

CARSON CITY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the March 27, 1996 Special Meeting

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A special meeting of the Carson City Regional Transportation Commission was held on Wednesday, March 27, 1996 in the Community Center Bonanza Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, NV at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairperson Greg Smith
Vice Chairperson Kay Bennett
Marie Wolf

STAFF: Paul Lipparelli
Tim Homann, Deputy Public Works Director
Harvey Brotzman, Senior Engineer/RTC
Fran Smith, Recording Secretary
(RTC 3/27/96 1-0000)

NOTE - Unless otherwise indicated each item was introduced by Chairperson Smith. Individuals speaking are identified following the heading of each item. A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's office. This tape is available for review and inspection during normal business hours.

A. CALL TO ORDER - Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Smith said he wanted to change the agenda slightly and give the public an opportunity to comment on non-agendized items before hearing the item on Regional Transportation Projects for Fiscal year 1996/1997.

(1-0027) Jim Cogwin had a concern with traffic at the corner of Fifth Street and Butti in that it is very dark and it is difficult to determine which direction cars will be going. He felt there should be some illumination at that corner. He also commented that making the left turn from Butti onto Airport is a hazard and needs lighting. He said it was his understanding that the City is planning to make some improvements in that area and suggested they do something to rectify the situation. Commissioner Bennett agreed it is a hazard. Chairperson Smith advised that the Commission is not allowed to respond to public comments but, because the City is planning to develop the Corporate Yard in the next few years, he was confident some lighting would be installed.

(1-0141) Jay Meierdierck felt the Commission should do something with regard to non-motorized transportation, specifically bicycles, walking, and skating. He noted that the Board of Supervisors had approved the bicycle plan with input from the public but that nothing has been done to implement it. He reported it had been directed as streets were repaved, modified, repainted, or whatever, that bike lanes and paths should be included but it has not happened. He also noted that Mayor Teixeira, as a Parks and Recreation Commission member, had directed this has to be done. He mentioned that Sonoma Street has a trail on it but the extension is not on the map. He felt that coordination is also needed from the Commission on State actions regarding highways. He noted that the State is in the process of designing the King-Ormsby-Winnie loop and that bike paths and bike trails have been called for on that. He said they need direction or a push by the City to include those.

(1-0221) Bruce Robertson said he was representing the Rotary Club. He reported that the club has been involved with part of the planning process of the State, City Parks and Recreation, and the State has committed to negotiation stages to do King Street. He commented that the State has asked the City to provide the signing and they will do the striping. He added that the Rotary Club has offered a \$10,000 donation for the signage.

(1-0250) Commissioner Bennett expressed her appreciation to Messrs. Robertson and Meierdierck for bringing these subjects to the attention of the Commission. She added that as part of the budget process for the Commission she and Mr. Homann have discussed establishing an advisory committee to study the issues of bikes and transportation. She asked Mr. Homann if it is still his intent to submit that as part of his budget. Mr. Homann said

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it is listed in the Public Works Administration budget for goals and objectives. Chairperson Smith advised that the budget hearings are held in early May. Mr. Homann pointed out to Mr. Meierdierck that Public Works is aware of the plan and are trying to incorporate it wherever they can. He added they sometimes have restrictions with regard to right-of-ways and cannot always accommodate the desires of the public. He reported that striping of Saliman Road from Highway 50 to Koontz Lane has already happened and that it includes bike lanes on both sides of the street.

(1-0305) Jerry Massad asked for information on how the Commission feels about the couplet system. Chairperson Smith said it has not come before the Commission although it will in future meetings as it relates to gas tax dollar expenditures.

2. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DIRECTING STAFF TO ESTABLISH THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996/1997 - (1-0375)

Mr. Homann said he would present an overview of the RTC as it relates to available funds for projects. He reported that the general direction this year had been left to the Commission's discretion on setting priorities.

(1-0419) Mr. Homann also explained that the City gets four cents of gas tax for the operating and construction budget and that it amounts to approximately \$1.25 million dollars of revenue annually. He added they have \$300,000 of the budget which is allocated to staff costs, services, supplies, etc. for the operation of the division. He also advised there had been a revenue bond of approximately \$2 million a couple of years ago which was to enhance construction work. He added that theoretically they would have \$670,000 for new projects each year which will increase as gas tax increases and as the debt gets retired. He said they have now identified available funds of \$895,000 for this year and that is what the Commission currently has to work with.

