

and supporting Mobility 2045 goals. As construction of infrastructure projects alone cannot achieve the goals of Mobility 2045, a voluntary list of policies available for adoption by local agencies was designed to encourage the development of strategic alternative solutions. By voluntarily adopting 50 percent of these policies, participating agencies may receive TDCs to offset local funds as matching funds for federal transportation projects. MTP Policy Bundle applications have been completed and reviewed. A recommendation for distributing available TDCs to successful applicants is provided in [Electronic Item 3.1](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety
- Pavement and Bridge Condition
- Transit Asset
- System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

1:20 – 1:35

4. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 15
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

1. New Format for Noting Performance Measures Addressed on Meeting Agendas: Deadline October 1, 2020
2. New TxDOT Fort Worth District Engineer, Carl L. Johnson, P.E., Graduate of Texas Tech University and Reassignment from the TxDOT Abilene District
3. Alan Clark, Director of Transportation Planning at Houston-Galveston Area Council Retiring
4. Remembering Wick Allison, D Magazine and Urbanist
5. Chair Approval of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Legislative Workshop: October 8, 2020, 11:30 am
6. International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association Awards Certificate of Merit to NCTCOG for the Automated Occupancy Detection and Verification Project (GoCarma)
7. Status Report on the Advancement of Engineering Funds for the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) on the SH 360/SH 161 Connector and the George Bush Extension South of IH 30
8. Approval for Transportation Director to Explore the Possibility of a Partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation and NTTA on Extending SH 360 and Chisholm Trail to the South
9. Approval of Letter on the City of Fort Worth Bypass Channel ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
10. Staff Response to Last Month's Agenda Item 1: Opportunity for the Public to Speak ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
11. East/West Equity Report ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
12. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Upcoming Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings>)
13. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>)

- 14. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding from Volkswagen Settlement ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
- 15. National Drive Electric Week Virtual Event (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/ndew>)
- 16. Status Report on Ozone ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
- 17. August Online Input Opportunity Minutes ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
- 18. September Online Input Opportunity Notice ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
- 19. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
- 20. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.9](#))
- 21. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.10](#))
- 22. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.11](#))

1:35 – 1:45

5. **Federal Highway Administration Performance Measures Target Reaffirmation or Revisions**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10
 Presenter: Chris Klaus, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request action to adopt a resolution approving adjustment to 2022 regional targets for federally required performance measures. A copy of the resolution is provided in [Electronic Item 5.1](#).

Background: In 2018, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) adopted 2020 and 2022 federal performance measure targets related to infrastructure condition, congestion, and air quality. The RTC has an opportunity to adjust 2022 targets for these measures, if appropriate, based on new data and methodologies. Draft proposed adjustments were presented to RTC members on August 13, 2020, and the Surface Transportation Technical Committee recommended RTC adoption of the proposed target adjustments at its August 28, 2020, meeting. This effort will generate financial and policy discussions on resources needed in current and future transportation planning. Additional details are provided in [Electronic Item 5.2](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

Safety Pavement and Bridge Condition
 Transit Asset System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

1:45 – 1:55

6. **Response to Members of the Texas House of Representatives House Committee on Transportation on Request for Information**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10
 Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will seek Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval on four letters in response to information requested by the House Committee on Transportation. This information is requested to assist the Committee on their interim charges.

Background: In lieu of holding public hearings, the House Committee on Transportation recently made formal requests for written information on select interim charges. Comments on each interim charge must be submitted by September 18, 2020. RTC positions are related to funding, COVID-19, safety and technology. [Electronic Item 6](#) contains correspondence

to the Committee. The request can be found at <https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/86R/schedules/pdf/C4702020081700001.pdf>.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety Pavement and Bridge Condition
 Transit Asset System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

1:55 – 2:05

7. **Optimized Freight Movement Project**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Thomas Bamonte, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council approval of a project to improve goods movement from freight hubs in the region to nearby expressways using connected vehicle and related technologies to optimize truck traffic through intersections will be requested.

Background: The Optimized Freight Movement project will use connected vehicle and related technologies to optimize the flow of trucks between freight hubs and expressways in the region. The freight industry has identified this initiative as a top priority. The Value of Time for goods movement approaches \$75 per hour. There are safety, operational, and environmental benefits from reducing the number of truck stops/starts at intersections. The project will focus on intersections with high volumes and proportions of freight traffic. It will use the optimal mix of technologies and data sharing to reduce the number of stops trucks make at signalized intersections. Deployment locations will be selected based on an assessment of potential benefits and costs and after consultation with the responsible local jurisdictions and freight companies. The project will include continual performance monitoring and adjustment to deliver the maximum net benefits. The project budget is \$5 million. [Electronic Item 7](#) contains additional details about the project and action requested.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety Pavement and Bridge Condition
 Transit Asset System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:05 – 2:15

8. **Regional Cotton Belt Veloweb Trail: Action Plan**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Karla Weaver, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request approval regarding funding for the Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail in partnership with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Silver Line rail project from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport in Grapevine to Shiloh Station in Plano.

Background: The DART Silver Line rail project is coordinating a parallel regionally significant Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail corridor that will connect seven cities across three counties. Accommodations for the approximate 26-mile regional trail

have been included as part of DART's planning for the commuter rail corridor. Additional funding is needed for the engineering of the trail. A two-contractor approach will be recommended for construction, partnering with DART for only one of the trail bridges in the corridor to be constructed with the current rail contractor. A second expedited phase to be implemented within six to nine months with a second contractor to be procured that can construct various crossings and location before the trains are operative. Funds will also be requested to provide safety walls near two schools along the corridor.

Staff will provide an overview of funding recommendations to implement various sections of this priority regional trail corridor. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 8](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety
- Pavement and Bridge Condition
- Transit Asset
- System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:15 – 2:25

9. **Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects Project Selection**

- Action
- Possible Action
- Information
- Minutes: 10

Presenter: Kevin Kokes, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide information regarding the Transportation Alternatives Program applications received and evaluation process. A recommendation of projects to select for funding will also be provided and action requested.

Background: The North Central Texas Council of Governments opened the Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects on March 2, 2020, and applications were due on May 15, 2020. Projects eligible for funding included active transportation and Safe Routes to School projects that will substantially improve safety and provide opportunities to walk and bicycle. Project scoring was based on project eligibility and a methodology for project evaluation as previously approved by the Regional Transportation Council. [Electronic Item 9.1](#) provides additional information on project scoring. [Electronic Item 9.2](#) reflects project recommendations.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety
- Pavement and Bridge Condition
- Transit Asset
- System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

2:25 – 2:35

10. **Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery**

- Action
- Possible Action
- Information
- Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on performance metrics to help understand the impacts of COVID-19 to the transportation system. This program continues to receive national recognition.

Background: Four performance metrics have been developed that will be tracked through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery process: 1) travel behavior response to COVID-19, 2) financial implications to traditional revenue sources, 3) benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility, and 4) prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases. Supporting Metric 4, the next round of public meetings for high-speed transportation between Dallas and Fort Worth is scheduled for September 23 and 24. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 10](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:

- Safety Pavement and Bridge Condition
 Transit Asset System Performance/Freight/CMAQ

11. **Progress Reports**

- Action Possible Action Information

Item Summary: Progress Reports are provided in the items below.

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 11.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 11.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 11.3](#))

12. **Other Business (Old or New):** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.

13. **Future Agenda Items:** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of future interest before the Council.

14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for **1:00 pm, Thursday, October 8, 2020**.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
August 13, 2020

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration which was renewed through September 7, 2020, and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the August 13, 2020, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council was conducted as a videoconference via Zoom. Staff conducted a roll call of members and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the videoconference: Tennell Atkins, Richard E. Aubin, Ceason Clemens (representing Mohamed Bur), Loyl Bussell, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Pat Deen, Rudy Durham, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, John Keating, Mike Leyman, Bobby Stovall (representing David Magness), Curtistene McCowan, B. Adam McGough, Cara Mendelsohn, Robert Miklos, Cary Moon, Barbara Odom-Wesley, Philip J. Ritter, John Ryan, Chris Schulmeister, Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Dennis Webb, Duncan Webb, B. Glen Whitley, W. Jeff Williams, and Ann Zadeh.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to give input on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Roger Harmon asked if there were any public comments. Dane Cofer commented he believed Dallas Area Rapid Transit is in violation of Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452 Sections 303 and 304 for the implementation of the Cotton Belt and that the Texas Department of Transportation indicated the RTC has jurisdiction for the non-safety portion of this chapter.
2. **Approval of the July 9, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the July 9, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. B. Glen Whitley (M); Theresa Daniel (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 3.1. **National Highway System Review:** Regional Transportation Council approval of the revised National Highway System (NHS) for roadways was requested. A detailed listing of the proposed modifications to the NHS was provided in Electronic Item 3.1.
 - 3.2. **Endorsement of State of Good Repair Grant Application Submitted on behalf of Trinity Railway Express, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and Trinity Metro:** Endorsement of the grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for the Federal-State Partnership for the State of Good Repair Program, submitted on behalf of the Trinity Railway Express, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and Trinity Metro was requested. Information about the proposed grant application project was provided in Electronic Item 3.2.
 - 3.3. **Approval of Application for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative Grant Program: S.M. Wright:** Regional Transportation Council approval to support and provide funding for the City of Dallas application for the 2020 Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative Grant Program was requested. Details of the proposed project were provided in Electronic Item 3.3.

A motion was made to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Theresa Daniel (M); Curtistene McCowan (S). The motion passed unanimously.

This following item was removed from the Consent Agenda by staff.

- 3.4. Approval of Application for Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative Grant Program: Goods Movement: Action was not requested because the Texas Department of Transportation decided to no longer pursue the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative Grant application submittal. Staff will bring back intermodal facility elements of this item for approval outside of the grant opportunity at the September 10, 2020, RTC meeting.
4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris reviewed items on the Director of Transportation Report. He discussed recent presentations on the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) COVID-19 #00X Program. In addition, he noted that the RTC will continue to meet remotely under current conditions and explore future options. He also noted that Loyl Bussell, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Fort Worth District Engineer was retiring and thanked him for his dedication to the region. Several members expressed their appreciation to Loyl Bussell for his work as the TxDOT District Engineer, as well as all the positions he held during his tenure. Mr. Morris reminded members that comments are continuing for the 2021 Unified Transportation Program. In addition, the Denton County Transportation Authority has decided to withdraw its request for assistance on a transit survey and will work with the North Texas Commission and others on surveys that are already being conducted. He discussed the \$300,000 in RTC Local funds requested as interim funding for air quality initiatives during the transition between multiyear agreements with the Texas Department of Transportation. Agreements have been signed and staff anticipates the total needed is closer to \$100,000. The submittal deadline for the 2020 TxDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program Call for Projects is October 1, 2020. Details were provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/safety/transportation-safety/statewide-safety-initiatives>. Information about upcoming Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events was provided at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings> and about current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>. A status report on the current ozone was provided in Electronic Item 4.1. Details about the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to retain the existing National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone was available at <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/ozone-pollution-continues-decline-under-president-trump-epa-proposes-retain-existing>. Electronic Item 4.2 contained an update on Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding and Electronic Item 4.3 contained the August online input opportunity notice. The Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.4, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.5, recent news articles in Electronic Item 4.6, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.7.
5. **COVID-19 Infrastructure Program Funding (COVID-19 #00X Program):** Christie Gotti presented project recommendations for the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program. As a result of the economic setbacks experienced due to the COVID-19 outbreak, there is an urgency to implement projects that help stimulate the economy like infrastructure investments made in 2009 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff recommends funding projects that would benefit from expedited action in partnership with local agencies and that are in line with existing Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policies outlined in Mobility 2045. Projects proposed in this round of investments target better school integration, improved freight connections, implementation of new regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities, improved air quality, and improved safety. The first two proposed projects are part of a larger partnership with Aledo Independent School District (ISD) to avoid locating

schools on major roadways. The first project includes a stub-out road from FM 5 to the new elementary school scheduled to open in August 2021. Staff proposed the right-of-way be donated by Aledo ISD, \$1 million in Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds for construction, and \$1.5 million from Aledo ISD (including \$500,000 match to the RTR funds) for construction. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has already funded a \$4.7 million roadway improvement along FM 5 to help improve connections in the area. As part of this effort staff proposed to use RTR funds, of which there are minimal amounts available in the western subregion, through an RTR/federal funding swap with Denton County that will be discussed later in the presentation. The RTC policy addressed through this project is better school integration. The second Aledo ISD project is improvements at the site of a new middle school. The project scope is realignment of Old Weatherford Road from FM 3325 to east of Coder Drive, including turn lanes at intersections and a pedestrian side path. Morning Star Development, the developer of a project to the north, has committed to paying for certain aspects of the roadway and has committed \$2 million for design. Staff proposed to use \$500,000 in RTR funds for right-of-way acquisition and an additional \$10 million in RTR funds for construction. The developer will pay an additional \$2.4 million in approximately four years, after construction is completed, which partially repays the RTC's commitment. RTR funds are proposed from the Regional West Set-Aside account and the RTC policy addressed is better school integration. The third proposed project is a series of intersection and bicycle/pedestrian improvements proposed near the Tarrant County courthouse. Staff proposed to fund the intersection improvements and a small realignment of Main Street at this time and to consider the bicycle/pedestrian component contingent on private-sector commitments being realized for a park in the area. The project improvements are on Main Street (Business 287) from Trinity River to Weatherford Street. These improvements include traffic calming and curb extensions to reduce traffic lanes and adjusting the turning radius of Main Street, as well as the elimination of the bail-out lane. Downtown Fort Worth Inc. has secured a commitment of \$775,000 to pay for the design. Tarrant County has committed \$1 million for construction. Staff proposed a \$660,000 State match for the on-system portions of the project, \$4 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds, and \$2.64 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds. RTC policies addressed include air quality, bicycle/pedestrian implementation, safety, and ADA compliance. The next proposed project is a pedestrian crossing at IH 35E from the Dallas Design District to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Victory Station. The State has agreed to pay for the design, which is currently estimated at \$350,000. Staff proposed \$2.8 million in Dallas County RTR funds for construction. The \$400,000 local match, plus additional funds for amenities will be paid by the private sector and TIF district funds for items such as lighting, crosswalks, a traffic signal, and landscaping. RTC policy positions addressed included bicycle/pedestrian, air quality, and safety. Also in the Dallas area is the Bachman Lake Area Planning Study project. The planning study will identify safe pedestrian access/facilities along major roadways to create connections to nearby trails, the DART Bachman Station, and Love Field Access. The area of review is bounded by Mockingbird to the south, IH 35E to the west, Inwood Road to the east and Royal Lane to the north. Staff proposed \$800,000 STBG funds and \$200,000 RTC Local funds for the project. RTC Local funds will be used as the local match to begin project implementation until federal funds become available. If the RTC Local is mostly expended before access is gained to the federal funds, Transportation Development Credits are proposed for the match instead. This policy addresses RTC policies for bicycle/pedestrian, safety, and air quality. The next proposed project is a freight project along FM 429 in Terrell. Union Pacific is proposing to construct siding track in the area, which creates the need for better roadway integration. Currently, there is an offset intersection of US 80 and FM 429. Staff proposed realignment of the offset intersection and an appropriate, safe at-grade crossing. The project is estimated at approximately \$10 million and staff proposed \$8 million STBG funds and a \$2 million State match. RTC policies addressed include freight and safety. Ms. Gotti discussed the proposed federal/RTR funding swap. As part of the

ARRA program in 2009, RTR funds were traded from the west to the east leaving the western subregion has limited RTR funds. Unfortunately, some of the implementation timelines for the proposed projects are sooner than federal funds may be available, so staff has worked with Denton County to identify unexpended RTR funds on IH 35E. Staff proposed to swap \$30 million in RTR funds from Denton County with \$30 million in STBG funds to cover the projects in this partnership program in the western subregion and leave a balance for future non-federal needs in the west. STBG funds will be used on a currently unfunded project in Denton County. If the Denton County project were to need additional funding, the balance would be paid with Category 2 funds to fully fund the selected project. Staff also proposed that the Denton County project is not identified until after the Texas Transportation Commission selects projects through its Unified Transportation Program action this summer. Glen Whitley noted the \$30 million RTR funding and that he would like to do everything possible to help the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) get the SH 360/SH 161 Connector to implementation. Completion of the connector will help with potential future extension of SH 360 to Hillsboro, taking pressure of IH 35E and IH 35W. RTC Chair Roger Harmon and Mike Leyman indicated they were both supportive of the extension of SH 360 south. Ms. Gotti noted the SH 360/SH 161 Connector is discussed frequently with TxDOT and NTTA, but added she was not sure non-federal RTR funds would be the appropriate funding for a project that may ultimately be considered on system. However, the funding swap will leave a balance of funding available for future projects the RTC decides to fund. Michael Morris noted that staff will reengage the North Texas Tollway Authority to discuss potential options for the SH 360/SH 161 Connector project. He added that NTTA is a willing partner but must monitor its cash flow especially due to the current COVID-19 environment. In addition, Hill County is outside the region. A letter requesting the Texas Transportation Commission to partner with the RTC to explore an extension of SH 360 of the current terminus will be necessary. Cara Mendelsohn noted that an increasing number of homeless encampments are being seen in Dallas. The IH 35E project in Dallas is on TxDOT land and there have been ongoing discussions regarding the lack of enforcement and resolution of the encampments. She asked what environmental design considerations and elements have been incorporated and if there are any specifications on responsibilities for homeless encampments. Mr. Morris noted the delegation of responsibility for TxDOT right-of-way is on a corridor by corridor basis. To a large extent, TxDOT is willing to delegate that responsibility to the city as part of the agreement and it is a frequent topic of discussion between cities and TxDOT. In some communities within the region TxDOT has retained the supervision of their right-of-way, in others the cities have requested the responsibility be delegated to them. When roadways are being designed, considerations for items such as homeless encampments are incorporated into the design. He added he would share the history of this subject in the City of Dallas with Ms. Mendelsohn by email. Dianne Costa asked when the Texas Transportation Commission is expected to act on the projects in the 2021 Unified Transportation Program. Ms. Gotti noted that action is anticipated at the August 27, 2020, Commission meeting and that staff will present an update to the RTC on the Regional 10-Year Plan based on the Commission action. A motion was made to approve the funded projects outlined in Electronic Item 5.1 and Electronic Item 5.2, including the exchange of \$30 million Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funding for \$30 million Regional Toll Revenue funding with Denton County. Action also included approval for staff administratively amending the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed. Ann Zadeh (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **High-Speed Rail and Hyperloop Update:** Michael Morris provided an update on progress by Texas Central Railway on high-speed rail from Dallas to Houston. The Surface Transportation Board has ruled Texas Central Railway is a railroad and federal approval of the environmental document is anticipated soon. Staff will continue to monitor the project and watch for financial

closure of Texas Central in advance of the upcoming Texas legislative session. In addition, the Tier II high-speed rail environmental study is underway between Dallas, Arlington, and Fort Worth. The next year will be focused on potential technologies including hyperloop, magnetic levitation, and traditional high-speed rail. Regarding the Hyperloop Certification Center, the region will not be included in the Phase 3 competitive selection process. Correspondence from Virgin Hyperloop was provided in Electronic Item 6.1. Neither Virgin Hyperloop nor the North Central Texas Council of Governments was able to get State support for the project, which was an important component for the Phase 3 selection. The correspondence reiterated Virgin Hyperloop's interest in its technology being used in the Fort Worth to Laredo high-speed transportation project. Electronic Item 6.2 contained RTC correspondence requesting a presentation by the six impacted Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the Fort Worth to Laredo corridors to the Texas Transportation Commission. Staff will continue to monitor progress regarding high-speed transportation in the region and throughout the State and provide updates to members.

7. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle and Transportation Development Credits:** Kevin Feldt presented results from the fourth round of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle survey, including the plan to distribute available Transportation Development Credits (TDCs). The MTP Policy Bundle is a list of voluntary policies from Mobility 2045. Entities adopting a minimum of 50 percent of the policies may receive TDCs to offset local funds for federal transportation projects. Projects must not currently be in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and entities must reapply every round. The process to submit applications through the MTP Policy Bundle was highlighted. Examples policies include employee trip reduction, parking management, safe access to schools, land use strategies, idling restrictions, and others. In Round 4, applicants include 19 local governments and 2 transit authorities. Details of the successful applicants, including the proposed TDCs recommended for each, were provided in Electronic Item 7. The policy bundle TDC awards re intended to supplement local funding for federal projects. Through the fourth round of the MTP Policy Bundle, approximately 33 million TDCs are recommended for award to the qualifying agencies. The schedule for this effort was reviewed, with Regional Transportation Council action requested at the September 10, 2020, meeting. Successful applicants are expected to receive formal notification in the September/October timeframe.
8. **Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery:** Michael Morris provided an update on metrics to help understand the impacts of COVID-19 to the transportation system. Four policy metrics were highlighted: 1) travel behavior response to COVID-19, 2) financial implications to traditional revenue sources, 3) benefits of travel responses to areas of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) responsibility and how we preserve those, and 4) prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases and utilize lower costs. Related to travel behavior response, freeway volumes have rebounded, and activity is nearly back to February 2020 levels as of June. Some of the return is due to the increase of traditional workers and some to the substitution of automobile travel for air travel. Average freeway speeds were also highlighted through June, as well as crash and fatality trends. Transit ridership is slowly improving but remains at an over 50 percent decrease in comparison to June 2019. Bicycle/pedestrian activity remains 22 percent higher than pre COVID-19, but activity is decreasing. Like transit ridership, airport passenger trends remain significantly decreased compared to May 2019. Data related to financial implications, the second metric, was highlighted. Reductions in vehicles sales tax, motor vehicles sales and use, and motor fuel tax were discussed as well as the impacts to Proposition 7 and Proposition 1. Toll transactions remain 41 percent lower as of May, and the North Texas Tollway Authority will continue to monitor revenue as it plans for future projects. Impacts to IH 35E TEXpress Lane transactions were also highlighted and improvements are expected for the

June/July timeframe. Policy metric three is the benefits of travel behavior responses. Staff continues to determine appropriate efforts to take advantage of behaviors that have had positive impacts in the region, especially as it relates to air quality. The region has experienced a significantly lower frequency of high, unhealthy ozone level days. Ozone exceedances early during the season despite the significant decrease in emissions from the drop in travel are being reviewed and will be a topic for discussion regarding the influence of emissions from outside the region. Also discussed were efforts by American Airlines to adjust its system, making Dallas Fort Worth International Airport now the busiest airport in the world despite decreased travel. Mr. Morris also recognized transportation authorities for their efforts to provide essential supplies and meals to those in need during the COVID-19 crisis. The final metric is how the RTC can use innovation to advance projects and create needed employment opportunities. Every \$1 billion in transportation investment produces approximately 12,000-15,000 jobs and for a long-term unemployment event, with near-term and long-term transportation investment providing the most benefit. Recent examples include IH 635 East, the Irving interchanges, IH 30 Downton, and IH 35E north of LBJ producing not only jobs in the construction sector as well as general economy sector. Other efforts include high-speed rail and autonomous transit. He also discussed a potential pilot project for the introduction of freeway induction loops in the pavement to recharge electric cars that will be presented in the future. Other projects include SH 183, the IH 820/IH 20 Y Connector, as well as additional projects included in the COVID-19 #00X Program. Members were encouraged to use slides from the meeting in their entities' presentations. Curtistene McCowan noted it was her vision to see connectivity in the Best Southwest area of Dallas County and other parts of the region where this is currently little or no public transportation is important. She also highlighted work the RTC has done as part of moving the Dallas County Inland Port Transportation Management Association forward. Mr. Morris noted the RTC has funded consultant assistance for three transit studies within the region. He discussed equity issues related to those entities currently paying/not paying into transit and the institutional structure to fund transit equitably. He reminded members that institutional questions of how to implement a level playing field, create incentives for those that are paying into transit to have access to more revenue, and create an opportunity to those who would like to participate in transit through a local government corporation will be brought back to the RTC in October. In addition, the RTC Chair will be asked his interest to hold a legislative workshop in the September-October timeframe. How to advance transit in a COVID-19 environment or the desire to wait until the following legislative session will be discussed. He noted the other important point was the intermodal hub in Dallas. Even though the Texas Department of Transportation is not pursuing the grant, staff is reviewing all the intermodal hubs in the region to focus on the higher-value items related to goods movement capabilities. Theresa Daniel discussed equity and the importance of evaluating current experience and using some of that information to achieve equity and build on current strengths. Mr. Morris noted the focus on goods movement is much more important for the region than other areas because of the lack of access to a seaport. The direction is to look at efforts such as the TMA, partnership with the private sector in Plano, access to schools in Aledo, and others to determine what tool is needed for the specific elements of various projects.

9. **Federal Highway Administration Measure Target Reaffirmation or Revisions:** Chris Klaus provided an update on the latest activities related to regional transportation targets for federally required performance measures. He discussed the longstanding history of performance measurement within the region that includes the federal requirement for inclusion in the long-range metropolitan transportation planning process, as well as regional efforts to document performance through items such as the annual state of the region report, Progress North Texas. Federal performance measures documented by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) include Safety (PM1), Transit Asset Management (TAM), Transit Safety (PTASP), Pavement and Bridge (PM2), and System Performance (PM3). He noted the focus of this presentation was on

PM3, System Performance, Freight, and Congestion Management Air Quality which contains a series of seven measures related to various aspects of the transportation system: reliability, congestion, mode choice, and emissions. Rulemakings establish a series of four-year performance periods, the first of which began in 2018. On November 8, 2018, the RTC adopted 2020 and 2022 regional targets. Rulemakings also establish the targets can be revisited in the mid-performance period allowing staff to review the 2022 targets previously approved by the RTC. The MPO can choose to reaffirm the existing targets or adopt new ones updated PM3 targets are due to FHWA on October 1, 2020. Details for the desired trend, original targets established in 2018, the updated forecast/trend, and 2020 target recommendation for each of the seven measures related to PM3 were provided in Electronic Item 9. Mr Klaus provided an overview of the 2020 targets staff recommends be revised through this process. Regarding total emission reductions for nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, the increase of reductions is the desired trend. Due to the implementation of projects in 2018 and 2019, funded projects have resulted in greater emissions reductions and 2020 and 2022 trends are significantly increased over original targets. Staff proposed that 2022 targets for nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds be revised to reflect the increase in emission reductions identified in the latest forecast/trends. Another measure proposed for revision is truck travel time reliability. This measure represents the reliability of travel for freight movement in the transportation system. Decreasing trends indicate better reliability and more predictable travel times. In 2018, staff originally estimated a target of 1.71. According to new methodologies and data sources, truck travel time reliability seems to be worsening and staff proposed that the 2022 target be revised to 1.90 and an aspirational goal that it does not worsen from the 2020 forecast of 1.83. Staff will be actively addressing freight reliability with programs, policies, and projects to support freight movement and are continuing to support alternative transportation options. In addition, staff will continue to assess COVID-19 impacts on the performance measures and address performance as part of the planning process through the Congestion Management Process update, upcoming mobility plans, the Unified Transportation Program/Regional 10-Year Plan, and TIP. Mr. Klaus noted the RTC would be asked to adopt the proposed adjustments to 2022 regional targets at its September 10, 2020, meeting and updates on the additional federal performance measures would be brought back in the future.

10. **Regional Trails Videos (Postponed from the March 12, 2020, Meeting):** Karla Weaver highlighted a series of videos featuring various regionally significant shared-use trails within the Dallas-Fort Worth region. The Trail of the Month video series is an outreach initiative to make the public aware of the over 700 miles of trails throughout Dallas-Fort Worth and future-planned trails. The video series also highlights current and future investments by the cities and the Regional Transportation Council, as well as the importance of the trails from a transportation perspective, regional connectivity, access to schools and employment centers, community enhancements, and the history of the trails. Local government leaders and staff, trail users, and Friends of the Trail groups were interviewed in the videos to discuss the impact to the community and neighborhood. A top ten set of trail videos were scheduled covering trails in Collin, Tarrant, Denton, and Dallas Counties. Two videos have been delayed and staff hopes to highlight those in the future. Trail of the Month videos are available at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/plan/bikeped/bikeweb>. Members were encouraged to share the video links in their newsletters, websites, and other outreach initiatives as well as other resources available to entities. As part of this process, staff hopes to identify where more facilities are needed which will help to build out facilities included in the long-range transportation plan.
11. **Clear Path™ Technology Program:** Jeff Hathcock presented information on the Clear Path™ technology that will enhance freight and passenger rail coordination. As outlined in Mobility 2045, passenger rail service is anticipated to increase with the planned implementation of new and

expanded service on existing freight corridors throughout the region. Multiple mobility solutions are needed as the region continues to grow in order to move both people and goods into and through the Dallas-Fort Worth area. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff has a history of collaboration and coordination with regional transportation authorities and Class 1 railroads regarding grade crossings, separations and closings, major track projects, project coordination, rail studies, technology solutions, and grant submittals. Clear Path™ technology is a technology solution that monitors and forecasts train traffic conditions, similar to air traffic control systems. The technology provides a data sharing system that allows freight and transit rail providers to access information in a secure environment and enable the exchange of timely, accurate, and actionable information on train movements. This technology is in use in the Greater Chicago Area. Clear Path™ technology current and future considerations for the region will be important for the coordination of freight and passenger train interactions and with the planned growth of both freight and passenger rail. Clear Path would also assist in the management of bottlenecks and identify future projects that would help the rail agencies further maximize their networks and with long-term mobility plan projects. NCTCOG staff will continue to coordinate with senior leadership of the three transportation authorities and all rail agencies operating within the region to establish guidelines and parameters for implementing Clear Path™. Future updates will be provided to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and Regional Transportation in the October/November timeframe. Mike Leyman noted he is interested in the passenger line going from Fort Worth to Midlothian and that he believes the rail line from Midlothian to Downtown Dallas would be of great interest for workers in the southern part of the region. He asked if there is a timeframe for the project and noted he has met with counterparts in Midlothian and Grand Prairie who are also interested. Mr. Hathcock noted there are multiple lines that are in varying stages of development for passenger rail implementation, and he could provide more information to Mr. Leyman following the meeting. Michael Morris noted that the institutional and funding structure of delivering this regional rail system will be a topic of discussion for the upcoming legislative session. RTC Chair Roger Harmon asked about the short rail line from the center of Fort Worth extending southwest. Mr. Morris noted that the rail line was the TEXRail extension and that this will also be a future topic of discussion. Staff has engaged the Fort Worth and Western Railroad on the path forward.

12. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 12.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 12.2, and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 12.3.
13. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
15. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, September 10, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Policy Bundle Funding Recommendations						
Entity	Policies Adopted				Recommended 2020 TDCs	
	2017	2018	2019	2020		
Cities: Eligibility Requires Adoption of 10 Policies						
City of Arlington	12	13	--	16	1,875,000	
City of Coppell	--	11	11	--	-	
City of Corinth*	--	--	--	13	1,125,000	
City of Dallas	15	17	17	19	3,000,000	
City of Denton	--	--	15	16	1,125,000	
City of Duncanville	8 ^x	12	--	15	1,125,000	
City of Farmers Branch	--	12	--	11	1,125,000	
City of Fort Worth	14	16	17	17	3,000,000	
City of Frisco*	--	--	--	14	1,125,000	
City of Garland	--	14	16	15	1,875,000	
City of Grand Prairie*	--	--	--	10	1,125,000	
City of Grapevine	12	16	16	17	1,125,000	
City of Irving	--	--	12	15	1,875,000	
City of Lewisville	10	13	15	15	1,125,000	
City of McKinney	15	16	16	14	1,125,000	
City of Mesquite	11	13	15	13	1,125,000	
City of North Richland Hills	8 ^x	--	12	15	1,125,000	
City of Plano	13	16	--	17	1,875,000	
City of Richardson	12	13	14	13	1,125,000	
City of Terrell*	--	--	--	13	1,125,000	
Transit: Eligibility Requires Adoption of 5 Policies						
DCTA	8	10	11	10	1,875,000	
Trinity Metro	5	9	9	9	3,000,000	
Total					33,000,000	

Legend

- Did not apply
- x Applied, but did not meet requirements
- * New applicant for 2020

DRAFT

The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 10, 2020

Mr. R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington DC 20310-0108

Dear Mr. James:

The purpose of this letter is to underscore the partnership between the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the purpose of advancing previously understood responsibilities about a project in Fort Worth, Texas.

The specific partnership was developed for the 2008 Modified Central City Project. Specifically, the USACE would implement the "Bypass Channel" in exchange for the RTC or Texas Department of Transportation providing funding for three arterial street bridges. The RTC is funding the project. The original RTC commitment was \$70 million and an additional \$20 million has recently been approved. The RTC's funding and the design work were expedited in order to meet the schedule set by USACE based on the design work ongoing for the "Bypass Channel," which showed a spirit of partnership. The RTC is proud of its commitment history and respectfully requests the USACE to continue moving forward on design and implementation of the "Bypass Channel."

Background

In March 2008, a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was finalized. The Record of Decision determined that the Fort Worth Bypass Channel (i.e., Modified Central City Project) was environmentally acceptable and was approved in May 2008 by the Army of Civil Works. In 2016, Congress passed the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the National Act fully authorizing this project for \$526.5 million in federal funds.

Project is Underway: Completion is Necessary

USACE has excavated 2.7 million cubic yards creating the offset requirements for additional flood protection. The Bypass Channel is at the 50 percent design level and the RTC has funded \$90 million for the construction of three arterial street bridges permitting the construction of the Bypass Channel. The bridges are all nearing completion.

DRAFT

Mr. R.D. James
Page Two

September 10, 2020

Parallel Work

In addition to this project, the Regional Transportation Council has teamed up with the USACE and fund a USACE position to guide the region on 404 and 408 permits. Please see the most recent letter (attached). In addition, at the USACE request, we are working together on reducing flooding potential upstream from downtown Fort Worth and Dallas. Our focus is on future transportation projects. We have a good partnership with the USACE.

Specific Request

Please advance funding for the completion of design and expedite remaining construction of the "Modified Central City Project" as soon as possible.

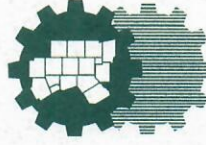
Michael Morris, P.E., NCTCOG's Transportation Director, would be happy to meet with any staff members, military officers, Administration officials, or Congressional representatives, to see the project finished. Michael Morris can be reached at (817) 695-9241, or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
Johnson County Judge

MM:aw
Attachment

cc: Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson
Congresswoman Kay Granger
Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

August 28, 2020

Mr. Barry G. Osborn
Regulatory Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers Fort Worth District
CESWF-PER-R
P.O. Box 17300
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Mr. Osborn:

On October 16, 2008, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) related to Section 214 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 to expedite the evaluation of permits under the jurisdiction of the USACE. Article IV, Section A, Item 7 of the MOA requires that within 15 days of the conclusion of the fiscal year, NCTCOG will provide a letter to USACE's principal representative detailing the level of satisfaction with the district's performance under the MOA. This letter is intended to fulfill that requirement.

NCTCOG is very pleased with USACE Fort Worth District staff under this agreement. The USACE Fort Worth District has been professional, cooperative, and offered flexibility in working with NCTCOG staff and other regional transportation partners, while maintaining its high standards of environmental review and impartiality. USACE has provided reliable and timely information when requested and has outstanding customer service. USACE staff is knowledgeable and always willing to assist with questions and concerns from NCTCOG staff or other regional transportation partners.

The focused and enhanced coordination made possible by this agreement has led to the withdrawal of unnecessary permits, swifter completion of projects, and better targeted mitigation requirements. This has resulted in conservation of both natural and monetary resources, and overall enhanced environmental stewardship for transportation projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Additional funding was approved and signed by NCTCOG and TxDOT in July 2019. An extension was approved and signed by NCTCOG and the USACE in November 2019 and will further extend the program to September 2022.

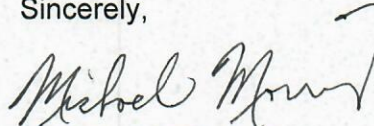
Mr. Barry G. Osborn
Page Two

August 28, 2020

NCTCOG appreciates USACE assistance in making this agreement a success and looks forward to continuing innovative partnerships and projects to expedite needed transportation projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

If you have any questions, please contact Nathan Drozd at (817) 704-5635 or ndrozd@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Morris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

NKD:lk

cc: Mr. Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Ms. Edith Marvin, P.E., Director of Environment and Development, NCTCOG
Ms. Melany Dennis, Grants and Contracts Supervisor, NCTCOG

**PUBLIC COMMENT
AUGUST 13, 2020
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL MEETING**

COMMENTER:

Dane Cofer

COMMENT:

DART is in violation of Texas Transportation Code Chapter 452 sections 303 and 304, and TxDOT indicated that the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has jurisdiction for the non-safety portion of this chapter.

Section 452.303 specifies public notification requirements for major service plan changes. Section 452.304 specifies public entity notification requirements of major service plan changes.

STAFF REVIEW:

Transportation Director Michael Morris interviewed TxDOT staff personnel that “met” with Mr. Cofer. TxDOT indicated they have no record of meeting with him. Mr. Cofer contacted the media who then contacted TxDOT. TxDOT, in error, claimed that the RTC has responsibility in Section 452.303. That authority is related to the responsibility of the transportation authority, not the metropolitan planning organization (MPO). TxDOT staff corrected themselves and informed the media representative some time ago. We have no knowledge of the media representative passing on to Mr. Cofer that responsibility resides with DART and not the RTC. The RTC has no responsibility in these Sections. In addition, Michael Morris spoke directly with Gary Thomas and Mr. Cofer’s views are known to DART and specifically involve details related to the Cotton Belt Corridor and Public Comments.

CONCLUSION:

Even though Mr. Cofer’s remarks were not germane to the agenda on August 13, ordinarily staff would attempt to assist a citizen and remedies, but because we have no legal responsibility and those conversations at DART have already been elevated, it is best to let Mr. Cofer continue to engage with DART involving specific questions.

Overview of Actions Affecting Eastern/Western Funding Shares (\$ in Millions)

Date	Projects/Programs	Relevant Actions		Cumulative Total	
		West	East	West	East
Mar-13	Final SAFETEA-LU East-West Equity Total	\$649.76	\$1,558.48	\$649.76	\$1,558.48
Jan-16	Final MAP-21 East-West Equity Total	\$320.98	\$847.62	\$970.74	\$2,406.10
Dec-16	FY 2017-2026 Regional 10-Year Planning Effort - Category 2 Funds (Transfer from the East to the West)	\$100.00	(\$100.00)	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.10
Oct-17	Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding for a project in Hunt County (City of Quinlan) awarded through the Statewide TA Set-Aside Call for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in October 2017 (Minute Order #115076)	\$0.00	\$0.30	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.40
Dec-17	Category 12 funding for various overpass reconstruction projects along the IH 30 corridor in Hunt County as approved in the December 2017 update to Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$102.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,408.40
Sep-18	Category 12 funding for the construction of an interchange at IH 45 and FM 664 in Ellis County as approved in the 2019 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$34.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,442.40
Dec-18	Transfer of Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds from the East to the West as approved by the RTC in December 2018 through the CMAQ/STBG: Strategic Partnerships Round 3/Intersection Improvements/MTP Policy Bundle TDC Program	\$5.80	(\$5.80)	\$1,076.54	\$2,436.60
Aug-19	Category 12 Clear Lanes funding for various projects in the region was awarded 69% East/31% West instead of being split 68% East/32% West, which gave the East a small amount of additional revenue compared to the West	\$0.00	\$33.59	\$1,076.54	\$2,470.19
Aug-19	Category 12 Strategic Priority funding for various projects in the East (IH 30 in Dallas County, IH 35 in Denton County, and IH 30 in Hunt County) and in the West (Southeast Connector in Tarrant County and SH 170 in Denton/Tarrant Counties) as approved in the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$208.33	\$1,018.85	\$1,284.87	\$3,489.04
Jan-20	Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funding for projects in Dallas County (City of Balch Springs) and Parker County (City of Hudson Oaks) awarded through the Statewide Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and TA Set-Aside Calls for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in January 2020 (Minute Order #115662)	\$2.13	\$0.96	\$1,287.00	\$3,490.00
Updated FAST Act Equity Percentage Share as of June 2020				26.94%	73.06%

Cumulative East-West Equity Share	Cumulative Total	
	West	East
Cumulative Total	\$1,287.00	\$3,490.00
Cumulative Percentage Shares	26.94%	73.06%
RTC Approved Target Shares	32%	68%

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding From the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program (TxVEMP)

In follow up to the July presentation about the Volkswagen Settlement, NCTCOG staff is providing new information about **funding for purchase and installation of Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations** from the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program (TxVEMP).

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) hosted informational webinars covering program requirements and the application process on August 11 and 12, and funding will be released soon.

NCTCOG expects that the webinar presentations will be posted on the grant program website soon after the events, and should be available by going to www.texasvwfund.org, then clicking on the “Grants” tab, then choosing the “Learn More” button in the box for this particular funding effort.

Key program details:

Eligible applicants: individuals, corporations, organizations, governments or governmental subdivisions or agencies, business trusts, partnerships, associations, or other legal entities, in the State of Texas.

Eligible Activities: purchase and installation of new light-duty electric vehicle Level 2 charging equipment installed:

- in a public place, workplace, or multi-unit dwelling (i.e. not located at a private residential dwelling that is not a multi-unit dwelling in Texas); and
- at a site without existing light-duty electric charging services or to expand the number of vehicles that may be serviced at an existing site.

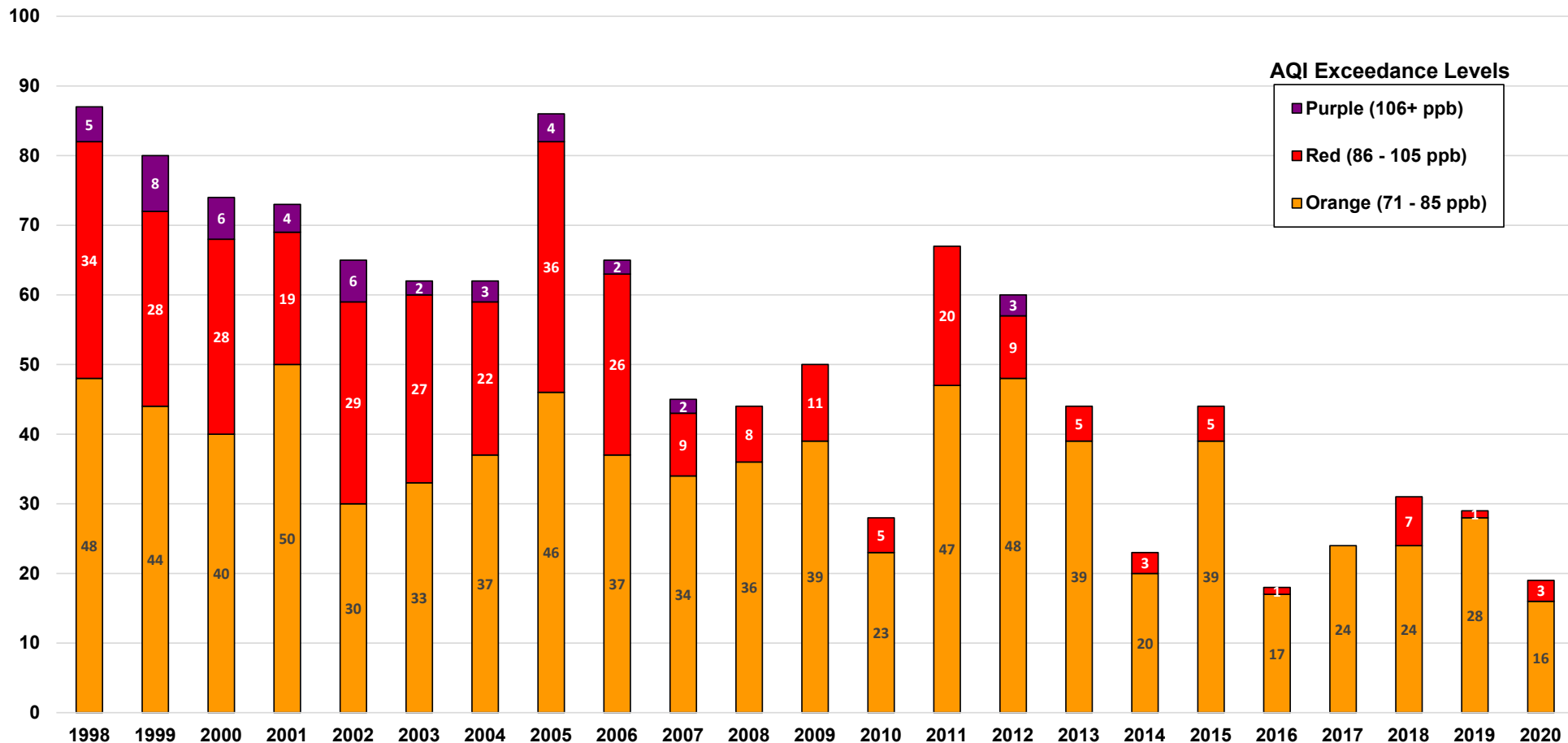
Funding Availability: \$10.4 million will be available for reimbursements of up to \$2,500 per installation. Grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and may not exceed the following percentages of eligible costs:

- electric chargers available to the public: 70%
- electric chargers available at a workplace or multi-unit dwelling: 60%

For more information: Contact TxVEMP staff at (833) 215-TXVW (8989); at VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov; or visit www.TexasVWFund.org.

