

AGENDA

**Regional Transportation Council
Thursday, August 11, 2016
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

11:30 am – 12:45 pm TollTag Marketing and Next Steps on DFW Connector Workshop

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

1:00 – 1:05 1. Approval of July 14, 2016, Minutes
☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Ron Jensen, RTC Chair
Item Summary: Approval of the July 14, 2016, minutes contained in [Reference Item 1](#) will be requested.
Background: N/A

1:05 – 1:05 2. Consent Agenda
☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 0

2.1. Federal Rulemaking Update
Presenter: Amanda Wilson, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Comments on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the National Performance Management Measures, [Reference Item 2.1.1](#), and the NPRM for Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform, [Reference Item 2.1.2](#), are provided to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for approval. Additional information can be found in [Electronic Item 2.1.3](#).
Background: On July 14, 2016, the RTC was provided with a summary and draft comments on the NPRM for the National Performance Management Measures and the NPRM for Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform. The National Performance Management Measures NPRM establishes a set of performance measures for states and metropolitan planning organizations to use to assess National Highway System performance, freight movement on the Interstate System, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program. Comments are due to the United States Department of Transportation by August 20, 2016. In addition, the NPRM for Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform proposes revisions to transportation planning regulations to promote more effective regional planning by states and metropolitan planning organizations. Comments are due August 26, 2016.

1:05 – 1:15

3. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report**

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

1. Agenda Item 6a Tabled from the July 14, 2016, Meeting and New Agenda Item 6b and Item 7
2. China Academy of Transportation Sciences/Regional Transportation Council Partnership in Support of the United States Department of Transportation ([Electronic Item 3.1](#))
3. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles ([Electronic Item 3.2](#))
4. Ozone Season Update ([Electronic Item 3.3](#))
5. Upcoming Clean Vehicle Events and Workshop ([Electronic Item 3.4](#))
6. Letter from Texas Good Roads ([Electronic Item 3.5](#))
7. Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) Grant Update
8. Joining Forces (Regional Planning Study for Military Bases) Public Meetings, August 23-30, 2016
9. High-Speed Rail Follow-up
10. Blue Green Gray Partnership Program: Irving Summit, August 16-17, Irving Convention Center: Opportunity for New Ideas
11. Mobility Matters (Handout)
12. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 3.6](#))
13. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 3.7](#))
14. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 3.8](#))
15. Transportation Partners Progress Reports

1:15 – 1:25

4. **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goal Update for Fiscal Years 2017-2019**

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 10
Presenter: Ken Kirkpatrick, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff requests approval of a 25 percent Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Participation Goal for FY2017-FY2019 for United States Department of Transportation contracting opportunities.

Background: The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is required by the Federal Transit Administration to revisit its DBE Participation Goal every three years. The current DBE Participation Goal is valid until September 30, 2016. Staff followed a schedule to meet this deadline that provided opportunity for public participation and comment. Three public meetings and a consultant/vendor open house were held to solicit comments on the proposed goal. Several comments and questions were received which sought clarification or were positive in nature. No negative comments were received. Staff is recommending a 25 percent DBE Participation Goal for FY2017-FY2019. Contingent on Regional Transportation Council approval, the updated DBE goals are anticipated to be presented to the NCTCOG Executive Board for approval on August 25, 2016. [Reference Item 4](#) includes additional details.

- 1:25 – 1:30** 5. **Transportation for Elected Officials to The BigX Events: Police Training**
☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 5
Presenters: Lee Kleinman, Councilmember, City of Dallas and Michael Morris, NCTCOG
Item Summary: A request for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) support of funding to provide transit services for elected officials to The BigX events will be requested. City, county, state, and national leaders can witness the type of natural or man-made events first responders address and their responses.
Background: Elected official support of the region's police and first responders is being requested. First responders train for a wide array of emergency situations. These training events will occur later this fall. With the loss of life of four Dallas officers and one DART police member, this initiative would demonstrate support by elected officials for our "Men in Blue." The requested funding will be used to provide transit services by the transportation authorities to these events for city, county, state, and federal elected officials. This action would approve the RTC to reimburse transportation authorities for providing transit services during a portion of this multi-day event through the use of RTC Local funds for less than \$25,000.
- 1:30 – 1:45** 6a. **Proposed Resolution to the Texas Transportation Commission Requesting Changes to the Draft Unified Transportation Program (tabled from last month)**
☐ Action ☒ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG
Item Summary: This item was tabled at the July 14, 2016, Regional Transportation Council meeting. Staff's recommendations is that the item remain tabled.
Background: N/A
- 6b. **Comments to the Texas Transportation Commission Regarding Changes to the Draft Unified Transportation Program**
☐ Action ☒ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 10
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Staff will highlight additional information regarding the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) draft proposal on new funding levels for the next ten years. Staff will also request the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) provide a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission, included in [Reference Item 6.1](#), supporting the Governor's Texas Clear Lanes program.
Background: RTC Chair Ron Jensen was able to reintroduce the RTC to the Texas Transportation Commission at its July meeting. The Texas Department of Transportation has a draft proposal on new funding levels for the next ten years through its Unified Transportation Program. The Regional Transportation Council was briefed on this item at its July 14, 2016, meeting and tabled action on a draft resolution, but requested staff to seek clarification from TxDOT related to questions that arose during

the July meeting. [Electronic Item 6.2](#) contains background information related to information that was provided at the July 2016 RTC meeting, as well as information that has been developed since that time.

1:45 – 1:55

7. Chairman Nichols Support Letter

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will be briefed regarding current efforts of Chairman Nichols on protecting transportation tools and other transportation funding efforts. Staff will request approval for the RTC to send correspondence thanking him for his work. [Reference Item 7.1](#) contains a draft letter to Chairman Nichols.

Background: Senator Nichols is Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee and has been a driving force behind transportation improvements such as the passage of Proposition 1 and Proposition 7. Chairman Nichols is currently working on an initiative to protect the use of funding options such as toll roads and managed lanes. Chairman Nichols has also provided comments to the Texas Transportation Commission related to the draft Unified Transportation Program, which is included as [Electronic Item 7.2](#). In addition, the Senate Transportation Committee is monitoring the progress of implementing HB 20 related to performance-based planning for metropolitan planning organizations and the Texas Department of Transportation.

1:55 – 2:10

8. Recommended Marketing Efforts for DFW Connector Pilot Program

☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 15

Presenters: Ken Kirkpatrick, Mindy Mize, and Amanda Wilson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: This Item is a follow up to the TollTag Marketing and Next Steps on DFW Connector Workshop held prior to the full Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting. Staff is recommending a slate of marketing efforts as part of the DFW Connector Pilot Program to increase TollTag usage. Funding in the amount of \$300,000 is requested to implement these initiatives.

Background: In 2014, the RTC initiated a pilot in the DFW Connector corridor where the pay-by-mail or ZipCash surcharge would be increased over time from a base of 50 percent to 90 percent of the underlying toll charge. The purpose of the pilot is to test strategies to increase TollTag usage and to apply lessons learned in the IH 35W corridor, where TxDOT bears the toll collection risk. Staff has been coordinating with NTTA to develop a slate of marketing efforts that target high pay-by-mail/ZipCash users in the DFW Connector corridor. [Reference Item 8](#) contains additional information about the recommended strategies and estimated costs of each. Public comments will be sought and included in the communication program.

2:10 – 2:20

9. **Regional 10-Year Plan/Priorities: Response to HB 20**

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10

Presenters: Christie Gotti and Dan Lamers, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will introduce and initiate discussions with the Council regarding the next increment of regional priorities covering FY2017-FY2027, as the Dallas-Fort Worth region's response to the House Bill 20 10-year planning requirement.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has a rich history of setting priorities and plans in advance, and working toward implementation of those plans. Starting in 2004, the RTC and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) began sharing project selection authority for Category 2 – Metro Corridor funding. At that time, the RTC developed consensus on the list of major roadway projects to be implemented over the next 10 years. In the intervening years, the RTC has worked toward the funding and completion of the projects identified in that "10-Year Map." Staff has reviewed the status of these priorities with the RTC several times since 2004, including review efforts in 2008, 2010, and 2012. The latest status of each project from the original 2004 10-year priority map is provided as [Electronic Item 9.1](#).

In 2004, Category 2 funds were received through FY2020, and traditional Category 2 funds have not been received since that time (though some Proposition 1 funds were placed into Category 2 for ease of implementation). Now, the Texas Transportation Commission is proposing to allocate new Category 2 funds in FY2017-FY2027, along with additional Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 allocations, which will be partially placed into the Category 2 funding allocation.

At the same time, House Bill 20 requires that regions develop a 10-year plan identifying major projects to be implemented over that time span. Given the availability of funds in FY2017-FY2027 and the fact that the Transportation Conformity of Mobility 2040 identifies projects to be implemented in 2017-2027 network, staff proposes to establish a 10-year timeframe starting in FY2017 and ending in FY2027.

Through this item, staff will introduce this initiative and outline a draft process and timeline for responding to the House Bill 20 requirements. Additional details are provided in [Electronic Item 9.2](#).

2:20 – 2:30

10. **Status of 2016 Transportation Conformity and Recommended Designations for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard**

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Chris Klaus, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will update the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on the status of the 2016 Transportation Conformity and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) list of counties

recommended to be designated nonattainment for the 2015 eight-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS).

Background: On March 10, 2016, the RTC approved the 2016 Transportation Conformity and reconfirmed the analysis on June 16, 2016. The region was anticipating a United States Department of Transportation determination by the end of June 2016.

On October 1, 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a final rule for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS, ≤70 parts per billion. As a requirement of the final rule, states have until October 2016 to submit recommended county nonattainment designations to the EPA. TCEQ is recommending the addition of Hood County to the existing ten-county nonattainment area in the North Central Texas region. By October 2017, the EPA will finalize counties designated as nonattainment.

TCEQ's recommendations, approved by the Commission on August 3, 2016, are provided in [Electronic Item 10.1](#). Additional details are provided in [Electronic Item 10.2](#).

11. **Progress Reports**

☐ Action ☐ Possible Action ☒ Information

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

- RTC Attendance ([Reference Item 11.1](#))
- STTC Minutes and Attendance ([Electronic Item 11.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 11.3](#))

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

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

14. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for ***1:00 pm, Thursday, September 8, 2016, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.***

MINUTES**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL****July 14, 2016**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, July 14, 2016, at 1 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Bruce Arfsten, Douglas Athas, Brian Barth, Rudy Durham, Bobbie Mitchell (representing Andy Eads), Charles Emery, Gary Fickes, Robert Franke, Taylor Armstrong (representing Sandy Greyson), Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, Lee M. Kleinman, Brian Loughmiller, John Horn (representing David Magness), Scott Mahaffey, Maher Maso, B. Adam McGough, Cary Moon, George Conley (representing Mark Riley), Kevin Roden, Kelly Selman, Gary Slagel, Lissa Smith, Mike Taylor, Stephen Terrell, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., Oscar Ward, Bernice J. Washington, Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, Kathryn Wilemon, and Ann Zadeh (representing W.B. "Zim" Zimmerman).

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, Nancy Amos, David Arbuckle, Gustavo Baez, Sara Bagheri, Melissa Baker, Tom Bamonte, Berrien Barksdale, Jay Barksdale, Carli Baylor, Natalie Bettger, Alberta Blair, Bob Brown, Jesse Brown, Ron Brown, John Brunk, Ken Bunkley, Mo Bur, Kasey Burgan, Susan Buse, Loyl Bussell, David Cain, Marrk Callier, Jim Cline, Bill Compton, Michael Copeland, John Cordary, Hal Cranor, Mike Curtis, Clarence Daugherty, Brian Dell, Jesus Diaz, Gordon Dickson, Kim Diederich, Jerry Dittman, Tammy Dubberke, Traci Enna, Kevin Feldt, David Gattis, Bob Golden, Christie Gotti, Jerry Haddican, Jill Hall, Heather Haney, Tony Hartzel, Jeff Hathcock, Rebekah Hernandez, Jesse Herrera, Robert Hinkle, David Hosseiny, Donna Huerta, Greg Janes, Jonah Katz, Megan Kenney, Dan Kessler, Karen Khan, Tony Kimmey, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Paul Knippel, Dan Lamers, April Leger, Sonny Loper, Stanford Lynch, Karina Maldonado, Barbara Maley, Mickey Marlow, Curtistene McCowan, Steve McCullough, Keith Melton, Michael Miles, Cliff Miller, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Jenny Narvaez, Ron Natinsky, Mark Nelson, Mickey Nowell, Michael Peters, John Polster, James Powell, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Dean Radeloff, Rob Rae, Chris Reed, Karen Richard, Kendall Richey, Milton Richter, Bill Riley, Christina Roach, Rylea Roderick, Carrie Rogers, Kyle Roy, Greg Royster, Russell Schaffner, Lori Shelton, Walter Shumac, Randy Skinner, Joe Smolinski, Tom Stallings, Shannon Stevenson, Rick Stopfer, Jahnae Stout, Dean Stuller, Vic Suhm, Gary Thomas, Lauren Trimble, Dan Vedral, Mitzi Ward, Jon Weist, Kendall Wendling, Elizabeth Whitaker, Gregory White, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, Alicia Winkelblech, Bruce Wood, Jeremy Wyndham, Brandi Youngkin, and Kate Zielke.

A moment of silence was held for the July 7, 2016, event impacting City of Dallas and Dallas Area Rapid Transit police officers.

1. **Approval of June 16, 2016, Minutes:** The minutes of the June 16, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Jungus Jordan (M); Kathryn Wilemon (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Clarification of Capital Funding for Transit Service in Collin County:** A motion was made clarifying previous Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval that Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) LGC and/or DART is authorized to purchase buses with up to \$3.22 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

funding previously approved by the RTC and substitute an equivalent amount of local funding to be spent on capital costs for transit service in Collin County.

Gary Slagel (M); Duncan Webb (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris highlighted items in the Director of Transportation report. A copy of Senator Robert Nichols' recent presentation regarding tax roads versus toll roads was provided in Electronic Item 3.1. He noted it was important for members to understand Senator Nichol's support for the tools the region has used over the years to build its transportation system. He also provided a brief overview of the Driverless Vehicles and Automotive Technology Workshop held prior to the meeting. Members will be provided information in the future regarding how to advance technology, develop communication, and reduce barriers that will help improve safety and efficiency of the transportation system. Information on current air quality funding opportunities was provided in Electronic Item 3.2, and an ozone season update was provided in Electronic Item 3.3. Information about the promotion of the AirCheckTexas Program was also provided in Electronic Item 3.4. Mr. Morris also discussed outcomes of the recent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial Review. As part of its oversight related to grant funding, the FTA conducts onsite review of the North Central Texas of Governments to examine performance every three years. FTA identified four areas of minor findings. There were no findings related to staff efforts regarding Texoma Area Paratransit. In addition, he noted that meetings will begin in August on the development of Access North Texas, the regional public transportation coordination plan for the 16-county North Central Texas area. An east/west equity quarterly update was provided in Electronic Item 3.5.1 and Electronic Item 3.5.2, and June public meeting minutes were provided in Electronic Item 3.6. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 3.7, recent news articles in Electronic Item 3.8, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 3.9. Transportation partner progress reports were provided at the meeting. Mr. Morris also thanked Texas Transportation Commission Chair Tryon Lewis for the opportunity to present items to both he and the Texas Transportation Commission. In addition, he noted that staff will request that the RTC Chair send correspondence to former Commissioner Jeff Moseley to congratulate him and invite him to attend a future RTC meeting. He also thanked Commissioner Victor Vandergriff who asked that he serve on the HB 20 committee that takes the new goals, value, and vision statement of the Texas Department of Transportation and integrates it into day-to-day practice.
4. **Victor Vandergriff Remarks:** Victor Vandergriff, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission, provided an overview of transportation in the region, as well as the partnership between the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the Texas Department of Transportation. He reviewed efforts by his father Tom Vandergriff as the Mayor of Arlington over 40 years ago and his vision regarding the creation of a regional transportation authority. He discussed the Regional Transportation Council, its credit to the Dallas-Fort Worth region, and how the RTC is unique from other similar organizations in the State and country. The RTC is strong, robust, and independent and he thanked members for upholding the legacy of those that fought for the region many years ago. He recognized the Governor's clear direction to address urban congestion, the Legislature's response regarding congestion funding, Proposition 1, Proposition 7, and the ending of diversions. He also noted the leadership and character of Texas Transportation Commission Chair Tryon Lewis. In addition, Commissioner Bruce Bugg is specifically charged with congestion relief and Laura Ryan is a newly appointed Commissioner of great character and intellect

who is interested in the process. In addition, he highlighted HB 20 efforts to improve transparency and accountability. He spoke about transportation funding, noting the overall theme that the glass is 3/4 full. While other regions are struggling for funding, the RTC is discussing and debating how to spend an additional \$38.4 billion that will be allocated in the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) over the next ten years and potentially an additional \$2.5-\$5 billion that may be available each year. RTC discussion is related to the \$22.5 billion that is targeted to congestion, of which the majority is allocated to metropolitan areas. He highlighted Category 2 funding and his proposal to the Commission that the funding for Category 2 total \$18.2 billion. The Texas Department of Transportation has proposed MPOs will be allocated \$12.6 billion, which is not the full amount but is an astounding sum of money for the State to allocate and is almost one third of the new money. Second, \$5 billion is proposed to be allocated to Category 4. These two proposed allocations total \$17.6 billion, approximately \$600 million short of the proposed \$18.2 billion. He noted it is important the RTC appreciate that this level of funding has never been allocated to metropolitan planning organizations. The Texas Transportation Commission will conduct a stress test to determine if the right allocations are going into the 12 categories of the UTP, and a period of adjustment is expected. He added the Unified Transportation Program can be adjusted quarterly and is updated annually. In closing, Mr. Vandergriff emphasized there are future opportunities yet to come and the art of the possible is before the region. He noted, in his opinion, it was not the time to cause stress in the system by perhaps prematurely being aggressive in an approach related to a specific funding allocation. He believes the region and Commission will work through issues to everyone's satisfaction, specifically on how the money works within the region.

5. **Proposed Resolution to the Texas Transportation Commission Requesting Changes to the Draft Unified Transportation Program:** Michael Morris discussed the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC's) partnership relationship with the Governor, the Texas Transportation Commission, Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the North Texas Tollway Authority, and other agencies in the region. He noted that efforts related to the proposed resolution to the Texas Transportation Commission requesting changes to the draft Unified Transportation Program (UTP) are no different. Two primary RTC instructions to staff were reviewed. The first instruction is to protect Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds from being swept. He noted that this discussion has nothing to do with RTR funds, which are secure. The second instruction is to insist on formula allocation, supporting the historic Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)/RTC partnership ensuring funding equity. If there is ever a movement or potential movement away from formula allocation, RTC discussion is necessary. He added that concerns to be discussed have nothing to do with changing safety, maintenance, bridge, or rural allocations, but are focused solely on urban congestion funding. The region historically has a 1/3 stake in urban congestion funds, which is an important stake with regard to how the funds are handled. He noted the Texas Transportation Commission has asked for comments regarding the 2017 UTP and for the RTC to comment as a body, action must be taken. Draft 2017 Unified Transportation Program funding was highlighted. A total of \$66 billion is available statewide for a 10-year period, of which approximately \$38 billion is new funding. Funding is allocated to 2 categories, includes new State and federal sources, and creates three new programs: congestion, connectivity, and strategic priorities. Staff's focus is on the proposed additional funding allocation of \$21.2 for congestion/urban mobility, of which \$11.2 billion is proposed for metropolitan planning organization (MPO) partnerships (Category 2). Connectivity Corridor Congestion is a new program and is a conscious effort by the State to ensure that urban regions are not only solving congestion but also providing connectivity to the rest of the State. The second element is Category 4, and the third element is Category 12,

Commission Strategic Priority. Staff supports the Governor's initiative that \$5 billion should be dedicated to urban congestion and are supportive of the partnership presented by Commissioner Bruce Bugg. He noted the focus of discussions is on the urban portion of the Connectivity Corridor Congestion allocation. Staff's suggestion is not to take funding away from connectivity, but instead integrate the new connectivity program into the traditional program to be allocated to urban regions for projects that are for both connectivity and capacity. Policy principles regarding the benefit of metropolitan project selection include funding equity, consensus, the ability to leverage funds, context sensitive design, air quality needs, and building of systems and the last mile. Mr. Morris reviewed the proposed RTC resolution. An updated version of the resolution was provided at the meeting in Reference Item 5. Section 1 of the resolution addresses Category 12 funding (Discretionary Funding of the Commission) and states the RTC supports the urban funding allocation including: 1) support of the Governor Abbott/Commissioner Bugg Congestion Relief Program, 2) \$5 billion to congestion relief, 3) fair share allocation to regions, and 4) flexibility to meet State needs. He reviewed Minute Order 109370 of the Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan from August 28, 2003. Mr. Morris discussed the partnership created by the Minute Order and the statement from Rick Williams that "The more you choose local sources of funds, whether that's local taxes or local tolls, the more money will be invested in your community; you will not be penalized for being aggressive with local funding." He noted this is the fundamental instruction given to RTC staff. Section 2 of the resolution addresses Category 4, the Connectivity (Congestion) program selected by TxDOT headquarters and that is not formula allocated. This section supports the "connectivity" emphasis. Verbiage suggests that the program contradicts Minute Order 109370 and that TxDOT assign a "mini-cap" for Connectivity in each applicable region in Category 2. Section 3 is only needed if Section 2 cannot be carried out. If not, the section requests that Congestion Relief be adequately funded. Mr. Morris presented a Category 2 funding test with several examples, discussing how the region could meet the needs of the freeway system under the proposed UTP allocations. In addition, Mr. Morris discussed the importance of Category 2 funds due to the fact that the funds are formula allocated and that 31.55 percent of the funds are allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. RTC supports this allocation and the resolution does not address this funding. He also discussed the importance of TxDOT operating as a business. Staff would like to work with the Sunset Commission to create a business model based on metrics and performance to prevent the Legislature from overriding TxDOT decisions. In the proposed resolution, staff has removed transmittal of the document to the Legislative Delegation because efforts are intended to engage TxDOT in a conversation. TxDOT is seeking public comment on the draft Unified Transportation Program and a TxDOT public meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2016. An RTC position is needed to comment as a body. Proposed edits to the resolution were provided at the meeting in Reference Item 5, and were highlighted. A statement was added clarifying that the Texas Transportation Commission has requested comments on the proposed 2017 Unified Transportation Program. In Section 1, support of Governor Abbott's Metropolitan Congestion Relief Initiative was added. The final sentence of the section was reworded to clarify the RTC suggests that the Commission develop a funding trade fair partnership to maximize projects that are in the best interest of the State of Texas. Section 2 includes the addition of TxDOT Minute Order 109370 and states the new program would need to be reviewed. In Section 3, a statement was added noting the section is only available if Section 2 cannot be carried out. "Respectfully" was added in Section 5, and in Section 6 transmittal to the members of the North Central Texas Legislative Delegation was removed. Lee Kleinman noted that he would be voting against the resolution. He added, that while staff is correct on many elements in the resolution, he believed it would benefit the RTC to have a better understanding of what the Governor and Commission is working to accomplish.

Mr. Vandergriff emphasized that he believes the Commission and the Department are on the same page. Each will learn together and are interested in building partnerships and systems. The process is trust, but verify. He noted he believed the resolution was premature, as written, and that there are other bites at the apple to come. Maher Maso discussed historical information regarding toll roads, the strong stance taken by RTC, and the commitment made by the State that the region would not be penalized. He encouraged dialog and noted he was supportive of staff. General discussion took place related to the history of Dallas-Fort Worth aggressively pursuing innovative financing to expedite transportation, State commitments to not penalize regions that used tolls, and the preferred approach to communicate with the Texas Transportation Commission and whether that should be in the form of a resolution, letter, or series of questions that Michael Morris would pose on the behalf of the RTC. A motion was made to table the agenda item and to instruct Michael Morris to express the concerns of the Regional Transportation Council to the Texas Transportation Commission. Jungus Jordan (M); Oscar Trevino (S). Kelly Selman and Brian Barth abstained from the vote. Bobbie Mitchell and Maher Maso were opposed. The motion passed. Rob Franke requested the members be provided with information in the future to help understand the underlying issues related to this item.

6. **Potential Transportation Alternatives Program Funds Lapse:** Ken Bunkley discussed the FY2013 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds that are potentially at risk of lapsing. In FY2013, the Dallas-Fort Worth region received approximately \$8 million in federal TAP funds. Federal regulations state that apportioned TAP funds are available for obligation for the year of apportionment plus three years. As a result, unobligated FY2013 TAP are at risk of lapsing at the end of FY2016. Of the \$8 million in TAP funds apportioned to the region, \$5.1 million has been obligated and another \$800,000 is anticipated to be obligated by the September 30, 2016, deadline. This leaves approximately \$2.1 million in TAP funds at risk of lapsing. A timeline was highlighted of the process from the time of federal apportionment through the addition of approved projects to the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Statewide TIP (STIP). Apportionments were established in March 2013, midway through FY2013. TxDOT then established individual metropolitan planning organization (MPO) allocations in August 2013. Due to this late allocation, FY2013 funds were allocated at the same time as FY2014 funds. On February 13, 2014, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) announced the TAP Call for Projects. Applications were reviewed, scored, and projects were recommended, followed by RTC approval for 23 projects to receive \$28.4 million in federal TAP funding in October 2014. A list of the projects and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 6.1. Approved projects were added to the TIP/STIP through the February 2015 modification cycle, nearly two years after the original apportionment. The delay in federal apportionment and allocation of Dallas-Fort Worth MPO funds were factors in the delay of the obligation of funds. In addition, the State did not have a TAP template agreement ready for local agency use until late 2015/early 2016 so local governments that were in a position to move projects forward were incapable of doing so because the template agreement was not made available. Following notification of the potential lapse, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff contacted agencies with TAP funds programmed in FY2015 and FY2016 to see if the projects could be obligated. Of the projects, none can be implemented prior to the deadline. Mr. Bunkley noted the importance of timely project implementation, including ensuring project estimates are accurate and realistic for all phases. Delays in funding impact financial constraints, TxDOT's letting capacity, and funding availability. As an example, three projects originally programmed with TAP funds in FY2015 and FY2016 have been delayed to FY2017 or FY2018 at the request of the implementing agencies. These projects, combined, representing a total of \$2.1 million. Had the projects been obligated, no TAP funds would be

at risk of lapsing. Staff realizes that several of the factors impacting implementation were beyond the control of agencies and are looking for possible solutions. Staff has requested that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) extend the obligation deadline six months. This does not necessarily mean all projects can be obligated, but may help reduce the amount of money at risk. At the time of the meeting, no response had been received from FHWA. TxDOT has also been asked if obligations can be managed on a statewide level versus managing the obligations at the individual MPO level. Staff was advised, based on the way funds are allocated to the region, that it is unable to do so. Staff will continue to work with local agencies to advance implementation of the projects to avoid a lapse in funding for FY2013 and in the future. Details were provided in Electronic Item 6.2. A motion was made to request Regional Transportation Council approval of a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission requesting assistance to ensure Transportation Alternative Program funds do not lapse in the region and statewide. Oscar Ward (M); Glen Whitley (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Transportation Rulemaking Update:** Amanda Wilson presented information and draft comments on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the National Performance Management Measures and also provided a summary of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule. The final rule for Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning was released and became effective June 27, 2016. This was a proposed rulemaking based on Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), and it incorporates minor changes from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Staff believes NCTCOG is already meeting or is on track to meet the implementation of this rule. A full summary will be provided to members. Two Notices of Proposed Rulemaking are out for public comment. The first is a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for National Performance Management Measures. This proposed rule is a result of MAP-21 that established a number of performance measures that the State and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) must meet. The proposed rulemaking addresses five areas related to performance measures on the national highway system, freight movement on the interstate system, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) related to traffic congestion and mobile source emissions. The national goals will establish measures and each state will be required to develop targets to meet those performance measures. MPOs will additionally set their own targets and all must be coordinated. Subpart E addresses how state departments of transportation and MPOs establish targets for travel time reliability and peak-hour travel time, and proposed performance measures include the percentages of reliable travel times and peak travel-time expectations. She noted that the expectation may not be an uncongested freeway, but how often the region is meeting the expected congestion levels. She added that many of the travel-time measures rely on data that has already been made available by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and that staff are utilizing. Subpart F establishes performance measures related to freight movement on the Interstate System related to truck-time reliability and uncongested mileage, and will measure the percent of mileage proving for reliable truck travel times and what percent of the interstate mileage is uncongested. Subparts G and H address traffic congestion and on-road mobile source emissions and is focused on projects that are funded with CMAQ program funds. Proposed measures include annual hours of excessive delay and the total emission reductions being reduced by selected projects. Ms. Wilson noted this is a general overview of what is a lengthy, technical document and presented draft comments. Related to target setting, proposed comment acknowledges the magnitude of coordination that will be necessary between the State and MPOs and that various areas of the state may have different measures or targets. Flexibility to MPOs and states for setting their own targets and measures is important. In addition, MPOs may not have the ability to

significantly influence targets in areas where the majority of project selection is handled by states. Finally, options are necessary for defining expected travel times. Ms. Wilson noted that one section of the proposed rulemaking specifically requests comments on whether or not to establish Greenhouse Gas performance measures. Staff's recommendation is not to establish this performance measures since the MPO looks at more comprehensive air quality strategies that are more appropriate. For on-road mobile source emissions, comment is for reporting areas to be consistent between CMAQ congestion and on-road mobile source emissions to make reporting simpler. Related to implementation, comment is to develop a web-based user interface to maximize successful implementation. In response to assessing congestion with all modes, comment is to consider the mobility of travelers using all surface modes of transportation and to incorporate shareable transit data. Finally, acknowledging that a travel demand model should be used as a reliable estimation when available. The second Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is for Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform. This rule has minimal impact to the Dallas-Fort Worth region, but addresses areas where there are multiple MPOs within one urbanized area. The proposed rule calls for metropolitan planning coordination related to metropolitan planning areas and development of single planning documents for areas with multiple MPOs. The second element in the proposed rule is MPO/state department of transportation coordination for consistent data, assumptions and other analytical material, as well as a process for resolving differences. Draft comment includes support for broad and large planning areas for greater public understanding, flexibility for states and regions to make decisions on their boundaries, and MPO/state department of transportation coordination. Ms. Wilson noted that action regarding proposed RTC comments would be requested at the August 11, 2016, RTC meeting and encouraged members to provide comments to staff.

8. **Follow Up to High-Speed Rail Industry Forum:** Kevin Feldt provided an overview of the High-Speed Rail Industry Forum held on June 20, 2016. The meeting was held in response to a Federal Railroad Administration and United States Department of Transportation request for proposals stemming from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act. Two primary corridors are proposed: 1) Dallas/Arlington/Fort Worth, and 2) Dallas/Arlington/Fort Worth/Austin/San Antonio/beyond. The Industry Forum agenda was highlighted, with the primary focus on data sharing, partnership opportunities, and teaming opportunities. A total of 58 participants attended the meeting, including two international high-speed rail firms from France and China. Participants were able to review data regarding regional demographics, travel surveys, and other important data related to the high-speed rail study. Additional information regarding high-speed rail is available at www.nctcog.org/hsr.
9. **Update on Proposed Volkswagen Settlement Agreement:** Ken Kirkpatrick highlighted the latest information related to ongoing federal and State lawsuits and proposed settlements against Volkswagen AG and related entities for their use of emission "defeat devices" installed in diesel automobiles. Federal and State court actions on June 28 announced partial settlements related to the Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Trade Commission, and consolidated consumer class action claims, as well as the State of California. A preliminary court hearing is scheduled for the end of July 2016. Mr. Kirkpatrick highlighted the environmental mitigation aspects of the proposed settlements. Included is \$2.7 billion in environmental mitigation of which the EPA will administration a portion of the funds. Approximately \$192 million of the total will be available to the State of Texas. In addition, there is \$2 billion in zero-emission vehicle

technology commitments from Volkswagen and its related entities, of which \$1.2 billion will be administered by EPA. State cases are proceeding and the Texas Attorney General has entered into a consumer settlement with Volkswagen for \$50 million in civil penalties to the State. The State's environmental claims are pending. Staff will provide updates regarding these funds in the coming months.

10. **Auto-Occupancy Verification Technology Procurement:** Ken Kirkpatrick provided an update regarding the joint effort between the Texas Department of Transportation and Regional Transportation Council (RTC) to procure technology to automatically detect auto occupancy in managed-lane corridors. Currently, the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) discount related to RTC's Tolled Managed Lane Policies is manually enforced. The procurement is focused on more advanced technology to automate the verification process. In-vehicle, out-of-vehicle, or a combination of both technology solutions are being considered. The procurement is focused on providing the HOV discount from a verification standpoint to appropriately apply the discount to eligible users and is not a legal mechanism to enforce citations for violators. The request for proposals for this technology was issued in April 2016. Proposals have been received and evaluated, and award is anticipated in late summer.
11. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Reference Item 11.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee meeting attendance and minutes were provided in Electronic Item 11.2, and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 11.3.
12. **Other Business (Old or New):** Oscar Ward noted the upcoming annual Transportation Summit on August 16-17, 2016, at the Irving Convention Center. Regional Transportation Council members were notified their attendance at the Summit would be complimentary.
13. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for Thursday, August 11, 2016, 1:00 pm, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

DRAFT

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

August 11, 2016

U.S. Department of Transportation
Docket Operations, M-30
West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Nadeau:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, I would like to submit comments on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on the National Performance Management Measures for Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, **Docket Number FHWA-2013-0020**, published in the April 22, 2016, Federal Register.

