

AGENDA

**Regional Transportation Council
Thursday, December 9, 2021
Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas
Exhibit Hall B, 1st Floor, 500 W. Las Colinas Blvd., Irving, TX 75039**

Members of the public may view a livestream of the RTC meeting at
www.nctcog.org/video under the "live" tab.

10:30 am – 11:30 am **RTC Member Orientation Meeting**

11:30 am – 12:30 pm **RTC Member Lunch**

1:00 pm **Full RTC Business Agenda**

- 1:00 – 1:10** 1. **Opportunity for Public Comment on Today's Agenda**
 Information Minutes: 10
Item Summary: This item provides an opportunity for the public to comment on today's meeting agenda items. Please provide a Speaker Request Card, available at the meeting, to the North Central Texas Council of Governments designated staff person. For today's meeting, public comments will be heard on all items.
Background: N/A
- 1:10 – 1:15** 2. **Approval of November 11, 2021, Minutes**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Theresa Daniel, RTC Chair
Item Summary: Approval of the November 11, 2021, 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. **Air Quality Funding Recommendations Related to the Environmental Protection Agency National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program**
Presenter: Lori Clark, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council approval of funding recommendations for the Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 Call for Projects (CFP).
Background: The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) opened three different calls for projects in October 2020 under three separate Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program awards: 1) the Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 CFP, 2) the North Texas Emissions Reduction Project 2020 CFP, and 3) the North Texas Freight Terminal Electrification 2020 CFP. These CFPs

award funds for diesel vehicle or equipment replacement projects and installation of EPA-verified electrified parking spaces and related infrastructure in North Central Texas. NCTCOG opened a fourth CFP, the North Texas Clean Diesel Projects 2021, in October 2021 to provide rebates to replace older, high-emitting diesel-powered vehicles, engines, and equipment, in addition to locomotive engine idle reduction technology. Funds for the North Texas Emissions Reduction Project have been exhausted, while Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 and North Texas Freight Terminal Electrification 2020 continued until the most recent application deadline of October 8, 2021. One application was received by this deadline for Clean Fleets North Texas 2020. Staff has completed review, quantified emissions, and developed project funding recommendations. This initiative is an extension of clean vehicle efforts listed as Weight-of-Evidence in the current State Implementation Plan. [Electronic Item 3.1.1](#) provides an overview of the call for projects and staff recommendations. [Electronic Item 3.1.2](#) provides detailed project listings.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality

1:20 – 1:35

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

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

1. Welcome and Introduction of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Members
2. 2022 RTC Business Meeting Schedule ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
3. Summary of RTC Member Orientation Meeting
4. Importance of Balanced Media Interviews
5. Progress North Texas and Other RTC Material (Handout)
6. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Awards
7. Southeast Connector Project Approved by the Texas Transportation Commission (Four Phases)
8. Update on North Tarrant Express Segment 2E
9. Update on Texas Central Partners: Loan Collateral
10. Statewide Safety Task Force: Results of Second Meeting
11. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events
(<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
12. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles
(<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
13. Status Report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
14. Status Report on Vehicle Temporary Paper Tags ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
15. Monthly Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops
(<https://www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops>)

- 16. October Public Meeting Minutes-Additional Comments ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
- 17. December Online Input Opportunity Notice ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
- 18. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
- 19. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
- 20. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
- 21. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.9](#))

1:35 – 1:45

5. **Mobility 2045 Update and Demographic Assumptions**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenters: Dan Kessler and Brendon Wheeler, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045, as well as on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment forecasts for the Metropolitan Area.

Background: Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018. Federal guidelines require the Dallas-Fort Worth region to update the long-range transportation plan a minimum of every four years. Development of the Mobility 2045 Update is currently underway which will include a new financial plan and necessary refinements to projects in the current Mobility 2045 plan. In addition, the North Central Texas Council of Governments is currently developing new forecasts of demographic activity out to the year 2045, which will be used to support the ongoing update of Mobility 2045.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Transit

1:45 – 1:55

6. **Freight Safety Campaign**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Jeff Hathcock, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update to the Council on the 2021 Freight Safety Initiative and its performance measures. The Initiative took place in May 2021 and ended in September 2021.

Background: North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff designed the Freight Safety Initiative to create a safer environment for commuters, commercial motor vehicle operators, and anyone else traveling on North Texas roadways. The goal of the initiative is to create awareness and focus on the importance of safe practices around freight movement. NCTCOG collaborated with partners such as Operation Lifesaver to help promote rail safety. As part of the safety initiative, advertisements were purchased and created across multiple platforms, including billboards, podcasts, social media, and radio. More information can be found in [Electronic Item 6](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety

1:55 – 2:05

7. **Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County Transit Studies Recommendations**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Shannon Stevenson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an overview of study recommendations resulting from the Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County Transit Studies.

Background: In 2018, the Regional Transportation Council approved funding for staff to conduct an independent transit needs assessment and develop a comprehensive approach to planning and implementing transit services in Collin, Southern Dallas, and Tarrant counties focusing on areas outside of transit authority service areas. Consultant assistance was utilized for each transit study.

The first phase of each study consisted of evaluating existing conditions as well as transit needs and demand. The second phase consisted of developing potential transit service options based on transit needs/demand and existing conditions identified in the first phase. Service cost estimates and service delivery options associated with the recommended services were also developed. Additionally, implementation strategies that support recommended service options were developed and serve as a roadmap for affected municipalities and partners to collaboratively work towards service implementation. Staff will provide an overview of the studies' recommendations for the Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County transit studies. More details can be found in [Electronic Item 7](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit

2:05 – 2:15

8. **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Overview**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Rebekah Gongora, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an overview of the new federal infrastructure bill, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, as it relates to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Background: This item will allow staff to provide updates on key positions of the Regional Transportation Council. The 117th US Congress convened on January 3, 2021, and approved the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on November 5, 2021. President Biden signed the bill into law on November 15, 2021. The new law includes a five-year surface transportation reauthorization, as well as additional funding and programs for other infrastructure.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Air Quality

2:15 – 2:25

9. **End of 2021 Ozone Season: Focus on Flat Progress**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Jenny Narvaez, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide a summary of the 2021 ozone season activity and other air quality updates for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region. The ozone season is from March 1 to November 30.

Background: The end of November concluded another ozone season for the DFW region. The region continues to work towards compliance for ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Staff has been tracking the exceedance days at each monitor and will provide a summary of the 2021 ozone season data for the North Central Texas 9- and 10-county nonattainment areas.

As a reminder, the region remains in nonattainment for both the 2015 and 2008 NAAQS for ozone. Staff will present an update on current air quality standings, compare current standings against previous ozone seasons, and highlight potential implications facing the region for not meeting federal attainment requirements. For further information see [Electronic Item 9](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality

10. **Progress Reports**

Action Possible Action Information

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

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 10.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 10.2](#))
- Local Motion (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/about/publications/locmo/local-motion-december-2021>)

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

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

13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for **1:00 pm, Thursday, January 13, 2022.**

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
November 11, 2021**

The November 11, 2021, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) was conducted as a videoconference via Zoom. Staff conducted a roll call of members, and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the videoconference: Richard E. Aubin, Chad West (representing Adam Bazaldua), Elizabeth M. Beck, Gyna Bivens, Mohammed Bur, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Janet DePuy, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Raul H. Gonzalez, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Roger Harmon, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Brandon Jones, Mike Leyman, Alison Maguire, B. Adam McGough, Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Omar Narvaez, Philip J. Ritter, Jim R. Ross, Chris Schulmeister, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, and Gary Slagel (representing Michele Wong Krause). Individual attendance was not taken for non-RTC member attendees.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Today's Agenda:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to comment on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Theresa M. Daniel asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to comment.

2. **Approval of the October 14, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the October 14, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. Richard E. Aubin (M); Duncan Webb (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 3.1 **Blue-Green-Grey Applications for New Ideas Round 3-Project Funding Recommendations:** A motion was made to approve award of funding for implementation of selected projects in the Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3. Additional information on application scoring was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.1, and staff award recommendations were included in Electronic Item 3.1.2.

A motion was made to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. Dianne Costa (M); B. Glen Whitley (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Whitney Vandiver presented the recipients of the 2021 Air North Texas Partner Awards: Outstanding Advertising, City of Grand Prairie; Outstanding Initiative, City of Dallas; Outstanding Outreach, City of Plano; Arlo Ambassador, City of Grand Prairie; and Partner of the Year, City of Cedar Hill. Michael Morris noted that he continued to work with Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Theresa Daniel regarding holding the December 9 RTC Orientation Meeting and Business Meeting in person at an offsite location. He noted the orientation meeting material and video will be provided to members before the December meeting for their review. He discussed various items recently presented within the region noting that he was recently asked to represent the City of Dallas on the presentation of the World Cup 2026 location in North America. He also noted that Chair Daniel and several members attended the recent Greater Dallas Planning Council meeting. In addition, he noted the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Statewide Safety Task Force was moving ahead on efforts to reduce the number of fatalities and the fatality rate in the state. The status of Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

Grant applications submitted by RTC/TxDOT was also highlighted and he discussed efforts to provide safety vests to RTC members for use in the field. Mr. Morris also noted that staff was asked to submit comments on House Transportation Committee interim charges and that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was approved on November 6 and becomes effective October 1, 2021. The bill totals \$1.2 trillion with approximately half as the five-year surface transportation reauthorization. The remaining half is for other infrastructure spending such as water, broadband, and SmartCities technology. He noted that staff would continue to monitor the internet component. In addition, he noted that efforts were still underway to have an electric vehicle manufacturing facility locate within the region. Remaining items in the Director of Transportation report were flagged. The Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.1. Crash Responder Safety Week will be held November 8-14, 2021. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events were available at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>, and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were available at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>. Electronic Item 4.2 contained a status report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding and Electronic Item 4.3 contained the current ozone status report. Information about upcoming monthly Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops was provided at <https://www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops>. October public meeting minutes were provided in Electronic Item 4.4. The current Public Comment Report was provided Electronic Item 4.5. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 4.6, recent news articles in Electronic Item 4.7, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.8.

5. **Endorsement of Economic Development Grant Opportunity Project Applications:**

Michael Morris presented project applications submitted as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding opportunities through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBRC). The first project submittal is the North Texas Information Technology Workforce Collaborative, submitted in partnership with Southern Methodist University (SMU) who would lead the project. SMU's application included eight total project clusters. The Creating Equitable Opportunities in Automated Vehicle Freight Applications project cluster will be led by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The project will address first mile goods movement through automated trucks and last mile goods movement through automated aircraft delivery. The second project application was submitted and will be led by the Center for Houston's Future, titled Becoming a Global Hydrogen Hub. Included in the application is a proposed project to add a hydrogen fuel station to the IH 45 corridor. NCTCOG will provide support as a project partner. The final project is to Lead the Transition of Freight Transportation in the Texas Triangle through Advanced Technologies and Innovative Policies on Equity and Sustainability. Submitted and led by the University of Texas at Arlington, the project would advance freight-oriented automated surface and aerial transportation applications and be supported by NCTCOG as a project partner. Mr. Morris noted that the projects were submitted for Phase One of the BBRC competition and that staff hoped to learn of project selection to proceed to Phase Two by the end of 2021. A motion was made to endorse project applications submitted for the Economic Development Administration Build Back Better Regional Challenge. Cara Mendelsohn (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Letter of Support to Advance SH 183 Segment 2E in Tarrant and Dallas Counties:**

Michael Morris provided an update on the status of the North Tarrant Express (NTE) Segment 2E project on SH 183. He noted the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has

discussed the project benefits many times and approved a \$3 million RTC financial backstop for design elements of the project. Lane imbalances were a result of capacity improvements on the North Tarrant Express that were included under the current Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) agreement. Mr. Morris noted that direction from the Legislative Budget Board may be needed regarding whether its approval to complete Segment 2E is necessary due to the current TxDOT agreement and highlighted proposed RTC action for staff to communicate with the cities along SH 183 to request letters of support to the Legislative Budget Board for the project and to draft a letter from RTC Chair seeking direction from the Legislative Budget Board. He highlighted three elements of the proposed letter: 1) direction as to whether Segment 2E approval is needed since the project is included in an active TxDOT agreement, 2) explanation of the safety implications due to lane imbalances, and 3) showcase of the benefits of tolled managed lanes for the region. Letters of support assembled to date were provided in Electronic Item 6. A motion was made to approve staff communication to entities along the SH 183 corridor requesting letters of support for the North Tarrant Express Segment 2E project and for the Regional Transportation Council Chair to communicate with senior State officials and members of the Legislative Budget Board. T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (M); Janet DePuy (S). The motion passed unanimously.

7. **High-Speed Rail Support for Texas Central Partners:** Michael Morris provided a report on high-speed rail from Houston to Dallas and presented a recommendation to aid in advancing the engineering of the City of Dallas Floodway Extension. He highlighted the levee expansion south of downtown Dallas implemented to protect downstream neighborhoods in the area. Dallas to Houston high-speed rail design near the levee requires a concrete slurry wall instead of a traditional dirt levee. Advancement of the engineering for the floodway extension is estimated at approximately \$800,000 and needed by the end of November 2021 to prevent project delay. Texas Central Partners is unable to release the funding at this time and has requested assistance from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC). Staff proposed to loan Texas Central Partners \$800,000 in RTC Local funds at the standard interest rate of 2.4 percent, to be provided to the City of Dallas for the floodway extension. He noted staff was negotiating the loan timeframe, which is expected to be approximately one year. In addition, negotiations on collateral to ensure repayment of the loan was being discussed as part of the loan agreement. Mr. Morris noted that it was important at this point in the planning process that the project is not held up and that the station location remains in the City of Dallas. RTC Vice Chair Duncan Webb asked for details of the repayment security. Ken Kirkpatrick noted that the security interest would be a promissory note secured by parcels of land to which the RTC would be the first lien holder. Staff is working on the valuation of the parcels to ensure they would be sufficient collateral to cover the \$800,000 loan in the event of nonpayment. Repayment is expected to be the earlier of December 31, 2022, or upon permanent financial close on the project by Texas Central, debt or equity financing, or sale of the parcels held for collateral whichever is earlier. Cara Mendelsohn thanked staff for their efforts to support rail while also considering the importance of protecting citizens from flooding concerns. A motion was made to approve a loan of approximately \$800,000 in RTC Local funds to Texas Central Partners to advance the engineering of the City of Dallas Floodway Extension in partnership with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The loan will include a 2.4 percent interest rate and legal agreements for ensuring repayment to the Regional Transportation Council. Dianne Costa (M); Cara Mendelsohn (S). The motion passed unanimously.

8. **2023-2026 Management and Operations, Regional/Air Quality, and Safety Funding Program:** Christie Gotti provided an overview of the 2023-2026 Management and Operations, Regional/Air Quality, and Safety Funding Program. Both the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and Regional Transportation Council (RTC) typically consider extending existing and funding new programs in these categories every few years. Projects/programs funded through this effort were last considered in the 2018-2019 timeframe and were funded through fiscal year (FY) 2022. The next round of funding will cover fiscal years 2023-2026 to coincide with the timeframe of the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Staff has begun reviewing a subset of projects within the agency and coordinating with local partners to ensure that existing programs and projects can continue without interruption. The purpose of the program is to supplement Transportation Planning Funds to enable operations, planning, and implementation activities to be conducted by North Central Texas Council of Governments staff, as well as activities that are above and beyond those allowed using federal planning funds. In addition, it assigns resources for air quality and operational activities identified by the RTC either through the air quality conformity process or the mobility plan. In general, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Regional Toll Revenue (RTR), and RTC Local funds will likely be proposed for FY2023-FY2026. Approximately \$15-20 million is expected to be programmed per fiscal year, dependent on the amount of federal planning funds received. It was noted a significant portion of the funding is passed through to other agencies with the remaining used to cover North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff time. Program and project types typically included in this initiative are management and operation activities such as the Mobility Assistance Patrol program and Transit Operations. Also included are NCTCOG-implemented projects such as modeling and planning efforts, as well as air quality programs and projects such as Freeway Incident Management, Employer Trip Reduction, data collection, Regional Traffic Signal Retiming, and others. The importance of these types of programs to air quality were highlighted. As a nonattainment region, these projects contribute to emissions reductions and in the past have been one of the factors that have helped the region to pass air quality conformity. Ms. Gotti noted that in addition to the three project groups, staff proposed to include efforts to be conducted as part of the statewide safety program and that a more detailed proposal will be brought back to the Council for review. As part of that presentation, staff will also present details of the plan to utilize Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding that was added to the region's STBG allocation in FY2022. Ms. Gotti noted that staff will continue to finalize funding amounts and the list of projects and programs to be recommended for funding. The information will be provided to the public, as well as the Committee and Regional Transportation Council, for review. She noted the item may not be finalized until January 2022, and that staff may bring back FY2023 projects separately in order to include those projects in the TIP so that funds are available at the beginning of FY2023. Details were provided in Electronic Item 8.
9. **North Central Texas Council of Governments Demographic Forecast Status Report:** Dan Kessler provided an update on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment for the Metropolitan Area. He highlighted the demographic forecasting process which includes determining control totals for population and employment by reviewing external forecasts from national demographers and economists. In addition, a comprehensive inventory of individual parcel data for the 16-county region is incorporated, as well as land use and comprehensive plans laid out by local governments. New population control totals for the region out to 2045 were received which estimated 11.5 million people by 2045. Draft population estimates by county were highlighted, and the average compound

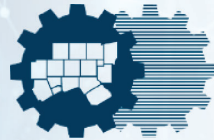
annual growth rate of 2 percent was noted. By 2045, Dallas and Tarrant Counties are projected to add over one million people. Perimeter counties are also predicted to have significant growth. The location of current population was shown comparing 2015, 2030, and 2045 to help provide a visual of the changes in density expected to occur in the region. A map showing changes in household and future population from 2015-2045 was also discussed. Mr. Kessler noted that control totals for employment estimate approximately 8.1 million jobs by 2045, which is faster growth rate than population. Employment data from the 2020 Census, draft 2045 forecasts, and the compound annual growth rate for the 12 counties was noted. Employment growth rate is impacted by the fact that people have multiple jobs but also due to the diverse economy of the region. Dallas County remains the economic employment center increasing by over 1.2 million additional jobs by 2045. Significant employment growth is also expected in Tarrant, Collin, and Denton counties. The location of current and future employment for 2015, 2030, and 2045 was also shown. He noted this anticipated growth creates challenges for the transportation system and staff continues to focus on efforts to provide employment access within the region. Built area, including combined population and employment data from 2015 compared to predicted data for 2030 and 2045, were compared. As expected, the centers of Dallas and Tarrant counties are built out and have minimal change. However, changes are seen in the perimeter areas of Tarrant, Denton, Collin, and Rockwall counties. Mr. Kessler reviewed the schedule for demographic forecasting efforts. Draft forecasts have been provided to local governments for their review and comment, and staff expects to finalize forecasts in the next month for presentation to the Executive Board in the spring for approval. Members were reminded that the demographic forecasting process is a joint effort between the Research and Information Services and Transportation Departments using control totals provided by external forecasts from national demographers and economists. Staff noted a copy of the slides would be provided to members of the Regional Transportation Council and Surface Transportation Technical Committee following the meeting.

10. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update:** Brendon Wheeler presented an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045. Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2018. The associated air quality conformity determination was received November 2018 and expires November 2022. Staff has begun development efforts for the Mobility 2045 Update, which will continue through the next year with an anticipated request for RTC adoption in June 2022. Major components to the plan update will include updated travel and demographic data; updated financial forecasts; project, program, and policy refinements; an updated performance-based planning framework; and updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle. Key updates will include reference to the new Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, new Executive Orders on equity, environmental considerations, and Travel Demand Management strategies. Other updates to address advances in technology will also be incorporated, including the latest recommendations for high-speed rail, advanced automated transportation systems, integration of vertical mobility technology, new automated vehicle initiatives including first and last-mile connections, and broadband access/infrastructure. Mr. Wheeler noted that as part of the Mobility 2045 Update, the MTP Policy Bundle will also be updated. The policy bundle provides opportunities to utilize Transportation Development Credits for those agencies meeting the requirements of the program and allows for those credits to be used towards local match on projects. Staff will be proposing to extend Round 4 Transportation Development Credits by an additional year to be used in FY2023, as well as updating policies as part of the Mobility 2045 Update. Details will be brought back to the Council for review before opening the next round of the MTP Policy Bundle. Additional information was provided at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress.

11. **Fiscal Year 2021/Fiscal Year 2022 Project Tracking Initiative:** Brian Dell presented a final report on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative. The project tracking initiative was implemented to address a series of project delays across the region and prevent future delays to the extent possible. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds was provided. Approximately \$94 million of the \$115.5 million in CMAQ funds allocated in FY2021 has obligated, including 29 out of 46 project phases. The remaining 17 phases were moved into subsequent fiscal years. For Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, of the \$186 million allocated approximately \$162 million has obligated including 37 out of 57 phases, with the remaining 20 phases moved into a later fiscal year. In addition, the status of FY2021 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds was highlighted. Of the \$12.4 million programmed, approximately \$9.5 million has obligated and 18 of 25 project phases. Remaining project phases were also moved to the next fiscal year. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2021 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 11.1. In summary, approximately 82 percent of CMAQ funds, 88 percent of STBG funds, and 77 percent of TA Set-Aside funds obligated in FY2021, a considerable improvement in the percentages from recent fiscal years. He noted the STBG/Category 2 funding partnership contributed to the reduction of the region's STBG carryover balances, and that sufficient TA Set-Aside funds obligated to avoid lapsing in FY2021. Mr. Dell also provided an overview of the FY2022 project funding. Approximately \$71 million in CMAQ funds is programmed across 44 project phases, \$171 million in STBG funds across 76 project phases, and \$17 million in TA Set-Aside funds across 18 project phases. Staff will continue monitoring FY2022 project progress and work with implementing agencies to resolve any issues that may be causing delays. Periodic updates to the Council will also be provided, as well as continued monitoring of projects for possible funding lapses. He noted that staff also plans to propose another STBG/Category 2 funding swap in the future to ensure that STBG carry-over balances do not accumulate. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2022, and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 11.2. Additional details on both initiatives were provided in Electronic Item 11.3. Christie Gotti discussed with members the pressure from the Texas Department of Transportation Austin to obligate funding. She thanked the Regional Transportation Council for its continued support and the progress made to date but noted that carry over balances remained and continued focus is needed.
12. **Status Report on Local Government Energy Reporting:** Lori Clark provided an overview of local government energy reporting requirements. Local government energy reporting is a State-mandated requirement in the Texas Health and Safety Code. Agencies in or near ozone nonattainment counties in Texas are required to establish a goal of reducing electricity consumption by at least 5 percent each year with a baseline of 2019 and submit an annual report to State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) regarding progress and efforts to meet the reduction goal. The North Central Texas Council of Governments staff began conducting outreach at the local level to help increase the rate of reporting and accuracy of reporting among local governments. Reporting has increased substantially since that time and a map illustrating 2020 reporting cities and counties was highlighted. Ms. Clark encouraged local governments to make members within their organizations aware of the reporting requirement and begin to prepare data for the upcoming reporting deadline on February 1, 2022. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 12 and available online at www.conservenorthtexas.org/item/local-government-energy-reporting-toolkit.
13. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 13.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 13.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 13.3.

14. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was discussion on this item.
15. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, December 9, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.



NCTCOG PRESENTATION

Air Quality Funding Recommendations Related to the Environmental Protection Agency National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program

Regional Transportation Council

December 9, 2021

Lori Clark, Program Manager

CALL FOR PROJECTS SUMMARY

NAME	PROJECT TYPES	STATUS
Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 (Bucket 1)	Replace Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles and Equipment	\$109,116 Available for October 8 Deadline
North Texas Emissions Reduction Project 2020 (Bucket 2)	Replace High-Use Diesel Vehicles/Equipment, Rail/Switch Yard Idle Reduction Technologies	Closed, Funds Exhausted
North Texas Freight Terminal Electrification 2020 (Bucket 3)	Installation of Transport Refrigerated Unit Electrified Parking Spaces, Connection Kits, Power Monitoring	On-Going, Next Deadline January 14, 2022
North Texas Clean Diesel Projects 2021 (Bucket 4)	Replace Onroad and Nonroad Diesel Engines/Vehicles/Equipment; Install Locomotive Shore Power	On-Going, Next Deadline January 14, 2022



SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS

Bucket 1*						
Applicant	Activities Requested	Applicant Eligible	Activities Eligible	Funds Requested	Recommended	
					Activities	Funds
City of Dallas	2	Yes	2	\$127,664	2	\$109,116
				Total	2	\$109,116
Funds Remaining after Recommended Subaward					\$0	

Bucket 2						
All Funds Awarded						

Bucket 3						
No Applications Received; Funds Remaining for January 14 Deadline: \$864,274						

Bucket 4						
Open; Funds Remaining for January 14 Deadline: \$1,531,290						

*Refer to Electronic Item 3.1.2 for More Details



ACTION REQUESTED

RTC Approval Of Recommended Subawards Under Clean Fleets North Texas 2020 **(Bucket 1)**:

City of Dallas Activity 1: \$63,832 to Replace 1 Diesel Dump Truck with a CNG Dump Truck (Fully Funded)

City of Dallas Activity 2: \$45,284 to Replace 1 Diesel Dump Truck with a CNG Dump Truck (Partial Award Due to Availability of Funds)

Funds Released From Prior Awards to be Applied to Activity 2

CNG = Compressed Natural Gas



SCHEDULE

Milestone	Estimated Timeframe
STTC Action to Recommend Subaward (Bucket 1)	December 3, 2021
RTC Approval of Recommended Subaward (Bucket 1)	December 9, 2021
Executive Board Authorization (Bucket 1)	January 27, 2022
Next Application Deadline (Buckets 3 and 4)	January 14, 2022
Project Implementation Deadline (Buckets 1, 2, 3)	February 26, 2023
Project Implementation Deadline (Bucket 4)	January 31, 2024



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Clean Fleets North Texas Call For Projects Funding Recommendations

Projects Recommended for Funding - CFNT 2020																												
Call for Projects	Application Deadline	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 Grant Award*	Local Match	NO _x Tons Reduced Over 6 Years**	Cost Per Ton of NO _x Reduced	Cost per Ton Rank (Max 2 Points)	Cost Per Ton NO _x Tier (Max 4 Points)	Score: Cost Per Ton NO _x Reduced (Max 75 Points)	Score: Subrecipient Oversight (Max 25 Points)	Total Score	PM2.5 Reduced Over 6 Years**	HC Reduced Over 6 Years**	CO Reduced Over 6 Years**	CO ₂ Reduced Over 6 Years**
CFNT 2020	Oct-21	City of Dallas	1	On-Road	Class 7 Short Haul	2001	Diesel	1,203	5,119		2021	CNG	\$182,378	35%	\$63,832	\$63,832	\$118,546	0.29	\$219,563	2	40	42	23	65	0.02	0.06	-0.02	0.00
CFNT 2020	Oct-21	City of Dallas	2	On-Road	Class 7 Short Haul	2002	Diesel	1,100	2,418		2021	CNG	\$182,378	35%	\$63,832	\$45,284	\$137,094	0.15	\$307,392	1	30	31	23	54	0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.00
Total Projects													\$364,756		\$109,116	\$255,640	0.44	\$ 249,101						0.03	0.09	-0.03	0.00	

Previously Awarded Projects - CFNT 2019 and 2020																												
Call for Projects	Application Deadline	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 Grant Award*	Local Match	NO _x Tons Reduced Over 6 Years**	Cost Per Ton of NO _x Reduced	Cost per Ton Rank for Application Deadline	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	PM2.5 Reduced Over 6 Years**	HC Reduced Over 6 Years**	CO Reduced Over 6 Years**	CO ₂ Reduced Over 6 Years**
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	4	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2005	Diesel	1,232	10,206		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.40	\$161,113	6	50	56	23	79	0.04	0.04	0.01	0.00
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	5	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2005	Diesel	341	9,082		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.36	\$180,370	5	40	45	23	68	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.00
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	3	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2005	Diesel	1,010	8,534		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.34	\$191,664	4	40	44	23	67	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.00
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	1	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2005	Diesel	1,292	8,026		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.32	\$203,302	3	40	43	23	66	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.00
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	6	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2001	Diesel	564	3,776		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.29	\$225,558	2	40	42	23	65	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.00
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	2	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2005	Diesel	812	5,975		2021	CNG	\$183,669	35%	\$64,284	\$64,284	\$119,385	0.24	\$269,874	1	30	31	23	54	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.00
CFNT 2020	Jan-21	City of Kennedale	1	On-Road	Class 8 Pumper Truck	2001	Diesel	1,000	3500	300	2021	ULSD	\$660,000	25%	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$495,000	0.52	\$318,287	1	30	31	22	53	0.03	0.05	0.17	0.00
CFNT 2019	Feb-20	City of Arlington	3	Non-Road	Construction - Backhoe	2007	Diesel	672		761	2020	B5	\$99,800	25%	\$24,950	\$24,950	\$74,850	1.17	\$21,303	3	55	58	22	80	0.11	0.08	1.06	0.00
CFNT 2019	Feb-20	City of Arlington	1	On-Road	Dump Truck	2000	Diesel	619	5479		2020	B5	\$105,000	25%	\$26,250	\$26,250	\$78,750	0.55	\$47,451	2	55	57	22	79	0.05	0.14	0.24	0.14
CFNT 2019	Feb-20	City of Arlington	2	On-Road	Dump Truck	2000	Diesel	629	3775		2020	B5	\$105,000	25%	\$26,250	\$26,250	\$78,750	0.37	\$70,908	1	55	56	22	78	0.04	0.09	0.16	0.14
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	5	Non-Road	Construction - Other	2000	Diesel	209		2300	2019	B20	\$325,000	25%	\$81,250	\$81,250	\$243,750	11.37	\$7,144	11	64	75	12	87	2.11	0.51	3.43	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	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	\$163,556	1.65	\$32,994	10	55	65	12	77	0.07	0.08	0.54	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	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	\$163,556	1.32	\$41,339	9	55	64	12	76	0.06	0.06	0.43	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	7	Non-Road	Construction - Crawler Tractors	2010	Diesel	10,069		1412	2019	B5	\$741,104	25%	\$185,276	\$185,276	\$555,828	4.12	\$45,020	8	55	63	12	75	0.49	0.13	2.50	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	6	Non-Road	Construction - Crawler Tractors	2010	Diesel	15,665		1311	2019	B5	\$741,104	25%	\$185,276	\$185,276	\$555,828	3.82	\$48,522	7	55	62	12	74	0.44	0.12	2.29	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	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	\$163,556	1.13	\$48,102	6	55	61	12	73	0.05	0.05	0.37	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	4	Non-Road	Construction - Other	2006	Diesel	1,061		517	2019	B20	\$475,000	25%	\$118,750	\$118,750	\$356,250	1.23	\$96,592	5	50	55	12	67	0.13	0.03	0.64	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	11	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2004	Diesel	388	10,379		2019	CNG	\$165,000	35%	\$57,750	\$57,750	\$107,250	0.39	\$149,457	4	50	54	12	66	0.04	0.04	0.01	-0.05
CFNT 2019	July-19	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	\$240,000	0.45	\$176,600	3	40	43	12	55	0.04	0.03	0.13	0.00
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Dallas	2	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2006	Diesel	1,007	6,080		2019	CNG	\$165,000	35%	\$57,750	\$57,750	\$107,250	0.23	\$255,305	2	30	32	12	44	0.02	0.03	0.01	-0.06
CFNT 2019	July-19	City of Benbrook	1	On-Road	Class 8 Ladder Truck	1999	Diesel	1463**	871		2019	ULSD	\$1,300,000	25%	\$325,000	\$325,000	\$975,000	0.25	\$1,283,570	1	1	24	26	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.00	
Total Projects													\$6,958,244		\$1,882,762	\$5,075,483	30.50	\$61,724						3.87	1.67	12.16	0.16	

Total															\$7,323,000		\$1,991,878	\$5,331,123	30.94	\$64,377									
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Funds Available for Call for Projects*	\$1,991,878
Total Funds Recommended for Award	\$1,991,878
Balance Available for Future Project Solicitation	\$0

Ineligible Projects - CFNT 2019 and 2020																						
Call for Projects	Application Deadline	Applicant	Activity	Type	Class/Equipment	Engine Year	Fuel Type	Annual Fuel Usage	Annual Mileage	Annual Usage Hours	Model Year	Fuel Type	Total Cost	Maximum Allowed Funding Level	Requested Grant Amount	EPA Grant Award*	Local Match	NO _x Tons Reduced Over 6 Years**	Cost Per Ton of NO _x Reduced	Reason for Ineligibility		
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	1	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2008	Diesel	5,242	15,214		2021	CNG	\$362,807	35%	\$126,982						Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements	
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	2	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2008	Diesel	3,982	13,201		2021	CNG	\$362,807	35%	\$126,982							Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	3	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2008	Diesel	3,187	8,979		2021	CNG	\$362,807	35%	\$126,982							Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	4	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2008	Diesel	1,425	8,585		2021	CNG	\$362,807	35%	\$126,982							Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	5	On-Road	Class 8 Refuse Hauler	2008	Diesel	4,689	13,752		2021	CNG	\$362,807	35%	\$126,982							Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements
CFNT 2020	Apr-21	City of Dallas	6	On-Road	Class 8 Short Haul	2009	Diesel	946	13,792		2022	ULSD	\$219,495	25%	\$54,874							Old Engine Model Year Not Eligible Per EPA Requirements
CFNT 2019	July-19	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; PM_{2.5} = 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

*CFNT 2019 and 2020 are funded through two separate EPA awards from the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act in 2017 and 2018.
 **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 Score 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

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
2022 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS
(Second Thursday, 1:00 pm)**

January 13, 2022

February 10, 2022

March 10, 2022¹

April 14, 2022

May 12, 2022

June 9, 2022

July 14, 2022

August 18, 2022²

September 8, 2022

October 13, 2022³

November 10, 2022⁴

December 8, 2022

Dates are subject to change.

¹ The 2022 National League of Cities Congressional City Conference is scheduled for March 6-9 and does not conflict with the RTC meeting schedule.

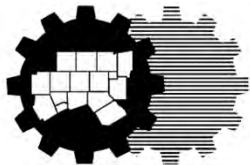
² This meeting date is scheduled to coincide with the annual Irving Transportation Investment Summit.

³ The 2022 Texas Municipal League Annual Conference and Exhibition is scheduled for October 5-7 and does not conflict with the RTC meeting schedule.

⁴ The National League of Cities 2022 City Summit is scheduled for November 16-19 and does not conflict with the RTC meeting schedule.

