

AGENDA

**Regional Transportation Council
Thursday, March 9, 2017
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

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

1:00 – 1:05 1. Approval of February 9, 2017, Minutes
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Ron Jensen, RTC Chair
Item Summary: Approval of the February 9, 2017, minutes contained in [Reference Item 1](#) will be requested.
Background: N/A

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

2.1. Transportation Development Credits for the High-Speed Rail Environmental Clearance

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of the local match for the completion of the environmental documentation for the high-speed rail line between Dallas and Fort Worth will be requested.

Background: At its February 9, 2017, meeting, the RTC approved approximately \$3 million for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to complete the environmental documentation needed for high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth. TxDOT is negotiating approval with the Federal Railroad Administration regarding this commitment. [Electronic Item 2.1.1](#) contains a copy of the latest correspondence. Staff is seeking RTC approval to use Transportation Development Credits for the local match. There is no change requested regarding the approximately \$3 million financial commitment. [Electronic Item 2.1.2](#) contains a copy of the previous RTC action.

2.2. Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act: East/West Funding Distribution

Presenter: Adam Beckom, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will seek action on the latest effort to reassess the funding distribution between the eastern (Dallas and Paris Districts) and western (Fort Worth District) subregions as a result of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) selects projects to be funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds

(formerly STP-MM funds). These funds are distributed to the region by the Texas Department of Transportation using formulas established by the Federal Highway Administration. The formula inputs include population, employment, emissions, etc. To ensure equity within the region, the RTC then distributes funding to the eastern and western subregions in proportion to each area's demographics and activity. The RTC reevaluates the funding distribution after a new transportation funding bill is approved by the United States Congress. The current east/west funding distribution is 68 percent and 66 percent in the eastern subregion and 32 percent and 34 percent in the western subregion for STBG and CMAQ, respectively. There are no proposed changes to the distribution. [Reference Item 2.2.1](#) provides additional information on the analysis and draft results. Supporting materials are available in [Electronic Item 2.2.2](#).

1:05 – 1:20

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

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

1. Recognition of Bernice J. Washington for Service on the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)
2. Overview of Today's Agenda
3. Proposed Partnership Opportunity with the Texas Transportation Commission (Action, [Reference Item 3.1](#))
4. FY2018 and FY2019 Unified Planning Work Program Development: Deadline, March 24, 2017
5. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles ([Electronic Item 3.2](#))
6. Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit, August 29-30, 2017 ([Electronic Item 3.3](#))
7. April Car Care Clinics ([Electronic Item 3.4](#))
8. March Public Meeting Notice ([Electronic Item 3.5](#))
9. 2017 Spring Outreach Season ([Electronic Item 3.6](#))
10. Mobility Matters ([Electronic Item 3.7](#))
11. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 3.8](#))
12. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 3.9](#))
13. Transportation Partners Progress Reports

1:20 – 1:30

4. **Volkswagen Mitigation Update and Correspondence to the State of Texas**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10
 Presenter: Chris Klaus, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on the Volkswagen settlement status and request approval to submit correspondence to the Governor of Texas and Texas Attorney General (AG) with recommendations for the approximately \$2.9 billion mitigation trust fund.

Background: Late last year, the Texas AG and the United States Department of Justice (US DOJ) filed lawsuits against the Volkswagen Group for emissions test-cheat devices applied to certain

2.0 liter and 3.0 liter diesel engines allowing increased emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x). The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) submitted a letter March 10, 2016 (contained in Reference Item 4.1), to the Texas AG and US DOJ requesting if a financial settlement is reached, funds be dispersed to Texas nonattainment regions for implementing air quality projects and/or programs. Since that time, Volkswagen has reached partial settlements for a mitigation trust fund of up to \$2.9 billion nationwide. Staff has met with other regions to begin collaboration on aspects of the mitigation process for Texas.

[Reference Item 4.1](#) is correspondence to the Governor of Texas and Texas AG requesting the State of Texas pursue the funding available to the State and other recommendations including designation of the lead agency for the State, acceptable projects to be funded, and description of funding allocation. Last month, the Surface Transportation Technical Committee took action supporting the RTC transmit correspondence to the Governor of Texas and Texas Attorney General. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 4.2](#).

1:30 – 1:40

5. **Resolution in Support for Texas Hyperloop Challenge Entry**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Tom Bamonte, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Approval of a resolution of support for the Texas entry in the Hyperloop One Global Challenge will be requested.

Background: Hyperloop is mode of passenger and freight transportation that propels a pod-like vehicle through a near-vacuum tube at more than airline speed. One of the companies developing the technology has sponsored the Hyperloop One Global Challenge to identify regions for the first deployment of the technology. Details are provided in [Electronic Item 5.1](#). A Texas entry was selected as a semifinalist from a pool of 2,600 entries and is competing for finalist status. The proposed resolution, provided in [Reference Item 5.2](#), is a statement of support for the Texas entry. There is no financial commitment. This resolution is consistent with other entities requesting support for intercity connections to the region.

1:40 – 1:50

6. **Dallas Area Rapid Transit/Regional Transportation Council Transit Related Improvement Program Funding Partnership**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Christie Gotti, NCTCOG

Item Summary: North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff will brief the Council and seek approval of a proposed partnership with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to assist with DART's Transit Related Improvement Program (TRIP) and increase the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)/Local funding pool.

Background: In December 2016, DART staff requested assistance from NCTCOG staff to develop a partnership that helps it respond to concerns from member cities without rail service. The proposed partnership helps DART and benefits the region by increasing the pool of RTC/Local funds. In January 2017, the DART Board approved the TRIP policy for DART cities without rail service in operation or rail service within an approved financial plan. The program encourages eligible cities to submit appropriate transportation projects for reimbursement from DART. DART requested a partnership with the RTC over eight years to assist in the TRIP. As part of the partnership, DART and the RTC will each contribute half the funds for TRIP in two increments. The RTC would contribute an additional \$10 million federal in each phase in return for \$10 million in local funds. The local funds would increase the region's RTC/Local pool. Additional information on the proposed partnership and projects are detailed in [Reference Item 6](#).

1:50 – 2:00

7. **Modern Day “People-Mover” Technology Update and Request For Information**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update of recent progress regarding people-mover project initiatives for the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Approval will be requested for staff to submit a Request for Information in order to advance this concept.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has adopted regional policies guiding the development of people-mover projects within the Dallas-Fort Worth region. The RTC held a workshop prior to the February 9, 2017, RTC meeting to discuss current and future efforts. Currently, staff is moving forward with a study to determine efficient and effective methods to move people to, from, and within the proposed Midtown development in North Dallas. Staff continues to work with Southwest Medical District staff to develop a scope of services. In Arlington, a proposed high-speed rail station is desired. Connectivity to the proposed Arlington high-speed rail station is possible with people-mover technology. To achieve functional and operational efficiencies, the RTC will be requested to approve staff to issue a Request for Information to the people-mover industry seeking information regarding people-mover technology, operational, and implementation methods, and strategies. A status update for these efforts, possible technology innovations, and the Request for Information will be presented. [Reference Item 7](#) highlights the overall program and path forward.

2:00 – 2:10

8. **Legislative Update**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Amanda Wilson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will receive an update on federal and State legislative actions.

Background: The first session of the 115th United States (US) Congress convened on January 3, 2017, and the Texas Legislature convened on January 10, 2017. Transportation issues will be a focus for both the US Congress and Texas Legislature. This item will allow staff to provide updates on key positions of the RTC and allow any additional positions to be taken, if necessary.

2:10 – 2:20

9. **Critical Freight Corridors: Regional Connections**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Dan Lamers, NCTCOG

Definitions: -National Highway Freight Network-federal
-State Freight Network-state
-Critical Freight Corridors-regional

Item Summary: Regional connections will provide enhanced connectivity to the State and federal freight systems. Staff will provide information regarding the proposed regional connections in North Central Texas.

Background: Critical rural and urban freight corridors provide connectivity within the federal network. By designating these important corridors, states can strategically direct resources toward improved system performance and efficient movement of freight. The designation of these systems will increase opportunities for National Highway Freight Program formula funds and Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies Grant Program funds. Next month, the Regional Transportation Council will be asked to approve the critical freight corridors (regional connections) presented for information this month. [Electronic Item 9](#) summarizes this partnership.

2:20 – 2:30

10. **Transportation Development Credits: Category Renewals and Additions**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Adam Beckom, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will present proposed changes to the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) Transportation Development Credit (TDC) program.

Background: In 2012, the RTC received an allocation of 465,486,222 TDCs from the Texas Department of Transportation. In the years since, 145,548,640 credits have been awarded to local agencies to be utilized in lieu of the local match on projects and programs with federal funding. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff has been exploring new ways to utilize TDCs and proposes to make changes and allocation adjustments to the program. Details of the proposed changes can be found in [Electronic Item 10.1](#). [Electronic Item 10.2](#) contains additional information on the existing categories.

2:30 – 2:40

11. **Schedule for Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and Air Quality Conformity**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10
Presenter: Chris Klaus, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Staff will provide information and the schedule for development of the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and air quality conformity analysis.
Background: Certain developments have occurred that necessitate updating current transportation plans. To ensure seamless delivery of multimodal transportation initiatives, staff has prepared a schedule of upcoming key milestones towards development of the next MTP, TIP, and corresponding air quality conformity analysis. [Electronic Item 11.1](#) highlights the schedule and includes explanation for the coordinated effort. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 11.2](#).
12. **Progress Reports**
 Action Possible Action Information
Item Summary: Progress Reports are provided in the items below.
- RTC Attendance ([Reference Item 12.1](#))
 - STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 12.2](#))
 - Local Motion ([Electronic Item 12.3](#))
13. **Other Business (Old or New)**: This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.
14. **Future Agenda Items**: This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of future interest before the Council.
15. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for ***1:00 pm, Thursday, April 13, 2017, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.***

MINUTES**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
February 9, 2017**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 1:00 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Monica R. Alonzo, Bruce Arfsten, Douglas Athas, Sara Bagheri, Brian Barth, Mike Cantrell, David L. Cook, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Charles Emery, Gary Fickes, Robert Franke, Sandy Greyson, Darrell Cockerham (representing Roger Harmon), Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, Lee M. Kleinman, Scott Mahaffey, Matthew Marchant, Maher Maso, B. Adam McGough, Cary Moon, Stan Pickett, Mark Riley, Kelly Selman, Gary Slagel, Mike Taylor, Stephen Terrell, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, Kathryn Wilemon, W. Jeff Williams, and W. B. "Zim" Zimmerman.

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, David S. Arbuckle, Tom Bamonte, Berrien Barks, Carli Baylor, Adam Beckom, Kenny Bergstrom, Brandi Bird, Alberta Blair, Sheri Boyd, Kristina Brevard, Jason Brown, Jesse Brown, Ron Brown, Pamela Burns, Loyl Bussell, David Cain, Marrk Callier, Angie Carson, Dave Carter, Sarah Chadderdon, Leigh Collins, John Cordary, Mike Curtis, Clarence Daugherty, Brian Dell, John Dewar, Kim Diederich, Jerry Dittman, Huong Duong, Chris Dyser, Chad Edwards, Craig Elliott, Traci Enna, Kevin Feldt, Joe Garcia, Matt Gauntt, James Geer, Bob Golden, Martin Gonzalez, Christie Gotti, Alan Greer, Tony Hartzel, Rebekah Hernandez, Jesse Herrera, Mark Hilderbrand, Jim Hinderaker, Robert Hinkle, Jodi Hodges, Ann-Claire Karalyos, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Paul Knippel, Dan Lamers, Ruben Landa, April Leger, Rebecca Leon, Alonzo Linan, Paul Luedtke, Alfredo Luera, Nancy Luong, Matt MacGregor, Megan Mahan, Mickey Marlow, Jan McGarry, Michael Miles, Cliff Miller, Cesar Molina Jr., Rebecca Montgomery, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Henry Navnital, Thun Nguyen, Mickey D. Nowell, Jim O'Connor, Randall P. Pogue, John Polster, James Powell, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Larry Redden, Bill Riley, Kevin Robenhymer, Tito Rodriguez, Carrie Rogers, Kyle Roy, Greg Royster, Moosa Saghian, Steve Salin, Steve Sanders, Russell Schaffner, Kelli Schlicher, Randy Skinner, Rick Stopfer, Neil Strassman, Vic Suhm, Gary Thomas, Jonathan Toffer, Christopher Tolar, Lauren Trimble, Bart VanAmburgh, Sandy Wesch, Greg White, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, Alicia Winkelblech, Mykol Woodruff, and Kate Zielke.

1. **Approval of January 12, 2017, Minutes:** The minutes of the January 12, 2017, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Jungus Jordan (M); Kathryn Wilemon (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Unified Planning Work Program Modifications:** A motion was made to approve modifications to the FY2016 and FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program provided in Reference Item 2.1.1. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 2.1.2.
 - 2.2. **TEXRail Contingency Loan Not Needed:** A motion was made to approve the removal of \$80 million in funding from the short-term contingency loan to the Fort Worth Transportation Authority for construction of the TEXRail project through the next Transportation Improvement Program modification cycle.

Glen Whitley (M); Mike Cantrell (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Kelly Selman presented information on the history of the Texas Road Hand Award, created in 1973. In the early part of the 20th century, anyone who helped build roads was called a road hand and the Texas Department of Transportation continues to use the term today. Today's road hands are citizens who have given their time, energy, and vision to help improve transportation in their communities and throughout the state. In bestowing this award, TxDOT recognized and expressed its sincere appreciation to Dallas County Commissioner Mike Cantrell who has contributed significantly to transportation in the region and state. Mike Cantrell thanked Commissioner Victor Vandergriff, the Texas Department of Transportation, and members of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for their commitment to the State and region. Michael Morris presented items on the Director of Transportation Report. He noted an upcoming RTC Transit Call for Projects for funding to increase job access for low-income individuals and funding to increase mobility options for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Additional details were provided in Electronic Item 3.1. An Access North Texas fact sheet was provided in Electronic Item 3.2 and contained details about the process to update transit operational plans in the 16-county region. He reminded members that the final deadline for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle survey is March 3, 2017. A quarterly east/west equity report was provided in Electronic Item 3.3, and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided in Electronic Item 3.4. He also noted the deadline for Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Annual Reports is March 1, 2017; details were provided in Electronic Item 3.5. Information regarding an article featuring the City of Euless in *Fuel Fix* Magazine for its idle reduction efforts was provided in Electronic Item 3.6. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 3.7, recent news articles in Electronic Item 3.8, and transportation partner progress reports were distributed at the meeting.
4. **Additional Information on Naming Rights for SH 360 South of IH 20:** Michael Morris discussed naming rights for the SH 360 corridor south of IH 20. He noted there is local interest to recognize the work of Senator Chris Harris and his efforts to deliver the SH 360 project. One approach to name the corridor is by the Texas Legislature and the other is by the North Texas Tollway Authority. Senator Kelly Hancock has introduced Senate Bill (SB) 588, provided in Electronic Item 4, which would name SH 360 the Senator Chris Harris Memorial Highway. Staff suggested that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) monitor the bill, as the bill is likely the best process to name the facility, and requested no action by the RTC. Glen Whitley noted he would like to go on record as being in favor of the naming the facility the Senator Chris Harris Memorial Highway and asked if the RTC should express whether it was in favor or opposed to the name. Mr. Morris asked that members transmit the position of their entity to Senator Hancock individually. Matthew Marchant suggested that as the naming of these types of projects are considered in the future, more thought be given to a more diverse pool of eligible candidates.
5. **Support Letters to the United States Secretary of Transportation: Opportunity for Partnership and Request for High-Speed Rail Funding:** Michael Morris discussed two of the top five policy initiatives highlighted at the January 12, 2017, Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting. The first initiative welcomes the United States Secretary of Transportation and outlines regional areas of success to potentially assist the nation. The six goals for the Secretary of Transportation are included in the proposed correspondence from the RTC, and also includes what the region has done over the last 20 years related to those goals. Draft correspondence was provided in Reference Item 5.1. The second initiative is addressed through a proposed request for gap funding for high-speed rail in the Fort Worth/Arlington/Dallas corridor. Draft correspondence was provided in Reference

Item 5.2. Staff requested that action on the letters be taken in two separate votes. Matthew Marchant discussed the letter in Reference Item 5.2 that requests gap funding. He asked if the funding is received, would it be funding that may have been taken from another project that could move more people. Mr. Morris noted the reason for using this particular revenue source is that it is only for the purpose of high-speed rail. It is believed that the private sector will pay a significant portion of the capital cost, and it is possible that others may be interested in contributing to 100 percent of the capital costs. This funding request is a contingency for gap funding. A motion was made to approve correspondence welcoming the United States Secretary of Transportation and outlining regional areas of success to potentially assist the nation, included in Reference Item 5.1. Mike Cantrell (M); Scott Mahaffey (S). The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made to approve correspondence requesting high-speed rail federal discretionary funds for the high-speed rail section between Fort Worth, Arlington, and Dallas, included in Reference Item 5.2. Mike Cantrell (M); Oscar Trevino (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Federal and State Legislative Update:** Amanda Wilson provided an update on federal legislative actions. In late 2016, a continuing resolution on appropriations for the federal government, including transportation, was passed through April 28, 2017. It continued funding at the Fiscal Year 2016 levels, so it is expected that Congress will begin working on an appropriations solution. In addition, she noted the new United States (US) Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao. Ms. Chao was the former Deputy Secretary from 1989-1991 and brings a history of transportation experience that may be helpful to the region. The new Administration is focused on appointments at this time, but transportation legislation is expected to begin working its way through Congress soon. Ms. Wilson also provided a State legislative update. In 2016, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved its Legislative Program that included three main components: 1) continue progress made toward improving transportation and air quality during recent legislative sessions, 2) invest in further progress toward meeting transportation and air quality needs, and 3) provide support for other transportation topics that may be addressed in legislation. Staff will continue to monitor bills related to the RTC Legislative Program and provide updates to members. She also highlighted bills and topics recently introduced. The Senate has proposed a draft budget in Senate Bill (SB) 1, with proposed overall spending of \$213.4 billion and general State spending of \$103.6 billion. This includes federal funding that is passed through to the State. An additional 1.5 percent reduction in general revenue funds is proposed. The House version of the budget differs in overall spending and general State spending, with proposed overall spending of \$221.3 billion and general State spending of \$108.9 billion. Both the House and Senate versions agree on the amount of transportation revenue, which is \$28.2 billion for the two-year budget. She noted this total includes \$5.7 billion more than the previous Legislative Session so it would include Proposition 7 coming back. However, of the \$5.7 billion in new funding, \$600 million is taken off the top to begin repaying some of the Proposition 12 bonds that were previously repaid through general revenue. Senate Finance Committee hearings have begun and will continue through February. Ms. Wilson also noted House Transportation Committees were recently announced. Senator Robert Nichols will continue as the Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, and Senator Bob Hall from the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region is the new Vice Chair. Other members were noted, specifically Senator Kelly Hancock, also from the DFW region. On the House Transportation Committee, Representative Geanie Morrison is the new Chair and replaces Representative Joe Pickett who remains on the committee. Continuing members on the committee from the region include Yvonne Davis, Larry Phillips, Cindy Burkett, Ron Simmons, Craig Goldman, and John Wray. In addition, she noted a select committee was nominated that will focus on ports, innovation and infrastructure, trade, and border crossing. Staff will continue to monitor

this and other committees, as well. Bills of interest were highlighted. A few bills related to comprehensive development agreements have been filed that would have commissioners courts approve projects to show local support to the Legislature. Other bills of interest include eminent domain, limited metropolitan planning organization board voting to elected officials, red light cameras, shared mobility such as Uber, the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, toll roads, and a transportation reinvestment zone pilot program. These are primarily the only transportation funding bills to date, and staff has heard that this is probably not a transportation funding year. However, staff will continue to monitor transportation funding as part of the RTC Legislative Program. Related to toll projects, the RTC Legislative Program includes continuing to retain tools such as toll roads or financing of projects. Toll related bills have been filed and include prohibiting the use of State funding for construction or acquisition of toll facilities, ending tolls once paid off, limiting the use of system financing, requiring the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to be repaid for the expenditure of money for toll facilities, and phasing out TxDOT participation in toll projects. For bills related to the RTC Legislative Program, staff will prepare correspondence or request for RTC members to testify on bills of importance. Staff will continue to provide updates to members by email for both federal and state legislative actions. No action was requested at the meeting.

7. **Follow Up from the Workshop on Modern Day "People Mover" and Arlington Transit Concepts Resulting from High-Speed Rail:** Michael Morris provided an overview of the Workshop on the Modern Day "People Mover" held prior to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting. During the meeting, RTC members discussed modern day people movers that include the integration of driverless and/or battery powered vehicles. In addition, goods movement may be integrated as part of the initiative. At the January 12, 2017, RTC meeting, there was a request for the City of Arlington to give feedback with regard to how it is integrating people-mover systems if high-speed rail were to come to Arlington and how that system would connect to the rest of the system. Mr. Morris discussed examples of proposed or existing people-mover systems such as Midtown/Galleria, Southwestern Medical District, a test track at the General Motors facility, and others. People-mover systems will be a part of the Mobility Plan. New options could include driverless vehicles, battery powered vehicles, and goods movement in the same corridor. Staff is looking into the technical elements involved in generating a conceptual mode of transportation, optimizing engineering and construction for elevated structures that could be implemented on existing public sector rights-of-way, new institutional structures, and the potential of multiple funders. He highlighted an example of a people mover that could pick up users in a neighborhood, send them down a guideway, and move back into the neighborhoods on the other end of the line. In the case of goods movement, goods could be loaded on pods, delivered to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, and moved to the correct gate to be loaded on a plane. During the RTC Workshop, staff suggested and members agreed that an action item be presented at the March 9, 2017, RTC meeting. Discussions will include a policy to adopt a uniform technology throughout the region and action to send out a Request for Information to determine how to engage the private sector to expedite this initiative in the region. Some corridors may be used only for goods movement, some only for people, and some for both people and goods. He noted that members attending the workshop were supportive of the effort. Jeff Williams, Mayor, City of Arlington, distributed a letter to members drafted as a follow up to last month's discussion regarding Arlington's transit plans and to provide an update regarding the Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee. The City Council passed a resolution in support of high-speed rail, is aware of the requirements to have a station location, and also aware of the importance of regional connectivity. He

noted the recent autonomous vehicle demonstration event held in Arlington and how emerging technologies will help advance transportation solutions in the region. Kathryn Wilemon thanked members who participated in the workshop.

8. **Regional 10-Year Plan: Technical Analysis for the IH 30/IH 635 Interchange:** Michael Morris provided an update regarding the technical analysis requested at the December 2016 Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting regarding the IH 30/IH 635 Interchange. The purpose of the analysis is to determine whether a full reconstruction of the interchange is required immediately to meet the transportation needs of the area, or if another option will suffice. At the December 8, 2016, RTC meeting, the City of Mesquite noted its disappointment that the IH 30/IH 635 Interchange was not part of the original recommendation for the region's 10-Year Plan. Staff committed to report a technical analysis of the interchange to the RTC in approximately 60 days. The current focus of the IH 635 project is environmental clearance for the ultimate build alternative. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff presented comments at the January 31, 2017, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) public hearing on the IH 635 project. Mr. Morris presented the innovative funding portion which laid out staff's strategy to fund the IH 30/IH 635 Interchange at the hearing. He noted it is important to understand there is a funding strategy. The region held \$300 million as a contingency in the eastern subregion during the 10-Year Plan project planning process. It is not a coincidence that the amount is also the dollar amount for the interchange. However, legislative support to build the first section of the facility from Royal/Miller to US 75, which would include tolled managed lanes, is needed. Until the legislative position is known, it is possible the funds will be needed in this portion of the facility. The tolled managed lane component is critical for this corridor and there is not enough funding to place \$2 billion on one project. In addition, Mr. Morris noted the interchange includes nine structures that were built in 1971, including direct connector ramps, IH 30 mainlane bridges, and IH 30 frontage road bridges. An adjustment to the westbound/southbound direct connector in the interchange was completed in 2011. The bridge sufficiency ratings are very high for the structures and the necessity of placing \$300 million into an interchange with high sufficiency ratings should be considered. Staff must then consider the constraints with regard to mobility that can be implemented. Several operational ideas were discussed. Staff believes there is sufficient room through and around the current interchange to provide some interim improvements. Ideas include northbound IH 635 frontage road improvements for direct accessibility to and from the existing IH 30 frontage roads, an additional northbound and southbound mainlane on IH 635, eastbound and westbound U-turns with no traffic signals on a new bridge over IH 30 at North Galloway Avenue, and others. Staff would like an opportunity to present ideas to the City of Mesquite and TxDOT. The original hope is that the Legislature is interested in an innovative funding approach for the entire project, and staff will continue to monitor legislative interest. Douglas Athas, Mayor, City of Garland, thanked TxDOT for its presentation at the public hearing and the design work on the project. He noted a funding shortfall remains for the corridor and asked if staff had an estimation of the extra revenue that would be available for further development if the Legislature chose to use a comprehensive development agreement for the entire corridor. Mr. Morris noted TxDOT has updated the revenues from Royal/Miller to US 75 and there are strong volumes to IH 30, so the additional revenue would likely offset the cost of the interchange. If the request was made, the environmental clearance would be impacted, but from a financial standpoint there would be significant benefit to the corridor. Mr. Athas noted he has spoken with the City of Mesquite and others, and they do not see a negative impact other than the impact to the environmental clearance. He asked what the anticipated delay to the environmental clearance would be if funding for the interchange was pursued. Mr. Morris noted that first, legislative approval will be necessary. Staff could double

its efforts to update the Mobility Plan, air quality conformity, and environmental impact statement if it is the desire of the RTC, but it would be beneficial to know the legislative position before additional efforts are started. If desired, further discussion will be necessary. Kelly Selman noted that updates to the Mobility Plan and air quality conformity would be necessary for the environmental clearance. Any public opposition would also be a determining factor. Mr. Morris added that staff efforts could be completed as early as late 2017, with environmental clearance possibly in early 2018 if the Legislature approves and efforts are completed simultaneously. Mr. Athas noted he believes the overall public understands and appreciates the tolled managed lanes and has had opportunities in other parts of the region to experience the benefits. Stan Pickett noted the City of Mesquite's appreciation for the work by staff and TxDOT. He also noted discussions with Garland, Rockwall, and others and that it is not only Mesquite that believes the project is important for regional mobility. The City of Mesquite understands that moving vehicles through the interchange is the biggest concern and is not asking to rebuild the interchange but to keep the project part of ongoing discussions.

9. **December 2016 Texas Mobility Summit Overview, February 2017 Automated Vehicle Demonstration and Roundtable, and Region Named Automated Vehicle Proving Ground:** Tom Bamonte provided an update on vehicle technology initiatives in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. First, he discussed the Texas Mobility Summit, which occurred in December 2016. Nine teams from around the state gathered and worked through transportation challenges and shared proposed solutions and ideas for how Texans can work together. The region fielded two teams: 1) Team Arlington, which focused on city transportation issues; and 2) Team DFW, which focused on improvements to the IH 30 corridor. During the Mobility Summit, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced that it would be designating automated vehicle proving grounds and was soliciting proposals. The Texas Department of Transportation, state university partners, and the regional participants in the Mobility Summit worked together on a statewide application. USDOT accepted the application as one of ten automated vehicle proving grounds in the country. This is an opportunity for the state to take leadership in the next generation of transportation. The Texas proving grounds include the University of Texas Arlington for low-speed deployments, Arlington streets for medium-speed deployments, and the IH 30 corridor between Dallas and Fort Worth for high-speed deployments. Mr. Bamonte noted the locations in the application are nonexclusive and that technology deployment work can be done anywhere in the region. He also noted the public demonstration of an autonomous vehicle that was cohosted with the City of Arlington. The region was the first in the state to test an automated vehicle and should be proud of the cooperation and continued work being done within the region and throughout the state to put Texas at the forefront of automated vehicle technology.
10. **Fiscal Year 2017 Federal Highway Administration 10 Year Preliminary Engineering Audit:** Adam Beckom presented an update on the latest developments regarding projects subject to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Preliminary Engineering (PE) Audit. The purpose of the FHWA PE Audit is to review all projects that have been funded with federal funds for preliminary engineering to ensure that projects move forward to timely implementation. Once a project is obligated for PE funding, it must advance to the next phase within ten years of the project obligation or the funds must be repaid. Time extensions are allowed, but only for extenuating circumstances. Mr. Beckom noted that the PE Audit is independent of the federal inactive projects list. Electronic Item 10 includes ten projects in the region subject to the FHWA PE Audit. For six of the projects, staff has been assured the projects will move forward in FY2017. Four of the projects are

considered at risk of losing funding. Staff is working with the implementing agencies and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to move the projects forward in a timely manner. Total preliminary engineering obligations for the projects in Electronic Item 10 total approximately \$5.7 million. If projects do not move forward and time extensions are not approved, the State or implementing agencies must repay the funds. In FY2016, approximately \$1.6 million in funding was lost in the region as a result of the PE Audit. The funds will eventually be returned back to the regional pool. TxDOT district staff has been working over the last two months to reach out to the implementing agencies on the list to gather project updates. As a reminder, in 2016 the Regional Transportation Council approved the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Milestone Policy in an effort to avoid projects from being placed on the PE audit list. The policy reviews projects selected with RTC local funds ten or more years ago and then North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff works with the implementing agencies to review the projects. Projects are either canceled or a time extension is granted. For entities whose projects appear on the PE Audit list, agencies are encouraged to work with staff to advance projects to the next phase of project delivery by the end of the fiscal year. Agencies were encouraged to coordinate actively with NCTCOG and TxDOT staff on project progress. Mr. Beckom noted NCTCOG staff monitors project delivery and status on a regular basis and through the MPO Milestone Policy effort, hopes to identify projects that may be subject to the PE Audit before the projects are placed on the FHWA list.

11. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Reference Item 11.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance meeting minutes in Electronic Item 11.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 11.3.
12. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
13. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for Thursday, March 9, 2017, 1:00 pm, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.



125 EAST 11TH STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | 512.463.8588 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

February 28, 2017

Mr. Marc Dixon
South Central Regional Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Dixon:

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) appreciates the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) conditional approval for the project to move forward pending TxDOT's response to the areas of concern.

Areas of Concern:

Alternative Analysis Phase: TxDOT agrees with the FRA that as lead agencies it is the responsibility of TxDOT and the FRA to make the final decision on when this phase should conclude. Given the recent developments regarding the alternatives that are currently being considered in the AA report we feel it is important to evaluate in greater depth the new alternatives presented by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). This consideration may or may not change the current direction of the study. By doing this we can ensure greater support from the region as the project moves forward and a final alignment is determined. If necessary, TxDOT requests that the FRA provide clear guidance on how they believe these new proposed alternatives should be incorporated into the EIS process.

Additional Funding Commitments: The NCTCOG has agreed to provide \$3 million to complete the project and has agreed to cover overruns. If the current approval proceeds as TxDOT has outlined, NCTCOG has adequate funding resources available to meet these commitments. TxDOT has discussed the FRA's position on the introduction of new alternative with the NCTCOG to determine a path forward with the alternatives identified in the AA report. Once an agreement is reached to complete the project TxDOT will develop a new estimate including contingency funding if overruns are encountered. Since TxDOT does not have funding available for the project and will not commit to fund any portion of the project a formal funding agreement with the NCTCOG to fund the project to completion will be executed before any work begins. This agreement will be in place before ARRA funds expire.

TxDOT Resource Management: TxDOT commits to maintaining control over the project through completion. Past issues with the consultant have been resolved to ensure a smooth and timely completion of the project. We understand the FRA's concern over the current political dynamics in the state regarding passenger rail and while these dynamics are beyond the control of TxDOT we will strive to work through these issues to the greatest extent possible to complete the project.

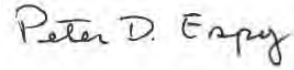
OUR VALUES: *People • Accountability • Trust • Honesty*

OUR MISSION: *Through collaboration and leadership, we deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods.*

An Equal Opportunity Employer

We look forward to your written response in order to advance high speed rail in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter D. Espy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Peter D. Espy
Rail Division Director



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

(L17-01)

January 6, 2017

Mr. Peter D. Espy
Rail Division Director
Texas Department of Transportation
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483

Subject: Dallas-Fort Worth Core Express Service Project Environmental Process Funding

Dear Mr. Espy:

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth region, have successfully partnered on many transportation projects including current efforts for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Core Express Service (CES) high-speed passenger rail project. NCTCOG believes great benefits are realized through our collaborative efforts.

The collaborative DFW CES National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) efforts are currently funded with federal American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds. These funds are set to expire on September 30, 2017. This funding availability deadline may not allow for NEPA process completion and receipt of a federal Record of Decision. Should the ARRA funding availability deadline remain as September 30, 2017, NCTCOG proposes to provide funding of approximately \$3,000,000 to complete the NEPA process. This funding backstop strategy is subject to Regional Transportation Council approval at its January 12, 2017, meeting. It is also contingent on NCTCOG's and TxDOT's agreement on a continued, seamless project management structure agreeable to the Federal Railroad Administration. This funding strategy would allow TxDOT staff and their consultants to continue the DFW CES environmental process efforts without interruption.

January 6, 2017

We look forward to continuing our partnership with TxDOT on this important project. Please contact me at 817-695-9241 if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,




Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

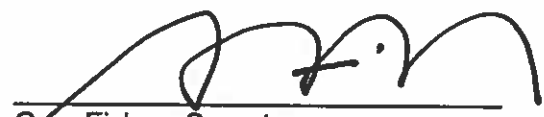
KDF:cmg/al

cc: Mr. Marc Williams, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, Texas Department of Transportation
The Honorable Victor Vandergriff, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
Mr. Mark Werner, Rail Planning Section Director, Texas Department of Transportation
Mr. William Meadows, Chairman, Commission for High-Speed Rail in the Dallas/Fort Worth Region

Certification of Regional Transportation Council Approval:

I hereby certify that this commitment was approved by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on January 12, 2017.



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

Gary Fickes, Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Commissioner, Tarrant County

**EAST-WEST
FUNDING DISTRIBUTION
FOR FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION
(FAST) ACT**

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

March 9, 2017

BACKGROUND:

RTC Bylaws for Determining Funding Distribution

Funding Program	RTC Bylaws
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	Re-evaluated with each new funding bill
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) (as of Dec 2015) Surface Transportation Program Metropolitan Mobility (STP-MM)	Re-evaluated with each new funding bill
Transit Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funding	Re-evaluated annually with new Federal Transit Administration (FTA) apportionments.

BACKGROUND:

Previous Distribution Percentages

	STP-MM		CMAQ	
Transportation Funding Bill	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
ISTEA	33%	67%	33%	67%
TEA-21*	32%	68%	32%	68%
	31%	69%	31%	69%
SAFETEA-LU	31%	69%	31%	69%
MAP-21	32%	68%	34%	66%

* TEA-21 funding distributions of 32% in the west and 68% in the east were originally approved. In 2003, the funding distributions were re-evaluated to 31% in the west and 69% in the east.

PREVIOUS EAST-WEST FUNDING DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS FOR MAP-21

STP-MM Based on 12-County MPA Boundary	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Population	34.32%	65.68%
Employment	30.10%	69.83%
Activity (Pop+Emp Equalized)	32.24%	67.76%
Vehicle Miles of Travel	31.54%	68.46%
Average	32.07%	67.93%
Rounded Average	32%	68%

CMAQ Based on 10-County Non Attainment Area	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Ozone Precursors tons per day ¹ (%)	77.74 (33.58%)	153.22 (66.42%)
Recommendation Ozone Precursors Tons of VOC and NOx (Rounded Average)	34%	66%

¹NCTCOG forecast for 2011 Transportation Conformity ten-county analysis of 2012 roadway network.

CURRENT FORMULA INPUTS FOR FAST ACT

DRAFT

STBG* Based on 12-County MPA Boundary	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Population	34.11%	65.89%
Employment	30.72%	69.28%
Activity (Pop+Emp Equalized)	32.42%	67.58%
Vehicle Miles of Travel	32.36%	67.64%
Average	32.40%	67.60%
Rounded Average	32%	68%

CMAQ* Based on 10-County Non Attainment Area	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
Ozone Precursors tons per day ¹ (%)	64.68 (34.03%)	125.37 (65.67%)
Recommendation Ozone Precursors Tons of VOC and NOx (Rounded Average)	34%	66%

*Additional information on the reassessment methodology is available in Reference Item 2.2.2.

¹NCTCOG forecast for 2016 Transportation Conformity ten-county analysis of 2017 roadway network.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Population Type		Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Total
Minority	Population	1,007,941	2,384,036	3,391,977
	Percent	30%	70%	
Low Income	Population	328,457	649,180	977,637
	Percent	34%	66%	
Minority or Low Income	Population	1,111,283	2,527,911	3,639,194
	Percent	31%	69%	

Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Environmental justice indicators show a minority and low income population distribution similar to the proposed funding distribution for western and eastern regions.

ACTION REQUESTED

DRAFT

- Recommend RTC approval of the proposed regional distribution of FAST Act funds as outlined below:

Funding Program	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
STBG	32%	68%
CMAQ	34%	66%

- Moving forward new funding distribution applies as follows:
 - CMAQ distribution applies to air quality programs, such as the Transportation Alternatives - Set Aside Program.
 - STBG distribution applies to all federal and State RTC-selected mobility programs, such as Category 2, TMF, Proposition 12, etc. (not including Regional Toll Revenue funding).
- Transit formula funding is determined each year based on FTA formulas.

