

## AGENDA

**Regional Transportation Council  
Thursday, May 14, 2015  
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

- 11:00 am**      **RTC Multimodal/Intermodal/High-Speed Rail/Freight Subcommittee**
- 1:00 pm**      **Full RTC Business Agenda**  
**(NCTCOG Guest Secured Wireless Connection Password: rangers!)**
- 1:00 – 1:05**    1.    **Approval of April 9, 2015, Minutes**  
 Action             Possible Action     Information            Minutes:        5  
Presenter:        Mike Cantrell, RTC Chair  
Item Summary: Approval of the April 9, 2015, minutes contained in [Reference Item 1](#) will be requested.  
Background:      N/A
- 1:05 – 1:05**    2.    **Consent Agenda (There are no items on the Consent Agenda)**  
 Action             Possible Action     Information            Minutes:        0
- 1:05 – 1:15**    3.    **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report**  
 Action             Possible Action     Information            Minutes:        10  
Presenter:        Michael Morris, NCTCOG
1. Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Nominating Subcommittee Appointments (Chair Mike Cantrell)
  2. RTC Meeting Completion and Texas Rangers Traffic
  3. 2015 Ozone Season Update ([Electronic Item 3.1](#))
  4. 2014 Transportation Conformity Update
  5. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles ([Electronic Item 3.2](#))
  6. Clean Fleet Policy Adoptee Update ([Electronic Item 3.3](#))
  7. Proposition 1 Fact Sheet ([Electronic Item 3.4](#)) and Preparation of FY2016 Projects
  8. Regional Public Input Opportunity ([Electronic Item 3.5](#))
  9. Transportation Safety Performance Measures Report 2014 ([Electronic Item 3.6](#))
  10. Travel Demand Management Performance Measures ([Electronic Item 3.7](#))
  11. Fort Worth Transportation Authority Master Plan Project Bus
  12. Stadler Manufacturing Facility ([Electronic Item 3.8](#))
  13. Correspondence Follow Up from the April 9, 2015, RTC Meeting ([Electronic Item 3.9](#))
  14. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 3.10](#))
  15. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 3.11](#))
  16. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 3.12](#))
  17. Transportation Partners Progress Reports
- 1:15 – 1:25**    4.    **Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery 2015**  
 Action             Possible Action     Information            Minutes:        10  
Presenter:        Christie Gotti, NCTCOG  
Item Summary: Staff will brief the Council on the seventh round of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic

Recovery (TIGER 2015) Discretionary Grant Program recently announced by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and will request approval of the projects recommended for submittal.

Background: In April 2015, the USDOT announced the TIGER 2015 Discretionary Grant Program for surface transportation projects that have a significant impact on the nation, a region, or a metropolitan area. [Electronic Item 4.1](#) is a copy of the notice of funding availability that details the \$500 million discretionary grant program, as well as the application requirements. Preapplications for the TIGER 2015 Discretionary Grant Program were due to the USDOT on May 4, 2015. Final TIGER 2015 applications are due to the USDOT by June 5, 2015.

[Electronic Item 4.2](#) details the previous TIGER efforts and the resulting funding decisions. An overview of the TIGER 2015 process, the projects recommended to be submitted on behalf of the Regional Transportation Council, and instructions for requesting letters of support for projects to be submitted by other agencies is available in [Reference Item 4.3](#).

1:25 – 1:40

5. **Mobility 2040**

Action       Possible Action       Information      Minutes: 15

Presenter: Dan Lamers, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Work is underway on the region's next long-range transportation plan. Staff has begun to inventory and review potential policy discussions related to the development of Mobility 2040. These include financial constraint issues, the balance between mobility, air quality, and quality-of-life measures; and the role of technology in transportation. A brief overview of these policy considerations will be presented, along with an update on the project schedule.

Background: One of the primary responsibilities of the Metropolitan Planning Organization is the development and maintenance of a metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). The last comprehensive update of the MTP occurred in 2011 with the adoption of Mobility 2035. Since then, Mobility 2035 has gone through two revisions, an update in 2013, and an amendment in 2014. Staff has initiated the development of a new MTP, Mobility 2040. This plan will reassess existing recommendations and include new demographics, financial forecasts, and planning initiatives. Development will continue over the next ten months with draft recommendations expected later this year. The Regional Transportation Council is expected to take action on Mobility 2040 in March 2016.

1:40 – 1:55

6. **State and Federal Legislative Update**

Action       Possible Action       Information      Minutes: 15

Presenter: Amanda Wilson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will receive an update on State and federal legislative actions. The Texas Legislature convened on January 13, 2015. The United

States (US) Congress convened January 6, 2015.  
Transportation issues are a focus for both the Texas Legislature and US Congress.

Background: The Texas Legislature and US Congress will be in session at the time of the May RTC meeting. This item will allow staff to provide updates on key positions of the RTC and allow any additional positions to be taken.

1:55 – 2:05

7. **2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program Development**

Action       Possible Action       Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Christie Gotti, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will brief the Council on the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process, upcoming meetings, and implementation of the project milestone policy.

Background: A new TIP is developed every two years through a cooperative effort among the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Texas Department of Transportation, local governments, and transportation authorities. The TIP is a staged, multi-year listing of transportation projects with committed funding from federal, State, and local sources within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area.

For regionally significant projects to proceed to implementation, they must be represented in the TIP document. To this end, NCTCOG staff will meet with local partners to receive input and updates on all their active projects. The data from these meetings will be assessed and organized into a draft project listing.

Staff is proposing to implement a project milestone policy with a starting assumption that projects ten years or older that have not advanced towards construction will need to be reapproved or slated for cancellation. Funds released through this effort will be returned to the regional pool and available for future projects. Details of the 2017-2020 TIP Development process, timeline, and focus areas are available in [Electronic Item 7](#).

2:05 – 2:15

8. **Transit-Oriented Development Data Collection/Routes to Rail**

Action       Possible Action       Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Karla Weaver, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will present information from the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) data collection and Routes to Rail study conducted for all existing light-rail and commuter-rail stations in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. The TOD data collection summarized various datasets related to rail stations, station areas, and developments within a half-mile of rail stations. The Routes to Rail study identified all existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities within a half-mile of existing rail stations and identified actual walking distance (walkshed) from the station to surrounding areas.

Background: The goal of the TOD data collection project is to capture accurate data related to demographics, employment, housing,

transit ridership, land use, zoning, and more for all existing rail station areas in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. The Routes to Rail study identifies distance and gaps in the pedestrian facilities within a half-mile distance to rail stations. The project produced an interactive online map and fact sheets for station areas showing a summary of data sets and bicycle/pedestrian connections around existing rail stations. The data collection is intended to assist cities, transit agencies, and other stakeholders identify development trends and activities around transit stops, better assess future development opportunities, and help identify areas that lack pedestrian and bicycle facilities or need further study to improve access to surrounding land uses.

2:15 – 2:25

9. **High Occupancy Vehicle Subsidy Report**

Action       Possible Action       Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Dan Lamers, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on the most recent managed lane performance report.

Background: As part of the adoption of the Toll Managed Lane and High Occupancy Vehicle/Express Managed Lane policies, the RTC requires regular reports provided by the Texas Department of Transportation regarding performance of the managed lane facilities and the North Texas Tollway Authority regarding customer service demands. Staff will present an overview of the performance of the operational managed lanes in the region. In addition, an update will be provided on the schedule and status of the opening of all managed lane facilities. Details are provided in [Electronic Item 9](#).

10. **Progress Reports**

Action       Possible Action       Information

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

- RTC Attendance ([Reference Item 10.1](#))
- STTC Attendance and Minutes ([Electronic Item 10.2](#))
- Local Motion ([Electronic Item 10.3](#))

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

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

13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for **1:00 pm, Thursday, June 11, 2015, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.**



**MINUTES****REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL****April 9, 2015**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, April 9, 2015, at 1 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Douglas Athas, Loyl Bussell (representing Brian Barth), Carol Bush, Mike Cantrell, Sheri Capehart, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Charles Emery, Mark Enoch, Gary Fickes, Sandy Greyson, Mojoy Haddad, Roger Harmon, Vonciel Jones Hill, Clay Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, Sheffie Kadane, Stephen Lindsey, Brian Loughmiller, David Magness, Scott Mahaffey, Matthew Marchant, Ray Smith (representing Maher Maso), Mark Riley, Kevin Roden, Amir Rupani, Mykol Woodruff (representing Kelly Selman), Mike Taylor, Stephen Terrell, Oscar Trevino, William Velasco II, Oscar Ward, Bernice J. Washington, Duncan Webb, Kathryn Wilemon, and Zim Zimmerman.

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, Bruce Arfsten, Gustavo Baez, Greg Baker, Melissa Baker, Paul Ballard, Berrien Barks, Carli Baylor, Bryan Beck, Natalie Bettger, Brandi Bird, Brandy Bissland, Alberta Blair, Shauna Bowman, Tanya Brooks, Ron Brown, John Brunk, Mo Bur, Michael Burbank, Chris Burkett, Jarrett Burley, Marrk Callier, Angie Carson, Dave Carter, Juan Contreras, Michael Copeland, Hal Cranor, Jason Crawford, Mike Curtis, Clarence Daugherty, Jerry Dittman, Chris Dyer, Chad Edwards, Traci Enna, Steve Farco, Brittney Farr, Kevin Feldt, Brian Flood, David Gattis, Bob Golden, Scott Gordon, Christie Gotti, Gary Graham, Scott Hall, Tony Hartzel, Suzie Heap, Rebekah Hernandez, Robert Hinkle, Jodi Hodges, David Hosseiny, Jessie Huddleston, Sholeh Karimi, Kate Kerr, Dan Kessler, Karen Khan, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Paul Knippel, Dan Lamers, April Leger, Ray Leszcynski, Sonny Loper, Paul Luedtke, Stanford Lynch, Keith Manoy, Chad McKeown, Michael Miles, Cliff Miller, Nancy Mitchell, Cesar Molina Jr., Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Mark Nelson, Mickey Nowell, Vaughn Parker, Maurice Pittman, John Polster, James Powell, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Richard Randall, Cesar Razo, Chris Reed, Bill Riley, Kyle Roy, Greg Royster, Moosa Saghian, Steve Salin, Russell Schaffner, Kenneth Schoen, Cathy Scott, Lori Shelton, Randy Skinner, Jim Sparks, Melissa Stephens, Rick Stopfer, Jahnae Stout, Sarah Stubblefield, Vic Suhm, Darrell Thompson, Matt Thompson, Don Treude, Lauren Trimble, Frank Turner, Jimmy Vrzalik, Mitzi Ward, Kendall Wendling, Sandy Wesch, Elizabeth Whitaker, Billy Mack Williams, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, Bruce Wood, Ed Wueste, and Susan Young.

1. **Approval March 12, 2015, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 12, 2015, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Sheffie Kadane (M); Kathryn Wilemon (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
  - 2.1. **2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** A motion was made to approve March 2015 out-of-cycle revisions to the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provided in Reference Item 2.1.1 and May 2015 revisions to the 2015-2018 TIP provided in Reference Item 2.1.2.
 

Sherri Capehart (M); Bernice J. Washington (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Mayor Douglas Athas presented members with a challenge coin for IH 635E as a token of efforts to implement the project. Michael Morris reminded members that it was Stand Up 4 Transportation day.

He noted that staff would later present information regarding the next Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program for potential opportunities to advance projects in the region. In addition, he discussed a request for action supporting Glen Whitley's position regarding maintenance funds. Mr. Whitley often reminds members that as the region has moved forward with toll roads and tolled managed lanes, the inventory of roadways that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) maintains decreases, but the percentage of maintenance funds that are allocated to the region should not be artificially lowered because the region has opted for toll facilities. Staff requested approval for the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair to send a letter to TxDOT indicating that the accounting system for the inventory of maintenance funds should be on the full inventory of major roadways and that regions that build toll facilities should not receive a discounted amount of maintenance funds. He noted that a correction to a particular formula could pay dividends in several different State formulas. This position leads to a policy question about whether maintenance funds should go to maintenance or if the RTC wishes to flex the funds to capacity improvements. Details can be negotiated in the future. A motion was made to approve the RTC Chair to send a request to the Chair of the Texas Transportation Commission that roadways in the Dallas-Fort Worth region should not be discounted because the region has opted to participate in a toll initiative. Jungus Jordan (M); Andy Eads (S). The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Morris also noted that the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is awaiting air quality conformity approval from the Federal Highway Administration and that staff will provide an update to members in the future. Details were available in Electronic Item 3.1. Current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided in Electronic Item 3.2, and information on the 2015 ozone season was provided in Electronic Item 3.3. In addition, comments from the March 9-April 7, 2015, online public input opportunity were provided at the meeting in Reference Item 3.8. Mr. Morris also discussed This is It – Passenger Transit, a phrase coined for staff in an effort to work with the transit industry, the business community, and other businesses that are seeking public transit as a part of their business plans. He also noted the upcoming Freeway Incident Management Executive level Course on May 13, 2015. Regarding passenger rail options, Mr. Morris discussed efforts to have a passenger rail vehicle manufacturing facility locate in the region and the Fort Worth Transportation Authority's (The T's) procurement process under the Buy America provisions. RTC east/west equity updates were provided in Electronic Item 3.4.1 and Electronic Item 3.4.2, and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act updates were provided in Electronic Item 3.4.3 and Electronic Item 3.4.4. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 3.5, recent news articles in Electronic Item 3.6, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 3.7. Partner progress reports were provided at the meeting.

4. **State/Federal Legislative Update and Proposed Action from the Regional Transportation Council Legislative Workshop:** Amanda Wilson provided a federal legislative update. She noted that the federal transportation bill expires in May, as well as authority to spend funds from the Highway Trust Fund. One option being discussed is the Grow America Act totaling \$478 billion over six years proposed to be funded by taxing overseas earnings of United States companies, but neither the House nor Senate has introduced this as a bill. It is likely that work will begin on an extension of the federal surface transportation bill. In addition, the Administration announced a new round of Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants. Required pre-applications were due by May 4 and final applications are due by June 5. Entities interested in letters of support from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) should contact Rebekah Hernandez by May 15. Ms. Wilson also provided an update regarding the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, beginning with the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)

Legislative Program to actively pursue. Related to identifying additional transportation revenue is the State budget. HB 1 has passed the House floor and includes \$209.7 billion over the biennium, with a \$1.6 billion increase in transportation funding over the last biennium. Contingency funds for the Low-Income Repair and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP)/Local Initiative Projects (LIP) and the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) are possible should additional legislation be passed related to general revenue dedicated accounts. The Senate Finance Committee approved HB 1 with a slightly smaller increase of \$1.3 billion for transportation and full funding within the article with new revenue that LIRAP/LIP and TERP will generate during the biennium. Additional revenue bills of interest include SB 5 and SJR 5 which would move a portion of the motor vehicles sales tax to the State Highway Fund for non-tolled roadway projects. HJR 13 and HB 13 have not moved but include moving a portion of the general state sales tax revenue as more stable source. Additional bills related to diversions and local vehicle registration has also been discussed, and staff will continue to monitor activities. Related to high-speed rail, SB 1601 has passed out of the Senate Transportation Committee. This bill would prohibit a rail company from exercising the power of eminent domain for high-speed rail through State authority. There may be some federal authority that could be used but this could impact the high-speed rail project from Dallas to Houston. In addition, HB 3918 was heard but left pending. This bill would prohibit the issuance of bonds for high-speed rail construction. Staff will be monitoring these bills closely. She also flagged an additional bill of interest regarding the Red River Navigability Study. HB 1907 has been sent to the House Transportation Subcommittee but has not had any action. A rider in HB 1 includes a contingency rider of \$2.5 billion for the study should HB 1907 pass. This was presented to the RTC who committed to participate in the study.

Michael Morris reviewed discussion from the RTC Legislative Workshop held prior to the meeting. He discussed the RTC priority to advance public-private partnership tools for the IH 635 project, noting that this priority was in danger of not being approved by the Legislature. Staff met with legislators in Austin to brainstorm on possible ideas. Mr. Morris noted that for the biennium there could be between \$6.8 billion and \$7.6 billion for transportation for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), which totals approximately \$3.5 billion annually statewide. As the State seems to be moving back towards a pay-as-you-go system, RTC has discussed the desire to also move away from tolling. Proposed action from the workshop is to communicate to the Legislature the RTC's appreciation and interest in moving towards pay-as-you-go. Reference Item 4.1, provided at the meeting and discussed at the workshop, referenced the use of tolls used in the absence of sufficient transportation funding on mega projects. The Grand DFW Tolled Managed Lane Compromise is conditional on the Legislature moving forward with additional transportation funding of the magnitude discussed and that the current existing tools are maintained. The compromise would allow planning for improvements to IH 635 to advance through a public-private partnership. The request does not change the priority of the Southern Gateway which would still be implemented first through the current funding commitment on the project. The request would be to trade in two of the three previously approved CDA projects for one new CDA project. If the request is approved, RTC would work with its legislative delegation in the region to get consensus locally as this initiative moves forward, and the RTC would decide in the future which two projects would be traded. In addition, the RTC would use new revenue allocated to the RTC to remove peak period tolls for high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) users of TxDOT/RTC tolled managed lanes projects in the region. Some of the new revenue allocated by the Legislature is anticipated to be received each year from the State and placed into an account to pay 100 percent of the cost of the HOV users during the peak period. If approved, staff would then begin to determine if non-mega projects in Mobility 2040 can be funded with options other than tolling. Approval would also

send a message to those currently deliberating on Southern Gateway and LBJ that HOV users would not be tolled and then this HOV policy could be applied to all the other corridors.

Amanda Wilson noted that NCTCOG staff rely on the policy board to communicate to elected legislators. This is a critical time and they need to hear from the local officials regarding the impact of this legislation on the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Reference Item 4.2, provided at the meeting, asks members to identify if they are comfortable communicating with legislators on behalf of RTC items. Members have been receiving e-mails related to bills of interest to the RTC that are being heard in committee hearings and members were asked for their assistance.

Clay Jenkins discussed the two projects he believed would be traded, Southern Gateway and Loop 9. He asked if the plan would be to build the Southern Gateway on time and on budget, but without the tolling component. Related to Loop 9, he noted that it seems as if the only way to get the project built is to use a comprehensive development agreement (CDA) for toll bridges. The project opens up 50,000 acres of undeveloped land in southeastern Dallas County for needed jobs. Mr. Morris discussed the Southern Gateway project. TxDOT has indicated that a concession will not be used on the Southern Gateway because it does not produce enough revenue and has decided to build through a design build contract. The strategy is to ensure that the Southern Gateway project proceeds first. The first phase is estimated at approximately \$500 million. When presented two months ago, this was entirely an RTC cost. If the State wishes to go through a design-build process and if the Legislature approved the magnitude of money discussed, the first increment of revenue would go to the Southern Gateway to close any financial gap necessary to move ahead with the project. If approved, the region will proceed with Southern Gateway first and start banking money to proceed with what is currently the next priority in Dallas County, the LBJ project. Mr. Morris also discussed the Loop 9 project and the current strategy to move ahead on the environmental document, using the \$50-100 million that exists on the project to build a frontage road system. A toll component is not considered feasible and the project is not being environmental cleared for a toll component. If the Legislature were to provide the \$3.5 billion statewide and the fair share to the region, there would be no reason to introduce tolls on the project, and Loop 9 will continue to be funded through the annual allocations. Mr. Jenkins expressed concern that members were being asked to approve a trade for projects that were not identified in Reference Item 4.1, provided at the meeting. He noted that if southern Dallas County is trading its two CDAs for a future promise that projects benefiting citizens in southern Dallas County will be built over time, he would like this promise to be memorialized before there is a vote. He discussed the value of the Southern Gateway project, noting that the region would not have fought for it if there were no value. In addition, Mr. Jenkins asked the third project that could be considered for trade. Mr. Morris noted that it was the IH 820 project in Tarrant County. Mr. Jenkins expressed that he did not believe the region would trade something in Tarrant County to build a project in Dallas County based on past history. Mr. Morris noted that if the RTC is required to pay 100 percent of the cost for HOV users on the facility it may not be possible for Southern Gateway to proceed first. If a partnership is possible, RTC would use the first increase in revenue to ensure that the Southern Gateway is implemented first without having to use 100 percent of its money to pay for HOV users. The attempt is to get Southern Gateway back to a 50/50 deal where TxDOT and RTC could possibly save \$100 million of your money on Southern Gateway for some other purpose instead of paying 100 percent of the cost on Southern. Mr. Jenkins asked if NCTCOG staff had discussed this with elected officials or anyone representing the cities and counties that would be impacted by Loop 9. Mr. Morris noted that being in the midst of the current legislative session does not allow for the regular planning timeframes.

He noted that he has discussed the compromise with the RTC Chair, Mayor Douglas Athas, and Vonciel Jones Hill the Transportation Chair of Dallas. Mark Enoch discussed the three contributors when the managed lanes were set up, TxDOT, Dallas County, and Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). DART invested approximately \$60 million and the payback was planned when the capital cost had been recovered. Given the fact that this is being modified, he asked about the repayment of that investment. Mr. Morris discussed the urgency created by the legislative session. He noted that this initiative was an attempt to create a conversation with the Legislature to advance the ability of IH 635 to proceed. Mr. Enoch noted that it seemed as though staff is indicating that there is not time to work out the details immediately and that there are things that RTC must work on if this or some form of this deal is accepted by the Legislature to ensure that previous commitments are maintained for those who invested in the lanes. Mr. Morris noted that he was correct. Vonciel Jones Hill noted that she wished to hear clearly on the public record that the trade will not adversely affect the Southern Gateway, it will still proceed first. The financing method is different but financing is not being taken away. Mr. Morris noted that it increases the chances of Southern Gateway to proceed first because it creates an opportunity for the first installment of TxDOT funds to go to the Southern Gateway. It reduces the magnitude of money that RTC may have to use on the project. It also permits the region the opportunity to not toll any HOV users on any of the HOV systems across the entire region. As the Legislature moves forward and the pendulum moves more towards pay-as-you-go, the RTC must send a message that it will also move away from tolling. Mega projects will still need a toll component, while smaller projects may proceed with pay-as-you-go funding. Vonciel Jones Hill noted she was willing to make the motion if there is a way to wordsmith so that it is clear that the Southern Gateway goes first. Douglas Athas noted that IH 635 is a mega project that ties into the existing portion of LBJ north. He discussed the importance of the project to development along the existing portions of IH 635, as well as residents and businesses in the entire northeast portion of the region. It is not being asked that the project move ahead of the line, but that the toll opportunities are used to do the most for the region. Bernice J. Washington noted that the RTC must be willing to put something forward that the Legislature is willing to accept. Mr. Jenkins reiterated the importance of Loop 9 to those in southern Dallas County and northern Ellis County and his concern that the RTC was making a decision on such short notice. Carol Bush also discussed the short notice and the inability to discuss the decision with elected officials in regions. Duncan Webb noted that Reference Item 4.1 mentioned the elimination of tolling on HOV lanes during peak periods and asked for clarification. Mr. Morris noted that the RTC policy has never paid the HOV costs in the off-peak period so this would only impact the peak period with no cost for HOV users to travel during that time. He also clarified that no decision was being made at the meeting regarding which two projects would be traded. Mr. Jenkins noted past discussions on Loop 9 and concern that future funding is not guaranteed from the Legislature, noting that any assurance that could be given that RTC is looking towards the building of Loop 9 would be appreciated. Mr. Morris noted that this policy is contingent on the fact that the Legislature funds the State at \$3.5 billion, that the region gets its fair share, and that it is able to keep its current tools. This partnership is an effort to send a message that tolling tools should be used for mega projects and if funding is allocated at this level, Loop 9 would not need tolled grade separated thoroughfare bridges. Mr. Jenkins asked about the financial commitment for the Loop 9 project. Mr. Morris noted that if the region receives its fair share every year there would be no reason for the region to toll incremental grade separations when funding could be requested through the RTC. If approved, the projects would then be determined at a future meeting. Discussion occurred regarding whether the western subregion would be willing to trade IH 820. Chair Mike Cantrell asked if members would be in favor of wasting the CDA on a project that is not going to use the option to the detriment of a mega project. A

motion was made to approve the Grand DFW Tolloed Managed Lane Compromise provided in Reference Item 4.1. Vonciel Jones Hill (M); Bernice J. Washington (S).

Andy Eads asked if staff had the opportunity to look at the revenue assumptions that were used for the TIFIA loan and asked if there would be any negative impact if the HOV reduction was implemented. Mr. Morris noted that there should be no impact to IH 35E. In addition, if there were negative impacts the RTC would not proceed because the assumption is that no projects will be negatively impacted and that existing priorities will not change. Matthew Marchant asked if staff viewed the HOV 2+ as critical to the structure of the deal, noting that he would like to better understand some of the details. Mr. Morris noted that key legislators are looking at options to include no CDAs in current bills. In discussions with those legislators, staff asked if other options would be considered. The conversation progressed and staff worked to determine RTC could send the message that elected officials are willing to move away from tolling projects. Since the HOV policy is complicated, it was suggested that this would be a good signal and also an effort to simplify the HOV policy by saying SOV users pay and HOV users do not pay during the peak period. This would also help get the Southern Gateway and other projects across the goal line. He noted that a lot of work must be done to look at the magnitude of the cost and the payback schedule. There may be unintended consequences that mean RTC cannot follow through with the compromise, but staff was attempting to bring something to the Legislature. Mr. Marchant noted that it would have been appropriate for staff to provide the information in Reference Item 4.1 by e-mail as soon as possible to allow time for review by members. Mr. Morris noted that he did not discuss the options until the workshop, held prior to the meeting, to avoid members being inundated with media questions prior to receiving a briefing. A workshop was held so that the item was not forced during the meeting. Mr. Marchant noted that details about the discussion topics at the workshop would have helped him make a decision whether or not the workshop should have been a priority compared to his other priorities arising out of elected service. Mr. Webb asked if the CDA component and the HOV component of the deal could be separated. He expressed concern regarding the financial implications of going from paying 50 percent to 100 percent, where those funds would come from, how it will impact funding in the area, and how the allocation is made. Chair Cantrell noted that members have heard that staff is trying to create a partnership situation with legislators that are not comfortable with CDAs in an effort to move them into a position they can justify supporting with the understanding that the north Texas region is going to back off of the tolls. Mr. Morris made a technical correction to Reference Item 4.1, adding a 5<sup>th</sup> statement noting that RTC reserves the right to review components of the proposal if unintended negative consequences are determined. Charles Emery motioned to call the question, which was approved unanimously. A vote was taken on the original motion. Clay Jenkins, Matthew Marchant, and Carol Bush were opposed. The motion passed.

5. **Mobility 2040**: Dan Lamers provided an overview of the purpose, schedule, and new initiatives being considered for the region's next long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2040. One of the primary responsibilities of the Metropolitan Planning Organization is the development and maintenance of a metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). The last comprehensive update of the MTP was in 2011 with the adoption of Mobility 2035. Since that time, Mobility 2035 has gone through an update in 2013 and an amendment in 2014. Efforts are now underway for Mobility 2040. This document is the blueprint for the region's transportation system over the next 20-year timeframe and it guides the expenditure of federal and State funds. He noted that as conversations that impact the allocation of funding occur, it is important to include those projects in the MTP and ensure that the recommendations have no unintended consequences. New elements for Mobility 2040



include the new 2040 horizon planning year, an additional 3.7 million in population and 2 million in jobs, legislative action from the current legislative session, and federal planning requirements. Staff will move ahead with current financial assumptions and then spend time over the summer reviewing the implications of federal and State legislative results. He highlighted additional policy considerations such as the evaluation and revaluation of the balance between transit and roadway, priced facilities and free roads, the increasing role of technology, last mile connections, etc. The theme of Mobility 2040 will be balance, particularly with regard to the balance between priced facilities and free facilities. The schedule for development of Mobility 2040 was reviewed, including public involvement and final adoption of Mobility 2040 anticipated in March 2016. Following the current legislative session, a workshop will likely be scheduled in early summer to begin discussions, particularly regarding funding and balance. He also flagged an infographic provided at the meeting as Reference Item 5. Include in the infographic is a link to the survey for individuals to weigh in on the future of transportation. The link is also available at [www.nctcog.org/survey2040](http://www.nctcog.org/survey2040).

6. **Innovative Revenues/Financial Backstop Update:** Ken Kirkpatrick briefed members on the status of Regional Transportation Council (RTC) financial backstop commitments and associated risks, including an inventory of projects with innovative revenue streams. He noted that discussions in Item 4 may impact some of the analysis presented, and that staff will incorporate information into future updates. Three categories of projects were presented: managed lane/revenue sharing projects, loan/funding swap initiatives, and financial backstop projects. Related to managed lane/revenue sharing projects, Mr. Kirkpatrick reminded members that in some cases the public sector owns the revenue and in other cases the public sector shares in the revenue. Managed lane/revenue sharing projects for which the public sector owns the revenue include the DFW Connector, estimated at approximately \$350 million over 40 years and IH 30, estimated at approximately \$240 million over 20 years. For IH 35E, a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan is being pursued and revenue from the project will repay the loan with any additional revenues remaining on the corridor. The SH 183/SH 114/Loop 12 project has been awarded by the Texas Transportation Commission and portions of SH 114 are under construction. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will be submitting a TIFIA loan for the project so any revenues generated from the project are pledged to repay the loan. Projects in which the public sector potentially shares the revenue include LBJ and the North Tarrant Express. If these projects reach a certain milestone and revenue exceeds certain limits, TxDOT and RTC would then share in the revenue with the private-sector partner. Based on initial conversations, revenue in this category is anticipated to be negligible. For the PGBT Eastern Extension, revenues are coming in and anticipated to be approximately \$350 million through 2035. The first \$124 million goes to Dallas County for repayment of the loan. Related to funding swap initiatives is the \$140 million North Texas Tollway Authority/TxDOT State Infrastructure Bank loan buyout that will be repaid over the next 15 years. The first few payments have been received. Another initiative was the FM 156/Fort Worth/Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail relocation for approximately \$50 million. Funds will be repaid with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funds, subject to the FAA annual allocation. There is a moderate risk regarding this repayment. Another project is the \$30 million IH 35W loan for the North Tarrant Express project. Staff is working to resolve this issue and will present information at a future RTC meeting. For the IH 30 and FM 1171 Pass-Through Finance projects, the funds are coming in and most of the money has been committed. Approximately 25 percent remains uncommitted and is in a pool of funds to be allocated to projects based on approval of the Trinity Parkway. In addition, the RTC advanced \$85 million for engineering on the Trinity Parkway project and those funds are largely unspent. Staff will continue to track this item as Trinity Parkway discussions

continue. Denton County also loaned \$57 million in Regional Toll Revenue funds on the LBJ project for right-of-way, which has been repaid. Mr. Kirkpatrick also discussed financial backstop projects for SH 360 and LBJ. Related to SH 360, the backstop includes operations/ maintenance and the project loan. In addition, there are anticipated revenues. Recently, TxDOT conditionally awarded the SH 360 project to the constructor. Two things that mitigate the RTC risk on the project is that the bid came back permitting a full four lanes to US 287 increasing the initial revenue. In addition, the operations and maintenance costs on a unit basis for the first 15 years came in lower than anticipated. Staff believes these two things lower the RTC risk for this project. In addition, the LBJ project has two backstop items. One is the repayment of \$90 million which is complete and has been allotted to SH 183. Also, there is a backstop of \$100 million on LBJ, of which \$40 million was utilized for the IH 35E/LBJ Interchange Y Connection and \$60 million is now available to the Dallas County pool of funds. Staff will continue to monitor related items as the legislative session ends and update members accordingly.

7. **Roadway Leverage and System Development:** Michael Morris highlighted a document prepared in response to a request by Jungus Jordan responding to the importance of system and leveraging, provided in Electronic Item 7. Members often discuss the benefit of building a transportation system versus simply building projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region. In order to accomplish this goal, commitments must sometimes be leveraged. Jungus Jordan discussed a chart provided at the RTC Legislative Workshop held prior to the meeting, noting how the region was able to increase capacity beyond what it could have done by using toll roads to pay for free roads. In addition, Mr. Morris highlighted a slide showing that the DFW region was the 32<sup>nd</sup> most congested region. Compared to other congested areas, the DFW region has benefited from leveraging projects and experiences less congestion than other cities highlighted despite its size. Staff noted that members would be provided the transit piece, system leverage piece, navigation data slide showing congestion, as well as the slide from the workshop by e-mail. In addition, RTC Chair Mike Cantrell requested that staff send the attachments to transportation committees in both the House and Senate and also to the Dallas County legislative delegation.
  
8. **"Characteristics of Premium Transit Services": An application for the Dallas Fort Worth Region:** Michael Morris discussed his service on the Transportation Research Board Academy of Science committee over the last three years called "Characteristics of Premium Transit Services." This initiative looked at what defines premium service and the elements of rail/bus that accomplishes premium service. Surveys were completed across the country and transit services were tested in three different communities. Mr. Morris viewed the current managed lane system noting that the region now has the potential ability to introduce transit service onto the express lanes. These lanes have guaranteed speeds and it may be possible to introduce guaranteed transit fares as a way to encourage transit usage on the managed lanes. Once construction is completed on IH 30, staff would like to work with the transit agencies regarding a pilot study to determine what would be the "characteristics of premium transit service" if introduced in the corridor. He discussed the park-and-ride lots in the area and the new federal highway carpooling application, noting that these could potentially be integrated as new "characteristics of premium transit services." The pilot study would include payment to the transit agencies to run service on IH 30 and test guaranteed transit service, utility of the park-and-ride lots, integration of both carpooling and transit, and use the revenues from the corridor to help innovative subsidizing of service. Results of the pilot test could potentially be integrated into other corridors. For example on IH 35W to the Alliance area, there has been interest in dedicated transit in express lanes to preserve and maintain employment. There is not necessarily a parallel rail corridor in that area, but in the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act

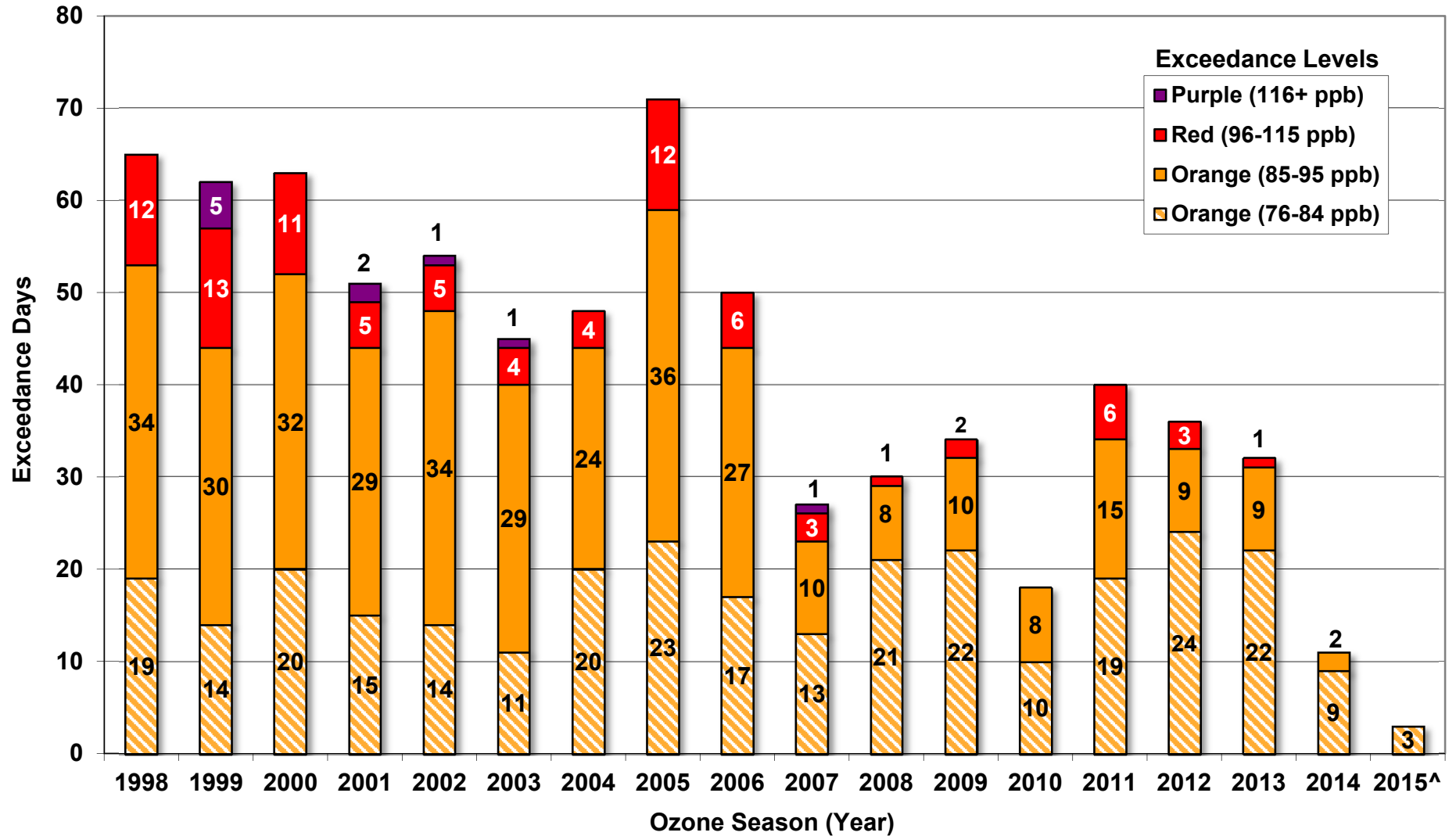
(TIFIA) application for IH 35W an innovative transit component was committed to the federal government. Options could be considered for facilities with express elements and allow cities to potentially join the transit agencies as part of the system. Staff will work with the transit agencies and potentially bring back a proposal in the January timeframe.

9. **Progress Reports**: Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Reference Item 9.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes were provided in Electronic Item 9.2, and the current Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 9.3.
10. **Other Business (Old or New)**: There was no discussion on this item.
11. **Future Agenda Items**: There was no discussion on this item.
12. **Next Meeting**: The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2015, 1:00 pm, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.

# 2015 OZONE SEASON

## 8-Hour Ozone Exceedance Days



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 75 ppb.

= Additional level orange exceedance days under the revised standard that were not exceedances under the previous 84 ppb standard. (AQI level orange = 76-95 ppb)

<sup>^</sup>Not a full year of data, current as of 4/27/2015

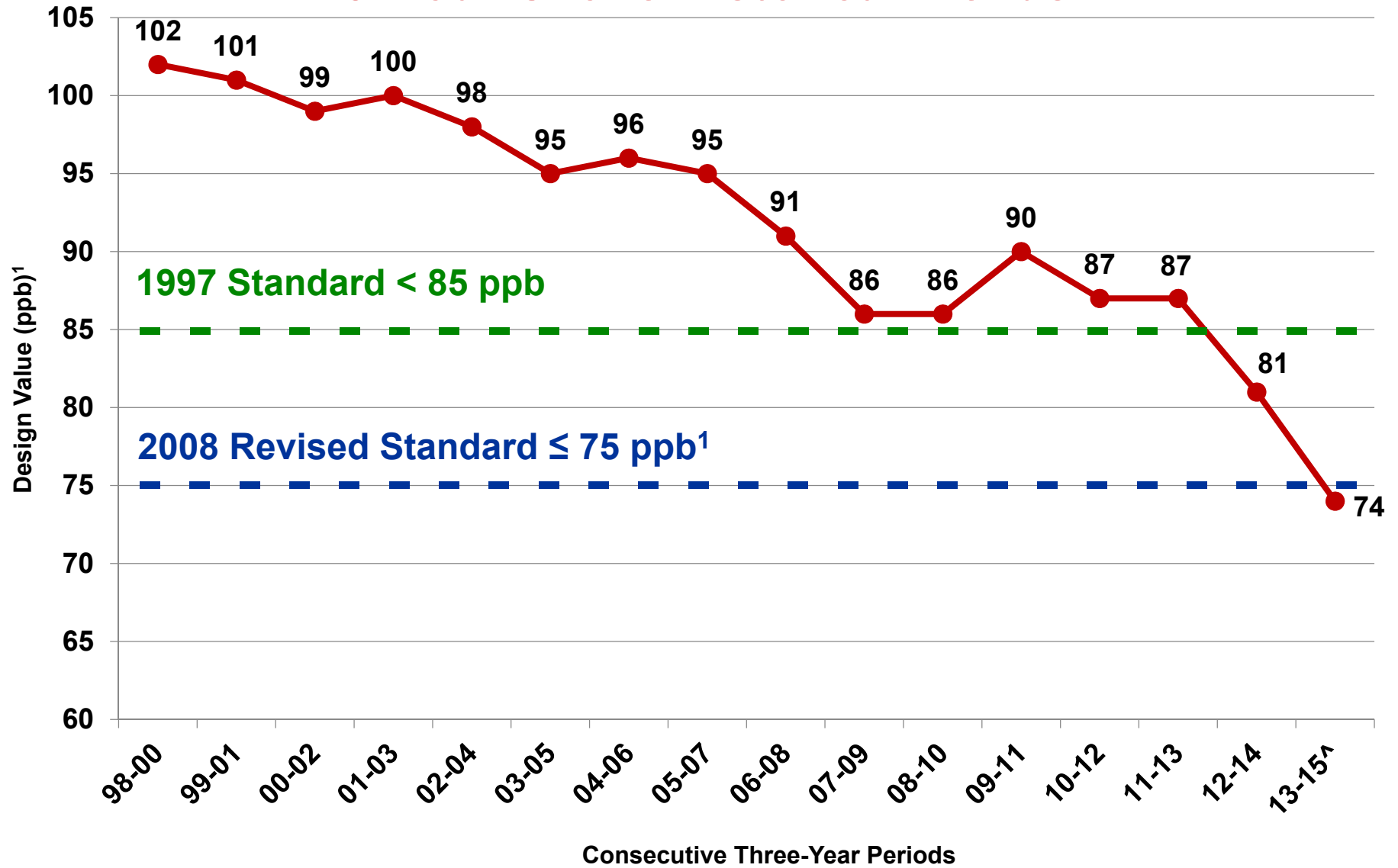
Note: The 2009-2013 data has been certified by TCEQ, and is currently undergoing review by the EPA for concurrence.

Source: TCEQ, [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr\\_monthly.pl](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl)

ppb = parts per billion

# 2015 OZONE SEASON

## 8-Hour Ozone Historical Trends



<sup>1</sup>Attainment 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 8-hour average ozone concentration) is equal to or less than 75 parts per billion (ppb).

<sup>^</sup>Not a full year of data. Current as of 4/27/2015.

# 2015 OZONE SEASON

## References

### For Technical Information:

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Air North Texas: [www.airnorthtexas.org](http://www.airnorthtexas.org)  
NCTCOG Ozone Updates: [www.nctcog/ozone](http://www.nctcog/ozone)



- Air Quality Home
- Air Quality Programs
- Air Quality Committees
- Air Quality Policy and Regulations
- Air Quality Publications
- Car Care Clinics
- Clean Vehicle Information
- Major Air Pollutants
- Funding Opportunities
- Ozone Information >
- State Implementation Plan (SIP)
- Transportation Conformity
- Transportation Home

### Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles

Funding programs that address air quality, such as clean vehicle projects, are available from a number of federal, State, local, and non-profit entities. This site provides links to various current and recurring grant opportunities and incentives for clean technology.

- Air Quality Funding Home
- Other Air Quality Funding Opportunities
- Sign-Up for Email Updates

## Current Vehicle Grant Funding Opportunities

Select Language ? ?

	Eligible Focus Areas										
	Heavy-Duty Vehicles					Light-Duty Vehicles					
	Application Deadline	School Buses	Oil and Gas Vehicles/Equipment	Long Haul Trucks	Dump Trucks	Other	Idle-Reduction Technology	Passenger Vehicles	Taxis	Idle-Reduction Technology	Eligible Applicant Type
<a href="#">AirCheckTexas Drive a Clean Machine Program</a>	Open							X			PC
<b>NEW</b> - <a href="#">Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program</a>	Open until 06/15/15	X	X	X	X	X	X				PB
<a href="#">Drayage Loan Program</a>	FCFS		X			X					PV
<a href="#">Federal and State Incentives and Laws (Including Tax Credits)</a>	Open	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		PV
<a href="#">Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive (LDLPI) Program</a>	FCFS until 06/26/15							X	X		PB, PV, PC
<a href="#">Propane Vehicle Incentives for Texas</a>	FCFS	X	X		X	X		X	X		PB, PV
<a href="#">Rebate Grants Program</a>	FCFS until 06/26/15	X	X	X	X	X					PB, PV, PC
<a href="#">Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program</a>	05/31/15	X	X	X	X	X					PB, PV

FCFS = First-Come, First-Served; PB = Public Sector; PV = Private Sector; PC = Private Citizens; TBD= To Be Determined

[NCTCOG Funding Opportunity Archive](#)

If you have any questions on upcoming funding opportunities, please email [AQgrants@nctcog.org](mailto:AQgrants@nctcog.org).

