

AGENDA

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
Thursday, March 12, 2020
North Central Texas Council of Governments

**1:00 pm Full RTC Business Agenda
(NCTCOG Guest Secured Wireless Connection Password: rangers!)**

1:00 – 1:10 1. Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840

☒ Information Minutes: 10

Item Summary: This item provides an opportunity for the public to speak on meeting agenda items. A Speaker Request Card is available at the side table. Please provide a Speaker Request Card to the North Central Texas Council of Governments designated staff person. For today's meeting, public comments will be heard on all items.

Background: N/A

1:10 – 1:15 2. Approval of February 27, 2020, Minutes

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 5

Presenter: Andy Eads, RTC Chair

Item Summary: Approval of the February 27, 2020, minutes contained in [Reference Item 2](#) will be requested.

Background: N/A

1:15 – 1:15 3. Consent Agenda (There are no items on the Consent Agenda)

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 0

1:15 – 1:30 4. Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 15

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

1. Federal Register Comments on Proposed Rules for Federal Communications Commission's Use of the 5.850–5.925 GHz Band (Handout)
2. Fiscal Year 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program
3. GoCarma App Update
4. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle)
5. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings)
6. East/West Equity Update ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
7. Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
8. Mobility Matters (Handout)
9. January Online Input Opportunity Minutes ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
10. March Public Meeting Notice ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
11. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
12. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
13. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))

- 14. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
- 15. Transportation Partners Progress Reports

1:30 – 1:40

5. **Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings (HB 2840) Rules**

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Amanda Wilson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request approval by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of Rules for Public Comments at RTC meetings.

Background: HB 2840 requires governmental bodies to allow each member of the public to give input on agenda items during open meetings. Input must be given before or during the consideration of the agenda item and not after. HB 2840 also permits governmental bodies to adopt reasonable rules regarding the public's right to address the body, including rules regarding time limits. Non-English speakers, with a translator, must be given double time during open meetings to address and communicate with the body. A governmental body may not prohibit public criticism of the body. This bill took effect on September 1, 2019. Staff will request approval on rules for the RTC to accept public comments as detailed in [Electronic Item 5.1](#). An example Speaker Request Card is included as [Electronic Item 5.2](#). Once approved, the rules will be included as an Appendix to the Public Participation Plan. [Electronic Item 5.3](#) is a presentation that provides more information.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☐ Safety ☐ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☐ Transit Asset ☐ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

1:40 – 1:50

6. **Trinity River Vision Bridge Funding Increase**

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of a funding increase of \$20 million for the Trinity River Vision (TRV) Bridge project will be requested.

Background: The TRV Bridge project includes the construction of three bridges over the redirected Trinity River in Downtown Fort Worth. The bridges were originally funded in 2011 with a total of \$69.9 million of federal, State, city, and private partner funding. Due to constructability issues and resulting delays, the most recent projected costs are \$89.3 million creating a projected overrun of \$19.4 million. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is proposing to add \$20 million, of which \$15 million would be a grant and \$5 million would be paid back by the City of Fort Worth and other local partners over the next ten years. Details are provided in [Electronic Item 6](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☒ Safety ☒ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☒ Transit Asset ☒ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

1:50 – 2:05

7. **Next Steps with the Texas Department of Transportation: Comments for the 2020 and 2021 Unified Transportation Program**

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 15

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: As previously stated, staff will present a Plan B on how to advance IH 35 in Austin for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) consideration. Action will be requested for official comments to be approved and transmitted to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC).

Background: Discussions continue with the Texas Department of Transportation districts on the schedule to develop new projects for the 2021 UTP. In the meantime, the TTC is proposing to modify the current UTP in April 2020. At the February 27, 2020, RTC meeting, members were provided information about the TTC's proposal to fund IH 35 in Austin. A North Central Texas Council of Governments staff visual presentation on the RTC's proposed Plan B is available at: www.youtube.com/nctcogtrans. Scroll to RTC Resolution 2020, 2021 Unified Transportation Program. [Reference Item 7](#) contains the RTC draft resolution. Attachment 1 contains a copy of the PowerPoint slides.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☒ Safety ☒ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☒ Transit Asset ☒ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:05 – 2:15

8. **2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Draft Listings**

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Brian Dell, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will brief the Council on the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process and provide a draft listing of current Regional Transportation Council commitments.

Background: A new TIP is developed every two years through a cooperative effort among 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 8](#) contains an overview of the TIP development process, focus areas, and schedule. The financially constrained draft project listings for the 2021-2024 TIP can be found at: https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Fund/TIP/21-24TIP/RTC_Info_21_24DraftProjectListings.pdf. Local agency comments on the draft listings must be provided by April 9, 2020, in order to be included in the final listings.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☒ Safety ☒ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☒ Transit Asset ☒ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:15 – 2:25

9. Mobility 2045 Update (High-Speed Rail Recommendations)

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Kevin Feldt, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide a discussion regarding the Mobility 2045 High-Speed Rail recommendations. The discussion will include information identifying various high-speed transportation technologies.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) adopted Mobility 2045 on June 14, 2018. Mobility 2045 includes recommendations regarding various high-speed rail technologies and corridors. During the January 9, 2020, RTC meeting, members requested a discussion and clarification regarding future high-speed transportation opportunities. The discussion will include the following topics:

- Mobility 2045 recommendations
- Defining various high-speed transportation technologies
- Current high-speed transportation efforts
- Future high-speed transportation opportunities

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☒ Safety ☐ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☒ Transit Asset ☒ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:25 – 2:35

10. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Schedule

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Kevin Feldt, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018. Staff will provide a report regarding efforts to update Mobility 2045.

Background: Following RTC adoption of Mobility 2045, staff and partner agencies have been working toward implementing the plan. These efforts include planning and project development tasks, projects in construction, and coordinating with the public and our transportation partners.

Federal guidelines require the Dallas-Fort Worth region to update the region's long-range transportation plan a minimum of every four years. In addition, the Mobility 2045 Update will be required to attain Transportation Conformity. The updated plan will include a new financial plan and necessary refinements to projects in the current Mobility 2045 plan.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

☒ Safety ☒ Pavement and Bridge Condition
☒ Transit Asset ☒ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:35 – 2:40

11. Trail of the Month Video

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 5

Presenter: Karla Weaver, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will highlight the series of "Trail of the Month" videos.

Background: Over a twelve-month period, the Sustainable Development team is highlighting various regionally significant shared-use trails within the Dallas-Fort Worth region through a series of

“Trail of the Month” videos. These videos detail benefits of the trail facilities including economic development, regional connectivity, increased mode share for active users, and improved quality of life within the community. Staff will provide a brief description of the videos developed to date and present a two-minute video from the series. The videos are posted to the North Central Texas Council of Governments website on the first Friday of each month, and the public is notified of their availability through several social media platforms. [Electronic Item 11](#) reflects the video staff will display at the meeting.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Safety | ☐ Pavement and Bridge Condition |
| ☐ Transit Asset | ☐ System Performance/Freight/CMAQ |

12. **Progress Reports**

- ☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information

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

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 12.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 12.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 12.3](#))

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

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

15. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for **1:00 pm, Thursday, April 9, 2020**, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
February 27, 2020

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, February 27, 2020, at 10:00 am in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments. The following members or representatives were present: Tennell Atkins, Adam Bazaldua, David Blewett, Mohamed Bur, Loyl C. Bussell, Theresa Daniel, Jon Michael Franks (representing Jeff Davis), Pat Deen, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Rick Grady, Moji Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Greg Giessner (representing Ron Jensen), Jungus Jordan, Ray Smith (representing John Keating), Lee M. Kleinman, David Magness, Curtistene McCowan, William Meadows, Cary Moon, Barbara Odom-Wesley, John Ryan, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Dennis Webb, Duncan Webb, Chad West, B. Glen Whitley, and Ann Zadeh.

Others present at the meeting were: Onyinye Akujuo, Vickie Alexander, Nick Allen, David S. Arbuckle, Kim Armstrong, Melissa Baker, Tom Bamonte, Berrien Barks, Sara Bass, Carli Baylor, Robin Bentley, Brandi Bird, David Boski, Ian Bryant, Kristen Camareno, J.C. Campbell, Jack Carr, Angie Carson, Ceason Clemens, Nancy Cline, Clarence Daugherty, Inga Dedow, Melany Dennis, Edie Diaz, Chad Edwards, Gary Enna, Sal Espino, Marcia Etie, Kevin Feldt, Michael Gage, Matt Garcia, Gypsy Gavia, Bob Golden, Barry Gordon, Christie Gotti, Danetta Harris, Jeff Hathcock, Victor Henderson, Rebekah Hernandez, Robert Hinkle, Matthew Holzapfel, Breanne Jackson, Brian Jahn, Amy Johnson, Tom Johnson, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Kevin Kokes, Dan Lamers, Mike Lang, Eron Linn, Stanford Lynch, Barbara Maley, Ron Massingill, Richard Matyikv, Steven McCullough, Mickey McGuire, Mindy Mize, Rebecca Montgomery, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Carey Neal, Jeff Neal, Than Nguyen, Tim Palermo, Evan Paret, James Powell, Ezra Pratt, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Chris Reed, Mark Rhea, Kyle Roy, Greg Royster, Steve Salin, Devin Sanders, Madeline Shepard, Walter Shumac III, Samuel Simmons, Vince Sims, Randy Skinner, Chelsey Smith, Tom Stallings, Shannon Stevenson, Dean Stuller, Dan Vedral, Mitzi Ward, Brendon Wheeler, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, and Alicia Winkelblech.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840:**

This item allows members of the public an opportunity to give input on agenda items. Speaker Request Cards were made available, and those interested in providing public input were asked to complete a card and provide to staff. Regional Transportation Council Chair Andy Eads asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak at the meeting or provide written comments to staff.

2. **Approval of the January 9, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the January 9, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. Tennell Atkins (M); Theresa Daniel (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.

- 3.1. **McKinney Avenue Trolley Funding:** Regional Transportation Council approval was requested to utilize existing Regional Toll Revenue funds previously authorized by the Regional Transportation Council for transit projects in an amount not to exceed \$650,000 to support the McKinney Avenue Transit Authority's Improved Service Frequency Plan and ensure enhanced connectivity between Uptown and Downtown Dallas. Details were provided in Electronic Item 3.1.

- 3.2. FY2020 and FY2021 Unified Planning Work Program Modifications: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of modifications to the FY2020 and FY2021 Unified Planning Work Program was requested. Direction for staff to also amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, was included in the action. The proposed amendments were provided in Electronic Item 3.2.1 and additional information was provided in Electronic Item 3.2.2.
- 3.3. Future Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects: Regional Transportation Council approval of the recommended eligible project categories, process, scoring criteria, and schedule for the upcoming 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects for the North Central Texas region was requested. Details were provided in Electronic Item 3.3.
- 3.4. Endorsement of Projects Submitted for the 2020 Infrastructure for Rebuilding American Discretionary Grant Program: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of projects submitted for award consideration in the Fiscal Year 2020 Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Discretionary Grant Program was requested. Proposed projects included the Virgin Hyperloop One (VHO) Certification Center and an updated iteration of the North Texas Multimodal Operations, Velocity, Efficiency, and Safety (MOVES) Program, which was previously submitted in 2019. Information on the MOVES Program was provided in Electronic Item 3.4.1. RTC comments provided to the United States Secretary of Transportation regarding the VHO Certification Center were provided in Electronic Item 3.4.2.

A motion was made to approve the items included on the Consent Agenda. Curtistene McCowan (M); T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (S); The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris provided an overview of items on the Director of Transportation Report. He thanked members who attended the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) New Member Orientation meeting on February 13, 2020. In addition, he noted a recent presentation to the Fort Worth City Council regarding the Trinity River Vision bridges that will be presented to the RTC at its March 12, 2020, meeting. He also noted North Central Texas Council of Governments staff member Jeff Neal recently returned from a series of seminars with the United States Department of Transportation in Indonesia and thanked him for representing the region.
5. **Mega-Development Program: Collin Creek Mall Redevelopment:** Michael Morris presented proposed funding and details of the Collin Creek Mall redevelopment project. He highlighted previous requests from entities interested in relocating to the region and local partners seeking to redevelop existing areas within the region. The Collin Creek Mall project includes redevelopment at the current location with access to the Downtown Plano Light Rail Station. Parking will be included as part of the redevelopment and will also provide parking for the downtown area. Staff proposed that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) contribute \$30 million in federal funds for a parking garage and that the City of Plano contribute \$25 million. Half of the RTC funding will be a loan. Since the redevelopment is near light rail and there is not enough parking in Downtown Plano, the project will include transit service using next generation electric vehicles to the Downtown Plano Light Rail Station. Transit routes operated by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) already exist at this location, and some adjustments in routing by DART may be necessary. Various market segments would use the parking garage, providing the ability to grow ridership at this rail

station. Additional details of the partnership were provided in Reference Item 5. Action will include a request for \$30 million in federal funds, \$15 million to be repaid as a loan, and \$25 million in local funds. Flexibility to use Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program or Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds will be needed, with Federal Transit Administration funds potentially used to assist in the purchase of approximately three transit vehicles for shuttle purposes. Specific agreement terms will be finalized. Roger Harmon discussed a recent request by the City of Burleson for Johnson County to enter into a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreement with the City for a parking garage in Downtown Burleson. Considering limited funds for transportation, he noted he would like to see funding be used towards the construction of roads and not parking garages. Mr. Morris discussed the continued growth in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. As the region approaches 8 million persons, a tipping point is reached regarding the tools needed to respond to the increasing population with increased focus necessary on land use and transit. While building roads has a direct transportation benefit, infilling the region around transit stations has a significant indirect benefit on congestion and air quality through the promotion of alternative modes of transportation. He added that because of the economic benefit to the City of Plano as a result of the project, half of the funding will be repaid by the City. Ann Zadeh noted that she had similar reservations regarding the project and expressed her opinion that parking garages incentivize people to drive. She noted that as other projects come forward, it will be important to consider that the projects must have a transit nexus if the RTC is providing funding for parking. RTC Secretary Theresa Daniel asked how economic development fits into the RTC's responsibilities and if the specific location of the parking garage was closer to the shopping center or the light rail station. Mr. Morris noted the parking garage is integrated into the development. In addition, he noted that infill in the urban portion of the region has tremendous benefits regarding air quality and congestion, of which reducing both are the responsibility of the RTC. Curtistene McCowan asked for clarification of the repayment terms for the \$15 million loan. Mr. Morris discussed Tax Increment Finance (TIF) revenue and repayment by the City of Plano with a 2.4 percent interest rate. Revenues will flow back to the RTC for other purposes. B. Glen Whitley discussed revenue resulting from TIF agreements and redevelopment in the area. He asked if Collin County was part of the TIF agreement for the parking garage and why the City of Plano was not repaying the full \$30 million. Duncan Webb noted the project was in his precinct and that he was supportive of the project, not only because of the transit element, but because of the lack of necessary parking in Downtown Plano. The project will enhance the ability for citizens to utilize a high-density development and connect to transit. Mr. Morris added that only \$15 million is being repaid because of the park-and-ride element for transit. Rick Grady noted that the TIF for this project has already been approved by the Plano City Council. Most of the parking garage is underground with buildings located on top. TIF funds will be used to improve the entire area, which is just adjacent to US 75. Discussion continued regarding funding, the revenue benefit versus the economic development, the purpose of the project, and what other entities in Collin County were supportive. George Fuller noted that he supports the holistic approach to transportation that includes transit in order to reduce congestion and that one could argue that any project approved by the RTC results in economic development. Cary Moon noted that in his opinion, the \$15 million being repaid should be tied to a development plan with revenue dollars that will support the payback. If this is not an economic development plan, then the RTC is at risk of not being repaid the \$15 million. He noted, in his opinion, it is important to confirm local participation of other jurisdictions in the TIF and possibly other waterfalls, and that other options should be revisited. RTC Chair Andy Eads thanked staff, the City of Plano, and Collin County for their efforts on this project, and noted this is an opportunity for redevelopment and to increase access for the public. He discussed the innovative efforts of the RTC and its success in

balancing practices and standards across the region and noted that a future item could come back to the RTC to address the concerns of the body and establish criterion for parking garages. Chair Eads noted that based on discussion, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff has significant direction regarding the RTC's concerns when considering future requests. A motion was made to approve the proposed partnership for parking and transit at the Collin Creek Mall mixed-use redevelopment: \$30 million federal funding with a \$15 million payback for the parking garage, \$25 million local funds, and approximately three transit vehicles for shuttle purposes. Action included flexibility in the federal funding source of either Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program or Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds, with Federal Transit Administration funds possible to assist with transit. Specific agreement terms will be finalized. Also included in the action was approval for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include this project and funding. Clay Lewis Jenkins (M); Tennell Atkins (S). Roger Harmon and Cary Moon were opposed. The motion passed.

6. **Next Steps with the Texas Department of Transportation and 2021 Unified Transportation Program:** Michael Morris presented the latest efforts regarding the partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the 2021 Unified Transportation Program (UTP), as well as the larger policy issue of transportation funding in the State. Electronic Item 6.1 contained information from the last Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) meeting. The latest funding targets from TxDOT were provided in Electronic Item 6.2, and a summary presentation was provided in included in Electronic Item 6.3. He highlighted the responsibilities of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), as well as the responsibilities of the State Legislature and Texas Transportation Commission. In January 2020, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff presented the need to advance tolled manages lanes and submitted four projects directly to TxDOT Headquarters for funding consideration in the UTP. Over the next several months, conversations with TxDOT will occur regarding how best to advance the projects. As a result of the January presentation, the current private-sector provider for SH 183 contacted NCTCOG regarding recent projections that indicate the general purpose and managed lane capacity improvements are anticipated to be triggered immediately. The capacity improvements total approximately \$162 million to be paid by the private sector. These improvements will create a lane imbalance near Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, and the private sector has proposed an additional \$860 million of improvements as an extension of the current facility to balance lanes between SH 121 and SH 161. In addition, \$270 million is proposed for payment to TxDOT for lane balance improvements east of SH 161 for a total of \$1.3 billion to the region. NCTCOG staff proposed continued conversations with the TTC requesting that the projects be grandfathered, similar to IH 35W 3C and IH 635 East, so that the projects can proceed into the 2021 UTP and the region and State receive the benefit of \$1.3 billion in improvements paid by the private sector. In addition, Mr. Morris noted that at today's TTC meeting, the Commission will propose to fund IH 35 in Austin with revenues from across the state. The RTC's direction to staff has been to continue with efforts to maintain the historical TTC formula funding allocation to the region. As a result of the proposal for IH 35 in Austin, he noted that members should respond with measured outrage for Plan A and propose Plan B which is a win-win situation for Austin and the State. This proposal will be presented to the RTC for consideration at its March 12 meeting. Plan A, proposed by the TTC, would require an additional \$3.4 billion in Category 12 Strategic Priority funds, as well as another \$300 million totaling \$5.7 billion for the project. As a result of the TTC's proposal, there would be a \$1 billion impact to the region, which contradicts the current relationship with the

TTC for formula allocation. He noted that the answer for IH 35 in Austin seems clear and exists in the real world as LBJ/NTE. Implementing the IH 35 project with tolled managed lanes will allow the Austin project to be built, as well as other projects across the state. Since the TTC is expected to select projects in May, staff believes there are 60 days to communicate the value of a Plan B option to the TTC, Governor's Office, Lieutenant Governor's Office, the private sector, the North Texas legislative delegation, Attorney General's Office, and the Austin MPO. The message will focus on equity, legal issues, project elements, and lost opportunity costs. He noted that the TTC Chair has communicated with NCTCOG and that a response to the IH 35 proposal from the RTC is anticipated. Several members discussed support for the IH 35 project and understanding of the congestion issue in Austin. Also discussed was the promise of formula allocation and that the region is not penalized for its innovation to move projects forward. It was noted that citizens have been supportive of tolled managed lanes in the region because of the promises for continued formula allocation, but that future support may be difficult if the fair share allocations are not honored. In addition, it was suggested that formula allocation be included in the RTC Legislative Program for the upcoming session. Mr. Morris noted that although the IH 35 project in Austin is the right project, the proposal is not the correct mechanism to fund the project. He suggested that members of the Austin MPO be invited to drive the region's managed lane corridors and discuss reliability, reduced congestion, choice lanes, funding waterfalls, and the success of leveraging available funds. RTC Chair Andy Eads noted that over the span of his experience on the RTC, there has been a good relationship with TxDOT and that the positive relationship will continue. Members of the RTC appreciate the Governor's desire to implement the IH 35 project in Austin and realize that IH 35 in Austin is a statewide issue important to everyone in the State. Chair Eads pledged his time and energy, as well as that of the RTC staff, to continue to work with partners in Austin and the TTC.

7. **Virgin Hyperloop One Certification Center Request for Proposals Response:** Michael Morris provided an overview of the resolution and funding proposal for the response to Virgin Hyperloop One (VHO) regarding its Request for Proposals for a Hyperloop Certification Center. On November 14, 2019, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved submittal of a response to the first round of the VHO Request for Proposals, provided in Electronic Item 7.1. Since that time, an Open Records request was received by the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Legal staff requested an opinion from the Attorney General, provided in Electronic Item 7.2. Mr. Morris noted members were provided information regarding the technology, proposed Hyperloop Certification Center route, implications to the existing and future Mobility plans, and proposed funding in Electronic Item 7.3. A draft resolution for RTC consideration was provided in Reference Item 7.4 and proposed correspondence to the Secretary of Transportation was provided in Reference Item 7.5. In addition, Mr. Morris noted Lee M. Kleinman has proposed an additional section for the draft resolution, which was distributed at the meeting in Reference Item 7.6. The proposed language reaffirms transit access within Arlington is contingent upon the City of Arlington participating in one of the existing three public transportation authorities. Mr. Morris noted Virgin Hyperloop One has selected the SH 360 and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport corridor as its preferred option and IH 635 east of the airport as the contingency option. Mobility 2045 high-speed recommendations were highlighted, as well as the proposed Hyperloop Certification Center location in relation to high-speed rail recommendations. If hyperloop technology is selected for the east/west high-speed corridor, travel will be possible from Downtown Dallas and Downtown Fort Worth directly to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport with travel time anticipated at approximately 7 minutes. He also highlighted the typical technology sections of the hyperloop for various portions of the

project and the use of autonomous transit. Mr. Morris also reviewed proposed funding for the project. Because of the low emissions of the hyperloop technology and the goods movement potential, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) proposed the RTC pursue approximately \$50-100 million in Texas Emissions Reduction Program air quality funds for the project. In addition, staff proposed the RTC pursue with the Federal Railroad Administration \$50-100 million of the \$900 million high-speed rail funds returned from California. NCTCOG staff has also applied for \$30 million in Fiscal Year 2020 Infrastructure for Rebuilding America funds. Also proposed was a request for the Texas Legislative Budget Board to allocate \$10-\$30 million of the \$160 million in AirCheckTexas funds being held by the State for air quality enhancement projects. NCTCOG staff also proposed \$40 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds and \$10 million in RTC Local funds be contributed to the project. Approximately \$2.5 million of the RTC Local funds will be used for University partnerships. Transportation Development Credits, as well as Carbon Credits will also be requested. If short-listed for Round 3 of the proposal process, NCTCOG will work with the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) and/or Governor's Office to request Category 12 Strategic Priority funds be allocated to the project, request funds from the Environmental Protection Agency/Department of Energy due to the energy elements of the project, pursue interest by the private sector, and discuss potential city and county contributions. Duncan Webb noted he was supportive of the VHO Hyperloop Certification Center being located in the region but noted he had some questions and comments. He asked if the Hyperloop Certification Center proposed corridor of SH 360 and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport was selected by NCTCOG staff or VHO. He discussed the negative perception given during the corridor presentations to VHO of asking City of Dallas and Collin County to leave during the City of Arlington presentation, and then the corridor being chosen as the preferred option. In addition, he discussed the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Orange Line and asked if staff has considered the proposed Hyperloop Certification Center corridor will compete directly with the Orange Line. Mr. Morris noted the proposed corridor was selected by VHO, and the City of Arlington requested that other entities not be present during its presentation to VHO. In addition, he discussed the potential east-west, high-speed corridor and connections to the airport. He noted the hyperloop technology provides a different service than rail and is not expected to be in competition with the Orange Line. Chad West discussed RTC's goals to reduce congestion and improve air quality but asked how taking a new technology like hyperloop to a City that does not participate in mass transit correlates with the goals of the RTC. Mr. Morris discussed the City of Arlington's efforts regarding mass transit and noted Mr. Kleinman's proposed addition to the draft RTC resolution reaffirms the RTC's position that the City of Arlington will not have access to these types of transportation modes without its participation in a transportation authority. B. Glen Whitley noted in the 23 years he has been on the RTC, he has never seen an entity penalized because it is not a member of one of the three transportation authorities. He discussed progress made by the City of Arlington and some resistance in the region regarding transit due to low ridership in areas of Fort Worth. He also noted the benefits of a potential VHO Hyperloop Certification Center corridor that is not a throw-away project and how the proposed SH 360 corridor provides for potential expansion. In response to Mr. Webb's question regarding the Orange Line, Lee M. Kleinman noted the Orange Line is primarily a multi-stop line with ridership typically consisting of employees. Regarding his proposed addition to the resolution, he noted the new section is proposed to reiterate the RTC policy to focus on transit both as a method for congestion relief and air quality mitigation. As a regional entity, he noted the proposed additional language reiterates the importance of all entities participating in the concept of regionalism. Paul Wageman asked if the distinction was that the City of Arlington must participate in transit or be a member of a transportation authority. Mr. Kleinman noted he is comfortable using the term

"participate" with the understanding the RTC would make the decision on what level of participation was necessary for members to feel the City was participating fairly in the overall process. Jungus Jordan noted Arlington's participation is a valid discussion which may be better served separately and noted the VHO Hyperloop Certification Center could be put at risk if the conversation is misunderstood. Barbara Odom-Wesley noted, as a new member of the Arlington City Council, she is unable to address some of the concerns discussed but noted the City Council is interested in a regional plan and being connected to other cities in the metropolitan area. She added the City of Arlington's May ballot will include a measure to capture the ¼ cent of its sales tax which would be eligible for transit through an economic development corporation which provides flexibility. Clay Lewis Jenkins asked if the money to fund the Hyperloop Certification Center would be allocated from the western subregion since the project is in Tarrant County. Mr. Morris noted staff suggested the funding not only come from the western subregion since the project will provide significant travel time benefits to both the east and the west. He noted future discussion can be held with the RTC regarding the proposed \$40 million STBG investment for the Hyperloop Certification Center. Mr. Jenkins proposed a friendly amendment to the resolution section language suggested by Mr. Kleinman to indicate "significant participation" is needed by the City of Arlington so the message is clear, with future RTC conversations to define "significant participation." Mr. Kleinman noted he is comfortable with the revised language for section 3 of the resolution. Mr. Jenkins asked for clarification of the funding request for this effort and whether the east/west formula allocation would be used. Mr. Morris reviewed the funding elements. Of the funding items listed in Electronic Item 7.3, the formula allocation would only be applicable to the \$40 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds of which it has not been determine how the \$40 million will be allocated since the project will benefit the entire region. The question was called. A motion was made to approve the draft Regional Transportation Council resolution provided in Reference Item 7.4, including the added section proposed in Reference Item 7.6, distributed at the meeting, and the proposed amendment to update language in the section to "significant participation." Also included in the action was approval to send correspondence, provided in Electronic Item 7.5, to the Secretary of Transportation. Theresa Daniel (M); Tennell Atkins (S). Jon Michael Franks, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Jungus Jordan, David Magness, Cary Moon, Barbara Odom-Wesley, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., and B. Glen Whitley were opposed. The motion passed. A second motion was made to approve a policy unanimously welcoming Virgin Hyperloop One to select the Dallas-Fort Worth region for its Hyperloop Certification Center. Lee M. Kleinman (M); Duncan Webb (S). The motion passed unanimously.

8. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 8.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 8.2, and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 8.3.
9. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
10. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
11. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, March 12, 2020, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

As of December 2019

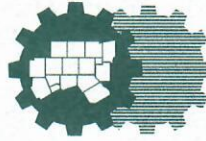
Overview of Actions Affecting Eastern/Western Funding Shares (\$ in Millions)

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
Updated FAST Act Equity Percentage Share as of December 2019				26.91%	73.09%

Cumulative East-West Equity Share		Cumulative Total	
		West	East
Cumulative Total		\$1,284.87	\$3,489.04
Cumulative Percentage Shares		26.91%	73.09%
RTC Approved Target Shares		32%	68%

No change since last presentation in October 2019.

RTC Director's Report
March 12, 2020



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

TO: Regional Transportation Council
(Primary and Alternate Members)
Mayors, City Managers
Surface Transportation Technical Committee
County Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs
Medical Examiners and Transportation Providers

DATE: March 6, 2020

FROM: Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

SUBJECT: Announcement for the May 2020 Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) developed Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Training courses to initiate a common, coordinated response to traffic incidents that will build partnerships, enhance safety for emergency personnel, reduce upstream traffic accidents, improve the efficiency of the transportation system, and improve air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. In 2018, the 16-county Dallas-Fort Worth region experienced 122,126 total reportable crashes, of which 42,510 were injury crashes, and 678 were fatal crashes. These statistics prove that training for agencies responsible for managing and clearing traffic incidents is extremely important and have demonstrated the ability to improve responder and motorist safety and to significantly reduce the length and size of roadway closures.

Since February 2003, 116 classes have been offered at the first responder level to 3,240 students in the areas of police, fire, department of public safety, towing, EMS, Mobility Assistance Patrol, transportation agencies, and media representatives. Additionally, since February 2005, 29 classes have been offered at the executive level to 1,027 decision and policy makers. For your reference, summaries of the regional attendance levels for the First Responder and Manager Course and the Executive Level Course can be found on NCTCOG's Traffic Incident Management Training web page <http://www.nctcog.org/FIM>.

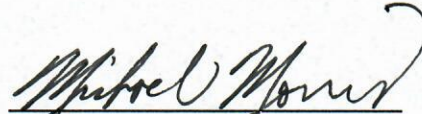
Although the NCTCOG TIM training has been very successful, it can be even more successful with the assistance and continual involvement of decision makers such as you. In order to have compliance at the first responder level, it is of vital importance that agency decision makers have an understanding of what is required of all responders during an incident; this includes police officers, fire fighters, tow truck operators, roadway construction crews, and mobility assistance crews, etc. Understanding the importance of incident management training, the Texas Commission on Fire Protection passed Rule 435.29 in July 2015, which requires completion of a minimum four-hour Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Traffic Incident Management program for all certified firefighters before December 1, 2020. As of September 2019, Texas Commission of Law Enforcement Officers (TCOLE), also mandates that TIM Training is now mandatory for all peace officers. It is important to note that the NCTCOG TIM Training Course is equivalent to the course offered by FHWA. Course participants can also earn continuing education credit for Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and Track Type II Fire by attending the TIM training.

March 6, 2020

The Executive Level Course provides you with an overview of the two-day First Responder and Manager Course. Additionally, the Executive Level Course also includes a preview of the updated ANSI vest standards. Those agencies that have participated in the training prior to 2013 are strongly encouraged to attend again, as major course updates have occurred since then, as well as updates to legislation and best practices. Important to note is that agency attendance at the NCTCOG TIM training, between 2013 to the present is a scoring component in the 2020 Incident Management Equipment Purchase Call for Projects (CFP). More information on the 2020 CFP will be provided during the May Executive Level Course.

You are invited to attend the Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course scheduled for Thursday, May 7, from 10 am to 12 pm. There is no charge for this class. The course will be held in the NCTCOG Transportation Council Room (616 Six Flags Drive, Centerpoint II, Arlington, Texas).

To RSVP for this course, please contact Barbara Walsh of NCTCOG at 817/695-9245 or bwalsh@nctcog.org. Please note that due to limited space, the course is restricted to the first 50 individuals who RSVP. We look forward to seeing you on May 7, 2020.


Michael Morris, P.E.

CF:bw

cc: Natalie Bettger, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG
Assistant Fire Chief John Glover, Town of Flower Mound Fire Department
Lieutenant Daniel Plumer, Dallas County Sheriff's Department

Increase Incident Response

Decrease Driver Delay

Executive Level Incident Management Training Opportunity

Join us for the Freeway Incident Management Executive Level Course hosted by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The course is designed to educate decision and policy makers on the importance and benefits of effective incident management. It also encourages a common, coordinated response to traffic incidents — a source of significant delays in our rapidly growing region.

Goals of the Freeway Incident Management Executive Level Course focus on:

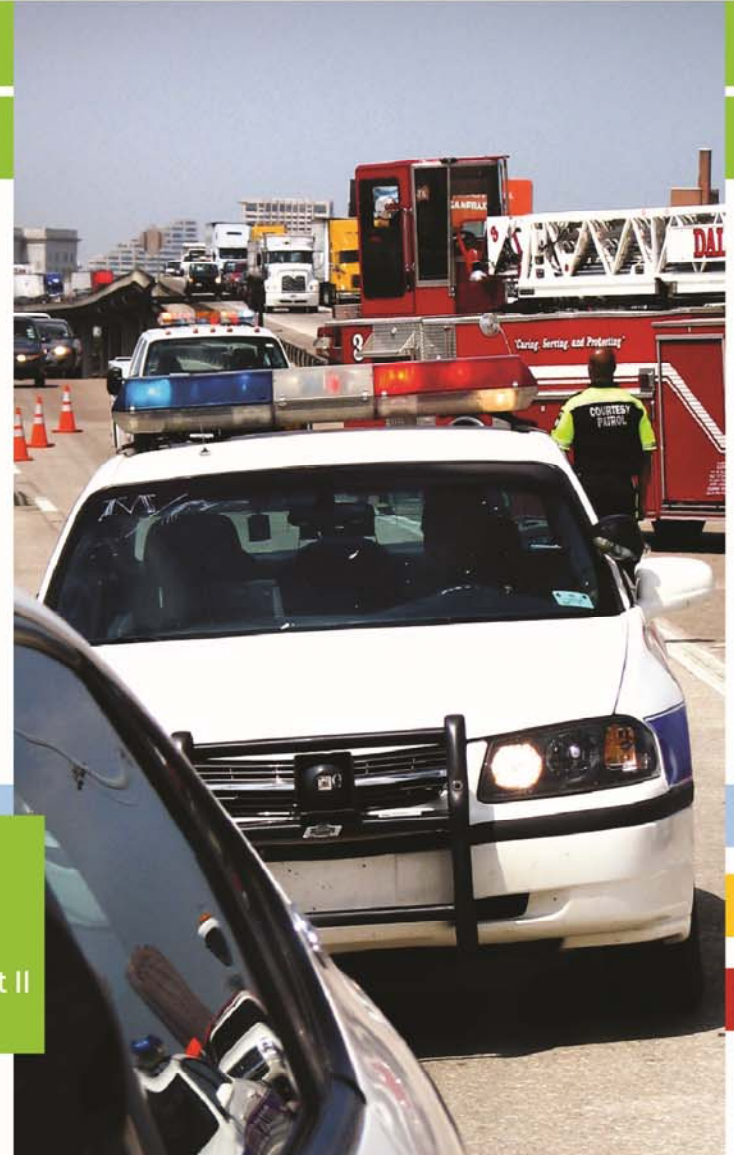
- building partnerships with local emergency response agencies
- enhancing safety for emergency personnel
- reducing upstream traffic accidents
- improving the efficiency of the transportation system
- improving air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth region

Space is limited. Register today. 817.695.9245 / bwalsh@nctcog.org

Thursday, November 6, 2014
10 am— noon
NCTCOG
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive, Centerpoint II
Arlington, Texas 76011



North Central Texas Council of Governments
Transportation



MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Work Program Modifications

Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings

Online Public Input Opportunity Dates

Monday, Jan. 13, 2020 - Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2020 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at 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. Work Program Modifications
2. Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings

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, online at 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 cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Summary of Presentations

Work Program Modifications handout:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/01/UPWP-Mods.pdf>

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) summarizes transportation activities for NCTCOG's metropolitan planning area, which covers a 12-county region. The UPWP is divided into five major task areas:

- Administration and Management
- Transportation Data Development and Maintenance
- Short-Range Planning and Programming and Air Quality and Transit Operations
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Special Studies and System Operations

The modifications included in this round of amendments address funding adjustments for air quality management, land-use initiatives and regional aviation planning and education.

The RTC will take action on the FY2020 and FY2021 UPWP modifications in February 2020.

Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/01/Public-Comment-at-RTC-Pres.pdf>

Draft Rules

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/01/Draft-RTC-Speaker-Rules.pdf>

Recent State legislation (House Bill 2840, 86th Texas Legislature) took effect on September 1, 2019. This bill states that members of the public must be allowed to make comments to a governmental body before or during the body's consideration of an item. If no simultaneous translation equipment is used, a member of the public using a translator must be given double the amount of time to comment. A governmental body may adopt reasonable rules regarding public comments, including rules that limit the amount of time for each public comment. The body may not prohibit public criticism of the body.

Opportunities for the public to speak on RTC agenda items began September 12, 2019. A single public comment period now occurs at each RTC meeting following the pledges and before any action is taken on agenda items. NCTCOG staff created a Speaker Request Card, which must be completed by each speaker prior to the start of the meeting. Speakers must provide their name, city of residence, zip code, the agenda item(s) on which they plan to speak (or provide written comments on) and whether or not they are speaking on, for or against the item(s). All comments that are received are documented in the RTC minutes and Public Comments Report.

The draft rules are currently posted for public review and comment until February 26, and the RTC will take action on them in March 2020.

