

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

NCTCOG Offices, CPIL, 1st Floor

William Pitstick Conference Room

Chair: Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton

Vice Chair: Julissa Amador, City of Denton

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) welcomed attendees and reviewed housekeeping items.

PRESENTATION

2. **Purpose of the RISE Coalition.** NCTCOG staff will share an overview of the RISE Coalition, highlighting the group's history and purpose.

NCTCOG reviewed the history, purpose, and mission of the RISE Coalition. Past activities of the Coalition and current voting membership structure were also discussed.

ACTION ITEMS

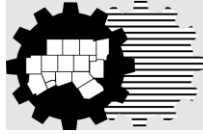
3. **Meeting Summary.** Review and approve the July 29, 2026, draft meeting summary, which can be viewed [here](#).

Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. **FY2027 Work Plan and Project Updates.** NCTCOG will discuss progress on the FY2027 Work Plan initiatives.

NCTCOG sought input on how to approach a set of regional green business standards, as laid out in the work plan. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) shared that, based on her experience discussing a potential green business program with her management team,



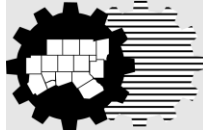
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the primary concern was the level of staff commitment required to implement such a program. She suggested that NCTCOG provide template documents for a green business program to help reduce additional workload placed on staff. Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) suggested that NCTCOG consider any national frameworks in place that could be adapted for the North Central Texas region. Mary Abercrombie (City of McKinney) requested that in addition to waste, transportation, and air quality, green infrastructure such as rainwater collecting and green scaping also be integrated into the program. NCTCOG asked if the group would be interested in forming a subcommittee dedicated to green business and establishing regionals standards. Julissa Amador (City of Denton), Lauren Foust (City of Cedar Hill), and Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton) expressed a willingness to participate in a subcommittee. Any other RISE members interested in participating in a green business subcommittee can reach out to Corinne Buckley at cbuckley@nctcog.org.

NCTCOG shared that, following feedback at a previous meeting requesting a dedicated group for RISE members to connect outside of meetings, a LinkedIn page for RISE Coalition had been established. The group will be private and allow members to collaborate and share resources. NCTCOG will reach out directly to voting members and their alternates with information on how to join the LinkedIn group.

NCTCOG sought feedback on the workshop/webinar topics the group has identified in the work plan and requested further clarification. For resilience hubs, Julissa shared that steps to establishing resilience hubs would be helpful, along with information on how to get started and establish relationships with NGOs. Melissa echoed support. For turning sustainability goals into action, Kylie Wieden (City of Grand Prairie) shared that outreach to residents can be challenging and that information on how to successfully engage them would be helpful. Mary agreed with focusing on resident facing engagement. NCTCOG asked if there were any specific challenges with resident programs that members have faced and would like more information on. Melissa shared that she would be interested to know how other communities handle the disposal of household hazardous waste, and Cory was interested in strategies for enforcing watering restrictions. Julissa shared that they have held weatherization classes in the past, and do not get a lot of participation when they try to promote home energy efficiency.

NCTCOG shared that a Sustainability Taboo workshop on the topic of language around sustainability will be held at NCTCOG Offices on December 2nd at 10:00 a.m. Participants will learn how to frame sustainability topics to advance initiatives while avoiding polarization through the game of Taboo.



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NCTCOG sought feedback from the group on the LEED Green Associate Exam Preparation Course held in September. Alex felt that the training was very informative, and Cory felt it was a good course that helped build confidence in the topics. Melissa shared that they received positive feedback from their planning team who were able to attend. NCTCOG shared that staff plan to coordinate a training to earn Continuing Education hours and asked if the group had a preference on the type of hours the training earned. Members indicated no preference, so NCTCOG plans to discuss training options with USGBC.

5. **Texas 90th Legislative Session.** NCTCOG will seek input from the group as to which topics to track during the 90th Legislative Session.

NCTCOG shared that staff plans to track bills related to energy, climate, greenhouse gas emissions, resilience, and data centers. Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) requested that staff also track any bills related to the erosion of the local government control over various items, citing a proposed bill from the previous session that would have prevented local governments from developing climate plans. NCTCOG plans to share legislation updates at quarterly meetings and will maintain an update matrix on the RISE Coalition committee page.