5/5/2015 MF/MG

[CONTACT US](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [LEGAL](#) | [SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS](#)

North Central Texas Council of Governments | 616 Six Flags Drive P.O. Box 5888 Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Main Operator: (817) 640-3300 | Fax: (817) 640-7806



# Clean Fleet Policy

## Adopting Municipalities

Addison\*

Allen\*

Aubrey

Benbrook\*

DeSoto\*

Eules\*

Farmers Branch\*

Flower Mound\*

Kaufman\*

Krum

Lancaster\*

McKinney\*

North Richland Hills\*

Richardson\*

Richland Hills\*

Springtown

Wylie\*

## Adopting School Districts

Allen ISD\*

Lipan ISD\*

## Additional Adopting Entities

Dallas County Schools\*

SPAN, Inc.\*







Denton County\*

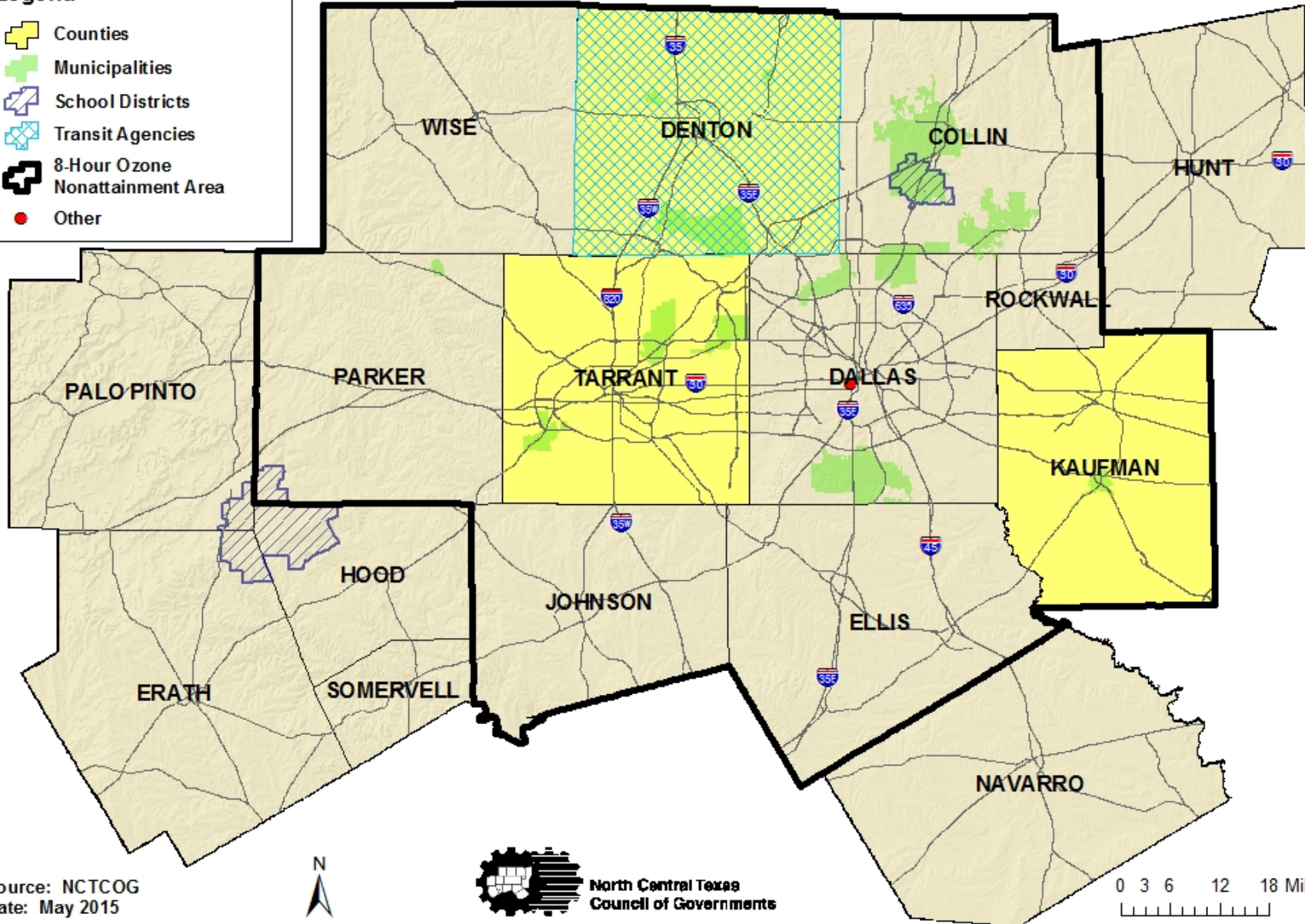
Tarrant County\*

Kaufman County\*

# Clean Fleet Policy Adoptees

## Legend

-  Counties
-  Municipalities
-  School Districts
-  Transit Agencies
-  8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area
-  Other





# FACT Sheet

April 2015

North Central Texas Council of Governments

Regional Transportation Council

www.nctcog.org/prop1

## Quick Take

### What:

#### Proposition 1:

A constitutional amendment approved by voters in November 2014 allowing half the oil and gas severance taxes earmarked for the Rainy Day Fund to be used for non-toll highways.

### Significance:

The Texas Department of Transportation has estimated it needs \$5 billion per year in additional revenue to meet the state's transportation needs. This constitutional amendment helps close the gap by providing \$1.7 billion in 2015 for projects statewide without increasing taxes. Attempts are being made during the 84th Legislature to find additional money for transportation.

### Inside the Numbers:

# 40

The percentage of Proposition 1 funds allocated to NCTCOG and other metropolitan planning organizations throughout the state. NCTCOG will receive approximately \$368 million.

## Prop 1 helps region meet transportation needs

Voters in Texas provided the state transportation system with a boost in revenue in November 2014 with the approval of Proposition 1. This constitutional amendment, approved by 80 percent of voters, allows a portion of the oil and gas severance taxes previously directed exclusively to the state's Rainy Day Fund to be used for non-tolled highway projects. In 2015, the allocation amounted to \$1.7 billion statewide and \$368 million for the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Future disbursements will be dependent on revenues produced by the oil and gas sector in Texas.

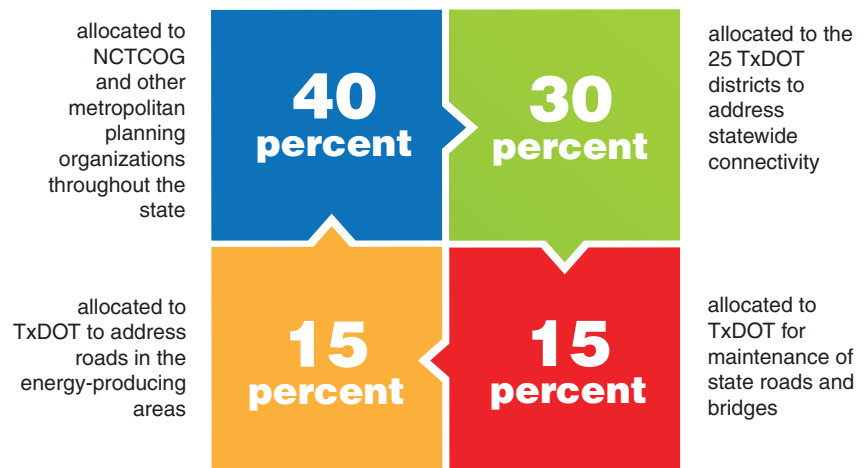
Proposition 1 is injecting needed revenue into roads throughout the state. Interstates and other roads that make up the state highway system are the focus of this funding, with an emphasis placed on systems rather than individual projects. This move is expected to improve connectivity in DFW and throughout the state.

In DFW, innovation has been key to the expansion of roadways built to accommodate the exponential growth experienced over the past few decades. The region has used a combination of traditional financing, tolls and public-private partnerships to add capacity to the region's roadways. The population is soaring, growing by approximately 1 million people per decade, a pattern expected to continue. By 2040, the region is projected to grow from nearly 7 million to 10.6 million.

The growth experienced by the DFW area has required a multimodal approach, with expanding transit and bicycle-pedestrian options complementing the roadway system. NCTCOG's comprehensive transportation approach will continue. However, Proposition 1 is about improvements to non-tolled roads.

NCTCOG and the state's other metropolitan planning organizations will receive 40 percent of the funding for corridor improvements and projects that address safety and congestion. The remaining funds will be distributed by TxDOT to address statewide connectivity, roads in the energy-producing areas and maintenance across the state.

## Distribution of Proposition 1 Funds

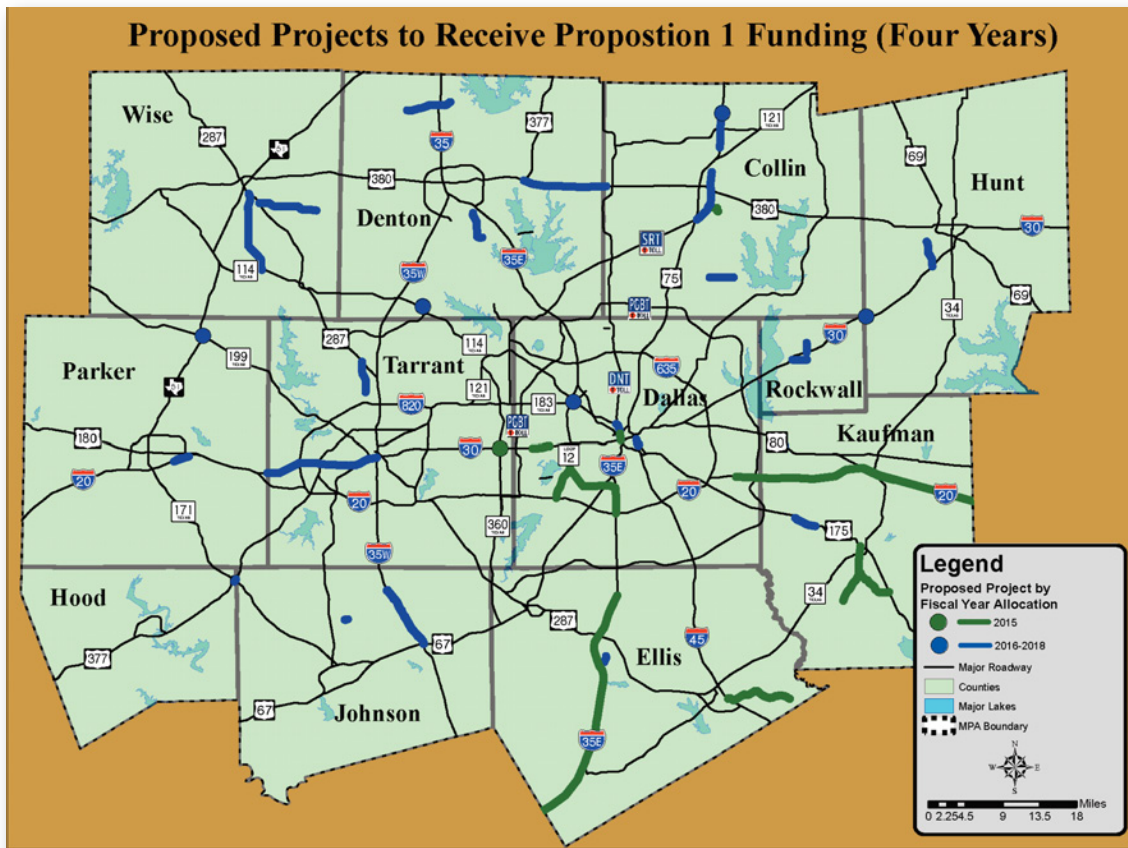


# FACTSheet

The multimodal approach taken by the Regional Transportation Council and its transportation partners throughout the region has resulted in rail, roadway and bike-pedestrian improvements in the ever-expanding region. Proposition 1 focuses on one of these components, specifically non-tolled roads. For example, the first year allocation helped fund an interchange at Interstate Highway 30 and State Highway 360. The project is expected to cost \$254 million, with \$200 million

provided through the first infusion from Proposition 1 and \$54 million through TxDOT and the RTC. On the eastern side of the region, the funds will help expansion of IH 35E in Dallas and Ellis counties. The map below highlights the projects approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in 2015 and projects under consideration through 2018. For a closer look at each project, visit [www.nctcog.org/prop1](http://www.nctcog.org/prop1).

## Proposed Projects to Receive Proposition 1 Funding (Four Years)\*



\*2015 projects have been approved; the projects through 2018 are under consideration.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK? TELL US.

## Regional Transportation Public Input Opportunity



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

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 since 1974, are seeking public input.

Information will be posted online at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input) for public review and comment May 11 - June 9, 2015.

To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2335 or e-mail [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org)

Submit comments and questions to NCTCOG:

E-mail: [transinfo@nctcog.org](mailto:transinfo@nctcog.org)

Website: [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input)

Fax: 817-640-3028

Phone: 817-695-9240

Mail: P.O. Box 5888

Arlington, Texas 76005

### REVIEW & COMMENT

#### Proposed Modification to the List of Funded Projects

A comprehensive list of funded transportation projects through 2018 is maintained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects with committed funds from federal, state and local sources are included in the TIP. To maintain an accurate project listing, this document is updated periodically, and a proposed project modification will be available for public review and comment.

### REVIEW & COMMENT

#### Proposed Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2014 and Fiscal Year 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality planning tasks conducted by the metropolitan planning organization. Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2014 and Fiscal Year 2015 UPWP will be available for public review and comment.

[www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input)

For special accommodations due to a disability or language translation, call 817-608-2335 or e-mail [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org). Reasonable accommodations will be made. *Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2335 o por e-mail: [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org). Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.*

# NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NCTCOG)

## 2014 Safety Program Performance Measures

### NCTCOG 16-County Crash and Fatality Data 2012-2014

North Central Texas Council of Governments - Traffic Safety Crash and Fatality Statistics

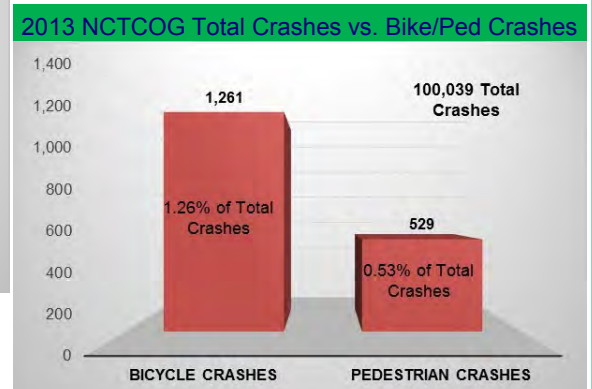
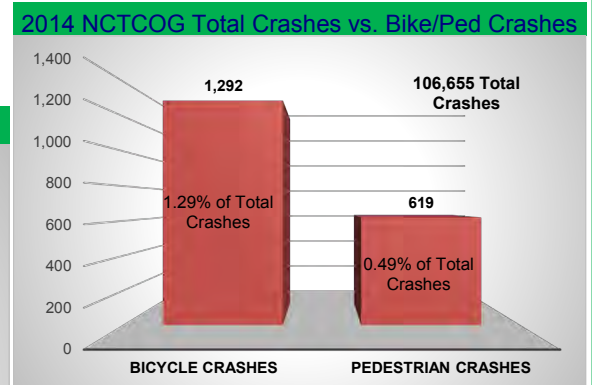
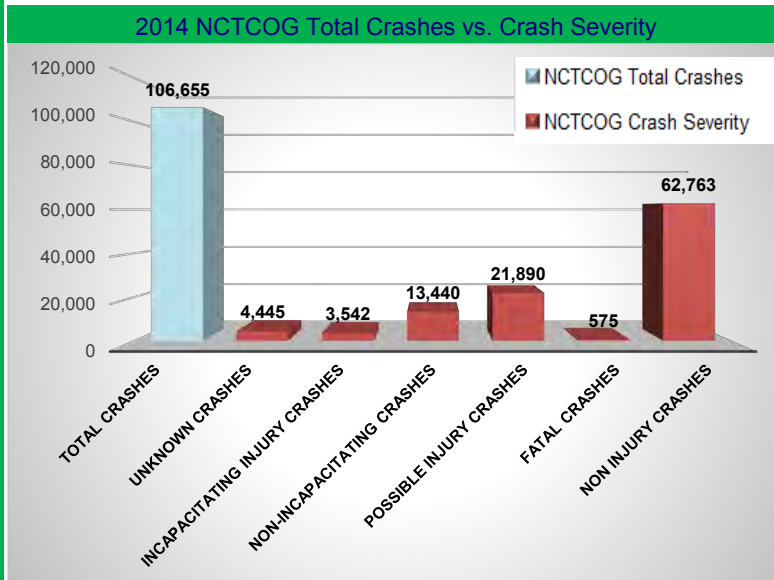
NCTCOG receives regional crash data from TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS) annually. The collected data helps to identify crash hotspots and assist in the development of improvement strategies for the locations. The performance measures below highlight reportable crashes and fatalities that occurred in the North Texas region in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The data below indicates that in 2014 the NCTCOG region experienced one crash every five minutes and one fatality every 15 hours.

2012-2014 Crashes				
County	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2013 to 2014
Collin	9,406	10,419	11,845	13.69%
Dallas	36,082	40,330	42,895	6.36%
Denton	7,634	8,975	9,886	10.15%
Ellis	1,801	1,858	2,173	16.95%
Erath	558	500	624	24.80%
Hood	633	638	752	17.87%
Hunt	1,037	949	1,110	16.97%
Johnson	1,947	2,010	1,998	-0.60%
Kaufman	1,335	1,388	1,480	6.63%
Navarro	930	968	1,073	10.85%
Palo Pinto	495	535	534	-0.19%
Parker	1,613	1,804	1,999	10.81%
Rockwall	982	1,026	1,019	-0.68%
Somervell	135	141	135	-4.26%
Tarrant	25,419	27,595	28,222	2.27%
Wise	837	903	910	0.78%
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,844</b>	<b>100,039</b>	<b>106,655</b>	<b>6.61%</b>

2012-2014 Fatalities				
County	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2013 to 2014
Collin	47	41	41	0.00%
Dallas	173	218	235	7.80%
Denton	34	40	36	-10.00%
Ellis	12	19	23	21.05%
Erath	7	10	16	60.00%
Hood	8	5	8	60.00%
Hunt	22	15	18	20.00%
Johnson	20	18	23	27.78%
Kaufman	27	12	24	100.00%
Navarro	8	13	10	-23.08%
Palo Pinto	7	11	8	-27.27%
Parker	20	18	15	-16.67%
Rockwall	12	8	3	-62.50%
Somervell	5	6	3	-50.00%
Tarrant	107	139	142	2.16%
Wise	19	10	14	40.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>6.17%</b>

Source (Crashes and Fatalities): TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS) current as of 2/13/2015- All TxDOT disclaimers apply to this information.

Note: A reportable motor vehicle crash is defined by TxDOT as: "Any crash involving a motor vehicle in transport that occurs or originates on a traffic way, results in injury to or death of any person, or damage to property of any one person to the apparent extent of \$1,000."



# NCTCOG Crash and Fatality Data 2014

## 2014 Contributing Factors for Serious Injury and Fatality Crashes

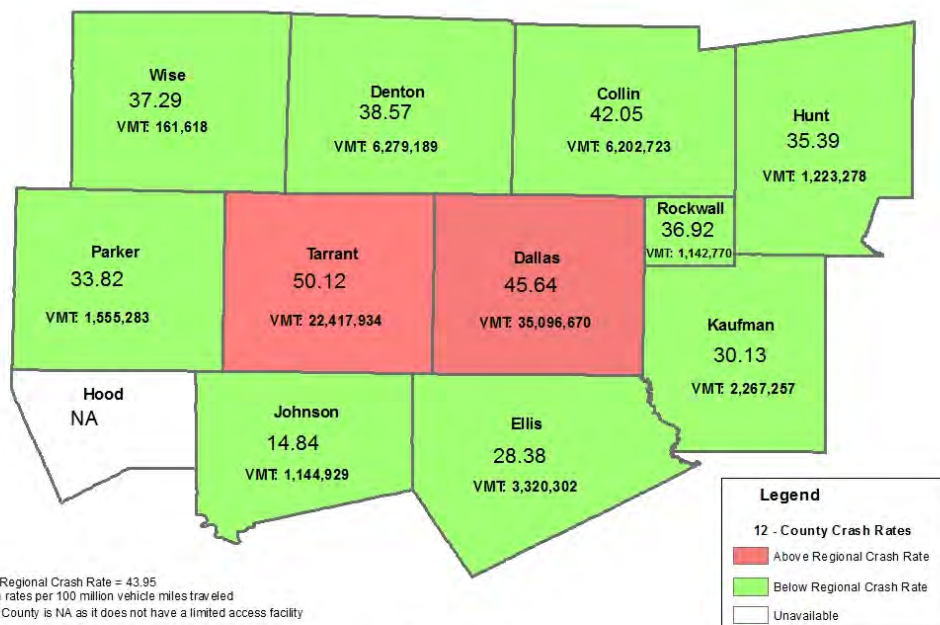
Top Ten Contributing Factors		Percentage
1	Speeding - (Overlimit / Unsafe Speed / Failed to Control Speed)	31.30%
2	Driver Related (Distraction in Vehicle, Drive Inattention / Road Rage / Drove Without Headlights)	10.65%
3	Faulty Evasive Action	9.57%
4	Changed Lane When Unsafe	9.24%
5	Followed Too Closely	8.66%
6	Failed to Drive in Single Lane	8.41%
7	Under Influence - (Had Been Drinking / Alcohol / Drug)	6.16%
8	Fatigued or Asleep	1.96%
9	Disabled in Traffic Lane	1.56%
10	Pedestrian - Failed to Yield ROW to Vehicle	0.98%

Note: The Contributing Factor Analysis above includes Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Contributing Crash Factors on limited access facilities in the NCTCOG 12-County MPA.

## 2014 Crash Rates by County

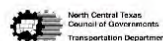
Annually NCTCOG calculates crash rates on limited access facilities for the NCTCOG 12-County MPA. The map below displays crash rates by county in comparison to the 2014 regional crash rate of 43.95 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. Counties that have a higher crash rate than the regional rate are shown in red, while counties with a rate below the regional crash rate are shown in green.

2014 Limited Access Roadway Crash Rates By County: NCTCOG 12 - County MPA



Note:  
 2014 Regional Crash Rate = 43.95  
 Crash rates per 100 million vehicle miles traveled  
 Hood County is NA as it does not have a limited access facility

Source:  
 Crash data - TxDOT Crash Records Information System (CRIS)  
 VMT data - NCTCOG trans model performance reports



0 5 10 20 30 Miles



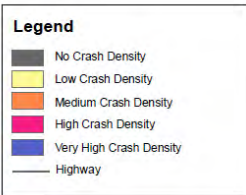
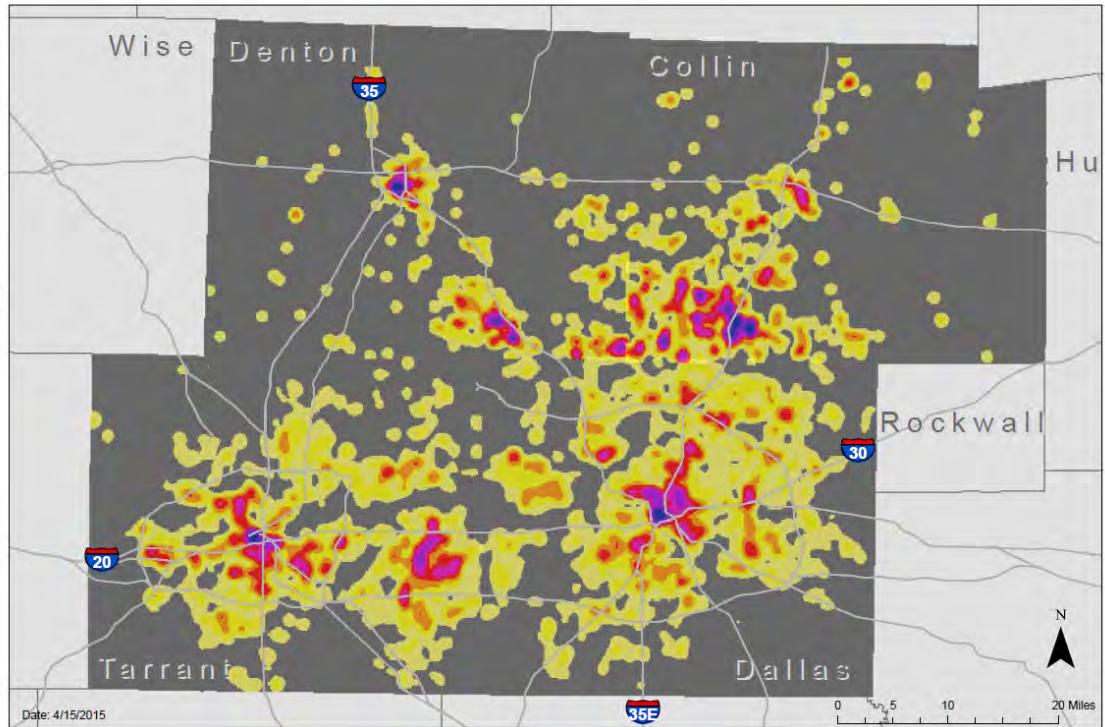
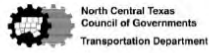


# Bicycle Pedestrian Crash Density Map

Over the past decade, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has been working to aggressively reduce pedestrian deaths by focusing extra resources on the cities and states with the highest pedestrian fatalities and/or fatality rates. FHWA has designated the State of Texas and the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth on the list to emphasize pedestrian safety efforts due to the number of pedestrian fatalities which are the result of crashes with motor vehicles. Between 2009-2013 there were 3,996 pedestrian crashes, 1666 bicycle crashes, and 347 bicycle and pedestrian fatalities reported in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. This map identifies the density of pedestrian and bicycle crashes in Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant Counties utilizing a low to very high density scale with yellow symbolizing lower concentrations of crashes and blue symbolizing higher concentrations. Larger detailed maps for each county in our region showing bicycle and pedestrian crash locations are provided at <http://www.nctcog.org/trans/sustdev/bikeped/BikePedCrashInfo.asp>.

## Collin, Dallas, Denton, & Tarrant Counties

Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Density (2009 - 2013)



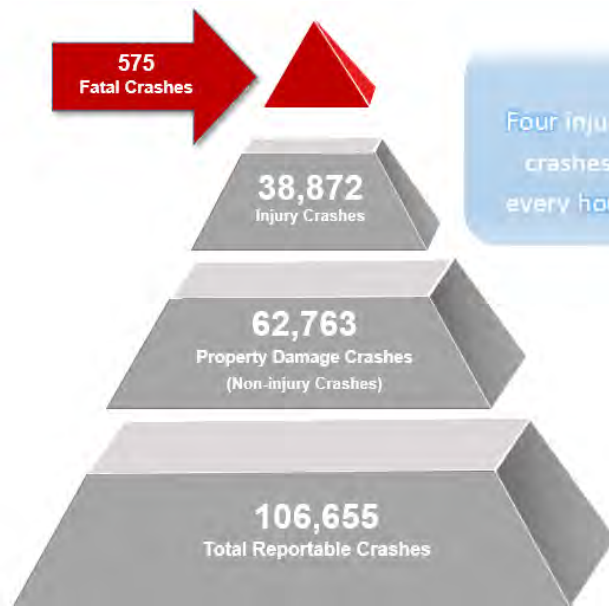
Note: Density concentration is calculated as a magnitude per unit area from crash point features and is based on each counties geography. Blue symbolizes higher concentration of crashes and yellow displays lower concentrations.

- 1.) Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System - 2013 data is current as of January 2014. All TxDOT disclaimers apply.
- 2.) Data displayed contains reportable crashes with latitude and longitude information. Additional crashes may have occurred.
- 3.) This data is composed of TxDOT "Reportable Crashes" that occurs or originates on a traffic way, results in injury to or death of any person, or damage to the property of any person to the apparent extent of \$1,000.
- 4.) Areas with the highest crash bicycle and pedestrian density are generally commercial corridors, areas surrounding universities, and central business districts.

# NCTCOG Freeway Incident Management (FIM) Program

## 2014 Regional Crash Pyramid

The statistics below show the importance of training for agencies responsible for managing and clearing traffic incidents is extremely important, as well as consistency among agencies, and has demonstrated the ability to improve responder and motorist safety and to significantly reduce the length and size of roadway closures.



Four injury crashes every hour

- On average, each injury crash requires
- 2 Law Enforcement
  - 4 Fire/Rescue
  - 2 Emergency Medical Services
  - 1 Towing and Recovery
  - 9 Responders

Potentially 36 responders "working in or near moving traffic" every hour 24/7/365

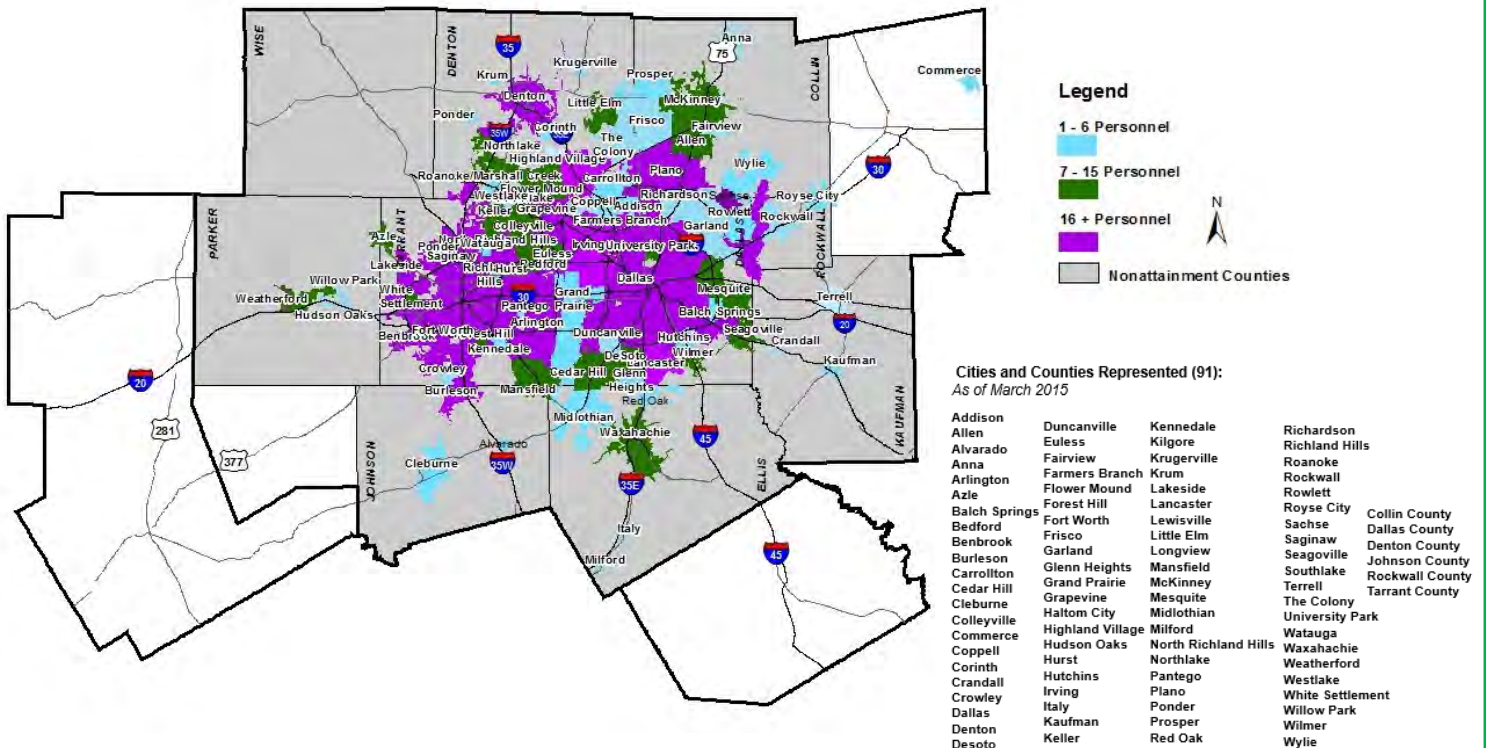
# NCTCOG Freeway Incident Management (FIM) Program

## First Responder and Manager's Course/Executive Level Course Training

The Freeway Incident Management (FIM) training series was developed in February of 2003 and first offered in December of 2003. The goal of the FIM training course is to initiate a common, coordinated response to traffic incidents that will build partnerships, enhance safety for emergency personnel, reduce upstream traffic accidents, improve the efficiency of the transportation system, and improve the air quality in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. The **First Responder and Manager's Course** is specifically designed for those with daily involvement in responding to traffic incidents on the region's freeways. This course is offered at least six times per year. The training is eligible for TCOLE Credits and Fire Commission Credits. In 2014 the training also became eligible for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

First Responder and Manager's Course Attendance			
2003 - 2013	2014	January-March 2015	Total
2,311	129	49	2,489

### First Responder and Manager's Course Attendance - Police



A similar map for agencies with Fire Attendance is also available upon request.

The **Executive Level Course** was introduced in 2005 and is geared towards agency decision and policy makers and provides a high-level overview of the topics discussed in the First Responder and Manager's Course. The Executive Level Course is offered twice a year.

### Executive Level Course Attendance

Police	Fire	City Staff	Elected Officials	Public Works/ Strategic Services Transportation	Medical Staff	Other	Total (February 2005 - November 2014)
234	92	19	16	17	4	84	466

### Photogrammetry Training 2007-2015

Photogrammetry Training is offered as a complement to the region's FIM Training series. The Photogrammetry System, used for crash reconstruction and forensic measurements, is an image-based 3D system that calculates measurements from photographs and digital images. The System helps reduce the time needed to investigate a crash scene. The following training is offered twice a year:

- Basic Training - five-days (includes a three-day iWitness™ workshop and a two-day Crash Zone workshop)
- Advanced Training - two-days (offered to students who completed Basic Training)

Course	Total
Basic Training	150
Advanced Training	95

# NCTCOG Freeway Incident Management (FIM) Program

## Incident Management Equipment Purchase 2014 Call for Projects

In 2014, NCTCOG conducted an Incident Management Equipment Purchase Call for Projects to assist our local police, fire, and public works agencies in purchasing equipment and technology that aid in clearing crashes quicker and more safely. Equipment and technology that aid in quick incident clearance assists both with keeping motorists and first responders safe on the roadway and in improved air quality for the region. Over \$1.7 million dollars was awarded to regional police and fire departments to assist them in purchasing equipment such as traffic control and scene management equipment; responder safety gear, changeable message signs, responder radios, and crash investigation technology and training.

### Agencies Receiving Funding (Eastern Sub-Region)

	Agency	Project Types	# of Project Requests	Funding Requested
1	City of Anna	Traffic Control Equipment, Responder Safety Gear, and Dynamic Message Boards	3	\$57,303
2	City of Dallas	Traffic Control Equipment, Dynamic Message Boards, Responder Radios and Accident Investigation Technology	5	\$144,739
3	City of Frisco	Traffic Control Equipment, TMC Equipment, Thermal Imager and Incident Dispatching Software	4	\$372,526
4	City of Denton	Traffic Control Equipment, Responder Safety Gear, Scene Lighting, and Dynamic Message Signs	7	\$52,512
5	City of Farmers Branch	Traffic Control Equipment, Responder Radios, Accident Investigation Technology	3	\$67,208
6	City of Flower Mound	Responder Opticom Emitters	1	\$4,905
7	City of Grand Prairie	Traffic Control Equipment and Dynamic Message Signs	3	\$33,606
8	City of Richardson	Accident Investigation Technology	1	\$10,248
9	Dallas County	Crash Attenuator Trucks Equipped with Traffic Control and Scene Management Equipment (Arrowboards, Lighting)	2	\$233,174
10	DART Police Department	Accident Investigation Technology	1	\$60,000
		Total	30	\$1,036,221

### Agencies Receiving Funding (Western Sub-Region)

	Agency	Project Types	# of Project Requests	Funding Requested
1	City of Arlington	Traffic Control Equipment, Crash Attenuators, Arrowboards, Push Bumpers/Transit Clusters, and Accident Investigation Technology	8	\$343,949
2	City of Euless	Traffic Control Equipment, Responder Safety Gear, Scene Lighting, and Dynamic Message Boards	5	\$34,597
3	City of Fort Worth	Heavy Duty Response Truck Equipped with Traffic Control Equipment, Responder Safety Gear, Portable Message Boards, and Accident Investigation Technology	7	\$160,036
4	City of Grapevine	Accident Investigation Technology	1	\$32,262
5	City of Hurst	Traffic Control Equipment and Scene Lighting	3	\$5,617
6	City of North Richland Hills	Heavy Duty Response Truck Equipped with Traffic Control Equipment	1	\$78,028
7	City of Weatherford	Traffic Control Equipment, Scene Lighting and Accident Investigation Technology	4	\$21,937
		Total	29	\$676,425



# Mobility Assistance Patrol Program (MAPP)

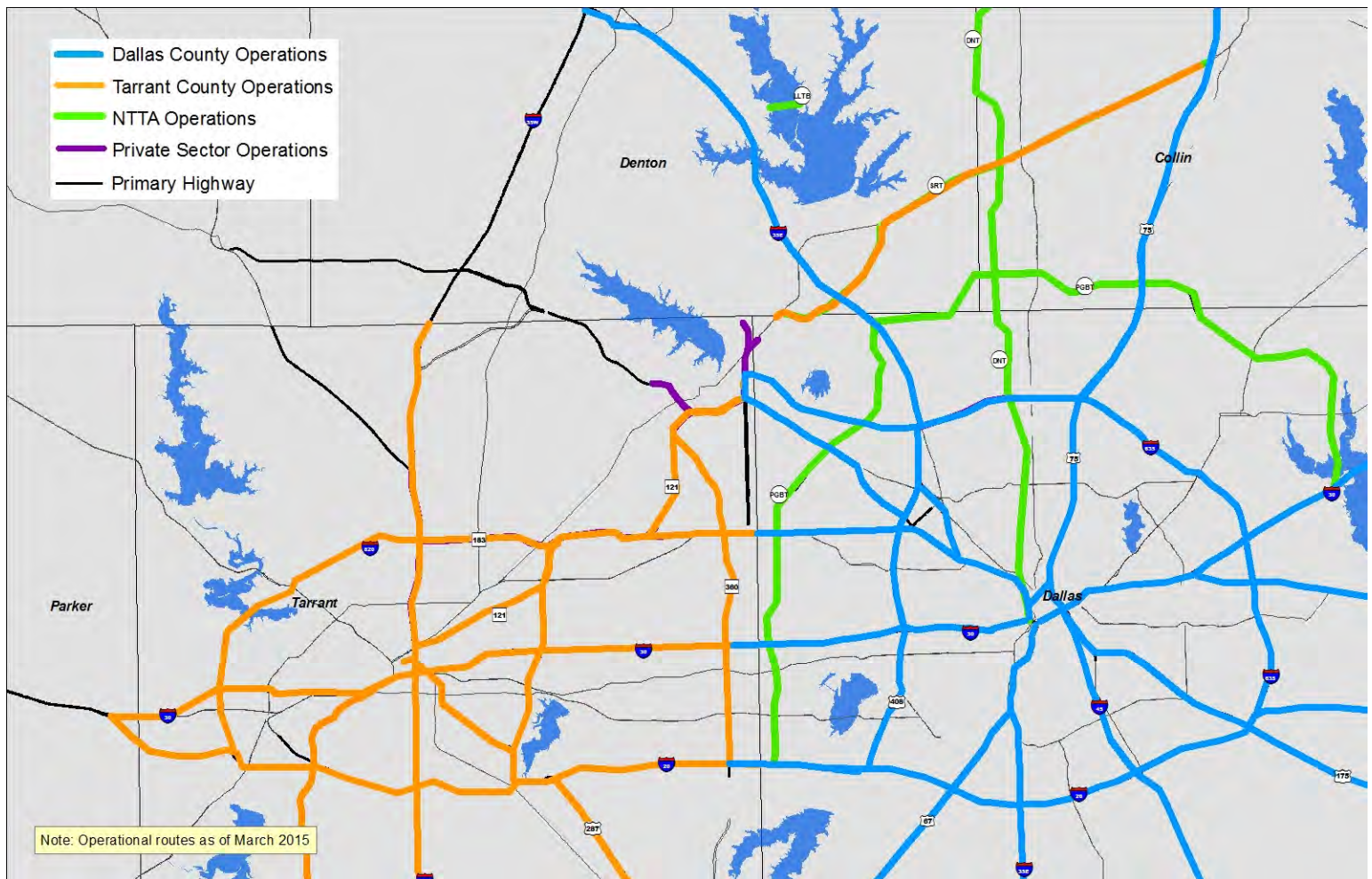
The Mobility Assistance Patrol Program (MAPP) is an essential element to the region's Freeway Incident Management operations. The MAPP coverage area is focused on congested roadway systems in Dallas and Tarrant Counties and portions of Collin and Denton Counties. The goal of the Regional MAPP is to assist in the alleviation of congestion on area highways/freeways and toll roads. The MAPP provides free assistance to stalled and stranded motorists by helping them to move disabled vehicles from the main lanes of regional highway/freeway facilities, assisting with flat tires, stalled vehicles, and minor accidents and ultimately getting the vehicles operating or off the facility completely. Assistance is also provided to law enforcement with traffic control when deemed necessary or when requested by law enforcement.

MAPP is currently being operated by the Dallas County Sheriff's Office, Tarrant County Sheriff's Office and the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA). Portions of Dallas and Tarrant County Operations are currently being patrolled by private sector partner agencies on the LBJ, DFW Connector, and NTE TEXpress corridors. This may reflect a decrease in assist numbers. We anticipate receiving performance stats from the private sector partner agencies.

## Mobility Assistance Patrol Program Performance Measures

Agency	2013 Assist	2014 Assist
Dallas County	62,356	69,828
Tarrant County	20,164	22,765
NTTA	37,998	38,832

## Patrol Routes

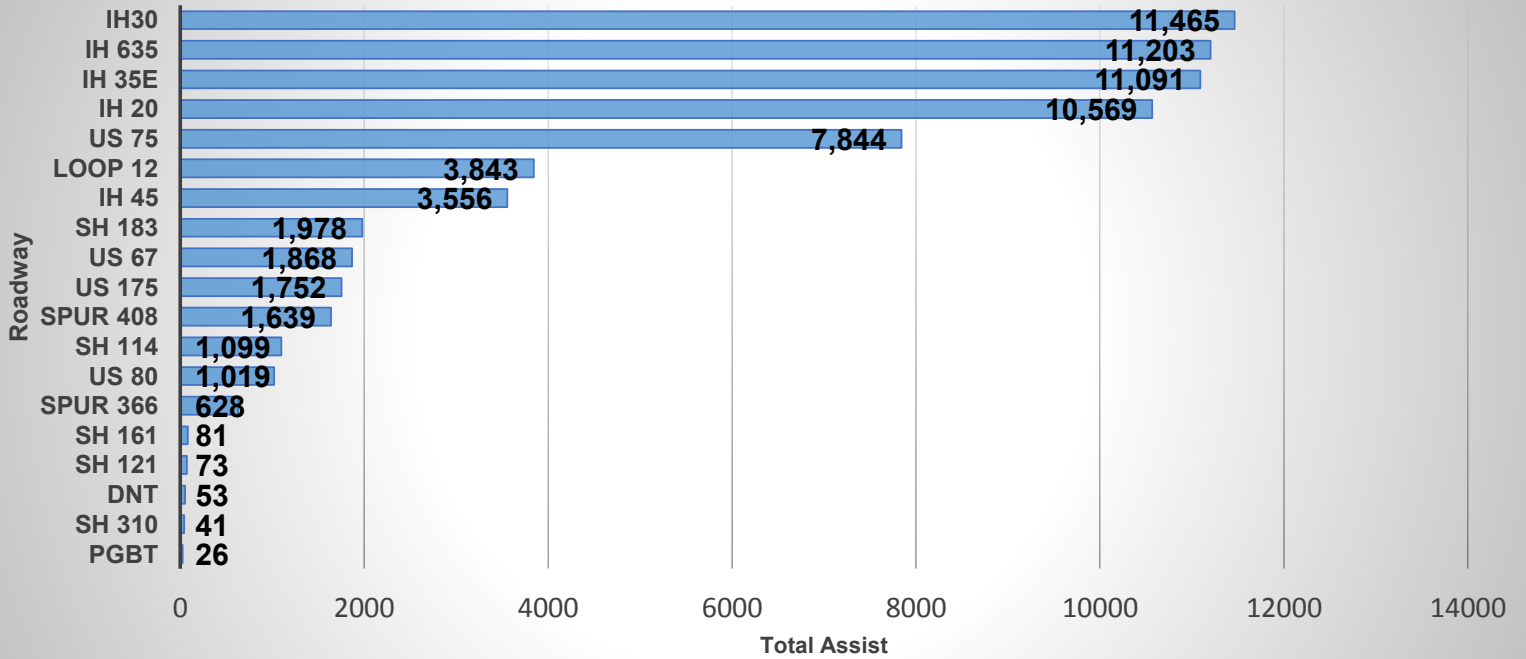


## Hours of Operation

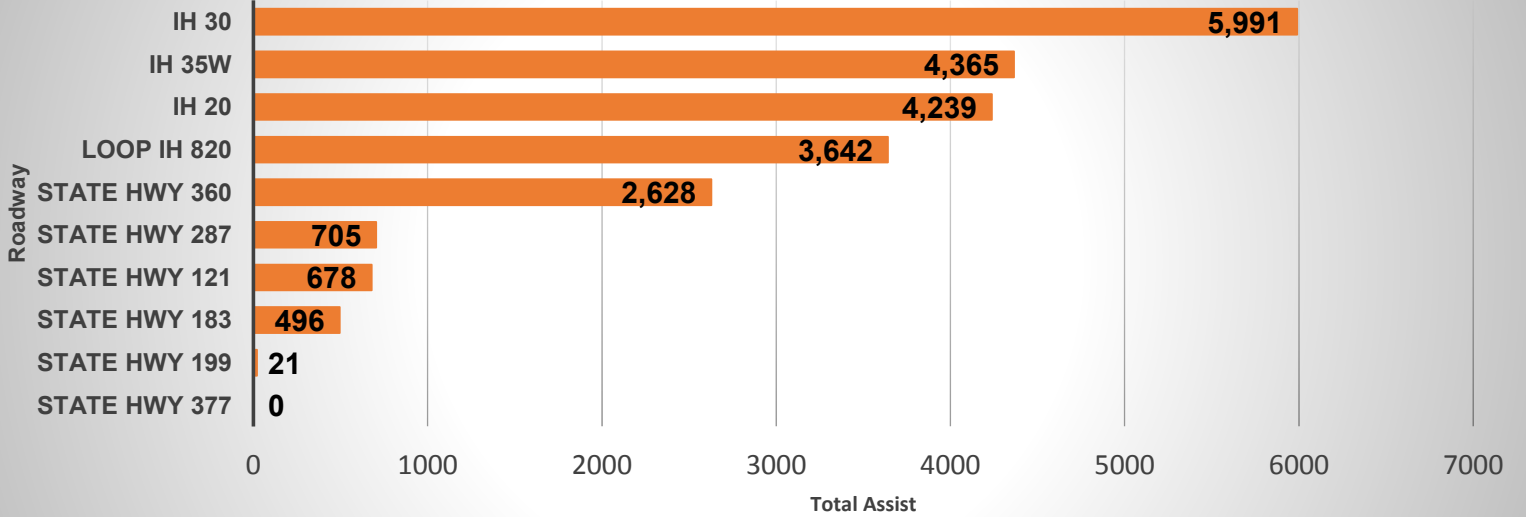
Dallas County	Tarrant County	NTTA	CDA (NTE)	CDA (LBJ)	CDA (DFW)
Mon - Fri 5 am - 9:30 pm	Mon - Sun	Mon - Sun	Mon - Sun	Mon - Sun	Mon - Fri 5:30 am - 8:30 am
Sat - Sun 11 am - 7:30 pm	6 am - 10 pm	24 hours/day	24 hours/day	24 hours/day	Mon - Fri 3:30 pm - 7 pm

# Mobility Assistance Patrol Program (MAPP)

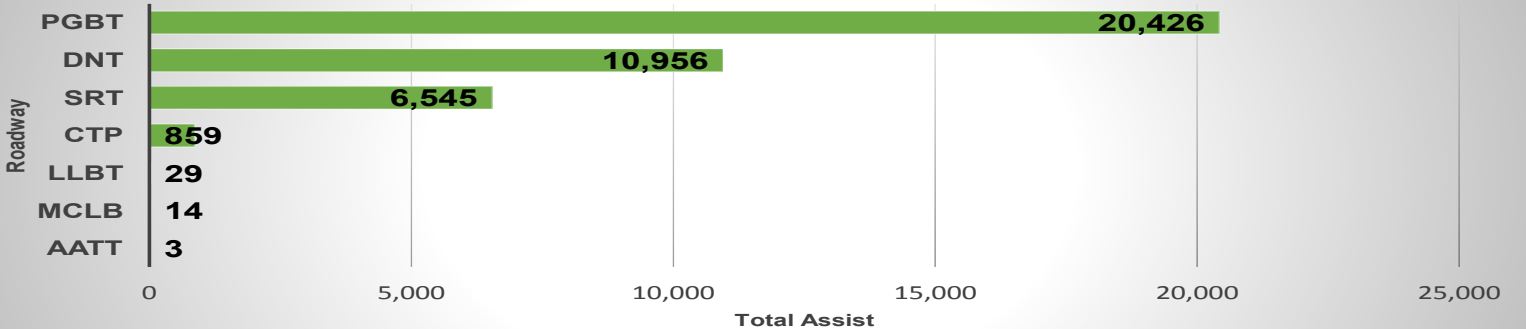
## 2014 Dallas County Assist Totals by Roadway



## 2014 Tarrant County Assist Totals by Roadway



## 2014 NTTA Assist Totals by Roadway



## Wrong Way Driving Pilot Project - Dallas County

The National Transportation Safety Board identifies wrong way driving crashes on high-speed divided highways as the most serious type of highway collision. Although the wrong way driving collision occurs less frequently than other crashes, this type of collision is more likely to result in fatal and serious injuries than other types of crashes. In 2012, NCTCOG began working with TxDOT and local jurisdictions in Dallas County to implement a Wrong Way Driving (WWD) Pilot Project. The goal was to implement a project that focuses on preventing wrong way driving along regional corridors through the implementation of intersection improvements, signage and/or other available countermeasures. The project focuses on Diamond Interchanges throughout Dallas County. Work was initiated on many of these intersections in 2014 and is expected to be completed in 2015. The cities included in this WWD Pilot Project are listed below.

