

DRAFT



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

November 10, 2016

Rule Comments, General Counsel Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 East 11th Street
Arlington, TX 78701-2483

Subject: Transportation Project Rules

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) , the policy body for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Area, I would like to submit comments regarding the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) proposed amendments to §§16.105, 16.152-15.154 and 16.160 concerning transportation programs and funding, as published in the October 14, 2016, Texas Register.

Overall, the RTC and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) support the proposed changes required by House Bill 20 (84R) made to the TxDOT planning and programming processes that will be used to prioritize and finance transportation projects and respectfully offers the following comments:

1. §16.105 states TxDOT will develop a Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to guide the development and authorize construction and maintenance of transportation projects. Among other requirements, the UTP must include a list of all projects and programs that TxDOT intends to develop or initiate construction or maintenance during the UTP period. The RTC recommends the UTP instead focus on performance measures and revenues, rather than a list of projects. Where law permits, the UTP should aggregate some projects (e.g., maintenance) to a program total and take advantage of project lists that already exist in Transportation Improvement Programs.
2. §16.105(b) specifies that the UTP will be financially constrained for planning and development purposes based on the planning cash flow forecast. The RTC supports the use of planning cash flow forecast for this purpose as it allows regions more flexibility in developing large, more significant projects.
3. §16.105(b) removes reference that the UTP will be organized by funding category. It is important to MPOs and TxDOT Districts across the state to know funding levels expected in each category to assist with planning efforts. While this is being removed directly from the UTP, a funding allocation should be made through the new planning cash flow forecast in §16.152.

4. §16.105(d) related to “Project Selection” requires that TxDOT “consider performance metrics and measures” and use a “performance-based scoring system” to evaluate and rank the priority of projects within a particular funding category. The RTC supports the use of performance measures and scoring criteria and recommends that the Commission identify the specific performance metrics and scoring criteria to be used not only to prioritize projects in each funding category, but also for the initial project selection as well.
5. §16.105(e) further defines “major changes” to the UTP, which will require public involvement. The language related to Category 4 and Category 12 is unclear whether projects in those categories will require public involvement, as the proposed wording states that “all revisions to projects funded in those categories must be first included in an update to the UTP approved by the commission.” In addition, as written it appears that no changes, even administrative amendments, could be made to projects in Category 4 and 12. The RTC recommends that TxDOT consider whether such a rule could have unintended consequences for project implementation.
6. §16.153(c) states that “the commission will use a performance-based process to determine...the amount of funds to be allocated to each program funding category,” but the process and criteria are not outlined in the proposed regulations. It will be important to outline these items moving forward so MPOs and TxDOT districts are able to participate in determining allocation criteria that could impact categories in which they have project selection authority. This becomes increasingly important in combination with §16.160 changes where funding allocation changes can be made based on consideration of performance results without the performance targets/measurement criteria being defined in advance.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed language concerning the transportation project rules. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG, at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

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

RH:ch

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

HB 20 10 Year Plan
County Share of Congestion
(Vehicle hours of Delay in 2040)

West Subregion	2040 Congestion	Percent within Subregion
Hood	10,579	1.0%
Johnson	49,609	4.8%
Parker	27,551	2.7%
Tarrant	929,160	90.0%
Wise	15,078	1.5%
Subregion Total	1,031,977	100%

East Subregion	2040 Congestion	Percent within Subregion
Collin	541,875	21.2%
Dallas	1,492,280	58.4%
Denton	282,212	11.0%
Ellis	69,755	2.7%
Hunt	27,054	1.1%
Kaufman	92,642	3.6%
Rockwall	49,244	1.9%
Subregion Total	2,555,061	100%

Regional Total	3,587,038
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Source: NCTCOG, Mobility 2040

Creating System for Users: IH 35E North of IH 635

Funding	Phase 1	Phase 2 (Draft)
IH 35 E Denton County	✓	\$314 M
TIFIA Loan	✓ \$285 M 35 Year Note (Denton Managed Lane Revenues)	Some Excess Revenue
IH 35 E Dallas County	\$0	\$295 M for IH 35 E Dallas County
IH 35 E Managed Lane Revenue in Dallas County	NA	Yes
Connection Within IH 635 Interchange	✓	Apply Excess Revenue
Potential CDA Along Entire Corridor	No	Yes
\$300 Million Contingency		?

