NEVADA LEGISLATURE
REGIONAL RAIL TRANSIT ADVISORY WORKING GROUP

(Assembly Bill 256 [2025])

MINUTES

February 23, 2026

The second meeting of the Regional Rail Transit Advisory Working Group for the 2025–2026 Interim was held on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 1 p.m. in Room 1 of the Legislative Hearing Rooms, 7120 Amigo Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 2134, Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada.

The agenda, minutes, meeting materials, and video recording of the meeting are available on the Working Group's meeting page. The video recording may also be found at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/. Copies of the video record can be obtained through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (publications@lcb.state.nv.us or 775/684-6835).

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Assemblymember Max E. Carter II, Chair
Hugh Anderson, Managing Director and Partner, Hightower Las Vegas
Tommy Blitsch, Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Officer, Teamsters Local 631
Justin Jones, Commissioner, District F, Clark County Commission
M.J. Maynard-Carey, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
Jacob Snow, Business Development Specialist, GCW Engineering, Inc.

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Senator Skip Daly, Vice Chair
Angela Fuss, Assistant Development Services Director, Development Services, City of Reno
Jim Gee, Director of Public Transportation and Operations, Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada
John Hester
Christopher Martinovich, Transportation Manager, Transportation Division, Carson City Public Works

WORKING GROUP MEMBER ATTENDING REMOTELY:

Cole Mortensen, Principal Consultant, Parametrix

WORKING GROUP MEMBER ABSENT:

Richard Landon

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Alex Drozdoff, Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division
Keely Latham, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division
Crystal Rowe, Assistant Manager of Research Policy Assistants, Research Division
Aaron MacDonald, Senior Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division

Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.
[Indicates a summary of comments or clarification.]

AGENDA ITEM I—OPENING REMARKS

Chair Carter:

Good afternoon, we are here for the second meeting of the AB 256 Regional Rail Working Group Committee. I appreciate you all showing up and we will ask Ms. Rowe to call the roll, please.

[Roll call taken.]

Please mark anybody that is absent, excused; anybody that shows up—please record them as present when they arrive.

Thank you all for showing up today. I would like to go over a little housekeeping; please turn all your electronic devices to silent, and please, every time you speak on the mic, please identify yourself for the record. If you are joining us in the audience, please sign in at the table near the entrance, and also mark if you are planning on testifying. Thank you.

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Carter:

Today, we will go into the first item of business—Agenda Item II. Public comment can be provided many different ways, either in person, online—excuse me, not online but via phone, email, and mail. With that being said, let us go up north. Is there anybody wishing to provide public comment in Carson City?

Josh Hobson, Carson City Resident:

Good afternoon. I am currently pursuing a master's degree in climate change leadership from the University of New England. My project for my environmental health class is taking a look at the environmental and public health impact, as well as both personal and municipal financial benefit that would come from building a robust commuter train system here in northern Nevada. The highest priority, of course, is connecting Reno and Sparks; and second to that is probably getting all the tourists out of their cars in the Reno Basin. The next highest after that is connecting this building we are in right now, to the international airport 30 miles north of us. By 2040, we expect to have over 800,000 residents within about an hour of the airport. This used to be a train state, and both Reno and Carson were train towns. We can use the technology of the past—that is used worldwide to connect people—to be an option for those of us who choose to live in these valleys. My assignment is actually due next week, so I do not have that yet for you. But I will be presenting that as a public comment once I have finished it, and certainly my advocacy for this will not end when the assignment is submitted. Thank you so much for looking into this clear public good. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. Is there anybody else in Carson City that would like to make public comment? Please sir, know that you can submit your comments online, and it will be put into the record. No more appearing up in Carson City.

Let us come down here to Las Vegas. Sir, you have got the mic. Excuse me, is there anybody in Las Vegas that would like to provide public comment? None appearing. AVH [Audio Visual Hearings Unit], could you put the next caller on the line, please?

AVH:

Thank you. Chair, the public line is open and working. We have no callers for public comment at this time.

Chair Carter:

Well, with that being said, thank you all very much. We will close the first period of public comment, remembering that there is another opportunity at the end of this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM III—OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION IN NORTHERN NEVADA, INCLUDING PASSENGER RAIL CONSIDERATIONS

Chair Carter:

Next, we are going to Agenda Item III, which is an overview of transportation in northern Nevada, including passenger rail considerations. To present this item, we have two of our Working Group members, Mr. Gee and Mr. Hester, as well as Paul Nelson, Government Affairs Officer with the RTC [Regional Transportation Commission] of Washoe County. I understand this presentation includes a general collaboration, and I want to tell all partners—thank you very much for working together. With that, the floor is yours, sir.

John Hester, Washoe County Resident Member, Regional Rail Transit Advisory Working Group:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also want to introduce Austin Osborne, the Storey County Manager, who is with Mr. Anderson. We will have some comments at the end of our presentation. (Agenda Item III A).

First slide, I want to start with what we call the Trans-Sierra Transportation Coalition. It is really an illustration of the ongoing communication we have had among jurisdictions in northern Nevada and into California. The important result of this Coalition was in June 2023; they issued a report from—they being the California Department of Transportation or Caltrans—which I will give to the clerk to put into the records (Agenda Item III B). It is entitled Reno Service Extension into the Counties of Sacramento, Placer, Nevada, and Washoe; and that is the result of them, and California people, and Nevada people—Nevada entities working together to talk about the idea of extending the rail corridor in California, called the Capitol Corridor, from Sacramento to Reno. It would have six daily trips instead of one, and it would basically extend that service from Sacramento through those stations listed in the slide to Reno. Travel to and from Reno to the west is important because we have employees and tourists that come into Reno, and people from Reno who go to Truckee and Tahoe, and west; plus the I-80 Corridor—just like going east of Reno, has capacity constraints. That is an important kind of foundation to let all of you know, particularly those who are not that familiar with us in northern Nevada, that we all work together and have been working together. That is really part of a larger picture. I want to give you a perspective on northern Nevada.

Next slide, please. This slide is really a view of the rail corridor, including from where I was talking about in Truckee—east to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI) Center. We view that—all

of us working together—as a transportation, a critical transportation spine in northern Nevada. Let me talk about that a little bit from west to east. In the west, there is Truckee, which you can see and that connects to the Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART), which is a bus system that serves the West Shore, North Shore, East Shores into Washoe County with funding from RTC Washoe. That is one way that we are already connected across state lines via rail.

The second, if you will follow me from left to right on that slide to Downtown Reno. In Reno, the RTC Fourth Street station, their main station for their bus system and Bus Rapid Transit System is diagonally across from the Amtrak Station, which the City of Reno is now working on through their Redevelopment Agency. It connects to the RTC system, which you will hear more about in a minute, which covers pretty much all of Reno-Sparks; plus has connections to Carson City, and when it gets to Carson City, connects to the Jump Around Carson or JAC system and through the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) to Douglas County—that system goes up to the Lake and on the East Shore of Lake Tahoe connecting back to that TART System. TTD runs a seasonal service. We have also, in the past, run a pilot project RTC to Incline Village with funding that we received through Senator Catherine Cortez Masto. Plus, we have private providers like the hotel shuttle, ski shuttles, and Amador lines that go between these areas. We see that the rail is a key part of holding/putting these systems together. The third part about that, and I think where we want to spend more of our focus is moving further to the east to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center. For that, I would like to turn over to Mr. Gee.

Jim Gee, Director of Public Transportation and Operations, Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada:

Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. The focus of my presentation will be specifically looking at the I-80 Corridor and even more specifically, the connection between Reno, Sparks, and the TRI Center. That is an approximately a 14-mile corridor. It has currently today, about 150 crashes a year. Generally, once every other day we are having a crash; 20,000 commuters are currently using that service to travel between Reno, Sparks, and the TRI Center. On a narrow four-lane interstate, with that many commuters, and that many crashes, we have and no options for folks to use alternative means; there is an ongoing issue with service to work for those folks.

Next slide. With that in mind, the RTC decided to do a study to look at the use of the existing Union Pacific line between Reno, Sparks, and the TRI Center. That is a commuter rail study. We are fortunate enough to be funded. not only by RTC, but we have a lot of partners who are also very interested in this problem—NDOT [Nevada's Department of Transportation], Storey County—who is represented here. EDAWN [Economic Development Authority] with Panasonic and Tesla, a lot of folks came together because there is a joint recognition that there is a problem that we need to look at and address and see if we can solve.

As stated, our study focused, specifically, on the use of the existing rail line. It was not to look at light rail, which is a different type of train. It was not to look at other means or other corridors. It was looking at the existing infrastructure that was already there, and how we can quickly get that infrastructure in use, not only for use by freight, but also for use by passengers. RTC went out and we commissioned a firm by the name of WSP to perform that study. WSP is an international leader in this type of work. They have worked specifically with Union Pacific on other projects around the country, which is why we wanted them to help us with this project. They in turn have gone out, they have interviewed the employers and their travel needs, look at the shift times, look at the ways that people are getting there now to determine the ridership estimates and also have looked at the freight, because we

recognize that if we are going to move passengers on Union Pacific line, we are obviously going to need permission from Union Pacific—they own the line and by having our trains on their line, they not only assume risk but they also lose capacity. What we need to make sure is that we come up with a solution that works not only well for passengers but also works well for freight.

On the freight side, we have examined the use of a lot of double tracking. Right now, a large portion of that corridor is single track between Reno, Sparks, and the TRI Center. To add capacity, we are going to need to do some double tracking. We have identified areas in that canyon through the Truckee River Valley that we could add some double track and to add capacity to the freight side.

Additionally, we are looking at where do we store vehicles, both freight and passenger, and on the TRI Center side that we would have to add some storage capacity so we can get trains out of the way essentially, and be able to keep freight moving while we are boarding and unboarding passengers.

To really make this system work, we also looked at the freight opportunities, and what if we could deliver freight all the way up to the door of the factory for Tesla and Panasonic, which are the two largest employers out there; and they share essentially the same building and the same campus. We know that job count is going to continue to grow. We also know that their freight movements are going to continue to grow because of their growing production. That gives us an opportunity to move a lot of freight by rail instead of truck, which will not only reduce the traffic on Interstate 80, but give those companies a more reliable way of moving around the community.

On the passenger side, we have done a lot of conceptual engineering. First, we have looked at station alternatives within Downtown Reno. Obviously, the existing Amtrak Station is a pretty good candidate. We have freight, we have passenger service there right now. We also recognize that a station in Sparks would make a lot of sense because we want to capture people before they get on Interstate 80 and start traveling to the TRI Center. But we do not want to have people double back to Reno if they are coming from Sparks, which is where the station in Sparks does make a lot of sense. We have looked at where do we put the trains at night, because we cannot keep them on the tracks obviously. We need a layover facility out of the way.

Then within the TRI Center itself, we looked at a number of passenger and freight alignments within the TRI Center. Here are some of the station outlines that I just mentioned. Within the TRI Center, we looked at six different alignments, three different transfer station locations. Quite simply as we look at the problem and look at the people and look at the opportunities—we believe that the closer that we get to the Tesla building and the Panasonic building, the more successful our service will be. With that in mind, our preferred alternative is right up Electric Avenue and basically paralleling the road that is there now. We also looked at where do we put passenger stations within the TRI Center. Again, being as close to Tesla and Panasonic really makes the most sense in terms of ridership. Bear in mind that we would have to have a circulator system in place to get folks around the industrial park to some of the other jobs out there.