The RTC is supportive of the proposed performance measures for States and metropolitan planning organizations as required by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and believes the performance management provisions will help work towards a safer and more efficient transportation system. Please consider the following comments as you work to finalize this regulation.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Target Setting

The RTC supports States and MPOs working together to achieve the established measures and targets, but is concerned that State targets may conflict with metropolitan area targets without proper coordination. States and MPOs also face different funding constraints, have different geographies and varying populations that may affect their transportation system. Because of this, it is essential that the flexibility for States and MPOs to set their own targets remain in the final rules. In addition, much of the funding is under the control of State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and MPOs may not be able to influence targets significantly in areas where the majority of project selection is handled by States. It would be helpful to include requirements for coordination and data sharing in the final rules.

Multimodal

The RTC supports the consideration of mobility using all surface modes of transportation. The final rule should include more than automobile and roadway freight performance measures to properly account for areas that provide transportation options and choices other than single occupant vehicle travel. Bicycle/Pedestrian safety and mobility, transit, ride-sharing strategies and other alternative modes are not included in the NPRM. Although data currently limits this,

consideration to other modes should be given in the future as new performance measures are developed, where warranted.

Reliability Measures

The RTC supports providing MPOs with the option to define and identify expected/desired travel times on roadway segments. The proposed reliability measures use terms such as expected travel times on certain facility segments relative to uncongested times, which could be problematic when defining the expected travel times. Urban/suburban/rural environments, travel mode, land use, and other factors may all contribute to variations in travel times. Recognizing that desired volumes and speeds are context-sensitive is vital when determining reliability measures. In addition, the proposed reliability measures do not take into account the occurrence of extraordinary events that could skew the data, such as special events (e.g., major sporting events, hazardous materials accident) or unusual weather, and the final rule should accommodate the impact of such events.

Subpart H: National Performance Management Measure for Assessing the CMAQ Improvement Program—On-Road Mobile Source Emissions

The RTC believes reporting areas should be consistent between CMAQ Congestion and On-Road Mobile Source Emissions Performance Measures to make reporting simpler. This will help when handling the data and executing the calculations.

The RTC does agree with the proposed definition for on-road mobile source and approves of the measure. Consistency among the definitions is the best approach. As stated in the proposed rules, the measure established through this rulemaking should apply to CMAQ-funded projects only in areas designated as nonattainment or maintenance for pollutants applicable to the CMAQ program versus all areas.

Greenhouse Gas Performance Measures

FHWA requested comments on whether or not to establish greenhouse gas performance measures. The RTC believes no new national-level measures should be established beyond those required in MAP-21. Additional time and experience with national-level measures is also needed by State DOTs, MPOs, and USDOT before additional measures are created. If USDOT does establish a greenhouse gas performance measure, there should be a separate rulemaking process where additional comments can be provided.

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC FHWA REQUESTS FOR COMMENTS**Maximizing Opportunities for Successful Implementation**

FHWA requested comments on how it can help maximize opportunities for successful implementation and increase the chances for full State DOT and MPO compliance with new performance related regulations. The RTC believes that the development of a web-based user interface would greatly help with implementation. For example, the Regional Integrated Transportation System interface has already been developed by the University of Maryland and may be a great starting point, but training opportunities must be expanded.

Assessing Traffic Congestion with All Modes of Transportation

FHWA requested comments on feasible approaches to move toward the development of a measure that would consider the mobility of travelers using all surface modes of transportation.

DRAFT

Administrator Nadeau
Page Three

August 11, 2016

The RTC supports the consideration of the mobility of travelers using all surface modes of transportation. Related to rail, the information available as part of the General Transit Feed Specification can be incorporated in conjunction with ridership and service reliability data that transit agencies can share.

Availability of Performance Throughput Data

FHWA requested comments on the use and availability of performance throughput data, as it is believed that performance throughput data is not widely available at a national level or routinely measured on a system wide basis. In the DFW region, the traffic volumes and person flows calculated or forecasted from our Travel Demand Model are used and considered a reliable estimation of traffic throughput that mirrors actual travel experience. The RTC would support throughput data from travel demand models to be used to assess this type of performance.

Alternative Methods of Hourly Volume Estimates

FHWA requested comments on alternative methods of hourly volume estimates to more effectively capture the impact of performance changes on differing levels of system use. The RTC believes the use of travel demand models should be encouraged and facilitated, as well as the implementation of specific algorithms that could forecast hourly traffic volumes. An alternate approach would be to develop hourly factors based on the permanent traffic count stations that exist in a region. These factors could be applied to the annual average daily traffic estimated as part of the Highway Performance Monitoring System.

Calculating System Performance Metrics

FHWA requested comments on the need for a complete data set to accurately calculate the reliability metric or alternative approaches that could be used reliably as part of a national performance program. The RTC acknowledges the possibility for travel times to be missing during different time intervals of the day, and based on data currently being collected, developing imputation algorithms to estimate missing data is recommended. These algorithms could be developed based on the historical trends and the similarities between roadway segments belonging to the same region.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and look forward to working with FHWA in the implementation of final rules. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

Ron Jensen, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

RH:ch

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

DRAFT

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

August 11, 2016

Docket Management Facility
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Nadeau and Acting Administrator Flowers:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, I would like to submit comments on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform, **Docket Number FHWA-2016-0016**, published in the June 27, 2016, Federal Register.

The RTC is supportive of the proposed methods for improving MPO coordination in the transportation planning process, but understands this rulemaking may potentially transform numerous MPOs across the county and emphasizes flexibility in any final proposed rules.

The NPRM proposes that multiple MPOs in same Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) or in contiguous MPAs consolidate and/or develop single planning documents, but allows for some exceptions when considering consolidation. The RTC supports consolidation of smaller MPOs in order to plan at the correct scale as well as the development of single planning documents to promote regional decision making and a more efficient planning process. The consolidation of select MPOs may help transportation investments better reflect the needs and priorities of the entire region; however, flexibility is vital in the process moving forward and MPOs should be given adequate time to transition, which may be longer than two years. It is important that States and regions are able to provide input on their own boundaries.

State and MPO planning agreements in the proposed NPRM would also be required to employ consistent data, include a dispute resolution process and coordinate on analyses of areas within the MPA. The RTC supports documentation of coordinated data sharing and analytical materials, as well as dispute resolution. States and MPO sharing information or analyses within MPA would improve regional coordination and create a more efficient and focused planning process. Requiring a dispute resolution process and data sharing would also strengthen coordination of MPOs and States.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on the FHWA and FTA proposed rulemaking on Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

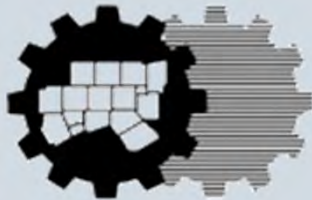
Sincerely,

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

RH:ch

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

Transportation Rulemaking



Regional Transportation Council

August 11, 2016

Amanda Wilson, AICP

North Central Texas Council of Governments

Overview

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM): National Performance Management Measures; Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Freight Movement on the Interstate System, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

- Comments Due August 20, 2016

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM): Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform

- Comments Due August 26, 2016

Performance Management Measures NPRM

Subpart A: General Information, Target Establishment, Reporting

Subpart E: Measures to Assess Performance of the National Highway System (NHS)

Subpart F: Measures to Assess Freight Movement on the Interstate System

Subpart G: Measures for Assessing the CMAQ Program – Traffic Congestion

Subpart H: Measures for Assessing the CMAQ Program – On-Road Mobile Source Emissions

Performance Management Measures NPRM

STATE DOT TARGET SETTING

- Establish 2- and 4-year targets within 1 year of effective final rule
- Adjustment of 4-year target allowed at mid-point
- Optional additional urbanized/non-urbanized targets

MPO TARGET SETTING

- Establish 2- and 4-year targets by either committing to support the State DOT target or establishing quantifiable target within 180 days of the State DOT
- If State DOT adjusts target, any MPO adjustments must occur within 180 days

Draft RTC Comments

TARGET SETTING

State targets may conflict with MPO targets; coordination is essential for success

MPOs may not be able to influence targets significantly in areas where the majority of project selection is handled by States

Reliability measures rely on terms such as expected travel times relative to uncongested times; States and MPOs defining expected travel times could be problematic (Request Option)

Draft RTC Comments

ASSESSING THE CMAQ IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM—ON-ROAD MOBILE SOURCE EMISSIONS

Measure

2- and 4-year Total Emission Reductions for each applicable criteria pollutant and precursor

Metric

Annual Tons of Emission Reductions by project for each applicable criteria pollutant and precursor

Draft Comments

Reporting areas should be consistent between CMAQ congestion and on-road mobile source emissions to make reporting simpler

Support definition for on-road mobile source that it is limited to NAAQS criteria

Draft RTC Comments

FHWA REQUESTED COMMENTS ON WHETHER OR NOT TO ESTABLISH GREENHOUSE GAS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Recommend not to establish GHG performance measures

Additional time and experience with current national-level measures is needed by State DOTs, MPOs, and USDOT before additional measures are created

Draft RTC Comments

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC FHWA QUESTIONS:

Recommendations for Implementation of New Regulations

Develop a web-based user interface to maximize successful implementation; offer training

Assess Congestion with all Modes

Consider the mobility of travelers using all surface modes of transportation

Incorporate shareable transit data

Traffic Throughput Data and Volume Estimates

A Travel Demand Model should be used as a reliable estimation when available; develop algorithms

Metropolitan Planning Area NPRM

Metropolitan Planning Coordination

- Clarifies definition of Metropolitan Planning Area and its use in regulations
- For areas with multiple MPOs, development of single planning documents
- Establish clear operating procedures for this coordination
- Encouragement for multiple MPOs in same Metropolitan Planning Area to consolidate, but allows for flexibility and exceptions
- Encouragement for MPOs to consolidate when MPAs are contiguous, but allows for flexibility and exceptions

Metropolitan Planning Area NPRM

MPO/State DOT Coordination

- Process for MPOs and State DOTs to employ consistent data, assumptions and other analytical materials
- Process for MPOs and State DOTs to resolve disagreements
- Documentation of processes in MPO Agreement

Draft RTC Comments

Metropolitan Planning Coordination

Support for single planning documents or consolidation of smaller MPOs for greater public understanding, planning at the correct scale and efficiency

Support flexibility for States and regions to make decisions on their boundaries

MPO/State DOT Coordination

Support documentation of coordinated data sharing, assumptions and analytical materials as well as dispute resolution

Contact Information

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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
CHINA ACADEMY OF TRANSPORTATION SCIENCES
AND THE
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

Background

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made and entered into by and between the China Academy of Transportation Sciences (CATS), located in Beijing, People's Republic of China, and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), located in Arlington, Texas, United States of America. This MOU is in support of the U.S. – China Transportation Forum established between the United States Department of Transportation and the Ministry of Transport of the Peoples Republic of China, with the goal of maximizing transportation capacity through increased infrastructure efficiency. The United States Department of Transportation is encouraging local and regional transportation entities to enter into cooperative agreements with CATS for the exchange of transportation related information in support of the U.S-China Transportation Forum.

CATS is a comprehensive research institute affiliated to the Ministry of Transport (MOT), P.R. China. Mainly involved in the forward-looking, public-beneficial and fundamental transportation researches, CATS has been focusing on major areas including transportation strategy, planning & policy, transportation information, transportation environmental protection and safety, and urban transportation etc. CATS is dedicated to establishing a first class think tank institute, a crucial innovation center, a well-known intermediary agent, and a comprehensive science & technology research institute both at home and abroad in the transportation industry.

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is the regional transportation policy body for the metropolitan planning organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area. The RTC has been and continues to be a forum for cooperative decisions on transportation in the Dallas-Fort Worth region.

The RTC has long participated in and supported activities of the Transportation Research Board (TRB), which is one of seven program units of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. TRB's mission is to promote innovation and progress in transportation through research. RTC staff has served on numerous TRB committees, including the TRB Executive Committee as a member and past-chair. TRB's Committee on International Cooperation focuses on facilitating transnational cooperation and collaboration among members of the global transportation community. In the spirit of TRB's Committee on International Cooperation, RTC staff enters into this Memorandum of Understanding to promote cooperation between RTC and CATS. CATS has entered into similar MOUs with the American Public Transportation Association, the Mineta Institute at San Jose State University part of the California State University System, and the University of South Florida.

Purpose

Recognizing the importance of mutual collaboration and the contributions to society made by our organizations through planning, research and development, both CATS and RTC share an interest in exchanging information and pursuing activities that promote efficient and safe public transportation services in our respective regions.

Toward this end, CATS and RTC staff agree to cooperate by exchanging knowledge and expertise in the area of integrated transport planning and modelling application urban transportation which will guide further discussions, and identify cooperation in a joint research project, modelling development and exchange of experts in these and other topic areas.

Areas of Cooperation

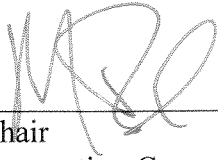
The Parties intend that the cooperation and collaboration may include but are not restricted to the following fields:

1. Provide technical support to the US-China Transportation Forum Urban Congestion Working Group.
2. Cooperate on the information and technical exchanges on integrated transport planning, modeling development and application.
3. Cooperate on applying international scientific and technical cooperation projects.
4. Conduct personnel exchanges, including visiting scholarships, intern exchanges, international conferences and workshops.

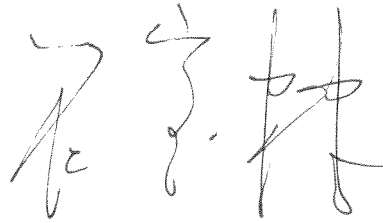
General

1. CATS and RTC staff shall exchange such information as they deem to be advantageous. All such exchanges shall be free of charge. Personnel performing services under this agreement shall retain their status as employees of their respective organizations. The supervision and administration of the personnel shall be in accordance with the policies and procedures of the organizations by which they are employed.
2. Specific cooperative projects and activities may be embodied in separate memoranda or plans between the Participants, which may cover the subject, procedures, and terms of cooperation to be undertaken, the entities involved, funding, and other appropriate matters related to the conditions of such cooperation.
3. CATS and RTC staff commit to working together to establish other opportunities for cooperation.
4. Any travel by RTC staff outside the United States will require approval by the Executive Board of the North Central Texas Council of Governments.
5. This MOU shall remain in force for three years, unless sooner terminated in writing by either party within 30 days of receipt, and may be renewed by mutual written consent.

Signed on June 3, 2016.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'MR' followed by a stylized flourish.

Mark Riley, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Parker County

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of three distinct, stylized characters.

Baolin Shi, President
China Academy of Transportation Sciences

中国交通运输部科学研究院 与 美国北得克萨斯州区域交通委员会 合作备忘录

一、背景

为支持中美交通论坛“提高基础设施效率、增强交通运输能力”的目标，中国交通运输部科学研究院（以下简称“交科院”）和美国北得克萨斯州区域交通委员会（以下简称“北得州交委会”）共同协商签署合作备忘录。美国交通运输部鼓励美国地方和区域交通部门与交科院签署合作协议，推动双方在交通相关领域的交流。

交科院是中国交通运输部直属的综合性科研单位，主要面向政府主管部门和整个交通运输行业开展前瞻性、公益性和基础性研究。交科院发展的基本定位是：深入实施创新驱动发展战略，立足“高端专业智库、一流创新基地、重要服务平台”发展定位，建设交通运输领域国内著名、国际知名的一流综合科研院所，为交通运输行业提质增效、转型升级提供有力的智力支撑与技术保障。

北得州交委会位于美国得克萨斯州，阿灵顿市，是负责达拉斯-沃斯堡大都会区的区域交通规划部门，一直以来并将继续成为达拉斯-沃斯堡地区交通协同决策的平台。北得州交委会长期以来一直参与

和支持美国交通运输委员会的活动。北得州交委会的成员服务于多个美国交通运输委员会分委员会，包括担任美国交通运输委员会执行委员会成员和前任美国交通运输委员会主席。美国交通运输委员会国际合作分委员会专门负责推进国际交流与合作。秉承美国交通运输委员会国际合作分委员会的精神，北得州交委会成员推进委员会和交科院的战略合作。在此之前，交科院已与美国公共交通协会、米内塔交通研究所、南佛罗里达大学等签署过类似的协议。

二、目的

基于对合作重要性以及双方合作对于社会贡献性的认识，交科院和北得州交委会均有兴趣开展交通运输相关领域的信息交流活动。为此，交科院和北得州交委会同意在综合交通规划及模型等领域开展信息与经验的交流活动，探讨双方在联合研究项目、模型开发、专家交流互访以及其他方面的合作。

三、合作领域

双方感兴趣的合作领域包括但不限于如下几个方面：

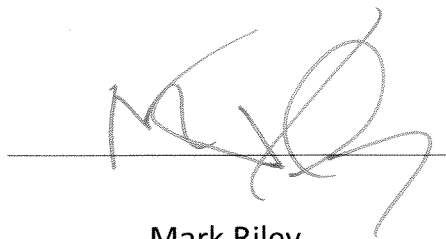
1. 为中美交通论坛城市拥堵工作组提供技术支持；
2. 在综合交通规划、模型开发和应用等方面开展信息和技术交流；
3. 合作申请国际科技合作项目；

4. 开展人员交流，包括访问学者、培训，联合组织召开国际会议等。

四、一般性条款

1. 双方在各自优势领域开展免费的信息交流。
2. 本合作备忘录涉及的工作人员，仍保留他们各自所属单位的职位。本合作备忘录涉及的工作人员的管理根据他们各自单位的具体规章制度执行。
3. 对于具体的合作项目和活动，双方需另外签署备忘录或工作计划。该备忘录或工作计划需包括主题、程序、合作内容、参与机构、资金和其它相关事宜。
4. 交科院和北得州交委会工作人员承诺共同努力探索双方潜在合作。北得州交委会成员须在北得州政府协会董事会的批准下方可赴其他国家开展工作。
5. 合作备忘录有效期为三年。一方终止本协议，需提前 30 天通知对方。合作备忘录终止后，经双方书面同意后可继续生效。

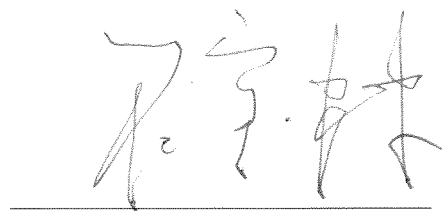
双方签字于 2016 年 6 月 3 日。

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Riley

美国北得克萨斯州区域交通委员会

主席

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, bold character on the left and several smaller characters on the right.

石宝林

中国交通运输部科学研究院

院长



NCTCOG
North Central Texas Council of Governments

GO

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transportation

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Transportation Conformity

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Print this page

Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles

Funding programs that address air quality, such as clean vehicle projects, are available from a number of Federal, State, local, and non-profit entities. This site provides links to various current and recurring grant opportunities and incentives for clean technology and infrastructure. It also provides information that is helpful once you have received grant funding through NCTCOG.

Air Quality Funding Home

Other Air Quality Funding Opportunities

Sign-Up for Email Updates

Select Language ? ?

Current Vehicle Grant Funding Opportunities

Click the links below for a program description and relevant dates and details.	Eligible Focus Areas									Eligible Applicant Type	
	Heavy-Duty Vehicles						Light-Duty Vehicles				
	Buses	Oil and Gas Vehicles/Equipment	Long Haul Trucks	Dump Trucks	Idle-Reduction Technology	Other	Passenger Vehicles	Taxis	Idle-Reduction Technology		
AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program							X			General Public	
Drayage Loan Program Deadline: First Come, First Served		X				X				Private Sector	
Federal and State Incentives and Laws (Including Tax Credits)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		Private Sector	
Propane Vehicle Incentives for Texas	X	X		X		X	X	X		Public Sector, Private Sector	
Texas Clean School Bus Program Deadline: November 1, 2016, 5pm CST NEW!	X									Public School Districts, Charter Schools	
Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program (TNGVGP) Deadline: May 26, 2017 5pm CST NEW!	X	X	X	X		X				Public Sector, Private Sector	
Tribal Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program FY 2016 Deadline: August 23, 2016 4pm EST NEW!	X		X		X	X				Tribal Governments	

http://www.nctcog.org/trans/air/vehicles/investments/funding/VehicleFundingOpportunities.asp[8/2/2016 9:37:41 AM]

[NCTCOG Funding Opportunity Archive](#)

If you have any questions on upcoming funding opportunities, please e-mail AQgrants@nctcog.org.

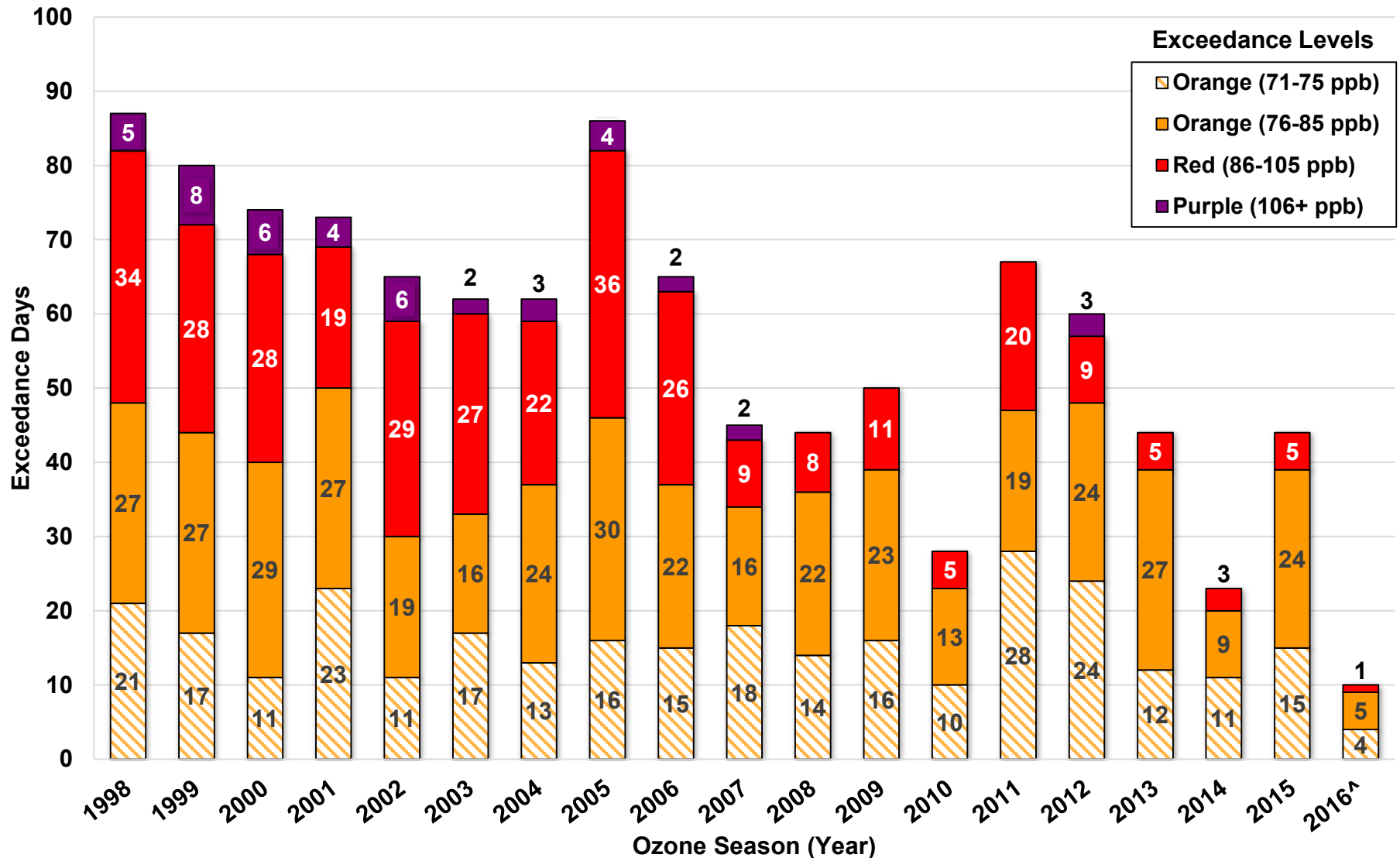
[CONTACT US](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [LEGAL](#) | [SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS](#)



North Central Texas Council of Governments | 616 Six Flags Drive P.O. Box 5888 Arlington, TX 76005-5888
Main Operator: (817) 640-3300 | Fax: (817) 640-7806

2016 OZONE SEASON

Eight-Hour Ozone Exceedance Days Based on 70 ppb Standard



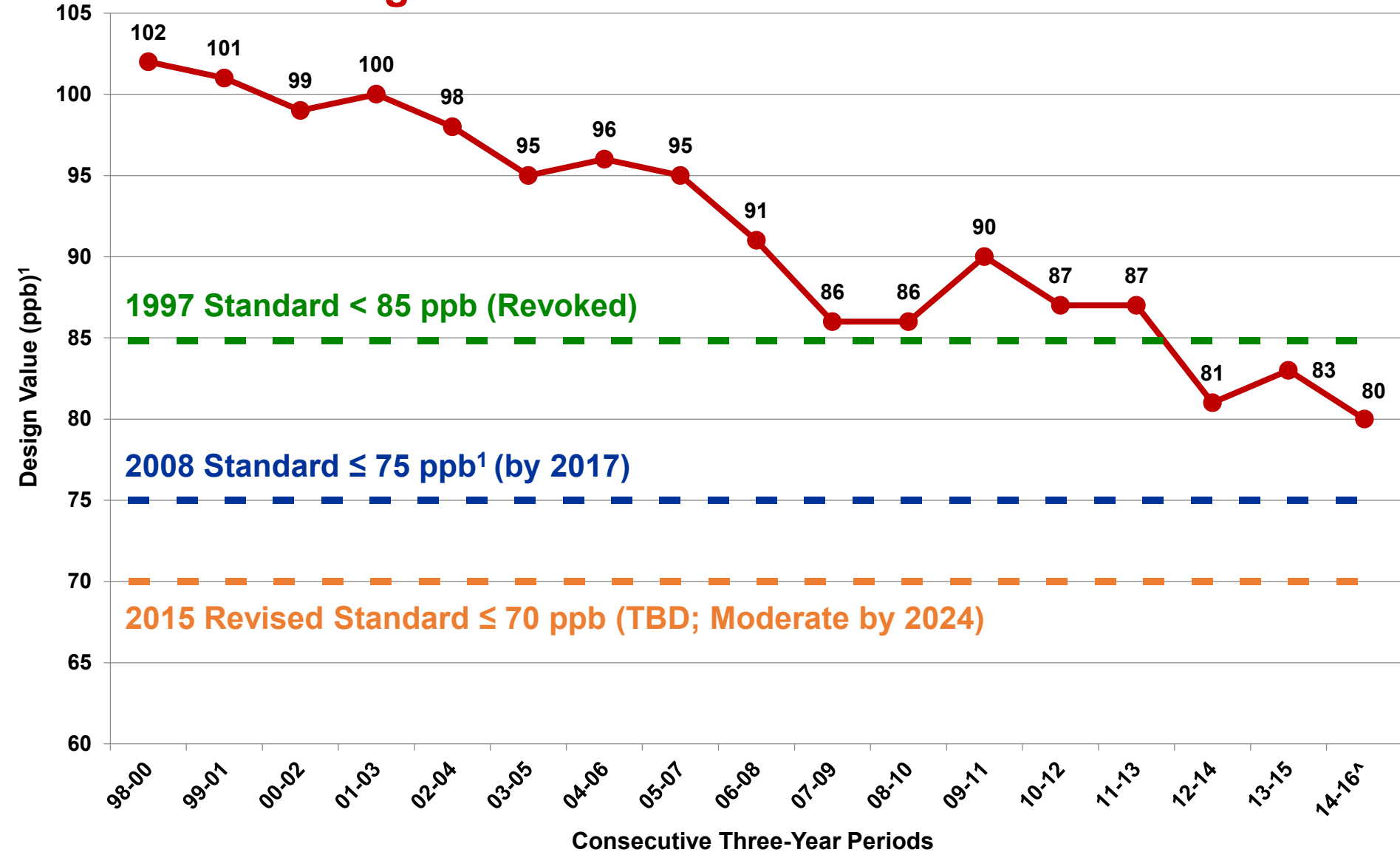
Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration. Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

 = Additional level orange exceedance days under the revised standard that were not exceedances under the previous 75 ppb standard. (AQI level orange = 71-75 ppb)

¹Not a full year of data, current as of 7/28/2016
 Source: TCEQ, http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl
 ppb = parts per billion

2016 OZONE SEASON

Eight-Hour Ozone Historical Trends



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

*Data not certified by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

¹Not a full year of data, current as of 7/28/2016.



Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Trainings & Events

2016

Tuesday, September 6

Compressed Natural Gas Fueling Facility Safety & Inspection Training University of Texas at Arlington 1 pm – 5 pm

What Will be Covered: Designed and taught by FS Circle Solutions, explains relevant codes and how they apply to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling stations. Participants will leave understanding the differences between IFC, NFPA 52 and NFPA 30A. These differences are a common source of friction between CNG developers and code officials because the industry designs meet NFPA 52, but code officials often inspect using the IFC. This class will cut through the confusing and often conflicting parts of the codes, and attendees will be able to enforce codes and permitting in a consistent manner that also improves public safety.

Who Should Attend: CNG professionals, code officials, and fire inspectors

Register: <http://csrtc.nctcog.org>

Wednesday, September 7

Compressed Natural Gas Fueling Facility Safety & Inspection Training University of Texas at Arlington 8 am – Noon

What Will be Covered: Designed and taught by FS Circle Solutions, explains relevant codes and how they apply to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling stations. Participants will leave understanding the differences between IFC, NFPA 52 and NFPA 30A. These differences are a common source of friction between CNG developers and code officials because the industry designs meet NFPA 52, but code officials often inspect using the IFC. This class will cut through the confusing and often conflicting parts of the codes, and attendees will be able to enforce codes and permitting in a consistent manner that also improves public safety.

Who Should Attend: CNG professionals, code officials, and fire inspectors

Register: <http://csrtc.nctcog.org>

Saturday, September 17

National Drive Electric Week Grapevine Mills Mall – Grapevine 10 am – 2 pm

What to Expect: Learn how you can drive electric at the largest gathering of EVs in North Texas! Activities, entertainment, giveaways, test-drives, and more will be available at the event.

Who Should Attend: General public, and electric vehicle enthusiasts and owners

Learn More: www.dfwcleancities.org/ndew

**Tuesday, October 4 –
Wednesday, October 5**

Compressed Natural Gas Fuel System Inspector Training Location TBD 8 am – 5 pm

What Will Be Covered: A working knowledge of the types of cylinders and fuel system components used in CNG vehicle systems; How to visually inspect CNG cylinders and fuel system components for damage and deterioration; How to vent and store CNG cylinders safely; How to safely and confidently hand CNG cylinders and fuel lines related to the system; How to recognize various failure models; information for the CSA International standardized certification test for cylinder inspection.

Who Should Attend: Technicians responsible for maintaining natural gas vehicles; system installers; safety managers; fleet managers and supervisors; and risk management staff

For additional information, visit www.dfwcleancities.org/cals or contact:

Kimberlin To, Communications Specialist

kto@nctcog.org | 817-608-2362



Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Trainings & Events

2017

**Monday, March 6 –
Tuesday, March 7**

National Alternative Fuel Training Consortium First Responder Vehicle Safety Training

NCTCOG

8 am – 5 pm

What Will Be Covered: Properties and functions of alternative fuels; How to identify the risks and hazards common to alternative fuel storage; How to recognize the alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) components, vehicle operation, fueling, and charging; How to identify risks involved with the transport and handling of alternative fuels; Personal protective equipment necessary for firefighters, EMS, and law enforcement officers when responding to an AFV incident; and rescuing occupants from a damaged AFV.

Who Should Attend: Fire fighters, EMS personnel, law enforcement, first responder trainers, tow truck industry personnel

For additional information, visit www.dfwcleancities.org/cals or contact:
Kimberlin To, Communications Specialist
kto@nctcog.org | 817-608-2362

Compressed Natural Gas

Fueling Facility Safety and Inspection Training

This course is designed and taught by Chief Jeremy Moore of FS Circle Solutions. As a professional firefighter, and alternative fuel advocate, he gained accreditations as a Fire Inspector and Fire Service Instructor from the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. He is committed to sustainable energy, particularly in compressed natural gas (CNG).