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

Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings

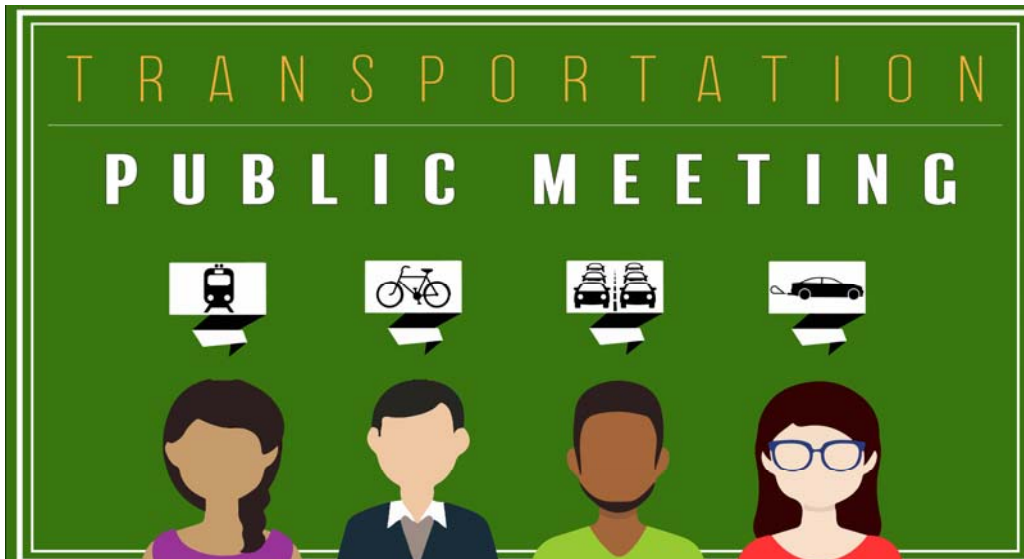
Email

Gary Hennessey

I wanted to commend the Texas Legislature for making public input a requirement for these meetings.

Darl Easton

Draft rules for Public Comment at RTC meetings appears to be reasonable and IAW the statute.



PRESENTATIONS

Transportation Improvement Program: Fiscal Years 2021-2024

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 draft list of active projects in the region.

Proposals on Two Major Projects

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has considered funding a transportation improvement associated with a transformational land use change at the Collin Creek Mall site. It involves a mixed-use development with transit connections to the Downtown Plano Light Rail Station. Additionally, the RTC has been asked to fund a change order of \$20 million on the Trinity River Bridges in Fort Worth to help speed up completion. Both projects will be presented for public review and comment.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle: Round 4

To encourage the development of alternative, strategic solutions, Mobility 2045 includes a list of voluntary policies that local governments and transportation agencies can choose to adopt. These policies aim to address issues affecting transportation in the region and cover a wide range of topics. Staff will present an overview of how the Mobility 2045 Policy Bundle Program works and how agencies work together to achieve the goals of the plan.

Start of 2020 Ozone Season

The 2020 ozone season begins March 1 and runs through November 30, 2020. The Dallas-Fort Worth region does not meet the federal air quality standard for the pollutant ozone, and NCTCOG staff continues to implement various projects and programs to improve air quality and protect public health. Staff will present an ozone season update as well as strategies to help reduce air pollution.

Dallas Fort Worth Clean Cities Recognition Annual Survey Results

Staff will provide an overview of the 2018 DFW Annual Fleet Survey results, which include statistics on the overall energy impact of fleets. Entities who were recognized for their transportation energy reduction efforts and strategies will also be highlighted.

ONLINE REVIEW AND COMMENT

Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects: www.nctcog.org/input

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Regional Smoking Vehicle Program: www.smokingvehicle.net

Vehicle Incentives & Funding Opportunities: www.nctcog.org/agfunding

Mobility Plan Administrative Revisions: www.nctcog.org/input

Spring Outreach Season: www.nctcog.org/input

The meeting will be live streamed at www.nctcog.org/video (click on the "live" tab). A video recording will also be posted online www.nctcog.org/input.



NCTCOGt



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

**MONDAY, MARCH 9,
2020 @ 6:00 PM**
**North Central
Texas Council of
Governments**
**616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011**

For special accommodations due to a disability or for language translation, contact Carli Baylor at 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made.

Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2365 o por email: cbaylor@nctcog.org con 72 horas (mínimo) previas a la junta. Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.

To request a free roundtrip ride between NCTCOG and the Trinity Railway Express CentrePort/DFW Airport Station, contact Carli Baylor at least 72 hours prior to the meeting: 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org.



CentrePort/DFW Airport Station
Arrival Options March 9

Eastbound Train 5:19 pm

Westbound Train 5:31 pm

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 Thursday, December 20, through Wednesday, February 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. Transit comments, including the opening and operation of TEXRail, expansion of transit and the 2020 Transit Survey were in the majority.

Air Quality

Twitter

1. Clear Air Partners Honored [nadallas.com/DAL/December-2018/Clear-Air-Partners-Honored/#.XB1BBAXwh2M.twitter](https://www.nadallas.com/DAL/December-2018/Clear-Air-Partners-Honored/#.XB1BBAXwh2M.twitter) ... @NCTCOGtrans #CleanAir – Natural Awakenings (@NaturalDallas)



2. North Texas Ozone Compliance Reclassified to Serious Nonattainment <https://www.nadallas.com/DAL/January-2019/North-Texas-Ozone-Compliance-Reclassified-to-Serious-Nonattainment/#.XDyZdMEqCdE.twitter> ... @NCTCOGtrans #HealthyPlanet #CleanAir – Natural Awakenings (@NaturalDallas)



3. #UnplugForCleanAir #ClimateActionNow #Sustainability #ClimateCrisis @indivisibletx24 @JudgeClayJ – 350 Dallas (@350Dallas)



Autonomous Vehicles

Twitter

1. And @NCTCOGtrans funding of a regional autonomous vehicle program.



Bicycle & Pedestrian

Twitter

1. @CityOfDallas @DallasParkRec @TxDOTDallas @NCTCOGtrans @DallasCityMgr @oncor – Lee M. Kleinman (@LeeforDallas)



2. The @RideDCTA A-train Rail Trail is now complete! You can now walk, bike or run across the entire 19-mile trail. – City of Lewisville (@LewisvilleTexas)



Facebook

1. "I don't have one" is not an excuse anymore!

Thanks to NCTCOG Transportation Department we have some!

Available for a very small donation or free with every single Earn-A-Bike!

No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. See We-Cycle Resource Center for details.

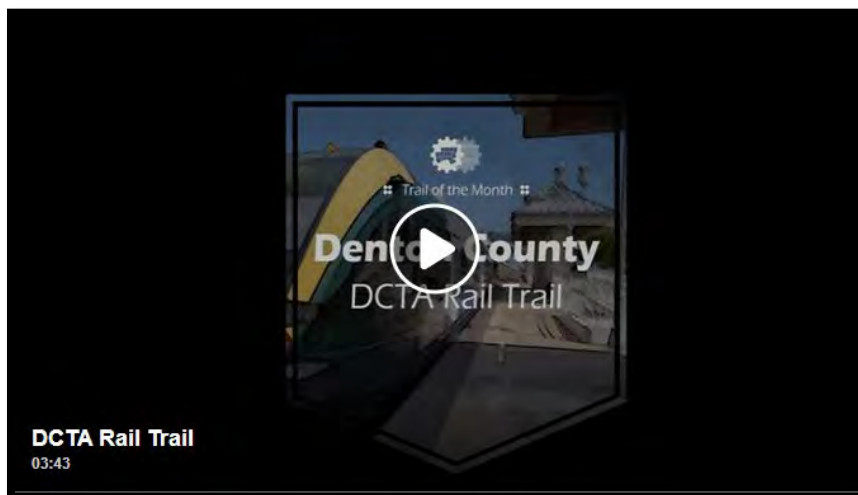
 – Bike Friendly South Dallas



We're happy to help keep everyone safe! 🚲🚲 – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Awesome contribution towards our efforts!!! Thank you so much NCTCOG for contributing bicycle helmets for distribution and providing a safer biking adventure. – Raynard Andrews

2. The A-Train Rail Trail is 19 miles long and is the longest trail in Denton County. Built parallel to the A-Train commuter rail line, this concrete trail travels along the renowned Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad. Check it out! – Lewsville Staff



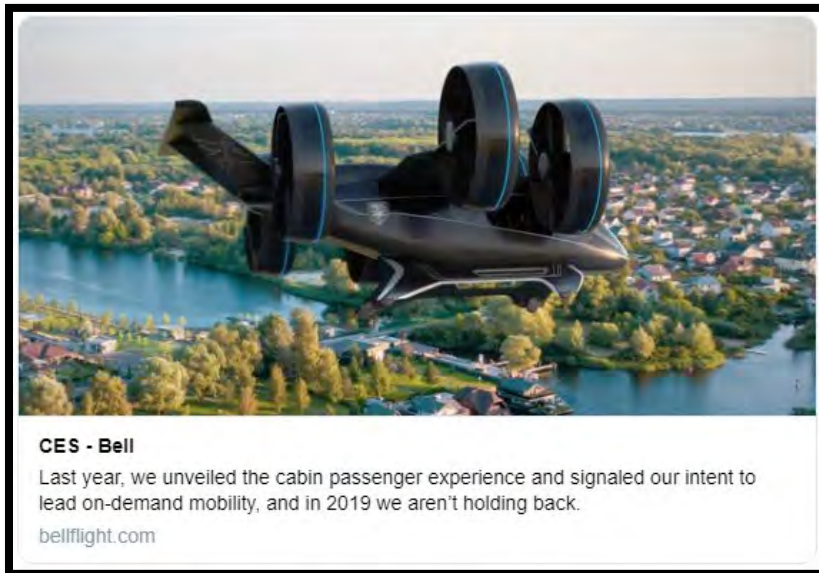
Innovative Vehicles & Technology

Twitter

1. Flying cars? Maaaybe. Bell unveils design for air taxi that could soon be buzzing around DFW: <http://bit.ly/2FmMjHW> – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



.@NCTCOGtrans thanks for the feature from your fellow #DallasFortWorth neighbor!
More info? Visit – Bell #FlyBellNexus (@BellFlight)



2. TRECCast: Transportation Technology Integration With @nctcogtrans Kevin Feldt (sponsored by @bokapowell) – TREC Dallas (@TRECDallas)



Facebook

1. Flying cars? Maaaybe. Bell unveils design for air taxi that could soon be buzzing around DFW: <http://bit.ly/2FmMjHW> – NCTCOG Transportation Department



– Loren Stewart

Programs

Facebook –

1. GoCama.....NO Smart Phone =NO Discounts

Regarding the new Gocarma app has anyone figured out how a driver with a toll tag but no smart phone can receive the HOV discount when applicable. Example 1) Grandmother owns a vehicle and has a toll tag but no smart phone, she takes various people shopping throughout the week, many of which do not have smart phones. 2) Driver with toll tag and occupant is on HOV phones are in purse for some reason (Low battery?) bluetooth disconnects.

There has to be a manual way to make up for the flaws in this system? – Doc B-statter

Hi, Doc! If an occupant doesn't have a smartphone, there is an option to request a GoCarma occupant pass. And just to mention, there only has to be two people at minimum with the GoCarma app installed on their smartphones. If there are more people in a vehicle than that, the driver would still get the discount because there are at least two individuals detected. You can visit gocarma.com/dfw to get more information. To speak to someone more directly, you can email team@gocarma.com. Hope this helps! – NCTCOG Transportation Department

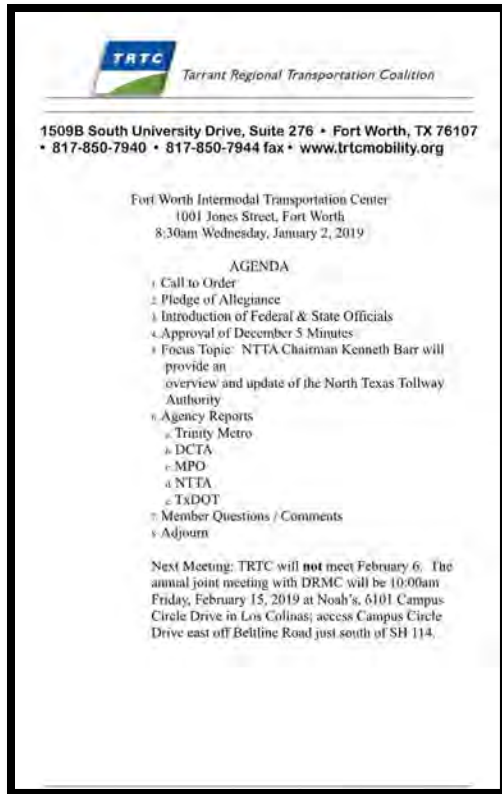
I understand the occupant pass and how it works, I am referring to the driver or owner of the vehicle. The problem is...if the person(s) do not have (cannot afford) a smart phone, then NO Discount. I have contacted both the NTTA and GoCarma, When I brought this problem to their attention they just stopped communicating with me. – Doc B-statter

Sorry to hear that you haven't heard from anyone. If you'd like, can you send us a private message with your phone number so we can further assist you? – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Public Meetings & Forums

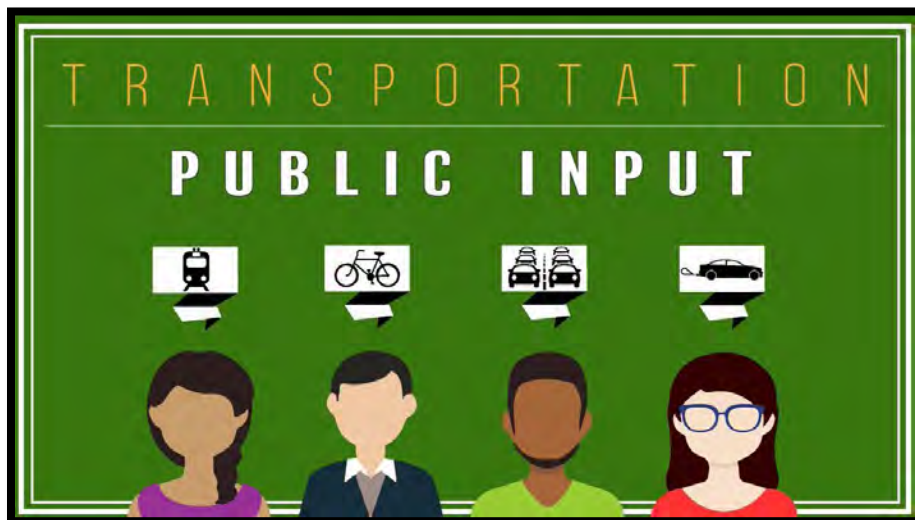
Twitter

1. Attending the January meeting of the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition (TRTC).
@trtcmobility @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit
@NCTCOGtrans – at Intermodal Transportation Center Station (Amtrak, Greyhound, TRE, The T) – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



2. On behalf of @TrinityMetro at the monthly meeting of the Regional Transportation Council.
 @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans
<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/about/committees/regional-transportation-council> ... – at North Central Texas Council of Governments – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)

3. The @NCTCOGtrans is asking residents for their input on the future of transportation in our area! Find out more information and submit your ideas at
<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/involve/meetings> – City of Forney (@CityofForneyGov))



5. @NCTCOGtrans wants to hear from you! Provide feedback on transportation and air quality initiatives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area until 2/11 at <http://nctcog.org/input>. – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



Facebook

1. It's our first RTC meeting of the year! The meeting will begin at 1 pm today. Want to watch the meeting live? Visit <http://nctcog.org/video> and click "live." – NCTCOG Transportation Department



It worked out well that the first RTC meeting of 2019 just happened to be on the same day as the launch of TEXRail service! – Paul McManus

Coincidence? Probably not. 😊 – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Transit

Email –

1. Brian Woods

Mr. Lamers

I am in need of transportation to my appointments and I use Logisticare van service for my appointments and they are not dependable either I am late or miss appointments because they don't show up. I have Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis and use a wheelchair. I live in Justin, Texas in Denton county which is also considered Fort Worth my doctors are in Justin and Keller, Texas the hospitals I use are Baylor, Scott & White in Grapevine, Texas and Harris Methodist in Keller, Texas I am looking for a van service that is dependable and reliable. I have sent emails to van service companies about the transportation problems I have sent emails to the county and city chamber of commerce as well as the State I don't know what to do because I can't depend on Logisticare van service. Please help me solve this transportation problem.

Mr. Woods,

Thank you for contacting the NCTCOG Transportation Department.

I've enclosed below contact information for Jay Ramos on our staff. He should be able to assist you with your service needs.

Please feel free to let us know if you have any additional questions. We'd be glad to help you any way we can

Twitter

1. TEXRail: 5 things to know about Texas' newest passenger train line: <http://bit.ly/2Tc4C6c> – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Dedicated Bus Lines can be built and operate for a fraction of the cost....compared to light rail. – J_C.Anderson (@JYakburger)



2. Heads up! Due to the #CottonBowl in Arlington, several roads will be closed. For the full list of closures, visit: <https://www.waze.com/events/cotton-bowl-2018-12-29> ... – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Gosh darn... If only @CityOfArlington had real #transit as a choice! Sorta like what would be available if the @CottonBowlGame were actually held in the Cotton Bowl... – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

3. Transportation transformation: TEXRail to DFW a game-changer @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



4. Still feeling great about yesterday's #TEXRail Golden Ticket Event! @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



5. Want to go to @DFWAirport? You can now take the @TrinityMetro rail line from @CityofFortWorth or @CityofNRH or @GrapevineTXCity @NCTCOGtrans @VisitFortWorth @FTWChamber @MayorBetsyPrice, other officials celebrated on Dec. 31

http://www.fortworthbusiness.com/news/officials-celebrate-opening-of-textrail-line-from-fort-worth-to/article_be72073c-0d43-11e9-977b-534c80e95067.html ... – FW Business Press (@fwbusinesspress)



6. It is always good to have Mariachi Mexicanisimo at the #TEXRail North Side Station celebration! Nothing like a mariachi serenade to send our good Fort Worth folks on the train!
@TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



7. Want to go to @DFWAirport? You can now take the @TrinityMetro rail line from @CityofFortWorth or @CityofNRH or @GrapevineTXCity @NCTCOGtrans @VisitFortWorth @FTWChamber @MayorBetsyPrice

http://www.fortworthbusiness.com/news/officials-celebrate-opening-of-textrail-line-from-fort-worth-to/article_be72073c-0d43-11e9-977b-534c80e95067.html ... RT @fwbusinesspress #travel #fortworth – Gulliver's Travel (@gulliversfw)



8. Love the uniforms of our #TEXRail crew! Excited about #TEXRail service to @DFWAirport . Service starts January 5th. Free January 5th to January 31st. #TimetoTrain @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @CityofNRH @GrapevineTXCity @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



I agree. 👍 – J (@J_Azucena_M)

Cool uniform – Nick Martinez (@martineznicNick)

9. 🙄 – Tarrant Transit Alliance (@TarrantTransit)

Burleson Star @BurlesonStar

North Central Texas Council of Governments has plans for City of Burleson, Texas Government -- a commuter rail to Fort Worth may be coming in the future... burlesonstar.net/news-local-new...

Burleson Mayor @kenshetter wasn't kidding! There's no time like the present. Let's make this a reality @NCTCOGtrans! – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

Ken Shetter @kenshetter

Replying to @kenshetter @txbornviking and 3 others

I've inquired about the possibly of a pilot project connecting @CityofBurleson to commuter rail. Thanks for asking, I'm all in!

👁️👁️👁️ – ⚡ Chargers ⚡ 🇵🇷 (@larro_mclovin)

👤🚗 – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)

10. @NCTCOGtrans, we need this in DFW. – Russ Bainbridge (@TriRussell)



11. Beautiful morning & day for #TEXRail! #mytexrail #timetotrain @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @CityofNRH @GrapevineTXCity @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantCountyTX @DFWAirport @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



I wanna try – Raul Garcia (@bigtata20002000)

12. He says the goal is to extend the rail line south to the Fort Worth Medical District and TCU area next.

📷 cred: @UrbanFortWorth



Yes please – Aaron (@thepodcastdude)

13. #TEXRail is messing up the #TRE Schedule. They just had a game of chicken at the ITC because TEXRail was late. Again. These TEXRail-caused TRE delays need to stop!
 @TrinityMetro @dartmedia @DARTAlerts @TxDOTFortWorth @NTEExpress @NCTCOGtrans @TarrantTransit @TrinityMetroAlt – at Intermodal Transportation Center Station (Amtrak, Greyhound, TRE, The T) – Enrique Durán Junior (@ejr_d)

14. A glimpse into the future from our client @NCTCOGtrans <https://bit.ly/2D4CaOA> – RideShark (@RideShark)



15. Tomorrow will be one wk from great Fiesta Night at @fwssr. Still basking in glow from event. We certainly “Dashed” to event. Thank you to @fwhcc for successful event & for partnership w/TrinityMetro. @CityofFortWorth @DickiesArena @VisitFortWorth @NCTCOGtrans @TarrantTransit – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



16. Buenos días Austin! Here for a quick trip to attend a meeting/conference on transportation and transit. Gotta love our Texas State Capitol! @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @FTWChamber @fwhcc @FWMBCC @NCTCOGtrans @TarrantTransit @TarrantCountyTX – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



17. Honored & humbled to make a presentation & be part of a transit panel on behalf of @TrinityMetro at the TEX-21 Statewide Qtrly Mtg w/ @HoustonMetro, @CCRTA, & @VIA_Transit. @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



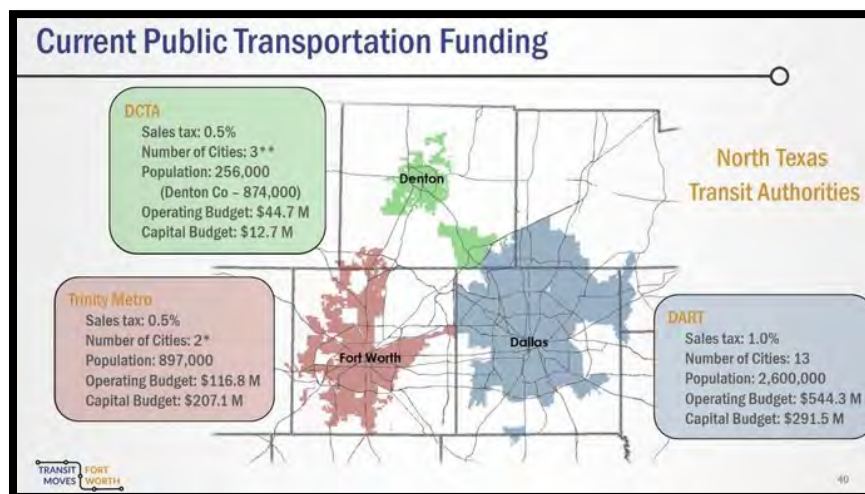
18. If you want them to listen, do the #survey on #transportation. Thanks! #TEXAS – Susanna Gallun (@SLGALLUN)



19. The SilverLine comes to Plano, but not to Legacy ... We are asking for a good connection. Giving Legacy employees living west a new way to commute & everyone a better way to travel west & to DFW International. – LegacyConnect (@LegacyConnectMe)



20. North Texas is home to 3 Public Transit authorities. In Texas, transit authorities are mostly funded on sales taxes. Here is a good overview on the three, including how much tax they charge, area of coverage, and member cities. In Tarrant County, only 2 cities are members. – Tarrant Transit Alliance (@TarrantTransit)



Why do so few cities join trinity metro it seems that so many of the cities jumped at the opportunity to join DART and the DCTA serves it's purpose well also – Christian (@CMBCOOL01)

Another fairly major player in the mix is @NCTCOGtrans and Michael Morris, who directs billions of dollars to transportation projects. With respect to Fort Worth, he appears to remember Fort Worth's rejection of street car funds and dispenses \$ accordingly—IMO. – Linda Ld Thornton, APR (@LindaLdThornton)

Probably more than you wanted 2 know. It's a complex situation largely handled by elected officials who, given the current mix, will not act without

clear public direction/outcry. So mobilize. Join @TarrantTransit and write/email county commissioners, mayors & your district rep. – Linda Ld Thornton, APR (@LindaLdThornton)

It's fine I've gotten very big on public transit lately I'm probably one of the few right wingers that actually sees the importance of having a good public transportation system – Christian (@CMBCOOL01)

And since my folks and I are moving to fort worth within the year I'm big on seeing more options that will keep me out of traffic so i appreciate all the info you give – Christian (@CMBCOOL01)

You and me both! Imagine if @CityofFortWorth was joined by member organizations like @TarrantCountyTX, @CityofNRH, @CityOfArlington (yikes!), @CityofBedfordtx, @CityofWatauga, @CityofSaginaw, @cityofhaslet, @CityofGP to promote public transit. WOW. Residents + cities = winners – Linda Ld Thornton, APR (@LindaLdThornton)



Yeah I think if Fort Worth had the corporation it would be just as successful as DART, I really wish Arlington would get on board I'd love to take a bus from centerport to six flags, the parks mall, or the various stadiums – Christian (@CMBCOOL01)

Facebook

1. TEXRail: 5 things to know about Texas' newest passenger train line: <http://bit.ly/2Tc4C6c> – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Can't wait to use it! – Lance Heiskell

Facebook –

1. New HOV GoCarma App Simplifies Carpooling, Saves Drivers Big Money:
<https://www.legacyconnect.solutions/.../new-hov-gocarma-app-s...> – NCTCOG Transportation Department



More Rail Transit please ETA - Enthusiasts of Transit Association – Curtis Garrison

Other

Email –

1. **Dustin L Sandlin**

Not sure if you're the right people to talk to, and I'm pretty sure my comments won't make a difference. I don't know if you can help, or if you guys are part of the problem. Simply put, I live in Prosper and me, my wife, and my daughter all drive to work each day. In the month of January, I paid almost \$800 just for us to get to work and travel around our community. We take service roads where we can, but it's not reasonable to take service and back roads everywhere. \$800. Annualized that will be almost \$10k a year, and we've been here 5 years. I shudder to think how much money the NTTA has made off me and my family to simply drive the roads around us. I know, I know. It's not free to build or maintain them, but I wonder how much of my taxes already go to support some of this? I mean, don't other Texans who live in the areas with the free roads not pay taxes too? Either way, I see how many cars are jam packed on the roads. If they pay even half of what I do, that's a ton of money each day and where is the transparency in the incoming funding and outgoing value? \$800. How is the right or reasonable to anyone???? Seriously. Again, maybe you can't help, won't help, or are part of the problem.

2. **Darwin Yeary**

Dear NCTCOG, Representatives, Although I am late sending this request for your executives there to review, I hope you will look at these needs

to consider. Local Citizens and Homeowners seem to have the last concern, by Weatherford Officials.

Dear Weatherford City Council members,

I had requested to be on the Weatherford City Council Agenda on 1-28-2020, thru the City Management Office on 1-16-2020. However. I was called by phone if I would be better interested in a meeting with a newly formed "City Neighborhood group" meeting, on 1-24-2020 at 1:30 PM. I agreed, and attended that supposed group meeting. In that meeting was only two Head Code enforcement Officers. We had a pleasant visit, and their courtesy was good. After their opening statements, I ask about assuming more persons to be there, but decided to talk over with them some deficient City Codes and Ordinances which was concerning me, and the neglected Environment of the Connaway's Addition, on Weatherford's far west side. Here are some things addressed with them.

1. A need for all City Departments to be in the loop, at least on the Internet about Environmental issues relating to the health and safety for all City of Weatherford's residents. The 30mph sign on Harmon St in the Connaway's Addition is interrupted to be 50 to 55mph, by nearly all motorist.

2. Problems with City Codes that only require plastic bagged trash, be put out at the street curb at 6:PM the day before the scheduled day pickup.

This results in overnight Animals, Possums, Raccoons, and loose Dogs to tear into bags which strows trash, garbage pickup is not responsible for.

This also conflicts with Animal Control's efforts to inhibit food incentives for Dogs. Many City provided Plastic trash Canisters remain half full of raw

garbage, which is an invite for animals even on non-trash pickup days. Also, the Shopper Ad Newspaper lay wet and yellowed in streets, represents 40% of all litter.

3. Packs of Dogs harbored by some residents, although fenced, while some persons who choose to take a walk, or to walk their Dog, can cause excitement and fear, in streets with no walkways. Some residents have lost control of their pets, including falling on street asphalt, and risking encounters with Automobiles on Connaway Addition streets.

4. Animal Control rules allowing five or more dogs in these fenced in areas is certainly a "Disturbing the Peace" issue, including break-out fear.

5. This and uncontrolled street speeding by motorist, and un-enforced muffler noise and loud racing hot rod noise. Also Pickup Decil vehicles speeding, disregarding residential safety is "unacceptable." "Peace and Safety laws" if any left, need to be revised and enforced. Disregarding pedestrians, for City growth is "shameful."

6. North Main street, Hwy 51N in town, with only two Safety protected 4 way street motorist crossings at Spring and Fourth St, is a blatant disregard for North side residents. The Spring and North Main four way intersection is a hazard by turning Tractor/Trailer's to motorist, and Pedestrians. The curbside parking on the W. Spring Street side is dangerous, and is a scandal.

7. "One positive move for Weatherford," would be, Using a State Grant, to restore the Old T&P Railroad Station, to provide rail tourism to Weatherford's Downtown Historical District, from the Metroplex. This is greatly needed monetarily support, and a shot in the arm, for Weatherford.

Also, restoring rail passenger service to western states, would be well received by Weatherford, and the Dallas-Ft Worth population.

3. Kim Brown

I am working on a project for the Bedford Fire Chief. How can I get the vehicle volume each day on Hwy 183 and Hwy 121 separately? Thanks in advance for your help.

Thank you for contacting the NCTCOG Transportation Department.

Traffic counts can be accessed via the following website:
<https://trafficcounts.nctcog.org/trafficcount/>.

For information related to daily traffic volume, please contact Mitzi Ward, one of our senior staff members. (I've copied her on this email.)

Feel free to let us know if you have additional questions.

Twitter

1. Stormwater managers and ecological folks from Dallas/Fort Worth area and from all of Texas should join us! #txwater @txawwa @NCTCOGtrans @CityOfFriscoTx @CityOfArlington @TXPlantGuy – Upper Trinity Water (@UTRWD)



2. Hopefully this return to local control could serve as a precedent and #Dallas could wrest local control from @NCTCOGtrans and rid itself of bad transportation policies and highways so "vitaly important to the region" but a noose on Dallas. – Andrew Wallace (@agwallace92)

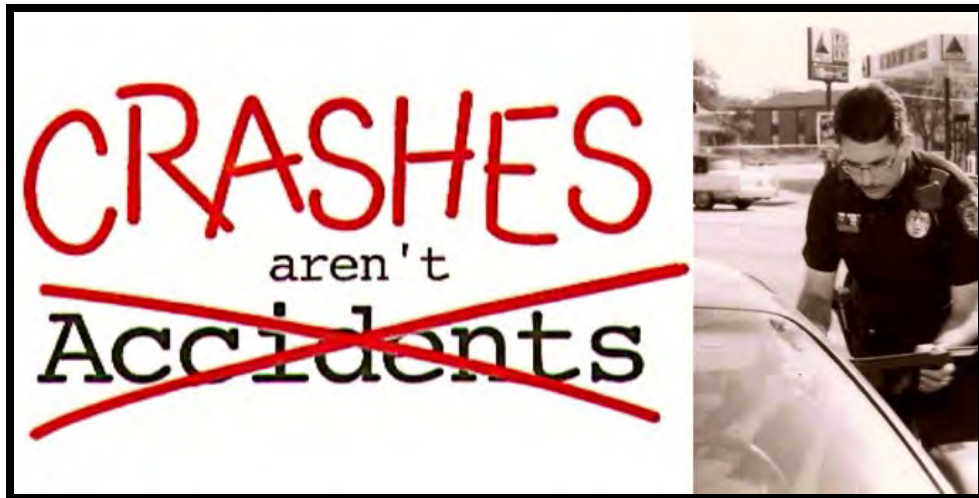


3. One day we'll fix the error that is the Benbrook Traffic Circle in where 183, 377, & Camp Bowie meet. I hope the folks at @NCTCOGtrans & @TxDOT would use this multimodal solution as inspiration. – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

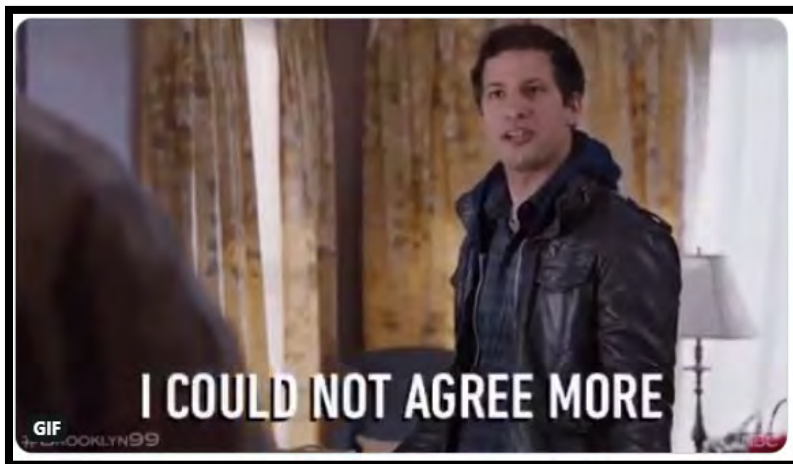


4. I was a (crash) investigator in 1997 when NHTSA kicked off the "Crashes Aren't Accidents" nationwide campaign. Texas subsequently changed the 'A' Word to "crash" on report forms. Drunk, drugged, and distracted drivers don't have accidents – they CRASH.

#CrashNotAccident – Rob Severance (@ChiefSeverance)



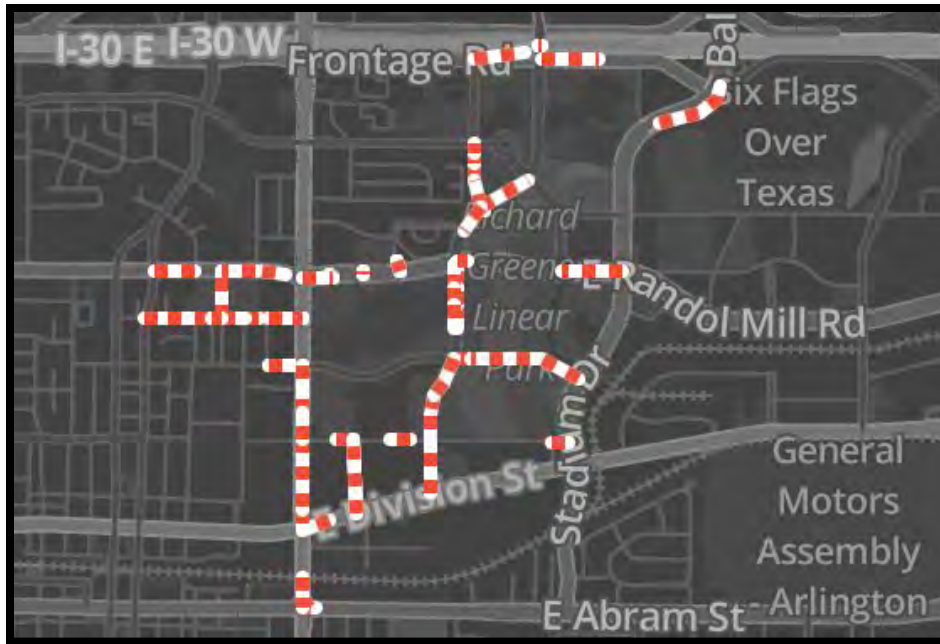
Collision is popular. – Dennis Moncrief (@CoinOnTheCob)



– Kris (@Kris_Baker)

Facebook

1. Heads up! Due to the #CottonBowl in Arlington, several roads will be closed. For the full list of closures, visit: <https://www.waze.com/events/cotton-bowl-2018-12-29> ... – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Harold ... did you know about this? – Nermin Begovic

I remembered on the way home – Harold Hall

Heheheh ok... hopefully we won't get stuck in it too much... - Nermin Begovic

2. Going out for lunch? The weather is beautiful! Consider keeping the car parked and walk instead.
– NCTCOG Transportation Department



Trying to walk 100 and ride 100 a week...we'll see. – Stan Hart

That's an awesome goal, Stan! We're rooting for you. 🙌 – NCTCOG Transportation Department

3. Tell us what you think about proposed changes to the transportation planning and air quality efforts we're organizing for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. More information posted here: nctcog.org/input – NCTCOG Transportation Department



Help! Im in an emergency situation im about to lose my only transportation if i cant get help getting my trucks O2 sensor wires replaced. Last year I uad to pay to get the sensors themself replaced. Can you help? – Pj Priscilla Drew

Hi, Pj! Have you heard of our AirCheckTexas program? You may apply and if you qualify, we can provide financial assistance to repair your vehicle. Visit <https://www.airchecktexas.org/repair> to read more about income guidelines and other requirements. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us at 1-800-898-9103. – NCTCOG Transportation Department

NCTCOG Transportation Department yes. Someone reached out to me! Thanks. I may end up off the road for a few days tho. He said it takes about 2 weeks to apply and get a voucher. Im low income so that shouldnt be a problem there. Thank you – Pj Priscilla Drew

Sorry to hear about the inconvenience. Hopefully we can get you back up and running soon! – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Yes \$5 per one trip permits for work will be cheaper than repair and I will appreciate it – Pj Priscilla Drew



January 8, 2020

Mr. Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Re: Strategic Funding Partnership for Electric COBUS Fleet

Dear Michael: **MICHAEL,**

On behalf of Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW Airport), I would like to express my gratitude for the strategic funding partnership to support DFW's transition to an electric COBUS fleet. This project is part of DFW Airport's ongoing commitment to climate action and improving regional air quality. The collaborative relationship between our respective teams at NCTCOG and DFW Airport is a model for the rest of the nation.

DFW Airport remains committed to growing responsibly, positioning itself to meet passenger and community growth while also minimizing environmental impacts. We will continue to expand our investment into renewable energy and evaluate opportunities to integrate electric vehicle technology and renewable fuels into our operations.

Thanks for all you do. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (972) 973-5200.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SD' followed by a stylized name.

Sean Donohue

cc: Chad Makovsky, Executive Vice President, Operations, DFW Airport
Robert Horton, Vice President, Environmental Affairs, DFW Airport
Christie Gotti, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG
Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG
Bill Meadows, Board Chair, DFW Airport

Sean Donohue
Chief Executive Officer

sdonohue@dfwairport.com
T (972) 973 5200
F (972) 973 5751

RECEIVED

JAN 15 2020

TRANSPORTATION

Dallas Fort Worth
International Airport
P.O. Box 619428
DFW Airport, TX 75261-9428

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

January 9, 2020

The Honorable Andy Eads, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Denton County
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Subject: Interest and Rebates from Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP); Retention of Local Funds

Dear Judge Eads:

Thank you for your letter dated November 14, 2019 acknowledging the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) limitations requiring the return of unused grant funding, including rebates and interest. While we do not have additional information regarding other options for these funds, if the Regional Transportation Council for NCTCOG chooses to discuss this matter with the Legislative Budget Board, TCEQ is available to participate in those discussions.