EAST-WEST FUNDING DISTRIBUTION TIMELINE

December 2016 Began analysis

February 2017 STTC Action

March 2017 Public Meetings

RTC Action

CONTACT INFORMATION

Adam Beckom, AICP
Principal Transportation Planner
(817) 608-2344
abeckom@nctcog.org

Christie Gotti
Senior Program Manager
(817) 608-2338
cgotti@nctcog.org

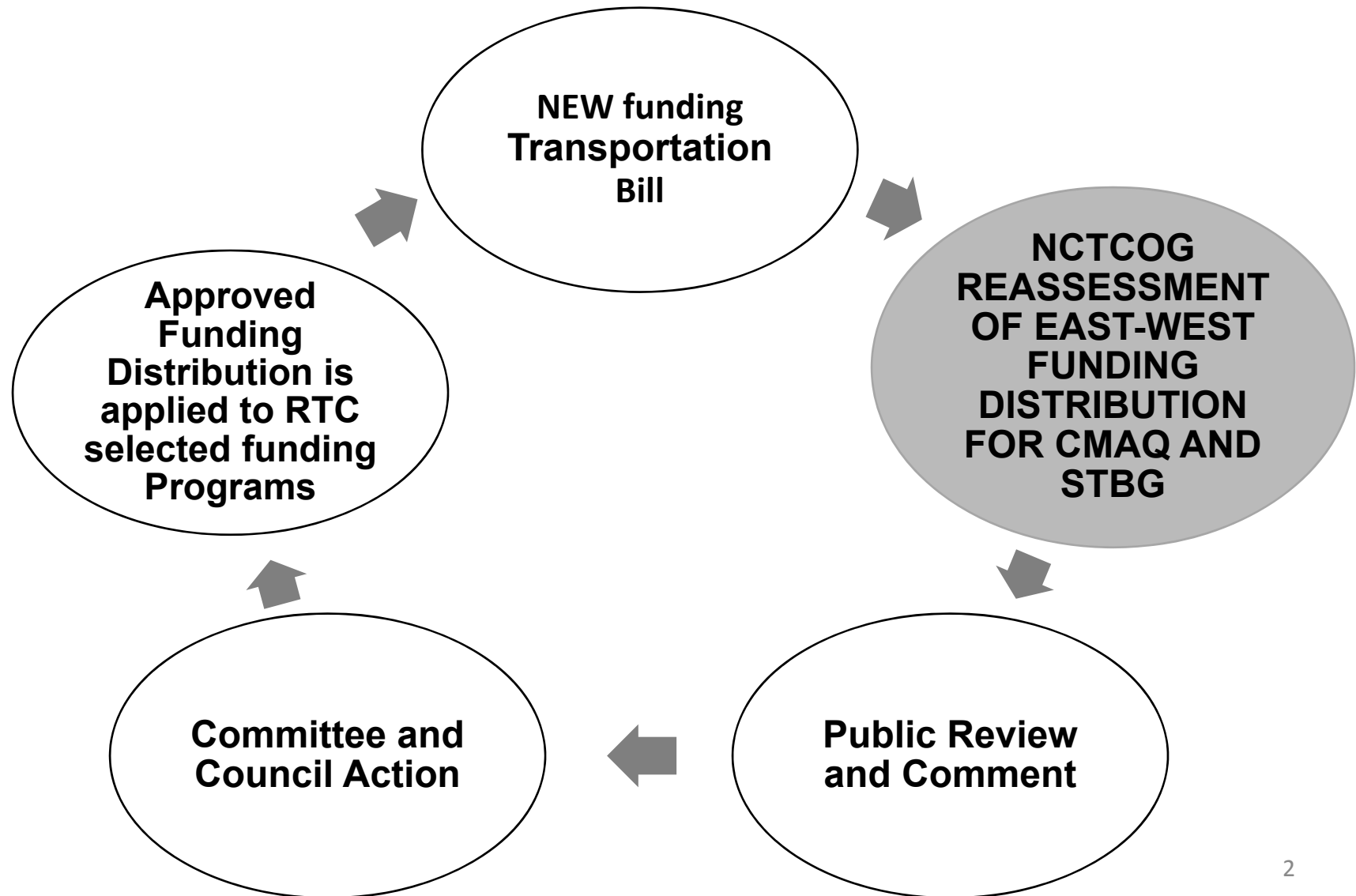
Amanda Long-Rodriguez
Transportation Planner
(817) 608-2367
along@nctcog.org

**EAST-WEST
FUNDING DISTRIBUTION for
FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION (FAST) Act
SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

March 9, 2017

EAST-WEST EQUITY REASSESSMENT PROCESS



FEDERAL/STATE FUNDING




Allocation

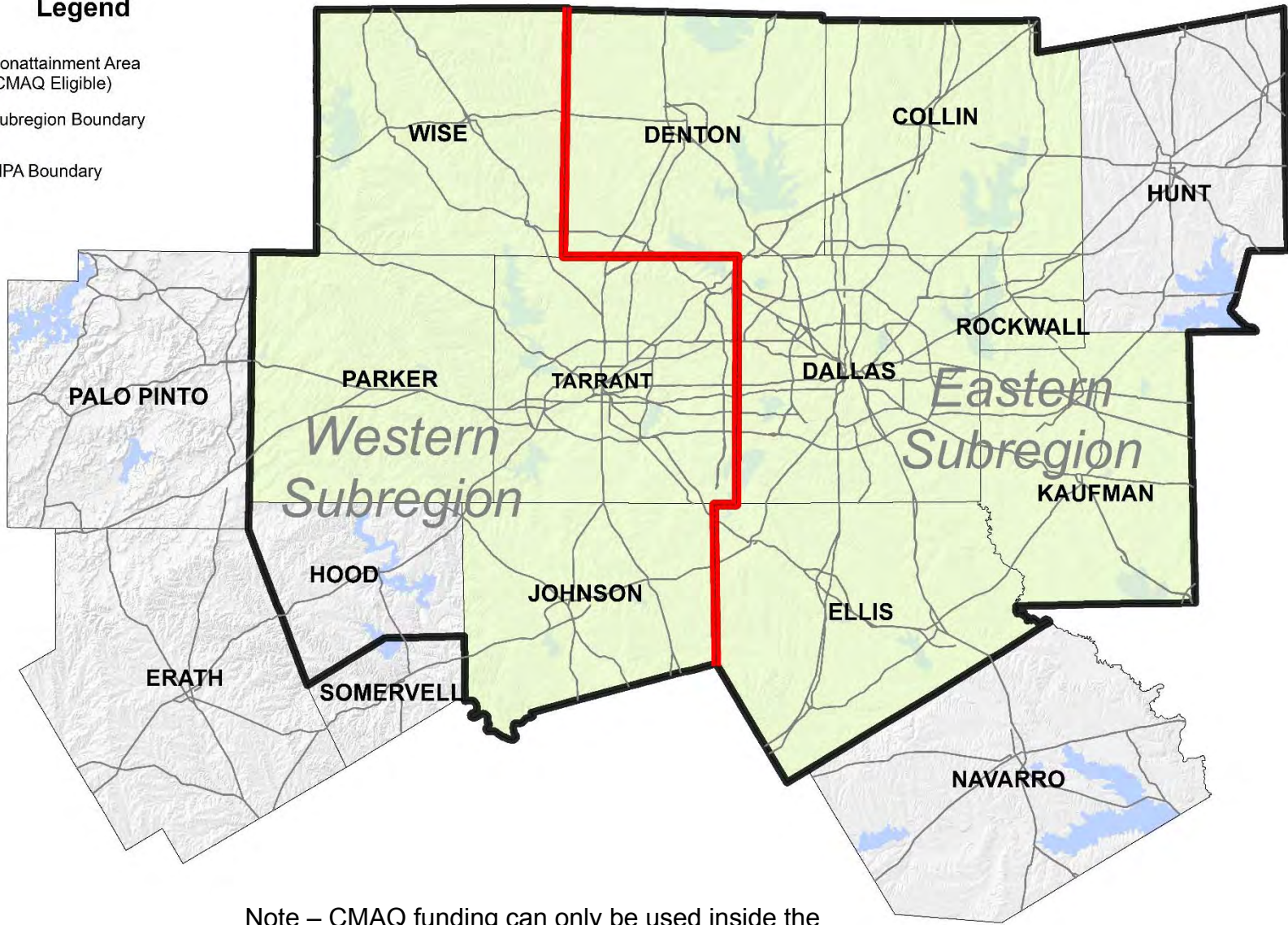
Congestion Mitigation And Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

- Designed for air quality or transit projects that address attainment of national ambient air quality standards in nonattainment areas.
 - Allocations to the region are based on population and air quality nonattainment factors.
 - Ozone precursors include: Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)

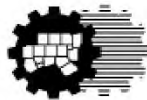
NONATTAINMENT AREA BOUNDARY

Legend

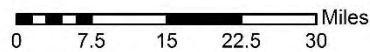
-  Nonattainment Area (CMAQ Eligible)
-  Subregion Boundary
-  MPA Boundary



Note – CMAQ funding can only be used inside the nonattainment area.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments



FEDERAL/STATE FUNDING



Allocation

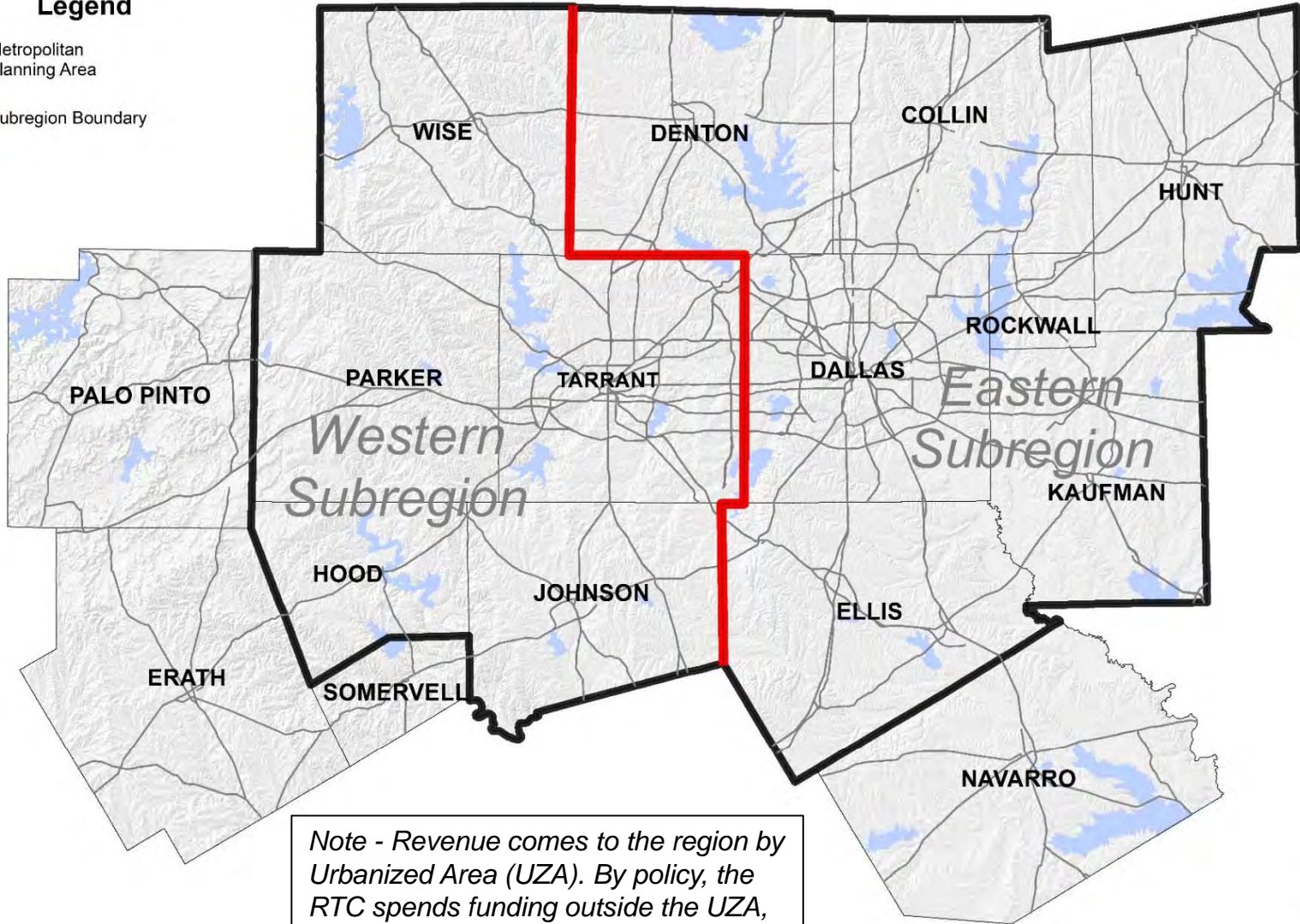
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

- This program is designed for mobility (roadway or transit) and air quality projects that address transportation needs within the Metropolitan Area Boundaries with populations of 200,000 or greater.
- Allocation to the region is based on population.
- Previously named Surface Transportation Program – Metropolitan Mobility (STP-MM).

MPA BOUNDARY

Legend

-  Metropolitan Planning Area
-  Subregion Boundary

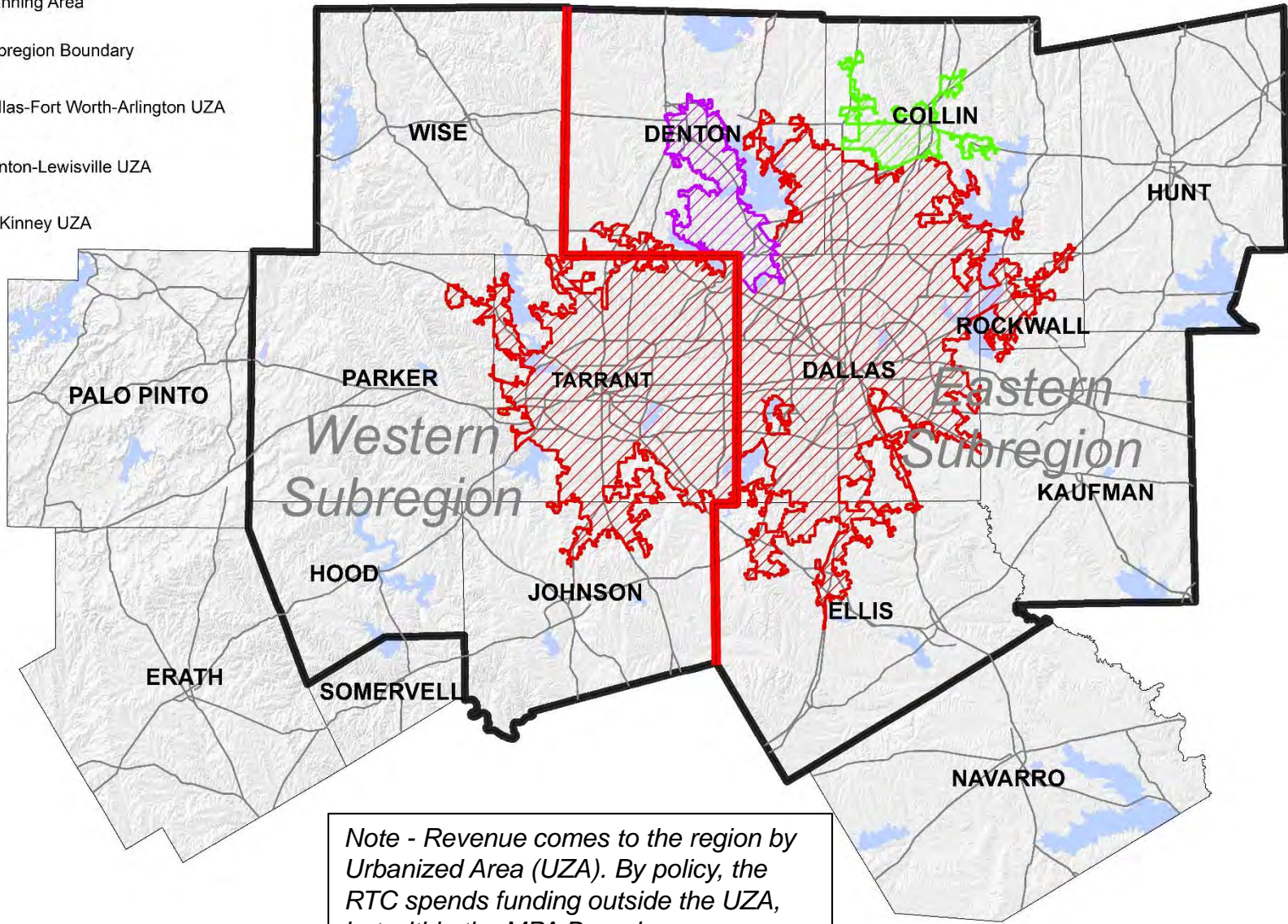


Note - Revenue comes to the region by Urbanized Area (UZA). By policy, the RTC spends funding outside the UZA, but within the MPA Boundary.

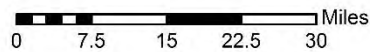
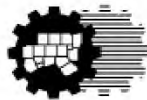
UZA BOUNDARIES

Legend

-  Metropolitan Planning Area
-  Subregion Boundary
-  Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington UZA
-  Denton-Lewisville UZA
-  McKinney UZA



Note - Revenue comes to the region by Urbanized Area (UZA). By policy, the RTC spends funding outside the UZA, but within the MPA Boundary.



FAST ACT FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

Inputs and Assumptions for STBG

1. 2010 urbanized areas (UZAs)
2. 2014 NCTCOG demographics
3. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) were derived from the 2014 demographic forecasts and roadway network.
4. Activity = Population + (1.587* Employment)
 - 1.587 is the latest employment ratio for the region

PREVIOUS DISTRIBUTION PERCENTAGES

Transportation Funding Bill	STP-MM/STBG		CMAQ	
	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion
ISTEA	33%	67%	33%	67%
TEA-21*	32%	68%	32%	68%
	31%	69%	31%	69%
SAFETEA-LU	31%	69%	31%	69%
MAP-21	32%	68%	34%	66%
<i>FAST ACT**</i>	32%	68%	34%	66%

*TEA-21 funding distributions of 32% in the west and 68% in the east were originally approved. In 2003, the funding distributions were re-evaluated to 31% in the west and 69% in the east.

** Proposed East-West funding distribution for FAST-Act

CONTACT INFORMATION

Adam Beckom, AICP
Principal Transportation Planner
(817) 608-2344
abeckom@nctcog.org

Christie Gotti
Senior Program Manager
(817) 608-2338
cgotti@nctcog.org

Amanda Long-Rodriguez
Transportation Planner
(817) 608-2367
along@nctcog.org

DRAFT

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

March 9, 2017

The Honorable Tryon D. Lewis
Chair
Texas Transportation Commission
135 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chair Lewis:

On December 8, 2016, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved the transportation projects for Category 2, Category 4, and the candidate list of Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) projects in Category 12. Our focus over the last six months was on meeting the requests of Governor Greg Abbott and Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg, Jr. in the “Texas Clear Lanes” program, responding to the request of the TTC from August 2016, and completing the performance requirements of House Bill 20. That work is now complete with certification documentation sent to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on February 20, 2017. We are monitoring your review of our recommendations and hopeful of your approval in the upcoming Unified Transportation Programs.

The Regional Transportation Council is now focused on meeting the needs that fall under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (i.e., Category 7) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (i.e., Category 5). One candidate program under RTC consideration is to leverage these federal funds with local funds to encourage local governments to remove portions of Farm to Market roads from the TxDOT system. This program has the benefits of reducing your out-year maintenance costs, as well as permitting local governments to focus on local design standards optimizing land use along these facilities. Our program is currently slated for \$100 million.

In exchange, we are requesting the Texas Transportation Commission to advance transportation design and engineering funding on innovative approaches to reconstruct some of the oldest sections of our outdated freeway system. The benefit of your program will address the following TxDOT goals:

- Deliver the Right Project
- Foster Stewardship
- Optimize System Performance
- Promote Safety
- Advance Texas Clear Lanes

Our portion of the program reduces your maintenance cost. Your portion of the program advances Texas Clear Lanes projects and significantly reduces your out-year capital costs.

DRAFT

Chair Tryon D. Lewis
Page Two

March 9, 2017

This partnership will compete with other regional programs being developed at this time, using these categories of funds. It is critical that we get some early feedback with regard to your interest in this partnership. It is our belief that this partnership and pilot initiative could lead to an innovative statewide program that advances TxDOT responsibilities. Using federal funds to advance local objectives that reduce TxDOT maintenance and construction costs and promote TxDOT goals is an idea that we hope you will consider.

Sincerely,

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

KD:al

cc: The Honorable Jeff Austin, III, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
The Honorable J. Bruce Bugg, Jr., Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
The Honorable Laura Ryan, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
The Honorable Victor Vandergriff, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
Mr. James M. Bass, Executive Director, Texas Department of Transportation
Mr. Brian Barth, P.E., District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation, Fort Worth
District
Mr. Kelly Selman, P.E., District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation, Dallas
District

- [Air Quality Home](#)
- [Air Quality Programs](#)
- [Air Quality Committees](#)
- [Air Quality Policy and Regulations](#)
- [Car Care Clinics](#)
- [Clean Vehicle Information](#)
- [Major Air Pollutants](#)
- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Ozone Information](#)
- [State Implementation Plan \(SIP\)](#)
- [Transportation Conformity](#)
- [Transportation Home](#)

Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles

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

[Air Quality Funding Home](#)

[Other Air Quality Funding Opportunities](#)

[Sign-Up for Email Updates](#)

Current Vehicle Grant Funding Opportunities

[Select Language](#) [?] ?

	Eligible Focus Areas								Eligible Applicant Type	
	Heavy-Duty Vehicles					Light-Duty Vehicles				
	Buses	Oil and Gas Vehicles/Equipment	Long Haul Trucks	Dump Trucks	Idle-Reduction Technology	Other	Passenger Vehicles	Taxis		Idle-Reduction Technology
AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program							X			General Public
Drayage Loan Program Deadline: First Come, First Served		X				X				Private Sector
Drayage Truck Incentive Program (DTIP) Deadline: May 26, 2017, 5 pm CST						X				Public Sector, Private Sector, General Public
Federal and State Incentives and Laws (Including Tax Credits)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		Private Sector
Propane Vehicle Incentives for Texas	X	X		X		X	X	X		Public Sector, Private Sector
NOW OPEN! Rebate Grants Program (Rebate) Deadline: May 26, 2017, 5 pm CST, First Come- First Served	X	X	X	X		X				Public Sector, Private Sector
Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program (TNGVGP) Deadline: May 26, 2017, 5 pm CST	X	X	X	X		X				Public Sector, Private Sector

[NCTCOG Funding Opportunity Archive](#)

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

STAQS 2017 DFW

Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit

**Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas
August 29 - 30, 2017**



The Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit 2017 is an event sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and EPA Regions 4 and 6.

The purpose of the Summit is to bring together stakeholders from both the transportation and air quality communities to discuss current and coming regulatory environment, technologies and current practices vital to the field of air quality and transportation. The summit is geared to practitioners involved with public agencies at all levels.

A host of speakers from within the southern and eastern regions will present a number of key topics, best practices and latest information vital to transportation, planning and air quality professionals

**Location: North Central Texas Council of Governments Offices
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011**

Registration (Coming Soon)

Agenda (Coming Soon)

Hotel Information (Coming Soon)

Restaurant Information (Coming Soon)

Contact Information

If you have questions about the Summit or about any information found on this page, please contact:

Mike Roberts
Federal Highway Administration
(404) 562-3928

Jeff Riley
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
(214) 665-8542

 Select Language ? ?

North Texas Car Care Clinics

Local repair shops have partnered with the North Central Texas Council of Governments to provide this free public service.

Is your
CHECK
ENGINE
LIGHT on?

or

Do you
need a
FREE CAR
CHECKUP?

MORE INFORMATION

Check Back Soon for a
List of April 2017 Clinics

WHAT HAPPENS AT A CLINIC?

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETINGS

Fiscal Year 2016 and Fiscal Year 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Modifications

The UPWP for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and air quality planning tasks to be conducted by the metropolitan planning organization. Proposed modifications to the Fiscal Year 2016 and Fiscal Year 2017 UPWP will be presented for public review and comment.

Development of Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and air quality planning tasks conducted by the metropolitan planning organization. Development of the Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 UPWP will be presented for public review and comment.

Transportation Development Credits

States and regions that have toll roads and managed lanes that benefit the federal transportation system receive non-cash credits from the Federal Highway Administration. The credits can be used in place of local funding or in-kind matches required of federal funding. Staff will provide an update on the current use of credits and provide proposals for the future of these credits in the region.

Regional East-West Equity Update Due to Latest Transportation Bill

Federal transportation and air quality funding is allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth area based on Federal Highway Administration formulas that incorporate population, employment, emissions and other factors. To ensure equity within the region, the Regional Transportation Council then distributes funding to the eastern and western **subregions in proportion to each area's demographics and activity**. Staff will discuss and seek input on the re-evaluation of the regional distribution for the most recent allocation of funding.

Other Information to be Highlighted at the Meetings:

- Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects
- Vehicle Repair and Replacement Assistance Available Through AirCheckTexas Program
- April Car Care Clinics
- Diesel Idling Hot Spots RFI

A video recording of the Arlington meeting will be online at www.nctcog.org/input.



NCTCOGtrans



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2017

6:30 PM

Bessie Mitchell House
411 Ball St.
Grapevine, TX 76051

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017

2:30 PM

North Central Texas
Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2017

6:30 PM

Josey Ranch Lake Library
1700 Keller Springs Road
Carrollton, TX 75006

For anyone wanting to ride transit to the March 15 public meeting, NCTCOG will offer a free connection to the meeting upon request on a first-come, first-serve basis. To request a free roundtrip ride between NCTCOG and the Trinity Railway Express CentrePort/DFW Airport Station, contact Carli Baylor at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org.



CentrePort/DFW Airport Station
Arrival Options March 15

Eastbound Train 2:10 pm

Westbound Train 2:20 pm

For special accommodations due to a disability or language translation, contact Carli Baylor at 817-608-2365 or cbaylor@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made. *Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2365 o por email: cbaylor@nctcog.org con 72 horas (mínimo) previas a la junta. Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.*



2017 Outreach Events

- Saturday, March 25** **Household Hazardous Waste Event**
Grapevine, 8 am - 11:30 am
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, AirCheckTexas, DFW Clean Cities, Car Care Clinics
- Saturday, April 1** **Fort Worth Earth Party**
Fort Worth Water Gardens, 11 am - 1 pm
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation
- Tuesday, April 4** **Brookhaven College Earth Day Fest**
Commons Courtyard, Farmers Branch, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation
- Friday, April 7** **UNT's University Day**
Library Mall at UNT, Denton, 11 am - 1:00 pm
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation
- Saturday, April 8** **Colorpalooza: A Celebration of Spring**
Old Town Lewisville, 10 am - 5 pm
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation
- Tuesday, April 18 -** **2017 Earth Day Celebration**
Wednesday, April 19 **DFW Airport Live Well Center, DFW Airport, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm**
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, Aviation Education
- Wednesday, April 19** **UTA Celebrating People and Planet**
University Center, Arlington, 11 am - 1 pm
 Informational booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation
- Thursday, April 20** **Earth Day Event**
UNT Health Science Center, Fort Worth, 11 am - 2 pm
 Informational Booth
Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, DFW Clean Cities, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation

For additional information or for future outreach opportunities, please contact:

Carli Baylor, Transportation Program Assistant
 cbaylor@nctcog.org | 817-608-2365 | 817-640-3028 (fax)



2017 Outreach Events

**Friday, April 21 -
Sunday, April 23**

**Earth Day Texas
Fair Park, Dallas, 10 am - 6 pm**
Informational booth

Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, AirCheckTexas, Car Care Clinics, DFW Clean Cities, NCTCOG Active Transportation program, Electric Vehicles North Texas, Try Parking It, Look Out Texans Safety Campaign, NCTCOG Active Transportation

For additional information or for future outreach opportunities, please contact:
Carli Baylor, Transportation Program Assistant
cbaylor@nctcog.org | 817-608-2365 | 817-640-3028 (fax)

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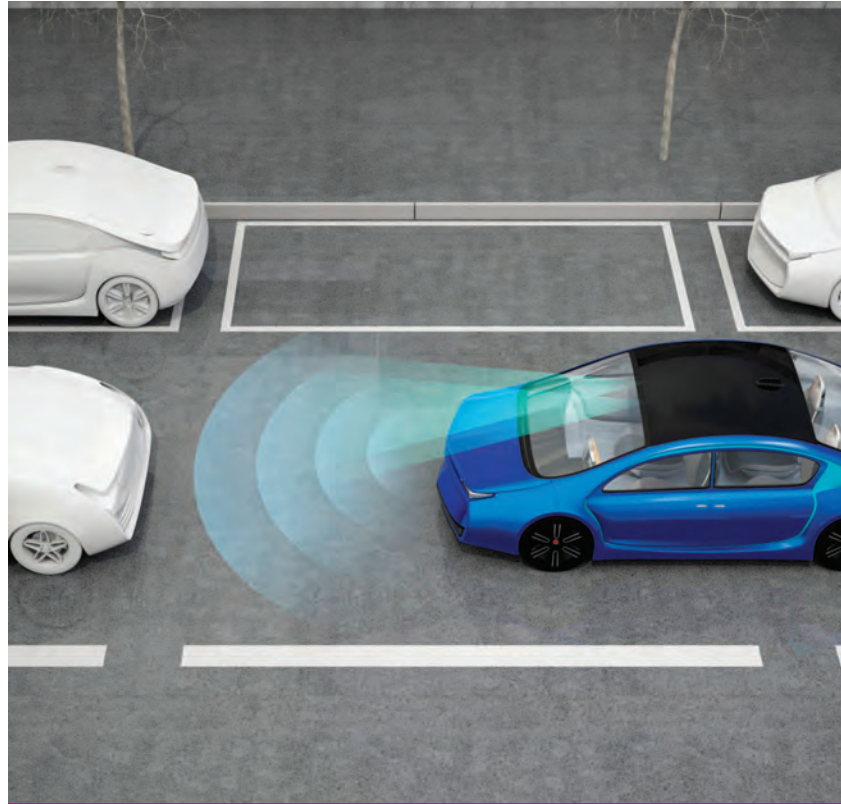
Semiannual Newsletter of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area

FWTA receives \$499M grant for TEX Rail line

The Fort Worth Transportation Authority received a \$499 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration in December, giving full funding to the 27-mile TEX Rail commuter line between Fort Worth and Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport. The \$1.034 billion project will provide passenger rail service to two stations in downtown Fort Worth before moving across Tarrant County, through North Richland Hills and Grapevine, and concluding at Terminal B at DFW Airport.

“A key element of our Transit Master Plan is to serve more people and more places – and TEX Rail does just that,” FWTA President and CEO Paul Ballard said. “In addition to current residents along the route, we will have multiple communities of riders in the transit-oriented developments.”

TEX Rail is expected to open in late 2018. For more information, visit www.texrail.com.



GETTY photos

Vehicles are being manufactured with increasing levels of automation, which could lead to a safer, more efficient transportation system. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is working to facilitate the development of this technology and has established a new program to work with representatives of the public and private sectors.

NCTCOG Seeking Partnerships for Vehicle Automation

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has established an automated vehicles program area that will explore the safety, accessibility and efficiency implications of the emerging technology.

NCTCOG recently issued requests seeking partners interested in transportation data sharing to advance automated vehicles and accelerate their integration into the transportation system. Several vehicle manufacturers and travel navigation services are testing technology that will take data from infrastructure and convert it to information that will make travel easier.

Many vehicles already contain sophisticated sensors and computers that offer navigation assistance, remote starting and automatic braking. Automobiles connected to the internet also provide blind-spot warnings to drivers and assistance with parking.

Technology is evolving so rapidly that the vehicles of tomorrow will offer even more automation. Soon, there could be technology that will help you more easily navigate city streets. There is a continuing effort across the country to use data to improve mobility.

The City of Frisco recently demonstrated an in-vehicle application from Audi that indicates to drivers when a light will turn green, how long a red light will last and what speed they could drive to optimize their chances of getting green lights at intersections. This is one application of sharing traffic-signal data.

Through its requests for partners, NCTCOG seeks to encourage developers of applications and auto manufacturers to help the region assume a leadership role in the deployment of automated-vehicle technologies. Additionally, North Texas was involved in a recent statewide proposal seeking US Department of Transportation designation of a Texas network of automated vehicle proving grounds. Arlington, with the presence of a major university, well-developed street grid and Interstate Highway 30 (with a protected managed lane) is thought to be a good candidate for the testing of automated vehicles at different speeds.

NCTCOG's role in automated technologies will be multifaceted.

Path to Vehicle Automation

To facilitate the advancement of vehicle automation, NCTCOG plans to:

1. Maintain current infrastructure, with special attention to lane markings.
2. Make transportation-related data accessible in real time.
3. Support shared-mobility services.
4. Factor automated vehicles into planning decisions.
5. Support automated vehicle pilot deployments.
6. Focus on automation's social equity and economic development opportunities.

Billions of dollars are being invested in vehicle automation by the public and private sectors in part because of the many potential benefits of the technology, an important factor in a region like North Texas seeing continued population growth and limited resources to expand the system.

Potential vehicle automation benefits include:

- **Safety** – Human error results in 90 percent of crashes on the roads. Travel by air or rail is statistically much safer than driving. Automation could reduce the crash rates on the roads.
- **Efficiency** – Highway performance has not changed much in generations. Automation could help North Texans travel more effectively through improvements such as more efficient routing.

More AUTOMATION on back page

A Message From Michael Morris, P.E.

Director of Transportation

A Quarter-Century Later, We're Still Innovating

We recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of one of the most revolutionary pieces of federal transportation legislation ever conceived by our nation. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) reshaped the way we plan for transportation needs in North Texas and across the country. With the signing of ISTEA in December 1991, local governments were given more flexibility to solve their own problems, and the focus of surface transportation shifted to include more than highways. Transit and bicycle-pedestrian projects were given more attention as lawmakers aimed to create a transportation system that integrated modes and land use. Money became available for new programs that sought to lessen congestion and improve air quality.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments, in cooperation with local, state and federal partners, administers programs to meet both these essential transportation goals. We are aided by public input, another component of the planning

process that was enhanced by ISTEA.

Today, North Texas is home to a diverse, multimodal system where residents can drive, use transit or opt for more active ways (bicycling or walking) to reach their destinations. Transportation planning continues to rely on innovation, and one example is being carried out along Interstate 30.

As a major east-west corridor connecting the central business districts of Dallas and Fort Worth, as well as Arlington's Entertainment District, I-30 has been chosen for a pilot study to encourage commuters to select alternatives to driving alone. Over the next few months, North Texans who commute on I-30 between Dallas and Fort Worth have an opportunity to earn rewards by opting for choices that will allow them to get to work through other means, thanks to the federal Value Pricing Pilot Program. By becoming I-30 Insiders, commuters will accumulate points for choosing alternatives to driving alone and qualify for prizes. The I-30 Insider

Challenge runs through April 28, while supplies last.

You have the power to improve air quality and mobility in one of our region's most well-traveled corridors by reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles on the roads during rush hour. To join the I-30 Insider Challenge, simply register at www.tryparkingit.com, the Dallas-Fort Worth region's commuter ride-match and trip-logging website.

If you drive alone to work, consider another option that works for your schedule. Carpool or vanpool. Take transit. Bike or walk. Work from home. If these options don't work, the answer could be a compressed work week or occasionally working from home. We are striving to be a region of transportation choice, where we respond to your transportation needs and you have multiple options for getting to your destination.

More MICHAEL MORRIS on back page



Former President George Bush speaks at a signing ceremony for ISTEA at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport in 1991. The legislation reshaped how transportation planning was done throughout the US.

Kevin Stillman/TxDOT photo



Regional Transportation Council

Transportation Choices Essential to Maintaining Quality of Life in Fast-Growing Plano, Smith Says

Member Profile

Lissa Smith, Executive Board Chair, Mayor Pro Tem, Plano

Toyota's new \$350 million North American headquarters expected to open this year will result in thousands of employees added to the Legacy area of Plano, already home to a growing number of major employers. FedEx Office opened in 2015, joining JC Penney, Frito Lay, Pizza Hut and others. Also in the plans for 2017 are regional headquarters for JP Morgan Chase & Co. and Liberty Mutual.

Corporate additions and expansions will bring more workers to an area already bracing for growth over the next two decades. Collin County is expected to see an increase of 744,000 residents by 2040 to push its population past 1.5 million, nearly twice as many people as in 2010. The county's employment is expected to jump 66 percent by 2040.

As new residents flock to the area, local officials must find ways to get them to work and home reliably. Quality of life is a major reason companies locate in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and local leaders want to keep it just that way.

Plano Mayor Pro Tem Lissa Smith is one of those officials working to make sure transportation progress can take place alongside economic progress.

Plano is spending millions of dollars on infrastructure, but the solution to keep people moving will involve a multimodal focus, she said.

As new residents flock to the area, local officials must find ways to get them to work and home reliably.

"We can't lay enough concrete to address our transportation," she said. "We're going to have to look at other options, including transit, making our communities more walkable and enhancing our citizens' quality of life. I think if we can do that, the region will continue to thrive."

Work continues to accommodate the growth in Legacy and other areas of Plano.

"Plano has always been at the

forefront of transportation planning," Smith said. "We've always planned ahead. But I think what we didn't anticipate in Plano, and what our challenge has been, is that pass-through traffic. With all the growth north, that's one of our biggest challenges."

The corporate relocations in Plano, major projects in Frisco and development along Sam Rayburn Tollway are just a few examples of expansion the northeast quadrant of the region has seen in recent years that is causing officials to look at an integrated approach to mobility.

Smith, who has served on the City Council since 2009, said she developed an interest in transportation while serving on the staff of former State Senator Florence Shapiro.

As a member of the Regional Transportation Council since 2009, Smith has needed to also think about the 12-county area when confronted with questions about transportation.

She likes being part of the

solution, making sure there are plans in place to keep the region prosperous. Her work on the City Council has helped Smith in her role as policymaker for the region. Although the RTC requires a broader focus, the issues are similar.

"As a councilmember, you're constantly looking at the quality of life of your citizens and, of course, economic development," she said. "Transportation plays such a big role in both of those."

Smith has also served as president of the NCTCOG Executive Board since June. In that capacity, she must guide the 17 voting members of the board to make decisions for the entire NCTCOG region.

Transit is an important component of the overall transportation plan, but so is technology, Smith said.

She recently visited Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where Uber is testing driverless vehicles. She didn't ride in any, since there was no way to specifically request

More LISSA SMITH on back page

RTC Approves Legislative Priorities

State legislators will be in Austin through May to debate transportation and other important issues, during the 85th Session of the Texas Legislature. In advance of the session, the Regional Transportation Council approved a legislative program in November that aims to continue the improvements made in transportation and air quality during recent years, invest in further progress to meet the region's needs and provide support for additional transportation topics that may be addressed.

Continue progress made toward improving transportation and air quality during recent legislative sessions

The Texas Legislature has taken major steps over the past four years to fund transportation and, as a result, new sources of revenue are available across Texas and the region.

Proposition 1, Proposition 7 and the end to diversions of the state's gas tax to non-transportation purposes will each provide the state with additional transportation revenue. The RTC supports the progress made during recent legislative sessions, specifically the continued full appropriation of these revenues to fund transportation. In addition, after years of limited funding, the

Legislature reinstated funds for the Low Income Repair and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP), also known as the AirCheckTexas Program, and Local Initiative Projects (LIP). LIRAP helps reduce automobile emissions by offering financial incentives to repair or remove high-emitting vehicles from the roadways and LIP administers several regional air quality programs, both helping to improve air quality in North Texas. The RTC offers support for continuing to fully appropriate LIRAP/LIP revenue. Retaining the ability to utilize tools such as tolling, managed lanes, debt financing and public-private partnerships, as well as allowing eminent domain authority for high-speed rail, commuter rail, freight rail, roadways and trails is also a goal of the RTC this legislative session. Support is also offered for efforts to utilize performance-based transportation planning.

Invest in further progress toward meeting transportation and air quality needs

In addition to continuing the current progress made in recent legislative sessions, the RTC seeks to invest in further progress to meet transportation and air quality needs. The RTC supports identifying additional revenue for transportation and authorizing the use of a

Comprehensive Development Agreement (CDA) for the Interstate Highway 635 East project from US Highway 75 to IH 30 as methods to meet the region's transportation needs. Additional CDA projects may be supported at a later date. Related to air quality, the RTC seeks to appropriate LIRAP's residual balance of previously collected funds, as well as increase the program's flexibility to better balance demand.

Another air quality program, the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP), is aimed at reducing emissions from polluting vehicles and heavy-duty equipment. Protecting TERP revenue, while ensuring funds are utilized for projects that effectively meet the intent of the program, is another priority.

Provide support for other transportation topics

As lawmakers consider bills on several issues over the next few months, the RTC will provide support for additional transportation areas that improve air quality, increase safety, relieve congestion, work to implement all modes of transportation, utilize innovative technology, support land use and transportation connections and more. For more on the RTC's Legislative Program, visit www.nctcog.org/trans/legislative.

Regional Transportation Council

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Councilmember, City of Arlington
- W. Jeff Williams**
Mayor, City of Arlington
- Erik Wilson**
Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, City of Dallas
- W. B. "Zim" Zimmerman**
Councilmember, City of Fort Worth

FLYBY DFW Aims to Inspire Youth to Take Flight

Aircraft maker Boeing has forecast 617,000 new commercial airline pilots will be needed over the next 20 years. Technicians will be in even higher demand. Boeing projects 679,000 new commercial aircraft maintenance workers will be required by 2035.

With this shortage in mind, the North Central Texas Council of Governments partnered with local aerospace companies and educators to develop FLYBY DFW, a game that allows participants of all ages to fly some of the most sophisticated aircraft in the world – and learn about key aspects of aviation while they are at it. Participants can pilot aircraft such as the F-35, built by Lockheed Martin, Bell Helicopter's V-280 and Airbus Helicopters' H155 and EC255 through different levels that test their maneuvering abilities, as well as their industry knowledge.

The vast majority of today's youth play video games, whether by themselves or in an online community. According to a survey conducted by The NPD Group, a market research firm,

91 percent of children 2-17 spend time gaming on a variety of devices.

Boeing projects 609,000 new commercial aircraft maintenance workers will be required by 2034.

Gaming could be an effective way to inspire the next generation to pursue aviation careers.

FLYBY DFW takes players through three areas: Alliance Airport, Dallas-Fort Worth and Corpus Christi. The latter was selected because the game's sponsors wanted a setting on the water that would allow aircraft carrier landings.



Participants amass points by collecting coins, completing airdrops, dodging other aircraft – and not crashing. They can also pick up bonus points at the end of each level by correctly answering a trivia question about aviation.

Competitors start by flying the JG-16, a student-designed aircraft. As they progress, participants are able to unlock parts of different aircraft, from helicopters to fighter jets.

FLYBY DFW seeks to generate interest in aerospace and aviation careers for elementary, middle, and high school students in an effort to build the local talent pipeline for future employment opportunities.

More FLYBY on back page

AUTOMATION (continued from Page 1)

- **Environment** – Shared mobility, especially micro-transit, can move more people in fewer vehicles, reducing the demand for parking lots and expansion of highways.
- **Access and equity** – Shared mobility and automation could help provide more transportation options to more people with fewer vehicles, reducing transportation costs and improving access to jobs.
- **Demand** – It is difficult to know how vehicle automation will impact demand, but the

efficiencies realized through this technology could allow more vehicles to travel farther.

The region's geography, well-developed transportation system and desire to attract and retain talent in the automotive technology sector make Dallas-Fort Worth a potential leader in the industry. NCTCOG is prepared to assume a key role in the deployment of the technology and is ready to work with researchers, auto manufacturers and governments to advance the concept as it seeks safer, more efficient transportation.

- Automated Vehicle Technologies**
Here is a breakdown of the automated vehicle technologies:
- **Autonomous vehicles** – "Driverless cars."
 - **Vehicle-to-vehicle** – The federal government has reserved a band of wireless spectrum for this technology, which would allow cars to communicate a basic safety message with one another to improve safety.
 - **Connected-vehicle** – Connecting vehicles and

infrastructure via cellular will support everything from infotainment to safety applications..

- **Vehicle-to-infrastructure** – Wrong-way driving, traffic-signal phasing and work-zone warnings.

For more information, visit www.nctcog.org/trans/auto.

MICHAEL MORRIS (continued from Page 2)

In 2015, the regional vanpool program reduced an average of more than 115,000 vehicle trips per month. That translates to additional capacity for those on the roads and time saved, adding to productivity at work and a better quality of life. We can improve on this through tools such as the I-30 Insider Challenge. Participating commuters will earn

points for logging alternative commutes along I-30 during morning and evening peak periods, and points will accumulate and may be used to purchase gift cards to restaurants, retail stores, online retailers and more.

Not everyone uses I-30 or is able to choose an alternative commute. We understand that and want to

involve those residents, too. North Texas commuters who get to work using other roads in the region, or can't switch to an alternative commute are eligible to be entered into a drawing for a \$250 Amazon gift card when they register for Try Parking It and take a survey on the I-30 Insider website.

Just as innovative thinking more

than a quarter-century ago reshaped the transportation system, today's planners are relying on creativity as they seek to modernize the system for tomorrow. The continued development of the choices provided by ISTE and other transportation legislation will help us get there. After all ... mobility matters.

LISSA SMITH (continued from Page 2)

one, but they were evident on the streets, she said.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has taken an interest in automated vehicles, which could improve safety and efficiency for consumers.

"To be sitting at a table talking about autonomous vehicles is

really interesting when you consider where we've come from in such a short time," she said of the RTC. "... The future's here, and we have to look at other options for mobility other than just our car. And I think that's key to changing the mindset of citizens."

Being part of the RTC, an

organization that will make such a tremendous impact on the future, is most fulfilling to Smith.

"I always say the decisions we make for today are easy in comparison to the decisions we make for the future," she said. "Those are the difficult ones. And those are key to the success of this

region, making sure we can move people and goods.

The cooperative spirit of those serving on the RTC will ensure North Texas continues to attract the population and employment growth that Smith has witnessed in her own backyard.

FLYBY (continued from Page 3)

With two major commercial airports, a significant military installation and aviation and aerospace companies with operations in the region, opportunities abound for the next generation to become involved in

the industry. By embracing the educational side of gaming, the industry has found a way to reach those future aviators and aviation professionals. The game is available for Apple and Android devices. Download

FLYBY DFW and begin flying today.

More information on how to pursue aviation opportunities in Dallas-Fort Worth is available at www.nctaviationcareers.com.

In addition to careers in aviation, the site provides information on educational programs in the area and available grants and scholarships.

For a list of upcoming Transportation Department events, visit www.nctcog.org/trans/calendar.asp

mobilitymatters

Semiannual Newsletter of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area

This publication can be made available in alternate formats upon request

North Central Texas Council of Governments
P. O. Box 5888, Arlington, Texas 76005-5888
PHONE (817) 695-9240 (metro)
FAX (817) 640-3028
Email mobilitymatters@nctcog.org
WEB www.nctcog.org

The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings, and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, or the Texas Department of Transportation. This document was prepared in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. Mobility Matters is a newsletter on the transportation planning activities and air quality programs of the North Central Texas Council of Governments and the Regional Transportation Council - together serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area since 1974.



Editor, Brian Wilson Layout and Design, Kristy Libotte Keener, Graphic Design Coordinator
Please email comments, suggestions or newsletter topic ideas to mobilitymatters@nctcog.org.

If you would like to change your name or address we have on file, please email us at mobilitymatters@nctcog.org.

Published by North Central Texas Council of Governments



February 7, 2017

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

Dear Michael,

You are one of our most dedicated public servants and I need your help with an important project.

Last fall, the City of Fort Worth, Streams & Valleys and the Tarrant Regional Water District began establishing the framework for a systematic process through which our community could envision the future of the Trinity River, translate that vision into goals/objectives and develop action steps to achieve them. This effort will culminate in the development of TRINITY: A 10-Year Strategic Action Plan for the Trinity River.

As you will remember, Fort Worth's rapid growth and demand for recreational opportunities led to the development of The Trinity River Vision Master Plan in 2003 and the Neighborhood Recreation and Enhancement Plan in 2009. Since then, tremendous development has occurred all along the river, and more projects are in the planning phases. Now is the time to think about the Trinity River's enormous potential and lay the groundwork for a regional amenity like none other in the United States.

We have engaged Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) from Berkeley, California, as our consultant team, and they have already conducted more than 100 stakeholder interviews. The feedback has been overwhelmingly consistent, favoring a regional approach that will:

- Improve access and connectivity
- Establish an integrated transportation network
- Focus economic development in synergistic locations
- Ensure adequate water quality and water supply
- Provide a diversity of destinations and amenities
- Create a major tourist destination and add tourist amenities in targeted areas

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MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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TRANSPORTATION

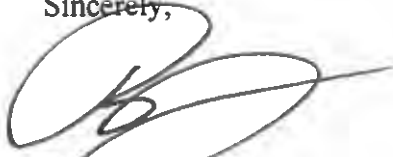
It is my pleasure to invite you to join the TRINITY TASK FORCE, a small group of community advocates who represent a broad spectrum of interests, can serve as a barometer for the strategic plan components, and have the experience and resources to champion the implementation of the plan once complete.

