

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 Saturday, June 20, through Sunday, July 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. Air quality comments related to Clean Air Action Day and ozone action days were in the majority.

In addition, comments are currently being accepted through a new, online map tool. Users can drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. The tool is in test mode and open to the public through August 2020. This month, there were 54 Bicycle and Pedestrian comments, 2 Roadway comments and 1 transit comment. To read them, visit:

<http://nctcoggis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourceReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

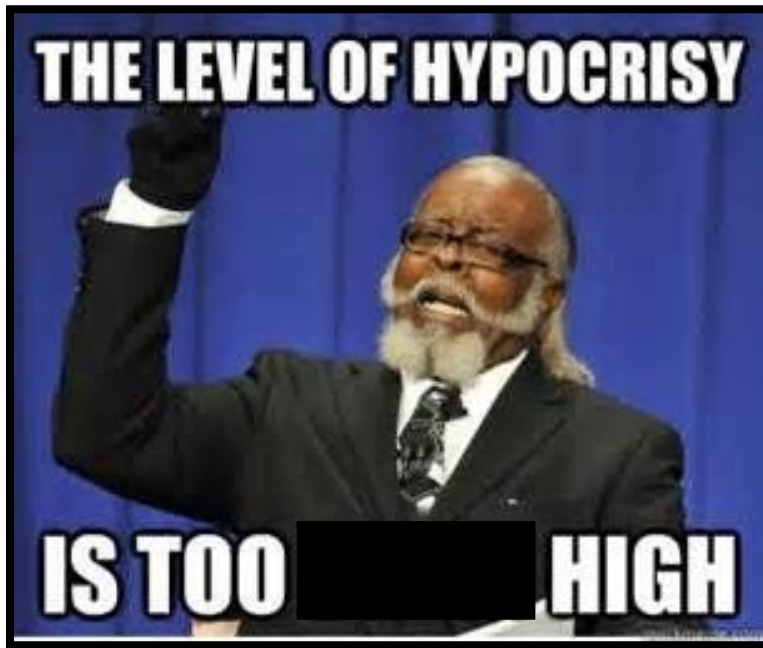
Air Quality

Twitter –

1. All people deserve to breathe healthy air. Together we can reduce harmful pollutants that impact those who live, work & play near ports, rail yards, roadways & freight distribution centers. Use #EPASmartWay tools to learn how to have cleaner air for all – <http://epa.gov/smartway>. – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



And yet, NCTCOG Transportation is still out there pimping new freeways, the pollution from which adds to DFW's chronic air pollution problem.... – Downwinders at Risk (@cleanerair)



2. Clean Air Action Day is almost here! Join us in partnering with @NCTCOGtrans to improve air quality in North Texas. #CAAD2020 – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



3. Social Distancing on Clean Air Action Day <https://nadallas.com/2020/07/31/323701/social-distancing-on-clean-air-action-day#.XygQQ1HEX00.twitter> #cleanairactionday #texasheat @NCTCOGtrans – Natural Awakenings (@NaturalDallas)

4. Clean Air Action Day is this Wednesday, and we created a quiz to test your air quality knowledge! Do you know how easy it is to take simple steps towards cleaner air in North Texas? Take the quiz to learn how you can be a clean air advocate! @NCTCOGtrans <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



5. Clean Air Action Day is TODAY! To celebrate, we made a quiz to test your knowledge. Do you know how easy it is to take simple steps towards cleaner air in North Texas? Take the quiz to learn how you can be a clean air advocate! @NCTCOGtrans <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



6. Happy Clean Air Action Day! Walk. Skip. Run. Whichever you decide to do, the air will appreciate you! #CAAD2020 – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



The talent. The vision. The Chucks. 🍌 – Christina Roach (@ChristinaGRoach)

