



Public Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting will begin at 10:05 am



July 24, 2025

Agenda

1. Call to order.
2. Guidance on virtual meeting participation.
3. Approval of minutes from January 23, 2025, meeting. (Action)
4. Approval of minutes from April 22, 2025, meeting. (Action)
5. TxDOT Public Transportation Division Director's report to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee regarding public transportation matters.
6. Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan Outreach Update. (Discussion)
7. 89th Legislative Session Update. (Discussion)
8. FY 2025 Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Application Update. (Discussion)
9. Public Comment
10. Propose and discuss agenda items for next meeting; confirm date of next meeting. (Action)
11. Adjourn. (Action)

Please mute yourself upon joining the meeting.

It is important to enter your name when joining the meeting – if you didn't do that, please exit the meeting and rejoin.

To comment on an agenda item, use the meeting's chat feature to let Theo know – he will let you know when to unmute your line.

Please don't place this meeting on HOLD – we'll all hear your hold tone.

Agenda Item 3

Approval of minutes from
January 23, 2025, meeting.

MINUTES FOR ADOPTION

Public Transportation Advisory Committee – Teams Meeting

January 23, 2025 - 10:00 A.M.

Committee Members Participating via Zoom:

John McBeth

Jim Cline

Dietrich Von Biedenfeld, Vice Chair

Participating in person:

Ken Fickes, Chair

James Oliver

JR Salazar

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division, PTN

Bonnie Sherman, Section Director, Statewide Planning and Program Development, PTN

Theodore Kosub, Strategic Programs Development Manager, PTN

Robbi Smith, Public Involvement Specialist, PTN

~~Frederico~~ Frederico Rodriguez, Government Affairs Analyst, GOV**AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to order.**

Chair Fickes calls the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Guidance on virtual meeting participation.

Kosub gives meeting guidance for those participating virtually.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Approval of minutes from November 21, 2024, meeting. (Action)**Motion:** Jim Cline

Recommends approval of minutes from the November 21, 2024, meeting.

Second: James Oliver

Members vote unanimously in favor of the motion. 10:07 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 4: TxDOT Public Transportation Division Director's report to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee regarding public transportation matters. (Discussion)

Director Gleason gives an update on upcoming Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) June awards for the service expansion program totaling just over \$2 million dollars to 9 rural transit districts. He notes that the division has flexibility for fine tuning service expansion budgets without having to return to the TTC for approval. Furthermore, he notes that FY 2025 rural and urban funding and FY 2024 federal rural funds will be awarded to Gulf Coast Transit District. He mentions the next round of large funding awards will be reviewed by the TTC in June or July if full year apportionments become available later in the year. This includes potential formula awards in June and discretionary 5310 funds in July.

Director Gleason touched on the Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan status and indicates that an update will occur at the next regular PTAC Meeting.

An update on potential rulemaking activities on the program side was discussed as a possibility later in 2025. Updates would be required due to circular changes and CFR updates. The existing 5310 program could also be examined for potential allocation updates.

As the final topic of the Director's Report, Gleason highlights the current Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Call for Projects. He suggests transit districts might partner with local communities on potential projects. Preliminary applications are due on February 21, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Statewide Active Transportation Plan Update. (Discussion)

Jeff Whitacre provides an update on the Statewide Active Transportation Plan (SATP) status. He details the plan's past outreach approach, engagement statistics and highlights the next round of outreach scheduled for Summer 2025. Whitacre details the top 16 challenges the SATP has identified and mentions an upcoming steering committee meeting.

Member Cline highlights the importance of pedestrian safety in the transit environment and in first/last mile connections. The intersection of active transportation modes and traditional transit modes should be considered in terms of pedestrian use and safety.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Federal Reauthorization Priorities (Discussion)

Frederico Rodriguez of TxDOT's Government Affairs Division gives an update on happenings in congress and department reauthorization priorities. He notes the status of the 119th Congress and ongoing coordination with the new administration. He mentions the next federal fiscal year will begin on October 1, 2025.

Rodriguez notes the current Infrastructure Bill, the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA), is set to expire in 2026. The department is working with our representatives in both Houses of Congress to identify a path forward. He notes the IIJA created a slew of discretionary grant programs, and notes the department generally sees that approach as dividing the funding pot unnecessarily. The use of formula program funding is preferred over discretionary grant programs. The department is interested in receiving more funding as a fast-growing state, but not necessarily with all the strings attached as they were in the IIJA. Specifically, unfunded mandates and overreach are being examined.