City/Agency	Total # of Intersections Identified	Project Completion Status
Carrollton	12	Complete
Dallas	194	-
Farmers Branch	2	Complete
Garland	15	Complete
Grand Prairie	25	Complete
Irving	38	Complete
Mesquite	16	Complete
Richardson	7	Complete
Rowlett	4	Complete
TxDOT	37	Designed
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	

2015 Update: Planning activities for Phase 2 of the Wrong Way Driving Pilot Project were initiated in 2015. Phase 2 activities will focus on local jurisdictions in Tarrant County .

## Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP)

NCTCOG hosted a workshop in March 2014 on the Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP) Call For Projects (CFP). During the workshop TxDOT staff from both the Dallas and Fort Worth Districts, provided information to local agencies on the process for submitting project applications as well as types of projects that would be accepted. The 2014 CFP resulted in the following projects for our region:

- The Dallas District received approval on 30 projects for a total of \$12,380,527.
- The Fort Worth District received approval on 16 projects for a total of \$6,767,571.

2015 Update: NCTCOG held a workshop in March 2015 for the 2015 HSIP Call for Projects. The deadline to submit projects to the Dallas District Office is May 15, 2015 and to the Fort Worth District Office is May 22, 2015. More information can be found at: <http://www.nctcog.org/trans/safety/HSIPCFP.asp>

## Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Efforts

The North Central Texas region represents one of the largest inland ports in the nation where freight is moved, transferred, and distributed to destinations across the state and around the world. In addition to the movement of commercial products and goods, the region continues to experience a great deal of truck traffic associated with the natural gas industry. As a result, safety issues are one of five significant truck transportation issues within the region. In 2014, NCTCOG conducted a survey of regional police agencies to gather information on Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) efforts throughout the region to assist in addressing these safety issues. Results of the survey were used to determine the current level of CVE now occurring; the number of agencies that have an established program; and interest in a regional training and technology program to assist with CVE. Based on the survey responses, NCTCOG hosted a work session with enforcement agencies in the first quarter of 2015 to further discuss CVE needs and interests. It is anticipated that additional activities related to CVE activities will occur in 2015.

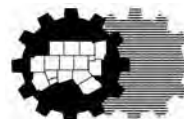
## Safety Related Information Resources

Safety Information resources are available at [www.nctcog.org/trans/safety/RegSftyResources.asp](http://www.nctcog.org/trans/safety/RegSftyResources.asp). General information topics include Highway Safety Improvement Program Information, Safety Countermeasures and Techniques, Safety References, Traffic Safety Statistics, and Safety-related Newsletters.

### Contact Information

Camille Fountain  
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North Central Texas  
Council of Governments  
Transportation Department

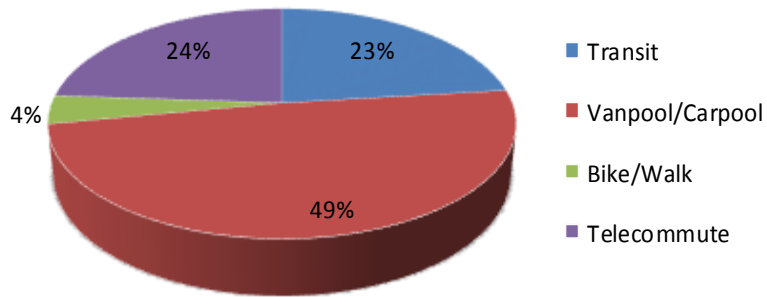
Information as Reported through TryParkingIt.com

Commute Modes January – December 2014

Commute Mode	Number of Times Used	VMT Reduced (mi)	Percentage Used
Transit	2,616	110,540	23
Vanpool – Ride	1,404	110,021	13
Vanpool – Drive	1,261	90,329	11
Carpool – Ride	1,587	69,551	14
Carpool – Drive	1,279	54,536	11
Telework Center	11	710	0
Bicycle	447	4,603	4
Telecommute	2,751	136,396	24
Walk	14	282	0

Note: The commute modes used, as reported through the Try Parking It website, are listed in the table above. It is important to note that these statistics are based on the commute activities voluntarily reported on the website. The actual commute mode percentages used throughout the region will differ.

2014 Try Parking It Commute Modes



Emissions Report January – December 2014

Vehicle Type	Miles Reduced	VOC (lbs)	NOx (lbs)	CO (lbs)	PM (lbs)	CO2 (lbs)	SO2 (lbs)
Automobiles [gas]	377,851	469	409	6,272	9	306,868	6
Automobiles [diesel]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUV/Truck/Van [gas]	194,676	304	378	4,497	5	220,519	4
SUV/Truck/Van [diesel]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motorcycle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hybrid Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	572,526	774	787	10,769	14	527,386	10

Employer and Emissions Report

Employer Statistics January – December 2014

The Try Parking It website continued to receive new employer registrations throughout 2014. Between the months of January and December, 396 new employers were reported.

Total Employers Registered	3,205
Total Number of Users to Date	17,381



# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT: TRY PARKING IT PROGRAM

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS  
COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS  
TDM PROGRAM

## Contact Information

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tryparkingit.com

Try Parking It  
E-Newsletters released  
in 2014 are available  
online. Please click the  
links below to access  
the documents.

[December 2014 Edition](#)

[November 2014 Edition](#)

[Sept/Oct 2014 Edition](#)

[August 2014 Edition](#)

[July 2014 Edition](#)

[June 2014 Edition](#)

[May 2014 Edition](#)

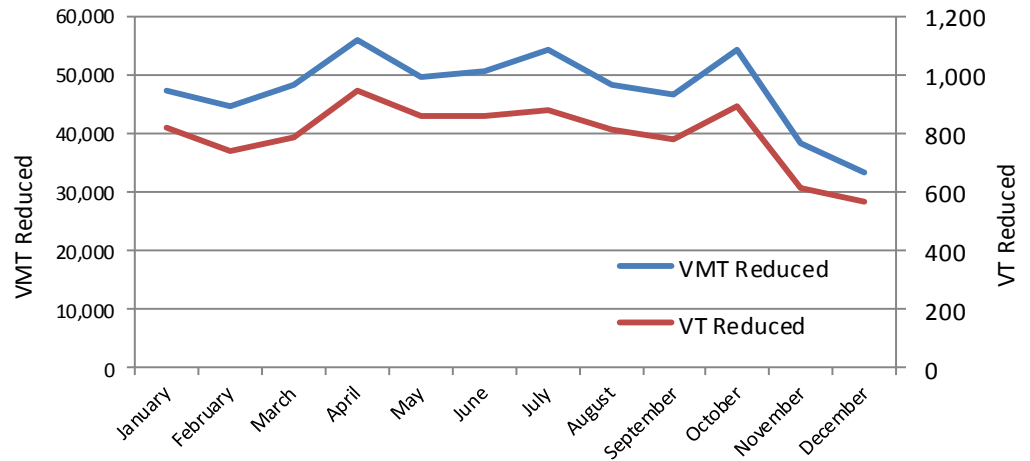
[April 2014 Edition](#)

[March 2014 Edition](#)

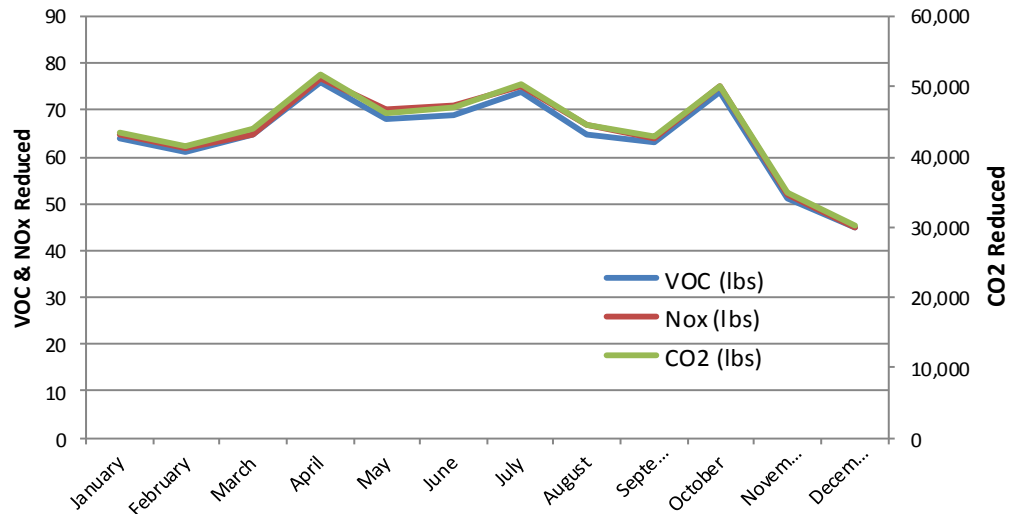
[February 2014 Edition](#)

[January 2014 Edition](#)

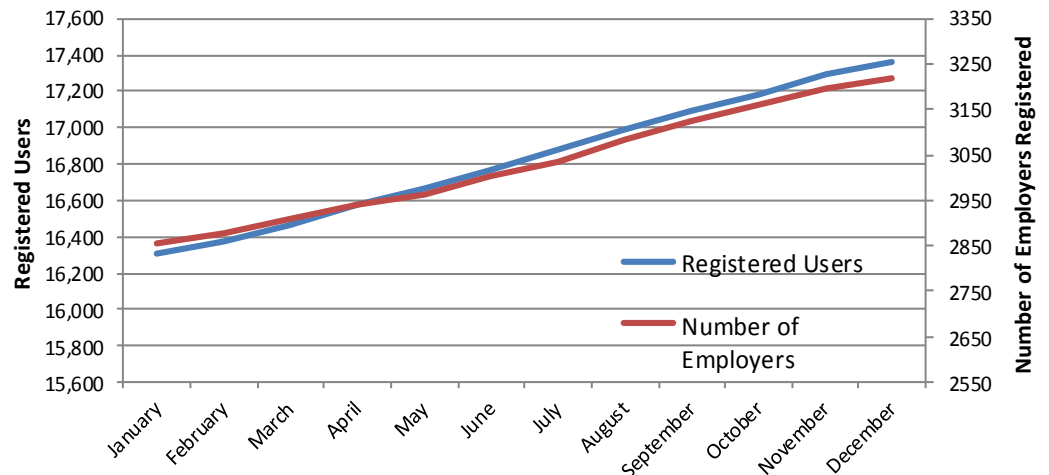
### 2014 Try Parking It Vehicle Miles Travel Reduced & Vehicle Trips Reduced



### 2014 Try Parking It CO2, VOC & NOx Reductions



### 2014 Try Parking It Registered Users & Number of Employers



**NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS  
COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS  
TDM PROGRAM**

**Contact Information**

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[www.nctcog.org](http://www.nctcog.org)



[www.dart.org](http://www.dart.org)



[www.the-t.com](http://www.the-t.com)



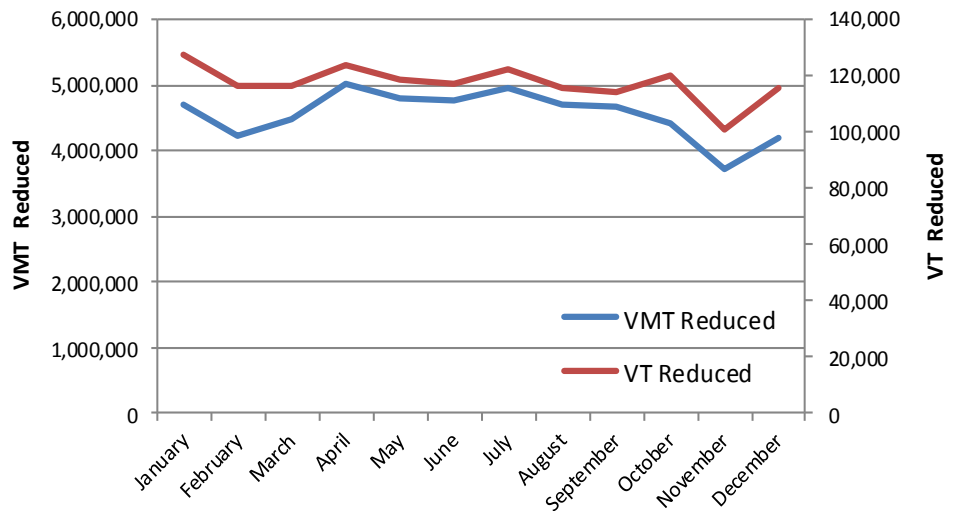
[www.dcta.net](http://www.dcta.net)

VANPOOL PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORTS: JANUARY – DECEMBER 2014

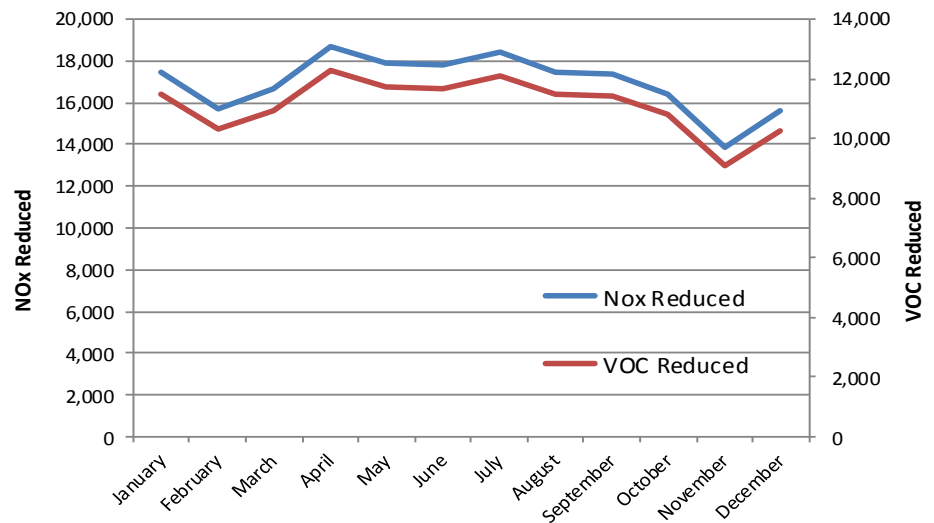
**Regional Vanpool Program Jan – Dec 2014**

Vanpool Program	DART	The T	DCTA	Combined
Total Number of Vans to Date	161	170	25	356
Average Number of Participants Per Month	1,698	1,213	238	3,148
Average Vehicle Miles of Travel Reduced Per Month	2,495,482	1,684,435	371,957	4,551,874
Average Vehicle Trips Reduced Per Month	64,418	43,966	9,057	117,440
Total NOx Emissions Reduced (lbs)	111,472	75,242	16,616	203,330
Total VOC Emissions Reduced (lbs)	73,215	49,420	10,913	133,548

**Vehicle Trips & Vehicle Miles Travel Reduced**



**NOx and VOC Reductions (lbs)**



## Try Parking It Program and Regional Vanpool Program Yearly Comparisons (2012 -2014)

### Try Parking It Program (VMT Reduced and Percent Used)

Commute Mode	2014		2013		2012	
	VMT Reduced	Percent Used	VMT Reduced	Percent Used	VMT Reduced	Percent Used
<b>Carpool</b>	124,087	25%	146,140	26%	232,168	36%
<b>Vanpool</b>	200,350	24%	179,434	20%	185,546	16%
<b>Telework Center</b>	710	0%	698	0%	1,272	0%
<b>Bicycle</b>	4,603	4%	7,594	5%	20,234	9%
<b>Telecommute</b>	136,396	24%	143,195	24%	131,340	17%
<b>Transit</b>	110,540	23%	113, 220	25%	127,927	22%
<b>Walk</b>	282	0%	451	0%	379	0%

### Regional Vanpool Program (DART, The T, and DCTA Combined)

Year of Performance	2014	2013	2012
<b>Total Number of Vans</b>	356	386	397
<b>Average Gas Price Per Gallon</b>	\$3.23	\$3.41	\$3.46
<b>Average Number of Participants Per Year</b>	3,148	3,343	3,507
<b>Average Vehicle Miles of Travel Reduced Per Month</b>	4,551, 874	5,165,066	5,337,357
<b>Average Vehicle Trips Reduced Per Month</b>	117,440	125,081	132,126
<b>Total NOX Emissions Reduced (lbs)</b>	203,330	230,721	238,415
<b>Total VOC Emissions Reduced (lbs)</b>	133,548	151,538	156,593

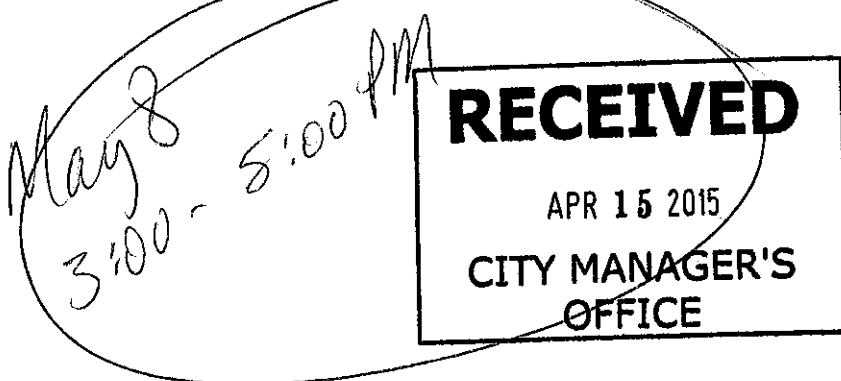
### Park and Ride Additions

Over the past 12 months, two new Park and Ride (PNR) facilities have opened along the IH 30/Tom Landry corridor. The PNR in Grand Prairie at IH 30 and Belt Line Road offers 328 parking spaces and will provide easy access to the IH 30 HOV/Managed Lane. It also includes a 233' Prairie Ribbon mural made of recycled glass tiles on the east retaining wall. The PNR in Arlington at the IH 30 HOV/Managed Lane T-ramp and Copeland Road provides direct access to the T-ramp. It offers 100 parking spaces and features such as lighting, signage, and sidewalk accessibility. Both PNR facilities are great connection locations for users of **DFW Connect-A-Ride**, the region's real-time carpooling website, and **Try Parking It** vanpool and carpool users.

Stadler US Inc

**STADLER***We Track Clever Solutions*

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 E-Mail [Stephen.Bonina@stadlerail.com](mailto:Stephen.Bonina@stadlerail.com)



Donna Barron  
 City Manager  
 City of Lewisville  
 151 W. Church Street,  
 Lewisville, Texas 75057

April 3, 2015

**Stephen Bonina**  
 President

**Subject: Preliminary Stadler Manufacturing Facility Application**

Dear Ms. Barron:

Stadler Rail is a Swiss rail car manufacturer that has a full line of passenger rail vehicles. Our company has seven manufacturing facilities throughout Europe and we have been looking throughout the United States for a location to build our U.S. manufacturing facility. Stadler is in the final stages of selecting our manufacturing location and is currently evaluating locations in Lewisville, Texas; Charleston, South Carolina; Savannah and Dublin, Georgia; and South Bend, Indiana.

Stadler is excited about the possibility of locating our facility in Lewisville and we would very much like to form a partnership with the City to build our first North American rail manufacturing plant.

Stadler's forte is to design and manufacture high quality, highly reliable, light weight rail vehicles with a low life cycle cost. Each of our European manufacturing facilities is capable of building all of our rail vehicles and Stadler will ensure that this will be true of our U.S. manufacturing facility as well. This will ensure that we maximize the number of rail vehicles that can be built at this facility, and hence maximize employment at this facility.

Stadler was established in 1942 and initially specialized in producing custom rail vehicles for the Swiss market. Our company's growth exploded when Europe changed its procurement procedures to focusing on the life cycle cost as opposed to the first cost of procuring rail vehicles. Today, Stadler is the European market leader in producing the lowest life cycle cost passenger rail vehicles. Stadler is actively educating North American transit agencies on the benefits of low life cycle costs and we are very optimistic about our future in North America.

Stadler would like to establish a partnership with the City of Lewisville whereby we can establish a permanent passenger rail car manufacturing facility within the confines of the City of Lewisville. Stadler envisions this facility to competitively offer passenger rail vehicles to the entire southern tier of the United States which is expected to have a disproportionately large



amount of passenger rail growth over the next twenty years; as well as provide overhaul activities for the established rail car fleets in Houston, Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth and Denton County.

Stadler's method of localizations is based on cooperation with a local partner. The principle of collaboration is that the partner owns the facility and Stadler pays a lease fee. Therefore, Stadler would ask the City of Lewisville to build this valuable collaboration. Stadler's goal is to achieve the following partnership:

The City of Lewisville, in partnership with Denton County and DCTA, would construct the new facility. Stadler will bring (besides the specific interior equipment) the following value:

- Lease payments
- Jobs, continuous creation starting at 85
- Creating Supplier opportunities (procure 60% locally)
- Know-how transfer
- Taxes
- Running costs

The current layout is based on the capacity of the TEX Rail project. Since Stadler's goal is to establish a long lasting engagement, the modular approach of the facility for future expansion is an essential factor.

In the coming weeks Stadler will submit a complete application that will include the following elements:

- Overview description of the facility and the activities that will take place at the facility
- Cost estimate
- Site layout drawings showing an overview of the facility
- Land use statement
- Employment projections
- Project schedule

Lastly, Stadler will look to establish a network of local businesses to help support our manufacturing activities. This will further add to the employment and boost the local economy.

We appreciate the spirit of collaboration that the City has expressed in all of our discussions and look forward to building a successful partnership to bring new, high-quality jobs to the City of Lewisville and Denton County.

Thank you,

**Stadler US Inc.**

  
Stephen Bonina, P.E.

  
Martin Ritter



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

May 7, 2015

Mr. Tryon D. Lewis  
Chair  
Texas Transportation Commission  
125 East 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Lewis:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) have coordinated on several major tolled facilities (i.e., tolled managed lanes and toll roads) in the Dallas-Fort Worth region, including SH 121/Sam Rayburn Parkway, Chisholm Trail Parkway, SH 360, LBJ Express, DFW Connector, North Tarrant Express, and others. Most of these projects were made possible by the financing tools enabled by the Texas State Legislature when increases in transportation revenues were not possible.

An important aspect of the great partnership between the RTC and TxDOT on these projects has been the guiding principle that transportation funding would continue to be formula allocated to regions. This principle gave confidence to the RTC that even when the most competitive corridors were delivered through tolling, the region's funding allocation would not be reduced.

An unintended consequence of tolling, which is not addressed by the above principle, is that as this region moves forward with toll roads, these tolled facilities are not included in the maintenance formula allocation. These roads are currently supported by toll revenues "able" to pay for maintenance. In keeping with the original principle of ensuring that regions implementing financing tools should not adversely be affected in terms of funding allocations, the percentage of maintenance money should not be artificially lowered because the tolled facilities come off system and are no longer considered in the maintenance formula.

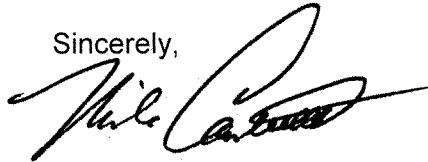
To this end, the RTC position is that the maintenance formula should account for the full inventory of major roadways so that regions that build toll facilities should not receive a reduced maintenance allocation. As the Legislature increasingly relies on formulas, which is supported by the RTC, an adjustment to this particular formula would be reflective of the original legislative intent to not adversely impact funding to regions that use tolling tools. These new maintenance funds should go to the TxDOT districts for their use on area roadways.

Mr. Tryon D. Lewis  
Page Two

May 7, 2015

Please contact Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, at (817) 695-9241 with any questions or concerns.

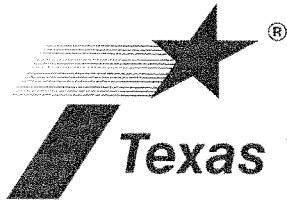
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Cantrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Cantrell  
Chair, Regional Transportation Council  
Commissioner, Dallas County

CG:al

cc: LtGen Joe Weber, USMC (Retired), Executive Director, TxDOT Austin  
Victor Vandergriff, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commissioner  
John Barton, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT Austin  
Brian Barth, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Fort Worth District  
Paul Montgomery, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Paris District  
Kelly Selman, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Dallas District



# Texas Transportation Commission

125 E. 11TH STREET • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483

April 14, 2015

Mike Cantrell, Chair  
Regional Transportation Council  
P. O. Box 5888  
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Dear Chairman Cantrell:

Thank you for your letter of congratulations. I look forward to my work on the Texas Transportation Commission and to continuing the successful relationship between the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), with the Regional Transportation Council and Dallas County.

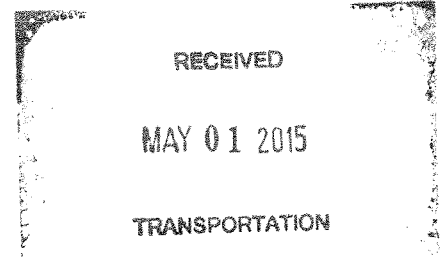
Our mission is to "Work with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas." I would emphasize the importance of working with others. It is only through these close, two-way conversations that we can serve as trusted stewards of the safety and future of the citizens of Texas. These conversations will serve us well as we work together to identify and prioritize projects to help ensure the economic prosperity and quality of life we enjoy today.

Again, thank you for your support. If you need to speak to someone on my staff or should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dallas District Engineer Kelly Selman, P.E., by e-mail at [kelly.selman@txdot.gov](mailto:kelly.selman@txdot.gov) or by phone at (214) 320-6100.

Sincerely,

J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.  
Commissioner  
Texas Transportation Commission

cc: Texas Transportation Commission  
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG  
LtGen J.F. Weber, USMC (Ret), Executive Director  
John A. Barton, P.E., Deputy Executive Director  
Kelly Selman, P.E., Dallas District Engineer



OUR GOALS  
MAINTAIN A SAFE SYSTEM • ADDRESS CONGESTION • CONNECT TEXAS COMMUNITIES • BEST IN CLASS STATE AGENCY

*An Equal Opportunity Employer*



**Texas Department of Transportation**

125 EAST 11<sup>TH</sup> STREET | AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | (512) 305-9504 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

April 16, 2015

Mike Cantrell, Chair  
Regional Transportation Council  
P. O. Box 5888  
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Dear Chairman Cantrell:

Thank you for your kind letter of congratulations. It is an honor to serve at Governor Abbott's pleasure in leading the Texas Transportation Commission and affecting a positive approach to transportation planning.

I look forward to working alongside the Regional Transportation Council and other MPO's across the state to advance transportation planning and projects critical to mobility in Texas.

We appreciate your support and anticipate many opportunities to work together on important transportation issues.

Sincerely,

Tryon D. Lewis  
Chair  
Texas Transportation Commission

cc: Texas Transportation Commission  
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG  
LtGen J.F. Weber, USMC (Ret), Executive Director  
John A. Barton, P.E., Deputy Executive Director

**RECEIVED**

**APR 23 2015**

**TRANSPORTATION**

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

April 23, 2015

Docket Operations, M-30  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

RE: DOCKET NUMBER FAA-2015-0150

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I would like to submit comments regarding the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), **Docket Number FAA-2015-0150**, published on February 23, 2015, in the Federal Register.

The RTC and NCTCOG Transportation Department staff work with all levels of government, elected officials, transportation partners, and the region's residents to plan coordinated transportation systems to meet mobility needs for the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Aviation is a major component of our transportation system both from a mobility and economic perspective. In a region with two Primary Commercial Service Airports, and eleven Reliever Airports, emerging Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) technology will need to be carefully considered.

In support of this topic, I have attached the following correspondence from NCTCOG staff and the Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee for further detail:

**Attachment 1:** NCTCOG Letter to the Federal Aviation Administration

**Attachment 2:** Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee Comments on Docket Number FAA-2015-0150

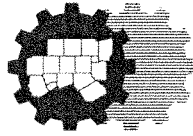
Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on proposed commercial operation of small UAS. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Mallonee, NCTCOG Aviation Program Lead, at [mmallonee@nctcog.org](mailto:mmallonee@nctcog.org) or (817) 704-2513.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Cantrell", is positioned above the printed name.

Mike Cantrell,  
Chair, Regional Transportation Council  
Commissioner, Dallas County, Texas

MWM:lk



## North Central Texas Council Of Governments

March 13, 2015

Mr. Scott Gore  
Congressional Liaison  
Government and Industry Affairs  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Mr. Gore:

RE: Planning Assistance for Unmanned Aircraft Integration in North Texas

We appreciate the time that you and Mr. Williams spent with us to discuss important issues relating to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) integration in North Texas. As you know, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is dedicated to supporting Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) efforts to safely incorporate UAS in the national airspace system, while also facilitating the development of this innovative technology. Subsequent to our conversation, the topic of UAS operations near airports was discussed with Secretary Foxx during the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation Housing and Urban Development hearing on February 26, 2015. Congresswoman Kay Granger again supported the need to address these concerns.

We feel we can help respond to the call for action by utilizing NCTCOG staff as an extension of the FAA mission. North Texas would be a model partner to provide valuable leadership which will be significant nationwide.

NCTCOG submitted a planning grant application to FAA's Office of Airports on August 4, 2014, to conduct technical analysis and address ongoing needs of the North Central Texas aviation system. Aligned with our discussion, we believe there is an opportunity to utilize our current proposal to:

- Facilitate local-level UAS model ordinances, land-use, and zoning control strategies
- Develop inventory and demand forecast for UAS activity in North Texas
- Create strategic public outreach, education, and communication campaign using social media and mobile technology
- Design and implement an integrated communication framework to assist tracking and reporting UAS activities to FAA
- Integrate aviation workforce and STEM education needs with the growing UAS industry

With your support, we are prepared to act quickly on these activities before Fiscal Year 2015 concludes. If awarded grant funding, we will leverage existing relationships with local governments, airport sponsors, industry stakeholders, and FAA's Texas UAS test site partners to accomplish the work. Additionally, we will monitor the progress of the upcoming FAA

Mr. Scott Gore  
Page Two

March 13, 2015

Reauthorization as well as recently introduced legislation pertaining to UAS (H.R. 1229 and S. 635).

As past Chair of the Transportation Research Board, Michael Morris has had an opportunity to work concurrently with Administrator Michael Huerta to advance the wellbeing of our federal transportation system. Please do not hesitate to suggest opportunities for NCTCOG to assist and provide support for a successful and expedited reauthorization process.

We look forward to continuing coordination efforts to accomplish complementary goals for UAS integration while protecting airports that are vital economic generators for the country. Please contact Mike Branum, UAS Projects Lead, at mbranum@nctcog.org or (817) 704-5642 with any questions or ideas you may have about ongoing collaboration and next steps.

Sincerely,



Michael Mallonee  
Principal Transportation Planner

MB:lk

cc: Jim Williams, Manager, Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Office, FAA  
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG  
Mike Branum, Transportation Planner, NCTCOG



## AIR TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE



April 23, 2015

Docket Operations, M-30  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

RE: DOCKET NUMBER FAA-2015-0150

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (ATTAC), which serves in an advisory capacity for regional aviation system planning matters to the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, I would like to submit comments regarding the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), Docket Number FAA-2015-0150, published on February 23, 2015, in the Federal Register.

We commend the FAA's work on this extremely complex issue concerning rapidly emerging technology in small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS). However, the industry is not standing idle while awaiting rulemaking. NCTCOG has been active in facilitating dialogue regarding the use of this technology in the vicinity of airports in North Texas. On April 1, 2015, ATTAC held a regional workshop to better understand the regulatory framework and considerations of this proposed rulemaking. The workshop was also meant to provide an open forum to discuss potential heightened airspace safety concerns and challenges for airport staff and law enforcement. It is in this context that we wish to submit general remarks for consideration by FAA in the rulemaking process.

- 1. Outreach and Education:** An understanding of aeronautical information is very important for sUAS operators and resources should be made available that are specific to regional or local airspace, airports, and best operating practices. Communication networks should be established to disseminate this information accordingly.
- 2. Critical Infrastructure:** In addition to certain airspace, consideration for critical infrastructure should be evaluated for commercial sUAS operations. Coordination with the Department of Homeland Security and State Emergency Response Plans should be conducted to ensure the protection of these assets from nefarious use of sUAS.
- 3. Operating Standards:** Consideration for operator requirements should be given for consistency with those operating within the realm of existing Certificate of Authorizations (COA). Most governmental entities that are currently approved to operate sUAS have more stringent requirements than proposed through this NPRM for commercial users.



April 23, 2015

**Operation Ceiling:** The current NPRM proposes a 500' operating ceiling. We ask that FAA clarify why this is inconsistent with existing regulation outlined in the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Section 334) and relevant FAA Advisory Circulars (AC 91-57) pertaining to model aircraft of similar operating requirements. A standard of 400' has also been communicated by the "Know Before You Fly" campaign.

4. **Air Traffic Control Permissions:** We ask that FAA clarify ATC permission procedures for the operation of sUAS in the vicinity of airports and consider local airport sponsors in the authorization process. The controlling air traffic authority of particular airspace can vary widely and direction is needed on how sUAS operators will be given the proper channels of communication when seeking approval.
5. **Operator Certification:** We concur with the recommendation to create an unmanned aircraft operator certificate with a specific sUAS rating. Consideration should also be given to the certification and safety standards of the aircraft being operated.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on proposed commercial operation of sUAS. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Mallonee, NCTCOG Aviation Program Lead, at [mmallonee@nctcog.org](mailto:mmallonee@nctcog.org) or (817) 704-2513.

Sincerely,



Quentin Hix, ATTAC Chair  
Director, Denton Enterprise Airport

MWM:lk



RECEIVED

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

APR 20 2015

**Interstate 35E (IH 35E) Widening  
From US 77 South of Waxahachie to US 77 North of Waxahachie  
CSJ: 0048-04-079**

TRANSPORTATION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will conduct a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, at the Waxahachie Civic Center, 2000 Civic Center Lane, Waxahachie, TX 75165. The purpose of the hearing is to present the planned improvements for Interstate 35E (IH 35E) from United States Highway (US) 77 south of Waxahachie to US 77 north of Waxahachie in Ellis County and to receive public comment. Displays will be available for viewing at 5:00pm with the formal hearing commencing at 7:00pm.

The proposed IH 35E project consists of an 11-mile long segment from US 77 south of Waxahachie to US 77 north of Waxahachie within the cities of Waxahachie and Red Oak, Ellis County, Texas. The proposed project would reconstruct and widen the IH 35E mainlanes from the existing four-lane facility to a six-lane facility. The existing facility consists of two travel lanes in each direction with four-foot wide inside shoulders, 10-foot wide outside shoulders, and a 32-foot wide center median. All proposed construction would occur within the existing right-of-way (ROW), which varies from 300 to 590 feet. No new ROW or easements (temporary or permanent) would be required. Seven bridge replacements within the limits of the project are proposed. Frontage road construction/reconstruction is not planned as part of the proposed project.

Maps and other drawings showing the proposed project's location and design will be displayed at the Public Hearing. Environmental documentation for the project will also be available for inspection at the hearing. Other information about the proposed project is on file and available for inspection Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm at the TxDOT Dallas District Office located at 4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, TX 75150 and the TxDOT Ellis County Area Office located at 124 FM 876, Waxahachie, TX 75167. This information will also be available online at [www.keepitmovingdallas.com](http://www.keepitmovingdallas.com) under Upcoming Public Hearing/Meeting.

All interested persons are invited to attend this Public Hearing. Verbal and written comments from the public regarding this project are requested and may be submitted for a period of 10 calendar days following the hearing. Written comments may be submitted either in person, or by mail to the TxDOT Dallas District Office, Mr. Jim Dobbins, 4777 East US Highway 80, Mesquite, TX 75150. All written comments must be postmarked on or before Friday, June 5, 2015 to be included in the official public hearing record.

The Public Hearing will be conducted in English. Persons interested in attending the hearing who have special communication or accommodation needs, or need an interpreter, are encouraged to contact the TxDOT Dallas District Public Information Office at (214) 320-6100. Requests should be made at least two working days prior to the Public Hearing. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate these needs. If you have general questions or concerns regarding the proposed project, you may contact Mr. Nelson Underwood, P.E. at (214) 320-6628.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project area being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.



## **AVISO DE REUNION PÚBLICA**

### **Interestatal 35E (IH 35E) Ampliación De US 77 Sur de Waxahachie a US 77 norte de Waxahachie CSJ: 0048-04-079**

El Departamento de Transporte de Texas (TxDOT) llevará a cabo una Reunión Pública el Martes, 26 de mayo 2015, en el Civic Center de Waxahachie, 2000 Civic Center Lane, Waxahachie, TX 75165. El propósito de la reunión es presentar las mejoras previstas para la Interestatal 35E (IH 35E) de Estados Unidos Carretera (US) 77 al sur de Waxahachie a US 77 al norte de Waxahachie en el condado de Ellis y recibir comentarios del público. Muestra estarán disponibles para su visualización a las 5:00 pm con la reunión formal que comienza a las 7:00 pm.

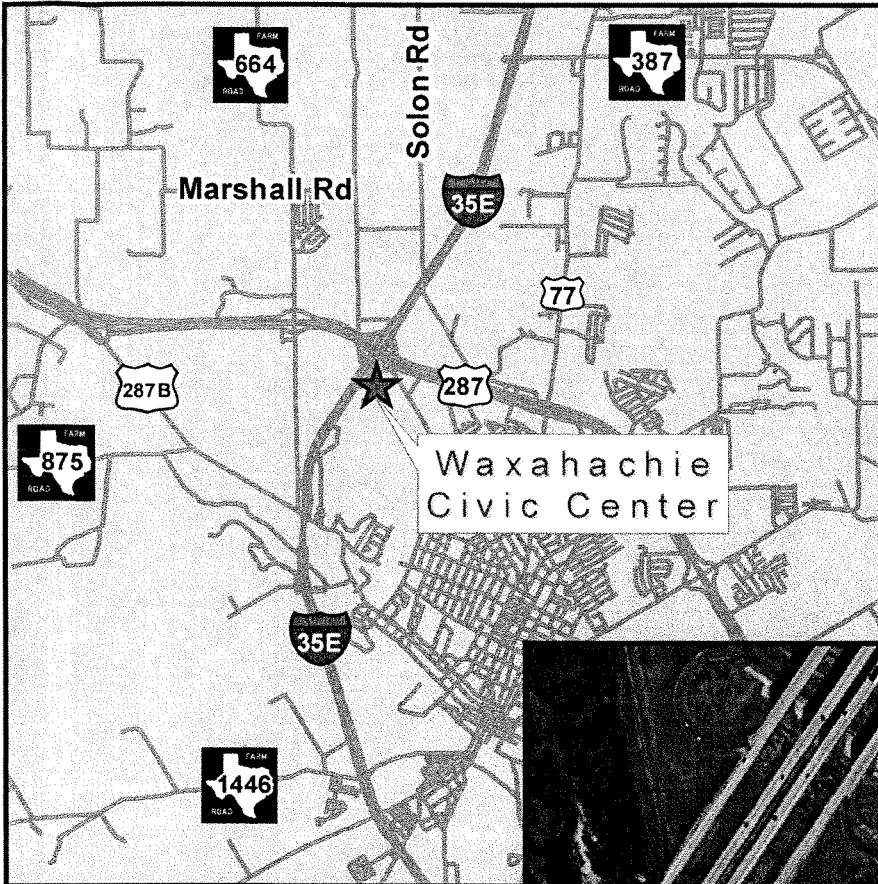
El proyecto IH 35E propuesto consiste en un segmento largo de 11 millas de la US 77 al sur de Waxahachie a US 77 al norte de Waxahachie dentro de las ciudades de Waxahachie y Red Oak, Ellis County, Texas. El proyecto propuesto reconstruir y ampliar los carriles principales IH 35E de la instalación de cuatro carriles existentes a una instalación de seis carriles. La instalación existente consta de dos carriles de circulación en cada sentido con anchos hombros de cuatro pies, dentro de 10 pies de ancho hombros externos y una mediana central de 32 pies. Todo proyecto de construcción ocurriría dentro del derecho de vía (ROW) existente, que varía desde 300 hasta 590 pies. No se necesitarían nueva fila o servidumbres (temporales o permanentes). Se proponen siete reemplazos de puentes dentro de los límites del proyecto. Frente a Calle de construcción / reconstrucción no está prevista como parte del proyecto propuesto.

Mapas y otros dibujos que muestran la ubicación y el diseño del proyecto propuesto se mostrará en la Reunión Pública. Documentación ambiental del proyecto también estará disponible para su consulta en la reunión. Más información sobre el proyecto propuesto se encuentra archivada y disponible para la inspección de lunes a viernes entre las 8:00 am y las 5:00 pm en la Oficina del Distrito de Dallas de TxDOT localizada en 4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, TX 75150 y el área del condado de Ellis TxDOT Oficina ubicada en 124 FM 876, Waxahachie, TX 75167. Esta información también estará disponible en línea en [www.keepitmovingdallas.com](http://www.keepitmovingdallas.com) bajo Próximas Audiencia Pública / Reunión.

Todas las personas interesadas están invitadas a asistir a ésta reunión pública. Comentarios del público con respecto a este proyecto son solicitados y serán aceptados por un período de 10 días después de la reunión. Los comentarios escritos pueden ser presentados ya sea en persona o por correo a la Oficina de TxDOT Dallas Distrito, el Sr. Jim Dobbins, 4777 East US Highway 80, Mesquite, TX 75150. Todos los comentarios escritos deben enviarse por correo a más tardar el Viernes, 05 de junio 2015 para ser incluido en el registro de la reunión pública oficial.

La reunión pública se llevará a cabo en Inglés. Las personas interesadas en asistir a la reunión que tienen necesidades de comunicación o especiales de alojamiento, o la necesidad de un intérprete se les anima a ponerse en contacto con el Distrito de la Oficina de Información Pública de TxDOT Dallas al (214) 320-6100. Las solicitudes deberán hacerse por lo menos dos días hábiles antes de la Reunión Pública. Se harán todos los esfuerzos razonables para dar cabida a estas necesidades. Si tiene preguntas generales o preocupaciones con respecto al proyecto propuesto, puede comunicarse con el Sr. Nelson Underwood, PE al (214) 320-6628.

La revisión ambiental, consultas y otras acciones requeridas por las leyes ambientales federales aplicables para esta área del proyecto siendo o han sido, llevado a cabo por TxDOT-en virtud de 23 USC 327 y un Memorando de Entendimiento de 16 de diciembre de 2014, y ejecutado por la FHWA y el TxDOT.



**Waxahachie Civic Center**

**IH 35E  
Public Hearing**

**Tuesday, May 26, 2015  
Open House 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Public Hearing Begins at 7:00 p.m.**

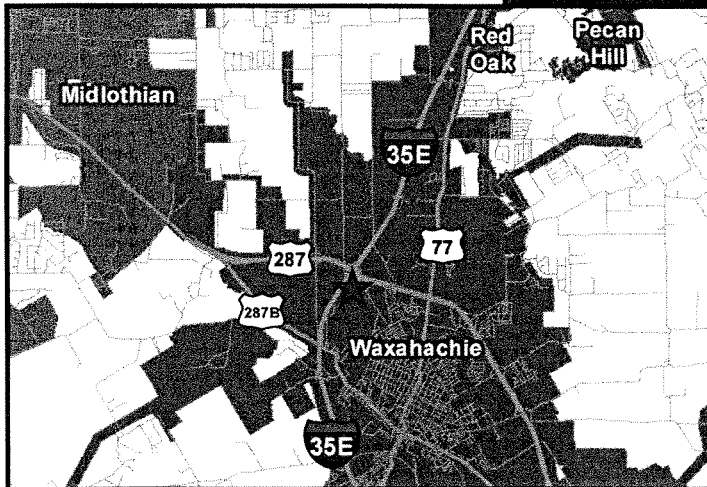
**DIRECTIONS:**

From Southbound IH 35E, take Exit 403 and continue towards US 287 South/ Corsicana exit following signage for the Waxahachie Civic Center Complex. Turn right on Sam George Drive and then right on John Arden Drive. John Arden Drive becomes Civic Center Lane. The Waxahachie Civic Center will be on the left (south side of Civic Center Lane).

From Northbound IH 35E, take Exit 403 to US 287/Corsicana/Ft. Worth. From the Service Road, follow signage for the Waxahachie Civic Center Complex/ Civic Center.

