

MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4

Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips

Start of 2021 Ozone Season

Car Care Awareness

Online Public Input Opportunity Dates

Monday, April 12, 2021 - Tuesday, May 11, 2021 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment.

Purpose and Topics

The online public input opportunity was provided 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 (MPO), and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff posted information regarding:

1. COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4
2. Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips
3. Start of 2021 Ozone Season
4. Car Care Awareness

The NCTCOG online public input opportunity was provided to inform and seek comments from the public. Comments and questions were submitted by email at transinfo@nctcog.org, online at www.nctcog.org/input, by mail at PO Box 5888, Arlington, TX 76005 and by fax at 817-640-3028. Printed copies of the online materials were also made available by calling 817-608-2365 or emailing transinfo@nctcog.org.

Summary of Presentations

COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4 presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/COVID-19-INFRASTRUCTURE-PROGRAM-ROUND-4.pdf>

Project list:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/COVID-19-Handout.pdf>

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the economy has suffered large setbacks, and there is an urgency to stimulate it. The main idea behind the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program is to inject much needed cash into the local and state economy using infrastructure investment.

Most of the projects included on the program's project list have been the subject of discussions between NCTCOG staff and regional partners over the past several years and meet one or more of the Regional Transportation Council policies outlined in Mobility 2045 and/or assist in reaching the region's federal performance measures. NCTCOG staff is recommending funding a fourth round of projects.

Projects were divided into project types and evaluated against each other. Selection criteria included air quality benefits, cost effectiveness, consistency with Mobility 2045, traffic volumes, if the project addressed a safety issue and if the project addressed federal performance measures.

Additionally, when the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) was signed into law in December 2020, \$9.8 billion of additional funding was set aside for transportation infrastructure, with approximately \$54 million allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. This program proposes to incorporate the aforementioned funding into this fourth round of project selection.

For a comprehensive list of projects being funded, please refer to the project listing on the public input page: www.nctcog.org/input.

Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips presentation:
<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/Regional-SOV-Trip-Reduction-Res.pdf>

NCTCOG's Travel Demand Management (TDM) goal is to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel on roadways by offering alternatives to driving alone. Traditional TDM strategies include telecommuting, transit, ridesharing, vanpools and flexible work schedules.

In October 2020, staff introduced the development of a Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution in an effort to retain some of the positive benefits of reducing trips realized during COVID-19 restrictions. The resolution outlines support for the establishment of a regional trip reduction target of 20 percent to reduce the number of SOV commute trips during the peak period. It encourages public and private sector employers to reduce employee SOV trips by implementing employer-specific trip reduction programs, encourages both public and private sector employers to monitor and track agency participation through an online commute tracking platform and encourages use of www.TryParkingIt.com to aid in tracking and monitoring activities.

The RTC will evaluate public agencies' participation and implementation of the program through a new policy established as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle with non-participation possibly impacting the level of Transportation Development Credits received through the Policy Bundle Survey process. For private sector agencies, the RTC will monitor the agency's participation and implementation of the program through www.TryParkingIt.com or a comparable tracking platform, with participation possibly resulting in awarding regional funding for TDM-related efforts such as transit passes.

In addition, NCTCOG staff will provide the RTC with annual updates on the status of the trip reduction target to reduce SOV commute trips and include www.TryParkingIt.com usage rates, number of users, trips reduced and emissions reduced.

The RTC is expected to take action on the Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips on May 13, 2021.

Start of 2021 Ozone Season presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/Start-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. The attainment deadline for the 2008 standard was July 20, 2018. The region did not meet the standard, and therefore, its air quality status was reclassified as serious. It must achieve attainment by July 20, 2021. The nonattainment deadline for the 2015 standard is August 3, 2021.

Everyone in the region can help improve air quality by working from home, using mass transit, avoiding unnecessary trips, carpooling, etc. More information on air quality and ozone alerts is available at <https://www.airnorthtexas.org>.

Car Care Awareness presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/CA-Final.pdf>

The Car Care Awareness campaign aligns with National Car Care Awareness Month in both April and October. The campaign seeks to advance air quality benefits for the region, informs owners about vehicle maintenance and helps build stronger community relations.

NCTCOG began hosting car care clinics in April 2013. The clinics, which have a hands-on, educational approach, provide vehicle owners the chance to speak with qualified technicians about their check engine light and any other issue they might be experiencing with their vehicle.

Due to the pandemic, NCTCOG staff moved the campaign entirely online and hopes to be able to return to an in-person approach in October 2021. The Car Care Clinic website, which launched in 2016, houses free educational materials, vehicle maintenance tips and program status updates.

