

## Topic of the Month: People in Transportation

There may come a day, whether it's a few years or a few decades from now, when we'll zip from one end of Texas to the other in a high-speed train. We'll soar above our roadways and highways in state-of-the-art gondolas. Robots will deliver our every want and need to our doorsteps – via wheels or wings.

These are just some of the projects the North Central Texas Council of Governments is working to bring to life. But every breakthrough in transportation begins with a good idea, and these concepts come from the people who've devoted their lives and careers to moving us – and the things we love - around the block or around the country.

For this month's Topic of the Month, we delve into the human element driving the transportation sector. We'll explore the roles played by planners, policymakers, partner governments and the very public they serve. Their collective insights are indispensable in shaping the future of how we move.

### **The Planners**

Since 1974, the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). With 8 million residents - and counting – the North Texas area needs more than just roadways to effectively move people.

NCTCOG's transportation planners have been essential in the creation of efficient and sustainable solutions to Dallas-Fort Worth's growing transportation needs. Coordinating their efforts with federal, state and local partner agencies, as well as members of the public, they analyze traffic patterns, forecast future transportation needs, and develop plans that address issues like congestion, pollution and accessibility.

Over the years, they have played vital roles in transit-oriented developments that reduce vehicle miles traveled, enable the use of alternative modes of transportation, promote economic development and improve air quality.

Two important components of their initiatives are air quality and safety. While NCTCOG's primary focus with air quality has been reaching ozone attainment, many of its air quality efforts also contribute to a broader reduction in particulate matter and greenhouse gas emissions, thus, supporting efforts to improve air quality comprehensively.

The NCTCOG Safety Program focuses on improving the safety of the transportation system by zeroing in on programs and projects that assist in reducing the number of crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities on our regional roadways.



To learn more about how NCTCOG is helping lead efforts to build and maintain an integrated regional transportation system for all North Texans, click [here](#).

### **The Policymakers**

NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council, serves as the transportation policymaking body for the region. The RTC's 45 members are local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers.

The RTC meets the second Thursday of each month at the NCTCOG offices in Arlington; the public is welcome to attend the meetings or [watch online](#).

The Regional Transportation Council plays a crucial role in advancing transportation by: (1) guiding development of multimodal transportation plans and programs, (2) determining the allocation of federal, state and regional transportation funds, and (3) selecting transportation projects for some programs while recommending projects to the Texas Transportation Commission for others.

The RTC also ensures the metropolitan area complies with state and federal laws and regulations regarding transportation and air quality.

### **The Partners**

To further the transportation goals of NCTCOG, we partner with local and regional cities, counties, federal agencies and transit providers to:

- Collaborate on long-term plans for the region's transportation network, considering factors such as population growth, economic development and environmental sustainability.
- Reduce emissions from vehicles and improve air quality through initiatives such as ride-sharing programs like Via, public transportation improvements and alternative fuel infrastructure.
- Expand access to public transportation, improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and developing innovative transportation solutions such as high-speed rail.
- Implement strategies to reduce traffic congestion, including promoting alternative modes of transportation.

### **The Public**

Transportation decisions in the 12-county Dallas-Fort Worth region significantly impact how North Texans live and travel. Recognizing this, the North Central Texas Council of Governments values input from residents, local governments, and the private sector. All

North Texans are encouraged to share their ideas and opinions throughout the transportation planning process. You can participate in several ways:

- **NCTCOG Public Portal:** NCTCOG's [public engagement portal](#) is the online home for outreach and listening efforts to shape the future of our communities. Learn more about events, initiatives, and opportunities to share your input on transportation and air quality topics.
- **Attend meetings:** Check our [website](#) for upcoming Regional Transportation Council meetings.
- **Watch meeting recordings:** NCTCOG offers [online video recordings](#) of Regional Transportation Council meetings, public meetings and many other workshops, projects, and events throughout the year.
- **Provide feedback:** Share your comments directly on our website through our [public input feedback survey](#).
- **Review the Public Participation Plan:** This [document](#) outlines the various ways you can further engage with NCTCOG's transportation planning efforts.
- **Follow us on social media** to learn more about our initiatives and upcoming community events.