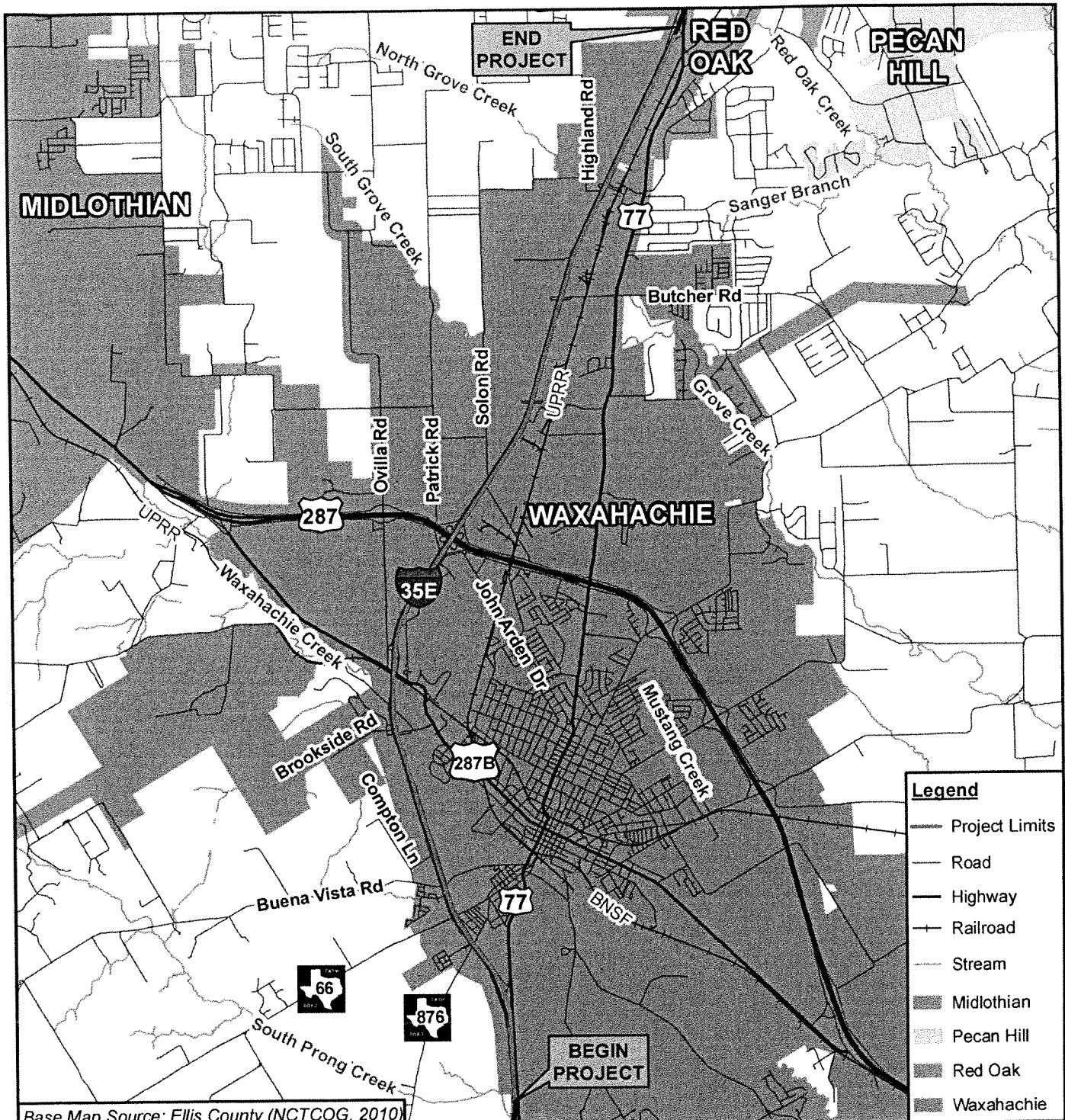


**Waxahachie  
Civic Center**



**Waxahachie Civic Center**  
2000 Civic Center Lane  
Waxahachie, Texas 75165

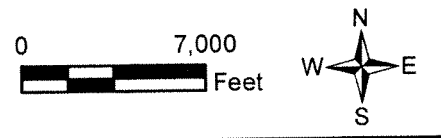
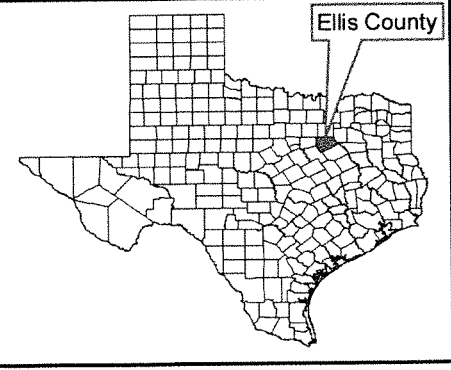
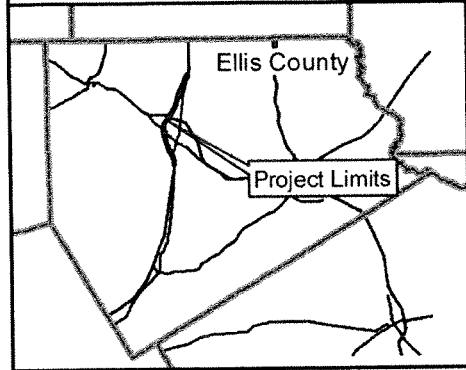




**Legend**

- Project Limits
- Road
- Highway
- Railroad
- Stream
- Midlothian
- Pecan Hill
- Red Oak
- Waxahachie

Base Map Source: Ellis County (NCTCOG, 2010)



**FIGURE 1  
PROJECT LOCATION**

I-35E  
FROM US 77 SOUTH OF WAXAHACHIE  
TO US 77 NORTH OF WAXAHACHIE

CSJ: 0048-04-079





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

April 13, 2015

Mr. Bill Hale, P.E.  
Director of Engineering Operations  
for Metropolitan Districts  
Texas Department of Transportation  
125 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Hale:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and Regional Transportation Council (RTC) continue to support the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) efforts to implement the Southern Gateway project on IH 35E and US 67 in southern Dallas County. We anticipate that the funding strategy for Southern Gateway may change over the coming months, due to encouraging legislation enhancing TxDOT revenues. Please see the attached table presented to the RTC. We encourage TxDOT to continue with the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, as we jointly finalize the funding solution.

As you know, the RTC is working closely with the State legislature to identify new transportation revenue sources. If successful, the current funding proposal will be changed to reflect the new funding options. Also, please keep in mind that the legislative policy/proposal under consideration may lead to the removal of the toll component for High Occupancy Vehicle users during the peak period.

Overall, this project could benefit from private sector input and an opportunity for economic development, so we support TxDOT's RFQ process. The RTC's commitment to Southern Gateway remains steady. Please contact me at (817) 695-9241 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

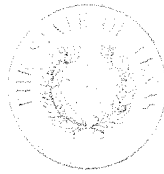
Michael Morris, P.E.  
Director of Transportation

CG:lp  
Attachment

cc: John Barton, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, TxDOT Austin  
Kelly Selman, P.E., District Engineer, TxDOT Dallas District



Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., *Chairman*  
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*  
Zak Covar, *Commissioner*  
Richard A. Hyde, P.E., *Executive Director*



## TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

*Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution*

April 8, 2015

Mr. Robert Tally  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration, Texas Division  
300 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 826  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Tally,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the documents comprising the *2014 Transportation Conformity Determination for the Dallas-Fort Worth Ten-County Nonattainment Area* submitted by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The purpose of this conformity analysis was to determine if the NCTCOG's *Mobility 2035: The Transportation Plan for North Central Texas – 2014 Amendment* and the *2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program for North Central Texas* are consistent with area emissions requirements for ozone. A ten-county area in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region is designated nonattainment for ozone: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise Counties.

In order for conformity to be demonstrated for the DFW ozone nonattainment area, projected ozone emissions from the amended transportation plan and transportation improvement program must be equal to or less than the applicable motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEB) for nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds (VOC), as required under Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 93. Regional transportation emissions were projected for analysis years 2014, 2018, 2028, and 2035 and then compared to the NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC MVEB established in the *Dallas-Fort Worth Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plan Revision for the 1997 Eight-Hour Ozone Standard*, which was approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) effective December 12, 2014.

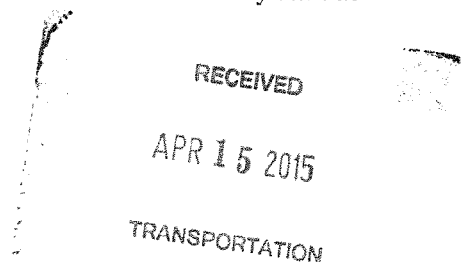
The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) air quality staff reviewed the transportation conformity determination documents. All issues were addressed and resolved in a series of consultative calls and e-mails with the NCTCOG, the Federal Highway Administration, EPA, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the TCEQ.

The TCEQ is satisfied that all requirements have been met and transportation conformity has been demonstrated. If you have any questions about our review, please contact Jamie Zech of my staff at 512-239-3935 or [jamie.zech@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jamie.zech@tceq.texas.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Brymer".

David Brymer, Director  
Air Quality Division



P.O. Box 13087 • Austin, Texas 78711-3087 • 512-239-1000 • [tceq.texas.gov](http://tceq.texas.gov)

How is our customer service? [tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey](http://tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey)

Printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable-based ink.

Cc: Mr. Jose Campos, Federal Highway Administration  
Ms. Barbara Maley, Federal Highway Administration  
Mr. Guy Donaldson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Jeffrey Riley, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Carlos Swonke, Texas Department of Transportation  
Mr. Marc D. Williams, Texas Department of Transportation  
Ms. Michelle Conkle, Texas Department of Transportation  
Ms. Jackie Ploch, Texas Department of Transportation  
Mr. Tim Juarez, Texas Department of Transportation  
Mr. Michael Morris, North Central Texas Council of Governments  
Ms. Jenny Narvaez, North Central Texas Council of Governments



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

April 3, 2015

The Honorable Cindy Burkett  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Representative Burkett:

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 continued leadership on transportation and air quality issues in the Texas Legislature.

The RTC would like to express support for House Bill 735, which establishes a program to collect information on the number of alternatively fueled vehicles (AFVs) registered in Texas. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is responsible for implementing a large number of control strategies that support the DFW 8-Hour Ozone Attainment Demonstration State Implementation Plan. In order to support this work, NCTCOG regularly utilizes registration data to understand trends and impacts of AFV use and ownership. HB 735 would help to support the efforts of the NCTCOG.

Collecting the number of AFVs registered in Texas will help to better implement fuel-specific impacts into emissions inventories, improve forecasting transportation system revenue, and help support long-range planning goals and performance measures. NCTCOG also houses the DFW Clean Cities Coalition, part of the national Clean Cities program under the US Department of Energy (DOE). The bill would help the program improve alternative fuel education, infrastructure planning and annual surveys. Finally, identification of AFVs would help streamline compliance with the requirement in HB 2305 (83R) that calls for proof of inspection for compressed natural gas containers prior to issuing a passing vehicle inspection report.

In December 2014, NCTCOG sent a letter to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles outlining the key benefits associated with collecting fuel type as part of registration data; the letter is attached for your reference. Again, the RTC appreciates the opportunity to provide support for HB 735 and thanks you for your valuable service to the State of Texas. Feel free to contact me or Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), at (817) 695-9241 or [mmorris@nctcog.org](mailto:mmorris@nctcog.org).

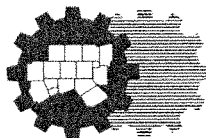
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Cantrell", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mike Cantrell  
Chair, Regional Transportation Council  
Commissioner, Dallas County

RH:ch  
Attachment

cc: Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

December 5, 2014

Ms. Whitney Brewster  
Executive Director  
Texas Department of Motor Vehicles  
4000 Jackson Avenue  
Austin, TX 78731

Dear Ms. Brewster

Subject: Request for Modification of Vehicle Registration Data to Capture Fuel Type

As part of the Regional Transportation Council's (RTC) legislative program for the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature to integrate and enforce all driving requirements, the RTC actively supported House Bill 2305 establishing a single certificate program for vehicle registration and inspection. The RTC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area; a membership roster is provided in Attachment 1. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) understands that as a result of changes required by House Bill (HB) 2305, various revisions are currently being made to the existing vehicle registration system. As staff to the RTC, NCTCOG wishes to take this opportunity to request that data regarding vehicle fuel type also be added to this system.

NCTCOG is responsible for implementing a large number of control strategies that support the DFW 8-Hour Ozone Attainment Demonstration State Implementation Plan (SIP), which includes activities aimed at supporting the State's Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program as well as the adoption of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). In order to support this work, NCTCOG regularly utilizes registration data to understand trends and impacts of AFV use and ownership. The limited information available regarding fuel type makes analyses complicated. Market penetration of AFVs is expected to increase as a result of improved availability, expansion of incentive programs, and economic dynamics.

NCTCOG has outlined the following key benefits associated with collecting fuel type as part of registration data:

**Implementing Fuel-Specific Impacts into Emissions Inventories**

Current on-road emission inventories (EIs) utilize the latest Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) modeling system for calculation of mobile emissions. This model accommodates fuel type as an input variable for on-road EI development, which is based upon registration data for vehicles in the nonattainment area. Because all vehicles are currently registered as either gasoline or diesel, these are the only fuel types currently used in the MOVES model. This does not allow for on-road EIs to reflect reduced criteria pollutant and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with market penetration of AFVs. As these emissions reductions will become increasingly important to developing EIs for the SIP and for passing Transportation Conformity, inclusion of fuel type as part of the vehicle

registration system will provide much-needed data to ensure EIs accurately capture emissions reductions associated with AFV use.

### **Forecasting Transportation System Revenue**

Capturing AFV adoption can allow for increased accuracy in future transportation revenue forecasting. With the growing demand to maintain revenue streams for transportation infrastructure, and the increase in adoption of viable AFV options, a more robust data set is becoming increasingly important. For example, as electric vehicles do not currently contribute revenue to the transportation system through the fuel tax, understanding the number and typical mileage for these vehicles will further assist in forecasting future revenue. In addition, use of natural gas vehicles (NGVs) for various industries is gaining momentum. These two examples underscore the need to monitor market penetration in order to optimize revenue planning scenarios affected by the growth of alternative fuel types.

### **Supporting Long-Range Planning Goals and Performance Measures**

As Congress has dictated increased use of performance measures in long-range transportation planning, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has developed a planning tool known as INVEST to help regional agencies such as NCTCOG evaluate how long-range plans are performing with regard to various performance measures. FHWA has included an "Energy and Fuels" category for performance measures, which includes several elements related to market penetration of AFVs, use of alternative fuel types, and other similar measures. Without fuel type data associated with vehicles registered in the State of Texas, agencies' ability to track and monitor results associated with these performance measures is greatly limited.

### **Supporting Clean Cities Coalition Activities**

NCTCOG houses the DFW Clean Cities Coalition, which is one of four coalitions in Texas that support the national Clean Cities (CC) program under the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). This program seeks to reduce petroleum consumption by providing support, through local CC coalitions, for AFV adoption and education. By incorporating fuel type into registration data, coalitions will be better equipped in two key functions:

**Alternative Fuel Education and Infrastructure Planning:** Inclusion of fuel type information in registration data will allow for geographic distribution of AFVs to be analyzed. This will help CC coalitions identify potential AFV education gaps to help ensure that additional outreach and education efforts are targeted at the audiences with the most need. It will also help coalitions quickly identify potential gaps in refueling infrastructure and work with stakeholder organizations to ensure that additional facilities are placed appropriately to support new market demand.

**Clean Cities Annual Survey Completion:** Each year, the DOE requires each local coalition to complete detailed information regarding AFV adoption in the coalitions' respective regions. This information is used in speeches, reports, news articles, as well as funding updates to the State Energy Program, Congress, and White House. It is critical to supporting decisions regarding program status and funding levels during federal budget development and appropriations processes. Currently, each coalition is forced to rely upon

December 5, 2014

voluntary reporting by its stakeholder fleets in order to compile this information for the DOE. Inclusion of fuel type in state registration data would allow coalitions to do simple queries to identify number, ownership, and mileage of AFVs in their respective regions to complete this annual requirement in a more streamlined and reliable manner.

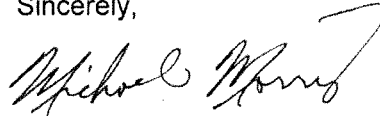
**Complying with HB 2305 Requirements for Natural Gas Cylinder Inspection**

Identification of NGVs will be critical for streamlined compliance with the new requirement in HB 2305 Section 548.104, which requires proof of inspection for compressed natural gas containers in accordance with 49 C.F.R. Section 571.304 prior to issuing a passing vehicle inspection report. The bill lacks language requiring that NGVs be identified at the time of registration, but by adding fuel type to registration data, inspectors will easily and reliably be able to identify vehicles which are subject to the new requirement.

To streamline data collection, NCTCOG recommends utilizing a pre-defined list of possible fuel types rather than allowing free-form entry. Several other states already capture fuel type in their registration systems and can likely provide valuable insight on the best manner in which to collect and maintain this information. NCTCOG has compiled a possible listing of potential fuel types based on existing DOE tools, which is included for reference as Attachment 2.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. NCTCOG looks forward to continued partnership with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, and staff is happy to assist with this item any way possible. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager at 817-695-9286 or cklaus@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.  
Director of Transportation

LPC:mg  
Attachments

cc: Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments



## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Regional Transportation Council**

**Mike Cantrell, Chair**  
Commissioner  
Dallas County

**Mark Riley, Vice Chair**  
County Judge  
Parker County

**Ron Jensen, Secretary**  
Mayor  
City of Grand Prairie

**Douglas Athas**  
Mayor  
City of Garland

**Brian Barth, P.E.**  
District Engineer  
TxDOT, Fort Worth District

**Ron Brown**  
Commissioner  
Ellis County

**Sheri Capehart**  
Councilmember  
City of Arlington

**Rudy Durham**  
Councilmember  
City of Lewisville

**Andy Eads**  
Commissioner  
Denton County

**Charles Emery**  
Board Chair  
Denton County Transportation  
Authority

**Mark Enoch**  
Board Member  
Dallas Area Rapid Transit

**Gary Fickes**  
Commissioner  
Tarrant County

**Rob Franke, P.E.**  
Mayor  
City of Cedar Hill

**Sandy Greyson**  
Councilmember  
City of Dallas

**Mojoy Haddad**  
Board Member  
North Texas Tollway Authority

**Bill Hale, P.E.**  
Director of Engineering  
Operations for Metro Districts  
Interim District Engineer  
TxDOT, Dallas District

**Roger Harmon**  
County Judge  
Johnson County

**Vonciel Jones Hill**  
Councilmember  
City of Dallas

**Clay Lewis Jenkins**  
County Judge  
Dallas County

**Jungus Jordan**  
Councilmember  
City of Fort Worth

**Sheffie Kadane**  
Councilmember  
City of Dallas

**Geralyn Kever**  
Councilmember  
City of McKinney

**Lee Kleinman**  
Councilmember  
City of Dallas

**Stephen Lindsey**  
Councilmember  
City of Mansfield

**Laura Maczka**  
Mayor  
City of Richardson

**David Magness**  
Commissioner  
Rockwall County

**Scott Mahaffey**  
Board Chair  
Fort Worth Transportation  
Authority

**Matthew Marchant**  
Mayor  
City of Carrollton

**Maher Maso**  
Mayor  
City of Frisco

**John Monaco**  
Mayor  
City of Mesquite

**Kevin Roden**  
Councilmember  
City of Denton

**Amir Rupani**  
Citizen Representative  
City of Dallas

**Danny Scarth**  
Councilmember  
City of Fort Worth

**Lissa Smith**  
Mayor Pro Tem  
City of Plano

**Mike Taylor**  
Mayor Pro Tem  
City of Colleyville

**Stephen Terrell**  
Mayor  
City of Allen

**T. Oscar Trevino Jr., P.E.**  
Mayor  
City of North Richland Hills

**William Velasco, II**  
Citizen Representative  
City of Dallas

**Oscar Ward**  
Councilmember  
City of Irving

**Bernice J. Washington**  
Board Member  
Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

**Duncan Webb**  
Commissioner  
Collin County

**B. Glen Whitley**  
County Judge  
Tarrant County

**Kathryn Wilemon**  
Mayor Pro Tem  
City of Arlington

**Zim Zimmerman**  
Councilmember  
City of Fort Worth

**ATTACHMENT 2**

**Potential Pre-Defined List of Fuel Types<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Fuel Types</b>	<b>Recommended Abbreviation</b>
<b>All Vehicles</b>	
Gasoline	G
Diesel	D
Flex-Fuel Gasoline	E85
All-Electric Vehicle	EV
Propane	LPG
Compressed Natural Gas	CNG
Bi-Fuel Gasoline/Compressed Natural Gas	G/CNG
Bi-Fuel Diesel/Compressed Natural Gas	D/CNG
<b>Additional Options for Light-Duty Vehicles Only</b>	
Gasoline Hybrid Electric Vehicle	GHEV
Gasoline Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle	PHEV
Gasoline Extended Range Electric Vehicle	EREV
<b>Additional Options for Heavy-Duty Vehicles Only</b>	
Diesel Hybrid Electric Vehicle	DHEV
Diesel Hydraulic Hybrid	HHV
Liquefied Natural Gas	LNG

<sup>1</sup> Based Largely on U.S. Department of Energy's Alternative Fuel Life-Cycle Environmental and Economic Transportation (AFLEET) Tool. <https://greet.es.anl.gov/afleet>

# Michael Morris: It's critical to remember where toll road fits into overall Trinity plan

By MICHAEL MORRIS

Published: 12 April 2015 07:21 PM

Updated: 12 April 2015 10:59 PM

Three items about the Trinity Parkway project are critical to remember. First, it is part of the Balanced Vision Plan that has five parts — not four. Second, we are planning for the next 25-plus years, and the region has added, and will continue to add, 1 million people per decade. And third, the most critical benefit of the Trinity Parkway is flood protection.

Eliminating transportation from the corridor would ignore demographic change and eliminate flood protection benefits, and therefore it would be a mistake.

The Trinity Parkway project is a component of the Balanced Vision Plan that includes improvements for flood protection, recreation, environmental restoration, economic development and mobility. The roadway also is an important element that complements and enhances all other components.

The proposed roadway placement enhances the eastern-northern levee, provides funding for park access, reduces congestion, increases reliability, provides funding for a signature pedestrian overlook and enhances accessibility for economic development opportunities in and surrounding downtown Dallas.

For context, the proposed Trinity Parkway project would be a toll road to serve as the managed lanes for the Interstate 35E and Interstate 30 downtown canyon corridors.

Plans are to build the project in stages, with construction of four lanes, as specified in the original Balanced Vision Plan. With significant increases in population and employment offset by changes in vehicle technology, it is anticipated that these lanes can be maintained for the foreseeable future.

Also for context, consider that the region has added 1 million people per decade since 1960 and anticipates nearly 4 million more by 2040. Current and future trends indicate

that areas near downtown will receive a significant redistribution and share of this growth and, with it, additional congestion.

The state publishes a list of the Top 100 congested roadways in Texas, and both the Legislature and Texas Transportation Commission have a strong expectation that public agencies will address these needs. In 2014, I-35E between State Highway 183 and I-30 and I-30 between I-35E and Loop 12 East are listed as the fifth- and 19th-most-congested road segments, respectively. The Trinity Parkway project addresses both of these corridors.

Highway speeds, observed in February 2014 — prior to major construction on the Horseshoe project — show commuter peak period traffic going less than 20 mph on I-35E. The speeds along I-30 in the Canyon are similar, and congested speeds exist for most of the midday period. This is because the current network lacks options and is outdated. Go to the I-30 canyon and take a look.

High-congestion locations lead to higher accident frequency, which reduces reliability and increases frustration when actual travel time doesn't meet expectations. As contained in the environmental document submitted for federal review, these I-35E and I-30 sections have accident rates two to three times the state average.

The Trinity Parkway project would reduce these congestion levels. That, in turn, would reduce accident frequency, improve safety and enhance reliability and accessibility.

The Trinity Parkway, as a toll road, is anticipated to accommodate 120,000 vehicles per day in 2035. This project draws its traffic from I-35E, I-30 and parallel traffic arteries in and near downtown Dallas. These drivers are willing to pay a toll to avoid congestion.

The Trinity Parkway project would connect State Highway 183 northwest of downtown to U.S. 175 southeast of downtown. This new inner loop would improve overall freeway speeds 5 mph, or about 15 percent, in the downtown area.

The environmental assessment submitted for federal approval estimated a 2 mph benefit, but this represents a worst case for congestion improvement. That assessment took into account the effect of the new route options for drivers, such as opportunities to reach new workplaces, shopping or other service destinations. These behaviors often take decades to occur. However, the estimate assumed they would take place

overnight and all at once. It is the most conservative estimate, which we are required to submit for air-quality purposes.

Our 5 mph estimate represents a more realistic outcome as driver behavior — the routes drivers take, the destinations they choose — changes over time.

In conclusion, we can determine that the Trinity Parkway project would shoulder approximately 10-20 percent of the traffic in the parallel corridors.

The direct benefit of just the parkway is about 50,000 fewer vehicle-hours of delay for a typical weekday. This translates into a benefit of over \$300 million per year to drivers. Most of this is due to reduced congestion, with a significant portion from reduced traffic-signal delay. The project results in a benefit-to-cost ratio approaching 5-to-1.

The Trinity Parkway meets and exceeds the principles in the Balanced Vision Plan. It helps achieve the other components of the plan. It does not ignore, but rather embraces, the significant demographic growth to the region, Dallas County, the Dallas central business district and surrounding neighborhoods. And lastly, it adds accessibility to new destinations for employment, shopping and services.

*Michael Morris is the transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Reach him at [mmorris@nctcog.org](mailto:mmorris@nctcog.org).*

## **Compromise offered to retain tolled component for LBJ East project**

By RAY LESZCZYNSKI rleszcynski@dallasnews.com

Staff Writer

Published: 09 April 2015 10:47 PM

Updated: 09 April 2015 11:42 PM

ARLINGTON — To get the \$2.4 billion LBJ East project funded by a Legislature that's reluctant to build toll roads, the Regional Transportation Council pushed forward a trade Thursday.

It asks the Legislature to approve LBJ Freeway expansion over the 11.8 miles from Central Expressway to Interstate 30 as a comprehensive development agreement. In return, the region likely will lose two already approved CDAs. There are three possibilities: the Southern Gateway project along Interstate 35E and U.S. Highway 67, Loop 9 through southern Dallas County and Loop 820 in Tarrant County.

CDAs are public-private partnerships that require legislative approval and lead to faster construction, albeit with a tolled component.

Garland Mayor Douglas Athas said there is no way the state would, or should, dedicate most of its available budget to any one freeway. But he said a "pay as you go" approach on the massive LBJ East project would be devastating. Athas said his city is still reeling from the 8- to 10-year rebuild of its Interstate 30 corridor.

"If we do that on 635, we will leave 635 and everything on it as a dead zone," Athas said. "It's a mega project. The only way we can do it is with managed lanes."

Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins was quick to point out that the two givebacks most likely in play are in southern Dallas County. The Southern Gateway project would reduce congestion along Interstate 35E and U.S. Highway 67. Loop 9 is planned to eventually connect cities in the southern part of the county.

### **Trading**

Jenkins said the offer to trade something in southern Dallas County for the benefit of northern Dallas County is pretty much in line with 70 years of history.

"CDAs authorized in southern Dallas County have some value. If it doesn't have value, we wouldn't have fought for it and won it for southern Dallas County," he said.

Dallas City Council Member Vonciel Jones Hill approved the plan on the premise that although funding was different for the Southern Gateway, that project would be funded and would remain first in line.

A toll concessionaire had already been ruled out for the Southern Gateway, North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Director Michael Morris said.

With the transportation revenue being projected in the Legislature, Morris said, Loop 9 can proceed on its projected pace without tolls. In fact, anticipated increases in revenue sources paved the way for the other portion of the deal — allowing vehicles with two or more occupants free use of managed toll lanes at peak hours.

Currently, the user pays half those tolls. The RTC pays the other half. The staff believes that picking up the full tab would encourage car pooling. It would also simplify an HOV tolling system that was put in place only because of the revenue shortfalls, Morris said.

## Late unveiling

Jenkins and the two other members who voted against what was labeled the Grand DFW Tolloed Managed Lane Compromise also were upset about the timing. While Athas, RTC chairman Mike Cantrell and staff had a hand in crafting the deal, most other members found out about it at the meeting.

Jenkins noted that the cities along the projected Loop 9 route — Wilmer, Lancaster, DeSoto — weren't at the table. He asked whether anyone would swap the area's third already approved CDA, Loop 820 in Tarrant County, to benefit Garland.

Morris admitted the late unveiling was intentional, to protect the committee members from being inundated by calls and media inquiries before they had a chance to be briefed by staff. The pending action on highway funding at the state and federal levels forced the immediate action, he said.

Athas reminded the group that the compromise was not between members, but between the RTC and a legislature that threatens to take away tolls as a road-building tool.

“This benefits Rowlett, Fate, Greenville, Forney — all of it,” the Garland mayor said. “It is very important we get this done and get this done quickly. If we don't do this today, 635 is done. It will not get a CDA in the future if the Legislature continues the way it is going now.”



## Downtown-Oak Cliff streetcar debuts with speeches, curious riders

By ROY APPLETON [rappleton@dallasnews.com](mailto:rappleton@dallasnews.com)

Staff Writer

Published: 13 April 2015 11:20 PM

Updated: 14 April 2015 07:18 AM

What a start.

With the toot of a horn, its maiden run began three minutes early, at 8:57 Monday morning.

Seconds later, the new Dallas streetcar hit something.

No problem. As scripted, operator Rubin Lowder eased the rumbling vehicle through a blue ribbon stretched across its path.

People packed inside the glassy car clapped as it passed a flock of photographers toward the first stop.

And there, under a white tent, speakers offered praise and perspective about the city's latest twist on mass transit — streetcar service between downtown and north Oak Cliff via the Houston Street viaduct.

"Welcome to Oak Cliff, Texas," City Council member Scott Griggs told a crowd of about 100 public officials, project leaders and others.

"The weather is just absolutely perfect for this," he said, referencing the overcast sky and a model for success. "Wouldn't you know it. Once you get a streetcar you import Portland weather."

In his remarks, Gary Thomas, chief executive of Dallas Area Rapid Transit, hailed the operation's potential for "connecting people and places. It's all about quality of life."

Official speeches and thank-you's out of the way, public rides began just before noon Monday. Beginning Tuesday, the free service will run from 5 a.m. to 7:15 p.m. weekdays.

More than five years in the making, the 1.6-mile line stretches from near Union Station downtown to the intersection of Beckley Avenue and Colorado Boulevard, near Methodist Dallas Medical Center.

A group of Oak Cliff leaders — including Luis Salcedo, Jason Roberts and Griggs before his council election — laid the project's foundation as members of the Oak Cliff Transit Authority.

"It's hard to believe," said Roberts, standing in the aisle during the roll-out ride.

A \$23 million federal stimulus grant in February 2010 brought the city, DART and the North Central Texas Council of Governments together as project partners. The city owns the line, DART will operate it and the council of governments has been the funding conduit.

An additional \$3 million in stimulus money, the allocation of regional toll-road revenue and other funding covered what has become a \$50 million investment, with plans for expansion.

Extensions south to near the Bishop Arts District and east to near the Omni Dallas Hotel and the Dallas Convention Center await official approval. The DART board is expected to vote on a construction contract for the Bishop Arts leg April 28. Longer term plans call for linking the line with the McKinney Avenue Trolley, connecting Uptown and Bishop Arts.

"I'm thrilled, but I'm more excited about the extensions," Keith Manoy, the city's streetcar project leader, said before climbing aboard Monday morning. Now that the system's first phase is finished, he is retiring.

The Houston Street bridge, closed since March 2013 for the streetcar project, will reopen to Oak Cliff-bound vehicles in June after months of repairs. The nearby Jefferson Boulevard viaduct then will return to one-way traffic into downtown. That's the latest word from City Hall.

The Houston bridge opened 103 years ago with an hourlong parade of horse-drawn buggies, carriages and motor-powered vehicles.

The bridge now has its first set of steel rails. But the regular streetcar parade won't bring much physical change to the historic span.

Two 550-volt batteries will power the project's U.S.-made cars across the bridge. No need for the overhead lines that will electrify the vehicles elsewhere along the route. The fleet includes two \$4.5 million cars, but only one will provide service at a time.

The bridge celebration in February 1912 included booming guns, singing children and 16 maids of honor releasing homing pigeons to flight.

The gathering Monday morning, near the site of those long-ago festivities, included no such fun, not even a champagne toast.

Trips Monday afternoon, running eight to nine minutes one way, attracted a number of riders checking out the operation and the passing scenes.

Two guys from Oak Cliff ventured into downtown to drink beer.

Rob Shearer, his daughter Kristy Shearer and their friend Bo Bartlett rode in to have lunch.

"It's cool," said Kristy. "It's fast and it's bumpy."

Tom Gray walked from his Oak Cliff home to the line's end at Colorado and Beckley.

"I decided to ride it just to see what it does," he said. "I helped pay for it."

Joe Whitaker, with a camera around his neck, took a DART train downtown from northeast Dallas and walked to the streetcar stop for an exploratory return to Oak Cliff, where he grew up.

"I'll probably come over once a week or two. I like to get out," he said.

Cliff Cornette, who lives near the streetcar line in Oak Cliff, said its proximity to Union Station and DART's light rail service was good news.

"This will be great because it hooks up with the train system," he said. "I'm selling my car.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/best-southwest/headlines/20150413-downtown-oak-cliff-streetcar-debuts-with-speeches-curious-riders.ece>

## Proposed laws would limit cities' annexation powers

By Caty Hirst  
chirst@star-telegram.com  
04/13/2015 4:35 PM  
04/13/2015 5:01 PM

FORT WORTH – Bill and Toni Biggerstaff loved living in the county, and if they had a choice, they would have kept it that way.

But when it came time to be annexed into Fort Worth, the Biggerstoffs and other families in the 109-home neighborhood sandwiched between Keller and Fort Worth had little power to stop it.

They signed a petition; they argued against annexation at the City Council meeting, pointing out the additional \$3,000 a year in taxes they would incur, despite the already-stretched-thin city services in the far north, such as longer police call times and a lack of parkland.

Despite their efforts, the Fort Worth council voted unanimously in August to bring the neighborhood into the city.

“We went down to the City Council, and I found that to be humiliating, too,” Bill Biggerstaff said. “You go to the meeting and you have your time to stand up there and say your piece and then once everyone is done — the decision has already been made. It is painfully obvious the decision has already been made.”

City officials said they needed to annex the neighborhood to provide clear city boundaries for police and firefighters, and residents were already taking advantage of city services built around them, like roads, without paying the city tax rate.

Still, Biggerstaff said, city officials didn't listen to their concerns, which included the residents being forced to take ownership of Fort Worth's debt obligations, which they couldn't vote on.

State Sen. Konni Burton, R-Colleyville, who shares those concerns, has filed three bills in the Legislature to limit cities' annexation powers.

“Cities have the right to grow and expand, but we also have to look to the rights of those who live outside the cities and their opportunity to have a choice in that annexation or the right to perhaps go another way,” said Art Martinez Devara, Burton's chief of staff.

The bills are meant to correct “perceived unfairness in the system and looking at ways to balance the two interests,” he said.

The first bill filed, Senate Bill 456, would limit all cities' extraterritorial jurisdictions — the land outside the city that city officials are allowed to be annexed — to half a mile from the city limits. Large cities like Fort Worth have an extraterritorial jurisdiction of 5 miles.

Mayor Betsy Price said the bill is “very troubling” and would especially affect Fort Worth, where several large developments are planned in its extraterritorial jurisdiction, including 1,755 acres in south Fort Worth owned by the Walton Group of Cos. About half of that property is in the extraterritorial jurisdiction, and the city plans to annex it as it is developed.

“We are not just doing annexation for the sake of annexation,” Price said. “We have a very good annexation policy and the vast majority of what we are doing now is owner-initiated.”

John Vick, president of Walton Development and Management, said in an email that a large extraterritorial jurisdiction is important to plan for growth in a “predictable, cohesive manner.”

“The potential effect of the passage of SB456 with respect to Walton’s holdings in Fort Worth is uncertain. But in general, I think it’s important for large, fast-growing cities such as Fort Worth to be able to proactively manage growth,” Vick said.

SB615 would eliminate cities’ abilities to impose limited annexation, which gives cities the right to regulate the zoning, planning, and health and safety ordinances in the area without providing services.

SB616 would enable residents in an area set to be annexed to petition to avoid annexation and instead create a general-law municipality.

Laws that would give residents more say in the process would help, Bill Biggerstaff said, and giving residents in an extraterritorial jurisdiction an alternative to annexation might encourage cities to sweeten the pot.

“There should be a way to be treated like adults, and have a say in it. There is no definitive or quantifiable criteria for avoiding annexation. You can scream, you can cry, you can get 100 percent of the homeowners to sign a petition. ... And it is going to happen whether you want it or not,” he said.

### **‘Two-sided coin’**

Councilman Danny Scarth, who made the motion to annex the Biggerstaffs’ neighborhood and was part of an annexation himself, said he understands that residents want more say, and he thinks they should be able to delay the process but ultimately not stop it.

“It really is a two-sided coin for me,” Scarth said. “I certainly understand people’s desire to not have someone essentially forcibly annex them. But from the city’s standpoint, I also get why we need to be able to annex, particularly in enclaves, just for efficiency in service.”

Disputes involving annexation are not new to Fort Worth, which has pulled in hundreds of acres at a time since the early 2000s and faced accusations that it forced people to pay city taxes only to receive poor or limited city services.

Toni Biggerstaff, an avid runner, exercises in the area often and used to see Tarrant County sheriff’s deputies as they patrolled the streets. She said she felt safe.

Since the neighborhood was annexed, she said, she hasn’t seen a Fort Worth police car on her runs.

“I just don’t have that same feeling of safety,” she said.

But Price said the city in recent years has re-examined how it annexes and now proceeds with annexation only on owner-initiated properties and properties that present a public-safety issue. The city must also provide services like police and fire as soon as areas are annexed.

None of the bills have cleared committee deliberations.

<http://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/community/fort-worth/article18430790.html>

## Texas Senate panel backs bill to put a stop to red-light cameras

By TOM BENNING [Follow @tombenning](#) [tbenning@dallasnews.com](mailto:tbenning@dallasnews.com)

Austin Bureau

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AUSTIN — Red-light cameras in Dallas and many other North Texas cities would be brought to a stop under legislation approved Monday by the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill, by Sen. Bob Hall, R-Canton, would outlaw future camera programs. And in time, it would halt cities that already have such cameras.

Red-light cameras, which are well-liked by law enforcement but largely despised by drivers, have long been debated.

A cavalcade of police officials — from Denton, Grand Prairie, Plano and elsewhere — said such cameras change driver behavior and reduce crashes.

But other people questioned the cameras' safety benefit and argued they are just municipal revenue generators.

Although Hall and others acknowledged the law enforcement view, the committee voted 5-0 to send the bill to the full Senate.

"The public has expressed great opposition to the growing practice of unmanned, automatic-controlled traffic cameras," Hall said.

Red-light cameras — and the accompanying \$75 fines — have been controversial since their start in Texas in the early 2000s.

Some object to the idea of being cited, albeit for a civil ticket, when a police officer isn't there to witness the violation. Others don't like that cities such as Dallas can still report unpaid fines to a credit bureau, because of a loophole in state law.

Some charge that the cameras, which are operated by third-party vendors, are an invasion of privacy. Still others are stunned to find out that only a small amount of the state's cut of the fines has reached its intended destination: regional trauma centers.

And some Texas cities — Arlington could be next — have seen their residents vote to outlaw red-light cameras.

There have been "landslide victories of people saying, 'Remove these cameras from our streets,'" said Kelly Canon, an Arlington resident who has helped push a May ballot proposition to ban the cameras in that city.

Camera supporters counter that some concerns are unwarranted. Police officials said, for instance, that sworn officers review each violation and that dreaded "right-on-red" tickets are issued only when drivers exceed a certain speed while making such turns.



More than anything, though, law enforcement officials are adamant that red-light cameras improve public safety.

Even though some scientific studies cast doubts on the cameras' effectiveness, police officials outlined internal data from their departments that showed reductions in the number of crashes. They also noted that the number of tickets given has dropped over time, suggesting a change in driver behavior.

And they pointed out that the millions of dollars that cities receive in red-light camera revenue go to pay for safety improvements, including improved crosswalks and better street lighting.

"We really do believe that these cameras make our intersections safer," Plano Assistant Police Chief Gay Schaffer said.

Hall and others pressed law enforcement to improve road safety through nonpunitive measures, such as extending the length of yellow lights. And under Hall's bill, they would have no other choice — eventually, at least.

The proposal would prevent cities from starting red-light camera programs. It also would target existing programs through a clause that appears to allow cities to operate such systems only until their contracts with camera vendors expire.

That could be years, in some cases. And some red-light camera opponents asked lawmakers to make the ban more immediate.

"It's a good start," said Byron Schirmbeck, Texas coordinator for the Campaign for Liberty. "But I don't believe it goes far enough."

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/state-politics/20150413-texas-senate-panel-backs-bill-to-put-a-stop-to-red-light-cameras.ece>

## Texas high-speed-rail plan on collision course with opposition

By Gordon Dickson  
gdickson@star-telegram.com  
04/15/2015 5:07 PM  
04/15/2015 10:37 PM

High-speed rail in Texas is in trouble before it pulls out of the station.

Supporters of high-speed rail acknowledge that they're concerned about legislative and other efforts to block a proposed bullet train from Dallas to Houston that a private company, with backing from a Japanese rail company, wants to open in 2021.

A bill under consideration in the Legislature would bar railroads traveling 185 mph or faster from using eminent domain to take private property for tracks. If approved, the law would make high-speed rail cost-prohibitive, according to a representative of Texas Central Railway, the company that wants to build the project.

Also, 14 elected leaders have asked Texas' congressional delegation to block any federal effort to approve high-speed rail in the state.

The opposition comes primarily from rural areas between Dallas and Houston. High-speed-rail supporters said killing the project could delay attempts to bring ultramodern trains to all of Texas by years — if not decades — and could end the efforts altogether.

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley noted that the proposed Dallas-to-Houston route, which could cost \$10 billion or more, can reportedly be built with private investment and no public funding. The project would be built by Texas Central Railway using technology from Central Japan Railway.

"If it was a manufacturer bringing in \$10 billion, they [state leaders] would be falling all over themselves to bring them in," Whitley said before attending a 35W Coalition meeting Wednesday at Texas Motor Speedway. "Instead, we're hitting them over the head."

The 35W Coalition consists of business and political leaders who meet periodically to talk about transportation needs in the western Metroplex, particularly along the Interstate 35W corridor through Fort Worth.

Separately, the state Transportation Department has created a high-speed-rail commission to explore extending the proposed Houston-to-Dallas line to Arlington and Fort Worth. That commission, headed by Fort Worth businessman Bill Meadows, is just beginning environmental reviews for the proposed route, which could run along the I-30 corridor in North Texas. Stopping the work now would waste years of research into high-speed rail, he said.

"Just give us a chance to go over our options," Meadows said.

Meanwhile, opponents are cheering the bill to remove eminent domain powers, which passed a state Senate committee days ago.

The nonprofit Texans Against High-Speed Rail sent a letter to Texas lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to oppose any efforts by Texas Central Railway to get operating permission from the federal government.

“Although rural counties may benefit from a few jobs during the construction phase, the long-term costs far outweigh any temporary benefit,” the letter says. “Farm and ranch land, often held by families for generations, will be divided, creating a loss in access and a loss in revenue for those who rely on farming and ranching to make a living.”

Group President Kyle Workman said in a news release that he is “overwhelmed by the support of our state legislators” and hopes that “Senators Cornyn and Cruz and Congressmen Barton, Flores, Brady and McCaul will represent our best interest in Washington by opposing an application by [Texas Central Railway] to the Surface Transportation Board.”

Texas Central Railway spokesman Travis Kelly addressed the 35W Coalition during the meeting at the speedway. He was a late replacement for Tom Schieffer, a senior adviser to Texas Central Railway, who canceled his scheduled appearance.

Kelly said Texas Central Railway intends to continue with its planning efforts and educational outreach to areas where opposition is strongest. For example, he said, the company needs to clarify its intention to build the line mostly along an existing utility corridor.

But during a break in the meeting, Kelly acknowledged that if the state removes eminent domain power for the project, “it would be cost-prohibitive.”

<http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article18623106.html>

# DART supports high-speed rail project as its lobbyist works against it

By TOM BENNING [tbenning@dallasnews.com](mailto:tbenning@dallasnews.com)

Austin Bureau

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AUSTIN — A proposed bullet train connecting Dallas and Houston has the backing of Dallas Area Rapid Transit, which could benefit from an influx of rail passengers into the city's center.

But as the Legislature considers measures to quash a private company's multibillion-dollar plan to build such a line, DART's longtime Austin lobbyist is also working for Texans Against High-Speed Rail, the main group opposing the project.

DART spokesman Morgan Lyons said this week that the agency is OK with the arrangement with the lobbyist, Galt Graydon.

"We see high-speed rail as a good opportunity for the region. Galt's client may have a different position," Lyons said, calling Graydon an "amazing supporter and advocate" for DART. "But we respect Galt's right to work with different clients."

The odd relationship is sure to raise the hackles of some Dallas boosters, though. And it highlights the often-complicated web that's the Austin lobby. It also fuels the clash that pits Texas' biggest urban centers against the rural communities between the two.

Graydon said he cleared his firm's high-speed-rail work in advance with DART officials. He questioned the bullet train project's potential benefit to DART, saying he didn't consider his situation a conflict.

"Or we wouldn't have taken it," said Graydon, who's also a longtime lobbyist for Southwest Airlines, which helped stop high-speed rail in Texas in the 1990s.

A 240-mile high-speed rail line — built with private money — is the dream of the company Texas Central Railway.

The project, which could be the first high-speed rail in America, would create a 90-minute train ride between Dallas and Houston. With federal approval and enough funding — an estimated \$10 billion — the train could be running by 2021, officials have said.

Supporters say the proposal would relieve the traffic on Interstate 45, which officials predict will see a major increase in congestion over the next two decades. Dallas officials have also touted the project's potential to spur development near downtown.

For a Dallas station, Texas Central is eyeing two locations just south of the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center. And an important part of such an effort would be connections to existing mass transit.

DART officials have long been in conversations with Texas Central about how to maximize access to three nearby light-rail stations. In response to the high-speed rail proposal, DART has even accelerated plans to boost light-rail and streetcar service in that area.

With that in mind, Dallas City Council member Lee Kleinman wondered on Wednesday how it made sense for DART's lobbyist to also be working for Texans Against High-Speed Rail.

"It's frustrating," said Kleinman, vice chairman of the council's transportation committee. "This is very much working against Dallas and working against DART."

Feelings about the project are much different in the mostly rural swath between Dallas and Houston — in other words, the site of most of the proposed high-speed line.

Residents and elected officials there have raised concerns that the tracks will split communities and harm property values. They've questioned the project's financial feasibility and have balked at the prospect that Texas Central would use eminent domain.

"This sets a very dangerous precedent," said Grimes County Judge Ben Leman, chairman of Texans Against High-Speed Rail.

To press their case before the Legislature, the anti-high-speed rail group turned to experts: The Graydon Group.

Graydon was involved in the effort to stop high-speed rail in Texas in the early 1990s, when Dallas-based Southwest Airlines helped stamp out a different privately funded effort. Another member of Graydon's firm worked for that bullet train push.

