



NEVADA LEGISLATURE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION'S SUBCOMMITTEE TO STUDY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

(Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS] 218.682)

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The third meeting of the Legislative Commission's Subcommittee to Study Transportation Issues was held on Wednesday, January 23, 2008, at 9 a.m. in Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 2134 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. A copy of this set of "Summary Minutes and Action Report," including the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" ([Exhibit A](#)) and other substantive exhibits, is available on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/Interim. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (e-mail: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775/684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Senator Randolph J. Townsend
Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Senator Dennis Nolan, Chair
Senator Dina Titus
Assemblyman Kelvin D. Atkinson
Assemblyman John Ocegüera

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Marjorie Paslov Thomas, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Scott Young, Principal Policy and Special Projects Analyst, Research Division
M. Scott McKenna, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Jeannie Claussen, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

OPENING REMARKS

- Senator Dennis Nolan, Chair of the Legislative Commission's Subcommittee to Study Transportation Issues, welcomed members and presenters to the third meeting of the 2007-2008 Interim. Senator Nolan emphasized the importance of continuing to address Nevada's traffic congestion, transportation funding issues, and alternative modes of transportation. He stated all recommendations relating to transportation will be considered for discussion at the final Subcommittee meeting and work session on June 4, 2008.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 25, 2007, AND NOVEMBER 13, 2007, MEETINGS IN LAS VEGAS

- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

ASSEMBLYMAN ATKINSON MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 25, 2007, AND NOVEMBER 13, 2007, MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION'S SUBCOMMITTEE TO STUDY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, HELD IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SENATOR TOWNSEND, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PRESENTATION ON A PROPOSED AIRPORT IN IVANPAH VALLEY, NEVADA

- Rosemary A. Vassiliadis, Deputy Director, Clark County Department of Aviation, provided an overview of the Ivanpah Valley Airport project and pointed out that it will be the only airport in the nation to offer a full-service commercial passenger service, which would include: (1) international flights; (2) long-haul domestic flights; (3) charter flights; and (4) international-domestic cargo.

She discussed the following three major highway projects that would be necessary if the airport is approved:

1. Las Vegas Super Arterial—a dedicated roadway access system to and from the airport;
2. Las Vegas Boulevard South Bypass—an alternate route (not going to the airport) designed to service the residents of Good Springs and Sandy Valley; and
3. Interstate 15 (I-15) South Airport Interchange—an access roadway to the Las Vegas super arterial roadway from the airport, which would allow traffic to connect to the inbound direction on I-15.

Ms. Vassiliadis reported the cost of the project is \$200 million and would be funded by airport revenues generated by passenger facility charges and general airport revenues. She stated that the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) included a study of the three aforementioned major highway systems. She indicated the EIS did not show a significant impact on traffic congestion on I-15, and confirmed that other modes of transportation would have access to the right-of-way on the Las Vegas super arterial roadway.

Details of Ms. Vassiliadis' Microsoft PowerPoint presentation are available as [Exhibit B](#).

- Susan G. Martinovich, P.E., Director, Nevada's Department of Transportation (NDOT), stated the Ivanpah Valley Airport project is a priority for the State. She affirmed that NDOT is currently going through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the I-15 corridor from I-15/U.S. Highway 95 (Spaghetti Bowl) to the APEX Interchange. NDOT will include the proposed airport in the NEPA.

She also mentioned that NDOT is working collectively with Clark County, the City of Henderson, and the City of Las Vegas to facilitate the movement of goods by motor carriers. More motor carriers will utilize I-15 as freight increases at the ports of Los Angeles and San Diego.

Continuing, Ms. Martinovich mentioned that NDOT is part of a Western coalition working with Arizona, California, and Utah to address the concerns involving freight movement and goods. In addition, NDOT is working in conjunction with California on various highway projects, such as widening of lanes and truck climbing lanes to facilitate movement into the State from the southern ports of California through Las Vegas and the entire I-15 corridor.

- Jacob Snow, General Manager, Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation ([Exhibit C](#)) and reported that the RTC of Southern Nevada is conducting a transit option study to determine available corridors and the best transit modes to service the Ivanpah Valley Airport, which include: (1) express bus service; (2) rapid transit by bus; and (3) future light rail. In addition, he mentioned the RTC of Southern Nevada is working with NDOT to preserve right-of-way for transit on I-15 as part of the high occupancy vehicles lanes so express busses could also use those lanes. Mr. Snow concluded the transit option study will be completed by the end of this year.

