

AGENDA

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL Thursday, May 13, 2021 North Central Texas Council of Governments

The RTC meeting on May 13, 2021, will be conducted as a videoconference meeting via Zoom. Members of the public wishing to speak may do so by calling toll free 1-855-965-2480 and entering meeting ID 851 6868 3082# when prompted. Following conclusion of the Opportunity for the Public to Speak in Agenda Item 1, the audio line will be disconnected. Members of the public may view a livestream of the RTC meeting at www.nctcog.org/video under the "live" tab.

1:00 pm Full RTC Business Agenda

- 1:00 – 1:10 1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840**
 Information Minutes: 10
Item Summary: This item provides an opportunity for the public to comment on today's meeting agenda items. Members of the public wishing to comment on an agenda item may do so during this item by calling toll free 1-855-965-2480 and entering meeting ID 851 6868 3082# when prompted. Speakers should state their name, city of residence, the agenda number they are speaking on, and whether they are speaking on/for/against the item. Members of the public are not permitted to provide comments after the conclusion of this agenda item; therefore, the audio line will be disconnected, and members of the public may view the livestream of the meeting at www.nctcog.org/video.
Background: N/A
- 1:10 – 1:15 2. **Approval of April 8, 2021, Minutes**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
Presenter: Roger Harmon, RTC Chair
Item Summary: Approval of the April 8, 2021, minutes contained in [Electronic Item 2](#) will be requested.
Background: N/A
- 1:15 – 1:20 3. **Consent Agenda**
 Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 5
- 3.1. **Changes to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Resulting from Statewide Financial Constraints**
Presenter: Ken Bunkley, NCTCOG
Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of revisions to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be requested, along with the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and other planning documents with TIP-related changes.

Background: The Dallas-Fort Worth region, along with the other metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the state, submitted TIP listings to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in June 2020. At the statewide level, TxDOT determined that the draft STIP listings, TxDOT's information system, and long-term State funding plans were not financially constrained. In late 2020, TxDOT submitted proposed changes to North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff for review and asked NCTCOG to advance the submittal of its regular TIP/STIP modifications through an amended process (not the quarterly cycle). A few final changes were proposed that result in additional revisions to the 2021-2024 TIP, which are provided as [Electronic Item 3.1](#) for the Council's consideration. These changes have been reviewed for consistency with the mobility plan, the air quality conformity determination and financial constraint of the TIP.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Transit

3.2. **Fiscal Year 2021 Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 3**

Presenter: Mindy Mize, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Support to recommend North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Executive Board approval of up to \$326,000 in funding for education campaigns for Phase 3 transportation initiatives that will initiate in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 will be requested. Last month, the Surface Transportation Technical Committee recommended for Regional Transportation Council approval.

Background: Since 2014, the NCTCOG Executive Board has been authorizing annual large-scale advertising purchase and placement initiatives for the Transportation Department. Unfortunately, due to making sure we are sensitive in our messaging during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as experiencing impacts related to funding agreement availability, FY2021 campaigns will be approved in phases when deemed appropriate. [Electronic Item 3.2.1](#) explains the benefits of this initiative and showcases cost savings obtained from bulk education campaign purchasing for the Transportation Department, primarily from FY2019 since we do not have much data from FY2020. [Electronic Item 3.2.2](#) provides a reminder of Phase 1 and Phase 2 FY2021 budgets previously approved as well as more information on Phase 3 FY2021 education campaign costs along with examples of past education campaigns. Education campaigns in Phase 3 will support the Ozone Season Emissions

Reduction Campaign, Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, transit pandemic recovery, and saving money and reducing truck emissions programs.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality, Transit

3.3. Regional Vanpool Program Modifications to Improve Overall Efficiency

Presenter: Shannon Stevenson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of Regional Vanpool Program modifications to improve overall efficiency will be requested.

Background: The North Central Texas Regional Vanpool Program is operated by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA), and Trinity Metro and achieves many regional benefits including lowering emissions by removing single-occupant vehicles off the road. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) previously approved funding to support vanpool services. Each transit agency operates their vanpool program slightly differently, which can be confusing to the public. Staff recently began assessing the program to look for ways to modernize and improve overall efficiency. In collaboration with staff from DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro, various areas have been identified for improvement to help simplify the program, reduce rider confusion, avoid unintended competition among the transit agencies, and gain greater program efficiency.

Approval of Regional Vanpool Program updates including defined agency boundaries, temporary flexibility to the subsidy funding structure, and a regional cooperative vanpool procurement to create a more unified program that will benefit current and future riders will be requested. [Electronic Item 3.3](#) provides additional details.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit

3.4. Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Performance Measures

Presenter: Shannon Stevenson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regional transit safety targets, new federally required performance measures relating to improving transit safety in the region, will be requested.

Background: The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Final Rule became effective on July 19, 2019. The PTASP seeks to improve public transportation safety by requiring operators of public transportation who receive Federal

Transit Administration Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funding to more effectively and proactively manage safety risks in their systems through the development of safety plans, which include individual agency transit safety performance targets. Once individual plans and targets are submitted to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the RTC must adopt regional transit safety targets within 180 days. Applicable regional providers provided their plans to the North Central Texas Council of Governments in December 2020. The proposed regional targets will be used to track and report on the region's performance through existing documents, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and will be used in the planning process to implement programs to improve transit safety.

RTC approval of the proposed PTASP regional transit safety targets, as well as the revision of administrative documents, as appropriate, to address the safety targets will be requested. Details can be found in [Electronic Item 3.4](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit, Safety

1:20 – 1:35

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

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

1. Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Nominating Subcommittee Appointments, Election of Vice Chair and Secretary (Chair Roger Harmon)
2. Remembering Tarrant County Commissioner/City of Hurst Mayor Bob Hampton
3. Metropolitan Planning Organization Federal Certification Review (at least every four years): June 14-16, 2021
4. Texas Department of Transportation/Unified Transportation Program Funding Category Allocations
5. Oklahoma Legislation Limiting Liabilities for Railroads Allowing Commuter Rail ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
6. Status of Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
7. Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision issued for the Dallas CBD Second Light Rail Alignment (D2 Subway) ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
8. North Central Texas Council of Government Staff Receive Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship through the US Department of Transportation
 - 2020: Catherine Osborn and Rachel Jenkins
 - 2021: Vivian Fung and Nicholas Allen

9. Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery ([Electronic Item 4.4](#)) (www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19)
10. East/West Equity Update ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
11. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
12. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Upcoming Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings>)
13. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources>)
14. Status Report on Ozone ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
15. Mobility Matters (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/about/publications/mm/mobility-matters-spring-2021>)
16. March Online Input Opportunity Minutes-Additional Comments ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
17. April Online Input Opportunity Minutes ([Electronic Item 4.9](#))
18. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.10](#))
19. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.11](#))
20. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.12](#))
21. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.13](#))

1:35 – 1:45

5. **Approval to Terminate SH 360 Financial Backstop**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval to terminate the SH 360 financial backstop will be requested.