What we see as we look at this project—and we are wrapping up—we see a real opportunity for improving the freight movement for the companies that are there and improving the passenger movement so employees can get the work.

In the short term, what we are going to recommend is using the existing tracks and getting a system up and running as quickly as possible, especially while Interstate 80 is getting

ready to start construction of a third lane. If we can start during that construction period, that will help our ridership because frankly, folks and commuters are going to be discouraged by the construction, and they might be more likely to take a train. We have the infrastructure already in place. We have done some modeling with UP [Union Pacific] to look at how we can place trains on the track. Again, on the short term, this would be just a few trains a day in the morning and afternoon for peak hours—fewer trains but longer trains to get folks to work. On the long term, we need to look at the freight capacity, because we recognize that while we can get the passenger piece up and running quickly, some of the freight infrastructure improvements that we would have to make are going to take years. Some of those freight improvements include some double tracking storage for freight vehicles or freight cars, an intermodal freight facility, then the extension of the tracks all the way up to Tesla and Panasonic.

What this does for us is we believe we can come up with a project that is a win, win, win. It is a win for the employees because they get a consistent, regular way to work. That does not change based on the fact that there is an accident today, that does not change based on the weather. It is a reliable schedule. For those businesses, they get a more reliable workforce, and they also get an additional option that they can use for moving their freight besides truck, which saves them money. Likewise for Union Pacific, they win because they get—they add more capacity, which means more business for them, especially as that Industrial Park continues to grow. There is more business there for Union Pacific.

Where we are in our project. We are continuing to work with the Union Pacific on the modeling of the proposed system. We do have a study that will be finished next month, and we will be presenting the results of that study, which includes the anticipated cost and anticipated ridership to both our steering committee, our funding partners, and also to the RTC Board in March 2026; but again, the focus in the short term is the passenger piece. The focus in the longer term is the freight piece; but putting those two pieces together, we think we come up with a really compelling project that would be successful in our region. With that, I would like to turn it over to Mr. Nelson.

Paul Nelson, Government Affairs Officer, RTC of Washoe County:

Good afternoon. There are some existing studies and some other studies that are underway right now to try to find ways to alleviate some of the traffic pressure that we are seeing out there; along with the rail study that we are doing. In 2020, NDOT did an Interstate 80 Corridor study; along with a lot of different corridors that they looked at. The ones that we really focused on: if you look at the green line right there, that is the I-80 Corridor. They also studied the possibility of building a road between South Meadows somewhere and then connecting that to USA Parkway. That is the yellow line down there on the bottom of the screen. Finally, they also had that where that red line is—finding a way to connect USA Parkway to Spanish Springs or Sparks. You can see that all of those options are very pricey. We do know that NDOT is moving forward with widening Interstate 80 from four lanes to six. And we are taking a look at that northeast connector, that we are calling it right now, to see if there is some potential to alleviate some of that traffic—get that traffic off of Interstate 80. If we can do that, if we can do the commuter rail, that will take a lot of pressure off Interstate 80 along with the widening that is already planned for it.

The current studies that we are working on right now is the northeast connector alignment feasibility study. We went out and we took what NDOT previously looked at, and we took another look at it, but we looked at six potential routes that would connect anywhere from Prater Way in Sparks all the way up to La Posada in Spanish Springs. We looked at six different corridors, and how they would tie to Interstate 80. One of them closer to the Patrick area and the rest of them over there closer to USA Parkway. We looked at all kinds

of different factors—environmental, right-of-way, cost—I think there were eight or nine different things that we looked at when we were doing this study. What we came up with at the end of it was that the best option to move forward would be connecting USA Parkway to Vista Boulevard over by Golden Eagle Park. There would also be an option to build one that would go up north around an area that is protected and connect that to La Posada. The difference in price was huge. It was about $275 million for the Vista connector. It is up around $450 million for the La Posada connector. By looking at this map here on the bottom, you can see there is a dotted line that connects from their proposed alternative. It would also give people the option to connect to La Posada. Not only would this provide a possible maybe 5,000 cars a day that would be able to use it, would also be able to alleviate some of that pressure that would come out there right there in Vista and allow some to go up to La Posada. We did hear a lot of concerns at a public meeting that this would create a lot of truck traffic that would come through there. That is not expected. Studies show that it would be maybe around 1 to 2 percent of the traffic that would come through there that would be trucks, because most of the people that would use this are workers that want to use this road to commute to and from Sparks and Spanish Springs.

Another thing that the state has done is they have got the Nevada State Rail Plan, and we have heard a lot of questions about why we do not use rail more in the Truckee Meadows and also to connect to other nearby areas. In the Nevada State Rail Plan, you can see they have got four areas; this map on the right, there are four different corridors where there is potential for some commuter rail ridership. The one that we hear most about is the connection from right around Border Town to Downtown Reno—that is that blue line up there at the top of the screen. Part of the reason is there is already existing rail there. That is one of the fastest growing areas in the Reno-Sparks area, and there are only two ways to get there. You have got Highway 395, and you have got Virginia Street, and both of those are very busy. If there is a snowstorm or if there is a crash, it is just as bad as Interstate 80 is between Sparks and TRIC [Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center]. That is one of the options. Things that they have recommended in this is to study the feasibility of the operation, the ridership, the financial part of it, local rights-of-way, and then transit-oriented development. Being able to go out there and knowing that there is this transportation available to build higher-density residences for people to be able to move to that would just automatically walk over to the train stop and come down. Some of these pictures that you see on the screen, that is the existing rail that goes out to the North Valleys. One of them goes right past an apartment up there by McCarran Boulevard—just to the northeast of the University.

Some other things that are happening. The Amtrak Station Improvement. The Reno Redevelopment Agency Capital Improvement Plan is looking at the Amtrak Station. One of the things that they are doing is they are putting in ADA [Americans with Disability Act] compliant restrooms. The restrooms in that building right now are in the historic part of the building. This would put it on the part of the building where Amtrak is and potentially they could wall off the old part of the train station, so that Amtrak would be separate from the historic train depot. There could also be some potential space for tenants to rent and future CIP [capital improvement planning] projects—they will be presented in March.

When it comes to legislative policy, there are a couple of things that we have talked about that the Legislature could possibly do when it comes to helping alleviate some of the issues we are seeing with the traffic and the potential for rail. One of them is to create a multi-county joint powers agreement that would allow counties like Washoe, Storey, Lyon, maybe Carson City to get together to find solutions for these problems. Phase I would be figuring out a way to get rail from Reno and Sparks to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, and then Phase II would extend that up from Reno and Sparks to Lake Tahoe, because Lake Tahoe, we are already seeing the traffic up there during some times of the year; they

are bursting at the seams with capacity. So, adding the potential for rail or alternative modes of transportation—we think it would benefit from having a joint powers agreement. Then also providing a funding mechanism, because that is, as you know, one of the biggest problems we have is trying to figure out how we are going to pay for all of these things. You saw that slide that I had with those three different roads, how expensive it is—all of these options are expensive; so finding solutions to be able to pay for it, we would need that funding mechanism. With that, we will gladly take some questions.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. I appreciate the presentation. Members, are there any questions or comments on this report?

Mr. Anderson:

Thank you, Chair. I have a very elementary question. What is double tracking?

Mr. Gee:

In the existing corridor, which is about 60 miles long, it is typically a single track that runs through that corridor. Double tracking is putting a second railroad track next to the existing track; so trains can get in and out of the way.

Chair Carter:

Any other questions from down here? [There were none.] Then let us go up north. Skip, any questions or comments up there?

Senator Daly:

I have a quick comment, clarification on Mr. Hester's part of it. Just wanted to be clear that the only rail that actually comes through is the Amtrak from Sacramento to Reno. The rest of the connections are all bus and other alternative transportations for that. A clarification there, because sometimes it sounded like we had rail there. We do not yet. We may want it, but we do not have it.

Mr. Hester:

Thank you, Vice Chair. That is correct. We did look approximately 12 to 15 years ago at light rail on Virginia Street—also north and south, and on Fourth Street and Prater Way—east and west. But that is not what we are talking about today.

Senator Daly:

Understood, and then follow up on the question on the double tracking. Are there—I believe there are two bridges in that 14-mile stretch. Do they have double tracks or just single [inaudible]?

Mr. Gee:

The existing bridges are both single track, and we are looking at double tracking those bridges also, which would be a significant cost, but also at the same time, a significant benefit to the project.

Senator Daly:

Understood. The reason I asked is because I am thinking there is one when you first come out of Sparks, and it goes over the river and then further down—right there, not USA Parkway, but what is the other street there anyway? I forget the name of it; anyway, it goes right across right there next to the cement plants right next to our apprenticeship facility—that is there as well. I do not know if there is enough room in between there for all of the other tracks and things that you need for the storage and the rest with those locations. So, yeah, you probably have to double track those.

Mr. Gee:

As we have looked at the project and have worked through the sort of the issues related to putting in additional capacity. The lack of room in terms of geography has been our biggest hurdle. There are a lot of hills, a lot of canyons, you have the river, you have the interstate—there is just not a lot of room to put additional capacity without adding the whole significant amount of cost.

Senator Daly:

Last question I have, Chair, if I can. I saw him nodding his head. Not to get too far ahead, and I know the funding issue—we can have all of these plans and look at it and say, "Hey, we could do this if we had the money." Assuming we have the money, what options are we looking at for, let us say, the one from Sparks down to USA Parkway, or Sparks, down in, as a road to try to create an alternative to I-80. We are doing the widening, which is good. Because I know the City of Sparks had a plan last time, and they wanted to use the toll mechanism, but then they were going to—they took old language from the bypass language for Boulder City. They were looking at these, public-private partnership type of a thing, and I told them—I said—to me those things never really work out. They are good for the private, not so good for the public. Any ideas on how you would do that? Because what I have said before, and I do not know. If there is enough money for the private entity to say, "I am going to put up $500 million to build this road. I am going to make that back plus profit based on the toll." The other part that they then charge the public agency for is operation and maintenance, which is where they kind of make money. But if they can put up that money and then earn it back based off the toll, and the other stuff; seems to me we could cut out the middleman. If we do the right toll, we can sell bonds on that, build it, and then continue with the operation and maintenance at a much lower cost—because that is their profit center. I am not against private entities trying to make money on these things. I am just saying it is not good for the public. I do not know if you have comments or not.

Mr. Nelson:

In the Regional Transportation Plan, this is an unfunded project, and we know that it is going to require a lot of different funding mechanisms. It is almost guaranteed that we would more than likely have to go to the federal government, apply for an INFRA [the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects program] Grant or a Mega [the National Infrastructure Project Assistance program] grant. We are also working with Storey County; we have Austin here—he can discuss more about that. We are talking to some of the larger companies out there to see if there is the potential that they would throw in some money also to help build this road.