Chief Moore is a leader in safety and codes for CNG stations across the nation, working with industry leaders to help educate public officials about natural gas fuels. This four-hour course will prepare participants to:

- explain relevant codes and how they apply to CNG fueling stations
- understand the differences between IFC, NFPA 52, and NFPA 30A
- enforce codes and permitting in a consistent manner that will improve public safety
- know the State and international firecode
- have a general understanding of CNG cylinder and vehicle systems

Who: CNG professionals, code officials, and fire inspectors

Where: University of Texas at Arlington
Mavericks Activities Center -
Upstairs Lounge
500 W. Nedderman Drive
Arlington, TX 76019

When: Tuesday, September 6
1 - 5 pm
or
Wednesday, September 7
8 am - noon

Cost: \$15 per trainee

Register at: csrtc.nctcog.org



[Web Version](#) | [Update preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)[MEMBERS](#)VISIT WWW.TEXASGOODROADS.ORG

A Letter from Texas Good Roads President Jose Hernandez Regarding the Dissolution of Texas Good Roads

Dear Texas Good Roads Member:

Over the past year, the Executive Committee of the Texas Good Roads Transportation Association, with the assistance of AGC of Texas, investigated whether there was sufficient interest among members in continuing the operations of Texas Good Roads.

The consensus opinion was this: while there was considerable sentimental and historical value in the association, it lacked practical value. Additionally, given the advocacy groups already in place, the investment of time and revenue needed to restore the association to its former status exceeded its potential value.

For this reason, I made a motion to the Executive Committee to dissolve the association. The vote was 16-1 in favor of dissolution.

After payment of final bills, the balance of the operating account will revert back to AGC of Texas for overpayment of dues. No dues from TGR members were collected in 2016.

Per the Articles of Incorporation, any remaining amount, along with the association's furniture and other assets, must be donated to a 501c(3) nonprofit.

The association's office furniture was fully depreciated and was donated to Salvation Army.

The Federal PAC account was closed and its balance of \$6.00 was donated to the Federal Treasury.

A Communities Foundation of Texas charitable account, with a balance of \$3,600, was donated to the Texas Transportation Institute.

On behalf of Texas Good Roads, I thank you for your efforts in promoting the values of Texas Good Roads Transprotation Association, and for the value you gave it through your membership.

If you should have any questions regarding the dissolution of Texas Good Roads, please contact Kristen Ogden Smith at kogden@agctx.org.

Sincerely,

Jose Hernandez
President, Texas Good Roads

You're receiving this because you
are a member of Texas Good Roads.

Edit your subscription | Unsubscribe

1122 Colorado, Ste 305
Austin, TX 78701

512-478-9351



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

July 29, 2016

Mr. Dan Harbeke
Director of Public Affairs
Union Pacific Railroad
101 W. Watson Road
Arlington, TX 76010

Mr. Steven Thomas, P.E.
Manager Industry and Public Projects
Union Pacific Railroad
101 W. Watson Road
Arlington, TX 76010

Dear Messrs. Harbeke and Thomas:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the North Texas region, would like to express gratitude and support for the public-private partnership between NCTCOG, the City of Dallas, Union Pacific Railroad, and other public agencies. The objective of the partnership has been to develop a more thoughtful and integrated approach to the project selection process and provide benefits for both the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the North Central Texas region. Under this partnership, a Rail Safety Project Package has been identified and NCTCOG would like Union Pacific Railroad to formally consider the projects listed below.

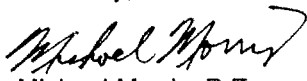
The Rail Safety Project Package will include three railroad crossing projects located at:

- North Prairie Creek Road – Proposed grade separation and crossing closure
- North Sam Houston Road – Proposed closing of the at-grade crossing
- Miller Yard Bypass Project (Linfield Road and Carbondale Street) – Proposed closing of the at-grade crossing at Linfield Road and making beautification improvements to the Joppa neighborhood, along with the possibility of an additional pedestrian bridge crossing over the railroad tracks at Linfield Road to facilitate pedestrian traffic. Improving the Loop 12 entrance to the neighborhood for vehicular/ pedestrian traffic and elimination of truck movements within the neighborhood is also proposed.

During the last meeting between NCTCOG and Union Pacific Railroad on July 12, 2016, we discussed the possibility of funding from Union Pacific Railroad and public agencies for the project list stated above. It was made clear that to achieve the desired outcome of implementation of the Rail Safety Project Package, there are several funding options that are under consideration by Union Pacific Railroad and the public agencies. NCTCOG is requesting that Union Pacific Railroad review the project list and provide possible funding commitments similar to the discussed 5% of construction costs, three Crossing Closure Credits, and \$500,000 associated with signal relocation and landscaping for the Joppa neighborhood.

In addition to Union Pacific Railroad's contributions, NCTCOG, the City of Dallas, and other public agencies would like to express their commitment to identifying a public funding source for implementation of the Rail Safety Project Package proposals. NCTCOG has worked with Union Pacific Railroad on a variety of transportation projects, like Tower 55, and looks forward to partnering again in the implementation of the multi-faceted Rail Safety Project Package.

Sincerely,


Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

JH:lk

cc: Jeff Hathcock, Principal Transportation Planner, NCTCOG

Michael —

Just saw the RTC approved an MOU with Texas Central. Dropping a quick note to thank you for leadership in supporting high-speed rail for North Texas. This project will provide District 16 with a great economic stimulus and make headway for the future of mobility in Texas.

Thanks again —

Don Huffering



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

July 25, 2016

The Honorable Robert Nichols
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Nichols:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I would like to thank you for your continued leadership on transportation issues. An RTC membership roster is enclosed.

As you know, long-term transportation funding is critical for MPOs, state transportation planners and other agencies to plan for future infrastructure projects. As a champion for transportation, your voice certainly helped in getting Propositions 1 and 7 approved, which gives us the ability to plan and implement needed transportation improvements throughout North Texas. We were recently provided with your Tax Road vs. Toll Road presentation and just wanted to once again thank you for speaking about the topic and for being a leader on the issue.

I also wanted to note that I was born in Jacksonville while my father was attending Jacksonville Baptist College.

Feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Jensen", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

RH:ch
Enclosure

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



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

July 14, 2016

The Honorable Tryon D. Lewis
Chair
Texas Transportation
Commission
125 East 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Jeff Austin, III
Commissioner
Texas Transportation
Commission
125 East 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Commissioner
Texas Transportation
Commission
125 East 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Laura Ryan
Commissioner
Texas Transportation
Commission
125 East 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Victor Vandergriff
Commissioner
Texas Transportation
Commission
125 East 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chair Lewis and Commissioners Austin, Bugg, Ryan, and Vandergriff:

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) staff has notified the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) that FY 2013 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds are at risk of lapsing at the end of FY 2016. These funds were made available through Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). Federal regulations state that TAP funds apportioned are available for the year of apportionment plus three (3) years and that any amounts that remain unobligated at the end of that period will lapse. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is requesting the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) assistance in ensuring that TAP funds are not lost to the region or State.

To provide some history, on July 6, 2012, MAP-21 was signed into law authorizing the United States Department of Transportation to create a TAP funding program. In March 2013, six (6) months into FY 2013, TAP apportionments were established at the federal level. Statewide Metropolitan Planning Organizations' (MPO) apportionments for TAP funds, including NCTCOG's regional allocation, were then established by TxDOT in late August 2013. Because the apportionments were not completed until the end of FY 2013, the FY 2013 apportionment funds were included with the FY 2014 allocations. Therefore, MPOs and the State lost one year of implementation time (i.e., all of FY 2013).

July 14, 2016

In October 2013, the Dallas-Fort Worth MPO initiated the 2014-2015 TAP Call for Projects, which resulted in project selection by October 2014. Selected projects were added to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through the next available TIP modification cycle. Due to a delay in finalization of a TxDOT agreement template for TAP projects, these projects were delayed until at least December 2015, when the template agreement was made available.

After coordinating with local governments and NCTCOG, the TxDOT Dallas District office inquired about the possibility of allowing flexibility in the use of the TAP funds in other urbanized regions throughout the State, but the District was advised that the location of the project is specific to the obligation. Hence, only projects physically located in a particular urbanized area can use that area's apportionment and the funds cannot be transferred to or traded with another urbanized area. TxDOT staff has also requested that Federal Highway Administration consider the possibility of a six (6) month extension to obligate funds. The response to this request is still pending.

Without a solution, the RTC is concerned not only with the potential loss of federal funding for the region, but also the possibility of lapsing TAP funding statewide. Circumstances beyond our control led to delays in receiving TAP funding allocations; therefore, the Regional Transportation Council is asking for the Texas Transportation Commission to assist in coordinating with FHWA to find a solution that will prevent un-obligated FY 2013 TAP funds from lapsing by the September 30, 2016 deadline. Please contact Michael Morris, P.E. or Christie Gotti at 817-695-9240 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Jensen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council

KB:tw

cc: Bill Hale, P.E., Chief Engineer, TxDOT
Brian Barth, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Fort Worth District
Kelly Selman, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Dallas District



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

July 8, 2016

Mr. Kelly Selman, P.E.
District Engineer
Texas Department of Transportation
Dallas District
4777 US Hwy. 80 E.
Mesquite, TX 75150

Mr. Brian Barth, P.E.
District Engineer
Texas Department of Transportation
Fort Worth District
2801 Southwest Loop 820
Fort Worth, TX 76133

Dear Messrs. Selman and Barth:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is requesting the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to extend the hours of operation on the IH 30 (Tom Landry) managed lane from twelve hours a day to the maximum extent possible, on a daily basis. The longer hours of operation during weekdays allows the lane to be open to accommodate commuters along the corridor, as well as guests attending special events.

This corridor is utilized to serve special events at both AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys and Globe Life Park, home of the Texas Rangers. This would reduce the number of requests outside normal hours of operation to provide access for special events. In addition, opening the lane for longer hours will minimize the number of times the operating crew will need to be deployed, saving money in the operating budget. Longer operating hours also results in additional revenue that can help fund the operations and management of the IH 30 (Tom Landry) corridor.

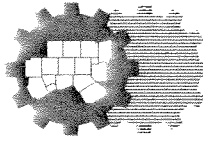
If you have any questions or would like to discuss this request further, please let me know. NCTCOG looks forward to the continued partnership with TxDOT on this corridor as well as other corridors within the region.

Sincerely,

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

NSB:lk

cc: Natalie Bettger, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG
Dan Lamers, P.E., Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

July 1, 2016

Mr. Scott Young, J.D., P.E.
President & CEO
Strategic Planning and Program Development, Inc.
16610 Dallas Parkway, Suite 2500
Dallas, TX 75287

Dear Mr. Young:

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff analyzed the potential volume of traffic on a proposed new toll road between US 80 and IH 20 just east of the East Fork Trinity River. The Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Travel Model was used in a series of scenarios including a) building the new road as a freeway, b) building the new road with the current regional toll rate, and c) building the proposed tolled facility and assuming the proposed extension of President George Bush Tollway (PGBT) from US 80 to IH 20 is delayed past 2040. We also performed an "all-or-nothing" analysis which indicates preferred travel routes independent of the effects of congestion. The results of the analysis are included.

Based on these results, our conclusion is that the project, which is not included in either the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or the recently-completed Kaufman County Thoroughfare Plan, does not warrant inclusion in the MTP at this time. The MTP already includes plans for the extension of PGBT by 2027 which would compete with this project by providing a parallel route just west of the East Fork Trinity River. The analysis does show that there is a moderate demand for a facility to serve north-south travel east of the river in Kaufman County. Even with the PGBT extension, the forecast volumes suggest the need could be better addressed with an arterial thoroughfare rather than a major limited-access facility. For example, Walnut Lane (FM 548/FM 740) has already been identified for expansion to six lanes in the Kaufman County Thoroughfare Plan. We will work with Kaufman County and the Texas Department of Transportation, to identify additional options to meet the north-south demand in this part of the county.

Sincerely,

Dan Lamers, P.E.
Senior Program Manager

DP:cmg
Enclosure

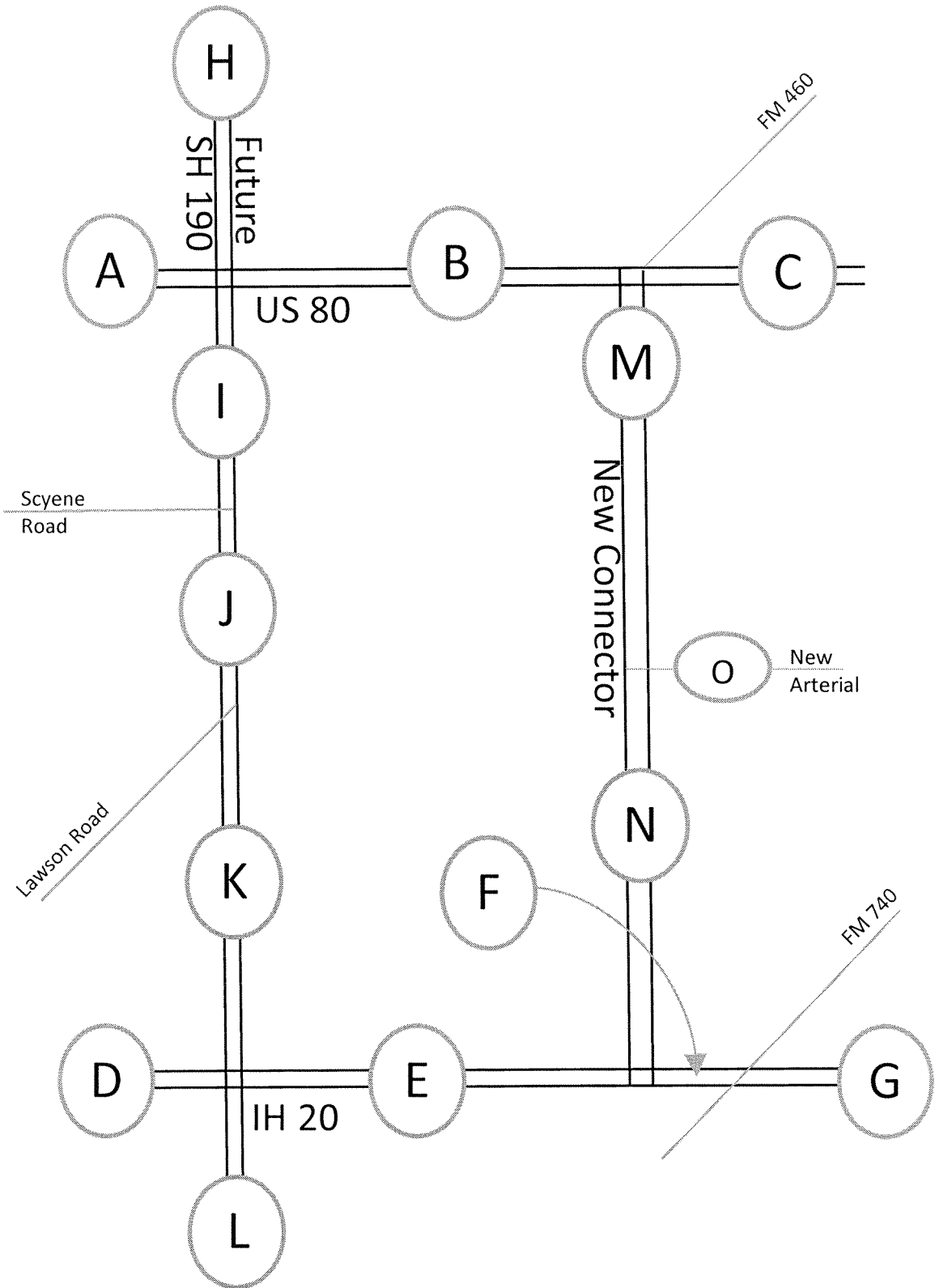
cc: The Honorable Bruce Wood, Kaufman County
Mr. Kelly Sellman, P.E., Texas Department of Transportation
Mr. Michael Morris, P.E., NCTCOG ✓

Kaufman County Connector Projected Volumes

From: To:		Scenario					Percentage Change				
		1. No Connector	2. Free Connector	3. Toll Connector	4. All-or-Nothing	5. Toll Connector, No SH 190	2 vs 1	3 vs 1	4 vs 2	5 vs 3	5 vs 1
US 80											
A	West SH 190	147,600	148,000	148,600	169,600	147,000	0.3%	0.7%	14.6%	-1.1%	-0.4%
B	SH 190 New Connector	182,900	179,100	177,700	209,400	183,000	-2.1%	-2.8%	16.9%	3.0%	0.1%
C	New Connector East	137,500	141,200	140,100	172,700	139,700	2.7%	1.9%	-0.8%	-0.3%	1.6%
IH 20											
D	West SH 190	111,700	119,100	118,100	95,100	121,900	6.6%	5.7%	-20.2%	3.2%	9.1%
E	SH 190 New Connector	107,100	122,700	120,000	93,400	120,200	14.6%	12.0%	-23.9%	0.2%	12.2%
F	New Connector FM 740	107,100	102,800	102,900	88,200	103,800	-4.0%	-3.9%	0.1%	0.9%	-3.1%
G	FM 740 East	86,700	85,400	85,200	71,100	85,400	-1.5%	-1.7%	-16.7%	0.2%	-1.5%
SH 190											
H	North US 80	44,600	43,700	44,000	61,300	34,800	-2.0%	-1.3%	40.3%	-20.9%	-22.0%
I	US 80 Scyene Road	26,700	19,000	21,800	18,700	N/A	-28.8%	-18.4%	14.7%	-1.6%	N/A
J	Scyene Road Lawson Road	27,500	21,100	23,800	20,700	N/A	-23.3%	-13.5%	12.8%	-1.9%	N/A
K	Lawson Road IH 20	16,200	14,500	16,600	14,400	N/A	-10.5%	2.5%	14.5%	-0.7%	N/A
L	IH 20 South	20,200	22,200	22,500	17,400	14,900	9.9%	11.4%	-21.6%	-33.8%	-26.2%
New Connector											
M	US 80 New Arterial	N/A	30,000	17,300	11,900	22,200	N/A	N/A	-42.3%	28.3%	N/A
N	New Arterial IH 20	N/A	29,800	18,800	11,700	22,900	N/A	N/A	-60.7%	21.8%	N/A
New Arterial:											
O	New Connector East	N/A	3,000	2,800	0	2,800	N/A	N/A	-100.0%	0.0%	N/A

Proposed US 80/IH 20 Connector

Volumes for Indicated Segments





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

TO: North Central Texas Legislative Delegation

DATE: July 1, 2016

FROM: Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation
Council Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

SUBJECT: Promotion of Regional Vehicle Repair and Replacement Program Funding

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, thank you for your leadership in the Texas Legislature on transportation and air quality issues.

In 2011, funding was cut for the Low Income Vehicle Repair, Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program, also known as the AirCheckTexas Program. The 84th Texas Legislature understood the importance of this program and appropriated the program's dedicated revenue beginning with fiscal years 2016-2017. The program is now fully reinstated and once again working to improve air quality by offering financial incentives to repair or remove high-emitting vehicles from the roadways. We thank you for recognizing the need for this important program.

Since funding for the AirCheckTexas program is now available, we need your help spreading the word. Please consider sharing information about the program with your constituents at an upcoming town hall, meeting or any other event. Enclosed is an information packet about the program to provide to your constituents. If the program is able to be incorporated into upcoming community settings, and you think it would be beneficial for an AirCheckTexas Program staff member to be in attendance, please let us know. More information about the program can be found at www.nctcog.org/airchecktexas.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.



Ron Jensen

RH:ch
Enclosure

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



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

June 28, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council, which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I am pleased to support Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART) grant submittal for the Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation Public Transportation Innovation Funding Opportunity; Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox Demonstration Program.

This project will improve the availability of transportation options for people in North Texas. Agencies like DART and the Denton County Transportation Authority, another MOD Sandbox Demonstration Program applicant, are considering how to use technology as a means to harness the power of many forms of shared-ride transportation to increase accessibility and travel options in our region. Piloting, testing, and finding workable solutions that facilitate the last-mile connection are essential to connect customers with multiple modes of transportation, including public transportation, private transportation, and transportation network companies.

This project is consistent with the programs and policies in Mobility 2040: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If the project is successful in receiving funds, the Regional Transportation Council will support its inclusion in the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Again, I would like to express my support for DART's grant submittal for the MOD Sandbox Demonstration Program. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

RH:ch

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



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

June 28, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council, which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I am pleased to support the Denton County Transportation Authority's (DCTA) grant submittal for the Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation Public Transportation Innovation Funding Opportunity; Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox Demonstration Program.

This project will improve the availability of transportation options for people in North Texas. Agencies like DCTA and Dallas Area Rapid Transit, another MOD Sandbox Demonstration Program applicant, are considering how to use technology as a means to harness the power of many forms of shared-ride transportation to increase accessibility and travel options in our region. Piloting, testing, and finding workable solutions that facilitate the last-mile connection are essential to connect customers with multiple modes of transportation, including public transportation, private transportation, and transportation network companies.

This project is consistent with the programs and policies in Mobility 2040: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If the project is successful in receiving funds, the Regional Transportation Council will support its inclusion in the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Again, I would like to express my support for DCTA's grant submittal for the MOD Sandbox Demonstration Program. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

RH:ch

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



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

June 9, 2016

Mr. Benjamin Owen
Office of Planning and Environment
United States Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Owen:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which serves as the policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I am pleased to support the 2016 Federal Transit Administration's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Pilot Grant Program application from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) for the **Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Red and Blue Lines TOD Corridor Planning Study**.

The planning study is designed to address critical barriers to TOD in the Red and Blue Line corridors through analysis identification of priority last mile bicycle and pedestrian connections to rail stations, advanced data collection of parking supply around rail stations, and surveys on the travel, demographics, and other preferences of those living and working around rail stations. The comprehensive planning analysis resulting from this work will not only advance the station area economic development, critical infrastructure needs, and promote ridership for the 28 DART stations in the project, it will also serve as a model to be replicated across our region to assist additional communities with new knowledge of how to best support TOD.

The application includes a broad regional partnership between NCTCOG, DART, and the four cities of Dallas, Garland, Plano and Richardson. Prior coordination with the four cities and DART through the regional TOD Task Force culminated in knowledge of TOD barriers and demonstrates our region's commitment to improving transit station accessibility and development. This application is also consistent with TOD supportive goals and policies approved by the RTC in the region's long range transportation plan, *Mobility 2040: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas*. NCTCOG will take the lead role in directing and coordinating planning efforts and further facilitating regional coordination. The RTC took action on May 12, 2016, to commit matching funds of \$300,000.

Again, the RTC supports NCTCOG's TOD Planning Pilot Grant Program application. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

Mark Riley
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Parker County Judge

TL/RH:ch

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



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

June 2, 2016

Ms. Stephanie Jones
Chief Opportunities Officer
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Jones:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. On behalf of the RTC, we support the City of Dallas' application for the Every Place Counts Design Challenge and the US Department of Transportation's selection to receive a two-day technical assistance workshop to assist with establishing guidelines for aesthetics and amenities that could be included in the Interstate Highway 35E/US Highway 67 project known as the Southern Gateway project.

The Texas Department of Transportation will begin the construction and widening of approximately 11 miles of these freeways from downtown Dallas to Interstate Highway 20 in 2017. Existing design deficiencies create congestion, impede traffic flow and are a safety concern for motorists. This project improves the Southern Dallas system linkage and allows for added mobility for residents and visitors. This enhanced mobility would specifically benefit residents by improving access to other areas of Dallas, including employment opportunities and essential services.

The project is included in Mobility 2040: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas. All federally funded surface transportation projects must also be included in the Transportation Improvement Program. If the project is successful in receiving funds, the Regional Transportation Council will support its inclusion in the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

Mark Riley
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Parker County Judge

RH:ch

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

DART extension will help UNT-Dallas area fulfill promise

The area around the University of North Texas at Dallas has long been touted as one of the city's most promising development opportunities. Not only is UNT-Dallas the only public four-year institution in the southern half of the city, but the rolling and lush topography boasts acres of potential.

What the area has lacked is convenient access to a rail line. But that is about to change.

On Oct. 24, DART's Blue Line expansion will open a rail station about two football fields from the southern edge of the campus and another at Camp Wisdom Road. No one should underestimate the importance of this rail line to the university and surrounding community.

The UNT-Dallas stop will be the southernmost end of the Blue Line and will allow students to affordably travel to the campus from just about any neighborhood in the city. For a student body that comes from families earning about \$30,000 a year, this is a deal changer.

The immediate community also stands to benefit, as the university now has a better chance to serve as a catalyst for economic development.

The school is about to break ground on a 120-bed residence hall, which is set to open next year. Other plans call for an amphitheater, an academic building and meeting space for community gatherings.

By 2021, the school expects to nearly double its enrollment, from 2,600 students to about 5,000. With the rail line at the school's back door and more people on campus, it is only natural that commercial and residential developers will follow these opportunities.

We applaud DART for completing this rail extension on budget and sooner than originally planned. Initially, the target date was 2019, but the timeline was accelerated to get this vital transportation link to the campus more quickly.

The ripple effects are already visible. Centurion American Development recently purchased 94 acres of land southeast of the campus and plans to put retail, townhomes and apartments on the property. This is in addition to the more than 200 acres it already secured at I-20 and Lancaster Road.

Now that the university and DART have increased their investment in southern Dallas, we hope more developers and potential homeowners give a careful look to what it offers. What's taking shape illustrates exactly the kind of progress that will indeed help bridge Dallas' "north-south gap."

Recent tragedies renew our resolve to close Dallas' north-south gap

By Dallas Morning News Editorial newsfeedback+editorial@dallasnews.com

Staff Writer

Published: 12 July 2016 07:00 AM

Updated: 12 July 2016 09:47 AM

Many well-intentioned individuals and institutions -- north and south -- have worked hard to try to close the economic and quality of life gaps that too often divide Dallas.

Pummeled by last week's crushing tragedies in this city and across the nation, it's understandable that many local bridge-builders feel a sense of helplessness.

What happens on Main Street Baton Rouge or suburban St. Paul affects Main Street Dallas. In a culture saturated by social media and smartphone video, all Americans instantly become citizens of the same place.

That's why this newspaper is more resolute than ever in advancing our ["Bridging Dallas' North-South Gap" efforts](#). For more than eight years, we have advocated ways, big and small, to lift up the southern half of our city.

Key players throughout Dallas deserve the credit for pushing progress forward.

For example, the entire City Council regularly shows a degree of understanding and support for southern Dallas that was unheard of at the horseshoe just a decade ago. Leading the way are the second-year southern council members who offer constructive ideas and strategies.

Additionally, [Mayor Mike Rawlings' GrowSouth initiative](#), in its fifth year, has kept the spotlight brightly trained on this area's assets and needs.

The socioeconomic problems that bedevil large swaths of Dallas remain daunting, chief among them [the large number of children living in poverty](#). Look at any set of numbers related to the disadvantaged and you'll find a high number represent people of color.

Things are changing, albeit too slowly:

Parkland's Hatcher Station Health Center has [dramatically improved access to healthcare](#) in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. Concrete, well-funded plans are evolving for [a revitalized Southwest Center Mall](#). DART's Blue Line extension to provide service to the University of North Texas at Dallas [will open in October](#), well ahead of schedule.

Sometimes progress is as preliminary as the simple recognition that a problem exists, as is the case with [the epidemic of loose dogs](#) that pervades southern Dallas.

Early on in our "bridging the gap" work, we noted that institutionalized injustice and ingrained negligence would only diminish under decades of persistence. And we pledged to be that relentless voice.

Dallas is asking itself lots of questions this week, and that goes for this newspaper as well: "Where are the holes in our efforts?" "What are we missing?"

Rawlings offered a good starting place when we posed that question to him: "If we could all, in the next 30 days, make sure to have a sandwich with someone who is not from our point of view or from our part of town, that would be a huge benefit in moving this city along."

We like that idea. We'd also like to hear yours; send them to **editorialboard@dallasnews**

Editorial: A crucial Texas Legislature lies ahead, so take care to choose the right reps

Published: 11 July 2016 08:00 AM

Updated: 11 July 2016 01:10 PM

If you were paying attention just before the long July Fourth weekend, you noticed the alert that went out across Austin and all over Texas. Rest assured the heads of our state agencies caught it.

It came [as a brief letter](#), less than two pages, from Texas' so-called "Big Three" of Gov. Greg Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Joe Straus.

In sum: Do not plan on more money to spend in the 2018-19 biennial budget. In fact, please present budget requests [4 percent lower than base appropriations](#).

For now, a few areas are exempt, including state aid to public schools, Child Protective Services, mental health services, border security, Medicaid, foster care, bond payments and state employee pensions. Which, if you've ever scripted a budget, puts a greater emphasis on cuts elsewhere.

And this is Texas, home of the "economic miracle," where lower taxes and fewer regulations are supposed to insulate us from budget pain. But when the oil and gas industry is under pressure from lower prices worldwide, the ripple effects on state revenue are undeniable.

That's why Abbott, Patrick and Straus want smaller budget requests. Agency heads will comply, especially if they want to remain agency heads, but the Legislature will have the final say next spring in their 85th such session.

This is where you can help. The budget fight, which could be especially loud and ugly next year, does not happen in a vacuum. You obviously have a say in who goes to Austin to represent you in the Texas House and Senate.

In less than four months, you most likely will have a chance to elect your House member, with only a few seats uncontested, and your Senate seat might be on the ballot, too. These are the men and women who will preside over committee hearings, work the halls and the chamber floor and then vote on a two-year state budget.

Nothing they do in Austin is more important, so it makes sense that no choice you face in November carries more weight. As tempting as it may be to vote a straight ticket and be done with it, are you certain each person on whichever party slate you choose accurately reflects the spending choices you would make?

And the only way to know the answer to that question -- really know it -- is to research the candidates seeking your vote and evaluate their stands. Do they want to expand [funding for CPS](#)

and other struggling child welfare programs? What about [funding for public schools](#) and transportation? Higher education? The [rainy-day fund](#)? Taxation and the size of government?

It matters who you send to Austin, and for our purposes, an uninformed vote is no better than sitting out the election. Tough decisions lay ahead in the 2017 Legislature, and you want someone who shares your vision making. What you decide now most certainly affects what your Legislature does later.

'Determine the value of each dollar spent'

"It is imperative that every state agency engage in a thorough review of each program and budget strategy and determine the value of each dollar spent. As the starting point for budget deliberations, we are requiring each agency to trim four percent from their base appropriation levels."

Letter from Gov. **Greg Abbott**, Lt. Gov. **Dan Patrick** and House Speaker **Joe Straus** to state agency heads and other leaders, June 30 -- DMN

'Pokemon GO' increases distracted driving, walking

BY GORDON DICKSON gdickson@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH

If you're already tired of watching pedestrians accidentally step into traffic while playing *Pokemon GO*, safety experts and psychologists have a somber message for you:

Get used to it.

The immensely popular *Pokemon GO* game, made by Nintendo and available for free download on smartphones, has taken the United States and other countries by storm since its release on July 6. In downtown Fort Worth this week, several hundred pedestrians young and old roamed the streets during lunch breaks, in search of the cartoon creatures.

"It's just fun," said Jace Lawler, 31, an information technology employee who captured Zubat, Nidoran and other Pokemon characters while walking along Eighth Street near General Worth Square. "I am walking from building to building, and they pop up on the sidewalks and in doorways."

The game uses the camera function on players' smartphones to transpose images of the pocket monsters onto real-world settings. For example, a player walking through Burnett Plaza downtown might come across a Do-duo — a creature that resembles a two-headed dodo bird — standing next to the Briefcase Man statue. The player can take a snapshot of the creature and its surroundings before "capturing" it in the game.

Some safety experts have issued warnings about the dangers of driving — or walking in traffic — while playing the game. And there have been many other strange reports, including one in Missouri, where police say a large number of youths were lured to a park by a feature in the game and then robbed. In Wyoming, a teenager searching for a water Pokemon instead found a dead body.

On Tuesday, the Texas Department of Transportation began asking its followers on Twitter and Facebook to submit artwork and slogans for a "Don't #PokemonGO and Drive" social media campaign. Followers responded by submitting written slogans, photos and at least one video.

Washington state also initiated a campaign urging motorists not to drive while playing *Pokemon GO*.

Raul Rodriguez, 17, a senior at Arlington Heights High School, said he saw several people walking in downtown Fort Worth while playing the game, and not watching closely where they were going. Thankfully, nobody got hit, he said.

Rodriguez said he hasn't seen anyone playing the game while driving, although many people have admitted doing so on social media. That, he added, "seems like an absurdly bad idea."

ALTERNATE UNIVERSE

The popularity of *Pokemon GO* can hardly be exaggerated. Less than a week after its release, the game software was installed on more Android phones than the popular Tinder dating application, according to the SimilarWeb analytic firm. *Pokemon GO* also has nearly as many daily users as Twitter, and more usage time than Whatsapp, Instagram and Snapchat.