(1-0471) Mr. Homann reported the current backlog of projects adds up to \$4.5 million and of that \$2.4 million is for the Graves Lane extension from Airport Road to Highway 50. He also said they try to update the City's transportation improvement plan each year and that the projects have been put into several categories. He explained that one is for existing streets that need to be widened because of increased traffic, a second is new segments of streets that need to be extended to further complete the transportation network, another is intersection signalization projects, one is reconstruction of intersections to provide a better flow of traffic, and finally there are infill projects. He explained they have done a technical evaluation of each category based on traffic volumes, accidents, projected future traffic volume, and cost estimates. He said in each segment a point value is assigned that allows them to set priorities which gives the Commission a starting point in evaluating projects.

(1-0605) At this point Chairperson Smith solicited comments or questions on Mr. Homann's presentation. Mr. Meierdierck asked that a new category be established for non-motorized transportation. Doug Hone asked why the Graves Lane extension carries such a big dollar number. Mr. Homann said that project is included in the \$4.4 million of backlog projects. Staff had prepared a map identifying all the projects currently on the priority list. Mr. Brotzman explained what type of project each mark on the map represented. He said that just because an intersection is funded they must still do a warrant study to show the installation of a signal is justified. He also noted they had marked other intersections that may possibly need a traffic signal in the future because of growth patterns in the community although studies have not yet been made. He pointed out on the map what the marks represented and that there are plans to accommodate the bicycle Master Plan. He also said there are arterial or collector roadways but it does not necessarily mean that the City has the right-of-way. He remarked that there are unpaved roadways in the City and that staff had evaluated these based on vehicle trips, number of residences, etc. and had come up with a point value for each.

(1-0741) Mr. Brotzman then stated staff was recommending three projects they would like to see funded this year. One was the Graves Lane extension including the sound walls for the project, another is installation of concrete islands at Desatoya and Edmonds and at Pheasant and Stanton. The third project would be the extension of Sonoma Drive at Highway 395 to Curry Street. He explained there are conduits already in place there for the installation of a traffic signal but a warrant study has not been done as yet. Commissioner Bennett asked what is the responsibility of the developer on the extension of Sonoma. Mr. Brotzman reported that, although the City does not currently have the right-of-way there, staff has received letters from two developers who have indicated

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their willingness to dedicate the right-of-ways to the City. Mr. Cogwin supported the idea of a signal and cited problems with trying to cross Carson Street from the east.

(1-1153) John Anderson was representing his client who is developing the old Southwest Gas property on the west side of Highway 395 at Sonoma. He said they will be starting their Master Plan for the site and are looking to deed a half acre to the City. He reported that the owner of the property to the south of his client's property has also indicated he will deed approximately one half acre to the City. Mr. Meierdierck reiterated his desire that a bike path be included in the project.

(1-1307) Chairperson Smith then solicited a motion to include Sonoma for funding in 1996-1997. Commissioner Bennett moved that the Regional Transportation Commission establish the Sonoma Street extension with an estimated cost of \$200,000 on the priority list for the Regional Transportation Commission in the fiscal year 1996-1997 based on the evidence on the record of this Commission at this meeting and prior meetings and after having considered the priorities established by the regional plan for transportation, the relation of the proposed work to other projects already constructed or authorized, the relative need for the project in comparison with others proposed, and the money available. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. She felt if businesses are bounded to the west by Curry that there should not be an ingress or egress from Sonoma on to Curry because of problems it would cause and that Curry would have to be widened. Motion carried 3-0.

(1-1453) The next discussion was on the Master Plan element update on the priority list with an estimated cost of \$35,000. Mr. Homann explained that the last transportation element was done in 1989 and since that time the City and developers have accomplished the majority of the outlined needs. He said these included an upgrade of the traffic signal system by totally computerizing it at a cost of \$750,000. The College Parkway extension from Highway 395 to Ormsby was also included. He said staff would like to revisit Master Planning of the City taking into consideration new facilities that are in place and come up with new recommendations. Included would be a better downtown transportation element because of the increased usage. Mr. Meierdierck noted that Mr. Homann had not made reference to the bicycle path system and encouraged the addition of approximately \$5,000 to the estimate so that it could be studied. Commissioner Bennett suggested the inclusion of a public transit element. Mr. Homann noted there are other studies currently going on which should also be coordinated.