We appreciate our partnership and look forward to continuing our work with NCTCOG on air quality issues. The TCEQ recognizes the value of local programs implemented by NCTCOG and has included the measures submitted by NCTCOG as part of the weight of evidence analysis in the *Dallas-Fort Worth Serious Classification Attainment Demonstration State Implementation Plan Revision for the 2008 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard* scheduled to be adopted by the commission in March 2020.

We are not yet evaluating potential legislative budget requests for the 87th Texas Legislative Session. However, it is our hope that significantly increased funding for Texas Emissions Reduction Program projects will be helpful in achieving emissions reductions in areas including the North Central Texas area.

If you have additional questions, please contact Donna F. Huff, Air Quality Division Director at (512) 239-6628.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Baker".

Toby Baker
Executive Director

cc: Chairman Jon Niermann, TCEQ
Commissioner Emily Lindley, TCEQ
Commissioner Bobby Janecka, TCEQ
Stephanie Bergeron Perdue, Deputy Executive Director, TCEQ
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG
Donna F. Huff, Director, Air Quality Division



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

November 14, 2019

Chairman Jon Niermann
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3086

Re: Interest and Rebates from Low Income Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated
Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP): Retention of Local Funds

Dear Chairman Niermann:

Thank you for your agency's response on August 14, 2019, to the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) previous request that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) allow locally generated income revenue through interest and rebates remain for use in the region. Although it was explained these revenues become program income and treated as grant funds, the RTC respectfully asks for your continued review of all options that will allow these funds to be retained and utilized in the counties where collected. A conversation with the Legislative Budget Board is one idea deserving consideration. If successful, this would avoid lengthy and threatening obstacles to invest into emission reduction programs that the region needs in order to reach two concurrent ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The RTC's position is that monies collected or generated in the region should stay in the region.

Also, appropriations from the Texas Legislature have been more difficult to obtain in recent years. Therefore, we request TCEQ's assistance in actively pursuing the appropriation of all dedicated air quality funds in the upcoming 87th Texas Legislative Session so that more emission reductions can be achieved.

These requests are important because the 2008 eight-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have an attainment year at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season, which translates to having the annual fourth-highest daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration over a three-year period to be less than or equal to 75 parts per billion (ppb). The 2019 regional ozone design value has increased in the last year from 76 ppb to 77 ppb. The proposed air quality rules and State Implementation Plan (SIP) revisions resulting from reclassification from moderate to serious nonattainment for the 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS suggest at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season our regional design value will be at 72 ppb. While sophisticated photochemical modeling suggest compliance to the 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season, it's dangerous to rely solely on Reasonable Available Control Measures (RACM) with hopes to avoid further noncompliance and associated reclassifications to levels that would impose increased and unprecedented requirements.

Similarly, the concurrent 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS also has an attainment year at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season, requiring the regions design value over a three-year period to be less than or equal to 70 ppb. Photochemical modeling suggests current efforts are not enough nor acceptable for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS.

November 14, 2019

In the proposed air quality rules and SIP revisions referenced above, the RTC takes its weight-of-evidence program commitments seriously. Our offices have a great working partnership in achieving significant emission reductions through real world programs. Programming efforts are needed now to continue to drive down precursor emissions under the weight-of-evidence process.

Your consideration of these requests is much appreciated due to potential consequences with continuing to not comply with NAAQS. Please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Eads", written in a cursive style.

Andy Eads, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Denton County

CK:ch

cc: Texas Legislative Delegation
David Serrins, Mobile Source Programs Team Leader, TCEQ
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)

January 10, 2020

Ms. Kristin Jacobson, MC 206
State Implementation Plan Team – Air Quality Division
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
PO Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

RE: Dallas-Fort Worth 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Emissions Inventory (EI) State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision (Non-Rule Project Number. 2019-111-SIP-NR)

Dear Ms. Jacobson:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Area, please accept the following comments regarding the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Emissions Inventory (EI) State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision (Non-Rule Project Number. 2019-111-SIP-NR), proposed on November 20, 2019. The RTC takes compliance to federal ozone standards seriously, supports exploring and implementing many transportation-related emission reduction control strategies, and is responsible for air quality conformity, which is an analysis ensuring federal funding approval goes to those transportation activities consistent with air quality goals.

This effort results from the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) requiring states to submit emissions inventory information for all relevant sources in areas that are designated nonattainment for any of the NAAQS. On October 1, 2015, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced a new eight-hour ozone standard of 70 parts per billion (ppb). The 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS became effective on December 28, 2015¹. Effective September 24, 2018, the EPA designated nine DFW area counties (Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Tarrant, and Wise) as marginal nonattainment for the 2015 ozone NAAQS.

The DFW area is now subject to two ozone standards, i.e., the serious nonattainment area requirements in the FCAA under the 2008 ozone NAAQS of 75 ppb and marginal nonattainment area requirements under the 2015 ozone NAAQS. The attainment date for the serious classification (2008 NAAQS) is July 20, 2021, with a 2020 attainment year, and for the marginal classification (2015 NAAQS) is August 3, 2021, with the same 2020 attainment year. We commend the TCEQ in devoting limited resources and quickly turning around SIPs for both the standards.

It is our understanding that the on-road mobile EI in this effort was extracted from the Air Emissions Reporting Requirements (AERR) emissions inventory work conducted by a TCEQ subcontractor. Since a subcontractor conducted the work, limited opportunity was available to

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2015-10-26/pdf/2015-26594.pdf>

review emission inventory results during the different stages of development. Looking forward, development of these AERR on-road mobile emission inventories is requested to be developed within the NCTCOG, who maintains official regional travel demand modeling for North Central Texas and is equally equipped to conduct such inventories. This will ensure consistency across all on-road mobile source emission inventories prepared for transportation conformities, attainment demonstrations and reasonable further progress in the area. All on-road mobile EI's that can be utilized into a regional SIP should be prepared through similar avenues to ensure variances are not based on approach techniques, such as assumptions, averaging, etc., so that implementation of the regional multi-modal long range transportation plan can proceed.

Overlapping schedules of both the 2008 ozone NAAQS and 2015 ozone NAAQS show to have attainment years at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season, which translates to having the annual fourth-highest daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration over a three-year period to be less than or equal to 75 ppb and 70 ppb, respectively. Currently, the regional ozone design value had increased to 77 ppb (from 76 ppb at the end of 2018 ozone season). The proposed air quality rules and SIP revisions resulting from reclassification suggest at the conclusion of the 2020 ozone season, our regional design value will be at 72 ppb. While sophisticated photochemical modeling suggests compliance to the 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS, it is not enough nor acceptable for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS.

Although an attainment demonstration photochemical modeling exercise is not required under a marginal nonattainment classification, as the DFW region is for the 2015 NAAQS, this analysis has been recently conducted for the region's serious nonattainment classification under the 2008 NAAQS. In the most recent air chemistry forecast analysis conducted for the 2020 attainment year, we suggest that utilizing a more current baseline is more beneficial as the current 2012 baseline is seven years in the past and unable to recognize emerging variances between photochemical modeling projections as compared to real-world monitor readings. For example, the Cleburne airport monitor is not a concern from a photochemical modeling standpoint; however, the three-year ozone design value was recorded at this monitor for most of the 2019 ozone season, suggesting multiple years of meaningful emission levels. In addition, the Denton airport monitor has been driving the design value in recent years. At the end of the 2019 ozone season, the Dallas North monitor is currently the controlling monitor at 77 ppb whereas photochemical modeling for 2020 suggests Grapevine to be the controlling monitor.

The TCEQ is urged to be the statewide champion and navigate through regulatory hurdles ensuring all collected monies from the now defunct Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Retirement Program (LIRAP) and Local Initiative Projects (LIP) be appropriated back to the counties for emission reduction programs. As revenue for these local programs was created through innovative approaches by participating North Central Texas counties, the RTC requests these funds remain allocated or returned to the counties where collected. The RTC's position is that monies collected or generated in the region should stay in the region. Implementation of more transportation emission reduction strategies can expand upon the initiatives contained in the SIP's Weight-of-Evidence, will assist in reducing the formation of ozone, and allow the region to comply with NAAQS.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the TCEQ's revisions to the DFW 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS EI SIP, as well as the continued partnership between our agencies. The RTC thanks the TCEQ staff for their time and resources spent preparing this revision and holding a public hearing in the region to receive public comments. NCTCOG staff, through the RTC, is committed to continuing to implement projects and programs and collaborate with partner

Ms. Kristin Jacobson
Page Three

January 10, 2019

agencies to reduce ozone-forming emissions in the DFW region. Should you have any questions, please contact Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager at cklaus@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9286.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Morris".

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

VT:ch

cc: Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG



4777 E. HIGHWAY 80, MESQUITE, TEXAS 75150-6643 | 214.320.4488 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

Certified Mail: 7015 0920 0001 3883 2937

January 13, 2020

CSJ: 0581-02-124, ETC.
SL 12/SH 183/SH 114/SS 482 (Irving Interchange)

Mr. Ramiro Lopez
Assistant City Manager – Public Works and Infrastructure
City of Irving
825 W Irving Boulevard
Irving, TX 75060

Dear Mr. Lopez:

This letter is a response to your letter sent to TxDOT on December 30, 2019. TxDOT would like to re-affirm with the City of Irving that, together as partners in transportation, we're prepared to deliver one of the largest Design-Bid-Build projects the region has seen in decades. The purpose of this letter will be to rectify any of the breakdowns in communication you discussed.

At this point in project development, and since the project is being delivered by Design-Bid-Build, all Right-of-Way and easements must be purchased prior to the project being authorized for project letting. Since the City's utilities will be joint-bid with the project, this includes the easements that the City of Irving will acquire. TxDOT headquarters will authorize the project for letting with unclear utilities with a Management Plan, but the project cannot be authorized for letting with unclear easements and/or Right-of-Way. A management plan is a detailed schedule that allows the contractor to work on the project in tandem while the remaining utilities finish their relocation. The project's remaining franchise utilities are on track for clearing the project by late Summer 2020, well within the Management Plan timeline for the project. Therefore, the City's easements have always been the final critical path item for letting the project. As a note, TxDOT must confirm that the City has gained possession of the easements, meaning the easements are fully acquired and closing has occurred.

TxDOT understands that acquiring easements requires a process that can be time consuming. Our team has worked closely with the City of Irving and their design consultant to eliminate or reduce easements where necessary to help find ways to streamline the easement acquisition required for the project. The letter sent to TxDOT on December 30, 2019 discusses an instance where an alternative was sent to TxDOT that would have eliminated several easements. Ultimately, this alternative was rejected by our Director of Transportation, Planning and Development after thorough review. The design alternative would have crossed the City's water line into the TxDOT ROW before going back into easement. Because of this maneuver, the proposed water line would have to cross the path of no less than 4 franchise utilities at two different locations. It was decided that this design

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OUR MISSION: Connecting You With Texas

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January 13, 2020

alternative had the potential to introduce significant risk to the project and TxDOT asked the City to continue with the easement acquisition.

TxDOT staff has been working closely with City staff as well as their design consultant to develop a relocation plan for the City that clears the project of conflicts in the least intrusive way possible. While it remains the utility owner's responsibility to determine the location of their conflicts with the proposed TxDOT facility and the location of other utilities in the area, TxDOT seeks to help in any way possible. This includes providing permits from franchise utilities and Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) data when available. It is the responsibility on the utility design team to confirm the accuracy of this information. In the case of the 24" Atmos line location discussed in the previous letter sent from the City of Irving, the SUE provided by TxDOT correctly marked the location of the Atmos line. Based on conversations with Atmos and the City's utility designer, it was assumed that the 24" line might have been in another location and the design progressed. It was later when TxDOT utility coordination staff again noted the conflict that the City of Irving decided to obtain Level A SUE on the line that confirmed the location originally shown in the first SUE provided by TxDOT.

Finally, regarding the schedule for letting, it has been communicated to the City of Irving several times that the letting date will depend on the City's easements acquisition. These easements are the critical path. When the project was moved out of the September 2019 letting back in August, the letting date was moved to September 2020. The City committed to acquiring all of their easements by December 2019 and asked if the project could be accelerated. This remains true, but TxDOT must confirm that the easements are in possession by the City. The process for getting on the letting schedule is roughly 3 months from the time when TxDOT identifies the project is clear for letting. As of the last easement update meeting that TxDOT attended on January 6, 2020, the City communicated that all of the easements will be closed by the end of January. Based on this information, TxDOT is targeting a May 2020 letting date. We will work with the City to confirm they're still on track by the end of January and at that time will finalize the acceleration to May 2020 depending on the outcome of the discussions.

If you have any questions, please contact Travis Campbell, P.E. at 214-320-4466.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

E2527653E8DE475

Mohamed K. Bur, P.E.
Dallas District Engineer

CC: The Honorable Richard H. Stopfer, Mayor, City of Irving
The Honorable Oscar Ward, Council Member, City of Irving
The Honorable Dennis Webb, Council Member, City of Irving
Chris Hillman, City Manager, City of Irving
Wayne Lee, P.E., City Engineer, City of Irving
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments
Lacey Rodgers, P.E., Director of Transportation, Planning & Development, TxDOT
John Hudspeth, P.E., Director of Operations, TxDOT
Jeff Bush, P.E., Director of Construction, TxDOT
Brenan Honey, P.E., Dallas County Area Engineer, TxDOT

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

January 15, 2020

Mr. Michael Eastland, Executive Director
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Dear Mr. Eastland:

We have scheduled a public hearing to be held in Austin on February 25, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., in Building E, Room 201S, at the commission's central office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle. This hearing is offered to receive testimony regarding proposed revisions to 30 TAC Chapter 114, Control of Air Pollution from Motor Vehicles, §114.622 and §114.629, and corresponding revisions to the state implementation Plan (SIP) under the requirements of Texas Health and Safety Code, §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency concerning SIPs.

You may download all of the documents to be considered at this public hearing at the following Web site: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/propose_adopt.html.

Your attendance and comments are invited. Comments may now be submitted online by accessing the e-comments Web page located at <http://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Amancio Gutierrez, at (512) 239-3770.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia L. Durón".

Patricia L. Durón
General Law Division

PD/sw

cc: Ms. Edith Marvin, PE. Director of Environment and Development North Central Texas Council of Governments, Arlington
Mr. Michael Morris, Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments, Arlington
Ms. Alyssa Taylor, Regional Director, Dallas/Fort Worth (*via electronic email*)

Enclosure

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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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO 30 TAC CHAPTER 114 AND TO THE STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (commission) will conduct a public hearing to receive testimony regarding proposed revisions to 30 TAC Chapter 114, Control of Air Pollution from Motor Vehicles, §114.622 and §114.629, and corresponding revisions to the state implementation plan (SIP) under the requirements of Texas Health and Safety Code, §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerning SIPs.

The proposed rulemaking would implement House Bill (HB) 1346 and HB 1627, from the 86th Texas Legislature, 2019, relating to the Diesel Emissions Reduction Incentive Program, to allow the commission to lower the required minimum usage in a nonattainment area or affected county for grant-funded vehicles and equipment from 75% to as low as 55% and to remove Victoria County from the list of affected counties..

The commission will hold a public hearing on this proposal in Austin on February 25, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. in Building E, Room 201S, at the commission's central office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle. The hearing is structured for the receipt of oral or written comments by interested persons. Individuals may present oral statements when called upon in order of registration. Open discussion will not be permitted during the hearing; however, commission staff members will be available to discuss the proposal 30 minutes prior to the hearing.

Persons who have special communication or other accommodation needs who are planning to attend the hearing should contact Sandy Wong, Office of Legal Services at (512) 239-1802 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD). Requests should be made as far in advance as possible.

Written comments may be submitted to Ms. Kris Hogan, MC 205, Office of Legal Services, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087, or faxed to (512) 239-4808. Electronic comments may be submitted at: <https://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. File size restrictions may apply to comments being submitted via the eComments system. All comments should reference Rule Project Number 2019-122-114-AI. The comment period closes on March 3, 2020. Copies of the proposed rulemaking can be obtained from the commission's website at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/propose_adopt.html. For further information, please contact Amancio Gutierrez, Grant Development and Management Section, (512) 239-3770.



CITY MANAGER
1000 Highland Village Road
Highland Village, TX 75077
972-317-0237 F 972-317-0237
www.highlandvillage.org

January 21, 2020

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
Regional Transportation Council
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Dear Mr. Morris:

Thank you for your recent correspondence dated November 15, 2019, regarding the City of Highland Village's request for direct access to the northbound lanes of Interstate Highway 35E. This is outstanding news for the Highland Village City Council as well as the eastern third of our City population. Our residents have had to traverse through multiple side streets in an attempt to ingress and egress our City since the two-way frontage road was taken away with the 35Express Project. This is also exciting news when we consider the opportunity for Transit Oriented Development in conjunction with DCTA A-Train station in the Interstate 35E corridor. This is truly a win, win for everyone.

We are currently identifying future budget and five year forecast considerations as well as identifying potential development opportunities. Any additional information that you can share, such as interim construction plans and scope, potential timeline for Regional Transportation Council consideration, and best estimate on potential construction timeline, would be very beneficial and helpful for the City of Highland Village in the next 30 days. I fully understand that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is working diligently on many projects in the North Texas region. The City of Highland Village has quietly worked and waited for this opportunity for twenty years and, as you are aware, our representatives are not going to let this opportunity to pass us by again.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (972) 899-5131 or mleavitt@highlandvillage.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Leavitt", written over a horizontal line.

Michael Leavitt, City Manager
City of Highland Village

Cc: Dianne Costa, Chair, DCTA, and former Mayor City of Highland Village
Mayor Charlotte Wilcox, City of Highland Village

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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

January 29, 2020

Mr. Michael Eastland, Executive Director
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Dear Mr. Eastland:

We have scheduled a public hearing to be held in Austin on March 12, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., in Building E, Room 201S, at the commission's central office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony regarding proposed revisions to 30 TAC Chapter 116, Control of Air Pollution by Permits for New Construction or Modification, §§116.110, 116.116, 116.710, and 116.721; new §116.118; and corresponding revisions to the state implementation plan (SIP) under the requirements of Texas Health and Safety Code, §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency concerning SIPs.

You may download all of the documents to be considered at this public hearing at the following Web site: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/propose_adopt.html.

Your attendance and comments are invited. Comments may now be submitted online by accessing the e-comments Web page located at <http://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments>. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Michael Wilhoit at (512) 239-1222.

Sincerely,


Patricia L. Durón
General Law Division

PD/sw

cc: Ms. Edith Marvin, PE. Director of Environment and Development North Central Texas
Council of Governments, Arlington
Mr. Michael Morris, Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of
Governments, Arlington
Ms. Alyssa Taylor, Regional Director, Dallas/Fort Worth (*via electronic email*)

Enclosure

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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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO 30 TAC

CHAPTER 116 AND TO THE STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (commission) will conduct a public hearing to receive testimony regarding proposed revisions to 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 116, Control of Air Pollution by Permits for New Construction or Modification, §§116.110, 116.116, 116.710, and 116.721; new §116.118; and corresponding revisions to the state implementation plan (SIP) under the requirements of Texas Health and Safety Code (THSC), §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerning SIPs.

The proposed rulemaking would implement provisions of House Bill 2726, 86th Texas Legislature, 2019 and THSC, §382.004. The proposed changes to Chapter 116 would allow applicants for a permit amendment to begin construction, at their own risk, when the draft permit has been issued and certain other criteria have been satisfied.

The commission will hold a public hearing on this proposal in Austin on March 12, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. in Building E, Room 201S, at the commission's central office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle. The hearing is structured for the receipt of oral or written comments by interested persons. Individuals may present oral statements when called upon in order of registration. Open discussion will not be permitted during the hearing; however, commission staff members will be available to discuss the proposal 30 minutes prior to the hearing.

Persons who have special communication or other accommodation needs who are planning to attend the hearing should contact Sandy Wong, Office of Legal Services at (512) 239-1802 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD). Requests should be made as far in advance as possible.

Written comments may be submitted to Ms. Kris Hogan, MC 205, Office of Legal Services, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087, or faxed to (512) 239-4808. Electronic comments may be submitted at: <https://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. File size restrictions may apply to comments being submitted via the *eComments* system. All comments should reference Rule Project Number 2019-129-116-AI. The comment period closes on March 17, 2020. Copies of the proposed rulemaking can be obtained from the commission's website at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/propose_adopt.html. For further information, please contact Michael Wilhoit, TCEQ Air Permits Division, Operational Support Section, at (512) 239-1222.

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

January 31, 2020

Mr. Michael Eastland, Executive Director
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Dear Mr. Eastland:

We have scheduled a public hearing to be held in San Antonio on February 18, 2020, at 2:00 p.m., at the Alamo Area Council of Governments located at 8700 Tesoro Drive. This hearing is offered to receive testimony regarding proposed Bexar County 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) §179B Demonstration State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision. The hearing for the proposed revision is required by Texas Health and Safety Code, §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency concerning SIPs.

You may download all of the documents to be considered at this public hearing at the following Web site: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/san/san-latest-ozone>.

Your attendance and comments are invited. Comments may now be submitted online by accessing the e-comments Web page located at <http://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Brian Foster at (512) 239-1930.

Sincerely,

Kirsti Jaul

Kristin Jacobsen
Air Quality Division

KJ/sw

cc: Ms. Edith Marvin, PE, Director of Environment and Development North Central
Texas Council of Governments, Arlington
Mr. Michael Morris, Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of
Governments, Arlington
Ms. Alyssa Taylor, Regional Director, Dallas/Fort Worth (*via electronic email*)

Enclosure

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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED REVISION TO THE STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (commission) will offer a public hearing in San Antonio on February 18, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. at the Alamo Area Council of Governments located at 8700 Tesoro Drive.

The hearing is offered to receive testimony regarding the proposed Bexar County 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), §179B Demonstration State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision (**Project No. 2019-106-SIP-NR**). The proposed SIP revision demonstrates that the Bexar County marginal ozone nonattainment area would attain the 2015 eight-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard by its attainment date "but for" anthropogenic emissions emanating from outside the United States in accordance with FCAA, §179B. The hearing for the proposed revision is required by Texas Health and Safety Code, §382.017; Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter B; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations §51.102 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency concerning SIPs.

The hearing is structured for the receipt of oral or written comments by interested persons. Individuals may present oral statements when called upon in order of registration. Open discussion will not be permitted during the hearing; however, commission staff members will be available to discuss the proposal 30 minutes prior to the hearing.

Persons who have special communication or other accommodation needs who are planning to attend the hearing should contact Jamie Zech, Air Quality Division at (512) 239-3935 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD). Requests should be made as far in advance as possible.

An electronic version of this proposed SIP revision and appendices is available at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/san/san-latest-ozone>.

The comment period for this SIP revision (**Project No. 2019-106-SIP-NR**) closes February 19, 2020. Written comments will be accepted through the *eComments* system at <https://www6.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. For additional submission methods, please contact Brian Foster, at (512) 239-1930.



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

January 27, 2020

Majed Al-Ghafry, P.E.
Assistant City Manager
City of Dallas
1500 Marilla Street, 4EN
Dallas, TX 75201

Dear Mr. Al-Ghafry:

This letter is in response to your request for funding assistance for a Re-Use and Redevelopment Plan for Hensley Field dated May 17, 2019. As you are aware, before the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) could respond, coordination was needed between the City of Dallas, NCTCOG and our military partners. Dan Kessler and his team have concluded that due diligence and NCTCOG staff is ready to bring a recommendation to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC).

There are two funding options for the City to consider. The first option involves direct federal funding of the project using Surface Transportation Block Grant funds. To use this option, the City would need to submit a Transportation Improvement Program modification by January 31, 2020 in order to receive an anticipated approval in the June 2020 timeframe. The City would need NCTCOG's approval on a dollar amount and we are ready to negotiate that now. This funding would require that the City follow federal and state requirements for procurement, contracting, and awarding to consultants. NCTCOG staff has reviewed the City's procurement process and strongly suggests the City coordinate with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in advance to ensure procurement steps performed to date will satisfy the requirements. NCTCOG staff will provide its observations about the City's procurement process. The City would need to execute an agreement with TxDOT prior to awarding any consultant contract as well. Execution of a funding agreement with TxDOT cannot occur until federal approval of the project. Additionally, the funding agreement may include other pre-approval requirements, such as review and approval of the City's consultant contract.

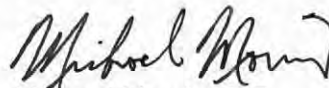
A second option would be for the City to identify a 100% city funded project that could receive the federal funds. In this case, the federal funds would be placed on that project and the City's local funds could be moved over to fund this study (if eligible). Under this scenario, the federal requirements would apply to the other project, not this study.

January 27, 2020

Any RTC funding would be contingent upon continued coordination with the military community and NCTCOG, however we believe the City should move ahead with their vision. In addition, given that the subject matter is more economic development rather than transportation focused, NCTCOG staff will recommend that any Tax Increment Finance or Transportation Infrastructure Investment Zone district created in this area be used to repay the RTC's contribution to the study in the future.

A response letter outlining the option of interest to the City is needed to add this funding request to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and RTC agendas. Please let me know if you have any questions at 817-695-9241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Morris".

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

CG:tw

cc: The Honorable Lee Kleinman, Councilmember, City of Dallas
T.C. Broadnax, City Manager, City of Dallas
James McGuire, Director, Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability, City of Dallas
Peer Chacko, Director, Planning and Urban Design, City of Dallas



February 5, 2020

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

RE: Funding Strategy for Redevelopment Master Plan for Hensley Field

Mr. Morris,

Thank you for your letter dated January 27, 2020 in response to the City of Dallas request for funding assistance for the Reuse and Redevelopment Master Plan for Hensley Field. I appreciate your offer of assistance and clarification of the options for use of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for this project.

The City of Dallas would like to proceed with seeking federal funding for this project in the amount of \$1.6 million to complement a \$400,000 local match for a total project budget of \$2 million.

Per your instructions, the City is submitting a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modification for this project by January 31, 2020. Please note that while this project will have significant economic development benefits, we anticipate that the major emphasis in this project scope will be on planning for streets, associated infrastructure, and multimodal access between the site and the region. This scope will be reflected in the proposed TIP modification application. Also, based on your advice, the City has reviewed the federal procurement requirements and believes that the project RFQ-RFP process undertaken to date complies with these requirements. We will work with the Texas Department of Transportation to confirm this.

Given the time constraints associated with receiving federal funding, we will continue to work on identifying another City-funded project that could receive the federal funds in order to enable us to move local funds to the Hensley Field Reuse and Redevelopment Master Plan instead. In the event this materializes, we will inform you and be prepared to make a future modification to the TIP accordingly.



We believe that Reuse and Redevelopment of Hensley Field is a truly unique opportunity to enhance prosperity, mobility, sustainability, innovation and equity in Dallas and the entire region. We appreciate your assistance with this project and look forward to continued collaboration with the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Please let me know if you need further clarification from the City of Dallas on this request.

Sincerely,

Majed Al-Ghafry, P.E.
Assistant City Manager
City of Dallas

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager, City of Dallas
James McGuire, Director, Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability
Peer Chacko, Director, Department of Planning & Urban Design
Michael Rogers, Director, Department of Transportation



February 11, 2020

Mr. Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Re: US Highway 287 – Uncontrolled Access Segments
City of Midlothian

Dear Michael,

In January of 2018, a letter was sent to you by former Mayor Bill Houston regarding the City of Midlothian's concerns related to the US Highway 287 corridor through the City and in particular, the segments of highway that have no frontage roads or grade separated interchanges. I have enclosed a copy of this letter for your reference.

Since this time, our staff has been working with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and their consultants on the US Highway 287 corridor assessment for Ellis County and we appreciate your assistance in getting this study underway. However, while this study considers the entire US Highway 287 corridor within Ellis County, we have a much more critical and immediate need for major improvements along the segments of US Highway 287 that traverse our city. As previously stated, Midlothian is currently the fastest growing city within our geographic area and week after week, City staff are meeting with developers who are wanting to develop properties along US Highway 287 and request that TxDOT permit direct access onto the main lanes. As you know, this type of direct access onto an ever-growing major highway creates tremendous safety concerns, as well as mobility and air quality issues. Additionally, with the on-going US Highway 287/Walnut Grove Road grade separation project, without frontage roads and additional grade separated interchanges along this corridor, it is anticipated that multiple traffic signals will be warranted in the near future, thereby reducing the overall positive impact of this project. Therefore, we are once again seeking your assistance in advancing and expediting the immediate planning, programming and funding of the necessary improvements to make US Highway 287 a fully controlled access facility through Midlothian.

RECEIVED

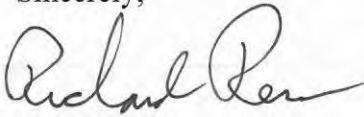
FEB 18 2020

Mr. Michael Morris, P.E.
Page 2

February 11, 2020

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for the assistance that you have provided in the past. If you should have any questions or wish to discuss this issue in greater detail, please don't hesitate to contact Chris Dick, City Manager, at 972-775-7102.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Reno". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Reno" clearly distinguishable.

Richard Reno
Mayor
City of Midlothian

Enclosure

cc: Chris Dick, City Manager
Clyde Melick, Assistant City Manager
Mike Adams, P.E., Executive Director of Engineering & Utilities
John Wray, Texas State Representative



Texas Department of Transportation

2501 SOUTHWEST LOOP 820, FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76133 | 817.370.6500 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

February 11, 2020

I-35W Northbound Over BUS 35W
Johnson County
CSJ: 0014-03-087

Mr. Michael Morris
Director of Transportation
NCTCOG
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Dear Mr. Morris:

The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Fort Worth District is initiating a Technical Work Group (TWG) to ask for your comments regarding proposed improvements to Interstate 35W northbound over Business 35W in Alvarado, Texas from County Road 604 to US 67. TxDOT invites you or a representative from your organization to attend the project's TWG meeting.

Date: February 25, 2020
Time: 2 – 4 p.m.
Location: City of Alvarado
Council Chambers
104 West College Street
Alvarado, Texas 76009

The purpose of the project is to enhance safety and mobility by realigning the northbound I-35W main lanes to meet current design standards while also removing the closed I-35W southbound left exit ramp. The project also proposes new northbound I-35W ramp configurations from CR 604 to US 67. Additionally, the existing northbound frontage road would be converted to one-way and extended to improve access and traffic flow.

As a TWG member, you will have opportunities to review and comment on the proposed design before the public meeting. Your participation will contribute greatly to the success of this project. If you would like additional information about the project, please contact TxDOT Project Manager Thomas Marquardt, P.E. at Thomas.Marquardt@txdot.gov or by phone at (817) 370-6772.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Gonzalez, P.E.
Director of Transportation, Planning and Development
Fort Worth District

OUR VALUES: People • Accountability • Trust • Honesty
OUR MISSION: Connecting You With Texas

An Equal Opportunity Employer

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FEB 12 2020

TRANSPORTATION

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

February 18, 2020

Mr. Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
Post Office Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

RE: Transportation control measure substitution in Dallas-Fort Worth ozone nonattainment area

Dear Mr. Morris:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Transportation Council adopted a TCM substitution on December 12, 2019 that removed high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane TCMs from the corridors listed below and replace them with traffic signalization TCM projects at six corridors in the City of Plano.

- IH 35 east corridor (Stemmons Freeway) between IH 635 and SH 121
- IH 635 east corridor (LBJ Freeway East) between Coit Road and Greenville Avenue
- IH 635 west corridor (LBJ Freeway West) between Luna Road/IH 35E and US 75

None of the three HOV TCMs has been included in the state implementation plan (SIP) to demonstrate attainment or reasonable further progress for the current 2008 or 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The NCTCOG has met the TCM substitution requirements in Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), §176(c)(8) and described in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2009 TCM substitution guidance.¹ This TCM substitution removes the HOV TCMs listed above and replaces their associated emissions reductions (nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds) with those from six traffic signalization TCM projects in the City of Plano.

This letter confirms the TCEQ's concurrence and complies with the requirement of FCAA, §176(c)(8)(A)(v). Once a letter of concurrence from EPA, Region 6 is received, the TCEQ will submit the substitute TCM and supporting documentation to EPA, Region 6 to update the list of SIP-approved TCMs. We look forward to working with the EPA and the NCTCOG to complete this TCM substitution. Please contact Jamie Zech at 512-239-3935 or jamie.zech@tceq.texas.gov with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Huff", written over a horizontal line.

Donna F. Huff, Director
Air Quality Division

RECEIVED

FEB 25 2020

TRANSPORTATION

¹ Guidance for Implementing the Clean Air Act Section 176(c)(8) Transportation Control Measure Substitution and Addition Provision, EPA-420-B-09-002, January 2009.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270

Office of the Regional Administrator

FEB 21 2020

Mr. Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Dear Mr. Morris:

Thank you for providing notice of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Transportation Council's December 12, 2019, approval of substitution of three Transportation Control Measure (TCM) commitments for the Dallas/Fort Worth Ozone nonattainment area with traffic signalization projects. EPA concurs with the NCTCOG's analysis and determination that the substitute TCMs are expected to provide equivalent emission reductions to the original TCMs.

These TCM commitments were originally approved as High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes into the Dallas/Fort Worth State Implementation Plan (SIP) as follows:

April 2000 Dallas/Fort Worth 1-Hour Ozone Attainment Demonstration SIP Revision, approved by EPA on September 27, 2005 (70 FR 56374)

- IH 35 East corridor (Stemmons Freeway) HOV lane between IH635 and SH121
- IH 635 West corridor (LBJ Freeway) HOV lane between Luna Road/IH 35 E and US75

May 2007 Dallas/Fort Worth 1997 8-Hour Ozone Attainment Demonstration SIP Revision, approved by EPA on January 14, 2009 (74 FR 1903)

- IH 635 East corridor (LBJ Freeway) HOV lane between Coit Road and Greenville Avenue

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, signed into law on August 10, 2005, revised the Clean Air Act (CAA) §176(c) transportation conformity provisions including procedures to use in substituting or adding the TCMs to approved SIPs. The CAA, as amended, requires that the replacement TCM must achieve equal or greater emission reductions; be implemented on a consistent schedule; and be supported by adequate resources and authority to be implemented, monitored, and enforced. The TCM must also have been developed through a collaborative process involving all affected jurisdictions, the EPA, and the public. Qualifying TCMs can be substituted into an approved SIP without undertaking notice and comment rulemaking, as allowed by §176(c)(8) of the Clean Air Act.

The EPA reviewed the methodology and the material provided by NCTCOG and concurs with the NCTCOG's determination that the traffic signalization projects selected as substitute TCMs are expected to achieve equivalent or greater emission reductions to the original HOV lane TCMs they will replace in the SIP. Additionally, the emission reductions from the substitute TCMs occur on a schedule consistent with the TCMs being replaced. This letter transmits EPA's concurrence regarding the TCM

substitution submitted by the NCTCOG. In reaching this decision, we have reviewed the technical information for the substitute TCMs provided by NCTCOG and have determined that the substitute TCMs meet the CAA §176(c)(8) requirements for substitute TCMs.

The substitute TCMs are now part of the federally enforceable SIP. We anticipate that the TCEQ will submit the substitute TCMs for incorporation in the codified applicable SIP within 90 days as required by CAA §176(c)(8). EPA will then proceed to update the Code of Federal Regulations to reflect the changes to the SIP in the Federal Register and clarify that these TCMs are a part of the federally enforceable SIP. If you have any questions regarding this decision, please contact Jeff Riley at (214) 665-8542.

Sincerely,



Ken McQueen
Regional Administrator

cc: Mr. Toby Baker
Executive Director, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Mr. Chris Klaus
Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments

Mr. Jose Campos
Planning Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Barbara Maley
Air Quality Specialist, Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Donna Huff
Air Quality Division Director, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Mr. Carlos Swonke, P.G.
Division Director, Texas Department of Transportation

Ms. Jackie Ploch
Human Environment Program Manager, Texas Department of Transportation

Ms. Janie Temple
Transportation Analysis Manager, Texas Department of Transportation



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270

Office of the Regional Administrator

FEB 21 2020

Mr. Toby Baker
Executive Director
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087, MC 109
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Mr. Baker:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has received notice of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Transportation Council's December 12, 2019, approval of substitution of three Transportation Control Measure (TCM) commitments for the Dallas/Fort Worth Ozone nonattainment area with traffic signalization projects. EPA concurs with the NCTCOG's analysis and determination that the substitute TCMs are expected to provide equivalent emission reductions to the original TCMs.

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consistent with the TCMs being replaced. This letter transmits EPA's concurrence regarding the TCM substitution submitted by the NCTCOG. In reaching this decision, we have reviewed the technical information for the substitute TCMs provided by NCTCOG and have determined that the substitute TCMs meet the CAA §176(c)(8) requirements for substitute TCMs.

The substitute TCMs are now part of the federally enforceable SIP. We anticipate that the TCEQ will submit the substitute TCMs for incorporation in the codified applicable SIP within 90 days as required by CAA §176(c)(8). EPA will then proceed to update the Code of Federal Regulations to reflect the changes to the SIP in the Federal Register and clarify that these TCMs are a part of the federally enforceable SIP. If you have any questions regarding this decision, please contact Jeff Riley at (214) 665-8542.

Sincerely,



Ken McQueen
Regional Administrator

cc: Mr. Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments

Mr. Chris Klaus
Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments

Mr. Jose Campos
Planning Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Barbara Maley
Air Quality Specialist, Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Donna Huff
Air Quality Division Director, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Mr. Carlos Swonke, P.G.
Division Director, Texas Department of Transportation

Ms. Jackie Ploch
Human Environment Program Manager, Texas Department of Transportation

Ms. Janie Temple
Transportation Analysis Manager, Texas Department of Transportation

Farmersville Begins Search for Home Rule Authority

By John Kanelis, KETR

Local control is best. That's the mantra of city governments everywhere, regardless of location or the political leanings of its governing body.

So it is, then, that Farmersville – a growing Collin County community – is beginning to wrestle with the best way to achieve complete local control. Its City Council wants to enact a home rule charter, moving the city away from the “general law” rules mandated by Texas statute.

The council came within a whisker the other evening of asking city residents to vote on a home rule charter in a municipal election. Then the council balked. It heard some concerns from at least one council member and a resident about the veracity of the formula that a city home rule charter committee had used to calculate the estimated population of Farmersville.

