

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Eric Strong, City Manager
Date: March 3, 2015
Subject: Fort Worth Transportation Authority

Council Action Requested:

No Action – Discussion Only

Background Information:

In September of 2014 and January of 2015, the City Council approved two resolutions regarding the Fort Worth Transportation Authority and recent legislation which changed the composition of the Board of Directors. The most recent resolution passed requested feedback from several local entities. I would like to give you an update on those resolutions and the feedback that we have received so far.

The attached resolutions and cover letters were sent to: The City Fort Worth, The City of Blue Mound, The Fort Worth Transportation Authority, Senator Kelly Hancock, Representative Stephanie Klick, Tarrant County and Commissioner Fickes

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Staff Contacts:

Eric Strong
City Manager
estrong@richlandhills.com

Attachments: Resolution 435-14
Resolution 443-15
Response from Fort Worth



CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS

(817) 616-3806 • 3200 DIANA DRIVE • RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS 76118

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

September 18, 2014

At the Richland Hills City Council meeting held on September 16th, 2014, the Richland Hills City Council voted unanimously to approve the resolution enclosed with this letter. The enclosed resolution recognizes that the Tarrant County Commissioners Court has appointed a member to the T Executive Board from a non-member city. While we recognize this within the powers of the Tarrant County Commissioners Court, we feel strongly that all future appointments should be made with primary consideration being given to residents from member cities, which currently include Richland Hills and Blue Mound.

Sincerely,

Mayor Bill Agan
City of Richland Hills, Texas

RESOLUTION 435-14

**A RESOLUTION OF THE RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL REQUESTING
TARRANT COUNTY TO CONSIDER FUTURE APPOINTMENTS TO THE T
EXECUTIVE BOARD COME FROM MEMBER CITIES**

WHEREAS, the T Executive Board is composed of nine members, and one of the members is appointed by the Tarrant County Commissioners Court; and

WHEREAS, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court appointment has historically been a resident from one of the member cities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills, along with the City of Blue Mound, are long-standing member cities of the T; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the City of Richland Hills has helped to make the T a regional authority; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills has invested over \$15,000,000 in the T system since membership started in 1993; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the dedicated sales tax the City of Richland Hills has allocated to the T, the City of Richland Hills is also moving forward with plans to further enhance the T system by creating a Transit Oriented Development surrounding the T rail stop in Richland Hills; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Richland Hills believes that the Tarrant County appointment to the T Executive Board should continue to be a resident from member cities to represent the T's appreciation and recognition of member cities dedicated, long-term, ongoing and significant financial and political commitments and sacrifices member cities have made for the betterment of the region as a whole; and

WHEREAS, appointment to the Executive Board by a resident from a non-member city leaves a significant portion of the T membership and a majority of member cities with no representation on the Executive Board.

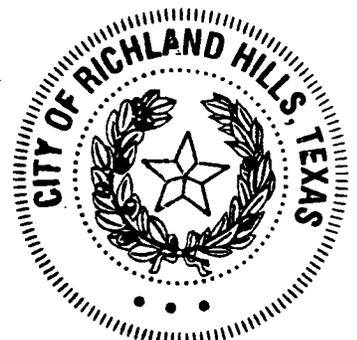
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS that the City Council respectfully requests that all future appointments by the Tarrant County Commissioners Court to the T Executive Board be made with primary consideration being given to residents of member cities.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS THE 16TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2014.


Mayor, Bill Agan

ATTEST:


City Secretary, Cathy Bourg





CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS

(817) 616-3806 • 3200 DIANA DRIVE • RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS 76118

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

January 13, 2015

On Tuesday, January 6th, the Richland Hills City Council approved a Resolution in regards to legislation that was passed in the last legislative session which affects the composition of the Fort Worth Regional Transportation Authority Executive Board. This legislation amended the Transportation Code as it relates to certain Regional Authority Executive Boards and was known as House Bill 2536.

The Fort Worth Regional Transportation Executive Board is comprised of nine members, eight of which are residents of Fort Worth. Prior to House Bill 2536 legislation being passed, one of the nine members of the Board was required to be a citizen of a member city other than Fort Worth. House Bill 2536 changed this requirement, and allowed for the ninth member of the Board to be a resident of a city that contracts with the Authority for services, yet which is not a member of the authority. The practical result of this provision was that two of the three member cities of the Fort Worth Regional Transportation Authority no longer have any representation on the Executive Board.

As we have reviewed this legislation and reflected on why the legislative change was brought forth to begin with, we have realized that it is due to systemic issues with the Transportation Code as it relates to Regional Transportation Authorities. Member cities that sacrifice significant funds to make the system regional are not represented on their own Board. Non-member cities that want to be a part of the regional system are unable to join for various reasons, yet are able to have representation on a board of which their city is not a member. We agree that legislative reform for the Transportation Code was, and still is, necessary. However, we disagree with the reform that was enacted. It was insufficient to address the real issues with regional transportation. In actuality, for some cities and entities, the legislation did the opposite of fixing problems; it created more problems.

As such, the attached resolution is a call for cooperation in fixing the problems. I look forward to hearing back from you and getting your thoughts on the Regional Transportation Authority and the issues that it faces.

