

3. RTC Group Seat Membership Designations – June 30, 2022, Response Deadline
4. Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
5. Executive Session Follow Up ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
6. Presentation to Texas Transportation Commission on Safety
7. Invited Testimony to Texas House Transportation Committee ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
8. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
9. 2022 Ozone Season Update ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
10. Status of Ozone Reclassification ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
11. Lori Clark appointed to Environmental Protection Agency Mobile Source Technical Review Committee ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
12. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
13. Input Opportunity: Comment on the Statewide Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan by May 15 ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
14. Input Opportunity: Submit Energy Efficiency Needs to SECO by May 20 ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
15. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report ([Electronic Item 4.9](#))
16. April Public Meeting Minutes ([Electronic Item 4.10](#))
17. May Public Meeting Notice ([Electronic Item 4.11](#))
18. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.12](#))
19. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.13](#))
20. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.14](#))
21. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.15](#))

1:25 – 1:45

5a. **Approval of Western Subregion Transit Partnership**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council approval of [Electronic Item 5a](#) on transit partnerships that permits a path forward for the East Lancaster corridor to be submitted for INFRA and MEGA funding in Electronic Item 5b.

Background: Electronic Item 5a, presents the funding allocation for the extension of passenger rail into the Fort Worth hospital district and the construction of the Trinity Lakes Station. The City of Fort Worth is proceeding with Katy Lofts without Regional Transportation Council funds. A minor adjustment to the IH 35W Guaranteed Transit Program is included in the approval request.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety, Transit

5b. **Fiscal Year 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant Program**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenters: Michael Morris and Jeff Neal, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of projects to be submitted for funding consideration

through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program. This \$2.85 billion program solicits project applications for three combined funding opportunities: the National Infrastructure Project Assistance Grants Program (MEGA), the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Grant Program (INFRA), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL).

Background: In March 2022, the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) announced the solicitation of project applications for the FY2022 MPDG Discretionary Grant Program (<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-announcement>). The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) combines three major discretionary grant programs in efforts to reduce burdens for state and local applicants, increase the pipeline of “shovel-worthy” projects now possible because of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and enable US DOT to get a more comprehensive view of projects in development nationwide, with additional details provided in [Electronic Item 5b](#). Applications are due to the US DOT by May 23, 2022. For the east subregion, NCTCOG proposes to submit the South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity Project as a consolidated application under both the INFRA and RURAL Grant programs. Additionally, NCTCOG will partner with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) – Dallas District as a co-sponsor for the re-submittal of the IH 30 Downtown Dallas Canyon Project under the INFRA and MEGA Grant programs (originally submitted in FY2021). For the west subregion, NCTCOG proposes to re-submit the East Lancaster Avenue Complete Streets and Transit Technology Project under the INFRA and MEGA Grant programs (originally submitted in FY2021). For agencies in the region submitting projects, please be aware you must complete the www.grants.gov registration process, usually requiring two-four weeks for completion, prior to submitting applications. Assuming the projected timing for application development, agency requests to receive a letter of support from the RTC should be submitted to Kyle Roy by Thursday, May 12, 2022, at kroy@nctcog.org.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Goods Movement, Roadway

1:45 – 1:55

6. **\$15M Dallas Area Rapid Transit/Garland Partnership that Expedited the IH 635 East Project**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Christie Gotti, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) action to finalize a \$15 million funding exchange with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and the City of Garland to fulfill the funding partnership originally approved by the RTC in September 2019.

Background: During the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) procurement process for IH 635 East, potential contractors submitted alternative technical concepts at Garland Avenue. As a result, the City of Garland, TxDOT, and RTC staff developed a plan for the Garland Avenue area, which led to a lower cost but was not ideal for the City of Garland. In order to build IH 635 East as one project versus having to split this area out into a separate project due to complications at the KCS Railroad, the City of Garland accepted the design and the RTC agreed to offset elements of the recommendation that were not consistent with Garland's interest in a \$15 million partnership on a future project. Since that time, the City has worked on a development plan in the area, which is part of, and adjacent to, the South Garland Transit Center. As such, DART, the City, and RTC staff have agreed to a three-party partnership to allow the City to use local funds from DART for the work. Instead of the RTC's federal funding going to the City directly, the RTC funds would pay for a DART project. Details of the partnership are provided in [Electronic Item 6](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Transit

1:55 – 2:05

7. **Regional Transportation Council Policy for Transportation Certification Program**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Brendon Wheeler, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will introduce and request action on a proposed policy outlining the guiding principles and process by which the RTC may transparently coordinate with transportation infrastructure providers wishing to certify innovative transportation technology to move people and/or freight within the region. This draft policy would serve to guide a consensus-building path among the RTC, interested local governments, and transportation technology providers in bringing innovative transportation solutions to our region with the end goal of a commercial application to serve a long-range transportation need.

Background: In February 2022, the RTC adopted Policy P22-01 to Advance High-Speed Rail in the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into the Phase 2 National Environmental Policy Act Process. This policy directed staff to advance high-speed rail on the Dallas-to-Fort Worth corridor along IH 30 and to monitor the advancement of hyperloop technology. This draft policy on a Transportation Infrastructure Certification Program is a follow-up to Policy P22-01 that provides a collaborative and transparent process for the RTC to pursue innovative technologies like hyperloop and others requiring certification or performing a pilot application. In recent months, the RTC and NCTCOG staff have been approached by hyperloop companies and transportation infrastructure providers that are interested in proving their innovative transportation technology for the first time in the US or the

world here in Dallas-Fort Worth. This outside interest began after the RTC responded to Virgin Hyperloop's Request for Proposals for a Certification Center site in early 2020 and continued through the Technology Forum outreach and coordination efforts as a part of the Dallas-to-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study. With Dallas-Fort Worth being a leader in advancing new technologies in transportation in the US, staff is introducing a formalized approach via the attached draft policy to outline the process that transportation technology providers may coordinate with the RTC and the region to prove their technology while serving a public transportation need. The draft policy is provided in [Electronic Item 7.1](#). Existing RTC Policy P22-01 is provided as [Electronic Item 7.2](#). [Electronic Item 7.3](#) includes additional details.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Goods Movement, Transit

2:05 – 2:15 8.

Title VI Program Update

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Ken Kirkpatrick, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will seek approval of updates to the Title VI Program and Language Assistance Plan. Both documents are necessary for compliance with federal civil rights requirements and must be adopted by the Regional Transportation Council. The updates must be submitted to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) by May 31, 2022.

Background: The FTA requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations update their Title VI Programs every three years. Title VI is a component of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Title VI Program identifies actions (NCTCOG) takes to ensure nondiscrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including limited English proficiency. The Title VI Program includes information on how NCTCOG monitors its transit subrecipients for Title VI compliance. The Language Assistance Plan describes how NCTCOG addresses the needs of residents whose native language is not English and who have a limited ability to communicate in English. It is part of the Public Participation Plan. Both the Title VI Program update and the Language Assistance Plan update have undergone a public comment period. The Title VI Program update is available at <https://nctcog.org/TitleVI>, and the Language Assistance Plan update is available at <https://nctcog.org/LAP>. [Electronic Item 8](#) includes additional details.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Administrative, Transit

2:15 – 2:25 9.

2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Draft Listings

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Christie Gotti, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement

Program (TIP) draft project listings and the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and other planning/administrative documents. The Council will also be briefed on changes being made to the TIP Development process as a result of recent discussions with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Background: A new TIP is developed every two years through a cooperative effort between the North Central Texas Council of Governments, the Texas Department of Transportation, local governments, and transportation authorities. The TIP is a staged, multi-year listing of transportation projects with committed funding from federal, State, and local sources within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area. [Electronic Item 9](#) contains an overview of the TIP development process and schedule. The financially constrained draft project listings for the 2023-2026 TIP are available at the following weblink: <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/funds/tip/transportation-improvement-program/2023-2026tip>. Projects in FY2023-2026 will be included in the 2023-2026 TIP, and projects in FY2027 and later will be placed in Appendix D of the TIP. Projects in FY2022 and earlier are provided but will not be included in the 2023-2026 TIP.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Transit

2:25 – 2:35

10. **Mobility 2045 Update and Transportation Conformity**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Brendon Wheeler, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Work continues on the region's next long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2045 Update, and corresponding 2022 Transportation Air Quality Conformity. Staff will present a brief overview of the draft plan and draft air quality conformity analysis results. In addition, staff will present information regarding:

- Any recent revisions
- Public comments received
- Schedule for completion

The draft plan and the recommendations as identified graphically and in tabular format are available at www.nctcog.org/PlaninProgress.

Background: Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018. Air quality conformity determination was achieved on November 21, 2018. Federal guidelines require the Dallas-Fort Worth region to update the long-range transportation plan a minimum of every four years. Development of the Mobility 2045 Update is currently underway, which will include a new financial plan, updated demographic forecasts, updated travel demand modeling tool, and necessary refinements to policies, programs, and projects in the current plan, Mobility 2045. The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations to perform an air quality analysis when a new Metropolitan Transportation Plan

is developed to ensure the multimodal transportation system complies with applicable Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets (MVEB) established for the region. Per the CAA, staff has conducted a successful analysis for the required MVEB analysis year (2023), the Metropolitan Transportation Plan horizon year (2045), and interim years (2026 and 2036). STTC is expected to take final action on the Mobility 2045 Update and 2022 Transportation Air Quality Conformity in May 2022. The RTC is expected to take final action on both documents in June 2022.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality, Roadway

2:35 – 2:45 11. Fiscal Year 2023-2025 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goal Update

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Ken Kirkpatrick, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide a summary of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program requirements and present the proposed DBE Participation Goal for FY2023-FY2025, in advance of initiating the formal public comment period.

Background: The North Central Texas Council of Governments is required by the Federal Transit Administration to revise its DBE Participation Goal every three years. The current DBE Participation Goal is valid until September 30, 2022. Staff has developed a schedule to meet this deadline that also encourages and provides opportunity for public participation and comment. [Electronic Item 11](#) includes additional details.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Administrative, Transit

2:45 – 2:55 12. Dallas-Fort Worth Regional East/West Funding Distribution – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Christie Gotti, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Given that a new transportation funding bill has been enacted, staff will provide the Council with information regarding proposed updates to the funding distribution between the Eastern (Dallas and Paris Districts) and Western (Fort Worth District) subregions. The latest East/West Equity quarterly report detailing transactions that affect the current distribution will also be provided.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) selects projects to be funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds. To ensure equity within the region, once these funds are distributed by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the RTC seeks to program funding to the eastern and western subregions based on the proportion of each area's emissions, demographics, and activity. Generally, the RTC re-evaluates the funding distribution after each new transportation funding bill is approved by the US Congress. The Infrastructure Investment &

Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law in November 2021, so staff has initiated the process to update the region's funding splits. Based on updated inputs (e.g., demographics, emissions), adjustments to both percentages are being proposed. [Electronic Item 12.1](#) provides additional information on the process for establishing the split and the proposed new splits for both mobility and air quality funds. [Electronic Item 12.2](#) contains the final East/West Equity report for the FAST Act.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit

13. **Progress Reports**

Action Possible Action Information

Item Summary: Progress Reports are provided in the items below.

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 13.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 13.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 13.3](#))

14. **Other Business (Old or New):** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.

15. **Future Agenda Items:** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of future interest before the Council.

16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for **1:00 pm, Thursday, June 9, 2022**, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

MINUTES**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
April 14, 2022**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on April 14, 2022, at 1:00 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Daniel Alemán Jr., Richard E. Aubin, Dennis Bailey, Adam Bazaldua, Elizabeth M. Beck, Gyna Bivens, Ceason Clemens (representing Mohamed “Mo” Bur), Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Janet DePuy, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, Nate Pike (representing George Fuller), Raul H. Gonzalez, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Roger Harmon, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, John Cordary (representing Carl L. Johnson), Brandon Jones, Mike Leyman, Alison Maguire, B. Adam McGough, William Meadows, Cara Mendelsohn, Philip J. Ritter, Jim R. Ross, Chris Schulmeister, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Cheryl Williams (representing Duncan Webb), B. Glen Whitley, and Michele Wong Krause.

Others present at the meeting included: Vickie Alexander, Rick Bailey, Thomas Bamante, Alberta Black, Jason Brown, Drew Campbell, Charles Covert, Casey Crow, Jeff Davis, Pritam Deshmukh, Marcia Etie, Brittany Fan, Staron Faucher, Kamal Fulani, Carmen Garcia, Paulette Hartman, Tony Hartzel, Sajid Hassan, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Jungus Jordan, Dan Kessler, Tony Kimmey, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Lee, Kleinman, Dan Lamers, Karina Maldonado, Dan McClendon, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Jenny Narvaez, Mark Nelson, Billy Owens, James Powell, Guillermo Quintanilla Jr., Tido Rodriguez, Sharon Rust, Chelsey Smith, Toni Stehling, Caroline Waggoner, Barbara Odom-Wesley, Brendon Wheeler, Casey Wright, and Susan Young.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Today's Agenda:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to comment on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Theresa M. Daniel asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak at the meeting or provide written comments.
2. **Approval of the March 10, 2022, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 10, 2022, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. B. Glen Whitley (M); T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 3.1. **Modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program:** The FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was approved by the Regional Transportation Council and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Executive Board in July 2021 and identifies the transportation and related air quality planning activities to be carried out by Metropolitan Planning Organization staff between October 1, 2021, and September 30, 2023. Amendments to the FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP were proposed to reflect new initiatives, project updates, and funding adjustments. The proposed amendments were posted on the NCTCOG website for public review and comment as part of the March public outreach opportunity and were provided in Electronic Item 3.1.1. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.2. The Surface Transportation Technical Committee took action at its March 25, 2022, meeting to recommend RTC approval. Action was requested to

approve the amendments and direct staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate.

- 3.2. **Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of the revisions to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was requested, along with the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program and other planning and administrative documents with TIP-related changes. May 2022 revisions to the 2021-2024 TIP are provided as Electronic Item 3.2.

A motion was made to approve the two items on the Consent Agenda. Elizabeth Beck (M); Richard E. Aubin (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris recognized former Fort Worth Councilmember and RTC Chair Jungus Jordan and former Dallas Councilmember Lee Kleinman for their years of service on the Regional Transportation Council. In addition, Michael highlighted items on the Director of Transportation Report. He recognized the Chair of the DART Board, Michele Wong Krause, wrangling with an issue in Collin County and updating the policies, he noted he is on the task force for Texas Transportation Commission Safety Program in which we will see a lot of press releases to come, Correspondence requesting appointments to RTC seats with multiple cities or cities and counties will be sent soon for two-year terms beginning in July 2022. The deadline for notifying NCTCOG staff of appointments is June 30, 2022. Chair Daniel will nominate members to both the RTC Bylaws Revision and Nominating Subcommittees in May. Michael noted that the FY2023 Community Project Funding requests are due by the end of April and MPO letters of support were due by April 15. Dallas City Council and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Board moved ahead on D2 Interlocal agreements. The NCTCOG Executive Board will take action on these agreements at its April 28 meeting. The Spring 2022 Virtual Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement for May 5, 2022. RTC members that have not attended were invited to attend. Michael recognized Chris Klaus of NCTCOG and his staff for the English and Spanish Air Quality guidebooks that were provided to RTC members. The remaining items were not presented.
5. **Fiscal Year 2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Discretionary Grant Program:** Michael Morris and Jeff Neal presented projects to be submitted for funding consideration through the FY2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program. Trinity Metro decided not to submit the TEXRail Extension for the FY22 RAISE Program after May STTC action; resulting discussions between NCTCOG and Fort Worth staff prompted a proposed funding solution. NCTCOG staff will bring back this funding proposal to STTC in April and RTC in May. NCTCOG staff will bring East Lancaster corridor along as an FY22 INFRA Grant request (resubmittal from FY21 INFRA). Jeff Neal highlighted the following proposed projects: 1) South Dallas Improved Bicycle/ Pedestrian Routes to Rail & Transit Technology Upgrades, including the construction of new active transportation accessibility links (sidewalks/trails), safety accommodations, bus stop amenities, transit technology upgrades, & job-housing balance policy applications for locations near four DART Blue Line light rail stations in the East Oak Cliff area of South Dallas for a total cost of \$43.75 million, 2) South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity, including the reconstruction of Belt Line Road, Sunrise Road, & Ferris Road for improved Inland Port multimodal capacity and access to/from IH 35E, IH 45, and Loop 9; the addition of 5.1 miles of new shared-use path

to link with existing Pleasant Run Road path; and Implementation pilot for Headlight construction management software for a total cost of \$82.53 million; and 3) International Parkway Advanced Mobility Program, including the reconstruction of aging International Parkway general purpose lane bridges and rebuild/reconfiguration of Terminal A/B ramps for right-side accessibility, to improve safety, reliability, and initiate advancement of the DFW Airport Autonomous Vehicle Corridor, for a total cost of \$50.9 million. April 14, 2022 was the submittal deadline for the FY2022 RAISE Grant Applications. Action will be endorsed at the April 28, 2022, Executive Board meeting. Additional information provided on the proposed path forward of the passenger rail extension into the hospital district in Fort Worth, Lancaster Fort Worth and IH 30 in Dallas in Electronic Item 5.

A motion was made to approve the allocation of new Regional Transportation Council funds in the amount of \$10,000,000 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds and Regional Toll Revenue funds for South Dallas Improved Bicycle/Pedestrian Routes to Rail and Transit Technology Upgrades and \$12,530,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant funds (including 4,270,000 TDCs) for South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity. Both projects were scheduled to be submitted for funding consideration through the FY22 RAISE Discretionary Grant Program. The action included the direction for staff to administratively amending the Transportation Improvement Program, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and other planning/administrative documents to include proposed projects, if selected for an FY22 RAISE Grant award. Dianne Costa (M); Michele Wong Krause (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Avondale-Haslet/Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Grade Separation Funding Partnership:**

Michael Morris presented a proposed partnership that would fund a grade separation at Avondale-Haslet Road and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway line in the City of Haslet. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC), City of Haslet, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and Tarrant County have partnered to implement the Alliance, Texas/Haslet Accessibility Improvement Project. The project received a \$20 million Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant in 2018, in addition to funds committed by the funding partners. The project includes 4-lane divided roadways on Avondale-Haslet Road/Haslet Pkwy from IH 35W to west of FM 156 and Intermodal Parkway from Avondale-Haslet to Transport Drive. Construction of the project is expected to be complete in the spring of 2024. With the recent selection of Avondale-Haslet Road in the City of Fort Worth as a Tarrant County Bond Program project, all improvements along the corridor have been funded except for a grade separation at Avondale-Haslet and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail line. The grade separation would address a mobility and safety issue at this intersection. School buses and emergency vehicles are often stopped at the rail line, and any pedestrians or bicyclists seeking to travel along the roadway must cross three tracks. Staff proposed that the RTC fund engineering and construction of the grade separation with \$14.5 million of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds; Federal funds would be matched with a combination of funds from BNSF and Regional Transportation Development Credits; BNSF would contribute 10% of the project costs (currently estimated to be \$1.5 million); and the partnership would fund the final piece of a series of improvements to this critical east-west corridor and improve safety by ensuring that vehicles and pedestrians do not have to cross the railroad tracks at-grade. More information on the proposed funding partnership was provided in Electronic Item 6. Commissioner Fickes thanked Representative Krause for the hard work as well as the Superintendent Ryder Warren of Northwest Independent School District, who was also a

driving force and explained the magnitude of the problem, and Michael Morris for taking and running with the ball and scoring.

A motion was made for Regional Transportation Council to approve the proposed funding and Transportation Development Credits for the grade separation at Avondale-Haslet Road and the BNSF Railway line and direction for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents as needed to incorporate this funding. Gary Fickes (M); B. Glen Whitley (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Fair Park Trail Loop:** Karla Windsor presented a request for funding for the southern portion of a shared use path loop at Fair Park, including improved access to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Fair Park Station. RTC awarded \$1,603,876 to Dallas County in the 2020 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Call for Projects to construct the Fair Park/East Dallas Trail Phase 1 (north alignment). Dallas County's local match was \$1,069,250. The north trail alignment has challenges due to conflicts with the operations of large events in which access to the trail will need to be periodically closed. Therefore, the awarded federal Transportation Alternatives program funds would not be a good fit for the northern trail alignment. As such, a partnership for implementation: The City of Dallas and Fair Park First will replace the federal funds for the northern trail alignment and partner with Dallas County to build the project. The city will design and construct a connecting southern "loop" and coordinate with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to improve access to the Fair Park DART Station. Staff requested federal funding of \$8M for the southern alignment in exchange for the City and Fair Park First to fund the northern alignment. Funding will pay for both the engineering and construction phases. It will provide bicycle and pedestrian circulation along streets around the perimeter of Fair Park, improve safety at roadway crossings and access points to Fair Park, and connect with the surrounding community. Electronic Item 7 included an overview of staff recommendations and the funding requested for implementation by the City of Dallas. Councilmember Adam Bazaldua thanked everyone who has supported the project. He added that it is something that is collaborative with several different agencies and entities but also with the community and the community park that is being brought in with a lot of history that is going to connect a lot of work that is being put into the overall revitalization of Fair Park.

A motion was made to approve the award of \$8 million Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds and 1.6 million Regional Transportation Development Credits for the Fair Park Trail southern alignment to the City of Dallas; Return the \$1,603,876 in Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds to the regional pool to be awarded in the 2022 TA Call for Projects; and to administratively amend the TIP/STIP and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes. Clay Lewis Jenkins (M); Adam Bazaldua (S). The motion passed unanimously.

8. **Mobility 2045 Update:** Development of the Mobility 2045 Update is currently underway, which includes a new financial plan, updated demographic forecasts, updated travel demand modeling tool, and necessary refinements to policies, programs, and projects in the current plan, Mobility 2045. Brendon Wheeler provided an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045, including the results of the regionwide Nondiscrimination Analysis for the plan update, and also included a brief introduction to the air quality considerations for the plan update as part of the conformity determination following plan adoption. The Nondiscrimination Analysis for Mobility 2045 reviewed various metrics for protected classes compared to non-protected classes to ensure equity and non-disparate impacts in regional

long-range transportation planning; this analysis is updated for the Mobility 2045 Update, taking into account the new demographic forecast and draft project recommendations. Pressures potentially diminishing transportation revenue: electric vehicles, inflation, political action, natural resources, fuel efficiency, travel behavior, consumer habits, and telecommuting. Future revenue enhancements, such as a vehicle-miles travel fee for all vehicles or fee for technology as a transportation mode, may eventually replace gas tax as traditional revenue source and become new “baseline”; periodic state/federal limited infusions help but may be unsustainable over long term; and current baseline funding sources like the gas tax continue to diminish, requiring major improvements to our current revenue structure to maintain and grow our current transportation system. Brendon noted that the RTC has a history of looking ahead and using every tool in the toolbox for innovative transportation funding and staff is incorporating that kind of knowledge into our revenue plan for the Mobility 2045 Update knowing this body will be instrumental at the Regional, Federal, and State levels.

There are two phases of the Public Involvement Plan: input to inform the implementation of the plan between different plan updates and then strategic input for the actual development of the plan. Public involvement activities include public meetings, speaking engagements, outreach events, publications, press releases, social media, and development activities. Brendon highlighted one of the tools and some of the comments for the digital mapping platform, Map Your Experience: many comments for Bike/Pedestrians and Transit modes focus on lack of adequate accessibility with comments on Roadways focusing on traffic and safety. Electronic Item 8 provided an overview of the Mobility 2045 Update, including schedule and draft plan progress.

9. **Start of 2022 Ozone Season and Spring 2022 Car Care Awareness:** Jenny Narvaez and Jason Brown provided an update on the start of the 2022 air quality ozone season and upcoming spring 2022 Car Care Awareness campaign. The 2022 ozone season began on March 1 and will continue to November 30 for the North Central Texas Council of Governments nonattainment areas. The region continues to monitor and work towards compliance with ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The region has been preparing to be reclassified to a stricter standard for both the 2015 and 2008 NAAQS and is also getting moved up from marginal to moderate under the 2015 standard and from serious to severe under the 2008 standard. The Car Care Awareness campaign provides education and outreach to vehicle owners and the public about proper vehicle maintenance practices. Current efforts are partnering with nonprofit organizations and vehicle repair shops throughout the region to provide focused outreach, providing Car Care Awareness digital toolkits and educational material to local governments and organizations upon request, updating the North Texas Car Care Awareness website with vehicle maintenance tips and making the online education materials available for download. As events become available within the ozone nonattainment region through partnering organizations, vehicle owners are invited to join and become more aware of how to properly maintain their vehicles, prevent potentially costly repairs in a timely manner, and feel better prepared to pass the State’s vehicle inspection program. NCTCOG maintains the North Texas Car Care website at www.ntxcare.org and offers car care tips, other vehicle information, and posts upcoming event locations. More details can be found in Electronic Item 9. Mayor Daniel Alemán complimented staff for providing the materials in Spanish and asked if all documents are available in Spanish. Jason Brown responded that several other documents are provided in Spanish and that other language translations are available upon request.

10. **Fiscal Year 2023-2025 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goal Update:** Ken Kirkpatrick provided a summary of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program requirements and schedule for updating the DBE Participation Goal for FY2023-FY2025. Certain recipients of Federal funds are required to have a DBE Program and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is a recipient of those funds. Federal guidelines require an updated DBE Goal every three years (with the new goal due August 1, 2022). The current goal of 19.4% is active through September 30, 2022. In terms of high-level federal principals of the DBE Program, the basic component ensures non-discrimination or award of non-contracting activities that ensures a level playing field; it's tailored to meet Federal Law; ensures DBE firms meet required eligibility standards; helps remove barriers to DBE participation; and assists in development of firms to compete outside DBE Program. Currently NCTCOG's overall goal in the last three years has been 19.4%. Staff will be bringing back the proposed goal for the next three years in May, it will then be published for public comment, and then come back to RTC in the July time frame for consideration of approval. NCTCOG Executive Board action will be requested in July for submission to the Federal Transit Administration by August 1. Electronic Item 10 included additional details.
11. **Title VI Program Update:** Ken Kirkpatrick described updates to the Title VI Program and Language Assistance Plan. Both documents are necessary for compliance with federal civil rights requirements and must be adopted by the Regional Transportation Council. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations update their Title VI Programs every three years. The Title VI program identifies actions NCTCOG takes to ensure nondiscrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including limited English proficiency. The Title VI Program includes information on how NCTCOG monitors its transit subrecipients for Title VI compliance. The Language Assistance Plan describes how NCTCOG addresses the needs of residents whose native language is not English and who have a limited ability to communicate in English. A draft of the Title VI Program update is available at <https://nctcog.org/TitleVI>, and a draft of the Language Assistance Plan update is available at <https://nctcog.org/LAP>. Electronic Item 11 included additional details. Submittal deadline to FTA is May 31, 2022.
12. **Fiscal Year 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program:** Jeff Neal briefed the Council on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program. This \$2.85 billion program solicits project applications for three funding opportunities: the National Infrastructure Project Assistance Grants Program (MEGA), the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Grant Program (INFRA), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL). The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) combines three major discretionary grant programs in efforts to reduce burdens for State and local applicants, increase the pipeline of "shovel-worthy" projects now possible because of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and enable US DOT to get a more comprehensive view of projects in development nationwide. Applications are due to the US DOT by May 23, 2022, for the following funding programs (with additional details provided in Electronic Item 12): The National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) Program will provide \$1 billion in FY2022 funding for major projects too large or complex for traditional funding programs. This is a new competitive grant program under the BIL. The Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Grant Program is a continuation of the existing Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Program, and it will provide \$1.55 billion in FY2022 funding for highway, bridge, freight rail, intermodal, and marine transportation projects of regional and national significance. The Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL) will provide \$300 million in FY2022 funding

supporting projects to improve/expand rural area surface transportation infrastructure for increased connectivity and enhanced safety and reliability of people and freight movements to generate regional economic growth and greater quality of life. This is another new competitive grant for agencies in the region submitting projects, please be aware you must complete the www.grants.gov registration process, usually requiring two-four weeks for completion, prior to submitting applications. Agency requests to receive a letter of support from the RTC should be submitted to Kyle Roy by Thursday, May 12, 2022, at kroy@nctcog.org. FY2022 MPDG Grant Application submittal deadline is May 23, 2022. RTC action will be requested on May 12 and Executive Board Endorsement on May 26, 2022. Michael Morris indicated the importance of the implementation time frame for all of the projects, indicated on slide 8 of Electronic Item 12, as key to scoring the funding. The three highest priority projects were the IH 35E Southern Gateway, IH 635 East, and the US 380 Collin County projects according to the TxDOT-Dallas District.

13. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 13.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 13.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 13.3.
14. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
15. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, May 12, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

CHANGING MOBILITY

DATA, INSIGHTS, AND DELIVERING INNOVATIVE
PROJECTS DURING COVID RECOVERY

Regional Transportation Council
May 2022

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

TRAVEL BEHAVIOR BY MODE



Bicycle/Pedestrian (+28%, February)



Freeway Volumes (-2%, February)

Toll Road (-13%, February)

Airport Passengers (-21%, February)

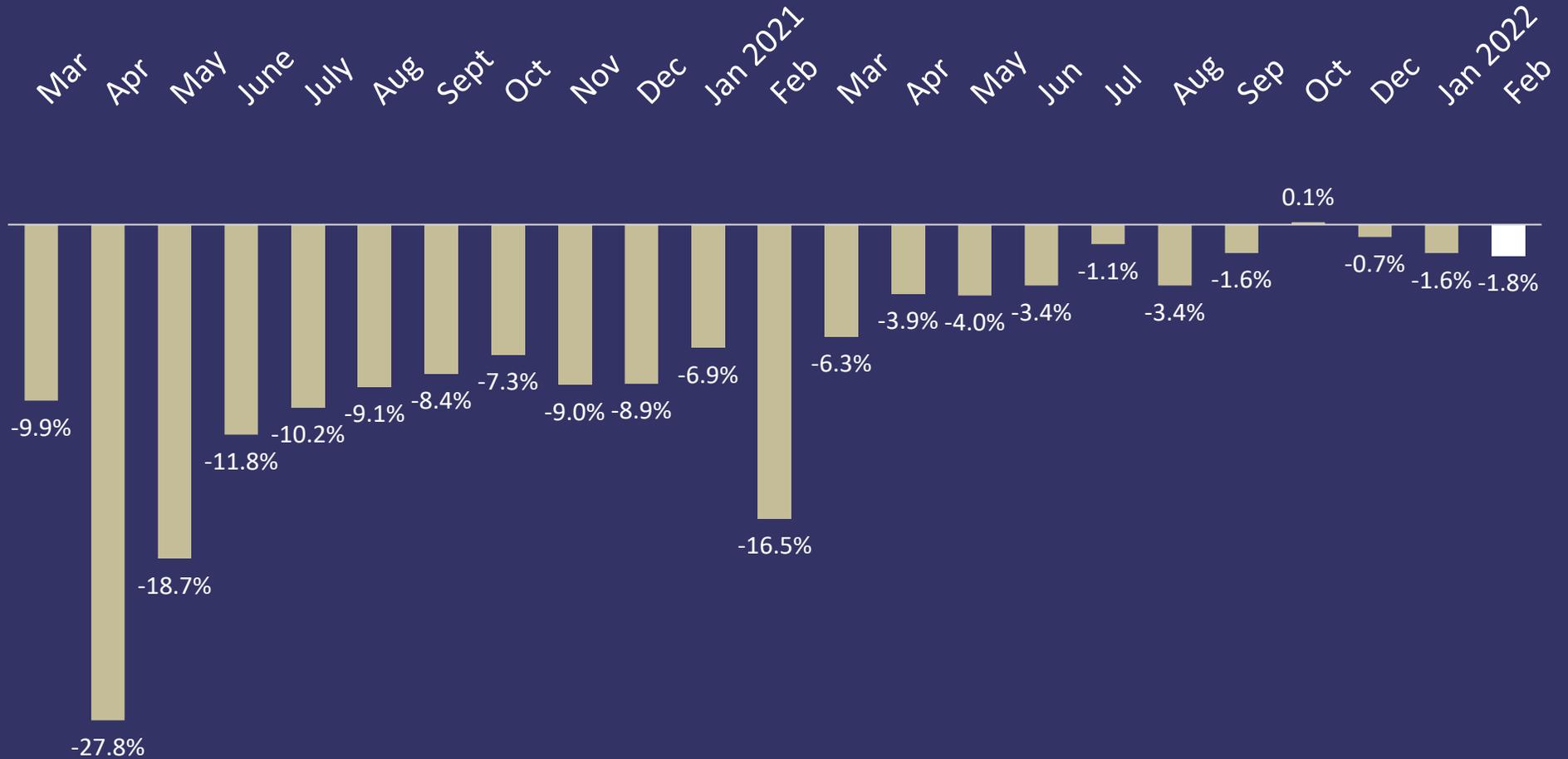
Transit Ridership (-43%, February)



ROADWAY TRENDS

Traffic Decrease vs Baseline

Average
Weekday
Freeway
Volumes



Source: TxDOT Dallas/TxDOT Fort Worth Radar Traffic Counters. As of October 2020, growth was calculated based on Fort Worth.

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

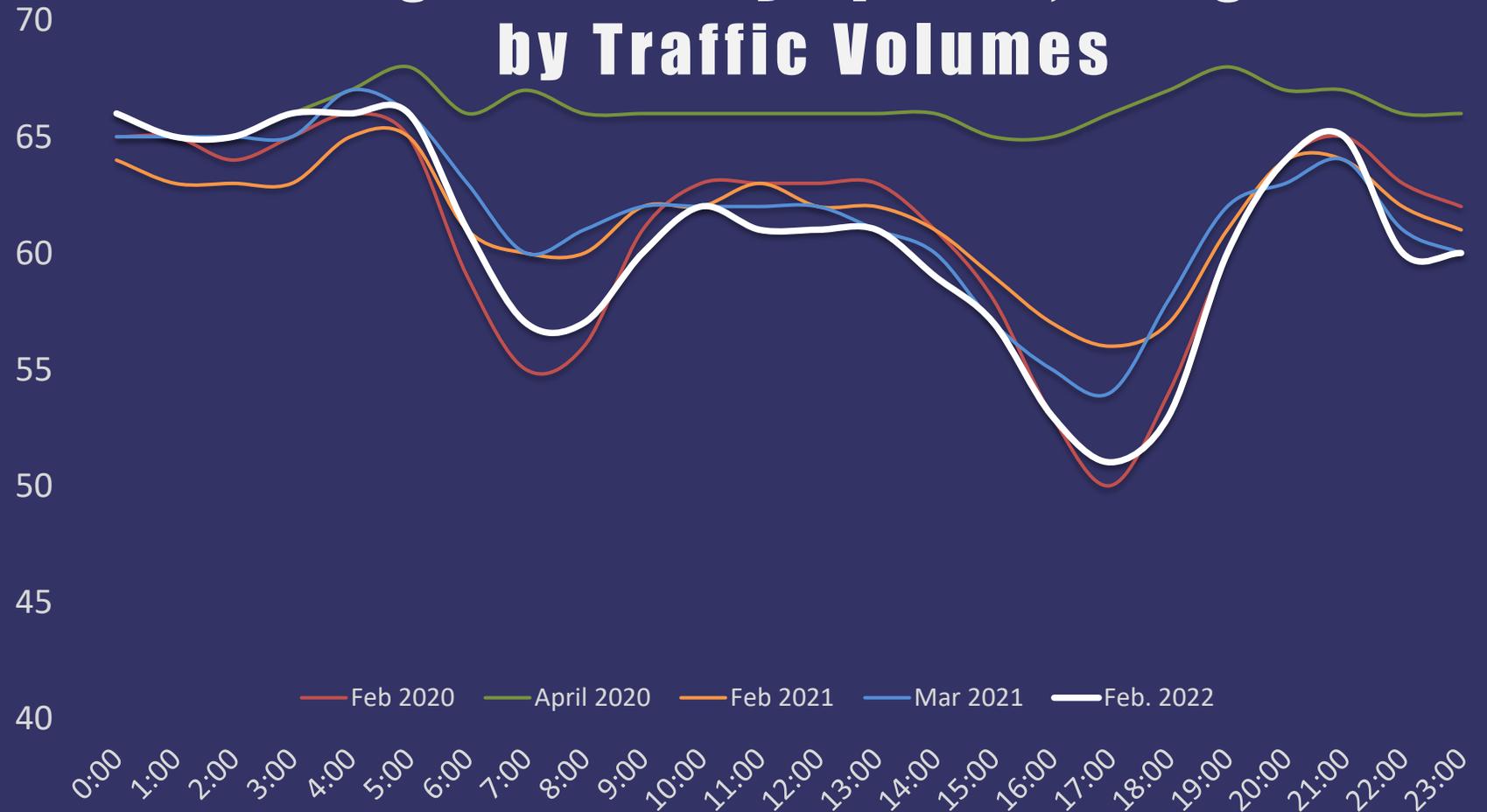
Note: Drop in freeway volumes in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

Note: Data for November 2021 was not collected for the majority of the locations.

ROADWAY TRENDS

Regional Average
Freeway Speeds

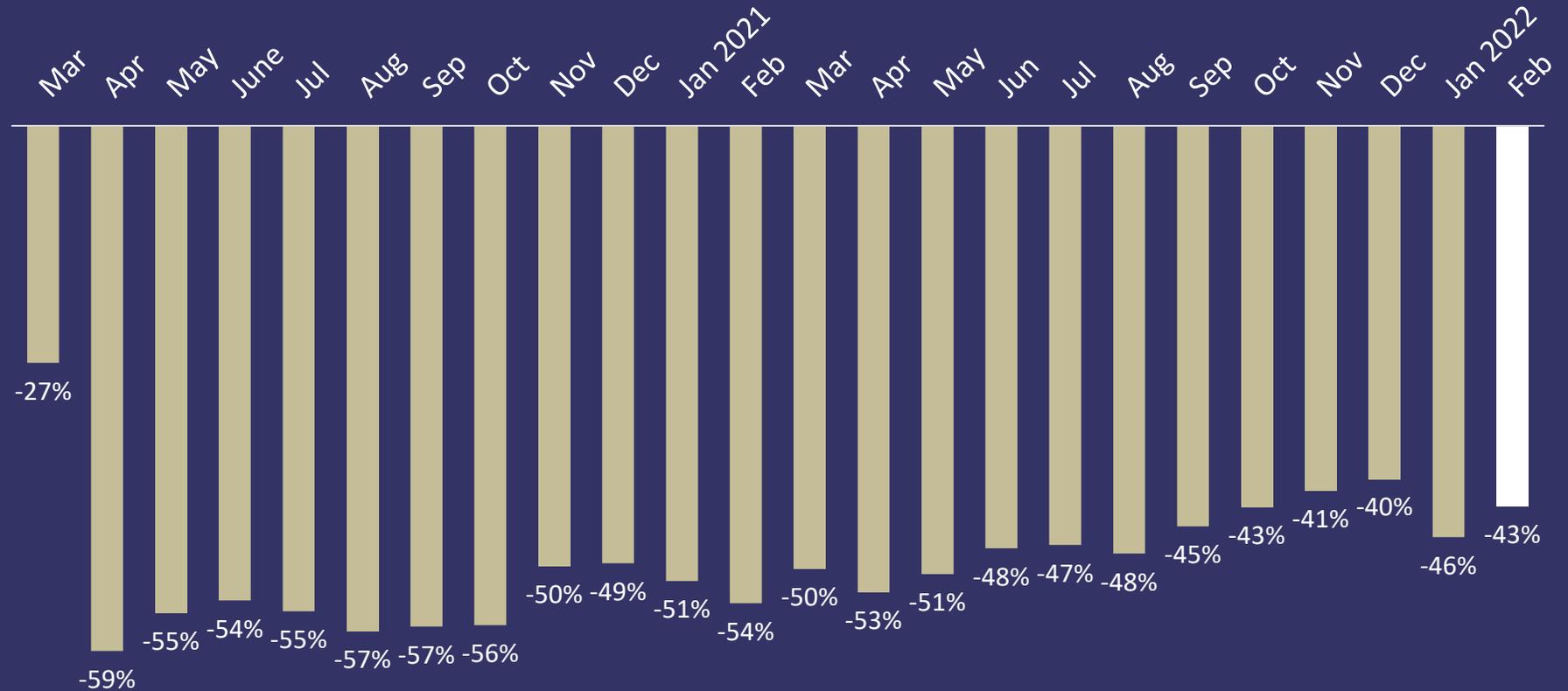
Average Weekday Speeds, Weighted by Traffic Volumes



TRANSIT IMPACTS

Passenger Decrease vs Baseline

Weekday Ridership



Source: DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro

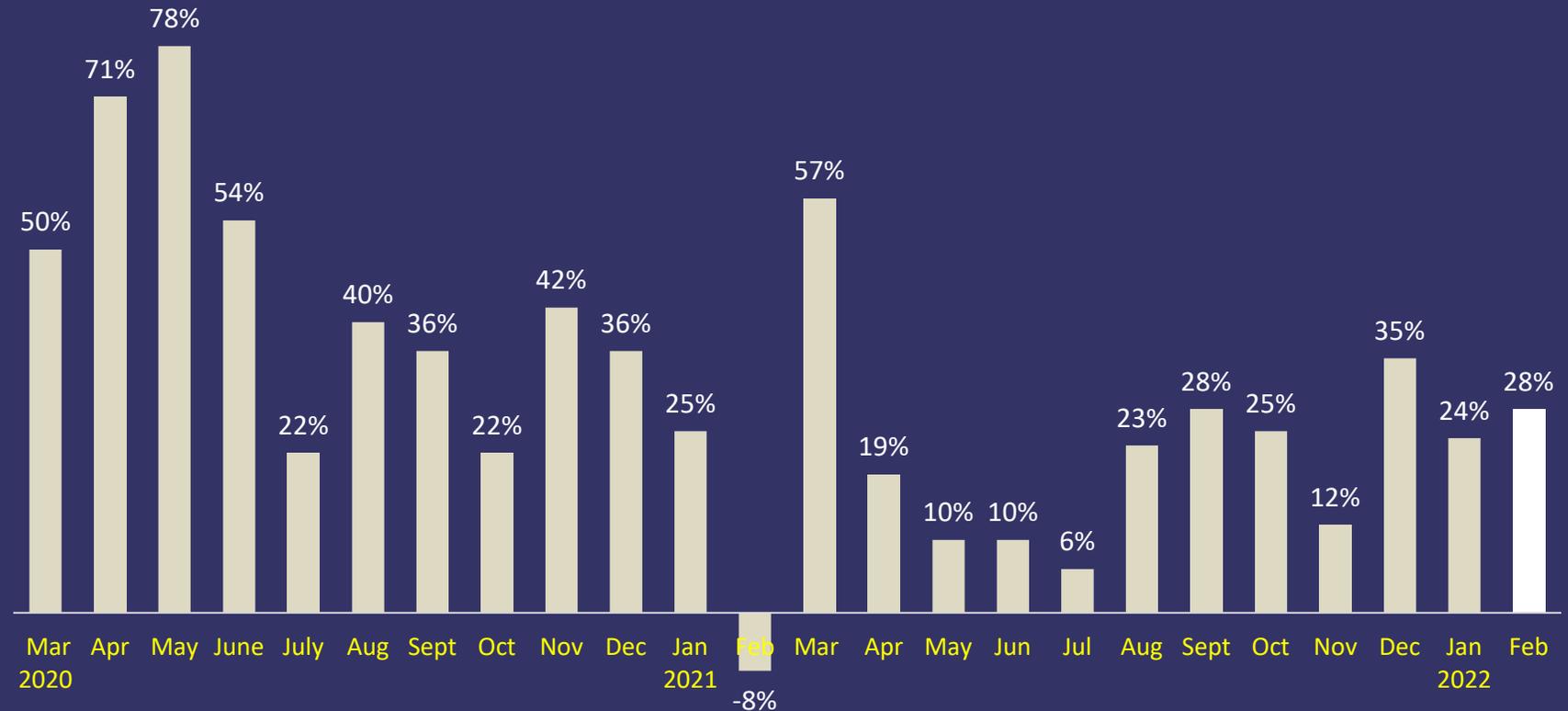
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Transit ridership impacted in Feb 2021 by week-long winter storm.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPACTS

Trail Counts

Increase in Full Week Trail Usage vs Baseline



Source: NCTCOG - collected at sites located in Plano, North Richland Hills, Denton, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Allen

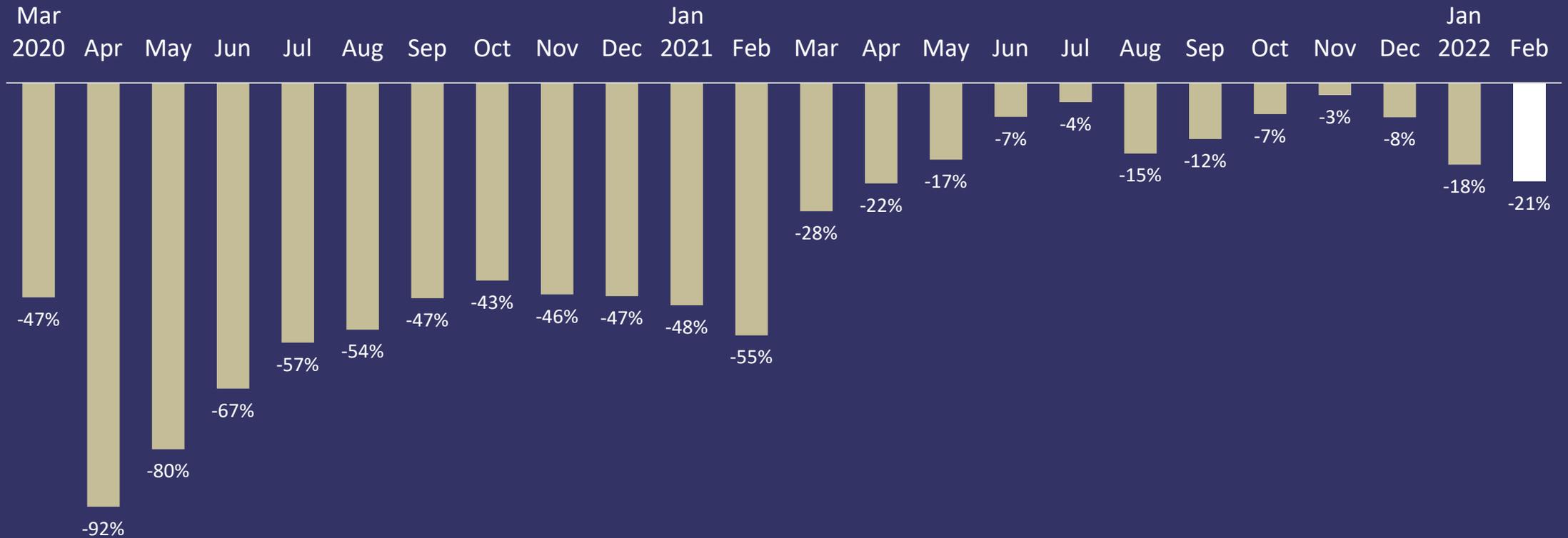
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020; No adjustments for weather were applied.

Note: Trail usage impacted in Feb 2021 by week-long winter storm.

AIRPORT TRENDS

Passengers

Change in Airport Passengers vs Baseline



Source: Dallas Love Field and DFWIA Websites

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Airlines experienced many flight cancellations in Dec. 2021 due to omicron variant affecting staff.