Aww, shucks. 😊

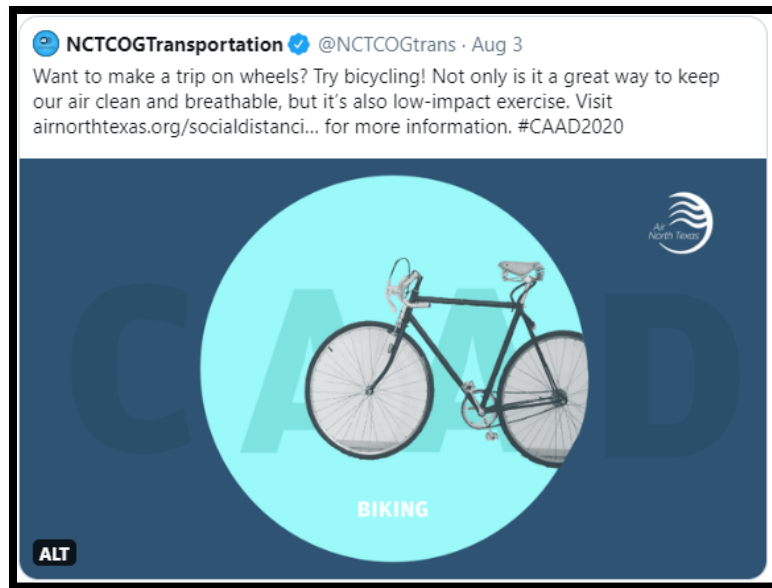
Don't forget to visit <https://airnorthtexas.org/socialdistancing> and select your clean air action for today! – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)

Of course! I'll record my telecommuting too so I can secure that TryParkingIt bag 😊



– NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)

7. Check out this Clean Air Action Day tip from @NCTCOGtrans! Biking is great for the environment AND great for your health. 🚲 Learn more steps you can take towards cleaner air in North Texas by taking our quiz: <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



Facebook –

1. Be careful out there. Orange levels are unhealthy for sensitive groups. #ArlolsOrange – Fort Worth Code



2. Ozone Action Day – Ozone in the Dallas-Fort Worth area Tuesday is predicted to be at Level Red, unhealthy. Active children and adults and people with lung disease, such as asthma, emphysema, or chronic bronchitis, should avoid outdoor activity. Everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion. Current ozone information: <http://bit.ly/9nC9vy>. Consider a clean air choice: <http://bit.ly/2oAbaPt>. – NCTCOG Transportation Department



#DriveElectric – Chris Hightower

3. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Clean Air Action Day, the annual celebration of environmental awareness put on by Air North Texas will be observed differently this year...

#cleanairactionday #environmentalawareness NCTCOG Transportation Department – Natural Awakenings Dallas Metroplex Magazine



4. Today is Clean Air Action Day! Check out these tips from NCTCOG Transportation Department for easy ways to promote clean air in the DFW area, even while social distancing. #CleanAirActionDay – RWB Consulting Engineers



Autonomous Vehicles

Facebook –

1. PAVE is proud to announce our Public Sector Advisory Council, an advisory body made up of public servants with deep experience preparing for and facilitating the autonomous future. The PSAC will advise PAVE on the critical issue of public sector engagement with AVs, and help provide vital resources to less-experienced localities and agencies.

Following are the inaugural members of PAVE's Public Sector Advisory Council:

Arizona Department of Transportation
California Department of Motor Vehicles
City Government of Chandler, Arizona
City of Detroit Government
City of Pittsburgh Dept of Mobility and Infrastructure
Colorado Department of Transportation
DriveOhio
The Eastern Transportation Coalition
Iowa Department of Transportation
Georgia Dept of Transportation
Louisville Metro Government

Miami-Dade County

Michigan Department of Transportation

Minnesota Department of Transportation

Mountain View Police Dept

NCTCOG Transportation Department

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)

Texas Dept of Transportation

Target Zero

WSDOT

Find out more about our PSAC members here: <https://lnkd.in/dBk42Pf> – PAVECampaign



Bicycle & Pedestrian

Email –

1. Francesca Funk

I need a protected bike lane on Zang Blvd, from Jefferson to Colorado, so I can do my whole commute safely by bicycle.

Twitter –

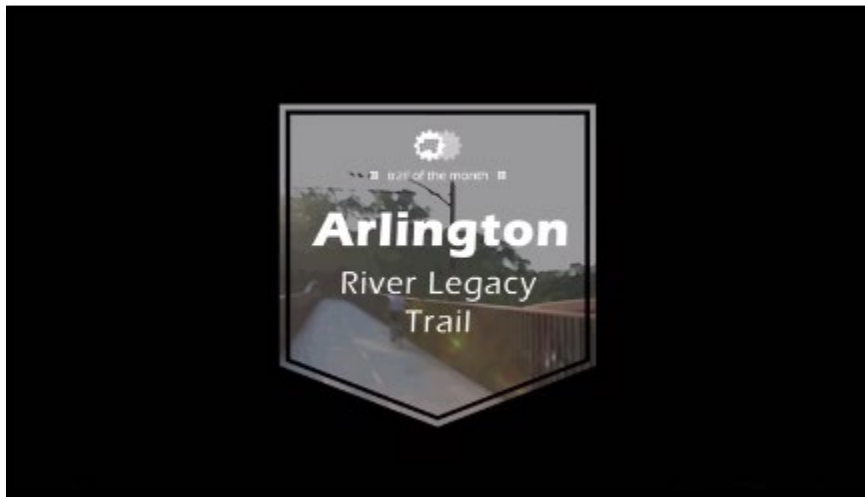
1. Trail usage has skyrocketed as residents rediscover walking & biking to stay active! This week's highlighted trail is the Cottonwood Creek Trail in @CityofAllenTX. It runs through downtown & connects places such as the Village at Allen, Old Stone Dam & the 1910 Railroad Bridge. – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Trails are great! But connected trails are even better. Connect the trails!!! We want more than 5 miles!!! – Jeff Mizener (@mizesoundguy)