Whether *Pokemon GO* is a phenomenon that's here to stay or just a flash in the pan, experts say it's just the beginning of what promises to be a wave of new virtual reality games that are sure to sap our already-thin attention spans away from our earthly obligations.

"*Pokemon Go* is the biggest step the culture has taken so far toward virtual reality," said Elias Aboujaoude, a Stanford University psychiatrist and author of *Virtually You: The Dangerous Powers of the e-Personality*.

Virtual reality gaming has been around for years, although most gamers would agree that the technology is in its infancy. Many games require a bulky headset and are played indoors.

But there are other outdoor uses. Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington this year is giving riders of the Shockwave roller coaster the option of putting on a headset — and in the process converting a traditional amusement park ride into a futuristic alien space battle.

Makers of headsets such as Facebook's Oculus are pledging millions of dollars to get video game manufacturers to start creating new content, according to *The Wall Street Journal*. And the *Journal* has begun aggregating VR content in its digital editions, even offering viewers instructions on how to watch the material.

SOCIAL SKILLS VS. SOCIAL MEDIA

Aboujaoude and other futurists have warned for years that, when virtual reality becomes more commonplace — possibly in just a few years — humanity will struggle with new moral issues. The new games, they say, will give players a chance to commit acts of sexuality and violence that are supposed to be off-limits in the real world.

And gamers of the not-too-distant future, they warn, will have the option of spending most if not all their waking hours in an alternate universe. The result could be a future generation of people lacking in the social skills considered so important today.

Of course, *Pokemon GO* doesn't go anywhere near that far. The game is a subtle combination of the real and artificial worlds. But the game's ability to psychologically place players in an alternate reality setting so easily — simply by pressing a few buttons on their phone's touch screen — is a breakthrough that is sure to be copied by other game manufacturers.

"Augmented reality, used by *Pokemon Go* to fuse virtual images with the physical environment, is the logical next step before embracing virtual reality more fully and before radically detaching ourselves from the physical world," Aboujaoude said in an email. "While *Pokemon Go* has put some people in harm's way by sending them to the wrong place at the wrong time, it is too early to fully appreciate its psychological impact. However, because it makes players interact with their physical environments, it is different from practically all other video and mobile games and can appear healthier as a result. This may lead us to underestimate its consequences."

Gordon Dickson: 817-390-7796, @gdickson

Congress passes aviation bill to close airport security gaps

BY JOAN LOWY *The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON

Congress passed an aviation bill Wednesday that attempts to close gaps in airport security and shorten screening lines, but leaves thornier issues unresolved.

The bill also extends the Federal Aviation Administration's programs for 14 months at current funding levels. It was approved in the Senate by a vote of 89 to 4. The House had passed the measure earlier in the week and it now goes to President Barack Obama, who must sign the bill by Friday when the FAA's current operating authority expires to avoid a partial agency shutdown.

Responding to attacks by violent extremists associated with the Islamic State on airports in Brussels and Istanbul, the bill includes an array of provisions aimed at protecting "soft targets" outside security perimeters. Other provisions designed to address potential "insider threats" would toughen vetting of airport workers and other employees with access to secure areas, expand random employee inspections and require reviews of perimeter security. Investigators suspect a bomb had been smuggled aboard a Russian Metrojet airliner that disintegrated over Egypt last year.

The measure is the most significant airport security bill to pass Congress in a decade, and its provisions "speak directly to some of the gaps that we perceive to exist in our aviation system in this country," said Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

But it also is notable for what it doesn't contain: A plan to remove air traffic control operations from the FAA and put them under the control of a private, non-profit corporation run primarily by segments of the aviation industry.

Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the airline industry has made privatizing air traffic control a top priority. But they ran into opposition from other powerful committee chairmen who don't want to cede oversight responsibility for a large share of the nation's aviation system to a private corporation. Other segments of the aviation industry also objected to the plan, saying they feared the corporation would be dominated by airline interests.

Airlines say privatization is needed because the FAA's culture is too slow and inflexible to complete the air traffic system's transition from old radar technology to satellites.

Shuster hasn't given up on the plan and may revive it next year when Congress will face a new deadline to extend FAA's authority.

Meet the residents who need city resources more than an I-35 deck park

By Sharon Grigsby Follow @SharonFGrigsby sgrigsby@dallasnews.com

Editorial Writer

Published: 13 July 2016 12:41 PM

Updated: 13 July 2016 06:03 PM

Our editorial page wrote earlier this week that last week's ambush of Dallas police officers has hardened our resolve around the "Bridging Dallas' North-South Gap" project. So because I didn't have an assignment related to yesterday's memorial service, I decided the most constructive thing I could do was spend the morning visiting a neighborhood where I had previously spent little time.

The choice was easy, thanks to a conversation I had with city council member Carolyn King Arnold just after the July council break began. Among the many issues we discussed were her concerns about the proposed Southern Gateway deck park. At the end of June, the council approved a resolution endorsing this park, with Marsalis Avenue to Ewing Avenue identified as the best possible location.

Arnold's not terribly enthusiastic about this project, not to mention questioning how the city eventually would find the tens of millions needed for the proposed Public Green, situated near the Dallas Zoo. While the Regional Transportation Council has offered up \$40 million, the total cost is north of \$100 million.

The District 4 representative is mostly worried about the impact the park might have on the lives of those who call the Tenth Street Historic District home. So after listening carefully to her concerns, I did some exploring on my own.

I walked and drove the streets of this historic district, which is roughly bounded by Clarendon, Eighth Street and I-35, talking with a few people who had ventured out in the July humid heat. Two of the three said they didn't even live in the neighborhood but were just there "helping out." Another had nothing to say, but did warn me about the neighbor's dog. (More on that to come.) Interesting, that man was carefully surveying one of the vacant homes on Eighth Street as if he was contemplating a purchase.

Colleague Brandon Formby most recently wrote about the neighborhood: It was first populated by freed slaves in the 1870s and, by the 20th century, was a vibrant center of black life, culture and commerce.

But today the Tenth Street Historic District, tragically, is one big ol' mess. That's not to say that there aren't some lovely homes and residents living decent lives. Yet those homesteaders are doing so against the odds.

And the odds are high that on most every block the residents are living with problems that the overwhelming majority of Dallas residents would find intolerable.

We're talking about an area of fewer than 100 residents, a few of them north of 80 years of age and the majority middle-aged. Some are home owners; others are renting. And the sad fact, as Arnold affirms, is that for most of them "dysfunction has become functional." Many have simply given up on things getting any better.

Just the piles of debris -- from refrigerators and castoff TVs to broken-down couches and random trash - are breathtaking. When I visited, it appeared that at least two piles were the belongings of evicted tenants. Arnold notes that at least part of the problem is getting residents to take responsibility for their own neighborhood.

Yet just across the street from these informal dumps are homes like this:

In contrast to the oasis above, on most streets, only every third home seems occupied -- with the ones on either side boarded up and scrawled with STAY OUT. Council member Arnold's sense of things is similar: She suspects at least 50 to 60 percent of the homes are vacant.

As too much of the neighborhood falls in on itself, speculators on the trail of a steal have begun slipping in. They want to capitalize on the rolling terrain and million-dollar views of downtown Dallas, similar to the increasing lure that is The Bottoms neighborhood, just to the north.

Arnold's challenge is to do everything she can to help create a sustainable community for the residents who want to stay in these potentially next-hot-thing neighborhoods while making sure that those who decide to sell don't get sent on their merry way with too little financial resources to find a home elsewhere.

Right now, it's difficult to see the potential for the harsh reality.

Take the house at the corner of Clarendon and Slade, which is literally falling down on itself -- but appears to still be occupied. It looks as if a tornado collapsed the back half, with bathroom fixtures and picture frames dangling at drunken angles.

In addition to the trash strewn all along the back of the house yesterday, another pile sat on the corner; there, a loose dog wearing a dreadfully heavy chain around his neck was trying to make a meal out of the debris.

When I returned later to try to get a better photo of the back of the house pictured above, the dog -- who had retreated in that direction earlier -- was having none of my exploration.

Infrastructure in the Tenth Street Historic District is obsolete. Arnold says the area has \$25 million in basic needs -- largely because outdated sewer lines need to be replaced with pipes that work for 2016 needs.

Some of the streets feel like alleys. Sidewalks and curbs? Nonexistent. Many yards haven't seen a lawnmower in 2016.

All of this a stone's throw south of DISD's nationally renowned Townview Magnet Center, which sits on the northern border of the historic district.

No wonder Arnold says that her constituents in this part of the district tell her they could care less about a deck park and, instead, implore her to find money that can be used for code enforcement. What does she hear? "Code, code, code, code - bulk trash, cars in yards, appliances at the curb, dogs keeping folks from getting out of their houses," she says.

She told me of one senior citizen who couldn't get out of her house. Of a neighbor's cat that had just been killed by a loose dog. About people complaining that they can't walk in the nearby park because of dogs.

Lou Nell Sims, who has spent most of her life in the Tenth Street Historic District, couldn't care less about a deck park. As she put it: "Our area's in disarray."

See for yourself. The photos describe it better than words:

Some houses are in worse shape than others.

The front end of a car and a couch line the sidewalk of these dilapidated homes.

The city council tried to protect the neighborhood by making it a historic district in 1993, complete with building restricts and zoning protections. But that seems to have done little to improve things, because sadly no one with the money required to save these homes has come forward to do so.

Instead, vacant homes in terrible shape, secured as best possible by owners against squatters and drug activity, deteriorate further.

So what is Arnold's plan?

Educate homeowners and renters on their rights and get their buy-in on what their neighborhood needs. Part of this involves getting them even better organized; part of it is making sure they don't get taken by bad actors.

Look at basic issues such as whether homeowners even have titles to their property. Many of these homes have simply been handed down, with no legal documentation. That could become an even bigger issue as more developers seek to buy.

Get the right infrastructure in place. That takes us back to that \$25 million.

Look at what kind of zoning changes need to be made to both protect what little remains of the historic nature of the neighborhood while allowing reasonably priced repairs and renovations.

Arnold knows this is a job bigger than moving that proverbial boulder up a mountain. But she's determined these residents get a fair deal -- whether they stay in this neighborhood or choose to move.

I agree with Arnold on much of what she wants to accomplish. It's sad commentary that this area has been so massively neglected for so long, only to be getting attention when gentrification casts a glance its way. The "Bridging Dallas' North-South Gap" team will be keeping careful watch on this neighborhood to see if all the recent attention pays off in ways that help everyone involved.

Majority of drivers express aggression

BY MAX B. BAKER maxbaker@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH

Somebody following you too closely on the highway, or yelling at you for being a dumb driver?

Well, according to a study released Thursday by AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, nearly 80 percent of drivers expressed "significant anger, aggression or road rage" behind the wheel of a vehicle in the last year.

And the study states that about eight million motorists went as far as intentionally ramming another vehicle or getting out from behind the wheel to confront the other driver.

"It's normal for drivers to experience anger behind the wheel, but we must not let our emotions lead to destructive choices," Doug Shupe, a AAA representative for Texas and New Mexico said in a statement. "Don't risk escalating a frustrating situation, because you never know what the other driver might do."

Nearly two out of three drivers in the study said that aggressive driving is a bigger problem today than three years ago, the AAA study states.

Sometimes these confrontations can have fatal consequences.

Earlier this year, a 20-year-old man was arrested after fatally shooting a woman while she was driving on Interstate 30 near Cooper Street in late January. Aspen Shaquille Daron Warren is accused of killing Brittany Daniel in a "road rage" incident.

A passenger in Daniel's car told police that another vehicle was weaving in and out of traffic. The other car pulled alongside Daniel's Honda Accord, someone rolled down the passenger window and yelled at them and fired a gun. Daniel managed to pull off the road, but later was pronounced dead at an Arlington hospital.

According to the study's estimates, 51 percent of drivers (104 million) admitted to intentionally tailgating someone; 47 percent (95 million) to yelling at another driver and 33 percent (67 million) making angry gestures.

There are times when things get more confrontational with 4 percent (7.6 million) saying they've gotten out of the car to confront the other driver and 3 percent (5.7 million) who have bumped or rammed another car.

Male and younger drivers, those 19 to 39, were significantly more likely to engage in aggressive behavior, and motorists in the Northeast were more likely to yell, honk or gesture angrily than people in other parts of the country, AAA reported.

"Inconsiderate driving, bad traffic and the daily stresses of life can transform minor frustrations into dangerous road rage," said Jurek Grabowski, Director of Research for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, in a statement. "Far too many drivers are losing themselves in the heat of the moment and lashing out in ways that could turn deadly."

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Collin County south? Exploding growth affecting towns from Austin to San Antonio

By Wire Services newsfeedback+wireservices@dallasnews.com

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A divorce, the prohibitive cost of California housing and family living in Texas convinced Kathy Terry to say goodbye to the West Coast and head to the Lone Star State, where she settled in a new suburban neighborhood off Interstate 35 on what once was rolling farmland.

But Terry didn't gravitate to San Antonio or Austin, two of the country's fastest-growing large cities. Instead, she chose New Braunfels, a place she'd never laid eyes on but that's gaining residents like Terry at a faster clip than either the Alamo City or the state capital.

Terry made her decision based on the hunch of her younger son, who lives near Corpus Christi.

"Mom, this is a cute little town, it's growing, and it's got the river, and you'll love it," she recalled him saying.

Appropriately, on her first day here, Terry drove around and spotted tubers in a river below. She illegally parked on the bridge, hopping out to take some photos.

"That's really cool, to have something like that in my backyard," she told the San Antonio Express-News.

While San Antonio officials have lately focused on how to deal with an expected 1.1 million more people in Bexar County by the year 2040, their neighbors along Interstate 35 -- New Braunfels, San Marcos, Schertz and Selma -- are booming as well. One day, they will form a tightly packed megalopolis from San Antonio to Austin, with no distinction from one city to the next.

"If you never leave the (New Braunfels) city limits here, you would think, 'Oh man, this growth is terrible,'" Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce President Michael Meek said. "But it's happening everywhere. We're in one of the fastest-growing mega-regions in the nation."

This closely follows nationwide trends: more people drawn to suburban areas on the edges of big cities where there is ample land for single-family homes, a community-minded environment that families crave and lower housing prices. Plus there's proximity to a major interstate for easy access to the benefits of big cities.

The I-35 corridor -- starting in San Antonio at Loop 410 and extending up toward New Braunfels -- accounted for nearly a third of the new housing starts in the San Antonio region between the third quarters of 2014 and 2015, said Jack Inselmann, regional director of Metrostudy, a national home construction researcher.

Of the 15 [fastest-growing cities](#) in the U.S. from 2014 to 2015, four of them -- Georgetown, first, New Braunfels, second, Frisco, fourth, and Pflugerville, 11th -- were on or near I-35, and all were on the fringes of bigger cities. Together, those places are beginning to merge into an even larger megaregion that connects San Antonio and Dallas, and that's part of the still larger Texas Triangle that takes in Houston as well.

Despite all the rapid growth along the corridor, there is little in the way of planning for these superurban areas. San Antonio and Austin each has its own metropolitan planning organization that focuses on transportation, but on separate parts of the I-35 corridor.

The region shares, among other issues, the chronic problem of traffic congestion on the interstate, yet one possible solution -- a commuter rail line -- has made little progress. In April, for the first time, several mayors from cities along the corridor, including San Antonio's Ivy Taylor, met to discuss the region's growth challenges. They plan to make it a regular meeting.

The infrastructure strains being felt all along I-35 affect New Braunfels residents every day. The city's population has almost doubled since 2000, ballooning from about 39,000 people to more than 70,000 last year, the U.S. Census reports. It ranked as the second-fastest-growing city in the U.S., with a population gain of 6.6 percent, from July 2014 to July 2015. By comparison, San Antonio inched up by 2.2 percent.

Comal County, which encompasses most of New Braunfels, has jumped from about 79,000 people to more than 129,000 from 2000 to 2015; from July 2014 to July 2015, it was the eighth-fastest-growing county in the U.S.

Terry is among the hundreds of thousands of [Californians who've relocated to Texas](#) in recent years: More people moved from California to Texas, about 62,000 in 2013 alone, than from any other state, a report from state demographer Lloyd Potter says.

Her new, suburban neighborhood bears little resemblance to the recreation summer spot of river rides and beer and sausage festivals with which New Braunfels often is associated.

Her home sits just beyond what is called New Braunfels Town Center at Creekside, a suburban bevy of restaurants, clothing stores and other retailers that's become an engine of new development east of I-35 and northeast of New Braunfels' historic downtown. Work is rapidly under way on more commercial sites around Creekside, including medical offices and apartments, eating up what once was rich farmland.

Across I-35, at the corner of the access road and FM 306, construction is beginning on a third H-E-B in the city, this one a larger "Plus" store.

"When you go from one to three" H-E-Bs, Meek said, "you know you're growing."

Even more development is coming, as work begins on Veramendi, with housing and retail planned, just outside New Braunfels' northwestern city limits. Over the next 25 years, more than 12,000 to 15,000 people could move into Veramendi, essentially the equivalent of adding another town on top of New Braunfels.

That is a dramatic change for a relatively small, summer tourist town with long-running ties to German culture. While the strength of those ties has gradually been withering for many decades, the increasing rush of newcomers can bring the change into sharper relief.

"It feels like we're losing our small town, German quaintness," said Mary Irwin, who teaches German language classes to children in the summer and is a member of the city's German American Society. "It's becoming more of a San Antonio suburb."

A word occasionally heard among the city's German old-timers is "auslanders," meaning outsiders, foreigners. People from an alien land.

New Braunfels is full of auslanders these days.

"We've said it before to people who've just moved here, 'Here comes another auslander,'" joked Diane Moltz, Irwin's sister, who helps organize the German classes for children in the summer and for adults in the winter. "I think it's kind of regrettably said sometimes. 'Here goes our city.'"

For centuries, different cultures have been drawn to New Braunfels, for the convergence of the Guadalupe and Comal rivers and the availability of spring water.

The town as it's known today was founded in 1845 by immigrants fleeing political strife in Germany.

Mills were built along the banks of the swiftly flowing Comal River, producing goods like cotton, wool, grain and eventually electricity, said fifth-generation New Braunfels resident Myra Lee Adams Goff, who writes a history column for the city's Sophienburg Museum and Archives. That kind of manufacturing, and New Braunfels' position between Austin and San Antonio, eventually made it a commercial center for a rising agricultural industry.

The town's German heritage, much of which was subdued after two wars with Germany, was embraced with renewed vigor in the 1960s, around the time city leaders began to focus on creating a tourist economy, sparked by the construction of Canyon Dam and, subsequently, Canyon Lake. The lake launched the river tubing industry. Wurstfest, New Braunfels' answer to Germany's Oktoberfest, started in 1961.

Today, New Braunfels' spot on I-35 is driving much of the population growth.

About 1,400 homes were built in New Braunfels between the third quarters of 2014 and 2015, double the number from just four years ago, Inselmann said.

The median price for a home in New Braunfels was \$223,700 earlier this year, higher than San Antonio's median of \$195,619, according to the San Antonio Board of Realtors. But it's lower than the median prices in popular Bexar County suburban neighborhoods like Alamo Ranch and Stone Oak, \$258,210 and \$265,250, respectively.

New Braunfels is a great place for households where one person works in San Antonio and another in Austin, Inselmann said.

"That's just a matter of running out of land in Bexar County," he said.

To Terry, the Golden State native, New Braunfels is a wonder compared to cash-strapped California: there's no trash on the streets, the highway department mows the highway medians. The lines at the grocery stores aren't always 15 people deep.

The Texas economy has been a welcome surprise. Terry's older son Kyle moved with her from California. He quickly found a job.

Also enticing, Terry found the housing costs in New Braunfels and Texas to be dramatically cheaper than California. Her old house in San Jose, which was a little more than 1,100 square feet, had no central air conditioning and was equipped with a tiny master bathroom, sold for \$800,000.

Her 1,900-square foot, KB Home in Texas would have cost "well over \$1 million" back in California.

In New Braunfels, it was \$230,000.

"My master bathroom here is as big as one of my bedrooms that I had over in California," Terry said.

New Braunfels' building explosion perhaps is best personified by the area around the Creekside shopping center, a smorgasbord of big-box retailers like Target and Best Buy and smaller ones just east of I-35 on the north end of town.

A few years ago, there was nothing here, not even a road. Now, the most recognizable marker is a 67,000-square-foot Buc-ees convenience store and service station, an armory of 120 gas pumps and travelers' vehicles, big rigs and RVs. Farther down Creekside Crossing, the road named for the shopping center, is Resolute Health Hospital, a 128-bed, for-profit hospital that opened in 2014.

Much of the development in New Braunfels is happening here, east of the Balcones Escarpment, a geological fault zone that divides the rich, blackland prairie from the rocky soil of the Texas

Hill Country. The fertile farmland makes development easier and so the land costs are cheaper, said Mark Hampton, a Realtor with Century 21 Randall Morris & Associates in New Braunfels.

Terry's home is just east of the shopping center, in a new KB Home community called West Village at Creekside. The initial development, which opened just last year, was so successful, KB officials added another 135 home sites, for a total of 469, KB spokeswoman Cathy Teague said.

Twee Cortez and her husband, Samuel, moved into the KB development in September right next door to Terry. The Cortezes were one of the first families in the development, where home frames are going up all the time.

"Houston was just so packed and crowded," Twee Cortez said of the city where she grew up and where her family lived for years. "I wanted it to be relaxing and quiet."

Moving east away from Creekside, the road dramatically narrows, and the rural character of New Braunfels and its surroundings shows itself again, in the open fields and older, tiny farmhouses. The pastureland outside town, fresh off an unusually rainy few months this year, unrolls like lumpy, green carpet dotted with black Angus cows.

Comparing Creekside to the rural properties beyond, it is as if two completely different places -- one suburban in character, one old town -- were stitched together.

It's here, just beyond the city limits, where Nathan Dolle makes his home, on a rural, woodsy, 10-acre property less than 3 miles from the KB neighborhood.

A fourth-generation New Braunfels resident, he'd fit in perfectly in a Laura Ingalls Wilder pioneer novel: he grows his own crops and keeps chickens that lay eggs for the family. He was born in 1972, but his wife, Lonnie, tells him he should have been born 100 years earlier.

"I'm tight. I'm German. I'm frugal," Dolle said. "I don't want to pay for anything I don't have to."

Though Dolle remains just outside the city limits, development has found him, too. Creekside has opened the door to more of just about everything in the area.

The Stars & Stripes Drive-in Theater opened in April last year on Kroesche Lane, not even a mile from Dolle's property. On a busy night, Dolle, said traffic gets backed up all the way past his house, onto FM 1101 and then toward I-35. After the movie, Dolle said the road in front of his house will be strewn with a trail of popcorn boxes and soda and beer cans.

"We moved out here, and there wasn't nothing. We were in the country, and now the city's coming to get us," Dolle said. "My wife said, 'Everybody wants to move to a small town, but everybody's moving here, and it's not a small town no more.'"

The grain business is booming at the Producer's Co-op in New Braunfels, which specializes in feed for show livestock. But in the past, most of the feed sold at the Co-op was made from grains grown in and around the city. Now, most of it comes from towns farther away, said Horace Luensmann, general manager for the Producer's Co-op Marketing Association. Farmers either can't afford to keep producing or the owners from whom they rent the land sell it out from under them.

"Are these guys losing farm ground? Yes," Luensmann said. "All day long they are losing farm ground."

Ryan Smith, president of Stars & Stripes New Braunfels Inc. said he specifically chose New Braunfels to build his second drive-in theater because of the rural feel, in addition to the centralized location and the convenient access for families. Although Smith's company owns the property, he still allows a local farmer to plant on part of it; this past summer, the movie theater had its own corn crop.

"We liked the town, and it's got a nostalgic feel to it, just with all its history," Smith said.

"We think the same things that were attractive to us about New Braunfels are attractive to a lot of people."

Relatively speaking, business is strong in New Braunfels. In the past, the town had one major employer, Mission Valley Textiles.

Now, the city has 50 separate primary employers, who manufacture or produce a good or a service in New Braunfels but sell it outside of the trade area, said Meek, with the chamber of commerce.

The potential for even more large-scale residential and commercial development is on the horizon.

In May, construction began on the first project in Veramendi, a 2,400-acre master-planned community and mixed-use development west of I-35. This is the half of New Braunfels that's home to Schlitterbahn, Landa Park, New Braunfels' historic downtown, the heart of the city's bustling tourist industry.

The development sits just north of where Loop 337 and Texas 46 meet and part of it borders the Guadalupe River. The project will be developed over 15 to 25 years and eventually could include more than 6,000 dwellings, a town center, a resort, public park space, a college campus and two elementary schools, said Tiffany Lacey, vice president of design and approvals with Australia-based ASA Properties, the developer who partnered with the landowner.

"It's literally another city," Meek said.

The first project is on its way: New Braunfels ISD broke ground on a new elementary school in Veramendi in May.

To prepare for a potential 40 percent to 50 percent increase in traffic over the next 20 years, the Texas Department of Transportation plans to convert Loop 337 from a two-lane, undivided road to a four-lane, divided corridor between I-35 and Hillcrest Drive, a \$45 million project.

New Braunfels officials point to the project as an example of how to do growth well. Developers will pay for flood control infrastructure up front and then be paid back by taxes collected from the new lot owners. Water detention facilities in the development will help ease flooding problems in the city as a whole.

It's designed to have more sidewalks, narrower streets and more trees, traits New Braunfels' current zoning codes don't encourage, said Christopher Looney, the city planning director.

City leaders say the compromises negotiated with Veramendi reflect a pragmatic tactic: you cannot control growth, Meek said, but, you can "manage it to your benefit."

Moltz, the German language teacher, still has her doubts.

"I would rather see . nice forest land, Hill Country land," Moltz said. "We have no voice in that. It just seems like all of the nice Hill Country is being developed."

Once a week, Dolle takes his entire family to the opposite end of New Braunfels, to a nondescript building that contains more than 100 years of German heritage.

This is the Solms Bowling Club, one of several traditional, German nine-pin bowling organizations in the county. Until a recent renovation, two of the lanes were original, installed when the club opened in 1898.

Dolle's father, Oscar, set pins here as a child and bowled here, as did his grandmother before him. Now, Dolle's son, Logan, plays in the junior league. When he was little, Dolle used to sleep on the club benches, fashioned out of church pews; now his young daughter Summer uses them to snooze.

History matters to Dolle, the club president, and his fellow members, whose club T-shirts say, "The tradition rolls on."

Dolle worries about how those traditions will continue as New Braunfels keeps growing, even though he understands its necessity, and that it can't be stopped. He sees it every day, working for the Comal Independent School District, where enrollment has about doubled since 2000. New Braunfels ISD, the smaller city school district, is expected to double in size over the next decade.

When Meek, with the chamber, moved here in the late 1980s, close to a third of the population seemed to be descended from the town's original German settlers. Now, he estimates it's closer to 6 or 8 percent of people who have that tie, judging from residents' surnames.

Children still can take German-language classes during a two-week summer camp sponsored by the German American Society and the Heritage Villages' Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture, Moltz said. From January to March, Moltz organizes a German class for adults. Many of the participants, she said, are newcomers.

More than a dozen students sat recently in the adult class, held at the Cross Lutheran Church and School, learning the German alphabet, several phrases and various tidbits of German culture and history.

Goff, the historian and New Braunfels native, is pragmatic about the whole thing, even if she misses the familiarity she once knew. The purpose of the Sophienburg Museum isn't to keep things from changing. It's trying to "to hold on, so people remember what was."

"I'm not one that says, 'Oh no, we have to go back to the old days,'" Goff said. "My husband said one time, 'The old days are now.'"

-- *Vianna Davila, San Antonio Express-News*

Dallas-Houston high-speed train company hires two more former public officials

By Brandon Formby [Follow @brandonformby bformby@dallasnews.com](#)

Transportation Writer

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The developers of a high-speed bullet train between Dallas and Houston added two former public officials to its team, the company announced this morning.

[Texas Central Partners](#) has tapped former [Texas Transportation Commission](#) member [Jeff Moseley](#) as its state vice president. Moseley also served as Denton County judge, a position that oversees the commissioners court, in the 1990s.

"Jeff has a clear understanding of the demands that elected county officials face, and will be able to effectively work with leaders and communities that are both rural and urban," Texas Central CEO Tim Keith said in a prepared statement.

[Michael Moore](#) is the company's new regional vice president for the Houston area. Moore was chief of staff to former Houston Mayor Bill White. Both he and Moseley will work out of the company's Houston office.

The controversial project has been heralded by officials in North Texas and Houston, the state's two largest metropolitan areas. It's also drawn the support of federal officials, [including Vice President Joe Biden](#). In Dallas, a station near or above Interstate 30 is seen as a way to [boost economic development in the Cedars](#) and reconnect that southern Dallas neighborhood to downtown. But it is fiercely [opposed in rural parts of Texas](#), where residents and officials fear the 240-mile rail line will bisect farms and rural towns. Opponents last month asked the state attorney general's office to weigh in on whether the [company can use eminent domain](#) to build the needed line.

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Plans for self-driving cars have pitfall: the human brain

Associated Press 7/19/16 2:41 AM By Joan Lowy

WASHINGTON - Experts say the development of self-driving cars over the coming decade depends on an unreliable assumption by many automakers: that the humans in them will be ready to step in and take control if the car's systems fail.

Instead, experience with automation in other modes of transportation like aviation and rail suggests that the strategy will lead to more deaths like that of a Florida Tesla driver in May.

Decades of research shows that people have a difficult time keeping their minds on boring tasks like monitoring systems that rarely fail and hardly ever require them to take action. The human brain continually seeks stimulation. If the mind isn't engaged, it will wander until it finds something more interesting to think about. The more reliable the system, the more likely it is that attention will wane. Automakers are in the process of adding increasingly automated systems that effectively drive cars in some or most circumstances, but still require the driver as a backup in case the vehicle encounters a situation unanticipated by its engineers.

Tesla's Autopilot, for example, can steer itself within a lane and speed up or slow down based on surrounding traffic or on the driver's set speed. It can change lanes with a flip of its signal, automatically apply brakes, or scan for parking spaces and parallel park on command.

Joshua Brown, a 40-year-old tech company owner from Canton, Ohio, who was an enthusiastic fan of the technology, was killed when neither he nor his Tesla Model S sedan's Autopilot braked for a truck making a left turn on a highway near Gainesville, according to federal investigators and the automaker. Tesla warns drivers to keep their hands on the wheel even though Autopilot is driving, or the vehicle will automatically slow to a stop. A similar self-driving system Audi plans to introduce in its 2018 A7 monitors drivers' head and eye movements, and automatically slows the car if the driver's attention is diverted.

But Brown's failure to brake means he either didn't see the truck in his path or saw it too late to respond — an indication he was relying on the automation and his mind was elsewhere, said Missy Cummings, director of Duke University's Humans and Autonomy Laboratory. The truck driver said he had heard a Harry Potter video playing in the car after the crash.

"Drivers in these quasi- and partial modes of automation are a disaster in the making," Cummings said.

"If you have to rely on the human to see something and take action in anything less than several seconds, you are going to have an accident like we saw."

Operators — an airline pilot, a train engineer or car driver — can lose awareness of their environment when they turn control over to automation, said Rob Molloy, the National Transportation Safety Board's chief highway crash investigator.

He pointed to the crash of Air France Flight 447 into the Atlantic Ocean while flying from Brazil to France in 2007. A malfunction in equipment used to measure air speed caused the plane's autopilot to disconnect, catching pilots by surprise. Confused, they caused an otherwise flyable plane to stall and fall from the sky, killing 228 people.

Planes and trains have had automation "for 20, 30 years and there are still times when they're like, 'Wow, we didn't expect that to happen,'" Molloy said.

Part of the problem is overconfidence in the technology causes people to think they can check out. Not long after Tesla introduced its Autopilot system, people were posting videos of car with the self-driving mode engaged cruising down tree-lined roads or even highways with no one in the driver's seat. Brown, for example, had posted videos lauding the Autopilot system and demonstrating it in action.

"There is a tendency of people to take one ride in one of these vehicles and then conclude that because they have not crashed over the course of 10 minutes that the system must be ready," said Bryant Walker Smith, a University of South Carolina professor who studies the technology.

Some experts think the ability of people to monitor autonomous systems may be getting worse. With the advent of smartphones, people are accustomed to having their desire for mental stimulation satisfied immediately.

"Go into Starbucks, for example," said Cummings. "No one can just patiently wait in line, they're all doing something on their phones. It's kind of pathetic."

Some automakers may be rethinking their approach. Two years ago, General Motors announced it would start selling a Cadillac in the fall of 2016 that would almost drive itself on freeways. But last week the company confirmed that the project has been delayed for an unspecified reason.

At previous briefings, company executives said they were waiting to perfect methods of assuring that the driver pays attention to the road even when the system is on.