FUNDING IMPACT

NTTA Transactions

Change in Tollway Transactions vs Baseline



Source: NTTA

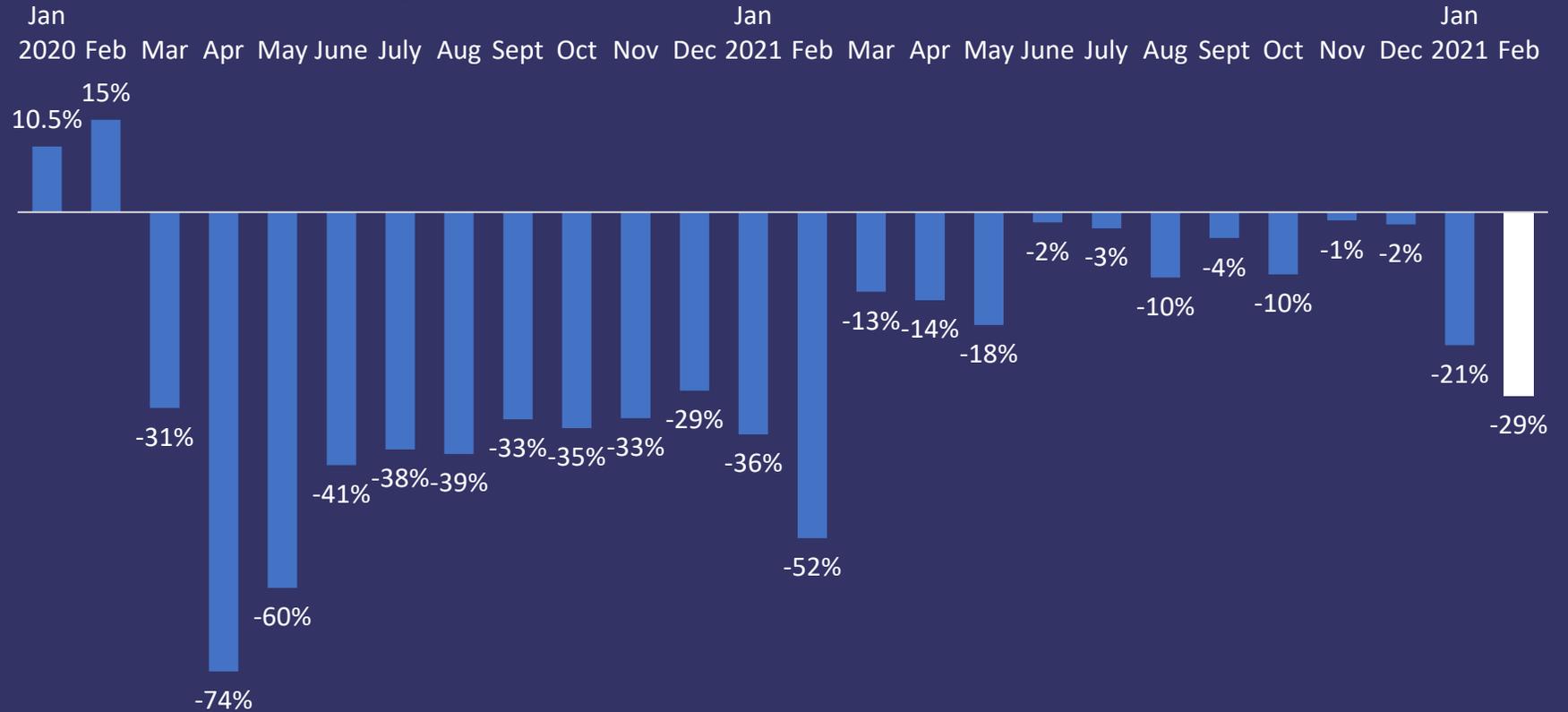
Notes: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

FUNDING IMPACT

I-35E TEXpress Lane Transactions

Change in Transactions vs Baseline



Source: TxDOT

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

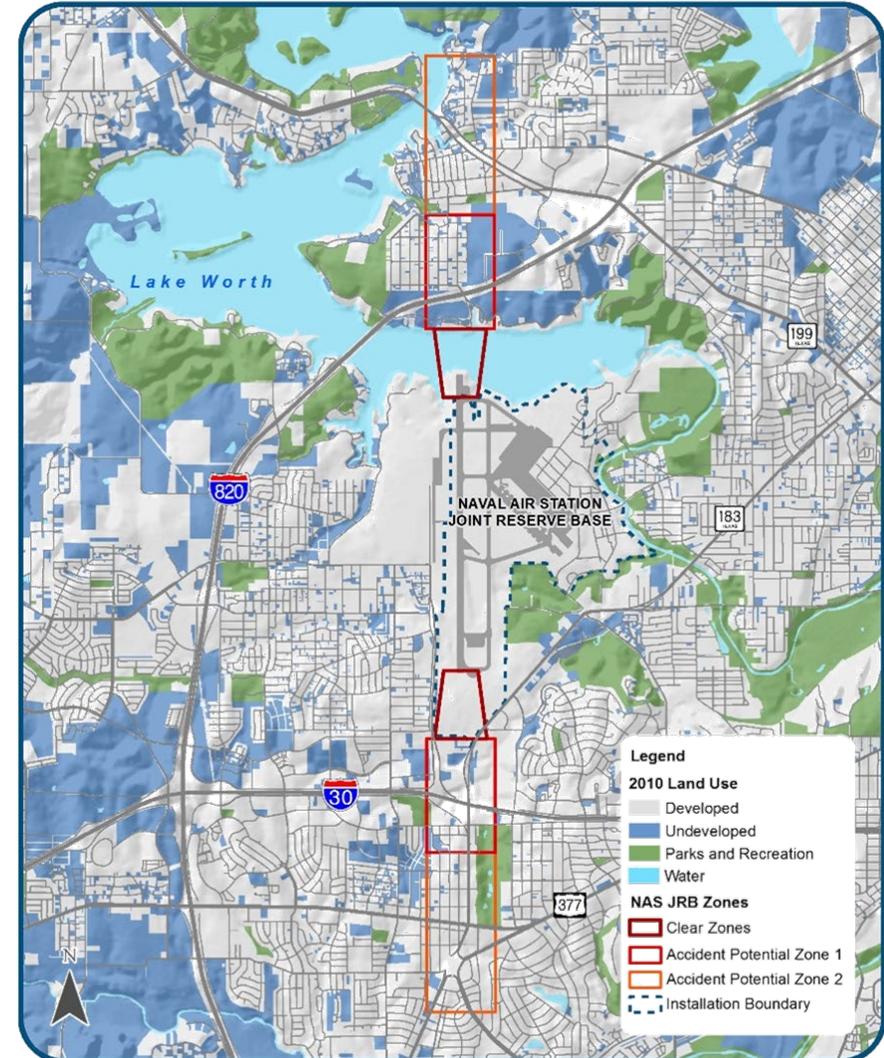
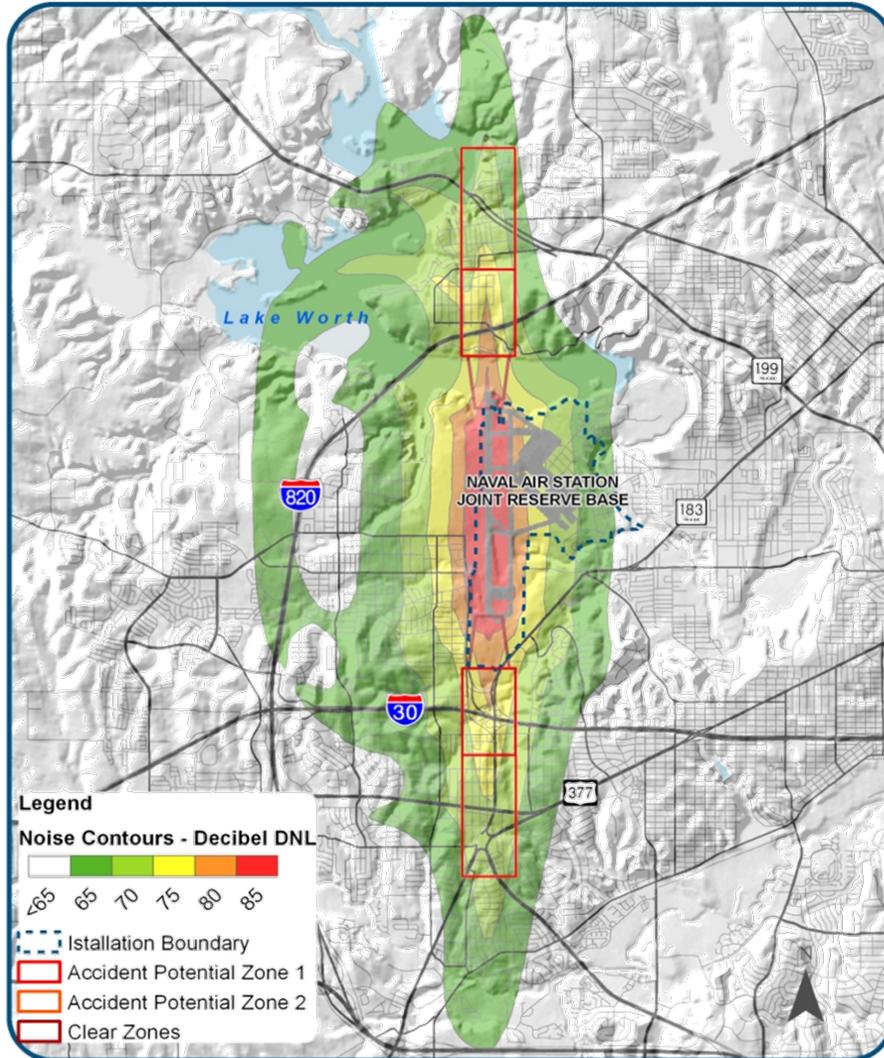
NCTCOG DOD JLUS IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

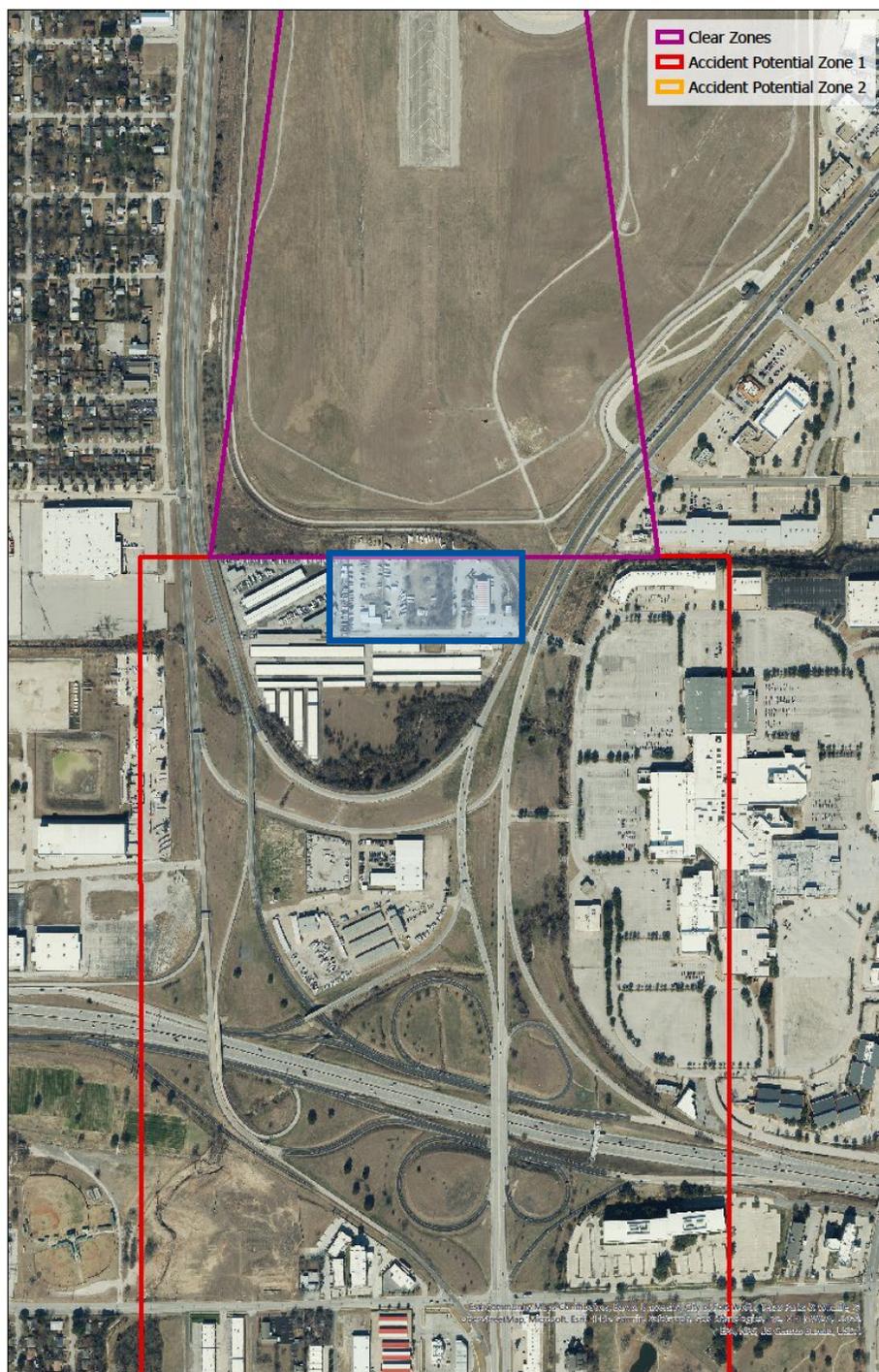
NCTCOG is currently under contract with the Department of Defense to work with RCC and local governments to implement strategies identified in the 2017 JLUS. Emphasis is on reducing encroachment and improving compatible land use, by addressing safety, and noise abatement strategies including a initiation of a Strategic Parcel Acquisition and Re-use Program.



Photo provided by Getty Images

NASJRB FORT WORTH NOISE CONTOURS AND SAFETY ZONES





These parcels are adjacent to or inside the south Clear Zone and included in south Accident Potential Zone 1



These parcels are in both the 80-84 dB and 75-79 dB DNL Noise Contours



Land Banking for Critical Regional Infrastructure



NCTCOG PRESENTATION

INVITED TESTIMONY: CURRENT AND FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

MICHAEL MORRIS, P.E.

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE
ON TRANSPORTATION

APRIL 26, 2022

LONG TERM TRANSPORTATION NEEDS FROM POPULATION GROWTH AND COVID-19 TRAVEL BEHAVIOR RESPONSE

BACKGROUND:

DFW population growth 3.7M additional persons by 2045. (1M/7Yrs)

COVID-19 Travel Impacts

Higher for bike/pedestrian, goods movement and inter-city

Equal for roadway (even at higher fuel price)

Lower for Capital Cost Transit Projects (DART D2 tunnel)

Bottom Line:

Significant More Demand in the Future (offsets COVID-19 benefits)

Need More Transportation Funding

Need Strategic Legislative Review



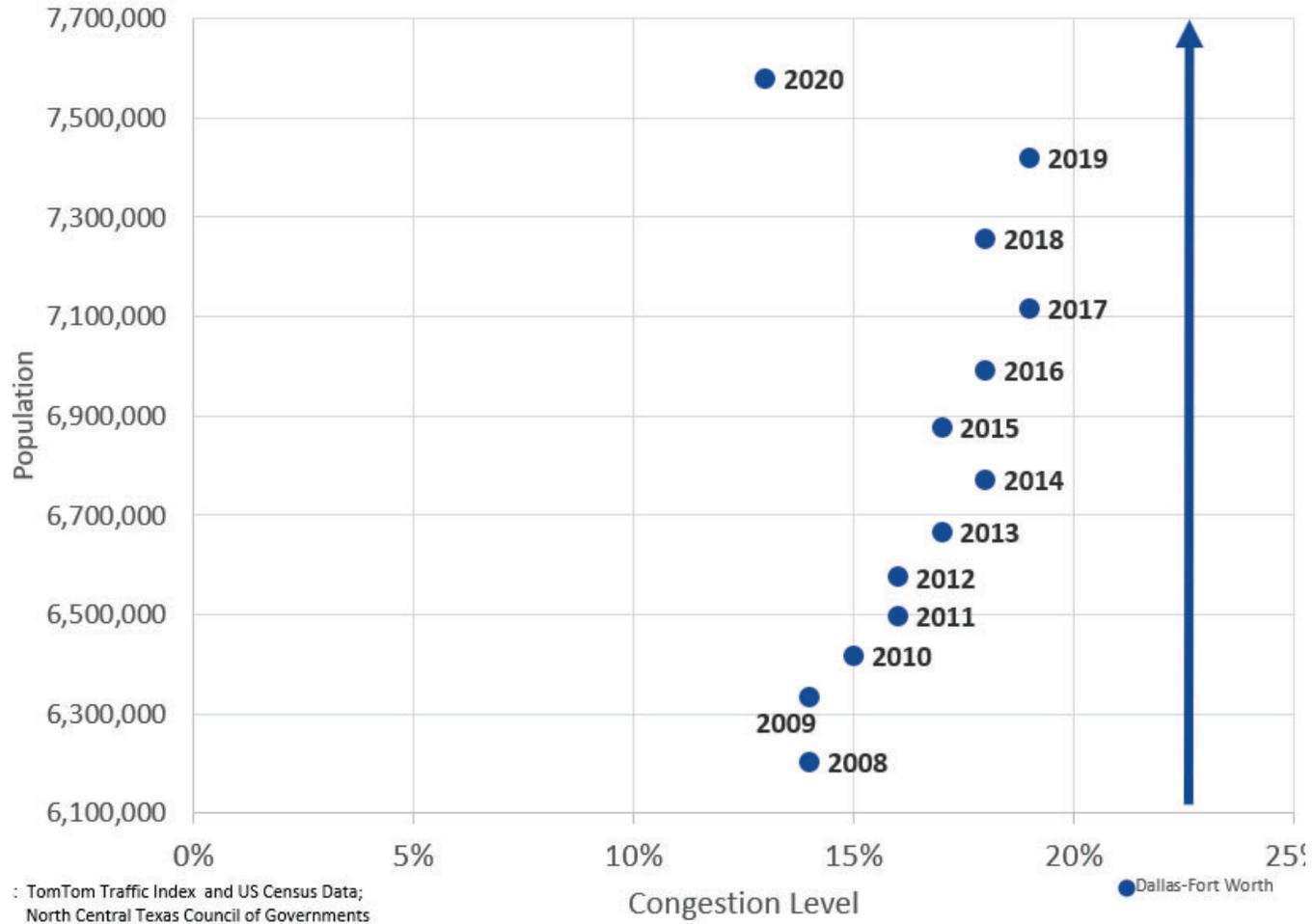
LONG TERM TRANSPORTATION NEEDS FROM POPULATION GROWTH AND COVID-19 TRAVEL BEHAVIOR RESPONSE con't.

ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

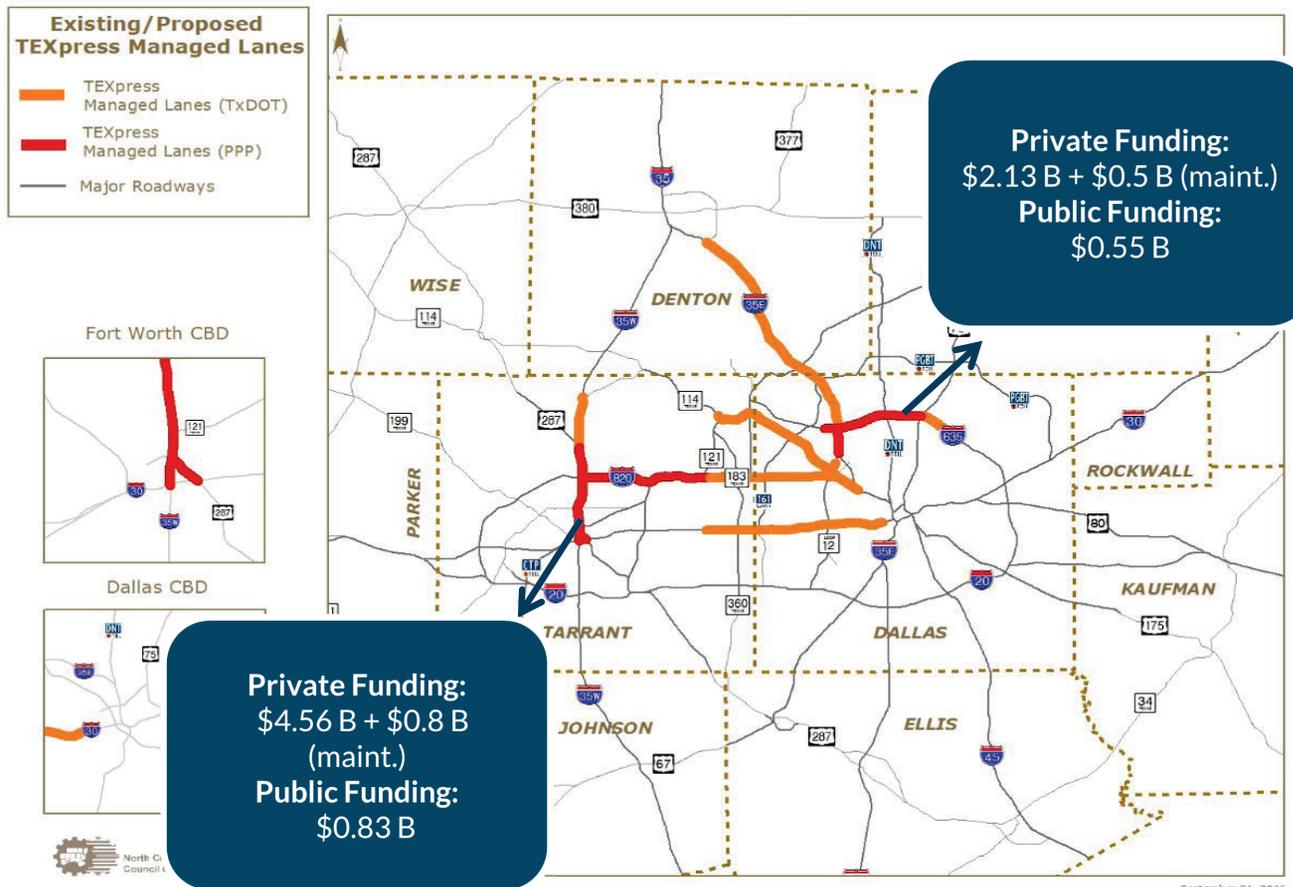
- 1) Mega-Regions (3) in Texas and Inter-City Needs (optimize capacity/safety)
 - Long Trips: Airplanes and Class 1 Railroads
 - Middle Length: High Speed Rail, Amtrak to Atlanta, Autonomous Trucks
 - Short Length: Cars and Trucks
- 2) Review Mobility Trends in Existing Texas Regions (see Figures)
 - Why are they different, learn from recent past
- 3) Legislative Interest to Drive Technology: Degree of Risk
 - Equal Access to the Internet: Broadband (Urban/Rural Win)
 - Autonomous Vehicle Geometric Design
 - Electric Charging on the Fly
- 4) Fund Areas Producing Your Growth
 - Reduce Externalities
 - Reduce Premium on Property Tax
 - Maintain Texas Legacy



Dallas-Fort Worth Congestion Levels and Population

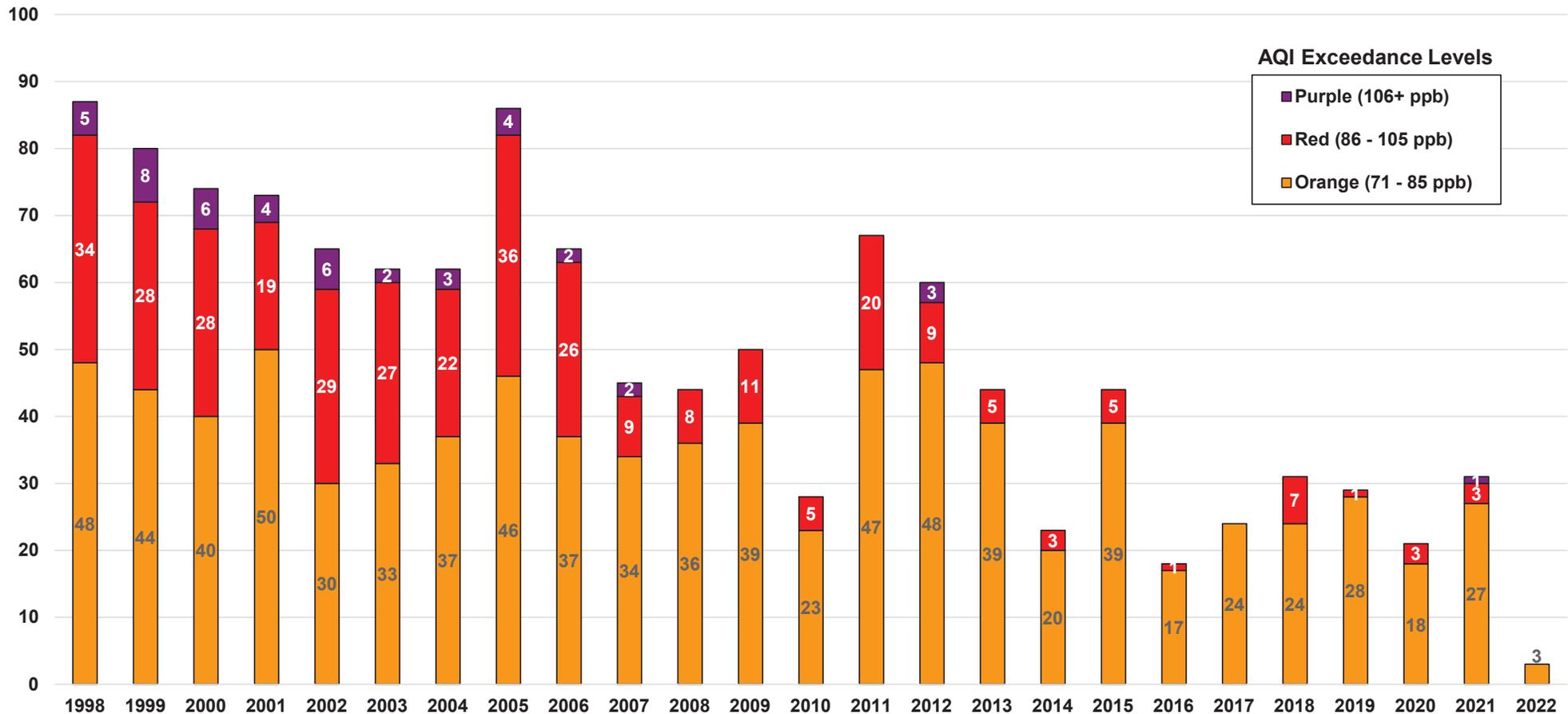


LEVERAGING/INNOVATIVE FUNDING



8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

Based on ≤ 70 ppb (As of April 27, 2022)



AQI Exceedance Levels

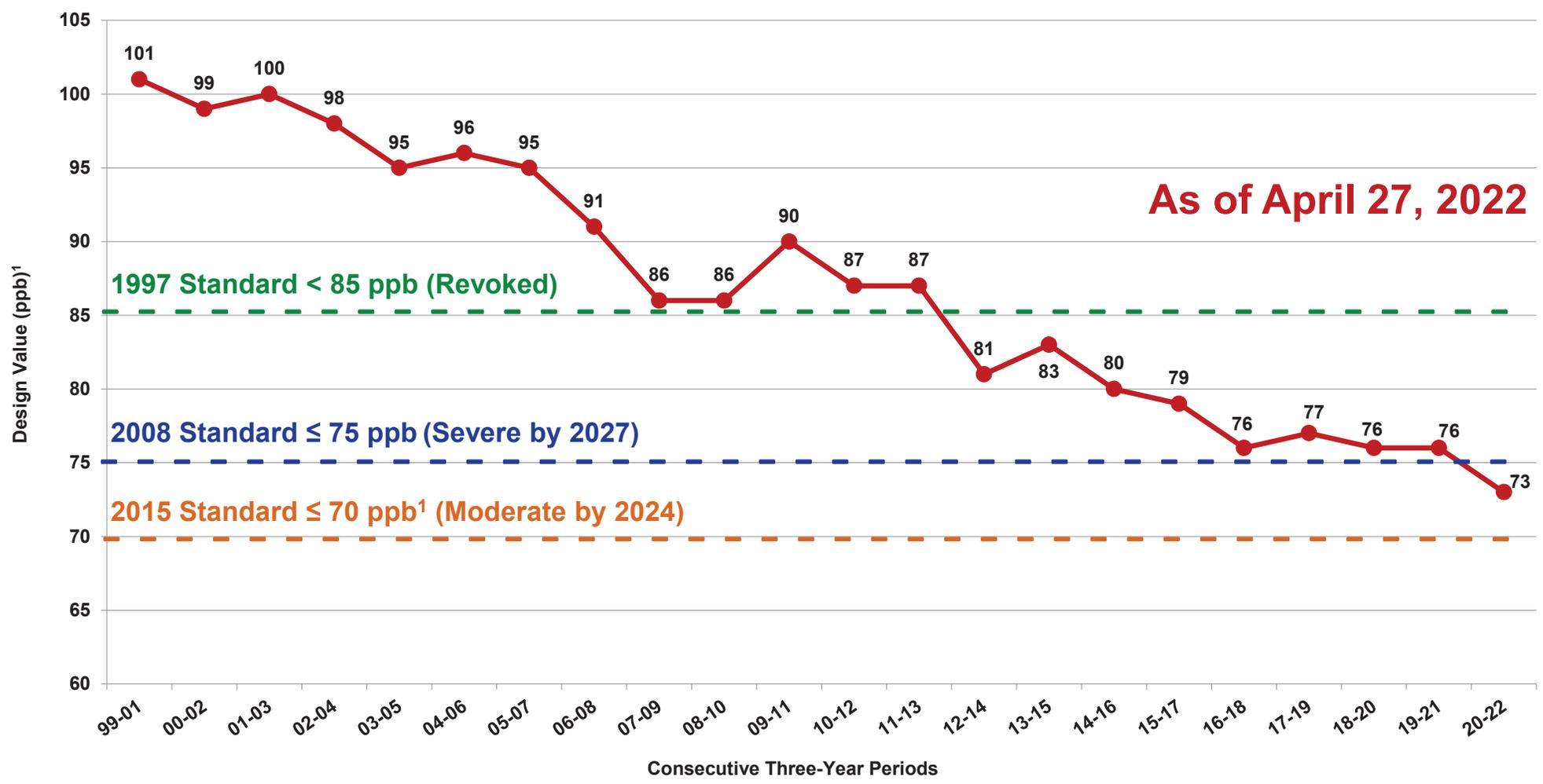
- Purple (106+ ppb)
- Red (86 - 105 ppb)
- Orange (71 - 85 ppb)

ELECTRONIC ITEM 4.4

Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration.
 Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

Source: TCEQ, http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl
 ppb = parts per billion

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS



¹Attainment Goal - According to the US EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards, attainment is reached when, at each monitor, the *Design Value* (three-year average of the annual fourth-highest daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration) is equal to or less than 70 parts per billion (ppb).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone>

STATUS OF OZONE RECLASSIFICATION

March 28, 2022, EPA published proposed determinations of attainment/extensions of the attainment date/reclassifications of areas for the 2008 & 2015 ozone NAAQS

2008 Ozone Standard:

EPA proposing to determine the Dallas-Fort Worth area failed to attain the 2008 ozone NAAQS by July 20, 2021, and will be reclassified as Severe and have a new attainment date of July 20, 2027 (*Regional Value was 76 ppb as compared to 75 ppb Standard*)

2015 Ozone Standard:

EPA proposing to determine the Dallas-Fort Worth area failed to attain the 2015 ozone NAAQS by August 3, 2021, and will be reclassified as Moderate and have a new attainment date of August 3, 2024 (*Regional Value was 76 ppb as compared to 70 ppb Standard*)

A virtual public hearing will be held for each proposed action on May 9, 2022

The 60-day comment period for each proposal closes on June 13, 2022

EPA must respond to comments for both standards and will then issue a final rulemaking



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 29 2021

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Ms. Lori Pampell Clark
Program Manager and DFW Clean Cities Coordinator
North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Dear Ms. Pampell Clark:

I am pleased to invite you to serve as a member of the Mobile Sources Technical Review Subcommittee of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Air Act Advisory Committee for a term beginning November 16, 2021, and ending November 16, 2024. As a representative member, you would represent local government.

The Mobile Sources Technical Review Subcommittee provides the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee with independent advice and recommendations on the scientific and technical aspects of EPA programs related to mobile-source air pollution and motor vehicles and engine fuels.

Subcommittee members are invited to serve as representatives of nonfederal interests. A copy of the *FACA Essentials at EPA for Federal Advisory Committee Members*, which outlines your responsibilities as a subcommittee member, is included with this letter. Although we are unable to offer compensation for your services, you may be eligible to receive travel and per diem allowances, according to applicable federal travel regulations.

To accept this invitation, please return the enclosed membership acceptance form to Julia Burch, designated federal officer for the Mobile Sources Technical Review Subcommittee. Should you have any questions or need more information, please contact her at (202) 564-0961 or burch.julia@epa.gov.

Your experience would be a great asset to this subcommittee, and it is my hope that you will allow the EPA an opportunity to benefit from your knowledge and unique perspectives.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael S. Regan

Enclosures

**Submit Input on Statewide EV Infrastructure Plan to the Texas Department of Transportation
Deadline: May 15**

Through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is set to receive approximately \$408 million over 5 years to help fill Electric Vehicle corridors across Texas as guided by the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. Prior to receiving any funds, TxDOT must submit a Statewide Infrastructure Plan to the Federal Highways Administration.

TxDOT is requesting feedback on the draft Texas EV Infrastructure plan, including study areas for installation of EV charging stations, until May 15, 2022. Input can include recommendations on specific study area locations. See [Texas Electric Vehicle Charging Plan | Social Pinpoint \(mysocialpinpoint.com\)](https://mysocialpinpoint.com)

Please note, this infrastructure plan will not result in a grant program. Rather, feedback will inform a future solicitation through which TxDOT anticipates awarding a contractor to install EV charging stations.

Submit Input on Energy Efficiency Needs to the State Energy Conservation Office by May 20

The Texas Association of Regional Councils has requested assistance in distributing a survey to local governments on behalf of the [Office of the Comptroller, State Energy Conservation Office \(SECO\)](#). SECO is seeking input from these communities to guide planning activities for the State Energy Program, which will see a substantial increase in funding as a result of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

SECO will be providing funding through the State Energy Program for projects that reduce carbon emissions through activities including energy conservation, renewable energy, and clean energy technologies in buildings. **SECO has drafted a survey to assess energy efficiency needs in communities statewide to ensure that they design programs that provide maximum community benefit.** Feedback is requested specifically from municipalities, counties, and school districts.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to provide input on funding programs that may be beneficial to your organizations. [The survey can be found here.](#) **Responses are due by May 20, 2022**



High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Report

Regional Transportation Council
Meeting

May 12, 2022

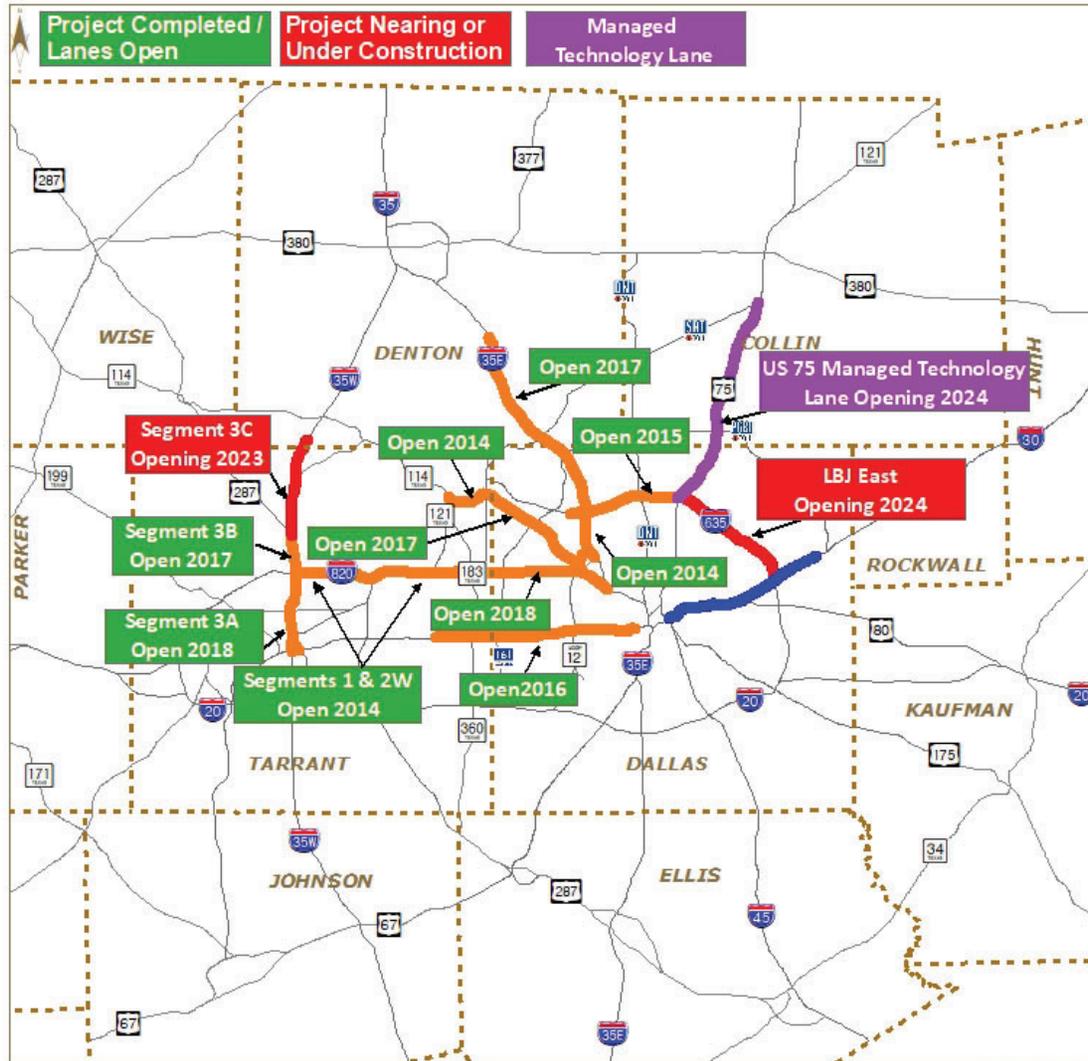
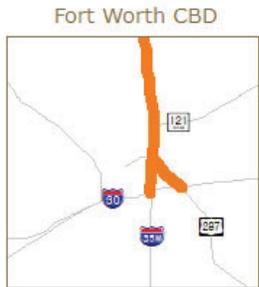


North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Managed Lane System

Current Express/HOV + New Managed Lanes

- Current Express/HOV Lanes
- Current TEXpress Managed Lanes
- TEXPress Managed Lanes Under Construction
- Managed Technology Lane
- Major Roadways



October 5, 2021

Toll Managed Lane Data Monitoring

Cumulative December 2013 – February 2022

How much HOV 2+ Subsidy has the RTC been responsible for?

\$ 7,071,745 as of February 2022

How much of the Vanpool Toll reimbursement has the RTC been responsible for?

\$ 12,407 from October 2014 – February 2022

How long can the RTC keep the HOV policy at 2+?

For now, it remains 2+ and it will continue to be monitored quarterly

Have there been any additional NTTA customer service needs?

No, minimal impact

Have the speeds on the Toll Managed Lane facilities dropped below 35 mph?

No

Toll Managed Lane Data Monitoring

Cumulative December 2013 – February 2022

Facility	HOV 2+ Subsidy Costs	NTTA Customer Service (Additional Needs)	Project Performance Events (Speeds < 35 mph)
North Tarrant Express <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SH 183/121 from IH 35W to SH 121 • IH 35W from IH 30 to US 287 	\$3,651,234	Negligible	0
LBJ Express <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IH 635 from Preston Road to Greenville Avenue • IH 35E from Loop 12 to IH 635 	\$3,420,511	Negligible	0
DFW Connector SH 114 from Kimball Avenue to Freeport Parkway	N/A	Negligible	0
IH 30 Managed Lanes IH 30 from SH 161 to Westmoreland Road	N/A	Negligible	0
IH 35E Managed Lanes IH 35E from FM 2181 (Teasley) to LBJ	N/A	Negligible	0



Update

Automated Vehicle Occupancy Verification

Through March 31, 2022



HOV Users

January 24, 2020 – March 31, 2022

Users: 50,498

Vehicles: 50,255

Occupant Passes: 8,911



Total and HOV Transactions

January 24, 2020 – March 31, 2022

Total Transactions – 2,331,303

LBJ/NTE Partners – 1,560,942

TxDOT – 770,361

Total HOV Transactions – 967,390 (~41%)

LBJ/NTE Partners – 654,350

TxDOT – 313,040

March 2022 - 49%

Unique Vehicles – 41,029



Questions/Contacts

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Program Manager

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MINUTES**Regional Transportation Council
PUBLIC MEETING****Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity****Beginning of Ozone Season & Car Care Awareness****Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects****Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Branding & Wayfinding Project****Meeting Date and Location**

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) held a hybrid public meeting Monday, April 11, 2022, at noon at the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) in Arlington. Patrons could attend in person, via phone, or view the live stream at www.nctcog.org/input. Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, moderated the meeting, attended by 67 people.

Public Meeting Purpose and Topics

The public meeting was held in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the metropolitan planning organization, and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff presented information about:

- Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity – **presented by Amy Johnson and Jenny Narvaez**
- Beginning of Ozone Season & Car Care Awareness – **presented by Nick Van Haasen and Anthony Moffa**
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects – **presented by Amy Hodges**
- Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Branding & Wayfinding Project – **presented by Shawn Conrad**

The public meeting was held to educate, inform, and seek comments from the public. Comments were solicited from those attending who wished to speak for the record. The presentations made during the meeting as well as a video recording were posted online at www.nctcog.org/input.

Summary of Presentations***Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity presentation:***

<https://nctcog.org/getmedia/cce7f710-6826-4eb9-bbee-195ffba5fb98/Mobility-2045-Conformity.pdf.aspx>

Mobility 2045 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that defines a long-term vision for the region's transportation system and guides spending of federal and State transportation

funds. This includes funding for highways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other programs that reduce congestion and improve air quality.

The Plan was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018, and Transportation Conformity was achieved on November 21, 2018. Mobility 2045 has nine goals and its vision is to improve the region's mobility today and tomorrow by embracing technology and innovation.

NCTCOG staff is working on an update to Mobility 2045 and has finalized a draft plan and financial forecasts. Policy and program updates include the Health Accessibility Program, Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies, advancing High-Speed Transportation recommendations, and the safe integration of mobile technologies throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth region.

The official comment period began on April 1, 2022 and ends on May 31, 2022. The RTC will take action on the Mobility 2045 - 2022 Update on June 9, 2022.

2022 Transportation Air Quality Conformity is required by federal legislation and demonstrates that projected emissions from transportation projects are within emission limits established by the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Conformity also ensures federal funding is applied to transportation projects that are consistent with air quality planning goals.

Beginning of Ozone Season & Car Care Awareness presentation:

<https://nctcog.org/getmedia/850910d7-4bae-47a8-ae9e-5b579750732f/Ozone-Car-Care.pdf.aspx>

Ozone is a gas composed of three atoms of oxygen and occurs both in the Earth's upper atmosphere and at ground level. Ground-level ozone is commonly referred to as "bad ozone" and forms when emission sources emit nitrogen oxides and/or volatile organic compounds that react in the presence of sunlight. Ozone can make it more difficult to breathe, aggravate lung diseases, and inflame and damage the airway.

North Texas is currently under two ozone standards, one for 2008 and one for 2015. The attainment deadline for the 2008 standard is July 20, 2027. The attainment deadline for the 2015 standard is August 3, 2024. Everyone in the region can help improve air quality by working from home, using mass transit, avoiding unnecessary trips, carpooling, etc.

The Car Care Awareness (CCA) campaign is one of many educational programs implemented by NCTCOG staff to help improve regional air quality. The campaign seeks to inform owners about vehicle maintenance and helps build stronger community relations.

NCTCOG began hosting car care clinics in April 2013. The clinics, which have a hands-on, educational approach, provide vehicle owners the chance to speak with qualified technicians about their check engine light and any other issue they might be experiencing with their vehicle.

Current efforts for the CCA campaign include the following:

- Partnering with regional nonprofit organizations and vehicle repair shops to provide focused outreach
- Providing digital toolkits and educational materials to local governments and organizations upon request

- Updating the campaign website with vehicle maintenance tips and online, educational materials

For more information on air quality and ozone alerts visit www.airnorthtexas.org. For more information on the NCTCOG Car Care Awareness campaign, visit www.ntxcare.org.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects presentation:

<https://nctcog.org/getmedia/9a7c9eed-589f-445e-a0a3-3edb9f8676aa/EV-CFP.pdf.aspx>

NCTCOG is currently accepting applications for grant funding for the installation of Level 2 and Direct Current Fast Charge (DCFC) electric vehicle charging stations. Up to \$1 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds is available, and all public entities are eligible to apply. Stations must be publicly accessible, located on an applicant-owned property in the 10-county ozone nonattainment area, and meet Federal Highway Administration Buy America requirements. Round 1 applications are being accepted through April 22, 2022. If there are any remaining funds after Round 1, Round 2 applications will be taken through May 20, 2022. More information is available at dfwcleancities.org.

Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Branding & Wayfinding Project presentation:

<https://nctcog.org/getmedia/97b17e1b-ca1d-4b2e-84ab-ad23e89bce7e/Regional-Trail.pdf.aspx>

The Regional Trail Branding and Wayfinding project will create unified branding and signage for the Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail, a 66-mile paved bicycle and pedestrian trail which runs through the cities of Fort Worth, Arlington, Grand Prairie, Irving, and Dallas. The project, which is expected to be fully completed by early 2024, will help build regional consensus for ongoing marketing and operations for the trail and provide recommendations for support infrastructure.

The project has the following goals:

- Create a unified branding and signage package that includes cobranding of local trails
- Provide infrastructure recommendations for holding major regional and national events
- Provide integrated regional 911 signage system and lighting recommendations
- Provide electronic message boards and real-time display trail counter recommendations
- Build consensus for on-going marketing and operations

A public feedback form is open to name the trail as well as provide more input on trail use, places, access, and more. For more information on the Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Branding and Wayfinding Project and to sign up for updates, visit FortWorthtoDallasTrail.com

COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE MEETING

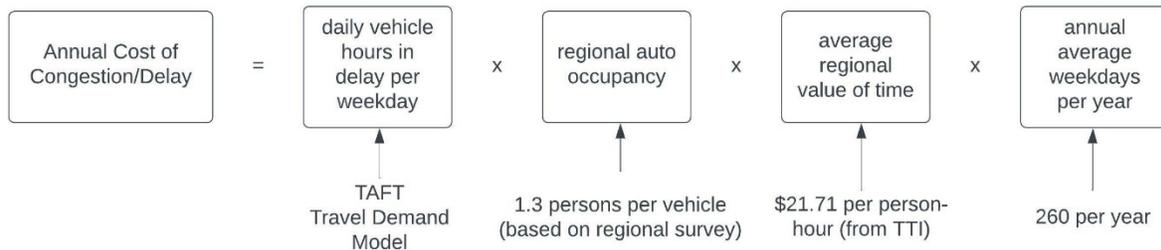
Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity

Andy Nguyen, Citizen

A. Calculation of congestion cost

Question: How is the annual congestion cost calculated? What factors do you take into consideration?

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: The equation for the cost of congestion is the daily vehicle hours spent in delay per weekday multiplied by the regional auto occupancy (1.3 persons per vehicle), multiplied by the average regional value of time (\$21.71 per person-hours [weighted average of autos and trucks]), multiplied by the annual average weekdays (260 weekdays per year). The value of time for autos and trucks is based on the latest research by Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI).



B. Impact of congestion cost

Question: Does congestion cost impact the allocation and the funding for highway maintenance and expansion?

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: They will be separate. The cost of congestion tells us how bad congestion is going to get. When it comes to maintenance, we have a few other inputs. We have our revenue sources that are dedicated to maintenance, which will funnel down regardless of congestion. Those are typically set by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). We also have additional programs for asset optimization. Those are added up with our TxDOT revenues to form our maintenance revenue and expenditure category, which is separate from the cost of congestion.

C. Traffic Safety

Question: Do you take traffic safety into consideration during planning efforts?