We have a tremendous opportunity before us and we need your leadership. I realize your time is limited, so we will have three (3) meetings only — March 8, April 12 and May 3. The breakfast meetings will last two (2) hours and be held in the most central location.

Please expect a follow-up call early next week from Johnny Campbell, President and CEO of Sundance Square. Johnny serves as Vice-President of the Streams & Valleys Board of Directors, and is leading this effort on our behalf.

Thank you in advance for making time to serve your community and your region once again. As Sylvia Earle wrote: "No water, no life. No blue, no green." With your help, we'll ensure that the results of this effort are both transformative and transformational.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betsy Price". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops.

Betsy Price
Mayor

See you soon!



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

February 9, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area we respectfully request your consideration of this initiative. A membership roster of the RTC is enclosed. The RTC and the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) Transportation Department work with elected officials, all levels of government, transportation partners, and the region's residents to plan coordinated transportation systems, projects and policies to meet transportation and air quality needs for the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Members of the RTC are requesting your support for high-speed rail between Fort Worth and Dallas. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is completing an Environmental Impact Study with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) within the next twelve months. We believe a partnership between the private-sector/international high-speed rail implementers and the Federal Railroad Administration could help advance the project. With this letter, we seek support from interested House members. The RTC wishes to explore ways to create a partnership between our region and your office.

High-speed rail has the potential to be a transformative mode of transportation. A private company, Texas Central Partners, is funding a route from Houston to Dallas, and officials throughout DFW are working hard to plan for an extension from Dallas to Fort Worth through Arlington. Eventually, high-speed rail continues from Fort Worth to the Austin-San Antonio region.

Representatives from the cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, and Arlington, Texas met with former Secretary Foxx on October 15, 2015. Since that time, work has progressed on several fronts for the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth segment and we feel the time is right to make a request for funding for the project from the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the FRA. This request is for \$2 billion for implementation of high-speed rail from Dallas to Fort Worth. This is the gap in capital costs with the remainder paid by the private sector.

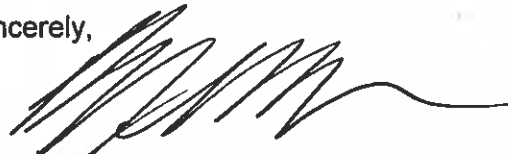
In March 2016, USDOT and FRA issued a request for proposals through the Federal Register and several responses were received for Texas corridors from private and public respondents. In parallel, the DFW region has moved forward on several items to prepare for high-speed rail service within the region. An industry forum was held in June 2016 that was attended by over 80 individuals representing firms from several countries, showing that there is international interest in participating in high-speed rail projects in the US.

February 9, 2017

This fall, NCTCOG, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the DFW region, issued a Request for Proposals for three station area plans in Dallas, Arlington, and Fort Worth and consultants have been selected to begin that work. In addition, NCTCOG issued a Request for Information and received 15 responses from global firms with expertise in planning, financial, technical, engineering, partnerships, fare collection, construction, and operations/maintenance of high-speed rail. TxDOT continues to work on an Environmental Impact Statement for the segment from Dallas to Fort Worth, with a final report expected to be finalized in 2017. Ridership forecasts have recently been completed by NCTCOG and show that the line connecting with the Dallas-Houston segment will be an extremely popular alternative for travelers to, from, and within the DFW region.

We fully support efforts to bring high-speed rail to the DFW region and request the USDOT and FRA review this funding request as a potential to leave a lasting legacy of innovation on transportation in the US, Texas, and the DFW region. Thank you for your service to our Nation. 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,



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

RH:kd
Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Michael Burgess, Congressman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Kay Granger, Congresswoman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, Congresswoman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Kenny Marchant, Congressman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Pete Sessions, Congressman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Marc Veasey, Congressman, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Roger Williams, Congressman, US House of Representatives
Mr. Marc Dixon, South Central Regional Manager, Federal Railroad Administration
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



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

February 9, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to serve as the United States Secretary of Transportation. A membership roster of the RTC is enclosed. The RTC and the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) Transportation Department work with elected officials, all levels of government, transportation partners and the region's residents to plan coordinated transportation systems, projects and policies to meet transportation and air quality needs for the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

We are pleased to have such a dedicated public servant as the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary of Transportation, as well as someone with direct transportation experience. During your time as Assistant Secretary of Transportation, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act was passed and signed in North Texas at the DFW International Airport. The DFW region has certainly taken to heart the idea of efficiency in transportation planning. The region uses a strong MPO framework to solve transportation issues through a regional process, as well as focuses on fiscally constrained plans that allow for innovative project financing.

The RTC stands ready to assist you by being a model for many of the plans the Administration is proposing and recently identified six policy initiatives for 2017.

- **National Infrastructure Bank**

The DFW region is a model for public-private partnerships and has additional projects ready to move forward through an Infrastructure Bank. With the advent of new technology and driverless vehicles, many innovative projects across a variety of transportation modes could be advanced.

- **Funding Partnerships**

The DFW region can be used as a road map of how tools and project leveraging can be implemented. For example, managed lanes on the LBJ Express and North Tarrant Express projects used a private equity finance model for a public-private partnership. In addition, MPO-Texas Department of Transportation public sector partnerships have also been constructed.

- **High-speed Rail**

Texas Central Partners is developing a high-speed rail line from Houston to Dallas. In addition, an environmental study is underway for an extension of the line from Dallas to

February 9, 2017

Fort Worth, which would connect with the Texas Central Partners line and an eventual line from Fort Worth to Austin/San Antonio.

- **Public Transportation**

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has the longest light rail system in the country and connects with other transit systems in North Texas. DART's system connects with the Denton County Transportation Authority. The Fort Worth Transportation Authority has a recently awarded full funding grant agreement to construct passenger rail from Fort Worth to DFW International Airport. Additional projects, including those with public-private partnership potential, are planned for the region.

- **Job Creation**

Transportation planning and construction spur job creation. Construction jobs and the multiplier effect of those jobs are only the beginning. The Dallas-Fort Worth region has been focused on large-scale improvements that have impacted the decisions of corporations to stay in the region or relocate to Texas because of the mobility options provided. Transportation solutions enhance the productivity of the logistics chain, creating jobs as well.

- **Optimize Patrol and Traffic Response**

Strategies designed to mitigate traffic are being deployed, while keeping cities safer. The Dallas County Traffic Patrol Program is a pilot program that allows sheriffs to patrol the highway system in order to provide local police officers more time to patrol cities.

Again, congratulations on your appointment and thank you for your service. Upon your request, we can provide you with additional information or meet with your staff about transportation opportunities in the DFW region. 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,



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

RH:ch
Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Victor Vandergriff, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission
Mr. Al Alonzi, Texas Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Bob Patrick, Region 6 Administrator, Federal Transit Administration
Mr. Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



ADAM MEDRANO
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 2

January 25, 2017

North Central Texas Council of Governments
Mr. Michael Morris, Director of Transportation
616 Six Flags Dr.
#200
Arlington, TX 76011

Mr. Morris,

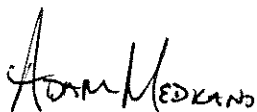
The City of Dallas is respectfully requesting from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, (NCTCOG) a regional conceptual study of the Harry Hines corridor from downtown Dallas, at Moody Street, to Loop 12 (Northwest Highway). This study will help to resolve the now dysfunctional cloverleaf at the intersection of Harry Hines and Inwood Road and would provide needed information to explore and support the redesign of the intersection and corridor to provide safer and better multi-modal options for transportation, environmental integrity and economic development.

We are also requesting that as a follow up to the conceptual study that NCTCOG commit to providing support for engineering concepts for resolution of the cloverleaf at the intersection of Harry Hines and Inwood Road.

The study and engineering concepts will intersect and support a public private partnership with the City of Dallas, Southwest Medical District and the project lead, Texas Trees Foundation, to redesign and implement the Southwestern Medical Urban Streetscape Master Plan that will provide the framework for redefining the Medical district.

Thank you for your support for this project as we are confident that we will be able to leverage both private and public support to implement the redesign of both Harry Hines and Inwood Road.

Thank you,


Adam Medrano
Council Member – District 2

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4777 EAST US HIGHWAY 80, MESQUITE, TEXAS 75150-6643 | 214-320-6100 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

February 10, 2017

Ms. Jill A. Jordan, P.E.
Assistant City Manager
City of Dallas
1500 Marilla Street, Room L1BS
Dallas, Texas 75201

Reference: Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck

Ms. Jordan:

This letter is in response to your letter dated February 2, 2017 regarding the Southern Gateway Project and the city's proposed public green/deck over I-35E from Marsalis Avenue to Ewing Avenue. The city's questions are reprinted below with the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) responses to those questions immediately following and italicized.

1. Can the Texas Department of Transportation delay the Advanced Funding Agreement with the city until December 2017, after the city's Bond Election?

TxDOT cannot delay the Advanced Funding Agreement with the city for the city's proposed public green/deck over I-35E. TxDOT anticipates executing a design-build contract in July for the Southern Gateway Project, which includes full reconstruction of I-35E from Colorado Boulevard to past US 67 and widening of US 67 from I-35E to I-20. At the city's request, TxDOT has also included potential scope items for the city's public green/deck over I-35E. TxDOT will receive bids in April and expects to announce the apparent best value proposer at the Texas Transportation Commission meeting on April 27, 2017. After the apparent best value proposer is announced, TxDOT will provide the bid prices to the city for the multiple scope items for the city's public green/deck. At that time, TxDOT will request direction from the city on which scope items to include in the final design-build contract. The Advanced Funding Agreement must be executed with the city prior to the execution of the design-build contract in July so that TxDOT can include the appropriate scope in the design-build agreement. As discussed in prior meetings, TxDOT encourages the city staff to be prepared to brief the City Council in May on the bid prices and execute an Advanced Funding Agreement with TxDOT in June.

2. Could TxDOT and the city execute an Advanced Funding Agreement before July for design only and a separate, later Advanced Funding Agreement for construction once the city identifies funding?

As stated above, TxDOT anticipates executing a design-build contract for the Southern Gateway Project in July. The design-build contract will include both design and construction of I-35E; therefore, executing an Advanced Funding Agreement in July for only design and not construction is not possible.

OUR VALUES: People • Accountability • Trust • Honesty

OUR MISSION: Through collaboration and leadership, we deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods.

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3. If the city cannot enter into an Advanced Funding Agreement before July, could TxDOT execute an additive change order for its contractor for the deck foundation once the city has its funding and executes an Advanced Funding Agreement?

TxDOT's contractor for the Southern Gateway Project will need to know the scope of the city's public green/deck over I-35E by July. The public green/deck will influence the final design of the project as well as determine the construction schedule. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has committed \$40 million to contribute to funding for the city's public green/deck. It is possible that this funding would pay for the foundations for the full public green/deck from Marsalis Avenue to Ewing Avenue. If the bid prices support this, and if the RTC agrees, TxDOT could build the foundations with the Southern Gateway Project. At a later date, the public green/deck cap could be constructed through a separate project once the city identifies funding. We encourage the city to work with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) on other potential funding options.

4. When does TxDOT anticipate the deck foundation work to begin?

TxDOT's Southern Gateway Project does not necessitate right-of-way acquisition in the vicinity of the city's public green/deck; therefore, we anticipate that the deck foundations would be constructed early in the project.

As previously discussed, TxDOT is supportive of the potential decking over I-35E for a public green space. TxDOT will need direction on scope from the city, a commitment on construction funding, and a commitment for maintenance and operation of the potential public green/deck in the form of an executed Advanced Funding Agreement with the city before TxDOT executes a design-build contract in July. We appreciate your partnership with TxDOT during this project and we look forward to continuing to advance the project on schedule.

Sincerely,



James K. Selman, P.E.
Dallas District Engineer

Attachment: Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck letter dated 2/2/17

cc: The Honorable Lee Kleinman, Dallas City Council, Transportation & Trinity River Project Committee Chair
The Honorable Carolyn King Arnold, Dallas City Council
The Honorable Scott Griggs, Dallas City Council
Alan Sims, Chief of Neighborhood Plus, City of Dallas
Peer Chacko, Director and Chief Planning Officer, City of Dallas
Rick Galceran, P.E., Director, Mobility and Street Services Department, City of Dallas
Tim Starr, P.E., Assistant Director, Engineering and Survey Services, City of Dallas
Tanya Brooks, Assistant Director, Mobility and Street Services Department, City of Dallas
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG
Sandy Wesch, P.E., Project Engineer, NCTCO

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OUR MISSION: Through collaboration and leadership, we deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods.



February 2, 2017

Mr. James K. Selman, P.E.
Dallas District Engineer
Texas Department of Transportation
4777 East Highway 80
Mesquite, Texas 75150-6643

RE: Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck

Dear Mr. Selman:

Thank you for attending the City Council Briefing on January 18, 2017. The purpose of the briefing was to discuss the City's funding commitment, funding options and the tunnel issues associated with constructing the Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck between Marsalis Avenue and Ewing Avenue.

This letter is in response to a request from our City Council to seek options for moving forward with the Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck. The City of Dallas would like to know the answers to the following questions:

1. Can the Texas Department of Transportation delay the Advanced Funding Agreement with the City until December 2017, after the City's Bond Election?
2. Could TxDOT and the City execute an Advanced Funding Agreement before July for design only and a separate, later Advanced Funding Agreement for construction once the City identifies funding?
3. If the City cannot enter into an Advanced Funding Agreement before July, could TxDOT execute an additive change order for its contractor for the deck foundation once the City has its funding and executes an Advanced Funding Agreement?
4. When does TxDOT anticipate the deck foundation work to begin?

The City of Dallas would need responses to the above questions prior to developing an advanced funding agreement for Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck. In addition, the City Council will need to take action to formally reduce the limits of the Council endorsed Southern Gateway Public Green/Deck location to Ewing Avenue to Lancaster Street.

Sincerely,

Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager

cc: Rick Galceran, P.E., Director, Mobility and Street Services Department, City of Dallas
Tanya Brooks, Assistant Director, Mobility and Street Services Department, City of Dallas



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

February 13, 2017

Mr. Robert Lingard
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards
Environmental Protection Agency
Mail Drop C404-03
Research Triangle Park, NC 27711

Attn: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0202

Dear Mr. Lingard:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) who serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for North Central Texas and is the local policy body responsible for meeting federal transportation conformity requirements, I appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) *Implementation of the 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone: Nonattainment Area Classification and State Implementation Plan (SIP) Requirements (Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0202)* published in the *Federal Register (81 FR 81276)* November 17, 2016. Currently, 10 counties in North Central Texas are designated ozone nonattainment under the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and are predicted to be ozone nonattainment under the 2015 ozone NAAQS when designations are made later this year. The region takes NAAQS noncompliance very seriously and works closely with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on the development of our regional SIP in addition to implementing a diverse array of transportation emission reduction control strategies aimed at attaining air quality standards. The RTC supports EPA in revising the ozone standard to a level that is best supported by science and health related studies and supports logical implementation rules that will guide attainment success.

Appreciate comment period extension

The EPA's extended comment period to February 13, 2017, is welcomed. This additional time allows for practitioners ample opportunity to review proposal, discuss with colleagues, and prepare appropriate comments.

EPA proposal to implement a modernized Title 1, Subpart 2 classification methodology

To classify nonattainment areas and establish attainment dates, the EPA is proposing the option of Title 1, Subpart 2 as contained in the Clean Air Act (CAA). The methodology being utilized is referred to as "percent-above-the-standard". The EPA has stated this approach is desirable because the "percent-above-the-standard" methodology follows previously implemented standards and has avoided litigation. It is essential to look for possible unintended consequences of this proposal. Application of this approach suggests a majority of nonattainment areas would be classified as "Marginal" which is associated to no SIP requirements and, depending on effective date of the implementation rule, could have a year 2020 attainment deadline. More specifically and critical to local regions would be design value milestone years of 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Statistically speaking this “percent-above-the-standard” methodology places States and local regions at a disadvantage, as compared to a more modern and realistic methodology, and ultimately in the long run, doing possible more harm to public health. To support this observation, the EPA’s recent publication *Notice of Availability of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Preliminary Interstate Ozone Transport Modeling Data for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) (82 FR 1733)*, suggests numerous nonattainment areas in Texas are forecasted to have design values over the 2015 ozone NAAQS of 70 parts per billion (ppb) into the year 2023, three years later than the “percent-above-the-standard” calculations suggest. Due to this significant inconsistency between the “percent-above-the-standard” methodology versus the EPA’s own ozone forecast modeling, the RTC staff is urging the EPA to reconsider the proposed methodology and utilize an alternate classification approach that results in more realistic conclusions consistent with observed historical trends and existing modeling forecasts.

Support for use of Title I, Subpart 1 classification approach

If the EPA is unable to thoroughly evaluate and implement a more reasonable approach to classify nonattainment areas under Subpart 2, then RTC staff strongly requests the EPA to carryout necessary steps for utilization of Subpart 1. Subpart 1 is allowable in areas with an ozone design value less than 90 ppb and provides for a more orderly, meaningful, and reasonable planning process to develop and implement necessary emission reduction measures that will lead to a more realistic attainment goal. We understand Subpart 1 requires attainment demonstration SIP’s and has a five-year milestone from classification effective date to attain the 2015 ozone NAAQS, with the possibility of up to 10 years if the EPA deems appropriate.

Support for Option 1 to revoke the 2008 ozone NAAQS

RTC staff supports the proposed Option 1, which will revoke the 2008 ozone NAAQS for all purposes in each area one year after the 2015 ozone NAAQS designation effective date. This option would establish a set of protective anti-backsliding requirements for all nonattainment areas that have not yet attained the 2008 ozone NAAQS at the time of its revocation.

RTC staff does not support Option 2, which would place a burden on federal, state, and local resources by increasing the number of analysis years needed to complete emissions inventory preparations for SIPs and conformity demonstrations. If a region is classified as nonattainment for both the 2008 and 2015 ozone standard, the requirements to demonstrate attainment of the 70 ppb standard, will simultaneously demonstrate attainment of the 75 ppb standard. The anti-backsliding requirements put in place by the EPA will ensure a region, if classified more stringent under the 2008 standard, will still be held to the control strategies and regulations of the higher classification, without creating a need for duplication of emission inventories and conformity demonstrations.

Support for wider application on international emissions impacts

RTC staff supports wider application of CAA Section 179B policy on international emissions impacts beyond historical applications to only nonattainment areas adjoining international borders (e.g. El Paso, Texas). Section 179B allows the EPA to approve prospective attainment plans if the demonstration shows the area would attain “but for emissions emanating from outside the US”, and not reclassify an area upon a determination that an area would have attained by its attainment date “but for emissions emanating from outside the US” Supporting this need, the EPA’s *Notice of*

Mr. Robert Lingard
Page Three

February 13, 2017

Availability of the Environmental Protection Agency's Preliminary Interstate Ozone Transport Modeling Data for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) (82 FR 1733) identifies other states and global emissions contributing significant ozone level impacts in Texas nonattainment areas. These external uncontrollable impacts look to be the deciding difference for North Central Texas' future attainment coupled with tighter ozone NAAQS.

Ensure timeliness of final rules

Through the CAA, the EPA sets strict deadlines for regions to come into attainment, transportation conformity determinations, SIP submittals, etc. In turn, however, the EPA has established a precedence of not meeting NAAQS complimentary federal deadlines to adopt and publish implementation rules. This puts undue burden on nonattainment regions to develop SIPs and conformity determinations. RTC staff suggests the EPA to fulfill their obligations under the CAA and when uncontrollable delays occur, then the EPA is asked to revisit the NAAQS timetable, including designation and implementation, to develop a more practical, effective, and efficient schedule and communicate this in a timely manner to the States and local areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the *Implementation of the 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone: Nonattainment Area Classification and State Implementation Plan Requirements*. We look forward to a continued partnership with the EPA as we work together toward the common goal of improving air quality in North Central Texas. If you have any questions or would like further clarification, please contact Chris Klaus at (817) 695-9286 or at cklaus@nctcoq.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

AP:ch

cc: Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG



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

February 17, 2017

The Honorable Brian Birdwell
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Senator Birdwell:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to thank you for your leadership in the Texas Legislature on transportation and air quality issues. As the Senate Finance Committee meets to discuss Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), I would like to thank you for the funding levels proposed for the Low Income Vehicle Repair, Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) and the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP). Both programs are important and cost effective air quality initiatives that are critical in reducing harmful emissions in North Texas.

The RTC would like to bring to your attention the previously collected LIRAP funds sitting unused in Clean Air Account 151 and the need to appropriate those funds. As you know, LIRAP is a self-funded program that helps the DFW area reduce automobile emissions by offering financial incentives to repair or remove high-emitting vehicles from the roadways and allows for implementation of innovative transportation investments. The RTC was pleased to see that SB 1 proposes to continue to fund the program at FY2016–17 levels; however, a balance of over \$200 million of collected revenue remains unappropriated and unable to be used for its intended purpose. We ask that you appropriate LIRAP's residual balance of previously collected funds in order to lessen the impacts of high-emitting vehicles and maintain an efficient transportation system for the many new residents that are anticipated to call North Texas home.

Similar to LIRAP, TERP also includes a number of financial incentives and assistance programs that help offset the cost associated with reducing emissions from high-emitting, heavy-duty engines. While SB 1 provides TERP with a reduction of \$27.7 million from the 2016–17 biennium, it also has a large balance of collected revenue that remains unappropriated and unable to be used for its intended purpose. Providing TERP with less funding and not appropriating previously collected TERP funds will negatively affect air quality throughout the region.

Minimizing emissions is critical as 10 counties in the DFW region have been designated nonattainment for the Eight-Hour Ozone Standard by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is implementing a more stringent ozone standard, which will make it even more difficult for DFW to reach attainment.

The Honorable Brian Birdwell
Page Two

February 17, 2017

The RTC urges legislators to recognize the need to protect TERP revenue, while appropriating residual balances of previously collected LIRAP and TERP funds to be used for their intended purposes. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

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

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

RH:ch

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



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)
February 20, 2017

Mr. Peter Smith, P.E.,
Director of TPP
Texas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 149217
Austin, TX 78714-9217

Dear Mr. Smith:

This letter is in response to the letter dated, February 8, 2017 from Mr. Lauren Garduño. This correspondence certifies that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Dallas-Fort Worth region has complied with rules pertaining to HB 20. Specifically, the MPO needs to communicate processes in selecting Federally funded projects in 43 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 16.105. To do so, we must comply with Chapter 16.105(d)(1) as stated in the letter from Mr. Garduño. We are very proud of our historical and more advanced recent use of performance measures and metrics in identifying project need and scheduling that need through project prioritization.

Attached to this letter is an executive summary developed by our office and the TxDOT Districts within our region, summarizing the process used for Categories 2, 4 and 12. In addition, Chapter 3 of the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Plan for North Texas documents other categories that the MPO selects using Federal funds. These two references are inclusive of the HB 20 methodologies used in the transparent need identification and project prioritization. I am pleased to certify our procedures considered TxDOT goals. The goals of our nation, State and region need to have mutual support and the traveling public should have assurances of the integrated "system" approach our offices are using.

If you have any questions or additional comments please call me at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

MM:kad
Attachment

cc: Kelly Selman, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Dallas
Brian Barth, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Fort Worth
Ken Kirkpatrick, Legal Counsel, NCTCOG
Christie Gotti, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG

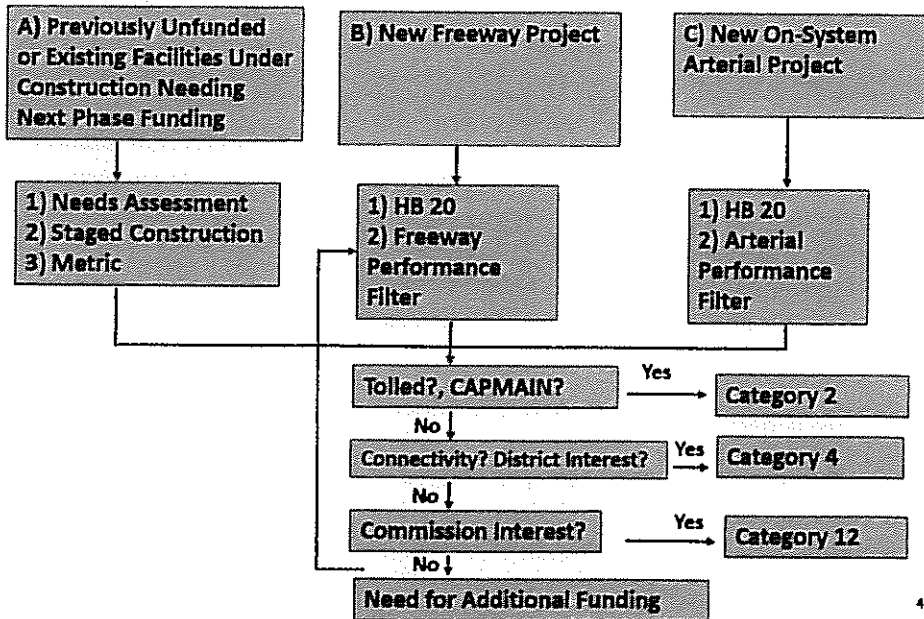
**Summary of 10 Year Plan Project Selection Process
For the Dallas/Fort Worth Metropolitan Area**

In response to recent communication from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) regarding development of the 2017 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) and the 10 year plans required as part of House Bill 20, the Dallas, Fort Worth, and Paris (Hunt County) TxDOT Districts and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) offer this summary of the joint Regional Transportation Council (RTC)/TxDOT District planning and programming process. In general, the Dallas-Fort Worth region endeavored to concentrate our funding (Category 2 and 4) on projects important to the region, but that (rightly so) may not gain the attention of the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC). To this end, our funds were placed on a variety of projects ranging from interstate highways to farm-to-market roads in rapidly urbanizing and congested areas. We are requesting TTC consideration to utilize Category 12 funds on major interstate, US, and State highway projects. Our plan was to leverage the "right" types of funds on the "right" types of projects. Therefore, as TxDOT Austin and the TTC review our proposed project listings, it can be noted that we propose leveraging our funds with the TTC's funds on some projects, but on most projects, the proposed funding is either 100% regional or 100% TTC. The summary below provides a synopsis of the process used in the Dallas-Fort Worth region to develop the 10 year plan.

Project Selection Process – "The Three Paths"

Proposed projects were divided into three paths in order to prioritize project selection. Path "A" included previous Regional Transportation Council (RTC)/ TxDOT commitments, Path "B" included new freeway projects, and Path "C" included new on-system arterials. Below is a flow chart outlining the paths, which helped our policy officials determine the best route for each project.

**PROJECT PRIORITIZATION:
PROCESS OF FILLING FUNDING BUCKETS**



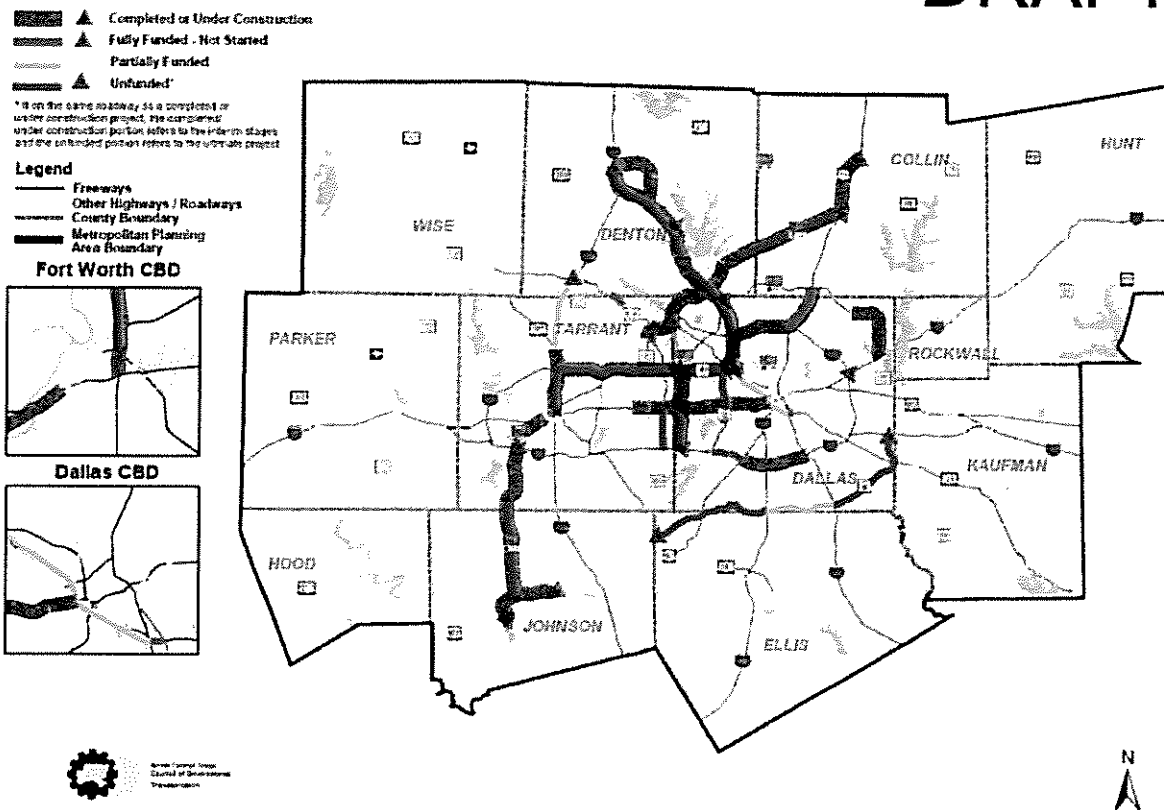
4 G1 AB2

Path "A" included previous commitments that remained unfunded or projects on existing facilities that were already under construction and needed funding for the next phase. In coordination with TxDOT District staff, a needs assessment was conducted to gather the latest project status and cost information for each project.

Staff also reviewed the previous 10-year planning efforts within the region and updated the 10-year map to display the current status of the RTC's previously identified priorities. Below is the map used to convey project status from the previous efforts to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC), the RTC, and the public.

RTC Priorities from 2004, 2008, 2010, and 2012
Current Status as of September 2016

DRAFT



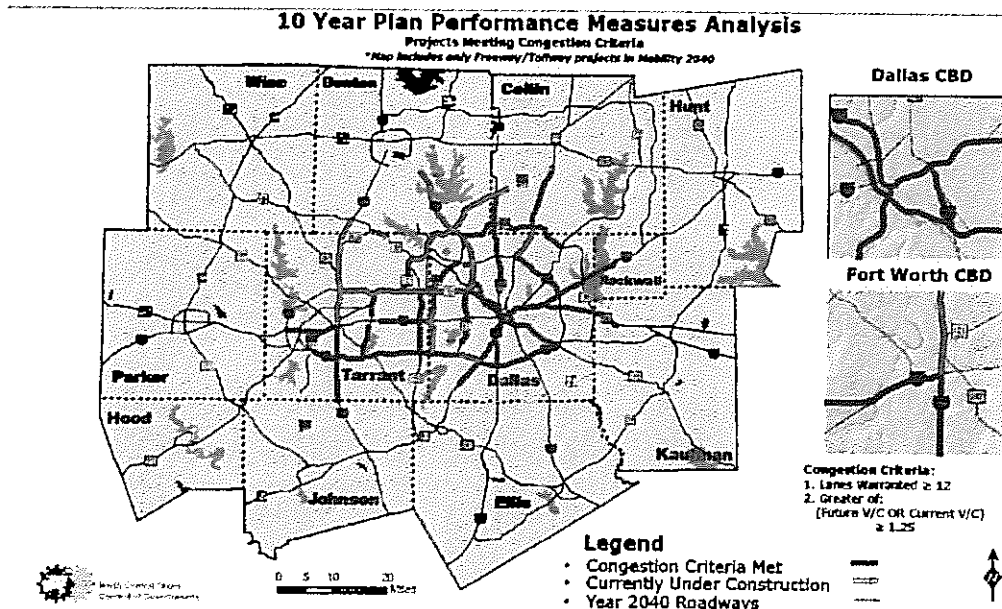
Path "B" projects are new project freeway projects, which were generated from the current metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) and vetted against performance measures to determine priority. The current MTP was approved in 2016 and the performance measures used to develop that plan were consistent with the criteria and goals set forth in House Bill 20 and MAP-21. Performance measures for the Path "B" projects focused on congestion, environmental justice, crash rates, truck percentages, etc. The congestion criteria considered included the number of lanes warranted, current volume to capacity (2017), and future volume to capacity (2040). Maps were developed to convey which projects met the criteria and are provided below.

Goals and Criteria Used in the 10 Year Planning Process

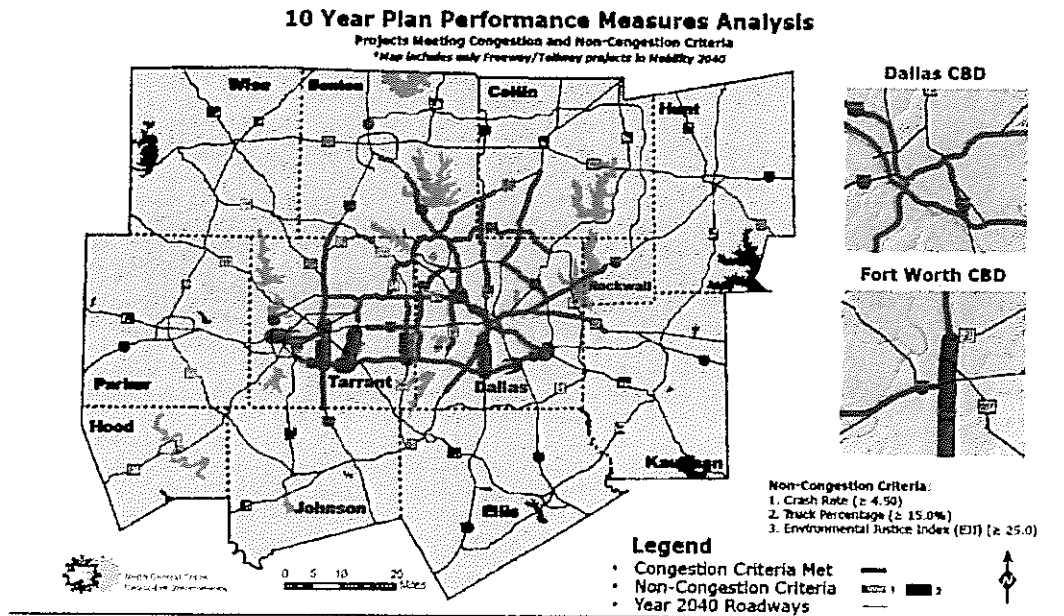
MAP-21 Goal	HB 20 Criteria*	Mobility 2040 Performance Measure Criteria
Congestion Reduction	Congestion	Traffic Volume/Roadway Capacity
System Reliability		Speed
Safety	Safety	Crash Rate
Infrastructure Condition		Pavement Conditions
Freight Movement and Economic Vitality	Economic development opportunities	Basic Employment
		Number of Trucks
Environmental Sustainability	Socioeconomic effects, including adverse health or environmental effects on minority or low-income neighborhoods	Environmental Justice Index
	Effects on the environment, including air quality	
Reduced Project Delivery Delay		Planning Status, Funding Availability, Constraints, and System Continuity

*"Funding Availability" was also a criteria for HB 20. Financial constraint was done once the project needs were identified.

Projects Meeting Congestion Criteria



Projects Meeting Congestion and Non-Congestion Criteria



“Path C” included projects that do not rise to the level of a freeway facility, however they are on-system arterials that have high traffic volumes. These projects were selected because they meet the congestion criteria, as well as the non-congestion criteria identified in the maps above. Our region elected to concentrate our Category 2 and 4 funds on these projects as they are regional in nature and provide connectivity to the rest of the State. While they are important projects, we did not think the Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) would be as interested in arterial projects as they might be in freeway projects.

Considerations & Outcomes

Consideration: In October 2015, the RTC approved the second installment of Proposition 1 projects through FY 2017. At that time, the RTC also identified proposed Proposition 1 projects in FY 2018 and FY 2019 with the idea that funding would be confirmed once the Proposition 1 funding levels were known. In 2016, the Proposition 1 funding forecast was made available and were lower than anticipated. This meant that projects funded in the out years and even some projects in FY 2017 could possibly be delayed due to anticipated funding shortfalls.

Outcome: Out year Proposition 1 projects were funded with Category 2 or 4 funds. As these projects were originally selected by the RTC in coordination with the TxDOT Districts, it was decided that Category 2 and 4 funds would uphold the RTC and Districts' previous commitments. This action enabled Category 12 funding requests to focus on larger projects that provide mobility to the region and State.

Consideration: Category 12 funding allocation levels were released along with Category 2 and 4 allocations. Selection authority for Category 12 funding is held by the Texas Transportation Commission and projects selected with these funds must provide a strategic benefit to the State.

Outcome: Our region thought it best to concentrate RTC and TxDOT District funding on more regional and connectivity projects. Therefore, Category 2 and 4 funds were placed on these facilities. Our 10 year plan list of projects requests Category 12 funds from the TTC for the largest, most significant projects in the region like LBJ East and other projects on Interstate, US, and State highways.



125 EAST 11TH STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | 512.463.8588 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

February 8, 2017

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

As you are aware, House Bill 20 (HB 20) passed by the 84th requires that each planning organization develop project recommendation criteria. The Texas Administrative Code was recently amended to reflect the changes required under HB 20. In the Chapter 16.105 (d)(1)(A) it states the commission shall consider the following criteria for project selection:

- (A) The potential of the project to meet transportation goals for the state, including efforts to:
- (i) maintain a safe transportation system for all transportation users;
 - (ii) optimize system performance by mitigating congestion, enhancing connectivity and mobility, improving the reliability of the system, facilitating the movement of freight and international trade, and fostering economic competitiveness through infrastructure investments;
 - (iii) maintain and preserve system infrastructure; and
 - (iv) accomplish any additional transportation goals for the state identified in the statewide long-range transportation plans as provided in §16.54 of this chapter (relating to Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan (SLRTP));

Please provide written confirmation that the project selection process you currently use includes consideration of these goals. This information will be included as part of the public meeting on February 23, 2017 for the upcoming March Unified Transportation Program revision. Please provide your response to:

Peter Smith, P.E., Director of TPP
P.O. Box 149217,
Austin, Texas 78714-9217

If you have any questions, please contact Peter Smith at 512-486-5003.

Sincerely,

Lauren D. Garduño, P.E.
Director of Project Planning & Development

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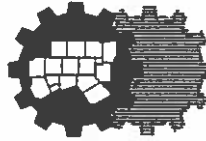
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North Central Texas Council Of Governments

February 21, 2017

Mr. Bill Verkest
Chairman, Transportation Advisory Committee
City of Arlington
P.O. Box 90231
Arlington, Texas 76004-3231

Ms. Alicia Winkelblech
Assistant Director, Strategic Planning
City of Arlington
P.O. Box 90231
Arlington, Texas 76004-3231

RE: Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee Feedback

Dear Mr. Verkest and Ms. Winkelblech:

Thank you for inviting the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to present to the City of Arlington's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) in January 2017. NCTCOG assists local governments in planning and coordination for many purposes, including the coordination of transportation services in our region. As the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, we are tasked with continuously improving seamless goods and people movement across the region through policies, planning and funding.

The creation of a TAC by the city is an excellent step forward in advancing the discussion of critical transportation needs in and around the city in both the near-term and the future. Given the city's geographic location, economic development generators and other opportunities to the city, it is important to consider emerging technologies for goods and people movement. In my presentation, I highlighted several mid to long term transportation options and opportunities for the TAC to consider. These concepts include:

- 1) High intensity bus service on major freeways such as I-30
- 2) A high speed rail station in Arlington
- 3) People movers to connect major destinations in the city
- 4) Automated vehicles operating in campus-like environments
- 5) Automated freight delivery connecting major manufacturing plants to transportation infrastructure

I am hopeful that these concepts will assist the committee in developing a strategic approach to frame transportation decisions for the City of Arlington. Maintaining flexibility in the short term will ensure success in implementing future technologies such as those outlined above.

Mr. Verkest and Ms. Winkelblech
Page Two

February 21, 2017

Additionally, I am requesting your comments on the concepts listed above in order to further NCTCOG's understanding of the transportation priorities for the city and its stakeholders. Your input will certainly serve as a guide to current and future planning and funding efforts.

I look forward to your remarks and those of the committee. Please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9241 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

JP:tmb

cc: The Honorable Jeff Williams, Mayor, City of Arlington
The Honorable Kathryn Wilemon, Council Member, City of Arlington
Trey Yelverton, City Manager, City of Arlington



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

February 27, 2017

Mr. T.C. Broadnax
City Manager, City of Dallas
Office of the City Manager
Dallas City Hall
1500 Marilla Street, 4EN
Dallas, Texas 75201

Mr. A.C. Gonzalez
Former City Manager, City of Dallas
Office of the City Manager
Dallas City Hall
1500 Marilla Street, 4EN
Dallas, Texas 75201

RE: Resilient Dallas Study

Dear Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Broadnax:

In January, Mr. Gonzalez requested assistance from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) related to a Comprehensive Study on the State of Transportation Equity in Dallas (the communication and proposed study are enclosed). As referenced in the letter, transportation access and mobility are vital to our region and both are key components of Access North Texas, the region's plan to coordinate public transit and human service transportation to meet the need of older adults, individuals with disabilities and individuals with low incomes.

While we are unable to fund your request for an independent study, I wanted to make you aware of upcoming work that may support and inform your Resilient Dallas initiative. This spring, staff will begin data collection and analysis to take a quantitative look at access to opportunity. This initial phase will include transit affordability, accessibility, and quality of service in several neighborhood-level zones across the region. Staff will also explore car-free quality accessibility to opportunities in these areas including employment, education and job training facilities, health care facilities, healthy food, and parks and recreation. Lastly, this work may include an economic development measure related to the value of investing in public transportation.

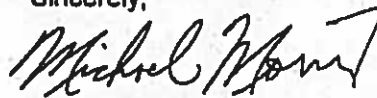
In the fall, work will be expanded in coordination with the University of Texas at Arlington to incorporate additional quantitative analysis and to develop an opportunity score or index for the 12-county Metropolitan Planning Area through NCTCOG's University Partnership Program. The scope of work for this phase includes an investigation of areas with low opportunity scores, a menu of investments or other interventions that can positively influence opportunity scores, and test cases for potential real-world application.

Mr. Broadnax and Mr. Gonzalez
Page Two

February 27, 2017

We welcome Resilient Dallas and others to participate in this work over the coming six to nine months. I am hopeful that this work will provide a springboard of information to advance the City's ongoing work on enhancing transportation access and mobility. As referenced in your letter, we appreciate the offer to participate in the Resilient Dallas Steering Committee and transportation sub-committee and look forward to that opportunity. Sarah Chadderdon will be coordinating the work outlined above. Please feel free to contact her at (817) 695-9180 or schadderdon@nctcog.org if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

SJC:tmb
Enclosures

cc: Gary Thomas, P.E., President/Executive Director, Dallas Area Rapid Transit
Theresa O'Donnell, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Dallas
Jill Jordan, Assistant City Manager, City of Dallas
Karla Weaver, Program Manager, NCTCOG
Sarah Chadderdon, Principal Transportation Planner, NCTCOG



January 9, 2017

Michael Morris
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington Texas 76011

RE: Resilient Dallas Study

Dear Mr. Morris:

I am writing to request your assistance in an effort to better understand and analyze the state of transportation equity in Dallas; and to request that NCTCOG partner with the City of Dallas to develop strategies to address the gaps and challenges that many of Dallas' transit-dependent and low-income residents struggle with every day.