Facebook –

1. Wanna get out and about in Arlington? Hop on the River Legacy Trail! It plays a vital role in the off-street connection from Fort Worth to Dallas. Stay tuned for more! – NCTCOG Transportation Department



We could do this in Mineral Wells of course on a much smaller scale. Mineral Wells CC should strive to make its carbon footprint much smaller while enhancing its health resort status. LETS GO GREEN! – John T. Brazil

2. Thanks to NCTCOG Transportation Department for this great video of the #CottonBeltTrail. We hope you'll get out and enjoy this awesome trail! – Keep Grapevine Beautiful



Instagram –

1. Have you been using the extra time at home to bike more? Tell us about it! Our interactive mapping tool is a great way for you to leave comments on how we can improve your travel experience. Visit <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/plan/mtp/map-your-experience>.



Can you put 1/10th of the money you put towards highway expansion towards trail extension / expansion? Or even bike lanes? – Philip Goss (@gosspl)

Committees

Facebook –

1. Congratulations to our newly elected North Texas Regional Transportation Council (RTC) officers! RTC is the independent transportation policy body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, which covers 12 counties across the North Texas region.

Dannenbaum Engineering also recognizes and thanks our Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC), Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition (TRCT), and Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) for their service to Dallas-Fort Worth.

NCTCOG Transportation Department

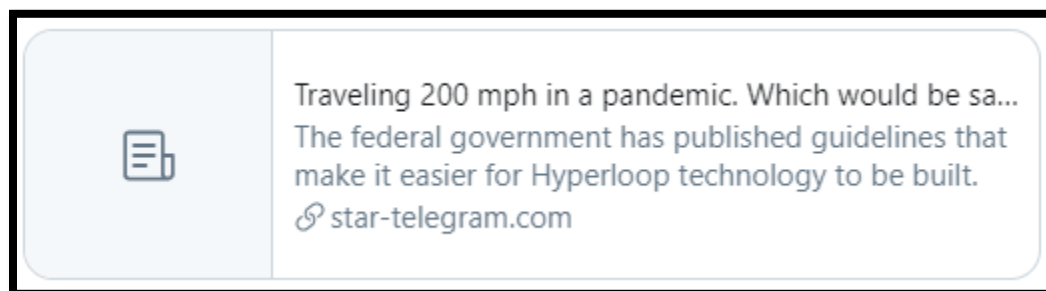
#EngineeringExcellence – Dannenbaum Engineering



Innovative Vehicles & Technology

Twitter –

1. Traveling 200 mph in a pandemic. Which would be safer: High-speed rail or Hyperloop? via @gdickson – Luke “Wear a Mask” Ranker 🏠 🤔 📄 – (@lukeranker)



Hmmmm...which would be safer, the mode of transit with 50+years of impeccable safety or the thing that technically doesn't exist?

I really Really REALLY wish @NCTCOGtrans would stop wasting time on hyperloop hype – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

Project Planning

Email –

1. Oscar Pearson

Please push for the outer loop for 428 around Aubrey. Even with the additional lanes on 380 traffic east and west will not see much relief. And add an overpass for safety sake over the railroad in downtown Aubrey to avoid train delays for fire and safety. Thank you.

2. Robert Brown

Has COVID-19 impacted transportation projects in the region? Specifically, the IH-30 expansion project through Hunt County. I'm extremely concerned with one-way service roads and how it will impact something simple as getting a burger from McDonalds.

3. Al Daniels

Make Lemmon Ave. 8 lanes with left hand turn lanes from Turtle Creek to Lovers Lane.