Senator Daly:

I understand, and I think you are probably familiar with the whole concept of how the private entity says, "I will put up the money and build it, but I am going to make that back plus the profit, because we do not own it because there is a law in Nevada—at least currently—that says they cannot own it, but then they charge fees for 20 years plus to operate and maintain. I just think it is not the direction we should go. I do think you need to get grants or something from the federal government. Obviously, those private partners that are going to benefit from it to put some in, but it is all going to, you know, be generated either off of some of the mechanism or the toll—same as you are charging people to ride the train. There is that there, but you have wear and tear on your car, you have gas, you have the other things. If we do it right, I think you can find that balance. I just wanted to give you my heads-up on that, is that model that they were talking about using on Project Neon, 10 to 12 years ago, NDOT figured out that it was going to cost them three times as much in the long run.

Chair Carter:

Thank you for that Skip, and you were jumping way ahead. But again, I appreciate you getting that on the record. Is there anybody up in Carson City that has a question for the presenters.

I want to recognize that Cole Mortensen has joined us via Zoom. Cole, open it up if you had any questions or comments.

Mr. Mortensen:

I do not have any questions or comments at this point in time. Thank you.

Senator Daly:

Chair, the Storey County Manager had some comments if you—

Chair Carter:

You jumped ahead of me again, Skip, and yes, exactly. I was just going to go there. I understand there is a representative from Storey County that would like to comment or question on this specific item. I am going to allow that seeing how they are a major stakeholder in all of this.

Austin Osborne, Manager, Storey County:

All right. Thank you, Committee members and Chair Carter and Vice Chair Daly. I really want to give our expression of appreciation for the relationship we built with the RTC in this project, as well as others. Just to talk a little bit about our position on what is being presented here in front of us today. We really believe that what is discussed here—this rail concept—it dovetails well into a portfolio of transportation improvements that are involved at the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center. Storey County itself has invested, so far about $48 million of transportation infrastructure in the Industrial Center, including the USA Parkway interchange for example, and other roads in the area. What we are excited about here, it was brought up several times during this Committee, is it is not necessarily just the volume of traffic that is coming to and from this area, but there is one route. What this project does is provide an alternative, potentially, to try to get that second way in and out of the park and reduce traffic, reduce loads, and provide alternatives. The alternative that is being proposed here with rail would connect directly into potentially nine miles of rail spur

that exists currently in the Industrial Center that is constructed, and built, and ready. Storey County of which owns properties or has leveraged along properties along this rail spur that might be ideally suited for park and rides, intermodal transit, or even like shuttles to get people to that last mile to their respective company. Along this rail spur, currently, there is permitted and constructed about 1,000 units of extended stay hotels. There is an RV Park ManCamp in the area that potentially could benefit from this, as well as no limit on more of those that we expect to come into the area, potentially providing kind of a little bit of a live-work environment at the end of this rail spur.

Our master plan supports and has strong goals and objectives for all modern and new developments and planned unit developments to have right-away reserved for intermodal transit and multimodal types of ways of getting in and around, and interconnectivity with the UP [Union Pacific] railway or other railroads in the area. In 2024, our County Commission also approved roughly 2,500 acres of master plan amendment to accommodate roughly or up to 10,000 units of affordable, attainable, suburban residential homes—ideally suited to south of the Industrial Center along the Highway 50 Corridor potentially removing a segment of the folks we are talking about working out of TRI Center from the I-80 Corridor altogether. We are looking forward to this project, and we are looking forward to our ongoing conversations with RTC, with NDOT, Washoe, Reno, and Sparks, and others on this project, the northeast connector, the southeast connector. We have talked to Sheriff Balaam and engaged in conversations with Washoe County about Storey County doing, like what fire does, like a mandatory or a mutual aid agreement for patrol and policing of I-80 to assist in the region and other projects including potential out-of-the-box transportation ideas with one or more of our companies out at the Industrial Center. I want to express our support once again. Thank you for your time, and thank you RTC for including us in this project.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. With that, I will take a hit one more time, are there any questions or comments from the Committee members that may have been generated by that last—

Mr. Hester:

Chair? I have one question. For general edification of the whole Committee, about how many jobs are there now, and how many do you expect? The same thing with population, so we get an idea.

Mr. Osborne:

Thank you, Committee member Hester. Right now, there are about 25,000 employees at TRI Center and it fluctuates with construction. There is a lot of construction going on right now that might actually decrease significantly over time, and some of the things are constructing our data centers that generate 30, 40 employees each. It is kind of a little bit of a benefit there, and what has happened is that is kind of given a little bit of a downward projection of what we thought employment numbers could be out of the Industrial Center. I do see numbers floating around the area, whether it is in reports or verbal discussions: about 35,000 at one point, somewhere in that number. We think that potentially is a realistic number. Anything that goes significantly north of that based on the type of land uses that are being approved and the demand for industry out there at this point, we do not really think that that is going to happen. It could, but we are really thinking that 35 number is probably a good number to target for now. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. With that, we will close out this portion. I just want to say thank you to the entities up north. I am very impressed with the level of cooperation and working together.

AGENDA ITEM IV—PRESENTATION ON THE PLANNING FOR HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Chair Carter:

We will move on to Agenda Item IV, which is with down here from the Southern Nevada Regional Transportation Commission and the aligned entities down here. The floor is yours.

Andrew Kjellman, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, RTC of Southern Nevada:

Sure, I can get started. Thank you, Chair Carter, members of the Working Group. Today, I am going to talk to you a little bit about our efforts for planning high-capacity transit in southern Nevada (Agenda Item IV). A lot of these efforts are contained in what we call our Onboard Mobility Plan. Onboard is a regional plan that was developed with the local entity stakeholder partners that you see here listed at the bottom. It was developed and adopted by our Board a few years ago. We have continued to do refinements and update the plan since then. In our role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, we develop a number of plans and studies at the RTC of Southern Nevada. The Regional Transportation Plan, that is our forward-looking plan for 20 years; the Transportation Improvement Program. The Onboard Mobility Plan is fundamentally different than those plans. Onboard is not fiscally constrained, rather, it asks our stakeholder partners and the public, how do we want to move about southern Nevada in the future? It is really an unconstrained mobility aspirational plan that we developed in partnership with our community.

One of the main impetuses of us developing this Plan is just southern Nevada's historical context as one of the region's fastest growing places. Here we see a few of the statistics of our current number of visitors and the current number of people living here. As we look into the future, as all of our plans do, we anticipate continued growth in visitor volume and specifically people moving and being born in southern Nevada. By 2040, we expect our regional population to reach almost 3 million people. What that does to our region's transportation system is it puts a lot of strain on it, all of that growth. One of the negative impacts of that growth is traffic congestion. As part of the Onboard Mobility Plan, we did a lot of peer comparisons—because we are not alone in this growth category—a lot of our peers in the inner mountain west—Phoenix; Denver; Salt Lake City; and in southern California, Los Angeles, San Diego—they have experienced this as well in terms of traffic congestion having a negative impact on the economy. So we look to them to understand how did they diversify the mobility options that they provide.

We rolled all of that up into what is the Onboard Mobility Plan, and Onboard really contains four buckets of projects and programs and these are intentional categories of projects. First, is we want to ensure that our existing transit system and our 56 million annual trips that we provide on our traditional transit network is enhanced and taken care of. When we talk to our customers, they appreciate the need for additional options like rail, but one of the things that they care about most is they care about bus frequency, and they care about the bus going more places in the Valley. Onboard contains improvements to traditional transit. We also looked at short trip connections, these are things like bicycle and pedestrian connections; because when we did outreach in the public, we heard a lot of interest in transit. But we also heard, you know, I live right next to this transit stop, but I have

difficulty crossing the street. It is dark—I feel unsafe—I cannot access your services, RTC. We wanted to ensure that we are enhancing that through Complete Streets projects to better connect our system with the region. We also looked at emerging transportation technologies. A lot of the community is skeptical about the need for significant investments in transit, and so we wanted to address that through Onboard. It is looking at leveraging emerging transportation technologies that the RTC can take advantage of, but also ensuring that any of the recommendations included in the plan are future proof. Then lastly, the subject of this Working Group is we looked at high-capacity transit options. Southern Nevada is the largest region in the United States without publicly-owned commuter rail or light rail. We wanted to understand, does the public support this. And if so, what are the best corridors for this investment? That is a broad overview.

I do have about a three-minute video that I am going to play for you that provides kind of the general idea of what Onboard is. Three-minute video:

> Time to stop thinking about moving more cars and instead find new and innovative ways to move more people. That is the motivation behind Onboard. Find sustainable transportation solutions that will improve our way of life, our environment, our economy, and keep us connected to everything that moves us. Onboard imagines eight innovative strategies for growth to help all southern Nevadans connect more easily, more efficiently, and more safely. [Audio cut out]

Mr. Kjellman:

I do not have that radio voice. Okay. I was waiting for it to come back, Chair.

Chair Carter:

Thank you for that. I think that we are seeing up there, we are up to number five right now.

***Mr. Kjellman*:**

I will skip ahead. Does that work? That provided the eight big moves as part of Onboard. We have done a lot of community outreach—in terms of, does the plan have support with the stakeholders and the local public? We have done four separate survey efforts as part of Onboard. I am going to share results from the most recent survey that we completed—it was done in 2022, so it was post-pandemic feedback that we received from the public about the Onboard Plan, and it received over 13,000 responses.

One of the first questions we asked the public is do you support light rail and bus rapid transit? The overwhelming sentiment that we received is yes, it does have a lot of support. The other question we asked, do you support additional investments in mobility improvements? We saw that there was an inclination to support increased investment in transportation. I think an indication of that is at the time our region was really growing, and traffic congestion was becoming a really big regional challenge and the need for providing more multimodal transportation options. This last one is fairly general because Onboard does contain those eight big moves, those four buckets of projects and programs. We wanted to better understand where would you invest scarce public dollars. We did a budgeting exercise with the community that, again, received over 13,000 responses. We asked them, where would you invest your money in the region's transportation system? Everyone had access to ten coins. This is the sheet that they had here, and they could spread those coins out amongst these nine projects anywhere they wanted. They could put all of their coins on one project or if they liked everything, they could just spread it around.

The feedback that we received is that light rail and bus rapid transit on the far left there. You see that is the overall number one priority investment category of the public. That was followed on by vets, seniors, paratransit, and low-income services, and then game day express, major event services. Then, it was followed by just different improvements to our traditional transit system. We see here that light rail does have a lot of support from the public in terms of investment priorities.

Now I am going to stay on this same graph, but I am going to break it down by sociodemographic characteristics. Here is the same information, just broken down between all respondents, non-white, less than $50,000 of household income, regular transit riders, non-transit users, and persons with a disability. It is really interesting to see how different sociodemographic categories rank different things. If we stay on the far left with light rail and bus rapid transit, we see the group that prioritized it the highest is that royal blue color, and if you follow the royal blue color—that is non-transit users. That is typically something that we see around the country is that light rail is supported heavily by people who do not use the current transit network. Then following on, you see the specialized services right next to it, the navy blue category of persons really like that, and if you followed down who the navy blue is, that is persons with disabilities. That makes sense, they really want investment in paratransit.

Then when we follow it on in terms of the geography of the responses that we received, here is a map of southern Nevada zip codes and this identifies their highest ranked category in each of those zip codes in terms of overall investment. We saw that people like investments in all parts of the transportation system, so what this map is showing is just in each zip code, where did they put most of those coins? What are their investment priorities? We see here in gray, that is light rail and bus rapid transit. We see the majority of the Valley had that as their number one priority. What I find interesting too is it is in outlying areas too. In outlying areas, there tends to be less transit ridership. Those are nontraditional transit riders, but those are also people who, if we were to receive funding to move forward with building out our high-capacity transit system, it likely would not serve those areas. To me, what this is telling us is the people who live in these outlying zip codes value light rail and high-capacity transit as an amenity that they want in their region and also as a potential option that they would potentially try in the future.