We are aware that NCTCOG is currently engaged in an update of the Access North Texas Plan and believe this initiative presents a timely and unique opportunity for the City of Dallas to collaborate with NCTCOG on this very important issue.

As you know, the City of Dallas was very fortunate to be selected as one of only 100 cities around the world to participate in the 100 Resilient Cities program, pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation. The Phase I Resilient Assessment of this process is now complete, and we are poised to launch the second phase which entails a detailed analysis and assessment of four key focus areas:

- Building an inclusive economy and expanding opportunity
- Achieving a healthier Dallas
- Defining a 21st century infrastructure for Dallas neighborhoods
- Advancing transportation equity and preparing for 21st century mobility

While all of these topic areas are inter-related, we believe the steel thread that binds these issues is transportation access and mobility. It will undoubtedly be integral to our success. For this reason, we invite your staff to participate on our Steering Committee and the transportation sub-committee which will kick-off in the upcoming weeks.

We have also approached Professor Shima Hamidi, Director of the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington, about conducting research specific to transportation equity in DFW, and particularly the City of Dallas. I'm sure you are aware of the impressive body of work Professor Hamidi has already produced regarding the impact equity of transportation systems for transit dependent populations. We would also request that NCTCOG fund this important study and incorporate the



City of Dallas

research and findings into the Access North Texas Plan. We have attached the proposal from Professor Hamidi for your convenience.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request to participate and partner with the City of Dallas on our Resilient Dallas Phase II Study. Theresa O'Donnell is leading this effort and will be in contact with your office to follow up and discuss next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AC Gonzalez', written over the word 'Sincerely'.

AC Gonzalez
City Manager, City of Dallas

Enclosure: A Comprehensive Study on the State of Transportation Equity in Dallas

Cc: Karla Weaver, Program Manager, NCTCOG
Theresa O'Donnell, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Dallas
Jill Jordon, Assistant City Manager, City of Dallas

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

March 1, 2017

The Honorable Trent Ashby
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Representative Ashby:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to thank you for your leadership in the Texas Legislature on transportation and air quality issues. As the House Appropriations Committee meets to discuss House Bill 1 (HB 1), I would like to thank you for the funding levels proposed for the Low Income Vehicle Repair, Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) and the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP). Both programs are important and cost effective air quality initiatives that are critical in reducing harmful emissions in North Texas.

The RTC would like to bring to your attention the previously collected LIRAP funds sitting unused in Clean Air Account 151 and the need to appropriate those funds. As you know, LIRAP is a self-funded program that helps the DFW area reduce automobile emissions by offering financial incentives to repair or remove high-emitting vehicles from the roadways and allows for implementation of innovative transportation investments. The RTC was pleased to see that HB 1 proposes to continue to fund the program at FY2016–17 levels; however, a balance of over \$200 million of collected revenue remains unappropriated and unable to be used for its intended purpose. We ask that you appropriate LIRAP's residual balance of previously collected funds in order to lessen the impacts of high-emitting vehicles and maintain an efficient transportation system for the many new residents that are anticipated to call North Texas home.

Similar to LIRAP, TERP includes a number of financial incentives and assistance programs that help offset the cost associated with reducing emissions from high-emitting, heavy-duty engines. HB 1 proposes to continue to fund the program at current funding levels, but TERP also has a large balance of collected revenue that remains unappropriated and unable to be used for its intended purpose. Not appropriating previously collected TERP funds will negatively affect air quality throughout the region.

Minimizing emissions is critical as 10 counties in the DFW region have been designated nonattainment for the Eight-Hour Ozone Standard by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is implementing a more stringent ozone standard, which will make it even more difficult for DFW to reach attainment.

The Honorable Trent Ashby
Page Two

March 1, 2017

The RTC urges legislators to appropriate residual balances of previously collected LIRAP and TERP funds to be used for their intended purposes. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, at mmorris@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

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

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

RH:ch

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

High-speed rail company drops suits against landowners

BY BRANDON FORMBY The Texas Tribune

The private developer of a planned bullet train between Dallas and Houston has withdrawn more than a dozen lawsuits against Texas landowners that sought court orders allowing the company access to private property to survey land for the 240-mile project.

Texas Central Partners officials said they are instead going to try and have an “open dialogue” with landowners about letting the company onto their land.

“We’re stepping back and going back to conversations and taking some of the heat out of our process,” President Tim Keith said.

Texas Central is developing a 240-mile bullet train line intended to transport passengers between Houston and Dallas in 90 minutes with a stop near Bryan. The company has partnered with Japanese train operator JR Central to bring its technology to Texas. The project has drawn support from officials in Houston and Dallas but opposition from communities and landowners that are expected to be near the train’s route.

In court filings, the company argued that state law allows it to enter private property to survey land that may be used for a potential route because it is a railroad. A group called Texans Against High-Speed Rail have said the company shouldn’t be considered a railroad because it doesn’t currently operate any rail lines.

A trial was set for July, according to the Harris County District Clerk’s office.

'It needed to be done years ago'

TxDOT officials discuss plans for easing gridlock on stretch of I-635

By RAY LESZCZYNSKI
Staff Writer rluszczynski@dallasnews.com

The late-arriving crowd at the Texas Department of Transportation's public hearing on the \$1.5 billion LBJ East project was to be expected Tuesday evening.

Just outside the site, Highland Oaks Church of Christ, was the object of shared frustrations. It was rush hour and LBJ Freeway, or Interstate 635, had ground to its daily standstill.

"It needed to be done years ago," said Lucian Giambasu of Garland, one of several weary residents who testified.

The freeway has been widened at both ends of the 11.2-mile project. But at four lanes and an HOV lane each way, unimproved I-635 from Central Expressway to Interstate 30 struggles to carry the daily load of about 200,000 vehicles.

"It's over 40 years old. It has exceeded its design capacity and does not meet current design criteria," Matthew Craig of Halff Associates said as he discussed the new plan with about 150 who attended Tuesday's public hearing.

That plan includes five main lanes and two express lanes in each direction, continuous frontage roads, seven noise walls and upgrades to Interstate 30 on each side of the interchange in Mesquite.

Regional Transportation Commission officials, mayors from Garland and Mesquite, and Dallas County Commissioner Theresa Daniel stated support for the project at the hearing.

"I hear it from Dallas, Richardson, Mesquite and Garland," Daniel said. "It affects us all mightily."

Construction is scheduled to start in 2020 and finish in 2024.

"This is not a need. Not a want. It's a desperation," said Francis Hiner, whose Garland home is near the first sound barrier in the corridor. "We need to get this done before I die. It took me 40 years to get a sound wall."

All but one of the speakers supported the tolled managed lanes currently in the plan to expedite the project. Between Miller Road/Royal Lane and Central Expressway, 3.3 miles, the managed express lanes would be tolled.

"We have unnecessary pollution, accidents and people losing sleep because they have too long a commute, which leads to more accidents," said Yvonne Salazar of Dallas. "If it takes toll lanes to make it work right, I'm ready to get it done."

Giambasu said the continuous frontage roads, which Garland and Dallas portions of I-635 don't currently have, would drive local economic impact throughout the corridor that includes Lake Highlands, Far East Dallas, South Garland and North Mesquite.

"What I don't support is having the project broken up into various chunks," he said. "That will only lead to further delays and congestion."

The toll lanes have yet to be approved by the Legislature, however, and without the clearance, the planned financing falls about one-third short of what's needed. That could lead to an extended timeline or compromised features — such as the interchange at I-30.

Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, said Tuesday that the tolled section would leverage the remaining hundreds of millions of dollars needed for the project. He advocated that the tolls be managed through TxDOT and the Regional Transportation Council, rather than with a private investor controlling the revenue stream.

In her first term representing part of the area, state Rep. Victoria Neave, D-Dallas, did not specifically comment on the legislative debate over tolls, but pledged to work to break ground as soon as possible. Her district director, Sylvia Thomas, read a statement saying in this case, personal mobility and economic mobility were one and the same.

"We live in one of the fastest-growing areas in the country," the statement read. "Those countless hours spent in traffic are hours that families could be spending together."

While the Legislature figures out the funding, TxDOT continues its path to clearing the project. That includes the public hearing and discussion of the project design, environmental study of the area and needed right-of-way acquisition.

Cara Rouvaldt of Halff Associates said about 16 acres of new right-of-way would be required for the construction. Structures at two apartment complexes — Summerwood Cove and The Park on Whitehurst, which combine for 700 units — and 10 commercial properties would be affected.

A condominium resident on the Dallas side of the freeway said she was upset her community would not get a noise wall. Four of the 11 areas that TxDOT said were approved for sound barriers will not get them at the landowners' request. Owners of multifamily complexes in the corridor may benefit most if their communities are visible.

The public comment period for the project runs through Feb. 15.

Twitter: @RayLeszcynski

Chance for ban on texting while driving improves, lawmakers say

BY ANNA M. TINSLEY atinsley@star-telegram.com

AUSTIN

Some lawmakers say 2017 is their best chance yet to pass a law preventing Texans from texting while driving — a law already in place in all but four states.

On Thursday, they launched their latest effort to keep roads safe at the state Capitol before more than a dozen Texans who have lost loved ones in crashes that involved distracted drivers.

"This is what drinking and driving was to previous generations," state Rep. Eddie Lucio III, D-Brownsville, one of several co-authors of a bill to ban texting while driving, said during a news conference on the issue. "I don't even think or assume when I see someone swerving that it's alcohol-related. I immediately assume it's because they are distracted, because they are on their phones.

"We will finish the fight," he promised. "We will reach that finish line."

But not all lawmakers are supportive, including Tarrant County Republican Sen. Konni Burton, who considers it unenforceable.

North Richland Hills' Dee Davila-Estelle was among those listening to Lucio and his allies as they laid out their legislative battle plan.

She and her husband, Kevin, lost two of their three children in a deadly 2015 accident, when their family's 2011 Ford Fusion was hit from behind on Interstate 35 by a driver they were told was distracted by his phone while driving.

"We went from a family of five to a family of three in the blink of an eye," Davila-Estelle said. "It has been so hard. Our family motto used to be 'live, laugh, love.' Our new motto is 'one step, one breath, repeat.'

"We couldn't breathe, we couldn't move. We didn't know how to function as half a family anymore."

She and others say it's past time for lawmakers to pass a law taking cellphones out of the hands of Texas drivers.

This is the fourth session in a row that state Rep. Tom Craddick, R-Midland, has filed a bill banning texting while driving. Several House members, including Lucio and state Rep. Charlie Geren, R-Fort Worth, signed on as coauthors.

State Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, filed an identical bill in the Senate.

Davila-Estelle said she will do whatever she can to help make this proposal law in Texas.

"When I saw my kids for the first time after the accident, which was at the funeral home, I promised them I was going to make it right so no family has to feel like this again," she said. "If the bill doesn't pass this year, they better get used to my face."

"I'll be back at the Capitol until it does."

THE PROPOSAL

At issue is House Bill 62, a measure banning texting while driving known as the "Alex Brown Memorial Act," which is named for a 17-year-old Terry County high school student killed in 2009 when she crashed her truck. She was texting at the time.

Craddick has long said Texas needs a ban because many of the estimated 3,500 fatalities on Texas roads could be prevented.

Dozens of Texas cities from Arlington to San Antonio have already outlawed texting while driving. And while there are state laws preventing texting in school zones and keeping both bus drivers with minor passengers and drivers younger than 18 from texting while driving, there is no overall statewide ban.

HB 62, and its companion Senate Bill 31, would make it a criminal offense if someone uses a "wireless communication device" while driving to "read, write or send an electronic message while operating a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is stopped."

Violations would be a misdemeanor crime, punishable by a fine between \$25 and \$99, unless the person already has been convicted of such an offense. Multiple offenses would draw fines between \$100 and \$200, according to the bill.

If approved by lawmakers, and signed by Gov. Greg Abbott, this measure could become law by Sept. 1, 2017.

State Rep. Gene Wu, D-Houston, said this is the third time he has signed on as a co-author of this bill.

"I'm getting pissed," he said. "This is outrageous. It's outrageous our state cannot do something as simple as dealing with distracted drivers.

"Our roads are already dangerous enough."

Under the bill, Texas motorists would still be able to talk on the phone while driving, if motorists have a "hands-free device" that only requires them to briefly touch the phone or car to begin or end a call.

It also would not be a violation for a Texas motorist to summon emergency help, report illegal activity, read a text a driver "reasonably believed concerned an emergency" or communicate with a dispatcher while behind the wheel.

Critics say this isn't the best way to address texting while driving. They say such a proposal would be hard to enforce — and would encroach on individual liberties.

LEGISLATIVE BATTLE?

Texas is among four states — as well as Arizona, Missouri and Montana — that don't have statewide bans on texting while driving, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Statistics show 14 percent, or 483, of the 3,534 deaths from traffic crashes in Texas in 2014 involved a distracted driver.

In Fort Worth, distracted driving factored in to 14, or 16.45 percent, of the city's 85 fatalities, in 2015, records show.

"We must stop these tragedies from occurring," said Jennifer Smith, executive director of the Stop-Distractions.org advocacy group. "It's no longer a question of whether this will happen to someone you love. It's when, if it hasn't happened already."

Last session, Sen. Burton, of Colleyville, was among those preventing a bill banning texting while driving from reaching the Senate floor for debate.

Concerns ranged from the bill violating the Fourth Amendment, which protects against unreasonable searches and seizures, to the micromanagement of Texas adults. She and others refused to green light the bill in 2015.

Burton said this week that she still doesn't support a measure.

"I continue to be against any bill that bans texting while driving," Burton said this week. "It would be a wholly unenforceable law because an officer cannot reliably distinguish between a person texting on their phone or simply looking at a map, etc.

"However, I am for what Texas current has on the books — these laws already provide police ample reason to pull a driver over based on observable actions."

Texting while driving bans have been proposed through the years and one passed the Legislature in 2011. But then-Gov. Rick Perry vetoed the proposal, saying it was a way to "micromanage the behavior of adults."

Anna Tinsley: 817-390-7610, @annatinsley

Driverless cars will change everything, futurist says

BY GORDON DICKSON gdickson@star-telegram.com

AUSTIN

Thomas Frey doesn't mince words when it comes to driverless cars.

"Driverless-car technology is going to be the most disruptive technology in all of history," the futurist said during an opening session of the two-day Texas Transportation Forum, which began Monday in Austin.

Speaking to about 1,000 attendees — most of whom have spent entire careers building highways the old-fashioned way (for human drivers) — Frey instead asked the crowd to imagine a day when Americans no longer owned their own cars but instead simply used their phones to hail a driverless car from a fleet.

The futurist at the Colorado-based DaVinci Institute think tank asked those in the audience to imagine how it might change car insurance, repairs, rentals and the delivery of goods now handled mostly by trucks. He asked them to imagine a supermarket of the future, with a large queue of driverless cars waiting to give people a ride home, but no need for a traditional parking lot.

Millions of jobs in these fields and others could be eliminated, although other new vocations that today we can't even imagine could take their place, he said.

He predicted driverlesscar technology would be in widespread use in 20 to 30 years, potentially shaking up the entire economy of Texas and other states.

"It will be more disruptive than the invention of the car itself," said Frey, senior futurist at the institute. "More than the invention of the wheel. More than [the discovery of] electricity."

CHANGING AGENDA

The gathering represented the 12th straight year transportation experts have met in Austin to talk in deep terms about their industry. But over time, the theme of the event has changed dramatically.

In the past, table discussions often focused on a lack of tax-supported funding to build roads, and the use of alternatives such as toll roads and partnerships with private companies. But money is no longer the top concern.

Texas now has a projected \$38.3 billion surplus of highway funds projected for the next decade. And the forum's agenda is dominated by topics such as how to make the most of data generated by cars.

For the Texas Department of Transportation, which is celebrating its 100th year of existence, the annual forum has become a time to gather information about the latest technological developments, and to share ideas about what, if any, role government should have.

"You have to always be ready. Our staff is very cognizant of these changes and what they might mean," said Tryon Lewis, Texas Transportation Commission chairman.

As the state's population essentially doubles to an estimated 50 million people by 2045, only about 53.7 percent of those new arrivals will be from the "natural increase" in which births outweigh deaths, said Lloyd Potter, Texas state demographer. The other 47.3 percent is expected to be migration of new residents from other states and countries.

The expected crush of humanity will force state leaders to seek out alternatives to traditional freeways — and, perhaps, cars with drivers.

"Our economy is so diverse, complex and high-tech," Potter said, "we can't have a transportation system like we used to."

Gordon Dickson: 817-390-7796, @gdickson

Arlington Officials Take Rides In Self-Driving Vehicle

February 2, 2017 12:17 PM

Filed Under: [Arlington](#), [Driverless Car](#), [Driverless Cars](#), [driverless vehicles](#), [Self-Driving](#), [Self-Driving Cars](#)

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ARLINGTON (CBSDFW.COM) – The future is rolling in North Texas in the form of self-driving vehicles. The Alliance for Transportation Innovation (ATI) hosted rides today in one of their fully “autonomous transit vehicles” – think of it as a minibus without a steering wheel.

City officials were some of the first to take a spin. The vehicle is programmed to stay on one path and stop for anything in its way.

Paul Brubaker, the CEO for ATI, said they’re hoping to show the public that there’s no need to worry about safety when it comes to self-driving vehicle technology.

“The purpose of the vehicle is to avoid situations like that in the first place,” he said. This [vehicle] is computer driven and computers don’t drink and drive, they don’t text and drive, they don’t fall asleep and they don’t get fatigued.”

Arlington was chosen as the North Texas test site because the football stadium and the ballpark. The city was the ideal site to see how the driverless vehicles would perform as shuttles from parking lots to the venues.

After going for a spin Arlington officials said they could see the new technology being one of the great things on the horizon for the entertainment district. Mayor Jeff said, “If you think about our entertainment district, that brings 14 million people here into our city, and then our major shopping areas to the south, I think we’re a great place to try out this technology.”

The autonomous shuttle that rolled around the Arlington Convention Center had no steering wheel or pedals and had enough space to seat 12 people

Texas still No. 1 in wind power, but challenges loom

BY BILL HANNA billhanna@star-telegram.com

Over the last decade, Texas has led the nation in wind energy and, for now, the growth shows no signs of slowing down.

The American Wind Energy Association came to General Motors' Arlington Assembly plant on Thursday to tout the industry and the factors that have made Texas the nation's top wind state. Thursday, North Carolina became the 41st state to have an operating wind farm.

Despite the rosy picture, industry officials are casting a wary eye toward Washington to see which way the political winds are blowing with the Trump administration.

Tom Kiernan, chief executive officer of the association, said since wind is low cost, provides jobs and is being used by many American companies like GM, it should be a good fit with many of President Donald Trump's goals.

"I think, I hope, wind will work for the Trump administration," Kiernan said.

In Texas, it's booming.

The Lone Star state, with 20,321 megawatts of installed wind power capacity, is easily the nation's leader, surpassing the combined capacity of No. 2 Iowa and No. 3 Oklahoma, according to a fourth-quarter market report compiled by the trade group.

One recent development has been companies like General Motors making long-term commitments to wind energy.

The Arlington plant, which assembles 1,000 SUVs daily including the Chevrolet Suburban, Chevrolet Tahoe and Cadillac Escalade, is already 50 percent powered by wind energy and will have 100 percent of its energy needs served by wind power by 2018.

That will make the Arlington plant GM's first factory to be fully powered by wind. GM is getting its wind energy from RES's Cactus Flats in Concho County and EDPR's Los Mirasoles Wind Farm in Edinburg.

“Wind is now the cheapest option, even when it is unsubsidized,” said Rob Threlkeld, GM’s global manager of renewable energy. Threlkeld estimated GM saved \$5 million in energy costs during the last year by using renewables, but it is too early to say how much it will cut electricity expenses at the Arlington plant.

In November, General Motors announced that it was buying enough wind power to serve the energy needs at 16 facilities across the country, including the one in Arlington.

Other companies such as Facebook and Amazon have also jumped on the wind bandwagon. The big Facebook data center under construction in far north Fort Worth will be powered by wind, while Amazon announced plans to build a wind farm in Scurry County, in West Texas, to provide energy for fulfillment centers in Haslet, Fort Worth, Coppell and Dallas.

One advantage is the ability to lock in a fixed price for energy rather than dealing with volatile energy sources such as natural gas.

For Texas, the state’s lead in wind energy is only expected to grow.

Wind power provides 25,000 jobs in Texas, from technicians who maintain turbines to factory workers who build components.

In the fourth quarter of 2016, Texas led the nation with 1,790 megawatts of wind power installed and the state also has the most capacity under construction with 5,401 megawatts, the report said.

Many speaking at Thursday’s event gave credit to the state’s \$7 billion investment to build the Competitive Renewable Energy Zone, which erected massive transmission lines to bring wind energy from West Texas to population centers in the eastern half of the state.

One megawatt can power about 200 homes during peak conditions and about 500 homes during milder demand, according to ERCOT, or the Electric Reliability of Council of Texas, which manages about 90 percent of the grid in Texas.

But there is some blow-back to wind power.

Trump famously railed against Scottish wind farms near his golf course in Scotland. But officials hope that former Texas Gov. Rick Perry, the nominee for secretary of energy, will provide some help. He was in office for the Texas buildup of CREZ transmission lines, which gives the industry hope.

The Trump administration's Top 50 list of infrastructure projects, which was obtained by the Star-Telegram's parent company, McClatchy, includes wind and transmission line projects helpful to the industry.

In Texas, some opposition has come from landowners who oppose new projects because they mar the landscape.

The state's Chapter 313 tax abatement program, which helped fuel the wind-farm growth, has also been getting increased scrutiny.

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar's biennial report on tax exemptions forecast that the Chapter 313 program, which temporarily lowers taxes paid by a business in exchange for providing economic benefits such as jobs, will cost local school districts about \$326 million in 2016 but could climb as high as \$1.1 billion in 2022, according to the Houston Chronicle.

Wind projects comprised 144 of the 309 Chapter 313 tax abatements in the state, the *Chronicle* reported.

Legislation has been proposed to limit wind turbines near military installations, the Star-Telegram reported earlier this week. Sen. John Coryn and U.S. Rep. Blake Farenthold, R-Corpus Christi, have introduced bills that could impact wind farms built near military installations.

The wind industry hopes any issues with wind turbines interfering with radar at military installations will be handled on a case-by-case basis rather than a uniform 25- or 50-mile ban on turbines near bases, said Jeff Clark, executive director of Austin-based Wind Coalition.

Another challenge is that wind doesn't always blow when energy is needed the most. In Texas, the highest energy usage tends to come on scorching summer afternoons when there is often very little wind blowing in West Texas.

But Kiernan said having more wind farms in South Texas helps mitigate those issues.

"When the wind isn't blowing in West Texas — guess what? — it's ripping at the other end of the state," Kiernan said.

Congress has extended the production tax credit for wind, but it is set to phase out by 2020. The Wind Coalition's Clark said that wind energy can stand on its own but points

out that the oil and gas industry has access to tools like the master-limited partnership, which can provide tax benefits for investors, that the wind industry does not.

"When you talk about wind, they're called subsidies," Clark said. "When you talk about other industries, it's called incentives or something else."

Bill Hanna: 817-390-7698, @fwhanna

TEX Rail commuter station approved at DFW Airport, to open in 2018

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article132416339.html#storylink=cpy>

By Gordon Dickson

gdickson@star-telegram.com

[TEX Rail commuter train service](#) is scheduled to begin boarding passengers in late 2018 in downtown Fort Worth.

And when that service begins, Dallas/Fort Worth Airport officials say they'll be ready with a station of their own at the other end of the 27-mile-long line.

DFW Airport board members have agreed to hire contractor Archer Western of Irving to build a station at Terminal B at an estimated cost of \$28.4 million. A contract with Archer Western, which along with rail operating company Herzog is [overseeing the TEX Rail project](#), was approved during a board meeting earlier this month.

The airport also has a light-rail station that opened in 2014 for [Dallas Area Rapid Transit](#) on the ground level of Terminal A. The DART station and the TEX Rail station will be connected by a walkway, making it possible for riders to easily transfer between the transit systems.

“We’re excited about that. We’re on track,” [DFW Airport chief executive Sean Donohue](#) said of the planned TEX Rail station. “The look and feel of the station will be very similar to the DART station at Terminal A. We’ll pretty much use the same design.”

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article132416339.html#storylink=cpy>

The DFW TEX Rail station is expected to be completed by September 2018, airport officials said, with TEX Rail service tentatively scheduled to begin in November 2018.

The TEX Rail line will start in downtown Fort Worth and offer stops near the Stockyards, the Mercantile area of north Fort Worth, North Richland Hills and Grapevine before reaching DFW.

In December, the [Federal Transit Administration](#) approved a full-funding grant agreement for TEX Rail, ensuring the project will receive its federal funding request of \$499.39 million.

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article132416339.html#storylink=cpy>

The [Fort Worth Transportation Authority](#), which is the lead public agency for TEX Rail, has begun construction of the project north of downtown.

The airport's TEX Rail station will be designed to accommodate a second rail line for DART's planned [Cotton Belt project](#), which would essentially extend TEX Rail north and eastward into Addison, Dallas and Plano by cutting diagonally across airport property. DART's board recently approved the Cotton Belt project, with the goal of opening by 2022.

Contract specifics

The contract with Archer Western includes demolition of an old people mover guide-way that ran in the bowels of DFW before the airport opened its SkyLink service. An airport operations area gate will also need to be moved to a nearby taxiway, according to a DFW Airport staff report.

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article132416339.html#storylink=cpy>

Some airport board members noted during a recent committee meeting that the \$28.4 million price tag is substantially lower than the \$40 million they had expected to spend on the TEX Rail station.

Airport officials noted that the TEX Rail line, which will feature self-propelled diesel rail cars, is different from the DART light-rail line, which features electric-powered cars. Also, they said, the contracting climate allowed for some lower costs for TEX Rail that weren't available when the DART station was built a few years ago.

The airport ended up spending \$35.6 million on the DART Terminal A station, spokesman David Magana said. DART covered the cost of getting the train tracks built onto airport property, he said.

TEX Rail trains are expected to operate about every half-hour during peak periods, with about 44 trains per day in all. About 9,000 passengers per day are expected to ride the trains in the service's first year, and that number could expand to 14,000 riders per day by 2035, Fort Worth Transportation Authority officials say.

This report includes information from the Star-Telegram archives.

Gordon Dickson: [817-390-7796](tel:817-390-7796), [@gdickson](https://twitter.com/gdickson)

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article132416339.html#storylink=cpy>

With money tight, Texas budget writers eyeing billions approved by voters for roads

More than a year after Texas voters approved routing billions in state sales taxes to roads and bridges, some lawmakers are questioning whether the first payment of \$5 billion should move forward as planned.

BY [JIM MALEWITZ](#) AND [BRANDON FORMBY](#) FEB. 13, 2017 12:51 PM

Texans voted in 2015 to boost funding for state's public roadways and bridges, which have strained under the state's growing population. Proposition 7 — loudly cheered by top Texas leaders and supported by 83 percent of voters — changed the state constitution to route some taxes collected on car sales to the State Highway Fund. But in an unusually tightfisted legislative session, some Texas lawmakers are raising the prospect of reducing that initial cash infusion to free up money for other state programs. No one has publicly backed such a move, but key budget writers have privately discussed the option. And at a Senate Finance Committee hearing Monday, Sens. [Kirk Watson](#) of Austin and [Charles Schwertner](#) of Georgetown asked Legislative Budget Board staffers about how it might work.

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Lawmakers could reduce the \$5 billion transfer by up to 50 percent through a two-thirds vote in both the House and Senate. That's through a provision of Senate Joint Resolution 5, the legislation that [sent the issue to voters in 2015](#).

"As we're thinking through all these budget items, we have a number in our head," Watson, a Democrat, said when he learned such a maneuver could ultimately free up \$2.3 billion in revenue for other purposes. "We purposely put in a fail-safe."

Schwertner, a Republican, questioned whether the Texas Department of Transportation has already allocated money expected from Proposition 7.

The Texas Transportation Commission, which oversees TxDOT, last year approved a long-range planning document that assumed it would receive Proposition 7 funds through 2026, according to its Unified Transportation Program.

And at the Texas Transportation Forum, an event hosted by TxDOT in Austin this month, Transportation Commission Chairman Tryon Lewis said the agency is already counting on the money in long-range plans. "We'll be getting the projects out," he said. On Monday, Lewis told the Senate Finance Committee that parts of the agency have been reorganized "to make sure money is used immediately."

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Local governments are already submitting proposals to TxDOT for how to tap the Proposition 7 money, Marc Williams, the agency's deputy executive director, told The Texas Tribune. The Transportation Planning Commission will discuss those and other proposals during a Feb. 22 workshop before voting on them in March.

TxDOT's main source of revenue — the gas tax drivers pay at the pump — hasn't seen an increase since 1991, years before the Dallas Cowboys last won a Super Bowl. Twenty-two states in recent years have increased their gas taxes to help pay for transportation

projects, according to credit ratings agency Moody's. Such a move has been largely considered a nonstarter in the tax-averse Texas Legislature.

Meanwhile, as cars become more efficient, most drivers are paying even less in per-mile gas taxes.

On top of that, inflation, increased construction costs and cars becoming more fuel efficient have prompted years of warnings from TxDOT officials that it can't keep pace with the demand for additional highway capacity needed to keep up with the state's booming population. In some parts of the state, particularly in North Texas, transportation officials and planners began relying more heavily on tolls to fund new highways or expansions of existing ones. Residents eventually began pushing back against their proliferation.

During the past two legislative sessions, lawmakers came up with a number of mechanisms to send more money to TxDOT that avoided raising taxes, including two constitutional amendments that voters overwhelmingly approved.

Though the Texas Senate and House kicked off this session with proposed budgets that are nearly \$8 billion apart, funding for TxDOT was one area where they agreed. Both bodies initially budgeted for TxDOT to receive more than \$28.1 billion over the next two years. In each proposed budget, that figure includes \$5 billion from Proposition 7's sales tax revenues.

In a report last week, Moody's argued that the new TxDOT funding approved by voters in recent years leaves the Legislature with less money to work with than it had in the previous session.

"Simultaneously, economic and population growth is expected to increase faster than the nation," the report said. "Balancing the government service demands of growth against a smaller general fund budget now is a greater challenge."

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But amid sluggish economic growth in a state with a litany of pricey needs — including widespread concerns about the state's child welfare system — some lawmakers appear to be lamenting whether too much money has been guaranteed for transportation.

A move to get back some of that money could face major opposition in the Legislature. State Rep. [Joe Pickett](#), the House sponsor of Senate Joint Resolution 5, suggested lawmakers should only use the clawback mechanism in case of a major economic downturn or if the state found itself in some other unforeseen fiscal bind.

"I just don't think our budget is that dire," the El Paso Democrat told the Tribune.

Last month, Gov. [Greg Abbott](#) released his proposed budget to lawmakers that included sending the full Proposition 7 funding amount to TxDOT in the next biennium.

"A promise to invest in infrastructure was made to voters, and this budget ensures the promise is kept," his budget says.

Mariana Alfaro contributed to this report.

Report: More Than 55,000 US Bridges Structurally Deficient

February 15, 2017 7:10 AM

WASHINGTON (AP) – A new report says the Brooklyn Bridge and Washington’s Arlington Memorial Bridge are among thousands of spans considered structurally deficient.

Although the numbers of deficient bridges have declined in recent years, the American Road & Transportation Builders Association’s analysis of transportation department data shows more than 55,000 bridges in the U.S. have been deemed deficient.

ARBTA says deficient bridges are crossed about 185 million times a day. The top 14 most-traveled deficient bridges are located in California.

Bridges labeled structurally deficient aren’t necessarily in immediate danger of collapse. The term is applied when spans need rehabilitation or replacement because at least one major component has advanced deterioration or other problems.

Riley touts road work during chamber meeting

By Lance Winter

lwinter@star-telegram.com

“Roads are meant to be traveled and cars are meant to be driven on them.” That’s the motto Parker County Judge Mark Riley uses when speaking of the transportation issues in Parker County.

Riley, who recently announced his plans to seek re-election, briefed those attending the East Parker County Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Wednesday, dealing with such issues.

“In 2008 voters approved a \$80 million bond and at that point we had \$10 million leveraged from the region,” Riley said. “I serve on the Regional Transportation Council - (RTC), there’s 43 of us and we allocate state and federal monies throughout the region.”

ADVERTISING

He said because of his membership in the RTC, and having served as its Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary, it’s that relationship that has helped him bring millions of the region's transportation dollars to Parker County.

“Under the 2008 bond an additional \$72 million in funding was secured to leverage the \$80 million in voter approved bond funds,” Riley said. “So we went from \$80 million to \$152 million. That’s helped us do a lot of projects.”

He said it’s all built around partnerships with cities, school districts and the Texas Department of Transportation.

Riley then showed a short video where Michael Morris, Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, praised Parker County as being a model for how transportation issues should be handled.

“We have used Parker County in the RTC as an example for planning, grass-roots public involvement, the funding of the bond program, implementation, the importance of the judge taking individual responsibility to bring those projects in on time and under budget,” Morris said. “That’s a story that has been repeated in other counties in our region.”

Riley said with the strong show of support by voters in favor of the 2016 Parker County Transportation Bond during last November, efficient and quality management of the county's transportation improvements continues to be his focus.

Riley said the East Loop will be next in line to address. It will be a multi-year project and cost \$56 million to complete.

"We approved bond sales a couple of weeks ago and interest rates were a little lower than we expected, 3.8 to 3.9 percent," he said. "We hope to be able to advertise for bids a little more than a year from now."

He said there was no question as to the need for the East Loop and the economic impact it will have and the positive benefits it will bring to everyone in Parker County.

"I am a firm believer that transportation improvements drive economic development," he said. "As Texas continues to experience economic prosperity, we must stay focused on the critical elements that make our state great."

He said a good transportation system is one of the best economic engines available.

"We're not letting the grass grow under our feet," Riley said. "We're ready to move."

Lance Winter: 817-594-9902, Ext. 102,

Twitter: @LanceWinter

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/community/weatherford-star-telegram/wt-news/article132620704.html#storylink=cpy>

Final lane placements for Dallas Horseshoe to take effect

Chris Sadeghi, WFAA 7:21 AM. CST February 17, 2017

DALLAS - A major highway project under construction since 2013 will take a big step towards completion at 10 p.m. Friday night. The Dallas Horseshoe is the interchange on the south side of downtown where Interstates 30 and 35 meet. It is scheduled for completion this summer, but some key lane changes will be placed into their final alignment and available for drivers by Saturday morning.

The most significant change will be seen for drivers heading westbound on I-30 at Exit 46A. Currently, drivers headed south towards Waco would exit I-30 from the right hand lane. This setup may have led to confusion for some drivers expecting to naturally turn left to head southbound. The permanent placement taking effect Friday night will move the southbound exit to the two more conventional left hand lanes. The previously used ramp will now be an exit for Colorado Boulevard.

Once the shift happens, drivers can use entrance ramps from Canton and Harwood Streets to access westbound I-30 and both directions of I-35.

The Horseshoe Project is a \$798 million redesign from the Texas Department of Transportation. The project website has a series of links and explanations for drivers.

Future suburbs will be walkable and tech-savvy, experts say

BY GORDON DICKSON gdickson@star-telegram.com

HURST

Suburbs of the future will feature ample places to walk and cycle — and it won't be because someone in government imposed their political will on developers.

Instead, it will be what the residents want.

That was among the messages Friday during the eighth annual Northeast Tarrant Transportation Summit in Hurst — an event that in the past focused on road-building in Dallas-Fort Worth but this year highlighted the impact of technology on future commuting.

Suburban dwellers will be immersed in mobile communications to a degree that can hardly be imagined today, freeing them from the need to climb into a single-occupant car and drive to work for a traditional, eight-hour shift, speakers said. Instead, these residents of the not-too-distant future — while they will still value good schools for their children and other suburban benefits — will place a premium on being able to shop, dine and perform other activities without driving.

“Millennials are most likely to carpool, to cycle, to take a bus,” said Jeff Gunning, a senior vice president at the design and architectural firm CallisonRTKL in Dallas. “It’s already affecting the way we master-plan our developments. Parking is going to be cut in half over the next 30 years.”

Another speaker, Ed McMahon of the Washington-based Urban Land Institute, added that walk-ability is driving retail developments nationwide.

“Walkable, mixed-use development is outperforming drivable neighborhoods,” McMahon said.

“Development is almost everywhere in the United States. It’s fostering premiums in retail development. The successful suburbs of the future are going to have walkable places. Not every place. But they will have a town center.”

DEPARTURE FROM THE PAST

The summit was a bit of a departure for Tarrant County Commissioner Gary Fickes, who first organized the event in 2010 mostly as a way for area residents to make sense of the large highway construction projects around them. Fickes, who in the past has spoken skeptically about commuter rail, high-speed rail and other public transportation projects, gave a proverbial tip of the hat to the impact of technology on the changing outlook in the transportation industry.

On several occasions Friday morning, Fickes playfully directed a hobby drone to fly over the tables occupied by about 700 attendees in the Hurst Conference Center.

The year's theme was “Creating the Transportation Tomorrowland, Today.”

Fickes noted that North Texas has been at the forefront of the effort to find alternative funding methods, including the use of private financing and tolls.

“As a community, we have been incredibly successful in our efforts to highlight mobility issues and support transportation funding,” Fickes said. “Today, however, we’re beginning to see a seismic shift in the industry, as traditional modes of transportation are giving way to innovative mobility solutions. From drones to autonomous vehicles, we wanted this year’s summit to point to the future mobility landscape.”

‘A.I. CHANGING EVERYTHING’

The event also featured a keynote presentation by Kent Larson, director of the Changing Places Group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Larson said his research forecasts that about 90 percent of future growth will take place within existing cities, and for transportation the emphasis will be on vehicle-sharing rather than ownership.

“Artificial intelligence is changing everything,” Larson said. He said high-tech improvements will lead to cleaner, more efficient lifestyles in cities.

But, he added, because fewer parking lots and mega-structures will be needed, “It threatens to take away a lot of the work of professionals, like architects, like me.”

Homeowners pack McKinney council meeting, saying 'no' to Highway 380 bypass

Written by

Nanette Light, Staff Writer

A proposition to build a freeway bypass north of U.S. Highway 380 wasn't on McKinney's City Council agenda Tuesday, but people dressed in red packed council chambers to voice their opinions on the project.

The answer was an echoing "no."

City staff recently presented three bypass route options to residents and council members as a way to tackle current and expected explosive growth in Collin County.

Ads by ZINC

All of three would cut through Joan Matlock's home, where she's lived for six years in a neighborhood of mature trees near the northeast corner of North Custer Road and Highway 380.

"Our neighborhood is so different, and we chose it that way," said Matlock, one of roughly 100 people who filled out feedback cards against the bypass plan Tuesday night. "It's not fancy. There are dandelions all over my yard. I have bees. I have birds that you don't see where you live, but they come to us because it's so quiet and there are so many trees. So I just ask you to please find another approach."

Neighbors have launched a grassroots effort against the Highway 380 Bypass plans, including an online petition that as of Tuesday night had garnered more than 800 signatures.

During a Monday work session, council members told city staff they did not support a bypass route on Bloomdale Road — one of the three road alignment options. The city is now exploring additional alignment options, but no route is off the table, said Jennifer Arnold, McKinney planning manager, in an email.

Last year, the City Council passed a resolution opposing conversion of busy Highway 380 into a limited access roadway or freeway because of a lack of right of way on each side.

"The reality is we have to do something," McKinney Mayor Brian Loughmiller said. "We're not there yet. Most likely there's going to be continued studies on multiple routes, multiple concepts."

Katy Trail bridge opening off again

Summer new target for project to connect to White Rock trail

By *TRISTAN HALLMAN*

Staff Writer thallman@dallasnews.com

The long, long awaited Katy Trail extension to Mockingbird Station will take even longer to finish, city officials say.

The project, initially approved in the 2006 bond package, is now slated to officially open late this summer after what city officials say were more unexpected construction delays. And that delay makes the area's City Council member, Philip Kingston, "volcanically unhappy."

"The lack of urgency is just truly infuriating," Kingston said.

City officials hoped to open the bridge to the Katy Trail's hikers and bikers and rollerblading patrons in April. But Rick Galceran, the director of Mobility and Street Services, said pockets of gas discovered underground have put the kibosh on that schedule.

Construction crews initially broke ground on the bridge in 2013. But they still had plenty of issues with property acquisition — one site changed hands several times and wound up in the hands of an overseas owner.

Active construction started last year, and workers recently discovered the fuel pockets in the ground — a petroleum substance that may have come from an old gas station from years ago.

"It's complicated," Galceran said. "It's not just your simple, fundamental type of work that goes on."

The bridge, which will connect the Katy Trail to White Rock trail, will appear finished in June, Galceran said. But the finishing touches will need a few more weeks. The current target is August — provided no other delays pop up. The city will probably need to shut down parts of the thoroughfare at times to complete construction.

Kingston said when he took office in 2013, city staff told him they still didn't have all the rights of way they needed. He began holding weekly meetings on the issue and helped them acquire the last bit of land they needed.

Angela Hunt, Kingston's council predecessor, said she's also frustrated. During her tenure on the council, something was always in the way: utility lines, DART, right-of-way problems, a new bid for a new contractor and other problems kept coming up.

Hunt said she knows the project is complicated. But the city does complicated projects all the time, she said.

"We can get a half-billion-dollar convention center hotel up and running within 18 months," she said. "Yet we can't seem to get a modest pedestrian bridge built over a decade."

Hunt and Kingston also say the issue is also a matter of public safety.

Some pedestrians have been injured trying to cross Mockingbird. Movie critic Gary Murray was killed crossing the road during the Dallas International Film Festival.

But Galceran said even though the city has dubbed the connection the "Mockingbird Pedestrian Bridge" in the past, it's not supposed to be a pedestrian bridge. It's a trail bridge. Pedestrians would have to go out of their way to enter the trail on one side.

Galceran said the city needs to make other improvements for pedestrians on Mockingbird.

Kingston said he has a plan to combine some city money and other funding sources to make such improvements in the area. But he's waiting on the city's next bond package, which was delayed until November, to his chagrin.

But in the meantime, he said the city shouldn't have to wait on the bridge to link White Rock and the Katy Trail. That should be the city's top priority among pedestrian projects, Kingston said.

Galceran said he understands the frustrations, but these delays do happen in such projects.

"This is just a high-profile project and everyone's anxious to see it through," he said.

Twitter: @TristanHallman

State lawmakers take aim at bullet train

Feb 21, 2017, 2:50pm CST Updated Feb 21, 2017, 4:42pm CST

Bill Hethcock Staff Writer *Dallas Business Journal*

Key lawmakers filed a pile of legislation Tuesday designed to stop the Texas bullet train in its tracks.

Five Republican senators joined four Republican state representatives to file a total of 18 bills addressing concerns with developer [Texas Central Partners'](#) proposed bullet train between Dallas and Houston.