Mayor Bill Agan
Richland Hills, Texas

RESOLUTION 443-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL REQUESTING THAT THE TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE REPEAL LEGISLATION WHICH WAS PASSED BASED ON INCORRECT TESTIMONY AND WHICH DAMAGED MEMBER CITIES OF THE FORT WORTH REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY AND LOOKS FOR MORE COMPREHENSIVE REFORM TO THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION CODE AS IT RELATES TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITIES.

WHEREAS, on March 26th, 2013, proposed legislation was introduced to the Texas House of Representatives Committee on Transportation which is known as House Bill 2536; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 2536 allowed for membership on the Board of Directors of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority from residents of non-member cities; and

WHEREAS, Testimony was provided to the Committee on Transportation from a representative from the City Council of the City of Fort Worth, in which the City of Fort Worth council representative was asked if the county and other member communities had been consulted with and agreed with the provisions of House Bill 2536; and

WHEREAS, in the testimony to the Committee on Transportation, City of Fort Worth City Council representative affirmed that the other member communities had been consulted with, that there was coordination amongst the communities and the other communities supported House Bill 2536; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills is a member city of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills had no knowledge of this legislation until after it was passed and there was no consultation, coordination or agreement from the City of Richland Hills in regards to this legislation either before or after its proposal or passage; and

WHEREAS, the incorrect testimony provided at this hearing helped to influence the ultimate passage of the legislation and significantly misrepresented the Richland Hills stance on this legislation; and

WHEREAS, this change in legislation was proposed not by a regional transportation authority, but rather by a single member city of one of the regional transportation authorities; and

WHEREAS, voters in Richland Hills have previously voted to be a member of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority, yet this legislation significantly changes the terms of the membership which citizens voted upon; and

WHEREAS, The City of Richland Hills is now represented in part by a representative of a non-member city who has the ability to vote on issues that affect Richland Hills and the services that are received by Richland Hills residents from the Regional Transportation Authority; and

WHEREAS, Richland Hills views this legislation change as a missed opportunity to fix more comprehensive issues with the Transportation Code as it relates to regional transportation authorities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: The City Council of Richland Hills respectfully requests that the Texas State House of Representatives and the Texas Senate reconsider this legislation which has damaged Richland Hills residents and changed the terms by which the City of Richland Hills joined the Fort Worth Transportation Authority, without any consent or knowledge of the legislation by the City of Richland Hills.

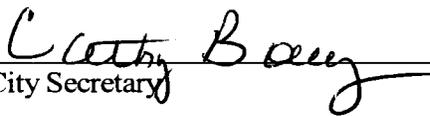
SECTION 2: The City Council of Richland Hills respectfully requests that that the Texas State House of Representatives and the Texas Senate take this opportunity to revisit the Transportation Code and look for more comprehensive reform which solves issues with the regional transportation legislation.

Passed by the City Council of Richland Hills, Texas this 6th day of January, 2015.

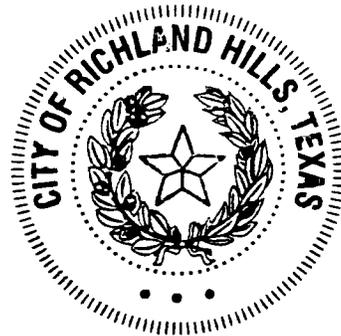


Mayor

ATTEST:



City Secretary





February 3, 2015

The Honorable Bill Agan
Mayor
City of Richland Hills
3200 Diana Drive
Richland Hills, Texas 76118

Re: Composition of Fort Worth Transportation Executive Board

Dear Mayor Agan:

Bill

Thank you for reaching out to us on this important matter. We did work to introduce and support passage of House Bill 2536 in 2013. One outcome of the bill was to allow the County, in making its appointment to the board, to select a resident who lives in a member city or in a city that contracts for service with the Fort Worth Transportation Authority in order to give residents from all communities that receive service from The T the opportunity to serve on the executive board. The person selected by the County to serve on the board is charged with acting on behalf of the residents of all unrepresented stakeholder cities.

Currently, the City of Grapevine is the only contracting city. However, as the highly anticipated TEXRail project comes to fruition, we expect other Cities will enter into similar agreements with The T. As The T's service boundary grows with the addition of more cities, either as full members or as cities contracting for rail service, it is likely that we would need to take a collective look at the corporate structure of The T to ensure it remains closely aligned with the communities it serves. In Fort Worth, we are hopeful that in the next few years The T will make significant strides in its membership connecting all of Tarrant County together.

However, we think it would be premature to seek any additional changes to The T's governing legislation until such time as we collectively agree on the path forward.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns, and I look forward to working closely with you to promote a more robust and more convenient public transit system for all of our citizens.

Sincerely,

Betty Price
Mayor

cc: Fort Worth City Council
Tarrant County Commissioners Court
Scott Mahaffey, Chair Fort Worth Transportation Authority
Bryan Beck, Regional Transportation, City of Fort Worth
TJ Patterson, Manager of Legislative Affairs, City of Fort Worth



BETSY PRICE, MAYOR

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