

## MINUTES

### **Regional Transportation Council PUBLIC MEETING**

#### **Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards**

#### **Walk to School Day Recap**

#### **Regional Policy for Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Design**

#### **End of 2022 Ozone Season**

### **Meeting Date and Location**

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) held a hybrid public meeting Monday, Nov. 7, 2022, at noon in Arlington. Patrons could attend in person, via phone, or view the live stream at [www.nctcog.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22](http://www.nctcog.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22). Karla Windsor, Senior Program Manager, moderated the meeting, attended by 99 people.

### **Public Meeting Purpose and Topics**

The public meeting was held in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the metropolitan planning organization, and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff presented information about:

- Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards – **presented by Daniel Snyder**
- Walk to School Day Recap – **presented by Erin Curry**
- Regional Policy for Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Design – **presented by Cauner McDonald**
- End of 2022 Ozone Season – **presented by Nick Van Haasen**

The public meeting was held to educate, inform, and seek comments from the public. Comments were solicited from those attending who wished to speak for the record. The presentations made during the meeting as well as a video recording were posted online at [www.nctcog.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22](http://www.nctcog.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22).

### **Summary of Presentations**

#### ***Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/960e47c9-556b-45de-b5db-70637a5e52c0/Transportation-Alternatives-Set-Aside-Program.pdf>

#### ***Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards handout:***

[https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/2d62267f-99da-4939-839c-3f3538de81a6/Draft\\_TA-Project-Funding-Tables\\_11-03-2022.pdf](https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/2d62267f-99da-4939-839c-3f3538de81a6/Draft_TA-Project-Funding-Tables_11-03-2022.pdf)

Project activities eligible to receive funding from the 2022 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects (TA CFP) include shared-use paths, on-street bikeways, signage, and protected intersections, among others. The 2022 TA CFP had four eligible project categories: Active Transportation, Safe Routes to School, Safe Routes to Rail, and Safety and Technology. Each category had its own set of scoring criteria.

NCTCOG staff received 33 applications and is recommending awarding funding to 13 projects throughout the region, including the City of Arlington, City of Fort Worth, City of Frisco, City of Allen, Dallas County, and along Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) routes. A breakdown of funding allocations can be viewed at [www.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22](http://www.publicinput.com/nctcogNov22).

The RTC will take action on the 2022 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects funding recommendations on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022.

***Walk to School Day Recap presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/9c5610e8-35b7-4d2c-bed5-9eadd6378f79/Walk-to-School-Day-Recap.pdf>

Walk to School Day, which began in 1997, is an annual event where schools and communities all across the country walk to school on the same day.

A total of 2,789 events were registered nationwide and 198 events were registered in the State of Texas, with 104 of those events taking place in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hunt, and Tarrant counties. NCTCOG staff helped 20 of the aforementioned schools celebrate Walk to School Day. Prizes were awarded to schools based on the events planned and in the order of applications received.

The next Walk to School Day event will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023. For more information, visit [www.WalkBiketoSchool.com](http://www.WalkBiketoSchool.com).

***Regional Policy for Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Design presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/fb626bc9-21d7-42dc-942b-07e39ee0af64/Complete-Streets-and-Context-Sensitive-Design.pdf>

The Regional Model for Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Design outlines the importance of planning and constructing complete streets and is intended to serve as the framework for encouraging local policies and projects across the region.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines “complete streets” as an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enable safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users of all ages and abilities. The needs of roadway users are different in rural, suburban, and urban communities. Thus, streets should be designed to fit the distinct context, circumstances, and local characteristics.

The proposed resolution will:

- Direct staff to collaborate with local governments and transportation providers to develop a checklist and guide for projects with complete streets and context sensitive design elements.
- Encourage the adoption and implementation of local government policies and resolutions related to complete streets and context sensitive design.
- Encourage consideration of complete streets and context sensitive design elements in future updates to local plans, manuals, ordinances, codes, and associated rules and regulations.
- Encourage local collaboration with the Texas Department of Transportation to implement transportation projects that apply context sensitive solutions consistent with local community characteristics.
- Direct staff to provide technical support for the development of local policies, resolutions, and applications for performance management.

The RTC will take action on Regional Policy for Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Design on Thursday, Nov. 10, 2022.

***End of 2022 Ozone Season presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/getmedia/0c9a53b4-d2ad-4f4c-adb7-90569607aa26/2022-End-Of-Ozone-Season.pdf>

Ozone is a gas composed of three atoms of oxygen and occurs both in the Earth’s upper atmosphere and at ground level. Ground-level ozone is commonly referred to as “bad ozone” and forms when emission sources emit nitrogen oxides and/or volatile organic compounds that react in the presence of sunlight. Ozone can make it more difficult to breathe, aggravate lung diseases, and inflame and damage the airway.

North Texas is currently under two ozone standards, one for 2008 and one for 2015. Because the region did not meet attainment for either standard, NCTCOG staff is preparing for the region to be reclassified from marginal to moderate under the 2015 standard and from serious to severe under the 2008 standard.

