last TAP grant that we've had going out, Teri, Eric are
really administering, trying to make sure all of these
projects get underway and on time. And I know one thing
we've put in here that you'll see -- hopefully start
seeing a change when we're giving out grants or doing
things, is to put a time frame on these. I'm going to
use an example.

I chair the Audit Committee, and I've
asked Trent Thomas and Andrea to give a state and
federal -- what's outstanding in the bill that we
haven't implemented. I think in the last session, two
or three -- we're kind of waiting on somebody else,
we're almost finished, but we have a long list of about
15 or 20 items that have not been done. The memorial highways. And there's -- it's infinite. So we're asking to kind of -- if you would, use the term "sunset" or with the grant, put an expiration on it so our staff can free up time to do other things.

But also with grants that -- if we're sitting around the table and this side has a grant and they've done it, this side hasn't completed theirs by a certain time frame, guess what? We've got other needs. We need to figure out a time and how to get that money used. So if you see us toughening up a little bit with the time frame, that's on purpose of whether -- regardless of the type of grant that it is. We need y'all's help to help execute. That's been a charge from Governor Abbott. Will help get the money to execute, execute, execute.

Because if we see -- one of our criticisms has been sometimes we have money sitting in an account. It's all dedicated, but it hasn't been fully expended, is to execute. And I know Eric does this with a lot of the transit.

But your committee, I'm really excited where you've come from. I know there's going -- y'all talked a lot about the jersey and you'll see that in a few minutes. But this is the 30th anniversary of "Don't
Mess With Texas." And I will say Brenda Flores' daughter, who manages this program -- I know she's in the building. I don't know if she's coming over -- really helped work with this. I think that is on a jersey. This is a brand that TxDOT owns. And it's not a fancy slogan that people think "Don't Mess With Texas." It started as a litter campaign. It's the 30th anniversary. I'm really excited to be a part of this. There's a lot of great things happening. And hopefully, it's a great way to carry on the brand, "Don't Mess With Texas."

I know you've got a lot to do. Thank y'all for letting me be here, and maybe y'all have some questions. I know when you get to the presentations, I have a couple of ideas to talk about what can be done with funding. There's more than one right answer.

I did have a great visit a couple of days ago with former Executive Director Andy Sansom, some of y'all probably know from Parks & Wildlife, and we had a good discussion about funding. Because I know with a lot of the projects that you're interested in, in Texas there's really two buckets that are available, Parks & Wildlife and TxDOT through the TAP grants. We've got to find some other ways to leverage and find other projects, and I have some ideas. I know with the talent
sitting around this table, some of y'all have done some
different things. But with the facility, to help figure
out how can we and what can we do, we'll save some of
those comments for a little bit later.

But, Billy, thank you for the leadership
that you've given and to all of y'all for serving to
help set a direction. And I think that's where -- a
blessing on an advisory committee. In the last year,
we've had the opportunity to really kind of cycle
through to all of our advisory committees to come back
and give a presentation, and we really appreciate that.
I know my colleagues and lot of the senior staff here
don't really know what everybody does and where you're
going. But thank y'all, and hope to keep this on a
regular cadence where the committee comes up and briefs
us because it is very important; that's why we have it.
So thank y'all for what you do.

("Thank you" in unison)

MR. HIBBS: Eric, the floor is still
yours.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. Well, I will roll
through some other more mundane-type details and turn it
back over for the rest of the meeting.

In the context of leadership and time, I
think it's hard to believe, but we have four positions
on this committee that have already served three years. Billy's term is coming up. Russ. And let's see. We've got Allison, who is actually sitting in for Julia, and --

MR. GONZALES: Robert Gonzales.

MR. GLEASON: How did I forget Robert Gonzales. And so we have been working with TxDOT and district folks, working with commissioners, working with some staff to fill those four positions. And we are moving forward with the recommendation to the commission in August. Both Billy and Robert have said they're interested in continuing on, and we certainly appreciate that. So our recommendation is going to be --

MR. AUSTIN: We'll consider one of them to continue.

MR. GLEASON: Second-guess the commissioners and their decisions.

(Laughter)

MR. GLEASON: Both Russ and Allison have a lot going on in their professional lives and have decided that they will not continue. And I want to recognize both of you for your work. It has been -- Russ, it's been great having the transit perspective at the table, and I'm going to miss that. We'll try and fill it over the next couple of cycles for sure.
Allison, I know you stepped in for Julia --

MS. KAPLAN: Correct.

MR. GLEASON: -- from San Antonio midway through. So you've actually not been here three years, but the term and the appointment does come up in August. And I know you have graciously stepped aside to allow some new blood to come in and allow you to pursue your professional responsibilities in San Antonio.

So thank you both for your service.

The two individuals that we have recommended the commission -- two new individuals to join the committee, one was a recommendation from former Commissioner Moseley and that would be George Mendez, and George is from The Woodlands area, I believe. And then the second individual is an individual that Senator Nichols has recommended very highly to us from the Nacogdoches area, Dr. DawnElla Rust, and her background is actually in health care, kinesiology. So very applicable and I think we'll --

MR. AUSTIN: That's Stephen F. Austin.

MR. GLEASON: Yes, Stephen F. Austin.

And, you know, we'll hear in a second from Anne-Marie.

So anyway, Russ and Allison, thank you.
And hopefully the next time we meet we will have two new faces at the table to continue the work of the committee.

I also want to recognize Stephanie Lind. You know, Stephanie, she works as a consultant and she's been helping us with doing work for the committee over the past 18 months or so. Stephanie in particular was instrumental in the strategic direction report that this committee put together and was subsequently presented to the commission. She has worked out our handlebar tag -- the bike safety handlebar tag that this committee produced as well. And most recently -- and we'll get into this in the next part of my report -- she has assembled just a tremendous amount of useful and creative information to be put on the department's Web page to promote bicycling and this committee's work.

And so, Stephanie, thank you for your efforts. Stephanie is going to Indiana. And we will miss you. We will miss you, but wish you the best of luck.

So anyway, on committee business, that's it there. In terms of progress on the strategic direction report there are three things that we are working with the committee on within the context of that report. And one is to establish an internal TxDOT bike
and ped work group made up of the various subject matters, experts from divisions around the department to help move forward with major initiatives, such as looking at design guidelines for biking/pedestrian facilities, Complete Streets policy for the department, things like that. I am scheduled to talk with administration on that coming up on August 9th, similarly with bike stripe and getting out a request for pilot project proposals for that.

Teri has assembled a package of items for me to go over with administration on the 9th as well. So I am hopeful that in the next 60 to 90 days you'll see some public process and progress on that.

And then, finally, as I mentioned on Web page design, we have assembled, with Stephanie's assistance, material to be put on the TxDOT Web site. We are in the pipeline with our creative services people to make that happen. They have a lot going on right now, and I am told we will begin making progress on that shortly. So I hope to have something to show the committee perhaps by the time we meet again next quarter on that.

So that's where we stand on some of the items coming out of the strategic direction report. What we have been as a staff and what Teri has been
spending 130 percent of her time on has been to make sure the Transportational Alternatives Program projects that the commission approved that are using fiscal year '13's federal funding -- we have a hard milestone to meet with the Federal Highway Administration, that by the end of September of this year, we have to have those projects -- we have to have those funds obligated. And what that translates down to is about six-and-a-half-million dollars of projects for rural areas in the state of Texas, those areas under 5,000, and a similar amount for areas between 5,000 and 200,000.

Now, if you recall, the commission approved, last fall, 50 projects associated with funding for those areas of the state. The funding stream covers four years; '13, '14, '15, and '16. We have a smaller subset of that group that we have identified as being furthest along and the highest likelihood of being able to obligate or get federal highway approval to move forward with FY13 funding, and we are totally focused and will be through September. I'm clearing all the final milestones we need to get that approval. If we do not get that approval, those funds lapse, which means that the department loses those funds.

So this is highly critical stuff. And I
know Karla's been engaged in that effort as well. And so we are like -- every time I walk by Teri and she's not working on that, I ask her what she's working on. And just to appreciate it, these projects -- at this point, everything that's being done on these projects is being done at the district. And so this is not something that Teri does. This is something that other people do in the department as part of their regular work. And so she's having to shepherd working with seven or eight different districts, shepherd the same number of projects through every step along the way.

And we have got it down to -- there are about six projects that are now coded in a pink color on my table, and they have to be beige by September 16th. So we are on top of it, but it's taking every spare moment of her time to get these important things going. Because I think if we can demonstrate success -- we've been able to move an idea to being a project for construction with this first group. We will demonstrate that these projects are going to be different than whatever the history might have been with respect to bike-ped projects in the old enhancements program. We are going to get these things built.

And we are going to be talking with Marc Williams sometime after the first of next year, a second
call for more projects with TAP funding. And if I lapse
some funds here in the next two months, that's going to
be a more difficult conversation than I want it to be.
So we're going to get that done, but I just want the
committee to know it's taking everything we have. And
we are in the hopper looking for additional assistance
and resources to do more of what you-all want to do. So
I ask for your patience, and we will get there.

Finally, I want to mention that there is a
really interesting research project going on that Teri
is involved in, which is looking at bike-ped monitoring
equipment, using monitoring equipment to establish a
collection database and methodologies for estimating
nonmotorized transportation. You know, we have to -- if
we're going to make the case over time for increased
investment, we're going to have to have numbers. We're
going to have to have something more than "It's a good
thing to do." And this research that Teri is involved
in is critical to that effort, and I think it dovetails
into one of the priorities on the strategic direction,
which was to do -- you know, to begin collecting data on
bicycle use.

So that concludes my report. Mr. Chair,
I'll turn the meeting back over to you.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Eric.
Great report.

I'm going to be necessarily brief because we've got a lot to cover today. Again, I want to share my thanks with Russ and Allison for the time that they've served on the committee. You picked a great day to come today because we are going to all get a jersey. And one of the things that Commissioner Austin helped us do is figure out a way for everyone to get a great bike jersey. I'm not going to pass them out right now. So come see me after it's over and we'll get those submitted.

MR. AUSTIN: Just show what it looks like.

MR. HIBBS: Yeah. Oh, yeah. You want to put yours back on?

MR. AUSTIN: No. So here's what it looks like. This is the back.

MR. HIBBS: Really fantastic.

MS. KAPLAN: Wait, wait. Hold it up.

He's going to get your picture.

MR. AUSTIN: There's the back and you see the Don't Mess With Texas brand on there, which is great. Anyway, I'm proud of this.

MR. HIBBS: You should be and the department should be --

(Applause)
MR. HIBBS: -- with the artwork on it and really making it something special. And, you know, at the end of the day, I know that it doesn't begin to cover the cost of your time, transportation and hotels and all that to give your service to this deal. But I wanted you to have something that was special.

MR. AUSTIN: And I can't wear that to the commission meetings.

(Laughter)

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. AUSTIN: But you never know.

MR. HIBBS: There was a little snafu in the order. Teri, you want to add a little color to that?

MS. KAPLAN: Well, basically, you could have had a club shirt or a racing jersey. And somehow they all came in as racing jerseys. But your names are on them. So you're going to get them today as racing jerseys. And those of you that ordered club jerseys, they're going to replace them; we're going to get a backup order. So at our next meeting, you'll get a club jersey. So you get two for one.

MR. GLEASON: So we'll have two jerseys.

MS. KAPLAN: So those of you -- some of you said, "Well, I guess I need to lose some weight."
That may be an inspiration.

MR. HIBBS: Actually, these look pretty good framed on the wall. Just saying.

(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: So also just to kind of conclude my part of the deal, I want to take a moment and thank the Bike Texas folks for accepting the challenge from the last meeting. There was a tremendous amount of work that has taken place since we met a quarter ago. And I kind of tasked them with the responsibility of pulling all of these, you know, various wings and segments that people talk about, and in some cases have been proved with a cogent plan that we could consider today for the first time. And a lot of phone calls, a lot of e-mails, a lot of things going on there.

But thanks to Rob and his group. I did want to let the committee know that, you know, stuff like this just doesn't happen behind the scenes. There's a lot of work that goes on behind that. So thanks.

All right. So next up we have Karla, who is going to present from the North Central Texas Council of Governments on Regional Active Transportation Planning in North Texas. And I asked Karla to do this.
You know, Russ gave us a tremendous presentation, or his group, about what was going on in Houston. Karla is going to show us what is going on up in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

So, Karla, the floor is yours.

MS. WEAVER: All right. Well, thanks for having me present this. In my regular 9:00 to 5:00, I am the program manager for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which is the MPO for the Dallas/Fort Worth region, and I manage our sustainable development program, which has a couple of hats of land use, economic development, transit development, but bike-ped is one of our more popular programs. So I'm going to highlight for you today a couple of things that we've got going on, a couple of different programs, a couple of different projects. And let me just start out by saying all of this can be borrowed; it's all available. If any of it strikes your fancy and you want to know more, you want copies or examples to use in your region, we're happy to do that.

So here we are, one of the MPOs here in the state. You know, metropolitan planning organizations are for areas greater than 50,000. There are 25 of them in Texas. We have 16 counties; 12 are in our planning area. It's pretty large; almost 9,500
square miles. When we go to other parts of the country, we have to mention that we're bigger than several of our states. You know, everyone from Texas is like, "Yeah."
So that's always fun.

And then we have three TxDOT districts. So we've got the Dallas district, we've got the Fort Worth district and we've got the Paris district, our -- Hunt County there in the northeast.

