

AGENDA

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL Thursday, May 14, 2020 North Central Texas Council of Governments

The RTC meeting on May 14, 2020, will be conducted as a telephonic/audio meeting. Members of the public wishing to speak may do so by calling toll free 1-800-250-3900 and entering PIN code 442318# when prompted. Audio and slides presented as part of the meeting will be live streamed for members of the public wishing to monitor the RTC meeting and available at www.nctcog.org/video.

1:00 pm Full RTC Business Agenda

- 1:00 – 1:10 1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840**
 Information Minutes: 10
Item Summary: This item provides an opportunity for the public to comment on today's meeting agenda items. Members of the public wishing to comment on an agenda item may do so during this item by calling toll free 1-800-250-3900 and entering PIN code 442318# when prompted. Speakers should state their name, city of residence, the agenda number they are speaking on, and whether they are speaking on/for/against the item. Members of the public are not permitted to provide comments after the conclusion of this agenda item.
Background: N/A
- 1:10 – 1:15 2. **Approval of April 9, 2020, Minutes**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Andy Eads, RTC Chair
Item Summary: Approval of the April 9, 2020, minutes contained in [Electronic Item 2](#) will be requested.
Background: N/A
- 1:15 – 1:20 3. **Consent Agenda**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
- 3.1. **Additional Funding for Tier II Environmental Document from Fort Worth to Dallas**
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of additional funding to close the funding gap to conduct the environmental document study on high-speed passenger transportation between Fort Worth and Dallas will be requested.
Background: The RTC has approved approximately \$5 million to conduct the environmental document study regarding high-speed passenger transportation between Fort Worth and Dallas. This dollar amount assumes some monetary value in the environmental work previously conducted by the Texas Department of Transportation. The RTC instructed the North Central

Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to procure a consultant to conduct the environmental documents. Negotiations have concluded with the winning proposer, HNTB Corporation and additional funds to conduct the study are needed. The NCTCOG Executive Board authorized an agreement with HNTB Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$11,000,000. The RTC is being asked to provide additional Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds necessary to close the \$6,000,000 funding gap for the study. Local match will be provided with Regional Transportation Council Transportation Development Credits.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

3.2. **Clean Fleets North Texas Funding Recommendations**

Presenter: Lori Clark, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Approval of funding recommendations for applications received for the second funding round under the Clean Fleets North Texas 2019 Call for Projects (CFP) will be requested.

Background: The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) opened the Clean Fleets North Texas 2019 CFP in June 2019 to award approximately \$2 million in grant funds for diesel vehicle or equipment replacement projects in North Central Texas. This initial application period (Round 1) ended in July 2019. A second application period (Round 2) opened November 15, 2019, and ended February 14, 2020. During this second funding round, staff received one application from the City of Arlington for the replacement of two dump trucks and one backhoe/loader. Staff has completed review and emissions quantification and recommends funding this project. This CFP was funded through the Environmental Protection Agency's National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program and Texas Commission of Environmental Quality Supplemental Environmental Project funding. This initiative is an extension of clean vehicle efforts listed as weight-of-evidence in the current State Implementation Plan. [Electronic Item 3.2.1](#) provides an overview of the CFP. [Electronic Item 3.2.2](#) provides additional detail on recommended projects.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

1:20 – 1:35

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

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 15
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

1. Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Nominating Subcommittee Appointments (Chair Andy Eads)
2. Dallas to Houston Public Hearings on Rule of Particular Applicability and Favorable Legal Status for High-Speed Rail
3. Op-ed Pieces and National P3 Presentation
4. Virgin Hyperloop One Certification Center Implementation
5. 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Development Schedule
6. United States Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao Thanks America's Public Transit Workers (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eUUVw-mirU>)
7. Mobility 2045 Update (High-Speed Rail Recommendations) (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
8. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Schedule (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
9. Trail of the Month Video (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
10. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle)
11. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings)
12. Status Report on Ozone ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
13. Department of Energy Redesignates Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
14. April Online Input Opportunity Minutes ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
15. May Online Input Opportunity Notice ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
16. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
17. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
18. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
19. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))

1:35 – 1:45

5. **Federal Transit Administration Funding in Response to COVID-19: Approval of Regional Transportation Council Funding Allocations**

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

Item Summary: Staff requests Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of specific funding allocations made available by the United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT's) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in response to COVID-19.

Background: On April 9, 2020, the RTC approved general funding made available by the US DOT's FTA in response to COVID-19 through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington (DFWA) Urbanized Area (UZA) will receive \$318,629,129 and the Denton-Lewisville (DL) UZA will receive \$23,461,867.

Funding will be provided at a 100 percent federal share, with no local match required, and will be available to support

operating, capital and other expenses generally eligible under the Urbanized Area Formula Program, and incurred beginning on January 20, 2020, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. FTA funds are typically included in the Transportation Improvement Program and follow that approval process, but the FTA is waiving those requirements for these funds in order to expedite the process. Details can be found in [Electronic Item 5](#). More information regarding FTA's response to COVID-19 can be found at www.transit.dot.gov/coronavirus.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

1:45 – 1:55

6. **Fiscal Year 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Discretionary Grant Program**

- Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Jeff Neal, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of projects to be submitted for consideration of funding through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program.

Background: In February 2020, the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) announced the solicitation of project applications for the FY2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant Program for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure expected to have significant mobility and economic benefits at the local or regional level. A copy of the Notice of Funding Opportunity detailing the \$1 billion discretionary grant program for FY2020, as well as the application requirements is available at https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2020-02/BUILD%202020%20NOFO_0.pdf. Applications are due to the US DOT by May 18, 2020. An overview of the FY2020 BUILD Grant Program request is available in [Electronic Item 6](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

1:55 – 2:05

7. **Effect of COVID-19 Restrictions on Transportation: Information System RTC4U**

- Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on the effect of COVID-19 restrictions of movement on the transportation system based on specific measures. The purpose of this item is to establish Regional Transportation Council (RTC) metrics worthy of monitoring.

Background: Staff proposes four performance metrics impacting transportation in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. RTC feedback on the appropriate policy emphasis is requested. The proposed four focus areas are: 1) travel behavior response to COVID-19, 2) financial implications to traditional revenue sources impacting transportation in the region, 3) travel behavior responses providing benefits to areas of RTC responsibility (e.g., congestion management system, national performance measures, ozone standard), and 4) prioritization of infrastructure improvements resulting in economic benefits offsetting unemployment increases.

Staff is monitoring several transportation measures including traffic volume, vehicle speed, transit ridership, emission levels, and others. These measures will indicate impacts to the transportation system as a result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Monitoring these measures will identify early RTC actions to neutralize negative impacts. [Electronic Item 7](#) contains additional details.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

2:05 – 2:15

8. **2020 Unified Transportation Program and 2021 Unified Transportation Program/Regional 10-Year Plan**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will update the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on the latest information regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) and the schedule and process to develop the FY2021 UTP and Regional 10-Year Plan for this year.

Background: Discussions continue with the Texas Department of Transportation districts on the process and schedule to develop an updated project listing for the Regional 10-Year Plan and the 2021 UTP. With August 2020 being the anticipated schedule for Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) action, staff proposes to bring the Regional 10-Year Plan listings to the public in May, request Surface Transportation Technical Committee approval at its May 2020 meeting, and request RTC approval at its June 2020 meeting. Additional information is included in [Electronic Item 8](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

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

9. **Progress Reports**

Action Possible Action Information

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

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 9.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 9.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 9.3](#))

10. **Other Business (Old or New):** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.
11. **Future Agenda Items:** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of future interest before the Council.
12. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for ***1:00 pm, Thursday, June 11, 2020.***

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
April 9, 2020**

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the April 9, 2020, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) was conducted via teleconference call. Staff conducted a roll call of members and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the conference call: Tennell Atkins, Richard E. Aubin, Adam Bazaldua, David Blewett, Mohamed Bur, Loyl C. Bussell, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, J.J. Koch (representing Clay Lewis Jenkins), Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, John Keating, Lee M. Kleinman, Mike Leyman, David Magness, Curtistene McCowan, Robert Miklos, Cary Moon, Barbara Odom-Wesley, John Ryan, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Dennis Webb, Duncan Webb, Chad West, B. Glen Whitley, W. Jeff Williams, and Ann Zadeh. Individual attendance was not taken for non-RTC member attendees.

Regional Transportation Council Chair Andy Eads thanked members of the Regional Transportation Council and local governments for the collaboration and partnership across the region over the last several weeks. He noted that with change and challenge comes opportunity, and that he was hopeful, from a mobility standpoint, new funds may be available for projects the region has been discussing for many years through some of the benefits of the stimulus packages and other items being considered at the federal level.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to give input on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Andy Eads asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak.
2. **Approval of the March 12, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 12, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. B. Glen Whitley (M); Theresa Daniel (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 3.1. **Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of revisions to the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), provided in Electronic Item 3.1, and the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program and other planning/administrative documents with TIP-related changes was requested.
 - 3.2. **Western Extrusions Transit Pilot:** Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of existing Regional Toll Revenue funds, previously authorized by the RTC for transit projects, to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) in an amount not to exceed \$325,000 was requested to enhance connectivity between Western Extrusions and DART service areas. Electronic Item 3.2.1 contained a copy of the City of Carrollton's request with the North Central Texas Council of Governments' response, and Electronic Item 3.2.2 provided additional details on the project.

- 3.3. Approval of Additional Funding to Expedite Environmental and Design Review for Surface Transportation Projects: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval for \$100,000 in RTC Local funds to expedite environmental and design review for surface transportation projects was requested. This effort will involve development of the environmental documentation for the Collin County Outer Loop and the Dallas to Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study, as well as other technical assistance as may be required.
- 3.4. Letters to the Texas Department of Transportation on High-Speed Rail: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to submit letters to the Texas Department of Transportation in three high-speed rail areas was requested. The first letter will request a path forward to conduct the Tier II environmental document on the proposed corridor from Fort Worth to Monterrey, Mexico. The second letter impacts the Tier II environmental document that the North Central Texas Council of Governments is conducting between Fort Worth and Dallas and will confirm that public sector right-of-way is available for high-speed rail use and to confirm interests to pursue discretionary funds from the federal government. The third letter will request clarification on the status of the Virgin Hyperloop One Certification Center technology being able to be constructed on public sector right-of-way.
- 3.5. Contingency Funds for Negotiations on the Tier II Environmental Document from Fort Worth to Dallas: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of additional Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds to close the funding gap to conduct the environmental document on high-speed rail between Fort Worth and Dallas was requested. Originally, the RTC approved \$5 million to conduct the environmental review for the project and instructed the North Central Texas Council of Governments to procure a consultant to conduct the environmental documents necessary between Fort Worth and Dallas. Negotiations are currently underway with the winning proposer and additional funding is necessary to close the funding gap on the required environmental documentation. A specific dollar amount was not requested in order to not bias the negotiations currently underway.
- 3.6. Federal Transit Administration Funding Allocations in Repose to the Coronavirus (COVID-19): The United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced April 2, 2020, a total of \$25 billion in federal funding allocations to help the nation's public transportation systems respond to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Funding is provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed by President Trump on March 27, 2020. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is the designated recipient for the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington (DFWA) Urbanized Area (UZA) and the Denton-Lewisville UZA. The DFWA UZA will receive \$318,629,129 and the Denton-Lewisville UZA was allocated \$23,461,867. Funding will be provided at a 100 percent federal share, with no local match required, and will be available to support operating, capital and other expenses generally eligible under the Urbanized Area Formula Program, and incurred beginning on January 20, 2020, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. FTA funds are typically included in the Transportation Improvement Program and follow that approval process, but the FTA has waived those requirements for these funds in order to expedite the process. Regional

Transportation Council approval of US DOT Federal Transit Administration funding allocations in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) was requested. Specific funding recommendations will be requested at a future meeting. More information regarding FTA's response to COVID-19 can be found at www.transit.dot.gov/coronavirus.

Paul N. Wageman requested a brief description of the request and asked how it differed from typical approval requests. Michael Morris noted that this item was included on this month's agenda due to the urgency of funding from Congress to help the nation's public transportation systems respond to COVID-19. Preliminary approval permits the overall funding to proceed, and staff will review the allocation methods from the FTA for action on the specific funding amounts within the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area to be provided to 11 transportation providers and confirmation of the allocation for the Denton-Lewisville Urbanized Area at the May 14, 2020, RTC meeting.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Curtistene McCowan (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Presentation of the Director of Transportation Report was not provided. Details were included in the associated meeting material.
 1. 2020 and 2021 Unified Transportation Program Status Report (Electronic Item 4.1)
 2. Dallas-Fort Worth Area High-Occupancy Vehicle Transportation Control Measure Substitution (Electronic Item 4.2)
 3. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Report (Electronic Item 4.3)
 4. 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Draft Listings (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
 5. Mobility 2045 Update (High-Speed Rail Recommendations) (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
 6. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Schedule (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
 7. Trail of the Month Video (Postponed at the March 12, 2020, Meeting and will Remain Postponed)
 8. Postponement Announcement for the May 2020 Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course (Electronic Item 4.4)
 9. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle)
 10. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings)
 11. Regular Travel Behavior Reports/Start of 2020 Ozone Season: A New Day (Electronic Item 4.5)
 12. March Public Meeting Minutes (Electronic Item 4.6)
 13. April Online Input Opportunity Notice (Electronic Item 4.7)
 14. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 4.8)
 15. Recent Correspondence (Electronic Item 4.9)
 16. Recent News Articles (Electronic Item 4.10)
 17. Recent Press Releases (Electronic Item 4.11)

5. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 5.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 5.2, and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 5.3.
6. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
7. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
8. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, May 14, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.

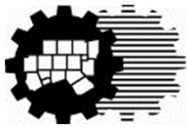
Clean Fleets North Texas 2019 Funding Recommendations

Regional Transportation Council

May 14, 2019

Lori Clark

Program Manager



North Central Texas
Council of Governments



Available Funding

Funding Sources: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Funds

Funding Category	Amount
TCEQ SEP Funds (for School Bus Replacements Only)*	\$88,516
Remaining Funds from 2017 Award**	\$881,528
Funds from 2018 Award***	\$1,110,350
Call For Projects Funds Available	\$2,080,394
Previously Approved Awards	-\$1,254,608
Balance Available for Most Recent Funding Round	\$825,786

*TCEQ SEP balance as of December 2019.

**Funds from 2017 award were originally distributed through the Clean Fleets North Texas 2018 Call For Projects. Amount includes funds previously obligated that have since been released through withdrawal of prior subawards.

***EPA award included \$39,789 for staff administration.

Project Eligibility

Eligible Applicants: Local Governments; Private Companies who Contract with Local Governments; and Must Adopt RTC Clean Fleet Policy or Similar

Eligible Activities	Funding Threshold
<u>Replace On-Road Diesel Trucks*</u> 16,001 GVWR and Up; Model Year 1996-2006; (Also Model Year 2007-2009 if Replacing with Electric)	45% Cost if New is Electric 35% Cost if New is Powered by Engine Certified to CARB Optional Low-NO _x Standards
<u>Replace Non-Road Diesel Equipment*</u> Must Operate >500 Hours/Year; Eligible Model Years Vary	(Both Natural Gas and Propane Engines Currently Available) 25% Cost for All Others

*All Old Vehicles/Equipment Must be Scrapped; Other Model Years Eligible On Case-By-Case Basis.

Approved Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Eligibility:

Clean Fleet Policy Adoption

Purpose: Reserve Funding for Fleets that are Engaged Beyond Grant Opportunities; Consistent with RTC Adoption of Clean Fleet Policy

Minimum Allowable Subaward: \$50,000

Purpose: Reduce Risk and Administrative Burden by Limiting Number of Subawards

Scoring Criteria:

Cost Per Ton NO_x Emissions Reduced 75%

Purpose: Maximize Emissions Reductions

Subrecipient Oversight Criteria 25%

Purpose: Balance Project Benefits with Administrative Burden

Summary of Applications

Previously Approved	Requested	Eligible	Approved
Number of Applicants	2	2	2
Number of Activities	12	11	11
Funding Requested	\$1,306,108	\$1,254,608	\$1,254,608
Funds Currently Available			\$825,786
New Recommendations	Requested	Eligible	Recommended
Number of Applicants	1	1	1
Number of Activities	3	3	3
Funding Requested	\$77,450	\$77,450	\$77,450
*Funds Remaining after Recommended Subaward			\$659,820 EPA Funds \$88,516 SEP Funds

Refer to Electronic Item 3.2.2 for more details.

***Staff Currently Evaluating Options to Release Additional Opportunity to Subaward Remaining Balances; EPA and SEP Balances May be Distributed Separately**

Schedule and Action Requested

Milestone	Estimated Timeframe
STTC Action to Recommend Subaward	April 24, 2020
RTC Approval of Recommended Subaward	May 14, 2020
Executive Board Authorization	May 28, 2020
Project Implementation Deadline	February 26, 2022*

*Deadline has been extended since funding round opened.

Action Requested: RTC Approval of Subaward

\$77,450 to the City of Arlington to Replace Two Vehicles
& One Equipment

For More Information

Lori Clark

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Clean Fleets North Texas 2019 Call For Projects Funding Recommendations

Projects Recommended for Funding - Round 2																											
Applicant	Activity	Old Vehicle/Equipment Information							New Vehicle/Equipment Information (Model Year 2019 or Newer)			Maximum Allowed Funding Level	Recommended Grant Amount					NO _x Benefits		Scoring Criteria					Other Environmental Benefits		
		Type	Class/Equipment	Engine Year	Fuel Type	Annual Fuel Usage	Annual Mileage	Annual Usage Hours	Model Year	Fuel Type	Total Cost		Requested Grant Amount	EPA 2017 Funds	EPA 2018 Funds	Total Grant Award	Local Match	NO _x Tons Reduced Over 6 Years*	Cost Per Ton of NO _x Reduced	Cost per Ton Rank (Max 3 Points)	Cost Per Ton NO _x Tier (Max 64 Points)	Score: Cost Per Ton NO _x Reduced (Max 75 Points)	Score: Subrecipient Oversight (Max 25 Points)	Total Score	HC Reduced Over 6 Years*	CO Reduced Over 6 Years*	CO ₂ Reduced Over 6 Years*
City of Arlington	3	Non-Road	Construction - Backhoe	2007	Diesel	672		761	2020	B5	\$99,800	25%	\$24,950	\$ -	\$24,950	\$24,950	\$74,850	1.17	\$21,303	3	55	58	22	80	0.08	1.06	0.00
City of Arlington	1	On-Road	Dump Truck	2000	Diesel	619	5479		2020	B5	\$105,000	25%	\$26,250	\$ -	\$26,250	\$26,250	\$78,750	0.55	\$47,451	2	55	57	22	79	0.14	0.24	0.14
City of Arlington	2	On-Road	Dump Truck	2000	Diesel	629	3775		2020	B5	\$105,000	25%	\$26,250	\$ -	\$26,250	\$26,250	\$78,750	0.37	\$70,908	1	55	56	22	78	0.09	0.16	0.14
Total Projects													\$309,800		\$0	\$77,450	\$77,450	\$232,350	2.09	36,976.03					0.30	1.46	0.27

Awarded Projects - Round 1																											
Applicant	Activity	Old Vehicle/Equipment Information							New Vehicle/Equipment Information (Model Year 2019 or Newer)			Maximum Allowed Funding Level	Recommended Grant Amount					NO _x Benefits		Scoring Criteria					Other Environmental Benefits		
		Type	Class/Equipment	Engine Year	Fuel Type	Annual Fuel Usage	Annual Mileage	Annual Usage Hours	Model Year	Fuel Type	Total Cost		Requested Grant Amount	EPA 2017 Funds	EPA 2018 Funds	Total Grant Award	Local Match	NO _x Tons Reduced Over 6 Years*	Cost Per Ton of NO _x Reduced	Cost per Ton Rank (Max 11 Points)	Cost Per Ton NO _x Tier (Max 64 Points)	Score: Cost Per Ton NO _x Reduced (Max 75 Points)	Score: Subrecipient Oversight (Max 25 Points)	Total Score	HC Reduced Over 6 Years*	CO Reduced Over 6 Years*	CO ₂ Reduced Over 6 Years*
City of Dallas	5	Non-Road	Construction - Other	2000	Diesel	209		2300	2019	B20	\$325,000	25%	\$81,250	\$ -	\$81,250	\$0	\$243,750	11.37	\$7,144	11	64	75	12	87	0.51	3.43	0.00
City of Dallas	8	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2001	Diesel	3,216	14,230		2019	B20	\$218,074	25%	\$54,519	\$ 54,519	\$0	\$54,519	\$163,556	1.65	\$32,994	10	55	65	12	77	0.08	0.54	0.00
City of Dallas	9	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2002	Diesel	2,490	11,357		2019	B20	\$218,074	25%	\$54,519	\$ 54,519	\$0	\$54,519	\$163,556	1.32	\$41,339	9	55	64	12	76	0.06	0.43	0.00
City of Dallas	7	Non-Road	Construction - Crawler Tractors	2010	Diesel	10,069		1412	2019	B5	\$741,104	25%	\$185,276	\$ 185,276	\$0	\$185,276	\$555,828	4.12	\$45,020	8	55	63	12	75	0.13	2.50	0.00
City of Dallas	6	Non-Road	Construction - Crawler Tractors	2010	Diesel	15,665		1311	2019	B5	\$741,104	25%	\$185,276	\$ 185,276	\$0	\$185,276	\$555,828	3.82	\$48,522	7	55	62	12	74	0.12	2.29	0.00
City of Dallas	10	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2002	Diesel	2,333	9,757		2019	B20	\$218,074	25%	\$54,519	\$ 54,519	\$0	\$54,519	\$163,556	1.13	\$48,102	6	55	61	12	73	0.05	0.37	0.00
City of Dallas	4	Non-Road	Construction - Other	2006	Diesel	1,061		517	2019	B20	\$475,000	25%	\$118,750	\$ 118,750	\$0	\$118,750	\$356,250	1.23	\$96,592	5	50	55	12	67	0.03	0.64	0.00
City of Dallas	1	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2004	Diesel	388	10,379		2019	CNG	\$165,000	35%	\$57,750	\$ 57,750	\$0	\$57,750	\$107,250	0.39	\$149,457	4	50	54	12	66	0.04	0.01	-0.05
City of Dallas	11	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2005	Diesel	2,994	8,436		2019	B20	\$320,000	25%	\$80,000	\$ 80,000	\$0	\$80,000	\$240,000	0.45	\$176,600	3	40	43	12	55	0.03	0.13	0.00
City of Dallas	2	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2006	Diesel	1,007	6,080		2019	CNG	\$165,000	35%	\$57,750	\$ 9,670	\$48,080	\$57,750	\$107,250	0.23	\$255,305	2	30	32	12	44	0.03	0.01	-0.06
City of Benbrook	1	On-Road	Class 8 Ladder Truck	1999	Diesel	1463**	871		2019	ULSD	\$1,300,000	25%	\$325,000	\$ -	\$325,000	\$325,000	\$975,000	0.25	\$1,283,570	1	1	2	24	26	0.02	0.07	0.00
Total Projects													\$4,886,430		\$881,528	\$373,080	\$1,254,608	\$3,631,823	25.96	\$48,329					1.11	10.41	-0.11
Total													\$5,196,230		\$881,528	\$450,530	\$1,332,058	\$3,864,173	28.05	\$47,482							

Funds Available for Call for Projects	\$881,528	\$1,110,350
Total Funds Recommended for Award	\$881,528	\$450,530
Balance Available for Future Project Solicitation	\$0	\$659,820

Ineligible Projects													Eligibility Comments										
City of Dallas	3	Non-Road	Construction - Other	2008	Diesel	71		456	2019	B20	\$206,000	25%	\$51,500	Annual Usage Hours Less than 500 Hours									

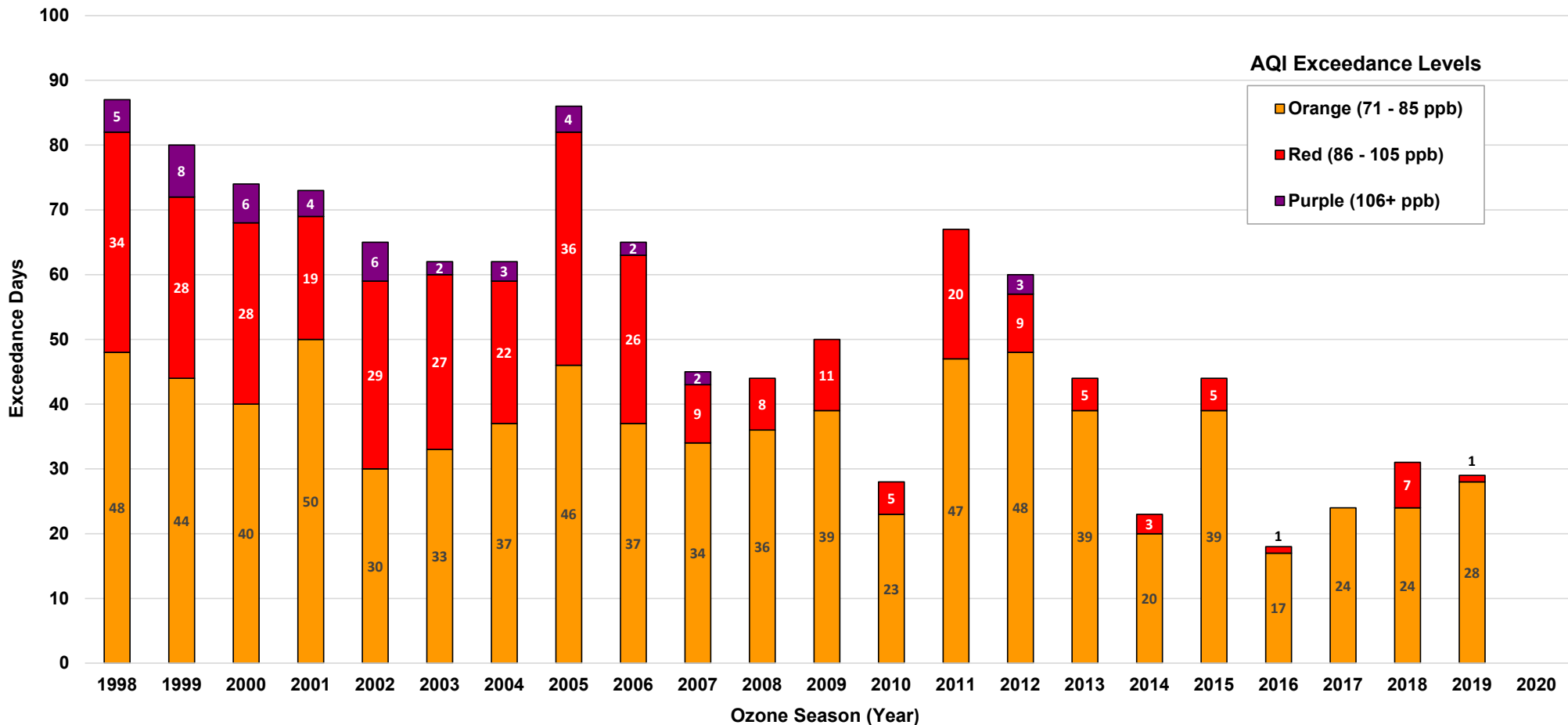
EPA = Environmental Protection Agency
 NO_x = Nitrogen Oxides; PM2.5 = Particulate Matter Less Than 2.5 Micrometers; HC = Hydrocarbons; CO = Carbon Monoxide; CO₂ = Carbon Dioxide
 B5 = 5% Biodiesel blend; B20 = 20% Biodiesel blend; ULSD = Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel; CNG = Compressed Natural Gas

*Emissions Impacts Quantified Using EPA Diesel Emissions Quantifier (DEQ)
 **Default DEQ value used in place of unknown information.
 ***The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) produced cost effectiveness tables for projects funded by Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds. The values used in the tiers reference data related to the low, median, and high cost-effectiveness projects for nitrogen oxide emissions reduction. See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/reference/cost_effectiveness_tables/.

Cost Effectiveness Tiers Based On Data Produced By FHWA***	Point Scale for Cost per Ton Tier
Tier 1 < \$20,000	64
Tier 2 \$20,001 - \$90,999	55
Tier 3 \$91,000 - \$168,000	50
Tier 4 \$168,001 - \$248,999	40
Tier 5 \$249,000 - \$367,000	30
Tier 6 > \$367,001	10 or less

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

Based on ≤ 70 ppb (As of May 4, 2020)

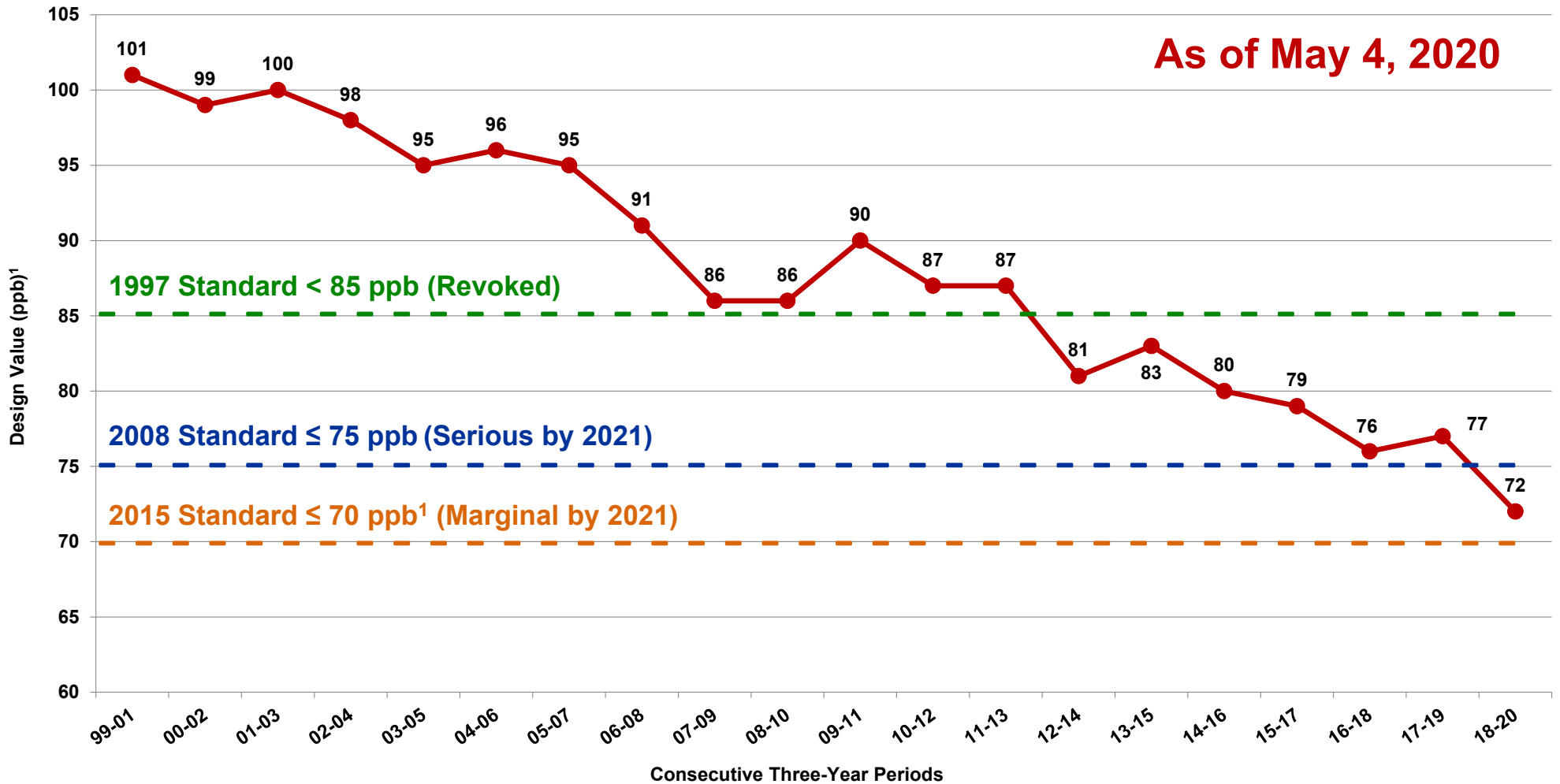


Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration.
 Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

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

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

As of May 4, 2020



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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CHRIS KLAUS
Senior Program Manager
cklaus@nctcog.org
817-695-9286

VIVEK THIMMAVAJJHALA
Transportation System Modeler II
vthimmavajjhala@nctcog.org
817-704-2504

JENNY NARVAEZ
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inarvaez@nctcog.org
817-608-2342

NICHOLAS VANHAASEN
Air Quality Planner II
nvanhaasen@nctcog.org
817-608-2335

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



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 24, 2020

Ms. Lori Clark
Clean Cities Coordinator
Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Dear Lori,

The Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Office would like to thank you for conducting a very informative and compelling briefing for our Clean Cities leadership team via webinar on November 19, 2019. We are pleased to inform you that the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition's request for re-designation as an official member of the national network of Clean Cities coalitions has been approved (effective date November 19, 2019). This re-designation is valid for a period of four years, or until notified otherwise. Please remember that your coalition must remain actively engaged in stakeholder support activities and other important duties as outlined in the attached *Active and Effective Clean Cities Coalitions Requirements Checklist*, to remain in good standing.

As demonstrated in the webinar, the coalition has an active and engaged host agency, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which provides strong financial backing and staffing support. We commend you for holding quarterly coalition meetings and for consistently hosting events that encompass a range of alternative fuels. We applaud you for taking a leadership role in Texas regarding the Volkswagen settlement, and for your work with colleagues in Texas and Louisiana to develop a ZEV corridor.

In assessing the coalition's effectiveness, we also conducted telephone interviews prior to the webinar with a number of Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition stakeholders. They praised you for your resourcefulness and responsiveness, and for your willingness to work with stakeholders in a can-do manner. They were grateful to the coalition for providing numerous training opportunities on alternative fuel vehicles and technology deployment, and for bringing them together with the right contacts and partners for funding opportunities.