Denton County Residents Need to Get to LBJ

DALLAS DISTRICT

PROGRESS

Monthly Report on Dallas District Projects and Topics

COLLIN CO. | DALLAS CO. | DENTON CO. | ELLIS CO. | KAUFMAN CO. | NAVARRO CO. | ROCKWALL CO.

WINTER IS COMING. OR IS IT?

REGARDLESS OF FORECAST, TxDOT TO KEEP ROADS SAFE DURING WINTER WEATHER

DALLAS — Forecasters believe the upcoming North Texas winter could be drier and warmer than usual — or maybe not.



Weather experts this year are predicting the formation of a La Niña weather pattern, leading to drier weather and above average temperatures. However, it is not uncommon for one or two severe Arctic outbreaks to occur during a La Niña.

Leaving little to chance regardless of the forecast, TxDOT has spent the past few months gearing up for the upcoming winter, updating response plans and restocking inventory. Last week, officials from the Dallas and Fort Worth districts held a joint media event to highlight TxDOT's winter preparations.

Dallas District officials have been coordinating with other agencies, local governments and school districts. A thorough check of inventory is complete. Supplies and materials restocked. All in preparation for what the coming winter might bring.

"Our goal is to maintain a safe transportation system, no matter what Mother Nature might bring," said John Hudspeth, TxDOT's director of operations in the Dallas District. "It is critical this time of year that we are fully prepared."

This season, the Dallas District will again have more than 185 pieces of equipment and nearly 300 employees readily available to immediately start working around the clock as soon as winter weather threatens North Texas.



SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation.

TxDOT graphic

In Dallas County alone, TxDOT will have 68 vehicles and 130 employees ready to respond to a winter weather event. The Dallas District has 14 snow plow blade attachments.

In 2014, the District began using a brine solution to treat roadways ahead of a winter storm. Brine is a liquid, salt-based anti-icer used to pretreat roads before temperatures drop below freezing.

"We have been really pleased with the results we saw from using brine last year," Hudspeth said. "It's cost-effective, it holds up very well in extreme conditions, and it allows us to treat more roads in less time."

The Dallas District now has five new brine makers at its disposal; one each in Denton, Collin, Ellis, Kaufman and Dallas counties, allowing TxDOT to make its own pretreating material.

Also, the District has a full stock of other materials on hand, including 2,815 tons of salt/sand mixture and 35,387 tons of ice rock/chat, materials commonly used to speed the melting process and improve traction on icy roads. Those materials are enough to carry the District through multiple days of snow and ice, and TxDOT will be ready the moment winter weather moves into North Texas. ■

NOVEMBER 2016 LET PROJECTS

CSJ NUMBER	HWY	LIMITS	TYPE OF WORK	EST. (M)	BID (M)	(%)	EST. TOTAL COSTS (M)**	CONTRACTOR	
0196-03-272	I-35E	North of Oak Lawn Ave. to north of Harry Hines Blvd. ramps	Full depth repair concrete pavement, mill & overlay on the frontage road	\$4.57	\$3.35	-26.64%	\$3.79	Austin Bridge & Road Services, LP	1
1785-01-032	FM 1830	FM 1830 from FM 407 to US 377 and at Fincher Branch; FM 544 from Parker Road to Plano Parkway	Shoulder widening, base repair and culvert widening	\$6.89	\$5.90	-14.36%	\$7.43	Jagoe-Public Company	2
2555-01-011	FM 2578	US 175 to FM 987	Restore existing pavement and add shoulders	\$7.02	\$6.88	-1.99%	\$8.21	A.L. Helmcamp, Inc.	3
0008-08-075*	VA	Various locations in Dallas County	Seal coat of shoulders	\$1.44	\$2.23	54.69%	\$2.45	Brannan Paving Co., Ltd.	
0048-03-093*	SH 342	Various locations in Dallas District	Seal coat, pavement markings	\$12.83	\$11.36	-11.46%	\$12.46	Brannan Paving Co., Ltd.	
NOVEMBER 2016 TOTAL				\$32.75	\$29.72	-9.24%	\$34.34		
DISTRICT FY ACCUMULATIVE LETTINGS				\$68.95	\$61.99	-10.09%			
DALLAS DISTRICT FY LETTING VOLUME CAP					\$594.42				