The system, called "Super Cruise," will use cameras and radar to keep the car in the center of a lane and also stay a safe distance behind cars in front of it. The system will bring the car to a complete stop without driver action if traffic halts, and it can keep the car going in stop-and-go traffic. But it's designed for use only on limited-access divided highways.

Google, meanwhile, is aiming for a car that's fully self-driving and may not even have a steering wheel or brake pedals.

Richland Hills upset with changes coming from transit agency

BY GORDON DICKSON gdickson@star-telegram.com

RICHLAND HILLS

Controversy over public transportation never seems to be far away in Richland Hills.

This time, a brouhaha has erupted over the Fort Worth Transportation Authority's plan to discontinue providing roughly \$210,000 a year for maintenance of the city's streets. Also, Richland Hills officials are upset about planned changes to the city's lone bus route.

The latest spat comes just two months after Richland Hills voters, who joined the transportation authority in 1992, once again voted overwhelmingly to remain with the agency. Despite that support, transit opponents have managed to get a referendum onto the ballot four times in 24 years trying to remove the city from the transit authority.

Mayor Bill Agan and Mayor Pro Tem Edward Lopez, both of whom have previously been in support of the transportation authority, also known as the T, in particular are incensed about the most recent planned changes, which will take effect over about the next two months. The city has posted tersely worded comments about the transportation service on its web site, and urged residents to take part in a survey about the discontinued street funds.

"We feel our citizens have been misled, and it's our job to keep them notified," Agan said in an interview. "The T ought to live up to its promises made to citizens."

'CAN'T JUSTIFY THAT EXPENSE'

The T is expected to collect about \$1.4 million this year from its half-cent sales tax charged to shoppers in Richland Hills stores, city officials said. Traditionally, the authority rebates the city 15 percent of that amount — or \$210,000 — for the city's street fund. However, T officials say their estimate for the amount of sales tax revenue they expect to collect in Richland Hills is closer to \$1.3 million this year, which would bring the street fund contribution to \$195,000.

The philosophy behind the rebate is, the money offsets the damage done to roads by the buses, which are heavier than most private vehicles.

But transportation authority officials recently notified Richland Hills that effective this year the rebate is no longer being provided.

Paul Ballard, transportation authority president, said it's not fair to provide the street money to Richland Hills at the same time Fort Worth diverts its street rebate to the agency's reserve fund to pay for the planned TEX Rail commuter line.

Ballard said the rebate apparently was done on a handshake agreement with Richland Hills before he arrived in Fort Worth in 2014.

"I run the T like a business, and if someone produces a contract saying we have to pay that money then I will pay it," said Ballard, who previously headed the public transportation service in Nashville. "Otherwise, I can't justify that expense. I think you can see how hard we are trying to generate funds."

Agan and Lopez, who along with city staff are currently preparing the Richland Hills budget for the 2017 fiscal year, say the transit rebate is needed to fix potholes and make other repairs.

“That’s 100 percent of our road budget,” Lopez said.

‘IT’S A SAFETY ISSUE’

Richland Hills is a city of about 7,800 residents, about 5 miles northeast of downtown Fort Worth. Despite its relatively small size — about 220 city blocks — the city has multiple public transportation options.

The Trinity Railway Express, a commuter rail line connecting downtown Fort Worth to Dallas, has operated a Richland Hills Station along Texas 121 since 2000. The station, which is near the Handley-Ederville Road exit, has long been discussed as a prime location for transit-oriented development, although no such development has ever gotten off the ground.

The city is also served by bus Route 41, which serves the train station and also can pick up anyone in the city at their homes.

The way Route 41 has traditionally worked is, prospective bus riders call the T driver on a cellphone, and the driver picks up the passenger at his or her house or other location.

But that system is about to change, possibly as soon as September.

The T will be installing bus stop signs at approximately 80 locations throughout the city. Riders will still call a phone number, but instead of that number going to the driver it will instead go to a dispatcher who will digitally direct the bus to the nearest stop.

“We can’t have drivers talking on a cellphone,” Ballard said. “It’s a safety issue.”

Ballard said that, with so many Route 41 stops available in Richland Hills, most riders will only have to walk the equivalent of a few houses to get to the nearest stop.

“We know where these riders are,” he said. “It’s not a mystery.”

He added that the change won’t affect disabled riders, who still have the agency’s door-to-door Mobility Impaired Transportation Service at their disposal.

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US says autos can meet 2025 fuel economy targets

Associated Press 7/18/16 5:31 PM By Dee-Ann Durbin & Tom Krisherap

DETROIT - The U.S. government says the nation's cars and trucks are well on their way to meeting fuel economy and emissions standards set for 2025.

But if gas prices stay low and consumers keep buying less-efficient vehicles like SUVs, the government could lower those standards. Automakers argue that meeting the requirements is difficult.

A report on the standards was issued Monday by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the California Air Resources Board. The report kicks off a two-year review that will determine whether to keep the 2025 fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions targets in place or change them.

Under standards set in 2012, automakers' fleets were expected to get an average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. That's not the real-world mileage vehicles will get; it includes credits for things like more efficient air conditioning systems. The real-world mileage is closer to 40 miles per gallon.

The government calculates an automakers' average based on the vehicles it sells. A company could fail to meet standards on pickup trucks but exceed them with fuel-efficient cars and still meet the requirements, said Alan Baum, a consultant in Detroit who advises automakers on fuel-economy regulations. But if it fails to sell those cars and only sells the pickup trucks, it could wind up being fined.

As gas prices have fallen, truck and SUV sales have risen. That means the 54.5 mpg standard may no longer be realistic, since automakers are selling more trucks and SUVs and fewer cars than the government anticipated in 2012. The government now forecasts average fuel economy between 50 mpg and 52.6 mpg in 2025, depending on the price of gas. But EPA officials said that the numbers could continue to change.

The report noted that in October 2012, when the fuel economy standards were finalized, U.S. average gas prices were \$3.87 per gallon. They ended 2015 at \$2.15 per gallon.

So far this year, sales of the Toyota Prius hybrid are down 25 percent while sales of SUVs and other light trucks are up 9 percent, according to Autodata Corp.

But gas prices alone aren't likely to convince the government to weaken the standards adopted in 2012.

The report says automakers can meet the original 2012 targets by continuing to make more advanced gasoline engines; the EPA says only about 2 percent of vehicles would need to be hybrids or electric vehicles to meet the standards.

"Today's draft report shows that automakers are developing far more technologies to improve fuel economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, at similar or lower costs, than we thought possible just a few years ago," said Janet McCabe, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. The government says 100 car, SUV, and pick-up truck versions on the market today already meet fuel economy standards targeted for 2020 or later. Automakers also have been making more use of lightweight materials, like aluminum, and improving vehicles' aerodynamics. They're also adding features like stop-start technology, which automatically shut down the engine and save fuel while a vehicle is stopped in traffic.

Those advances come at a cost. The EPA estimates the fuel economy standards will cost \$1,017 per vehicle between 2021 and 2025, while NHTSA estimates they will cost up to \$1,245 per vehicle. The agencies differ on how much consumers would save in gas, but they estimate it's between \$680 and \$1,620 per vehicle.

Those costs, and consumers' reluctance to buy the smallest, most fuel-efficient vehicles, mean the auto industry will likely argue that the standards should be relaxed. The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, a lobbying group that represents 12 automakers, including BMW, Toyota and General Motors, says meeting the standards is "a daunting challenge."

"Absent a vigorous commitment to focus on marketplace realities, excessive regulatory costs could impact both consumers and the employees who produce these vehicles," the alliance said in a statement.

But environmental groups will urge the government to strengthen the standards. In a statement, Sierra Club President Andrew Linhardt said the report proves that the standards are working.

"Due to technological innovation, our cars are cleaner and more efficient than ever before," he said.

DART's Blue Line extension into southeast Oak Cliff greeted with hope

By Brandon Formby Follow [@brandonformby](#) bformby@dallasnews.com

Transportation Writer

Published: 21 July 2016 04:23 PM

Updated: 21 July 2016 04:52 PM

Gail Terrell has waited decades for her Southeast Oak Cliff neighborhood to see the kind of economic development boosts that are commonplace in Dallas' northern half.

On Thursday morning, Terrell caught a glimpse of what she hopes is a game changer.

"Finally, we're starting to see some of the things we wanted," Terrell said as she rode a Dallas Area Rapid Transit light-rail train along a coming Blue Line extension to UNT-Dallas Station.

Terrell was among dozens of people Thursday who participated in a test run of the 2.6-mile extension, which is set to open Oct. 24. Once the project is complete, the Blue Line will run south from Ledbetter Station to the new Camp Wisdom and UNT-Dallas stations.

State Sen. Royce West also hopes the line prompts more development in southern Dallas. But he also sees the new line as a way to connect transit-dependent residents to the public university.

"It's part of a dream come true," he said.

The project will be the last extension on the agency's current hub-and-spoke system outside of the region's urban core for the foreseeable future. Still, DART is vying for federal funding for a second downtown Dallas route. The agency's long-term plan also calls for commuter rail service on the Cotton Belt line that would connect

DFW International to the Red Line in Richardson or Plano. DART is exploring ways to fast-track some sort of service on that route.

Meanwhile, the agency next month will open an extension of the downtown-Oak Cliff streetcar line.

DART president and executive director Gary Thomas on Thursday heralded the Blue Line extension.

“It goes to a part of our community that is in need of transportation choices,” Thomas said.

Terrell lives near the new terminus, which will connect the University of North Texas-Dallas to DART’s expansive light-rail system. The former Dallas parks and recreation board member pointed to Mockingbird Station, a large mixed-use complex in northern Dallas, as an example of the kind of transit-oriented developments that can come along DART lines.

Of course, she’s aware that not every DART station brings that kind of economic boon. Several are surrounded by parking lots rather than businesses, residences or workplaces. But she’s still hopeful.

“You may not end up with as much over here, but I feel confident we’re going to see more developers coming,” she said.

On Twitter:

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July 21, 2016 1:18 PM

Is Dallas-Fort Worth being penalized for building toll roads?

Highlights

By Gordon Dickson

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ARLINGTON — A huge number of toll roads have been built in recent years, or are currently under construction, in the Dallas-Fort Worth region.

As a result, traffic is already moving faster on corridors such as Loop 820 in Northeast Tarrant County, Texas 114/121 in Grapevine, Chisholm Trail Parkway in south Fort Worth and Interstate 635 in Dallas than it has in decades. More relief will be on the way when the reconstruction of Interstate 35W, including four toll lanes, is completed in 2018 in north Fort Worth.

But local transportation officials say they are now concerned that the state's transportation leadership will effectively penalize North Texas for being so aggressive in building those toll roads. As the state prepares to portion out tax-supported funds over the next 10 years, North Texas — which has already handled its most glaring traffic problems with an estimated \$14 billion investment in roads with a toll component — could see a smaller portion of tax-supported highway dollars.

Those funds could instead be spent on transportation needs elsewhere in the state, they say.

The North Texas region resorted to building toll roads beginning about 15 years ago because the state was sorely lacking in sufficient tax-supported funds to build roads. Since then, the availability of highway dollars has seriously rebounded, and Texas is poised to receive \$66 billion in state and federal highway funds over the next 10 years, starting in fiscal year 2018, including a stunning \$38.3 billion in new funds, according to a draft version of the state's 10-year planning document.

But the Texas Transportation Commission is retooling the formulas used to distribute those \$66 billion in funds across the state, said Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Some Metroplex leaders say it's quite possible a disproportionate share will go to rural areas where residents haven't had to deal with toll roads, which would be unfair to residents of the Metroplex who pay not only gas taxes at the pumps but also tolls.

"There has to be some principal of fair share to the regions," Morris said last week during a discussion of the issue in Arlington.

Big dollars for roads

The controversy has erupted as the Texas Transportation Commission, which oversees the Texas Department of Transportation, is working on an annual update of its Unified Transportation Program — a document that traditionally serves as road map for spending state and federal road dollars over a revolving 10-year period.

The commission is expected to approve the latest UTP document in late August, and is currently seeking public comment on it. Public meetings will be held on the subject Thursday in both Fort Worth and Dallas.

Texas traditionally gets its highway funds from motor fuels taxes collected at the pumps — 20 cents per gallon in state taxes, and 18.4 cents per gallon in federal taxes, for gasoline — as well as from vehicle registration fees paid by vehicle owners for their windshield stickers each year.

The 44-member Regional Transportation Council, most of whom are local elected officials from the North Texas region, discussed the issue at length earlier this month. Morris asked the group to approve a resolution calling for the state transportation commission to increase funding for congestion relief by \$5 billion. The resolution also called for a formula to be created to ensure that no one urban region took a disproportionate share of the funds.

Vandergriff steps in

But the RTC declined to approve the resolution put forward by Morris. Instead, the RTC agreed with a request by Victor Vandergriff, an Arlington businessman who serves as one of five members of the state transportation commission. Vandergriff spoke to the RTC as a guest, and asked the RTC not to approve a resolution that potentially would put the Dallas-Fort Worth area at odds politically with new statewide transportation leadership put in place under the direction of Gov. Greg Abbott.

Since Abbott took office in 2015, the transportation commission has experienced turnover in three of its five positions — including the arrival of new chairman Tryon Lewis and members Bruce Bugg and Laura Ryan. Those three took the places of Ted Houghton, Fred Underwood and Jeff Moseley.

The remaining two transportation commission members, Vandergriff and Jeff Austin were appointed several years earlier by former Gov. Rick Perry and continue to serve.

“In my opinion, now is not the time to cause stress in the system by perhaps prematurely being aggressive in an approach concerned about a specific funding allocation,” Vandergriff told RTC members. Noting that metro areas are pegged to receive more than \$21 billion of the new highway funding, Vandergriff added, “You have a lot of money coming your way. You have the opportunity for a lot more.”

Several RTC members agreed with Vandergriff, saying it would be pointless to initiate a fight with the transportation commission when state Legislators, many of whom favor increasing spending in rural areas, likely would steer the highway funds away from the metro areas anyway.

“What I’m hearing is, they’ve already made up their mind,” said Grand Prairie Mayor Ron Jensen, who recently was appointed RTC chairman.

Jensen noted that so far no other metro areas in the state have protested the transportation commission’s plans for the money, which means Dallas-Fort Worth could be fighting the battle alone.

“Why should we piss them off when we don’t have to? Excuse the language, but that’s a fact,” Jensen told RTC.

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley also favored a more measured response, saying the region has “made a lot of progress” in building its influence with the transportation commission.

A handful of other RTC members objected, noting that in 2003 when the North Texas region was in the midst of aggressive toll road planning then transportation commissioner Ric Williamson of Weatherford offered a promise on behalf of the state.

“The more you choose local sources of funds, whether that’s local taxes or local tolls, the more money will be invested in your community,” Williamson, who died in 2007, said at that time. “You will not be penalized for being aggressive with local funding.”

Some RTC members, including DFW Airport representative Bernice Washington, urged the group to listen to Morris and take action on a resolution asking for more congestion-busting funding for metro areas.

Washington told Vandergriff she appreciated his call for a more measured response, but said she had a “trust issue” with state government and suspected that if the RTC refused to take action the Dallas-Fort Worth area would indeed lose billions of dollars in highway funds.

“I tell you I personally have a trust issue,” she said. “That’s where my angst lies. Will they deliver on their promises and not penalize us for being aggressive? That is where my concern lies.”

Frisco Mayor Maher Maso added: “It’s about the commitments that were made. Through the success of the region, I don’t think we need to be penalized.”

Even though the resolution failed on a voice vote, the RTC urged Morris to travel to Austin and speak with transportation commission members about the North Texas region’s concerns about funding fairness.

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Donors help solve woman's 4-hour, 3-vehicle DART commute, but problems remain for many in southern Dallas

By Loyd Brumfield [Follow @LoydBrumfield](#) lbrumfield@dallasnews.com

Communities Reporter

Published: 21 July 2016 07:51 PM

Updated: 22 July 2016 09:10 AM

RICHARDSON -- At a meeting in Dallas to address quality of life issues in southern Dallas, Pamala Burch described her commute.

Wake up at her Highland Hills home near Paul Quinn College at 3 a.m. Walk to the DART bus stop and take the 4:07 a.m. bus to the Ledbetter train station. Take the train to the West End station. Transfer to the Orange line and ride it to the Las Colinas Convention Center. Walk 15 minutes to her job at Neiman Marcus, rain or shine, in freezing cold or broiling heat.

Total time: 1 hour, 53 minutes. Then do it in reverse to get home.

One of the meeting's attendees, Michelle Corson, held up her hand.

"We are going to get you a car," said Corson, founder of On The Road Lending, a nonprofit that helps low- and moderate-income people buy cars.

Corson made good on that promise along with several others who joined forces to present Burch, 47, with a blue 2013 Toyota Corolla on Thursday at Toyota of Richardson.

"I'm just so grateful. I'm really in a state of awe," said Burch, who lives in her childhood home with her aging mother and a son getting ready to go to college. "I had no clue that when I went to that meeting that it would turn into a meeting about me."

As salesman Randy Boston drove the car around so Burch could see it for the first time, she shook her head.

"I think it's just ... Hey, when I got here, did I have some red ruby heels on?" she said.

Burch paused for interviews while she watched Boston show her the car's accessories.

"This will allow me to do the things I need to do to help others," she said.

Christie Myers, one of the general managers for Neighbor Up, a nonprofit that falls under the city of Dallas' GrowSouth initiative, found out about Burch and urged her to attend one of the meetings.

"In these meetings when we would bring up challenges, everyone mentioned public transportation," said Myers, who oversees Neighbor Up's Education Corridor -- an area that encompasses Paul Quinn College on the east and the University of North Texas-Dallas on the west.

Myers met Burch one morning and joined her on her commute.

"One of the challenges for her is just how much it lengthened her day," Myers said.

Myers texted City Council member Casey Thomas about Burch's case in the middle of a council meeting.

"That's how urgent she thought this was," Thomas said.

The Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce became involved. It partnered with Thomas to "move the needle in Oak Cliff in regard to poverty," chamber president Kiyundra Gulley said.

"This is an area that has pockets of extreme wealth along with pockets of extreme poverty," Gulley said.

One of the things unique to the area is the lack of connectivity in regard to transportation, Myers said.

"For [Burch] and other riders who are going to the West End station, one of the problems is that the express bus routes don't begin earlier, which causes her to have to get to Ledbetter to start her commute," Myers said. "If they started earlier, she could skip Ledbetter and just take the bus into I-45."

To study accessibility, chamber officials met with several representatives who are stakeholders in transportation, including Uber, DART, Thomas, Paul Quinn President Michael Sorrell, UNT-D President Bob Mong and On The Road Lending.

"She stood up and said that her eight-hour day caused her to be away from home for 13 hours," Gulley said. "As soon as she said it, you could see everybody's eyes sink and our hearts broke."

Burch has taken mass transit to work every day since October when she took the job at Neiman Marcus. Her mother has an older-model car that isn't always reliable, and Burch thought it was

more important for her son to have a car as he gets ready to attend the University of Texas at Tyler.

"I haven't had a car since 2012," Burch said.

The chamber donated \$1,500 toward the \$2,500 down payment. Additional donations made up the difference, Gulley said. Burch will make monthly payments of \$243.15 on a loan that's a little less than \$14,000.

Burch can afford the monthly payment, thanks to her job. But the down payment had made a car unattainable. On The Road had previously helped with her \$80 in monthly DART expenditures.

Corson estimated that On The Road, which is handling Burch's loan, has put about 50 people into vehicles, most through Toyota of Richardson. She expects that number to reach 100 by the end of the year thanks to an influx of contributions.

"I love these days, especially when you can help a person as good as she is," said Corson, who went on Burch's commute with her the day before she picked up the car.

"It's not particularly safe," Corson said.

Burch has always been an advocate for reliable mass transit in under-served areas, doing her own research and meeting with city officials. She learned that the three bus lines that serve her southern Dallas area handle about 2,000 riders a day.

"We need more [buses] than that," she said.

Burch more or less held her emotions in check on Thursday until Myers arrived at the dealership. Burch placed her hand over her mouth as Myers excitedly ran toward her and embraced her.

"This wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for you," Burch whispered.

On Twitter:

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Downtown Dallas' newest signature bridge finally gets its second arch

By Brandon Formby Follow [@brandonformby](#) bformby@dallasnews.com

Transportation Writer

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It's done. Well, almost done.

Construction crews early Friday capped the second arch on the new Margaret McDermott Bridge, which is where Interstate 30 now spans the Trinity River. The 350-foot-high twin arches sit on either side of the highway bridge, above what will eventually be pedestrian and bicycle paths. Between them will be the new I-30 main lanes and managed lanes.

The bridge is part of the ongoing, \$800 million Horseshoe Project, a rebuild of where I-30 and Interstate 35E come together downtown. The entire project is expected to be completed next year. The second arch still lacks cables that connect its steel curves to the actual bridge span.

The bridge is named for arts patron and philanthropist Margaret McDermott. It joins the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge, the nearby Woodall Rodgers Freeway span over the Trinity, as the city's two signature bridges designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava.

Robots, drones help North Texas police

Dallas police used robot to kill sniper

Total of 280 law enforcement agencies have robots

Drone use by police still far from commonplace

By Rafael Sears

rsears@star-telegram.com

Now that a police robot has been used to kill a suspect in Dallas, can drones be far behind?

The idea is a long way from becoming reality, experts say.

The Arlington police department is the only one in the Metroplex that uses drones, and they're used to protect lives.

A drone can "see" a situation before an officer is sent into danger, and can help with evacuating citizens, said Arlington police Lt. Brook Rollins, commander of the Technical Services Division.

The department used drones to get a bird's-eye view of heavily damaged buildings after a storm in October 2014 and for tactical surveillance when an armed suspect barricaded himself in a building.

While the military regularly uses drones to kill — the [New America Foundation](#), which tracks drone strikes, estimates that the U.S. has conducted more than 400 drone strikes that killed at least 7,000 people — Arlington police wouldn't use them that way, Rollins said.

"We would never use them as a weapon — lethal or nonlethal," he said.

The main priority is developing drones' surveillance and visual capabilities, to help officers respond faster and protect innocent lives, said Thor Eells, National Tactical Officers Association board chairman.

In any case, drones are seeing limited use in law enforcement because of the lack of guidelines and strict restrictions through the FAA, Eells said.

Arlington police purchased two drones that resembled miniature helicopters for \$202,260 in 2013 and have since upgraded at no additional cost to three smaller quadcopters, Rollins said. The drones were purchased with federal money.

The Fort Worth Police Department has a drone but does not use it, and Dallas police do not use drones, officials said. Robots, on the other hand, have been in use for a decade.

Robots on the job

The Dallas Police Department deployed a robot packed with C-4 explosives to kill the man accused of fatally shooting five officers and wounding several others during a July 7 ambush in downtown Dallas.

Police departments have been using them for more than 10 years, according to a [study](#) by the Center of the Study of the Drone at Bard College. Arlington, Fort Worth and Dallas all have robots and use them for a variety of situations deemed too dangerous for officers, whether to detonate a suspected bomb or pump tear gas into a suspect's location.

Fort Worth has had several in its inventory since at least 2011, Officer Tamara Valle said in an email. The robots are assigned to the SWAT team, she said, declining to say how they are used because of security reasons.

A search of *Star-Telegram* archives shows they have been used regularly, including:

January 2014: The SWAT team used a robot to help end a five-hour standoff with a man who had killed his ex-wife before barricading himself in another woman's house in north Fort Worth. After John St. Angelo fired several shots at officers, the SWAT team used a robot to pump tear gas into the home he was in. He surrendered, and was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

November 2014: The Fort Worth Fire Department used a robot for the initial search of a home in southwest Fort Worth after a witness reported a man who could have bomb-making materials inside. No materials were found.

April 2013: Fort Worth police used a stair-climbing robot armed with special cameras to locate a man who had barricaded himself inside a house in central Fort Worth. The robot helped find the man in an attic.

January 2011: Arlington police showed off a remote-controlled robot that grabbed a backpack and placed it inside a bomb disposal to demonstrate the department's readiness before Super Bowl XLV.

Arlington police have used a different camera-only robot to deliver a throw phone or water to a suspect rather than sending an officer, Rollins said.

Decision in Dallas

The most publicized robot deployment came early July 8, when sniper Micah X. Johnson was cornered inside El Centro College.

After hours of negotiations, during which Johnson talked of wanting to kill white people, “especially police officers,” police Chief David Brown made the decision to deploy the 790-pound robot, operated by two officers, to detonate a brick of C-4 explosives to kill the gunman.

“They improvised this whole idea in about 15, 20 minutes — extraordinary,” Brown said in a news conference.

The robot, a Remotec Andros Mark V-A1 purchased for about \$151,000 in 2008, sustained partial damage to the extension arm but remains functional, Brown said.

The machine, manufactured by Northrop Grumman, can deploy car bombs, also known as vehicular-borne improvised explosive devices, as well as breaching entryways, according to [manufacturer documents](#).

Brown said he would not hesitate to use the robot as a killing machine again.

“I would use any tool to save officers’ lives,” Brown said. “I’m not ashamed to say it.”

THIS ARTICLE CONTAINS INFORMATION FROM STAR-TELEGRAM ARCHIVES.

Rafael Sears: 817-390-7657, @searsrafael

DALLAS POLICE ROBOT FACTS

Type: Remotec Andros Mark V-A1

Weight: 790 pounds

Height: 46.5 inches

Width: 43 inches

Speed: 0 to 3.5 mph

The Mark V-A1:

- can lift 60 pounds with its arm fully extended and 145 pounds close to its body.
- allows users to mechanically breach entryways and deliver vehicular-borne improvised explosive countermeasures.
- has a two-way audio system with a speaker and microphone as well as a color surveillance camera.

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/crime/article91588227.html#storylink=cpy>

Plano poised to spend \$12 million fast-tracking Cotton Belt rail service, but plenty of hurdles remain

By Brandon Formby

Transportation Writer

Published: 26 July 2016 06:00 AM

Updated: 26 July 2016 03:24 AM

This post will continue to be updated throughout the day Tuesday.

The Plano City Council last night reportedly agreed to spend \$12 million in hopes of fast-tracking rail service on the Cotton Belt Line. That's the east-west rail line that runs from DFW International to the Collin County suburb. It could allow North Texans in northern suburbs to connect to the airport without having to endure a 90-minute ride all the way into Dallas, through downtown and across Irving.

It's also the line that Dallas Area Rapid Transit currently doesn't plan to have service on until 2035. According to NBC5's Noelle Walker, moving up the project could drive the cost down from \$2.9 billion to \$1 billion. The new plan, Walker reports:

"...would have two new DART stations at Shiloh and 14th Streets. Plano would pay approximately \$12 million towards the project using tax increment financing (TIF). That means a portion of the property value increase from taxes on properties within a half-mile radius would go to the project."

So how far forward does this push the project? That's tough to say, because (as is the case in transportation funding and planning) things get complicated very fast.

Walker's report says that "other cities along the line proposed line have similar decisions to make."

But Dallas is the biggest city that line runs through. Officials there are currently focused on figuring out where to put a second downtown light-rail line, a project seeking federal money for construction.

That is also a project that some downtown landowners think should be delayed so DART can find the money to put it completely underground instead of mostly at street-level. (D Magazine's Peter Simek recently penned a thorough rundown of the political, financial and neighborhood complications of that project.)

Enter Dallas council member Sandy Greyson, who represents the Far North Dallas district that the Cotton Belt line would run through. She has opposed the northern rail project. Residents in her neighborhood have raised concerns about noise along the line, which runs through several neighborhoods.

Further adding to the mix is Addison, which wants rail along the Cotton Belt because it has sent hundreds of millions of dollars to DART since 1983, but still lacks any kind of rail service.

But, wait. There's more.

The Cotton Belt also runs through Carrollton, where it could connect to DART's Green Line, which also connects to the Denton County Transportation Authority's A-Train. But Carrollton Mayor Matthew Marchant favors bus rapid transit and not rail service on the Cotton Belt.

Obviously, there's a lot to unpack here. I'll be updating this post today as I find out more.

On Twitter:

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Follow this story

Editorial: She's riding DART full-time to help it better serve southern Dallas

By Dallas Morning News Editorial

Published: 26 July 2016 07:00 AM

Updated: 26 July 2016 08:45 AM

Christie Myers, one of the new general managers under Mayor Mike Rawlings' GrowSouth umbrella, is determined to improve public transit for residents of the city's southern half.

Don't be fooled by her cheerful, sunny exterior; she's a relentless warrior for this cause.

We say good for her. And good for southern Dallas.

For about eight weeks, Myers has been relying on Dallas Area Rapid Transit, spending much of each day on buses and trains. She's brought others along for the ride [via her Facebook page](#).

While you might not know her, last week's story by *Dallas Morning News* reporter Loyd Brumfield about Myers' inspiration likely rings a bell: [the almost two-hour daily commute of Oak Cliff resident Pamela Burch](#) to Las Colinas, a one-way marathon that begins with a 4:07 a.m. bus ride.

Myers is part of [Rawlings' Neighbor Up effort](#), which hired a trio of individuals -- with salaries covered by private donations -- to focus on three neighborhoods.

The 30-year-old Myers is assigned to [the Education Corridor](#). After signing on in April, she quickly learned that reliable, accessible public transportation ranks among residents' biggest worries.

Hearing from Burch about her commute, Myers insisted on tagging along for the trip from Highland Hills, near Paul Quinn College, to Burch's job at Neiman Marcus headquarters - accomplished through a bus ride, two train rides and a 15-minute walk.

Where's an express bus when you need one?

That was Myers' question too -- just one of many. She soon began riding DART and chronicling her experiences to illuminate shortcomings and spark urgency on getting those problems fixed.

Myers is also taking concerns straight to DART, most recently meeting with its president, Gary Thomas.

DART knows bus lines need analysis and adjustment; the agency is already doing some of that. But [it's taking a cautious approach](#), rolling out changes piecemeal over a decade or so.

On behalf of the Education Corridor, Myers says that's simply not fast enough. Much will have to change in October when an extended Blue Line opens, so she's hoping other simple adjustments can be made for better service.

"I could only sit for so long and listen to community member after community member talk about the difficulties they experience with DART. I needed to actually live in their shoes to best advocate for them."

-- Christie Myers, Education Corridor general manager

A resident of Irving, Myers usually drives to the West End, where Neighbor Up has an office, and uses DART from there. Her schedule involves shuttling all over southern Dallas as well as getting to meetings throughout the city. She's become adept at apologizing for being perpetually late and sporting a less-than-fresh appearance -- part of the price that public-transit users pay daily.

It's those riders without transportation choices whose cause Myers is fighting. She vows to keep riding DART and publicizing her experiences "until I feel like adequate change is actually coming."

We're betting she doesn't give up.

Construction finally begins on pedestrian bridge at Mockingbird Station

By Joe Simnacher Follow @JoeSimnacher jsimnacher@dallasnews.com

Staff Writer

Published: 26 July 2016 05:29 PM

Updated: 26 July 2016 11:02 PM

Construction has begun on the Mockingbird pedestrian bridge. Seriously.

Like a long-awaited Hollywood blockbuster — years in the making and with a cast of thousands — crews are at last moving dirt. Factories in Houston and Germany are fabricating steel for the cantilever suspension bridge with its three 80-foot-tall towers.

The bridge, set to be completed early next year, will link the Katy Trail with DART's Mockingbird Station and trails to the north.

The project is expected to create both recreational opportunities and avenues of transportation.

"Any additional park land is great," said Jason Ney, park planning and acquisitions manager for Dallas Park and Recreation. "It's an important connection. The Katy Trail is our most heavily used trail."

The *daily* Katy Trail numbers meet or beat *monthly* totals across the region, according to North Central Texas Council of Governments statistics.

Routh Street is by far the busiest in the 16-county Dallas-Fort Worth area. During the last six months of 2015, nearly 600,000 pedestrians and bicycles crossed that location. Traffic heated up last July, when an average of 3,500 trips a day were recorded there.

The statistics are the first tallied from 26 permanent counting stations that NCTCOG installed across the region last year. Traffic counts may include round trips and do not necessarily translate into unique individual users, said Daniel Snyder a NCTCOG transportation planner.

The Katy Trail numbers are definitely the highest in the region, Ney said.

"It's by far the most heavily used trail; any connections into and out of it are important," he said. He expects the connection to lessen congestion on the Katy Trail.

Transportation planners are watching to see if the bridge will increase commuter trail traffic to the Mockingbird Station.

"It is a big link," Snyder said. "Anytime a bridge is involved, it overcomes a huge barrier for bicyclists and pedestrians. It's going to be really interesting to see how the counts change, after that bridge is completed."

The bridge has been more than a decade in the making. Former Dallas City Council members Angela Hunt and Gary Griffith proposed a pedestrian-bicycle bridge over Mockingbird just west of Central Expressway about 11 years ago. But building the 457-foot span has been a difficult task.

A grid of easement rights needed to be approved by numerous land owners. And the initial design was scrapped because the planned conventional construction method threatened to put too much weight on the nearby DART tunnel that lies under Central Expressway.