We have 209 cities. So we have 13 cities larger than 100,000. And then I have cities of 3,000. So I actually was in a planning study this week in a community with city council and they had 2,800 in their community. So it's very diverse what we're dealing with. And we're currently around a little over seven million people. And we estimate that our growth patterns by 2040 will be over 10 million people.

So we're all about designing lots of mode choice options. So if you want to drive, you want to take transit, you want to bike, you want to walk, all of those options should be available and all of them should be safe. One of the ways that we looked at doing this is our Regional Veloweb. So this is 1,200 miles of connected trails. We call this our superhighway, if you will. It connects our cities, our counties to large destinations. 442 miles of it is already built. You
could ride it. 146 has funding on it, so it's in the design or the construction phases. And then we have, actually, another 1,200 planned for a total of 1,800 miles.

These are what we call community shared-use paths. So these are very important to our local governments. A lot of them make internal trips possible. Maybe there's not a lot of connection to their neighbors, but these get folks from where they live to where they want to go and shop and do live. So those are an important system as well. We have 333 miles of that built, another 42 funded, 1,900 planned for a total 2,300 miles. And then on top of that, we've got our on-street bike network.

So five years ago, I had two cities with an on-street bike plan. Now I have 34 cities. So this has grown exponentially in the last five years. And we're trying to figure out how that works with our roadway systems, how this links with our trails and where people want to go. Because you can't build a trail everywhere, but you can't on-bike everywhere you want to go either.

So we've got 448 miles that are dedicated facilities today, 71 that are coming that are funded, 2,200 planned for a total of 2,700. So if you look at
it all -- oh, one more thing I want to mention is rural
counties. So we have some very rural counties in DFW
with less than 10,000 people, so bike facilities look
very different there. So we looked at our sort of rural
sections and what sort of -- wide shoulders, paved
shoulders, where popular routes are and how those fit
into the overall network as well. Because Complete
Streets, urban, suburban, rural, those cross-sections
should look different. So all together, the spaghetti
bowl, looks at 1,400 miles of existing or funded plans,
5,500 still planned. So 5,500 is a lot of funding that
we need to build all of these. And then for a total of
over 7,000 miles, if the entire system was complete.

I want to highlight a couple of our
regional trails that are kind of special and connect a
lot of our communities, and a lot of effort has gone
into these. The first one I'll mention is the Orange
Line, along our Cotton Belt Corridor, which is where
we're focused on implementing a regional trail. So the
Cotton Belt Corridor is 44 miles long, 11 of it exists,
34 still to come.

The Dallas to McKinney Corridor is that
yellow one. So it will be 82 miles long when it's
completed, 56 miles of it exist today, 11 has been
funded and 15 miles are all we have left to build, and
then an 82-mile continuous corridor.

Denton to Dallas is the green line. It's a 54-mile trail with 28 miles existing, 13 funded, and we need 13 more miles to have that guy completed. And then I'm going to talk about the guy in blue here on the bottom in just a minute. He sort of kicked us off, this city-to-city connection problem.

So Fort Worth to Dallas we brought together the mayor of our five largest cities. Fort Worth, Dallas, Arlington, Grand Prairie and Irving are all connected, if you're familiar with our region. So this is a pretty long trail, it's over 64 miles, and we only have about 10 miles left to build -- or to fund. So once that's complete, it will link all of those key communities. It has access to transit. It's going by some of our ballpark areas. It's going to be a pretty key destination for the region.

Another thing I'll mention is Complete Streets. So we just adopted our long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2040, this year. Complete Streets concepts were introduced for the first time. It's talking about all modes, all users kind of all sharing their space within our roadways within our communities.

We just recently hosted a training and had
the Federal Highway Administration come down from D.C. to talk about some of their guidebooks and sort of best practices for communities, and it was very well attended by our TxDOT districts and by a lot of our cities within the region.

MR. AUSTIN: May I ask you a question?

MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

MR. AUSTIN: "Complete Streets," is that a trademark name, is that a concept or is that a program?

MS. WEAVER: It's a concept, sort of talking about the Complete Streets for all modes. Context-sensitive design is a similar concept, depending on sort of -- context-sensitive design is the ITE term you'll see from the engineers, and Complete Streets tends to be the planners.

MR. GLEASON: If I may, Karla.

MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

MR. GLEASON: What you will find at TxDOT, we do not have, at this point, something that stands up by itself as a Complete Streets policy. In places around the department, we have policies and practices, that if you were to pull them together they would begin to look something like that. And one of our tasks from the strategic direction report is to engage in a discussion at the department and what that would look
like, and what more might we need to do.

MR. AUSTIN: And most of that would probably be within the MPO, but there's probably a lot of other cities that should -- adopted that are not inside the MPO.

MS. WEAVER: Exactly.

MR. GLEASON: And there are other state DOTs that have a stand-alone Complete Streets policy. If you go on to their Web site, you can click on it.

MR. AUSTIN: Very similar to bike stripe?

MR. GLEASON: Yeah. But I think if you could imagine, you know, some of our main streets in rural Texas are state highways. And so it could --

MS. WEAVER: It looks very different.

MR. GLEASON: -- you know, it could look very different with --

MS. WEAVER: But can still be complete.

MR. GLEASON: -- a comprehensive look at it.

MR. FRANK: In the city of Houston there's a Complete Streets policy, so Public Works in the city has a policy --

MR. GLEASON: Right.

MR. FRANK: -- to look at all the future planning in Houston of how you do this for these
MR. AUSTIN: Who else has one, Dallas?

MS. WEAVER: Fort Worth just adopted one and Dallas just did.

(Brownsville, Austin, City of San Antonio spoken simultaneously)

MR. STALLINGS: Houston.

MS. WEAVER: So our two big cities in the last two years both adopted these policies and those were the two big cities that had on-street bike plans five years ago. So then we had 35 cities adopt on-street bike plans and we're hoping to see the same wave.

We have a workshop planned in August prior to our technical committee of our elected officials. We're bringing in Fort Worth and Dallas to talk about their programs and to share that with our other cities. Because if you can see your neighbor doing it, you get much more comfortable with "This could really work in my community."

Another program that I'll mention is called Routes to Rails. So we have 74 light-rail stations within our metroplex. We have our TRE, which is this yellow line that connects Fort Worth to Dallas, if you wanted to do commuter rail. And then DART,
Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and our Denton County Transportation Authority, DCTA. You can go all the way from downtown Dallas to Denton, and the airport; now connects all these systems.

So we wanted to look and see -- we talk about a good walkshed for pedestrians is a half mile, but it's never how the crow flies. So what are we missing as far as sidewalk connections of where people really want to go when they get to their destination? So we've mapped that for all of the transit stations within our region, and we're looking to prioritize funding for new sidewalks and bike infrastructure to make those connections. And here's a little example of, you know, a half a mile of actual distance. We've identified where are the gaps. And then a lot of times we're missing sidewalks or crosswalks or infrastructure. And then we've got where people actually live or the shops they want to go to. So that's really helped us prioritize.

MR. PITCHFORD: Karla?

MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

MR. PITCHFORD: Can you go back to that one for one second?

MS. WEAVER: I sure will.

MR. PITCHFORD: Because I'd like to make a
point here that the analysis that the North Central Texas Council of Governments did to produce this study of the connectivity between rail stations and bike and pedestrian connections helped -- and I can now say this publicly -- helped lead the location of the new world headquarters for American Airlines adjacent to this network. Because they were excited about the R and D that North Central Texas Council of Governments had done as they were looking at sites to land their new corporate headquarters, 6,000 people, north of half a billion dollars of total investment. This study helped them guide that decision. So, really, this is not just about recreation. That was true connectivity to a 6,000-person employment center.

MS. WEAVER: Thank you for that.

MR. PITCHFORD: Great study.

MS. WEAVER: One thing that's really been a focus for us is pedestrian safety. So most of you guys know that Texas is one of the focus states for the Federal Highway Administration for pedestrian safety. We have two of the five cities in the state; Dallas and Fort Worth have the highest pedestrian fatality rates within our state, along with Houston, Austin and San Antonio. So we've been doing a lot of designing for pedestrian safety and going out in the field with
engineers within our district trying to -- we had a class where we brought wheelchairs, we brought visual blockers, and people who were designing the streets had to go use their streets and see if it really worked for all modes. So that's been quite an interesting aha moment for a lot of engineers within our region. So focusing on this and, really, how we affect the education, the engineering, the enforcement of where we're having problems within our region.

We've been doing sort of data analysis of the heat maps. We've used TxDOT's CRIS data, and we're able to overlay sort of where are our hot spots for crashes and fatalities. Then we're able to pull the actual record reports to see what the causations were, time of day, age, what was really going on in that situation, so we can try to back in some engineering solutions if we see patterns throughout the region.

We've also, through a grant provided by the Texas Department of Transportation -- we've developed a regional safety and education campaign called "Look Out Texans," so it's Bike, drive and walk safely. We've got lots of messaging on buses, billboards, radio, print material. We're going out to back-to-school events, where you get 30,000 folks coming through, talking about sort of -- we've developed 21
safety tips; seven for bicyclists, seven for pedestrians
and seven for motorists about just everyone is your
neighbor. So you might not be a cyclist, but maybe your
dentist is or your child's teacher or your next-door
neighbor. And if we all look out for each other, then
we can familiarize and put a friendly face to people
that we see out on the road.

  TxDOT has been very gracious and let us
kind of re-brand their Drive Kind Ride Kind, some of
those videos. And then we've also produced our own
video recently with sort of area policemen and firemen
and doctors and veterinarians and librarians, and all of
them doing safe actions on the road.

  Workshops and training are very important
for us. You know, it's one of the top things we hear
from our communities, is there is so much changing in
this field and we don't know enough about it. So we're
bringing in things about designing for pedestrian
safety. AASHTO Bike Guide, we've had workshops on that,
NACTO Urban Bikeway, Complete Streets.

  The Federal Highway Administration at the
end of September -- everyone is invited -- will be there
for four days. Each day is the same training on the new
separated bike lanes and protected guide that just came
out in D.C. So we're going to have examples; two days
in Fort Worth, two days in Dallas. And we're going to take the class out to look at protected bike lanes that have been implemented. Because again, it's new engineering and people need to see it in action and see how it's working. And then roundabouts as well, which always causes people some raised eyebrows and question marks.

And then, again, bringing all folks together. So we think it's really important. We always hold registration for our TxDOT staff. So we want our districts to be the first people at the table for all of our training. And then we go after, you know, engineers of cities that we know have upcoming projects within the next five years. So we're really trying to be proactive, and we call people. We're like, "You haven't signed up. Why haven't you signed up?" So we'll chase you down if we think you should be at these trainings. And then being out in the field has also been really valuable as part of what we're trying to do.

I'll mention really quick our count program. So if you see a blue star, this is where we have purchased a permanent bike counter and we are starting to track data. Someone once said, "If you're not counted, you don't count." So we are trying to count what the volume is of bike-ped data in our region.
We've been counting cars for decades, but we don't know the input of all the investment we spent on trails. So the red ones are other agency owned. Some yellow ones we're not considering in our program because they're more recreational-based trails, which is not really our focus as a transportation agency. And then we have one on-street counter that we purchased from the City of Fort Worth.

So this is sort of a snapshot of the region we counted for 2015. We just came out with our annual report, which is on our Web site. We counted 4.2 million people, and that was -- half of the counters were not online for the bulk of the year. So I'm really excited to see what 2016 will show us. It was a lot more than we expected. You know, we didn't know what would be happening. We didn't know where they were going to be coming from.

Some trails are pedestrian focused. The yellow are the pedestrians; the blue are the cyclists. Our counters break up the difference between the two. Depending on where you're at in the region, whether you're in Dallas or Fort Worth or Plano. And the land-use context is very important. I'll mention here the highest-used trail in Fort Worth is next to the food park. So people like to be around trails where
there is food and drinks, and grab a cold beverage. So
we're going to be studying a lot more the impact of land
use to trails and their ridership. Because if it's in
the middle of nowhere, it doesn't seem to be maybe as
popular as places where people can get off and interact
with their surroundings. Still has its uses, but if
you're talking raw volumes you want to be in the heart
of communities.

So that's it. It was a broad overview.

We're doing lots of different things. I have a great
team, all listed here, of folks working on these
efforts. Sometimes it's herding cats, but we just keep
moving forward. And hopefully, we're making some impact
within our region.

Any questions from anybody?

MR. AUSTIN: Can I ask you a question?

MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

MR. AUSTIN: Ms. weaver, would you mind
going back to slide 8?

MS. WEAVER: I sure will.

MR. AUSTIN: I want to ask for a
clarification on something.

MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir.

MR. AUSTIN: That Regional Veloweb, are
these dedicated bike trails?
MS. WEAVER: Yes, sir, Veloweb is all trails.

MR. AUSTIN: All right. So going to the next one, Community Shared Path, that's the bikes and pedestrians?

MS. WEAVER: Correct. Also trails.

MR. AUSTIN: And then On-Street Bike Network, that's where you have lane or shared road within the --

MS. WEAVER: Correct.

MR. AUSTIN: -- what have you?

MS. WEAVER: Exactly.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay. If I may inject something.

MS. WEAVER: Of course.