STATUS REPORT ON TEXAS VOLKSWAGEN ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FUNDING

**Regional Transportation Council
December 9, 2021**



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

OVERVIEW OF TEXAS VOLKSWAGEN ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM (TXVEMP) FUNDING

Statewide Location	Program	DFW Area Allocation	Schedule	Status*
~\$169.5 Million	School, Shuttle, and Transit Buses	\$11,684,806	Closed	>\$17.3 Million Requested All Available Funds Awarded
	Refuse Vehicles	\$8,346,290	Closed	\$9,448,544 Requested \$5,863,995 Awarded
	Freight & Port Drayage Vehicles	\$6,677,032	Closed	\$8,876,816 Requested \$5,619,030 Awarded
	Electric Forklifts and Port Cargo-Handling Equipment	\$6,677,032	To Be Determined	
	Electric Airport Ground Support Equipment			
	Ocean-Going Vessel Shore Power			
~\$35.5 Million	ZEV Infrastructure - Level 2 Rebate	\$10,465,958 (Statewide)	Closed	\$4,305,000 Requested \$1,775,000 Awarded
	ZEV Infrastructure – DC Fast Charge and Hydrogen Refueling	\$20.9 Million (Statewide)	Opened November 2, 2021; Suspended November 3, 2021	\$89,852,581 Requested

*Data reflects information posted at www.texasvwfund.org as of November 29, 2021

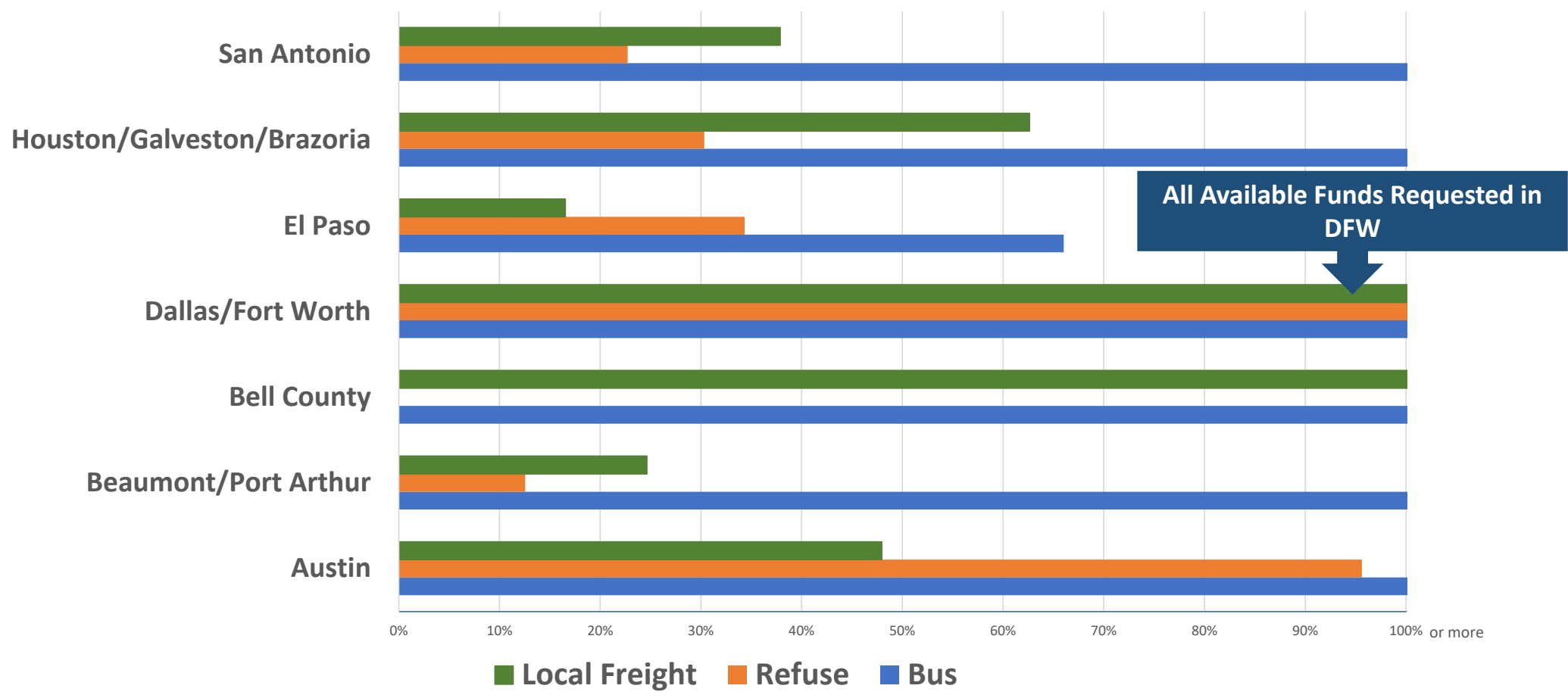
STATUS/SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS ALREADY CLOSED

**Funding Rounds for Bus, Refuse, and Local Freight
Truck Replacements/Repowers**

Rebate for Installation of Level 2 Charging Stations

PERCENT FUNDING REQUESTED BY REGION

Percent Available Funds Requested by Funding Round



All Available Funds Requested in DFW



Data reflects information posted at www.texasvfund.org as of November 29, 2021

TXVEMP ZEV INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEL 2 REBATE

**APPLICATIONS CLOSED
SEPTEMBER 9, 2021**

Total Statewide Allocation = \$10,465,958

\$6,160,958

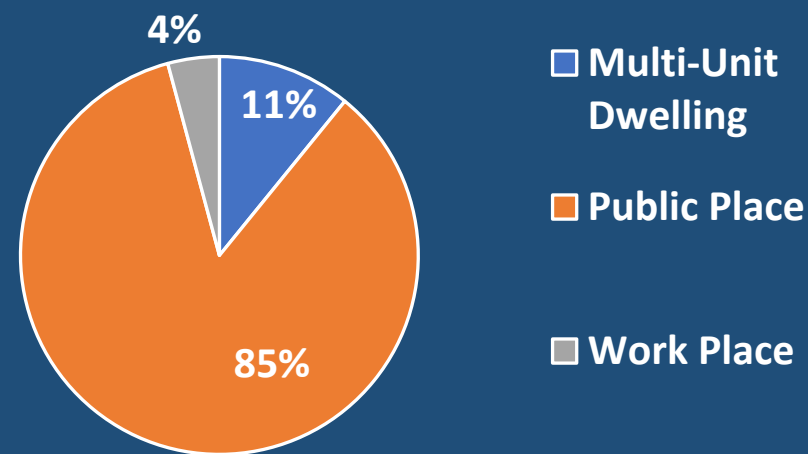
\$4,305,000

Funds Remaining Funds Requested

DFW Area Requested 27% of All Funds to Date

2446 Sites Requested Statewide

Distribution by Site Type

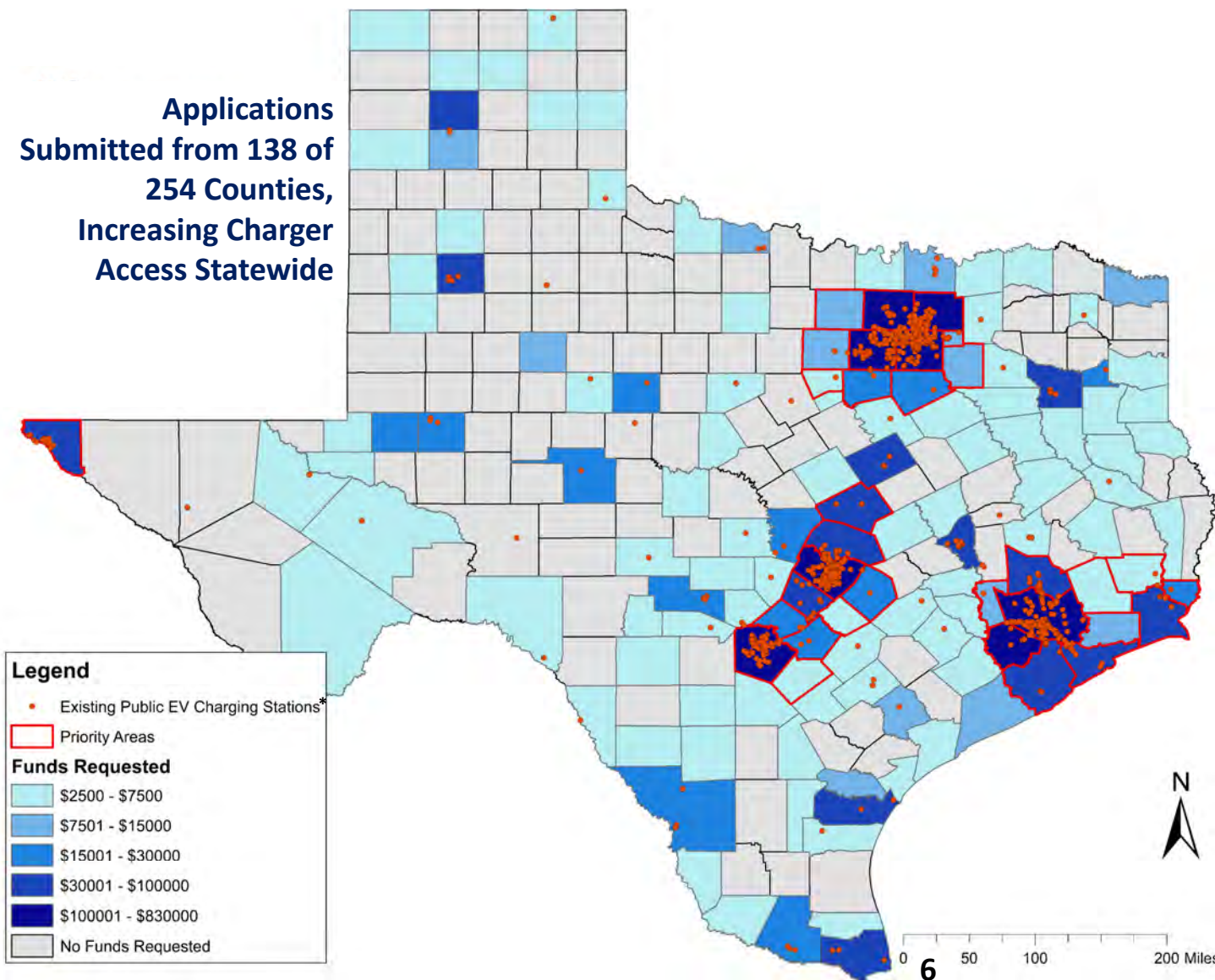


GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF ZEV LEVEL 2 FUNDING REQUESTS

Applications Submitted from 138 of 254 Counties, Increasing Charger Access Statewide

Priority Areas

Area	Counties
Dallas-Fort Worth Area	Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Wise
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Area	Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Waller
San Antonio Area	Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Wilson
Austin Area	Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, Williamson
El Paso County	El Paso
Bell County	Bell
Beaumont-Port Arthur Area	Hardin, Jefferson, Orange



*Existing Station Data from Department of Energy Alternative Fuel Station Locator, January 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION

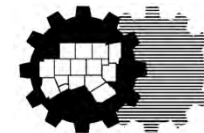
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Also see “Hot Topics” at www.nctcog.org/aqfunding



North Central Texas
Council of Governments



STATUS REPORT ON VEHICLE TEMPORARY PAPER TAGS

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

JASON BROWN

PRINCIPAL AIR QUALITY PLANNER

DECEMBER 9, 2021

VEHICLE TEMPORARY PAPER TAGS

What is a Temporary Tag?

Intended to be used for temporary vehicle registration

Twelve variations of a temporary tag

Texas Buyer tag is predominantly abused



Why Improper Use of Temporary Tags is a Concern?

Circumvent mandatory emissions inspections

Avoid region and statewide tolls

Loss of State revenue

Exploit vehicle purchaser

Risk to officer safety

Bought, sold and used in crimes to conceal identity in all 50 states



RECENT COVERAGE & SUMMARY

NBC 5 News:

[Texas Temporary Paper Tags](#)

[Introduction Video](#) (Aired Nov. 8)

\$200 million black market business in Texas

Local auto dealer “issued 110,000 tags...in the last four months”

[Possible Solutions Video](#) (Aired Nov. 9)

Provides for a rapid response

Set maximum number of tags licensed dealers can issue

[Reopened Next Day Video](#) (Aired Nov. 10)

Verify dealer identity

Need to control authorized dealer users in database

[Lost Revenue Video](#) (Aired Nov. 23)

Costing Millions of Dollars in Lost Revenue



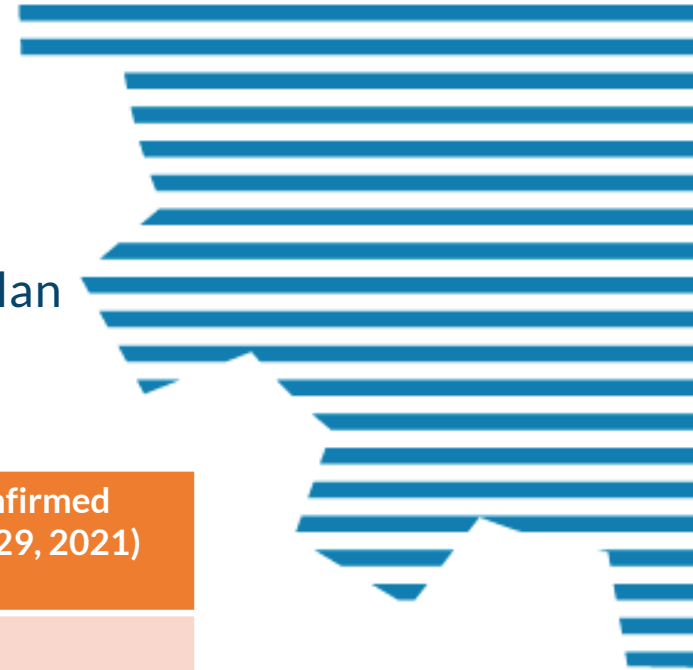
CURRENT PLAN OF ACTION

Resume Mobile Emissions Task Forces

Supported by RTC Transportation Implementation Plan Project; \$2 Million Fund Task Forces

Obtain County Participation Status:

County	Request Letter (Mailed October 6, 2021) (Response by October 29, 2021)	Participation Confirmed (as of November 29, 2021)
Collin	✓	
Dallas	✓	✓
Denton	✓	
Ellis	✓	
Johnson	✓	
Kaufman	✓	
Parker	✓	
Rockwall	✓	
Tarrant	✓	✓



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MINUTES

**Regional Transportation Council
PUBLIC MEETING**

Mobility 2045 Update

Freight Safety Campaign

Local Governments Energy Reporting

Meeting Date and Location

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) held a public meeting Monday, October 11, 2021, at noon at the North Central Texas Council of Governments (Arlington); Dan Lamers, Senior Program Manager, moderated the meeting, attended by two people.

Public Meeting Purpose and Topics

The public meeting was held 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, and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff presented information about:

1. Mobility 2045 Update – presented by Amy Johnson
2. Freight Safety Campaign – presented by Morgan Tavallae
3. Local Governments Energy Reporting – presented by Dorothy Gilliam

The public meeting was held to educate, inform and seek comments from the public. Comments were solicited from those present who wished to speak for the record. The presentations made at the meeting are available at www.nctcog.org/input, and a video recording was posted at www.nctcog.org/video.

Each person who attended the public meeting received a packet with a meeting agenda, a sheet on which to submit written comments and copies of the presentations.

Summary of Presentations

Mobility 2045 Update presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/10/MTPUpdate.pdf>

Mobility 2045 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that defines a long-term vision for the region's transportation system and guides spending of federal and State transportation funds. This includes funding for highways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other programs that reduce congestion and improve air quality.

The Plan was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018, and Transportation Conformity was achieved on November 21, 2018. Mobility 2045 has nine goals and its vision is to improve the region's mobility today and tomorrow by embracing technology and innovation.

NCTCOG staff is working on an update to Mobility 2045 and currently focused on confirming project and performance measure refinements as well as finalizing financial forecasts. Updates include incorporating the use of new technologies, safety and travel demand management (TDM) strategies as well as addressing equity and barriers to opportunity.

Public involvement and plan development efforts will take place throughout the 2021 calendar year and spring 2022. The official comment period for the Mobility 2045 update will take place in April and May of 2022. The RTC will take action on the update in June 2022.

Freight Safety Campaign presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/10/Freight.pdf>

Over the last five years, an average of 289 truck crashes have occurred per month. There were 31 railroad crossing incidents in 2020. The Freight Safety campaign helps create awareness for safe driving habits near large freight vehicles on the highway and at railroad crossings.

The goals of this campaign include the following:

- Reduce freight-related accidents and inform the public about safe driving practices near large commercial motor vehicles
- Reduce rail crossing and trespassing incidents by informing the public about safe rail crossing habits and practices
- Create a safer environment for freight and passenger movements

Target audiences for the campaign include the general public as well as truck drivers. NCTCOG staff are utilizing fact sheets, social media, billboards, radio and podcasts to help promote the initiative.

More information about the Freight Safety campaign can be found at www.freightntx.org

Local Government Energy Reporting presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/10/EnergyReporting.pdf>

The Regional Energy Management Project is a partnership between the NCTCOG Transportation and Environment & Development Departments. It's purpose is to expand local government capabilities in energy management, increase compliance with state mandated energy reporting requirements and to improve the accuracy of emissions reduction data associated with reduced energy use.

The Texas Health and Safety Code requires all political subdivisions, institutes of higher education and state agencies in the 41 ozone nonattainment and near attainment counties to establish a goal of reducing electric consumption by at least 5 percent each state fiscal year for seven years and to submit an annual report to the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO). The reports are used by Texas A&M Energy Systems Laboratory (ESL) to estimate nitrogen oxide reductions associated with energy conservation. ESL submits the reports to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Due to issues with lack of awareness and inconsistency in reporting from year to year, NCTCOG staff began assisting with outreach efforts for the project by developing a toolkit and

providing workshops and webinars. In turn, 76 cities and 2 counties submitted a 2020 energy report.

NCTCOG staff continue to assist in regional energy management work and 2021 webinars have been recorded and posted online for those interested in learning more about this initiative.

For more information, visit <http://conservenorthtexas.org/item/local-government-energy-reporting-toolkit>

ORAL COMMENTS RECEIVED AT MEETING

No oral comments received at the meeting.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA & MAIL

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

Freight Safety Awareness Initiative - 10/11/2021

Questions: How will the general public be made aware (p.5) of truck limitations and resulting precautions that the general public can take for safety around trucks - Please see my comments + questions regarding this issue when I address page 6)

(pages) COVID-19 messaging - What form will this messaging take? If it's only through technology, please bear in mind that even people who have smart phones, often do not use features of the phone other than to send + receive calls.

(pages) Educating truck drivers - What will be done to ensure that truck drivers are educated about safety measures? Will this be a mandatory course through their employers? What about independent truck drivers? Some may be self-employed with no employer. How will they be educated? Many are probably on the road for a large percentage of time.

(page 6) Comment - My concern is that not everyone including motorists, is well connected through technology

Questions - How would people receive the fact sheets that are addressed in the Outreach Section of this presentation? Where are these fact sheets distributed? If they are only available on the computer, many motorists may not be aware of the sites to obtain these and they may not know that the fact sheets are available, so they will not be searching for them.

Expansion of Initial Comment Regarding Page 6 - Of the motorists who have access to computers and smart phones, not all of them sign up for alerts and messages. They may not go into computer sites that offer information about

Safety and Security around trucks. Therefore, it is important to reach out to motorists in as many innovative ways as possible.

Page 6 - Comment - Billboards may be appropriate for brief messages, they are not appropriate for more detailed messages.

Page 6 - Comments - In addition to education through radio, television, through public service announcements, would be a good source to educate motorists about safety around trucks.

Another idea that comes to mind is external wrapping of buses, especially in the rear of the bus, with a brief message both pictorial and in printed words about safety reminders around trucks, would be a good way to advertise. This way, when cars stop behind a bus, motorists will be able to see the message.

Perhaps more brainstorming could be done to develop additional innovative ways to advertise so that the public can be aware of safety measures.

Mobility 2045 Update - Oct 9, 2021

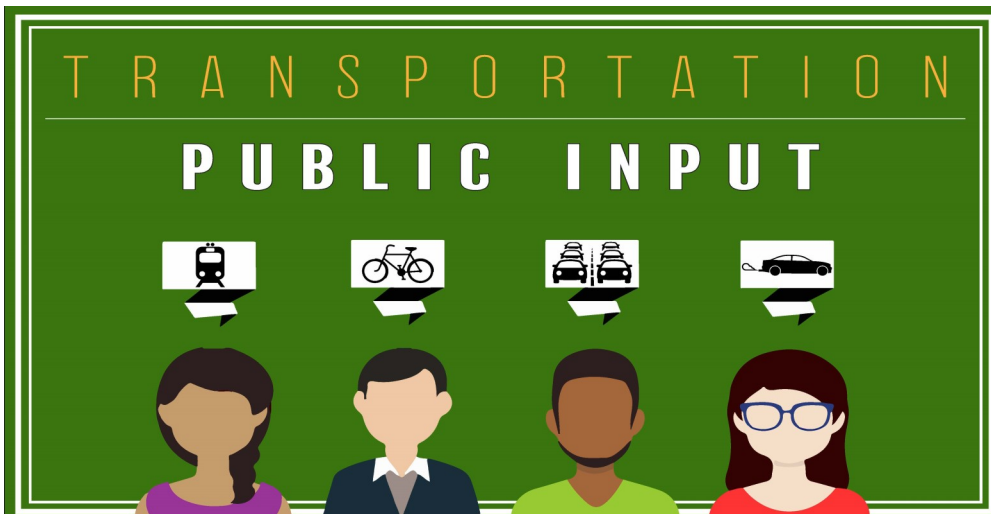
Page 8 - Highlights: Regional Priorities

Safety

Comment: In addition to the obvious inclusion of reminders about safety around train tracks, I urge you to remind users of bus transportation about the caution necessary before boarding and after de-boarding a bus. Pedestrians must navigate dangerous road crossings, even in instances where there are traffic lights. Motorists are not always looking out for pedestrians, so pedestrians need to be very vigilant. This is especially true in areas where cars are turning (i.e. traveling west and turning south, etc.)

Administrative Revisions to Mobility 2045: the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas - Revisions - Oct. 2021

Question: Although I have reviewed MTCOG charts with similar information as the Chart on pages 1 through 8 called "Mobility 2045: Regionally Significant Arterial Improvements: Revised Sept 16, 2021", I would like to ask what the numbers in the columns indicating the years (2018, 2020, 2028, etc.) refer to. Are they the number of projects, number of lanes? For example, for RSA ID # 1,587,275 on page 2, what do the 3's in the 2018 and 2020 columns + the 4's in the 2028-2045 columns refer to?



WHAT DO YOU THINK? TELL US.

Information will be posted online at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment **December 13, 2021 - January 11, 2022**. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Regional Operations and Air Quality Funding Update

The Regional Air Quality and Management and Operations Program provides federal and regional air quality and mobility funds to programs and projects that address the region's air quality and aid in management and operations of the regional transportation system. Details of the program and the projects being proposed for funding will be presented.

Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment 2021 Call for Projects: Final Recommendations

The Incident Management Freeway Blocking Equipment 2021 Call for Projects made \$1M available for the purchase of blocking equipment to provide protection to first responders responding to traffic crashes. Final project recommendations will be provided for review and comment.

End of Ozone Season

North Central Texas' 2021 ozone season concludes at the end of November. Staff will present an update on current air quality standings, compare current standings against previous ozone seasons, and highlight potential implications facing the region for not meeting Federal attainment requirements.

(ONLINE REVIEW & COMMENT; NO PRESENTATION)

Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects

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

Work Program Modifications

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality planning tasks to be conducted by the metropolitan planning organization. Proposed modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP will be presented.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Interactive Public Input: Map Your Experience: www.nctcog.org/mapyourexperience

Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP): www.smokingvehicle.net

Vehicle Incentive & Funding Opportunities: www.nctcog.org/aqfunding

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.



NCTCOGtrans



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

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 Wednesday, October 20, through Friday, November 19. Comments and questions are submitted for the record and can be submitted via Facebook, Twitter, fax, email and online.

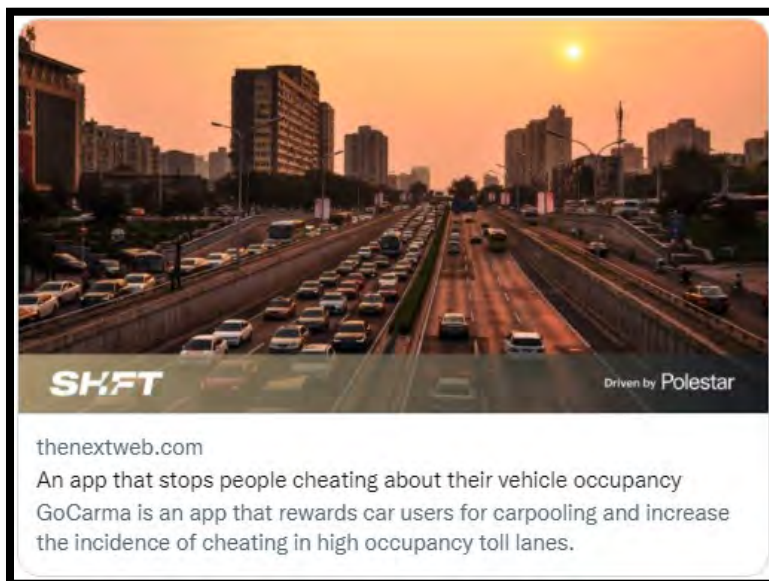
This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Bicycle and pedestrian comments were in the majority.

In addition, comments were accepted through a new, online map tool. Users can drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. This month, there were two bicycle and pedestrian comments, two transit comments and two roadway comments. To read them, visit: <http://nctcogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

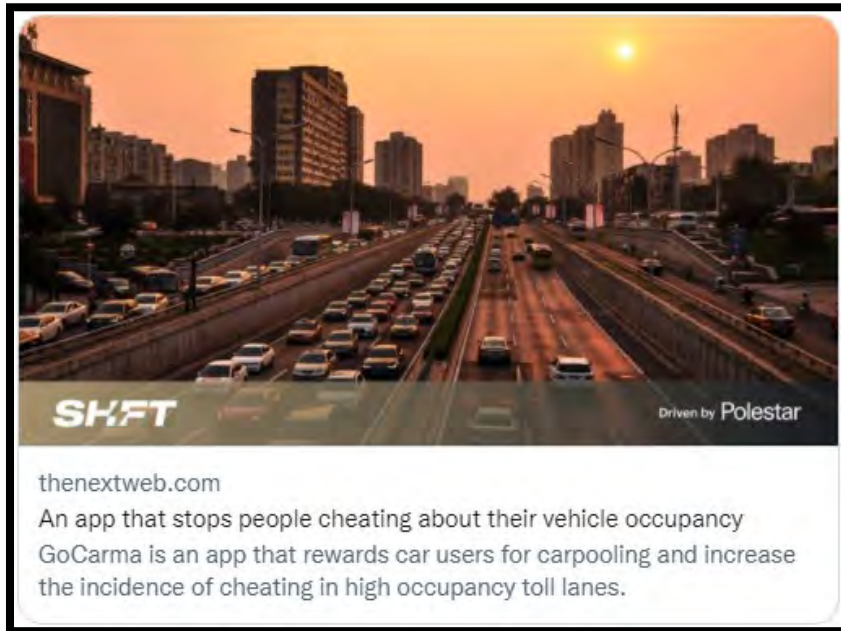
Air Quality

Twitter –

1. Thank you @Cate_Lawrence @thenextweb to learn how @NCTCOGtrans @GoCarmaTeam @TxDOTDallas are making #DFW a case study for emissions reductions. If more cities and governments adopted similar policies, we can meet global goals. @COP26 – Captain Carpool (@CaptainCarpool)



2. Thank you @cate_lawrence @thenextweb for taking time to learn how @NCTCOGtrans and @TxDOTDallas are a case study for meeting @COP26 #emissions reduction goals. – Captain Carpool (@CaptainCarpool)



SKFT Driven by Polestar

thenextweb.com
An app that stops people cheating about their vehicle occupancy
GoCarma is an app that rewards car users for carpooling and increase the incidence of cheating in high occupancy toll lanes.

Aviation

Twitter –

1. @nasaero Deputy AAM Mission Integration Manager, Nancy Mendonca will be one of the experts in attendance for the 11/6 10am-12pm CT free virtual workshop. Register at: <http://knowbeforeyoufly.eventbrite.com>. – NASA Aeronautics (@NASAero)



NCTCOGTransportation @NCTCOGtrans · Nov 3
Join us 11/6 from 10a – 12p Central as we discuss the Future of The Skies with experts from the FAA. Register at: knowbeforeyoufly.eventbrite.com. To learn more about UAS in DFW, visit northtexasuas.com. #drone #NorthTexasUAS



10 A.M. - 12 P.M.
FREE WORKSHOP
know before you fly your drone
NOV. 6
ALT

2. It's easy to get excited about the future when you hear the possibilities to improve communities and people's lives.

*Just finished monthly meeting of Community Unmanned Aircraft System working group from the @NCTCOGtrans @CityOfDallas – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)

Bicycle & Pedestrian

Twitter –

1. New way finding signage installed this week by @CityOfDallas for @NorthavenTrail connection between Valleydale and new bridge!

Also, watch for construction closures between Valleydale and bridge ramp beginning 11/1 for about one month while @TxDOT works in the area. – Jeff Kitner (@JeffKitner)



2. Checking out the Preston Ridge Trail in #D11 & #D12 with Parks Director John Jenkins, @JeffKitner & @Rudy_Karimi

#GetConnected #SafeTrails

#ConnectCottonBelt

#ConnectValleyViewPark

@TheLoopDallas @NCTCOGtrans @laneconner @Wylie_H_Dallas @BikeDFW – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)



3. Tour with @DallasParkRec & @JacobsEngineers re: trail alignment of northern-most trail in @CityOfDallas. Working name @charleypride trail Multiple 🏠 <coming soon> Thx @laneconner! #ConnectDenton&CollinCounties @TheLoopDallas @NCTCOGtrans – caraathome (@🏠) (@caraathome)



It was a great day to be outside and on our trails! Lots of ideas for infrastructure improvements and connections. – Jeff Kitner (@JeffKitner)

4. As I understand it, the people's who inhabited this region before the Spanish called the river Arkikosa.

Including the name "Arkikosa" in the title like a good option. – Loren S. (@txbornviking)



5. More construction progress by @TxDOTDallas on the bridge connection between @NorthavenTrail and WRC/Cottonwood Creek trails. Project is currently a little ahead of schedule. #DallasTrails #DallasParks – Jeff Kitner (@JeffKitner)



High-speed Transportation

Twitter –

1. So dumb – Matthew Marchant (@MatthewMarchant)

NCTCOGTransportation @NCTCOGtrans · Oct 22
 Come see what might be the next piece of Texas high-speed transportation: Service connecting Dallas to Fort Worth. On 10/26, learn about prospective routes and stations, technologies and timeline, and tell us what you think!

DFW Has a Need for Speed!
 Learn about high-speed travel and getting there fast.



Come Get Up to Speed!
 • Dallas Mercy Street
 Tues. Oct. 26, 4-7pm

ALT **HIGH-SPEED TRANSPORTATION** DALLAS-FORT WORTH

Facebook –

1. Get up to speed from 4-7 pm today on the next piece of Texas high-speed transportation: Service connecting Dallas and Fort Worth. Learn about prospective routes and stations, technologies and timeline, and tell us what you think! More: <https://www.nctcog.org/.../dfw-high-speed-transportation....> – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Do You Have a Need for Speed?



Learn about high-speed travel across DFW.

Get Up to Speed!
 • Dallas Mercy Street
 Tues. Oct. 26, 4-7pm

HIGH-SPEED TRANSPORTATION DALLAS-FORT WORTH

Do you all have this as a savable event we can share? That way people can have it on their calendar. Thanks! – Ben Hyde

Hi, Ben! Apologies for the delay. We have a Facebook event here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/466409168087592/>. You should then be able

to sync the event to your calendar. Hope this helps! – NCTCOG Transportation Department

Innovative Vehicles & Technology

Email –

1. Katherine Homan

Will ERCOT be up to supplying electricity for all the electric cars that we are seeking to replace those running on gasoline?

Considering the new housing being constructed also needing power in these times of temperature extremes and now this new scope of demand for powering automotive vehicles, might our already inadequate Texas grid be headed for a Catch-22? Just wondering.

Hi Taylor, me again,

This time it's about the following excerpt from an email that I received from a family member. These seem to be some very basic infrastructure concerns and cost issues that electric vehicles do not address. Kindly clarify! Katherine

At a neighborhood BBQ I was talking to a neighbor who's a British Columbia Hydro Executive.

I asked him how the all EV thing was doing. He laughed, and then got serious, saying "If we really intend to adopt electric vehicles, certain realities need to be faced."

"For example, a **home charging system for a Tesla requires 75 amp service.**

The average house is equipped with 100 amp service. On our small street of approx. 25 homes, the electrical infrastructure would be unable to carry more than three houses with a single Tesla each. For even half the homes to have electric vehicles, the system would be wildly over-loaded. This is the elephant in the room with electric vehicles.

Our residential infrastructure cannot bear the load. And renovating our entire delivery system to do so will not become evident until we are too far down this dead end road."

When Eric test drove the Chevy Volt at the invitation of General Motors, he said that "For four days in a row, the **fully charged battery lasted only 25 miles before the Volt switched to the reserve gasoline engine.**"

According to General Motors, the Volt battery holds 16 kwh of electricity which takes a full 10 hours to charge a drained battery. **The cost for the electricity to charge the Volt is never mentioned**, so I looked up what I pay for electricity. Since it varies with amount used and the seasons, I pay approximately \$1.16 per kwh. $16 \text{ kwh} \times \$1.16 \text{ per kwh} = \18.56 to charge the battery.

$\$18.56 \text{ per charge divided by } 25 \text{ miles} = \mathbf{\$0.74 \text{ per mile to operate the Volt using the battery}}$. Compared to a similar size car with a gasoline engine that gets only 32 mpg. $\$3.19 \text{ per gallon divided by } 32 \text{ Mpg} = \mathbf{\$0.10 \text{ per mile}}$.

ALSO - a gasoline-powered car costs about \$35,000 while the Volt costs \$46,000 plus. So, the Government wants us to pay more for a car that costs more than seven times as much to run and takes three times longer to drive across the country. Seriously?

Response by NCTCOG Transportation staff

Thank you for reaching out to us to share your concerns with electric vehicle adoption.

The email you sent us sounds similar to one that's been in circulation for a few years and contains some outdated information, and we'd like to provide you with some updates:

The Alternative Fuels Data Center (AFDC) is a reputable resource from the U.S Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Office and contains a wealth of information on alternative fuels. It also features data-driven tools that can verify some of the claims in the email. The Vehicle Cost Calculator calculates the lifetime cost compared between any vehicle and fuel type, including gasoline powered.

Home Charging- Since the email states that Tesla home charging requires a 75 amp service, we searched Tesla's website for technical details for their home charging wall connectors and found they offer circuit breakers starting at 15 amps up to 60 amps. For non-Tesla EVs, most homeowners opt for Level 1 charging equipment at home that requires only a power outlet on a dedicated branch circuit. For drivers who need faster-charging equipment to charge at home, Level 2 charging equipment may be installed. An electrician would need to

determine whether their home has adequate electrical capacity. However, as previously stated, this is a personal preference since Level 1 equipment can suit most drivers' needs.

Chevy Volt- The Chevy Volt referenced in the email a Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) and not a fully electric vehicle (EV); hence the reference that it includes a gasoline engine. The Volt was discontinued by Chevrolet back in 2019, and Chevrolet currently offers all-electric vehicles, such as the Chevy Bolt. An important distinction of PHEVs like the Volt is that they often utilize a very small electric battery for very short ranges (i.e. 38 miles), whereas fully electric vehicles have a higher range from 150 miles (Nissan Leaf) up to 405 miles (Tesla Model S). This may be best suited for drivers who don't drive very far on a daily basis but want the certainty of being able to fill up at a gas station during long trips. If you would like to read a local firsthand account from a former Chevy Volt and current Chevy Bolt owner, Buzz Smith, known as the EV-Angelist, writes a blog about his electric vehicle endeavors: <https://www.theev-angelist.com/my-electric-vehicle-journey/>

Electric vehicle costs and range. The \$1.16 per kWh of electricity referenced in the email is more expensive than the current average of 11.75 cents per kWh for electricity in the State of Texas: <https://www.eia.gov/state/data.php?sid=TX>.

If we use the Texas average price of 12 cents per kWh and the AFDC vehicle cost calculator tool data that the 2020 Chevy Bolt (a fully electric vehicle) consumes 26/33kWh to travel 100 miles, it would cost under \$4 to travel 100 miles, and with a range of 200 miles, it would cost less than \$8 to fully charge a vehicle. If you would like something more closely representing that of gas prices, then the Department of Energy has a tool called eGallon that would help compare the gallon of gas vs. eGallon. In Texas at the time of responding to you, the average cost of gas on the website shows \$2.58 per gallon and \$1.08 per electric eGallon.

To answer your concern about cost of ownership over the long term, Argonne National Laboratory put out a report comparing the total cost of ownership that shows that electric vehicles have maintenance costs 40% lower than conventional gas-powered over the lifetime of the vehicle.

We hope this provides some clarification and please do not hesitate to reach out to our team directly at cleancities@nctcog.org.

1. Lynda Longstreet with @thecmiteam is working with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to better understand current transportation needs and challenges and how emerging transportation technology can help. Join the Focus Group. @NCTCOG_Official @NCTCOGtrans – Wise County Chamber (@WiseCountyChamb)



Programs

Email –

1. Ethan Minter

I just read the article on the US 75 HOV Incentive article in the Community Impact Newspaper, Richardson Edition.

I agree there needs to be a change to the HOV lane. While in traffic, if you look who is using the HOV lane, 90+ percent of the cars have one person in the vehicle. This is frustrating since I have to sit in traffic with one less lane being utilized, and I also have to get behind the single occupancy cars who are using the HOV lane.

The use of the HOV lane is to encourage people to carpool by helping high occupancy vehicles bypass traffic, but the only people it's really helping are the single occupancy vehicles using that lane to skip over traffic.

2. Sonya Xu

Hi there,

I hope your day is going well!

I was wondering if North Texas provides any grants or subsidies for carpool/vanpool programs? I am trying to start one amongst my colleagues and just wanted to reach out about it.

Thanks so much!

Response by NCTCOG Transportation staff

Thank you for contacting the NCTCOG Transportation Department.

Vanpools are subsidized at the transit agency level. The Regional Transportation Council authorizes funding directly to transit agencies to bring down the individual rider's price. Depending on your location, you can reach out to the appropriate agency below:

DART.org - Vanpool Program Information

Commuter Vanpool | DCTA

Vanpool - Trinity Metro (ridetrinitymetro.org)

Please contact us if you need additional assistance.

Project Planning

Email –

1. Janna Blumentritt and Bruce Blumentritt (see attachments

I live on Waco Street and was recently asked for a narrative on my home, by the Parker County Historical Commission, for Cox-McClain; the company that's heading up the environmental survey of the historic neighborhood, southwest of the square. May I ask why the Cox-McClain map (Attachment 1) is strikingly different from the map that was voted on by the City Council in 2019 (Attachment 2)? My husband, and I, do our best to keep up with the latest matters regarding this entire issue, but did we miss this new route's formal approval? It's hard to fathom that this is even being considered in a residential area. How do we get out of our driveway? Is it just an optical illusion that the Cox-McClain map runs across the west end of the All Saints Church and Old City Hall, yet avoids the parking lot of the Baptist Church? Why would the City Council vote to now push the planned roadway closer to historically significant residences and properties?

THE HISTORY

The compelling history that's teetering on the edge of destruction, by the City of Weatherford, IS mindboggling. Within a two block radius, there are THREE Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks: Old City Hall, The Wright Home, and the Woolfolk-McCall Home. Old City Hall's only one of two Art Deco structures in Weatherford, and the James Claude Wright Home, a Queen Ann from the late 1890's, is the childhood home of former Speaker of the House, Jim Wright. The Woolfolk-McCall homestead is one of the first dried brick homes in the City of Weatherford. It was built by Joseph A. Woolfolk, one of two attorneys that defended Native American Chiefs Satanta (White Bear) and Addo-eta (Big Tree). Both war leaders were on trial for the Warren Wagon Train (or Salt Creek) Massacre, which took place in 1871, near Graham, Texas, in Young County. Legend holds that both were held for a brief time at the Woolfolk house before their trial. Additionally, there are Historical Markers for the First Baptist Church, and for the All Saints Anglican (Episcopal) Church. The latter actually being inside the boundaries of the National Register of Historic Places for downtown Weatherford. As is Old City Hall. All Saints has history that dates back to 1875 when a Bishop, from Dallas, rode out on horseback to hold services. In 1879, a small stone church was built where Old City Hall stands today. The church at 125 South Waco was erected in 1923, and inside, one can find the stone baptismal font and walnut alms from the 1879 sanctuary. Douglas Chandor, and Ina Kuteman, were married at All Saints. General Hood Simpson, the Commanding General of the Ninth United States Army, in northwest Europe during WW II, was also married in the church. Additionally, the funeral of Douglas Chandor and the funeral of Broadway star, Mary Martin, were held in this historic sanctuary. And it's not just brick and mortar that makes this area consequential. There's an oak tree over 150 years old that stands at the corner of Waco and Columbia, with five oak trees of similar age, that grace the property across the street.

THE HOUSE AT 208 SOUTH WACO

Our house is located at 208 South Waco. We have the authentic Abstract of Titles dating back to 1897, along with a handwritten chronological history of the property. Lot No. 4, Block 25, is one of the original lots in the township of Weatherford, and was first sold by Parker County in 1857, to a man named G. G. Baggerly. His widow, Sue J. Baggerly, sold it in 1860 to D. O. Norton. Mr. Norton was one of the settling pioneers of Weatherford, along with being the first postmaster, the publisher and editor of the first newspaper, the Frontier News, and one of four aldermen elected in 1858, when Weatherford became a municipality. Eventually, Joseph A. Woolfolk owned it, and sold it in 1879, along with his home, to George A. McCall. In 1884, it was sold to TJ Sims, and wife Lizzie, who homesteaded the property on August 21, 1889. (The Sanborn maps did not include the property until 1900, when it first appeared on their atlas.) A lawsuit forced the house to be sold, and highly respected physician, William M. Campbell, bought it in 1897 (Attachments 3 & 4). Dr. Campbell practiced medicine in Weatherford for 68 years, and by his own calculations, delivered more than 5,000 babies. In 1958, the County honored him by changing the name of Bowie Memorial Hospital to Campbell Hospital. Dr. Campbell saw many changes in the delivery of healthcare during his career and was a contributor to significant changes in medical practice over that time. Because it's one of the earlier homes constructed in Weatherford, it embodies unique architectural characteristics of the era. It includes a gambrel roof, the original siding, a rare slate fireplace mantel, the original transoms and butler door and original stained glass in the original front door.

TRAFFIC AND PRESERVATION

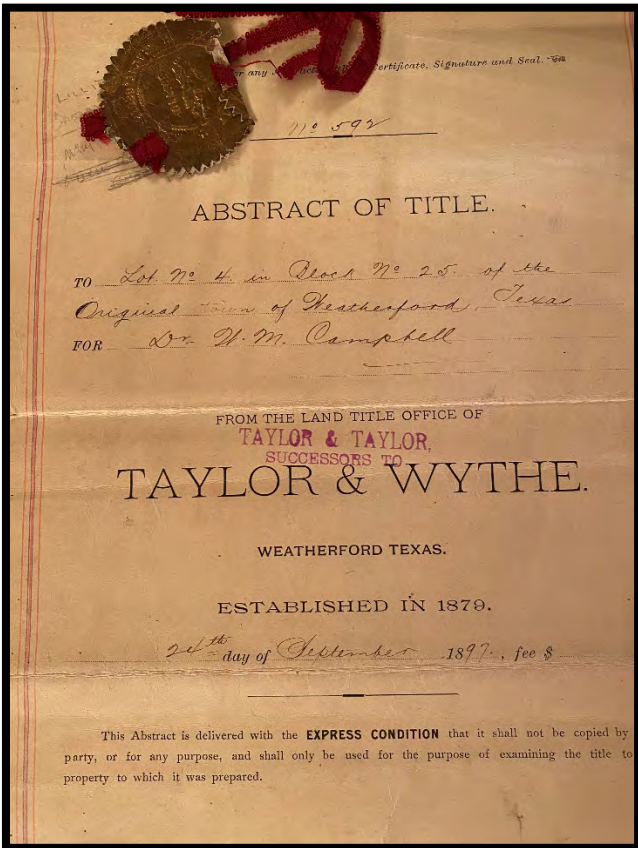
Traffic is an issue in Weatherford, and all over Parker County, so we understand the need to look at some alternatives, but rerouting heavy traffic, including 18-wheelers, just one block off the square and through one of the most historic quadrants that remains, is irrational. These old neighborhoods weren't built to accommodate today's transportation systems. If traffic is to be rerouted, wouldn't the City, along with TXDOT and NCTCOG, do everything possible to make use of parking lots, empty buildings, and businesses, instead of demolishing historic properties, and homes? Properties that hold a direct link to the rich history of this town and Parker County? If there're too many entities to avoid in a southern-bypass, wouldn't it indicate that it's not a moralistic approach? Though far from ideal, at least the general plan voted upon by the City Council in 2014 (Attachment 5) made the effort to utilize roads that had already been built to accommodate increased traffic: Palo Pinto and Santa Fe. There was no southern-bypass. It wasn't necessary then and it isn't necessary now. But what should be necessary to this community, its citizens and its government is saving the remaining historical structures and promoting them, along with the historical neighborhoods, as a destination for tourists who seek "True Texas." It's what the City of Mineral Wells is doing and doing it well. The preservation, and revival, that's now underway in that town IS impressive. They're wanting to ensure treasured entities of downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods, are protected, not destroyed. This intuitive understanding of merging restoration, with progress, has apparently caught the eye of investors who want to capitalize, and promote, the alluring history of Mineral Wells, Texas. The City of Weatherford, however, seems intent on taking a wrecking ball to its fascinating past, including the oldest house in the city, circa 1860, which stands at 133 North Waco. Where are the voices of our City leaders standing up to protect the history of Weatherford, Texas? In the end, when one looks at the Heritage Square Project on the City's website, it's clear that the bypass isn't really about solving gridlock (because whatever will be built will be obsolete as soon as it's finished), the bypass is about entertainment. It's about gutting history, on and around the historic square, to bring in further restaurants and shops to create Weatherford's version of Sundance Square.