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Yes, absolutely. We have a safety section in the Mobility Plan, called operational efficiency. We also incorporate crash data and detailed information about certain programs designed to address safety issues and concerns.

Beginning of Ozone Season & Car Care Awareness

Andy Nguyen, Citizen

A. Meeting ozone standards

Comment: Is there a penalty for our region not meeting the ozone standard?

Summary of Response by Jenny Narvaez: When we don't meet a standard by the set deadline, our region is reclassified to the next highest standard. Since we did not meet the 2008 and 2015 standards on time, we are being reclassified to severe under the 2008 standard and to moderate under the 2015 standard. When this occurs we are given more time to meet the standards but might have more requirements or work that needs to be completed.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects

Kelvin Bass, Office of Congressman Royce West

A. Cost of EV Charging Stations

Comment: It is stated that up to \$1 million is available for vehicle charging stations. Is that per applicant or the total funding available for the region?

Summary of Response by Amy Hodges: It's the amount of funding available for the whole region.

Summary of Response by Chris Klaus: The Regional Transportation Council had allocated this funding some time ago, but there were some additional restrictions created by the Federal Highway Administration so the money was unable to be spent. Staff worked hard to figure out how to spend it and came up with the idea to utilize it for electric vehicle charging stations. There will also be more funding available through the federal government's Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). We're waiting for the guidelines and requirements to be released for that, but in the meantime, we'll go through the process of scoring projects submitted for this particular Call for Projects and announce the results in the near future.

Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Branding & Wayfinding Project

Mark Solo, Pathfinders Fun Cycling

A. Connecting trails

Question: Does the completion of the Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail have anything to do with connecting the Campion South and Campion North Trails together?

Summary of Response by Shawn Conrad: The segment of the Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail that the Campion Trail connects to is complete, and the South Campion Trail is also complete. The North Campion Trail is a separate project independent of the regional trail. Phase 1 of the North Campion Trail which connects to the regional trail is anticipated to be complete by spring 2023.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED DURING THE COMMENT PERIOD VIA WEBSITE, EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA & MAIL

Website

Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity

Melissa Brown, Citizen

I hope future projects will include Vision Zero goals, incorporate mass transit and safe dedicated bicycle infrastructure. Many of our streets need "road diets". Cooper St. is a prime example of this.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Melissa, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks

we will be working to incorporate feedback we've received as appropriate. Safety, including bicycle and pedestrian safety, is a bigger priority for this Mobility Plan Update, and voicing your support helps us to plan to make it better!

Mike Wyss, Mayor's Committee On Persons With Disabilities

Make sure ALL sidewalks and curb ramps go somewhere, not like some sidewalks that don't connect. Also if there's bus serve in the area, make sure bus stops AREN'T in grassy area and AREN'T on a SLANT. Make sure ALL materials are Accessible to ALL Disabilities, like wheelchairs, vision impairment, walkers, etc. Also make sure there's not any type of poles in the middle of sidewalks and curb ramps. Please keep in mind, fancy may look good but fancy doesn't work for EVERYBODY.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Mike, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks we will be working to incorporate feedback we've received as appropriate. We are also continuing to work with our partner agencies like local governments, transit authorities, and the Texas Department of Transportation to create a better transportation system for all users in the North Central Texas region.

Evan Rosner, Citizen

I am sorely disappointed at the lack of mass transit integration. Adding more roads and expanding our highways has been continuously shown to make congestion and our cities worse. Better integration and access to regional rail between Dallas and Fort Worth as well as lines to locations like Plano, Arlington, Frisco, etc. will reduce traffic and pollution across the metroplex while also increasing economic activity and raising property values along each location where mass transit is considered.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Evan, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks we will be working to incorporate feedback we've received as appropriate. We want to improve the availability of options for people, and we're planning now for future active transportation and transit networks. Maps of the Veloweb and transit system recommendations can be found at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress. Funding travel options like transit has been a challenge in recent years, so voicing your support helps us to plan to make it better!

Joel McLelland, Citizen

When will the final connections be made to link Interstate 20 up fully to the Chisholm Trail Toll Road? East on I-20 to South on CT / North on CT to West I-20 / South on CT to East I-20 / West of I-20 to North CT.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Joel, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks we will be working to incorporate feedback we've received as appropriate. We've sent you an email with the details on the IH 20 recommendations and who you can contact at TxDOT for more information.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson (Email): Thanks for reaching out in our Mobility Plan Public Comment Form with the question about IH 20/Chisolm Trail. We have the

full interchange in our year 2045 network of the Mobility Plan, meaning it is planned to be completed by the year 2045. If you would like further information or details, the contact for that project is Ricardo Gonzalez, Texas Department of Transportation Fort Worth, ricardo.gonzalez@txdot.gov.

Additionally, I wanted to let you know you may have received automatic emails as part of the public comment form. I apologize if you got one with the incorrect name. The public comment form is a new system for us and we we're glad you've taken the time to use it!

Thanks, and let us know if you have additional questions or comments.

Matthew Havener, Citizen

345 should be demolished or buried downtown. Add capacity around the suburban edge to accommodate through traffic.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Matthew, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks we will be working to incorporate all the feedback we've received as appropriate. We are also continuing to work with our partner agencies like local governments, transit authorities, and the Texas Department of Transportation to create a better transportation system for the North Central Texas region.

Michael Weiss, Citizen

All freeways need to be widened now to a minimum of 4 travel lanes with NO TOLL ROADS. Get the police back on the freeways to clear accidents sooner and enforce the speed limits. It is very dangerous driving through some of the construction zones with speeding motorists and poor traffic control.

Summary of Response by Amy Johnson: Hello Michael, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback on the transportation system and the Mobility Plan Update! In the coming weeks we will be working to incorporate all the feedback we've received as appropriate. We want to improve transportation systems for North Texans, so we thank you for your thoughts. We also understand that traffic safety and enforcement has been a challenge in recent years, so voicing your support for safety helps us to plan to make it better!

Comments on April 2022 Public Input Opportunity

Due May 10, 2022

Phyllis Silver
April 25, 2022

Comment

Start of 2022 ozone season and Spring Car Care 2022
Car Care Awareness

+
Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects

I am pleased that NCTCOG continues in earnest to take measures to clean up our air.

Comments
Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail Brandy and
Wayfinding Project

slides #9
#10

I am in favor of the top selections:

- Vision - welcoming, friendly, timeless and modern
- dominant experience on the Path - Peace and quiet and natural refuge.
- look & feel of the Regional Trail - natural

Concern about the trail.

One concern that I have about the trail is the possible allowance of dogs. I know that dog owners can be very attached to their dogs, however I feel that permitting them can be hazardous. Dogs tend to want to wander, even when on a leash, and bother other trail lovers. Also dogs can want to be aggressive toward other dogs. In addition, you would have the clean-up problem if you allow dogs. So, I think dogs should be prohibited for the peaceful enjoyment of all.

Naming the Trail

Without a computer, I am not able to see the 2 trail names & logo combinations - I would like to propose DFW Regional Trail as a name.
(if it's not too late to make this proposal)

TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC MEETING

MAY 9 · NOON · 616 SIX FLAGS DR. ARLINGTON, TX

PRESENTATIONS

Mobility 2045 Update & 2022 Transportation Conformity

One of the primary responsibilities of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the development and maintenance of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). NCTCOG staff has initiated the development of an update to the current MTP, Mobility 2045, and will provide an overview of the draft plan materials which are available at nctcog.org/PlanInProgress.

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires MPOs to perform an air quality analysis when a MTP is developed/updated. This analysis is to ensure the multimodal transportation system complies with applicable Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets (MVEB) established for the region. Per the CAA, staff has conducted successful analyses for the required MVEB analysis year, the MTP horizon year, and interim years.

Proposed Awards from EV Charging Station Call for Projects

Staff will give an update on funding recommendations from the NCTCOG Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects April 22, 2022 application deadline. This grant funding is for the purchase and installation of publicly accessible Level 2 and Direct Current Fast Charge (DCFC) electric vehicle charging stations.

AV2.1: Preparing for Emerging Transportation Technology with Local Partners

In 2021, work began on NCTCOG's regional planning exercise looking at future mobility development within the region—AV2.1: Planning for Local Partners. NCTCOG staff will present an update on the status of the project, including information about the early scenario development efforts, public outreach initiatives, and educational materials in development for interested school districts. More information: connectNTXfutures.org

Parking Garage Policy and Projects

NCTCOG staff has been working with several cities across the region on funding partnerships for parking garages in proximity to transit stations. An overview of the proposed policy pertaining to parking garage funding requests along with proposed projects will be presented for review and comment.

East/West Funding Formula Update

With the passage of each new transportation funding bill, the funding distributions between the Eastern and Western portions of the Dallas-Fort Worth region are re-evaluated. An overview of the process for establishing the funding split and the proposed new splits for both mobility and air quality funds will be provided for review and comment.

2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a federally and State-mandated list of transportation projects with committed federal, State, and local funding within a four-year period. Staff will present an overview of the TIP development process and provide a final list of projects with funding in FY 2023-2026 and the TIP document for review and comment.

For special accommodations due to a disability or for language interpretation, contact Thao Tran at 817-704-2510 or tctran@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made.

To request a free roundtrip ride between NCTCOG and the Trinity Railway Express CentrePort/DFW Airport Station, contact Thao Tran at least 72 hours prior to the meeting: 817-704-2510 or tctran@nctcog.org.

Attend in person, watch the presentations live at nctcog.org/input, or participate via phone by dialing 855-925-2801 then code 6341.



RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Interactive Public Input-Map Your Experience:
nctcog.org/mapyourexperience

Mobility Plan Administrative Revisions:
nctcog.org/input

Statewide EV Infrastructure Plan:
txdot.mysocialpinpoint.com/tx_ev_plan

Fair Treatment & Meaningful Involvement:
nctcog.org/equitybrochure

PUBLIC COMMENTS REPORT

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

Purpose

The public comments report is in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Process, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and amended on November 8, 2018.

This report is a compilation of general public comments submitted by members of the public from Sunday, March 20, through Tuesday, April 19. Comments and questions are submitted for the record and can be submitted via Facebook, Twitter, fax, email and online.

This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Comments related to innovative vehicles, including zero-emissions and autonomous vehicles, were in the majority.

In addition, comments were accepted through a new, online map tool. Users can drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. This month, there were three bicycle and pedestrian comments, three roadway comments and six transit comments. To read them, visit: <http://nctcoggis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

Aviation

Twitter –

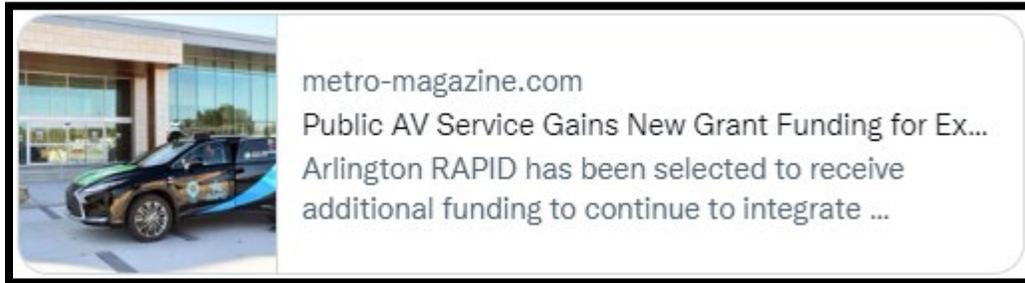
1. Michael Hill of #CumulusImaging talks about SB 763 and the Texas Urban Air Mobility Advisory Committee, the efforts by the @NCTCOGtrans to promote urban air mobility, and how Texas is positioning itself to be a leader in advance air mobility system <https://bit.ly/3CZLtwx> – Drone Radio Show (@DroneRadioShow)



Innovative Vehicles & Technology

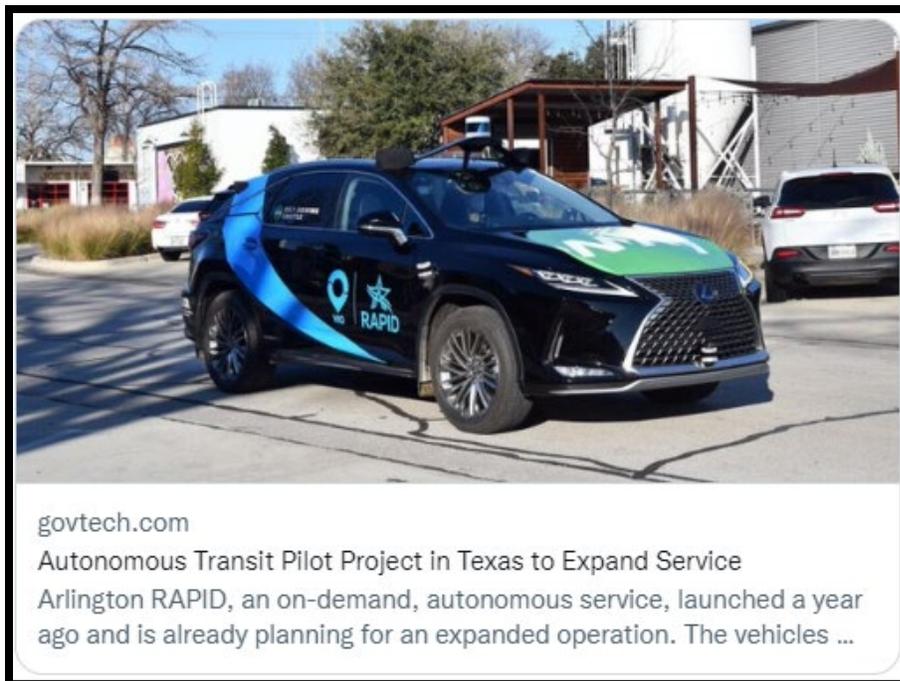
Twitter –

1. Three cheers to @CityOfArlington's #autonomous vehicle RAPID program and @FTA_DOT Integrated Mobility Innovation grantee for over 28,000 trips and securing an extension grant from @NCTCOGtrans 🎉 – Shared-Use Mobility (@SharedUseCntr)



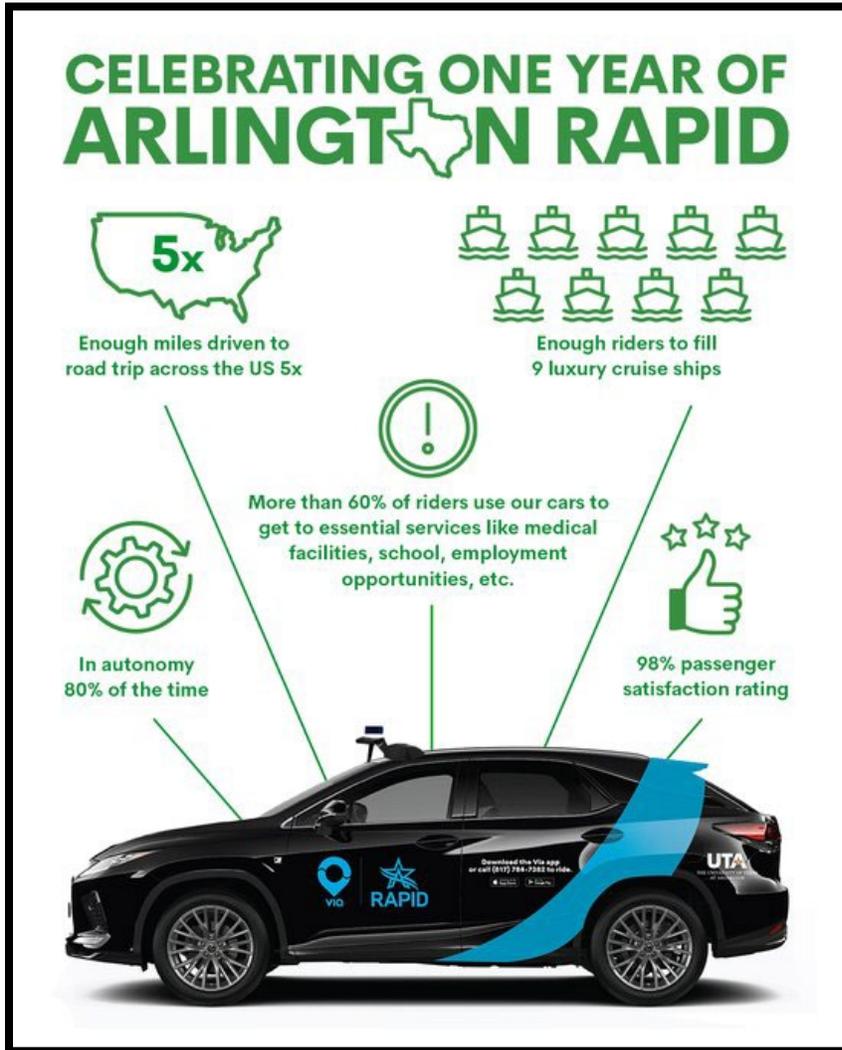
2. Thank you @govtechnews for highlighting the initial success and upcoming expansion of the Arlington RAPID program!

We are excited to continue partnering with @ridewithvia, @CityOfArlington, and @utarlington on this service with support from @NCTCOGTrans. – May Mobility (@May_Mobility)



3. 28,000+ rides given. 98% satisfaction rating. 99% on-time performance.

It is clear the Arlington community has embraced the RAPID program. After a successful one-year pilot, Arlington RAPID has been renewed through 2024. – May Mobility (@May_Mobility)



With additional grant support from @NCTCOGtrans, RAPID will continue to operate for two more years.

Our plans for the extension include adding vehicles with a higher seating capacity and moving further towards our goal of driver-out operations in the city. – May Mobility (@MayMobility)

4. Exciting new #autonomousvehicle projects in @NCTCOGTrans see the draft #mobility plan which will be considered June 9 2022 by the #Regional #Transportation Council – Susanna Gallun (@SLGALLUN)

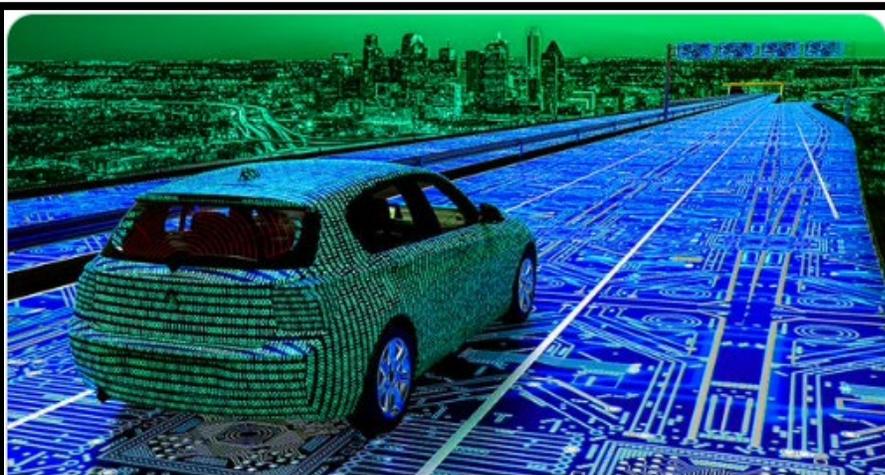


keranews.org

DFW Airport, surrounding cities test drive autonomous vehicles

Officials at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport want autonomous cars to drive and park themselves after the vehicle's own...

5. Huge statement made by @NCTCOGtrans in formally setting the standard that "technology is a transportation mode and should be defined as such" Projects for roads and rail must be integrated with tech considerations. Bravo! <https://bit.ly/3vkK9Rd> #smartmobility #smartregion – Dallas Innovation Alliance (@DallasSmartCity)



dallasinnovates.com

Smart City Boost: Agency Adds Broadband to its Transportation Solut...

Most anyone who has been commuting to work over the past two years has likely noticed a decrease in traffic. Brookings Institution noted tha...

Facebook –

1. "A major shift to electric vehicles and a clean power grid in the US could save tens of thousands of lives over the next few decades, according to a new report by the American Lung Association."

How switching to EVs would improve health in the US: [https://www.theverge.com/.../electric-vehicles-improve....](https://www.theverge.com/.../electric-vehicles-improve...) – NCTCOG Transportation Department



Like to see this lot all queuing at a charge station 🙄🙄😏😏 – Stephen James French

100% propaganda CRAP. – Phil Neil

Project Planning

Email –

1. John Helmer

Hi Stephen. Thanks for considering comments on the Hwy 380 Bypass plan. Mine exceeded the online form limit so here it is:

The Sam Rayburn Toll Road (SRT) was built in record time by the NTTA. Same with the President George Bush turnpike (PGBT) in North Dallas/Plano. Also, the LBJ Express project in North Dallas. These are great roads. I am in favor of tolling all public arterial roads. Consider that the Highway 380 congestion is not just localized to McKinney; Hwy 380 is difficult from Denton to Princeton and beyond. It is a 36 mile problem. Denton built loop 288 many years ago, which allows access both north and south to Hwy 35. We need a visionary plan to reduce the drive times throughout this area. Why not consider a limited access toll road on the original Hwy 380 ROW, either elevated or below grade. Operate it like all the other toll roads. I see a need for eventual rail down the centerline, serving Denton, McKinney, possibly over to Greenville and all points in between. The current plan to deviate north will require the purchase of very expensive right-of-way, and will be detrimental to Prosper and North McKinney. And the increased distance would be a deterrent to use, and not of much interest to drivers intending to go south on Hwy 75. The proposals I have seen are short-sighted knee-jerk reactions on the “just do anything” category of bad planning. Why not slow down and think big in creating solutions that will not be obsolete when the last concrete is poured? Consider asking the NTTA for their ideas.

Thanks for listening.

John Helmer

Hi Mike, Thanks for advocating for rail service extending to McKinney. I am forwarding my comments about the McKinney Hwy 380 bypass. I don't like their plan. I think it should be a toll road with eventual rail service. I know you have influence. Thanks.

Twitter –

1. North Texas transportation planners are in touch with Elon Musk's Boring Company to build underground tunnels around Dallas to help with our congested roadways NBC DFW reports – Dallas Texas TV (@DallasTexasTV)



.@NCTCOGtrans is determined to waste our money yet again. – TeePope 👉🔴🟢



2. Dallas is using taxpayer's money to build a people mover around a site that, and I am NOT making this up, is 500 meters wide and 1000 meters long. At a typical pace, that's a 5 and 10 minute walk respectively. Pathetic.

It's how we end up with the plot of Wall-E, y'all. – Dazzling Urbanite (@apressler3)



A people mover on a site this small is a pathetic waste of money and space. Based on the drawings, the streets are not car free and there is very limited sidewalk space. This is pathetic. – Dazzling Urbanite (@apressler3)

Public Meetings & Forums

Twitter –

1. Join the North TX Council of Government @NCTCOGtrans for a Transportation Public Meeting next MONDAY, APRIL 11 at 12PM. Input from residents impacts transportation & air quality policy for North Texas. Join in person or watch live! For more info, visit <https://buff.ly/3uGsL9I> – Dallas Innovation Alliance (@DallasSmartCity)



2. We want your input at an upcoming meeting for regional transportation initiatives, hosted by @NCTCOGtrans. Attend in-person or virtually on April 11. <https://bit.ly/3DKaTOM> – Mayor Mattie Parker (@MayorMattie)

3. There's still time to register for the Zero Emission Vehicle Workshop hosted by Dallas-Forth Worth Clean Cities Coalition and others on April 25.

Register by TOMORROW! It's FREE! <http://ow.ly/FcFQ50IKjwF>

#Dallas #FortWorth #GrandPrairie #heavyduty #trucks #trucking #ZEV – FuelCellPartnership (@CaFCP)



Roadway

Email –

1. **Kelsey Abel**

Good afternoon,

I am emailing in hopes that someone can provide an update for a project taking place on Old Weatherford Road from FM 3325, CSJ 0902-38-140. May I ask what is currently underway and what the schedule looks like moving forward?

I really appreciate your time!

Good afternoon, Kelsey

Thank you for contacting the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department.

Response by NCTCOG Transportation staff

Plans are to rebuild and realign Old Weatherford Road from FM 3325 to just past Purple Thistle Lane (part of the Walsh Ranch development). The rebuilt section will include a concrete two-lane curb and gutter section (one lane each way) with a 10' pedestrian trail on the north side. This will eventually be expanded to a four-lane median and divided thoroughfare at some point in the future as demand grows. The schedule for this construction is expected to start sometime this fall once design and city/county review processes are complete.

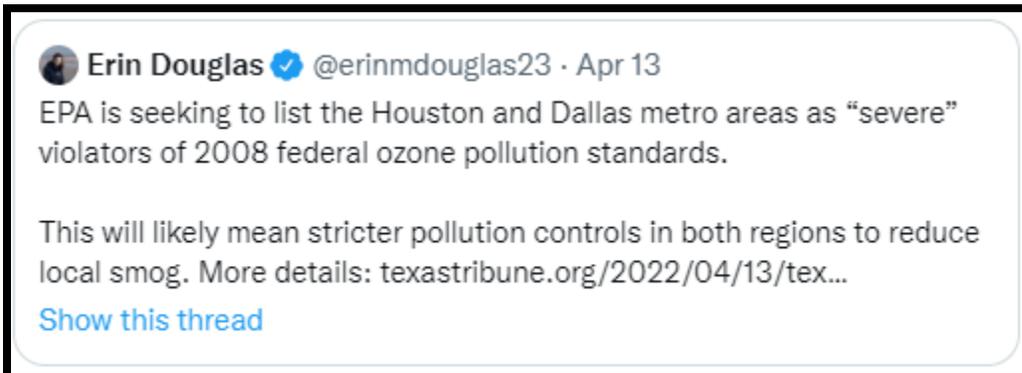
If you have further questions on this project, feel free to reach out to Brendon Wheeler directly at bwheeler@nctcog.org or 682-433-0478.

Twitter –

1. @TxDOTDallas and @NCTCOGtrans induced sprawl, coupled with lack of mass transit infrastructure, drives growth in motor vehicle injuries and deaths – Wylie H Dallas (@Wylie_H_Dallas)



2. Hey @TxDOT and @NCTCOGtrans Hopefully this means stopping all highway expansions and removing inner city highways in DFW. Otherwise, this is proof you're responsible for the deterioration of the health of our region. – Andrew Wallace (@agwallace92)



Transit

Twitter –

1. Want to know more about the issues & problems @CityOfDallas residents are facing along the @dartmedia Cotton Belt/Silver Line? Here's a short history as told by a compilation of local news media clips: <https://youtu.be/Y6L8RslBn2M> @NCTCOGtrans @TxDOTDallas @TxDOT @VisionZeroTexas – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)

 youtube.com
PTAA District 12 Cotton Belt
This video is inspired by the neighbors caring for their community.

2. "City Manager asks Dart to make safety changes to plan" #CottonBelt @SilverLine @USDOTFRA @dartmedia @herzogcompanies @NCTCOGtrans @TxDOTDallas @TxDOT @KenKalthoffNBC5 @DallasCityMgr @DallasMayor @Johnson4Dallas – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)



Other

Twitter –

1. Happy to see my friend, former colleague and transportation guru recognized today at @NCTCOGtrans Regional Transportation Council. Thank you @LeeforDallas for your service and contribution to our city/region! – Adam R. Bazaldua (@AdamBazaldua)

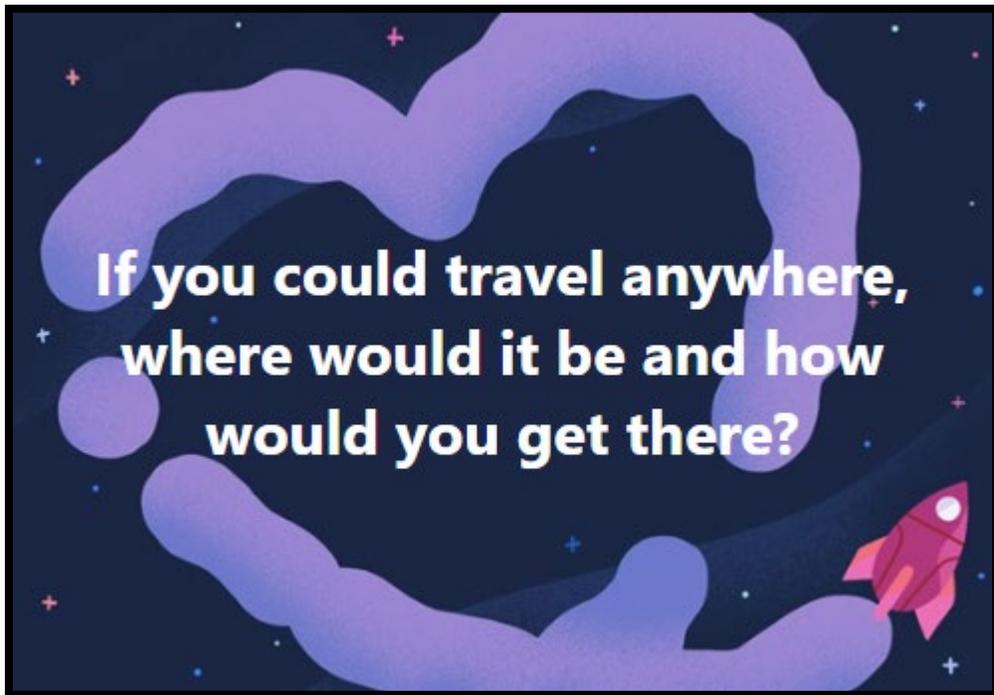


2. @LeeforDallas receiving recognition from @NCTCOGtrans RTC for his service.
@CityOfDallas – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)



Facebook –

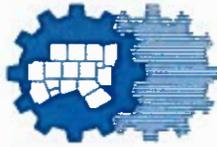
1.



Anywhere the bus doesn't go, using any private transportation I like so I get there and go on MY terms. – Phil Neil

Boat – Robert Moore

Robert Moore, ah, so a cruise? Love the water! – NCTCOG Transportation Department



North Central Texas Council of Governments

April 25, 2022

Sharmila L. Murthy
Senior Counsel
Council on Environmental Quality
730 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Murthy:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), together serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, we would like to submit comments on the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) notice published in the February 23, 2022, Federal Register, Request for Information on Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) Beta Version, Docket Number CEQ-2022-0002.

As CEQ reviews data and assessment tools available to assess climate and economic justice, please consider the attached comments to help identify opportunities for policies and programs to better address equitable services and safety.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and look forward to working with CEQ on these issues. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9263 or dlamers@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Lamers', written over a white background.

Dan Lamers
Senior Program Manager
North Central Texas Council of Governments

KR:kw

WRITTEN COMMENTS

1. *Methodology.* Please refer to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool website for more information regarding the methodology.

a. Given the function and role of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool in identifying disadvantaged communities to support the Justice40 initiative, please provide comments and recommendations for improving the methodology used to identify disadvantaged communities:

“College Enrollment” Measure: Using “percentile college enrollment for population over 15” may not successfully identify the communities that Justice40 intends to address. For example, a neighborhood composed of older, “empty-nester” households may meet the “low enrollment” criteria even though the neighborhood does not exhibit other characteristics typical of a disadvantaged community. Additionally, urban neighborhoods near universities may be identified as “not disadvantaged” due to the high number of college students, even when the permanent residents of these communities suffer similar or worse environmental burdens compared to adjacent neighborhoods. (For examples, please see the Woodlawn neighborhood in Chicago, the Mantua neighborhood in Philadelphia, or neighborhoods adjacent to Baylor University in Waco, Texas.) CEQ may consider using educational attainment statistics in lieu of higher education enrollment. This dataset may more accurately capture the economic climate of a community.

“Clean Transit” Category: As currently structured, the “Clean Transit” category seems limited to pollutant exposure, and could be renamed “Transportation Pollution” to acknowledge the multiple sources of pollution affecting a community. In addition, there are many other elements related to transportation that may warrant adding a broader “transportation disadvantage” category to accompany other forms of disadvantage in the CEJST. NCTCOG recommends integrating metrics and datasets used by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Joint Office in developing their joint definition of disadvantaged communities. Transportation disadvantage was defined as tracts in which commute times were longer, vehicles per household were lower, walkability was more difficult, and transportation costs were higher as a percentage of income. (Data sources are discussed in the answer to question 2 below.) Other aspects of sustainable transportation that are currently overlooked include vehicle ownership and access to important destinations (e.g., employment, medical care, grocery stores).

Additionally, broadband internet is increasingly becoming a critical means to access goods, education, employment, public involvement processes and political participation; accordingly, the NCTCOG Transportation Department is beginning to analyze internet access as its own mode of transportation. CEQ should consider including access to internet, either within an existing disadvantage category or as a new category.

- b. Recognizing the role of the tool in identifying disadvantaged communities for Justice40 investment benefits across agencies and programs, how can the tool's methodology incorporate a cumulative impacts approach that quantitatively measures the combined adverse factors that contribute to the conditions that Justice40 is intending to address?**

Currently, the CEJST only indicates whether a tract is considered disadvantaged for at least one category, whether it is disadvantaged for multiple categories or not. It displays these tracts as a single shade. Instead, the tool could display progressively darker shades to illustrate disadvantaged areas that experience multiple adverse factors.

NCTCOG agrees it is especially important to serve communities that experience multiple compounding disadvantages. However, grants and other funding sources typically are restricted to addressing a single issue or a set of closely related issues. The CEJST can be altered to display cumulative disadvantages, but it may not have much value unless funding sources are more multifaceted in approach and encourage the involvement of multiple agencies and programs.

- 2. Datasets. Data in the beta version of the tool provides measures for socioeconomic status and in the areas of climate, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, clean water infrastructure, and the remediation of legacy pollution. (a) What recommendations for additional datasets would improve upon the set of indicators used in the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool? In your comments, please include why and how this data would improve upon the current set of data and/or indicators used in the tool. (b) In your response, please include the following: (i) Full information regarding data sources (including url, government agency, and/or organization); (ii) Intended measure—what does the dataset and/or indicator measure?; (iii) Scope—does the recommended data and/or indicator include the data from all 50 states and territories? If not, please provide comments as to how to address the issue; (iv) A summary of the quality (i.e., completeness, accuracy, consistency, and reliability) of the data for use in the tool; and (v) Geographic resolution of the data (i.e., census block, census tract, zip code, county, etc.).**

As mentioned in the response to question 1(a), CEQ should consider replacing higher education enrollment with educational attainment. This dataset is readily available from the U.S. Census' American Community Survey (ACS).

Additionally, CEQ should consider a broader transportation disadvantage category, as discussed in the response to question 1(a). Some indicators to consider are zero-car households, transportation costs as a percent of income, and walkability scores. Much of this information has already been compiled by USDOT and DOE and is summarized on the following website: <https://www.anl.gov/es/electric-vehicle-charging-equity-considerations>. These indicators were obtained through the ACS, HUD's Location Affordability Index, and EPA's Smart Location Database, respectively. All data sources are available at the census tract geographic level. HUD and EPA may not update these datasets regularly, but the source data is generally derived from datasets that are publicly available and updated regularly.

3. *Map Usability and Accessibility:* Map Usability and Accessibility. The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool map provides an online geospatial platform that provides the user with the capability to identify the communities identified as disadvantaged by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool methodology. We are soliciting information regarding usability and accessibility of the geospatial platform. Please provide recommendations on the following:

a. What modifications can improve the usability, accessibility, or design of the mapping functions that display the data and results of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool?

Within the contextual menu that appears upon clicking a census tract, the user can view percentile rankings for each indicator of disadvantage. For comparison, it would be additionally helpful to include the percentile that serves as the threshold for disadvantage. It could also be valuable to display the “raw values” that define these percentiles, if possible. Including raw values could increase the functionality of the tool beyond grant applications and help agencies and organizations that do not have the technical skill to obtain the data in-house.

It may be helpful to consider the ability to select and combine multiple geographies to obtain aggregated values for a custom area. Many federal tools currently have this functionality, such as EPA’s EJScreen, FHWA’s Screening Tool for Equity Analysis of Projects, and others. This would allow the user to identify disadvantaged areas based on alternative geographies, such as neighborhoods, municipal boundaries, or the areas around proposed projects. The CEJST’s user interface may be improved by changing the symbology that represents categories above the regional percentage. Currently, a “blue dot” represents a disadvantaged category. It may be helpful to use more intuitive symbols, such as a check mark or similar design.

Layers in this tool should be downloadable as a shapefile, excel file, or other format, and it may additionally be helpful to download subsets of the national dataset, such as by state or by user-specified geography.

At some map scales, smaller features of the disadvantaged community’s layer will disappear while other features continue to display. This may confuse some users.

b. Are there specific features or functions that will enhance the usability of the interactive map by community members and organizations, government staff, and other stakeholders?

Many local governments and community organizations could benefit from this tool, but many have limited technical ability or staff time to search and download data. They may find the data easier to navigate if it is provided at the state scale. It may also be useful to provide the option to download this data for all tracts within a user-specified geography.

For organizations with more GIS prowess, it may be useful to provide an option to download this data layer as a geographic file (e.g., ESRI shapefile).

4. *Additional Feedback:* What additional feedback would you like to provide on the beta version of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool?

There are many equity-related federal tools available for use, including the Areas of Persistent Poverty and Disadvantaged Community Status Tool, the Argonne EV Charging Justice40 Map, FDA's EJScreen, and the FHWA Screening Tool for Equity Analysis of Projects. We recommend that CEQ produce guidance that explains which planning tasks are best suited to use CEJST as opposed to these other equity-related federal tools.

Additionally, NCTCOG strongly recommends that the 40 percent federal requirement is applied based on the type of disadvantage that the federal program aims to address. The administration should refrain from determining the 40 percent requirement by analyzing all disadvantaged communities together. For example, if a tract is disadvantaged in Sustainable Housing but not Climate Change, and it receives funding to address climate change, it should not be counted toward the 40 percent benefits requirement. Instead, 40 percent of federal monies aimed at improving climate change should be benefiting communities identified by the CEJST as disadvantaged under the climate change category.



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

April 25, 2022

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
United States House of Representatives
2306 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Johnson:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I am pleased to support Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART's) East Dallas Bus and Maintenance Facility Renovation project for the U.S. House of Representatives' Community Project funding requests for the Fiscal Year 2023 Transportation/Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

Improvements to the East Dallas Bus and Maintenance Facility include rehabilitation of the bus washing equipment, lighting and safety enhancements for the DART employee parking garage, and pavement repairs in the bus parking lot area. These improvements will maintain high cleaning standards for DART's bus fleet, improve safety and security for DART bus operators and maintenance employees, and help to sustain a high-quality transit facility, which impacts the state of good repair of the bus fleet.

The project is consistent with the plans and policies of Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If any of these projects are successful in receiving funds, the RTC will support inclusion in the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Theresa M. Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Theresa M. Daniel, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Commissioner, Dallas County

RG:kw

cc: Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

April 25, 2022

The Honorable Collin Allred
United States House of Representatives
114 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Allred:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I am pleased to support Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART's) Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system upgrade to the U.S. House of Representatives' Community Project Funding requests for the Fiscal Year 2023 Transportation/Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

SCADA is a control system that uses computers, networked data communications, and graphical user interfaces for high-level, process supervisory management. DART's SCADA system is used to control and efficiently manage the extensive light rail network. A next generation DART SCADA system is needed that will improve system reliability and safety, as well as add important capabilities including multi-site functionality, multi-modal future integrations and add new, optical transmission network compatibility. This upgrade will replace software, servers, workstations, tunnel ventilation control systems, an overview display wall, and a cybersecurity program, as well as provide data backup with remote-site archive sub-systems.

The project is consistent with the plans and policies of Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If any of these projects are successful in receiving funds, the RTC will support inclusion in the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

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Dr. Theresa M. Daniel, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Commissioner, Dallas County

RG:kw

cc: Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

April 25, 2022

The Honorable Marc Veasey
United States House of Representatives
2348 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Veasey:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I am pleased to support Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART's) Fuel System Modernization Project for the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2023 Transportation/Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

The project consists of installing a new, modernized diesel fuel system at the TRE's Equipment Maintenance Facility and includes costs to remove the current fuel management and storage system and replace with new, fully compliant, economically friendly fuel storage that nearly doubles the current fuel storage capacity. The new fuel delivery system will include new lines, dispensers, and monitoring equipment that will help prevent catastrophic fuel leaks and spillages, thereby protecting the nearby freshwater ecosystem from contamination.

The project is consistent with the plans and policies of Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If any of these projects are successful in receiving funds, the RTC will support inclusion in the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dr. Theresa M. Daniel'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Theresa M. Daniel, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Commissioner, Dallas County

RG:kw

cc: Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

Jon Niermann, *Chairman*
Emily Lindley, *Commissioner*
Bobby Janecka, *Commissioner*
Toby Baker, *Executive Director*



TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

April 13, 2022

Ms. Lori Pampell Clark
Program Manager
North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

via email: llark@nctcog.org

Subject: Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) - Request for Comments on Proposed Preferences and Scoring Criteria under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023 Alternative Fueling Facilities Program (AFFP)

Dear Ms. Clark:

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) received your comments regarding the FY 2022-2023 AFFP grant round on March 4, 2022. TCEQ would like to provide you with the following responses to your comments, which are summarized below:

1. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) supports small business set aside. However, the TCEQ should require the applicant to provide documentation that their entity existed in a manner that meets the stated criteria prior to publication of the proposed selection criteria. NCTCOG also requests that public sector applicants be explicitly listed as part of the "all other" category.

Response: For this AFFP grant round, the agency is incentivizing small business participation. Further restricting the date by which a small business must be registered or certified as such may limit participation of small businesses in the program.

Public sector applicants do not qualify as small businesses under this grant round. The TCEQ will clarify in the public solicitation documents under which category public sector applicants should apply.

2. NCTCOG questions the rationale for the set-aside for natural gas versus other fuel types. This breaks available funding into four different 'buckets' with relatively small levels of funding in each. This could result in difficulty funding larger projects with high merit. If the TCEQ retains the four funding buckets, NCTCOG recommends exercising flexibility in adjusting awards between the various funding buckets (in the event some sub-allocations are oversubscribed, and others undersubscribed) and communicating this flexibility at the outset of the program.

Response: TCEQ will include language in its solicitation documents that confirms that the TCEQ may redistribute the funding allocations. Any redistribution of funds will be consistent with the purposes of the AFFP and dependent on demand and requested grant amounts.

3. NCTCOG supports the restriction against awards to businesses that received two or more grants under the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program. However, the TCEQ should clarify the exact meaning of “two or more grants.” It is unclear whether this means two or more sites (addresses), two or more agreements, or something else.

Response: For this purpose, TCEQ defines a grant as a contract entered into with a performing party who applied under the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program (TxVEMP) Light-Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Supply Equipment: Direct Current Fast Charging and Hydrogen Fueling Equipment grant round to install electric vehicle infrastructure at a single project site. For the AFFP Grant Round, any business, including legal affiliates of that business, that entered into two or more contracts under the TxVEMP Light-Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Supply Equipment: Direct Current Fast Charging and Hydrogen Fueling Equipment grant round is not eligible for a grant under this AFFP grant round.

4. Increase points for criteria a, proximity of the station to existing facilities, to optimize wider deployment of alternative fueling infrastructure. NCTCOG also recommends using a ratio of available infrastructure, such as number of dispensers/charging ports compared to average annual daily traffic, to award points to locations that may be near an existing facility, but where existing facilities may be inadequate to serve demand.

Response: The current scoring criteria utilizes two criterions to evaluate existing infrastructure and average annual daily traffic. Depending on the applications received, these two criteria emphasize the wider deployment of alternative fueling infrastructure while still allowing areas with high traffic and existing alternative fueling infrastructure to remain competitive. If more complete data sets across all fuel types are available in the future to evaluate the number of dispensers/charging ports, the scoring criteria may change for subsequent AFFP grant rounds.

5. Decrease points for criteria b, distance from a highly traveled highway segment. This criteria could prioritize areas which are already captured in criteria c.

Response: Criteria “b” (distance from a highly traveled highway segment) and criteria “c” (distance from an interstate, U.S. highway, or state highway) do not overlap in the data for which they evaluate. Criteria “b” evaluates the actual traffic counter data nearest the proposed facility whereas criteria “c” looks only at the distance of the proposed station from the roadway. To avoid confusion, TCEQ will change the name of criteria “b” to more accurately reflect the data it evaluates.

6. Adjust points associated with criteria c, distance from an interstate highway, U.S. highway, or state highway, to complement rather than duplicate new funding programs established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: For electric vehicle (EV) charging sites only: Decrease points for sites located along Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-designated alternative fuel corridors. These locations will be funded through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. Reserving AFFP funds for locations NOT along these corridors will facilitate projects which are ineligible for NEVI. Corridor designations are available on the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Statewide Planning Map or the FHWA Alternative Fuel Corridors website.

Response: TCEQ has provided TxDOT with the locations of proposed DC Fast Charge facilities that were recently awarded grants by TCEQ to facilitate TxDOT’s planning purposes and to avoid duplication of proposed facility locations under TxDOT’s State Plan for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment.

7. Elevate tie-breaker provision d.xiii., location in an economically depressed or blighted area, to a selection criterion. The TCEQ should also provide a list or map of these areas within the Clean Transportation Zone.

Response: AFFP continues to focus on the geographic expansion of alternative fueling facilities balanced against market demand for those fueling facilities. Given the limited number of alternative fueling facilities for all eligible fuel types, further geographic and demand scoring criteria are not yet warranted. However, TCEQ will consider the location of a facility in an economically depressed or blighted area as tie-breaking factor. Applicants interested in determining whether an area is considered as economically depressed or blighted should refer to Texas Government Code Section 2306.004. The TCEQ does not maintain a map of these areas.

8. Award points for sites which plan to offer alternative fuel produced via renewable methods and/or incorporate resiliency measures (e.g., battery storage at EV charging sites).

Response: The TCEQ may consider scoring criterion for resiliency measures and alternative fuel produced via renewable methods in future grant rounds as it continues to gather data.

9. NCTCOG recommends that the TCEQ require DC Fast Charge EV charging stations located within one mile of an interstate, U.S. highway, or state highway to meet key design criteria listed on page 26 of the NEVI Formula Program Guidance, unless the applicant demonstrates that such standards are impractical or infeasible due to utility capacity constraints:

- a. Charge power per DC port should be at least 150 kW
- b. Provide at least four Combined Charging System ports
- c. Be capable of simultaneously charging four EVs

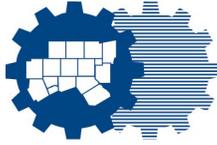
Response: TCEQ will consider minimum technical specifications and fill/charging rates for all fuel types as scoring criterion in future grant rounds as it continues to gather data.

Thank you for your comments. Please contact TERP staff at 1-800-919-TERP (8377) or terp@tceq.texas.gov with any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Michael Wilson, P.E., Deputy Director
Air Grants Division



North Central Texas Council of Governments

March 2, 2022

Subject: Comments on the Texas Emission Reduction Plan Alternative Fueling Facilities Program

To Whom It May Concern:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Transportation Department, which serves with the Regional Transportation Council as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth region, and is the host agency for the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition, is pleased to have the opportunity to provide input on proposed preferences and scoring criteria for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Texas Emissions Reduction Plan's Alternative Fueling Facilities Program (AFFP).

NCTCOG appreciates TCEQ's consideration of these recommendations. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9232 or lclark@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Lori Clark
Program Manager
North Central Texas Council of Governments

KR:bw

Attachment

North Central Texas Council of Governments Comments on Proposed Preferences and Selection Criteria for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Texas Emissions Reduction Plan Alternative Fueling Facilities Program

Grant Amounts and Small Business Set-Aside

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) supports small business set-aside. However, the TCEQ should require the applicant to provide documentation that their entity existed in a manner that meets the stated criteria *prior to* publication of the proposed selection criteria. NCTCOG also requests that public sector applicants be explicitly listed as part of the “all other” category.

NCTCOG questions the rationale for the set-aside for natural gas versus other fuel types. This breaks available funding into four different ‘buckets’ with relatively small levels of funding in each. This could result in difficulty funding larger projects with high merit. If the TCEQ retains the four funding buckets, NCTCOG recommends exercising flexibility in adjusting awards between the various funding buckets (in the event some sub-allocations are oversubscribed, and others undersubscribed) and communicating this flexibility at the outset of the program.