MR. AUSTIN: I'm sure, Billy, some of y'all may have heard me say this before. On our Web page, public data, we have something that's called Pocket Facts. You can Google it to find it on our Web page. We have some really interesting data here. Did you know that we have 278 airports? We can go on through. We have a ton of bridges. We have lane miles. We have our budget. We talk about the ports. I can go on and on. But there's one thing that's missing; number of bike lanes. Because we don't know.
MS. WEAVER: Yeah.
MR. AUSTIN: And I'm not going to say it's anybody's fault, but this is where you've actually quantified the types of trails. And what may not be on there are off-road dirt bike trails.
MS. WEAVER: Yeah. We don't track those.
MR. AUSTIN: Or ATV. Somehow somewhere I would like, you know, for the committee to come out and reach out to the resources to begin to coordinate somehow what do we know we have. We don't know. And there's nobody better to do this than in here. And this is something where if you have a link or you're going somewhere to gather that, accumulate it, but sort it out. And I'm going to a place I don't know, but I can see it. You have to categorize it. And I like your categorization; that's why I'm asking that you also have dirt bike trails, to begin to categorize it.
If it's within the MPOs, those are going to be the easy places to go to start. Maybe there's the Parks & Wildlife system, start talking -- all the other -- what do we know that exists. Because somewhere -- it's not reported on here. And I've asked why. Because we don't know.
MS. WEAVER: Yeah. This is full-time --
MR. AUSTIN: Is that a fair statement?
MR. HIBBS: Fair enough.

MS. WEAVER: It's a lot of effort.

MR. AUSTIN: We have an idea, but --

MS. WEAVER: Yeah.

MR. HIBBS: Eric, I think that we included this data collection in the strategic plan.

MR. GLEASON: Yes, sir. And I think one of the key things is just defining before you start what you're going --

MR. AUSTIN: What you're going to do.

MR. GLEASON: -- what you're going to measure and what it's going to be called. Because there's such a -- I mean, for example, just because there's a six-foot shoulder somewhere, it may not -- it probably doesn't make your map.

MS. WEAVER: Probably not. We have clear criteria.

MR. GLEASON: But that was probably a conversation that you had that said, "This is what we are going to include, and this is what we are not."

MR. AUSTIN: And that's where this committee can really be -- you're the users. To find it and then begin to collect it.

MR. GLEASON: It has just a sign --

MR. AUSTIN: Right.
MR. GLEASON: Is there a Share the Road sign? Probably doesn't. But you see a lot of that happening. So we have to come up with a topology that we can use to then go forward.

MS. WEAVER: We use AASHTO as our standard, and we have 65 cities with trail maps in the region. So we take all their plans and we digitize them. And then we send them back and say, "Did we get it right?" And then we bring all the cities in. We bring -- the communities are invited, public input. And we have people go over the maps and just mark them up. Did we get it right, what do we want to see that's not there now.

And some cities don't have plans. And there will be huge gaps in the middle of our region. Irving, over 200,000 people, doesn't have a bike plan. So you just never know. It's a little hit or miss. But we spend a lot of time trying to clean this up and keep this up to date.

MR. AUSTIN: Well, I think that's amazing to come back out to look and say here's what you know that you've identified in the different ways. And if you compound that across the state, it's going to open -- anyway, this is opening my eyes. It's going to open up a lot of eyes. And again, use what we have to
start as a starting point.

MR. HIBBS: Well, the data collection part of it I'm almost certain is in the strategic plan as a very important component of what we're doing. Because we understand that counting people and counting pedestrians and bikes and all those things in this infrastructure help drive so much of what's going on.

But I'll go back and, Eric, you and me post this meeting, let's pull that language out and let's send it to Commissioner Austin and make sure that he's comfortable with what we're planning to do and if it marries up with what his ideas are here. Because I totally understand, you know, the need for that.

MR. GLEASON: Karla, I apologize if I missed it. Are there some overarching objectives for themes that guide this vision?

MS. WEAVER: Yes. So they're all listed within our Mobility 2040 long-range transportation plan. So we have goals and policies tied to safety, tied to making regional connections, overcoming gaps and barriers. We do that really well, whether it's road or it's freight or it's river. Because the cities have captured a lot of the low-hanging fruits. At a regional level, we're trying to connect large to large employers. We're trying to connect to major destinations. That
becomes the focus of our map and how you make it on the Veloweb.

MR. GLEASON: I think if you could -- and I'm not thinking it's all the objectives in the plan.

MS. WEAVER: Sure.

MR. GLEASON: But if there is a subset that are particularly -- that this effort particularly draws on --

MS. WEAVER: Yeah.

MR. GLEASON: -- or links back to, I think I would be interested in seeing those.

MS. WEAVER: Sure. Be happy to send that.

MR. HIBBS: Karla, thank you very much.

MS. WEAVER: You're welcome.

MR. HIBBS: As you all know, I've tried to strategically pick out different people in the committee to have expertise in areas like this, to give everybody a chance to learn about this. And I learn more than anybody because this is not my day job. And, you know, I'll look at every slide like, you know, a new kid with a toy. So it's really, really helpful to me.

Bobby, I don't want to put you on the spot here. But for the next meeting, because of all of the work that you have done in El Paso and the kinds of things that you guys have been able to do to marry up a
college with a transportation system for a city that's,
you know, exploding and has, in some cases, very
different kinds of needs than the rest of other parts of
the state, can I maybe get you to do a brief
presentation at the next committee meeting?

MR. GONZALES: Absolutely.

MR. HIBBS: Sounds like you got
reappointed. So that's good news.

MR. GONZALES: I guess I'm coming back.
(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: Well, I don't want to get
ahead of myself.

MR. GLEASON: It depends on what he says
for the rest of the meeting.

MR. HIBBS: Yeah.

MR. GONZALES: I'll be back.

MR. HIBBS: But you have a really unique
kind of perspective in terms of what's going on in your
part of the state, too. And so because you've been -- I
mean, you're really the father of a whole lot of what's
taking place in El Paso. So it would be great.

MR. GONZALES: I would love to.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. That would be
wonderful. All right.

So thank you, again, Karla.
MS. WEAVER: You're welcome.

MR. HIBBS: I appreciate it. That was enormously helpful. All right.

MR. HAMILTON: I just wanted to ask a quick question.

MR. HIBBS: Sure.

MR. HAMILTON: A great presentation, Karla. Through your presentation, did you guys break out how many of those trips were commuter, even walking to work and biking to work versus recreation? Because I know as the commissioner stated here, you know, you're looking at all modes of transportation. And when you tie that to economic development and land use, people want to build and bring their companies in to where people will walk. Coming from D.C. I ride the train or walk or take a bicycle to work to get there quickly versus having to get on the highway. And that sort of takes people off the road. So a modal-shift is going to take place.

So when you guys looked at the data, do you guys really look at that as a focus to are they trying to go to work or recreation and to sort of stratify?

MS. WEAVER: Yeah, we definitely do. So the counters are continuous 24 hours a day, and they
have 15-minute increments like a car counter would. So we're able to see patterns during the peak periods morning and afternoon when people would be commuting. And we can make ties when we have certain spikes in data in certain locations where we have maybe a large office complex; we're able to see some of those trends.

MR. HIBBS: And I'm sorry. I didn't follow protocol. I need to get you to recognize yourself and who you're with for the benefit of the committee because this is a public meeting.

MR. HAMILTON: Oh, okay. Good morning.

Donny Hamilton with the Federal Highway Administration.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. Thank you very much.

Okay. So moving right along, the next item on the agenda is a presentation from Bike Texas. I want to thank Robin Stallings and Mark Stine and Beth Noble, who is going to be presenting for us today. This is a continuation of a discussion that planted a lot of seeds when Mark Stine showed us what was going on in Canada. And for those of you that sat through that presentation that he made that showed how all of these different communities had come together to build -- how many miles is it, Mark?

MR. STINE: I want to say 1,800 kilometers.
MR. HIBBS: 1,800 kilometers.

MR. STINE: About 1,200 miles.

MR. HIBBS: 1,200 miles across Canada.

And he was giving us the background on the economic development opportunity that these towns have seen and what all has happened up there. It really kind of put the next part of this discussion on steroids. So I'm going to turn it over to Beth.

And, Beth, you've got a very interesting background.

MS. NOBLE: I do.

MR. HIBBS: So why don't you tell the committee about your role.

MS. NOBLE: Well, thank you. It's a pleasure to be here. I'm going to give a shout out to Robin and to Mark. Mark really knows the routes backwards and forwards, so I'm going to ask for his expertise during the presentation.

I started my career in Texas working in Galveston at the Galveston Art Center. Went up to the Panhandle area, lived in the small town of Panhandle. Moved to Amarillo. Went up to Iowa for 20 years and worked in higher education. Came back to Van Horn to start the Texas Mountain Trail organization and part of the Texas Heritage Trails system that was partially
funded by transportation enhancements. And there really
got involved in bike tourism and the possibilities.

    I'm going to start with a very brief
two-and-a-half-minute video that helped me get really
involved in bike tourism.

    Lived in Marfa as well. Went back up to
Iowa, and just in Austin two months on the staff of Bike
Texas. So thrilled to be back. I'm thrilled to be
focusing on bicycles and bicycle tourism, too.

    So I want to show this video here. Like I
said, it's just two and a half minutes, and I think
you'll enjoy it.

    (Video played)

    MS. NOBLE: So Russ and Laura from The
Path Less Pedaled came through Van Horn when I was
working with the Texas Mountain Trail. I was in the
process of thinking about what I can do in Van Horn to
promote tourism. And as you know, that area, the
landscape is beautiful and the roads don't have much
traffic. And the history is incredible, the culture is
incredible. And so they helped us start thinking about,
What can you do to make communities more cycle friendly?
What can you do to make businesses more cycle friendly?
And so we developed a series of heritage bike routes
just in our region. We developed a network of
cycle-friendly hotels, and we worked with the communities to do very simple things to make them more welcoming for cyclists.

    And as you can see from the video, the key to capturing the economic impact of the tourists is to slow them down. So we were asked to take a look at the possible Texas connections to the U.S. Bicycle Route, east-west and north-south. I think we have the opportunity for the development of some legacy here. We all know that Eisenhower's legacy is in part because of the interstate transportation system. We have, I think, a hidden legacy here with Governor Connally.

    When we were getting ready for HemisFair '68, he ordered a survey of travelers to Texas. What were their impressions of Texas? And the study was pretty real when it came back. It said that folks thought of Texas as hot, dusty, not much water and not very attractive. And so as a result of that study, Governor Connally asked that a series of 10 scenic driving routes be developed to help promote each region of the state. And as a result, these blue and white highway signs went up all over.

    Many years later in the late '90s with transportation enhancement funds, there was a network of nonprofits that promoted each region based on those
driving routes. And from being part of that system, I know that every week someone talked about Governor Connally's contribution to the state, not just in our awareness of the beauty of the state but the history and the economic impact. These organizations have boards that go out and speak to rotary clubs. They have maps. They have travel guides. And so this is part of that legacy.

One of the reasons why we're here today is because of the 2005 Bicycle Trails Tourism Act, and I'll refer back to this from time to time. But the key part of it is that the Texas Department of Transportation Bicycle Advisory Committee shall advise and make recommendations to the commission in the development of bicycle tourism trails in the state.

And our organization, and Mark in particular, has done a lot of research on possibilities for trails in the state. And a large part of his inquiry has been connecting the history. And so he's got the Chisholm Trail, Buffalo Soldier Trail, Comanche and Apache Trails that have been mapped out that could be possibilities to link in the tourism fabric of the state as well as the landscape. And as part of the 2005 act, it talks about the need to reflect the geography, scenery, history and culture of the state.
Is there a demand for this sort of thing?
Absolutely. I think we're all sold on this, that in this state bicycles and bicycle culture is a major driver. We're larger economically than hunting, and we have -- there's a lot of people out there with a bike who want to travel and want to use their bike on trails and roadways.

I want to share a couple of examples of kind of a groundswell of development all over the country. The East Coast in many ways was really interesting to me for a number of reasons. One is, their goal is to have it all traffic free. The length of the Eastern Coast, they're really making their mark. In the last year, they've had a lot of momentum. One of the things that's so interesting to me is 40,000 supporters and volunteers. There's a lot of people who are behind this notion and are willing to work and to contribute to it.

And then at the bottom, I've pulled our language from our 2005 Bicycle Tourism Act. "We shall maximize federal and private sources of funding for the designation and care in development of these trails." That's what they are doing. They are maximizing federal, state and private funds to get this done.

Then we come to the bicycle route system
itself. The plan started in the 1980s. This is a map from four years ago. The very dark lines going through Maine, Southern Michigan, Virginia, Kentucky, Alaska, those are established routes four years ago. The corridors, and you see them going through Texas, there's one roughly in the -- going from El Paso through Houston. There's one going through the Panhandle. There's one coming from Texarkana all the way through Lubbock. Those are corridors. Those are 50-mile-wide stretches of land that were identified as possibilities for the U.S. route system. So that's a framework that has been in place for quite some time. It just identifies some opportunities there.

MR. AUSTIN: Is that along the interstate system, basically?

MS. NOBLE: Roughly.

MR. AUSTIN: So as you go up into Denver coming up out of New Mexico, I know as part of the interstate system up there they have some wide shoulders with signs for some segments. Is that part of that plan?

MS. NOBLE: I believe it is. The bicycle route system does not need to be signed. There is signing nomenclature there that identifies the routes, but not all sections of it need to be signed. And
again, that part of it has been a corridor.