State law declares that a city must achieve a population of at least 5,000 residents to become eligible to seek home rule status. The city's home rule committee has estimated the city population to be 5,060. How did it derive that figure? According to City Councilman Mike Hurst, a member of the committee, the panel estimated that the average city habitation contains 3.2 residents.

Among the residents attending a City Council meeting, Jim Foy – a former councilman and former Planning & Zoning commissioner – questioned the 3.2-resident-per-dwelling formula.

Foy said the U.S. Census Bureau places the national average at 2.63 residents per dwelling, which he noted is “way below 3.2.” He said using the Census Bureau formula, Farmersville's population would stand at 4,218 residents.

“State law says that the council is to make a good faith determination of the population, using facts like people per household. So, what is a valid number for Farmersville?” he said.

Foy told the council, “Cities vary widely in their demographics. Booming cities have younger families and may have close to three people per household. Other cities have an older population with more retirees than young families and may average closer to two people per household.” He said Farmersville's population is older than the average and, thus, might not have as many people per dwelling as the charter committee has estimated.

He cited the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which he said estimates Farmersville's population in 2019 to be 3,340 residents.

Foy urged the council to table the resolution calling for an election in May. “The national census is being conducted in nine weeks, on April 1,” Foy said, urging the city to “table this resolution until we get an actual count from the Census Bureau, at which time you will have a factual basis for declaring if we exceed 5,000 residents.”

Farmersville has a municipal neighbor just a few miles to its west, Princeton, that has been living through a home rule nightmare for several years. Princeton has sought voter approval for a home rule charter four times; it has failed each time. Princeton residents have fought against what they believe is the city's attempt to annex property and to raise taxes too readily.

I reside in Princeton and my own wish is for my city to enact a home rule form of government. It should free itself of the restrictions placed on it by the general law mandates required by Texas statute.

I am unaware at this moment of any plans to try for another run at establishing a city charter. I do know, based on what I heard in Farmersville, that the folks down the highway have paid attention to Princeton's clumsy effort to establish local control.

The Farmersville City Council has dedicated itself to getting it right when they do ask the voters for permission to enact a home rule charter.

<https://www.ketr.org/post/city-begins-search-home-rule-authority>

New HOV GoCarma App Simplifies Carpooling, Saves Drivers Big Money

By Legacy Connect

GoCarma — the newest mobile app aimed at helping carpooling North Texas drivers with an NTTA TollTag save half of their regular toll expenses — just rolled out its newest iteration, and it's smarter than ever.

The [mobile application is free to download](#) and join on both iPhone and Android, and its main function is helping carpoolers save 50 percent in tolls on TEXpress lanes during peak periods.

Natalie Bettger is the Senior Program Manager, Congestion Management and System Operation, for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. She told *LegacyConnect* the redesigned application is simpler than ever to operate.

“Once users download the app, register their account, and link it to their TollTag, the app runs in the background,” she said. “When they are traveling on those TEXpress lanes, it can determine how many people are in the car, and it automatically gives them a discount on those facilities.”

The difference between GoCarma today and its former iteration is the updated version does not make drivers self-declare. The former version of the app, she said, required drivers to register online 15 minutes before beginning their commute, or else their trip would not be valid and no discounts would be applied.

Another difference the updated app makes, Bettger said, is police are no longer required to sit by the side of an HOV lane and manually enforce whether or not drivers are actually carpooling, creating more fair conditions for everyone using the lane. Instead, tax dollars go toward the actual HOV discount, not enforcement.

Bettger said she's often asked if passengers without smartphones still qualify for the discount. The answer, luckily, is yes.

For passengers without a smartphone, drivers are still able to benefit from a discount by requesting an occupant pass. As long as one person in the car has a smartphone, she said, the discount can be applied.

For users new to the application, Bettger said there's one important fact she wants everyone to hear: Drivers new to the app do not need to get a new TollTag.

At the end of the day, Bettger said, it comes down to two things: saving drivers money and lessening congestion.

“If you are carpooling, take advantage of the app,” she said. “That's why we have it: to give people an incentive to carpool and help with the congestion.”

[Visit GoCarma's website to learn more.](#)

<https://www.legacyconnect.solutions/post/new-hov-gocarma-app-simplifies-carpooling-saves-drivers-big-money>

TxDOT Approves Millions for Safer Access to Schools, Communities

By Hannah Jones

New federal funding will give pedestrians and bicyclists safer access to schools, public transit, and communities across Texas.

The Texas Transportation Commission approved \$24 million for 30 projects across the state that will build sidewalks, shared use paths, bike lanes, and other safety features.

This federal funding comes from two different programs: Transportation Alternatives and Safe Routes to Schools.

Projects by Transportation Alternatives aim to enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety, provide access to multimodal options, and connect community destinations like schools, places of work, commercial areas and medical facilities in rural or small urban areas.

The Texas Transportation Commission approved 18 projects under this category, collectively valued at \$15.8 million.

Funds from the Safe Routes to Schools program go to projects that encourage safe bicycling and walking for children in elementary and middle schools.

The commission approved 12 of these projects, cumulatively valued at \$8.5 million.

In the Dallas District, projects from the Safe Routes to Schools program include the construction of 0.8 mile of new accessible sidewalks beginning on Quail Drive and ending at Lake June Road.

The sidewalk improvements will connect Floyd Elementary School with nearby neighborhoods, Walter E. Luedecke Park, and public transportation.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/txdot-approves-millions-for-safer-access-to-schools-communities/2305256/>

Dallas-Fort Worth transit authorities to conduct passenger surveys

By Kim Roberts, The Texan

Ridership on public transportation systems across the country has fallen in recent years and DFW is no exception. With this trend in view, transit authorities in DFW will survey their riders in an effort to gauge demand and improve service.

Some area riders of public transit in Dallas will be surveyed beginning this week and continuing over the next few months.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA), and Trinity Metro in Fort Worth are conducting the surveys, in partnership with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).

SURVEYS

The passenger surveys will be conducted in phases, starting with DART and Trinity Railway Express passengers. That process will take about 3 months, according to Kathleen Yu, the principal transportation system modeler with NCTCOG.

Passengers using DCTA and Trinity Metro will be surveyed for about 2 ½ months in the fall.

Some of the surveys are taken on cards and some are conducted orally, but all will be kept confidential.

The results will be compiled and released in a report about six months after the surveys are completed.

“The data will be used by transit planners as they consider any changes or improvements to their transit systems,” Yu explained.

The results are also used when applying for Federal Transit Administration grant programs.

However, when asked if the agencies would attempt to survey those who don't ride mass transit and their reasons for not using the systems, Yu said that only existing riders would be included in the surveys.

RIDERSHIP

DART reports that it provided 62.5 million passenger trips in 2018, with almost half of those being on buses. That's down from the 65.7 million ridership reported in 2017.

The Trinity Rail Express commuter rail between Dallas and Fort Worth had 1.8 million passenger trips in 2019. This was a 10.8 percent decrease from 2018.

In 2019, ridership for Trinity Metro in Fort Worth was about 5 million. This was a 3.6 percent decrease from 2018.

Additionally, the new TEXRail has **significantly underperformed expectations** in its first year of operations.

Denton County (DCTA) had about 2.5 million riders in 2019, down from over 2.7 million in 2018.

Despite the decreases in riders, both DART and Trinity Metro transit authorities increased their budgets in Fiscal Year 2020. DCTA lowered its budget slightly.

DART has a total budget (operating and capital) for FY2020 of over \$1.3 billion, up 31 percent from 2019.

Trinity Metro has an operating budget of \$113.9 million, an increase of 2 percent based on sales tax revenue increases, not based on an increase in ridership.

DCTA's operating budget of \$44.6 million in 2020 is about \$400,000 lower than the previous year.

<https://thetexan.news/dallas-fort-worth-transit-authorities-to-conduct-passenger-surveys-amid-ridership-declines/>

Fort Worth oil and gas company mining metals for use in electric cars

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Not all oil and gas companies feel threatened by the impending arrival of electric cars and renewable fuels.

A few of these traditional, fossil fuel companies are even investing in alternative energy resources.

In downtown Fort Worth, an oil and gas exploration company known as Black Mountain is pivoting toward mining for nickel, copper and other rare earth metals that are crucial in the manufacture of lithium-ion batteries used in electric cars, cellphones, household appliances and many other electronics connected to the Internet.

The privately held company in [Sundance Square](#) created a subsidiary in 2018 known as Black Mountain Metals. That subsidiary has since [spent more than \\$75 million](#) buying 100% of one Australian nickel mine and a 20% stake in another.

Black Mountain Metals also is actively looking for copper mining investment opportunities around the world, said [Ashley Zumwalt-Forbes, company president](#). The company is in the process of raising \$100 million for a new acquisition, she said.

The metals are mined from the ground, then sold to smelter operations or battery manufacturers.

"I firmly believe that, in my lifetime, oil and gas are not going anywhere, but inevitably renewables are going to take more of the market share," Zumwalt-Forbes, said in an interview at her office overlooking Sundance Square's fountains.

Black Mountain's moves may be part of a larger, global business trend, as concerns about climate change continue to rise. Also, support for renewable energy such as battery-powered cars and solar or wind-powered electrical plants continues to grow as the costs of building and operating them come down.

Some organizations say worldwide demand for gasoline-powered automobiles will soon reach its peak — and at least one group [believes that peak has already been reached](#).

As crude oil and natural gas prices remain low, some investors may eschew traditional fossil fuel companies in favor of more sustainable, diversified energy plays.

Last year, energy was the [worst-performing sector of the Standard & Poors 500](#), a measure of the 500 largest publicly-held companies. The S&P energy sector includes industry giants such as Irving-based Exxon Mobil Corp.

Although there have been allegations that petroleum companies are [working behind the scenes](#) to slow the expansion of the electric car market, others in the industry see the writing on the wall and are seeking to diversify their companies' holdings beyond oil and gas.

Even so, the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers, which represents the oil and gas industry in federal and state government affairs, forecasts that fossil fuels [will remain a major employer in](#)

[Texas](#). The organization's annual Texas Petro Index, which was most recently published in January, noted that crude oil production in Texas grew by about 15% last year, despite falling prices.

Karr Ingham, petroleum economist and executive vice president for the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers, said he doesn't know of many other oil and gas exploration companies that have branched into mining for metals used in batteries, but he isn't surprised to learn about Black Mountain's interest in the field.

"These are tough times for oil and gas companies. The industry is kind of in a state of contraction," Ingham said in a phone interview. "Beyond that, just in terms of the battery issue, we're talking about increased use of electric power for one purpose or another, and I think we can all see where the possibility for that is pretty high. This is what companies do. They look into the future, and kind of make informed bets into what the market place is going to look like."

Zumwalt-Forbes, 29, recently made Forbes magazine's list of [30 under 30](#) in the energy industry. Her background is firmly in oil and gas.

The Choctaw, Okla., native studied petroleum engineering at the University of Oklahoma and also graduated from Harvard Business School before joining Black Mountain in 2017.

Black Mountain had been formed in 2007, primarily to explore for oil and natural gas in West Texas and southern New Mexico. The company continues to invest heavily in fossil fuels.

But Zumwalt-Forbes is leading Black Mountain's effort to diversify. Black Mountain Metals is headquartered in Fort Worth — a single desk occupied by Zumwalt-Forbes within Black Mountains' corporate office.

Zumwalt-Forbes oversees a staff of 15 full-time employees and about 20 contractors, all based in Western Australia. She splits her work time between Fort Worth and Perth, Australia.

"My view is, the metals business is oil and gas' future," she said, adding that she prides herself on "being a Fort Worth thinker, being on the edge of this energy transition."

Dallas-Fort Worth's sprawling rail networks haven't worked, so here's a better idea

By Connor Harris and Nathaniel Barrett, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

North Texas has bet big on passenger rail. Since 1996, Dallas Area Rapid Transit has spent [\\$5 billion](#) on the longest light rail network in the U.S.

The region also has three commuter rail lines: Trinity Railway Express from Dallas to Fort Worth, the A-train from Denton to Carrollton, and, since last year, TEXRail from Fort Worth to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

In two years, DART will [finish](#) the Silver Line commuter rail from the airport to Plano, which it predicts will draw 5,630 riders per day. DART budgets \$1.2 billion for the line, or \$220,000 per rider.

Despite this investment, trains in DFW have few riders. In the last quarter of 2018, DART [averaged](#) 1,030 daily light rail rides per mile of route length, far below Houston (2,651) and Phoenix (1,800).

DART's worst lines are often pricey recent extensions. For example, the Orange Line to DFW, finished in 2014, [received](#) only 2,975 riders per weekday in 2018. The line cost about \$1.8 billion, or \$600,000 per weekday rider.

Commuter rail does even worse. From July to September 2019, TEXRail got [only](#) 1,300 riders per weekday, one-sixth the [original](#) estimate. The line cost \$1.03 billion to build, or \$800,000 per weekday rider. The A-train got only 1,400 riders per weekday; each A-train ride [costs](#) \$32.62 to provide, 96% of it from tax subsidies. TRE does a bit better, with 6,600 riders per weekday, but its operations are [still](#) 70% subsidized.

High public-transit ridership [depends on](#) dense, large-scale development, but DFW rail lines stretch into sparse suburbs and other areas with little demand. DART's Green and Blue lines run along freight railroads surrounded by low-value, land-intensive industries; many commuter rail stops are in industrial parks or even open fields. Several DART lines run along freeways, which compete with train ridership and consume large amounts of otherwise developable land.

DFW transit agencies argue that population growth will provide rail riders, but development around remote rail stations has scarcely boosted ridership so far. For example, the Las Colinas Urban Center DART station, which serves mixed-use development twelve miles from downtown Dallas, [gets](#) the second lowest ridership in DART's light rail network.

Despite extensive construction, ridership there inched up from 236 boardings per weekday in 2014 to only 266 in 2018. The reason is simple: Small developments can't provide everything residents need, and when they need to travel elsewhere, cars are much faster than light rail or buses for most long trips.

It's time for DFW transit agencies to stop expanding rail lines, consider closing low-performing existing lines, and use the money for better purposes. More than 85% of DART's bus stops, for instance, lack simple amenities such as [benches or shelters](#), even though a basic shelter [costs](#) only \$5,000 to \$10,000 to install.

Rail construction funds could also be redirected to completing the HOV lane network on DFW freeways, making express bus trips far more reliable.

If rail projects are justified anywhere in DFW, it's in dense downtown and near-downtown areas, whose residents can benefit from concentrations of amenities that let them live with only rare car travel.

In DFW, these areas are growing rapidly. Developers are spending billions of dollars on projects in central Dallas: One vacant office tower is getting a [\\$450 million residential conversion](#), and high-rises in Deep Ellum are [drawing](#) high-profile tenants such as Uber. Several new high-rises have also been [announced](#) in downtown Fort Worth.

DFW should have better public transit, but this doesn't mean spending billions on trains for a few rich suburbanites. Transit agencies need to end their mindless rail expansions and focus on cost-effective investments for dense areas and transit-dependent poor residents.

Brush Creek, Allred roads could become part of regional thoroughfare to I-35W

By Peggy Heinkel-Wolfe, Denton Record-Chronicle

A motorist drives Monday down Hickory Creek Road, through the S-curve where several severe wrecks have occurred. Short-term fixes — guardrails, lighting, shoulder work — for the old two-lane asphalt road went into overdrive last year after two teenage brothers died early last year after their vehicle rolled off the road and into the creek.

Denton city leaders have a few choices in a long-term plan for Hickory Creek Road, but only one comes with regional funding.

The city engineer's office is scheduled to present four options during a work session with the City Council on Tuesday afternoon. All of the options would help motorists get across the south side of town from Teasley Lane all the way to Interstate 35W.

The Regional Transportation Council, an independent policy arm of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, told the city it prefers the option that essentially follows Brush Creek Road and Allred Road.

Report: Six Texas oil refineries spewing cancer-causing pollutant above federal threshold

An environmental nonprofit has released an analysis of first-of-its-kind air monitoring data that shows benzene levels at 10 U.S. petroleum refineries exceeded limits established in an Obama-era environmental regulation. Six are in Texas.

By Kiah Collier, The Texas Tribune

Eight years ago, two environmental nonprofits sued the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The agency was a decade overdue in updating limits on how much hazardous air pollution the country's oil refineries could emit; the groups hoped a lawsuit would force it to act.

The result was a regulation that required more than 100 refineries to monitor — and report — levels of cancer-causing benzene along the perimeters of their facilities and to make fixes when concentrations exceed a certain threshold.

On Thursday, the Washington, D.C.-based Environmental Integrity Project — one of the two nonprofits that sued the EPA in 2012 — released an analysis of the publicly available monitoring data refineries began sending to the EPA in January 2018. It found that 10 of them had reported benzene levels above the established threshold over a one-year period that ended in September. Six of those refineries are in Texas, including three in the Houston metro area.

The Texas refinery that reported the highest concentrations of the hazardous pollutant at its fence line was Total Port Arthur Refinery in Port Arthur, with levels 148% greater than limit, according to the report.

“These results highlight refineries that need to do a better job of installing pollution controls and implementing safer workplace practices to reduce the leakage of this cancer-causing pollutant into local communities,” Eric Schaeffer, executive director of the Environmental Integrity Project, said in a statement. “EPA in 2015 imposed regulations to better monitor benzene and protect people living near refineries, often in working-class neighborhoods. Now, EPA needs to enforce these rules.”

The EPA didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Environmental Integrity Project stressed that the 10 refineries are not necessarily in violation of the law.

Under the rule, facilities must collect air samples at their fence lines every two weeks, and if the average of the highest concentrations of benzene exceeds 9 micrograms per cubic meter of air over a one-year period, they are required to investigate the cause and take action to reduce emissions.

The other Texas refineries that reported benzene levels above the federal action limit are:

- Pasadena Refining (100% above the limit)
- Flint Hills Resources Corpus Christi East (79% above limit)
- Valero Corpus Christi East (44% above limit)
- Shell Deer Park (23% above limit)
- Marathon Galveston Bay Texas City (11% above limit)

In written statements, all the companies said they have worked hard to reduce emissions of benzene and other hazardous air pollutants. Some stressed that the fence line monitoring data isn't necessarily indicative of public health risks and described the report as misleading.

"The Total Port Arthur Refinery has a robust monitoring system in place to assist us in identifying the source of an emission, investigating its cause and implementing corrective actions," the French oil giant said in its statement. "We are committed to comply with EPA rules.

We take seriously our responsibility to reduce our environmental footprint."

California-based Chevron, which [purchased](#) Pasadena Refining from Brazil's state-owned oil company Petrobras last year, said in a statement that it "regularly analyzes the fence line monitoring data to identify and address potential sources of benzene emissions at its newly acquired Pasadena refinery."

"Chevron has taken steps, including testing and piloting new monitoring technology to identify potential sources, which would drive a reduction in levels at our refineries' fence lines," the statement said.

It noted that the facility, which had a [long history](#) of problems with air pollution and worker safety, has submitted a corrective action plan to Texas' environmental regulatory agency that called for monitoring improvements, which it said are "currently underway."

Kansas-based Flint Hills Resources said that the fence-line monitoring data it reported to the EPA isn't necessarily indicative of benzene levels in communities near its facility.

"Corpus Christi maintains an extensive network of ambient air monitors that indicate benzene levels are much lower than this report would suggest and well within public health standards," the company said in a statement. "Even so, we constantly strive to minimize our emissions."

Shell said that it had used the monitoring data at its Deer Park refinery to "identify a single operational activity near the fence line that drove the outcome, conduct an investigation on the cause and apply corrective measures."

The company added that as of the fourth quarter of 2019, the facility's rolling annual average is 6.99 micrograms per cubic meter, which is below the EPA threshold of 9.

Ohio-based Marathon Petroleum said in a statement it had traced its high emissions to a relief valve, fixed the issue and gone even further: "In addition to correcting the one-time relief valve situation, we have installed additional emissions controls on several of our storage tanks and deployed mobile monitoring sensors that provide real-time emissions data, so we can identify potential sources and address them."

In a one-sentence statement, Valero pointed out that its current benzene monitoring averages are below the threshold.

Benzene, a highly flammable gas with a sweet odor, has been classified as a known human carcinogen by EPA "for all routes of exposure," [according](#) to the agency. Short-term exposure to the chemical may cause drowsiness, dizziness and headaches, as well eye, skin and respiratory irritation and even unconsciousness. Long-term exposure among workers has been linked to increased incidence of leukemia and blood disorders. Women who have inhaled

benzene at high levels have reported adverse impacts to their reproductive systems, and adverse impacts to fetal development have been observed in animal testing.

The Environmental Integrity Project noted that the 9 micrograms limit is not tied to any official health-based standards, but it said that the 10 refineries "have long-term benzene concentrations that are more than three times higher than California's long-term exposure limit for increased risk of blood disorders and other disease."

"When compared to other benchmarks established by EPA, some of the highest emitting refineries on the list of 10 could represent an additional cancer risk of 4 in 10,000, when considering lifetime exposure," the report says.

The report notes that "EPA's Integrated Risk Information System indicates that inhaling benzene concentrations as low as 13 micrograms per cubic meter over a lifetime is likely to cause one additional cancer case for every 10,000 people exposed."

While the Trump administration has unwound dozens of other Obama-era environmental regulations on the fossil fuel industry, a [final rule](#) it proposed this week keeps in place the benzene monitoring requirement for refineries.

Triumph Site Receives Environmental Accolades

By Triumph Group, Times Herald

BERWYN, Pa., Feb. 10, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Triumph Group (**NYSE:TGI**) announced that its Triumph Product Support - Accessory Services business recently received two environmental accolades from the city of Grand Prairie. This recognition demonstrates Triumph's ongoing commitment to sustainability in its businesses.

The Grand Prairie, Texas based Triumph business received the Environmental Compliance Achievement for full compliance with the city's environmental requirements. The site earned the recognition after an on-site inspection by the city's Environmental Services Department.

The site was also recognized for participation in the annual North Texas Clean Air Challenge.

In support of the challenge, the site completed an education campaign that included communications, lunch and learn programs and email notifications on how employees can take action to reduce air pollution. Employees committed to the [Clean Air Action Pledge](#) and clean air initiatives were promoted at the site, including employee carpooling and signing up to receive air pollution alerts from Air North Texas, encouraging greater awareness of behaviors that impact the quality of the air and other environmental factors around them.

The city of Grand Prairie partnered with Air North Texas, a non-profit organization through the North Central Texas Council of Governments, to promote a consistent air quality message and increase public awareness in an effort to reduce emissions. Triumph participated in a challenge along with other local companies to act to reduce air pollution.

"I am very proud of all the hard work and dedication that has resulted in these awards," said, Jim Berberet, President of Triumph Accessory Services. "Our company is dedicated to doing its part to improve the air quality and overall environmental standards of the Dallas-Fort Worth area."

Triumph Accessory Services – Grand Prairie's capabilities include the repair and overhaul support for most aircraft accessories including pneumatics, hydraulics, environmental systems, actuation, constant speed drives, integrated drive generators, heat transfer, engine controls, fuel accessories, and gearboxes.

Triumph Group, Inc., headquartered in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, designs, engineers, manufactures, repairs and overhauls a broad portfolio of aerospace and defense systems, components and structures. The company serves the global aviation industry, including original equipment manufacturers and the full spectrum of military and commercial aircraft operators.

More information about Triumph can be found on the company's website at www.triumphgroup.com.

Fort Worth's Panther Island and its funding are the latest issue in Republican primary

By Anna M. Tinsley, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

[Panther Island](#) has become even more of a political issue.

Now that officials have said they expect just a small portion of the federal dollars requested this year for the \$1.17 billion project, Republican Chris Putnam said it's time to take a long look at the project that would reshape the Trinity River north of downtown Fort Worth.

Putnam, a former Colleyville city councilman, is challenging U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, a Fort Worth Republican who spearheaded the project, for the 12th Congressional District seat in the March 3 GOP primary.

After federal officials announced Monday that Panther Island will get just [\\$1.5 million for a feasibility study](#), far less than the \$38 million local officials requested, Putnam stressed that while he was on the Colleyville City Council he helped guide efforts to pass transparency and ethics reforms, along with term limits.

"In part, these new ordinances required the public disclosure of land ownership, business interests, and government contracts held by officials and employees," Putnam said in a written statement. "As we have seen with today's news about Panther Island and the Grangers, they are also much needed in Washington, D.C. ...

"When we close our eyes to this kind of government waste, political nepotism and corruption we become direct enablers to everything we claim to hate about Washington, D.C."

Granger's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment about Putnam's statement. Her office also did not respond to a request for comment Monday evening regarding the feasibility study.

The White House Office of Management and Budget a feasibility study on the project is needed. Generally, these studies detail a flood problem, review the environmental impact and note how to fix the problem, as well as provide alternatives.

Local officials have said a study showing the economic viability of Panther Island isn't needed.

Congress approved funding for the project in 2016 without calling for a study. Locals have said the feasibility study would take too long and cost too much money, further delaying the project.

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price — who has met with White House budget officials to talk about the project — has said it may be necessary to look into public-private partnerships.

"I applaud the efforts by Mayor Price and Fort Worth city leaders to influence a solution in Washington DC independently of Ms. Granger," Putnam said in his statement. "We must now start over but can do so in the sunlight of complete transparency."

An independent review of Panther Island last year [found confusion surrounding the project](#) and suggested changes to the management structure. In October, the Trinity River Vision Authority

changed the role of J.D. Granger, its executive director and the son of Granger. J.D. Granger will now focus on [coordinating the flood control aspects](#) of the project and is no longer involved in economic development or recreation.

Kay Granger, a former Fort Worth mayor, is seeking a 13th term in office. Putnam, who lives in Fort Worth, is challenging her in what has become a high-profile, well-funded race.

[At stake is a two-year term](#) that pays \$174,000 a year. The district includes the western part of Tarrant County, all of Parker County and the eastern part of Wise County.

Early voting for the March 3 primary runs from Feb. 18-28.

The winner will face the winner of the Democratic primary, either Lisa Welch or Danny Anderson.

Irving's former Texas Stadium site at center of major development plans

By Gavin Pugh, Community Impact Newspaper

Irving planners are touting a stretch of land along the Trinity River corridor as the site of one of the city's last large master-planned projects.

The land, set near the geographic epicenter of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, covers the former Texas Stadium site and totals 1,000 acres.

Its location requires a strategic approach to development, according to city officials.

But before the city can begin soliciting projects from commercial and real estate developers, improving road infrastructure is first on the to-do list for the development, according to the mayor.

The Texas Department of Transportation will begin work early this year on a \$420 million revamp of the site where SH 114, SH 183 and Loop 12 converge, dubbed the "diamond interchange." This work will provide needed connector ramp upgrades while also improving traffic flow in anticipation of the tens of thousands of new employees and residents destined for the future mixed-use development, Irving officials said.

The site will include a mix of single- and multifamily residential; offices; green space; and a new Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail station. The future construction is expected to boost the city's tax base for decades to come.

Irving Mayor Rick Stopfer underscored the scale of the project at the annual state-of-the-city address Jan. 16. "We shouldn't build an office building in there that's less than 15 stories," he said at the address. "We shouldn't build an apartment complex that's less than 10 stories because if we're going to move this city forward, we're going to need a tax base in the future.

This whole development in this area will probably never be completed in my lifetime."

Mixed-use development

Future development on the 1,000-acre site has the potential to address a compounding series of problems: Population increases are fueling demand for housing, while more drivers on roads contribute to worsening traffic conditions and air quality.

"There's not a lot of develop-able land available left," Irving Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders said. "There's this demand for ... office space that's conveniently located [near] our airports and downtown Dallas, and I think [the project] is a solution for a lot of those types of issues."

Several years ago, Irving planners created a comprehensive zoning ordinance to clear the way for future construction, Sanders said.

At full build-out, the site will include transit-oriented developments that will add office and retail space, entertainment venues, hotels and dense residential units, Irving Planning Director

Steven Reed said.

“[The plan] does recommend very high density—at a minimum, 60 units per acre ... nearest the DART rail station, and an overall density of 40 units per acre throughout the rest of the development,” Reed said.

The master plan projects the construction of up to 9,201 residential units, while the whole development is projected to be able to sustain 20,500 new jobs, Reed said.

Irving Traffic and Transportation Director Dan Vedral said TxDOT's initial road work at the diamond interchange will cause traffic disruption throughout its four-year timeline.

“This interchange is the confluence of three major freeway systems in Dallas,” Vedral said.

“There's a significant amount of traffic that goes through that, so therefore, there's going to be a lot of disruption. But when it's done, it certainly is going to be a showcase location [that] any sort of development would want to [be located] in.”

Drivers along SH 114 will have already noticed the construction of Irving's Signature Bridge connecting the former Texas Stadium site to another soon-to-be developed tract of land, according David Springob, the city engineering manager overseeing the bridge construction.

The Signature Bridge will feature lighting and canopy covers over the pedestrian walkways.

“It's a critical connection because you want to hook the properties together,” Vedral said. “You certainly want to do it for the ease of people who are not only walking [and] cycling but driving. ... It provides direct ramps on 114, so there's ... good vehicle access off of 114.”

The 500-foot-long bridge is expected to be completed by the end of 2020, according to the city.

How hyperloop could stand apart from existing transit modes

Hyperloop has the potential to naturally compete in the marketplace while offering something new — as long as companies can overcome regulatory and financing challenges.

By Chris Teale, Smart Cities Dive

By the end of the decade, the way people get around may be revolutionized by quick and affordable hyperloop trips — if predictions from supporters are correct.

While the potential of companies like Virgin Hyperloop One (VHO) shows promise for lighter traffic congestion and less reliance on crumbling roads, that's tempered by concerns over how hyperloop technology could impact existing transportation modes.

Experts say the needs of hyperloop must be balanced with current infrastructure, and there may be difficulties in working out a regulatory home for the technology and its financing.

But supporters say, if done right, transportation is ripe for a change.

"My excitement about the hyperloop really stems from the fact that I view it as a new mode of transportation," Rick Geddes, professor and founding director of Cornell University's Program in Infrastructure Policy, told Smart Cities Dive. "And transportation, if you stop and think about it, has not really had a new mode since the Wright brothers in 1904."

The existing landscape

Boosters emphasize that hyperloop will naturally compete within the marketplace while offering something new. With speeds that could reach nearly 700 miles an hour, hyperloop promises to offer rapid connections to major population centers — which may cause traditional transportation offerings to fall by the wayside.

"You go when you want to go, you get there when you want to get there, and you don't stop at every place along the way," VHO Chief Technology Officer Josh Giegel said during a press conference last year on Capitol Hill.

Hyperloop could also bolster transit in areas of the country that rely heavily on cars. VHO's feasibility study of a route through Missouri found it could be commercially viable and safe, and could have tracks along Interstate 70, providing it a clear route and a contrast to existing infrastructure.

"We can no longer afford to develop, implement and invest in policies and infrastructure that rely on yesterday's transportation and mobility solutions," Tina Quigley, then-general manager of the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, said during a 2018 hearing of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation on emerging transportation technologies.

Stan Caldwell, executive director of Carnegie Mellon University's Traffic21 Institute, said hyperloop could end up being an alternative to inter-city air travel, similar to the traditional rail system. That would be further helped by hyperloop stops closer to downtown than most airports, which are typically outside of downtown.

Hyperloop won't necessarily replace existing modes of transportation though, according to Thea Walsh, director of transportation and infrastructure development at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. The intention is to be more holistic, she said during a panel discussion on the technology at the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) annual meeting in Washington, DC last month.

"We're not just planning for one new mode," Walsh said. "It's going to exist in a very multimodal world. It's part of a system... in my mind, it enhances an existing system. We don't see this as replacing every single mode on the map, but it's the strategic usage of it in places where it makes sense."

Discussions around hyperloop may still be in their very early stages for public transit officials. A spokesman for the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) declined to comment on the group's position, while a spokesman for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) did not respond to requests for comment.

Extensive passenger service to compete with or complement public transit may be a long time coming, however. During the TRB panel discussion, VHO General Counsel Mary Herman said the company would likely look to prove the viability of hyperloop incrementally, which will be dependent on proving its safety. Speakers at TRB said it will be imperative to manage expectations and to be as transparent as possible when it comes to safety improvements and development.

"Tell me your speed records, that's great," said Bryant Walker Smith, an associate professor at the University of South Carolina's School of Law. "But at the same time, be willing to tell stories about what's hard. What hasn't worked, what are you still struggling with, what hasn't gone as you expected? This is the kind of honesty and presentation that will build the credibility that I think we will need to sustain these discussions over the years or decades that they will last."

Finding a 'regulatory home'

While hyperloop's promise of ultra-fast connections may be appealing, it remains to be seen how it will be regulated in comparison to traditional modes of transportation. VHO officials have said publicly it would like to be regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), as the agency's oversight already closely mirrors the needs of hyperloop.

"For us, it's really about where the regulatory home sits," Giegel told Smart Cities Dive in an interview last year. "That allows a couple of things to occur. It allows people to understand the jurisdictions that you might need to fall under from a regulatory point of view and understand the opportunities for finance, whether that be public-private partnerships (P3s) or government loans or whatever it might be."

Caldwell noted parallels with autonomous vehicles (AVs) and ride-hailing, which both have been the subject of intense debate among regulatory agencies after arriving suddenly.

"There were very specific lanes and programs for a lot of transportation modes, so when these new modes come in, like even when TNCs came in like Uber and Lyft, and micromobility like the scooters and the bike-share, and things like maglev or hyperloop, they don't fit into a normal box either from a regulatory side or a funding side," Caldwell said. "That's just by their definition why they're disruptive."

There are signs that the federal government is looking to get its arms around disruptive transportation technologies. U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Elaine Chao announced last year the creation of the Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology (NETT) Council, which she said would help address modal silos at USDOT and ensure emerging transportation technologies receive proper review and support. An FRA spokesperson told Smart Cities Dive in an email that the NETT Council is still in the process of determining how to support regulatory development for hyperloop but said no decisions have been made so far.

Observers said the development of NETT showed the federal government's willingness to experiment, and to alleviate concerns around introducing new risks into the transportation system.

"There's a lot of risk aversion," Geddes said. "Nobody really wants to sign off and say yes, this technology is safe for human travel, and then have some horrible accident occur. There's a lot of risk aversion in the regulatory process anyway, but if you're adding this element of it being a completely new technology that hasn't been tested, then it's going to be even slower."

But it could still be a long time before there is regulatory certainty, depending on how quickly things move. Geddes said the government should also play a future role in determining basic standards of hyperloop technology, like the diameter of the tubes, and how features like propulsion, braking and levitation would work.

Funding and business models

Perhaps the most visible way hyperloop will be compared with existing transportation modes will be in its ticket price, a topic Herman said she is asked about often. The Missouri feasibility study envisioned a ticket price that would cost less than driving, and although it did not go into specifics, Herman said it would need to be competitive and not just a playground for the rich.

"We really do envision this as a high throughput mass transit system," she said. "It has the potential to move tens of thousands of people per hour. If we're setting a price where it's not getting that utilization, it's not serving people the way it's supposed to."

That feasibility study also does not go into the costs associated with building hyperloop infrastructure, leaving a lot of doubt for city leaders and potential investors. Geddes said that while the first-ever route may be a big investment, economies of scale will bring those costs down over time.

"The first hyperloop route from point A to point B is probably going to be a pretty expensive ride, because you have these huge fixed costs to pay," he said, pointing to costs of the tube, the pylons, environmental permitting and other elements. "Unless it gets subsidies, the company that's providing that service has got to cover those costs. So, the more scale you get, the more riders, you can spread those fixed costs over more and more riders and the costs will come down."

VHO and others have said they will seek private funding for hyperloop infrastructure, something that may quell concerns around the distribution of funds ordinarily used for roads, bridges and transit. Caldwell said placing the emphasis on private funding should help ensure there is a business case.

"That's one benefit to a privately-funded system: the investor market will determine the feasibility of a project, which I think avoids the shiny-object component from a public sector side where something might just be politically pushed through because it's a shiny object," he said.

While there appears to be a desire to use private financing to build and operate hyperloop, some VHO officials have also said they are open to public help, too. In written testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee's 2018 hearing, VHO Vice President of Business Strategy Josh Raycroft said projects using VHO technology should be eligible to receive "relevant federal programs designed to support these projects," including Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF).

Geddes said he would "not support" spending public monies on hyperloop infrastructure but said the likes of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Department of Defense (DoD) could set aside research and development money for the technology.

"I would not want to see money that should be spent repairing potholes being diverted to hyperloop, with the caveat that the federal government does fund a lot of research and development on new technologies all the time," he said.

Fort Worth mayor: Time for 'good developers and good investors' to look at Panther Island

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

With the prospect of federal money to construct Fort Worth's Panther Island unlikely, Mayor Betsy Price says it is time for "brighter minds" in the private sector to consider how to finish the \$1.17 billion project.

Washington officials this week rejected a request for \$38 million to continue designing and building the Trinity River project, opting [instead to provide \\$1.5 million for a long debated feasibility study](#). With no construction dollars in sight, Price told the Star-Telegram on Thursday she hoped to convene a group of developers and real estate experts to discuss how the roughly 800-acre patch of land north downtown can become a center for growth.

"It's time to get good developers and good investors together, people who do this kind of thing for a living, and start a conversation," Price said. "I think we need to look at the whole project.

Is it going to look like what we envisioned or is it time to change?"

Panther Island, known by the Corps as the Central City Project, hopes to mitigate a Trinity River flood by cutting a bypass channel. The outcome would form an 800-acre island ripe for development. Since the project's inception in the early 2000s, renderings have shown the island as a walkable mix of commercial and residential properties bisected by channels, giving the landscape a river-walk feel.

The Tarrant Regional Water District, the local sponsor of the project, is a major landowner in the area, but Price said the city is responsible for ensuring quality development there. In October the Fort Worth City Council approved [stripping references to the Trinity River Vision Authority](#) from the city's development code to make it clear that prospective developers need to go to the city, not the TRVA, with ideas.

Design standards for the area include a pedestrian friendly layout of buildings that can support 10,000 residents as well as commercial office space. Robert Sturns, the city's director of economic development, said those standards could morph. The area could become more dense or may be marketed as a site for a corporate headquarters.

Water district general manager Jim Oliver was skeptical about turning to private developers at this stage of the project.

"If someone has an idea, we'd be willing to listen," Oliver said.

But Oliver said the district has discussed some of the land it owns in the past with developers who appeared skittish. He said the companies, which he wouldn't name, told the district the possible return on investment was too far out for them to invest now.