My husband, and I, are in our late 50's and for 20 years we've lived at 208 South Waco Street. My husband's a regional director for Rosa's Café and Tortilla Factory. He's helped with the Weatherford's store's involvement in the Taste of Parker County, sponsoring the Parker County Heritage Society's Candlelight Tour of Homes, and helped with contributions to many other charitable events through the years. I'm a social worker and I've worked at Holland Lake Nursing and Rehab for 20 years. I've helped hundreds of patients from this City, around the County, and beyond. It's been a source of pride for me to be a part of Weatherford, and the community, as an advocate for those who need medical care, psychosocial support, and assistance in returning to their homes. I'm also a member of the Parker County Historical Commission.

As we inch toward retirement, we've been looking forward to finally being able to focus on this unique historic home, and its restoration. We'd love to see it showcased someday on the Candlelight Tour of Homes and we're currently seeking a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark.



Attachment #3



Attachment #4

Attachment #5



Twitter –

1. This in my mailbox last night...

@TxDOT @TxDOTFortWorth & @NCTCOGtrans never-ending mission to forever widen highways & subsidize sprawl developments (ahem, Walsh Ranch) continues... – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

I-30 West Corridor Study

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is currently conducting a study to improve and modernize the I-30 West Corridor. The project limits for this study extend along I-30 from I-40 to Oakhaven Trail Parkway, 4820 West Central Street to Oakhaven Trail, Spur 341 from I-30 to Downe Drive, and for SR 183 from Magnolia Meadows Road to Rosewood Street. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the transportation and widening of the existing I-30 corridor, to consider potential express lanes, and to evaluate improvements to the frontage roads, ramps and cross streets including the I-30/RD 130, Spur 341, and I-30/SR 183 interchanges within the project limits.

Public Meeting Tentative Early 2022*

TxDOT is preparing to present the following information at our first public meeting, including:

- Study Overview:** Learn about the study process, what the study includes and other basic information.
- I-30 Mainline Alternatives:** See the alternatives that have been evaluated for the I-30 mainline.
- I-30/Spur 341 and I-30/SR 183 Interchange Alternatives:** See the alternatives that are under consideration for the I-30 interchanges at Spur 341 and SR 183.
- Evaluation Matrix:** Learn what TxDOT considers and includes in the decision-making process and what that means for selecting the final alternatives such as:
 - Engineering
 - Environmental
 - Traffic
 - Estimated Cost

Project Location Map

Charles Cox, P.E.
TxDOT Project Manager
 Phone: (817) 774-6233
 Email: Charles_Cox@txdot.gov
 You can also receive information previously presented at meetings by visiting www.txdot.gov #I30WCS

tell us what YOU THINK about the I-30 meeting format

TxDOT is gearing up for the first I-30 West Corridor Study public meeting. Do you have any feedback on how we should conduct that meeting?

- Would you be able to participate in an online virtual public meeting, which will consist of a pre-recorded video presentation and will include both audio and visual components?
- Would you prefer to attend an in-person meet if CDC and local government health regulations were followed?

Take our 30-second survey and give us your thoughts!

Take our 30-second survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/I30WCS>

Call (833) 933-0431 and take the survey via phone.

Scan QR code to take the survey:

Survey Is Active
 through November 12, 2021

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OCTOBER 2021

16

It was coming, eventually.

Would have been nice to have some form of light rail in this town by now, but cars come first in the good ol' U.S. of A.... – Jeriat Gillum (@Jeriat817)

Roadway

Twitter –

1. Please join me. I will be discussing our award winning DFW @TEXpressLanes project in partnership with @NCTCOGtrans and @TxDOTDallas @TxDOTFortWorth @lbjexpresslanes @MilliganPartnrs @TollTagNews – Captain Carpool (@CarpoolCaptain)



Transit

Facebook –

1. 🙌 If it's been a while since you last took transit, here are a few tips #HopOn – NCTCOG Transportation Department



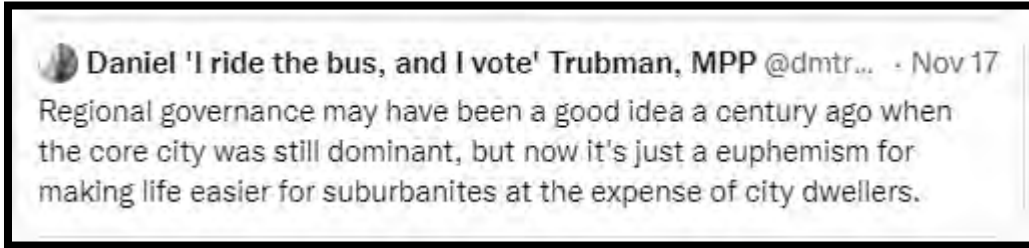
DART does a great job! – Kevin Overton

Best tip: stay away from mass transit like it was the plague! – Phil Neil

Other

Twitter –

1. Maybe it's time we dissolve all these Council of Governments and replace it with something more feudal with the suburbs as serfdoms. When has @NCTCOGtrans ever done anything but extract wealth from Dallas and dilute it among the region? – Andrew Wallace (@agwallace92)



Time for cities to rebuild walls around the city center (aka implement congestion pricing)
– Daniel 'I ride the bus, and I vote' Trubman, MPP



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Chris Hill
Collin County Judge
Collin County Administration Building
2300 Bloomdale Rd., Suite 4192
McKinney, TX 75071

Dear Judge Hill:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$191,000 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Chris Hill
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "M".

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Jim Skinner, Sheriff, Collin County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

November 10, 2021

The Honorable Clay Jenkins
Dallas County Judge
Dallas County Administration Building
411 Elm Street
Dallas, TX 75202

Dear Judge Jenkins:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your county is \$804,000 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the county. If a county chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Clay Jenkins
Page Two

November 10, 2021

We are letting you know that we have already been in communication with Dallas County staff and working with your county to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. We look forward to working with your county emissions task force and their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your participation in this program.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Marian Brown, Sheriff, Dallas County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Andy Eads
Denton County Judge
Denton County Courthouse
110 West Hickory
Denton, TX 76201

Dear Judge Eads:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$139,200 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

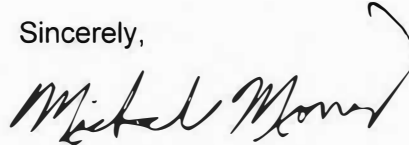
The Honorable Andy Eads
Page Two

October 15, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Tracy Murphree, Sheriff, Denton County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Todd Little
Ellis County Judge
Ellis County Courthouse
101 W. Main St
Ellis, TX 75165

Dear Judge Little:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$30,000 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Todd Little
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Brad Norman, Sheriff, Ellis County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Roger Harmon
Johnson County Judge
Johnson County Courthouse
2 North Main St., Room 120
Cleburne, TX 76033

Dear Judge Harmon:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$34,400 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Roger Harmon
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "M".

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Adam King, Sheriff, Johnson County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Hal Richards
Kaufman County Judge
County Judge Office
100 W Mulberry
Kaufman, TX 75142

Dear Judge Richards:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$33,000 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Hal Richards
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Bryan Beavers, Sheriff, Kaufman County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Pat Deen
Parker County Judge
Parker County Courthouse
One Courthouse Square
Weatherford, TX 76086

Dear Judge Deen:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$25,400 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable Pat Deen
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of this program.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Russ Authier, Sheriff, Parker County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

October 6, 2021

The Honorable David Sweet
Rockwall County Judge
Rockwall County Courthouse
101 E. Rusk St., Suite 202
Rockwall, TX 75087

Dear Judge Sweet:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your County is \$22,600 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the County. If the County chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable David Sweet
Page Two

October 6, 2021

Please have your staff contact Anthony Moffa at amoffa@nctcog.org or 817-695-9281 regarding your interest to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. Please let us know your interest by **Friday, October 29, 2021**. This schedule is timely to convene a meeting of regional task forces before the end of the calendar year as their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your consideration of the program.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Terry Garrett, Sheriff, Rockwall County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



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

November 10, 2021

The Honorable B. Glen Whitley
Tarrant County Judge
Tarrant County Administration Building
100 E. Weatherford Street
Fort Worth, TX 76196

Dear Judge Whitley:

This letter offers funding assistance to your county to help the region address fraudulent vehicle inspections and violations in the vehicle registration process.

As a past participating county in the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP), also known as AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program, and the Local Initiatives Project (LIP), the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) would like to inform you of funding available to reinstate regional vehicle emissions task forces with support from local law enforcement. Since the summer of 2019, LIP funded emissions task forces have been discontinued. These task forces were integral in minimizing fraud of illegal and fake vehicle registrations, fraudulent vehicle inspections, and the surge in fraudulently obtained paper temporary vehicle registration plates.

A recent effort during the 87th Texas Legislature with the filing of House Bill (HB) 2539 (Representative John Turner) sought to have previously collected funds for LIRAP/LIP returned to participating counties, for use in LIP, including emissions task forces. Unfortunately, the bill seeking LIRAP to LIP structure changes was left pending in the House Environmental Regulation Committee and no State fiscal appropriations were allocated to these programs.

Recognizing importance that emissions task forces have provided in the past, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved funding to restart efforts tackling fraud in the vehicle inspection program and registration process. Similar to historical allocations based on vehicle inspections, the approximate distribution for your county is \$720,600 for a minimum two-year period. There are no local match requirements to the county. If a county chooses to not accept these funds for an emissions task force, the funds will be redistributed to those counties in the region that do re-establish a task force. Therefore, allocations to participating counties could be higher.

The Honorable B. Glen Whitley
Page Two

November 10, 2021

We are letting you know that we have already been in communication with Tarrant County staff and working with your county to partner with the RTC in forming an emissions task force for your county. We look forward to working with your county emissions task force and their enforcement activities will be a vital element in our ability to reach attainment of the federal ozone standards.

Thank you for your participation in this program.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AM:ch

cc: Bill E. Waybourn, Sheriff, Tarrant County
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Anthony Moffa, Air Quality Planner, NCTCOG



Friday, October 29, 2021

Attn: Michael Morris, Director of Transportation
c/o North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

RE: North Texas HIPster Inclusive Mobility Project

Dear Mr. Morris and RTC reviewers:

LegacyConnect is pleased to support the City of Plano's proposed North Texas HIPster (Hugely Important People) Inclusive Mobility project.

LegacyConnect works to improve mobility options for employers and public entities in the Legacy West area in the City of Plano. We are excited to support this proposal because it furthers accessibility in the transportation industry in a tangible way. We support this project as a pathway to inclusion for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities by solving mobility issues through community engagement and innovative technology such as autonomous vehicles.

The LegacyConnect Board Members support this mobility project and the numerous benefits it will provide the businesses of the Legacy area through enriching our workforce, and providing reliable transportation for those in need.

Commissioner Webb - Collin County
Frank Castro - Children's Health
Glenn Lickstein - Gaedeke Group LLC

Lori McMahon - Toyota
Michael Lawson - Boeing
Peter Braster - City of Plano

Todd Plesko - DART
Tom Harrington - Intuit
Tyler Munger - Liberty Mutual

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lissa Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lissa Smith
Chair
Legacy Connect



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

December 3, 2021

The Honorable Dan Patrick
Lt. Governor of Texas
Joint Chair, Legislative Budget Board
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

The Honorable Dade Phelan
Speaker, Texas House
Joint Chair, Legislative Budget Board
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Lt. Governor Patrick and Speaker Phelan:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to express our support for the improvements of the North Tarrant Express (NTE) Segment 2E along State Highway 183.

The NTE Segment 2E is a critical component of a vital infrastructure network within the DFW area. Expanding NTE 2E will increase capacity, provide congestion relief, and enhance the safety aspects of SH 183, which will benefit multiple communities throughout North Texas. Expansion of the project is required to avoid dangerous bottlenecks that could threaten the safety of motorists and the efficient movement of goods through North Texas.

The RTC is seeking direction from the Legislative Budget Board if further approval is needed to complete Segment 2E, since it is already included in an active Texas Department of Transportation contract. In June 2009, a Comprehensive Development Agreement (CDA) was executed for construction of the IH 820/SH 121/SH 183 section of the NTE. The CDA included capacity improvement triggers requiring the private sector to make improvements along the tolled and non-tolled sections of the project. NTE Segment 2E is part of an existing agreement with TxDOT with private sector funding allowing improvements to be made at no additional cost to the State. The RTC respectfully requests that the Legislative Budget Board conclude LBB action is not necessary or approve the improvements to North Texas Express Segment 2E.

We look forward to hearing from you about this critical North Texas project. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theresa Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Theresa Daniel, Ph.D., Chair

Commissioner, Dallas County

RG:kw

Lt. Governor Patrick and Speaker Phelan
Page Two

December 3, 2021

cc: The Honorable Joan Huffman, Texas Senate
The Honorable Jane Nelson, Texas Senate
The Honorable Charles Schwertner, Texas Senate
The Honorable Larry Taylor, Texas Senate
The Honorable Greg Bonnen, Texas House of Representatives
The Honorable Mary Gonzales, Texas House of Representatives
The Honorable Morgan Meyer, Texas House of Representatives
The Honorable Armando Walle, Texas House of Representatives

Panel: Self-Driving Trucks Find Dallas-Fort Worth Launchpoint

Dallas-Fort Worth is ground zero for the development of autonomous truck technology, thanks to the cooperation of business leaders, and local, regional, and state governments, industry leaders say.

Experts from Kodiak, Waymo, Aurora, Embark, TuSimple, and Deloitte discuss why DFW is at the center of self-driving trucking deployments—and how that's shaping the future of the global supply chain. Here's a takeaway.

By Dave Moore, Dallas Innovates

Self-driving trucks could help eliminate supply-chain issues plaguing the U.S. right now and shore up the nationwide shortage of truck drivers. They could even reduce truck-accident rates substantially.

And Dallas-Fort Worth is ground zero for the development of autonomous truck technology, thanks to the cooperation of business leaders, and local, regional, and state governments.

Those are a few takeaways from the Oct. 28 Dallas Regional Chamber [Autonomous Trucking Roundtable](#), presented by Deloitte. On hand for the virtual discussion were representatives from industry experts from Kodiak, Waymo, Aurora, Embark, and TuSimple. The discussion was moderated by [Ashok Divakaran](#), strategy practice leader for Deloitte's connected and autonomous vehicles practice.

The leaders dispelled the myth that self-driving trucks will eliminate the need for human drivers and reinforced the notion that autonomous trucking technology is ready for deployment—it's just a matter of public education and acceptance.

Texas fully autonomous “first”

“Back in 2015, Texas was the site of the first fully autonomous ride on public roads, in the entire world, with Waymo,” said panelist [Annabel Chang](#), head of state policy and governmental relations for Waymo. “That was on the passenger-hailing side, but that demonstrates where Texas has had a leadership position.”

Chang added that Texas' location along the Interstate 10 corridor—which sweeps from Florida to California—makes it situated perfectly to help move freight across the entire country. She also said that the commitment from Texas and regional governments to autonomous transportation prompted Waymo to make Dallas [its center of operations](#) for the southern portion of the United States.

DFW takes the lead

Dallas-based Kodiak's [Daniel Goff](#) spelled out the reasons DFW has become a fulcrum for autonomous trucking in the U.S.:

- DFW is second only to Chicago for the volume of freight that passes through the region.
- milder weather is more conducive for testing autonomous trucking technology; and
- the regulatory and business climate is extremely conducive for autonomous trucking.

“Dallas-Fort Worth really rolled out the red carpet for our industry, and really started to see the potential of this technology,” said Goff. “That goes to folks like [Duane Dankesreiter](#), who we met over two years ago at the (Dallas Regional) Chamber ... and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), which has invested a ton of resources in this industry. [Tom Bamonte](#) has become one of the real leaders. TxDOT has been incredibly supportive with its connected autonomous vehicle task force.”

The industry needs “predictable governance”

Aurora’s [Gerardo Interiano](#) said the autonomous trucking industry needs predictable governance—issuing permits, setting regulations, fees, etc.—as it hones the technology, and his company has found that at all levels in Texas.

“When we show up and have conversations with these folks about what we’re doing, and what we need from them, their answer always is, ‘What is it that we can do to bring more jobs here and investment here to the community?’ And that’s music to our ears,” Interiano said.

Easing the pain of a truck driver shortage

Embark’s [Monika Darwich](#) said autonomous trucks will go a long way toward bridging the shortage of 80,000 truck drivers the country is facing.

“Lots of current drivers are aging, ready to retire within the next decade,” she said. “The number of people coming into the industry is not enough to fill that gap. When you look at the increasing demand of e-commerce, etc., on top of that, you need a solution for the supply chain to not completely collapse. Autonomous trucking is one small piece of that.”

TuSimple’s [Lee White](#) said self-driving trucks will likely fill the role of operating both mid-length and long-haul truck routes—operating at distances of 300, 700 miles, even 2,000 miles.

“It’s all helping with the pain points in the supply chain right now ... and maximizing the most-valuable assets that they have, which are their drivers,” he said. “How do they continue to improve the work/life balance for them?”

Fully autonomous trucks on long haul routes will allow human truckers—who will operate locally—to return to their homes at night, he said.

From drawing board to the road

Aurora’s Gerardo Interiano handled the final question: How can autonomous trucks move from the drawing board to roads?

“We have the data and evidence to say we now believe the technology is safe,” he said.

In September, Aurora launched a [pilot collaboration](#) with FedEx, deploying autonomous trucks—with backup human drivers—to haul goods 500 miles from Dallas to Houston along the I-45 corridor.

“We could remove the human driver in Texas tomorrow,” Interiano said. “There’s nothing that prevents us from a regulatory perspective. But one of the things you’re getting into is the public acceptance. That is a component that we, as an industry, are responsible for. We are responsible for working with partners like the Chamber, like the (North Central Texas Council of Governments) ... to show that this technology is safe. That’s why we’ve developed the [safety-case framework](#), where there will be able to show the public and our partners that this technology is ready to be deployed and ready to be commercialized.”

Click [here](#) to view the entire discussion.

(Pro tip: Advance 30 minutes into the video for the panel.)

This North Texas toll road can cost \$20 to drive during peak hours

The fluctuating rates can cost drivers who don't take the non-tolled general highway lanes.

By Anna Caplan, Dallas Morning News

Heading from Fort Worth to DFW Airport anytime soon? It could cost you as much as \$20 to access the TEXpress lanes on State Highway 121, [according to](#) CBS 11 (KTVT-TV).

That's if you have a Toll Tag.

If not, the fare is even higher, the station said. The highway management company said it is contractually obligated to raise the tolls to keep traffic moving at 50 mph.

Rates fluctuate periodically, according to the TEXpress' variable congestion-management pricing.

"Unlike other toll roads with fixed toll rates, prices on the TEXpress Lanes fluctuate based on real-time traffic conditions and demand. This helps prevent congestion and allows traffic to flow freely at a minimum of 50 mph along the corridor," LBJ Express/North Tarrant Express said on its [website](#).

"It is your choice to drive on the TEXpress Lanes or to drive on the adjacent non-tolled general highway lanes."

TEXpress offers a pricing calculator on its website and mobile to determine the average rates for the past 180 days.

Many drivers told the station they'd rather sit in traffic than pay the steep fee.

"To me, it's not worth it really I mean the traffic is still snarled," Bedford resident Pablo Castillo told the station. "You're having to pay for something that's not usable really."

Darrell Key, who was driving from Grand Prairie to the Mid Cities area, told the station that he saw the price displayed on a digital sign and believed it was a mistake.

"I said it's probably a glitch when we came across another one we said there it is again," he told the station.

The TEXpress Lane managers said traffic volume correlates with the prices, and that people who don't like it should let elected officials know.

Reminder to be safe on the roadways as daylight saving time ends

Look Out Texans encourages everyone to be alert and look out for people biking and walking.

By NCTCOG, Dallas Morning News

Daylight saving time ends this weekend, bringing earlier evenings and darker commutes. Look Out Texans is reminding drivers to use their lights and look out for people walking and biking. The risk of traffic crashes and fatalities increases in dark lighting conditions, with nearly two-thirds of all pedestrian crashes and 80% of all fatal pedestrian crashes occurring in dark lighting conditions.

People walking and biking are more vulnerable roadway users than those that are in vehicles, so drivers are reminded to turn their lights on, look out for people walking and biking, and to not drive distracted. Those walking and biking can do their part to be seen by wearing bright and/or reflective clothing while in the dark. State law requires bikes to have a front white light and a red reflector or red light on the back.

Whether in an urban, suburban or rural setting, bicyclists and pedestrians are sharing the roads with drivers, and all users need to remain alert. Interactions between drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians can occur just about anywhere in the region. Wherever they are, everyone should be respectful and look out for one another.

Look Out Texans' campaign efforts enhance the work of local, state and federal transportation partners who are focused on improving reliability and safety for all road users, using roadway design solutions and spreading greater awareness of how people can bike, walk and drive safely. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is coordinating Look Out Texans for cities and transportation partners across the region. It comes at a time when motor vehicle crashes that involve people bicycling and walking are increasing in North Texas. Between 2015 and 2019, there were more than 10,500 such reported vehicle crashes with pedestrians and bicyclists, resulting in 864 fatalities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Consequently, the Federal Highway Administration has designated both Dallas and Fort Worth as Pedestrian and Bicycle Focus Cities, which were selected based on high rates of crash fatalities.

For more information about the Look Out Texans campaign, including tips that can help make the roads safer for all, visit www.LookOutTexans.org. Follow the campaign on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using #LookOutTexans.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments

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

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

Voters overwhelmingly approve Tarrant County transportation bond

By Abby Church, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Tarrant County voters overwhelmingly supported a \$400 million bond proposal to improve roads Tuesday night, with 65.73% of voters approving the measure, according to unofficial results from all 323 voting centers. Reached late Tuesday, County Judge Glen Whitley said he felt good about results so far — county residents are “sensitive” to transportation, he said, and it’s an issue that resonates. County officials have already identified 33 projects they’ll complete with \$200 million of the bond. These projects will be matched 50% by cities. When the cities are ready to begin their projects, Whitley said, the county will be there with the cash.

This round of projects barely scratches the surface of requests put in by cities this past spring. The county received 196 proposals, totaling nearly \$763 million in funding requests. Another \$125 million will go to projects that cross multiple jurisdictions, and \$75 million will be divided among the commissioners for transportation projects within their precincts. Whitley said Tuesday he and the commissioners would immediately begin to look at what projects to fund with the other \$200 million.

The county is still working on a \$433 million transportation bond passed in 2006, he said.

Table: Abby Church Source: [Tarrant County](#) [Get the data](#)

New DCTA city representative sees GoZone as supplemental to bus routes

By Will Tarpley, North Texas Daily

The Denton City Council has appointed council member Alison Maguire to its chair on the Denton County Transportation Authority board of directors, removing incumbent Chris Watts.

Maguire, elected to the city council last May, said Watt's removal came after the former mayor ignored a campaign organized by Denton residents to prevent the axing of six Denton Connect Routes.

"Watts continued to push forward with his intention to cut six bus routes and so my colleagues and I felt we didn't want him to remain on the board," Maguire said.

The *North Texas Daily* could not reach Watts for comment.

The board of directors approved a motion back in July to replace Denton Connect Routes 1, 2, 3 and 4 with GoZone, an on-demand ride-share service. The board has until March 2022 to decide whether it will also eliminate Connect Routes 7 and 3. Maguire said she opposes eliminating any bus routes.

GoZone launched in September to a mixed reception, with complaints regarding the app's GPS system and the service's pickup and drop-off situation. Maguire said performance fixes are on the way, as well as an increase in the fleet size, though she does not know if there are any plans regarding pricing beyond the current \$0.75 rate per ride.

"I think GoZone has potential," Maguire said. "My concerns, which are being addressed, of not meeting demand will be improved as we refine the program. I was concerned GoZone would reduce ridership on Connect Routes. Data shows that isn't happening."

The data Maguire refers to was presented at last week's board of directors meeting, which shows Connect ridership regularly outpacing GoZone. For example, an average Thursday in September saw just over 6000 rides on Connect Routes, in comparison to under 2000 via GoZone.

"It doesn't seem [like GoZone] is serving as a replacement," Maguire said. "It's serving as a supplement."

Maguire also pointed to data comparing Connect Route and GoZone boardings by location. She said the data showed Connect Route boardings well away from GoZone pickup locations, save for "a significant overlap" on Route 7.

"To me, that's evidence we need both," Maguire said. "For people on campus, they want options."

The bus routes and GoZone utilize different workers, which Maguire called "contentious." While GoZone uses contracted drivers, DCTA employs members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, an international labor organization representing transit employees in the U.S. and Canada.

“There has been a lot of talk around since last year about eliminating [bus drivers’] positions,” Maguire said. “They aren’t sure their positions are safe, so they’ve been leaving. That’s one of the reasons I was so forceful at our last meeting, I wanted to protect their positions.”

The potential elimination of bus routes spawned No Bus Cuts Denton, a grassroots group formed by local citizens and bus drivers in opposition to the changes.

Joshua Hatton, a member of No Bus Cuts and also a part of the Texas State Employees Union, said the organization stands in solidarity with the unionized bus drivers and is against the GoZone contract for a number of reasons.

“We know that many people who use the buses in Denton and Lewisville are financially struggling and don’t have access to a phone,” Hatton said. “If these cuts go through, they will be excluded from public transportation.”

Tuesday, No Bus Cuts Denton issued a press release calling for the elimination of the GoZone contract, the preservation of bus routes and including the community in a “new, truly participatory progress” for determining Denton County transportation.

The status of university routes, which are managed between the university Transportation Services and DCTA, has also been up for discussion. George Stieren, communications specialist for Transportation Services, said changes in DCTA board leadership “should not impact discussions on future UNT-DCTA service agreements.”

“UNT negotiates all such agreements with DCTA leadership and board members do not participate in this process,” Stieren said. “The board’s involvement only comes at the end in approving agreements, as does the Board of Regents on the UNT side.”

Pamela Burns, DCTA director of public involvement and communications, said further decisions regarding fare structure and GoZone would likely be made at the Dec. 2 board meeting.

“DCTA is committed to providing transit service for its member cities and will continue to serve UNT,” Burns said.

There's Still Plenty Of Gold To Be Found At The End Of DFW's 'Rainbow Highway'

By Katharine Carlon, Bisnow

Some say you'll find a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Those involved in commercial real estate in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro claim to know differently.

"I say it's at the end of 121," McKinney Mayor [George Fuller](#) said.

Investment, development and economic opportunity are flourishing along the state highway running through [Collin County](#), the nation's fourth-fastest-growing county and home to North Dallas' most affluent suburbs, including Allen, [Plano](#), [Frisco](#) and McKinney.

Home to regional and national hubs for [Toyota](#), [UPS](#), [FedEx](#), [Southwest Airlines](#), [Motorola](#) and the [Dallas Cowboys](#), among others, Collin County has become a magnet for [big-name companies and investment](#) and [people](#).

And panelists at *Bisnow's* Oct. 28 Innovation (121) Corridor event say the boom times along and near the artery referred to as "rainbow highway" are far from over, with McKinney alone counting 115 square miles of available and developable property, Fuller said. McKinney already has 68 acres under development and a roster of recent wins such as banking firm Independent Financial's [plans to triple the size of its campus](#) in the [Craig Ranch](#) development and the \$750M [Craig International](#) project at District 121 [anchored by Kaizen Development's 200K SF eight-story office tower](#).

"We've done work all over Texas, we've done Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, things like that. But at the moment, almost the entirety of our work is focused in the DFW area, and primarily in the Collin County area, because that's where most of the expansion and growth is happening," McRight-Smith Construction President [Andrew Smith](#) said. "There's a lot of infill work to be done. There's a lot of population-driven growth. And we see the businesses following them ... There's still lots of opportunities to build for lots of different types of groups."

Smith said there is no end in sight for new development along the [121 Corridor](#), with a number of companies already planning projects for three to four years from now and a pipeline that shows no signs of tailing off. Some of the long-term planning is in response to rising materials costs, which are extending timelines further into the future. But the bulk of the momentum is being driven by population shifts in a market that is growing by 100 residents daily, making way for a stream of employment centers, housing, medical offices and retail.

"You guys will probably read three articles today in a newspaper that tells you retail is dead. Retail is not dead, it's just evolved," he said. "You can't Amazon a haircut or an ice cream cone. There's going to have to be somewhere to get stuff."

Most panelists predicted [Collin County's](#) run would last until at least 2030. [Kaizen Development Partners](#) CEO [Derrick Evers](#) said his company's analysis uncovered numerous gaps and opportunities along the corridor, including a relative dearth of Class-A office space.

"There's tremendous opportunity because there's a lot of gaps to be filled," Evers said. "And then you want to make 24-hour communities, to have office where you have daytime traffic, because if you're a retailer, you can't survive on nights and weekends alone, you do need that

full cycle. To the extent that we can bring housing, bring daytime traffic with office, where you have the retailers here, it becomes this community.”

Allen-based [JaRyCo Development](#) President [Bruce Heller](#) said the attraction of developing in Collin County comes down to local governments working as partners instead of adversaries.

That means not just understanding economic development, he said, but elevating the importance of good public schools, strong transportation links and other public amenities to the young, well-educated families flocking to the county.

“You got these great cities — Allen and Plano and Frisco and McKinney — that all understand business ... and they know the challenges that come with development,” Heller said. “I just think it's sort of a perfect storm of everything coming together.”

That's the mix, in part, that brought the AT&T Byron Nelson Golf Tournament, which Salesmanship Club of Dallas President Mike McKinley called the [PGA Tour](#)'s premier charitable fundraiser, to Collin County this year after seven decades in Dallas County. The tournament, supporting the Momentous Institute, held its first event at TPC Craig Ranch in McKinney in May.

“We walked into a room with about 25 leaders of the McKinney community, the business community, the [city of McKinney](#), and within about 15 minutes, our tournament director and I kind of looked at each other and we knew we were home,” McKinley said, adding the charity, which fosters social emotional health for children and families, netted \$5.5M in its first year despite [PGA](#) limits on the number of people that could be hosted due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Independent Financial Chairman and CEO David Brooks said the ability to land prestigious events and the bustle of activity up and down the corridor testified to the intensity of interest in the area, which he called a national phenomenon unmatched by anywhere else in the country.

Brooks noted he is speaking to people around the country interested in investing in the area.

In an environment as rich with capital as he has seen in his career, he said, opportunities still abound: “Take a drive [and] next time don't pay attention only to what you see, all the buildings, and pay attention to all the land that is still undeveloped. The momentum here is going to continue on, I think, for 10 years into the future.”

Under DART's New Bus Plan, Some Riders Face Difficult Trips Between Stops

The transit agency's new plan doubles down on reliability and frequency, but it also means that riders may have a trot ahead of them.

By Dalton Laferney, D Magazine

If we were not in Dallas, the phrase “walk a little farther” might produce no additional stress for residents who use public transportation every day.

Under [its new bus network plan](#), DART calculates that as many as 75 percent of people within DART's service area will be within walking distance of a bus stop, about a 6 percent increase from the current arrangement. The agency [polled North Texans](#) who live within the agency's service area and found that most people would rather travel a longer distance by foot to a bus stop if it means buses will run more frequently. DART's new plan refocuses its buses around core high-frequency routes, which it believes will be more reliable but will sometimes require a longer walk after a transfer.

But in [a city as unfriendly to pedestrians as Dallas](#), what does 10 minutes of walking distance really mean, especially for someone taking their elderly mother to the doctor's office? What about somebody who is already burdened to traverse to the stop that is across the street from him? What does it mean to walk a little farther in a city where even the most expensive and well-developed neighborhoods are dotted with pedestrian hazards?

For Barbara Jordan, 64, it means more time in the morning darkness as she catches the bus to make it to work by 7 a.m. She wrote to DART, pleading her case to save the 541 running next to her South Oak Cliff apartment. “Please don't make me walk three blocks to get a bus,” she wrote.

And for Christopher Long, who uses a wheelchair and lives with severe pain, the 542 disappearing would require him to use the agency's paratransit service more often, which he said would impact his ability to move around. DART's scheduling system requires paratransit riders to make arrangements by 5 p.m. the day before their planned trip, but they can also book up to four days in advance. Long says that would limit his flexibility.

As we move closer to Jan. 24, 2022 — the day when the new route changes will be in effect — more people are reaching out to DART leaders to try and get a sense for how their lives will change. What might not be obvious from the stats and official framing of the changes is clear when you talk to some everyday bus riders: the extra distance will not be quite so simple for everybody.

Decisions on where to live often factor in how convenient it is to get to work, what kind of retail is accessible, and where you will go for a night out. For people without a car or those who cannot drive, a reliable public transit system is key if they are to truly partake in a big city. Many people already arrange their lives around transit, and DART's hope is that by making these changes, more people eventually will center DART in how they move around. It's a bet officials are making for the future of public transit in one of the nation's largest cities.

To be clear, DART and its consultants have tried to be mindful of how eliminating bus stops and telling customers to walk a few more blocks will affect people who struggle to move around this

city. Jarrett Walker, the international consultant [brought in to essentially save DART's inefficient bus system](#), has proposed taking down bus stops and moving around routes in many cities that needed to prioritize scarce resources. DART is hamstrung in some ways because the overhaul had to be budget neutral. The agency has included in its messaging a reminder that what you see now may not be what the system looks like in five or 10 years.

He said there are always people who are rightfully concerned about route changes, but he assures concerned Dallas residents that the new plan was built with them in mind.

“One of the common perceptions of people with disabilities is that they aren’t in a hurry, and I think that spills over from what we hear from a lot of retired people, who will say often that they are in less of a hurry than working people are, which is understandable, and they therefore get less of a benefit out of the kind of travel time improvements that we’re trying to deliver to everyone else,” Walker said last week. “But I don’t think that’s true of people with disabilities and even people using mobility devices. Lots of them are going to jobs, lots of them have busy lives, lots of them are in as much of a hurry as anyone else, which is to say, that a lot of them are going to benefit from these changes.”

There is good news for riders who may live with disabilities and who are eligible to [use paratransit](#). Though some bus routes will shift and in some cases disappear, the service areas for paratransit will not change, says Rob Smith, the interim vice president for service planning and scheduling at DART. The agency’s planners and stakeholders made a conscious decision not to change paratransit. “There are no direct effects on the paratransit service,” he said. “That’s sort of a bedrock service that we provide.”

Some people live with disabilities but do not qualify to use the paratransit service. There is an application and review process as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act that must take place before one can use the service. In those cases, Smith says people should also consider using the GoLink service, which will be a crucial part of DART’s new service plan. DART widened the coverage areas for GoLink, the rapid-demand service people can pay to be picked up and dropped off within the specified zones. “You will actually in most cases be able to be picked up at your home, so you won’t necessarily have to walk to the bus stop,” Smith said. “We will take you anywhere within that designation zone or to the nearest transfer point.”

He said one of the most common questions people have right now is how to use GoLink. DART has decided to start operating the new GoLink zones in early December, so people will be more accustomed to using the on-demand service when the broader network changes take effect in January. (He also urged riders to continue sharing their concerns by emailing serviceplanning@dart.org.)

Talking to bus riders, I heard from virtually nobody who disagrees that more buses running more frequently might attract and keep more riders. It makes sense to even people outside of urban design and transit circles that this new plan could lead to a better tomorrow. But such a huge part of a healthy transit system is the infrastructure that supports (or doesn’t support) how passengers find their way to and from a bus stop.

Part of creating that better future is acknowledging how problematic it can be to move around on foot here. Patrick Kennedy, who represents Dallas on DART’s board of directors, says this new plan should help member cities identify the infrastructure fixes that need to be funded. Broken or

cracked sidewalks, dangerous intersections, and ADA non-compliant spaces should come more into focus as DART and its cities monitor travel behaviors under the new plan.

“Even in highly developed areas like Uptown, there’s sidewalks and curbs and corners that don’t have ADA access throughout, so we’ve got a lot of work to do,” Kennedy said. “But all we can do is call out the problem, and start addressing it, and create the pathway to slowly but surely, and incrementally, improve it. And I think we are on that right path.”



The 6600 block of Santa Fe Ave., where a dicey sidewalk disappears.

Kennedy hopes that the new bus system will create a pathway for the city to improve its infrastructure, particularly along transfer routes that get to the higher frequency buses.

Rick Grunbaum, 79, became legally blind about 20 years ago. He has been riding public transit his whole life, in places like New York City and Vienna, Austria. For the past 45 years, he has been in Dallas. Getting on and off a bus is no challenge for him — it’s how he gets to his destination after the bus stop that sets Dallas apart from the transit-friendly cities of his past.

He rides route 19 up and down Gaston Avenue, and urged DART to extend the line out to Garland Road instead of stopping in Lakewood, which would allow him to access his preferred shops. While he thinks the new plan is a step in the right direction, his use of DART, in terms of access, does not change. “It [still] doesn’t fill my needs,” he said.

In advance of the new network, Kristina Parsadanova has already moved her elderly mother to her brother’s home because it has become too burdensome to use DART buses to make it to doctor visits. She has relied on Uber a lot more lately, a far more expensive mode of getting

around. She supports the effort to improve the DART bus network even as she is set to lose the 362, which currently runs in front of her apartment near the University of Texas at Dallas. The new network means either an additional 10 or 15 minute walk across an open field at the corner of Coit Road and McCallum Boulevard to reach a bus stop, or more connections, to get to her job in Addison.

"I'm gonna have to get a car, which is going to be hard," she said.

DART has already booked Walker's firm to conduct a five-year study of how the new bus network is playing out in the lives of its riders. Walker and DART officials say this is only the beginning of the process, and changes will be made along the way.

The agency encourages riders to share with DART and member cities everything they encounter under the new plan, from ineffective bus routes to inaccessible sidewalks.

\$850 million Frisco mixed-use project plans for construction start

Big development on S.H. 121 near Legacy West has been in the works for years.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

After years of planning, there are signs that a huge Frisco development is moving ahead.

The Spring Creek Frisco 45 mixed-use project is located on State Highway 121 between the \$3 billion Legacy West development and the Grandscape complex in the Colony.

Back in 2018, the Houston-based owner of the 60-acre tract at S.H. 121 and Spring Creek Parkway obtained zoning to build an \$850 million project to include office towers, a hotel, retail space and apartments and townhouses.

Frisco's city council okayed the project after years of pushback from nearby homeowners.

But nothing much has happened on the site since then.

Now plans have been filed to start work on infrastructure and open space to support the massive development.

Construction is set to start in January, according to planning documents filed with the state. The infrastructure construction is valued at more than \$6 million and is scheduled to be completed late next year.