(1-1617) Larry Osborne, Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce, said they support the update because of the increase in traffic and related concerns in the City. He felt the plan for streets, highways, and traffic should be a coordinated effort and that it is a wise expenditure of funding. Commissioner Wolf expressed her feeling that as long as the Planning Commission allows high density there will be a lot of traffic. Commissioner Bennett said she anticipates the outcome of the study will reflect the upgrade of the land use element of the City's Master Plan. Commissioner Wolf moved that the Regional Transportation Commission spend the \$35,000 for the Master Plan update. Mr. Meierdierck asked that the motion include a reference to the other studies going on. Mr. Brotzman said a bicycle system and a transit plan are already identified in the goals and objectives section of the current streets and highways element of the Master Plan. Commissioner Bennett seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

(1-1825) The next recommendation was the Edmonds Drive pedestrian crossing project at a cost of \$20,000. Mr. Brotzman pointed out on the map the possible locations of the medians, these being at Desatoya and Edmonds, and Pheasant at Edmonds. Mr. Homann remarked that a signal is expensive and not necessarily warranted in this case. He felt these medians could alleviate some of the problems. Commissioner Bennett asked about the volume of traffic and what numbers are needed in order to achieve an acceptable warrant. Mr. Brotzman said the warrant for traffic with two or more lanes is 600 vehicles per hour per approach and 150 from the off leg which would off of Pheasant. He also reported they had done a pedestrian count which did not meet the warrant. She asked at what percent they are at in the criteria for meeting a warrant. Mr. Brotzman said it was at approximately 40 percent. Chairperson Smith asked if it is possible to install a signal that would allow traffic to move freely until a button was pushed. Mr. Brotzman said if it was installed it should be at Pheasant and that loops should also be put in because they detect the presence or absence of a vehicle. Chairperson Smith asked if installing the activated signal would interfere with the free flow of traffic and Mr. Homann said he did not believe it would substantially alter it.

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(1-2317) George Horton asked that the City not put anything in except at Pheasant. He felt that installing it elsewhere would not do any good. He had a concern that there isn't compliance with the speed limit but Mr. Brotzman said they have done speed studies and came up with 90 percent compliance.

(1-2493) Teri Cantley said she was representing Eagle Highlands Phase I and Empire PTA. She asked if staff, in studying the criteria for a warrant, had considered the additional 3,000 cars per day that will push through once the Graves Lane extension is completed. Mr. Brotzman said the studies are done on existing conditions. Mr. Homann explained there are eleven warrants they look at for a traffic signal. He added that some are volumes, some are the number of pedestrians, and some are the number of accidents at an intersection. He also said they cannot speculate at this point what impact the extension of Graves Lane will have.

(1-2617) Ms. Cantley said it was her understanding that Richard Scott, when he was doing the Master Plan for his Iron Mountain Acquisition development, had been granted several variances and one of the things he was supposed to have done was pay for a light. She asked for an update on this. Mr. Homann explained there are levels of service from A to F and that a development cannot cause traffic to deteriorate below a certain level of service. He added that all the traffic studies done for that development, including buildout, indicated it would not cause the intersection to fall below a D level of service. Ms. Cantley expressed her discomfort with the idea of having to stand on a median in the middle of the street with cars and trucks speeding by.

(1-2915) Mark Davis said he was representing Eagle Highlands Phase II. He commented that the growth in the area has been phenomenal and felt that studies done as recently as five or six months ago could already be voided. He mentioned the increase in cars and described the routes people take to get to Pheasant and how long it takes to get out on to Edmonds.

(1-3141) Chairperson Smith said he had a concern that this situation had not come to light until after the last budget cycle where funding had been allocated to other projects. He passed the gavel to Vice Chairperson Bennett and moved that the Regional Transportation Commission, based on the evidence on the record of this commission at this meeting and prior meetings and after having considered the priorities established by the regional plan for transportation, the relation of the proposed work to other projects already constructed or authorized, the relative need for the project in comparison with others proposed, and the money available, I move the RTC approve the project of the Pheasant at Edmonds crossing and add it to the list to be funded for fiscal year 1996-1997 in the amount of \$100,000 based on the findings that are as follows: the priority established by the Regional Transportation Commission - that meets it; the relation to the proposed work and our other projects already constructed or authorized - that meets it; the relative need for the project in comparison with others proposed - that meets it; the money available - that certainly meets it, and that, again, to be the signalized three way intersection I spoke of earlier. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. Commissioner Bennett expressed her appreciation for the work staff does and said she understands and respects that they, in their professional judgment, need to make recommendations. Chairperson Smith said for the record he also applauds the fact that staff took the time to try to come up with alternatives to spend less money but still have a safe crossing area. Motion carried 3-0.

Vice Chairperson Bennett passed the gavel back to Chairperson Smith.

Chairperson Smith then asked if staff has any idea as to how long they anticipate it will take for the project to be completed and Mr. Brotzman said it should be in by Thanksgiving of this year.