Based on the stakeholder responses, and the information presented in the webinar, we believe that the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition can continue to play a major role in improving transportation energy efficiency and advancing affordable domestic transportation fuels and technologies in the region in the coming years.

To ensure the continuing success of the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition, we present the following suggestions:

- Many coalitions have had great success in working with school districts, and introducing them to alternative fuels such as propane. Continue to reach out to those school districts that are not yet using alternative fuels, and publicize the successes of those that have made the switch, stressing the financial and operational benefits available. Consider joining with the other Texas coalitions, and the Propane Council of Texas, to create a statewide alternative fuel school bus users group, so school districts can communicate with each other regarding their experiences. You may wish to contact Elizabeth Munger, Lone Star Clean Fuels Alliance coordinator, for information on a highly successful propane roundtable for school districts that her coalition held last year. Elizabeth can be reached at elizabeth@lonestarcfa.org or 512-694-1004.
- Reach out to the Environmental Protection Agency's Diesel Collaboratives for potential new stakeholders with medium-duty and heavy-duty vehicle applications. Many fleets operate in multiple states, and may be participating in one or more EPA regions.
- Wendy Dafoe of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will follow up with you regarding developing case studies on longevity with alternative fuel fleet vehicles. Should you wish to contact Wendy directly, she can be reached at wendy.dafoe@nrel.gov or 303-275-4470.
- As you pursue activities related to alternative fuels and efficiency in the freight sector, please keep Marcy Rood of Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) apprised. ANL may be able to provide expertise in the area of modeling. Marcy can be reached at mrOOD@anl.gov or 217-413-8446.

Congratulations on the good work you continue to do with the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Clean Cities, and for hosting the recent and highly successful Coordinator 101 training sessions.

Sincerely,



Dennis A. Smith
National Clean Cities Director



Linda Bluestein
National Clean Cities Co-Director

C: Michael Morris, Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments
 Dan Kessler, Asst. Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments
 Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments
 Neil Kirschner, Regional Manager, Southeast Region
 Wendy Dafoe, Clean Cities Task Leader, National Renewable Energy Laboratory
 Marcy Rood, Principal Environmental Transportation Analyst, Argonne National Laboratory
 Ellen Bourbon, Senior Energy Policy Analyst, Allegheny Science & Technology

MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Attorney General Announces Open Meetings Act Provisions Subject to Temporary Suspension

Status Report: Transportation & RTC Emergency Policies & Procedures

Congestion Management Process

TxDOT's American Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan

Incident Management 2020 Call for Projects Recommendations

Online Public Input Opportunity Dates

Monday, April 13, 2020 - Tuesday, May 12, 2020 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment.

Purpose and Topics

The online public input opportunity was provided in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff posted information regarding:

1. Attorney General Announces Open Meetings Act Provisions Subject to Temporary Suspension
2. Status Report: Transportation & RTC Emergency Policies & Procedures
3. Congestion Management Process
4. TxDOT's American Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan
5. Incident Management 2020 Call for Projects Recommendations

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

Summary of Presentations

Attorney General Announces Open Meetings Act Provisions Subject to Temporary Suspension presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/AG-Updates.pdf>

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Abbott declared a State of Disaster for the State of Texas on March 13, 2020. Texas Government Code Section 418.016 permits the Governor to

suspend certain statutes upon a Declaration of Disaster, and provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act were suspended on March 16, 2020.

The following provisions were suspended:

- Those that require a quorum or presiding officer to be physically present
- Those that require a physical posting of the agenda provided the agenda be posted on-line with a toll-free phone number or free video conference link for public participation
- Those that are interpreted to require face-to-face interactions between the members of the public and public officials
- Relaxed provisions to allow for two-way audio communication in lieu of two-way audio and video

Status Report: Transportation & RTC Emergency Policies & Procedures presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/Emergency-Procedures.pdf>

We hope members of the public are staying safe and healthy throughout these difficult times. NCTCOG is still open for business, and our employees are working from home. We are continuing to be as transparent as possible and want you to reach out to us regarding your transportation-related comments, concerns and questions.

Through the utilization of innovative technology, the Regional Transportation Council is still conducting monthly meetings and will be taking action on the allocation of \$341 million in emergency transit funding. Additionally, we understand there could be a potential reduction in State revenues and will do whatever is necessary to help ensure the maintenance of our regional transportation system. We will continue to focus on providing an array of transportation options for the Dallas-Fort Worth region and are also putting together real-time data related to safety fatalities, transit ridership, ozone levels, etc.

Thank you for your time and stay safe.

Congestion Management Process presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/CMP.pdf>

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a federally-mandated planning document and required for urbanized areas with populations that exceed 200,000 people.

The CMP is developed, established and implemented as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning process and should include demand management strategies, traffic operational improvements, public transportation improvements, ITS technologies and additional system capacity where necessary.

Goals and objectives for the CMP center around mobility, quality of life, system sustainability and implementation. The Process also includes system identification, performance measures, system performance monitoring, strategy identification and selection, implementation, monitoring and project performance evaluation.

NCTCOG staff will present the CMP for review and comment during the September 2020 public input opportunity. The Regional Transportation Council will take action on the CMP in December 2020.

TxDOT's American Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/TxDOT-ADA.pdf>

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends protection to persons with disabilities against discrimination in the private sector and in State and local government. It protects access to employment, public transportation and public accommodations, and assures quality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency.

ADA goals include the following:

- Eliminating barriers for people with disabilities
- Expanding equal opportunities for people with disabilities
- Developing a communications and outreach plan regarding TxDOT's ADA program
- Developing a reporting system
- Providing ADA training to employees

The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) mission is to ensure that every program, service, benefit, activity and facility open to the public is fully accessible and usable by people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act covers many issues from workplace services to public transportation accommodations. TxDOT staff developed a plan for reporting and will discuss how the agency provides opportunities to assist those with disabilities in its planning activities and how citizens can take an active role in making changes.

Reporting goals include:

- Increase awareness of TxDOT's ADA Accessibility Program throughout the department and state
- Improve internal and external communications about TXDOT's ADA Accessibility Program
- Increase public participation during the design, planning and development phases
- Develop/maintain ADA training to employees, recipients and sub-recipients
- Develop and maintain a grievance process that is consistent with the US Departments of Justice and Transportation's ADA accessibility requirements
- Create a sub-recipient monitoring program that is consistent with Federal Highway Administration's requirements

Incident Management 2020 Call for Projects Recommendations presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/I-M-CFP-Pres.pdf>

East Recommendations handout:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/I-M-CFP-East-Recommendations.pdf>

West Recommendations handout:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/04/I-M-CFP-West-Recommendations.pdf>

In December 2019, NCTCOG staff opened an Incident Management Call for Projects (CFP). Approximately \$1.5 million in funding is available through this CFP, and its purpose is to assist partner agencies in purchasing equipment and technology that aid in quick incident mitigation.

Eligible recipients included public sector partner agencies within the NCTCOG 10-county nonattainment area who are actively involved in incident management. Eligible activities included the purchasing of equipment and technology used in mitigating crashes, such as cones, flares, protective clothing, radio equipment and signs, among others. Personnel and staffing charges as well as vehicle purchases were not eligible to receive funding from this CFP.

NCTCOG received 21 application submissions. Staff is recommending allocating approximately \$989,774 in funding to the eastern side of the region and approximately \$510,000 to the western side. These funding recommendations are outlined in detail at www.nctcog.org/input

The Regional Transportation Council will take action on the proposed list of selected projects in June 2020.

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

Attorney General Announces Open Meetings Act Provisions Subject to Temporary Suspension

Email

Joe M Bailey

Regardless of the Attorney General's announcement that open meeting laws are subject to temporary suspension, there are numerous effective methods available for conducting public meetings online. Transparency is essential to a democracy so I urge you to make arrangements for meetings to be conducted online and not suspended because of the Coronavirus. In fact, I would encourage this as a standard of practice for the future even after the coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

TXDOT's American Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan

Mail

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

15720 Artist Way, #4912
Addicks, TX 75001

April 20, 2020

North Central Texas Council of Governments

Transportation Department

P.O. Box 5888

Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Dear Transportation Representative,

I appreciate receiving the material for the Regional Transportation Public Input Opportunity that I requested. I understand that public comments are due to you by ^{RECEIVED} May 12, 2020. I am forwarding the following comments regarding ADA.

I recommend improvements in accessibility to bus stops in multiple cities - Dallas, Farmer Branch, Plano, and other cities in the DART service area. Some bus stops are in the grass and/or on a hill. One example is the eastbound bus (Routes 402 and 403) along Belt Line Road. The stop closest to the Fretz Park Library and Recreation Center is on a grassy hill. The nearest accessible stop is the stop prior to the library and recreation center. A person would have to cross a busy street if they got off the bus there and wanted to go to the library or recreation center.

With regard to accessibility, some pathways leading to bus stops, although on concrete sidewalks, are not wide enough for wheelchairs to pass. This

is due to utility poles and other utility devices (Such as large boxes containing traffic management equipment) being in the way. Examples of this would be on Preston Road in Dallas, especially south of LBJ Freeway.

I appreciate your forwarding my comments for review and action to the appropriate areas.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

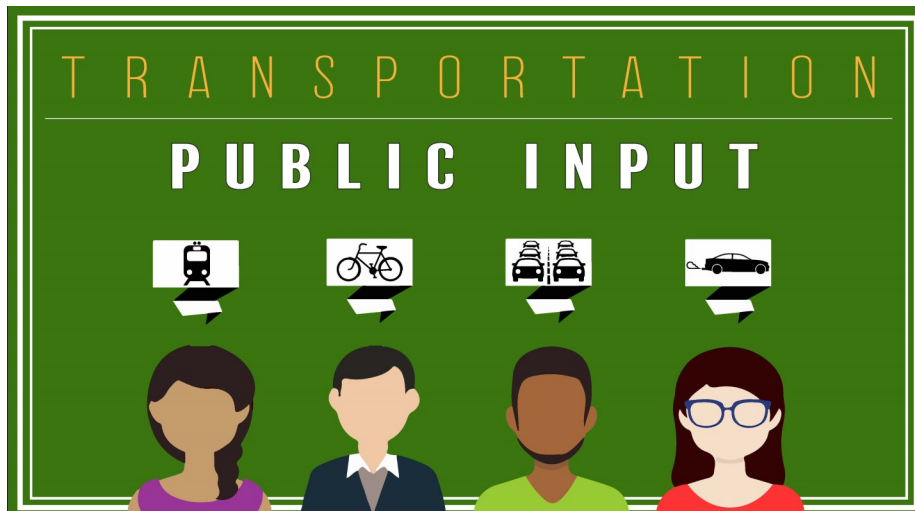
Phyllis Silver

Phyllis Silver

RECEIVED

APR 23 2020

TRANSPORTATION



WHAT DO YOU THINK? TELL US.

Information will be posted online at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment **May 11 - June 9, 2020**. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

10-Year Plan Update

In December 2016, the Regional Transportation Council approved a 10-Year Plan identifying major projects to be implemented in the region by Fiscal Year 2026. An updated draft of the project list out to Fiscal Year 2030 will be presented for review and comment.

Mobility 2045 Update: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas

One of the primary responsibilities of a Metropolitan Planning Organization is the development and maintenance of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). NCTCOG staff has initiated the development of an update to the current MTP, Mobility 2045, and will provide an overview and proposed timeline for the Plan.

2020 Ozone Season and Transportation Trends

As the region enters the peak of ozone season, attainment of both the 2008 and 2015 air quality standards remains critical. An update on ozone monitor readings as well as impacts from COVID-19 on the transportation system will be provided.

EV and NG Data Collection Project

Staff will give an update on two upcoming fleet data collection projects for natural gas and electric vehicles. The natural gas vehicle data will be used to compare natural gas maintenance costs to those of diesel vehicles in order to help fleets make more informed decisions about future purchases. The electric vehicle project will focus on understanding vehicle and charging station patterns and performance data that will aid research planning.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

- Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP): www.smokingvehicle.net
- Vehicle Incentives & Funding Opportunities: www.nctcog.org/agfunding
- Interactive Public Input: Map Your Experience: www.nctcog.org/mapyourexperience
- New Air Quality Handbooks: www.nctcog.org/airquality

WWW.NCTCOG.ORG/INPUT



NCTCOGtrans



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Learn about transportation in the region and help set future priorities. The Regional Transportation Council and North Central Texas Council of Governments, together serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, are seeking public input.

Submit comments and questions to NCTCOG:

Email: transinfo@nctcog.org

Website: www.nctcog.org/input

Fax: 817-640-3028

Phone: 817-695-9240

Mail: P.O. Box 5888

Arlington, TX 76005-5888

For special accommodations due to a disability or for language translation, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org. Reasonable accommodations will be made. Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2365 o por email: cbaylor@nctcog.org. Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REPORT

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

Purpose

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

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

This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Comments in the “Other” category, regarding Census Day 2020 and COVID-19, were in the majority.

Air Quality

Twitter –

1. EPA's recent grant of nearly \$2.5M to @NCTCOGtrans will fund rebates to replace diesel-powered engines and equipment with cleaner-burning equipment. – EPA Region6 (@EPAregion6)



Bicycle & Pedestrian

Twitter –

1. Thank you to @FortWorthParks & @TRWD_News for building & maintaining the trails. Remember to keep your social distancing when you are out on the trails or at city parks. #FortWorthTrails @CityofFortWorth @StreamsValleys @TrinityMetro @FWBikeSharing @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)



Programs

Email –

1. viperboy0098

Hello, the website I have been referred when I asked about how pricing is determined states "TEXpress Lanes use variable congestion-management pricing to help manage traffic flow and provide faster, more predictable travel. Roadside equipment recalculates real-time prices every 5 minutes, 24 hours a day, aiming to ensure the lanes are moving at 50 mph or faster."

I find this interesting because I am always able to sustain a speed of 70+ from end to end. For example at 6:30 this morning, ofcourse with tons of people not going to work and such, traffic is super light, but it was still over 6\$ to go through the entire section. The traffic load was the same as when it was at 7am yesterday morning and the day prior. Is there simply a timing structure at which you guys use to vary rates based on expected demand as opposed to the above statement?

Good afternoon,

Thank you for contacting the NCTCOG Transportation Department.

For information on our TEXpress Lane system, please contact Robert Hinkle. I've enclosed his information below:

Robert Hinkle, Corporate Affairs

LBJ Express / NTE / 35W

rhinkle@northtarrantexpress.com

Dear TEXpress Lanes Customer,

We appreciate your question regarding the TEXpress lanes.

As we are all trying to navigate during these unprecedented times we have been particularly mindful of the speed and volume of vehicles on the roadway. We are constantly monitoring the toll rates and adjustments will occur based on those factors.

Again, we appreciate your feedback and for reaching out with your question.

Projects & Planning

Email –

1. Jon Donhy

Recently, traveling Hwy 121, NE of Hwy.75 was a nightmare. One lane was open for many miles. Speed and travel time was greatly impacted.

It looks like the work could be broken down in sections so traffic could move a bit more easily. Just saying.

Twitter –

1. \$15 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grants for a free parking garage, which creates congestion and worsens air quality. And another \$25M from city of Plano: - patrick kennedy (@WalkableDFW)

COLLIN CREEK MALL MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

• Requested Action:

- Approval of parking and transit
 - \$30 million federal with a \$15 million payback for parking garage
 - \$25 million local
 - Approximately 3 transit vehicles for shuttle purposes
- Anticipated funding source is either federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program or Surface Transportation Block Grant funding (FTA funding may assist with Transit)
- Specific agreement terms to be finalized, but would include elements highlighted in this presentation
- Direct staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include this project and funding

This seems like one of the craziest and most reckless funding decisions by @NCTCOGtrans in recent years. How did Dallas' reps vote? – Wylie H Dallas (@Wylie_H_Dallas)

I suppose Michael Morris gonna Michael Morris... Thumbs down 👎 – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

Public Meetings & Forums

Twitter –

1. Busy day of conference calls by audio or video. Listened earlier to audio meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). <https://nctcog.org/trans/about/committees/regional-transportation-council> @CityofFortWorth @TrinityMetro @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino (@SAL_FW)

Facebook –

1. NCTCOG Transportation Department wants your input on regional transportation!

Check out the full flyer here: <http://argyletx.com/.../NCTCOG-Regional-Transportation-Online...>

Or learn more here: <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/involve/meetings.> – Town of Argyle



TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC INPUT

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Learn about transportation in the region and help set future priorities. The Regional Transportation Council and North Central Texas Council of Governments, together serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, are seeking public input.

WHAT YOU THINK? TELL US.

Information will be posted online at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment April 13 - May 12, 2020. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Attorney General Announces Open Meetings Act Provisions Subject to Temporary Suspension

The Texas Open Meetings Act ensures that governmental entities conduct business in an open and transparent manner. Staff will summarize the recent flexibility in conducting governmental body meetings in light of public health recommendations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining transparency and public participation principles.

Status Report: Transportation & RTC Emergency Policies & Procedures

The NCTCOG Transportation Department has taken actions to protect the health of our communities and will provide updates on how department employees are continuing to work on important regional planning, programming and projects as well as on how Regional Transportation Council meetings will be conducted during the current health situation.

10-Year Plan Update

In December 2016, the RTC approved a 10-Year Plan identifying major projects to be implemented in the region by Fiscal Year 2026. An updated draft of the project list out to FY 2030 will be provided for review and comment.

Congestion Management Process

Federal regulations mandate areas with populations over 200,000 must implement a Congestion Management Process (CMP) for measuring transportation congestion levels and prioritizing management strategies. Staff will provide a brief overview of federal requirements as well as elements to be considered in the CMP update.

TxDOT's American Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan

The ADA covers many issues from workplace services to public transportation accommodations. Access and awareness are keys to ensuring the needs of disabled citizens are met. TxDOT developed a plan for reporting and will discuss how the agency provides opportunities to assist those with disabilities and how citizens can take an active role in making changes.

Incident Management 2020 Call for Projects Recommendations

Traffic incident management plays an important role in improving safety and reducing congestion in North Texas. \$1.5 million was available through a call for projects for the purchase of equipment used to aid and mitigate traffic incidents, keep people safe and improve air quality. Proposed funding recommendations will be provided for review and comment.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

- Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP): www.smokingvehicle.net
- Vehicle Incentives & Funding Opportunities: www.nctcog.org/aqfunding
- Mobility Plan Administrative Revisions: www.nctcog.org/input

Submit comments and questions to NCTCOG:
Email: transinfo@nctcog.org
Website: www.nctcog.org/input
Fax: 817-640-3028
Phone: 817-695-9240
Mail: P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005-5888

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NCTCOG North Central Texas Council of Governments

Thanks for sharing! – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Railroad

Email –

1. Alan Guard

Good morning – Would you know who I can contact at Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad to discuss fixing a very poor railroad crossing on FM 407 here in New Fairview? Thank you for your assistance.

Transit

Email –

1. Paul McManus

Hello,

As people have traveled less in the past week or so due to the Coronavirus, I've read and noticed that not only are many more people throughout DFW including where I live in Lantana here in Denton County going outside and walking, running, or riding bicycles, but air pollution is decreasing and air quality is improving in many parts of the U.S. and around the world due to the reduction of car traffic and other factors as well. As a result, I believe it's absolutely critical going forward that the NCTCOG Transportation Dept. and Regional Transportation Council (RTC) focus even more on policies and action items that emphasize and encourage people to use multimodal forms of transportation here in DFW, including DART's, Trinity Metro's, and DCTA's bus and train services. Plus, focusing on improving and expanding these transit services and other forms of transportation can also help reduce car traffic and road congestion, as well as to help improve air quality, regional mobility, and the overall quality of life here in DFW as our region continues to grow very rapidly.

I appreciate your consideration of my suggestions, and please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thanks so much!

Your timing could not be better. The Regional Transportation Council funded efforts last year and they are ready to go. Over the last year we have been working on efforts to expand transit service. Three consultant contacts will go to our Board on Thursday. They are for Collin County, Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County. Shannon will give you more details. Please keep in touch. Our Board meeting is through a conference call do to social distancing.

Carli will make your comments available to the RTC . – Michael Morris

Facebook –

1. DCTA has created a survey regarding the Discount Pass Programs. Take the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FYTL5CK> – NCTCOG Transportation Department



Thanks for sharing! - KL – Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA)

Other

Twitter –

1. #CensusDay2020 📍 – LaDryian Cole (@laydriancole)



2. We owe a debt of gratitude to workers everywhere:

Healthcare, janitors, grocery cashiers, Pharmacists and their staff, transportation, those keeping our power grid and our water plants working, delivery drivers, food banks, all those who are risking their lives for us everyday. –

#SaveAmerica  #resister  HonorHeatherHeyer#NoBernie (@NoraBrup)

YES!! @AmerMedicalAssn . @NationalNurses . @USDOT . @NCTCOGtrans ... I don't know other nat'l twitter accts but THANK YOU to all who have been serving the public – Alexandra Allred (@alexandraallred)

Facebook –

1. Certain requirements regarding vehicle registration, titling and disabled parking placards have been waived due to the current state of emergency. For more information, visit: <http://txdmv.gov/covid-19>. – NCTCOG Transportation Department



Thanks. Good to know. – Ronnie Brady



Texas Legislature

March 16, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Bugg,

Thank you for your steadfast leadership on the Texas Transportation Commission. We are writing to request that the Commission delay adoption of revisions and updates to the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) at its April meeting.

While the UTP is within the authority of the Commission, we respectfully suggest postponing adoption of the 2020 UTP revisions and updates, and instead, continue developing the 2021 UTP several months later. In light of recent events, we believe this focus would better serve all Texans.

The state's 10-year program to guide transportation project development has served us well. It has allowed for robust debate among the Commissioners and encouraged vigorous public input. It has also proved to be fiscally prudent, given the challenge of not knowing with certainty how much revenue will be available for projects. It is of course important that the UTP be fiscally constrained based on estimated revenues over a 10-year period.

As you know, there has been immense volatility in global financial markets, a near collapse in the oil market, and a threat of a potential recession—just in the last couple weeks. Additionally, Proposition 1 deposits to the State Highway Fund are directly related to the price of oil, and this volatility has contributed to annual deposits ranging from \$440 million to \$1.74 billion. Similarly, Proposition 7 revenues are dependent on the State's overall sales tax revenues and motor-vehicle sales, which may also be affected by volatility in our current climate. Combined with limited public participation in normal government activities due to COVID-19, we are prompted to make this request.

Simply put, the 10-year UTP is based on estimated revenues over a 10-year time period, and since these estimates were last made, there have been substantial changes that have not yet stabilized.

We believe it is in the interest of all Texans to postpone adoption until more financial certainty is available and the public is able to fully participate in the comment period. This will not delay project delivery nor will it adversely affect the driving public. The very nature of the UTP lends itself to a long-term view of the state's transportation needs, and we encourage you and the Commissioners to keep this long-term perspective at the forefront of your decision-making.



Texas Legislature

Thank you for your favorable consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert L. Nichols".

Robert L. Nichols
Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terry Canales".

Terry Canales
Chair, House Committee on Transportation

cc: Commissioner Alvin New
Commissioner Laura Ryan
Commissioner Robert C. Vaughn
Executive Director James Bass



April 2, 2020

Executive Committee

Duncan Webb, Chair

Commissioner, Collin County

Adam McGough, Vice Chair

Council Member, City of Dallas

Oscar Ward, Secretary

Council Member, City of Irving

Tammy Dana-Bashian, Treasurer

Mayor, City of Rowlett

Tennell Atkins

Council Member, City of Dallas

Jerry Nickerson

Council Member, City of Garland

Rick Grady

Mayor Pro Tem, City of Plano

Rudy Durham

Mayor, City of Lewisville

Barry Gordon

Mayor, City of Duncanville

David Blewett

Council Member, City of Dallas

Andy Eads

County Judge, Denton County

Clay Jenkins

County Judge, Dallas County

George Fuller

Mayor, City of McKinney

Dennis Bailey

Commissioner, Rockwall County

Kevin Falconer

Mayor, City of Carrollton

Steve Terrell

Mayor, City of Allen

Gary Roden

Council Member, City of Coppell

Curtistene McCowan

Mayor, City of DeSoto

Keely Briggs

Council Member, City of Denton

Janet DePuy

Mayor Pro Tem, City of Richardson

James McCarley

Executive Director Emeritus

Ex-Officio Members

Dianne Costa, DCTA

Mo Bur, TxDOT

Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Arturo Ballesteros, NTTA

Gary Thomas, DART

Wendy Lopez, Dallas Chamber

Chairman Bruce Bugg

Texas Transportation Commission

125 E. 11th Street

Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Bugg:

On behalf of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition Board of Directors, I would like to express our appreciation for all of the work of the members of the Texas Transportation Commission for the well-being of all the citizens of the State of Texas. The North Texas region has long enjoyed a wonderful working relationship with the Commission because we all have the same goal – an efficient and effective transportation system that provides for a high quality of life and a vibrant business climate. We have many examples of the Commission and North Texas being able to blend the needs of North Texas with that of the whole State. Because of our cooperation with the Commission over decades, we feel we can speak freely when we have a concern.

Right now we have a concern related to the upcoming revision to the 2020 UTP, and to the development of the 2021 UTP to fully fund the I-35 project in Austin, without utilizing the revenue that could be gained by tolling the managed lanes. If tolled managed lanes were allowed to be incorporated into the project, TxDOT could design and construct I-35 and utilize approximately \$2 B less in Commission discretionary dollars, freeing up those funds to be used on other needed projects, or to fill the gap that the coronavirus has certainly put on future funding expected from Proposition 1 and Proposition 7.

We strongly urge the Commission to make a distinction between adding toll roads and adding tolled managed lanes. Our position in North Texas is that managed lanes should not be considered toll roads, and should be allowed under the non-tolled environment. Tolled managed lanes provide the driver with freedom to choose, and those who wish not to pay a toll can utilize the adjacent non-tolled lanes. This is a completely different model than a toll road, which does not provide a driver with a direct non-tolled option immediately adjacent. Tolled managed lanes also provide the driver with guaranteed trip times, and effective congestion mitigation, which is not the case with toll roads and freeways.

Executive Staff

Drew Campbell, Exec Director

Brandi Bird

Byron Campbell

Mary Diefenbach



Executive Committee

Duncan Webb, Chair

Commissioner, Collin County

Adam McGough, Vice Chair

Council Member, City of Dallas

Oscar Ward, Secretary

Council Member, City of Irving

Tammy Dana-Bashian, Treasurer

Mayor, City of Rowlett

Tennell Atkins

Council Member, City of Dallas

Jerry Nickerson

Council Member, City of Garland

Rick Grady

Mayor Pro Tem, City of Plano

Rudy Durham

Mayor, City of Lewisville

Barry Gordon

Mayor, City of Duncanville

David Blewett

Council Member, City of Dallas

Andy Eads

County Judge, Denton County

Clay Jenkins

County Judge, Dallas County

George Fuller

Mayor, City of McKinney

Dennis Bailey

Commissioner, Rockwall County

Kevin Falconer

Mayor, City of Carrollton

Steve Terrell

Mayor, City of Allen

Gary Roden

Council Member, City of Coppell

Curtistene McCowan

Mayor, City of DeSoto

Keely Briggs

Council Member, City of Denton

Janet DePuy

Mayor Pro Tem, City of Richardson

James McCarley

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Dianne Costa, DCTA

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Arturo Ballesteros, NTTA

Gary Thomas, DART

Wendy Lopez, Dallas Chamber

Executive Staff

Drew Campbell, Exec Director

Brandi Bird

Byron Campbell

Mary Diefenbach

Recognizing these benefits, in the early 2000s North Texas local governments, with the support of the Commission, determined that the most effective way to invest in our highway system was to incorporate private investment and tolled managed lanes into our highway system. The system has proved to be extremely successful in mitigating congestion, accelerating the construction of our highway system. Our local elected leaders hear mostly positive comments related to the benefits and freedom that tolled managed lanes provide.

The success of the managed lane projects in North Texas leads us to strongly recommend that the Commission seriously consider and support this option for IH-35 project in Austin. We also ask that given the worsening financial position of the State of Texas, and the far-reaching impacts of the current health crisis, that the Commission delay hearing and voting on this issue and extend the time limit for comments.

However, if the Commission decides not to postpone this decision and to use its Category 12 Commission discretionary funds for the I-35 project in Austin, then we feel regions must be allowed to leverage their limited dollars with tolled managed lanes in their areas, since we will no longer have the needed state funding to advance the projects.

We respectfully request that you allow us to complete the managed lane system that exists in DFW. In the 2021 UTP, the MPO in DFW submitted four toll managed lane projects for your consideration: IH 30 from IH 35W to FM 157, IH 30 East from IH 45 to US 80, US 75 Corridor, and SH 183 from 121 to 161. These four tolled managed lane projects represent the missing pieces in our overall managed lane system for DFW. With a complete managed lane system, someone could travel any of our major highways in DFW and have a choice to get there faster. We ask the Commission to support this vision which it previously supported and which the Board Members of the DRMC continue to support and desire to implement.

We respectfully ask the Commission to support the tolled managed lane option for I-35 in Austin and to support our request for authorization to implement tolled managed lanes for the four North Texas projects in the 2021 UTP.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests as you contemplate significant policy decisions for the future of Texas.

Sincerely,

Duncan Webb, DRMC Chair

Collin County Commissioner



TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Chairman

April 6, 2020

Laura Ryan
Commissioner

Alvin New
Commissioner

Robert C. Vaughn
Commissioner

Andy Eads
Regional Transportation Council
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-588

Dear Chairman Eads,

Thank you for your comments in your April 1, 2020 letter on the proposed update to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). These comments will be considered along with the other public comments during the April 30, 2020 Texas Transportation Commission meeting.

Maintaining strong partnerships and open lines of communications is crucial in achieving our shared goal of providing responsible transportation solutions for all Texans. If you have any questions, you may contact Katelyn Dwyer in my office at (512) 305-9519.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Chairman
Texas Transportation Commission

cc: Texas Transportation Commission
James M. Bass, Executive Director
Peter Smith, P.E., Transportation Planning & Programming Director
Brian R. Barth, P.E., Director of Project Planning and Development
Tucker Ferguson, P.E., Austin District Engineer
Mo Bur, P.E., Dallas District Engineer
Loyl C. Bussell, P.E., Fort Worth District Engineer
Trent W. Thomas, Director of State Legislative Affairs



State of Texas
Post Office Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

April 8, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Bugg,

We are writing in support of the recent letter sent by both Chairman Terry Canales and Chairman Robert Nichols requesting that the Commission delay adoption of revisions and updates to the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) at its April meeting.

At this time, considering the recent events and given the challenge of reallocating as well as the redistribution of State resources to address the COVID-19 crisis, it would be prudent to delay any immediate changes or revisions to the 2020 UTP plan.

To date, there has been immense volatility in global financial markets and in the oil market. Proposition 1 deposits to the State Highway Fund are directly related to the price of oil. Similarly, Proposition 7 revenues are dependent on the State's overall sales tax revenues and motor-vehicle sales which may also be directly impacted by the current financial climate.

We respectfully urge you and the Commissioners to give our request your positive consideration as you, the Commission, and other elected officials continue to identify and address the various complex issues facing the State during this pandemic. We believe, this delay will not prevent project delivery nor will it adversely affect the mobility of the general public.

Sincerely,



Representative Michelle Beckley
State Representative
District 65



Representative Rhetta Andrews Bowers
State Representative
District 113



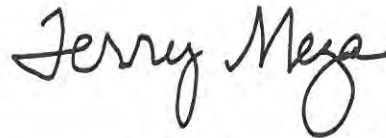
Representative Yvonne Davis
State Representative
District 111



Representative Jessica González
State Representative
District 104



Representative Julie Johnson
State Representative
District 115



Representative Thresa "Terry" Meza
State Representative
District 105



Representative Ana-Maria Ramos
State Representative
District 102



Representative Toni Rose
State Representative
District 110



State Representative Carl Sherman
State Representative
District 109



State Representative Rafael Anchia
State Representative
District 103

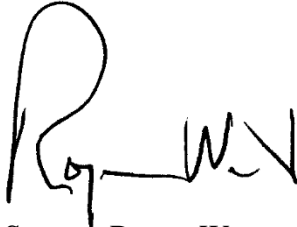
cc: Members of the Texas Transportation Commission



Representative Lorraine Birabil
State Representative
District 100



Representative Angie Chen Button
State Representative
District 112



Senator Royce West
State Senator
District 23

cc: Members of the Texas Transportation Commission

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-021

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, SUPPORTING THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL OF THE NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT'S RESOLUTION ON THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S PROPOSED UPDATES OF THE 2020 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (R20-02).

WHEREAS, The City of North Richland Hills, Texas possesses legal authority to support the Regional Transportation Councils' resolution (R20-02); and,

WHEREAS, The Regional Transportation Council (RTC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and has been and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for the approval of transportation projects and policies in the region's long-range transportation plan (Mobility 2045) pursuant to its federal responsibilities under Title 23 of the United States Code, including the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project, which would add two non-tolled managed lanes and one frontage road lane in each direction from US 290E to US 290W/SH 171 (the "Project"); and,

WHEREAS, the RTC was made aware of a potential \$4.34 billion funding gap in the Project, and the Texas Transportation Commission (the "Commission") has proposed updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) that would re-allocate and prioritize \$3.4 billion in available funds to address the funding gap; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is accepting public comments on the UTP and will hold a public hearing on the UTP; and

WHEREAS, The City Council of North Richland Hills finds it is in the best interest of the citizens of North Richland Hills to support the Regional Transportation Councils' resolution on the Texas Transportation Commission's proposed updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1. The City Council hereby finds that the recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution as if written herein.

SECTION 2. The City Council of North Richland Hills hereby supports the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Government's Resolution (R20-02) on the Texas Transportation Commission's proposed updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program to provide alternative

solutions to close the funding gap for the Project. The Resolution is attached hereto as "Exhibit A."