    I want to just skip ahead. This is what
it looks like in May. The corridors are still in place.
The dark lines are ones that are established routes. So
there is a groundswell of support here. There's a lot
of activity nationwide. Now 24 states and the District
of Columbia have a designated part of the bicycle route
that has been established.

    MR. GONZALES: Does established mean it's
been -- there's a sign on it? Or does established mean
it's been recognized by the state agency?

    MS. NOBLE: Yeah, the state agency has
petitioned to the system to formalize it as part of the
route system. Because previously they are corridors
that are unofficial. They do not need to be signed at
the time that they hit this map.

    MR. HIBBS: So, Beth, I don't want to get
ahead here.

    MS. NOBLE: Yeah. Sure.

    MR. HIBBS: Let's say, for example, that
later on in your presentation you're going to show us
some routes that don't necessarily line up with what
they had recommended in those preferred corridors.

    MS. NOBLE: That's right.

    MR. HIBBS: What does that mean?
MS. NOBLE: I think it's a --

MR. HIBBS: Is that a problem? Or do we just go back to them and say, "Hey, we've taken a look at how we want to get our state arranged. You need to redraw your map and know that it's going to connect someplace else"?

MS. NOBLE: Yes, I believe that's the case.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. So they haven't been so blessed up the food chain that you can't unwind those particular routes at this point.

MS. NOBLE: That is not my understanding.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. All right.

MS. NOBLE: Yeah. I think we're on the same line there.

I want to go through three states that have recently designated routes. The Georgia DOT is extremely -- yes?

MS. WEAVER: Just real quick. Did you say you have to have a minimum of 50 feet to be on the -- or 50 miles -- 50 -- 50 miles to be shown on the map?

MS. NOBLE: The corridor, as I understand it, are 50-mile-wide possibilities.

MS. WEAVER: Okay. Chunks at a time.

MS. NOBLE: Yes.
MS. WEAVER: Okay.

MS. NOBLE: Wide.

MR. STALLINGS: No. She means that they just roughly made a 50-mile imaginary corridor somewhere in there within 50 miles of an interstate, probably.

MS. NOBLE: Yes.

MR. STALLINGS: But somewhere along there they want to do a route. And so there's no specific links. But to be designated it's got to be -- part of the DOT has to agree with the USDOT.

MS. WEAVER: Gotcha. Thank you.

MR. HIBBS: We need to identify Robin Stallings with Bike Texas. Thank you.

MS. NOBLE: So I want to show you three states very quickly. Georgia DOT is extremely proud of their work. They are at the front of that effort. Their route is interesting to me because it has the ideal characteristics from a tourism standpoint. Their route connects Chattanooga, Tennessee to Atlanta, two major metropolitan areas, the ability to pull population through a region. They are incorporating some of the cultural and natural assets of the region through spurs and loops.

I know when we look at a map and we see a line, we get really nervous if we're not on that line.
And I've worked with communities who have not been on the line and I've worked with communities who have been on the line, and people get nervous. So the opportunity to work with spurs and loops can help some of those political questions, but can also bring more value to the traveler by incorporating other areas.

So the blue loop up here at the north pulls in a national battlefield; that's part of the National Park Service. Our act talks about the need to work with our state park system.

The green loop over to the left goes by Lookout Mountain in Georgia.

And the red line is the main route, primarily two-lane country roads. There is a significant rails/trails segment to it and it goes all the way into Central Atlanta and connects with their urban rail system. Again, great connectivity to bring people in.

And Tennessee, I wanted to share this because the state map here has a lot of color on it. Those are all the state bicycle routes. And their current U.S. bicycle route goes through the central part of the state and incorporates Nashville. So it goes right by the Ryman Auditorium. It goes by the Country Music Hall of Fame. It goes into Franklin, Tennessee,
and there are several war sites and a lot of other small towns.

In Arizona, they share some of the same -- yes?

MS. WEAVER: Can you go back and talk about the suitability index from Tennessee? I think that's a really key point if Texas is looking to do something similar.

MS. NOBLE: Yeah. I don't know much about it in detail. But I know that they've done considerable looking at the character of each of those roads and have rated them and brought that into the consideration and what comes next.

MS. WEAVER: Because what we're looking to do, it's all about level of comfort.

MS. NOBLE: Yes.

MS. WEAVER: So if people feel comfortable with their eight-year-old or their 80-year-old riding that route, if you haven't looked at all your roads and determined that, it's really challenging to figure out how to get from A to B.

MS. NOBLE: Absolutely.

MS. WEAVER: It's a lot of effort to do that, but that gives you the safest routes.

MS. NOBLE: And I'm glad that you brought
that up, because that's really a consideration.

   And Arizona, that shares many -- some of
the same physical attributes as our state, particularly
the western part of the state, long stretches, low
population. There are some challenges on the tourism
there for community support. But they are interesting
in that they have done some economic impact work even
before the designation of their trail. And they
measured the impact of out-of-state cyclists coming in
and what that meant to their economy. Their route
follows, roughly, Adventure Cycling Association's route,
which I'll mention in a little bit. And they also have
taken care to go by the green areas, which are public
lands. Again, coordinating with, in our case, state
park system.

   MR. HIBBS: And so as of 2013, the
economic impact of just the out-of-state cyclists, these
are people traveling to Arizona to come ride their bikes
on that trail, is over 30 million dollars?

   MS. NOBLE: Statewide.

   MR. HIBBS: Statewide.

   MS. NOBLE: And in our state -- I
mentioned Adventure Cycling Association. They have
three routes that run through our state. One is Route
66, which bisects the Panhandle going through Amarillo
on the way to Los Angeles. The southern tier route goes
from San Diego to St. Augustine. In our state, it goes
through El Paso. It goes right by my front door -- my
old front door in Van Horn, so I saw the cyclists coming
through every day there. And it goes all the way
through the state.

There's a little loop here. It's a third
route. It's called the Hill Country Loop. I know that
Adventure Cycling has also done tours down into Big
Bend. They haven't designated a route there. There's
some challenges on the tourism support end with that.
But if we decide to do what Arizona did, this is an
obvious route to what's already been designated by
Adventure Cycling.

And then we come to Mark's work in looking
at our state map and what possibilities might be there.
So a lot of things on this map. We won't go over
everything, just a couple of examples. It looks at,
really, what are the opportunities here in terms of
rights-of-way, existing trails and routes and country
roads. Again, what is attractive and suitable for
cycling.

I want to talk about the Northeast Texas
Trail. It has so many of the elements in place for a
successful venture. They are very close to completing
this effort. There's more that can be done, certainly. And I know that we have some champions of it here. 130 miles. There are still some stretches to complete. There is a high desire to make this Lanier State Park. The proximity to the metropolitan areas into the trails that were presented just a few minutes ago, there's so much opportunity there to pull people from Texarkana and from the Dallas/Fort Worth area and move them across those small towns creating a great economic impact for them.

MR. AUSTIN: Can I ask you a question?

MS. NOBLE: Uh-huh.

MR. AUSTIN: Does that trail -- kind of going back to your presentation -- going up to the Collin County trail, do those connect?

MS. WEAVER: Right now the main part of that starts in Hunt County, and we don't have a direct trail connection to link to that yet.

MR. AUSTIN: And I met with them the other day. They're coming into Collin County. That's why I was asking does it connect, or will it connect, or is there a plan to connect?

MS. WEAVER: I haven't seen plans yet for that.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay.
MR. PITCHFORD: It can across --

MS. WEAVER: I think eventually they want it to.

MR. PITCHFORD: Ultimately, it could connect to DFW. It could connect on the other end to Texarkana. That can happen, but it's not -- the focus has been 130 miles from Farmersville.

MS. NOBLE: There's still some sections of the 130 miles that need to be connected.

MR. PITCHFORD: That's right.

MS. NOBLE: One of the things that I think is so exciting about this venture is the level of enthusiasm and buy-in and participation in this route. I know, and it was reinforced this morning in conversation, that people come from the Dallas/Fort Worth area with equipment to independently, on their own, groom this trail. There is so much enthusiasm for this trail and care and heart, and that's what you need to make a successful venture.

MR. GLEASON: If I may. And, Commissioner, there are several sections of that trail that y'all funded as a project of the TAP program.

MS. KAPLAN: We have three sections that have funding not for permanent surface but for a rideable surface. There's limited funding at the local
level up there. So because of the 20 percent
participation, they can't do as much as they would like
to do.

MR. AUSTIN: May I inject something?

MS. NOBLE: Of course.

MR. AUSTIN: I was going to save it for
another time. But while this is up here, looking at
connectivity around the state, which is kind of part of
the presentation -- if you want me to wait, I will.

MR. HIBBS: No.

MR. AUSTIN: We're visiting, looking and
not sure what's going on with our future funding
opportunities. And, as you know, Eric said, you know,
we're limited in times that we come out with TAP grants.
What if FH -- you know, DOT or TIGER grants -- set
Parks & Wildlife and TxDOT aside. How do these things
get done, which is kind of back to your question. This
is where it's going to come back into the creativity.

I've looked at a lot of Web pages for bike
organizations. Nowhere on there -- there's reference to
TIGER grants, TxDOT, TAP or Parks & Wildlife. Nowhere
it says are there any other foundations or any other
entities that support or will fund bike or trail,
pedestrian vehicles for -- I mean, not vehicles --
projects. How do you accumulate those?
But also, kind of to your point, people bring their equipment up to help clear. There's a lot of untapped resources that can help do this.

Now, I'm a Boy Scout. So let me just say right up front, talk to your scouting organizations statewide. They need service projects. They need Eagle Scout projects. This is a great way. And this is something that they help put together as part of the vision to help the community. That's part of the whole plan, get them engaged to use and participate.

There's a lot of other organizations that can help out. Talk to your juvenile and adult probation officers. I know of somebody that went to -- a particular community that went to build a bike trail within the city within an MPO that had donated resources, and what they needed was labor and the place. Well, it's a city property. They got the city to buy in for the property to do it. And guess what they used for labor. Trustee labor; prisoners that needed good time to get out and work.

MS. BALES: With the TAP you can't do that.

MR. AUSTIN: Oh, I know. I'm not saying -- set that aside. You're right.

(Laughter)
MR. AUSTIN: I said set that aside. It had nothing to do with the TAP or any other type of funding that way. But what I'm leaning to is using creativity to help advance the trails where and when appropriate. That guy is sitting right here. And it was a part of the bike plan that was put in place -- it was Billy Hibbs -- what they did. But what I'm leading to, there's more than one answer. There's more than one way to do it. It's not all about come give me the money.

But what those little things can do on a project like this or any other -- I'm just using this as an example. How do you help create goodwill in the community exposure, but also use other resources that are available to help build it out in whatever form it is? Is it clearing? Is it paving? Is it cleaning up? Replacing?

There's also a lot of contractors. Believe me, contractors, engineers, a lot of different entities have excess materials or talent that they're willing to donate and contribute to help do the plans and things. Look what exists in your community. It's not always TxDOT funded. I'm picking on us here for a second. What else can you use to help advance this to have it ready as part of the map, ready to go and
develop those plans? There's a lot of excess materials around, whether it's local, whether it's a commercial building site or something else.

    I've heard of some creativity coming back, "Well, how do we get over this bridge? It's a TxDOT bridge." Well, there is a, you know, time and place. I've seen plans with appropriate steel. You build a ramp out to the side. Or it's going through a city park or something, that you can build a ramp on the side to go over what's dedicated.

    It's to think outside the box. I hope this committee can start coming together for when we get this Web page for resources other than TAP for these other funds. And you're right. How do you use these other resources to enhance what you're already doing or potential match funding? And how do we get those ideas to put on the Web page to come together? That's where the talent in this room with the other organizations can help bring those ideas together. I've looked and I haven't seen any central repository. Because to advance these plans, that's going to need your help. Y'all can probably write down a few right now.

    I think you mentioned, you know, a new campus was coming in, a new building. Businesses will help fund this. I know Billy and I were involved in a
conversation with UT Tyler. There was a potential with something going on out there. Maybe that fits into their plan for their campus to have access. So school districts, all these other campuses, universities can help fill in. It's a gap, but gaps create -- eventually get filled.

So think of the resources that you have, what's going through UTAP or connectivity, what can be done on the campus, what can be done at UT. You know, there's a lot there already. Look at all these resources. How do we begin to accumulate those to advance? Again, don't forget about local labor and donations of in-kind that can really help advance these projects.

MR. HIBBS: Yeah. Because there is a -- there's a shared component in a lot of these grants particularly to the smaller communities where they've got to put in 20 percent maybe of the funding or 30 or 40 in order to qualify for part of the bids. That doesn't necessarily always have to be in cash. It can be in-kind donations. And like Commissioner Austin said, you know, contribution of materials and things like that. And then if you can figure out how to get the labor part of it done.

MR. AUSTIN: But some of the TAP grants
are limited in what's counted and what's not. But when
you start looking at other grants, you know, whether --
United Way. There's a lot of other entities that you go
to. What about --

MS. WEAVER: State Farm.

MR. AUSTIN: State Farm. You know, here's
our match and here's how we're going to do it. And I
come back to an Eagle Scout project. Eagle Scouts are
going to say, "Here's the project, here's where we're
going to raise our money, here's how we're going to have
our labor, here's the time frame and here's what's good
or not." If you y'all have never looked at -- talk to
your local council. Great ideas.