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

Based on ≤ 70 ppb (As of September 1, 2020)

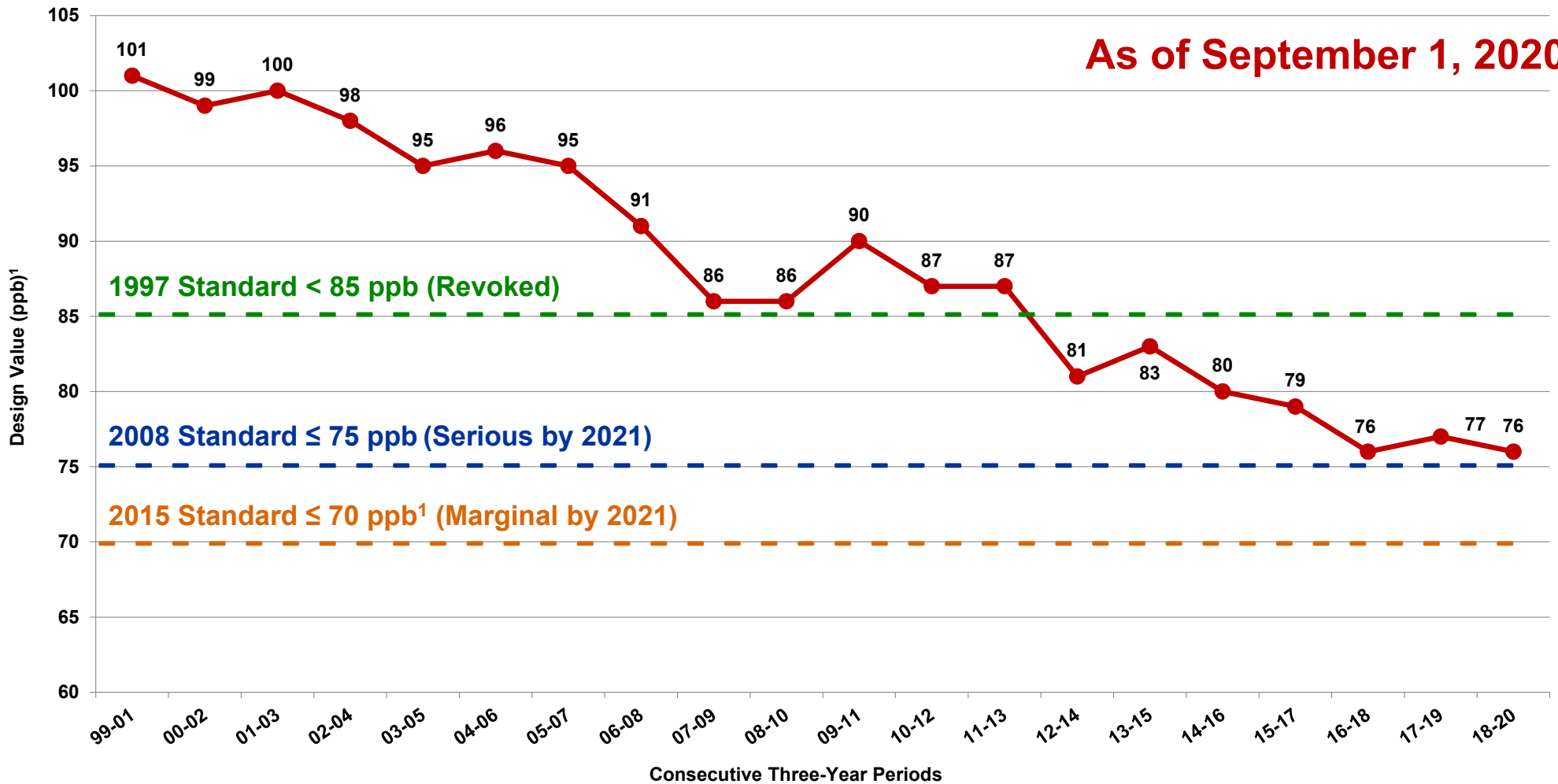


Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration.
Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

Source: TCEQ, http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cqi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl
ppb = parts per billion

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

As of September 1, 2020



¹Attainment Goal - According to the US EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards, attainment is reached when, at each monitor, the *Design Value* (three-year average of the annual fourth-highest daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration) is equal to or less than 70 parts per billion (ppb).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone>

MINUTES**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY****Changing Mobility: Data, Insights and Delivering Innovative Projects
During COVID Recovery****Transportation Performance Measures****2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards****IH 45 Zero Emission Corridor Plan Update****Online Public Input Opportunity Dates**

Monday, August 10, 2020 - Wednesday, September 9, 2020 – 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. Changing Mobility: Data, Insights and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery
2. Transportation Performance Measures
3. 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards
4. IH 45 Zero Emission Corridor Plan Update

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 cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Summary of Presentations***Changing Mobility: Data, Insights and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/08/COVID-Effects.pdf>

This presentation includes information related to what NCTCOG is doing to help assist transportation projects and programs during these challenging economic times. Four policy metrics entitled Changing Mobility have been developed to help guide NCTCOG staff in alleviating the negative impacts of COVID-19:

- Travel behavior response to COVID-19
- Financial implications to traditional revenue sources
- Benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility
- Prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases

Metric 1: Travel behavior response to COVID-19

- Compared to pre-COVID activity, use of bike/ped trails was up 22 percent in June
- Compared to pre-COVID activity, use of roadways was down 6 percent in June
- Compared to pre-COVID activity, toll road transactions were down 41 percent in May
- Compared to pre-COVID activity, use of transit was down 54 percent in June
- Compared to pre-COVID activity, aviation travel was down 80 percent in May

Metric 2: Financial implications to traditional revenue sources

- Compared to 2019, sales tax revenue saw a 4 percent increase in July 2020
- Compared to 2019, motor fuel tax revenue saw a 2 percent decrease in July 2020
- Compared to 2019, IH 35E TEXpress Lane transactions saw a 60 percent decrease in May 2020

Metric 3: Benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility

- Less vehicles on the road reduces emissions
- Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport is the busiest airport in the world and despite decrease in travel, no employees have been furloughed throughout the pandemic
- Local transit authorities have been partnering with nonprofits and local governments to deliver essential supplies to those in need

Metric 4: Prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases

- For a long-term unemployment event, need near-term and long-term transportation investment for maximum benefit
- Staff focused on implementing major transportation projects, including high-speed rail from Dallas to Fort Worth, autonomous transit, the Y Connector and SH 183.

Members of the public are encouraged to provide feedback on the NCTCOG strategies and policy metrics for managing the impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation system.

Transportation Performance Measures presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/08/Performance-Measures.pdf>

A performance measurement is a framework for relating observed performance of the transportation system to regional goals and priorities, planning processes, and project selection and policies. A measure is usually calculated from regularly updated data and a target is then established for where the measurement should be.

NCTCOG conducts a variety of activities related to performance measures, including the creation of Progress North Texas and the current examination of COVID-19's impact on the transportation system. Some performance measures are required by federal legislation such as MAP-21 and the FAST Act.

This presentation primarily focuses on performance measures established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration. Known as PM3, these seven measures are related to various aspects of the transportation system, including reliability, congestion, mode choice and emissions.

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) adopted quantitative 2020 and 2022 regional targets for PM3 on November 8, 2018, and updated targets are due to FHWA on October 1, 2020.

Overall, NCTCOG staff is reaffirming the original PM3 targets for 2022 but also recommending adjusting targets for truck travel time reliability and emissions reductions.

The RTC will take action on the revised PM3 targets in September 2020.

2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects: Recommended Funding Awards presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/08/2020-TA-CFP-Pres.pdf>

Handout:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/08/2020-TA-CFP-Handout.pdf>

Project activities eligible to receive funding from the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects (TA CFP) include shared-use paths, on-street bikeways, signage and protected intersections, among others. The 2020 TA CFP had two eligible project categories: active transportation and Safe Routes to School (SRTS). Each category had its own set of scoring criteria.

NCTCOG staff received 38 applications and is recommending awarding funding to projects in the City of Arlington, City of Fort Worth, City of Dallas, City of Richardson, Dallas County and along Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) routes. A breakdown of funding allocations can be viewed at www.nctcog.org/input.

The RTC will take action on the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects funding recommendations in September 2020.

IH 45 Zero Emission Corridor Plan Update presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2020/08/IH-45-Update.pdf>

In 2019, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded funding to NCTCOG to develop a plan for infrastructure to support both battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles along IH 45 from Dallas to Houston.

NCTCOG staff has proposed the following strategies to meet FHWA's deployment plan goals:

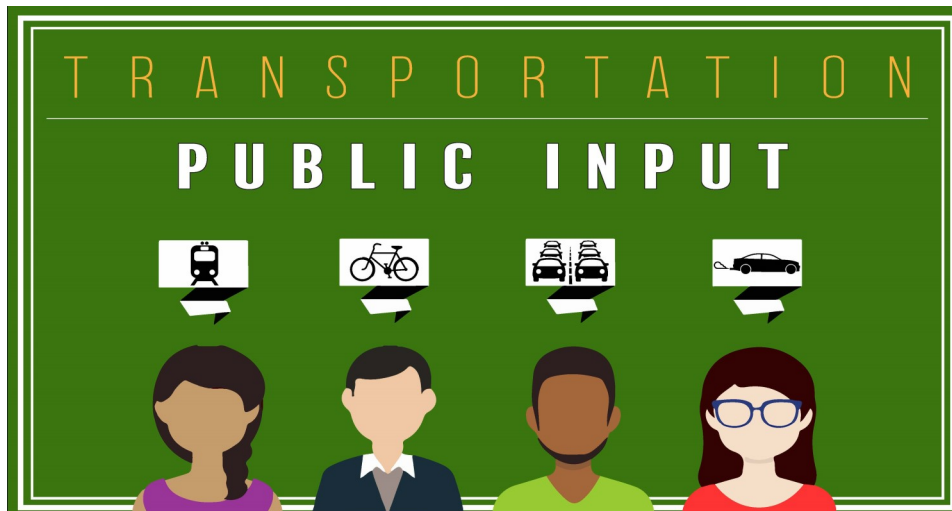
- Develop electric and hydrogen corridor along IH 45
- Expand infrastructure needs for medium and heavy-duty electric trucks and buses
- Support future strategic initiatives in the corridor, such as AV technology deployment and truck platooning

For the corridor to be classified as ready under FHWA's criteria, electric vehicle supply equipment must be placed every 50 miles within 5 miles of IH 45. There is currently one gap remaining along the corridor, and it's from Ennis to Madisonville. Additionally, there are currently no publicly available hydrogen stations in Texas. For the corridor to be classified as ready, a station must be placed every 100 miles within 5 miles of IH 45.

Staff will continue to identify the best technologies suitable for vocational needs, identify best market development opportunities and convene stakeholder groups. Additional case studies and an infrastructure deployment plan will be completed by May 2021.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, MAIL, EMAIL and SOCIAL MEDIA

No comments received via website, mail, email or social media.



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Learn about transportation in the region and help set future priorities. The Regional Transportation Council and North Central Texas Council of Governments, together serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, are seeking public input.

Submit comments and questions to NCTCOG:

Email: transinfo@nctcog.org

Website: www.nctcog.org/input

Fax: 817-640-3028

Phone: 817-695-9240

Mail: P.O. Box 5888

Arlington, TX 76005-5888

For special accommodations due to a disability or for

language translation, call

817-608-2365 or email

cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Reasonable accommodations will be made.

Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para

interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2365 o por

email: cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? TELL US.

Information will be posted online at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment **September 8 - October 7, 2020**. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Fiscal Year 2020 Public Transportation Funding: Program of Projects

NCTCOG staff will present proposed transit projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration through the final award of Fiscal Year 2020 funds for the following four programs: Urbanized Area Formula, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, State of Good Repair, and Bus and Bus Facilities. This input opportunity meets the federal requirement for public participation in programs of projects. Please note DART hosts their own public meeting and can be contacted directly for more information.

The following agencies' programs of projects will be presented:

City of Arlington, City of Grand Prairie, City of McKinney, City of Mesquite, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA), North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Trinity Metro, Northeast Transportation Service (NETS), Public Transit Services (PTS), Span, Inc., and STAR Transit.

Heavy-Duty Vehicle Emissions Impact Study

In coordination with NCTCOG, an oversize/overweight (OS/OW) heavy-duty vehicles study was conducted by Texas A&M Transportation Institute. The main goal of the study was to characterize and estimate emissions impacts of OS/OW vehicles on air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth nonattainment area. Staff will present findings and recommendations.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding & Other Clean Vehicle Incentives

Rebate funding will soon be available for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations across Texas through the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program. Staff will present key details on how to take advantage of this funding as well as provide other opportunities available for citizens or fleets to acquire cleaner vehicles.

Optimizing Freight Movement Project

Staff will present details of a \$5 million project proposal designed to improve the flow of truck traffic between freight hubs and expressways. The project will identify where improving the flow of trucks can do the most good as well as select one or more technologies to improve truck travel.

ONLINE REVIEW & COMMENT (NO PRESENTATION)

Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects: www.nctcog.org/input

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

- Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP): www.smokingvehicle.net
- Vehicle Incentives & Funding Opportunities: www.nctcog.org/aqfunding

WWW.NCTCOG.ORG/INPUT



NCTCOGtrans



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PUBLIC COMMENTS REPORT

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

Purpose

The public comments report is in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Process, 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.

This report is a compilation of general public comments submitted by members of the public from Saturday, June 20, through Sunday, July 19. Comments and questions are submitted for the record and can be submitted via Facebook, Twitter, fax, email and online.

This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Air quality comments related to Clean Air Action Day and ozone action days were in the majority.

In addition, comments are currently being accepted through a new, online map tool. Users can drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. The tool is in test mode and open to the public through August 2020. This month, there were 54 Bicycle and Pedestrian comments, 2 Roadway comments and 1 transit comment. To read them, visit:

<http://nctcoggis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

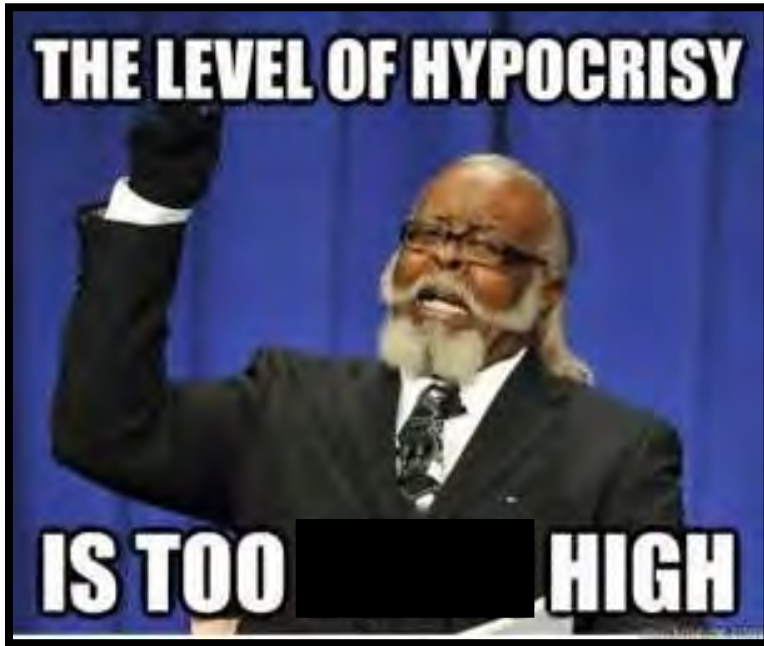
Air Quality

Twitter –

1. All people deserve to breathe healthy air. Together we can reduce harmful pollutants that impact those who live, work & play near ports, rail yards, roadways & freight distribution centers. Use #EPASmartWay tools to learn how to have cleaner air for all – <http://epa.gov/smartway>. – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



And yet, NCTCOG Transportation is still out there pimping new freeways, the pollution from which adds to DFW's chronic air pollution problem.... – Downwinders at Risk (@cleanerair)



2. Clean Air Action Day is almost here! Join us in partnering with @NCTCOGtrans to improve air quality in North Texas. #CAAD2020 – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



3. Social Distancing on Clean Air Action Day <https://nadallas.com/2020/07/31/323701/social-distancing-on-clean-air-action-day#.XygQQ1HEX00.twitter> #cleanairactionday #texasheat @NCTCOGtrans – Natural Awakenings (@NaturalDallas)

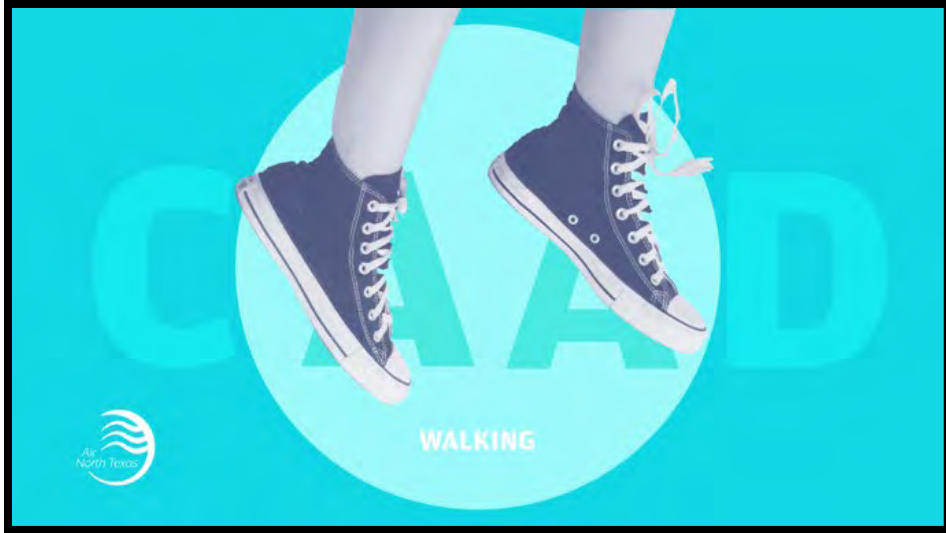
4. Clean Air Action Day is this Wednesday, and we created a quiz to test your air quality knowledge! Do you know how easy it is to take simple steps towards cleaner air in North Texas? Take the quiz to learn how you can be a clean air advocate! @NCTCOGtrans <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



5. Clean Air Action Day is TODAY! To celebrate, we made a quiz to test your knowledge. Do you know how easy it is to take simple steps towards cleaner air in North Texas? Take the quiz to learn how you can be a clean air advocate! @NCTCOGtrans <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



6. Happy Clean Air Action Day! Walk. Skip. Run. Whichever you decide to do, the air will appreciate you! #CAAD2020 – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



The talent. The vision. The Chucks. 🐾 – Christina Roach (@ChristinaGRoach)

Aww, shucks. 😊

Don't forget to visit <https://airnorthtexas.org/socialdistancing> and select your clean air action for today! – NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)

Of course! I'll record my telecommuting too so I can secure that TryParkingIt bag 😊



– NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)

7. Check out this Clean Air Action Day tip from @NCTCOGtrans! Biking is great for the environment AND great for your health. 🚲 Learn more steps you can take towards cleaner air in North Texas by taking our quiz: <https://bit.ly/3gjYqoF> – DCTA (@RideDCTA)



Facebook –

1. Be careful out there. Orange levels are unhealthy for sensitive groups. #ArlolsOrange – Fort Worth Code



2. Ozone Action Day – Ozone in the Dallas-Fort Worth area Tuesday is predicted to be at Level Red, unhealthy. Active children and adults and people with lung disease, such as asthma, emphysema, or chronic bronchitis, should avoid outdoor activity. Everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion. Current ozone information: <http://bit.ly/9nC9vy>. Consider a clean air choice: <http://bit.ly/2oAbaPt>. – NCTCOG Transportation Department



#DriveElectric – Chris Hightower

3. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Clean Air Action Day, the annual celebration of environmental awareness put on by Air North Texas will be observed differently this year...

#cleanairactionday #environmentalawareness NCTCOG Transportation Department – Natural Awakenings Dallas Metroplex Magazine



4. Today is Clean Air Action Day! Check out these tips from NCTCOG Transportation Department for easy ways to promote clean air in the DFW area, even while social distancing. #CleanAirActionDay – RWB Consulting Engineers



Autonomous Vehicles

Facebook –

1. PAVE is proud to announce our Public Sector Advisory Council, an advisory body made up of public servants with deep experience preparing for and facilitating the autonomous future. The PSAC will advise PAVE on the critical issue of public sector engagement with AVs, and help provide vital resources to less-experienced localities and agencies.

Following are the inaugural members of PAVE's Public Sector Advisory Council:

- Arizona Department of Transportation
- California Department of Motor Vehicles
- City Government of Chandler, Arizona
- City of Detroit Government
- City of Pittsburgh Dept of Mobility and Infrastructure
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- DriveOhio
- The Eastern Transportation Coalition
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Georgia Dept of Transportation
- Louisville Metro Government

Miami-Dade County
Michigan Department of Transportation
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Mountain View Police Dept
NCTCOG Transportation Department
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
Texas Dept of Transportation
Target Zero
WSDOT

Find out more about our PSAC members here: <https://lnkd.in/dBk42Pf> – PAVE Campaign



Bicycle & Pedestrian

Email –

1. Francesca Funk

I need a protected bike lane on Zang Blvd, from Jefferson to Colorado, so I can do my whole commute safely by bicycle.

Twitter –

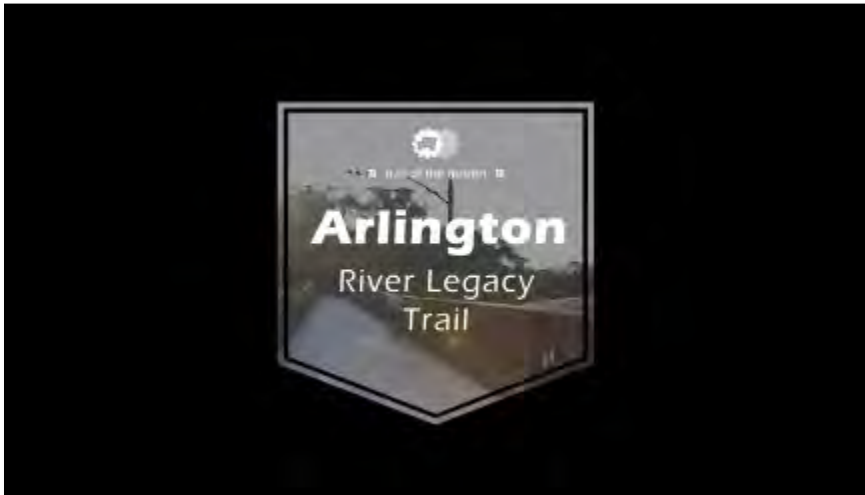
1. Trail usage has skyrocketed as residents rediscover walking & biking to stay active! This week's highlighted trail is the Cottonwood Creek Trail in @CityofAllenTX. It runs through downtown & connects places such as the Village at Allen, Old Stone Dam & the 1910 Railroad Bridge. – NCTCOG Transportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



Trails are great! But connected trails are even better. Connect the trails!!! We want more than 5 miles!!! – Jeff Mizener (@mizesoundguy)

Facebook –

1. Wanna get out and about in Arlington? Hop on the River Legacy Trail! It plays a vital role in the off-street connection from Fort Worth to Dallas. Stay tuned for more! – NCTCOG Transportation Department



We could do this in Mineral Wells of course on a much smaller scale. Mineral Wells CC should strive to make its carbon footprint much smaller while enhancing its health resort status. LETS GO GREEN! – John T. Brazil

2. Thanks to NCTCOG Transportation Department for this great video of the #CottonBeltTrail. We hope you'll get out and enjoy this awesome trail! – Keep Grapevine Beautiful



Instagram –

1. Have you been using the extra time at home to bike more? Tell us about it! Our interactive mapping tool is a great way for you to leave comments on how we can improve your travel experience. Visit <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/plan/mtp/map-your-experience>.



Can you put 1/10th of the money you put towards highway expansion towards trail extension / expansion? Or even bike lanes? – Philip Goss (@gosspl)

Committees

Facebook –

1. Congratulations to our newly elected North Texas Regional Transportation Council (RTC) officers! RTC is the independent transportation policy body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, which covers 12 counties across the North Texas region.

Dannenbaum Engineering also recognizes and thanks our Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition(DRMC), Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition (TRCT), and Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) for their service to Dallas-Fort Worth.

NCTCOG Transportation Department

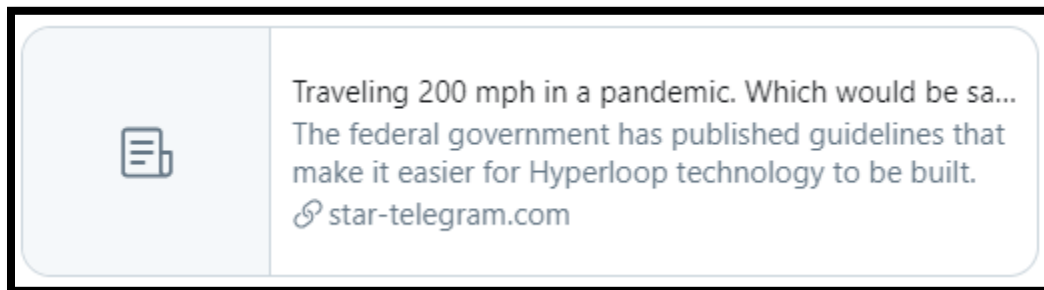
#EngineeringExcellence – Dannenbaum Engineering



Innovative Vehicles & Technology

Twitter –

1. Traveling 200 mph in a pandemic. Which would be safer: High-speed rail or Hyperloop? via @gdickson – Luke “Wear a Mask” Ranker 🏠 🤔 📄 – (@lukeranker)



Hmmm...which would be safer, the mode of transit with 50+years of impeccable safety or the thing that technically doesn't exist?

I really Really REALLY wish @NCTCOGtrans would stop wasting time on hyperloop hype – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

Project Planning

Email –

1. Oscar Pearson

Please push for the outer loop for 428 around Aubrey. Even with the additional lanes on 380 traffic east and west will not see much relief. And add an overpass for safety sake over the railroad in downtown Aubrey to avoid train delays for fire and safety. Thank you.

2. Robert Brown

Has COVID-19 impacted transportation projects in the region? Specifically, the IH-30 expansion project through Hunt County. I'm extremely concerned with one-way service roads and how it will impact something simple as getting a burger from McDonalds.

3. Al Daniels

Make Lemmon Ave. 8 lanes with left hand turn lanes from Turtle Creek to Lovers Lane.

4. Laurie Richardson

The roads and infrastructure desperately need to be improved for the communities off of Fm1385. Infrastructure is severely lacking. Waiting years to expand FM1385 won't work. Fishtrap between 1385 and Gee road needs more lanes now. Parvin road is key - it needs to be paved with asphalt to be used as a proper road - paving Parvin between fm1385 and Teel road will eliminate much of the traffic problems on 1385 by giving communities a real proper alternate route. We can't wait years for these things to happen, it's already a dire problem. We need help and solutions now. Thank you!

Twitter –

1. If growing states like Texas get undercounted in the #Census2020 will the COG's stop building highways because they don't have the hard pop. growth numbers to justify it or will they continue bc that's the only thing they know how to do? – Andrew Wallace (agwallace92)

@NCTCOGtrans, @AlamoAreaCOG, @CAPCOGTX, & @HGACmpocan you shine light on this? – Andrew Wallace (agwallace92)

Public Input

Twitter –

1. @TrinityMetro está rediseñando su red de autobuses para crear Una Mejor Conexión y necesitamos de su ayuda!

Necesitamos su opinión sobre cómo hacer que nuestro sistema funcione mejor para usted hoy y en los años por venir. @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @fwhcc – Sal Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



2. @TrinityMetro is redesigning its bus network to create A Better Connection and we need your help!

We need your input on how to make the system work for you today and in the years to come.
 @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @FTWChamber @fwhcc @FWMBCC
 @TarrantTransit



Safety

Twitter –

1. There are lots of things that can distract you while you're driving besides your phone. Join us in playing the new AR game from @TxDOT to see how good you are at driving heads up in Texas.

<http://DartThoseDistractions.com>

#HeadsUpTexas #EndTheStreakTX

@TxDOTFortWorth

@TxDOTDallas



Thank you for advocating for this cause! We work hard everyday to fight against distracted driving!! Our app always asks, "Is It Worth It??" – Safe 2 Save (@Safe2Save)

Transit

Email –

1. **Andrea Voss**

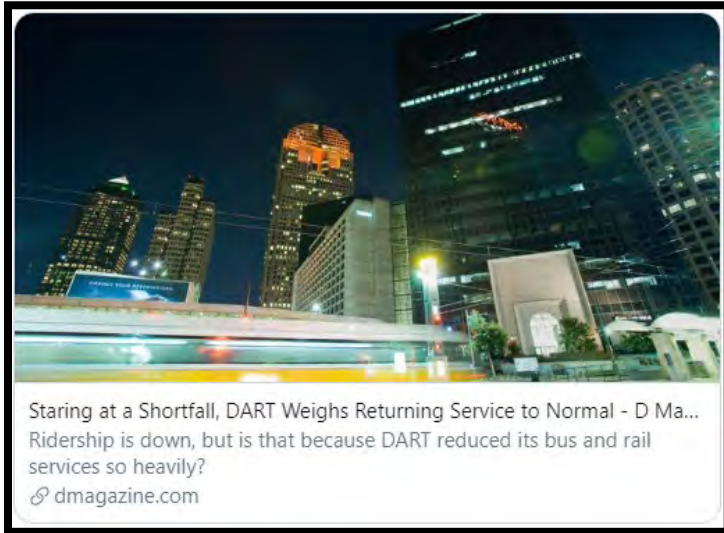
We need more DART Rail service that goes around the county and not primarily through downtown, to save people time and make them want to use the public transit more.

Twitter –

1. Please check out this video from @TrinityMetro re: A Better Connection. @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – Salvador Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



2. <https://dmagazine.com/frontburner/2020/08/staring-at-a-shortfall-dart-weighs-returning-service-to-normal/> @dartmedia @CityOfDallas @NCTCOGtrans – Lee M. Kleinman (@LeeforDallas)



3. Exciting new transit oriented development project at Trinity Lakes by a new Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station. <https://star-telegram.com/news/business/growth/article244935422.html> @TrinityMetro @CityofFortWorth @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans @GynaDistrict5 @GynaB @TarrantTransit – Sal Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



Other

Twitter –

1. COVID-19 impacts on transportation via

@NCTCOGtrans

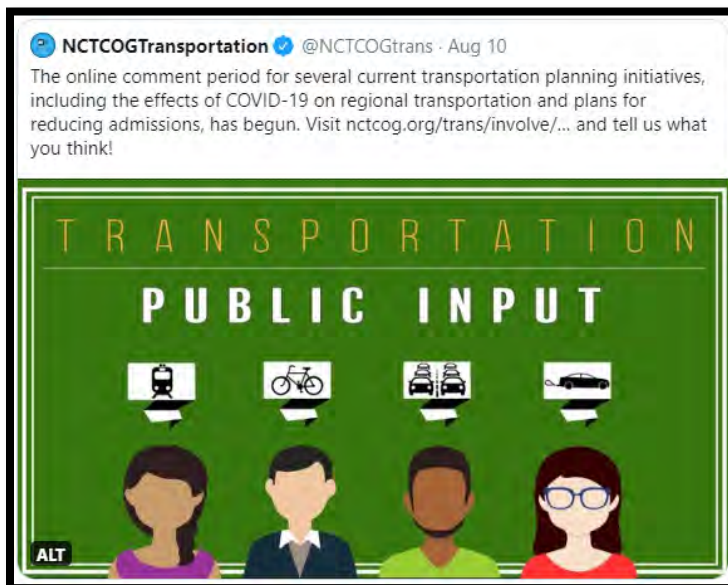
. Roadways are bouncing back, transit is facing a deep hole, and airports are significantly down. Trail usage has spiked.

Source: RTC meeting Packet

<https://nctcog.org/trans/about/committees/regional-transportation-council?ext=.> – Fort Worth Urban (@UrbanFortWorth)



If you or any of your followers would like to share their thoughts on this topic, the comment period for it has just begun! More info here: - NCTCOGTransportation (@NCTCOGtrans)



RECEIVED

AUG 04 2020

TRANSPORTATION



GARLAND
TEXAS MADE HERE

July 31, 2020

Mr Michael Morris
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Tx 76011

Re: RTC Milestone Policy relating to the City of Garland/DART Transit PASS Project

Dear Mr. Morris,

The purpose of this letter is to inform the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the City of Garland commitment to complete by December 2024 the "Citywide Bottleneck Improvements" currently listed under the RTC Milestone Policy.

DART had dedicated funding to the City of Garland for intersection widening projects along SH 78, Forest Lane and Plano Road and had been working on these projects since 1992 known as Transit PASS. The project along SH 78 is currently under construction by TxDOT. Since that time, DART had been working toward implementing these bottleneck improvements identified in 1992. The funding for the Transit PASS project was part of a defederalized process. Once these funds are expended the defederalized coordination obligations will be complete.

The following are the recent events that have moved this project toward completion:

- In a separate effort in 2016 the City of Garland commissioned a bottleneck study of 40 intersections to determine the most congested intersections in Garland and recommend cost effective improvements to relieve this congestion.
- In 2018 DART entered into an agreement with the City of Garland through which the City of Garland agreed to receive the Transit PASS funding and take the lead on utilizing this funding on DART routes to apply toward implementing these improvements on these bottleneck locations.
- In May 2019 the Garland voters approved the use of up to \$14 million in bond funding to construct these bottleneck improvements.
- In summer 2019 \$207,800 of these funds were used to develop 30 percent plans for 19 of these intersections. In 2020 \$2,750,000 of these funds are being used to design construction plans for fourteen of these intersections.

CITY OF GARLAND

PO BOX 469002 GARLAND, TX 75046-9002

972-205-2000

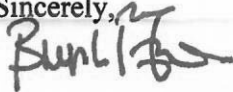
WWW.GARLANDTX.GOV

- Three of these intersections, Jupiter & Forest, Plano & Buckingham, and IH 30 & Broadway will be ready for letting by the end of 2020. These intersection improvements will require the acquisition of right of way.
- The remaining funding along with the citizen approved bond funding will be used for completing the bottleneck improvements on these three intersections.

As can be seen from the recent activity, \$2,957,800 of the total \$3,202,833 funding subject to the RTC Milestone Policy has already been expended. The remaining \$245,033 is expected to be expended within the next year on construction of the three intersections listed above. However, potential right of way delays are possible, thus the commitment to complete this funding by December 2024. Additionally, these bottleneck improvements and several more will be constructed using the \$14 million in local bond funds. The local bond funds are not subject to the RTC Milestone Policy.

The City of Garland appreciates the efforts of the RTC to move projects toward completion and we look forward to continuing our partnership in this commitment.

Sincerely,



Bryan L. Bradford
City Manager
City of Garland

cc: Gary Thomas, President DART

August solar policy snapshots

A guide to recent legislation and research throughout the country.

By Kelsey Misbrenner, Solar Power World

Climate groups take legal action against Arizona utility for raising rooftop solar customer rates

Phoenix, Arizona

Arizona climate and environmental groups filed a brief asking the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to take another look at Salt River Power Company's discriminatory charges against rooftop solar customers. The public power utility raised electricity rates for rooftop-solar customers by 60%.

Yale poll finds most New Jerseyans support proposals included in Clean Energy Equity Act

Trenton, New Jersey

A poll from Yale University found at least seven in 10 New Jersey residents support the proposals included in the New Jersey Clean Energy Equity Act being considered by the New Jersey Senate Environment Committee. The bill is meant to help low-income families in the state have access to solar + storage as well as energy efficiency.

Senator Mitch McConnell does not include clean energy COVID-relief in initial proposal

Washington, D.C.

Although hundreds of solar companies from all sectors signed a letter asking Congress to support COVID-19 recovery legislation for solar power and seven Republican lawmakers separately sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell also urging him to support the legislation, it's still unclear whether the solar industry will get the relief it's asking for to cope with COVID-19. McConnell introduced a narrow proposal regarding the next COVID relief package that does not include any clean energy provisions.

New report finds Texas utility-scale solar growth may push remaining coal plants into retirement

Austin, Texas

New utility-scale solar growth in Texas could push much of the remaining coal-fired fossil fuel industry into early retirement in the next few years, according to a new report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA). The report also highlights the importance of the rise in battery storage technology to bring more stability to an increasingly renewable grid.

North Central Texas Council of Governments receives regional SolSmart designation

North Central Texas

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) received a Bronze designation from SolSmart for its role in helping local governments make it easier for customers to go solar. The Council has provided solar training sessions and online resources to localities to facilitate the growth of solar in the region.

Presidential candidate Joe Biden commits to 100% clean electricity by 2035 in new plan

Washington, D.C.

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden released a new clean energy plan in July to transition to 100% clean electricity by 2035 and spend \$2 trillion over four years on clean energy projects, according to CNN. The new roadmap based on the Biden-Sanders Unity Task Force Recommendations sets a goal of installing 500 million solar panels within five years, including eight million rooftop and community energy systems.

Final Massachusetts SMART program regulations protect already-planned solar projects

Boston, Massachusetts

Massachusetts published its final regulations for the SMART renewable incentive program. The final version expands the incentive target and protects many community solar projects that were in development prior to the issuance of the new land use restrictions.

FERC dismisses petition to federalize solar net metering

Washington, D.C.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission dismissed the controversial petition by the New England Ratepayers Association (NERA) to place solar net metering under federal control. Solar and clean energy advocates celebrated the dismissal.

New York PSC extends net metering for solar customers through January 2022

Albany, New York

The New York Public Service Commission (NYPSC) extended net metering through January 2022 for current customers to mitigate the effects COVID-19 has had on the solar industry. NYSEIA said this move will help the residential solar industry begin its recovery in the state.

Indiana county adopts its first-ever solar energy ordinance requiring pollinator-friendly groundcover

Randolph County, Indiana

Commissioners in Randolph County, Indiana, recently adopted the area's first solar energy ordinance requiring pollinator-friendly groundcover on project sites. The requirement will apply to the construction of the state's largest solar farm, developed by EDP Renewables.

DOE seeks information on "national security threats" to power grid

Washington, D.C.

President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order in May aimed at "securing the nation's bulk-power system" from "equipment with foreign interest" and charged Department of Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette with executing it. The Department of Energy is now creating a task force and requesting information from energy companies to help identify any "vulnerabilities in the bulk-power system."

Social Distancing on Clean Air Action Day

By Annalise Combs, Natural Awakenings

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, Clean Air Action Day, the annual celebration of environmental awareness put on by Air North Texas will be observed differently this year.

The City of Dallas will sponsor a virtual Air Quality Town Hall meeting from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., August 4, the first in a series of quarterly town halls to support their Comprehensive Environment and Climate Action Plan.

It will focus on the objective that all Dallas communities breathe clean air. Buzz Smith will speak on electric vehicles and Dr. Haneen Khreis, from Texas Tech, will talk about air quality and environmental justice.

Many social distancing strategies such as working from home, can double as clean air strategies as residents pledge to do simple things every day to positively impact air quality.

It is important to work toward better air quality every day, especially in Dallas-Fort Worth, which remains in nonattainment for ozone pollution.

People can also plan the most fuel-efficient route and combine trips when they do have to drive.

Other examples include bicycling or walking to the store, packing lunch in a reusable bag and buying locally grown foods. North Texans are encouraged to observe social distancing protocols while aiming to improve air quality.

Sign up for air pollution alerts at AirNorthTexas.org/signup. Individuals will be notified when ozone levels are predicted to be unhealthy so they can take extra precautions and limit actions that affect air quality on those days. Visit AirNorthTexas.org/howto for resources and information on programs that can help improve air quality each day.

Activists to Reveal Campaign Calling on Dallas Leaders to Clean Up Shingle Mountain

The new campaign aims to call on Dallas city leaders to step in and clean up the 100,000-ton pile of old roofing materials, saying it's a matter of 'public safety'

By Alanna Quillen, 5 NBCDFW

There's an update to a story we've been following in Southeast Dallas.

Patience is running thin for a neighborhood that is living in the shadow something known as "Shingle Mountain."

On Wednesday morning, they have plans to announce a major campaign to make sure their voices are heard.

In the last two years, those residents have formed into a group called Southern Sector Rising. The new campaign aims to call on city leaders to step in and take down Shingle Mountain once and for all.

The pile is made up of more than 100,000 tons of illegally dumped, old roofing materials. Neighbors say they've filed complaints with the city since early 2018.

Later that year, [the City of Dallas sued the recycling company to clean it up](#). In 2019, [a judge ordered the property owners to remove the pile](#) within three months.

But as of this week, it's still there.

Southern Sector Rising will be announcing a campaign called '[Stand With Marsha. Move the Mountain](#).' The campaign name is a nod to resident Marsha Jackson, who lives right next to Shingle Mountain.

The pile of material sits just 50 feet from her bedroom window. [She said she and her neighbors suffer from health issues because of it](#) and have lost faith in the system to enforce the cleanup.

"I'm tired of having a quiet voice. I'm tired of suffering. I'm tired of taking all this medicine that I have to take constantly, over and over," she said.

There's a long list of major community groups backing them up, including For Oak Cliff, Mothers Against Police Brutality, Inclusive Communities Project, and Friendship West Baptist Church.

The group itself has a serious mission statement, [seeking to "end decades of racist zoning, forcing industrial polluters into predominantly Black and Brown neighborhoods."](#)

"Yes, we're a small community. But we still have our lives here. Everybody should be treated the same way," said Jackson.

In a statement to NBC 5 in June, Dallas city leaders said, "The City has aggressively enforced against all responsible parties, including owners and operators, and continues to seek rapid removal and disposal of all remaining materials. We stand behind Ms. Marsha Jackson and all other Dallas residents seeking to ensure compliance with laws and regulations intended to protect human health and the environment."

[Click here to read that full statement from the city and more updates on progress to clean up the mountain.](#)

The campaign says they plan to make their demands heard in a press conference outside Dallas city hall at 10 a.m. Wednesday morning.

The demands include a deadline of Oct. 1 to get the material cleaned out of the neighborhood.

In a statement, the group said protests are planned throughout the city budgeting process in August and September.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/activists-to-reveal-campaign-calling-on-dallas-leaders-to-clean-up-shingle-mountain/2420153/>

Rather than pour trillions into infrastructure funding, the feds should get out of the way of private investment

It's almost as if the government wants to favor government-owned infrastructure over private sector infrastructure.