SECTION 3. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in full force and effect from and after the date of its adoption, and it is so resolved; and all Resolutions of the City Council of the City in conflict herewith are hereby amended or repealed to the extent of such conflict.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 13th day of April 2020.

CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS

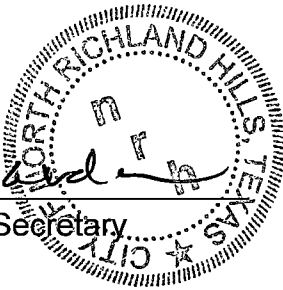
By: _____

Oscar Trevino, Mayor

ATTEST:



Alicia Richardson, City Secretary

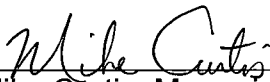


APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:



Maleshia B. McGinnis, City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Mike Curtis, Managing Director of Public Works

April 15, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Bugg,

The North Texas Commission (NTC) supports the recent letter sent by both Chairman Terry Canales and Chairman Robert Nichols requesting that the Commission delay adoption of revisions and updates to the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) at its April meeting.

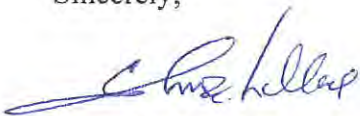
Our State faces unprecedented challenges as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic while also facing the challenge of significant disruption in our oil and gas industry. With these obstacles bringing much uncertainty to our economic future, it would be prudent to delay any immediate changes or revisions to the 2020 UTP plan at this time.

To date, there has been immense volatility in global financial markets and in the oil market. Proposition 1 deposits to the State Highway Fund are directly related to the price of oil. Similarly, Proposition 7 revenues are dependent on the State's overall sales tax revenues and motor-vehicle sales which may also be directly impacted by the current financial climate.

Should the Commissioners move forward with the 2020 UTP plan as currently scheduled, please consider this letter in support of the Regional Transportation Council's resolution as adopted at their March 12 meeting. During this unprecedented pandemic crisis, it's important to give thoughtful consideration to all funding mechanisms that would also permit additional high-priority projects in the North Texas region as well as across the State.

We respectfully urge you and the Commissioners to give our request your positive consideration as you, the Commission, and other elected officials continue to identify and address the various complex issues facing the State during this pandemic. We believe, this delay will not prevent project delivery nor will it adversely affect the mobility of the general public.

Sincerely,



Chris Wallace
President & CEO

CC: Dr. Joe May, Chairman of the Board
Eric Fox, Chairman, Government Affairs Committee
Holli Davies, Vice President Advocacy

CITY OF IRVING

COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. RES-2020-128

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Irving is comprised of nine (9) elected officials, including the Mayor and eight (8) councilmembers, and is a member of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which is the regional policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments; and

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for the approval of transportation projects and policies in the region's transportation plan (Mobility 2045) pursuant to its federal responsibilities under Title 23 of the United States Code; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2020, The Texas Transportation Commission (Commission) was briefed on potential updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to address a \$4.34 billion funding gap for the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project which would add two non-tolled managed lanes and one frontage road lane in each direction from US 290E to US 290W/ SH 171; and

WHEREAS, to address the \$4.34 billion funding gap, the Commission proposes to allocated \$3.4 billion in Commission Strategic Priority and Texas Clear Lanes funds (Category 12), reprioritize \$600 million in Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funds allocated to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/Austin District, and include an additional \$300 million in Category 12 funds in the 2021 UTP; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is schedule to take action on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP at its regular meeting on April 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the RTC has a long-standing relationship with the Commission and TxDOT on advancing major transportation projects and as such has an interest in providing feedback to the Commission on its proposed changes to the 2020 UTP; and

WHEREAS, on March 12 2020, the RTC passed a resolution relating to the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP and recommended that the Commission consider alternative mechanisms to fund the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project that would permit additional high-priority statewide and regional projects to advance in parallel;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF IRVING, TEXAS:

SECTION I. THAT the City of Irving hereby supports the North Central Texas Council of Governments Regional Transportation Council's recommendation, as evidenced by its March 12, 2020 resolution, that the Texas Transportation Commission consider alternate mechanisms to fund the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project that would permit additional high priority statewide and regional projects to advance in parallel;

SECTION II. THAT the Mayor is hereby authorized to provide comments to the Commission consistent with this resolution.

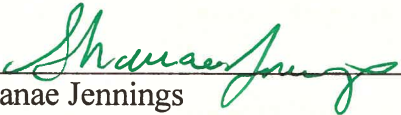
SECTION III. THAT this resolution shall take effect from and after its final date of passage, and it is accordingly so ordered.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF IRVING, TEXAS,
on April 16, 2020.



RICHARD H. STOPFER
MAYOR

ATTEST:



Shanae Jennings
City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Kuruvilla Oommen
City Attorney





April 22, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Bugg,

It is our understanding the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) will vote on April 30th to fully fund the reconstruction of I-35 in the Austin District (I-35 Austin). Collectively, we are voicing our concern about the timing, and potentially challenging impact that a decision of this magnitude could have.

To be clear, we have no quarrel with the merit of singling out I-35 Austin for full construction funding. Nor do we question the method of delivery or financing for the project. Our concern is not really about I-35 Austin. It is about the timing of any funding action taken by the TTC outside the normal cycle.

We believe the TTC should not take action to fully fund I-35 Austin until the 2021 Unified Transportation Program (2021 UTP). TTC's initial consideration of the 2021 UTP is a mere two months away, with a final vote to take place in August.

The short pause we are requesting will have little impact on the eventual delivery of I-35. TxDOT staff has indicated publicly the project is 4-6 years away from construction. The pause could have a positive impact for all of Texas. The coronavirus challenge we are all in the midst of will likely result in less available funding for transportation projects in fiscal year 2021. The decline in revenue for projects might extend into fiscal year 2022 and beyond. A pause could very well save the considerable angst that would occur statewide if funding for the construction of I-35 Austin proceeds while more shovel-ready projects across the state have to be postponed or eliminated from consideration.

If history is a guide, there will be a federal stimulus package for infrastructure projects. Texas will receive significant funding, most likely for shovel-ready projects. Perhaps there will be additional terms and conditions attached to the use of this federal stimulus funding, as there have been in previous programs. The combination of uncertainty and opportunity merits following a measured process to best protect and promote the interests of all of Texas.

In closing, we would be remiss if we did not take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the leadership of Governor Gregg Abbott and his team during this challenging time. It takes wisdom, patience, and teamwork to create and maintain the cooperative and coordinated response the Governor put in place in March to guide us and get through this unprecedented crisis. The results to date in Texas are encouraging and in large measure due to his approach.

Respectfully, we ask that the Texas Transportation Commission postpone consideration of full funding I-35 Austin until the normal cycle of the annual 2021 UTP.

Betsy Price
Mayor of Fort Worth

Glen Whitley
Tarrant County Judge

Jeff Williams
Mayor of Arlington

Devan Allen
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Gary Fickes
Commissioner, Precinct 3

J.D. Johnson
Commissioner, Precinct 4



Oscar Trevino
Mayor of North Richland Hills

Brian Johnson
Mayor of Kennedale

William Tate
Mayor of Grapevine



Jerry Dittrich
Mayor of Benbrook

Linda Martin
Mayor of Euless

Bob Golden
Mayor of Haslet



Pat McGrail
Mayor of Keller

David Cook
Mayor of Mansfield

Edward Lopez
Mayor of Richland Hills



Henry Wilson

Henry Wilson
Mayor of Hurst



Laura K. Hill

Laura Hill
Mayor of Southlake



Laura Wheat

Laura Wheat
Mayor of Westlake



Ronald A. White

Ronald White
Mayor of White Settlement



Michael Boyter

Michael Boyter
Mayor of Bedford



Kelly R. Thompson

Kelly R. Thompson
Mayor of Westover Hills



Richard Newton

Richard Newton
Mayor of Colleyville



The Senate of The State of Texas

SENATE COMMITTEES:

VICE CHAIR
Higher Education

MEMBER
Education
Finance
Transportation

Senator Royce West
District 23

President Pro Tempore
2006

DISTRICT OFFICE:
5787 South Hampton Road
Suite 385
Dallas, Texas 75232
214/467-0123
Fax: 214/467-0050

CAPITOL OFFICE:
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711
512/463-0123
Fax: 512/463-0299
Dial 711 for Relay Calls

April 17, 2020

The Honorable J. Bruce Bugg Jr.
Chairman - Texas Transportation Commission
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Bugg,

I will begin by thanking you and the Commission for your efforts to address the daily transportation and mobility interests of the 28 million citizens and thousands of businesses who call Texas home. North Texas and Dallas in particular have benefited greatly in recent years through strategies put in place by the Commission, whose goals target problems of congestion by working collaboratively with local and regional stakeholders.

However, I am writing at this time to address concerns brought to my attention by those involved in transportation both locally and in other parts of the state. They center around announced Commission plans to expedite improvements to the I-35 corridor in Austin by concentrating Category 12 Strategic Priority funding (\$3.4 billion) in that single region. This item is to be voted on as part of the 2020 Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) as soon as April 30, 2020.

My understanding of Category 12 Funds is that they are to be made available for use on projects statewide, as prioritized through the UTP. No one who has traveled I-35 from Austin all the way to San Antonio will question that help in addressing congestion and time lost in traffic warrant immediate attention, but even some in that region question the encumbrance of that amount of Category 12 funds to do so.

April 17, 2020

Letter to Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr.

page 2

I understand that plans which utilize some form of paid lanes, such as tolls, express and other demand-based tools have been suggested to the Commission. These would help in providing revenue streams that could add flexibility to the use of finite state resources. I say this because over the last 15 years, I have been a part of a Legislature that was hard-pressed to stretch such resources to meet statewide needs when revenues did not meet previous levels or the unexpected occurred. In 2004 and 2005, we cut state agencies past the bone, to the marrow. And within FY10-11 budget cycles, local school districts were forced to close campuses.

When the world changed in the space of weeks, the results of the global pandemic novel coronavirus, our way of life was impacted in ways witnessed by only a few now living. It is not known how smart instruments such as Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 will perform over the next year, but we can expect reduced revenues. In recent years, the Legislature has focused on reducing and expediting transportation debt incurred during times mentioned when traditional *pay-as-you-go* methods could not meet transportation and growth demand. We may visit lean times again and I join Senate and House Transportation Committee Chairmen Nichols and Canales and others, in urging the Commission to reconsider plans to expedite the Capital Express Project by the means proposed in the 2020 UTP that is now before the Commission.

The Texas Transportation Commission and the thousands who work at the Texas Department of Transportation work hard daily to make Texas work and move better. Your contributions should never be under-estimated or go unappreciated. If there is anything I can do to assist you in these challenging times, I am at your service.

Our best for Texas!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Royce West". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal stroke.

Royce West
Texas Senate
District 23



April 22, 2020

Texas Transportation Commission
Texas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 149217
Austin, TX 78714

ATTN: Peter Smith – 2020 Unified Transportation Program

Dear Mr. Smith,

On behalf of the Dallas Regional Chamber's (DRC) 1,100 member companies and the 500,000 citizens who work for them, we are grateful for the leadership that the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) has taken to address the \$4.34 billion funding gap for the Interstate Highway 35 Capital Express Central Project. However, we respectfully request the commission to consider the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) R20-02, Resolution on the Texas Transportation Commission's Proposed Updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP).

As the independent transportation policy body of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Forth Worth Metropolitan Area, the Regional Transportation Council comprises of local elected or appointed officials for the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers.

On March 12, 2020, the RTC unanimously approved and passed R20-02 as a response to the TTC proposal in reprioritizing \$600 million of existing Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funds towards the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/Austin District and including an additional \$300 million in Category 12 funds in the 2021 UTP.

The DRC supports the recommendations made by the Regional Transportation Council and continues to support policies and solutions that address future infrastructure needs to ensure Texas to be a great state to live, work, and do business. We greatly appreciate your leadership and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale Petroskey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dale Petroskey
President & CEO
Dallas Regional Chamber



State Highway 114

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is proposing to add continuous frontage roads, including ramp and intersection improvements, along SH 114 from FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road in Tarrant County, Texas. The proposed project is approximately 2.28 miles long.

Proposed Improvements:

- Add continuous two-lane frontage roads along SH 114 from FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road to increase connectivity along this travel corridor through the cities of Southlake, Westlake, and Trophy Club.
- Reversal of some existing entrance and exit ramps from the current "Diamond Configuration" to a proposed "X Configuration" to increase mobility and enhance safety along the mainlanes and frontage roads.
- Add U-Turn lanes along SH 114 for both eastbound and westbound U-Turn directions at Kirkwood/Solana Boulevard and at Dove Road for the eastbound to westbound U-Turn direction.
- Constructing continuous sidewalks along SH 114 between FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) and Dove Road.
- Constructing a 14-foot wide shared outside lane for bicyclists along the proposed westbound and eastbound frontage roads between FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) and Dove Road.
- Would require approximately 4.8 acres of proposed right-of-way and approximately 5.6 acres of temporary construction easements.
- Although additional right-of-way would be required, no residential or non-residential structures are anticipated to be displaced at this time.
- Construction is anticipated to take approximately 2.5 years, and the estimated cost is approximately \$31.8 million, excluding costs for utility relocations.

Anticipated Schedule:

Timeline	Activity
April 2020	Public Hearing
Summer 2020	Schematic Approval
Summer 2020	Environmental Approval
Summer 2020	Right-of-Way Acquisition
Fall 2020	Begin Construction
Fall 2021	Utility Adjustments
2023	End Construction

Submitting Comments:

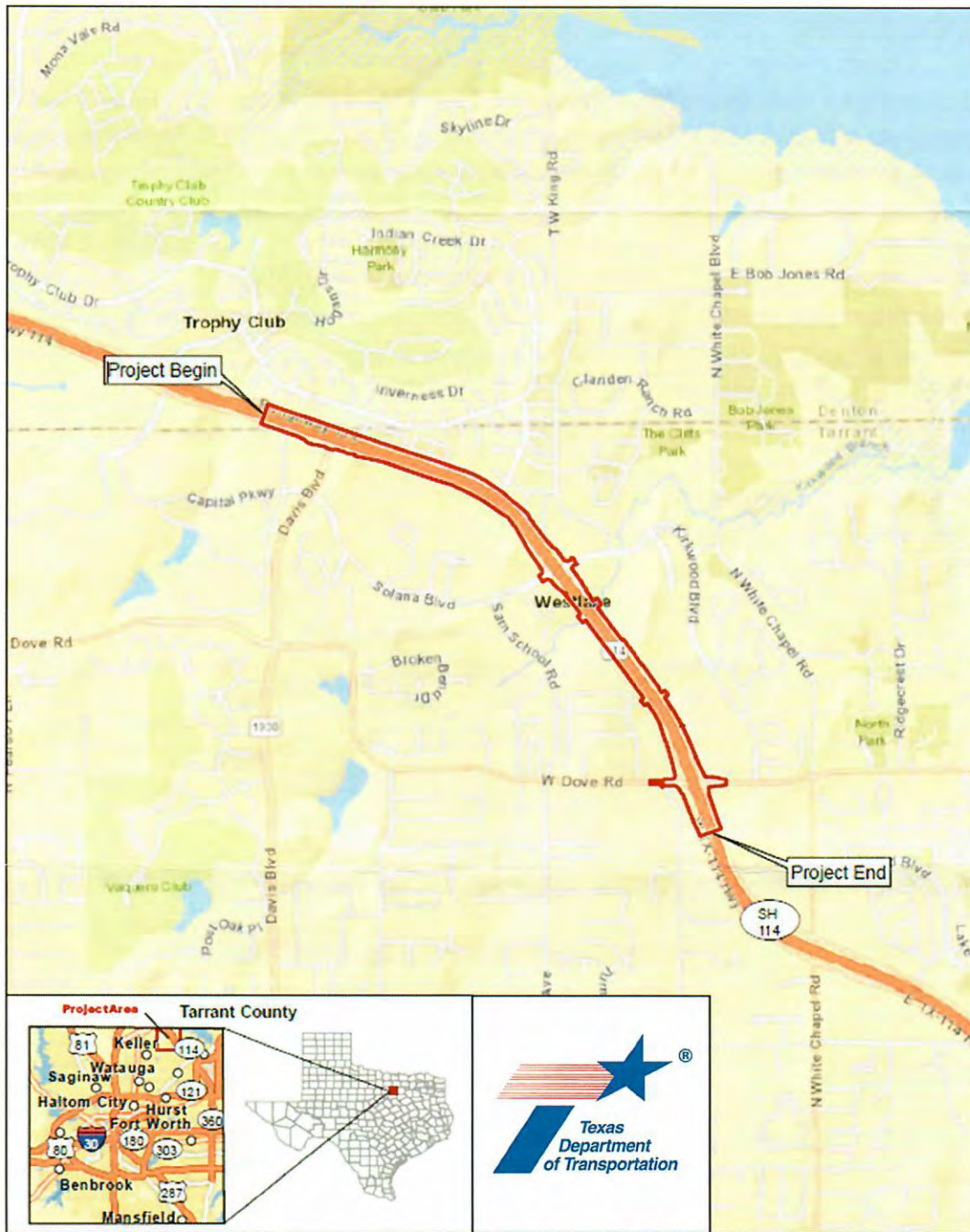
Comments are encouraged and welcomed, and must be received or postmarked **on or before Friday, May 15, 2020** to be included in the official hearing documentation. Please submit comments via the following methods:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>MAIL
Loyl C. Bussell, P.E.
District Engineer
TxDOT Fort Worth District
2501 SW Loop 820
Fort Worth, TX 76133</p> | <p>EMAIL
Thomas.Marquardt@txdot.gov</p> | <p>VERBAL
April 30, 2020 from
6:30 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.
469-552-9986
Make your comment
by leaving a message</p> | <p>ONLINE
Visit www.TxDOT.gov
In upper right-hand search box:
Enter: SH 114 Frontage Roads
Then Click: Submit Your Comment</p> |
|--|--|--|--|



State Highway 114

Project Location Map



The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.



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

April 8, 2020

Virtual Public Hearing for SH 114 Frontage Road, Ramp and Intersection Improvements
FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road
CSJ: 0353-03-100
Tarrant County, Texas

~~Ms. Kathryn~~ Rush
Senior Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Dear Ms. Rush:

The Texas Department of Transportation Fort Worth District (TxDOT-FTW) is conducting a virtual public hearing to seek input regarding the SH 114 frontage road project. The hearing will be held on Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. To log onto the virtual public hearing, visit www.TxDOT.gov and in the "Search TxDOT" box in the upper-right hand corner, enter: "SH 114 Frontage Roads" at the date and time indicated above. Project staff will give a presentation regarding the project. The presentation will include both audio and visual components.

TxDOT-FTW invites you or a representative from your organization to participate in the hearing. For your convenience, a copy of the public hearing notice is enclosed.

If you would like additional information regarding the proposed project, please contact our TxDOT Project Manager, Thomas Marquardt, P.E., at Thomas.Marquardt@txdot.gov or (817) 370-6772.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

7879B0B92E5D403...

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

Enclosures: Public Hearing Notice

cc: Thomas Marquardt, P.E., Project Manager, TxDOT-FTW

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

An Equal Opportunity Employer



Notice

Virtual Public Hearing

SH 114 Frontage Road, Ramp, and Intersection Improvements

From FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road

CSJ: 0353-03-100

Tarrant County, Texas

The Texas Department of Transportation ("TxDOT") is proposing to add continuous frontage roads, including ramp and intersection enhancements, along SH 114 from FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road in Tarrant County, Texas. This notice advises the public that TxDOT will be conducting an on-line virtual public hearing on the proposed project. The virtual hearing will be held on **Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.** To log onto the virtual public hearing, go to the following web address at the date and time indicated above: www.TxDOT.gov. In the upper right-hand search box enter the search keywords: SH 114 Frontage Roads. Project staff will give a presentation regarding the project. The presentation will include both audio and visual components. If you do not have internet access, you may call Thomas Marquardt, P.E. at (817) 370-6772 to ask questions about the project and access project materials at any time during the project development process. Members of the public may call (469) 552-9986 and verbally provide testimony from 6:30 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. immediately following the virtual public hearing presentation. Formal written comments may also be provided by mail or email as explained below. All verbally provided testimony and timely written comments submitted by mail or email will be included as part of the official record for this hearing and project, and considered by TxDOT. Responses to verbally provided testimony and comments will be prepared by TxDOT, included as part of the hearing and project record, and made available online.

The existing facility consists of east and westbound highway mainlanes with three 12-foot lanes, a 10-foot inside shoulder, and a 10-foot outside shoulder in each direction of travel, separated by a concrete traffic barrier within an existing right of way (ROW) ranging from 295 feet to 475 feet. The existing freeway includes grade-separated interchanges at FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard), Kirkwood/Solana Boulevard, and at Dove Road. An existing westbound frontage road is located between FM 1938 (David Boulevard) and Kirkwood/Solana Boulevard and consists of one 14-foot shared outside lane and one 12-foot inside lane with 1-foot offsets on each side for curb and gutter. The westbound frontage road is separated from the westbound mainlanes by a grassy median. Access to the SH 114 mainlanes is provided by entrance and exit ramps to cross street intersections.

The proposed project is approximately 2.28 miles long and would add continuous two-lane frontage roads along SH 114 from FM 1938 (Davis Boulevard) to Dove Road to increase connectivity along this travel corridor through the cities of Southlake, Westlake, and Trophy Club. Additionally, the proposed project includes the reversal of some of the existing entrance and exit ramps from the current "Diamond Configuration" to a proposed "X Configuration" to increase mobility and enhance safety along the SH 114 mainlanes and frontage roads. Along with these improvements, U-Turn lanes would be added along SH 114 for both eastbound and westbound directions at Kirkwood Boulevard/Solana Boulevard and on the west side of Dove Road. Approximately 4.8 acres of additional right-of-way and approximately 5.6 acres of temporary construction easements would be required. Although additional right-of-way would be required, no residential or non-residential structures are anticipated to be displaced at this time. Information concerning services and benefits available to affected property owners and information about the tentative schedule for right-of-way acquisition and construction can be obtained from the TxDOT district office by calling Thomas Marquardt, P.E. at (817) 370-6772.

Anticipated permanent impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, would consist of impacts to two water features and no wetland features. No temporary impacts are proposed. The impacts are anticipated to be authorized by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Nationwide Permit 14 for Linear Transportation Projects without a Preconstruction Notification. Approximately 7.8 acres of the proposed project area is within the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain. Potential fill within the floodplain would be determined during final design and coordinated with the appropriate local floodplain administrators. The proposed project would not raise the base flood elevation to a level that would violate applicable floodplain regulations or ordinances.

Any environmental documentation or studies, maps and drawings showing the project location and design, tentative construction schedules, and other information regarding the proposed project are available online at www.TxDOT.gov, keywords "SH 114 Frontage Roads".

TxDOT makes every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of the public. The virtual public hearing will be in English. If you have a special communication accommodation or need for an interpreter, a request can be made. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can also be made to accommodate most needs. Please call Thomas Marquardt, P.E. at (817) 370-6772 no later than Tuesday, April 28, 2020. Please be aware that advance notice is requested as some accommodations may require time for TxDOT to arrange.

Written comments from the public regarding the proposed project are requested and may be submitted by mail to Loyl C. Bussell, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Fort Worth District Office, 2501 SW Loop 820, Fort Worth, TX 76133. Written comments may also be submitted by email to Thomas.Marquardt@txdot.gov. All written comments must be postmarked or received on or before May 15, 2020. Additionally, as stated above, members of the public may call (469) 552-9986 and verbally provide testimony from 6:30 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. immediately following the virtual hearing presentation. Responses to written comments received and public testimony provided will be available online at www.TxDOT.gov, keywords "SH 114 Frontage Roads", once they have been prepared.

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the proposed project or the virtual hearing, please contact Thomas Marquardt, P.E., at (817) 370-6772 or by email at Thomas.Marquardt@txdot.gov.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

North Texas Cities Keep Public Transportation Open Despite Coronavirus Concerns, Shelter-In-Place Orders

Though both Dallas and Tarrant counties have ordered citizens to shelter-in-place, public transportation is still operational.

By Kim Roberts, The Texan

While Dallas and Tarrant counties have both ordered residents to stay at home in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, both continue to operate public transit systems and Fort Worth is even offering free fares for riders until April 9.

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority (DART) and Trinity Metro in Tarrant County are considered “essential” and operate “for North Texas riders who rely on buses and trains to get to jobs, stores, and medical appointments.”

The county orders define public transportation as “essential critical infrastructure” under the [guidelines](#) of the Department of Homeland Security.

DART, Trinity Metro, and Trinity Railway Express (TRE) have modified their schedules to offer fewer trips throughout the day. They are following what would typically be considered a weekend schedule.

Though DART doesn’t have official ridership numbers for March, it acknowledged seeing fewer riders on-board due to the shelter-in-place orders.

Trinity Metro has eliminated fares for its transit system, but DART and TRE have not.

Dr. Deborah Birx, the coordinator of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, pointed out in an *Inside Texas Politics* [interview](#) on Sunday that public transportation systems in metropolitan areas are contributing to incidental transmissions because the virus can live on hard surfaces.

Researcher Christopher Mason is [currently conducting tests](#) with Twist Bioscience on the NYC subway system to determine the prevalence of COVID-19 on surfaces there.

Transit systems are encouraging riders to leave an open seat between themselves and others, but the transit crews are not monitoring or enforcing the regulations.

The DFW area transit systems have increased the frequency of cleanings of hard surfaces where the virus might survive and be transmitted. DART trains are cleaned each night and also when each train reaches the end of its line.

DART, TRE, TEXRail, and Trinity Metro are using cleaning agents designed to kill the coronavirus to wipe down hard surfaces, like handrails, door buttons, and grab straps.

On the TRE, the train crews have been provided hand sanitizers and gloves. Trinity Metro has also equipped buses and trains with ionizers that are meant to sanitize the air as it is recirculated.

Trump pushes \$2 trillion infrastructure package in next coronavirus bill, saying it must be 'VERY BIG & BOLD'

His new tweet aligns with calls by a number of Democrats to create large projects for investment, jobs

By Jeff Stein and Seung Min Kim, The Washington Post

President Trump said Tuesday that a \$2 trillion infrastructure package should be part of Congress's next response to the [coronavirus](#) pandemic, reviving a 2016 campaign pledge to ramp up construction projects despite public health guidance that Americans should stay home and isolated to the greatest extent possible.

Citing extraordinarily low interest rates that have reduced the cost of federal borrowing, Trump said on Twitter that now "is the time" to push forward with an infrastructure package in response to the severe economic downturn caused by the coronavirus that causes the disease covid-19.

Numerous House Democrats have also discussed in recent weeks advancing infrastructure legislation as part of their response to the coronavirus pandemic.

"With interest rates for the United States being at ZERO, this is the time to do our decades long awaited Infrastructure Bill," Trump wrote on Twitter. "It should be VERY BIG & BOLD, Two Trillion Dollars, and be focused solely on jobs and rebuilding the once great infrastructure of our Country! Phase 4."

But lawmakers, for more than three years now, have failed to break meaningful ground on bipartisan infrastructure talks, making the issue something of a long-standing joke on Capitol Hill. Some experts pointed out that a pandemic may be a poor time to ramp up construction projects, given that federal health officials are urging workers to stay home if possible and avoid personal contact.

His "Phase 4" comment refers to the fact that Congress has passed three bills in response to problems created by the outbreak of the coronavirus, with the most recent law enacted on Friday. That law directs more than [\\$2 trillion in spending](#) for emergency assistance to companies, new payments of up to \$1,200 to millions of Americans, and assistance for airlines, state unemployment programs and a host of other groups.

The president offered no additional specifics about his infrastructure idea, and a White House spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for more details.

On Tuesday morning, shortly before the tweet, Trump spoke with Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) about the need for a massive, \$2 trillion package that would include revamping the nation's roads, bridges, tunnels and ports, according to a person familiar with the conversation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the discussion.

Barrasso, the third-ranking Senate Republican, also chairs the Committee on Environment and Public Works, which unanimously cleared a highway bill last year that greenlights \$287 billion in infrastructure spending over five years and is the most substantial legislation of its kind in history.

But Trump's vision of an infrastructure would build on that highway bill, according to the person familiar with the call with Barrasso, and its mission would be to "renovate and rebuild America while putting America back to work."

Trump, who had called Barrasso, told the Wyoming senator and close ally that he wanted him very involved in the infrastructure effort, the person said.

Congressional Democrats are already at work on the next effort and discussions have begun on what it may include.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard E. Neal (D-Mass.) [stepped up talks on an infrastructure deal in February](#), but those negotiations were derailed by the widening impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Public health experts have called for Americans to self-isolate, and numerous states have issued stay-at-home orders urging all but essential personnel to remain in their homes.

Infrastructure talks have largely centered on providing hundreds of billions for maintenance and repair work on the nation's roads, bridges and other decaying infrastructure — all of which would probably require workers to be in close contact with one another.

"I've been making this point for years now: He's correct," said Jared Bernstein, former economic adviser to then-Vice President Joe Biden (D), about Trump's argument about the potential to use low interest rates to fund a large infrastructure bill. "But we have to be realistic about how infrastructure fits into the nature of the current crisis."

That issue may not be impossible to resolve. Congress should pass an infrastructure package now to capitalize on the political crisis and low interest rates, but construction projects should not begin until quarantines are lifted, said Peter Gowan, an economic expert at the left-leaning Democracy Collaborative.

Other outstanding fissures may still be difficult for lawmakers to overcome.

Senate Republicans have balked at raising taxes as part of an infrastructure deal, a key sticking point in previous negotiations, and it is unclear if conservatives are willing to spend more money beyond the large deals already signed into law. Senior Republicans have also been reticent to embark on a big-spending, "Phase 4" bill to boost the flagging economy, wanting to gauge the effects of the \$2.2 trillion package signed into law last week before any next moves.

Trump's reference to low interest rates on Tuesday suggested he is in favor of borrowing heavily to finance new projects, which would probably add to the government's debt.

During his campaign four years ago, Trump promised a \$1 trillion infrastructure package he said would create hundreds of thousands of jobs and rebuild roads, bridges, ports and airports, among other things.

But White House officials could not reach agreement among themselves over how to finance such a package.

Congressional Democrats have long been skeptical of the seriousness of Trump's attempts at an infrastructure deal. Both sides have sharply disagreed about what projects should be included in an infrastructure bill, with conservatives rejecting Democratic efforts to include clean energy projects and other provisions aimed at mitigating climate change in their legislation.

"We all make the jokes about it, but the problem is infrastructure is an empty vessel term that means different things to different people," said Ryan Ellis, a conservative tax expert. "You can talk to 10 people around town, and you may get 10 different emphases for what that means and what the definition of it is."

Finally reopening downtown Fort Worth's Heritage Plaza took a step forward

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Plans to reopen Heritage Plaza and extend the downtown park on the Trinity River bluff took a step forward Tuesday when the Fort Worth City Council approved \$1 million for design work.

That's a sliver of the \$40 million plan to reopen the park in time for the city's 175th anniversary in 2024. Along with restoring the Lawrence Halprin-designed Heritage Park, which closed in 2007 due to safety concerns, proponents also want to revamp Paddock Park, which sits just north of the historic Tarrant County Courthouse with fountains and extend Heritage Park's public space down the bluff to the river.

The money comes from the city's 2014 bond package and will not be affected by a projected decrease to city revenue related to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Today, a chain link fence guards the plaza's fountains. It was built a few years after the Fort Worth Water Gardens in the late 1970s and followed the same theme — combining elements of water and stone to create a downtown oasis. Now leaves and dirt are now gathered in the fountain's pools.

Restoring just Heritage Plaza would cost \$2.5 million plus \$1.3 million for new landscaping in front of the plaza, according to an itemized budget proposal. The river staircase and canopy walkway would cost a total of \$7 million, and Paddock Park's water feature is estimated to be about \$1.8 million. Street work, including improvements to Franklin Street along the river, would cost almost \$7 million. A more than \$9 million contingency is built in.

Fernando Costa, an assistant city manager, told council members in early March the city could look at using \$12.5 million from the upcoming 2022 bond program, which requires voter approval, for the project. There's another \$500,000 left from the 2014 bond and \$1 million available from a special downtown tax district. The city would also be asked to pay about \$3 million over 10 years for maintenance, bringing the public investment to about \$19 million.

Another \$20 million would be needed from other sources, Costa said. Private donors have already funded about \$1 million worth of preliminary design and engineering work that included placing geological sensors along the limestone bluff to ensure the ground wasn't shifting. But more private investment would be needed. Money could also be available through the North Central Texas Council of Governments, Tarrant County and the state, though those agencies have not committed yet.

Council Approves Centerpiece for Upcoming Trinity Mills Station

By News Staff, Focus Daily News

Carrollton, Texas – Carrollton City Council unanimously approved an agreement for a 125,000-square foot, six-story Class A office structure to serve as the marquee building within new Trinity Mills Station urban development.

The City of Carrollton, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), The Integral Group, and Koa Partners signed a Master Development Agreement (MDA) for the entire Trinity Mills Station on March 1, but Council's approval at the Tuesday, April 7 meeting means planning for the first of two major office buildings for the area is set to move forward.

The City and DART collectively own 26 contiguous acres of land that will comprise Trinity Mills Station, a future transit center district, located at the southeast quadrant of the President George Bush Turnpike and IH-35E interchange. It is the largest publicly owned transit-oriented development site in [North Texas](#) and the most connected, since Trinity Mills Station is served by the DART Green Line light rail service to Dallas and the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) A-Train commuter service to Denton.

"This is a monumental milestone for the entire development team on all sides," Carrollton Urban Development Director Ravi Shah said. "The Trinity Mills Station MDA is the culmination of negotiations over the last two years and the start of a transformation in this area from an inner-ring suburb to a vibrant hub for economic and social activity, with increased shopping and dining, hospitality and recreation venues, and business opportunities."