I am going to stay with this map theme. I am just going to share a little bit of the background details about how we came up with our recommended high-capacity transit network. Here is a map of the universe of corridors that we started out with. Working with our local agency stakeholder partners, they asked the RTC to analyze the feasibility of high-capacity transit on all of these roadways. It really is most of the arterial roadways in southern Nevada that we analyze for the feasibility of high-capacity transit. We then screen those through a data analysis.

The data analysis primarily looks at adjacent land use, sociodemographic characteristics, access to an automobile, and projected ridership on a light rail or bus rapid transit vehicle. Areas in green are more supportive of high-capacity transit investment, and areas in red are less supportive. It does kind of follow the growth in the Valley that we see. We did a few more rounds of screening, so here is the interim step—if you will, where we were kind of mid-project at this point. We had dropped a number of corridors off, and these are the ones that we did remaining final analysis with. Then the ultimate final map that we have today, this is our recommended high-capacity transit map. The colored lines, those are identified as potentially being light rail or bus rapid transit. The black lines—that is rapid bus. If we remember from a month ago, rapid bus is really similar to bus rapid transit, but the one difference is that it does not have that dedicated lane for the full corridor. What you would do on these colored lines is if there is funding to move forward with project development

activities—you would do what is called an alternatives analysis. You would identify—you do a lot more outreach in that corridor, you do more data analysis, and you identify, does it make sense to move forward with less light rail or bus rapid transit on those corridors. As I said at the top, Onboard is different from the other plans that we do. We remove the constraint of being able to fund this plan. I think we can all appreciate how expensive a plan of this scale would be. So, yes, this whole system is unfunded. However, the RTC is being very aggressive in going after federal discretionary grant funding, and we have started to implement some of these corridors as grant funding becomes available.

I am going to highlight just three of those corridors that we have been moving forward with. I am going to highlight Maryland Parkway, which is in red; Boulder Highway, which is in blue; and then Charleston, which is in green. Starting with Maryland Parkway, this is the existing condition of Maryland Parkway. It is three general purpose lanes in each way; it connects a lot of regional destinations. Here is the proposed project that is currently under construction. The RTC anticipates being done with this project this calendar year. What it does is add those dedicated bus lanes, and those lanes will be painted red—like this rendering shows. We widen the sidewalks to ten feet. We added the center median island. We are including street trees as part of the project and then the transit station area or the bus stop is really much more enhanced, and so it is providing much more shade, more passenger information, and we are adding bollards to protect our transit customers at each of the transit station areas. When I say we are being opportunistic with our funding, this project benefited from $150 million from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to move forward. That was really only enabled by revenues generated through fuel revenue indexing, so this project is receiving $125 million of fuel revenue indexing dollars.

Boulder Highway is much the similar story. Boulder Highway has fuel revenue indexing funds included on it. With that, the City of Henderson was able to go after and compete and be awarded $40 million through an INFRA Grant through the Federal Highway Administration to move this project forward on the southern half of this corridor; so this overall corridor is 15 miles. It is currently under construction in the southern part of the corridor. Then in the northern half of the corridor, the RTC is currently coordinating with NDOT to proceed with project development activities on the northern half of the corridor that goes through unincorporated Clark County in the City of Las Vegas. We receive grant funding from the Build America Bureau. We have matching funds from NDOT to move that project forward. The ultimate intent is to move that center running transit concept, that is currently under construction in Henderson, to the northern part of the corridor.

Then, the last corridor that I am going to talk about is Charleston Boulevard. Charleston Boulevard is behind the other two corridors, meaning it is not ready to go out to construction yet. Right now, Charleston Boulevard is in what is called that alternatives analysis phase. We are trying to understand what transit technology would work best in this corridor, and for what segments of the corridor. This project was awarded a discretionary RAISE [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity] Grant to move forward with that analysis—so it is being grant funded as well. The purpose of the Charleston Boulevard alternatives analysis is it is a really long corridor; it is over 15 miles from east to west—primarily it is a safety project. This roadway is really unsafe, and that is one of the benefits of high-capacity transit is it gives you the opportunity to go through and make the roadway much safer. This is on the City of Las Vegas' High-Injury Network, so that means there is a disproportionate number of people getting seriously injured or killed on this roadway. We also are looking at this as an opportunity to improve transit service. Right now, if you were to take our current Route 206, from west to east, it takes almost 2.5 hours to do that trip; and part of the reason it takes so long is it is because it is well patronized. That means we are stopping every quarter of a mile, lots of people are getting

off and lots of people are getting on, and they are all paying through that front door. We are also looking at this as an opportunity to grow the economy; so we are partnering with the City of Las Vegas and Clark County on this in terms of identifying transit-oriented development opportunities.

One of the final things that we are looking at here is we want to deliver a financially responsible project. At the end of this, we are going to identify a locally preferred alternative, and we want that locally preferred alternative to be able to be funded. Funding is something that we are going to be looking at moving forward on Charleston.

Just a little bit more about the process on Charleston, this is kind of what we are doing now. We screen what transit technologies are most appropriate for the corridor. We identify what alignment works best. This is primarily alignments through Downtown, that is where we are at right now. Then the final step is piecing those together. So, what transit technology on what road makes the most sense for Charleston Boulevard. I am going to highlight this Step A right here, because we have completed the step in terms of looking at overall transit technology. This is the universe of technologies that the stakeholders asked us to look at. We looked at all of these options, we compared them to the purpose and need of the overall project. We are moving forward with further analysis on these three technologies; light rail, bus rapid transit, and a rapid bus enhanced bus operations alternative.

In terms of barriers that we have experienced in terms of moving forward, specifically with light rail. I think this is kind of an illustrative graphic. What you see here on this slide, you see every metropolitan region in the United States that has over 2 million people living there. However, the regions listed on the left-hand side of the graphic have something that the regional regions on the right-hand side do not—that is publicly-owned and operated light rail or commuter rail. Largely, that is a function of not having the local sustainable funding source. One to capital fund these projects, but then also to support the maintenance and operations of these services moving forward. When you combine that lack of local sustainable funding with the cost differential between light rail and bus rapid transit, it is fairly significant. What you see here is cost across the nation that are currently in the Capital Investment Grant pipeline to be funded by FTA. You see light rail on the top row, bus rapid transit on the bottom row, these are in last year's current year dollars. It is about $230 million for one mile of light rail transit. And that is for at grade, that is essentially kind of the cheapest you can get. Any subsurface tunneling, or subsurface stations, or any elevated segments to remove it from traffic you are going to increase that $230 million cost-per-mile, and then you compare that with the $40 million cost-per-mile for bus rapid transit. Then, also you see the cost of operations and maintenance. This really hits on being able to support services for these types of systems, because that is how the RTC funds operations and maintenances with our local sales tax revenues. So, even if you can overcome the barriers of capitally funding the project, you do have to support operations of the system.

That being said, the last slide I am going to leave you with is—if you can find the funding, there are indeed lots of benefits that I think we can all appreciate with high-capacity transit. One, very similar to the RTCs Fuel Revenue Indexing Program. It is a really big job stimulus. It is a jobs program. It is a benefit to the regional economy in terms of construction workers building these projects and then being able to provide those services with increased numbers of drivers, and mechanics, and operations folks supporting that system. There is also societal benefits. Those societal benefits are really improvements in safety. Safety is a really big issue in southern Nevada, high-capacity transit provides an opportunity to make our roadway safer. There is also benefits to reduce pollution, greenhouse gases, and increase public health as more people take transit. There is also economic growth benefits in terms of our transportation system becoming more efficient. So

reduce congestion, improve travel time, and reduce household expenditures on transportation. That is a key one. Then finally, there are benefits with transit-oriented development and partnering with local agencies to support redevelopment opportunities. With that, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. I just wanted to comment that the Game Day service that the RTC has been providing has really opened up the eyes of a demographic and communities that typically do not use mass transit and is creating demand. I hear about that all the time, about how much it is loved. I wanted to recognize that how much that efforts meant to the community. With that, I open up for questions.

Ms. Maynard-Carey:

I would like to just like to expand on what you just spoke about. That is, not only are we, of course, a public transportation agency, we are also the traffic manager for the region, and we worked closely with both the Raiders and the Golden Knights to understand where the season ticket holders live and then designed our system around that. If not for the Game Day Express, where we are bringing folks up from the outlying areas; those that drive probably 100 percent of the time. In and around any event on the Las Vegas Strip, you would see an additional 1,500 to 2,000 cars trying to find a place to park or to drop off—if it is a TNC [transportation network company] or a cab, et cetera. There is a lot to be said for ensuring that we are looking at mobility options for the outlining areas to connect to the Las Vegas Strip.

One last point, high-capacity transit is a job stimulator and a job growth, just here in southern Nevada operating the 13th busiest bus system. Every single day between 155,000 and 160,000 daily boardings—80 percent of those trips are people going to work. We are connecting employees to employers and are part of the economic ecosystem, and I do not think that is really it; something that comes to mind if you do not take public transit or high-capacity transit. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Jones:

Thank you, Chair. I have two questions for you, Mr. Kjellman. One, we heard presentations from northern Nevada, and they seem to be looking also at freight rail. Is that something that the RTC of Southern Nevada has historically been involved in? And then two, can you speak to, since this is about regional rail, can you really speak to efforts by the RTC to interface with Brightline?

Mr. Kjellman:

Sure. Mister Chairman, through you. For freight rail, that is primarily—we coordinate with UPRR [Union Pacific Railroad] through our role as the metropolitan planning organization. We really lean on the Nevada State Rail Plan in terms of what their priorities are for future investment in that freight rail network. The RTC has been involved previously with efforts to develop the APEX site. There was that bill a few years ago where the RTC was going to lead development of that spur railroad line to access that site. But no, it was not something that we looked at as part of Onboard. It was really about moving people specifically, around the

region, but in and around the resort corridor, where we see a lot of the demand for trips. And then the second question—what was the second question? I am sorry, Mr. Jones.

Commissioner Jones:

Coordination with Brightline.

Mr. Kjellman:

Yes, we have had coordination with Brightline West. One, in terms of it is—this project is listed in our regional transportation plan. So that means it is included in our travel demand model, and it is very much like the airport in terms of our model. We forecast the number of trips, we leaned on the studies that Brightline West has done, and so we have incorporated that in terms of its impacts on the regional surface transportation system—in terms of trips and any congestion it could generate. Then, we have also had informal conversations in terms of how can we better access that site once it is up and running. What are the best options for RTC services? Would it go on-site, or would it stay on the curve? We have had very early conversations with them.

Chair Carter:

Please remember to state your name for the record when you go to talk. Thank you.

You have more comments or questions from down here? [There were none.]

With that, we will go up north. Go ahead.

Ms. Fuss:

Thank you. I had a question on that one slide that you showed that had, I think probably 20 different cities that have light rail. You mentioned that most of them, if not all of them, have some kind of separate funding source for maintenance and operations. Are there any overall themes that all of them have that separate source? Is it changes to our tax structure? Is it, what do they all have that we do not have? I guess is the question.