Restrictions

NCTCOG supports the restriction against awards to businesses that received two or more grants under the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program. However, the TCEQ should clarify the exact meaning of “two or more grants.” It is unclear whether this means two or more sites (addresses), two or more agreements, or something else.

Scoring Criteria

NCTCOG recommends the following changes:

- Increase points for **criteria a, proximity of the station to existing facilities**, to optimize wider deployment of alternative fueling infrastructure. NCTCOG also recommends using a ratio of available infrastructure, such as number of dispensers/charging ports compared to average annual daily traffic, to award points to locations that may be near an existing facility, but where existing facilities may be inadequate to serve demand.
- Decrease points for **criteria b, distance from a highly traveled highway segment**. This criteria could prioritize areas which are already captured in criteria c.
- Adjust points associated with **criteria c, distance from an interstate highway, U.S. highway, or state highway**, to complement rather than duplicate new funding programs established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law:
 - **For electric vehicle (EV) charging sites only:** Decrease points for sites located along Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-designated alternative fuel corridors. These locations will be funded through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. Reserving AFFP funds for locations NOT along these corridors will facilitate projects which are ineligible for NEVI. Corridor designations are available on the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Statewide Planning Map¹ or the FHWA Alternative Fuel Corridors website.²
- When considering criteria for **existing local amenities nearby or statement of future construction of one**, increase the allowable distance of amenities from a quarter-mile to a half-mile, especially in rural and underdeveloped areas.

¹ https://www.txdot.gov/apps/statewide_mapping/StatewidePlanningMap.html

² [Electric Vehicle \(EV-Round 1,2,3,4 and 5\) - FHWA HEPGIS Maps \(dot.gov\)](#)

- Elevate tie-breaker **provision d.xiii., location in an economically depressed or blighted area**, to a selection criterion. The TCEQ should also provide a list or map of these areas within the Clean Transportation Zone.
- Award points for sites which plan to offer alternative fuel produced via renewable methods and/or incorporate resiliency measures (e.g., battery storage at EV charging sites).

EV Charging Station Requirements

NCTCOG recommends that the TCEQ require DC Fast Charge EV charging stations located within one mile of an interstate, U.S. highway, or state highway to meet key design criteria listed on page 26 of the NEVI Formula Program Guidance³, unless the applicant demonstrates that such standards are impractical or infeasible due to utility capacity constraints:

- Charge power per DC port should be at least 150 kW
- Provide at least four Combined Charging System ports
- Be capable of simultaneously charging four EVs

If these standards cannot be made an eligibility requirement, then the TCEQ should, at a minimum, award points for EV charging stations that do adhere to these requirements. The TCEQ should consult with TxDOT on other criteria to ensure that EV charging stations funded under AFFP are as consistent as practicable with statewide EV charging infrastructure plans under development in conjunction with the NEVI Formula Program.

³ [The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure \(NEVI\) Formula Program Guidance \(dot.gov\)](#)

Dallas Business Journal

Plano study highlights opportunities for development around DART Silver Line stations

By Erick Pirayesh

In a study commissioned by the city of Plano, a majority of the area around the site of the new 12th Street Station being built as part of Dallas Area Rapid Transit's Silver Line project was found to have high potential for redevelopment.

City documents indicated that the purpose of the study was to identify areas around the two new DART stations being built in Plano that could be suited for transit-oriented developments. According to the study, these types of developments are typically built near public transit areas and are more attractive to developers and prospective residents.

The study was presented at the March 28 Plano City Council meeting and was conducted by AECOM, an independent engineering firm.

"There is a really interesting opportunity to get to a more diverse set of housing options [in these areas]," said Chris Brewer, economic development lead for AECOM. "The land is not cheap, but that gives us opportunities to think about how we can get to ... a broader mix of products where people can also take the train to other places."

The Silver Line [project](#) is a \$1.89 billion commuter rail line being built by DART that will connect Plano travelers to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. Riders will have an estimated travel time of 60 minutes or less from Plano, according to figures released by the transit agency. The project was originally planned to be complete this year, but DART announced last summer that it would be delayed until late 2024.

The line will add 10 new stations across DART's service area, with two of those to be in Plano. The Shiloh Road Station will be located at 1101 Shiloh Road, and the 12th Street Station will be located at 1180 12th St.

The study identified a 1-mile diameter circle around the two future stations, with a goal of identifying likely potential redevelopment sites. According to the study, those sites were determined by asking whether a plot of land is vacant or occupied, and how much of that vacant land is available. The study also asked about the age of the structure occupying a plot of land and how much of the available land could be redeveloped.

After determining these answers, the study found that 95% of all the likely potential redevelopment sites found were in close proximity to the 12th Street Station. The study stated that undeveloped land costs around the 12th Street Station location had risen from \$7 per square foot in 2010 to \$28 per square foot by 2022.

The study determined the best options for development in the area were building townhomes, attached homes and duplexes, or converting existing industrial buildings into restaurants, boutique retail or event spaces.

“To make the housing obtainable, it may be that we take a look at different opportunities with smaller homes and smaller lots [around the stations],” Council Member Rick Grady said.

The study split up the areas around the 12th Street Station into different sub-districts that included Downtown Plano north of the station site, the Douglass Neighborhood just west of the site, an industrial district located southwest of the site, a district off K Avenue south of the site, the Vendome Neighborhood just east of the station and an industrial district southeast of the site.

In the downtown area, the study determined townhomes and apartment complexes of four to five stories were the most likely uses for potential redevelopment sites. A set of vacant lots and aging single-family homes in the Douglass Neighborhood district were determined to have likely redevelopment potential, according to the study. The study stated “preservation of affordable single-family housing should be a priority in this area.”

Parts of the industrial district, the study stated, could be redeveloped for apartments, restaurants, retail or showrooms. In the K Avenue district determined by the study, Ferro, a high-end apartment development is being built and is expected to open this summer at 1005 11th St. The study stated retail stores, restaurants or showrooms would be other appropriate developments in this area.

The Vendome Neighborhood district would be suited for townhomes or a mix of multifamily units and commercial buildings, according to the study. Redevelopment opportunities in the industrial district would be best served with retail, restaurants and event rooms, according to the study.

Most of the same types of redevelopment were recommended for areas around the Shiloh Road Station but on a much more limited scale, taking into consideration that area is more suited to industrial properties, according to the study.

With the information gathered from the study, council indicated that official plans to guide development around the new stations could be prepared for future use. The entire study can be viewed [here](#).

NBC DFW

“Now or Never” Severe Emissions Cuts are Essential to Climate Change Reform, Experts Say

Researchers from Texas A&M are in the middle of a 3-year study on air quality in Joppa.

By Noelle Walker

As the newest [United Nations climate report](#) came out warning it's "now or never" to make severe cuts to emissions, a study in the small community of Joppa south of Dallas aims to reduce pollution.

"We know that especially communities of color are disproportionately exposed to pollutants because of legacy and zoning laws," Texas A&M researcher and Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Natalie Johnson said.

Johnson and fellow Texas A&M researcher Ping Ma are working with [Downwinders at Risk](#) to measure industry-caused pollution in the community with the hope of mitigating health impacts.

"We aim to reduce the air pollution level in Joppa," Ma said.

The average life expectancy in Joppa is 13 years less than someone living in Highland Park.

"I don't ever think it should always be up to the individual to modify their behavior around a pollutant," Johnson said. "The long-term goal is equipping the community with the knowledge for change, and not only documenting that the levels are high on those days but eventually how can we modulate those levels so that they don't go above a certain threshold that could be detrimental to health."

Johnson and Ma said global pollution has local links that contribute to the bigger problem of climate change, seen in melting ice caps in the arctic and more frequent wildfires.

"This is a cycle," said. "Even the local air pollution can impact globally."

The Joppa project is funded by a 3-year grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/joppa-environmental-study-nears-end-of-first-phase/2931923/>

Dallas Morning News

Commuting from Dallas' growing exurbs is getting more dangerous

County roads cannot handle the rapid population growth, resulting in more fatalities.

By Rebekah F. Barfield

As more people move to the outer-ring suburbs, or exurbs, outside of Dallas and other major Texas cities, their commutes are becoming more dangerous.

Texas has seen an increase in car accidents over the course of the pandemic, and the number of deaths in collisions rose 25% in 2021 compared with 2019, according to [the National Safety Council](#). While some analysts attribute a portion of the rise to drivers developing risky habits during the COVID-19 shutdowns when roads were less congested, that is not the only factor.

It is also true that COVID-19 caused a spike in the number of families moving to the exurbs, leading to more commuters on the roads in general.

Much of the risk associated with commuting to and from exurb areas is because of the nature of the roadways: cars move quickly on two-lane rural highways, where all of the normal factors such as driver distraction, impairment and human error are compounded by high-speed limits and a lack of barriers between lanes. Accidents in rural areas happen at lower frequency but with higher fatality rates than urban areas because rural roads are less accessible for emergency vehicles, and it takes longer on low-traffic roads for single-car accidents to be discovered.

The Texas Department of Transportation offers some new tools to help with safer road design, but state policymakers need to gain a firm grasp of the special infrastructure challenges in rapidly growing exurbs in order to keep people safe on the roads.

Exurbs are low-density neighborhoods in rural areas within commuting distance of major cities.

These areas appeal to homebuyers because they are less crowded, offer better-rated schools, and boast more property and larger houses for lower prices than can be found in the suburbs or inner cities. In North Texas, this includes Frisco, Anna, Prosper and beyond.

The number of people who opt for the exurbs are a small percentage of the population, but because this migration is taking place in rural areas, the phenomenon has a large impact.

These areas experience special changes to their characteristics and qualities that affect state and local infrastructure, and this type of growth will continue to be relevant as increasing numbers of exurbs spring up outside major cities.

One distinctive aspect of exurbs is that they hold a larger percentage of commuters than the suburbs or urban neighborhoods. Exurbs also tend to be far enough away from their corresponding metropolitan areas that light rail or bus transportation options are unavailable.

And, in Texas, exurb drivers must use county roads to reach the city.

In Collin and Denton counties, nearly 40% of the workforce commutes to other counties, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Consumer Survey. In Fort Bend County, 60% of the workforce commutes to Harris County (Houston.) Those percentages have been steady for the past 15 years or so.

However, those percentages now represent many thousands more commuters because of the population growth of the exurbs. The workforce in Denton County, for example, grew 38% from 2010 to 2019; Fort Bend County's workforce grew 41%, and the workforce in Williamson County, near Austin, rose 41%.

Further, the number of vehicles registered in exurb counties is also rising. In the past six years, Denton and Collin counties alone have seen an additional 211,580 vehicles registered, according to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

The rise of low-density neighborhoods in rural areas, filled with commuters, exacerbates road safety in the rural fringe. A 2003 study by W.H. Lucy published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that exurbs had significantly higher traffic fatalities compared to the inner city of the metropolitan areas they were associated with. This study included both the inner cities, the suburbs and the exurbs of Dallas and Houston.

The Texas Department of Transportation, as of the latest crash statistics published on its website in 2020, still categorizes all fatal car accidents under two subtypes: urban or rural.

A 2016 article published in the journal *Accident Analysis & Prevention* notes that this categorization system is outdated, due to the rise of low-density communities (exurbs) around the rural fringe of metropolitan areas. A better approach is to study road safety through the lens of regional development processes.

TxDOT allocated 16.7% of its total funding in its 10-year plan to projects in rural districts and 47.7% toward metro districts. It is likely that both of these funding channels will contribute to improving road safety for commuters traveling between their counties of residence and Texas metropolitan areas. This is great news for rural road safety in Texas, especially with the addition of the Safer by Design tool developed by TXDOT and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

This tool includes a comprehensive guide to assessing safety characteristics of rural highways, and it is intended to help roadway designers plan new and improvement projects.

TxDOT is now requiring the use of Safer By Design for all non-interstate rural projects, and the department intends to extend its required use to all other roadways. This tool, along with TXDOT's Road to Zero goal of zero fatalities on Texas roads by the year 2050 and the new funding for rural and metropolitan road improvements signal that policymakers are taking substantive action that will protect commuters.

The exurbs are not going anywhere. Texans are continuing to choose to live in these areas. The number of commuters on the roads from Texas exurbs to their metropolitan counterparts grew by tens of thousands over the past decade, and that number will continue to grow.

As traffic fatalities rise in the state of Texas, with a large percentage occurring in rural fringe and exurban areas, policymakers in the Legislature and administrators with the Department of Transportation must continue to target rural roads with public-safety funds for improvements.

Dallas Morning News

Why Dallas sidewalks are in such bad shape

A city cannot become more walkable with thousands of miles of crumbling or missing sidewalks.

By Rod Scales

Dallas sidewalks are in bad shape. Thousands of bumpy sidewalks tilted slabs and wonky joints across the city pose safety hazards and threaten Dallas' aspirations of walkable neighborhoods.

The problem is so widespread as to be overwhelming to City Hall. The Department of Public Works recently found that recommendations by its Sidewalk Advisory Committee, of which I am a member, representing the North Dallas Neighborhood Alliance, are too costly to implement all at once to repair every damaged sidewalk. The result is a rather meager proposal by the department to fix bad sidewalks in just three small, focused areas around the city each year for the next two years. Of course, the areas that had the worst conditions or no sidewalks at all rose to the top for remediation.

That was a reasonable approach. But it left unaddressed the many thousands of problems that residents continue to trip over on a daily basis. The city should also amend its policies and practices to avoid this cycle of constant need for repair.

On an admittedly unscientific basis, a mini walking survey was done last summer by a handful of residents in Council District 12, in North Dallas. It counted 40,000 places where there were uneven sidewalk joints exceeding one half inch high, enough to cause a trip.

A walking survey that identifies 40,000 problems in front of 18,000 homes in just one district indicates a vast problem across the city.

In a presentation to the Dallas City Council, the public works department showed a graphic indicating 2,085 miles of missing sidewalks in Dallas. But that doesn't tell the whole story; Dallas also has 1,081 miles of defective sidewalks. That is, 3,166 miles of sidewalk need fixing.

Los Angeles had similar problems, and in 2015, it settled a class-action lawsuit filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act for \$1.4 billion. Dallas allocated money to maintain some sidewalks, but nothing to fix old, defective sidewalks. Will Dallas be forced into adequate budgeting?

There are no-cost solutions the city should explore right now. The city should thoroughly update its 20-year-old documents on construction practices for sidewalks. The current documents are ambiguous, and unless an inspector requires proper sidewalk construction, it isn't likely to happen. While an update of those documents is in the works, key details are missing, such as how to install a new section of sidewalk against an old section.

Ever wondered why many sidewalks are sunken at the water meter locations? That is because even with updates to construction drawings, there still is no requirement to compact the dirt to prevent it later being settled in the pipe trench under the sidewalk.

These trip hazards and sunken sections are the result of 50 years of improper construction practices, with the cost to fix them now falling on homeowners.

Further building permit requirements still include a provision for a contractor to pay \$208 for a sidewalk waiver, under certain, very limited conditions. Hard to fathom that one. I am ashamed

to say, I used that waiver for phase 1 of a Preston Road building in North Dallas 30 years ago but rectified the matter when we built phase 2.

Homeowners can turn to the city's Sidewalk Replacement Program to fix damage in a cost-sharing arrangement. Nowhere does that website offer approved construction specifications so residents can download them to give to their contractors to install correct private-pay sidewalk repairs. Richardson and Frisco have letter-size PDF drawings on their websites for the public to easily access. This is another simple, no-cost solution.

Residents who care about sidewalks and try to report safety problems can do so using the 311 system. However, the city's 311 website doesn't include in the drop-down choices the option to report a sidewalk trip hazard. You'd have to know about the ADA accessibility concerns option. That option refers to constraints, barriers and ramps but nothing about trip hazards that violate ADA criteria.

Have you persisted in reporting a sidewalk trip hazard to 311 and wondered why nothing seems to happen? The service request gets closed quickly, before anything has been done.

When the city verifies a report, it doesn't place a safety marker at the hazard. How about cheap red paint? It then takes many months for that repair to run through the Sidewalk Replacement Program for good reason; repairs are grouped by area, so residents must wait until repairs are being done in their neighborhood.

Without any indication that a 311-service request will be addressed, residents have little incentive to report a problem. The city does not go looking for these hazards, they wait for a resident report. The homeowner isn't likely to report hazards, because the city charges them half of the repair cost. So, no one is accountable and little is accomplished.

And many of these trip hazards are way bigger than a half inch. Some are as much as 4 inches and have been that way for years. No wheelchair is going up over that.

These are easy, low-cost solutions that the public works department could implement right now. I met some good people in the department during my time on the sidewalk committee. Most want to do the right thing, but somehow it just seemed to be an uphill battle. I finally gave up. You can only help those who want to be helped.

KERA

Can a Dallas plan overcome the sidewalk gap between low-income and affluent neighborhoods?

By Alejandra Martinez

As Patricia Vega walks around the Bachman Lake neighborhood on a windy day, her footsteps crunch dirt and gravel. That, she said, is where a sidewalk should be located.

She points to the intersection of Overlake Drive and Ovella Avenue.

“Esta es la conexión donde no hay banquetas,” Vega said in Spanish. (“Here, at this intersection there are no sidewalks.”)

Sidewalks in low-income neighborhoods are more a necessity than a convenience. But a City of Dallas plan that calls for adding new sidewalks — and improving existing ones — may not make up for decades of neglect and infrastructure disinvestment.

“Las banquetas no están adaptables, no tienen especialmente señalamientos, no tienen esas rampas, esos señalamientos de cruce,” Vega said. (“The sidewalks here are not adaptable, don’t have (wheelchair-friendly) ramps and don’t have great signage.”)

In more wealthy neighborhoods people use sidewalks to walk their dogs or go on a jog. But in underserved neighborhoods, like Vega's, they're a transportation artery. And sidewalks are key to supporting health, accessibility, and pedestrian safety.



Patricia Vega said some people take sidewalks for granted. The Bachman Lake neighborhood resident said the streets have few sidewalks — or none — and it is hard for her to walk to the grocery store.

In the mostly Hispanic neighborhood of Bachman Lake, where the median household income is about **\$30,000**, many people don't have access to a car.

Vega has four kids. Three have autism and learning disabilities. She said her family depends on sidewalks to go to the grocery store, the doctor and the park.

“Es peligroso y cuando tienes niños con necesidades especiales es difícil controlarlos. Entonces si es requerido una banquetta para poder, se podría decir estar más seguros,” Vega said. (“It is dangerous and when you have children with special needs it is difficult to control them. And you need the sidewalk to feel more safe.”)

Sidewalk plan tensions

Dallas has more than 4,000 miles of sidewalk, but nearly 50% are damaged. And city officials say more than 2,000 miles of sidewalks need to be built.

For years, Dallas leaders have promised to make fixing sidewalks that are broken or too narrow a priority — and to build new ones. The city’s [Sidewalk Master Plan](#) identifies 12 target areas for sidewalk improvements. Some of those include portions of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Hampton Crossing, Hampton Rd. and Illinois Ave., Cedar Creek, and Elam Creek. Fixing all of Dallas’ sidewalk problems ultimately could cost as much as \$2 billion dollars.

“Our core methodology consisted of six factors, so we have places of public accommodation, equity, street classification, citizen request, pedestrian safety and activity areas,” said Efrain Trejo, a Senior Program Manager at the city’s Department of Public Works.

The plan was intended to provide something for each of the 14 Dallas council districts. But Council Member Tennell Atkins, who represents southern Dallas says the plan is not equitable.

“You can’t just say, ‘OK, I got 14 council district. Everybody get the same amount of money.’ No, we never catch up,” Atkins said.

For example, Atkins said in his district the rural neighborhood of Cigarette Hill, which is located near Lancaster Road and Simpson Stuart Road just off I-20 desperately needs sidewalks and did not get any funding.

Council Member Carolyn King Arnold said political games inside the city hall chambers often get in the way of talking about Dallas’ history of systemic racism. Arnold said it is time for wealthy districts to share more resources with underserved ones.

“You [wealthier districts] are really fat, you’re overweight with resources — it’s time to share with your other brothers and sisters who have been starving to death for many, many years. So you’re going to have to take some food out that plate and put it on someone else’s plate,” Arnold said.

Putting pedestrians first

Dallas resident Krista Nightengale hauls a black wagon through the bumpy sidewalks of downtown. The wheels grind through the gravel. Her 12-year-old dog Reno lost motor function in his hind legs about a year ago. He’s inside the wagon.

<https://youtu.be/9T4ZC5SQHB4>

Nightengale has lived downtown for over a decade. She said that in Dallas, pedestrians are not valued.

“A lot of this is just what are Dallas priorities. Are we going to start putting priorities on people over cars?” she said.

Dallas has [one of the highest traffic fatality rates](#) among the 15 most populous cities in America. And since 2010, traffic deaths in Dallas have increased by 80%. Pedestrians are involved in more than one out of every three traffic accidents in Dallas.

Part of the city’s sidewalk plan is to improve pedestrian crossings at “identified high-crash intersections.”

Nightengale said even in a part of town where there are many sidewalks, taking a stroll can be dangerous. Walking around her neighborhood she points to streets that are missing white crossing lines and sections of sidewalks.

“Let’s take this ramp right here. That ramp kind of shoots you off a little bit into the street,” she said. “You feel like you are kind of being put into the street... That’s probably one thing I wouldn’t have noticed if I wasn’t pulling an 81-pound dog on a wagon.”

Nightengale is the executive director of the nonprofit [Better Block](#) in Dallas. She uses social media platforms to detail her personal experience navigating the city on foot and encourages others to create awareness around walkability in Dallas.



Krista Nightengale walks her elderly and disabled dog Reno through downtown Dallas to the Deep Ellum dog park. Nightengale says the lack of sidewalk accessibility has made it increasingly difficult to walk her dog using a cart. She is pushing for more thoughtful planning for sidewalks.

Vega said she would like to see the Bachman Lake neighborhood become more walkable. She didn’t know the city has sidewalk plan, but she hopes her community will receive funding.

"Una banqueta, a lo mejor para los que tiene dinero, no es nada. Pero realmente nosotros no tenemos ese dinero para poderlo hacer," Vega said. ("A sidewalk may not mean much for people who have money. But in reality we don't have the money to do it ourselves.")

Dallas Morning News

The weekend airport scramble shows why Texas needs high-speed rail

Imagine removing millions of Dallas and Houston commuters from our roads and airports.

By Dallas Editorial

Texans spent another weekend playing their least favorite game, the Texas Transportation Scramble.

Contestants start by getting texts that their flights have been delayed or canceled. In trying to rearrange travel, contestants realize airline routes are scrambled, and they must each make a strategic decision: Go to the airport and try to maneuver onto another flight; rent a car; find a ride; stay another night.

Texans have played this game over and over during the pandemic, but it wasn't unknown in the before times. Our airplanes and roads are full, thanks to growth in population, visitors and business. The lesson of the game: Texas needs to increase its transportation capacity among major cities.

Between bad weather and technology issues, flights were coming to a standstill in the last few days out of Dallas Love Field. That's the nature of flying, but it also points to why the state needs to get serious about expanding its transportation options. Grounded flights waste time and money in a state where growth needs to be the priority.

One of our best options: high-speed rail between Dallas and Houston.

The high-speed rail plan, a privately funded effort by the firm Texas Central, is stuck in litigation over its right to use eminent domain to gather the narrow share of land it needs for its tracks. Texas' Supreme Court is expected to decide that issue this summer.

We've argued Texas needs to support the rail project, and the recent flight nightmares indicate why. Because as we grow, these problems aren't going to get better.

Consider that in Dallas-Fort Worth, airline traffic measured in available seat miles rose 35% over the 10 years ending in 2019, the highest airline traffic year in Bureau of Transportation Statistics records, and experts anticipate air travel to continue recovering from the pandemic this year. We've seen waves of flight cancellations the past year, as weather and complicated airline schedules meet labor shortages.

Hopping in a car or even on a nice bus for city-to-city jaunts aren't great options either. The same growth affecting airports is choking the freeways. Expanding to meet demand would cost taxpayers and travelers billions more.

In 2010, there were 21 million vehicles registered in Texas, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles. At the end of 2020, that number had risen by 3 million.

Texas wisely built good roads and airports years ago and continues to expand and maintain them. But regular drivers on Interstate-35 or Interstate-45 can see that the constant construction hardly keeps up with population growth.

Texas Central anticipates its trains will carry 6 million passengers per year by 2029, if the state's policymakers are wise enough to see the benefits.

Imagine removing millions of Dallas and Houston drivers off of the interstate and onto rail. Imagine arriving at the nearest big city airport for a trip, and there aren't quite so many under-caffeinated cross-state commuters sighing when you take an extra 10 seconds to contemplate your Starbucks order.

A rising tide of transportation capacity can lift all of our spirits and keep our economic engine revving.

Dallas Morning News

Why DART is pushing back the opening date for the Silver Line to DFW Airport

The route, which will take passengers along 10 stations between DFW Airport and southeast Plano, will now open in 2024.

By Chole Bennett

The long-anticipated [Dallas Area Rapid Transit Silver Line](#) will open in late 2024, two years after it was to begin carrying passengers between DFW Airport and Plano.

The line was scheduled to open in 2022 but has been pushed back twice due to construction delays, the COVID-19 pandemic and unsettled agreements.

DART spokesman Gordon Shattles said in July 2021 that the latest setback was partially triggered by delays in land acquisition and agreements between the agency and freight operators as well as pandemic-related slowdowns.

Some cities that the Silver Line will traverse have also requested design modifications to the rail, causing further delays, Shattles said.

DART has not yet set a month for the rail's opening.

"The final decision on the beginning of revenue service for the DART Silver Line will be decided by the DART Board of Directors," Shattles said.

The 26-mile Silver Line has [been in the works since 1990](#) and will travel between southeast Plano and DFW Airport, stopping at 10 stations along the way. According to Shattles, the ride from 12th Street in Plano to DFW Airport will be 59 minutes.

The project is expected to cost \$1.2 billion to construct.

Silver Line meetings

DART is holding a series of [virtual community meetings](#) to get input from residents on the Silver Line's construction and operations. Shattles said the meetings will consist of presentations on the line's design and construction, updates on the project's betterment walls and progress on hike and bike trails near DART stations.

"The goal of these community meetings is to ensure our residents are engaged and informed about the progress of the long-awaited Silver Line project, and to make certain that any questions or concerns they have as construction ramps up are answered," Shattles said.

Irving Weekly News

DFW Airport Receives \$20 Million In Federal Appropriations

By Irving Weekly Staff

Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) is pleased to announce that four key infrastructure projects were included in the FY22 Federal Appropriations Act that has been passed by Congress and signed by President Joe Biden. Combined, the four projects will receive \$20 million (\$5 million per project) in funding from the federal government.

The projects will enhance the efficiency of DFW Airport, which will improve our customer experience, create over 4,000 jobs in North Texas, maintain our safe and secure environment, and will assist in DFW's sustainability goal to achieve net-zero carbon by 2030. The projects included in the Act are: The Brute Force Electric Central Utility Plant, International Parkway Flyover Bridge Replacement and Conversion Project, Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Station Consolidation, and Snow and Ice Remove Equipment Storage Facility.

"We are grateful to the DFW Airport Congressional Delegation for advocating for our Airport, and for our customers. The projects included in this act will make a lasting impact on how DFW delivers to our customers and how we run our operations," said Chief Executive Officer Sean Donohue. Below is a brief description of each project.

Brute Force Electric Central Utility Plant – DFW Airport is proposing to construct a new Brute Force Electric Central Utility Plan and replace the aging steam piping distribution system with a highly efficient hot water piping system. This project will address current, and future, heating and cooling demand, improve resiliency, maximize efficiency, and will be part of DFW's Carbon Net-Zero plan.

International Parkway Flyover Bridge Replacement and Conversion Project – This will replace four left-hand flyover ramps with new right-hand exit bridges for Terminals A, B, C, and E. The four left-hand bridges are nearing their end of life and could become a disruption to passenger travel. The right-hand bridges will improve traffic and provide efficient means of accessing these terminals. This project is supported by the Texas Department of Transportation and the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Station Consolidation – This project will consolidate four existing Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) stations into two new larger, more resilient, and more sustainable facilities. Some of the ARFF stations are well over 50 years old and are seeing an increase in maintenance costs. The consolidation of these stations will provide industry-standard facilities for critical emergency services operations, improve concurrent response resiliency, and lowers the total response time. This project will also reduce operating and maintenance expenses by at least 25% and will reduce the long-term apparatus replacement costs.

Snow and Ice Removal Equipment Storage Facility – This project is the first phase of the Snow and Ice Removal Equipment Facility project that will provide a storage facility for twenty-five snow and ice fleet vehicles that currently are parked outdoors exposed to the weather.

STEER Brings AV Technology to Dallas to Test Autonomous Valet Services at DFW Airport

This monumental collaboration achieves an industry-first milestone in the adoption of autonomous vehicle applications at a major transportation hub by connecting individual passenger vehicles with an established, interconnected AV management ecosystem.

COLUMBIA, Md., April 7, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- [STEER Tech](#), an autonomous vehicle technology company, announced today that it was awarded funding under the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Automated Vehicles Program to develop a cutting-edge testbed at the [Dallas Fort Worth International Airport \(DFW\)](#) that will demonstrate a comprehensive automated parking ecosystem.



In partnership with DFW, STEER Tech will integrate its existing autonomous vehicle technology to create the most advanced live autonomous ecosystem. The demonstration will consist of three subsystems: low-speed vehicle automation for automated valet parking, supervisory parking management for autonomous vehicles, and active digital curb management. These three interconnected subsystems aim to provide a solution to the overutilized and heavily congested curbside drop-off and pick-up areas at DFW caused by the rise of air travel and increased use of ride-hailing services when fully implemented.

"The [autonomous vehicle] tests fit into the airport team's focus on efficient mobility throughout the airport, including the drop-off curb and parking," Paul Puopolo, the executive vice president of innovation at the DFW International Airport. Puopolo said [this project will help the airport prepare for the new technology](#).

"Auto-valet services create a win-win scenario for travelers, employees, airport operations, and sustainability when effectively coordinated with a curb management process," Anuja Sonalker, CEO of STEER Tech. "For DFW and other airports to maximize the benefits of auto-valet services, the automated technology must be integrated with a curbside management system such as the one this demonstration will use."

In an industry-leading move and in the interest of interoperability with other systems, STEER will 'open-source' the data interfaces such that any vendor may participate, subject to common interface standards in the future. The goal of such a groundbreaking move is to keep the airport stakeholders and customers at the center of the experience.

STEER Tech and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport look forward to the [implementation of this revolutionary automated vehicle ecosystem](#) and the enhanced customer experience, increased parking capacity, more effective traffic management, and the other benefits it will provide.

About Dallas Fort Worth International Airport

Dallas Fort Worth International (DFW) is one of the most frequently visited superhub airports in the world. Centered between owner cities Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, DFW Airport also serves as a major job generator for the North Texas region by connecting people through business and leisure travel. For more information, visit the [DFW website](#) or download the DFW Mobile App for iOS and Android devices.

About STEER Tech

STEER Tech is the leading automated vehicle company engineering innovative solutions to mobility issues faced by enterprises and consumers. STEER develops autonomous technology for passenger and commercial vehicles that can be applied to parking, low-speed driving, first and last-mile delivery, vehicle maintenance, fleet operations, and other custom use cases. With its growing network of autonomous transfer hubs for fleet and delivery companies and mapped points of interest for consumers, STEER continues to create an ecosystem of users and infrastructures that benefit from space and time efficiency, reduced costs, enhanced user experiences, and new revenue. Visit [STEER's website](#) to see the technology in action and explore the benefits of vehicle automation.

KERA

Fort Worth project to keep bus riders out of the sun and rain looks to City Council

By Miranda Suarez

The Glen Park neighborhood has few bus stops with places to sit or protection from the weather. Community and transit advocates are working together to add more shelters themselves, but they need the green light from the city.

A community-led project to build new bus shelters in Fort Worth's Glen Park neighborhood is asking for the City Council's help.

The neighborhood in southeast Fort Worth has 36 bus stops, but only a few have seating, or awnings to protect people from the elements, [according to the Tarrant Transit Alliance](#).

In 2020, the Glen Park Neighborhood Association and the TTA started [the Glen Park Bus Shelter Project](#): an independent project to build five new shelters. They surveyed residents about what they wanted and even [held a design competition](#). Now, [Tarrant County College is helping to build the shelters](#), using a \$7,600 grant from the American Public Transportation Association.

The project's supporters asked the Fort Worth City Council on Tuesday to [waive the \\$700 fee](#) to build the shelters on city property, said Jonathan Guadian, one of the project organizers.

"We constantly see our neighbors standing at these bus stops for intervals of 30 to 60 minutes while they wait on their bus," Guadian told City Council members. "Sometimes we see them using the curb as a place to sit. Other times we see them standing in the shade of a utility pole to find some relief from the sun."

Trinity Metro, the public transit service that operates Fort Worth's bus system, is another partner in the project. Trinity Metro's [own survey data](#) shows that riders want better bus stops, with more benches and shelters.

Adding those will improve the public transit experience, said Andre McEwing, the former chair of the Tarrant Transit Alliance, who joined advocates speaking in favor of the shelter project.

"They want to ride to get to the medical facility, they want a ride to get to the stores, to the jobs, but we need to help them at the bus stop," McEwing said.

During the meeting, Mayor Mattie Parker connected Guadian with a member of city staff, and said "We'll talk about the project."

Robert Ford with Tarrant County College said two of the shelters should be ready to install by mid-May.

Dallas Morning News

Grand Prairie launches on-demand rideshare service

The city received a \$3.8 million federal grant to start the public transportation program.

By Sarah Bahari

On-demand public transportation is now available in Grand Prairie.

The city launched Via, a rideshare program, this week with a \$3.8 million grant from the Federal Transportation Administration.

[To book a ride](#), Grand Prairie residents should download the Via smartphone app or call 214-253-0874. Via operates 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

One-way rides in Grand Prairie cost \$3. Via will also provide transportation to four nearby colleges: Tarrant County Community College Southeast campus, University of Texas at Arlington, Dallas Baptist University and Dallas County College Mountain View campus.

Riders will be picked up at a designated spot, usually a nearby street corner. That will help the service run smoothly, as drivers will be picking up and dropping off riders along the way, the city said on its [website](#).

Wheelchair-accessible vehicles are available upon booking.

Via is also available in [Arlington](#), which recently celebrated its 1 millionth trip in February since launching the program in 2017.

Dallas Morning News

How the Texas economy can grow even if the state cuts carbon emissions to net zero

Getting Texas to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 can boost GDP and job growth.

By Isabella M. Gee and Michael E. Webbe

Good news, Texas: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions can help the state's economy meet our needs and the desires of our investors and customers. Our research shows that decarbonizing is good for business and the environment.

During the past 2 1/2 years, [we conducted an extensive analysis](#) that examined different pathways to get Texas to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We made several important conclusions.

First, there are many ways to get the Texas economy to net-zero.

Second, doing so has important economic benefits such as GDP growth and job creation.

Third, reducing carbon dioxide emissions has critical environmental co-benefits such as cutting water use by the power sector and avoiding air pollution.

Fourth, the oil and gas industry has a place in a low-carbon future.

These are exciting conclusions because they are yet more proof that Texas can play a leadership role as the world's economy decarbonizes.

For a state that has made a lot of money not caring about carbon emissions, it is natural to fret that our prosperity will suffer if Texas starts to care about carbon emissions. However, our research arrives at the same conclusion as other objective third parties who have studied national decarbonization: that simply doesn't need to be the case.

Getting to net-zero requires several steps: cleaner fuels, higher efficiency, electrification, hydrogen and carbon management. The Texas power market is already quickly replacing coal with natural gas, wind and solar as those cleaner options are cheaper and abundant in Texas.

Doing so reduces CO₂ emissions from the power sector. And this means that if we use the cleaner power sector to electrify other activities such as transportation and industrial processes, those sectors' emissions will also drop. In addition, electric motors and heat pumps are more efficient than gasoline engines and gas furnaces, so electrification reduces the energy we need in Texas despite a growing economy and population.

For the parts of the economy that are hard to electrify, we can use cleaner fuels such as hydrogen. Hydrogen can also be used as a carrier for industrial heat and as a building block for chemicals and other materials.

Carbon scrubbers at the smokestacks, machines that remove CO₂ from the air, and multiple carbon management technologies, including land management, can mitigate remaining emissions from gas-fired power generation.

The economic benefits from avoiding costly air pollution and investing in the deployment of so much infrastructure mean the economy will grow and create jobs. In future scenarios that focus

on hydrogen and carbon management, these industries might be excellent job creators. New technology allows the oil and gas industry to pivot into the hydrogen and carbon industry. Doing so leverages the highly skilled capabilities of Texas' energy incumbents to the benefit of us all.

But why should we care and go to all this trouble? Because our customer's care. Whether Texas accepts the risk of climate change or not, consumers worldwide are looking for goods and services that have a lower carbon footprint. Reducing our CO2 emissions will give us a competitive advantage and retain our global energy leadership. If we ignore our customers' requirements to clean up our act, they will look elsewhere.

Just because we're energy leaders today doesn't guarantee that will always be the case. We compete with cities, regions and countries globally that would happily take that leadership role away from us. It would be silly for us to give them that opportunity.

By nimbly adjusting for the economy of the future rather than digging in to protect the legacy of our past, we can maintain our leadership role and harness the economic gains that come with it. As our research shows, not only are we capable of getting our economy to net-zero emissions, but it's the right thing to do. And time is of the essence.

KRLD

North Texas falling behind in ozone emissions

By Alan Scaia

With North Texas falling behind on ozone emissions, grants now available to shift fleets to electric.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments said grants are now available to install charging stations. NCTCOG said nine counties are considered ozone nonattainment areas by standards set in 2015.

"In order for regional air quality to improve, we all need to do our part," said NCTCOG Air Quality and Transportation Planner Nick Van Haasen.

Van Haasen said "our part" can include working from home, carpooling, and using mass transit to commute. He urges people to carpool to lunch or bring their lunch with them and consider bicycling or walking for short trips.

He said drivers should also avoid unnecessary trips, drive at a constant speed and limit the time they spend idling.

NCTCOG said, while ozone levels in North Texas are above standards, they have dropped from 101 parts per billion in 2000 to 73 parts per billion earlier this month.

The council started taking applications for grants that would pay for charging stations in March. Grants of up to \$1 million are funded with money from the Federal Highway Administration's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program.

"We want to fill some infrastructure gaps, in other words, the distance between charging stations," said NCTCOG Principal Air Quality Planner Amy Hodges.

Hodges said a survey showed most private vehicle fleet operators support a shift toward electric and more infrastructure to charge cars.

"We were noticing an increased interest in electrification," she said. "A lot of our fleets have already deployed electric vehicles, and they're interested in deploying more."

Hodges said charging stations could be built at a mix of public and private sector locations like parks, libraries, community centers, stadiums, and other places the public would frequent.

To be eligible, organizations must have adopted the Regional Transportation Council's "Clean Fleet Policy". She said grants could cover the cost of design, purchase, and construction costs but not ongoing maintenance.

More information is available [here](#).

Dallas Morning News

Addison picks developers for \$472 million transit development tied to Silver Line

The office, apartment and retail project will be ready in time for DART's new Silver Line.

By Steve Brown

Developers in Addison are ready to hop on board with plans for construction around DART's [new Silver Line](#).

The commuter rail [route will run from DFW International Airport](#) to Plano, through Addison.

The city picked two developers this week — Dallas' Stream Realty Partners and Aml Residential — to build an 18-acre, \$472 million mixed-use project surrounding the rail station just west of the Dallas North Tollway.

Addison's City Council approved an agreement with the developers at Tuesday's meeting.

"The town leadership has postponed any development on this significant parcel in anticipation of a light rail station in Addison," Addison City Manager Wes Pierson said in a statement. "Now that we have a more comprehensive DART timeline, we've been able to select a master developer to help us achieve the vision adopted by the city council, which will have a significant economic impact for Addison and the region and will truly set Addison apart from other recent developments in the area."

The proposed development will be built next to Addison's Circle Park, a 10-acre public green space now used for the city's annual fireworks shows and other events.

The first phase of the project will include a six-story office building with 150,000 square feet of workspace and 9,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.

There also will be a 13-story luxury apartment building with ground-floor retail. A seven-story luxury apartment building is planned with additional restaurant and shopping space on the first level.

A 45,000-square-foot entertainment complex will be operated by The Hub, a Texas-based creator of entertainment venues and restaurants.

There will be a 650-car parking garage to serve the development.

The first phase of the project is set to open in 2024 — in time for the first riders on the new DART line. The project would add one of the first new offices in Addison in several years.

"We recognize Addison's importance as a business hub for this region and anticipate extraordinary demand for the office space created as a part of this project," Brad Dornak, director of development at Stream Realty Partners, said in a statement. "As we come out of the pandemic, businesses are re-evaluating their office needs."

"They are looking for developments which are rich in amenities. This development fulfills every possible need, including ease of access, great dining, beautiful green space and more."

Stream Realty Partners is the same developer building the [mixed-use Quadrangle office and retail project](#) in Dallas' Uptown district. The commercial real estate firm also oversaw the recent \$100 million-plus redo of downtown Dallas' landmark Trammell Crow Center.

Apartment builder Amlı Residential recently completed the [46-story Amlı Fountain Place tower](#) in downtown Dallas, the city's tallest residential building. Amlı has built apartment communities throughout the Dallas area.

"Addison has been a great collaborative partner, and we're proud to be selected to help create this walkable, livable transit-oriented development," Amlı's Joe Bruce said. "The future is bright for Addison and the DART Silver Line."

Commercial property firm Cushman & Wakefield represented Addison in the more than yearlong search for developers for the transit project.

"While we were presented with several great proposals, as we evaluated each, it became clear that the AMLI/Stream vision for Addison aligned with our strategic plans and our hopes for the future," Addison Mayor Joe Chow said in a statement.

The Addison project is [one of the largest new developments](#) in the works along the 26-mile Silver Line being built from the north end of DFW Airport to north of the Bush Turnpike in Plano.

Dallas Morning News

Decades after Dallas stole homes from Black residents, final plans set for new Fair Park greenspace

Here's your first look at renderings and designs for the 14-acre Community Park, which begins construction in January and opens in 2024.

By Sharon Grigsby

It's really going to happen. Fair Park's neighbors finally will get the signature park — a Blackland Prairie wonderland chock full of amenities — that for more than half a century was nothing more than lies and broken promises.

I got an early look at the Community Park designs, released publicly Thursday and the result of more than a thousand conversations between Fair Park's nonprofit operator and area residents and businesses.

Free of fencing and open to all, the 14-acre greenspace will replace Fair Park's largest parking lot when it opens in 2024 near the Dos Equis Pavilion off South Fitzhugh Avenue.

Darren James, Fair Park First's chairman and president, told me the new greenspace is a gift to the community as well as to the entire region.

"I wanted to create a regional draw, but I wanted to make sure that the people that live right across the street felt as welcome and at home as anybody coming from across the Metroplex," James said.

City Hall's original promise to build a park for Fair Park's neighbors, a pledge broken time after time, was part of its [ugly ploy to force hundreds of Black families from their homes](#) in the 1960s and 1970s.

It's a tragedy this city can ill afford to forget: After a consultant reported in 1966 that Fair Park was unpopular because of "the poor Negroes in their shacks" and that City Hall should "eliminate the problem from sight," Dallas cheated homeowners with low-ball offers and used eminent domain to take other properties.

Dallas officials promised at the time that some of those 52 acres would become a terrific neighborhood park. Instead, 300 homes were ripped away in order to lay a massive slab of concrete big enough for 4,000 cars.

More than 50 years later, no new greenspace — no matter how wonderful — can ever make up for those families' losses or the city's shamefully unjust behavior. But it can be a small step toward healing for a part of our city traditionally othered by those [inside Fair Park's walls](#).

Construction on the \$85 million project, which also will add a parking structure near Gaisford Street, is set to begin in January.

Design plans provide what's long been on neighbors' wish lists — all-access, all-ages playground areas, a dog park, wifi, picnic areas, water activities and an abundance of gathering spaces and shade.

Perhaps most important, given the shortage of performance venues and food options in South Dallas, are the community stage, pavilion and market grove.

Fair Park First CEO Brian Luallen, who walked me through 183 pages of designs and renderings, emphasized the team's insistence on getting the park just right, whether that be convenient, free parking or whimsical elements you won't find at any other park in North Texas.

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Fair Park First's director of strategic initiatives Alyssa Arnold said the renderings give specific shape to the surrounding communities' desires. "What I love is you can see these layers of input become real and ultimately connect the park back to the community."

Landscape architecture firm Studio-MLA, out of Los Angeles, has led the Community Park design team in creating a colorful and topographically interesting greenspace out of what's now a sunbaked flat expanse.

Because this project is outside the National Historic Landmark footprint of Fair Park it has more design flexibility and, in contrast to the heavy dose of concrete in the original park, nature's beauty gets the lead role here.

Mirroring the red oaks and live oaks that run along South Fitzhugh, the "post oak porch" entrance will lead visitors through a Blackland Prairie — from river bottoms and floodplain forest to gardens with percussion play and rock escarpments with built-in slides.

At the park's center will be a flexible-use stage that can adapt to the lawns on either side. Public art, lighted at night, will rotate in the space and the Lookout Tower will provide a panoramic view.

The design team also understood the need to create a homey and secure environment. That means lighting on paths, seat benches and throughout the park's amenities.

One of those, the orchard-covered Sycamore Lounge, is the outdoor spot older residents requested for game tables, book and art carts, and a view onto the play space for younger children, including the "tot lot."

More than an acre of the space is devoted to play features. One area is filled with sliding, spinning and seesawing equipment of all kinds. The adventure play space features a large net and rock wall for climbing.

Water fun will be a big draw, whether observing the natural pond-like runnel feature or the chutes of tumbling water and inch-deep pools safe to play in. Careful attention also has been given to stormwater management and making sure these amenities don't create runoff problems for neighbors.

Luallen got most excited talking about the "fog tree," which may involve the replanting of a large live oak that will likely need to be moved from the Fair Park Coliseum due to renovations there. Delicate misting lines would be entwined in its branches and lights installed throughout to create a "living fountain."

In addition to the half-mile fitness loop and equipment along the route, the Community Park also will include a Market Grove, which will host farmer's markets and art fairs.

As for the parking structure, which will be in a lot to the east of the Community Park, designers anticipate that berms can be created to block that view from park-goers. This parking area will allow Fair Park First to create a new park from the huge surface lot.

It's worth remembering that the city also has work to do. Undersized water mains on nearby Gaisford Street are nearing the end of their life and must be replaced for the park to hook into.

Final choices — for instance, types of stone and the design of the Lookout Tower — are yet to be made. But Luallen told me the park will closely resemble what we see in these designs and renderings. Fair Park First expects to announce in the next few weeks who will build the park.

The closest Luallen would come Tuesday to talking about where the \$85 million capital campaign stands was to say Fair Park First has made tremendous progress and to stay tuned for a funding announcement in coming weeks.

Perhaps it's been by necessity, but I like the tack Fair Park First has taken on fund-raising. They didn't begin with a major gift that would include naming rights — although that's not off the table.

Wouldn't it be great if, instead, the philanthropic community comes together in a way that would allow the surrounding neighborhoods to choose the name?

Fair Park First has worked with its South Dallas neighbors since late 2018 when the City Council turned the entire park's operation over to it and its for-profit partner, Spectra. First up was creating a master plan in partnership with residents and business owners.

A cornerstone of that plan, [which Council approved in October 2020](#), was to create the Community Park.

Longtime community leader Anna Hill, whose Dolphin Heights neighborhood is east of Fair Park, has been involved in the Community Park since its beginning — and during many of those decades of broken promises.

“Hopefully, I'll still be around to see it,” the 82-year-old laughed as she told me Wednesday about her favorite features of the new park, including the Blackland Prairie theme, the walking paths and the wildflowers.

Her concern is no longer whether a top-notch park will be delivered to the community, but the need for neighbors to support the greenspace once it is finished. “This is what they asked for, over and over again, a park that was open and that they could bring their kids to,” she said.

I've written regularly for years about the empty bag of broken promises and outright lies that Fair Park's neighbors have endured for generations. There's been so little credibility for authentic change for so long.