The Spring Creek Frisco 45 property is one of the largest vacant tracts along the north side of S. H. 121.

The new development was planned to have four office towers with as much as 1.4 million square feet of space. There's also plans for a full-service hotel, 80,000 square feet of retail and more than 1,000 apartments and townhouses.

The buildings would surround series of parks and open spaces.

KFM Engineering and Design is working on the development.

Engineering firm Stantec and Dallas-based KDC also were involved in obtaining the original zoning for the project.

The owner of the project is a real estate partnership affiliated with Houston businessman George Bishop, founder and chief executive officer of GeoSouthern Energy. Bishop has made other property investments in the Dallas area.

Plans for the big Frisco development are heating up as developers are again looking at new office projects.

A handful of office towers are proposed for West Plano and Frisco – the first such buildings in the works since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Buildings in the project at Spring Creek Parkway and S.H. 121 would be built around a series of small parks and open space. (Spring Creek Frisco 45)

Expansion of Sam Rayburn Tollway in Frisco nears December completion

By Brooklynn Cooper, Erick Pirayesh, Community Impact Newspaper

The \$200 million expansion of the Sam Rayburn Tollway and its intersections is on track to be completed in December, according to North Texas Tollway Authority officials.

“We are coming down the homestretch,” NTTA spokesperson Michael Rey said. “We are on schedule [and] on budget. Everything is going as planned.”

The tollway’s widening project began in January 2019. It adds a fourth lane in both directions from Denton Tap Road in Coppell to US 75 in McKinney.

In Frisco, five bridges were widened as part of the expansion: Legacy Drive, Parkwood Boulevard, Preston Road, Hillcrest Road and Coit Road. The eastbound Preston exit ramp opened in early October.

The eastbound lane from the Dallas North Tollway to US 75 in McKinney also recently opened. Rey said that NTTA will continue to open new lanes in segments as construction wraps up. The project aims to improve regional mobility, as the estimated North Texas population of 7.5 million is projected to exceed 11 million in the coming decades.

“It was obvious to anybody who has traveled the [tollway] in the past few years ... traffic was certainly ramping up,” Rey said. “We were starting to see congestion, so that triggered the planning and ... the construction of that extra lane.”

Part of the expansion involved adding lanes to existing bridges at several intersections. This process includes demolition work and adding foundation, columns, beams and a bridge deck, Rey said.

Brian Moen, Frisco’s assistant director of engineering services and transportation, said that the NTTA has worked well with the city as both entities attempt to proactively complete projects to adjust to the region’s growth.

He added that commuters on the Dallas North Tollway that switched to the SRT to get to arterial roads like Coit, Independence or Preston experienced a lot of congestion during rush hour.

“With some of the ramp changes that they’ve made as a part of the widening, that should help improve that situation, so that’s one of the things that [drivers] should notice early on once everything’s fully opened up,” Moen said.

The project is paid for through the NTTA’s Capital Improvement Fund, which consists of toll revenue available after operations and debt services have been paid.

Growing without congestion

Projects that expand transportation infrastructure are essential as the region experiences

unprecedented growth, Collin County Commissioner Duncan Webb said.

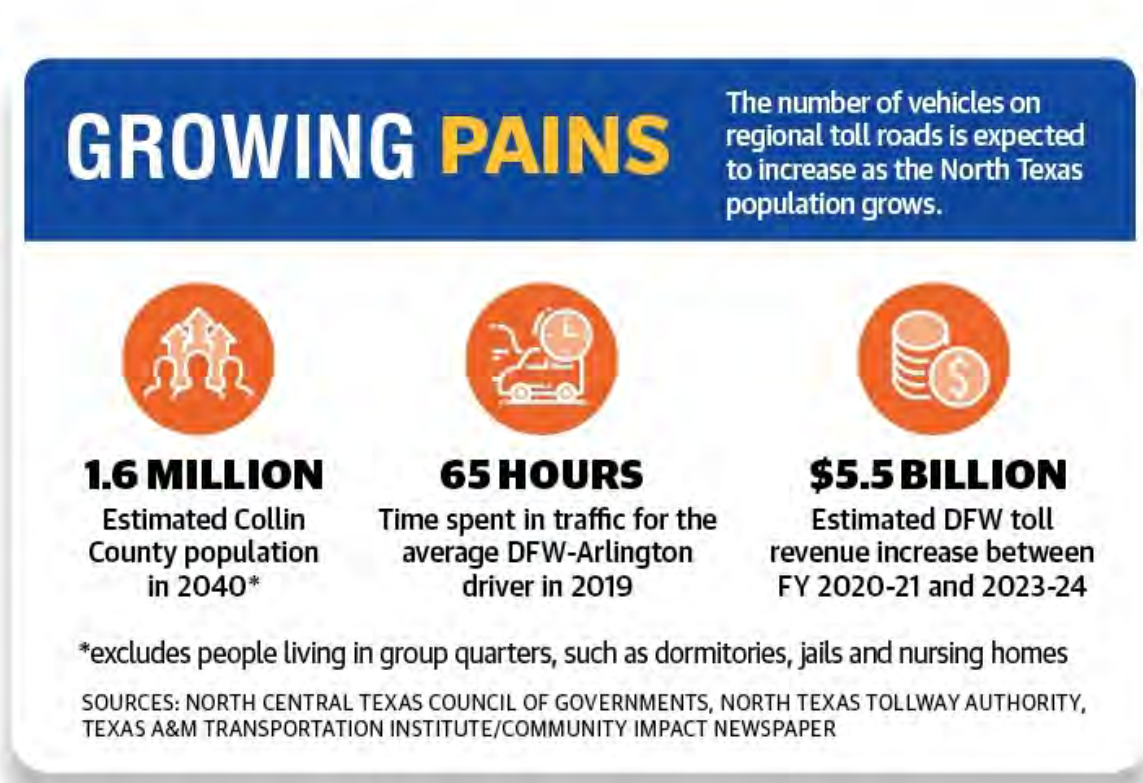
“We are estimating between 40 and 80 people moving to Collin County every day. ... That also means that we probably have 20 new cars on our roads every single day,” he said.

As more employees began working from home, rush-hour congestion reduced significantly, Webb said. Some areas of the metroplex saw traffic drop by between 7% and 10% compared to pre-pandemic levels, he added.

As part of its long-term mobility plan for the region, the North Central Texas Council of Governments wants companies to consider designating at least one day per week to remote work.

“It can’t be mandated; it’s just a goal,” Webb said of the initiative. “The hope is [remote work] ... will allow us to continue to grow without the congestion experienced by other large metropolitan areas.”

These growth projections are reflected in NTTA’s budget, which estimates revenue to increase to \$5.5 billion between fiscal years 2021 and 2024. In fiscal year 2020-21, toll revenue is estimated at \$971 million.



As part of a biennial toll rate schedule approved by its board of directors, NTTA announced earlier this year a \$0.01 average toll rate increase, from \$0.19 to \$0.20 per mile, that began July 1.

The Sam Rayburn Tollway widening project is not expected to contribute to increased toll rates, according to NTTA officials.

Rey said one benefit of the project is construction occurred in the middle of the highway, which lessened the effect on drivers.

“We never want to say we don’t have an impact; we understand construction always does,” he said. “But it certainly has had minimal impact.”

Looking ahead

Road paving and maintenance work throughout the tollway and its frontage road are still underway. NTTA is also working on striping and improving landscaping along the corridor.

One of NTTA’s upcoming projects includes widening the DNT to four lanes in each direction from the SRT to US 380. Design is ongoing for those improvements.

Moen said that the city has been working with the NTTA to ensure the expansion is able to accommodate the growth of northwest Frisco with the future arrival of the [Fields development](#) and the PGA courses.

“A lot of times, it’s like that ‘Field of Dreams’ movie: you build it and they will come,” Moen said. “Where we add capacity, usually there’s demand that will come and use that... But I think long term, it’ll serve Frisco [and] what its needs are.”

The city of Frisco’s transportation department is also assessing the needs of commuters to determine where potential improvements could be made, Moen said. Annually, his department reviews traffic data collected at various locations throughout the city to see how areas are changing and where the demand is. Right now, the focus is on north-south arterial roads that intersect with the SRT.

The transportation department has a Capital Improvement Program, which consists of a five-year thoroughfare plan based on development in the city. That plan is “constantly” updated, Moen said.

He gave the example of Coit Road, which is currently being widened to six lanes from Main Street to the SRT. Once that project is completed, it will be widened from Main to US 380.

Eventually, the city will do the same with Independence Parkway, he added.

“We’re positioning ourselves to try and provide good flow that leads down into [the SRT] for those who need to use it to go elsewhere around the region,” Moen said.

How the GoCarma app can change driver behavior

An app that stops people cheating about their vehicle occupancy

By Cate Lawrence, The Next Web

Carpooling is a great way to cut driving costs, reduce traffic, save time, and reduce stress. It also improves air quality and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Rates of traffic and parking congestion are reduced.

Many states in the US use toll roads to encourage carpooling. Cars with over three people (technically known as high occupancy vehicles or HOVs) can then receive a discount of up to 50% off their toll during peak hours.

The problem is that people cheat. But a company called Carma has stopped HOV cheating in Texas, a state with over 50 toll roads. I spoke to Carma's Chief Business Officer, Paul Steinberg, to find out more.

GoCarma confronts the problem of cheating commuters

The GoCarma app uses Bluetooth and GPS in the Dallas-Fort Worth Express Lane locations to verify there are at least two people in the vehicle. Vehicles with a verified HOV status then receive a 50% HOV toll discount.

Specifically, the app measures occupancy. It counts how many phones are traveling together in a vehicle. (If you're in the car with people without a smartphone such as kids, an Occupant pass can record their presence in the car).

HOV tolls are becoming the norm

Over 45,000 daily commuters in Dallas-Fort Worth use Carma technology. Carpool rates have increased by 15% in a little over a year.

Paul explained the need as part of a bigger push to increase HOVs:

The more cars you fit in a lane, the slower it goes. And there are mandates on how fast that road must travel. The new transportation bill mandates that every new toll road in the US must have an HOV component to it.

So, the tech has come at a great time, as cities focus on improving their carbon emissions. To date, Dallas-Fort Worth commuters have saved roughly 3300 metric tons of CO2 by choosing to travel together using GoCarma instead of driving alone. That's the equivalent of reversing CO2 emissions from just over 700 passenger vehicles driven for one year, or 400 homes' energy use for one year. Impressive, right?

Removing police from minor road violations

An additional advantage of apps like GoCarma is that they remove HOV enforcement from police. Many are calling for the need to separate police from non-critical traffic enforcement tasks.

An extensive investigation by The New York Times found that many cities utilize police as revenue agents for traffic violations, instead of public safety infractions. As a result, driving is one of the most common daily routines during which people get shot, tasered, beaten, or

arrested after minor offenses. The New York Times identified 400 cases from the past five years in which officers killed unarmed civilians who had not been under pursuit for violent crimes.

For catching HOV violators, the use of police is also a highly inefficient form of policing.

As Paul explained:

Historically, the only way to catch people for vehicle occupancy violations is a police officer on the side of the road peering into vehicles — even if they have a camera, they still have to drive and pull over offending drivers. And they can only pull over two or three people an hour.

So as traffic volumes have increased over decades, the percentage of actual cheaters they are catching keeps going down because they can only catch about 4% of the total number of cheaters that are driving past them in any given hour, even if they're on the road.

By using technology such as GoCarma, enforcement saves time and money. Violation detection shifts from the police, reducing police shootings and police injuries in the line of duty.

GoCarma acts as a deterrence to repeat offenders

If you get caught in a HOV lane without exemption, the fines can be steep. For example, in California, a HOV lane violation ticket is a minimum \$490 fine. Many states even have additional fines for anyone caught trying to use a doll or dummy to fake passengers.

But maybe there's another way? As Paul shared: "What we've been able to do in Dallas is by flipping that model, going away from enforcement and moving to verification."

With GoCarma, violating users receive a series of escalating warnings. Carma reports that 98% change their behavior before the fourth notification. While habitual violators get suspended from HOV discounts for 30 days, they can still use the managed lanes. To date, less than one of every 1,000 users has received a suspension, with violation rates lower than 2%.

Carma is upgrading their platform next year to allow cities to deploy congestion pricing easily. But as Paul explained:

What is unique about Texas, is that they are flipping the model of road user charging. They want to give you discounts. So, as the US government is looking at road user pricing, TxDOT wants to give money back for good behavior.

If you change your time of day for commuting, they're going to give you money back. If you take an alternative route during peak times such as a game at the Dallas Cowboys Stadium, they'll pay you.

Carma's work in Texas has attracted national and international attention with interest in cities such as Bogota and Dublin. The company received a Toll Excellence Award for innovation from the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association.

As Paul noted:

As the world tries to solve its big emissions problem, the easiest emission to solve is transportation. That's where all the oil is being burned. And it's the simplest thing to introduce a policy that will encourage carpooling or less driving.

Changing driver behavior is hard. But where punishment has failed, Carma might have found the solution, incentivizing drivers to do the right thing.

Less than 20 miles separate Dallas communities with the lowest and highest life expectancy

Several factors can explain why the disparity exists, and access to health care isn't the biggest part of the equation

By Imelda Garcia, Dallas Morning News

Under the shadow of downtown Dallas' skyscrapers and a few feet away from the Trinity River and Interstate 35E are the 10th Street Historic District and The Bottom neighborhoods, the census tract with the lowest life expectancy in Dallas County.

A resident here can expect to live just 64.2 years on average, according to the Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation's analysis based on census data.

Of the inhabitants in this census tract, 50.9% are Hispanic, 44.7% are Black and 14.2% are white.

About 20 miles away, in a census tract of the city of Richardson that is part of The Reservation and JJ Pearce neighborhoods, residents live, on average, 86.5 years, the highest life expectancy in Dallas County.

In this area of Richardson, 77.4% of inhabitants are white, 10.6% are Asian and 6.2% are Hispanic.

The factors behind this disparity are multifaceted and complex, and access to health care is only a small part of the equation, says Gül Seçkin, a specialist in medical sociology from the University of North Texas.

Seçkin said health outcomes in a population depend not only on individual choices, but also on socioeconomic factors that explain the difference in life expectancy of more than two decades between two communities in the same county.

Three of the most important factors are income disparities, access to health care and the type of work they do, she said. But there are other not-too-evident factors.

"Even simple things like being able to afford a vacation, taking time off from work, having to work multiple jobs, living in neighborhoods that are not safe, the quality of the air or the soil, or your housing condition," Seçkin said. "The accumulation of all these factors over a long period of time leads to these differentials in life expectancy."

A stressed community

None of this comes as a surprise to residents in areas where health outcomes are worse.

"The community here has been broken for so many years and we are neglected," said Patricia Cox, president of the 10th Street Historic District Residents Association.

"Here, you don't have nearby stores, no clinics, no hospitals, crime is rampant and we're facing gentrification. We are highly stressed," she said.

The 10th Street Historic District is part of Oak Cliff. It was originally an African American community, where some slaves who came with the white settlers of the Dallas area first settled in the 1840s.

Years after the abolition of slavery, the first freedmen's town in North Texas was established there.

After years of changes in the area, including construction of highways and the demolition of dozens of homes, Cox said the 10th Street Historic District went from being a thriving community with stores, churches, workshops and clean streets to a forsaken area with high crime, littered streets, unmowed yards and crumbling homes. Developers are now looking to buy it for its proximity to downtown, only 3 miles north.

“This inequality is something we have lived with for centuries,” said Cox, who was born in this neighborhood in 1943 and, after living for a few years in California, returned in 2006 to take care of her mother.

“Here lived those who were abused and exploited. It seems nothing has changed,” she said.

Cox has lived past the average life expectancy in this neighborhood. She’s 77, and her mother died at 93 not from an illness, but as a result of a fall that injured her head.

Even though Cox is diabetic and has heart issues, she thinks the diet she has had all her life — meat- and animal fat-free— has protected her from worse outcomes.

However, in the past few years, as she took on a larger role advocating for her community, diabetes has taken a toll. She lost 40 pounds in the past year because of the disease.

During the day, the streets in the 10th Street Historic District look empty, with very few people walking on them or spending time on their porches or in their front yards.

The only time neighbors see each other is when they leave for work or when they’re back home to rest. In 2018, the area’s median household income was \$25,385 a year, less than half the Dallas County median, according to data from the Census Bureau.

There are no grocery stores nearby to speak of. The same goes for dollar stores or even bus or DART rail stations.

Those without a car have to walk up to at least one mile to the nearest public transit line.

If they need something from the grocery store, they have to walk 2.5 miles, or about 40 minutes, to reach Supermercado Monterrey, the nearest in the area, on the other side of I-35E.

There are no emergency clinics close to the area either. The closest health care provider they can go to is Methodist Dallas Medical Center, about 2 miles away.

Dallas Police Department data shows that this is an area where crime is high. So far this year, there have been reports of 11 retail shop and commercial building thefts, 10 stolen vehicles, five armed assaults, three armed robberies and two burned vehicles in the area.

Cox is retired and uses Medicare. She makes her copayments comfortably and receives her diabetes control drugs on time.

Living in the same neighborhood, Abel González, 59, has had a more difficult time affording health care.

González has had a stomach hernia for the past few years, but it wasn’t until last summer that it kept him from working in construction, a job he’s been doing since he arrived in Dallas from Durango, Mexico, in 1979.

“I knew I had it, but I never searched for care because it was either that or taking food from my children’s mouths,” González said.

“I had to choose between getting screenings and visiting the doctor or feeding my kids.”

A father of six between 9 and 18, González has been out of work since July and has been helping pay his household expenses with his federal child tax credit money.

Now he’s getting unemployment benefits, but he makes only half as much as he used to when he had a job.

Upon losing his job, González lost his health insurance, too. So he went to Parkland Hospital, where he is scheduled for surgery in mid-December.

“I think we live less long here because we’re neglected,” González said.

“We are poorer and face a lot of obstacles to access care. To be fine here in our neighborhood ... we cannot do it alone.”

Seçkin said residents of poor neighborhoods experience stressors from all sides — and when you add their financial strains to the mix, that can lead to poorer health.

“It’s like being in a constant survivor mode. It puts your body in a fight, because you don’t have any opportunity to relax; you are always struggling,” she said.

Not far away, another world

To the north, only 17 miles away, the area of the Reservation and JJ Pearce neighborhoods where life expectancies are the longest in Dallas County is one with few of these stressors. It has a thriving upper middle class with spacious homes and well-kept lawns.

Front yards are dotted with lawn chairs and playgrounds, and it is common to see people of every age walking their dogs or working out.

Kathy and Russell Scott, 68 and 64, have been living in the area for 28 years. Russell owns a music school. Kathy works as a secretary at Waterview Christian Church in the same Richardson community.

They have never had serious health problems nor have they had trouble getting treatment for the illnesses they have faced.

“We have always had health insurance through our jobs. And each year we get routine checkups, try to eat healthy and everything is fine,” Kathy Scott said.

The Scotts also believe part of their well-being derives from the environment they live in.

“There are places where crime is higher, people don’t know each other, and you can see more stress in those people’s eyes,” Russell Scott said.

Richardson police data shows that this is an area with no record of high-impact crime. So far this year, just three assaults and five business thefts have been reported.

In addition to having access to quality health care, the Scotts have the support of a network of friends and acquaintances helping them get better care and make good decisions.

“Both of us already had cataract surgery, and two of our congregation leaders are physicians, so they told us where to go,” said Russell Scott.

Greg Parks and Lenin Munguía, community outreach ministers at Waterview, said the jobs and lifestyles of people living in the area allow them to have a higher life expectancy than the rest of the county.

“This neighborhood is very stable. People come in, they settle here and they stay, sometimes for many decades,” said Parks. “The neighborhood itself is very communal, with lots of neighbor interaction and many people with a religious affiliation.”

“Access to health care is tied to employment, so a community where people have good jobs, they necessarily have access to better health care,” said Munguía, in charge of the church’s outreach with the Latino community.

However, it’s not the area with the highest income in the county.

The area’s median household income was \$114,306 in 2018, according to census data. That’s roughly twice the Dallas County median, but five census tracts in northern parts of Dallas have median household incomes that topped \$250,000, according to data compiled by PCCI.

Around this Richardson neighborhood, there’s a wide variety of businesses and services available.

Real estate agents often talk of the “Starbucks effect,” where the coffee shops’ locations indicate an area of rising prosperity. Unlike in the 10th Street Historic District, where the closest Starbucks is 3 miles away in a downtown building, the area where the Scotts live has at least 10 Starbucks locations in a 2-mile radius.

The area also has several grocery stores, including some offering organic food like Sprouts Farmers Market and Whole Foods Market.

The closest emergency clinic is just across a street, and the nearest large hospital, Medical City Dallas, is 4 miles away.

Seçkin said that although individuals may have better overall health in communities with more economic resources, no one is exempt from the chance of facing a chronic illness or health crisis.

The difference, she said, is in having a way to deal with it.

“Let’s say if I’m making six figures, \$200,000, \$300,000 or if I’m a millionaire, making more money is not going to substantially increase my health,” Seçkin said. “But if I’m making \$30,000 or \$40,000, increasing my income level does make a difference. That’s why our leaders need to work on this, so that there’s less inequality.”

Seçkin said placing the sole responsibility for health on each individual — by simply recommending dieting, exercise or better sleep, for example — misses the point. Communities that address inequities, she said, can help individuals make the healthier choices they may want to make and improve health outcomes for all.

Texas could get billions from the infrastructure bill, yet all Texas Republicans voted against it

By Bret Jaspers, KERA

The bill would bring an estimated \$30 billion or more of infrastructure spending into the state. That includes money for federal highway programs, public transit and the state's electric vehicle charging network.

Texas would benefit massively from the infrastructure bill [that passed the House of Representatives late Friday](#), yet not one Texas Republican voted for it.

It's now awaiting President Biden's signature.

The bill would bring an estimated \$30 billion — or more — of infrastructure spending into the state, according to a specific White House [breakout for Texas](#). That includes \$26.9 billion from federal highway programs, \$3.3 billion for public transportation and \$408 million to expand the state's electric vehicle charging network. These outlays would come over the next five years.

There is also at least \$100 million slated for broadband expansion in Texas. The White House said, "14% of Texas households do not have an internet subscription."

All this funding could have a significant impact on the daily lives of people in Texas, said Michael Morris, director of transportation at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

"If you're interested in technology, if you're interested in bike paths, if you're interested in safety, if you're interested in traditional [infrastructure], if you're interested in reknitting communities, there's a home for all of you in this new focus," he [told KERA when the bill passed the Senate](#) in August.

While 13 House Republicans [voted for the bill](#), none were from Texas' congressional delegation.

In a [statement](#), Fort Worth's Kay Granger, the ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, said part of why she voted against the infrastructure package is because Democrats are also hoping to pass a different bill, one that funds child care, universal preschool and climate change mitigation. That bill, called the Build Back Better Act, has no GOP support in the Senate and would have to pass through a budget process known as "reconciliation."

"The fact that this bill is only being voted on alongside the reconciliation bill proves that they are two sides of the same partisan, tax-and-spend coin," Granger said.

She specifically disliked that \$256 billion of the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill would come from deficit spending, according to the [nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office](#).

Meanwhile, all of Texas' 13 Democrats voted for the infrastructure bill.

“The House of Representatives made a transformational change in America by voting for the largest and most impactful legislation, I believe, in the history of the United States,” said Houston’s Sheila Jackson Lee after the vote.

Lee also said she held out her infrastructure vote “as long as [she] could” to get an [agreement from moderate Democrats on scheduling a vote](#) for the larger social spending bill on the week of Nov. 15.

Here’s a list of the Texas Congressional delegation and how they voted, organized by party:

Republicans - all “no”

- Louie Gohmert (Tyler)
- Dan Crenshaw (Houston)
- Van Taylor (Plano)
- Pat Fallon (Sherman)
- Lance Gooden (Terrell)
- Jake Ellzey (Waxahachie)
- Kevin Brady (The Woodlands)
- Michael McCaul (Austin)
- August Pfluger (San Angelo)
- Kay Granger (Fort Worth)
- Ronny Jackson (Amarillo)
- Randy Weber (Friendswood)
- Pete Sessions (Waco)
- Jodey Arrington (Lubbock)
- Chip Roy (Austin)
- Troy Nehls (Richmond)
- Tony Gonzales (San Antonio)
- Beth Van Duyne (Irving)
- Roger Williams (Austin)
- Michael Burgess (Lewisville)
- Michael Cloud (Victoria)
- John Carter (Round Rock)
- Brian Babin (Woodville)

Democrats - all “yes”

- Lizzie Fletcher (Houston)
- Al Green (Houston)
- Vicente Gonzalez (McAllen)
- Veronica Escobar (El Paso)
- Sheila Jackson Lee (Houston)
- Joaquin Castro (San Antonio)
- Henry Cuellar (Laredo)
- Sylvia Garcia (Houston)
- Eddie Bernice Johnson (Dallas)
- Colin Allred (Dallas)
- Marc Veasey (Fort Worth)
- Filemon Vela (Brownsville)
- Lloyd Doggett (Austin)

\$2.5 billion Frisco mixed-use project set to start on Dallas North Tollway

The mixed-use Railhead development is a project of veteran developer Heady Investments.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

A \$2.5 billion development on the way in Frisco will bring a combination of commercial and residential construction.

Called The Railhead, the mixed-use project is a development of Plano-based Heady Investments. The 80-acre building site is one of the largest vacant tracts on the Dallas North Tollway in the area just north of Frisco's Main Street.

Plans for the Railhead include more than 1 million square feet of office, hotel and high-rise residential buildings.

And 1,280 apartments are included in the development plans, which just received zoning approvals.

"We are going to break ground in 60 days," said developer Randy Heady. "Our engineering firm Kimley-Horn will go on Monday to the city to submit the final drawings and the building permit."

A partnership set up by Heady Investments acquired the building site from two local investors.

All of the planned buildings will surround an almost 5-acre park, with \$1.2 million in landscaping and water features.

"We are going to build a new major entry called Wyndham Parkway, and the park will be visible from the tollway," Heady said. "The central focus of the entire development is that green space, which we think will be like Dallas' Klyde Warren Park.

"We have someone that wants to put two restaurants on the park," Heady said. "Our urban park is three times the size of the park in Frisco Square."

Heady Investments plans to sell building sites in the project to other developers. Heady, who has a track record of successful commercial projects along the tollway, already has deals in the works for a medical building and apartments.

Top Dallas-Fort Worth apartment builder JPI has contracted to buy land for an 875-unit rental community that would start next year.

"We are talking to developers who will build speculative office space," Heady said.

Sites for as many as five high-rise office and hotel buildings are earmarked for the east side of the property along the tollway.

The multifamily housing projects would be built facing the park and on the west side of the development.

Two other sites could accommodate a combination of retail and office space.

Financing for the land development is being provided by Simmons Bank.

Heady said the project takes its name from old railroad crossings in the area. "It's always been known as the railhead," he said.

One of the sellers of the land and an investor in the project is Frisco's Newman family, which has been a long-time landowner in the town.

"Our family came to the area in 1841," said Jim Newman. "This was not one of the original purchases, but we have been involved in it for quite a while.

"We thought Randy Heady would do a great job moving forward with our vision for the site."

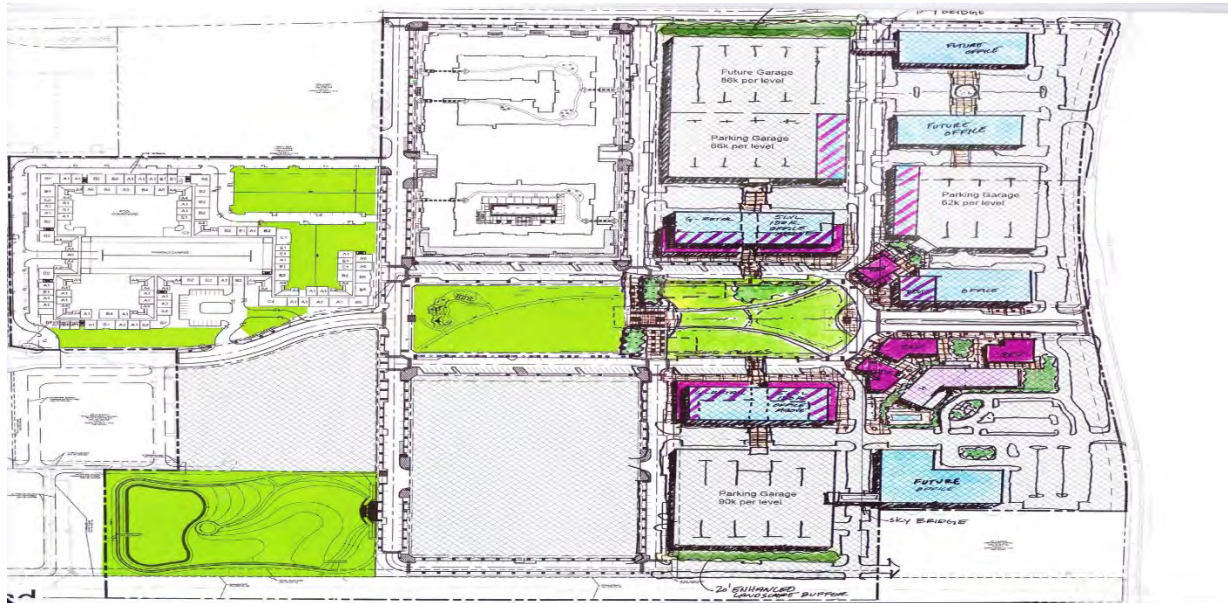
Heady Investments just completed a high-rise office building on the north side of Plano's Legacy business park. The 14-story Headquarters II project was acquired by New York-based investor Monarch Alternative Capital.

Heady Investments has built office projects all over the Dallas-Fort Worth area for more than four decades. The developer also has a new speculative office building under construction in Allen.

The Railhead will be one of the largest new developments planned for Frisco.

The site is located between major Frisco developments located farther south on Warren Parkway and the 2,500-acre Fields community under construction on the city's north side near U.S. Highway 380.

"I've never done a land development like this project in Frisco," Heady said.



Buildings in the 80-acre Railhead development will surround an almost 5-acre park.(Heady Investments)

Arlington community group asks for city funding on plan for East Pioneer Parkway

By Kailey Broussard, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

City leaders want more information from a community group guiding international corridor development before they put up funds for projects and bringing online a management corporation.

Members International Corridor Vision, a nonprofit that has collaborated with city government to create a business district along East Pioneer Parkway, put forward an array of plans to make improvements to the stretch, create a business improvement district and fund a management corporation that oversees the area's growth and vitality.

Plans the group laid out to city council include improvements to the city water tower at 1103 E. Arkansas Lane, installation of banners on streetlight poles and public art, hire an executive director and consultant, and launch business facade and restaurant hospitality score programs.

The consultant would help develop a plan to create a business improvement district, which would levy taxes on businesses to fund projects. Price tags offered for initial plans total around \$500,000, not including annual staffing and facade program costs and the price for water tower improvements. The vision group has committed \$100,000 toward the plans, and asked the city to contribute, with the understanding the district would help fund most of the projects.

The group is also fundraising for a \$127,000 public art project called "Life Cube," a collaborative art installation where visitors can write down goals and dreams. Mayor Jim Ross and some council members were skeptical of the plans, which include possibly narrowing Pioneer Parkway from six lanes to four and converting inside lanes into pedestrian-friendly spots.

A city study found the stretch of Pioneer Parkway east of Center Street saw more than 47,000 vehicles per day in 2018 and could grow to 61,000 vehicles per day by 2040. Four-way roads can handle around 37,000 vehicles per day, according to the city. "I'm a little concerned about that," said Victoria Farrar-Myers, District 7 council member.

The conversation Tuesday afternoon is the latest as leaders look for ways to boost businesses in the stretch of east Arlington. Council members in May voted to create a tax increment reinvestment zone covering the international corridor, a program that redirects property tax revenue from the area toward improvement projects in order to boost property values. City staff estimated the zone would accrue \$61 million for projects before the zone's expiration in 2051.

The zone covers the area between Pioneer Parkway, Center Street, Mitchell Street, Arkansas Lane and city limits. Farrar-Myers said the reinvestment zone, along with several city services, already provide what the vision group proposed.

Hunter said the city and group should hold town halls in her district, which covers the city's southeast region, and District 5, which covers central and east Arlington. Ross agreed. "Until we sit down with that neighborhood and talk to them," he said. "There are certain things about the proposal that cause me discomfort."

Texas Will Get Billions for Environmental Projects from Infrastructure Bill, from Clean Water to EV Charging to Public Transit

\$550 billion in new infrastructure spending is coming to projects nationwide—and a big slice is bound for Texas. From new electric buses to rail projects to improved power infrastructure to lead water service line removal and more, Texas' environment may be one of the biggest beneficiaries of all.

AECOM CEO Troy Rudd says the bill will help support critically needed innovation and sustainable solutions projects.

By David Seeley, Dallas Innovates

The bipartisan infrastructure bill that Congress passed Friday will invest \$550 billion in new infrastructure spending. A lot of that money is coming to Texas—and all that green could make a real difference to our environment.

According to Environment Texas—a [grassroots nonprofit organization](#)—the historic bill will improve Texas' transportation and power infrastructure and lead to cleaner water for decades to come.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 69-30 last summer. After months of wrangling, the bill was passed by the House of Representatives Friday night, 228-206.

The bill's key environmental provisions for Texas

In a release, Environment Texas noted an array of provisions in the bill that will create positive impacts for the Texas environment. They include:

\$2.9 billion for removing lead pipes and other water infrastructure in Texas over five years. Texas still has an estimated 270,000 lead service lines. Our state had 6000 sewage overflows in 2019, leading the American Society of Civil Engineers to give [Texas' wastewater infrastructure a grade of D](#).

\$408 million to build electric vehicle charging stations in Texas over five years, with the opportunity to apply for \$2.5 billion in grant funding. Texas needs an estimated [12,400 level 2 charging stations and 1,720 level 3 "fast charging" stations by 2030](#) to meet projected demand.

Electric grid and power infrastructure improvements. The bill includes \$73 billion for these improvements nationwide. In Texas, last February's record winter whiteout caused power blackouts across the state, exposing a critical need for grid improvements.

Transmission constraints are also leading to [curtailments of wind and solar energy](#) in our state. Both issues could benefit from Texas' share of the \$73 billion.

New passenger and freight rail projects. The bill provides \$66 billion for these projects nationwide. In Texas, Texas Central is [working on building a bullet train line between Dallas and Houston](#). And [Amtrak has proposed new rail service](#) connecting Dallas to Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Houston. These projects could potentially benefit from Texas' share of the \$66 billion.

\$3.3 billion for public transit in Texas. The bill provides \$39 billion for public transit nationwide (the largest such investment in history). According to the White House, "based on

formula funding alone, Texas would expect to receive \$3.3 billion over five years.” Austin’s Project Connect, Houston’s [MetroNext](#), and other transit projects in Texas could benefit from the funding.

Environmental remediation. The bill provides \$21 billion for this nationwide—and Texas could sure use its share. According to Environment Texas, our state has [55 superfund sites](#), [32 abandoned mines](#) and [783,000 unplugged oil and gas wells](#).

Zero and low emission buses. The bill provides \$7.5 billion for this nationwide. Environment Texas says at least 13 school districts in Texas have expressed interest in purchasing electric buses. Meanwhile, nine Texas transit agencies in Texas have already, or plan to, purchase electric buses.

The bill’s benefits for Texas aren’t only environmental

In addition to the environmental benefits above, the infrastructure bill will bring a lot more spending to Texas.

[Airports in Texas will receive around \\$1.2 billion](#) for infrastructure development over five years, according to the White House fact sheet.

Texas will also receive **\$53 million over five years to protect against wildfires** and **\$42 million to protect against cyberattacks**. Texans will also benefit from **the bill’s historic \$3.5 billion national investment in weatherization** which will reduce energy costs for families.

Texas will also receive at least **\$100 million to help provide broadband coverage** across the state, including providing access to over 1 million Texans who currently lack it.

Finally, roads—the first thing many people think about when they hear “infrastructure.” Based on formula funding alone, Texas would expect to receive **\$26.9 billion for federal-aid highway apportioned programs** and **\$537 million for bridge replacement and repairs** under the act over five years.

Altogether, this infrastructure funding in Texas creates a lot for many companies to do—including AECOM, the infrastructure consulting giant that recently announced its HQ move to Dallas.

Dallas infrastructure giant AECOM applauds the bill’s passage

AECOM is one of the world’s largest infrastructure consulting firms, and as Dallas Innovates reported in August, [it’s moving its headquarters from Los Angeles to Dallas](#).

AECOM’s CEO, Troy Rudd, says the bill will help support critically needed innovation and sustainable solutions projects.

“We applaud the passage of the Infrastructure Bill,” Rudd said in a statement. “The law supports the needed investment in infrastructure to boost America’s economic future addressing many of the critical needs of our communities. Significantly, this legislation includes provisions to speed project delivery and makes billions of dollars available for innovation and the sustainable solutions required to achieve our communities’ social and environmental goals.”

Denton City Council nixes activist group's transportation proposal

By Marshall Reid, Denton Record Chronicle

Six of Denton's seven City Council members declined to further a transportation policy proposed by a vocal advocacy group during Tuesday's council meeting.

The proposal, written by No Bus Cuts Denton, was pitched to the council by member Deb Armintor. She said her colleagues were welcome to selectively support aspects of the proposal, but she supported its three major tenets.

Council members Vicki Byrd, Brian Beck, Jesse Davis, Alison Maguire and Paul Meltzer, as well as Mayor Gerard Hudspeth, withheld their support.

If passed, the resolution would have called upon the Denton Central Transportation Authority to keep all fixed bus routes, cancel DCTA's contract with New York-based Via Transportation and increase community involvement in the agency's decision-making.

DCTA, as a public entity, has a [governing body of five representatives](#) elected by the cities it serves, as well as two representatives selected by Denton County. Its meetings are open to the public and [agendas are posted online](#).

Despite that, No Bus Cuts Denton stated in a press release that "the failure of the DCTA to include the community in the decision-making process is the primary cause of the crisis that the DCTA now faces."

That crisis, as the group sees it, is DCTA's partnership with Via that produced the GoZone program. The program brought a fleet of vans to create a ride-hailing system similar to private industry models.

DCTA's pursuance of that model, which might replace many of the traditional bus routes in Denton, in part led to Armintor's Tuesday proposal.

"I don't support this for one simple reason: We don't have the data," Hudspeth said Tuesday afternoon. His colleagues echoed Hudspeth's sentiment that it would be premature to push rapid changes at DCTA.

Even council member Maguire, who landed a seat on the DCTA board following [backlash against her predecessor's support](#) for Via, stood against the proposal.

"I'm not willing to commit to ending the Via contract until viable alternatives are on the table," she said.

Maguire said a bus driver shortage, fueled in part by rising pay for commercial drivers in private industry, and an aging DCTA fleet of buses mean it is not in a position to strike out on its own again at this point.

Davis pointed back to this [past summer's resolution](#) passed by the City Council relating to the very issue raised Tuesday.

The resolution stated the council's opposition to the elimination of traditional bus services for at least six months. DCTA's board ultimately [opted for a 90-day window](#) instead.

Meltzer agreed it was most prudent to stick with the resolution currently in place. Beck said he supports

many of the proposal's goals, but he too would like to see some additional data and explore other options before agreeing to such a proposal.

Byrd, the final council member to speak on the issue, said she also couldn't support the resolution at the time, but that she is incredibly suspicious of the privatization of public services.

A majority of council members would have needed to support Armintor's pitch Tuesday before it could return to the council's agenda for a more formal hearing.

North Texas Council Of Governments Launches Safe Driving Campaign

By CBSDFW.com Staff

ARLINGTON, Texas (CBSNEWS.COM) – The North Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is launching an effort to promote safe driving across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Drive Aware North Texas is an educational campaign designed to improve unsafe driving behaviors that are the leading contributing factors for serious injury and fatality crashes in North Texas.

