

## **Topic of the Month: Sustainable Development**

The North Central Texas Council of Governments continues its Topic of the Month series in March, focusing on sustainable development and the vital role it plays in our region.

In 2001, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) initiated the Sustainable Development Program to encourage planning and foster growth and mixed-use development in and around historic downtowns and Main Streets, infill areas, and along passenger rail lines and at rail stations. Since its inception, the program has had four cycles of funding (2001, 2006, 2010 and 2018), awarding approximately \$157 million for projects to support sustainable development throughout the region.

In the program's inaugural year, 2001, the RTC awarded approximately \$1.8 million to the City of Lewisville for its Old Town Plaza project, an open space redevelopment project in Historic Downtown Lewisville. The project included construction of Wayne Ferguson Plaza across the street from City Hall on West Church Street, the development of land for mixed-use buildings and the improvement of pedestrian infrastructure.

Other 2001 projects included improvements and construction of DART's Orange Line in Irving, new road construction in The Colony and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure improvements at Cedars South Side in Dallas. In all, approximately \$40.8 million was awarded for 19 projects.

In 2006, the RTC awarded approximately \$40 million for Sustainable Development projects such as streetscaping along Hi Line Drive, one of the main thoroughfares in Dallas' Design District; intersection improvements, landscaping, street construction and pedestrian amenities in downtown Rowlett; street lighting along Grapevine's Main Street; and pedestrian access improvements in Fort Worth's Museum Place mixed-use development.

The RTC initiated the third Sustainable Development Call for Projects in March 2009, designating \$43 million for infrastructure projects, which was awarded in 2010.

Among the projects was the Lake Highlands Multimodal Connectivity project, a continuation of previous work done to create a walkable neighborhood built near DART's Lake Highlands Station in Dallas. NCTCOG funded transportation improvements of \$2.77 million with a local match of \$693,556 from the City of Dallas, to support this transit-oriented development. This phase of the project included trail extension and intersection improvements north of the Lake Highlands Town Center, providing bicyclists and pedestrians with safer access to White Rock Creek.

Projects also included the revitalization of an area of Fort Worth's historic Main Street; trail connections, street construction, traffic signalization, and landscaping at Vitruvian Park in

Addison; and the installation of two roundabouts and trails along West Windsor Street, in Flower Mound.

Funding for six additional infrastructure projects was approved by the RTC in 2018, totaling \$41.8 million. This included a \$4.5 million award to the City of Crowley for improvements to its Main Street, such as constructing pedestrian amenities, roundabouts, intersection improvements, landscaping and retrofitting the roadway for multimodal transportation options.

Other funds went to the City of Ennis for construction of grade separation at the intersection of Business 287/Ennis Avenue and Union Pacific Rail Line; and the City of Irving for intersection, street and pedestrian improvements along the West Irving Boulevard commercial corridor.

NCTCOG and its partners are continuing to use transportation funding as a tool to tackle quality of life issues while also creating opportunities for economic growth. For more information, visit [NCTCOG Sustainable Development](#).