Mr. Kjellman:

Sure. It is a number of different things. So, that slide refers to regions that have both light rail or commuter rail. Part of it is just opportunistic. Some of those regions—like Orlando was listed there—Orlando generates less sales tax per capita than the RTC does for our transit system. But Orlando did have access to a commuter rail system that they were able to leverage that. I think it is a number of different things in terms of overall funding structure that can support the local match funding needed to grant fund these projects, but then also on the maintenance and operation side. A lot of this work that the RTC has done is through our Transportation Resources Advisory Committee, where we kind of get into the nitty gritty in terms of what is our peer comparison in terms of funding per capita, and then what are some other revenue sources that our peer agency, our peer regions have tapped into that we have not yet.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. Are there any other questions from up north?

Mr. Hester:

Chair, when we did a light rail streetcar study for the Reno-Sparks area, the consultant we had indicated that the development, the multiplier for development was 12 to 60 times what you invest in the capital investment and talked about that as a way, particularly, to stimulate redevelopment in corridors that needed it. I am specifically talking about where we had Virginia Street, which was 395 and then got 580. How would we redevelop Virginia Street? That was one of the reasons we were looking at that. Did you all look at any corridors like that in southern Nevada and see any, I know you have a lot of development and new growth, but did you also look at that from a redevelopment perspective?

Mr. Kjellman:

Yes, Mister Chairman, through you. Yes, we did look at that, and that is—we have a whole economic benefits of the Onboard Plan Report that has been developed. A lot of those benefits do come from enhanced opportunities for redevelopment, specifically transit-oriented development. What you see a lot is those travel speed and the travel time savings provided by that high-capacity transit vehicle. A lot of that is capitalized back into the adjacent property. That is something that we would—we are really looking forward to taking advantage of—if we can get the grant funding to support these types of systems.

Chair Carter:

Very good. Any other questions from up north or from Mr. Mortensen on Zoom?

Mr. Mortensen:

Yes, Chairman Carter. I do not want to derail this conversation, but we have been looking at The Boring Company tunnels in Las Vegas and the use of autonomous vehicles in those. I do think that there is an opportunity, especially along the I-80 corridor, to pave a road or a facility—and this is coming from my transportation background—that would allow autonomous vehicles to commute people back and forth, and you could prioritize the employees that are going to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center and then have turnouts where you could have a platoon of vehicles turn out so that the employees going home, just pull over while the platoon of vehicles go to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center. Based on my knowledge of civil engineering and my background, the design speeds could provide a significantly less cost, as far as the payment is concerned, because those autonomous vehicles can react a lot faster than the 2.5 seconds that your average driver takes. I am just kind of wondering if anyone in the north or the south has looked into something like that, one way or the other.

Mr. Kjellman:

Mister Chairman, I would suggest deferring maybe that comment to LVCVA [Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority] who is going to be one of the following agenda items.

Chair Carter:

Thank you for that. Yes sir, that LVCVA is up next when we finish with questions here. We will come back to that Cole, Mr. Mortenson, excuse me, and you are teed up for the next presentation.

Any other questions or comments from the Committee? [There were none.]

With that being said thank you very much. I really appreciate again the cooperation we are seeing from all of the entities, both north and south.

AGENDA ITEM V—PRESENTATION ON TRANSPORTATION AND RAIL TRANSIT OPERATIONS, NEEDS, AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Chair Carter:

We will move on to Agenda Item V, presentation on transportation and rail transit operations, needs, and developments in southern Nevada, which is going to go to Mr. Finger, Chief Strategy Officer with the LVCVA and the floor is yours, sir.

Ed Finger, Chief Strategy Officer, Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority:

Thank you, Mister Chair. As you said, and I am going to do my best to say that every time I speak to the mic again. It is my presumption, Mister Chair, that you would like me to speak to The Boring Company in addition to the Loop. Is that correct, sir?

Chair Carter:

If you are comfortable with it.

Mr. Finger:

I said "Loop" twice by the way, I mean, in addition to the Monorail, I was trying to figure out how to get my presentation up (Agenda Item V). A little bit about the LVCVA, I think most folks probably know who we are. We would not have been given a transportation presentation a decade ago. We set out, initially, in transportation space to build a people mover on campus, because with the expansion of the Convention Center, funded in part by Senate Bill 1 of the 2016 Session, we became 1.1 miles—corner to corner, and it became a walk. We looked at putting a people mover in akin to the McCarran Airport trams or other people movers and significantly-sized public buildings. The Vegas Loop came to be from that via RFP [request for proposal]. We had providers who offered fixed rail i.e., airport train service. We had folks that pitched gondolas over the top of the Las Vegas Convention Center; we ended up of course selecting the loop. For those that do not know, the Loop on the Convention Center campus was paid for by the Convention Center. It is not fare generating, it is constrained to the corners of the campus. The Loop that is offsite, that extends beyond the Convention Center campus, is the private entity that is The Boring Company. I will do my best to manage that differentiation as I go through the proceedings here.

Loop is not a tremendously complicated thing. It is a lane of roadway underground. It is just at a different elevation, and the advantage to surface level roadway is that it is express; that in theory, using a Las Vegas reference, you could get in at the airport, you could drive without hitting a stop sign. Those of you that drive, whether it be the Boulevard or whether it be Paradise on the way to the Convention Center, familiar with all the lights and all the stoppages, can appreciate what expressway would do in terms of times of transit in the Strip Resort Corridor. EVs [electric vehicles], so it is eco-friendly. I am going to need to wear these glasses to read this presentation. Currently, right now it is Teslas, and the larger Tesla models.

In ground—we have 3.5 miles of operational system. I will tell you a little bit later on what the plans are and what is built and imminently operational. There are nine operational stations with the idea that we will have 15 in the not too distant future, in this calendar year. We have moved about 3.5 million passengers in the system so far. The majority of

them on the Las Vegas Convention Center, it has gone well from a passenger safety perspective. It is the highest rated customer amenity on the Las Vegas Convention Center campus. Capacity is something that people often furrow their brows on. I will tell you a little bit about how we came to the conclusion, because the construction contract we had with The Boring Company originally was almost completely a risk. If they did not build successfully, we did not pay, and if they did not prove operational capacity, we did not pay a significant chunk of what that $52.5 million contract was. In order to test capacity, having both people in the stations and people in the control center, we hired a third-party independent accounting firm that counted each and every passenger that got in and out of a car over a period of measurement to validate capacity in the Convention Center campus. I tell you that just by way of reference because capacity is an oft theoretical thing, and in the case of the Monorail, which we are also the owners of—we do not ever reach theoretical capacity.

This picture is what the Loop is entitled to be through Clark County entitlement and City of Las Vegas entitlement—nearly 70 miles of tunnel, 104 stations entitled. If and when it gets to that point, it would be a meaningfully significantly sized transportation system in comparison to other U.S. transportation systems. It is hard to see, but it is airport out to the tips of Downtown, and it is Decatur across Sammy Davis, the Boulevard, Koval, Paradise, University, and those streets that generally go north to south in the direction of west to east across the campus as I listed them. Getting from entitlement to permitting has been a thing. We permitted the system originally for the Convention Center campus under a set of fire protection standards specifically, that were the sticking point, and the county through both experience and staff turnover, we had some reconsideration of what standards they wanted to apply. We have not actually had a new operating permit; until a very recently issued one—this week—or last week in about a year out of the county. We are optimistic, and this is where I am talking about off the campus—I am talking about The Boring Company, the private company, and the LVCVA generally as a facilitator of things that we believe will make the destination better, but not as the owner or driver of the system necessarily. We are optimistic that in the not too distant future to the County Commission will come a set of code that memorializes the revised set of standards that The Boring Company builds under, and that will accelerate and allow what are seven Boring Company machines available in the metro area here to be underground, and to prove how quickly mileage can be accumulated in the tunnel system.

The Nevada Transportation Association recently permitted The Boring Company operations into the airport in conjunction with airport allowance. I know Mr. Chrisley is here, and he will speak to it to the extent he wants to or plans to. But that last part is surface level at this point, obviously the sacred jewel of any transportation system—the one the Monorail never accomplished—is making its way to Reid International Airport. But right now, its last part surface level with the idea that the tunnel is in-ground now get very near—they get Thomas and Mack near to the Convention Center. The Boring Company owns additional land that allow them to end up on the south side of Tropicana and then have a very short surface drive until hopefully someday there is a permanent solution at the airport. I mentioned to you that there is 3.5 miles operational, told you I would come back, there is 11 miles built. So, there is tunnel edge all the way from approximately 4744 Paradise, approximately Thomas and Mack south wise, all the way up through two lanes down Paradise, all the way up through the Convention Center into Westgate; we are over to the Wynn and across the street to Wynn West. The planned third tower of Mr. Wynn that is on the west side of the Boulevard there; with some hope and some belief that with you are going to see the Thomas and Mack head over to the MGM set of properties in not too distant future. You are going to see tunnels. We recently were permitted by the City of Las Vegas to go from the Strat to the Convention Center and from the Strat to the Plaza in opposite directions.

The Strat to Convention Center is a two-party permit. It requires City permitting until Sahara and then County permitting south of Sahara. With that kind of enablement and that ability to come down the destination or down the southward—down the Boulevard, there would be an opportunity to have a pretty significant quadrant or rectangle of tunnels. Generally, from the Thomas and Mack westbound to the Strip, northbound down the Strip to Downtown, eastbound to the Convention Center and the Paradise and around.

I will skip the Loop commercial on how safe their cars are. But, generally, the intent of this slide, which I will not read to you, is under the governance of the Clark County Building Department and Fire Department. Safety matters, it matters to The Boring Company, it matters to the Convention Center as the owners of the system on campus. There are a number of safety features there meant to make sure that any instance or incident in the tunnel is quickly addressed and that first responders are able to get quickly to response. That is my Loop part of the presentation, Mister Chair; and if it is your pleasure, I will stop to answer Loop questions before I talk to you about the Las Vegas Monorail.

Chair Carter:

Thank you for that offer. And yeah, we will take in any questions. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Anderson:

Thank you. It is my understanding that the Loop is just one direction at all times, and there is no capacity to go two directions.

Mr. Finger:

Through the Chair, if you will Mister Chair. In a single piece of tunnel, the intention is to be mono-directional—to be single directional. We have utilized portions of tunnel so far to be bi-directional with safeties at either end with gates and lights at either end at Resorts World to the Convention Center as an example as we wait to build, to get permitted, and to build the completion of that from the Convention Center background to Resorts World and complete a Loop. But the design intent of the system is to have single directional tunnels—single lane in a direction.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Jones:

Thank you, Mister Chair. Thank you, Mr. Finger, two questions. First—when the Loop was originally pitched, there was talk of a larger capacity vehicle, up to 16 passengers, and have not seen much on that lately. So, if you could do an update on that and then also sort of to Mr. Anderson's bi-directional question, is there a consideration of a different type of vehicle that would be bi-directional like Zoox being in the tunnel?