NCTCOG officials say these leading factors are speeding, impaired driving, failing to drive in a single lane, and distracted driving.

Speeding contributes to one-third of such accidents alone and was identified as a factor in over 150,000 crashes, including 1,252 fatal injury crashes and 4,619 suspected serious-injury crashes, from 2016 to 2020.

The other three factors account for an additional 31% of crashes. Alcohol is the leading cause in impaired driving accidents, which have slowly declined since 2016.

The largest contributor to distracted driving accidents was smartphone use while driving. Between 2016 and 2020, there were over 77,000 distracted driving accidents recorded in North Texas.

Wrong-way driving incidents occur less frequently, but when they happen, they are more likely to result in serious injuries or fatalities than the other factors.

The [Drive Aware North Texas website](#) focuses on these four main factors and includes data from the past five years in easy-to-read graphs.

NCTCOG hopes that the campaign will educate North Texans ways to make driving safer for themselves and others.

Carrollton gets on board with new transit-oriented development

Trinity Mills Station will bring offices, apartments and more at Bush Turnpike and I-35E.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

Carrollton officials are hoping a new mixed-use project will transform an old commercial area on the city's north side.

Called Trinity Mills Station, the development near the southeast corner of Interstate 35E and Bush Turnpike will include offices, apartments and retail surrounding a new public park. There's also the potential for a hotel.

The ambitious project adjoins two commuter rail stations.

Trinity Mills Station, which started construction in October, is a joint effort of developers Integral and Koa Partners, the city of Carrollton and DART.

"Our vision was for this to be something more than just apartments but a gathering place, a destination — something Carrollton has not had in the past," said assistant city manager Marc Guy. "We are providing the land for the esplanade.

"We are also providing the base infrastructure for the project," Guy said. "We are creating that foundation upon which the project can develop."

Carrollton is spending \$12 million on the project.

The 25-acre site along Dickerson Parkway is jointly owned by Carrollton and DART.

After DART opened its Green Line commuter station on the west side of the Trinity Mills Station property, Carrollton bought and demolished a Home Depot store next to the station in 2003.

Carrollton has now acquired additional land in the same area.

"Our long-term goal would be redevelopment opportunities around Trinity Mills Station," Guy said. "We really see this as the beginning of opportunity for that entire area."

Irving-based Koa Partners is hunting business tenants for its first 135,000-square-foot office building planned for Trinity Mills Station. The six-story first-phase building was designed by architects CallisonRTKL.

"We'll have at least 10,000 square feet of retail on the ground floor of the office building," said Koa Partners CEO Harry Lake.

Koa Partners plans to start construction on the office next summer, after the esplanade park and infrastructure are complete.

"We are ultimately going to deliver close to 1 million square feet of first-class office space in what we believe is a regional location," Lake said. "It's at the intersection of Bush Turnpike and 35 — a phenomenal location.

"We liken it to what CityLine is in Richardson."

Jones Lang LaSalle is marketing the office building, which will open in 2023.

At the same time Koa Partners is building its office, Integral plans to construct the first-phase, 430-unit Trinity Mills Station rental community.

“It’s five stories with ground-floor retail all around the base,” said Integral principal Art Lomenick. “It will front onto the park.”

Lomenick said a big draw for Trinity Mills Station will be the adjoin DART and Denton County Transportation Authority commuter rail depots.

“You can go north to Denton and or head south to downtown Dallas,” he said. “It’s got great accessibility.

“This is the largest transit-oriented development I’ve worked on in the Dallas area.”

Lomenick previously developed apartments and retail in Carrollton’s old downtown district.

“Trinity Mills Station is not about just the 25 acres but what can happen in that 300-acre area of the city,” Lomenick said.

Carrollton has been working toward that goal for years.

“The importance of Carrollton’s Trinity Mills Station urban development can be measured by the project’s longevity,” said Ravi Shah, Carrollton’s director of development services.

“Several Carrollton city councils have worked for a long time — more than 20 years — to ensure this expansion comes to fruition.

“The groundbreaking was the next exciting step in the future of not only this multifaceted development site but also in Carrollton’s position as a transportation hub in D-FW,” Shah said.

Growth is good, but let's take advantage of chances to preserve Texas' open spaces

By Yffy Yossifor, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Growth is good. The problems associated with it, especially the type of sustained boom Fort Worth has seen for years now, get a lot of attention. And they should.

But it's important to affirm what growth can accomplish. It makes possible better schools, broader prosperity and better lives. The Fort Worth area needs more houses, a lot of them.

And not just for people moving to town. Expanding housing stock relieves prices across the board, taking pressure off rentals, too.

We get just one chance, though, to preserve open land. Once it's paved over, it's hard to get it back. Even city dwellers benefit from protected plains, which help reduce temperatures and contain floods. Our latest housing boom needs balance. It's inevitable that more large ranches on Fort Worth's fringes will be sold to become developments, so policymakers need to think now about ways to protect some of that land and encourage smart, carefully planned development. It starts at the state level and includes counties and cities across the area.

Perhaps the biggest challenge falls to cities and counties that haven't had to fully grapple with this kind of growth. As Fort Worth and its suburbs sprawl farther into Wise, Parker and Hood counties, they'll face new challenges. Preparing for growth entails more than preservation.

Far-out exurbs must anticipate new population and be prepared to construct enough schools and roads before the crowds arrive. Congestion on side streets in the newest areas of north Fort Worth is an example of the frustration that can quickly build if it isn't done right. Northwest ISD has been working to stay ahead of its booming enrollment for years, similar to how Frisco ISD in Collin County planned as it grew. Fort Worth must encourage new development within the city.

Sprawl has its costs and encouraging more home construction inside Loop 820 would mitigate at least some of them.

The challenges there include gentrification that can displace established residents and businesses, often minority communities. And attracting families to live in more of the city can happen only if there's more confidence in the schools, an overriding factor for many families willing to trade long commutes for a better education for their children. With the real estate market booming, this is an important time for land preservation.

The city of Fort Worth is working to acquire green space so it can be maintained, such as the recent purchase of Broadcast Hill. There are similar state initiatives, such as the acquisition of a large Gulf Coast ranch to become a state park. There are strong incentives for ranching families to sell.

Developers are eager to fill market demands, and it's a given that more North Texas land will be converted. Agencies and nonprofit organizations that hope to preserve some of it will have to offer strong incentives. Texas has ample land for all of its needs. We can preserve plenty of prairie and protect wildlife while still expanding available housing.

Fort Worth and other cities have gotten better about driving density in recent years, reducing the traffic and costs associated with sprawl. But many homeowners will always be willing to accept a long commute in exchange for a quieter area, better schools or, ironically enough, the opportunity to acquire more land.

Managing the growth associated with that and finding a balance to preserve nature must be a priority.

Plano town hall meeting to address the public's questions about city infrastructure projects

Streets, sidewalks, traffic lights and more are expected to be discussed.

By Teri Webster, Dallas Morning News

Plano is hosting a town hall meeting to allow the public to ask questions about infrastructure projects.

In addition to streets and sidewalks, topics will include park renovations, bridges, traffic lights, median improvements and sewers.

The meeting will take place in the Florence Shapiro Council Chambers in the Plano Municipal Center on Thursday, Nov. 18, from 7-8 pm.

Participants may attend in person or remotely via phone at 888-409-5380 or on [Twitter](#).

The meeting will also be livestreamed on [Plano's website](#), the city's [Facebook page](#) and [on YouTube](#) for those who want to watch but not ask questions.

The city has already received questions about its [overlay asphalt projects](#).

Many people want to know about the benefits of asphalt overlays, Shannah Hayley, the city's director of communications and community outreach projects, said in an email.

[Some of the advantages](#) are cost effectiveness and longevity of 10 to 15 years, city officials say.

A map of all of Plano's construction projects is available [online](#).

Texas should get billions from the new infrastructure plan

By Eric Neugeboren, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The infrastructure plan that President Joe Biden plans to sign into law next week is expected to provide at least \$35 billion to Texas, but it's unclear exactly how the legislation will effect the Fort Worth area. State and local officials said this week they do not know which projects will receive funding through the bill or when that funding will be available. The bill includes \$550 billion of new infrastructure spending nationwide over five years. The plan has funding to revitalize the nation's roads and bridges, modernize the public transit systems, mitigate the effects of climate change and increase broadband access. Based on formula funding, Texas is eligible to receive \$26.9 billion for federal highway programs, according to the White House. The state can also expect to receive \$537 million in bridge and road repairs over the next five years. Texas should also receive approximately \$1.2 billion over five years for infrastructure development for airports, and \$3.3 billion over five years to improve public transportation options.

In some cases, it could take months or years for certain funding to reach state and local governments, said Joseph Kane, a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program. All Democrats in Texas' Congressional delegation voted for the bill, while all Texas Republicans voted against the plan. The Fort Worth government is still waiting to learn how the city specifically could benefit from the bill, according to spokesperson Michelle Gutt. Arlington and Tarrant County are also waiting. Tarrant County officials are excited about the bill but do not "have any details yet as to what that's going to look like," spokesperson Bill Hanna said. In Arlington, "we've just got to figure out where and when" the infrastructure bill will make its impact, said Jay Warren, director of communication and legislative affairs. "I look forward to working with our region to advance key infrastructure projects with the funding this bill will provide," Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker said in a statement.

The money in the infrastructure bill is both formula funding and competitive funding. Formula funding is money that all states receive based on formulas developed by the federal government. Competitive funding is when eligible entities apply for funding. It could take years for the federal government to provide competitive funding to state and local entities, said Kane from the Brookings Institution. In addition, precedent on similar legislation shows transportation funding could take months or years to reach local governments. The wait is likely to be shorter for infrastructure projects that are already in the pipeline, Kane said. "A lot of places, understandably, are kind of waiting in anticipation of 'Well, when can we start hitting the shovels on the ground?'" Kane said. "I think probably the more straightforward projects that are already in the project pipeline — repaving projects or basic repair projects — those are probably going to be the first ones we will see across the country." Here are some of the main provisions in the bill, and where the state stands in receiving and distributing the money.

TRANSPORTATION

The Texas Department of Transportation oversees the state's highways, as well as the aviation, rail and public transportation systems. TxDot does not know which projects will get the additional funding, according to a statement from TxDot spokesperson Bob Kaufman. It is likely the state will use funding for projects already a part of the department's Unified Transportation

Program, a 10-year transportation planning document. Tarrant County has 323 projects under the Unified Transportation Program, including 119 where construction is underway or beginning soon. The city of Fort Worth has 114 projects under the program.

BROADBAND

Texas is expected to receive at least \$100 million to help provide broadband coverage statewide. The state is a “long way from knowing” how broadband funding from the bill will be distributed to individual counties, according to Kevin Lyons, spokesperson for the Texas Comptroller’s office. The funding is tied to new data and map collection from the Federal Communications Commission, which Lyons said will not be finalized until mid-late 2022. The White House said about 29% of Texans will be eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Fund, which will help low-income families afford internet access. The fund is a rebranded version of the Emergency Connectivity Fund, a program established during the pandemic that local Rep. Marc Veasey, D-Texas, helped launch. The Affordable Connectivity Fund offers broadband discounts of \$30 each month to eligible households, \$20 lower than the monthly discounts in the Emergency Connectivity Fund. The new fund is for households living at or below 200% of the poverty line, a wider net than the emergency fund, which was for households at or below 135% of the poverty line.

ENVIRONMENT/UTILITIES

Texas is expected to receive \$2.9 billion over five years to improve infrastructure statewide and \$53 million to protect against wildfires. The bill also allocates an estimated \$42 million to protect against cyberattacks. The White House said the bill will allocate \$3.5 billion to weatherize the nation’s energy infrastructure to reduce energy costs. It did not say how much of that money will go to Texas. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality — the state’s environmental agency — has not received any funding from the infrastructure bill and has no additional information, according to a statement. The Public Utilities Commission of Texas, which regulates electric, water and telecommunication utilities, did not respond to a request for comment on the bill.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram project spurred this racial equity effort in 76104 ZIP code

By Mariana Rivas, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

When the Star-Telegram published a series, last year examining why people in Fort Worth's 76104 ZIP code had the state's lowest life expectancy, local nonprofit leaders and others were pushed to action. Shawn Lassiter, founder and executive director of BRAVE/R Together, described the moment she first read the series. Working in education, she always knew that students and their families faced systemic barriers, but she said the article identified the issue in a way that called her to action. "Man, it's right in front of us that people are not living as long as others purely based on their ZIP code and the color of their skin," Lassiter said. "It's something I've always known ... but I think the article put it front in your face." The series was prompted by a 2019 UT Southwestern study that reported the average resident in the 76104 ZIP code didn't live to see their 67th birthday, which is 12 years less than the average Texas resident.

The series found the majority of early deaths were in neighborhoods east of I-35 that include majority-Black communities Hillside, Morningside and Historic Southside. Ironically, the ZIP code takes in Fort Worth's medical district west of the interstate. The series revealed I-35 was a barrier for Southside residents of color. Many can't access the area's healthcare options because of a lack of insurance or transportation, or they are not aware of programs available to help. And their neighborhoods don't include things such as grocery stores, pharmacies and doctor offices.

Since the series published, food drives have been organized, free pop-up clinics have come to the area, and organizations have planted backyard gardens for residents needing access to healthy produce. United Way of Tarrant County has been analyzing how best to serve the area since the start of this year. One result was BRAVE/R Together, short for BRAVE/RACE Together, a community organizing initiative founded by both the United Way and Lassiter's racial equity consulting organization, BRAVE/R. BRAVE/R Together is dedicated to fighting racial and systemic injustices with an initial effort in the 76104 neighborhoods of color.

Focused on education, employment, housing and healthcare, the organization provides resources to people and organizations that have already been doing work in the 76104 communities. "We are there to provide the guardrails, the structure, so that the people that are living in that community, working in that community, have their generations of history within that community — they're the ones leading this and guiding us, frankly," said Leah King, president and CEO of United Way of Tarrant County. In its most recent push, BRAVE/R Together hopes to grant \$100,000 to grassroots and nonprofit organizations working to solve systemic inequities in 76104. Organizations have until Dec. 3 to apply to receive up to \$10,000 each.

BRAVE/R Together started by naming 10 community ambassadors, 76104 residents committed to serving their neighborhoods and sharing their passion with other residents. Community ambassadors each specialize in one of BRAVE/R Together's focus areas, and their next task is to host meetings with neighbors to talk about problems they face in each area and what solutions might be.

Katrina Carpenter, who owns a cafe and catering business in 76104, said she noticed business owners in her community were having trouble getting their businesses started. They didn't have access to funding in the same way people in other parts of the city did, she said. They didn't

know “who to talk to, where to turn, how to properly set up.” Carpenter is now a community ambassador with BRAVE/R Together and will host her first meeting with business owners Monday, Nov 15. Carpenter said she often donated food to people in her community and would notice gaps they faced in access to food, healthcare and employment. “It’s like once you hear something, it’s hard to un-hear,” she said. Getting involved with BRAVE/R Together gives her a platform to do her philanthropic work, Carpenter said.

“I am encouraged at every meeting that we’ve had so far, just hearing how passionate each ambassador is about the work that’s being done,” Carpenter said. “I can only hope that we’ll be able to touch the hearts of the people that we’re working with and for.” BRAVE/R Together has also started to name community ambassadors for the 76105 ZIP code, which takes in neighborhoods such as Stop Six and Polytechnic Heights, as it continues to branch out to other affected communities in the city. In the coming months, BRAVE/R Together will conduct surveys to understand what residents want solved and explore possible solutions. They eventually hope to form an online platform to showcase this data and the organization’s progress.

“Our feedback from many members in the community is that there have been a number of people and organizations that have come into their community, made promises year after year after year, and they just either leave or they don’t see any progress, and our goal is to be 100% opposite of that,” King said.

To apply for a grant or learn more about BRAVE/R Together, visit bravertogether.org or email at contact@bravertogether.org.

Grand Prairie, Dallas recognized for work to advance clean air

A regional environmental initiative is trying to get communities to reduce emissions.

By Sarah Bahari, Dallas Morning News

A North Texas environmental initiative has recognized Grand Prairie for its efforts to promote clean air.

The city received the award for outstanding advertising for promoting Air North Texas' educational campaign.

Grand Prairie used social media and city newsletters to provide residents with tips on clean air, high ozone level alerts and ways to participate in Clean Air Action Day.

Grand Prairie also earned the Arlo Ambassador Award for its efforts to advance the initiative through campaign mascot "Arlo the Airmadillo." For example, the city purchased a 2020 Chevy Bolt to reduce emissions, then wrapped it with a "Plugged into the Prairie" graphic design that featured Arlo.

The city of Dallas also received the award for outstanding initiative for hosting a virtual Clean Air Action Day celebration, which focused on renewable energy and provided opportunities for communities to adopt renewable energy strategies.

Ten Dallas-Fort Worth area counties do not meet the Environmental Protection Agency's regulations for ozone pollution. Launched by the North Central Texas Council of Governments, [Air North Texas](#) aims to help communities reduce emissions.

Plano's pioneer Haggard family wins approval for office, retail, home development

Mixed-use project would replace one of the last farming tracts along the Dallas North Tollway.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

After hours of discussion and hearing from more than a dozen residents, Plano's planning and zoning commercial gave the go ahead for development on one of the last sections of the pioneer Haggard family's farm.

Haggard Enterprises Ltd. and Dallas developer Stillwater Capital want to rezone more than 142 acres on Spring Creek Parkway just east of the tollway to build a mixed-use project with office, retail, hotel and residential construction.

The plan still needs city council approval.

Parts of the Haggard Farms project would have a farm theme, recognizing the property's heritage. At the heart of the development would be a destination food and beverage and event venue called The Almanac.

"The Haggard family has been around here a long time," Rutledge Haggard told the planning commission. "This land we are talking about developing is part of that land settle by my great great grandfather in 1856.

"We can do a development that can be a lot more dense and unattractive," he said. "I think we'll all be proud of what we see on the farm when it is finished."

Current zoning would allow the Haggard family to build office and retail including high-rise buildings.

The plan approved Monday night would limit most of the buildings to just four floors for offices and apartments. A small hotel would be five stories.

A majority of planning commissioners approved the development after delaying a vote at last month's meeting and sending the developers back to work with nearby homeowners who opposed construction of large parking garages adjacent to a nearby neighborhood.

The developers agreed to reduce the height of the garages and minimize the impact on nearby homes with landscaping and exterior design changes.

"We've met with them on three specific occasions to discuss our areas of concern – including the park and garages," said Steve Lavine, representing the nearby Avignon Windhaven neighborhoods. "The Stillwater folks have been more than flexible and accommodating to our concerns.

"This is the most attractive design we can expect to replace the open fields of the farm."

The support of the neighboring homeowners carried a lot of weight with the five commission members who voted for the zoning change.

"To have this many of them say this is what we want in our backyard is pretty powerful stuff," said commission chairman David Downs.

But three of the commission members voted against the zoning and there was also a failed move to once again table the request.

Most of the residents at the meeting spoke against the planned development, raising familiar concerns about traffic, density and a dislike of apartments.

“I respect the Haggards and what they have done for the community,” said Plano resident Michael Turner. “But how much is enough?”

“This is going to cause a lot of traffic and crowding,” he said. “The citizens don’t want this project. I think the Haggards have had enough development.”

Clay Roby with developer Stillwater Capital said once the project gets final approval from Plano’s city council, construction could start in six to nine months.

He said the kind of mixed-use development his firm and the Haggards want to build is what the area needs – not just another office park or big box retail center as allowed by current zoning.

“It’s a legacy asset for the family its very important to them its developed in a way that is thoughtful,” Roby said.

Along with The Almanac complex, requested zoning change would more than 700,000 square feet of offices, 700 multifamily residential units, a 98-room hotel, a retail village, seniors housing community and townhomes.

More than two dozen acres of the land would be set aside for a park and open space.

“We have been working on this for a year,” Roby said. “We have been to the planning and zoning commission three times.

“This has been an exhausting process.”

Sam Rayburn Tollway expansion will address needs of growing region

By Erick Pirayesh, Community Impact Newspaper

The \$200 million expansion of the Sam Rayburn Tollway and its intersections is on track to be completed by the end of the year, according to the North Texas Tollway Authority.

“We are coming down the homestretch,” NTTA spokesperson Michael Rey said. “We are on schedule [and] on budget. Everything is going as planned.”

The tollway’s widening project began in January 2019. It adds a fourth lane in both directions from Denton Tap Road in Coppell to US 75 in McKinney. Rey said crews will open new lanes in segments as construction wraps up. Landscaping and striping work in the corridor is ongoing.

The tollway feeds directly into southern Lewisville and serves as an important connector for the city to The Colony, Plano, Frisco and McKinney. Seven intersections in the Lewisville area were also widened.

Lewisville City Council Member Brandon Jones serves on the North Central Texas Council of Governments Regional Transportation Council and said he believes the tollway is an important amenity for residents.

“Even with traffic, because of [the] Sam Rayburn [Tollway], we’re about 20 minutes from Legacy West in Plano ... maybe 25 minutes to IKEA,” Jones said. “So you can get to a whole bunch of job centers, attractions and stores from Lewisville, and [the] Sam Rayburn [Tollway] makes that possible.”

Jones said the tollway will take on even more importance with the annexation of Castle Hills, planned for Nov. 15. The master-planned community is located along the tollway just east of Lewisville.

“[The Sam Rayburn Tollway] is very important for the office space that’s in Castle Hills and for the residents so they can get back and forth,” Jones said. “It’s going to be a great stopping point. It will be entertainment and mixed use, so they’ll have that offramp that can get them there pretty quickly.”

The tollway expansion project aims to improve regional mobility, as the estimated North Texas population of 7.5 million is projected to exceed 11 million in the coming decades.

“It was obvious to anybody who has traveled the [tollway] in the past few years ... traffic was certainly ramping up,” Rey said. “We were starting to see congestion, so that triggered the planning and ... the construction of that extra lane.”

The project is paid for through the NTTA’s Capital Improvement Fund, which is funded by toll revenues available once other costs are paid.

Denton County Judge Andy Eads, who represents the county on the Regional Transportation Authority, said expanding infrastructure is essential as the region grows.

[here.](#)

MEETING THE DEMAND

The Sam Rayburn Tollway expansion project is adding a fourth lane in both directions along the 26.2-mile corridor that runs from Coppell to McKinney. It aims to accommodate a rapidly growing North Texas region. The additional lanes are set to open in December.

Cost \$200M

Length 26.2 MILES

Months of construction 35

SOURCE: NORTH TEXAS TOLLWAY AUTHORITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Bridges at seven intersections near Lewisville and Flower Mound were widened as part of the project.

- A Denton Tap Road
- B MacArthur Boulevard
- C Lake Vista Drive
- D Huffines Boulevard/Marchant Boulevard
- E Hebron Parkway
- F Castle Hills Drive/Standridge Drive
- G Josey Lane/Main Street

A Nighttime crews west of Denton Tap Road work at night to place a new sign near Lewisville. (Courtesy NTTA)

B A new concrete column is placed at MacArthur Boulevard as part of the bridge widening project. (Courtesy NTTA)

With its recent rapid growth, North Texas could see big funding through Biden's infrastructure bill

Lots of details remain to be worked out, but the funds could potentially go toward improving regional public transit, decreasing congestion and bolstering highway safety.

BY Emily Caldwell, Dallas Morning News

WASHINGTON — Almost \$27 billion for federal highway programs. Over \$3 billion for public transportation, and at least \$100 million for broadband internet expansion. Just under \$3 billion to improve drinking water infrastructure (including the removal of lead pipes), and \$42 million to protect against cyberattacks.

[While still just estimates from the White House](#), these figures illustrate how much funding Texas could receive — some now, some later — after President Joe Biden signs the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act [into law on Monday](#). The total number comes out to [about \\$35.44 billion over five years for various projects](#) across the state.

“From my perspective at [the Department of Energy], and this is true of all the departments that are seeing funding flow through, there are short-term strategies and longer-term ones,” Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm told reporters Tuesday.

“Hopefully, within the next six months you’ll start to see some activity, particularly with respect to roads and those formula dollars,” meaning programs that already have pipelines established to get funding to states and localities, Granholm said. “And then some of it will be longer term.”

The roughly \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package promises “the largest long-term investment in our infrastructure and competitiveness in nearly a century,” per the White House.

“This is a once-in-a-generation investment to create good-paying jobs, modernize our infrastructure, turn the climate crisis into an opportunity,” [Biden said Wednesday during a visit to the Port of Baltimore](#) in Maryland.

The House passed the legislation last week after months of negotiations, concessions and collaborations across the aisle [and between factions of the Democratic Party](#). The Senate also passed the bill 69-30 with some Republican support in August, but [Texas Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn voted against it](#). All Texas lawmakers [in the House voted along party lines](#).

“It isn’t paid for, will add too much to the debt, and was rushed through the Senate in a week’s time without adequate debate or input,” Cornyn said in a statement after the vote.

“This is a bait and switch, and the bill is not paid for like we were promised,” [Cruz said on the Senate floor](#). “This bill is part of a much broader problem we’re having with reckless federal spending. ... Republicans shouldn’t play a part in this. We should instead say enough is enough.”

Though funding hasn’t officially been divvied up for individual projects yet, North Texas’ [rapid population](#) and [industrial growth](#) over the last 10 years could mean significant allocations of funds for improving regional public transit, decreasing congestion and bolstering safety on highways and roads.

“Every area of our infrastructure, from our roads and bridges to our water systems, to our broadband capacity — all is going to be stretched further, and so we need this investment just to keep up with our growth,” Rep. Colin Allred, D-Dallas, told *The Dallas Morning News* on Thursday.

The U.S. Census Bureau [lists Dallas as the ninth-largest city in the U.S.](#) based on 2020 census data. From 2010 to 2020, the city’s population grew by 8.9%.

“Projects like [DART’s D2 \[Subway\] project](#)... is something that you could see more federal funding being available for,” Allred said. “For us, I have been pushing for an adjustment to I-635 and I-30 in Mesquite, which has kind of a dangerous access route, and that’s something that may be able to see funding here.”

Allred said the federal funds are an opportunity for North Texas to invest in the region’s future, particularly as the Dallas-Fort Worth area continues to expand.

“It has to be toward the future,” Allred said. “It can’t just be toward the model that we’ve had at times, which is to just maybe add another highway lane or try to increase the highway size. We need to also use this funding, particularly on the public transit side, to make DART a more viable option for folks, to improve it, to make the light rail better.”

Weatherizing energy infrastructure

In a fact sheet with breakdowns of funding allocations, the Department of Energy cited the 2021 Texas freeze as an example of an extreme weather event this year that, along with the Dixie fire in California and Hurricane Ida, “made it clear that our existing energy infrastructure cannot endure the impacts of climate change.”

The White House said Texas will benefit from the bill’s \$3.5 billion national investment in weatherization, though it’s unclear how much of that sum the state will receive, or how it will affect [measures approved by the Texas Legislature this year](#) in response to February’s winter storm.

The Department of Energy said \$11 billion in grants for states, tribes and utilities to enhance the resilience of the electric infrastructure against disruptive events such as extreme weather and cyberattacks will also be up for grabs.

“For some asset owners, a once-in-a-decade event is rare enough that for them, the risks are small enough that it’s not worth the investment,” said Ross Baldick, emeritus professor in the electrical and computer engineering department at UT-Austin. “But for us as a society, experiencing widespread blackouts, those risks are pretty intolerable.”

Baldick said the principle of spending money on the infrastructure of the Texas power grid, money that might not otherwise be spent by asset owners and private investors, is sound.

“I think there’s a very good argument for us as a society deciding to invest in additional weatherization over and above what private investors might spend based on their own self-interest,” Baldick said. “Because their tolerance for risks, for failures, for widespread blackouts are different — legitimately different — to what our tolerance is.”

The White House also said Texas can expect to receive an estimated \$42 million to protect its infrastructure against cyberattacks. Kate Davis, an assistant professor in the electrical and

computer engineering department at Texas A&M University, studies cyber-physical systems and security, particularly when it comes to the state's electrical grid.

"What utilities are the most concerned with are adversaries that have a high capability and a high motivation," Davis said. "It's like there's this constant challenge of trying to have the defenders [of the infrastructure] ahead of the adversaries."

Davis said power systems and other crucial infrastructure have cybercommunication and control components that are woven into the system's ability to operate, and those cyber aspects can face threats from well-funded antagonists looking to gain access. She said the \$42 million is a good start in combating these threats in Texas.

"It would get us a long way down the road towards where we want to be, and then it would be easier to reassess and see again where the industry is and what else is needed," Davis said. "I think there are a lot of really good potential efforts and needs in this area, and I think Texas is really well-poised to take advantage of this."

Additionally, Biden administration officials have said a key objective with the infrastructure package is to not only fund projects, but fund the jobs states and cities will need to complete those projects.

"What all of these investments have in common is that they will create jobs — pipe fitters to replace those pipes, electricians, to install those EV charging stations, auto workers, to build the cars that plug into them," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg told reporters Monday.

Allred said the bill is not aimed at only one area of the country or one type of industry, either.

"Every community, every industry will benefit from this investment," he said.

Dallas replacing bus service with Uber rides for Joppa, and some residents are not happy

DART bus route that community had relied on for years will end January 24.

By Sriya Reddy, Dallas Morning News

The city is partnering with Uber and DART to provide residents of Joppa in southern Dallas with two free Uber rides a day to designated locations for the next three years, but some Joppa residents are frustrated with the changes in transportation.

The program, JoppaRides, brings residents to and from 15 predetermined locations, such as the Dallas VA Medical Center, DART Ledbetter Station, and Fiesta Mart Grocery. JoppaRides runs from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week. The two rides include going to the location and coming back.

DART representative Gordon Shattles said that the locations were pick through meetings with the community, planning divisions, and stakeholders

“We’ve held a series of both online and in-person meetings, inviting residents in the Joppa area to come in and definitely understand the program, but also solicit input for the areas that they are going to be that they feel they need access to,” he said.

Some residents, like Temeckia Derrough, president of the Joppa Freedman’s Town Association, expressed concern with having just two rides a day. She said that she herself doesn’t use the bus, but many of her friends and family members do. Derrough gave a hypothetical situation of a woman who has to drop a child off at the elementary school, then she could use up their two rides and wouldn’t be able to get to work.

“Sustainable? No,” she said. “Access? You will have a little access, but it won’t be sustainable for you. And that’s the prime example.”

Shattles said that DART has heard these complaints from the community and are considering adding more rides.

The program is coming about after DART’s redesign of bus lines takes away the bus that comes to Joppa beginning on January 24. The goal of this redesign is to increase the frequency of buses throughout the city. Joppa, however, is losing its bus because of the lack of ridership, according to DART.

DART will also add a GoLink program starting on December 6 to compensate for the lack of public transportation. GoLink provides a curb-to-curb service that brings residents to nearby stations.

Residents also say that the options that DART is giving are more inconvenient than the bus system.

“When they first sent this out, I was appalled,” Claudia Fowler said. “And I told DART I’m appalled and like you’re limiting where you’re taking us.”

Fowler has lived in the community her whole life. She and her mother advocated for DART to add a bus going into Joppa decades ago. Fowler remembers her mother, a cafeteria worker walking miles to get to work at 4 a.m. every morning.

“I just remember when the first bus came out here and how excited everybody was to see, you know, seeing a city bus come out to the Joppa community.” Fowler said. “She was one of the first ones that got on the bus.”

Now she feels frustrated that the bus that she fought for as a teenager will be taken away.

Shattles said that DART’s goal is to provide transportation access to the Joppa community.

Residents can sign up at this link <https://www.dart.org/riding/jopparides.asp>. Concerns and questions about JoppaRides, or other DART programs, can go to the Customer Information at 214-979-1111

Tarrant Regional Water District buys land needed for Panther Island channel

By Harrison Mantas, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The Tarrant Regional Water District board voted unanimously Tuesday to spend \$3 million for a half-acre of land needed to build the bypass channel that would connect the Clear and West Forks of the Trinity River. The land was appraised at \$559,840 by the Tarrant Appraisal District.

The price of \$3 million came from the market value of the property, the district's real property director, Steve Christian, told the board. The land is owned by Go Investments LLC of Burleson.

Marquita Moore, who runs Pressed Massage Therapy at the site, expressed trepidation during the public comment section about the effect of the purchase on her business. She asked the board for clarification about what help both her and Forged Fitness gym owner Zia Ali would be provided once the water district acquired the land. Christian said the board would provide transition assistance for Moore and Ali, although he wasn't able to give specifics about what would be provided.

Ali said he has set up a meeting with the water district on Friday to go over what kind of help the district would provide. The decision gives him more piece of mind knowing there will be a conversation and road map for his next steps instead of being kept in the dark, Ali said in a text.

The purchased land stretches from 309-321 Greenleaf St. It is just north of the West 7th district and near the White Settlement Bridge. The channel being built is part of the larger Central City Flood Control Project. The 1.5-mile bypass channel would connect the Clear and West Forks of the Trinity River and create an 800-acre island north of downtown.

The southern half of the channel would run under the recently completed White Settlement and Henderson Street bridges. The Texas Department of Transportation began constructing the three bridges over dry land in 2015. They were expected to be completed in 2018, but construction delays and the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the completion until 2021.

Construction of the channel has also been delayed after funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is taking a lead role in building the channel, allocated only \$7.5 million to for the project in the past five years. Congress allocated \$526 million for the project in 2016 though disagreements with the Trump administration over the project's feasibility held up funding.

2 Of The Most Dangerous Highways In The US Go Through DFW Area, Study Says

By Caroline Vandergriff, CBS DFW

A new ranking of the most dangerous highways in the country found two of the top five go right through Dallas-Fort Worth.

Texas-based insurance comparison site, [The Zebra, compiled the list based on fatality data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.](#)

Five Deadliest Highways in the U.S.

I-95

I-20

I-5

I-75

I-35

“The study really coincides with a trend that we’re seeing nationally, which is that drivers are just more reckless on the roads,” said Danielle Marchell, a licensed insurance agent and spokesperson for The Zebra. “They assume that there are less people driving across the country, and therefore they’re a little bit more willing to speed and put the pedal to the metal on the roads.”

In 2019, 197 people were killed on I-35, which is more than 12 deaths per 100 miles. The highway runs through several high-traffic areas in Texas and serves as a major route for 18-wheelers.

“Unfortunately, most of the fatalities that occurred on I-35 were in the Dallas and Austin areas,” Marchell said.

Drivers say all the construction projects don’t help either.

“That’s going to cause merging and separating and all sorts of alternate routes, and that unfortunately creates danger as a byproduct,” said driver Tim Billcorder.

Alcohol and drug use, speed, and even road rage play a role as well.

“Things that angered Texas drivers the most on the roads were distracted driving, getting cut off and then tailgating as well,” Marchell said.

Triple AAA predicts 3.6 million Texans will travel by car over Thanksgiving, which could make the existing dangers worse. That’s why some drivers plan to avoid the interstates altogether.

“There’s more accidents during the holiday season and stuff, so I think flying is safer,” said Kirsten from Brownsville.

If you do plan on hitting the road to see friends or family, it's important to take extra caution to make I-20, I-35, and all roads safer for everyone.

"This might sound cliché, but just be alert of your surroundings and be really mindful of those speed limits," said Marchell. "Make sure you're not breaking any laws."

Speeding or driving distracted can not only cause accidents, but can cost you financially too if you get hit with a ticket.

<https://dfw.cbslocal.com/2021/11/18/most-dangerous-highwaysdfw-texas-study/>

112-acre development could replace Frisco's five-story concrete hole from failed Wade Park project

The mixed-use project proposal is reported to include 700 hotel rooms, 2,800 multifamily units, 1.9 million square feet of office space, 455,000 square feet of retail space, several parks and open space

By Brandi Addison, Dallas Morning News

A plan is in the works to replace Frisco's infamous [five-story concrete hole](#) left by the defunct Wade Park project more than four years ago.

Developer JVP Management and architecture firm Torti Gallas + Partners presented the 112-acre proposed development earlier this week at a joint meeting with the City Council and the city's Planning and Zoning Commission, the [Community Impact](#) reported. The proposed project, temporarily called by placeholder "Project X," includes 700 hotel rooms, 2,800 multifamily units (including townhomes and condominiums), 1.9 million square feet of office space and 455,000 square feet of retail space.

The community would also feature several parks and open space, including a large central park and smaller parklets, which are public seating platforms that extend from a sidewalk, usually converted from parking space

The developers are still discussing solutions for the giant hole.

JVP Management partner Van Nguyen described the hole as the project's greatest challenge, according to *Community Impact's* report. Its projected repair cost is between \$25 million and \$85 million.

"Nothing would make us happier than to get rid of that hole in the ground," Nguyen said during the presentation. "In the time that was wasted, Frisco has continued to grow. And there's that hole in the ground."

Wade Park incorporated the land in 2013 and broke ground for the \$2 billion development in 2014, *The Dallas Morning News* has previously reported. But the project ran into delays and finally ground to a halt when developers ran out of money and later [declared bankruptcy](#).

The 175-acre development on the Dallas North Tollway was planned for high-rise offices and hotels, shopping centers and luxury residential. At one time, it was one of the largest real estate developments planned in North Texas, *The News* previously reported. But after digging a huge hole for the project and partially building a row of shops on Lebanon Road, construction on Wade Park stopped in 2017.

Gamma Real Estate, which loaned more than \$150 million on the Wade Park site, took control of the property in early 2019. Project remnants include incomplete building shells and the five-story hole that would have served as an underground parking garage. Nguyen said some of the building shells are still usable, but they will have to demolish others.

The developers pitched the completion of Project X in multiple phases, *Community Impact* reported.

The first phase could include a five-story medical office and a 40,000-square-foot Whole Foods at the corner of Dallas North Tollway and Lebanon Road — although Whole Foods has not finalized a deal — and the second phase could address the large hole before developing more space.

Dallas Has the Second-Worst Traffic Fatality Rate in the Country

The city has a long way to go if it wants to reach its goal of zero annual traffic deaths by 2030.

By Alex Macon, D Magazine

Last year, 228 people were killed in traffic in Dallas, marking an 80 percent increase in the annual number of traffic fatalities here between 2010 and 2020. Of the 15 most populated cities in the country, we have the second highest traffic fatality rate: more than 14 deaths per 100,000 people.

Getting around Dallas is dangerous no matter how you do it, but it's especially hazardous on foot. According to city statistics, pedestrians account for only about 2 percent of travel within the city (compared to 88 percent in cars), but make up about 36 percent of traffic deaths. If city officials want to be able to report zero annual traffic deaths by 2030—and they say they do—then they have their work cut out for them.