Another area of priority for the department is looking at the Build America Buy America (BABA) Act. This Bill has created practical headaches for procuring different materials, some of which are not necessarily manufactured in America. There is interest in BABA waivers which would allow for purchases of materials that are not necessarily manufactured or sourced in the United States.

The department is also examining the withdrawal of FHWA greenhouse gas rulemaking which added several reporting items and reviewing recent FTA rules which can be potentially burdensome.

Rodriguez mentions the department continues to work with partners and national organizations when looking at the next surface reauthorization bill and provides an update on which Texas representatives hold positions on various committees.

Member Oliver asks what the advisory committee can do to push these department federal reauthorization priorities.

Director Gleason mentions that this is a discussion item, but that members can act if they wish. He also encourages committee members to engage with associations and advocacy groups to solidify a simple message for Congress.

Chair Fickes mentions his interest in improving NTD data collection requirements. Much of the data that is asked for keeps increasing and is a challenge for providers to keep up with escalating data requirements.

Director Gleason mentions that the Council on Public Transportation likely has a recommendation to reduce data collection requirements. He also notes that if the committee has specific concerns or areas of interest, they should send them in as individuals, and this item could be reconsidered in a future meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Service Expansion Program. (Discussion)

Director Gleason clarifies that the Service Expansion Program (SEP) has funds over two years totaling \$12 million. Currently, \$10 million of the two-year total has been allocated, but an additional \$2 million will be reallocated at a future date. He also provides an update on the initial performance measures coming out of the service expansion program. Though in the initial stages, the performance metrics will be useful in determining the success of the service expansion program and may determine if funding would be maintained as part of an agency's budget.

Director Gleason notes September 2025 will mark a year of active service expansion program activities, so the department will have a better handle on how successful the program has been and will be able to tweak or modify services to make sure the SEP can stay in place.

Chair Fickes expresses interest in examining the fare structure associated with service expansion projects. He mentioned that SEP fare collection for modes like microtransit may be similar to current fixed route services, but it would be interesting to see a future date.

Member Cline appreciates receiving service expansion updates and would like to examine future opportunities for service expansion. The updates and metrics could be used as an argument for more expansion funds, but also to sustain current service.

Director Gleason mentions that another SEP update will be provided in the Summer of 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 8: PTAC Appointment Process. (Discussion)

Director Gleason gives an overview of the PTAC appointment process and history. He notes the current process uses appointment by the Executive Branch for PTAC members. The difficulty with the current process is timely appointment to the committee and the inability to have a complete committee. Currently, PTAC has six members with three vacancies.

Chair Fickes asks about the current process and wonders if an interested party could join the committee.

Director Gleason responds there is not a current formal process, but an interested party could work with the executive offices (Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House) to express their interest. At the moment, this is the best avenue of success given the structure of governing statute.

Member McBeth mentions the current difficulty of getting people appointed to PTAC. He expresses an interest in having appointments reserved for only public transportation providers and transportation users. He notes the difficulty of filling the three committee spots reserved for members of the general public.

Member Biedenfeld agrees with the predicament of getting people appointed to the committee, challenges of recruitment and issues associated with the appointment process.

Director Gleason agrees to provide any updates at the next PTAC meeting.

Member Oliver supports a membership comprised of providers and users because they are the ones who directly benefit from transit. He supports leaving the appointment process as is within the executive branch but suggests better defining member types. He expresses support for more provider membership, especially for rural and providers of West Texas, but notes that adding Metro system members to the committee would not be beneficial.

Director Gleason mentions that department staff take advisory committee appointments seriously and do a thorough job of vetting. This vetting includes geographic balance, but PTAC is currently determined by statute and not similar to other department advisory committees.

Member Cline states the importance of considering that people who pay for public transit generally are not the ones using it, so a broad perspective is important and valuable to keep on the committee.

AGENDA ITEM 9: Public Comment

Chair Fickes asks if there are any public comments, Kosub responds there is one comment.

Member of the public Buffa asks about an item in the federal reauthorization slides. Specifically, he asks why the department would be in favor of rescinding certain rules surrounding worker safety and minimum safety inspection programs.

