



# City of Denton

City Hall  
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## AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

**DEPARTMENT:** Transportation

**CM/ DCM/ ACM:** Mario Canizares

**DATE:** March 21, 2018

### **SUBJECT**

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and make a recommendation regarding pending action by the Regional Transportation Council regarding the advancement of the IH-635/LBJ East Project.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has developed a 10-year plan over the past several years. Included in that plan is the IH-635 East Managed Lane project from US 75 to IH-30. Knowing that the Texas Legislature passed Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 funds with a prohibition for use on any facility with a toll component, the RTC planned to fund IH-635 East using Category 2 Federal dollars, which, does not prevent the use of toll facilities, but encourages them.

In December 2017, the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) received letters from the Governor, Lt. Governor, and two senators in the North Texas region opposing the inclusion of tolled lanes on IH-635 East. Based on those letters, the TTC removed IH-635 East, IH-35W, and several other projects throughout the state that included tolled managed lanes from the 10-year Unified Transportation Plan (UTP).

In January 2018, the RTC made a presentation to the TTC regarding the reinstatement of IH-635 East into the UTP. The Commission delayed action because the project had a \$1 billion shortfall. The Commission asked the RTC to provide the TTC with a proposal as to how the region intended to bridge the \$1 billion funding gap. At the time, the proposal would require the delay of other critical roadway projects in the region, including improvements on IH-35E from the Denton/Dallas County line to IH-635.

On February 28, 2018, TxDOT Administration staff met with RTC staff to discuss the path forward for IH-635 East. Based upon that meeting, TxDOT staff sent RTC staff a sample cover letter, resolution, and funding strategy for RTC policy officials to act on at their March 8, 2018, meeting. On March 2, RTC staff responded to the information from the TxDOT Administration with a series of questions that need to be answered before taking this issue before the policy members of the RTC.

On March 6, 2018, Chairman Bruce Bugg of the TTC, responded to the requested information, calling the request an "obfuscation," insisted that the RTC drop the plans for tolling the managed lanes, and provide the TTC with a proposal to cover the \$1 billion funding shortfall. Chairman Rob Franke of the RTC, responded that RTC staff has requested information to assist the policy officials determine the best path forward on IH-635 East, and at such time as they receive that information, RTC will consider its options.

At the March 8, 2018, RTC meeting, several members of RTC expressed their disappointment in the TTC's response to the RTC's concerns. Additionally, the City of Dallas informed the members of the RTC that Dallas would not support moving forward with any alternatives on IH-635 East that do not include managed lanes. Following the City of Dallas lead, Denton County stated that their position would be similar. Finally, there is some concern from the RTC that the TTC does not have the legislative authority to "ban" all new toll roads in Texas since the Legislature has passed no such ban.

Mobility Committee Chair Bagheri requested that this issue be brought before the Mobility Committee to outline the issue and discuss options as it relates to the pending RTC vote on advancing the IH-635 project. John Polster, ITS and staff will present this item. Attached, as Exhibit 2, is Item 3.16 from the March 6 RTC agenda containing emails and correspondence from RTC staff, RTC Chair, and the TTC associated with this issue.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN RELATIONSHIP**

The City of Denton's Strategic Plan is an action-oriented road map that will help the City achieve its vision. The foundation for the plan is the five long-term Key Focus Areas (KFA): Organizational Excellence; Public Infrastructure; Economic Development; Safe, Livable, and Family-Friendly Community; and Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship. While individual items may support multiple KFAs, this specific City Council agenda item contributes most directly to the following KFA and goal:

**Related Key Focus Area: Organizational Excellence**

**Related Goal: 1.6 Collaborate with local, regional, state, and federal partners**

### **EXHIBITS**

1. Agenda Information Sheet
2. Item 3.16 RTC Agenda, March 6, 2018

Respectfully submitted:  
Mark Nelson  
Transportation Director