A picture containing bottle, photo, meter, black Description automatically generated The City and DART have expressed their vision for the project as an active mixed-use development including office buildings, a hotel, restaurants, retail, residential uses and large outdoor grass gathering places for concerts, picnics, exercising, and other events that would create activity day and night every day of the year.

"This is one of the first major projects undertaken in my tenure and one of the most impactful," Carrollton Mayor Kevin Falconer said. "In view of the previous projects in our surrounding cities in years past, the City of Carrollton is in for an economic boost that will reclaim the area surrounding the old Home Depot property and infuse the neighborhood with a modern, streamlined aesthetic similar to Legacy Town Center."

Phase I features not only the six-story, 125,000 square-foot Class A office building that includes a four-story structured parking with five hundred parking spaces and 10,000 square feet of retail space, but also a five-story mixed-use residential development that also features structured parking, an esplanade, public infrastructure, and public green space.

Commercial real estate company JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated) has been retained to serve as the exclusive leasing partner for the office portion of the project with Executive Vice President Chris Doggett and Vice President Lauren Perry leading the marketing and leasing efforts. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2021.

A picture containing table Description automatically generated Integral, an Atlanta-based master developer led by managing principal, Art Lomenick, has partnered with Koa Partners, a Dallas-based office developer led by CEO, Harry Lake, to achieve the vision of redeveloping the new

Trinity Mills Station into a place to live, work, and play by transforming former parking lots and other commercial and acquired land by the City into an urban village that will spur further investment around the Trinity Mills DART station and the Broadway corridor to Downtown Carrollton.

Lomenick has directed the initial redevelopment of numerous uptown and midtown communities throughout the U.S., beginning with involvement in the evolution of Dallas' very own Uptown — transforming it into a thriving urban district of shops, residencies, offices, and engaging public spaces.

He also orchestrated the business planning and development of Addison Circle and Legacy Town Center, two master-planned, new urbanist communities crafted in cooperation with the Town of Addison and City of Plano.

“Partnership and vision building are key to sparking successful catalytic developments like the proposed Trinity Mills Station,” Lomenick said. “The plan is to bring in people that are passionate about the project and turn an area like this into a prime spot for corporate relocations and civic growth.”

Due to its location at PGBT and IH-35E, this premier redevelopment area has high visibility and the potential to capture not only the east-west traffic from PGBT, but also north-south commuters from IH-35E. Highway and rail connections to Dallas Love Field and DFW International Airports can be made within 20 minutes.

“The long-term benefits of developing communities and activity centers near rail stations is one that extends across the nation,” DART President/Executive Director Gary C. Thomas, said.

“Connectivity and multi-modal access are increasingly important in a Texas that is rapidly urbanizing – this is especially true in the Dallas/Ft. Worth region. The City of Carrollton's commitment to multimodal transportation options, and an urban landscape that reflects the importance of those options, will be fully realized with Trinity Mills Station.”

Falconer said he is very excited about this partnership and the vision set in place by the City, DART, and Integral. He said Trinity Mills Station was a Council priority from the [Strategic Planning](#) session in the summer of 2017 and, arguably, one of the most thrilling projects to come into fruition.

“Carrollton's transportation infrastructure is one of its greatest strengths,” Falconer said. “Trinity Mills Station will be a tremendous catalyst for growth for all three of Carrollton's DART light rail stations, as we continue to create a City that more families and businesses want to call home.”

Denton County Transportation Authority recommends transit passengers wear cloth face masks due to COVID-19

By Anna Herod, Community Impact Newspaper

Denton County Transportation Authority has recommended all passengers wear a cloth face mask on the agency's vehicles to protect passengers and staff from COVID-19.

The recommendation was announced April 7 to stay in line with recent guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, according to DCTA.

"While wearing face masks can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is still suggested passengers maintain 6 feet of distance whenever possible between other riders and DCTA bus and rail operators," the agency stated in a news release.

DCTA has also taken extra precautions to ensure the safety and cleanliness of its buses, trains and cars.

"Along with daily cleanings, we are using a medical-grade disinfecting spray on all DCTA buses, trains and Downtown Denton Transit Center," the agency stated. "Additional attention is being placed on high touch point areas, such as door handles, countertops and steering wheels, and we continue to evaluate our cleaning processes as needed."

Fort Worth's transit buses keep rolling, while most people stay home for coronavirus

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Howard Estell spends his workdays in a 35-foot metal tube on rubber wheels, breathing the same air as dozens of other Fort Worth-area residents.

Estell works at [Trinity Metro, Fort Worth's transit agency](#), where he has been a bus driver for nearly 17 years. Each morning, he puts on rubber gloves and a cloth mask to make his rounds, and he keeps a small bottle of sanitizer attached to his belt loop.

Although Trinity Metro sprays all its buses with disinfectant after each fueling — usually at least a couple of times per day — Estell also cleans the surfaces with his own sanitary wipe when he steps aboard. But other than taking those precautions, he doesn't worry too much about contracting the extremely contagious and potentially deadly illness.

At a time when many Tarrant County residents are under orders to stay at home, to slow the spread of coronavirus, Estell is among the thousands of Fort Worth-area workers whose job requires them to continue showing up each day, and to mingle with people in close quarters.

"For the most part, people are just really scared," Estell said during a recent break at Trinity Metro's garage, before heading out to his afternoon route along Hemphill Street in south Fort Worth. "I try to solve that, well, not really solve it, but work with it by saying 'Hello. How are you doing? Thank you. Have a good day.' Things you would normally do anyway. But those things seem to be really helping."

EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS

After the city and county issued emergency declarations demanding that many residents stay home except for essential trips, some residents questioned why Trinity Metro was still operating its buses, as well as the [TEXRail and Trinity Railway Express](#) commuter lines.

One bus rider, Guy Terry, took issue with one of Trinity Metro's strategies to force riders to keep a distance from each other by roping off two-thirds of its seats. The agency also now requires most passengers to board buses using only the rear doors, reserving the front doors only for people with wheelchairs.

Terry said those strategies could force more passengers to stand in the aisles, possibly putting them closer together, during periods of high use. Some of the agency's buses have only 24 seats, although others along the popular East Lancaster Avenue routes can hold up to 88 people and on some days can be packed.

Terry also disagreed with the agency's decision to offer free rides during the coronavirus crisis. "When they started offering free rides that started a chain reaction for people to ride them just for the sake of it," Terry said in a Twitter direct message, adding that he has been trying to avoid riding the buses. "I am surprised more people have not come down with COVID-19 from riding the buses and other public transportation services."

The decision to keep Trinity Metro buses, TEXRail, Trinity Railway Express and paratransit services running hasn't been without its hiccups.

One Trinity Metro driver has tested positive for coronavirus March 21, was [kept in isolation after showing mild symptoms](#), officials said. An update on the driver's condition wasn't available.

The University of North Texas Health Science Center, which already was testing police and other first responders for coronavirus, on April 1 announced that it would [offer drive-through testing for Trinity Metro drivers](#).

But since then, no drivers have complained about coronavirus symptoms, Trinity Metro officials said.

"We have not yet had any employees require testing since our partnership began with HSC." Joe Acosta, the agency's chief safety officer for bus and rail, said in an email. "The operator who tested positive recently was tested at another facility prior to our agreement with HSC."

ESSENTIAL SERVICE

Although public transportation buses force riders to share tight space, they're also essential service and worth keeping open — not just for work, but also trips to medical appointments and the grocery store, said Bob Baulsir, Trinity Metro president and chief executive officer.

"Many first responders, healthcare professionals and other essential workers rely on Trinity Metro to get to their jobs," Baulsir said in an email. "We also provide essential transportation services for Tarrant County residents to access health care, food and medicine. Our ACCESS paratransit service provides hundreds of rides a day for dialysis treatments and other medical visits as well as critical errands like buying groceries and pharmacy products."

'PROBABLY THE BEST THING TO DO'

Estell goes about his daily bus routes with no complaints, even though he fits into several high-risk categories for exposure to coronavirus. He is 67 years old, and a cancer survivor. Twelve years ago, he was diagnosed with head and neck cancer. Doctors removed part of his neck and 19 lymph nodes, he said.

"They told me I wasn't going to live six months," he said. "That's a life-changer there. So, I've got a pretty big God. I said, 'We'll see what happens.' By his grace, I don't have it anymore. I have been in remission for 12 years."

Estell lives in the Crowley area with his wife, one of his sons and a daughter-in-law. The couple also has four grandchildren ages 4-13.

When he comes home from a day of driving buses, his wife insists that he take precautions to avoid bringing the virus into the house.

"My wife says take all your clothes off and take a shower now," he said, laughing. "I think that's probably the best thing to do."

Despite Declining Ridership, \$318 Million Federal Grant Guaranteed to North Texas Public Transit

[Kim Roberts](#)

Public transportation systems, which have [continued operating](#) in the Dallas-Fort Worth area during the COVID-19 crisis, are poised to receive over \$300 billion from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

As part of the [\\$2.2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act signed by President Trump on March 27](#), the federal government has agreed to bail out local public transportation across the country for expenses related to the preparation for and response to COVID-19.

“This historic \$25 billion in grant funding will ensure our nation’s public transportation systems can continue to provide services to the millions of Americans who depend on them,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao in a press release on April 2.

Even before the COVID-19 crisis, public transportation ridership [had been declining across the country](#) in recent years, according to the American Public Transportation Association. The [Dallas and Fort Worth transit systems](#) are no exception.

The \$318 million in grant money guaranteed to the DFW area is to reimburse expenses that occurred after January 20, 2020.

According to FTA’s website, capital, operating, and other expenses are eligible for reimbursement. Operating expenses include driver salaries, fuel, personal protective equipment, and cleaning supplies. It also includes administrative leave costs for reductions in force or quarantined employees.

Six entities will directly receive a share of the \$318 million FTA grant: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Trinity Metro (Fort Worth), Northeast Transportation Services (NETS), and the cities of Grand Prairie, Mesquite, and Arlington.

The Denton/Lewisville urban area will receive a grant of \$23 million.

While local shelter-in-place orders have been in place, DART has acknowledged lower ridership on its routes. Trinity Metro has offered free fares to its users.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) will distribute the share of an extra \$12 million based on actual expenses to five other smaller transit entities: Community

Transit Services in Ellis and Navarro Counties, Span, Inc. in northwest Dallas County and Denton County, STAR Transit, city and county Transportation in Johnson County, and Public Transit Services in Palo Pinto and Parker Counties.

The specific amounts designated to each of these will be determined before the next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council of NCTCOG in May.

The Council approved the grants in a matter of minutes as part of its April consent agenda.

Is there a plan to reopen North Texas businesses after coronavirus? They're working on it

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

When the coronavirus pandemic passes, Fort Worth-area officials hope a unified framework will allow Metroplex residents to return to life as normal at roughly the same time across the region.

The plan is in its infancy, but Dallas-Fort Worth area county judges and health care experts agree the region needs to establish guidelines for when travel and businesses can reopen, said Mike Eastland, director of the 16-county North Central Texas Council of Governments. A draft of the proposal could be finished as early as next week, though the actual [end of the pandemic is likely several weeks away](#).

"We're really, really early in the process, but we know the day will come and we want to be ahead of it," Eastland said.

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley said he hopes DFW can have a consistent plan to reopen across the region. As the coronavirus began to spread in March, a [patchwork of conflicting regulations](#) quickly popped up as Gov. Greg Abbott balked at a Texas-wide mandate and local leaders attempted to curb the infection rate.

"There might be one of us on either side that's rogue, but I think we ought to reopen consistently," Whitley said.

It's unclear what the stages of weakening restrictions will look like.

Whitley speculated that one phase could include allowing bars and restaurants to reopen at half the building's capacity. Another option could be requiring stores to screen incoming customers for temperatures. Employees might have to wear masks and gloves, he said.

Abbott said in a press conference Wednesday he had spoken with President Donald Trump and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin about a federal strategy to begin reopening businesses.

That would likely vary by state, and in Texas may vary by county based on the number of infections and other data, he said.

"I would like to see the recharging of the business sector to happen as quickly as possible for as many businesses as possible in alignment with the standards set by the CDC and by the president," he said.

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price said she was also building a committee to plan for the city's eventual return to normal.

"Unfortunately, there is no hard and fast guide of when communities will return to operating as they did prior to COVID-19," she said in a statement. "The overall health and safety of our community remains the top priority, and won't be comprised, but we will be prepared to begin re-opening when safe and appropriate for all residents."

Brandon Bennett, Fort Worth's health officer and commander of the Joint Emergency Operations Center, said it could be some time before officials can even consider weakening the restrictions. Several milestones have to be reached first.

The number of cases is still accelerating and may not peak until next week, he said. The first milestone is widespread testing, not just of those who meet CDC criteria, but everyone who is suspected to be infected. That will allow health officials to better track and predict the virus, he said.

A sustainable reduction in new COVID-19 cases, especially those of community spread, also needs to be reached. Health officials must be able to show significant community spread has not occurred for at least 14 days.

Fort Worth and Tarrant County's stay at home orders end April 30, same as the statewide mandate. But Bennett alluded that the orders may be extended in some form if spread continues.

Even as restaurants and bars open, Bennett said officials are likely to continue to recommend people stay home, especially those with compromised immune systems, and not gather in large groups.

"As the risk changes, our behavior can change," he said.

Power Up: Trump should focus on air pollution in coronavirus response, researchers say

By Jacqueline Alemany, The Washington Post

The Policies

THE CORONAVIRUS CLIMATE ARGUMENT: If the Trump administration is serious about containing the novel coronavirus in the United States, it should consider ways to cut down on air pollution.

That's the argument from researchers behind [a new nationwide study](#) that found coronavirus patients living in counties with high levels of air pollution were more likely to die than those living in less-polluted areas before the pandemic.

Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health analyzed data from more than 3,000 counties with confirmed coronavirus deaths around the country. They found a statistical link between long-term exposure to PM 2.5 — [dangerous air particles so small they can enter the bloodstream](#) — and higher death rates from the disease caused by coronavirus.

- **“We know fine particulate matter affects the respiratory system. And we know that covid-19 kills by affecting the respiratory system. So, we know, by science, that getting [the disease] is like adding gasoline to the fire,”** Dr. Francesca Dominici, a Harvard biostatistician who led the research, told Power Up.
- “If you're breathing polluted air and your lungs are inflamed by the disease, you're going to get very, very sick,” she said.

Dominici says the study offers big lessons for the Trump administration, which has been aggressively moving forward with [easing restrictions on air pollution](#) even during the pandemic. Dominici says coronavirus makes environmental rollbacks an even more “unwise and irresponsible decision.”

- **“Now is not the time to be rolling back environmental regulations,”** Dominici said.
- “We cannot go back and clean the air of the past,” she added. “But in the future, we can target and make sure that in the counties that have high level pollution, we take environmental measures so that the disease doesn't kill as many people.”
- The study's conclusion states its data underscores “the importance of continuing to enforce existing air pollution regulations to protect human health both during and after the covid-19 crisis.”

The study found the impact of tiny pollution was huge: Take Manhattan, for example.

If the city had lowered its average particulate matter level — by just one single unit per cubic meter — over the last two decades, the study found, there would have been “248 fewer covid-19 deaths among a total of 1905 deaths up to April 04, 2020.”

- **Big cities overall seem to fare worse:** “The District of Columbia, for instance, is likely to have a higher death rate than the adjacent Montgomery County, Md. Cook County, Ill., which includes Chicago, should be worse than nearby Lake County, Ill. Fulton County, Ga., which includes Atlanta, is likely to suffer more deaths than the adjacent Douglas County,” per the [New York Times's Lisa Friedman](#), who reported earlier this week on the study's findings.
- **Why: “Most fine particulate matter comes from fuel combustion, like automobiles, refineries and power plants, as well as some indoor sources like tobacco smoke,”** Friedman writes. “Breathing in such microscopic pollutants, experts said, inflames and damages the lining of the lungs over time, weakening the body’s ability to fend off respiratory infections. Multiple studies have found that exposure to fine particulate matter puts people at heightened risk for lung cancer, heart attacks, strokes and even premature death.”
- **The study can also help guide the allocation of resources within the U.S.:** “In the short term, Dr. Dominici and other public health experts said the study’s finding meant that places like the Central Valley of California, or Cuyahoga County, Ohio, may need to prepare for more severe cases of covid-19,” Friedman writes.
- **These findings coincide with the news that coronavirus is “infecting and killing black Americans at a disproportionately high rate,** according to a Washington Post analysis of early data from jurisdictions across the country,” [The Post's Reis Thebault, Andrew Ba Tran, and Vanessa Williams report.](#)

Research also shows that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by air pollutants and are more likely to face a [“pollution burden.”](#)

The government's view: The Environmental Protection Agency says it is “committed to protecting public health by improving air quality and reducing air pollution,” an agency spokesperson told Power Up. Covid-19 “is a new and evolving situation and scientists are working hard to understand what variables are linked to transmission and vulnerability.”

Yet climate experts have slammed recent steps the Trump administration has taken that could reduce air quality, [as my colleague Dino Grandoni has reported.](#) At the end of March, the EPA announced a relaxation of environmental rules, [telling](#) petrochemical plants, power companies and other major industries that “they could determine on their own if they can report their operations’ air and water pollution levels during the virus outbreak.”

- The spokesman tells Power Up that the “EPA’s temporary enforcement guidance is not a blanket waiver of enforcement. All regulated entities are expected to comply with all applicable requirements and EPA does not expect any increase in PM emissions.”
- **Not the only move:** The administration [announced last week](#) it was loosening Obama-era mileage standards for cars, pickup trucks and SUVs, one of Trump's biggest environmental rollbacks so far. And the EPA is currently in the process of reviewing [the National Ambient Air Quality Standards](#) — or pollution standards — for particulate matter.

Social distancing is having an impact: Pollution [has declined in major cities](#) such as Los Angeles, Seattle, and New York, as social distancing forces people to stay at home and

everyday life comes to a standstill. It's happening globally, too: Italy and China [have also seen a decline](#) in air pollution and lowered greenhouse gas emissions amid efforts to stop the spread of the disease. This could, in theory, help reduce stress on people's lungs — but the air quality is likely to get worse again as restrictions are lifted and the economy resumes, unless other steps are taken.

The researchers want more data: More research is needed understand the impacts on a global scale, including whether covid-19 was exacerbated in Wuhan, an industrial city in China, due to air pollution.

- “It's why we made our statistical analysis code available — I'd love to analyze the data in a consistent matter,” Dominici said. “Attacks on the respiratory and cardiovascular system are pretty much the same around the world.”

At The White House

TRUMP POISED TO RENEW PUSH TO REOPEN THE ECONOMY: “[The president] is preparing to announce as soon as this week a second, smaller coronavirus task force aimed specifically at combating the economic ramifications of the virus and focused on reopening the nation’s economy, according to four people familiar with the plans,” [Ashley Parker, Josh Dawsey and Yasmeen Abutaleb scoop](#).

- **The economic task force will be a mix of top administration and private-sector officials:** Newly minted White House chief of staff Mark Meadows is likely to lead the group. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and national economic adviser Larry Kudlow will also join, our colleagues write. “The economic task force will not meet every day, like the large one, and is expected to have a more informal feel, with many of the meetings held over the phone and as in-person briefings with the president.”

The goal is to open as much of the country as possible by April 30: The larger coronavirus task force's strict social distancing guidelines are set to expire at the end of the month. Trump had pushed to reopen the country by Easter (this weekend) but backed down after strong urging from health officials.

- **Trump refused to give a date:** “But I don't think we're going to be very far behind,” he told reporters at the daily briefing. Attorney General William P. Barr was more blunt on Fox News later in evening, “I think we have to allow people to adapt more than we have, and not just tell people to go home and hide under their bed, but allow them to use other ways — social distancing and other means — to protect themselves.”

On The Hill

PHASE 4 TALKS STALL: Later this morning, “Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is moving forward to bring the \$250 billion small-business increase up on the floor on Thursday without Democrats’ priorities included, essentially daring Democrats to object,” [Erica Werner, Mike DeBonis and Seung Min Kim report](#). Beyond that it's unclear what will happen to a plan that White House hoped would be on Trump's desk by the weekend.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi wants to the GOP to come to table and is prepared to wait them out: “I have said very clearly: What they are proposing will not get unanimous consent in the House. There is no reason they cannot come to the table and see the value of what we are

offering,” Pelosi [told Robert Costa](#). She and Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer want to change the GOP proposal and add an additional \$250 billion for hospitals and states.

- **But Pelosi wouldn't say whether she would encourage Senate Democrats to object today:** “Pelosi said she always avoids meddling in the affairs of the other congressional chamber but reiterated that she finds Mnuchin’s request deeply flawed,” our colleague writes.
- **She is also pledged to continue to fight to get funding for states to vote by mail:** “Shameful. Shameful and discouraging,” Pelosi said of what happened in Wisconsin this week. “We would want it to have some of what we had in our first bill, which was same-day registration, direct mailing of the ballot to everyone who is registered to vote — issues like that, that facilitate vote by mail. Again, that’s the discussion for the next bill, which we’re by and large ready for.”

How we got here: “Trump and [Mnuchin] are seeking the extra small-business money after banks fielded more than 400,000 loan requests in less than a week for firms trying to navigate the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic,” our colleagues write.

The Campaign

THE GENERAL ELECTION BEGINS: “With the withdrawal of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) from the Democratic race, [former vice president Joe Biden] and [Trump] have no remaining opponents but each other,” [the New York Times's Alexander Burns and Jonathan Martin report](#). “Yet the actual activities of the campaign remain largely on hold, frozen by the coronavirus outbreak that has brought most other aspects of the country’s public life to a standstill.”

Trump and his campaign offered a preview of two-pronged approach: Biden pulled off his comeback by being the choice of the Democratic Party establishment a group that disrespected Sanders’s populist movement and also by “embrac[ing] the far-left policies of the anti-establishment Sanders and is indistinguishable from the self-described socialist,” [Michael Scherer and Toluse Olorunnipa report](#).

- **That strategy is based on two key audiences:** “One is a competition for the ideological center of the country, run through the tony, tax-skeptical suburbs of key swing states that rejected the GOP in 2018. The second is a fight for the mostly working-class populism of the left, which has rejected the establishment politics of both national parties,” our colleagues write.
- **Trump has also tried to goad Obama off the sidelines:** “I’ll tell you; it does amaze me that President Obama hasn’t supported Sleepy Joe. It just hasn’t happened,” Trump told reporters. “When is it going to happen? When is it going to happen? Why isn’t he? He knows something that you don’t know that I think I know, but you don’t know.”

WHAT'S NEXT FOR BERNIE AND HIS MOVEMENT? In the immediate future, Sanders has pledged to support Biden. “[But the senator added that] he will remain on primary ballots in an effort to collect enough delegates to influence the party’s platform in negotiations this summer,” [Sean Sullivan, Matt Viser and David Weigel report](#).

Biden and his team immediately started rolling out appeals: [The former veep released a lengthy statement](#) praising Sanders and his campaign. His campaign also “campaign expects to announce several policy agreements with Sanders starting [today], on topics including health care and student loans,” our colleagues report.

- **The lessons of 2016 loom large:** “[Biden] passed on numerous opportunities to call on Sanders to drop out — even when it was clear Sanders had no realistic shot of winning the nomination. [He] even made a courtesy call to the Vermont senator last week to basically apologize for moving ahead with his running mate selection,” [Politico's Marc Caputo reports](#).
- **A reminder of how we got here:** “What began as the most diverse presidential field in history, featuring more than two dozen candidates, finished as one white man in his 70s handed off the nomination to another,” our Post colleagues write. “Biden’s own prospects had been written off not long ago, before a bracing and dramatic surge in the March primaries driven in part by the establishment closing in to embrace him.” In case you were wondering, the South Carolina primary was just 40 days ago.

As for the long term, all eyes are on AOC: “Among some activists, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), a rising star who helped rescue Sanders’s candidacy with an endorsement after his heart attack, is seen as a potential successor,” our colleagues write. “But some hard-liners are less sold on Ocasio-Cortez and view her as too conciliatory.”

- **The Chamber will help her primary challenger:** “The traditionally conservative U.S. Chamber of Commerce is planning to endorse a primary challenger to progressive icon Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a move that represents a dramatic intervention in a Democratic race,” [Politico's Alex Isenstadt reports](#). Former CNBC anchor Michelle Caruso-Cabrera is challenging the freshman congresswoman.

In the Media

WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Meadows is off to a rocky start: “Trump’s new chief of staff, Mark Meadows, has escalated tensions in the White House with a swift series of staff changes that have drawn complaints from some in the West Wing about his management style, according to people familiar with the matter,” [Bloomberg's Jennifer Jacobs, Jordan Fabian, and Josh Wingrove report](#).

- **The former congressman is already involved in the coronavirus response:** “[He is] calling Republican governors who have held out against issuing stay-at-home orders in their states to ask them to implement the policies immediately, according to two people familiar with the calls,” Bloomberg reports. “The president has said such decisions are up to state leaders and has not publicly criticized those who decline, who are all Republicans.”

Trump faces bipartisan scrutiny for ousting Intel IG: “Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), who for decades has championed congressional oversight, is drafting a letter to the president seeking that explanation about Michael Atkinson. Grassley’s effort has been endorsed by Sens. Mitt Romney (R-Utah), Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Democrats in the chamber,” [Seung Min Kim, Josh Dawsey, Tom Hamburger and Mike DeBonis report](#). Atkinson, as the intelligence

community's inspector general, defied the administration in alerting Congress to a whistleblower complaint about Trump's actions regarding Ukraine that later help spark the president's impeachment.

Former acting Navy secretary's travel to Guam cost taxpayers over \$240k: "For [acting Navy secretary Thomas Modly], the visit resulted in his resignation, after he created an uproar by insulting the former commanding officer of the USS Theodore Roosevelt, who had raised concerns about how the Navy was handling a coronavirus outbreak on the warship," [Dan Lamothe reports](#).

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, mayor Bill de Blasio face criticism for acting too slowly: "From the earliest days of the crisis, state and city officials were also hampered by a chaotic and often dysfunctional federal response, including significant problems with the expansion of coronavirus testing, which made it far harder to gauge the scope of the outbreak," [the Times's J. David Goodman reports](#).

- **Key graf:** "[Thomas R. Frieden, former head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] said that if the state and city had adopted widespread social-distancing measures a week or two earlier, including closing schools, stores and restaurants, then the estimated death toll from the outbreak might have been reduced by 50 to 80 percent."

Linda Tripp dead at 70: "Linda Tripp, a key figure in the presidential sex scandal that nearly brought down the administration of Bill Clinton over his affair with onetime White House intern Monica S. Lewinsky, leading to the president's impeachment in 1998, died April 8," [Matt Schudel reports](#).

State legislators request federal officials halt activity on Texas Central's high-speed rail project

By Danica Smithwick, The Community Impact Newspaper

Dozens of elected officials representing Texas communities signed a [letter](#) April 6 requesting U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao put an end to activity related to Texas Central's high-speed rail project between Dallas and Houston.

The letter comes about a week after Texas Central [officials announced](#) they were laying off 28 employees on March 27 "in an effort to make the best use of [their] current funding" in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

State senators and representatives in the letter said they do not believe Texas Central will be able to secure adequate funding for the construction of the project any time soon.

"It has become clear Texas Central Railroad simply does not have the financial resources required or expertise employed to continue with this project," the letter read.

"To proceed otherwise would be an inexcusable waste of taxpayer dollars and jeopardizes the integrity of the rules making process at the Federal Railroad Administration."

Signees included state Rep. Ben Leman, R-Anderson; state Rep. Cecil Bell, R-Magnolia; state Rep. Will Metcalf, R-Conroe; state Rep. Tom Oliverson, R-Cypress; state Rep. Steve Toth, R-The Woodlands; state Rep. Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock; state Rep. Kyle Kacal, R-College Station; state Rep. Mike Lang, R-Granbury; state Sen. Brandon Creighton, R-Conroe; state Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston; and state Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham.

U.S. Reps. Kevin Brady, R-The Woodlands, and Ron Wright, R-Arlington, followed up with their own [letter](#) to Chao on April 8.

"We are in the midst of a public health crisis, and our taxpayer dollars should be focused on defeating our invisible enemy—and not on a private, Texas based project," Brady said in a statement. "Texas Central has shown the bleak reality of their financial situation, and the project remains unsustainable."

Members of the [ReRoute the Route](#) coalition advocate for the proposed high-speed rail project to be relocated to a safer and more sensible route. Spokesperson Taylor Ward thanked these legislators in a statement saying the project has funding, safety and private property concerns.

"Carlos Aguilar, President and CEO of Texas Central, has made it clear that the proposed high-speed rail is in no financial shape to move forward, especially in light of the COVID-19 crisis," Ward said. "Congressman Brady has once again championed action in favor of all Texans, and all taxpayers nationwide by asking Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao to halt the federal regulations process on Texas Central's proposed high-speed rail project."

Texas Central officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment on April 8. Earlier this year, *officials told Community Impact Newspaper* the \$12 billion construction process would be privately funded and begin later this year once they receive final approvals from federal agencies.

With TxDOT grant, UTA team to test feasibility of recycled plastics in road construction

Building roads from plastic recyclables

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON, EUREKALERT

When China recently stopped importing much of the United States' recycling materials, it created a glut of recyclables, including plastics, with no place to go.

Enter Sahadat Hossain and Warda Ashraf.

The University of Texas at Arlington researchers are combining their two areas of expertise--recycling and asphalt/concrete, respectively--to lead a two-year, \$342,588 feasibility study on building plastic roads, funded by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

The roads wouldn't be made entirely of recycled plastic, but instead mixed with asphalt for an ideal consistency to keep the road safe for motorists and help it last longer, cost less and avoid cracking. "When China was taking all of the recyclables, it was an \$11 billion per year industry for the United States," said Hossain, a professor in the Department of Civil Engineering and director of UTA's Solid Waste Institute for Sustainability.

"Materials that were recycled before are now going to landfills, where they are going to occupy a large volume of landfill space for a long time.

"Now that the international market for U.S. recycling materials no longer exists, we need to find and create local uses and markets for recycled plastics. TxDOT is focusing on increasing use of sustainable construction material, and this feasibility study of plastic roads is the agency's latest effort."

Some countries already have tried building plastic roads, with inconsistent results. Hossain said the right mix of plastic is needed in asphalt to create friction between a vehicle's tires and the road, ensuring safe driving.

Ashraf, an assistant professor of civil engineering, has expertise in construction materials. "We want to make the road more sustainable with these recycled plastics mixed in," Ashraf said. "The project could lead to more durable, sustainable and cheaper roads while also maintaining safety for vehicles. We also need to evaluate the effects of using recycled plastics on the performance of roads."

The research team certainly will have a lot of recycled plastics available for its testing. The United States is creating more waste than ever. In 2015, the most recent year for which national data was available, the U.S. generated more than 262 million tons of waste, up 4.5% from 2010 and 60% from 1985, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

That amounts to nearly five pounds per person per day.

A Bloomberg survey showed that each person in the United States generates the equivalent of 3,700 bottles in plastic waste annually.

"The plastic road project demonstrates TxDOT's commitment to incorporate recycling and sustainability in pavement repair, construction and management," said Boon Thian, TxDOT Dallas District pavement engineer.

Ali Abolmaali, chair and professor of the Department of Civil Engineering said the project could have long-term implications for roads across the United States.

"Finding the proper mix of plastics used in roadways could be life-changing for the infrastructure most of America takes for granted," Abolmaali said. "UTA already has a great working relationship with TxDOT. This project will only serve to strengthen that relationship."

Developer behind Fort Worth project offering automated valet discusses new office tower

By Ryan Salchert, Dallas Business Journal

A local partnership that includes [Cornerstone Projects Group](#) and [Trident Structures](#) is planning a new office project in Fort Worth called Triune Centre, which is set to be the first office development in the United States to include an automated valet parking system.

The fully automated tower works by stacking cars vertically on a pelleted handling system and rotating them as necessary. It can be controlled by both an access control module and a mobile phone app. For visitors of the building, it even works through SMS texts. Since the parking system is a piece of equipment, it can also be removed from the building if cars become obsolete, allowing for larger floor plates

Automated parking systems have been around since the turn of the 20th century and come in many forms. Similar systems have been used in residential projects in the United States, but never in a commercial office building.

"We're not reinventing the wheel. I just think urban environments have begun to mature to where they look more like some of these European cities by way of density. As we become a more dense population, that's why this now makes sense," said [Nolan Bradshaw](#), president and owner of Cornerstone Projects Group.

Cornerstone has been in business for 10 years and offers development, architectural and general contracting services to its clients. The company has worked on projects in various real estate sectors include single-family, multifamily, retail and office. The idea for this project and its unique parking system came from Bradshaw's friend [Clay Trantham](#), founder of Trident Structures.

"They approached me and asked, 'How do we marry what we're doing on the logistics side with what you're doing on the commercial real estate side?' What intrigued me about the partnership was the technology. It allows you to unlock smaller sites that might have otherwise been undevelopable because of parking restrictions.

Where you have to have several thousand square feet in a traditional parking structure, we can do the same amount in basically seven parking stalls," said Bradshaw.

In November, the partnership purchased a 0.3-acre plot of land in Fort Worth near the corner of Photo and Locke Avenues. The site will eventually hold the six-story, 30,000-square-foot building. The property will be leased by [Stream Realty Partners](#).

In 2019, 200,000 square feet of office space was delivered in Fort Worth, while 600,000 square feet being absorbed. Class A and B office property is 89 percent leased in the market.

"When you think about the current market (in) Fort Worth, it's made up of mostly 2,500-square-foot users. What's going to attract that user and justify these relatively high rents? We decided that one big value-add was that 5,000-square-foot floor plate. How many options do you have to be a full-floor tenant in a mid-sized building with 360-degree panoramic views and highway visibility?" said Bradshaw.

Though it is not known how much the project will cost, Bradshaw says the price of the automated parking system would have canceled out the price of buying more land for a traditional parking lot. Originally intended for a May groundbreaking, the project's timeline has now been pushed back to June or July. Construction is scheduled to take 12 months.