4. Laurie Richardson

The roads and infrastructure desperately need to be improved for the communities off of Fm1385. Infrastructure is severely lacking. Waiting years to expand FM1385 won't work. Fishtrap between 1385 and Gee road needs more lanes now. Parvin road is key - it needs to be paved with asphalt to be used as a proper road - paving Parvin between fm1385 and Teel road will eliminate much of the traffic problems on 1385 by giving communities a real proper alternate route. We can't wait years for these things to happen, it's already a dire problem. We need help and solutions now. Thank you!

5. Thom Bouis

Connecting SH205 to Parker Rd would create a substantial portion of a multi county lower speed commerce loop around Dallas directly connecting many small towns enabling movement of goods and people without loading up the interstate highways.

6. Darwin Yeary

Dear Sirs, There is a decades old situation in Weatherford concerning a lack of consideration for motorist and residents and their safety on North main, Hwy 51N.

I sent in a request three months ago from the TXDOT mailing, which says " Tell us what you think " with no reply or return e-mail answer.

Discrimination still exist against local tax paying citizens, who reside within a three mile area off Hwy 51N, inside Weatherford City limits.

Continual uninforcement and out of control speeding of automobiles and Tractor Trailer rigs, threatens the life and safety of local motorist and pedestrians trying to enter or cross over at intersections in this stretch of in-town highway. Only two protected traffic lite standards exist, one at 4th St. and one at 51N and Spring St, one block from the Parker County Courthouse. This intersection which is congested with ill arranged street parking is a automobile death trap for motorist waiting to cross over Spring St, going west. Tractor rigs turning left on E Spring hardly miss crashing into automobiles waiting for a green lite there.

Sorry to report all the promises given back in 2005, about the proposed loop around Weatherford, certainly did not improve the dangerous and fraught Weatherford Square. And now another planned proposal awaiting millions of dollars, for taking truck traffic off the Square, has people still asking "WHEN" by Citizens and Weatherford businesses.

I just wish the buck passing between TXDOT and Weatherford, would end. You both work for us, we the " People."

I believe the editors of MAD Magazine, or even "Myself," could design a better plan that could safely work.

Twitter –

1. If growing states like Texas get undercounted in the #Census2020 will the COG's stop building highways because they don't have the hard pop. growth numbers to justify it or will they continue bc that's the only thing they know how to do? – Andrew Wallace (agwallace92)

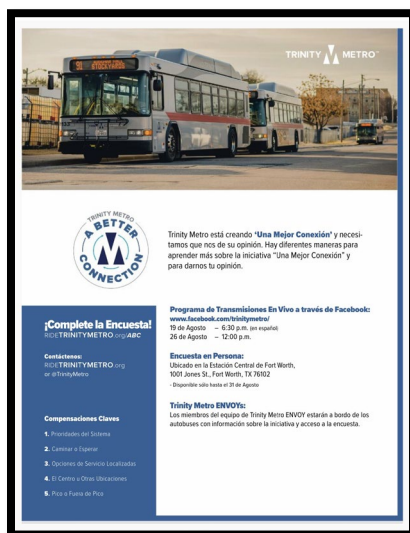
@NCTCOGtrans, @AlamoAreaCOG, @CAPCOGTX, & @HGACmpocan you shine light on this? – Andrew Wallace (agwallace92)

Public Input

Twitter –

1. @TrinityMetro está rediseñando su red de autobuses para crear Una Mejor Conexión y necesitamos de su ayuda!

Necesitamos su opinión sobre cómo hacer que nuestro sistema funcione mejor para usted hoy y en los años por venir. @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @fwhcc – Sal Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



2. @TrinityMetro is redesigning its bus network to create A Better Connection and we need your help!

We need your input on how to make the system work for you today and in the years to come.
@CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @FTWChamber @fwhcc @FWMBCC
@TarrantTransit



Safety

Twitter –

1. There are lots of things that can distract you while you're driving besides your phone. Join us in playing the new AR game from @TxDOT to see how good you are at driving heads up in Texas.

<http://DartThoseDistractions.com>

#HeadsUpTexas #EndTheStreakTX

@TxDOTFortWorth

@TxDOTDallas



Thank you for advocating for this cause! We work hard everyday to fight against distracted driving!! Our app always asks, "Is It Worth It??" – Safe 2 Save (@Safe2Save)

Transit

Email –

1. **Andrea Voss**

We need more DART Rail service that goes around the county and not primarily through downtown, to save people time and make them want to use the public transit more.

2. **Dane Cofer**

Mr. Morris,

I am sending you the information you directed be sent to you from the RTC meeting today. (Please note that similar information was provided to previous representatives from Dallas to the RTC... perhaps their not acting on the information is part of why they were all replaced abruptly this year).