*Not mapped.

**Est. Total Proj. Costs includes estimated PE, ROW, E&C, Indirect Costs and Potential Change Order Costs at the time of bid.

DECEMBER 2016 PROJECTED LETTING PROJECTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

CSJ NUMBER	HWY	LIMITS	TYPE OF WORK	EST. (M)	
0596-04-041	FM 878	Along FM 878, FM 664 and FM 813 in Ellis County	Mill, repair and resurface	\$6.17	1
2845-01-019	FM 455	Various locations in Dallas District	Seal coat, pavement markings	\$0.68	2
TOTAL				\$6.85	

NOTE: Subject to Change.

COMPLETED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS (FROM OCTOBER 1 – 31, 2016)

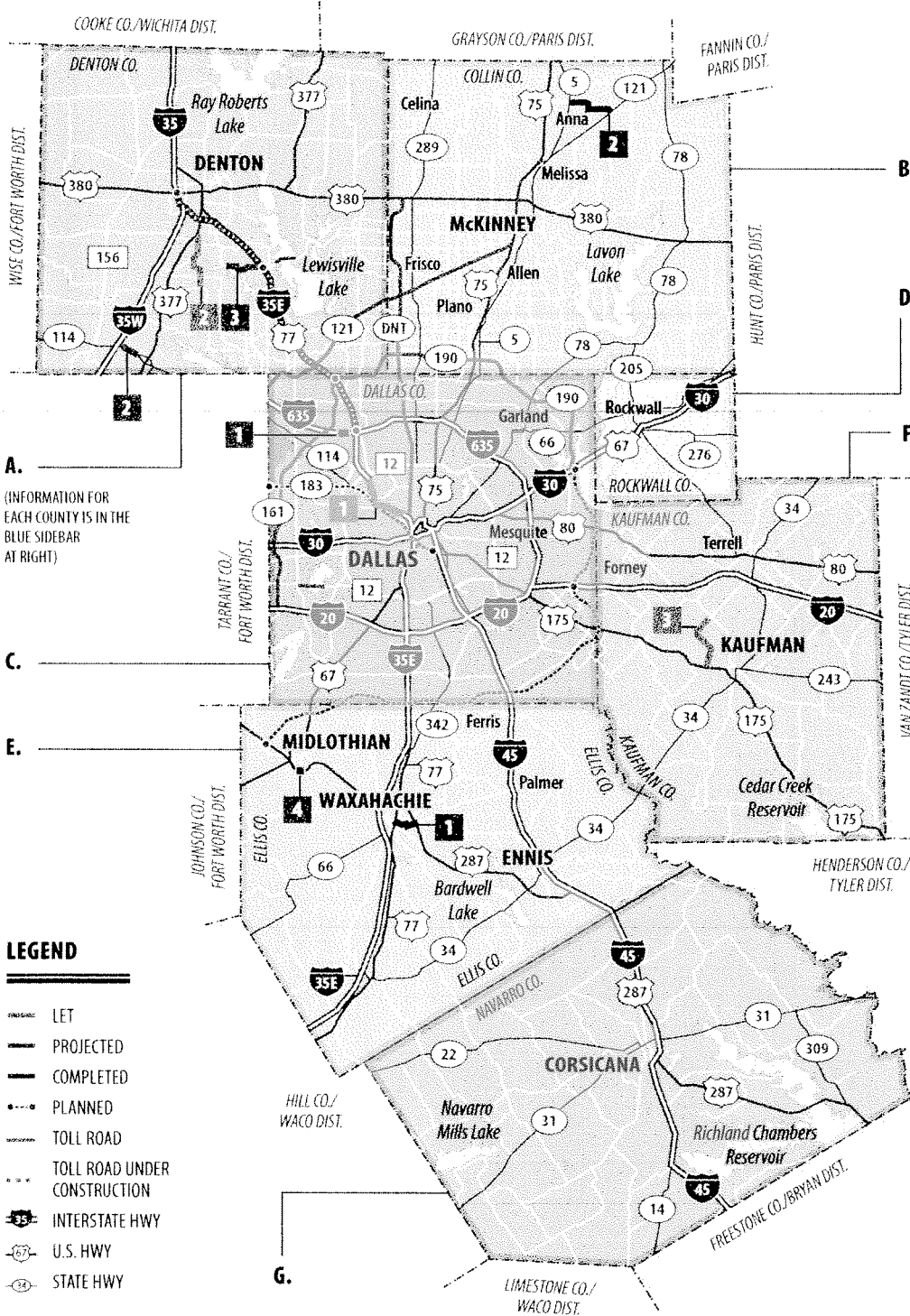
CSJ NUMBER	HWY	LIMITS	TYPE OF WORK	DATE COMPLETED	COST (M)	
2374-01-172	I-635	West of I-35E	ITS Installation	10/20/16	\$3.13	1
0353-02-075	SH 114	Raceway Drive to Bus SH 114	Pavement Repair, Mill, Overlay and Pav Mark	10/25/16	\$0.69	2
2054-02-016	FM 2181	W of FM 2499 to I-35E	Widen 2LN to 6LN Divided Urban Roadway	10/18/16	\$23.60	3
0815-08-027	FM 663	At US 287	Widen Existing Overpass	10/04/16	\$4.73	4
TOTAL					\$32.15	

SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation.

TxDOT graphic

DALLAS DISTRICT PROJECTS MAP

Colored and numbered boxes correspond with the charts on page 2 and show projects that have let in November, are projected to let in December or have recently been completed.



A.
(INFORMATION FOR EACH COUNTY IS IN THE BLUE SIDEBAR AT RIGHT)

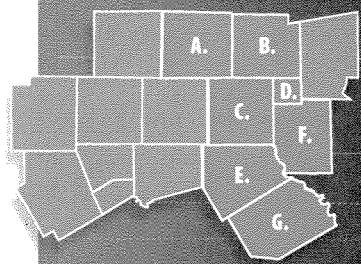
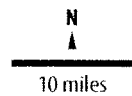
C.

E.

LEGEND

- LET
- PROJECTED
- COMPLETED
- PLANNED
- TOLL ROAD
- TOLL ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION
- INTERSTATE HWY
- U.S. HWY
- STATE HWY

SOURCE: TxDOT research.
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: NCTCOG.



DALLAS DISTRICT TOTALS

VEHICLE REGISTRATION | 3,806,303
*POPULATION ESTIMATE | 4,551,670
LANE MILES | 10,493.628

A. | DENTON COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 603,332
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 758,370
LANE MILES: 1,488.733

B. | COLLIN COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 729,624
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 897,510
LANE MILES: 1,373.829

C. | DALLAS COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 2,064,783
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 2,478,740
LANE MILES: 3,366.158

D. | ROCKWALL COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 82,515
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 89,660
LANE MILES: 346.368

E. | ELLIS COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 165,813
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 164,960
LANE MILES: 1,523.910

F. | KAUFMAN COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 109,180
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 113,530
LANE MILES: 1,201.810

G. | NAVARRO COUNTY
VEHICLE REGISTRATION: 51,056
*POPULATION ESTIMATE: 48,900
LANE MILES: 1,192.820

TxDOT PREPARED FOR WINTER WEATHER



DALLAS — TxDOT has spent the past few months gearing up for the upcoming winter weather season, updating response plans and restocking inventory.