Background: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved action to advance the SH 360 toll road on December 5, 2013. The project has been opened to traffic since May 2018. The RTC provided the financial backstop to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) loan to the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) and in December 2013, TxDOT provided \$300 million for the construction of SH 360 South from approximately Green Oaks to US 287 to be repaid by NTTA through project revenues. The transaction required a financial backstop in case the traffic demand could not meet the loan repayments to TxDOT. NTTA wishes to pay off the loan, sell bonds, and place SH 360 into the NTTA system. This would eliminate the RTC's need to financially backstop the project. The draft Resolution Approving Termination of Regional Transportation Council Financial Backstop for the SH 360 Loan is provided in [Electronic Item 5.1](#). Additional details are provided in [Electronic Item 5.2](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Administrative, Roadway

1:45 – 1:55

6. **“Trade Fair” Partnership with Lubbock and Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Ken Bunkley, NCTCOG

Item Summary: The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will be briefed on a proposed “Trade Fair” partnership with Lubbock Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Rio Grande Valley MPO and will be asked to approve the partnerships.

Background: The Lubbock MPO approached the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) with the proposal of creating a trade between the two agencies. The Lubbock MPO is requesting to borrow cash flow/allocation authority from the RTC/NCTCOG for a total of \$21,000,000 of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for two projects in FY2023 and FY2025. In turn, the Lubbock MPO would repay the full \$21,000,000 of STBG funds back over three years to NCTCOG in FY2028 - FY 2030.

The Rio Grande Valley MPO approached NCTCOG with the proposal of creating a trade as well. The Rio Grande Valley MPO is requesting to borrow cash flow/allocation authority from RTC/NCTCOG for a total of \$14,578,845 of STBG funds in FY2022. In turn, the Rio Grande Valley MPO would repay the full \$14,578,845 of STBG funds back to NCTCOG in FY2026.

Staff will request RTC approval of the proposed trade fair partnership between NCTCOG and the Lubbock MPO and between NCTCOG and the Rio Grande Valley MPO. [Electronic Item 6](#) contains additional information.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway

1:55 – 2:05

7. **American Rescue Plan Act Transit Funding Allocations: Round 3**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Shannon Stevenson, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of the US Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding allocations in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Background: FTA announced April 2, 2021, approximately \$30.5 billion nationwide in additional federal funding allocations to help alleviate funding shortfalls for the nation’s largest public transportation systems due to COVID-19. Funding is provided through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, signed by President Biden on March 11, 2021.

The primary objective of the funding is to ensure public transit agencies receive sufficient funding, when combined with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental

Appropriations Act apportionments, to equal at least 132 percent of the Urbanized Area's (UZA) public transit operating costs based on 2018 expenses. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is the designated recipient for the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington (DFWA) UZA and the Denton-Lewisville (DL) UZA.

The DFWA UZA will receive \$340,487,932 and the DL UZA was allocated \$14,115,131. Funding will be provided at a 100 percent federal share, with no local match required, and prioritizes the use of funds for operational and payroll needs but also supports expenses traditionally eligible under the Urbanized Area Formula Program and the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. The DFWA UZA and DL UZA are receiving Urbanized Area Formula Program funding only because several transit agencies fall below the 132 percent threshold.

Staff will request RTC approval of funding allocations based on FTA's methodology for Urbanized Area Formula Program funds under the ARP and for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program funds to be distributed based on eligibility and need. Details can be found [in Electronic Item 7](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit

2:05 – 2:15

8. **Legislative Update**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Rebekah Hernandez, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on federal and State legislative actions related to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Legislative actions to be covered include the following:

- Federal Infrastructure Bill Update
- State Budget Update
- Bill Actions in the Texas Legislature

Background: Transportation issues continue to be a focus for both the United States Congress and the Texas Legislature. The 1st session of the 117th US Congress convened on January 3, 2021. The 87th Texas Legislature convened on January 12, 2021. This item will allow staff to provide updates on key positions of the Regional Transportation Council and allow any additional positions to be taken, if necessary.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Transit

2:15 – 2:25

9. **Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Dan Lamers, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update regarding the Dallas to Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation (DFWHST) Connections Study. Currently the project is nearing completion of its first phase, including analysis of route and mode alternatives.

Background: In April 2020, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff began work on the DFWHST Connections Study with consultant assistance. The project is divided into two phases, the first being an alternatives analysis effort. The second phase will be a National Environmental Policy Act effort, resulting in a federal government action identifying the project's next steps. Staff and the consultant have been analyzing alternatives while engaging the public and stakeholders. The Phase 1 efforts are designed to reduce the number of alternatives (technology and alignment) to a minimum for more detailed analysis in the Phase 2 effort. The following items will be presented:

- Route screening results
- Mode screening results
- Technology update
- Project schedule

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Transit, Safety

2:25 – 2:35

10. **Regional Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (2021)**

Action Possible Action Information Minutes: 10

Presenter: Kevin Kokes, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on the regional Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), including the purpose, goals and recommended policies, regional data analysis, identified safety corridors, and a pedestrian public opinion survey.

Background: A regional Pedestrian Safety Action Plan was completed in early 2021 in response to the steadily increasing number of pedestrian fatalities across North Texas since 2010. Pedestrian fatalities in the North Texas region were well above state and national averages during that same time, leading the Federal Highway Administration to designate Texas as a focus State for pedestrian safety, and Dallas and Fort Worth as focus cities.

The purpose of the PSAP is to serve as a guide for improving pedestrian safety across the 12-county Metropolitan Planning Area. The PSAP was developed as one of the North Central Texas Council of Governments' many efforts to support the safety positions adopted by the Regional Transportation Council and the Texas Transportation Commission. Staff will provide an overview of the PSAP including goals, policy recommendations, and action items.

The PSAP, including appendices, can be viewed at www.nctcog.org/pedsafetyplan. More information can be found in [Electronic Item 10](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety

11. **Progress Reports**

Action Possible Action Information

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

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

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

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

14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for ***1:00 pm, Thursday, June 10, 2021.***

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
April 8, 2021

In accordance with the Texas Governor's March 13, 2020, Disaster Declaration which was renewed through May 5, 2021, and subsequent suspension of certain Texas Open Meetings Act provisions, the April 8, 2021, meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) was conducted as a videoconference via Zoom. Staff conducted a roll call of members and the presence of a quorum was confirmed. The following members or representatives were present on the videoconference: Tennell Atkins, Richard E. Aubin, Dennis Bailey, Mohamed Bur, Dianne Costa, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Pat Deen, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Kevin Falconer, Gary Fickes, George Fuller, Barry L. Gordon, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Mojj Haddad, Roger Harmon, Ivan Hughes, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Carl L. Johnson, Jungus Jordan, John Keating, Laura Mackey (representing Mike Leyman), B. Adam McGough, William Meadows, Allan E. Meagher, Cara Mendelsohn, Bruce Archer (representing Robert Miklos), Cary Moon, Ignacio Nuñez, Philip J. Ritter, John Ryan, Chris Schulmeister, Mark Aldredge (representing Casey Thomas II), Jeremy Tompkins, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., William Tsao, Paul N. Wageman, Duncan Webb, Devan Allen (representing B. Glen Whitley), W. Jeff Williams, and Ann Zadeh. Individual attendance was not taken for non-RTC member attendees.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak on Today's Agenda: Consistent with HB 2840:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to give input on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Roger Harmon asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak.
2. **Approval of the March 11, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the March 11, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 2. Tennell Atkins (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** There were no items on the Consent Agenda.
4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris recognized Flower Mound Assistant Fire Chief of Emergency Medical Services, John Glover and Traffic Incident Management Course instructor, for his commitment to freeway incident management. Mr. Morris also recognized Dallas City Council for efforts to help resolve transportation projects near downtown and highlighted a map of the D2 alignment, provided in Electronic Item 4.1. He also thanked Kevin Feldt, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Program Manager, for his service to the region and noted he would be leaving the organization to work in the private sector. In addition, he discussed the proposed Regional Single Occupancy Trip Reduction Target. A draft Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution to be presented at the May 13, 2021, meeting was provided in Electronic Item 4.2. He noted the resolution proposes a 20 percent reduction in single-occupant vehicle (SOV) travel. He highlighted the impacts of setting a SOV trip reduction too high or too low, both positive and negative, provided in Electronic Item 4.3. Too high of a reduction could increase fatalities and negatively impact rail ridership, lifestyle/tourism, and transportation revenues. A reduction that is too low could have implications to future right-of-way, not have enough impact on emissions or climate change, and would be a lost opportunity. He also noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is up for review. Details on the schedule were provided in Electronic Item 4.4. Mr. Morris also provided a brief overview of Changing Mobility: Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery, provided in Electronic Item 4.5. He highlighted travel behavior by mode, and specifically noted that freeway volumes decreased in February due to inclement weather. Transit ridership and aviation passenger numbers have leveled out,

