

Contact:
Michael Scroggins
Email: michael.scroggins@okc.gov
Phone: (405) 297-2107

Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma

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RTA Officials Meet with Top American Regional Transit Systems

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA – Representatives of the Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma (RTA) were in Salt Lake City, Utah last weekend to attend the annual Transit Board and Administrators Seminar sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). RTA Chair Brad Henry, RTA Co-Chair Marion Hutchison and RTA Interim Executive Director Jason Ferbrache attended the four-day conference, which brought together RTA board members and administrators from around the country for peer exchange and professional development on board governance and policy development for public transportation agencies, including sessions on national and legislative issues, advocacy, building ridership, transit-oriented communities, workforce development, safety and security, fare policies, and innovation and mobility management. In addition to attending the APTA conference, RTA board representatives were invited to privately meet with board members from Utah Transit Authority (UTA) and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART).

“The conference was a tremendous opportunity for us to meet with board members from UTA, DART, Denver RTD and other peer city RTAs to better understand their organizations and transit systems, and to learn about their successful approaches to many of these issues that have helped make their systems some of the best in the region”, said Henry. “That type of insight will be invaluable to us as we move forward with developing a regional transit system for the Oklahoma City metropolitan area.”

In addition to the seminars, conference attendees were provided the opportunity to experience UTA’s expansive Salt Lake City transit system, including light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit modes.

“For quite some time, we’ve considered the Salt Lake City system as an exemplary model for what’s possible for Oklahoma City”, said Hutchison. “Having now seen and ridden the system firsthand only reinforces that belief. What UTA has developed in such a relatively short period of time is truly remarkable, and it’s clearly one of the best transit systems for a city of its size in the country.”

In addition to the APTA seminars and transit tours, RTA Owner’s Representative Kathryn Holmes made special arrangements for Henry, Hutchison and Ferbrache to join DART representatives in a tour of Swiss train manufacturer Stadler Rail’s manufacturing facility in Salt Lake City, which is currently producing modern, European-style rail transit vehicles for DART and CalTrain (San Francisco).

“It was impressive to see the latest developments in commuter rail vehicle design and technology”, said Ferbrache. “To think that we may soon see trains like this traveling between Oklahoma City, Edmond and Norman is very exciting. It would be a transportation game-changer for the citizens of Central Oklahoma.”

The RTA is an independent governing transportation authority created under Oklahoma statutes by the cities of Oklahoma City, Edmond and Norman for the purposes of developing and operating a comprehensive regional transit system for the benefit of the citizens of Central Oklahoma.

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