The district purchased chunks of land in the path of the channel, but also owns land that required environmental cleanup. The district owns about 150 acres, 30 of which is ready for development. The rest would be marketable after the levees come down when the channel is built, Oliver said.

The idea has been that the sale of these properties would fund improvements to the island, such as the canals, Oliver said. If the goal was to pay for the construction of the channel, the district would have to sell the land for more than three times the value, he speculated.

Mark Mazzanti, a former Corps executive who has been hired to coordinate the local project, told the Star-Telegram this week there were a number of options to move forward. That may be a major topic of discussion at Tuesday's water district meeting, but Mazzanti declined to go into detail.

In the past, the Corps has been authorized to allow local sponsors to build projects on their own and be reimbursed later, but Congress has not approved the appropriation for that in several years, he said. The president's 2021 budget proposal calls for \$250 million to restart the program, but it's unclear if Congress will approve it.

Price said she's hopeful a group of private developers can offer a wide range of solutions and noted the city's history of successful public-private partnerships. The latest is [the \\$540 million Dickies Arena](#). The city contributed \$225 million that will be paid back through taxes on tickets, parking, livestock facilities and hotel rooms. The Fort Worth Zoo and a homeless housing program are also public-private partnerships.

The most successful is [Alliance Texas](#), the commercial, industrial and residential [mega development that surrounds the country's first industrial airport](#). Hillwood, a [Ross Perot Jr.](#)-founded developer that manages Alliance, estimated the development contributed \$7.8 billion in economic activity in 2019 and \$242.8 million in property taxes to North Texas.

"We've done this before," Price said. "We can't wait another 16 years for federal funding."

ARMY CORPS PARTNERSHIPS

Though Price's idea focuses on spurring development on Panther Island, the Corps is [exploring public-private partnerships](#) for the construction and maintenance of water projects, called P3s.

Two projects underway are larger in scope than Panther Island but offer similar benefits. Both are relatively new projects compared to the nearly two-decade old Trinity River endeavor.

In Texas, private investment focused on economic development, not flood control, will significantly enhance [the capacity of the Brazos Island Harbor near Brownsville](#).

Three liquefied natural gas companies, Next Decade, Annova and Texas LNG, have picked up part of the tab for deepening the Brownsville Ship Channel from the Gulf of Mexico to their shipping locations. It's a \$310 million project that the Corps estimates will be done in half the time and for \$72 million to \$150 million less than if the Corps did it alone, according to a project summary.

The three private companies will invest \$38.75 billion in Brownsville operations. The project will boost the companies' operations in the Port of Brownsville, adding up to 600 jobs with an average salary of \$70,000 a year. The median household income there is around \$36,000, according to the Corps.

In North Dakota an ambitious \$2.75 billion plan to re-route a river around Fargo with a 30-mile channel is the Army Corps' first public-private partnership.

There, the Red River of the North flows to Canada between Fargo and Morehead, Minn. It poses a significant flood risk to both cities — volunteers have use [millions of sandbags to keep the waters away](#) from both towns.

Originally the Corps was going to construct both parts of the long-term flood protection plan: an upstream dam system south of the two cities and the channel to the west of Fargo.

Instead the Corps is responsible for just the dam system. Private companies will design, dig and maintain the channel, said diversion consultant Rocky Schneider. The Corps has committed to about \$750 million, Schneider said, and received a \$100 million appropriation this week, the largest allocation the St. Paul district of the Corps has ever received.

Three “teams” of private companies have bid on the channel section, he said, and a contract should be awarded soon. They’ll be reimbursed overtime through three voter-approved tax districts and will commit to maintaining the channel for 30 years.

The process has taken about six years, but locals have been optimistic the unique partnership will expedite the project, he said. A Corps summary of the [Fargo-Morehead diversion anticipates a \\$100 million savings](#) for the federal government. Without the partnership, the agency estimated the work would take at least 16 years. With it, the time frame is reduced to just over six years. The project is expected to be done by 2027.

“There’s a lot of assurance to the public that someone isn’t going to just build a trench and walk away,” Schneider said. “We think the quality of work will be far superior.”

Here's a peek at how a new climate action plan could change life in Dallas

From air quality and water to mass transit and recycling, proposals are wide-ranging. But some stakeholders say draft doesn't go far enough, fault public input process

By Jesus Jimenez, Dallas Morning News

As Dallas tackles climate change, the city could try to change how North Texans get to work, how they power their homes, and how much shade they have.

A year after the City Council unanimously voted to create its first climate action plan, a draft is ready. The Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan is the product of community meetings and input from more than 6,000 Dallas residents.

The plan includes 90 proposals, many of them focusing on reducing greenhouse gases to meet the city's boldest goal: eliminating such emissions by 2050.

The plan is expected to launch April 22, which is Earth Day. Residents can review and comment on the plan at dallasclimateaction.com through March 3.

After the review period ends, the Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability will review the responses.

City leaders have described the plan, which was developed by AECOM Technical Services, as an ambitious and necessary response to looming environmental threats.

"Dallas is a healthy, safe and economically vibrant city. But to be a truly resilient city, Dallas must prepare for the effects of climate change," Mayor Eric Johnson said in a prepared statement.

Too weak, some say

But since the draft's release Feb. 4, some Dallas residents have said it doesn't adequately address all the problems the city will face.

Several members of the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led activist group focused on climate change and job creation, attended Wednesday's City Council meeting to express their concerns about the plan.

"While I — and my generation — appreciate that the city of Dallas is currently working to prevent climate change, we'd like to emphasize the importance of being more aggressive before we reach tipping points of no return," said Samuel Posten, 13, as dozens of group members stood behind him, linking arms.

Local business owner Javier Enriquez, 25, also told council members that the plan's goals won't yield progress quickly enough.

"The luxury of incremental change is no longer a viable path, and incredible threats require incredible solutions," he said.

Evelyn Mayo, board chairwoman for Downwinders at Risk, a community group focused on clean-air issues in North Texas, said the city didn't do enough to gather public input.

"Public meetings meant to generate input were poorly attended, poorly publicized and often hard to find," she said. "Without an equitable process, there are no equitable outcomes."

What could have been a vehicle to undo Dallas' decades of systemic environmental racism, unfortunately is yet another top-down plan that even if implemented, will likely leave front-line communities right where they are: on the front line."

Jim Schermbeck, a long-time environmental community organizer in North Texas, said the climate action plan's proposals could do more.

"Most are without imagination or timelines, meaning that even the most milquetoast-like recommendations being made will have to be fought for tooth and nail to be done in a timely manner," he wrote in a post for [Downwinders at Risk](#). "... The list of recommendations is effusive about stormwater management and tree-planting and silent on more challenging issues such as inequitable pollution burdens and the city's own reliance on natural gas."

Here are notable pieces of the plan and how they could affect people:

Energy efficiency

The plan sets a target of making all new construction "net-zero energy" within 10 years. The term means that the amount of energy used by a building is equal to the amount of renewable energy produced there.

Related goals include making operations at Love Field Airport carbon neutral, updating building codes to favor solar energy and better accommodating electric vehicles.

Air quality

Many of the plan's goals would improve air quality, at least indirectly. To measure progress, Dallas plans to work with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to install more monitoring stations across the city.

The plan also suggests changing zoning standards to make sure new industries that produce harmful emissions are located safely away from neighborhoods.

Water resources

The city is focusing on detecting and repairing leaks in the water system and encouraging businesses and homeowners to cultivate drought-tolerant plants.

Leaders are continuing to create plans to protect the city's water infrastructure facilities from extreme weather.

Although droughts may become more extreme, by the end of the century, North Texas could see up to 40% more days with severe thunderstorms, the plan says. Improving storm drainage and flood protection will continue to be a priority. [The city has 84 such projects in the works.](#)

Waste and recycling

The city plans to expand its recycling program and do more to reduce illegal dumping. It also wants to ensure that staff members who buy good goods and services for the city focus on green options, including use of content that is high in recycled materials, providing locally sourced food for city-sponsored events, and using less-toxic cleaning products.

Transportation

The plan calls for 100% electric bus fleets for DART and Dallas ISD by 2040 and for expanding public transit options.

Ride-sharing apps like Uber and Lyft could receive incentives to electrify their fleets.

Green spaces

The city wants to expand its tree canopy by over 40% by 2050 and reduce the urban heat island index by 75% by 2050.

About 14.7 million trees are within Dallas city limits, according to the [Texas Trees Foundation](#). But about 46% of those are in the Great Trinity Forest. In addition to adding more trees, the city wants to distribute them more evenly.

The plan calls for creating more green space by using city-owned properties to create small parks and vine walls. The goal is for 95% of Dallas' population to live within a half-mile walk of a park or trail by 2050.

How much will the Texas bullet train cost? Curious Texas tackles this and other questions about the line

If hurdles are cleared, North Texans could be making the under 90-minute trip to Houston as soon as 2026, says the company leading the project.

By Jesus Jimenez, Dallas Morning News

It's been discussed in North Texas for years — a high-speed train that could get someone from Dallas to Houston in just 90 minutes.

The talk could become reality soon, according to Texas Central, the company developing the line.

Naturally, North Texans have questions about it. Curious Texas asked *Dallas Morning News* readers what they wanted to know about the train, and they delivered.

Here are answers to some of the most popular questions.

How much will a train ride cost?

Like buying a plane ticket, prices will depend on several factors, such as the class of service and how far in advance the purchase is made, Texas Central says.

"On the high end, tickets will be competitive with the cost of flying, and on the low end, they will be competitive with the cost of driving," the company says on its website.

With those parameters in mind, it could be assumed that a ticket could cost as little as a tank of gas, or as much as a \$200 flight.

How many people will fit on the train?

The rail line will use the latest model of the Shinkansen train. In Japan, that model — called the N700S — seats over 1,300 passengers. It will be adapted for Texas.

Modifications could include extra air conditioning and wider seats, according to Holly Reed, Texas Central's managing director of external affairs. Wider seating could mean a smaller capacity than the train used in Japan.

What path will the train take?

The [latest proposed route](#) spans 10 counties from Dallas to Harris counties, with a stop near College Station. Portions would run near Interstate 45, others much farther west. The route is under review by the Federal Railroad Administration, and it could change.

Texas Central maintains it plans to build and operate a route that is least impactful to the environment and communities.

Where will the train make stops?

Exact stops are undetermined, but Texas Central has revealed their general locations.

Dallas' stop is expected to be in the Cedars neighborhood, south of Interstate 30 near downtown. The train will stop near state highways 30 and 90 in Grimes County, equidistant to College Station and Huntsville. Texas Central plans to have direct shuttle service to Texas A&M University, about a 30-minute drive away from the station in Grimes County.

The Houston stop would be in the city's northwest side, near interstates 10 and 610.

How long will it take to build?

"We've had our heads down working on this for a long time," Reed told *The News* in December.

"The conversation has shifted from, 'Is this really going to happen?' to 'When can I ride it?'"

Texas Central is waiting on federal approval of the project's environmental and safety aspects. If those are cleared by summer, groundbreaking could begin in the fall. After that, North Texans could be making the under 90-minute trip to Houston as soon as 2026, the company said.

Patrick McShan, a Dallas attorney with The Beckham Group, does not believe the train's groundbreaking will happen so soon. McShan represents Texans Against High-Speed Rail, which opposes building the line. He believes that Texas Central will face more legal battles and that the project could end up before the Texas Supreme Court.

In a conference call with news media Thursday morning, U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Houston, said he doesn't believe Texas Central has made progress on the line's construction.

"What has changed about the project? Our view is nothing," Brady said. "Nothing's changed in the project to give them eminent domain [to build]."

On its website, Texas Central says it plans to use eminent domain "only as a last resort."

Will pets be allowed on the train?

Like airlines, it's likely service animals will be allowed on the train, but Texas Central has not confirmed any details regarding service animals or pets.

A sustainable future for Texas bottles

By Katherine Lugar and Carol McGarah, Denton Record-Chronicle

As we are reminded nearly every day, our planet faces extraordinary environmental challenges, and consumers rightly expect leaders in the business community to be part of the solution.

That is why the American Beverage Association and the Texas Beverage Association are working together on a breakthrough sustainability initiative that has just announced a multimillion-dollar investment to support more sustainable, efficient and convenient recycling programs in Dallas-Fort Worth and the surrounding communities, including Denton.

North Texas is the first region to be selected for this nationwide effort, which is designed to showcase how industry leaders, sustainability groups and municipalities can work together to overcome shortfalls in the collection, sorting and remaking of materials. It's an exciting project, and we look forward to working with stakeholders across the state to build on this opportunity.

The initiative, called Every Bottle Back, represents an unprecedented coalition that joins the Coca-Cola Co., Keurig Dr Pepper and PepsiCo with environmental and sustainability leaders at the World Wildlife Fund, Closed Loop Partners and the Recycling Partnership.

Working together, we will get more valuable plastic bottles back and keep them from winding up in places they shouldn't, like lakes and rivers or wasted in landfills. Our bottles are made from a valuable and versatile plastic called PET. They are 100% recyclable, including the caps, and they are made to be remade.

To achieve that goal, we're upgrading recycling centers, including the Balcones Material Recovery Facility in nearby Farmers Branch. The facility, which serves the entire Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, will be enhanced with state-of-the-art technology, such as optical sorters, machinery with artificial intelligence, and robotic arms that separate recyclable plastics, along with new belt configurations to improve the processing of more recyclable materials.

We're also engaging consumers to ensure that they have the tools and knowledge to take advantage of recycling opportunities.

That means in-unit outreach, bins and totes for multifamily housing complexes in Dallas. It also means cart-to-cart outreach for residents in more than 232,000 Fort Worth homes. And reaching across 230 Texas communities, we're supporting the "Know What to Throw" public service campaign launched by North Central Texas Council of Governments. These efforts are a vital step toward helping consumers decrease contamination of valuable recyclable materials, like plastic beverage bottles and aluminum cans.

Every Bottle Back investments in North Texas will ensure that an additional 3 million pounds of newly recovered PET plastic is available to do just that. That means less need for new plastic, lower costs and a smaller environmental footprint.

Ultimately, this initiative is an important step toward the creation of a truly circular economy, making sure valuable PET bottles end up where they belong — back on the shelf. But it also will provide a road map for sustainability efforts nationwide.

Our hope is that the Every Bottle Back initiative, through the programs, educational tools and services it supports, will inspire others to partner with local communities to tackle the issue of plastics in the environment and find innovative ways to improve community recycling.

A more sustainable future is within reach, and we appreciate the support of municipal leaders — and beverage lovers everywhere — who are helping to make it possible.

Fort Worth-area cement plant wants to double its emissions. These moms are fighting it.

By Kristian Hernandez and James Hartley, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Abigail Slye, 32, remembers the first time she drove down U.S. Highway 287 from Fort Worth to Midlothian. Her husband had a new coaching job at a local high school, and they were in search of their first home.

They drove past one of the three cement plants in the city, and he joked, “Look, it’s Six Flags over Midlothian,” Slye said.

She asked her real estate agent about the white clouds spewing from the top of a towering smokestack visible from their front yard. Just steam, she remembers her Realtor saying.

It took the mother of three several years before she realized the clouds were made of carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and particulate matter so small it can enter the bloodstream through the lungs and cause [breathing and heart problems](#), according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“I had to get involved and do something,” Slye said. “My son’s elementary school is at the edge of the property of one of these cement plants. But it’s hard to get people to care.”

Pollution from Midlothian, known as the [Cement Capital of Texas](#), isn’t restricted to the city. The EPA lists Ellis County as part of a [nine-county smog zone](#) in North Texas, along with Tarrant, Dallas, Collin and Denton counties. Winds from the south and southeast carry pollutants from as far as the Gulf of Mexico, according to Chris Klaus, senior program manager of the North Central Texas Council of Governments’ air quality department.

In September, Slye teamed with Laura Hunt, a pediatrician whose 4-year-old daughter began having respiratory problems after the family moved to Midlothian in 2015. Together they started Midlothian Breathe.

The group wants to stall a plan from Swiss-based cement manufacturer Holcim US Inc., which wants to nearly double the carbon monoxide it can put into the air, according to a request filed with the state and obtained by the Star-Telegram under a Texas open records request.

Holcim is asking the state to remove the annual carbon emissions cap of 4,303 tons per year from both of its production lines and rescind to a previous limit of 3,555 tons per year for each line. The company also wants to increase its use of pure petroleum coke from 60% of its “flexible” fuel to 100% in one of its lines.

In an email, Holcim spokeswoman Jocelyn Gerst wrote that while the company wants the emissions caps removed, it has no plans to increase pollution and will continue to meet all state and federal environmental regulations. She also wrote that Petroleum coke, also known as petcoke, is only one of the fuel sources used at the Midlothian cement plant. Others include natural gas, coal, and alternative fuels, such as old tires that would otherwise end up in a landfill, she wrote.

WHAT IS PETROLEUM COKE?

Petroleum coke is a byproduct of the petroleum refining process. While it is solid carbon and resembles coal, it creates particles that are less than 10 micrometers in diameter. The EPA labels any particles smaller than 10 micrometers as dangerous, though studies on rats have shown that it has a low level of toxicity.

“Our commitment continues to be to produce cement that is crucial to the economy of North Texas and beyond and doing so in a manner that meets our emission limits,” Gerst wrote. But Midlothian Breathe’s six members and its supporters remain skeptical.

“If your child’s health was threatened by a disease, you’d want a second opinion,” said Hunt, who works in a hospital’s pediatric unit caring for underweight and premature newborns.

“All of us are being threatened by nearly 3,000 tons of additional air pollution that the state says is perfectly harmless,” Hunt said. “There’s no way that’s true.”

Midlothian sits on a limestone reserve that could last 600 years, making it a coveted place for cement production, [according to the city](#). The first plant was built in the early 1960s by Texas Industries. TXI was purchased by Martin Marietta in 2015 and employs approximately 173 people. Other major cement operations in Midlothian include Ash Grove Texas LP, with 121 employees and Holcim with 145 workers.

The amendment application for Holcim Inc.’s permit is under technical review by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Once the technical review of the application is complete, Holcim will be required to publish a preliminary decision. After that, TCEQ will have a 30-day public comment period followed by a public meeting.

Midlothian Breathe has asked the City Council to match the \$3,000 it has raised to hire an independent expert to evaluate the request and conduct its own study before the public meeting, which has not been scheduled.

During a Jan. 28 Midlothian City Council Meeting, Slye joined four other Midlothian Breathe members to appeal for support. The four women read prepared remarks to the six city councilmen and mayor, telling personal stories of the effects the plant has had on their families. The women asked the council to take part in protecting air quality in the city.

Slye said the group’s approach was meant to be peaceful — no megaphones or shouting — but strong.

“We’re not out here with picket signs. We just want to set up a meeting,” Slye said after the council meeting.

Midlothian city manager Chris Dick told the Star-Telegram the city is not interested in meeting with the group or partnering with it for an independent study.

“We don’t have any jurisdiction over that permit,” Dick said. “Midlothian has already been heavily tested for decades, and every time they’ve concluded we are in compliance with EPA and state standards.”

Kuruville John, chairman of the engineering department at the University of North Texas, wonders about the environmental effects of burning additional petcoke.

“Burning 100% petcoke will change the chemical characteristic of the particulate matter,” John said. “Even if the levels of emission are in compliance, it’s important to also look at the toxicity and composition of the particulate matter.”

<https://www.star-telegram.com/latest-news/article240263191.html>

Planned Protected Bike Lane Coming to Harwood Street to Link the Cedars with Downtown

Pedestrians rejoice—a major thoroughfare is getting safer.

By Matt Goodman, D Magazine

A protected bike lane is coming to Harwood Street downtown, first connecting the Cedars just past the Farmers Market near Main Street Garden. It's Downtown Dallas Inc.'s first step in providing pedestrian infrastructure that will get cyclists, walkers, and scooter-ers from Dallas Heritage Village to Klyde Warren Park without having to dodge vehicles. The first phase should be complete by the spring.

Harwood is one of Downtown Dallas Inc's so-called "catalytic corridors," providing a more-or-less direct shot from the Cedars to the Arts District. One day, you'll find the forthcoming Harwood Park there. [The new Pacific Plaza](#) is also along the street. But Harwood is mostly one way. It forks confusingly at Pacific Avenue, making it tricky for pedestrians to cross.

And it doesn't provide adequate infrastructure for folks on bikes or scooters.

"[Harwood Street] is such an important district connector," said Kourtny Garrett, president of Downtown Dallas Inc. "You start to see how the fabric knits together."

The first phase will run along Harwood from Beaumont Street all the way to Main. The ingress and egress of the office towers north of Main will require a deeper design study before anything permanent goes in. Plus, the lanes narrow. So, they're starting with paint and delineators, the city's "first-ever protected micro-mobility facility," as coined by Krista Nightengale, the managing director of the Oak Cliff nonprofit Better Block. Those delineators look like squat speed bumps.

Others look like large standing planters.

Better Block is also handling the paint job.

"They saw interest in the project, and we know they mobilize quickly," Garrett says. "They're looking for quick wins and pilot projects."

And that's very much what this is. The usage of the new lane will inform what the second phase looks like, as well as whatever permanent construction awaits in the future. Garrett wouldn't say exactly what that would be, but it could include a bike lane separated with a curb, a grade differentiation, or a combination with a paver system. She's also curious about how cyclists and scooters will get along; when the idea first came to DDI, in 2014, scooters weren't part of the conversation.

A group of urbanists—Patrick Kennedy, 42 Real Estate's Benton Payne, graphic designer Robbie Good—also identified Harwood as a potential pedestrian thoroughfare and took the idea to downtown stakeholders. They modeled their idea after the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: a wide, pedestrian-only lane that is grade-separated from vehicular traffic. It leads cyclists and walkers through downtown and to the front door of many of the city's arts and entertainment options.

Theirs was broader, incorporating the existing trails and connecting downtown with Deep Ellum and onto the Perot Museum.

But from that idea came Bike Harwood. DDI plans to pursue bond funding to pay for the permanent lane.

“The city’s transportation department has been very supportive,” Garrett says. “Our intent is to have another incremental implementation – while you’re waiting on big funding, you start with a delineator system and really look to those larger capital bond funds to get something permanent.”

Better Block is looking for volunteers to help paint on March 6. [Head here for more details on that.](#)

\$2.5 billion project in the works north of downtown builds on the Uptown boom

A 30-acre high-rise project called The Central will remake the east side of U.S. 75.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

Dallas' next major development is starting with a bang.

Early Sunday morning, demolition crews were scheduled to blow up an office tower just north of downtown to make way for a \$2.5 billion mixed-use project called The Central.

[The demolition, expected to take seconds, will take longer](#), but it will be a couple of years before the first new structures open in the almost 30-acre project at U.S. Highway 75 and Haskell Avenue.

Called The Central, the huge development would have 5 million square feet of office, residential, hospitality, food and beverage, entertainment and retail. A 3.5-acre park will sit in the middle of the project.

Plans for the first phase of The Central include a 17-story office building, a 320-unit apartment high-rise, a 430-unit apartment project by JPI, a 300-room full-service hotel and a 150-room limited-service hotel. There will also be 110,000 square feet of eateries and entertainment space.

Developer Artemio De La Vega has been working on the project for more than five years. He has a team of high-profile architects working on The Central project, including Dallas-based GFF, BOKA Powell and New York's Perkins-Eastman.

"Food and beverage and entertainment are really critical for the mixed-use component," De La Vega said, as is the central park that the high-rise buildings will overlook. "We want to make this project very much nature-oriented with as much green space as we can."

As recent Dallas-area projects go, it would be one of the largest.

The three-building Union Dallas development in Uptown, which just sold for \$370 million and a record price per square foot, has three buildings with 800,000 square feet of space.

Trammell Crow Co's new Park District mixed-use development at Woodall Rodgers Freeway and Pearl Street cost almost \$400 million and has 900,000 square feet of offices, apartments and retail.

The Central — if built to plans — would be larger than either of those projects.

But it would be nowhere near the size of some of the huge suburban developments such as Plano's \$3 billion, almost 250-acre Legacy West development or Jerry Jones' \$1.5 billion Star development in Frisco, which covers 91 acres.

Three years ago, De La Vega bought the first 10.5 acres at the northeast corner of U.S. 75 and Haskell Avenue from Xerox Corp. In 2010, Xerox had bought Dallas-based Affiliated Computer Services, which was based in the tower that's coming down Sunday.

Last year, he bought another almost 17 acres next door from developer Trammell Crow Co., which had planned a shopping center on the site.

After rezoning the property, De La Vega began clearing the rest of the old buildings, which were once home to 7-Eleven founder Southland Corp.

"Those buildings were constructed in the 1970s, and they have served their purpose," De La Vega said. "This site should be cleared in two months."

"We would like to break ground in the third quarter."

The Central project would be the tallest, densest development yet in the area between North Central Expressway and Ross Avenue.

Most of the construction in the area east of Uptown has been low-rise and mid-rise buildings.

But a lack of development sites and rising land prices are pushing developers to think differently.

"I think higher density is going to come to that side of the freeway — it makes sense to me," said Neal Sleeper, president of Cityplace Co., which developed the project between U.S. 75 and Turtle Creek over the last 30 years. "There is not much left on the west side of the freeway."

In nearby Deep Ellum, developers are already remaking the old low-scale commercial district with a new generation of tower projects.

"Eventually, dense development is going to ring downtown," Sleeper said. "If they are able to do all that, it would be great for the area."

What De La Vega is proposing for his property isn't all that different from what was on the drawing boards almost four decades ago.

That's when Southland Corp. secretly bought up more than 130 acres on both sides of the highway for its ambitious Cityplace development.

Old architectural drawings of Cityplace show a forest of towers rising on the corner where De La Vega is building his Central project. But when a real estate crash scuttled the plans, Southland only built one piece of it: the 42-floor Cityplace Tower.

De La Vega is also talking with DART about expanding its underground Cityplace commuter station, which could give The Central direct access to the light-rail line.

"This site is blessed with a ton of infrastructure, and it's under-used in my opinion," De La Vega said. "This area I think has the most potential of all."

"It's really untapped for density and urban development."

The Central development will be the largest undertaking ever for De La Vega, who's a member of a prominent family with widespread business and real estate holdings in Texas and Mexico.

De La Vega Development has done real estate projects in Arizona, South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana. The family also founded one of the most successful firms in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez with its Grupo De La Vega business consortium.

De La Vega admits that he's never done a project the size of The Central development, but he believes the timing and location are right.

He expects that after the dust is cleared from the demolition, The Central will be a game changer for that area of Dallas.

"We want to do something the city can be proud of and the folks on the east side of U.S. 75 can be proud of," he said.

As Panther Island officials wait for federal funds, bridge schedule firms up

By Marice Richter, Fort Worth Business Press

A week after learning that the only money allotted to the \$1.17 billion Panther Island would be for a feasibility study, local officials still have no more clarity about the study or their next move.

But Tarrant Regional Water District board member James Hill didn't mince words on Tuesday with a report on the project to the board.

"I think it is time to take a pause," Hill said, after noting this is the third consecutive year that the project has failed to win any federal funding for construction. The project is authorized to receive \$526 million and has received about \$68 million in the past.

"I don't think we need to be into more debt on the project" at this time, Hill said.

While project partners, including the city of Fort Worth and Tarrant County along with the TRWD, were hoping for federal money for construction the money included in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers budget was \$1.5 million to be equally matched by the local agencies for the study.

"We are waiting on guidance from the Corps," said Panther Island program manager Mark Mazzanti, a former executive with the Corps.

In the meantime, local funds will continue to move ahead relocating utilities, land acquisition and other preparations needed to be ready for the Corps to begin the work of digging a channel on the Trinity River to improve flood control and transform an industrial area north of the Tarrant County Courthouse into the waterfront community of Panther Island.

But with local funds dwindling, the TRWD has begun issuing commercial paper bonds to pay necessary bills.

It remains unclear when the project will be finished.

"That's a question I want answers to," said TRWD board member Leah King.

Separately, a schedule that was announced as firm up on Tuesday is for the three bridges Panther Island bridges that will eventually cross the channel.

Fort Worth City Council members were told that the White Settlement Road bridge will be finished in December this year while the North Main and Henderson street bridges will be completed in December 2021.

That schedule has the White Settlement bridge two years behind the original completion date of 2018 and the other bridges three years behind.

Despite the lag in construction, leaders of the partner agencies have long insisted that the bridges were fully funded, and any cost overruns would be settled when the bridges were finished.

But a top regional transportation planner told the City Council that the cost of the bridges has escalated by about \$19 million from \$69.9 million to \$89.3 million. A payment of nearly \$16 million was made to the Sterling Construction of Houston in December, the contractor for the bridge project.

Michael Morris, director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (COG), said the additional cost would be covered by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the oversight body for transportation planning throughout North Central Texas.

The RTC must vote on the payment, which could happen as soon as mid-March or possibly April, Morris said.

The money will likely come from a federal transportation block grant, he said. Since the contractor has already been paid by the Texas Department of Transportation, the grant money would reimburse the state agency.

Morris acknowledged that cost overruns were anticipated from the time the V-pier design was selected about six years ago.

"We did not like this bridge design," Morris said. He told the council that he and two other top local transportation leaders preferred the West 7th Street design for the sake of consistency.

But Army Corps officials said the West Seventh Street design would require two- to three-years of study and modeling, which would potentially slow the Corps' timetable for digging the Panther Island channel, Morris said.

A second choice would have been a common V-pier design but that, too, was rejected due to extra time for study and modeling, Morris said he was told. Instead, the transportation officials signed off on the unique V-pier design, with each pier being unique and a different size.

"So, we took one for the team to help meet the Corps' construction schedule," Morris said.

Although no additional cost overruns are anticipated, Morris and Lloyl Bussell, district engineer for TxDOT, did not rule out the possibility of unforeseen circumstances that could result in extra cost or delays.

Experts and consultants are working on-site to oversee aid construction and prevent further delays and an agreement with the contractor has workers are on-site seven days a week as well as on overnight shift work, Bussell said.

Morris said the nearly \$90 million price tag is about the amount he expected the bridges would cost because of a design that is "very complex."

"The bottom line is it's needed, and we've got to move forward, and we've got to do so as responsible messengers," said District 6 Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem Jungus Jordan. "You're standing in front of us a road map. As keepers of the public trust, you've given us the pathway."

Morris said years from now any complaints about the additional funding will be forgotten, pointing to cost overruns in the Chisholm Trail Parkway that took more than half a century to complete.

"Someone will stand here 10 years from now and ask, 'What was the deal about the \$20 million dollars?' We've got to keep it in perspective," he said.

The new schedule pushes back completion of the bridges from a tentative schedule announced by TxDOT a year ago. At that time, the White Settlement bridge was due to be completed by this summer or early fall of 2020, with bridges for North Main and Henderson streets in early 2021.

Mayor Betsy Price has made completion of the bridges, especially the White Settlement bridge a top priority for the city. The White Settlement road closure has been most impactful because there is no construction work-around as there is at the other two bridge sites.

Businesses along White Settlement have been cut-off from downtown during construction, leaving many struggling and others closing their doors.

Even if bridge construction is completed according to the schedule, it is uncertain whether federal funding will be allocated for channel construction to meet the current project schedule.

The feasibility study could take up to three years, if it is necessary, officials said.

The announcement of \$1.5 million for a study came after the Trinity River Vision Authority, an offshoot of the TRWD, hired a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the scope of the Panther Island project.

As a result, a restructuring of the TRVA, the oversight agency for Panther Island, reassigned TRVA executive director J.D. Granger to a narrower role within the TRWD. Other TRVA tasks were reassigned to the city of Fort Worth and TRWD as well.

Granger is the son of U.S. Congresswoman Kay Granger, R-Fort Worth, who has been the champion of Panther Island for nearly two decades.

Officials said they felt confident that the organizational changes and a focus strictly on flood control protection would better position the project for federal funds.

About \$330 million of local funds have already been spent on the project and some local leaders, including Fort Worth City Manager and TRVA board member David Cooke are reluctant to spend any more without a guarantee of federal funds.

Price has signaled that it could be time to look elsewhere for funds.

"While we are disappointed TRV did not receive federal funding for construction, we will continue to collaborate with our local partners, this administration and our delegation in Washington on this critical flood control project," Price said in a statement. "Furthermore, I believe this is an opportunity to bring private partners to the table and explore public-private partnerships."

Dallas Is Falling Far Short of Its Ambitious Goal to Become Bike Friendly By 2021

By Lucas Manfield, Dallas Observer

Dallas is nowhere close to fulfilling an ambitious plan to create a citywide network of bicycle lanes.

In 2011, the City Council [adopted a plan](#) to create 1,300 miles of bike routes, including bikes lanes, street markings and multipurpose trails, that would promote "wide-spread use of bicycles" in the car-centric city. And it promised to do so by 2021.

But on the eve of that deadline, the city has built barely a tenth of the network.

"Our numbers are still not the greatest," said Michael Rogers, the city's head of transportation. But he emphasized that the focus has been on building safer, protected bike lanes rather than meeting the numeric goals set out by the 2011 plan.

"Even though we've only done 11%, we're trying to do them differently — more holistic — and in a safer way."

The \$370,000 plan, funded primarily by a grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, was contracted by the city in concert with Dallas County, DART, DISD and local cycling advocates.

Then Mayor Mike Rawlings [voiced his support](#) at a ceremonial bike ride, remarking, "We've got to be a bike-able city."

It was a response to growing discontent within the city's bicycling community. In 2008, and then again in 2012, Dallas was ranked the [worst cycling city](#) in America.

But almost immediately, proponents worried that promise of the 76-page "master plan" wouldn't materialize. "If it will be funded and how it will be funded, I don't know," said Warren Casteel, a member of its citizens advisory board, in an interview with *The Dallas Morning News* in 2011.

The plan itself was circumspect on the matter. It proposed the city "partner with local events and hold other events to raise funds."

In the end, the city allocated little funds toward the plan's implementation.

"But at \$500,000, we couldn't do a whole lot other than sharrows," said Rogers, referencing the widely maligned painted street markings that are designed to encourage drivers to "share" with bicycles. [Recent research](#) has suggested they don't make cyclists any safer.

Heather McNair, the president of BikeDFW, said sharrows are an "interim stopgap." While dedicated bike lanes are preferable, paint is sometimes better than nothing. At the very least, she pointed out, it makes riders feel welcome on the roads.

But Angela Hunt, a former City Council member who helped spearhead the plan, said that's not enough. "For too long, we've patted ourselves on the back as a city for painting streets and putting up signage, as if that's going to do anything substantive. It doesn't work."

She said that, even in its early years, the plan failed to live up to expectations. There was a lack of political will to dedicate the resources needed to implement it, she said. "We can do all the plans we want, have as many meetings as we want, but we're not going to change our behavior or our transportation system without real money behind it."

Several years ago, the city finally increased funding to \$1 million a year. At the time, the plan was to bump that number by another \$500,000 each year. That, too, Rogers acknowledged, never happened.

He said that his department can't implement the plan alone and said "a collaborative approach" is necessary. Rebuilding roads, he said, depends on funding from the Department of Public Works and taxpayer-approved bonds.

Dallas stands in stark contrast to Austin, which created a similar plan in 2014 and then funded it with a transportation bond. It included more than \$20 million dedicated to new bike lanes. As a result, the city built out [nearly a quarter](#) of the planned network by 2017.

By then, Austin had moved up to seventh in *Bicycling* magazine's ratings. "More than 10 percent of Austinites who live within an 8-square-mile area around downtown now commute by bike," the publication reported.

Crossing U.S. Highway 75

To understand the limitations of Dallas' current bicycling infrastructure, McNair presented a challenge: cross North Central Expressway in northern Dallas.

This isn't academic. One side lies the Northaven Trail, which runs east to west linking Preston Hollow and other northern Dallas neighborhoods. On the other side are the Sopac and White Rock Creek trails, which connect downtown Dallas and Richardson.

But try to get between these trail systems, and you realize that many bicycle "routes" in Dallas are mere wishful thinking.

The best route, according to both Google's bicycle map and McNair, is a mile along Meadow Road, a four-lane artery between Walnut Hill and Royal with no discernible markings for cyclists.

Faded blue signs, remnants of the [1985 Greater Dallas Bike Plan](#), point to another route, marked haphazardly with faded sharrows. But it peters out at Forest Lane, which appears on the 1985 map to be a bicycle route but is now six lanes of heavy traffic.

McNair has a word for what Dallas is lacking: "connectiveness." The city has built a lot of great trails, but it hasn't done a great job bringing them together.

"That's the low-hanging fruit that we should have the budget to work on," she said.

The Missing Oversight Board

The Dallas plan offered a simple way to hold the city accountable: Create a "Bicycle Advisory Board to monitor and track implementation of the Plan."

This board, McNair said, was never created.

"There is little question at this point that without an advisory board, the bike plan is just a good idea on paper lacking any real leadership in bringing it to fruition," McNair wrote in an email.

She's still fighting for the board's creation, nine years after it was first proposed. "Better late than never," she said in an interview.

Meanwhile, the city has struggled to assign someone the unenviable task of administering the plan. The position has historically had few resources and little support — all while laboring under the weight of unfulfilled expectations.

Max Kalhammer, the city's first-ever bike coordinator, was the first casualty. "It was a combination of things, and I can't deny that the conditions under which I was performing my job was a factor when making my decision," he [told the Observer](#) in 2013 after leaving the position.

After his replacement, Ashley Haire, stepped in a year later, Kalhammer slammed city leaders [in a letter to The Dallas Morning News](#). "It couldn't hurt to give Dr. Haire a program staff to help design, plan, coordinate, implement and monitor the Bikeway System," he wrote.

Haire lasted a little over a year. According to [DMN reporter Robert Wilonsky](#), she was working "almost single-handedly" with "antiquated technology" that required her to design bike lanes by hand.

The city [spent thousands](#) on consultants to design bike lanes while it looked for a replacement. Jared White took over the assignment until 2018, when he moved to a new position in the parks department. The position has gone unfilled since.

Filling the position is key, according to the city's own comprehensive climate plan, a draft of which was released last week. It noted that the bike plan "has not been fully implemented due to a lack of resources and no dedicated manager" and that "hiring an in-house bicycle advocate and coordinator to update the bicycle master plan and work through the existing implementation hurdles is key."

Rogers said he's still looking for the right person. "We've had interviews, and I didn't believe we were at the right fit. ... I'm looking for someone who's really good at communicating with the public but also has the technical know-how to still move this thing forward." He expects to fill the position by the end of this month.