but aviation passenger numbers are expected to improve as residents are vaccinated and begin to travel for vacation. Transit ridership may not improve until employers begin to transition employees back to offices. Full details are available through the online dashboard at www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19. Information on a training opportunity for prosecutors and judges regarding Commercial Motor Vehicle Violations: Enforcement, Prosecution, and Reporting (May 18 and 19, 2021) was provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/safety/transportation-safety/commercial-vehicle-enforcement>. Electronic Item 4.6 contained an announcement for the Spring 20201 Virtual Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course. Upcoming Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities events were provided at <https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings> and current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided at <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>. Electronic Item 4.7 contained a status report on the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program funding programs. March online input opportunity minutes were provided in Electronic Item 4.8 and the April online input opportunity notice was provided in Electronic Item 4.9. The current Public Comments Report was provided in Electronic Item 4.10, recent correspondence in Electronic Item 4.11, recent new articles in Electronic Item 4.12, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 4.13.

5. **COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program (Round 4):** Christie Gotti presented recommendations for the fourth round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program, an initiative implemented to stimulate the economy after setbacks resulting from COVID-19. Proposed projects meet one or more of the policies outlined in Mobility 2045, assist in reaching the region's federal performance measure targets, as well as include projects that have been the subject of ongoing discussions and submitted by local governments for consideration. Project types include roadway, complete streets, bicycle/pedestrian, intersection improvements, and strategic partnerships. A summary of the eligibility and selection criteria was presented. Ms. Gotti noted that the specific criteria/process used for each project type was included in Electronic Item 5.1. Also discussed was recent stimulus funding totaling \$9.8 billion that was set aside for transportation infrastructure as part of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA). Of that amount, \$803 million was allocated to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and \$164 million was allocated to Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Texas. Approximately \$54 million was allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region and staff anticipates those funds will be awarded to the region through the 2022 Unified Transportation Program. In addition, staff proposed to incorporate these funds into existing project selection efforts through this and future rounds of COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure, as well as the Regional 10-Year Plan. Ms. Gotti also highlighted the current east/west funding distributions as a result of the proposed projects. She noted that balances are slightly off target and that selection of projects through future rounds of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program will help bring funding percentages closer to the targets of 32 percent in the west and 68 percent in the east for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds and 34 percent in the west and 66 percent in the east for Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement Program funds. A summary of proposed funding recommended through COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Round Four was highlighted by project type and funding category for a total of approximately \$40.5 million recommended for roadways, \$43.18 million for complete streets, \$21.85 million for bicycle/pedestrian, \$19.5 million for intersection improvements, and \$50.62 million for strategic partners for an overall total funding of approximately \$175.65 million including local funds. Transportation Development Credits will also be used by many cities. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. If approved, staff anticipated projects will be included in the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program modification cycle, with Federal Highway Administration approval expected in October 2021. Additional details about the program and proposed projects were provide in Electronic Item 5.2. Lane

Grayson thanked staff for their assistance through this program and noted the Cities of Midlothian and Waxahachie were in full support of the recommendations. RTC Vice Chair Theresa Daniel also expressed her appreciation to staff and asked if a map identifying the projects funded through this program was available. Staff noted that a map identifying projects funded through each round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program could be created and provided to members. A motion was made to approve the proposed projects for the fourth round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program outlined in Electronic Item 5.1 and direction to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents to include the projects. Lane Grayson (M); Rick Grady (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **2021 Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emissions Grant Program:** Lori Clark presented details of a proposed regional submittal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low or No Emissions Grant Program. The program is expected to award \$180 million nationwide in funding for advanced technology transit projects that reduce energy consumption, harmful emissions, and direct carbon emissions. Eligible projects include acquisition of low- or no-emission buses, related equipment and facilities, and workforce development. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is an eligible applicant and staff proposed submittal of a project, on behalf of the region, to electrify the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Link that connects the CentrePort Station to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. The project would include the purchase of electric buses, charging stations, and project administration costs. Ms. Clark noted that since the meeting mailout material was developed, updated funding amounts were received for charging equipment infrastructure, with an anticipated award of up to \$8 million in federal funds to be matched by up to 1.6 million in regional Transportation Development Credits. The schedule for this effort was reviewed. If approved, the application submittal deadline is April 12, 2021. Ms. Clark noted that the proposed projects would support four of the air quality emphasis areas, as well as federal performance measures related to air quality and transit. The project would also be consistent with several policies include in the long-range transportation plan. Details were provided in Electronic Item 6. A motion was made to approve staff submittal of a proposed project application for the Fiscal Year 2021 Federal Transit Administration Lo and No Emission Grant Program requesting up to \$8 million in Federal Transit Administration funds, including the use of up to 1.6 million regional Transportation Development Credits as match. Action also include approval for staff to administratively amend the transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include the proposed project, if awarded. Jungus Jordan (M); Theresa Daniel (S). The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Legislative Update:** Rebekah Hernandez provided an update on federal legislative actions related to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area. President Biden has laid out an infrastructure plan that includes \$2.3 trillion in infrastructure investments over eight years, of which \$571 billion is allocated for transportation. The American Jobs Plan's expansive definition of "infrastructure" is controversial as it includes funding for water, the electric grid, broadband, and others. There are many unanswered questions regarding language in the bill, and details will be left up to Congress. A partisan vote is anticipated in the Senate, so the bill must move forward through a budget reconciliation. A separate surface transportation reauthorization bill will still be needed, with the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act expiring on September 30, 2021. Ms. Hernandez highlighted some of the major transportation funding allocations in the American Jobs Plan, which include electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, fixing highways, roads, and bridges, Amtrak, mega projects, historic inequity projects, road safety,