UPDATE OF THE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF THE CALIFORNIA-NEVADA SUPER SPEED GROUND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

- Bruce A. Aguilera, Chairman, California-Nevada Super Speed Ground Transportation Commission, provided an overview of the California-Nevada Interstate Maglev Project (CNIMP). He stated the Maglev train is safe, reliable, and environmentally friendly

and can travel up to 300 miles per hour. He noted that the 260-mile trek from Las Vegas to Anaheim will take approximately 87 minutes, and the train will carry 17,544 seated passengers per hour in each direction and will use only 16 percent of the land that is required to build an eight-lane highway. He added that when the train is not at its full passenger capacity, the train will also haul freight. Mr. Aguilera also discussed the timelines for completion and the costs involved for each segment of the Las Vegas to Anaheim corridor. Refer to [Exhibit D](#) for Mr. Aguilera's Microsoft PowerPoint presentation.

- M. Neil Cummings, President, American Magline Group, Los Angeles, California, reported that the CNIMP is a remarkable mode of transportation connecting southern California and southern Nevada. He stated that once the EIS has been approved, the CNIMP will move forward with the environmental work on the corridor. He added that until the environmental work is completed, the CNIMP cannot obtain federal funds or issue taxes and bonds. In conclusion, he stated that the CNIMP is 18 months to two years away from receiving two record of decisions, which are: (1) a programmatic record of decision, which lays out the entire plan for the full corridor (Las Vegas to Anaheim); and (2) a site-specific record of decision, which would allow construction to begin in Nevada and allow the State to have the first 300 miles per hour Maglev train operating in the United States.

PRESENTATION ON INTERMODAL FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION, RAILWAYS, AND FUTURE RAIL PROJECTS IN NEVADA

- James W. Mallery, Transportation Planner/Analyst III, NDOT, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation ([Exhibit E](#)) and discussed intermodal freight transportation, railways, and future rail projects in Nevada. He noted that rail traffic is at full capacity. He discussed the following projects:
 1. Land Ferry Alternative;
 2. Amtrak's California Zephyr;
 3. Oakland to Reno Amtrak Extension; and
 4. The Proposed Talgo Train between Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

In addition, Mr. Mallery discussed future mobility demands and concluded that NDOT will explore ways to secure funding to meet the future needs of the transportation infrastructure.

- Paulette Carolin, FAICP, Principal Planner, RTC of Southern Nevada, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation ([Exhibit F](#)) and discussed the results of the Las Vegas to Los Angeles Rail Corridor Improvement Feasibility Study. The study included, but was not limited to:

1. Elements of service feasibility;
2. Needed rail improvements;
3. The impact of fares and schedules on ridership;
4. The impacts of increased travel time on ridership and revenue;
5. The three conceptual station areas considered; and
6. Future phases of project development.

In conclusion, Ms. Carolin stated that funding is unavailable to construct the line at this time; however, the RTC of Southern Nevada will make every effort to secure additional funding for intermodal freight transportation, railways, and future rail projects to eliminate traffic congestion.

OVERVIEW OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S "CORRIDORS OF THE FUTURE PROGRAM" AND IMPLEMENTING A "COMMERCE ONLY LANE" PILOT PROJECT IN NEVADA

(As directed by Chairman Nolan, this agenda item was taken out of order.)

- Scott Rawlins, P.E., Deputy Director, NDOT, gave an overview of the "Corridors of the Future Program" (CFP) and its primary goals. He noted there is a Western States Coalition comprised of Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah that collectively will: (1) develop measures to improve the quality of the highway for users; (2) focus on commerce and goods movement; and (3) provide innovative project delivery concepts. He also indicated the CFP is providing Nevada with: (1) appropriations and earmarks; (2) opportunities for streamlining project delivery and environmental processes; and (3) innovative financing and project delivery mechanisms.

Mr. Rawlins noted that NDOT will be requesting "seed money" from the federal government to conduct a system-wide corridor study of all transportation modes and major intermodal connections along the I-15 corridor across the Western States. He concluded that a Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared with the United States Department of Transportation to determine the roles and responsibilities of NDOT in the study.

Details of Mr. Rawlin's Microsoft PowerPoint presentation are available as [Exhibit G](#).

PRESENTATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF MOTOR CARRIERS IN NEVADA

- Ted Scott, Director of Special Projects, American Trucking Association (ATA), Washington D.C., presented an overview of the motor carriers in Nevada ([Exhibit H](#)). He discussed the primary roles of the trucking industry and how motor carrier traffic effects the quality and sustainability of the State's roadways. He expounded on the trucking industry's economic future and growth and highlighted the following:
 1. Projected increase in various domestic product growth sectors;
 2. Freight transportation tonnage;
 3. Estimated averages for annual daily truck traffic; and
 4. Freight-truck highway flows.

There was general discussion in regard to the revenue sources available, weight distance taxes for trucking, and the impact it has on commerce.

Continuing, Mr. Scott noted the ATA's support of tolls and truck lanes because of the safety advantages. He stated that 70 percent of truck accidents are determined to be the fault of the car driver. In addition, he said interstate trucking and out-of-state registered trucks contribute to the highway user fees and taxes in Nevada through the International Fuel Tax Administration and the International Registration Plan. He stated that the ATA was not in favor of weight distance taxes as it takes more time and money to collect the fees from the trucking industry and it is not cost effective. He stated the two-tiered system, which is the fuel tax and registration fees, is the best way to collect user fees from motor carriers.

- Chairman Nolan mentioned that in discussions with the trucking industry, it has been conveyed they will pay their share for the roads they travel on to conduct business and assist in funding Nevada's future highway projects.
- Mr. Scott stated that the Motor Carriers Association, the ATA, and the interstate trucking community would support an increase of the fuel tax and registration fees provided the revenue was allocated to the highway infrastructure or freight infrastructure. He said the fuel tax would not impact trucking because freight movement is under contract to a shipper. He pointed out that tolls would not be supported by the industry if it meant a rate increase since the shipper already pays an established rate based on miles driven. If tolls are created, he noted it was important to have an alternate route for trucks.

Discussion ensued regarding highway damages from trucks and vehicles.

- Susan G. Martinovich, previously identified, spoke on a cost allocation study performed in 1999 by NDOT, which covered two classes of vehicles (basic vehicles weighing 10,000 pounds or less, and heavy vehicles). She stated the findings showed discrepancies in the numbers found for the contributions of revenue and highway costs from each class of vehicle. She noted NDOT plans to conduct another highway cost allocation study and will use the methodology developed by the cost allocation from the federal government and will present data from the study during the next legislation session.

PRESENTATION ON THE TAHOE-RENO INDUSTRIAL CENTER

(As directed by Chairman Nolan, this agenda item was taken out of order.)

- Lance Gilman, Director of Marketing, Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI) Center, presented an overview of the TRI Center and noted it consisted of 104,000 acres and is the largest fee-owned property in Nevada. He stated the USA Parkway connector is the most significant cutoff, which allows traffic to have emergency access and connects to U.S. Highway 50, which provides access to southern Nevada, Lyon County, and the City of Yerington. He also mentioned that with the cost of fuel escalating, trucking and rail transport are critical to the State's needs. He mentioned the TRI Center is currently served by the Union Pacific Railway and BNSF Railway, but the TRI Center has applied for permits for their own private short-line rail system.

Responding to questions from Chairman Nolan regarding transportation issues that coincide with the growth at the TRI Center, Mr. Gilman answered that the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor is not running at full capacity and there is a lot of room for growth. He further stated that because I-80 runs through a canyon, there is a problem with accessibility when accidents occur. He made the following recommendations:

1. Create a set of detours for emergency vehicles;
 2. Install directional signage so traffic can be directed back to the escape route; and
 3. Secure funding to finance the USA Parkway.
- Mr. Gilman noted that four and a half miles of the USA Parkway has been constructed with private funds.
 - Senator Titus asked if Storey and Washoe Counties had been approached to see if they would put a question on their ballot seeking funding to help pay for the completion of the USA Parkway.

- Gregg Hess, Chairman, Storey County Commissioner, was of the opinion that the bond would pass in Storey County because of the popularity of the project. He also indicated the best approach would be Sales Tax and Revenue (STAR) bonds instead of collecting taxes from the public or receiving funds from a toll road.
- Vince Griffith, Project Manager and Design Engineer, Reno Engineering Corporation, and a team member of the TRI Center, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation and gave an overview of the TRI Center ([Exhibit I](#)).