The concerns ranged from the general regulation of high-speed rail to landowners threatened by the potential misuse of eminent domain to ensuring the state isn't later forced to bail out the private project with taxpayer dollars.

Texas Central Partners is developing the 240-mile, privately funded train line that will connect North Texas, the Brazos Valley and Houston. The company repeatedly has said that it won't seek public funding. Central Japan Railway Co. has set up a subsidiary to serve as Texas Central's technology advisors on the project.

"This group of foreign investors is threatening to seize family farms, physically divide the state of Texas, and have a gravely detrimental impact on the citizens I represent," state Rep. [Leighton Schubert](#), R-Caldwell, said in a statement. "At a minimum, the people of Texas deserve reasonable reassurances that their private property rights will be respected and that they will not be left holding the bag if this ill-conceived project fails."

The lawmakers said in a press release that Texas Central Rail has claimed that the project will cost \$12 billion to complete, while an independent analysis from the Texas Department of Transportation puts that estimate at closer to \$18 billion.

A spokeswoman for Texas Central Partners said the effort to take away a "safe, reliable and productive transportation choice" runs counter to the values and principles of Texans clamoring for the transportation alternative.

"Contrary to the national focus on infrastructure projects that stand to create tens of thousands of jobs and benefit millions of people, it is ironic that the proposed legislation calls for more government regulation in trying to block a free market led project that will create jobs and generate economic development," said [Holly Reed](#), Texas Central managing director of external affairs.

Critics have also [questioned the overall financial viability of the project](#), arguing that without a government subsidy, Texas Central will find it virtually impossible to meet their stated ridership estimates at prices competitive with air and car travel.

"This legislation will ensure that the property rights of our constituents are respected and state taxpayers aren't asked to bail out this project when costs inevitably exceed stated projections and ridership fails to meet expectations," said Sen. [Charles Schwertner](#), R-Georgetown.

Schwertner cited an independent [study by the Reason Foundation](#) which indicates a proposed high-speed rail between Dallas and Houston will lose over \$537 million a year and could cost taxpayers up to \$21.5 billion.

Reed said that Texas Central [tried for months preceding publication of the report to contact the Reason Foundation](#) to provide the latest data and background information, but their calls and emails went unacknowledged.

In July, the Surface Transportation Board determined the federal government lacked the authority to grant eminent domain powers to Texas Central Rail or otherwise regulate the proposed high-speed train. Since then, project opponents have argued that it is increasingly unclear whether Texas Central has the legal authority to take land from private property owners along the train's proposed path or regulatory framework necessary to operate a high-speed train in Texas.

"It is not a railroad, and therefore, it does not have eminent domain authority," said state Rep. Byron Cook, chairman of the House State Affairs Committee, which oversees most eminent domain legislation.

Texas Central reported last week that it has reached agreements giving the company the option to acquire more than 30 percent of the land estimated to be needed for the bullet train's route in the 10-county stretch.

The amped up resistance to the project comes at a time when President Trump's infrastructure wish list apparently includes several high speed rail projects including the Texas train, and the president [lamented a lack of high speed rail](#) in a recent meeting with airlines executives.

"You go to China, you go to Japan, they have fast trains all over the place," Trump said at a meeting that included Dallas-based [Southwest Airlines](#) CEO [Gary Kelly](#) as well as the CEOs for Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, Alaska Airlines and JetBlue Airways.

"I don't want to compete with your business," Trump said at the meeting, "but we don't have one fast train."

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, meanwhile, has called the Dallas-Houston project critical to the city's future, and the rail project has a long list of high-profile, wealthy supporters.

The bullet train would connect the state's two largest metro areas, which have a combined population of 14 million, in less than 90 minutes with a midpoint stop in the Bryan-College Station area.

Chris Lippincott of Texas Rail Advocates called the bills opposing the development of bullet trains in Texas unsurprising and disappointing.

"Adding more government bureaucracy will damage efforts to build the train infrastructure Texans want," Lippincott said in a statement. "Our Legislature should be in the business of expanding transportation options and embracing innovation. We hope legislators don't fall victim to a vocal minority who would have our state bury its head in the sand by ignoring our growing population and clogged roads."

But Kyle Workman, spokesman for Texans Against High-Speed Rail, said the group representing thousands of landowners opposed to the project remains confident and applauds the work of the lawmakers who filed legislation Tuesday.

"We're happy to have these senators and state representatives on our team as we make progress against the high-speed rail train," Workman said.

Texas lawmakers move to stymie high-speed rail project

Dug Begley | February 21, 2017
Houston Chronicle

Nearly a dozen Republican state lawmakers, mostly from rural and suburban districts, filed a flurry of bills Tuesday aiming to “derail” plans for a privately-funded high-speed rail line in Texas.

The 18 bills, nine each in the Texas Senate and Texas House, aim to limit Texas Central Partners’ ability to develop a Houston-to-Dallas line supported by both metro areas, but strongly opposed by many rural landowners and elected officials.

The bills complicate the private company’s right to acquire property via eminent domain, strengthen landowner protections, compel state agencies to assess the feasibility of the planned rail line and prohibit the state from ever maintaining or operating a high-speed rail line.

"I still have doubts about whether a high-speed rail project makes sense for Texas" said Senator Brandon Creighton, R-Conroe. "Taxpayers should not be expected to pay the bill if the project fails."

Company officials, in a statement, defended the project, noting Texas needs new mobility options.

"Contrary to the national focus on infrastructure projects that stand to create tens of thousands of jobs and benefit millions of people, it is ironic that the proposed legislation calls for more government regulation in trying to block a free market led project that will create jobs and generate economic development," said Holly Reed, managing director of external affairs for Texas Central.

Bullet train bills

The following bills were filed this morning, summarized by the authors:

SB 973 by Creighton/HB 2168 by Bell (Railroad Determination Before Surveys) - prohibits a private high-speed rail entity from entering private property to conduct a survey unless the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) first determines that the surveying entity is, in fact, a railroad.

SB 974 by Creighton/HB 2181 by Cook (Option Contract Protection) - voids any high-speed rail option contracts held by a high-speed rail entity upon a bankruptcy initiated by or against the entity.

SB 975 by Birdwell/HB 2169 by Schubert (Security Requirements) - provides a framework of minimum security requirements to be followed during the construction and operation of a private high-speed rail line. Requires the high-speed rail authority to coordinate security efforts with state and local law enforcement, as well as disaster response agencies.

SB 977 by Schwertner/HB 2172 by Ashby (No Taxpayer Bailout) - prohibits the legislature from appropriating new funds, or allowing state agencies to utilize existing funds, to pay any costs related to the construction, maintenance, or operation of a private high-speed rail in Texas.

SB 978 by Schwertner/HB 2104 Bell (Property Restoration Bond) - requires a private high-speed rail entity to file a bond with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) sufficient to restore property used for the rail service to the property's original conditions if the service ceases operation.

SB 979 by Schwertner/HB 2179 by Cook (Right of Repurchase for Non-HSR Use) - prohibits an entity that operates or plans to operate a high-speed rail from using property acquired for purposes other than high-speed rail. If the

high-speed rail authority doesn't use the property for that specific purpose, the original landowner must be given the opportunity to repurchase the land.

SB 980 by Schwertner/HB 2167 by Schubert (Put Texas First) - prohibits any state money from being used for any purpose related to a privately owned high-speed rail, unless the state acquires and maintains a lien in order to secure the repayment of state funds. Requires that the state's lien be superior to all other liens, effectively making Texas a priority creditor.

SB 981 by Kolkhorst/HB 2162 by Wray (Interoperability) - requires an entity constructing a high-speed rail line in Texas to demonstrate compatibility with more than one type of train technology.

SB 982 by Perry/HB 2173 by Ashby (High-Speed Rail Feasibility Study) - upon request of a legislator, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) must generate a feasibility study of a proposed high-speed rail project. The study must indicate whether the project is for a public use, whether it will be financially viable, and what impact of the project will have on local communities.

Since the legislative session began, state lawmakers have said they planned to use Austin to constrain development of the high-speed rail project, notably its rights to survey and acquire rural land. Critics of the company have said it has used heavy-handed tactics to force landowners into sales agreements.

Earlier this month, Texas Central announced about 30 percent of the parcels needed for the 240-mile project are covered under sale option agreements, meaning landowners have agreed to sell the land once the project has the necessary environmental clearances and is ready for construction.

The company, which is said its still finalizing its private funding, will use Japanese bullet train technology to travel between the two metro areas. The trip, company officials said would cost around the same as airline travel, estimated to take 90 minutes. In addition to Houston and Dallas, the company plans a stop near College Station.

Along the route, residents and elected leaders who feel the project doesn't benefit them and ruins the rural character of their communities have banded together to oppose it. State lawmakers, among them Sens. Charles Schwertner, R-Georgetown, and Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham, and State Reps. Cecil Bell, R-Magnolia and Byron Cook, R-Corsicana, have repeatedly questioned the need for the project.

"Transportation is a critical issue for our state, which requires thoughtful and pragmatic solutions for today and the future," said State Rep. John Wray, R-Waxahachie. "Texas Central has failed to demonstrate a viable or comprehensive plan addressing the real mobility needs of our state, and the legislation filed today seeks to address the legitimate issues posed by this project."

Average commuter spent 2.5 days stuck in Dallas traffic last year, but it could be worse

Written by

[Eline de Bruijn](#)

Drivers in Dallas-Fort Worth sat in traffic longer last year than any other Texans — an estimated 60 hours on average — ranking the area among the most congested cities in the world. Dallas jumped up to the No. 16 spot in 2016 among the most clogged cities ranked by transportation analytics firm Inrix, up from No. 28 the year before.

The 59.4 hours, or almost 2 1/2 days, local commuters spent in their cars last year is far above the American average, about 42 hours. But it's nothing compared with Los Angeles drivers, who were stuck in gridlock a whopping 104.1 hours, which topped Inrix's list.

Ads by ZINC

"I would feel reasonably good about where you're at," said Aaron Renn, who specializes in urban policy for the Manhattan Institute, a think tank. "I wouldn't feel great, but it doesn't strike me in terms of traffic."

Houston often ranks worse than Dallas when it comes to traffic, but not this time. It was 24th on the list, followed by Austin, at 32. San Antonio barely made the top 100, at 95.

Renn compared the bulging population in Dallas-Fort Worth with New York City's low rate of growth.

"When you're adding over a million people every decade, traffic is going to be bad because of a lack of infrastructure," he said. "You're going to need to build more roads."

That's precisely the plan, said Michael Morris, director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. He noted that Dallas-Fort Worth is the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the country, so being ranked seventh is positive.

"The good news is we're doing the right projects," Morris said. "The bad news is we're scored down because of congestion and we have more areas under construction compared to other parts of the country."

In the survey, the boundaries of Dallas-Fort Worth stretch from Fort Worth out west to Terrell in the east and from McKinney in the north to Mansfield and DeSoto in the south.

Morris anticipates Dallas will be ranked in a better spot when upcoming construction projects wrap up within the next eight to 10 years.

But that means traffic may get worse before it gets better.

The Texas Department of Transportation has earmarked \$786 million in funds for Dallas as part of Gov. Greg Abbott's Texas Clear Lanes initiative.

The plan aims to reduce congestion, improve mobility and enhance efficiency along Interstate 35E from Interstate 30 to Oak Lawn and I-35E from U.S. Highway 67, called the Southern Gateway.

Also included in the Clear Lanes initiative is \$265.3 million for three major projects in Fort Worth.

"These are short-term delays with 50 years of benefit," Morris said.

Dallas drivers could use the relief, both in terms of saving time and money.

Sitting in congestion costs each Dallas-Fort Worth driver \$1,508 and costs the cities \$2.9 billion, according to the survey. That price tag includes the cost of time, wear and tear on the roads, fuel costs and the social cost of emissions.

The ranking came as no surprise to Victor Vandergriff, commissioner with the Texas Transportation Commission, especially considering Dallas-Fort Worth's population growth and projections for the future.

"It's a never-ending battle to keep up with congestion," Vandergriff said. "We will have to be ever more creative in moving people through."

Vandergriff believes Dallas has the opportunity to set an example for other big cities and expects Abbott's Clear Lanes initiative to spur economic development through road and infrastructure investments.

"We are a region with a lot of resources, and I feel good about our chances to dig out of the hole and keep it moving forward compared to other [cities] in the country," Vandergriff said.

Dallas City Council member Lee Kleinman sees several solutions to move forward: expanding DART and its streetcar lines and making bicycle and walkability improvements.

He said creating "urban node" areas, such as the Oak Cliff Gateway project, would allow residents to work, live and play with less reliance on vehicles.

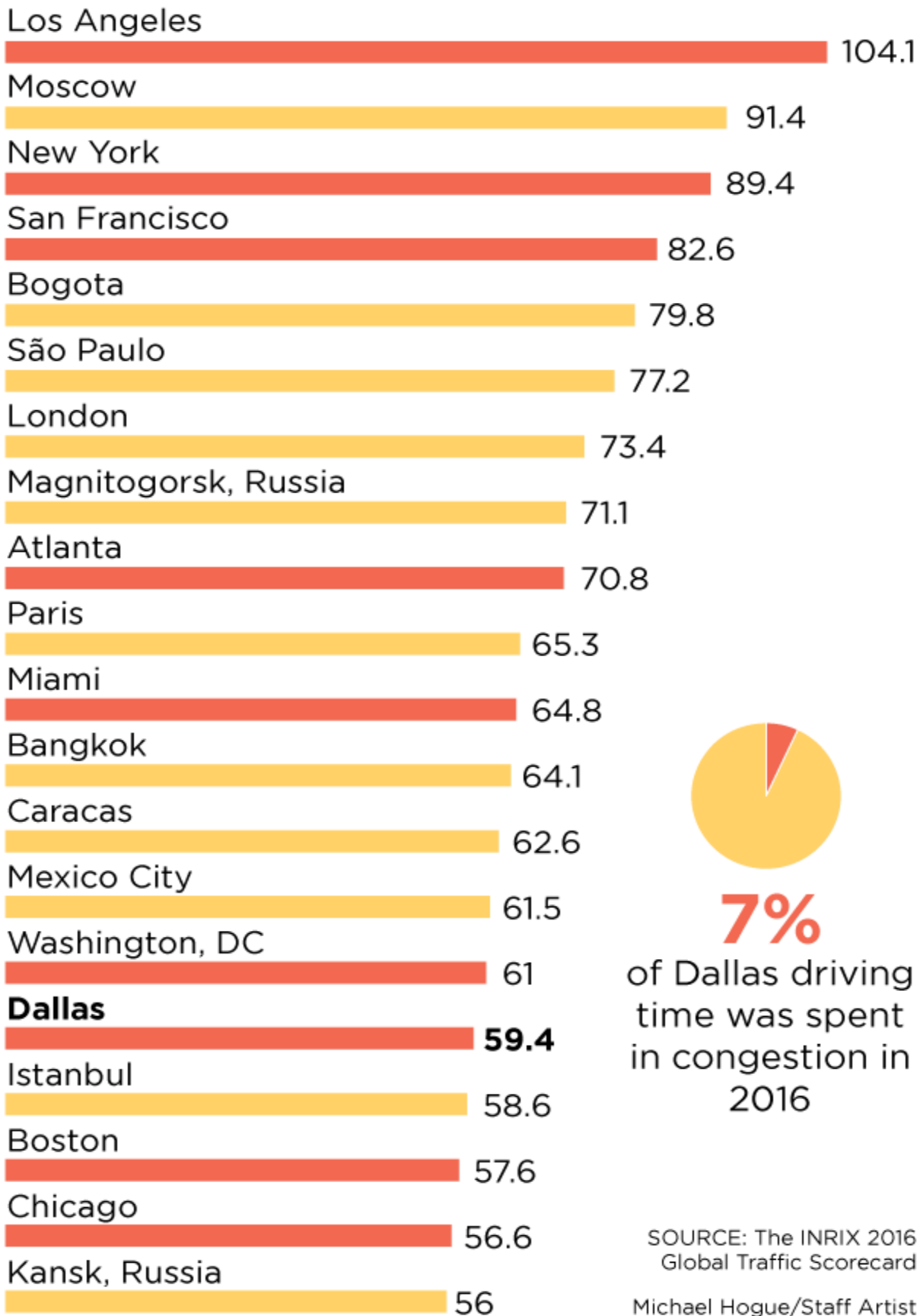
"People need to start figuring out how to live closer to where they need to go," Kleinman said. "In southern Dallas, many people have to commute to get to jobs, if we could figure out how to get more job opportunities in southern Dallas, they wouldn't have to drive so far."

With the population expected to double in the next 50 years, he admitted it could be a bumpy road ahead.

"It's going to be tough," he said. "It's scary."

Hours spent driving in congestion, 2016

■ U.S. cities ■ International cities



7%
of Dallas driving
time was spent
in congestion in
2016

SOURCE: The INRIX 2016
Global Traffic Scorecard

Michael Hogue/Staff Artist

Bill package shapes fight on high-speed rail

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Legislative opponents of a proposed high-speed rail line to zip passengers between Dallas and Houston have filed a package of bills aimed at killing the project.

State Sen. Brian Birdwell, R-Granbury, is a member of the group. Texas Central Partners wants to build the bullet train line using Japanese technology and counting on private investors to pay the \$12 billion cost.

"This group of foreign investors is threatening to seize family farms, physically divide the state of Texas, and have a gravely detrimental impact on the citizens I represent," said state Rep. Leighton Schubert, R-Caldwell, in a news release issued Wednesday.

That may be overly dramatic, but there is determined opposition to the project among property owners along the proposed route and among some lawmakers.

Some of what the group has proposed amounts to commonsense measures to be put in place should the project move forward.

Birdwell, for example, has filed SB 975 to establish security measures for screening passengers and protecting against a terrorist attack.

Another bill, SB 982, would require the Texas Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study for any high-speed rail project.

SB 980 would prohibit the use of state money for the Dallas-Houston line unless the state obtains a lien superior to all other lenders. SB 977 would prohibit a taxpayer bailout if the project goes bust.

Those bills should not be significant problems for Texas Central Partners. But other bills certainly are.

SB 981 would require that Texas Central demonstrate its line's compatibility with more than one type of train technology. Texas Central's planned Japanese technology is not compatible with those from other countries.

And then there's SB 973, a rattlesnake in disguise. It would bar survey crews from entering private property to mark it for a high-speed rail line unless the Texas Department of Transportation declares that the project fits the definition of a railroad.

To do that, TxDOT would be saying Texas Central can use eminent domain to take the land it needs. Few topics are as politically sensitive in Texas as taking private land, especially for use by a private entity.

That puts TxDOT in the center of this battle.

Transportation agency takes aim at congestion in Texas' biggest cities

By Emily Donaldson | Posted Feb. 22, 2017

Texas Department of Transportation Commissioners met Wednesday afternoon to update their \$70 billion funding plan for the next 10 years of construction projects. The Unified Transportation Plan allocates a large sum of money for the agency to address problems in congestion, connectivity and safety.

Of the \$70 billion, \$50 billion is allocated already via formula funding. That leaves \$20 billion to be allocated over the next 10 years at the discretion of TxDOT and its commissioners.

As part of a proposed March update of the Unified Transportation Plan, TxDOT presented roughly \$8 billion in projects—from that \$20 billion pot—to begin executing over the next four years.

The funding proposal takes into account the Texas Clear Lanes, a project headed up by Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg that seeks to provide major congestion relief in Texas' five largest cities—Houston, Dallas, Austin, Fort Worth and San Antonio.

At this time, Texas Clear Lanes has allocated \$1.3 billion to these five cities for specific projects. Here is the breakdown of how these funds will be used:

- **Austin** will receive \$156.8 million for I-35 and U.S. 183
- **Dallas** will receive \$364 million for IH 635
- **Fort Worth** will receive \$163.8 million for IH 635, FM 2499 and SH 121
- **Houston** will receive \$443.4 million I-69, Hwy. 610 and I-45
- **San Antonio** will receive \$170.3 million I-10, US 281, I-410, SL 1604

Bugg said the Texas Clear Lanes task force was created to relieve future congestion as more people move to Texas each year.

In a 2015 presentation, state demographers said Texas' population would top 50 million by 2050. The population stood at less than 30 million in 2015.

The areas experiencing the most growth are the usual suspects: Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio, with Dallas forecasted to become the largest Texas city with more than 16 million. Houston is projected to grow to more than 14 million, and Austin is estimated to house more than 5 million people by 2050.

“The state of Texas is spurring economic development and creating jobs by making a historic investment to build more roads and improve our infrastructure,” Gov. Greg Abbott said in 2015. “That’s why today I am directing the Texas Transportation Commission to create a focused initiative to identify and address the state’s most congested chokepoints and work with transportation planners to get new roads built swiftly and effectively.”

If everything proceeds as is, and the Commission approves the proposed funding for Texas Clear Lanes, \$2.5 billion total will be allocated to the group for 19 new projects. Those projects are detailed here.

Another \$5 billion has been distributed from the Unified Transportation Plan to districts within urbanized locations via the transportation funding formula.

About half of this \$5 billion is set aside for projects in which TxDOT would work in conjunction with local municipalities.

Austin received \$254 million, Dallas received \$616 million and Houston received \$626 million from this overall amount. The projects funded from this source will start sometime within the next four years. Additional projects may be recommended as part of the 2018 Unified Transportation Plan.

Before finalizing the next allocation of Unified Transportation Plan funds, TxDOT will host a public meeting Thursday afternoon in Austin. Those interested in following remotely can view the meeting online.

On March 14, TxDOT will also host a public hearing on the allocation of Unified Transportation Plan funds in Austin.

A full list of proposed changes can be viewed [here](#).

Gridlock is just around the corner

STEVE BROWN

stevebrown@dallasnews.com

Every year, up to 80,000 people move to North Texas. Unfortunately for all of us, they usually bring their cars.

One of the biggest downsides of the boom we are seeing in Dallas-Fort Worth is the ever-worsening traffic mess.

Let me tell you, it's only going to get worse.

We've been complaining about traffic since North Central Expressway opened in the 1950s. As the city has expanded, road and highway congestion has spread out.

The new ground zero of gridlock is the Dallas North Tollway and State Highway 121 in Collin County. That's where developers are building billions of dollars of offices, shops, apartments, restaurants and hotels.

Some of the region's biggest employers have landed there: Toyota, Liberty Mutual Insurance, JPMorgan Chase and more.

By the end of next year, when all the new offices around the tollway/Highway 121 intersection are finished, over 20,000 more people will be working in the new Legacy West development and nearby.

And most of them have cars.

"The increase in employment there will probably approach 30,000 or more people in the next four years," said Steve Thelen of commercial real estate firm JLL. "When that Legacy market gets built out, they will have more office space than downtown Fort Worth.

"You have all these jobs created and people coming into town."

West Plano residents and area developers are gritting their teeth and hoping for the best when all these workers start moving into buildings in West Plano and Frisco later this year and in 2018.

They can hope all they want, but any way you figure, it's going to be a mess.

They are adding lanes to Dallas North Tollway. And developers and employers in the Legacy business park are planning for shuttle buses to move people among offices, restaurants and apartments.

To me, it's like those folks in California trying to fix their dam during a flood.

In this case, it's a flood of people and the consequence of North Texas' success as one of the hottest real estate markets and economies in the country.

Our commute times average about an hour, according to a study released last week by research firm Inrix.

That's still well below the numbing 101-minute average commute time in Los Angeles or the average 71-minute drive to work in Atlanta.

But it still amounts to the equivalent of almost 22 days a year that North Texans spend in their cars trying to get to work so they can turn around and go home again.

"In D-FW, an acceptable commute is 30 minutes, but we are seeing that commute go to an hour," Thelen said. "Commute time frames are going to go up.

"Right now there are 7 million people living here, and it's going to 10 million."

Twitter: @SteveBrownDMN

How DFW could go from a bunch of strong cities to a regional powerhouse

Written by

Nan Ellin, DMN Contributor

North Texas has two poles, Dallas and Fort Worth, connected by a number of cities and towns, each with its own needs and personalities. While all share an airport, stadiums, and interstates, they have yet to benefit from the true cultural and economic powerhouse of the region as a whole.

Yet, this region already has some key building blocks that, working together, could be greater than the sum of their parts. What if we leveraged the Trinity River, with Interstate 30 and the Trinity Railway Express rail service, along with the world-class medical and research facilities along their paths, to create a linear district?

Stretching 30 miles from Dallas to Fort Worth, this Trinity District would be characterized by vital urban hubs around train stations, more parks and trails, and strong physical links - by foot, bicycle, transit and car - within the district and to adjacent areas. To make this happen, representatives from each city, government body, university, corporation and other interested groups could establish a framework for coordinated efforts for economic development, air quality, water quality, transportation, attracting corporate relocations and more.

The Dallas-Fort Worth region is already the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the U.S. with a population of 7.1 million, projected to grow past 10 million in the next 15 years. The region has the fourth-busiest airport and the largest light rail operator, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, in the nation, and, the region could soon be linked to the fifth-largest (and fastest growing) metro area - Houston - by a 90-minute trip on high speed rail.

Given the wealth of meds (medical research districts) and eds (research universities) in this area, the district could become an innovation corridor where new technologies and other inventions are developed and prototyped. Already, I-30 was selected in January as one of ten proving grounds nationally for driverless vehicles and the district could also become a test bed for other innovations that, once refined, would scale to other parts of North Texas, enabling a smart region.

North Texas already knows the success of working together on a regional project: DFW International Airport. The airport is has long been a major growth engine for Texas. Identifying the Trinity District as a regional endeavor would strategically position the region for further advancement. A Trinity District would contribute to the vision and accomplishments of Vision North Texas and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Building on the significant work accomplished by both, a coordinating committee could oversee strategic planning and implementation. Committee members would ensure alignment of their respective goals and

resources to mutual benefit, robust engagement with their various constituencies, and service to the larger good of the region.

This Trinity District Partnership would include representatives from cities along the river corridor, regional groups, universities, corporations, non-profits, and others. UT Arlington's College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs could provide ongoing research and design support for this project.

Across the globe, rivers and other waterfronts have been catalysts for vibrant corridors of vital urban hubs interwoven with parks and trails. Right here in Texas, this is apparent in Austin, San Antonio and Houston's Buffalo Bayou. The Trinity District could lend itself to continued revitalization of our waterways and to realize the Branch Waters Network developed by my colleague Kevin Sloan.

Match waterfront revitalization with the building of a smart innovation corridor, and we have the Trinity District of North Texas. Trinity indeed: a felicitous union of nature, a built environment that harmonizes with it, and the intellectual and creative capital of our community to produce a distinctive and completely game-changing district for this region.

Nan Ellin is the founding dean of the College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs at UT Arlington. She is the author of Integral Urbanism, Postmodern Urbanism, and Good Urbanism, and spearheaded the canalscape project for the Phoenix metropolitan area in 2008 to create vital hubs where canals meet major streets. Email: nan.ellin@uta.edu

How to pay for Texas' \$12 billion bullet train without asking the state for money

Written by

Jill Cowan, Economy reporter

Texas Central Partners has repeated its promise time and time again. It will connect Dallas and Houston in 90 minutes with the nation's first high-speed rail line. And it will get the \$12 billion job done without public funding.

This collaboration between The Dallas Morning News and the Texas Tribune explores how a plan to link Dallas and Houston by high-speed rail highlights a widening divide between Texas' rural roots and its explosive urban-suburban growth.

Proponents of the Texas bullet train say it's not only possible, but inevitable, as the country's interstates, bridges and tunnels near the end of their useful lives.

The key, executives say, is that there's money to be made.

"Entrepreneurial risk will be borne by investors who understand that," Texas Central president Tim Keith said. "The appetite for infrastructure assets by global investors is huge."

The idea that the free market will pick up where government leaves off sounds straightforward enough. It's one that has gained steam, especially since President Donald Trump has made overhauling the nation's infrastructure a top priority.

But, really, how does a private company go about lining up the billions of dollars it needs to pay for a 240-mile bullet train line? And is it possible for it to actually turn a profit?

First, it's important to distinguish between financing and funding a major infrastructure project, said Michael Bennon, managing director of Stanford University's Global Projects Center.

Financing is how Texas Central will get enough money to build the high-speed rail line in the first place. Funding is the revenue that will keep the train running.

"They're two very different things, and people get them really mixed up," Bennon said.

Financing is the more complicated side of the equation because it's essentially a high-stakes gamble that may not pay off for decades.

Seeking ‘real assets’

Texas Central executives are confident they’ll be able to find the money, in large part because investors are hungry for “real assets” — tangible projects, basically — that could provide bigger returns than what’s available in today’s market.

Managers of huge pots of money, like private equity funds or pension funds, “have obligations to pay their plan holders and they need long-dated assets,” Keith said.

In other words, low interest rates and other factors have meant that there aren’t a lot of places to park portions of those pools that will reliably pay out to investors over long periods of time.

That’s part of why pension funds, which are supposed to be how workers get paid their retirement, are seeking out safer investments.

Upfront money from investors will pay for roughly a third of the project, Keith said. The other two-thirds will be debt.

So far, Texas Central has raised about \$115 million from investors.

Keith said Texas Central is considering a range of financing options, including federal credit programs that would essentially provide cheap loans aimed at spurring infrastructure construction.

“As the government moves away from funding projects on a grant basis ... these loans allow them to take a less meaningful role ... and allows the markets to solve for the difference,” he said.

Another potential source of cheap financing is the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation, a national development bank, which has an economic interest in shepherding Japanese technology into foreign markets.

Central Japan Railway, the company that developed the technology for the Japanese Shinkansen bullet train, is partnering with Texas Central.

“They have been following the project for years ... and they continue to express interest in advancing discussions when we hit the right milestones,” Keith said.

Tetsuro Amano, the Houston-based general consul of Japan for Texas and Oklahoma, said the technology partnership with Japan Central Railway is definitely “good business,” but it’s too soon to speculate on the Japanese bank’s level of involvement.

Institutional investors

More private capital is finding its way into projects that were once the domain of government.

The McKinsey Global Institute recently noted that institutional investors — like the pension and private equity funds Keith mentioned — “seem like an obvious source of capital” in a world where increasingly urgent infrastructure projects are seriously underfunded.

Its report said institutional investors have \$120 trillion to move around. Blackstone Group, the world’s biggest private equity firm, is reported to be raising as much as \$40 billion for infrastructure investments.

Of course, there are caveats.

“To attract these investors, governments and other stakeholders need to develop their project pipelines, remove regulatory and structural barriers, and build stronger markets for infrastructure assets,” the McKinsey report said.

Public-private partnerships, like toll roads, have had mixed success, including in Texas.

Still, the McKinsey report underscores the hunger for worthy projects.

“Insurance companies and banks recount instances in which investors outbid each other in a rush to finance the rare infrastructure deals they consider ‘bankable’ and that have appropriate risk-return profiles,” the report said.

All that goes to say there are institutions that could theoretically bankroll a high-speed rail line. But only if it’s a sustainable business.

And that points back to the second part of paying for a big infrastructure project: funding.

Infrastructure projects rely on two main sources of funding — taxes or user fees, Bennon said. For public transit, it’s usually a combination of both.

Texas Central has promised not to use tax money as funding. That leaves ticket sales, plus smaller sources of side revenue from station parking fees and concessions. Texas Central has said the project passes muster, by that measure.

“This project is fully financeable based on ticket sales,” Keith said.

That’s what experts — and critics — are skeptical about.

A 2015 study commissioned by Texas Central estimated the line would spur \$36 billion in economic development over 25 years. The company estimates 5 million people will ride the train each year, with that number growing to 10 million.

While the company hasn't worked out details such as how much passengers will be charged, executives say fares will be low enough to entice Texans to leave their cars at home. By comparison, a typical flight from Dallas-Fort Worth to Houston costs \$195 one way.

"We do expect to be able to attract people from their vehicles as well as airplanes," Keith said. "We believe we'll be competitive with airfare for business travelers."

Critics suggest those projections are optimistic to the point of delusion. They contend Texans won't forgo their cars, especially when it's unclear how riders would get around the sprawling Dallas and Houston metros once they step off the bullet train.

And a recent report by the libertarian Reason Foundation predicted the project would operate at a loss and leave taxpayers on the hook for billions of dollars.

"In spite of their large and growing populations, Dallas and Houston are poster children for big cities where high-speed rail has no chance of succeeding without public funding unless land use and transit patterns change dramatically," the foundation's report said.

Texas Central sent out a lengthy rebuttal, in which the company said the report's authors didn't take them up on offers to look at their internal data.

"The recently published Reason Foundation report is deeply flawed and rife with uninformed biases about how Texans travel," a company statement said.

More broadly, Bennon said, research has shown that very few rail lines around the world are profitable from ticket sales alone — and the ones that are profitable have multiple huge cities along the route where riders can easily transfer to local transit.

Most existing rail lines are heavily subsidized.

'A whole new league'

None of that means a Texas bullet train is doomed to fail, though, Bennon wrote in an email.

"This project is in a whole new league," he said. "There's no real precedent for high-speed rail financed completely by the private market in the U.S."

Many of the factors that led Texas Central to pick its Dallas-to-Houston route in the first place are crucial. The distance makes a high-speed rail line competitive with airlines, and ride-hailing apps like Lyft and Uber mean that readily accessible public transit is becoming less of a factor.

Plus, the mere fact that Texas Central's plan relies almost entirely on private investment means its ridership projections have to stand up to stronger scrutiny, Bennon wrote.

"Investors in that company and eventually the lenders will certainly have every incentive to get the numbers right," he said. "It's their money that's going to be on the line."

So what if the critics are right and no one rides the train?

Bennon said that a lot of things would have to go very wrong for taxpayers to be stuck with the full tab. If ridership is lower than expected, first investors would lose their money, then the project would have to go into bankruptcy and lenders would take a loss.

“In terms of the benefit to the taxpayers of Dallas and Houston, this can be a win-win scenario,” Bennon said. “If it’s structured correctly, only in the most extreme cases of very low ridership or massive cost overruns would a project get built and later have to cease operations or get a bailout.”

Texas legislators don’t seem inclined to let that happen. Among the slate of more than 20 bills legislators filed this month to derail the bullet train project were measures that would prohibit the state from spending its money operating a failing rail line.

Brandon Formby of The Texas Tribune contributed to this report.

Disclosure: Texas Central Partners, Uber and Lyft have been financial supporters of The Texas Tribune. A complete list of Tribune donors and sponsors can be viewed [here](#).

Proposed bailout taps DART funds

By TRISTAN HALLMAN

Staff Writer thallman@dallasnews.com

Dallas police and firefighters are now looking to Dallas Area Rapid Transit's budget to help get their failing pension system back on track.

City Council member Scott Griggs, a pension board trustee, has drafted a resolution to help fund the pension system using one-eighth of the city's sales tax revenue dedicated to DART. He talked to his council colleagues about the idea — which has been pushed by police and fire associations — Wednesday during a closed-door legal session.

Griggs' aim is to ask voters in November to make the choice between using money for DART's future or for public safety workers' retirements.

DART, of course, never thought it would be part of the pension mess. Agency spokesman Morgan Lyons said such a move is "potentially devastating for transit operations."

Lyons said DART officials would have to consider cuts to train and bus service and perhaps even reconsider their ambitions to simultaneously build a second downtown Dallas rail line, a streetcar and a new suburban rail line to DFW International Airport.

But for the pension system, the money would be a significant boon. The ailing fund, which is on track for insolvency in 10 years, would be in line to get at least \$30 million annually.

Dallas taxpayers now send more than \$260 million annually into DART's coffers, according to financial reports. The agency collected more than \$545 million in sales tax revenue from all 13 member cities combined in 2016.

"It's the only option that works," Griggs said. "We can't raise property taxes. We can't raise sales tax. The legislative climate in Austin is against raising the sales tax ceiling."

The Legislature will ultimately have to approve changes to the Dallas Police and Fire Pension System because state law governs the fund, which operates mostly independent of the city. House Pensions Committee Chairman Dan Flynn, R-Van, and his staff have been working on a compromise bill. He is expected to file it in the next few days.

The bill will propose a new governance system for the fund, significantly pare benefits, raise the retirement age and increase the contributions paid by the city, police and firefighters.

But the bill will avoid the controversial and legally questionable city plan to save the pension by reducing future monthly payments to some retirees to make up for the unsustainable interest rates paid on lump-sum accounts over the years.

Avoiding those “claw-back” provisions leaves a funding gap of hundreds of millions of dollars to fill. All sides wanted to get the pension on a course to become fully funded within 30 years. Flynn’s plan would take more than 40 years to fully fund. And that would assume the fund will make an average of 7.25 percent returns on its investments annually for almost all of that time, a projection some believe is still too high.

Flynn said in a written statement that he is encouraged that city officials are “considering all means to continue to close the gap on pension plan funding.”

Griggs said the sales tax that goes to DART is a much better option than deeper cuts to city services. And voters would get to make that choice.

“Ultimately, this is the taxpayers’ money,” he said. “This is not the city of Dallas’ money. It’s not DART’s money.”

But several of Griggs’ council colleagues will be a hard sell on taking funding away from DART.

Mayor Mike Rawlings said it’s “a terrible idea.”

“An idea that we’ve got a huge problem for the city here, and we’re going to create another huge problem?” he said. “DART is such an important strategic asset for the city, and for southern Dallas in particular. We actually need more of DART in southern Dallas.”

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Erik Wilson, who represents southwestern Dallas, is worried that it will ultimately unravel DART at a time when the agency should be trying to figure out ways to better connect people and their jobs.

“DART had nothing to do with getting us into this,” Wilson said. “The pension got us here; the pension will be what gets us out.”

Police and fire association leaders came up with the idea to take money from DART to avoid the clawback issue and tax increases.

Dallas Fire Fighters Association President Jim McDade said city departments are routinely asked every year to submit ideas for budget cuts of 5 to 7 percent, and have become more efficient as a result, he said.

“I don’t think it’s going to be a choice between cutting DART services and the pension,” McDade said. “There are ways they can probably look internally and get more efficient.”

Griggs and his allies also see a potential added benefit to messing with DART’s funding stream: They don’t like the Cotton Belt, a proposed commuter rail line that would stretch between Plano and the airport.

DART is trying to build the Cotton Belt line and new downtown rail lines at the same time. Dallas City Council members want them to focus on the long-promised downtown lines first.

But reopening the battle could also backfire; the agency's officials could instead delay the Dallas projects in favor of the Cotton Belt project. Addison officials, who have also long been promised rail service, have threatened to leave DART if the Cotton Belt wasn't a priority.

But that would be a fight for later, if the idea even makes it to the voting booth. Lyons, the DART spokesman, said it's not even clear if Dallas will be allowed to reduce its sales tax payments to DART.

What is clearer, Lyons said, is that Dallas residents would probably pay a price if the city went down that road.

"The reality is service would have to be cut significantly," Lyons said. "Where, how — I don't know. I would not imagine that one of the other 12 cities would be interested in having their service cut based on the decision."

Twitter: @TristanHallman

GM, Tech Industry at Loggerheads Over Self-Driving Cars

Car maker backs state legislation that tech companies say could put them at a disadvantage in autonomous vehicles. GM denies the claim.

Wall Street Journal 2/24/17 5:30 a.m. ET By Tim Higgins

When Illinois state Rep. Michael Zalewski crafted state legislation that would allow car makers to operate self-driving taxi services, he leaned heavily on [General Motors](#) Co.

His bill, introduced Feb. 8, would limit access to the business to companies that make their own vehicles. That means GM would be eligible, but not tech companies like Uber Technologies Inc. that are developing their own self-driving cars and don't make their own vehicles.

"General Motors approached me about it and suggested that they had success last year in Michigan [with a similar bill], and they consider Chicago a big market for them," Mr. Zalewski, a Democrat, said in an interview. "We went from there."

GM's involvement in the legislation [underlines a simmering tension](#) between Motor City car makers that have long done it their way, and Silicon Valley tech companies that aim to rewrite the rules of the road. After falling behind in self-driving cars, GM has unleashed its powerful lobbying team to cultivate relationships with statehouses. The largest U.S. vehicle maker by sales has a long history of backing legislation to preserve its interests, including a bill in Indiana last year that would stop electric-vehicle maker [Tesla](#) Inc. from operating its own stores there.

GM denied it is trying to keep tech companies out of the market for autonomous vehicles, noting that ultimately the lawmakers make the decision on what's filed and that the company has worked with policy makers who have different views on the degree of legislation they want to support. On Thursday, the auto maker said it has been having discussions with Uber and Waymo, a unit of Google owner [Alphabet](#) Inc., on language that everyone can support.

"Our business is to introduce new technology into vehicles safely and that's what we do," said Harry Lightsey, GM's executive director of emerging technologies policy. "We don't have a problem with tech companies being in this business if they can show they are responsible and can be accountable for the performance of their product."

Last year, legislators introduced bills in 20 states that involve self-driving cars, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. This year, lawmakers in several states are looking at legislation modeled after legislation in Michigan that GM endorsed and that originally excluded tech companies from participating in so-called mobility on-demand services, or autonomous taxis.

Waymo, which [has logged more than 2.5 million miles of testing its self-driving cars](#) on U.S. roadways, is fighting back. Michigan's SAVE Act, enacted in December, was ultimately amended to include Waymo after outcries from the tech giant.

"Just as Americans should have a choice in what car they buy, they should also have a choice to ride in safer, more advanced self-driving cars," a Waymo spokesman said in a statement. "This kind of anticompetitive bill will only slow down the rollout of life-saving technology and create an unlevel playing field at the expense of consumer safety."

GM's Mr. Lightsey said he is aware of at least 10 states where the SAVE Act language, which GM views as a model, is circulating among lawmakers, including in bills filed in Maryland, Georgia and Tennessee. Tennessee state Rep. William Lamberth said he consulted with GM and others when drafting legislation similar to the SAVE Act. The Republican said he is cautious about letting tech companies have access to public roads for testing.

"I know that if a manufacturer of a vehicle puts a car on the roadway it's going to have gone through a thousand different tests before it ever gets out on the road," Mr. Lamberth said. He added there is nothing preventing a tech company from partnering with an auto maker.

In Illinois, where Mr. Zalewski in the past proposed statewide regulations against Uber, the lawmaker said he was prepared to “engage” in a dialogue with the ride-hailing service and other tech companies. “There are always opportunities for amendments,” Mr. Zalewski said.

Mr. Zalewski’s bill includes a carve-out for Waymo similar to the one in the Michigan legislation, allowing for a company that has tested more than one million miles on public roads to be considered a car manufacturer. The Tennessee legislation doesn’t have such a provision.

“We think it is early in the life of this technology” for states to enact legislation on self-driving cars, an Uber spokeswoman said in a statement.

TechNet, a lobbying group founded years ago by Silicon Valley fixtures John Doerr and John Chambers to advocate for tech-industry issues, is tracking 60 autonomous-car-related bills that are circulating and expects 10 to 20 more this year.

In Massachusetts, lawmakers proposed legislation to tax self-driving cars, dubbed by one lawmaker as zombie cars, out of fear of fleets of cars circling Boston without passengers. In California, after Uber last year [operated self-driving cars in San Francisco without a state permit](#), a bill has been filed to make such a violation punishable with a fine of up to \$25,000 a day.

Eric Paul Dennis, an analyst at the Center for Automotive Research in Ann Arbor, Mich., cautioned states from quickly adopting legislation.

“The [earliest timeline to when we might see some kind of product](#) to which these laws would apply is at least 2021,” he said. “By that time, our knowledge of the topic may have changed so much that anything passed now will be obsolete.”