Fair Park First seems genuinely intent on getting things right — starting with this incredibly ambitious greenspace off South Fitzhugh.

The nonprofit will support its neighbors to set in motion a process for the right piece of public art to mark the history of this space. “There will be something very significant that commemorates the story of this land and whose it was and how it brought us to this point of a Community Park,” Luallen told me.

“This is a park for the future, but we know there’s no way to get to the future without acknowledging the past.”

The Texas Tribune

EPA seeks more smog controls in Houston, Dallas after they fail to meet standards

The Houston and Dallas regions may soon be designated as “severe” violators of federal smog rules, which would prompt more aggressive regulations.

By Erin Douglas

The Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday [sought to list](#) the Houston and Dallas metro areas as “severe” violators of 2008 federal ozone pollution standards, kicking off a process that will likely impose stricter pollution controls in both regions to reduce local smog.

Ground-level ozone pollution, known as smog, harms human health by constricting lung muscles, making it harder to breathe and exacerbating lung diseases such as asthma. More than 79 million Americans live in areas that do not meet national air quality health standards for smog, according to the EPA.

“Smog pollution is a serious threat to public health,” said EPA Administrator Michael Regan in a Wednesday statement on the [proposed rule](#). “With these proposed determinations, we are fulfilling our duty under the Clean Air Act.”

Ozone pollution results from car and truck emissions, industrial emissions from facilities such as refineries and electric generation plants, as well as from natural sources (trees, for example, emit organic compounds that [react](#) with other emissions to form ozone).

The 2008 rule requires metro regions to stay below 75 parts per billion of ozone in the air; the EPA looks at the fourth worst ozone pollution days between 2018 and 2020 to determine the limit was violated. The [Dallas-Fort Worth area](#), a 10-county region, exceeded the threshold at 76 parts per billion, while the eight-county [Houston region](#) exceeded it at 79 parts per billion.

Three other metro regions — Denver, Chicago and New York — also failed to meet the standard and would be listed as “severe” violators under the [EPA’s proposal](#).

“It is a big deal,” said Victor Flatt, an environmental law professor at the University of Houston who has studied the Clean Air Act. “Once you change those designations, it requires the state to do more in that locality to reduce pollution.”

In addition, the [EPA is seeking to designate](#) the San Antonio region as a “moderate” violator of the more recent 2015 ozone standard of 70 parts per billion, with a measurement of 72 parts per billion.

The new designations in the Dallas and Houston regions would trigger more aggressive pollution control requirements on businesses by requiring the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to revise its plans to control smog in those regions. The changes could include stricter air pollution permits and requiring businesses to install better pollution control technology, as well as requiring a greater reduction in pollution before an area can approve new additional pollution sources.

A TCEQ spokesperson declined to comment on the EPA’s proposal on Wednesday.

Flatt said he wouldn't be surprised if Texas sues the EPA to protest the new designations, although winning would be difficult since the EPA's authority to enforce the ozone requirements is well settled, he said.

"But the attorney general of the state of Texas is running for reelection," Flatt said. "He plays to a base by opposing EPA or the Biden administration."

Flatt said the EPA action partially reflects the Biden administration's influence on the EPA following inaction on the standards under the Trump administration.

"We have a different administration now that is more concerned about the health impacts of ozone," Flatt said, but added that inflation concerns are tempering the administration's actions. [The Biden administration said on Tuesday](#) that the EPA would allow E15 gasoline, or gasoline that uses a 15% ethanol blend, to be sold over the summer, which is typically not allowed due to smog concerns.

In a statement, EPA press secretary Nick Conger said that an agency analysis found that vehicles manufactured in the last two decades would have similar exhaust emissions on E15 fuel as the standard manufacturing test fuel and that the EPA expects relatively small changes to emissions from the change.

"EPA would not expect an impact on ambient air quality," Conger wrote in a statement. "However, EPA is committed to working with states to help ensure that expectation remains true."

EPA rejects deadline extension request

The EPA also sought to reject Texas' request for a deadline extension in Houston, arguing that an extension would simply delay planning for pollution controls and further burden neighborhoods already subjected to high levels of pollution — particularly neighborhoods adjacent to the highly industrialized Houston Ship Channel.

"Granting the state's request would, by definition, prolong the ozone air quality problem," the EPA proposal said.

Predominantly Latino neighborhoods that sit adjacent to the ship channel tend to experience high levels of industrial pollution from refineries, chemical plants and other industrial operators nearby. Regan, the EPA administrator, toured one such Houston Ship Channel neighborhood, Manchester, in November to hear environmental concerns from residents and advocates during the administrator's [tour of environmental justice issues](#) in the South.

While Texas environmental organizations said that they welcomed the EPA's action on ozone, much more work needs to be done.

High levels of pollution can disproportionately harm Black and Latino children, researchers have found: [One 2017 Rice University study](#) showed that 13% of Black children in Houston have an asthma diagnosis compared with 7% of Hispanic children and 4% of white children and Asian children.

“EPA's failure to meet its Clean Air Act deadline to finalize more stringent designations has led to public health impacts, prevented vulnerable individuals from enjoying the outdoors and allowed for air nuisance that cannot be reversed,” Bryan Parras, a Gulf Coast organizer for the Sierra Club based in Houston, wrote in a statement. The Sierra Club and other environmental organizations [in February had warned the EPA](#) they would sue if the agency didn't soon take action.

“The good people of Houston and Dallas deserve better, cleaner air quality,” Parras wrote.

Smog reductions stagnant

Between 1991 and 2020, the Dallas region's highest ozone levels decreased by 28%, according to TCEQ data. The Houston region's decreased by 36% over that same period. But much of the gains were made in the first two decades of regulation, when Texas focused on reducing industrial emissions and federal standards on vehicle exhaust improved.

In recent years, major Texas cities have struggled to reduce smog. [In Houston](#), high ozone levels fluctuated between 78 parts per billion and 81 parts per billion between 2014 and 2020 without a consistent downward trend, according to data included in the EPA's proposal.

“Ozone is a very stubborn pollutant,” said Daniel Cohan, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering at Rice University and an expert on air quality.

“It takes large changes in emissions to make much of a change,” Cohan added. “To get that last 10% of progress that we need is just very, very hard to do without steps like electrifying vehicles that come closer to completely removing emissions.”

He estimates it would probably require at least a 50% reduction in local air emissions in Houston to achieve a roughly 10% reduction in ozone levels.

In Texas, it's particularly difficult to reduce smog, he said, because the climate can accelerate chemical reactions in the atmosphere that create ozone. Smog tends to be worst on sunny, hot and stagnant days, when the sunlight and high temperatures accelerate reactions between volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides to form ozone. Such conditions are particularly common during Texas summers — and getting worse with climate change, further accelerating those reactions, experts said.

An [October report](#) by the Texas state climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon found that average daily minimum and maximum temperatures in Texas have both increased by 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit in the last 125 years. Nearly half the increase has come since 2000.

“EPA is showing frustration that Texas hasn't done more to take vigorous measures [to cut ozone pollution],” Cohan said. “But just the atmospheric chemistry of the situation is going to make a 70 parts per billion standard very difficult for large cities to achieve in hot climates.”

Dallas Innovates

Smart City Boost: Agency Adds Broadband to its Transportation Solutions Toolkit

Replacing highway traffic with web traffic makes sense to leaders at the Regional Transportation Council and COG.

A recent council vote sends a message that the agency is just as interested in funding technology that provides access to services, as it is in funding traditional roads and bridges, said NCTCOG chief Michael Morris.

By Dave Moore

Most anyone who has been commuting to work over the past two years has likely noticed a decrease in traffic.

Brookings Institution **noted** that metro traffic congestion was cut in half after COVID-19 hit in 2020, attributing it largely to employees working virtually from home, and more flexible work schedules (though government stay-at-home orders figured prominently as well).

The think tank has also **reported** that 18 million households in rural and urban America are without broadband internet service, which allows streaming of data for smart devices.

Considering those factors, the DFW region's metropolitan planning organization recently informally adopted the policy of funding projects that extend access to broadband internet to underserved communities, while lessening traditional traffic flow.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments transportation director Michael Morris took a moment to note that in its March 10 vote, the Regional Transportation Council wasn't just funding **six projects** for \$11.3 million: It was endorsing a larger idea.

"If you approve this today, you are creating a legal foundation that technology is a transportation mode and should be defined as such" by federal law, Morris said.

Morris said in the council's affirmative vote, it sends a message that the agency is just as interested in funding technology that provides access to services, as it is in funding traditional roads and bridges.

Expanding the Smart City Cash Pool?

If other metropolitan planning organizations follow suit, it could mean a boon to funding smart city projects, which sometimes languish due to budgetary constraints.

Revenue from the federal excise tax on gasoline and diesel fuel generates **\$36 billion** annually—most of which funds traditional roads, bridges, etc., according to the Tax Policy Center.

A Dallas Innovates analysis of a Federal Transit Authority **database** indicates the North Central Texas Council of Governments is the fifth-largest metropolitan planning organization in the United States, by population.

The agency has projected funding \$245 billion in transportation/accessibility projects in Dallas-Fort Worth between 2018 and 2045.

Yet even as far back as **2018**, the agency was considering broadband internet as a solution to help bridge an 87% highway funding shortfall. (The agency has cited increasing construction costs, improving fuel efficiency, and urban sprawl as contributing factors to the shortfall.)

Replacing highway traffic with web traffic makes sense to leaders at the Regional Transportation Council and COG.

Fossil Fuel Funds Boost Smart City Advances

DFW emerging technology advocate [Victor Fishman](#), executive director of the [Texas Research Alliance](#) (TRA) and the North Texas Center for Mobility Technologies, said the March 10 vote could signify a substantial increase of funding for innovations that allow users to bypass traditional road use to get the services they need. The TRA is sponsored by the Dallas Regional Chamber.

Fishman backed one of the projects that was funded by the Regional Transportation Council: \$5 million toward a pilot project of autonomous vehicles for Dallas County and portions of McKinney without broadband access.

Those autonomous vehicles could bring web connectivity and hardware to link residents to educators, and experts in health care, and nutrition (among other subject areas). One potential application could be accompanying the delivery of healthy foods with a consultation with a nutritionist. Aside from providing telemedicine visits, the vehicle could also shuttle patients in need of immediate care to health care providers, if necessary.

“Think about the revenue generated by gasoline taxes, and the billions of dollars being considered for new infrastructure projects,” Fishman said. “Even a small portion of these funds can have an outsized impact on fueling the development of technologies that reduce the need for, cost and maintenance of, and safety issues associated with our traditional approach for moving people to tasks and activities.”

Precursor to Greater Virtual Immersion

Meanwhile, DFW mobility innovation advocate [Tom Bamonte](#) likens the potential of virtual services to air travel in the early 20th century.

“Roughly a century ago, as technology developed (e.g., the Wright Flyer), a new transportation mode emerged in the space above us — aviation,” writes Bamonte, program manager of automated vehicles at the North Central Texas Council of Governments. “We are seeing a similar process today: Today’s collaboration technology like Zoom/Teams allows us to ‘travel’ virtually to some of our life activities, just like other transportation modes connect us to those activities through movement on land or in the air.”

Bamonte said virtual meeting software such as Teams or Zoom will likely serve as a precursor to more effective interactive platforms, such as Facebook’s Metaverse, or Microsoft Mesh.

“Plus, growing adoption of 5G will allow more life activities to be conducted virtually in a satisfactory fashion, just as today’s aviation sector scaled up in a few decades after the Wright Flyer,” Bamonte writes.

Dallas Morning News

Seeing more Teslas on Texas roads? Electric vehicle adoption isn't as widespread as you'd think

Polls show Texans are enthusiastic about EV ownership, but registration data tells a different story -- for now.

By Dom DiFurio

Texans are coming around to the idea of an electric future on state roadways, and adoption has been growing in some of the most populated counties over the last decade.

State data, however, suggests Texans have a long way to go before reaching ownership levels that could help meaningfully reduce roadway emissions — a major contributor to air pollution and climate change, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The data — pulled together by the [Dallas Fort-Worth Clean Cities Coalition](#), a U.S. Dept. of Energy program, and the [North Central Texas Council of Governments](#) — provides an up-to-date pulse of EV ownership trends in Texas. The data includes not only electric battery vehicles registered in the state, but also plug-in hybrid, and other electrified hybrid vehicles. Here's how the picture looks broadly across the Lone Star State.

Which region of Texas has the most electric vehicles?

The D-FW region leads the way in total number of registered EVs, [with 43,836 as of April](#). D-FW residents account for more than one-third of Texas EV owners, according to Texas Department of Motor Vehicles data from April. That figure includes Dallas, Collin, Tarrant, Rockwall, Ellis, Parker, Johnson and Kaufman Counties.

EVs in the Houston and Austin region each account for around 20% of EV ownership in the state. And the San Antonio region is home to nearly 9% of registered EVs in Texas. All other parts of Texas collectively make up about 10%.

How many electric vehicles are there in Texas, in total?

There were 120,000 electric vehicles registered to drive on Texas roadways in April.

How do the number of EVs on Texas roads compare to combustion engine vehicles?

EVs represent just 3.12% of all registered vehicles in Texas.

Which Texas county has the most electric vehicles?

Travis County, home to Austin, leads the way with 17,828 electric vehicles registered as of April 2022, according to DMV data. Nearly on par with Travis County is Harris County, which has 17,148 registered EVs. Dallas County is home to 13,208, Collin County 10,872 and Tarrant County has 8,759.

What do Texans think of transitioning to electric vehicles?

From [Rivian's R1S](#) to the [Ford F-150 Lightning](#), [Cadillac's Lyriq](#), and even the forthcoming [Toyota Bz4X](#), there's no doubt electric vehicles are being embraced by automotive manufacturers this year.

But are Texans on board? Studies suggest a majority of the state's residents are fairly enthusiastic.

Fifty-two percent of Texans have a positive opinion of EVs, according to a November [poll](#) from Climate Nexus Polling and Yale and George Mason universities. And of those who said they'd be buying a new vehicle in the next four years, 44% of Texans said they're likely to buy an EV.

What is the most common electric vehicle on Texas roads?

The most common vehicle registered in Texas is the Tesla Model 3. So if you feel you're seeing a lot of them today, it's because you are ... at least in relation to other EVs.

Behind the Tesla Model 3 is the Tesla Model Y, S and X, making Tesla the most popular automaker among Texas EV owners. After Tesla, the Chevrolet Volt and Nissan Leaf are the next-most common.

The number of Teslas on Texas roads in comparison with others is likely a result of the company's early foothold in the EV market. It's also a testament to its incredibly strong brand.

It's not a simple process purchasing a Tesla in Texas. The company has been [lobbying the state legislature](#) for some time to open up laws that prevent manufacturers from selling directly to consumers. Texas law upholds the dealership model of auto sales — dealers are the authorized vehicle sellers, and manufacturers can't sell to you directly.

The dealership lobby argues this creates more competition and helps keep costs down for the consumer. Tesla would prefer full control of its business model, from sale to maintenance. The result is consumers fill out paperwork online or in one of the company's small galleries and the vehicle is delivered to their home from another state.

The unfavorable sales laws haven't stopped Tesla founder Elon Musk from betting even bigger on Texas. The mega-billionaire [moved Tesla's headquarters](#) to Austin last year, and just threw a massive [initiation-only celebration](#) to commemorate the opening of a new \$1.1 billion auto assembly plant near Austin where the Cybertruck will be built.

How many EV charging stations are there in Texas?

Experts have dubbed consumers' reluctance to purchase an EV due to lack of charging stations "Range Anxiety." To deal with this, advocates are pushing for [federal funding](#) to support development of more fast-charging stations around Texas over the next several years.

Texas has more than 2,000 charging stations across the state, many of which can charge multiple vehicles at once, according to the Texas Department of Transportation. TxDOT's plan for how it will spend \$407.8 million over five years on EV infrastructure is [due by Aug. 1](#).

The state [needs more than 14,000](#) charging stations to support the number of electric vehicles projected to be on roads by 2030, according to a 2018 [report](#) from environmental research nonprofit Environment Texas.

In D-FW, there are more than 1,500 charging stations, more than any other major Texas metro, according to [PlugShare](#). The Houston and Austin metro areas each have around 1,000 charging stations. San Antonio has nearly 400.

Dallas Morning News

Collin County needs to upgrade U.S. Highway 380 to a bypass, whether neighbors like it or not

The region's fastest growing area cannot afford to allow NIMBY scuttle critical infrastructure.

By Ron Simmons

During my first session as a state representative in 2013, my chief of staff came into my office and said that one of the bills I had filed was getting pushback from some residents, using the NIMBY defense. I had no idea what he was talking about.

He explained to me that NIMBY, an acronym for "not in my backyard," came into play when someone supported an idea in general but just not close to them.

This stance is never embraced more often by Texans (and all Americans) than when expansion of our infrastructure system is in play. And in Collin County, the region's fastest growing area, the NIMBY crowd is loud and organized when it comes to the routing of a much-needed bypass for U.S. Highway 380.

While serving on the House Transportation Committee from 2014 to 2018, I spent hours and hours learning about this highway that divides Frisco and McKinney from Prosper and Melissa and which has become a key component of the North Texas economy and quality of life.

Probably the No. 1 thing I learned in this process was that we all want to have proper, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and we want it yesterday, but not in any way that would inconvenience us.

There is no better example of this than the arguments going on in Collin County right now.

The northern part of Collin County is growing exponentially, and as is always the case with Texas residential and commercial development, this growth precedes the proper infrastructure development to handle the growth. The movie is the same every time: People want to move away from the congested city into more tranquil suburbs or exurbs. Developers quickly build the neighborhoods but rarely (because they are not required to do so) develop the infrastructure that connects their shiny new development to the rest of the area. Therefore, the road system (and other infrastructure) is quickly overwhelmed, and the quality of life decreases over time.

If you have driven U.S. 380 at any point between McKinney and Denton, you know what a disaster it is to navigate. Sure, it is four to six lanes wide, but with red lights every couple of miles at major crossroads, it is a stressful journey, no matter the time of day.

This problem was caused by the resistance of residents and local leaders to acknowledge what was obvious even in the past decades, that 380 needs to be a limited-access road between Denton and McKinney.

But the Texas Department of Transportation heeded the local concerns and basically said, "OK, if that is what you want — basically a wide city street for 30 miles — then that is what we will build you." What a huge mistake, one that will ultimately hurt that area as opposed to help it.

Now we have the fight between Prosper and McKinney over where a very important (and traffic-relieving) bypass should be routed. Personally, I don't know what the answer should be, but I

know how it ought to be decided. Which route is the best long-term infrastructure decision for the area? Whichever option best answers that question is the one that should be selected.

TxDOT knows the answer to this, and I urge its leaders to make the tough call and select the best option. I encourage the elected leaders in Prosper and McKinney, as well as concerned residents, to make their cases, but to also remain open to compromise to get what's best for the entire area and avoid the NIMBY mantra.

We know what a NIMBY approach will bring; we're living with it now.

Dallas Morning News

Plano-based Frito-Lay teases new electric delivery truck fleet serving North Texas

The electric trucks are part of an initiative to achieve net zero emissions in 20 years.

By Dom DiFurio

Frito-Lay seized on the upcoming Earth Day anniversary to debut its new investment in Ford's eTransit truck — electric vehicles that will soon begin making deliveries in North Texas.

Specifically intended for use in Carrollton, the company bought 40 of Ford's all-electric transit vehicles and expects to receive them later this year, Frito-Lay said.

The company expects the trucks to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions from logistics operations by about 390 metric tons every year. Besides the electric truck pilot in Carrollton, the company said it is using renewable compressed natural gas in its fleet.

It's also working on compostable packaging. It's in the process of developing recyclable paper bottles and [piloted its compostable chip bags at Coachella](#) this week.

"Frito-Lay recognizes our opportunity to utilize our size and scale to advance technology throughout our supply chain while reducing environmental impacts as we move our products more sustainably with a goal to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040," PepsiCo Foods North America vice president of sustainability David Allen said.

Frito-Lay, a subsidiary of PepsiCo, is headquartered in Plano and employs around 6,500 workers in Dallas-Fort Worth. The company operates 30 manufacturing sites in the U.S. and Canada as well as more than 200 distribution centers.

KERA News

Trinity Metro creates first sustainability plan to reduce pollution

By Haley Samsel

A handful of Trinity Metro staff have always known about the transit agency's actions to reduce air pollution and energy use, said Chad Edwards, the agency's vice president of planning and development.

Six [electric Dash buses](#) carry passengers through downtown and the Cultural District. Over the past decade, the agency's fleet of buses were converted from a diesel fuel system to compressed natural gas in an effort to reduce fossil fuel emissions.

But those initiatives were never compiled into a formal action plan with timelines for completion that could be viewed by employees and the general public, Edwards said.

Now, thanks to the agency's participation in the Federal Transit Administration's inaugural "[Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge](#)," staff have drafted their first-ever [sustainability plan](#).

"We already do a lot of these things – it just hasn't been documented very well," Edwards said. "We already have electric buses and the plan is to purchase more of those. It just wasn't put on paper, necessarily, that we were going to do this in a certain timeframe."

Trinity Metro is one of [more than 170 organizations](#) participating in the challenge nationwide. The goal is to push public transportation agencies to further reduce [greenhouse gas emissions](#), which trap heat and contribute to global warming. Transportation accounts for 29% of total greenhouse gas emissions each year, according to the [latest Environmental Protection Agency data](#).

The [North Central Texas Council of Governments](#), a voluntary association of governments that work on regional planning issues, encouraged local transit agencies to get involved with the challenge. Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Denton County Transportation Authority, east Dallas' STAR Transit and the council of governments are also participating.

Organizations had a slate of three options: submitting their existing climate action plans, explaining their strategy for developing one or creating an entirely new plan for the challenge, Edwards said.

"It gives us a better sense of how we move forward in the future, and it's still in its early stages," Edwards said. "There's some internal review that has to be done, but we hope to take it to the board (of directors)."

Lori Clark, an air quality program manager for the council of governments, offered support to agencies regarding the different strategies they could use to transition their fleets to cleaner fuel sources, whether through pursuing federal grant funding to purchase electric buses or improving energy efficiency at their facilities.

Clark also leads the [Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities](#) program, which the U.S. Department of Energy established in 1995 to help local governments reduce fossil fuel consumption.

“Our fleets were very early adopters in making that switch to natural gas and getting into cleaner fuels,” Clark said. “Now they’re going to be early adopters to making that additional switch from natural gas to even cleaner electricity. It’s got the same benefits in terms of reducing ozone-forming pollutants, with the extra benefit of being even more impactful in terms of greenhouse gasses.”

Under the Biden administration, federal funding to transition bus fleets to electric vehicles has increased ten-fold, Clark said. The two central sources are the [Low or No Emission Vehicle Program](#) and the [Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program](#), both overseen by the Federal Transit Administration.

“That’s where a lot of our transit agencies, not only here but around the country, have been able to get funding to help acquire their very first electric buses because they are so much more expensive,” Clark said. “I’m sure that there’s plans to send in more electric bus applications.”

Summary Table of Sustainability Plan Targets

Category	By 2025	By 2030	By 2035
Fleet Emissions	10 EV charging stations installed	25% of nonrevenue fleet converted to hybrid or electric	30% of nonrevenue fleet converted to hybrid or electric
Facility Energy Usage	Convert all facilities to LED lighting	Modernize HVAC systems at HRP complex	Derive 25% of facility electricity from roof-mounted solar panels
Water Usage	Initiate an agency-wide water conservation program	Reduce metered water usage by 30% by 2030	Convert 100% of landscaping to xeriscaping
Waste Reduction	Initiate an agency-wide recycling program	Transition 50% of customers to paperless fare media	Divert 75% of office waste to recycling
Hazard Resiliency	Craft an emergency response plan and a flood risk assessment for Trinity Metro assets	Retrofit 50% of flood-prone transit stops to improve resistance to flood events	Derive 25% of facility electricity from roof-mounted solar panels (same as above)

Trinity Metro’s draft sustainability plan names goals for 2025, 2030 and 2035.

Trinity Metro’s draft sustainability plan, submitted prior to the April 15 deadline, focuses on five key areas: emissions from its vehicle fleet, facility energy usage, water usage, waste reduction and preparation for floods and natural disasters.

By 2025, Trinity Metro plans to install 10 electric vehicle charging stations, initiate agencywide conservation and recycling programs, and create an emergency response plan and flood risk assessment for their fleet, among other goals. Long-term plans include converting 30% of staff vehicles – the “non-revenue fleet” of vehicles – to hybrid or electric by 2035.

Challenges to converting all Trinity Metro buses to electric include the capacity of the local electric grid to recharge buses, Edwards said. Another concern is how long the buses can run without being charged.

“What is the infrastructure there on the electric grid that can provide that charging capability?” Edwards said. “What do we do with the buses – do we bring them back to the garage to charge or is there an opportunity around to charge them? How often do they have to recharge? These are all considerations that we have when we’re thinking about this.”

For now, Edwards is happy to highlight the actions Trinity Metro is already taking to reduce air pollution in Tarrant County. At [a virtual event](#) for Earth Day on April 22, 10 transit agencies from across the country will be celebrated for their “exemplary efforts” to address emissions.

“We’ve had a hard time patting ourselves on the back for all the good things we’re doing,” Edwards said. “We’ve already renovated [a facility on Grove Street](#) downtown and taken on a 110 year-old building remodel inside with water-saving measures. We are really trying to get LED lights in the whole office. We’re always looking at opportunities to improve our footprint.”

Dallas Morning News

New I-35 deck park in Dallas' Oak Cliff gets \$10.5M in private money

Southern Gateway Park is currently being built over the highway near the Dallas Zoo in southern Dallas.

By Everton Bailey, Jr.

A [new, 5-acre southern Dallas deck park being built over Interstate 35E](#) has most of the money needed to pay for half the project, the nonprofit group overseeing the plan announced Tuesday.

The latest round of private donations, announced during a news conference at Dallas City Hall, pushes funding for the first half of the project to around 75%, said April Allen, president and COO of the Southern Gateway Public Green Foundation. The first part is expected to cost around \$82 million.

Allen described the project as “a park with a purpose” that would spark more growth and economic opportunity for southern Dallas and serve as a bridge to reconnect parts of Oak Cliff that were divided when the highway was built in the 1950s.

The donations include \$10.5 million from the Rees-Jones Foundation, Communities Foundation of Texas, the Eugene McDermott Foundation and the Rainwater Charitable Foundation.

“We all know that the historic underinvestment in southern Dallas has stymied its residents’ growth and success,” Allen said. “By drawing eyes, dollars and feet to this area, we believe that the Southern Gateway Park will be the first step to reversing this neglect.”

Southern Gateway Park is currently being built over the highway near the Dallas Zoo between Ewing and Marsalis Avenues and has a planned opening of late 2023 or early 2024.

About half the park will be built from Ewing Avenue to Lancaster Avenue during the first phase. It’s expected to cost \$90 million for the second half that would continue along the highway toward Marsalis Avenue. It’s unclear when that portion would open.

The concept of the greenspace is modeled after Klyde Warren Park in Uptown, which is built over the top of Woodall Rodgers Freeway.

When I-35 was built, [it cut through the Tenth Street Historic District in Oak Cliff](#) and led to the demolition of dozens of homes and businesses. Tenth Street, one of the city’s oldest neighborhoods, was founded by former slaves after the Civil War, and it is one of the few intact freedmen’s towns in the country.

But today it’s one of the poorest areas in the city. In 2018, the area’s median household income was \$25,385 a year, less than half the Dallas County median, according to Census Bureau data.

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A rendering of the proposed Southern Gateway Park.(Southern Gateway Public Green Foundation)

Allen said after the news conference that her foundation is looking into ways to help keep longtime residents from getting priced out of their homes in the area, including helping advocate for statewide policy changes that could minimize property tax increases. She also said the foundation hopes to help raise the majority of the remaining \$20 million through private donations.

Of the \$172 million for the overall project, funding sources so far include Dallas contributing \$7 million through 2017 bond money; \$40 million expected to come from the North Central Texas Council of Governments; and at least \$35 million in private money raised by the Southern Gateway Public Green Foundation.

Mayor Eric Johnson, who was among several city dignitaries at the news conference, said he is among generations of Dallas residents who have grown up in the city knowing I-35 as a barrier as well as a transportation and trade corridor. He dismissed the notion that the park would be a carbon copy of Klyde Warren Park because of its connection to neighborhoods.

“Southern Gateway Park should be viewed as what it is,” he said, “which is a game-changing investment in the people and the families of southern Dallas.”

Fox 4 DFW

Dallas City Council considers changing parking requirements for apartment developments

By Lori Brown

City staff says the need for affordable housing in Dallas has reached a crisis level. But the city says its current plan offering incentives to developers isn't working.

Dallas City Council members are considering a new proposal that would allow developers to build more dense apartment complexes with fewer parking spaces in exchange for creating on or off-site affordable housing.

City of Dallas staff told council members that the city is in a housing crisis with apartments ranging from affordable to luxury at a 98% occupancy rate.

But city council members are concerned about cuts to parking requirements and fees that may be too high for developers as tools to solve the housing crisis.

A Dallas ISD middle school teacher used a break between classes to tell council members he sees the need for affordable housing firsthand. He urged them to change rules that require a certain amount of parking space for apartment developments.

The city's plan would allow developers to build taller apartment complexes with fewer parking spaces.

In exchange, the developers would need to either build affordable units or pay into a city fund that would subsidize them throughout the city.

Another resident told council members that going up is the wrong direction.

"We don't need dense or multifamily homes," they said. "We need single family residential." Councilwoman Cara Mendelsohn agreed.

"Having 60% multifamily homes in my district, it becomes unhealthy," she said.

But city staff said apartment complexes are the primary way to solve the housing problem.

"We cannot build our way out of our housing need in a single family 1 per 5,000 lot houses," said Pam Thompson, housing strategy manager.

Dallas has less than one month's supply of apartments. By contrast, a six-month supply is considered healthy.

"I have never seen our market so full," Thompson said.

The city currently requires five parking spaces for every four apartment units. City staff is recommending a dramatic cutdown to one parking space for every two apartment units.

Mendelsohn said that doesn't apply to Far North Dallas.

"We are not a walkable, one-size-fits-all city," she said.

"The fact we don't have a walkable city shows us we do have a problem," said Dr. Andreea Udrea, assistant director of planning and development. "Because when you have the expectation that you will have a free parking spot, of course, the market doesn't give you an opportunity to use transit."

Councilman Chad West had concerns about how the fund developers pay into will be managed.

"Here is my fear: we have a department that is not being efficiently run," he said.

Despite all the concerns raised, the city council is expected to vote on the plan as soon as May 11.

<https://www.fox4news.com/news/dallas-city-council-considers-changing-parking-requirements-for-apartment-developments>

Tyler Paper

TxDOT initiatives aim to improve safety, reduce traffic fatalities statewide

By Maleri McHam

Transportation officials say they are making an effort to improve safety across the state.

The Texas Department of Transportation held a meeting with the Texas Transportation Commission in Austin on Tuesday to share what they have been doing to educate drivers and improve road safety.

TxDOT and representatives of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Safety Task Force spoke about how they have been working together to decrease traffic fatalities in Texas and future plans.

"I think what we're seeing today is safety is everyone's issue," said Michael Morris, director of transportation for North Central Council of Governments.

In 2021, a driver or passenger was not wearing a seatbelt in 46% of fatalities in the state, according to Lance Simmons, TxDOT director of engineering and safety operations.

"I've timed myself; it takes maybe less than four seconds to put a seatbelt on, but that could be the most important four seconds of your day," Simmons said.

The second-highest statewide statistic was 37% of fatalities caused by someone driving under the influence, he said. Other traffic-related fatalities were pedestrian fatalities at 18%, bicycle fatalities at 2%, motorcycle fatalities at 12% and [work zone-related fatalities](#) at 5%.

Officials are working to increase awareness in each of these areas with reduced speed limits, campaigns, press visits, educational series, advertising and more, Simmons said.

Engineering projects are also being used to decrease traffic fatalities in Texas.

"We have implemented numerous engineering countermeasures to increase safety on our roadways," said Michael Chacon, TxDOT director of traffic safety.

Some areas of focus include safer roadway lane departures, widening roads, measures for pedestrian and bicycle safety, rumble strips, median barriers, adding turn lanes, more signalizations, enhancing crosswalks and more.

A big area of focus since 2011 is wrong-way driver initiatives, Chacon said. The focus grew after a police officer in San Antonio was killed by someone driving the wrong way and the issue has since found its way to other large Texas metroplexes, he said.

Some recommendations in place for wrong-way drivers are reflective tape on sign posts, lit-up wrong way arrows, oversized wrong way signs on ramps, lowered signs, LED lights on sign borders and dynamic message signs to warn drivers.

There are also safety countermeasures that have already been put in place that come from the Federal Highway Administration, Chacon said. These include but are not limited to crosswalk pavement markings, limited speeds in work zones, becoming a stop for pedestrians and chevron pavement markings.

Other than putting engineering countermeasures in place, annual district safety plans have also been completed the last two years, Chacon said. A big focus area for these is pointing out what each district is seeing in their areas based on crash data and areas of concern and focus.

Each district can request a list of projects for TxDOT to fund, Chacon said. This is a part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program that is meant to address fatalities and serious injuries.

TxDOT gives districts money based on the data provided with a target of a 2% decrease in fatalities and serious injuries, Chacon said.

Some of the other things being done outside of engineering include dashboards that show 10 years of data in emphasis areas; dashboard cameras to allow TxDOT to warn people of what is ahead on the road; a new Strategic Highway Safety Plan; and a project safety scoring tool that allows designers to go in and see how engineering changes would impact safety.

As the MPO Safety Task Force engages in this statewide effort, Morris said it is important to remember each district is different and there cannot be a "one size fits all." Each MPO should have the opportunity to develop both short-term and long-term focuses to solve the issues in their area, he said.

Dallas Morning News

U.S. Highway 380 expansion project pits ‘neighbor against neighbor’ in Collin County

Two proposed options for the expansion project — segments A and B — have been a point of strong contention for residents in McKinney and Prosper.

By Hojun Choi

On most Fridays, a group of Tucker Hill residents can be found at Petra, a Tex-Mex spot in McKinney where they put a few tables together, grab a drink and catch up with one another while munching on chips and queso.

Lately, a hot topic for the group of regulars has been the proposed plans by the Texas Department of Transportation to expand U.S. Highway 380, which was highlighted as a priority by the state agency, Collin County and the North Central Texas Council of Governments to support growth.

“It was somewhat of an issue before, but now it has become more of an issue as we’re getting closer to the decision as to which plan, they’re going to use, so that’s why the conversation has been more vocal lately,” said Jim Cruse, who lives in Tucker Hill, an HOA-managed neighborhood that, according to its website, has one of the largest, privately-owned fountains in the country.

While there are five options being considered as part of TxDOT’s environmental impact study to improve traffic on U.S. 380 in Collin County, two segments — A and B — have pitted many residents in Prosper and in McKinney against each other.

That’s because the expansion project means the difference between building the bypass either in Prosper or McKinney.

Although residents in the area agree that U.S. 380 needs to be improved, those who live in McKinney’s Tucker Hill and Stonebridge Ranch neighborhoods say they would be negatively impacted by segment A. Meanwhile, segment B has received strong pushback from Prosper residents.

The expansion of U.S. 380 through segment A would displace two homes and 17 businesses in McKinney, impacting residents whose homes are close to the highway in Tucker Hill and Stonebridge Ranch. Segment B would displace five homes and no businesses in Prosper but would cut through multiple residential developments that are either planned or under construction.

Officials in McKinney and Prosper have each mounted public relations campaigns to fight against the less-desired options, and residents in both areas have organized rallies and neighborhood meetings to do the same.

Since it started its feasibility study for the project in 2017, the Texas Department of Transportation has received more than 18,000 comments — “one of the largest number of comments for any public involvement project in the Dallas district,” according to the state highway authority. That figure does not include the number of responses TxDOT has received for the environmental impact study.

Thursday is the [last day for people to weigh in](#) on TxDOT's environmental impact study. TxDOT spokeswoman Madison Schein has said the agency is expected to make a decision on the preferred route in early 2023, when residents will again be able to submit public comments.

'Years of stress'

Both options propose expanding U.S. 380 from its current six lanes into eight with two service roads on each side, according to [the state highway authority](#).

In addition to widening the portion of the highway that is north of the Stonebridge Ranch and south of Tucker Hill neighborhoods in McKinney, the option would also require TxDOT to build a new bypass on the east side of Tucker Hill — between North Custer Road and North Lake Forest Drive. Stonebridge Academy, a preschool, the Applebee Montessori Academy and Two McKinney ISD elementary schools in — Wilmeth and McClure — are also located near U.S. 380.

Segment A would require 5.5 miles of construction east of North Custer Road and is estimated to cost \$98.8 million more than segment B.

About half of the 17 businesses that would be displaced with segment A would be within Prosper, and the rest are in McKinney, its neighbor to the southeast.

In addition to widening the portion of the highway that is north of the Stonebridge Ranch and south of Tucker Hill neighborhoods in McKinney, the option would also require TxDOT to build a new bypass on the east side of Tucker Hill — between North Custer Road and North Lake Forest Drive. Stonebridge Academy, a preschool, and the Applebee Montessori Academy are also located near U.S. 380.

Kim Carmichael, who has lived in Tucker Hill for seven years, said she has been organizing the neighborhood's residents against segment A. Over the years she has filled a file cabinet full of documents related to the matter. Although she is appreciative of TxDOT's efforts to meet with residents, Carmichael said she thinks the state agency has taken too long to decide a preferred route.

"It has been years of stress," she said. "I wish [TxDOT] would have made a decision a long time ago."

She and other Tucker Hill residents are against option A because of multiple factors, she said, including safety concerns related to construction, noise and pollution. She also said that route would affect the ability to enter and exit the neighborhood, which raises concerns about access for emergency response vehicles.

In a written statement, Schein, of TxDOT, said "options to streamline access and align connecting streets in the Tucker Hill area were explored in the feasibility study phase," and added that TxDOT is continuing its analysis, which will include studying potential routes in and out of the neighborhood.

Much of the debate has remained civil, but some of the rhetoric has been personal.

In one screen capture of a Facebook comment that was shared with *The Dallas Morning News*, a user suggested that students from Tucker Hill, which is zoned in Prosper ISD, be

barred from going to those district's schools because of the neighborhood's support for segment B.

Joan Stuckmann, a resident of Stonebridge Ranch, which is south of the proposed segment A, has also been trying to inform people in her neighborhood about the potential negative impacts of the proposed route.

She lamented how the project has seemingly pitted residents in McKinney and Prosper against each other. Stuckmann said she avoids the topic when speaking to friends who are Prosper residents to preserve that relationship.

"It's terrible, you know?" she said. "We've been through so much these last few years, and I was feeling really good that we were starting to get back to normal a little bit."

'A mess'

Segment B would snake west of North Custer Road and require 4.5 miles of construction, according to TxDOT projections. It would cut through a residential development called Ladera Prosper, which is currently under construction and designed as a neighborhood for people who are 55 years or older.

John Delin, the owner of Roanoke, Texas-based Integrity Group that is heading the Prosper project, said the first homes for the neighborhood are expected to be built later this year. He said the company would look for ways to fight this plan legally if TxDOT moves forward with the option.

"Which ... is not something we want to do; that's not our forte," he said. "We prefer to build our community out. It's highly needed."

Owners of ManeGait, an equine therapy center, have [said that they would move](#) if TxDOT chooses segment B, despite TxDOT's position that the new bypass would "not significantly impact" the organization's sprawling property off North Custer Road. The highway authority is currently reaching out to study impacts to other equine therapy services that are close to major roadways.

Prosper ISD has said that it opposes the option because of a new high school currently being built on County Road. According to the most recent reports from the school district, the high school is about 42% complete. Segment B would be about 1,600 feet away from the school's property line, according to current TxDOT projections.

The segment has also received pushback because it would require that a new road be built close to Founders Classical Academy in Prosper, a charter school at the intersection of North Custer and County roads.

Dawn Ventre, who lives on the border of Prosper and McKinney, said her daughter is currently in kindergarten at the academy and is expecting to send her son to the school in two years. She said she strongly opposes option B because of the health issues that a major roadway could have on students, but also because of literature she has read regarding its impacts on student performance.

Ventre said she thinks TxDOT should have done a better job of planning for growth, adding that the agency's indecisiveness has "created a mess."

“The state has pinned neighbor against neighbor, neighborhood against neighborhood,” she said. “And now they’re trying to pin this highway onto students; that’s not right.”

Chris and Kathryn Keating have lived in Prosper for about six years in a neighborhood called Whitley Place, which is located near where a new bypass would be built under segment B. The couple attended a town rally last week to voice their opposition.

“It would definitely affect the quality of life we expected when we moved out to the area,” Chris Keating said.

Keating, who has friends who live in McKinney, said he thinks the two options have sowed a lot of misunderstanding around Prosper residents’ opposition to segment B.

“Obviously people in McKinney don’t want a highway in their backyard just like we don’t either,” he said.

As for inflammatory comments on social media, such as the one threatening a petition to prevent children in McKinney from attending Prosper ISD schools, the couple said they are “ridiculous” and “out of line.”

“I think that’s the state of our nation right now,” Kathryn Keating said. “Anybody is going to be a keyboard warrior and spew out nonsense, and that’s what that is.”

Fort Worth Report

As Panther Island project ramps up, close relationship between water district and engineering firm draws scrutiny

Officials say political contributions, familial ties to firm do not influence decisions on big contracts

By Rachel Behrndt and Emily Wolf

The engineering firm Freese and Nichols recently paid the city of Fort Worth \$1.5 million for claims related to [three Panther Island bridges](#) that are no stranger to news coverage. The payout is related to multiple amendments the firm made during the bridges' design process, raising the total cost of the project.

The project has been criticized for mismanagement and cost overruns that have plagued the bridges since design began. The money won by Fort Worth didn't stay in the city's coffers for long. In the same council session, council members immediately agreed to pour that money back into the bridges' construction budgets. [Tarrant Regional Water District](#) will contribute an additional \$3.5 million to the [North Central Texas Council of Governments](#) over 10 years to pay Freese and Nichols for cost overruns related to the project.

While the city doesn't plan to exclude Freese and Nichols from future contracts, the bridge saga has muddied the waters on the benefits of the relationship, according to District 9 council member [Elizabeth Beck](#).

"In work session, we talked about choosing the best value in our bidding process," [Beck](#), whose district includes all three bridges, said. "And so certainly when you're talking about choosing the best value, previous experience would absolutely come into play."

[Brian Coltharp](#), CEO of Freese and Nichols, described some cost overruns as normal parts of construction that designers can't always anticipate.

"When things come up on that project or any project, we all come to the table and talk through those things. That's exactly what happened," Coltharp said. "Those changes are within the reasonable realm of what we see as an industry."

The bridges are one of the best examples of cozy relationships between government officials and Freese and Nichols employees that may have led to a less competitive environment for contract bids for the Panther Island work, said Lon Burnam, a former state representative and a leader of the [Water District Accountability Project](#).

Critics have also pointed to close familial and professional ties between employees at Tarrant Regional Water District and Freese and Nichols as evidence of potentially unfair contracting practices.

The million-dollar paychecks to Freese and Nichols are a drop in the Trinity River compared with the long history of taxpayer dollars paid out to the engineering firm since their inception in the region over a century ago, according to contracts obtained by the Report.

The Freese and Nichols political action committee, separate from the funding behind the engineering firm itself, contributes money to Tarrant Regional Water District board members.

“One of the purposes of the accountability project is to hold these sweetheart relationships accountable,” Burnam said.

The at-times symbiotic relationship between local government entities and Freese and Nichols extends into personnel matters. Tarrant Regional Water District employees have reported a bevy of personal relationships with Freese and Nichols associates, far surpassing conflicts of interest reported by other contractors.

Across the country, engineering firms like Freese and Nichols receive about 80% of their business from government agencies, said [K.N. Gunalan](#), a former president of the [American Society of Engineers](#).

Freese and Nichols has secured over \$19.5 million from TRWD since 2017

As an engineering firm specializing in infrastructure, especially in the areas of water management and environmental engineering, Freese and Nichols helped establish the White Rock Lake and Lake Worth Reservoirs. Since then, the firm has expanded to over 28 offices nationwide.

Since 2010, the firm has received over \$19.5 million in contracts from the water district. The water district has awarded over \$115.7 million in contracts since 2017, according to the Tarrant Regional Water District’s website. Freese and Nichols have received \$2.6 million in contracts from the district during the same time, accounting for around 2% of the agency’s total contract spending.

Tarrant Regional Water District does not have a go-to engineering firm, said [Sandy Newby](#), the district’s chief financial officer.

“We just send out requests for proposals and whoever sends back the best response based on what project we’re trying to do gets the work,” Newby said.

But Burnam said Freese, and Nichols and Tarrant Regional Water District have had a cozy relationship for years.

“They are a reputable firm, but the relationships between public sector organizations and Freese and Nichols are way too cozy, and there isn’t any oversight,” he said.

The bulk of Freese and Nichols’ income from the water district stems from the organization’s pipeline projects. Tarrant Regional Water District owns four major water sources: Lake Bridgeport, Cedar Creek Reservoir, Eagle Mountain Lake and Richland-Chambers Reservoir. About 250 miles of corresponding pipelines move water from those lakes into Tarrant County.

Freese and Nichols was tapped as the project manager for the district’s signature [Integrated Pipeline Project](#) in January 2010. Since then, the integrated pipeline project alone has netted the company \$8.2 million. Freese and Nichols is not the biggest firm on the project, Newby said; two other engineering firms received the bulk of contracted funds for the pipeline.

The project will deliver water from Cedar Creek and Richland-Chambers in East Texas to Tarrant Regional Water District and Dallas Water Utilities. The two agencies share the cost of the billion dollar project.

“We’ve been honored to serve multiple roles on the integrated pipeline project as one of dozens of companies involved in this complex project, which has involved multiple phases spanning several decades,” Freese and Nichols communication coordinator Linda Campbell said.

Families split between water district, Freese and Nichols

The company’s ties with the water district don’t stop at frequent contracts. Multiple water district employees have reported familial relationships with Freese and Nichols employees in conflict of interest disclosure forms.

The number of connections between water district employees and Freese and Nichols employees isn’t necessarily problematic, [Gunalan](#) said, as long as those relationships are properly disclosed.

Members of the public can view conflict of interest disclosures on the water district’s website.

The bulk of the disclosure forms are related to relationships between Freese and Nichols and water district employees.

Mark Jalbert, who works as a senior designer for Freese and Nichols, is married to the water district’s human resources liaison Nina Jalbert. He is also the father-in-law of Courtney Jalbert, an infrastructure integrity manager with the water district.

The district’s human resource manager, Shelby Lyon, is married to Freese and Nichols employee Mark Lyon.

Rachel Ickert, water resources engineering director at the water district, reported Freese and Nichols engineer Mark Ickert as her brother-in-law. Mark Ickert is listed twice as key personnel in two contracts since 2010.

“We build teams based on qualifications and experience, so if Mark was the most qualified, then he would’ve been on the team,” Coltharp, the firm’s CEO, said.

Rachel Ickert previously worked at Freese and Nichols for over a decade. She departed the company in February 2014, and immediately began to work for the water district that same month, according to her [LinkedIn profile](#).

Conflict of interest forms show there were also two other relationships between water district staff and Freese and Nichols employees reported in 2017. One of those staff members, Rachel Crawley, is still employed by the district, and reported that a former spouse worked at Freese and Nichols in 2020.

Engineering firms often have robust processes for weeding out potential conflicts of interest, Gunalan said.

“The American Society of Civil Engineers has a code of ethics that we follow, and every conflict of interest needs to be fully disclosed, absolutely,” Gunalan said. “And you need to sequester yourself from any of those types of evaluations.”

It is common for employees of governmental organizations and engineering firms to form familiar or personal relationships, he added. What is unethical is leaving a government agency

to go work for a firm and continue to leverage relationships with your previous employer to win contracts.

“They should have those kinds of written policies in place to alleviate those kinds of concerns,” Gunalan said.

