

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: August 2nd, 2016
Subject: Resolution regarding Fort Worth Transportation Authority

Council Action Requested:

Consider Resolution requesting that the Texas State Legislature consider comprehensive improvements to the Transportation Code.

Background Information:

In the past several years there have been several instances in which Richland Hills residents feel that they have been treated inequitably by the Fort Worth Transportation Authority. Amongst other things, this includes recent events in which the FWTA has notified the City that they are no longer providing the revenue sharing that has historically been a benefit of membership in the FWTA.

The attached resolution is a step in educating and informing our lawmakers of the inequitable relationship that the current Transportation Code provides for. The council may also want to consider proposing specific legislation for the upcoming legislative session.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: None

Staff Contacts

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City Manager
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Attachments: Resolution

RESOLUTION 471-16

A RESOLUTION OF THE RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL REQUESTING THAT THE TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE CONSIDER COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRANSPORTATION CODE AS IT RELATES TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITIES

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills has been a member of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (FWTA) since 1992; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, several efforts have been made by Richland Hills to improve the relationship between the FWTA and Richland Hills; and

WHEREAS, those efforts have included multiple resolutions that have encouraged and requested communication and coordination of efforts between Richland Hills and the FWTA; and

WHEREAS, Richland Hills has received no acknowledgement of the resolutions from the FWTA, nor has Richland Hills seen any increased efforts to communicate or coordinate with Richland Hills on important initiatives and services provided in Richland Hills; and

WHEREAS, any recent communication from the FWTA to the City of Richland Hills has primarily been to inform Richland Hills of adverse actions towards Richland Hills, and

WHEREAS, these adverse actions have included: the change in legislation that facilitated the removal of a Richland Hills resident from the FWTA Board of Directors, the removal of the 24 year rebate for street improvements that has historically been provided to all member cities and the removal and reduction of services provided to Richland Hills residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills recognizes that being a member of the FWTA provides Richland Hills with no assurances of services continuing; and

WHEREAS, the transportation code allows member cities a relationship with the Transportation Authority, but does not provide for a contract or require any stipulated levels of service; and

WHEREAS, the relationship provided by the Transportation Code cedes all decisions, power and influence to the Transportation Authority and the residents of Richland Hills are strictly at the mercy of the Transportation Authority to receive whichever services the Authority decides to provide; and

WHEREAS, several non-member cities have recently contracted with the FWTA for defined services at a defined price; and

WHEREAS, the FWTA cannot arbitrarily and without notice alter the terms of contracts that it has with non-member cities in the same manner that it does with member cities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills disagrees with the flaw in the Transportation Code that allows for a more defined and equitable relationship to exist between the FWTA and non-member cities than the relationship that exists between the FWTA and member cities; and

WHEREAS, historically, the relationship between the FWTA and Richland Hills has resulted in inaccurate information being provided to Richland Hills regarding ridership and usage by Richland Hills residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills led the effort to modify legislation in the 2015 legislative session to fix some of these problems with the Transportation Code; and

WHEREAS, one of the problems that was addressed allowed for increased membership on the FWTA Board of Directors in order to provide a potential spot for Richland Hills residents once again; and

WHEREAS, despite once again having a Richland Hills resident as a member of the Board of Directors, decisions by the FWTA which significantly damage the residents of Richland Hills are being made without board knowledge, thereby negating the benefit of having a resident serve as a member of the Board of Directors and undermining the intent of the law; and

WHEREAS, Richland Hills seeks an equitable and fair partnership between the FWTA and Richland Hills; and

WHEREAS, a relationship that is fair and equitable should require that the FWTA acknowledge both the benefit provided to the citizens as well as the damage done to city infrastructure based on their vehicles traffic patterns; and

WHEREAS, historically the FWTA has acknowledged this damage and made efforts to share revenues in order to remedy the problems caused by their vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the FWTA has decided to no longer acknowledge or take responsibility for the damage being done to infrastructure funded by the tax payers served by the FWTA and has shifted the burden to repair these problems entirely to Richland Hills, resulting in a larger burden being placed on residents by way of the need for additional tax funds to be expended to repair these problems.

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 consider legislation that modifies the Transportation Code and turns an inequitable relationship into an equitable partnership for all involved.

Passed by the City Council of Richland Hills, Texas this 2nd day of August, 2016.

Bill Agan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cathy Bourg, City Secretary