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/gm-tech-industry-at-loggerheads-over-self-driving-cars-1487932204>

Texas' rural roots and urban future are on a high-speed collision course over a bullet train

By [Jill Cowan](#)

Brandon Formby

John Stoneham's knees don't work like they used to, and it's gotten tougher to count the cows roaming his 1,000 acres of land in southeast Texas. Sometimes newborn calves disappear into the tall brush and the 77-year-old can't find them for days. Three mornings a week, though, Stoneham still tosses 50-pound feed bags onto the bed of a mud-caked pickup like they weigh half that. Then he steers the truck around soggy patches on the Grimes County farm his family has owned for almost 150 years and fills the cows' troughs.

"I like raising cattle -- I enjoy it," he said, taking shelter from an approaching downpour in a cluttered shed. "It's just something I've always done, it's something I know and something I'll continue to do."

The farms and homesteads in Grimes County blanket open land that for now is beyond the reach of Houston's sprawling outer suburbs. The economic momentum and booming population growth that have transformed the state's largest metro areas are distant phenomena in this and other rural Texas counties.

But all that could change if the bullet train comes barreling through.

Stoneham's ranch is among thousands of parcels of Texas land that could one day be home to America's first high-speed rail line. It's also the site of a likely collision between two of the state's most dearly held principles: Texans' right to do what they want with their property and the free market's ability to solve thorny problems with little government interference.

The outcomes could affect Texans for generations.

Privately-owned Texas Central Partners plans to build a 240-mile bullet train line between downtown Dallas and northwest Houston within the next several years. It promises to speed passengers between the two cities in 90 minutes on train cars that travel 205 mph.

Company executives and elected officials in the state say connecting two of the nation's largest business hubs with a landmark transportation project will further grow Texas' already bustling economy. Many leaders in Dallas and Houston are on board.

"When you start thinking about doing business in multiple locations -- international investors are flocking here," said Linda McMahon, president and CEO of The Real Estate Council in Dallas. "What this would do for Dallas is it would connect with the port, it would connect with Houston, which is just another great economic charge in the state."

Texas Central promises to get the \$12 billion project done without taking public dollars other than through loans -- and vows it will help increase tax revenue for scores of cities, counties and school districts along the route.

“Everything we do, everything we touch is grounded on financial feasibility,” said Carlos Aguilar, Texas Central’s CEO.

Central Japan Railway, the company that developed the technology for the Shinkansen bullet train, which operates throughout Japan, is partnering with Texas Central and is eager to get a foothold in the U.S. market. For Texas Central leaders, it’s a chance to complete a showcase project and get in on the ground floor of what they expect will be a massive money-making opportunity.

Tim Keith, Texas Central’s president, said there’s lots of interest from investors who have been raising vast sums of money to get big infrastructure projects built in a nation whose new president vows to fix a crumbling network of interstates, bridges and tunnels.

But landowners along the way oppose the rail project for a litany of reasons. Some doubt Texas Central’s claims about how many riders it’ll attract and the train’s broad economic benefits.

Others don’t think a company using Japanese technology and equipment for a privately-owned transportation project should have the ability to use eminent domain to buy up their land.

Texas Central says it will only use eminent domain as a last-case scenario. But its claims that it has the power to do so have already spurred state legislation that aims to stop the project in its tracks. The company is expected to fight those bills.

“The effort to take away a safe, reliable and productive transportation choice runs counter to the values and principles of so many Texans who are clamoring for it,” said Holly Reed, Texas Central’s spokeswoman, in a prepared response to the legislation.

Opponents also don’t see why they should get behind a project that will change the characteristics of their land on its way to benefiting the state’s urban hubs.

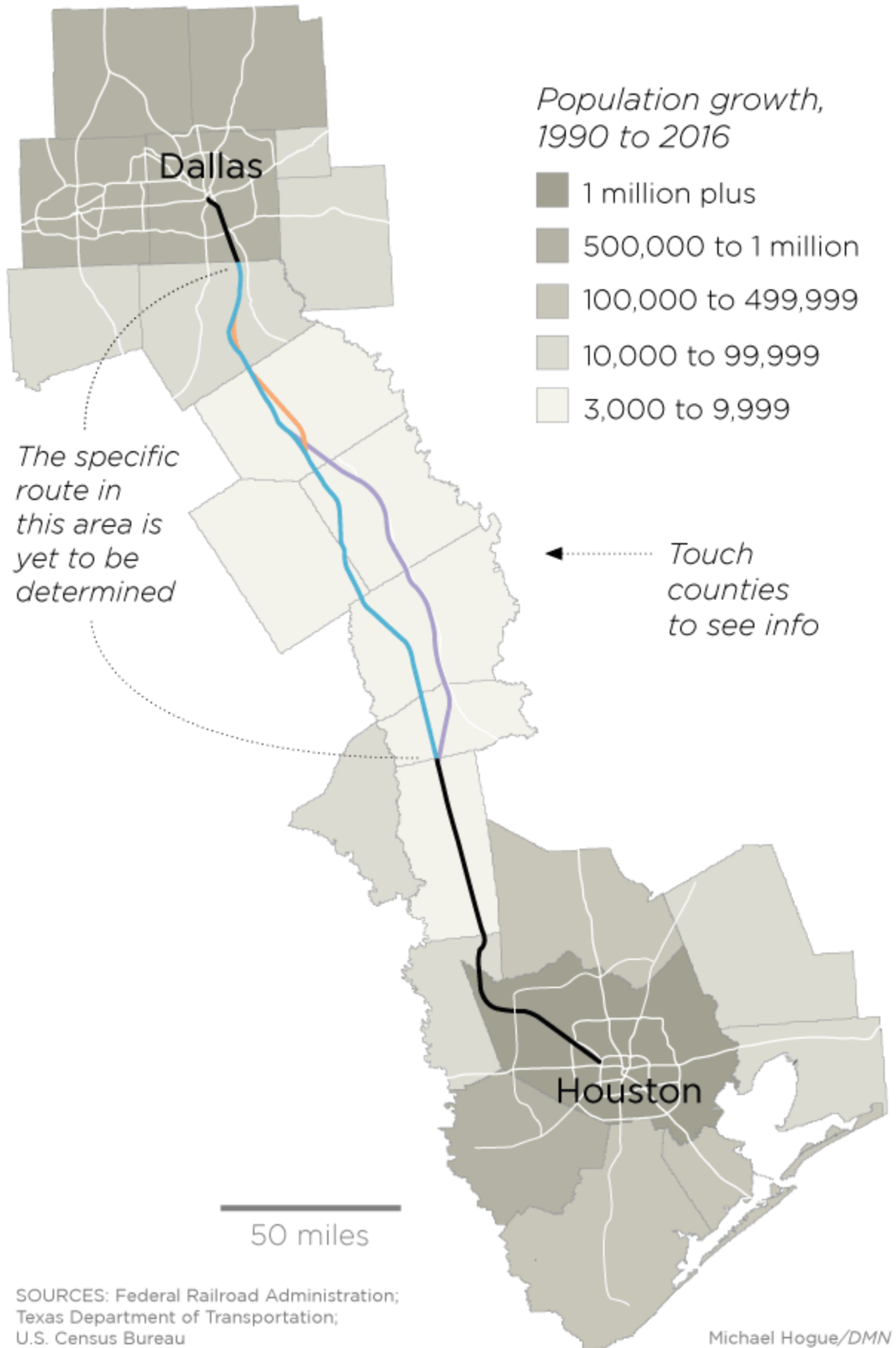
“It’s not going to be an easement, they’re just going to cut and run a path through,” Stoneham said, gesturing to Grimes County pastures lined by stands of scrubby, bare trees. “So the place is basically going to be cut in half.”

‘In the middle of great access’

In recent years, Texas cities have aggressively recruited corporate headquarters and expansions as a way of luring high-paying jobs and investment to the state. As a result, Texas’ economy has consistently ranked among the fastest-growing in the country.

Of the 10 counties through which the bullet train could run, Dallas and Harris, home to Houston, unsurprisingly saw the highest numbers of new residents during a 26-year period that ended last year. That ballooning population -- and the largely open and flat terrain between the two areas -- has made a high-speed train connection tantalizing.

The Dallas-Fort Worth metro area has 7.1 million residents, while the Houston metro area has about 6 million. Combined, they account for almost half of Texas’ nearly 28 million people.



“Talking about the fourth- and fifth-largest [regions] in the U.S., it makes it No. 2 behind New York,” Aguilar said. “That’s how important this is.”

The Houston station is likely to be in the Spring Branch neighborhood, about six miles outside downtown. It will be just west of Interstate 610, between U.S. Highway 290 and Interstate 10, where there are now light industrial buildings, empty lots and an apartment building south of the aging Northwest Mall. Texas Central officials see the area as ripe for the kind of redevelopment - hotels, restaurants, condominiums -- a station could spur.

The station wouldn’t directly connect passengers to any of Houston METRO’s three rail lines, all of which are miles away. But Texas Central officials tout the proximity to three major highways and METRO’s Northwest Transit Center, a large bus transfer station across Old Katy Road from where the station may one day sit.

Company leaders say the location will give passengers a number of ways to connect to business nodes scattered throughout the city, including downtown, the Energy Corridor and Texas Medical Center.

“We’re in the middle of great access,” Reed said.

Dallas’ station, by contrast, will be just outside of downtown, south of Interstate 30. The station is envisioned as a vibrant, mixed-use gateway between the buzzy Cedars neighborhood and the central business district. The goal is to also tie it into Dallas Area Rapid Transit’s sprawling light-rail train network.

North Texas leaders hope the station will jump-start development in the southern half of Dallas, which has languished behind its northern counterpart for decades.

“As we put together the terminus, the epicenter is going to change in the city of Dallas,” Mayor Mike Rawlings said. “As I’ve always said, we need to grow south -- this is going to be right at the doorstep of southern Dallas and allow us to bring great retail.”

Praying for a better deal

Texas Central said this month that it had secured the ability to survey property owned by more than 3,000 people and businesses. The company also said it has land option agreements on 30 percent of the parcels it needs for the entire project. But it isn’t releasing the number of parcels that could be needed for the line or how much of the 240-mile route is represented by its land option agreements.

Company officials say that’s partly because federal officials are still reviewing the project and the route isn’t finalized. Furthermore, they say, the company wants to protect its proprietary interests from potential competitors.

“What needs to be understood is that the first deployment of high-speed rail in America -- in the hemisphere -- is highly sought after,” Keith said.

Opponents balk at those arguments.

“We qualify for the unbelievable power of eminent domain, but we don't have to show you our numbers,” is what Limestone County landowner Blake Beckham hears.

He hasn't let Texas Central or its representatives onto his rural weekend retreat, which he plans to turn into a wedding and event venue. Beckham is a Dallas attorney who has done pro bono legal work for opposition group Texans Against High-Speed Rail. Grimes County Judge Ben Leman is chairman of that organization.

The group argues that Texas Central shouldn't qualify as a railroad company with eminent domain powers because it doesn't currently operate a railroad. Leman said survey permissions and land option agreements the company has secured shouldn't be seen as signs of support for the project. He said landowners sign such documents out of fear of the company's claims of having eminent domain authority.

“It's them signing something they're hoping and praying would be a better deal than eminent domain,” Leman said.

The opposition argument

Texas Central executives are adamant they've approached landowners as neighbors. They've hosted information meetings. They've emphasized that the train will create maintenance and construction jobs and send tax revenue to communities statewide.

Terry Sanders started out like many rural landowners: adamantly against the bullet train that will likely mean bulldozers for the Grimes County home he and his wife had lovingly built for retirement.

“We were just opposed to it to the 10th degree,” he said. “If they came by, we wouldn't even talk to them.”

Then a drive to Houston -- and a 5-mile traffic backup because of a flipped trailer -- changed his mind. Sanders and his wife bought the 7 acres in Plantersville about a decade ago for roughly \$10,000 an acre. Texas Central, he said, paid them \$25,000 upfront with the option to purchase the land for about twice what they paid, a deal he said was “more than fair.”

But Leman of Texans Against High-Speed Rail said current land prices aren't fair compensation for what will squash future property value increases from the sprawling development creeping north from Houston. Soon, Leman said, it's bound to boost land values in Grimes County, too. But if land has a high-speed train running through the middle of it, he fears it's a much tougher sell.

“We want to facilitate the infrastructure that encourages the best of the growth,” Leman said. “We need a healthy mix of business and residential development. What this project would do is bisect the heart of where a lot of this growth would potentially be.”

Spinoff development ahead

Texas Central executives argue there's no evidence showing that a rail line decreases property values. They also see a development boom in Grimes County because it will be home to the line's third station. An exact location hasn't been announced.

"As you can imagine, we have some ideas on where it could work the best and we're working towards those solutions," Reed said.

In 2015, Texas Central released a study it commissioned that estimated the line would spur \$36 billion in economic development over 25 years. The libertarian Reason Foundation, meanwhile, predicted this month that the project would leave taxpayers on the hook for billions of dollars because it won't be profitable.

Some of the high-speed rail bills filed in Austin this week seek to mitigate the negative impacts on land if the project fails. One bill also seeks to have the Texas Department of Transportation and Legislative Budget Board provide an analysis on such matters as the project's feasibility and impact on property values.

Charles Gilliland, an economist at Texas A&M University's Real Estate Center who tracks property values, said rural land values have been rising since the 1960s.

But it's tough to predict exactly if or when rural land values will skyrocket as sprawl from urban areas approaches, he said. It's also hard to tell how a high-speed rail line would affect rural Texas since there's no other American predecessor to examine.

"Essentially, everybody over there would like to have a study at their fingertips that would show exactly what the impact's going to be," he said. "But to my knowledge, nothing like that exists."

One thing is clear: Demographers and economists say Texas' cities and suburbs are swelling, while the proportion of people living in rural areas declines.

"Large cities are good for growth, good for wealth creation and welfare," said Pia Orrenius, a senior economist with the Dallas Federal Reserve. "That paints a much more negative picture for the future of rural areas."

Retirement home

That puts people like Stoneham in a tough spot. He wants to pass his land on to his kids -- but, he noted, "kids these days don't seem to want to work out here."

Stoneham said Texas Central offered him about \$900,000 for the roughly 50 acres of his land the company would need -- "way too low."

He thinks his son might be interested in leasing it out to someone else who thinks they can make money running cattle. And one of his grandkids, at least, loves visiting.

He stopped the truck on a small hill, looking out past the tall transmission towers placed on the land decades before, after his father gave a power company easements. Stoneham was working with an architect to build a little house there, where he could live out his days among the cows.

But the house is on hold. It would be right in the bullet train's path.

Disclosure: Texas Central Partners, Texas A&M University and Linda McMahon have been financial supporters of The Texas Tribune. A complete list of Tribune donors and sponsors can be viewed [here](#).

Americans Have Been Driving Less, But Now They're Just Sitting at Home

Is a recent drop in auto fatalities linked to people becoming shut-ins?

- [John Metcalfe](#)
- [@citycalfe](#)
- Feb 9, 2017

Joe Skipper/Reuters

Some good news for the environment and, well, for staying alive: [Driving](#) rates and fatal car wrecks are on the decline in the United States.

But there's bad news for health: Americans haven't replaced driving with physical activities, preferring instead to putter around the home, according to a new study in the [American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#).

Americans (Millennials, in particular) drove an average of 600 miles less each year from 2004 to 2014, according to the paper's author, [Noreen McDonald](#), a city planning specialist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. That same period saw a significant drop in road fatalities, which could be attributed to safer vehicles and better driving, or to less time spent behind the wheel. Data analyses suggest the latter.

However, the recent spurning of the car likely isn't a result of more folks living in dense urban areas, where public transit is widely available and short-distance trips are common. It also isn't because more folks are biking, walking, rollerblading, or anything of the sort, says McDonald. Rather, she argues that the cutback corresponds with "the global economic crisis, rising gas prices, and a general shift in lifestyle habits, including evolving attitudes about travel."

Here's more of her theory from a [university press release](#):

These results accord with analyses from the transport literature that show the drop in driving occurred because Americans were going fewer places, not because they were switching from cars to travel by bus, foot, or bicycle....

"Americans have stayed home more in the recent decade for a complex set of inter-related factors," [says] McDonald. "Technologic advances have eliminated the need for some face-to-face interaction. High gas prices, rising debt, stagnant incomes, and increases in unemployment have made driving more costly. Finally, delays in employment, partnering, and parenthood have lowered the need for certain types of trips."

But the current situation might not last. Today's slightly more favorable economic landscape seems to be putting more Americans back into cars, which is probably why 2015 saw 2,348 more fatal car accidents than 2014. "The challenge that we must all now work toward," says McDonald, "is how to maintain the safety record on American roads as population growth, low gas prices, and an improving economy lead to more travel."

DRAFT

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

March 9, 2017

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

The Honorable Ken Paxton
Attorney General of the State of Texas
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Governor Abbott and Attorney General Paxton:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC), a roster is included as Attachment 1, which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for North Central Texas, is responsible for meeting federal transportation conformity requirements resulting from our ozone nonattainment status. In addition, the RTC is very involved and committed in implementing a diverse array of emission reduction projects and programs that lessen mobile source impacts. To this end, the RTC sent correspondence to Assistant Attorney General Cruden and Attorney General Paxton on March 10, 2016, requesting a portion of any financial settlement which results from the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Civil Action and the Texas Attorney General's (AG) lawsuit filed in 2015 (Volkswagen Group of America, Inc. and Audi America, LLC), be distributed equitably to all nonattainment areas, see Attachment 2. Since that time, Volkswagen has agreed to a Partial Consent Decree with the United States, which includes the creation of a Mitigation Trust to fund eligible mitigation actions. At this time, the sum from Partial Consent Decrees suggest funding for the State of Texas of approximately \$209 million.

The RTC encourages the State of Texas to pursue funding available to the state as part of the Mitigation Trust established by the Volkswagen Partial Consent Decrees. Accompanying this letter are recommendations on allocating the \$209 million allotment to the State of Texas, as well as suggestions for the dispersal process of the funds, see Attachment 3. Texas can use this funding to not only improve the air quality throughout the state, but can also allow Texas to invest in infrastructure and create jobs. The RTC has a strong collaborative history with the state and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to improve the nonattainment situation in our region. These funds will have a significant impact in improving the quality of life in the region as well have a positive impact on the private and public sectors in a variety of ways. The RTC appreciates your attention to this matter, and looks forward to working with you.

DRAFT

The Honorable Greg Abbott and The Honorable Ken Paxton
Page Two

March 9, 2017

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

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

CK:ch
Attachments

cc: Bethany Engel, Trial Attorney, US Department of Justice
Barbara L. McQuade, US Attorney, US Department of Justice
Anthony W. Benedict, Assistant Attorney General, State of Texas
Pedro Perez Jr, Assistant Attorney General, State of Texas
Richard Hyde, P.E., Executive Director, TCEQ
David Brymer, Director, Air Quality Division, TCEQ
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of transportation, NCTCOG
Ken Kirkpatrick, Counsel for Transportation, NCTCOG
Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager for Air Quality Planning and Operations, NCTCOG

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W. Jeff Williams
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Erik Wilson
Deputy Mayor Pro Tem
City of Dallas

W. B. "Zim" Zimmerman
Councilmember
City of Fort Worth



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

March 10, 2016

**The Honorable John C. Cruden
Assistant Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
Environment & Natural Resources Division
Law and Policy Section
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530-0001**

**The Honorable Ken Paxton
Attorney General of the State of Texas
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548**

Dear Assistant Attorney General Cruden and Attorney General Paxton:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC), which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for North Central Texas and responsible for meeting federal transportation conformity requirements, is requesting a portion of any financial settlement which results from the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Civil Action filed on January 4, 2016, (Volkswagen AG, Audi AG, Volkswagen Group of America, Inc., Volkswagen Group of America Chattanooga Operations, LLC, Dr. Ing. H.c. F. Porsche AG, and Porsche Cars North America, Inc.) and the Texas Attorney General's (AG) lawsuit filed on October 8, 2015, (Volkswagen Group of America, Inc. and Audi America, LLC), be distributed equitably to all nonattainment counties.

The actions by both the DOJ and Texas AG were a result of findings that Volkswagen AG installed illegal emissions defeat devices in light-duty vehicles with diesel engines. These defeat devices allow tailpipe emissions up to 40 times the legal level of Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x).

These settlement funds would be earmarked to implement air quality projects and/or programs to off-set the increased emissions from the diesel vehicles equipped with the emission test defeat devices. This is important because the Dallas-Fort Worth region is NO_x-limited, which means decreases or increases in NO_x emissions, such as the increases resulting from the emissions test-cheat devices, have a more profound effect on the overall ozone levels.

It is a federal requirement that regions designated nonattainment for ozone must demonstrate transportation conformity for the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). As the region develops or amends the MTP, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as staff to the RTC, must ensure it complies with these federal requirements and the associated motor vehicle emissions budgets for NO_x and volatile organic compounds set by the State Implementation Plan. To develop the on-road emissions inventories for the region, NCTCOG uses the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Motor Vehicle Emissions

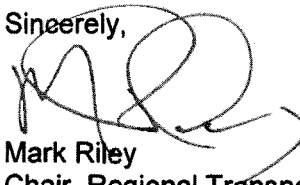
March 10, 2016

Simulator, which includes local inputs and built-in federal vehicle emission standards. The overall emissions for the region are based on many factors, including the assumption vehicle's emission systems design and function are in compliance with State and federal emissions standards. As a result of the recent findings, certain Volkswagen, Audi, and Porsche diesel vehicles are operating above the federally allowed NO_x emissions limits, air quality planning has underestimated these emissions and additional emission reduction control strategies are necessary. Financial assistance through any level of settlement funds would allow nonattainment areas such as the Dallas-Fort Worth region to implement said emission reduction control strategies to offset unhealthy emission impacts.

NCTCOG will continue to partner with the EPA and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality through developing emissions inventories and providing assistance with on-road vehicle emissions data for our region. Although restitution for the individual owners of vehicles equipped with emissions test-cheat devices is prudent, providing a portion of any financial settlement resulting from violations of the Clear Air Act to the nonattainment regions will benefit all citizens through the continued improvement for air quality.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for NCTCOG at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,



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

JPL:ch

cc: Bethany Engel, Trial Attorney, US Department of Justice
Barbara L. McQuade, US Attorney, US Department of Justice
Anthony W. Benedict, Assistant Attorney General, State of Texas
Pedro Perez, Jr., Assistant Attorney General, State of Texas
Richard Hyde, P.E., Executive Director, TCEQ
David Brymer, Director, Air Quality Division, TCEQ
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG
Ken Kirkpatrick, Counsel for Transportation, NCTCOG
Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager for Air Quality Planning and Operations, NCTCOG

Elements of Proposed Technical Plan

Upon the State of Texas pursuit of available funding to the state as part of the Mitigation Trust established by the Volkswagen Partial Consent Decrees, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) requests that the State of Texas, by and through the Office of the Governor, designate the Texas Commission on Environment Quality (TCEQ) as the Lead Agency for the purposes of Texas' participation in the Mitigation Trust. The RTC believes that the TCEQ has shown reliable capabilities in the dispersal of their Texas Emission Reduction Program grants, and has the administrative and technical capacity to serve as the Lead Agency for Texas. The RTC also requests to allow input from regions and other interested parties throughout Texas on the development of the Mitigation Plan.

As stated in the 2.0 L Partial Consent Decree, acceptable projects are identified that allow regions flexibility to maximize investments, with emphasis on high nitrogen oxides reduction programs. The North Central Texas Region can benefit from this Mitigation Trust by implementing said emission reduction strategies to offset unhealthy emissions impacts. As projects vary in benefits across different regions, the RTC suggests that use of funds be determined by each regional Council of Governments (COG) and administration functions be streamlined and flexible to allow for quick project implementation. If a COG is unwilling or unable to participate in the spending of funds, the RTC requests the TCEQ, as the Lead Agency, retain and disperse remaining funds to regions that demonstrate adequate need and interest.

To ensure the appropriate allocation of funds, the RTC requests 90 percent of funds be suballocated to each COG region by total number of registered Volkswagen, Audi, and Porsche vehicles subject to the Partial Consent Decrees in that area. The selected regions are recommended to be based on Transportation Management Areas that were recently recommended nonattainment for the 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone or have an existing vehicle inspection/maintenance program. As an added benefit, this recommendation falls in line to similar regions identified in Texas Clear Lanes.

Utilizing data supplied by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the following table highlights potential suballocated funding results for each COG after distributing impacted Volkswagen, Audi, and Porsche vehicles. The RTC suggests the remaining 10 percent balance be used as a set aside for other interested COG regions.

Texas Regional Councils	Vehicles Affected				Potential Settlement Per Texas Regional Councils
	2.0 Liter	3.0 Liter	Total		
Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) ^{1, 2, 3}	4,014	482	4,496	11.12%	\$27,438,116
Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) ^{1, 2, 3}	4,657	729	5,386	13.32%	\$32,869,593
Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) ^{1, 2, 3}	8,056	1,599	9,655	23.87%	\$58,922,377
North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) ^{1, 2, 3}	8,789	1,537	10,326	25.53%	\$63,017,345
Rio Grande Council of Governments (RGCOG) ^{1, 2}	870	89	959	2.37%	\$5,852,570
Remaining Regions with 10% Set Aside	8,813	809	9,622	10.00%	\$20,900,000
Total Vehicles Affected in State of Texas					40,444
VW Settlement to the State of Texas					\$209,000,000
Fair Share Funding Recommendation Total (VW Settlement – 10% Set Aside)					\$188,100,000
Total Vehicles in Fair Share Funding Recommendation					30,822
Potential Settlement Per Vehicle with Fair Share Funding Recommendation					\$6,103

Fair Share Funding Recommendation: Regional counties within Transportation Management Areas: are proposed for nonattainment under 2015 NAAQS for Ozone or have existing vehicle inspection/maintenance programs; and/or are a part of Texas Clear Lanes

1. Transportation Management Area
2. Proposed Ozone Nonattainment Area (2015 Ozone NAAQS) and/or has Existing Vehicle Inspection/Maintenance Program
3. Texas Clear Lanes

Registration Source: NREL (Polk Vehicle Registration Database)

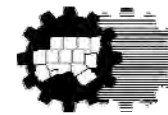
VW Settlement to the State of Texas Source: Partial Consent Decree 2.0L (9/30/16) and 3.0L (12/20/16)

VOLKSWAGEN MITIGATION UPDATE AND CORRESPONDENCE TO THE STATE OF TEXAS

Regional Transportation Council

Chris Klaus

March 9, 2017



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

OVERVIEW

Lawsuits Against Volkswagen Group 2.0 and 3.0 Liter Diesel Engine Vehicles

Found to Exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Standard for Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x) Emissions

RTC Requested the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Texas Attorney General (AG), if a Financial Settlement is Reached, Funds be Dispersed to Texas Nonattainment Regions (March 10, 2016)

Partial Settlements Resulting in \$2.9 Billion Mitigation Trust Fund

2.0 liter Partial Settlement (9/30/16): \$2.7 Billion

3.0 liter Partial Settlement (12/20/2016): \$225 Million

\$209 Million to State of Texas

Administration Share is 15%

MITIGATION PROCESS

Trustee Selected

(Anticipated Appointment by Court Early 2017)



Trust Agreement Finalized

(Trust Considered Effective)



Potential Government Beneficiaries Must File Certification Form to Become Beneficiaries/Identify Lead Agency within 60 Days of the Trust Effective Date



Trustee Files List of Designated Beneficiaries

(Trustee has 120 days from Trust Effective Date to file list)



Beneficiaries Must Create Mitigation Plan

(Summary of How the Beneficiary Intends to Use Allotted Funds)



Mitigation Trust Administered by Trustee

(Trustee Required to Transmit Determination of Beneficiary's Funding Request within 60 Days Upon Receipt)

FAIR SHARE FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

Identify Effected Vehicles In Each COG Region



COG Region with Transportation Management Areas (TMA)



COG Region Containing Air Quality Focus; Proposed Ozone Nonattainment, or Existing Vehicle Inspection/Maintenance Program



COG Region within Texas Clear Lanes

Alamo Area COG

Capital Area COG

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Rio Grande COG

North Central Texas COG (Approximately \$63 Million)

Set Aside of 10% for Other Interested Regions

ELIGIBLE NO_x MITIGATION ACTIONS

Heavy-duty Vehicle Repowers/Replacements:

Freight Trucks

School, Shuttle or Transit Bus

Freight Switchers

Airport Ground Support Equipment

Charging Infrastructure for Light-duty, On-road Zero Emission Passenger Vehicles

Actions Eligible Under EPA's Diesel Emission Reduction Act

Alternative Fuel Infrastructure

Electrified Parking Spaces

REQUESTED ACTION

Letter to Governor of Texas and Texas AG

Request State of Texas Pursue Receipt of Funds

Request Lead Agency be the Texas Commission on Environment Quality

Direct that Mitigation Plan Development Include Input from Regions and Other Interested Parties Throughout Texas

Emphasis on High NO_x Reduction Programs

Support Fair Share Funding Disbursement to COG's Based On:
Transportation Management Areas
Ozone Noncompliance
Texas Clear Lanes
10% Set Aside for Other Interested Regions

Use of Funds be Determined by Each COG

Develop Streamlined and Flexible Administrative Functions

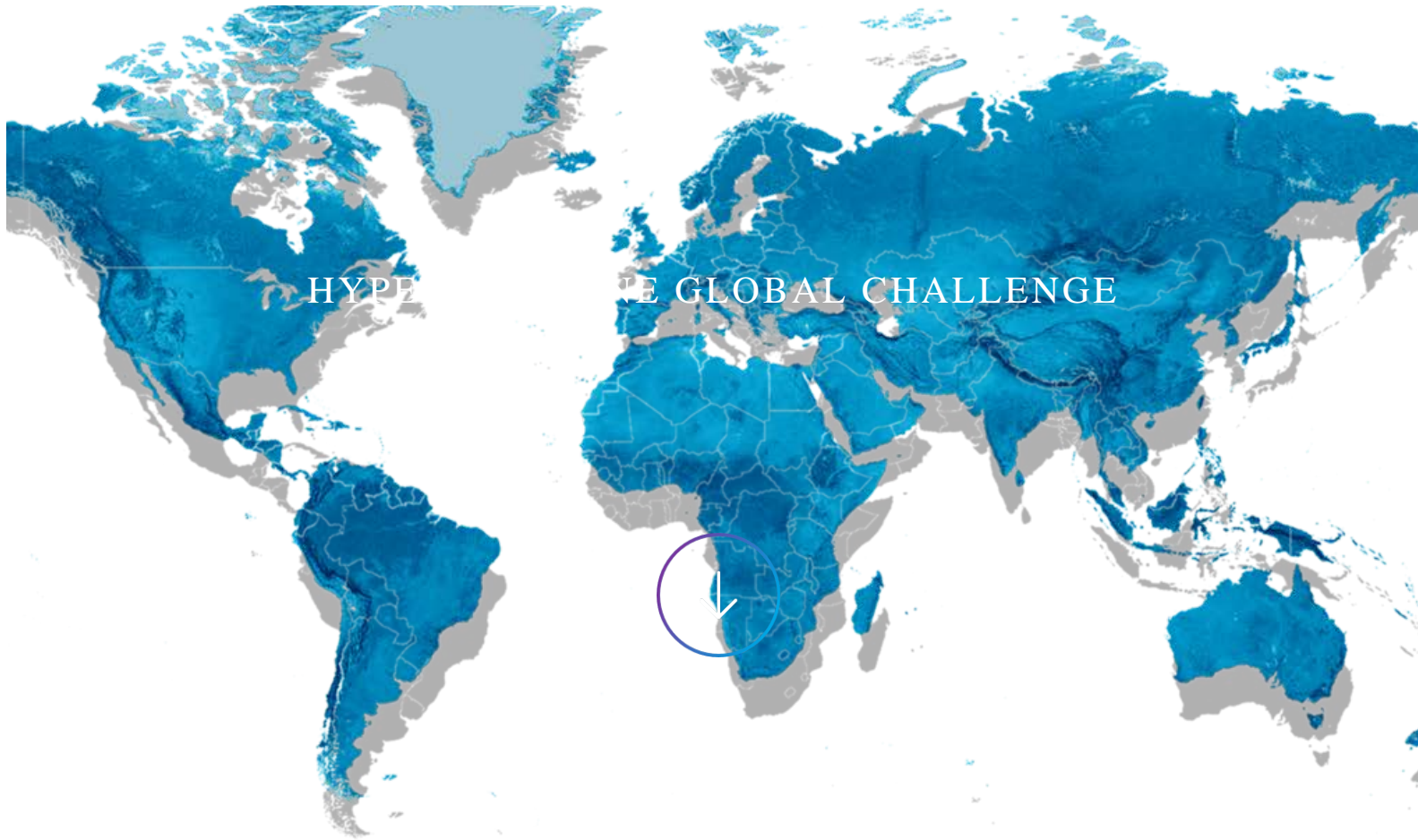
VOLKSWAGEN MITIGATION UPDATE

For Further Information

Chris Klaus
Senior Program Manager
817-695-9286
cklaus@nctcog.org

Jenny Narvaez
Principal Transportation Planner
817-608-2342
inarvaez@nctcog.org

Jody Purvis Loza
Senior Air Quality Planner
817-704-5609
jloza@nctcog.org



WHAT IS THE HYPERLOOP ONE GLOBAL CHALLENGE?

The Hyperloop One Global Challenge is a competition which invites teams anywhere on Earth to put forward a comprehensive commercial, transport, economic, and policy case for their cities, regions, or countries to be considered to host the first hyperloop networks. The Hyperloop One Global Challenge is not an engineering competition: we bring the technology, you tell us how it should be used in your location.

Advised by an international jury of leading experts in transport, technology, economics and innovation, Hyperloop One is seeking to collaborate with applicants who most powerfully make the case for how Hyperloop would not only transform passenger and cargo transport in their locations, but also how that Hyperloop transformation will drive economic growth, generate opportunities for development, and create radically new opportunities for people to live anywhere, work anywhere and be anywhere.

FS Links Case Study

Hyperloop One has formed a partnership with FS Links Ab, to study a potential hyperloop route linking Helsinki and Stockholm, the capital cities of Finland and Sweden. Hyperloop One reduces the journey time from over 16 hours by ferry to around 30 minutes. With on-demand service planned to all major intermediate centers of population, direct service to both Helsinki and Stockholm airports, and a combined 40 million passengers per year, FS Links uses Hyperloop One to create a Nordic super-region.

READ MORE →

Switzerland - Cargo Sous Terrain

Hyperloop One joined forces with the Swiss industrial consortium Cargo Sous Terrain to develop a fully automated freight transportation system connecting major transport hubs in Switzerland. The system allows flexible, durable and cost-effective underground freight transport of pallets and packages.

→

[READ MORE](#) →

Arcturan Sustainable Cargo

Hyperloop One, AECOM and GRID Logistics, together with consulting partner KPMG, have committed to collaborate on a privately funded economic and technical feasibility study. The study investigates using innovative advanced technologies to alleviate traffic congestion in the Los Angeles area, to improve air quality and port efficiency and positively impact the city's economic competitiveness.

[READ MORE](#) →

LIST OF SEMIFINALISTS

AR Buenos Aires Cordoba	AU Sydney Melbourne	CA Ring of Fire
CA Toronto Montreal	CA Vancouver	
CH Shanghai Hangzhou	DE German Loop	EE Tallin Helsinki
ES Madrid Tangiers	FR Corsica Sardinia	
IL Eilat Tel Aviv	IN Bangalore Thiruvan	IN Chennai BangaloreA
IN Chennai BangaloreB	IN Freight Corridor	
IN Mumbai Chennai	IN Mumbai Delhi	KS Seoul Busan
MX Mexico City Guadalajara	NL Dutch Loop	
PL Warsaw Wroclaw	SA Durban Joburg	UK Glasgow Cardiff
UK Liverpool Hull	UK London Edinburg	
UK Northern Arc	US Boston Somerset	US Cheyenne Houston

US Gary Louisville

US LA Ensenada

US Kansas City St Louis

US Miami Orlando

US Midwest

US Nevada

US Rocky Mountain

US Colorado

US Seattle Portland

US Texas Triangle

INTERNATIONAL PANEL OF JUDGES

Jury members listed below shall under no circumstances be contacted by competition participants or their representatives. Participants who attempt to contact jury members shall be disqualified. Click on the judges picture to [learn more](#).

DRAFT

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE TEXAS ENTRY IN THE HYPERLOOP ONE
GLOBAL COMPETITION
(R17-01)**

WHEREAS, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

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

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for the approval of transportation projects and policies in the region's long-range transportation plan (Mobility 2040); and,

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for identifying mobility choices within the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth Metropolitan Planning Area through Mobility 2040; and,

WHEREAS, since 1991, the region has been designated as nonattainment for the pollutant ozone and approximately half of ozone precursor oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) emissions come from on-road mobile sources; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC is responsible for identifying projects simultaneously improving mobility and air quality; and,

WHEREAS, there is increasing interest in and research and development of Hyperloop technology, which provides for high speed transport of both people and freight on a net zero energy basis; and,

WHEREAS, Hyperloop One, one of the companies developing Hyperloop technology, is conducting a competitive Global Challenge to identify early deployment sites for Hyperloop technology; and,

WHEREAS, the Global Challenge attracted over 2,600 entries and a Texas entry was selected as one of the semifinalists; and,

WHEREAS, the Texas entry in the Global Challenge contemplates Hyperloop service within the region and connecting this region with other major metropolitan areas in Texas; and,

WHEREAS, obtaining finalist status for the Texas entry could help Texas attract investment and associated jobs as Hyperloop technology is developed and deployed; and,

WHEREAS, supporting research and development of new transportation technologies and business models will help the region achieve improvements in mobility and air quality; and,

DRAFT

WHEREAS, there is no financial commitment associated with an expression of support for the Texas entry in the Hyperloop One Global Challenge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. The Regional Transportation Council expresses its support for the Texas entry in the Hyperloop One Global Challenge.

Section 2. This support is consistent with other entities that desire system connections to, from, and through the region.

Section 3. This resolution shall be transmitted to interested parties as appropriate.

Section 4. This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

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

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on March 9, 2017.

Gary Fickes, Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Commissioner, Tarrant County

DART/RTC TRANSIT RELATED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TRIP) FUNDING PARTNERSHIP

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MARCH 9, 2017

BACKGROUND

- ❖ In December 2016, DART staff requested assistance from NCTCOG to develop a partnership to help assist in their Transit Related Improvement Program (TRIP).
 - ❖ The TRIP program is designed to help DART respond to concerns from member cities without rail service or rail service in the approved financial plan.
 - ❖ Through this partnership, staff proposes to increase the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)/Local pool through an innovative funding exchange.
- 

RTC/DART PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP DEAL POINTS

- ❖ DART and the RTC each contribute half the funds to the TRIP program in 2 phases.
- ❖ In addition, the RTC will send another \$10M for DART in each phase (\$20M total).
- ❖ In return, DART will send the same amount of local funds back to the RTC.
- ❖ The local funds will repopulate the RTC/Local pool.

RTC Commitments	Phase 1 FY 2018-2020	Phase 2 FY 2021-2025
RTC to DART (50%)	\$7,025,000	\$9,000,000
RTC/DART swap	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
TOTAL	\$17,025,000	\$19,000,000

RTC/LOCAL FUNDS

- ❖ RTC/Local Pool was established in 2005 with funds from several funding exchanges.
 - ❖ e.g., \$57M with Denton County, \$21M with Dallas.
- ❖ RTC funded local air quality, sustainable development projects, and other regionally significant projects with the funds.
- ❖ RTC/Local funds will be used for air quality projects, innovative finance, leveraging, cash flow, and other regional transportation projects.
- ❖ As the existing RTC/Local balance is spent down, NCTCOG staff has been seeking opportunities and potential partnerships to “re-populate” the account.
 - ❖ e.g., DFW Airport (Glade Road), Others?

PROPOSED PROJECT TYPES

- ❖ DART will utilize TRIP funds to build for the following types of projects with the affected cities:

Agency	Project Types
Cockrell Hill	Street repair and signal upgrades
Glenn Heights	Street repair, signal upgrades and transportation studies
University Park	Signal upgrades, radio system upgrades, road repair, road reconstruction, and intersection improvement
Highland Park	Signal upgrades, radio system upgrades, road repair, road reconstruction, and intersection improvement

- ❖ DART will use local funds for the above improvements
 - ❖ The RTC's federal funds will be used on DART projects to offset their local expenditures on TRIP.
 - ❖ This strategy concentrates federal money on a few bigger projects versus several small projects.

PROJECT PROPOSED FOR FEDERAL FUNDS

Cotton Belt Rail Line:

Funding Phase	Fiscal Year	Funding Amount	Work Phase
1	2018	\$17,025,000	Environmental and Preliminary Engineering
2	2021	\$19,000,000	Construction

TIMELINE

December 2016	DART request for partnership
January 2017	Initial DART Action on TRIP
February 2017	STTC Action
March 2017	RTC Action
	Executive Board Action
April 2017	DART Agreement Action

ACTION REQUESTED

- ❖ Recommendation for RTC approval of the DART/RTC Transit Related Improvement Program Partnership with an exchange of:
 - ❖ \$17M in federal funds for \$10M local in 2018 (Phase 1)
 - ❖ \$19M in federal funds for \$10M local in 2021 (Phase 2)
- ❖ Approval to administratively amend the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate the new projects.