For more information, visit www.ntxcarcare.org. Email comments and questions to ntxcarcare@nctcog.org.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, MAIL, EMAIL and SOCIAL MEDIA

Email

COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4

John Godwin, City of Terrell

I am writing to express our great appreciation for and continued support of those two projects included in Infrastructure Program Round 4 for the City of Terrell. We believe these safety enhancement projects will have significant positive impacts on our overall downtown, especially US 80 and Spur 227, and be a tremendous first step for us as we work towards the development of complete streets. Accessibility, equity, and safety are keys to our long term success.

We also hope for consideration of future opportunities for funding for access road construction along Interstate 20 in Terrell and all of Kaufman County as we move forward over the next few years. This project, including interchange improvements, is a partnership with Kaufman, which has approved bonds in support of the work. Upon completion, this project will have significant impacts on safety, economic development, and traffic congestion in our area.

On behalf of the city council and staff of the City of Terrell, we again thank you for your support of the two approved projects, as well as the ability to use some of our transportation credits towards their completion. We look forward to working with you in the future on these and other significant transportation projects.

Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips

Michael Harrington

I am a statistician. After creating Combarry™ I now can count Hariot, Pascal, and Fibonacci as my peers.

Studies of traffic patterns have happened and demonstrate some inescapable truths. The first is that forced Car Pooling is quite impossible. This is due to shopping behaviors, errands people run, work place hours, schools they or their children attend, meetings, doctors appointments, and so forth. In fact it is the subject of math where $N \neq NP$ versus $N = NP$ type solutions.

On a pure basis it cannot succeed from the drive way anyways, people need a way to meet up after all for the ride or the likelihood that their rides will match is as near as impossible as can be.

Not only would the system ultimately fail it would cost every politician involved to be voted out of office quickly and would end any other plans said politicians had desires to implement.

Response by NCTCOG Transportation Department Staff

Mr. Harrington,

Thank you for providing your feedback on the proposed resolution to establish a regional target to reduce drive alone vehicle trips on our regional roadways during peak driving periods. The purpose of the resolution is not to force commuters to carpool. It is our goal to reduce roadway congestion and improve our region's air quality by reducing the number of drive-alone trips by encouraging commuters to use alternative commute options. This can be achieved through an assortment of Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies that are available in the North Central Texas region. In addition to carpooling, these alternatives to driving alone include vanpooling, taking transit, biking, walking, telecommuting, and flexible or variable work schedules. We understand that every commuter is different and their commute needs may differ. The proposed

resolution gives commuters the option to choose the alternative commute solution that works best for them and does not mandate carpooling.

For additional information on TDM strategies available in North Central Texas, we welcome you to visit www.nctcog.org/trans/manage/tdm. We also welcome you to track your alternative commutes at TryParkingIt.com where commuters can earn rewards by using alternatives to driving alone.

Mail

Phyllis Silver

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

4/29/2021

Carl:

These are my comments and questions for the Regional Transportation Public Input Opportunity due May 11!

Proposed Regional Single - Occupancy Vehicle Trip Reduction Target Development Resolution = great!

Comments:

This is a great idea - taking something as negative as the pandemic and observing the positive effects of such things as the reduction of air pollution. The you're taking the extra step in devising ways that we can maintain some of these effects, at least to a degree, under better (non-pandemic) circumstances.

Especially like the notation on pg (no pg.#) - Trip Reduction Target Setting Areas of Consideration. Recommending a realistically achievable target that results in high benefits and reduced negative impacts.

Recommendation

on that same page, realizing that parking lots are generally private property & trusting that design recommendations ^{standards} can still be made to reduce accidents, I recommend that more safety features, such as fewer exits from parking lots so that it will not interfere with oncoming traffic and also better visibility (free from barriers to visibility) as motorists are leaving a parking lot to enter the main road.

MAY - 5 2021

COVID-19 Infrastructure Program? Round 4 Packet:
Question
Page 4 -

Eligibility Criteria - what is a Major Collector
and what is the Federal Functional Classification
System?

Comment -

I am pleased with the choice of projects listed
in the packet, as summarized in the chart on page 7.

Start of 2021 Ozone Season Packet.

Comments: Thank you for making the distinction between
the two types of ozone and for reminding us what
contributes to the bad ground-level ozone.

Question - page 8 - on the bar graph, what do the numbers
in the purple, red, and orange areas of the graph
represent? Is it the number of days that we exceeded
each level of the Air Quality Index?

COVID-19 HOOX Infrastructure Program
(Round 4) Funding Recommendations; Bicycle - Pedestrian

Comment: COVID-19 ID# 052 - I am pleased that
sidewalks will be constructed in this area - I would
like it to be sooner than FY2023.

Same report Funding Recommendation Complete Streets

Question I'm not sure why the two Richardson Projects
have no ID#. I notice the total scoring is only 50.
Are you planning on implementing these projects? I'm not
sure I understand these entries. Can you clarify this for me?

Car Care Awareness

Comment: Thank you for the Car Care tips, especially as it
relates to tire inflation.