The two main points I am making are:

1. DART is in violation of Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452 sections 303 and 304.
- 2 The Texas Transportation Commission (the head of the Texas DoT) said they only enforce the safety aspects of Transportation Code Chapter 452 and that COG is responsible for enforcement of the remainder.

A group of citizens have geared up to seek injunctive relief based on DART's blatant violation of these sections, but my big question is why are citizens having to pick up the enforcement role that should belong to government?

Here are the two sections of the Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452 that DART is in violation of (I have highlighted specific elements to show singular examples of how DART is in violation - these do NOT constitute the entirety of DART's violation, just an illustrative example. The examples are provided below both excerpts from the Texas Transportation Code).

Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452

Sec. 452.303. MAJOR SERVICE PLAN CHANGE: NOTICE AND HEARING. (a) The subregional board of an authority described by Section 452.301 may not, without holding a public hearing on the proposed change, consider a change in the service plan that would:

- (1) change the location of a right-of-way of a fixed guideway system;
- (2) change or add a width of a right-of-way of a fixed guideway system;
- (3) change a grade separation or add a grade separation to a fixed guideway system;
- (4) move the location of a station of a fixed guideway system;
- (5) reclassify the aerial, at-grade, or subgrade vertical alignment of a fixed guideway or establish the vertical alignment of a fixed guideway;
- (6) move the location of:
 - (A) a parking lot;
 - (B) a maintenance facility; or
 - (C) an off-street transfer center;
- (7) add a facility listed in Subdivisions (1)-(6); or
- (8) add a route for a fixed guideway system.

(b) Before holding a public hearing required under Subsection (a), the subregional board shall in writing notify:

- (1) each owner of real property located within 400 feet, including streets and alleys, of the boundary of the proposed right-of-way or the boundary of property on which the facility is proposed to be located; and
- (2) the governing body of each municipality and the commissioners court of each county in which the changed or additional right-of-way or facility is to be located.

(c) The notice required by this section must be given to each governing body and to the property owners shown by the municipal or county tax roll at least 20 days before the date of the hearing by depositing the notice in the United States mail.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 452.304. ADOPTION OF MAJOR SERVICE PLAN CHANGE. (a) After a public hearing, the subregional board described by Section 452.301 may approve a change described by Section 452.303(a) in the service plan by a favorable vote of two-thirds of the members present.

(b) If the change in the plan includes the addition of a fixed guideway route, including a route to be added under an agreement under Section 452.060, the governing body of each municipality through which the route would pass must approve the route before the subregional board may add the route to the service plan.

(c) The subregional board shall give notice of a change in the service plan adopted under this section to:

(1) the commissioners court of each county in which the changed or additional right-of-way or facility is to be located if the change is located in an unincorporated area; and

(2) the governing body of each municipality in which the changed or additional right-of-way or facility is to be located.

DART's violation of Section 303

With JUST these two very focused and unambiguous references highlighted, I can illustrate that DART did not comply with Texas Transportation Code. The property on the Northeast corner of The Hillcrest and Cottonbelt rail line is illustrated below (image from Collin CAD).

- A grade separated crossing was introduced to the Cottonbelt at Hillcrest.
- This property is within 400' of this grade-separated intersection.
- This property is owned by Hillcrest Limited (see info below from Collin CAD below)
- The owner of this property was interviewed by Fox4 and tearfully indicated that she had received no notice of the rail development, which would not have been true if she had received a Notice of the Public Hearing.

This is just one example, but hundreds of people's similar rights have been violated... and hundreds have sent letters to put DART on notice of intent to sue. Their first step will be seeking injunctive relief to halt the train. But, why was this not monitored and caught by COG?

DART violation of Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452.304

Section 304 says "the governing body of each municipality through which the route would pass must approve the route before the subregional board may add the route to the service plan."

Dallas provided approval via DCC Resolution 18-0488 (<http://citysecretary2.dallascityhall.com/resolutions/2018/03-28-18/18-0488.pdf>). However, the City's approval was CONDITIONAL. Meaning, they only approved the implementation in Dallas IF DART met specific requirements/conditions. Here are the conditions Dallas mandated. Dallas has submitted multiple plans to Dallas that were not compliant... but equally important, beyond the plans, DART has not completed the remainder of the requirements.