(1-3473) Chairperson Smith said at the last priority meeting he had made the motion to remove the extension of Hillview Drive from the list. He added there were people at that meeting who had opposed the extension but there had been no one there who supported the project. He reminded the public that any action taken here is not the final decision because all this Commission can do is make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors who will approve or deny it. Mr. Homann described the area that would be affected, noted that the City has an existing right-of-way, and said the increase in traffic has resulted in this attempt to gather some of it from collector streets. Mr. Brotzman said the estimated cost is \$111,000.

(1-3719) Fran McClain mentioned the impact of Wal Mart, other stores and housing developments have had on the

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street. She also commented on the flooding from Koontz Lane and said there is nothing that will alleviate it as long as the road stays the way it is and that sand fills the manholes leaving the water nowhere to go. She also talked about the traffic turning toward the highway and described the route they take. She cited several instances where she and other people have had difficulty getting in and out of their property because of the traffic. She felt that opening the one block involved would ease the problem by permitting traffic to take alternate streets. She expressed her hope that this project can be completed this year.

(2-0375) Chris Tschirhart suggested that the project be given a low priority and a high priority given to reconstructing Koontz by putting in drainage improvements and curb, gutter, and sidewalks. He suggested, since drainage improvements were put in along Saliman, that the City submit a letter to FEMA to remove the area from the flood plain.

(2-0505) Chairperson Smith said his reason for not feeling Hillview should go through was that it really would not solve any of the problems because there would still be a lot of traffic on Saliman and Koontz. Ms. McClain reiterated the problem with people getting in and out of their property. Mr. Homann explained that putting Hillview through would not affect storm drainage on Koontz. He said there is a catch basin that will have to be eliminated which would not have any impact on anything west on Koontz. Laura Tschirhart felt that the project would cause more traffic and speeding on Saliman.

(2-0727) Chairperson Smith referred to his motion to remove the project from the priority list and wondered if it should have stayed on the list as inactive. Mr. Lipparelli said there is nothing that requires this Commission or the City to have a priority list. However, he said it works nicely in terms of planning and organizing. He said all that is required is that before a project is started it has to be approved by this Commission because of the expenditure of the gas tax. He also noted that approval of the project is what requires the Commission to evaluate it in terms of priorities of the Master Plan and relative need for the project in relation to other needs. Mr. Homann said this is something of a wish list of projects ranked in a priority order. Commissioner Bennett said she was reluctant to remove Hillview from consideration at some time in the future. At this point Chairperson Smith entertained a motion. Commissioner Bennett moved that based upon the representation and the testimony heard at this meeting I would move that Hillview Drive remain on the future projects list without committed funds. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. Chairperson Smith asked for a roll call vote: Bennett - aye; Wolf - aye; Chairperson Smith - nay. Motion carried 2-1. Chairperson Smith expressed his feeling that this issue will probably be revisited in front of the Board of Supervisors and said he would make sure the public would know when this is to take place.

Chairperson Smith declared a recess at 8:30 p.m. When he reconvened the meeting at 8:40 p.m. a quorum was present.

(2-1147) Chairperson Smith then went to a discussion on the sound wall project. Don Morse announced his objection to the Graves Lane extension. He felt the extension would run through the middle of a quiet residential area and within ten feet of some homes. He said it was his understanding the purpose of the extension was to get traffic from Highway 395 north to Highway 50 east and said there are already four routes to handle it. He provided a sheet of his comments and read it into the record. (This is attached to these Minutes.)

(1-1241) Mr. Homann said sound mitigation had not been previously considered but, once College Parkway was opened up, there was a request from people living along the parkway to consider this problem. He added that based on that the Commission had given staff direction to develop and consider a sound mitigation policy. He explained as they had gone through the design of the Graves Lanes extension project it had become apparent that the same problem existed there. They had proceeded with a noise study and came up with a recommended mitigation effort for noise and sound walls. The report included alternatives of six and eight foot walls. However, it was felt that a six foot sound wall might give a sufficient level of mitigation at a cost of \$750,000 as opposed to \$900,000 for the eight foot wall. He added that RTC and the Board of Supervisors are ultimately interested in having a noise mitigation policy although it is not mandated in Nevada. He then said in order to move forward this could be a conditional approval of priorities to get started. He noted it would probably be cheaper to do all of this to begin with.