and ports (including land ports). Michael Morris noted it is important to point out that many are debating what is labeled “transportation infrastructure” in the plan and that when future funding is identified, there will be those that state transportation infrastructure was already funded, when in fact nearly 70 percent of the funding in the plan is not actually transportation. If Congress labels funding as transportation and because of the magnitude of the proposed funding, there may be significant negative impacts to the level of funding authorized in future transportation reauthorization. In conversations with Representative Beth Van Duyne, member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, staff was asked to prepare information in the event the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is asked to weigh in on the proposed transportation infrastructure funding. Ms. Hernandez also provided an update on State legislative actions. The Texas Legislature will adjourn on May 31, 2021. Over the past several weeks, committee hearings have increased, and staff continue to track bills related to the RTC Legislative Program. She noted staff was recently asked to be a resource witness and there may be additional requests for testimony in committee hearings. Members will be provided weekly emails on Friday that will include updates on high-priority bills related to the legislative program and asking if RTC members are in Austin to testify or drop a card supporting or against a bill depending on the legislative program. She noted that many bills with a chance of dying are anticipated to be amended onto other bills, and that staff will be monitoring those amended bills closely as they move through the legislative process. Bill topics related to the RTC Legislative Program were highlighted. Related to transportation funding, Senate Bill 1 (State Budget) was approved on the Senate Floor and will be moving to House Appropriations. The bill includes slightly over \$30 billion for transportation, which is similar to the last biennium. She noted additional federal stimulus funds are expected that may not be included in the bill, so the bill currently includes language to incorporate any federal funds that are received after the bill is passed. In addition, two other transportation funding bills have been heard in committee, but both were left pending. Related to high-speed transportation, bills have been introduced related to eminent domain, landowner rights, property for highspeed rail, and creation of a High-Speed Rail Legislative Review Committee, but all bills were left pending. A number of bills have also been introduced regarding safety and include reducing speed limits and pedestrian safety. Although left pending, committee action is anticipated. A bill approved in House Transportation would update terminology and remove the accident and replace it with crash in many different statutes. Air quality-related bill topics include electric vehicle charging infrastructure, as well as vehicle emissions inspection for which staff was asked to provide resource testimony. In addition, HB 2539 addresses Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) funds and is set for a House Environmental Regulations hearing. The bill proposes that LIRAP funds be allocated back to the counties from which they were collected to be used for air quality and transportation purposes, for which staff has also been asked to provide testimony. Ms. Hernandez noted that legislative updates will continue to be provided to members during the legislative session. Theresa Daniel asked about HB 2539. Ms. Hernandez noted that the bill was schedule to be discussed in the House Environmental Regulations Committee on April 12, 2021. Details regarding the time were unclear, but she noted the information would be provided to members by email. No action was requested for this item.

8. **Status Report on the North Texas Tollway Authority’s Desire to Place SH 360 South in the NTTA System:** Michael Morris provided an overview of SH 360 and the North Texas Tollway Authority’s (NTTA’s) desire to place SH 360 South in the NTTA system. The Regional Transportation (RTC) approved action to advance the SH 360 toll road from approximately Green Oaks to US 287 in December 2013 and provided the financial backstop to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) loan to NTTA in case traffic

demand did not meet the loan repayments to TxDOT. The project has been opened to traffic since May 2018. He noted that tollway transactions have been reported to the RTC as part of COVID-19 impacts to the region, and that transactions on the SH 360 South project have recovered more quickly than the rest of the NTTA system. Mr. Morris noted NTTA has informed the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) that it would like to pay off the loan for the SH 360 project and place the project into the NTTA system. This would eliminate the RTC's need to financially backstop the project. There is some urgency for NTTA to move forward due to increasing interest rates. Refinancing is expected to lower the interest rate from 4.25 percent to approximately 3.25 percent for a savings of approximately \$50 million through a larger refinancing effort. Currently, there are two agreements related to the SH 360 South project. The first is a project agreement between NTTA and TxDOT that is related to the \$300 million loan and the interest accumulated, for a balance of \$330 million that NTTA would pay to TxDOT. The second is a backstop agreement that includes TxDOT, NTTA, and the RTC. A summary of the benefits to NTTA repaying the loan early and placing the SH 360 South project on its system were highlighted. This would release the RTC from the financial backstop for the project and eliminate RTC risk. In addition, NCTCOG previously set aside \$15 million as a contingency in case the loan backstop were utilized, so the \$15 million contingency funds could be released for project selection in the western subregion with Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds. Other benefits include the elimination of possible SH 360 toll rate increases due to low project performance, potential for next stage SH 360 improvements beginning sooner, and consideration for some portion of the \$330 million being returned to the region by the Texas Transportation Commission in the next Unified Transportation Program. Mr. Morris also highlighted remaining items being discussed with NTTA. The first item being discussed is extension of the wayfinding sign pilot program. Cities along the SH 360 South corridor preferred the use of wayfinding signs to identify amenities at exits versus large billboards due to aesthetics. Since NTTA does not use wayfinding signs, there are ongoing discussions about extending the wayfinding sign pilot from five years to ten years. The second item being discussed is the next phase of improvements for SH 360. Currently, improvements on SH 360 are guaranteed but with significant delay. Moving the project to system finance makes earlier advancement of improvements a possibility. Finally, the RTC took a risk by backstopping the project and staffs are working to reach agreement about whether the backstop is considered compensable and how the compensation would be paid. One option is that revenue sharing begins earlier than the original 2053 date. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. Mr. Morris noted that a financial decision is needed from TxDOT by April 21. In addition, staff will be scheduling a meeting with Tarrant County, Grand Prairie, Arlington, and Mansfield to brief the cities on the negotiations and discuss wayfinding signs. In addition, TxDOT and NTTA will continue efforts on its agreements. Action by the RTC will likely be requested at the May 13, 2021, RTC meeting.

9. **Fiscal Year 2021 Project Tracking Update:** Christie Gotti presented an update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative implemented to help track obligations against Regional Transportation Council (RTC) funding sources. Since approximately 2012, carryover funding balances have occurred each year due to projects that are not ready for implementation, which has created significant carryover balances. At the beginning of FY2021, staff provided the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and the RTC a list of projects by phase that were schedule to advance or obligate funds during the fiscal year. Agencies would be required to report project status on a more frequent basis in order for staff to address issues that might be hindering progress on projects and ensure funds are being obligated in a more timely manner. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) project funding was highlighted. Of the approximately \$110 million programmed, only approximately \$16 million has obligated for

FY2020 and approximately \$24 million has obligated for FY2021. For Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds, approximately \$26 million for FY2020 and approximately \$11 million for FY2021 has been obligated out of the total \$179 million programmed. Also highlighted was funding for the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program. She noted some funds could be obligated more quickly since the State now allows projects to be handled outside of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process. In addition, she noted the FY2021 negative balance is a result of project closeouts, withdrawals, and changes. TA Set-Aside must be obligated within three years of award or the funding lapses, with approximately \$7 million at risk of lapse if not obligated by the end of the fiscal year. Of the 23 project phases, 19 have passed their estimated start date and although some may obligate on time, the risk of the lapse of funds remains a concern. Ms. Gotti noted that some TA Set-aside funding has been allocated to the Cotton Belt Trail project, which may advance in FY2021 versus FY2022, which help bring down the balance of funds. Mr. Bur requested that staff provide to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) the list of projects that were at risk for the TxDOT Dallas District. Ms. Gotti noted that staff has an email stream that can be provided to TxDOT. Mr. Morris noted that staff would send to the district the two critical projects and also send information to RTC members who represent the entities for those projects. Ms. Gotti noted that although FY2021 is halfway over, only 22 percent of CMAQ, 7 percent of STBG, and 0 percent of TA-Set Aside funds have been obligated. Since projects have not progressed as quickly as needed and STBG funds have the largest balance, staff will be proposing a STBG/Category 2 funding partnership as part of the region's 10-Year Plan that could help bring down STBG balances substantially. Michael Morris added that in the fall, North Central Texas Council of Governments staff drafted a letter to the Texas Transportation Commission encouraging a partnership to advance STBG projects. No response has been received to date, so staff are working with the local TxDOT districts to get projects obligated. Ms. Gotti noted projects listed in Electronic Item 9.1 are sorted by status with projects already obligated listed first and projects expected to obligate in FY2021 next. Also included are original and revised start dates. Members were encouraged to work with staffs within their agencies to move projects along.