Director Gleason responds that some of programs go beyond what is practical and necessary given the existing commitments to safety. The rescinding concern is typically from and focused on the opinion of Metropolitan systems. As smaller scale example, Galveston operates a single rail line but must respond to additional requirements that are already being covered and new regulations come with extreme reporting requirements.

So, this is not a reflection of diminished focus on safety, rather the current federal requirements are sufficient and additional requirements create a burden for operators.

Member Oliver agrees and mentions there is an issue of overreach and mission creep.

AGENDA ITEM 9: Propose and discuss agenda items for next meeting; confirm date of next meeting. (Discussion)

Chair Fickes suggests Thursday, April 24, as a potential next PTAC meeting date.

A potential conflict for members of the committee is identified for that specific date.

Director Gleason states that week in April will be examined as the next meeting date and staff will work to identify the best date for getting committee quorum.

AGENDA ITEM 10: Adjourn. (Action)

Motion: JR Salazar

Second: James Oliver

Members vote unanimously in favor of the motion. 11:37 A.M.

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 A.M.

Prepared by:

Theodore Kosub
Public Transportation Division

Approved by:

Ken Fickes, Chair
Public Transportation Advisory Committee

Agenda Item 4

Approval of minutes from April 22, 2025, meeting.

MINUTES FOR ADOPTION

Public Transportation Advisory Committee – Teams Meeting
April 22, 2025 - 10:00 A.M.

Committee Members Participating via Zoom:

Jim Cline

Participating in person:

Ken Fickes, Chair

James Oliver

JR Salazar

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division, PTN

Bonnie Sherman, Section Director, Statewide Planning and Program Development, PTN

Theodore Kosub, Strategic Programs Development Manager, PTN

Robbi Smith, Public Involvement Specialist, PTN

AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to order.

Chair Fickes calls the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Guidance on virtual meeting participation.

Director Gleason gives meeting guidance for those participating virtually.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Approval of minutes from January 23, 2024, meeting. (Action)

Without a quorum, minutes from the meeting of January 23, 2025, will slide to the next regular PTAC meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 4: TxDOT Public Transportation Division Director's report to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee regarding public transportation matters. (Discussion)

Director Gleason gives an update on upcoming Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) May awards including allocations for transit district boundary changes and lead planning agencies. Looking forward, July awards will include FY 26 state funding to urban and rural transit districts, FY 25 rural federal funding and first year 5310 program funding.

Director Gleason mentions the performance measure of cost per hour for rural funding allocations and informs the committee the division is examining cost per hour in relation to FY 23 and FY 24 data. Cost per hour will not be used in FY 25 allocations as factor, but it is being examined in terms of the last 10 years of performance data and in the context of major FEMA declared emergencies such as the pandemic. Next, he

highlights the current Transportation Alternatives call for projects and mentions that 311 preliminary projects applications have been received in the first round for a total request of \$1.1 billion. Detailed applications are due June 20, 2025, and October of 2025 is the target for awarding TA funds.

Director Gleason mentions the upcoming Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Call and highlights the intent to replace fleet and potentially implement facility projects in rural areas. Next, he discusses a set of proposed 89th Legislative Session bills that would amend the current structure of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC). He notes the status of the bills as currently in each chamber's Transportation Committee and states staff will continue to monitor progress. The proposed legislation would increase the committee's roster from the current 9 positions to 11, with 7 transit district members and 4 other key stakeholders.

Finally, he discusses two exceptional item requests for additional state funds to support fleet state of good repair and census 2020 impact mitigation funding. These two items did not make it into conference committee requests and are therefore unlikely to be funded this session.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Statewide Active Transportation Plan Update. (Discussion)

Tim Sorenson provides an update on the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan (SMTP). He details the plan's Spring Outreach Campaign and notes that the draft plan is currently under review. He details the challenges and strategies contained in the plan and notes that five key groupings have emerged for high level plan organization. Next, he covers the draft initial implementation steps including developing a network and hub plan, development of transit planning and design guidelines, establishment of a community of practice to address rural and small urban transit challenges, development of transit success metrics and enhanced data collection, identification of new sources of transit funding and increased flexibility for existing funding and a formalized plan for regular educational transit outreach.

Chair Fickes asks about economic development and the type of stakeholders engaged.

David Kolovson details a variety of economic stakeholders were engaged, including Greater Houston Partnership, Opportunity Austin, and Governor's Economic Development Office.

Chair Fickes highlights efforts in Harris County and mentions a Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) study on medical transportation and the economic benefits it generates.