By Tom Giovanetti, Dallas Morning News

"It must be infrastructure week" has become a bit of a joke among political insiders in recent years. It began during the Obama administration, when President Barack Obama seemed to use infrastructure speeches to change the subject when things weren't going well, but [it has become full-on joke](#) during the Trump years, when every time the Trump administration has tried to build momentum for an infrastructure agenda, the president himself has blown up the carefully planned news cycle with some shocking tweet or outrageous comment.

And we have finally gotten to the point during this COVID-19 muted presidential campaign when both candidates have rolled out their big infrastructure plans. President Donald Trump is (once again) talking about a \$1 trillion infrastructure plan to stimulate the economy, while Joe Biden's plan ups the ante to \$1.3 trillion.

Seeing these numbers and hearing all this rhetoric, you would be forgiven for thinking that the federal government is in charge of most of the nation's infrastructure. But you would be wrong.

In fact, the federal government owns just 3% of the nation's infrastructure. State and local governments and the private sector own the remaining 97%. So, the federal government owns only a tiny bit of the nation's overall infrastructure stock.

State and local governments own the majority of the nation's roads and bridges, and of course government buildings such as schools. But the private sectors own the vast majority (about 85%) of "critical infrastructure" as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Critical infrastructure includes roads, pipelines, utilities such as water, gas, electric and waste management, railroads, communications networks and airports.

This decentralized ownership of infrastructure is a strength, not a weakness, in a large nation with a dynamic, free-enterprise economy. But the federal government, while owning just 3% of the nation's infrastructure, is the tail that wags the infrastructure dog because of its impact on infrastructure projects.

Federal laws and regulations raise costs and slow construction of infrastructure projects. Many projects cannot be undertaken until receiving permission from federal regulators seemingly intent on stopping development. The average time for the Environmental Protection Agency to complete environmental review for infrastructure projects has risen from 2.2 years in the 1970s to almost 7 years today. That's years, not weeks or months.

The Davis-Bacon Act, a relic from 1931, requires projects receiving federal funding to pay prevailing union wages, which can increase costs of any infrastructure project touched by the federal government.

And federal funding tends to come with strings attached and new regulations that seem designed to hinder, rather than accelerate, infrastructure development. For instance, the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives recently passed the \$1.5 trillion Moving America Forward Act, which provides generous funding for roads and bridges, which are government

owned, but would place severe regulatory restrictions on America's freight rail network, which is privately owned. Among other things, the legislation would mandate larger crews than necessary to suit the demands of unions, effectively ban the transport of liquefied natural gas by rail, and even slap a one-size-fits-all regulation on each of the nation's 200,000 grade crossings.

It's almost as if the government wants to favor government-owned infrastructure over private sector infrastructure.

It's not just the federal government that gets in the way of infrastructure development. Months and years of local government permitting delays became such an obstacle to the rollout of wireless services that the Federal Communications Commission finally had to impose a 90-day shot clock on local permitting of cellphone towers and improvements.

And here in Texas, the last several legislative sessions have featured ill-advised attempts to make legitimate uses of eminent domain more difficult and expensive, which would make it much harder and more expensive to build the pipelines Texas needs to move oil and gas from the Permian to refineries and export facilities on the gulf.

The vast majority of America's infrastructure is privately owned and funded through private investment capital. America's private sector has demonstrated a willingness to build the pipelines, railroads, communications networks and other infrastructure a growing population needs, without reliance on the taxpayer.

But it seems that too often the main role of government in America's infrastructure is to slow it down, make it more expensive, frustrate efforts by the private sector to keep up with America's growing population and favor government infrastructure while regulating the private sector.

If we really do want America's critical infrastructure maintained, modernized and continually expanded, instead of borrowing and spending trillions of dollars on a small portion of our overall infrastructure, the most important thing government at all levels could do is just get out of the way.

Saving Fuel, Protecting the Environment: Grapevine Adds Hybrid Police Vehicles to Fleet

BY CBSDFW

The City of Grapevine has incorporated new police hybrid vehicles to their police fleet.

In a release, the department said the hybrid offers the same level of protection and less idle time without sacrificing necessary operation power needed in a police vehicle.

Police vehicles require a computer, radios, cameras, radars, and lights that typically require the vehicle to remain on to keep all of these items operating. But with the new hybrid police units, each of the items operates off of a lithium-ion battery for an extended time, allowing the gas engine to shut off, running only intermittently to charge the battery, even with the air conditioning running.

Hybrid vehicles will also cruise without the engine running until the speed reaches 40 miles per hour, then the high-performance 3.3L Hybrid Engine kicks-in with its 10-speed modular hybrid transmission.

The department said the hybrids will help in the reduction of CO2 emissions and can save upwards of \$6000 per vehicle, each year, in fuel costs when used in most (police) daily operations.

What a NIMBY Victory in Plano Means for the Future of Urban Planning in Texas

After a long legal battle, Plano will trash its forward-thinking Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. That's a loss for the entire North Texas region.

By Peter Simek, D Magazine

The final death knell for one of the most promising, forward-thinking urban planning efforts in North Texas [will be sounded tomorrow](#). During a joint session of the city of Plano's City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission, Plano officials are expected to vote to repeal the city's [Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan](#) and replace it with the 1986 master plan—literally putting Plano a generation behind on planning for its future growth and success.

The Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015, and since then, it has been embroiled in [a long legal feud](#) seeking its repeal. Opponents feared the new plan and said it would allow dangerous amounts of density that would erode the suburban city's character.

To me, the Plano Tomorrow plan looked like exactly the kind of urban planning vision that could begin to reverse the damaging effects of 70 years of sprawl-style suburban growth.

That style of growth, while often trumpeted as the bedrock of the region's incredible economic success, has also proven to treat North Texas cities and communities like disposable commodities, cycling urban neighborhoods and inner-ring suburbs alike through a series of booms and busts. The short-term economic gains of sprawl-style growth do not pay for the ultimate erosion of tax bases, inequitable transfers of wealth, and hidden costs of living.

Plano was once the poster child of sprawl, which made the Plano Tomorrow plan even more extraordinary and revolutionary. The plan recognized that the pattern of growth that has defined the last 70 years of urban expansion in North Texas will not allow the region to remain sustainable, and it charted a new path forward.

It allowed for pockets of density, rethought how to integrate transit into a highway-dominated city, and accommodated for a deepening tax base driven by a mix of commercial and residential investment.

It reimagined the suburban city not as a commuter-berg of single-family houses flanked by highways and strip centers, but as a vibrant, resilient community unto itself.

Plano Tomorrow wasn't perfect, but it recognized reality: more than a half-century of economic growth has transformed Plano from an ideal suburban utopia into a more dynamic and complex city, with large job centers, an expanding commercial base, and demand for a diversity of housing, services, and mobility options. But that was too much for some Plano residents.

They fought the adoption of the plan through the courts while waging a disinformation campaign that drudged up tired clichés about density and urban life.

These attacks represented parochial NIMBYism at best, and thinly veiled endemic racism at worst. The anti-Plano Tomorrow crowd often repeated erroneous claims that the master plan would overcrowd schools and allow "high density, multi-family residential development on every-four corner intersection," as the *Dallas Morning News* [reports](#). Another Plano resident once accused Plano Mayor Harry LaRosiliere of trying to turn "Plano into Harlem."

“In Council meetings, in their rhetoric, when people say, ‘Those kids shouldn’t be in school with our kids. People in apartments will cause crime.’ The racial undertones have been very clear,” [LaRosiliere told me in 2018](#). “We had a guy come up to Council and say, ‘Hey, you’re the Black mayor.’ The ugliness is there. Some are more adept at masking their rhetoric than others.”

Ultimately, the victory for Plano Tomorrow opponents came through the courts, and it hinged on a miscalculation by Plano’s city staff. When Plano resident Beth Carruth collected 4,000 signatures and filed a petition requesting the city to place approval of the plan before a public referendum, the city believed the petition had no standing.

Multiple courts, however, sided with Carruth. During a specially called meeting on Sunday, the Plano Council decided to give up the lengthy and costly legal battle, rather than continue to appeal.

That legal battle could have far reaching consequences, not only for Plano, but for the future of urban planning in Texas. It sets a precedent that would allow any well-financed interest group to force municipal governments to put basic items of business up for a public vote.

Opponents of the plan saw this as a call for more direct democracy. The Plano Tomorrow plan, however, was already conceived through a long public process and eventually approved by a Council vote.

The battle also exposes an essential conflict facing the future of North Texas—and large metropolitan regions across the country. Transitioning the American economy away from a model characterized by waste and inefficiency—the inequitable, environmentally catastrophic, and ultimately unsustainable model of sprawl—will require urban planning shifts in large cities and suburban and ex-urban communities alike.

All metropolitan areas will need to begin to resemble a networked series of urban clusters that are more efficiently linked and which better utilize space, expand economic opportunity, provide for diverse housing choices, and allow access to multiple forms of mobility.

Cities like Plano will not be able to afford the costs associated with maintaining its sprawling infrastructure.

This doesn’t mean the end of suburbia—nor does it mean that people who enjoy life in suburban Plano will need to leave their hometown. Rather, the Plano Tomorrow vision was designed as a way to stabilize Plano’s suburban character, while introducing ways to grow the city’s tax base so that Plano could continue to afford to provide the kinds of services Plano residents have come to expect, like quality schools.

What opponents of the plan don’t appear to understand is that suburban growth itself functions [like a Ponzi Scheme](#), and as soon as a city runs out of space for developing new tracks of suburban housing, the tax base stops growing sufficiently to cover the costs of basic services. Suburbs require ever-lasting growth to survive, but Plano has already been developed to its borders. It has run out of land, and like other inner-ring Dallas suburbs, faces [the real threat of deterioration](#).

Plano Tomorrow opponents created an imaginary boogie man, and they have now chased their monster out of town. What they are left with is a plan from the 1980s that is more permissive of the kinds of developments that will erode their community's character and value.

My hope is that the city of Plano's elected officials will regroup and restart the process of drafting a new master plan. The experience of the last five years will likely make them more cautious this time around, but elected officials need to remember that the Plano Tomorrow plan has much popular support, despite the volume of the opposition.

We now know that any new master plan in Plano will likely need to be put to a referendum. So be it. Allow a new, forward-thinking plan a fair fight against the disinformation of the NIMBYs, so that Plano can move into the next century. The city's future—as well as the future of all of North Texas—depends on it.

Why are steel poles being installed all over Dallas? Curious Texas investigates

The poles cost anywhere between \$12,000 to \$20,000.

By Sriya Reddy, Dallas Morning News

Late last year, former *Dallas Morning News* reporter and lifelong Dallas resident Tony Hartzel noticed mysterious steel poles rising on the median in front of Campisi's restaurant on Mockingbird Lane near Greenville Avenue. He also saw new steel poles on Abrams Road.

He could tell that they weren't streetlights but was otherwise stumped, so he asked Curious Texas: "What are those poles supporting?"

The poles are being installed for Verizon's new 5G telecommunications project Ultra Wideband, said Robert Perez, director of the Dallas Department of Public Works. The poles will follow the city's standard streetlight design and be used to implement new smart cell technology in Dallas alongside the streetlights.

The city itself does not install the poles, but different internet providers, such as AT&T, Crown Castle and now Verizon, have been installing small cell poles for the last couple of years, Perez said. The poles cost between \$12,000 and \$20,000, but the providers say they will pick up the costs. Perez said that the number of poles depends on the provider that it is for.

In a 2019 article, *The News* reported on Verizon's launch of its 5G Home service, which allows customers to have 5G coverage at home, in Houston and four other U.S. cities. [Dallas entered the picture](#) at the end of last year with 5G wireless coverage extended to the downtown, Deep Ellum, Knox/Henderson, Uptown and Medical District areas.

Verizon said Ultra-Wideband has the capability to increase customers' internet speed. This will be seen mostly in video downloading. It also will help with public safety because of reliable connections for emergency responders, according to Verizon.

Verizon has since launched this technology in more than 30 cities and is planning on expanding throughout this year.

City of Arlington Seeks Public Input on New Autonomous Vehicle Pilot Program

The Arlington RAPID project will integrate fully autonomous vehicles into Arlington's existing Via on-demand rideshare service.

By Press Release Desk, Patch

The City of Arlington is seeking public input ahead of the launch of a new public transportation pilot program, Arlington RAPID (Rideshare, Automation, and Payment Integration Demonstration).

The Arlington RAPID project will integrate fully autonomous vehicles into [Arlington's existing Via on-demand rideshare service](#). This pilot will include a wheelchair-accessible autonomous vehicle and free autonomous vehicle rides for University of Texas at Arlington students. RAPID is expected to launch in March 2021 as a one-year pilot.

Feedback is critical to the success of this transportation project. Accordingly, a UTA research team will conduct a focus group on behalf of the City to collect input from people residing and/or working in Arlington. Due to the importance of feedback for the project, the team is seeking participants who are willing to voluntarily attend a one-hour virtual focus group discussion and complete an online survey in mid-August 2020. The UTA research team is seeking individuals who use Via and/or Handitran services or those who are interested in public transportation options in Arlington.

Interested in participating in this important study? [Please click this link to provide your valuable input.](#)

As part of its ongoing efforts to Enhance Regional Mobility and Put Technology to Work, the City of Arlington has already managed two successful autonomous vehicle deployments. The Milo off-street pilot program with EasyMile was conducted from August 2017 to August 2018 and the on-street pilot program with drive.ai vehicles was conducted from October 2018 to May 2019. [Click here to learn more about the RAPID pilot program.](#)

For more information about the Arlington RAPID pilot program, please contact Ann Foss at Ann.Foss@arlingtontx.gov or 817-459-6678.

Dallas-Fort Worth developers defy pandemic, launch more than a dozen new projects

More than a dozen big North Texas projects have debuted since the pandemic took hold.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

On Dallas Avenue just south of Interstate 20, excavators are busy tearing up the landscape for a 1 million-square-foot industrial project.

The huge speculative warehouse is one of several new developments VanTrust Real Estate is kicking off. The VanTrust deals are among more than a dozen major real estate projects started or announced since the COVID-19 outbreak took hold.

The biggest pandemic in a century hasn't been enough to stop North Texas' booming real estate market.

VanTrust Real Estate is also working on another big warehouse project in South Fort Worth and an office building in McKinney, executive vice president Bill Baumgardner said.

"Living in a COVID world, the one market everyone likes is industrial — it continues to do well," Baumgardner said. "And in the D-FW area, if you don't have a building ready, you are not in the game.

"Hopefully by the end of the year we'll have 2 million square feet going on the industrial side."

VanTrust is also making plans for new office buildings with a project in the works in McKinney's Craig Ranch development. "Our strategy there is when the market tells us or we get an anchor tenant, we will be breaking ground," Baumgardner said. "When we get a vaccine, the best I know is that's when the corporate world will come out of hibernation.

"There is an opportunity to gain market share, and that's what we are trying to take advantage of."

Dallas-Fort Worth building starts in the second quarter were down only 1% from the same period last year.

Nonresidential construction starts in June were up 10% from 2019 levels, according to a new report by Dodge Data & Analytics.

For the first half of 2020, almost \$11.4 billion in construction starts were recorded in North Texas — behind only New York City for new construction.

Developers say most projects that were close to starting before the pandemic have moved ahead.

But some have been delayed by the pandemic.

Developer Bill Cawley is ready to start his next Plano office project, which is just east of the Dallas North Tollway. The 120,000-square-foot office building on Parkwood Boulevard will house offices for First United Mortgage and have additional space.

“We are going to break ground in September,” Cawley said. “We’ve had a little bit of [leasing] activity on the rest of the building.

“We have a 15,000- to 20,000-square-foot lease we are talking to and have had a couple of smaller inquiries,” he said. “I think when we are done with the building, we will be in recovery.”

Almost 85% of the real estate execs recently surveyed by a top Dallas architect said they are optimistic about a return to “normal” at some point. And more than 60% of the industry professionals told architect GFF they are not worried about continuing projects that are in the design phase or under construction.

“We’ve been surprised by the lack of anxiety in the written responses that we’ve received,” GFF CEO Evan Beattie said. “We originally sent this survey out at the beginning of June when COVID-19 cases were beginning a second significant upward trend.

“Despite this, most people responded with an optimistic view towards what the future will hold for the real estate market in North Texas.”

Almost 90% of the managers and clients in GFF’s survey said they still expect to start new projects in the coming 12 months.

“We are encouraged that almost all of our clients and project managers responded that they expected to start new projects by the beginning of 2021,” Beattie said. “The short-term negative impacts of the pandemic have been obvious and painful, but many developers, institutional and corporate clients are moving forward with projects to meet anticipated demand in 2022 and 2023.”

New North Texas developments

Major projects started or announced in the four months since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic:

Industrial

Invesco Real Estate and Bandera Ventures are starting a 956,020-square-foot warehouse project on Everman Parkway near Interstate 20 in South Fort Worth.

VanTrust Real Estate started construction of a more than 1-million-square-foot speculative industrial building in its DalParc Logistics Center on Telephone Road, south of Interstate 20.

Stonemont Financial Group is starting the two-building McKinney Airport Center warehouse project with more than 230,000 square feet of space on the west side of McKinney’s airport.

Developer Wynne/Jackson is building a \$200 million, 280-acre industrial park in Mesquite in Kaufman County along Interstate 20.

Perot Development Co. and Invesco Real Estate are building a 196-acre industrial campus at 5150 State Highway 161 in Irving at DFW International Airport. Plans call for 2.4 million square feet of warehouse and distribution space.

Logistics Property Co. is building a 1 million-square-foot speculative warehouse project at the Southport Logistics Park in Wilmer. The first two buildings in the 242-acre business park on Interstate 45 project were leased to Amazon and food products firm Smuckers.

Conor Commercial Real Estate is building Skyline Commerce Center, a two-building, 198,000-square-foot industrial project on South Buckner Boulevard just south of Interstate 30. The new office and warehouse campus will include one building with about 135,000 square feet of space and another with more than 62,000 square feet.

Office buildings

VanTrust Real Estate plans to build a four-story building in the Craig Ranch development on the north side of State Highway 121. The 115,000-square-foot McKinney Corporate Center II will be next door to a similar building VanTrust built in the business park that is fully leased.

J. Small Investments and Lyda Hill Philanthropies are redeveloping the 23-acre Pegasus Place business campus on Stemmons Freeway. The 18-story tower is getting new life as a state-of-the-art home for biotech firms and nonprofit organizations.

Developer Granite Properties has updated plans for its Uptown Dallas office high-rise next door to the Crescent complex. The 26-story 23Springs office tower would replace low-rise buildings at the corner of Cedar Springs Road and Maple Avenue and could start early next year.

GlenStar Properties and Singerman Real Estate are kicking off redevelopment of the Solana office campus in Westlake. The investors bought the more than 1 million-square-foot office complex constructed in the 1980s last year and are launching a multimillion-dollar makeover.

Cawley Partners, in partnership with Plano's pioneer Haggard family and First United Bank, is building the 120,000-square-foot, four-story Parkwood office building on the east side of Dallas North Tollway at Parkwood Boulevard and Windhaven Parkway. The building will house the headquarters of First United Mortgage.

Trammell Crow Co. plans to build a 27-story office and retail tower at McKinney and Maple avenues next door to the Crescent. The 2401 McKinney tower would be the tallest office building on Maple.

Apartment projects

NRP Group is building a 205-unit apartment project called Independence at Collin McKinney at 2150 Collin McKinney Parkway north of State Highway 121. The project is one of four affordable apartment projects the developer is starting in Texas.

Austin developer Oden Hughes and Canada-based North American Development Group are building a seven-story apartment and retail building on Oak Lawn Avenue next to the landmark Melrose Hotel. The building will have 293 rental units and 6,000 square feet of retail.

Crescent Real Estate plans to build a more than 30-floor luxury residential tower on Maple Avenue between the Stoneleigh Hotel and the Crescent. The high-rise is set to go up at 2811 Maple Ave. just north of Cedar Springs Road and will replace a low-rise commercial building.

Huge housing development shows coronavirus may not be slowing Fort Worth's growth

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star Telegram

Far north Fort Worth's boom doesn't appear to be slowing down as an international developer plans to bring 10,000 to 15,000 new residents to a nature-focused community just west of Texas Motor Speedway.

Today much of Wildflower Ranch is a little more than a pasture, but by this time next year 400 homes will be available in the first phase of the 3,300 single-family home master-planned community centered on Harriet Creek. The development from Houston-based real estate firm Hines is the latest addition to the rapidly growing northern suburbs and Northwest school district.

"This area has been for the last five years one of the top two growth areas in the residential real estate market, so we really feel strongly that this is a prime location," said Dustin Davidson, Hines managing director. "Frankly, of all the new developments that are coming online, we are kind of positioned to be the crown jewel."

Homes will range from \$200,000 to \$400,000 on 40 to 60-foot wide lots, though Davidson said some custom homes could hit \$500,000. The location just north of the Alliance Airport hub and just west of the Charles Schwab headquarters in Westlake make it a prime location for both blue collar and white-collar workers, he said.

Coronavirus has changed the way many people work and some of the homes reflect that, he said. Builders have developed a few options that include sound-proof studies for those looking for a more comfortable work-from-home atmosphere. Beazer Homes, Bloomfield Homes, Gehan Homes, Highland Homes and Lennar Homes have been tapped for construction.

The location north of Texas 114 and south of Sam Reynolds Road is in Fort Worth's extrajudicial territory, the buffer around the city that has not been annexed but must follow city building and design standards.

TCC Students Can Use Arlington's Via Rideshare Service for Free Through Two-Year Pilot Program

The service is offered between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. on Saturday.

By Press Release Desk, Patch

Starting Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020, Tarrant County College students will be able to use the City of Arlington's Via rideshare public transportation service for free as part of a two-year pilot program.

This program, funded by the North Central Texas Council of Governments, will allow Tarrant County College students to ride Via to and from anywhere within the rideshare service area, not just the campus. The purpose of this program is to help provide access to higher education in the City of Arlington and promote workforce development and job readiness.

In support of City Council's priority to [Enhance Regional Mobility](#), Arlington first partnered with Via Transportation, Inc., in 2017. The app-based, on-demand transportation program, now in its third year, is expected to expand citywide in January 2021.

The Via rideshare service area currently includes a significant portion of Arlington between Lamar Boulevard to the north, State Highway 360 and beyond to the east, the City limits to the south and Silo Road, Matlock Road or Fielder Road to the west. Major destinations in this service area include Downtown, the University of Texas at Arlington, major hospitals, the Entertainment District, the Parks Mall, Arlington Highlands, Tarrant County College Southeast campus, the Interstate 20 at Park Springs Park and Ride lot, and the CentrePort TRE Station. [Click here to see the service area map.](#)

Ready to try Via today? Book a trip on a rideshare vehicle using the free Via app or call 817-784-7382. Enter your pick-up and drop-off locations and a vehicle will pick you up within a block or two of where you are. The service is offered between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information, please visit www.arlingtontx.gov/via.

Panther Island board gambles by turning down federal study money. Will it pay off?

By The Fort Worth Star-Telegram Editorial Board

Imagine that you're trying to persuade your uncle to invest in a major project that you've been working on for nearly two decades.

And suppose your uncle — let's call him Sam — [wants a detailed study of your idea](#) before fully committing to invest. The study will be expensive, but just a fraction of the total you're seeking, and he'll pay half the cost of the review if you match it.

Worth it? Apparently not to the board overseeing [Fort Worth's Panther Island flood-control project](#).

The consultant that the Trinity River Vision Authority board hired to coordinate the project, Mark Mazzanti, recommended that the panel ignore the \$1.5 million offer from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a feasibility study. The goal is for the corps to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to [dig a bypass channel for the river](#), eliminating the risk of a disastrous flood and creating an island of prime real estate with business and recreational opportunities.

But local officials have always insisted that an [economic impact study isn't necessary](#) because the flood-control imperative is clear and Congress has signed off on the project. And the entities who are partners on the project have [already been squabbling over more local spending](#), so the \$1.5 million to match the Corps funding is significant, especially during a recession.

Mazzanti explained Friday that, in essence, the request for the study is odd because it's out of the usual order of business for a Corps project. A feasibility study usually precedes congressional authorization of a project.

"A new-start feasibility study is confusing for [local officials] to understand when they have executed a considerable amount of their responsibilities" under previously struck agreements with the Corps.

Noting that the Corps has been a "tremendous partner," he added: "We've asked the Corps to provide the objective and scope of what the study would accomplish. Why do you need it for an authorized project?"

Mazzanti and the board have a point. The trouble is, who can say at this point what the strategy is to finally get the river channel dug? What happens if the waiting game stretches on?

And might the decision to decline the study read as a sign that local project leaders fear it would reflect poorly on the economic need or environmental impact of the proposal?

What's increasingly clear is that there's either a fundamental disagreement about the project or a big communication breakdown with Washington. After an [independent review](#) was done at the behest of Mayor Betsy Price, project leaders acknowledged that the messaging emphasis on flood control had been lost.

Changes were made, including shifting the recreation and economic development portions to other entities and [hiring Mazzanti](#), a decades-long veteran of the Corps of Engineers. Mazzanti said that project officials “regularly ensure we’re consistent with” the recommendations of the independent review.

Rep. Kay Granger, Fort Worth’s powerful congressional veteran who is the top Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, told us earlier this year that the holdup rested with Mick Mulvaney, the White House chief of staff who was also overseeing the president’s budget office. [Mulvaney was shifted out of the White House](#) in March, but nothing has changed for Panther Island.

Each year brings another budget opportunity, so perhaps the board is betting that 2021 could bring a change of heart by a re-elected President Donald Trump or a better chance under a President Joe Biden. Gambling on that could make sense, given that the feasibility study could take at least three years.

But with the ongoing pandemic and economic slump, federal dollars will only be harder to come by. In the meantime, what local work continues, including [bridges that will now clearly carry traffic over dry land](#) for perhaps years.

Mazzanti said that completing local tasks “certainly shows our commitment to the highest, most important critical things we can do.”

But Fort Worth will have to wait still longer for leaders from City Hall to the regional water authority to Washington to figure out a way out of this mess.

Public transportation may see dramatic makeover in post-pandemic world

Don't be surprised if Covid-19 spells the end of fixed-route, big-bus systems, to be replaced by autonomous vehicles and more flexible "demand-responsive" operations, transportation experts say.

By John Kent, Texas Climate News

Joe Garza has worked construction jobs for most of his adult life. At 61, with the wiry physique of someone half his age, the longtime Fort Worth resident intends to keep on working, and that means taking the bus to get to his job site. For Garza and thousands of other Texans like him, reliable mass transit is the difference between employment and joblessness.

"If I don't have the bus, I can't get to work," Garza said. Losing his bus route "would really disrupt my life because it's the only transportation I've got."

So far, so good for Garza. Fort Worth's Trinity Metro has no plans to cut the transportation service he depends on. But with great swaths of America now working from home, shopping from home and even socializing from home on videoconferencing apps – all thanks to Covid-19 and its knack for contagion – it's not hard to envision a revised future for urban mass transit, one in which buses, train cars and other vehicles have evolved to accommodate a permanent, more disinfected, more socially distant reality.

Contending with that challenge would simultaneously complicate efforts to battle climate change, since transit is a crucial element in plans to decarbonize urban transportation to help avoid its most severe impacts.

The new world of pandemic-influenced transit might also be defined by potentially smaller systems running fewer routes, carrying fewer riders and leaning more heavily on demand-responsive arrangements, as work-from-home situations become permanent for some. Others seeking personal separation may find that they can walk or bike to the office, while some who are now used to doing everything from the house may develop a long-term fondness for their new lifestyle.

"People are becoming habituated to working from home and maybe taking part in fewer activities in general, like after school sports for your children," said Kara Kockelman, professor of transportation engineering at the University of Texas at Austin.

"They may be bringing those [ridership] numbers down for work and school and maybe some other activities if they shift to home. So, I think you could lose 50 percent of travelers in general, not because of Covid fears so much, but just not a need for as much travel," she added.

"Of course, eating and drinking out, those kind of luxuries, may be less common in the future due to a recession triggered by Covid, or due to people becoming habituated to cooking at home and knowing how to do that now that they've been sort of forced to."

Across Texas, big-city transportation teams already are scrambling to adjust to dramatically lower passenger loads, reduced revenues and a hazy future that makes planning difficult – all the while taking extraordinary measures to protect the health of riders and transit workers.

Coronavirus has knocked Texas metropolitan transportation for a loop. The North Texas Council of Governments, representing 7.6 million residents in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington area,

reports that year-over-year urban transit ridership in the region fell by an average of about 27 percent in March, 60 percent in April and recovered slightly in May to minus-55 percent.

The state's other large urban areas have charted similar year-over-year declines, with Harris County METRO (Houston) and Capital Metro (Austin) both down by about 50 percent, and VIA Metropolitan Transit (San Antonio) showing a 47 percent decline, all from May 2019 to May 2020.

Constant adjustments

Then came June and July, and with them another big spike in coronavirus cases nationwide.

Texas was among states especially hard hit, and some health experts are warning of a possible, though not inevitable, second wave of the pandemic in the fall. Texas' urban mass-transit leaders have responded to these unstable, hard-to-predict conditions with commendable speed and are now operating in a state of constant adjustment.

"We acted quickly to respond to Covid conditions, following CDC [U.S. Centers for Disease Control], state and local guidelines, and will continue to add health and safety measures as needed and available for as long as Covid or other emergency conditions are present," said VIA Communications Manager Lorraine Pulido.

Those measures include enhanced cleaning protocols, limiting bus capacity to ensure social distancing on board, mandatory face masks for riders and operators, and retrofitting driver cabins with transparent plastic barriers – adaptations that other major Texas transit agencies also have made, along with temporary free service and reduced frequency on some routes.

The public's newly heightened awareness of disease transmission and prevention may have changed rider expectations irreversibly. "Looking ahead, several of these protocols could become long-term and/or permanent steps VIA and other transit agencies maintain to ensure continued safety for transit workers and the traveling public," Pulido said.

We've been here before.

Just over a century ago, during the 1918-19 flu pandemic, the deadliest in recent history, Americans were warned to wash their hands frequently, social-distance, wear face masks in public, stay at home and avoid crowds. Like many public services, urban mass transit took a hit as ridership dropped, routes were scaled back, and transportation workers got sick. Municipal leaders who failed to bring their transportation systems into line with disease-fighting protocols were called out, as in this Oct. 15, 1918, appeal from the Toledo News-Bee in Ohio:

If public meetings and gatherings are to be prohibited in an effort to prevent the spread of influenza, the streetcar situation should not be overlooked. If the coughing or sneezing of a victim of the disease is likely to spread infection, what place is more dangerous than a crowded streetcar?

No such admonitions were required in 2020 to spur Texas urban transit agencies into action. All appear to have dropped everything to get ahead of the pandemic in the interest of public safety.

Dallas' DART, for example, "has aggressively expanded agency-wide cleaning and safety protocols in response to the novel coronavirus," said Gordon Shattles of DART External

Relations, while Trinity Metro reports taking “extra steps to increase the cleaning frequency of high-touch areas such as door handles, railings, seats and benches with disinfectant throughout each shift.”

But while transportation systems rebounded after the 1918 pandemic, the forecast for a similar rally 102 years later is cloudy. Even in economically supercharged Texas, recently reduced tax revenues from weakened or permanently closed businesses have combined with sharply reduced fare collections to keep transit agencies on edge.

Monica Russo of Harris County METRO said it’s still too early to tell how Covid-associated shortfalls might impact future operations. “Should revenue-related restrictions exist, adjustments will be made to mitigate the impact of the restrictions and continue to provide safe, clean, reliable, accessible and friendly public transportation services to our region,” she said.

Transportation representatives statewide have expressed both gratitude and relief for multimillion-dollar cash infusions they’ve received from the CARES [Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security] Act, which has helped systems continue running smoothly during the turbulence that the pandemic has stirred up. Overall, the bipartisan CARES legislation set aside \$25 billion to help public transit systems across the U.S. offset Covid-19 challenges.

Uncertainty and opportunity

Even with the federal government largesse, budgets have been upended, and some systems in other parts of the country are sounding the alarm. “Unless the economy comes ripping right back, and there’s a vaccine, and social distancing is eliminated, we fall off the financial cliff in 2023,” Jeffrey Tumlin of San Francisco’s city transit network said in a [New York Times report](#).

While his concern may be well-founded, Texas transportation leaders tend to be a bit less worried, at least when addressing the public. “We are hopeful that we’ll be able to maintain current service levels with the help of additional federal funding through the CARES Act,” said Dottie Watkins, chief operating officer of Austin’s METRO transit system.

As the state’s transit agencies ponder their next move, UT’s Kockelman says the situation presents a golden opportunity to accelerate a shift toward “right-sized,” demand-responsive (call or text for pickup and drop-off) people movers, and to begin stepping back from large, route-based vehicles like 40-passenger buses.

Nationwide, urban buses tote an average of only about nine people per mile, and in Texas, ridership is even lower than that, she said. “It’s not a very flexible mode. It’s this one huge whale traveling through this lane that’s going to use a lot of capacity of that lane regardless of how many people are on [the bus],” Kockelman said.

On-demand transit, which has been around for years as a means of transporting disabled riders, is now showing up in Texas cities as a first mile/last mile connection to longer-route buses and trains, as well as providing localized transportation around designated parts of town.

Trinity Metro’s ZIPZONE uses Toyota Sienna minivans to move people around Fort Worth’s Medical District and Near Southside, as well as some outlying communities. A few miles away in Arlington, long known as the largest city in the U.S. without a mass transit system, the 100 percent demand-responsive Via transport network is filling the void by hauling riders around downtown, UT-Arlington, the Entertainment District and the TRE regional rail station.

The idea is catching on nationwide as well. “Talking to the leadership of our metro system in my home city of Los Angeles, there’s no question that they’re looking at getting away from, ‘We provide the routes and you will ride on them,’ to a system where they respond to where the consumer demand is, and change more rapidly,” said Mary Nichols, chair of the California Air Resources Board. “There’s some really exciting work going on in that area, and I think it’s going to be the solution for these agencies in the future.”

Her remarks came during an Aug. 4 webinar, “The Impact of Covid-19 on Transportation Patterns & Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” sponsored by the Energy Institute at the University of Texas at Austin.

With self-driving technology having progressed close to the point of safe deployment on city streets, autonomous vehicles could begin nudging their way into the Texas urban transit scene in the near future. Kockelman describes these systems as “just so much more nimble and demand-responsive,” saying they will undercut the cost of operating bus fleets. “Our transit agencies already are subsidizing your and my travel on buses and trains at a higher level than we will need to pay to cover all of the cost of our going in right-sized, autonomous vehicles. So there’s going to be a huge shift,” she said.

For those right-sized transit vehicles that will be the workhorses of on-demand (and possibly autonomous) systems, removable barriers between passengers could be configured to help block a future pathogen from drifting nefariously around the cabin. Strangers might feel more secure being walled off by that sheet of Plexiglas, while a passenger load of family members would likely prefer to take the shield down. “Those retrofits are definitely being looked at,” Kockelman said.

Ironically, Covid-19 itself may not to be a reason for people to avoid urban mass transit altogether. According to a new study from China, the chances of contracting the disease on a bus or train now appear to be low for those who wear a mask and social-distance on trains with reduced passenger density.

“The masking is really taking the risk down so much that that the bus driver who’s there all day on an eight-hour shift is staying healthy,” Kockelman said, noting that the benefits of mask-wearing have long been recognized and socialized in Asian countries that endured the SARS epidemic nearly two decades ago.

Whatever changes lie ahead for Texas urban mass transit, our metro areas will continue to require systems that ensure the efficient movement of large numbers of people daily, some of whom have no other transportation options. Harris County METRO’s pledge of “providing essential workers with a means to get to essential jobs” is a commitment echoed by officers of the state’s other big transit agencies as well, and represents a future that construction worker Joe Garza would welcome.

“It’s what I depend on,” he said.

Fort Worth's 'bare bones' bus system will get a redesign, but funding is lacking

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

[Trinity Metro hopes riders will tell them how to improve](#) the system ahead of a redesign meant to bring more people onto Fort Worth's buses, but at least one official worries suggestions will merely "sit on the shelf" without a change of heart from City Hall.

There appears to be little commitment coming out of City Hall this year to boost Trinity Metro. The transit agency requested \$10 million from the city's 2021 budget for short-term improvements and additional funding for longer-term fixes. But City Manager David Cooke's budget provides \$1.5 million for improvements to Trinity Metro, of which about \$650,000 is set aside for sidewalks and other improvements at bus stops.

"We know where the demand is, but we don't have the funds to meet the needs," said Jeff Davis, Trinity Metro board chairman, calling the system "bare bones."

Despite the city moving into leaner years with slowed growth of the tax base due to the coronavirus-spurred recession, several cash-funded city programs will see a 2.5% to 3% increase in funding for capital improvements. Transit will receive no additional dollars. Trinity Metro isn't alone, as \$750,000 used to support partnerships with community groups also remained the same.

If the economy returns to where it was in January, Cooke said he would be more comfortable looking for additional funds for Trinity Metro.

Cooke said he understood Trinity Metro's desire for \$10 million, but said the decision came down to "choices and tradeoffs." To find \$10 million for transit, the city would have to cut money from some other program, he said, at a time when open positions are being eliminated to save money. Fort Worth has grown its tax base by roughly 4% annually for several years, but Cook is projecting low or no growth through 2023.

"I think these are valid conversations to have," Cooke said of increasing transit spending. "But I think we're about to go into a hard year and '22 is going to be even harder."

For fiscal year 2020 the city also set aside \$1.5 million, which helped fund the development of a new app and a new Zipzone, where bus riders can connect to a rideshare service, in the Near Southside. About \$500,000 wasn't allocated, said Chad Edwards, the city's mobility officer.

At first that money was swept up to pay for COVID-related expenses, but it's available again, he said. It could be used to meet some of the needs Trinity Metro outlined in its request for \$10 million. The wish list included creating an "Amazon route" to serve a north Fort Worth fulfillment center at a cost of \$450,000.

The city has also made a three-year commitment of \$450,000 for Dash, the tourism-focused loop from downtown to the Cultural District. The last installment of \$150,000 will be in fiscal year 2021, Edwards said.

Fort Worth's allocation to [Trinity Metro is just a small part of the agency's budget](#), which in 2020 was expected to bring in roughly \$125 million in operating revenue. More than \$94.1 million, or about 75%, comes from sales tax collected in Fort Worth, Blue Mound and Grapevine. Ticket sales account for a little more than \$10 million and federal aid brings in about \$13 million.

Trinity Metro provides 8 million trips a year, according to the agency's website. In March, as the pandemic set in, a little more than 500,000 people rode a transit service, down about 25% from last year.

The office of Mayor Betsy Price said she would reserve comment until the next budget discussion scheduled for Tuesday when Cooke will present his vision for operational spending in the next fiscal year.

Councilwoman Ann Zadeh, the council's most vocal proponent of the bus system, expressed disappointment in the allocation for Trinity Metro. The city needs to be more transit-focused to attract jobs and to provide access to underserved areas. The longer Fort Worth waits, the more expensive transit improvements will become, she said.

"It's important to realize that there are things that we can do now that you may not see as totally necessary for your life right this minute, but will benefit you in the long run," she said. "A transit system works for young people who don't drive yet, and older people who get to a point where they can't or shouldn't be driving. It provides access to all of those important things that increase their quality of life."

Zadeh serves on the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, the Metroplex's official regional planning agency.

Councilman Cary Moon, another Fort Worth representative on the transportation council, said he wanted to see sustained growth in Trinity Metro's ridership before the city invested additional tax dollars. Alternatives to fixed bus routes, like the rideshare-style Zipzones are promising, he said, and his office regularly discusses smaller improvements like signage, accessibility and more comfortable bus stops.

"What I task Trinity Metro with is delivering a mobility system people actually want to use," Moon said. "We have to see more riders before we increase tax dollars."

This year won't be the time to get more funding, he said.

For four years Fort Worth lowered its property tax rate, but this year Cooke is proposing keeping the rate the same. Moon said he wanted another reduction and was looking to find areas to cut spending.

Mayor Pro Tempore Jungus Jordan, a longtime member of the transportation council, did not return a call for comment.

If Fort Worth truly wants economic growth, transit must be a priority, Davis said, citing an oft-mentioned statistic from the American Public Transportation Association that for every dollar spent, public transportation generates \$4 in economic activity.

“What kind of city do we want to be?” Davis asked. “Do we want economic development? Do we want to be able to move our best resource, our people, around? Or do you want to make it difficult for them to get out of their neighborhoods to go to school or work?”

TRINITY METRO IMPROVEMENTS

The agency released a survey Aug. 3 asking [riders to share their priorities](#).

Questions focus on why people ride, whether a person is willing to walk farther for shorter wait times and if it's popular to go downtown or should routes be more direct to job centers. The survey will be used to develop alternatives to the bus route, which has basically been the same for almost 40 years.

The agency spent part of this year studying the system, but no one from Trinity Metro was available this week to discuss that analysis.

Davis said the analysis and the survey will inform how Trinity Metro reroutes buses. The likely outcome will be more service to job centers outside of downtown and at higher frequency.

The hope is those changes will help attract more riders.

Without more funding from the city, Davis wasn't optimistic riders will get what they deserve. “I worry this is just another study that's going to sit on the shelf,” he said.

[There are some obvious holes in the bus service.](#)

Of [Trinity Metro's](#) 48 bus routes, five carry 50% or more of the system's weekday riders. That means the bulk of the system isn't doing much to connect riders. Weekend service is even more sparse, with fewer routes and longer wait times.

That's likely because service is infrequent on most routes. Only seven operate every 15 minutes — the ideal frequency to attract riders — and 33 routes end service by 6 p.m. This makes using the metro tricky for all sorts of riders, whether they're trying to get to and from work, headed to the grocery store or riding for fun.

A year ago Chad Edwards, the city's mobility officer, and a consultant outlined three options for the City Council: incremental improvements that wouldn't require additional funding but also wouldn't catch up to Fort Worth's growth, a more robust plan that calls for more frequent routes and a TEXRail extension, and a “visionary” plan that calls for at least 19 bus routes with service at 15 minutes, among other changes.

Some changes are in the works now.

In the fall Trinity Metro will launch an updated GoPass app. Currently the app is only useful for buying and displaying electronic passes, meaning a third app like NextBus or Google Maps is needed to plan a trip. Accessing the ZipZone rideshare or the B-Cycle rental bikes requires yet more apps.

The new GoPass will have all of those functions built into one, Davis said, calling it “a big shot in the arm.”

The city and Trinity Metro are also finishing design work on a bus rapid transit line that will carry passengers swiftly from downtown to far east Fort Worth to a stop just on the other side of Loop 820. Bus rapid transit, called BRT, mimics light rail because it gives the bus a dedicated lane with large, well-lit transit stops and quick service. The city set aside about \$60 million for the project, which could be doubled with grants.

In July Trinity Metro launched a [Zipzone in Fort Worth's medical district](#). Rides in the Near Southside will be free through the end of August and will cost \$3 after. Riders hail a rideshare through Via that connects from the bus stop or train station to anywhere in the zone.

Other zones serve Crowley and the Mercantile and Alliance areas.

Trinity Metro also plans to enhance its services in the medical district by extending the TEXRail commuter line from its terminus at T&P Station about two more miles to the southwest, to a planned train station at Mistletoe Boulevard.

NCTCOG seeking input on Transportation Planning Initiatives

By Fort Worth Business Press Staff

North Texans are invited to comment online through Sept. 9 on several current transportation planning initiatives, including the effects of COVID-19 on regional transportation, emission reduction plans, potential funding awards, and federal performance measures.

To help the public better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation system, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will provide an update on several performance metrics. These policy metrics address the financial implications of the pandemic, travel behavior responses and benefits, and offsetting unemployment increases, NCTCOG said in a news release.

Staff will also provide the public with updates on several project initiatives.

In 2019, the Federal Highway Administration awarded funding to NCTCOG to develop the Interstate Highway 45 Zero Emission Corridor Plan to support both battery-electric and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles along IH 45 from Dallas to Houston.