10. **Regional Transit Performance Measures: Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and Transit Asset Management:** Shannon Stevenson presented information on the proposed Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) performance measures. She highlighted recent presentations by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) regarding the various federal performance measures. PTASP regional safety performance measures are new and will be set on a four-year schedule. Recent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations require operators of public transit who receive Section 5307 Urbanized Area funds to adopt and implement safety plans, which include safety targets. All of the providers in the region adopted their individual plans/targets by December 2020, which began a 180-day clock for the Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt transit safety targets at the regional level. NCTCOG staff recommended the targets be consistent with those adopted by transit providers, with seven targets relating to the four performance measures: fatalities, injuries, safety events (collision, derailment, fire, etc.) and system reliability (mean distance between major mechanical failures). Proposed targets include the total number of fatalities and the rate of fatalities per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles (VRM), the total number of injuries and the rate per 100,000 VRM, the total number of reportable safety events and the rate per 100,000 VRM, and the mean distance between major mechanical failures. All targets strive for a reduction, except the average distance between breakdowns for which an increasing number indicates improvement. Ms. Stevenson described the process staff used to develop regional targets and a baseline for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 targets. The baseline average for the seven targets were

highlighted, as well as the initial proposed regional targets. Most targets recommend a 5 percent improvement over the baseline to be achieved by FY2023. For fatalities, the recommended target was proposed in line with the established regional safety position that even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable. Existing efforts to improve transit safety have been put in place by agencies and NCTCOG and include a recent cooperative camera procurement that put cameras on buses for small providers throughout the region, grade crossing improvements, employee safety training, vehicles inspections, between-car barriers, and solar-powered bus stop lighting. In the future, staff will analyze data and work with providers to identify programs and projects that enhance transit safety on an individual level as well as the regional level. Efforts may include enhanced vehicle lighting, infrastructure monitoring, and sidewalk improvements. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.

Ms. Stevenson also provided an update on regional Transit Asset Management (TAM) targets and performance. TAM is a business model that prioritizes funding based on the condition of transit assets to achieve or maintain transit networks in a state of good repair. NCTCOG coordinated with public transportation providers in the region to ensure all agencies either developed their own TAM plan or participated in a group-sponsored plan offered by NCTCOG or the Texas Department of Transportation. Regional targets for the four TAM performance measures, adopted by the Regional Transportation Council in 2018, were highlighted and will be revisited for adoption in 2022. All targets were approved at 0 percent of the various metrics: rolling stock, percent of transit vehicles that meet or exceed the industry standard defined as the FTA's default useful life benchmark; infrastructure, percent of rail track segments are under performance restrictions; equipment (any non-revenue vehicle owned and operated by providers) percent that meet or exceed the industry standard also defined by the FTA useful life benchmark; and facilities (buildings, stations, park and rides, etc.) percent of transit facilities rated below adequate on the industry standard Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) scale. Regional performance, as reported in the National Transit Database for each of the four measures was highlighted and details were provided in Electronic Item 10. Rolling stock performance has been consistent or improved for several of the asset types. However, there has been a decline in performance for the small bus asset type. Ms. Stevenson noted that a Request for Proposals was currently underway for vendors as part of the cooperative vehicle procurement program with subrecipients. Staff expects small bus performance to greatly improve over the next couple of years as vehicles that exceed their useful life are replaced. For rail infrastructure, regional performance has improved significantly, particularly for commuter rail and hybrid rail modes. Equipment, non-revenue vehicles, have seen a large decline in performance between FY2018 and FY2019 for all three asset types. For this target, staff will be coordinating with providers in the region to discuss the performance and if additional funding is needed to help facilitate performance improvements. Finally, overall transit facilities meet or nearly meet the regional target as measured by the TERM assessment tool. She noted that performance is relative to the assessed facilities. Approximately 65.5 percent of total facilities have undergone a conditions assessment since FY2018. The timeline for this effort was highlighted, with action on the proposed PTASP targets expected at the May 13, 2021, meeting and TAM targets in 2022.

11. **Regional Vanpool Program Modifications to Improve Overall Efficiency:** Shannon Stevenson presented information on the North Central Texas Regional Vanpool Program operated by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Trinity Metro, and the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) for the entire North Central Texas region. The program helps reduce congestion and lower overall emissions by removing single-occupant vehicles from roadways. Funding was previously approved by the Regional Transportation Council

(RTC) to support this program, and over the past six-to-nine months staff have worked to review the program and identify areas for improvement with the transit agencies. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will be seeking temporary flexibility regarding the subsidies paid by the RTC during the transition to a more cohesive vanpool program over the next year. The goal is to improve overall efficiency, reduce rider confusion, and eliminate unintended competition between providers. After extensive coordination with the transit agencies, staff proposed three major modifications that will help simplify the program. The first proposed modification would be to establish clear provider boundaries that are consistent and resolve overlap among providers. In addition, DART has made a formal request to define boundaries. Boundary modifications will also help to ensure Section 5307 Urbanized Area funding is appropriated accurately since funding is generated based on origin the vanpools. The second proposed modification would be to address rider equity concerns through temporary flexibility for subsidies. Subsidy percentages are based on the funding year being used by each agency, not by fiscal year, which can vary. In addition, depending on contract terms and timing, there is variation on vendor costs among transit agencies which causes a wide range of prices. Finally, a regional cooperative vanpool procurement would be proposed to help create a regional program to be administrated by each of the agencies. Mobility 2045 contains language that vanpools should not complete, so introducing a regional procurement will help provide consistency among the three transit agencies, lower costs for riders, reduce administrative costs, and eliminate confusion. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. Ms. Stevenson noted if recommendations were approved by the Regional Transportation Council at its May 13, 2021, meeting, program transition would be expected to begin in summer 2021. Details were provided in Electronic Item 11.

12. **Air Quality Program Report:** Jenny Narvaez presented information on the 2021 ozone season that began March 1 and ends November 30. She noted the region did not meet attainment for either the 2008 (equal to or less than 75 parts per billion) or the 2015 (equal to or less than 70 parts per billion) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The Dallas-Forth region is expected to be reclassified from serious to severe for the 2008 standard and from marginal to moderate for the 2015 standard and will have until no later than July 20, 2027, to meet the new attainment deadline for the 2008 NAAQS and August 3, 2024, for the 2015 NAAQS. Attainment for both standards will be based on the three-year average of the fourth highest monitor readings from the 2021-2023 ozone monitor data. Ms. Narvaez highlighted the federal attainment requirements for the region and the ozone monitors design values for the 2019, 2020, and the 2021 seasons that would be needed in order for the region to reach attainment for both standards. In addition, she highlighted the 8-hour ozone NAAQS historical trends for the region. Details were provided in Electronic Item 12. Staff will continue to investigate how to more accurately alert the public of predicted exceedance days, impacts from background emissions, as well as continue efforts to help bring the region into attainment. Additional information was made available to members at www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone.