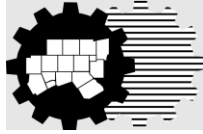
INFORMATION ITEMS

6. **RISE Bylaws Updates.** A member of the Bylaws Ad Hoc Subcommittee will provide an update on suggested revisions to the RISE Coalition Bylaws.

The RISE Coalition Bylaws Ad Hoc Subcommittee met on October 1st to discuss revisions to the bylaws. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) shared the recommended changes with the group. These include lowering the cost share amount for colleges and universities, transitioning non-profits to non-voting members, allowing for private sector donations, clarifying language around Chair and Vice Chair terms, providing NCTCOG the authority to use cost shares as deemed appropriate, and making administrative updates to language. The group will have the opportunity to review bylaws revisions after the meeting, with a virtual vote approving the bylaws revisions to be conducted virtually. If approved, revisions will need to go through NCTCOG's Executive Board before going into effect for FY2028.

7. **FY2027 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2027.

NCTCOG shared that cost shares were sent out to all members at the beginning of October. NCTCOG apologized for the multiple cost share emails that members received



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due to a technical error and clarified that the correct cost shares were sent from Corinne Buckley with the subject line “NCTCOG FY27 RISE Cost-share Program”. Those interested in joining the RISE Coalition can reach out to Corinne at cbuckley@nctcog.org to inquire about membership or request an invoice.

8. **North Texas Zero Emission Vehicles (NTxZEV) Program Update.** NCTCOG Transportation Department staff will present an overview of the NTxZEV Call for Projects, a funding opportunity for replacing and upgrading eligible heavy-duty fleet vehicles, including project eligibility requirements, upcoming deadlines, and available applicant resources.

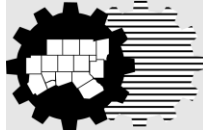
Juliana VandenBorn (NCTCOG) provided an update on the North Texas Zero Emissions Vehicles (NTxZEV) Program, covering the scope and eligibility requirements for the program. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) asked if Class 4 vehicles were eligible for funding, and Julianna clarified that only Class 6 and 7 vehicles are eligible. Julianna also confirmed that private fleets were available, following a question from Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch). Finally, Hassan Shah (City of Fort Worth) requested additional clarification on eligible infrastructure costs, which Julianna explained were dependent on the vehicle type and the cost of the replacement vehicle. Further information about the program can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) and on the [program website](#).

9. **NCTCOG Regional Opportunities.** NCTCOG will provide information on other opportunities in the North Central Texas region that relate to sustainability and the Coalition’s focus areas.

NCTCOG staff presented updates on upcoming meetings, events, and funding that may be of interest to members. More details are available in the [meeting presentation](#).

- [Sustainable Public Rights of Way Subcommittee \(SPROW\)](#) – SPROW provides support and technical advice to NCTCOG’s Public Works Council on sustainability issues associated with public works infrastructure. Their next meeting will be held virtually on [December 9, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.](#)
- [Texas Energy Summit](#) – Energy Systems Laboratory is hosting the Texas Energy Summit 2026 in Austin from October 26-28.
- [Community Centers Energy Efficiency Retrofits for the State Energy Program](#) – The State Energy Conservation Office is currently accepting applications from eligible community centers to receive low-interest loan funding for energy efficiency retrofit projects. The deadline to apply is December 18, 2026.

During discussion of regional opportunities, Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) asked if NCTCOG had a “cheat sheet” on all the COG committees and who is suggested to attend. NCTCOG shared that this is something that had been in the works in the past



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but was put on hold. However, it is something that can be revisited if the group finds it valuable. Other members agreed that a document with the mission statement of each committee would help in determining which staff should attend. Alexa Zahradnik (University of Texas at Dallas) cautioned against specifying a target audience for each committee as this could create issues in getting approval to attend. Julissa Amador (City of Denton) inquired whether committee meetings are recorded. NCTCOG clarified that meetings are not recorded, but that meeting slides and summaries can be found online on the respective committee's webpage.