Mr. Finger:

Sure, through the Chair to Commissioner Jones. First or maybe in reverse order, as it relates to Zoox. The majority of this system is going to be a private company; and it is a Tesla family company, and the intent is to utilize Tesla vehicles. When we, the LVCVA, built these tunnels and when we hired The Boring Company, because they are the third-party operator of the system, they train the drivers, they execute the drives—we pay them for that service at this point. We understood who they were, and what we thought we would

get out of more interest in that level of service. But we also understood we built infrastructure that if we ever chose to sever that contract, we could have any type of EV or autonomous vehicle run through that. If it came to pass that The Boring Company were successful outside of the boundaries of the Convention Center, it would be pretty challenging and probably impractical to have any bifurcation in service vehicle in operation there—just for those reasons. I am going to admit in going second to first, I forgot your first question; so please indulge me.

Commissioner Jones:

Larger capacity vehicle.

Mr. Finger:

Larger capacity, thank you. We and my boss, Steve Hill in particular, have always been interested at the LVCVA in larger capacity vehicles. In the Convention Center, what is happening right now is it works immaculately the way it is. It is The Boring Company's general belief with the behavior and assuming they have success building at the airport, that actually smaller capacity vehicles are more productive as it relates to end destination. But we certainly believe that if The Boring Company were ever to want to accomplish, perhaps if they built tunnels at a place like an airport, for example, the large capacity vehicles between terminals would be just absolutely necessary in our opinion. So, we share that thought—there is no imminent plan or development of them in the system, so far.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. Any questions from up north?

Senator Daly:

Does not appear so. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Mr. Mortensen.

Mr. Mortenson:

I do not need to reiterate myself. I think that, I threw that thought out there just with the idea that the autonomous vehicles are kind of our future, and it is a lot cheaper to pave roads than it is to lay rail.

Chair Carter:

Very good. Thank you very much for that, Mr. Mortenson. With that, let us move on to the next piece, Mr. Finger.

Mr. Finger:

Certainly, thank you. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority is also the owner of the Las Vegas Monorail. We purchased the Las Vegas Monorail in December 2020. We did it for two reasons. We did it because the Monorail was in its second bankruptcy since inception, and while we are an atypical transportation provider by our general nature, there was not an obvious entity to help the Monorail through this—the Monorail needed help. We happened to be there talking to the Monorail though, for the reason that we wanted to

enable what we thought was more than $1 billion of private investment in The Boring Company system; and that investment was not going to be allowed because Clark County, in a previous generation of leadership, had entered into a noncompete agreement/arrangement with the Monorail where no other systems could be built along the Strip Resort corridor until the year 2107. Our acquisition of the Monorail allowed us to eliminate that noncompete agreement and allow other competitive private investment in the Resort corridor.

We bought it when COVID was going on, we reopened in May 2021, after a 14-month closure—carries about 5 million passengers annually. If you put in an F1 track and you do a whole bunch of Strip Resort corridor improvement projects, you can get that number up closer to 6 million, because people end up on your Monorail more often; but five is generally about what happens. It also is an eco-friendly transportation mode.

One of our sources of pride, and it is a little bit easier to do when you buy something in bankruptcy, is the Monorail has been profitable in every year of operation. We have been able to do some different things as it relates to how you think about the finances and operation of that entity. We have paid back the LVCVA, our investment in the Monorail already.

It is an aged system. It is a system that we had a very public conversation about when we bought, because there is better, the nine train, four car system that we have most acutely has trains that are aging out and compatibility of rail and train, and that is better than a $250 million bogey. We bought the Monorail for $24 million. When I was telling you it was profitable; we made $24 million. It is an accomplishment, but we did not make $250.

Like all things—all forms of public transportation, you need subsidy, you need community investment to make a project like that work. I personally believe the Monorail could have been more and could have been something different with a little bit different mindset from this community in terms of where it went, and how we incorporated into public transportation systems; but I am not a public transportation professional.

With that said, we are not going to invest $250 million in trains. What we have done instead, I forgot my order of slides. If you are not familiar with the Monorail, it runs on the east side of the Strip; seven stations was originally the MGM Bally's private run akin to the other private monorail runs at the properties, became the Las Vegas Monorail Company, and extended runs behind the Caesars property comes to the Convention Center, goes to the Westgate on the north end goes to the terminus is the Sahara, and that is apparently my whole presentation.

We are investing in trying to make the Monorail make it another decade anyway. We had the folks who built the trains, we have had the folks that built the system tell us the things we need to do to make sure we can get another decade out of it. We are making those investments. The Monorail Company has done a great job of their life in caring for the assets under their care, but they do have limited lives and there is going to have to be, at some point, a change of use. We also are looking at options for change of use. We are looking for change of use options, and perhaps either of the two gentlemen that made references that might make you think about this. There are other things you can do on top of pretty sturdy legs with different track systems. We are thinking about what that could look like in coming generation, and now with all of the impressive and important things that the RTC does, that it can maybe continue to be a compliment to the multimodal needs of the very busy Strip Resort corridor, which is exactly what our hope for the Loop system is. That is my presentation on the Monorail. I am available for any questions, Mister Chair.

Chair Carter:

Is there any questions or comments from the board? Up north? Very good.

Senator Daly:

Just one, I promise not to go off track and get ahead of myself. Just a question about the—hopefully you get another ten years out of the Monorail—is the right-of-way—you guys own the right-of-way, so it could be transitioned into some other type of transportation use at some point if you can no longer keep the Monorail going.

Mr. Finger:

Mister Chair, thank you. Generally, we have a perpetual right of use for the current use of the Monorail. Alternate use will involve a number of things including the engineering and thought process about what we put on top of those tracks, but it will also involve partnership and shared interest from the Strip properties who have granted us those right-of-way uses for the current Monorail operations.

Senator Daly:

So, you do not own all of the right-of-way out right with the purchase.

Mr. Finger:

Not without approvals from the Strip properties for alternate use. Yes, sir.

Senator Daly:

Okay. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Well, and with that I think we are good. Is that the end of your presentation, Mr. Finger?

Mr. Finger:

It is Mister Chair.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. I really appreciate it.

AGENDA ITEM VI—PRESENTATION ON REGIONAL RAIL PLANNING AND ALIGNMENT WITH INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STATE

Chair Carter:

With that, we are going to move on to Agenda Item VI, presentation on regional rail planning and alignment with infrastructural developments within the state.

For that, Mr. Chrisley, Director of Aviation and Bryant Holt, Senior Director of Aviation, both with the Clark County Aviation Department. Please go ahead when you are ready and please remember to state your name for the record so that we can keep track of what is going on. Thank you.

James C. Chrisley, Director of Aviation, Clark County Department of Aviation:

Thank you, Mister Chair, and with me is Brian Holt, Senior Director of Aviation with the Department as well. As we get the slides up, for those who do not know, we own and operate five airports within the Clark County system, which includes Harry Reid, our only commercial service airport, but that also does include four general aviation airports to include Henderson, North Las Vegas, Overton-Perkins, as well as Jean Sport. With that, we were asked today to come in and give an update on where we are in our transformation plan, and we do plan on focusing on our commercial service to include Harry Reid in our future airport (Agenda Item VI). But to discuss that, I am going to go through the big picture, as it says here, then I will pass over to Bryant to talk about some of the details on how it relates directly to this Group on the connectivity to and from our airport system.

We do see our big picture transformation as three separate projects. The first being a maximization, a connection, and then an expansion. The maximization project focuses on Harry Reid Proper. We have 2,800 acres. We have four runways. We are fully encroached. There is no ability to add any additional runways at Harry Reid Airport. Therefore, it is on us. It is prudent on us. We need to maximize every square inch of that 2,800 acres to ensure it operates as safely and efficiently as possible. With that in, we brought on a planning consultant to help us plan the modernization of our facilities. This includes replacement of A and B gates at Terminal 1; as well as trying to rebalance our traffic between Terminal 1 and Terminal 3. Currently, we have about 75 percent of our traffic goes through Terminal 1. For those of you who have come to the curb on a Sunday morning—you know what I mean. It is very congested and only 25 percent is currently at Terminal 3. If it was easy to move, we would do it. But there are things that we need to do at Terminal 3 to ensure we can shift—to get that balance closer to 50/50, which will immediately help with some of the congestion on our roadways and parking system. The second piece of this project is to modify Terminal 3 as far as ticket counters, as well as baggage screening capacity as well, and vertical movement of passengers within the facility to ensure that can operate with an increased workload of passengers. Thirdly, we need to maximize our ability to move folks between our terminals, which kind of feeds into our connection. We are on Harry Reid Proper, I think it was mentioned earlier with The Boring Company, would be a solution for our inter-terminal shuttle. But as we move folks from terminal to terminal, we want to make sure there is the ability to connect within those terminals on the land side. We do have our people movers on the secure side, as you go through security checkpoints, you can go between the terminals and all the gates. Once you get through a checkpoint, you can go anywhere. But on land side, we are very limited in our ability through a bus to move folks back and forth. The journey goes through what we call a single-point urban interchange, which is a very signalized intersection which bogs things down as we get between T2, and T3, and T1. As we move forward with that, we need to increase that ability to connect between both Terminal 3, Terminal 2, as well as with our community.

The second major portion of this is the connection project. Between the interconnectivity of the terminals, we are also looking at how do we connect better to the Strip and to our community. We are looking at the concepts of multimodal centers on both the north and the south. We did purchase 164 acres, as you see on the slide, to the south at the corner of Sunset and Las Vegas Boulevard. Our CFO [Chief Financial Officer] was kind enough to purchase that and found a way. But we see that as a key point of our connectivity to any sort of mass transit or future mass transit with the community. We will connect through our center tunnel for those of you do not know—our airport connector tunnels; we have north and south, but there is also a vacant center tunnel that is available for some form of mass transit that could be dedicated to connect Harry Reid Proper down to the south multimodal.

As I said, we are a constrained airport. The latest guidance from the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] indicates that by 2033, we expect to be severely constrained—meaning there will be congestion at the airport, increasing delays, and impacts to the wider national airspace system. With that, I mean, the solution they present to fix a capacity constrained airport is to add an additional, well-placed runway and that is as we shift to our expansion project. In order to relieve those capacity constraints, which are not only physical, but they are also airspace and terrain impacts at Harry Reid, the expansion project is the Southern Nevada Supplemental Airport (SNSA). Let me be clear. This is a supplemental airport. Harry Reid will continue. Hence, the maximization will continue to operate at full capacity. But as we meet those capacity constraints, the additional two runways that SNSA provides will be that additional commercial capacity that the community will need to meet those future aviation demands.

As far as this Working Group is concerned, I think the key point in this is the south multimodal, on how that tie in with any regional rail or other transportation for passengers. That is where we see our connectivity with the community and the north multimodal as well for something maybe not rail related, but certainly bus rapid transit, et cetera. With that, let me turn it over to Bryant to give a little update on other initiatives or planning that we have done.

Bryant W. Holt, Senior Director of Aviation, Clark County Department of Aviation:

Thanks, Jim. Just to piggyback on what Jim was saying in terms of the connectivity, big picture, really ties in both the roads as well as our interconnections through the type of transportation modes. We saw the north multimodal and the south multimodal being a very essential part. We really think that all of the modes of transportation can interface through these facilities. So the north, which is going to be our first multimodal out of the gate, is going to kind of serve as some of the relief parking and some of the interfacing with some of the TNCs. You may be familiar with the Uber and Lyft type of operations. I think the south multimodal though is going to serve up as really what we call the most centerpiece of our multimodal. Because not only will it integrate with our multimodal for the south supplemental airport, but also the potential of tying into an interface, not necessarily a direct connecting with Brightline, but there will be a soft interface with the Brightline activity. It also is part of our conceptual plan. We looked at some of the aspirational goals that the RTC had with high-capacity subways running from the Brightline Station up to Las Vegas. We see that as really being another component that which the soft multimodal could serve in that capacity. Light rail as well as the bus rapid transit would be instrumental in interfacing with the south multimodal.