CONTACT

Christie Gotti
Senior Program Manager
(817) 608-2338
cgotti@nctcog.org

Amanda Long-Rodriguez
Transportation Planner
(817) 608-2367
along@nctcog.org

Ken Kirkpatrick
Counsel for Transportation
(817) 695-9278
kkirkpatrick@nctcog.org

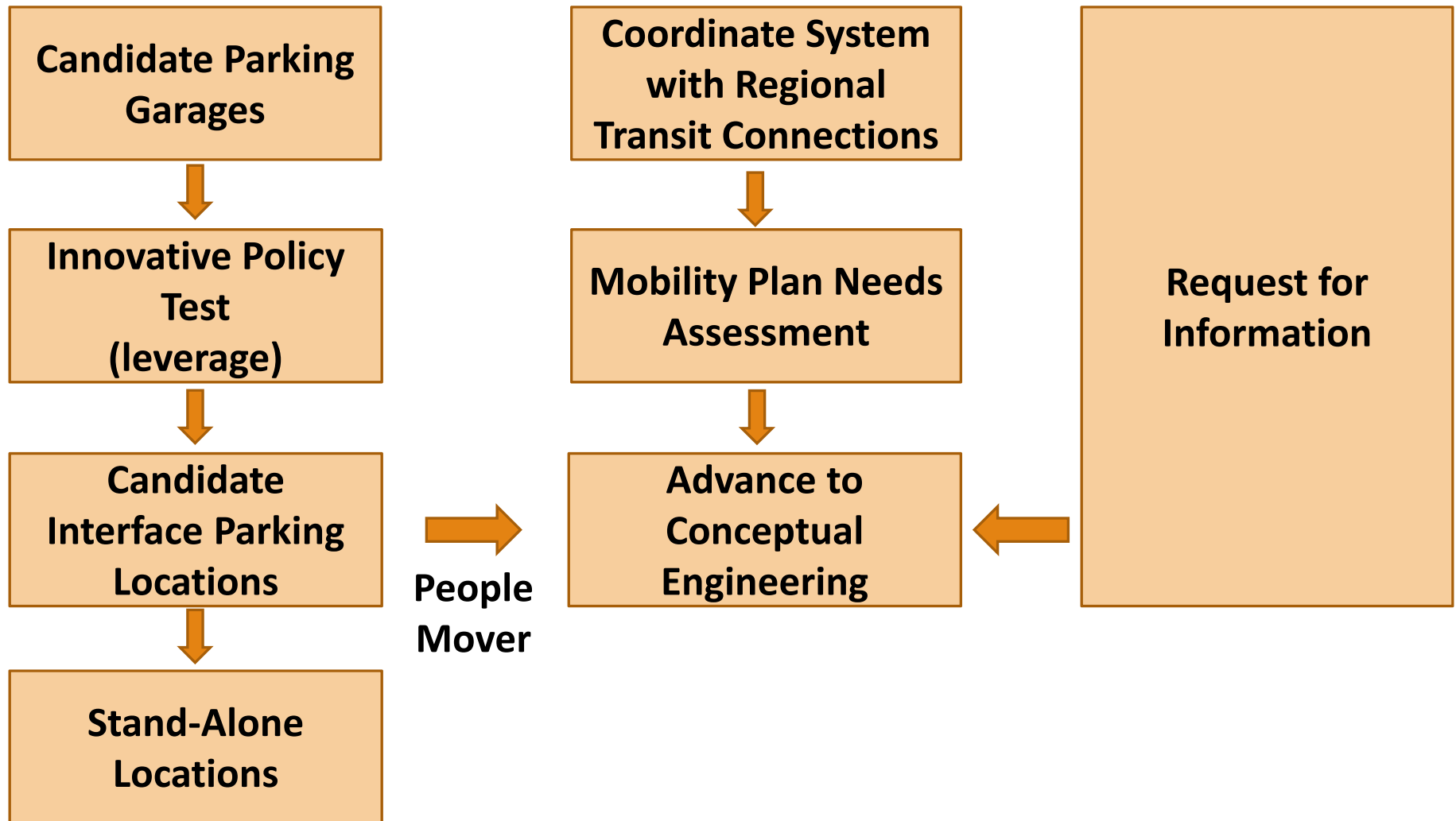
MODERN DAY “PEOPLE-MOVER” TECHNOLOGY UPDATE AND REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Regional Transpiration Council
March 9, 2017

Michael Morris, P.E.

Director Of Transportation
North Central Texas Council Of Governments

“PEOPLE-MOVER” IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (FOCUS ON THE WHAT)

COST BENEFITS

Economies of Scale of a Single System

Engineering Optimization of Structure

Industrialization Feasibility

Feasibility of Driverless Vehicles

Feasibility of Battery Technology

Role of Freight

Access-Line Haul-Egress Integration Feasibility

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (FOCUS ON THE WHAT)

REVENUE BENEFITS

Manufacturing Location Locally

Public-Private Partnerships

Revenue from Freight

Innovative Funding

Integrate with Parking Garages

CRITICAL FREIGHT CORRIDORS

Regional Transportation Council
March 9, 2017

Dan Lamers, Senior Program Manager



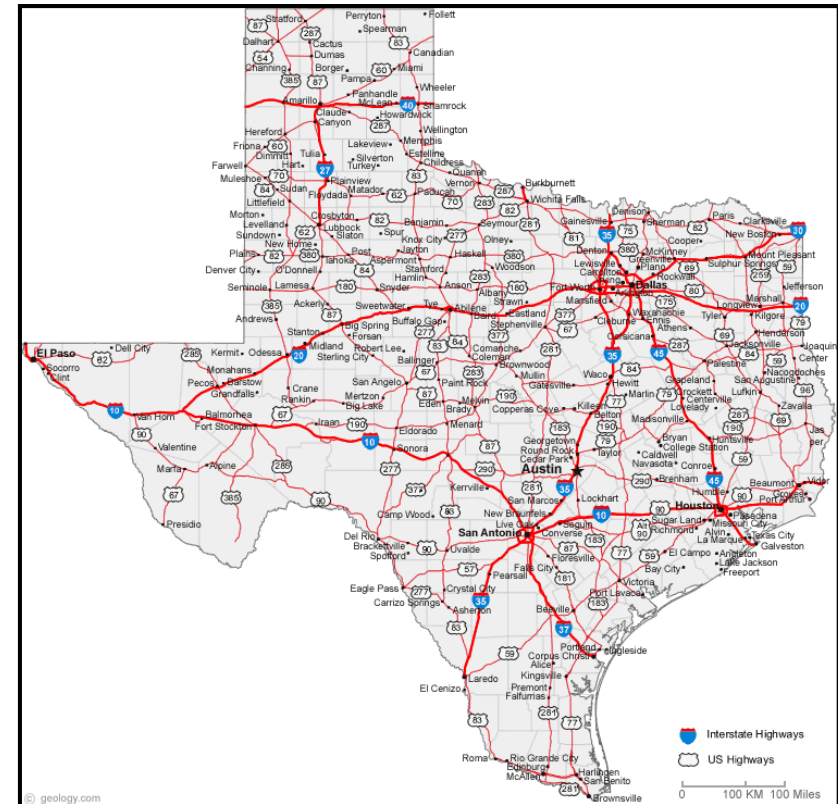
OVERVIEW

Objective

To identify important freight corridors that provide critical connectivity to the State Freight Network and National Highway Freight Network

Anticipated Outcomes

Allows expanded use of national highway freight program formula funds and FASTLANE grant program funds for eligible projects that support national goods movement goals



EXPLANATION OF FREIGHT NETWORKS

Primary Highway Freight System - federal

- Network of highways identified as the most critical sections of the U.S. freight transportation system
- Consists of 37,436 centerline miles of interstate and 4,082 centerline miles of non-interstate roads - 41,518 total miles

Texas Freight Network - state

- Primary Freight Network includes almost 6,400 miles of highways projected to carry more than 10 million tons of cargo by 2040
- Secondary Freight Network includes almost 13,400 miles of highways and is projected to carry more than 10 million tons of cargo or more, by 2040

Critical Freight Corridors - regional

- Urban – Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated
- Rural – State designated

CRITICAL URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDOR DESIGNATION REQUIREMENTS (FEDERAL)

23 U.S.C. 167(f) Identifies the Requirements for Designating Critical Urban Freight Corridors

Must be in an urbanized area and meet one or more of the following four elements:

- Connects an intermodal facility to:
 - The federal primary highway freight system
 - The interstate system
 - An intermodal freight facility
- Located within a corridor of a route on the Primary Highway Freight System and provides an alternative highway option important to goods movement
- Serves a major freight generator, logistics center, or manufacturing and warehouse/industrial land
- Important to the movement of freight within the region, as determined by the MPO or the state

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

All regional freight-related urban corridors are being evaluated to identify potential critical urban freight corridors, using a qualitative and quantitative approach.

Utilizing performance-based planning to develop performance measures that consider:

- Truck Travel Data
- Intermodal Facility Locations
- Connections to Freight Oriented Developments
- Connections to the Primary Highway Freight System
- Connections to the Texas Freight System

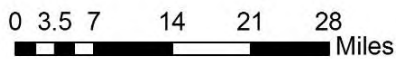
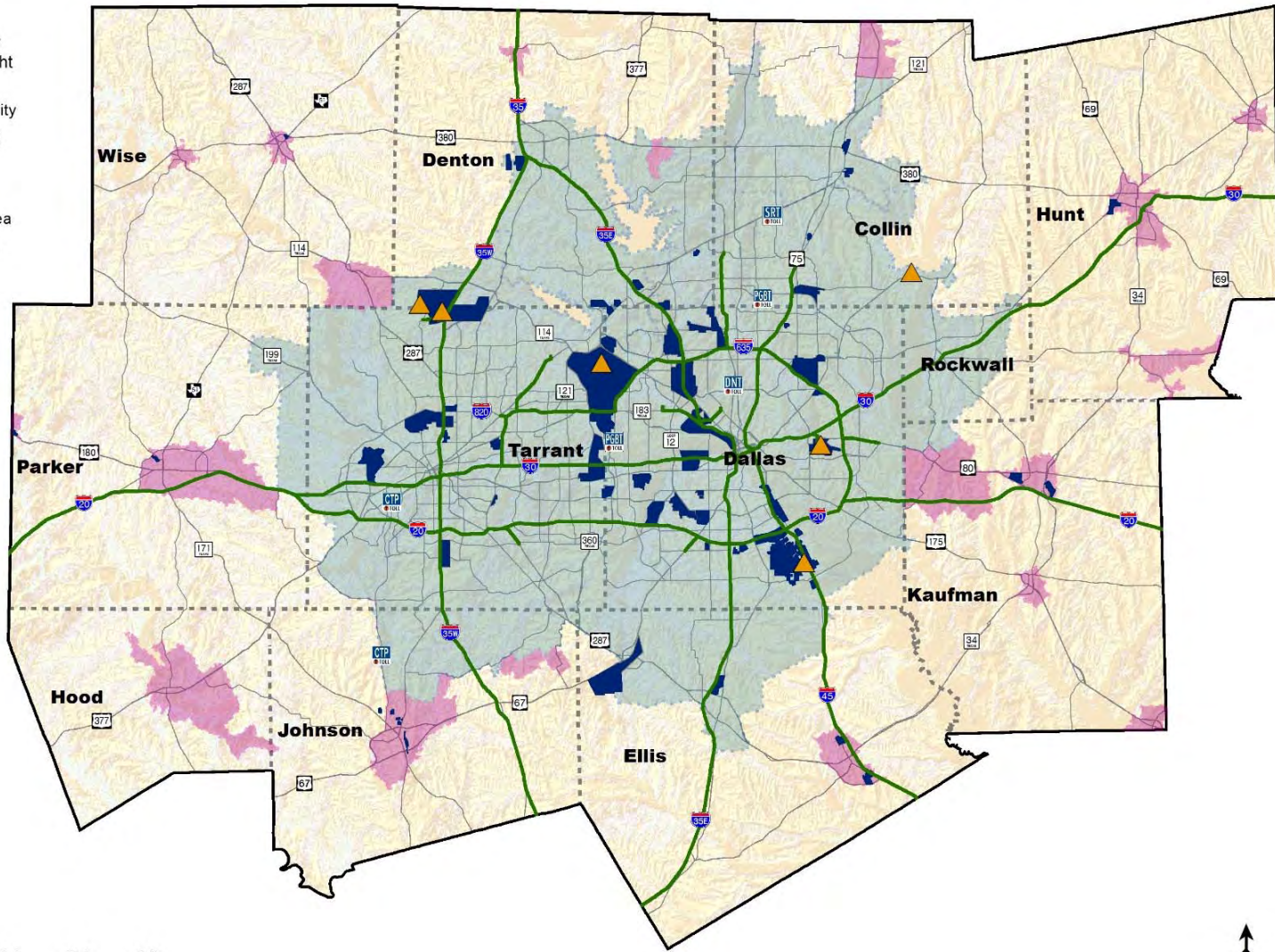
Developing a Regional Critical Freight Corridor System to align goals with:

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Ten Year Plan

FHWA Primary Highway Freight System

Legend

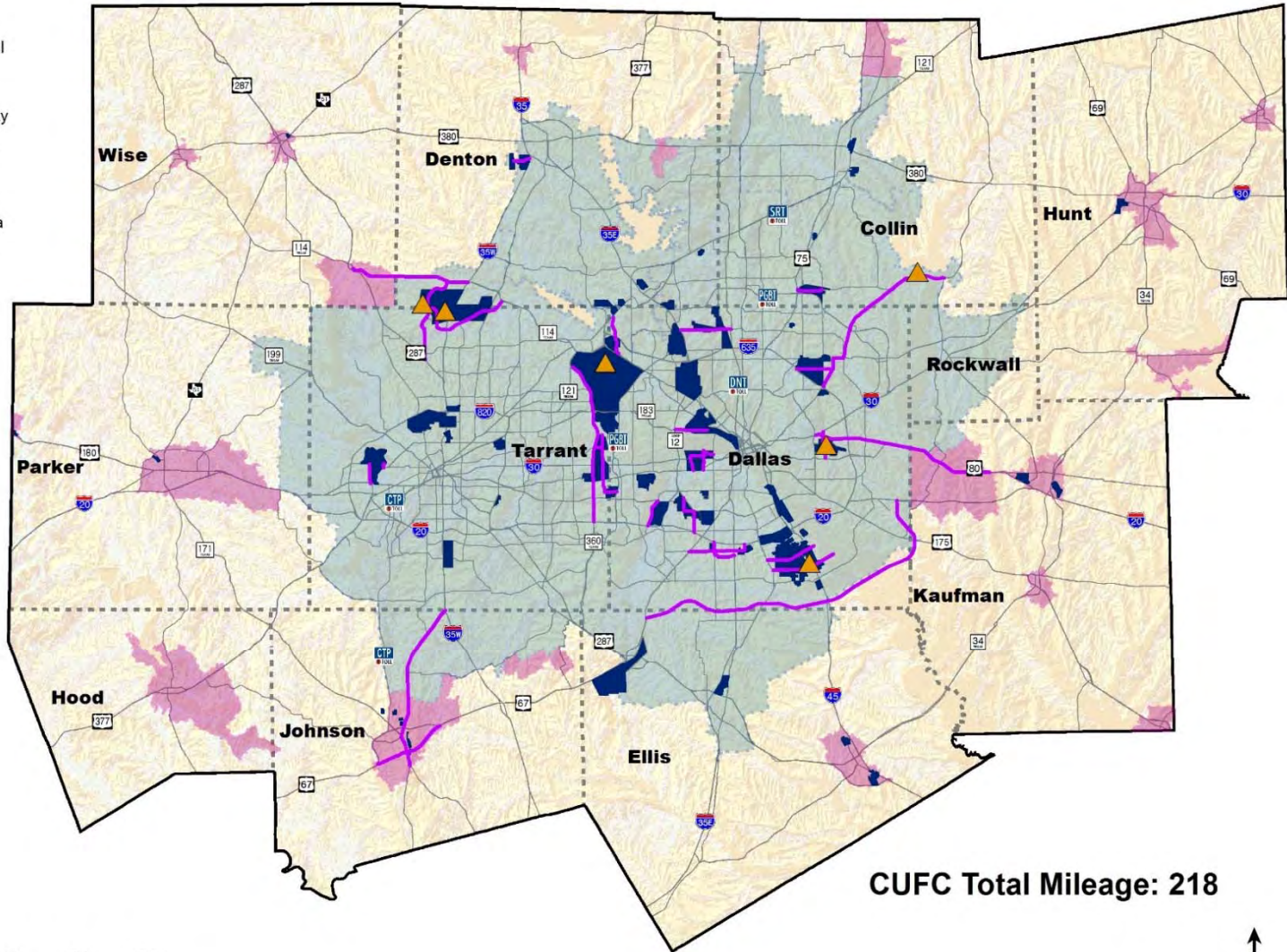
- FHWA Primary Highway Freight System
- Intermodal Facility
- Freight Oriented Developments
- Urbanized Area**
 - Small Urban Area
 - Urbanized Area
- Highways
- Counties



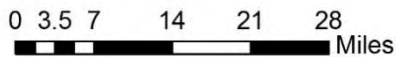
Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors DRAFT

Legend

- Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors
- Intermodal Facility
- Freight Oriented Developments
- Urbanized Area
 - Small Urban Area
 - Urbanized Area
- Highways
- Counties



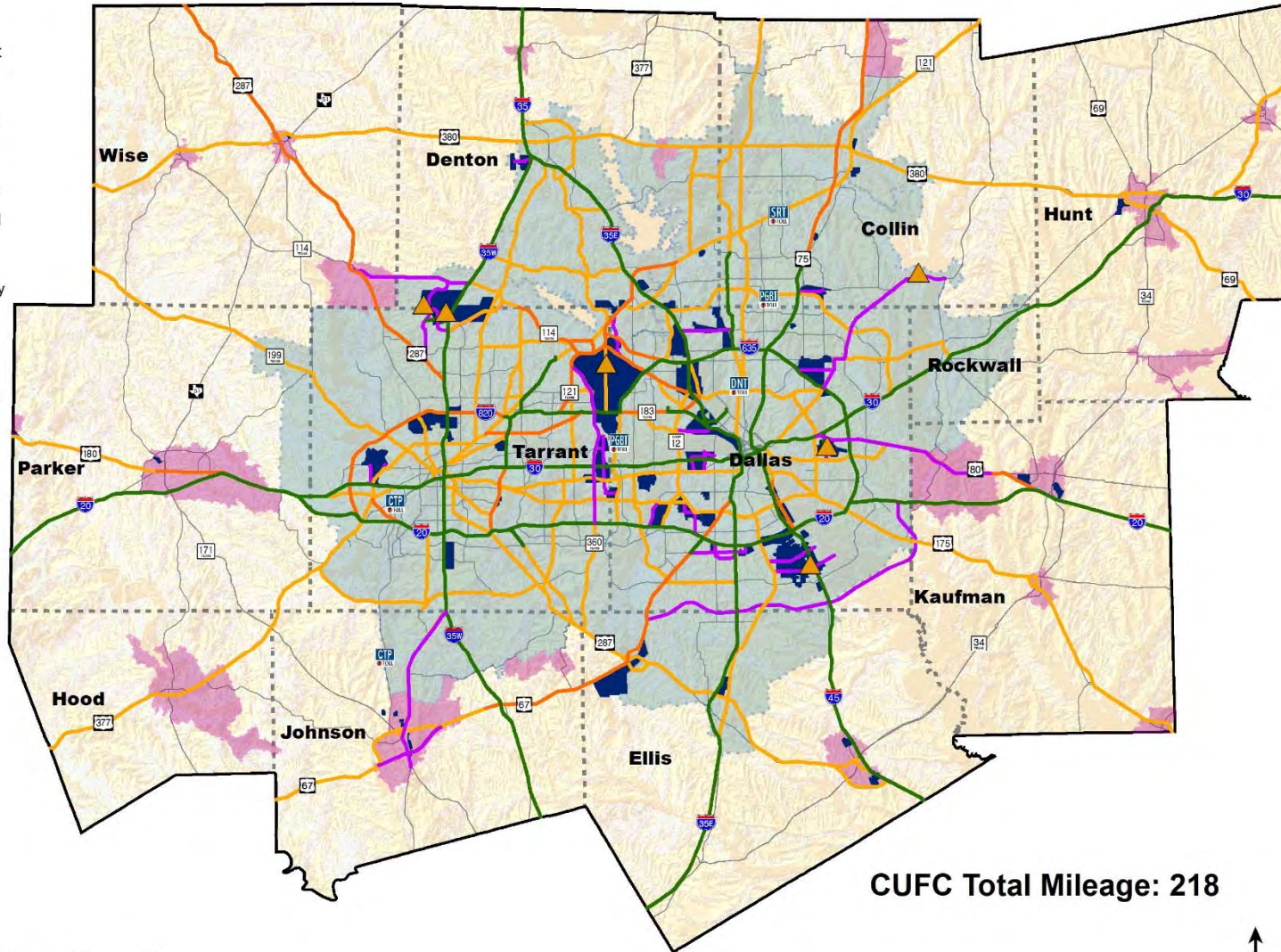
CUFC Total Mileage: 218



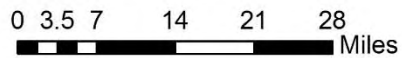
Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors DRAFT

Legend

-  FHWA Primary Highway Freight System
-  TxDOT Primary Freight Network
-  TxDOT Secondary Freight Network
-  Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors
-  Intermodal Facility
-  Freight Oriented Developments
- Urbanized Area**
-  Small Urban Area
-  Urbanized Area
-  Highways
-  Counties



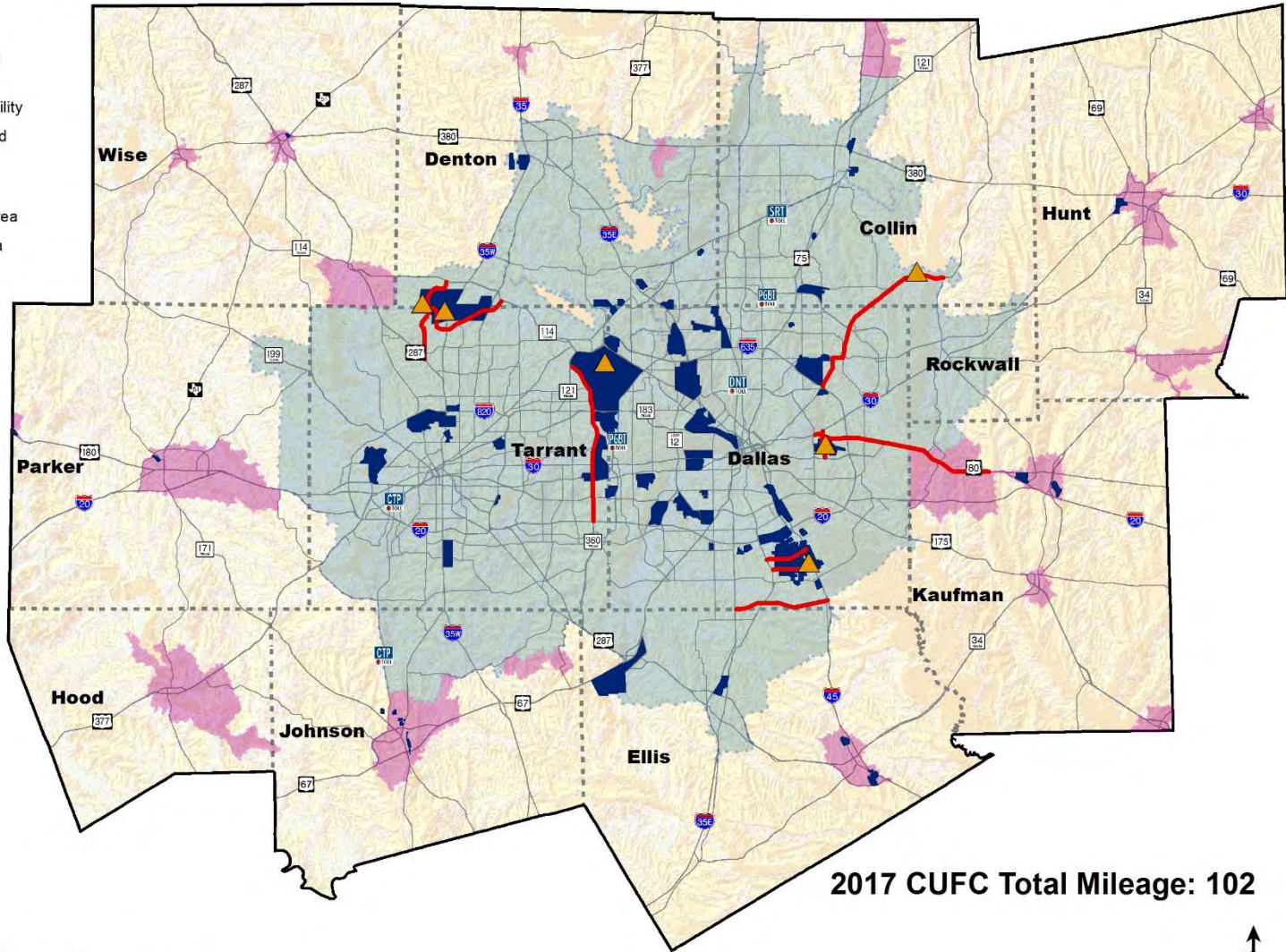
CUFC Total Mileage: 218



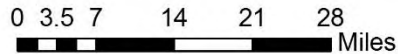
Draft 2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors

Legend

-  2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors
-  Intermodal Facility
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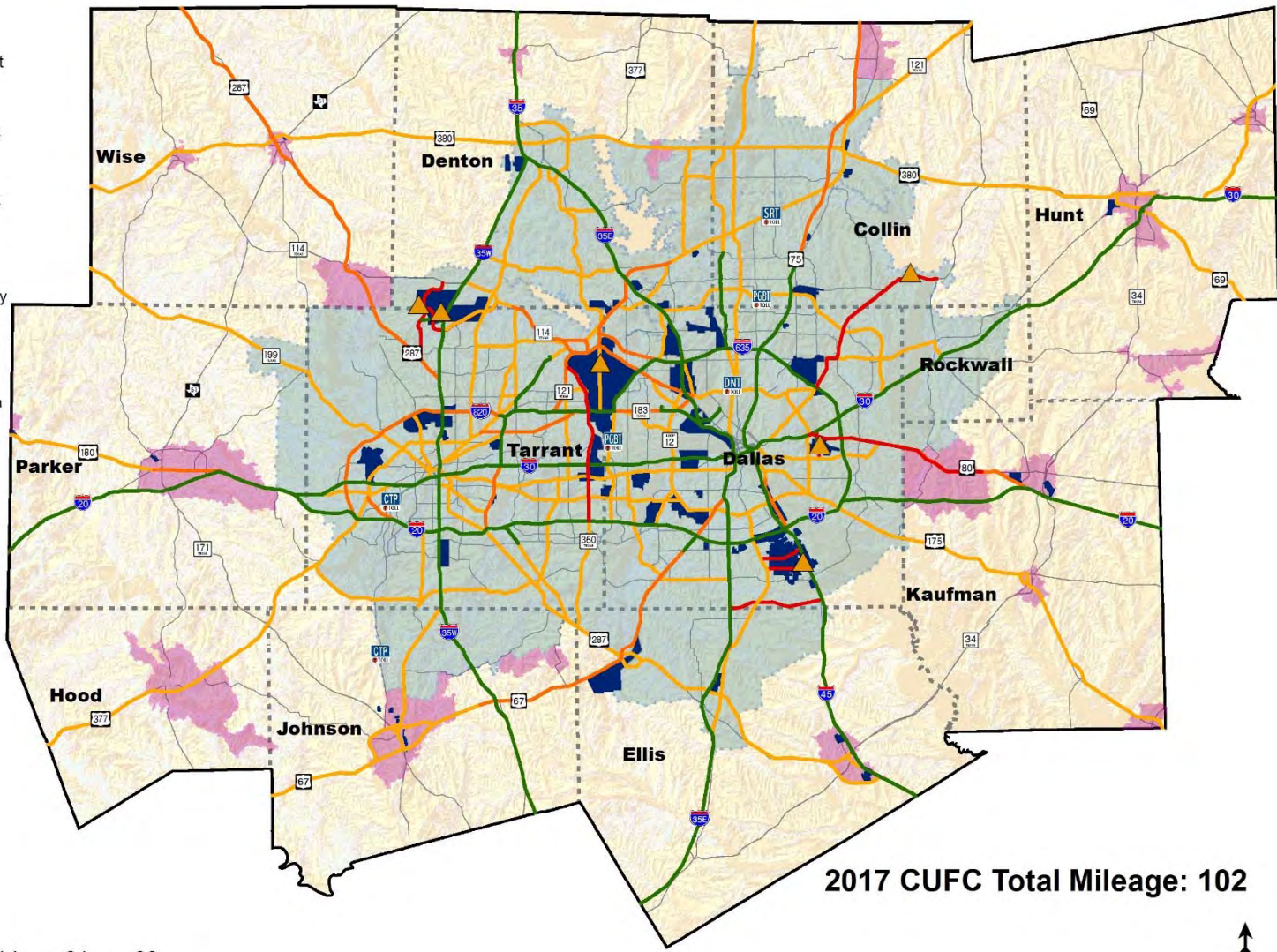
2017 CUFC Total Mileage: 102



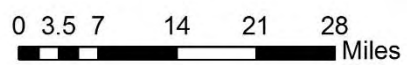
Draft 2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors

Legend

-  FHWA Primary Highway Freight System
-  TxDOT Primary Freight Network
-  TxDOT Secondary Freight Network
-  2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors
-  Intermodal Facility
-  Freight Oriented Developments
- Urbanized Area**
-  Small Urban Area
-  Urbanized Area
-  Highways
-  Counties




2017 CUFC Total Mileage: 102



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[Railroad Crossing Reliability Partnership Program](#)
[Regional Freight Advisory Committee \(R-FAC\)](#)
[Freight North Texas](#)
[Truck Lane Demo Project](#)
[Truck Planning](#)
[Transportation Home](#)

Freight Program Area

Critical Freight Corridors

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is engaged in developing a Regional Critical Urban Freight Corridor system. The goal is to identify important freight corridors that provide critical connectivity to the state freight network and the Primary Highway Freight System. The regional Critical Freight Corridor system will align with Mobility 2040: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Ten Year Plan.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) requires the FHWA Administrator to establish a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) to strategically direct Federal resources and policies toward improved performance of the NHFN. This network is the focus of funding under the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) and a significant funding target under the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) Grants Program (Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program) (23 U.S.C. 117). The NHFN consists of the following four subsystems: (1) the Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS); (2) those portions of the Interstate System not part of the PHFS; (3) Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFCs); and (4) Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFCs). (23 U.S.C. 167(c)).

CRFCs and CUFCs are important freight corridors that provide critical connectivity to the NHFN. By designating these important corridors, States can strategically direct resources toward improved system performance and efficient movement of freight on the NHFN. The designation of CRFCs and CUFCs will increase the State's NHFN, allowing expanded use of NHFP formula funds and FASTLANE Grant Program funds for eligible projects that support national goals identified in 23 U.S.C. 167(b) and 23 U.S.C. 117(a)(2).
Source: Federal Highway Administration, February 2017

Critical Freight Corridors Maps and Information

- FHWA Primary Highway Freight System
- FHWA Primary Highway Freight System and TxDOT Freight Networks
- Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors System - DRAFT
- Potential Critical Urban Freight Corridors with State Network and National System - DRAFT
- DRAFT 2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors (first round suggestions)
- DRAFT 2017 Critical Urban Freight Corridors with State Network and National System (first round suggestions)
- Critical Urban Freight Corridor Scorecard - *Coming Soon*

Staff

- Jeff Hathcock, Principal Transportation Planner
- Michael Johnson, Transportation Planner
- Lisa Key, Sr. Administrative Assistant
- Dan Lamers, Sr. Program Manager

[Freight Links](#)
[Contacts by Topic](#)
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QUESTIONS



CONTACT INFORMATION

Dan Lamers
Senior Program Manager
817-695-9263
DLamers@nctcog.org

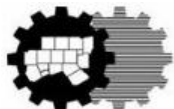
Jeff Hathcock
Principal Transportation Planner
817-608-2354
JHathcock@nctcog.org

Mike Johnson
Transportation Planner
817-695-9160
MJohnson@nctcog.org

UPDATES TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CREDIT PROGRAM

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION
COUNCIL

MARCH 9, 2017



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation Department

BACKGROUND

- Transportation Development Credits = TDCs
- TDCs are “earned” by the region when toll revenues are used to fund capital projects on public highways
- TDCs are not money or cash
- They do not increase funding for a given project
- They are eligible to “match” a federal funding award
- The Dallas-Fort Worth Region has been allocated 465,486,222 in TDCs
- As of September 30, 2016, the Dallas-Fort Worth Region has 319,121,623 of TDCs available for future allocation

CURRENT TDC BALANCES

Category	Award Methods	Current Allocation
1	Strategic Awards to Small Transit Providers	10,000,000
2	Type 1 Call: RTC has Revenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Alternatives Program • TxDOT/RTC Partnership for Reliability, Congestion Mitigation, and Air Quality • Collin County LIP/LIRAP Partnership 	9,600,000
3	Type 2 Call: Local Agency has Revenue	16,764,599
4	Selling TDCs to other MPOs/TxDOT	100,000,000
5	Regional Programs/Management and Operations	10,000,000
TDC Pool	For Future Allocation	319,121,623

CATEGORY 1: STRATEGIC AWARDS TO SMALL TRANSIT PROVIDERS

<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support public transit by maximizing the use of federal funds, particularly when federal funds otherwise would be unused because of the inability of agencies to provide the local match
<p>Proposed Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater coordination between TIP and Transit Operations teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the transit category has adequate credits prior to awarding them • Increased communication and standard operating procedure for TDC Annual Report • Continue the category with no changes • Increase its allocation by 16,000,000 (1 million for FY 2016 and 5 million each for FY 2017, 2018, and 2019)

CATEGORY 2: TYPE 1 CALL - RTC HAS REVENUE

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance initiatives of strategic importance• Expedite delivery of projects• Free up local or State funds for use on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that can be expedited outside the federal process• Projects not typically eligible for federal funds
Proposed Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove “Type 1 Call” from the name and rename to “RTC Has Revenue”• Continue the category and increase its allocation by 10,400,000

CATEGORY 3: TYPE 2 CALL - LOCAL AGENCY HAS REVENUE

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance projects of strategic importance• Support capacity expansion of roadway, transit, and bicycle/pedestrian projects• Leverage projects to maximize revenue available to regional transportation projects• Expedite multi-modal project delivery• Demonstrate innovative funding, partnering, or project delivery methods
Proposed Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove “Type 2 Call” from the name and rename to “Local Agency Has Revenue”• Decrease the allocation by 73,484 to match the awarded amount• Retire the category

CATEGORY 4: SELL TDCS TO TXDOT AND OTHER MPOS/MPO REVOLVER

Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate local revolving fund to cash flow federal programs administered by NCTCOG
Proposed Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue the category• Increase allocation by 50,000,000• Permit future use of the tool if the opportunity arises• Send letters to other MPOs in the State to re-test the market

CATEGORY 5: REGIONAL PROGRAMS/MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regional programs that improve air quality, congestion, reliability
Proposed Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the category and increase its allocation by 20,000,000 • Refine the goal of the category: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Support regional programs and projects that improve air quality, congestion, reliability, safety and accessibility, modernize infrastructure, advance planning efforts in the region, and others that may apply” • Expand the category and utilize it to assist with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic partnerships with regional agencies • Future Sustainable Development projects (Phase 4) • Regional Turnback Program efforts • Land use/transportation integration for military bases • Projects/programs that improve safety

PROPOSED NEW CATEGORY

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle
 - Goal: Provide support to agencies that implement policies that further Mobility Plan objectives
 - Propose to allocate 100 million TDCs to this category (Approximately 50 million per year for at least the next 2 years depending on the level of interest)
 - A “bank” of credits for this program was approved as part of Mobility 2040 action in March 2016
 - Eligibility
 - An agency will be considered eligible if it meets 50% of the MTP policies
 - Eligible agencies will then be able to submit projects for consideration (RTC approves via TIP action)

PROPOSED NEW CATEGORY

- MTP Policy Bundle (cont'd)
 - Selection Process and Use Requirements
 - Agencies must submit the survey to initiate the process
 - Response level from agencies will determine the number of credits that will be awarded to an agency (Credits will be prorated depending on the demand)
 - Propose to use approximately 50 million of the 100 million TDCs (with approximately 5 million TDCs per agency as needed) in Year 1
 - Annual survey submission by agencies:
 - Confirm eligibility if previously qualified
 - Create window for new certifications (for any new agency)
 - TDCs must be assigned to a project within one year (TDCs that are not programmed in the TIP will be returned to the regional pool for reuse in the next year)
 - By State law, project agreement must be signed within 2 years of award or assignment to a project
 - Agencies cannot sell or transfer TDCs

PROPOSED NEW CATEGORY

- MTP Policy Bundle (cont'd)
 - Deadlines:
 - Agency Survey Submittal: March 3, 2017 (First Friday of March going forward)
 - First Opportunity for Project Submittal: Due to TIP team by the deadline for the August 2017 TIP Modification cycle (April 28, 2017)
 - Can also submit projects through the November 2017, February 2018, and May 2018 TIP Modification cycles
 - Additional Information: www.nctcog.org/policybundle

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTIONS

Category	Proposed Action(s)
1 – Strategic Awards to Small Transit Providers	Continue the category and increase its allocation
2 – RTC Has Revenue	Continue the category and increase its allocation
3 – Local Agency Has Revenue	Retire the category after adjusting its allocation
4 – Selling TDCs to Other MPOs/TxDOT	Continue the category and increase its allocation
5 – Regional Programs/Management and Operations	Refine and expand the category’s goal and scope; Increase its allocation
6 – MTP Policy Bundle	Create the category and increase its allocation

PROPOSED NEW ALLOCATION AMOUNTS

Category	Award Methods	Current Allocation	Proposed Change	Revised Allocation ¹
1	Strategic Awards to Small Transit Providers	10,000,000	+16,000,000	26,000,000
2	Type 1 Call: RTC has Revenue	9,600,000	+10,400,000	20,000,000
3	Type 2 Call: Local Agency has Revenue	16,764,599	-73,484	16,691,115
4	Selling TDCs to other MPOs/TxDOT	100,000,000	+50,000,000	150,000,000
5	Regional Programs/Management and Operations	10,000,000	+20,000,000	30,000,000
6	MTP Policy Bundle	0	+100,000,000	100,000,000
TDC Pool	For Future Reallocation	319,121,623	-196,326,516	122,795,107
Total		465,486,222		465,486,222

¹Additional allocations are for fiscal year 2017, 2018, and 2019

REMAINING TDC AMOUNT

- If the proposed allocations are approved, our MPO would have ≈ 122.8 million TDCs left for future allocation.
- Staff plans to work with TxDOT to determine why our MPO has not received more TDCs
 - Is the State not meeting the federal maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?
 - Or, is the State meeting MOE, but not requesting approval of new credits?
- Propose to send a letter to the State requesting clarification of the above issues

FUTURE TDC AWARDS

- If additional TDCs are awarded, the RTC will be asked to approve the adjusted allocation to the respective category at that time.
 - Example: Approval of transit projects using Category 1 TDCs will be accompanied by approval of an increased allocation for that category to cover the awarded amount, if needed.
- The TDC balances will then be adjusted to reflect the new allocations.

TIMELINE

February 2017

STTC Information

March 2017

RTC Information

Public Meetings

STTC Action

April 2017

RTC Action

QUESTIONS?

Adam Beckom, AICP

Principal Transportation Planner

817-608-2344

abeckom@nctcog.org

Brian Dell

Transportation Planner I

817-704-5694

bdell@nctcog.org

Christie J. Gotti

Senior Program Manager

817-608-2338

cgotti@nctcog.org

TDC CATEGORY PROJECT ELIGIBILITY & SELECTION TYPE

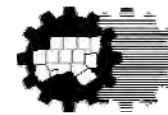
Category	Eligible/Example Project Types	Selection Type
1 – Strategic Awards to Small Transit Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital (e.g. buses, mobility management, maintenance) • Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTC and/or TIP Action • Ongoing, “open” call for projects
2 – RTC Has Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for projects • TIP Action
3 – Local Agency Has Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for projects
4 – Selling Credits to Other MPOs/TxDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership between NCTCOG and TxDOT/Other MPOs (approved by RTC)
5 – Regional Programs/Management and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality, Travel Demand Management, operations, data collection, software development, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTC and/or TIP Action

SCHEDULE FOR THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN, TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, AND AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY

Regional Transportation Council

Chris Klaus

March 9, 2017



**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

RATIONALE

AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY:

EPA Adequacy on Latest Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets (MVEB)

NO_x = 130.77 tons per day

VOC = 64.91 tons per day

Conformity Deadline = November 23, 2018

New 2015 Ozone Standard Nonattainment Designations – October 2017

Conformity Deadline = Late 2018 – Early 2019

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) UPDATE:

Demographics to 2045

**Incorporate Most Recent Project Development Initiatives
(i.e. HB20 10-Year Planning Effort)**

Incorporate Modern Day “People Mover”

Environmental Documentation Consistency

Results from 85th Texas Legislative Session


Possible Inclusion of New Federal and State Performance Measures

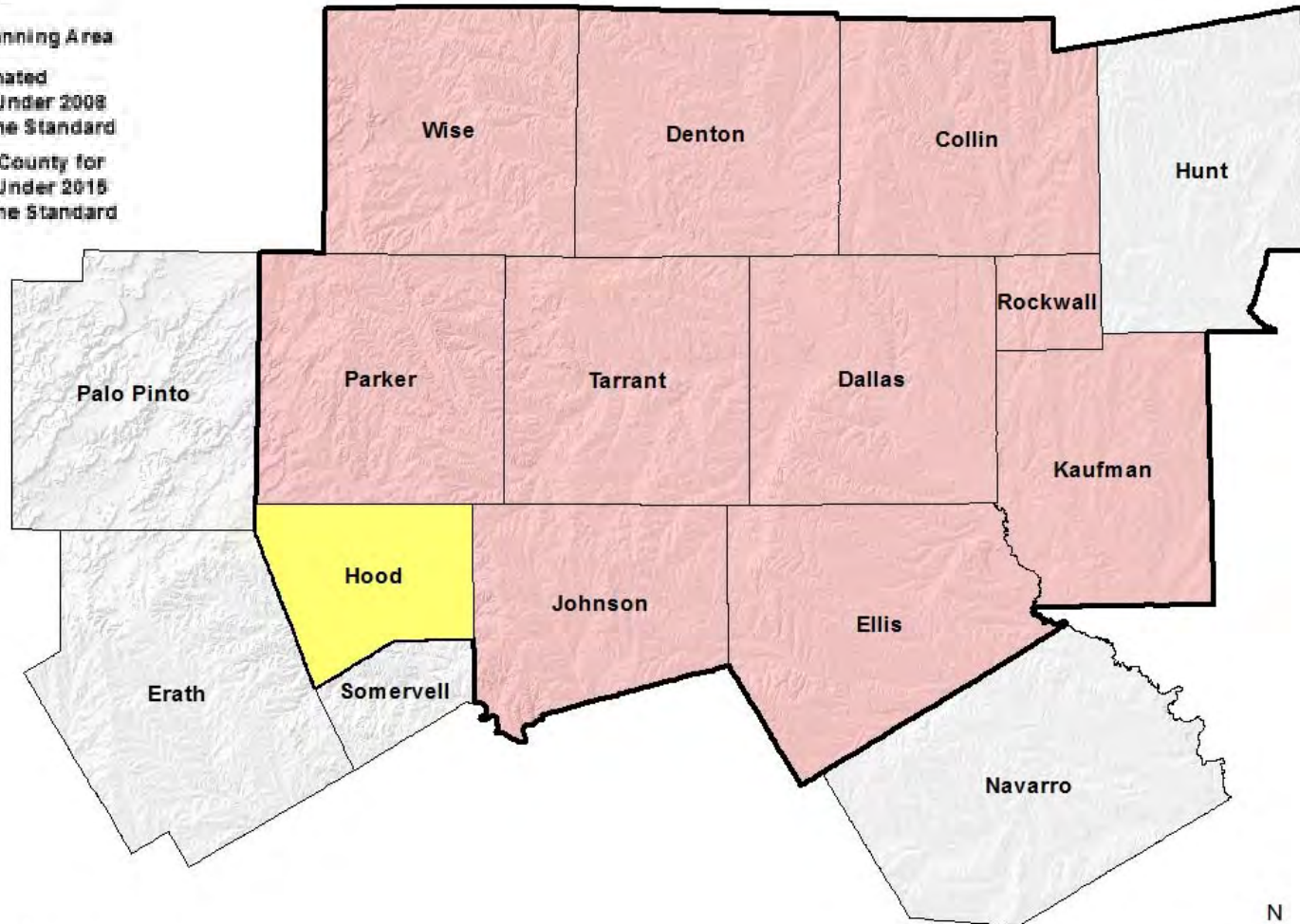
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP):

2019-2022 Inventory of Surface Transportation Projects

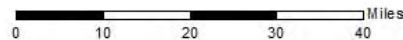
DFW METROPOLITAN PLANNING AND NONATTAINMENT AREAS

Legend

-  Metropolitan Planning Area
-  Counties Designated Nonattainment Under 2008 Eight-Hour Ozone Standard
-  Recommended County for Nonattainment Under 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone Standard



North Central Texas
Council of Governments



SCHEDULE

DRAFT

Milestone	Date
2045 MTP Update, 2019-2022 TIP, and Air Quality Conformity Development	Begins April 2017
Public Involvement	Through May 2018
2019-2022 TIP (STTC-Action)	April 27, 2018
2019-2022 TIP (RTC-Action)	May 10, 2018
2045 MTP Update and Air Quality Conformity (STTC-Action)	May 25, 2018
2045 MTP Update and Air Quality Conformity (RTC-Action)	June 14, 2018
Air Quality Conformity Consultation Process	June – November 2018
Air Quality Conformity DOT Determination	By November 23, 2018

CONTACT

For More Information on 2045 MTP:

**Kevin Feldt, AICP
Program Manager
817-704-2529
kfeldt@nctcog.org**

For More Information on 2019-2022 TIP:

**Adam Beckom, AICP
Principal Transportation Planner
817-608-2344
abeckom@nctcog.org**

For More Information on Air Quality Conformity:

**Jenny Narvaez
Principal Air Quality Planner
817-608-2342
jnarvaez@nctcog.org**

Planning Cycle for Upcoming Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and Air Quality Conformity

As the Governor-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is responsible for development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and air quality conformity analysis. The 10 counties in the DFW area are designated as an ozone nonattainment area by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and are subject to the transportation conformity analysis requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990. These counties fall within the 12-county Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The transportation conformity analysis is based on the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan and must demonstrate the total ozone-causing pollution expected from all of the planned transportation projects listed in the MTP are within limits established in the State Implementation Plan for complying with the CAAA.