But that's all water under the bridge. Pre-construction monitoring of the DART tunnel was completed and approved earlier this year, clearing the way for work to begin. Rebcon Inc. of Dallas began excavating positions for the bridge's support towers.

Transportation planners hope the bridge will improve commuter access to DART.

"We look at it as alternative transportation, not just recreation," Ney said. "Just as with roads, when you add more connections, you might get more people on the road, but you also get opportunities to connect to other places. And we want and need people to do that to help relieve traffic congestion, especially in the core of the city."

On Twitter:

@JoeSimnacher

Texas' high-speed train: Right project, right way, right time

Trains like this one in Japan are proposed for high-speed rail service between Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston. Japan Central Railway

By Holly Reed

Special to the Star-Telegram

A high-speed train between North Texas and Houston offers Texans more than quick relief from traffic-choked highways.

The [privately developed project](#) will be an economic powerhouse, creating local jobs, generating community tax revenue and creating Texas' newest industry.

Despite facts to the contrary, some people continue to misrepresent how Texas Central will operate the rail system.

I'm referring to Crystal Wright's [July 10 piece](#), "Is rail company lying about building Texas bullet train without subsidies?" in which she called Texas "a particularly bad venue" for high-speed rail.

Without any data to back up her claim, she neglects to acknowledge the rigorous review of more than 90 city pairs throughout the U.S. that initially identified the strength of a high-speed passenger train linking North Texas and Houston.

The combination of current population, growth trends, dynamic economic opportunities, congested highways, geography and distance between the regions makes this an ideal market for this privately developed project.

These two areas, the state's largest commercial centers, represent half of Texas' population, and nearly 50,000 [commuters travel back and forth](#) between Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth at least once a week.

On top of these "super commuters," countless more understand the frustration and headaches that come with the current commute, choosing not to make the trip because of the inefficiencies and unpredictability in current travel choices.

But the high-speed train, at more than 200 mph, will get them between the two cities in 90 minutes.

Wright also makes erroneous claims about the project's business model.

The developers, Texas Central, a private company, will not take taxpayer grants for construction or any public money to subsidize its operation.

The suggestion that Texans will foot the bill simply is not true.

As with any other project funded by a private company, all risk falls to its private investors, not the state or taxpayers. And in Texas, it is illegal to bail out a private company.

This project has been widely embraced by many Texas business legends, including Fort Worth fund manager John Kleinheinz, Houston entrepreneur Drayton McLane Jr. and Dallas developer Jack Matthews.

These investors recognize that using a market-led approach to bring America its first true high-speed train will provide long-lasting benefits.

Wright bases some of her arguments on an old report from the [Reason Foundation](#), a think tank.

What she didn't mention is that the Reason Foundation's founder and analysts separately and more recently have applauded this project's approach [in this very paper](#).

They have said repeatedly that "opponents mistakenly claim that taxpayers will be stuck subsidizing the rail line, but this project actually provides a welcome opportunity for the private sector to deliver a fast, affordable transportation option with little or no risk to taxpayers."

This mega-project — with on-the-ground infrastructure investment in Texas exceeding \$10 billion — will bolster local and state economies by sustaining 10,000 jobs during each year of its construction schedule and generate tax revenues for local and state governments, school districts and other taxing entities.

It is disappointing that instead of researching the facts, Wright decided to sling anti-Texas barbs from Washington.

Texas long has benefited from state and local leadership, driving fiscal discipline and recognizing the importance of transportation. This project is the latest to exemplify these Texas principles.

Holly Reed is managing director, external affairs, for Texas Central, the private developers of high-speed rail between North Texas and Houston.

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/other-voices/article92223762.html#storylink=cpy>

Counting trees? Downtown Dallas taking steps to be more pedestrian friendly

By Brandon Formby Follow @brandonformby bformby@dallasnews.com

Transportation Writer

Published: 28 July 2016 04:12 PM

Updated: 28 July 2016 08:18 PM

No matter the time of day or evening, Main Street is a river of activity that cuts through the heart of downtown Dallas. Several blocks south, the Farmers Market is emerging as a booming residential neighborhood. On the other side of the central business district, the West End serves as a transit hub and lunchtime mainstay for corporate employees and out-of-town convention goers.

A downtown whose activity once withered at the end of the workday is now peppered with burgeoning hot spots of residential, recreational and retail vitality. But maintaining this resurgence will require stitching together these nerve centers with seamless stretches of pedestrian-friendly sidewalks lined with shops, eateries, parks and residential buildings.

“We’re still maturing in the sense that we’re trying to figure out how to connect the dots, how to create zones of activities,” said Karl Zavitkovsky, director of Dallas’ office of economic development.

That’s where the University of Texas at Arlington comes in. A team of the researchers and doctoral students from the school’s Institute of Urban Studies are embarking on a first-of-its-kind study on the walkability of downtown Dallas.

Their work aims to collect data to identify and map which city blocks have the highest concentration of pedestrians, the safest crosswalks and the most well-maintained sidewalks.

“We are going to look at every single street segment from intersection to intersection,” said Shima Hamidi, the institute’s director.

Walkability is important to the commercial and residential vitality of an urban core because people who live, work and shop in such dense places want to do so without having to drive short distances between multiple spots.

“We’ve heard it from building owners, brokers and office workers,” said Dustin Bullard, vice president of public space and design for economic development group Downtown Dallas Inc. “Really, everybody we’ve touched, that’s a common refrain.”

In an analysis of the walkability of America’s 30 largest metro areas released this month, George Washington University’s School of Business found that pedestrian-friendly developments and neighborhoods are strong economic drivers. It also said that there is demand across the country for more urban developments that revolve around people, not cars.

“The future growth of walkable urban places could provide the same economic base in the 21st century that drivable suburbanism did in the mid- to late 20th century,” says the report, “Foot Traffic Ahead.”

'Active and vibrant'

As part of the UTA study, Hamidi's team is inventorying the kinds of ground-level businesses on each downtown Dallas block, the amount of green space along each corridor and the number of trees that provide shade along the way. In all, the team will collect data on about 30 different urban design features for each street segment.

Zavitkovsky said the breadth of data will help provide the clearest picture ever on how best to invest in downtown infrastructure to bring even more residents and businesses.

"Initially, when we were trying to bring downtown back, it was like taking mud and throwing it at a wall and hoping it would stick," he said. "Things were so quiet, and there was just no momentum."

Five years ago, Downtown Dallas Inc. put together a master plan for redevelopment in downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. The organization is working on an update of the touchstone document called Downtown Dallas 360. Much of UTA's study will be incorporated into that update.

"If you don't have sustained pedestrian activity, chances are you don't have very active and vibrant areas," Zavitkovsky said.

What about the summer heat?

Of course, Dallas' history of car-centric planning isn't the only thing that makes a city street unfriendly to pedestrians. So, too, does Texas' infamous summer heat. And that's never more clear than it is these days. "It's hard to walk in this kind of climate," said Hamidi, the urban institute director.

That's a chief reason why the amount of shade on each street is being factored in to UTA's study.

Zavitkovsky agrees that sweltering Texas heat is a factor in walkability. But he doesn't see it as a reason to stop increasing the number of pedestrian-friendly corridors and gathering spots.

"If you have places that people enjoy, even with the hot weather, you're going to have more activity," he said.

'Common sense'

George Washington University's urban walkability study found that only 9 percent of office and retail space in North Texas is in walkable areas. Foot Traffic Ahead also found that on average, office rents are 74 percent higher in walkable areas compared with suburban areas. The study ranked Dallas-Fort Worth as the sixth-least-walkable out of the nation's 30 largest metropolitan areas.

But the study included the entirety of Dallas and its scores of suburbs, not just downtown. And it predicted that North Texas has the potential to jump from the country's 25th-most-walkable urban area to its 17th.

Downtown Dallas Inc. and the city's economic development office say they hope the UTA data will identify projects to spur even more growth.

"It's just kind of common sense: if you're able to walk and not have to get in your car, that's attractive," said Shalissa Colwell Perry, Downtown Dallas Inc.'s marketing vice president.

On Twitter:

@brandonformby

Getting Cotton Belt rail service a decade early could come with some limitations



[Brandon Formby](#)

A key part of [fast-tracking rail service on the Cotton Belt line](#) from DFW International to Plano hinges on lowering construction costs. To do that, Dallas Area Rapid Transit is considering single-tracking most of the route instead of double-tracking the entire path.

The transit agency and area cities are trying to find ways to get service on the line by 2025 or sooner, at least a decade ahead of current plans to have trains running by 2035.

Having two sets of tracks the entire way would allow trains to move in both directions without interfering with each other. But that's more expensive. Having one set is cheaper, but also comes with some operational inflexibility.

Single-tracking doesn't mean there would be just one set of rails for the entire route. DART rail planning vice president [Steve Salin](#) said stations and other various spots across the line would be double-tracked. Those places would be chosen based at least partially on train schedules. That means DART would double-track spots where trains going opposite directions are likely to be in the same area at the same time so they can pass each other.

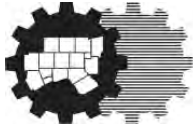
Single-tracking the Cotton Belt is one reason that Carrollton Mayor [Matthew Marchant](#) opposes plans to fast track service on the line.

"Single track is essentially pointless - you get 'rail' but only 30-minute [frequency] and any issue on the track and service is totally disrupted," Marchant said. "All of the existing light rail lines are double tracked."

DART officials say that the TRE started as a single-track route but was later double-tracked. Salin said plans right now are for Cotton Belt service every 20 to 30 minutes. When asked what the frequency of the double-tracked version of the project would be, he said it didn't get far enough into development "to understand what that operating environment would be."

There's still a lot to be worked out on the fast-tracked version of Cotton Belt service, too. Station locations aren't finalized, and neither is the particular route in a couple of places. And financing hasn't been secured either, though DART estimates that the fast-tracked version would cost about \$1 billion versus \$2.9 billion for the full-fledged version that would take a decade or more longer to get up and running.

The DART board could finalize a financial plan for fast-tracking service at a September meeting.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Amanda Wilson
(817) 695-9284
awilson@nctcog.org

Survey Data Will Guide Transportation Investments in North Texas

Responses needed to help with nationwide survey on transportation

July 14, 2016 (Arlington, Texas) – Reliable data about where people travel and how they get from place to place is essential for identifying transportation needs. Advanced technologies can count vehicles and project changes in population and congestion, but there is no substitute for information provided by real people when it comes to understanding driving, transit, bicycling and walking behavior.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is participating in the National Household Travel Survey and encourages residents in Dallas-Fort Worth to help with this effort aimed at better understanding how people travel in North Texas. The results will help officials and planners determine where and how to make transportation investments, such as bridges and roads as well as facilities for bicycling, walking and transit.

The survey began in North Texas in April, when questionnaires were mailed to thousands of randomly selected households, and will last until spring 2017. Although the selected households are not required to respond to the survey, a higher participation rate will yield more accurate data for future planning efforts.

The first part of the survey asks the selected households to answer 16 basic questions and takes just a few minutes. Respondents will then receive access to a secure website where they can log their travel for a typical day. This online recording process takes 13 minutes, on average.

Every trip, no matter the destination or length, is important to document. Data about how people commute to work, when they stop at the grocery store and how children get to school is invaluable for transportation planners and policymakers who prioritize transportation projects and allocate funds.

The Federal Highway Administration has conducted the National Household Travel Survey every five to seven years since 1969 to learn more about the travel behavior of Americans. The yearlong data collection effort asks questions about how people travel, how often they drive, how they plan daily trips to run errands and whether they carpool or use alternative modes of transportation. Survey results help planners understand changing transportation needs nationwide and in communities. To learn more about the NHTS, visit nationalhouseholdtravelsurvey.com.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit [NCTCOG.org/trans](https://www.nctcog.org/trans).

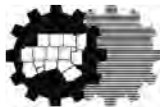
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DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2017-2019 Goal Update

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
AUGUST 11, 2016

Ken Kirkpatrick



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

NCTCOG Policy and Current DBE Goal

NCTCOG Policy:

Award Fair Share of Contracts to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

NCTCOG Transportation Department (US DOT-Assisted Contracting Opportunities):

25 Percent Overall DBE Participation Goal

Demonstration of Good-Faith Efforts

Certification of DBE Eligibility

Necessary to Update the Goal for Next Three Years

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

DBE Availability Analysis

	Potential Awards (in \$1,000s)	Total DBE Firms*	Total Firms*	Non-Weighted Summary
Urban Planning/ Engineering Services	\$ 8,470	536	1,679	31.92%
Advertising/Public Relations and Outreach	\$ 2,382	221	1,022	21.62%
Software Development/ Computer Services	\$ 817	182	2,229	8.17%
Equipment	\$ 1,467	6	102	5.88%
TOTAL	\$13,136	945	5,032	18.78%
Total Weighted Summary				25.67%

*Market Area is Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

Historical Performance

Fiscal Year	Total Contract Amount	DBE Goal	DBE Contract Percent	DBE Expenditure Percent
2006-2010	\$17,028,000	13%	22%	24.1%
2011-2013	\$7,122,596	25%	27.4%	24.5%
2014-2016*	\$14,485,947	25%	29.81%	31.69%

*through May 1, 2016

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

Race Conscious & Race Neutral Participation

Race Conscious Participation:

Achieved through DBE contract goals

Race Neutral Participation:

Achieved without DBE contract goals

Fiscal Year	Total Contract Expenditures	Total DBE Expenditures	Race Conscious Expenditures	Race Neutral Expenditures	Ratio of Race Conscious v. Race Neutral
2014-2016	\$8,061,597	\$2,555,293	\$1,443,164	\$1,112,130	56:44

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

Proposed Goal

2017-2019 Contracting Opportunities	\$13,136,000
Proposed Overall DBE Goal	25%
Race Conscious	14%
Race Neutral	11%

Goal Development Methodology and Supporting Materials Available
at: <http://www.nctcog.org/trans/programs/DBEProgram.asp>

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

Public Comments

Public Meetings (June)

Positive Feedback and Comments
Clarifying Questions

DBE Open House/Workshop (July)

Positive Feedback and Comments
Comments and Questions Focused on Process

FY2017-2019 DBE GOAL UPDATE

Schedule

TASK	DATE	STATUS
STTC Meeting: Information Item	May 27	✓
Notice to Public: Proposed DBE Goal	June 1	✓
Public Meetings: Proposed DBE Goal	June 13-15	✓
RTC Meeting: Information Item	June 16	✓
Consultant/DBE Workshop	July 13	✓
End of 45-Day Public Comment Period	July 21	✓
STTC Meeting: Action Item	July 22	✓
Submit Electronically to FTA <i>Draft DBE Goal for FY17-19</i>	August 1	✓
RTC Meeting: Action Item	August 11	
Executive Board: Action Item	August 25	
Submit Electronically to FTA <i>Approved DBE Goal for FY17-19</i>	August 26	
DBE Program Update and Goal Effective	October 1	

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Ken Kirkpatrick

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Phone: 817-608-2308

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DRAFT

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

August 11, 2016

The Honorable Tryon D. Lewis
Chairman
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

The Honorable Jeff Austin, III
Member
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

The Honorable J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Member
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

The Honorable Laura Ryan
Member
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

The Honorable Victor Vandergriff
Member
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Chairman Lewis and Commissioners Austin, Bugg, Ryan and Vandergriff:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to submit the following comments on the development of the 2017 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The RTC is pleased to see a strong commitment to addressing urban congestion relief in the draft UTP and we would like to support the adoption of Governor Abbott's Texas Clear Lanes Program in Category 12. A program of \$5 billion over ten years focused on the heaviest congestion areas in the State with project selection coming directly from the Texas Transportation Commission showcases the commitment of our Governor on mobility and reliability needs.

Earlier this year, the first phase of this program brought a welcomed infusion of funding to five of the region's top transportation priority projects and we look forward to working with the TTC and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on advancing additional projects.

The RTC has a strong record of partnership with the TTC and TxDOT to improve transportation in the DFW area. Alongside the UTP, we recognize the importance of working together on a lot of transportation initiatives. Innovation funding partnerships, transparency through performance measures, and streamlining project delivery are examples of our partnerships. The RTC pledges to work collaboratively with the TTC and TxDOT and stands ready to assist on other issues important to meeting the transportation needs of the DFW area.

DRAFT

Page Two

August 11, 2016

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the inclusion of the Texas Transportation Commission's strong commitment to addressing urban congestion. Please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9241 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ron Jensen, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

AW:ch

cc: James Bass, Texas Department of Transportation
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

NOT PROPOSED FOR ACTION**RESOLUTION APPROVING REQUESTED CHANGES BY THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO THE DRAFT 2017 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (R16-07)**

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), composed primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with NCTCOG and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the Texas Transportation Commission has requested comments on the proposed 2017 Unified Transportation Program; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC has aggressively pursued innovative finance methods, such as tolling and tolled managed lanes in order to address rapid population growth based on a partnership between the Texas Transportation Commission and MPOs in 2003 that occurred with the approval of the Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the partnership program was designed so that regions that pursued local innovative funding sources would not be penalized by a reduction in other sources of transportation revenue and began the formula allocation of Category 2 – Metropolitan Corridor funding to MPOs for MPO policy boards to select projects in coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Districts; and,

WHEREAS, the partnership program has led to over \$14 billion worth of roadway capacity improvements in the Dallas-Fort Worth region alone, with only a fraction of that coming from traditional transportation capacity improvement funding; and,

WHEREAS, population growth is projected to continue into the future with the need for capacity improvements also expected to continue at the same time that the public and elected officials are asking for fewer projects with a toll component, putting increased pressure on traditional and newly-approved state transportation funding sources; and,

WHEREAS, the draft 2017 Unified Transportation Program does not account for comprehensive benefits of roadway construction with nearly 50 percent of major corridor construction costs going to maintenance improvements vs. capacity improvements, therefore significantly underfunding capacity improvements for urban regions; and,

WHEREAS, it appears that the draft 2017 Unified Transportation Program creates new strategic programs that will not be formula allocated to MPOs for project selection and therefore would result in negative unintended consequences where major Interstate and U.S. Highway projects may be underfunded due to a project-by-project funding selection rather than a comprehensive analysis of the overall transportation system within a metropolitan region as well as connecting metropolitan regions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:**Section 1.**

The Regional Transportation Council strongly supports Governor Abbott's Metropolitan Congestion Relief Initiative and respectfully requests that the Texas Transportation Commission commit to three elements of Category 12 –Strategic Priority (Congestion Initiative). It is proposed that the Commission commit that \$5 billion be allocated to urban congestion relief and that some reasonable formula be developed so no one region sweeps the urban program. In addition, the RTC suggests that the

Commission develop a funding trade fair partnership to maximize projects that are in the best interest of the State of Texas.

Section 2.

The Regional Transportation Council respectfully requests that the Texas Transportation Commission reconsider the Category 4 – Connectivity (Congestion) Program. The Commission should allocate these funds to large urban regions in Category 2 and create a system of transportation solutions that simultaneously solve urban congestion and connectivity projects. TxDOT Minute Order # 109370, approved on August 28, 2003, indicates that this proposed new program would need to be reviewed.

Section 3.

If Section 2 cannot be carried out, the Regional Transportation Council respectfully requests that the Texas Transportation Commission increase funding in Category 2. The proposed funding levels are significantly less than the level of capacity funds discussed by TxDOT in advance of the Proposition 7 statewide election.

Section 4.

The Regional Transportation Council respectfully requests the Texas Transportation Commission support these allocations in order for the RTC to continue to reduce the number of future tolled projects in our region.

Section 5.

The Regional Transportation Council respectfully requests that TxDOT adopt performance measures, consistent with H.B. 20, to be used to determine funding levels, project need, and project prioritization.

Section 6.

This resolution will be transmitted to members of the Texas Transportation Commission and Executive Staff of the Texas Department of Transportation.

Section 7.

This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

Ron Jensen, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

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 July 14, 2016.

Gary Fickes, Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Commissioner, Tarrant County

The information below was submitted as a written comment to the Texas Department of Transportation on July 22, 2016:

The following comments and questions are submitted on behalf of the North Central Texas Council of Governments in reference to the Texas Department of Transportation's request for comments on the draft 2017 Unified Transportation Program.

TxDOT is seeking comments on the proposed UTP, what form should the comments be in, in order to be the most constructive?

The following four questions refer to Category 12.

The Regional Transportation Council, the policy board for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Planning Organization, wishes to support the Urban Congestion Relief Program.

Is the \$5 Billion amount going to urban areas only or is it available statewide?

If it goes to urban areas, is there a "fair share" allocation?

The Commission currently does not initiate tolled projects, but endorses projects from MPOs, are we to assume that none of these funds can go to tolled projects as was implemented in the first wave of congestion relief projects?

Would the Commission entertain pooling revenues across categories to create a system of larger congestion relief projects?

The following four questions refer to Category 4.

The UTP proposes \$5 Billion for Urban Connectivity Projects.

Is there a "fair share" allocation to urban regions?

If there is a “fair share,” would TxDOT entertain pooling revenues to create a larger system of connectivity and congestion relief projects?

If there is not a “fair share” allocation, how does this program meet the TxDOT partnership program in Minute Order #109370?

TxDOT currently does not initiate tolled projects, are we to assume that none of these funds can go to tolled projects?

And finally, has TxDOT worked out a process for Category 2, 4 and 12 to be selecting major roadway projects in urban areas all at the same time?

STRUCTURE OF FUTURE PROJECT SELECTION

	STATEWIDE CONNECTIVITY		URBAN CONGESTION	
	TOLLED	NON-TOLLED	TOLLED	NON-TOLLED
CATEGORY 2 MPO	✓	✓	✓	✓
CATEGORY 4 TxDOT	?	✓	✗	✗
CATEGORY 12 COMMISSION	?	?	?	✓

DRAFT

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

August 11, 2016

The Honorable Robert Nichols
Chairman
Senate Transportation Committee
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to thank you for your continued dedication to improving transportation for the State of Texas. During this critical legislative interim, you have shown leadership in calling attention to the continued need for innovative finance tools, supporting historical allocations from the Texas Transportation Commission, and monitoring implementation of performance-based planning through House Bill 20.

Although we have written to thank you for your "Tax Roads vs. Toll Roads" presentation, we again would like to highlight the importance of this issue. The Texas Legislature has provided, through the last two sessions, a significant infusion of funding for non-tolled transportation improvements. We have calculated that this meets around 30 percent of our needed congestion funding, so your continued focus on keeping tools in place to expedite projects will be critical in the future.

Additionally, your comments to the Texas Transportation Commission related to funding allocations and meeting commitments to metropolitan regions who take advantage of these innovative tools were appreciated. The RTC recognizes the challenges faced by the Texas Department of Transportation in meeting needs outside of the metropolitan regions as well as ensuring proper maintenance and safety on roadways and bridges. Your comments are important, not just as a Senator, but as a member of the Texas Transportation Commission when these partnerships were developed.

Going hand in hand with the additional funding that has been received is implementing the requirements of House Bill (HB) 20 related to performance-based planning and decision-making. This demonstrates to the public and to the Legislature that funding is being used appropriately. We know the Senate Transportation Committee has held hearings on implementation of HB 20 and we stand ready to ensure plans and projects in the DFW area are developed in accordance with HB 20 requirements.

Again, thank you for your service to the State of Texas and your commitment to transportation. Please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9241 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ron Jensen
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor, City of Grand Prairie

AW:ch

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

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ROBERT L. NICHOLS
STATE SENATOR

COMMITTEES:
Transportation, Chair
Finance
Intergovernmental Relations
Natural Resources & Economic Development

July 22, 2016

The Honorable Tryon Lewis
Chairman, Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 787001

Dear Chairman Tryon Lewis:

Thank you for your leadership of the Texas Transportation Commission. I am writing to express my thoughts on the development and adoption of the Uniform Transportation Plan (UTP), and how it relates to the implementation of House Bill 20.

Firstly, I want to compliment the Commission and the Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for reaching out to the public, and especially to local transportation planners, for their input on the UTP. It is important this process be as transparent as possible.

Last Session, I was pleased to sponsor House Bill 20 in the Texas Senate. Section 4 of this law created a new Section 201.999 of the Transportation Code, Prioritization and Approval of Projects by the Commission. Subsection (c) states in part, "The system must account for the diverse needs of the state so as to fairly allocate funding to all regions of the state."

My comments specifically relate to the proposed \$5 billion increases in both Category 12 - Strategic Priority and Category 4 - Connectivity in the UTP.

I believe it is good judgment to direct Category 12 funds for congestion relief. These funds can be used by the Commission for strategic purposes, and Governor Greg Abbott has clearly made congestion relief a priority for Texas. For several years, the Texas Transportation Institute has been tracking the top 100 most congested roadways in the state. The overwhelming majority of those roads are in four particular metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), which include five TxDOT districts. Strategically targeting these areas for congestion relief, in my opinion, makes good use of transportation dollars.

I encourage the Commission to use a "fair share" methodology using distribution formulas created over a decade ago to target the strategic objective of reducing chokepoints in these four MPOs within Category 12. Some communities have chosen to leverage local transportation dollars by developing toll projects, while others have chosen to live with more congestion. It would be perceived as penalizing some and rewarding others if the distribution is not made on a systematic distribution that has been used and accepted in the past.

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Historically, Category 4 – Connectivity funding has been used to connect our state and roadways of the major urban areas so that traffic can move throughout our state. When traffic becomes congested on our primary corridors in urban areas, it impedes commerce statewide. If the Commission is intending to use these transportation dollars for that purpose, I would encourage it be specific on which vital corridors of statewide and national significance to target, and to use performance-based criteria in selecting which segments should be improved.

I do not believe that this statewide connectivity funding should be restricted to just a select four MPOs. Instead, it should be distributed among the 25 TxDOT districts fairly, using some combination of population and vehicle miles traveled. As I recall, this kind of proportional distribution has given the four major urban areas approximately 75% to 80% of funding over the last decade, while still ensuring our urban centers remain strongly connected.

I appreciate the Commission's and the Department's work in this difficult and important decision making process. If my office can assist in any way, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert Nichols". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert L. Nichols
State Senator, District 3



RECOMMENDED MARKETING EFFORTS FOR DFW CONNECTOR PILOT PROGRAM

Regional Transportation Council

August 11, 2016



Ken Kirkpatrick, Counsel for Transportation
Mindy Mize, Program Manager, Transportation Marketing
Amanda Wilson, Public Information Manager, Community Outreach



BACKGROUND

TollTag Users Have a Higher Payment Rate than ZipCash Users

Pilot Initiated at RTC Suggestion to TxDOT

Test Ability to Cover Collection Risk for Pay-by-Mail/ZipCash Users

Periodically Increase Pay-by-Mail Surcharge (at 90, 180 days)

Market-Driven Approach to Increase Toll Tag Usage (currently 70% TollTag/30% Zip Cash on DFW Connector)

Potential to Apply Lessons Learned to IH 35W Corridor (TxDOT has Collection Risk)



RECOMMENDED MARKETING EFFORTS FOR DFW CONNECTOR PILOT PROGRAM

TollPerks for New TollTag Customers

Prize Giveaways

Preloaded TollTags to Targeted Areas

TollTag Sales at Inspection Stations in Targeted Areas

TollTag Sales at Car Dealerships in Targeted Areas



TOLLPERKS FOR NEW TOLLTAG COSTUMERS

Concept

TollPerks points can be redeemed for exclusive rewards from Dallas-Fort Worth area merchants

Additional TollPerks are given to new TollTag customers

TollTag must be tied to a credit card/bank account

Market in concert with prize giveaway

Estimated Cost

See prize giveaway information



PRIZE GIVEAWAYS

Concept

One or more grand prizes for a vacation destination or North Texas area sporting team given away

New TollTag customers are put into drawing

TollTag must be tied to a credit card/bank account

Use advertising such as billboards along DFW Connector and online/digital ads

Estimated Cost

Prize Pool: \$5,000

Marketing: \$40,000

PRELOADED TOLLTAGS TO TARGETED AREAS

Concept

Preloaded TollTags are offered to high use ZipCash customers in average to low income zip codes using the DFW Connector

\$20 credit is offered, but TollTag must be tied to a credit card/bank account

Use direct mail piece to advertise to target group of ZipCash users on DFW Connector

Target 10,000 users

Estimated Costs

Incentives up to \$200,000

Staff/Marketing up to \$30,000

TOLLTAG SALES AT INSPECTION STATIONS IN TARGETED AREAS

Concept

TollTag package are offered to costumers going through annual inspection process

TollTag must be tied to a credit card/bank account

Target inspection stations where highest concentration of users of the DFW Connector live

Participating inspection stations will receive \$5 per TollTag sold through NTTA

Joint RTC/NTTA staff communication/coordination effort

**Estimated Cost
\$10,000**

TOLLTAG SALES AT CAR DEALERSHIPS IN TARGETED AREAS

Concept

TollTag package is offered to purchasers of vehicles as a part of dealer benefits package (e.g. free oil changes)

TollTag must be tied to a credit card/bank account

Target dealerships around highest concentration of DFW Connector users

Dealership will receive incentive for participating (\$5 per tag through NTTA)

Joint RTC/NTTA staff communication/coordination effort

Estimated Cost

\$10,000



REQUESTED ACTION

Request approval of up to \$300,000 to implement DFW Connector TollTag marketing efforts

Source of Funds: Regional Toll Revenues (Regional Pool)

Administratively modify the TIP/STIP and any other necessary administrative or planning documents



CONTACT INFORMATION

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RTC Priorities from 2004, 2008, 2010, and 2012

Current Status as of August 2016

DRAFT

-  Completed or Under Construction
-  Future Need - TxDOT/RTC Responsibility*
-  Future Need - CDA/NTTA Responsibility*
-  Fully Funded
-  Partially Funded

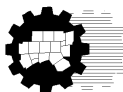
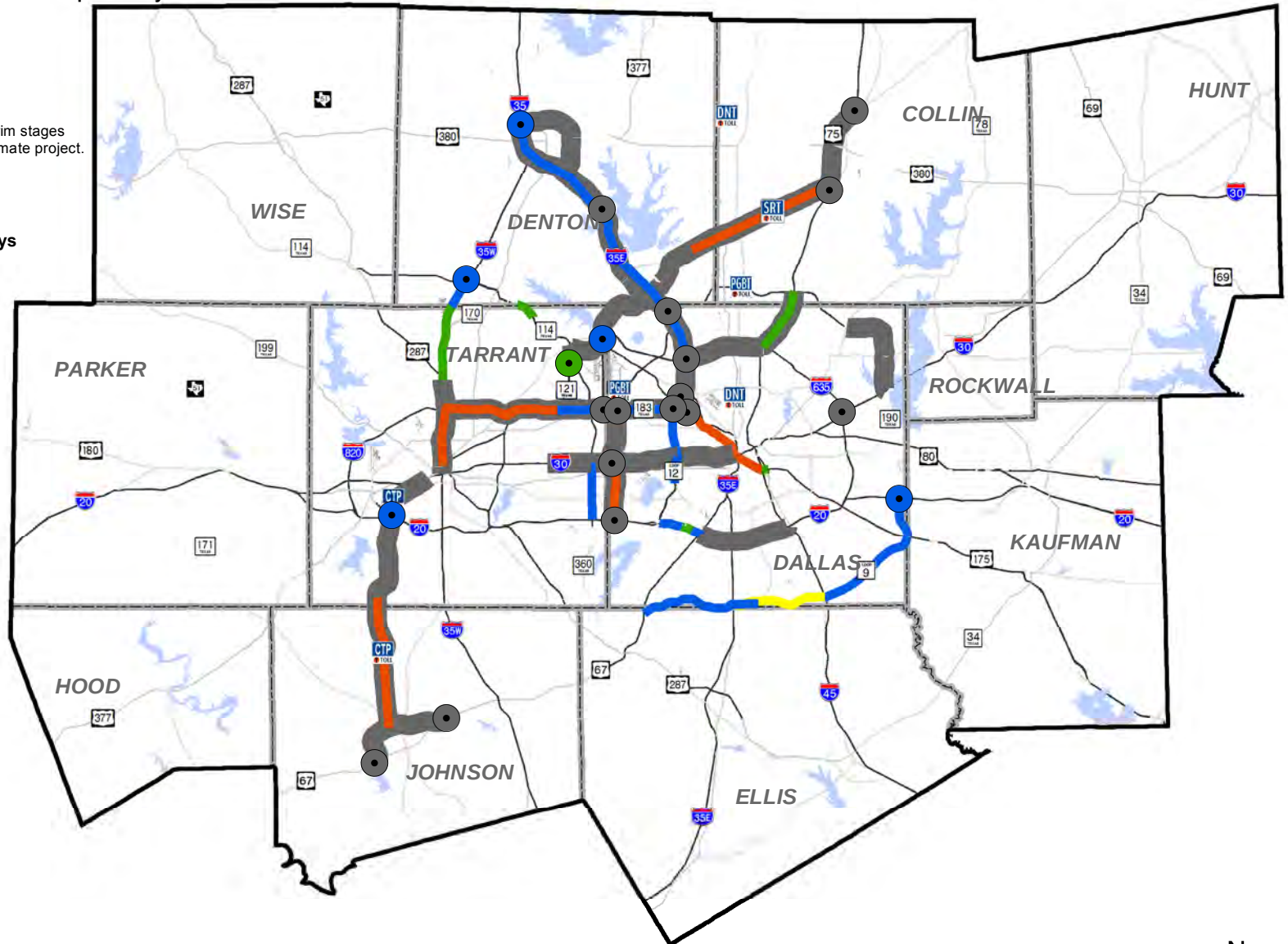
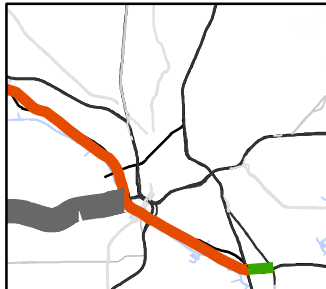
* If on the same roadway as a completed or under construction project, the completed/under construction portion refers to the interim stages and the future need portion refers to the ultimate project.