We went through an exercise, conceptually, really look at all the different mass transits. We looked at high-speed train, regional train, subway train, light rail train as well as the bus rapid transit. Then looked at the same sort of aspirational overview that the RTC did with looks at what applications can be applied where, so when you think about interfacing with the airport, while we think that there is still an opportunity to adopt some of The Boring concepts, a mass transit connectivity, like a subway system, would be essential at least from the south multimodal perspective. Some of the light rail that is above on-grade would also be an avenue that can come into the south multimodal. We see the bus rapid transit being the primary concept though, after opening day, to serve as that mass corridor down South Las Vegas Boulevard to the south supplemental airport as being essential. It would be accompanied with a mass, or what we call express lane, and then sort of secondary lanes that would stop off at each of the major interchanges along the South Las Vegas corridor.

I think one of the things that people question is what is—what are we going to do as far as connectivity to the supplement airport? When we go into opening day, our goal is to really utilize the Jean interchange. There will be buses that will take people down, get off at the Jean interchange, and then go to the airport. That plus five when we start getting into a more higher increased volume, we do see that shift going to the South Las Vegas Boulevard. Again, we have some concepts that looked at utilizing the south multimodal, South Las Vegas Boulevard using the BRT—bus rapid transit as the primary mode of transportation that would interface with the south multimodal. We did not want to get into too many more details other than open it up for questions and seeing where the Advisory Group wanted to take the conversation; and we can fill it in from there.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much. With that, are there any questions here? Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Jones:

Sorry, I am chatty today. Speaking to the connectivity with the SNSA. Can you talk about discussions you have had or plan to have with Brightline given that their rail line is going to run right past?

Mr. Holt:

Yeah.

Commissioner Jones:

And then just generally, I have made this comment before, publicly and privately, planning for a future in which you are using I-15, accessing the Jean off ramp for five years into existence of SNSA. We need to have a better solution than that.

Mr. Holt:

All of our studies would indicate that if we did opening day with the Jean interchange, we will satisfy that condition. However, going long term, obviously, that would not be the best solution.

Interfacing and discussion with Brightline, as I said, Brightline has a certain application. It is a high-speed rail; it is not a commuter rail or regional transportation rail. So, it is a completely different product. That is why Brightline themselves did not define that as a stop for them to come to the airport. I think we can just take that off the table.

What we really want to look at is what is going to be advantageous for our travelers and our passengers who get off at the airport to get a timely connectivity to the south multimodal, because they are different application. They will have luggage, and they have a different travel experience. I know that the Jean is not the most desirable, but when you think about it in opening day, it is the most feasible and most cost effective.

Commissioner Jones:

Brightline is in the back there, they might have a different perspective.

Chair Carter:

Any other questions down here? With that, we will go up north.

Senator Daly:

Does not look like any questions up here.

Chair Carter:

Okay, and barring Mr. Mortenson butting in, if he wants to—he is more than welcome to; but barring that we will—I thank you very much for your presentation and look forward to continuing the conversation.

AGENDA ITEM VII—PRESENTATION ON REGIONAL RAIL TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ITS ALIGNMENT WITH TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE

Chair Carter:

With that, we are finished with Item VI and moving on to Item VII; presentation on regional rail transit development, including its alignment with transportation needs and projects across the state. To present this item, we have Tara Frank, Transportation Planner and Analyst, and Eric Scheetz, Senior Project Manager, both with Nevada's Department of Transportation; and additionally down here, Sarah Watterson with Brightline West will be joining at the podium. With that, the floor is yours.

Tara Frank, Rail Program Manager, Nevada's Department of Transportation (NDOT):

We will be presenting an overview of NDOT's rail program today (Agenda Item VII). First, NDOT has been involved in rail for decades, working with host railroads and collaborating with other partners. NDOT's role has included maintaining rail plans, as well as cooperating with railroad owners to ensure a cohesive partnership between rail and highway interactions. The program is codified by *Nevada Revised Statutes* or NRS, historically Chapter 705 covering both railroads and monorail. NRS Chapter 705, Section 421 addresses the state plan for service by rail. A federal requirement of the U.S. Department of Transportation, or U.S. DOT. Nevada State Rail Plan is updated regularly, every several years by NDOT, and made available to the Federal Rail Administration or FRA, the Federal Highways Administration or FHWA, and to the general public.

Here we will take a look at our mission statement—help fostering the development of statewide rail corridors to enable the improved connectivity of passenger rail between communities and to add to the success of the local economies throughout the state while ensuring regional involvement, support, and participation with the understanding that an efficient passenger rail transportation system has the potential to reduce wear and tear along the state's roadways while also improving the safety of its population. In 2024, dedicated staff were added to the rail program catalyzing NDOT into a more proactive role within rail. It is worth noting that while NRS codifies language regarding rail, high-speed rail, and NDOT's role in its relation there too, the program receives no state funding. The program is currently funded through a couple of FRA grants, as well as the State Planning and Research Program—also known as SPR. The SPR Program is also federally funded.

Looking at one of these grants currently received by NDOT—the Corridor Identification and Development Program, commonly referred to as the CID Program. The CID Program is a comprehensive inner-city passenger rail planning program, which is focused on identifying key corridors that require development or improvement to facilitate the economic growth, improve the mobility, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents and businesses.

The FRA initially awards grantees like NDOT Step One funds to develop a scope, schedule, and cost estimate to prepare an in-depth statement of work for each corridor. The Program is designed to bring a corridor to fruition from project conception to full preparation for construction. A key component of the CID Program is engaging and coordinating with stakeholders to ensure the needs of the corridor are addressed during the planning process. Local and regional partnerships are critical to the success of the corridor's development. The Program does not fund the capital projects, rather, once a corridor has progressed through all three steps of the CID Program; construction of a corridor is then eligible for other federal funding through FRA and other U.S. DOT grant programs.

Keeping this overview of the CID Program in mind, we will take a look at our current rail projects. The Brightline West project is currently under construction between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. It is funded by NDOT's federal state partnership or FSP grant, among other funding sources. Typically, a CID project would proceed construction of a corridor, but with the FSP grant already awarded and Brightline construction underway, the FRA asked NDOT to apply for a CID grant in coordination with the Brightline West project. NDOT's Brightline West grant is for Step One scoping which is 100 percent federally funded and designed to develop a scope, schedule, and budget for an FRA statement of work. Additionally, NDOT was awarded a Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects program grant funds, also known as INFRA funds, through the FRA to complete environmental clearances, design, and construction of corridor-based improvements on the Union Pacific Railroads or UPs Network, the Elko Amtrak Station, and the UP Elko Yard in rural Elko Nevada. The project will enhance Amtrak and UPs flexibility, efficiency, velocity, and operating capacity, and support future rail operations and growth through Elko on the Overland route, which runs from the San Francisco Bay area to Omaha, Nebraska.

As mentioned earlier, NRS Chapter 705.421 maintains that NDOT develop a state rail plan for rail service, which is a federal requirement as outlined in the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 266, Section 15 requirements for state rail plan. Section 11315 of the Fixing America Surface Transportation Act of 2015—FAST Act—made changes to the federal requirements, specifying that state approved rail plans be submitted every four years for acceptance by FRA. Nevada's most recent State Rail Plan was released in 2021 and is due for an update. Rail program staff will begin working on an update once a new federal transportation bill has been authorized. This will allow NDOT to incorporate any potential changes into this update. NDOT is also a committed partner to the Washoe RTC-led feasibility study, on which Jim Gee presented earlier today, research, and commuter rail options between Reno and the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center.

Looking forward, it is anticipated that FRA will release another round of discretionary CID program funding likely in the fall of 2026. NDOT rail program staff meets monthly with Utah Transit Authority in preparation for the pursuit of a grant for the Desert Wind Corridor, which is between Las Vegas and Salt Lake City. NDOT is also intending to integrate its freight program with its rail program in an effort to create a consolidated, more efficient program that will eliminate any redundancies. Lastly, but certainly not least, our rail program staff continues to network, build, and foster new partnerships with other states and various regional entities in order to cultivate collaboration and new rail transit opportunities. Internally, current rail staff is fostering relationships with NDOT right-of-way safety and district offices to help develop cohesive understanding of NDOT's role within rail. With that, I am happy to take any questions.

Chair Carter:

Are there any questions for NDOT? And up north?

Ms. Fuss:

Thank you. I work at the City of Reno. Just one thing that has come to our attention in the past couple of years when we deal with rail, and this is more on a broader scale. When new development comes, there is an existing railroad line, the development has to trigger some improvements to that crossing. The local jurisdiction gets tasked with forever maintaining that crossing. Like I said, this is kind of come to light within the last couple of years because we had a couple of development projects that triggered it. But this is something local jurisdictions—maybe—we are not aware that we had to do this forever. In terms of funding it, we do not have a separate funding source to pay for maintenance of railroads. So, totally supportive of what you guys are doing, and I think it is exciting—make sure if there is any way to incorporate forever funding for maintenance of those railroad crossings so the local jurisdictions do not get stuck with that, that would be a huge help.

Ms. Frank:

Okay. When we are ready, I would like to introduce Eric Scheetz, our NDOT Project Manager for Brightline West, and Sarah Watterson is joining us from Las Vegas. She is the President of Brightline West.

Eric Scheetz, Senior Project Manager, NDOT:

Well, thank you. I appreciate your time this afternoon. It has been an opportunity of a lifetime to work on this project, and I cannot wait to see a quick connection from Rancho Cucamonga to Las Vegas. With that being said, we do have Sarah Watterson here, or in Vegas rather, to answer questions specifically on Brightline, and as she is probably the best person to answer it—I would like to defer to her. Thank you.

Chair Carter:

Looks like you are on a hot seat. Ms. Watterson.

Sarah Watterson, President, Brightline West:

Good afternoon, everyone. I am happy to give a short update or answer—okay. Many of you, I think, are familiar with Brightline. It is a 220-mile, high-speed system connecting Las Vegas to southern California. I think to the comment made earlier, helpful to know we have no at-grid crossings—happy to talk more about that separately. It is a fully-barrier enclosed corridor, mostly in the median of Interstate 15 through partnerships with CalTrans, and NDOT, and the Bureau of Land Management allowing us to reach true high speeds of over 186 miles per hour. Taking a trip that would often be twice as long as what our trip is at—about two hours.

We came here just over five years ago and worked to obtain all of the right-of-way; all of the private land for the stations. The stations will be in Las Vegas, in the high desert in California, and in Rancho Cucamonga, then linking to the regional rail of Metrolink in southern California, connecting directly to L.A.'s Union Station. We obtained all of that land and right-of-way. We obtained our permits. We were successful in our partnership with NDOT in obtaining a $3 billion federal grant through the fed-state partnership grant in 2024. Most recently about a year ago, we raised about $2.5 billion of private financing that we could use to match against that grant to advance engineering and start executing some of our construction contracts—especially those early works contracts that we wanted to work on where the test track would be.