A Southwest spokesman said the airline does “not currently have a position” on the latest high-speed rail effort. He said that the company was aware of Graydon’s work with Texans Against High-Speed Rail but that Southwest wasn’t involved in any way in that push.

Though records filed with the Texas Ethics Commission say The Graydon Group is working pro bono, Graydon said that’s a mistake. The firm is correcting its reports to reflect that its five members are each receiving less than \$10,000 from the anti-rail group, he said.

Given Graydon’s long-standing ties to DART — the agency has paid the firm up to \$1.16 million in public money over the last five years — Lemman said his group had some pause in hiring the group. But he said Graydon assured him it “wasn’t going to be an issue.”

The lobbyists have a few different bills to work on — from those that would effectively stop the project to those that would provide more protections to rural landowners.

One bill, backed by rural senators, to prohibit high-speed rail projects in Texas from using eminent domain has been approved by a Senate committee. But Graydon said he wasn’t in a position to predict the success of that or other possible measures.

“None of this is uncontroversial,” he said.

Follow Tom Benning on Twitter at [@tombenning](https://twitter.com/tombenning)

# Editorial: A bad day for Dallas council ends with some good for the Trinity

Published: 17 April 2015 07:10 PM

Updated: 17 April 2015 07:10 PM

The drama that tied the Dallas City Council in knots this week was as pointless as it was damaging.

Now it's important to focus less on that and more on what good came from one of the nastiest council meetings in recent memory.

In a 10-4 vote, the council authorized city staff to study ways of implementing a beautifully conceived plan for a brilliant park and a true parkway inside the Trinity River levees.

Given the rancorous turn the council took Thursday, it might be too much to hope for unity over the process we need to build our park and parkway.

The wounds of the past — and the dedication of those who would fight for a fight's sake — might be too much to overcome, but what the vast majority of us should be able to agree on is the product we want for our city.

What we want was laid out expertly by famed urban designer Larry Beasley: a heavily landscaped, four-lane meandering road that leads us into a great urban park.

It is a road with few entrances and exits but plenty of opportunities for stopping within the park. It is a road where semitrailer trucks are prohibited. It is a road unlike the planned Trinity River toll road, known at City Hall as Alternative 3C.

City staff now has its marching orders — figure out how to implement the plan Beasley presented. City Manager A.C. Gonzalez should dedicate whatever resources are necessary to accomplish that quickly and to present a clear path forward to council.

None of this is to say the fighting at City Hall doesn't matter. It does.

The plan we want will be almost impossible to fund, either publicly or privately, in the atmosphere we witnessed Thursday. So what happened, who's to blame and how do we fix it?

With the first two questions, it depends on whom you ask.

Somehow, the central players were the two most extreme council members on either side — Vonciel Jones Hill, who favors a six-lane toll road, and Philip Kingston, who opposes the road and has become a specialist at aggravating his colleagues.



Their conduct Thursday is in the past now and not worth dwelling on. Neither should be a leading voice in this discussion henceforth; they've proven too divisive.

Mayor Mike Rawlings, meanwhile, should reconsider having Hill organize public meetings around the new vision for the Trinity. Hill is an outspoken proponent of the large road and seems, at best, indifferent to a park. She is the wrong choice to lead public outreach.

The job for the rest of us lies in figuring out how to build the trust we need to reach that lovely place Dallas deserves, the place rendered in Beasley's drawings.

Whatever healing that requires — with both sides shouldering blame and offering olive branches — is what Dallas needs now.

# Supporters hail potential of southern Dallas' S.M. Wright Freeway project

By ROY APPLETON [rappleton@dallasnews.com](mailto:rappleton@dallasnews.com)

Staff Writer

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A long-anticipated transportation project — designed to improve safety, reroute traffic and encourage redevelopment — is to begin this fall in southern Dallas.

On Friday morning, elected officials and other supporters of the S.M. Wright Freeway plan hailed the proposed changes and potential opportunities.

“This has been a long time coming for this neighborhood,” City Council member Carolyn Davis told those gathered outside New Hope Baptist Church.

Davis, who leaves the council after next month's election because of term limits, has been a leading proponent of the Wright redo. She continues to champion a related job program for minority residents and contractors.

“I want to make sure I see some black folks [working] on that highway,” she said, her amplified words drowning the freeway's rumble. “That's why we are here today.

“I love my Latino brothers and sisters. But what we have a struggle with today is jobs for our people,” said Davis, who is black. “And we have to make sure that they are part of this environment.”

The work to come will include a straightening of Dead Man's Curve, the sharp-turn merging of S.M. Wright and C.F. Hawn Freeways. Both are stretches of U.S. Highway 175.

“We can't have an economy and any kind of comfort or convenience without transportation,” said U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Dallas. Still, she added, Dead Man's Curve has been a source “of frustration for a number of years, because we never understood why it was ... there.”

Efforts to eliminate the hazardous interchange began in the late 1980s, Davis said. She thanked Johnson, who “stuck there with us” to secure financial support.

The \$200 million project will also include an extension of C.F. Hawn west to Interstate 45, creating a new commuter route to and from downtown.

It will include improved roadway access and a rebuilding of S.M. Wright to eliminate its overpasses, add landscaping and slow traffic in the interest of neighborhood redevelopment.

“When 175 is connected directly to Interstate 45 and the Trinity Parkway, southern Dallas will have much safer access to downtown and points beyond,” said Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Council of Governments. “When the elevated section [of S.M. Wright] comes down, economic opportunity opportunities will open up.”

The work will be completed in “about five years,” said Duane Milligan, a Texas Department of Transportation project manager, who called it the “largest public infrastructure project in the South Dallas area in a generation.”

Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price, noting that “growth and development follows transportation,” said “part of revitalization ... must be thoroughfares, access and being able to provide and build neighborhoods.”

He thanked Morris for helping interests in southern Dallas County “compete for the kind of dollars that for so long we have been denied.” He recalled local opposition to the building of I-45 “through South Dallas without any exits, going right over South Dallas.”

Saying the city’s southern areas had been shortchanged on highway access, Price called for continuing “to fight to make sure our community gets what it is entitled to get.”

The Wright project’s Community Economic Opportunity Program recruits, screens and tries to connect work, potential workers and minority-owned businesses.

“Our goal is to transform lives and build the economic vitality of this community,” said Alva Baker, the jobs program director. “We’ve talked about it. It’s time to make it start to happen even more.”

She said 21 people have been hired through the grant-funded program so far.

“This community has a strong workforce,” she said. “There are people who live here that have marketable skills and who want to work and take care of their families. They just need another chance.”

# Editorial: Senate, don't block Texas bullet train

Published: 20 April 2015 07:17 PM

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The rape of the Texas countryside is at hand.

That's the overwrought warning from rural members of the Texas Senate who have vowed to derail proposed bullet-train service from Dallas to Houston.

This newspaper's response to our country cousins: dispense with the hyperbolic claptrap. It doesn't become you or help clarify any legitimate points of contention over the rail venture.

The privately financed Texas Central High-Speed Railway is an exciting project that will test this state's claim as fostering a business-friendly environment. Plans call for beginning 205-mph rail service by 2021.

Texas Central is seeking no government subsidies or special favors. It certainly wasn't counting on government interference.

At issue is a bill by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R- Brenham, which could strike a fatal blow against the Texas Central High-Speed Railway by stripping it of powers of eminent domain. Other railroads have that authority, as does an array of other businesses, including utility and pipeline companies.

Kolkhorst would strip it from the bullet-train project because of, in her words, "the devastation that it will do to the rural areas."

That's the type of bunk that Kolkhorst was dealing when the bill passed the Senate Transportation Committee. It now awaits action from the full Senate.

There, we hope, business-minded lawmakers can refute her objections and refocus the debate.

Kolkhorst has claimed the high-speed railway will deal more harm to rural Texas than the long-departed, still-reviled Trans-Texas Corridor concept that was touted by former Gov. Rick Perry. The TTC would have criss-crossed Texas with broad rights of way carrying traffic, trains and utility lines. It riled rural Texas and collapsed of its own ambition.

In contrast, the proposed bullet train would have a light footprint, and its opponents know it. From central Dallas to central Houston, the 240-mile route would require just 3,000 acres. The right of way would be about 100 feet over most stretches, about the width of a country road. Plans call for elevating the tracks for much of the way and allowing landowners numerous access points beneath them.

Traffic could come and go. Livestock could come and go. Emergency vehicles could come and go.

Opponents of the project might have pressed for details in the hearing on the bill, but didn't. They might have sought clarity on the company's plans for acquiring easements from hesitant or unwilling property owners. They might have discussed how state law allows a private company greater latitude in making offers than it allows for a government project. Opponents of the railway didn't seem interested in that, either.

Passage of Kolkhorst's bill would be a mistake. It would render Texas as fearful of the unknown, as opposed to the swashbuckling state we know. Lawmakers should make sure Texas remains a place where entrepreneurs are willing to risk their capital and accomplish audacious goals.

### **Texas Central High-Speed Railway**

**Route:** 240 miles, between central Dallas and central Houston; possible link from Dallas to Fort Worth, if a separate group of local backers finds financing

**Speed:** Up to 205 mph

**Start date:** 2017 for construction, 2021 for service

**Cost:** \$10 billion to \$12 billion

**Footprint:** No more than 100 feet wide and elevated over most stretches. Frequent underpasses would allow passage of farm equipment, livestock, vehicular traffic and emergency vehicles.

# Lee Kleinman: Dispelling myths about the Trinity Parkway

By LEE KLEINMAN

Published: 21 April 2015 06:28 PM

Updated: 22 April 2015 07:57 AM

There's a movement afoot in our city that is grounded in an alternate reality.

Devotees of this movement want you to believe that the very real progress you see in Dallas is a farce. They ask that you overlook our new and improved parks, a booming economy, historically low crime rates, our embrace of cultures and our thriving arts district. Progress in our city is not what it appears, they say. Gloom and doom is all they know.

The devotees of this movement are so unsure in the merits of their position that they resort to name-calling, shouting down and booing those who continue to support the Trinity Parkway as a vital piece of the overall Trinity River Corridor Project.

In this highly politicized environment, it can be difficult to discern the truth. I would like to clear up a few misconceptions.

The Balanced Vision Plan (BVP) was a negotiation among many interests as to the highest and best use of the Trinity River Corridor. Five elements — flood protection, environmental restoration, recreation, transportation and economic development — were balanced to provide something for everyone.

Now that many of the recreational, environmental and flood-risk elements are falling into place, it's time to fulfill the promise for the transportation component.

Last week, we were treated to a review of the BVP and a concept plan called the Trinity Parkway Design Charrette. Led by Larry Beasley, one of the world's renowned urban designers, this plan calls for a four-lane, meandering parkway with park access, beautiful views and limited flyovers. This is no longer the "big, honking toll road" that some of my colleagues oppose.

The Charrette plan drew wide acclaim and, on Thursday, the council voted 10-4 to pursue that plan. Four council members voted against it and against the park development. These toll road opponents were handed a golden opportunity to move forward with a truly balanced vision that embraces the park. They chose instead to play political games and continue to push misinformation.

Here are some myths about the ongoing discussion that I'd like to dispel:

**Park and parkway are incompatible:** At its widest at full build-out, the parkway's earthen base (the bench) is typically 200 to 300 feet wide, while the floodway is typically 2,000 feet.

Dedicating 10 percent of the space to mobility and the other 90 percent to recreation is a reasonable balance. It's misleading to imply that an isolated section where the width increases is representative of the entire project. A local example of compatibility is at White Rock Lake, where a six-lane highway goes through the park [in the Loop 12/Northwest Highway area].

**Roads cause urban sprawl:** Urban sprawl is just economic development in the suburbs. This is an urban infill project that will benefit Dallas citizens. Southern Dallas will benefit much the same way the suburbs have. Simplified connections to employment in the hospital district and both airports will enhance the desirability of living in southern Dallas. While encouraging density and urbanism is a laudable goal, most Dallasites live outside the urban core. Unfortunately, new-urban principles are not sufficient in themselves to manage the massive population increase North Texas will see by 2050.

**The 2007 ballot was misleading:** Maybe we can tackle the grassy knoll theory after we solve the mystery of the supposedly confusing 2007 ballot initiative, the second time in a decade that voters endorsed the parkway. Let's give more credit to our constituents, who made an informed decision on a topic that was well-publicized by both sides.

**The parkway limits access:** The Trinity Design Charrette shows 15 access points, including several pedestrian access points where the parkway crosses the river outlets. There will also be a 500-foot deck park over the parkway between the Commerce Street and Interstate 30 bridges. The levees are a barrier. The parkway overcomes that. Structure is the only way to make it walkable from the Design District and the Cedars. Look at the Connected Cities proposals, which show how plazas can connect over the parkway.

**There are better ways to solve the traffic problem:** Many plans were discussed over the years. The process filtered out many ideas. I'm advocating for building the Design Charrette recommendations within the limits of the current approval. Rehashing other options is merely a delay tactic. The Corps of Engineers conducted a lengthy public comment period that included public meetings, document review and open communications. Recently, several organizations have flip-flopped on the project. This is merely a political ploy due to the upcoming election.

The city has spent 12 years seeking approvals for the Trinity River Corridor Project. Starting over is not an option. Let's work with the approvals we have to achieve the Trinity Design Charrette.

Lee Kleinman represents District 11 on the Dallas City Council. Reach him at [lee.kleinman@dallascityhall.com](mailto:lee.kleinman@dallascityhall.com)



# Poll finds Dallasites' support for toll road within Trinity River levees tepid

By BRANDON FORMBY

Transportation Writer

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As the size of the Trinity Parkway grew in recent years, so did a chasm between how Dallas residents and top city officials view the controversial toll road, a poll by *The Dallas Morning News* shows.

Public support for the \$1.3 billion project planned within the Trinity River levees is tepid, even though voters have twice approved it and the City Council last week signaled strong support for a new idea on how to construct it.

Of Dallas residents who have formed an opinion on the road, 40 percent oppose it and 23 percent favor it. *The News'* poll found opposition even higher among registered voters, with 65 percent against it.

Most aren't swayed by plans to initially start the toll road with fewer lanes and interchanges than what could eventually be built decades in the future.

Federal highway authorities this month approved construction for the road designed as a large, high-speed tolled highway that would run inside the city's planned massive park alongside the river.

Project opponents say the survey results lay bare a long-growing disdain for the road — and a burgeoning distrust of the city officials who back it.

“This poll clearly shows that Dallas voters are now decisively rejecting the Trinity toll road,” said Angela Hunt, a former City Council member who led the failed 2007 referendum to reduce the size of the project now going forward. “The people pushing for this road are not representing the interests of Dallas residents.”

While opponents for years have said that the road is inhospitable to the planned park, that wasn't the primary factor fueling opposition citywide. The project's \$1.3 billion cost is, say those who opposed it in the poll.

Toll road supporters, meanwhile, say the numbers highlight the need to better educate an electorate that still has a large group of undecideds. More than a third of residents either haven't received enough information to form an opinion or have yet to make up their minds.

Two-thirds of those surveyed said downtown highways need traffic relief, though only 17 percent believe Trinity Parkway is the right solution.

Mayor Mike Rawlings, a chief supporter of the road, said something must be done to alleviate congestion. The City Council has called for public meetings about the Trinity Parkway in coming weeks.

"Through those meetings, I will have the chance to get an accurate sense of where the community stands on the new parkway vision," he said.

The primary reasons for backing the road among those who favored it were congestion relief, even though traffic estimates show it won't provide a dramatic overall benefit and would worsen bottlenecks in parts of southern Dallas.

The poll of 800 Dallas residents, taken April 10-17 by Blum & Weprin Associates Inc. using cellphones and landlines, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. For registered voters, the margin of error was plus or minus 3.8 percentage points.

## Election issue

The results shed light on how residents and voters view the project ahead of the May 9 election for City Council members who decide the project's fate. The project itself is not on the ballot, but 65 percent of registered voters say where candidates stand on the issue will be an important consideration.

In a contentious meeting last week, council members agreed 10-4 to put together a team to determine which recommendations from a group of privately funded experts could be incorporated into the first phase of Trinity Parkway's construction.

Those suggestions include initially building fewer lanes and interchanges than showed in designs for the full-scale version of the toll road. At the same meeting, the council

also voted 10-4 against dropping its pursuit of the large toll road that some officials have said will eventually be built.

*The News* polled residents about moving forward on that full-scale project, often referred to as Alternative 3C. More than 63 percent of those opposed said starting with fewer lanes would make no difference in their opinion; 14 percent said it would make them more supportive. But 12 percent said that tactic would make them more opposed.

Council member and toll road supporter Lee Kleinman, who is unopposed for re-election, said that telling poll respondents that Trinity Parkway was a toll road biased the results because there is a strong sentiment against such road projects right now in North Texas.

Kleinman and Rawlings, whose election challenger Marcos Ronquillo is against the road, also faulted the poll for not asking about details of the so-called dream team's recommendations for the first phase of construction.

The council has yet to formally adopt those recommendations and is just now trying to figure out which ones are feasible and allowable. There also is no plan yet for funding whatever recommendations get used.

## Waiting on corps

The city already has received federal highway clearance for the road. It is awaiting approval of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build the road, park and lakes. Both reviews revolved around Alternative 3C. Kleinman said withdrawing support of Alternative 3C now could delay the road and the park for years.

Toll road opponent Philip Kingston, another council member without a challenger, doesn't believe the overall corridor would be set back several years. He said it's better to slow down and be right than speed up and be wrong.

"Are we in a hurry to make a 100-year mistake?" he said.

Craig Holcomb, a former City Council member who is now executive director of the nonprofit Trinity Commons Foundation and a longtime supporter of the road, said many respondents probably wrongly assumed that the bulk of costs will be paid through property taxes.

The city is expected to only spend \$84 million, a ceiling set by voters in a 1998 bond election. Most of construction costs haven't been determined, though officials will probably pursue a mix of toll revenue bonds, federal funds and state contributions.

"We'll accept money wherever we can find it," he said.

## AT A GLANCE: Poll methodology

Blum & Weprin Associates Inc. of New York conducted the random telephone survey of 800 Dallas residents April 10-17. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points, meaning each response could vary that much in either direction.

In 19 out of 20 cases, responses probably would differ by no more than that amount in either direction, even if all voters were interviewed. Pollsters used both landlines and cellphones, and the overall results were weighted demographically and geographically to census data.

Differences in how questions are worded or in what order they are asked can cause results to vary. Some undecided responses are not listed in these results.

# Fear fueling Dallas City Council's divide on Trinity toll road

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Transportation Writer

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What divides Dallas City Council members over the Trinity Parkway's future isn't necessarily a question of whether or not a road should be built along a massive riverside park in the works.

It's not even about what the road should look like, at least not for its first few decades on the ground.

Their differences instead center on whether the council should leave future leaders the option of one day building the fiercely unpopular, high-speed tolled highway moving toward federal clearance or instead limit construction to a gentler and smaller version unveiled this month.

At the heart of the split are two warring fears, the collision of which caused the collapse of behind-the-scenes City Hall negotiations that could have brought a unanimous vote on the city's most divisive project.

Proponents of starting smaller and letting future councils determine when to build the bigger road are afraid that forever limiting construction would unravel one federal agency's approval of the road and delay another agency's ongoing review of plans for a massive park in the floodplain.

At a contentious meeting about the project this month, council member Jennifer Staubach Gates said that a delay could further fatigue residents who have been watching the overall corridor project fuel fights for decades while the floodplains still sit largely bare.

"They're tired of hearing about it," she said. "They're ready for something to happen."

Gates was among a majority of council members who refused to withdraw support for the large-scale version of the Trinity Parkway known as Alternative 3C. But that balance of power at the council horseshoe is misaligned with how the public views the project, according to a poll conducted for *The Dallas Morning News* this month by Blum & Weprin Associates Inc. And it could shift depending on whom voters choose in the May 9 City Council election.

Only two of the council's 11 toll road supporters, Gates and Lee Kleinman, are unopposed and guaranteed another term. Fellow proponents Monica Alonzo, Rick Callahan and Mayor Mike Rawlings have opponents. The six remaining supporters face term limits and will be replaced by

new people. Early voting in the May 9 elections begins Monday. Because so many people are running for the various contested seats, several June runoffs are almost certain.

Meanwhile, the council's four opponents to Alternative 3C — Sandy Greyson, Scott Griggs, Philip Kingston and Adam Medrano — are unopposed and will be back. They fear that classifying a team of experts' recommendations for the road as the first phase of Alternative 3C's construction will leave open the door to saddling Dallas' planned landmark park with a \$1.3 billion piece of infrastructure that is significantly and fundamentally different from what voters approved in 2007.

"It got bigger and bigger and worse and worse," Greyson said this month before introducing a failed attempt at reining in the highway's size and speed.

Days before that meeting, Rawlings unveiled during a private luncheon a team of 12 urban planning experts' sweeping vision for the Trinity Parkway. The plan calls for rows of trees lining a weaving, four-lane road that has parking lots where drivers can stop and enjoy the park. It was almost immediately deemed the Beasley Plan, a nod to urban planner Larry Beasley, who led the team's privately funded work.

The recommendations inspired artist renderings that show a dramatically different riverfront — and Dallas — than the one residents know today. They drew acclaim from longtime Alternative 3C opponents. And they also spurred last-minute negotiations between the faction of officials and civic leaders who have been pushing for Alternative 3C's federal approval and those who have been battling it.

According to Kingston as well as three other people with knowledge of the talks, discussions were aimed at uniting the entire 15-member council around the Beasley Plan and ending decades of acrimony surrounding the Trinity Parkway. But discussions broke down when one faction of negotiators refused to kill Alternative 3C and the other refused to support anything that allows that version of the road to be built in the future, according to Kingston and the three other people, who would speak only if *The News* did not name them. Collectively, they represent both sides of the argument.

Hours later, the bitter divide remaining between council members was laid bare for the public when the council bitterly fought over whether to kill Alternative 3C. In a 10-4 vote, the body decided against the move. In another 10-4 vote, it authorized the city manager to create a team of bureaucrats and experts to see whether the Beasley Plan could be built as the first phase of Alternative 3C.

Many council members fear the city may never again secure federal approval for a road and that pulling 3C kills one shot at the project. Kleinman said if the council is able to use the Beasley Plan as the first phase of construction, there's no guarantee future councils will definitely expand that into the full-blown version under federal review.

He also said pulling Alternative 3C now and building smaller doesn't prevent future councils from seeking federal approval to go even bigger than 3C down the road. Constructing the

experts' version, with its meanders and trees and access to the park, would be politically difficult to bulldoze, he said.

"Building this is more preclusive," Kleinman said.

According to a poll *The News* commissioned this month, 40 percent of residents oppose Alternative 3C. About 35 percent don't believe they have enough information to form an opinion. About 23 percent support it.

The plan to start smaller won't make 76 percent of opponents support the project. That figure includes 12 percent of opponents who said they would be less likely to support the project if the city starts with fewer lanes. Annemarie Bristow of North Oak Cliff falls into that latter camp.

She said supporting the Beasley Plan under the umbrella of Alternative 3C requires trusting a City Hall that has little integrity when it comes to the Trinity Parkway.

"Therein is the problem — I don't have any faith in them," she said.

Opponents say the only way to unite the city is to remove Alternative 3C as an option and instead build only what's shown in the Beasley Plan — even if that takes more time and requires giving up federal funding for the Trinity Parkway.

"I see an endgame, but there has to be the will to go and build that road and nothing else," said former Mayor Laura Miller.

The city has yet to determine which aspects of the Beasley Plan can be implemented. There is also no plan for funding. Those determinations are being made in the kind of behind-the-scenes meetings with experts and government employees in which the Trinity Parkway grew from what was depicted in the 2003 Balanced Vision Plan into Alternative 3C. The differences between what was shown to voters and what was sent to federal officials is fueling distrust of City Hall over the project.

The council is expected to publicly review the city manager's team's determinations about what can and can't be changed from what's in Alternative 3C. Then, Gates said, the council can decide the road's fate. She said she'll have the "courage" to halt Alternative 3C altogether if what is envisioned in the Beasley Plan cannot be the Trinity Parkway's first phase of construction.

"I think I'll have the support of other colleagues at that point to do that," she said.

Who those colleagues will be is now in the hands of voters.

*Follow Brandon Formby on Twitter at @brandonformby.*

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/local-news/20150426-on-trinity-parkway-city-council-fractured-by-future.ece>



## **Keys to the Highway of the Future: Smart Cars, Smarter Networks**

By David T. Hartgen

April 26, 2015 11:20 p.m. ET

For 3,000 years, people lived close to the land or in cities, their worlds limited to walking distance. Just 100 years ago, Henry Ford's Model T changed all that, and America's highways have strained to keep up ever since.

Our highways have vastly improved since the 1950s, when the Interstate system began, though conditions and congestion continue to be a challenge. Today's 62,000 miles of interstates, freeways, toll roads and highways make up only 1.5% of our roads but carry almost one-third of our traffic, greatly expanding available choices of jobs, housing, shopping and recreation. Distant regional economies are now tied together. Roads are safer, too: Highway fatality rates today are one-fifth the rates of the 1950s.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/keys-to-the-highway-of-the-future-smart-cars-smarter-networks-1430104847?KEYWORDS=transportation>

# North Texas growth continues as population nears 7 million

BY SUSAN SCHROCK

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04/24/2015 5:26 PM

## ARLINGTON

The population in North Texas is nearing 7 million and shows no signs of slowing down, according to annual estimates.

The 16-county region grew by nearly 97,000 people from January 2014 to January 2015, continuing a trend that began in 2010. The North Central Texas Council of Governments, whose tasks include transportation planning and improving air quality for the region, released its annual population estimates Thursday.

The region's population stands at 6,939,250, including 1,244,270 in Dallas and 792,720 in Fort Worth. Fifteen years ago the region had 5.3 million residents.

“There's two sides to growth. One side is good because people are voting with their feet and they're moving to North Texas because of great jobs and great quality of life,” said Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins, who serves on the council's executive board. “But as those people move here, it gives us challenges — challenges of public health and transportation and education.”

Dallas and Fort Worth saw the highest number of new residents, with Dallas adding 11,910 people, a 1 percent increase, and Fort Worth adding 11,620 people, a 1.5 percent increase.

The tiny towns of McLendon-Chisholm (population 2,050) in Rockwall County and Melissa (population 6,890) in Collin County saw the greatest percent change, growing by 17.1 percent and 11.3 percent respectively.

“It's a general statement on the economy: Things are picking up again,” said Mike Eastland, the council's executive director. “We just happen to be that magnet that is drawing a whole lot of business and people to us.”

The council of governments, which has tracked the region's population since 1974, goes beyond the census to include local data such as new housing construction permits and the number of occupied single-family and multifamily housing units in each city, said Tim Barbee in research and information services. That data, which also pinpoints where major industrial and commercial activity is happening, helps the council prioritize transportation projects.

“For us in this agency, it's very important because we do the transportation planning for the region 20 and 25 years out. We want each year to measure what is happening. We don't just take a general population and say, ‘Oh, Fort Worth, Dallas or Arlington is this big.’ We start breaking it down into small bits and pieces because we are looking at where road improvements may be needed first,” Eastland said.

Besides Fort Worth, the biggest gainers in Tarrant County were Arlington (1,300), Mansfield (990), Keller (850) and North Richland Hills (610).

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## FAST GROWERS

Top 10 cities in North Texas with the biggest population increases from 2010-2015.

- 1. Fort Worth** 51,514
- 2. Dallas** 46,454
- 3. Frisco** 28,521
- 4. McKinney** 23,723
- 5. Arlington** 13,932
- 6. Irving** 12,320
- 7. Plano** 11,299
- 8. Denton** 9,817

**9. Little Elm** 7,812

**10. Grand Prairie** 7,214

Source: North Central Texas Council of Governments

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/community/article19422408.html#storylink=cpy>

# Rising speed limits spur safety concerns

BY JENNI BERGAL

STATELINE.ORG

04/25/2015 4:04 PM

WASHINGTON

Wisconsin state Rep. Paul Tittl drives his Toyota Prius 140 miles from his home district to the state capitol in Madison every week. Usually, he keeps up with the fast-moving traffic on the highway. But one day, he decided to lower the pace and drive at the maximum speed allowed – 65 mph.

“Little old ladies scowled at me and gave me dirty looks when they passed me because I was doing the speed limit, and I was in the right lane,” the Republican legislator said. “I was amazed.”

That’s why Tittl decided to introduce a bill that would allow Wisconsin’s speed limit to be raised to 70 on highways. The measure passed the state Assembly earlier this month on a 76-22 vote. It’s now in the Senate.

Wisconsin is one of at least 10 states that took up legislation this year to increase maximum speed limits, according to Richard Romer, state relations manager for AAA. As of April 17, two measures have died, one has been enacted, two are waiting for governors’ signatures and the rest are pending.

Tittl said that Wisconsin is like “an island” because it and Oregon are the only states west of Pennsylvania that still maintain a 65 mph maximum speed limit. And Oregon is considering a bill that would boost its limit to 75 mph on interstate highways. “The roads are safer. The cars are safer. There’s no reason why we can’t be raising the speed limit,” Tittl said. “People are not going to drive excessive speeds and if they do, we have the highway patrol and they’ll take care of them.”

Drivers’ rights advocates argue that if higher speed limits are being set at appropriate levels based on valid engineering standards, roads will actually be safer. They say traffic flow will be smoother and more uniform, and there’ll be fewer accidents.

But many safety experts disagree.

“Study after study shows that when speed limits go up, deaths on those roads go up as well,” said Russ Rader, spokesman for the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, a nonprofit research group funded by auto insurance companies that does crash tests on new cars. “Crashes at these high speeds overwhelm the safety features that are built into modern vehicles. They’re not designed to handle crashes at 75 or 80 miles an hour.”

Speed limits have historically been set by the states. But in 1973, as a response to an oil embargo and gas shortages, Congress passed a law establishing a national speed limit of 55 mph. More than a decade later, it allowed states to raise speed limits to 65 mph on rural interstates. In 1995, Congress repealed the law entirely, letting states set their own limits.

Since then, 38 states have raised speed limits to 70 mph or higher on some parts of their roadways, according to the insurance institute. Sixteen states have at least a 75 mph speed limit.

In recent years, a number of state legislatures have taken up measures aimed at either raising the speed limit or giving transportation officials the authority to do so. The results have been a mixed bag.

Last year, for example, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Utah and Wyoming passed legislation allowing higher speed limits. But in nearly a dozen other states, including Mississippi and Oklahoma, similar measures were defeated.

In Florida, Republican Gov. Rick Scott vetoed a bill that would have hiked the maximum speed limit on some highways to 75 mph. In his veto letter, Scott cited the recent death of a state trooper who was struck and killed by a passing pickup truck.

In Illinois, the legislature voted to raise the speed limit to 70 mph on state toll roads, but that measure was vetoed by then-Gov. Pat Quinn, a Democrat, who cited safety concerns. Late last year, lawmakers overwhelmingly overrode Quinn’s veto.

“People like to go fast,” said Rader of the insurance institute. “Lawmakers like to deliver something that’s popular to their constituents. But states should be vigorously enforcing the speed limits they have, not raising them.”

This year, speed limits continue to be a topic of heated debate, especially with gasoline prices dropping, making fuel economy less significant to drivers.

“The public wants to go faster, and there is no recognition that there’s any kind of a downside to that,” said Jonathan Adkins, executive director of the Governors Highway Safety Association, which represents state highway safety offices. “Legislators think of this as a quick and easy thing to do without any consequences. We don’t agree with that.”

As of April 17, bills to hike the speed limit were pending in Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin. Measures that would have increased the speed limit to 75 mph died in Iowa and Ohio. In Maryland and Washington state, legislation was awaiting the governor’s signature. And earlier this month, South Dakota became the fifth state to increase its maximum speed limit to 80 mph on interstates, joining Utah, Wyoming, Idaho and Texas (which allows 85 mph on some roads).

Nevada could soon join some of its neighbors. A bill that would allow the speed limit to be raised to 80 mph on some rural highways passed the Senate on a 16-4 bipartisan vote earlier this month. It is now in the Assembly.

“I think this is a prudent thing to do. It would let people drive legally at the speed they’re already driving at now,” said the bill’s sponsor, Republican state Sen. Don Gustavson, a former truck driver who represents a rural district that encompasses more than 37,000 square miles.

Gustavson said raising Nevada’s speed limit would save time for truckers and help reduce travel fatigue for drivers.

“It’s not over the top. In Europe, you have unlimited speed, you have people going 100, 120 miles an hour,” Gustavson said. “People drive at a speed they’re comfortable with. If they don’t want to drive at 80, they don’t have to. But stay in the slow lane.”

Across the country, supporters of higher speed limits point to a number of studies to support their argument. One they cite is a 2008 Purdue University study, which found that raising the speed limit on an interstate highway in Indiana had not increased the probability of fatalities or serious injuries.

They also cite a report by the Michigan State Police's Office of Highway Safety Planning, which states that contrary to popular belief, lower speed limits don't necessarily improve safety.

"It sounds counterintuitive, but it's not," said John Bowman, vice president of the National Motorists Association, a membership-based group that represents drivers.

Bowman said that traffic engineers generally calculate safe speeds by looking at how fast traffic naturally travels on a given stretch of road and figuring out the speed that 85 percent of vehicles do not exceed.

"The idea is to set the speed limit based on the speed people already are traveling at," Bowman said.

But safety advocates say that the research is clear that if the speed limit is increased, more people will die in speed-related crashes. They also cite National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data that shows that in 2013, there were 9,613 speed-related fatalities.

"We're making a tremendous amount of progress in reducing drunk driving and more people are wearing their seat belts," said Adkins, of the governors' highway safety group. "Traffic deaths are down about 25 percent since about 10 years ago. But one of the areas we haven't made progress in is speed-related fatalities."

Adkins said that his group doesn't have a recommendation about what the speed limit should be because it depends on road conditions and engineering, which vary from state to state – and from highway to highway. What might work on long rural patches of road in Idaho or Wyoming may not work in Massachusetts, Adkins said.

But he and other safety advocates say that regardless of conditions, higher speeds are dangerous. For example, they point to a 2009 report in the American Journal of Public Health that found a 3.2 percent increase in fatal crashes between 1995 and 2005 attributable to higher speed limits.

"As speed limits and speeds go up, a driver's reaction time is limited," Adkins said. "The crash is more likely to be severe. Those laws of physics haven't changed. You're not able to react to what that guy or gal next to you is doing. They might be on their cellphone or be impaired. They might pull right in front of you and you have to be able to react to that."



Safety advocates also say that posted limits are simply a cushion, and that drivers frequently go 5 mph to 10 mph above them. “Guess what happens if you have a crash at 95 mph?” Adkins said.

Florida Democratic state Sen. Arthenia Joyner, a strong opponent of last year’s failed legislation to hike the speed limit in her state from 70 to 75, agrees.

“The speed limit is high enough,” Joyner said. “Florida has a big senior population. As it stands now, if the speed limit is 70, the person behind you is going 80 anyway. Raising the speed limit would only be giving them leeway to drive faster. This is not the German autobahn.”

Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/nation-world/national/article19545285.html#storylink=cpy>

# Trinity River Project gains approval from Army Corps of Engineers

By ELIZABETH FINDELL AND BRANDON FORMBY

Staff Writers

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The city's long-standing plans for parks, improved levees and a road in the Trinity River corridor got the green light Monday from the Army Corps of Engineers, clearing the way for Dallas to pursue federal funding for the project.

The city has envisioned a transformation of the river corridor for decades. Since the mid-1990s, it has worked to secure approval — and money — for a \$572 million comprehensive plan that would enhance flood protection, provide a reliever road for downtown highways and create recreational amenities along the river's path.

Monday's "record of decision" from the Army engineers does not in itself advance those plans. But by concluding that no environmental or hydrological concerns should preclude the project, the corps essentially authorized the city to move forward, while providing the required clearance for Congress to appropriate money for the Trinity project.

"I don't think we were particularly worried about it, but it's extremely significant," said Dallas City Council member Lee Kleinman, vice chair of the council's Transportation and Trinity River Project Committee.

"This enables us to build the parks and the lakes ... all of this."

The approval is "a significant milestone," said James Frisinger, a spokesman for the Fort Worth regional office of the Corps of Engineers. The agency, he noted, has spent years evaluating whether the city's plans have economic value and whether they can be carried out in a way that is environmentally sound.

"We've now done that to the satisfaction of our people," Frisinger said.

The decision does not directly affect the fate of the much-debated Trinity Parkway, a proposed toll road within the Trinity levees. According to the corps, the Trinity

project passes environmental muster with the toll road as a component or if the road's shelf is built with no road atop it.

### **Levee improvements**

Dallas' vision for the Trinity corridor — now little more than an uninviting ditch in places — calls for lakes, plazas, green spaces, athletic fields, trails, an amphitheater and other attractions.

It also contemplates improvements to the river levees, which were rated “minimally acceptable” last year. The levees were built in the early 1930s, then expanded 30 years later. Severe flooding in 1989 and 1990 in neighborhoods downstream from downtown — past where the original levees end — prompted the city to refocus on flood protection.

As the city has awaited federal approval of the corridor project, it has moved forward with several amenities and improvements in and around the floodplain. These include the Sante Fe Trestle Trail, the Elm Fork Athletic Complex, the Trinity River Audubon Center, the Texas Horse Park at the Trinity, the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge and the Continental Avenue pedestrian and bicycling bridge.

The Texas Department of Transportation is currently constructing a second signature highway bridge, the double-arched Margaret McDermott Bridge, where Interstate 30 crosses the floodplain. It also plans to open a boat launch next month off the Sylvan Avenue bridge over the river.

For the corridor project, the cost-sharing arrangement is 65 percent federal money and 35 percent city money. The federal portion must come through congressional appropriations.

Kleinman said Dallas has already sunk the bulk of its share into remediation efforts and small projects. The city has some money left over from past bond issues. It will look to future bonds or private partnerships for additional funds, said Sarah Standifer, interim director of the city's Trinity Watershed Management office.

Frisinger, the Corps of Engineers spokesman, said raising the levees is a priority for the federal agency. It also wants to remove embankments and piers from the abandoned Santa Fe Railway trestle, which has been retrofitted into a bridge for the Santa Fe Trestle Trail.

“That's causing floodwaters to back up,” Frisinger said.

An interior drainage plan calls for expanding and improving five pump stations and building one new one.

About eight miles of the river will be restored to a meandering path with vegetation, creating habitat that was lost when the river was moved and straightened into a channel in the 1920s. Also planned is an 80-acre wetlands area between the Corinth Street Bridge and the Santa Fe Trestle Trail.

### **Roadway's shelf**

By far, the most talked-about component of the Trinity project has been the Trinity Parkway.

The city just got approval from federal highway authorities to move forward with the largest version of the roadway, the option known as "Alternative 3C," though most City Council members said they would like to consider building fewer lanes initially.

The corps didn't look at the road itself, just at how the earthen shelf that would support it would affect flooding. From the agency's perspective, it's fine if the road gets built, and fine if it doesn't. But the corps expects the earthen shelf to be built; plans call for creating that shelf using dirt that's excavated in the construction of the lakes.

The City Council earlier instructed City Manager A.C. Gonzalez to put together a task force to determine if a smaller version of the Trinity Parkway could be built on the full-scale version's shelf until future leaders decide to finish expanding the road.

Kleinman, a proponent of that, said he was excited to see that the corps' decision did not affect the road's size.

"The corps is neutral as to whether we build a bike trail on top of the bench ... or the whole blown-out 3C," he said. "That gives us the most options."

It remains unclear whether potential design changes to the road could affect the overall corridor project, or the corps' approval of it. Frisinger said that couldn't be determined unless and until the city formally recommended changes to the Trinity Parkway.

In general, some refinement of a plan already on the table is permissible, but major design changes could require a complete re-evaluation at the federal level.

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# Toll lanes: What Fort Worth area motorists can expect

BY GORDON DICKSON

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04/28/2015 5:16 PM

Nearly a year has passed since the Chisholm Trail Parkway toll road opened to traffic between downtown Fort Worth and Cleburne.

In another part of the region, the North Tarrant Express project, which includes reconstruction of free lanes and the addition of toll lanes on Loop 820 and Texas 121/183 in Northeast Tarrant County, has now been open for business more than six months.

To say Fort Worth-area motorists are becoming accustomed to paying tolls wherever they go is an understatement.

And there's more. In 2018, a rebuilt Interstate 35W is expected to open between downtown Fort Worth and AllianceTexas. That's another road that will feature a combination of toll and toll-free lanes.

So, like them or not, toll lanes appear to be here to stay.

With that in mind, here are some things to expect in the coming months and years on the western side of the Metroplex:

## Higher toll rates

The North Tarrant Express toll lanes have been open six months, and the private-sector operator is now free to charge whatever rates the market will bear — up to 75 cents per mile. Most of the time, the rates will be in the 25-cent to 45-cent-per-mile range, though.

During the first six months after the road opened Oct. 3, the private consortium that controls the road, NTE Mobility Partners, followed a rigid chart showing the toll rates hour by hour. But the introductory period is over.

“The toll rates are traffic-driven, meaning that as traffic builds across all lanes the rates increase gradually,” said Robert Hinkle, spokesman for NTE Mobility Partners.

He said one goal is to raise toll prices to dissuade motorists from using the toll lanes. With fewer cars on the toll lanes, it’s easier to ensure the traffic stays at a minimum of 50 mph on the toll lanes, which is the goal.

For example, just after 9 a.m. on a recent weekday morning, the advertised price for a trip on the Loop 820 toll lanes from I-35W to the Texas 121/183 merge was \$3.50. That trip represents roughly half the 13-mile North Tarrant Express corridor. But during off-peak times — a Sunday morning, for example — that same trip could be less than \$1.

NTE Mobility Partners, headed by the U.S. arm of Spanish firm Cintra, will control the North Tarrant Express lanes and receive the toll revenues through March 2061, according to its contract with the state.

## Bedford speed zone

Bedford police are keeping an eye out for speeders on the North Tarrant Express toll lanes, particularly between Industrial Boulevard and Central Drive. Officers are there regularly with laser-equipped speed detectors to spot and pull over lead-footed drivers.

Toll lanes have a speed limit of 70 mph, whereas non-toll lanes are 60 mph.

“Officers do work both the main lanes and the toll lanes. They have people going way in excess of 70 mph,” said Bedford police Lt. David Smith.

He said the traffic patrols are not a special speeding initiative.

## Better downtown access

When the I-35W makeover is completed in 2018, motorists in the toll lanes will have their own lanes to get to and from downtown.

“It’s a lane that splits off I-35W and comes between Weatherford and Belknap streets,” said Andy Taft, president of Downtown Fort Worth Inc., who added that he was recently briefed by project managers.

Taft said he was told it will be a reversible ramp. “In the morning, the lane is going to be one-way into downtown, and at night the gates will change and it will be one-way out of downtown,” he said.

Officials working on the I-35W expansion haven’t made a final decision about whether to make the ramp reversible, or two-directional, Hinkle said.

Once the \$1.4 billion revamp of I-35W is complete, existing entries to downtown will remain much the same as they are today for non-toll traffic.

If the ramp to downtown is reversible, on weekday mornings it will dump vehicles heading westbound into downtown onto Belknap Street. Then, in the afternoons that ramp will be open to eastbound traffic heading out of town from Weatherford Street.

The ramp is scheduled to be built just east of the Sonic restaurant at 100 N. Nichols, between Belknap and Weatherford streets, and will extend over the freight railroad tracks, officials said.

## More company on the toll lanes

Expect more people to use toll lanes in the western Metroplex in the years to come. For decades, the trend has been steady growth in the number of toll-paying customers for the North Texas Tollway Authority, which built Chisholm Trail Parkway and most other toll roads in the Dallas area. The Texas Department of Transportation, which oversees contracts for the toll lanes on otherwise toll-free highways such as Loop 820, also is seeing numbers rise.

About one in four TollTags is registered to a vehicle in Tarrant or Johnson counties, said Michael Rey, North Texas Tollway Authority spokesman.

Regionwide, TollTags are installed on 3,167,311 vehicles — mostly in Collin, Dallas and Denton counties, Rey said. In Tarrant County, there are more than 678,000 TollTags, and in Johnson County, about 40,000.

Use of toll lanes — also sometimes labeled express lanes, or TEXpress lanes — also is on the rise on the North Tarrant Express project. The toll lanes on Loop 820 and Texas 121/183 are averaging 350,000 unique visitors per month, or roughly 12,000 vehicles per day.

That's an increase from the first two months, when an average of 300,000 unique visitors per month used the toll lanes, Hinkle said.

## Lots of room in Grapevine

Another road with toll lanes is the DFW Connector, the Texas 114/121 corridor in Grapevine that was rebuilt in 2013.

Some motorists have said it seems that few vehicles are on the toll lanes, which are managed by the Texas Department of Transportation.

But an average of 5,224 vehicles per day are using them, agency spokesman Tony Hartzel said.

The transportation department isn't using the DFW Connector toll lanes to generate revenue to pay off debt. Instead, those toll lanes are expected to become more popular over the next several years as more motorists begin using the corridor — already one of the busiest in the Metroplex — for their commute.

The typical toll rate for for the DFW Connector, which has only two entry/exit points — one in Southlake, the other in Irving — is 70 cents for TollTag users and \$1.33 for those who pay by mail.

Pricing on the toll lanes can go up if the DFW Connector main lanes become congested, but it doesn't happen much. During the winter, the transportation department was criticized when the automated system raised prices to \$7 per car during a snow and ice storm.

Hartzel said officials fixed the problem, and now have a policy that during bad weather events a fixed price is placed on the toll lanes, to avoid overcharging the public.

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*Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article19827912.html#storylink=cpy>*



# Dallas' biggest debate — the Trinity Parkway — gets its day in Texas House

By BRANDON FORMBY [bformby@dallasnews.com](mailto:bformby@dallasnews.com)

Transportation Writer

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State Rep. Rafael Anchia's attempts to halt the Trinity Parkway were left pending in a Texas House subcommittee Wednesday, where they face an uphill battle before becoming law this late in the legislative session.

But that doesn't mean the Dallas Democrat is giving up just yet.

Anchia said in an interview Wednesday there is "more than one way" to make a law, hinting that he may add the propositions as amendments to other legislation that reaches the House floor.

"And there are going to be a number of transportation funding bills that come through," he said.

His comments came after a parade of project opponents and one of its most passionate and influential supporters debated the bills at the Texas Capitol on Wednesday. The hearing gave the project a brief appearance on a statewide stage.

One of the bills would prevent the Texas Department of Transportation from chipping in state funds on the \$1.3 billion project that faces a massive shortfall. The other would essentially undo an environmental review exemption that former U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison afforded the project with a 2010 amendment to a federal spending bill.

The legislation aimed at killing a local project seemingly runs counter to Anchia's staunch defense this year of local control on other issues, like gun control and natural gas drilling.

But the lawmaker quickly addressed that as he presented his bills and derided the project at a Texas House transportation subcommittee Wednesday. Anchia said the funding bill wasn't about telling Dallas it shouldn't build the Trinity Parkway, a tolled highway that would be at least six lanes wide as it runs through the Trinity River levees.