Meanwhile, he said his priority is to "make safety first" using the money he has available. This means making sure that new infrastructure projects going forward have protected bike lanes. "We're seeing better quality projects that are coming out, that are not just to hit a number," he said.

Once safer infrastructure is in place, Rogers said, more bicyclists will hit the streets. But, he admitted, "Right now, we're not quite there."

Fort Worth's Panther Island bridges expected to cost \$20 million more than expected

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The three bridges that may one day span a Trinity River channel in downtown Fort Worth will cost almost \$20 million more than expected and likely won't be done until the end of 2021.

That extra money will come from the North Central Texas Council of Government's Regional Transportation Council in the form of a \$15 million grant, officials said Tuesday. Another \$5 million may be paid through a special tax district designed to fund work related to a planned bypass channel in the Trinity River that would create Panther Island.

Once scheduled to open in 2017, the bridges were delayed by design issues and the completion date was pushed back two years. Then project [officials last year said](#) the bridge would be finished by late summer 2020, with bridges for North Main and Henderson streets following in the spring of 2021.

Now an official schedule shows White Settlement Road will be done by the end of this year with the other two bridges finished by the end of 2021.

Originally budgeted at \$69.9 million, the new cost is a little more than \$89 million.

Despite the delay and increased cost, city manager David Cooke voiced optimism in an interview with the Star-Telegram.

"Under normal conditions, I'm now very confident they can get it done," he said. Even at the higher price the bridges will cost about what regional transportation experts anticipated in 2014 when construction began, said Michael Morris, director of transportation for the council of governments.

Morris anticipates asking the Regional Transportation Council, a body that decides how to spend state and federal transportation dollars in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, to allocate about \$15 million in federal grants to the Texas Department of Transportation for bridge work the agency has already paid Texas Sterling.

The bridges, which would span the bypass channel in the Trinity River north of downtown, have been behind schedule from the beginning.

When asked to participate in the project more than six years ago, Morris said regional transportation officials questioned the bridges' complicated and unique V-pier design, hoping the Army Corps of Engineers and the Trinity River Vision Authority, which is coordinating the project, would chose a design similar to the W. 7th Street bridge. That design would have cost less and taken less time to complete, he said.

But Morris said Corps officials told them a new bridge design would delay the project by at least three years as engineers completed a new hydrology study.

Each of the 20 V-piers is unique, so regional transit officials pushed for one design for all but were told that too would delay the project.

Not wanting to be the cause of the delay, Morris said the Regional Transportation Council signed off the V-pier design and would now help push the project forward.

"I am more confident in the project now than I was before," he said, adding that Panther Island was a vital flood control effort.

TxDOT reached a new agreement with Texas Sterling late last year and paid the contractor about \$15 million to continue work. Loyl Bussell, district engineer for TxDOT, said the new agreement should make it easier for the contractor to complete the bridges. Work is ongoing seven days a week in multiple shifts, he said. The agreement also allows the contractor to work through issues with bridges' design faster, he said.

Businesses along White Settlement Road expected further delay of that bridge. Members of the White Settlement Road Development Task Force, which [advocates for businesses](#) and has been meeting twice a month with TxDOT officials about the bridge work, said in January [state officials told them](#) the bridge would be done by the end of the year.

White Settlement Road has created the biggest headache, especially for locally owned businesses across the river to the west of downtown. Unlike the Henderson and Main Street work, White Settlement has been closed at the bridge site since 2014, cutting off the road from downtown.

The lack of traffic between the west side of the river and downtown has hurt several businesses, including Angelo's Barbecue, a [favorite lunch spot](#) of downtown workers. Owner Jason George told the Star-Telegram in January he estimated business has fallen 30% since work began.

Steve Metcalf, president of the White Settlement Road Development Task Force, said business owners along the street have mixed feelings. Some are "ready to get out the pitch forks and torches" but others are more optimistic now that a firm completion date has been set.

The bridges are being built over dry land. The Army Corps of Engineers is expected to dig a 1.5-mile bypass channel under them sometime in the future. That channel is meant to control water flows in the Trinity River in the event of a flood and is the major feature of the \$1.17 billion Panther Island project.

The Army Corps has received little funding for the bypass channel since it was first authorized in 2006. Though it was re-authorized for \$526 million in 2016, the channel has received \$62 million to date.

The local Corps office and the water district asked for \$38 million for design and construction work this year, but didn't receive any. Instead, Washington provided [\\$1.5 million for a feasibility study](#). A water district meeting Tuesday morning, board member James Hill said he hoped the district would slow work on their portion of the project.

It is no coincidence Morris chose a federal grant program to help pay for the bridges, he said.

"I hope it spurs a conversation," Morris said. "OK Corps of Engineers, what was your commitment?"

Bridges to Nowhere: Fort Worth Eyes Completion Date for Panther Island's Delayed Bridge Projects

Three bridges in Fort Worth associated with the beleaguered Panther Island project have had their completion dates set. For now, the bridges will cross dry land.

By Kim Roberts, The Texan

The Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) has officially announced the completion date for the three bridges near downtown Fort Worth affiliated with the beleaguered Panther Island project. The White Settlement Bridge is set to be completed in December of this year, and the other two bridges at North Main and Henderson are set to be completed in December of 2021.

TXDOT met with the Fort Worth City Council during a work session on February 18 to give an update on the bridge projects.

"This is the first time we've really had firm, committed, and approved dates for these bridges and for that I'm thrilled," Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price said, who acknowledged that the project has been plagued with problems and adversely affected several local businesses near the construction.

The bridges were originally supposed to be completed in the summer of 2018, at a cost of about \$70 million. The completion will cost an additional \$20 million.

Michael Morris, a representative from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, said that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), a group with representatives from many local government bodies, will make up the difference.

"We knew there would be cost overruns," Morris said, especially pointing to the unique, non-standard bridge designs. The RTC will have to officially vote for the extra bridge funds. Morris expects that vote in late March or April.

PART OF A LARGER PLAN

The three bridges are part of a larger flood control and economic development plan commonly known as Panther Island, which involves creating a bypass channel and lake along the Trinity River in Fort Worth.

So far, the Panther Island project, which is estimated to cost \$1.2 billion and has seen years of delays, administrative problems, and cost overruns, has not secured federal funding for the bypass channel of the Trinity River, a key component of the flood control portion of the project.

At least for now, the bridges will cross dry land.

"If the [bypass] channels don't come...would the bridges be necessary?" asked Cary Moon, council member for District 4 in Fort Worth.

"These bridges were built as a result of Fort Worth's desire to create a bypass channel," Morris replied, explaining that the decision was to build the bridges first because it is easier to build bridges on dry land before creating the bypass channel.

“We’ve got to build these bridges before we can talk about a lake or a channel or anything else,” Jungus Jordan, council member for District 6 said. “We are going to finish this project.

The bottom line is it’s needed, and we can’t stop where we’re at. We’ve got to move forward.”

“This is a critical project for the city of Fort Worth. Whether it is flood control, and it is, or whether it is economic development, and flood control always has a piece of economic development, this is a long-haul project. We’re moving forward to do this. It’s had lots of hiccups; it’s caused lots of people lots of headaches,” Price noted.

WATER DISTRICT FUNDING

Also, on Tuesday, the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) board met and received an update from Trinity River Vision Authority (TRVA). Board member James Hill recommended that the TRWD “take a pause, figure out where we are, slow down, and not issue any more debt until we meet with our partners and figure out how to responsibly move forward.”

In early January, TRWD issued \$1 million in commercial paper to finance the administrative costs of the TRVA for about three months.

Sandy Newby, the finance director, reported that the money should last until early April and that she understood functions were being “scaled back as much as possible to do the bare minimum.”

First Look at Houston-to-Dallas High-Speed Train Interior Plan

The project could break ground as early as June with a completion date of 2026 likely.

By Larry Collins, NBCDFW

Newly released sketches show what the interior of a high-speed rail connecting Dallas and Houston could look like if the project overcomes court challenges and breaks ground.

Texas Central, the private company behind the project, released details and [sketches of the interior of the train cars](#) this week.

The project [still faces hurdles](#). Texas Central is waiting on green lights from the federal government.

The company must also finish acquiring land and financing. And there are ongoing legal battles with opponents of the train. But Aguilar remains confident.

If the rail comes to fruition, passengers wouldn't have to worry about the middle seat squeeze – because there is no middle seat – it's either an aisle or window seat. There will also be no seat belts.

"This design gives passengers nearly a foot more legroom than most coach airlines seats ensuring the most comfortable ride possible for all riders," Texas Central said in blog post.

Interior features onboard the train cars include:

- Two configurations: 2/2 and 2/1 seat configuration (no middle seat ever!)
- High-speed Wi-Fi: multi-point Integrated high-speed internet connectivity to provide the fastest, most reliable wireless connection of any train in the world
- The ability to configure some of the eight-cars to "quiet cars" with restrictions on cell phone usage
- Trains will feature variable lighting to accommodate individual passengers
- Full access for all: the train will meet or exceed all ADA specifications

"I still can say we're absolutely sure it's going to happen," Texas Central CEO Carlos Aguilar said.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/first-look-at-houston-to-dallas-high-speed-train-interior-plan/2314471/>

Developer behind \$2.5B project is eyeing a 'third billion-dollar company' for the site

By Ryan Salchert, Dallas Business Journal

The site of a future \$2.5 billion mixed-use development is getting a lot more press than originally intended.

Two weeks ago, construction crews failed to implode an elevator shaft within a former data center at the corner of N. Central Expressway and Haskell Avenue.

What was left was quickly dubbed "The Leaning Tower of Dallas," causing a social media frenzy locally and becoming a must-visit photo opportunity. Though the attention was short-lived, as the tower is now being demolished, developer [Artemio De La Vega](#) says he will commission a local artist to memorialize the leaning structure.

"That building was the original corporate headquarters for 7-Eleven. When they moved to Cityplace, their IT department stayed because it would have been too expensive to move.

When they eventually did move, [Affiliated Computer Services] went there. They became a multibillion-dollar company. So, think about it. That building has been home to two billion-dollar companies, and now it won't fall. It wants to stay, so we're going to memorialize it," said De La Vega, president and CEO of Dallas-based [De La Vega Development](#).

Though the former data center is no longer standing, much of its infrastructure is still in place, creating an opportunity that De La Vega hopes will attract a third billion-dollar company to the site.

"With the digital infrastructure that's still there and its central location, this development should be of interest to high-tech and web-based companies, like Google and Amazon. We'll be going out to California soon and talking to companies like these," De La Vega said.

If such a tenant can wait until late 2022, an entire 17-story, 350,000-square-foot office tower could be theirs.

The \$2.5 billion development, which is called "The Central," will also feature two hotels, two apartment complexes, green space and 110,000 square feet of retail and restaurants in its first phase. Additionally, the developer is working to get an entrance to the nearby Cityplace DART station to connect to the development.

Office and retail space will break ground first by this fall. The developer and its leasing partner [JLL](#) are already in talks with several first-to-market retail tenants, according to De La Vega. The rest of the project team includes architects BOKA Powell and New York's Perkins-Eastman.

De La Vega's vision for The Central has expanded since the company began buying land in the area three years ago.

What started as a 3 million-square-foot mixed-use project with a \$1 billion price tag eventually grew by 2 million square feet. This was after De La Vega was able to secure an additional 10.5

acres from Trammell Crow Co. along Carroll Avenue. Despite the project's growth, the general idea has stayed the same throughout.

"Early on, we still had a vision to do a campus, a walkable, new generation mixed-use project. We wanted to focus on people's experience. This impacted everything from lighting to design to the programming and activation of the green space," De La Vega said. "I envision people being outside, doing yoga in the morning, throwing a Frisbee during the day and at night, having a large screen up to play movies. We could use a project like this as a city."

This is the most ambitious project De La Vega Development has ever undertaken.

The company has previously developed two mixed-use and retail developments totaling nearly 2 million square feet in El Paso and Lubbock, as well as several smaller retail buildings locally.

The family behind De La Vega Development also founded Grupo De La Vega, which has operations in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez.

To fight huge drop in bus riders, North Texas transit agency faces hard choices about who gets service

The new bus layout coming in 2022 might bring more service to high-demand areas, but it could also modify routes that serve people at their doorsteps.

By Juan Pablo Garnham, The Texas Tribune

Commuters in the historically low-income neighborhood of West Dallas have adapted their morning routines to new bus routes since August. That's when Dallas Area Rapid Transit, North Texas' largest public transit agency, redrew two lines that used to zigzag through the residential area to instead run mainly along major streets farther from many residents' doorsteps.

The new routes led to faster commutes, but also a lot of complaints from the neighborhood that's traditionally been inhabited by black and Hispanic residents.

"Immediately after we implemented the service, we got complaints from senior citizens, low-income people and advocacy groups," said Todd Plesko, DART's vice president of service planning and scheduling. But today more people are actually using the buses.

DART officials say that's because streamlined routes can help people reach more places in less time.

"We were able to increase the number of jobs accessible within 60 minutes by 100,000," Plesko said.

A similar situation may soon play out across the 13 North Texas cities DART serves, where overall bus ridership has declined by a third, from 45 million passenger trips in 2008 to 30 million in 2018. The transit agency is [planning to redesign](#) its entire bus network. But that will come with hard choices: Focus on coverage, which aims to provide at least some service to all areas, or prioritize frequency, which provides more service to high-trafficked areas.

"Something that is characteristic of the Dallas area's transit service is that its network is designed to provide a lot of coverage," said Michelle Poyourow, a consultant with Jarrett Walker and Associates, the firm that DART hired to analyze the system and propose changes. "Almost half [of the network] is designed to provide coverage, not to get high ridership."

What could make those tough choices even more difficult is the fact that many loyal DART riders — in the search for affordable housing — have moved to suburbs and away from the denser urban core, where more frequent routes make more sense.

"Our low-income riders, who are an important component of those people who choose to use transit, they've had to move in many cases," Plesko said. "They're moving to areas along the freeway loops and in neighborhoods where housing is more affordable, but it is also very difficult to serve with transit."

Houston Metro, that region's major transit agency, had a similar challenge five years ago, when it began prioritizing frequency in areas that could [potentially have a lot of commuters](#).

"Here, we got rid of a lot of redundancy and overlapping routes. We got rid of buses that went out of their way to go to places, and this freed up service," said Christof Spieler, an urban planner and former Metro board member.

Austin also redrew its bus map, in 2018, when Capital Metro consolidated routes and increased service in areas of high demand. According to that transit agency, the changes led to 16 consecutive months of increased ridership.

Back in North Texas, Hiireen Jones, who said he has ridden “practically every bus in the city,” would be relieved if DART follows suit. He said lackluster service on existing routes causes delays for riders.

“The customers complain about the buses being late,” said the 38-year-old from Irving. “Today I was late to work like 10 minutes.”

More buses per route means that Jones would have more alternatives if he missed a bus or if a vehicle had mechanical problems. Still, he worried about how DART could let people know about the potential route changes.

“Communicating with people is not something that the company does that much,” Jones said. “I feel they don’t publicize town hall meetings, and there’s not many focus groups or instances where people can come together and make decisions as a whole.”

DART may face some limitations to increasing ridership, though. Jarrett Walker and Associates’ initial analysis shows that DART’s bus system is already simpler and more streamlined than what Houston Metro’s was in 2015.

“There is very little duplication of routes,” Poyourow said. “Everything has a good reason to be there, whether it is a ridership reason or a coverage reason.”

Houston Metro officials tried to redesign their bus network without spending more money. But after the public engagement process, the board increased the funds for bus operations by about \$12 million. But DART officials want to redesign the system without incurring extra costs.

“At this point, unfortunately, a lot of our issues are money issues,” said Jon-Bertrell Killen, board member of DART. “We don’t have a ton of more money right now to deploy. We’ve already purchased all the buses that I think we can afford.”

Jarrett Walker and Associates is developing two proposals. One of them will aim to increase ridership, with straighter and simpler bus routes focused in areas with a lot of commuters.

That proposed system will have more frequent buses throughout the week, including during rush hour. The other proposal will focus on covering as much of the sprawling service area as possible.

“These two concepts will illustrate a spectrum. People don’t have to pick one or the other, they can actually point some place in between, to indicate how DART should make this tradeoff,” Poyourow said.

Both the DART board and riders will be able to provide input on the proposals that will influence the version officials approve. Any modifications would be implemented in early 2022.

“One city may want faster buses that come more frequently, another city may be more interested in making sure that there’s Wi-Fi on the buses or that buses come down to residential

streets,” Killen said. “But in order to get more of one or the other, it does mean to take away from another side.”

The tough choices underscore how public transit agencies already have a hard time luring new riders — and keeping current riders — in regions built primarily for personal vehicles.

While riding the 408-bus route, Jones fantasized about having a choice between taking the bus or his own vehicle.

“I would definitely have a car or a truck. It would help me haul around supplies, and I could do business with it,” he said. “But right now, I can’t afford it.”

Lewisville's Garden Ridge Trail expected to be completed in April

By Community Impact Staff

The city of Lewisville is nearing completion on the construction of a 4.2-mile trail and 3.6-mile bike lane that will be shared with vehicles alongside Garden Ridge Boulevard and South Valley Parkway.

Although the city originally estimated that the project would be completed in February, officials say the project is now on track to be finished in April due to weather delays.

The 12-foot-wide trail is designed to connect Highlands Park to Garden Ridge Boulevard. It will also serve as a connector between the Denton County Transportation Authority station in Highland Village and the Municipal Annex.

The city got a grant for the project from the Texas Department of Transportation and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. A local match of \$506,118 was required, as was any amount exceeding the initial estimate of \$2.1 million.

Timeline: August 2015-April 2020

Cost: \$2.6 million

Funding sources: TxDOT, NCTCOG, city of Lewisville

Dallas' Growth Demands a Dialogue on Density

On a purely economic basis, density is much more efficient, says StreetLights Residential SVP Bob Voelker. Here's why.

By Bob Voelker, D Magazine

Over the last decade, we have added over a million new residents to Dallas-Fort Worth. There is no debate over Dallas' continued expansion—the question is not whether we need to continue to build to meet this demand, but how are we going to build our city?

Will we craft urban environments that address the human scale of the city, or continue to build-out low-density residential forms over larger areas, expanding our automobile dependence and stressing our public infrastructure and tax base? Will we densify in the inner core, or do we need to annex Oklahoma?

The great cities of the world that we all love to visit have common qualities: they are walkable and bikeable, places to see and be seen—sit at roadside bistros, and people watch around public squares. Being in the development business, we hear from our neighbors that they want walkable retail and restaurants, they just don't want traffic and density.

Yet, by definition, you can't have walkable places if too few customers live within walking distance. Retail and restaurant owners want maximum purchasing power in their trade area.

If there are not enough people within walking distance, the result is drive-to establishments, which increase traffic and congestion and further erode the people scale experience.

If we deny density, we instead spread out people and places into separated zones of development, forcing everyone to drive, increasing the dominance of the car over people and places alike.

On a purely economic basis, density is much more efficient. I live in a high-rise luxury apartment building that sits on 1.33 acres, just outside Highland Park. The tax appraised value of our building is over \$100 million. A typical Highland Park house sits on approximately 7,500 square feet of land and possibly valued at around \$2.2 million. You could fit eight Highland Park houses on our 1.33 acres—or a value of 8 x \$2.2 million, or \$17.6 million in single-family houses.

Our apartment building on the same land generates almost six times the tax value and tax revenue as those eight houses. And larger scale development needs less municipal funding as the need for roads, parking spaces, water lines, sewer lines, and other public infrastructure and services are condensed. The result is fewer residences per mile requiring less infrastructure and with substantially more revenue.

The benefits of density need to be considered at both the individual and societal levels, including accounting for quality of life impacts.

Although at the individual level suburban low-density housing in the abstract may be cheaper (often referred to as “drive until you qualify”), the math is much more complicated when you factor in housing location externalities including added transportation costs; reduced time with family and friends or working out (vs. walkable and bikeable neighborhoods that promote health and human interaction); traffic-related stress; increased utility costs from single-family homes with four walls, a foundation; a roof; etc.

Society as a whole also carries a burden from low density, spread out housing—higher cost per person for roads and utility lines and parking spaces; more pollution; global warming; more traffic and congestion; lower worker productivity; and lower property tax values per acre and student. These externalities are all born by society, and mostly not by the individual choosing to live farther from work.

On an ethereal level, the density of the built environment allows more experiential intersection moments—with people, buildings, bicycles, dogs, sounds, smells, designs—heightening our sense of wonder and excitement. Walk along the Katy Trail on a pretty Saturday or visit Knox Street or West Village on a Friday night, and you get a real feel for these intangible benefits (a European feel) of living in a more compact urban area.

It is time for Dallas to have a serious dialogue about these hidden costs of sprawl and consider the real individual and societal benefits of high quality, denser urban form. We could all use more great places that lift our human spirit daily.

Trinity Metro authorized to use \$39M for expansion to Medical District

Fort Worth Business Press Staff

Federal funding announced for TEXRail extension

U.S. Rep. Kay Granger, R-Fort Worth, announced Feb. 28 that Trinity Metro is authorized to use remaining federal funds from the TEXRail project for an extension of the commuter rail line.

The 27-mile route was completed on time and \$80.6 million under budget, with roughly half of those funds coming from federal and half from local, Trinity Metro said in a news release.

The \$38.9 million in federal funds can now be used to extend TEXRail another 2.1 miles from the Fort Worth T&P Station to a new station in the Medical District.

In 2016, Trinity Metro and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the United States Department of Transportation signed a \$499.39 million Full Funding Grant Agreement for the \$1.034 billion TEXRail project.

The new station will be located behind Baylor Scott & White All Saints Medical Center, by the Mistletoe neighborhood.

"The Fort Worth Medical District is an ideal location for the next station because of the 40,000 people who work and visit that area. Extending TEXRail is perfect for medical professionals, patients and visitors," said Trinity Metro President and CEO Bob Baulsir.

"As the economy of the Fort Worth area continues to boom, North Texans deserve infrastructure that keeps pace with our region's rapid development. Five years ago, I advocated strongly on behalf of Trinity Metro to secure a \$500 million grant to build TEXRail, a 26.8-mile commuter rail line extending from downtown Fort Worth across Tarrant County, through North Richland Hills and Grapevine, into the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

"Last January, TEXRail opened not only on time, but also \$80.6 million under budget. While unspent federal funds are typically used for other projects across the U.S., I strongly supported Trinity Metro's application to use \$38.9 million of leftover grant funds to extend TEXRail by 2.1 miles into the Fort Worth Medical District, even personally urging Acting FTA Administrator Jane Williams to approve the request. TEXRail's expansion into the Fort Worth Medical District will improve quality of life and access to health care services, an especially significant win for our District's lower-income residents.

"We appreciate the FTA for allowing us to use the unspent funds toward expanding our TEXRail line," Trinity Metro Board Chairman Jeff Davis said in the news release. "The support of Kay Granger and our other congressional delegates has meant the world to us."

A timeline for the extension has not been determined. Baulsir said the first steps will be to define the scope and to undergo a competitive process of bids.

TEXRail began operating in January 2019, and the existing route runs between downtown Fort Worth and the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport's Terminal B. The line has nine stations in Fort Worth, North Richland Hills and Grapevine.

Local partners expected to pony up \$5M as part of \$20M Panther Island bridge overruns

By Marice Richter, Fort Worth Business Press

A plan moving forward to cover the \$20 million cost overruns of the three Panther Island bridges will require local partners in the \$1.17 billion project to ante up \$5 million.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Council, the governing body for North Texas transportation projects, is expected to vote on the plan on March 12. A public meeting on March 9 is an opportunity for citizens to comment on the proposal.

Michael Morris, director of transportation for the Council of Governments, proposed that the Regional Transportation Council reimburse the Texas Department of Transportation for the \$19.4 million the agency paid the contractor, Sterling Construction of Houston, for cost overruns, largely due to design challenges.

TxDOT officials paid the contractor in December, records show, for the cost overruns. Bridge construction, which has dragged on beyond the original completion date of 2018, has been riddled with delays, a spokesman for the contractor has said repeatedly.

Morris told the Fort Worth City Council last month that the cost of the bridges has escalated by \$19.4 million from \$69.9 million to \$89.3 million.

The Panther Island project partners, which include Tarrant County and the Tarrant Regional Water District along with the city of Fort Worth, have steadfastly maintained that the cost of the bridges was fully covered and that no extra payments would be made until the bridge construction was complete.

The city of Fort Worth and TxDOT have shared oversight of the bridges since two of the bridges, North Main and Henderson, are part of the state highway system. White Settlement Road is a city street.

"TxDOT paid their contractor to resolve all issues and expedite completion of the bridges," Morris stated in an email. "I publicly thanked them for that."

But Morris said the RTC is being asked to cover \$20 million to cover "aggregate impact of all issues to complete the bridges."

Morris said the staff recommendation to cover the \$20 million is a \$15 million grant and \$5 million from the local partners to be repaid over 10 years. The upfront money will come from a federal transportation block grant and the state.

The local agencies' \$5 million share will be included in a loan agreement and will be approved along with the funding request by the RTC.

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee, a group of 80 members who are mostly city engineers as well as technical staffers from the area, endorsed the plan during a meeting on Feb. 28.

The payment for overruns comes at a critical time for the Panther Island project as the coordinating agency, the Trinity River Vision Authority, has run out of money and is issuing commercial paper bonds to pay critical bills.

The partnering agencies were hoping for about \$10 million in a federal appropriation through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to go toward designing the channel on the Trinity River north of downtown Fort Worth to replace old levees and create Panther Island.

Instead, the partners learned early last month that was allocated \$1.5 million to be matched with local money for a feasibility study. The details of that study have yet to be released but the study could take several years to complete.

The local partners have invested about \$330 million in the Panther Island project and the Army Corps has green-lighted spending \$526 million in federal funds on it.

The project has received about \$68 million in federal funds so far but none in the past three years.

But the project has become a central part of the biting primary battle between longtime incumbent U.S. Rep. Kay Granger and challenger Chris Putnam, a wealthy businessman and conservative activist from Colleyville.

Granger has been the champion of this project all along and her role as senior ranking member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee provides a perfect perch to shepherd a massive development such as this.

"The Panther Island project is an unmitigated disaster," said Karin Dyer, campaign manager for Putnam. "Fourteen years and \$400 million later, it is still in the design phase with three broken bridges standing on dry ground, and the Trump administration has cut off funding. We've lost businesses and people have lost their homes and property to eminent domain." Granger's campaign did not provide a comment.

Businesses along White Settlement Road have been especially impacted since there is no work-around detour to connect that road to downtown Fort Worth. It is expected to be the first of the three bridges to be completed late this year, according to the most recent schedule.

The Henderson and North Main Street bridges are expected to be finished by the end of 2021.

Mayor Betsy Price has been extremely outspoken about bridge construction delays.

"If they're not (completed on time) my big boot is going to be on somebody's backside," she remarked during her Feb. 28 State of the City address.

She also announced that efforts are underway to explore a public/private partnership to develop the area designated as Panther Island.

Morris has said he expected from the start that the bridges to cost about \$90 million due to the complex and unique design that is being carried out for the first time.

The March 9 public meeting will be at 6 p.m. at the Council of Governments office, 616 Six Flags Dr., Arlington. The RTC meeting will be at 1 p.m. March 12 at the same location.



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Brian Wilson
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GoCarma Technology App Provides Simpler Way to Qualify for HOV Discount

TEXpress users to switch smartphone apps beginning Jan. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Jan. 13, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) – Those who travel on Dallas-Fort Worth area TEXpress Lanes will soon have a simple, new way to qualify for high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) toll discounts.

The Dallas-Fort Worth area's TEXpress Lane System was established to enable users of some of the region's most highly traveled roadways to reach their destinations more reliably. On these roadways, drivers can either choose to pay a variable toll for the ability to travel at least 50 mph on the TEXpress Lanes, or they can use the general-purpose lanes for no additional charge.

The Regional Transportation Council established policies that provide a toll discount for HOV vehicles on TEXpress Lanes during weekday peak periods (6:30-9:00 a.m. and 3:00-6:30 p.m.) and 24/7 on IH 635 from IH 30 to US 75. The discount is currently implemented through an app-based pre-declaration method, *Drive On TEXpress*, and enforced manually through police officers in the field.

Beginning Jan. 24 at 6:30 p.m., the *GoCarma* smartphone app will replace *Drive On TEXpress*, ensuring road users will no longer need to activate their HOV status prior to each trip.

GoCarma uses Bluetooth technology to automatically verify travelers in a carpool. As long as at least two people in the vehicle install the *GoCarma* app or have an occupant pass, they will not need to interact with the app after setup. It's that easy.

Drive On TEXpress users are invited to switch to *GoCarma* prior to the January 24 6:30 p.m. launch and can pre-register today at www.gocarma.com/dfw. The *GoCarma* app is available for FREE in the App Store and on Google Play.

Dallas-Fort Worth is the fourth-largest region in the nation, with a population of approximately 7.5 million. Innovative solutions such as TEXpress Lanes, intended to provide residents with travel choices, are helping transportation planners develop a transportation system that will meet the needs of the region as it continues rapid expansion.

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About Carma Technology Corporation:

Carma Technology Corporation (Carma) is the provider of *GoCarma*, a smartphone app that automatically verifies vehicle occupancy. For more than a decade, Carma has been a trusted partner of government agencies in fighting traffic congestion by rewarding high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) travel. From launching the first ridesharing smartphone app in 2008, to verifying millions of passenger trips, Carma's patented and proven technology helps people to save time and money on their commute. The GoCarma app automatically verifies HOV status, enabling commuters to qualify for HOV toll discounts without needing to declare it prior to each trip.

About TEXpress Lanes:

The TEXpress Lanes system is all about choice, predictable travel speeds and congestion relief. Currently, there are more than 100 miles of TEXpress Lanes that form a network within the North Texas region. Managed to reduce congestion and keep traffic flowing, these toll express lanes use variable pricing in which tolls fluctuate based on real-time traffic conditions in the lanes. They offer drivers more choice in their daily commutes, located across eight major Dallas-Fort Worth corridors including I-635, I-35E, Loop 820 and SH 121/183, I-35W, I-30, SH 114, SH 183 and Loop 12. For more info about the TEXpress Lanes, visit <https://www.texpres lanes.com>

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PRESS RELEASE

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HTML:

<https://nctcog.org/trans/about/news/current-press-releases/nctcog-accepting-online-input-on-transportation-in>

NCTCOG Accepting Online Input on Transportation Initiatives

Online comment period open through Feb.11

Jan. 14, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) — The North Central Texas Council of Governments is conducting an online public input opportunity to allow residents to comment on transportation and air quality initiatives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Patrons are encouraged to provide input at www.nctcog.org/input through Feb. 11.

Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2020 and FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program will be posted for review. The UPWP for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality tasks to be conducted by NCTCOG.

Additionally, due to the passing of House Bill 2840, members of the public can now provide their input during Regional Transportation Council meetings. Staff will provide an overview of this process and post the draft rules for review and comment through Feb. 26. Since this is being added to NCTCOG's Public Participation Plan, it requires a 45-day comment period.

Finally, information on electric vehicle incentives, Texas Emissions Reduction Plan funding, Clean Fleets North Texas 2019 Calls for Projects and Mobility Plan administrative revisions will be available.

To request printed copies of the presentations, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

How to submit comments and questions:

Email: transinfo@nctcog.org
Website: www.nctcog.org/input
Phone: 817-695-9240
Fax: 817-640-3028
Mail: P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005

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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, 167 cities, 19 school districts and 27 special districts. For more information on the Transportation Department, visit [NCTCOG.org/trans](https://www.nctcog.org/trans).

For more news from the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/about/news>.

About the Regional Transportation Council:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. The RTC's 44 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at www.nctcog.org.

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PRESS RELEASE

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Want to Learn More About How Drones Can Help You?

Workshop will help owners navigate rules, safely fly emerging class of aircraft

Jan. 16, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) — Like many North Texans, you may have received a drone as gifts this holiday season. Maybe you're finding drones more useful for business or emergency response.

Perhaps you are considering pursuing a career in the industry.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is hosting the first of a series of drone workshops from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, January 18 at its Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive.

UAS professionals and FAA industry experts will address FAA rules and regulations for drones, how to register drones, tips on operation and pre-flight planning best practices and potential remote identification rules. Attendees, ranging from those that have never flown a drone to the professional drone operators wanting to practice safe operations, will learn about the FAA Know Before You Fly campaign and policies.

"Growing in popularity and significance in our daily living, it has become imperative that North Texans be aware of regulations, best practices and where to safely fly their drones," said Adrian Doko, president of the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, Lone Star Chapter.

In North Texas alone, there are more than 20,000 registered UAS, whether by hobbyists, first responders or businesses. And there are career opportunities for ages 16 and older.

Over the next two years, NCTCOG will partner with cities, universities and other interested parties to host 12 free drone workshops across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. For information on locations, times and dates, visit www.northtexasuas.com. To register for the next workshop please visit <https://knowbeforeyoufly.eventbrite.com>.

NCTCOG has been working with partners on issues related to this evolving technology. The workshops are currently being sponsored by various UAS industry stakeholders and are supported by the North Texas UAS Safety and Integration Task Force.

The taskforce was organized to serve as an information "clearinghouse" for academia, public- and private-sector entities and the general public.

To address integration issues and carry out solutions, the task force has formed working groups focused on education and public awareness, legislation, training and integration.

DETAILS

WHO: Recreational and licensed drone operators

WHAT: Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshop

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 18

WHERE: North Central Texas Council of Governments, 616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington

WHY: Encourage UAS safety best practices and open a dialog between local users and the North Texas UAS Safety and Integration Task Force as a conduit for resources within the community.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: Drone simulators used for training to become licensed; display of drone technology

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PRESS RELEASE

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Transit Agencies to Begin Surveys to Gauge Demand, Meet Needs

Region's bus, train riders asked to provide input to improve system

Jan. 27, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) – The first phase of a regionwide transit survey will begin Feb. 3. Dallas Area Rapid Transit, McKinney Avenue Transit Authority and Trinity Railway Express passengers are being asked to help planners determine the demand on the system.

Funded through a partnership between the North Central Texas Council of Governments, DART, Denton County Transportation Authority and Trinity Metro, the surveys will be conducted in two phases.

The first survey is an on-to-off survey that will attempt to measure demand. Upon boarding, riders on the larger DART bus routes (at least 1,000 riders per day) will be handed cards by surveyors wearing blue vests. Riders will return the cards when they get off the bus. On DART and TRE trains, passengers will simply be asked at what station they will get off. The M-Line Trolley will also be included in this survey.

A subsequent interview survey will be conducted involving DART, MATA, Dallas Streetcar and TRE passengers beginning Feb. 24 to collect information about their trips, the fare and demographics. In most cases, this will occur through an interview by the surveyors. On express routes, passengers will be asked to fill out a paper questionnaire. Testing of the interview survey begins on a limited number of DART bus and rail routes during the week of Jan. 27.

DCTA and Trinity Metro riders will be surveyed later this year. Riders of Trinity Metro and DCTA vehicles can expect to be asked to participate in the on-to-off survey after Labor Day and the interview survey later in the fall.

The surveys are voluntary, and answers will be kept confidential. Questions regarding the passengers' starting locations and destinations will provide details about why people are choosing transit and paint a picture of how the system is used. The survey information will allow transit agencies to better address demand and to plan future transit needs.

Dallas-Fort Worth is the fourth-largest region in the nation, with a population of 7.5 million and is expected to grow to more than 11 million by 2045.

"As our region continues to grow, transportation choices are becoming more important so we can adequately serve the needs of people who live, work and go to school in North Texas. Our growing transit system is one of those choices people use every day to reach their destinations," said Arash Mirzaei, a NCTCOG senior program manager. "The transit survey collects a sample of trip and user characteristics every five years. The data is collected through voluntary participation by the transit users. What we learn through the analysis of this data is essential in providing equitable and effective transit services in the region."

The 2020 transit survey schedule is as follows:

- Jan. 27 – Survey pilot test
- Feb. 3 – DART, MATA and TRE start on-to-off survey
- Feb. 24 – DART, Dallas Streetcar, MATA and TRE interview survey begins
- After Labor Day – On-to-off survey begins on Trinity Metro and DCTA vehicles
- Fall 2020 – Interview survey begins on Trinity Metro and DCTA vehicles

For more information about the survey, visit www.nctcog.org/transitsurvey2020.

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PRESS RELEASE

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Relaunched Ride-Matching Program Offers More Functionality

Improvements to Try Parking It make it easier to find ride matches, track commutes

Feb. 11, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) – Try Parking It, North Texas' alternative-commute resource, has been relaunched, offering an updated website and mobile app.

The new TryParkingIt.com continues to assist users in locating rideshare matches and providing the ability to record alternative commute trips. Commuters are still eligible to win new incentive rewards. But there are now improved functionalities that ensure a more personalized and seamless experience.

Previously, residents who vanpooled, carpooled, biked, walked or took transit, had to manually track their commute alternatives for each trip. Now, reoccurring trips can be automatically recorded, so they don't have to be entered each time. This saves valuable time and can lead to more accurate records, since users no longer have to manually record each trip.

The Try Parking It program also offers a mobile app, allowing users to participate wherever they are located. Users also can sign up for text or email alerts.

The previous app must be deleted and the new one downloaded before users are able to experience the increased functionality. The app provides users with an additional means to access Try Parking It, and many of the same functionalities exist on the app as are present on the website.

Whether recorded on the website or app, each alternative commute tracked earns points toward an expanded list of rewards, including contest drawings, dining, shopping, events and services. For establishing a new account, users of the app and website are instantly rewarded 1,000 points. Earned points can be redeemed immediately or are available for later use.

Try Parking It is to be utilized by all commuters. Users are also encouraged to track commute activity for other instances such as shopping and dining. You can even record physical activity, such as bicycling, walking and running. Users of the Strava and Under Armour fitness apps can directly sync their activities with Try Parking It. This removes the user from having to also record activity tracked by these apps in Try Parking It. This feature is enabled when people are actively traveling.

An agreement with Enterprise to maintain vanpool information offers a more accurate and timely listing of available vanpools for Try Parking It users. This listing will be automatically updated and ensures that a current listing of vanpools is readily available to users.

To get started, visit TryParkingIt.com or download the FREE Try Parking It app from the App Store or on Google Play. Try Parking It has allowed residents to track their alternative commutes for more than 10 years.