Maybe there's a forum that we can be a
repository and resource to help, say, if you're going to
go ask for trustee labor. What would that take? You
know, you've done this. What do they want to know?
It's who, what, where, when, how much. What materials
we need, where is it going to go. So there's a lot of
great ideas. And again, I'm using this one as an
example. It's recent conversation that would tie into
this network. How do you develop it? How do you
connect it? Just some ideas.

MR. PITCHFORD: Commissioner, if I may?

Commissioner Austin, you'd be very proud
of this trail because they have done everything that you said except perhaps the prisoner labor. I don't think we've done that yet. And until the TAP grants came through, hadn't done really much at all with any sort of government sources. But there may be a point, especially because this is a rural trail, in our big population centers where the local sources can only do so much because they are just not as populated in density.

MR. AUSTIN: Talk to your sheriffs. I mean, talk to the leaders that you have in the community right now. There may be other ideas and I'm just naming a few. And General Weber did tell me about his visit up there as well.

MR. PITCHFORD: Well, we'd like to talk more about how you managed to use the labor from the trustees.

MR. HIBBS: Well, just real quickly. I can tell you that most county sheriffs who are running a county prison, they are looking for opportunities for those prisons to give back to the community. And it's very hard for a private business to say, "Well, I need, you know, 10 prisoners to come over here and help me clean off my vacant property because I'm going to build an office." That doesn't work. They need to be doing
active work in public projects where they can make a difference. And in Tyler it worked out where it was just a win-win-win for everybody.

First of all, they like to get out of jail and they like to be outside and they don't mind working hard.

(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: Generally, the sheriff is thrilled because the people are seeing them work and they're seeing the benefit and it's benefiting the entire county or the community or the city. And the taxpayers benefit because they're getting a lot of work done for free that they would otherwise be paying for. You know, not that it's free to incarcerate someone, but at least you're getting some work done.

So I would be happy to talk more about that. But I think that it is -- it's a great untapped resource we have in our state, particularly for something -- if we're going to try to tackle a major, you know, transportation initiative like this. And nobody has, you know, money hanging on trees, where we could potentially, you know, facilitate those in some way.

MR. AUSTIN: Yeah. I just want to be clear. I can't say that all of these efforts will count
towards TAP funding, but there's other ways to advance these projects and that's part of what we're doing as a resource.

MS. BALEs: And before you, I guess, engage these folks to provide any kind of crew, get it approved if you're going to be using any federal funding. And not approved by TxDOT; you have to get it approved by FHWA so we can vet it.

MR. HAMILTON: In addition, I come from the finance world. And this is what states are doing. They're trying to think of ways to come up with additional funding outside the -- that will merge the federal as well as the state and local funds so then they can come together and conceptually -- like Texas could be a mega-region state in the south. People are looking to connect the dots even from the USDOT level. How you kind of work together to create these nexus opportunities for economic development so that everybody can benefit.

And I think Commissioner Austin made a good point. One of the ways they've done it -- I dealt with a lot of (inaudible). When you're in design-build contracts, is there a way to negotiate, you know, to improve these trails, or are we looking for a bid in order to move forward. Or working with this
design-build contract, if there's a T3. In Texas how
can you improve this facility that benefits bike and
pedestrian people? If there's a mitigation strategy is
it always a fund, or a park, or does it help us figure
out how to enhance this bike route and maybe you can
maintain it? You have to, you know, really think
outside the box, and there's a lot of opportunities.
You have to show people -- and everybody is doing it --
in Texas what's the benefit to them, and they'll help
you with their money when you market and show them what
the benefit will be.

MR. AUSTIN: Great comment.

I was at the groundbreaking several years
ago of 183 here in Austin. I don't know if y'all
followed that. But there was a plan, said we're going
to take part of the old bridge and make it part of the
bike-ped. That was part of the entire plan and some
mitigation concerns that were in there. But also
thinking outside the box, listen to one other thing;
mitigation.

Again, coming back when I was -- Billy and
I worked together on the Boy Scout Camp. But we had
some -- one of our members came to us with something and
said, "Do you know what? There was an" -- I'm not going
to say it just right, so y'all -- "there was an
environmental settlement that may have involved" -- and
I don't want to misquote the agency -- I want to say the
TCEQ for some air quality funds that were available
where certain businesses had to invest and do mitigation
projects somewhere.

The Boy Scout Camp is a nonprofit. It was
an ineligible project around the lake in doing some
trails cleanup. There may be other types of credits
like that that may involve federal funds. People need
to do mitigation credits. I would think a lot of these
projects like this or whatever could potentially
qualify. So I would say think outside the box. Our
portion, I think, is minimal. It's a lot of money, but
when we start looking outside and leveraging and
stacking to complete projects, there's a lot of money
out there and available with a focused positive effort.

MR. HIBBS: I'm sorry. Can you identify
yourself?

MS. BALES: I'm Genevieve Bales with the
Federal Highway Administration. I oversee the TAP
funding for Texas.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. AUSTIN: Thank y'all for being here.

MS. NOBLE: And, Commissioner Austin, I
wanted to extend your comments, which I think were
excellent, in terms of finding creative ways to deal
with solutions. One of the things that I find
particularly exciting about the Northeast Texas Trail is
that all these ideas require someone to coordinate them
and to make those calls. And so this organization has,
as part of their strategic plan, someone who can do
that. And so that's one of the reasons why I think this
specific route has a great deal of possibility in
becoming a true winning asset.

MR. GONZALES: I have one question. Is
this an individual lane or is this like part of the
shoulder of the highway, or is it a combination? Or how
is the whole route?

MR. AUSTIN: I think I have a map, but
it's a railbank.

MR. FRANK: But I think it can be on
shoulders, the designation.

MS. NOBLE: Oh, yes. It certainly can.
The next possibility -- and there are
many; I'm just going to mention two today -- is Old
Texas 20, obviously the potential to connect Austin to
Houston. And in those population areas there's a great
deal of benefit there; 190-mile route. There's a
possibility of cycling from downtown Houston to downtown
Austin, and that's thrilling to think about. Mark has
done -- he's ridden it. And he's taken a lot of notes throughout the years and what would be required with that. And in talking to my tourism folks, in the tourism community this year there are communities along that route that see a great advantage to their community. So that is also another possibility.

And I'm almost done here.

In terms of moving the vision forward, we talked about maximizing federal with private funds. I think we've talked about that a lot today. Another part of that 2005 act is that the department could work with statewide bicycle nonprofits to help with identifying, developing, promoting, coordinating all these agreements to make the bicycle tourism trails happen and also to advance them. And that's where the people part comes in, in making sure that the communities are engaged and are using all their assets to make it a really viable opportunity for Texans who want to ride on their bicycles.

So we have detailed maps. We also have the large map in paper form that we can share with you. But that's it for my presentation. If you have any other questions.

MR. STEINER: Beth, just a quick question. Do you know anything about the -- I've heard of a trail
system starting out at Beaumont and heading north, and
I've actually seen part of it. It's actually a
completely separate lane, which really looks kind of
odd, about eight-feet wide, following U.S. Highway 69
heading from Beaumont up and I know eventually up
through Lufkin. There's actually an abandoned railbed
through there. Do you know anything about that?

MS. NOBLE: I personally don't. I might
throw that to Mark.

MR. STINE: I'm Mark Stine with Bike
Texas.

I've seen that and it goes up to one of
those areas of the -- the Big Thicket headquarters. And
you're correct, the rail corridor does go on up. I
believe that has been held by TxDOT. Although I'm not
absolutely sure along that U.S. -- it's not I-69. It's
U.S. 69. And so they have at least going from -- I
believe is it Kountze? Up to -- it's about 15 miles or
so. And so that's just one of those little statements
where it could be expanded to Lufkin and could be
expanded down to Beaumont, if you have the community and
somehow found the funding or the in-kind work to do
that.

MR. STALLINGS: Robin Stallings, Bike
Texas.
What you probably saw in Colorado, Commissioner, is that along a lot of their state highways and maybe some interstates they've done parallel, separated pathways. And the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority has been a real leader amongst the Toll Road Authority, because every toll road they've been building has a separate side path. So they don't have an argument about, you know, riding on the shoulders or not, because they made something a lot better. And they say that in talking to Director Heiligenstein, he said that it's a marginal extra cost when they do it when they've got all the equipment out there.

And so when there's other major roadwork going on, that's an opportunity to do that because it costs a whole lot less when you're not gearing up, you've already run through all the environmental and all the engineering, all the planning, and it's probably a fraction of, you know, a percent or two. But otherwise, if you do it from scratch it can be, you know, many times more.

MR. HIBBS: So, Beth, in your analysis of what we've already got built out in the state and what's about to be finished and completed, and understanding that we all probably agree wholeheartedly that, you
know, bicycle tourism is a good thing and we want to
promote it for the state of Texas, are y'all in a
position to be able to recommend routes at this time?

In other words, can you put up a map of
the state of Texas and say, "We think this is the
corridor for the north-south and this is the one that's
east-west that makes the most sense at this time," or is
this something that needs to be studied some more?

MS. NOBLE: I think that our focus is on
particular stretches. And I mentioned the northeast
Texas trail's strategic on our part, because we think
that it's really close. And by connection to the
Dallas/Fort Worth area, it really has the capability to
probably be the best bang for the buck in terms of
moving quickly and getting it done. Getting it all done
from Texarkana through the Metroplex. And that is
part -- that is one of those corridors that is part of
the U.S. Bicycle Route Systems. So I think that we
agree that that can be an excellent place to start.

MR. HIBBS: Well, I was just -- in terms
of trying to get my hands around this -- because this is
going to be a big project, obviously, even to put in a
strategic plan and say, "Okay. Well, this is what we
think." And do you start with northwest only -- I mean,
north-south only or east-west only, or do you try to do
both?

Because, you know, Texas is such a big place, and we have some very important parts of this already built. You know, there's some big, major metropolitan areas. And part of this example is this Austin-Houston thing. Well, that's not a -- necessarily up in the northern part of the state. But how do you tie all that in and then come up with a plan so that we can then get organized and either, you know, put together a committee to start kind of overseeing this or start requesting funding for various strategic parts of it or engaging county commissioners, the governor's office, or someone like that, to help, you know, kind of bring this to the attention of the public?

MS. NOBLE: I think that there are several prongs to your question. One is a political prong and what communities are really engaged to make something happen. One is a physical prong, what's really out there physically, what's closer to being ready to go and what needs more physical development and then the funding part as well. And so that's a very complicated question.

I'll defer to these gentlemen, see if you have anything else to add.

MR. STALLINGS: One thing that I could
mention is that you can plan for the whole thing, but there are these pieces that you do first that will create momentum. You know, we obviously have a lot more population on the east side of the state. So it's going to be more bang for the buck, more users, a little bit more tourism dollars if you do something on the east side than if we're going all the way to West Texas. So maybe the West Texas part has got -- you know, a little bit different, maybe it's not a separated paved path. Maybe it's more on a, you know -- combined with U.S. 90 or some smaller road, and it's not going to be for families. It's going to be for the heartier cyclists for sometime.

But on the east side of the state there's some tremendous opportunity. And among those would be -- it's almost like it could fit -- you know, if there was some planning and TxDOT could kind of look and see where can the local region, like the Dallas/Fort Worth region, handle a lot of that. And then TxDOT's uniquely positioned, you know, to fill in the gaps to connect it with maybe the NETT Trail with Dallas/Fort Worth. Maybe there's gaps in there. But also to have a big picture, because there's so many tiny communities that can't take on such a big project.

It's almost like, how could you do fewer
bigger projects? How could you get, you know, to --
whether it was TxDOT or Texas Parks & Wildlife to take
on, you know, kind of the bigger view. First the
planning stage and some engineering, you know, in
phasing, prioritizing where there is already a lot of
population.

But if you look at NETT -- we keep talking
about that because it's easy to quantify, it's easy to
compare with the Katy Trail where they connect 16 towns
and the NETT connects 19 towns. Well, they're going to
generate a lot of economic benefit on that. So when you
do that section, that's going to create demand from
other small towns. So it's going to be easier to get
even more local buy-in because they've really got to
pony up. But some of it, because it's almost a road
standard you can get where you can leverage a lot of
volunteer help in the mountain bike clubs all over the
state; do thousands of hours every year of volunteer
trail building and stuff for the single track.

But then when it comes to paved granite
trails, it takes a level of professionalism. So you go
from a $15,000-a-mile trail to a $100,000-a-mile trail.
And then when you pave, you're looking at a
million-dollar-a-mile trail, counting some occasional
water crossings. In some urban areas that could be two
million, but, you know, it's in that scale. So you're getting up to the standards and you've got to do them to certain standards for maintenance and everything else, they've got to be pretty heavy-duty. So there's some things you can do with free and leveraged help.

But also in some places there could be tax increment financing things, because properties within a short distance of a trail actually go up in value. Some of that could be captured. But it almost needs a coordinating entity of a scale like TxDOT to, you know, think of it big enough so that it's not just each tiny little project that we may not get to.

MR. HIBBS: Well, that really sums up kind of my whole concern. It may sound like a good idea, but Texas is so enormous and we've got all of these moving parts; I agree.

And, Eric, could you weigh in possibly, on your thoughts in terms of how -- you know, what we might need to do as a next step? And I understand you've got limited resources, too, and it's hard for you to put a team of engineers to study the best routes and all for something like this. But what would you recommend to keep moving forward?