Anchia said it was about prioritizing the state's limited transportation dollars and making sure they are spent on projects that help mobility on the state's highway system. He pointed out that traffic forecast comparisons for 2035 show that congestion on Dallas highways won't significantly be helped if Trinity Parkway is built.

"This is the policy discussion we need to have," he said.

## Environmental bill

Anchia said the environmental bill is about putting the parkway through a normally routine evaluation, called a "4f review," of how federally funded highway projects impact park land. The Federal Highway Administration approved Trinity Parkway without such an assessment because of the 2010 exemption.

“Why should the citizens of Dallas be denied this 4f review?” he said.

Dallas City Council member Vonciel Jones Hill later passionately defended the project. She said she’s glad people care about lakes and parks, but noted that neither are in the floodplain now.

“It’s a big ditch,” she said.

Hill did not tell lawmakers that the city received federal approval this week to put both a park and lakes within the floodplain. The lakes are likely to appear before any road because the road’s foundation will be built from the dirt excavated to create the new bodies of water.

Hill also said that the toll road is meant to relieve congestion for southern Dallas residents who are predominantly black and Hispanic. She noted that the city has not been as deeply divided over other highway and toll road projects built in northern Dallas.

The chair of the council’s transportation committee, and a member of the Regional Transportation Council, Hill said Trinity Parkway will help southern Dallas residents’ commutes.

Hill told lawmakers that she was speaking on behalf of a majority of the City Council. Eleven of the 15 members support the Trinity Parkway.

The FHWA’s approval of the project was predicated on traffic projections that show the Trinity Parkway would worsen congestion on some southern Dallas corridors, especially U.S. Highway 175. The projections did not look at the toll road’s impact on Interstate 45 south of those two roads’ intersection, another major thoroughfare for southern Dallas residents.

### **Anti-toll sentiment**

Oak Cliff resident Brad Nitschke said the road would hurt “budding social and economic” progress being made in southern Dallas. He used a recent city report on Dallas’ widening gap between the rich and poor to make the case that a toll road will do little to help southern Dallas residents rise out of poverty.

“We’re going to build a highway through your neighborhood even though we know you can’t afford to use it,” Nitschke said.

Council member Sandy Greyson and longtime project opponent Angela Hunt were among several people testifying in favor of Anchia’s bills.

The legislation dovetails into a bipartisan anti-toll sentiment looming over this legislative session. Several transportation funding measures would preclude using state money on toll projects. And, Anchia said, Wednesday’s testimony garnered support from subcommittee members who saw first hand the acrimony surrounding a Trinity Parkway.

“That’s the kind of coalition you need for ideas to get passed on the House floor,” he said.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/transportation/20150429-dallas-biggest-debate-gets-its-day-at-texas-capitol.ece>

## End of the road for red-light cameras?

By Anna M. Tinsley  
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April 29, 2015

Arlington residents will weigh in next month on an issue that has swept the state: Should the government pull the plug on red-light cameras?

They'll vote on the matter because more than 11,000 residents signed petitions asking city leaders to get rid of the cameras.

The intersection of Pioneer Parkway at Cooper Street in Arlington is one of many sites where red light cameras catch offenders. | Khampha Bouaphanh Star-Telegram

Public safety officials are pushing to keep the cameras, but that hasn't stopped concerns from spreading — sparking lawsuits and leading legislators to consider scrapping the cameras statewide.

"We are tired of being bilked for every dime we have in the false name of safety," said Kelly Canon, a member of Citizens for a Better Arlington and a vice president of the Arlington Tea Party. "It is not a safety feature on our intersections. It is a money-grabbing scheme and we are tired of it."

Canon helped lead the effort to put the issue before Arlington voters, and she will be in Austin today testifying before legislative committees considering proposals to end red-light cameras in Texas.

"We've had enough," she said. "It's over. Their cash cow is about to get brought down."

Not everyone feels that way.

A group of more than 30 officials statewide sent a letter to lawmakers Wednesday supporting the use of the cameras and asking that they stay in place.

"Texas communities use traffic safety cameras to reduce red light running, reduce crashes and save lives, and these programs have had enormous success," says the letter, which includes signatures from city or police leaders in Arlington, Bedford, Haltom City and Richland Hills.

"However, these bills seek to ban, limit or place restrictions on the use of red light cameras and put the public's safety at risk," the letter says. "This would drastically reduce the ability of our Texas police departments to enforce and hold accountable drivers who run red lights."

### In Arlington

Texas has had red-light cameras since 2003.

Critics say they go too far, letting government invade Texans' privacy, monitoring movements and raking in cash for cities that use them at high-traffic intersections.

Some violators say they weren't caught running a red light, just not coming to a full stop before turning right on red.

Supporters say that the cameras help uphold the law and that they're working, reducing accidents and deaths and generating money for cities and states. They say drivers can't reasonably expect privacy on a public road.

In Arlington, more than 11,000 residents signed [petitions](#) asking city leaders to shut off the cameras, which bring in about \$2.1 million in fines a year.

While officials say the cameras have [helped](#) reduce accidents, opponents say rear-end crashes are on the rise at intersections with cameras. And they believe the cameras are just a moneymaker for the city.

[Early voting](#) continues through Tuesday for the [May 9 election](#).

"The red-light cameras are not ... constitutional," Canon said. "They do not give us our due process of law. The cameras can't identify the driver, just the vehicle."

Jody Weiderman of Arlington tried to keep the issue off the ballot, asking a Tarrant County judge to block the city from calling for a vote. State District Judge Tom Lowe [dismissed](#) the request.

"I think it's a great program and it needs to stay in the city of Arlington," Weiderman said in court.

## **In the Legislature**

Several proposals on red-light cameras are scheduled to be heard by members of the House Transportation [Committee](#) today.

Already through the Senate is [Senate Bill 714](#), by Sen. Bob Hall, R-Edgewood, which would prevent the cameras from being used at intersections. But they wouldn't be turned off until existing contracts expire.

"This is a concept that sounded good on paper but failed miserably in real-world application," Hall has said.

Among the proposals lawmakers are considering:

- [House Bill 142](#), by Rep. Jonathan Stickland, R-Bedford, would prevent the use of red-light cameras.

- [HB740](#), by Rep. Dwayne Bohac, R-Houston, would require that signs warning about the presence of red-light cameras also list how much violations cost.

- [HB1131](#), by Rep. Gary Elkins, R-Houston, would prohibit the cameras.

• [HB1710](#), also by Bohac, would allow cities to prevent red-light cameras once local voters weigh in. Holding those elections would require a petition signed by 10 percent of registered voters.

### **A new lawsuit**

This month, a 70-page lawsuit was filed in Tarrant County against 53 cities and several companies that operate the cameras.

The suit stemmed from a ticket that James H. Watson of Shreveport received for a violation at a Southlake intersection last year.

Watson says that he wasn't in his 2009 Honda and that he didn't knowingly let anyone else use his vehicle at that time and place.

But he was mailed a \$75 ticket, which noted that a \$25 late fee would be added if he didn't pay promptly. If unpaid, the fine could go to a collection agency or prevent him from renewing his car registration.

"Faced with the threat of damage to his credit or the loss of the right to renew his vehicle registration, [he] paid the \$75 penalty," the lawsuit says, adding that Watson "paid this penalty under coercion or duress."

He wants his money back, and he wants a ruling that the cameras are unconstitutional, which means they would be turned off, said his attorney, Russell Bowman of Irving.

He argues that the cameras are illegal because the Texas Constitution gives a person "the right to confront ... the witnesses against him." The transportation code, however, denies those rights to anyone who receives a red-light-camera ticket, the lawsuit says.

### **Uncollected fines**

Nearly two dozen states allow red-light cameras, and fewer than a dozen specifically restrict their use, according to the [Governors Highway Safety Association](#).

Each ticket carries a \$75 fine, amounting to millions of dollars statewide. After camera vendors are paid a portion, half the revenue stays in the city where the violation occurred and half goes to the state.

During the last fiscal year, the state collected more than \$16.2 million, up from \$15.4 million in 2013 and down from \$16.6 million in 2012, according to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

The money was earmarked for regional trauma centers in Texas, but lawmakers have authorized that only once — in 2009, when the department sent \$13.3 million to 128 facilities, including the JPS Health Network, Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth and Harris Methodist Northwest, state records show.

No other disbursements have been made, and the money has been growing, now hovering around \$100 million, officials have said.

Millions of dollars in fines go uncollected each year. That's because the law has no real teeth unless county officials agree to prevent motorists from updating their registrations until they've paid their red-light tickets.

Some counties are doing that, but Tarrant County won't. Local officials say it isn't their job to enforce ticket collections for cities and the state.

Rep. Charlie Geren, R-Fort Worth, has filed a [proposal](#) geared toward preventing county assessor-collectors and the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles from requiring Texans to pay red-light fines before registering their vehicles.

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<http://www.star-telegram.com/news/politics-government/article19917204.html>

## Study: Hot summers and high ozone make Dallas-Fort Worth's air some of nation's worst

[Robert Wilonsky](#) Follow @RobertWilonsky Email [rwilonsky@dallasnews.com](mailto:rwilonsky@dallasnews.com)

Published: April 29, 2015 12:55 pm

Couldn't ask for a more beautiful late April afternoon — oceanic-blue skies, cool temps heading toward a high in the mid-70s, a whisper of a breeze out of the north. Just wait, though: [Tomorrow's forecast is for a "moderate" Air Quality Index day](#), thanks to an expected uptick in the ground-level ozone. Most folks won't even notice it — just the "[unusually sensitive](#)." But sooner than later, of course, it'll be summer, which brings with it 100-degree Ozone Action Days — the kind that once again land Dallas-Fort Worth a spot on [the American Lung Association's Top 10 Most Ozone-Polluted Cities list](#).

Specifically [we're at No. 7 on that list](#), which is part of the ALA's annual State of the Air report. And for those keeping score at home, that F grade lands us one spot higher on the naughty list than DFW's 2014 ranking. We're getting worse, not better when it comes to ground-level ozone. Which sounds bad, only because it is. But it turns out the real reason for the decline in air quality dates back to data collected during [Our Hottest Summer Ever](#), 2011, when we recorded 71 days hotter than 100 degrees — 40 of them in a row. This year's report takes into account air pollution data collected from 2011 to 2013.

"Those 100-degree days are *terrible* ozone days," says Jeff Miracle, executive director for the American Lung Association in Texas. "And we had more bad ozone days in this report than in the previous report, because we had more 100-degree days. I live in Rockwall, and there's an area along the highway when I can first see downtown Dallas. And in the spring downtown looks great. In the summer, though, there's this brownish-orange haze hanging over the city." And we all know what's causing it: vehicular traffic.

Dallas-Fort Worth is actually doing much better elsewhere in the report. The region is actually seeing what Miracle calls "the continued reduction of year-round particle pollution." But [those summer days are only going to get more plentiful](#), bringing with them air-pollution watches and threats to those suffering from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other respiratory ailments. And the children, of course. Think of the children — [especially the babies](#).

The American Lung Association is among the groups demanding the Environmental Protection Agency tighten up the National Ambient Air Quality Standards intended to reduce ground-level ozone; Miracle was among those speaking to the feds in Arlington earlier this year about lowering the allowable limits.

But until that happens, he says, "We need to plan ahead for those times of the year when we know the ozone already has issues because of temperatures. We need to make changes so those days aren't as dangerous. Individually, we need to look at taking more public transit on those 100-degree days. We need to carpool more. That would be a good start." So's walking and cycling. But it's so hot and hard to breathe. Oh, wait.

<http://thescoopblog.dallasnews.com/2015/04/study-hot-summer-and-high-ozone-make-dallas-fort-worths-air-some-of-nations-worst.html/>

# 12 Dallas city employees helped Trinity Parkway ‘dream team’

By BRANDON FORMBY [bformby@dallasnews.com](mailto:bformby@dallasnews.com)

Transportation Writer

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Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings has touted 12 experts’ privately financed review of the proposed Trinity Parkway as a way to redesign the toll road without spending a dime of taxpayer money.

But recently released city records show that a dozen city employees collectively spent more than 275 hours supporting the private review of the city’s most controversial project outside public view.

Rawlings described the experts as a “dream team” that would redesign a controversial proposal for a high-speed toll road into a version voters approved in 2007.

As he was beginning a re-election campaign in which the toll road was becoming a leading issue, he used the experts’ and city staffers’ ongoing work as a reason the public should withhold judgment on the tollway project.

The mayor, who is being challenged by toll road opponent Marcos Ronquillo, has referred to the dream team’s final recommendations when asked about the project at campaign forums and debates.

City Council member and frequent Rawlings critic Philip Kingston asked City Manager A.C. Gonzalez for the amount of work and number of employees who supported the experts’ work.

Gonzalez sent Kingston the information Thursday, and Kingston provided the record to *The Dallas Morning News*.

He called the city employees’ contributions to the dream team’s work a “misappropriation” of public resources that the mayor is using to provide “political cover” for supporting a controversial project.



He also said Rawlings and Gonzalez bypassed the full council by allowing city resources to be used on a private endeavor that excluded the public and had not been before all 15 of the city's elected officials.

"It's contrary to what the people expect," Kingston said.

But Rawlings compared the employees' contributions to the kind of public-private partnership that achieved "great results" with the development of the Arts District and a previous vision for Trinity Parkway.

"I always ask the city manager to give all the assistance he deems necessary for every private enterprise that is trying to make our city better," he said. "Private enterprises have long been an important part of our city's growth."

Gonzalez did not respond to requests for comment.

Mari Woodlief, the mayor's re-election campaign manager, said incumbents run on their records. She said it's logical for Rawlings to discuss ideas for uniting the city around what's historically been a controversial project, especially one that is a leading election issue.

"So naturally, it's going to be become something that is part of the campaign," she said.

### **Ethics questioned**

The dream team recommended last month that the city build a meandering four-lane parkway instead of the large highway designed to be at least six lanes wide. That larger version, for which the city received federal approval, is the reason for much of the public opposition to the project.

The city doesn't yet know how much of the experts' vision can be used. It is pursuing the suggestions to be part of the first phase of construction for what's eventually planned as the large-scale, controversial version of the road.

Kingston said he has not ruled out filing an ethics complaint about the use of city staff members to help the dream team. The city's ethics code prohibits officials or employees from using personnel for private or political purposes unless the work fits within the scope of adopted city policies or is what is typically available to the public.

Those who worked with the dream team included an assistant city manager, three assistant department directors and senior-level engineers and planners.

All 12 of the employees either attended or helped gather documents for a December meeting with some of the experts to determine parameters of their work. At least three also attended portions of the design charrette that occurred in February in Dallas. Their contributions included briefing the team of experts.

### **Time contributed**

Gonzalez did not calculate how much money the personnel time equaled, and Kingston did not ask. According to the city manager's accounting, the amount of time contributed ranged from two hours spent by assistant public works director Tim Starr to 38 hours spent by senior planner Arturo del Castillo.

According to city employee salaries as of October, the lowest-paid employee who participated was an intern who earned \$14 an hour and contributed 32 hours of work. The highest-paid was Assistant City Manager Jill Jordan, who makes \$205,000 a year and contributed 20 hours of work.

"Some of the people on city staff spent more time on this project than the dream team themselves," Kingston said.

Starr said he provided information only about other public works projects in the Trinity River corridor, similar to the kind of briefings he provides business and civics groups when they request public appearances at meetings. He said he didn't know of any staff members who participated in deliberations.

"I don't think any staff was really there other than to provide background information," he said.

# Backers of east LBJ overhaul pitch new funding idea

By TOM BENNING [tbenning@dallasnews.com](mailto:tbenning@dallasnews.com)

Austin Bureau

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AUSTIN — North Texas lawmakers are pitching a new funding mechanism — one that could still involve toll roads — to finance a proposed \$2 billion overhaul of the LBJ Freeway east of North Central Expressway.

Local officials in and around Garland have long sought the improvements, knowing that a toll component was likely to be critical to timely completion. But the Legislature, reflecting public sentiment, has shown little enthusiasm for more toll roads.

Amid worries that a stalemate could delay a revamp of the outdated freeway by a decade or more, Rep. Cindy Burkett, R-Sunnyvale, has helped craft a compromise that would allow tolls only in limited circumstances.

“As we begin steering to the goal of less dependence on perpetual toll roads, this hybrid option will still make megaprojects like this one possible,” she told the House Transportation Committee on Thursday.

The “expiring revenue enhancement” proposal, which is still pending in committee, would require transportation planners to first try financing the LBJ project by traditional means, such as the use of state gasoline tax revenue.

If those dollars weren't sufficient, officials could then turn to debt-financing options to expedite completion. Those options could include “transportation investment zones” to use future growth in state sales tax revenue along the LBJ corridor.

They could also include tolled managed lanes, already a feature on some North Texas highways.

But in a nod to toll road opponents, the tolled managed lanes could be added only if additional free lanes were also included in the project. And the enhanced revenue

options would expire after 35 years or when the project was paid off, whichever came first.

The LBJ East project would cover about 10 miles, from North Central Expressway to Interstate 30. Traffic there regularly backs up. Many stretches lack frontage roads, discouraging economic development. The outdated highway offers a stark contrast to the revamped portion of the LBJ just to the west.

Cost estimates for an LBJ East overhaul vary. A baseline plan that would add free main lanes, tolled managed lanes and frontage roads would cost \$1.4 billion. Sinking the road below grade would increase the cost to \$2.2 billion.

Through traditional funding methods, the entire Dallas area might receive \$200 million a year to expand its highway capacity, officials said. Even if every penny of that were used for LBJ East, it would take years to pool enough money for the project.

Tolls could help. But the growing network of toll roads has frustrated many drivers, who have vented to lawmakers.

## **House Panel Appropriations Bill Would Freeze Transportation Funding**

Bond Buyer 4/29/15 2:27pm ET By Jim Watts

DALLAS - The House Appropriations Committee's transportation panel approved a bill for fiscal 2016 that would essentially freeze next year's federal funding for highway and transit infrastructure at the previous year's \$51 billion.

The spending measure, which now goes to the full committee for consideration, would provide \$40.25 billion for highways and \$10.7 billion for transit, down \$161 million from fiscal 2015 and almost \$20 billion less than President Obama requested for transportation in his proposed fiscal 2016 budget. Implementing the spending plan would depend on passage of a new transportation bill to restore the spending authority that will end May 31 with the expiration of a 10-month extension approved by Congress last year. The appropriations measure does not address the expected \$16 billion gap in fiscal 2016 between the motor fuels tax revenues dedicated to the Highway Trust Fund and the expected expenditures.

The proposed fiscal 2016 appropriations for the Transportation Department focus on core operations and critical transportation projects, said subcommittee chairman Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, R-Fla.

"Though difficult decisions had to be made, I am confident our priorities will ensure the stability of these vital areas," he said.

Rep. David Price, D-N.C., the subcommittee's ranking Democrat, agreed to advance the measure but promised to offer amendments to increase transportation funding when it comes before the full committee.

"We can't just wring our hands and say, 'Oh, we're broke' because we're not broke," he said. "We have to figure out our way through this."

Price said House Democrats will try to increase the funding for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery competitive grant program from the \$100 million allocated to it in the bill adopted by the subcommittee. TIGER grants will total \$500 million in fiscal 2015.

"This \$100 million for 2016 is just a placeholder," Price said. "It's clearly inadequate. We need to put a lot more money into that program."

President Obama asked for \$1.25 billion of TIGER grants for fiscal 2016 as the first installment of a six-year, \$7.5 billion program. The Transportation Department has distributed more than \$4.5 billion of TIGER grants since the program began in 2009.

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said the proposal funding levels in the appropriations bill pending in the House are inadequate to meet the nation's infrastructure needs.

"We're not happy with the funding levels for sure," he told reporters at a Tuesday briefing. "It's very disappointing overall because the country is sucking wind."

President Obama's 2016 transportation proposal would provide \$51.3 billion for highways and \$18 billion for mass transit projects.

Six states have postponed almost \$2 billion in road and transit projects planned for 2015 over the possibility that federal reimbursements will be delayed this summer due to low balances in the Highway Trust Fund and more are sure to follow, Foxx said.

Gasoline and diesel tax revenues in the HTF should be sufficient to keep reimbursements to states for qualified projects flowing for a month or so past the May 31 expiration of the extension to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) two-year highway bill, Foxx said.

That cushion could allow Congress to pass a short extension that wouldn't require lawmakers to find the \$10 billion of new revenue or so needed to keep the HTF operating through the end of fiscal 2015 on Sept. 30, Foxx said.

A short grace period might give Congress a chance to agree on a long-term funding solution for transportation, he said.

"If it's an extension for extension's sake, that's not a good idea because it's going to continue to freeze and immobilize state departments of transportation that are trying to find resources to get projects done," Foxx said.

<http://www.bondbuyer.com/news/washington-infrastructure/house-panel-appropriations-bill-would-freeze-transportation-funding-1072684-1.html>

# Roads to nowhere

## Texas' local transportation agencies spend at least \$1 billion in tax money with little to show for it

By [James Drew](#) | Staff Writer

Published May 1, 2015

— Grayson County authorities wanted to extend the Dallas North Tollway to Oklahoma and keep the lucrative toll dollars in their own community.

The result six years later: at least \$2.2 million in state funds spent, but no toll road.

In Tyler, local officials in 2004 vowed to build a \$248 million outer loop to absorb traffic and rake in tolls from a county of about 220,000 people.

The result: Slightly more than half of the beltway is completed. But the state wrote off a \$55 million loan that was supposed to be repaid with toll dollars.

In San Antonio, authorities pushed to build 50 miles of toll lanes stretching across the traffic-choked north side of Bexar County.

The result 11 years later: zero miles completed. Flawed planning and bloated administrative costs led to a complete overhaul of the agency in charge.

That agency is a regional mobility authority, a locally based transportation agency that can't levy taxes and isn't run by elected officials.

Counties, including Grayson and Smith, set up regional mobility authorities to use bonds to build transportation projects and pay them off with tolls. The theory is that the tolls stay home, boosting area economies.

But nearly 15 years after the Texas Legislature changed state law so the agencies could be created, most of the nine RMAs have struggled to live up to their ambitions while burning through at least \$1 billion in tax dollars, an investigation by *The Dallas Morning News* has found.

The RMAs have spent at least \$220 million on overhead costs, and not all RMAs have been audited, according to *The News*' analysis. They've spent about \$864 million in state and federal funds, despite the Texas Legislature originally hoping the projects would be financed almost exclusively by tolls.

Some have completed no roadway projects at all. Others have spent millions on projects that critics have said are unnecessary, such as planning for a toll road through a residential neighborhood of Brownsville.

In some cases, RMAs have financed projects by siphoning off tax dollars from elsewhere, not by using tolls.

Several projects, including high-profile toll roads, moved forward because the Texas Department of Transportation bankrolled them, with the RMAs playing minor roles because some had challenges obtaining bond money to build them.

The local agencies have spent at least \$260 million in state funds, according to audit reports. (Some RMAs did not provide *The News* with audits for all years.)

Other projects were completed because the Obama administration poured federal dollars into Texas as part of the national effort to pump up the ailing economy. The total of federal funds spent, much of it “stimulus” dollars, is at least \$604 million.

Agency leaders defend their track records. They point to \$1.5 billion of projects they say would not have been built without them.

“There’s a real place for RMAs in the rural areas as well as the big cities,” said Delbert Horton, chairman of the Sulphur River RMA, which covers four counties in northeast Texas.

But critics assert that some of the local transportation agencies have become small fiefdoms, unaccountable to taxpayers.

“There might be some that we need to look at abolishing,” said state Rep. Lyle Larson, a San Antonio Republican.

Larson and other legislators are calling for increased oversight of the regional mobility authorities, either by the state auditor or a state commission assigned to eliminate “waste, duplication, and inefficiency.”

The pressure for closer scrutiny comes at a time when anti-toll road sentiment has arisen in parts of Texas, including North Texas.

But with a Legislature bent on cutting taxes, the local transportation agencies counter that toll roads often are the only way to get roadways built to keep pace with growing traffic.

“If the choice is no roads or tolls, my direction is, ‘Let’s see what we need to do to toll,’” said David Smith, executive director of the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority in Bexar County.

With only a few weeks left in the regular session, legislators so far haven’t advanced their bills through the House or Senate to require detailed audits of the local transportation agencies.

They say that’s because the regional mobility authorities have gained power over the past 14 years, in large part because most of them use a politically connected law firm that doubles as their lobbyist.

That firm, Dallas-based Locke Lord, has played a key role in enabling the agencies to tap vehicle registration fees and funds from higher property tax values for their projects.



## Advertisement

RMA mission accomplished?

When legislators voted in 2001 to let local governments set up their own transportation agencies, two ideas stood behind the law.

If the state didn't have enough money to build roads, then the new regional mobility authorities could tap local dollars and sell bonds to get them done faster. By anteing up, the locals could help the state stretch its dollars further.

The second idea was that if toll roads were going to be built, the counties wanted to keep the revenue. Otherwise, that cash would flow into the coffers of TxDOT and be scattered around the state.

The way to prevent that from happening was by creating authorities: governments with state powers that operate in smaller areas, such as a city or a county.

Regional mobility authorities are different animals from massive agencies like the North Texas Tollway Authority or county toll authorities, such as the one in Collin County.

Counties don't need to be above a certain population to create a regional mobility authority.

When counties began to set up the new agencies last decade, they had clear goals.

In Grayson County, local authorities wanted to expand their road network to keep pace with economic growth from the Dallas metropolitan area. They formed the Grayson County Regional Mobility Authority in 2004 to pay for projects and complete them faster.

The Grayson County RMA said its first project would be extending SH 289 from Sherman to Pottsboro.

But the county, with more experience, decided to tackle the project itself, raising the question of why the RMA was created.

"They had no funding, and they really didn't have a good grasp of what they were trying to do," said Gene Short, a former Grayson County commissioner who was one of the original architects of the RMA. "It wasn't their fault. They were new."

The project moved forward, but without the local transportation agency.

And the roadway wasn't financed by tolls as the Legislature had envisioned for projects like Highway 289.

The county cut a deal with TxDOT: The county sold bonds to pay for the project, and the state agreed to reimburse the county.

But commissioners didn't entirely give up on the agency.

In 2008, they said the RMA would oversee extension of the Dallas North Tollway through Grayson County.

That way, the North Texas Tollway Authority wouldn't be able to pocket the toll revenue from the extension as it does from the existing Dallas North Tollway.

A year later, the regional mobility authority announced that the state had approved its request for \$10 million to develop the project. Then a route was chosen. Of the \$10 million, \$2.2 million has been spent.

But the project hasn't moved forward. A study found that there wouldn't be enough traffic to repay the bond money that would have to be borrowed to build it, said Mike Shahan, executive director of the local transportation agency.

Veston Derebery, 83, said he's among the property owners who are left hanging.

The path chosen by the RMA would split the 10-acre tract where Derebery lives — land that has been in his family since the 1940s.

It may now be decades before the Dallas North Tollway is extended through Grayson County, RMA officials said.

"I am standing on pins and needles for 30 or 40 years," said Derebery. He said the local agency should buy the land for the toll road now to remove the cloud over his property.

Eleven years after its creation, the Grayson County Regional Mobility Authority has not completed any roadway projects.

But it does have a job: County commissioners assigned the agency to operate the North Texas Regional Airport.

The track record of the regional mobility authority in the Austin area is vastly different.

The local agency is a bridge between two counties with opposite political loyalties — Democratic Travis and Republican-controlled Williamson.

And unlike Grayson County, where the Highway 289 extension was built in large part to spur development around the airport, the Austin area is choking on traffic.

The promise of a steady flow of toll money enabled the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority to complete five projects totaling \$755 million since its creation in 2002.

Motorists in Austin heading to Houston who suffered for several years through stop-and-go traffic on U.S. Highway 290 East, for example, now have the option of using three express toll lanes in each direction.

Complaints of waste

The most serious accusation against the regional mobility authorities is that some have wasted public dollars.

In 2003, San Antonio-area officials rolled out an ambitious blueprint for its RMA: Plans called for 50 miles of toll lanes stretching across rapidly growing northern Bexar County at a cost of up to \$2 billion.

What followed was a series of controversies and missteps that incensed many residents who want solutions for San Antonio's traffic woes.

Residents fought the toll lane plans. They attacked the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority and its counterparts around the state as "non-elected groups" that want to "place a tax on us by asking us to pay a toll on a road already paid for."

They also filed lawsuits that exposed TxDOT's failure to fully study the environmental impact of highway construction, including the effect of runoff into San Antonio's primary water source, the Edwards Aquifer.

That put a major toll road project on hold, but it didn't stop the Alamo RMA from building a bigger staff with tax dollars.

In 2005, the authority hired a former San Antonio city manager, Terry Brechtel, as its executive director. That agency had two employees earning \$299,702. Five years later, the payroll had mushroomed to nine employees earning \$1.2 million.

The agency's board agreed to pay Brechtel \$186,000 a year — more than what the head of TxDOT earned. But Brechtel — who had resigned as city manager under pressure from the mayor — didn't have transportation experience, anti-toll activists said.

Richard C. Gray was among residents of northern Bexar County who watched the meltdown of the local transportation agency with disgust.

"They took retired politicians and put them over at the regional mobility authority," said Gray, referring to Brechtel and former San Antonio Mayor Bill Thornton, the agency's first board chairman.

The Bexar County Commissioners Court — angered by the high overhead and lack of progress on projects — seized control of the RMA in 2013. The agency's employees were replaced with county workers, who added the agency's work to their regular duties.

As a result, the county cut the agency's personnel costs from \$1.2 million to \$514,665.

Eleven years after the agency opened its doors, none of the 50 miles of toll lanes has been built.

The agency can point to only three completed projects: a badly needed interchange at U.S. 281 and Loop 1604, and two smaller projects to improve traffic flow on stretches of a highway.

Federal stimulus funds from the Obama administration paid for most of those projects.

## Cameron County

In Cameron County, the local transportation agency wanted to build a toll road through Brownsville.

Residents who lived near the proposed route pulled together to stop the RMA from carving out a highway through their neighborhoods. They wanted a hike-and-bike trail and pointed out that the toll road would be parallel to a nearby highway.

The opponents also collected thousands of signatures on petitions to fight the toll road. Many of the signatures were collected outside of Catholic churches across the city.

Nonetheless, the RMA could not be swayed in its efforts to build the toll road, said Bill Berg, a West Brownsville resident who fought the project.

Under state law, the governor appoints the board chairman of each regional mobility authority. Other board members are appointed by local officials.

“Nothing could get them to see that this was not a good idea,” he said.

So West Brownsville residents took their case to elected county and city officials.

Residents won their battle in 2012. The toll road was scrapped.

The real toll: The RMA spent about \$2.4 million on planning for a toll road that residents never wanted.

But the RMA has not given up.

The local agency still hopes to build the roadway but without tolls, said Pete Sepulveda, executive director of the Cameron County RMA.

## Smith County

In East Texas, Smith County officials had dreamed since at least the 1980s of building a 50-mile loop around Tyler.

The state would not pay for a four-lane divided highway with frontage roads. The reason: Studies showed there wasn't enough traffic to justify it, said Sharon Emmert, a former Smith County commissioner.

So backers of the big city-style beltway set up the North East Texas RMA that could use bonds and tolls to build it. Emmert said the agency spent at least \$4 million in local tax dollars. The project was scaled back to two lanes.

Instead of selling bonds, however, the RMA used money from TxDOT, which acted like a bank.

In 2011, TxDOT agreed to lend \$55 million to the local agency to build a 10-mile section of the toll road in Smith County.

But instead of repaying the loan, the North East Texas Regional Mobility Authority asked the commission that oversees TxDOT to turn the loan into a grant.

That would free up money to build more sections of the toll road, leaders of the local agency said.

The Texas Transportation Commission approved the request last year.

As a result, Texans who may never drive on Toll 49 in Smith County helped pay for a stretch.

Dr. Mark Atkinson, a former Tyler resident who lived near the road's path, said the local agency's campaign to get the state to write off the loan didn't surprise him.

It was consistent with how Toll 49 was developed, he said.

"The people who were behind it were businessmen, road contractors and politicians," said Atkinson, a leading opponent of the project. "They wanted to build it come what may."

About 26 miles of Toll 49 have been completed. Studies showed that traffic would be too low on the eastern side of the planned loop, so that part has been put on hold.

But those who are scrutinizing the project say the local agency is an unneeded layer between the citizens and the government.

"These RMAs are not run by elected officials; these are appointed people and they've got a big bank account," said Ernie Clark, a former Tyler city manager and president of a nonprofit conservative group, Grassroots America We the People.

#### Legislation and barriers

On April 22, the state House approved a bill sponsored by state Rep. Joe Pickett, D-El Paso, that would enable county commissioners to appoint themselves to serve on RMA boards. Currently, they appoint most of the board members.

By appointing themselves, commissioners could make RMAs more accountable to the citizens, said Pickett, who is chairman of the House Transportation Committee. The Senate has not taken any action yet on the measure.

But Larson, the Republican House member from San Antonio, is pushing a bill that would go well beyond what Pickett wants.

His legislation would require a state commission to review whether regional mobility authorities should continue to exist.

Larson acknowledged this week that his bill may be dead. With less than a month in the regular session, it remains bottled up in Pickett's committee.

The reason is that the local transportation agencies are lobbying against it, Larson said.

The RMAs have paid about \$2 million to firms employing registered lobbyists in recent years, according to public records obtained by *The News*.

But it's difficult to get a full accounting of how much lobbying has been done. The agencies provided records for different time periods — most from 2009 through last year.

And agencies did not specify how much they paid for work that is defined as lobbying under state law.

That's because they charge lobbying firms for "legislative work." Some of that is lobbying, such as urging lawmakers to vote in a certain way. Other duties, such as answering a lawmaker's question or testifying at a committee meeting, are not defined as lobbying under the state's lobby law.

And the agencies say they don't ask the firms to separate bills for legislative work from lobbying because it's not required by state law.

As a result, the public can't pinpoint how much the local transportation agencies are paying for lobbying.

Six of the seven RMAs that hire lobbyists use the same powerful Dallas-based law firm, Locke Lord. The firm also does legal work for those agencies.

The Cameron County RMA has spent the most, about \$481,000.

In addition to paying Locke Lord, that local agency also has paid \$217,500 since mid-2012 to a firm headed by Ray Sullivan. He is an ex-chief of staff to former Gov. Rick Perry.

The Hidalgo County RMA has spent about \$452,000 on legislative work since 2008, nearly all of it to a lobbying firm, Pathfinder Public Affairs, and to the law firm of McGuireWoods.

Rene Ramirez, the president of Pathfinder, is a former chief of staff to state Sen. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, a McAllen Democrat. On his firm's website, Ramirez says he has secured \$123.5 million for RMA projects.

Locke Lord is a major campaign contributor to state candidates through the firm, a political action committee and its employees.

The law firm has accomplished much for the regional mobility authorities.

A report compiled by the firm lists several major laws enacted since 2003 that benefit them.

“We probably had a hand in it one way or another,” said C. Brian Cassidy, managing partner of Locke Lord’s Austin office.

That includes being able to tap revenue from a \$10 vehicle registration fee if the county approves it. That’s especially valuable for regional mobility authorities because they do not have taxing power.

The local transportation agencies also have the first right to build any toll roads in their regions, trumping TxDOT.

Locke Lord has helped organize the regional mobility authorities to oppose Larson’s bill.

The firm initially said it was neutral on a bill sponsored by state Sen. Don Huffines, R-Dallas. Huffines’ bill would require the state auditor to examine the agencies.

Locke Lord tried to work with Huffines to give counties the option of asking for audits of RMAs, but the effort failed. His bill has been approved by the Senate Transportation Committee.

RMA leaders have told legislators they already are held accountable to taxpayers. They said they don’t want to pay for the state reviews or audits.

But Larson, the GOP House member from San Antonio, said if the regional mobility authorities have nothing to worry about, they should welcome state audits.

“It’s basically to shine some sun and take them out of the dark,” he said.

# Debate over Trinity toll road accelerates

Mercedes Olivera [oliveramercedes@ymail.com](mailto:oliveramercedes@ymail.com)

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Seventeen years after Dallas voters approved a scenic recreational parkway along the Trinity River, the parkway has yet to be built.

But a public debate over whether or not the parkway should be a six- to eight-lane tollway has gained full steam.

Recent polls show that a large majority of Dallas voters do not want a toll road along the Trinity River. A toll road was never mentioned in the 1998 bond election, and its opponents say that original vision must not be altered.

Installing a six- or eight-lane toll road would indeed be different from the meandering parkway most voters may have envisioned back then.

And then there's the cost — a \$1.5 billion projected price tag. The city lacks about \$900 million to pay for it.

State Rep. **Rafael Anchía**, D-Dallas, proposed a bipartisan bill this week to the state House transportation subcommittee on long-range infrastructure planning that would prohibit the Texas Department of Transportation from “bailing out financially unsound toll roads like the Trinity.”

“If you're going to be a great city, you're going to have to do better than proposing a massive toll road next to a mud pit,” he said.

Conservationists and residents have long complained that the river has become a drainage ditch and eyesore, with warehouses and jails dotting its banks.

Anchía said he's heard an earful from Dallas business owners and residents, most of them opposed to the toll road.

Mayoral candidate **Marcos Ronquillo** is also opposed to a toll road and said Dallas residents are still waiting for the park presented in the 1998 bond.



“It’s just another example of kicking the can down the road,” he said. “We don’t have any other alternative” of dealing with the booming traffic that urban planners say is coming.

Demographers project that Dallas will continue to add 1 million people per decade for the next 30 years. That could translate into millions of cars.

But others say Americans’ driving habits are changing, and Dallas is looking back at 20th century transportation solutions instead of looking ahead to creative and sustainable ways of connecting people in the future.

As an attorney, Ronquillo has done bond work over the years for the city, Dallas ISD and Dallas Area Rapid Transit.

He points out that even if funds are included in a future bond election for a toll road, the city still has infrastructure needs that are not being met.

“And it always comes back to potholes.”

Dallas Mayor **Mike Rawlings** has said he hopes to go with the recommendation offered by a “dream team” of city planners — a four-lane parkway.

“I want us to figure out the best and fastest way to make their vision for a smaller, meandering parkway a reality,” he said in a statement Friday.

He said public input is equally important. City officials will hold numerous meetings throughout the city in the coming weeks to gather feedback on the recommendations.

Meeting dates and times will be announced.

But Anchia said city leaders should embrace a much bigger vision.

The city should be “park-centric,” he said. “A world-class park will make this a world-class city.”

# T ready to buy TEX Rail cars for Fort Worth commuter line

By Gordon Dickson

gdickson@star-telegram.com

Efforts to start the proposed TEX Rail commuter train service by 2018 are gathering steam.

Fort Worth Transportation Authority board members recently approved the purchase of eight self-propelled diesel rail cars to operate on the proposed 27-mile rail line and agreed to enter into several contracts that will help get the project underway. The rail would carry an estimated 10,000 or more passengers per day from downtown Fort Worth to Grapevine and Dallas/ Fort Worth Airport's Terminal B.

The T agreed to a contract with a firm to handle preparations for TEX Rail construction, which could begin next year, approved the purchase of several properties to make way for the project, and OK'd a final design contract for two stations in North Richland Hills.

"This is really the first major milestone for the project," said Bob Baulsir, the T's vice president of TEX Rail and procurement.

## Not all funding in place

The moves, expected to cost a combined \$115 million, were made even though TEX Rail hasn't received the full federal funding to cover the cost of the project. In all, TEX Rail is expected to cost \$862 million, with federal money needed for roughly half.

Even without funding, the Federal Transit Administration could give the T the go-ahead to buy the cars by granting its request to "enter into engineering," a procedural step T officials hope could come as soon as May. The FTA's governing rules for new-start passenger rail lines say transit agencies may have "pre-award authority" to make certain purchases that will eventually be reimbursed with federal funds, even if the overall project hasn't gotten final approval.

The timing of a full-funding grant agreement from the agency depends on how quickly the T completes the remaining steps in the federal application. Under such an agreement, the federal

government essentially pledges to provide the full amount of money needed. The appropriations are often spread over many years and can be subject to congressional approval of mass transit funds.

## Light-duty cars

The eight rail cars were by far the largest expenditure authorized last week. They will be ordered from Switzerland-based Stadler Bussnang AG, which has a Stadler Rail U.S. branch in New Jersey. Each car costs \$10.775 million. With engineering and other expenses the total tab is expected to be \$106.7 million, although the T has options to buy more cars that would increase the cost.

Stadler and three other companies were invited to talk to the T about its needs for TEX Rail. The others are US Railcar, Nippon Sharyo and Bombardier, T officials said. But only Stadler eventually responded to the T's request for proposals. The other companies said they couldn't comply with the federal government's "buy America" requirements for purchases involving federal money.

The T has \$25 million on hand to place the order for the cars and has access to state and federal grant funds as well as millions of dollars in its fund balance to cover costs if there are delays in getting the full-funding grant agreement from the transit agency, or new-starts funding from Congress. The T can also issue debt if necessary, Baulsir said.

The rail cars are a type known as diesel multiple units. They are self-propelled, with the engines embedded in the passenger cars, so a locomotive isn't needed.

The operator rides in a control room at the front of the lead passenger car.

## Controversy over the cars

Stadler cars were in the spotlight beginning in 2012, when an electrical problem known as shunting caused a Denton A-train to disappear from a dispatcher's control panel. Shunting occurs when the electrical signal sent by trains through the metal railroad tracks is interrupted by any of several factors, including dirt or rust on the tracks.

In the case of the Stadler cars, a former Trinity Railway Express chief mechanical officer criticized the T in a 2013 *Star-Telegram* article, saying he was concerned that the Stadler cars were a safety hazard because they were too light to provide a continuous signal. Shunting could prevent a train from triggering the gates and lights at a railroad crossing, for example.

But Baulsir says the Stadler cars the T wants to buy for TEX Rail have twice as many wheels as those used by the A-train, and he expects no difficulties with shunting. Baulsir also said passengers

will be thrilled by the streetcarlike comfort of the Stadler cars, which feature ample standing room, panoramic windows and very little rattling or other noise.

## NRH stations

The T board also agreed to enter a \$527,590 contract with the Urban Engineers firm to design two TEX Rail stations in North Richland Hills: one at the northwest corner of Loop 820 and Iron Horse Boulevard, the other on Smithfield Road between Mid-Cities Boulevard and Main Street.

TEX Rail would then have 10 stations. The North Richland Hills stations were initially left off the environmental planning document for TEX Rail.

Although North Richland Hills currently doesn't have sales tax capacity to join the T — Fort Worth, for example, dedicates a half-cent to the T and Grapevine pays 3/8 cent — city officials are in discussions with the T to determine how to help pay for TEX Rail and get the two stations open, City Manager Mark Hindman said.

"We are establishing tax-increment finance districts that will pay a large portion of the costs out of the incremental value that will derive from the transit-oriented developments that we have laid out around the two stations," Hindman said.

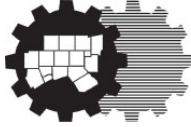
## Land purchase

The T board also approved the purchase of several small pieces of property on the northeast end of downtown Fort Worth, where a new stretch of railroad tracks will be needed to get TEX Rail out of the Intermodal Transportation Center and onto the Union Pacific tracks heading toward the Stockyards.

The properties are at 1519 and 1525 E. Belknap St., and 1604 E. Bluff St.

*Gordon Dickson, 817-390-7796*

*Read more here: <http://www.star-telegram.com/news/traffic/your-commute/article20144886.html#storylink=cpy>*



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Planners Seek Input on Proposed Changes to Funded Transportation Projects

North Texans can review, give input on recommendations online

**March 23, 2015** (Arlington, Texas) – Developing transportation solutions for the many regional transportation needs involves collaboration and public input that guide decisions as projects move from an idea to a detailed plan to secured funding and eventually construction. North Texans are encouraged to review and comment on the latest set of changes to funded transportation projects moving toward completion.

A comprehensive list of funded transportation projects through 2018 is maintained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects with committed funds from federal, state and local sources are included in the TIP. To maintain an accurate project listing, this document is updated on a regular basis. The current set of proposed project modifications are available for public review and comment at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input).

While the TIP is a forward-looking list of projects, planners are also looking back at transportation investments in 2014. The Annual Listing of Obligated Projects is published as an update, and it is also available at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input). Each year, NCTCOG, in consultation and coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation and public transportation agencies, compiles a listing of obligated projects, including investments in roadways, transit, maintenance, pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, for which federal funds were obligated in the preceding fiscal year.

#### Regional Transportation Input Opportunity Details

Information is online at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input) for public review and comment through April 7, 2015, when comments are due. To request printed copies of the information, call (817) 608-2335 or e-mail [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org).

Submit comments and questions through one of the following methods:

**E-mail:** [transinfo@nctcog.org](mailto:transinfo@nctcog.org)

**Website:** [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input)

**Fax:** (817) 640-3028

**Phone:** (817) 695-9240

**Mail:** P.O. Box 5888, Arlington, Texas 76005

**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 on 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](http://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](http://www.nctcog.org).

# # #



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

## PRESS RELEASE

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## NCTCOG Partners with Local Auto Shops for Free Clinics

North Texans can learn basic car care tips throughout April

**March 31, 2015** (Arlington, Texas) – Spring is here, and as temperatures warm up, many people are thinking about getting their cars in shape for the hot North Texas summer.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is partnering with auto repair shops across the Dallas-Fort Worth area to sponsor free Car Care Clinics during National Car Care Month, recognized each April. Clinics will be held in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Parker and Tarrant counties through April 25.

North Texans who attend a clinic will learn what the check-engine light means, how to monitor fluid levels and other basic maintenance lessons that could help prolong their vehicles' lives and aid the environment. Many clinics will provide free vehicle checkups. While supplies last, attendees will receive a complimentary vehicle emergency kit, which includes jumper cables, an LED flashlight, basic first aid kit, and manual for basic car troubleshooting and guidance. To find a clinic scheduled near you visit [www.NTXCarCare.org](http://www.NTXCarCare.org).

Proper vehicle maintenance may not only save motorists money on expensive repairs in the future; it can also lead to air quality improvements by reducing emissions and improving fuel economy. Efficiently operating vehicles are especially important to Dallas-Fort Worth as it heads into the peak of ozone season. Ten area counties are in nonattainment for the pollutant ozone, and are working to meet the federal standard, and vehicle emissions are a primary contributor to the formation of ozone pollution.

“Car Care Clinics are a great opportunity for people to learn how their cars work and understand the importance of keeping them maintained,” said Jason Brown, NCTCOG air quality operations manager. “Through this key partnership, we are able to provide a service to the entire region that will help residents understand the connection between taking care of their car and improving the air we breathe.”

Car Care Month is a nationwide effort sponsored by the Car Care Council that aims to provide information about ways to prolong vehicle life, obtain better gas mileage and minimize emissions.