OTHER BUSINESS

10. **Participant Roundtable.** Participants will have an opportunity to share activities happening within their communities or organizations to identify areas for collaboration and sharing of sustainability programs or success stories.

Alex Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch – Farmers Branch has their Arbor Day event coming up in November and will be giving away their 1000th tree. They are also revamping their water rebate program to help increase outdoor water savings.

Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton – Carrollton is coming up on their Environmental Distinction Award, which recognizes those in the industrial sector. They shared that they have seen a massive increase in interest in these awards, with more industrial firms looking to get involved. They also shared that their new sustainability committee, formed by Council, has begun meeting and will be involved in the awards process.

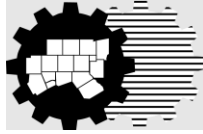
Julissa Amador, City of Denton – Denton will be updating Council on their Climate Action Plan at their November meeting. They also recently hosted a stream cleanup event and will be hosting a Texas Recycles Day event for residents in November where residents can bring various hard to recycle items to help with waste diversion.

Mary Abercrombie, City of McKinney – McKinney has several events coming up in November, including their Love McKinney event and a big tree planting.

Kylie Wieden, City of Grand Prairie – Grand Prairie also has a recognition event for industrial pretreatment awards coming up in November. They have had a lot of events and will be attending Arbor Day in November.

Zach Riggs, City of Plano – Plano will be hosting a Texas Recycles Day event soon and will be installing five new litter booms along three creeks.

Lauren Foust, City of Cedar Hill – Cedar Hill is hosting a fall cleanup day and are working on privet removal.



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Melissa Canclini, City of Lewisville – Lewisville has added a new sustainability team member. Their Parks department is hosting an unplugged event at one of their parks to encourage residents to unplug from digital life. Their Keep Lewisville Beautiful organization is celebrating their 40th anniversary and hosting a trash bash. Lewisville is also hosting their Roots for Wings program in November, which will be a native gardens workshop targeted at local businesses. Finally, they are working on incorporating their sustainability plan into the city's Vision 2035 plan.

Natalie Nava, City of Fort Worth – Fort Worth recently had their neighborhood litter stomp. They are preparing for America Recycles Day, and Fort Worth Beautiful will be hosting their quarterly clean-up event in December.

11. **Future Agenda Items.** Suggestions for future agenda items.

Julissa Amador (City of Denton) shared they want to start a low-income e-bike voucher program and would be happy to present on this initiative once it is completed. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) requested a presentation on large-scale composting, similar to what Plano does. Natalie Nava (City of Fort Worth) expressed an interest in learning about sustainability grants available on topics like air quality, water quality, fleets, and composting.

12. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 27, 2027. This meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams. [RSVP and add to calendar.](#)

13. **Adjournment.**

Julissa Amador (City of Denton) made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Corinne Buckley at (817) 704-2510 or cbuckley@nctcog.org.

If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact Ashley Barnett at (817) 695-9231 or abarnett@nctcog.org at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.



RISE Coalition

October 21, 2026
9:30 a.m., NCTCOG Offices

VOTING MEMBER & ALTERNATE SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	REPRESENTS	SIGN IN
Cory Heiple	City of Carrollton	☒
Krista Pender*	City of Carrollton	☐
Lauren Foust	City of Cedar Hill	☒
Colten Richardson*	City of Cedar Hill	☐
Oppong Hemeng	City of Dallas	☐
Julissa Amador	City of Denton	☒
Kaitlynn Davis*	City of Denton	☐
Alex Pharmakis	City of Farmers Branch	☒
Maria Minter*	City of Farmers Branch	☐
Natalie Nava	City of Fort Worth	☒
Jordan Balusek*	City of Fort Worth	☐
Kylie Wieden	City of Grand Prairie	☒
Jody Cason*	City of Grand Prairie	☐
Melissa Canclini	City of Lewisville	☒
Kayla Ware*	City of Lewisville	☒
Sujata Gautam	City of McKinney	☐
Mary Abercrombie*	City of McKinney	☒
Olivia Osborne	City of Plano	☐
Savannah Mauter*	City of Plano	☐
Devin Taylor	Tarrant Regional Water District	☐
Jason Gehrig*	Tarrant Regional Water District	☐

* Indicates alternate member

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