

local motion

A monthly update on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department

May 2016 | nctcog.org/localmotion

Inside

The Transportation Department's role has evolved and its size grown since its establishment in 1969. Its commitment to the region, however, has remained steadfast. Read more on page 2 and remember to read about NCTCOG's 50th anniversary throughout the year at NCTCOG.org/50.

Meetings

May 4, 8:30 am
TRTC

Fort Worth Intermodal
Transportation Center
1001 Jones St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

May 6, 11 am
DRMC

North Texas Tollway Authority
5900 W. Plano Parkway
Plano, TX 75093

May 12, 1 pm

Regional Transportation Council
NCTCOG
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

May 27, 1:30 pm

**Surface Transportation
Technical Committee**
NCTCOG
Transportation Council Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

Lend a hand to our community this ozone season

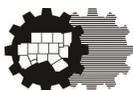
Ozone season, like warmer weather, is upon us. As the temperature rises, air quality generally worsens, so it is important for North Texans to do their part to lessen emissions in the spring and summer.

Beginning May 2, more attention was brought to the issue of a cleaner air in North Texas and beyond with the celebration of Air Quality Awareness Week. But improving air quality in North Texas requires assistance from everyone every day. NCTCOG operates programs to give residents the tools to contribute. One is Air North Texas, a regional partnership and campaign encouraging individuals, businesses and governments to make clean air choices by promoting behavioral and lifestyle changes that impact their health and the environment.

Participation in Air North Texas is a way for people who call the Dallas-Fort Worth area home to help their neighbors breathe easier during ozone season, which lasts through October. By committing to at least one action to improve the air quality and health in North Texas, anyone – young or old – can help bring the region toward attainment. Residents can also join in on the change by participating in events such as Clean Air Action Day, designated to encourage people to make environmentally friendly choices that could lead to a healthier North Texas. On the first Friday of summer, June 24, North Texans are encouraged to commit to clean air actions and share how they will lend a hand with our community.

Signing up for air pollution alerts is another way to get involved and be a part of the solution. These alerts provide information about when the region's air quality may be unhealthy. An email will be sent with tips to improve air quality and limit time spent outdoors. Sign up for alerts and discover other ways to help improve air quality at AirNorthTexas.org.

For more information about Local Motion topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

our region

Transportation has evolved, but department's commitment remains

The NCTCOG transportation Department began in 1969, with two employees. Although its role has evolved and its size grown over the past 47 years, its commitment to the region has remained steadfast. In the early days, the emphasis was on energy, necessitated in part by the energy crisis of the 1970s. Later, with the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, air quality became a significant area of emphasis. This remains true today. Because ten Dallas-Fort Worth area counties are in nonattainment for ozone, transportation improvements must be made without negatively impacting air quality.



In 1974, the department was designated as the region's metropolitan planning organization and today, through the Regional Transportation Council, is in charge of transportation policymaking for 12 counties. North Texas has added about 4.5 million people since 1970, bringing the total to near 7 million and necessitating a transportation system that serves more than just personal vehicles.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit's 90-plus mile light rail system is the largest in the nation, and the region's commuter rail network continues to develop, connecting more and more people to their destinations. The Trinity Railway Express serves as an important connection between Dallas and Fort Worth; Denton County Transportation Authority's A-train connects Denton and Carrollton; and starting in 2018, TEX Rail will provide residents of the western side of the region the same opportunity their eastern counterparts have through DART light rail: direct access to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport by rail. The region's bicycle-pedestrian network also continues to expand.

Over the years, the region's transportation system has seen more than just expansion. Innovation has helped Dallas-Fort Worth accommodate the growth that continues today. NCTCOG works closely with its regional partners and the Texas Legislature to ensure the transportation needs are met for the entire region. One innovation with a lasting impact was the financing agreement reached with the North Texas Tollway Authority to construct Sam Rayburn Tollway, a roadway that is attracting new development to parts of Collin and Denton counties.

Historically, NTTA has constructed roads and used the resulting revenue to support its growing system. With Sam Rayburn Tollway, the benefactor became the region. NTTA paid the region more than \$3 billion, which has been used to build numerous Dallas-Fort Worth area projects that otherwise would have had to wait years for completion. The Regional Toll Revenue funding initiative remains in use today to enhance the multimodal transportation system. For a closer look at the Transportation Department over the years, visit www.nctcog.org/50.