- A study is completed and an implementation plan adopted to create a comprehensive, high frequency grid network bus system for Dallas, and,
- Funding is set aside in its 20 year Financial Plan for this comprehensive bus system, and
- Rail stations within the City of Dallas are only provided at two locations, Cypress Waters and Knoll Trail. The Preston Road/Keller Springs and Coit Road stations are eliminated from the project, and
- Grade-separated street crossings are constructed at Hillcrest Road and Coit Road. Infrastructure changes are at-grade or below grade, and
- Mitigation and Betterments are provided throughout the residential communities in Far North Dallas to mitigate adverse impacts including, at a minimum:
 - Continuous 15-foot high concrete, sound-absorbing walls that meet the 3dBA Ldn limits at all residences on both sides of the rail line,
 - Tire-derived aggregate for track ballast to reduce vibration,
 - Enhanced landscaping to reduce visual impacts,
 - Double gated, lower height crossings and quiet zones at all at-grade street crossings to improve safety and to reduce noise,
 - Train Noise shall not exceed current community noise levels by more than 3dBa Ldn at maximum headways,
 - Vibration levels – the standard of reference for human exposure to vibrations in buildings will be ANSI S2.7-1983 (R2006), or 65 vdB peak vibration level,
 - Directional crossing bells in all quiet zones that adhere to the lowest/quietest federal safety limits. DART will employ all practical measures to obscure sound intrusions from the bells into the residences, and

- DART will enter into an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Dallas to assure that freight service will never be allowed on the Cotton Belt between Waterview Parkway and the Dallas North Tollway, and
- Cooperation is provided in the development and implementation of a bicycle-pedestrian trail within the Cotton Belt corridor outside of the sound walls consistent with the 2011 Dallas Bike Plan, subject to neighborhood input.


Section 2. That the City Council supports the proposed change in alignment and the location of a rail station for the Cotton Belt near the Cypress Waters development within the City of Dallas.

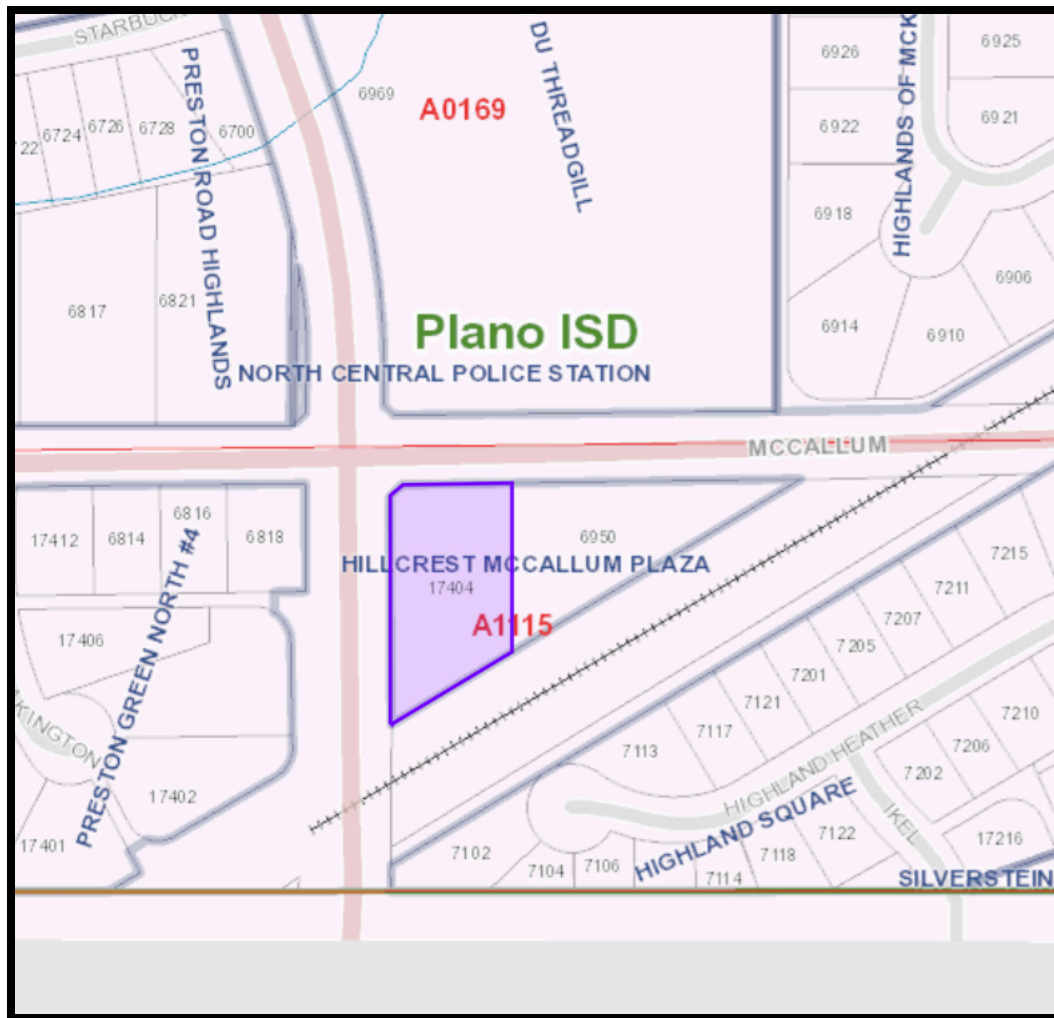
Section 3. That the DART Board increases its \$50 million commitment to provide betterments in residential areas of the Cotton Belt corridor, adjusts the funding amount to reflect inflation since their resolution was approved in 2006, and stipulate that these funds will be used to provide betterments that would be in addition to the mitigation measures required by the FTA.