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REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Rules for Public Comment

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) hereby establishes reasonable rules regarding the public's right to address the Council at open meetings consistent with the Texas Open Meetings Act. The intent of these rules is to hear the views of the public prior to the RTC considering items. These rules also promote an orderly and fair process through which public comments may be received by the RTC.

Public Comment

At every open meeting of the RTC, opportunity will be provided at the beginning of the meeting for members of the public to address the RTC regarding any item(s) on the agenda for consideration. Persons are permitted up to three (3) minutes to speak. A person addressing the RTC through a translator will be provided up to six (6) minutes. A timer will be visible to the speaker and indicate the amount of time remaining. Speakers shall conclude their comments prior to or upon expiration of the time. In the event a large number of speakers are present, the RTC may encourage large delegations to have one person speak for the group or impose reasonable time limits per individual that are more restrictive; if a delegation chooses to select a spokesperson to represent the entire delegation, the spokesperson will be provided up to five (5) minutes to speak or ten (10) minutes if the spokesperson is addressing the RTC through a translator.

Persons requesting translation services, to be provided by the RTC, must do so at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the posted meeting time.

Speaker Registration

Persons who wish to speak must complete and return to staff a registration card prior to the start of the RTC meeting. Registration cards are printed on yellow paper, available in the RTC meeting room and must, at a minimum, include the following information:

1. Speaker's name;
2. City of residence;
3. Zip code;
4. Agenda item(s) on which the speaker plans to speak;
5. Indication of whether speaking on/for/against agenda item(s); and
6. Any other information requested by RTC staff.

Speaker Warning and Removal

The RTC Chair will provide a notice to a speaker whose time has expired. The RTC reserves the right to have speakers removed from the meeting room in the event they become disruptive or make threatening, profane or otherwise inappropriate remarks.

Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings (HB 2840) Rules

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MARCH 12, 2020

AMANDA WILSON, AICP



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Overview of HB 2840

Members of the public must be allowed to make comments to a governmental body before or during the body's consideration of an item

A governmental body may adopt reasonable rules regarding public comments, including rules that limit the amount of time for each public comment

If no simultaneous translation equipment is used, a member of the public using a translator must be given double the amount of time to comment

A governmental body may not prohibit public criticism of the body

Bill took effect on September 1, 2019

Draft Rules

Single public comment period, following the pledges, before any action items

Public comments will be taken on any agenda item

Establishes a 3-minute time limit; 6-minute time limit if using a translator

Large delegations may be encouraged to have one spokesperson speak for the group; in this case a 5-minute time limit is provided (10 minutes if using a translator)

Translation will be provided by RTC, if requested, 72 hours in advance

Provisions for warning speakers if time exhausted or removal, if necessary

Draft Rules, continued

Speaker Request Card must be completed prior to the start of the RTC meeting

Speakers must provide the following information:

- Name
- City of Residence
- Zip Code
- Agenda item(s) on which the speaker plans to speak
- Indication if speaking on/for/against the agenda item(s)
- Any other information requested by RTC staff

Opportunity to provide written comments rather than speak at the meeting

Additional Items

Benchmarked local governments on a number of topics

RTC Rules will be added to Public Participation Plan as an appendix when adopted; will be added to RTC Bylaws when next updated (2022)

Considered room layout, personnel and technology needs to effectively implement the public comments

Information will be provided on the RTC website regarding the public comment opportunity, as well as ability to request translation

Comments received will be documented in RTC minutes

Written comments will be provided to RTC prior to item consideration; individuals may state only for/against an item and that will be provided to the RTC at the end of the comment period

Schedule

Milestone	Date
Draft Rules Presented to RTC for Information (Action to Take to Public Input Opportunity)	January 9, 2020
Public Input Opportunity (45-Day Comment Period)	January 13-February 26, 2020
STTC Information Item	January 24, 2020
STTC Action Item	February 28, 2020
RTC Action Item	March 12, 2020

Action Requested

Approve Rules for Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings (Electronic Item 5.1).

Questions/Comments

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TRINITY RIVER VISION BRIDGE

**Regional Transportation Council
March 12, 2020**

Michael Morris, P.E.

**Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

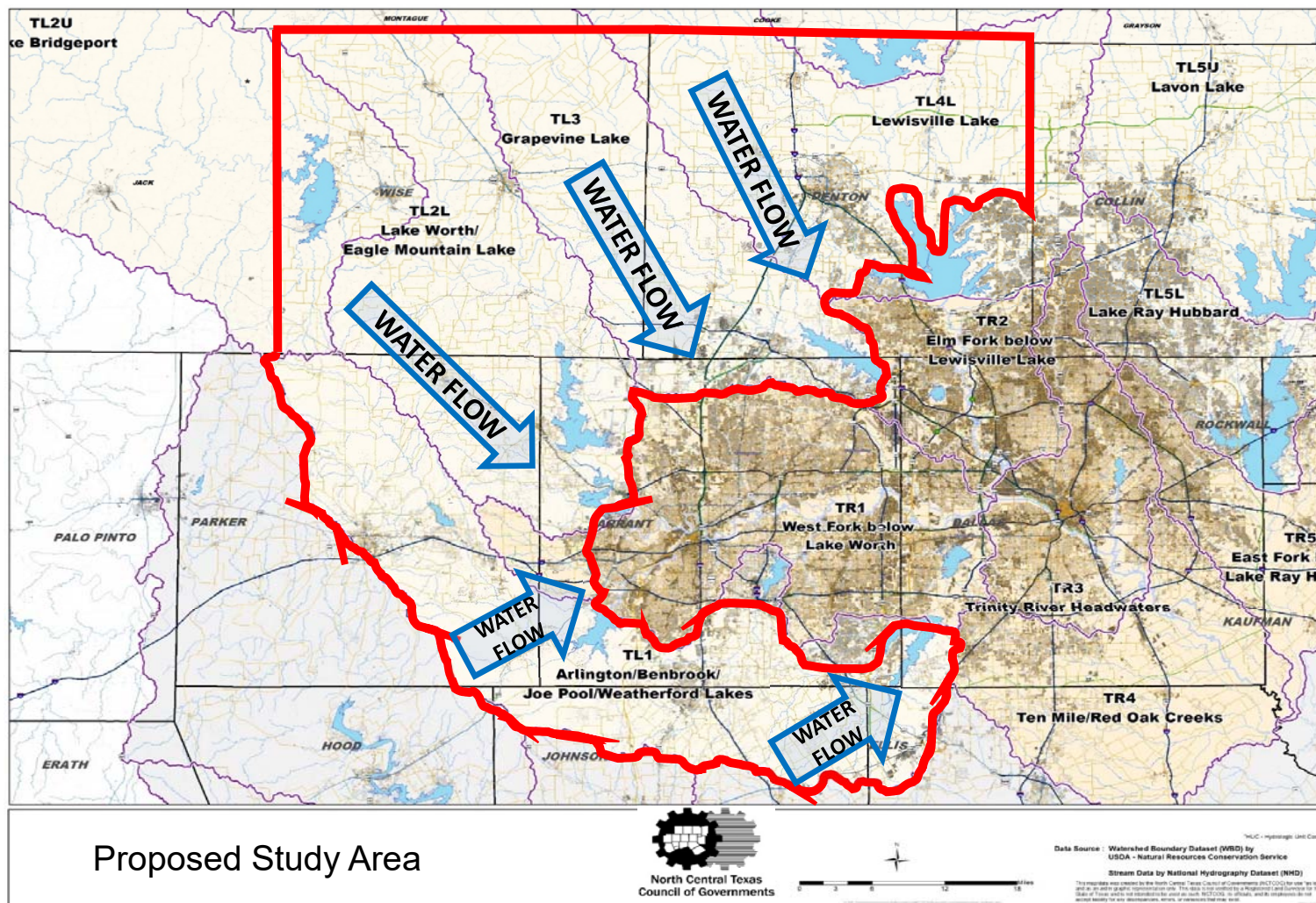


A nighttime architectural rendering of a modern bridge over a river. The bridge features a series of white, V-shaped piers that are illuminated from below with blue light. The bridge deck is dark, and the railing is visible. Several tall, white, modern light poles with multiple starburst lights are positioned along the bridge. In the foreground, a paved walkway runs alongside the river, with a person standing and looking towards the bridge. Trees and foliage are visible on the right side of the walkway.

Trinity River Vision Bridge Projects

**Additional Funding Request and Loan
Agreement with the City of Fort Worth**

WHERE: Greater Focus on Vulnerable Area



Storms Exceeding Infrastructure and NFIP Standards

Regional observed storms

USACE extreme storm database

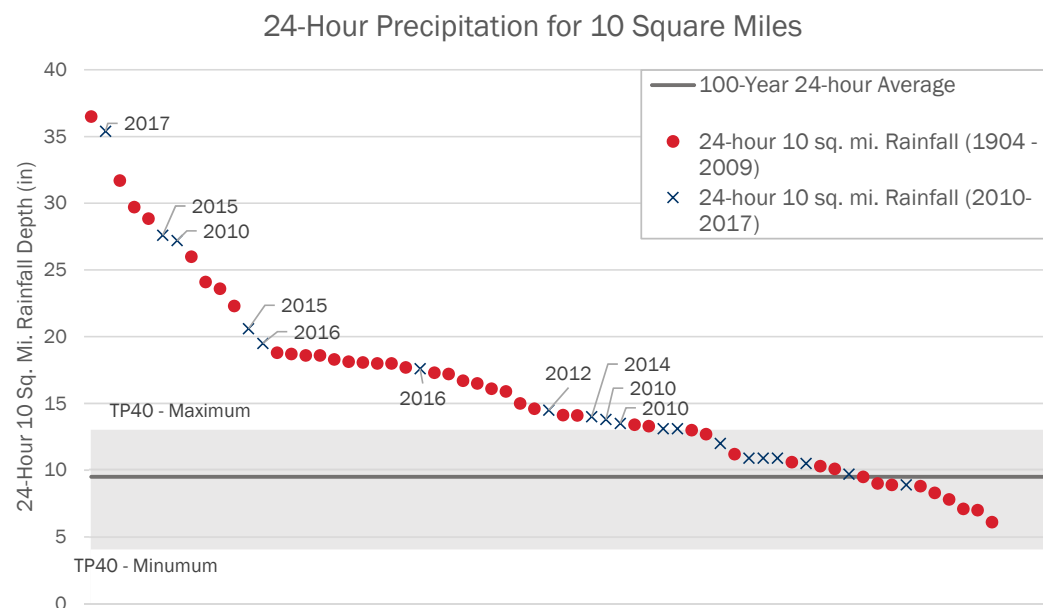
24-hour rainfall for 10 mi²

Plotted in descending order

Grey band is current design standard (100-year) for all of TX

Blue X's points are 2010-2017 storms that exceed 100-year

18 events exceeded the 100-yr design standard



Background

The Panther Island Central City Flood Project is the planned construction of a 1.5 mile bypass channel of the Trinity River to control flooding north of downtown Fort Worth. The project will create two islands, collectively known as Panther Island.

One of the key features of the project are the signature bridges on Henderson Street, N. Main Street, and White Settlement Road.

The RTC was originally involved in funding three bridges with a variety of federal, state, regional, and local funding sources



Project Location

While the original bid came in under the funded amount, constructability issues the resulting project delays have created a cost overrun

The RTC has been asked to help pay for the increase.



TRV Bridge Project Financial Status

Original Funding	\$69.9 million
Projected Cost	\$89.3 million
Current Project Overrun	\$19.4 million

Source: TxDOT - 2/13/2020

Action Being Considered

Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to:

Provide an additional \$20 million to cover the cost overrun

- \$15 million is a grant

- City of Fort Worth and other local partners will pay back \$5 million over 10 years

DRAFT

**RESOLUTION ON THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S PROPOSED
UPDATES TO THE 2020 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
(R20-02)**

WHEREAS, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and has been and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for the approval of transportation projects and policies in the region's long-range transportation plan (Mobility 2045) pursuant to its federal responsibilities under Title 23 of the United States Code; and,

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2020, the Texas Transportation Commission (Commission) was briefed on potential updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to address a \$4.34 billion funding gap for the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project which would add two non-tolled managed lanes and one frontage road lane in each direction from US 290E to US 290W/SH 171; and,

WHEREAS, to address the \$4.34 billion funding gap, the Commission proposes to allocate \$3.4 billion in Commission Strategic Priority and Texas Clear Lanes funds (Category 12), reprioritize \$600 million in existing Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funds allocated to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/Austin District; and include an additional \$300 million in Category 12 funds in the 2021 UTP; and,

WHEREAS, TxDOT will be holding a public meeting on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP on March 12, 2020, at 4:00 pm at each TxDOT District office and via WebEx; and,

WHEREAS, TxDOT's public comment period for the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP will be open from March 13-April 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, TxDOT will be holding a public hearing on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP on April 7, 2020, at 10:00 am at a location to be determined in Austin; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission is scheduled to take action on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP at its regular meeting on April 30, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC has a long-standing partnership with the Commission and TxDOT on advancing major transportation projects and as such has an interest in providing feedback to the Commission on its proposed changes to the 2020 UTP.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. The RTC supports the Texas Transportation Commission's efforts to advance needed major capital improvements to the IH 35 corridor in the central Austin area as a high-priority project for the State of Texas. The

DRAFT

RTC recommends the Commission consider alternate mechanisms to fund the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project that would permit additional high-priority statewide and regional projects to advance in parallel. The RTC only supports Plan B.

Section 2. The RTC requests the Commission review successful managed lanes projects (IH 635, North Tarrant Express) implemented by TxDOT in the Dallas-Fort Worth region as examples of projects that leveraged scarce public-sector funds to build major transportation projects creating reliable travel times and significant congestion relief.

Section 3. The RTC directs staff to provide comments to the Commission during the open comment period, public meetings and public hearings on the proposed revisions to the 2020 UTP in the form of this resolution, the attached presentation (Attachment 1), and video presentation. Plan B is presented in this material.

Section 4. This resolution shall be transmitted to the members of the Texas Transportation Commission, the members of the North Texas legislative delegation, metropolitan planning organizations in the State of Texas, private-sector leadership groups, and other interested stakeholders.

Section 5. This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

Andy Eads, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Denton County

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on March 12, 2020.

Theresa Daniel, Ph.D., Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Commissioner, Dallas County

DRAFT

IH 35 AUSTIN: PRESENTATION OF PLAN B

2020, 2021 Unified Transportation Program

Michael Morris, PE
Director of Transportation
March 6, 2020



OVERVIEW

DRAFT

Purpose

DFW Background

Main Street, Austin, Texas

Comment

PURPOSE: PROPOSED REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ACTION

DRAFT

COMMISSION PLAN A

Correct Project
Wrong Approach

PLAN B

WIN for Neighborhoods
WIN for Users
WIN for Other Texas Urban Areas
WIN for Rural Texas

DRAFT

IH635 “NO HIGHER, NO WIDER”

GOAL:

Neighborhood Preservation from User Revenue to Build More Expensive Roadway

Impacting Party Pays: Wins with Guaranteed Speeds

Neighborhood Wins from Depressed/Stacked Facility

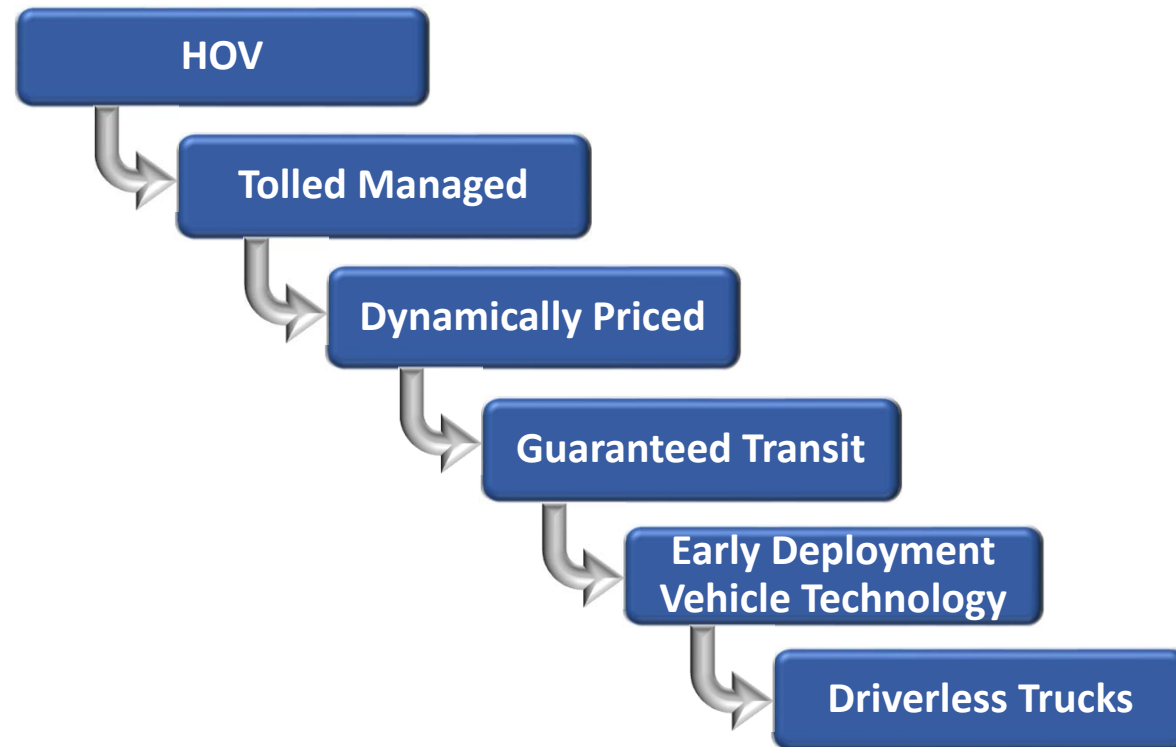
Freeway Users Helping Neighborhood

Need Revenue for Gentrification Policy

Non-Tolled Frontage Road (<i>lanes</i>)	6
Non-Tolled Freeway (<i>lanes</i>)	8
Tolled Managed Lanes	6
Percent Freeway Lanes Non-Tolled	57%
Percent Lanes Non-Tolled	70%

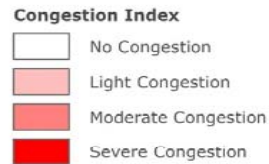
MANAGED LANES EVOLUTION

DRAFT

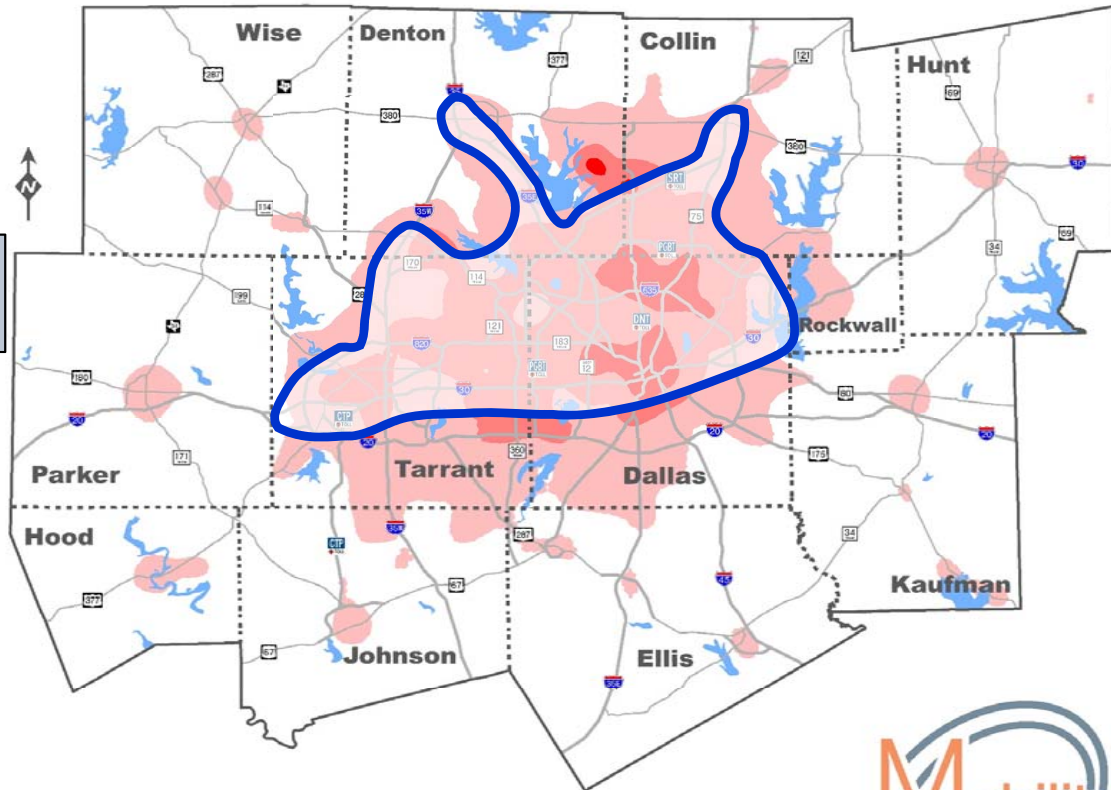


TOLL MANAGED LANE SYSTEM POLICY BOUNDARY

2018 Levels of Congestion/Delay



Within Boundary – Year 2018
13% Land Area
79% Vehicle Hours of Congestion Delay



Cost of Congestion/Delay: \$11.9 billion

Congestion Index is based on a percent increase in travel time.

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION

DRAFT

	Current Level	Projected Congestion Level Next Million Population	Congestion Per Million
DFW	18%	24%	6
Austin	25%	39%	14
Houston	23%	31%	8
San Antonio	17%	28%	11

2021 UTP GRANDFATHER S.H. 183 “2E”: NO CAT. 12

DRAFT

Non-Tolled Freeways:	\$162M
Missing Tolled Managed Lane	\$860M
Additional Revenue Paid to TxDOT	<u>\$270M</u>
	\$1,292M

MAIN STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS (I.H. 35 from SH 45N to SH 45S)

DRAFT

	Commission Plan A	Plan B
Distance (<i>miles</i>)	27	27
Non-Tolled Frontage Road (<i>lanes</i>)	6	6
Non-Tolled Freeway (<i>lanes</i>)	8	8
Non-Tolled Express	4	0
Tolled Express	0	4
Percent Freeway Lanes Non-Tolled	100%	67%
Percent All Lanes Non-Tolled	100%	80%
\$ For Other Non-Tolled Projects	\$0 ¹	\$4.3B

¹ Revenue from DFW $\approx$ \$1B

FUNDS

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	Commission Plan A	Plan B
Currently Funded	\$1.9B	\$1.9B
Plan A New Funds (2020)	\$3.4B	0
Austin MPO Transfer (from Debts)	\$0.6B	0
Plan A New Funds (2021)	\$0.3B	0
Unfunded Local Government (Context Sensitive Design)	\$1.8B	0
Managed Lane Funds (Local)	0	\$8.0B
Total	\$8.0B	\$9.9B
Assistance from Rest of the State	≈ 75%	0
Impact to DFW	\$1.0B	0

DRAFT

IMPLICATIONS

	Commission Plan A	Plan B
Meet Long Term Mobility Needs	No	Yes
Guaranteed Speeds	No	Yes
Reliability	No	Yes
Choice Lanes	No	Yes
Guaranteed Transit	No	Yes
Technology Lanes	No	Yes
Gentrification Funding	No	Yes
Context Sensitive Design	No	Yes
35-I30 System	No	Yes
Construction Reliability	No	Yes
Build \$4.3B Statewide	No	Yes

COMMENT

DRAFT

COMMISSION PLAN A

Correct Project
Wrong Approach

PLAN B

WIN for Neighborhoods
WIN for Users
WIN for Other Texas Urban Areas
WIN for Rural Texas

TxDOT UTP SCHEDULE

DRAFT

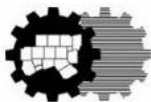
March 12, 2020:	PUBLIC MEETING
March 13 – April 13, 2020:	PUBLIC COMMENTS
April 7, 2020:	Public Hearing
April 30, 2020:	Commission Meeting

EMAIL:	UTP-PUBLICCOMMENTS@txdot.gov
TELEPHONE:	800-687-8108
US MAIL:	UTP-Peter Smith P.O. BOX 149217 AUSTIN, TX 78714-9217

2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DRAFT LISTINGS

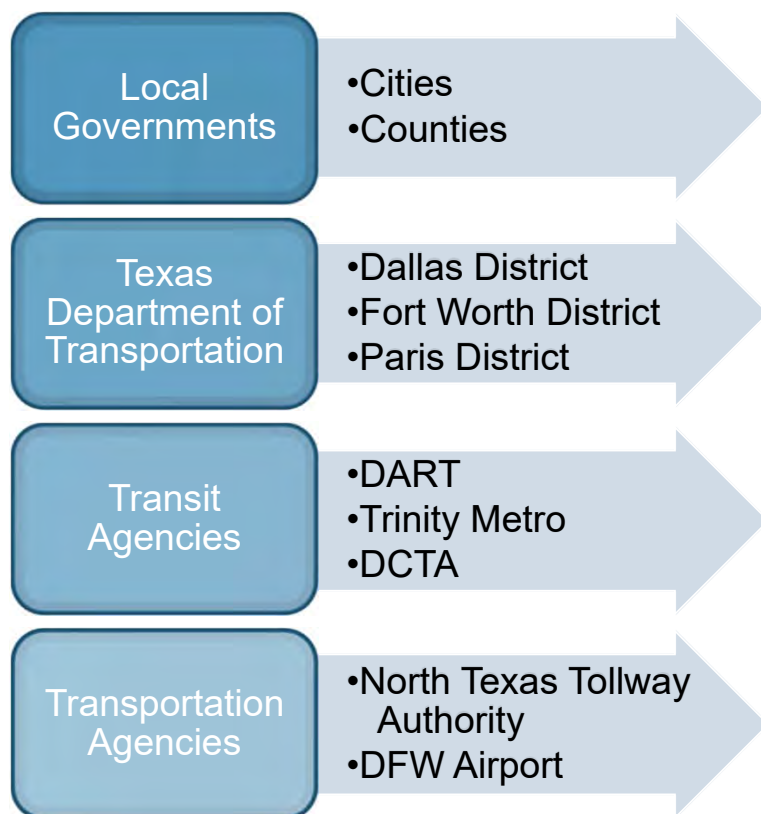
Regional Transportation Council

March 12, 2020



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation Department

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: A COOPERATIVE EFFORT



**2021-2024
Transportation
Improvement
Program
for North Central Texas**

 **North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

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)

FOCUS AREAS

- Draft Project Information
 - Reflects updates to projects provided by agencies, as well as updates from recent/pending TIP Modifications where applicable
 - Financially constrained to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) allocations
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Surveys
 - Surveys have been sent to agencies that have a project or phase in FY 2021, the first year of the new TIP.
 - Responses provide more clarity on project schedules to help NCTCOG staff determine which projects phases will truly be ready to commence in FY 2021.
 - Failure to provide a survey response will lead to a project being pushed to a later year.
 - Doing this work now can help prevent the need for additional TIP Modifications in the future.

SCOPE OF PROGRAMMING

- \$13.47 Billion in the 2021-2024 TIP (Roadway and Transit)
 - \$7.70 Billion in Federal Commitments
 - \$2.11 Billion in State Commitments
 - \$0.18 Billion in Regional Commitments
 - \$2.63 Billion in Local Commitments
 - \$0.85 Billion in Transit Commitments
- 939 Active Projects (Roadway and Transit)
- 63 Implementing Agencies (Roadway and Transit)

REQUEST FOR REVIEW

- Please ensure that your staff reviews the listings for projects being implemented by your agency and within your jurisdiction to verify:
 - Start and end dates of each phase
 - Fiscal years of each phase
 - Scope
 - Limits
 - Funding amounts
- If a project does not have funding in FY 2021, 2022, 2023, or 2024, it will not be in the new TIP.
 - FY 2020 projects will not automatically carry over. We must determine now if projects should be “double-listed” in FY 2021 if they could be delayed.
 - Projects in FY 2025 and later will be in the environmental clearance appendix of the TIP (Appendix D).

TIMELINE

May – November 2019	Conducted meetings with implementing agencies
August 2019 – February 2020	Data entry, develop listing, and financial constraint
February 2020	Present draft listings to STTC for Information
March 2020	Present draft listings to RTC for Information
March 2020	Conduct public meetings
April 9, 2020	Deadline for providing comments on draft listings
April 2020	Present final listings to STTC for Action
May 2020	Present final listings to RTC for Action
June 2020	Transmit final document to TxDOT
	Executive Board endorsement
August 2020	Anticipated approval of the STIP by Texas Transportation Commission
October/November 2020	Anticipated federal approval of the STIP

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Christie J. Gotti
Senior Program Manager
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cgotti@nctcog.org

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Senior Transportation Planner
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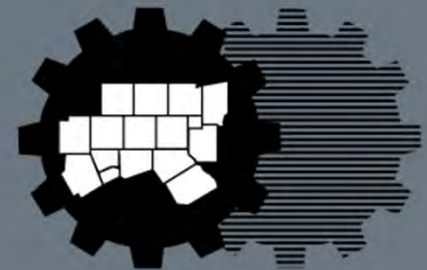
James Adkins
Transportation Planner
Ph: (682) 433-0482
jadkins@nctcog.org

TRAIL OF THE MONTH

Highlighted Regional Trails

Regional Transportation Council
March 12, 2020

Karla Weaver, AICP
Senior Program Manager
Sustainable Development Program

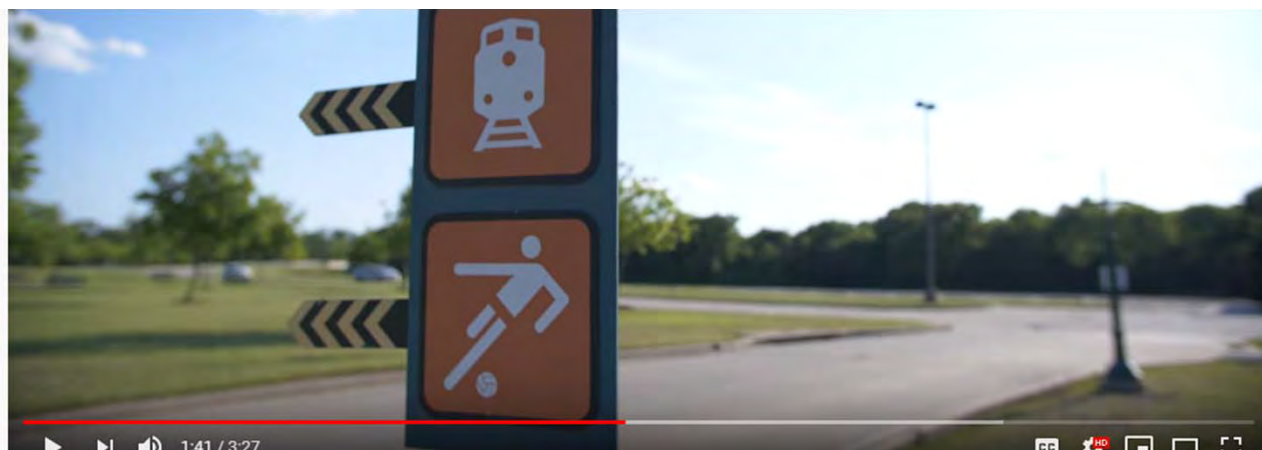


**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

OUTREACH INITIATIVE

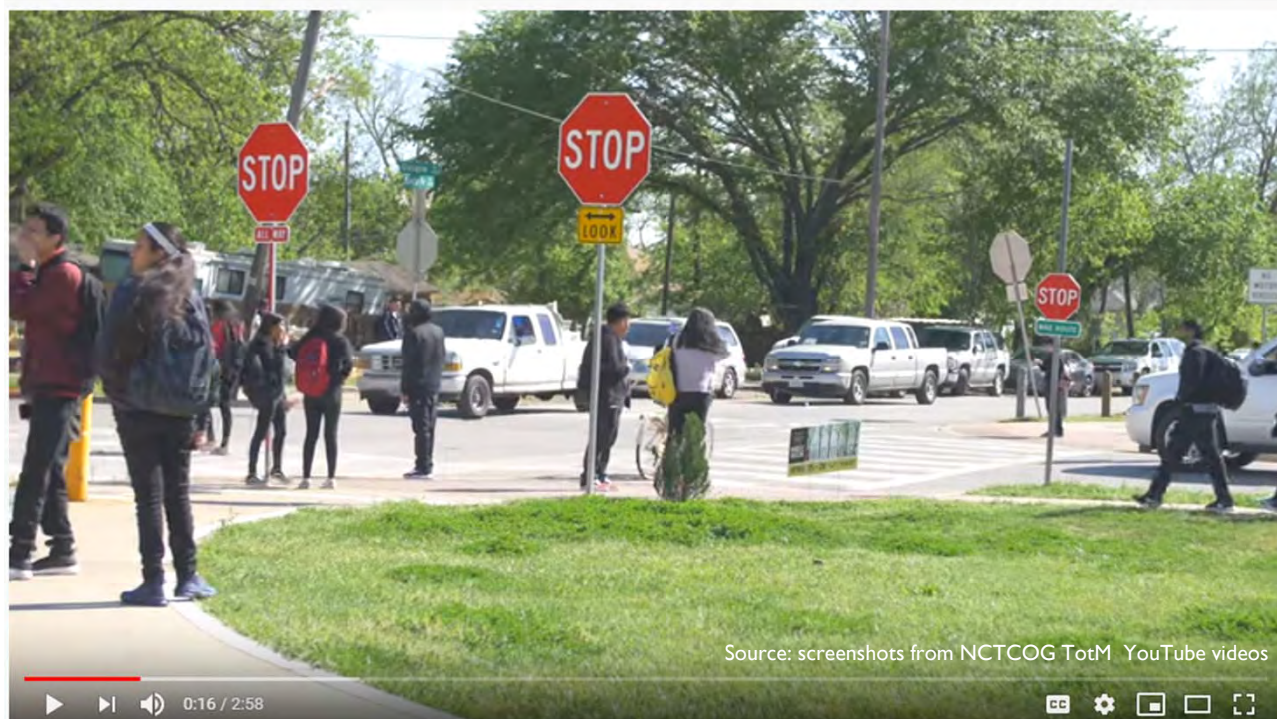
- **Make the public aware of the many great trail systems in the Dallas-Fort Worth region**
- **Over 773 miles built and 3,869 miles planned**
- **Highlight current and future investment by cities and the Regional Transportation Council**





Videos highlight the benefits of our trail system, such as:

- Transportation
- Regional connectivity
- Access to job centers and schools
- Community enhancement
- History of the trails



Source: screenshots from NCTCOG TotM YouTube videos

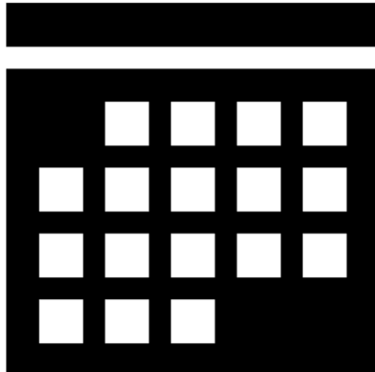
Videos include interviews with:

- Local government leaders and staff
- Trail users
- Organizations, such as *Friends of the Trail* groups



Source: screenshot from NCTCOG TotM YouTube video

SCHEDULE/CALENDAR OF TRAIL VIDEOS



- **Santa Fe (August 2019)**
- **Cottonwood Creek (September 2019)**
- **River Legacy Trail (October 2019)**
- **Cotton Belt Trail (November 2019)**
- **Preston Ridge Trail (December 2019)**
- **DCTA Rail to Trail (January 2020)**
- **Trinity Trails – Ft. Worth – Benbrook – Westworth Village (February 2020)**
- **SoPac Trail (March 2020)**
- **Lone Star/Campion/Delaware Creek to Downtown Irving (April 2020)**
- **Central Trail (May 2020)**
- **Regional Trails Overview (June 2020)**



THANK YOU!