MR. GLEASON: Well, I've had a number of conversations internally about a scope of work for some
consultant assistance, for example. I think this is a perfect opportunity to try to bring some of this into focus for us. You know, I think we easily leap to a north, south, east, west, you know, across Texas map, but we all understand how difficult that would be, when, in fact, the real bang for the buck is in these smaller, you know, interregional-type connections. And it may not be as important in the long run to have those complete across the state as much as some of these key connections. It may be all right to establish conceptually what those key across-state corridors could look like. But I think in addition to that we would want to also take a look at, you know, a half dozen or more of these more, you know, interregional-type connections.

We have talked about recognizing that depending on where you are in the state and the anticipated level of use, there are different cross-sections of investment that you make, just as Robin was describing. And so the consultant work could also put together typical cross-sections and associate that level of investment with a certain kind of area of the state. I think we can assemble -- and we've heard it today. We can assemble the argument around the economic impact of these investments and we can use
consultant work for that.

And I think we can, you know, engage a certain level of key stakeholders around the state in addition to this group in that effort. I'm kind of drawing the line in suggesting some enormous public effort, but I think we can deliberately engage a larger group of stakeholders. And, you know, Roger, you may recognize this. This is the scope of work that we've talked about trying to get our arms around how much that might be. But I think that's the way to make the next step happen.

MR. HIBBS: So TxDOT would engage a consultant. You would put the consultant on the project. You would, at some point, look at the results of the consultant's study. Then the Bike Advisory Committee could say, bless that and then move forward with what, adopting it into our strategic plan, selling it upstream to the commission? Help us understand.

MR. GLEASON: So I think what would happen is -- again, this is just a conversation at this point. But I believe one way forward is -- and I think my way forward would actually have this committee actually help, you know, if we had a green light. First thing we'll do is come and say, "We've got this green light, and you've heard us talk about it." Now, will we really
make this happen? What does the scope look like? What exactly should we be asking for? And the committee will be engaged the whole way through.

Now, I think once we have the product of that effort, the question then becomes how do we lend significance to it? The committee can add it to its strategic direction report. We can discuss with administration and the commission whether there's an appropriate level of action for them on that product. I think I'm not really -- don't really know how to answer your question exactly now.

MR. HIBBS: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: But I think there will come a time when we get to a product where it will be appropriate to ask how do we lend some institutional significance to it. What is the appropriate level of action? You know, we aren't going to be so prescriptive in that outcome as to suggest that it is a project. And so what is the appropriate level of action at that time?

MR. HIBBS: Well, should we as a committee have a vote, for example, to request that TxDOT assign a consultant to this project?

MR. GLEASON: I would be willing to just have a simple nod around the table, an informal consensus nod. And we can try to get some work done on
MR. GONZALEZ: If I could add something. I think it's also about setting a clear procedure for designation. For example, in Cameron County we already have -- we've already planned the U.S. Bike Route 55 in our county plan. But there really is no clear procedure for designation by the commission or by -- or, I mean, by TxDOT to get a route. I mean, if we can find the money and we know that signing the whole route -- so you're talking about over -- probably about a hundred miles that connects Combes to Laguna Atascosa to the island to Brownsville to Harlingen. I think it was about $500,000.

So I think you also need to set -- we kind of maybe need to be stewards of where this route goes but also have an application process for communities that are already ready and that already have a plan in place and they want to get going on this.

MR. AUSTIN: I want to compliment what y'all have done down in Cameron County. Recently somebody mentioned -- Robin, you -- somebody may have mentioned a TIF. They have passed a countywide TRZ, Transportation Reinvestment Zone, to participate -- you
know, Transportation Reinvestment Zone is like a TIF. You participate in the appreciated value. And that is for infrastructure projects within the county. So there's a great example of locals helping themselves. And I think it's a great tool.

One thing, you know, Eric talked about, we don't have any projects yet. But I'm going to go back to our discussion yesterday at the commission meeting. We're looking at allocating dollars for road construction. There's a lot of unidentified projects that need to be done in every district throughout the state. Maybe the discussion time could be sooner than later, is to start talking with the district engineer, the locals to say if this project is on there and we have an existing shoulder, adding a foot or whatever; that could be a possibility. Not guaranteeing it, but that would be a legitimate possibility where it's appropriate to have more bike lanes dedicated if it's on this route that ties into a plan.

So there is a lot of those unfunded road projects, you know, like you mentioned Central Texas RMA. You know, there's a lot of roadways that are used right now. A foot or two feet can make a big difference. And then you put a lane in the side much like we do on a hurricane evacuation route; you can put
a designated bike lane. So there are things. That's
the art of the possible. And I say that to start having
those conversations locally is that -- for consideration
when those plans are designed to be included. That's
something that can be done long range. But it's back to
y'all's question, identifying what routes are there and
what's being used.

MR. STALLINGS: Mr. Chairman, can I throw
in that the U.S. Bicycle Route System is going to
happen. And I don't think we want a huge gap in the
middle where Texas is half the country, basically. That
means half of those cross-country travelers would spend
their money, half their time in Texas, spending it here.
So they're already setting it up for us. All we have to
do is capture it; otherwise, they're going to take the
northern route across the country.

And if we look at -- I think it's worth it
to analyze the whole thing and look and see where could
we capture existing shoulders, where could next time the
road project is done add a foot, as Commissioner Austin
says.

MR. AUSTIN: And I used that as an
example.

MR. STALLINGS: Right, for example.
But obviously separated from automobile
traffic absolutely every time possible. But then in the
process of that, it may be that there's some areas that
are right for additional investment for truly separated
trail facilities that maybe aren't continuous. But that
we -- the goal of this committee it seems like should be
to really buy into the U.S. Bicycle Route System that
benefits the different parts of Texas. And then some of
them might be pretty easy. It might actually not be
that hard to do Route 66 in the Panhandle. You know,
for example, Oklahoma is doing it and so is New Mexico.
And that's a relatively shorter section and it's going
to be hearty cyclists. Maybe you don't have to do it
separate.

But I think that looking at that and then
seeing what we can do in context is really valuable, and
not assuming we can't do it because a lot of it is being
done. You know, people on the ground, communities are
already building into it. Look at what Dallas is doing
with this incredible route. And in the process, we're
highlighting and getting excited about this. The
legislature has given direction. They've encouraged us
to work with, you know, the governor's office on
tourism, you know, work with Texas Parks & Wildlife.

It seems like that all the elements are
coming together with this committee in this time to
either make it a designated bicycle tourism trail, so there could be a process. You know, so it's a Texas bicycle tourism trail, and then there could be a process for the U.S. Bicycle Route System. And that's already established and that's working with AASHTO. They have certain standards for that. So then communities could begin to apply. If they want to apply to part of the U.S. Bicycle Route System, they want to apply for more of a regional thing, so it's a Texas bicycle tourism trail.

And I think that setting some standards like that and getting the big vision could go a long way for people to start finding money and for it to start coming together.

MR. GONZALES: Or we could start identifying those gaps. So if you have communities apply and, you know, you have a big number of communities, then you could -- then we, as a committee, I think, could focus on saying, "Well, we don't really have anybody applying," for example, "between Austin and Houston. Well, let's go talk to, you know, Shiner or somebody else." I think that would kind of lower our -- the work that we would have to do, if you put this process in place.

MS. WEAVER: One thing I was going to
mention is I think as part of this process -- not to get
too much into the weeds -- but I think engaging the
county judges is very important. Because there's going
to be a lot of gap space between cities. I've already
had a county judge call me and be like, "How would this
work? Am I in charge of things? Do I have to have"
(inaudible) --

(Laughter)

MR. AUSTIN: Good question.

MS. WEAVER: But there's huge gaps where
we're not going to have -- you know, we don't have the
MPOs; we don't even have cities. So making sure they're
at the table I think will be really important to
process.

MR. HIBBS: I agree. But I don't think we
even know which county judges to go to until we know
where the routes are going to be.

MS. WEAVER: That's true.

MR. HIBBS: We've got to figure out which
counties that this thing is going to go through first.
So I'm kind of back to what you need from us. And it
sounds like to me you wanted a consensus for the
committee to request, respectfully, from TxDOT that you
study these routes that Bike Texas has already done some
research on and give us some feedback as to where you
think they should go.

MR. GLEASON: What I intended to say was some consensus from the committee, that they would like us to explore a consultant's scope of work to help address that question, which would include looking at -- obviously, this is an effort that's more about getting in front of the -- being a leader by getting in front of -- under file orders since -- just wherever they're going, because so much more of the work has been done locally, than it is about any new ideas we might have as a department. But I think we would -- what I would be looking for is that kind of an effort, that kind of a scope we talked generally about, is that something that makes sense to the group, and if it does, we will pursue that between now and the next meeting, trying to get some resolution on whether or not we're in a position to proceed.

MR. HIBBS: Is there anyone that disagrees with that? I'm just going to step out on a limb here and guess that most of you are probably in favor of doing something like this. So is there anyone that disagrees with the approach that we discussed so that we can have this consensus from the committee?

MR. PITCHFORD: One comment, Mr. Chairman. I would like to add some motivation.
MR. HIBBS: Okay.

MR. PITCHFORD: In 2012 Governor Snyder of Michigan announced a bike trail across Michigan, 600 miles. I will be so embarrassed as a Texan if Michigan has a longer bike trail across their state, and you can put that in the minutes.

(Laughter)

MR. PITCHFORD: So that as a motivation, that's the reason to do this.

MR. HIBBS: Well, duly noted.

So, Eric, it sounds like to me that we have a consensus with the committee. You can move forward with that, and we would appreciate it very much.

I want to thank Beth and the Bike Texas group for a lot of hard work on this and we look forward to continuing this conversation as we move on.

All right. So in order to try to get us out of here relatively soon, it's now time to discuss our meeting in October. Robin Stallings was generous enough to allow me to ride one of their electric bikes not too long ago. And I got to tell you, I was impressed. My body is not getting much exercise.

MR. GLEASON: That was my reaction.

(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: So I think what TxDOT has
done -- since these electric bikes may be kind of the next big thing, maybe like electric cars or maybe not. I don't know. But in any event, for those of you that have not been on one of these, let me tell you, it's pretty foolproof. It's a lot of fun, and I think it would benefit all of you, who are like me, and don't necessarily come in contact with all these universities and different --

MR. GLEASON: Is this a driverless bike?

MR. FRANK: A Google bike.

(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: So a little map was passed around that would show our ride. I think it would take place after the meeting next time in October, weather permitting. And so I wanted to give everybody a heads-up. So you should probably dress appropriately. I would think jeans would be appropriate instead of coats and ties next time.

MR. GLEASON: Maybe a jersey?

MR. HIBBS: Maybe a jersey, yeah.

And so does anyone have a question or a problem with that?

MS. WILLIAMSON: Are the bikes going to be provided or do we need to bring our own?

MR. STALLINGS: May I describe it,
briefly?

MR. HIBBS: Please.

MR. STALLINGS: So we have 25 electric bikes. So literally every person in this room could participate, but committee members, obviously, would have priority. Our plan would be to start at 200 East Riverside. We'd bring the bikes over there. It would be an educational tour. So while you'd learn about electric bikes, you'd also get to see a number of different types of bicycle treatments; protected bike lanes, shared-use roadways, the amazing boardwalk, the bike-pedestrian bridge. And so we'll do brief -- very brief stops. And we'll coordinate the route. Basically it's roughly this. But we'll coordinate with Teri to make sure that you-all can learn a lot.

This is a Bike Texas event. It's a lot easier and less bureaucracy if we host the event and not TxDOT.

MR. HIBBS: Absolutely.

MR. STALLINGS: So we are happy and proud to do this. This is a Bike Texas event. And Commissioner Austin and any other commissioners are welcome. If you wouldn't mind writing down biketexas.org/txdotbac, and you can register now. We'll have more details about the ride. But basically, we've
set up a registration. There's a liability release
that, you know, releases us and TxDOT, of course. Also
we'll know what your bike size is. We'll provide the
helmets. So all you really have to do is just have
comfortable clothing.

MR. HIBBS: Give us that Web site again.

MR. STALLINGS: It's
biketexas.org/txdotbac.

MR. GLEASON: And let me just go out on a
limb here and I would invite Russ and Allison, if you
wish to join the committee as alumni, you would be more
than welcome I am sure.

MR. STALLINGS: Well, I can tell you that
this is a game changer for engineers and planners.
We've invited them from around the state to come in to
look at these particular facilities. While Austin
doesn't have a complete network yet, they've got some
great examples. And so on this ride you'd be able to
see from the least expensive to the Cadillac version of
different types of bike facilities. So it's a really
great opportunity.

And you'll get to find out when you
combine electric bikes with a protected bicycle
facility, that's a game changer. It's a little bit like
electric cars except a whole lot bigger. Right now
there are 300 million electric bikes in use in the
world. There are 30 million being produced every year.
By far many times bigger on a worldwide basis than
electric cars are probably ever going to be. And so
it's taken off in Europe and China and Japan. And in
places like Amsterdam, people are exchanging their
regular bikes for electric bikes. Because for people
that care about transportation, it's like you'd give up
a manual typewriter for an electric typewriter. Well,
that's what's going to happen with electric bikes. It's.pretty exciting and it's still relatively new to this
country.

But because of your role, it's really
valuable for you-all to experience these technologies
combined, the infrastructure and the new type of
vehicle.