Eventually, Bradshaw hopes to replicate this parking system in other commercial projects across North Texas.

'Unbelievable' Timing: As Coronavirus Rages, Trump Disregards Advice to Tighten Clean Air Rules

By Coral Davenport, The New York Times

Disregarding [an emerging scientific link between dirty air and Covid-19 death rates](#), the Trump administration declined on Tuesday to tighten a regulation on industrial soot emissions that came up for review ahead of the coronavirus pandemic.

Andrew R. Wheeler, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, said his agency would not impose stricter controls on the tiny, lung-damaging industrial particles, known as PM 2.5, a regulatory action that has been in the works for months. The scientific evidence, he said, was insufficient to merit tightening the current emissions standard.

"The U.S. has made incredible strides in reducing particulate matter concentrations across the nation," Mr. Wheeler said. "Based on review of the scientific literature and recommendation from our independent science advisers, we are proposing to retain existing PM standards which will ensure the continued protection of both public health and the environment."

The decision brought praise from the nation's oil companies and manufacturers, which had said a tighter regulation on smokestack emissions of fine soot would harm their economic viability — even before the global health crisis cratered the global economy.

But public health experts say that the move defied scientific research, including the work of the E.P.A.'s own public health experts, which indicates that PM 2.5 pollution contributes to tens of thousands of premature deaths annually, and that even a slight tightening of controls on fine soot could save thousands of American lives.

Just last week, researchers at Harvard [released the first nationwide study](#) linking long-term exposure to PM 2.5 and Covid-19 death rates. The study found that a person living for decades in a county with high levels of fine particulate matter is 15 percent more likely to die from the coronavirus than someone in a region with one unit less of the fine particulate pollution.

"The timing of this is unbelievable," said Richard Lazarus, a professor of environmental law at Harvard. "There's this big study that just came out linking this pollutant to Covid. This seems like a colossal mistake on the administration's part."

Paul Billings, a senior vice president of the American Lung Association, noted that the Harvard study came on top of other reports that linked the pollutant to premature deaths. "This pollution already kills tens of thousands of Americans every year. This is an affirmation of a standard that already does not provide adequate safeguards to public health," he said.

Because the Harvard study was only published last week, after White House lawyers had already largely completed a lengthy review of the proposed rule, its findings are not expected to be included in the legal rationale.

However, a senior author of the Harvard report said that top E.P.A. officials were made aware of its conclusions. "Many people have been presenting our study to E.P.A. They know about it," said Francesca Dominici, a professor of biostatistics at Harvard who led the study.

“I’m disappointed but not surprised,” she said about the administration’s announcement. “But it is an unwise decision in light of the pandemic. There has been a constant tactic over the last few years by the administration to dismiss science in general.”

Mr. Lazarus, the Harvard lawyer, said that he expected that E.P.A. would be legally required to incorporate the findings of the Harvard study into the rationale for the rule before it is made final, likely later this year. “It will eventually be part of the legal record,” he said. “Historically, Harvard’s public health studies have been central to E.P.A. public health rules.”

The proposed rule, which will be open to public comment for 60 days before being reviewed by the White House and made final, retains a standard enacted in 2012. That rule limited the pollution of industrial fine soot particles — each about 1/30th the width of a human hair, but associated with heart attacks, strokes and premature deaths — to 12 micrograms per cubic meter. By law, the E.P.A. is required every five years to review the latest science and update that standard.

When E.P.A. scientists conducted that mandatory review, many concluded that if the federal government tightened that standard to about nine micrograms per cubic meter, more than 10,000 American lives could be saved a year.

In a [draft 457-page scientific assessment](#) of the risks associated with keeping or strengthening the fine soot pollution rule, career scientists at the E.P.A. estimated that the current standard is “associated with 45,000 deaths” annually. The scientists wrote that if the rule were tightened to nine micrograms per cubic meter, annual deaths would fall by about 27 percent, or 12,150 people a year.

“The E.P.A.’s own scientific report is overwhelmingly in support of a tougher standard. It over and over again shows that the evidence of harmful public health effects from PM 2.5 are much greater than were previously known,” Mr. Lazarus said.

After the publication of that report, numerous industries, including oil and coal companies, automakers and chemical manufacturers, urged the Trump administration to disregard the findings and not tighten the rule.

In a [November 2019 public comment](#) submitted by 13 industry groups, including the American Petroleum Institute, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Mining Association and the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the industry representatives wrote, “significant uncertainty remains about the relationship between exposure to PM 2.5 and adverse effects on public health.”

The E.P.A.’s leaders ultimately agreed with the industries’ assessment. A [final version](#) of the scientists’ report, published in January to preview the still-unpublished rule, does say the rule as it stands contributes to 45,000 deaths annually, but it also says only that tightening it would reduce “health risks,” not deaths.

In a draft of the rule viewed by The Times said that Mr. Wheeler, placed “little weight on quantitative estimates” of the mortality risk associated with fine soot pollution.

Hemphill-Lamar connection opens to traffic

By Fort Worth Business Press

Construction is complete on the Hemphill-Lamar connection to the central business district, and the roadway opened to traffic April 10.

Total cost of the project is \$53 million with the City of Fort Worth contributing \$26.6 million.

The remaining funding comes from the North Texas Council of Governments, the Texas Department of Transportation and Tarrant County.

The city converted Lamar Street to two-way traffic between Fifth and Texas streets to enhance connectivity from the Near Southside to downtown.

TEXRail approaching one-year anniversary

More than half a million rides and miles have been traveled on TEXRail since Jan. 10, 2019.

By [Trinity Metro](#), MASS Transit

Trinity Metro TEXRail celebrated its [first year in operation](#) of providing a comfortable and convenient ride between downtown Fort Worth, Texas, and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport's Terminal B.

At the end of 2019, TEXRail ridership reached 545,345 for the year. December was a record-setting month, with 51,217 passengers and the trains were on schedule 99.15 percent of the time. The previous record for paid ridership was 44,741, which occurred in November.

Jon-Erik Arjanen, vice president and chief operating officer for rail, said TEXRail's reliability is key to increasing ridership.

"Riders want to know that the train is going to pick them up on time and take them safely to their destination as scheduled," Arjanen said. "If you're traveling to the airport to catch a flight, you don't want to worry about when you'll arrive."

Ridership patterns emerged during the first year, with DFW Airport Terminal B Station consistently ranking first in ridership on weekdays and Sundays. On Saturdays, Grapevine/Main Street had the highest ridership.

"We found that more business and leisure travelers are choosing to leave their cars at home and not worry about getting stuck in traffic," Arjanen said. "In 2020, we expect our commuter base to grow as more companies take advantage of the 25-percent discount we offer through our EasyRide program."

To put the one-year anniversary in perspective, consider the number of miles TEXRail has traveled since beginning operations. Between Jan. 10, 2019, and late July, the trains traveled 230,442 miles between Fort Worth T&P Station and DFW Airport Terminal B Station. Frequency increased to 30 minutes during peak travel times in late July. From that point through Jan. 10, 2020, the mileage was 297,594.

Traffic is down, but fatal wrecks continue on Texas roads

By Peggy Heinkel-Wolfe, Denton Record-Chronicle

Traffic is lighter these days, but it's too soon to say whether that's made it safer for Texas motorists as millions work from home or are laid off.

One thing hasn't changed: Texas is continuing its years-long streak with at least one fatal crash every day on a public roadway.

Texas Department of Transportation engineers watched the traffic drop through most of March and compared those volumes recorded at permanent stations statewide with volumes recorded the last week of February.

As stay-at-home orders rolled out statewide, traffic plummeted, down 41% in the last week of March compared with the last week of February.

Traffic in urban areas dropped even further, with Austin down the most, at 49%. Traffic dropped in Fort Worth by 42% and in Dallas by 37%.

Some consumer advocates noticed the traffic drops and began calling for motorists to get a break from their insurance companies. The state insurance commissioner in California ordered relief for consumers there, but the order came after several major insurers had already announced credits and refunds — most in the 15-25% range — last week.

By law, insurance companies can't hang onto piles of cash, but premium adjustments aren't calculated after just a few weeks, experts say. Instead, the companies' announcements may be driven both by a perceived problem in public relations and a bit of peer pressure.

Nat Pope, an insurance expert and business professor at the University of North Texas, says the refunds and credits are uncharacteristic for the industry, even if the intuition associated with it seems reasonable.

"The fact that they are doing it 1) without being forced by the government, 2) providing blanket refunds without investigation, and 3) doing it before the end of the policy period, are all a bit odd," Pope wrote in an email.

Accident data collected by the Texas Department of Transportation hints at a dip in the rate of crashes, but Texas peace officers make their reports once their investigation is complete.

In other words, there's no deadline to submit the crash data. Officers have logged 241 traffic fatalities in March 2020 so far, compared with 305 fatalities in March 2019.

Statewide, peace officers reported about 48,000 crashes per month from March to December last year. From January through the beginning of April, the rate has been about 41,000 per month.

In Denton County, peace officers reported about 1,000 crashes per month from March to December 2019. From January through the beginning of April, they've reported about 900 per month.

But Denton County's count of fatal crashes has hardly budged: 37 of the crashes from March to December were fatal; 10 of the crashes from January through the beginning of April were fatal.

The Denton Police Department is still tracking its activity and does not yet know for sure whether there have been fewer crashes, department spokeswoman Allison Beckwith said.

"We have seen a slowdown, especially in the evening and nighttime hours," Beckwith said.

However, officers have seen some extreme speeds — drivers traveling in excess of 100 mph — on the freeways and ticketed those motorists.

"We are enforcing that," Beckwith said. "We're not allowing them to endanger others."

Robert Wunderlich, director of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute Center for Transportation Safety, said traffic data, and particularly crash data, isn't like the stock market.

"It's hard to study it in real time," Wunderlich said.

For example, someone might survive the crash but die of their injuries a month later, which changes the data.

He was part of a research team that studied the effect the Great Recession had on traffic data and noted a decline in serious crashes and fatalities during that time.

The current crisis is different, taking many commuters off the road, who aren't necessarily the riskiest drivers, he said.

"Perhaps the more risk averse you are, the less likely you are to travel right now," Wunderlich said.

For those who are trying to make driving safer, this unusual window may provide additional insight into the psychology of risky driving.

"I hope it gives us insight," Wunderlich said. "This is a tough nut to crack."

Trinity Metro's ZIPZONE coming to city of Crowley in May

The new mobility option will provide service to a hospital, shopping center and three bus routes.

By [Trinity Metro](#), MASS Transit

ZIPZONE is coming to the city of Crowley, Texas, thanks to a partnership with Trinity Metro and the city to provide a new transportation option to Crowley residents.

The Crowley ZIPZONE, which will begin in May, will provide transportation to medical facilities and shopping options within the city as well as connections to three bus routes (route 6, route 66X and route 72) in Fort Worth.

"This will be a big benefit because it's an affordable way to get around town, especially for our seniors," said Jack Thompson, assistant city manager and economic development director for Crowley. "We are excited to work with Trinity Metro and Via (the contracted service provider)."

The Crowley ZIPZONE will operate 6:30-10:00 a.m. and 3:30-7:00 p.m. weekdays and will include service to Texas Health Huguley Hospital Fort Worth South and the Gateway Station shopping center. The cost for a one-way trip will be \$3.

Primary funding for the ZIPZONE was provided by the North Central Texas Council of Governments through a \$333,000 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program grant.

Roy C. Brooks, Tarrant County Commissioner Precinct 1, said, "It is important to work toward feasible transportation options for all of our Tarrant County cities. Thanks to a partnership between the Regional Transportation Council, Trinity Metro and Tarrant County Precinct 1, residents of the city of Crowley will have a new way to move within their city and to connect to the larger public transportation network."

The new service in Crowley is the third on-demand service for Trinity Metro. A fourth option, the Near Southside ZIPZONE, is planned for late spring.

"Helping customers reach their destination requires a combination of traditional transit and innovative solutions," said Wayne Gensler, vice president and chief operating officer of bus and paratransit at Trinity Metro. "By introducing service in new areas, we are able to connect passengers with our existing services to provide a better customer experience."

About ZIPZONES

Trinity Metro has two other ZIPZONES. The Mercantile ZIPZONE connects Trinity Metro TEXRail and bus passengers (route 11, route 12 and route 16) to first/last-mile service near Mercantile Center Station. The Alliance ZIPZONE connects with bus route 16 and route 63X/64X, which is a partner route between Trinity Metro and Denton County Transportation Authority.

EPA Awards Nearly \$2.5M to North Central Texas Council of Governments to Help Reduce Diesel Emissions

By MarketScreener

Recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a cooperative agreement with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to fund diesel emissions-reduction programs.

The agreement provides \$2,494,496 to replace diesel-powered engines and equipment in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Wise, Hood and Navarro Counties. The funding is provided under the National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program.

'Reducing diesel emissions is an important component of improving and maintaining good air quality,' said Regional Administrator Ken McQueen. 'NCTCOG continues to be a valuable partner in securing this benefit for Dallas-Fort Worth area communities and families.'

NCTCOG will use the funding to issue rebates to eligible organizations to replace highway diesel vehicles and buses with cleaner-burning versions. The grant will also fund rebates for non-road vehicles and shore power installation for rail and switch yards to control equipment idling.

Replacing these types of engines and equipment will reduce emissions of harmful diesel particulate matter and other pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide. This is especially important in North Central Texas, where vehicles and other mobile sources are among the main contributors to air pollution.

Exposure to diesel exhaust can lead to serious health conditions, like asthma and respiratory illnesses, and can worsen existing heart and lung disease, especially in children and the elderly.

EPA's Clean Diesel Program provides support for projects that protect human health and improve air quality by reducing harmful emissions from diesel engines. This program includes grants and rebates funded under the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA).

More information on EPA's Clean Diesel programs: <https://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel>
More information on EPA's work in Texas: <https://www.epa.gov/tx>

Fort Worth: Provide Online Comments On Regional Transportation Issues

NCTCOG will conduct an online public input opportunity related to transportation initiatives.

By Press Release Desk, Patch

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) will conduct an online public input opportunity related to transportation initiatives. [Information will be posted online](#) for public review and comment through May 12.

To request printed copies, contact [Carli Baylor](#) at 817-608-2365.

These are the topics for input:

Status report: Transportation & RTC Emergency Policies & Procedures. The NCTCOG Transportation Department has taken actions to protect the health of the community and will provide updates on how department employees are continuing to work on important regional planning, programming and projects as well as on how Regional Transportation Council meetings will be conducted during the current COVID-19 situation.

Congestion Management Process. Federal regulations mandate urbanized areas with populations more than 200,000 must implement and maintain a Congestion Management Process (CMP) for measuring transportation congestion levels and prioritizing management strategies. Staff will provide a brief overview of federal requirements as well as elements and topics to be considered in the CMP update.

10-Year Plan update. In December 2016, the Regional Transportation Council approved a 10-Year Plan identifying major projects to be implemented in the region by fiscal year 2026. An updated draft of the project list out to FY 2030 will be presented for review and comment.

TxDOT's American Disabilities Act Plan. TxDOT's mission is to ensure that every program, service, benefit, activity and facility open to the public is fully accessible and usable by people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act covers many issues from workplace services to public transportation accommodations. Access and awareness are keys to ensuring the needs of disabled citizens are met. TxDOT staff developed a plan for reporting and will discuss how the agency provides opportunities to assist those with disabilities in its planning activities and how residents can take an active role in making changes.

Incident Management 2020 call for projects recommendations. Traffic incident management plays an important role in improving safety and reducing congestion in North Texas. A total of \$1.5 million was available through a competitive call for projects for the purchase of equipment and technology used to quickly aid and mitigate traffic incidents, keep motorists and first responders safe, and improve air quality. Proposed funding recommendations will be available online for review and comment.

To learn more, contact the [NCTCOG Transportation Department](#) at 817-695-9240.

Is now the time for Texas to build expensive highways, toll roads and passenger rail?

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Now may not seem the time to talk about spending big tax dollars on transportation projects, since the economy is in a funk and many Texans are stuck at home due to the coronavirus shutdown.

But, in Dallas-Fort Worth and across the state, elected and appointed officials are working on several multibillion-dollar projects, including proposals that could benefit from an expected infusion of federal stimulus dollars and help get the state's unemployed masses back to work.

Some of the projects, however, are opposed by lawmakers and lobbying groups who think they're a waste of money.

In Dallas, the future of a proposed \$16 billion high-speed rail line has been thrown into question after the company leading the effort, Texas Central Railway, laid off 28 of its workers, citing financial constraints. That project, which would be privately funded, faces a backlash from mostly rural lawmakers who oppose the use of farmland for the rail line.

At the same time, the Regional Transportation Council soon may consider initiating up to \$5 billion in mobility projects across North Texas, including a possible test track for a new type of transportation involving a [Hyperloop pneumatic tube](#) in Dallas-Fort Worth. Other projects under consideration include reconstruction of Loop 820 and I-20 in southern Tarrant County, Texas 183 in Dallas County and LBJ/I-35E in Denton.

Also, Fort Worth's transit agency Trinity Metro is working on a plan to [extend the TEXRail commuter line to the medical district](#), using federal funds. And, [DFW Airport is still planning a new Terminal E](#), although the project may be delayed for a couple of years because of the financial woes experienced by airlines.

Meanwhile, in Austin, a massive proposal to spend about \$4 billion widening Interstate 35 is drawing the ire of elected leaders who say it's an inappropriate use of funds at a time when the economic shutdown — and the near-collapse of the oil industry — has slashed the state's financial resources.

NOW IS THE TIME

Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, says now is precisely the time to press forward with infrastructure projects that will help Texans get back to work quickly and will ensure the state is able to get back on track in terms of its recent history of aggressive job growth.

But, he says the projects can't be built entirely with traditional tax funds provided by state and federal governments. Those resources, which already were scarce before COVID-19, have all but dried up because of a loss of economic activity and a glut of oil that has caused the price of that resource to [drop below zero for the first time in history](#).

Instead, Morris said, the North Texas region — and the state as a whole — should embrace technology and partnerships with private companies to get the projects built. Morris said he was “refreshed” to hear recent comments by [entrepreneur and Dallas Mavericks basketball team owner Mark Cuban](#) about the need to invest today in robotics and other technology — not just old-school roads and bridges — to improve infrastructure.

Morris also noted that transportation investments in a down economy have worked before. In 2008-09, during the Great Recession, the Metroplex was able to build Chisholm Trail Parkway in Fort Worth, the DFW Connector (Texas 114 and 121) in Grapevine and the North Tarrant Express managed lane project on Loop 820 and Texas 121/183 in Northeast Tarrant County by seeking creative funding methods.

Federal stimulus dollars aren’t yet available for transportation projects but could become an important part of the economic recovery as Congress looks for areas to spend money on job growth.

“Infrastructure is one of the most significant economic multipliers,” Morris said in a phone interview. “We need to stop focusing on us and start focusing on those 22 million (unemployed) people. We need to get the projects ready for bidding, getting the architects and engineers to work, get the laborers and construction workers to work.”

“Infrastructure may be the economic engine in Texas that gets all your people working again.”

CONCERNS ABOUT WASTE

But others are deeply concerned that the state may rush to make decisions about big-dollar projects that could hamstring the state for years.

The proposed Dallas-to-Houston high-speed rail line has been contested for months by lawmakers, especially those in the vicinity of a proposed station west of Bryan-College Station — and a few weeks ago they jumped on a chance to halt the project after the company leading the bullet train effort laid off 28 workers.

“It has become clear Texas Central Railroad simply does not have the financial resources required or expertise employed to continue with this project,” state Rep. Ben Leman, R-Anderson, wrote to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao in a letter that was also signed by 10 other Texas lawmakers. “To proceed otherwise would be an inexcusable waste of taxpayer dollars and jeopardizes the integrity of the rules making process at the Federal Railroad Administration.”

But Carlos Aguilar, Texas Central Railway’s chief executive officer, said that despite the short-term setback the high-speed rail project remains a viable concern, and a possible jobs-booster.

“Unfortunately, like many other companies and organizations around the world, we have been forced to make hard decisions in an effort to make the best use of our current funding, and the result has been the layoff of approximately 28 employees,” Aguilar said in an email. “Our core team of experts and planners remain actively engaged and prepared to move this project forward when we have our permits and the financial markets have stabilized.”

Aguilar added: “Once we are permitted, Texas Central is a shovel-ready project that will create more than 17,000 jobs during construction and generate a multibillion-dollar economic impact

across the U.S via contracts for U.S. steel mills and manufacturers, minority and women owned businesses, veterans, rural businesses along the alignment.”

In Austin, organizations such as the Texas Association of Business, for example, have pushed for the state not to spend nearly [\\$4 billion in state tax-supported dollars on rebuilding I-35 in Austin](#). That association favors using partnerships with private companies — including toll “managed lanes” built within a highway corridor that also has toll-free lanes — to help public, tax-supported dollars stretch further.

“There is a way to have fiscal conservatism and infrastructure stimulus at the same time,” Jeff Moseley, Texas Association of Business chief executive officer, said in an email. “If Texas re-authorizes public-private partnerships, private investment and managed toll lanes, some priority projects in our major metro areas could be jump-started. That would create jobs and boost local economies without placing additional burdens on Texas taxpayers, while helping government conserve state tax dollars for other needs.”

The Texas Transportation Commission, which oversees the Texas Department of Transportation and sets policy for the state’s traffic and mobility efforts, is scheduled to consider the I-35 proposal during its regular monthly meeting on Thursday.

Because of limits imposed by the state Legislature in recent years, the state transportation department is strictly limited in how many projects it can build using bond or toll debt.

Some lawmakers say it would be unwise to pursue the I-35 project in Austin until the impact of coronavirus and the oil industry collapse on the state’s finances are more clear. Texas relies heavily on motor fuels taxes paid at the gas pumps to pay for highways, and also receives transportation funding from the state’s oil revenues.

State Sen. Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville, and state Rep. Terry Canales, D-Edinburg, wrote a letter March 16 asking the Texas Transportation Commission to delay making a decision on approval of the state’s Unified Transportation Plan (UTP), a document that would spell out the state’s transportation priorities for the next 10 years, for several months until more is known about the state’s financial health.

The letter noted that the state’s transportation fund receives proceeds that vary from \$400 million to \$1.74 billion annually from oil revenues.

“We believe it is in the interest of all Texans to postpone adoption until more financial certainty is available and the public is able to fully participate in the comment period,” Nichols and Canales wrote. “The very nature of the UTP lends itself to a long-term view of the state’s transportation needs, and we encourage you ... to keep this long-term perspective at the forefront of your decision-making.”

Coronavirus has rattled life in North Texas. These 13 numbers show how we've changed

From crime to grooming, here's how Dallas-Fort Worth has adapted to a historic disruption of everyday life.

By Kyle Arnold, Ariana Giorgi and Jesus Jimenez, Dallas Morning News

Every day in North Texas now looks like a quiet Christmas morning.

Southwest Airlines jets don't circle downtown Dallas' skyline as much as they did a few months ago. Central Expressway and the Dallas North Tollway are devoid of the usual rush hour traffic jams. Downtown streets don't hustle and bustle during the workweek the way they did before governments urged everyone to stay home.

Even police and ambulance sirens are less frequent.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the Dallas-Fort Worth region in extraordinary ways and transformed the lives of the 7.7 million people who live here.

The cadence of daily life that creates routine and stability has been disrupted. The region's favorite pastime — dining out — has been replaced by drive-through lines.

People are staying up later and listening to louder music. They're cutting their own hair and bingeing on reality shows about exotic animal keepers. But data shows they're also worried about their health and livelihoods.

Here are 13 data points demonstrating how coronavirus has upended North Texas.

42%

Decrease in traffic congestion.

Often gridlocked during rush hours, major highways across North Texas have been flowing freely.

During peak times, traffic congestion in Dallas-Fort Worth has decreased by as much as 42% compared with 2019 averages, according to the location technology company TomTom's traffic index.

1.5 million

Number of Texans receiving unemployment pay.

The Texas Workforce Commission has processed more than 1.5 million claims for unemployment pay since March 15, even as other displaced workers couldn't get through in swamped online and phone systems. That means more than 10% of all Texas workers have filed for jobless benefits in the last month.

The biggest job losses occurred in the restaurant sector, which was hit hard by government travel and recreation restrictions. [The health care and retail sectors](#) have also seen massive job losses.

The state has paid out about \$1.4 billion in unemployment benefits so far.

The job-posting site Indeed reported a 34% decrease in listings in March, compared with the same month in 2019. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said Tuesday that there were 481,000 job openings in the state at companies such as Amazon, Lockheed Martin and Baylor Scott & White.

688,000

Estimated number of Texas restaurant employees who've lost their jobs.

Although restaurants in Texas are allowed to be open for delivery and takeout, [there aren't enough shifts to go around or, in some cases, isn't enough business to pay the bills](#). As a result, an estimated 688,000 restaurant workers in Texas have been laid off or furloughed, according to the Texas Restaurant Association.

From April 1 to April 10, restaurant owners reported an average decline in sales of 70%, according to the association.

230,809

Number of Texas SNAP applications received in March.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program received 230,809 applications from Texans in March. That was up from 114,008 in March 2019, according to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

In Dallas County, there were 141,910 eligible cases last month, representing 315,048 people and totaling more than \$36 million in SNAP payments.

The statewide shelter-in-place order didn't start until the end of March, so the number of SNAP applications is likely to be higher in April.

58%

Spike in popularity of "buzz cut" as a Google search phrase in Dallas-Fort Worth.

With beauty salons and barbershops deemed nonessential and ordered to close, North Texans have had to take matters into their own hands — literally. From the weeks of March 22 to April 5, the popularity of the search term "buzz cut" increased 58%.

Similarly, from the weeks of March 15 to March 29, the popularity of the search term "home manicure" increased 37%.

North Texans [are looking for crucial information, too](#). D-FW searches for "shelter in place" are up 2,600%, according to Google Trends.

People are also looking for information about financial insecurity. Searches are up 2,200% for "stimulus" and up nine fold for "Texas Workforce Commission," the agency that handles unemployment claims.

It isn't all serious, though. There have been major spikes in searches for Animal Crossing, a new Nintendo Switch video game, and Joe Exotic, the charismatic and controversial focal point of the Netflix documentary *Tiger King*.

19%

Drop in crime in Dallas.

The Dallas Police Department's dispatch unit has seen a 19% decrease in crime during the first three weeks of April compared with figures a year ago. Arrests are down more than 17% and violent crime is down nearly 14%, according to Dallas police data.

However, family violence is up, a possible sign that government movement restrictions are taking a mental toll.

46% to 71%

Drop in DART ridership for week of March 22.

With so many North Texans working from home or not able to work, DART ridership has dropped significantly. For the week of March 22 — compared with the same time period last year — weekday bus ridership decreased by 46%, light-rail ridership dropped 58% and Trinity Railway Express ridership declined 71%, according to Dallas Area Rapid Transit.

Because of the decrease in ridership, DART has changed some of its weekday transit schedules.

196

Months since gas was this cheap.

December 2003 was the last time gasoline in Dallas was cheaper than the current \$1.38 a gallon, according to the fuel-tracking site [GasBuddy.com](https://www.gasbuddy.com). That was 196 months ago. A month ago, a gallon of gas cost an average of \$1.82 in Dallas, according to the American Automobile Association.

But few people are driving enough to get much benefit from the historically low fuel prices. American drivers are using less fuel during the pandemic than they have in 50 years, according to the Oil Price Information Service.

22,374

Tons of trash.

That's how much garbage the city of Dallas' residential trash collectors picked up in March, a 14% increase over March 2019.

It doesn't necessarily mean residents are making more trash. Businesses and apartment complexes use private companies for their garbage service. More likely, people have shifted some of their throwaways from the workplace to home.

But having many businesses closed has helped. McCommas Bluff Landfill took in just 135,000 tons of trash in March from Dallas and surrounding communities, a 10% decrease from March 2019.

39,000

Searches for help on the North Texas Food Bank site

Almost 40,000 people have searched on the North Texas Food Bank website for how to get food assistance as the economic toll from the COVID-19 pandemic has set in.

So far, the food bank and its partners have handed out more than 6 million pounds of food, serving 12,000 families through the bank's mobile pantry.

[The Texas National Guard is helping, with 250 members](#) dispatched to work with the food bank starting April 6.

It's a massive increase for the food bank. About half of those asking for help are people who've never needed food assistance before, said food bank spokeswoman Liana Solis.

50%

Fewer passengers at Dallas Love Field

Dallas' usually busy skies are quiet as airlines such as American and Southwest have slashed flight schedules.

Fewer than 705,000 people flew in and out of Dallas Love Field in March, a 50% drop from a year earlier. But that's just the beginning of the decrease, since airline traffic has dropped considerably since then.

That's the fewest passengers Love Field has seen since Wright Amendment restrictions ended in 2014 and Southwest Airlines was allowed to fly anywhere in the country from the airport. Nationally, airport traffic numbers have fallen 95% to 97% compared with figures a year earlier, according to the Transportation Security Administration.

["We kind of feel like we are at the bottom,"](#) said Mark Duebner, Love Field's director of aviation. "The hard part we are all grappling with is, what does the return look like?" Lately, only 1,500 people a day have been traveling through Love Field, Duebner said.

606

Noise complaint calls to 911 during the first week of the shelter-in-place order

Weekly noise complaints in Dallas have more than doubled.

Dallas police typically receive fewer than 300 noise complaints a week, but in mid-March that number began to rise past 500, according to a *Dallas Morning News* analysis of 911 calls. The week of March 22, the first week of the shelter-in-place order, Dallas residents made 606 calls related to noise.

341

Animals fostered from Dallas Animal Services between mid-March and mid-April

As residents spend more time at home, many have volunteered to care for cats and dogs that normally would be at animal shelters.

From March 13 until the shelter-in-place order, 177 pets were fostered, compared with just 62 for the same period a year earlier. Since then, volunteers have continued to step up and over 300 animals were fostered by mid-April.

Operation Kindness, a no-kill shelter in Carrollton, felt a sizable impact. In February, it received 26 foster applications — a typical number. Since asking the community to help foster pets in

mid-March, it's received 697 foster applications, which allowed it to clear the shelter of more than 200 pets. The exceptions were "medically fragile" animals that must stay on site for care.

The SPCA of Texas, which previously housed over 600 animals in its shelters, was able to reduce that number to 350 in just two weeks with help from fostering. On average, the SPCA of Texas has 159 animals in foster homes, but an increase in volunteers brought the number of animals being fostered to 284 by the end of March.

And here's a [hat tip to *The New York Times*](#) for planting the seed for this look at how life has changed in North Texas.

Here's how transportation projects can help Texans get back to work amid coronavirus

By Michael Morris, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Texas funding for roadway infrastructure comes from the federal government in the form of gasoline taxes and general revenue. State funding is provided through gas tax receipts, vehicle registration fees, and parts of oil and gas severance tax and motor vehicle sales/general sales tax that voters approved.

This model, although not meeting all the transportation needs of Texas' urban regions, created a feeling of "enough revenue." It was enough to create a centralized management structure, a standard roadway-only design approach and a fiscally conservative funding method.

In the COVID-19 world, that approach is no longer realistic. The Texas Department of Transportation can adjust to critically needed next steps. We can no longer do what we want; we must do what we need.

We can no longer focus on transportation alone. We are a crucial player in getting people back to work and should embrace a comprehensive, innovative approach to doing so.

MOBILIZE FOR JOB CREATION

Traffic on Dallas-Fort Worth freeways fell 35% just in March. Therefore, federal gasoline tax revenues are at risk, along with other federal general revenue needed for the COVID-19 response. Strike One. State gasoline receipts would be similarly affected. Strike Two.

Oil and gas severance taxes will drop because of reduced demand and because the price of oil is collapsing to near zero. Strike Three. Sales taxes are at risk as sales of general items and motor vehicles decline due to stay-at-home orders and growing unemployment. Strike Four.

With 22 million Americans requesting unemployment assistance in just the first four weeks, and the Texas rainy day fund being used as emergency funding, we no longer have "enough revenue."

We should remain hopeful, though, because we were asked to do this before. In October 2007, the S&P index 500 was above 1,500, then fell below 700 in March 2009 during the financial crisis. It did not return to 1,500 until March 2013.

Under TxDOT, the transportation infrastructure community across the state became one, delivering a system of improvements by expediting project delivery and advancing innovative funding. With little traditional money, it was the greatest advancement of mega-projects in Dallas-Fort Worth history, creating mobility and jobs.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

First, the costs of construction will decrease. In 2011, it fell 25% from the 2009 base, a greater reward for near-term construction. Second, the federal government should add Infrastructure to the COVID-19 relief arsenal.

Third, at 0% interest, debt is your friend. Expediting projects now and jump-starting our economy replenishes revenue sources. Fourth, the private sector is your friend, bringing revenue as well.

With infrastructure bonds, can we memorialize our commitment to each other with an outcome-based innovative financial plan?

For Dallas-Fort Worth, it would mean we take a health crisis, focus on need and not want, and build like 2009. Advance high-speed rail from Dallas to Houston and Fort Worth to Dallas. Build a Virgin Hyperloop One Certification Center, autonomous transit vehicles in the Dallas hospital district, at the General Motors assembly plant and the Midtown Development next to the Galleria.

Advance electric-vehicle recharging with induction loops in our freeway pavement. Advance \$5 billion in improvements on Interstates 820 and 20 in Tarrant County, State Highway 183 in Dallas County, U.S. Highway 380 in Collin County, and LBJ Freeway to Denton on IH 35E.

Extend TEXRail to the Fort Worth Medical District. Advance the new Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport terminal

Our health workers, first responders, transit drivers and grocery employees are not doing what they want to do; they are doing what they need to do. We should do the same with infrastructure.

Michael Morris is director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

<https://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article224620795.html>

As Texas transportation funding takes a hit, we must change our focus

It's crucial to invest in infrastructure needs, not wants, and create jobs.