Staff is seeking stakeholder involvement from fuel providers, fleets, infrastructure developers, fuel associations, government agencies, utilities, and interest groups and will provide an update on planning progress.

Additionally, staff will present recommended projects to receive funding as part of the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects.

Finally, staff will discuss recent federal transportation rules that require metropolitan planning organizations to monitor and set targets for a specific set of performance measures. Observed trends, project implementation and the effects of COVID-19 will impact the decision on whether target adjustments will be recommended.

The department's new interactive map tool, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, vehicle incentive opportunities and administrative revisions for Mobility 2045, the region's long-term transportation plan, will also be highlighted.

North Texans could provide input on these beginning August 10 and continuing through Sept. 9 at www.nctcog.org/input.

To request printed copies of the information, call (817) 608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org

Fort Worth doesn't need dangerous nuclear waste rolling through on Tarrant rail lines

By Peggy Hendon and Linda Hanratty, Fort Worth star telegram

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering licensing two different facilities to store the nation's high-level nuclear waste.

One would be at the existing low-level storage facility in Andrews County, Texas. The second, known as the Holtec site, would be between Carlsbad and Hobbs, New Mexico.

Why should Tarrant County be concerned?

Most of the uranium waste from nuclear power plants is located east of the Mississippi River. Union Pacific Railroad appears to be the most likely carrier of the high-level nuclear waste casks, although any commercial rail lines could be used.

Union Pacific tracks run through the middle of the county, just south of downtown Fort Worth and just north of Arlington's City Hall and library, traversing neighborhoods of all kinds. Fort Worth's medical district and the TCU and UT-Arlington campuses are within 1.5 miles of the tracks.

A second Union Pacific rail line runs north toward Denton from Tower 55, a major railroad intersection just southeast of downtown Fort Worth. A large Union Pacific railyard lies southwest of downtown.

Tower 55 holds vital national and international significance, connecting freight and passenger travel between the East and West coasts, Southeast, Midwest, Gulf Coast, Mexico, and Canada. More than 100 trains pass through Tower 55 each day.

Interim Storage Partners, which operates the Andrews County site, has asked to have 45 days to move low-level waste from Vermont. The rail cars carrying the high-level radioactive waste would sit at the Fort Worth rail yard, across from Colonial Country Club.

These nuclear waste cars are readily identifiable, given their huge dumbbell-like shape, size and weight, which makes them a potential target for terrorist attacks.

High-level radioactive waste is one of the most dangerous substances on earth, consisting of irradiated fuel rods that have been inside nuclear reactors. Exposure to unshielded nuclear waste is lethal. One railcar would carry more plutonium than was in the bomb dropped on Nagasaki.

If the Nuclear Regulatory Commission approves either or both licenses, thousands of rail shipments of deadly, high-level radioactive waste could move through Tarrant County for more than 20 years, risking accidents leaks, and terrorist actions.

Transport of massive amounts of high-level waste in thousands of shipments across the country is unprecedented. A 2019 report of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board found that there is a substantial lack of data regarding potential damage of spent nuclear fuel during transport.

Many rails are only designed to carry 143 tons per car. The loaded casks for this waste weigh 210 tons or more. It is unclear whether tracks in Tarrant County would handle such weight. And accidents can happen. A cask carrying low-level waste that was headed to Andrews caught fire in the Chicago area in June.

A better alternative would be to leave high-level waste at existing nuclear plants until a permanent repository is found to bury canisters underground. The repository should be owned by the federal government, not a private entity.

One radioactive railway accident in Tarrant County could contaminate our region and harm thousands of lives, posing substantial health risks and seriously impacting future economic growth.

Resolutions opposing consolidated interim storage of this waste and its transport through heavily populated communities have been passed by Bexar, Dallas, Nueces, El Paso and Midland Counties and the cities of San Antonio, Midland and Denton, as well as the Midland Chamber of Commerce.

Tarrant County, along with the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington, should also oppose the transportation of high-level nuclear waste through our communities and advise our federal representatives and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of our serious concerns. Our lives and economic well-being may depend upon preventive action now.

Fort Worth: Document Explains Regional Funding Shortfall in Transportation

Traditional transportation revenue sources are not keeping up with the expanding region's needs.

By Press Release Desk, Patch

Dallas-Fort Worth's population of more than 7.5 million makes it the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the nation. The 12-county area grew by 1.2 million people between 2010 and 2020. It is expected to continue its rapid expansion through 2045, when its population could exceed 11.2 million.

Traditional transportation revenue sources are not keeping up with the expanding region's needs. But planners and policymakers continue to search for solutions that will help residents move throughout the region reliably.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has published a [fact sheet](#) to explain how transportation needs can be met well into the future.

Even with billions of dollars of improvements planned through 2045, there is still a shortfall anticipated. Identifying additional transportation revenue is key to reducing congestion across North Texas.

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has embraced innovation in an effort to complete major projects. The RTC works collaboratively with local, state and federal partners to direct funding to projects that improve efficiency. The region's continued growth has made it a crucial part of the statewide economy.

To learn more, contact the NCTCOG Transportation Department [by email](#) at 817-695-9240.

Dallas Sports Commission's Monica Paul talks chances of hosting 2026 World Cup games

By Evan Hoopfer, Dallas Business Journal

[Monica Paul](#)'s job is always challenging. The executive director for the Dallas Sports Commission is tasked with bringing sporting events to North Texas and competes with other large U.S. metro areas trying to do the same.

COVID-19 presented another challenge altogether. While some industries figured out how to pivot to work from home and host client meetings over video chat, sports simply couldn't happen for a period of several months while athletic directors and league commissioners grappled with how to safely play sports in a pandemic.

Paul laid out the grim numbers. So far, DFW has had 32 events canceled since the start of COVID-19 representing \$191 million in lost economic impact. For the rest of the year, Paul projected another 22 events to cancel and another \$132 million in lost economic impact.

"They are big numbers for us," Paul said. "We're not discounting, by any means, the fall.

We do have some events that are going to take place, so we're focused on them. But we're really trying to focus on the spring and getting an idea of how we can assist some of our clients in planning for those events."

Some of those events include a National Cheerleaders Association All-Star event, VEX Robotics World Championship and the Lone Star Volleyball Classic tournament.

Another challenge for Paul? Her once eight-person team is now four as a lot of the organization's funding comes through things like hotel night stays and visitors coming to town, which has been depressed since the pandemic started and is not projected to come back en masse soon.

Despite the challenges, Paul and her team have their sights set on bringing some massive sporting events to North Texas this decade, including the World Cup. To discuss that and more, Paul spoke with the *Dallas Business Journal*.

What are some big sporting events that you've secured in the last year or so that you're particularly proud of?

Definitely getting another Women's Final Four for 2023, I think that will be a special one.

I think our four-year partnership with the Cowboys and FC Dallas for the MexTour is the only one of its kind in the United States, so we're proud to be hosting the Mexican National Team for four years. It kind of ties into our overall 2026 World Cup plan.

That'll be the — not the sole focus — but a major focus for us over the next year as FIFA makes a determination for host cities for 2026. They'll probably be making a determination summer or fall 2021.

I know North America will host the 2026 World Cup and several cities will be part of that. If you had your druthers, what would Dallas' role be?

If I had my way, I would like to see at least six group-stage matches here in Dallas and us hosting the final. If not the final, then the semifinal. I think we're prime for that on location, venues, training facilities, accommodations, transportation, our corporate base — I could probably go on and on. But in addition to matches, in 1994 Dallas hosted the international broadcast center and we'd very much like to host that again in 2026. This is a 10,000-plus media that would be here within our city and region for an extended amount of time.

Is it possible games could be played in more than one venue?

It'd be at one stadium, most likely. But we have to put up various training camps and base camps. A base camp is something that a team has designated 'OK, Cotton Bowl Stadium or Toyota Stadium in Frisco is the base camp for a team.' They come here for a month training there, and they fly off to wherever their matches are and then they fly back to their base camp and continue to practice. Kind of a 'home away from home' type of situation for the team.

Assistant City Manager named Award Winner by North Central Texas Council of Governments

Alison Ortowski, Southlake's Assistant City Manager, was named the North Central Texas Council of Governments' 2020 Linda Keithley Award for Women in Public Service Winner at a virtual meeting on August 14.

She was nominated earlier this year by Mayor Laura Hill and City Manager Shana Yelverton for her nearly 17-year career in public service, including 13 with the City of Southlake.

"Alison's impact on Southlake is tremendous," said City Manager Shana Yelverton. "She is an outstanding decision-maker who can rightly rely on this strength, but generously works to ensure that voices are heard, and perspectives are honored."

Ortowski's public service career started as the Main Street Director for the City of Gatesville, Texas, from 2000 – 2003. She then served as the Downtown Project Coordinator for the City of Denton from 2003 – 2007. Southlake City Manager Shana Yelverton hired Alison in 2007 as the Assistant to the City Manager. In 2013, due to her ability to deftly handle complex and detailed projects, like the Southlake Citizens Satisfaction Survey and the production of Southlake's award-winning annual budget document, City Manager Yelverton promoted Ortowski to Assistant City Manager.

"Alison is a woman of integrity who finds a way to get things done, a trustworthy, can-do professional who brings enormous energy to her work," said Mayor Laura Hill. "She is brilliant and is beyond dedicated to serving Southlake with great competence."

Ortowski is a member of ICMA – International City/County Management Association, TCMA – Texas City Management Association, TML- Texas Municipal League, and the Urban Management Assistants of North Texas. She has also acted as a liaison for SPIN (Southlake Program for the Involvement of Neighborhoods) and for the Community Enhancement Development Corporation (CEDC), the board that works with Council to support The Marq Southlake facility operations, and the Economic Development and Tourism Master Plan recommendations.

"Alison leads by example. She is a change agent within an organization that is constantly evolving, and she expects as much of herself, if not more than she expects of those she works with," said Boerne City Manager and former Southlake Assistant City Manager Ben Thatcher.

"Alison is fearless, committed, and determined and does not shy away from tough challenges." The award recognizes a woman who displays the Linda Keithley traits of integrity, dignity, poise, loyalty, commitment, and dedication while serving as a faithful public servant.

The award was established in 1986 to honor Mrs. Keithley for her 17 years of service to the Council of Governments.

How this old gravel mine may become Fort Worth's hottest transit-oriented development

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Today, it's a mostly barren stretch of land just off Loop 820 in east Fort Worth — a former sand and gravel mining area that was dug up decades ago, and then left vacant.

But developer Ken Newell is ambitiously working to build on the property a mixed-use neighborhood known as Trinity Lakes.

The project incorporates an existing 15-acre lake that was formed long ago by rainwater filling one of the mining pits. Newell envisions the lake being surrounded by town homes, a grocery store, retail shops and pubs — all within walking distance of regional hike-and-bike trails connecting Fort Worth to Dallas, and a new Trinity Railway Express commuter train station.

“It will be a place where people can go and get out of the weather and get a cup of coffee before they get on the train,” he said.

After years of talk, city leaders and transit officials are ready to join with Newell and build the project at the northeast quadrant of Loop 820 and Trinity Boulevard.

TRANSIT ‘A LONG TIME COMING’

A tax-increment financing district, which was formed by the city to help pay for construction of utilities, roads and other infrastructure in the area, approved earlier this month a development contract for Trinity Lakes. The contract covers construction of a new sewer line and a road connecting Trinity Boulevard to the planned train station, at a cost of up to \$6.2 million.

The developer, Newell Companies, will be authorized to do the work and seek reimbursement from the city.

“It has been a long time coming,” [Fort Worth Councilwoman Gyna Bivens](#), whose district includes Trinity Lakes, said in an email. “I find the idea of transit-oriented development coming to the east side thrilling.”

Bivens, who serves on the tax-increment financing board, added that the property “is a perfect fit for a rail station.”

The Trinity Railway Express already runs along the tracks that form the northern boundary of the Trinity Lakes property. Commuter trains whiz by dozens of times per day, carrying passengers from downtown Fort Worth to Dallas.

Newell, a former Fort Worth transit board member, has enlisted the help of Trinity Metro to build a new Trinity Railway Express station on the property. The station is expected to cost \$6 million, with the developer and the transit agency splitting the cost.

Construction of the station is being held up somewhat by the bidding process. Initial bids came in too high than what was budgeted for Trinity Lakes, Trinity Metro officials said.

Officials are looking for ways to get the price of building the station down. They also want the construction project to include double tracking the Trinity Railway Express line in that area, so that trains can run more frequently.

Newell is optimistic the challenges the project faces in the bidding process are minor and can be overcome.

[The North Central Texas Council of Governments](#), which is the region's official planning body, has applied for up to \$47 million in federal dollars to make improvements up and down the 34-mile long Trinity Railway Express line, and some of those funds could be used to prepare the Trinity Lakes area for development, officials said.

FORT WORTH INFILL GROWTH

The Trinity Lakes project is in an area along the Trinity River bottoms that was once too remote for residential growth but is now prospering. The area features good access to Texas 183 and Precinct Line Road in Hurst, Interstate 30 heading to Arlington and Dallas and Loop 820 in Fort Worth.

The Texas Department of Transportation is in the midst of a multi-million-dollar expansion of freeways in the area, including flyovers connecting Texas 121 and Loop 820 on the western edge of the Trinity Lakes project.

About 3,200 single-family homes have already been built in the area, including homes in the [Lakes of River Trails neighborhood](#) just south of Hurst — and just east of the Trinity Lakes project. Eventually, the area could be home to as many as 12,000 people, Newell said.

The land surrounding the Trinity Lakes project is 1,600 acres. It's mostly flat, other than the several dozen ponds and small lakes left by decades of mining.

Although many of the nearby residential areas feature typical brick, single-family homes with grass lawns, the Trinity Lakes project would include multi-family housing and a new network of streets designed to equally accommodate cars, bicycles and pedestrians.

Hundreds of trees would be planted as part of a broader landscape plan. And, Newell said, there is plenty of room not only for apartments but also a grocery store, pharmacy and other shops and restaurants — all surrounding a tiny, charming lake.

The Trinity Lakes train station would replace the nearby Richland Hills station, a popular park-and-ride lot less than a mile to the west.

Richland Hills voters opted in 2016 to leave Trinity Metro, citing a lack of satisfaction with transit services in their city. Trinity Metro has already notified Richland Hills of plans to close that city's train station, once the Trinity Lakes station is up and running.

As one door for transit-oriented development closes, another opens up.

Rowlett mayor appointed to NCTCOG executive board

By Staff report, Rowlett Lakeshore Times

City of Rowlett Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian was appointed to serve on the Executive Board of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) on Friday, Aug. 14.

NCTCOG's Executive Board, composed of 17 locally elected officials, and one ex-officio non-voting member of the legislature, is the policy-making body for all activities undertaken by the Council of Governments, including program activities and decisions, regional plans, and fiscal and budgetary policies.

"I am honored to serve as a member of this team and excited for the opportunity to work with so many outstanding local governments at this regional level," said Dana-Bashian. "Together, we will continue to build partnerships allowing us to leverage our abilities and affect the programs and decisions that benefit both our individual communities and the region as a whole."

Dana-Bashian has served as Mayor of Rowlett since August 2017 and on the Rowlett City Council since May 2013. Mayor Dana-Bashian is also a member of the Board of Directors, including serving as Treasurer, of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition, a transportation advocacy group made up of cities, counties and transportation agencies across north Texas.

About The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) NCTCOG is a voluntary association of, by and for local governments, established to assist in regional planning.

NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions. With over 230 member governments, NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas centered around Dallas and Fort Worth.

Now in its 52nd year, NCTCOG's programs encompass transportation planning, environment, and development, aging and disability resources, emergency preparedness, demographic research, regional training, criminal justice, 911 emergency numbers, a regional police academy, and more.

Waste in the water? Fort Worth and Arlington trying to stop harmful sewer overflows.

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

As shoppers scooped up packs of toilet paper in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, city water departments across the country shared a similar concern: Would the toilet paper shortage lead to an influx of alternatives, including supposedly “flushable wipes” and Kleenex, and [increase the number of clogs](#) in the sewage system?

At least for water officials in Fort Worth and Arlington, the fear did not become reality. That doesn't mean that both cities have not grappled with how to combat what are known as sanitary sewer overflows, a public health concern that involves the spilling of raw sewage into city streets or streams before it has reached a treatment facility.

Facing the double threat of fines and growing populations, water officials have taken steps in recent years to reduce the number of overflows. There are a variety of reasons why overflows take place, according to [the Environmental Protection Agency](#): too much rainfall infiltrating the sewer system, sewer lines that do not have the capacity to carry the wastewater or a deteriorating system that has not been properly cleaned or maintained.

Because the overflows contain raw sewage, they can carry bacteria, viruses, parasitic organisms, intestinal worms and inhaled molds and fungi, according to the EPA.

That's why Fort Worth and other cities must act quickly to clean the area and take samples to ensure that harmful bacteria has been removed, said Stacy Walters, Fort Worth's regulatory environmental administrator.

“All sewer overflows are a public health concern for us, which is why we have short term actions,” Walters said. “We understand the effects and that's one of the reasons why we go through a lot of effort during the cleanup process because we're trying to restore the environment as quickly as possible and without leaving any footprint in that process.”

Residents dumping large amounts of grease down the drain and flushing non-biodegradable materials are also among the top reasons that water departments are called to address blockages, according to city officials. In Arlington, 79% of the city's overflows are grease-related, said Craig Gantt, the assistant director of field operations for the water department.

“In addition to those fats, oils and grease, it is those materials that should not be flushed down the toilet,” said Craig Cummings, Arlington's water utility director. “Frankly, what should be flushed down the toilet is toilet paper and the other things should be going to a landfill.

Keeping those materials out of the sanitary sewer system would go a long way to preventing some of the stoppages that we have.”

Overflows can have dire consequences for the environment, particularly when the wastewater spills directly into a body of water. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality fines cities for sewer overflows that pollute water bodies, measuring the impact in the amount of gallons spilled and the count of fish killed after the incident.

WASTEWATER OVERFLOWS

This map indicates the total number of reported sanitary sewer overflows from 2015 to 2019 in Fort Worth by gallons of unauthorized wastewater discharged into the environment. The larger the circle, the more wastewater was released.

The 2019 discharges are in red and also includes a description of the incident. Click on the circles for more information. Data provided by the North Central Texas Council of Governments and Esri.

<HTTPS://MEDIAPROGRAM.MAPS.ARCGIS.COM/APPS/WEBAPPVIEWER/INDEX.HTML?ID=13D3F9BBA62B4CE382F8CC98EDDBFF36>

Last month, the TCEQ [approved a \\$13,125 fine](#) on Fort Worth for an October 2019 incident that led to the discharge of 3,500 gallons of untreated wastewater into a tributary feeding French Lake. Due to a collapsed sewer main, approximately 755 fish were killed before the city was able to clean the area, according to the TCEQ enforcement report.

“All sanitary overflows are critical and urgent,” said Chris Harder, Fort Worth’s water utility director. “One like this rises to the highest levels of criticality, and our remediation work was occurring over that weekend to ensure the area was cleaned as soon as possible.”

HISTORY OF FINES, HIGH NUMBERS OF SEWER OVERFLOWS IN FORT WORTH

Fort Worth’s water department is no stranger to responding to high numbers of sewer overflows. In 2010, the city hit a peak of 525 sewer overflows, topping the previous year’s record of 522, according to totals reported by the water department.

Between May 2007 and July 2017, officials reported 3,936 overflows totaling about 57 million gallons of wastewater, according to a 2018 agreement between the city and the TCEQ.

Most of those discharges were due to debris and grease blockages, in addition to some caused by structural issues with sewer lines and heavy rain that infiltrated the system.

“It’s really disappointing that they had that many incidents, but it’s not surprising because Fort Worth has for several decades now put an emphasis on rapid growth over sound, sensible infrastructure development,” said Lon Burnam, a former state representative and chair of the Tarrant Coalition for Environmental Awareness. “It’s almost inevitable that during that time frame, there was a really high incidence rate.”

Over the past five years, Fort Worth has been fined by the TCEQ at least five times for sewer overflows that resulted in killing 2,700 fish, according to the city’s compliance history with TCEQ.

Based on that history, in addition to other violations, the TCEQ rated Fort Worth’s compliance “satisfactory,” though the city’s 2019 compliance rating ranked among the worst when compared to other major Texas cities.

When it comes to [the rating system](#), the lower the better: The top performers earn a rating of 0.10 or lower, while satisfactory performers receive a rating between 0.11 and 55.

Fort Worth's 10.10 rating was higher than Dallas, Houston, Austin, San Antonio and El Paso, though Arlington had a slightly higher rating at 12.06. Arlington has received at least three fines for sewage overflows in the past five years, according to compliance records.

While Arlington's Cummings said he was unfamiliar with the rating system, Walters said the TCEQ rating, which is calculated each September, was inaccurate for Fort Worth.

"We realized that TCEQ has some violations in their compliance history that are not really violations of our permit," Walters said. "We think we're improving, and I think we understand where our problems are. We just need to make sure that everything is being accurately reflected in TCEQ's database as well."

MAINTENANCE, PUBLIC OUTREACH LEADS TO REDUCTION

Since 2007, Fort Worth has been part of TCEQ's [Sanitary Sewer Overflow Initiative](#), signing two 10-year agreements with the commission that require the city to document its progress on how it is expanding and cleaning sewer lines and constructing wastewater collection pipelines to reduce issues with overflows due to heavy rain, amid other long-term plans.

The last agreement, signed in 2018, has received a funding commitment of at least \$375 million from the city, Harder said. He noted that sewer overflows have consistently decreased year over year since 2010. Fort Worth was successful in reducing the number of overflows to 134 in 2017, though that number saw a slight bump in 2019, when the city counted 172.

"We're committed to rehabbing and replacing over 10 miles of sewer lines each year," Harder said. "We have some of these big milestone projects that we have commitments to, but we also have our annual maintenance program that we're committed to."

With these new commitments, we anticipate seeing a further reduction in the amount of overflows."

Currently, 104 municipalities and water authorities participate in the TCEQ program, according to TCEQ spokesperson Brian McGovern. Participation protects water systems from most formal enforcement measures for sewer overflow violations and allows officials to direct funding toward fixing sewer system issues rather than paying fines, according to the commission.

Arlington is not an active participant in the initiative, though the city does follow many of the guidelines outlined by TCEQ, Cummings said. Brad Franklin, the assistant director of engineering for the Arlington water department, said the TCEQ has allowed the city to implement projects and install new technology, such as smart covers to wirelessly monitor manholes and water levels, instead of paying penalties.

Both Arlington and Fort Worth have developed risk models to detect trends and predict where their field crews need to conduct more maintenance work before an overflow occurs. In Arlington, limited resources dictate that the city be smart about where it sends its expensive maintenance trucks, Cummings said.

"We're seeing some improvement but it's not going down dramatically," Cummings said. "I think that's because we can't be in all places at all times. What we're trying to do is find that happy

medium between what is cost-effective and what is moving us forward toward driving that number of overflows down over time.”

Raising public awareness of how to help reduce overflows is a large part of the water department’s mandate as well, Harder said. Part of Fort Worth’s efforts have included [launching a podcast](#), sending fliers with water bills and working with restaurants to ensure that their grease traps are working effectively.

“A great majority of overflows are preventable, but it has to be a collaboration,” Harder said. “We have a very robust public outreach program, and we’re meeting regularly to assess our operating performance and make modifications to our plan as we see opportunities.

It’s one of the highest priorities we have as a utility.”

Additional track arrives for DART's Silver Line

With the arrival of the second load of rail, work moves into the heavier construction phase with an anticipated completion of the project and its 10 new stations in early 2023.

By MASS Transit

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has received a second delivery of rail for its \$1.2-billion Silver Line.

Another 50 segments of new rail were off-loaded Aug. 3 in Carrollton. The project's first 50 rail segments from Steel Dynamics, Inc., arrived July 15.

Construction update

DART's design-builder for the 26-mile Silver Line Regional Rail Project, Archer Western Herzog, has been concentrating on the removal of abandoned rail along the right-of-way and utility relocation.

The design-builder has also prepared 30 percent, 60 percent and 100 percent design packages for civil, guideway, track, stations, bridge layouts, street modifications and traffic control.

Overall, DART has received 281 of 436 total design submittals through Aug. 5, 2020.

With the arrival of the second load of rail, work moves into the heavier construction phase with an anticipated completion of the project and its 10 new stations in early 2023.

For the northern portion of its 13-city, 700-square-mile, service area, an area currently seeing growth in employment, population and activity centers, DART plans to use eight Stadler FLIRT trainsets that were ordered in June 2019.

DART is reviewing vehicle design packages including engine and cooling system performance reports and interior layout, and has received 150 of 164 total vehicle submittals, through Aug. 5, for a scheduled vehicle design completion date of September 2020.

The Silver Line's equipment maintenance facility is currently at a 65 percent level of design.

DART has forecasted the Silver Line at 5,630 daily boarding's at the beginning of revenue service anticipated in March 2023.

Dallas-Fort Worth ranks fourth for U.S. commercial property investment in first half of 2020

Even with annual decline, D-FW was behind only New York, LA and San Francisco.

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

The Dallas-Fort Worth area ranked fourth nationally for total real estate investment at midyear.

Property market investment in the D-FW area totaled about \$23 billion for the 12-month period ending in June, according to researchers at CBRE and Real Capital Analytics.

That's down 7.5% from the previous year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But the year-over-year decline in investment in North Texas was tiny compared to the almost 70% drop nationwide for properties including offices, apartments, hotels, shopping centers and industrial buildings.

"The hotel sector had the largest percentage decrease year-over year (-91.2%), while industrial had the least at -49.8%," CBRE's analysts said in a new report.

Only New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco had more total real estate investment for the year ending with June.

And out of the top 20 U.S. investment markets included in CBRE's survey, only five slight had year-over-year gains – Seattle, Phoenix, Orlando, Portland and Raleigh, N.C.

So far in 2020, most of the major commercial property sales were completed or put under contract before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The biggest property deals of this year include the \$400 million sale of the Galleria office towers and the \$370 million sale of the Union development north of downtown Dallas.

The sale of the 25-story Kincaid at Legacy apartments in Plano, the 22-story St. Paul Place in downtown Dallas and the purchase of three North Dallas office buildings in Preston center also were among the biggest investment deals in the area so far this year.

Klyde Warren Park director Kit Sawers discusses phase two plans

By Ryan Salchert, Dallas Business Journal

Few projects in the last decade have been as influential and transformative to downtown and Uptown Dallas as the creation of Klyde Warren Park.

Opened in 2012, the 5.2-acre public park, built on top of Woodall Rodgers Freeway, has not only created one of the best public spaces in Dallas but has also inspired commercial development along the edges of the park. Today, the numerous condos and office buildings that sit along the park are some of Dallas's most expensive and desirable real estate.

Still more park is yet to come. In late 2018, it was announced that the park would expand between St. Paul and Akard streets, bringing an additional 36,000 square feet of green space and a three-story enclosed pavilion to the park. Originally set to kick off in 2019 with a price tag of \$76 million, the park expansion is now on schedule to begin in late 2021.

One of the leaders behind the park's latest expansion and its programming efforts is [Kit Sawers](#), president of Klyde Warren Park.

Was this second phase of Klyde Warren Park always part of the original plan?

It was definitely part of the original plan to take the park as close to the Perot Museum as possible. To be quite honest with you, when the park reached St. Paul Street, they just got tired and ran out of money. Therefore, phase two was put on hold. Of course, it's been tweaked since then. The exciting part is that so many of the original partners are still involved and we thought it was a great time to finish up the project.

Can you tell me about what's being added in phase two?

There will be the three-story pavilion, then on the other side of Akard (Street), there will be another 40,000-square-foot deck. We're also adding 1.65 acres of new park.

Events that would be in the pavilion would include private events, public, non-profit, corporate, family events, etc. It will also give us a backup space to have events if they can't happen in the park for whatever reason. We'll also have lots of free programming year-round and a place to hold performances, like concerts. One thing we hope to do at the far west deck is have an ice-skating rink and holiday market during the winter months to give the city a central location for fun holiday festivities.

In addition to the expansion of the park, we're planning some enhancements to the existing park. We're planning to add a large fountain on Pearl (Street), an iconic fountain for children to walk into, like the current water features we have. We hope it would create a beautiful entrance to the Arts District.

We also want to relocate the dog park closer to Museum Tower. This would make more room in the actual park, but also help expand the footprint of the dog park.

We're also planning to expand the children's park. We would extend it to St. Paul (Street) which allows us to add more water features and play places, plus a picnic area too. You learn lessons

when you see how the community actually uses space. We learned that the children's park is too small for how much it's used. It's really loved and is always teeming with children. It'll be great to expand it.

Is the goal still to begin construction in 2021?

We hope so. COVID has slowed things down a little bit as everyone makes their pivots and new plans, but if I could make a prediction today, that's the plan.

Arlington approves warehouse plan by airport, but urge developers to listen to neighbors

By Kailey Broussard, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Arlington City Council members moved along a request to [rezone an undeveloped space for office and warehouse development](#) — as long as the developer reaches back out to concerned residents who live next door.

Miles Terry of developer Jackson-Shaw is one step closer to developing Parc 20, a two-building facility at 4801 S. Collins St. Terry and Douglas Cooper, with engineering firm Mycoskie and Associates in Arlington, said the plan will create new jobs in the city, alleviate flooding in the neighborhood and make use of undeveloped land. The plans also include for a barrier wall and trees to minimize noise.

“Both the buildings and the site were designed with respect to, and in coherence with, their surroundings,” Terry wrote in an emailed statement.

However, a handful of nearby residents said no amount of mitigation can change the fact they’ll have a warehouse facility within 50 yards of their homes.

“It’s not going to be the same for us,” Angelica Chavez Mireles said. Mireles gathered [15 petition signatures](#) from residents along the property line. The petition cited issues ranging from the environmental and health hazards construction poses to the trash, increased crime and traffic the facilities may bring. One resident said he and [his family is moving](#) because of the proposal.

Developers responded to the petitioners’ concerns, assuring construction would be in line with city requirements and environmental regulations and that Parc 20 would not impact their quality of life.

The council approved the proposal 8-1 following six residents’ comments against the proposal and eight supporting Parc 20. District 3 Councilman Marvin Sutton, who represents the neighborhood, opposed the application — even though he has previously supported the project — due to residents’ concerns.

“I’d like to see a little bit more dialogue” between the developers and residents, he said... Helen Moise, District 1 Councilwoman, suggested proposing set hours in which trucks could operate on the site to allay noise concerns.

“You might have more neighborhood support from the houses that back up to the project if you have some limits,” she said.

Other council members, including Dr. Ignacio Nunez, who represents District 5, asked Terry to consider including a rest area to encourage drivers to turn off their vehicles.

“Thank you for the wall, thank you for the 8-foot trees. We’re just asking for a little bit more,” he said.

After their initial public meeting was canceled, the developers, as well as property owner and Arlington attorney Kris Landrith, visited with residents earlier in the year to field concerns.

Landrith purchased the property in 1996 and said he has been searching for a developer who, like him, cares about their neighbors.

"I believe we've found the best suited developer for the tract for several reasons," he said. Mayor Jeff Williams called on residents with concerns to lend an "open ear" to the developers.

Williams said previous councils and commissions have considered several projects for the site but denied them. Additionally, he said, the site location would not lend well to commercial or residential development. Although the site has sat unused for decades, he said, it cannot remain undeveloped forever.

"It is not realistic to believe that that will be green space from now on," he said.

City council members must vote on the zoning case a second time before the request is approved. Arlington City Council's next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 8.

Long-Term Closure on Interstate 35 West Expected to Last Through Summer 2021

Long-term closure set for southbound Keller Hicks exit off I-35W

By NBC5DFW

Parts of Interstate 35 West will be closed for an extended period of time due to construction activities.

The off-ramp from southbound I-35W to Keller Hicks Road will be closed for work on North Tarrant Express 35-W.

Traffic will be redirected to the next exit at Heritage Trace Parkway, and the previous exit at State Highway 170 will also be open.

This closure is anticipated to last through summer 2021. Construction activities and schedules are subject to change.

The North Tarrant Express 35W project is considered a critical infrastructure sector, and as the project continues, staff, contractors and construction workers will follow guidelines to ensure the health and safety of employees amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the Agenda: Connecting economic development, housing and community regeneration in Dallas

By Bill Hethcock, Dallas Business Journal

With a tight fiscal environment, the pandemic, social unrest and social and economic disparity plaguing the city, it's clear that Dallas, like all big cities, faces formidable challenges.

Dallas City Council members will be briefed today on an ambitious "roadmap" aimed at addressing these issues and more by connecting the city's work in the areas of economic development, housing and community regeneration.

Priorities in the *Community Transformation Action Roadmap* include generating economic spending, introducing new pilot programs to foster creativity, exploring regulatory and policy changes to fuel social and economic advancement and creating a more powerful brand for the city of Dallas.

The roadmap lays out a three-year timeline for action.

Sound like a tall order?

It is, according to [Eric A. Johnson](#), chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services for Dallas.

Not a 'plan'

"Over the past 90-days, we have thought about how to connect our collective work in economic development, housing, and community regeneration, with an emphasis on action," Johnson wrote in a memo to the City Council. "We were seeking to design an effort that would respond to the current landscape, and address decades of community feedback and ideas to advance prosperity in areas with unrealized potential. We did not want to duplicate efforts or become another 'plan.'"

"It is our hope that upon reaching its destination, that the *Roadmap* sets in motion foundational progress and prosperity for all and unleashes unprecedented economic and social impact," Johnson adds.

So, how do you get there?

One priority of the roadmap will be to pursue public-private partnerships to generate resources beyond the city's general fund for community regeneration. The Community Regeneration Fund would support affordable housing production, small business lending in underserved communities and historic preservation, through loans and grants.

The roadmap also cites a need in Dallas for a framework that supports better policy decision making on the economic development front.

The framework should be based on factors such as the economy, the environment and society and be wide-ranging and flexible, the roadmap says. The policy will be designed with input from the City Council and community stakeholders and will work in tandem with city development and

investment tools to create “a progressive business and community environment,” the planning document says.

Another priority will be a data-driven approach to community development that’s planned and launched in partnership with external stakeholders. It will address improving access to health care, access to healthy food, green space, education and workforce development, and broadband access for the community and in support of furthering education access.

The data driven approach will also be applied to affordable housing and financial empowerment.

This project will also reimagine public safety by examining and responding to property decline, public nuisance, and other factors that assist with making neighborhoods safer by design.

Connecting the dots

The roadmap is coordinated by the Office of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services. The three-year planner, concept — is broken into seven categories and links departments and external partners to programs, projects and initiatives that are underway or proposed.

The roadmap was developed through 60-plus virtual meetings with City Council, community leaders and stakeholders.

The roadmap analyzes the potential economic and social impact if the three-year plan is followed.

Some of those numbers include:

- Projected Economic Impact: \$34.8 billion
- Projected Employment Impact: 88,000 jobs
- Tax Revenue Projected Impact: \$858 million
- Housing Initiatives: \$1.2 billion in estimated development value and projected combined economic impact from 2020-2024 of \$1.5 billion
- Infrastructure projects: \$1.3 billion in estimated development value and projected combined economic impact from 2020-2024 of \$1.76 billion
- Transformative projects: \$6.6 billion in estimated development value and projected combined economic impact from 2020-2024 of \$31 billion

Prosper's Smith elected president of NCTCOG

By Staff Report, Celina Record

Prosper Mayor Ray Smith was elected president of the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) Executive Board at NCTCOG's 54th annual General Assembly, which was held virtually Friday.

The executive board is the policy-making body of the Council of Governments, which serves the 16 North Central Texas counties of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Navarro, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Somervell, Tarrant and Wise. Smith will lead the 17-member board for the next 12 months.

Smith assumes the leadership of NCTCOG from Wise County Judge J. D. Clark, who was elected to the one-year term in June 2019. He will continue to serve on the NCTCOG Board as past president. DeSoto Mayor Curtistene McCowan was elected vice president, and Rockwall County Judge David Sweet was elected secretary/treasurer.

Smith was first elected to NCTCOG's executive board in 2016 and served as director, secretary-treasurer and vice president before being elected president. He is also an alternate member of the Regional Transportation Council. He was elected mayor of the town of Prosper in May 2010, having served on the Town Council for three years. His service in Prosper also included an appointment in May 2004 as president of the Economic Development Corporation, where he is a board member. Smith is also chairman of the Collin College Foundation Board of Directors.

Prior to moving to Prosper, Smith served in the city of Frisco on the City Council, Economic Development Corporation, Community Development Corporation, Planning & Zoning Board, as a volunteer firefighter and with the Frisco Education Foundation.

He is a 1981 graduate of Baylor University, where he earned a BBA and was a member of the 1980 Southwest Conference Champion Baylor football team. He is a market president with Farmers Bank and Trust.

Smith and his wife, Lena, have been married for 30 years, and have raised three sons and are currently raising two grandsons.

In addition to the four officers, 13 Directors were elected to the 17 member NCTCOG board: Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins; Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley; Collin County Judge Chris Hill; Denton County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell; Dallas Councilmember Lee Kleinman; Fort Worth Councilmember Kelly Allen-Gray; Arlington Councilmember Andrew Piel; Allen Councilmember Gary Caplinger; Corinth Mayor Bill Heidemann; Plano Councilmember Kayci Prince; Erath County Judge Alfonso Campos; Burleson Mayor, Ken Shetter; and Rowlett Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian. The Honorable State Representative Yvonne Davis, District 111 is the NCTCOG Ex Officio member.

Here's how the plastics fire in Grand Prairie is affecting our air quality

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Officials are warning that a [massive fire at a plastics plant](#) in Grand Prairie is likely to burn through Thursday, prompting concerns about the amount of pollutants being released into the air and its effect on residents.

No one has been injured due to the flames at the Poly-America manufacturing plant, which have caused plumes of black smoke since firefighters were called to the scene early Wednesday.

The cause? A power line fell onto storage buildings containing plastic rolls, igniting the entire area, according to Bill Murphy, assistant chief of operations with the Grand Prairie Fire Department. Evacuations have not been ordered as of early Wednesday afternoon, but widespread power outages are expected as the fire continues to burn for at least another day, Murphy told reporters.

Gov. Greg Abbott said in a statement that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and city officials are monitoring air quality conditions in order to address safety concerns in the community. People with respiratory conditions, such as asthma or emphysema, should stay away from the area and remain indoors to avoid breathing issues or throat soreness, Murphy said.

"Nobody needs to seek medical attention unless you have severe, severe difficulty breathing from it," Murphy said, according to [KXAS Channel 5](#). "It's just an irritant but stay clear of it if you can."

The weather conditions in Grand Prairie should allow the air pollution caused by the fire to disperse rather than linger in the air for a long period of time, said Melanie Sattler, a civil engineering professor at UT Arlington who has studied air pollution for more than 20 years. The sunny weather and medium wind speed will play a large role in diluting pollutants, Sattler said.

"When we have sunny conditions, we get more atmospheric turbulence," Sattler said. "You get heating of the ground, then you get the warm air that rises up, and so you get a lot of convective turbulent mixing of the atmosphere when you have sunny days like we have today."

Public health officials are more concerned when there are inversion conditions, which occur when warm air above cooler air acts like a cap and traps pollution where people can breathe it in. Light wind speeds also contribute to this issue, Sattler said.

"You get pollutants that hang around for a much longer period of time," Sattler said. "My guess is that today that we have pretty good conditions for dispersing things."

Locals are still concerned about the potential consequences of the pollution. Patsy Ray of Grand Prairie told the Star-Telegram she wants her city councilwoman to ask the Environmental Protection Agency to test the air after witnessing a similar incident in the past 15 years.

"Things like this, we'll tolerate it but we really don't want to accept it," Ray said. "That kind of smoke will bring another underlying condition with people of my age. I'm 74 years old, I don't need something else to be fighting. I don't need something building up in my lungs."

The fire remains an issue for people with underlying respiratory and heart conditions, Sattler said. The main type of pollution involved with the plant fire is particle pollution, which involves the release of tiny pieces of plastic into the air and creates the black, visible smoke plumes coming out of the manufacturing plant.

“You would tend to associate respiratory impacts with this, but when people breathe things in, the lungs are taking the oxygen to the bloodstream,” Sattler said. “Anything that penetrates deep into the lungs can get carried into the bloodstream and go to the heart, so people with underlying cardiac conditions would be vulnerable as well.”

The second type of pollution involves the release of organic compounds into the air. Since plastics are organic compounds and made from petroleum, Sattler said, they should ultimately be converted into carbon dioxide after they burn. But in this case, there will likely be incomplete combustion, leaving some of the organic compounds suspended in the air.

Residents should be less worried about this kind of pollution, Sattler said, because it is typically associated with long-term exposure rather than the short-term, acute exposure coming from the plastics plant.

People living near the vicinity of the fire should avoid exercising or allowing children to play outdoors, since kids breathe in more air per body weight than adults and are therefore more affected by pollutants, Sattler said. Anyone with an underlying heart or respiratory condition should also remain indoors, she said.

“Even though our air indoors ultimately is coming from outside, concentrations are generally significantly reduced by a factor of two or so indoors,” Sattler said. “While the fire is going on, try to stay indoors.”

She added: “But I think after it’s over, given the meteorological dispersion, I don’t think there will be a concern for days after they’re able to put it out.”

Crews make progress on \$200 million Sam Rayburn Tollway widening

By Elizabeth Ucles, Miranda Jaimes, Daniel Houston, Community Impact Newspaper

Construction on the Sam Rayburn Tollway and its intersections has ramped up in recent months as part of a \$200 million expansion.

The North Texas Tollway Authority's Sam Rayburn Tollway widening project began in January 2019 and will add a fourth lane in both directions from Denton Tap Road in Coppell to US 75 in McKinney. The project also calls for ramp improvements in Plano between the Dallas North Tollway and Preston Road.

The Sam Rayburn Tollway widening project aims to improve regional mobility, as the population of North Texas is projected to exceed 11 million in the coming decades.

The entire 26-mile corridor is under construction at once so crews can get ahead on project progress, NTTA spokesperson Michael Rey said.

"The work is being done in the center median for safety reasons and to lessen the impact to drivers," Rey said.

Summer progress

Rey said decreased traffic on the tollway due to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed construction crews to begin work sooner and extend work later into the day.

"From March through May, NTTA traffic engineers extended the times of permissible lane and ramp closures on the [Dallas North Tollway], [the President George Bush Turnpike] and [the Sam Rayburn Tollway] to advance key construction and maintenance projects while traffic counts were low," Rey said in his email. "Those extended lane closure hours were discontinued in June."

However, the reduction in traffic had an adverse effect on NTTA's toll transactions and revenue, according to a May 20 report by the toll authority. In May, NTTA traffic was down 42% as compared to the same month the previous year. April's traffic drop was steeper: a 57% year-over-year drop.

That toll revenue is used to finance road improvements. These projects do not receive federal funding, said Kevin Feldt, program manager for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which oversees mobility in the region. Rey said funding for the expansion will not be affected by revenue dips. The project is still on track for completion in late 2021.

From January to April, crews excavated in the tollway's median, began asphalt and concrete paving, worked on intersection bridges and continued building a new ramp on Parkwood Boulevard in Frisco, per the report.

Part of the SRT expansion involves adding lanes to existing bridges at several intersections. The process for this includes demolitions and adding foundation, columns, beams and a bridge deck, Rey said.

As businesses and residents return to work and traffic increases, Rey said NTTA project and

traffic engineers will evaluate tollway and intersection closures on a weekly basis.

More work scheduled

Work is continuing on the 26-mile tollway, according to a summer 2020 progress report by NTTA.

The construction has required occasional single-lane closures, Rey said in the email.

Construction has been particularly disruptive in recent weeks at four major Plano intersections.

Foundation and column construction has required twice-daily closures of U-turn and right-turn lanes at Parkwood Boulevard, Preston Road, Rasor Boulevard and Coit Road, Rey said. Some U-turn lanes have been closed for drainage work, he said.

Crews have also had to close other lanes on Preston Road nightly through the month of August as they place new deck panels, Rey said. The closures start at 10 p.m. and end at 5 a.m.