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(1-1425) Commissioner Wolf suggested installing a noise meter at a point along College Parkway. Mr. Brotzman had provided relatively similar data on a study and Mr. Homann explained the results. Commissioner Bennett said she was interested in landscaping and the design. Mr. Homann said staff had used a worst case scenario in projecting a cost of \$900,000. He added if this is a funded project staff's instruction to their consultant would be to explore every possibility and to pass on the concerns about the aesthetic quality of what the wall would look like. He said, because of the constraints of the eighty foot right-of-way, there may not be a lot of options as to what can be done. Mr. Brotzman said available funds are \$595,000 and pointed out on the map the location of the proposed installations. Commissioner Bennett mentioned alternatives such as berming where possible and Mr. Homann said that was his preference.

(1-1715) Mr. Morse asked what is planned for the intersections of Sherman and Nye. Mr. Brotzman said conduit will be installed in the event signals are put it at some time in the future.

(1-1779) Larry Osborne expressed a concern that there is no noise ordinance in the City or in the State. He said it is his understanding that none of the noise levels along the area being considered currently exceed Federal standards. He commented on the need to build some type of a bypass or expressway and noted the increase in noise levels it will cause in other areas of the City. He felt that before a precedent is set by building the sound wall perhaps the anticipated noise levels in those other areas should also be considered.

(1-1949) Chairperson Smith mentioned some of the other needs and suggested an option of setting aside part of the available money each year for the sound wall leaving some funding for other projects. Mr. Brotzman said, although there is no sound policy, there is the option of bidding the sound walls. He felt it would be best to put them in when the roadway is built because once there are 14,000 vehicles a day using it and then coming back and having to neck it down to one lane in each direction would not be very good from a public relations standpoint. Mr. Homann said he would not have a problem starting the project in late fall and Mr. Brotzman said it would probably take from nine months to a year to complete. Commissioner Bennett commented that at some point the City will take Hot Springs Road and the State will take and maintain College Parkway. The question arose as to whether or not the sound wall was mandated by the State. Mr. Homann reported he has asked the State about this but has not received a definitive answer. Chairperson Smith suggested the creation of a category that could be used for sound walls or other sound mitigation projects although he was not sure sound walls are the answer to the problem. Mr. Homann mentioned that a portion of the money would be needed to amend the contract with the consultant, SEA, to design something which could be brought back to the Commission. Commissioner Bennett asked how much the design would cost. Mr. Brotzman said if the cost of the entire project would be \$900,000 then he estimated that a 25 percent portion should be allocated as a minimum. Commissioner Bennett then suggested setting aside something like \$300,000-\$400,000 out of which would come a design and, after having seen the it, the dollars can be allocated to it.

(1-2496) Mr. Homann said the charge of the Commission is not necessarily to set the budget because it is the Board of Supervisors's job although the Commission sets the priorities. He did not know what the design work is going to cost but that the Commission can set as a priority the design at whatever dollars that is going to take. He added that they could then make a recommendation that the remaining dollars not be allocated to a priority project at this time. Chairperson Smith said he was not sure he wanted to commit the balance of the dollars to sound mitigating projects. Mr. Homann felt that this discussion indicates this is an important issue. He said he would at least like to have the design work done which would give them firm numbers and direction on how to recommend the allocation of the money.

Chairperson Smith said he was ready to make a motion and passed the gavel to Vice Chairperson Bennett. Mr. Lipparelli suggested if the Commission was considering setting aside some gas tax money for the design of sound walls that it be designated for a particular project and not as part of a general sound wall mitigation account. Chairperson Smith said based on the evidence on the record of this commission at this meeting and prior meetings and having considered the priorities established by the regional plan for transportation, the relation of the proposed work to other projects already constructed or authorized, the relative need for the project in comparison with others proposed, and the money available, I move the RTC approve \$100,000 for the design of sound walls and sound mitigation for the Graves Lane extension project. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

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(2-2861) Mr. Homann said that left \$496,000 and suggested a motion be made to recommend that the remaining money be assigned as uncommitted funds and in so doing it would be available at any time during the year. Commissioner Smith moved that RTC designate the remaining \$496,912 as uncommitted funds. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Vice Chairperson Bennett then passed the gavel back to Chairperson Smith.

4. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS - Commissioner Bennett expressed her feeling that this had been a good meeting and said she appreciated the input from the public and staff.

5. STAFF'S COMMENTS - None.

6. ACTION ON FUTURE MEETING DATE AND TIME - The next meeting is scheduled for April 17 at 8:30 a.m. in Room #59 at the Northgate Administrative Complex.

7. ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business Chairperson Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bennett moved to adjourn. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Chairperson Smith adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

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ARE SO APPROVED _____ April 17 _____, 1996

/s/ _____
Greg Smith, Chairperson