Tarrant Regional Water District does not have a policy in place to prevent former water district employees from leaving the company to work for an engineering firm and then continuing to work on projects involving the water district, Newby said.

“Nor am I aware that we’ve had anyone do that,” she added.

Coltharp said the company follows the processes established by clients when disclosing potential conflicts.

“Every client is a little bit different, but they all pretty much have a conflict of interest form,” he said. “Our policy is to follow guidance given by the company.”

The Tarrant Regional Water District’s recently approved board policies, [passed in January](#), do not directly address familial relationships between district employees and contractors. However, the water district has had a policy in place to address conflict of interest disclosures for years. The policy defines a potential conflict of interest between a possible vendor and water district employee as:

- A familial relationship
- An employment or business relationship that results in a taxable income of over \$2,500
- And/or an employee receiving a gift valued over \$100 from the vendor in the last year

Once an employee learns a vendor that fits into one of the three categories has signed or is being considered for a contract, they have seven days to file a conflict statement with the district’s records management officer.

Water district board members secure Freese and Nichols donations

In addition to its corporation, Freese and Nichols also operates a separate political action committee, which collects donations from the company’s employees.

The PAC has spent over \$8,500 from 2015 to 2021 supporting Tarrant Regional Water District board candidates, according to an analysis of campaign finance reports.

Longtime board member Marty Leonard first received a donation from Freese and Nichols in 2015, during her first re-election campaign. At the time, the PAC gave her \$2,500. While Freese and Nichols did not donate directly to Leonard’s 2019 campaign, records show the company’s late vice president, Lee Freese, and his wife, Dana Freese, donated \$100. John Freese donated another \$100 in the same cycle.

Leah King secured \$2,500 from Freese and Nichols during her 2017 campaign, and another \$1,000 during her 2021 re-election campaign.

Freese and Nichols gave board member James Hill \$2,500 during his 2017 campaign, but did not contribute to his re-election campaign in 2021.

Coltharp said when choosing which candidates to support for office, the company focuses on two things: whether candidates' values align with the stated values of the company and whether they have a good working knowledge of what goes on in the community.

"One of the biggest values that comes to mind is to act with integrity, which is like I said, when we do work for the public, we're all about transparency," Coltharp said. "That's what we want to see in anybody that we support."

Burnam, with the Water District Accountability Project, said Freese and Nichols have disproportionate influence in elections, similar to police and fire associations.

"They are corporate entities that have a vested interest in how the water district spends their money and they also have a vested interest in them having a weak board," he said. "They benefit from weak oversight."

Freese and Nichols have historically been involved with the water district's biggest projects, ranging from reservoirs to pipelines. As Panther Island – the water district's biggest project yet – ramps up, members of the accountability project worry about the legitimacy of a robust bidding system.

"I'm not saying there's anything illegal," Burnam said. "But what is questionable is that their expenditures are not closely monitored, and it makes me crazy that we can't get ... elected officials to be actively engaged in holding government agencies accountable for their spending."

NBC DFW

'Somebody's Got to Answer,' Legislators Press Texas DMV Over Paper Tag Debacle

House Transportation Committee holds hearing with Texas DMV to better understand how crooks with dealer's licenses have been able to abuse the state's temporary plate system.

By Scott Friedman and Eva Parks

State lawmakers pressed the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Tuesday for answers about how the agency allowed the illegal sale of temporary license plates to spiral out of control.

In a House Transportation Committee hearing, Chairman Terry Canales pointed out the legislature gave the DMV authority in 2021 to immediately stop small car dealers suspected of selling tags from gaining access to the state's tag system.

But Canales questioned why it took the DMV more than seven months to implement administrative rules and begin immediately suspending the suspected fraudsters.

"I am not here to shoot the messenger but at some point, somebody's got to answer to this committee and the legislature as to why it would take so long and why the media has to be the one that uncovers it so that the agency we gave a directive to can actually do something," Canales said.

In November 2021, **NBC 5 Investigates** exposed how small dealers with no storefronts were continuing to print hundreds of thousands of tags, which law enforcement officials suspected were being sold for profit.

At Tuesday's hearing, Daniel Avitia, the DMV's new acting executive director, apologized for the delays in implementing the rules. He took over [when the previous director, Whitney Brewster, resigned](#) over the tag debacle.

"As painful as it may have been to see our agency in the media and receiving those black eyes, I will say that being in the media was part of the solution," Avitia said.

Avitia said it had been challenging for the agency, under his predecessor, to implement the rules due to the complexities of the state's administrative rule process.

By the time the DMV began taking swifter action, fraudulent tags were already begin put on cars used to commit serious crimes in Texas and across the country.

A top Texas of Department of Public Safety commander testified Tuesday that his agency is aware of more than 600 cases in 16 months where cars with paper tags were involved in suspicious incidents the department investigated. The tags make it difficult for law enforcement to identify the owner of a vehicle.

"Criminal street gangs and Mexican cartels are especially known to rely on this tactic, the pervasiveness we have seen time and time again", said DPS Deputy Director Floyd Goodwin.

Sgt. Jose Escribano, a Travis County investigator who specializes in tag fraud, told the committee that the state needs to reinstate funding for task forces that used to investigate tag cases in other major cities including Dallas, where the Dallas County Sheriff's Department once had a dedicated unit. That unit folded after Republican Gov. Greg Abbott vetoed funding that supported the task forces in 2017.

Canales urged officers to communicate with his office to help them understand what sort of funding is needed.

Committee members also discussed the need for tougher background checks for people applying for car dealer licenses and the possibility of replacing the current paper tag system with something else.

But Canales, who called the tag problem a "black eye" for the state, suggested many of the fixes could be implemented by the DMV alone, without assistance from the legislature, which cannot pass bills to address the problems until the House and Senate are back in session in 2023.

Tawny Solbrig, the mother of a young man killed in a crash involving a pickup truck that was on the road with an illegal paper tag, urged the committee not to hand the issue back to the DMV without continuing to hold the agency accountable.

"Make sure they are doing what they need to be doing because ultimately y'all are responsible too."

The DMV has previously said it is devising a plan to begin fingerprinting car dealers who can access the electronic tag system, and hopes to approve that plan as early as June. The agency has also discussed the need for more investigators to visit small car dealers and has said it is looking at the possibility of a new more secure system to replace paper tags.

The Texas Senate Criminal Justice Committee is also investigating the paper tag mess and is expected to hold its own hearings on the issue soon.

PREVIOUS REPORTS

- April 26, 2022 - [Texas House Set to Hold Paper Tag Hearings](#)
- April 14, 2022 - [Texas DMV Cracks Down on Dealers Selling Temporary Paper Tags](#)
- April 13, 2022 - [TxDMV Closes Inspection Loophole That Put Unsafe Cars on Roads](#)
- April 12, 2022 - [Dallas Police Go Undercover to Fight Illegal Paper Tags](#)
- April 7, 2022 - [Police Warn of Fake Paper Tags Used to Cheat Car Buyers](#)
- April 5, 2022 - [Texas Senate Will Investigate Illegal Paper Tag Crimes, Smuggling](#)
- March 9, 2022 - [Texas Paper Tag Crime Danger Extends Nationwide](#)
- March 5, 2022 - [Texas House Will Hold Hearings on Paper Tag Mess](#)
- Feb. 28, 2022 - [License to Smuggle: Drug Cartels and Human Smugglers Use Paper Texas Tags to Evade](#)

- Feb. 15, 2022 - [Fort Worth Police Announce Special Operation Targeting Paper Tags](#)
- Feb. 14, 2022 -- [Crash Victim's Parents Want More Cops to Police Paper Tag Fraud](#)
- Feb. 13, 2022 - [More Funding Need to Fight Criminals Using Bogus Paper Tags: Police](#)
- Feb. 10, 2022 - [Police Report Drop in Fraudulent Tags But Warn Crooks Are Adapting](#)
- Feb. 9, 2022 - [Texas DMV Shuts Down Six More Dealers Suspected of Selling Paper License Tags](#)
- Feb. 7, 2022 - [TxDMV Director Resigns Amidst Paper Tag Mess](#)
- Jan. 27, 2022 - [TxDMV Takes Emergency Action to Keep Crooks From Selling Paper Tags](#)
- Jan. 21, 2022 - [Dallas Police Operation Targets Fraudulent Paper Tags](#)
- Jan. 17, 2022 - [Recording Shows Police Warned TxDMV of Paper Tag Security Flaw Years Ago](#)
- Dec. 16, 2021 - [DMV Committee Recommends Fingerprinting Some Dealers to Slow Paper Tag Fraud](#)
- Dec. 14, 2021 - [Texas House Transportation Chair Vows to Stop Paper Tag Fraud](#)
- Dec. 6, 2021 - [Texas DMV Boss Deflects Blame for Paper Tag Debacle](#)
- Nov. 23, 2021 - [Illegal Paper Tags Costing Texas Taxpayers and Toll Roads Millions](#)
- Nov. 10, 2021 - [Suspected Paper Tag Peddler Shut Down Tuesday, Reopens Wednesday: Investigators](#)
- Nov. 8, 2021 - [How Texas Paper Tags Became a \\$200M Criminal Enterprise: NBC 5 Investigates](#)

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/investigations/somebodys-got-to-answer-legislators-press-texas-dmv-over-paper-tag-debacle/2951065/>

Dallas Morning News

A new trail will link Dallas, Fort Worth, Arlington and more cities. What should it be called?

The public is invited to help choose a name and logo.

By Sarah Bahari

A long-awaited pedestrian and cycling trail will soon span Dallas to Fort Worth, connecting several cities along the way.

Completion of the 66-mile trail is expected in 2024, but it's still missing one big thing: a name.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has narrowed the name to two possibilities — DFW Discovery Trail and DFW Trinity Trail — and is asking people to choose their favorite.

[An online survey will be available for the next month.](#)

In addition to the name, participants are asked to choose between two logo options. Both the name and logo choices were developed with public input through a virtual open house last year.

Once complete, the trail will link Dallas, Fort Worth, Arlington, Irving and Grand Prairie. More than 50 miles are already open, the agency said in a press release.

The trail will connect existing trails, including Trinity Skyline Trail in Dallas, Fort Worth Trinity Trails, Champion Trail in Irving and River Legacy Trail in Arlington.

North Texas leaders and transportation planners say the trail will promote healthy living, reduce traffic congestion and draw tourism.

Planning began in the 1990s, and the five cities began working with the North Central Texas Council of Governments in 2013.

“The finished trail is envisioned as a regional, state and nationwide attraction for recreation, tourism and events, both large and small,” the agency said in the press release.

Dallas Morning News

Southlake's Westin Hotel adding electric parking spaces, supporting city's mobility plan

The hotel will add six dual-charging ports to its parking lot.

By Brandi Addison

Southlake City Council unanimously approved a specific-use permit that allows the Westin Dallas Southlake Hotel to create 12 electric parking spaces.

According to city documents, six dual-charging ports will be added to the parking lot of the hotel, located at 1200 E. State Highway 114, specifically for hotel guests. The chargers will work with all electric vehicles, including Teslas.

The addition supports Southlake's 2030 Mobility Master Plan, which encourages private investment in alternate energy technologies in the city and recommends creating non-residential charging stations, like the ones coming to the hotel.

The mobility plan, which the city devised in 2014, is [available online](#).

Dallas Innovates

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Leads to a \$641M Investment to Reduce Texas Pollution and Traffic

The \$641 million can be invested in a range of eligible projects aimed at reducing carbon pollution and traffic congestion, while increasing transportation options across the state. Projects could include public transit services, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, traffic flow improvements, congestion management technology, and pedestrian and cycle trails.

By David Seeley

Congressman Colin Allred has announced that Texas will receive more than \$641 million in funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to give Texans more transportation options and reduce traffic and carbon pollution across the state.

“North Texans feel the lack of federal investment in our infrastructure every day—from congestion to persistent smog,” Allred said in a statement, adding that the new investments “will reduce congestion and help protect our planet.” Allred is a member of the congressional Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

\$6.4 billion in investments nationwide

Ahead of Earth Day, the Biden administration announced investments totaling more than \$6.4 billion across the U.S., to be administered under the [Federal Highway Administration’s Carbon Reduction Program](#). As North Texans deal with high gas prices and rising inflation, Allred says the new funding will allow Texas to deliver more transportation alternatives and reduce commute times.

The \$641 million can be invested in a range of eligible projects, including:

- Public transit services
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Traffic flow improvements
- Congestion management technology
- Pedestrian and cycle trails

These are only the latest investments in Texas infrastructure investments under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Others have included over [\\$172 million in transit funding](#) for the Dallas area, more than [\\$107 million in bridge repair funding](#), over [\\$80 million in funding](#) headed to DFW Airport and Love Field Airport, and over [\\$60 million for electric vehicle charging](#).

LMT Online

Here's how many EVs are registered in Laredo and Texas overall

By Robin Bradshaw

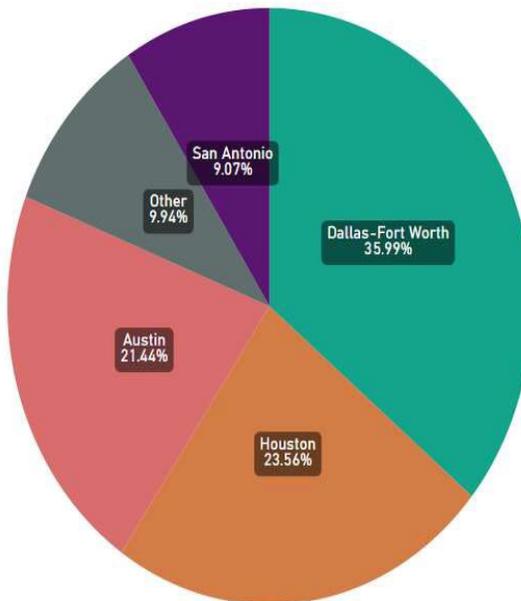
As part of a U.S. Department of Energy [initiative](#), Dallas Forth-Worth Clean Cities Coalition and the North Central Texas City Council of Governments created an interactive tool using State of Texas Department of Motor Vehicles data to highlight electric vehicle ownership in counties across the Lone Star State. The [tool](#) reflects data through April 19, 2022. So, how many electric vehicles are registered in Laredo and what are the most popular models?

The [report lists](#) the number of EVs registered in Texas and each county. Overall, there are 122,967 EVs registered in the state of Texas, according to the dataset. This includes 264 in Webb County.

For comparison, Travis County topped the Texas list with 18,139 registered EVs, followed by Harris County (17,463), Dallas County (13,443), Collin County (11,140) and Tarrant County (8,901), in order.

The tool also shows regions with the highest percentage of EV ownership in the state. It's noted that although Travis County led with the highest number of registered EVs, Dallas led per region.

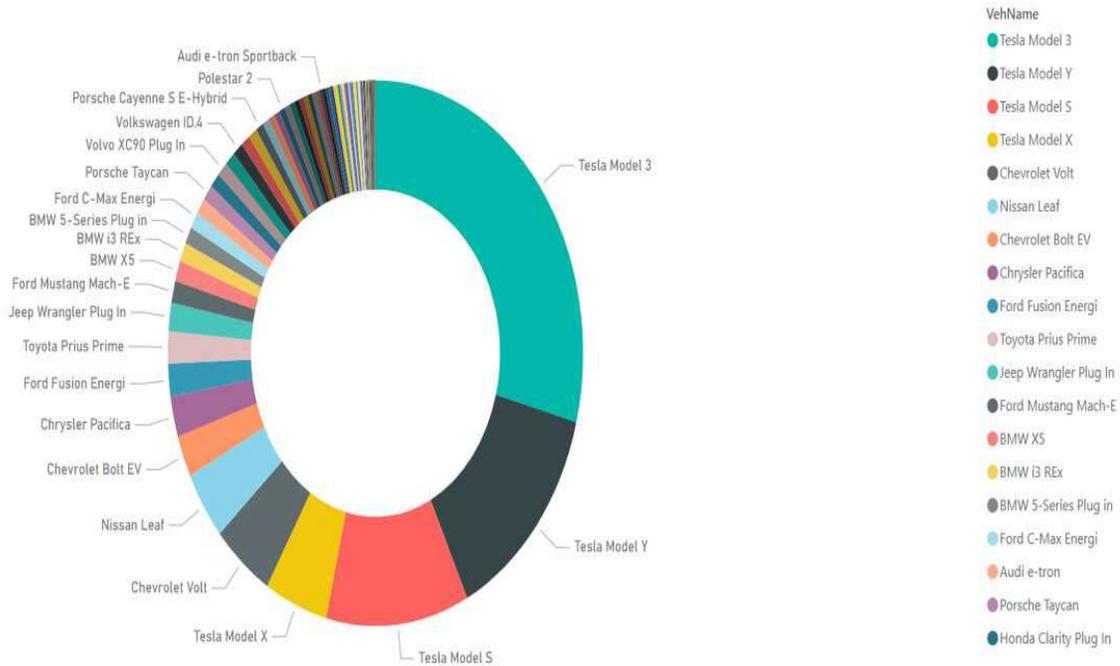
EV REGISTRATION BY REGION



A pie graph of the most EVs per region.
Texas EV Registration tool

In Webb County, the most popular EVs registered on the road include the Tesla Model 3, Tesla Model Y, and Tesla Model S. This trend is similar to the most popular EVs registered in more populous Texas counties. In Travis County, for example, the Texas county with the most registered EV vehicles, the top three models include the Tesla Model 3, Tesla Model Y and Tesla Model S, in order.

EV REGISTRATION BY MODEL



A pie graph of the most popular EV models in Laredo.
Texas EV Registration tool

The tool also lists EV registration totals since 1999 per county. In Webb County, there were 23 EVs registered in 2020, 95 in 2021 and 40 so far in 2022.

Fort Worth Business Press

J.D. Granger lands consulting contract to keep working on Panther Island project

By Marice Richter

When J.D. Granger announced he was leaving his job with the Trinity River Vision Authority to start his own consulting firm, skeptics wondered how long it would be before he landed a consulting contract with the agency he was leaving.

The answer: not long.

Granger has already entered into an agreement that will pay him \$12,000 a month for the next six months to continue his work on the \$1.17 billion Panther Island Project as an independent contractor.

Granger, who has overseen development of the Panther Island project championed by his mother, U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, [announced on social media April 22](#) that he is leaving his job to start his own consulting firm.

Granger has served for 16 years as executive director of the Trinity River Vision Authority (TRVA), the agency that manages the massive flood control and economic development project known variably as Trinity River Vision, the Central City project and Panther Island.

His last day as a regular employee will be Friday, April 29, according to a spokesman for the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), the parent agency of the Trinity River Vision Authority.

The six-month contract between his firm, JD Granger Group LLC, and the Tarrant Regional Water District will begin May 1.

The contract was authorized by TRWD General Manager Dan Buhman and is under the \$75,000 threshold that requires approval by the TRWD board of directors. Granger will be paid a total of \$72,000 over six months.

As the Army Corps of Engineers “moves to final design and construction, and local partners execute their project responsibilities, we need to leverage all available resources to ensure the project’s success.” Buhman said in a statement.

“To that end, TRWD has entered into a 6-month consulting agreement with JD Granger Group, LLC, to support program management, provide institutional knowledge and provide strategic input to the benefit of this critical community project,” Buhman stated.

Leah King, president of the TRWD board, said the contract with Granger is “ a very good thing.

“The contract is very narrowly focused and for a specific amount of time,” King said.

Members of the grassroots Water District Accountability Project question the need for Granger’s services since the TRWD already pays Mark Mazzanti, a retired U.S. Army Corps of Engineers veteran, for his consulting services.

“Mark’s work is focused on (Washington) D.C.,” King said. “J.D. will work with the Corps office in Fort Worth on the design” for the 1.5-mile channel of the Trinity River north of the Tarrant County Courthouse. The federal government categorizes the channel as a flood control protection measure

Mazzanti’s role helped secure \$403 million in federal funds for the Panther Island project design from the U.S. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act earlier this year.

Lon Burnam, a former state representative and president of the Water District Accountability Project, expressed concern that the contract with Granger was done without a board vote since the payment amount was so close to \$75,000.

“I’m glad he’s leaving in six months but I want to know J.D.’s not double dipping as he moves into the private sector of his real estate development career.”

In a long post last Friday on his Facebook page, Granger recounted his work on the project and his decision to move on, according to a screenshot of the post. Granger wrote that he achieved his goals for both the management and branding aspects of the project, including getting people into the river for the first time in 12 years.

“We are now known for having the only section of a river in a Texas downtown area that you can swim in and Texas’ only waterfront stage,” he wrote.

“It was an uphill battle ... but I am extremely proud to have delivered both this spring,” he stated. “Having secured over \$400 million in federal funds for the project and completed the first section of our new Riverwalk, I feel I have met my commitments to myself and my community,” Granger said.

Granger wrote that he has decided to “pursue new personal goals and opportunities.” He also wrote that he would “help” the Tarrant Regional Water District and the Trinity River Vision Authority as the Panther Island project transitions to its next phase.

Granger is the second top executive to leave the water district within the past year.

Jim Oliver, longtime TRWD general manager, announced his plans to retire in March 2021. After it was revealed that former TRWD board President Jack Stevens agreed to pay Oliver about \$300,000 in extra compensation without consent of the board, the board voted to revoke the agreement.

Last fall, the board agreed to a settlement with Oliver for \$300,000 over employment claims in exchange for Oliver's consent to drop legal action against the district.

Granger has been an embattled overseer, operating under a cloud of criticism and controversy centering on questions about his qualifications for the job and objections to the nepotism inherent in his involvement with a project so closely tied to his mother, a former Fort Worth mayor and the project's most ardent supporter as a member of Congress.

For all but the last two years, J.D. Granger had oversight over all aspects of the project, including recreation and entertainment, land acquisition and economic development as well as coordinating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on flood control.

But after several years when the \$1.17 billion project failed to receive the federal funds it needed to move forward, the Trinity River Vision Authority board hired a consultant to review the entire project and recommend changes that would improve its chances to get federal money.

As a result of the recommendations from the Riveron consulting firm, Granger was shifted into a somewhat diminished role reporting to Oliver. Also, Mazzanti was hired as program manager to coordinate work being done on the project – including the much-delayed construction of three bridges – in conjunction with the city of Fort Worth, Tarrant County and other government entities.

In January, officials announced that the federal government had allocated \$403 million for the long-stalled project as part of \$14 billion in infrastructure money the Biden administration plans to spend to upgrade the nation's ports and waterways.

City of Duncanville

MULTI-CITY PROJECT IN SOUTH METROPLEX RENEWS INFRASTRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE SAFETY NEEDS & RAPID REGIONAL GROWTH

Wintergreen Road Project Reflects Successful Regional Partnerships

The Wintergreen Road Project, the product of a partnership between Dallas County, the Cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville, Dallas Water Utilities, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), has produced major infrastructure upgrades that will improve road safety and transportation efficiency, satisfy flood plain control safety requirements, and deliver major water service improvements that are projected to accommodate the demands of a fast-growing portion of South Dallas County for up to 50 years.

On Wednesday, April 27th, leaders from Cedar Hill, DeSoto, and Duncanville joined Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price and other Dallas County officials, and key representatives from Dallas Water Utilities and NCTCOG for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 1500 N. Duncanville Road to mark the completion of this \$10 million + multi-city infrastructure project.

“The Wintergreen Road Project’s successful completion is further evidence of how collaboration between the Best Southwest Partnership, of which the City of Duncanville is a proud member, and Dallas County can positively impact the lives of citizens. Beyond the upgraded driving surface and other needed improvements, our city’s residents can now enjoy wider sidewalks and bike lanes along this road,” said Duncanville’s Mayor Barry L. Gordon.

Specifically, this project improved Wintergreen Road at its intersections with Duncanville Road and with Main Street by constructing four new traffic lanes, building a new bridge over Stewart Branch Creek, and improving box culverts on Duncanville Road to allow for required storm drainage and FEMA and local flood plain compliance.

A new traffic signal has been installed at the Main Street intersection to promote motorist and pedestrian safety. And more than 1300 linear feet of 96-inch Water Main pipes were installed by Dallas Water Utilities to meet the projected water needs of South Dallas County for the next 50 years.

Wintergreen Road and Duncanville Road are critical parts of the Master Thoroughfare Plans from the Cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, and Duncanville and these improvements will enhance mobility within all three cities. The project also widened sidewalks, added bike lanes in both directions along Duncanville Road, constructed a trail along the west side of Duncanville Road, and made parking improvements for the Windmill Hill Preserve.

Wintergreen Road Project limits are from Main Street and Wintergreen Road intersection to 1300 feet east and from the intersection to 900 feet south on Duncanville Road.

“The Wintergreen Road project is just one example of the great things the Best Southwest cities accomplish as we work closely together with our partners,” said Cedar Hill Mayor Stephen Mason. “This project is a huge investment in safe and efficient traffic flow at the intersection of three different cities. We appreciate Dallas County’s support for this and other important infrastructure improvements in the region.”

The involvement of Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price reinforced this strong regional partnership and Commissioner Price made sure to acknowledge the key role that the contractor played in this massive infrastructure project. Said Commissioner Price, "Texas Standard Construction, LTD has been a trusted partner for collaborating and producing the project."

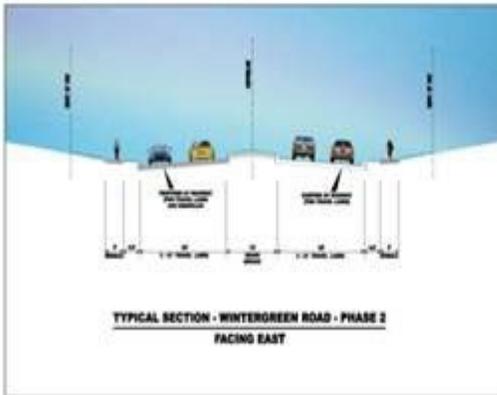
The Wintergreen Road Project was engineered by Dal-Tech and contractor Texas Standard Construction began construction in August 2019. It was initially projected to be completed by the summer of 2021, however, multiple factors including manpower and supply shortages tied to the Coronavirus Pandemic resulted in a revised construction schedule. But all of the entities involved persevered to ensure that this vital project was completed.

"The Cities of DeSoto, Cedar Hill, and Duncanville routinely partner with each other because we understand the importance of working together and leveraging our combined resources so that we can accomplish more in our cities and our region," stated DeSoto Mayor Rachel L. Proctor in a statement delivered on her behalf by DeSoto City Councilmember Crystal Chism.

Proctor's statement added, "The Wintergreen Road project could not have succeeded had it not been for the incredibly high level of cooperation and communication that took place from the planning phase through our ribbon cutting between our partner cities, Dallas County, City of Dallas Water Utilities, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. DeSoto is proud of what we accomplished and to be a part of this great team!"

For a summary of the main elements of the Wintergreen Road Project view the project fact sheet at <https://bit.ly/3EGwGra>

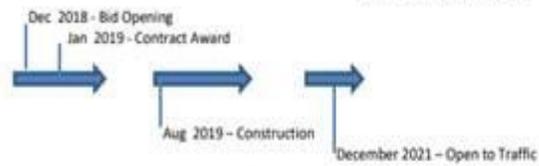
Fact Sheet: Wintergreen Road MCIP 47302 Project, R&B District 3 "Ribbon Cutting Ceremony"



IMPROVEMENTS

- Limits: from Main St. & Wintergreen Rd intersection to 1300 feet east and from intersection to 900 feet south on Duncanville Rd.
- Construct four new lanes of concrete pavement, new bridge at Stewart Branch Creek, four box culverts at Duncanville Rd, storm drainage improvements, a traffic signal, sidewalks and trail, and Windmill Hill Preserve parking improvements.
- 1300 linear feet of 96 inch Water Main Transmission

TIMELINE



PURPOSE

- Promote economic development
- Provide efficient and safe traffic flow.

PROJECT FUNDING

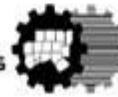
State	\$3,130,000
Local	\$7,245,000
(Dallas County, Cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville, and Dallas)	
Total:	\$10,375,000

Engineer – Dal-Tech

Contractor – Texas Standard Construction, Ltd



Duncanville
City of Champions



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

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The Waxahachie Sun

George Michael "Mike" Ramsey: 1944-2022

George Michael "Mike" Ramsey

Dec. 28, 1944 – April 26, 2022

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved husband, father, grandfather and precious friend, George Michael "Mike" Ramsey. Mike will be greatly remembered as a beacon of tremendous joy, grace, inclusion and kindness.

His incredibly humble, engaging and generous spirit made each and every one he encountered - friend or stranger - feel seen and so special. He made an indelible impression on the hearts of many, especially those in the community of Waxahachie, Texas which he deeply cherished. Known for his signature, impeccable attire in a bolo tie and perfectly shined cowboy boots, he was a highly accomplished and respected businessman where he gave 44 years of service in the title insurance industry and poured countless service hours into his community. But it was his marriage of almost 55 years to his college sweetheart, Bonney, and his two daughters, Angela and Andrea, that gave him the most pride and joy.

Mike was born on Dec. 28, 1944, in Dallas, Texas. He was born to George Alston and Mary Gwendolyn "Gwen" Ramsey. His mother, with the help of his dear grandmother, Hallie Belle Moore, anchored his infant upbringing the first few months of his life until his father returned from Naval deployment at the end of WWII. He grew up in the Oak Cliff area of Dallas and graduated from Kimball High School in 1963. He was voted Most Popular by his peers, was a Captain and 2-year letterman in football and earned All-City and All-Greater Dallas awards. He maintained many lifelong, dear friendships from his early years in Oak Cliff.

He attended Southern Methodist University before transferring to North Texas State University where he obtained a BS degree in Government and History. He met the love of his life, Bonney Gayle Streit, his senior year and they were married June 17, 1967, in Vernon, Texas.

They welcomed their first daughter, Angela Leigh on Feb. 20, 1970, and their daughter Andrea Dee on May 12, 1972. From 1970-1977, Mike proudly served in the United States Air Force Reserves at Carswell Air Force Base. In 1977, they built their forever home on Main Street in the historic area of Waxahachie, where they raised their family. Their home was an open door to visitors and was typically filled with the activity and laughter of their daughters' many friends throughout the stages of their lives.

Throughout Mike's career in the title industry, he held an executive management role for a 17-state agency operation for the nation's largest land title insurance organization, Chicago Title Insurance Company. He was President of the Texas Land Title Association (TLTA, 1982), President of Title Underwriters of Texas (1978), and Chair of major committees of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico Title Associations. He was honored as "Title Man of the Year" in 1973 by the TLTA and retired in Dec. 2010 with 44 years of service.

Mike was highly recognized for his integral service toward the preservation and development of the Waxahachie community he loved so dearly. For WISD, he served as Co-Chair of Operation First Day of School (2010), an organization serving the needs of underprivileged children attending the district and, was honored with the 2012-2013 "Citizen of the Year" Award along with wife, Bonney. For the City of Waxahachie, he served as Vice President of Waxahachie Community Development Corporation and was appointed to serve an unexpired term on the City Council in 2014. He served on the Impact Study Committee, the North Central Texas Council of Government's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies Committee and was appointed Commissioner for Condemnation Hearings for County Court at Law #1 from 2013 until his passing.

Serving the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce, Mike was Chair of the Economic Development Council from 2010-2016 where he was instrumental in assembling multiple city leaders to drive growth, preservation, and prosperity. He served as Advisor, Board of Directors from 2010 until his passing. He served on the I35/Hwy 287 Design and Beautification Subcommittee, and Co-Chair for the Chamber's Annual Auction in 2011 with his wife, Bonney. In 2012, they received the Chair's Special Award and in 2018 Mike received the Mayor's Special Award and Key to the City of Waxahachie. In 2019, he and Bonney were honored with the prestigious Citizens of the Year award.

Together, Mike and Bonney were integral in the capital development fundraising for the new Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in Waxahachie. They served on the Steering committee for Capital Campaign 2013-2014, as well as the Founders' Wall in the Replacement Campus. Sponsored by the Association of Fundraising Professional Greater Dallas Chapter, they were honored on National Philanthropy Day in 2013 by the Baylor Health Care System Foundation.

Beyond all of his contributions to his career and community, Mike's greatest pride and effort was focused on his cherished family. After raising his two daughters, Mike was beyond proud of the blessing of his "Magnificent 7" grandsons! He was unequivocally devoted to their lives and development. As little boys, Mike enjoyed entertaining them throughout their acreage property on Main Street and playing his G-scale model trains from Germany in their home's beloved "train room" - the boys spent countless hours enjoying this hobby with their "Roro".

He enjoyed attending their many sports practices, games and events and poured his heart into their individual interests and life milestones. As the years progressed, the boys could count on their Roro's wisdom and guidance. His legacy of devotion to family and community will undoubtedly live on in their hearts and actions.

Mike was preceded in death by his grandparents Hubert and Hallie Belle Moore and Lyle Alston and Elsie Mae Smith Ramsey; mother Mary Gwendolyn Ramsey and father George Alston Ramsey; Great Uncle George Leland Ramsey and Uncle Lyle Weston Ramsey.

He is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Bonney Gayle Streit Ramsey; daughter Angela Leigh Benkendorfer, her husband Scott and sons James Dax, Michael Brooks, Scott Alexander and Adam Bryce Benkendorfer; daughter Andrea Ramsey Williamson, her husband Shaun and sons Cade Ramsey Prendergast, William Michael Prendergast and Dylan Bynum Williamson;

aunt Corine Smith Ramsey and first cousins Patricia Ann Ramsey, Janet Ramsey Calvert, and Keri Ramsey Turner.

Honorary Pallbearers are his dearly loved sons-in-law Scott Benkendorfer and Shaun Williamson and cherished grandsons Dax Benkendorfer, Brooks Benkendorfer, Cade Prendergast, Alex Benkendorfer, Will Prendergast, Bryce Benkendorfer and Dylan Williamson.

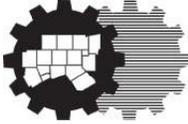
Visitation will be held on Friday, May 6, 2022, from 6-8 p.m. at Boze-Mitchell-McKibbin Funeral Home at 511 W. Main Street, Waxahachie, Texas.

Service will be held on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., Central Presbyterian Church at 402 N. College Street, Waxahachie, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of George Michael Ramsey to Central Presbyterian Church in Waxahachie.

To view an obituary or sign the guest book, please visit www.bozemitchellmckibbin.com.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Boze-Mitchell-McKibbin Funeral Home, 511 W. Main Street, Waxahachie, Texas 75165. 972-937-2211.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE

Contact:
Brian Wilson
(817) 704-2511
bwilson@nctcog.org

N. Texans Can Help Name and Brand Regional Trail

60-plus-mile path through heart of region will connect 5 cities

April 25, 2022 (Arlington, Texas) – Imagine being able to walk, run or bike across the region, along some of the most well-established trails in North Texas – and experience the natural beauty along the way.

The Trinity Trails.

River Legacy Trail.

Campion Trail.

This is just a sample of the local trails that will be connected to form a seamless walking and biking corridor between downtown Fort Worth and downtown Dallas when the entire regional facility of more than 60 miles is complete. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is looking to name and brand the regional trail, and residents are being asked to help.

North Texans are encouraged to participate in the agency's virtual public feedback forum at www.fortworthtodallastrail.com. The forum, which launched Monday, April 25, will be open for one month. Participants will be asked to choose between two trail name and logo options and provide input on points of interest along the trail. The name and logo choices were developed with the help of public input provided through a virtual open house held late last year.

Over 50 miles of the trail are now open, spanning Fort Worth, Arlington, Grand Prairie, Irving and Dallas. It is expected to be completed in early 2024. The finished trail is envisioned as a regional, state and nationwide attraction for recreation, tourism and events, both large and small.

Trail users can witness the region's diversity and growing interconnectedness along the corridor as they walk or bike for leisure, compete in a sport or spend a day discovering nature with the family. NCTCOG is collaborating with the five cities and stakeholders associated with tourism, culture, nature and events as part of this effort. The goal is to develop a regional brand for this facility while maintaining the identity of existing individual trail segments.

By the fall, this effort is expected to be complete, resulting in a new name, logo and branding materials, as well as a wayfinding signage package and other recommendations.

The project has been part of the region's long-range transportation plan since the 1990s. Since 2013, the five core cities' mayors and staff have collaborated with NCTCOG on the effort to develop a trail network to highlight the corridor's economic development and tourism potential.

The 60-plus-mile trail and alternative transportation route will bring new necessary health benefits, traffic reduction and recreational opportunities to an ever-growing North Texas.

For more information about the Fort Worth to Dallas Regional Trail and the branding project, visit www.nctcog.org/FWtoDalTrail.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions. NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 229 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 19 school districts and 27 special districts.

#



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE

Brian Wilson

(817) 704-2511

bwilson@nctcog.org

NCTCOG, State and Federal Partners Work to Improve Roadway Safety in April

Importance of safety underscored during Distracted Driving Awareness Month

April 11, 2022 (Arlington, Texas) – The COVID-19 pandemic has brought various public safety efforts into focus, including the importance of safe driving on highways and city streets alike.

In April 2020, North Texas freeway volumes declined nearly 30%. However, as traffic congestion lessened, those who were on the roads were able to drive faster. Consequently, the crashes that happened were more serious. As people have returned to working in offices, traffic has largely rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. But the roads remain dangerous. In 2021, the Dallas-Fort Worth area also saw an increase in crashes, including those resulting in serious injuries or fatalities.

“We have more work to do as a state and region to improve roadway safety,” said North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Director Michael Morris, P.E. “The Council of Governments is committed to working with our state and local partners to make the roads safer for all users.”

Attention is paid to roadway safety throughout the year, but the issue is highlighted in April. Throughout the month, the National Safety Council will commemorate Distracted Driving Awareness Month, reminding drivers to pay attention while behind the wheel and share the road.

Work Zone Awareness Week will also be celebrated April 11-15. This is a week especially important in fast-growing areas of Texas like Dallas-Fort Worth, where billions of dollars are being spent to improve the reliability of the transportation system and active construction zones are commonplace.

The Texas Department of Transportation has enlisted the assistance of 23 Metropolitan Planning Organizations across the state – including NCTCOG – to enhance safety. TxDOT and the state’s MPOs are collaborating on a statewide safety task force to develop solutions to help reduce serious and fatal crashes.

TxDOT and regions across the state are working to meet a goal set by the Texas Transportation Commission to reduce the number of deaths on Texas roadways by 50% by 2035 and to zero by 2050.

NCTCOG uses a combination of outreach to help make the roads safer and more efficient. Here are some examples of campaigns:

- The Drive Aware North Texas campaign aims to bring attention to the issue of driver safety and help reduce the number of serious crashes by improving negative driver behaviors such as distracted driving and speeding.
- The Safe Driving Campaign was a freight-related effort in 2021 to encourage all drivers – whether in passenger vehicles or trucks – to think about freight safety on the roadways and at rail crossings.
- Operation Lifesaver and NCTCOG also coordinated last year on the Railroad Crossing Safety Campaign, which sought to reduce rail crossing wrecks and inform the public about safe rail crossing practices. Railroad crossing incidents in Dallas-Fort Worth have declined steadily since 2000.
- Look Out Texans is an educational campaign intended to improve roadway safety through a series of 21 tips encouraging North Texans to watch for one another, whether they choose to bike, walk or drive. Many of the tips involve reminders of safely driving near bicyclists and pedestrians.

Outside of campaigns to bring awareness to safety, NCTCOG continues to equip first responders to handle incidents safely and efficiently through its Traffic Incident Management training. More than 3,300 emergency responders from 132 cities and counties throughout the region have completed this training.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit www.nctcog.org/trans.

###

FUNDING PARTNERSHIP WITH FORT WORTH AND TRINITY METRO

\$ IN MILLIONS

Equates to \$62.06M
in New RTC Funding

	Existing RTC Federal	New RTC Federal	FTA Federal	TxDOT	Trinity Metro (Local)	Fort Worth (Local)	Private Sector	INFRA	TDCs ¹ (Regional)	Total Funding
TEXRail Extension to Hospital District	20.00 ²	51.36 ³	38.90		38.04 +6.46 +3.50	7.17	1.57 ⁴		21.10	167.00
Katy Lofts	-11.36						11.36 ⁵			11.36
E. Lancaster Corridor	40.00 ⁶			10.00 30.00		10.00 ⁷	2.00 ⁸	100.00		160.00 182.00
Trinity Lakes Station	6.69 ⁹	20.05 ²			-6.46				5.35	26.74
Guaranteed Transit (IH 35W)	14.00 ²	2.01 ²			-3.50				3.20	16.01

1. Transportation Development Credits
2. Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) federal funding
3. Includes \$11.362M removed from Katy Lofts, plus \$40M in CMAQ federal funding
4. Baylor, Scott, and White Hospital
5. Private Sector Developer of Katy Lofts Site

6. Category 2 funds
7. \$10M from Bond Program, \$6.43M potentially later
8. Franchise Utilities & Water/Sewer
9. \$4.5M CMAQ and \$2.19M Surface Transportation Block Grant funds



MULTIMODAL PROJECTS DISCRETIONARY GRANT (MPDG) PROGRAM



May 12, 2022

Regional Transportation Council (RTC) – Information Item
Overview of FY 22 MPDG Discretionary Grant Program (MEGA, INFRA, & RURAL)

Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program (MEGA)

2

Available Funds (Project Type)

\$1 Billion

– All Projects (FY 22)

Cost > \$500 M

– 50% Available Funds

Cost \$100-500 M

– 50% Available Funds

Federal Cost Share / Match

Up to 60%

– MEGA Grant Request
(no award min./max.)

Up to 80%

– Federal (overall)

Eligibility (Applicants)

1. State or group of States (DOTs)
2. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPOs)
3. Local governments
4. Political subdivision of a State
5. Special purpose district or public authority w/ transportation function (incl. port authority)
6. Tribal government or consortium of Tribal governments
7. Amtrak partnership w/ one or entities above
8. Group of all above entities

Eligibility (Project Types)

1. Highway/bridge project
 - a) National Multimodal Freight Network
 - b) National Highway Freight Network
 - c) National Highway System
2. Freight intermodal (including public ports) or freight rail project with public benefit
3. Railroad/roadway grade separation or at-grade crossing elimination project
4. Intercity passenger rail project
5. Public transportation project (Ch. 53 of Title 49) or part of any project types described above

■ No statutory obligation deadline

■ USDOT “seeks projects that will begin construction before September 30, 2025.”



Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight/Highway Projects (INFRA)

3

Available Funds (Project Type)

\$1.55 Billion

– All Projects (FY 22)

85% – Large

– Costs > \$100 M

15% – Small

– Costs < \$100 M

Federal Cost Share / Match

Up to 60%

– INFRA Grant Request
(no award minimum)

Up to 80%

– Federal (overall)

Award Size

No Maximum

– All Projects

\$25 Million

– Minimum (Large)

\$5 Million

– Minimum (Small)

Eligibility (New)

Applicants:

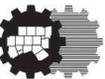
1. Federal land management agency w/ State or group of States
2. Multi-state corridor organization

Project Types:

1. Wildlife crossing
2. Surface transportation project at international border crossing
3. Marine highway project w/ NHFN functional connection
4. National Multimodal Freight Network highway/bridge/freight

■ **Obligation Deadline: September 30, 2025**

■ **Construction Start Deadline: March 30, 2027**



Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL)

4

Available Funds (Project Type)

\$300 Million

– All Projects (FY 22)

Lane Departures

– 15% (not TX)

Appalachians

– 25% (not TX)

Federal Cost Share / Match

Up to 80%

– RURAL Grant Request
(no award minimum)

Up to 100%

– Federal (overall)

Award Size

No Maximum

– All Projects

\$25 M Minimum

– 90% of projects

No Minimum

– 10% of projects

Project/Location Eligibility

Rural (2010 Census):

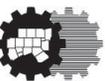
1. Outside an Urbanized Area (UA)
2. In Census-defined Urban Cluster
3. UA w/ population < 200,000

Project Types:

1. Highway, bridge, or tunnel
 - a) National Hwy Performance Program
 - b) Surface Transportation Block Grant
 - c) Tribal Transportation Program
2. Hwy freight (NHFP)/safety (HSIP)
3. Access to rural economic support
4. Integrated mobility & travel/on-demand management system

- **Obligation Deadline: September 30, 2025**
(same as INFRA)

- **Construction Start Deadline: March 30, 2027**
(same as INFRA)



Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

Statutory Requirements

5

- **Generates national or regional economic, mobility, and/or safety benefits – ALL**
- **Cost effectiveness – ALL**
- **Contributes to MAP-21 (23 U.S.C. 150) program goals – INFRA/RURAL**
- **Based on the results of preliminary engineering – INFRA/RURAL**
- **Availability of one or more stable/dependable funding or financing sources – MEGA/INFRA**
- **Significant need of or inability to complete easily/efficiently w/o Federal funds – MEGA/INFRA**
- **Reasonable expectation for construction within 18 months of obligation – INFRA/RURAL**
- **Applicant(s) have/will have sufficient legal, financial, & technical to carry out project – ALL**

Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

Uniform Selection Criteria

6

■ Project Outcomes

	0	1	2	3
Rating Scale	Project negatively affects outcome area OR application contains insufficient assessment information.	Outcome area claimed benefits are plausible but minimal OR claimed benefits are not plausible.	Clear and direct benefits in outcome area stem from adopting common practices for planning, designing, or building infrastructure.	Clear, direct, data-driven, and significant benefits for the outcome area are well-supported by application evidence.

- *Safety*
- *State of Good Repair*
- *Economic Impacts, Freight Movement, & Job Creation*
- *Climate Change, Resiliency, & the Environment*
- *Equity, Multimodal Options, & Quality of Life*
- *Innovation*

■ Economic Analysis (Benefit-Cost Ratio)

■ Project Readiness Analysis

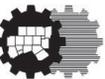
- *Technical Assessment* – Delivery history, project feasibility, Federal compliance/requirements, ROW acquisition plan
- *Financial Completeness* – Detailed budget, design/contingency status, cost overrun plan, obligation target certainty
- *Environmental Review/Risk Assessment* – Detailed schedule, required approval/permit status, risk mitigation plan

Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program

Submittal Timeline (DRAFT)

7

March 22, 2022	FY 22 MPDG Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Announced
April 14, 2022	RTC Information
April 22, 2022	STTC Information
May 6, 2022	RTC Agenda “Mail Out” <i>(Scope, cost, & funding source/share details finalized for proposed NCTCOG project selections)</i>
May 12, 2022	RTC Action
May 12, 2022	RTC Letter of Support Request Deadline <i>(for projects submitted by partnering agencies, submit to Kyle Roy – kroy@nctcog.org)</i>
May 23, 2022	FY 22 MPDG Grant Application Submittal Deadline – www.grants.gov
May 26, 2022	Executive Board Endorsement
May 27, 2022	STTC Endorsement



Upcoming Grant NOFO Announcements in 2022

New/Existing Programs with NCTCOG/Partner Eligibility

8

May 2022	Transit Oriented Development Pilot Program
May 2022	Safe Streets & Roads for All Grant Program – <i>NEW</i>
May 2022	Nationally Significant Federal Lands & Tribal Project Program
May 2022	Bridge Investment Program – <i>NEW</i>
June 2022	Railroad Crossing Elimination Program – <i>NEW</i>
June 2022	Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – <i>NEW</i>
July 2022	All Stations Accessibility Program – <i>NEW</i>
Aug 2022	Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements Grant Program
Sept 2022	Strengthening Mobility & Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) – <i>NEW</i>

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USDOT BIL: <https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law>

USDOT Grant Portal: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants>

USDOT (Upcoming Grant Opportunities): <https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/upcoming-notice-funding-opportunity-announcements-2022>

Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/mpdg-announcement>

April 14, 2022

Regional Transportation Council (RTC) – Information Item
Overview of FY 22 MPDG Discretionary Grant Program (MEGA, INFRA, & RURAL)

FOLLOW UP ACTION ON GARLAND/IH 635 EAST PARTNERSHIP

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

May 12, 2022



NCTCOG PRESENTATION

BACKGROUND

- In September 2019, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved a partnership with the City of Garland to aid in the implementation of the IH 635 East project.
- That action included approval of \$15 million, but required that the specific project to be funded be brought back for RTC approval.
- Garland has identified a project of interest, which is land banking and redevelopment activities near the South Garland Transit Center.