By Michael Morris, Dallas Morning News

Texas funding for roadway infrastructure comes from the federal government in the form of gas tax receipts and general revenue. State funding is provided through gas tax receipts, vehicle registration fees, Proposition 1 oil and gas severance tax, and Proposition 7 motor vehicle sales and general sales tax.

This model, although not meeting all the transportation needs of Texas urban regions, created a feeling of enough revenue. This was enough revenue to create a centralized management structure, a standard roadway-only design approach, and a fiscally conservative funding method.

In the COVID-19 world of today, that approach is no longer realistic. The Texas Department of Transportation can adjust to critically needed next steps. We can no longer do what we want, we must do what we need. We can no longer focus on transportation alone. We are a crucial player in getting people back to work and should embrace a comprehensive, innovative approach to doing so.

Traffic on North Texas freeways has fallen 35% just in the month of March. Therefore, federal gasoline tax revenue is at risk, along with other federal general revenue needed for the COVID-19 response. Strike one.

State gasoline receipts would be similarly impacted. Strike two. Oil and gas production taxes will be affected by the demand reduction, but also the collapse in the price of oil. Strike three. And Proposition 7 tax revenue is at risk as sales of general items and motor vehicles has declined due to stay-at-home orders and growing unemployment.

Strike four. With 22 million Americans requesting unemployment in just the first four weeks, and the Texas Rainy Day Fund being used as emergency funding, we no longer have enough revenue.

We should remain hopeful because we were asked to do this before, during the 2007-2008 financial crisis. Under TxDOT, the transportation infrastructure community across the state became one, expediting project completions with innovative funding. With little traditional money, it was the greatest advancement of mega projects in the region's history, creating mobility and jobs.

What are the lessons from the past? First, the cost of construction will decrease. In 2011, it fell 25% from the 2009 base, a greater reward for near-term construction. Second, the federal government should add Infrastructure to the COVID-19 relief arsenal.

Third, at 0% interest, debt is your friend. Expediting projects now and jump-starting our economy replenishes revenue sources. Fourth, the private sector is your friend, bringing revenue as well.

During this health crisis, we must focus on need and not want, and build like we did in 2009. We should advance high-speed rail between Dallas, Houston and Fort Worth. Build autonomous transit vehicles in the Dallas hospital district, at the General Motors assembly plant and the midtown development next to the Galleria.

Advance electric vehicle recharging with induction loops in our freeway pavement. Make \$5 billion in improvements on Interstate 820 in Tarrant County, State Highway 183 in Dallas County, U.S. 380 in Collin County, and LBJ to Denton on Interstate 35E. Extend TEXRail to the Fort Worth Medical District, build the new Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport terminal.

Our health workers, first responders, transit drivers and grocery employees are not doing what they want to do, they are doing what they need to do. We should do the same with infrastructure.

Michael Morris is director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. He wrote this column for The Dallas Morning News.

DART to begin construction on new Irving light rail station

The Hidden Ridge Station will be located on Meadow Creek Drive near Green Park Drive.

By Hunter Johnson, Dallas Morning News

Even as the novel coronavirus impacts the number of people traveling for work, Dallas Area Rapid Transit is expanding how Dallas-Fort Worth residents can access its system of light rail trains.

For Irving, that means construction of a new Orange Line stop between the current North Lake College and Irving Convention Center stations.

The new Hidden Ridge Station will be located on Meadow Creek Drive near Green Park Drive, according to a press release from the transit agency. Construction is slated to begin later this month or early May. Construction is expected to be completed in early 2021.

Situated between State Highway 114 and MacArthur Boulevard, the new light rail station — DART's 65th — will be close to several hotels as well as Pioneer Natural Resources and Verizon's corporate offices for the area. The new station will feature 136 parking spaces and six bus bays.

Construction work will be performed between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays, with some weekend work possible, according to the release. Preliminary excavation work by Archer Western will have trucks, graders, concrete and excavation equipment moving through the area.

DART added in the statement that all construction workers will adhere to CDC guidelines to minimize the possible spread of COVID-19 at the site.

This wouldn't be the first way DART has had to adjust due to the coronavirus. It changed some of its transit schedules last month to compensate for a drastic drop in regular passengers.

According to DART, for the week of March 22 — compared with the same time period last year — weekday bus ridership decreased by 46%, light-rail ridership dropped 58% and Trinity Railway Express ridership declined 71%.

North Central Texas Council of Governments Plan to Reopen Businesses Groups Them by Priority

Multiple dates and rules cause confusion among some Dallas County residents

By Ken Kalthoff

The North Central Texas Council of Governments shared their plan Thursday on how to safely reopen businesses across the Metroplex. The plan divides businesses into five different priority groups based on exposure. See the plan at the bottom of this article.

Multiple dates on the calendar are causing confusion for some Dallas residents and businesses about when and how they may reopen.

Most North Texas stay-at-home orders expire at the end of April, but [Tuesday Dallas County extended its safer-at-home order until May 15](#). And Wednesday, [the city of Dallas extended a disaster declaration through May 12](#) to coincide with [the state's disaster declaration](#).

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/coronavirus/differing-dates-levels-of-restrictions-for-reopening-in-dallas-county/2357079/>

Dallas-Fort Worth's air pollution dropped to record lows last year, but it still gets an 'F' in national report

Despite the improvement, Dallas-Fort Worth ranked 21st out of 228 metropolitan areas on a list of U.S. cities with the most ozone pollution.

By Jesus Jimenez, Dallas Morning News

Dallas-Fort Worth recorded its least polluted period on record for ozone pollution, but there's still room to improve, according to the American Lung Association's [2020 State of the Air report](#).

The report covers air pollution data from 2016 through 2018. During that period, Dallas-Fort Worth recorded fewer days with unhealthy levels of ozone pollution compared with last year's report, making it the best ozone report on record for the area.

But despite the improvement, Dallas-Fort Worth ranked 21st out of 228 metropolitan areas on a list of U.S. cities with the most ozone pollution. The American Lung Association gave the area an "F" on its report card for ozone pollution.

At 14th on the list, Houston was the highest-ranking Texas city for ozone pollution, and El Paso was 17th on the list.

"Ozone pollution can harm even healthy people, but is particularly dangerous for children, older adults and people with lung diseases like COPD or asthma," Charlie Gagen, advocacy director of the American Lung Association in Texas, said in a written statement. "Breathing ozone-polluted air can trigger asthma attacks in both adults and children with asthma, which can land them in the doctor's office or the emergency room. Ozone can even shorten people's lives."

Ozone is an odorless gas, usually present in the upper levels of the atmosphere, where it protects the Earth from the sun's ultraviolet rays. When ozone reaches ground level, it becomes the main ingredient in smog and can be harmful and create respiratory issues for some.

Jessica Rangel, vice provost for academic innovation at the University of North Texas' Health Science Center, said poor air quality can have similar effects on the lungs as smoking does, especially for people with respiratory issues, children and the elderly.

"Lung tissue is very sensitive tissue," Rangel said. "When you consider air quality, it impacts all of us. This is a tremendous concern."

As North Texas continues to grow, more people, more cars on roads and more construction will have negative effects on air quality, Rangel said.

Carpooling can make a difference in improving air quality, Rangel said. Another thing people can do to protect themselves is stay home on days when air quality is poor, she said.

So far this month for Dallas-Fort Worth, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has not issued ozone action days, when air quality levels could be unhealthy for sensitive groups.

North Texas typically sees an increase in ozone action days in the summer, when temperatures rise. On those days, the TCEQ recommends limiting time outdoors, carpooling and shortening driving times when possible.

The report gave Dallas-Fort Worth a “C” on its report card for levels of 24-hour particle pollution. Levels were similar to those on last year’s report. Dallas-Fort Worth ranked 40th out of 217 metropolitan areas on a list of the most polluted U.S. cities for 24-hour particle pollution.

Particle-pollution — soot or tiny particles in the air — can come from several sources, including coal-fired power plants, diesel emissions, wildfires and wood-burning devices.

Particle pollution, which can lodge in the lungs and enter the bloodstream, can cause asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes and even lung cancer, according to Gagen.

“At the same time, this year’s report shows that we must stand up for clean air — especially to safeguard our most vulnerable community members,” Gagen said. “Our leaders, both here in Texas and at the federal level, must take immediate, significant action to ward off climate change and other threats to the quality of the air we all breathe.”

The report does not show data for 2020, but recent NASA satellite images have shown lower levels of nitrogen dioxide over Texas in recent weeks. Nitrogen dioxide is a pollutant that contributes to smog, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

This Monday: Stream a Symposium on Dallas' Parking Requirements

They are the quiet part of city code that dictates much of what gets built and what does not in this town. And come on, what else would you be doing?

By Matt Goodman, D Magazine

Parking requirements dictate much of what gets built and what does not in this city. Residential, commercial, it does not matter. City code dictates the amount of parking you need or do not need in order for you to put up that fourplex or open that restaurant.

City code has not exactly warmed to the idea of urban neighborhoods as well as it should have: every 100 square feet of a restaurant requires a parking space, just as every single hotel room does.

Going back to his days on Dallas City Plan Commission, North Oak Cliff Councilman Chad West has been a proponent to rethinking the code to better reflect the conditions in the neighborhoods that make Dallas the city that it is.

And because you have absolutely nowhere to go other than your allotted walks, you will be able to tune into this stream with West and a few others that talk about this very topic.

The Coalition for a New Dallas, the super PAC that *D* founder Wick Allison started (and is independent of operations at *D*, mind you), is sponsoring a Zoom stream with West, Travis Liska of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and Mintwood Real Estate's Katy Slade. It happens Monday, April 27, at 5:30 p.m. It's not like you have anything else to do.

When we come out of this pandemic, we'll be coming to a city that will be greatly changed. Before the pandemic, the requirements were already making some projects pencil out and others not. The digital symposium promises to discuss "innovative parking proposals" that could change how our city does business.

When we can all return to our lives, it'll be particularly important for the city to establish smart policies that encourage sustainable growth. And that, in many ways, starts with parking.

[Head here to RSVP.](#)

Industry Leaders Launch Plan to Close the Loop on Postconsumer Plastic Bottles

By Arlene Karidis, Waste 360

Half of Americans have access to recycling that is automatically provided to them, but of those households, 30 percent don't participate, estimates The Recycling Partnership. The nonprofit recently joined forces with Closed Loop Partners, the American Beverage Association (ABA) and the World Wildlife Fund to improve that participation figure, narrowing in on polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles.

With \$100 million in backing from ABA members Coca-Cola, Keurig Dr Pepper and PepsiCo, to be allocated through Closed Loop and The Recycling Partnership, the goal is to support a new ABA initiative to return postconsumer plastic bottles to the supply chain to make new bottles.

The partners set up a multipronged approach, leveraging technology and education as their tools, with a lot of thought devoted to strategy.

"We are working to identify opportunities and turn them into projects," says Bridget Croke, managing director of Closed Loop Partners. "We have started by identifying certain geographic focus areas around the country and have developed a set of criteria to be sure we will have the most impact. We are talking to material recovery facilities (MRFs) and municipalities to see where there may be opportunities to deploy our capital."

While the \$100 million will be allocated over 10 years across multiple cities, the partners are starting in the Dallas-Fort Worth area to increase collection, recycling and processing of plastic bottles.

"We have criteria based on need and opportunity in a given region," says Sarah Dearman, vice president of Circular Ventures for The Recycling Partnership. "We want to ensure there is a strong end market, and there is one in that region."

Dearman points to a large bottle-to-bottle facility in Dallas, CarbonLITE.

"Reclaimers like CarbonLITE provide bottle-grade material, and we want that material to go to the highest and best use as part of the circular economy," she says.

Of the total to be allocated, \$2 million will go to Balcones' MRF in Dallas for sorting technology improvements to be able to supply reclaimers.

With regard to community education and access efforts, the industry initiative has three focus points:

- In Fort Worth, carts will be allocated to the city and citizens will be educated on how to recycle and reduce contamination.
- In Dallas, the effort will be aimed at improving access to collection in multifamily housing and providing community education.

- Across the entire North Central Texas Council of governments, which includes 230 communities, a public service campaign will be undertaken to educate residents on best recycling practices.

“The idea is to marry investments in infrastructure improvements so bottles are sorted properly, with improvements in community collection to get more materials through the system and ultimately fed through bottle reclaimers to produce more bottle-grade recycled PET for new bottles,” says Kevin Keane, ABA’s executive vice president for government and public affairs.

Each partner has a defined role in the project. ABA’s three largest members are providing the funding for the broad initiative. Closed Loop will administer loans to upgrade MRFs to increase PET yields from the facilities’ front to back ends.

The Recycling Partnership is working on the community access piece, awarding grants for carts and focusing on education around how to recycle and reduce contamination. And the World Wildlife Fund will provide scientific guidance to help measure the reduction in plastic footprint.

Over the years, ABA members have made investments in community recycling individually, from providing carts to helping with education, and those efforts will continue, says Keane.

“But we wanted to see if we could create scale, so each company is not out there doing their own thing,” he says. “In the past we have worked with Closed Loop and The Recycling Partnership individually on community projects.

Now we come together through this initiative to create a system to provide more scale and focus on collection in a way that feeds bottles directly through reclaimers. Thus, we can reach toward our goal of producing more bottle-grade recycled PET to make new bottles and reduce use of virgin materials on the front end.”

This type of collaboration is needed to accelerate the development of a circular economy, says Dearman.

“This is a unique combination of expert organizations coming together with industry to improve recycling in the U.S.,” she says.

DART's GoLink shuttle service to serve Carrollton business park

By Progressive Railroading

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) yesterday reached an agreement to extend DART's GoLink on-demand shuttle service to the west Carrollton area.

In May, the service will provide first- and last-mile connections from the Valwood Industrial Business Park area in west Carrollton to DART's Green Line at the downtown Carrollton light-rail station.

Under the agreement, NCTCOG will fund the \$325,000 service for two years.

Does North Texas' geographic sprawl give it an advantage in the fight against coronavirus?

Some officials, like NY's governor, say high-density cities are at greater risk, but not all health experts agree.

By Charles Scudder, Dallas Morning News

With its car-centric culture and sprawling suburbs, North Texas has never had the same population density as many other major U.S. cities.

But did our spread-out suburbs help slow the spread of coronavirus?

Unlike jam-packed places like New York City, where residents are stacked in high-rises and rely on cramped subway cars where the virus can spread quickly, we have spacious yards and vehicles to get from place to place. Surely this more-distant lifestyle has helped flatten the curve, right?

Experts say it's not quite that simple.

The spread of any virus depends on two major factors: how infectious it is, and how much interaction an infected person has with others. The virus that causes COVID-19 is highly contagious. Because of its long incubation period, carriers can spread it to others without even knowing it.

So, public health officials say, simple steps like social distancing and wearing masks have a greater impact on the spread of coronavirus than does general population density.

"Whether or not someone gets the virus is not just influenced by the properties of the virus alone," said Diana Cervantes, an epidemiologist at the University of North Texas' Health Science Center. "It does not matter if you are in a rural area or urban area — a person needs to try their best to limit close contact with people, practice good hand hygiene and limit the amount of contact they have with people who may be infected. And right now, we just need to assume everyone could be infected."

Still, some leaders have said our proclivity to denser cities put us at risk. In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo asserted that "dense environments are its feeding grounds." Timothy Bray is director of the Institute for Urban Policy Research at the University of Texas at Dallas. He said that the sprawl of North Texas may have helped slow the spread, but not simply because the region has low population density.

While heavily hit cities like New York and Chicago rely on public transportation and more shared communal space, Bray said, Dallas and Fort Worth historically have grown along interstates and highways.

"We're not even built the same. We are configured differently," Bray said. "It sure seems that there is something to that because what congestion does, what density does is put susceptible people in a close space together."

Urban planners who advocate for higher-density neighborhoods, however, say that data shows that the virus' spread has not been impacted by density. The virus has hit communities of all sizes, whether urban, suburban or rural, said Patrick Kennedy, a Dallas urban planner who has often advocated for a more walkable city.

“To me, that’s just sort of being intellectually lazy,” Kennedy said. “The fact that it’s in nearly every county in the U.S. points to how infectious it is.”

Density hasn’t been a clear indicator of viral hotspots. San Francisco and Seoul, South Korea, both cities with high density, have not had outbreaks nearly on the scale of as places like New York and Seattle.

Some of Texas’ hardest hit counties are in the rural Panhandle. Even in New York, some of the first major outbreaks were in suburban communities on Long Island rather than the densely populated boroughs of New York City.

According to an analysis of COVID-19 cases by county that was recently published in *Scientific American*, although an increase in density would mean a rise in the number of contacts an infected person would have, “the effect is relatively small” on the total number of current cases. In Dallas, the last 10 years have been marked by rapid high-density housing developments in and around downtown. Many have pushed for a stronger, livable downtown, and that means high density.

Mike Eastland, executive director of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, said his group helped cities shift building codes in the early 2000s to allow for more high-density housing and walkable communities.

Now, the pandemic has put similar efforts across the country into question. [Anecdotally](#), some people in larger cities who are now finding ways to work remotely are wondering if it’s worth it to live in a place where a virus can spread so quickly.

Eastland said it’s unlikely that the virus will have a major impact on North Texas’ housing patterns.

“Where [people] chose to live and how they move these days is probably more than this one thing,” Eastland said. “I would think our lifestyles are going to be more grounded to what makes sense in our lives.”

Kennedy, however, said Dallas’ urban benefits outweigh those concerns. Large cities offer cultural diversity, strong tax bases and other resources such as large hospitals, which are especially crucial in a pandemic, he said.

“Cities have gone through these kinds of things throughout history,” Kennedy said. “Cities always come back, and it’s because they’re fundamentally advantageous.”



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Brian Wilson
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bwilson@nctcog.org

NCTCOG Requests Input on Funding Initiatives

Comments accepted online through May 12

April 13, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) — The North Central Texas Council of Governments is conducting an online input opportunity to give residents the chance to comment on a series of topics pertaining to transportation initiatives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Given the current situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCTCOG Transportation Department has taken precautions to protect the health of communities. Staff will provide a status report on how the Transportation Department is continuing to work on important regional planning, programming and projects, as well as details on the attorney general's temporary suspension of Open Meetings Act provisions. Information on what NCTCOG is doing during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is available at www.nctcog.org/covid-19.

Ensuring business continues to be conducted in an open and transparent manner, NCTCOG will post information about several regional planning efforts online for review.

Dallas-Fort Worth and other metropolitan areas with populations over 200,000 must have a Congestion Management Process to measure congestion levels and prioritize management strategies. Staff will provide a brief overview of federal requirements as well as elements to be considered in the current CMP update.

Traffic incident management plays an important role in improving safety and reducing congestion in North Texas. Proposed funding recommendations for a competitive call for projects related to traffic incident management will also be available for residents to review and comment on online.

Additionally, the Texas Department of Transportation will provide information on an effort to assist people with disabilities in its planning activities and how residents can take an active role in making changes.

Finally, information on the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, various vehicle incentives and Mobility Plan administrative revisions will be available.

One topic that had been advertised as being part of the public input opportunity, the 10-Year Plan update, has been postponed until May.

Residents are encouraged to provide their input at www.nctcog.org/input beginning April 13 and continuing through May 12. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

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 in the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit www.nctcog.org/trans.

About the Regional Transportation Council:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. The RTC's 44 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at www.nctcog.org.

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North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Brian Wilson
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Census Participation Crucial to Disbursement of Transportation, Health Funding

Residents encouraged to answer questionnaire online

April 30, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) – As North Texans remain mostly at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, they have an opportunity to help ensure data used for the next 10 years is accurate. The US Census Bureau continues its once-a-decade count of citizens, and this year the questionnaire can be completed online.

While the pandemic has forced many changes, technology has helped people remain connected to friends, family and work colleagues. In the same way, it is more convenient than ever to respond to the census. North Texans are encouraged to complete the census online by visiting www.2020census.gov. Information can also be submitted by mail or over the phone.

The questions can be answered in about 10 minutes, and the process is safe and secure. Answers are important because they help determine how much federal funding Dallas-Fort Worth and other regions across Texas and the nation receive toward endeavors such as education, transportation and healthcare. Census results also inform congressional representation.

In Texas, approximately 50% of residents have responded to the census. North Texas counties are setting the standard in response rate, with six counties in the top 10, including Rockwall County (first), Collin County (second) and Ellis and Denton counties (tied for fifth), according to the Census Bureau. Colleyville, Trophy Club and Haslet lead the region's cities in response rate. Updated data on self-response rates can be found at www.2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html. In 2010, approximately 64% of Texans completed the census form themselves.

To assist with the collection of data, the Census Bureau has begun to send reminder postcards to homes to encourage people to complete the census questionnaire. Households that do not provide information will receive an in-person visit from a Census Bureau representative later this summer. In-person activities are currently suspended due to COVID-19.

When they resume, the Census Bureau expects to incorporate the most current guidance from healthcare authorities to ensure the staff members and the public remain safe and healthy.

Until then, North Texans can do their part in the comfort of their own homes to help make sure the data the Census Bureau will report accurately reflects what the growing region looks like. While adults will answer the questions, the whole family could benefit from the lessons of the process. This is also an opportunity for kids learning remotely to

discover how easy it is to participate and how valuable the information is to policymakers.

The Dallas-Fort Worth area remains one of the fastest-growing regions in the nation, with a population of more than 7.5 million. The region typically adds more than 1 million new residents every 10 years. Its population in 2010 was more than 6.3 million, according to the Census Bureau.

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FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FUNDING IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19: APPROVAL OF FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MAY 14, 2020

SHANNON STEVENSON, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER

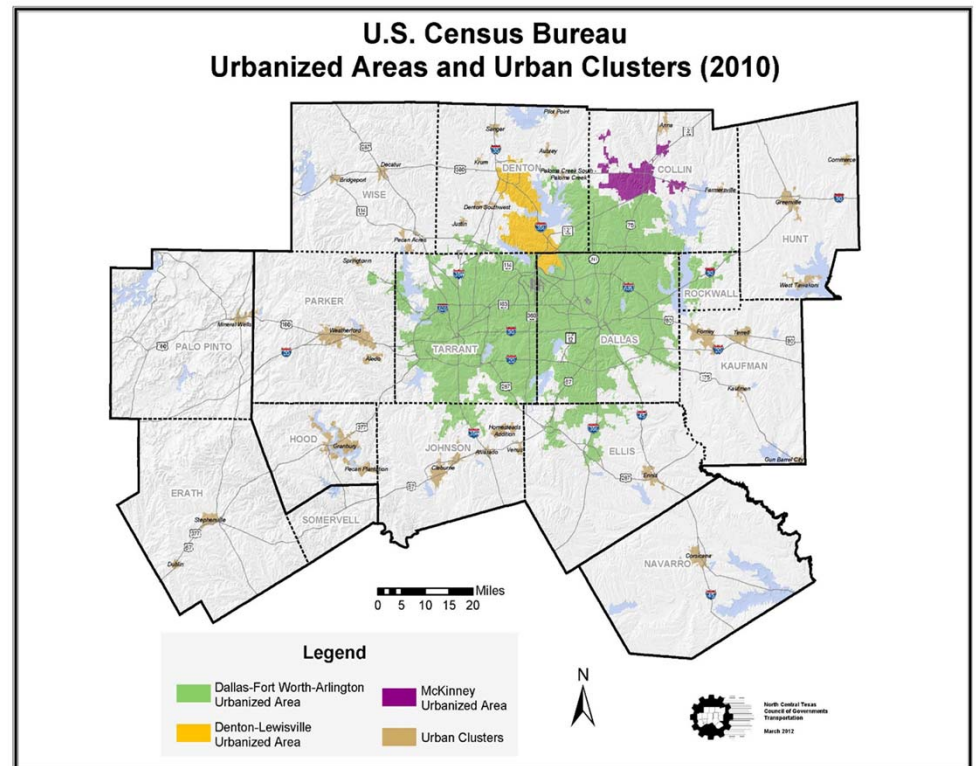
TRANSIT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

CARES ACT FUNDING BACKGROUND

- President Trump signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act into law on March 27, 2020
 - The CARES Act provides emergency assistance and emergency appropriations to support agency operations during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The Federal Transit Administration was provided with \$25 billion in supplemental funding to allocate to recipients of urbanized area and rural area formula funds
- Funding is being provided at a 100-percent federal share, with no local match required, and is available to support capital, operating, and other expenses generally eligible under those programs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19
- Funding made available through the CARES Act is not required to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program unless funding will be used for projects that have substantial functional, locational, or capacity changes

CARES ACT FUNDING FOR THE REGION

- NCTCOG Designated Recipient of FTA Urbanized Area (UZA) Formula funds for North Texas
- Available Funding for North Texas¹
 - DFW-Arlington UZA: \$318,629,129
 - Denton-Lewisville UZA: \$ 23,461,867
 - TOTAL: \$342,090,996



¹FTA funding for the McKinney UZA is administered through TxDOT

RECIPIENTS BY URBANIZED AREA

Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington UZA

Receive FTA Funding Directly

1. DART
2. City of Grand Prairie
3. City of Mesquite
4. City of Arlington
5. Northeast Transportation Service (NETS): Northeast Tarrant County
6. Trinity Metro (FWTA)

NCTCOG Subrecipients

1. Community Transit Services (CTS): Ellis and Navarro Counties
2. Span, Inc.: Northwest Dallas County and Denton County
3. STAR Transit: Kaufman, Rockwall, and Southern Dallas Counties
4. City/County Transportation: Johnson County
5. Public Transit Services (PTS): Palo Pinto and Parker Counties

Denton-Lewisville UZA

Receive FTA Funding Directly

1. Denton County Transportation Authority

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Cities/areas with no transit service still generate funds for the apportionment based on population, population density, and low-income population.
 - Funding generated from cities/areas with no transit service are being distributed to recipients based on Vehicle Revenue Mileage¹
- Funding generated from the operation of the Trinity Railway Express split between DART and Trinity Metro based on Inter-Local Agreement
- Propose NCTCOG keep 0.25% from total apportionment amount (\$796,572) for the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington UZA for administrative purposes (distribution of funds to the region and administration of subrecipient funds)²
 - Subrecipient Coordination: Transit, Legal, FMT, Administration, and Risk and Compliance Staff Time (new agreements, invoices separate from regular apportionments, oversight & compliance, etc.)
 - Regional Coordination: Transit Agencies/Cities Support (FTA grant submittals, reporting assistance, TIP modifications, DBE & Title VI programs, other compliance-related assistance, etc.)

¹Recipients: All DFW-Arlington UZA recipients, except Mesquite and NETS; Mesquite and NETS not included because service is contracted and reported by STAR Transit and Trinity Metro, respectively

²NCTCOG normally reserves 1.0% from annual total apportionments for the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington UZA for administration

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS BY RECIPIENT

Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Urbanized Area	Federal Funding Program	Funding Totals
City of Arlington Direct Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 10,955,694
City of Grand Prairie Direct Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 3,852,375
City of Mesquite Direct Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 3,442,401
City/County Transportation (Johnson County) NCTCOG-Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 899,600
Community Transit Services (Ellis and Navarro Counties) NCTCOG-Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 1,781,036
Dallas Area Rapid Transit Designated Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 229,627,520
Trinity Metro/Fort Worth Transportation Authority (FWTA) Designated Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 55,161,034
North Central Texas Council of Governments Designated Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 796,572
Northeast Transportation Services FWTA Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 4,813,723
Public Transit Services (Palo Pinto and Parker Counties) NCTCOG-Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 396,081
Span, Inc. (NW Dallas and Denton Counties) NCTCOG-Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 2,204,136
STAR Transit (Kaufman, Rockwall, and S Dallas Counties) NCTCOG-Subrecipient	Section 5307	\$ 4,698,957
	TOTAL	\$ 318,629,129
Denton-Lewisville Urbanized Area	Federal Funding Program	Funding Totals
Denton County Transportation Authority Designated Recipient	Section 5307	\$ 23,461,867
	TOTAL	\$ 23,461,867

SCHEDULE

ACTION	DATE
CARES Act Signed into Law	March 27, 2020
FTA Released Funding Allocations	April 2, 2020
RTC Action: Overall Funding	April 9, 2020
NCTCOG Executive Board Action for Subrecipients	April 23, 2020
STTC Action: RTC Endorsement of Overall Funding and Specific Allocations	April 24, 2020
RTC Action: Specific Allocations	May 14, 2020
Subrecipient Agreement Execution	May 2020

ACTION REQUESTED

RTC Approval:

- Approval of specific funding allocations
- To revise administrative documents as appropriate to incorporate this project
- “Capital investments” or major “capacity changes” will require RTC approval

FTA DATA POINTS SOURCE

- Population: 2010 Census
- Population Density: 2010 Census
- Low-Income Population: American Community Survey “Age by Ratio of Income to Poverty in the Last Twelve Months,” (2013-2017 dataset) and refers to persons with incomes of up to 150% of poverty
- Revenue Vehicle Miles: Fiscal Year 2018 National Transit Database Annual Report
- Passenger Miles: Fiscal Year 2018 National Transit Database Annual Report
- Operating Expenses: Fiscal Year 2018 National Transit Database Annual Report
- Route Miles: Fiscal Year 2018 National Transit Database Annual Report
- Low-Income Population, Revenue Vehicle Miles, Passenger Miles, Operating Expenses, and Route Miles data is updated each year

METHODOLOGY

- Sub-allocation process follows FTA's statutory formula used to allocate funds for general public transportation
- FTA's apportionment¹ was utilized to re-create the formula for the following **data points**:
 - Population
 - Population Density
 - Low-income Population
 - Revenue Vehicle Miles
 - Passenger Miles
 - Operating Expenses
 - Route Miles
- The **formula factors** specific to the CARES Act², which utilize the **data points**, were used to determine dollar amounts for recipients

¹FTA's FY2020 apportionments were published February 24, 2020

²FTA's formula factors for CARES Act funding were published April 9, 2020



Source: USDOT BUILD Discretionary Grants - www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants

May 14, 2020

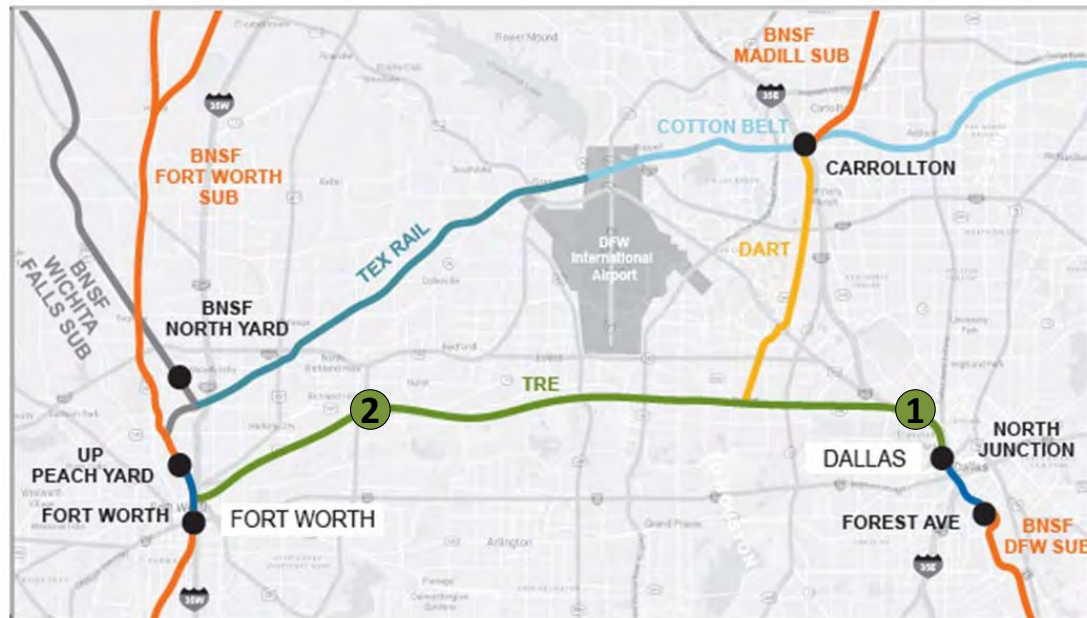
Regional Transportation Council – Action Item
FY 2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant Program – Overview and Proposed NCTCOG Projects

BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

NCTCOG Project #1: North Texas MOVES Program

2

- MOVES = Multimodal Operations, Velocity, Efficiency, and Safety

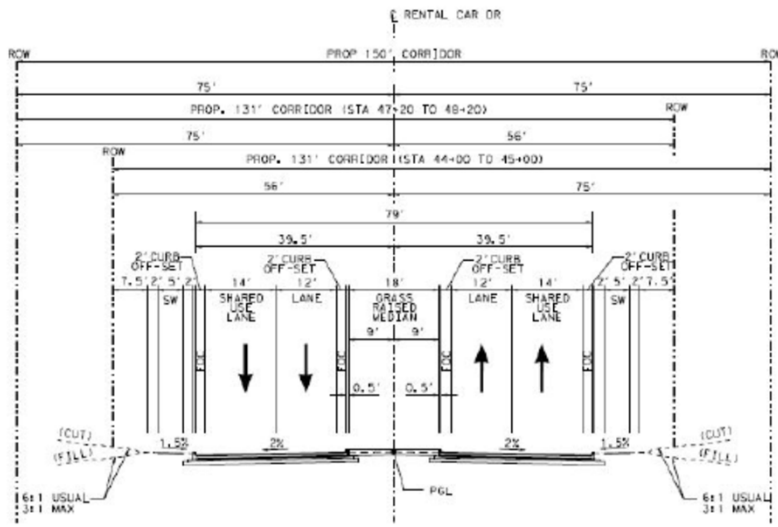


- #1 (Medical Market Center – Stemmons Freeway): Double track & rehab/replace 3 bridges
- #2 (Handley Ederville Road – Precinct Line Road): Double track & replace 2 bridges
- #3 (Implement Clear Path Technology): Framework improving overall regional rail operations