Mr. Sorenson mentions the plan has examined case studies and relevant information will be incorporated in the plan.

Member Oliver discusses his experience with an economic development project in the Seguin area. He mentions the importance of planning for transit up front and having a point of contact for putting a transit plan together in economic development projects.

Member Cline asks about intercity bus service and raises the question of metrics for that specific service type.

Director Gleason clarifies that without being mode specific, a hub and network plan will identify key connection points that need to be fortified with service or facilities. The next level for the vision would address connections based on demand, thus defining the mode or investment level needed.

For instance, within the Texas Triangle high daily volumes might suggest that investment into higher capacity rail or high-speed rail should be considered.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Upcoming Rulemaking: CFR updates and Section 5310 Grant Program (Discussion)

Director Gleason mentions an upcoming rule concept and requests the committee's help in reviewing administrative code. He anticipates an upcoming rulemaking that would amend 5310 program rules to be consistent with federal guidance. The second area targeted for a proactive discussion is how the department allocates and manages funding within the 5310 program. The committee will be engaged with these two issues in the future and will have conversations surrounding the most effective way to distribute program funding. Currently 5310 funding program totals about \$10 million dollar per year. PTAC will be updated the rulemaking concept progresses and will be engaged in the fall for this rulemaking effort. Any rule changes would impact the next cycle of 5310 funding in the first part of calendar year 2027.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Future PTAC Meeting Schedule. (Discussion)

Director Gleason suggests future meetings for PTAC in July and October. The last two weeks July is the target for the next PTAC meeting, but staff will confirm availability with PTAC members.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Public Comment. (Discussion)

Citizen Ian Wilson mentions this is his first time listening in and applauds the committee for working on these projects. He states he is proud to be Texan and thanks all who are working on the statewide transit plan. He mentions transit benefits and suggests communicating those benefits broadly. Further, he suggests featuring public transit mode options and touting the business benefits transit provides. He suggests showing people examples on an individual and business level, since they strengthen the overall economic tax base.

Chair Fickes thanks Mr. Wilson for his comments.

AGENDA ITEM 9: Propose and discuss agenda items for next meeting: confirm date of next meeting. (Discussion)

Director Gleason suggests reviewing public comment on the draft plan at the next PTAC meeting.

Member Cline would like to see an overview of legislative proposals from the 89th Session at the next PTAC meeting and overall status after Sine Die.

AGENDA ITEM 10: Adjourn. (Action)

Chair Fickes Adjourns the meeting at 11:07.

Agenda Item 5

Director's Report

Commission Actions: July – September 2025

- **July:**

- FY 26 State Funding to Urban and Rural Transit Districts
- FY 25 Rural Area Formula Funding for Rural Transit Districts
- First Year Funding for Upcoming 5310 Program Projects

- **Aug/September:**

- N/A

Semiannual Operators Debrief

- Highlights
- Feedback
- Future Options



Semiannual Transit Operator's Business Meeting

Settling in 8:30 AM – 8:40 AM

Agenda Item 6

Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan Outreach Update

Texas SMTP 2050 Development Timeline



Upcoming Outreach & Engagement – TBA:Fall 2025



4-10 in-person public meetings across the state as well as live virtual meeting (Target October)



Presentations to SMTP Steering Committee
Key Transit stakeholders on the final plan



Public survey on priority implementation steps and opportunities to comment on the plan



Social media campaign and sharing kits about the SMTP

Outreach Goals

- Close the feedback loop with the public and with key stakeholders
- Raise awareness of collaborative work on the future of transit in Texas
- Galvanize support from transit champions for implementation steps

Agenda Item 7

89th Legislative Session Update

Transit Bills

Transit Bills	Caption	Final Status
HB 542	Relating to the use of certain money transferred to and deposited in the state highway fund as required by the Texas Constitution.	Failed to advance
SB 1770	Relating to the accommodation of pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, children, senior citizens, users of public transportation, movers of commercial goods, and motorists on streets and highways.	Failed to advance
HB 3187 / SB 1557	Relating to powers of regional transportation authorities.	Failed to advance
SB 2770	Relating to equitable representation in decision making for transportation planning.	Failed to advance
HB 4888	Relating to the provision by a regional mobility authority of financial assistance for transportation projects of governmental entities located in the area of the authority; providing authority to issue bonds.	Failed to advance