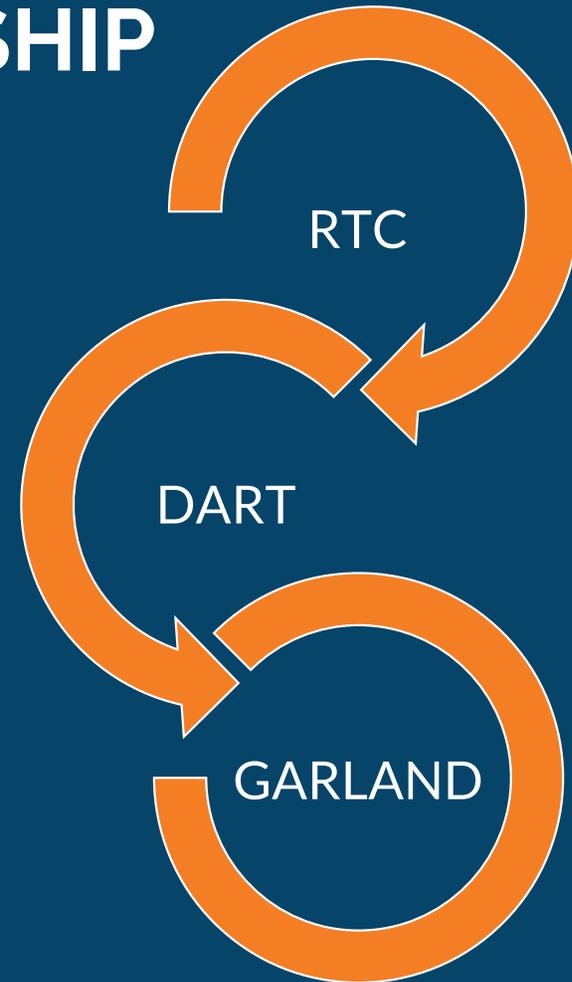
PREVIOUS RTC ACTION ON CITY OF GARLAND \$15 MILLION PARTNERSHIP:

- Thank City of Garland for Approval
- Mediate City of Garland Concerns with a New RTC Partnership Program Using New Funds
- Pursue a Solution for Approximately \$15M
- Bring Back for RTC Approval Specific Projects for Implementation



THREE PARTY PARTNERSHIP

- The City prefers to use local funding for their redevelopment efforts at the South Garland Transit Center.
- Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has agreed to aid in the partnership by providing local funds to the City if the RTC makes DART whole by providing the same amount of federal funds.
- DART proposes that the RTC funds be placed on the Silver Line Rail Project that is currently under construction.



PROPOSED ACTION

- RTC approval of:
 - \$15 million in federal CMAQ funds for the Silver Line Rail Project (from DFW Airport Station to Shiloh Station); DART will match the federal funds with \$3.75M of local funds on the Silver Line project.
 - DART sending \$15 million in local funds to Garland in several installments
 - Garland using the funding for land banking and related redevelopment activities in the area surrounding the South Garland Transit Center
 - Administratively amending the TIP and other planning/administrative documents with this information/action



QUESTIONS/CONTACTS



Christie Gotti

Senior Program Manager

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DRAFT

Policy Support to Develop Process for the
Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program
(P22-02)

The Dallas-Fort Worth region has positioned itself as an innovator in using advancing technology to address transportation issues. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) continues to receive interest from technology developers on implementing new and innovative infrastructure technology that is not currently in operation for a commercial application anywhere in the United States. As is the case with many new technologies, these transportation infrastructure solutions require certification by the appropriate governing entities (either local, state, or federal). This certification requirement may come in many forms, depending on the application, including safety certification to ensure the safety and welfare of the traveling public, as well as certification for use within the region as required by NCTCOG.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and process by which the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) may choose to coordinate with a technology provider to implement a certification facility in the Dallas-Fort Worth region for commercial application. To ensure flexibility with the various types of infrastructure being developed, the following process is structured in a transparent way for potential technology developers and local governments/transportation entities to express interest and collaborate on implementation opportunities. This process would allow for periodic expressions of interest to be facilitated in a timely manner.

The following are the guiding principles of this Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program:

- Potential projects must serve a long-range transportation need as identified in the recommendations of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or be considered for inclusion in a future Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- The technology developer is solely responsible for navigating any certification process(es) with the appropriate regulating authority(ies) for the developer's specific technology as required.
- If the proposed technology is implemented and fails to perform as intended, or the certification process ends or fails, the project-sponsoring local government must have verifiable assurances that the transportation need identified will still be appropriately addressed. It is encouraged that this contingency be included in any technology infrastructure proposal. Public funds may or may not be used for the certification needs of the emerging infrastructure technology.
- NCTCOG will facilitate mutual cooperation between local governments and transportation entities where potential project limits extend across multiple jurisdictional boundaries.
- When considering locations for proposed technology facilities, local governments and transportation entities should consider the following:
 - Expected timeframes for infrastructure to be operational for public use
 - Public use goals and performance expectations of proposed transportation infrastructure.

Following the guidelines listed above, the RTC directs staff to implement the following transparent process outlined in the steps below once NCTCOG or the RTC is approached by an infrastructure technology provider to enter into this process. This process is structured to allow for periodic solicitation or acceptance of proposed technology infrastructure solutions. The following process outlines how proposals brought to NCTCOG will be handled and does not

preclude local governments and transportation entities from engaging directly with technology entities.

- 1) NCTCOG staff will confirm infrastructure technology solution proposed by provider conforms with this policy and a long-range transportation need as identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- 2) NCTCOG staff will provide RTC with a summary of the technology provider's proposal, including any requirements and available details on the proposed operation of the technology. The RTC will take action on whether to initiate the development process for certification of the infrastructure technology.
- 3) Upon RTC action, local governments will submit potential locations of interest that utilize public right-of-way and serve a regional long-range transportation need.
- 4) The technology provider will determine the preferred location and project development opportunity to pursue based on the proposals provided by the local governments through NCTCOG.
- 5) The RTC will initiate project development activities and coordination efforts among the appropriate transportation agencies, local governments, and the technology provider. The RTC will direct NCTCOG staff to provide support in the project development activities and coordination efforts as needed. Project development activities and coordination efforts may include appropriation of public funds for project development and implementation.

The RTC directs staff to provide regular briefings when proposals are received and during project development. The RTC also directs staff to integrate the resulting recommendations from projects that advance into future mobility, air quality, safety, and other regional planning activities as appropriate.

Approved: _____

Policy Support to Advance High-Speed Rail in the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into Phase 2 National Environmental Policy Act Process
(P22-01)

Existing Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policy, P21-01 (Policy Support to Advance the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into Phase 2), was adopted on July 8, 2021. Guiding the efforts of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff, this existing policy outlined the desires of the RTC to advance both high-speed rail and hyperloop into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

Following further coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration, hyperloop technology is unable to advance through the NEPA process to environmentally clear a specific corridor for a hyperloop facility at this time due to hyperloop's lack of safety certification and demonstration status.

The RTC is interested in maintaining the momentum of Phase 1 efforts, including public and private stakeholder consensus, and maintaining early opportunities for private investors and operators in high-speed rail to gain interest in the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth corridor. In order to achieve environmental clearance of the Interstate Highway (IH) 30 corridor for a high-speed mode in a timely manner, the RTC directs staff to advance high-speed rail along the IH 30 corridor into the NEPA process and to coordinate with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration in determining the appropriate approval process for environmental clearance.

While not included in the federal NEPA process, the RTC directs staff to continue to monitor hyperloop technology advancement through the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Technology Readiness Levels index as identified in Phase 1. Staff will bring regular updates to the RTC on the progress of hyperloop's advancement.

The RTC directs staff to continue coordination with local governments and the Texas Department of Transportation in Phase 2 efforts, including preliminary engineering and environmental documentation required by the National Environmental Policy Act. Additionally, the RTC reaffirms support for a modally integrated IH 30 corridor, including high speed rail, managed lanes, general purpose freeway lanes, and frontage roads, consistent with the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

RTC directs staff to integrate these alignment and mode recommendations into future mobility, air quality, safety, and other regional planning activities as appropriate.



NCTCOG

DEVELOPING THE INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

BRENDON WHEELER
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
5/12/2022

A futuristic, curved tunnel with blue and white lighting, creating a sense of motion and depth. The tunnel's walls and ceiling are composed of smooth, curved panels that reflect the light, giving it a sleek, modern appearance. The perspective is from the center of the tunnel, looking down its length, which emphasizes its curvature and depth. The lighting is a mix of cool blues and warm whites, with some bright spots that suggest recessed lighting or reflections. The overall effect is one of a high-tech, advanced environment.

BACKGROUND

Policy 22-01: Advancing High-Speed Rail

Advance only high-speed rail into NEPA process

Purpose:

- To environmentally clear IH 30 corridor
- To not hold up NEPA process with developing technology

Monitor hyperloop technology advancement

Purpose:

- To advance hyperloop along technology certification and demonstration path
- To advance these two technologies in different corridors



Interest in DFW Region

Virgin Hyperloop's request for proposals for certification center site in 2020

DFW High-Speed Transportation Connections Study

Technology Forum outreach

Interest received to date

- Hyperloop developers
- Advanced gondola-like systems/suspended pods

Many new transportation infrastructure technologies require certification prior to widespread application

Technologies face difficulties in advancing through traditional planning processes



History of Innovation in DFW Region

Telecom Corridor

The Superconducting Super Collider project

Managed lanes network

First all-electronic tolltag facility

Vehicle occupancy verification technology

Mobility Innovation Zone – Alliance

Autonomous vehicle testing and deployment

Drone technology





POLICY
for Transportation Technology
Infrastructure Certification Program

Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program

Purpose of RTC policy to:

- Outline RTC's guiding principles
- Define transparent process by which RTC may coordinate with technology provider for certification facility or pilot applications
- Provide structure for periodic solicitation or acceptance of new technology infrastructure solutions
- Ensure level playing field for transportation infrastructure technology providers wishing to move to region and local governments wishing to propose their site for consideration



Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program

Guiding Principles:

- Must serve long-range transportation need (MTP)
- Technology developer responsible for navigating certification process
- NCTCOG will facilitate mutual cooperation
- Local government considerations:
 - Contingency should technology fail to perform as intended
 - Expected timeframe for infrastructure to be operational
 - Public use goals and performance expectations



Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program

Process:

- 1) NCTCOG staff to ensure technology solution conforms to policy guidance and long-range transportation need (MTP).
- 2) NCTCOG staff to brief RTC and RTC to take action on initiating process.
- 3) Upon RTC action, local governments to submit potential locations of interest.
- 4) Technology provider to determine preferred location to pursue.
- 5) RTC to initiate development activities; NCTCOG staff to provide support.



Requested RTC Action

Staff requests RTC adopt this policy to develop a process for the Innovative Transportation Infrastructure Certification Program:

- Advances hyperloop and other innovative infrastructure technologies through the certification process to commercial application
- Outlines guiding principles and transparent process by which RTC may coordinate with technology providers needing certification
- Ensures a long-range transportation need is met
- Allows for periodic solicitation or acceptance of developing technology solutions for region
- Creates level playing field for transportation infrastructure providers and local governments



Schedule

- ✓ January 28, 2022 – STTC Action
HSR Policy (P22-01)
- ✓ February 10, 2022 – RTC Action
HSR Policy (P22-01)
- ✓ April 21, 2022 – STTC Action
Certification Policy (P22-02)
- ➔ May 12, 2022 – RTC Action
Certification Policy (P22-02)

CONTACT US



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NCTCOG

2022 TITLE VI PROGRAM AND LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN UPDATES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
5.12.2022

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964



WHO IS PROTECTED

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin



WHO MUST COMPLY

Any program or activity that receives federal funds or other federal assistance



TITLE VI PROGRAM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



FREQUENCY

Update every three years



CONTENTS

Describe how NCTCOG MPO implements Title VI nondiscrimination efforts and monitors subrecipients



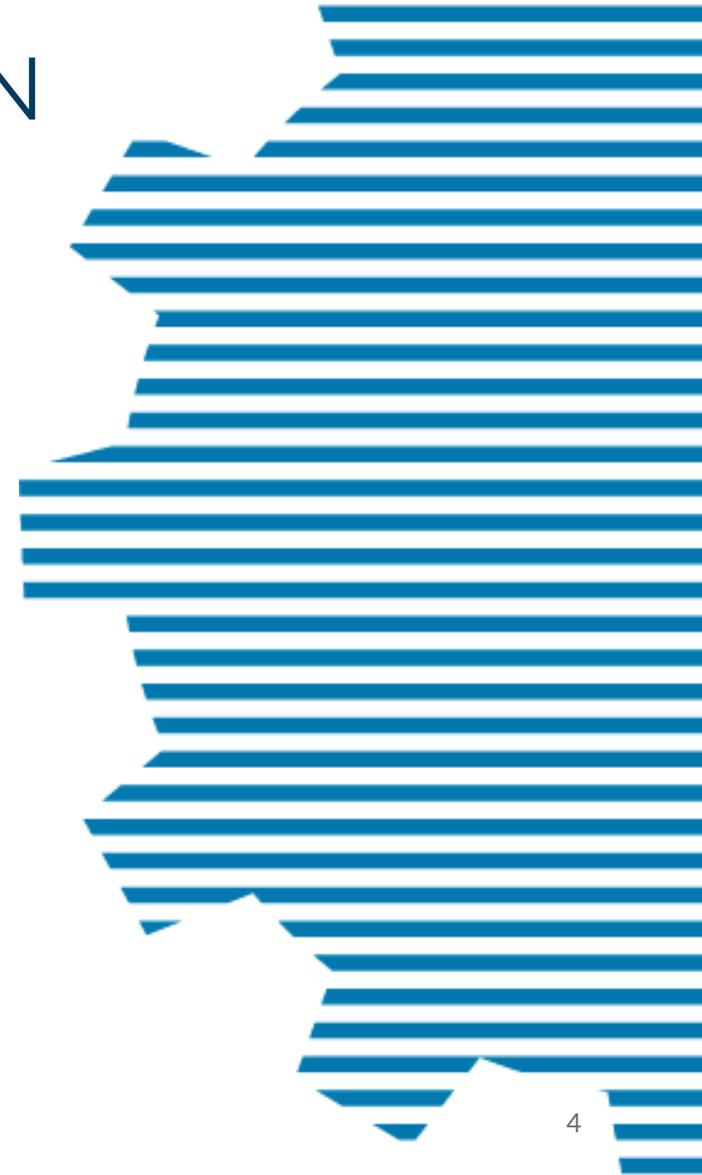
REVIEW

Submit to Federal Transit Administration for review



TITLE VI/NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as a recipient of federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person shall on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any Agency programs or activities.



TITLE VI PROGRAM UPDATES OF NOTE

List of transit-related Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits (none)

Summary of outreach efforts made since the last Title VI Program submission

Schedule of subrecipient Title VI Program submissions

Impacts of the distribution of state and federal funds in the aggregate for public transportation projects

Forty-five-day public comment period



Image Provided By Getty



LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN UPDATES OF NOTE

Limited English proficiency population
for the 12-county Dallas-Fort Worth
Metropolitan Planning Area

Literacy rates for the 12-county area

Four-factor analysis to evaluate the
extent to which language assistance
measures are required

Forty-five-day public comment period



TIMELINE

Meeting/Task	Date
Public Meeting, Launch of 45-Day Public Comment Period	February 7, 2022
Close of Public Comment Period	March 23, 2022
STTC Information	March 25, 2022
RTC Information	April 14, 2022
STTC Action - Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, Title VI Program, Language Assistance Plan	April 22, 2022
RTC Action - Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, Title VI Program, Language Assistance Plan	May 12, 2022
Executive Board	May 26, 2022
Submittal Deadline	May 31, 2022



REQUESTED ACTION

Regional Transportation Council approval of:
Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy Statement
Updates to MPO Title VI Program
Updates to MPO Language Assistance Plan



CONTACT US



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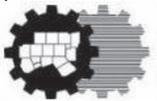
Kate Zielke
Principal Transportation Planner
Title VI Coordinator

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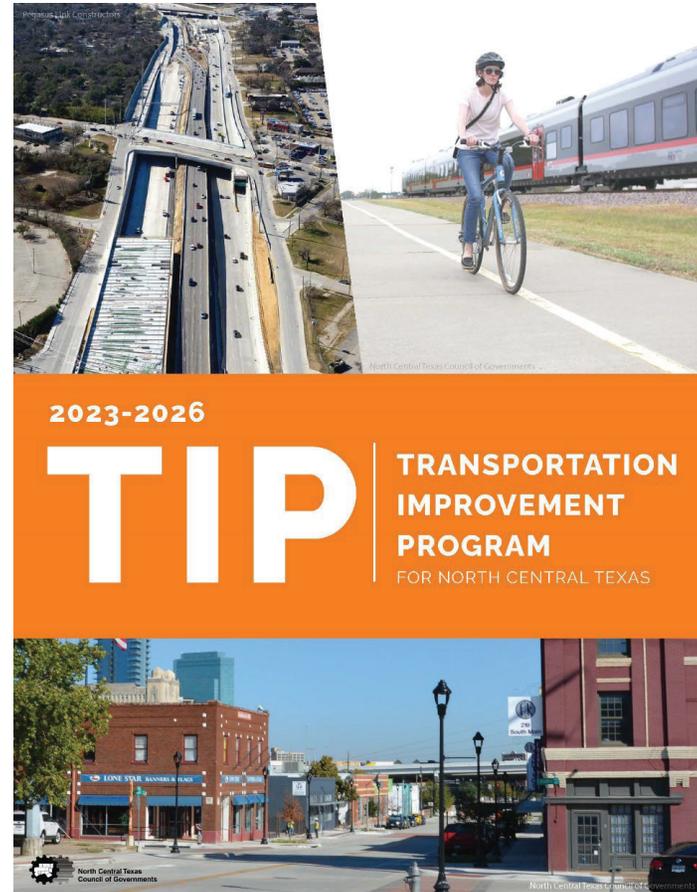
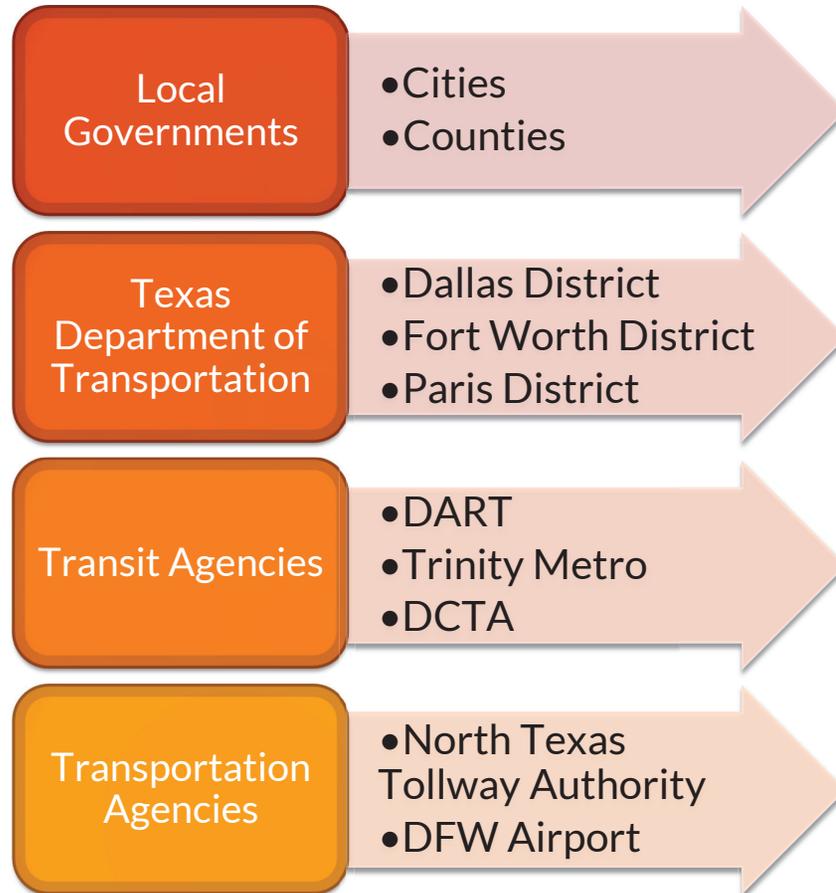
2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) DRAFT LISTINGS

Regional Transportation Council
May 12, 2022



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation Department

A COOPERATIVE EFFORT



DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Review existing projects and gather information on additional locally funded projects
- Make needed revisions to existing project schedules, funding, and/or scope
- Develop revised project listings
- Financially constrain project programming based on estimated future revenues
- Conduct Mobility Plan and Air Quality conformity review
- **Solicit public and Committee/Council input**
- **Finalize project listings and submit to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

SCOPE OF PROGRAMMING

- \$9.16 Billion in the 2023-2026 TIP (Roadway and Transit)
 - \$5.34 Billion in Federal Commitments
 - \$1.46 Billion in State Commitments
 - \$0.15 Billion in Regional Commitments
 - \$1.27 Billion in Local Commitments
 - \$0.94 Billion in Transit Formula Commitments
- 1,018 Active Projects (Roadway and Transit)
 - 609 Active Projects in 2023-2045
- 71 Implementing Agencies (Roadway and Transit)

CHANGES TO TIP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Typically, the RTC, STTC, and public are provided with a “Double Entry” report that contains all active projects in which to review and comment. This report provides a more comprehensive picture of a project than the Statewide TIP (STIP) format that is required by TxDOT.
- Once approval of these listings is received, staff converts the data into the required STIP report format and submits it as part of the TIP document to TxDOT for inclusion in the STIP.
- FHWA recently informed staff that this process does not satisfy their requirements for review and comment on the TIP.
- To comply with these requirements, staff will be bringing back the approved project listings in STIP report format, along with the full TIP Document.
 - The STIP report will only contain the project phases funded in FY2023-2026
 - Given that the same information is slated for approval this month, we propose to ask for approval via consent agenda next month.

TIMELINE/ACTION

Meeting/Task	Date
Meeting with Implementing Agencies	May-September 2021
Data Input, Financial Constraint, and Analysis	June 2021-February 2022
Draft Listings - STTC Information	February 2022
Draft Listings - RTC Information	March 2022
Draft Listings - Public Involvement	March 2022
Deadline for Providing Comments on Draft Listings	March 31, 2022
Draft Project Listings - STTC Action	April 2022
TIP Document and Final STIP Listing – Public Involvement	May 2022
Draft Project Listings – RTC Action	May 2022
TIP Document and Final STIP Listing – STTC Consent Agenda	May 2022
TIP Document and Final STIP Listing – RTC Consent Agenda	June 2022
Submit Final Document to TxDOT	June 2022
Anticipated TxDOT Commission Approval (for STIP)	August 2022
Anticipated Federal/State Approval (STIP)	October/November 2022

REQUESTED ACTION

- RTC approval of:
 - The projects and project changes shown in the 2023-2026 TIP roadway Double Entry report and transit TIP listings
 - Amending the Unified Planning Working Program (UPWP) and other planning/administrative documents as needed
- Only projects in FY2023-2026 will be included in the new TIP
 - Projects in FY2022 and earlier are provided, but will not be included in the new TIP
 - Projects in FY2027+ will be included in Appendix D to allow project development activities to continue

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

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NCTCOG Transportation

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program – Fiscal Year 2023-2025 Goal Update

Ken Kirkpatrick | Regional Transportation Council

May 12, 2022

DBE Requirements & NCTCOG Policy

 Requirement: 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 26

Who is required to have a DBE Program:
Certain Recipients of Federal Funds (FTA, FHWA, FAA)

NCTCOG Policy:
Award Fair Share of Contracts to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

NCTCOG Transportation Department (US DOT-Assisted Contracting Opportunities):

- 19.4% Overall DBE Participation Goal
- Demonstration of Good-Faith Efforts
- Certification of DBE Eligibility
- Necessary to Update the Goal for Next Three Years



Process to Update DBE Goal

- ✓ Project Potential Contract Awards (FY 23-25)
- ✓ DBE Goal Development
- ✓ Initiate Public Input/Stakeholder Involvement
- ➔ Publish Goal for Public Comment/Review

Committee Review/Consideration

Implement New DBE Goal – October 1, 2022



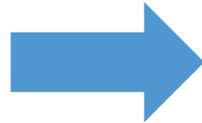
Development of DBE Goal

Step 1:

Determine Relative Availability of Ready, Willing & Able DBE Firms

- Determined by Market Area
 - DFW MSA (NCTCOG)
 - Individual Market Area Transit Subs (County)
- Includes weighting by Contract opportunities for FY23-25
 - NCTCOG & Subs
 - Funding Source

Establishes Base Figure



Step 2:

Consideration of Other DBE Data

- Historical DBE Expenditures
- DBE goals from other, similar agencies in DFW Market area
- Stakeholder comment
- Public comment

Adjustments to Base Figure



Step 1

Projection of Potential Contract Awards

NCTCOG & Subrecipients

Procurement Type	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s) FTA	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s) FHWA^	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s) TOTAL
Construction	\$4,105	\$0	\$4,105
Marketing, Advertising, and Public Outreach	\$191	\$1,800	\$1,991
Office Supplies & Equipment (Rental & Purchase)	\$429	\$573	\$1,002
Operational Administrative, Communications, Support Services	\$2,603	\$0	\$2,603
Planning/Engineering	\$0	\$10,725	\$10,725
Software and Ancillary Information Technology Professional Services	\$1,060	\$3,005	\$4,065
Transportation Equipment	\$13,721	\$0	\$13,721
Vehicle Maintenance and Operations Support	\$3,965	\$0	\$3,965
TOTAL	\$26,073	\$16,103	\$42,176



Step 1

Preliminary DBE Availability Analysis

NCTCOG & Subrecipients

Procurement Type	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s)	DBE Firms	Total Firms	DBE Goal
Construction	\$4,105	3,699	13,900	26.6%
Marketing, Advertising, and Public Outreach	\$1,991	427	1,784	23.9%
Office Supplies & Equipment (Rental & Purchase)	\$1,002	35	629	5.6%
Operational Administrative, Communications, Support Services	\$2,603	890	11,220	7.9%
Planning/Engineering	\$10,725	1,810	5,655	32.0%
Software and Ancillary Information Technology Professional Services	\$4,065	727	5,156	14.1%
Transportation Equipment	\$13,721	22	251	8.8%
Vehicle Maintenance and Operations Support	\$3,965	71	2,403	3.0%
TOTAL	\$42,176	7,681	40,998	18.7%
Total Weighted Summary				17.0%



Step 1

Preliminary DBE Availability Analysis

Subrecipients

Procurement Type	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s)	DBE Firms	Total Firms	DBE Goal
Construction	\$4,105	3,699	13,900	26.6%
Marketing, Advertising, and Public Outreach	\$191	427	1,784	23.9%
Office Supplies & Equipment (Rental & Purchase)	\$429	35	629	5.6%
Operational Administrative, Communications, Support Services	\$2,603	890	11,220	7.9%
Software and Ancillary Information Technology Professional Services	\$1,060	146	3,047	4.8%
Transportation Equipment	\$721	19	109	17.4%
Vehicle Maintenance and Operations Support	\$3,965	71	2,403	3.0%
TOTAL	\$13,074	5,287	33,092	16.0%
Total Weighted Summary				12.7%



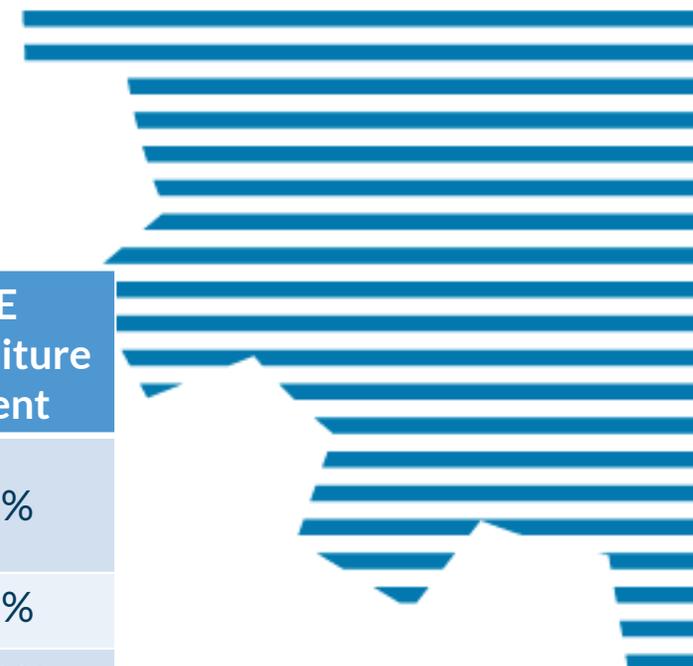
Step 2 – Consideration of Other DBE Data Items Reviewed for Potential Adjustments

- ✓ Historical DBE Achievement/Expenditures
- ✓ Similar Entity DBE Goals
- ✓ Stakeholder Comment
- ✓ Public Comment



Step 2

Historical DBE Performance



Fiscal Years ^{^*}	Total Contract Amount	DBE Goal	DBE Contract Percent	DBE Expenditure Percent
2006-2010	\$17,028,000	13%	22.00%	24.1%
2011-2013	\$7,122,596	25%	27.40%	24.5%
2014-2016	\$20,010,463	25%	27.93%	24.63%
2017-2019	\$10,657,099	25%	31.59%	33.69%
2020-2022	\$41,807,606	19.4%	19.18%	14.78%

*expenditures through April 8, 2022

[^]2006-2019 NCTCOG activity only, 2020-2022 NCTCOG & Subrecipient activities



Step 2

Similar Entity DBE Goals/Feedback

Similar Entity DBE Goals

Agency	Goal	Program Period
Trinity Metro	13%	FY2020-2022
DART	31%	FY2020-2022
DCTA	10%	FY2022-2024

Stakeholder Feedback

DBE Consultation Workshop (April 11) – positive feedback

Public Comment Pending – Public Comment Period Begins May 13th

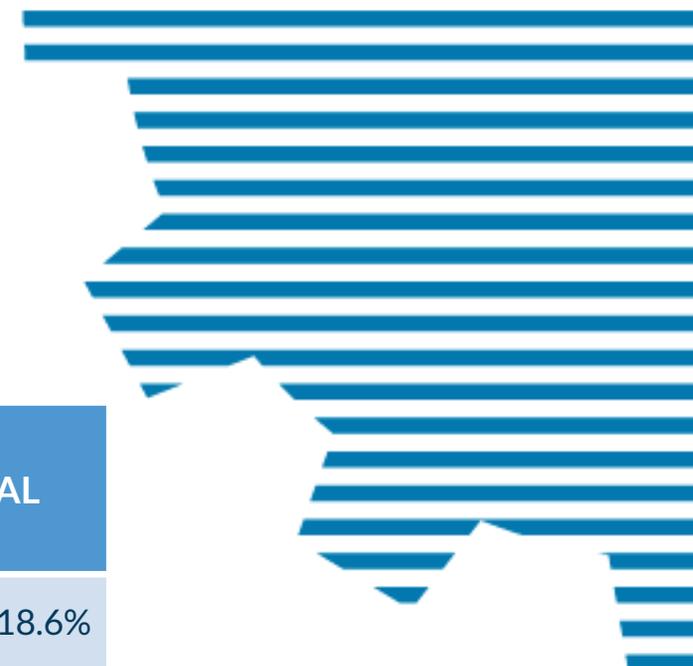
No recommended adjustments at this time, subject to public comment



FY2023-2025 DBE Goal Update

Proposed Goal

NCTCOG and Subrecipients
(FTA, FHWA Funds)



CONTRACTING ENTITY	FTA	FHWA	TOTAL
NCTCOG	8.8%	26.6%	18.6%
SUBRECIPIENTS	12.7%	N/A	12.7%
TOTAL WEIGHTED GOAL*	9.8%	32.0%	17.0%

*Weighted by Contract Service Type, Contract Award Amount, and Market Area



Schedule

TASK	DATE	STATUS
STTC Meeting: Information Item on DBE Goal Update	March 25	✓
Consultation Meeting with Stakeholders	April 11	✓
Meeting: Information Item on DBE Goal Update	April 14	✓
STTC: Information Item on Proposed Goal	April 22	✓
RTC: Information Item on Proposed Goal	May 12	✓
Notice to Public of Proposed Goal (start 45-Day Public Comment Period)	May 13	
DBE Open House	June 6	
Public Meeting on DBE Goal Update Process	June 13	
STTC: Approval of DBE Goal	June 24	
End of 45-day Public Comment Period	July 5	
RTC: Action Item of DBE Goal	July 14	
Executive Board: Action Item	July 28	
Submit Final Electronically to FTA	August 1	
DBE Program Update and Goal Effective	October 1	



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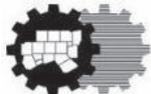


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DALLAS-FORT WORTH EAST/WEST FUNDING DISTRIBUTION FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT & JOBS ACT (IIJA)

Regional Transportation Council
May 12, 2022



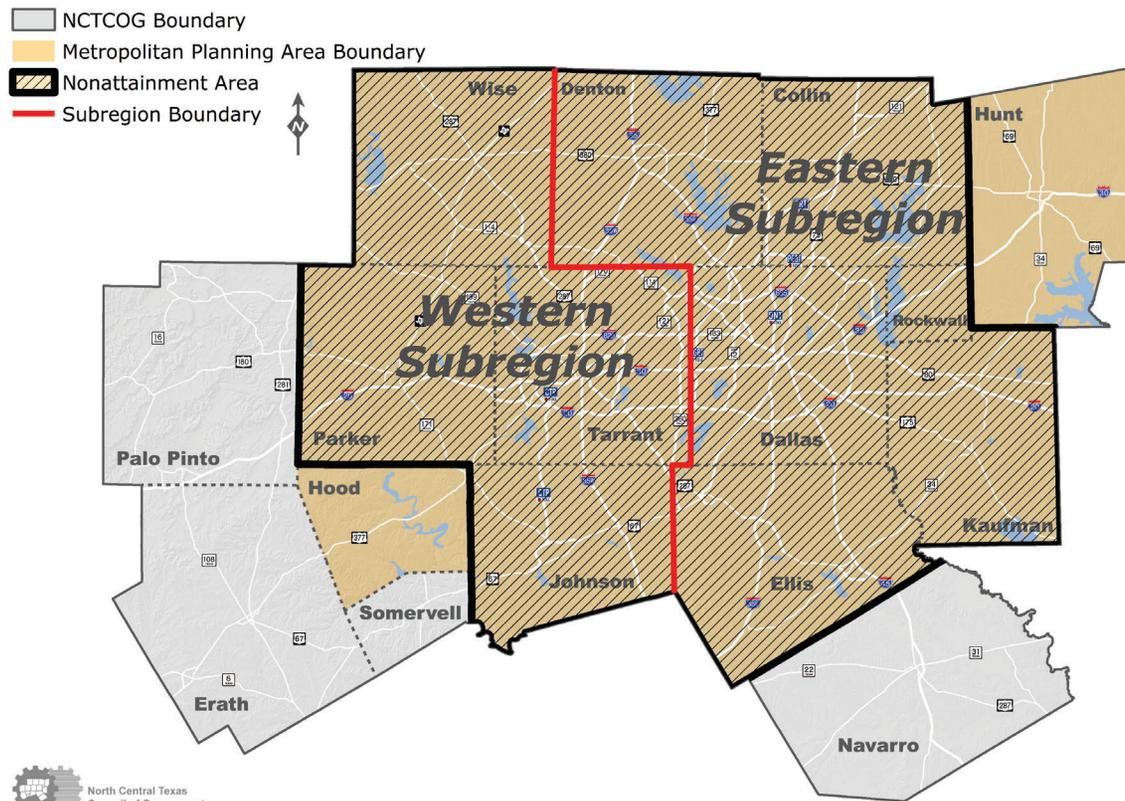
North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation Department

BACKGROUND

- Federal funding comes to our region from federal transportation apportionments via the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).
- Apportionments are based on several factors depending on the funding source (e.g., population, emissions).
- While funds cannot be sub-allocated to cities or counties (per federal law), we can split funds along TxDOT District lines.
- This practice has helped our region stay focused on overall priorities vs. who has received what funding when. Instead, each subregion works within their available funding.
- Regional Transportation Council (RTC) bylaws state that funding distributions are to be re-evaluated with each new transportation funding bill for air quality and mobility funds; transit funds are re-evaluated each year as federal apportionments are received.
- On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, which necessitates a review of the latest East/West funding distribution.

EASTERN/WESTERN SUBREGION BOUNDARY AND NON-ATTAINMENT AREA

North Central Texas Council of Governments Region

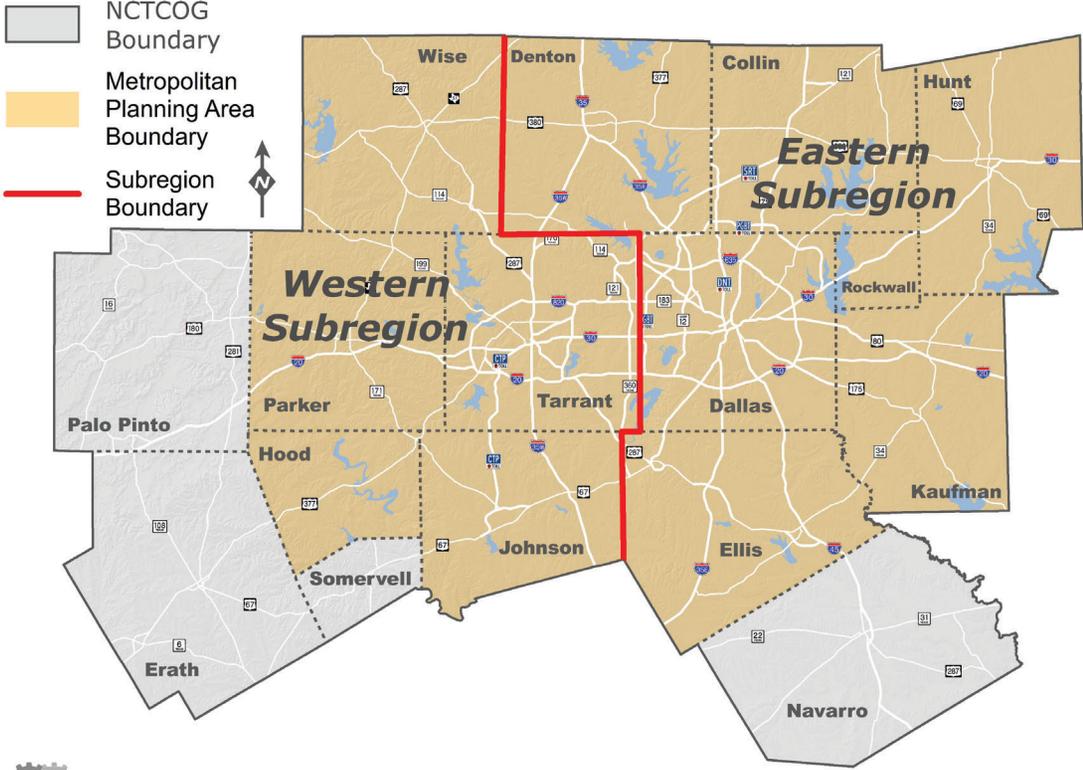


AIR QUALITY FUNDS

- Funding intended for air quality projects that address attainment of national ambient air quality standards in nonattainment areas.
- Allocations to the region are based on population and air quality nonattainment factors.
- East/West Distribution Formula Inputs:
 - Tons per day of ozone precursors:
 - Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and
 - Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)
- Generally, applies to Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds

EASTERN/WESTERN SUBREGION BOUNDARY AND MPA BOUNDARY

North Central Texas Council of Governments Region



MOBILITY FUNDS

- Designed for mobility projects addressing transportation needs within Metropolitan Area Boundaries with populations of 200,000 or greater
- Allocations based on population of Urbanized Areas in the region
- East/West Distribution Formula Inputs:
 - Population
 - Employment
 - Activity (Population and Employment Equalized to account for communities where available jobs might exceed population or vice versa)
 - Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Resulting percentage split applies to the RTC's mobility funding categories (e.g., Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Category 2 funding)

PREVIOUS FUNDING DISTRIBUTION PERCENTAGES

Transportation Funding Bill	STP-MM/STBG		CMAQ	
	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
ISTEA (1991)	33%	67%	33%	67%
TEA-21* (1998)	32%	68%	32%	68%
	31%	69%	31%	69%
SAFETEA-LU (2005)	31%	69%	31%	69%
MAP-21 (2012)	32%	68%	34%	66%
FAST ACT (2015)	32%	68%	34%	66%

* TEA-21 funding distributions were originally approved as 32% in the west and 68% in the east. In 2003, the funding distributions were re-evaluated to 31% in the west and 69% in the east.

FORMULA INPUTS FOR IIJA ANALYSIS

Mobility Funds Based on 12-County MPA Boundary	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Population ¹	33.38%	66.62%
Employment ²	29.45%	70.55%
Activity (Pop+Emp Equalized)	31.42%	68.58%
Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) ³	30.79%	69.21%
Average	31.26%	68.74%
Rounded Average	31%	69%
Air Quality Funds Based on 10-County Non-Attainment Area	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Ozone Precursors tons per day ⁴ (%)	41.50 (36.06%)	73.59 (63.94%)
Ozone Precursors Tons of VOC and NOx (Rounded Average)	36%	64%

¹Source: 2020 United States Census data

²Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis data (2019), Census for Transportation Planning Products (2016), Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data (2019), and proprietary data collected in 2019

³Source: Estimate from 2019 Roadway network (validation year)

⁴Source: NCTCOG forecast for 2022 Transportation Conformity ten-county analysis of 2023 roadway network.

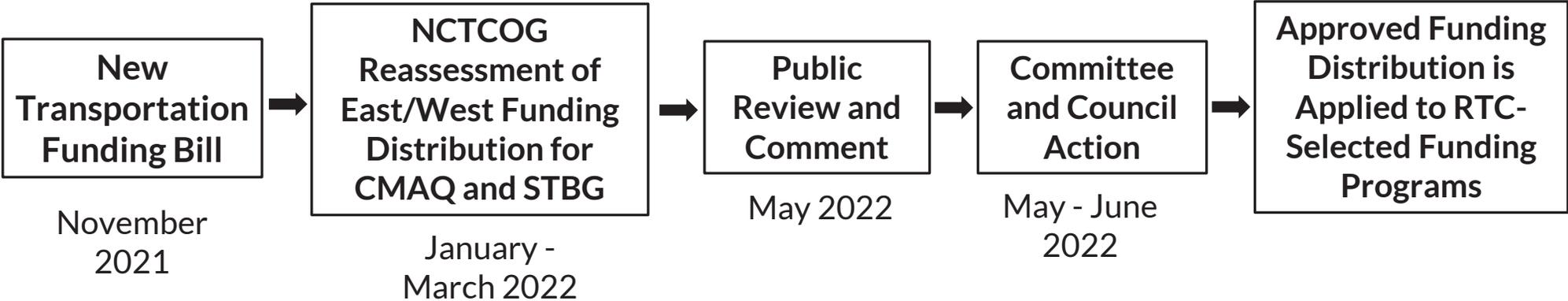
EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE – IJA ANALYSIS

- In addition to the inputs specific to each funding category, environmental justice and equity are considered when developing funding distributions.
- These indicators show a minority, low income, and/or limited English proficiency population distribution similar to the proposed funding distribution for the western and eastern regions.

Population Type		Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Total
Minority	Population	1,185,662	2,774,455	3,960,117
	Percent	30%	70%	
Low Income	Population	389,691	784,965	1,174,656
	Percent	33%	67%	
Limited English Proficiency	Population	246,765	667,606	914,371
	Percent	27%	73%	

Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION FORMULA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



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Overview of Actions Affecting Eastern/Western Funding Shares
(\$ in Millions, as of March 2022)

Date	Projects/Programs	Relevant Actions		Cumulative Total	
		West	East	West	East
Mar-13	Final SAFETEA-LU East-West Equity Total	\$649.76	\$1,558.48	\$649.76	\$1,558.48
Jan-16	Final MAP-21 East-West Equity Total	\$320.98	\$847.62	\$970.74	\$2,406.10
Dec-16	FY 2017-2026 Regional 10-Year Planning Effort - Category 2 Funds (Transfer from the East to the West)	\$100.00	(\$100.00)	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.10
Oct-17	Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding for a project in Hunt County (City of Quinlan) awarded through the Statewide TA Set-Aside Call for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in October 2017 (Minute Order #115076)	\$0.00	\$0.30	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.40
Dec-17	Category 12 funding for various overpass reconstruction projects along the IH 30 corridor in Hunt County as approved in the December 2017 update to Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$102.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,408.40
Sep-18	Category 12 funding for the construction of an interchange at IH 45 and FM 664 in Ellis County as approved in the 2019 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$34.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,442.40
Dec-18	Transfer of Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds from the East to the West as approved by the RTC in December 2018 through the CMAQ/STBG: Strategic Partnerships Round 3/Intersection Improvements/MTP Policy Bundle TDC Program	\$5.80	(\$5.80)	\$1,076.54	\$2,436.60
Aug-19	Category 12 Clear Lanes funding for various projects in the region was awarded 69% East/31% West instead of being split 68% East/32% West, which gave the East a small amount of additional revenue compared to the West	\$0.00	\$33.59	\$1,076.54	\$2,470.19
Aug-19	Category 12 Strategic Priority funding for various projects in the East (IH 30 in Dallas County, IH 35 in Denton County, and IH 30 in Hunt County) and in the West (Southeast Connector in Tarrant County and SH 170 in Denton/Tarrant Counties) as approved in the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$208.33	\$1,018.85	\$1,284.87	\$3,489.04
Jan-20	Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funding for projects in Dallas County (City of Balch Springs) and Parker County (City of Hudson Oaks) awarded through the Statewide Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and TA Set-Aside Calls for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in January 2020 (Minute Order #115662)	\$2.13	\$0.96	\$1,287.00	\$3,490.00

Overview of Actions Affecting Eastern/Western Funding Shares
(\$ in Millions, as of March 2022)

Date	Projects/Programs	Relevant Actions		Cumulative Total	
		West	East	West	East
Aug-20	Transfer of Regional Toll Revenue funds from Denton County to the Western Subregion in exchange for an equal amount of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds as approved by the Regional Transportation Council through the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program (Round 2)	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$1,317.00	\$3,520.00
Aug-20	Category 12 Strategic Priority funding for the IH 30 Canyon project in Dallas County as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in the 2021 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$112.00	\$1,317.00	\$3,632.00
Sep-20	Additional Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set Aside funding awarded to the Eastern subregion through the 2020 TA Set Aside Call for Projects as approved by the RTC; Western subregion will receive an equal amount of CMAQ and/or STBG funding as part of a future project selection initiative to offset this extra funding.	(\$1.86)	\$1.86	\$1,315.14	\$3,633.86
Aug-21	Category 12 Strategic Priority and Texas Clear Lanes funding for various projects in the East (US 380 in Collin County, IH 30 in Dallas County, US 80 in Dallas County, IH 30 in Hunt County, and Regional Mobility Assistance Patrol) and in the West (IH 20 in Parker County, IH 30 in Tarrant County, and Regional Mobility Assistance Patrol) as approved in the 2022 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$83.59	\$255.23	\$1,398.73	\$3,889.09
Oct-21	Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funding for projects in Parker County (City of Aledo & City of Weatherford) awarded through the 2021 Statewide TA Set-Aside Calls for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in October 2021 (Minute Order #116126)	\$1.60	\$0.00	\$1,400.33	\$3,889.09
Updated FAST Act Equity Percentage Share as of March 2022				26.47%	73.53%

Cumulative East-West Equity Share	Cumulative Total	
	West	East
Cumulative Total	\$1,400.33	\$3,889.09
Cumulative Percentage Shares	26.47%	73.53%
RTC Approved Target Shares	32%	68%

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
May 2021 - April 2022

RTC MEMBER	Entity	5/13/21	6/10/21	7/8/21	8/12/21	9/9/21	10/14/21	11/11/21	12/9/21	1/13/22	2/10/22	3/10/22	4/14/2022
Daniel Alemán Jr (01/22)	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Dennis Bailey (02/21)	Rockwall County	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Adam Bazaldua (09/21)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Elizabeth M. Beck (08/21)	Fort Worth	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Gyna Bivens (08/21)	Fort Worth	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E(R)
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	P
Janet DePuy (09/21)	Richardson	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton County	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant County	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	A	P	P	P	E(R)
Raul H. Gonzalez (09/21)	Arlington	--	--	--	--	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Barry L. Gordon (12/20)	Duncanville	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	E	E	A
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson County	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Carl L. Johnson (09/20)	TxDOT, FW	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E(R)
Brandon Jones (05/21)	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	P	P	P	E(R)	P	A	E	E(R)	A	A	A	P
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Alison Maguire (07/21)	Denton	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Adam McGough (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	E	A	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P
Allen E. Meagher (12/20)	Irving	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P
Cara Mendelsohn (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	E
Omar Narvaez (09/21)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Philip J. Ritter (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
May 2021 - April 2022**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	5/13/21	6/10/21	7/8/21	8/12/21	9/9/21	10/14/21	11/11/21	12/9/21	1/13/22	2/10/22	3/10/22	4/14/2022
Jim R. Ross (07/21)	Arlington	--	--	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chris Schulmeister (07/20)	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Eules	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	A(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	P	E	P	P	P	P
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant County	P	P	E	P	E	E(R)	P	E	P	P	E	P
Michele Wong Krause (11/21)	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster

March 2021 - April 2022

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	3/26/21	4/23/21	5/28/21	6/25/21	8/27/21	9/24/21	10/22/21	12/3/21	1/28/22	2/25/22	03/25/22	04/22/22
Joe Atwood	Hood County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Melissa Baker	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Micah Baker	Dallas County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Boski	Mansfield	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Keith Brooks	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Caskey	Frisco	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Cohen	Southlake	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kent Collins	Coppell	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hal Cranor	Euless	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Davis	Wise County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caryl DeVries	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Dickens	Hurst	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Disheroon	Johnson County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Phil Dupler	FWTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rebecca Diviney	Denton	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Edwards	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chris Flanigan	Allen	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ann Foss	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eric Gallt	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gary Graham	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ron Hartline	The Colony	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shannon Hicks	Addison	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jeremy Hutt	Cleburne	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Thuan Huynh	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Joel James	NTTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*

P=Present A=Absent R=Represented E=Excused (personal illness, family emergency, jury duty, business necessity)

-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by vido/audio conference. Individual attendance not taken.