- Legend**
-  Freeways
 -  Other Highways / Roadways
 -  County Boundary
 -  Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary

Fort Worth CBD



Dallas CBD



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation



REGIONAL 10-YEAR PLAN/PRIORITIES

Regional Transportation
Council

August 11, 2016



BACKGROUND

- In 2004, Category 2 funds were received through FY 2020
 - Category 2 Funds are used to implement mobility and capacity projects
 - Additional Category 2 funds have not been allocated to the region since that time.
- The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) programmed Category 2 funds by creating a 10-year project priorities map.
 - Staff proposes to follow a similar, but new performance-based process for selecting the next round of Category 2 funds.
- In June 2016, the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) announced that new Category 2 funds would be allocated for FY 2017 to FY 2027.
 - Proposition 1 funds were previously placed into Category 2, for ease of implementation
 - Future Category 2 funds will include Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 allocations

HOUSE BILL (HB) 20 MPO REQUIREMENTS

HB 20, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, required the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to:

- Develop a 10-year plan for the use of allocated funds
- Use performance based planning and project selection
- Develop criteria that consider:
 - Congestion
 - Safety
 - Economic development opportunities
 - Available funding
 - Effects on the environment, including air quality
 - Socioeconomic effects, including adverse health or environmental effects on minority or low-income neighborhoods
 - Any other factors deemed appropriate by the planning organization

PROPOSED 10-YEAR PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

1. Inventory and reassess projects from previous 10-year planning efforts (Electronic Item 9.1)
2. Coordinate with TxDOT Districts to assess project timing and estimated construction costs
3. Review the 2027 network year of Mobility 2040 (the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)) to identify the next set of candidate priority projects
4. Review and refine performance measures used to develop Mobility 2040 for use in this effort
5. Develop draft map and project listing
6. Coordinate map with other entities selecting projects
7. Create a “system” of improvements
8. Financially constrain project listing/map of projects
9. Follow regular public involvement and committee approval process
10. Transmit final plan to TxDOT/TTC

RTC Priorities from 2004, 2008, 2010, and 2012

Current Status as of August 2016

DRAFT

-  Completed or Under Construction
-  Future Need - TxDOT/RTC Responsibility*
-  Future Need - CDA/NTTA Responsibility*
-  Fully Funded
-  Partially Funded

* If on the same roadway as a completed or under construction project, the completed/under construction portion refers to the interim stages and the future need portion refers to the ultimate project.

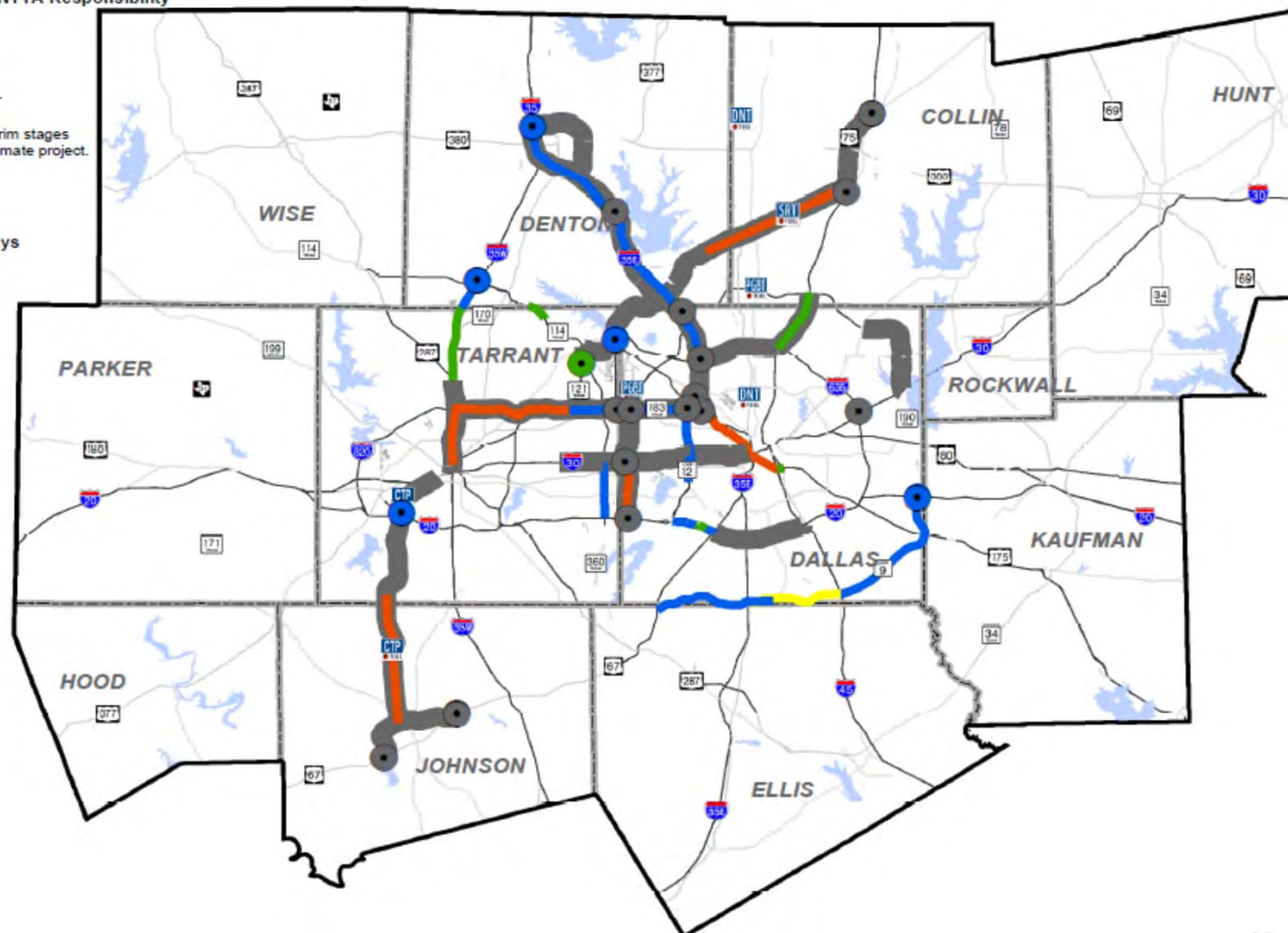
Legend

-  Freeways
-  Other Highways / Roadways
-  County Boundary
-  Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary

Fort Worth CBD



Dallas CBD



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation



PERFORMANCE MEASURES UNDER CONSIDERATION

- During the development of Mobility 2040, all limited access facilities in the region were evaluated using a technical, data-driven approach
- Performance measures were developed in response to MAP-21 national goals
- Scores were used to rank and prioritize improvements in Mobility 2040
- Staff proposes to use similar performance measures to prioritize improvements in response to the HB 20 10-year plan requirements

PERFORMANCE MEASURES UNDER CONSIDERATION, CONT.

- Below are the Mobility 2040 performance measures:

Performance Measure Criteria
Traffic Volume/Roadway Capacity
Speed
Crash Rate
Pavement Conditions
Basic Employment
Number of Trucks
Environmental Justice Index
Planning Status, Funding Availability, Constraints, and System Continuity

CONTACT/QUESTIONS?

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST
for Approval of the 2015 Ozone NAAQS Designation
Recommendation to the Governor

AGENDA REQUESTED: August 3, 2016

DATE OF REQUEST: July 15, 2016

INDIVIDUAL TO CONTACT REGARDING CHANGES TO THIS REQUEST, IF NEEDED: Joyce Spencer-Nelson, (512) 239-5017

CAPTION: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP. Consideration of the approval of the designation recommendation for the 2015 eight-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for submittal to the governor for consideration and transmittal to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA will consider the state recommendation in making final designations and area boundary determinations for the 2015 ozone NAAQS.

The EPA revised the eight-hour ozone NAAQS on October 1, 2015, lowering the standard from 0.075 parts per million (ppm) to 0.070 ppm. The Federal Clean Air Act requires that state designation recommendations be sent to the EPA within one year of NAAQS promulgation, or by October 1, 2016. Staff recommends that all counties in the State of Texas with regulatory ozone monitors exceeding the revised NAAQS, based on certified 2013 through 2015 monitoring data, as well as all counties designated nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS, be designated nonattainment for the 2015 ozone NAAQS. Staff also recommends that the recommendation for any of these areas that subsequently meet the standard based on 2016 monitoring data be changed to an attainment recommendation. Additionally, staff recommends that all counties in the State of Texas that have regulatory ozone monitors with complete data meeting the revised NAAQS and are not currently located in an area designated nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS be designated attainment. Finally, staff recommends that all other counties of the state be designated as unclassifiable/attainment. (Kristin Patton, Amy Browning/Sierra Redding) (Project No. 2016-009-SIP-NR)

Steve Hagle, P.E.

Deputy Director

David Brymer

Division Director

Joyce Nelson

Agenda Coordinator

Copy to CCC Secretary? NO X YES

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Commissioners **Date:** July 15, 2016

Thru: Bridget C. Bohac, Chief Clerk
Richard A. Hyde, P.E., Executive Director

From: Steve Hagle, P.E., Deputy Director
Office of Air

Docket No.: 2016-0399-SIP

Subject: Commission Approval for the State Designation Recommendation for the 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

State Designation Recommendation for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS
Non-Rule Project No. 2016-009-SIP-NR

Background and reason(s) for the recommendation package:

On October 1, 2015, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revised the primary eight-hour NAAQS for ozone from 0.075 parts per million (ppm) to 0.070 ppm, or 70 parts per billion (ppb).¹ The EPA also revised the secondary NAAQS for ozone to 70 ppb, equivalent to the primary standard. The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) requires that state designation recommendations be sent to the EPA within one year of NAAQS promulgation. By October 1, 2016, the governor of each state must recommend designations of attainment, nonattainment, or unclassifiable under the 2015 eight-hour ozone standard for all areas of the state. For any areas where the governor recommends a nonattainment designation, the state may also recommend nonattainment area boundaries (i.e., which counties or parts of counties within a metropolitan area should be included in the nonattainment area).

The 2015 ozone standard is exceeded with a design value greater than 70 ppb, measured over a three-year period. Based on certified air monitoring data for 2015, four areas in Texas are not meeting the revised ozone standard: Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB), San Antonio (SA), and El Paso (ELP).

Scope of the recommendation package:

The recommendation from the commission, along with supporting documentation, would be provided to the governor with information sufficient to recommend designations for all counties in Texas to the EPA by October 1, 2016. The EPA will consider the governor's recommendations in making final designations by October 1, 2017.

A.) Summary of what the recommendation will do:

Staff's recommendation to the governor is for counties with regulatory ozone monitors measuring over the 2015 ozone NAAQS of 70 ppb, based on certified 2013 through 2015 monitoring data, to be designated nonattainment. In addition, staff recommends that counties currently designated as nonattainment for the 2008 ozone standard be recommended as nonattainment for the 2015 ozone standard. Staff recommends that the

¹ The 2015 ozone NAAQS was promulgated by the EPA on October 1, 2015 and published in the *Federal Register* on October 26, 2015 (80 FR 65292).

Re: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP

following counties be designated nonattainment for the 2015 eight-hour ozone standard: Bexar, Brazoria, Chambers, Collin, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Ellis, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, Liberty, Montgomery, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Waller, and Wise Counties.

Staff recommends that all counties in Texas that have regulatory ozone monitors meeting the 2015 ozone NAAQS, based on complete and certified 2013 through 2015 monitoring data, and are not currently located in an area designated nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS, be designated attainment for the 2015 eight-hour ozone standard: Bell, Brewster, Cameron, Gregg, Harrison, Hidalgo, Hunt, Jefferson, McLennan, Navarro, Nueces, Orange, Randall, Smith, Travis, Victoria, and Webb Counties.

Finally, staff recommends that the remaining 216 counties in the state be designated unclassifiable/attainment consistent with historical EPA designation practices.

The following attachments are provided in support of the TCEQ's recommendation:

- Attachment A: State of Texas 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone NAAQS Designation Recommendation
- Attachment B: Certified 2013 through 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone Design Values for Regulatory Monitors in the State of Texas

B.) Scope required by federal regulations or state statutes:

Section 107(d) of the FCAA requires state designation recommendations to the EPA within one year of NAAQS promulgation. For the 2015 ozone NAAQS, the governor of each state must recommend to the EPA designations of attainment, nonattainment, or unclassifiable for all areas of the state by October 1, 2016. The EPA issued guidance on the schedule and process for area designations for the 2015 ozone NAAQS, including guidelines for setting nonattainment area boundaries, on February 25, 2016.²

This state designation recommendation is based on certified 2013 through 2015 data, the latest three years of complete monitoring data that will be available at the time that recommendations are due. 2015 monitoring data was certified by the TCEQ and submitted to the EPA for concurrence on April 27, 2016. The EPA is expected to finalize area designations by October 1, 2017 and the designations will likely be based on certified 2014 through 2016 monitoring data.

C.) Additional staff recommendations that are not required by federal rule or state statute: Staff recommends that nonattainment area designation recommendations based on 2013 through 2015 monitoring data be revised to attainment for any counties monitoring attainment based on 2016 data.

² Memorandum from Janet McCabe, Acting Assistant Administrator, February 25, 2016, Area Designations for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards, EPA Office of Air and Radiation.
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/ozone-designations-guidance-2015.pdf>

Re: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP

Statutory authority:

The EPA published the final rule establishing the revised NAAQS for ozone in the *Federal Register* on October 26, 2015 (80 FR 65291). The authority to propose and adopt the SIP revision is derived from FCAA, 42 United States Code, §7410, which requires states to submit SIP revisions that contain enforceable measures to attain the NAAQS. Additionally, the authority to propose and adopt the implementation plan and similar documents is derived from Texas Health and Safety Code, Texas Clean Air Act (TCAA), §382.002, which provides that the policy and purpose of the TCAA is to safeguard the state's air resources from pollution; TCAA, §382.011, which authorizes the commission to control the quality of the state's air; and §382.012, which authorizes the commission to prepare and develop a general, comprehensive plan for the control of the state's air.

Effect on the:

A.) Regulated community: Regulated entities in areas designated nonattainment by the EPA could be subject to regulatory requirements (some, for the first time). These may include permitting requirements, general conformity, transportation conformity, and requirements to reduce emissions within the nonattainment area. The complete impact of compliance with the 2015 ozone standard is unknown until implementation guidance is available and will also depend upon the classification assigned to areas designated nonattainment by the EPA. Based on the classifications approach used for the 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS and preliminary 2015 monitoring data, it is anticipated that any areas designated as nonattainment in Texas would likely be classified as marginal or moderate.

B.) Public: This recommendation has no immediate effect on the public. Nonattainment designations made by the EPA could cause the public to be subject to increased regulatory requirements, such as a vehicle inspection and maintenance program.

C.) Agency programs: Nonattainment area designations made by the EPA will require additional work from agency programs and functions associated with state implementation plan development and implementation, including rulemaking, program implementation, monitoring, permitting, and enforcement.

Stakeholder meetings:

The TCEQ's recommended designations were provided for public review and comment. Staff offered the option for public informational meetings regarding the 2015 ozone NAAQS and the designations process, if requested by local stakeholders. No local stakeholder meetings were requested.

Public comment:

The TCEQ's proposed designation recommendations were provided for public review and comment through a Web solicitation and GovDelivery notification. The public comment period opened on March 15, 2016 and closed on April 15, 2016. The TCEQ received written comments on the recommended designations from the 8-Hour Ozone SIP Coalition, Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG), Alamo Group of the Sierra Club, Association of Electric Companies of Texas (AECT), Bay City Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), CEMEX Construction

Re: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP

Materials South, LLC, City of Dayton, City of El Paso, City of Liberty, City of San Antonio and Bexar County, City of Seguin, Corpus Christi Air Quality Group, El Paso Electric (EPE), El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), Golden Triangle Business Roundtable, Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, Hood County Clean Air Coalition, Lhoist North America, Liberty County, Martin Marietta, Office of Representative Molly S. White, Sierra Club and Downwinders at Risk, Texas Chemical Council, Texas Oil and Gas Association, Western Refining, and 30 individuals.

Generally, comments supported the TCEQ's recommended designations for areas identified as attainment or unclassifiable/attainment. Commenters in the DFW area recommended expanding the DFW nonattainment area to include Freestone, Limestone, Rusk, and Titus Counties. City of Cleveland, City of Dayton, City of Liberty, and Liberty County in the HGB area recommended an attainment designation for Liberty County and the Texas Chemical Council commented that counties designated nonattainment for the 2008 NAAQS should not be recommended as nonattainment for the 2015 NAAQS without a current analysis. Commenters in the El Paso area, including El Paso Electric, El Paso MPO, Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, and Western Refining, recommended either an unclassifiable designation or partial county nonattainment designation for El Paso County. Many commenters also urged the TCEQ to pursue exceptional events to avoid a nonattainment designation for areas like El Paso County. Commenters in the San Antonio area, including AACOG and City of Seguin, recommended an unclassifiable designation for Bexar County. Several commenters, including Bexar County, City of San Antonio, EDF, and Sierra Club and Downwinders at Risk, also requested that the TCEQ complete a five-factor analysis to identify if any other counties in the San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA may contribute to nonattainment in Bexar County. CAPCOG also provided an alternative approach to TCEQ's recommendation, supported by AACOG, Bexar County, City of San Antonio, and El Paso MPO, that would account for the range of measurement uncertainty that EPA allows for ozone monitoring (+/- 7%) as part of its consideration of air quality data. The alternative approach would be for the TCEQ to recommend that EPA designate counties that have regulatory monitors with design values over the 2015 ozone NAAQS that are within the EPA's allowable range of measurement uncertainty for ozone (71 ppb - 75 ppb) as "unclassifiable" rather than "nonattainment." Finally, AECT and EPE commented that Texas' designation recommendation submittal should specify that if the 2014 through 2016 design value for any of the three counties recommended as new nonattainment counties (i.e., Bexar County, El Paso County, and Hood County) does not exceed 70 ppb, Texas' recommended designation for that county will change to attainment.

Potential controversial concerns and legislative interest:

The EPA will consider exceptional events in the designations process and finalized an exceptional events flagging and demonstration submittal timeline as part of the final 2015 ozone NAAQS rule to align with initial area designations. Under the schedule promulgated in the final rule, the deadline for flagging exceptional events for data years 2013 through 2015 is July 1, 2016. The deadline for submitting exceptional events demonstrations for data years 2013 through 2015 is October 1, 2016. For 2016 monitoring data, the deadline for both the flagging of exceptional events and submittal of demonstrations is May 31, 2017.

Re: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP

The EPA expects to promulgate revisions to the 2007 Exceptional Events Rule and finalize a guidance document to address criteria for wildfires that could affect ozone concentrations before the October 1, 2016 date by which states are required to submit their initial designation recommendations and exceptional event demonstrations for data years 2013 through 2015. The EPA announced the proposed rule revisions and draft guidance on November 10, 2015; however, it is uncertain whether they will be finalized in a timely manner for states to use in developing these October 1, 2016 submittals.

Does this recommendation package affect any current policies or require development of new policies? No

What are the consequences if this recommendation package does not go forward? Are there alternatives to the recommendation?

The governor's office would not have the TCEQ's recommendation to consider for a recommendation to the EPA. Not submitting a recommendation to the EPA could remove Texas' opportunity to provide input on designations and could lead to EPA designations of Texas counties under the new standard without state input. However, the EPA is expected to publish a *Federal Register* notice regarding proposed designations at the time that 120-day letters are issued to states providing an additional opportunity for Texas to comment before the EPA finalizes designations under the 2015 ozone standard.

Key points in the recommendation schedule:

Commissioners' Agenda: August 3, 2016

Recommendation to the governor's office: Mid-August 2016

Recommendation due to the EPA: October 1, 2016

Certification of 2016 Monitoring Data: May 1, 2017

EPA sends 120-day letters for designations: June 2, 2017

Final ozone area designations to be issued by the EPA: October 1, 2017

Agency contacts:

Kristin Patton, Project Manager, Air Quality Division, (512) 239-4907

Amy Browning, Staff Attorney, (512) 239-0891

Sierra Redding, Staff Attorney, (512) 239-2496

Joyce Spencer-Nelson, Division Liaison, (512) 239-5017

Attachments:

Draft letter from Chairman Shaw to Governor Abbott

Attachment A: State of Texas 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone NAAQS Designation Recommendation

Attachment B: Certified 2013 through 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone Design Values for Regulatory Monitors in the State of Texas

Resolution Concerning the 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards Designations

Commissioners

Page 6

July 15, 2016

Re: Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP

cc: Chief Clerk, 2 copies
Executive Director's Office
Marshall Coover
Erin Chancellor
Stephen Tatum
Jim Rizk
Office of General Counsel
Kristin Patton
Joyce Spencer-Nelson

August XX, 2016

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P. O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711-2428

RE: State Designation Recommendations for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

Dear Governor Abbott:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revised the primary and secondary eight-hour NAAQS for ozone to 0.070 parts per million, or 70 parts per billion (ppb), on October 1, 2015. Section 107(d) of the Federal Clean Air Act requires the governor of each state to submit to the EPA a list of all areas with a designation recommendation of attainment, nonattainment, or unclassifiable, within one year of promulgation of a new or revised NAAQS.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) recommends that all counties in Texas with regulatory ozone monitors measuring over the 2015 ozone NAAQS of 70 ppb as well as counties currently designated as nonattainment for the 2008 ozone standard be recommended as nonattainment for the 2015 ozone standard. The TCEQ recommends that all counties in Texas that have regulatory ozone monitors with complete data meeting the 2015 ozone NAAQS, and are not currently located in an area designated nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS, be designated attainment. Finally, the TCEQ recommends that all other counties in the state be designated unclassifiable/attainment consistent with historical EPA designation practices. This recommendation is based on the three most recent years of quality-assured air data from the current regulatory monitoring network for the years 2013 through 2015 (see Attachments A and B). Additionally, the TCEQ recommends that nonattainment area designation recommendations based on 2013 through 2015 monitoring data be revised to attainment for any counties monitoring attainment based on 2016 data.

Enclosed are a resolution and attachments containing the designation recommendation for your submittal to the EPA by the October 1, 2016 deadline.

If I can be of any assistance, please contact me at 512-239-5510.

Sincerely,

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., Chairman

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Ryan Vise, Office of Budget and Policy, Office of the Governor
Mr. Richard A. Hyde, P.E., Executive Director, TCEQ

ATTACHMENT A

STATE OF TEXAS 2015 EIGHT-HOUR OZONE NAAQS DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION

The following table identifies Texas counties and the designations that the State of Texas is recommending for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS.

Recommended Designation	Counties
Nonattainment	Bexar Brazoria Chambers Collin Dallas Denton El Paso (<i>with the exception of tribal lands, i.e. Ysleta Del Sur Reservation or Trust Lands</i>) Ellis Fort Bend Galveston Harris Hood Johnson Kaufman Liberty Montgomery Parker Rockwall Tarrant Waller Wise
Attainment	Bell Brewster Cameron Gregg Harrison Hidalgo Hunt Jefferson McLennan Navarro Nueces Orange Randall Smith Travis Victoria Webb
Unclassifiable/Attainment	Remaining 216 counties in the state

ATTACHMENT B

CERTIFIED 2013 THROUGH 2015 EIGHT-HOUR OZONE DESIGN VALUES FOR REGULATORY MONITORS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has calculated the eight-hour ozone design values for Texas counties with regulatory monitors, as presented in the table below, in support of the State's designation recommendation for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The design values were calculated with certified 2013 through 2015 monitoring data.

Design Values by County for the 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone NAAQS

County	Certified 2013 through 2015 Design Value (parts per billion)
Denton	83
Brazoria	80
Tarrant	80
Harris	79
Bexar	78
Collin	76
Dallas	75
Parker	75
Galveston	73
Hood	73
Johnson	73
Montgomery	73
El Paso	71
Rockwall	70
Bell	69
Ellis	68
Gregg	68
Jefferson	68
Travis	68
Kaufman	67

ATTACHMENT B

County	Certified 2013 through 2015 Design Value (parts per billion)
McLennan	67
Smith	67
Harrison	66
Navarro	66
Orange	66
Randall	66
Nueces	65
Brewster	64
Hunt	64
Victoria	64
Cameron	59
Webb	59
Hidalgo	56

Note: The regulatory CASTNET monitor in Polk County does not have a valid 2013 through 2015 design value as the monitor does not meet data completeness requirements. Incomplete data shows a 2015 design value of 64 parts per billion.

Source: The EPA Air Quality System database (<https://www.epa.gov/aqs>)

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE 2015 EIGHT-HOUR OZONE
NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS DESIGNATIONS**

**Docket No. 2016-0399-SIP
Project No. 2016-009-SIP-NR**

WHEREAS, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Commission) met on August 3, 2016 to discuss and consider designation recommendations for the 2015 eight-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for submittal to the governor for his consideration and transmittal to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that the EPA revised the eight-hour standard for ozone on October 1, 2015, setting both the primary and secondary standards at 0.070 parts per million, or 70 parts per billion (ppb); and

WHEREAS, the Commission acknowledges that the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), § 107(d), requires the EPA, after the promulgation of a new or revised NAAQS, to designate areas as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassifiable; and

WHEREAS, the Commission acknowledges that the FCAA, § 107(d), also establishes a process for each governor to provide recommendations to the EPA regarding appropriate designations for the 2015 ozone NAAQS for their state, including appropriate geographic boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Commission acknowledges that the EPA has specified a deadline for the submittal of recommended designations for the 2015 ozone NAAQS of October 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Commission acknowledges that the EPA recommends that states identify areas not in compliance with the revised NAAQS using the most recent three years of air quality data, preferably data from calendar years 2013 through 2015, stored in the EPA Air Quality System (AQS) from Federal Reference Method and Federal Equivalent Method monitors that are sited and operated in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 58; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that based on complete and certified AQS monitoring data from 2013 through 2015, all monitors in Texas with data eligible for comparison to the revised 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS were reviewed, and there are areas of the state that should be recommended for designation as nonattainment, in addition to areas that should be recommended for designation as attainment or

unclassifiable/attainment, as noted in the attached Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that at the time that the EPA makes final designations, AQS monitoring data from 2016 may also be available for the EPA's consideration and that nonattainment area designation recommendations based on 2013 through 2015 monitoring data may be revised to attainment for any counties monitoring attainment based on 2016 data; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby requests the governor of Texas to submit a recommendation for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS to the EPA for consideration consisting of nonattainment designations for all counties in Texas with regulatory ozone monitors measuring over the 2015 ozone NAAQS of 70 ppb as well as areas currently designated as nonattainment for the 2008 ozone standard, attainment designations for all counties in Texas that have regulatory ozone monitors with complete data meeting the 2015 ozone NAAQS that are not currently located in an area designated nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS, and unclassifiable/attainment designations for all other counties in the state, as detailed in Exhibit A, by the EPA's requested deadline of October 1, 2016.

TEXAS COMMISSION ON
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., Chairman

Date Signed

STATUS OF 2016 TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY AND RECOMMENDED DESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2015 OZONE NAAQS

Regional Transportation Council

Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager
August 11, 2016



2016 TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY

Update

AGENCY	ACTION	DATE
STTC	Information – Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity	December 4, 2015
RTC	Information – Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity	January 14, 2016
NCTCOG	Public Meetings and Start of Public Comment Period on Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity	January-February 2016
STTC	Action – Endorsement of Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity	February 26, 2016
RTC	Action – Endorsement of Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity and End of Public Comment Period on Mobility 2040 and 2016 Transportation Conformity	March 10, 2016
EPA, FHWA, TCEQ, TxDOT	Begin 90 Day Partner Review of 2016 Transportation Conformity	March 11, 2016
EPA and TCEQ	US 67/IH 35E TCM Substitution Begins	March 22, 2016
NCTCOG	US 67/IH 35E TCM Substitution Public Comment Period Begins	April 11, 2016
STTC	Approve the RTC's Intent to Adopt a Resolution Indicating Concurrence on the TCM Substitution	April 22, 2016
NCTCOG	US 67/IH 35E TCM Substitution Public Comment Period Ends	May 10, 2016
RTC	Adopt a Resolution Approving TCM Substitution	May 12, 2016
EPA and TCEQ	Send TCM Substitution Concurrence Letters to FHWA, FTA, and TxDOT	Late May, 2016
STTC	Action – Endorsement of the 2016 Transportation Conformity for Mobility 2040 and Associated TIP, Incorporating the TCM Substitution	May 27, 2016
RTC	Action – Endorsement of the 2016 Transportation Conformity for Mobility 2040 and Associated TIP, Incorporating the TCM Substitution	June 16, 2016
US DOT	Estimated 2016 Transportation Conformity Determination	June 2016

2015 EIGHT-HOUR OZONE STANDARD

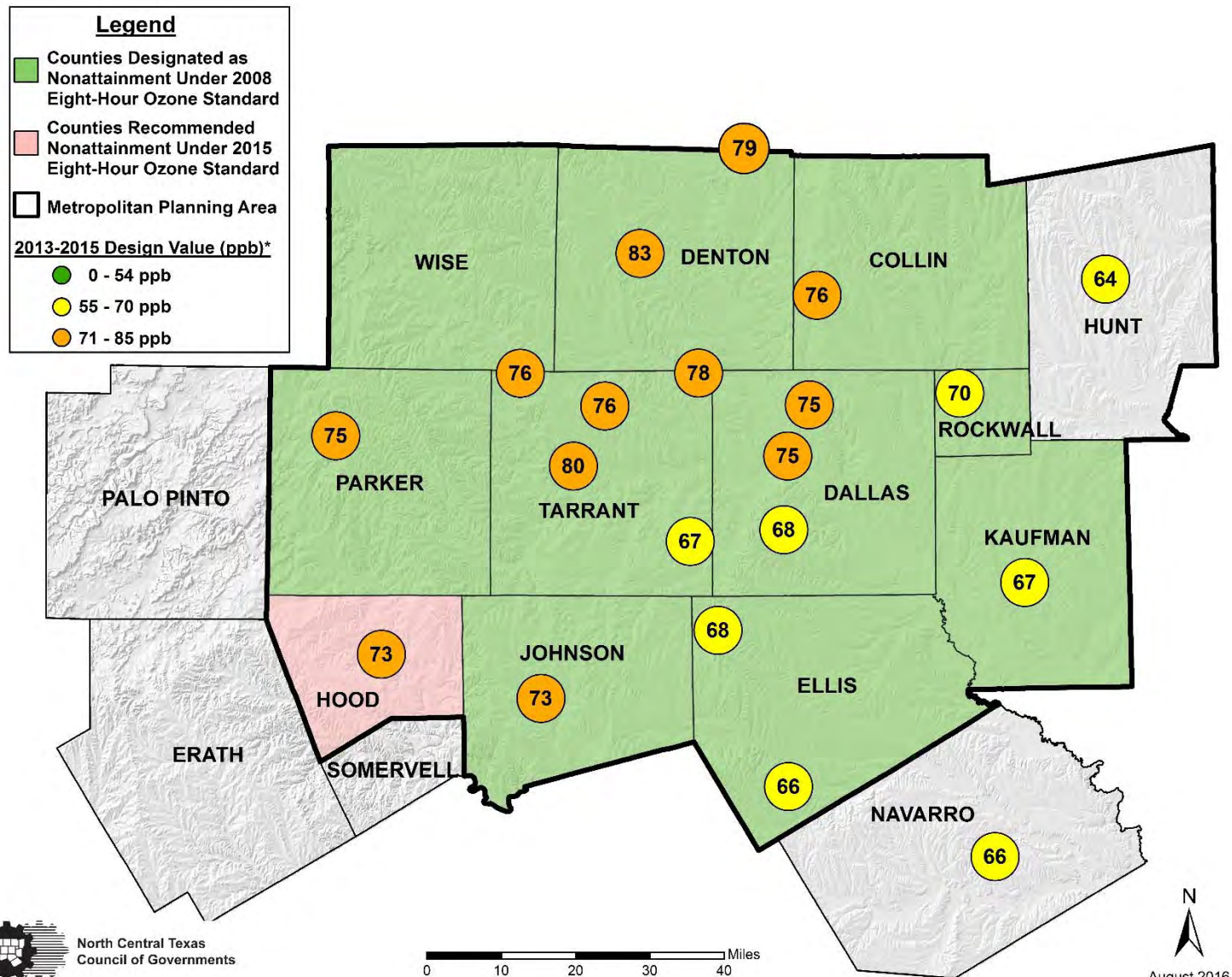
Nonattainment Recommendations (≤ 70 ppb)