In the summer of last year, we started executing our construction contracts. We executed a construction contract on our Las Vegas Civil work with Las Vegas Paving, on our Las Vegas Station with McCarthy Building Companies, and on our vehicle maintenance facility in Sloan with Whiting-Turner. Work on all three of those contracts has started predominantly early works to get ready, to get ahead of the game, to finish our design. Las Vegas Civil, for instance, is about 100 percent complete with all of its design, at this point, as with the Station, almost on the vehicle maintenance facility as well. Then, the final contract we signed, which was actually in May 2024, was with our Rolling Stock provider that is building our ten train sets—and that is with Siemens. Those first two train sets are going to be built in Germany where there is going to be a technology transfer. They are actually bringing folks over to establish, basically, a training and technical program in Germany. Then we will use that training know-how in a facility they are building in upstate New York to build the remaining eight train sets, and then hopefully any train sets that we order beyond that and any other high-speed train sets that will be built by Siemens in America. We will use that same technology transfer and know-how in our vehicle maintenance facility, which will be here in Sloan. We will hire our own folks that are going to be doing all of the repairs and maintenance, basically everything except for the repair of the full train itself will be done in that facility and with a team of our own folks and our own know-how built out here.

The main thing that we are working on right now is executing our remaining contracts. We have nine total contracts, and so those remaining ones are in the works right now as we advance engineering and are able to culminate those.

Then the main final milestone is the rest of the financing. In September of this past year, we applied for a RRIF [Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing] loan through the federal program called Build America Bureau. It is under U.S. DOT. We applied for a $6 billion loan, and we are working with them, hopefully, on a 1Q timeline for our early-stage approvals that we would take to be able to go out and raise the remainder of the private money. They have been really good partners as, obviously, everyone working here has been as well.

I think we all— I am encouraged having heard about everything on the RTC and commuter rail and everything that is being worked on. I do not get to sit in these meetings all the time, and I wish I could. But I am encouraged to see everything that is going on. We have been very fortunate to feel that same spirit of partnership from the Federal Administration as well. They have been very supportive of working with us to obtain this RRIF loan. That is a critical component of our financing and critical both in terms of obtaining the financing, as well as on the timeline that we are working with them on.

With all that in mind, we are working on an end of 2029 opening date. We had hoped to be opened by the Olympics when we had originally applied for the federal grant in 2023—that was beginning of 2023. It took a little bit longer than we had thought to get that grant, so in the spirit of six months, as I like the story of the Wright Brothers, they failed 100 times, and nobody remembered that they failed 100 times when they got the 12 seconds flying. We are doing everything possible to get this built and appreciate all of your support and partnership. Happy to answer any questions as well.

Chair Carter:

With that, we will go to Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Jones:

She answered all my questions last week.

Chair Carter:

Okay. Thank you very much. I had a couple of questions, although Commissioner Jones hit one and probably hit them all last week. But, how is Brightline—are you coordinating in regard to seamless first and last mile connections? That is critically important here. We hear that all the time, what is going to happen once they hit that station down on Las Vegas Boulevard.

Ms. Watterson:

Thank you, Chair. Could not agree more. I think the parallel I would use is that when we built out Brightline, Florida from a construction and design standpoint, we started designing that system in 2012, when Uber and rideshare was highly irrelevant at the time—honestly, it was not as widely used nearly as it is now. So, we did not have the space considerations that we needed to be able to accommodate different things. I am encouraged to see what the airport is doing with the multimodal center, because you build these massively large buildings and who would think that you are confined by space at the end? It always happens that way.

Here with Brightline West, and I will talk about the Las Vegas part, although to me honestly, I think we have a much larger job to do on the southern California side. I will start on Las Vegas first though. We have been meeting with RTC and others, and we have met with The Boring Company, we have met with RTC; and so I think there is a lot of partnerships to be had. But what I will tell you what we are doing first is spatial allocation. We have the total piece of land is 110 acres. The Brightline West has about 20 acres of that—almost 6 acres of that is being held for truly pick up/drop off. Let alone there is a 900-space parking structure that is being built that you can see from the freeway, so in addition to that 900-space parking structure, there is about 6 acres of just pick up/drop off. Then there is probably another maybe quarter of an acre for what I call Kiss and Ride; there is a tremendous amount of space for TNC, taxi, rideshare, buses of both medium-density and high-density buses—enough slots to fit buses of all sizes. So what we are really doing is accommodating the larger space, not knowing, what we do not know is going to happen four years from now during construction. About a year before construction can really jump in on planning detail, of course, with conversations along the way. I would also say, maybe with conversations with Boring and others, the time it takes maybe to extend, as we have understood, is leaves us time to plan. Again, as long as we are planning for spatial allocation right now, and we understand that there is a partnership ahead of us—we are planning for that now.

On the southern California side, we are building on that side a 3,700 space parking structure—massive parking structure. In addition, as I mentioned, we sit right on top of the Metrolink train stations. It is Metrolink's biggest, most busiest train station—its San Bernardino line, two plus million trips per year. So really, and that stop in particular, other than L.A. Union Station, is one of their busiest stops. We are working in partnership with both the City of Rancho Cucamonga, the San Bernardino County Transit Authority, and the Metrolink to actually redesign that whole entire transit hub; so that Brightline coming in is a big piece of it. There will be a lot of pick up/drop off, the parking—it is basically almost a single floor of pick up/drop off and other parking and then ease of getting in and out of the rail. In addition, we are working with a lot of the local transportation agencies on their own bus rapid transit routes and connecting in. But again, that will be something that gets decided closer to us actually opening.

Chair Carter:

Very good, and you captured most of my next two questions. But I want to hear about how you are working with the local entities to maximize the economic development potential for that area of the station here; and also, what are the plans? We are hearing now a lot about, and RTC has been working on that, the surges that we get when we have big events like now hockey games, football games, potentially baseball games—well, no, we are going to have baseball games. Those surges, Vegas has always had surges at different times of the year; now we are going to see more and more surges. What is Brightline's plan for varying capacity?

Ms. Watterson:

Of course. The beautiful thing about a train is it is highly predictable. We are running 35 trains per day, 17 in one direction, 18 in another; our train sets are made to hold about 440 people. We can double those train sets to get to about 880 people per train—passengers per train. And we are only going one way in, one way out. Our surges, if you will, even if a full bus is full, it is about 880 patrons coming out of our station and needing to get into vehicles. That is a large number. I am not suggesting that is a small number by any means, but it is a predictable amount of people. I should also mention that the way that Brightline books our customers is you booked a reserved seat. Through that information, we ask where are you going? Is there any way we can help on your first and last mile transportation? We have learned in Florida, we have actually tested full scale first and last mile services that we have had ourselves in Florida. I will give you an example—just a parallel in Florida, right now. We do an immense amount of business taking people to and from sporting events. Formula One last year, we were their number one partner in terms of direct transportation taking in patrons to our Aventour Station and then getting them via shuttle to the Hard Rock. We do that with a buzzer beater train for the Miami Heat Arena, where we know if you are coming from West Palm Beach, you get to our Miami Station, you get off, you get into a bus, or walk—you have the opportunity to walk—and go to either Miami Marlins or go to Miami Heat Arena depending on where you are going. We expect it to be no different here. If there is going to be Raiders fans coming here for a large-scale event, there cannot be more than 880 coming in an hour. I wish there could, but they come, we have large scale buses that we can partner with RTC and others, but have availability for it and get them to the stadium, get them safely back, hopefully after they stay for a night. Sorry.

Chair Carter:

Thank you. The other part was about working with the local entities, about capturing the maximum amount of economic development and opportunities for economic development and driving that in that area out there.

Ms. Watterson:

Yes, of course. I do not know what the exact opportunities are going to be here. I would be lying if I said all the economic opportunities that would come. What I know, first and foremost, is that it takes many, many people to build a train, and it will take many people to operate the train. We are—I do not know how many, I should probably know this number, but I could name six contractors that actually opened up offices in Nevada for the Brightline West project that now have many other projects going on in Nevada. I am not able to quantify it. I wish I could. But that is just the beginning. I think that is the start of the construction. The construction is a finite period of time. Then you have a 20-acre anchor with ample real estate around it that could be developed for many things beyond that and

many services with our neighboring businesses around us. I would love to be able to quantify the exact number. I can tell you what the studies say, but I do not think that is where, you know, I do not think that is worth it, but I could know that there is already concrete opportunities today, and there is going to be more tomorrow.

Chair Carter:

Thank you very much and with that, we will go up north.

Vice Chair Daly:

No questions.

Chair Carter:

Mr. Mortenson, I just want to make sure that you have the opportunity.

Mr. Mortensen:

No, sir, I am good.

Chair Carter:

Well, thank you very much and thank you, Ms. Watterson.

AGENDA ITEM VIII—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Carter:

With that, that takes us into our final agenda item—Agenda Item VIII, public comment. There are multiple ways again, just like we talked about in the beginning, in person, by phone, by email.

With that, we will open up down here first in southern Nevada. Is there anybody wishing to make a public comment? None appearing, we will move up to Carson City. None appearing. AVH is there anybody on the phone lines?

[Public comment was received by Matthew Harris, California Resident, LTL Truck Driver (Agenda Item VIII).]

AVH:

Thank you, Chair. The public line is open and working. We have no callers at this time.

Chair Carter:

Once again, I want to say thank you all for your attendance here and for helping facilitate a meeting that we got done way ahead of what we planned. I really appreciate the engagement. With that, we are adjourned.

AGENDA ITEM IX—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Working Group, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Crystal Rowe
Assistant Manager of Research
Policy Assistants

_____

Alex Drozdoff
Principal Policy Analyst

APPROVED BY:

_____

Assemblymember Max E. Carter II, Chair

Date: _____

MEETING MATERIALS

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Agenda Item III A	John Hester, Washoe County Resident Member, Regional Rail Transit Advisory Working Group Jim Gee, Director of Public Transportation and Operations, Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County, Nevada Paul Nelson, Government Affairs Officer, RTC of Washoe County, Nevada	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Agenda Item III B	John Hester, Washoe County Resident Member, Regional Rail Transit Advisory Working Group	Follow-Up Information The handout may be viewed at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/ and the original will be on file in the Research Library, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or email Library@lcb.state.nv.us
Agenda Item IV	Andrew Kjellman, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, RTC of Southern Nevada	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation The handout may be viewed at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/ and the original will be on file in the Research Library, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or email Library@lcb.state.nv.us
Agenda Item V	Ed Finger, Chief Strategy Officer, Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation The handout may be viewed at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/ and the original will be on file in the Research Library, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or email Library@lcb.state.nv.us

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Agenda Item VI	James C. Chrisley, Director of Aviation, Clark County Department of Aviation Bryant W. Holt, Senior Director of Aviation, Clark County Department of Aviation	Handout The handout may be viewed at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/ and the original will be on file in the Research Library, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or email Library@lcb.state.nv.us
Agenda Item VII	Tara Frank, Rail Program Manager, Nevada's Department of Transportation (NDOT)	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation The handout may be viewed at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/ and the original will be on file in the Research Library, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. For copies, contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or email Library@lcb.state.nv.us
Agenda Item VIII	Matthew Harris, California Resident, LTL Truck Driver	Written Remarks

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