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster

March 2021 - April 2022

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	3/26/21	4/23/21	5/28/21	6/25/21	8/27/21	9/24/21	10/22/21	12/3/21	1/28/22	2/25/22	03/25/22	04/22/22
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
William Johnson	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eron Linn	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Luedtke	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Marbut	Weatherford	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wes McClure	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Moen	Frisco	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mark Nelson	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jim O'Connor	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kevin Overton	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Palermo	DCTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Todd Plesko	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shawn Poe	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Polster	Denton County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kelly Porter	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Porter	Wylie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kathryn Rush	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Salmon	Lewisville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Shewski	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dave Timbrell	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Press Tompkins	Greenville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Logan Tucker	Duncanville												*
Gregory Van	Haltom City	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Daniel Vedral	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE April 22, 2022

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, April 22, 2022, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following STTC members or representatives were present: Melissa Baker, Bryan Beck, David Boski, Keith Brooks, Tanya Brooks, Ceason Clemens, Kent Collins, Clarence Daugherty, Greg Dickens, Rebecca Diviney, Phil Dupler, Chad Edwards, Eric Fladager, Chris Flanigan, Ann Foss, Eric Gallt, Ricardo Gonzalez, Gary Graham, Tom Hammons, Shannon Hicks, Matthew Hotelling, John D. Hudspeth, Thuan Huynh, Gus Khankarli, Paul Luedtke, Chad Marbut, Alberto Mares, Wes McClure, Brian Moen, Mark Nelson, Jim O'Connor, Kevin Overton, Tim Palermo, Dipak Patel, Todd Plesko, Shawn Poe, John Polster, Akar Pokhrel, Kelly Porter, Tim Porter, Greg Royster, Kathryn Rush, Moosa Saghian, David Salmon, Brian Shewski, Walter Shumac, III, Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize, Daniel Vedral, Caroline Waggoner, and Robert Woodbury.

Others present at the meeting were: Shakeel Ahmed, Vickie Alexander, Tom Bamonte, Emily Beckham, Natalie Bettger, Angie Carson, Brian Dell, Christie Gottie, Duane Hengst, Andrew Hooker, Jim Jarrath, Amy Johnson, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Dan Lamers, Jody Loza, Michael Morris, Bailey Muller, Jenny Narvaez, Catherine Osborn, Minesha Reese, Toni Stehling, Shannon Stevenson, Brendon Wheeler, Amanda Wilson, and Kate Zielke.

1. **Approval of March 25, 2022, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 25, 2022, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. John Polster (M); Daniel Vedral (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** There were not any items on the Consent Agenda.
3. **RAISE, Trinity Metro Partnership and "INFRA": Making Partnerships in Constrained Scheduling Environments:** Michael Morris updated the Committee on the latest information on the RAISE grants submitted to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC). A proposed transit partnership with the City of Fort Worth and Trinity Metro and the resultant implications to the next round of "INFRA" grants. We have a new partnership with Trinity Metro. The item was put as possible action when the agenda was drafted but we've made enough progress to make it an action item. We have three more Call for Projects due in May. Michael mentioned we are going to focus on the "INFRA" part, we are focused on all three new rounds, including MEGA. We will not be putting together nine applications between now and the May deadline. Staff is requesting action of the two particular items. At last month's Surface Technical Transportation Committee (STTC) meeting, Trinity Metro was going to submit Rail Extension into the Hospital District but elected not to. So, we scurried to resubmit the Rail Extension into Fort Worth. With permission from Trinity Metro to submit it, then we honored the Airport commitment the STTC made. It is a test of the new transportation legislation that permits money to be used on Airports, thought it was critical to test that new federal policy. We kept to the STTC recommendations and didn't change course. We are working on fixing the situation now and bring it back to the Committee, it involves Katy Lofts having a different path forward on previous Committee money that was previously approved. We proposed to advance Lancaster and "INFRA" project as we did previously and a TIGER grant previous to that. We do want to get the East Fort Worth rail station across the goal line, that's the rail station at 820 and Trinity Railway Express with a

slight adjustment to the guaranteed transit program. That's the program that transit vehicles use the toll managed lanes, where if we don't get you there on time, we go ahead and pay those fares directly to the transit agency. The three items that the Committee and RTC approved: South Dallas Improved Bicycle/ Pedestrian Routes to Rail & Transit Technology Upgrades; South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity; and International Parkway Advanced Mobility Program. It appears we were one minute late on the South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity submittal at 5:01 pm. We will resubmit it under "INFRA". Action requested today is to resubmit, if necessary, South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity under "INFRA" and give us permission to submit the Lancaster project under "INFRA". Updated financial information provided on the last slide of the presentation that wasn't included in the mailout will be uploaded to the STTC website for reference under "presentations". Michael mentioned Christie Gotti, Brian Dell, and Shannon Stevenson, all spent a lot of time getting all of this information together. Michael provided a walkthrough of the five projects listed on the last slide are: TEXRail Extension to Hospital District; Katy Lofts; E Lancaster Corridor; Trinity Lakes Station; and Guaranteed Transit (IH 35W) also know as the cost revenue matrix, the rows are costs, the columns are revenue. Starting at the bottom, we made a slide adjustment on the Guaranteed program, we are requesting a little bit more money be put into that initiative under new RTC Federal; relieve Trinity Metro of their dollar amount and recapture that money for the rail extension into Fort Worth that was not submitted as part of the RAISE grant. Trinity Lakes Station is pretty far to the east, relieving Trinity Metro their part of the monies to be put into the rail extension into Fort Worth, East Lancaster Corridor is documenting the voters of Fort Worth are reviewing a bond program that seized \$10 million onto Lancaster because of the mechanics, with the footnote 7; we are freeing up for Fort Worth to potentially put in \$16 million but keeping it at \$10 million to be consistent with the bond election or the City of Fort Worth will tell us to go ahead and put it as \$16 million but at some point in the future, we will add more money to the Lancaster project, just not between the bond election in Fort Worth. No additional money requesting from NCTCOG for Lancaster, we will try to fund it more directly. Katy Lofts was approved for \$11 million, and they think they can get it across with their own money working with their developers but need to make sure Katy Lofts still happens so taking our money and moving it into the TEXRail Extension project. The TEXRail Extension was previously approved for \$20 million, we are requesting \$51 million of new RTC Federal; FTA has new start money of \$38 million, if that money isn't used at some point quickly, that money goes back to Washington. However, we accumulate \$38 million plus \$6 million, plus \$3.5 million; Fort Worth's share would be \$7.17 million and \$1.57 million from a private sector with 21.10 TDCs for a total of \$167 million. The total equates to \$62.06M in new RTC funding. We are insisting the hospital district still put in their associated commitment of land for the station and then the association credits pick up the additional local match necessary for that to happen. It is critical to get all five major projects across the goal line at the same time. Trinity Metro has to weigh in on this with regards to moving forward. Brian Beck asked if the Lancaster budget is moving forward? Michael responded with the requirements for the Lancaster project and being on Texas Department of Transportation right of way, it can be done within the 5-year time frame. Kelly Porter commented this is consistent with what has been discussed and the City of Fort Worth is working on the resolution now and hoping to get that to Council next month. Chad Edwards echoed what Kelly Porter mentioned.

A motion was made to approve the South Dallas County Inland Port Multimodal Connectivity be resubmitted under "INFRA" and give us permission to submit the Lancaster project under "INFRA" along with \$62.06M in new RTC funding. Kelly Porter (M); Chad Edwards (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **\$15M Dallas Area Rapid Transit/Garland Partnership that Expedited the IH 635 East Project:** Christie Gotti requested a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) action to finalize a \$15 million funding exchange with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and the City of Garland to fulfill the funding partnership originally approved by the RTC in September 2019. That action included approval of \$15 million but required that the specific project to be funded be brought back for RTC approval. Garland has identified a project of interest, which is land banking and redevelopment activities near the South Garland Transit Center. We are mediating City of Garland's concerns with a new RTC Partnership Program using new funds, pursue a solution for approximately \$15 million, and bring back for RTC approval specific projects for implementation. By entering a three-party partnership, the city prefers to use local funding for their redevelopment efforts at the South Garland Transit Center; Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has agreed to aid in the partnership by providing local funds to the City if the RTC makes DART whole by providing the same amount of federal funds. DART proposes that the RTC funds be placed on the Silver Line Rail Project that is currently under construction. Proposed action recommended for RTC approval of \$15 million in federal CMAQ funds for the Silver Line Rail Project (from DFW Airport Station to Shiloh Station); DART will match the federal funds with \$3.75M of local funds on the Silver Line project; DART sending \$15 million in local funds to Garland in several installments; Garland using the funding for land banking and related redevelopment activities in the area surrounding the South Garland Transit Center; and Administratively amending the TIP and other planning/administrative documents with this information/action.

A motion was made to approve \$15 million in federal CMAQ funds for the Silver Line Rail Project (from DFW Airport Station to Shiloh Station); DART will match the federal funds with \$3.75M of local funds on the Silver Line project; DART sending \$15 million in local funds to Garland in several installments; Garland using the funding for land banking and related redevelopment activities in the area surrounding the South Garland Transit Center; and Administratively amending the TIP and other planning/administrative documents with this information/action. Clarence Daugherty (M); Paul Luedtke (S). The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Regional Transportation Council Policy for Transportation Infrastructure Requiring Certification:** Brendon Wheeler introduced a draft policy outlining the guiding principles and process by which the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) may transparently coordinate with transportation infrastructure providers wishing to certify innovative transportation technology to move people and/or freight within the region. This draft policy serves to guide a consensus-building path among the RTC, interested local governments, and transportation technology providers in bringing innovative transportation solutions to our region with the end goal of a commercial application to serve a long-range transportation need. In February 2022, the RTC adopted Policy 22-01 to advance only high-speed rail into the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into the Phase 2 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The purpose is to environmentally clear IH 30 corridor and not hold up NEPA process with developing technology. Monitor hyperloop technology advancement for the purpose to advance hyperloop along technology certification and demonstration path and advance these two technologies in different corridors. We've had a lot of interest in the DFW Region. Virgin Hyperloop's request for proposals for certification center site in 2020. Many new transportation infrastructure technologies require certification prior to widespread application and technologies face difficulties in advancing through traditional planning processes either at the State or local levels. The purpose of RTC Policy, electronic item 5.1, is to outline RTC's guiding principles; define transparent process by which RTC may coordinate with technology provider for certification facility; provide structure for periodic solicitation or acceptance of new

technology infrastructure solutions; and ensure level playing field for transportation infrastructure technology providers wishing to move to region and local governments wishing to propose their site for consideration. The guiding principles for innovative transportation technology infrastructure certification program are as follows: must serve long-range transportation need (MTP); technology developer responsible for navigating certification process; NCTCOG will facilitate mutual cooperation; and local government considerations: contingency should technology fail to perform as intended; expected timeframe for infrastructure to be operational; and public use goals and performance expectations. The Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program's process is as follows: 1) NCTCOG staff to ensure technology solution conforms to policy guidance and long-range transportation need (MTP); 2) NCTCOG staff to brief RTC and RTC to take action on initiating process; 3) Upon RTC action, local governments to submit potential locations of interest; 4) Technology provider to determine preferred location to pursue; 5) RTC to initiate development activities; NCTCOG staff to provide support. Requested STTC action is recommend RTC adopt policy to develop process for Innovative Transportation Infrastructure Certification Program: Advances hyperloop and other innovative infrastructure technologies through the certification process to commercial application; outlines guiding principles and transparent process by which RTC may coordinate with technology providers needing certification; ensures a long-range transportation need is met; allows for periodic solicitation or acceptance of developing technology solutions for region; and creates level playing field for transportation infrastructure providers and local governments. Michael Morris mentioned that the important part of was the transparency of the technology when it comes to the Region and gets announced to STTC, gets announced to RTC, RTC confirms this technology is of interest to us. Then there is a 2nd transparent item, information is sent to every local government with the requirements of it. Last time people didn't pay attention to the requirements and submitted routes that weren't very good, but the locals have to have a transparent ability to understand when new technology comes, to see if they are interested or not by potentially hosting that particular certification facility because it's critical for us not to just host pilot locations that are not throw-aways and eventually become part of the regional system. So, the transparency of all of this is the value added that we are doing. Kelly Porter asked, if this technology is piloted, I think putting something in the material policy that protects all of the local governments if it turns out there's a faulty technology or along those lines. Michael Morris responded that Brendon and Dan are working on the best safeguards regard it. It will be retro guarded if it doesn't work or come back to square one so they will add it to the policy. We won't eliminate all risk; the local government can decide if they wish to bother the senate under those particular conditions. Phil Dupler stated he has a concern with the language in the policy not being strong enough and feels it needs to have stronger language to indicate what you just explained. Michael Morris responded with reassurance of doing the best we can making sure that technology is ready and that there's a good substitute contingency. At the end, the local government and/or transportation provider is going to have to decide on taking a risk. You don't want to be in the certification business if you don't want to take a risk with regard to that. If you don't want to take on a risk, then don't submit a proposal. Kathryn Rush wanted to clarify the goal is that the certification facility will be in or along the right-of-way or some certification corridor so that it can be used in the future, if the technology was certified, correct? Michael Morris responded that the hope would be that wherever the test facility is, that is used to do the certification is not in the middle of some place that doesn't have eventual use to be a functioning element of its implementation. Under federal law you can't build a capital-intensive project without it being included in the Mobility plan. Kathryn also asked logistically how it work from an allowance standpoint, would it be the local government would have to acquire if it hadn't already if it wasn't part of the right of way or if you have any best practices? Michael responded with a few scenario

examples to provide an explanation and reiterated don't submit if you don't want to take a risk. The interest of the local government and our part is the transparency of it.

A motion was made to approve STTC's recommendation for RTC to adopt policy to develop process for Innovative Transportation Infrastructure Certification Program: Advances hyperloop and other innovative infrastructure technologies through the certification process to commercial application; outlines guiding principles and transparent process by which RTC may coordinate with technology providers needing certification; ensures a long-range transportation need is met; allows for periodic solicitation or acceptance of developing technology solutions for region; and creates level playing field for transportation infrastructure providers and local governments. Kelly Porter (M); John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Title VI Program Update:** Kate Zielke presented a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of updates to the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Title VI Program, including the Title VI Policy Statement and Language Assistance Plan. Both documents are necessary for compliance with federal civil rights requirements and must be adopted by the Regional Transportation Council. The Federal Transit Administration requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations update their Title VI Programs every three years. The Title VI program identifies actions NCTCOG takes to ensure nondiscrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including limited English proficiency. Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy Statement that we will be seeking RTC and Executive Board approval of in May is as follows: "The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as a recipient of federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person shall on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any Agency programs or activities." The Title VI Program includes information on how NCTCOG monitors its transit subrecipients for Title VI compliance. The Language Assistance Plan describes how NCTCOG addresses the needs of residents whose native language is not English and who have a limited ability to communicate in English. Submittal deadline is May 31, 2022. The Title VI Program update can be downloaded from <https://nctcog.org/TitleVI>. The Language Assistance Plan update can be downloaded from <https://nctcog.org/LAP>. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 6.

A motion was made to approve recommended Regional Transportation Council of: Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, "The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as a recipient of federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person shall on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any Agency programs or activities."; updates to MPO Title VI Program; and updates to MPO Language Assistance Plan. Robert Woodbury (M); Walter Shumac (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Draft Listings:** Brian Dell requested a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) draft project listings, the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and other planning/administrative documents. The Committee will also be briefed on changes being made to the TIP Development process as a result of recent discussions with the Federal Highway Administration. A cooperative effort with local governments, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Transit Agencies,

and Transportation Agency partners. Working on the development process by: Review existing projects and gather information on additional locally funded projects; make needed revisions to existing project schedules, funding, and/or scope; develop revised project listings; financially constrain project programming based on estimated future revenues; conduct mobility plan and air quality conformity review; solicit public and Committee/Council input; and finalize project listings and submit to the TxDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review. This TIP is going to have a little over \$9.03 billion of funding it with almost 1,000 active projects that we are tracking and of those 562 are going to be in the new four-year TIP or in the environmental appendix, and 68 are being implemented by project sponsors across the region. The main reason we wanted to bring you an update today is there are changes we have to adapt to the TIP development process: Typically, the Committee, RTC, and public are provided with a "Double Entry" report that contains all active projects in which to review and comment. This report provides a more comprehensive picture of a project than the Statewide TIP (STIP) format that is required by TxDOT; Once approval of these listings is received, staff converts the data into the STIP report format required by TxDOT and submits it as part of the TIP document to TxDOT for inclusion in the STIP; FHWA recently informed staff that this process does not satisfy their requirements for getting review and comment on the TIP; and To comply with federal regulations, staff will be bringing back the approved project listings in STIP report format, along with the full TIP Document. The STIP report will only contain the project phases funded in FY 2023-2026. Given that the same information is slated for approval this month, we propose to ask for approval via consent agenda. Requested action recommend RTC approval of: the projects and project changes shown in the 2023-2026 TIP roadway Double Entry report and transit TIP listings; amending the Unified Planning Working Program (UPWP) and other planning/administrative documents as needed; only projects in FY 2023-2026 will be included in the new TIP; projects in FY 2022 and earlier are provided but will not be included in the new TIP; and Projects in FY 2027+ will be included in Appendix D to allow project development activities to continue. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 7. Wes McClure asked will double entries still be available with the side basically for approval. Brian responded yes; it will be an appendix that we will provide a link to it since it's 600 pages.

A motion was made to approve the projects and project changes shown in the 2023-2026 TIP roadway Double Entry report and transit TIP listings; amending the Unified Planning Working Program (UPWP) and other planning/administrative documents as needed; only projects in FY 2023-2026 will be included in the new TIP; projects in FY 2022 and earlier are provided but will not be included in the new TIP; and Projects in FY 2027+ will be included in Appendix D to allow project development activities to continue. Brian Beck (M). John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.

8. **Director of Transportation Report on Selected Items:** Dan Kessler provided an update on the Executive Session Follow Up; a project with the Department of Defense JLUS Implementation Grant. NCTCOG is currently under contract with Department of Defense to work with RCC and the local governments to implement strategies identified in the 2017 JLUS. Emphasis is on reducing encroachment and improving compatible land use, by addressing safety, and noise abatement strategies including an initiation of a Strategic Parcel Acquisition and Re-use Program. Twenty-five F-35s are scheduled to be delivered to the base in 2024. A big part of this project is focused on noise, safety, and what strategies we can pursue. One of our strategies is basically when there is an opportunity for land acquisition and making the land surrounding the base more compatible. For about 15 years, we have been focused on commercial parcels that are located on the South end of the runway, we call it right at the end of the clear zone – APZ1. We've been watching these

parcels for years and an opportunity came up early this winter, in the January – February time frame to perhaps acquire these. One of these parcels has been a BBQ restaurant and Farmers Market. Dan mentioned they brought this opportunity to Michael and discovered it's a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to acquire these properties. He also thanked Michael Morris, Jeff James, RTC, Executive Board, and NCTCOG staff for the tremendous support and making this happen within 60 days, we were able to put in a contract on this property for approximately \$2 million and hope to close in 60 days. Clarence Daugherty stated since it's BBQ, it's important. Michael Morris responded that this was an item we couldn't take to the STTC, because we can't go public with the information yet or we would have more than one buyer. This was only my second Executive Session to the Regional Technical Council. When we can go public, we need to take it back to the STTC. This money will be in the land banking program, so we are going to seek Federal Grants for reimbursement of our \$2 million. We have about \$1.1 million in our land banking program, we will add this money, if successful to the land banking program to be able to do more of this in the future, where there are critical parcels that need to be purchased. They are often competitive, and we don't want someone bidding, so we have a contract at this particular time so we don't think we can be outbid. Michael Morris also provided an overview of the metrics on Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery: Bike/Ped and Omnicron are on the uptick, but the transit numbers are continuing to improve; transit data provided on the presentation titled 'Changing Mobility'. State safety efforts was presented by Michael Morris to the Texas Transportation Commission, we will bring back the local program this summer and advancing management operations and safety. We are looking at over one hundred counter measures, please get engaged with us if you are interested is safety. Natalie Bettger has a safety task force. We have committed 23 MPOs across the state to join hands with Texas Department of Transportation on try to turn the fatality rates around. It will have to be a re-engaging with law enforcement, new education programs, and freeway lighting; Received good news from the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Chairman with an important update regarding Northern Collin County Rider Assistance Program, has opted in to the partnership with DART and will be monitored with the DART staff on what the DART Board will do; RTC Bylaws Subcommittee announcement at RTC Meeting and RTC Nominating Subcommittee announcement at RTC Meeting in May and updated by the end of the summer. Michael mentioned that for the counties that share seats, you don't have enough population to have dedicated seats so you have to share, the current Bylaws state that you need to alternate your RTC members that way it ensures ownership, and rotating/alternating isn't occurring in the Kaufman, Hunt, Johnson, Parker and Wise counties, that will be taken to the RTC for their direction. Councilmember Moon elected to run for another office of which he did not win so the mayor will be re-appointing a new member to the RTC. Subcommittee will have to pick two officers, one for Secretary and one for Councilmember Moon; Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) D2 Interlocal Agreement; Dallas City Council-February 9, 2022; DART Board-February 22, 2022; NCTCOG Executive Board-April 28, 2022; RTC Requirements; Spring 2022 Virtual Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement - May 5, 2022, details in Electronic Item 8. Michael highly encourages law enforcement to attend these traffic incident management courses. He also mentioned he appreciated the work Dan and Ken Kirkpatrick put into making sure we don't lose Lockheed Martin. Robert Woodbury asked what happens to the property if not used. Michael responded that we are going to meet the Navy/Military manual with regard to compatible uses so it could be leased for certain functions.

9. **Dallas-Fort Worth Regional East/West Funding Distribution – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act:** Brian Dell provided an overview on a new transportation funding bill has been enacted, staff will provide the Committee with information regarding proposed updates to the funding distribution between the Eastern

(Dallas and Paris Districts) and Western (Fort Worth District) subregions with the recent passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Federal funding comes to our region from federal transportation apportionments via the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Apportionments are based on several factors depending on the funding source (e.g., population, emissions). While funds cannot be sub-allocated to cities or counties (per federal law), we can split funds along TxDOT District lines. This practice has helped our region stay focused on overall priorities vs. who has received what funding when. Instead, each subregion works within their available funding. Regional Transportation Council (RTC) bylaws state that funding distributions are to be re-evaluated with each new transportation funding bill for air quality and mobility funds; transit funds are re-evaluated each year as federal apportionments are received. On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, which necessitates a review of the latest East/West funding distribution. The first category of funds is the Air Quality funds: Funding intended for air quality projects that address attainment of national ambient air quality standards in nonattainment areas. Allocations to the region are based on population and air quality nonattainment factors. East/West Distribution Formula Inputs: Tons per day of ozone precursors: Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOx). Generally, applies to Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds. The second category is Mobility Funds: Designed for mobility projects addressing transportation needs within Metropolitan Area Boundaries with populations of 200,000 or greater; Allocations based on population of Urbanized Areas (UZA) in the region; Resulting percentage split applies to the RTC's mobility funding categories (e.g., Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Category 2 funding); East/West Distribution Formula Inputs: Population and Employment; Activity (Population and Employment Equalized to account for communities where available jobs might exceed population or vice versa); Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT); Brian noted on the previous funding distribution percentages that we have been operating under the last six years basically known as the Fast Act (2015): we've been operating under for Mobility funds a 32% to 68% West/East split and for the Air Quality Funds a 34% to 66% West/East split. He also noted for the Formula Inputs for the IIJA, Mobility Funds based on 12 county MPA Boundary; the rounded average for the Western subregion is 31% and 69% for the Eastern subregion; Air Quality Funds based on 10 county non-attainment area; 36% for the ozone precursors tons per day in the Western subregion and 64% for the Eastern subregion. Taking a look at the equity and environmental justice – IIJA Analysis. These indicators show a minority, low income, and/or limited English proficiency population distribution similar to the funding distribution for the western and eastern regions that is being proposed: Minority: 30% for the Western subregion and 70% for the Eastern subregion. Low income: 33% for the Western subregion and 67% for the Eastern subregion. Limited English Proficiency: 27% in the Western Subregion and 73% for the Eastern Subregion. Funding distribution formula development process is as follows: new transportation funding bill in November 2021 to NCTCOG reassessment of East/West Funding distribution for CMAQ and STBG in January – March 2022 to Public review and comment in May 2022 to Committee and Council action in May - June 2022 to Approved funding distribution is applied to RTC selected funding programs. The latest East/West Equity quarterly report detailing transactions that affect the current distribution will also be provided. Electronic Item 9 included additional details.

10. **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goal Updates:** Emily Beckham provided a summary of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program requirements and schedule for updating the DBE Participation Goal for FY2023-FY2025. Certain recipients of Federal Funds (FTA, FHWA, FAA) are required to have a DBE Program and COG is a recipient of those funds. The requirements are updated DBE Goal every three years with the new goal

due August 1, 2022; current goal of 19.4% active through September 30, 2022, covered FY2020-2022; publication of DBE goal as part of RFP, and certification of DBE eligibility. In terms of high-level federal principals of the DBE Program, the basic component ensures non-discrimination or award of non-contracting activities that ensures a level playing field; it's tailored to meet Federal Law; ensures DBE Firms meet required eligibility standards; help remove barriers to DBE Participation; and assist in development of firms to compete outside DBE Program. Currently our overall goal in the last three years has been 19.4%. Emily highlighted the key date in the DBE Program Update schedule is when we will be bringing back our proposed goal for the next three years in May, it will then be published for public comment, and then come back to RTC in the July time frame for consideration of approval and of course to the NCTCOG Executive Board at the end of July for submission to FTA by August 1. The current DBE Participation Goal is valid until September 30, 2022 and will be ready to implement that goal October 1, 2022. The development of DBE Goal is a two-step process: Step 1 is to determine relative availability of ready, willing, and able DBE Firms; determined by market area, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (NCTCOG), individual market areas transit subrecipients (County), includes weighting by contract opportunities for FY2023-2025; NCTCOG and Transit Agencies divided by funding sources. Step 2 is consideration of other DBE data; historical DBE expenditures, completed disparity studies, DBE goals from other, similar agencies in the Dallas-Fort Worth market area. Potential awards projected for NCTCOG and Subrecipients; aggregated into procurement types and into FTA and FHWA: FTA Awards are \$21.5 million; FHWA Awards are \$14.5 million for a total of \$36 million and contract opportunities for the three-year time period. In terms of the step 1 process, looking at the preliminary DBE availability analysis for NCTCOG and Subrecipients across all of our programs, our total weighted proposed goal at completion of step 1 process is 17.3% that would be attained by RFPs and individual contract goals. Electronic Item 10 includes additional details.

11. **Mobility 2045 Update and Air Quality Conformity:** Amy Johnson and Jenny Narvaez provided an update on the continual region's next long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2045 Update, and corresponding 2022 Transportation Conformity. Amy mentioned there has not been any major revisions of the draft plan and draft conformity analysis results. The major components are as follows: plan content such as programs, policies, and projects; financial plan and constraint; nondiscrimination analysis doesn't have any disparate impacts found; and air quality conformity consistent with federal/state air quality goals. Recent revisions to the plan content have minor table adjustments in terms of identification numbers and more administrative type elements. No change to transit or roadway recommendations. On the chapter content, added revisions to summarize the draft plan from public comments to map your experience summaries added to Mobility options and social considerations chapters, air quality conformity results added to environmental considerations chapter, and financial refinements made in Financial Reality chapter to bring that to a close. The draft plan and the recommendations as identified graphically and in tabular format are available at www.nctcog.org/PlaninProgress. Draft financial plan expenditures with final quality control to make sure everything aligned in terms of NTP and TIP, that everything aligned with Transit Authority financials that we received so the presentation reflects the refinement down to the decimal point. Our final plan is about \$148.3 billion. The breakouts are included on slide 5 of Electronic Item 11. To summarize the public comments, we received during the official comment period, which is a sixty-day period. We have received comments from community events, map your experience, NCTCOG public meetings, social media, online comment form, and mail. The topics people are bringing to us are support for expansion of transit network to alleviate congestion, congestion and maintenance relationship, cost of congestion methodology, safety included as part of Mobility plan, add capacity to suburban highways to alleviate downtown congestion, and expanding trails and

pedestrian access. For the plan schedule, we will bring this item for STTC action in May and RTC action in June. Turning it over to Jenny, who presented for Transportation Conformity. The purpose of 2022 Transportation Air Quality Conformity Analysis is required by Federal Legislation. It demonstrates that projected emissions from transportation projects are within emission limits (Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets) established by the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and ensures federal funding and approval is applied to transportation projects that are consistent with air quality planning goals. The Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the 10 county nonattainment areas under the 8-hour ozone standards mapped on slide 11 in Electronic Item 11. The reason and highlights for Mobility 2045; adopted by RTC on June 14, 2018 and achieved USDOT Transportation Conformity Determination on November 21, 2018. The updated plan, with conformity determination, required within four years. We received the last conformity determination, November of 2018. We are currently under the emission units are for both, Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) is anticipated to be updated by the EPA in June. The EPAs have been going back and forth so in preparation, we provided 2 scenarios. For both of the scenarios, we are under the emissions limits that are set by the EPA. Our analysis results are passing. In scenario 2, should the budgets be found adequate by the EPA before we receive a determination, we are under the emissions limits. Additional details provided in Electronic Item 11. Kathryn Rush asked if most, if not all of the counties in the region currently in non-conformance so how does the analysis show conformance in 2023? Jenny responded that the analysis shows that the projects and plans do make the air quality worse. We can't measure ozone directly, so we have set limits that we are bound to NOx and VOC, and we have to be under those limits. Showing that we conform to those limits, doesn't mean we reach attainment. We can still get conformity without reaching attainment. The region has been preparing to be reclassified to a stricter standard for both the 2015 and 2008 NAAQS and is also getting moved up from marginal to moderate under the 2015 standard and from serious to severe under the 2008 standard. Michael Morris responded this is a good point stated, we are not the developers of the State implementation plan. John Polster mentioned not to confuse air quality with air conformity, he referenced the graph shown in Electronic Item 14.2.

- 12. Status Report on Federal Highway Administration Alternative Fuel Corridors and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law:** Bailey Muller provided an overview of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Alternative Fuel Corridors, as well as new funding programs allocated through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Important next steps and relevance to North Texas will be presented. Three key takeaways: Round 6 Corridor Nominations, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) soliciting "Round 6" request for alternative fuel corridor nominations. \$5 billion formula funding, national electric vehicle infrastructure formula funds program for filling EV corridors through State DOTs. \$2.5 billion competitive grants for charging and fueling infrastructure for corridors and communities. New funding programs associated with corridor designation: National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program - \$5 billion for filling EV designated corridors; all state DOTs to complete statewide infrastructure deployment plan in accordance to template provided by NEVI Formula Program. Grants for charging and fueling infrastructure for corridors and communities - \$2.5 billion for EV, CNG, LNG, LPG, Hydrogen Infrastructure Competitive Grants; 50% along designated corridors, 50% within communities. Joint DOT/DOE Deployment Support Program to Provide Tools & Technical Assistance to Funding Recipients - www.driveelectric.gov. NEVI EV charging infrastructure guidelines: Be within 1 mile of designated EV corridor, at least every 50 miles be publicly accessible; Include at least 4 150 kW DC Fast Charge CCS, with minimum site capacity of 600 kW; Funding must stay along FHWA EV corridors until all designated highways are "saturated" and fulfills all station site requirements. Formula funding impacts to Texas: NEVI formula program: TxDOT Set to Receive ~\$408M Over 5 years for EV Charging; Initial

Apportionment - \$60.3M (February 10 memo); TxDOT to Complete NEVI Statewide Infrastructure Deployment Plan. Potential MPO Role: Portion of Funds May be Allocated to Projects Located Within in Each MPO Area After all Corridors Filled, with MPOs Having a Role in Recommending Station Siting & Design/Standards. Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is requesting feedback on the NEVI plan by May 15, 2022. Feedback can be submitted on the TxDOT EV Planning Webpage: https://txdot.mysocialpinpoint.com/tx_ev_plan. The deadline for TxDOT to submit State NEVI plan to FHWA is August 1st, 2022 and the deadline for FHWA to approve/submit plan is September 30, 2022. NCTCOG engagement and readiness: we are hosting a regional public EV infrastructure working group. NCTCOG facilitating a group of local governments to collaborate and discuss public EV charging infrastructure projects across North Texas and plan for grant funding for individual governments or regional scaled project. To join the working group, email Bailey at bmuller@nctcog.org. Participating in TxDOT NEVI plan workshop group and developing regional-scale EV infrastructure plan for North Texas consistent with NEVI guidance. Will expand content to include highway corridors that are not yet designated, as well as intraregional level 2 community-based charging needs. Evaluating options to pursue competitive funding for EV or Hydrogen corridors. Timeline in general: Upon Approval from FHWA, TxDOT can Access Formula Funding and Begin Implementing NEVI Plan. NCTCOG will Continue to Monitor Guidance and Timing Updates for the Competitive Grants for Charging & Fueling Infrastructure for Corridors & Communities.

13. **Fiscal Year 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program:** Before Jody Loza briefed the Committee on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program, Michael Morris complimented and thanked Jody on the hard work on this project and the team meeting the deadlines. This \$2.85 billion program solicits project applications for three funding opportunities: the National Infrastructure Project Assistance Grants Program (MEGA), the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Grant Program (INFRA), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL). For the MEGA program, available funds are \$1 billion; federal cost share/match is up to 60%, but any federal funds is up to 80%. Eligible applicants and eligible project types are listed in Electronic Item 13. Jody noted the USDOT “seeks projects that will begin construction before September 30, 2025.” The next grant program is INFRA, with available funds are \$1.55 billion, federal cost share/match is up to 60%, but any federal funds is up to 80%; there is no maximum to the award size, \$25 million for large and \$5 million for small. The eligibility for applicants: 1) Federal land management agency w/ State or group of States. 2) Multi-state corridor organization. Eligibility for project types: 1) Wildlife crossing; 2) Surface transportation project at international border crossing; 3) Marine highway project w/ NHFN functional connection; and 4) National Multimodal Freight Network highway/bridge/freight. The obligation deadline is September 30, 2025 and construction start deadline is March 30, 2027. The third and final project, is the RURAL grant program with available funds of \$300 million with one caveat important to note here is lane departures and any project in the Appalachians is not in Texas. RURAL grant request cost share/match is up to 80%, federal is up to 100%. There is no maximum to the award size but there is a \$25 million minimum for 90% of projects and minimum for 10% of projects. Project/location eligibility is detailed in the Electronic Item 13. The obligation deadline is September 30, 2025 and the construction start deadline is March 30, 2027. There are statutory requirements for this program and Jody highlighted three of them: Based on the results of preliminary engineering – INFRA/RURAL; Availability of one or more stable/dependable funding or financing sources – MEGA/INFRA; and Reasonable expectation for construction within 18 months of obligation – INFRA/RURAL. The uniform selection criteria for all of the MPDG programs, there’s a rating scale of 0 to 3; Jody highlighted the new criteria as Economic

Impacts, Freight Movement, & Job Creation, Climate Change, Resiliency, & the Environment, and Equity, Multimodal Options, & Quality of Life. RTC action will be requested on May 12, 2022, RTC letter of Support request deadline submitted to Kyle Roy at kroy@nctcog.org by May 12, 2022, the FY22 MPDG grant application submittal deadline on www.grants.gov is May 23, 2022, Executive Board Endorsement is May 26, 2022, and STTC Endorsement is May 27, 2022. Upcoming Grant NOFO announcements of funding availability in 2022, the important thing to note is that in the past we are used to doing 2 to 3 grants, but there is now 18 eligible to apply for with a quick timeline of four coming out in May, two in June, one in July, one in August, and one in September. Several grant opportunities can be applied for and not just one. Clarence Daugherty stated the time frame doesn't work for a lot of us, does the information let us know what to expect for the upcoming years? Jody responded with essentially the grant opportunities for the new Infrastructure bill was brought about under Biden administration but changed, but essentially yes, we would anticipate similar programs unless there is a Presidential re-election. John Polster asked if this is an annual process or one call per year? Michael responded it depends, and when we know, we will lay out the process as we know. Some may be a one call per year, or some every six months. We have 36 different calls and some of them, the rules haven't been written yet so as we know, we will lay them out, and try to work with staff to try to slot your project to maximize your ability to win with those particular criteria.

14. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.
 1. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
 2. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
 3. Status Report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding (Electronic Item 14.1)
 4. 2022 Ozone Season Updated (Electronic Item 14.2)
 5. Federal Register Comments sent to EPA/Clean School Bus (Electronic Item 14.3)
 6. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report (Electronic Item 14.4)
 7. March Public Meeting Minutes (Electronic Item 14.5)
 8. May Public Meeting Notice
 9. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 14.6)
 10. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 14.7)
 - Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 14.8)
15. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on May 27, 2022.

Adjourned at 3:46 PM.



A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

May 2022

INSIDE

You can get active during Bike Month

May is Bike Month, an opportunity to discover (or rediscover) the joy of two-wheel transportation. Whether you want to explore the region's off-street trails, participate in an event with friends or colleagues, or even ride your bike to work, there are many ways to celebrate.

Bike to Work Week begins May 16 and is punctuated by Bike to Work Day on May 20. For more, see page 2.

N. Texans can help name and brand regional trail

Imagine being able to walk, run or bike across the region, along some of the most well-established trails in North Texas – and experience the region's natural beauty along the way.

Paths will link to form a seamless walking and biking corridor between Fort Worth and Dallas when the entire regional facility of more than 60 miles is complete. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is seeking residents' help naming and branding the regional trail, which is expected to be completed in 2024.

North Texans are encouraged to participate in the agency's virtual public feedback forum at www.fortworthtodallastrail.com, open until late May. Participants will be asked to choose between two trail name and logo options, which were developed with the help of a virtual open house held last year. Participants are also asked to provide input on their favorite destinations along the trail.

Over 50 miles of the trail are now open, spanning Fort Worth, Arlington, Grand Prairie, Irving and Dallas. The finished trail is envisioned as a regional, state and national attraction for recreation, tourism, culture and events.

Trail users can witness the region's topographical diversity and growing interconnectedness along the corridor as they walk or bike for leisure, compete in a sport or spend a day discovering nature with the family.

By the fall, this effort is expected to be complete, resulting in new branding materials, a wayfinding signage package and other recommendations. This trail will bring health benefits, traffic reduction and recreational opportunities to an ever-growing North Texas.

Visit www.nctcog.org/FWtoDalTrail for more information.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

For more information about Local Motion topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department.

Bike Month presents residents a good opportunity to get active

May is Bike Month, an opportunity to discover (or rediscover) the joy of two-wheel transportation.

Whether you want to explore the region's off-street trails, participate in an event with friends or colleagues or even ride your bike to work, there are many ways to celebrate. Bike to Work Week begins May 16 and is punctuated by Bike to Work Day on May 20.

NCTCOG encourages you to consider commuting by bike or other sustainable transportation modes in support of this League of American Bicyclists-sponsored event.

Even if you are a little far from the office, you may still be able to make your bicycle part of your commute. If you live and work near a transit stop, think about combining a bike ride with public transportation. The region's public transportation providers allow bikes on their buses and trains. The entire month offers opportunities to get active, including the [Bike Month Challenge](#). Bike DFW and TryParkingIt.com are partnering to challenge people to ride their bikes to places they would typically drive — to work, school, lunch or to run errands. Top finishers will be rewarded with bike swag. For a complete list of how to participate in Bike Month activities, visit www.nctcog.org/biketowork.



Getty Images

May is Bike Month, a great time to use active transportation to get to work or run errands.

RTC approves \$8 million for trail connections to Fair Park

The Regional Transportation Council approved \$8 million of federal transportation funds in April for the engineering design and construction of a trail around the perimeter of Fair Park in Dallas. This investment of transportation funding will support the partnership of the City of Dallas, Fair Park First and Dallas County, which will lead the design and construction of a companion trail along the northern side of Fair Park.

The northern trail alignment will extend the Santa Fe Trail directly east to neighborhoods on the east side of Fair Park. Dallas County will provide \$1.069 million; the City of Dallas will contribute \$500,000; and Fair Park First will add \$1.1 million toward the northern alignment of the trail. The combined funding investment for both trail alignments around the perimeter of Fair Park is \$10.7 million.

The transportation funding approved by the RTC will complete the remainder of the trail loop alignment around the west, south and east sides of Fair Park within public street rights-of-way of Parry Avenue, Highway 352/Robert B. Cullum Boulevard and South Fitzhugh Avenue.

This "southern" trail alignment will improve bicycle access to the DART Fair Park Station and crossings of the Green Line light rail tracks. The trail will also provide bicycle and pedestrian circulation along streets around the perimeter of Fair Park, improve safety at roadway crossings and access points to Fair Park, improve circulation for large events such as the Texas State Fair, and connect with the surrounding south Dallas neighborhoods. Engineering design for the "southern" alignment of the trail project will be led by the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department and is anticipated to begin by next year. Construction of the trail is expected to begin in 2025.

TRANSIT

Trinity Metro chooses new President & CEO

Richard W. Andreski was recently named the new president and CEO of Trinity Metro. Andreski will begin his role June 20, after being selected by the Trinity Metro Board of Directors.

Andreski comes from the Northeast, where he has worked in public transportation for 23 years, including 10 years in executive leadership. He has served as the Bureau Chief of Public Transportation for the Connecticut Department of Transportation since 2015.

At the Connecticut DOT, he has overseen the state's public transportation. He had an operating budget of \$850 million and a team of 110 planners, engineers, rail and transit professionals.

The Connecticut DOT includes 22 transit providers and serves 80 million people annually.

Before being hired at the Connecticut DOT, Andreski worked at New Jersey Transit, where he began as a bus planner in 1999.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in biology from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, Andreski earned a master's degree in city & regional planning from Rutgers University.

Andreski replaces interim president and CEO Paul J Ballard, who assumed the role in November 2021, following the retirement of Bob Baulsir.

REGIONALNews

Avondale Haslet grade separation OK'd by RTC

The RTC has approved a partnership that will fund a grade separation at Avondale Haslet Road and the BNSF Railway line in Haslet.

The RTC agreed in April to program \$14.5 million in federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funds, and BNSF will contribute \$1.5 million, or 10% of the cost. This grade separation is the latest in a series of improvements to this critical east-west corridor that will enhance transportation through a fast-growing area. It is also expected to boost safety by ensuring that vehicles and pedestrians do not have to cross the railroad tracks at-grade.

The RTC, City of Haslet, Texas Department of Transportation and Tarrant County have partnered to implement the Alliance, Texas/Haslet Accessibility Improvement Project in Haslet. This \$60 million funding partnership includes a federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant of \$20 million that was awarded in 2018.

Comment on Mobility 2045 Update through May 31

NCTCOG is seeking public comments on the update to Mobility 2045, the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, until May 31. The official public comment and review period began April 1, giving residents another opportunity to provide feedback on the long-range transportation plan before it is considered by the RTC next month.

Planners have used various methods to gather the opinions and experiences of those living in the region to shape the Mobility 2045 Update. These methods include public meetings and the implementation of the transportation department's online public engagement tool, Map Your Experience. This tool gathers input on where North Texans are experiencing transportation issues, regardless of mode.

Mobility 2045 guides the spending of federal and state transportation funds based on regional goals. The plan makes recommendations for travel modes through policies, programs and projects designed to improve regional mobility and increase efficiency, safety and system capacity. Long-range transportation plans such as Mobility 2045 are federally required to be updated at least every four years. Keep up with the progression of the plan at www.nctcog.org/PlaninProgress.

Transportation Resources

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Publications

NCTCOG.org/trans/outreach/publications.asp

Partners

Dallas Area Rapid Transit
DART.org

**Denton County
Transportation Authority**
DCTA.net

North Texas Tollway Authority
NTTA.org

**Texas Department
of Transportation**
TxDOT.gov

Trinity Metro
RideTrinityMetro.org

By the Numbers

\$14.5 million

The amount of money the RTC programmed for a grade separation at Avondale Haslet Road.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

NCTCOG to share planning updates May 9

NCTCOG will host a hybrid public meeting in May to provide an update on the region's long-range transportation plan, funding recommendations and plans for emerging transportation technologies, among other planning initiatives.

The meeting will take place at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive, at noon on Monday, May 9. Residents may attend the meeting in person, watch it live online at www.nctcog.org/video or participate via phone by dialing 855-925-2801 then code 6341.

NCTCOG is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which identifies how the region will manage and operate the transportation system. Staff has also performed air quality analyses for the Mobility 2045 Update, and will provide additional information on these efforts.

Staff will also give an update on funding recommendations from the first round of applications for NCTCOG's Electric Vehicle Charging Station Call for Projects. Made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, all public entities are eligible to apply for grant funding intended for the purchase and installation of publicly accessible stations around the region.

With the passage of each new transportation funding bill, the funding distributions between the eastern and western sides of the region are re-evaluated. Staff will share an overview of the process for establishing the funding split and the proposed new percentages for both mobility and air quality funds.

Additionally, funding for parking garages near transit stations and proposed projects will be presented for review and comment by staff. In 2021, work began on NCTCOG's regional planning exercise to prepare for new transportation technologies in the region — AV2.1: Planning for Local Partners. NCTCOG staff will present an update on the status of the project. The department's interactive map tool, Map Your Experience; the statewide EV infrastructure plan; fair treatment and meaningful involvement efforts; and administrative revisions for Mobility 2045 will also be highlighted. A recording of the presentations will be posted at www.nctcog.org/input.

Prepared in cooperation with the US Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) and the Texas Department of Transportation. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration or the Texas Department of Transportation. Imagery provided by Getty Images, Trinity Metro and NCTCOG.