Jason Brown provided an overview of a growing trend in Texas that involves the improper use of Texas temporary tags or “paper tags” and the impacts to the region. A temporary tag is intended to be used as a temporary form of vehicle registration until permanent plates are issued for a vehicle, should be tied to the sale of a vehicle, and are only valid for 60 days. There are a number of varieties, but the predominant version seen in the region is the Texas Buyer tag. Abuse has become widespread since implementation of the Two Steps on Sticker program, elimination of the Mobile Emissions Task Force, through abuse of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) database, and easy access to online merchants of temporary tags. Although the process to produce a temporary tag is created in the system

that is a legitimate record, the widespread abuse is related to the fact it is not associated with the sale of a vehicle. Abuse of temporary tags circumvents mandatory emissions inspections, allows users to avoid tolls, leads to state revenue loss, increases risk to officer safety, funds illegal activities, and conceals the identify when used in crimes. It is estimated that over 1.1 million fraudulent tags have been created resulting in nearly \$80 million in lost revenue. Some potential solutions to this problem include rule changes within the DMV limiting the number of tags that can be created, as well as through bills that have been introduced at the Texas Legislature that would allow the DMV flexibility to deny dealers access to the database and a bill that would resume the Mobile Emissions Task Force and allow counties to use previously collected funds for the effort. Details were provided in Electronic Item 12.

13. **National Aeronautics and Space Administration Advanced Air Mobility Community Planning and Integration Proposal:** Ernest Huffman presented information on a submission for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Advanced Air Mobility Research and Demonstration (ARMD) Announcement of Collaborative Partnership Opportunities. NASA is interested in engaging with MPOs and representatives in the region interested in early drone activity/integration, in particular to demonstrate and prepare for early adoption of Advance Air Mobility and Urban Air Mobility development. He noted this would be a non-reimbursable partnership agreement where the only activity will be staff time. Strategically, the community planning and integration effort is focused on two main areas: 1) addressing key barriers with Advance Air Mobility (AAM) community integration towards adopting AAM services in urban areas and 2) addressing technical barriers across vehicle design and operation, airspace design, and airspace integration that would benefit from inputs provided by local, regional and or state decision makers. Staff believes this will be a transformative program that will allow opportunities for future funding. He noted the proposal team includes NCTCOG, Hillwood/Alliance Mobility Innovation Zone, Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, Mineral Wells Innovation Zone, Cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Frisco, and Richardson, Bell Textron, University of North Texas, University of Texas at Arlington, University of Texas at Dallas, Southern Methodist University, Transportation Research Alliance, AECOM, and Swanson Aviation Consultancy. In closing, he noted the opportunity will bring significant engagement to the RTC and the Task Force.
14. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 14.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance and minutes in Electronic Item 14.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 14.3.
15. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
16. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
17. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, May 13, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Changes to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

How to Read the Project Listing

The attached changes were requested by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) during submittal of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to remain within Statewide financial constraints prior to the State submittal of the 2021-2024 TIP/STIP to the Federal Highway Administration. Each field on the table is described below.

DISTRICT:	The TxDOT district in which the project is located; either Dallas, Fort Worth, or Paris.
TIP CODE:	The number assigned to a TIP project, which is how NCTCOG identifies a project.
CSJ:	The Control Section Job (CSJ) number is a TxDOT-assigned number given to track projects.
PROJECT SPONSOR:	Identifies the lead public agency or municipality responsible for the project.
FACILITY:	Project or facility name or location (i.e., highway number); some HWY labels used for non-highway projects in the TIP are: VA (various), CS (city street), MH (municipal highway), and SL (state loop).
LIMITS FROM:	Cross-street or location identifying the beginning or starting limits of a project.
LIMITS TO:	Identifies the ending point of the project.
SCOPE:	Brief description of work to be performed on the project.
TIP FY:	Identifies the fiscal year in which the project is expected to begin.
PHASE:	Identifies the phases approved for funding. ENG is Engineering, ENV is Environmental, ROW is Right-of-Way Acquisition, UTIL is Utility Relocation, and CON is construction.
FUNDING CATEGORY:	Identifies the sources that are used to fund the project. Chapter III of the TIP/STIP provides description of the different funding categories and outlines abbreviations commonly used for the categories: www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Fund/TIP/21-24TIP/Chapter-3.pdf
FUNDING SHARES:	Provides the total funding shares (federal, state, regional, and/or local) for all fiscal years, funding categories, and phases.
COMMENTS:	Brief description of the changes being made.

Note: Changes are shown in red, with the currently approved project information as red strikethroughs.

Changes to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

											FUND SHARES					
DISTRICT	TIP CODE	CSJ	PROJECT SPONSER	FACILITY	LIMITS FROM	LIMITS TO	SCOPE	TIP FY	PHASE	CATEGORY	FEDERAL	REGIONAL	STATE	LOCAL	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Changes to 2021-2024 TIP Development Requested by TxDOT Transportation, Planning & Programming (TPP) Division to Maintain Statewide Financial Constraints																
DALLAS	13033	0195-03-090	TXDOT- DALLAS	IH 35	IH 35W	US 380	RECONSTRUCT INTERCHANGE AND EXISTING 4 TO 4/8 LANE FRONTAGE ROADS	2021	ENG	SW PE	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000,000	\$ -	\$ 7,000,000	Delay construction phase from FY2023 to FY2025
								2023 2025	CON	12 - STRATEGIC PRIORITY	\$ 111,700,446	\$ -	\$ 27,925,112	\$ -	\$ 139,625,558	
DALLAS	55198	0195-03-087	TXDOT- DALLAS	IH 35	US 380	US 77 NORTH OF DENTON	RECONSTRUCT AND WIDEN 4 TO 6 LANE RURAL FREEWAY WITH RAMP MODIFICATIONS AND 4 LANE TO 4/6 LANE FRONTAGE ROADS	2021	ENG	SW PE	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,248,220	\$ -	\$ 10,248,220	Delay construction phase from FY2023 to FY2025
								2021	ROW	SW ROW	\$ 18,868,761	\$ -	\$ 2,096,529	\$ -	\$ 20,965,290	
								2023 2025	CON	12 - STRATEGIC PRIORITY	\$ 143,767,540	\$ -	\$ 35,941,885	\$ -	\$ 179,709,425	
Changes to TIP Modification Requests after RTC Approval on January 15, 2021																
DALLAS	13012	0196-03-282	TXDOT- DALLAS	IH 35E	IH 635	DENTON COUNTY LINE	RECONSTRUCT EXISTING 2 MANAGED LANES TO 2 MANAGED LANES	2021	ENG	CAT 3 - DESIGN BUILD FUNDING	\$ 11,576,000	\$ -	\$ 2,894,000	\$ -	\$ 14,470,000	Change Cat 2M funding match from regional to state
								2021	CON	2M - METRO CORR	\$ 63,585,386	\$ 15,896,346	\$ 15,896,346	\$ -	\$ 79,481,732	
DALLAS	40076	0918-47-321	DALLAS COUNTY	VA	ROWLETT RD MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS; ALONG DUCK CREEK DR/ROWLETT RD FROM DUCK CREEK TRAIL AT GREENBELT PARKWAY	GARLAND EASTERN CITY LIMITS	CONSTRUCT NEW SEPERATED BICYCLE LANES, SIDEWALKS, AND SHARED- USE PATH ALONG ROWLETT RD/DUCK CREEK DR	2021	ENG	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,071,409	\$ 1,071,409	Decrease Local Contribution funding in FY2023
								2023	UTIL	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	
								2022	CON	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 756,375	\$ 756,375	
								2023	CON	9 TA Set Aside	\$ 3,745,450	\$ -	\$ 936,363	\$ -	\$ 4,681,813	
								2023	CON	9 TA Set Aside	\$ 434,255	\$ -	\$ 408,563	\$ -	\$ 842,818	