These repairs and others are in response to the needs of a rapidly growing Collin County population, Rey said.

The tollway project is expected to provide some relief to heavily trafficked areas along the project corridor, Feldt said.

There are no plans to expand the tollway beyond four lanes, officials said.

Transportation planners should explore more solutions to improving mobility other than expanding highways, Feldt said. Cities should also keep an eye on the future and try to get ahead of transportation needs before they happen.

“It’s much better to be proactive than reactive,” Feldt said.

Business benefits

The Sam Rayburn Tollway corridor has been one of Plano’s most active areas of development in recent years.

The \$3 billion Legacy West development brought sprawling new office campuses and thousands of jobs to Plano, including at Toyota Motor North America, Liberty Mutual, JPMorgan Chase and FedEx Office. All of these businesses have direct access to Sam Rayburn Tollway.

On the other side of the tollway in McKinney, the Craig Ranch development has benefited greatly from access to the tollway, said James Craig, president of Craig International, a real estate brokerage, development and consulting company located in McKinney. Its CEO, David Craig, was the master developer of Craig Ranch.

“The Sam Rayburn Tollway has been an integral component of our success,” James Craig said. “It put us within a 20-[minute] to 25-minute drive time to DFW Airport, which is something corporate America wants to see. So, when corporations are considering the McKinney Corporate Center at Craig Ranch, that’s an important box that they can check. As far as I’m concerned, the more mobility, the better.”

Fatalities decline as traffic returns

By Audrey Henvey, Star Local Media

Transportation data trends show that despite lower crash levels in the DFW area, road fatalities remained elevated during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, recent data indicates a change.

Michael Morris, transportation director with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), presented data on Aug. 13 revealing various transportation trends from March through June.

“We want to find as many of the good things out of this horrible situation as we possibly can, like cleaner air, which is being sustained, and safety, which is being turned around,” Morris said at the meeting.

Recent data from the Texas Department of Transportation traffic counters for Dallas and Fort Worth shows that freeway travel in the area has begun to recover since seeing a sizable drop.

While freeway volume numbers in April were down by 25% compared to February numbers, freeway traffic in June was only down by 6% compared to February numbers.

“But it isn’t for what you think,” Morris said.

He said the number was due both to traditional workers coming back as well as the substitution of automobile travel for aviation travel.

Despite crash reductions in the same months, fatalities as reported by the Texas Department of Transportation Crash Records Information System remained elevated compared to 2019 numbers, up 28% in March, 11% in April and 42% in May.

“That’s because human beings do really stupid things when they can go really fast,” Morris said, “and they could go really fast in May.”

Morris’s presentation noted that traffic enforcement was significantly reduced during COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders.

As vehicle travel has returned, Morris said, drivers have been unable to go as quickly on roadways. June data revealed an 11% reduction in traffic fatalities compared to 2019.

“We were hoping to see fatalities go down in March, April and May as a result of the significant decrease in traffic,” Morris said. “It obviously didn’t materialize, but it has finally flipped how we were hoping.”

As roadway numbers recover, other transportation data gives a developing look at how North Texans are traveling through the pandemic.

Tollway transactions as reported by the North Texas Tollway Authority were down 29% in March, 56% in April and 41% in May, compared to 2019. Morris said he hoped to see the numbers continue to improve in June and July.

“But that is a big hit to an entity that you have asked to build lots of toll roads,” he said.

Transit ridership is slowly improving, but nowhere near where it needed to be, Morris said.

Meanwhile, transportation by bicycle in June remained comparatively high compared to pre-pandemic levels but has begun to decrease. While airport travel was 80% below what was anticipated in May, Morris said he recently heard data implying significantly improved data for June and July.

In the midst of decreased travel, the D/FW International Airport is the busiest airport in the world, he said.

Fort Worth One Of 3 Texas Cities Sen. Cruz Wants Selected As U.S. Space Command Headquarters

By CBSDFW

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CBSDFW.COM) – U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation and Space, today sent a letter to Secretary of the Air Force advocating for the cities of Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio to be selected to host U.S. Space Command Headquarters.

The Air Force has already announced that the three Texas cities would continue to the evaluation phase of the selection process.

In the letter, Sen. Cruz wrote:

“There is no better location for the men and women of Space Command than the great state of Texas. Cities and towns across Texas have been repeatedly recognized as among the best communities in the nation for supporting the military, including through numerous national awards from veterans’ organizations and the Department of Defense for their support of military bases.”

Cruz said that Fort Worth “easily meets and exceeds the Air Force’s stated criteria for the headquarters of U.S. Space Command. Fort Worth houses the expansive Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth with over 10,000 active duty and reserve members of the Navy, Marines, Army, and Air Force assigned to the base. Similar to both San Antonio and Houston, Fort Worth is home to numerous top-notch universities and colleges like Texas Christian University and Texas Wesleyan University. This city is also home to a number of leaders in advanced industries, including the one-of-a-kind Lockheed Martin facility, where the world’s most advanced fighter jet, the F-35, is built and tested.”

He went on to explain in the letter why San Antonio and Houston are good options:

“San Antonio, nicknamed Military City USA, is home to numerous Air Force, Army, and Navy bases, including Fort Sam Houston, Randolph Air Force Base, Lackland Air Force Base, Camp Bullis, Camp Stanley, and Martindale Army Airfield, all of which are under the umbrella of Joint Base San Antonio. The city also has a number of great Texas universities and colleges which include the University of Texas San Antonio, Trinity University, and Texas Lutheran University.

San Antonio also hosts a robust and advanced aerospace industrial base including the Boeing Corporation’s large presence at Kelly Field and the Southwest Research Institute which has led a number of complex space projects for NASA including the New Horizons mission.”

“Houston, nicknamed Space City, is not only home to the Johnson Space Center which itself is home to the famed Mission Control Center of NASA, but also the Army’s 75th Innovation Command and Ellington Air Force Base, all of which contribute to Houston’s recognition as the most diverse big city in America. The city has a number of terrific colleges and universities including Rice University and the University of Houston. It also hosts advanced industries, many of which are well versed in all things space like Jacobs, Oceaneering, Intuitive Machines, Paragon Space Development Corporation, and the large contingent of the Boeing Corporation’s Defense, Space & Security Division, which, among many other things, helps to keep the

International Space Station in top shape for American astronauts and our international partners.”

Sen. Cruz is a leading advocate for standing up a Space Force. In 2019, Sen. Cruz chaired a hearing that examined current approaches to civil-military coordination, cooperation, de-confliction activities, and related issues, and discussed future architectures for managing the space domain.

“Texas is the prime location for the new headquarters for U.S. Space Command. Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio have proven track records of providing a great home to military members and veterans, supporting advanced educational institutions to train the next generation of service members, and fostering advanced industries on the cutting edge of aerospace and space exploration [...] I’m proud to be a passionate supporter of and advocate for the Space Force, space exploration, and renewed American leadership in space, and I am eager to see the great things the new headquarters of U.S. Space Command will accomplish.”

<https://dfw.cbslocal.com/2020/08/18/fort-worth-one-of-3-texas-cities-sen-cruz-wants-selected-as-u-s-space-command-headquarters/>

Could a bus from downtown Fort Worth to Texas Live! be a home run for Rangers fans?

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Imagine in a world without coronavirus — where [fans instead of cardboard cutouts pack into Globe Life Field](#) — not having to deal with congested Interstate 30 on the way to a Rangers game.

That might be possible if a fast-moving bus line down East Lancaster is extended into Arlington's entertainment district. The concept is in its infancy, but has support from Trinity Metro.

Fort Worth and Trinity Metro are in the early stages of working out the design for a bus rapid transit line from downtown to Handley Drive, but city and transit authority officials have already reached out to Arlington and the Rangers to discuss continuing the service to [the area of Globe Life Field](#).

Extending the bus line into Arlington is “the most natural extension of transit,” said Jeff Davis, chairman Trinity Metro's board of directors.

“We'd love to provide downtown to the Arlington entertainment district service,” he said.

Trinity Metro and Rangers officials met earlier this month to initially discuss the idea. Fort Worth City Council members heard briefly about the concept Thursday during a budget workshop.

In an email, the Rangers said the team was interested in working with Arlington and others in “exploring public transit alternatives.”

Texas Rangers Executive Vice President of Business Operations Rob Matwick said in a statement that Trinity Metro provided team executives with a presentation about the plan, and both parties “agreed to keep the lines of communication open.” Other entities will need to be onboard before discussions continue, he said.

A city of Arlington spokesperson said she was unaware of rapid bus line discussions. The city is the largest in the United States without comprehensive public transit. City officials recently said they are [considering expanding the ride share platform Via](#).

[Bus rapid transit, or BRT, is like “light rail on tire.”](#) Davis said. Larger buses, like the extended accordion-esque ones that work Route 2 and Route 89, travel in dedicated lanes that are physically separated from other lanes. That keeps them out of regular traffic so both the bus and the cars can move swifter. The buses pull into stations that are closer to those for light rail than a regular bus stop with lighting, benches and shelters.

Design work that is just beginning will determine if the BRT line down East Lancaster will require rebuilding the median or taking up one of the lanes of the street. Some parts of East Lancaster have five or six lanes.

An early estimate indicates the seven-mile stretch of East Lancaster could cost \$140 million to \$150 million, said Chad Edwards, the city's mobility officer. The Texas Department of

Transportation has provided \$50 million to Trinity Metro, and Edwards has proposed the city provide \$25 million through the 2022 bond program. The rest could be available through Federal Transportation Administration grants.

Continuing the line roughly nine miles into Arlington to Texas Live and the Rangers stadium would cost another \$70 million. Edwards stressed the numbers are early estimates that may drop after the design is done.

“These are high level planning estimates not construction ready estimates,” he said.

The idea of rapid bus lines is nothing new, said Councilwoman Gyna Bivens, a former chairwoman of the transit authority. In the early 2000s she pitched an elevated line down Interstate 35, the backbone of the city, which she believes would connect downtown to job centers in the south and north.

Bivens said she was frustrated she had not yet been briefed on the notion of extending the Lancaster line into Arlington. The current terminus at Lancaster and Handley is in her district. In order to [make the BRT or other transit initiatives work](#), the city and Trinity Metro will need to better communicate about priorities and finances, she said.

“We need to be bold,” she said. “But we need to be transparent about the dollars and make sure everyone is on the same page.”

Route 89, the Spur/East Lancaster line, is already one of the most traveled bus lines. Nearly 73,000 trips were made on average each month in fiscal years 2018 and 2019. That number has dropped off this year due to pandemic. About 46,000 trips were made in July. Edwards said the ridership should naturally go up with a quicker, more convenient service.

The BRT line, even if it doesn't carry Rangers fans to Arlington, will provide new opportunities to east Fort Worth, Davis said. [Trinity Metro received \\$600,000 from the federal government](#) specifically to help study development along the Lancaster corridor.

“There's great demand,” Davis said.

Could Arlington have citywide transportation? Leaders mull options as Via riders return

By Kailey Broussard, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Larry Woodward began driving for Arlington's ride-share service during one of the public transportation system's busiest months to date.

When he signed on in February, he learned the ins and outs of Via, a ride-hailing service provided through a partnership with the city, through driving around 15 people around over his six-hour shift. The service shuttles riders for \$3 through a service area that covers part of the city and the Centreport TRE station for \$3.

The city recorded around 22,000 rides through the month on the heels of Via's expansion to southeast Arlington, Tarrant County College and the Park Springs Park and Ride lot along Interstate 20. But after the first round of stay-at-home orders in March, April ridership dwindled to 7,700 as the coronavirus pandemic forced people indoors and UT Arlington classes online.

Suddenly, Woodward was waiting two hours between rides. But as students return to in-person and hybrid courses and people venture out, he's seeing business return to the city's sole form of public transit.

"I can tell a difference between what it was two months ago and what it is now," Woodward said.

City officials regard Via as a creative transportation solution for a city that has historically resisted traditional public transportation options. Council members will decide in the next couple of months whether to renew Arlington's contract with Via and expand the service citywide in January. The council has already taken up questions about the program's future, including future funding sources and protocol for scaling back the system as rideshare demand changes.

A spokesperson for Via told the Star-Telegram that ridership levels are around 60% of pre-pandemic numbers. City documents show ridership has [steadily increased](#) since April following a two-month decline. Riders are returning to vans with plexiglass screens installed between drivers and passengers, personal protective equipment and restrictions on the amount of riders allowed in the vehicle.

Overall, the city saw a decrease in ridership just over 50% between the beginning of the year and the first few months of the pandemic. Third-quarter fiscal year numbers put Arlington's ridership at just over 28,000 riders between April and June.

However, Alicia Winkelblech, city senior strategic initiatives officer, said the city was able to tweak the service according to falling demand thanks to the app's flexibility. When rider numbers dwindled, the city reduced the amount of vans on the road from 22 to 15.

Additionally, some of the drivers who quit as demand decreased have returned. Other cities with traditional mass transit services cannot make similar adjustments and may have missed out on some cost savings, she said.

"We were actually able to save money and still provide transit service for those who were needing it during the pandemic. A lot of transit agencies and groups that are providing more

traditional transit across the nation didn't see the same cost savings we saw because they're not running as flexible of a system," she said.

Via in Arlington receives funding from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which allows Tarrant County College students to ride for free. Instead of offering a normal shuttle service for its students, UT Arlington is also offering free rides for its students to use Via at no cost.

Hailey Phillips, a senior biology student at UT Arlington, said the service helps students like her who do not own a vehicle. She said the program has especially helped international students.

"I really don't know what we would have done" without a shuttle, she said.

COUNCIL MEMBERS DISCUSS EXPANSION

As ridership numbers rise — and as the city's contract with Via expires in 2021, officials must decide what the future of the service will look like and how to fund it.

Winkelblech put that question before Arlington City Council members at a meeting July 19. The council will vote in October whether to renew the city's contract. A citywide contract would put 40 more vans on the road. The current service covers around 40% of the city, [including](#) downtown, the entertainment district, Arlington Municipal Airport and the Centreport TRE station. In 2022, council members will decide whether to keep the ride-share program citywide or scale it back.

Mayor Jeff Williams said he hopes an expansion would help city staff better understand riders' needs and lead to other transit projects in the city.

"We have hit on one of the most successful transportation projects in the nation right here and cities across the nation have followed Arlington's path," he said.

The city is also faced with long-term funding questions surrounding the service, especially if the service extends citywide. The service is projected to cost \$439,000 during fiscal 2020, [but could cost as much \\$6.2 million in fiscal 2024](#), according to city projections.

"There's lots of tools on table and lots of different approaches we can take to try to reduce that gap," Winkelblech said.

Council members will discuss restructuring the service's flat \$3 fare to a tiered system based on distance traveled. The scale would cap out at \$5 under the proposal, and the average fare cost may rise to \$3.76. Winkelblech said the fare would help the service remain competitive as a ride-hailing service and generate extra funds without pricing people out of rides. She said based on current data, most trips would not cost more than \$4.

"There's a much smaller percentage that would be looking at a \$4.50 or \$5 ride," she said.

Other proposals include offering advertising on and inside its vans, seeking grant funding and opting for a different vehicle make and body.

Fort Worth Council to hear report on proposal from Water District that could impact development

By Fort Worth Business Press Staff

The Fort Worth City Council at its Aug. 25 Work Session will hear a presentation on a proposal from the Tarrant Regional Water District to revise its General Ordinance and Commercial Facilities Ordinance.

According to an informal report to the council, the City of Fort Worth staff became aware of these proposed ordinance revisions on Aug. 20 and began a review to determine the impact on the City of Fort Worth, the community and developers working in the city.

“The revised ordinances would greatly expand the authority of the District to regulate development in Fort Worth and surrounding cities and counties,” according to the report.

The Tarrant Regional Water District Board of Directors will consider adopting the revised General Ordinance and Commercial Facilities Ordinance at their Sept. 15 board meeting.

The General Ordinance regulates the water and land under District jurisdiction and the Commercial Facilities Ordinance provides minimum standards for the operation and maintenance of Commercial Facilities located on District land or waters to protect public use, access and safety and to maintain good water and environmental quality.

According to the city report, the most significant ordinance revisions include:

- The geographic impact of the ordinances is greatly expanded:
 - The definition for District Land is expanded to include all land that drains to District Water.
 - The definition for District Water is expanded to include all bodies or accumulations of water, natural or artificial, located within the District’s Service Area.
 - The new definition of Service Area includes the area where the District provides raw water to customers. This includes all or part of 11 counties (Tarrant, Denton, Parker, etc.)
- The authority of the General Manager is expanded to:
 - Create, set the amount of, and collect fees for licenses and permits.
 - Promulgate, adopt and amend residential improvement permit guidelines.
 - Adopt or amend any standards governing construction or maintenance of any improvement on or in District Land or District Water.
 - Require the District’s customers (e.g. the City of Fort Worth) to adopt ordinances implementing the District’s master drainage plan and other plans for water quality, and preventing waste or unauthorized use of District Water.

- Development or use of land draining into District Water shall comply with TRWD's Water Quality Guidance Manual.

The full ordinance revisions can be found here:

<https://www.trwd.com/resources/board-of-directors/#public-comment>

The council will also hear a request from Panther City Holding Company LLC for a zoning change at 2712-2724 Azalea Ave. in the Linwood neighborhood. The 0.79-acre site is currently zoned A-5 One-Family and the group is requesting a change to "UR" Urban Residential.

UR has a maximum density 40 units per acre with up to 60 units if a height bonus is obtained for structured parking. UR has a maximum height of three stories with a height bonus for an additional floor if the development incorporates structured parking. The surrounding multifamily projects in this area are within the range of units per acre associated with those maximums.

The zoning change request was the subject of several neighborhood comments opposing the zoning change during a hearing at the Zoning Commission, which approved the change.

Waymo Taps Texas As Its Robot Truck Hub with Dallas Depot

By Alan Ohnsman, Forbes Staff

Waymo, the leading U.S. self-driving vehicle company, is expanding its robot truck program by moving into Texas with a new depot in Dallas that will serve as the hub for road-testing its fleet of 18-wheelers.

Waymo tells *Forbes* its semis roll into Dallas this week and the Silicon Valley-based company plans to hire licensed local truckers to assist with highway evaluations as safety drivers. It'll start with a temporary facility this month, as it looks for a long-term base of operations. Mapping of roads in Texas and New Mexico with the high-definition cameras and sensors on Waymo's autonomous minivans was completed in March ahead of plans to start truck tests in April, before the Covid-19 pandemic delayed things. Waymo isn't saying how much it's investing in the project.

The Alphabet subsidiary's current fleet of 13 Peterbilt trucks, loaded with digital cameras, laser lidar sensors, radar and computing system will be operating on the I-10, I-20 and I-45 interstates and other high-capacity commercial routes between Texas and New Mexico. "In addition to further advancing our trucking capabilities, we're excited to explore how our tech might be able to create new transportation solutions in Texas, which has a high freight volume and is a favorable environment for deploying AVs," the company said.

Making Texas the center of Waymo's trucking operations makes sense given how big the industry is there, employing one in 16 Texans, according to state data.

Autonomous trucking rival TuSimple, which like Waymo also has operations in Arizona, opened its own Dallas depot earlier this year and self-driving startup Aurora, led by the former head of Google [GOOGL +0.6%](#)'s Self-Driving Car Project, said last month it will also be [testing delivery vans and trucks in Texas](#). Nuro, a startup created by two other ex-Googleers, [tests its autonomous delivery vehicles in Houston](#). Waymo previously tested a few autonomous semis in Atlanta, where it briefly ran loads for Google, but the new initiative will be on a larger, more consistent scale.

"Our location and reliable transportation system make Dallas-Fort Worth a center for freight," said Tom Bamonte, senior program manager for automated vehicles for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. "Waymo's choice of Dallas-Fort Worth for its automated trucking hub helps the region prepare for the future of freight transportation and secure its leadership position."

Testing of Waymo's robotaxi fleet in the Phoenix area has mainly continued during the pandemic, though its Chrysler Pacifica minivans aren't currently providing rides for people in its Waymo One service as a coronavirus safety precaution. Autonomous minivans in its Waymo Via logistics fleet are also picking up and dropping off packages for UPS and AutoNation [AN +0.1%](#) car dealerships in the Phoenix area.

The company that began as an inhouse Google project a decade ago [said last month](#) it raised a total of \$3.2 billion in its first external fundraising, with investment from companies including Magna International, Andreessen Horowitz, AutoNation, T. Rowe Price, Perry Creek Capital, Fidelity Management as well as its parent Alphabet.

Fort Worth: Kelly Allen Gray Named To NCTCOG Executive Board

District 8 Councilmember Kelly Allen Gray has been named to the North Central Texas Council of Government's Executive Board.

By Press Release Desk, News Partner

District 8 Council member Kelly Allen Gray has been named to the North Central Texas Council of Government's Executive Board.

The board, composed of 17 locally-elected officials and one ex-officio non-voting member of the Texas Legislature, is the policy-making body for all activities undertaken by the council of governments, including program activities and decisions, regional plans and fiscal and budgetary policies.

The board is supported by technical, study and policy development committees and a professional staff headed by Mike Eastland, executive director.

Other Tarrant County board members include County Judge Glen Whitley, Arlington Councilmember Andrew Piel and Burleson Mayor Ken Shetter.

Citizens Defeat Special Deal for Democrat State Senator's Son

City council sides with citizens and defeats push to build unwanted soccer fields under interstate.

By Robert Montoy, Texas Scorecard

For months, Dallas citizens have had to defend their land from a Democrat state senator, who is trying to force upon them soccer fields they didn't want. On Wednesday, citizens successfully pushed their city council to defeat the shady deal, avoiding clouds of corruption.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Dallas City Council unanimously defeated a special deal for the son of State Sen. **Royce West** (D–DeSoto) that would have built soccer fields underneath I-345 in the central part of Dallas, known as Deep Ellum.

Interstate 345, located in central Dallas in the Deep Ellum district, **is a stretch of highway constructed in 1973 that has been blamed for the decades-long economic downturn of the area.** While those in the area have been pushing to **tear down this highway and build parking lots**, West's son Roddrick proposed building soccer fields instead—something he has no prior experience doing. He struggled to answer questions as to **how he secured the bid for this project through the Texas Department of Transportation.**

West was vocally supportive of the deal, **raising questions of whether he would personally profit from it, considering his lucrative past with government contracts.**

City council members also complained about city staff keeping details of the deal from them.

But on Wednesday, **Councilmember Lee Kleinman made a motion to deny West his soccer fields.** The motion passed unanimously.

"I'm glad it was struck down," grassroots leader Troy Jackson said.

"Council made the right decision today by denying the soccer field proposal," Councilman Chad West told *Texas Scorecard*. "I believe in transparency and fairness above all, and this entire proposal and its process was the complete opposite of that."

"I have previously called this 'an insider deal that is about power, money, and influence,'" Councilwoman Cara Mendelsohn told *Texas Scorecard*. "I am an advocate for ethics and transparency, and this deal wasn't any of those."

Deals such as this are far too common in government, **as is seen with Fort Worth's Panther Island boondoggle—involving U.S. Congresswoman Kay Granger (R–Fort Worth) and her son.** Citizens must maintain vigilance in their local and state governments to continue preventing special deals for connected politicians.

"Politicians who use their influence to enrich their family members smacks of nepotism and graft," grassroots leader Susan Fountain told *Texas Scorecard*. "I am sure that we do not need a replay of Kay Granger and her son's fiasco development."

Dallas hires firm to plan transformation of Hensley Field into prime lakefront development

The City Council will pay \$2 million for a master plan that envisions the airfield's future. But the old Naval Air Station still needs a clean-up from harmful chemicals.

By Kevin Krause, Dallas Morning News

A contaminated former Navy airfield in southwest Dallas has long been the city's dumping ground for government vehicles, and more recently, Confederate monuments pulled from parks.

But Dallas leaders envision a future where [Hensley Field](#) becomes a sprawling lakefront development with shops, homes, parks and other amenities.

While that's still a long way off, the City Council on Wednesday took the first step by approving a \$2 million contract for a master plan to guide future development of the airstrip south of I-30 after environmental cleanup is completed.

The city owns the 738-acre waterfront site, which is a former Naval Air Station on the west side of Mountain Creek Lake. The land is considered prime real estate once the soil is clean again.

The proposed development is an opportunity to increase much-needed affordable housing in the area, according to the city, and will play a big role in Dallas' financial recovery after the coronavirus pandemic.

"The site is a hidden gem — a waterfront blank slate with immense potential," Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson said in a written statement. "I am thrilled that the City Council has decided to move forward with the master planning process, which will show us how we can add vibrancy to southern Dallas and contribute significantly to the tax base of our great city."

The council awarded the master plan contract to McCann Adams Studio of Austin, which beat two other finalists that submitted proposals. The city received 15 proposals from urban planning firms after seeking bids last year. That list was then narrowed down to three finalists that included firms from Massachusetts and California.

Johnson said in a statement that he has been pushing for the proposed redevelopment and environmental cleanup of Hensley Field for months. Investors could get tax breaks because the property sits within a federal "Opportunity Zone," a designation given to "economically distressed" areas to spur development, he said.

The master plan will take about a year and a half to complete, the mayor said.

But the city has a bigger challenge ahead. The site is contaminated with harmful chemicals known as PFAS from the military's five decades of operations at the base, which the Navy closed in 1998.

While cleanup efforts have stalled over the years, Johnson said that he has been working with the Navy, the White House and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to get the job done.

Council member Jennifer Staubach Gates said the Navy is "obligated" to help with the cleanup.

"I ask that we keep that pressure," she said. "Hopefully, we'll all get invited back when the construction happens."

Council member Chad West said a DART rail expansion from Westmoreland Station in Oak Cliff, about a 20-minute drive away, is also being considered to provide future residents and visitors with transportation options.

City staffers listed other decommissioned military bases and airports across the U.S. that have been turned into successful urban developments: Mueller, a former airport in Austin; Treasure Island Naval Base in San Francisco; Hamilton Air Base in Novato, Calif.; and Hunters Point in San Francisco.

Council member Tennell Atkins said Hensley Field's redevelopment will increase property values, tax revenue and jobs in the region.

"It's almost another downtown Dallas," he said.

But Atkins added that the project is "going to take decades to get done."

Council member Omar Narvaez likened it to a "small town inside the city of Dallas" and said it will be similar to Cypress Waters, a booming development northwest of Dallas that continues to grow. The 1,000-acre development at LBJ Freeway and Belt Line Road already boasts more than 11,000 office workers.

"We'll probably all be gone from City Hall by the time it gets started and done," Narvaez said, adding that the council members will be able to take pride in their involvement.

Hensley Field is within Casey Thomas' district. He said it is one of the city's largest plots of prime development land.

"This is an opportunity to take something like a blank canvas ... to really build something," Thomas said. "This is a historic opportunity."

Prosper mayor elected president of association's executive board

By Staff Report, Stephenville Empire-Tribune

Prosper Mayor Ray Smith's schedule just got a bit busier.

On Aug. 14, Smith was elected president of the executive board of the North Central Texas Council of Governments' (NCTCOG) at its 54th annual General Assembly, which was held virtually.

The executive board is the policy-making body of the Council of Governments which serves the 16 North Central Texas counties of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Navarro, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Somervell, Tarrant and Wise.

Smith, who will lead the 17-member board for the next 12 months, assumes the role from Wise County Judge J. D. Clark, whose one-year term ended.

Meanwhile, DeSoto Mayor Curtistene McCowan was elected vice president of the board while Rockwall County Judge David Sweet was elected secretary-treasurer.

Smith was first elected to the board in 2016. He has previously served as its director, secretary-treasurer and vice president before being elected President.

Also an alternate member of the Regional Transportation Council, he was elected the mayor of Prosper in 2010. Smith had served on the Prosper Town Council for three years.

A current member and former president of the Prosper Economic Development Corporation, Smith also chairs the Collin College Foundation board of directors.

Additionally, 13 directors were elected to the NCTCOG board. They include Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins; Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley; Collin County Judge Chris Hill; Denton County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell; City of Dallas Councilmember Lee Kleinman; City of Fort Worth Councilmember Kelly Allen-Gray; City of Arlington Councilmember Andrew Piel; City of Allen Councilmember Gary Caplinger; City of Corinth Mayor Bill Heidemann; City of Plano Councilmember Kayci Prince; Erath County Judge Alfonso Campos; City of Burleson Mayor Ken Shetter; and City of Rowlett Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian.

AIR NORTH TEXAS OFFERS AIR QUALITY ALERTS, WAYS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

By Richardson Today

Though March-November is considered “ozone season” in the DFW area, hot temperatures and the resulting higher ozone concentrations in our air usually make August the month with the most “high-level” days. So far, there have been six days this month that the DFW area has hit Orange Level for ozone and two Red Level days. On Orange Level ozone days, sensitive groups such as children and the elderly should limit outdoor activity and on Red Level days, all persons should limit outdoor activities.

To keep up with local air quality, sign up for free air pollution alerts from Air North Texas by clicking [here](#). The e-mailed alerts let you know when ozone is expected to hit unhealthy levels, and also provide helpful reminders about ways everyone can minimize creating air pollutants. Air North Texas is a regional clean air partnership formed by the North Central Texas Council of Governments, of which Richardson is a member city.

Website: www.airnorthtexas.org

Website: www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone

Erath County Judge Elected to NCTCOG Executive Board

By J Horton, The Flash Today

Erath County Judge Alfonso Campos was elected to the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Executive Board at its' August General Assembly meeting. The executive board, composed of 17 locally elected officials and one member of the Texas Legislature, is the policy-making body for all activities undertaken by the Council, including program activities and decisions, regional plans, and fiscal and budgetary policies.

The Executive Board is supported by technical, study and policy development committees and professional staff headed by Mr. Mike Eastland, Executive Director.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region in North Central Texas, which is centered around the DFW metroplex. The organization includes over 230-member governments from the 16 counties, numerous cities, school districts and special districts in the region. It assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development.

The Council monitors grant programs for many services it passes on to its members, including, but not limited to, grants for: senior services, such as Meals on Wheels; employment enhancing (skills and job fairs) partnerships with colleges; child care services for both providers and parents; and victim assistance services.

Campos joins fellow county judges serving on the Executive Board, including: Collin County Judge Chris Hill; Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins; Rockwall County Judge David Sweet; Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley; and Wise County Judge J.D. Clark.

Campos began his first term as Erath County Judge in January 2019. He graduated from Huckaby High School and Tarleton State University. He served as a Game Warden with TX Parks & Wildlife for 25 years and four years as Justice of the Peace in Caldwell County.

Prior to his election to Erath County Judge, he served as a court bailiff for Erath County. He and his wife Connie are parents of Laura and her husband Humberto, teaching remotely at DePaul and Villanova University respectively, and teenagers Diego and Lucia at home in Hannibal in Erath County.

Waymo Tests Autonomous Trucks in Texas

Company to Center Tech Efforts in Dallas

By Jerry Hirsch, Transport Topic

Waymo launched testing of autonomous trucks in Texas and announced plans to make Dallas the center of its heavy-duty vehicle technology efforts.

Alphabet Inc.'s autonomous vehicle unit said in an Aug. 26 news release that it has begun testing Peterbilt trucks equipped with self-driving technology along Interstate 10, I-20 and I-45 in Texas.

The company already has a passenger vehicle operations center in Phoenix that will be linked into its commercial vehicle testing network. It is focusing on trucking lanes that include Phoenix to Dallas, Dallas to Houston and Dallas to El Paso, Waymo told Transport Topics in a statement.

Waymo is focusing [development and testing efforts along those Southwest shipping corridors](#) because the region has favorable weather, roads and regulation, it said.

"We're excited to explore how our tech might be able to create new transportation solutions in Texas, which has a high freight volume and is a favorable environment for deploying AVs," Waymo said.

Texas officials welcomed Waymo. "We are fortunate to operate in a region and state where policy officials encourage innovative problem-solving, and decisions from companies like Waymo demonstrate they recognize they can both test their technology and succeed here," said Tom Bamonte, senior program manager of automated vehicles for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. "Our location and reliable transportation system make Dallas-Fort Worth a center for freight in the United States."

Waymo, formerly Google's self-driving car unit, is looking at two deployment models for autonomous trucking. The first would be the classic point-to-point or dock-to-dock setup ubiquitous in trucking. But that requires last- and first-mile surface street driving, which makes up one of the biggest hurdles for self-driving trucks. The company also is looking at transfer hubs, where a human driver would ferry a trailer to a highway-adjacent depot. The autonomous tractor would then pick up the trailer, hauling it to another hub near its destination. At that point, a human driver would take the load to the delivery site.

The current Texas testing will use both loaded and unloaded trucks but won't do any commercial shipping for now, the company said. It will start with just a "few" trucks but plans to ramp up operations. Waymo does not make public the number of test vehicles in its fleet. The company is launching its Dallas operations out of temporary space but is searching for a permanent headquarters for the autonomous truck development center. It also plans to hire software technicians to sit in the passenger seat and look over the system while a CDL driver monitors the truck and traffic.

[Waymo has partnered with Transdev](#), a French company with its U.S. headquarters in Lombard, Ill., to recruit licensed truck drivers for the test program. In addition to having experience with transporting and securing cargo and operating in a wide array of weather conditions, the

applicants also must have some laptop computer experience and proficiency with using Google productivity applications such as Sheets and Docs.

Waymo sees commercial vehicles as a promising application for autonomous technology. But the company does not intend to get into truck manufacturing or shipping services. Instead, it wants to work with OEMs and motor carriers to get its technology into vehicles, it has said.

How North Texas Dispatchers Tapped Waze Data to Speed 9-1-1 Response Times

Every day, Wazers alert their peers of highway incidents and hazards—with more than 10,000 reports in DFW alone. Waze analysis shows, about 40 percent of the time, user reports of crashes to its app are almost five minutes faster than traditional 9-1-1 calls.

By Dave Moore, Dallas Innovates

Anyone who has been in a crash understands the chaos involved. Few involved immediately dial 9-1-1 following the rush of adrenaline. Those lost seconds cost lives, according to at least one analysis.

More than 130 million Waze App users, meanwhile, constantly pump driving traffic and highway condition information into Waze, alerting peers in nearly real-time. Everyday Dallas-Fort Worth Waze users submit more than 10,000 reports of highway incidents and hazards, such as crashes and objects on the road.

Forty-percent of the time, Wazers reports of crashes to the app are almost five minutes faster than traditional 9-1-1 calls, according to [an analysis](#) by Waze.

Knowing that, the North Central Texas Communications District (NCT 9-1-1) worked for roughly 18 months to route dispatchers (who work in Public Safety Answer Points, or PSAPs) in the region that same data, giving them nearly equal awareness as drivers on North Texas roads.

“About 70 percent of our PSAPs are utilizing the (Waze data) service,” writes [Rodger Mann](#), 9-1-1 GIS Manager for the [North Central Texas Emergency Communications District](#), in an email earlier in 2019. “We are confident the others will sign up ... as they go through their respective channels for approval.”

NCT 9-1-1 supports more than 40 dispatch centers in nine counties across the region.

How Waze Landed in DFW Emergency Dispatch Centers

Local transportation technology advocate Tom Bamonte—who has been developing relationships with a host of tech, logistics and transportation companies across the world for years—approached Mann with the notion of tapping into the Waze data pool to cut response times. Bamonte is a senior program manager for automated vehicles at the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).

Mann ran the concept past the NCT 9-1-1 Supervisor Committee, which eventually signed off on the project.

In order to coalesce the Waze data into the NCT 9-1-1 framework, Mann and his team connected with East-Texas-based [The Genesis Group](#). That company works with call centers across the U.S. using its web-based Genesis PULSE to integrate Waze data into 9-1-1 dispatch systems.

“First responders that use this (PULSE) software have access to real-time, Wazer-reported crash alerts,” a Waze spokesperson wrote in response to a query from Dallas Innovates. “This can have a major impact on response time. In fact, 40 percent of the time, crashes are reported

by Waze users an average of 4.5 minutes before being called into emergency response centers through 9-1-1 or other channels.”

Dispatchers using the PULSE system wed with Waze can see crash reports on their computer screens, allowing them to track the whereabouts of emergency responders. It also helps dispatchers choose the best emergency responder for the call and allows them to use Waze data to identify the most-direct routes.

“Using Waze’s data, first responders are able to move more safely and quickly through traffic to aid those in need,” according to a statement from Waze to Dallas Innovates.

Integrating Waze data into existing 9-1-1 frameworks was no small feat, according to Mann. “The biggest challenge was redesigning our Enterprise environment and purchasing a few additional applications and writing a few custom scripts to aid in filtering and rendering the data,” he writes.

The first NCT 9-1-1 dispatch center went live with Waze data in mid-June 2019, according to Mann.

Global Initiative at a Grassroots Level

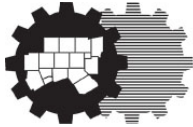
Waze is working with more than 1,200 partners around the world in projects similar to the North Central Texas Council of Governments NCTCOG collaboration, according to Waze.

Locally, Fort Worth, Arlington, Plano, Frisco, and other cities have developed such partnerships. Frisco’s use of Waze data in a partnership with its transportation and emergency response departments helped inspire Mann’s efforts. NCTCOG has integrated Waze data into its 511DFW traveler information system.

Through a partnership with NCTCOG on the I-30 corridor between Fort Worth and Dallas, the Texas Department of Transportation is exploring the use of Waze data to improve highway incident response for possible scaling statewide. TxDOT is one of over 25 state departments of transportation that have data sharing partnerships with Waze.

Bamonte credits Mann and his team which also operate as part of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) for connecting North Texas dispatchers with Waze’s data trove.

“While (my office) may have introduced NCT 9-1-1 to the idea of using Waze incident data to improve roadway emergency response, all of the heavy lifting was done by NCT 9-1-1,” Bamonte writes to Dallas Innovates. “This is a very inspiring story of public sector innovation by NCT 9-1-1 and the network of PSAPs it serves.”



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Brian Wilson
(817) 704-2511
bwilson@nctcog.org

NCTCOG Requests Input on Transportation Planning Initiatives

Comments accepted online through September 9

August 10, 2020 (Arlington, Texas) — North Texans are invited to comment online on several current transportation planning initiatives, including the effects of COVID-19 on regional transportation, emission reduction plans, potential funding awards, and federal performance measures.

To help the public better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation system, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will provide an update on several performance metrics. These policy metrics address the financial implications of the pandemic, travel behavior responses and benefits, and offsetting unemployment increases.

Staff will also provide the public with updates on several project initiatives. In 2019, the Federal Highway Administration awarded funding to NCTCOG to develop the Interstate Highway 45 Zero Emission Corridor Plan to support both battery-electric and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles along IH 45 from Dallas to Houston. Staff is seeking stakeholder involvement from fuel providers, fleets, infrastructure developers, fuel associations, government agencies, utilities, and interest groups and will provide an update on planning progress.

Additionally, staff will present recommended projects to receive funding as part of the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects.

Finally, staff will discuss recent federal transportation rules that require metropolitan planning organizations to monitor and set targets for a specific set of performance measures. Observed trends, project implementation and the effects of COVID-19 will impact the decision on whether target adjustments will be recommended.

The department's new interactive map tool, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, vehicle incentive opportunities and administrative revisions for Mobility 2045, the region's long-term transportation plan, will also be highlighted.

North Texans can provide input on the aforementioned topics beginning August 10 and continuing through September 9 at www.nctcog.org/input.

To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered in the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit www.nctcog.org/trans.

About the Regional Transportation Council:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. The RTC's 44 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at www.nctcog.org.

#

DRAFT**RESOLUTION APPROVING SYSTEM, FREIGHT AND CMAQ PERFORMANCE MEASURES
(R20-04)**

WHEREAS, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and has been and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

WHEREAS, under Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 490, States and MPOs must coordinate to develop targets for federally required performance measures; and,

WHEREAS, on June 21, 2018, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) established 2020 and 2022 targets for System Performance, Freight, and CMAQ measures (i.e. PM3); and,

WHEREAS, the RTC adopted 2020 and 2022 quantitative regional targets for PM3 measures November 8, 2018; and,

WHEREAS, per Title 23 CFR Part 490, the RTC has an opportunity to either adjust or reaffirm 2022 targets for PM2 and PM3 measures; and,

WHEREAS, updated PM3 targets are due to the Federal Highway Administration via TxDOT October 1, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC has considered the reaffirmation of existing 2022 targets and adoption of new 2022 regional targets for the North Central Texas region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. The Regional Transportation Council reaffirms 2022 Regional Targets for PM3 measures:

- Interstate Reliability
- Non-interstate Reliability
- Peak Hour Excessive Delay
- Non-SOV Travel

Section 2. The Regional Transportation Council adopts new 2022 Regional Targets for PM3 measures as contained in Attachment 1:

- Truck Travel Time Reliability
- Emissions Reductions

DRAFT

Section 3. The Regional Transportation Council directs staff to transmit the approved targets to the Texas Department of Transportation.

Section 4. This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on September 10, 2020.