High Speed Rail Bills

High Speed Rail Bills	Caption	Final Status
SB 424 / HB 483	Relating to the use of state money for high-speed rail operated by a private entity and to the construction of certain high-speed rail.	Failed to advance
HB 1402	Relating to a prohibition on the use of public money to pay for the alteration of a roadway related to high-speed rail construction.	Failed to advance
SB 1769	Relating to the use of state money for high-speed rail operated by a private entity and to the construction of certain high-speed rail.	Failed to advance
HB 2003	Relating to provision to the Texas Department of Transportation of information regarding certain high-speed rail projects.	Signed by Gov, effective 9/1/25

PTAC Bill

PTAC Bill	Caption	Final Status
SB 1922 / HB 5295	Relating to appointments to the public transportation advisory committee.	Failed to advance

Transit Program Exceptional Items - Not Funded

- \$25 million (\$12.5 per year) for Rural Fleet Replacement and Facilities
- \$3.77 million (\$1.885 per year) for Census 2020 Impact Mitigation to State Funding Formula

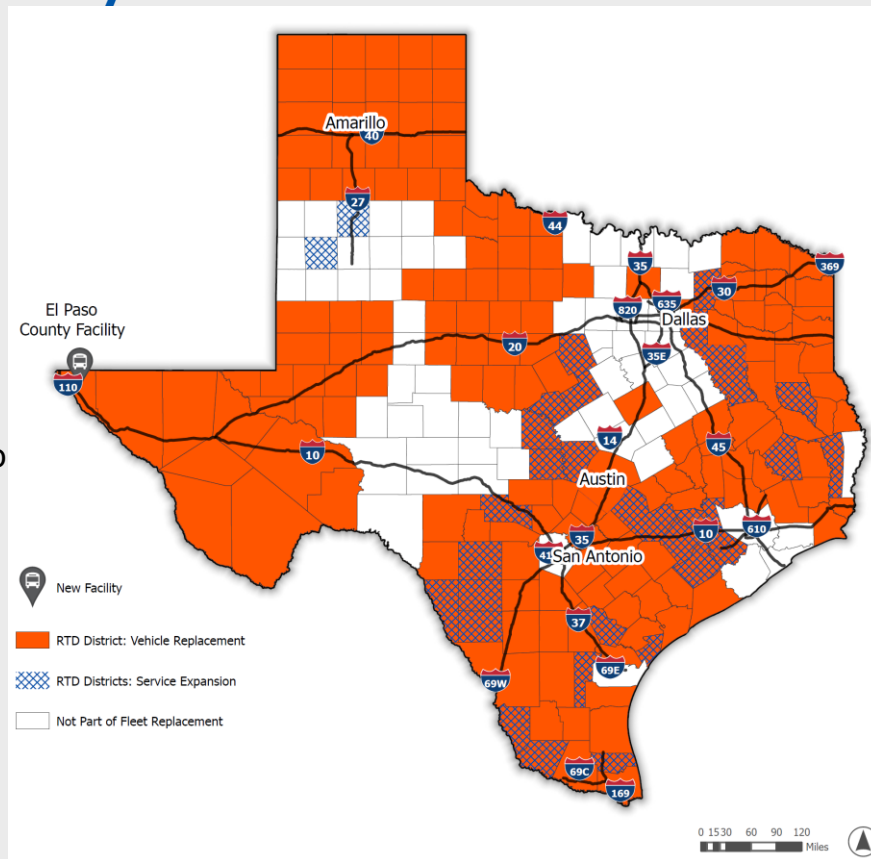
*89th Legislature Special Session 1: July 21, 2025 – August 19, 2025

Agenda Item 8

FY 2025 Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Application Update

Moving Texas Forward: Fleet & Facility Modernization for Rural Texans

- Total Federal Ask - \$39,611,630
- Replace 146 transit vehicles \$23,733,030.
- This amount will allow the RTDs to keep the fleet in a SGR through 2027.
- \$3,078,600 for 20 new buses for service expansion for 13 RTDs.
- \$12,800,000 for construction of an Operations & Maintenance Facility for El Paso County/El Paso Transportation Authority (ETA).
- Supported with State Funds - \$3,200,000
- TDCs - 5,362,326



Agenda Item 9

Public Comment

Agenda Item 10

Propose and discuss agenda items for next meeting;
confirm date of next meeting

Agenda Item 11

Adjourn