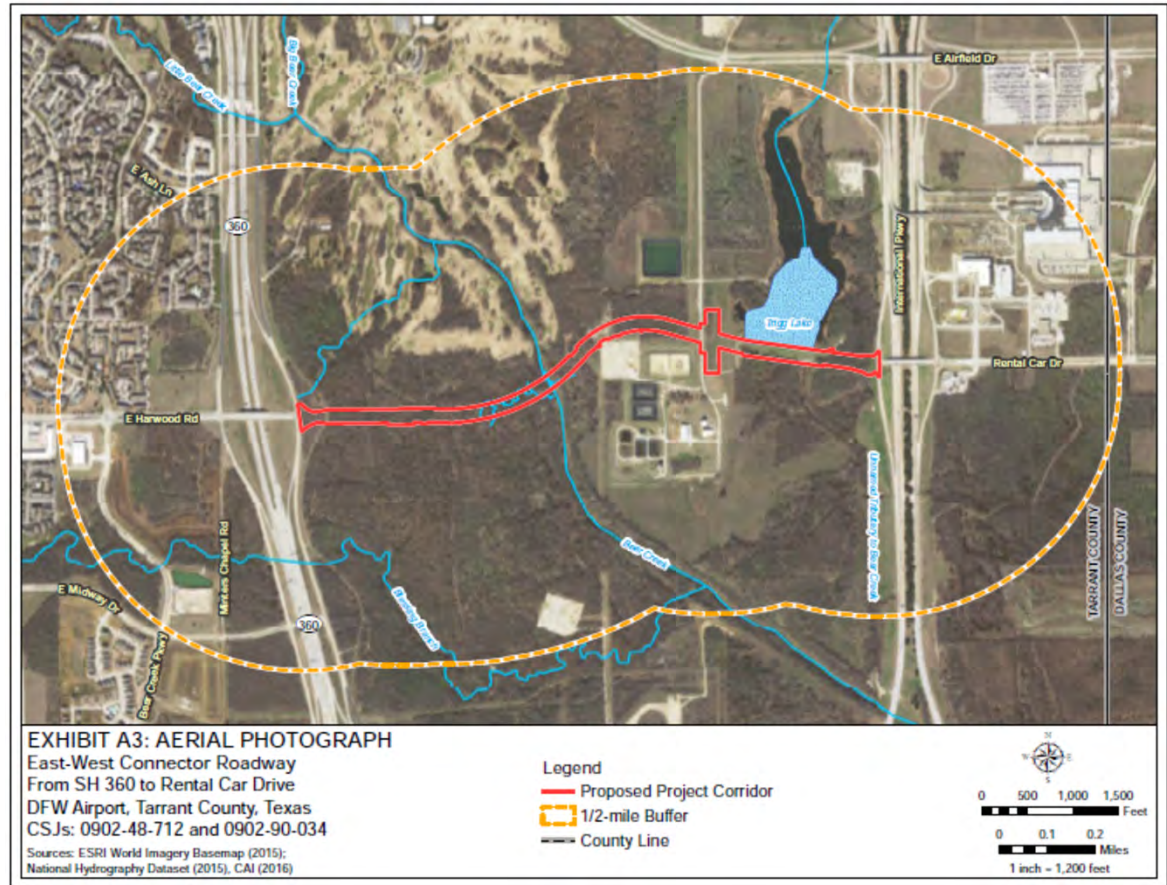
BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

NCTCOG Project #2: DFW Airport East-West Connector Project

3



- ❑ Construct ultimate 4-lane divided roadway (SH 360/ Harwood Rd. – International Pkwy./Rental Car Dr.)
- ❑ Improved DFW Airport, Euless, and Irving access option to SH 183

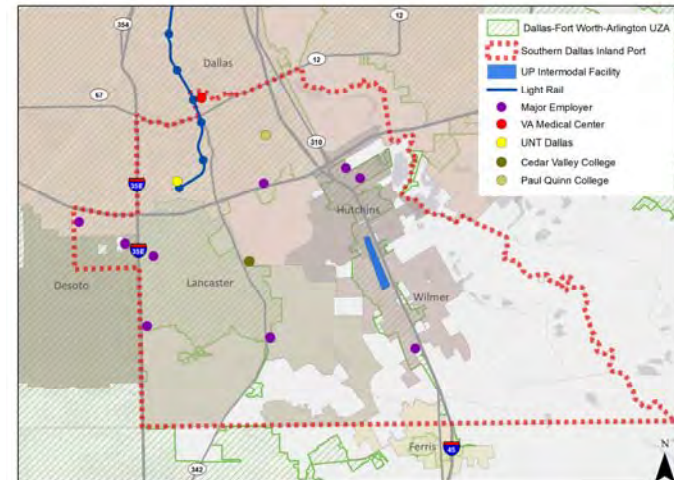
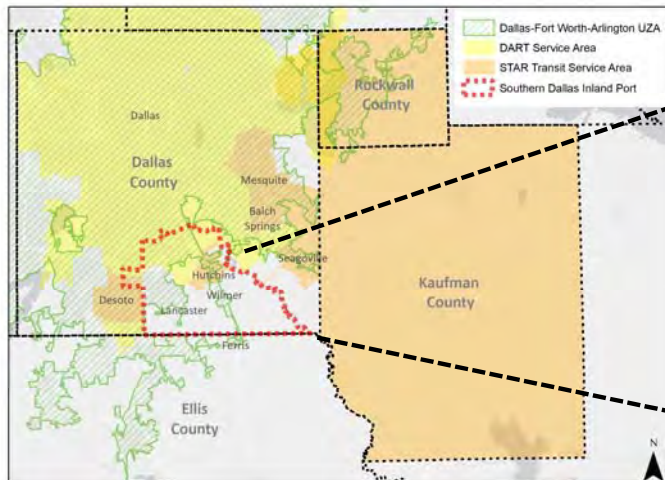


BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

NCTCOG Project #3: Enhancing Mobility Within the South Dallas Inland Port

4

- **South Dallas Transit and Market Demand: Connecting rural residents and large employers of the International Inland Port of Dallas (IIPOD) to the DART light rail system, healthcare (VA Medical Center), and education/job training sites**



- ❑ Expanded transit using electric buses connecting to existing service
- ❑ New/upgraded bus facilities and charging systems
- ❑ Sidewalk and traffic signal improvements

BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

Proposed NCTCOG Projects: Funding Details

5

Staff proposes the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)/North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) submit the following projects:

Project	Non-Federal Funds ¹			Federal Funds ¹		Total Project Cost ¹
	Local	State	Private	Other Federal	Proposed BUILD Request	
North Texas Multimodal Operations, Velocity, Efficiency & Safety (MOVES) Program	\$26.0 ²	\$0.0	\$2.0 ³	\$2.0	\$25.0	\$55.0
	51%			49%		
DFW Airport East-West Connector (SH 360 – International Parkway)	\$14.0 ⁴	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$21.6	\$13.3	\$48.9
	29%			71%		
Enhancing Mobility Within the South Dallas Inland Port	\$2.6 ⁵	\$0.1	\$0.0 ⁶	\$0.0	\$9.3	\$12.0
	23%			77%		

1. All funding and cost values indicated in millions (rounded)
2. Trinity Metro and DART funding commitments
3. BNSF Railway funding commitment

4. \$3,316,065 RTR, \$10,545,250 DFW Airport, and \$110,000 City of Euless funding commitments
5. \$1,630,000 in Dallas County RTR Funds and \$1,000,000 from the cities of Dallas and DeSoto
6. Oncor infrastructure “make ready” commitment; dollar amount to be determined

BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

Proposed Submittal Timeline

6

February 18, 2020	BUILD Grant Notice of FY 2020 Opportunity Announced
March 27, 2020	STTC Information (Identify Candidate NCTCOG Projects)
April 3, 2020	Deadline for Candidate Project Recommendations
April 24, 2020	STTC Action (Project Scope, Cost Estimates, & Funding Sources Finalized)
May 1, 2020	Request Deadline for Letters of Support (Other Projects) Send to Rebekah Hernandez - rhernandez@nctcog.org
May 14, 2020	RTC Action
May 18, 2020	BUILD Application Submittal Deadline - www.grants.gov
May 28, 2020	Executive Board Endorsement

BUILD Discretionary Grant Program

Requested RTC Action

7

- **Recommend Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of:**
 - **Three proposed projects for the FY 2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant Program**
 - **Administratively amending the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Statewide TIP, and other planning/administrative documents to include the proposed projects, if selected for an FY 2020 BUILD Grant award**

Contact Information

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May 14, 2020

Regional Transportation Council – Action Item

FY 2020 BUILD Discretionary Grant Program – Overview and Proposed NCTCOG Projects

EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON TRANSPORTATION: INFORMATION SYSTEM RTC4U

Regional Transportation Council

Michael Morris

May 14, 2020



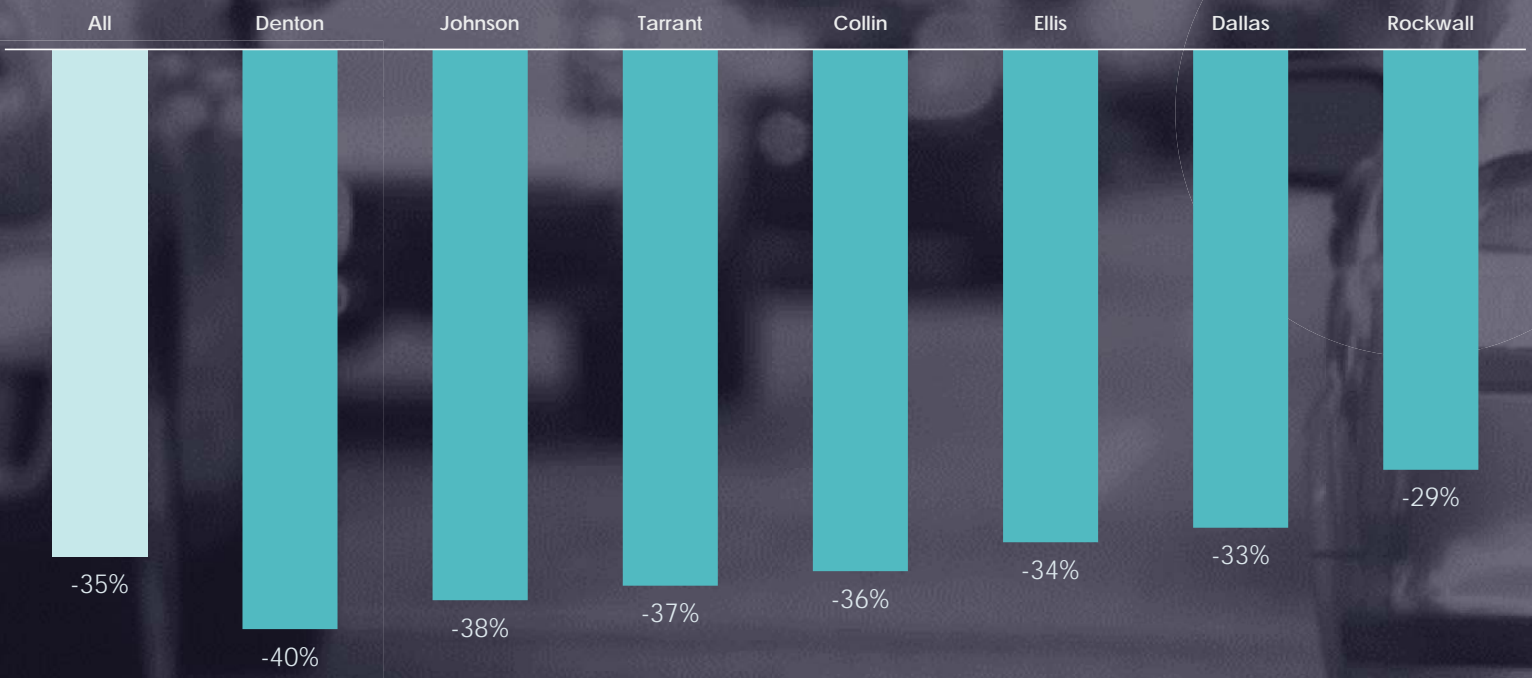
North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Policy Metrics: RTC4U

1. Travel behavior response to COVID-19
2. Financial implications to traditional revenue sources
3. Benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility (e.g., Congestion Management System, national performance measures, ozone standard)
4. Prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases

Freeway Volume, All Week

Decrease in Traffic by County, Wk 1 vs Wk 4 March 2020



Source: TxDOT Dallas/TxDOT Ft Worth Radar Traffic Counters

Toll Road Transactions - 2019 vs 2020

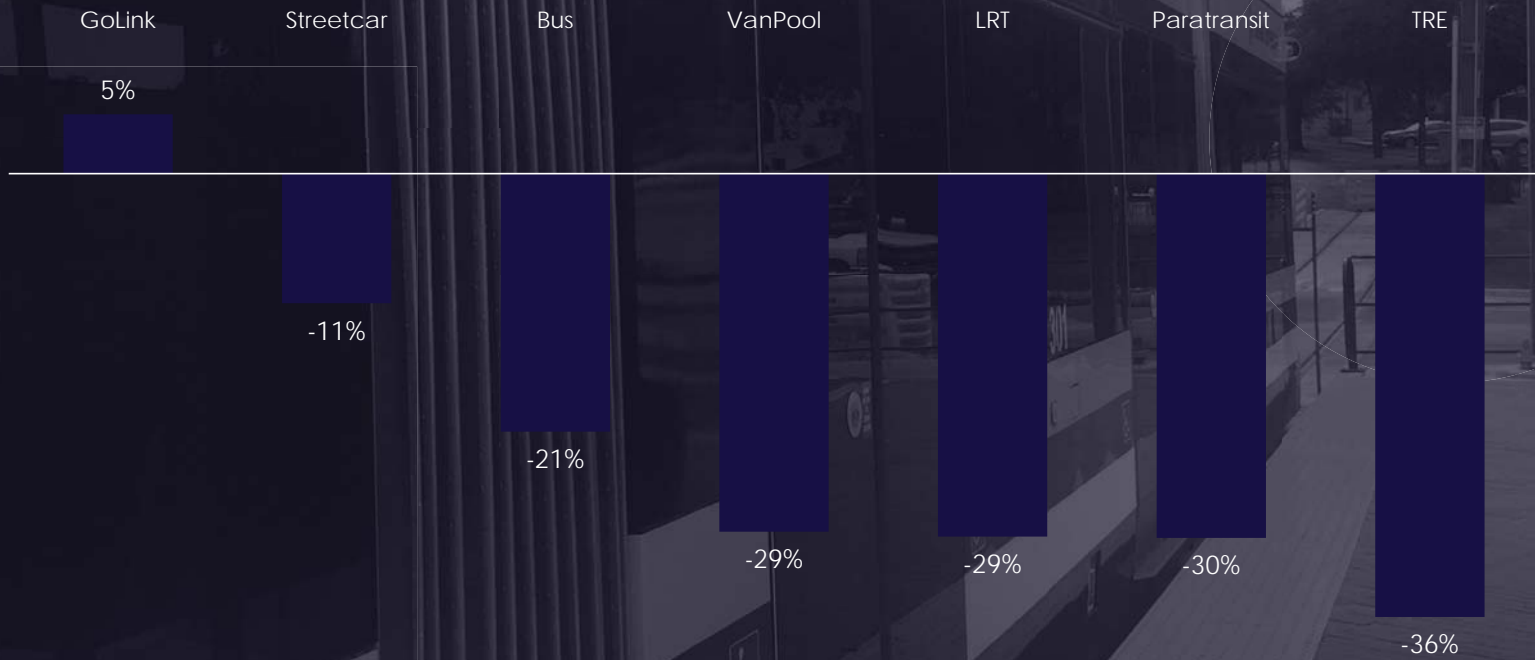
Transaction Decrease by Facility - March 2019 vs March 2020



Source: NTTA

Transit - DART

Change in DART Total Ridership by Mode - Mar 2019 vs Mar 2020

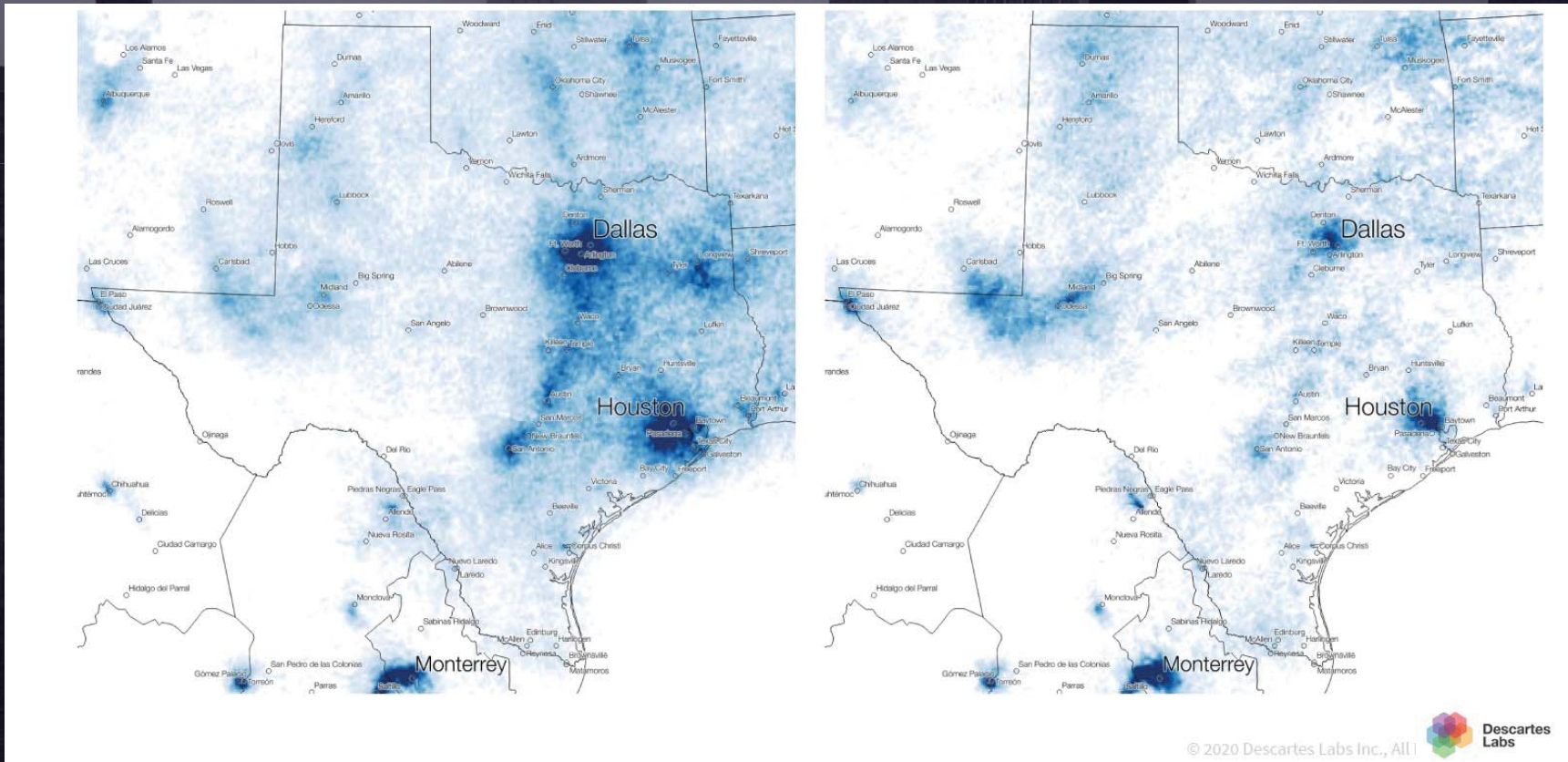


Source: DART

Regional Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) Tracking

February 2020

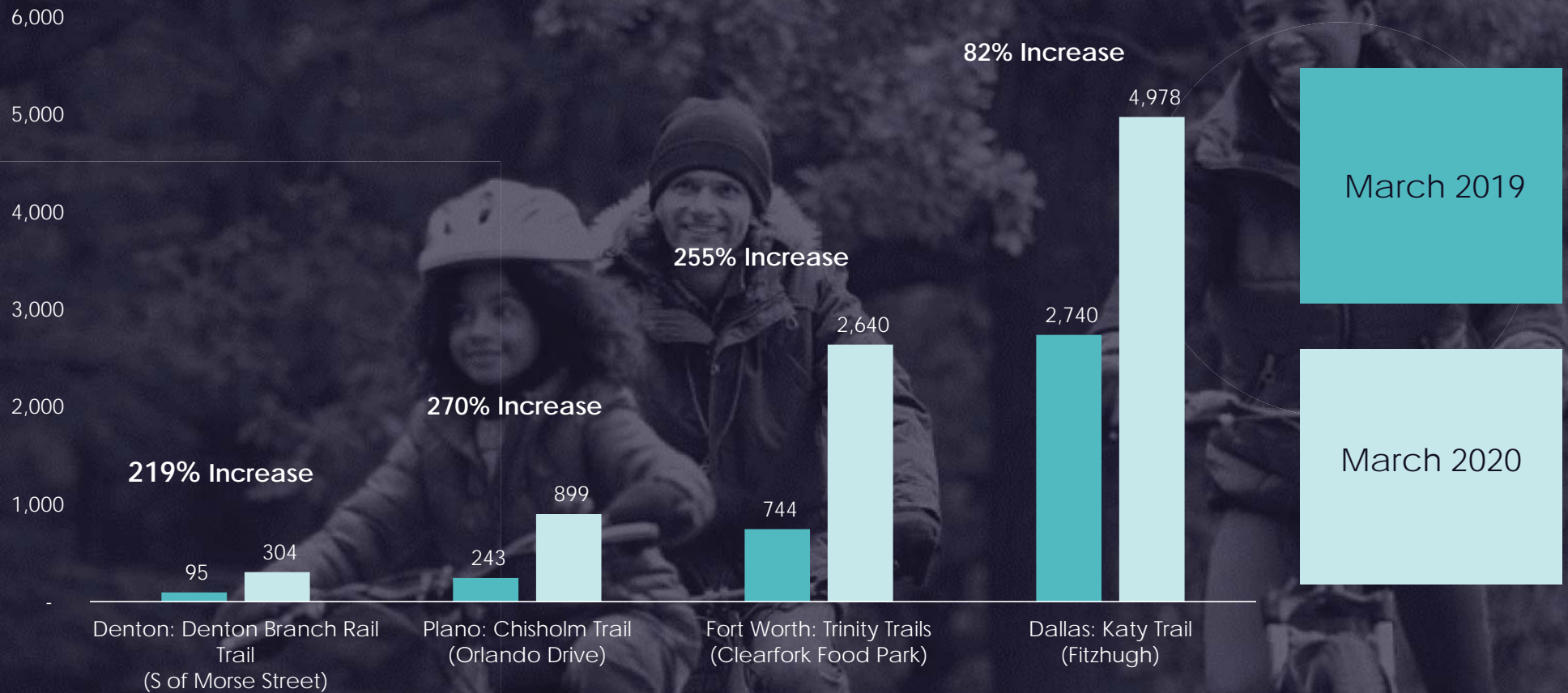
Week of March 29, 2020



North Central Texas Annual Ozone Comparison

	3-Year Design Value			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
March	2 Yellow days High:62 at Eagle Mtn Lake	8 Yellow days High: 63 at Denton	10 Yellow days High: 66 at Cleburne	3 Yellow days High: 64 at Pilot Point
April	10 Yellow days High: 68 at Denton	16 Yellow days	12 Yellow days High: 69 at Greenville	8 Yellow days High: 69 at Rockwall High: 69 at Grapevine
		2 Orange days High: 81 at Dallas North High: 81 at Dallas Hinton		
May	15 Yellow days	9 Yellow days	6 Yellow days	
	5 Orange days High: 80 at Dallas North High: 80 at Dallas Hinton	6 Orange days	5 Orange days High: 80 at Pilot Point	
		2 Red days High: 92 at Eagle Mtn Lake		

Daily Average Bicycle/Pedestrian Counts March 2019 vs March 2020

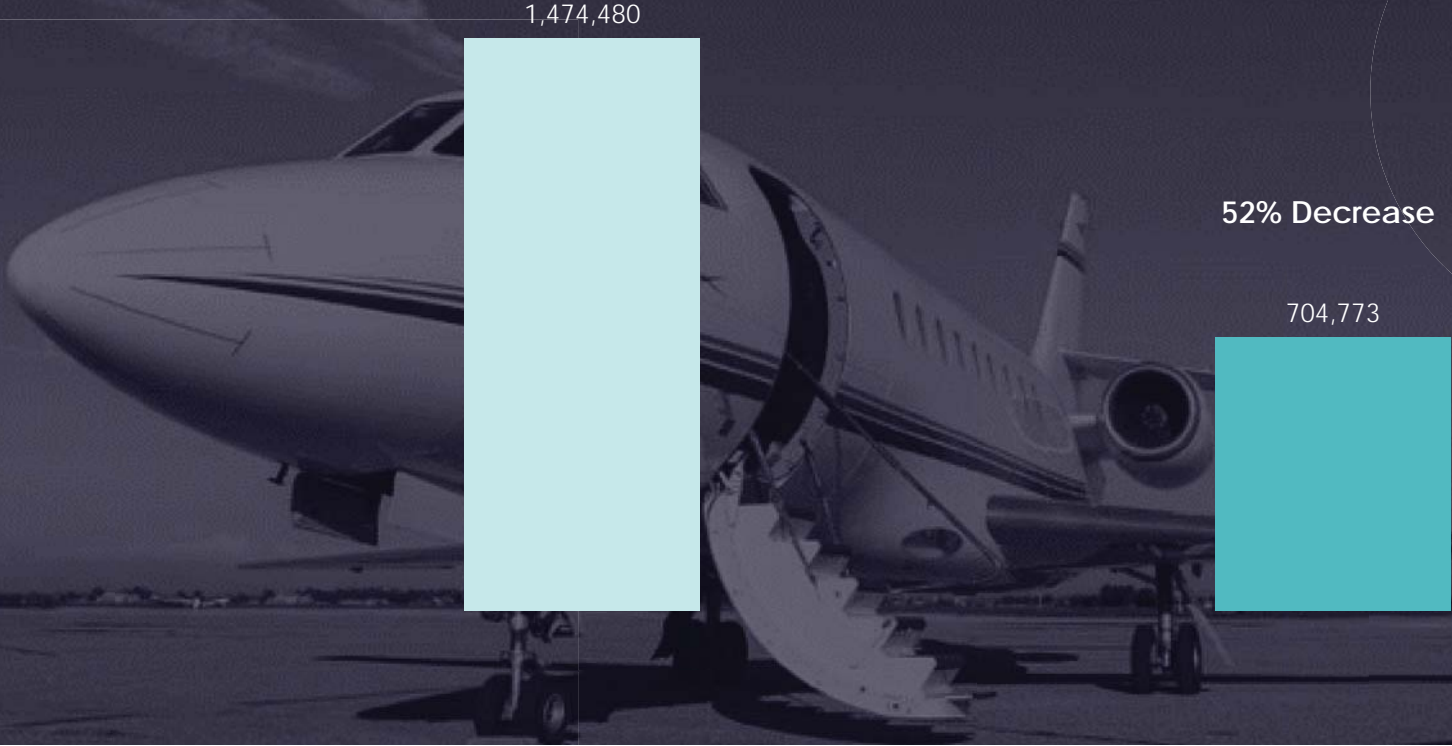


Sample Weeks: 3/25/19 – 3/31/19 and 3/23/20 – 3/29/20

Source: NCTCOG and City of Dallas

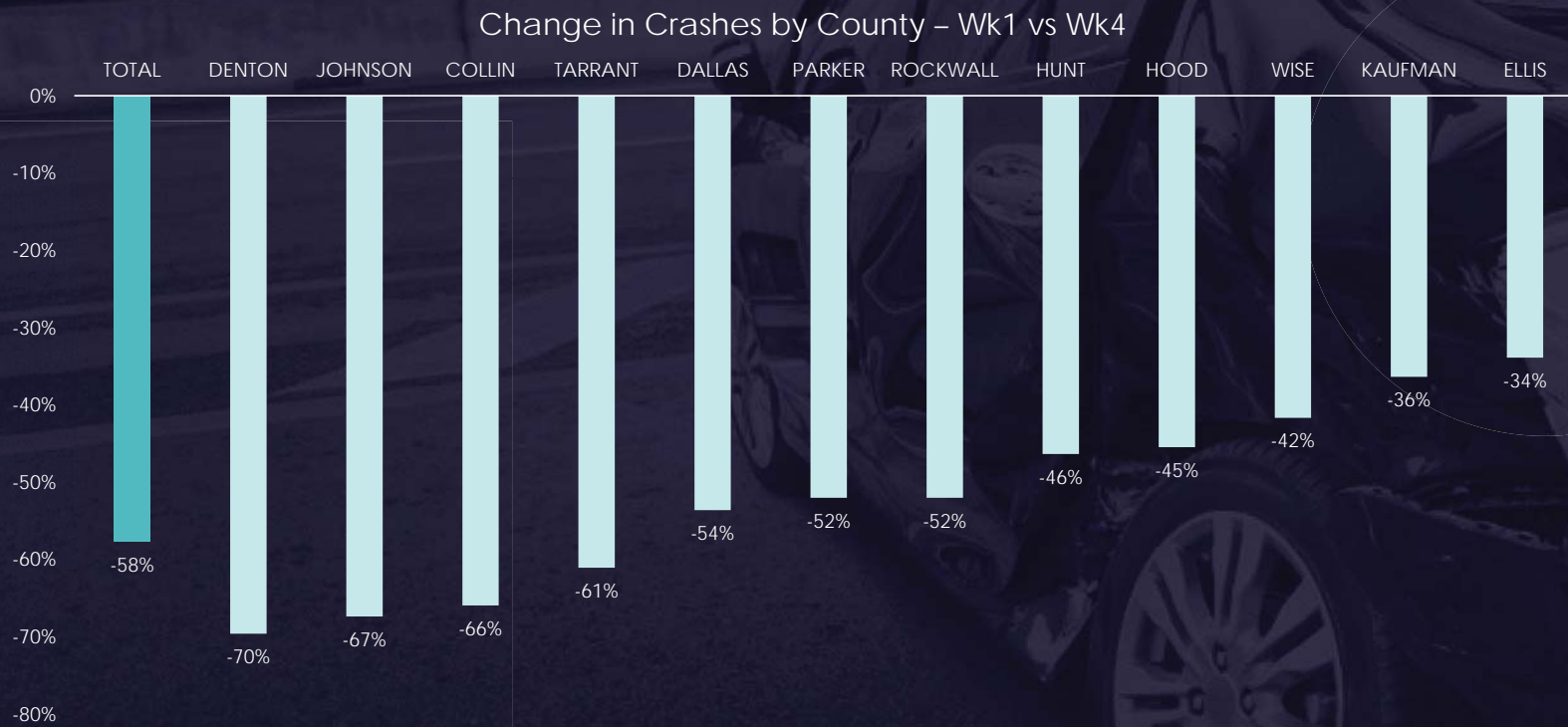
Airport Travel – Dallas Love Field

Total Passenger Enplanements and Deplanements - March 2019 vs March 2020



Source: Dallas Love Field Website

Change in all Crashes by County, March 2020



Source: Crash Records Information System
Note: March crash data is current as of 4/21/2020

2020 UTP AND 2021 UTP/ REGIONAL 10-YEAR PLAN +

Regional Transportation Council

May 14, 2020

Michael Morris, P.E.

Director of Transportation



2020 UTP AND 2021 UTP/REGIONAL 10-YEAR PLAN +

2020 UTP: Commission Action in April

2021 UTP: Integrating Previous RTC Actions Going Back to
December 2016

RTC4U Metric Four: Mitigation of Regional Unemployment

INCOMING PRIVATE SECTOR REVENUE FOR NORTH TARRANT EXPRESS (NTE)/SH 183

Per prior RTC direction, staff continues to work with TxDOT and private sector partners to complete additional phases of the NTE and other public/private partnership projects.

Recent projections indicate that general purpose and managed lane capacity improvements are anticipated to be triggered in mid-2022 with an open to traffic date of June 2024.

The private sector is currently coordinating with TxDOT to advance these improvements.