Ann Zadeh, Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Councilmember, City of Fort Worth

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT 1

New Performance Measure Targets

Truck Travel Time Reliability: 1.90 (Aspirational 1.83)

Emissions Reductions – NO_x: 7,403.95 kg/day

Emissions Reductions – VOC: 1,814.02 kg/day

**Federal Highway Administration
Measure Target
Re-affirmation or Revisions**

**Regional Transportation Council
September 10, 2020**

Chris Klaus



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Performance Measurement Activities

COVID-19: Changing Mobility

Local: Progress North Texas

Federal:

Later: Safety (PM1) = 5

Later: Transit Asset Management (TAM) = 4

Later: Transit Safety (PTASP) = 4

Later: Pavement and Bridge (PM2) = 6

Now: System Performance (PM3) = 7

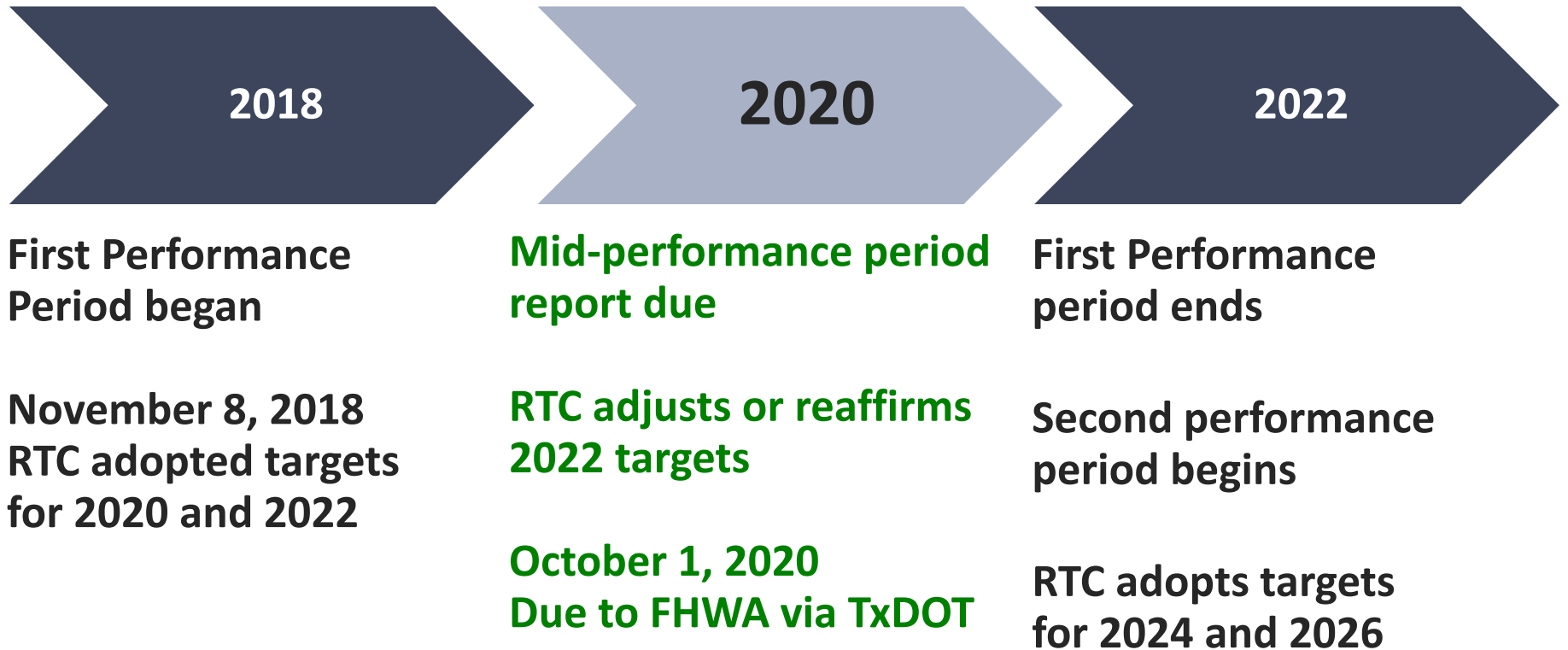


Progress North Texas 2020

Additional Examples:

www.nctcog.org/pm

Performance Period Schedule



Recommended RTC Recommendations

Measure	Desired Trend Indicating Improvement	Original Targets (as of 2018)		Updated Forecast/Trend		2022 Target Recommendation
		2020	2022	2020	2022	
Interstate Reliability	↗	78.6%	79.5%	78.4%	79.5%	Re-affirm 79.5%
Non-Interstate Reliability	↗	N/A	71.1%	74.4%	76.1%	Re-affirm 71.1%
Truck Travel Time Reliability	↘	1.71	1.66	1.83	1.90	Revise 1.90* Aspirational 1.83
Peak Hour Excessive Delay	↘	N/A	15.00 hrs.	13.25 hrs.	12.51 hrs.	Re-affirm 15.00 hrs.
Non-SOV Travel	↗	19.9%	20.2%	19.8%	20.0%	Re-affirm 20.2%
Total Emissions Reductions – NOx	↗	2,892.96 kg/day	5,062.68 kg/day	5,884.42 kg/day	7,403.95 kg/day	Revise 7,403.95 kg/day
Total Emissions Reductions - VOC	↗	599.67 kg/day	1,079.40 kg/day	1,418.56 kg/day	1,814.02 kg/day	Revise 1,814.02 kg/day

*Accept revised target resulting in development of work plan with focus to improve freight movement

PM3: Related Policies, Programs, Projects

Actively address worsening freight reliability with programs, policies, and projects to support freight movement

Existing Examples:

Incident Detection and Response (tow truck staging)

Techniques Encouraging Trucks from Peak Periods

Supporting Alternative Transportation Options

Assessing COVID-19 impacts on measures

Addressing measures in planning processes

Ongoing Congestion Management Process update

Upcoming Mobility plans

UTP/10-Year Plan

2021-2024 TIP

Schedule



July 24	STTC Information
August 10	Online Public Input Opportunity
August 13	RTC Information (PM3)
August 28	STTC Action (PM3)
September 10	RTC Action (PM3)
October 1	Revised PM3 Targets Due to FHWA via TxDOT
November 2020- Early 2021	Possible RTC Action on PM2 Targets (Depending on TxDOT)
Early 2021	Anticipated RTC Action on PM1/TAM/PTASP Targets

Recommended Action

Re-affirm existing 2022 Regional Targets for:

Interstate Reliability

Non-Interstate Reliability

Peak Hour Excessive Delay

Non-SOV Travel

Adopt new 2022 Regional Targets for:

Truck Travel Time Reliability: 1.90 (Aspirational 1.83)

Emissions Reductions – NO_x: 7,403.95 kg/day

Emissions Reductions – VOC: 1,814.02 kg/day

Questions, Comments, Contacts

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Chris Klaus
Senior Program Manager
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<https://www.nctcog.org/pm/fed>



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

DRAFT

The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 10, 2020

The Honorable Terry Canales
Texas House of Representatives
PO Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Chair Canales:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to extend our thanks for your valuable service in the Texas Legislature on transportation issues. The RTC would like to respond to the House Committee on Transportation's notice of formal request for information on interim charges.

House Transportation Interim Charge 1B: SB 282 and SB 962, which relate to the funding for the State Highway Fund. Study the current mix of user fee-based funding for the state highway system, including registration fees, tolls, and fuel tax, and determine if current funding generated is sufficient to maintain cost demands. Examine whether current legislative appropriations, including projections for Proposition 1 (severance tax) and Proposition 7 (sales tax) funds, are keeping pace with Texas' highway funding needs to accommodate population and economic development growth. Make recommendations for additional methods of funding or innovative tools that the state could utilize to deliver road infrastructure projects.

Funding Needs

Identifying additional transportation revenue is key to reducing congestion across Texas large urban regions like the DFW area. Significant population growth, increased construction costs and continued improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency have all contributed to a transportation funding shortfall.

As you know, the Comptroller's revised 2020-2021 Certification Revenue Estimate projects a Fiscal Year 2021 ending deficit of \$4.58 billion, down from a previously projected surplus of \$2.89 billion. While the future remains uncertain, severance tax collections in FY21 are expected to decrease from FY20 totals, resulting in smaller FY22 transfers to the State Highway Fund and Rainy Day Fund. Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 allocations are not guaranteed amounts and will fluctuate each year, so it is important to identify additional reliable, long-term funding solutions.

Methods of Funding

Due to these fluctuations in certain transportation revenue sources, such as Propositions 1 and 7, it is imperative to ensure other transportation funds are appropriately allocated. The RTC is requesting the Legislature ensure the fair-share allocation of funds to metropolitan regions. Texas Transportation Code Chapter 201.9991 states that the Transportation Commission may

DRAFT

Chair Canales
Page 2

September 10, 2020

make discretionary funding decisions. This has led to different interpretations, and clarification of current code is needed to ensure proper allocations of Category 12 Strategic Priority Funds. Historically, you have requested TxDOT to fund other Categories of funds, with Category 12 to be used for emergency purposes.

Additionally, traditional funding sources in their current condition are not meeting the needs of the State and other methods of funding must be explored. In recent legislative sessions, there have been numerous proposals to increase funding for transportation but have not achieved final passage. Some of these proposals include indexing the motor fuels tax to fuel efficiency, allowing counties in a region the ability to adopt a \$10 optional vehicle registration fee, or implementing a temporary, voter approved local transportation revenue source that could be used for both highway and transit projects. Transportation reinvestment zones and a vehicle miles traveled pilot project are other options. The RTC encourages the Legislature to consider all options during the upcoming legislative session.

It is important to note that much has changed since the motor vehicle fuels tax was last increased nearly three decades ago. Vehicles are more fuel efficient, and alternative fuel, hybrid, and electric vehicles have proliferated. Last session, Senate Bill 604 (86R) authorized a study to be completed by December 2020 on the effect alternative fuel vehicles have on transportation revenue. Once published, study recommendations that provide additional revenue should be investigated. Delays in implementation will make legislation more difficult.

Innovative Tools

Utilizing innovative tools to expedite projects during times of recession, which we now face, are critical. The RTC supports the ability to utilize tolled managed lanes and public-private partnerships to help expedite projects when traditional funding sources are scarce. We understand that some believe the current environment does not support tolling, this is not the view of our region and this may be an opportunity for a partnership between MPOs, TxDOT, the Texas Transportation Commission, and the Texas Legislature to work together to allow tolled managed lanes with restrictions. This may include only tolling in urban districts or in only part of a region that experiences extensive traffic congestion. As the DFW region continues to grow, so does the need to accommodate rising travel demand, provide choices, and balance transportation investments.

The RTC appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments and looks forward to discussing our ideas with you further. If you have any questions, please contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

RH: kw

cc: Members of the House Committee on Transportation
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

DRAFT



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(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 10, 2020

The Honorable Terry Canales
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Dear Chair Canales:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to extend our thanks for your valuable service in the Texas Legislature on transportation issues. The RTC would like to respond to the House Committee on Transportation's notice of formal request for information related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Inquiry 1: How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected state agencies, interested parties, and the public as it relates to transportation matters?

Inquiry 2: What transportation issues are anticipated to arise in the future as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Inquiry 3: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability of the transportation state agencies to accomplish their mission and to serve the public in an effective and efficient manner?

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Transportation Department, staff to the RTC, has developed four performance metrics to help understand the impacts of COVID-19 to the transportation system. Performance metrics have been tracked each month since March 2020 and include, 1) travel behavior response to COVID-19, 2) financial implications to traditional revenue sources, 3) benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility, and 4) prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases. These performance metrics show changes to the transportation system and the resulting financial implications.

Metric 1) Travel Behavior Response To COVID-19

Travel behavior response to COVID-19 in the DFW area varies among transportation mode. Other than bicycle/pedestrian travel, all other modes experienced decreases in travel. Bicycle/pedestrian travel increased significantly during the first months of the pandemic, but since reaching a peak in April, continues to decrease each month. Freeway volumes greatly decreased in March and April but continue to climb back to almost pre-COVID levels due to employees returning to work and residents substituting driving for airline travel. Additionally, toll transactions have decreased substantially, transit ridership has been cut in half, and airline travel is down 65 percent, and the trend is increasing in recent months for these measures.

Metric 2) Financial Implications to Traditional Revenue Sources

Traditional revenue sources, such as sales tax and motor fuel tax, initially decreased but have now increased to near pre-COVID levels. However, Proposition 1 transfers to the State Highway Fund are projected to be impacted in 2022. Managed lanes and toll transactions decreased greatly initially and have improved. This metric will continue to be closely monitored as the legislative session approaches, especially considering the reluctance on toll projects and debt financing in combination with potentially lower revenues will make it very difficult to continue to plan and fund critical transportation improvements. In particular, mega projects such as IH 35 through Austin should be considered for tolled managed lanes. Not only will this provide much-needed revenue for ongoing maintenance and operations of the corridor, but will also allow other projects to move ahead across the State and for long-standing statewide allocations to be honored, rather than funding taken from other metro regions in the state to complete the project.

Metric 3) Benefits of Travel Behavior Responses to Areas of RTC Responsibility

When travel came nearly to a halt during the early days of the pandemic, transportation and air quality planners and policymakers began to see some positive benefits. There are opportunities as we gradually return to normal to not go back to “business as usual” but to take the positive benefits and make them lasting changes. An example is improvement to air quality. Since March, there have been significantly fewer unhealthy ozone exposure days, although the number of exceedance days has been rising with hot weather and increased travel. In addition, many employees and businesses are seeing a benefit from telecommuting – increased productivity, reduces stress from commutes, and more time with family. Continued telecommuting by a portion of employees could significantly contribute to improved air quality and reduced traffic congestion. The RTC will look to policies, programs, and projects that can continue these benefits into the recovery phase of the pandemic.

Metric 4) Prioritization of Infrastructure Improvements that Offset Unemployment Increases

Infrastructure improvements will help offset unemployment, not only in DFW, but throughout the State. There is a need for near-term and long-term transportation investment for maximum benefit. Every \$1 billion in transportation investment produces approximately 12,000 to 15,000 jobs. The RTC encourages the Texas Legislature to identify additional transportation funding or reinstate innovative financing options to advance projects that can bring needed employment to the State.

For detailed information on each of these performance metrics, please see the September 10 presentation to the RTC at www.nctcog.org/rtc. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. If you have any questions, please contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

RH:kw

cc: Members of the House Committee on Transportation
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

DRAFT



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 10, 2020

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Austin, TX 78768

Dear Chair Canales:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to extend our thanks for your valuable service in the Texas Legislature on transportation issues. The RTC would like to respond to the House Committee on Transportation's notice of formal request for information.

House Transportation Interim Charge 2:

Study the state's transportation and road safety efforts in support of the Texas Transportation Commission's goal of ending traffic deaths in the state by 2050. Identify the most dangerous roads and transportation corridors in the state and determine opportunities to reduce high rates of traffic accidents and fatalities in these areas. Make recommendations to improve policies, funding strategies, program development, and agency coordination to ensure continuous improvements to road safety.

We applaud the Committee for seeking information on the important topic of road safety. The RTC believes that greater attention needs to be placed on safety and the four E's – Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Emergency Response. Four specific areas that require attention are increasing seatbelt compliance, decreasing impaired drivers, decreasing aggressive drivers, and eliminating wrong way drivers. Less traffic on roadways due to COVID-19 has increased vehicle speeds and fatalities.

The RTC appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments and can provide greater detail upon request. If you have any questions, please contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

RH:kw

cc: Members of the House Committee on Transportation
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

DRAFT



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 10, 2020

The Honorable Terry Canales
Texas House of Representatives
PO Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Chair Canales:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area, I would like to extend our thanks for your valuable service in the Texas Legislature on transportation issues. The RTC would like to respond to the House Committee on Transportation's notice of formal request for information on interim charges.

House Transportation Interim Charge 3:

Study the technology and safety aspects of autonomous and semi-autonomous vehicles, including predictive capabilities and the potential for dedicated freeway and surface lanes for public transportation, autonomous vehicles, and semi-autonomous vehicles. Make recommendations for optimizing state policy to prepare for varying vehicle technologies to ensure safety and traffic reliability on Texas roadways.

We applaud the Committee for studying the technology and safety aspects of automated vehicles (AVs). The RTC recommends the use of managed express lanes as an interim use of dedicated lanes for automated vehicle testing. The Committee should consider the potential for using these express lanes in urban regions for autonomous cars and trucks and create AV test corridors. One example from the DFW area is the use of Interstate Highway 30 between Dallas and Fort Worth as a test corridor for transportation technology. The State should also work on improved maintenance for AVs. The initial AV vehicle use cases are likely to be long-distance freight trucks that need well-maintained roads and notice of closed roads, traffic backups, and work zones. In addition to studying AVs, the State should also expand its investment in connected vehicle technologies.

The RTC appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments and can provide greater detail upon request. If you have any questions, please contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

RH:kw

cc: Members of the House Committee on Transportation
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



Optimized Freight Movement Project

Regional Transportation Council

September 10, 2020

Thomas J. Bamonte

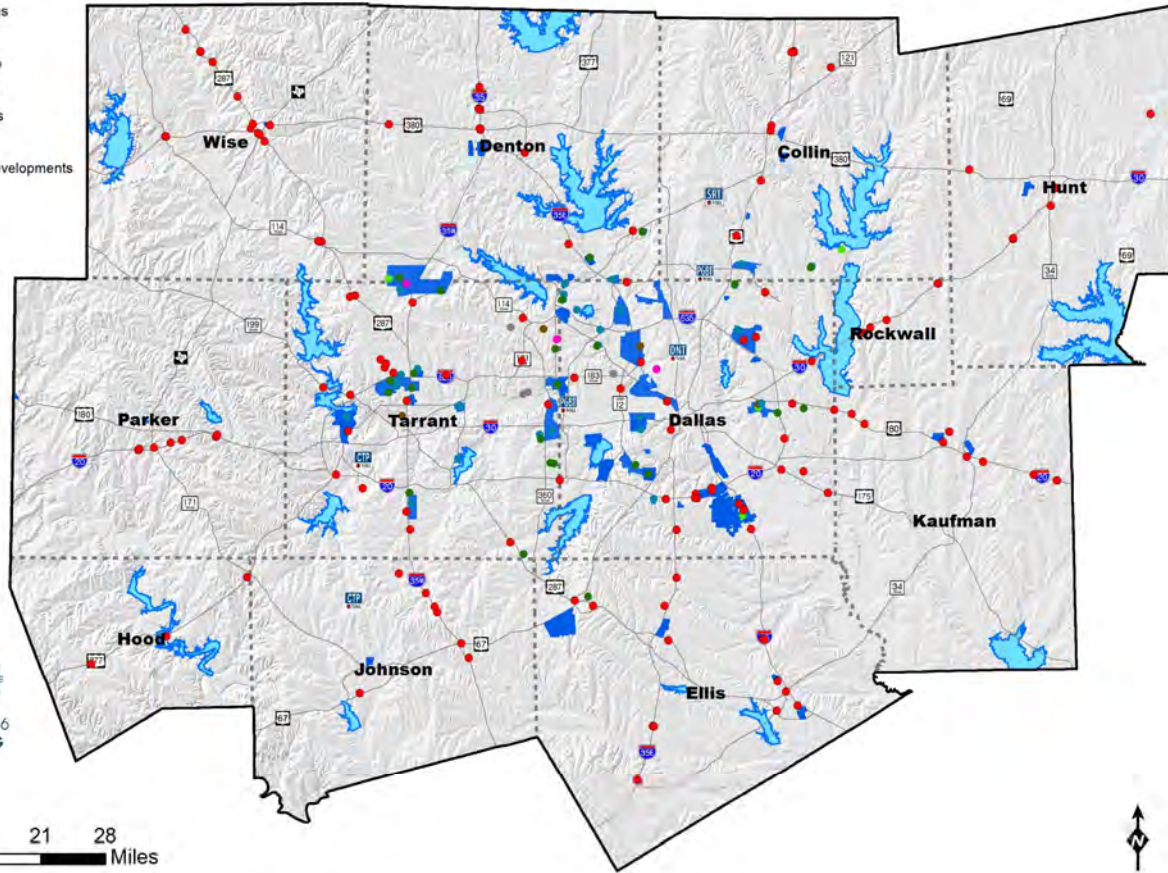
Senior Program Manager, Automated Vehicles



North Central Texas Major Freight Facilities

Legend

- Truck Stops
- Foreign Trade Zones
- Industrial Parks
- Parcel Delivery Hub
- Pipelines Terminals
- Intermodal Facilities
- Major Airports
- Freight Oriented Developments



DFW, an inland port

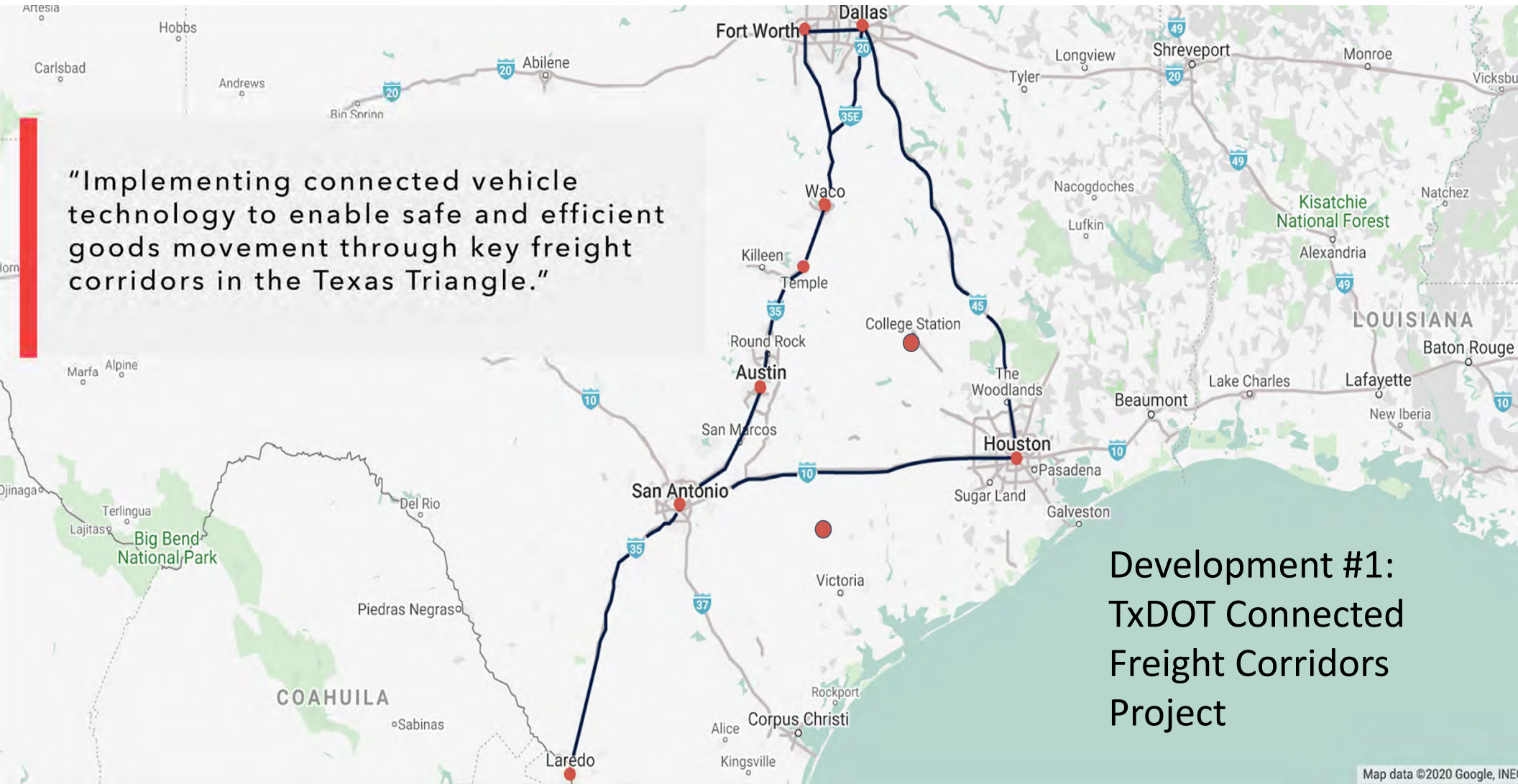
Freight hubs linked to expressways

Connections signaled

Optimizing truck flow = opportunity

Truck Travel Time
Reliability (PM3) Support

“Implementing connected vehicle technology to enable safe and efficient goods movement through key freight corridors in the Texas Triangle.”



Development #1:
TxDOT Connected
Freight Corridors
Project

Map data ©2020 Google, INE

Optimization = Freight Industry Priority

TIERS

01

Work
Zone
Warning



Queue
Warning



Wrong-
Way
Drivers



Truck
Signal
Priority



02

Advance
Traveler
Information
System (ATIS)



Road
Weather
Warning



Truck
Parking
Availability



Bridge
Height
Warning



03

Emergency
Electronic
Brake Light



Pedestrian
& Animal
Warning




Eco-
Dynamic
Routing

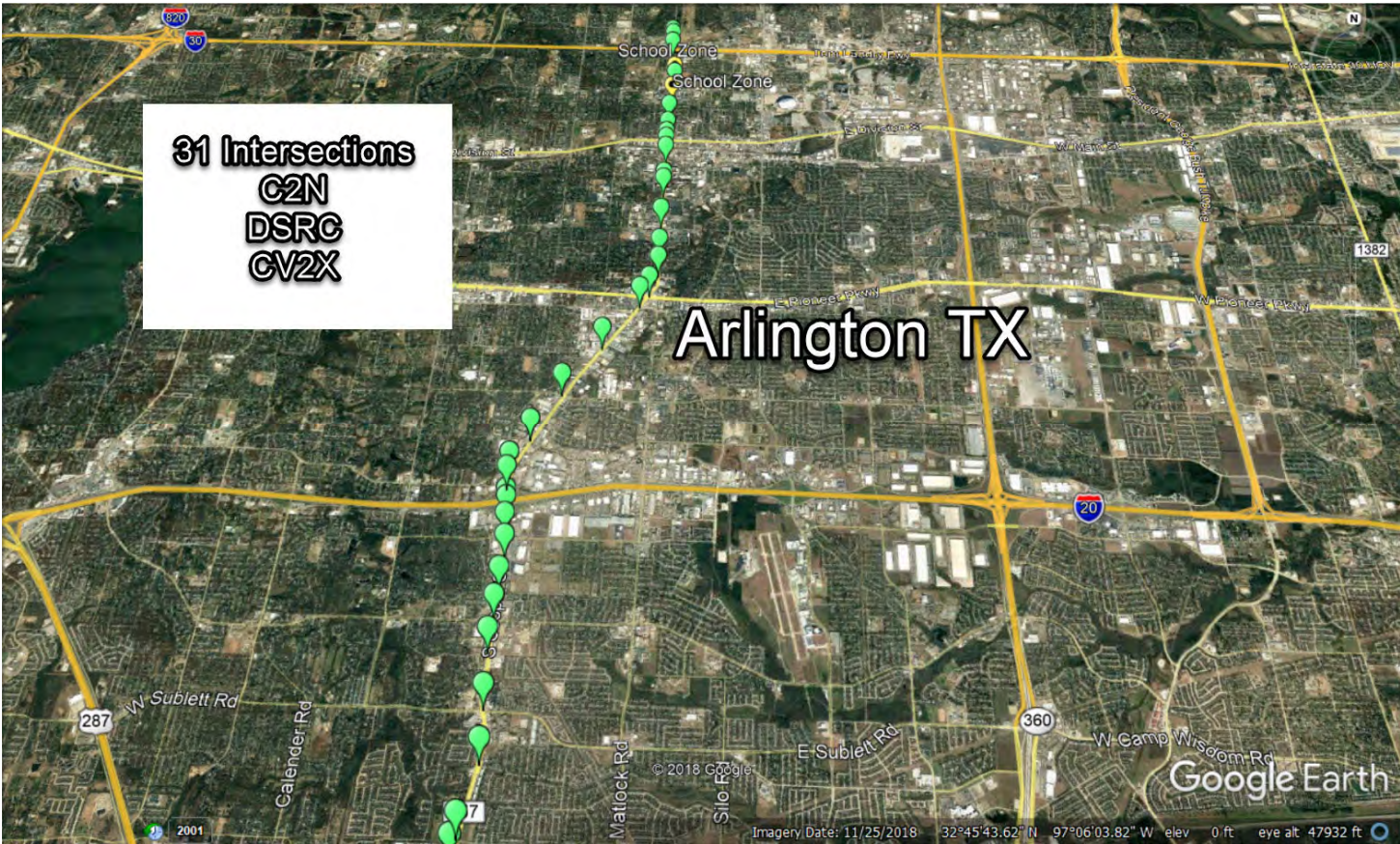


Border
Wait
Times



 = Highlighted applications are prioritized for development

Development #2: Arlington Connected Vehicle Corridor



Development #3: Georgia Regional Connected Vehicle Program (and other such programs)



- Collaboration between GDOT & Atlanta MPO
- 1000+ intersections
- Dual mode
- Freight priority application
- Recent Request for Proposal

Optimized Freight Movement Project Elements

1. Technology to optimize the flow of trucks from hubs to expressways
2. Benefit-cost analysis to identify where tech will do the most good:
 - Truck travel time savings
 - Improved traffic flow
 - Public health
 - Any adverse impacts—e.g., cross-traffic delay
 - Compare with alternative solutions—e.g., signal retiming
3. Coordination with local agencies/freight industry
4. Monitor performance and adapt

Action Requested

Approval of:

1. \$5 million for Optimized Freight Movement project (\$200K RTC Local, remainder federal; RTC Transportation Development Credits); and
2. Staff to administratively amend the TIP/STIP and other planning documents as required to effectuate the project.

Contact

Thomas J. Bamonte
Senior Program Manager,
Automated Vehicles
tbamonte@nctcog.org
Twitter: @TomBamonte



Regional Cotton Belt Veloweb Trail: Action Plan

Regional Transportation Council

September 10, 2020

Karla Weaver



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Background

- In 2018, the RTC approved funding for design and construction of the Cotton Belt trail “critical” sections.
- Proposed trail design and construction costs as part of the Silver Line rail design/build process provided by the rail contractor are higher than anticipated.

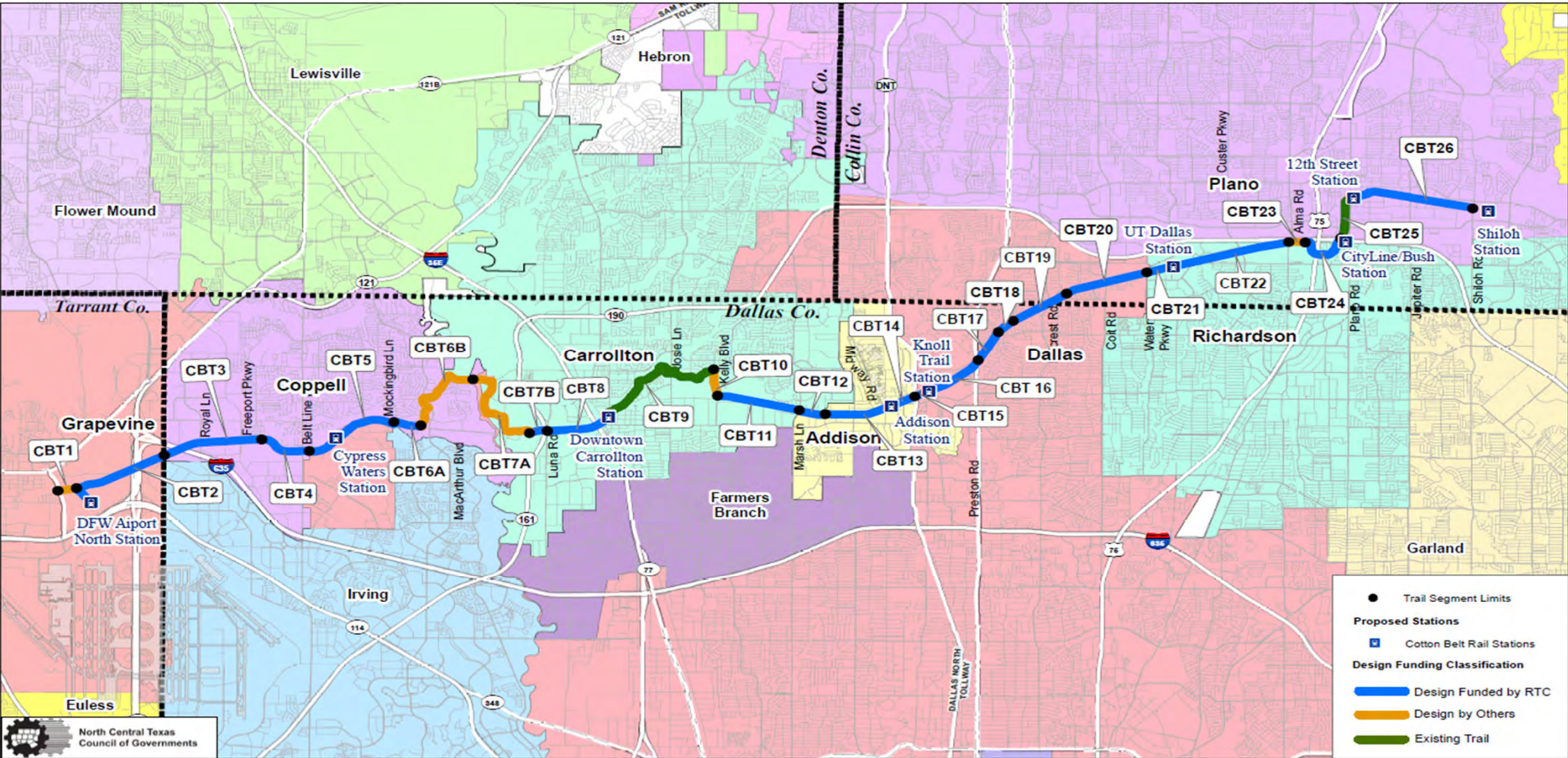


Solution

- New approach proposed to minimize current high costs and expedite construction with two contractors.
- Increase RTC funding to complete 100% design to minimize risk. One designer for all parts of the rail and trail.
- Proceed with construction of strategic critical sections with current DART contractor – the crossing of the Dallas North Tollway (Contractor 1, Archer Western Herzog).
- Proceed with construction of strategic critical sections with a second contractor – critical sections (Contractor 2). Contractor 2 will have lower prices because they will have more experience as a “trail” contractor.
- DART will procure the second contractor within 6-9 months. They will build in various constrained locations before the trains are operable. Costs more in line with industry standards will allow DART to build the project cheaper and will allow public funds to go further. Construction will follow the agreed upon design crossings.



Exhibit 1 Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail: DFW Airport to Plano Trail Design Funding



- Trail Segment Limits
- Proposed Stations**
- Cotton Belt Rail Stations
- Design Funding Classification**
- Design Funded by RTC
- Design by Others
- Existing Trail



Additional Trail Connection / Safety Issues

- Construction funding is needed to ensure adequate safety walls in the rail corridor near Fairhill School and Ivy Montessori School. (design/build contractor to construct with the rail project)

RTC Action

- Design of 100% of the entire trail:
 - Increase RTC award of \$8.2M to \$14.9M
 - Increase use of Regional Transportation Development Credits (TDC) to 3.0 million in lieu of local match
- Construction of strategic critical trail bridge sections will be done with two DART contractors.
- Fund additional safety walls near school locations for \$245K STBG funds. RTC Transportation Development Credits will be used for match.
- Assemble inventory for locations for second DART contractor.
- Administratively amending the TIP/STIP and amending other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes.

Contact Information

Karla Weaver, AICP

Sr. Program Manager

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Kevin Kokes, AICP

Program Manager

kkokes@nctcog.org



TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

2020 Call for Projects Recommendations for the North Central Texas Region

Regional Transportation Council

September 10, 2020

Kevin Kokes, AICP



**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

Eligible Project Activities for Construction

May include:

- Shared-Use Paths (Trails)
- On-Street Bikeways
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Signalization
- Protected Intersections
- Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Curb Ramps
- Traffic Controls and Calming Measures
- Signage
- Road Diets
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Counters

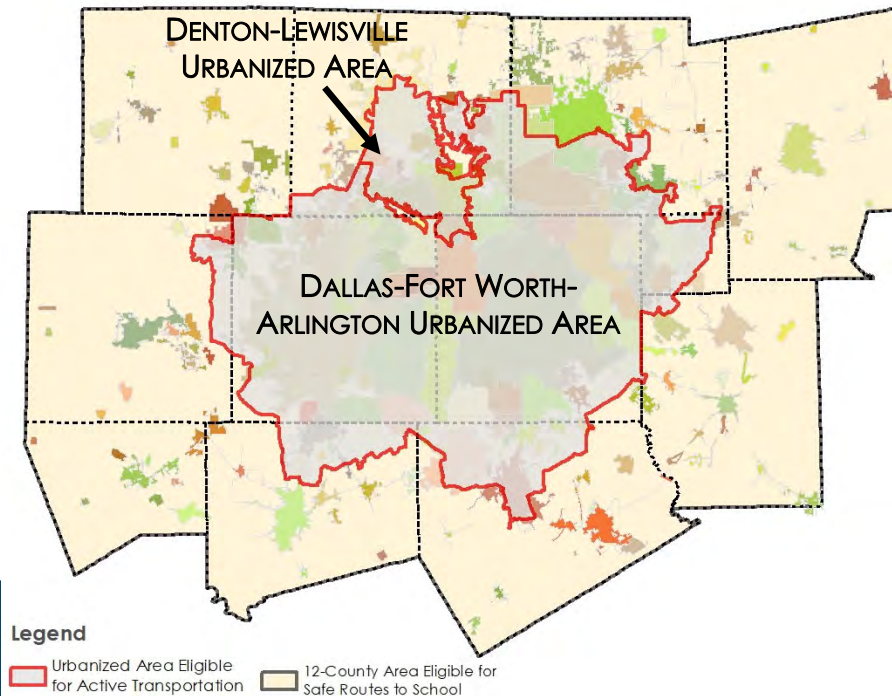


Overview of the Transportation Alternatives Program

- Construction-implementation focus
- Engineering and environmental must be 100 percent locally funded
- Minimum 20 percent local match is required for construction
- Agencies were eligible to request TDCs in lieu of a local match if qualified through the MTP Policy Bundle process

Eligible Areas by Project Category

- **Active Transportation:** Large urbanized areas (over 200,000)
- **Safe Routes to School:** 12-county region, within 2 miles of K-8 school



Funding Overview

Funding Allocation for FY21*, FY22, and FY23
(conditional upon receipt of federal funding)

Funding	Western Subregion Fort Worth District (34%)	Eastern Subregion Dallas and Paris Districts (66%)	Total Funding Available
Anticipated Funds (FY 21-22-23)	\$8,102,880	\$15,729,120	\$23,832,000
Previously Awarded Funds (FY 21)*	-	- \$3,967,201*	-
Available Funds (FY 21-22-23)	\$8,102,880	\$11,761,919	\$19,864,799

* FY21 Eastern Subregion funds awarded by RTC on 6/13/19 as part of the 2019 Call for Projects.

Evaluation and Scoring



**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

Active Transportation Category Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

Category	Scoring	Description
Regional Network Connectivity	20	Improves connectivity of Mobility 2045 regional paths and bikeways between cities and counties.
Transit Accessibility	15	Improves connections and access to transit.
Safety	15	Improves safety and provides facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists with a high level of comfort and suitability for users of all ages and abilities.
Congestion Reduction	15	Provides alternative travel options as an option to motor vehicle trips in areas with greater opportunity for walking and bicycling, thus improving air quality.
Equity	10	Improves access to disadvantaged populations and underserved communities.
Reducing Barriers	5	Provides safe crossing of existing travel obstacles such as major roadways, interchanges, railroads, and bodies of water.
Project Readiness and Other Factors	20	Project readiness / ability to obligate funds and initiate construction quickly. Other factors related to innovation, project impact, and local match percent.



Safe Routes to School Category Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

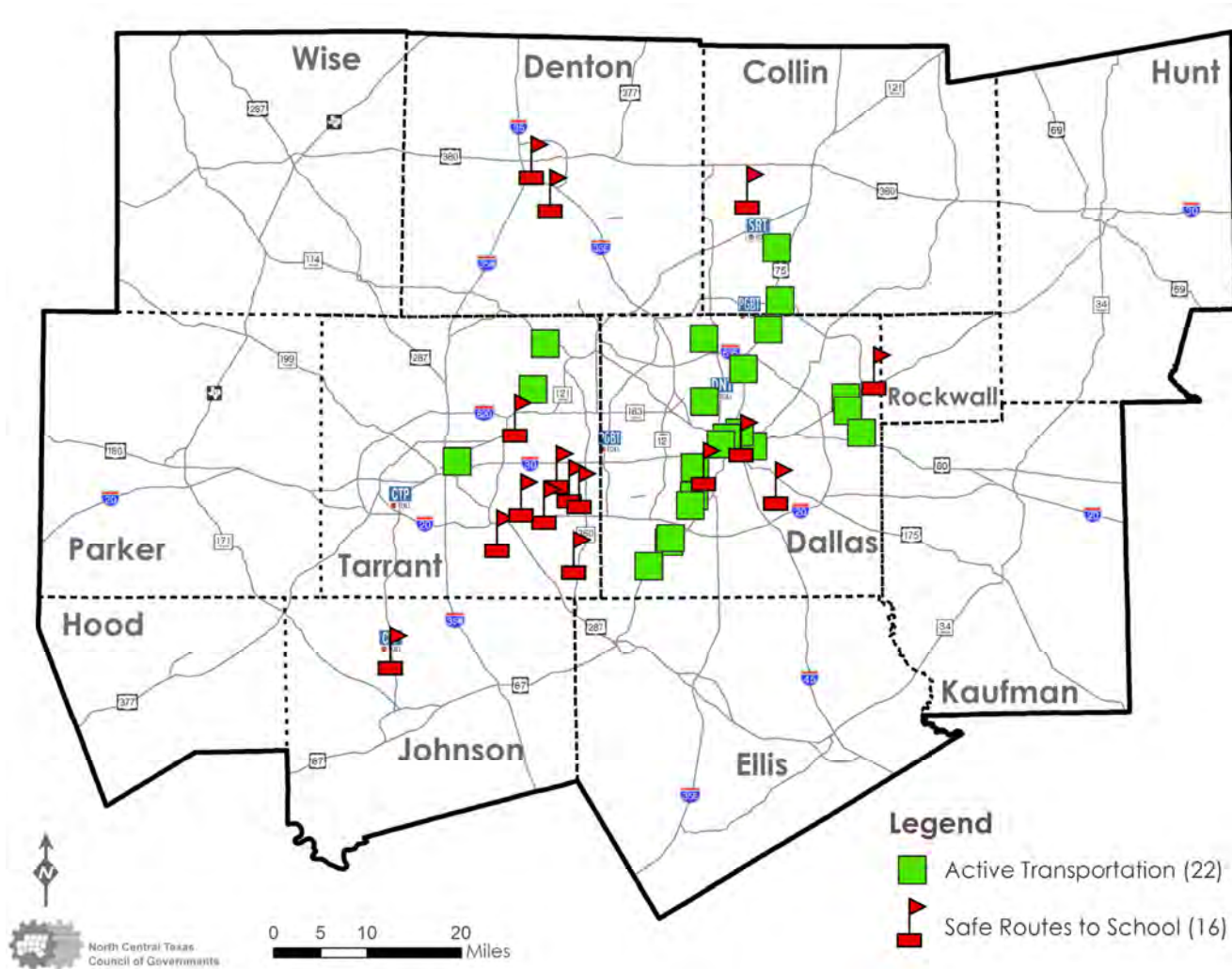
Category	Scoring	Description
Problem Identification	20	Addresses an identified problem, and the problem is significant.
Planning Support	20	Supported by a SRTS Plan or local planning effort, and supportive municipal policies and plans (ADA Transition Plan and Complete Streets Policy).
Potential to Increase Walking and Bicycling	15	Likely to increase the number of students that walk or bicycle to school.
Equity	15	Improves school access and safety for disadvantaged populations and underserved communities.
Community Support	10	Community support is demonstrated through letters of support, a public meeting, and past participation in encouragement or education events.
Project Readiness and Other Factors	20	Project readiness/ability to obligate funds and initiate construction quickly. Other factors related to innovation, project impact, and local match percent.