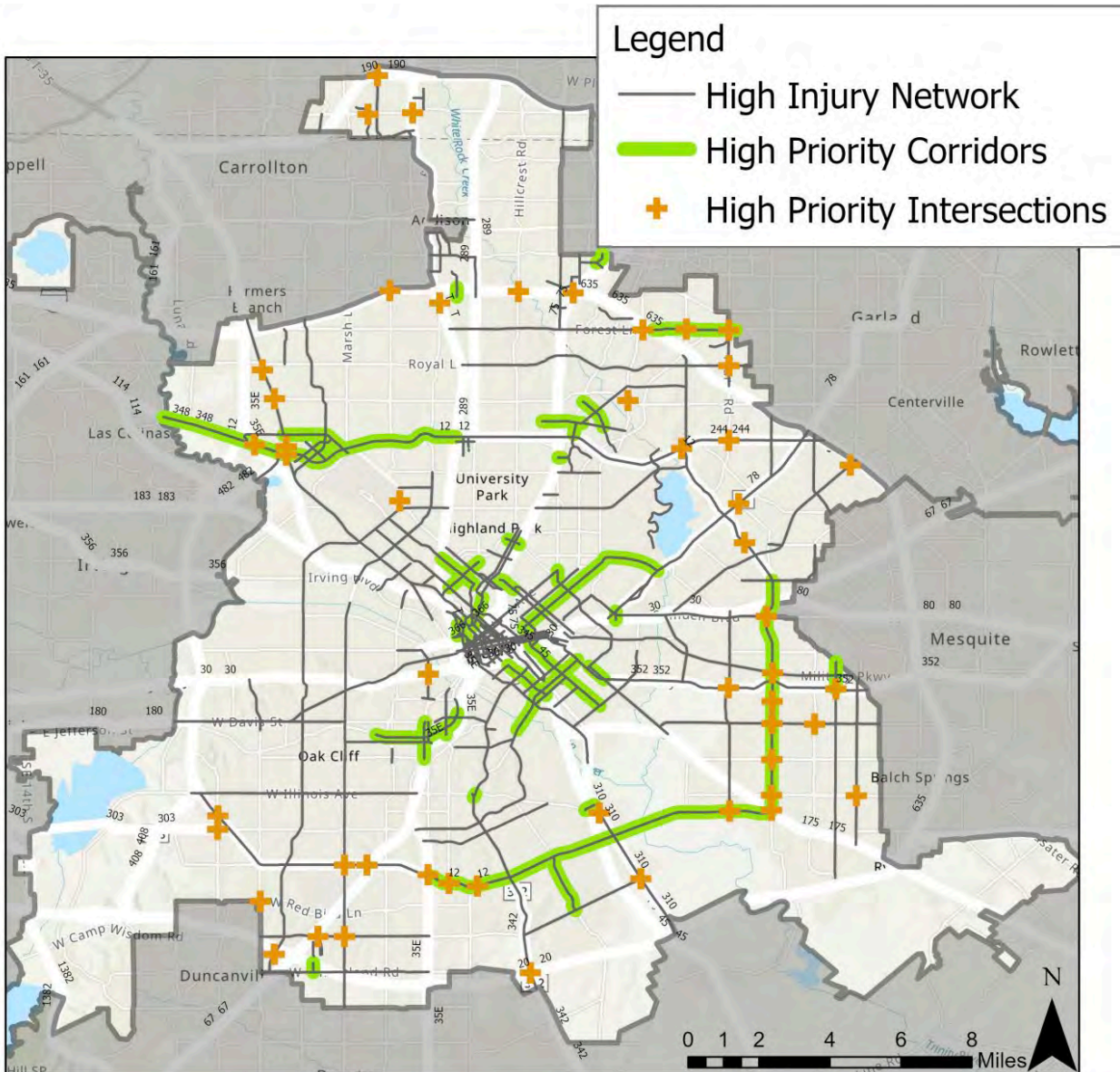
Those numbers come from a briefing given to the City Council's transportation committee Wednesday, at which city transportation director Ghassan "Gus" Khankarli discussed Dallas' in-progress Vision Zero action plan.

Cities across the country have adopted similar so-called "Vision Zero" plans over the last decade or so, [with mixed results](#). But traffic deaths are preventable—urbanists like to point to the example of Oslo, Norway, which actually [has been able to realize zero traffic deaths in a year](#).

For that to happen in Dallas, it will take more than talk.

"Very often around this horseshoe we talk about wanting to be a walkable city, but we're clearly killing our pedestrians," City Council member Cara Mendelsohn said at the briefing. "I think these numbers are alarming. And a lot of this goes back to some of the basics we keep talking about."

Dallas is already taking some steps to reduce traffic deaths, Khankarli told council members. The city putting LEDs in street lights and adding reflective backplates to traffic signals. It's funding a bike plan. It's rolling out yet another plan to address the city's [2,000 miles of missing sidewalk](#). It's identified problem areas both topical—speeding, drunken driving, red light running—and geographic: about 8 percent of city streets account for 60 percent of its most serious crashes.



Analyzing crash data will be especially important, Khankarli said. Most pedestrian deaths, for example, occur when someone is walking outside of a crosswalk. Could the city add more crosswalks or implement other traffic-calming measures in those areas where pedestrian deaths are common? “What are the particulars at those locations?” he said.

Vision Zero would attempt to address all of the above. An action plan could be adopted as early as this spring. In the meantime, there’s a [virtual public meeting tonight at 6 p.m.](#) An online survey asking for your thoughts on some of the early draft recommendations of the city’s Vision Zero plan should go live after that meeting.

The \$2 Billion Sidewalk Problem in Dallas

Officials discuss ways to make more progress on Dallas sidewalk problems

By Ken Kalthoff

Dallas has a \$2 billion backlog of crumbling or missing sidewalks but only about \$15 million in this year's budget to start tackling the problem.

Dallas city council members heard a briefing on the sidewalk challenge this week and one member suggested asking charities to help chip in more money.

Consultants were hired to prepare the sidewalk master plan that identifies the problems and guides improvement.

An example of the situation is the neighborhood east of Central Expressway near Lemmon Avenue where Courtney Wade walks her dog.

"And I'm always tripping, just kind of stubbing my toe on the wedges in them. There's a lot of potholes in them," she said.

The area is booming with many new homes being constructed.

Homebuilder John Marasli also lives in the neighborhood.

He is responsible for replacing sidewalks in front of his new homes but that leaves plenty of other areas that are the city's responsibility.

"Everybody moving in just wants to have a safe environment that they can walk their dogs, and run around whatever," he said.

That neighborhood is one of 12 focus areas that will split the \$15 million available for sidewalks in Dallas in this year's budget that took effect October 1.

In his State of the City speech Wednesday, Mayor Eric Johnson said Dallas must focus on basic services to better compete with the suburbs for people and jobs.

"The cities that we used to call our bedroom communities have caught us napping over the years," Johnson said.

The City Council discussed sidewalks at a briefing Tuesday.

"We can't be a walkable city when we don't have sidewalks that are functioning for people," Council Member Cara Mendelsohn said.

City staff members said sidewalks could get a bigger piece of the pie in the next public improvement bond referendum a few years from now.

Councilman Chad West suggested raising much more money for sidewalks by asking charity groups to help.

“We go to our philanthropic partners, our foundations. We basically do what has been done in homelessness to try to double our money,” West said.

Builder John Marasli said better sidewalks would boost his neighborhood.

“It would definitely help the community,” he said.

Courtney Wade said it would make dog walking safer, especially at night when heaving sidewalk joints are hard to see.

“I think that would help out a lot,” she said.

A briefing document Tuesday gave a small update on the sidewalk efforts.

https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21113738/dallas_sidewalk_master_plan.pdf

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/the-2-billion-sidewalk-problem-in-dallas/2820071/>

As Washington spews \$1.2 trillion for infrastructure, none for Panther Island. Why?

BY THE FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM EDITORIAL BOARD

Washington is spending \$1.2 trillion in a new infrastructure package. A reasonable person might wonder if a tiny fraction of that will finally fund one of Fort Worth's longest-lived projects, the rerouting of the Trinity River to create Panther Island. After all, the entire effort to dig bypass channels could be funded with less than 0.05 percent of the massive bill that President Joe Biden signed into law Monday. The answer is no. The Tarrant Regional Water District project, in partnership with the county, city and other entities, remains unfunded.

And while we wait, we're in danger of falling back into the old patterns that got the project crosswise with the feds in the first place: Focusing on economic development, housing and other baubles when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cares about flood control.

The water district continues to chip away at preparations for the dirt to fly, including land acquisition and utility work.

Developers are champing at the bit to start building businesses, housing and other amenities that would create a vibrant district out of basically nothing. If we were engineers charged with flood control, we'd want to know how that kind of construction could possibly go forward when the need to tame the Trinity remains. More than two years ago, an outside review identified confusion and poor communication about the project's mission.

Some leaders, including Fort Worth City Manager David Cooke, have said the economic development vision took too much prominence over a better flood-control option than the current Trinity levees. The Trinity River Vision Authority, which oversees the project on behalf of the water district and its partners, hired a long-time Army Corps expert to guide dealings with the agency and stress the seriousness of the flood-control mission. Here we go again.

Whatever the hold-up in Washington is, no one can get past it — even in an era of prodigious spending.

Rep. Kay Granger, the Fort Worth Republican who has led the charge for the program, told the Star-Telegram in July that enough money would soon be granted to begin channel construction.

"I think it will be funded for everything they can spend in the next cycle," she said.

We asked her office for an update Thursday, but our questions went unanswered. Granger has said that during the Trump administration, the impediment to funding was Mick Mulvaney, who ran the White House budget office and eventually also served as President Donald Trump's chief of staff. With the change of administrations, Mulvaney is obviously no longer an issue.

A water district spokesman noted that the Army Corps is scheduled to release its annual project list early next year. If the project isn't funded to the point Granger identified, it's fair to question whether any progress can be made in the Biden administration, either.

That would mean three more years of limbo. Water district officials have stressed that projects backed by the Corps and authorized by Congress are always finished, even if it takes years and the process appears messy. But at some point, the Washington spending spree will end, and Panther Island backers may regret missing an opportunity. Every time we're told the money is juuuuuust around the corner, it's not. In 2019, Mayor Betsy Price and Rep. Roger Williams went to the White House and emerged confident that as much as \$250 million was on the way.

Instead, the Corps offered a small amount for a feasibility study, which the river authority rejected.

Granger is the top Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, which authorizes federal spending. If Republicans win control of the House next year, which seems more than likely, she'll be in line to chair the panel. Surely, in a government that spends trillions at a time, such a powerful official could secure a relatively small amount for a justified, approved flood control project. Until then, one of the many curiosities of the Panther Island saga is how it didn't happen during a bonanza of federal infrastructure spending — and what that says about indifference in the federal government to whether Panther Island is ever truly an island.

Oak Cliff Deck Park, 50-Mile Loop Trail Receive Federal Grants

Shout-out to infrastructure grants.

By Alex Macon, D Magazine

A handful of North Texas infrastructure projects, including an Oak Cliff deck park and a city-circling trail, got big boosts this week from nearly \$21 million in federal grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

They are:

- The Southern Gateway, [the Oak Cliff deck park that will span I-35E near the Dallas Zoo](#). It will benefit from \$900,000 awarded to the city of Dallas.
- The Loop, [which will link Dallas' hike-and-bike trails into one 50-mile circuit](#), is getting \$12 million to help finish its final section, including the overhaul of a bridge in Pleasant Grove that will help cyclists traverse U.S. Highway 175.
- The Southern Dallas Inland Port, which is adding electric shuttles and upgrading streets and sidewalks in southern Dallas, De Soto, Lancaster, and surrounding environs. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is getting more than \$8 million for the project.

The press release from The Loop includes a lot of quotes from relevant officials talking about how great this 50-mile trail will be. And why not? It should be pretty great.

But for the sake of avoiding redundancy, I'll just pick one quote. Here's U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, whose possibly [pending retirement is kicking off a lot of speculation about her potential successor](#).

"This project is more than just transportation infrastructure – this investment will be a catalyst for mobility and economic opportunity and reconnect Pleasant Grove to the rest of Dallas.

Improving transportation is a critical part of improving quality of life throughout North Texas, especially for those communities who need it most. Increased mobility can mean access to better jobs, better healthcare and even better education. These are just a few of the reasons why The LOOP will provide great benefit to District 30 residents."

TEXRail Seeks Public Input on 2.1 Mile Extension Proposal at Cost of Nearly \$180 Million

Trinity Metro, the transit authority in Fort Worth, is seeking public input about its planned extension of the TEXRail commuter line 2.1 miles into the Medical District at an estimated cost of at least \$179 million.

By Kim Roberts, The Texan

Trinity Metro is seeking public input until November 30 about a proposed 2.1 mile extension of the TEXRail from the Fort Worth T&P station to a new Southside station in the Fort Worth Medical District.

TEXRail currently runs 27 miles from downtown Fort Worth to Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. The rail opened in January 2019 and has stations in Fort Worth, North Richland Hills, and Grapevine.

The proposed extension would run west along I-30 then take a turn southward near the Chisholm Trail Parkway.

Currently, the environmental analysis is being completed, which includes seeking public comment about the project and its impact. Comments can be submitted by mail, phone, or electronically through the project's [website](#).

In February 2020, Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX-12) [announced](#) that Trinity Metro was authorized by the Federal Transit Administration to use the \$38.9 million in federal funds remaining from the original project toward completion of the extension. The original TEXRail project cost estimate was \$1.034 billion, but the project was completed about \$80 million under budget.

When asked about the total cost of the 2.1-mile extension, TEXRail Chief Engineer John Tipton said that the last estimates were about \$179 million, but that inflation will likely impact the cost over time.

Trinity Metro is working with the city, county, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments to raise the additional funds needed for the project. The total project funding has yet to be secured.

Construction is expected to begin in early 2024, with a planned opening in the spring of 2026. The environmental assessment currently in process considered impacts in key areas such as noise and vibration, cultural and historic resources, park land, and property acquisitions. TEXRail expects 73 trains per day to run along the new extension.

In order to reduce the noise levels in neighborhoods and in Newby Park, a “quiet zone” will be established at the Mistletoe Boulevard crossing where horns will not be sounded as normally would be the case. Further, rail lubrication will be utilized at the turn southward near the Chisholm Trail Parkway to reduce squealing noise.

When asked about traffic increasing in the Mistletoe neighborhood due to the Southside station, the leadership team said their modeling showed the station would attract primarily pedestrian traffic.

The TEXRail commuter line was originally proposed as a measure to reduce congestion and improve connectivity in the fast-growing DFW region. The Federal Transit Administration estimated that TEXRail would average 8300 riders per day or about 250,000 riders per month.

The latest [numbers available](#) show 37,504 riders for September 2021 and 304,545 riders through the first nine months of the year. Tarrant County has about 2.1 million residents.

Illegal Paper Tags Costing Texas Taxpayers and Toll Roads Millions

The North Texas Tollway Authority said that since Jan. 1, more than 500,000 cars with paper tags that had no valid contact address racked up more than \$14.7 million in unpaid tolls

By Scott Friedman and Eva Parks, NBC DFW

First, an investigation showed [how unscrupulous car dealers were illegally selling hundreds of thousands of Texas paper license plates online](#), allowing people to drive cars that wouldn't pass a state inspection, and even helping criminals hide from police.

Now NBC 5 Investigates has learned illegal paper tags may also be robbing Texas taxpayers and toll road users of millions of dollars in revenue.

The North Texas Tollway Authority said that since Jan. 1, 513,692 cars traveled the tollways with paper tags that had no valid contact address, racking up more than \$14.7 million in unpaid tolls.

And in Houston, the Harris County Toll Road Authority reported 349,953 cars with paper tags that could not be matched to an owner have racked up an estimated \$10.8 million in outstanding receivable revenue.

The two tollway authorities said they were unable to say for certain how many of the tags with no valid address were bought fraudulently, but as NBC 5 Investigates has shown, paper tag fraud is now widespread across Texas.

Texas buyers tags should only be issued to people who actually buy a car from a dealer and should never be sold.

Last week, [NBC 5 Investigates showed how undercover constables in Austin have bought real Texas paper tags from licensed car dealers](#) willing to enter any name or address in the state's tag system. In one case a dealer they investigated even entered a football stadium into the system as a driver's home address.

And tollways aren't the only place where fraudulent tags appear to be costing the community millions.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) estimated counties in Texas are losing roughly \$80 million in revenue as people buy illegally sold paper tags instead of legitimately registering their cars.

The NCTCOG arrived at that \$80 million figure by looking at one estimate of the number of paper tags sold illegally and then calculating how much counties would have collected in tax revenue if those cars had been legally registered.

Adding to the frustration for local counties, in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, hardly anyone is working to stop the illegal sale of tags.

"Unfortunately, the state has taken the money, and so we're trying to work on this without any funding," Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins (D) said.

In 2017, Gov. Greg Abbott (R) vetoed funding for a clean air program that helped pay for special law enforcement task forces that worked to tackle paper tag fraud, including a group of specially trained Dallas County sheriff's deputies who even found criminal gangs selling paper tags.

Those police units were funded with fees collected from car registrations.

But millions in fees already collected were never sent to local counties. Instead, the state legislature kept the money to help balance the state budget.

Jason Brown with the NCTCOG said more than \$150 million is sitting in a state account that could help put the law enforcement task forces back on the street.

"It's a huge problem, and it's one that can largely be fixed by turning loose of the dedicated money in Austin that our taxpayers have already paid for this purpose," Jenkins said.

NCTCOG is currently working on a plan to use federal grant money to try to re-launch the Dallas-Fort Worth area task forces by next summer.

But to keep those task forces running here and across the state -- they say they will eventually need that state funding.

"We're not necessarily seeking all of it at once. I mean, just get us something that's reasonable to be able to get these enforcement programs back up," said Chris Klaus, NCTCOG's senior program manager for air quality planning and operations.

Abbott's staff turned down a request for an interview.

In an email, Abbott's press secretary Renae Eze wrote in part, "Fraud of any kind damages the businesses of hardworking Texans and undermines our state's economy, and Gov. Abbott has worked with the legislature to root it out."

Eze pointed to a bill the legislature passed this year that will allow the Department of Motor Vehicles to limit the number of tags a dealer can issue to stop fraudulent dealers from issuing massive numbers of tags. The law will also allow the DMV to more quickly shut down dealers caught selling tags.

Eze said that the new law is, "...a good start, one that we look forward to building on with the legislature."

But law enforcement officials said the new law is not enough to stop the fraudsters.

"This has got to stop. And the only person that can stop this right now is going to be the governor of the state of Texas intervening right now," Travis County Constable Sgt. Jose Escribano said.

Travis County constables who work paper tag fraud said they are overwhelmed. When they catch fraudulent dealers they sometimes re-open quickly under new names.

"They're masters at masking. This is a mask," Escribano said.

Escribano said the DMV needs to begin fingerprinting people applying for dealer's licenses -- and run background checks on all who can access the DMV's tag system. Right now, dealers can add authorized users who can print tags with no vetting.

Fraudulent Texas paper tags now pose a nationwide threat. Police said criminals across the country are using them to commit crimes and evade surveillance cameras.

The FBI has stepped in to assist.

"I have talked to dozens of law enforcement officials around the country, and typically their first question to me is, you know what in the world is going on in Texas," FBI Special Agent Brannon Coker said.

Coker investigated a crew of Texas dealers indicted for illegally selling hundreds of thousands of Texas tags across the country.

"That's why the FBI is involved in this because of how this has spread across the nation," he said. "We want to do what we can to assist in taking down some of these criminal organizations."

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/investigations/illegal-paper-tags-costing-texas-taxpayers-and-toll-roads-millions/2823743/>

I rode GoZone, Uber and Lyft to see how DCTA's new program stacks up to the competition

By Justin Grass, Denton Record-Chronicle

I spent a few hours Monday afternoon riding GoZone, Uber and Lyft through some of Denton's busiest streets. The experience gave me some insight into how the Denton County Transportation Authority's latest program compares to its fierce rideshare competition, including some key benefits — but some significant downsides as well.

GoZone officially [launched Sept. 7](#) as a proposed long-term solution to decreasing ridership on bus routes. By nudging riders to single, on-demand rides instead, DCTA officials say coverage area and cost efficiency will improve. The agency contracted New York-based Via Transportation to handle the day-to-day operations of the service, which includes maintaining vans and hiring drivers.

I set out Monday as a true rideshare novice, having never used such a service before. I set up a route between the Rayzor Ranch Walmart and the site of the Denton Community Market on West Mulberry Street, to test the three services on two of Denton's busiest roads, and took all my rides in the afternoon between 1 and 4 p.m.

My first ride was with GoZone, and pickup went smoothly. The experience is similar to other rideshares, using an app with location tracking to set your route. As a first-time user, I didn't have trouble working the system, and I also got pinpoint-accurate text messages notifying me when my van was 15 minutes away, five minutes away and when it arrived.

I waited 20 minutes in total, identical to the estimation, and became the second passenger in my van. The route ended up deviating significantly, between dropping off the other rider and making a failed pickup far out of the way, in which my driver waited for a few minutes before determining it was a no-show. I booked my ride at 1:30 p.m. and got dropped off at 2:25.

I then tested Uber and Lyft and could tell right away the difference between GoZone and the more established options. The apps are both more advanced — though not significantly easier to use — and wait times were far shorter. My Uber driver picked me up five minutes after I booked, while my Lyft driver happened to be nearby and picked me up in less than a minute.

Of course, wait times can be subject to luck of the draw — but I ran into serious trouble with my second GoZone attempt. This time getting picked up from Walmart, I got a 22-minute wait estimation. The process went similarly to my first ride, including my 15-minute notification, but stalled at the 10-minute estimate.

For nearly half an hour, the wait estimate would drop to 9 minutes before shooting back up to 10. I gave my driver two calls 15 minutes apart using their number supplied by the app, but wasn't able to reach them. I booked my ride at 3:07 p.m. but eventually decided to switch to a Lyft ride at 3:45, with my phone at less than 10% battery and the GoZone app giving me no further updates.

Comparison

GoZone has a few clear advantages over the competition. The first is price: During the ongoing promotional period, rides cost 75 cents regardless of route distance, and you can go to and from

anywhere within the mapped-out Denton zone or Lewisville/Highland Village zone. For comparison, my Uber ride was \$10.44 pre-tip, while my Lyft rides cost \$9.50 and \$14.45.

DCTA also has GoZone passes available for frequent riders, although a permanent fare structure hasn't yet been decided. It should also be noted that DCTA pulled in almost \$31.2 million in sales tax revenue last year from its three member cities, Denton, Lewisville and Highland Village. This year, the agency is projecting more than \$32 million — meaning residents in those three cities are already footing some of the bill for any trips they take.

Another plus for GoZone is its fare reductions for several designations: senior, student, Medicare card holders and riders with disabilities. You can also mark your profile for wheelchair accessibility, which gets you serviced with wheelchair-accessible vans.

But the current downsides of the service are glaring. My successful attempt at a ride still required a 20-minute wait, double or over that of the other options around the same time. And my failed attempt would have taken much longer than that. With such a small sample size, there could be abnormalities — perhaps my driver had car trouble, for example.

Still, the app offered me no explanation for why my wait time was stuck at 10 minutes, and no alternative other than to wait without an end in sight. Calling my driver could have alleviated the confusion, though mine didn't answer on two occasions.

Long wait times haven't been an uncommon complaint in the two-and-a-half months since GoZone's launch. DCTA officials discussed the program's capacity at [last month's board meeting](#), revealing contractor Via has had to provide more vehicles than the 30 originally laid out in the contract. The program was topping out at about 42 vehicles by late October, according to CEO Raymond Suarez, with high demand leading to increased wait times.

GoZone also has [limited hours of operation](#), starting up at 5 a.m. on weekdays and going until 10 p.m. (11 on Friday). Those hours constrict further on Saturday and Sunday. Uber and Lyft both offer 24/7 service, though driver availability varies.

It's impossible for my experience over just a few hours to represent the entire service. But if my time with GoZone wasn't an anomaly, it will need to make improvements before it can make use of its strengths and become the accessible public transportation evolution DCTA is hoping for.

The \$400 million federal push to steer Texas drivers toward an electric future

Experts are weighing how best to build \$400 million in vehicle charging stations in a way that could spur more Texans to ditch their gas-guzzling trucks and SUVs.

By Dom DiFurio, Dallas Morning News

The U.S. has never been more serious about transitioning to clean energy on roadways. But is Texas serious about it?

A Biden administration [plan](#) aims to shift 50% of passenger vehicle sales in the U.S. to electric vehicles by 2030, rather than cars and trucks running on fossil fuels. To accomplish this, the administration has pushed legislation providing a slew of tax credits for EV purchases as well as funding for infrastructure.

It's an ambitious plan — the success of which will depend partly upon the buildout of a \$7.5 billion nationwide network of charging stations with funding from the recent infrastructure bill passed by Congress.

Texas will receive \$408 million of that funding for charging stations, and could apply for additional grants from a \$2.5 billion pool. Experts see additional, faster-charging stations placed strategically around the state as a way to persuade more consumers to buy electric.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, about 80% of electric vehicle charging happens when the car is parked at home and plugged in at night.

Still, one of the biggest perceived roadblocks for consumers considering the shift is something called “range anxiety.” It's a term used to describe the fear of setting off on a trip only to be stranded with a dead vehicle and nowhere to charge it.

In Texas, reaching U.S. goals will mean overcoming anxieties and getting millions more electric vehicles on the road.

‘A classic economic paradox’

California leads the nation in EV adoption, followed by Florida and Texas. The states with the most EVs on the road also happen to be the country's most populous.

Texas had 52,190 electric vehicles registered by the end of June 2021, [according](#) to the latest data from the U.S. Department of Energy. That's fewer than 1% of the 22 million total vehicles registered in the state, according to data from the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

The state needs more than 14,000 charging stations to support the number of electric vehicles projected to be on roads by 2030, according to a 2018 [report](#) from environmental research nonprofit Environment Texas.

Whether that estimate holds true for Texas in coming years is dependent on how fast adoption grows — especially considering the switchover to electric is happening faster than previously anticipated, said Tom “Smitty” Smith, executive director of the Texas Electric Transportation Resource Alliance.

Smith was active in crafting policy during Texas' renewable energy boom in the 1990s and early 2000s. His nonprofit organization TxETRA brings together private business leaders, public utility companies, academics, automakers and EV owners pushing for sustainable transportation policies.

And the appetite for development among private businesses is growing as battery technology becomes cheaper, and more electric vehicle models are announced by automakers and emerging startups almost monthly.

Texas recently received an infusion of funding for charging infrastructure, and experts say it was awarded rapidly, underscoring market demand for fast charging solutions.

The fallout from Volkswagen's emissions scandal resulted in a [settlement](#) that included \$30 million for Texas to put toward mitigating the environmental impact of vehicle emissions statewide. That included funding for electric vehicle charging stations, according to the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The money set aside specifically for direct current fast chargers, which can power an EV battery from 0% to 80% in 45 minutes, was committed in less than seven hours after offering the funding, NCTCOG [DFW Clean Cities](#) coordinator Lori Clark said.

Applicants for that funding included Austin-based Tesla, Irving-based 7-Eleven, Buc-ee's and others.

"We're looking at 10-times that amount of money coming to the state to be spent over a course of five years," Clark said.

Still, the federal money is anticipated to cover just 15% of the country's anticipated charging needs by 2030, making it all the more important that stations are built where they can have the most impact, experts said.

Smith's organization [TxETRA](#) has been pushing for new charging station development in areas with low-income residents as well as in apartment complexes and rural areas generally.

Densely populated Texas metros are already becoming saturated with charging stations. D-FW has the most charging stations compared to any other metro in Texas at more than 1,300, according to charging station finder [PlugShare](#).

"It's a classic economic paradox. Until there's enough demand, private capital is not going to invest," Smith said, referring to the history of unequal broadband internet development in rural areas as one example.

The Texas Department of Transportation is expected to develop a plan for use of the federal EV charging funding.

"With our state's population booming, funding for transportation is as vital as ever," TxDOT spokesman Bob Kaufman said in a statement to *The Dallas Morning News*.

"The infrastructure bill passed by Congress will help address transportation needs in Texas as the state could receive nearly \$1 billion per year of additional funding for project development, construction and improvements to our roads and bridges over the next five years."

Shifting public perception

Roughly 7% of Americans [report](#) owning an electric or hybrid vehicle today. In Dallas, Tarrant, Collin and Denton counties this year, leading EV maker Tesla has sold 5,769 vehicles through Oct. 31, according to the Freeman Metroplex Recap. That represented about 3.5% of all cars sold locally through 10 months.

In a Pew Research survey, just 39% of Americans said they're considering an electric vehicle for their next car purchase.

"We're talking about a technology that works really well and that costs less to own over time," said Clark, who owns a Toyota Prius.

American adoption of electric vehicles is expected to continue climbing as infrastructure is built out and tax breaks help alleviate the cost of buying an EV. There is a rough correlation between the areas in Texas with the most EV charging stations and those with the highest rates of EV ownership, she said.

Clark, however, still sees other hurdles in Texas that don't have to do with so-called range anxiety.

In particular, Clark thinks consumers across the state will need to reframe how they think about electricity in similar terms to how they think about their relationship with conventional fuels.

"There's nothing necessarily patriotic about driving vehicles that use fuel that was dug out of the ground in another part of the world," Clark said. "In Texas, we make our own electricity. What's more Texan than driving an electric car when you make your own electricity?"

Three Southern Dallas Projects Awarded \$21M in Federal RAISE Grants

\$12 million will go toward building The Loop's Trinity Forest Spine Trail South Phase; \$8.218 million will enhance mobility within the Southern Dallas County Inland Port, including the purchase of eight on-demand electric shuttles; and \$900,000 will help connect communities across the Southern Gateway, from Oak Cliff to the forthcoming I-35 deck park to the Dallas Zoo and the Tenth Street Historic District.

By David Seeley, Dallas Innovates

Three projects in Southern Dallas have been awarded a total of \$21 million in federal grants through the the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grants program.

Last Friday, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg announced that the Biden Administration will invest nearly \$1 billion in American infrastructure through the RAISE grants, with funding awarded to 90 projects in 47 states, Washington, D.C., and Guam.

The RAISE grants coming to Southern Dallas include:

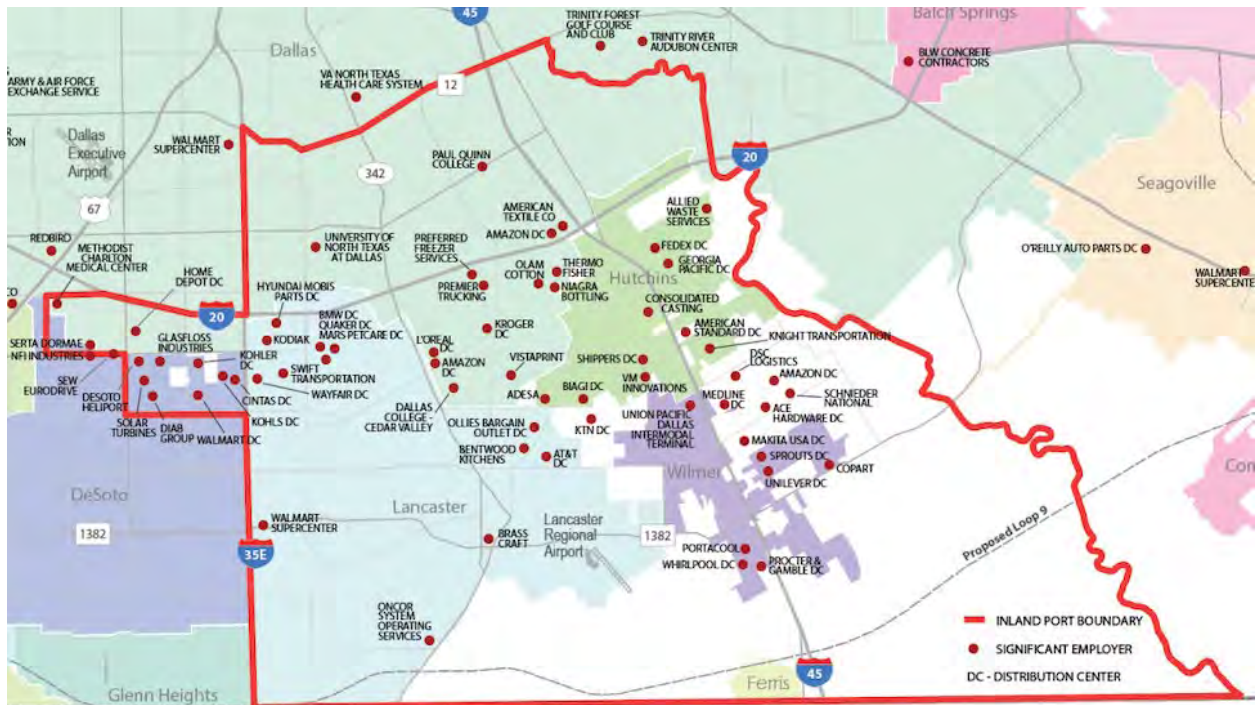
\$8.218 million for Enhancing Mobility within the Southern Dallas Inland Port



Union Pacific intermodal terminal in Wilmer [Photo: Michael Samples]

The [Southern Dallas County Inland Port](#) stretches across 7,500 acres within five municipalities, including Dallas, Lancaster, Ferris, Wilmer, and Hutchins. From here, big companies have access to seagoing ports in Houston, Los Angeles, and Long Beach, California via I-45 and I-20—as well as to rail lines that can carry freight to points across the U.S.

You can see our story about the Inland Port's executive director [here](#) and more about the port itself [here](#).



Map of the Southern Dallas County Inland Port [Image: inlandport.org]

The Inland Port grant will be used by the North Central Texas Council of Governments to implement new transit service, improve pedestrian infrastructure, and update traffic signals across the area.

Currently, the Inland Port area is great for moving freight in all directions—including from [two new high-tech Walmart fulfillment and distribution centers](#) planned to open in 2023 and 2024 in Lancaster.

But the Inland Port is not so good for people and private vehicles to walk or drive around.

The awarded project includes the purchase of eight electric shuttles for on-demand transit; new sidewalks and crosswalks near the VA Medical Center and light-rail station; and around 41 new traffic signals to optimize transit, pedestrian, and vehicular movements.

The electric shuttles will connect people who don't own cars to a thriving, growing job center, increasing the quality of life for the area, according to the Department of Transportation.

\$12 million for [The LOOP: Uniting Neighborhoods with Urban Trails](#)



THE LOOP



When completed, The Loop will circle around central Dallas, connecting Southern Dallas with many attractions including Uptown, Deep Ellum, and White Rock Lake. [Image: The Loop]

To complete the third and final segment of Dallas' 50-mile urban trail, the project will add around 11 miles of trail focused on the Trinity Forest Spine Trail South Phase. The new Southern Dallas trail "close the Loop" by connecting the Santa Fe Trail in East Dallas to southern areas of the city.

Funds from the RAISE Grant will be used to construct the South Phase of the Trinity Forest Spine Trail, a four-mile, shared-use path that will connect the Lawnview DART Station to the Lake June DART Station and Pemberton Hill Road.

One key obstacle to overcome is crossing U.S. 175, which cuts a swath through Southern Dallas, separating residents from rail stations and planned trail infrastructure across the

highway. The RAISE funds will help replace a two-lane, low-clearance bridge on Lake June Road with a new, four-lane “complete street” bridge that includes bike lanes and pedestrian walkways.

“As we look forward to our city’s future, what is clear is that trails are vital to the people of Dallas,” Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson said in a statement. “The LOOP isn’t some vanity project, or just an economic development play, or just a feel-good amenity for our neighborhoods. Trails are more to us than a nice-to-have perk. A strong and viable trail system must be considered critical infrastructure for a 21st century city. This grant is reflective of that fact, and we’re thrilled to have federal support as we continue building a more vibrant Dallas.”

\$900,000 for Connecting Communities in the Southern Gateway



Southern Gateway Park's Phase One (right side above, including the hilltop-covered restaurant/retail complex at center) and Phase Two (upper left above). [Image: HKS]

As we wrote yesterday in our story about the [Southern Gateway deck park](#) over I-35, this project will create [a master plan](#) for efforts to connect the deck park and Dallas Zoo to Dallas' Oak Cliff neighborhood.

The Connecting Communities project will also conduct design and engineering for intersection improvements connecting the deck park to the Bishop Arts and Jefferson commercial areas; a pedestrian bridge connecting the commuter rail line to the Dallas Zoo; and a pedestrian bridge over I-35 connecting to 12 acres of newly created public-use green space.

“We’re proud to support these great projects that will improve infrastructure, strengthen supply chains, make us safer, advance equity, and combat climate change,” Buttigieg said in a statement. “As in past years, we received far more applications than we could fund: this cycle saw about a ten-to-one ratio of requests to available dollars. But going forward, with the passage of President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we will be able to support far more infrastructure projects to support jobs and everyday life in communities across the country.”

‘Whose children are we harming?’ Arlington council to vote on gas wells near daycare

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

When she opened Mother’s Heart Learning Center in east Arlington 18 years ago, Wanda Vincent had a clear mission. She wanted to provide a safe, nurturing environment for kids and to be their “home away from home.” Now, she worries the expansion of natural gas drilling at the property next door could be putting her children in harm’s way.

“We put up with the dust, we put up with the loud noise. It wakes our babies up from nap time,” Vincent told members of Arlington’s planning and zoning commission last month. “Can we promise these children 10, 20, 30 years from now that you can be healthy, that you can be safe?” Shortly thereafter, the commission voted 9-0 to approve French energy giant Total Energies’ request to drill three additional gas wells at its AC360 site, located at 2000 South Watson Road. The permit request was filed under Total’s Fort Worth branch, TEP Barnett.

Hundreds of residents, including dozens living outside of Arlington, have already weighed in with letters opposing and supporting Total’s permit. The heated debate will culminate with a City Council vote Tuesday night — a case of déjà vu for the activists who successfully fought Total’s attempt to expand drilling at the same site nearly 18 months ago.

A lot has changed since Arlington’s City Council voted 6-3 to deny Total’s request to expand drilling in June 2020, including two new members elected last summer. The decision earned national media attention and reinvigorated concerns about childhood asthma, leukemia and birth defects associated with drilling near schools and daycare centers.

During a public hearing last year, council members responded to residents worried about health risks, particularly in communities of color hit hard by COVID-19, said Ranjana Bhandari, executive director of the environmental advocacy group Liveable Arlington.

Those arguments should remain just as compelling now, she added. “That last council had some members who were very ardent supporters of fracking, and even they found this one problematic,” Bhandari said. “I want them to remember that last year, they committed to working more seriously on racial equity in Arlington. Here’s an opportunity for them to make good on that promise. 100% of these toddlers (at Mother’s Heart) are children of color.”

Since Total assumed ownership of the drill site in 2016, the company has operated it in a safe and environmentally responsible way that is compliant with local and state requirements, said TEP Barnett spokesman Kevin Strawser.

Three new wells will be placed more than 600 feet from all “protected uses,” which includes buildings like schools, hospitals and homes, Strawser said. The company is also using an electric-powered rig required by Arlington officials, which further reduces emissions from the drilling process, he added. “Our team members and families live in the communities throughout the DFW region, and we work diligently to ensure the safety and quality of life for all our neighbors near every one of our sites,” Strawser said in an email.

“We look forward to discussing the drill zone and the natural gas well permits with the City Council and the public at the November council meeting.” Arlington officials have openly expressed anxiety over potential legal action from oil and gas companies if the council does not approve permits that meet all technical requirements. House Bill 40 — adopted in 2015 as a response to Denton’s fracking ban — prohibits cities from banning drilling within city limits and from implementing any regulations that are not “commercially reasonable.”

Typical city regulations include issues like noise control and the distance between a drill zone and another building. Arlington has already implemented regulations on how companies drill near daycares. Since March, operators have been required to measure 600 feet between the daycare building or the area designated for a playground and the drill zone. Previously, drillers did not have to include playground space in their measurements and, in some cases, could drill less than 300 feet away from play areas if they received a waiver.

Dr. Ignacio Nuñez, a member of the planning and zoning commission, served a term on City Council and voted in favor of Total's permit request in 2020. He approved it again last month, explaining that his personal opposition to fracking could not outweigh his desire to keep Arlington out of an expensive lawsuit that he said the city would likely lose.

"How much harm is going to happen if we take \$500,000 from the people of Arlington that really need it?" Nuñez said during the meeting. "The real power is going to be at City Council. If City Council says no, I fear what comes next." He added that Total is "playing the game" by changing its drill zone shape from a rectangle to a "little weird trapezoid" that is further away from Mother's Heart.

The shape of the drill zone, which outlines where the company seeks to drill gas wells, may come into play when the council prepares to vote on Tuesday night. In a city staff report, Arlington officials state that Total's proposed drill zone is less than 600 feet from protected buildings. In that case, seven council members, or a supermajority, must approve the permit for it to move forward. However, Total has agreed to limit all future wells to areas that are more than 600 feet away from protected buildings, according to the staff report.

With that in mind, council members could modify the size or shape of the drill zone to include only those sections and approve Total's permit with five votes rather than seven, per the staff report.