Karla Weaver, AICP

Senior Program Manager

kweaver@nctcog.org

Kevin Kokes, AICP

Program Manager

kkokes@nctcog.org

Matt Fall

Senior Planner

mfall@nctcog.org

Trail of the Month Videos:
nctcog.org/bikeweb



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
February 2019 - February 2020

RTC MEMBER	Entity	2/14/19	3/14/19	4/11/19	5/9/19	6/13/19	7/11/19	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20
Tennell Atkins (09/17)	Dallas	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	E	E(R)	P
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
Adam Bazaldua (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	A	P
David Blewett (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Loyl Bussell (05/17)	TxDOT, FW	P	P	E(R)	P	A(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E(R)	E
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	E(R)
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	P	P
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)	A
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	A	A	A	P	A	E	E(R)	P	P	E	A	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Mojj Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	A	A	P	E	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Ivan Hughes (09/19)	Addison	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	P	A	E(R)	P	A(R)	E(R)	P	P	A	E(R)	P	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	E(R)	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	P	P	P	E(R)
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)
Lee M. Kleinman (09/13)	Dallas	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Curtistene McCowan (06/19)	DeSoto	--	--	--	--	P	E(R)	P	E	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	E	E	P	E	A	P	E	A	P	E	P	P
Robert Miklos (12/19)	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	E	A	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Barbara Odom-Wesley (07/19)	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
John Ryan (05/18)	Denton	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Stephen Terrell (6/14)	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Euless	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	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
February 2019 - February 2020

RTC MEMBER	Entity	2/14/19	3/14/19	4/11/19	5/9/19	6/13/19	7/11/19	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Paul Wageman (10/19)	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P
Dennis Webb (8/18)	Irving	A	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	A	E	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin Cnty	E(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chad West (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	E	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant Cnty	E	P	E	E(R)	P	E	E	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	E	P
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E
Ann Zadeh (06/17)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	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)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
October 2018 - January 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	10/26/18	12/7/18	1/25/19	2/22/19	3/22/19	4/26/19	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20
Onyinye Akujuo	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
Joe Atwood	Hood County	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P
Melissa Baker	Irving	--	--	--	--	--	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Micah Baker	Dallas County	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Katherine Beck	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
David Boski	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Keith Brooks	Arlington	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	--	--	--	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT, Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P
Robert Cohen	Southlake	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kent Collins	Coppell	P	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	A
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT, FW	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Rick Cortez	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P
Hal Cranor	Eules	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A(R)
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P
Chad Davis	Wise County	A	A	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	A	A	A	P
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	P
Pritam Deshmukh	Denton	--	P	P	R	P	P	P	A	A(R)	P	P	P	A
Greg Dickens	Hurst	A	A(R)	A(R)	A	A(R)	A(R)	A	A(R)	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)
David Disheroon	Johnson County	A	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	A	P
Phil Dupler	FWTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A(R)
Chad Edwards	Fort Worth	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	E	P	P
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A	P	A
Chris Flanigan	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ann Foss	Arlington	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Graham	McKinney	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	A(R)	A(R)	E(R)	A(R)	P
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	A	A	A	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	A	P	A
Ron Hartline	The Colony	A(R)	A	A	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	A	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	P	P
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Terry Hughes	Weatherford	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Tony Irvin	DeSoto	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	A
Paul Iwuchukwu	Arlington	P	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sholeh Karimi	Grand Prairie	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Paul Knippel	Frisco	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Chiamin Korngiebel	Dallas	A	A	A	P	A	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P

P = Present A= Absent R = Represented
-- =Not yet eligible to attend

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, or business necessity)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
October 2018 - January 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	10/26/18	12/7/18	1/25/19	2/22/19	3/22/19	4/26/19	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A	A(R)
Eron Linn	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	--	--	--	P	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	A	P	P
Paul Luedtke	Garland	P	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Wes McClure	Mesquite	A(R)	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Moen	Frisco	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Cesar Molina, Jr.	Carrollton	A	P	P	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Mark Nelson	Richardson	--	P	P	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jim O'Connor	Irving	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kevin Overton	Dallas	A	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P	A	A
Tim Palermo	DCTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	A(R)	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Todd Plesko	DART	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Shawn Poe	Richardson	--	P	P	R	P	E(R)	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
John Polster	Denton County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Tim Porter	Wylie	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P
Bryan G. Ramey II	Duncanville	P	P	P	P	A	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P	P	A	A
Lacey Rodgers	TxDOT, Dallas	P	P	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	P	A	A	P
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	A
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P
David Salmon	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A	P	P	P	A(R)
Lori Shelton	NTTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Shewski	Plano	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	--	--	--	--	--	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	A
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Cheryl Taylor	Cleburne	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	P	P	A
Dave Timbrell	Garland	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Press Tompkins	Greenville	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A	A(R)	P	P	P
Daniel Vedral	Irving	P	A(R)	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

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jury duty, or business necessity)

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE January 24, 2020

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, January 24, 2020, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments. The following STTC members or representatives were present: Onyinye Akujuo, Joe Atwood, Melissa Baker, Micah Baker, Bryan Beck, Katherine Beck, David Boski, Shon Brooks, Tanya Brooks, Ceason Clemens, John Cordary Jr., Rick Cortez, Allen Harts (representing Hal Cranor), Clarence Daugherty, Chad Davis, Arturo Del Castillo, Duane Hengst (representing Greg Dickens), David Disheroon, Kelli Gregory (representing Phil Dupler), Chad Edwards, Claud Elsom, Chris Flanigan, Ann Foss, Mike Galizio, Ricardo Gonzalez, Gary Graham, Ron Hartline, Matthew Hotelling, Terry Hughes, Paul Iwuchukwu, Sholeh Karimi, Gus Khankarli, Chiamin Korngiebel, Chad Barte (representing Alonzo Liñán), Eron Linn, Clay Lipscomb, Stanford Lynch, Alberto Mares, Wes McClure, Brian Moen, Mark Nelson, Jim O'Connor, Tim Palermo, Dipak Patel, Shawn Poe, John Polster, Tim Porter, Lacy Rodgers, Moosa Saghian, Jeff Kelly (representing David Salmon), Lori Shelton, Brian Shewski, Walter Shumac III, Randy Skinner, Cheryl Taylor, Press Tompkins, Keith Fisher (representing Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize), Daniel Vedral, Caroline Waggoner, and Robert Woodbury.

Others present at the meeting were: James Adkins, Vickie Alexander, Nick Allen, Cameron Anderson, Tom Bamonte, Berrien Barks, Carli Baylor, Chasidy Benson, Natalie Bettger, Brandi Bird, Jesse Brown, Molly Carroll, Dave Carter, Brian Dell, Sam Dennehy, Cody Derrick, Kevin Feldt, Brian Flood, David Garcia, Gypsy Gavia, Dorothy Gilliam, Christie Gotti, Clifton Hall, Victor Henderson, Rebekah Hernandez, Amy Hodges, Chris Hoff, Kirk Houser, Brett Huntsman, Bethany Hyatt, Brian Jahn, Amy Johnson, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Kevin Kokes, Kevin Kroll, Wayne Kurfees, Dan Lamers, Sonya Landrum, April Leger, Travis Liska, Mickey McGuire, James McLane, Mindy Mize, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Jeff Neal, Evan Newton, Johan Petterson, Ezra Pratt, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Chris Reed, Kyle Roy, Samuel Simmons, Shaina Singleton, Shannon Stevenson, Teresa Taitt, Gaby Tassin, Vivek Thimmavajhala, Ben Torres, Francisco Torres, Mitzi Ward, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, Kate Zielke, and Norma Zuniga.

1. **Approval of December 6, 2019, Minutes:** The minutes of the December 6, 2019, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Jim O'Connor (M); Daniel Vedral (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **McKinney Avenue Trolley Funding:** A recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to utilize existing Regional Toll Revenue funds previously authorized by the RTC for transit projects in an amount not to exceed \$650,000 to support the McKinney Avenue Transit Authority's Improved Service Frequency Plan and ensure enhanced connectivity between Uptown and Downtown Dallas was requested. Details were provided in Electronic Item 2.1.1.
 - 2.2. **FY2020 and FY2021 Unified Planning Work Program:** A recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of modifications to the FY2020 and FY2021 Unified Planning Work Program was requested. Action included direction for staff to also amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, to reflect the approved modifications. The proposed amendments were provided as Electronic Item 2.2.1 and additional information was provided in Electronic Item 2.2.2.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. John Polster (M); Clarence Daugherty (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Collin Creek Mall:** Michael Morris presented details of efforts to formalize a new program to combine new large developments coming to the region with redevelopments within the region. He noted staff has been working on a comprehensive policy for projects that fall into two categories: 1) existing developments in the region that are being repurposed and 2) developments for large corporations coming to the region. The region continues to receive infrastructure funding requests for assistance in redeveloping major retail and economic centers, as well as requests for entities looking to relocate to the region from local partners seeking new opportunities to revitalize existing areas. This creates an opportunity to use transportation investment to change land use and promote economic development of the region. Examples of external partnership requests, as well as local partnership efforts were highlighted. In addition, elements of a proposed policy/standard practice to handle these types of requests versus approaching each request differently was presented. Projects should support sustainable, mixed-use, and transit-oriented development with some opportunity to use technology as part of the effort. Many will have a parking garage component, which is usually a cost issue with developers regarding mixed-use development. It is also important that these occur in urban, suburban, and rural contexts. Projects must have a context sensitive design with each potentially differing in context. Since there is an economic development benefit, investment will be through both grants and loans. In addition, it will be important to partner with the Governor's Office on economic development projects coming to the region. Mr. Morris presented details of the Collin Creek Mall mixed-use redevelopment partnership opportunity. Staff proposed that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) contribute \$30 million in federal funds for the parking garage and the City of Plano will contribute \$25 million. Half of the RTC funding will be a loan. Since the redevelopment is near light rail and there is not enough parking in Downtown Plano or Plano City Hall, the project will include transit service using next generation electric vehicles to the Downtown Plano Light Rail Station. He noted discussions are ongoing regarding the source of funding for this service, as well as the number of vehicles needed for the transit service. Mr. Morris noted the use of shuttles in other areas of the region and potential economies of scale to use an integrated technology for use across the system. Payment to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) for operations is not proposed. Plano is paying as a member of DART and there is existing transit service in proximity to the project. DART will have the benefit of the capitol purchase and will readjust its operating cost over time as a result of readjusting its transit service plan. The transit vehicles will be available for service to the parking garage, as well as places of interest between that are to be determined by DART. As part of the partnership, the parking garage must be open to the public. In addition, the development must include electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Negotiations are ongoing and include assurances that the proposed development will materialize. Future efforts will include a case-by-case assessment of risk. The money that is loaned will be paid back with interest and a standard rate of 2.4 percent has been established. Future discussions regarding inflation may be necessary. RTC funding would only pay for publicly available parking/transit and the garage must be owned by the public sector. In addition, RTC funding will be for construction only. He noted that this proposed partnership is an example of efforts to standardize a set of principles when new large developments come to the region or entities propose redevelopments within the region. Mr. Morris provided an overview of the action requested. Action will include a request for \$30 million in federal funds, \$15 million to be repaid as a loan, and \$25 million in local funds. Flexibility to use Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) or Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds will be needed, with Federal Transit Administration funds potentially used to assist in the purchase of approximately three transit vehicles for shuttle purposes. Specific terms of the agreement will be finalized separately. Committee Chair Bryan Beck noted that he supports the goal of the effort. He asked the total number of parking spaces to be included in the garage and staff's vision that the investment made for parking spaces is equivalent to what is preserved for transit use. He noted his concern that the mixed-use development may consume all the parking and that there will not be dedicated park-and-ride spaces for transit. Mr. Morris noted the total number of parking spaces is approximately 900-1000, 200-300 of which is dedicated to

residential. He later clarified that the total parking spaces is 2,000, of which 1,250 are public and 750 are private spaces. He added there are not direct mathematics that equate the \$15 million to a specific amount of parking spaces reserved for transit. It is the vision of the mixed-use development and what it can bring in a fast-growing part of the region and associated accessibility measures that staff believes the transit component will bring. Shawn Poe asked if there would be benchmarks required of the developer similar to what cities include in economic development agreements. Mr. Morris discussed staff efforts to evaluate the risk of the project and the importance of developing a standard policy for this and similar projects, but noted staff preferred not to add deal points on top of the City's agreements with the developer that could complicate the project. Chris Flanigan discussed the component of the agreement associated with transit bus purchases and noted that it seemed as though the structure of the agreement mandates the purchase of next generation electric vehicles and if so, was that born out of a requirement of the CMAQ funding. Mr. Morris noted that yes, there is a requirement for next generation transit vehicles, but that it is not a result of CMAQ funding. Staff would like to have more experience with next generation transit vehicles, and through this effort can advance technologies to help determine if there are potential benefits for other deployments. Mike Galizio asked if the City has agreed to own and maintain the parking structure and if the public parking is free or paid. Mr. Morris noted that the parking is free. Ken Kirkpatrick noted the City has agreed the that public sector would own the land underneath the parking garage, either directly by the city or a Local Government Corporation created by the City. Chad Davis asked if this effort could be perceived as an attempt to spend public money on private development. Mr. Morris noted that it is important to be careful regarding public-sector support for ad hoc private-sector development. Awareness of this was one element that triggered discussion of a comprehensive policy for consistency with all requests. In addition, he noted the importance of public-sector benefit. For this project, it was not the developer or the City that requested the next generation transit shuttle. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) explored the public-sector interest which included the introduction of several purposes for the garage. The parking garage helps light rail, downtown restaurants, and mixed-use developments at this location. The context must have public-sector benefits, and because there is also public-sector benefit it is important that a portion of the funds be a loan. Eron Linn noted that DART runs site-specific shuttles, so it is familiar with that aspect of the project, but noted the next generation transit component seems prescriptive. Mr. Morris noted there were many considerations discussed. Vehicles are being provided and the transit agency will receive the benefit of the capital costs and is either absorbing or reprogramming the operating costs. He noted that he would be happy to meet with DART to explain the benefit. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval for parking and transit at the Collin Creek Mall mixed use redevelopment: \$30 million federal funding with a \$15 million payback for the parking garage, \$25 million local funds, and approximately three transit vehicles for shuttle purposes. Action included flexibility in the federal funding source of either Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program or Surface Transportation Block Grant funds, with Federal Transit Administration funds possible to assist with transit. Specific agreement terms will be finalized. Also included in the action was a recommendation for approval of staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include this project and funding. John Polster (M); Daniel Vedral (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle – Round 4:** Amy Johnson presented an overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle Round 4 application process. The MTP Policy Bundle is a list of 20 voluntary policies that can be adopted by local governments or transportation partners. A minimum adoption of 50 percent of the applicable policies is required, and successful applicants receive Transportation Development Credits (TDC) that can be used to offset local funds for federal transportation projects. To be eligible, projects must be new and not contained in the current Transportation Improvement Program. Agencies can apply online at www.nctcog.org/policybundle. Example policies were highlighted.

Agencies can take action to adopt the policies through four types of action: 1) joint staff coordination, 2) governing body approval, 3) local ordinance, or 4) election. Round 4 of the Policy Bundle will be a two-year program (FY2021 and FY2022), versus a one-year program as in previous rounds. TDC award amounts will be commensurate with the longer time period. As in previous rounds, all interested agencies must reapply even if they participated in the previous round. In addition, the same list of eligible policies from Mobility 2045 will be available. Round 4 funding assistance will open on February 3. The early submittal deadline is March 20. Applications received by this deadline will be reviewed for completeness by North Central Texas Council of Governments staff. The final application deadline is April 27, 2020. A timeline for the effort was reviewed. An overview of the process to use TDCs was provided, and it was noted that TDCs awarded in FY2020 may be used in FY2021 and FY2022. Members were encouraged to contact Transportation Improvement Program staff for assistance. Details were provided in Electronic Item 4. Committee Chair Bryan Beck noted the length of time it takes to implement projects and the impact to using TDCs within the two fiscal years. Christie Gotti noted the MTP Policy Bundle Program is silent on the timeframe to use TDCs once they are assigned to projects. Agencies should identify the project on which the TDCs will be awarded and have an executed TDC agreement within the two-year timeframe.

5. **Update on the Fort Worth to Laredo High-Speed Transportation Study:** Kevin Feldt provided an update regarding the high-speed transportation study draft report for the Fort Worth to Laredo high-speed transportation project. The project follows up on the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Texas to Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS). North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff reviewed the TOPRS Tier I environmental document recommendations for corridors, technologies, and modes of travel. The intention is that the study would be a bridge to a future study for the Fort Worth to Laredo high-speed transportation project. The final report is expected to be submitted in February 2020. The Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) study reviewed three corridors identified in the TOPRS and analyzed hyperloop, magnetic levitation, high-speed and higher-speed trains, regional rail, and guaranteed transit. High-level criteria were used to review the TOPRS corridors, with 23 city-to-city combinations analyzed. Corridor types identified were greenfield, existing highways, existing railroad, and existing utility. Hyperloop technology with stops at all major cities along the corridor was the highest-rated alternative analyzed. The general corridor path recommended alternative is use of a utility corridor from Fort Worth to Waco, the IH 35 corridor from Waco to San Antonio, and a greenfield corridor west of IH 35 from San Antonio to Laredo. Study results indicated further analysis in a Tier II Environmental Study is warranted. NCTCOG staff and the consultant met with all MPOs in the corridor. Comments from MPOs were highlighted. Comments included the need for public funding, who will fund the project, construction costs, the project timeline, maturity and expectation of the technology, and the availability of existing rights of way to emerging and new technologies. Clarence Daugherty asked if there was an anticipated timeline for this project. Mr. Feldt highlighted next steps, which includes working with the other MPOs to identify a path forward and with the State of Texas to determine the appropriate mechanism for future study. Additional discussion regarding the readiness of the hyperloop technology was held. Onyinye Akujuo asked if there has been any initial cost analysis completed for the maglev and hyperloop technologies. Mr. Feldt noted no costs have been included, primarily because the cost of the hyperloop technology is unknown at this time and staff did not want to disadvantage or advantage other technologies during the analysis.
6. **Safety and Transit Asset Management Performance Measures Updates:** Kevin Kroll provided an update on Roadway Safety regional targets for federally required performance measures. Federal legislation specifies quantitative performance measures that must be tracked and reported annually or biennially. Performance targets for Roadway Safety were approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in 2017 and first tracked in 2018. In February 2019, the RTC reaffirmed the performance targets for both Highway Safety and

Transit Asset Management, as well as established a regional safety position that even one death on roadways is unacceptable. Also approved was additional funding for future safety project implementations. Mr. Kroll highlighted the five Roadway Safety performance targets: 1) number of fatalities, 2) rate of fatalities, 3) number of serious injuries, 4) rate of serious injuries, and 5) number of non-motorized fatalities plus serious injuries. Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Safety Performance Targets and Projections for 2018, 2019, and 2020 were also highlighted. He noted that at the beginning of the process, TxDOT decided that a 2 percent reduction across each of the performance measures was achievable by the target year 2022. In addition, preliminary North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) 2018 Safety Performance was highlighted. All targets are based on a five-year rolling average, and for the first time since the process began there is data available for comparison of targets versus performance. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) process, actual performance must be better than the 2018 targets or than the baseline performance (2012-2016). The region, according to the process, would be deemed to have met or made significant progress towards the targets. Mr. Snyder discussed the process for states to present their data to FHWA and the implications if states are deemed not to have met or made significant progress towards meeting their Highway Safety Improvement Program targets. He added the FHWA does not make any determination on metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) regarding performance measures. The timeline for this effort was reviewed and it was noted that NCTCOG's final findings on performance status for 2018 regional targets will be reported in April 2020.

David Garcia provided an update on Transit Asset Management (TAM) regional targets and performance. As the MPO for the region, NCTCOG is required to set annual TAM targets in coordination with transit providers to ensure regional consistency. The TAM model is designed to prioritize funding based on the condition of transit assets to achieve and maintain assets in a state of good repair. Targets are established for each asset category: 1) rolling stock (revenue transit vehicles), 2) infrastructure (rail track), 3) equipment (non-revenue transit support vehicles), and 4) facilities (buildings, stations, park and rides). The target for each category is zero percent. Mr. Garcia noted that with the latest data release which focuses on FY2018, staff can provide updates on all asset categories and presented performance by asset category. Rolling stock is measured by whether the vehicles meet or exceed their defined useful life. Comparing 2017 to 2018, passenger car performance remained the same over the two-year period and continued to meet the regional target. Small bus and commuter rail passenger coach decreased in performance, and the bus group improved compared to 2017 but still does not meet the regional target. Infrastructure performance measures the percentage of revenue track miles with performance restrictions by mode. Streetcar rail performance is the only infrastructure type that meets the regional target of zero percent. In the equipment category performance is measured by whether the vehicles meet or exceed their defined useful life. Only steel wheel vehicles meet the regional target of zero percent. Automobiles, trucks, and other rubber tire vehicles do not meet the target. Data for facilities performance measures breaks down facilities that have been inventoried versus those that have undergone a conditions assessment and performance is measured using the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) model to assess a facilities overall condition. Given the large number of facilities, a phased approach is being taken to assess facilities over the four-year TAM plan horizon. Relative to the facilities that have been assessed, the regional target is being met. Mr. Garcia noted staff will continue to coordinate with providers to adopt consistent definitions and targets as they relate to Transit Asset Management. Staff will also coordinate with providers to stay informed about the new safety plans that all transit operators who receive 5307 funds are required to develop per FTA regulations. Providers have until July 2020 to develop Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans. Staff is currently coordinating with providers to get more information about the plans and working with FTA to clarify the MPO's roll regarding setting safety performance targets. Additional updates will be provided to the Committee and an RTC workshop is proposed for the summer. Committee action on the Public Transportation Agency

Safety Plan (PTASP) and Pavement, Bridge, and System Performance measures will be requested in October 2020. Michael Morris noted that staff will work with transit agencies to ensure that the scale of future transit graphics capture performance accurately. Onyinye Akujuo noted that many of the slides do not contain data from Trinity Metro. Trinity Metro has a new Chief Safety Office who will be responsible for the PTASP and provide data to NCTCOG.

7. **Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council Meetings (HB 2840) Draft Rules:**

Amanda Wilson provided an overview of draft Rules for Public Comments at Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Meetings. HB 2840, which took effect on September 1, 2019, requires governmental bodies to allow members of the public to make comments to a governmental body before or during the body's consideration of an item. Reasonable rules regarding public comment can be adopted, including provisions for time limits for commenters and additional time for commenters that require translation. Public criticism of the body may not be prohibited. Ms. Wilson noted that the Transportation Department implemented public comments beginning with the September 2019 RTC meeting and that no members of the public have taken an opportunity to comment to the RTC to date. An overview of the draft rules, provided in Electronic Item 7.1, was provided. Staff proposed a single public comment period following the pledges and before any action items. Public comments will be taken on any agenda item, and speakers will be given a three-minute time limit, with six minutes given for those requiring translation. Large delegations may be encouraged to have one spokesperson speak for the group, with a five-minute time limit provided; ten minutes if using a translator. Translation will be provided if requested 72 hours in advance. In addition, provisions are included for warning speakers when time has exhausted or if removal of a speaker is necessary. A Speaker Request Card, provided in Electronic Item 7.2, must be completed prior to the start of the RTC meeting. The card provides an opportunity for written comments rather than speak at the meeting. Ms. Wilson noted that as part of development of the draft rules, staff benchmarked local governments in the region as well as other metropolitan planning organizations in Texas. Staff has also considered room layout and personnel and technology needs, and believes staff is appropriately prepared. Ms. Wilson noted the rules will be added to Public Participation Plan as an appendix when adopted and to the RTC Bylaws when next updated in 2022. Comments received will be documented in the RTC minutes. In addition, she noted information regarding the opportunity to speak will be provided on the RTC website prior to the February 27, 2020, meeting. Based on feedback received at the January 9, 2020, RTC meeting, written comments received at RTC meetings will be provided to members in advance of discussion on an item. If someone does not wish to speak, staff would be available to read whether an individual was for or against an item at the end of the comment period. She noted that the draft rules are currently in an online 45-day public input opportunity. To date, two public comments have been received related to appreciation to the legislature for the opportunity to comment and that the rules seemed reasonable. Ms. Wilson provided an overview of the schedule for this effort. RTC action on the draft rules is anticipated at the March 12, 2020, meeting. Details were provided in Electronic Item 7.3. Chad Edwards asked if open comments will be accepted at RTC meetings. Ms. Wilson noted that only comments specific to the meeting agenda will be permitted.

8. **Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Update:** Amy Hodges provided an update on the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program. Funds are available through the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust as a result of a settlement agreement related to the installation of emissions defeat devices. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is responsible for administration of Texas' share of the funds, approximately \$209 million total. Of the total, approximately \$31 million was set aside for statewide zero-emission vehicle infrastructure which is anticipated to be available in summer 2020. Organizations interested in applying for zero-emission vehicle infrastructure funding were encouraged to contact staff. In addition, approximately \$169 million is available for mitigation actions such as the replacement or repower of old, heavy-duty diesel equipment with the

Dallas-Fort Worth in receipt of approximately \$33 million. TCEQ has been releasing funding in project-specific application cycles. The first round of funding made approximately \$11.6 million available for school, transit, and shuttle buses. Although the funding round remains open until May 8, all funding has been awarded. The second funding round included approximately \$8.3 million for refuse vehicles and remains open. Ms. Hodges noted that refuse vehicle funding is available for the repower or replacement of refuse vehicles such as garbage trucks, roll-off trucks, dump trucks, sweeper trucks, and others. Funding is available at 80 percent with no federal requirements. To date, the region has applied for only 29 percent of available funding. The importance of fleets in the region requesting all funds allocated, in order for the region to fully benefit, was highlighted, and it was noted that applications will be accepted through October 8. The third round of funding has not been released but approximately \$6.6 million will be available for local freight and port drayage trucks. Staff anticipates that the funding will be available by January 31, 2020. Approximately \$6.6 million in remaining funds is available for other categories listed in Electronic Item 8. Staff will continue to monitor funding available through the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program and provide updates to members.

9. **Auto Occupancy Verification Technology Update:** Natalie Bettger provided an update on the launch of a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) technology that verifies and automatically applies the HOV discount on managed lanes within the region. The technology will launch at 6:30 pm the afternoon of the meeting on LBJ East and on all other managed lanes January 27, 2020. An overview of the new automated process was provided. Users will get the GoCarma app that is associated with a toll tag and setup the GoCarma pass, drive in the TEXpress lane, and the app will automatically recognize the number of passengers in the vehicle and apply the appropriate toll. As of January 21, over 22,000 visitors have accessed the GoCarma website and over 8,600 users have registered for the app. Most questions received to date about the app have been related to occupant passes for those with no smartphone and general use of the technology. She noted that efforts are continuing on final acceptance and integration testing, implementation of a communication plan, and customer service monitoring. After launch of the technology, members will be updated on the go-live process, ongoing performance measures, and any customer service items. She thanked LBJ/NTE Mobility Partners, the North Texas Tollway Authority, and the Texas Department of Transportation for their partnership on this effort. She noted that a more extensive marketing effort focused on new users will begin in April 2020.
10. **New Traffic Counts Website:** Francisco Torres provided an overview of the main features and tools of the new North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) traffic counts web interface. The new interface was developed to help make traffic count data more understandable and accessible to the general public. New features include display of the latest count and year on the initial screen and availability of detailed data on all points that includes historical counts, counts by time of day, and counts by vehicle type. He also highlighted the various types of traffic counts available and noted that for the first time, bicycle and pedestrian counts are available. In addition, the interface is fully compatible with mobile devices. The website is available at <https://trafficcounts.nctcog.org/trafficcount/>. Members were encouraged to contact staff if they would like to see their entities' traffic counts displayed on the NCTCOG website.
11. **Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects:** Daniel Snyder presented an overview of the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects. Approximately \$20 million in federal funding is anticipated to be available to support non-motorized forms of transportation and construct facilities that support walking and bicycling. Eligible project activities may include shared-use paths, on-street bikeways, bicycle/pedestrian signalization, protected intersections, sidewalk/crosswalks/curb ramps, traffic control and calming measures, signage, road diets, and bicycle/pedestrian counters. The maximum federal funding award is \$5 million, and the

minimum award is \$300,000. Details regarding eligible projects sponsors and locations were provided in Electronic Item 11. Mr. Snyder noted the emphasis for the Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects is the implementation and construction of new facilities. Any design and environmental work will be 100 percent locally funded. A minimum 20 percent local match is required for construction, and the local match must be cash or Transportation Development Credits (TDC). Agencies are eligible to request TDCs in lieu of local match if qualified through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle process. In addition, a resolution by the project sponsor's governing body confirming the availability of local match contribution is required with each application. The evaluation and scoring criteria for projects within the Active Transportation and Safe Routes to School categories were highlighted. Additional scoring criteria were detailed in Electronic Item 11. Mr. Snyder noted that pending approval by the Regional Transportation Council on February 27, 2020, the Call for Projects will open March 2, 2020. The deadline to submit applications is May 15, 2020, 5 pm. Proposed projects recommended for funding will be presented to the Committee at the August 28, 2020, meeting for consideration.

12. **Fast Facts:** Michael Morris provided a status report on upcoming Regional Transportation Council (RTC) agenda items. Regarding the Virgin Hyperloop One (VHO) Certification Center Request for Proposal, VHO headquarters personnel will be in the region February 3-4. Entities who submitted a project corridor will be invited to provide an informal presentation to VHO staff. He added that the February 13, 2020, RTC meeting has been postponed until February 27, 2020, 10 am for further discussion on the next step in the Request for Proposal process.

Mr. Morris also noted that conversations are advancing with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff have been working with the TxDOT districts to submit a list of projects proposed for funding in the Unified Transportation Program. Additional details will be presented to the RTC at its February 27, 2020, meeting. As part of the project submittals, Mr. Morris noted that four tolled managed lane projects will be submitted. Projects were listed in Reference Item 12.1. Discussions with TxDOT will include the ability of advancing tolled managed lanes projects due to their success and the importance of formula allocation.

Jeff Neal noted that the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) recently announced the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 round for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Discretionary Grant Program. The Notice of Funding Opportunity is available at www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infra/infra-notice-funding-opportunity. The deadline for project applications is February 25, 2020. Entities interested in receiving a letter of support were asked to contact staff prior to February 7, 2020. Endorsement of the specific project applications submitted will be requested at a future meeting.

Kate Zielke provided an overview of a new online tool developed by the NCTCOG Transportation and Environment and Development Departments, the Permittee Responsible Mitigation Database. The database connects willing landowners and permit applicants to make it easier to conduct permittee responsible mitigation related to the discharge of dredge and fill material into waters of the United States. Details about the database were provided in Electronic Item 12.2 and the data base is available at www.prmd.nctcog.org.

Chris Klaus noted that the latest correspondence from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regarding dedicated AirCheckTexas funding was provided in Electronic Item 12.3. The correspondence reaffirms TCEQ's opinion that there are no options for the region to retain the dedicated and unspent monies for the repair and replacement assistance program.

Dorothy Gilliam reminded members of the February 1, 2020, deadline for political subdivisions, state agencies, and institutes of higher education located in ozone nonattainment or near nonattainment counties to report electricity consumption and progress towards the reduction goal to the Texas State Energy Conservation Office. A copy of recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 12.4.

Jenny Narvaez noted that staff comments on the Dallas-Fort Worth 8-Hour 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard Emissions Inventory State Implementation Plan Revision were provided in Electronic Item 12.5.

Amy Hodges highlighted current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles, including the 2020 Clean Diesel Call for Partners and the Clean Fleets North Texas Call for Projects. Additional information was provided at www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle. In addition, Ms. Hodges noted that the annual fleet survey is now available at www.dfwcleancities.org/annualreport.

Kimberlin To congratulated recipients of the 2018-2019 Air North Texas Partner Awards: Outstanding Advertising, Hood County Clean Air Coalition; Outstanding Initiative, Green Dallas; Outstanding Outreach, City of Plano; Arlo Ambassador, City of Denton; and Partner of the Year, City of Grand Prairie. Details were provided at www.airnorthtexas.org/partnerawards19.

Shaina Singleton noted that the deadline for the May 2020 Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program modification cycle was close of business the day of the meeting.

Evan Newton provided an update on the east/west funding equity. He noted no changes have occurred since last presented in September 2019, and details were provided in Electronic Item 12.6.

Carli Baylor noted that public comments received during November and December comment periods were provided in Electronic Item 12.7 and Electronic Item 12.8, respectively.

Ms. Baylor also noted that an online public input opportunity is available January 13-February 11, 2020. Topics to be included, as well as other details, were provided in Electronic Item 12.9.

Victor Henderson noted that Electronic Item 12.10 contained the current Public Comments Report that includes general public comments received from November 20-December 19, 2019. Comments related to transit use, access and expansion were in the majority.

The current Local Motion was provided in Electronic 12.11, and transportation partner program reports were provided in Electronic Item 12.12.

13. **Other Business (Old and New):** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on February 28, 2020, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.



A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

March 2020

CALENDAR

March 4, 8:30 am

TRTC

Fort Worth Central Station
1001 Jones St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

March 12, 1 pm

Regional Transportation Council
NCTCOG

Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

March 13, 11 am

DRMC

North Texas Tollway Authority
5900 W. Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75093

March 27, 1:30 pm

Surface Transportation
Technical Committee
NCTCOG

Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

Ozone season underway in Dallas-Fort Worth



Ozone season in the Dallas-Fort Worth area began March 1 and continues through November.

In North Texas, this is the time of year when ground-level ozone is typically at its highest concentration. Ten Dallas-Fort Worth area counties remain in nonattainment for ozone, although the region has

made significant progress in recent years.

Ozone forms when volatile organic compounds combine with sunlight and intense heat. For example, pollution can occur when emissions from power plants, vehicles, dry cleaners and more are exposed to heat. The air quality index is used to report daily air quality levels in the region to help better understand the severity of pollution and related health impacts. The color-coded system is easy to follow. When the index is green or yellow, the air is safe for most groups. When the index is orange, red or purple, it can be unsafe for most groups to go outside.

A few simple changes to people's daily routines could make a difference. To stay informed about the AQI North Texans are encouraged to sign up for air pollution alerts at www.airnorthtexas.org/signup. High ozone can be combatted in many ways, including reducing idling, carpooling, taking your lunch to work and conserving water and electricity. For more clean air ideas, visit www.airnorthtexas.org/howto.

Friday, June 26, 2020, is Clean Air Action Day, Air North Texas' flagship event encouraging involvement from throughout the region to make the air cleaner. Consider doing at least one thing on this day to improve air quality. Share your actions on social media by including #CAAD2020 on your post or tagging @NCTCOGtrans. For a list of ways to help air quality, visit www.airnorthtexas.org/cleanairactionday.

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.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Trail of the Month spotlight shines on Southern Pacific Trail

Bicycle and pedestrian options are increasing across the Dallas-Fort Worth region. In support of this growth, the North Central Texas Council of Governments has developed a monthly video series, as part of an outreach initiative, to highlight the region's expanding system of shared-use paths.

The spotlight in March focuses on the recently completed Southern Pacific Trail, or SoPac Trail, a 5.6-mile facility connecting the White Rock Lake area to the Park Cities, North Dallas and Richardson. Built in the right-of-way of a former Southern Pacific rail alignment, the project was supported through a variety of funding sources, including more than \$7 million awarded by the Regional Transportation Council.



NCTCOG photo

The SoPac Trail is being highlighted as the Trail of the Month for March. The trail connects White Rock Lake to Richardson and other Dallas-area cities.

SoPac's numerous trail connections provide convenient access to various neighborhoods, schools, commercial centers and parks, including Fair Oaks Park, which can be directly accessed through the Fair Oaks Park trailhead.

The SoPac is the latest bicycle-pedestrian facility featured in the Trail of the Month series. The videos are being released on the first Friday of each month and allow viewers to learn about trails in their neighborhoods and throughout the region, while inspiring residents to get out and be active.

Watch the SoPac Trail and other featured videos at www.nctcog.org/bikeweb.

Community outreach season kicks off in March

With spring approaching, attention will soon turn to outdoor activities, enjoying the mild temperatures and sunny weather. Outreach season kicks off March 21 with Fix My Ride, a service offered by Cross Timbers Church in Denton County assisting North Texans in need of minor vehicle repairs and maintenance, such as oil changes and tire rotations. The Career Exploration and Job Fair is scheduled for March 25 at Denton High School and Grapevine's Hazardous Waste Event is set for March 28.

The NCTCOG Transportation Department participates in community events each spring to help tell North Texans the story of transportation and air quality. NCTCOG's outreach efforts will continue through April, culminating in the annual EarthX celebration April 24-26 at Fair Park in Dallas.

At each event, staff will provide information on programs such as Air North Texas, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program and Try Parking It. Air quality is an important component of transportation planning in Dallas-Fort Worth because 10 counties are in nonattainment for ozone and are working to reach compliance with federal standards.

The department attends events throughout the year, but spring presents many opportunities to meet residents face to face. Last year, the department appeared at 16 community events attended by approximately 200,000 people.

TRAFFIC COUNTS

Updated website offers traffic, bike-ped counts

There is a new way to gauge vehicle demand on many Dallas-Fort Worth roads. The traffic counts page, one of the most popular pages on the NCTCOG website, has been redesigned.

The site is accessed daily by people in the public- and private-sectors, including city and county staffs, entrepreneurs, real estate agents, consultants, students and researchers.

The new traffic counts interface offers a high-quality base map and improved visuals and charts that help to make the data understandable and more accessible.

New features include display of the latest count and year on the initial screen and availability of detailed data on all points that include historical counts, counts by time of day, and counts by vehicle type. For the first time, bicycle and pedestrian counts are available on the webpage.

In addition, the interface is fully compatible with mobile devices. The data is available at <https://trafficcounts.nctcog.org/trafficcount/>. Member agencies are encouraged to contact NCTCOG to have their vehicle and bike/pedestrian counts displayed on this new NCTCOG online resource.

REGIONALNews

VW funding for freight vehicles now open

The Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program is now accepting applications under the third round of funding for projects to replace or repower local freight and port drayage vehicles.

Approximately \$33 million is available to public- and private-sector entities in the priority areas of Texas, including Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. For example, a company seeking to replace older diesel delivery trucks with newer, more fuel efficient could apply for funding under this grant program.

Grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, visit www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/trust.

Drone workshop set for March 28 in Dallas

The next drone workshop is set for 10 am-2 pm Saturday, March 28 at Dallas County Community College's Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development in southern Dallas.

This is the second of 12 half-day workshops scheduled for locations across North Texas. The first was held in January at NCTCOG's Arlington offices.

The series is being conducted to help professionals and amateurs learn rules, regulations, best practices and more about this emerging technology. The workshop will also provide tips on flight safety, including pre-flight planning, how to conduct a safe flight and where to fly drones. The workshop will provide instruction on guidelines and requirements for people flying drones as a hobby as well as those who have found commercial uses for them.

Unmanned aircraft systems are becoming more widespread in North Texas and beyond. In 2019, there were almost 27,000 UAS registered in North Texas. This represented an increase of more than 40% over the previous year. The session will include a demonstration on the "Low Altitude Authorization Notification Capability system, which allows drone pilots to fly in controlled airspace below 400 feet. There will also be instruction on applying for airspace waivers. Registration for this FREE workshop is open through 5 pm Friday, March 27. For more information, visit www.northtexasuas.com.

Transportation Resources

Facebook

Facebook.com/nctcogtrans

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Twitter.com/nctcogtrans

YouTube

YouTube.com/nctcogtrans

Instagram

Instagram.com/nctcogtrans

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

27,000

The approximate number of unmanned aircraft systems, or drones, registered in North Texas.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

NCTCOG requests input on funding initiatives



North Texans will be presented details on two major project proposals that could help shape parts of Fort Worth and Plano during a public meeting in March.

The RTC is considering funding a land-use change at the former Collin Creek Mall site in Plano and has also been asked to fund a change order of \$20 million to help expedite completion of the Trinity River Bridges, part of Fort Worth's Panther Island flood control project.

NCTCOG staff also will discuss the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program during a public meeting scheduled for 6 pm on Monday, March 9 at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive.

The TIP is a federally and state-mandated list of transportation projects with committed funding within a four-year period. An overview of the development process and a draft list of active projects in the region will be presented for review.

Additionally, staff will present an overview of the Mobility 2045 Policy Bundle Program, which includes a list of voluntary policies that local governments and transportation agencies can choose to adopt. These policies aim to address issues affecting transportation in the region.

Finally, staff will provide an overview of the upcoming ozone season as well as statistics from the 2018 DFW Annual Fleet Survey. Information on spring outreach season, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, vehicle incentives and administrative changes to Mobility 2045 will also be highlighted.

The meeting will be streamed live at www.nctcog.org/video for those not able to make it in person.

A video of the presentation will be available after the meeting 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.