This is the third time NCTCOG has partnered with local auto repair shops for free clinics. The first round was in October 2013, as part of Fall Car Care Month. Last April, the partnership was renewed at repair shops across the region.

**Scheduled Car Care Clinics**

Facility	When	Where
Rick's Automotive & Wrecker Service	6:30 p.m. April 7	1110 N. Main St. Cleburne, TX 76033
The Auto Shop	10 a.m. April 11	2560 E. Plano Parkway Plano, TX 75074
Oakland Auto Repair	11 a.m. April 11	1228 Oakland Blvd. Fort Worth, TX 76103
Christian Brothers Automotive	11 a.m. April 14	156 W Interstate Highway 20 Weatherford, TX 76086
Express Car Service	11 a.m. April 18	240 E. Ovilla Road Red Oak, TX 75154
Heller Automotive	Noon April 18	3104 S. Rigsbee Drive Plano, TX 75074
Firestone	4 p.m. April 21	2401 N. Belt Line Road Irving, TX 75062
Kwik Kar Auto Repair & Service Center -- Matlock	6:30 p.m. April 23	5333 Matlock Road Arlington, TX 76018
Barebones Auto Repair	10 a.m. April 25	3826 Market Street Denton, TX 76209
Starkey's Service Center	2 p.m. April 25	918 W. Davis Dallas, TX 75208

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For more news from the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit [www.nctcog.org/trans/outreach/media](http://www.nctcog.org/trans/outreach/media).

# # #



**G4910-9X****DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Office of the Secretary of Transportation****Notice of Funding Availability for the Department of Transportation's National Infrastructure Investments under the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015****AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary of Transportation, DOT**ACTION:** Notice of Funding Availability

**SUMMARY:** The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235, December 16, 2014) ("FY 2015 Appropriations Act" or the "Act") appropriated \$500 million to be awarded by the Department of Transportation ("DOT" or the "Department") for National Infrastructure Investments. This appropriation is similar, but not identical, to the program funded and implemented pursuant to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the "Recovery Act") known as the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or "TIGER Discretionary Grants," program. Because of the similarity in program structure, DOT will continue to refer to the program as "TIGER Discretionary Grants." Funds for the FY 2015 TIGER program ("TIGER FY 2015") are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. The purpose of this final notice is to solicit applications for TIGER Discretionary Grants.

**DATES:** Pre-applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM E.D.T. on May 4, 2015. Final applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM E.D.T. on June 5, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** Pre-applications must be submitted electronically through [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER). Final applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. Only applicants who comply with all

submission requirements described in this notice and electronically submit both valid pre-applications to DOT and final applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for award.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information concerning this notice, please contact the TIGER Discretionary Grant program staff via e-mail at [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov), or call Howard Hill at 202-366-0301. A TDD is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 202-366-3993. In addition, DOT will regularly post answers to questions and requests for clarifications on DOT's website at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER)

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice is substantially similar to the final notice published for the TIGER Discretionary Grant program in the *Federal Register* on March 3, 2014. However, the FY 2015 Appropriations Act does not provide dedicated funding for the planning, preparation, or design of capital projects ("TIGER Planning Grants"); these activities may be eligible to the extent that they are part of an overall construction project that receives TIGER Discretionary Grant funding. Additionally, unlike the past two rounds of TIGER Discretionary Grants, a pre-application must be submitted for an application to be considered. The pre-application helps DOT allocate staff resources for the evaluation process, allows applicants to provide identifying information about their project, and assists DOT in clarifying eligibility questions before the final application is submitted. In addition to the differences above, and minor edits for clarification and those made to conform the notice to the statutory circumstances of this round of TIGER Discretionary Grant funding, this notice's format has changed to conform to Appendix I to 2 CFR Part 200. Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for these TIGER Discretionary Grants, and you

should read this notice in its entirety so that you have the information you need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

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### **A. Program Description**

Since the TIGER Discretionary Grants program was first created, \$4.1 billion has been awarded for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure over six rounds of competitive grants. The TIGER Discretionary Grant program seeks to award projects that advance DOT's long-term priorities for the nation's transportation system found in DOT's Strategic Plan for FY 2014-FY 2018 ([http://www.dot.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/2014-2018-strategic-plan\\_0.pdf](http://www.dot.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/2014-2018-strategic-plan_0.pdf)). Section E, Application Review, of this notice describes the TIGER Discretionary Grant selection criteria based on these priorities. Please see DOT's website at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER) for background on previous rounds of TIGER Discretionary Grants.

Throughout the TIGER program, TIGER Discretionary Grant awards have supported innovative projects, including multimodal and multijurisdictional projects which are difficult to fund through traditional Federal programs. Successful TIGER projects leverage resources, encourage partnership, catalyze investment and growth, fill a critical void in the transportation

system or provide a substantial benefit to the nation, region or metropolitan area in which the project is located. The FY 2015 TIGER program will continue to make transformative surface transportation investments that dramatically improve the status quo by providing significant and measurable improvements over existing conditions. Transformative improvements anchor broad and long-lasting, positive changes in economic development, safety, quality of life, environmental sustainability, or state of good repair. Because each TIGER project is unique, applicants are encouraged to present, in measurable terms, how TIGER investment will lead to transformative change(s) in their community.

The FY 2015 TIGER program will fund transformative projects of all eligible types, including projects that promote Ladders of Opportunity, to the extent permitted by law. The FY 2014 TIGER program gave consideration to projects that sought to improve access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for disconnected communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas. This included, but was not limited to, capital projects that better connected people to jobs, removed physical barriers to access, and strengthened communities through neighborhood redevelopment. The FY 2015 TIGER program clearly identifies this concept as Ladders of Opportunity. Ladders of Opportunity projects may increase connectivity to employment, education, services and other opportunities, support workforce development, or contribute to community revitalization, particularly for disadvantaged groups: low income groups, persons with visible and hidden disabilities, elderly individuals, and minority persons and populations.

**B. Federal Award Information**

The FY 2015 Appropriations Act appropriated \$500 million to be awarded by DOT for the TIGER Discretionary Grants program. The FY 2015 TIGER Discretionary Grants are for capital

investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. The Act also allows DOT to use a small portion of the \$500 million for oversight and administration of grants. If this solicitation does not result in the award and obligation of all available funds, DOT may publish additional solicitations.

The FY 2015 Appropriations Act specifies that TIGER Discretionary Grants may not be less than \$10 million and not greater than \$200 million, except that for projects located in rural areas (as defined in Section C.3) the minimum TIGER Discretionary Grant size is \$1 million.

Pursuant to the FY 2015 Appropriations Act, no more than 25 percent of the funds made available for TIGER Discretionary Grants (or \$125 million) may be awarded to projects in a single State. The FY 2015 Appropriations Act directs that not less than 20 percent of the funds provided for TIGER Discretionary Grants (or \$100 million) shall be used for projects located in rural areas. Further, pursuant to the FY 2015 Appropriations Act, DOT must take measures to ensure an equitable geographic distribution of grant funds, an appropriate balance in addressing the needs of urban and rural areas, and investment in a variety of transportation modes.

The FY 2015 Appropriations Act requires that FY 2015 TIGER funds are only available for obligation through September 30, 2017. No FY 2015 TIGER funds may be expended after September 30, 2022. As part of the review and selection process described in Section E.2., DOT will consider whether a project is ready to proceed with an obligation of grant funds from DOT within the statutory time provided. Under the FY 2015 Appropriations Act, no waiver is possible for these deadlines.

The FY 2015 Appropriations Act allows for up to 20 percent of available funds (or \$100 million) to be used by the Department to pay the subsidy and administrative costs for a project

receiving credit assistance under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998 (“TIFIA”) program, if it would further the purposes of the TIGER Discretionary Grant program.

Recipients of prior TIGER Discretionary Grants may apply for funding to support additional phases of a project awarded funds in earlier rounds of this program. However, to be competitive, the applicant should demonstrate the extent to which the previously funded project phase has been able to meet estimated project schedules and budget, as well as the ability to realize the benefits expected for the project.

DOT expects that each TIGER Discretionary Grant will be administered by one of the relevant modal administrations, pursuant to a grant agreement between the TIGER Discretionary Grant recipient and the relevant modal administration.

### **C. Eligibility Information**

To be selected for a TIGER Discretionary Grant, an applicant must be an Eligible Applicant and the project must be an Eligible Project.

#### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible Applicants for TIGER Discretionary Grants are State, local, and tribal governments, including U.S. territories, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local governments.

Multiple States or jurisdictions may submit a joint application and must identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact. Each applicant in a joint application must be an Eligible Applicant. Joint applications must include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant and must be signed by each applicant.

#### **2. Cost Sharing or Matching**

TIGER Discretionary Grants may be used for up to 80 percent of the costs of a project<sup>1</sup>. DOT may increase the Federal share above 80 percent only for projects located in rural areas, in which case DOT may fund up to 100 percent of the costs of a project.

DOT will consider non-Federal funds, as well as funds from the Tribal Transportation Program (23 U.S.C. 202), as a local match for purposes of this program. DOT cannot consider any funds already expended (or otherwise encumbered) towards the matching requirement. Please note that matching funds provided by an applicant will not be considered as matching funds if the source of those funds is ultimately a Federal program, nor can Federal funds be used as match for other Federal funds, unless authorized in statute. Matching funds are subject to the same Federal requirements described in Section F.2. as awarded funds.

### **3. Other**

- i. Eligible Projects** - Eligible projects for TIGER Discretionary Grants are capital projects that include, but are not limited to: (1) highway or bridge projects eligible under title 23, United States Code (including bicycle and pedestrian related projects); (2) public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code; (3) passenger and freight rail transportation projects; (4) port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure); and (5) intermodal projects. This description of eligible projects is identical to the description of eligible projects under earlier rounds of the TIGER Discretionary Grant program.<sup>2</sup> Research, demonstration, or pilot projects are eligible only if

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<sup>1</sup> To meet match requirements, the minimum total project cost for a project located in an urban area must be \$12.5 million.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the Department may use a TIGER Discretionary Grant to pay for the surface transportation components of a broader project that has non-surface transportation components, and applicants are encouraged to apply for TIGER Discretionary Grants to pay for the surface transportation components of these projects.

they result in long-term, permanent surface transportation infrastructure that has independent utility as defined in Section C.3.iii.

- ii. Rural/Urban Definition** – For purposes of this notice, DOT defines “rural area” as any area not in an Urbanized Area, as such term is defined by the Census Bureau,<sup>3</sup> and will consider a project to be in a rural area if all or the majority of a project (determined by geographic location(s) where the majority of project money is to be spent) is located in a rural area. In this notice “urban” means not rural. This definition affects three aspects of the program. First, the FY 2015 Appropriations Act directs that not less than \$100 million of the funds provided for TIGER Discretionary Grants are to be used for projects in rural areas. Second, for a project in a rural area the minimum award is \$1 million instead of \$10 million. Third, up to 100 percent of the costs of a project in a rural area may be paid for with Federal funds.

To the extent more than a *de minimis* portion of a project is located in an Urbanized Area, applicants should identify the estimated percentage of project costs that will be spent in Urbanized Areas and the estimated percentage that will be spent in rural areas.

- iii. Project Components** – An application may describe a project that contains more than one component. DOT may award funds for a component, instead of the larger project, if that component (1) meets minimum award amounts described in

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<sup>3</sup> For Census 2010, the Census Bureau defined an Urbanized Area (UA) as an area that consists of densely settled territory that contains 50,000 or more people. Updated lists of UAs are available on the Census Bureau website at [http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC\\_RefMap/ua/](http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC_RefMap/ua/). Urban Clusters (UCs) are rural areas for purposes of the TIGER Discretionary Grant program. Please note that while individual jurisdictions might have a population of fewer than 50,000, if they are included as part of an UA, they will be classified as urban for purposes of the TIGER program.



Section B and all eligibility requirements described in Section C; (2) has independent utility; and (3) independently aligns well with the selection criteria specified in Section E.1 (*Selection Criteria*). Independent utility means that the component provides transportation benefits in and of itself and will be ready for intended use upon completion of the component's construction. All project components that are presented in a single application must demonstrate a strong relationship or connection between them (please see Section E.1.iii.d. for Required Approvals.)

DOT strongly encourages applicants to identify in their applications the project components that have independent utility and separately detail the costs and requested TIGER funding for those components. If the application identifies an independent project component, the application must clearly identify the benefits that the component would produce on its own, in addition to describing the benefits from the full proposal.

- iv. **Limit on Number of Applications** - Each lead applicant may submit no more than three applications. Unrelated project components should not be bundled in an application for the purpose of avoiding the three applications per lead applicant limit. Please note that the three-application limit applies only to applications where the applicant is the lead applicant. There is no limit on applications for which an applicant can be listed as a partnering agency. If a lead applicant submits more than three applications as the lead applicant, only the first three received will be considered.

#### **D. Application and Submission Information**

##### **1. Address:**

Pre-application instructions and information will be available at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER), and will include details for submitting the pre-application electronically to DOT. Final applications must be submitted to Grants.gov. Instructions for submitting pre-applications and final applications through Grants.gov can be found at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER).

## **2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

- i. Pre-Application:** The pre-application requires applicants to submit identifying information about their project and qualifies applicants to submit a final application. If an applicant does not submit a pre-application, the final application will not be considered. Pre-applications will not be reviewed until after the pre-application deadline.

Applicants must complete the pre-application form and send it to DOT electronically on or prior to the pre-application deadline, in accordance with the instructions specified at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER).

- ii. Final Application:** Final applications will not be considered unless a pre-application is submitted by the applicant. Any changes from the pre-application should be clearly identified in the final application. DOT may ask any applicant to supplement data in its application, but expects applications to be complete upon submission. To the extent practicable, applicants should provide data and evidence of project merits in a form that is verifiable or publicly available. The final application must include the Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) and the Project Narrative. Additional clarifying guidance and FAQs to assist applicants in completing the SF-424 will be available at

[www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER) by May 5, 2015, when the “Apply” function within Grants.gov opens to accept applications under this notice.

The Project Narrative (attachment to SF-424) must respond to the application requirements outlined below. The application must include information required for DOT to assess each of the criteria specified in Section E.1 (Selection Criteria). Applicants must demonstrate the responsiveness of a project to any pertinent selection criteria with the most relevant information that you can provide, regardless of whether such information has been specifically requested, or identified, in this notice. An application should provide evidence of the feasibility of achieving project milestones, and of financial capacity and commitment in order to support project readiness.

An application should also include a description of how the project addresses the needs of the area, creates economic opportunity, and sparks community revitalization, particularly for disadvantaged groups.

DOT recommends that the project narrative adhere to the following basic outline and, in addition to a detailed statement of work, detailed project schedule, and detailed project budget, should include a table of contents, maps, and graphics as appropriate that make the information easier to review:

- a. Project Description (including a description of what TIGER funds will support, information on the expected users of the project, a description of the transportation challenges that the project aims to address, how the project will address these challenges, and if, and how, the project promotes Ladders of Opportunity. The description should include relevant

data, such as passenger or freight volumes, congestion levels, infrastructure condition, and safety experience.);

- b. Project Location (a detailed description of the proposed project and geospatial data for the project, including a map of the project's location and its connections to existing transportation infrastructure, as well as a description of the national, regional, or metropolitan area in which the project is located, including economic information such as population size, median income for transportation facility users, or major industries affected, and project map);
- c. Project Parties (information about the grant recipient and other project parties);
- d. Grant Funds and Sources/Uses of Project Funds (information about the amount of grant funding requested, availability/commitment of fund sources and uses of all project funds, total project costs, percentage of project costs that would be paid with TIGER Discretionary Grant funds, and the identity of all parties providing funds for the project and their percentage shares.) Include any other pending or past Federal funding requests for the project as well as Federal funds already provided under other programs and the size, nature/source of the required match for those funds, to clarify that these are not the same funds counted under the matching requirement for this grant request;
- e. Selection Criteria (information about how the project aligns with each of the primary and secondary selection criteria):

i) Primary Selection Criteria

- a) State of Good Repair
- b) Economic Competitiveness
- c) Quality of Life
- d) Environmental Sustainability
- e) Safety

ii) Secondary Selection Criteria

- a) Innovation
- b) Partnership

- f. Results of Benefit-Cost Analysis;
- g. Project Readiness, including planning approvals, NEPA and other environmental reviews/approvals, (including information about permitting, legislative approvals, State and local planning, and project partnership and implementation agreements); and
- h. Federal Wage Rate Certification (an application must include a certification, signed by the applicant(s), stating that it will comply with the requirements of subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code [Federal wage rate requirements], as required by the FY 2015 Appropriations Act).

The purpose of this recommended format is to ensure that applications clearly address the program requirements and make critical information readily apparent.

DOT recommends that the project narrative be prepared with standard formatting preferences (i.e., a single-spaced document, using a standard 12-point font, such as Times

New Roman, with 1-inch margins). The project narrative may not exceed 30 pages in length. Documentation supporting the assertions made in the narrative portion may also be provided, but should be limited to relevant information. Cover pages, tables of contents, and the federal wage rate certification do not count towards the 30-page limit for the narrative portion of the application. Otherwise, the only substantive portions of the application that may exceed the 30-page limit are any supporting documents (including a more detailed discussion of the benefit-cost analysis) provided to support assertions or conclusions made in the 30-page narrative section. If possible, website links to supporting documentation (including a more detailed discussion of the benefit-cost analysis) should be provided rather than copies of these materials. Otherwise, supporting documents should be included as appendices to the application. It is helpful if applicants' references to supporting documentation clearly identify the relevant portion of that document. At the applicant's discretion, relevant materials provided previously to a relevant modal administration in support of a different DOT discretionary financial assistance program (for example, New Starts or TIFIA) may be referenced and described as unchanged. This information need not be resubmitted for the TIGER Discretionary Grant application but may be referenced as described above; website links to the materials are highly recommended. DOT recommends using appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., "Project Narrative," "Maps," "Memoranda of Understanding and Letters of Support," etc.) for all attachments.

### **3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

DOT may not make a TIGER Discretionary Grant award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant

has not fully complied with the requirements by the submission deadline, the application will not be considered. To submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants must:

- i. Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number;
- ii. Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov);
- iii. Create a Grants.gov username and password; and
- iv. The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) at your organization must respond to the registration email from Grants.gov and login at Grants.gov to authorize you as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Please note that there can be more than one AOR for an organization.

For information and instructions on each of these processes, please see instructions at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>.

If an applicant is selected for an award, the applicant will be required to maintain an active SAM registration with current information throughout the period of the award.

#### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

- i. **Deadline:** Pre-applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM E.D.T. on May 4, 2015. Final applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM E.D.T. on June 5, 2015. The Grants.gov “Apply” function will open on May 5, 2015.

The Department has determined that a pre-application deadline fewer than 60 days after this notice is appropriate because (1) this notice is substantially similar to notices used for previous rounds of TIGER Discretionary Grants, (2) minimal work is required to submit the pre-

application, and (3) the accelerated timeframe helps the Department ensure that it can timely obligate the available funds.

- ii. Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this notice and electronically submit valid pre-applications to DOT and final applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for award.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline. Please be aware that you must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application, and that this process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete. If interested parties experience difficulties at any point during the registration or application process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 1-800-518-4726, Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. EDT.

- iii. **Late Applications:** Applications received after the deadline will not be considered except in the case of unforeseen technical difficulties outlined in Section 4.iv. Late applications that are the result of failure to register or comply with Grants.gov applicant requirements in a timely manner will not be considered.

- iv. **a. Pre-Application**

Applicants experiencing technical issues due to the pre-application submission site that are beyond the applicant's control must contact [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov) or Howard Hill at 202-366-0301 prior to the pre-application deadline with the user name of the registrant and details of the technical issue experienced.



DOT will consider late pre-applications on a case-by-case basis. DOT encourages applicants to submit additional information documenting the reason for the late submissions.

**b. Final Application**

Applicants experiencing technical issues with Grants.gov that are beyond the applicant's control must contact [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov) or Howard Hill at 202-366-0301 prior to the corresponding deadline with the user name of the registrant and details of the technical issue experienced. The applicant must provide:

- i) Details of the technical issue experienced.
- ii) Screen capture(s) of the technical issue experienced along corresponding "Grant tracking number" (Grants.Gov).
- iii) The "Legal Business Name" for the applicant that was provided in the SF-424 or pre-application
- iv) The AOR name submitted in the SF-424 (Grants.gov)
- v) The DUNS number associated with the pre-application/application
- vi) The Grants.gov or Pre-Application Help Desk Tracking Number

To ensure a fair competition for limited discretionary funds, the following conditions are not valid reasons to permit late submissions: (1) failure to complete the registration process before the deadline date; (2) failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on

its website; (3) failure to follow all of the instructions in this notice of funding availability; and (4) technical issues experienced with the applicant's computer or information technology (IT) environment. After DOT staff review all of the information submitted and contacted the Grants.gov Help Desk to validate the technical issues you reported, DOT staff will contact you to either approve or deny your request to submit a late application through Grants.gov. If the technical issues you reported cannot be validated, your application will be rejected as untimely.

## **5. Funding Restrictions**

6. There is no specific set aside funding solely for pre-construction activities<sup>4</sup> in the FY 2015 TIGER Discretionary Grant program. However, these activities may be eligible to the extent that they are part of an overall construction project that receives TIGER Discretionary Grant funding. For TIGER funds to be considered for pre-construction activities, the applicant must clearly state, in the application, the pre-construction activity and amount of TIGER funds that will be expended on the activity.

## **E. Application Review**

### **1. Selection Criteria**

This section specifies the criteria that DOT will use to evaluate and award applications for TIGER Discretionary Grants. The criteria incorporate the statutory eligibility requirements for this program, which are specified in this notice as relevant. There are two categories of selection criterion, "Primary Selection Criteria" and "Secondary Selection Criteria." Within each relevant selection criteria, applicants are encouraged to present in measurable terms how TIGER

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<sup>4</sup> Pre-Construction activities are activities related to the planning, preparation, or design of surface transportation projects. These activities include but are not limited to environmental analysis, feasibility studies, design, and engineering of surface transportation projects as describe in Section C.3.

investment will lead to transformative change(s) in their community. Projects will also be evaluated for demonstrated project readiness, benefits and costs, and cost share.

**i. Primary Selection Criteria:** Applications that do not demonstrate a likelihood of significant long-term benefits based on these criteria will not proceed in the evaluation process. DOT does not consider any primary selection criterion more important than the others. The primary selection criteria, which will receive equal consideration, are:

- a. **Safety.** Improving the safety of U.S. transportation facilities and systems for all modes of transportation and users. DOT will assess the project's ability to reduce the number, rate, and consequences of surface transportation-related accidents, serious injuries, and fatalities among transportation users, the project's contribution to the elimination of highway/rail grade crossings, and the project's contribution to preventing unintended releases of hazardous materials. DOT will consider the project's ability to foster a safe, connected, accessible transportation system for the multimodal movement of goods and people.
- b. **State of Good Repair.** Improving the condition and resilience of existing transportation facilities and systems. DOT will assess whether and to what extent: (1) the project is consistent with relevant plans to maintain transportation facilities or systems in a state of good repair and address current and projected vulnerabilities; (2) if left unimproved, the poor condition of the asset will threaten future transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods or accessibility and mobility of people, or economic growth; (3) the project is appropriately capitalized up front and uses asset management approaches that optimize its long-term cost structure; (4) a sustainable source of revenue is available for operations and maintenance of the project; and (5)

the project improves the transportation asset's ability to withstand probable occurrence or recurrence of an emergency or major disaster or other impacts of climate change. Additional consideration will be given to a project's contribution to improve the overall reliability of a multimodal transportation system that serves all users, and to projects that offer significant transformational improvements to the condition of existing transportation systems and facilities.

- c. Economic Competitiveness. Contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United States over the medium- to long-term, revitalizing communities, and creating and preserving jobs. DOT will assess whether the project will (1) decrease transportation costs and improve access for Americans with transportation disadvantages through reliable and timely access to employment centers, education and training opportunities, and other basic needs of workers; (2) improve long-term efficiency, reliability or costs in the movement of workers or goods; (3) increase the economic productivity of land, capital, or labor at specific locations, and through community revitalization efforts; (4) result in long-term job creation and other economic opportunities; or (5) help the United States compete in a global economy by facilitating efficient and reliable freight movement, including border infrastructure and projects that have a significant effect on reducing the costs of transporting export cargoes. DOT will prioritize projects that exhibit strong leadership and vision, and are part of a larger strategy to significantly revitalize communities and increase economic opportunities.
- d. Quality of Life. Increasing transportation choices and access to essential services for people in communities across the United States, particularly for disadvantaged

groups. DOT will assess whether the project furthers the six “Livability Principles” developed by DOT with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.<sup>5</sup> DOT will focus on the first principle, the creation of affordable and convenient transportation choices.<sup>6</sup> Further, DOT will prioritize projects developed in coordination with land-use planning and economic development decisions, including through programs like TIGER Planning Grants, the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Regional Planning Grants, the Environmental Protection Agency’s Brownfield Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program, and technical assistance programs focused on quality of life or economic development planning. DOT will assess the extent to which the project will anchor transformative, positive and long-lasting quality of life changes at the national, regional or metropolitan level.

- e. Environmental Sustainability. Improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water quality, avoiding and mitigating environmental impacts and otherwise benefitting the environment. DOT will assess the project’s ability to: (i) reduce energy use and air or water pollution; (ii) avoid adverse environmental impacts to air or water quality, wetlands, and endangered species; or (iii) provide environmental benefits, such as brownfield redevelopment, ground water recharge in areas of water scarcity, wetlands creation or improved habitat connectivity, and stormwater mitigation, including green

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> In full, this principle reads: “**Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nations’ dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.”

infrastructure. Applicants are encouraged to provide quantitative information, including baseline information that demonstrates how the project will reduce energy consumption, stormwater runoff, or achieve other benefits for the environment.

**ii. Secondary Selection Criteria**

- a. Innovation. Use of innovative strategies to pursue the long-term outcomes outlined above. DOT will also assess the extent to which the project uses innovative technology to pursue one or more of the long-term outcomes outlined above or to significantly enhance the operational performance of the transportation system. DOT will also assess the extent to which the project incorporates innovations in transportation funding and finance and leverages both existing and new sources of funding through both traditional and innovative means. Further, DOT will consider the extent to which the project utilizes innovative practices in contracting, congestion management, safety management, asset management, or long-term operations and maintenance. DOT is interested in projects that apply innovative strategies to improve the efficiency of project development or to improve project delivery.
- b. Partnership. Demonstrating strong collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders, and the product of a robust, inclusive planning process.
  - i) Jurisdictional and Stakeholder Collaboration. DOT will consider the extent to which projects involve multiple partners in project development and funding, such as State and local governments, other public entities, and/or private or nonprofit entities. DOT will also assess the extent to which the project application demonstrates collaboration among neighboring or regional jurisdictions to achieve national, regional, or metropolitan benefits. In the context of public-private

partnerships, DOT will assess the extent to which partners are encouraged to ensure long-term asset performance, such as through pay-for-success approaches.

- ii) **Disciplinary Integration.** DOT will consider the extent to which projects include partnerships that bring together diverse transportation agencies and/or are supported, financially or otherwise, by non-transportation public agencies that are pursuing similar objectives. For example, DOT will give priority to transportation projects that are coordinated with economic development, housing, water infrastructure, and land use plans and policies or other public service efforts. Similarly, DOT will give priority to transportation projects that are coordinated with housing, social services, or education agencies. Projects that grow out of a robust planning process—such as those conducted with DOT’s various planning programs and initiatives, the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Regional Planning Grants and Choice Neighborhood Planning Grants, or the Environmental Protection Agency’s Brownfield Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program, as well as technical assistance programs focused on livability or economic development planning—will also be given priority.

**iii. Demonstrated Project Readiness**

Projects that receive funding in this round of TIGER must obligate funds by September 30, 2017, or the funding will expire. Therefore, DOT will assess every application to determine whether the project is likely to proceed to obligation by the statutory deadline (see *Additional Information on Project Readiness Guidelines* located at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER) for further details), as evidenced by:

- a. **Technical Feasibility.** The technical feasibility of the project should be demonstrated by engineering and design studies and activities; the development of design criteria and/or a basis of design; the basis for the cost estimate presented in the TIGER application, including the identification of contingency levels appropriate to its level of design; and any scope, schedule, and budget risk-mitigation measures. Applicants must include a detailed statement of work that focuses on the technical and engineering aspects of the project and describes in detail the project to be constructed;
- b. **Financial Feasibility.** The viability and completeness of the project’s financing package (assuming the availability of the requested TIGER Discretionary Grant funds) should be demonstrated including evidence of stable and reliable capital and (as appropriate) operating fund commitments sufficient to cover estimated costs; the availability of contingency reserves should planned capital or operating revenue sources not materialize; evidence of the financial condition of the project sponsor; and evidence of the grant recipient’s ability to manage grants. The applicant must include a detailed project budget in this section of the application containing a breakdown of how the funds will be spent. That budget must estimate—both dollar amount and percentage of cost— the cost of work for each project component and provide examples. If the project will be completed in individual segments or phases, a budget for each individual segment or phase must be included. Budget spending categories must be broken down between TIGER, other Federal, and non-Federal sources<sup>7</sup>, and identify how each funding source will share in each activity.

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<sup>7</sup> Non-Federal sources include State funds originating from State revenue funded programs, local funds originating from State or local revenue funded programs, private funds or other funding sources of non-Federal origins.



c. Project Schedule. The applicant must include a detailed project schedule that includes all major project milestones--such as start and completion of environmental reviews and approvals; design; right of way acquisition; approval of plan, specification and estimate (PS&E); procurement; and construction-- with sufficiently detailed information to demonstrate that:

- i) all necessary pre-construction activities will be complete to allow grant funds to be obligated no later than June 30, 2017, to give DOT reasonable assurance that the TIGER Discretionary Grant funds will be obligated sufficiently in advance of the September 30, 2017, statutory deadline, and that any unexpected delays will not put the funds at risk of expiring before they are obligated;
- ii) the project can begin construction quickly upon receipt of a TIGER Discretionary Grant, and that the grant funds will be spent steadily and expeditiously once construction starts; and
- iii) any applicant that is applying for a TIGER Discretionary Grant and does not own all of the property or right-of-way required to complete the project should provide evidence that the property and/or right-of-way acquisition can and will be completed expeditiously.

DOT may revoke any award of TIGER Discretionary Grant funds and award those funds to another project if the funds cannot be timely expended or construction does not begin in accordance with the project schedule established in the grant agreement.

d. Required Approvals

- i) Environmental Permits and Reviews. An application for a TIGER Discretionary Grant must detail whether the project will significantly impact the natural, social

and/or economic environment. The application should demonstrate receipt (or reasonably anticipated receipt) of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the project to proceed to construction on the timeline specified in the project schedule and necessary to meet the statutory obligation deadline, including satisfaction of all Federal, State and local requirements and completion of the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) process. Although Section C.3.iii (Project Components) of this notice encourages applicants to identify independent project components, those components may not be separable for the NEPA process. In such cases, the NEPA review for the independent project component may have to include evaluation of all project components as connected, similar, or cumulative actions, as detailed at 40 CFR § 1508.25. The applicant should submit the information listed below with your application:

- 1) Information about the NEPA status of the project. If the NEPA process is completed, an applicant must indicate the date of, and provide a website link or other reference to the final Categorical Exclusion, Finding of No Significant Impact or Record of Decision. If the NEPA process is underway but not complete, the application must detail the type of NEPA review underway, where the project is in the process, and indicate the anticipated date of completion. You must provide a website link or other reference to copies of any NEPA documents prepared.
- 2) Information on reviews by other agencies. An application for a TIGER Discretionary Grant must indicate whether the proposed project requires

reviews or approval actions by other agencies<sup>8</sup>, indicate the status of such actions, and provide detailed information about the status of those reviews or approvals and/or demonstrate compliance with any other applicable Federal, State, or local requirements.

- 3) Environmental studies or other documents—preferably through a website link—that describe in detail known project impacts, and possible mitigation for those impacts.
- 4) A description of discussions with the appropriate DOT modal administration field or headquarters office regarding compliance with NEPA and other applicable environmental reviews and approvals.

ii) Legislative Approvals. The applicant should demonstrate receipt of state and local approvals on which the project depends. Additional support from relevant State and local officials is not required; however, an applicant should demonstrate that the project is broadly supported.

iii) State and Local Planning. The planning requirements of the modal administration administering the TIGER project will apply.<sup>9</sup> You should demonstrate that a

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<sup>8</sup> Projects that may impact protected resources such as wetlands, species habitat, cultural or historic resources require review and approval by Federal and State agencies with jurisdiction over those resources. Examples of these reviews and approvals can be found at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER).

<sup>9</sup> All projects requiring an action by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in accordance with 23 CFR Part 450, must be in the metropolitan transportation plan, transportation improvement program (TIP) and statewide transportation improvement program (STIP). Further, in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas, all regionally significant projects, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the conforming metropolitan transportation plan and TIP. To the extent a project is required to be on a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, and/or STIP, it will not receive a TIGER Discretionary Grant until it is included in such plans. Projects not currently included in these plans can be amended by the State and metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Projects that are not required to be in long range transportation plans, STIPs, and TIPs will not need to be included in such plans in order to receive a TIGER Discretionary Grant. Port, freight and passenger rail projects are not required to be on the State Rail Plans called for in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008. This is consistent with the exemption for high-speed and intercity passenger rail projects under the Recovery Act. However, applicants seeking funding for freight and passenger rail projects are encouraged to demonstrate that they have done sufficient planning to ensure that projects fit into a

project that is required to be included in the relevant State, metropolitan, and local planning documents has been or will be included. If the project is not included in the relevant planning documents at the time the application is submitted, you should submit a certification from the appropriate planning agency that actions are underway to include the project in the relevant planning document. Because projects have different schedules, the construction start date for each TIGER Discretionary Grant will be specified in the project-specific grant agreements signed by relevant modal administration and the grant recipients and will be based on critical path items identified by applicants in response to items (i)(1) through (4) above.

- e. **Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies.** The applicant should identify the material risks to the project and the strategies that the lead applicant and any project partners have undertaken or will undertake in order to mitigate those risks. In past rounds of TIGER Discretionary Grants, certain projects have been affected by procurement delays, environmental uncertainties, and increases in real estate acquisition costs. The applicant must assess the greatest risks to the projects and identify how the project parties will mitigate those risks. DOT will consider projects that contain risks so long as the applicant clearly and directly describe achievable mitigation strategies.

The applicant, to the extent they are unfamiliar with the Federal program, should contact DOT modal field or headquarters offices for information on what steps are pre-requisite to the

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prioritized list of capital needs and are consistent with long-range goals. To the extent possible, freight projects should be included in a state freight plan and supported by a state freight advisory committee (see MAP-21 §§ 1117–1118). Further information and guidance information on transportation planning and is available from the following FHWA and FTA sites respectively - <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning> and <http://www.fta.dot.gov/about/12347.html>. Port planning guidelines are available at [StrongPorts.gov](http://StrongPorts.gov).

obligation of Federal funds in order to ensure that their project schedule is reasonable and that there are no risks of delays in satisfying federal requirements.

Contacts for the Federal Highway Administration Division offices—which are located in all 50 States, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico—can be found at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm>. Contacts for the ten Federal Transit Administration regional offices can be found at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/12926.html>. Contacts for the nine Maritime Administration Gateway Offices can be found at [http://www.marad.dot.gov/about\\_us\\_landing\\_page/gateway\\_offices/Gateway\\_Presence.htm](http://www.marad.dot.gov/about_us_landing_page/gateway_offices/Gateway_Presence.htm).

For Federal Railroad Administration Contacts, please contact TIGER program staff via e-mail at [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov), or call Howard Hill at 202-366-0301.

#### **iv. Project Costs and Benefits**

An applicant for TIGER Discretionary Grants is generally required to identify, quantify, and compare expected benefits and costs, subject to the following qualifications:<sup>10</sup>

An applicant should prepare and submit an analysis of benefits and costs; however, DOT understands that the appropriate level of detail of analysis (for items such as surveys, travel demand forecasts, market forecasts, and statistical analyses) is less for smaller projects than for larger projects. The level of sophistication of the benefit-cost analysis (BCA) should be reasonably related to the size of the overall project and the amount of grant funds requested in the application. Any subjective estimates of benefits and costs should be quantified, and the applicant should provide appropriate evidence to lend credence to their subjective estimates. Estimates of benefits should be presented in

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<sup>10</sup> DOT has a responsibility under Executive Order 12893, Principles for Federal Infrastructure Investments, 59 FR 4233, to base infrastructure investments on systematic analysis of expected benefits and costs, including both quantitative and qualitative measures.

monetary terms whenever possible; if a monetary estimate is not possible, then at least one non-monetary quantitative estimate (in physical, non-monetary terms, such as crash rates, ridership estimates, emissions levels, or energy efficiency improvements) should be provided.

Based on feedback over previous rounds of TIGER, DOT recognizes that the benefit-cost analysis can be particularly burdensome on Tribal governments. Therefore, the Department is providing additional flexibility to Tribal governments for the purposes of this notice. At their discretion, Tribal applicants may elect to provide raw data to support the need for a project (such as crash rates, ridership estimates, and the number of people who will benefit from the project), without additional analysis. This data will then be used to allow DOT economists to make the best estimates they can develop (given the data provided) of benefits and costs. Examples of BCAs by successful Tribal applicants are also available online at <http://www.dot.gov/policy-initiatives/tiger/tribal-tiger-bca-examples>.

The lack of a useful analysis of expected project benefits and costs may be the basis for not selecting a project for award of a TIGER Discretionary Grant. If it is clear to DOT that the total benefits of a project are not reasonably likely to justify the project's costs, DOT will not award a TIGER Discretionary Grant to the project.

Detailed guidance for the preparation of benefit-cost analyses is provided in the *2015 Benefit-Cost Analyses Guidance for TIGER Grant Applicants* and in the *BCA Resource Guide* (available at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER)). A recording of the *Benefit-Cost Analysis Practitioner's Workshop (2010)* and two BCA-related webinars are also available for

viewing at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER), along with examples of benefit-cost analyses that have been submitted in previous rounds of TIGER.

Spreadsheets supporting the benefit-cost analysis should be original Excel spreadsheets, not PDFs of those spreadsheets. Benefits should be presented, whenever possible, in a tabular form showing benefits and costs in each year for the useful life of the project. The application should include projections for both the build and no-build scenarios for the project for each year between the completion of the project and a point in time at least 20 years beyond the project's completion date or the lifespan of the project, whichever is closer to the present. Benefits and costs should both be discounted to the year 2015, and calculations should be presented for discounted values of both the stream of benefits and the stream of costs. If the project has multiple components, each of which has independent utility, the benefits and costs of each component should be estimated and presented separately. The results of the benefit-cost analysis should be summarized in the Project Narrative section of the application itself, but the details should be presented in an attachment to the application if the full analysis cannot be included within the page limit for the project narrative.

**v. Cost Share**

The FY 2015 Appropriations Act directs DOT to prioritize projects that require a contribution of Federal funds to complete an overall financing package, and all projects can increase their competitiveness for purposes of the TIGER program by demonstrating significant non-Federal financial contributions. The applicant should clearly demonstrate the extent to which the project cannot be readily and efficiently completed without a TIGER Discretionary Grant, and the extent to which other sources of funds, including

Federal, State, or local funding, may or may not be readily available for the project. DOT recognizes that applicants have varying abilities and resources to contribute non-Federal contributions, especially those communities that are not routinely receiving and matching Federal funds. DOT recognizes certain communities with fewer financial resources may struggle to provide cost-share that exceeds the minimum requirements and will, therefore, consider an applicant's broader fiscal constraints when evaluating non-Federal contributions. In the first six rounds, on average, projects attracted more than 3.5 matching dollars for every TIGER grant dollar.

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

DOT reviews all eligible applications received before the deadline. The TIGER review and selection process consists of three phases: Technical Review, Tier 2 Analysis consisting of project readiness and economic analysis, and Senior Review.

In the Technical Evaluation phase, teams comprising staff from the Office of the Secretary (OST) and modal administrations review all eligible applications and rate projects as Highly Recommended, Recommended, Acceptable, or Not Recommended based on how well the projects align with the selection criteria.

Tier 2 Analysis consists of (1) an Economic Analysis and (2) a Project Readiness Analysis. The Economic Analysis Team, comprising OST and modal administration economic staff, assess whether total benefits of the proposed projects are likely to outweigh costs. The Project Readiness Team, comprising Office of the Secretary Office of Policy (OST-P) and modal administration staff, evaluates the proposed project's technical and financial feasibility, potential risks and mitigation strategies, and project schedule, including the status of environmental approvals and readiness to proceed.



In the third review phase, the Senior Review Team, which includes senior leadership from OST and the modal administrations, consider all projects that were rated Acceptable, Recommended, or Highly Recommended and determine which projects to advance to the Secretary as Highly Rated. The Secretary selects from the Highly Rated projects for final award.

## **F. Federal Award Administration**

### **1. Federal Award Notice**

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, the Secretary will announce awarded projects by posting a list of selected projects at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER). Following the announcement, the relevant modal administration will contact the point of contact listed in the SF 424 to initiate negotiation of the grant agreement.

### **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 C.F.R part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 C.F.R pt. 1201. Additionally, applicable Federal laws, rules and regulations of the relevant modal administration administering the project will apply to the projects that receive TIGER Discretionary Grant awards, including planning requirements, Service Outcome Agreements, Stakeholder Agreements, Buy America compliance, and other requirements under DOT's other highway, transit, rail, and port grant programs.

For projects administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations set forth in Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 23 C.F.R apply. For an illustrative list of the applicable laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, polices, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to a TIGER project

administered by the FHWA, please see

[\[http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/tiger/fy2014\\_gr\\_exhbt\\_c/index.htm\]](http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/tiger/fy2014_gr_exhbt_c/index.htm).

For TIGER projects administered by the Federal Transit Administration and partially funded with Federal transit assistance, all relevant requirements under chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C. apply. For transit projects funded exclusively with TIGER discretionary funds, some requirements of chapter 53 of title 49 U.S.C. and chapter VI of title 49 C.F.R. apply. For projects administered by the Federal Railroad Administration, FRA requirements described in 49 U.S.C. Subtitle V, Part C apply.

Federal wage rate requirements included in subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code, apply to all projects receiving funds under this program, and apply to all parts of the project, whether funded with TIGER Discretionary Grant funds, other Federal funds, or non-Federal funds.

### **3. Reporting**

- i. Performance Reporting** - Each applicant selected for TIGER Discretionary Grant funding must collect information and report on the project's performance with respect to the relevant long-term outcomes that are expected to be achieved through construction of the project. Performance indicators will not include formal goals or targets, but will include baseline measures as well as post-project outcomes for an agreed-upon timeline, and will be used to evaluate and compare projects and monitor the results that grant funds achieve to ensure that grant funds achieve the intended long-term outcomes of the TIGER Discretionary Grant program.

- ii. Progress Reporting** –Each applicant selected for TIGER Discretionary Grant funding must submit quarterly progress reports and Federal Financial Report (SF-425) on the financial condition of the project and the project’s progress, as well as an Annual Budget Review and Program Plan to monitor the use of Federal funds and ensure accountability and financial transparency in the TIGER program.

**G. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts**

For further information concerning this notice please contact the TIGER Discretionary Grant program staff via e-mail at [TIGERGrants@dot.gov](mailto:TIGERGrants@dot.gov), or call Howard Hill at 202-366-0301. A TDD is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 202-366-3993. In addition, DOT will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications on DOT’s website at [www.dot.gov/TIGER](http://www.dot.gov/TIGER). To ensure applicants receive accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact DOT directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties, with questions. DOT staff may also conduct briefings on the TIGER Discretionary Grants selection and award process upon request.