Section 4. That the DART Board uses the funds budgeted for the eliminated Preston Road/Keller Springs and Coit Road stations on betterments for the Far North Dallas portion of the rail line.

Section 5. That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas and it is accordingly so resolved.

Owner Information

Owner ID	420157
Owner Name(s)	 17404 Hillcrest Ltd
Exemptions	None
Percent Ownership	100.00%
Mailing Address	4539 Gus Thomasson Rd Mesquite, TX 75150-1728



Please advise if you have any questions regarding the information presented.

Michael Morris

Mr. Cofer,

Attached is the response back to you and the RTC members. I told you I would get back to you in advance of the Friday mailout to the RTC. Although you cited sections of law that refer to Transportation Authorities like DART, not MPOs, typically we could aid in communication with a third party like DART. In talking to DART, they are familiar with your positions and you have elevated them to very high levels in their organization. There is little I can do informally because of the far advanced conversation with DART. If that changes, and it is a more working conversation maybe there is something I can help with.

Councilmember Mendelsohn,

You are copied because Mr. Cofer copied you on his initial e-mail to me.

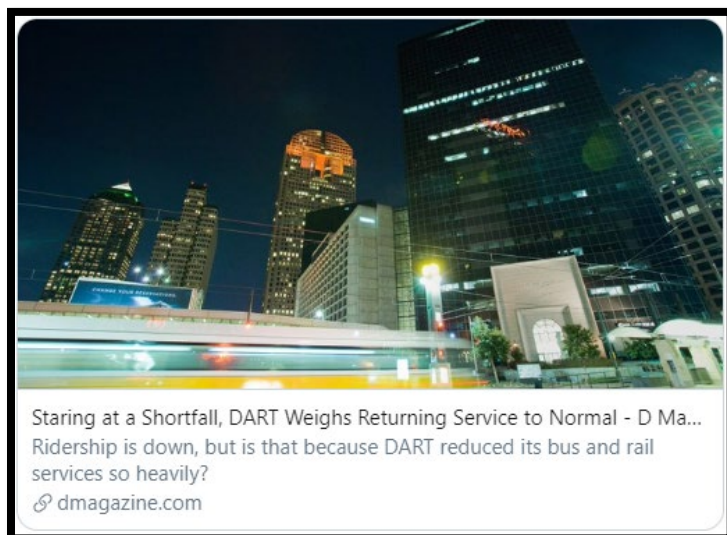
See Attachment #1 for additional response.

Twitter –

1. Please check out this video from @TrinityMetro re: A Better Connection. @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – Salvador Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



2. <https://dmagazine.com/frontburner/2020/08/staring-at-a-shortfall-dart-weighs-returning-service-to-normal/> @dartmedia @CityOfDallas @NCTCOGtrans – Lee M. Kleinman (@LeeforDallas)



3. Exciting new transit oriented development project at Trinity Lakes by a new Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station. <https://star-telegram.com/news/business/growth/article244935422.html> @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @GynaDistrict5 @GynaB @TarrantTransit – Sal Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