2020 TA Applications Received and Requested Federal Funding

	Western Subregion (Fort Worth District)	Eastern Subregion (Dallas District)	Total
Total Number of Applications Received	12	26	38
Active Transportation: 22 Applications (Federal Funding Requested)	\$ 5,422,587	\$ 41,263,270	\$ 46,685,857
Safe Routes to School: 16 Applications (Federal Funding Requested)	\$ 13,530,928	\$ 7,684,215	\$ 21,215,143
Total Federal Funding Requested	\$ 18,953,515	\$ 48,947,485	\$ 67,901,000
Federal Funding Available	\$ 8,102,880	\$ 11,761,919	\$ 19,864,799
Requested Funding Exceeding Available Funding	\$ 10,850,635	\$ 37,185,566	\$ 48,036,201



Project Applications Received (38)



Recommended Projects



**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

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2020 TA Funding Recommendations Western Subregion (Fort Worth District)

	Project Sponsor	Project Name	Recommended TA Funds	Recommended TDCs
1	City of Arlington	Webb Elementary School SRTS	\$ 788,987	157,797
2	City of Arlington	Crow Leadership Academy SRTS	\$ 1,668,585	333,717
3	City of Arlington	Thornton Elementary School SRTS	\$ 1,452,534	290,506
4	City of Fort Worth	East First/East Fourth St	\$ 2,332,000	466,400
Total			\$ 6,242,106	1,248,420

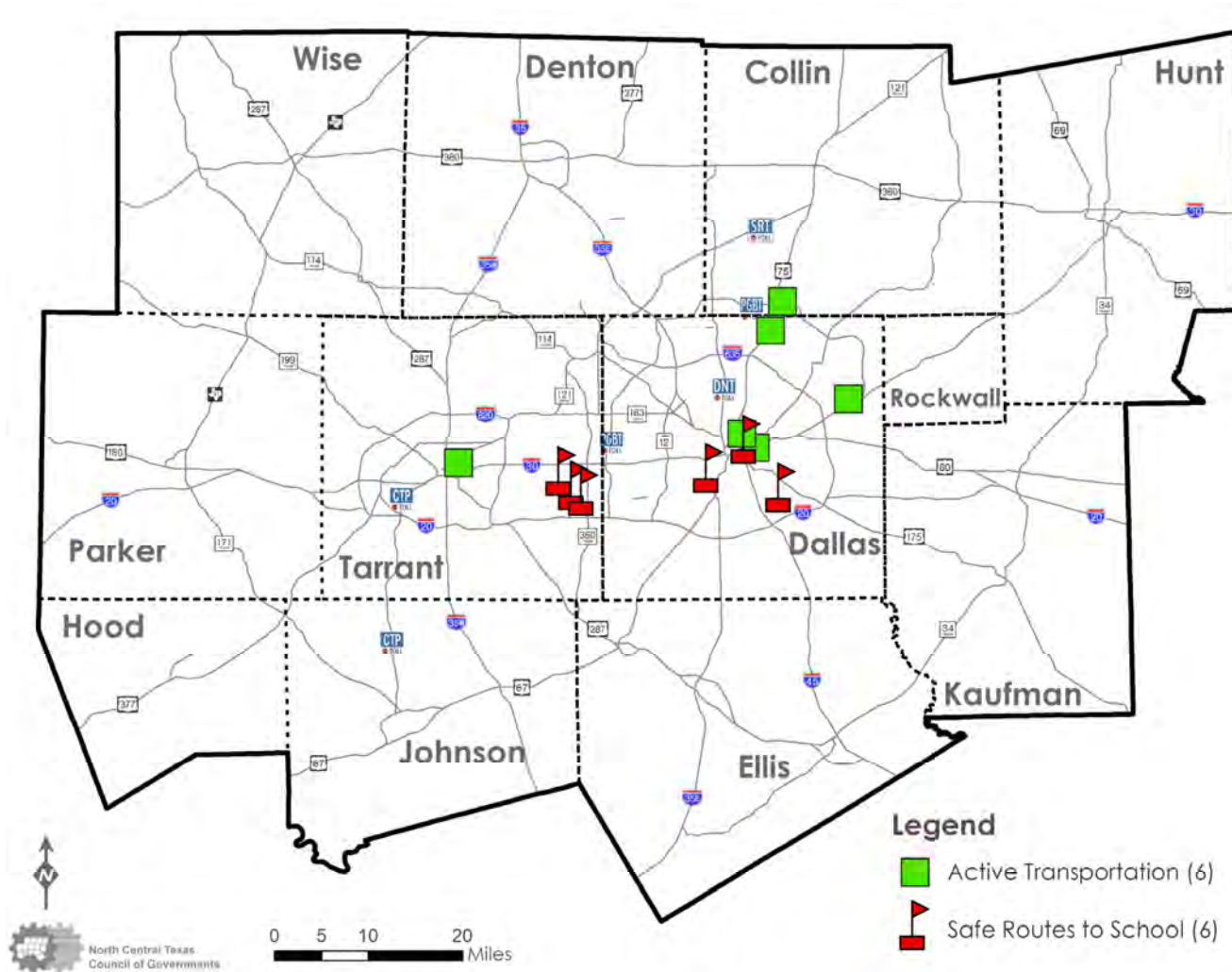
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2020 TA Funding Recommendations Eastern Subregion (Dallas District)

	Project Sponsor	Project Name	Recommended TA Funds	Recommended TDCs
1	City of Dallas	Elam SRTS Improvements	\$ 1,962,980	392,596
2	City of Dallas	Rosemont SRTS Improvements	\$ 758,351	151,670
3	City of Dallas	Ross Avenue Shared-Use Path	\$ 3,836,092	767,218
4	City of Dallas	Zaragoza SRTS Improvements	\$ 325,661	65,132
5	Dallas Area Rapid Transit	Bridge for Cotton Belt Veloweb Trail at Plano Pkwy	\$ 2,911,792	0
6	Dallas County	Fair Park/East Dallas Trail Phase 1	\$ 1,603,876	0
7	Dallas County	Rowlett Rd Multimodal Improvements	\$ 4,179,705	0
8	City of Richardson	Greenville Ave Multimodal Improvements	\$ 1,702,948	340,589
Total			\$ 17,281,405	1,717,205



Project Applications Recommended (12)



DRAFT

Recommended Funding (All Sources)

Subregion	Federal	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total
Active Transportation	\$ 14,234,413	\$ 3,588,498	1,107,807	\$ 17,822,911
Safe Routes to School	\$ 3,046,992	\$ 0	609,398	\$ 3,046,992
Eastern Total	\$ 17,281,405	\$ 3,588,498	1,717,205	\$ 20,869,903
Active Transportation	\$ 2,332,000	\$ 0	466,400	\$ 2,332,000
Safe Routes to School	\$ 3,910,106	\$ 0	782,020	\$ 3,910,106
Western Total	\$ 6,242,106	\$ 0	1,248,420	\$ 6,242,106
Grand Total	\$ 23,523,511	\$ 3,588,498	2,965,625	\$ 27,112,009



East/West Equity Balance



- Fewer projects/funding totals recommended in the western subregion results in a funding balance of \$1,860,774.
- The western subregion balance under this call for projects is recommended to be awarded to projects in the eastern subregion, since TA funds are subject to congressional recissions and must be programmed and obligated in a timely manner.
- An equal amount of CMAQ and/or STBG funding will be made available to other transportation projects in the western subregion to offset the balance transfer to the eastern subregion.
- This adjustment will be reflected in the quarterly East/West Equity Tracking Report.

DRAFT

Recommended Funding (Federal)

Funding Categories	Western Subregion	Eastern Subregion	Total
TA Funds Available (FY 21-22-23)	\$ 8,102,880	\$ 11,761,919	\$ 19,864,799
TA Funds Available to Transfer from West to East (FY 23)	(\$ 1,860,774)	\$ 1,860,774	-
TA Funds (FY 24) Recommended	-	\$ 3,658,712	\$ 3,658,712
Total Recommended ¹ TA Funds	\$ 6,242,106	\$ 17,281,405	\$ 23,523,511

¹ TA funds will be utilized assuming authorization as part of the next federal transportation bill. If TA funds are not available, project funding will be backfilled with CMAQ and/or STBG.



Schedule

Milestone	Date
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) — Info on CFP	November 20, 2019
Call for Projects Public Workshop	January 21, 2020
Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) — Info on CFP	January 24, 2020
Regional Transportation Council (RTC) — Action on CFP	February 27, 2020
Call for Projects Opens	March 2, 2020
Deadline for Meetings to Review Applications for Completeness	April 10, 2020
Call for Projects Closes	May 15, 2020, 5 PM
Review of Projects / Scoring by NCTCOG	May — July 2020
Public Meetings	August 2020
STTC — Action on Selected Projects	August 28, 2020
RTC - Action on Selected Projects	September 10, 2020
Individual Meetings with TxDOT District Staff	September – October 2020
Submittal Deadline for TIP Modifications	October 23, 2020
Approval of Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	March / April 2021



Requested RTC Action for Approval:

- The list of projects to fund through the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects, as provided in Electronic Item 9.2.
- Administratively amending the TIP/STIP and amending other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes.
- Per program rules, Project Sponsor must execute an Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) with TxDOT within one year of project selection.
- Per program rules, projects must advance to construction within three years from selection or the funding may be reprogrammed.
- Per program rules, cost overruns are the sole responsibility of the Project Sponsor.
- Transferring Western allocation of TA funding to the East, with the same amount of CMAQ or STBG funds to be transferred back to the Western Subregion.
- East/West Equity tracking reports will reflect adjustments for funding in the western subregion to offset the balance transfer to the eastern subregion with this call for projects.

Contact Information

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Shawn Conrad

Principal Transportation Planner

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DRAFT

2020 Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects (FY 21-22-23)
Fort Worth TxDOT District
Active Transportation

#	Project Sponsor	Project Name	1. Regional Network Connectivity (20 Points)												Project Score	Requested Funding				Recommended Funding											
			2. Transit Accessibility (15 Points)		3. Safety (15 Points)		4. Congestion Reduction (15 Points)		5. Equity (10 Points)		6. Reducing Barriers (5 Points)		7. Project Readiness and Other Factors (20 Points)			Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total	Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total								
1	City of Fort Worth	East First/East Fourth St	13	High	8	Medium	11	High	13	High	8	High	5	High	15	High	73	\$	2,332,000	\$	-	466,400	\$	2,332,000	\$	2,332,000	\$	-	466,400	\$	2,332,000
TOTAL RECOMMENDED														\$	2,332,000	\$	-	466,400	\$	2,332,000	\$	2,332,000	\$	-	466,400	\$	2,332,000				
Projects Not Recommended for Funding																															
2	City of Colleyville	Nature Center Trail	4	Low	0	Low	8	Medium	3	Low	0	Low	4	High	17	High	36	\$	2,672,032	\$	668,008	-	\$	3,340,040							
Ineligible Projects																															
3	City of Southlake	Downtown District Pedestrian Access Improvements	Project application lacked an adopted resolution identifying a local match.													\$	418,555	\$	104,638	-	\$	523,193									
TOTAL REQUESTS RECEIVED														\$	5,422,587	\$	772,646	466,400	\$	6,195,233											

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**2020 Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects (FY 21-22-23)
Fort Worth TxDOT District
Safe Routes to School**

#	Project Sponsor	Project Name	1. Problem Identification (20 Points)		2. Planning Support (20 Points)		3. Potential to Increase Walking and Bicycling (15 Points)		4. Equity (15 Points)		5. Community Support (10 Points)		6. Project Readiness and Other Factors (20 Points)		Project Score	Requested Funding				Recommended Funding													
																	Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total	Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	CMAQ Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total								
1	City of Arlington	Webb Elementary School SRTS	16	High	14	High	13	High	15	High	5	Medium	12	Medium	77	\$ 788,987	\$ -	157,797	\$ 788,987	\$ 788,987	\$ -	\$ -	157,797	\$ 788,987									
2	City of Arlington	Crow Leadership Academy SRTS	20	High	10	Medium	13	High	15	High	5	Medium	12	Medium	75	\$ 1,668,585	\$ -	333,717	\$ 1,668,585	\$ 1,668,585	\$ -	\$ -	333,717	\$ 1,668,585									
3	City of Arlington	Thornton Elementary School SRTS	20	High	10	Medium	15	High	15	High	2	Low	12	Medium	74	\$ 1,452,534	\$ -	290,506	\$ 1,452,534	\$ 1,452,534	\$ -	\$ -	290,506	\$ 1,452,534									
TOTAL RECOMMENDED																\$ 3,910,106	\$ -	782,020	\$ 3,910,106	\$ 3,910,106	\$ -	\$ -	782,020	\$ 3,910,106									
Projects Not Recommended for Funding																																	
4	City of Arlington	Della Icenhower SRTS/Trail Connection	16	High	10	Medium	15	High	5	Low	7	High	15	High	68	\$ 2,327,165	\$ -	465,433	\$ 2,327,165														
5	City of Kennedale	Kennedale Safe Routes to School	18	High	12	Medium	13	High	0	Low	7	High	15	High	65	\$ 853,512	\$ 213,378	-	\$ 1,066,890														
6	City of Arlington	Gunn JHS SRTS	20	High	10	Medium	9	Medium	10	Medium	2	Low	12	Medium	63	\$ 2,869,368	\$ -	573,873	\$ 2,869,368														
7	City of Arlington	Key Elementary SRTS	16	High	10	Medium	10	Medium	5	Low	2	Low	12	Medium	55	\$ 1,803,407	\$ -	360,681	\$ 1,803,407														
8	City of Hurst	SRTS for Shady Oaks, Donna Park & Hurst Hills Elem	10	Medium	0	Low	15	High	5	Low	5	Medium	12	Medium	47	\$ 852,122	\$ 213,030	-	\$ 1,065,152														
9	City of Burleson	FM 1902 & CR 910 SRTS	10	Medium	0	Low	11	Medium	5	Low	4	Medium	3	Low	33	\$ 915,248	\$ 228,812	-	\$ 1,144,060														
TOTAL REQUESTS RECEIVED																\$ 13,530,928	\$ 655,220	2,182,007	\$ 14,186,148														

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2020 Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects (FY 21-22-23)
Dallas TxDOT District
Safe Routes to School

#	Project Sponsor	Project Name	Evaluation Criteria										Project Score	Requested Funding				Recommended Funding													
			1. Problem Identification (20 Points)		2. Planning Support (20 Points)		3. Potential to Increase Walking and Bicycling (15 Points)		4. Equity (15 Points)		5. Community Support (10 Points)			6. Project Readiness and Other Factors (20 Points)		Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total	Transportation Alternatives Federal Funding	CHAQ Federal Funding	Local Match	Transportation Development Credits	Total							
1	City of Dallas	Zaragoza SRTS Improvements	17	High	14	High	15	High	15	High	7	High	9	Medium	79	\$ 325,661	\$ -	65,132	\$ 325,661	\$ 325,661	\$ -	\$ -	65,132	\$ 325,661							
2	City of Dallas	Elam SRTS Improvements	13	Medium	10	Medium	15	High	15	High	7	High	9	Medium	69	\$ 1,962,980	\$ -	392,596	\$ 1,962,980	\$ 1,962,980	\$ -	\$ -	392,596	\$ 1,962,980							
3	City of Dallas	Rosemont SRTS Improvements	13	Medium	6	Low	15	High	10	Medium	7	High	15	High	66	\$ 758,351	\$ -	151,670	\$ 758,351	\$ 758,351	\$ -	\$ -	151,670	\$ 758,351							
TOTAL RECOMMENDED															\$ 3,046,992	\$ -	609,398	\$ 3,046,992	\$ 3,046,992	\$ -	\$ -	609,398	\$ 3,046,992								
Projects Not Recommended for Funding																															
4	City of Denton	Newton Rayzor Elem School SRTS	18	High	4	Low	15	High	5	Low	2	Low	12	Medium	56	\$ 1,399,477	\$ 349,869	-	\$ 1,749,346												
5	City of Rowlett	Rowlett Lake Highland Trail	10	Medium	10	Medium	13	High	0	Low	10	High	12	Medium	55	\$ 1,344,579	\$ 336,144	-	\$ 1,680,723												
6	City of Frisco	McKinney & Frisco Connector Hike & Bike Trail 2A	16	High	4	Low	11	Medium	0	Low	4	Medium	17	High	52	\$ 506,628	\$ 337,752	-	\$ 844,380												
7	City of Denton	Sam Houston Elem School SRTS	20	High	0	Low	15	High	0	Low	2	Low	12	Medium	49	\$ 1,386,539	\$ 346,634	-	\$ 1,733,173												
TOTAL REQUESTS RECEIVED															\$ 7,684,215	\$ 1,370,399	609,398	\$ 9,054,614													

CHANGING MOBILITY

DATA, INSIGHTS, AND DELIVERING
INNOVATIVE PROJECTS DURING COVID
RECOVERY

Regional Transportation Council
September 2020

Michael Morris, PE
Director of Transportation



POLICY METRICS: CHANGING MOBILITY

METRIC 1: Travel behavior response to COVID-19

METRIC 2: Financial implications to traditional revenue sources

METRIC 3: Benefits of travel behavior responses to areas of RTC responsibility

METRIC 4: Prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases

Metric 1:
TRAVEL BEHAVIOR
RESPONSE TO COVID-19

TRAVEL BEHAVIOR BY MODE



Bicycle/Pedestrian (22%, July)



Freeway Volumes (-10%, July)

Toll Road (-27%, June)

Transit Ridership (-55%, July)

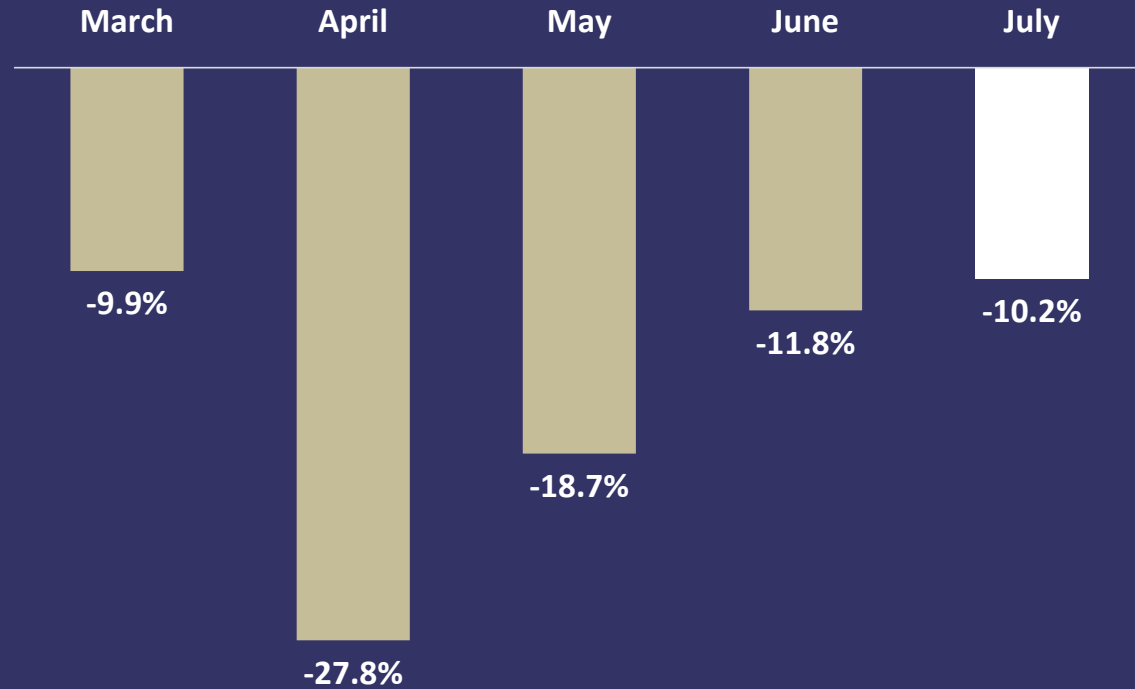
Airport Passengers (-65%, June)



ROADWAY TRENDS

Weekly Freeway
Volumes

Traffic Decrease vs 2019

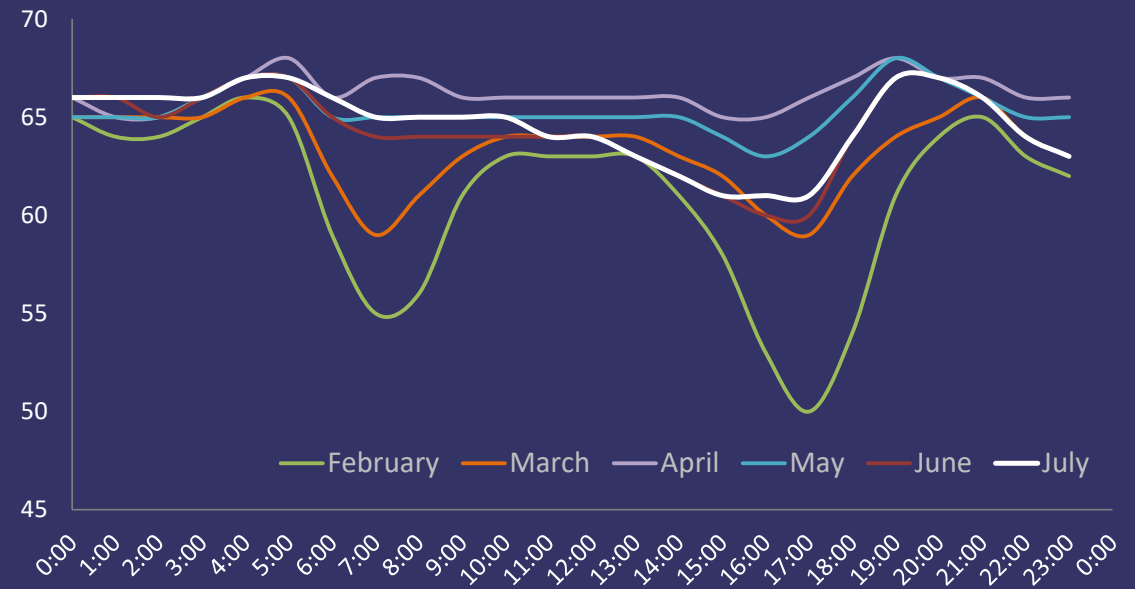


Source: TxDOT Dallas/TxDOT Fort Worth Radar Traffic Counters

ROADWAY TRENDS

Regional Average
Freeway Speeds

Average Weekday Speeds, Weighted by Traffic Volume

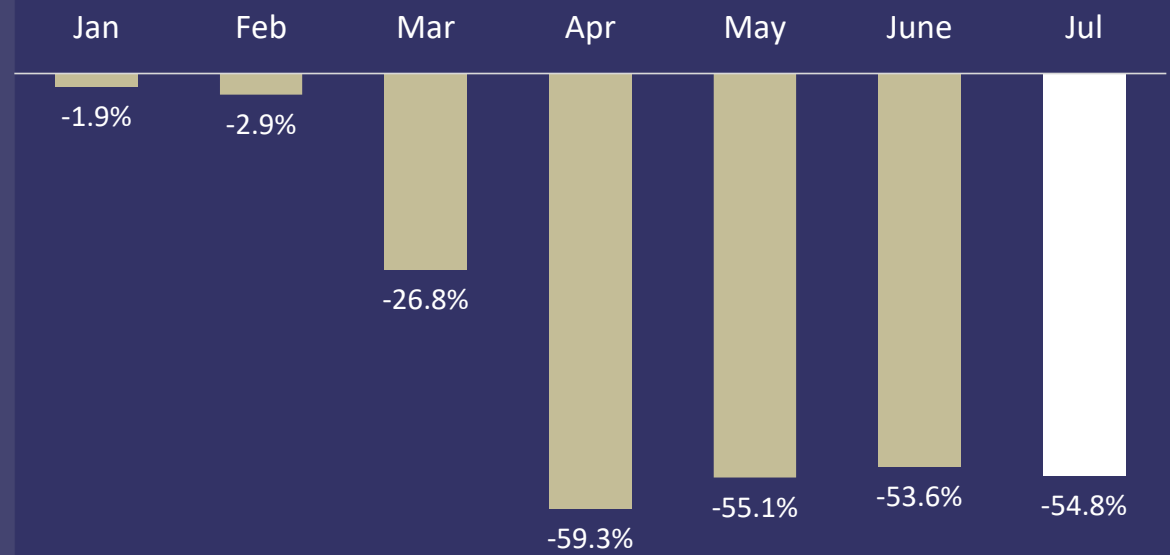


Source: TxDOT Sidewire Devices

TRANSIT IMPACTS

Ridership

Passenger Decrease : 2019 vs 2020

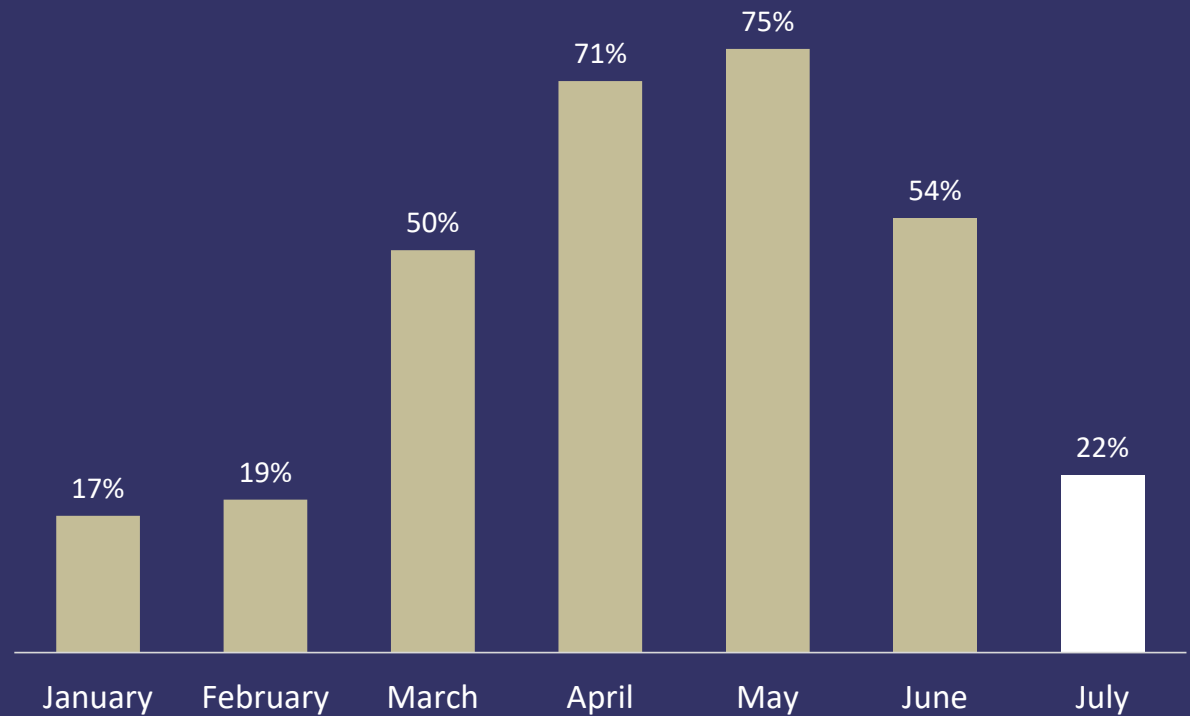


Source: DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPACTS

Trail Counts

Increase in Full Week Trail Usage : 2019 vs 2020



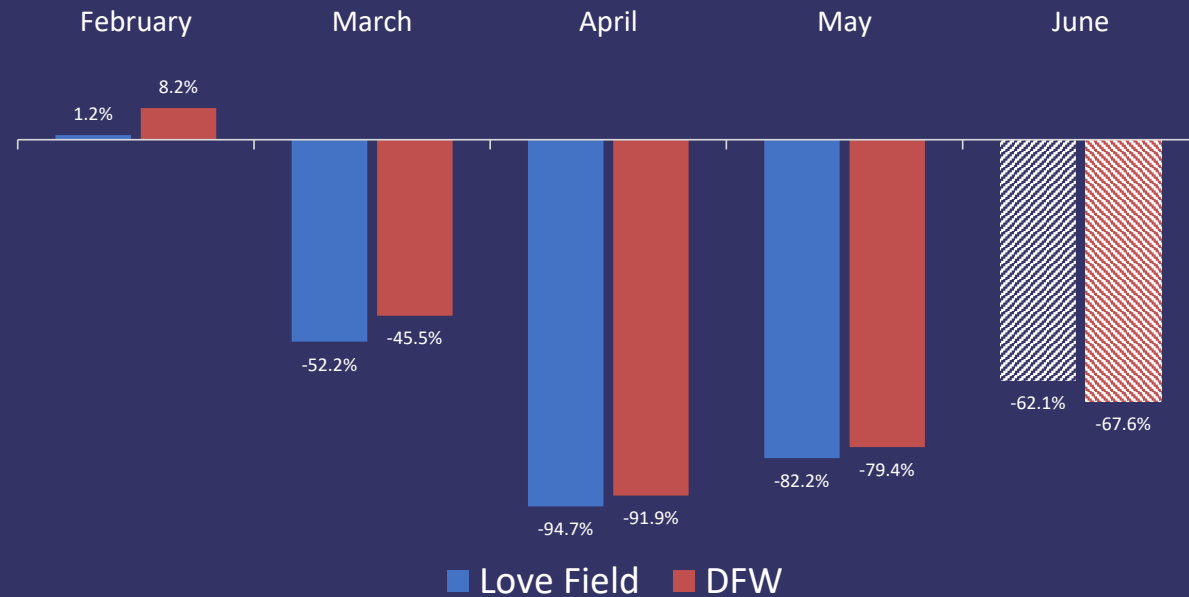
Source: NCTCOG - collected at 8 sites located in Plano, North Richland Hills, Denton, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Allen.

Note: No adjustments for weather were applied.

AIRPORT TRENDS

Passengers

Change in Airport Passengers - 2019 vs 2020



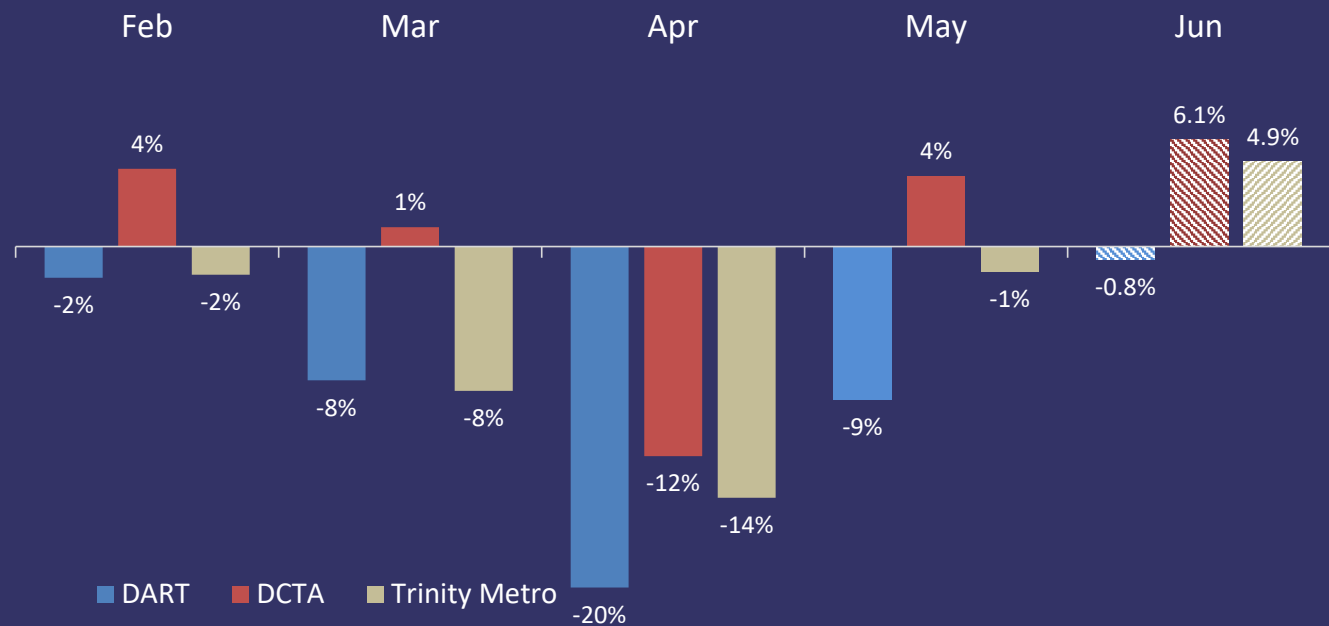
Source: Dallas Love Field Website and DFWIA data

Metric 2:
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
TO TRADITIONAL
TRANSPORTATION REVENUE

FUNDING IMPACT

Transit - Sales Tax Allocations

Sales Taxes Allocated For Transit: 2019 vs 2020

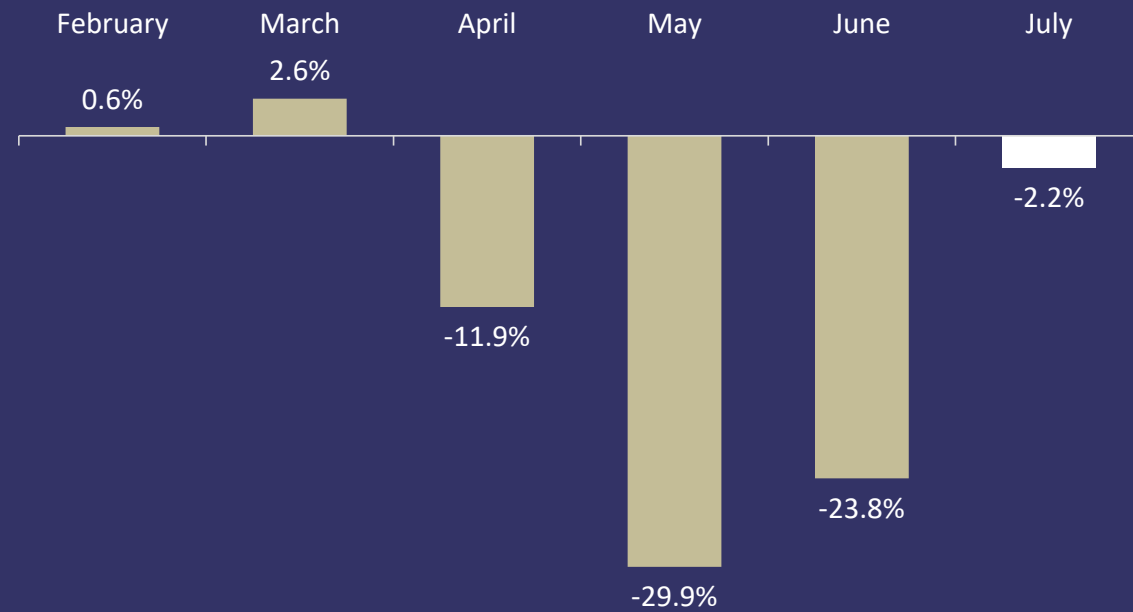


Source: DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro

FUNDING IMPACT

Motor Fuel Tax
Decrease

Change in Fuel Tax: 2020 vs 2019

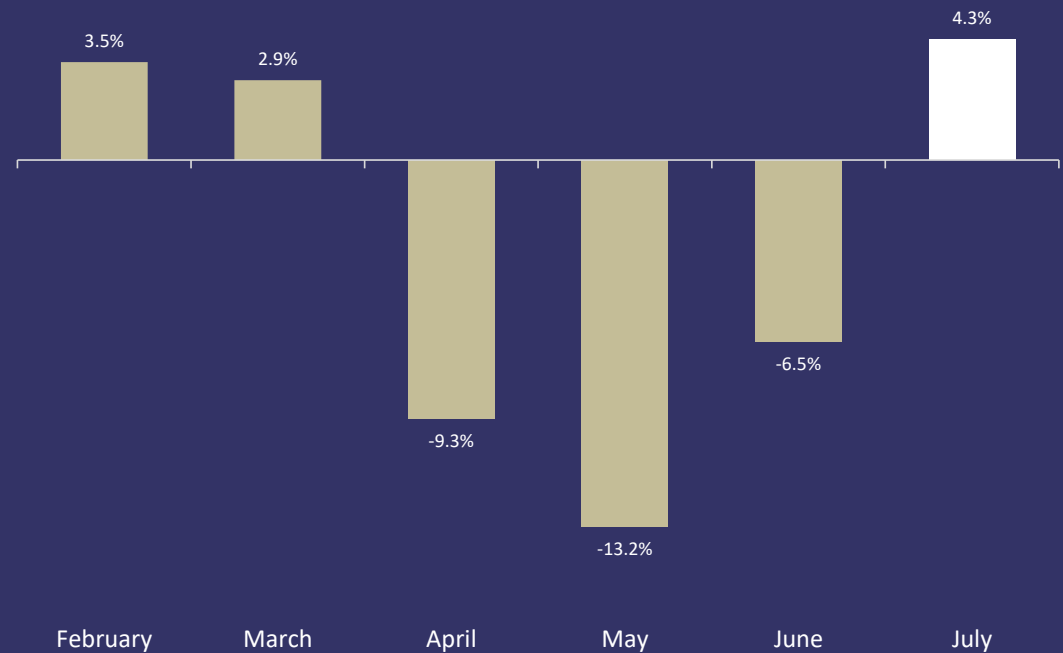


Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
Month reflects reporting data, not collection date

FUNDING IMPACT

Sales Tax
(Component of
Proposition 7¹)

Sales Tax Change: 2020 vs 2019



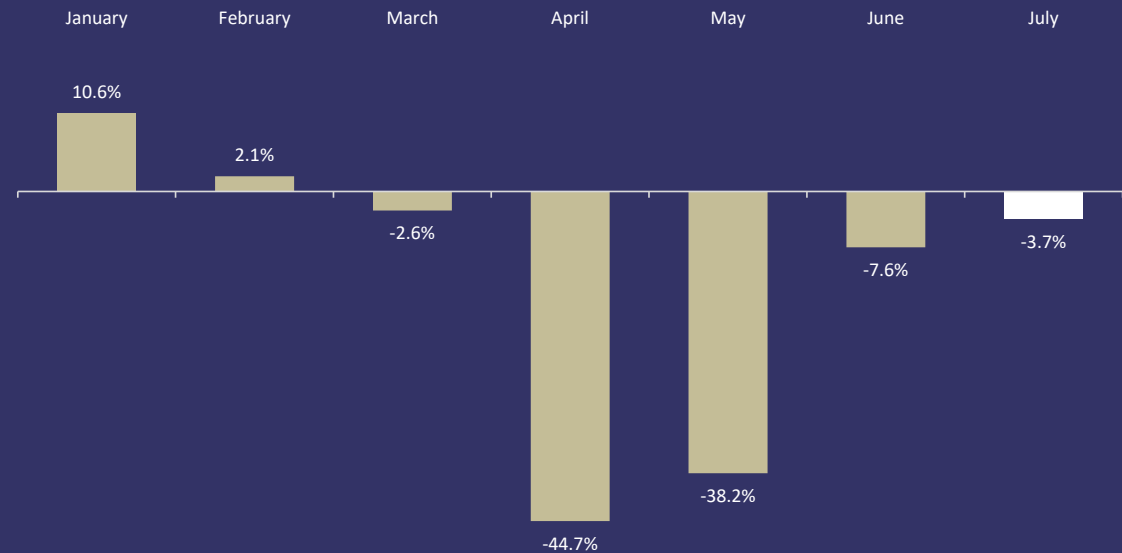
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

¹ Proposition 7 includes General State Sales Tax and Motor Vehicle Sales Tax
Month reflects reporting date, not collection date

FUNDING IMPACT

Motor Vehicle Sales
and Rental Tax
(Component of
Proposition 7¹)

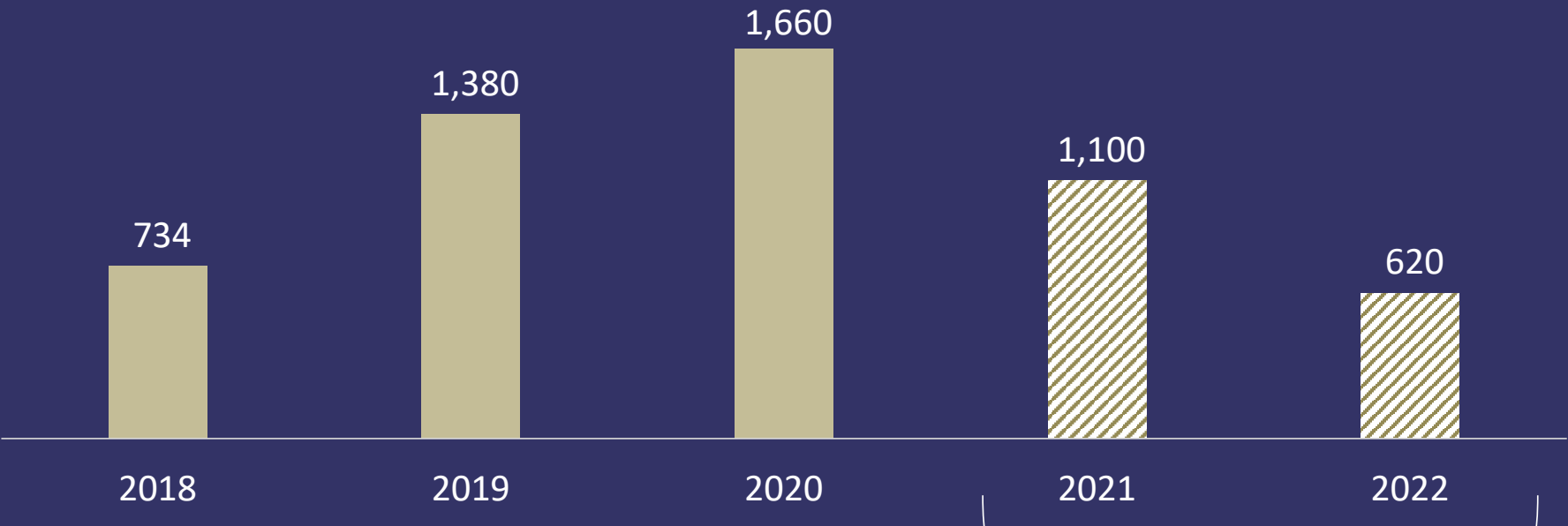
Motor Vehicle Sales and Rental Tax Change: 2020 vs 2019



Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

¹ Proposition 7 includes General State Sales Tax and Motor Vehicle Sales Tax
Month reflects reporting date, not collection date

Proposition 1 (Oil & Gas Severance Tax) Transfers to the State Highway Fund, Millions



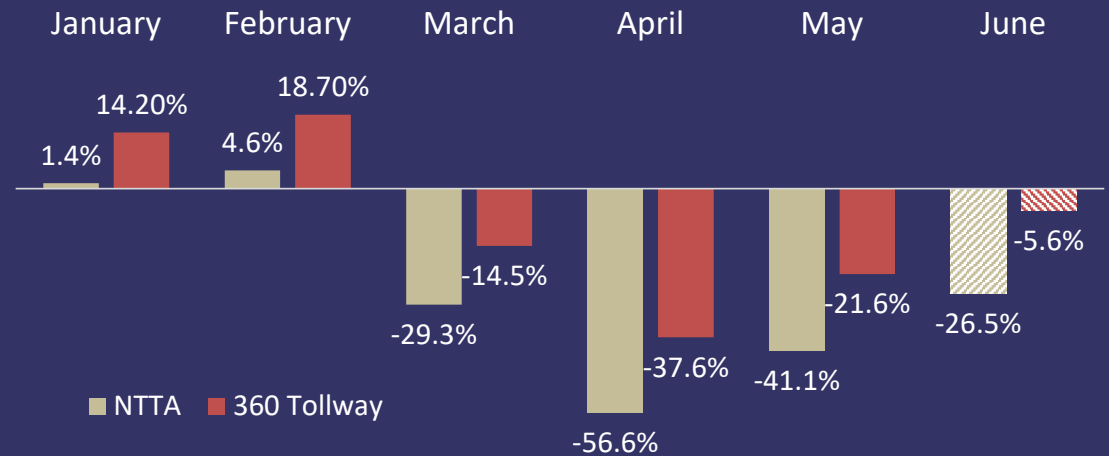
Projected in July 2020
Revised Comptroller
Certification Revenue
Estimate

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

FUNDING IMPACT

NTTA Transactions,
Including SH 360

Change in Tollway Transactions: 2019 vs 2020



Source: NTTA

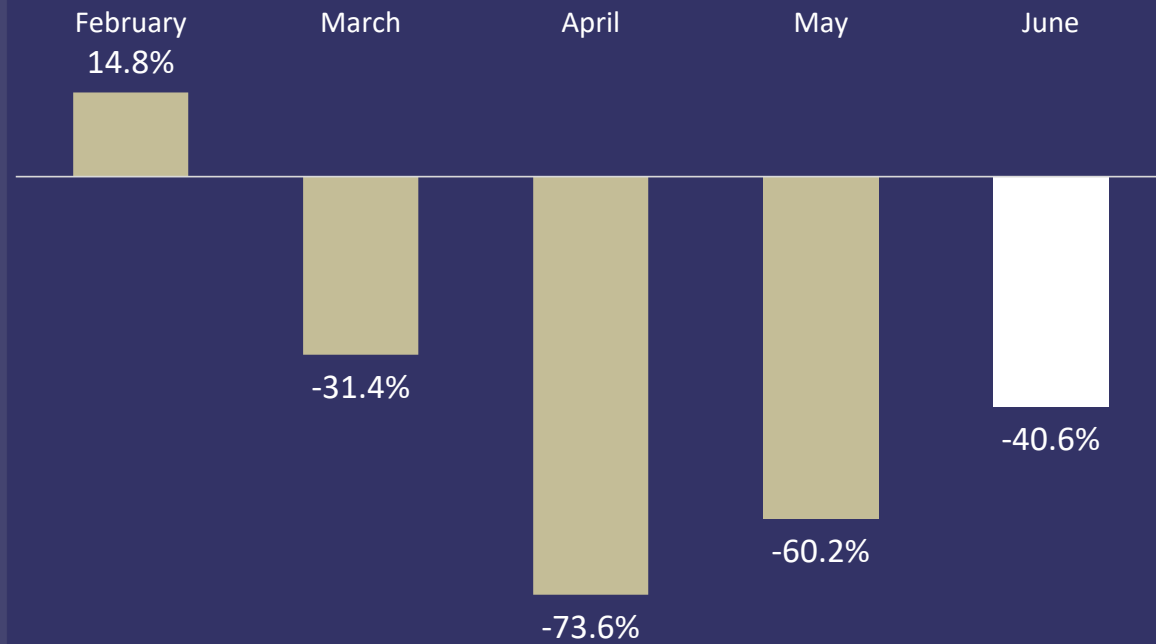
Note: Change for NTTA includes 360 Tollway

Additional Note: Despite decline in transactions, the revenues are sufficient to meet debt service for SH 360. No current impact to RTC backstop expected.