MR. HIBBS: And I got to tell you, I was
extraordinarily impressed with the ride that I got on
it. And I thought, at that time, that it would be so
helpful not only to get a chance to experience it
personally as a member of the committee, but also, like
Robin was saying, to see all these different types of
shared roadways that Austin has, so when we go back into
our community we can have a little more personal
firsthand experience of that.
And the meeting is October the 21st -- is that right? -- for those of you that need to put that on your calendar.

All right.

MR. STEINER: Billy?

MR. HIBBS: Yes, sir.

MR. STEINER: Just a comment. David Steiner.

Robin, just thinking about this, you know, is really kind of exciting and outstanding. But is there anything being done to publicize this or should be done to publicize what we're doing or we shouldn't?

You're shaking your head.

MR. STALLINGS: We only have 25 bikes.

It's not open to the public.

MR. STEINER: Not open, but that we're having the event, and is it an avenue to publicize what TxDOT and the Bicycle Advisory Committee is doing to build the infrastructure in the state. You know, it just seems like maybe an opportunity. Maybe it's not a good idea.

MR. STALLINGS: When we do these kind of things -- like we've done them for Austin City Council and for legislatures. And so usually what we do is we'll record it and then promote that it already
happened so that we've got photos. And so if anybody wants to use that through social media or any other way. We don't really want to have bandits on there, also. That's what you call it on a bike ride when somebody just joins and they don't register and they don't have their number tag, you know. So we can't really manage that because it could get too big.

MS. KAPLAN: Liability issues as well.

MR. STALLINGS: If it's small we can handle it. And we'll also have our own engineer on board that can help describe the facilities. So it's as much as you want to learn, but it's really just a great experience learning about these different kinds of facilities.

MR. STEINER: Just so we're clear what I was thinking. Is it something that we at least invite the media so that -- not publicize we're having the ride, but at least take the picture that "Hey, this happened."

MR. STALLINGS: We're very receptive to it.

MR. STEINER: You know, we're doing all this work. How well does it get out to the communities and the state that we're spending all this time? A lot of effort is going on. That may help to build the
support as Commissioner Austin mentioned, you know, getting that groundswell of support at the local communities. And sometimes the money comes from -- Lufkin's got it -- an anonymous donation. So I just wanted to -- that was a thought that hit me.

MR. TWING: Shawn Twing from Amarillo. I have one question. When you said you record the ride, are you using like the GoPhones that show it from the rider's perspective?

MR. STALLINGS: Not really. We would just have still photography. I mean, while we might have that, anybody would be welcome to do that. We don't really do that. And actually what we do is, is we try to get photos. And if you -- we give you the good shots, if we get any individual shots, and we sell you the bad ones.

(Laughter)

MR. STALLINGS: So if you look really out of shape or pretty miserable, we'll sell those to you.

MR. TWING: Well, the only reason why I ask is since we're looking at -- in a week I'll be in Boulder. And I always love riding in Boulder because they really are cutting edge. But when you see it from the cyclist's perspective in terms of space, you know, how close a car gets, you know, as part of promoting,
you know, safety and awareness, I mean, just put a
couple of cameras on a couple of helmets and you could
cut and splice. And as part of the feature presentation
you say, "Well, here's an unprotected intersection. You
know, here's one that's protected."

MR. HIBBS: That's a good point.

All right. So moving right along. We're
going to now go to the part of the meeting where we go
around the table and talk about what's going on in our
various communities.

And, Ramiro, we would like to start with
you today.

MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Well, as I mentioned
the last time, we are finishing up the Lower Rio Grande
Valley Active Transportation and Active Tourism Park.
That's the plan that has the plan for U.S. Bike Route
55, so that's 10 cities. All 10 cities in Cameron
County will be adopting that. And I know I owe you the
draft, so I'm on that.

Our two-and-a-half-mile extension of
our -- we call it the Foreground Battlefield Extension,
is about 60 percent complete. I want to commend the Far
District for working on that. It is on time, on budget
and they are diligently working through that, so that's
important.
We're also working on -- Teri visited us about a year ago. And, you know, we have that funding now for improving the crossings at major intersections. So our Battle Trail -- our Battlefield Trail crosses four or five TxDOT roads that are four lanes each. So it's a pretty daunting task. It's unsafe, so we're under design on those, and we're very excited about that.

In Brownsville we're up to about six open street events, Siclovia, a year. And we also submitted a TIGER Grant with the Island -- South Padre Island, including a dedicated bike facility over the Queen Isabella Causeway.

MS. WEAVER: You got the funding.
MR. GONZALEZ: Oh, wow.
MS. WEAVER: It just was announced today.
MR. GLEASON: We just got them in.
(Applause)
MS. KAPLAN: That's what working together does for us all.
MR. HIBBS: So drinks are on you. Right?
MR. GONZALEZ: So I guess -- I didn't know that. But I guess I can announce that. So that will include a dedicated -- we're working with the Far District -- a dedicated facility off the Queen Isabella
Causeway, and they're going -- engineers will have to do that.

MR. AUSTIN: Like put an arm or extension out.

MR. GONZALEZ: Yeah. I think 10 feet, another -- additional 10 feet onto the causeway. So you'll be able to take pictures on top of that causeway. And this, actually, in our plan was the number one component to it. That link to the island is important from a tourism perspective.

MR. AUSTIN: Just a little fun clarification. I met with the judge two days ago. It is the existing causeway, not the second. Right?

MR. GONZALEZ: The existing causeway.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay. Good.

MR. GONZALEZ: Although you know what? I think we need both.

MR. AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly.

(Laughter)

MR. AUSTIN: I heard from the judge. Just checking.

MR. GLEASON: Just to give you a sense of perspective, there's 500 million dollars nationwide for TIGER. TIGER is all modes. All right. They got 585 applications totaling 9.3 billion dollars. That's a
highly competitive environment. So congratulations.

   MS. KAPLAN: Wow. That is huge.

   MR. HIBBS: All right. Shawn, tell us what's going on in Amarillo.

   MR. TWING: Lots going on in Amarillo. We have a lot of construction, which is opening up opportunities. Because in the downtown area, which is -- what we're finally starting to see development-wise, is that downtown is being revitalized, streets are being torn down, old buildings. So now this is a perfect opportunity to start putting in more bike-friendly, you know, lanes and add that. So instead of having kind of an outward growing in, you know, the people involved would share the road with the business leaders that are doing this revitalization.

   We're talking about better ways, you know, to start incorporating that now. Somebody earlier had mentioned, you know, if you're already building and the equipment is already there, it's a small step as opposed to a tremendous step.

   MR. HIBBS: The incremental cost is low.

   MR. TWING: Amarillo has some bumpy roads politically, you know. But that seems to be starting to iron out, and my hope is that very soon we can start working more closely with the city government and people
start thinking, you know, a little bit further ahead, and going around and meeting the county commissioners.

The county judges and commissioners -- I mean, Amarillo is pretty landlocked. You know, I mean within the city, you get a lot of support. You start getting to the counties outside, you know, it's more of just showing them that, you know, we're really not a nuisance. There's a lot that we can do. In looking at the Route 66 Trail, you know, the frontage road from Amarillo to Vega to New Mexico is beautiful. It's some of the best blacktop you'll ever ride on. Absolutely gorgeous, and they put Route 66, you know, banners on it.

But what often gets overlooked is the east side of the Panhandle. That is absolutely beautiful. It's hilly. It's challenging. It's gorgeous. And, you know, I hope some of the focus starts heading back that direction. Because that's some of the best riding you'll ever do and I highly recommend it, if you ever get an opportunity. Give me a call if you're in Amarillo. I'll take you to some areas of canyons you never knew existed, and it's just breathtaking.

MR. AUSTIN: When you talk about Amarillo, don't forget about our travel centers, too. There's good destinations to stop and go into.
MR. TWING: And the travel centers all across I-40 are wonderful. I mean, they're great places.

MR. AUSTIN: Watch out for rattlesnakes.

MR. TWING: Yeah. We see all the signs.

Teri was like, "Really?" And I'm like, "Well, yeah, really." Don't let your child go running up there.

(Laughter)

MR. HIBBS: Thank you, Shawn.

Allison?

MS. KAPLAN: Just a quick update from Austin. The city council is considering a 720-million-dollar mobility bond. Allison Kaplan with Austin.

The city council is considering a 720 million mobility bond. Most of the dollars will go toward corridor studies that have already been finished. They just need the preliminary engineering and construction money to fund the plan that's been sitting on the shelf.

MR. STALLINGS: 120 million active transportation.

MS. KAPLAN: 120 million goes specifically towards the bicycle master plan and the sidewalk master plan. The bicycle master was adopted in 2014. The
sidewalk master plan was just adopted by council this year. So those are brand-new. I mean, the sidewalk master plan is brand-new this year.

The other thing I want to mention is, the City is starting up its process for the strategic mobility plan. Austin hasn't updated its area transportation plan since the '90s, as I'm aware. And so the update this year, they're starting the process and it should take a couple of years to finish. It's going to be a lot of public involvement.

Our transit agency, Capital Metro, has a couple of studies going on right now. One is Connections 2025, which is their five-year plan, updating that. And another is the central study for how they're going to improve transit in Central Austin, and those are small bike and ped components.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. Thank you very much.

Dave?

MR. STEINER: David Steiner.

A couple of things to note in the area. Since we last met, we actually got kicked off and started building our trail system at a county park along Lake Sam Rayburn. So this is something that they -- there's been a group in the area, the lake enhancement task force, that was really working to expand and
improve that park. And, you know, they have reached out
to several of us in the community around the trail
system. So that was partially funded. You know, it's
one of those that is funded through Texas Parks &
Wildlife. And then a lot of local labor. So that got
kicked off. It's kind of exciting. And then the heat
came, so it's kind of slowed down through the summer.
Plan to get going on that again here in the fall.

The other thing to note is just in the
Nacogdoches community, they formed the Healthy
Nacogdoches Coalition, which is taking on the -- I think
it's called -- and I'm not real familiar with this --
the Healthy Cities & Counties Challenge. So they've
gotten involved with that. They've reached out to me
and also some folks in the bike group in Nacogdoches to
help support that. So, you know, within that bike group
and that, there's groups in there working as to how can
we get lanes -- some dedicated bike lanes on certain
routes in the city, as well as just a groundswell of
really one guy, really just almost single-handedly
building out trails. You know, building out from SFA
elsewhere. So, you know, little small projects like
that going on.

MR. HIBBS: Bobby, how are things in
El Paso?
MR. GONZALEZ: Actually, you know, we just finished wrapping up the bikeway master plan for the city. It's going before the council on the 9th. And they've already identified several high-priority projects that they're going to hit the ground running, once council approves it. And both Allison and I actually worked on that plan when she was in El Paso. And so we were a part of that team.

We're also working on private projects for green boxes that are going to be strategically placed across the city, which is a good thing.

And then as Commissioner Austin discussed -- or stated earlier, we are continuing to work on the campus. UTAP continues to transform the campus into a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly campus. And so that's ongoing and things are looking up.

MR. HIBBS: Very good. I hope you didn't mind me adding a little extra something next to your plate there. Because you're at ground zero for so many good things that have happened over there. I think the committee members have really benefited from your presentation with all that's going on. Thank you.

Russ, again, thanks for serving on the committee and we look forward to meeting you on the road somewhere. And tell us what's going on in Houston.
MR. FRANK: Sounds good. Russ Frank from Houston.

I guess it's been a couple meetings ago we did a presentation about what's going on with the Houston bike plan. Since that time -- during that time, the plan was still in the public process. We have done lots of work, the city had done lots of work on that, and it was being presented to the public for comments. It's all been finished now. It's been presented to the city council. Now we're in the phase of sort of how does that become a legal guide for the city to implement. Our city council is very supportive of that plan.

Some of you may know we have a new mayor in Houston who has been very, very much pushing for multi-motorism in all types of things. And so some of the work there is for bike things and more bike trails. For metro it means what do we do now for more transit, also. He's come to the TxDOT Commission before. And so he's really pushing for how do you do all these different kind of modes. So I think the bike plan will be very easily integrated into lots of things the city is going to be doing, future projects and future improvement programs and that kind of thing. So that's kind of where we are.
MR. AUSTIN: You've got a new county commissioner, too.

MR. FRANK: We have a new county commissioner, yes. We have lots of changes in political, yes. And actually, the county commissioner that we have used to be one of our state senators and he's a huge cyclist. Rodney Ellis was a state senator. Now he's going to be a new Harris County commissioner. So he is --

MR. HIBBS: Bike friendly.

MR. FRANK: -- actually not a commissioner yet. He's the designated democrat to be in that spot, and there's no one else on that ballot. So there's an interim person in that spot right now; a commissioner had passed away. And so he will be, in January, the new commissioner for Harris County. So I think everyone is very excited. Like I said, he's a huge cyclist, so that will be good for Harris County.

MR. HIBBS: Awesome. Good, good.

Well, Karla, thanks again for a great presentation today. I can speak for Chairman Austin, who is furiously writing down all these notes, and he was saying, "I had no idea," over and over again. So he learned a lot today.

MR. AUSTIN: He's going to have his
MR. HIBBS: She really put a lot of effort into that. And so we appreciate it very much.

The floor is yours.

MS. WEAVER: Well, I hit the highlights. The only thing I would mention is that we recently coordinated with TxDOT to do public hearings in our region on bicycle-pedestrian projects. And so our Fort Worth and Dallas district, Teri came down, and we invited all of our communities and folks, and that was a really positive effort. And then our next Bike Advisory Committee meeting of our region -- we bring all the cities together quarterly. We're going to have It's all about TxDOT Day. So we've got the gentleman that presented to us about chip seal coming to talk and everyone is very excited about that. We invited all the bike clubs in our region.

