



March 2026

Funding Agreement Provides Transit Member Cities a New Path Forward



Dallas Area Rapid Transit cities are expected to see a portion of the sales tax they pay returned as part of a deal to head off withdrawal elections in key cities. Farmers Branch, Irving and Plano were among six cities to schedule elections that would have given voters the chance to withdraw from the transit system. However, they canceled the ballot measures after DART and the Regional Transportation Council reached a funding agreement that will result in member cities being refunded 10% of their sales tax contributions in the fifth year of the deal.

DART will contribute 5% of the sales taxes to cities the first year and an additional 0.5% each year for a period of five years. On Feb. 12, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved a plan to provide \$75 million over five years to help fund DART capital projects. With DART contributing 7.5% to cities and the RTC providing an additional 2.5% in the final year of the agreement, member cities will receive the equivalent of 10% of their sales tax contributions in the last year for other transportation-related needs.

Most of the funding approved by the RTC would come from a combination of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality and Surface Transportation Block Grant funding.

The RTC Transit Vision Subcommittee will be requested to accelerate the development of a legislative proposal intended to improve regional transit through 2050. The transit subcommittee was formed last summer to help reshape the region's public transportation system for the next 25 years. For more on Regional Transit 2.0, visit [NCTCOG.org/transit2.0](https://nctcog.org/transit2.0).

Topic of the month

AN EYE ON: Sustainable Development



March marks the onset of spring, when temperatures warm up, patios bustle, trails come alive and outdoor festivals bring food, music and fun to communities across the region.

Many of the places and activities we enjoy this time of year are the result of thoughtful infrastructure planning and long-term investment – what we call sustainable development. But sustainable development goes beyond buildings and infrastructure; it’s about creating connected, walkable communities that support everyday life.

This year, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) celebrates a milestone: 25 years of regional leadership in advancing sustainable development. For our March Topic of the Month, we’re reflecting on how the RTC - through the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) - has worked to align transportation and land use, helping communities grow in ways that strengthen mobility, support local economies and enhance quality of life across the Dallas–Fort Worth area.

Read more about our Topic of the Month [here](#).

Ozone Season

As Ozone Season Arrives, NCTCOG Rallies Communities for Cleaner Air



Longer days and rising temperatures mark the return of spring and the start of ozone season in North Texas.

As ozone season officially begins March 1, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is kicking off community air quality outreach efforts across the region.

On Saturday, March 28, NCTCOG will take part in ***Keep Fort Worth Beautiful Earth*** at Trinity Park Pavilion 4 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Hosted by Keep Fort Worth Beautiful, the event follows the 2026 Cowtown Great American Cleanup and is aimed at bringing together residents to celebrate caring for the community. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about local air quality initiatives and simple steps they can take to make a difference.

Additional Earth Day events are planned throughout April, providing more opportunities for North Texans to celebrate and learn more about cleaner air.

These events coincide with a critical time for the region. Ozone season runs annually from March 1 through Nov. 30. With higher temperatures, sunlight and heat interact with precursor pollutants, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), creating favorable conditions for the formation of ground-level ozone, a harmful air pollutant that negatively affects air quality and public health.

The 2025 season ended with a design value of 83 ppb at two regulatory monitors in Collin (Frisco) and Tarrant (Fort Worth Northwest) counties. As a result, the region remains in nonattainment of both the 2008 (75ppb) and 2015 (70ppb) National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone.

Dallas-Fort Worth is currently classified as a “severe” nonattainment zone under the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) 2008 ozone standard and a “serious” nonattainment zone under the 2015 standard, with a deadline to reach compliance by 2027.

Improving air quality is a shared responsibility. NCTCOG offers various online resources to help individuals, businesses and local governments stay informed and take action. The 2025 Air Quality Handbook provides a full breakdown of the region's air quality and air quality initiatives. Learn more at [NCTCOG.org/trans/quality/air](https://nctcog.org/trans/quality/air).

Staying informed about daily air quality initiatives and strategies help individuals and businesses reduce emissions by taking small, everyday actions. Residents can sign up for air quality alerts at [AirNorthTexas.org/sign-up-for-alerts](https://airnorthtexas.org/sign-up-for-alerts).

Look Out Texans

Advancing Bicycle Safety Across North Texas



From children riding to school to adults staying active or commuting to work, bicycling is both great exercise and an accessible mode of transportation for many North Texans. Safe bicycle infrastructure and proper attentiveness while riding and driving are key components of traffic safety.

Traffic safety is a shared responsibility. The **Look Out Texans** safety campaign urges everyone to be alert -- **Look Out** for one another -- to keep bicyclists safe.

In Texas, a bicycle is considered a vehicle when it is operated on the road. For this reason, bicyclists are required to follow the same traffic laws as vehicle drivers. Most

crashes between vehicles and bicyclists happen because drivers fail to see the cyclist. The following are some tips for staying visible while cycling.

Laws and Safety Tips for Bicyclists

- **Follow traffic laws.** Bicyclists are responsible for obeying traffic laws, including stopping at stop signs and traffic signals, and yielding the right of way to pedestrians.
- **Proper lighting is required by law.** Affix a white front light and red rear light and reflectors to the bicycle for nighttime riding or when visibility is poor.
- **Place yourself in the traffic lane so you are noticed by motorists.** Be alert and claim your space at intersections. Continually scan the road, and do not assume drivers see you. Ride predictably, so drivers will know where you are heading and are more likely to see you.
- **Protect your head from severe injuries.** Always wear a properly fitted bike helmet while cycling. A helmet reduces the risk of death or serious injury, with studies showing significantly reduced risk of brain injuries by up to nearly 90%.
- **Dress to be seen by motorists.** Wear bright/light-colored clothing and reflective materials. Drivers can see reflective materials three times farther away. When bicycling at night, a front headlight and a rear reflector or rear red light are required by state law.

Why It Matters:

Understanding how drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians interact on our roadways is crucial for the safety of all North Texans: our families, friends and neighbors. **Looking out** for one another can make all the difference in reducing crashes and saving lives.

For more tips on walking, bicycling and driving safely, visit [LookOutTexans.org](https://www.LookOutTexans.org).

Input Requested on Transportation Funding at March 9 Public Meeting



NCTCOG invites the public to provide input on recent zero emission and electric vehicle transportation initiatives, stormwater infrastructure planning and traffic signal funding during a hybrid public meeting at noon on Monday, March 9.

The meeting will be held in the Transportation Council Room at the NCTCOG offices, located at 616 Six Flags Drive in Arlington. Those unable to attend in person can view the meeting online at <https://publicinput.com/nctcogMarch26>. Residents can also participate by calling 855-925-2801 and entering code 3423. Public comments will be accepted until April 7.

The meeting will feature staff presentations covering the North Texas Zero Emission Vehicle (NTxZEV) Call for Projects, a status update on the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Texas Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan, the Integrating Transportation & Stormwater Infrastructure (TSI) Study and an overview of the Traffic Signal Funding Program.

Local Motion is a monthly email newsletter from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department. For more information about topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department.

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