FUNDING IMPACT

I-35E TEXpress Lane Transactions

Change in Transactions: 2019 vs 2020



Source: TxDOT

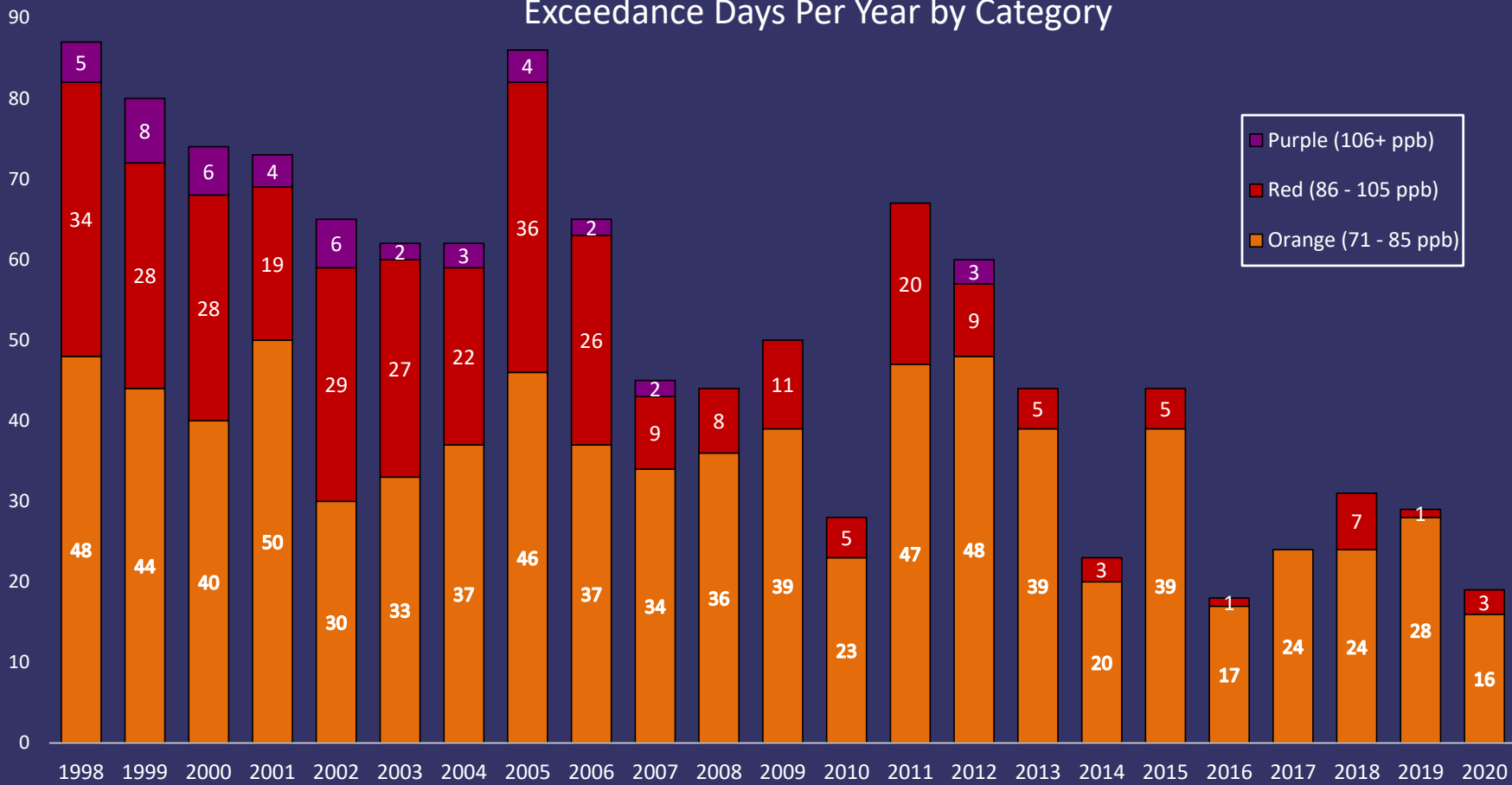
Note: TIFIA loan not impacted at this time as interest only payment period does not begin until May 2022

Metric 3:

Benefits of Travel Behavior Responses to Areas of RTC Responsibility

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

Exceedance Days Per Year by Category

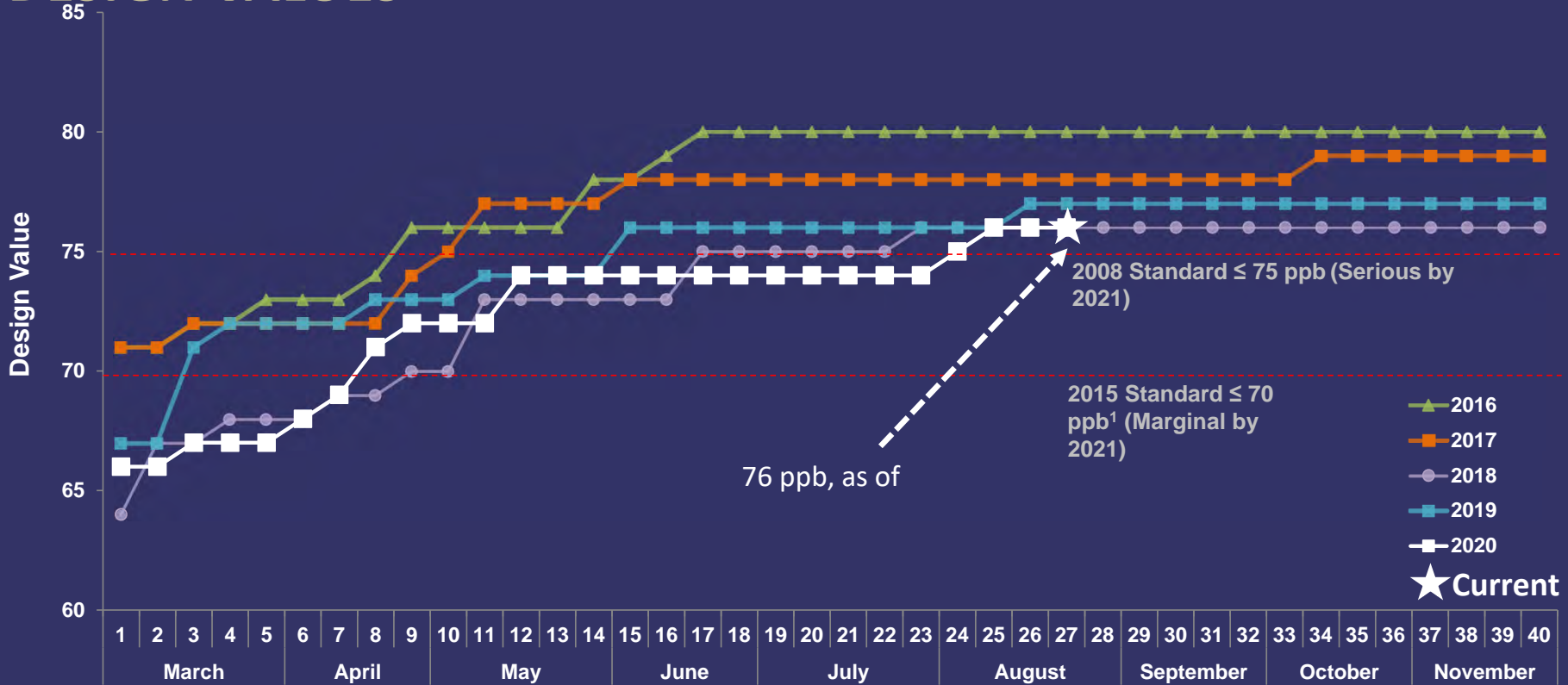


Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration as of August 18, 2020.

Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

2016-2020 HISTORICAL OZONE SEASON WEEKLY DESIGN VALUES



Data Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Metric 4:
Prioritization of
infrastructure
improvements that offset
unemployment increases

\$1 billion in transportation investment = 12,000-15,000 jobs

No conclusive evidence of different types of construction projects generating more/fewer jobs

For a long-term unemployment event, need near-term and long-term transportation investment for maximum benefit

Transportation impact on the economy



CANDIDATE PROJECTS

High Speed Rail: Dallas to Houston

High Speed Rail: Dallas to Fort Worth

Autonomous Transit (Tarrant, Midtown)

Technology (Freeway Induction Loops)

State Highway 183 (Section 2E+)

Y Connector (IH820/IH20)

COVID-19 #00X Program

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
September 2019 - August 2020**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20	3/12/20	4/9/20	5/14/20	6/11/20	7/9/20	8/13/20
Tennell Atkins (09/17)	Dallas	P	A	P	E	E(R)	P	E	P	A	P	P	P
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	E(R)
Loyl Bussell (05/17)	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	--	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	--	--	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	A	P	P	P	P	A
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	P	A	P	P	E(R)	A	A	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E	P	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	E(R)	P	P	E	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	A	P	A	A	P	E	P	P	E	P	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ivan Hughes (09/19)	Addison	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	A	E(R)	P	P	E	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	A	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Curtistene McCowan (06/19)	DeSoto	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Adam McGough (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	E	A	P	E	P	P	E(R)	A	A	P	P	A
Cara Mendelsohn (07/20)	Dalals	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
Robert Miklos (12/19)	Mesquite	--	--	--	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Barbara Odom-Wesley (07/19)	Arlington	P	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Philip J. Ritter (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
John Ryan (05/18)	Denton	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P
Chris Schulmeister (07/20)	Allen	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
Casey Thomas II (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Eules	--	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P= Present
A= Absent
R=Represented by Alternate
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
September 2019 - August 2020**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	9/12/19	10/10/19	11/14/19	12/12/19	1/9/20	2/27/20	3/12/20	4/9/20	5/14/20	6/11/20	7/9/20	8/13/20
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Paul Wageman (10/19)	DART	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dennis Webb (8/18)	Irving	P	A	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant Cnty	E	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	P	P	E(R)	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ann Zadeh (06/17)	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present
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Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
May 2019 - July 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20	2/28/20	3/27/20	4/24/20	5/22/20	6/26/20	7/24/20
Onyinye Akujuo	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Joe Atwood	Hood County	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Melissa Baker	Irving	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	*	*	*
Micah Baker	Dallas County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Katherine Beck	Fort Worth	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
David Boski	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Keith Brooks	Arlington	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	*	*	*
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Cohen	Southlake	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Kent Collins	Coppell	A	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Rick Cortez	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Hal Cranor	Eules	P	A	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	*	*	*	*	*
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Davis	Wise County	A	A	P	A	A	A	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Inga Dedow	NTTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	--	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Caryl DeVries	Grand Prairie	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*
Greg Dickens	Hurst	A	A(R)	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	*	*	*	*	*
David Disheroon	Johnson County	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Phil Dupler	FWTA	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A(R)	P	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Edwards	Fort Worth	P	P	A	P	E	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	A	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Chris Flanigan	Allen	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Ann Foss	Arlington	P	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Gary Graham	McKinney	A	P	A(R)	A(R)	E(R)	A(R)	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	P	A(R)	P	P	A	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Ron Hartline	The Colony	A(R)	A	A(R)	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	A(R)	*	*	*	*	*
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	*	*	*	*	*
Terry Hughes	Weatherford	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Jeremy Hutt	Cleburne	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*
Thuan Huynh	McKinney	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*
Tony Irvin	DeSoto	P	A	P	A	P	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*

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Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
May 2019 - July 2020

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	5/24/19	6/28/19	8/23/19	10/4/19	10/25/19	12/6/19	1/24/20	2/28/20	3/27/20	4/24/20	5/22/20	6/26/20	7/24/20
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	--	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Knippel	Frisco	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Chiamin Korngjebel	Dallas	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	A	A	P	P	P	A	A(R)	E(R)	*	*	*	*	*
Eron Linn	DART	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	P	A	P	A(R)	A	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Luedtke	Garland	A(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	A	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Wes McClure	Mesquite	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Moen	Frisco	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Mark Nelson	Richardson	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	*	*	*	*	*
Jim O'Connor	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Kevin Overton	Dallas	P	P	E(R)	P	P	A	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Palermo	DCTA	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Todd Plesko	DART	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Shawn Poe	Richardson	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
John Polster	Denton County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Porter	Wylie	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan G. Ramey II	Duncanville	A(R)	P	P	P	P	A	A	A(R)	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Kathryn Rush	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
David Salmon	Lewisville	P	P	A	P	P	P	A(R)	P	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Shewski	Plano	P	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	*	*	*	*	*
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	P	A	A	A	P	P	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Dave Timbrell	Garland	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*
Press Tompkins	Greenville	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	A	A(R)	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Daniel Vedral	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	*	*	*	*	*
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	*	*	*	*	*

P=Present A=Absent R=Represented E=Excused (personal illness, family emergency, jury duty, business necessity)
-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by WebEx/Audio Conference. Individual attendance not taken.

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

July 24, 2020

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, July 24, 2020, at 1:30 pm, by videoconference. The Regional Transportation Council Bylaws establish that the Technical Committee approved membership in attendance at a meeting shall constitute a quorum for action to be taken, therefore individual attendance was not taken for committee members or other attendees.

1. **Approval of June 26, 2020, Minutes:** The minutes of the June 26, 2020, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. Daniel Vedral (M); John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council Policy Position Establishing Guidelines for Ratification Actions:** Endorsement of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of P20-02, Policy Position Establishing Guidelines for Ratification Actions, to support interim staff-generated actions in the future was requested. A copy of the letter to the Dallas Stars and their response, which generated the development of the proposed policy, was provided in Electronic Item 2.1.1. A copy of the Policy Position Establishing Guidelines for Ratification Actions was provided in Electronic Item 2.1.2.

A motion was made to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. Daniel Vedral (M); Stanford Lynch (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **National Highway System Review:** Brian Flood presented final recommendations resulting from the National Highway System (NHS) Review. The NHS is a network of nationally significant roadways that support the movement of people and goods between population centers, international border crossings, major military installations, and intermodal facilities. It was originally designated in 1996, and in 2012 as part of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) was expanded to include all Federal Functional Classification System (FFCS) principal arterials that were not currently on the system. The NHS brings focus on parts of the transportation system with the largest impact on the movement of people and goods. Performance measures for the system are calculated for pavement and bridge condition, safety, congestion, and travel time reliability. Components of the NHS mandated by federal law include the Interstate Highway System, the Non-interstate Strategic Highway Network, and congressionally designated high-priority corridors. Also included are other FFCS urban and rural principal arterials and connectors that link intermodal facilities such as ports, airports, and AMTRAK stations with the rest of the NHS, which are designated through coordination with local transportation officials. In February 2019, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TPP) presented a list of preliminary suggested NHS modifications to North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff. Information regarding the NHS update process was then presented to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) and to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), as well as through a series of NCTCOG-hosted NHS update workshops. Recommendations were developed and NCTCOG staff provided statements of support, revision, or rejection of preliminary suggested NHS modifications to TxDOT TPP, as well as additional suggested modifications derived from staff/STTC input. A map of the final recommendations was highlighted at the

meeting, which included additions, deletions, and deferred additions to be added once warranted for inclusion. The proposed roadway modifications were presented and included additions and deletions. Intermodal facility modifications were also presented, and included name changes and modification of connectors, as well as some additions and deletions of facilities. Details were also provided to the members by email, prior to the meeting, in Electronic Item 3. Brian Shewski asked if it would be possible to get the specific criteria/rational leading to a facility being deferred. Mr. Flood noted that staff was not given that type of feedback, but for the majority of those deferred, TxDOT did not see sufficient traffic volumes or truck traffic but did make it clear there would be mechanisms in place to add these facilities once they are deemed warranted. Chad Edwards flagged two corrections: 1) Fort Worth Intermodal Center is now Fort Worth Central Station and 2) Santa Fe Railway Intermodal Facility should be BNSF Intermodal Facility. Greg Royster noted that International Parkway runs through the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and is shown on the map as a toll road. He noted the facility is not owned by a toll authority. Staff indicated that the NHS is based on functionality and International Parkway is listed as a toll road since a toll is collected on the roadway. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of all modifications proposed through the National Highway System update, including deferred additions to the system to be added as warranted in the future. Details were provided in Electronic Item 3, distributed to members as an electronic handout by email. Chad Edwards (M); Greg Royster (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **COVID-19 Infrastructure Program Funding:** Christie Gotti presented project recommendations for the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the economy has suffered large setbacks and there is an urgency to implement projects that help stimulate the economy similar to infrastructure investments made in 2009. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff recommends funding projects that would benefit from expedited action in partnership with local agencies. Future rounds of this partnership program are anticipated, and staff will be conducting a thorough review of the Mobility Plan to determine programs that need additional funding. Proposed projects should meet one or several of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policies outlined in Mobility 2045, with this particular round of investments targeting better school integration, improved freight connections, implementation of new regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities, improved air quality, and improved safety. The first two proposed projects are part of a larger partnership with Aledo Independent School District (ISD) to avoid locating schools on major roadways due to the reduction of speeds in school zones. The first project includes a stub-out road from FM 5 to the new elementary school scheduled to open in August 2021. Staff proposed the right-of-way be donated by Aledo ISD, \$1 million in Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds for construction, and \$1.5 million from Aledo ISD (including \$500,000 match to the RTR funds) for construction. In a related effort, the Texas Department of Transportation has already funded improvements along FM 5 for the project. As part of this effort staff proposed to use RTR funds, of which there are minimal amounts available in the western subregion, through an RTR/federal funding swap with Denton County that will be discussed later in the presentation. The RTC policy addressed through this project is better school integration. The second Aledo ISD project is improvements at the site of a new middle school needed by 2022. The developer of a project to the north has committed to build a small part of the roadway, but not necessarily in the timeframe needed. Part of the partnership includes upfront payment by the RTC with repayment by the developer within the timeframe originally committed. The developer has already committed \$2 million for design and staff proposed to use \$500,000 in RTR funds for right-of-way acquisition and an additional \$10 million in RTR funds for construction. The developer will pay an additional \$2.4 million in approximately four years, after construction is completed,

which partially repays the RTC's commitment. The scope of the projects is realignment of Old Weatherford Road from FM 3325 to east of Coder Drive, including turn lanes at intersections and a pedestrian side path. RTR funds are proposed from the Regional West Set-Aside account and the RTC policy addressed is better school integration. The third proposed project is a series of intersection and bicycle/pedestrian improvements proposed by Downtown Fort Worth Inc. and the City of Fort Worth. The overall program was highlighted, and staff proposed to currently move forward with the roadway improvements along Main Street (Business 287) from Trinity River to Weatherford Street. These improvements include traffic calming and curb extensions to reduce traffic lanes and adjusting the turning radius of Main Street, as well as the elimination of the bail-out lane. Downtown Fort Worth Inc. has secured a commitment of \$775,000 to pay for the design. Tarrant County has committed \$1 million for construction. Staff proposed a \$660,000 State match for the on-system portions of the project, \$4 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds, and \$2.64 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds. RTC policies addressed include air quality, bicycle/pedestrian implementation, safety, and ADA compliance. Ms. Gotti noted the private sector is working on the portion of the project in the park and is looking for private-sector funding. The bicycle/pedestrian facility will be considered for funding in the future contingent on private-sector funding commitments being realized. The next proposed project is a pedestrian crossing at IH 35E from the Dallas Design District to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Victory Station. The State has agreed to pay for the design, which is currently estimated at \$350,000. Staff proposed \$2.8 million in Dallas County RTR funds for construction. The \$400,000 local match, plus additional funds for amenities will be paid by the private sector and TIF district funds for items such as lighting, crosswalks, a traffic signal, and landscaping. RTC policy positions addressed included bicycle/pedestrian, air quality, and safety. Also in the Dallas area is a proposed planning study near Bachman Lake. The planning study will identify safe pedestrian access/facilities along major roadways to create connections to nearby trails, the DART Bachman Station, and Love Field Access. The area of review is bounded by Mockingbird to the south, IH 35E to the west, Inwood Road to the east and Royal Lane to the north. Staff proposed \$800,000 STBG funds and \$200,000 RTC Local funds for the project. Depending on how quickly the federal funding is under an agreement, that RTC Local could be used as a match. If the RTC Local is mostly expended before access is gained to the federal funds, Transportation Development Credits are proposed for the match instead. This policy addresses RTC policies for bicycle/pedestrian, safety, and air quality. The next proposed project is a freight project along FM 429 in Terrell. Union Pacific is proposing to construct siding track in the area, which creates the need for better roadway integration. Currently, there is an offset intersection of US 80 and FM 429. Staff proposed realignment of the offset intersection and an appropriate, safe at-grade crossing. The project is estimated at approximately \$10 million and staff proposed \$8 million STBG funds and a \$2 million State match. RTC policies addressed include freight and safety. As mentioned earlier in the presentation, the western subregion has limited RTR funds. In order to fund some of the improvements in the western side of the region, Denton County has agreed to trade a portion of its RTR funding balance coming back from IH 35E to help accelerate the proposed projects by using non-federal funds. The total RTR funds being returned to Denton County has not been finalized, but it will be enough for this proposed partnership. Staff proposed to fund a currently unfunded project in Denton County with \$30 million in STBG funds and move the same amount of RTR funds from the Denton County account to the western subregion to cover the projects in this partnership program, plus leave a balance for future non-federal needs in the west. If the Denton County project were to need additional funding, the balance would be paid with Category 2 funds in order to fully fund the selected project. Staff also proposed that the Denton County project is not identified until after the Texas Transportation Commission selects projects through its Unified Transportation

Program action this summer. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of the funded projects outlined in Electronic Item 4.1 and Electronic Item 4.2, including the exchange of \$30 million Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funding for \$30 million Regional Toll Revenue funding with Denton County. Action also included a recommendation that staff administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed. John Polster (M); Stanford Lynch (S). The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle and Transportation Development**

Credits: Amy Johnson provided results from the fourth round of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Policy Bundle survey, including the plan to distribute available Transportation Development Credits (TDCs). The MTP Policy Bundle is a list of 20 policies from Mobility 2045. Entities that adopt a minimum of 50 percent of the policies may receive TDCs to offset local funds for federal transportation projects. Policies are focused on quality of life goals in the Mobility Plan and include employee trip reduction, parking management, safe access to schools, land use strategies, idling restrictions, and others. In Round 4, applicants include 19 local governments and 2 transit authorities. Details of the successful applicants, including the proposed TDCs recommended for each, were provided in Electronic Item 5. Ms. Johnson reminded members that TDCs are awarded based on population and were updated based on the latest population estimates. In addition, staff is finalizing a question with the Denton County Transportation Authority, which will impact only the number of qualifying policies, not the recommended TDC amount for award. Through the fourth round of the MTP Policy Bundle, approximately 31.8 million TDCs are recommended for award to the qualifying agencies. The schedule for this effort was reviewed, with Committee action anticipated in August and Regional Transportation Council action in September. Successful applicants are expected to receive formal notification in the September/October timeframe. Additional information is also available at www.nctcog.org/policybundle.

6. **Federal Highway Administration Measures Target Reaffirmation or Revisions:** James McLane presented an overview of current Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) performance measures. Observed performance is used in the region to help establish regional goals and priorities, planning, policy development, and project selection. Although the region has a history of using performance measurement, recent federal transportation legislation requires certain performance measures be included in the long-range metropolitan transportation planning process. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, performance measures are documented through efforts such as recent collection/presentation of COVID-19 data trends and the annual state of the region report, Progress North Texas. Additional examples are available at www.nctcog.org/pm. Federal performance measures documented by the MPO include Safety (PM1), Transit Asset Management (TAM), Transit Safety (PTASP), Pavement and Bridge (PM2), and System Performance (PM3). PM2 and PM3 rulemakings establish a series of four-year performance periods, the first of which began in 2018. At that time, the MPO adopted two-year (2020) and four-year (2022) targets for the performance period. 2020 marks the mid-performance period and rulemaking allows 2022 targets to be revisited. The MPO can choose to reaffirm the existing targets or adopt new ones. Since in 2018 the MPO chose to support the State's targets for PM2, new targets are needed from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Once received, the MPO will decide whether to adopt its own quantitative targets or continue to support statewide targets and action on this performance measure will be brought back to the Committee and RTC. This will prominently include an assessment of off-system arterials in poor condition. Updated PM2 targets are due 180 days

after TxDOT makes its adjustments. He noted the primary focus of the presentation is PM3, System Performance, Freight, and Congestion Management Air Quality which contains a series of seven measures related to various aspects of the transportation system: reliability, congestion, mode choice, and emissions. Updated PM3 targets are due to FHWA via TxDOT on October 1, 2020. On November 8, 2018, the RTC adopted 2020 and 2022 regional targets. The updated forecast/trend for each measures and draft recommendations for 2022 targets were highlighted. It was noted the impacts from COVID-19 are yet to be determined for these measures. Interstate and non-interstate reliability addresses the percentage of travel on roadway network that meets a given threshold for reliability, and an increase is the desired trend. Based on original targets and updated trends, staff proposed that the 2022 target be reaffirmed for each. Truck travel time reliability is an index representing the reliability of travel for freight movement in the transportation system. Decreasing trends indicate better reliability and more predictable travel times. According to updated forecasts and trends for 2020 and 2022, this measure is worsening, and staff proposed that the 2022 target be revised from 1.66 to 1.90. Staff will work to implement policies, programs, and projects that help with freight movement in the region. Peak hour excessive delay measures what is defined as excessive delay above a specific threshold that is experienced by the region's population. Improvement is indicated by a declining trend. Based on original targets and updated trends, staff proposed that the 2022 target be reaffirmed. The next measure is non-single occupancy vehicle travel which is the percentage of commute trips as reported by the American Community Survey that use any more other than a driver driving alone. The desired trend is represented by an increase. Although data for this measure indicates an improvement, this measure will most likely be impacted by COVID-19 and will continue to be monitored. Staff proposed that the 2022 target also be reaffirmed for this measure. The final two measures are the emission reductions for nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. The increase of reductions is the desired trend. 2020 and 2022 trends are significantly increased over original targets, and staff proposed that 2022 targets for nitrogen oxides be revised to 7,402.95 and for volatile organic compounds to 1,814.02. Mr. McLane noted that staff will be actively addressing worsening freight reliability with programs, policies, and projects to support freight movement and are continuing to support alternative transportation options. In addition, staff will continue to assess COVID-19 impacts on the performance measures and address the measures as part of the planning process through the Congestion Management Process update, upcoming mobility plans, the Unified Transportation Program/Regional 10-Year Plan, and the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program. Committee action will be requested on PM3 targets on August 28, 2020, and by the RTC on September 10, 2020. Michael Morris discussed interstate reliability, which is improving, and truck travel time reliability which is not improving. He noted that truck traffic, especially on the interstate highway system, is not uniform. In addition, the reliability could potentially worsen as major construction projects begin in the region. Staff is working with TxDOT on innovative options to handle truck travel in constructions zones such as a dedicated truck lane within a construction zone. Clarence Daugherty discussed the forecast/trends for the performance measures. Specifically for truck travel reliability, he noted it seems as though the target is being set according to the forecast and encouraged staff to set more challenging targets, especially since there are currently no consequences of missing the targets from a federal standpoint. Mr. Morris noted that staff will work between now and the next Committee meeting to meet with TxDOT on various aspects of targets and to determine appropriate targets for the final recommendations.

7. **Federal and State Legislative Update:** Kyle Roy provided a federal legislative update. He reminded members the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act expires on September 30, 2020. The House has approved the Investing in a New Vision for the

Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act and the Senate approved a partial version of a surface transportation bill in 2019 but action is needed on a full bill. HR 2, the Moving America Forward Act, is a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure bill that includes transportation, water, broadband, housing, energy, and healthcare, as well as INVEST text. The INVEST in America Act includes nearly \$500 billion in federal funding for FY2021 through FY2025 and was approved by the House Transportation Committee mostly along party lines. The bill is divided into four divisions. Division A maintains existing program structure for FY2021 and extends authorized funding levels. In addition, it provides some additional funding for departments of transportation and transit agencies COVID-19 relief. Division B reauthorizes highway, transit, and safety programs and authorizes approximately \$257.4 billion in contract authority for FY2021 through FY2025. Division C is for hazardous material safety reauthorization and Division D is for rail reauthorization. Major themes of the INVEST in America Act include focus on improvements to existing facilities versus new capacity, creates at least 20 new programs/grant programs, includes climate, resiliency, and greenhouse gas reductions, as well as bicycle/pedestrian access and safety, increased transit funding, and bridge improvements. Mr. Roy noted that Congress must also act on appropriations by September 30. On the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development section, the bill provides \$75.9 billion, which is a 2.25 percent increase over 2020 funding levels. The House has also included an additional title in the bill that provides an additional \$75 billion in appropriations for COVID-19 relief. The bill will go before the full House Appropriations Committee in mid-July and Senate markups have been delayed. The current focus is on crafting another COVID-19 response bill since supplemental unemployment benefits expired on July 31, 2020. The House and Senate will recess on August 7 and return in September. Mr. Roy also provided a State legislative update. The House and Senate legislative committees have canceled all interim hearings due to COVID-19. The Comptroller released mid-cycle revenue estimates last week and as many expected revenue projects were lowered by nearly 10 percent from the last estimate in October. The Comptroller now projects a \$4.5 billion deficit for FY2021. In addition, severance tax collections are expected to drop significantly over the next year which results in smaller transfers from the general revenue fund to the rainy-day fund and State highway fund. The Comptroller did note that his projections assume the economy will be slow to return to pre-COVID 19 levels of activity and also do not account for any future federal assistance. Additionally, the Texas Transportation Commission public comment period for the draft FY2021 Unified Transportation Program is open until August 10. As a reminder, Mr. Roy. noted that the first day of the 87th Texas Legislature is January 12, 2021. Bill filing begin November 9, 2020.

8. **Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery:** Michael Morris provide an update on performance metrics to help understand the impacts of COVID-19 to the transportation system, as well as develop efforts to maintain benefits. Four policy metrics were highlighted: 1) travel behavior response to COVID-19, 2) financial implications to traditional revenue sources, 3) benefits of travel responses to areas of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) responsibility and how we preserve those, and 4) prioritization of infrastructure improvements that offset unemployment increases and utilize lower costs. The first policy metric, travel behavior response to COVID-19, was discussed and specific data for freeway volumes, average speeds, crashes and fatalities, transit ridership, enplanements, and bicycle/pedestrian counts were highlighted. Freeway volumes are rebounding and although a good sign for the economy, he noted the importance of working to preserve some of the benefits to congestion and air quality seen when freeway volumes were lower. With the increase in freeway volumes, crashes and fatalities have decreased. Data for transit ridership impacts has not been received, and bicycle and pedestrian trail counts have lowered from May to June. Similar to transit, airport passenger trends have not significantly increased. Data related to financial implications, the

second metric, was highlighted. Reductions in vehicles sales tax, motor vehicles sales and use, and motor fuel tax were discussed. He noted this is one reason the RTC believes the Texas Transportation Commission will not have the revenues anticipated for the Unified Transportation Program. New data for funding impacts to the IH 35E TEXpress lanes and North Texas Tollway Authority have not been received but are expected to show similar improvement to freeway volumes. Policy metric three is the benefits of travel behavior responses. Staff continues to determine appropriate efforts to take advantage of behaviors that have had positive impacts in the region, especially as it relates to air quality. Also discussed were efforts by American Airlines to adjust their system, making Dallas Fort Worth International Airport now the busiest airport in the world despite decreased travel. The final metric is how the RTC can use innovation to advance projects at a time when the highway construction index is lower. Project examples were highlighted. In addition, staff continues to document advancement of smaller projects the region is moving forward through the COVID-19 #00X Program. Brian Moen noted that although freeway volumes have increased, the same increases are not necessarily being seen on local arterials. Chad Edwards asked if data indicates peak periods are still pronounced or has peak period travel flattened. Mr. Morris noted staff would provide an additional slide on the website regarding the data. While peak periods in the morning and evening did flatten, the latest data shows that both peak periods are increasing once again.

9. **Update on Volkswagen Settlement:** Lori Clark provided an update on Volkswagen Settlement activities. One portion of the Volkswagen Settlement is the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program, which includes several funding programs. Funding opportunities for refuse vehicles and freight/port drayage vehicles remain open and program eligibility and current funding availability for each were highlighted. Details were provided in Electronic Item 9, and the available funding was updated at the meeting. Members were encouraged to see if their respective entities qualified. Ms. Clark also highlighted the percent of funding made available to regions for the individual programs and the percentage of available funding that has been requested. The Dallas-Fort Worth region continues to lead the State in demonstrating demand for the funding and staff continues to monitor funding requests in case unallocated funding because available in the future. Ms. Clark also discussed Electrify America, a subsidiary of Volkswagen and another portion of the Volkswagen Settlement. Electrify America is responsible for investing \$2 billion nationwide in zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure and education/outreach to raise awareness of zero-emission vehicles. Funding has been available through cycles and Electrify America is now requesting information to help guide its next funding opportunity. The North Central Texas Council of Governments will be submitting information at the regional level, but individual communities were encouraged to provide community-specific information that may help with future funding investments in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Submissions can be made at www.electrifyamerica.com/submissions and are due August 14, 2020. Kevin Overton asked if there will be restrictions on where Level 2 chargers can be located. Ms. Clark noted there is not much information about what the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality plans to do with infrastructure funding, but it is believed that public access will be required.
10. **Transit Survey and Survey of Employers:** Michael Morris discussed the need for data and information that will aid transit agencies to plan and stage future transit improvements and to help maintain improvements in congestion and air quality in a post COVID-19 environment. At the July 9, 2020, Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meeting, Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) Chair Dianne Costa requested feedback on an idea to conduct a survey that could help transit agencies and others as they prepare their response for potential ridership increases based on scheduling decisions made by larger

employers, schools, and universities. Mr. Morris highlighted the challenges of a survey due to the ever-changing elements of the COVID-19 environment and that a continuous survey would likely provide more benefit due to the fluidity of current circumstances. He noted that staff will be working to determine if other transit agencies are interested and asked members to provide additional ideas or methods for such a survey. In addition, Mr. Morris the need to engage both the public and private sectors, especially large employers, regarding how many of its workers it anticipates will commute during peak periods once roadway travel increases as people return to work. A survey may be an option to collect data but may not be the best instrument. Individuals or entities with ideas were asked to contact staff with suggestions or comments. John Polster noted that it is possible transit ridership will never fully rebound from the impacts of COVID-19 and that a survey may not helpful. Clarence Daugherty discussed the current, quickly changing environment and noted that as a result a survey may not provide much benefit. Erin Linn, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and Tim Palermo, DCTA, noted that any data collected would be helpful. Phil Dupler, Trinity Metro, noted that it was discussing the idea of a survey internally and would contact the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

11. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.

1. 2019 Regional Safety Performance Report (Electronic Item 11.1)
2. 2019 Regional Travel Demand Management Performance Report (Electronic Item 11.2)
3. Deadline to Submit Requests for Transportation Improvement Program Modifications through the November 2020 Cycle – July 24, 2020
(<https://rtrinternal.nctcog.org/login/>)
4. Environmental Protection Agency Proposes to Retain Existing NAAQS for Ozone
(<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/ozone-pollution-continues-decline-under-president-trump-epa-proposes-retain-existing>)
5. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles
(<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>)
6. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Upcoming Events
(<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings>)
7. Status Report on Ozone (Electronic Item 11.3)
8. Clean Air Action Day, August 5, 2020
(<https://www.airnorthtexas.org/socialdistancing>)
9. East/West Equity Update (Electronic Item 11.4)
10. June Online Input Opportunity Minutes (Electronic Item 11.5)
11. August Online Input Opportunity Notice (Electronic Item 11.6)
12. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 11.7)
13. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 11.8)
 - Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 11.9)

12. **Other Business (Old and New):** There was no discussion on this item.

13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on August 28, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.



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

September 2020

INSIDE

NCTCOG tapped to join AV council

NCTCOG has joined a group of public-sector organizations from across the country to provide more education about automated vehicles and their impacts on society.

Partners for Automated Vehicle Education, or PAVE, launched its Public Sector Advisory Council in August. See more on page 3,

Virtual meetings set for high-speed study

North Texans who want to learn more about efforts to link the center of the region through a new transportation technology will be able to review and comment on the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study in September. The North Central Texas Council of Governments has scheduled virtual public meetings for noon September 23 and 6 pm September 24 to give residents a chance to learn more about the study and provide input to planners examining potential technologies and alignments.

The study is evaluating high-speed alternatives to modernize and enhance mobility

between Dallas, Arlington and Fort Worth. Planners will consider and analyze conventional high-speed rail, magnetic levitation and hyperloop technologies. The resulting high-speed service between Dallas and Fort Worth could connect to high-speed rail between Dallas and Houston and a future high-speed option from Fort Worth to South Texas. Residents can watch the presentation and participate live at www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs or participate by calling 855-756-7520. They should use extension 65720# for the September 23 meeting and extension 65721# September 24. They can register for one of the meetings by emailing hst_dfw@nctcog.org or calling 817-608-2365. Participants will have the opportunity to give input during the meetings through both platforms. Comments and questions can also be submitted before or after the public meetings at hst_dfw@nctcog.org or on the project webpage. Presentations will be the same for both meetings and be posted September 18 on the project webpage. For printed copies, call 817-608-2365 or email cbaylor@nctcog.org.

Details

What: High-speed transportation public meetings

When: Noon September 23; 6 pm September 24

How to participate: Watch online at www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs or call 855-756-7520.

Use extension 65720# September 23 and extension 65721# September 24.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

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.

Trinity Metro introduces Near Southside ZIPZONE service



Trinity Metro has introduced a new on-demand transportation option to the Near Southside.

The Near Southside ZIPZONE is now serving the growing area, providing shared rides in Toyota Sienna vans to its numerous hospitals, restaurants and other businesses. Service is provided from 6 am to 8 pm daily.

ZIPZONE will connect with Trinity Metro TEXRail and Trinity Railway Express service at the Fort Worth T&P Station and to many area bus routes. The new ZIPZone is a partnership with the City of Fort Worth that will provide another option for the 40,000 people who work in the area.

The Near Southside ZIPZONE is the fourth on-demand service provided by Trinity Metro. The Crowley ZIPZONE was launched in June to help residents get to destinations within the city and also to connect with Trinity Metro's other services throughout Tarrant County.

Last year, the Mercantile ZIPZONE was started to connect bus and TEXRail riders in the area near Mercantile Center Station. The Alliance ZIPZONE began in early 2019 to help connect bus passengers with jobs in the area. The on-demand service is an innovative solution that complements Trinity Metro's other public transportation options.

TxDOT's new AR game urges drivers to always stay alert

In spite of stay at home orders and less traffic the past few months, Texas has continued to see about the same amount of fatalities on our state's roadways.

To reach drivers more creatively about the dangers of distracted driving, TxDOT has launched a new web-based augmented reality game that reinforces the importance of paying attention behind the wheel and reminds drivers to keep their heads up. Around 1 in 5 crashes on Texas roads are caused by distracted driving, and all of them are preventable.

This new AR game, "Dart Those Distractions," is designed to increase awareness about the dangers of distracted driving in an interactive, engaging way that resonates with all ages. Inspired by a classic carnival game, Dart Those Distractions involves players throwing darts over a car windshield to hit balloons symbolizing driving distractions like eating, programming music or navigation and self-grooming. To play the game, visit www.darthosedistractions.com.

TxDOT's annual "Heads up, Texas" campaign officially launched August 4 and is a key component of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel, like wearing a seat belt, driving the speed limit, never texting and driving and never driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

November 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on Texas roadways, and #EndTheStreakTX asks all Texans to commit to driving safely to help end the streak of daily deaths. — By TxDOT

Publication highlights importance of good AQ

Ten Dallas-Fort Worth area counties do not meet the Environmental Protection Agency's regulations for ozone pollution, meaning the region has additional environmental responsibilities when completing transportation improvements.

The region must implement measures to improve its air quality or face future sanctions from the EPA and potentially lose transportation funding. NCTCOG recently published a fact sheet to explain the importance of air quality and what is being done to reduce ozone pollution. It is available at www.nctcog.org/factsheets.

Studies indicate elevated levels of ground-level ozone have negative impacts on health. Additionally, ground-level ozone poses a risk to the environment, wildlife, agriculture and manufactured structures in the region.

NCTCOG works closely with regional partners to develop and implement strategies, policies and programs to enhance air quality.

It periodically allows public and private entities to compete for funding intended to reduce the emissions of their fleets and purchase cleaner equipment.

NCTCOG also relies on programs that allow the public to participate in the process by making clean air choices such as telecommuting and combining necessary trips.

REGIONAL News

Grants for Level 2 EV chargers coming soon

The Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program is preparing to make grants available for the purchase and installation of Level 2 charging equipment for light-duty zero-emissions vehicles in Texas.

Funds, made available from the Volkswagen settlement, may be used for the purchase and installation of new light-duty electric vehicle Level 2 charging equipment. A total of \$10.4 million in grant funding will be available for reimbursements of up to \$2,500 per installation.

The grants can fund up to 70% of chargers available to the public and as much as 60% of those installed at workplaces and multi-family housing developments. Funding is available statewide for equipment installed:

- In a public place, workplace or multi-unit dwelling
- At a site without existing light-duty electric charging services or to expand the number of vehicles that may be serviced at that site

For more on the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program, visit www.tceq.texas.gov.

NCTCOG tapped to join AV council

NCTCOG has joined a group of public-sector organizations from across the country to provide more education about automated vehicles and their impacts on society. Partners for Automated Vehicle Education, or PAVE, launched its Public Sector Advisory Council in August.

The advisory council includes 20 organizations from across the country – from cities and states to law enforcement organizations and regional governments – to help PAVE broaden its education initiatives by sharing their perspectives of the potential impact of AVs on public sector entities. The Texas Department of Transportation is also part of the advisory council.

The group's goal is to advise PAVE on issues of concern to public-sector groups, including AV impacts on infrastructure, traffic, law enforcement and public transit. North Texas has become a hotbed for AV testing, including recent announcements of freight pilots by the private sector.

Transportation Resources

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Publications

NCTCOG.org/trans/outreach/publications.asp

Partners

Dallas Area Rapid Transit
DART.org

**Denton County
Transportation Authority**
DCTA.net

North Texas Tollway Authority
NTTA.org

**Texas Department
of Transportation**
TxDOT.gov

Trinity Metro
RideTrinityMetro.org

By the Numbers

\$10.4 million

Grant funding to be available throughout Texas for Level 2 electric vehicle chargers.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

N. Texans invited to provide transportation input

Dallas-Fort Worth residents can comment on and review several transportation funding initiatives beginning September 8.

NCTCOG staff will provide information related to the Fiscal Year 2020 proposed transit projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration. Funding programs include Urbanized Area Formula, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, State of Good Repair, and Bus and Bus Facilities.

Programs of projects will be presented by the cities of Arlington, Grand Prairie, McKinney and Mesquite, as well as Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Denton County Transportation Authority, NCTCOG, Trinity Metro, Northeast Transportation Service, Public Transit Services, Span Inc. and STAR Transit.

NCTCOG staff will present findings from Heavy-Duty Vehicle Emissions Impact Study. The study was conducted by Texas A&M Transportation Institute in coordination with NCTCOG. The study characterized and estimated emission impacts of oversize/overweight vehicles on air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth nonattainment area.

Additionally, staff will present details and opportunities related to electric vehicle infrastructure funding and other clean vehicle incentives. Opportunities are available for residents or fleets to acquire cleaner vehicles, and rebate funding will soon be available for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations across Texas through the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program.

Staff will also present details of the \$5 million Optimizing Freight Movement Project proposal designed to improve the flow of truck traffic between freight hubs and expressways.

Proposed modifications to the list of funded projects will be posted for review and comment. Information on the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program and vehicle incentive opportunities will also be provided.

An audio recording of the presentations will be posted online at www.nctcog.org/input, where comments will be accepted through October 7.

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