Before the council votes, they will hear from community members in what is expected to be an emotional public hearing. More than 300 people have submitted letters opposing Total's expansion, while 189 others sent letters supporting Total's expansion. Many supporters said they were royalty holders with the company and stood to benefit financially from more drilling.

Sixty-nine parents who send their children to Mother's Heart signed a petition voicing concerns about health risks resulting from natural gas production, Bhandari said.

If Total's request is approved, the company will begin drilling in January and continue for at least six more months, according to permit documents. "The elephant in the room is environmental justice," Bhandari said. "Whose children are we harming?" Rosalia Tejeda, a mother of three who lives in the neighborhood adjacent to the east Arlington drill site, said she moved to Texas from New York because she was "running away from pollution."

She told the planning and zoning commission that the city needs to keep her children's best interests in mind when voting on gas drilling. "Just as I put a mask on my children and send them to school to keep them from getting COVID, I would do anything to keep them from getting anything: asthma, leukemia, any of the health effects and risks they run into living in a neighborhood so close to this drill zone," Tejeda said. "I'm just mortified to think that not just my children, but everyone else's children, can be at risk for any of these things."

Fort Worth to Dallas in under 20 minutes? Proposed transit system could be the ticket

By John Kent, Green Source DFW



A high-speed train on the platform in Bengbu, China. Courtesy of Storyblocks.

Imagine stepping onto a speedy, cushy, state-of-the-art electric train, then blowing past all those poor stiff's mired on the interstate as you blast your way from Fort Worth to Dallas and back. Whoosh! You're there.

For the daily legions of beaten-down North Texas commuters, it surely must sound too good to be true. But 100 years ago, imagination was not required for such a trip. A rail service known as the **electric interurban** whisked hundreds of passengers daily between the two cities at the scenery-blurring speed of 60 mph. No fumes, no clatter — just the smooth, reassuring hum of a big electric motor pulling you swiftly toward the horizon. It was great while it lasted, but by 1950, widespread automobile ownership, better highways and cheap gas had permanently derailed the interurban.

Any veteran of the infamously glacial I-30 or I-20 traffic stack-ups is well aware of where that “progress” led us.

As they say, what goes around comes around. There is now a 21st-century take on the interurban's mass-transit concept that would zip DFW commuters back and forth at speeds of at least 200 miles per hour, shrinking port-to-port transit times down to as little as 12 minutes, and potentially removing thousands of carbon-belching cars from local roadways.

"That would be the dream, seriously," said Chad Butler, a Fort Worth resident who from 2018 to 2020 spent up to an hour and a half commuting each way from Fort Worth to his job at AT& T in Dallas.

He expects the commute to resume when Covid-19 safeguards are finally lifted. He says he would be first on board of a high-speed option.

"I'd get more sleep, I'd never stress about being late for a meeting and I definitely would not drive to Dallas."

A policy-making group of elected officials representing 97 North Texas cities, 12 counties and seven transportation providers — the **Regional Transportation Council** — is studying the feasibility of such a high-speed line. The agency has already agreed upon the general location of the corridor within which the service would operate. The RTC also reviewed an assortment of fast mass-transit technologies, settling on two distinctly different finalists.

A policy-making group of elected officials representing 97 North Texas cities, 12 counties and seven transportation providers — the **Regional Transportation Council** — is studying the feasibility of such a high-speed line.



"We're way on the front end of this project. We're kind of just beyond the, 'Hey we've got a great idea, let's look at where we'll actually put this line, and what type of mode will we use?'" said

Brendon Wheeler, manager of the **North Central Texas Council of Governments**' long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which includes a multi-phase study of the DFW high-speed line.

“The RTC is wanting to be really innovative in transportation options for our region, seeing that we can't build our way out of congestion. We can't just continue to build more roads,” Wheeler said.

One **study** shows that Garland, Fort Worth and Arlington have the longest commute times in Texas, with Dallas and Plano close behind. In other words, our car-dependent metropolis appears ripe for the kind of relief that rapid mass transit could bring.

The RTC recently completed Phase 1 of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, identifying the I-30 corridor as the logical path for the high-speed line, which, for the sake of speed, would have just three stations: downtown Fort Worth, Arlington's entertainment district and downtown Dallas. It would run on a dedicated, elevated platform. Phase 1 also whittled down a half-dozen competing people-moving technologies to just two — **high-speed rail** and **hyperloop**. Planners will decide later which mode will move ahead.

High-speed rail – the “bullet train” — is a proven technology that first entered service nearly 60 years ago in Japan. In that span of time, the **Japanese trains**, moving at speeds of up to 300 mph, have carried more than 10 billion passengers without a fatality or injury. Similar systems are now in widespread use across Asia and Europe. Such a train between Dallas and Fort Worth could get riders from the heart of one city to the other in about 20 minutes.

Hyperloop is a more exotic technology in which individual passenger pods travel through a near-vacuum in a sealed tube at up to 650 miles per hour. Because of the short distances involved in the DFW project, the hyperloop system would accelerate only to about 300-350 mph, but still could shrink Dallas-Fort Worth commute times down to 12 minutes. Although no operational hyperloops have been completed, **test tracks** are up and running, including two in the U.S. and one in France.

Virgin Hyperloop One

<https://youtu.be/XbKg1Qm7wNU>

Members of DFW's Regional Transportation Council talk about hyperloop technology in this 2018 video. Courtesy of NCTCOG.

One advantage of hyperloop is the prospect of flexible, on-demand service instead of the more rigid timetables typical of rail lines. A disadvantage could be hyperloop's potential incompatibility with dissimilar high-speed transportation services like the **Texas Central**, a more conventional bullet train under study to link Dallas and Houston.

“Our project is more about creating a larger high-speed system to connect with other high-speed systems in the state. And, hopefully, as the high-speed transportation bug builds around the U.S., it connects to a national network, much like Interstate highways do for vehicle travel,” Wheeler said. “So, we see this as just a link in the chain of high-speed transportation across our region and state. What we want to do is have an integral system such that you wouldn't have to get off modes and change trains or leave one platform, walk a block and get on another train – that would take a lot of time and effort.”

The project's next step is environmental analysis, a two-year federal process designed to ensure that the operational system is environmentally benign. Assuming all goes well, by early 2024 the project should have an "environmentally cleared corridor," Wheeler said. "That's when we'll be able to identify actually who's going to be able to build the project, and how the project will be funded."

He said clearing the environmental hurdle would make the project more attractive to private investors, who the RTC envisions as being integral to a public-private funding strategy for the service.

How much will the bankrollers need to pony up? Ballpark estimates for a high-speed rail system are \$95 million per mile, with hyperloop coming in at around \$90 million. For a line that's projected to run 31 miles, the guesstimate for the total tab is just shy of \$3 billion.

During his Fort Worth to Dallas commuting days, Chad Butler finally decided to ditch the highway traffic and start taking the **Trinity Railway Express**.

"When I took the train, it was so much less stressful," he said. "I'll likely have to start going back to the office here pretty soon, and I will only be taking the train, for sure."

As good as the TRE is, Butler notes that accidents or other unforeseen issues sometimes produce delays on the train. He admits that the commute, even without trouble on the tracks, still consumes about an hour of travel time each way.

For now, patience will be Butler's ally as he trundles along on his beloved but imperfect TRE. NCTCOG officials say an operational, superfast transit line rocketing across the Metroplex is still another 15 or 20 years down the tracks.

Is the Texas power grid ready for the electric vehicle boom?

It's a question environmentalists, renewable energy experts and automakers are wary of as the Biden administration pushes for widespread adoption.

By Dom DiFurio, Dallas Morning News

When a winter storm crossed paths with the Lone Star State in mid-February, the lights went off in Texas — as did the heat, the grocery store refrigerators and gas station pumps.

Hundreds died as a result of the infrastructure failure, and state legislators have spent the months since debating how best to improve Texas' independent electrical grid.

If the U.S. is going to meet its goals for electric vehicle adoption, Texans will need to buy millions of battery-powered cars and trucks over the next eight years. Experts hope federal funding for EV charging stations to be developed in coming years will spark the switchover.

But what happens when most, or even half, of Texas' residents are plugging their cars into the grid to charge? Even though that's years away, it's a question environmentalists and renewable energy experts are already worried about.

Even Plano-based Toyota North America's leadership has [challenged](#) the Biden administration's goals, arguing that infrastructure must be upgraded to handle more electric vehicles.

In 2018, researchers at the University of Texas published a [study](#) that looked at how much electricity would be required if every state moved entirely to electric vehicle usage. If all passenger vehicles in Texas were electric, the state would need to produce 30% more electricity annually than it currently does. That equates to enough electricity to power 11 million homes every year, according to the study.

"Some of the challenges are where do we put these [charging] stations? Where do we make sure the stations don't overload the grid?" said Lori Clark, the DFW Clean Cities coordinator at the North Central Texas Council of Governments. "If we're putting a bunch of DC fast chargers that are going to serve potentially 10 cars at one time in one little spot at a gas station in rural Texas, that's going to be a little bit tricky."

An expected 80% of all vehicle charging happens at home, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. The time of day when owners choose to charge those vehicles will have the biggest impact on the grid, according to 2020 research from Pew.

Clark said she thinks there will need to be more education around the best charging times. She likens it to not running large appliances and air conditioners during peak hours of energy usage in the summer.

"Consider that electric car another large appliance — don't plug it in or don't let it start charging from 3 to 7 p.m.," Clark said.

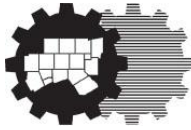
Many EVs have a built-in function that allows the user to delay charging of the vehicle until a scheduled time. Overall, Clark said, electricity providers are not concerned about the ability of the grid to handle passenger vehicles.

According to Texas Electric Transportation Resources Alliance executive director Tom "Smitty" Smith, power grid reliability could become a problem.

“Unless,” Smith said, “we think about how to look at electric vehicles as an asset.”

Because they don’t need as many of the moving parts required by combustion engines, electric vehicles are essentially batteries on wheels. And Smith envisions a system where a network of EV batteries plugged into home connections allow stored power in an EV to be pulled back into the grid to accommodate peak usage times.

“Generally speaking, the estimates are that you can see net benefits to the all of the ratepayers in a state by using the electric grid more efficiently,” Smith said.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Brian Wilson
(817) 704-2511
bwilson@nctcog.org

NCTCOG Holds its First In-Person Meeting of the Year on Several Transportation Programs

Metropolitan Transportation Plan, other regional efforts will be highlighted Oct. 11

October 6, 2021 (Arlington, Texas) — The North Central Texas Council of Governments will host a public meeting in October to provide an overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Mobility 2045, and present details on this year's freight safety campaign, local government energy reporting requirements and other transportation issues.

The meeting will take place at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive, at noon on Monday, October 11. This marks NCTCOG's first in-person meeting since March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Residents may attend the meeting or watch it online. Those attending in person are encouraged to wear masks and maintain six feet from one another.

One of the primary responsibilities of a Metropolitan Planning Organization is the development and maintenance of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP identifies transportation needs, investments and priorities for the regional transportation system including highways, bridges, public transit, freight, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. NCTCOG staff is developing an update to the current MTP, Mobility 2045, and will provide an overview and timeline for the plan.

Additionally, staff will provide details on this year's freight safety campaign, which is educating heavy-duty vehicle operators about following regional truck lane restrictions and informing the public about safe driving practices near large commercial vehicles and the importance of reducing freight-related accidents.

Staff will also present an overview of the local government energy reporting requirements, NCTCOG resources and training, and important reminders regarding the upcoming 2021 Local Government Energy Reports. Political subdivisions in ozone nonattainment or "affected" counties in Texas are required to reduce their electric consumption by 5% each year and report their annual electricity consumption to the State Energy Conservation Office.

The department's interactive map tool, Map Your Experience, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP), vehicle incentive opportunities and administrative revisions for Mobility 2045 will also be highlighted.

To watch the meeting online, click the "live" tab at www.nctcog.org/video. A recording of the presentations will also be posted at www.nctcog.org/input, where residents can comment through Nov. 9.

For special accommodations due to a disability, language translation needs, or to request printed copies of information discussed, contact Carli Baylor at 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. A free roundtrip ride between NCTCOG and the Trinity Railway Express CentrePort/DFW Airport Station can also be

arranged with 72 hours' notice.

Public Meeting Details
Monday, Oct 11, 2021, Noon North Central Texas Council of Governments 616 Six Flags Drive Arlington, TX 76011

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

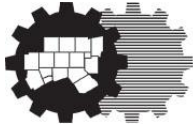
NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development.

NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions. NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 229 member governments including 16 counties, 167 cities, 19 school districts and 27 special districts. For more information on the Transportation Department, visit NCTCOG.org/trans.

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

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NCTCOG Launches Campaign to Promote Safe Driving

Drive Aware North Texas aims to reduce serious crashes and fatalities

Nov. 11, 2021 (Arlington, Texas) – Speeding was the top contributor to serious-injury and fatality crashes on North Texas roadways in 2020, figuring into one-third of such incidents across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The next three leading factors – Impaired driving, failure to drive in a single lane and distracted driving – accounted for a combined 31% of such crashes.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is undertaking an effort to make the roads safer by reducing these and other leading causes of serious crashes, with the launch of the Drive Aware North Texas campaign. This is an educational campaign aimed at improving negative driver behaviors that are the leading contributing factors for serious-injury and fatality crashes in North Texas.

NCTCOG and its transportation partners work daily to ensure the transportation system provides residents with the capacity needed as the region grows. Roadway construction and maintenance are visible contributors to system reliability. But safety is also a significant part of the equation. Drive Aware North Texas encourages motorists to be part of the solution to safer roadways by avoiding certain risky behaviors while behind the wheel.

The campaign website, www.driveawarentx.org, focuses on four main causes of serious and fatal traffic incidents: speeding, impaired driving, distracted driving and wrong-way driving. It examines data over the past five years related to each category, including crashes by time of day and gender, presenting the data in easy-to-read graphs.

Speeding

Speeding crashes occur when drivers either exceed speed limits or drive at unsafe speeds for road conditions. Speeding was an identified factor in over 150,000 crashes, including 1,252 fatal injury crashes, and 4,619 suspected serious injury crashes from 2016-2020. While speeding can cause serious crashes any time of day, the most common time for them to occur was 5 p.m.

Impaired Driving

Driver impairment – by alcohol, illegal drugs, legal medication or drowsiness – has remained a leading contributing factor in serious roadway crashes in both Texas and the region. Although driver impairment continues to be a significant problem in North Texas, there is some good news. The number of crashes involving impaired driving decreased by 4% from 2016-2020. There was also a decline in the number of crashes where medication was a factor. Alcohol remains the leading cause in this category. But there are fewer alcohol-related serious-injury and fatality crashes than in 2016, according to the data.

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving can be any activity that takes a driver's attention away from the roadway. Distractions can include anything from texting, talking on a mobile device, using social media, eating, drinking, putting on makeup, shaving, reading, programming a navigation system, watching a video, adjusting the radio and even talking to passengers. There were over 77,000 distracted driving crashes in the region from 2016-2020, with most occurring in the early evening, according to the data. Drivers are encouraged to focus on the roadway and avoid potentially dangerous distractions when behind the wheel. Following a few simple tips could help make the roads safer for everyone.

- Always give driving your full attention.
- Pull off the road entirely and come to a complete stop before talking or texting on your device.
- Put your phone away, turn it off, or use an app to block texts and calls while driving.
- Tell friends, family and co-workers you won't respond to texts or calls while driving.
- Remember that all distractions are dangerous, so pay full attention when behind the wheel.

Wrong-Way Driving

Wrong-way driving incidents occur less frequently, but when they happen, they are more likely to result in serious injuries or fatalities than the other factors. Between 2016 and 2020, over 3,500 wrong-way driving crashes occurred in the North Central Texas region. NCTCOG continues to work with its transportation partners to implement the NCTCOG Wrong-Way Driving Mitigation Program, which focuses on preventing incidents where a driver enters a limited access facility in the wrong direction by installing low cost wrong-way driving countermeasures at known hotspots.

By avoiding risky behaviors while driving and paying attention to the road in front of them, North Texans can make the transportation system safer for themselves and their neighbors. To learn more about the Drive Aware North Texas campaign visit www.driveawarentx.org.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

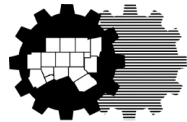
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NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 170 cities, 24 school districts and 30 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit www.nctcog.org/trans.

###

Freight Safety Awareness Initiative

**Regional Transportation Council Meeting
December 9, 2021**



**Jeff Hathcock, Program Manager
NCTCOG Transportation Department**



FREIGHT SAFETY AWARENESS INITIATIVE

In 2018, staff held the first Freight Safety Awareness campaign.

The second Freight Safety Awareness Initiative began in May and ran through September. This initiative helps create awareness for safe driving habits near large freight vehicles on the highway and at railroad crossings.



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Initiative

Safety

Goal

Target Audiences

Outreach

Results

Webpage

Next Steps

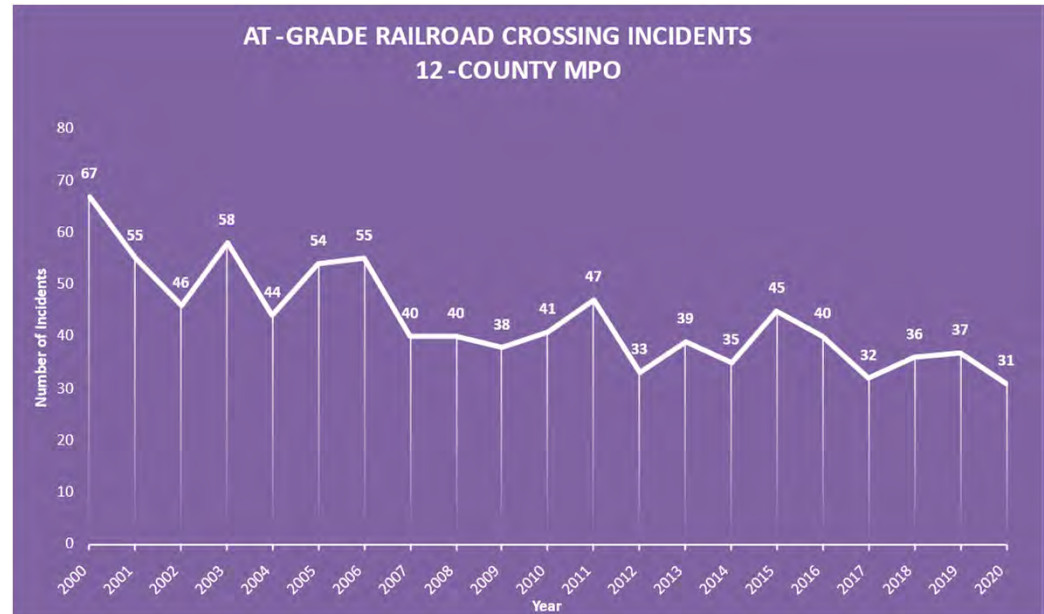
SAFETY

Truck Safety – There have been an average of 289 truck crashes per month over the last 5 years.

CMV Crashes on Limited Access Facilities

Year	Yearly	Monthly Average
2016	3,310	276
2017	3,316	276
2018	3,279	273
2019	2,996	250
2020	4,433	369

Rail Safety – There were 31 crossing incidents in 2020.



GOALS

To create a safer environment for freight and passenger movements through physical improvements and safety awareness initiatives.

To merge two campaigns (Safe Driving Campaign and Operation Lifesaver) into one larger Freight North Texas marketing campaign.

Truck Safety – To reduce freight-related accidents and inform the public about safe driving practices near large commercial motor vehicles.

Rail Safety – To reduce rail crossing and trespassing incidents by informing the public about safe rail crossing habits and practices.



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Initiative

Safety

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Next Steps

TARGET AUDIENCE

General Public – Increased awareness about truck limitations with regard to:

- Stopping distance and sight line availability
- Strategies and simple adjustments for driving near large trucks
- The importance of freight and its role in our daily lives

The initiative will also increase awareness about safe mobility practices at rail crossings and Quiet Zones, and the importance of not trespassing on railroad land.

COVID-19 Messaging – This year, due to the pandemic, we plan on stressing the importance of truck drivers, especially during lockdowns, and the significance of keeping goods moving.

Truck Drivers – The initiative also aims to educate truck drivers about truck lane restriction locations and safety benefits to increase awareness on the roadways. Information about air quality and mobility benefits will also be elements of this initiative.

Initiative

Safety

Goal

Target Audience

Outreach

Results

Webpage

Next Steps

OUTREACH

Outreach will be conducted through:

- Fact Sheets
- Social Media
- Search Engine Optimization
- Billboards
- Radio
- *Podcasts*
- Website

NCTCOG
FACT SHEET
September 2021

QUICK TAKE

Regional Driver Awareness is Key to Freight Safety

Highway Safety

What:

Regional freight safety initiatives are developed to create a safer environment for bicyclists and pedestrians, commuters, first responders, commercial motor vehicle operators and anyone else traveling on North Texas roadways.

Significance:

Trucks and freight trains take longer to stop than passenger vehicles, making it important for motorists to use caution when encountering them.

By the Numbers:

500+

The number of truck lane restriction miles in Dallas-Fort Worth. Currently, 34 municipalities in the region have such restrictions. Following these rules can make the roads safer for all drivers.

Regional Driver Awareness is Key to Freight Safety

North Texas sees an enormous volume of freight transported every day by semi-trucks and other commercial motor vehicles, supplying gasoline, medical supplies, building materials, groceries and more. If you own it, a truck probably moved it at some point.

In the past five years, there have been an average of 289 truck-involved crashes per month in North Texas. The number of crashes has increased each of those years. By understanding the importance of proper driving near and around trucks, navigating traffic will be safer, faster and more efficient. As the region's population continues to grow and freight traffic increases to supply the rising demand of consumer product deliveries, the potential for roadway incidents between automobiles and commercial motor vehicles increases. Many passenger vehicle drivers do not realize that these vehicles have "blind spots," where the truck driver cannot see passing vehicles.

Heavy-duty vehicles can be difficult to maneuver, and the length of time needed to stop is about 40% greater than cars. Truck drivers can also help make the roads safer by following the truck lane restrictions, which limit the lanes used by trucks on certain freeway corridors throughout the region.

In these areas, trucks with three or more axles are prohibited from using the inside left lane, except when passing traffic. This eases congestion and reduces the number of truck-related crashes on the freeways. Learn more at www.FreightNTX.org.




Photo: Getty Images

Initiative

Safety

Goal

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Results

Webpage

Next Steps

RESULTS FROM INITIATIVE

Billboard Placement

9 Total Billboards

- IH 45 near the UPRR facility
- DFW Airport off IH 635 & SH 114
- South Dallas off IH 35
- Alliance Airport area off IH 35W (Fort Worth)
- Southwest FOD off IH 30/SH 360 (Arlington/Grand Prairie)
- Off IH 635 and Shiloh Road
- IH 820 area north of downtown Fort Worth
- Off IH 20 - Duncanville/DeSoto area
- North of downtown Dallas off IH 30 & IH 635



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Total weekly impressions: 2,752,615

Total estimated monthly impressions, including added value billboards: 12,731,412

Total Campaign Impressions: 34,752,332

Initiative

Safety

Goal

Target Audiences

Outreach

Results

Webpage

Next Steps

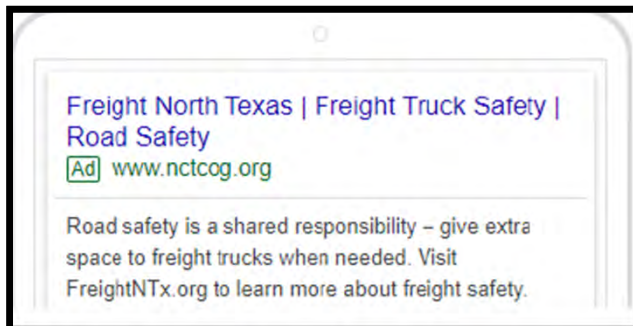
RESULTS FROM INITIATIVE

Facebook Results

- Total Clicks: 2,213
- Total Impressions: 863,689

Google Results

- Total Clicks: 1,099
- Total Impressions: 26,674



Imagery provided by NCTCOG



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Initiative

Safety

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Results

Webpage

Next Steps

RESULTS FROM INITIATIVE

Audacy (Radio) Ads Stations:

- KRLD AM & KLUV: Traffic Report with Online Ad
- KRLD FM: Sports Updates with Online Ad
- KJKK & KVIL: Music Content with Online Ad
- KJKK FM, KRLD AM & KRLD FM Traditional Radio

Total Commercials: 2,987

Total Streaming Impressions: 335,000

Total Campaign Impressions: 15,369,900

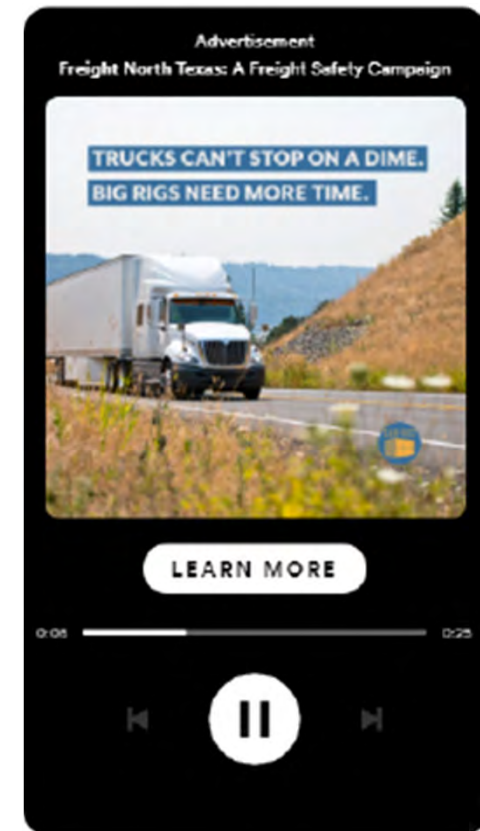
All ads were produced at 15 seconds long and ran for 18 consecutive weeks

There were 4 ads in rotation

Spotify

Total Clicks: 580

Total Impressions: 218,438



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Initiative

Safety

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Webpage

Next Steps

WEBPAGE


www.freightntx.org

Freight Safety

Regional transportation safety initiatives are developed to create a safer environment for bicyclists and pedestrians, commuters, first responders, commercial motor vehicle operators and anyone else traveling from one place to another on our roadways. North Central Texas has an enormous volume of freight being transported every day, by semi-trucks and other Commercial Motor Vehicles. If you own it, a truck probably brought it.

As the population grows and freight traffic increases to supply the growing demand of consumer product deliveries, the potential for roadway incidents between automobiles and Commercial Motor Vehicles escalates. Many drivers do not realize that these vehicles have "blind spots" where the driver has no view of passing vehicles. They are difficult to maneuver and the length of time needed to stop is about 40% greater than cars. *Source:* [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#)

Stop. Trains Can't.



Graphics: Transportation.gov, Federal Railroad Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

- Regional Planning & Projects
- Congestion Management
- Maps, Models & Data
- Quality of Life
- Funding & Business
- Plans, Studies, Reports
- Get Involved
- About Transportation

Initiative

Safety

Goal

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Webpage

Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

Work with Communication's Team to improve the next initiative.

Improvements to the Freight Safety Website.

Next Freight Safety Initiative is planned for 2023.



Imagery provided by NCTCOG

Initiative

Safety

Goal

Target Audiences

Outreach

Results

Webpage

Next Steps

QUESTIONS?

Initiative

Safety

Goal

Target Audiences

Outreach

Results

Webpage

Next Steps

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Regional Transportation Council

Southern Dallas County and Tarrant County Transit Studies Recommendations

Shannon Stevenson | December 9, 2021

BACKGROUND

Request from partners:

- Best Southwest Partnership
- Tarrant County Mayors' Council

Develop a comprehensive approach in planning and implementing transit services in the requested areas:

- Balancing Needs
- Addressing Equity
- Member/Non-Member Cities Considerations

Study Elements	Dallas County	Tarrant County
Internal and regional connections	✓	✓
Strategic implementation	✓	✓
Near-term horizon (now to 10 years)	✓	✓
Increase transportation options and innovation	✓	✓
Funding options	✓	✓
Private sector involvement	✓	✓
People and goods	✓	



BACKGROUND: BUILDING ON EFFORTS



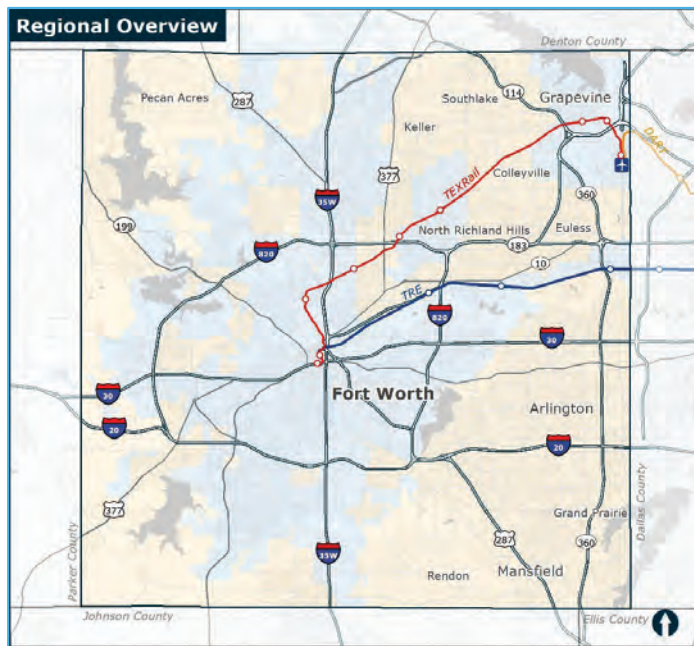
Transit Studies
Tarrant County
 Southern Dallas County

Geographic Focus	NCTCOG Region	NCTCOG Region	Outside Transit Authority Service Areas
User Focus	All Users	Vulnerable Users	All Users
Travel Modes	All Modes	Bus, Demand Response, and Paratransit	Bus and Demand Response
Planning Horizon	Long Range	Short-Medium Range	Short-Medium Range



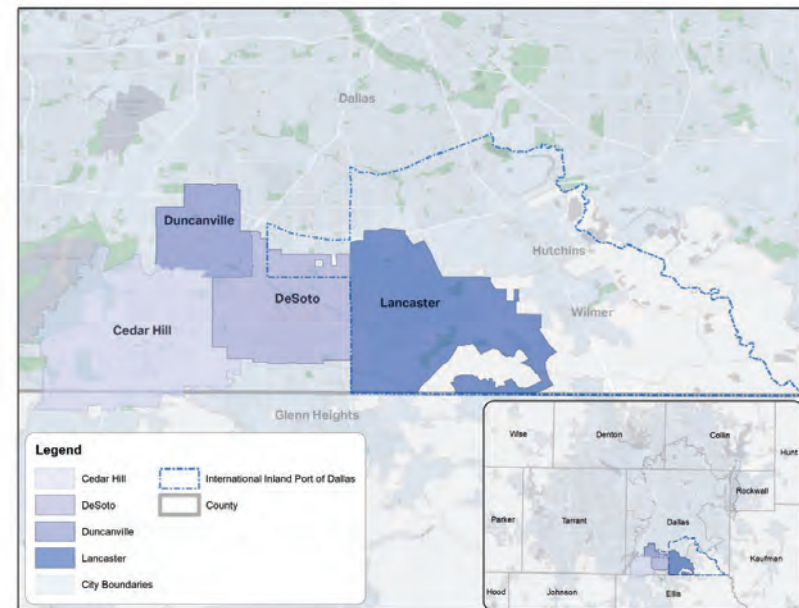
STUDY AREAS

Tarrant County



Focus Areas: Cities outside of Trinity Metro's service area

Southern Dallas County



Focus Areas: Cedar Hill, Duncanville, DeSoto, Lancaster, and the Inland Port



PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Type	Tarrant County	Southern Dallas County
Stakeholder Meetings* (Project Advisory Committee)	3	3
Public Meetings*	2	3
Input Survey	✓ (607 total responses)	✓ (240 total responses)
Additional meetings with stakeholders were also held to discuss specific study-related topics.		

*Due to COVID-19 constraints, public outreach was conducted through virtual meetings and online participation.

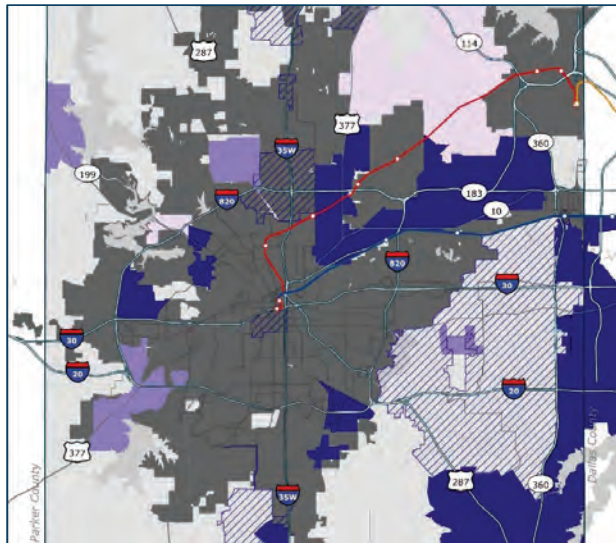


TRANSIT NEEDS: TECHNICAL ANALYSES

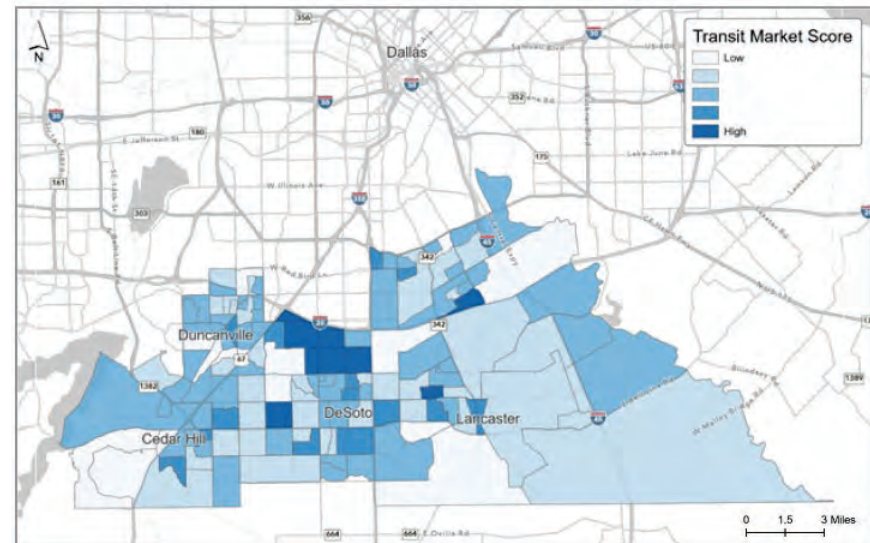
Identified needs based on technical analyses:

- Population/Employment Densities
- Transit-Dependent Populations

- Activity Centers
- Trip Patterns
- Existing Conditions



Tarrant County



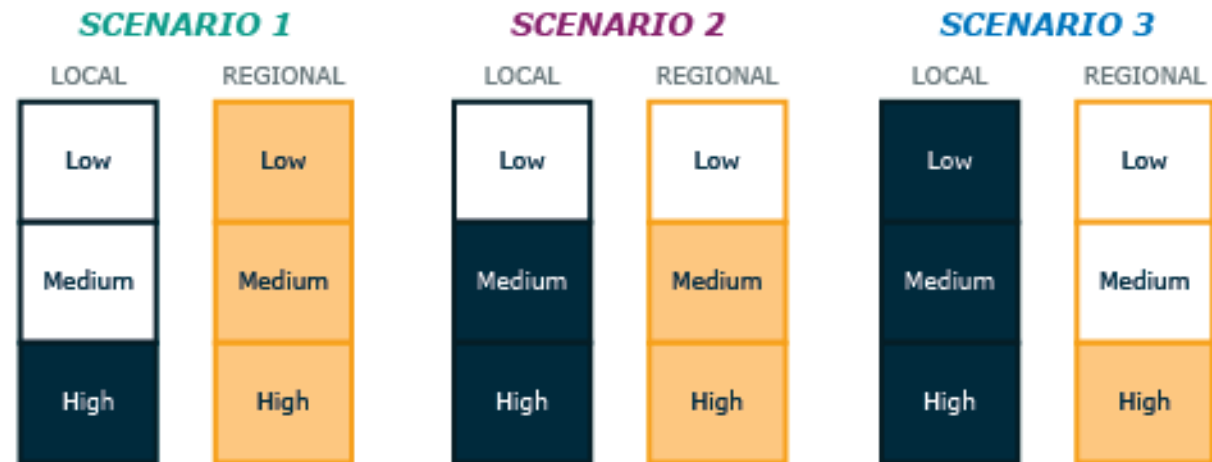
Southern Dallas County



RECOMMENDED SCENARIOS: TARRANT COUNTY

Developed three scenarios based on identified needs as well as stakeholder/public input

The scenarios provide a range of what services might look like throughout the county

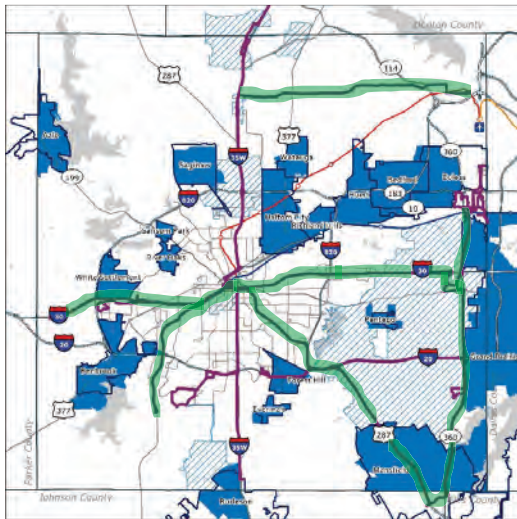


RECOMMENDED SCENARIOS: TARRANT COUNTY

Scenario 1

Service Needs

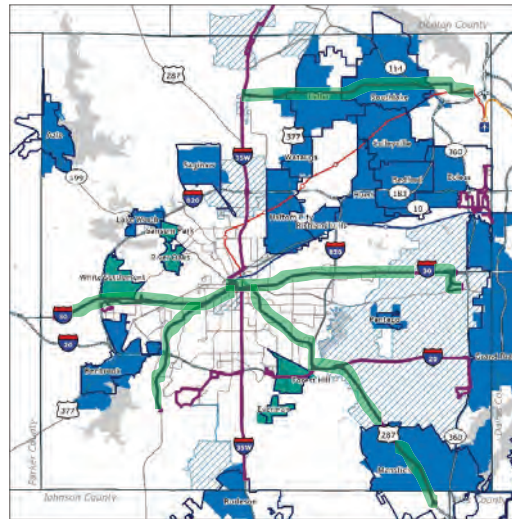
Local	Low	Med	Hi
Regional	Low	Med	Hi



Scenario 2

Service Needs

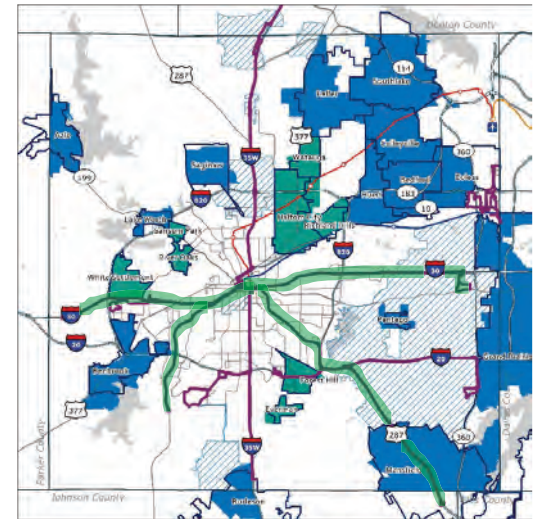
Local	Low	Med	Hi
Regional	Low	Med	Hi



Scenario 3

Service Needs

Local	Low	Med	Hi
Regional	Low	Med	Hi



COST ESTIMATES: TARRANT COUNTY

Baseline Budget Target
(countywide): \$18M to 18.4M

Estimated cost breakdown by
municipality is also provided

Municipalities can choose to move
forward with service
recommendations independently