In addition, TxDOT has contracted with a joint venture between Amey Consultants and Webber Construction to increase its

maintenance resources in Dallas County, including during winter weather events. The performance-based contract means Amey-Webber is responsible for treating interstates in Dallas County, including I-30, I-20, I-635, I-45 and I-35, along with the Dallas County portion of US 75.

TxDOT will now be able to refocus its resources elsewhere in the district. This season, TxDOT will again have more than

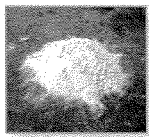
185 pieces of equipment and nearly 350 employees readily available to immediately start working around the clock as soon as winter weather threatens North Texas.

What's more, the Dallas District has 14 snow plow blade attachments and three new brine makers at its disposal. Brine is a liquid, salt-based anti-icer used to pre-treat roads just before temperatures drop below freezing. *

AFTER SNOW/ICE EVENT

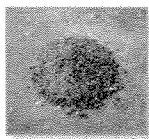
- Stockpiles/supplies are replenished (multi-day storm)
- Roadways are swept/cleaned of excess aggregate
- Winter plan effectiveness is evaluated and adjusted
- Roadway repairs are scheduled (Potholes, guardrails, structures, etc.)
- Equipment is serviced and prepared for the next winter storm

WHAT MATERIALS ARE USE ON THE ROADS?



Before an Ice/Snow Event

- Liquid salt-based anti-icers help prevent ice formation



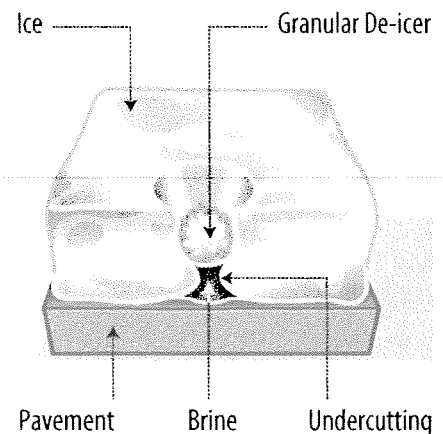
During an Ice/Snow Event

- Various salt-based granular de-icers are used to help melt ice already formed on the road

HOW DO THE CHEMICALS WORK?

Granular De-Icer

A granular de-icer – salt for instance – lowers the freezing point of water from 32 °F to about 15 °F (depending on how much you use).



When salt makes contact with ice – melting begins immediately and spreads out from that point, creating a salt/water mix (brine) that continues melting the ice, undercutting the bond between the ice and the road.

Melting Ice Takes Time

The temperature and the amount of ice or snow on the road determine de-icing material amounts and melting rates. As temperatures drop, the amount of de-icer needed to melt a given quantity of ice increases significantly.

SOURCE: www.usroads.com

TxDOT graphic



From Mr. Brian L. of Lewisville, Texas: "Thank you for having all of the construction on I-35E picked up prior to 6:00 a.m. this morning. The drive was very nice – no delays."

SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation.

TxDOT graphic

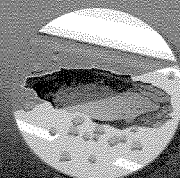
DALLAS DISTRICT | PROGRESS



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
4777 E. Highway 80
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75150-6643

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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dalinfo@txdot.gov
www.txdot.gov



REPORT A POTHOLE:

Visit www.txdot.gov/contact-us/formhtml?form=Report_a_Pathole or call 800.452.9292. Progress report can be downloaded at <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/district/dallas/progress.html>