PRESENTATION ON INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 80 CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE TRUCKEE CANYON AREA

(As directed by Chairman Nolan, this agenda item was taken out of order.)

- Susan G. Martinovich, previously identified, emphasized that NDOT is moving forward with the I-80 Corridor Study and is exploring ideas and strategies to facilitate mobility along the corridor ([Exhibit J](#)). The I-80 Corridor Study will address: (1) access; (2) expansion; (3) future needs and volume; (4) road closures due to inclement weather; and (5) lack of parking for motor carriers. She also listed some of the issues with the East Truckee Canyon (ETC) corridor along I-80, which include: (1) physical and environmental constraints with the water and mountain terrain; (2) demands for commercial trucking; (3) demands for local growth; and (4) challenges with proposed developments.

Ms. Martinovich stated that upon completion of the corridor study findings, the recommendations will be submitted for approval to the RTC of Washoe County, local jurisdictions, and the NDOT Board of Directors. When approved by the Board of Directors, NDOT can move forward with the projects.

- Gregory Krause, Executive Director, RTC of Washoe County, reported on the I-80 ETC Plan/TRI Center. He stated that in order to accommodate and plan for growth of the TRI Center, the RTC of Washoe County foresees the need for a major investment in increasing capacity of the I-80 corridor in the next ten years. He offered the following solutions for meeting the challenges in transportation services and infrastructures: (1) widening I-80 to provide frontage roads and extend the roads from the TRI Center to the Mustang Interchange in order to accommodate the projected 50,000 daily trips; and (2) plan other alternative links that will connect the development on the north and south side of I-80 in the ETC to the rest of the arterial network extending up into Spanish Springs to the north and into the South Truckee Meadows to the south.

Details of Mr. Krause's Microsoft PowerPoint presentation are available as [Exhibit K](#).

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m. The next scheduled meeting of the Subcommittee is for February 19, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannie Claussen
Senior Research Secretary

Marjorie Paslov Thomas
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Senator Dennis Nolan, Chair

Date: _____

LIST OF EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda” provided by Marjorie Paslov Thomas, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit B](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Ivanpah Valley, Planning Southern Nevada’s Future Full Service Commercial Airport,” dated January 23, 2008, submitted by Rosemary A. Vassiliadis, Deputy Director, Clark County Department of Aviation.

[Exhibit C](#) is a copy of a slide show titled “Ivanpah Airport, Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada,” furnished by Jacob Snow, General Manager, Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada.

[Exhibit D](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “California-Nevada Interstate Maglev Project (CNIMP),” dated January 14, 2008, presented by Bruce A. Aguilera, Chairman, California-Nevada Super Speed Ground Transportation Commission.

[Exhibit E](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Legislative Subcommittee to Study Transportation, A System Partnership in Transportation,” dated January 23, 2008, presented by James W. Mallery, Transportation Planner/Analyst III, Nevada’s Department of Transportation (NDOT).

[Exhibit F](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas to Los Angeles Rail Corridor Improvement Feasibility Study,” dated January 23, 2008, submitted by Paulette Carolin, FAICP, Principal Planner, RTC of Southern Nevada.

[Exhibit G](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Corridor of the Future, Interstate 15, Mobility for America’s Future,” submitted by Scott Rawlins, P.E., Deputy Director, NDOT.

[Exhibit H](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Nevada Legislative Commission Subcommittee to Study Transportation Issues,” presented by Ted Scott, Director Special Projects, American Trucking Association.

[Exhibit I](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center,” furnished by Vince Griffith, Project Manager and Design Engineer, Reno Engineering Corporation, and Team Member of the Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI) Center.

[Exhibit J](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Welcome! I-80 Corridor Study,” dated January 23, 2008, presented by Susan G. Martinovich, P.E., Director, NDOT.

[Exhibit K](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Presentation to Legislative Commission’s Subcommittee to Study Transportation Issues, I-80 East Truckee Canyon (ETC) Plan/Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center (TRI),” submitted by Gregory Krause, Executive Director, RTC of Washoe County.

This set of “Summary Minutes and Action Report” is supplied as an informational service. Exhibits in electronic format may not be complete. Copies of the complete exhibits, other materials distributed at the meeting, and the audio record are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library online at www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm or telephone: 775/684-6827.