TCEQ Commission Approval Addition of Hood County	August 3, 2016
State Recommendations Due to EPA	October 2016
EPA Final Nonattainment Designations	October 2017
Effective Date of Final Designations	December 2017
State Implementation Plan Due	December 2020
Attainment Date	Marginal – Extreme 2020 – 2037

Note: Dates are anticipated, and subject to change; <https://www.epa.gov/ozone-pollution/2015-ozone-naaqs-timelines>
ppb = parts per billion

2015 EIGHT-HOUR OZONE STANDARD

Nonattainment Recommendations (≤ 70 ppb)



FURTHER INFORMATION

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817-608-2342

Jody Loza
Senior Air Quality Planner
jloza@nctcog.org
817-704-5609

NCTCOG Ozone Updates: www.nctcog.org/ozone

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
August 2015 - July 2016

RTC MEMBER	Entity	8/13/15	9/10/15	10/8/15	11/12/15	12/10/15	1/14/16	1/20/16	2/11/16	3/10/16	4/14/16	5/12/16	6/16/16	7/14/16
Monica R. Alonzo (07/15)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	A
Bruce Arfsten (08/15)	Addison	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Douglas Athas (06/13)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
Brian Barth (09/13)	TxDOT, FW	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Carol Bush (01/15)	Ellis Cnty	P	E	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E
Mike Cantrell (1/07)	Dallas Cnty	A(R)	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	P	P	A
David L. Cook (05/16)	Mansfield	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E	P	E
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)
Charles Emery (4/04)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Franke (1/08)	Cedar Hill	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sandy Greyson (11/11)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	A(R)
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	E
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lee Kleinman (09/13)	Dallas	P	P	P	E	E(R)	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Loughmiller (04/15)	McKinney	A(R)	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)	A	P	P	A	P	P	A(R)
Scott Mahaffey (03/13)	FWTA	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Matthew Marchant (07/08)	Carrollton	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	E	P	P	A
Maher Maso (10/08)	Frisco	P	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	P	E	E(R)	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P
B. Adam McGough (07/16)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Stan Pickett (06/15)	Mesquite	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	A	P	E	A	P	P	A
Mark Riley (1/09)	Parker Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Kevin Roden (6/14)	Denton	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	E	P	P	E	P
Kelly Selman (02/15)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Gary Slagel (11/15)	DART	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lissa Smith (6/12)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Mike Taylor (7/14)	Colleyville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Stephen Terrell (6/14)	Allen	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Casey Thomas II (07/16)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	E	P
Oscar Ward (6/14)	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
August 2015 - July 2016

RTC MEMBER	Entity	8/13/15	9/10/15	10/8/15	11/12/15	12/10/15	1/14/16	1/20/16	2/11/16	3/10/16	4/14/16	5/12/16	6/16/16	7/14/16
Bernice J. Washington (4/09)	DFW Airport	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin Cnty	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant Cnty	P	E	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	E	E	P	E	P
Kathryn Wilemon (6/03)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	--	--	P	P	A	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	P	E
Erik Wilson (07/15)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	A	P	P	P	P	A
W.B. "Zim" Zimmerman (9/12)	Fort Worth	A(R)	P	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P	P	E	E(R)

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster

June 2015 - June 2016

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	6/26/15	7/24/15	8/28/15	9/25/15	10/23/15	12/4/15	1/22/16	2/26/16	3/25/16	4/22/16	5/27/16	6/24/16
Antoinette Bacchus	Dallas County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Micah Baker	Dallas County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Bryan Beck	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	--	--	--	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
David Boski	Mansfield	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Kristina Brevard	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	R	P	P	P	R
Keith Brooks	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	A	P	P	P
John Brunk	Dallas	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A
Mohammed Bur	TxDOT, Dallas	P	P	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	P
Loyl Bussell	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Dave Carter	Richardson	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Hal Cranor	Eules	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	A	R	P	P	P	R	A	P	P	P	A	P
Chad Davis	Wise County	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Greg Dickens	Hurst	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	A	R	R	R
David Disheroon	Johnson County	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	A	A	A	P	P
Massoud Ebrahim	Greenville	P	P	P	R	R	P	P	P	A	A	P	P
Chad Edwards	DART	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Keith Fisher	Keller	A	R	P	R	A	P	P	R	A	P	P	P
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	A	P	A
Chris Flanigan	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R
Ann Foss	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Gary Graham	McKinney	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	R	R	P	R	P
Tom Hammons	City of Carrollton	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A
Michael Hasler	Duncanville	--	--	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Curvie Hawkins	FWTA	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	A	A
Mark Hines	McKinney	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Chris Holsted	Wylie	P	A	P	A	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Kirk Houser	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Terry Hughes	Parker County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Jeremy Hutt	Colleyville	P	P	A	P	A	A	R	P	A	R	A	P
Thuan Huynh	Garland	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	P
Paul Iwuchukwu	Arlington	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P
Joseph Jackson	Ellis County	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	A
Tim James	Mesquite	A	P	A	A	P	A	A	P	P	A	A	P
David Jodray	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	A	A	A	P	A	R	P	P
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	A	P	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Tom Johnson	DeSoto	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P
Sholeh Karimi	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A

P =Present A= Absent

R =Represented -- =Not yet eligible to attend

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster

June 2015 - June 2016

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	6/26/15	7/24/15	8/28/15	9/25/15	10/23/15	12/4/15	1/22/16	2/26/16	3/25/16	4/22/16	5/27/16	6/24/16
Paul Knippel	Frisco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Chiamin Korngiebel	Dallas	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	A
Richard Larkins	Grapevine	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	A	A
Paul Luedtke	Garland	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	P	P	P	P	P	R	A	P	P	P	P	P
Rick Mackey	TxDOT, Paris	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Srini Mandayam	Mesquite	P	P	P	R	R	P	R	P	A	P	A	R
George Marshall	Coppell	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	P	P
Laura Melton	Burleson	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	P	A	A
Brian Moen	Frisco	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	R	A	A
Cesar Molina, Jr.	Carrollton	A	P	P	A	P	R	P	P	A	A	A	P
Lloyd Neal	Plano	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	A	P	P
Mark Nelson	Denton	P	P	P	R	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	R
Jim O'Connor	Irving	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	A	A	P	A	A
Kevin Overton	Dallas	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Todd Plesko	DART	A	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	A	A	A	P
John Polster	Denton County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Daniel Prendergast	Plano	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
Lisa Pyles	Addison	P	A	P	A	P	A	A	P	P	A	A	A
William Riley	Tarrant County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	A
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
David Salmon	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	R	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Elias Sassoon	Cedar Hill	P	P	R	P	P	P	R	R	P	E	P	P
Gordon Scruggs	The Colony	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	R	P	A	A
Lori Shelton	NTTA	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	A
Angela Smith	FWTA	--	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Mark Titus	Richardson	P	P	P	P	R	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jonathan Toffer	Dallas County	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	P
Timothy Tumulty	Rockwall	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	R
Daniel Vedral	Irving	P	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	P	A
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	P	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Jared White	Dallas	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Bill Wimberley	Hood County	A	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	P	R	A	P
Mykol Woodruff	TxDOT, Dallas	P	A	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	--	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

P =Present A= Absent

R =Represented -- =Not yet eligible to attend

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

June 24, 2016

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, June 24, 2016, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following STTC members or representatives were present: Antoinette Bacchus, Micah Baker, Bryan Beck, David Boski, Anna Mosqueda (representing Kristina Brevard), Keith Brooks, Mohammed Bur, Dave Carter, John Cordary Jr., Hal Cranor, Clarence Daugherty, Chad Davis, Duane Hengst (representing Greg Dickens), David Disheroon, Massoud Ebrahim, Claud Elsom, Keith Fisher, Tim Porter (representing Chris Flanigan), Ann Foss, Gary Graham, Michael Hasler, Mark Hines, Chris Holsted, Matthew Hotelling, Kirk Houser, Terry Hughes, Jeremy Hutt, Thuan Huynh, Paul Iwuchukwu, Tim James, David Jodray, Tom Johnson, Paul Knippel, Paul Luedtke, Stanford Lynch, Ricky Mackey, Christina Hickey (representing Srin Mandayam), George Marshall, Cesar Molina Jr., Lloyd Neal, Julie Anderson (representing Mark Nelson), Jim O'Connor, Dipak Patel, Todd Plesko, John Polster, Daniel Prendergast, William Riley, Moosa Saghian, David Salmon, Elias Sassoon, Lori Shelton, Walter Shumac III, Angela Smith, Mark Titus, Timothy Tumulty, Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize, Caroline Waggoner, Jared White, Bill Wimberley, and Mykol Woodruff.

Others present at the meeting were: Logan Arthur, Tom Bamonte, Berrien Barks, Carli Baylor, Natalie Bettger, Jason Brodigan, Jesse Brown, Ron Brown, Ken Bunkley, Sarah Chadderdon, Michael Copeland, Ruben Delgado, Kevin Feldt, Wade Haffey, Jill Hall, Heather Haney, Alan Hendrix, Rebekah Hernandez, Chris Hoff, Mohammed Howlader, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Dan Lamers, April Leger, Sonny Loper, Chad McKeown, Mindy Mize, Bailey Muller, Milton Richter, Rylea Roderick, Kyle Roy, Kelli Schlicher, Russell Shiffner, John Stanley, Jahnae Stout, Dean Stuller, Gerald Sturdivant, Jonathan Toffer, Whitney Vandiver, Sandy Wesch, Elizabeth Whitaker, Amanda Wilson, and Brian Wilson.

1. **Approval of May 27, 2016, Minutes and Recognition of Members:** The minutes of the May 27, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Stanford Lynch (M); Michael Hasler (S). The motion passed unanimously.

Jim O'Connor recognized Jonathan Toffer for six years of service on the Surface Transportation Technical Committee.

2. **Consent Agenda:** There were no items on the Consent Agenda.
3. **Potential Transportation Alternatives Program Funds Lapse:** Ken Bunkley discussed the FY2013 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds that are potentially at risk of lapsing if not utilized by September 30, 2016. Federal regulations state that apportioned TAP funds are available for obligation for the year of apportionment plus three years. Any unobligated apportioned amounts at the end of that period shall lapse. TAP funds that were apportioned in FY2013 must be utilized by the end of federal FY2016. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin recently notified the Dallas-Fort Worth region that metropolitan planning organization (MPO) selected TAP funds are potentially at risk of lapsing. Approximately \$8 million in FY2013 TAP funds have been apportioned to the region, totaling approximately \$10 million with local match. To date, \$4.5 million has been obligated and staff anticipates that approximately \$987,000 in additional funds will be obligated leaving \$2.5 million at risk of lapsing. A timeline was highlighted for members.

In March 2013, TAP apportionments were established at the federal level. In late August 2013, TxDOT established individual MPO allocations including the Dallas-Fort Worth region's allocation. A TAP Call for Projects Workshop was held December 17 and on February 13, 2014, the RTC announced the TAP Call for Projects. Applications were reviewed, scored, and projects were recommended, followed by RTC approval for 23 projects to receive \$28.4 million in federal TAP funding in October 2014. Selected projects were added to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through the February 2015 TIP modification cycle allowing cities and implementing agencies to begin contracting the agreement process with TxDOT. Several factors led to the delay of the obligations: 1) a six month delay in the federal apportionment, 2) the TAP template agreement for local agency use was not available until late FY2015/early FY2016, and 3) agreements were held up pending finalization of the template agreement even though local governments were ready to move ahead as soon as the TIP modifications were approved. When staff learned that TAP funds were at risk, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and TxDOT staffs coordinated regarding the impacted projects and next course of action. NCTCOG staff then began researching projects with unobligated TAP funds and contacted agencies that had TAP funds programmed in FY2015 and FY2016 to see if the projects could be obligated prior to the October 2016 deadline. A total of \$5.5 million in TAP funds have been obligated, primarily for preliminary engineering or TxDOT review time. Of the remaining projects, none are ready for construction. Mr. Bunkley noted the importance of timely project implementation, including ensuring project estimates are accurate and realistic for all phases. This allows staff to program projects in the correct year so financial constraint can be managed, and to ensure that TxDOT's letting capacity is met and funding is available. It was noted that three projects previously programmed with TAP funds in FY2015 and FY2016 were delayed to FY2017 at the request of implementing agencies. These projects represent approximately \$2.2 million in unobligated federal TAP funds, which is the majority of total funds at risk of lapsing. Mr. Bunkley noted that staff is seeking solutions to determine how to avoid these instances in the future. In addition, staff has requested that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) extend the obligation deadline six months as it did not apportion the funds until six months into FY2013. TxDOT has also been asked to manage obligations statewide versus managing the obligations at the individual MPO level given the delay in allocating FY2013 funding by one year. Staff has heard this is not possible at this time because the funds were delivered at the MPO level and cannot be looked at as an overall statewide project. Staff will continue to work with local agencies to advance TAP project implementation to avoid a lapse this year and in future fiscal years, and begin development of a policy regarding timely project implementation. Mr. Bunkley clarified that although the agreement was not in place, it was sent to agencies in December 2015. To date, several agreements have not yet been received by TxDOT. Tim James asked how NCTCOG staff recommends that cities plan for delays outside of their control. Mr. Bunkley noted that staff realizes there are circumstances outside of the control of agencies and staff is working on efforts to implement projects in a more timely fashion. To date, no feedback has been received from FHWA regarding the extension and staff is not aware when additional details will be made available. Christie Gotti noted that staff's recommendation is that every agency on the list execute its agreements and obligate funds. She added, six months seems like sufficient time for agencies to have moved forward since the template agreement was provided from TxDOT. The TxDOT Dallas District has done some analysis, and believes that even if the extension is received, the funds cannot be obligated by the deadline. Clarence Daugherty discussed the timeline of events and clarified that even though the template was available since December 2015, the template was not made available for over a year. Ms. Gotti agreed and noted that was the reason staff has questioned TxDOT and FHWA. Jim O'Connor asked the next step for agencies. Ms. Gotti

noted that staff can continue to seek an answer from FHWA. Agencies should continue to push projects across the goal line. Dan Kessler noted that staff is also working on other fronts with TxDOT to execute agreements more quickly. Mr. James asked about the risk to funds with executed Local Project Advance Funding Agreements (LPAFAs). Ms. Gotti clarified that if agencies have executed LPAFAs, funds are obligated. It is the unexecuted agreements with unobligated funds that are risk. However, if problems continue more funds could ultimately be lost. She added, this is a rule of which staff is generally aware but that is handled at the State level. Since TAP funds are handled specific to each MPO, there are delays that are outside the control of many. This also occurs with other funding types, but there is a way to handle the problem statewide. Staff has stressed the importance of being realistic about project implementation for this reason. John Polster suggested that agencies review their LPAFAs, which should include information about what happens if funds are not obligated.

4. **High-Occupancy Vehicle Subsidy Report:** Berrien Barks provided an update on the most recent managed lane performance report. The current Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Managed Lane Policy allows for high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) users to travel on tolled managed lanes at a 50 percent discount during the peak periods. The RTC is responsible for paying the cost of the discount on the North Tarrant Express (NTE) and the LBJ Express. A map of the near-term, managed lane system was highlighted showing currently opened facilities and those expected to open in the next five years. As of April 2016, the HOV subsidy is approximately \$583,000. RTC originally allocated \$17 million dollars for this subsidy. In addition to HOV users receiving a discount, the policy also allows for RTC-sponsored vanpool users to receive a 50 percent discount during the peak periods through a reimbursement request. As of April 2016, approximately \$1,200 in requests for reimbursements have been received. Staff believes it is safe to remain at a 2+ requirement for the discount until June 2018, or before, based on continued monitoring. In addition, the North Texas Tollway Authority serves as the billing agent for all tolled managed lanes in the region. It has not reported any customer service impacts or concerns to date. From a performance standpoint, the RTC policy strives to maintain a minimum average corridor speed of 50 miles per hour (mph). To date, there have been no qualifying instances in which speeds have dropped below 35 mph. A slide showing the subsidy cost by corridor was presented.
5. **DFW Connector Pilot Study Update:** Ken Kirkpatrick briefed the Committee on the status of the DFW Connector Pilot Program related to pay-by-mail surcharges. As a reminder, the pilot program was instituted when the Texas Department of Transportation requested assistance from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on IH 35W due to the collection risk of pay-by-mail users. In the DFW Connector corridor, traffic is continuing to increase. The current surcharge is 90 percent and the transaction split had settled at about 70 percent toll tag user and 30 percent pay-by-mail user in past years. This year, toll tag transactions have increased to approximately 72 percent. It seems that less than 10 percent of the pay-by-mail users account for about one-half of the pay-by-mail transactions. If those users can be targeted, a significant portion of the pay-by-mail transactions may be impacted. Mr. Kirkpatrick reviewed transaction data for the NTE and LBJ Express corridors. In addition, he noted that the RTC, North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), and private sector partners have become more focused on marketing efforts to increase toll tag penetration. NTTA is working to determine the different market sectors of the pay-by-mail users and how to impact those users specifically. Potential marketing ideas include direct marketing letters, establishing a micro website, incorporating the use of NTTA's toll perks program, providing a credit to people who sign up for a toll tag, preloaded toll tags, and giveaways. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted

that staff is interested in any suggestions members may have. Cesar Molina suggested that the nominal credit and preloaded toll tag ideas be combined with a requirement that the users enter their own payment information as a way to get them started. Anna Mosqueda noted that the Denton County Transportation Authority has had success through social media. Paul Luedtke asked if staffs have been able to determine demographics for the pay-by-mail users. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that staffs have not yet looked into that data. Matthew Hoteling suggested that staffs work with car dealerships about including toll tags on vehicles when purchased. John Polster discussed demographics and the possibility that younger users may not have access to credit cards, and that staff should look into those type of demographics.

6. **Follow-up to Clean Air Action Day Transportation and Air Quality Workshop:** Whitney Vandiver provided an overview of discussions from the Clean Air Action Day Transportation and Air Quality Workshop held prior to the meeting. Topics presented included SH 161 peak-hour lane performance, Texas Department of Transportation fleet strategies, the Dallas Bikeway System, and the City of Cedar Hill's electric vehicle and solar initiatives. In addition, members were encouraged to become Air North Texas Partners. Details were available in Electronic Item 6 and at www.airnorthtexas.org.
7. **Status of the Current Comprehensive Development Agreement Managed Lanes: Preliminary Performance of the LBJ and NTE Tolloed Managed Lanes:** Dan Lamers provided a report regarding recent performance measures on the LBJ Express and North Tarrant Express (NTE) tolled managed lanes. Now that the facilities are open, performance data is becoming available that validates staff's original assumptions regarding the benefits of a tolled managed lane system. Data for the NTE and LBJ Express was highlighted. In both corridors, traffic dropped during construction and users moved to parallel corridors. Since the tolled managed lane facilities opened, the NTE corridor is operating at a 36 percent increase in traffic and the LBJ Express corridor is operating at a 14 percent increase. Traffic is returning to both corridors, is increasing, and the region is beginning to see the benefits of having additional capacity. Speeds have significantly increased during the peak periods on the general purpose lanes even though addition capacity was not added. In addition, speeds on the tolled managed lanes have been relatively constant because of the ability to use price to manage demand. Also, over 6 million different vehicles have used the corridors. Data shows that the average user travels the tolled managed lane about 5-6 times per month, including many new users. User vehicle types indicate that Toyota, Ford, and Honda are the top vehicles in the corridor and that only 15 percent of the vehicles are considered luxury brands. In addition, a majority of those surveyed had favorable opinions of the facilities. Mr. Lamers also outlined outreach education campaign efforts underway regarding the overall tolling needs of the region. Efforts are focused on increasing the understanding of how and why tolling is important to the region. Five areas of communication related to tolled managed lanes include: 1) brief videos of real users in the corridor, 2) frequently asked questions and education for stakeholders, 3) observed behavior fact sheet, 4) review of economic development near tolled managed lanes, and 5) a funding status white paper thanking the Legislature for funding but reminding them that the funds cannot be used on tolled managed lanes. Electronic Item 7 outlines the phases of the outreach efforts planned. Jim O'Connor asked if enough data is available to know if the tolled managed lanes are operating as planned and asked about future toll increases. Mr. Lamers noted that the tolled managed lanes seem to be as successful as or more successful than originally believed. In addition, he noted that tolled managed lanes are dynamically priced to manage demand. Rate increases are not made to meet financial obligations.

8. **North Central Texas Council of Governments 50th Anniversary Video:** Amanda Wilson discussed the 50th anniversary of the North Central Texas Council of Governments. As part of the celebration, the Transportation Department created a video showcasing department staff sharing memories and thoughts on what has made the Transportation Department successful, including focus on partnerships, public, and people. The video was shown during the meeting.
9. **Surface Transportation Technical Committee Officers and Announcement of New Regional Transportation Council Officers:** Dan Kessler noted that the North Central Texas Council of Governments Executive Board endorsed the selection of Surface Transportation Technical Committee officers for the 2016-2017 term: Loyl Bussell, Chair, Deputy District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation, Fort Worth District; Todd Plesko, Vice Chair, Vice President of Planning and Development, Dallas Area Rapid Transit; and Mohamed "Mo" Bur, Secretary, Director of Transportation Planning and Development, Texas Department of Transportation, Dallas District. He also noted Regional Transportation Council (RTC) officers approved at the June 16, 2016, RTC meeting: Ron Jensen, Chair, Mayor, City of Grand Prairie; Rob Franke, Vice Chair, Mayor, City of Cedar Hill; and Gary Fickes, Secretary, Commissioner, Tarrant County.
10. **Fast Facts:** Brian Wilson highlighted the 2016 Progress North Texas publication, provided at the meeting. The state of region report focuses on what the region is doing to make the transportation system safer. Additional copies were made available upon request.

Bailey Muller discussed current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Texas Emission Reduction Plan has announced the opening of its Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program. This grant opportunity is opened until May 26, 2017, on a first-come, first-served basis. In addition, the North Texas Airport Emissions Reduction 2016 Call for Projects is opened. Applications are due by August 26. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.1.

Jody Loza provided an ozone season update. She noted the region has experienced six exceedance days to date, which is the number of exceedances also experienced last year at this time. The region's design value is at 79 parts per billion. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.2.

Dora Kelly highlighted marketing and outreach efforts to increase awareness about the AirCheckTexas program. Since funding was restored last year, it has been a challenge to regain the previous momentum of the AirCheckTexas program. Assistance was requested to increase awareness in local communities. Details were available in Electronic Item 10.3.

Jenny Narvaez provided an update on the 2016 Transportation Conformity determination. Last month, staff requested reconfirmation of 2016 Transportation Conformity including the Transportation Control Measure substitution process. RTC approved the reconfirmation at its June 16, 2016, meeting, and all partners have approved the substitution process. Comments have been received from all partners and the North Central Texas of Governments (NCTCOG) has responded promptly. It is staff's understanding that additional comments will be provided. Staff will continue to provide updates to members regarding receipt of a 2016 Transportation Conformity determination.

Sarah Chadderdon discussed Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial Review outcomes. As part of its oversight related to grant funding, the FTA conducts onsite review

of the North Central Texas of Governments to examine performance every three years. Review was conducted in April 2016. FTA identified four areas of minor findings. Of the four, three were associated with policy adjustments that subgrantees must make. For the final finding, NCTCOG staff followed FTA disposition rules but did not notify FTA in advance. Staff has until Fall to submit revised documents to the FTA.

In addition, Ms. Chadderdon discussed correspondence from the City of McKinney provided in Electronic Item 10.4. In April 2016, staff sent a letter to the City of McKinney to determine how McKinney wanted to move forward related to identifying a direct recipient for FTA funding that is available for transit service in the McKinney Urbanized Area. McKinney has requested that NCTCOG serve as the direct recipient for the funds. Staff is working through technical details with McKinney regarding some form of transit service in the future.

Kelli Schlicher provided information on Access North Texas, the regional public transportation coordination plan for the 16-county North Central Texas region. The plan includes strategies to improve the coordination and availability of public transportation, particularly for older adults, people with disabilities, low income individuals, and families without cars. At the end of July, NCTCOG staff will be hosting a kick off meeting for the Access North Texas update. Details will be provided to members in the future.

Wade Haffey highlighted the current east/west equity. Since February 2010, the RTC passed a policy to track Texas Department of Transportation funding approvals that do not follow the region's current east/west formula allocations. As of June 2016, the region is at 71.25 percent east and 28.75 percent west. With passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, staff will revisit the east/west equity percentages later this year. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.5.1 and Electronic Item 10.5.2.

Ken Kirkpatrick discussed a recent China Academy of Transportation Sciences/Regional Transportation Council partnership. Eight years ago, the United States (US) Department of Transportation established a US/China transportation forum to exchange transportation related information with China. The most recent meeting of the forum was in Los Angeles in June 2016. In support, the RTC executed a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of exchanging information and collaborating on travel demand modeling techniques.

Amanda Wilson noted that the National Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations will be held in Fort Worth on October 25-28, 2016. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.6.

The current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 10.7 and transportation partner progress reports were provided in Electronic Item 10.8.

Dan Kessler introduced new NCTCOG staff present at the meeting: Tom Bamonte, Brian Dell, Jesse Brown, Gregory White, and Jacqueline Tien.

11. **Other Business (Old and New):** There was no discussion on this item.
12. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on July 22, 2016, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.



August 2016

A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

NCTCOG program focuses on vehicle automation

NCTCOG conducted a workshop on automated vehicle technology in July, introducing a subject that will be studied by a new program area in the Transportation Department. Watch the Regional Transportation Council presentation by visiting NCTCOG.org/video and clicking "Other Workshops and Meetings."

Calendar

August 3, 8:30 am

TRTC

Fort Worth Intermodal Transportation Center
1001 Jones St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

August 5, 11 am

DRMC

North Texas Tollway Authority
5900 W. Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75093

August 11, 1 pm

Regional Transportation Council
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

August 26, 1:30 pm

Surface Transportation
Technical Committee
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

N. Texas sets mark for clean air commitments



Photo: NCTCOG

On June 24, the seventh annual Clean Air Action Day, the North Central Texas Council of Governments and Air North Texas encouraged North Texans to lend a hand to help improve air quality by committing to at least one "clean air action."

This year, there was tremendous participation in Air North Texas' flagship air quality event. With a 57 percent increase over last year, the most commitments to date were recorded.

In 2016, the most popular commitment chosen was maintaining personal vehicles through oil changes or checking tire pressure. Other popular commitments made included taking lunch to work, combining trips and buying locally. Participants also chose to carpool, use mass transit, telecommute and encourage others to be air aware.

Air North Texas partners played an important role in helping make the 2016 event a success. The City of Dallas held its first Clean Air Action Day event at City Hall Plaza and the Central Library on June 24, where staff educated the public about improving air quality and staying healthy. The City offered many options for lunch and arranged for a walk to the Dallas Farmers Market. Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport also had significant internal participation for Clean Air Action Day, thanks in part to an online Ozone 101 course for employees.

Thanks to all who participated in this year's Clean Air Action Day. Strong participation from North Texans reinforces the idea that simple actions can make a difference when implemented collectively.

Remember to log Clean Air Action Day commitments at AirNorthTexas.org and continue to strive for better air all year long.

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

High-speed rail planning moving forward

Progress on plans to bring high-speed rail to the Dallas-to-Houston corridor continues. While this effort has drawn much of the attention in recent months, transportation planners are working to facilitate movement on connections that would open the technology to residents throughout Dallas-Fort Worth and other fast-growing metropolitan areas.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments hosted an industry forum in June bringing together potential proposers for a planned Fort Worth-to-Dallas segment that eventually could link to other parts of Texas and the Southwest. While no federal money was allocated for high-speed rail in the current federal transportation act, Washington is soliciting proposals for projects across the nation from the private sector.

The industry forum was intended to help public- and private-sector groups interested in submitting proposals gather information needed to make their pitches.

The proposals are due to the Federal Railroad Administration August 31. The FRA will review proposals within 90 days and determine which options should be forwarded to the Secretary of Transportation, who could decide whether to recommend any to Congress. It is believed high-speed rail between Fort Worth and Dallas is a prime candidate for funding through this initiative.

NCTCOG's role in advancing high-speed rail includes:

- Serving as a resource to entities interested in making proposals
- Providing information about regional policies and the Mobility Plan
- Making technical information available

Before the proposals are due to Washington, NCTCOG will host a Texas Department of Transportation public hearing where information on a separate Oklahoma-to-South Texas project will be discussed. An environmental impact statement, which lays out potential options for rail service in the Interstate Highway 35 corridor, has been issued and will be reviewed at the hearing. It is scheduled for 5:30 pm August 11 at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive, with presentations set to begin at 6 pm.



Photo: Getty Images

NCTCOG is facilitating efforts to bring high-speed rail to the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The agency will host a public hearing August 11 to gather input on an environmental impact study of the Oklahoma-to-South Texas corridor.

CLEAN SCHOOL BUS



Program has funded more than 200 projects

Over the years, NCTCOG has worked to provide local school districts and school bus operators with the information and resources necessary to meet their needs while improving air quality and protecting public health.

As part of these efforts, NCTCOG has funded over 200 clean school bus projects, two-thirds of which implemented alternative fuels such as propane, compressed natural gas or hybrid-electric systems into daily operations.

Ten North Texas counties are in nonattainment for ozone pollution and continue to work toward complying with the federal government's ozone standard.

The Clean School Bus Program is one of many NCTCOG initiatives helping the region make progress toward this goal.

To learn more about how North Texas has emerged as a leader in alternative fuel use and how you can get involved, visit NCTCOG.org/cleanschoolbus.

Alternative fuel vehicle procurement



**Dallas-Fort Worth
CLEAN CITIES**

NCTCOG is looking for fleet representatives and fleet procurement staff to participate in a working group for a new initiative known as Fleets for the Future.

The project goal is to administer a regional cooperative procurement effort for alternative fuel vehicles to help fleets acquire these vehicles at a lower cost.

NCTCOG and the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition are participating in this national partnership funded by the US Department of Energy, under contract with the National Association of Regional Councils.

If you work in fleet management or fleet procurement and are interested in participating, contact Amy Hodges at ahodges@nctcog.org or 817-704-2508.

To learn more, see the Fleets for the Future website at NARC.org/f4f.

Argonne National Laboratory AFLEET tool

By using a simple spreadsheet tool, fleet managers are able to estimate petroleum use, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutant emissions and cost of ownership of on-road vehicles.

Argonne National Laboratory has designed the Alternative Fuel Life-Cycle Environmental and Economic Transportation (AFLEET) Tool on behalf of the Department of Energy's Clean Cities program.

The AFLEET tool aims to provide fleets with the ability to see the environmental and economic costs and benefits of incorporating alternative fuel vehicles into their fleets.

For more information on the AFLEET tool, visit AFDC.ENERGY.gov and click on the tools section.

Transportation Resources

Facebook

Facebook.com/nctcogtrans

Twitter

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

**The Fort Worth
Transportation Authority**
FWTA.org

**Texas Department
of Transportation**
TxDOT.gov

By the Numbers

200

The North Central Texas Clean School Bus Program has funded more than 200 projects since it began, helping the region's school districts and school bus operators improve fuel efficiency.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

Join us for National Drive Electric Week

Electric Vehicle enthusiasts are invited to help set another record this year as part of the annual National Drive Electric Week event from 10 am to 2 pm September 17 at Grapevine Mills Mall.

At last year's event, North Texas electric vehicle owners established the Texas record for most EVs in one place. This year, the North Central Texas Council of Governments and DFW Clean Cities Coalition invite all North Texans to learn more about electric vehicles and charging options, while potentially witnessing another record-breaking gathering.

Attendees can get up close and personal with this cutting-edge technology and participate in activities such as informational displays from organizations and technologies, hands-on activities for adults and children, entertainment, and ride-and-drive opportunities for available EV models. They may even win the use of an EV for a day!

Additional information and registration details can be found at DFWCleanCities.org/ndew.

Mobility Matters looks at FWTA master plan

The summer issue of Mobility Matters is available in print and online. This issue of the NCTCOG Transportation Department's semiannual newsletter features articles about the Fort Worth Transportation Authority's master plan, the Look Out Texans safety campaign and more. Scott Mahaffey, chairman of the FWTA board, is also profiled in this issue.

Read the newsletter online at NCTCOG.org/mobilitymatters. For printed copies, contact Brian Wilson at bwilson@nctcog.org.

Prepared in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. 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, the Federal Transit Administration or the Texas Department of Transportation.