MR. GLEASON: Very excited about chip seal.

(Laughter)

(Simultaneous conversation)

MS. WEAVER: We're looking forward to it; it's going to be good. And we're going to talk about the contracting process and how to get projects moving and meeting timelines and give our cities a little push
to keep things moving on their end. So we're looking forward to that next month.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

So, Anne-Marie, in Wichita Falls there's a very big event that's coming up.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

MR. HIBBS: And you've covered us up with freebies. And so thank you for that.

MS. WILLIAMSON: And I have extras, so if you didn't get it. And visitors, too. I'll just leave it over at the table. Whatever is there, please take it so I don't have to take it home.

So I'm really happy to talk about the Hotter'N Hell Hundred especially given everything that we talked about today. Because when we talk about tourism, you know, it's not 15,000 Witchitans that ride in the Hotter'N Hell Hundred. For the last -- this is our 35th-year anniversary. And so we've had -- I talked to the director a couple of days ago -- 350,000 riders for the endurance ride over the career of the Hotter'N Hell Hundred. So certainly folks who come into the area are getting a great impression of Wichita Falls and of Texas, because we have international visitors who come to the Hotter'N Hell Hundred.

MR. HIBBS: And the economic impact to
your region is extraordinary.

MS. WILLIAMSON: We're very pleased. The CVI calculated that, that recently it's about between seven and eight million dollars annually at the event -- the impact of the event of the Hotter'N Hell Hundred in Wichita Falls. So we're very pleased that we can have that impact on our community. It takes lots of volunteers and lots of hospitality to get people to come back. We also give back to the community to various charitable organizations, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, the sheriff's department, police, fire department. We provide a scholarship program for Midwestern State University that has a club cycling team, who have been ranked first in the nation several times. This year we're third in the nation, but we're racing against huge, huge universities.

We also have been doing a great deal more research in heat illness and hydration and what's the best way to do it. Because there's a lot of pop culture out there that is kind of not ideal. But also, just on a personal note, my husband is the medical director for the Hotter'N Hell Hundred. And I shouldn't say this because there's no wood around. But he's had a pretty good track record over the last 10 years in terms of a fatality not happening in Hotter'N Hell Hundred. I
don't want to say that too loud.

But we are able to bring in doctors in training to learn how to address heat illness and exercise-induced hyponatremia in the field. And so back in the day when I worked in the pediatric intensive care unit, we had what was called 3 percent sodium. So it's a very highly concentrated IV salt water. And I remember the night that I was working, that they came through and took all those vials out of our reach because of the fear that we would accidently give that instead of the regular normal saline because you, basically, can make someone a vegetable.

And so several years ago looking at the research Keith said, "You know, I think we should give 3 percent sodium IV push" -- or not IV push, "but IV at the Hotter'N Hell Hundred." And I was like "In the tent? Have you lost your mind? There is no way. I will not sign off on that." Like I had any say anyway. But we, as a committee, looked at the research. And since we have started doing that, we have had no ICU admissions, so the hospital is very pleased with us. And we have a great relationship anyway with them.

We provide all medical care at the Hotter'N Hell Hundred free. If somebody breaks a bone or has a potential that they've got a broken bone, we
send them to the hospital to get X-rayed, they come
back, there's no charge for that. We get great
community support of over 3,000 volunteers throughout
the community. So we're really, really, really happy
with that. And I hope that any of you who can would
come and join us at the Hotter'N Hell Hundred. You're
more than welcome. It's a great event. And thanks.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you.

And I'm so old school I used to take salt
tablets.

MS. WILLIAMSON: The other thing I want to
say is that we're also now, as of last year, having
disaster preparedness groups that are coming up and
setting up their mobile hospitals and breaking them
down. I mean, they need that experience. And so we've
also been able to get to meet some of those folks and
help them out in their training, and, as well, they're
helping us out now, because I get to work in
air-conditioning.

MR. HIBBS: And thank you for the
freebies.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. And I'll put the
other ones over there. Sorry I took so long.

MR. HIBBS: Joseph.

MR. PITCHFORD: Big news in Dallas. Over
the past year and a half, a group has come together, a
private sector group, to help leverage public-to-private
dollars to create a 50-mile loop around the city. Much
of that is existing, but there's about 16 miles' worth
of gaps that have to be filled. And if filled, we would
have a continuous 50-mile loop around our city, which
given here, from Dallas there's a lag in the nation in
being bike friendly. This would be really, really big
for us.

So this private sector group has come
together that would raise money that is for the form
501(c)(3) and put a price tag on it and it's 56 million
dollars, which includes 16 million dollars' worth of a
maintenance endowment. A contingency endowment being
very important there because you've got to maintain them
after you build them and some -- to some perks.
Twenty million dollars of that the City of Dallas has
agreed to put in the 2017 bond package.
Twenty-three million dollars would be private, and
13 million dollars of other -- different public sector
buckets. Our friends of the North Central Texas Council
of Governments I believe are to be of assistance in
identifying those other public sector buckets.

One important segment of this, the most
significant segment goes -- connects the Katy Trail to
the Trinity Strand Trail, which goes over Stemmons Freeway 35-E. And we will need some help from our friends at TxDOT to make sure that we're coordinating properly and doing it the right way in crossing over that major public roadway. But the momentum is something I've never seen in my time in Dallas, to actually make this happen. So I believe it will.

MR. HIBBS: Awesome. That's terrific.

All right. Well, Allison, it's your last meeting, too. And so don't forget your jersey, nor everybody else out there.

I did notice that last time when we talked about the jerseys and I said this is one of those deals where you got to be present to win, we got a full committee. I don't think there is any, you know, actual association with that. But anyway, thank you.

So, Allison, the floor is yours.

MS. BLAZOSKY: Thank you, Billy. There's quite a bit going on in the San Antonio area. But one thing that I will kind of highlight is the new addition of our bike map. It's the 5th edition for the City of San Antonio, and the MPO where I work has led each of those editions. This one has the level of comfort type of terminology, so we went back to that, instead of just putting where a bike lane is striped or where the trails
So if you're a resident of the area, then you can kind of find where you live and figure out -- if you are comfortable, as adults, on most roadways and you're confident, then you might be able to have a greater number of road types available to your ride. But maybe you want to bring your two-year-old along with you on that type, and so you're looking for a more protective off-street type of facility. And you can kind of see the difference in what is available to you.

So it's great for a route-planning perspective as a rider. But then it's also really helpful for staff and for elected officials, because I think it highlights more visibly where there are lacking areas, where there are gaps, and in terms of prioritization they can kind of help. Because we might want to put a bike lane on most streets. But because of our limited funding, we know that would take a long time.

So if you have got a pretty good, long access route, that's pretty comfortable for most people, but it's divided by something that looks red, so less comfortable, then you, the planner, might be able to say, "That's the intersection that we need to spend our dollars on to make it easier for people to cross that
"So that's the cool thing about the bike map. The physical copy focuses on San Antonio, but the MPO did it for every road in your region. So if you were to go online, you could look at that for the whole Alamo area.

MR. HIBBS: So you have lane miles,
Mr. Commissioner.

MR. AUSTIN: There you go.

MS. BLAZOSKY: When you say "lane miles," it's weirdly harder than you would expect it to be. So my empathy goes out to everybody who is trying to calculate these because it is a challenge. There's just so much going in, that you're trying to keep up with everybody's progress. But it would be a great thing to have for the Pocket Facts, if we can get that.

So at the MPO, I was the bike and pedestrian planner for three years and now I have moved on to be their regional transportation planner. So that's my other news that I'll share. We've hired somebody that's coming over from Florida and she'll be starting in September. So I'm hoping that -- even though she won't be on the committee, this is a great place to get a sense of what's going on in the state, since she's new to the state. So I'll ask her to attend the October meeting --
MR. HIBBS: Oh, that would be great.

MS. BLAZOSKY: -- and see if there's a bike available for her to try out. I am a total electric bike convert. I think they're great. And I hope some day I can add one to my collection.

With that, thank you so much for letting me be a part of your committee.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much, Allison. We appreciate your service as well.

This is the public comment time. Do we have any comment from the public?

MS. KAPLAN: Bill, I would like to add something. Teri Kaplan.

These little stickers that I've left for you-all, this was an effort that was done by Alamo Area MPO, which Allison represents. And if you take the back off -- not on the ones you have -- these are intended to go on your side windows so that when you look to your mirrors, you will think about bicyclists. That's why I gave you each two so that you'll put them on your -- the main cars that you drive. And there's some extras at the table if you'd like them. And we will be producing more. It's a joint effort between TxDOT.

And I just want to say how proud I am of everyone at the table and the efforts that you-all are
making to make bicycling and walking safer for everyone.

MR. HIBBS: Thank you very much.

Robin Stallings has asked for a chance to
address something.

MR. STALLINGS: Yeah. I wanted to
mention, when Karla gave her presentation, we were
talking about different types of facilities and lane
miles and all that. Bike Texas did a benchmark report
in 2012. The 35 largest cities in Texas, we did an
inventory of the bike and pedestrian accommodations,
including natural surface trails, paved trails,
sidewalks. And I believe Karla participated in it,
actually. And Brownsville did, basically, the 35
largest cities. And so our plan is to do that again.
So we have the staff person. We haven't quite
identified all the funding. Hint, hint.

But that tracks with the bicycle-friendly
program. So the communities that have either applied
for that designation, there are seven in Texas, or that
are considering applying in the future. Once they do
this very extensive survey that we have, then,
basically, they have a pretty good idea of how they
do -- if they wanted to get a bicycle-friendly
designation. And it's a rigorous methodology. TTI has
used it as a resource. And so it's a pretty useful
1 book. So in a way, we're not covering every area of
2 Texas. And we would love to expand it to include more
3 than the 35 largest cities. But that's what we're
4 building it around right now.

          Yes, sir?

MR. GLEASON: Who funded that 2012 effort?

MR. STALLINGS: Well, we funded it out of
8 pocket, which was pretty tough, but we --
9
MR. GLEASON: How much was it?

MR. STALLINGS: -- with a little bit of
11 money from REI. There's a national benchmark report
12 that's funded by the CDC, the Center for Disease
13 Control. And so they do the 50 largest cities in the
14 country and included seven cities in Texas, you know,
15 including several in North Texas, you know, Dallas/Fort
16 Worth and Arlington were included and, of course,
17 Austin, Houston, you know, San Antonio, El Paso -- not
18 El Paso.

          And so we wanted to make sure that it
20 would track also with that. So if you lived in a Texas
21 city you could compare yourself with any other city in
22 that list, or if you were in Tyler you could compare
23 yourself with Longview, or if you were in Amarillo you
24 could compare yourself with Lubbock. And so it was
25 widely -- you know, really popular. Because we need
that kind of data.

MR. AUSTIN: What did that study cost?

MR. STALLINGS: Well, it takes us about a hundred thousand dollars to do it.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay.

MR. STALLINGS: But it's very thorough. We've got samples of the 2012 model, so now we'll be able to measure the progress. And so we're happy to send and share copies with everybody on the committee. We'll send one to you, Commissioner.

MR. HIBBS: Okay. That would be great.

Okay. All right.

So, at this point, we need to talk about our future meetings, Teri.

MS. KAPLAN: I think we'll do that via e-mail with the committee members to save time.

We have TxDOT's photographer with us; Will is here today. I would like for everyone to -- I'd like for us all to take a photograph on the stairs of the Greer Building, and I want the first photograph to include everyone in the room. We have good representation from our commission office, from TPP, from FHWA, we've got out bicycle advocacy group and we've got PTN and, of course, the members. So I'd like us all to be in the photograph with the members up
front, and then photographs of the members.

       MR. HIBBS: And that would be
post-restroom break for the chairman. At this point,
we're -- we will stand adjourned.

       Commissioner Austin has graciously
provided us with these Don't Mess With Texas stickers.

       MR. AUSTIN: These are patches that you
can -- they're iron-ons. You can sew them or paste them
on -- I said paste them on -- iron them on.

       Thank y'all for being here. I've learned
quite a bit.

       And there's two folks I don't -- you know,
you may have met before. Tim Ginn, wave your hand. Tim
and Megan Kenney work in the commission office as
support. And I'll say one little known fact about Tim.
Any Longhorn fans in here?

       MR. HIBBS: Yes.

       MR. AUSTIN: Okay. You know that guy,
that Bevo that ran around on the -- in costume running
around the field during games? You're looking at one of
the guys. I just wanted you to know. Just so you know.

       (Simultaneous conversation)

       MR. HIBBS: With that important piece of
state official business, do we have a motion to adjourn?

       MS. WILLIAMSON: So moved.
MR. HIBBS: So moved by Anne-Marie.

MR. STEINER: Second.

MR. HIBBS: Second by David. All in favor say aye.

("Aye" spoken in unison)

MR. HIBBS: We'll see you in October.

Thank you-all.

(Proceedings concluded at 12:40 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE

STATE OF TEXAS  )
COUNTY OF TRAVIS  )

I, SUZANNE VILLA, a Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the above-mentioned proceedings occurred as hereinbefore set out.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT the proceedings of such were reported by me or under my supervision, later reduced to typewritten form under my supervision and control and that the foregoing pages are a full, true and correct transcription of the original notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 10th day of August 2016.

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