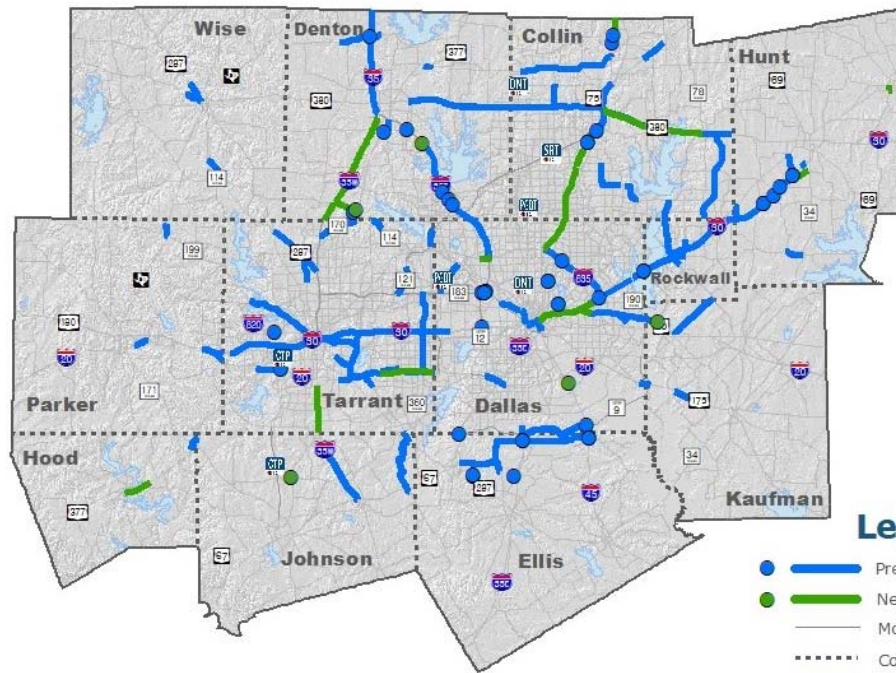
The private sector partner (NTEMP) will be paying for these improvements in the amounts noted below:

Capacity Improvements	\$ in Millions	Notes
SH 183/NTE Segment 1 & 2W Widening	\$162	Add 1 general purpose lane in NTE Segment 1 and 1 managed lane in NTE Segment 2W
Build 2+2 managed lanes from Reliance Parkway to SH 161 (former Segment 2E)	\$860	This section of 5.3 miles would be built and operated by private sector as an extension of the current facility
Build 2+2 managed lane from SH 161 to Story Rd	\$270	Funding Cintra would pay to TxDOT to lane balance east of SH 161 (2 miles)

\$1,292

Dallas-Fort Worth Regional 10 Year Plan Projects

FY 2017 - FY 2030



Dallas CBD

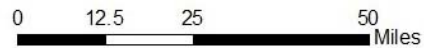


Fort Worth CBD

DRAFT

Legend

- — Previously Approved 10 Year Plan Projects
- — Newly Proposed 10-Year Plan Projects
- Mobility 2045 Roadways
- County Boundary
- Lakes



Date: 4/9/2020

DO WHAT WE NEED, NOT WHAT WE WANT

Existing Funding Constraints

Financial Crisis Response from 2009

Lower Cost of Construction (25%)

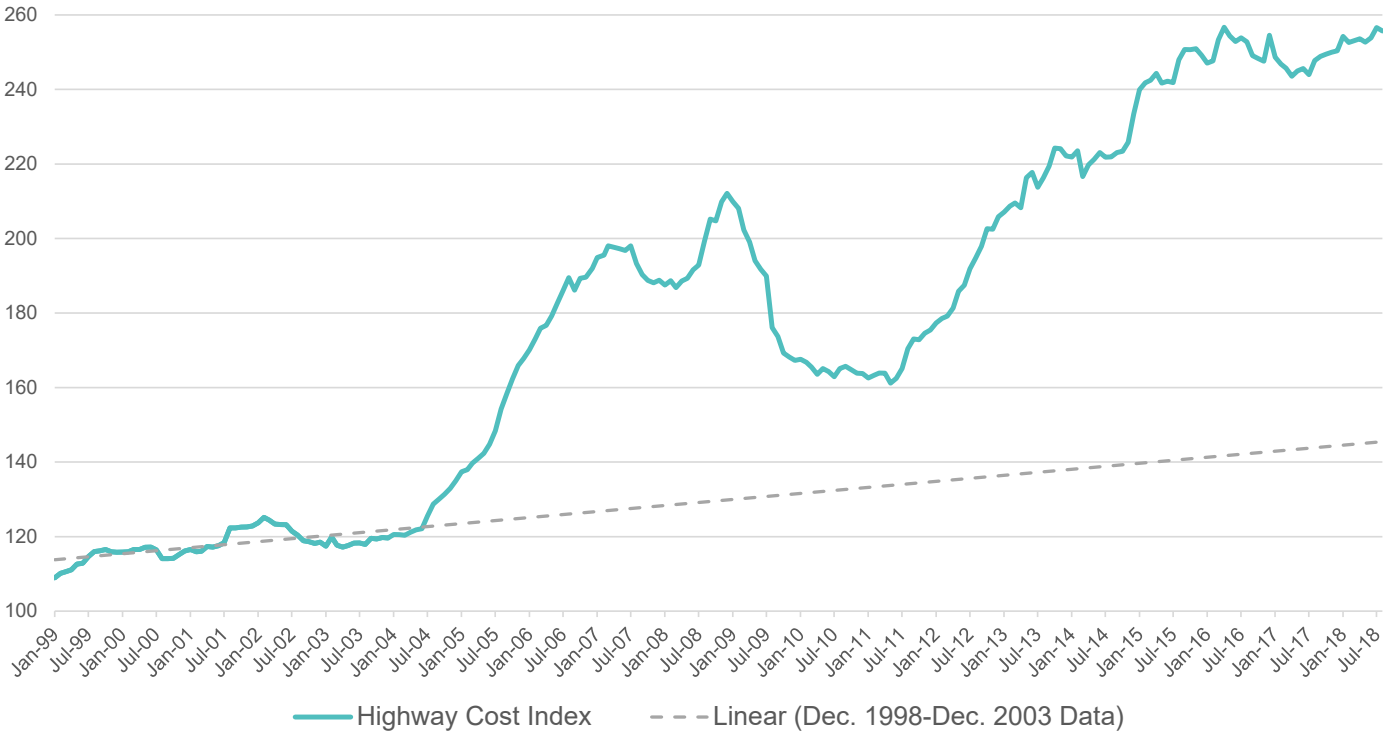
Federal Infrastructure

State P3

0% Interest

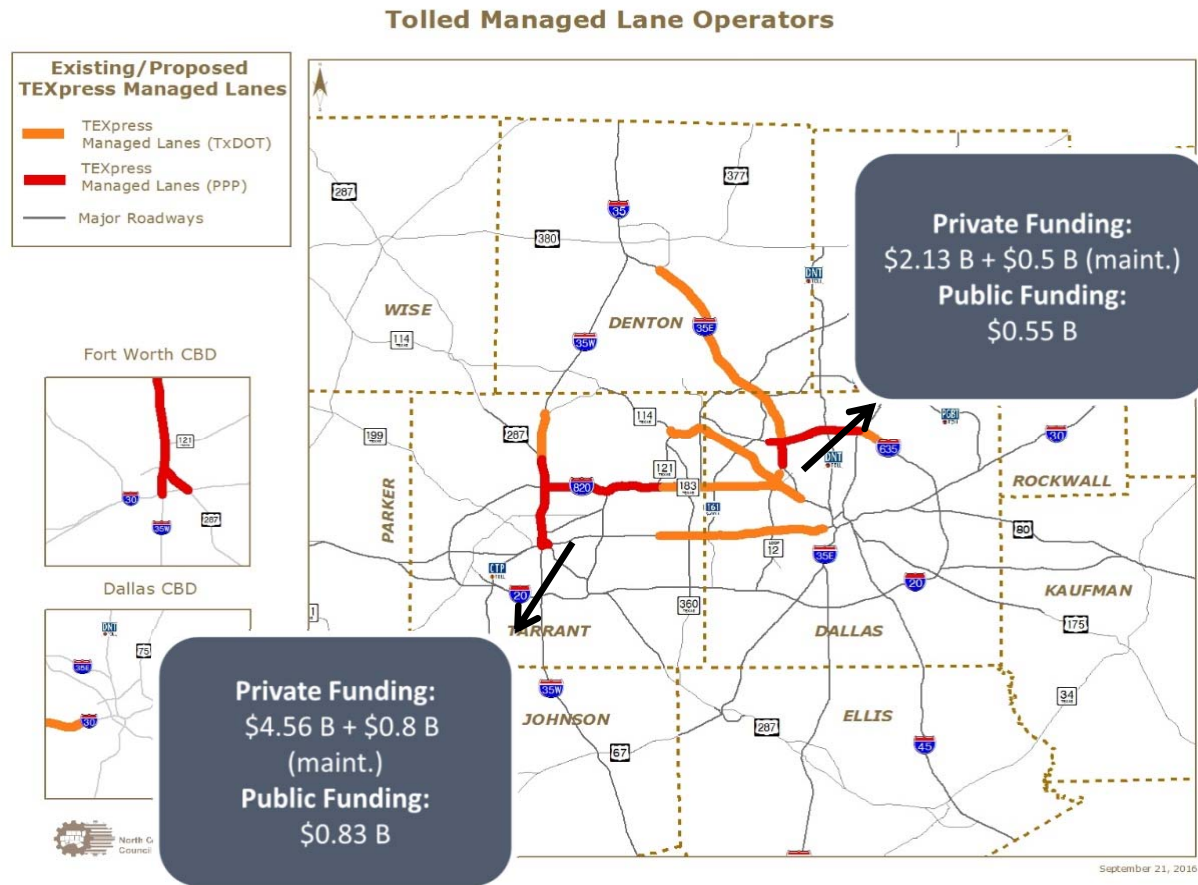
Infrastructure Bonds

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF LOWER CONSTRUCTION INFLATION COSTS



Source: Texas Department of Transportation – Highway Cost Index

LEVERAGING/INNOVATIVE FUNDING



CANDIDATE PROJECTS

High Speed Rail: Dallas to Houston

High Speed Rail: Dallas to Fort Worth

Hyperloop Certification Center

Autonomous Transit (Midtown)

Freeway Induction Loops

State Highway 183, US 75 Technology Lanes

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
April 2019 - April 2020

RTC MEMBER	Entity	4/11/19	5/9/19	6/13/19	7/11/19	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20	3/12/20	4/9/20
Tennell Atkins (09/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	E	E(R)	P	E	P
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Adam Bazaldua (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	A	P	E	P
David Blewett (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	P	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Loyl Bussell (05/17)	TxDOT, FW	E(R)	P	A(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	A	P
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	E	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)	A	A	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	A	P	A	E	E(R)	P	P	E	A	P	P	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	E	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	P	E	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ivan Hughes (09/19)	Addison	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	E(R)	P	A(R)	E(R)	P	P	A	E(R)	P	P	E	E(R)
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	P	E	P	P	A	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P
Lee M. Kleinman (09/13)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Curtistene McCowan (06/19)	DeSoto	--	--	P	E(R)	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	P	E	A	P	E	A	P	E	P	P	E(R)	A
Robert Miklos (12/19)	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E	P	P
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	E	A	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
Barbara Odom-Wesley (07/19)	Arlington	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
John Ryan (05/18)	Denton	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Eules	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	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
April 2019 - April 2020**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	4/11/19	5/9/19	6/13/19	7/11/19	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20	3/12/20	4/9/20
Paul Wageman (10/19)	DART	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dennis Webb (8/18)	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	A	E	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin Cnty	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chad West (11/19)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	E	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant Cnty	E	E(R)	P	E	E	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	E	P	P	P
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E	P	P
Ann Zadeh (06/17)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
January 2019 - March 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/25/19	2/22/19	3/22/19	4/26/19	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20	2/28/20	3/27/20
Onyinye Akujuo	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	*
Joe Atwood	Hood County	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	*
Melissa Baker	Irving	--	--	--	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	*
Micah Baker	Dallas County	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Katherine Beck	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
David Boski	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Keith Brooks	Arlington	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	*
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	*
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	--	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E	*
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	*
Robert Cohen	Southlake	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
Kent Collins	Coppell	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	*
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	*
Rick Cortez	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	*
Hal Cranor	Euless	A	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	*
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	*
Chad Davis	Wise County	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	A	A	A	P	A	*
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	P	P	*
Pritam Deshmukh	Denton	P	R	P	P	P	A	A(R)	P	P	P	A	P	*
Greg Dickens	Hurst	A(R)	A	A(R)	A(R)	A	A(R)	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	*
David Disheroon	Johnson County	P	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	A	*
Phil Dupler	FWTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A(R)	P	*
Chad Edwards	Fort Worth	--	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	E	P	P	P	*
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	A	P	A(R)	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A	P	A	P	*
Chris Flanigan	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Ann Foss	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	*
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	*
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Gary Graham	McKinney	A	A	A	P	A	P	A(R)	A(R)	E(R)	A(R)	P	P	*
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	A	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	A	P	A	P	*
Ron Hartline	The Colony	A	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	A	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	*
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	*
Terry Hughes	Weatherford	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	*
Tony Irvin	DeSoto	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	A	A	*
Paul Iwuchukwu	Arlington	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	A(R)	*
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
Sholeh Karimi	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A	*

P=Present A=Absent R=Represented E=Excused (personal illness, family emergency, jury duty, business necessity)
-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by WebEx/Audio Conference. Individual attendance not taken.

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
January 2019 - March 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/25/19	2/22/19	3/22/19	4/26/19	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20	2/28/20	3/27/20
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	*
Paul Knippel	Frisco	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
Chiamin Korngiebel	Dallas	A	P	A	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	*
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A	A(R)	E(R)	*
Eron Linn	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	A	*
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	--	P	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	A	P	P	P	*
Paul Luedtke	Garland	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A	P	*
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	*
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	*
Wes McClure	Mesquite	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Brian Moen	Frisco	E(R)	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	*
Mark Nelson	Richardson	P	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	*
Jim O'Connor	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
Kevin Overton	Dallas	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P	A	A	P	*
Tim Palermo	DCTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Todd Plesko	DART	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	*
Shawn Poe	Richardson	P	R	P	E(R)	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	*
John Polster	Denton County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Tim Porter	Wylie	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*
Bryan G. Ramey II	Duncanville	P	P	A	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P	P	A	A	A(R)	*
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	P	*
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	P	A	P	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	*
David Salmon	Lewisville	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	*
Brian Shewski	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	A	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	*
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	--	--	--	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	*
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Cheryl Taylor	Cleburne	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	*
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	P	P	A	A	*
Dave Timbrell	Garland	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*
Press Tompkins	Greenville	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	*
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*
Daniel Vedral	Irving	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*

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MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE March 27, 2020

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, March 27, 2020, at 1:30 pm, by WebEx/audio conference. The Regional Transportation Council Bylaws establish that the Technical Committee approved membership in attendance at a meeting shall constitute a quorum for action to be taken, therefore individual attendance was not taken for committee members or other participants.

1. **Approval of February 28, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the February 28, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Daniel Vedral (M); John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** A recommendation for Regional Transportation Council approval of revisions to the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), provided in Electronic Item 2.1, along with the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program and other planning documents with TIP-related changes, was requested.
 - 2.2. **Western Extrusions Transit Pilot Funding:** A recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to utilize existing Regional Toll Revenue funds previously authorized by the RTC for transit projects in an amount not to exceed \$325,000 to provide funding to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to enhance connectivity between Western Extrusions and DART service areas, was requested.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. John Polster (M); Onyinye Akujuo (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **2021 Unified Transportation Program and Regional 10-Year Plan Update:** Michael Morris provided an update regarding the 2020 and 2021 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). Members were provided a letter from the Texas Legislature to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) in Electronic Item 3.1 and a copy of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution approved at the March 12, 2020, meeting regarding comments to the 2020 UTP proposed update in Electronic Item 3.2. He noted that staff was preparing a transmittal to the members of the North Texas legislative delegation, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the State of Texas, private-sector leadership groups, and other interested stakeholders encouraging participation in the Texas Department of Transportation public involvement process for the 2020 UTP proposed update. As presented at previous meetings, the TTC has proposed to build IH 35 in Austin without a tolled component using revenues from across the state. The RTC does not agree with the TTC plan and has proposed an alternative. Regarding the 2021 UTP, there is not enough funding to advance projects; however, the RTC has instructed staff to continue with the inclusion of project commitments as negotiations proceed. The TTC is expected to take action on the 2021 UTP in the summer. Mr. Morris discussed the current impact of oil prices and the anticipated revenue from Proposition 1 and Proposition 7, as well as potentially reduced fuel tax revenue and the impact this may have on available funding. He noted that

staff will continue to work with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as instructed on the 2021 UTP project listings and continue to communicate the RTC's position on the 2020 UTP proposed update. Mr. also provided updated information on the public involvement period. The public comment period for the project was originally March 13-April 13, 2020, but has been extended to April 24, 2020. In addition, the public hearing scheduled for April 7, 2020, has been postponed until April 24, 2002, at 10 am. Members will be provided the RTC's position and associated information by email following the meeting.

4. **Letters to the Texas Department of Transportation on High-Speed Rail:** Michael Morris discussed proposed letters to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) regarding high-speed rail. For the Fort Worth to Laredo High-Speed Transportation Study, staff will request the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approve a letter addressing the path forward to conduct the Tier II environmental document. The letter will document the enthusiasm of the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) within the corridor for the opportunity to have intercity connections and formally transmit the positions of those stakeholders to the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). The final report for the corridor is expected in April 2020. Mr. Morris also discussed the Virgin Hyperloop Once Hyperloop Certification Center and noted that a letter of support has not been received from the TxDOT to date. The RTC will also be asked to take action on a letter formally requesting TxDOT support of the region's proposal for a Hyperloop Certification Center in the SH 360 corridor right-of-way. A third letter will be requested regarding the Tier II environmental document that the North Central Texas Council of Governments is conducting between Dallas and Fort Worth. Negotiations are ongoing with the preferred engineering firm for consultant assistance on environmental clearance of the corridor. Additional funding may be needed depending on the monetary value of the environmental work previously conducted by TxDOT. A funding amount has not been published in order to not undermine current negotiations.
5. **Start of 2020 Ozone Season: A New Day:** Jenny Narvaez provided an update on the region's 2020 ozone season, which began on March 1. At the end of the 2019 ozone season, the region's design value was 77 parts per billion (ppb). The region remains in nonattainment for both the 2015 and 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. Ozone values for 2020 are significant because the results will be averaged with results from the 2018 and 2019 seasons and used to determine if the region comes into attainment under both the 2015 and 2008 standards. Ms. Narvaez noted that along with air quality monitoring, staff will be extending its monitoring to vehicle miles traveled for heavy-duty, medium-duty, and light-duty vehicles, as well as gasoline sales, diesel sales, transit ridership and congestion. In addition, staff has coordinated with the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport to monitor various airport data. For example, NASA satellite imagery has shown that since COVID-19 restrictions have impacted daily behaviors, a reduction of NOx in early-impacted cities has been seen. A snapshot of China on January 1, 2020, and February 10-15, 2020, was shown, as well as snapshots of Italy on February 24 and March 8, 2020. Both show significant decreases in NOx emissions. Images are also expected from various cities around the United States such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Ms Narvaez noted that staff will continue to provide monthly updates throughout the 2020 ozone season.
6. **Completion of Transit-Oriented Development Parking Study:** Travis Liska presented information on the findings of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) parking utilization and management study that was completed in 2019. Funding was made available for the study through a Federal Transit Administration grant to advance TOD planning. Planning

funds were tied to 28 Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Red and Blue Line stations receiving capital funding for platform extensions. It was noted that work under this grant included parking, the focus of the presentation, but also included other TOD elements that will be presented in the future. Parking is an important element of Transit Oriented Development because if not done appropriately and not considered with care, it can undermine TOD goals. To help better plan for parking so it does not undermine TOD, staff identified the need to do a study to generate data and information that leads to better parking policies for the public sector. Staff approached 16 private developments who agreed for staff to conduct onsite observations for a continuous 72 hours to understand parking utilization at each of the developments, all of which were within walking distance and with good pedestrian connections to DART stations. Staff found that overall, most sites used less parking than what was supplied by the developer/required by cities. Key findings of the study indicated the site/garage parking is not reaching optimal utilization, with approximately 4,500 spaces unused over the three-day period. In addition, findings indicated that significantly less parking is utilized at workforce affordable housing developments compared to higher-end multifamily housing in the same corridor. This is important because construction of parking spaces is costly, making it more expensive to build affordable workforce housing. In addition, previously conducted onboard transit surveys indicate that most transit ridership comes from low to moderate income households. This is a significant finding to consider and continue to study as strategies to increase ridership are determined. Another key point from the study for consideration is the private sector influence to build beyond the minimum number of parking spaces required by cities. In speaking with developers and others, the influence of lenders, brokers, and tenants in determining the supply of parking is an important consideration and communication with these stakeholders is crucial to achieve public goals. To help advance the conversation for both the public and private sector, a toolbox has been created where agencies can find the study and relevant data, as well as a list of 15 parking management strategies. The strategies focus on efficient use of existing parking spaces through shared parking and public parking incentives, as well as smarter development codes that refine requirements to focus more on data and market forces and leveraging technology to help connect drivers with spaces and achieve optimal utilization. He noted that additional details of the study were available online at www.parkingtoolboxntx.org.

7. **Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Report:** Natalie Bettger presented the most recent managed lane subsidy performance report. A map of the managed lane facilities within the region in which the high-occupancy discount is applied was highlighted. As of January 2020, the current subsidy paid by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is approximately \$5.5 million. In addition, approximately \$12,000 in requests for reimbursements from vanpool users have been received. At this time, staff proposed that the RTC keep the HOV policy at 2+ users and will continue to provide quarterly updates. She also noted there have been no additional North Texas Tollway Authority customer service needs to date and the speeds on the tolled managed lane facilities have not dropped below 35 miles per hour at the fault of the developer. A table outlining the subsidy by corridor was highlighted. Ms. Bettger also provided an update on the GoCarma application that went live on January 24, 2020. The application automatically detects the number of passengers in a user's vehicle and applies the discounted toll rate for HOV users. Since the launch, over 61,000 visits have been made to the website and over 29,000 have registered for the application. In addition, over 5,500 occupant passes have been requested. Also highlighted was HOV discount data, including total transactions for corridors operated by both LBJ/NTE Partners and the Texas Department of Transportation from January 24-March 20, 2020. Of the over 394,000 Carma transactions, approximately 40 percent of the

users are actual HOVs. Unique user data by roadway operator is also available. Ms. Bettger also provided a high-level overview of the violation identification process. An initial 90-day grace period has been established, which begins once a user activates the vehicle pass. The violation process begins with a notification of general information, notifying the violator of the proper use for the equipment. The process then escalates over a series of three notifications, followed by a 30-day suspension period if the user behavior remains unchanged. She noted that this notification process addresses concerns by RTC and Committee members that there would be those who attempt to circumvent the system. In closing, Ms. Bettger presented future data items that would be provided as part of the quarterly report including total and HOV transactions by corridor, average speed on managed lanes by corridor, and average speeds on general purpose lanes by corridor. This will allow staff to bring back general performance metrics for each of the corridors. In addition, she noted that staff was open to other ideas/requests from members.

8. **Fiscal Year 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Discretionary Grant Program:** Jeff Neal briefed the Committee on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program. Approximately \$1 billion is available for FY2020 and details for the grant program, including application requirements, were provided in https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2020-02/BUILD%202020%20NOFO_0.pdf. He noted that many items such as award requests, distribution, and deadlines fall in line with previous calls for projects and that to date, no announcements of COVID-19 impacts to the schedule have been released. Applications are due May 18, 2020. Of note is a recent directive that if an entity is submitting on-system projects on the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) behalf where TxDOT will ultimately act as the grant recipient or implementing agency Texas Transportation Commission approval is needed advance of the application submittal. Knowing how complex this process could potentially be, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff has worked during this round to identify project candidates that are not on-system. For that reason, NCTCOG will likely submit one project on the region's rail system and two roadway projects, one for each subregion. Staff proposed to advance another iteration of the North Texas MOVES Program that includes improvements along the Trinity Railway Express corridor in partnership with Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), and Trinity Metro. NCTCOG believes this continues to be an attractive project submittal because of the partnership aspect and improvements for both freight and passenger rail. For the eastern subregion roadway project, staff proposed mobility enhancements in the area surrounding the IIPOD facility in partnership with Dallas County. This will include various thoroughfare improvements to accommodate advanced transit connectivity to help transfer employees between transit and employment centers. For the western subregion roadway project, staff proposed submittal of the East-West Connector known as the extension of Harwood Road east of SH 360 to connect with Rental Car Drive that will create a direct link between Euless and Irving. This project is in partnership with the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and the Federal Aviation Administration. Staff efforts to determine project funding sources, amounts, and what the specific BUILD grant request will include are being finalized. Additional candidate recommendations were welcomed through Friday, April 3, 2020. All candidate projects must be consistent with Mobility 2045 recommendations. He added that staff is available to provide additional technical assistance to entities if requests are received in a timely manner. Agencies interested in receiving a letter of support from the Regional Transportation Council must submit requests to Rebekah Hernandez by Friday, May 1, 2020. Committee action on the proposed project applications is expected at the April 24, 2020, meeting. Michael Morris discussed the IIPOD Enhanced Mobility Project and the

importance of proposing a project that will seem attractive to Washington in a post COVID-19 environment, compared to a traditional thoroughfare street project. The IIPOD Enhanced Mobility Project will include a no-cost transit proposal that will be important to allow employees in the southern sector an opportunity to have access to employment centers, considering the potential large unemployment rate from COVID-19 impacts. Efforts could include subsidized transit fares, improvements to thoroughfare streets in the southern sector, and the potential to use underutilized transit vehicles as part of the project. Alberta Blair, Dallas County, thanked staff for their efforts and discussed ongoing discussions with Commissioner John Wiley Price. Mr. Morris noted he spoke with Commissioner Price earlier in the day and noted his passion about another east/west thoroughfare street in Dallas County. He added that staff will continue with efforts to fund transportation in the region through traditional ways, but that in this case staff believes the IIPOD Enhanced Mobility Project may be more competitive. Erin Linn, DART, asked for additional details about no-cost transit. Mr. Morris provided brief details but noted that additional details of the project are in the development stage. As DART comes out of the spring, into the summer it will hopefully have the backbone of a rail system but may not necessarily the number of desired users so the proposed project would subsidize users of the rail system, especially those headed south. This will help with DART's ridership gain in the southern sector headed to the rail station just south of the University of North Texas. Since all of the fixed-route buses may not be back to work, the proposed project could enable the purchase of new, smaller, and alternative-fuel-based buses, as well compensate the otherwise unpaid bus drivers, at our cost to circulate employees to warehouse employers on variable routes as part of the TMA related to the IIPOD. These are low to middle income, traditional transit users that may be financially desperate because of the current high unemployment rates. Staff's goal is to lay out a full turnkey package that includes subsidized transit fares, payment for new vehicles and their operating expenses, and intersection improvements. The project would produce a win-win situation for both thoroughfare street improvements and transit. People can get back to work and have means to use better transit in the process. He noted this is not a permanent solution because it may impact areas that are not part of the current DART transit service. Alberta Blair asked if a letter of support is needed from the TMA. Mr. Morris noted that a letter of support would be helpful, but that the group should not be brought together just for the purpose of providing a letter of support.

9. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.
 1. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle Round 4 (Electronic Item 9.1)
 2. Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement (Electronic Item 9.2)
 3. Dallas-Fort Worth Area High Occupancy Vehicle Transportation Control Measure Substitution (Electronic Item 9.3)
 4. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings>)
 5. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>)
 6. Mobility Matters (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/about/publications/mm/mobility-matters-winter-2020>)
 7. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 9.4)
 8. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 9.5)
 - Transportation Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 9.6)

10. **Other Business (Old and New):** John Polster requested that North Central Texas Council of Governments staff provide the Committee with data or information related to ramp metering as the region considers data related to how managed lanes improve travel times on the managed lanes themselves and also on general purpose lanes. He noted it was important to remove the argument that ramp metering should be used versus tolled managed lanes. Mr. Morris noted that the suggestion has been made that citizens should not be tolled but that ramp metering be used to manage the transportation system. He discussed various options for ramp metering and limitations related to many of the existing ramps because of their design. He noted that the Committee should work with the Texas Department of Transportation districts within the region to develop a short paper, previous to the legislative session, regarding whether there are existing ramps in the region on which ramp metering could be demonstrated to provide data to show that it is not a viable solution to manage the transportation system.
11. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on April 24, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.



A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

May 2020

INSIDE

NCTCOG unveils interactive map tool

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is now accepting public input through a new online mapping tool.

Map Your Own Experience is easy to use and designed to help NCTCOG incorporate public input into its work to develop innovative solutions to regional transportation issues.

Read about how this new tool can help you connect with the planning process and contribute to a more reliable transportation system on page 3.

Bike Month takes broader approach with COVID-19

May is National Bike Month, a coast-to-coast celebration of bicycling as a healthy alternative to motorized transportation. With a larger share of the nation's population currently working from home, many people are looking to bicycling as a fun and simple way to remain active.

Regionwide, bicycling has been on the rise since early March. Data from bicycle and pedestrian counters along various Dallas-Fort Worth area trails shows an average daily increase of more than 200%.

The League of American Bicyclists decided to postpone this year's Bike to Work Week until September 21-27. Bike to Work Day will take place on September 22, coinciding with Car Free Day.

Bike to Work Day traditionally takes place during Bike to Work Week in May. It entails outreach at transit stops and jobsites, where advocates offer refreshments and information to commuters who choose bicycling as an alternative to driving for the day.

Many agencies and community groups are viewing the postponement as an opportunity to support bicycling through a more holistic approach. Rather than focusing on a one-day event, support for active transportation may be more broadly and effectively promoted throughout the entire month, with a greater focus on bicycling to the grocery store or with the family than to the office.

On its website, the League noted that bicycling is an "essential need" during this time of restricted travel for households that may have limited or no access to vehicles, as well as for those who "need to get out and be active while maintaining distance from others."

For more information about Bike Month, visit www.bikeleague.org/bikemonth, and for safety tips for all road users visit www.lookouttexans.org.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

For more information about Local Motion topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department.

Regional transit survey postponed due to COVID-19

The 2020 transit survey has been temporarily postponed due to COVID-19. The survey is being conducted in coordination with the region's three transit agencies – Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Denton County Transportation Authority and Trinity Metro – and is being completed in two phases.

The first type is a stop-to-stop survey and will help planners understand passenger trip patterns on each bus route and rail line. The second type of survey will be conducted through interviews with easily identifiable personnel.

Surveys of DART, TRE, the Dallas Streetcar, and the M-Line Trolley passengers began in February and were to conclude in May.

However, with changes necessitated by the ongoing pandemic, the transit survey has been postponed. NCTCOG is monitoring the situation and will coordinate with the transit agencies to determine when to resume the survey.

The goal of the surveys is to determine how riders are using the expanding transit system and what changes could be made in the future to better accommodate the needs of the rapidly growing region. Transit will continue to be a key component of the regional transportation system with Dallas-Fort Worth adding more than 1 million people per decade.

For more information please visit www.nctcog.org/transitsurvey2020.

HNTB selected to study high-speed alternatives in Dallas-Fort Worth

The NCTCOG Executive Board has approved a contract with the consulting firm HNTB Corp. to study high-speed transportation options in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington corridor. HNTB will provide technical support for the analysis of potential alternatives, operations/service planning and preliminary engineering, as well as environmental documentation for high-speed passenger service between Dallas and Fort Worth.

As part of the study, HNTB and local transportation planners are investigating the best high-speed transportation option to link residents across North Texas to the proposed high-speed rail service expected to be built between Dallas and Houston. Also, connection to a potential system from Fort Worth to Laredo will be studied.

Additionally, North Texas is under consideration for a Hyperloop Certification Center, where hyperloop technology would be tested for implementation across the US.



The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many schedule changes, including the postponement of the 2020 transit survey.

LEARNING AT HOME

NCTCOG offers kids fun transportation activities

Balancing home schooling our kids with getting our own work done while at home flattening the curve can be a challenge.

Area school districts are doing a nice job supplying at-home learning. But what happens for children not old enough to attend school yet? Or when those who do are finished with their classwork and you have a few hours of work left to go?

NCTCOG has put together resources for kids of all ages to teach them about transportation and air quality along with the three R's.

There are coloring activities, opportunities for kids to design a helmet – or even create a car! – and trivia to test their knowledge about air quality, bike safety and clean vehicles.

Additionally, online tours and field trips from many cool transportation-related museums are available at the click of a mouse or the tap of a finger. Just visit www.nctcog.org/trans/about/educate/transportation-activities for these and other activities.

And be sure to check out the NCTCOG Transportation Department social media pages often for more fun and games.

REGIONALNews

Transit agencies receive federal COVID-19 help

The Regional Transportation Council approved allocations of more than \$300 million to area transit agencies in April in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Federal Transit Administration funding is meant to help transit providers affected by the change in travel patterns brought about by stay-at-home orders across the nation.

The funding was awarded to agencies in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas, with DART, DCTA and Trinity Metro receiving most of the money.

NCTCOG is responsible for administering approximately \$11 million of the funding for five smaller agencies, known as subrecipients. A final determination on what they will receive is expected this month.

Department launches new interactive map tool

NCTCOG's Transportation Department is now accepting public input through a new online mapping tool. Map Your Experience is intuitive and designed to help NCTCOG use public input to collaborate with partners and develop innovative solutions for regional transportation issues.

Members of the public can provide as many comments as they wish as well as browse and comment on pins placed by others on the map. Providing personal information is optional and will not be visible to others in the tool. However, users will be asked to provide their ZIP code to help staff better serve their community as well as communities across the region.

The tool is currently in beta test mode and is open to the public. Staff will reassess the tool in the fall to ensure it is fully functional and meeting users' needs.

Comments from the test period will be used to guide upcoming planning efforts, including an update to Mobility 2045, the region's long-range metropolitan transportation plan.

Be heard. Help us plan for the future and share your transportation experience at

www.nctcog.org/mapyourexperience.

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

**Texas Department
of Transportation**
TxDOT.gov

Trinity Metro
RideTrinityMetro.org

By the Numbers

\$11 million

The approximate amount of COVID-19 federal transit funding NCTCOG is administering for the region's smaller transit agencies.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

Online input opportunity begins May 11

North Texans can provide online input for regional transportation planning and air quality initiatives beginning May 11.

NCTCOG staff will post information related to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the State's 10-Year Plan and several air quality projects. Comments will be accepted through June 9 at www.nctcog.org/input.

The NCTCOG Transportation Department maintains several long-range planning documents, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and 10-Year Plan.

The MTP has a planning horizon of at least 20 years and guides the expenditure of federal and State transportation funding. The 10-Year Plan identifies major projects to be implemented in the region by Fiscal Year 2030.

Details on a planned update to the current MTP, known as Mobility 2045, and the 10-Year Plan will be provided for review and comment.

Staff will also post presentations related to the current ozone season, impacts from COVID-19 on the transportation system and an update on two upcoming fleet data collection projects for natural gas and electric vehicles.

The new interactive mapping tool, updated Air Quality Handbook, Regional Smoking Vehicle Program and vehicle incentive opportunities will also be highlighted.

An audio recording of the presentations will be posted at www.nctcog.org/input.

To request printed copies of the presentations to be discussed, contact Carli Baylor at 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Prepared in cooperation with the US Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) and the Texas Department of Transportation. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration or the Texas Department of Transportation.