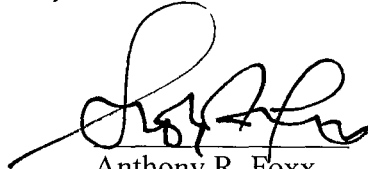
**H. Other information**

**1. Protection of Confidential Business Information**

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. If the application includes information you consider to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant should do the following: (1) note on the front cover that the submission “Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)”; (2) mark each affected page “CBI”; and (3) highlight or otherwise denote the CBI portions. DOT protects such information from disclosure to the extent allowed under applicable law. In the event DOT receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request

for the information, DOT will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at 49 CFR § 7.17. Only information that is ultimately determined to be confidential under that procedure will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

Issued On: March 30, 2015



Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary

# PREVIOUS TIGER GRANT SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	Project	Funded	Funding Initiative
<b>TIGER I 2009</b>	IH 30 HOV/Managed Lanes	✓	SH 161 RTR
	IH 45/US 175 Direct Connection (SM Wright)	Partial	SH 121 RTR/ Proposition 12
	SH 121 (Section 13)	✓	TxDOT Partnership
	IH 35 W/IH 820 Interchange	✓	CDA
	US 67 (Cleburne Bypass)	✓	Proposition 12
	Tower 55 At-grade Improvement	✓	TIGER I (\$34 million)
	SH 121/SW Parkway	✓	NTTA/ARRA

# PREVIOUS TIGER GRANT SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	<b>Project</b>	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Funding Initiative</b>
<b>TIGER II 2010</b>	DART Orange Line Extension (Submitted by DART)	✓	Local/TIGER II (\$5 million TIGER)
	Downtown Dallas – Oak Cliff Streetcar	✓	SH 161 RTR/TIGER II (\$26 million TIGER)
	Cotton Belt Regional Rail	No	N/A
	HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant	No	N/A

# PREVIOUS TIGER GRANT SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	<b>Project</b>	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Funding Initiative</b>
<b>TIGER III 2011</b>	IH 35E Managed Lanes	✓	TxDOT \$2 Billion Funding Initiative
	US 67 Cleburne Bypass	✓	Proposition 12
<b>TIGER IV 2012</b>	IH 35E Managed Lanes	✓	TxDOT \$2 Billion Funding Initiative
	US 67 Cleburne Bypass	✓	Proposition 12

# PREVIOUS TIGER GRANT SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	<b>Project</b>	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Funding Initiative</b>
<b>TIGER V 2013</b>	IH 45/US 175 (SM Wright) Phase 1	✓	Proposition 12
	Trinity River Vision Bridges Project	✓	Proposition 12
	Regional Bicycle/ Pedestrian Multimodal Network	Partial	\$10M TAP/TE*

\*Transportation Alternatives Program/Transportation Enhancements



# PREVIOUS TIGER VI (2014) GRAND SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	<b>Projects</b>	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Funding Initiative</b>
<b>TIGER VI 2014 Planning</b>	Cotton Belt Regional Corridor	No	N/A
	School Siting and Landbanking Coordination	Partial	TIGER VI \$210,000
	Aviation and Military Base Accessibility Coordination	No	N/A

# PREVIOUS TIGER VI (2014) GRAND SUBMITTALS AND AWARDS

	Projects	Funded	Funding Initiative
<b>TIGER VI 2014 Capital</b>	IH 45/US 175 (SM Wright-Phase 2B)	No	Proposed for 2 <sup>nd</sup> round of Proposition 1 funding
	Regional Bicycle/ Pedestrian Multimodal Network	Partial	\$10M TAP/TE*
	IH 35W Managed Lane Access from IH 30 (Eastbound to Northbound)	No	N/A

\*Transportation Alternatives Program/Transportation Enhancements

# **TIGER**

## **GRANTS**

DRAFT

# **PROJECTS RECOMMENDED FOR SUBMITTAL**



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

Regional Transportation Council  
Action Item  
May 14, 2015

# OVERVIEW

- \$500 million discretionary grant program
- \$100 million for rural areas  
(\$1 million minimum with no match requirement)
- Up to \$100 million for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loans
- Only \$125 million available to any state
- \$10 million minimum and \$200 million maximum request

# OVERVIEW—Cont'd

- Only three (3) applications per sponsor
- Surface transportation capital projects only (no planning funds)
- Twenty percent (20%) match requirement, but higher matching percentages improve competitiveness
- All funds must be obligated before September 30, 2017, and fully expended by September 30, 2022
- No waivers will be possible for these deadlines

# PREVIOUS TIGER VI (2014)

## Grant Submittals and Awards

Planning Projects	Funded	Funding Initiative
Cotton Belt Regional Corridor	No	Being pursued under Technical Assistance
School Siting and Landbanking Coordination	Partial	TIGER VI \$210,000
Aviation and Military Base Accessibility Coordination	No	Being pursued with DoD* Funding

\*Department of Defense

# PREVIOUS TIGER VI (2014)

## Grant Submittals and Awards

Capital Projects	Funded	Funding Initiative
IH 45/US 175 (SM Wright-Phase 2B)	No	Proposed Proposition 1 funding
Regional Bicycle/ Pedestrian Multimodal Network	Partial	Transportation Alternatives Program/ Transportation Enhancements
IH 35W Managed Lane Access from IH 30 (Eastbound to Northbound)	No	Proposed and expanded for TIGER VII 2015 Call for Projects

**DRAFT**

# **PROPOSED TIGER VII (2015) NCTCOG/RTC SUBMISSIONS**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount to be Requested (\$ in Millions)</b>	<b>Proposed Local Match Source (\$ in Millions)</b>
Regional Connections through Technology and System Integration	\$10.0	\$2.5 (State Match and Future RTC Funds)
IH 35W Multimodal Corridor Improvements (IH 35W/IH 30 Managed Lane Access and Guaranteed Transit)	\$20.0	\$15.0 (State Match and Future RTC Funds)
Park Lane/Vickery Meadows Complete Street Project	\$12.5	\$12.5 (City of Dallas, Dallas County, DART, Future RTC Funds)



# LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Requests for RTC Letters of Support for projects submitted by other agencies are due by COB, May 15, 2015, to Rebekah Hernandez at [rhernandez@nctcog.org](mailto:rhernandez@nctcog.org)

# 2015 APPLICATION PROCESS/ TIMELINE

- April 3 TIGER VII Discretionary Program funds announced by USDOT
- April 9 RTC Information
- April 24 STTC Information
- May 14 RTC Action
- May 15 Requests for letters of support due to Rebekah Hernandez at [rhernandez@nctcog.org](mailto:rhernandez@nctcog.org)
- May 22 STTC Endorsement
- June 5 Applications due to USDOT

[www.dot.gov/tiger](http://www.dot.gov/tiger)

# **ACTION REQUESTED**

Approve the projects to be submitted for TIGER funding by NCTCOG/RTC

Administratively amend the 2015-2018 TIP/STIP to include TIGER 2015 projects if selected

# CONTACT INFORMATION

TIGER Information

**Christie J. Gotti**

Senior Program Manager

Ph: (817) 608-2338

[cgotti@nctcog.org](mailto:cgotti@nctcog.org)

Letters of Support

**Rebekah Hernandez**

Communications Coordinator

Ph: (817) 704-7545

[rhernandez@nctcog.org](mailto:rhernandez@nctcog.org)

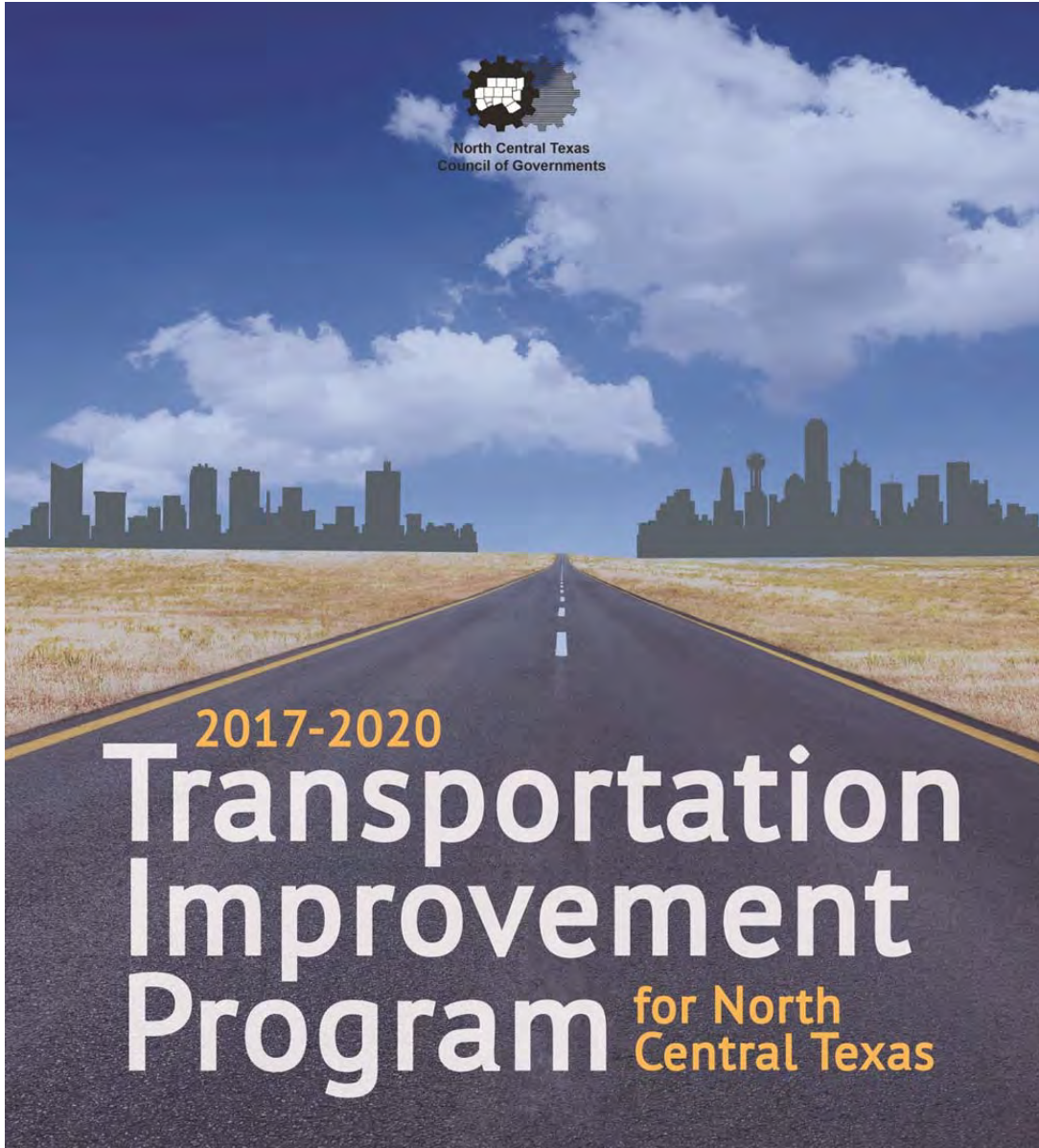
TIGER Information

**Adam Beckom, AICP**

Principal Transportation  
Planner

Ph: (817) 608-2344

[abeckom@nctcog.org](mailto:abeckom@nctcog.org)



# Development of the 2017-2020 TIP

Information and  
Upcoming Schedule

Regional Transportation  
Council  
May 14, 2015

# PROCESS

1. Review all existing projects and solicit additional locally funded projects
2. Make needed adjustments to existing projects
3. Develop revised project listings
4. Balance project listings to estimated revenue
5. Conduct Mobility Plan and Air Quality review
6. Solicit public review (process, draft listings, final listings)
7. Finalize project listings and submit to partners

# BACKGROUND

- ◆ **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a staged, multi-year program of transportation projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area**
  - ◆ Includes projects
    - ◆ Funded by federal, State, and local sources
    - ◆ Programmed for construction in the next four years
  - ◆ Developed by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) in cooperation with:
    - ◆ Local governments
    - ◆ Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
    - ◆ Local transportation agencies

# MEETING EXPECTATIONS

## ◆ Who needs to attend?

- ◆ Project managers that can answer questions about the status of projects
- ◆ Fiscal managers to answer questions about expenditures, agreements, and invoicing
- ◆ Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) staff will be present to help set realistic expectations regarding timing and process

## ◆ How you can help

- ◆ Reiterate importance of being prepared to agency staff
- ◆ Ensure agency staff are given sufficient time and resources to gather information needed for meetings



# **MEETING EXPECTATIONS:**

## **Information Needed**

- ◆ **Project status updates by phase including start and end dates**
- ◆ **Project financial information**
  - ◆ Status of agreements
  - ◆ Invoicing updates
- ◆ **Requests for project modifications**
  - ◆ Scope and limit changes
  - ◆ Funding changes
  - ◆ Implementing agency changes

# FOCUS AREAS

## Proposed Milestone Policy Implementation

- ◆ Projects funded for ten (10) or more years where construction has not started need to be reapproved. Agencies can justify keeping projects by providing or demonstrating:
  - ◆ A realistic, achievable schedule
  - ◆ Policy board support
  - ◆ Availability of local matching funds
- ◆ Intended outcomes of milestone policy enforcement include:
  - ◆ Increasing the amount of available funds for “Ready-to-Go” projects
  - ◆ Providing a realistic assessment of project status for funding decision making
  - ◆ Balancing project construction schedule capacity within the current financial constraints

# TIMELINE/ACTION TABLE

May–Aug 2015	Meet with implementing agencies
Jun 2015–Jan 2016	Data input, financial constraint, and analysis
Jan 2016	Draft listings - STTC information
Feb 2016	Draft listings - RTC information Public meetings - draft listings
Mar 2016	Final listings - STTC action
Apr 2016	Final listings - RTC action
May 1, 2016	Final document to TxDOT
Aug 2016	TxDOT Commission approval (for STIP)
Oct 2016	Anticipate federal/State approval (STIP)

# QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

## **Christie Gotti**

Senior Program Manager

Ph: 817/695-2338

cgotti@nctcog.org

## **Adam Beckom, AICP**

Principal Transportation Planner

Ph: 817/608-2344

abeckom@nctcog.org

## **Michael Overton, Ph.D**

Transportation Planner

Ph: 817/704-5663

moverton@nctcog.org

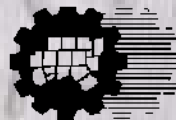
<http://www.nctcog.org/trans/tip/>

# TOLL MANAGED LANE DATA MONITORING

Regional Transportation Council

May 14, 2015

Dan Lamers, P.E.



*North Central Texas Council of Governments  
Transportation Department*

# TOLL MANAGED LANE DATA MONITORING

*Cumulative December 2013 – February 2015*

How much HOV 2+ Subsidy has the RTC been responsible for?

*\$76,351 as of February 2015*

How long can the RTC keep the HOV policy at 2+?

*For now, it remains 2+ until the June 1, 2016 on or before date,  
and it will continue to be monitored quarterly*

Have there been any additional NTTA customer service needs?

*No, minimal impact*

Have the speeds on the Toll Managed Lane facilities dropped below 35 mph?

*No*

# TOLL MANAGED LANE DATA MONITORING

*Cumulative December 2013 – February 2015*

<b>LBJ EXPRESS</b>	<b>HOV 2+ Subsidy Costs</b>	<b>NTTA Customer Service (Additional Needs)</b>	<b>Project Performance Events (Speeds &lt; 35 mph)</b>
<b>North Tarrant Express</b> <i>SH 183/121 from IH 35W to SH 121</i>	\$46,397	Negligible	0
<b>LBJ Express</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>IH 635 from Preston Road to Greenville Avenue</i></li> <li>• <i>IH 35E from Loop 12 to IH 635</i></li> </ul>	\$29,954	Negligible	0
<b>DFW Connector</b> <i>SH 114 from Kimball Avenue to Freeport Parkway</i>	N/A	Negligible	0

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster**  
**May 2014-April 2015**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	5/8/14	6/12/14	7/10/14	8/14/14	9/11/14	10/9/14	11/13/14	12/11/14	1/8/15	2/12/15	3/12/15	4/9/15
Douglas Athas (06/13)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Barth (09/13)	TxDOT, FW	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Carol Bush (01/15)	Ellis Cnty	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)	P
Mike Cantrell (1/07)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Sheri Capehart (7/06)	Arlington	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Rudy Durham (7/07)	Lewisville	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton Cnty	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Charles Emery (4/04)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mark Enoch (12/06)	DART	P	E(R)	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant Cnty	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Franke (1/08)	Cedar Hill	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	E
Sandy Greyson (11/11)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	A	P	P	P	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson Cnty	P	P	P	A(R)	E	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P
Vonciel Jones Hill (11/07)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Clay Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sheffie Kadane (11/11)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P
Lee Kleinman (09/13)	Dallas	E	E	P	P	E	P	A	P	E	E	E	E
Stephen Lindsey (10/11)	Mansfield	E(R)	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Loughmiller (04/15)	McKinney	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Laura Maczka (6/12)	Richardson	P	P	P	E	P	E	E(R)	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	A
David Magness (06/13)	Rockwall Cnty	P	P	E	P	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	A	P
Scott Mahaffey (03/13)	FWTA	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Matthew Marchant (07/08)	Carrollton	P	A	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Maher Maso (10/08)	Frisco	P	A(R)	A(R)	P	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	A	E
John Monaco (6/08)	Mesquite	E	P	A	P	P	P	A	E(R)	P	P	E	A
Mark Riley (1/09)	Parker Cnty	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Roden (6/14)	Denton	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P
Amir Rupani (11/14)	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	P	P
Danny Scarth (9/12)	Fort Worth	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Kelly Selman (02/15)	TxDOT, Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	E(R)
Lissa Smith (6/12)	Plano	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
Mike Taylor (7/14)	Colleyville	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Stephen Terrell (6/14)	Allen	--	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
Oscar Trevino (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	E(R)	P	P	E	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	A	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)

REFERENCE ITEM 10.1



**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster**  
**May 2014-April 2015**

<b>RTC MEMBER</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>5/8/14</b>	<b>6/12/14</b>	<b>7/10/14</b>	<b>8/14/14</b>	<b>9/11/14</b>	<b>10/9/14</b>	<b>11/13/14</b>	<b>12/11/14</b>	<b>1/8/15</b>	<b>2/12/15</b>	<b>3/12/15</b>	<b>4/9/15</b>
William Velasco (11/11)	Dallas	P	A	P	A(R)	P	P	E	A	P	E	P	P
Oscar Ward (6/14)	Irving	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Bernice Washington (4/09)	DFW Airport	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	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	P	E(R)	E	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	E
Kathryn Wilemon (6/03)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Zim Zimmerman (9/12)	Fort Worth	P	P	E	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

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)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster  
February 2014-March 2015

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	2/28/14	3/28/14	4/25/14	5/23/14	6/27/14	7/25/14	8/22/14	9/26/14	10/24/14	12/5/14	1/23/15	3/27/15
Antoinette Bacchus	Dallas Cnty	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Bryan Beck	Fort Worth	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	A
Kristina Brevard	DCTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P
Keith Brooks	Arlington	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
John Brunk	Dallas	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Mohammed Bur	TxDOT, Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P
Chris Burkett	Mansfield	P	R	P	R	P	R	R	P	R	P	P	R
Loyl Bussell	TxDOT, FW	R	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jack Carr	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Dave Carter	Richardson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT, FW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Hal Cranor	Eules	--	--	A	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	P
Chad Davis	Wise Cnty	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	P
Greg Dickens	Hurst	P	P	P	R	P	R	P	R	R	R	R	P
Sherrelle Diggs	Rowlett	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	A	P	A
Massoud Ebrahim	Greenville	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	R	P	A
Chad Edwards	DART	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P
Claud Elsom	Rockwall Cnty	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P
Holly Ferguson	TCEQ	--	--	--	--	--	A	A	A	A	A	P	A
Keith Fisher	Keller	A	A	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	R	P	P
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P
Chris Flanigan	City of Allen	P	P	P	R	P	P	R	P	R	P	P	A
Gary Graham	McKinney	R	P	P	P	P	P	R	P	R	R	R	P
Tom Hammons	City of Carrollton	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Curvie Hawkins	FWTA	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	A
Chris Holsted	Wylie	P	P	A	R	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
Thomas Hoover	Bedford	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	P
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P
Kirk Houser	City of Dallas	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Terry Hughes	Parker County	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeremy Hutt	Colleyville	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	R	P	P	P
Paul Iwuchukwu	Arlington	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Tim James	Mesquite	--	A	P	A	R	P	P	A	P	P	A	P
David Jodray	Fort Worth	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A
Tom Johnson	DeSoto	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P
Sholeh Karimi	Grand Prairie	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chiamin Korngiebel	Dallas	A	P	A	R	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P
Richard Larkins	Grapevine	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Paul Luedtke	Garland	R	A	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A

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R =Represented    -- =Not yet eligible to attend

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster  
February 2014-March 2015

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	2/28/14	3/28/14	4/25/14	5/23/14	6/27/14	7/25/14	8/22/14	9/26/14	10/24/14	12/5/14	1/23/15	3/27/15
Stanford Lynch	Hunt Cnty	P	P	P	P	R	P	R	P	P	A	P	R
Rick Mackey	TxDOT Paris	P	R	A	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Srini Mandayam	Mesquite	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Geroge Marshall	Coppell	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	R
Clyde Melick	Waxahachie	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Laura Melton	Burleson	--	--	--	--	--	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Brian Moen	Frisco	A	R	R	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cesar Molina, Jr.	Carrollton	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A
Lloyd Neal	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	A
Mark Nelson	Denton	P	P	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jim O'Connor	Irving	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Overton	Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	A	P
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	P	P	P	A	P	R	P	P	P	P	P	P
Todd Plesko	DART	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
John Polster	Denton Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lisa Pyles	Town of Addison	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
William Riley	Tarrant Cnty	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P
David Salmon	Lewisville	--	P	A	R	P	P	P	R	P	P	R	P
Elias Sassoon	Cedar Hill	A	P	A	P	R	A	A	R	P	P	P	P
Gordon Scruggs	The Colony	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	R	P
Lori Shelton	NTTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	A
Randy Skinner	Tarrant Cnty	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	A	P	P
Mark Titus	Richardson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jonathan Toffer	Dallas Cnty	P	A	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	P	P
Timothy Tumulty	Rockwall	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	A	A	R	P	P
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Daniel Vedral	Irving	A	R	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	P	P	P
Jared White	Dallas	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
Bill Wimberley	Hood County	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Alicia Winkelblech	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	R
Mykol Woodruff	TxDOT, Dallas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P

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## MINUTES

### **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE March 27, 2015**

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, February 27, 2015, at 1:30 pm, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following STTC members or representatives were present: Kristina Brevard, Keith Brooks, John Brunk, Mohammed Bur, David Boski (representing Chris Burkett), Loyl Bussell, Dave Carter, John Cordary, Jr., Hal Cranor, Clarence Daugherty, Chad Davis, Greg Dickens, Chad Edwards, Claud Elsom, Keith Fisher, Eric Fladager, Gary Graham, Thomas Hoover, Matthew Hotelling, Kirk Houser, Terry Hughes, Jeremy Hutt, Paul Iwuchukwu, Tim James, David Jodray, Tom Johnson, Sholeh Karimi, Chiamin Korngiebel, Richard Larkins, John Dewar (representing Stanford Lynch), Ricky Mackey, Srinu Mandayam, Mike Garza (representing George Marshall), Clyde Melick, Mark Nelson, Jim O'Connor, Kevin Overton, Dipak Patel, Todd Plesko, John Polster, William Riley, Greg Royster, David Salmon, Elias Sassoon, Gordon Scruggs, Lori Shelton, Caleb Thornhill, Mark Titus, Jonathan Toffer, Timothy Tumulty, Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize, Caroline Waggoner, Jared White, Bill Wimberley, Sarah Stubblefield (representing Alicia Winkelblech, and Mykol Woodruff.

Others present at the meeting were: Gustavo Baez, Carli Baylor, Bob Best, Natalie Bettger, Ken Bunkley, Jarrett Burley, Ruben Delgado, David Dryden, Kevin Feldt, Potela Fleming, David Gattis, Christie Gotti, Jill Hall, Jeff Hathcock, Rebekah Hernandez, Yagnesh Jarmarwala, Tim Juarez, Dan Kessler, April Leger, Sonny Loper, Chad McKeown, Amy Moore, Jenny Narvaez, Bruce Nipp, Jae Park, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Kyle Roy, Penny Sansom, Kelli Schlicher, Tamella Spillman, Jahnae Stout, Gerald Sturdivant, Darrell Thompson, Matthew Thompson, Madhu Venugopal, Elizabeth Whitaker, Amanda Wilson, and Brian Wilson.

Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize introduced new Committee members: John Cordary, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Fort Worth; Mykol Woodruff, TxDOT Dallas; and Richard Larkins, City of Grapevine.

1. **Approval of January 23, 2015, Minutes:** The minutes of the January 23, 2015, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Clarence Daugherty (M); Jim O'Connor (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
  - 2.1. **Endorsement of Unified Planning Work Program Modifications:** A motion was made to endorse Regional Transportation Council approval of modifications to the FY2014 and FY2015 Unified Planning Work Program provided in Reference Item 2.1.1. Details were provided in Electronic Item 2.1.2.
  - 2.2. **Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of March 2015 out-of-cycle revisions to the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), provided in Reference Item 2.2.1, and May 2015 revisions to the 2015-2018 TIP, provided in Reference Item 2.2.2.

- 2.3. Endorsement of Comments to the Environmental Protection Agency Regarding Proposed Rule: National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone: A motion was made to endorse Regional Transportation Council approval of comments submitted by the Regional Transportation Council to the Environmental Protection Agency regarding its recently proposed ozone standard provided in Reference Item 2.3.2. Details were provided in Electronic Item 2.3.1.

Jim O'Connor (M); John Polster (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **State and Federal Legislative Updates:** Rebekah Hernandez provided an update regarding federal legislation. The House and Senate passed their FY2016 budgets which serve as a blueprint for the appropriations process. Appropriations subcommittees were continuing to meet on the FY2016 appropriations requests. She noted that Congress must still address funding the Highway Trust Fund, an extension of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization, and rail reauthorization. An update was also provided regarding the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. Related to the State budget, House Bill 1 was approved by the House Appropriations Committee. The two-year, \$209 billion proposal is \$7.7 billion more than the current two-year budget. Transportation funding is increased by \$1.6 billion overall. Related to the AirCheckTexas program, the 87.5 percent funding cuts seen in the past continue but an additional \$81 million each was included for Low-Income Repair and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP)/Local Initiative Projects (LIP) and the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) contingent on passage of HB 7 related to general revenue dedicated account funding. In addition, work is being done on an amendment to HB 1 that would allocate LIRAP funding back to the North Texas region similar to what was done in Travis County during the last legislative session. Senate Bill 2 is still pending Finance Committee action, but individual work group decision documents were approved. The Senate did include the \$81 million in additional funding for LIRAP/LIP and TERP. Ms. Hernandez also reviewed bills related to the RTC State Legislative Program related to transportation revenue, public-private partnerships, AirCheckTexas funding, and high-speed rail. Related to transportation revenue, SB 5 and SJR 5 passed out of the full Senate and would dedicate a portion of the motor vehicle sales tax per year to the State Highway Fund. Numerous other bills were being monitored related to transportation revenue. The House Transportation Committee heard HJR 13 that would dedicate a portion of the sales tax revenue for transportation funding, but the bill was left pending in committee, as well as other bills. Related to public-private partnerships, comprehensive development agreement (CDA) bills filed have primarily been related to Travis County and South Texas. She noted that the RTC requested CDA authority on the IH 635 project, but a related bill has not been filed. Other bills related to IH 635 would allow TxDOT to develop the project but without tolled components. Bills regarding the AirCheckTexas program include HB 1030 that would give counties flexibility to expand the program, include additional transportation projects, and allow the funds to be spent over a longer period of time. Additional bills would move the program to the county level for implementation. Related to high-speed rail, four bills have been filed that are not consistent with the RTC Legislative Program. HB 1876 requires notification to legislators and county judges about a rail project and HB 1889 would require county or municipality approval of a project that would travel through its area. HB 3915 relates to the assessment of damages in condemnation proceedings. Finally, SB 1601 would prohibit high-speed rail companies from using the power of eminent domain for a high-speed rail system. Ms. Hernandez also highlighted bills related to the RTC Legislative Program to support and monitor. Bills include prohibiting school bus idling, establishing a program to collect alternative fuel vehicle information at registration, aviation encroachment, unmanned aircraft systems, and safe passing distances for bicycle/pedestrian unprotected road users. In

addition, HB 7 was filed related to general revenue dedicated accounts that would allow flexibility for TERP and LIRAP. Under eminent domain, related bills would remove private toll road company or corporation eminent domain authority. Numerous red light camera bills have been filed, as well as bills that would impact Metropolitan Planning Organizations and statewide planning. Several bills have been filed regarding toll roads and managed lanes that would call for the collection of tolls to be stopped when the road was paid or bonds were paid. Finally, related to transit, a rail liability bill related to the Denton County Transportation Authority was heard in committee and another bill was filed prohibiting FTA funds from being used on rail projects. Staff will continue to monitor and provide updates to the Committee.

- 4. Forecast 2040 Update:** Dan Kessler provided an update on the ongoing demographic forecast process for the year 2040, a joint effort between the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Research and Information Services Department and Transportation Department. These forecasts are developed for the region every four years and are used to guide the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, as well as for city and county planning initiatives. Independent control totals from national economists are used to determine how the region will size and shape itself relative to other metropolitan areas around the country. Once a size is determined, the more difficult task is to determine where the growth will occur. This is done through the use of a gravity land use model (GLUM) to determine how data is allocated to the 232 districts and 5,200 traffic survey zones. NCTCOG has been through local review at both the district and traffic survey zone levels, and are continuing review with agencies. Mr. Kessler highlighted the impacts of migration to Texas and the region, as well as job growth in Texas compared to the nation. Specifically, the Dallas-Fort Worth region created more jobs in the past decade than the State of California. Independent projection scenarios for net migration between 2010 and 2015, as well as population forecasts for 2040 were reviewed. He noted that if the region were to grow at the rate predicted by some demographers, Collin, Dallas, Tarrant, and Denton Counties could each reach approximately 3.5 million in population by 2060 and the region reach 14 million, which is about the size of metropolitan Chicago. NCTCOG staff has reviewed these forecasts to determine its estimated population projection of 10.6 million by 2040. Once regional forecasts are developed, a model is used to determine where growth will occur in five-year increments across the 232 districts that make up the 12 county metropolitan area. Mr. Kessler discussed model calibration and validation. Calibration is the process of ensuring that the model is accurately representing how population and employment growth occurred. Validation is the process of using the calibrated model to verify the forecasted growth, in this case using 2010 Census data. A question asked by the Regional Transportation Council in February was the accuracy of NCTCOG forecasts historically. He reviewed forecasts developed in 1987 for projections of population and employment in the region to the year 2010 compared to actual data from the 2010 Census. NCTCOG was conservative in its forecasts and projected slightly higher percentages of growth in Tarrant and Dallas Counties and lower percentages of growth in Collin and Denton Counties than what actually occurred. By setting the current model back to the year 2000 and performing analyses for 2005 and 2010, staff can compare this data to the actual data from the 2010 Census and calibrate the current model to verify forecasted growth. In most cases, the current model is within 1-2 percent for the 2010 validation year. Mr. Kessler also reviewed the 2040 population forecast by county. Collin and Denton Counties are estimated to double in population. Continued growth is also expected in Dallas and Tarrant Counties. Employment growth is also anticipated, with higher forecasts for both downtown Dallas and Fort Worth; 190,000 additional employees in Dallas and 120,000 additional employees in Fort Worth. Mr. Kessler discussed the importance of conversations within the region regarding accommodating anticipated growth and higher densities, as well as transportation options in the region. He reviewed the last step used in the demographic process to break

down data to a detailed level. Staff has inventoried what is occurring within the region from a land-use perspective. Data is then reaggregated to the traffic survey zones. A simulation was shown displaying development by parcel from 1950 through the 2040 planning horizon. Mr. Kessler noted that staff was in the final stages of the process and anticipated presentation to the Executive Board in May for approval. Chad Edwards asked if staff would be providing a report comparing current demographics to the new demographics. Mr. Kessler noted that staff has not prepared this type of report in the past, but did not believe it would be difficult to prepare.

5. **Sustainable Development Regional Mobility Initiative Report:** Patrick Mandapaka highlighted information from the Sustainable Development Regional Mobility Initiatives report. In 2001, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) adopted a Sustainable Development Funding Program which included strategies to utilize existing system capacity, improve rail mobility, promote mixed use, and improve access management. Call for projects were held in 2001, 2005, and 2010 focusing on rail stations, rail lines, transit oriented development (TOD) access, infill, and historic main street districts. A total of 81 projects have been funded; 59 construction projects, 20 planning projects, and 20 pilot projects for land banking. Over \$144 million was allocated through the calls for projects, including a 20 percent local match. Mr. Mandapaka highlighted the distribution of projects in the region. He also highlighted the types of funds utilized for each call for projects, as well as the length of time it took to complete projects funded through each call. Mr. Mandapaka also discussed transit oriented development, one of the larger focus areas of the Sustainable Development Program for which approximately 66 percent of sustainable development funding has supported TOD. Transit oriented development projects are typically projects near rail stations that have land use planning or building orientation that promote rail transit access or bike pedestrian access. This is important since 1 in 8 people live near transit lines and 30 percent of all jobs are along rail lines. These projects have high potential to reduce vehicle miles traveled and work trips in the region. He also highlighted live, work, and play opportunities located along rail lines, as well as major trip generators such as colleges, shopping centers, hospitals, and larger commercial areas. Regionally, approximately 10,900 residential units and over 3.5 million square feet of commercial space have been added. Planning projects were also highlighted, including rail station area transit oriented development plans, context sensitive transportation plans, etc., that are a necessary part of sustainable development efforts. Additional details were available in the publication provided at the meeting.
6. **Transit Elements in the Cotton Belt Corridor: Vehicle Manufacturing Facility, TEX Rail Line Support, Technical Assistance to the City of Addison, and Potential Dallas People Mover System Access:** Kevin Feldt discussed a variety of topics related to transit in the region. He highlighted regional rail innovation efforts related to the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) A Train. Staff believes a vehicle manufacturing facility located in the region will be a tremendous economic opportunity and allow the capability to have a Buy America compliant vehicle. There is also a joint vehicle procurement opportunity that would lower costs. Discussions are continuing with a potential manufacturer seeking potential sites in Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant Counties. Regarding TEX Rail support, the full funding grant agreement (New Starts) program is progressing. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) previously awarded \$50 million to the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T) and has proposed \$100 million in the FY2016 federal budget. In addition, The T regional rail vehicle procurement is underway. The proposed vehicle is consistent with the size of the current light rail vehicles in the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system, as well as the procured vehicles for DCTA. In addition to the size compatibility, there is interest in procuring vehicles that are Federal Railroad Administrative (FRA) compliant so that the

vehicles can also be used on freight corridors. He noted that a waiver from FTA was obtained for the DCTA Stadler GTW 2/6 vehicle and The T is in the process of procuring a compatible vehicle, the Stadler FLIRT. In the future, there is interest to develop a vehicle that is FRA compliant and also meets the size and dimension standards that have been set. Mr. Feldt also noted discussions with the Town of Addison to assist in expediting the beginning of additional transit service and potential sources of funding. Meetings are being scheduled with cities, the county, and prominent land owners in the corridor that have an interest in the addition of rail service in Addison. Staff is also coordinating with DART, DCTA, and The T regarding available options. Regarding public transportation, staff has ramified the various passenger transportation modes into different categories including regional rail, light rail, people mover, street car, and local bus and have reviewed areas such as mobility, distance traveled, frequency of service, passenger volume, dedicated right-of-way, and land-use density needs for each category. Specifically he noted the people mover, a collector/local street version of passenger rail. People mover options are being reviewed and there is interest in having an option that is consistent throughout the region. A meeting has been schedule with the Southwest Medical District, Dallas County, and City of Dallas on options to move forward. Additional candidate locations include airports, central business districts, entertainment districts, hospital districts, college districts, and industrial complexes.

- 7. Mobility 2040:** Chad McKeown discussed the development of the region's next long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2040. This document is the blueprint for the region's multimodal transportation system which covers at least a 20-year timeframe. The financially constrained plan responds to the goals that are developed locally for the transportation system and documents all of the policies, programs, and projects for continued development at the regional transportation level. New elements for Mobility 2040 include the new 2040 horizon planning year, an additional 3.7 million in population and 1.9 million in jobs, legislative action from the current legislative session, direction from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), federal planning requirements, numerous policy considerations, as well as needs assessments in the region. Mr. McKeown provided additional detail regarding policy considerations such as the evaluation and reevaluation of the balance between transit and roadway, priced facilities and free roads, and capital investment and maintenance. In addition, the increasing role of technology, last mile connections, infrastructure resiliency, and comprehensive views of corridors will be evaluated. Staff has been asked to identify comprehensive corridor options as well as reevaluate the balance between priced facilities and free facilities. Graphics were reviewed showing the distribution of freeways and toll roads in the region in comparison to vehicle miles traveled for daily commute on these freeways and toll roads. He noted that in light of legislative discussion in the current session regarding toll roads, these are the types of details staff will review as policy considerations are made during development of Mobility 2040. The schedule for development of Mobility 2040 was reviewed, with final adoption of Mobility 2040 anticipated in March 2016. Throughout the process there will be several public input opportunities and briefings to the Committee and RTC regarding efforts. Partner agency and local government assistance was requested to review and prioritize existing Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) recommendations within respective jurisdictions, provide revised design concept, design scope, financial, or other relevant project information, participate in MTP discussions at workshops and meetings, and facilitate early and on-going discussions about development, planning considerations, priorities, and concerns within your community. A survey is being conducted to gather introductory information on Mobility 2040 and is available at [www.nctcog.org/survey2040](http://www.nctcog.org/survey2040).



8. **Fast Facts:** Kelli Schlicher highlighted a competitive call for projects that opened on February 27 to award funding for two Federal Transit Administration programs. Approximately \$4.9 million is available for projects that support increased transit options for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas. Pre-proposal workshops were held in March 2015, and material and recorded presentations were available at [www.nctcog.org/FTAfunding](http://www.nctcog.org/FTAfunding).

Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins noted that development of the FY2016 and FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was underway. In mid-February, staff transmitted correspondence to agencies requesting regional transportation or air quality planning studies and technical assistance requests that agencies would like for the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to conduct. Staff will be reviewing submittals for possible inclusion in the document. Correspondence also requested an inventory of transportation and air quality planning activities of regional significance in which organizations will be involved over the next two years. Those studies will be inventoried and also included in the UPWP. Project submittals were due by March 20. Staff will be returning to the Committee in May with a draft document for information and in June for final action. The final document is due to the Texas Department of Transportation by August 1.

Kevin Kokes highlighted information regarding the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects. Within the region, over 100 cities that are outside the urbanized area boundaries and approximately 50 cities that are partially in the urbanized area boundaries are potentially eligible for funding. Details were provided to members by e-mail and a workshop, facilitated by TxDOT, was held on March 10. A video of the workshop, as well as copies of presentations were provided at [www.nctcog.org/TAP](http://www.nctcog.org/TAP).

Kyle Roy noted that February public meeting minutes were provided in Electronic Item 8.1. Information included presentations and comments from the February 2-3, 2015, public meetings.

Jahnae Stout discussed the current online regional transportation public input opportunity open from March 9 through April 7. More information was provided in Electronic Item 8.2. NCTCOG is seeking input on Transportation Improvement Program modifications, and the 2014 annual listing of obligated projects was also available for review.

Brian Wilson noted that the latest edition of Mobility Matters was provided at the meeting. In addition, an air quality fact sheet was provided in Electronic Item 8.3 and at [www.nctcog.org/factsheets](http://www.nctcog.org/factsheets).

Ken Kirkpatrick discussed federal approval of the NCTCOG Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. Because NCTCOG is a direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration funds to carry out certain programs through Regional Transportation Council authorization, NCTCOG is required to develop a DBE program on a periodic basis. Concurrence of the current DBE program, valid through 2016, was provided in Electronic Item 8.4.

Marissa Fewell highlighted air quality funding opportunity for vehicles. She noted the newly opened Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) rebate grants program and the TCEQ light duty motor vehicle purchase release incentive program. Details were available in Electronic Item 8.5.

Jody Loza noted that the Regional Transportation Council recently submitted comments on the Dallas-Fort Worth State Implementation Plan revision, provided in Electronic Item 8.6. Electronic Item 8.7 contained the Texas Transportation Commission minute order for environmental speed limits. In addition, she discussed the 20105 ozone season that began March 1 for the 2008 ozone standard of 75 parts per billion. The region's design value at the time of the meeting was 71 ppb.

Jenny Narvaez discussed 2014 transportation conformity. The North Central Texas Council of Governments continues to work with one of its partner agencies and hopes to receive a final determination in April 2015. Details regarding conformity are available in Electronic Item 8.8. In addition, on February 17 the Environmental Protection Agency proposed to reclassify the region to severe under the 1997 ozone standard of 85 parts per billion (ppb). However, the final implementation rule for the current 2008 ozone standard of 75 ppb was issued in March and will become effective April 6. Once that occurs, the 1997 standard will be revoked and the region will not have to be reclassified.

Jasper Alve noted that April is National Car Care Month. In partnership with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, auto repair facilities throughout region will open car care clinics to the public. The significance of proper vehicle maintenance and tips for care will be discussed. Locations and additional details were provided in Electronic item 8.10.

Angela Smith highlighted the current east/west equity allocations for The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users in Electronic Item 8.11.1 and Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Electronic Item 8.11.2. In addition, she provided an update regarding projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Details were provided in Electronic Item 8.11.3 and Electronic Item 8.11.4.

The Local Motion was provided in Electronic Item 8.12, and transportation partners progress reports were provided in Electronic Item 9.13

9. **Other Business (Old and New):** Mike Branum announced an upcoming Unmanned Aircraft Workshop scheduled for April 1, 2015, 10 am to 12 pm, in the Transportation Council Room. Through the Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee, staff has been working with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on coordination efforts for unmanned aircraft. Workshop discussion topics include policy, local level integrations for technology, and rulemaking for small unmanned aircraft systems recently released by FAA. North Central Texas Council of Government (NCTCOG) staff is looking into how this technology could benefit transportation planning in the region and will provide future updates to the Committee.

Dan Kessler welcomed new NCTCOG staff: Carli Baylor, Jarrett Burley, Matt Thompson, Karina Maldonado, Jasper Alve, and Jeff Hathcock.

10. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on April 24, 2015, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.

# local motion

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

May 2015 | [nctcog.org/localmotion](http://nctcog.org/localmotion)

## 84th Legislature concludes June 1

The 84th Texas Legislature is scheduled to conclude June 1. Transportation has been a focal point of the session, with lawmakers looking for ways to provide additional funding to meet the transportation needs of the rapidly growing state.

For an update of how the Legislature addresses transportation during the 140-day session, read next month's issue of Local Motion.

## Meetings

**May 1, 11 am**  
**DRMC Meeting**

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

**May 6, 8:30 am**  
**TRTC Meeting**

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

**May 14, 1 pm**

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

**May 22, 1:30 pm**

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

## Ground broken on Midtown Express

Another important transportation project will soon be underway in Dallas-Fort Worth following the April 27 groundbreaking ceremony for the Midtown Express. This project encompasses 14.8 miles of State Highway 183, from SH 121 to Interstate Highway 35E, 10.5 miles of SH 114 between SH 183 and International Parkway, and 2.5 miles of Loop 12. Construction is expected to begin this spring, according to the Texas Department of Transportation. The first phase of the project will cost \$848 million and include design and reconstruction of the existing lanes and the addition of a TEXpress Lane in both directions of SH 183. TEXpress Lanes are also being added to SH 121 and Loop 12.

The project will redevelop SH 183, a roadway that dates to 1959 and received its latest upgrade, a third main lane in each direction, in 1973. Today, an estimated 150,000 to 170,000 vehicles per day travel the road between Fort Worth and Dallas. SouthGate Mobility Partners was awarded the bid for the first phase of the project, which is expected to be completed by 2018. The entire project is expected to cost \$3.8 billion and include up to three TEXpress Lanes in each direction on SH 183 and two on SH 114 and Loop 12.

As part of the agreement, SouthGate will maintain the corridor for 25 years. The project will improve a corridor that covers five cities and two counties, improving existing bridges and building new ones where necessary to improve traffic flow through the heart of the growing region.

The Midtown Express will also provide travelers to and from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport better access to the south entrance. Drivers can sign up for text alerts and read additional information about the project at

[www.drivemidtown.com](http://www.drivemidtown.com).

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



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

# our region

## Garland ISD's Ramirez named winner of annual transportation art contest

Ruben Ramirez, a seventh-grader from Sam Houston Middle School in Garland, won the annual Progress North Texas art contest from among a record 100 entries.

The theme of this year's contest was "Improving Transportation for Your Family." Ramirez took a multimodal approach, including a taxi, a bus and bicycle-pedestrian signs in his creation.

His work will appear on the cover of Progress North Texas 2015, which examines transportation and air quality improvements made in the region last year. Readers will learn about additional choices being provided to help residents move throughout the region and beyond, and how changes are aiding families. Great attention is paid to surface transportation enhancements being made in the region, but the report will also discuss safety, aviation and technological advancements made in the last year, as well as work being done to improve air quality and public involvement efforts.

Ramirez was recognized during a ceremony at the Garland ISD Middle School Art Show in April. Joining Ramirez as top finishers were Emily Tran of Jackson Technology Center (second) and Leslie Barker of Austin Academy (third). The creations of all three winners, plus seventh-graders Samantha Hernandez and Yexon Lazo, who earned honorable mentions, will appear inside Progress North Texas 2015.

The NCTCOG Transportation Department began the art contest four years ago in an effort to reach out to students and inspire them to think about transportation. The goal was to invite them to imagine solutions to problems faced today in the hopes that they will become adults who are engaged in the transportation decision-making process.

A slideshow of all the artwork submitted is available at [www.youtube.com/nctcogtrans](http://www.youtube.com/nctcogtrans). Progress North Texas 2015 will be published in print and online at [www.nctcog.org/ourregion](http://www.nctcog.org/ourregion).



Garland ISD photo

**Ruben Ramirez, second from left, was named winner of the annual Progress North Texas art contest during a ceremony at the Garland ISD Middle School Art Show in April. His drawing will appear on the cover of the annual transportation report. Joining Ramirez, a seventh-grader at Sam Houston Middle School, are Elizabeth Pulver, his teacher; Brian Wilson, Progress North Texas editor; and Don Hernandez, SHMS principal.**



## TCEQ GRANT

### **EV rebate deadline June 26**

The deadline to qualify for the Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive (LDPLI) Program is approaching.

Public or private entities and individuals interested in the state rebate from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) must lease or purchase a qualifying vehicle and fill out an application, which TCEQ must receive by June 26.

This program provides financial incentives of up to \$2,500 for the purchase or lease of eligible new vehicles powered by compressed natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas or electric drives (plug-ins).

TCEQ has a list of specific eligible vehicle makes and models online, and applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

The commission released funding in May 2014 for the LDPLI Program.

For additional information about this TCEQ program, visit [www.terpgrants.org](http://www.terpgrants.org).

# public involvement

## **Entities adopting Clean Fleet Policy update**

A regional effort to encourage cleaner vehicle fleets across Dallas-Fort Worth is progressing. As of April, 23 local fleets have adopted the revised Clean Fleet Policy. This includes cities, counties, school districts and a transit agency. Funding eligibility through the Regional Transportation Council requires adoption of the Clean Fleet Policy, and as the Dallas-Fort Worth area continues to face air quality challenges, RTC urges all organizations with fleet operations in the DFW ozone nonattainment area to adopt the new Clean Fleet Policy. The RTC resolution and new policy template can be viewed at [www.nctcog.org/fleetpolicy](http://www.nctcog.org/fleetpolicy). Supporting items, also available online, include a Clean Fleet Policy guidance document, which outlines practical examples for implementing policy elements.

## **Input sought on transportation modifications**

Planners will seek comments online for a change to the short-term list of funded projects and work program modifications starting May 11.

A comprehensive list of funded transportation projects through 2018 is maintained in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects with committed funds from federal, state and local sources are included in the TIP, which is periodically updated to ensure accuracy. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for regional transportation planning provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality planning tasks conducted by the metropolitan planning organization.

Information on changes to both documents will be available for review and comment at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input) through June 9. To request printed copies of the information, call 817-608-2335 or email [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org).

# resources

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# partners

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Transportation Authority**  
DCTA.net

**North Texas Tollway Authority**  
NTTA.org

**The Fort Worth  
Transportation Authority**  
The-T.com

**Texas Department  
of Transportation**  
TxDOT.gov

## \$848 million

The approximate value of the first phase of the Midtown Express project, which will result in the rebuilding of portions of State Highway 183, SH 114 and Loop 12.

# policymakers —

## UAS technology promising for transportation

NCTCOG is working with local aviation partners to evaluate the safe application of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), technology that can be used for transportation planning and data collection.

Although historically used for military purposes, UAS technology can assist with aerial photogrammetry, law enforcement and disaster response. At an Air Transportation Technical Advisory Committee workshop April 1, local officials discussed the potential benefits of UAS while underscoring the need for regional coordination.

Officials from Naval Air Station Fort Worth, Joint Reserve Base and the Arlington Police Department discussed the importance of clear, uniform guidelines that can be applied to the use of this emerging technology.

The University of Texas at Arlington Research Institute is partnering with other universities on research and development of UAS. An update on this project was also provided at the workshop.

Unmanned aircraft are an example of a technology NCTCOG monitors for impacts on regional aviation planning, as recommended in the Regional General Aviation and Heliport System Plan. UAS technology is promising for aviation and transportation planning because it would provide NCTCOG new data and help it cost-effectively generate imagery to improve planning and safety. The Texas Department of Transportation and other outside agencies may also benefit. Read more about NCTCOG's involvement with UAS at [www.nctcog.org/uas](http://www.nctcog.org/uas).

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