Scenario	Estimated Cost	Local / Regional % Split
Scenario 1	\$18.1M	74% / 26%
Scenario 2	\$18.4M	82% / 18%
Scenario 3	\$18.3M	88% / 12%



GOODS MOVEMENT: SOUTHERN DALLAS COUNTY

Key Takeaways

- Inland Port is **poised to more than double in size over the next 10 years** (50-100M sq. ft. of new industrial development)
- As industrial buildings grow in size, so does corresponding truck traffic
- Many local thoroughfares are experiencing high truck volumes, increased development could push these intersections to capacity

Southern Dallas Inland Port



22.4M SQ.FT

industrial distribution space
since 2010



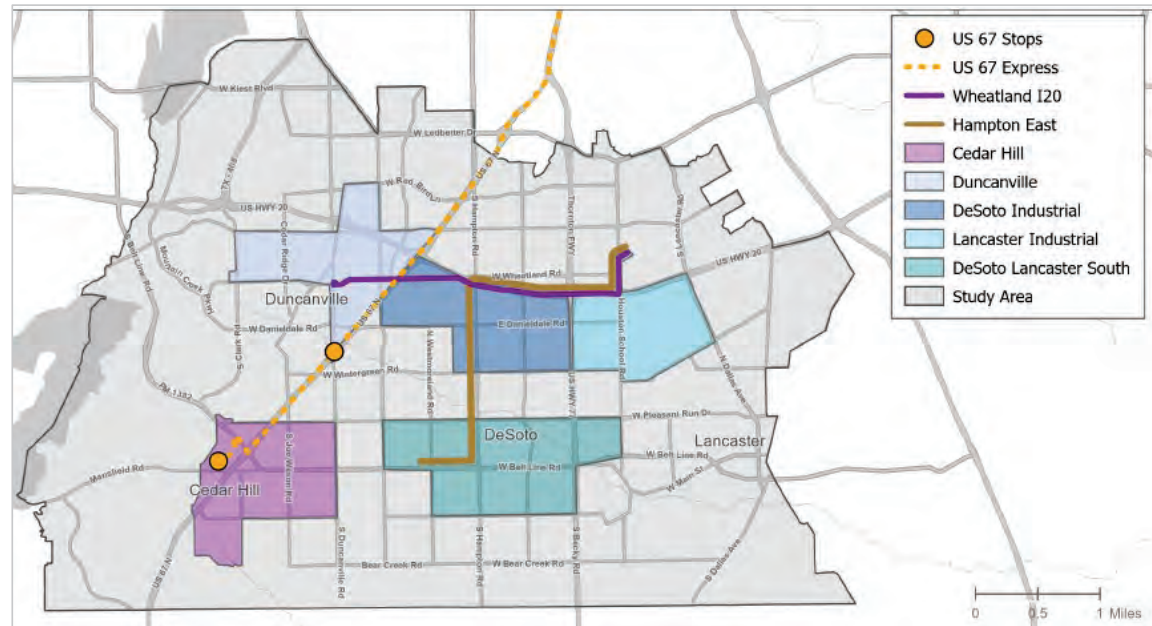
RECOMMENDATIONS: SOUTHERN DALLAS COUNTY

Based on identified needs as well as stakeholder/public input

Phase 1 builds the foundation of transit service in the area; later phases build on this foundation

- *Three (3) fixed-routes ; five (5) microtransit zones*

Coordinate transit/roadway planning to facilitate safe transit travel; prepare for continued growth in truck volumes in the Inland Port

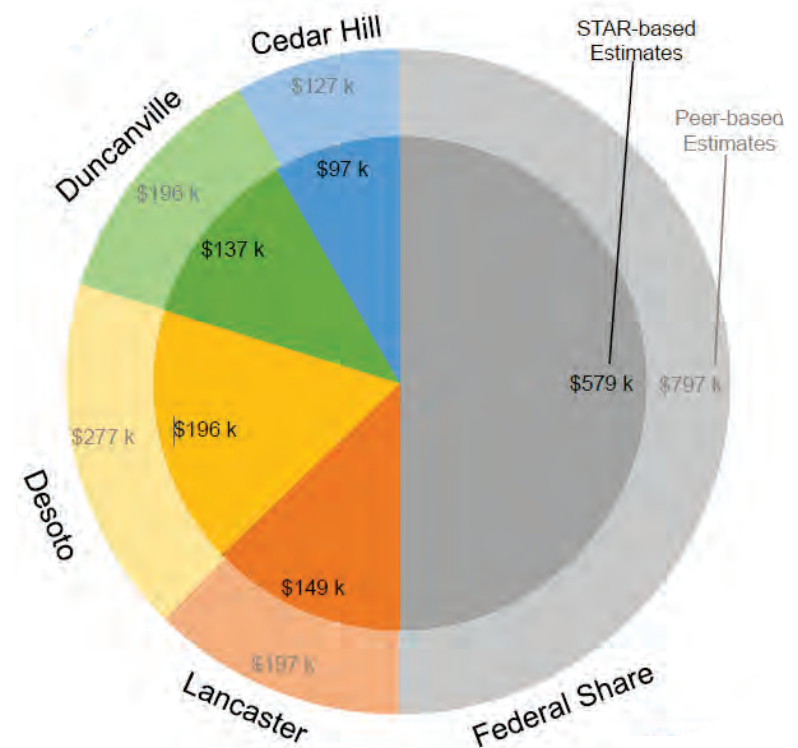


SERVICE COST ESTIMATES: SOUTHERN DALLAS COUNTY

Phase 1: \$1.2 to 1.6M (combined total)

Phase 2: \$2.12M (reinvests in the core service of Phase 1 and expands coverage)

Estimated cost breakdown by municipality is also provided



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Provide a framework for municipalities to establish or expand transit service based on recommended services

Designed as a flexible roadmap for municipalities to implement services that meet local/regional needs, priorities, and goals

Next Step: continued coordination with partners and local governments

Service Model	Recommended
Agreement w/Transit Provider	Yes
Contracted Service	Caution
Directly Operated by Municipality	No
The RTC and NCTCOG encourage municipalities to coordinate planning and implementation efforts with existing Transit Providers.	



CONTACT INFORMATION



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Shannon Stevenson

Senior Program Manager

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Project Website: www.nctcog.org/transitstudies



End of 2021 Ozone Season

Regional Transportation Council • December 9, 2021

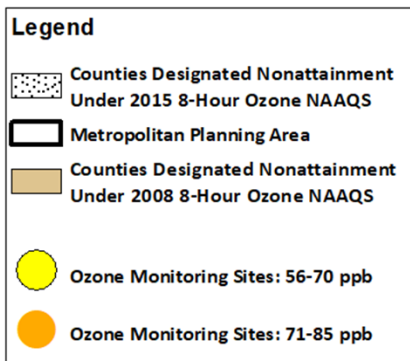
Jenny Narvaez, Program Manager



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

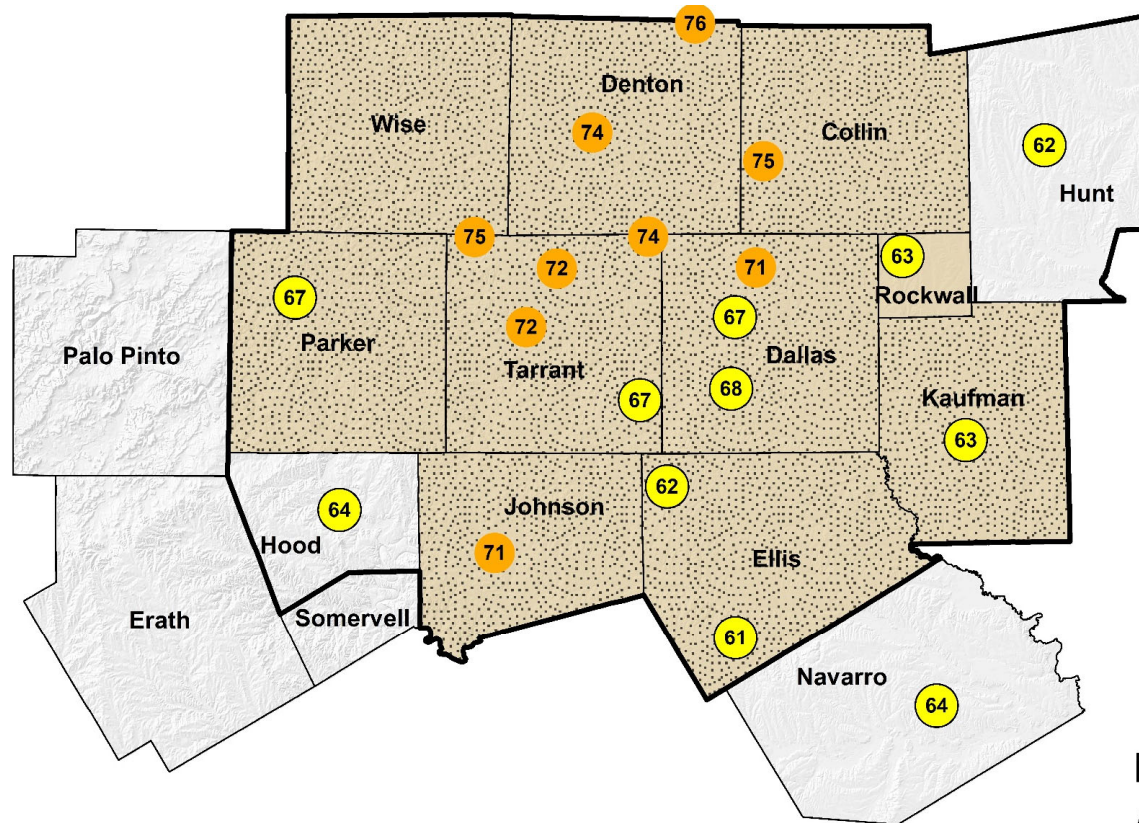
Monitor Locations with Current Design Value

As of November 29, 2021

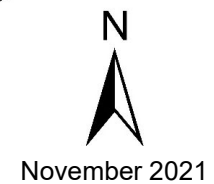
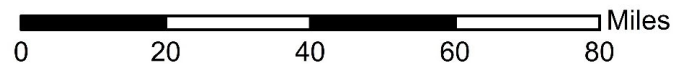


Colors represent Air Quality Index Breakpoints

Design Value = 3-Year Average of Fourth Highest Value



North Central Texas Council of Governments



Monitor Data for 2021 Ozone Season

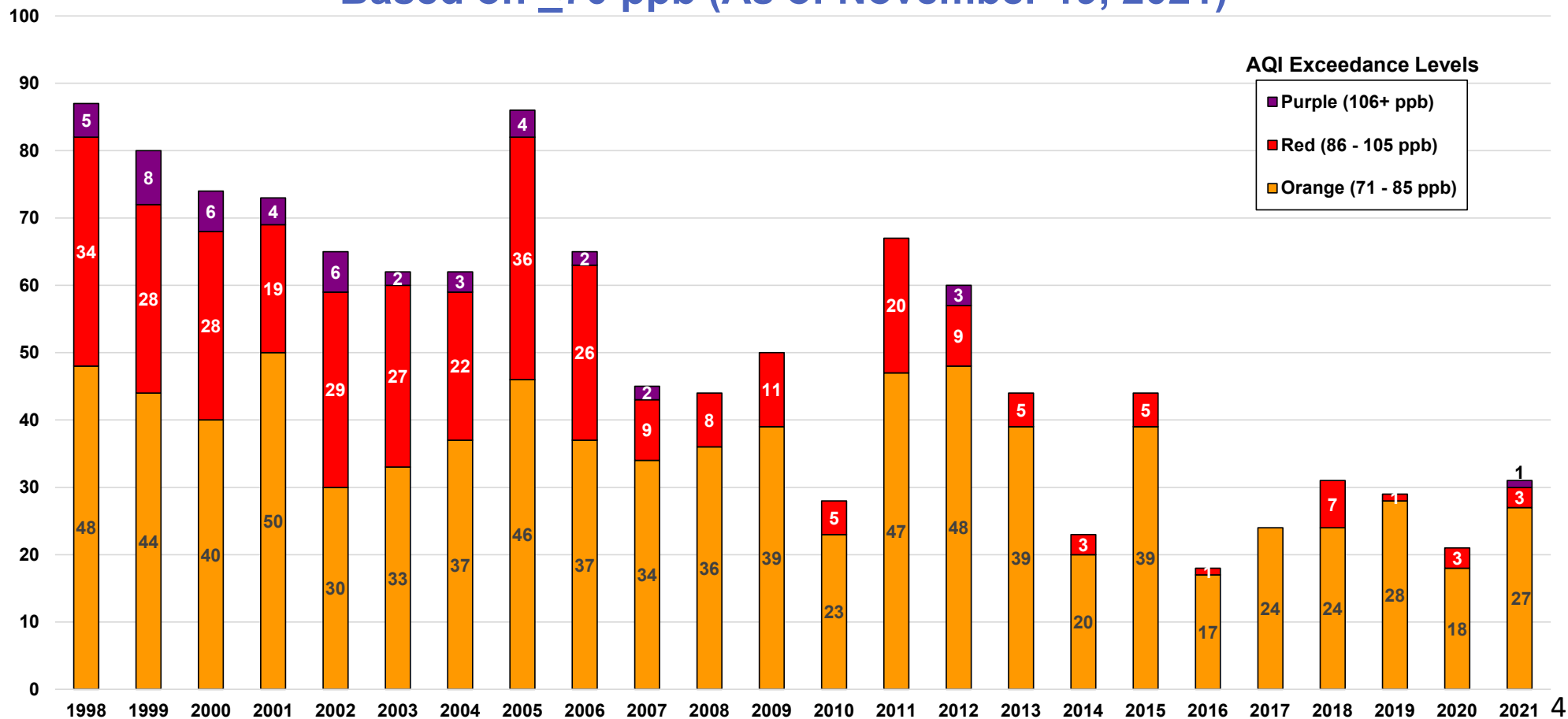
Five Highest Monitors

Five Highest Monitors	4 th Highest Value for Season			2021 Ozone Season Design Value
	2019	2020	2021	
Denton Airport South	71	71	81	74
Eagle Mountain Lake	75	76	76	75
Frisco	74	70	81	75
Grapevine Fairway	71	77	75	74
Pilot Point	73	71	85	76 ←

Design Value = 3-Year Average of Fourth Highest Value

8-Hour Ozone NAAQS Exceedance Trends

Based on ≤ 70 ppb (As of November 19, 2021)



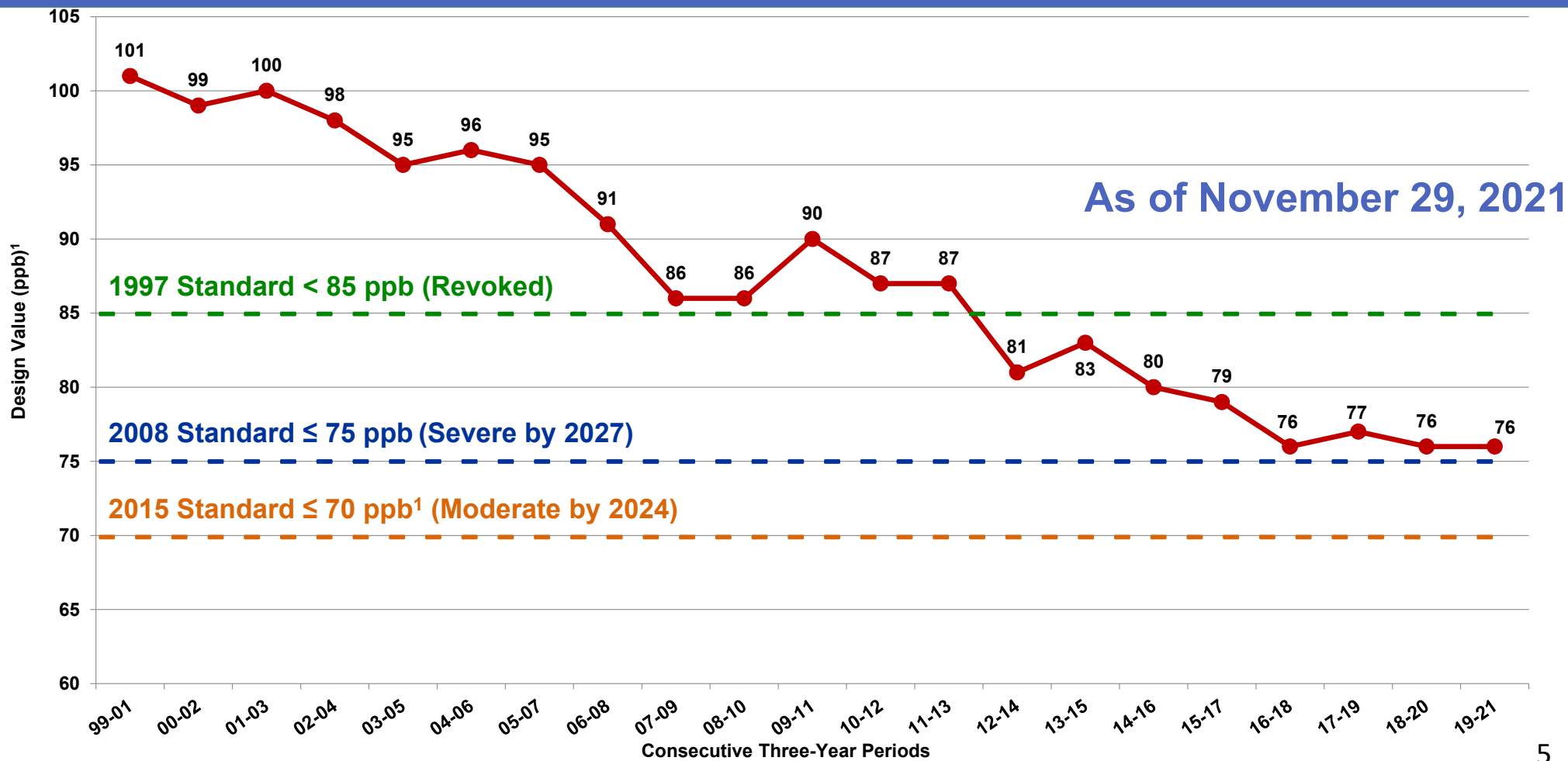
AQI Exceedance Levels

- Purple (106+ ppb)
- Red (86 - 105 ppb)
- Orange (71 - 85 ppb)

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/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl
ppb = parts per billion

Ozone Design Value Trends



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

Timeline and Milestones

2008 Ozone Standard
(<75ppb)

Attainment Date:
No later than **July 20, 2027**

*Attainment will be based on
2024-2026 Ozone Monitor Data*

EPA NAAQS
Classifications

Marginal
(3 years to attain)

Moderate
(6 years to attain)

Serious
(9 years to attain)

Severe
(15/17 years to attain)

Extreme
(20 years to attain)

2015 Ozone Standard
(<70ppb)

Attainment Date:
No later than **August 3, 2024**

*Attainment will be based on
2021-2023 Ozone Monitor Data*

Reclassification Due to Failure to Attain Stricter Standards

Going from Serious Classification to Severe:

**Major source threshold decreased to 25 Ton Per Year (from 50 TPY)
Impacts businesses that require CAA permitting for new/continued operations**

Penalty fee program for major sources

Per ton penalty fee increase on major sources if the area does not meet required reductions

New Source Emission Offset ratio increased to 1.3:1 (from 1.2:1)

 **Low VOC reformulated gas**

No implications, because our region has previously opted in

 **VMT growth offset required**

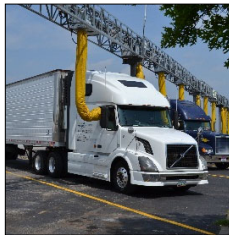
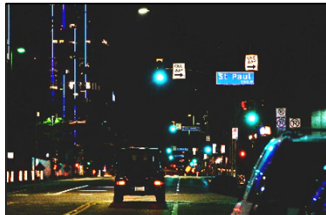
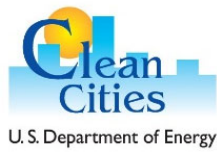
Analysis completed and no transportation control strategies are needed

A continued and thorough assessment of regional implications is ongoing.

Air Quality Control Strategies and Local Programs



Rideshare. Record. Reward.



SMART E

Saving Money and Reducing Truck Emissions



References

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

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
December 2020 - November 2021

RTC MEMBER	Entity	12/10/20	1/14/21	2/11/21	3/11/21	4/8/21	5/13/21	6/10/21	7/8/21	8/12/21	9/9/21	10/14/21	11/11/21
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Dennis Bailey (02/21)	Rockwall County	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A
Adam Bazaldua (09/21)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E	P	E(R)
Elizabeth M. Beck (08/21)	Fort Worth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
Gyna Bivens (08/21)	Fort Worth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A
Janet DePuy (09/21)	Richardson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Raul H. Gonzalez (09/21)	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	E	P
Barry L. Gordon (12/20)	Duncanville	--	E(R)	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas County	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Carl L. Johnson (09/20)	TxDOT, FW	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Brandon Jones (05/21)	Lewisville	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	A	E
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Alison Maguire (07/21)	Denton	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P
B. Adam McGough (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	A	A	E(R)	P	P	E	A	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	A
Allen E. Meagher (12/20)	Irving	--	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	P
Cara Mendelsohn (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Robert Miklos (12/19)	Mesquite	P	A	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	A	P	P	A
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A
Omar Narvaez (09/21)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E	P	P
Philip J. Ritter (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

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jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
December 2020 - November 2021**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	12/10/20	1/14/21	2/11/21	3/11/21	4/8/21	5/13/21	6/10/21	7/8/21	8/12/21	9/9/21	10/14/21	11/11/21
Jim R. Ross (07/21)	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Chris Schulmeister (07/20)	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Eules	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	P
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant County	P	P	P	E	E(R)	P	P	E	P	E	E(R)	P
Michele Wong Krause (11/21)	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E(R)

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency, jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
September 2020 - October 2021

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	9/25/20	10/23/20	12/4/20	1/22/21	2/26/21	3/26/21	4/23/21	5/28/21	6/25/21	8/27/21	9/24/21	10/22/21
Joe Atwood	Hood County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Melissa Baker	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Micah Baker	Dallas County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Katherine Beck	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Boski	Mansfield	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Keith Brooks	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Caskey	Frisco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Cohen	Southlake	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kent Collins	Coppell	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rick Cortez	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hal Cranor	Eules	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Davis	Wise County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caryl DeVries	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Dickens	Hurst	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Disheroon	Johnson County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Phil Dupler	FWTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rebecca Diviney	Denton	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Edwards	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chris Flanigan	Allen	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ann Foss	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gary Graham	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ron Hartline	The Colony	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shannon Hicks	Addison	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Terry Hughes	Weatherford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jeremy Hutt	Cleburne	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
September 2020 - October 2021

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	9/25/20	10/23/20	12/4/20	1/22/21	2/26/21	3/26/21	4/23/21	5/28/21	6/25/21	8/27/21	9/24/21	10/22/21
Thuan Huynh	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Joel James	NTTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
William Johnson	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eron Linn	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Luedtke	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wes McClure	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Moen	Frisco	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mark Nelson	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jim O'Connor	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kevin Overton	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Palermo	DCTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Todd Plesko	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shawn Poe	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Polster	Denton County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kelly Porter	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Porter	Wylie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan G. Ramey II	Duncanville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kathryn Rush	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Salmon	Lewisville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Shewski	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dave Timbrell	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Press Tompkins	Greenville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Daniel Vedral	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by vido/audio conference. Individual attendance not taken.

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE October 22, 2021

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, October 22, 2021, at 1:30 pm by videoconference. 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 attendees.

1. **Approval of September 24, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the September 24, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. Melissa Baker (M); Mike Galizio (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1 **Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council Action on SH 121 Wrecker Service Funding: Replacing Federal Funds with RTC Local Funds:** Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to utilize RTC Local funds in an amount not to exceed \$750,000 to pay for the staging of wreckers along the SH 121 technology lane for services rendered December 2020 through 2021 was requested. The requested action included administratively amending the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed.
 - 2.2. **Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council Action on Klyde Warren Park Extension Cost Increase:** Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council action to approve funding the federal share of an \$8.5 million cost overrun (\$6.8 million federal and \$1.7 million local) for the previously funded Klyde Warren Park Expansion project was requested. The City of Dallas will cover the local match for the cost increase. This action includes approval for North Central Texas Council of Governments staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes. A summary of existing and proposed funding was provided in Electronic Item 2.2.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Daniel Vedral (M); Clarence Daugherty (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3-Project Funding:** Shawn Conrad presented the Blue-Green-Grey Application for New Ideas Round 3 funding opportunity, proposals received, and evaluation process. The purpose of the Blue-Green-Grey funding initiative is to promote the planning and construction of green or sustainable infrastructure in the region and to advance small projects with innovative outcomes that can be replicated regionally. Previous funding rounds for the initiative were highlighted. For Round 3, up to \$300,000 in Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Local funds were available with a maximum award of \$75,000 to each applicant. The proposal period opened July 19, 2021, with proposals due August 12, 2021. Applications received were scored based on team qualifications; impact; innovation/significance; applicability, adaption, transferability, and practicality; and collaboration with various stakeholders. Other considerations included

equity, geographic distribution, and diversity of disciplines. Three projects were recommended for funding: Allen Inlet Floatable Filter, \$75,000; Bottom District Neighborhood Beautification, \$74,910; and University of Texas Arlington Biofiltration Swales Testing, \$51,500. The City of Allen Inlet Floatable Filter project will address the City's need to upgrade to Phase 2 of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ's) stormwater permitting requirements. Proposed project elements will include the development of a modified inlet design for the collection and removal of debris and floatables during active construction and is intended to be inexpensive and provide a more effective and permanent solution. The Bottom District Neighborhood Beautification project will address a historically underserved neighborhood located in a flood plain which is more susceptible to environmental issues such as flooding and has a history of under investment. Project goals will be to establish a green infrastructure network by developing a plan that is intended to potentially function as an alternative to a standard stormwater plan. The project team expects to incorporate a small-scale pilot implementation project as part of this overall project. The final project is the University of Texas Arlington Biofiltration Swales Testing project. This proposed project will address stormwater contaminants. TCEQ recommended best practices are often difficult to implement in larger urban areas so this project is seeking to install, monitor, and test an expanded shale alternative for use in biofiltration swales. Equity considerations, geographic distribution, and diversity of disciplines considerations for each project were highlighted. Additional information on application scoring was provided in Electronic Item 3.1 and staff recommendation details were provided in Electronic Item 3.2. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of the proposed list of projects to fund through the Blue-Green-Grey funding program Round 3 provided in Electronic Item 3.2. Action also included a recommendation to authorize administratively amending the Transportation Improvement program/Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate the changes. Britney Farr (M); Robert Woodbury (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **2023-2026 Management, Operations, and Safety Program:** Brian Dell provided an overview of the 2023-2026 Management, Operations, and Safety Program. The Committee and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) typically consider extending existing and funding new air quality, management, and operations projects/programs every few years. Projects/programs funded through this effort were last considered in 2018-2019 and funded through fiscal year (FY) 2022. The next round of funding will cover fiscal years FY2023-2026 and will also consider funding for safety projects/programs. Mr. Dell noted that the program provides funding in addition to Transportation Planning funds for staff to conduct various operations, planning, and implementation activities. As in previous years, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Regional Toll Revenue (RTR), and RTC Local funds will likely be proposed for FY2023-FY2026. Beginning efforts early ensures that existing programs and projects that are continued can do so without interruption. He noted staff is in the process of determining both the amounts of funding and the specific projects and programs to be proposed with approximately \$15-20 million programmed per fiscal year. As noted, this amount may decrease with increased federal planning funds. In addition, he noted that a significant portion of the funding is passed through to other agencies with the remaining used to cover North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff time to coordinate, plan and lead various activities. Program and project types typically included in this initiative are management and operation activities such as the Mobility Assistance Patrol program and Transit Operations. Also included are NCTCOG-implemented projects such as project tracking and planning efforts to assist local governments. Regional/air quality projects and programs include a variety of activities such as Freeway Incident

Management, Employer Trip Reduction, data collection, Regional Traffic Signal Retiming, and others. The importance of these types of programs to air quality were highlighted. As a nonattainment region, these projects contribute to emissions reductions and help the region to pass air quality conformity. Mr. Dell noted that in addition to the three project groups, staff proposed that the region take a leadership role and partner with the State as part of a larger statewide safety program to improve safety and reduce fatalities on the transportation system. A more detailed proposal will be brought back to the Committee for review, along with details of the project recommendations. As part of that presentation, staff will also present details of the plan to utilize Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding that was added to the region's STBG allocation in FY2022. Mr. Dell noted that staff will continue to finalize the amounts of funding to be requested, along with the specific list of projects and programs to be recommended for funding. The information will be provided to the public, as well as the Committee and Regional Transportation Council, for review. Details were provided in Electronic Item 4.

5. **North Central Texas Council of Governments Demographic Forecast Status Report:**

Dan Kessler provide an update on ongoing efforts to develop revised 2045 Population and Employment for the Metropolitan Area, which will be used to support development of the Mobility 2045 Update. Draft forecasts have been developed and provided to local governments for their review and comment. Forecasts provide a common base for regional planning for use by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), cities, counties, and partner agencies. The forecasting process is data-driven, usually developed on a four-year cycle, and includes a comprehensive inventory of individual parcel data for the 16-county region. Mr. Kessler highlighted the demographic forecast process which includes determining control totals for population and employment by reviewing external forecasts from national demographers and economists relative to other metropolitan areas across the state. New control totals for the region out to 2045 were received which estimated 11.5 million people by 2045. Related employment for the same time period is expected to reach approximately 8 million jobs. This ratio of population to employment creates challenges regarding the impacts to the travel models based on changes in behavior such as telecommuting and working multiple jobs. Mr. Kessler highlighted slides created from parcel inventory data of the 12-county metropolitan area. The model breaks the land area into 28 million units and shows changes in the predicted build area out to 2045. He noted development around the perimeters of Dallas and Tarrant counties, as well as growth in Collin, Denton, southern Dallas, southeast Tarrant and western Parker counties. The location of population and employment activities out through 2045 were also highlighted. He noted that during development of demographics, staff has been sensitive to density. In order to have 12 million persons and 8 million jobs in the region, higher densities will be necessary. Local governments that focus on transit, mixed-use development, and travel reductions may be more comfortable with higher densities, while other local governments plans may be more compatible with lower densities. Images of forecasted density out to 2045 were highlighted. Also highlighted was household population data from the 2020 Census, draft 2045 forecasts, and the compound annual growth rate for the 12 counties. Maps identifying the location of current and future employment and employment density out to 2045 were also highlighted. Staff will continue to closely look at the relationship between where people live and work and how trends may change in the future based on recent behaviors. Dallas County remains the economic employment center increasing to over 3.5 million employees by 2045. Allocations from Perryman suggest there will be 200,000 more employees in Collin, Denton, Tarrant counties than previously and approximately 300,000 additional employees in Dallas County. Next, changes in population and employment estimates from 2015 to 2025 were highlighted. As expected, the centers of

Dallas and Tarrant counties are essentially built out and have minimal population change. Changes are expected in western Tarrant, western northern Denton, northern Collin and Rockwall. Regarding employment, significant employment growth is seen in Collin and Denton counties creating the challenge of how to put a transportation system in place over the next 30-40 years to address that employment growth. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. Members were encouraged to work with their respective staffs to review the forecasts and provide comments to the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Presentation of the final demographic forecasts to the Executive Board is anticipated in late 2021/early 2022. Chad Edwards asked what level of zones were used in the maps displayed for changes in population and employment from 2015-2045. Mr. Kessler noted that the map displays data for block groups for the purposes of summarizing data. Actual forecasts are done at a microscale level, but staff can aggregate at any level that entities would like to view. Kelly Porter discussed recent developments in the cultural districts of Fort Worth and asked if those new developments have been incorporated. Mr. Kessler noted that the demographic forecasting process is ongoing, and that staff are continually incorporating parcel inventories to capture new developments as well as incorporating data from comprehensive, zoning, and land use plans. He encouraged review of the demographics sent out to cities and counties. Eric Fladager asked to what extent the raw data from Perryman may have projected the impacts of COVID-19 and working virtually. Mr. Kessler noted that regional demographic control totals from the Perryman Group were developed and delivered prior to COVID-19. Perryman's report focuses on the national economy of the Dallas-Fort Worth region in comparison to other metropolitan regions and estimates employment based on their economic modeling. He noted that staff continues to discuss how travel behavior changes are impacting the region. Chad Edwards discussed employment and the possibility that many jobs may not be at typical business locations. He noted this is something being considered by transit agencies when thinking of commuter trips and how to include flexibility to meet future behavior. Mr. Kessler noted staff is working to determine how shorter trips, non-work trips, trips in the off-peak period, and other changes if behavior related to jobs should be handled in the travel model. Mr. Fladager asked the deadline for local governments to provide comments to NCTCOG. Mr. Kessler noted that end of October 2021 would be ideal, and that flagging significant discrepancies or errors was of most importance.

6. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update:** Amy Johnson provided an overview of efforts to update Mobility 2045. Mobility 2045 was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2018. The associated air quality conformity determination was received November 2018 and expires November 2022. Staff has begun development efforts for the Mobility 2045 Update and are currently working through project refinements, policy and program updates, as well as updates to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle. A request for RTC adoption is expected in June 2022. Major components to the plan update will include updated travel and demographic data; undated financial forecasts; project, program, and policy refinements; an updated performance-based planning framework; and updates to the MTP Policy Bundle. She noted the projects, programs, and policies included in the plan work towards achieving the nine goals in the four themes of the plan: mobility, quality of life, system sustainability, and implementation. In the Mobility 2045 Update, staff expects to incorporate new policies and programs, as well as update existing programs. In addition, new State and federal policy or legislation will be reflected in the update, as well as the progression of studies and advances in technology. Key updates include reference to the new Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, new Executive Orders on equity, environmental considerations, and Travel Demand Management strategies. Advances in technology will also be incorporated such as the latest recommendations for

high-speed rail, advanced automated transportation systems, integration of vertical mobility technology, new automated vehicle initiatives, and broadband access/infrastructure. Ms. Johnson noted that within the mobility plan is the MTP Policy Bundle. Updates to the policy list will be proposed. Due to timing conflicts, the next round of the MTP Policy Bundle recommendations will be brought to the Committee earlier to allow entities enough time to review and consider policies. Staff will be proposing to extend Round 4 Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) by an additional year to be used in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. Round 5 will open in FY2023 for use of TDCs in FY2024 and FY2025. Ms. Johnson noted that additional information on the Mobility 2045 Update was available at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress and on the MTP Policy Bundle at www.nctcog.org/policybundle. Chad Edwards asked how or if the travel demand model will be modified to apply some of the thoughts and ideas that help prioritize projects and other elements in the plan. Staff noted that early efforts have begun to incorporate the demographic forecasts into the travel demand model and basic strategies related to Travel Demand Management (TDM). Estimated reduced trips as a result of TDM strategies are used, and it was noted that North Central Texas Council of Governments is typically conservative in its estimates because it is difficult to capture all elements of human behavior that is expected to occur 20-25 years in the future. Impacts of COVID-19 will allow for additional behaviors to be considered and staff will work to capture resulting strategies.

7. **Fiscal Year 2021/Fiscal Year 2022 Project Tracking Initiative:** Brian Dell presented a final report on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative. The project tracking initiative was implemented to address a series of project delays across the region to provide opportunities for entities to raise issues that may be preventing a project's progress and help ensure that funds are being implemented in a more timely manner. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds was provided. Approximately \$94 million of the \$115.5 million in CMAQ funds allocated in FY2021 has obligated, including 29 out of 46 project phases. The remaining 17 phases were moved into subsequent fiscal years. For FY2021 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, of the \$206 million allocated approximately \$312 million has obligated including 35 out of 55 phases, with the remaining 20 phases moved into a later fiscal year. In addition, the status of FY2021 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds was highlighted. Of the \$12.4 million programmed, approximately \$9.5 million has obligated and 18 of 25 project phases. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2021 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 7.1. Mr. Dell noted there were marked improvements in obligations over the previous fiscal year. The STBG/Category 2 funding partnership contributed to the reduction of the region's STBG carryover balances. In addition, more STBG funds were obligated than programmed due to the State requesting to obligate additional STBG funds in the region since other regions in the state left STBG funding on the table. It was also noted that sufficient TA Set-Aside funds obligated to avoid lapsing in FY2021. Mr. Dell also provided an overview of the FY2022 project funding. Approximately \$71 million in CMAQ funds is programmed across 44 project phases, \$178 million in STBG funds across 77 project phases, and \$17 million in TA Set-Aside funds across 18 project phases. Staff will continue monitoring FY2022 project progress and provide periodic updates to the Committee, as well as continue monitoring for possible funding lapses. A list of projects scheduled to begin in FY2022 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 7.2. Additional details on both initiatives were provided in Electronic Item 7.3.
8. **Status Report on Local Government Energy Reporting:** Dorothy Gilliam provided an overview of local government energy reporting and the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG's) efforts to increase the rate of local government energy reports

submitted to the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO). Local government energy reporting is a State-mandated requirement in the Texas Health and Safety Code. The requirements aid efforts to attain federal air quality standards by reducing demand for energy generation. Political subdivisions, institutes of higher education, or State agencies in or near ozone nonattainment counties in Texas are required to establish a goal of reducing electricity consumption by at least 5 percent each year for seven years beginning on September 1, 2019, and submit an annual report to SECO regarding progress and efforts to meet the reduction goal. An overview of the reporting website was provided, with details included in Electronic Item 8. Once submitted, a copy of the submitted data is available through the energy consumption reporting dashboard. The deadline for 2021 reports is February 1, 2022. An overview of the reporting statistics for the region was provided. Staff began conducting outreach and offering technical assistance to entities in early 2019 and in 2020, a total of 76 cities and 2 counties submitted a local government energy report. To increase compliance, an energy reporting toolkit has been developed to help local governments understand and prepare for report submittal. The toolkit is available online at www.conservenorthtexas.org/item/local-government-energy-reporting-toolkit. Additional information was also provided in Electronic Item 8. Melissa Baker thanked staff for the presentation. She noted the City of Irving completes reporting each year and asked if the deadline has changed. In addition, she asked if a best practices or similar webinar might be available for entities to help share experiences for other local governments who are reporting. Ms. Gilliam noted that SECO reporting deadline did recently change to February 1. In addition, she noted a webinar was scheduled for January 2022, and that although not planned staff would consider how this information could be included.

9. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.
1. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
 2. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
 3. Status Report on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding (Electronic Item 9.1)
 4. Status Report on Ozone Season (Electronic Item 9.2)
 5. Know Before You Fly Your Drone Workshops (www.northtexasuas.com/UAS-Taskforce#Workshops)
 6. Deadline to Submit Requests for Transportation Improvement Program Modifications through the February 2022 Cycle – October 22, 2021 (<https://rtrinternal.nctcog.org/login>)
 7. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report (Electronic Item 9.3)
 8. 2021 Texas Department of Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program Call for Projects Submittal Deadline for Applications Due to District Offices November 17, 2021 (<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/forms-publications/publications/highway-safety.html>)
 9. 2021 Fall Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement (Electronic Item 9.4)
 10. Immediate Action Freeway Projects-State Contingency (Electronic Item 9.5)
 11. Economic Development Administration Grant Opportunities: Four Projects (Electronic Item 9.6)
 12. September Online Input Opportunity Minutes (Electronic Item 9.7)

13. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 9.8)
14. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 9.9)
 - Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 9.10)

10. **Other Business (Old and New)**: There was no discussion on this item.

11. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on December 3, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.