Staff expects the attainment deadline for the new classifications to be no later than July 20, 2027 for the 2008 standard and no later than August 3, 2024 for the 2015 standard.

For more information on regional air quality, visit <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone>.

**COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE MEETING**

**Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards**

**Mike P, Citizen**

A. Light Rail in Fort Worth

*Comment:* Has any thought been given to a light rail system like DART that connects the major neighborhoods in Fort Worth, or to expanding the TEXRail system beyond the T&P Station? There have been apartment complexes popping up everywhere and eventually parking and traffic will be even more challenging. West 7th is already best avoided altogether since more and more development is being crammed in the same space.

*Summary of Response by Karla Windsor:* NCTCOG's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2045, has a lot of long-range systems in place for rail extensions, and planning for this initiative has been done at both the regional and local level. There have been attempts to run public transportation to the West 7th area specifically, and I know those are of interest to the community. Our transit team is currently trying to find a more permanent solution.

### **End of 2022 Ozone Season**

**Phyllis Silver, Citizen**

A: Nonattainment penalties

*Comment:* Could you review what the penalties are for being in the nonattainment zone? Are penalties imposed by the State or some other entity? If there is a fee, who pays it, and to whom do they pay it?

*Summary of Response by Nick Van Haasen:* There are some penalties for being in nonattainment, and they are paid to the Environmental Protection Agency. If you feel comfortable providing your contact information, we can send you additional information.

### **COMMENTS SUBMITTED DURING THE COMMENT PERIOD VIA WEBSITE, EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA, & MAIL**

#### **Social Media**

No comments submitted.

#### **Website**

No comments submitted.

#### **Mail**

**Phyllis Silver, Citizen**

Please see Attachment 1 for comments submitted via postal mail.

Comments and Questions

Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program

Question: What does "set aside" refer to in the title of this budget?

Comments: I am pleased that there is an effort to make the streets in our Region more walkable.

I would like to see "Safe Routes to Rail" to be expanded to "Safe Routes to Public Transportation". In the Dallas area (not just the city of Dallas) there are grassy and rocky areas, broken sidewalks, sidewalks with obstacles, such as utility poles and utility units that make it difficult to go to and from bus stops. Traffic signals controlling crossings to and from bus stops are not always conducive to the safety of pedestrians, wheelchair users, and bicyclists. I would like to see improvement in these areas.

Walk to School Day 2022

Comments: This is a great initiative to have children thinking about walking.

It is wonderful that MTCOG has provided incentives to schools for this program.

Regional Model Supporting Complete Streets (Context Sensitive Design)

Comment: I support the RTC's effort to encourage local governments in our Region to adopt complete streets designs.

Jackie,  
11/23/2022  
Thank you for returning my call promptly today.

Attached are my comments & questions for the November Public Input Opportunity. This is due December 6.

Phyllis Silver

Phyllis Silver  
11/23/2022

# November 2022 Transportation Public Meeting

## Comments and Questions

(continued)

### End of 2022 Ozone Season

Comments: During the November 7, 2022 NCTCOG Public Input Meeting, I had asked if penalties were imposed if our Region is designated as "non attainment". I see from the NCTCOG Air Quality Handbook that "failure to meet Federal standards for air quality could result in additional emission-control requirements" and could result "in a freeze on Federal transportation funding."

Questions: Is there any way of determining who the air pollution offenders are? If there is, is there a way to penalize these offenders? Is there a financial penalty for companies that are responsible for us being a nonattainment zone? If there are financial penalties, are they paid to the EPA or some other group?

Are there incentives for companies to comply with Federal air quality standards?

Comment: I am thinking that if there are no penalties for offenders and incentives to comply, then compliance may not be a priority for some companies. I would be interested in learning your comments on this matter.  
Thank you.



Phyllis Silver  
Phyllis Silver  
11/23/2022

## Responses to Public Input following the November 2022 Public Meeting

### Question:

“What does “Set-Aside” refer to in the title of this handout?”

### Response:

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) is a source of federal funding for transportation-related projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Within STBG funding, a percentage (or set-aside) is federally required to be used for Transportation Alternatives (or TA) Set-Aside eligible activities. The “Set-Aside” in the name of the funding source indicates it is a subset of a larger funding program.

### Comment:

“I am pleased that there is an effort to make the streets in our region more walkable. I would like to see “Safe Routes to Rail” to be expanded to “Safe Routes to Public Transportation.” In the Dallas area (not just the City of Dallas) there are grassy and rocky areas, broken sidewalks, sidewalks with obstacles such as utility poles and utility units, that make it difficult to go to and from bus stops. Traffic signals controlling crossings to and from bus stops are not always conducive to the safety of pedestrians, wheelchair users, and bicyclists. I would like to see improvement in those areas.”

### Response:

Thank you for your comment. NCTCOG staff concur with your assessment about the need to create connections to all forms of transportation facilities. We continue to work with local communities and support their efforts to improve transit access. We encourage you to reach out to your local city staff and elected officials and voice your support for these efforts since local governments are responsible for constructing and maintaining sidewalks.