

## **MINUTES**

### **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY**

#### **MPO Milestone Policy: Round 2**

#### **End of 2020 Ozone Season, Compliance With Federal Requirements & Future Outlook**

#### **2020 Changes in Regional Trail & Shared Bicycle Use**

#### **Regional Rail Information System (RRIS)**

#### **Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects**

#### **Online Public Input Opportunity Dates**

Monday, December 14, 2020 - Tuesday, January 12, 2021 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input) for public review and comment.

#### **Purpose and Topics**

The online public input opportunity was provided 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 (MPO), and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff posted information regarding:

1. MPO Milestone Policy: Round 2
2. End of 2020 Ozone Season, Compliance With Federal Requirements & Future Outlook
3. 2020 Changes in Regional Trail & Shared Bicycle Use
4. Regional Rail Information System (RRIS)
5. Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects

The NCTCOG online public input opportunity was provided to inform and seek comments from the public. Comments and questions were submitted by email at [transinfo@nctcog.org](mailto:transinfo@nctcog.org), online at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input), by mail at PO Box 5888, Arlington, TX 76005 and by fax at 817-640-3028. Printed copies of the online materials were also made available by calling 817-608-2365 or emailing [transinfo@nctcog.org](mailto:transinfo@nctcog.org).

#### **Summary of Presentations**

##### ***MPO Milestone Policy: Round 2 presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/Milestone-Policy-Pres.pdf>

##### ***Recommended Project List:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/Milestone-Policy-Recommendation-List.pdf>

The MPO Milestone Policy was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2015 and reviewed projects selected from 1992 to 2005 that had not yet gone to construction. The initiative was successful in getting 51 out of 57 projects to construction and in October 2019, a second round of projects was introduced.

Intended outcomes of the MPO Milestone Policy include:

- Providing a realistic assessment of project status for decision-making
- Balancing project construction schedule capacity within the current financial constraints
- Increasing the amount of available funds for “ready-to-go” projects rather than long delayed projects
- Getting old projects to construction and implementation

Forty-one projects needed to be reconfirmed or cancelled during the second round, and agencies with projects on the project list were notified via letter to reconfirm projects as priorities by:

- Providing a realistic and achievable schedule with NCTCOG & TxDOT concurrence
- Providing documentation of policy board support
- Documenting the availability of local matching funds

The RTC will take action on round two of the MPO Milestone Policy on February 11, 2021.

***End of 2020 Ozone Season, Compliance With Federal Requirements & Future Outlook presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/End-of-Ozone.pdf>

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 2020 ozone season ended on November 1, 2020, marking the end of a three-year monitoring period for both standards. Because the region did not meet attainment for either standard, NCTCOG staff is preparing for the region to be reclassified from marginal to moderate under the 2015 standard and from serious to severe under the 2008 standard.

The reclassification of the 2008 standard from serious to severe requires staff to conduct additional analysis. This analysis, which is called VMT Growth Offset, assesses if existing transportation control strategies are sufficient to offset anticipated emission increases. If the existing strategies do not offset, additional ones will be required. Examples of these strategies include telecommuting, traffic signal improvements and public transit, among others.

The official reclassification of the 2008 and 2015 standards is still to be determined. Staff expects the attainment deadline for the new classifications to be no later than July 20, 2027 for the 2008 standard and no later than August 3, 2024 for the 2015 standard.

For more information on regional air quality, visit <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone>.

**2020 Changes in Regional Trail & Shared Bicycle Use presentation:**

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/Active-TR.pdf>

The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented effects on our regional transportation system. To better understand these effects, NCTCOG staff has been collecting and analyzing real-time data, including regional bicycle and pedestrian trail usage.

This presentation features data collected during the height of the pandemic at eight different bicycle and pedestrian trail locations in Allen, Dallas, Denton, Fort Worth, North Richland Hills and Plano. The data suggests significant increases in the use of these trails throughout 2020, specifically in May. For a breakdown of the data and to view the full presentation, visit [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input)

**Regional Rail Information System (RRIS) presentation:**

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/RRIS.pdf>

NCTCOG staff is working with regional rail partners to develop and implement a Regional Rail Information System (RRIS). This system will maximize efficiency on shared-use freight and passenger rail networks by allowing all rail agencies to:

- Exchange timely, accurate and actionable information on regional train movements
- Assist with freight and passenger train interactions
- Identify rail bottlenecks
- Enhance long-term Mobility Plan projects
- Identify infrastructure projects to increase rail capacity throughout the region

NCTCOG has published a Request for Proposals to solicit interest from potential consultants, and the submission deadline is January 8, 2021 at 5 pm.

**Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects (no audio presentation; handouts posted online for review and comment):**

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/12/TIP-Handout.pdf>

A comprehensive list of funded transportation projects through 2024 is maintained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects with committed funds from federal, State and local sources are included in the TIP. To maintain an accurate project listing, this document is updated on a regular basis.

The current modification cycle includes project updates and adjustments for transportation initiatives in Burleson, Dallas, Granbury, Irving, Kaufman County, McKinney, Midlothian and Joshua, among others. Additionally, financial adjustments related to services managed by public transportation agencies, including Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA), Trinity Metro and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), are also included.

**COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, MAIL, EMAIL and SOCIAL MEDIA**

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

January 3, 2021

Carli,

Happy New Year to you! It is my hope that we can all come together in person some day soon. I always enjoy a live presentation from the members of the COE to go over these items.

In the meanwhile, enclosed are my comments & questions due January 12. I know that the mail is slower than I hope this gets to you in ample time.

Thank you.

Phyllis Wilson



Comments / Questions - Regional Transportation RM 11.5  
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Public Input Opportunity - Due 1/12/2021  
COVID-19 Impacts on Active Transportation

Comment - It is refreshing that there has been a positive aspect to COVID-19 - People spending more time outdoors walking + bicycling

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End of Ozone Season, Compliance with Federal Requirements, and Future Outlook

Comments: It is disheartening that (1) air quality is not improving at a faster rate and (2) periodic inaccurate ozone alerts for predicted exceedances are at a high rate.

I would also like to suggest that within each packet, at the first occurrence of an acronym that the acronym be defined. I realize this is everyday language for the experts, but members of the public are not as familiar with the terminology and <sup>just</sup> concepts. For example what is VMT Growth Offset (Page 6)?

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In reviewing the Project Modification Listing - Transit I began to think about the poor communication <sup>Section</sup> to passengers riding the DART train when it's stuck in the <sup>DART</sup> tunnel before or after Citiplace station -

Can there be a project to improve the communication so that passengers will know the cause of the delay and the duration of the delay? I personally have not rode the train in a while, but I understand that there still may be Wi-Fi problems in the tunnel. I expect that a telecommunications project can get this resolved for everyone's safety.

Phyllis Silver  
Phyllis Silver

1/3/2021