The following is a list of efforts and projects that are anticipated over the next two years:

Air Quality

The EPA declared the motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEBs) in the *Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Attainment Demonstration State Implementation Plan revision for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS* adequate for transportation conformity purposes. Per the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 40, Part 93.104(e), the DFW area must demonstrate conformity, using these MVEBs within two years of the effective date, November 23, 2016. To meet this deadline, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will take local action by adopting transportation conformity results in June 2018 to allow the US Department of Transportation sufficient time to provide a federal conformity determination by November 2018.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is developed in accordance with the metropolitan planning requirements set forth in the Statewide Metropolitan Planning Final Rule (CFR, Title 23, Part 450; CFR, Title 49, Part 613). Because the Dallas-Fort Worth area is designated nonattainment, regionally significant surface transportation projects must be inventoried in the TIP. Deadlines for TIP development and submittal are dictated by the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) schedule. The TIP is modified quarterly and a new TIP is developed every two years. Due to this schedule, development or amendments of the TIP may not share the same schedule as the MTP and conformity analysis. However, once the MTP and conformity are approved, projects in the TIP can be amended to conform. The intent is to have the projects in the TIP to match the November 2018 conformity date, so the RTC would need to take final action on the 2019-2022 TIP by May 2018.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Federal planning regulations require that the MTP in a nonattainment area be revised at least once every four years. There are three types of MTP revisions including administrative modification, amendment, or update (a brand new plan is classified as an update). The threshold for the type of MTP revision pursued is relative to what is being changed in the MTP. For example, minor text changes would qualify as an administrative modification, changes to design concept or scope for a few projects could be accounted for in an amendment, while more substantive changes regarding demographic forecasts, MTP base and horizon year, financial assumptions, etc. would require an update. Due to the magnitude of changes that are necessary for the next MTP revision, it is appropriate to pursue an update in the form of a new

MTP. These changes include updated demographics to 2045, incorporation of House Bill 20 10-year planning effort, inclusion of the modern day “People Mover”, consistency with environmental documentation, results from the 85th Texas legislative session, and possible inclusion of new federal and state performance measures.

Model Development Group

During the development of a new MTP, the regional travel demand model version DFX 4.5 should be used in creation of the traffic forecasts. The MVEB emissions and budgets were established from model runs using this version; changes to the model would result in changes to the budgets. The DFX 4.5 is already available for use by the Air Quality and Mobility Plan teams. DFX 4.5 has been validated based on 2010 observed roadway counts and 2014 observed transit ridership.

Demographics

To support the development of a new MTP, a demographic forecast for 2045 would be created by January 2018. This new forecast would not change the existing demographic forecast that included 2017-2040, released in 2015. The 2045 forecast would be an extension of the 2040 demographics. The new forecast for 2045 will provide an opportunity to utilize newly available data from cities and local governments regarding unseen development in the 2040 forecast. To stay in compliance with federal planning regulations, the MTP horizon year will be extended to 2045 to maintain the 20-year planning cycle.

Congestion Management Process

A Congestion Management Process (CMP) is required in metropolitan areas with population exceeding 200,000, known as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Federal requirements state that in all TMAs, the CMP shall be developed and implemented as an integrated part of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Although this is a federal requirement, no specific deadlines are set for updates to the CMP. CMP project forms must be completed for individual projects by implementing agencies and submitted to NCTCOG. The development of a new MTP would not significantly impact any CMP efforts.

National Environmental Policy Act

To receive environmental approval under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a project must be consistent with the MTP and transportation conformity. To determine this, the Federal Highway Administration reviews the project design, environmental documentation, MTP, TIP listings, conformity tables, and conformity networks. Additionally, several analyses (e.g., mobile source air toxins, regional tolling analysis, and project specific environmental justice origin-destination) in a NEPA document rely on data from the travel demand model. These must be performed using the MTP networks that correctly reflect the design. The development of an update, amendment, or new MTP would not significantly impact any major projects. For at least five known projects, a change to the MTP and associated conformity networks is needed before the projects can be environmental approved.

Public Involvement

Public involvement supports the conformity, TIP, and MTP processes by affording opportunities for public review and comment. Per the RTC Public Participation Plan, draft MTP, TIP, and air quality conformity documentation would be made available at multiple public meetings throughout the region. The MTP update must be provided at least 60 days, and the TIP and conformity results at least 30 days prior to requesting local RTC approval. Members of the public are notified of the meetings via articles, email, social media, and newspaper

advertisements, including minority publications. Additionally, at least one public meeting is video recorded and made available online at www.nctcog.org/video for review and comment.

Unified Planning Work Program

Under federal law (CFR, Title 23, Part 450.308), the NCTCOG is responsible for documenting transportation planning activities and transportation-related air quality planning activities in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Metropolitan Planning Area. The UPWP documents the planning efforts and priorities during a specified timeframe. Modifications to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 and FY2017 UPWP will be necessary to incorporate development of the MTP, conformity analysis, and the preparation of demographic forecasts through the year 2045. Proposed modifications will be presented through a public outreach effort initiated in March 2017, followed by action from the Surface Transportation Technical Committee later that month, and action by the RTC and NCTCOG Executive Board in April 2017. Upon these approvals, proposed modifications will be transmitted to the state and federal funding partners for review and approval during the May/June 2017 timeframe.

DRAFT

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
March 2016-February 2017

RTC MEMBER	Entity	3/10/16	4/14/16	5/12/16	6/16/16	7/14/16	8/11/16	9/8/16	10/13/16	11/10/16	12/8/16	1/12/17	2/9/17
Monica R. Alonzo (07/15)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Bruce Arfsten (08/15)	Addison	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Douglas Athas (06/13)	Garland	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sara Bagheri (12/16)	Denton	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P
Brian Barth (09/13)	TxDOT, FW	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Carol Bush (01/15)	Ellis Cnty	P	P	P	P	E	P	A	P	P	E	P	A
Mike Cantrell (1/07)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	R	E	P	P
David L. Cook (05/16)	Mansfield	--	--	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Charles Emery (4/04)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P
Robert Franke (1/08)	Cedar Hill	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Sandy Greyson (11/11)	Dallas	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	E	A	A
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	E	P	P	P	E(R)
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	A	P	P	P	E	A	P	P	P	P	P	E
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Lee M. Kleinman (09/13)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Brian Loughmiller (04/15)	McKinney	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	A
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	A	P	P	A(R)	P	P	A	P	E	P	E
Scott Mahaffey (03/13)	FWTA	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Matthew Marchant (07/08)	Carrollton	P	E	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	P	E	P
Maher Maso (10/08)	Frisco	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
B. Adam McGough (07/16)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Stan Pickett (06/15)	Mesquite	E	A	P	P	A	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Mark Riley (1/09)	Parker Cnty	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P
Kelly Selman (02/15)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P
Gary Slagel (11/15)	DART	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lissa Smith (6/12)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
Mike Taylor (7/14)	Colleyville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Stephen Terrell (6/14)	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Casey Thomas II (07/16)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	E	A	A	A	A	E	A	A
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	A(R)	P	E	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

REFERENCE ITEM 12.1

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
March 2016-February 2017**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	3/10/16	4/14/16	5/12/16	6/16/16	7/14/16	8/11/16	9/8/16	10/13/16	11/10/16	12/8/16	1/12/17	2/9/17
Oscar Ward (6/14)	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant Cnty	E	E	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	E	E	P
Kathryn Wilemon (6/03)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	P	E	E	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P
Erik Wilson (07/15)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	E	P	A	P	P	E	P	E
W.B. "Zim" Zimmerman (9/12)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	E	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
January 2016-January 2017

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/22/16	2/26/16	3/25/16	4/22/16	5/27/16	6/24/16	7/22/16	8/26/16	9/23/16	10/28/16	12/2/16	1/27/17
Antoinette Bacchus	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	A	P
Micah Baker	Dallas County	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	P	A	P	A	A
Bryan Beck	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
David Boski	Mansfield	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Kristina Brevard	DCTA	P	R	P	P	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	P
Keith Brooks	Arlington	R	P	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	A	P	P
Mohammed Bur	TxDOT, Dallas	A	P	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Loyl Bussell	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dave Carter	Richardson	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	A
Kent Collins	Coppell	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT, FW	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Hal Cranor	Eules	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	R	R	R	P	P
Chad Davis	Wise County	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	A
Greg Dickens	Hurst	R	R	A	R	R	R	R	R	A	R	R	A
David Disheroon	Johnson County	P	A	A	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Massoud Ebrahim	Greenville	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Chad Edwards	DART	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Keith Fisher	Cleburne	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	P	A	A	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	P
Chris Flanigan	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	R	P	P	P	P
Ann Foss	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Graham	McKinney	P	R	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	R
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A
Ron Hartline	The Colony	--	--	--	--	--	--	R	P	R	P	P	R
Michael Hasler	Duncanville	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P
Curvie Hawkins	FWTA	P	A	P	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mark Hines	McKinney	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	A	A	A	A	A
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Kirk Houser	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A
Terry Hughes	Parker County	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeremy Hutt	Colleyville	R	P	A	R	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Paul Iwuchukwu	Arlington	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Joseph Jackson	Ellis County	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Tim James	Mesquite	A	P	P	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	P
David Jodray	Fort Worth	A	P	A	R	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Tom Johnson	DeSoto	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P
Sholeh Karimi	Grand Prairie	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P
Paul Knippel	Frisco	--	--	--	--	--	P	R	A	P	A	P	A

P =Present A= Absent
R =Represented -- =Not yet eligible to attend

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
January 2016-January 2017

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/22/16	2/26/16	3/25/16	4/22/16	5/27/16	6/24/16	7/22/16	8/26/16	9/23/16	10/28/16	12/2/16	1/27/17
Chiamin Korngiebel	Dallas	P	P	P	A	A	A	A	A	P	P	P	P
Richard Larkins	Grapevine	P	P	A	P	A	A	A	P	P	P	A	A
Paul Luedtke	Garland	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	A	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	P	P	A	R
Rick Mackey	TxDOT, Paris	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Srini Mandayam	Mesquite	R	P	A	P	A	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Laura Melton	Burleson	P	A	A	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Brian Moen	Frisco	P	A	P	R	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cesar Molina, Jr.	Carrollton	P	P	A	A	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	A
Lloyd Neal	Plano	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mark Nelson	Denton	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jim O'Connor	Irving	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	R	P	P	A
Kevin Overton	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	P	P	P
Todd Plesko	DART	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Shawn Poe	Rowlett	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P
John Polster	Denton County	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Tim Porter	Wylie	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	A
Daniel Prendergast	Plano	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Lisa Pyles	Addison	A	P	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	P	A	P
William Riley	Tarrant County	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	A	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	A
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
David Salmon	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R
Elias Sassoon	Cedar Hill	R	R	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	R
Lori Shelton	NTTA	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Angela Smith	FWTA	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P
Chelsea St. Louis	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	A
Dave Timbrell	Garland	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A
Mark Titus	Richardson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
Timothy Tumulty	Rockwall	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	A
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	A	P	P	R	P	R	P	P	P	P
Daniel Vedral	Irving	P	A	A	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	A	A
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Jared White	Dallas	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P
Bill Wimberley	Hood County	R	P	P	R	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Mykol Woodruff	TxDOT, Dallas	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	A	P	P	P
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

P =Present A= Absent
R =Represented -- =Not yet eligible to attend

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE January 27, 2017

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, January 27, 2017, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following STTC members or representatives were present: Antoinette Bacchus, David Boski, Kristina Brevard, Keith Brooks, Mohammed Bur, Loyl Bussell, Kent Collins, John Cordary Jr., Hal Cranor, Clarence Daugherty, David Disheroon, Chad Edwards, Keith Fisher, Eric Fladager, Chris Flanigan, Ann Foss, Robyn Root (representing Gary Graham), Brian McNulty (representing Ron Hartline), Michael Hasler, Curvie Hawkins, Matthew Hotelling, Terry Hughes, Paul Iwuchukwu, Tim James, David Jodray, Tom Johnson, Sholeh Karimi, Chiamin Korngiebel, Paul Luedtke, Edward Haas (representing Stanford Lynch), Yang Jin (representing Srin Mandayam), Lloyd Neal, Mark Nelson, Jim O'Connor, Kevin Overton, Dipak Patel, Todd Plesko, Shawn Poe, Daniel Prendergast, Lisa Pyles, William Riley, Moosa Saghian, Jeff Kelley (representing David Salmon), Robert Woodbury (representing Elias Sassoon), Lori Shelton, Walter Shumac III, Randy Skinner, Angela Smith, Chelsea St. Louis, Mark Titus, Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize, Caroline Waggoner, Jared White, Bill Wimberley, and Mykol Woodruff.

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, Morgan Bailie, Tom Bamonte, Carli Baylor, Adam Beckom, Kenny Bergstrom, Natalie Bettger, Jason Brown, Leah Brown, Ron Brown, Ken Bunkley, Pamela Burns, Shawn Conrad, Jerry Cotter, Matt Craig, Brian Dell, Julie Dunbar, Huong Duong, Craig Elliott, Kevin Feldt, Marcos Fernandez, Brian Flood, Chris Funches, Martin Gonzalez, Christie Gotti, Wade Haffey, Jill Hall, Fola Hammones, Heather Haney, Duane Hengst, Rebekah Hernandez, Jesse Herrera, Chris Hoff, Yagnesh Jarmarwala, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Dan Lamers, April Leger, Amanda Long-Rodriguez, Alfred Luera, Nancy Luong, Edith Marvin, Mark Middleton, Mindy Mize, Nick Page, David Plutowski, Chris Reed, Amy Rideout, Kevin Robenhymmer, Rylea Roderick, Kyle Roy, Russell Schaffner, Kelli Schlicher, Neil Strassman, Gerald Sturdivant, Sandy Wesch, Elizabeth Whitaker, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, and Kate Zielke.

1. **Approval of December 2, 2016, Minutes:** The minutes of the December 2, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Kristina Brevard (M); Tim James (S). The motion passed unanimously. Tim James noted discussions at the December 2, 2016, meeting regarding the Regional 10-Year Plan and Next 10 Years of Projects. He requested that in the future, when the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) makes a motion that includes specific language or comments, that the specific language or comments are conveyed to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) when the item is presented so that the RTC is aware that STTC had specific recommendations in addition to the original motion.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Unified Planning Work Program Modifications:** A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of modifications to the FY2016 and FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program included as Reference Item 2.1.1. Additional information was provided in Electronic Item 2.1.2.

Jim O'Connor (M); Tim James (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Endorsement of High-Speed Rail Environmental Backstop:** Michael Morris presented the Regional Transportation Council's action to endorse a high-speed rail backstop. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is conducting the High-Speed Rail Environmental Impact Study using American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds that expire on September 30, 2017. TxDOT Austin contacted the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) regarding its opinion on completing the EIS for the high-speed rail line between Dallas and Fort Worth. The Federal Railroad Administration is concerned that the EIS will not be completed by the deadline to expend ARRA funds. To prevent EIS efforts from being on hold, RTC staff committed \$3 million to backstop ARRA funding if the funding source is not available to complete the Record of Decision on the project. This will allow the current engineers to continue is work on the EIS, uninterrupted. At its January 12, 2017, meeting, the RTC approved staff's commitment and signed a letter certifying its support to use the funds if necessary to ensure the EIS is completed. A copy of the letter was provided in Reference Item 3. A total of \$3 million was approved to backstop the ARRA funds. It is possible that the deadline for ARRA funds will be extended and the backstop will not be necessary. A motion was made to endorse Regional Transportation Council action to use approximately \$3 million in Surface Transportation Program funds to backstop American Recovery and Reinvestment funds for the Environmental Impact Study on the high-speed rail line between Dallas and Fort Worth, if needed. Paul Luedtke (M); Mark Nelson (S). The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Texas Department of Transportation 100 Year Anniversary:** Surface Transportation Technical Committee Chair Loyl Bussell introduced a video celebrating the 100 year anniversary of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). He noted he was proud to be part of an agency that considers safety a priority and works to develop solutions for transportation, and expressed his appreciation for entities in the region and their partnership to help move transportation forward. Mo Bur noted the new TxDOT mission statement; "Through collaboration and leadership, we deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods". He added, he believes the mission statement embodies the goals of the Regional Transportation Council and Surface Transportation Technical Committee. He noted the region is a great example for the rest of the state and other metropolitan planning organizations. Loyl Bussell noted an official kick-off celebration will be held at the Transportation Forum in Austin on February 6-7, 2017. April 4, 2017, is the actual anniversary date. There will be events scheduled for that date in Austin, as well as events throughout the state during 2017.
5. **Statewide Inundation Mapping Program: Sharing Watershed Data for Improved Transportation Design:** Jerry Cotter, Chief of Water Resources, United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), presented information on the activities of the Federal Interagency Team known as Interagency Flood Risk Management (InFRM) and how those activities could help impact transportation infrastructure. The first initiative is meteorology to determine future rainfall amounts and intensities. Nationally, the country is shifting to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Atlas 14 that shows precipitation frequency intensity estimates for 1 through 1,000 years in durations of 5 minutes to 60 days. This information can be used for infrastructure design and flood studies. The information will be available via a state of the art website and will be able to be imported into water analysis applications and programs. The project funding and schedule for this initiative was highlighted. The next initiative, watershed hydrology, is related to runoff once the rainfall is received. InFRM, an interagency group of scientist and engineers, has been formed to help decrease the uncertainty regarding how much water will show up at various types of infrastructure such as roadways and bridges. Watershed hydrology assessments are being developed, as well as inundation mapping that will be available online. Mr. Cotter highlighted

stages of development for various locations in the state. The assessments estimate discharges for various time periods for both existing and future conditions, as well as climate change impacts. For example, data is available for the 100 year existing, future, and future with climate change. He discussed the 2015 flooding in Wimberley and the impact, uncertainty, and risk of changing data and analysis. Watershed hydrology assessments, incorporated with statistical hydrology, creates an improved estimate of how much water will arrive at specific areas. These models will produce data that will be published on the United States Geological Survey website and may be useful for transportation and infrastructure design groups. The last effort highlighted was the development of inundation mapping products for Texas. Inundation maps are geared towards emergency managers, but may benefit transportation entities. The online inundation maps will estimate how deep water is anticipated to be during real-time flood events to help entities manage their transportation network. A library will be created for each location and show water levels in various intervals. The National Weather Service generates forecasts every 12 hours and this information will be used to update the website so that the appropriate map for the depth being forecasted is updated. Data will include depths predicted and the timing, and could help with road closures and other infrastructure problems that are impacted by flooding. Clarence Daugherty asked what as the basis for predicting future conditions related to how cities plan to develop. Mr. Cotter noted the USACE has acquired land use projections for each city and placed the data into the hydrologic model. Estimates can then be determined based on the impacts of future development. Tim James asked how entities can access the inundation mapping. Mr. Cotter noted the website should be available in spring and the first products available near the end of September 2017.

6. **TEXpress Lanes Education Campaign:** Amanda Wilson provided an update on the TEXpress Lanes Education Campaign. In 2016, at the request of former Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Mark Riley, a workshop was held with RTC members who identified messaging and communication needs to help the public better understand managed lanes. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff coordinated with public information officers from regional transportation agencies throughout 2016 and a communication plan was developed. Educational components are a focus of the campaign such as how the lanes are used, why the lanes are used, how individual lanes create a system, and how the lanes benefit the transportation system and economic development in the region. Key efforts include the use of real world testimonials, analogies, and humor to help the user understand the lanes. Public information officers and NCTCOG staff developed eight key talking points: 1) options for drivers who want a more reliable commute, 2) a reliable choice with a predictable travel experience, 3) lowers the stress of commuting, 4) produces far-reaching benefits, 5) easy to use, 6) TollTag, TxTag, or EZ Tag customers and carpoolers get the lowest toll rates, 7) payment is easy, and 8) corridors with TEXpress lanes have been improved or completely rebuilt. Ms. Wilson noted that the campaign includes two targeted audiences of the communications plan, which are stakeholders and the general public. Products include a presentation with a script, a pocket card highlighting the campaign, and a white paper focusing on the benefits of the lanes. Staff continues to reach out to economic development directors and are finalizing a myths and facts information card. In addition, real world testimonials, social media messages, short articles, humorous videos, and other educational elements have been developed. All of the material leads back to a regional website that contains a comprehensive list of information on the TEXpress lanes: www.TEXpresslanes.com. Staff will work to finalize the remaining elements of the communications plan and provide to RTC members through the website in an online toolkit. Additional real-world testimonials are needed, and members were encouraged to have interested individuals contact staff. NCTCOG staff will also work with partners to distribute information to the general public and with RTC members to schedule

events in their communities. Clarence Daugherty asked if staff is making a concerted effort to provide this information to legislators. Ms. Wilson noted that legislators are a main stakeholder in the campaign and that staff has been invited to present at an upcoming Transportation Advocates of Texas Transportation 101 session for legislators and staff.

7. **Fiscal Year 2017 Federal Highway Administration 10 Year Preliminary Engineering**

Audit: Adam Beckom presented an update on the latest developments regarding projects subject to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Preliminary Engineering (PE) Audit. The purpose of the FHWA PE Audit is to review all projects that have been funded with federal funds for engineering, but that have not moved on to the next phase of implementation. Once a project is obligated for PE funding, it must advance to another phase within ten years of the project obligation. Time extensions are allowed, but only for extenuating circumstances. Mr. Beckom noted that the PE Audit is independent of the federal inactive projects list. A total of ten projects in the region are subject to the PE Audit. The list of projects for the western subregion were provided in Electronic Item 7.1 and for the eastern subregion in Electronic Item 7.2. Of those projects, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has selected approximately \$3.5 million of the projects and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) approximately \$2.1 million, bringing the total to \$5.6 million of funding at risk. TxDOT district staff is working with implementing agencies to justify the need for time extensions, and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff is working with the agencies to monitor and track the projects through the MPO Milestone Policy effort. Mr. Beckom noted that agencies with projects on the list should advance the projects to the next phase no later than September 30, 2017. Substantial progress must be shown for an extension. Agencies should also actively coordinate with TxDOT and NCTCOG on project progress. If the next phase is not initiated by the deadline and a time extension is not granted, obligated funds must be repaid to the federal government. In FY2016, approximately \$1.6 million was lost in the region as a result of the PE Audit. Agencies can keep projects off of the PE Audit list by keeping project schedules realistic and achievable, coordinating with TxDOT on key project delivery steps, submitting invoices to TxDOT on a regular schedule, coordinating with TxDOT and NCTCOG for project guidance and assistance, and communicating project schedules frequently. NCTCOG staff is working with agencies who have projects on the FY2017 FHWA PE Audit list and are monitoring project delivery schedules on a regular basis. Through initiatives like the MPO Milestone Policy, NCTCOG staff hopes to identify projects that may be subject to the PE Audit before they make it on the list. Michael Morris discussed the federal funds that must be returned to TxDOT and asked TxDOT staff where the returned funds go and if they funds can be placed on other regional projects. Mo Bur noted that the funds would likely be returned to the Category the funds were allocated from, but that he would confirm this information.

8. **Clean Cities Annual Report and Fleet Recognition:** Pamela Burns provided an overview of the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities (DFWCC) annual report and Clean Fleet Policy, and how this ties into larger air quality efforts of the Metropolitan Planning Organization. This is important because three policies in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle are related to air quality, one of which addresses Clean Fleets. In order to be eligible for clean vehicle funding, entities must have both adopted and complied with the Clean Fleet Policy. In addition to funding eligibility, fleets may also receive recognition as an outstanding fleet for going above and beyond what other fleets in the region are doing. The Clean Fleet Policy not only assists with the air quality goals for the region, but also supports the mission of the United States (US) Department of Energy's (DOE) Clean Cities program by reducing petroleum and improving energy security. The DOE has set a goal of reducing petroleum consumption by 2.5 billion gallons per year by the year 2020. Current projections show that

Clean Cities programs are on track to meet that goal. In order to do so, the DOE has challenged each of the local coalitions to increase petroleum reduction by 15 percent each year. To demonstrate attainment of these goals, the DOE requires entities to submit annual reports. The report not only fulfills the DOE requirement, but also serves as compliance with the Clean Fleet Policy in the region. Reports are due annually on March 1 and cover the previous calendar year. The data collected for 2015 shows that the region saved over 23 million gallons of petroleum. Alternative fuel vehicles accounted for the largest portion of reduction. The Clean Fleet Policy provides a framework for reducing emissions, improving economy, partnering with the North Central Texas Council of Governments and Clean Cities on clean vehicle activities, as well as training staff on air quality and petroleum reduction goals. The annual report allows for reporting on each of these activities that contribute to the goals. The reports are then scored by NCTCOG staff to provide recognition for those fleets who are exceeding other fleets in their efforts. Three levels of award are possible: 1) bronze, 2) silver, and 3) gold. Outstanding fleets were recognized at the December 2016 annual Clean Cities meeting. The Cities of Euless, Carrollton, and the Town of Addison received the silver award; and the Cities of Coppell, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Richardson, Rockwall, Southlake, Town of Flower Mound, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and Denton Independent School District received the bronze award. Ms. Burns noted the annual report is due March 1 and can be found on the DFWCC newly redesigned website, www.dfwcleancities.org. Details were provided in Electronic Item 8.

9. **New Multifunctional Transportation Alignments:** Michael Morris highlighted potential new multifunctional transportation options that may result from advances in technology related to driverless vehicles. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) requested North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff advance the implementation of people mover systems in Mobility 2040. He noted previous discussions regarding a pilot system/test track at the General Motors Assembly Plant to move vehicles from the facility to the rail head. This idea is slowly gathering interest in other potential facilities. For example, if high-speed rail is built between Dallas and Fort Worth, the ability to connect an Arlington high-speed rail station to the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport is needed. A people mover system that connects not only with high-speed rail but with the University of Texas Arlington, downtown Arlington, the entertainment district, and other locations may be possible. Other potential opportunities include the Dallas Hospital district, Midtown (east of the Galleria), and an upgrade in Las Colinas. An RTC workshop is scheduled for February 9, 2017, prior to the RTC meeting to advance the conversation of the modern day people mover system. The modern day option for a people mover system may be a driverless vehicle operated in a right-of-way that does not use a guideway system. The driverless vehicle may be able to operate in a lightweight concrete structure or in other innovative ways. In addition, there may be opportunities to use these systems to also move goods in the same corridor. Discussion and constructive criticism are needed regarding the possibility of using driverless vehicle technology such as how to engage the private sector, designs for overhead structures, the possibility of multiple function corridors for both goods and passengers, the financial or innovative funding opportunities related to goods movement, potential new institutional structures such as who will operate the facilities, and set of specifications for a single technology. STTC may want to create a subset of the Committee who is interested to help NCTCOG with the driverless conceptual elements. Members were asked to weigh in on other potential market segments within the region so that entities in the area can receive a direct invitation to eventually sit on a committee that determines vehicle specifications and elevated structure designs. Chad Edwards asked how vehicles in the general purpose lanes could impact congestion. He also asked who will operate and maintain these types of systems, and who is liable for the systems. Mr. Morris discussed various options and projections that driverless vehicle usage could both positively and

negatively impact congestion. He added that questions of liability, phased implementation, and institutional mechanisms to build and maintain the systems are all good questions that should be discussed. Clarence Daugherty noted these types of technology must be embraced as technology moves forward and congestion continues to be a problem. Members with potential locations should contact Kevin Feldt, NCTCOG.

10. **Top Five Regional Transportation Council Policy Initiatives for 2017 and Introduction of New Institutional Needs:** Michael Morris summarized the top five Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policy initiatives for 2017 as presented at the January 2017 joint meeting of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition and Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition. The items were discussed at the January 12, 2017, RTC meeting and include initiatives that showcase the region and may aid the new Administration. The first item is the possibility of a new federal initiative on transportation. The region has projects that are ready for implementation in the event that funding becomes available. The second initiative is the RTC's partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The third initiative is high-speed rail. Two environmental clearances are anticipated to be completed in 2017. The fourth initiative is the 85th Texas Legislature. The final initiative is related to efforts on the TEXRail project; the Cotton Belt; how Coppell, the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, and RTC can participate in a funding partnership; and a potential integrated new transit technology for a people-mover system that could be a driverless vehicle.
11. **Fast Facts:** Michael Morris discussed approval by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of a partnership with workforce development agencies to address drivers that could be replaced by the advance of transportation-related technology. This topic was requested by Regional Transportation Council member Lee M. Kleinman. As technology advances in the region, drivers may be replaced with less qualified drivers due to the technology. If approved, this item will permit staff to engage the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Tarrant County, and Dallas County workforce development boards and technology staffs to prepare for the transition of technology in transportation.

Michael Morris noted that at the December 2016 RTC meeting, staff committed to bring back the Texas Department of Transportation's technical analysis of the IH30/IH 635 Interchange to show the potential phasing of the project. This technical analysis will be provided to the RTC at its February 9, 2017, meeting.

Natalie Bettger noted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle survey deadline to submit for staff review is February 3, 2017. The final deadline to submit all required documentation is March 3, 2017.

Tom Bamonte discussed an upcoming event hosted by the Alliance for Transportation, the City of Arlington, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. On February 2, 2017, at the Arlington Convention Center attendees will have an opportunity to ride in an automated vehicle and talk to developers. A flyer containing details of the event was distributed at the meeting.

Tom Bamonte also noted an Automated Vehicle Workshop scheduled for February 13, 2017, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments. A flyer containing details of the workshop on the advances in automated and connected vehicle technology was distributed at the meeting.

Allix Philbrick highlighted current air quality funding for vehicles. The Texas Commission of Environmental Quality, through its Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, has announced the re-opening of the Rebate Grants Program on February 22. Awards will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. Details were provided in Electronic Item 11.1.

Kimberlin To highlighted information about an upcoming Compressed Natural Gas Station Safety and Inspection Training for compressed natural gas professionals, code officials, fire inspectors, and fire marshals on February 9, 2017. The training will help prepare participants on understanding the differences between international and state fire codes and enforcing codes and permitting in a consistent manner to improve public safety. Details were provided in Electronic item 11.2.

Rachel Linnewiel noted that as part of last year's Volkswagen settlement with the Environmental Protection agency, \$1.2 billion has been set aside to fund electric vehicle charging infrastructure, education, and outreach outside of California over four funding rounds. Electrify America, an organization created by Volkswagen to implement the distribution of these funds, accepted initial input for the first round of funding earlier this month. Comments submitted by the North Central Texas Council of Governments were provided in Electronic Item 11.3.

Rebekah Hernandez provided a legislative update. She noted the Texas Legislature convened on January 10, 2017. At the time of the meeting, approximately 2,000 bills have been filed. Senate committee members were also announced. The only major action taken to date has been that the Senate and House have each released their proposed statewide two-year budgets. The budgets are approximately \$8 billion apart, but serve as the starting point for negotiations. Texas Department of Transportation funding totals approximately \$28.3 billion and does include an additional \$5 billion for the anticipated Proposition 7 funds. Funding for AirCheckTexas was continued at the current levels. Electronic Item 11.4 is a copy of RTC Legislative Program. Staff will continue to send weekly legislative updates to members.

Carli Baylor noted that an NCTCOG online public input opportunity was held December 13, 2016, through January 11, 2017. Members of the public were encouraged to review and comment on the FY2016 and FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program modifications, as well as proposed modifications to the list of funded projects. Minutes containing comments on the aforementioned input opportunities were provided in Electronic Item 11.5.

Kelli Schlicher highlighted the Access North Texas fact sheet provided in Electronic Item 11.6. Access North Texas is a regional public transportation coordination plan for the 16-county North Central Texas region. The plan includes strategies to improve the coordination and availability of public transportation particularly for older adults, disabilities, low income individuals, and families without vehicles. NCTCOG staff is updating Access North Texas to incorporate new public transportation needs within each county including emerging technologies and progress made since the last plan was adopted in 2013. In August 2016, staff began hosting outreach meetings throughout the 16-county region. STTC members have been invited to attend the meetings. One easy way for community members to have their voice heard is through a survey available at: www.accessnorthtexas.org/survey. Strategies identified in Access North Texas can be funded locally or through funding available annually and competitively through the Federal Transit Administration grant programs. NCTCOG will open a competitive call for projects for funding from the Urbanized Area Formula Funding program for job access/reverse commute projects only and the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program.

Approximately \$5.5 million is available for competitive award in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas. The call for projects opens February 27 and closes April 7, 2017. Preproposal workshops will be held in March 2017. Additional information is available at www.nctcog.org/ftafunding.

Elizabeth Whitaker announced an upcoming Scenario Planning Workshop. Last year, staff received a grant to conduct scenario planning exercise using the Federal Highway Administration's PlanWorks resources. As part of the grant, staff would like to reach out to technical committees and other interested parties to discuss the role of scenario planning in transportation and how scenario planning can be used to better plan for the future, manage risk, and make better decisions. NCTCOG will host a workshop prior to next month's STTC meeting from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on February 24, 2017. A flyer regarding the workshop was distributed at the meeting.

Brian Dell provided an update on the current east/west equity distribution for the region. To date, the distribution percentage is 68.29 percent in the eastern subregion and 31.71 percent in the western subregion. A listing of all actions to date to balance the equity was provided in Electronic Item 11.7. Also, staff is working to develop new funding distributions that will be used to allocate Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act funds that the region will receive. Once completed, an update will be provided to members.

Wade Haffey noted the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modification submittal deadline for the May 2017 TIP/Statewide TIP modification cycle was close of business the date of the meeting.

Gabriel Ortiz highlighted information regarding a Complete Streets one-day design course. The workshop, scheduled for February 7, 8, and 9, is a follow up to the Complete Streets Policy Workshop held in 2016. The design workshop will provide guidance on how to plan and design for implementation of complete streets that support safe, convenient, and comfortable mode choices. Since the announcement flyer was distributed, all three one-day courses have been filled. Members were encouraged to sign up for the waitlist so that NCTCOG staff can use the list to gauge interest to schedule another workshop in the future. Details were provided in Electronic Item 11.8.

The current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 11.9 and transportation partner progress reports were provided in Electronic Item 11.10.

12. **Other Business (Old and New):** Loyl Bussell recognized new members of the Committee: Keith Fisher representing the City of Cleburne, Dave Timbrell representing the City of Garland, and Chelsea St. Louis representing the City of Dallas. Dan Kessler recognized new North Central Texas Council of Governments staff: Fola Hammones, Nancy Luong, Morgan Bailie, Huong Duong, and Amy Rideout.
13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on February 24, 2017, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.



March 2017

A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

Inside

Self-driving shuttle visits Arlington for test rides

Residents and transportation leaders got a glimpse into the future of transportation in February, when EasyMile brought a self-driving shuttle to Arlington.

The company offered the public rides in a low-speed, 12-passenger transit shuttle as part of the Autonomous Vehicle Road Trip. For more information, see Page 2.

Calendar

March 3, 11 am
DRMC

North Texas Tollway Authority
5900 W. Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75093

March 9, 1 pm
Regional Transportation Council
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

March 24, 1:30 pm
Surface Transportation
Technical Committee
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

North Texas ozone season starts this month



be air aware

The ozone season began in North Texas on March 1 and will last through the end of November. The height of ozone season typically begins in May when temperatures begin rising, but now is a good time for North Texans to begin considering how their actions could improve the air during ozone season, which has been extended by one month.

With the Environmental Protection Agency recently lowering the ozone standard from 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb, the region will need to continue to work together to improve air quality. The 2016 design value for the North Texas region was 80 ppb, with seven counties in nonattainment for the 70 ppb standard. The EPA anticipates announcing the nonattainment designations for the 70 ppb standard in October. For current information on the region's ozone levels, visit www.nctcog.org/ozone.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments maintains many policies and programs intended to help residents and businesses participate in clean air efforts. One is Air North Texas, which provides individuals, local governments and businesses lists of strategies they can implement when air quality is forecast to be poor.

Air North Texas implements a regional clean air event, Clean Air Action Day, on the first Friday of each summer. Clean Air Action Day 2017 will fall on June 23, and participants are asked to implement a clean air action that will help reduce ozone in the region. Visit www.airnorthtexas.org to learn more about how to improve air quality and to sign up for air pollution alerts, which will help residents and employers stay informed of when additional clean air actions are recommended.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

For more information about Local Motion topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department

Self-driving shuttle gives Arlington taste of driverless technology

Residents and transportation leaders got a glimpse into the future of transportation in February, when EasyMile offered the public rides in a low-speed, 12-passenger self-driving transit shuttle as part of the Autonomous Vehicle Road Trip, organized by the Alliance for Transportation Innovation. NCTCOG and the City of Arlington co-sponsored the demonstration at the Arlington Convention Center.

At a meeting inside the Convention Center, Paul Brubaker, ATI's president and CEO, spoke to transportation officials about how self-driving technology could change the way Americans get around, making it safer and more efficient to travel from place to place.

The EasyMile shuttle is the type of vehicle that would be good for places such as the University of Texas at Arlington to take students, faculty, even visitors around campus. It may also be used in business parks. For widespread adoption to take place, the public must be willing to turn to vehicles without steering wheels.

It was this need for public acceptance that led to ATI's Road Trip, which made Arlington its only stop in Texas.

Working with its regional and statewide partners, NCTCOG plans to play a key role in helping bring vehicle automation to the streets.

Through its new automated vehicle program, NCTCOG will use its planning expertise to help move the technology forward. The US Department of Transportation recently

named Texas an Automated Vehicle Proving Ground, and the Dallas Fort Worth area, specifically the UTA campus, Arlington streets and Interstate 30 corridor between Dallas and Fort Worth, could soon welcome the testing of automated vehicles, including driverless cars and shuttles.



NCTCOG photo

Residents were able to experience what it feels like to ride in an EZ10 driverless minibus as part of the Autonomous Vehicle Road Trip in Arlington last month.

Managed Lanes

Survey: How do you plan your trips on managed lanes?

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute and the Texas Department of Transportation are interested in how drivers plan trips and the criteria they use to determine when to travel in managed lanes.

In the Dallas-Fort Worth area, these facilities are called TEXpress Lanes. Designed to help improve trip reliability by giving drivers the choice to pay for greater trip reliability, TEXpress Lanes have opened as part of the DFW Connector, LBJ Express, North Tarrant Express and Interstate Highway 30.

TTI has developed a short survey, available at www.travelsurveys.org. The anonymous survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and will help enhance travel information systems provided by transportation agencies.

The deadline to participate is early March. So take a few minutes today to help TTI and TxDOT improve travel planning tools.

For questions regarding the survey, contact Sue Chrysler at 979-845-4443 or s-chrysler@tti.tamu.edu.

Alternative fuel vehicle procurement kickoff

NCTCOG is looking for fleet representatives and fleet procurement staff to participate in a new initiative called Fleets for the Future. With a focus on local public fleets, NCTCOG plans to open a regional cooperative procurement of alternative fuel vehicles.

The goal is to increase regional alternative fuel deployment by coordinating the procurement of select vehicles and infrastructure to obtain volume discounts that fleets cannot access individually.

To learn more and take an alternative fuel vehicle fleet survey, visit the Fleets for the Future website, www.nctcog.org/f4f, or contact Bailey Muller at bmuller@nctcog.org or 817-695-9299. Join NCTCOG for a procurement kickoff event this spring.

NCTCOG sponsoring Car Care Clinics in April



Getty Images

NCTCOG is partnering with local automobile repair shops to sponsor free Car Care Clinics in April.

NCTCOG is partnering with local automotive repair shops to sponsor FREE Car Care Clinics throughout April to help North Texas drivers whose vehicles have the check engine light illuminated.

A vehicle's check engine light turns on

when there may be an issue that could impact its emissions. These clinics will provide drivers with an opportunity to talk to a technician about their vehicles' issues. Staff will be at each clinic to discuss financial assistance that is available to help drivers with repairs. To find a clinic near you, visit www.NTXCarCare.org. For more information, email NTXCarCare@nctcog.org or call 817-704-5697.

Transportation Resources

Facebook

Facebook.com/nctcogtrans

Twitter

Twitter.com/nctcogtrans

YouTube

YouTube.com/nctcogtrans

Instagram

Instagram.com/nctcogtrans

Publications

NCTCOG.org/trans/outreach/publications.asp

Partners

Dallas Area Rapid Transit

DART.org

Denton County Transportation Authority

DCTA.net

North Texas Tollway Authority

NTTA.org

The Fort Worth Transportation Authority

FWTA.org

Texas Department of Transportation

TxDOT.gov

By the Numbers

10

The number of North Texas counties that make up the current ozone nonattainment area. The region's ozone season began March 1 and concludes November 30.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

NCTCOG to participate in spring outreach events

NCTCOG is participating in several community outreach events this spring to discuss air quality initiatives and transportation planning in North Texas.

Residents who attend Fort Worth Earth Party, Colorpalooza: A Celebration of Spring, UNT University Day and Earth Day Texas at Fair Park, among others, can stop by the NCTCOG table to visit with staff about transportation projects and programs and learn how they can help improve air quality in the rapidly growing Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Information on NCTCOG transportation and air quality programs, including Try Parking It, Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition, Air North Texas and AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program will also be available. Brochures and publications will be distributed, as well as lunch bags, water bottles, activity books, crayons and other educational items. For more information, visit www.airnorthtexas.org.

Provide input on development credits, UPWP

Residents are encouraged to provide input on a series of transportation topics during public meetings in March.

Transportation Development Credits, a regional east-west equity update, Unified Planning Work Program modifications for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 and development of the FY 2018 and 2019 UPWP will be presented at 6:30 pm March 13 in Grapevine, 2:30 pm March 15 in Arlington and 6:30 pm March 20 in Carrollton.

Proposed modifications to the List of Funded Projects, AirCheckTexas, April Car Care Clinics and a Diesel Idling Hot Spots Request for Information will also be highlighted.

For more information on presentation topics or to watch a video recording of the Arlington meeting, visit www.nctcog.org/input.

Prepared in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration or the Texas Department of Transportation.