EPA honors NCTCOG freight outreach

NCTCOG has been recognized for the fifth year in a row for its efforts to promote emissions reduction and improve efficiency in the freight industry. The Environmental Protection Agency named NCTCOG a SmartWay Affiliate Challenge honoree in April. NCTCOG promotes SmartWay initiatives by providing outreach to potential partners and informing freight operators in the area about the benefits of adapting to EPA-verified SmartWay technologies. The SmartWay Affiliate Challenge was developed to acknowledge entities that have demonstrated exceptional recruiting, promotion and marketing toward these goals. SmartWay Transport is a voluntary, public-private partnership with the freight industry that the EPA started in 2004. It helps SmartWay Partners move more goods more miles with lower emissions and less energy. Reducing emissions in the freight sector plays a vital role in improving regional air quality. Thirty percent of regional on-road nitrogen oxide emissions come from heavy-duty diesel vehicles.

public involvement

Celebrate Bike Month in North Texas

May is Bike Month, and North Texans have opportunities to show support for commuting on two wheels throughout the month, starting with Bike to School Day on May 4. National Bike to Work Week May is 16-20, capped by National Bike to Work Day on May 20. NCTCOG encourages residents to commute by alternative transportation modes in support of Bike Month, organized by the League of American Bicyclists. Bicyclists can also log their commutes on TryParkingIt.com, where they will be eligible for prizes. For information on Bike to Work events organized by cities and the region's transit agencies, visit NCTCOG.org/trans/sustdev/bikeped/bike2work.asp.

NCTCOG celebrates spring at 20 DFW events

The NCTCOG Transportation Department participated in 20 community outreach events this spring, educating residents about air quality initiatives and metropolitan transportation planning in North Texas.

Staff members visited the sixth annual Earth Day Texas at Fair Park, attended by more than 130,000 people. They presented to the Texas Trucking Association about for funding for alternative fuels and clean vehicle technology for freight efficiency and emissions reduction.

In addition, NCTCOG had booths at Fort Worth's Earth Party, Lewisville's ColorPalooza, Oak Cliff Earth Day, DFW Airport's Earth Day Celebration, University Day at the University of North Texas and The University of Texas at Arlington's Celebrating People and Planet, among others. Transportation and air quality programs, including Try Parking It, Air North Texas, Clean Air Action Day, the Look Out Texans safety campaign and the NCTCOG Active Transportation Program, were also highlighted.

resources

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partners

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DART.org

Denton County
Transportation Authority
DCTA.net

North Texas Tollway Authority
NTTA.org

The Fort Worth
Transportation Authority
The-T.com

Texas Department
of Transportation
TxDOT.gov

4.5 million

North Texas has added about 4.5 million people since 1970, bringing the total to near 7 million.

policymakers — RTC

Students can learn to bicycle, walk safely

The end of the school year is just a month away, so students will soon have more opportunities to bicycle, walk and play outside. To help keep kids safe this summer and in the coming school year, the Look Out Texans safety campaign has created lesson plans and materials to teach students about how to bicycle and walk safely.

These resources were developed by NCTCOG with assistance from an educator focus group made of North Texas teachers. The lesson plans, customized for students in grades 3-5 and 6-8, meet Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. Through a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation, Look Out Texans is able to provide these informative and fun resources to educators and the general public for free online.

A combination of videos, activities and a quiz, helps students learn about safe bicycling and walking practices. Teachers can also take advantage of articles, letters and tip sheets to ensure learning continues at home. To access the resources, please visit

www.LookOutTexans.org/schoolkit.

Survey: Idle-reduction initiatives

Vehicle idling reduces fuel economy, wastes money and contributes to ozone-forming emissions. NCTCOG is looking for ways to make regional idle-reduction programs more effective, and needs your help! Tell us what type of vehicles you think are most important to target, what messages are most effective, and areas where you think idling is most important to reduce, by taking the following survey:

SurveyMonkey.com/r/FX3T7FW

Prepared in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration or the Texas Department of Transportation.