Other

Twitter –

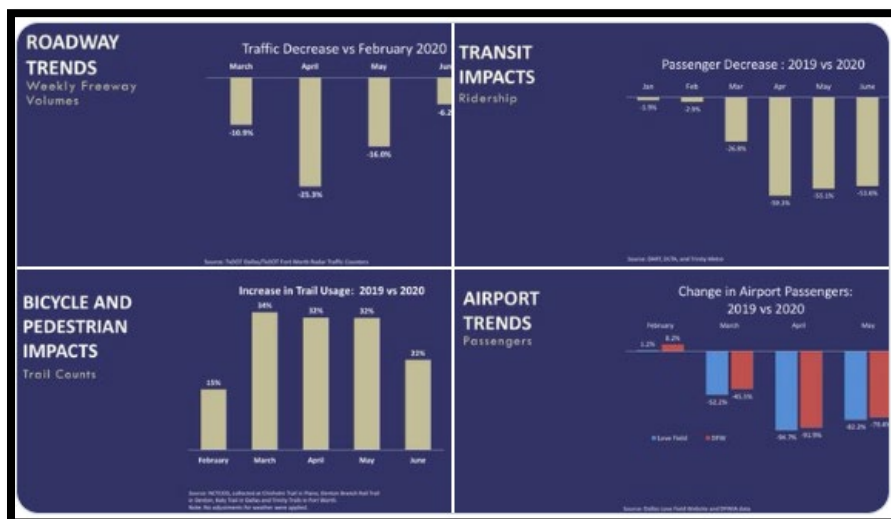
1. COVID-19 impacts on transportation via

@NCTCOGtrans

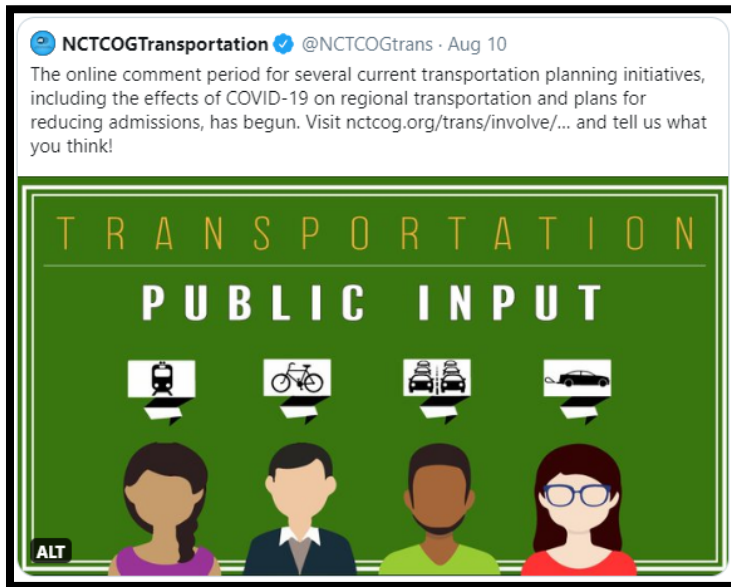
. Roadways are bouncing back, transit is facing a deep hole, and airports are significantly down. Trail usage has spiked.

Source: RTC meeting Packet

<https://nctcog.org/trans/about/committees/regional-transportation-council?ext=.> – Fort Worth Urban (@UrbanFortWorth)



If you or any of your followers would like to share their thoughts on this topic, the comment period for it has just begun! More info here: - NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Attachment #1

**PUBLIC COMMENT
AUGUST 13, 2020
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL MEETING**

COMMENTER:

Dane Cofer

COMMENT:

DART is in violation of Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452 sections 303 and 304, and TxDOT indicated that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has jurisdiction for the non-safety portion of this chapter.

Section 452.303 specifies public notification requirements for major service plan changes. Section 452.304 specifies public entity notification requirements of major service plan changes.

STAFF REVIEW:

Transportation Director Michael Morris interviewed TxDOT staff personnel that “met” with Mr. Cofer. TxDOT indicated they have no record of meeting with him. Mr. Cofer contacted the media who then contacted TxDOT. TxDOT, in error, claimed that the RTC has responsibility in Section 452.303. That authority is related to the responsibility of the transportation authority, not the metropolitan planning organization (MPO). TxDOT staff corrected themselves and informed the media representative some time ago. We have no knowledge of the media representative passing on to Mr. Cofer that responsibility resides with DART and not the RTC. The RTC has no responsibility in these Sections. In addition, Michael Morris spoke directly with Gary Thomas and Mr. Cofer’s views are known to DART and specifically involve details related to the Cotton Belt Corridor and Public Comments.

CONCLUSION:

Even though Mr. Cofer’s remarks were not germane to the agenda on August 13, ordinarily staff would attempt to assist a citizen and remedies, but because we have no legal responsibility and those conversations at DART have already been elevated, it is best to let Mr. Cofer continue to engage with DART involving specific questions.