Grouped Project CSJs

PROPOSED CSJ	GROUPED PROJECT CATEGORY	DEFINITION
5000-00-950	PE-Preliminary Engineering	Preliminary Engineering for any project except added capacity projects in a nonattainment area. Includes activities which do not involve or lead directly to construction, such as planning and research activities; grants for training; engineering to define the elements of a proposed action or alternatives so that social, economic, and environmental effects can be assessed.
5000-00-951	Right-of-Way Acquisition	Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition for any project except added capacity projects in a nonattainment area. Includes relocation assistance, hardship acquisition and protective buying.
5000-00-952 5000-00-957 5000-00-958	Preventive Maintenance and Rehabilitation	Projects to include pavement repair to preserve existing pavement so that it may achieve its designed loading. Includes seal coats, overlays, resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation done within existing ROW. Also includes modernization of a highway by reconstruction, adding shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes (e.g., parking, weaving, turning, climbing, non-added capacity) or drainage improvements associated with rehabilitation.
5000-00-953	Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation	Projects to replace and/or rehabilitate functionally obsolete or structurally deficient bridges.
5000-00-954	Railroad Grade Separations	Projects to construct or replace existing highway-railroad grade crossings and to rehabilitate and/or replace deficient railroad underpasses, resulting in no added capacity.
5800-00-950	Safety	Projects to include the construction or replacement/rehabilitation of guard rails, median barriers, crash cushions, pavement markings, skid treatments, medians, lighting improvements, highway signs, curb ramps, railroad/highway crossing warning devices, fencing, intersection improvements (e.g., turn lanes), signalization projects and interchange modifications. Also includes projects funded via the Federal Hazard Elimination Program, Federal Railroad Signal Safety Program, or Access Managements projects, except those that result in added capacity.
5000-00-956	Landscaping	Project consisting of typical right-of-way landscape development, establishment and aesthetic improvements to include any associated erosion control and environmental mitigation activities.
5800-00-915	Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Deployment	Highway traffic operation improvement projects including the installation of ramp metering control devices, variable message signs, traffic monitoring equipment and projects in the Federal ITS/Intelligent Vehicle Highway System (IVHS) programs.
5000-00-916	Bicycle and Pedestrian	Construction or rehabilitation of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths and facilities.

Grouped Project CSJs (continued)

5000-00-917	Safety Rest Areas and Truck Weigh Stations	Construction and improvement of rest areas and truck weigh stations.
5000-00-918	Transit Improvements and Programs	Projects include the construction and improvement of small passenger shelters and information kiosks. Also includes the construction and improvement of rail storage/maintenance facilities and bus transfer facilities where minor amounts of additional land are required and there is not a substantial increase in the number of users. Also includes transit operating assistance, acquisition of third-party transit services, transit marketing, and mobility management/coordination. Additionally includes the purchase of new buses and rail cars to replace existing vehicles or for minor expansions of the fleet [See Note 3].

Note 1: Projects funded with ~~Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Transportation Enhancement, and~~ Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program funding require a Federal eligibility determination and are not approved to be grouped.

Note 2: Projects funded as part of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) consistent with the revised grouped project category definitions may be grouped. RTP projects that are not consistent with the revised grouped project category definitions must be individually noted in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Note 3: In PM10 and PM2.5 nonattainment or maintenance areas, such projects may be grouped only if they are in compliance with control measures in the applicable implementation plan.

Benefits of Transportation Education Campaign Initiatives

By working with media vendors over a number of years, developing relationships, and executing strategic education campaigns, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Transportation Department programs calculated the following cost savings in added value in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 and/or FY 2020:

In FY 2019, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program continued education campaigns on regional transit lines and bus stations where NCTCOG staff saw 27 percent in savings by keeping existing artwork, extending media contracts, and planning for long-term campaigns. Similarly, 511DFW, Air North Texas and National Drive Electric Week advertising procured radio spots to receive a combined 19 percent in added value.

In FY 2019, the Air North Texas campaign gained 15 percent added value in Weather App spots. Air North Texas and Public Meetings saved a combined 31 percent advertising in local print publications. Other Public Meetings advertising brought in 9 percent added value from Vietnamese advertising print publications in both FY 2019 and FY 2020.

In addition to lower advertising rates, other benefits have been obtained in this effort, such as:

- Allow NCTCOG to utilize more outlets and increase the frequency of the ads which, in turn, has reached a broader audience;
- Increased website traffic;
- Greater public participation in transportation department programs and projects;
- Cross communication for campaigns, such as when advertising has been purchased;
- Improved efficiencies with media outlets, such as improved staff coordination and increased timeliness.

Fiscal Year 2021 Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 3

Regional Transportation Council

Mindy Mize

Transportation Education and Outreach

May 13, 2021



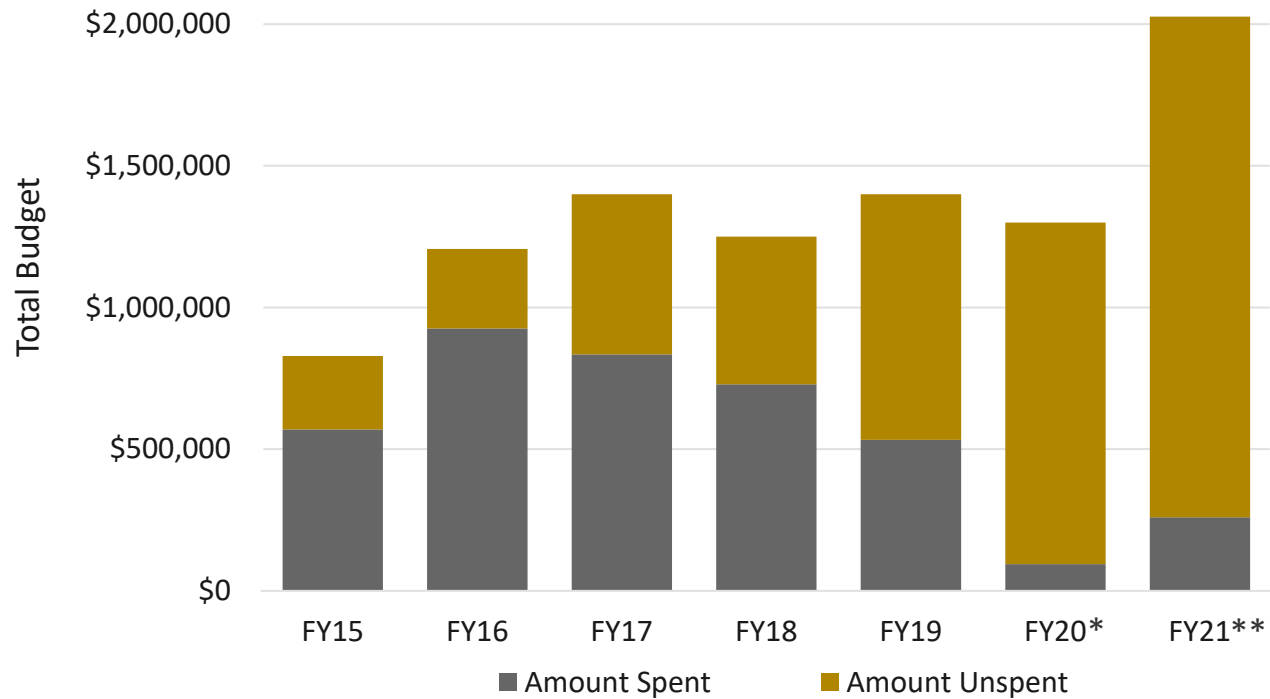
The Three E's for Education Campaigns

Engineer - Develop initiative

Educate - Inform the audience on initiative

Enforce - Make sure initiative is being implemented

Education Campaign Budget Overview



**Significant amount unspent was due to impact of COVID-19 pandemic and funding availability for campaigns.*

***Includes Phase 1 through 3. Funding is in phases based on campaigns needed.*

Education Campaigns Overview

Education campaigns for Transportation Initiatives allows for:

- **Lower Media Buy Rates**
- **Increased and Targeted Audience Reach**
- **Increased Website Traffic and Engagement**
- **Greater Public Participation**
- **Cross Communication for Campaigns**
- **Improved Efficiencies with Media Outlets**

Education Campaigns Performance Measures

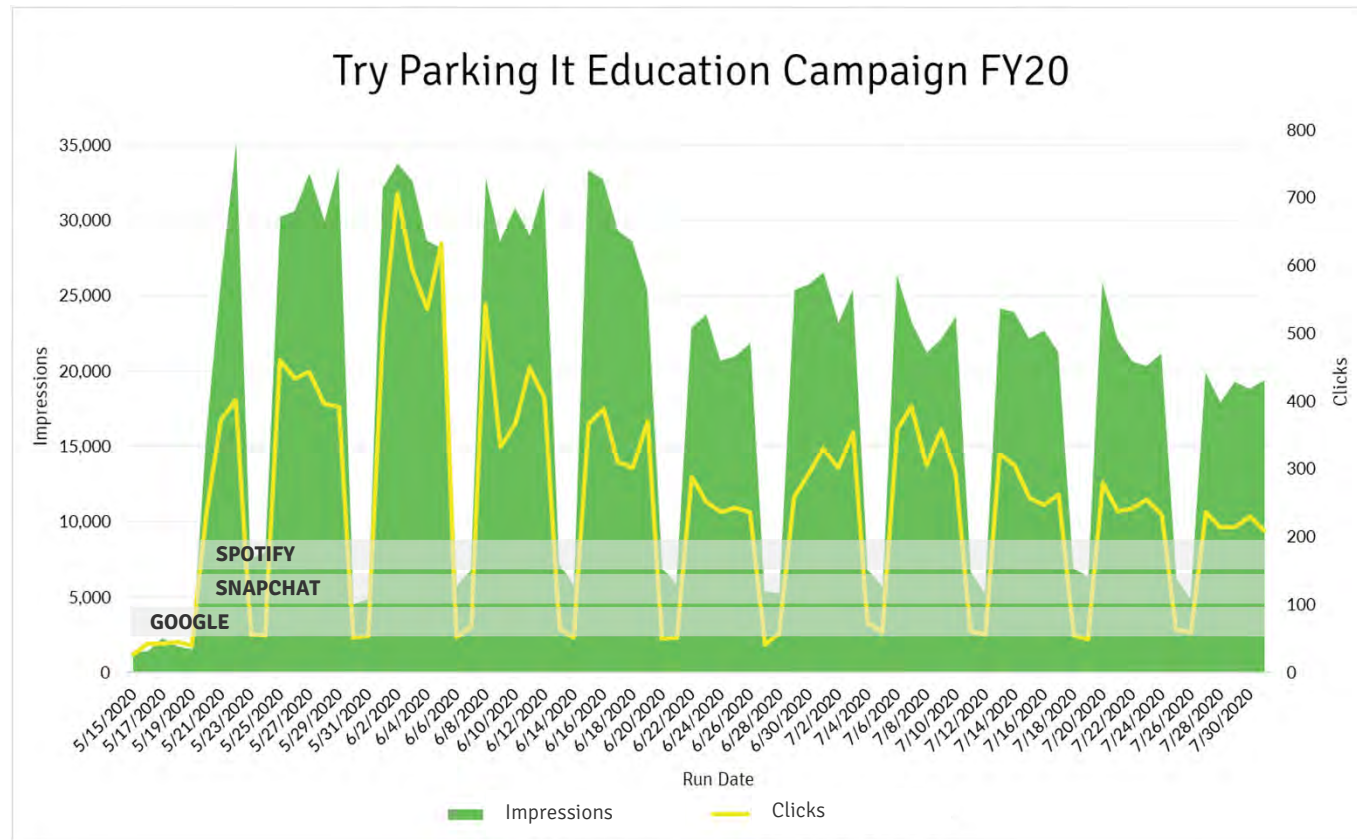
Targeted Audience Examples:

- **Truck Drivers and Fleet Owners**
- **General Public**
- **Commuters**
- **Motorists and Transit Users**

Key Performance Indicator Examples:

- **Clicks, Impressions, and Reach**
- **Website Visits and Actions Taken**
- **Number of Registrants and Participants**
- **Number of Online Submissions**

Example of Education Campaign Performance Metrics



Transportation Education Campaign Overview

FY2021 Educational Campaign for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 1 was approved by STTC, RTC, and Executive Board in September/October 2020.

FY2021 Purchase and Placement of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 1					
Program Name	Funding Source	New Funding Amount	Match Source*	New Match Amount	Total
High-Speed Transportation	RTR	\$50,000	N/A	N/A	\$ 50,000
Notifications of Opportunities for Public Input/Public Meetings	TPF	\$49,284	N/A	N/A	\$ 65,000
Flexible Category**	CMAQ/STBG	\$100,000	TDCs	20,000	\$ 100,000
Total		\$199,284			\$ 215,000

*TDCs in the amount of 20,000 may be used as match but are not included in the total dollar amount.

**Specific funding source, including match source, will be determined by the project(s) using the Flexible Category, and could also include RTR or RTC Local.

Total up to \$215,000 to cover education campaign expenses approved.

Transportation Education Campaign Overview

FY2021 Educational Campaign for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 2 was approved by STTC, RTC, and Executive Board in January and February 2021.

FY2021 Purchase and Placement of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 2					
Program Name	Funding Source	New Funding Amount	Match Source*	New Match Amount	Total
Drive Aware North Texas	STBG	\$150,000	TDCs	30,000	\$ 150,000
Look Out Texans	STBG	\$200,000	TDCs	40,000	\$ 200,000
Regional Goods Movement: Safety Campaign	STBG	\$150,000	TDCs	30,000	\$ 150,000
Congestion Management Program	STBG	\$175,000	TDCs	35,000	\$ 175,000
HOV 2+ Incentive	CMAQ/STBG	\$640,000	TxDOT	\$160,000	\$ 800,000
Engine Off North Texas	STBG	\$10,500	TDCs	2,100	\$ 10,500
Total		\$1,325,500			\$ 1,485,500

*TDCs in the amount of 137,100 may be used as match but are not included in the total dollar amount.

Total up to \$1,485,500 to cover education campaign expenses approved.

Transportation Education Campaign Overview

FY2021 Educational Campaign for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 3 are a part of the FY2020 and FY2021 UPWP that was approved by the RTC and Executive Board in August 2019, with periodic modifications and approvals, with the latest in July 2020.

FY2021 Purchase and Placement of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase 3

Program Name	Funding Source	New Funding Amount	Match Source*	New Match Amount	Total
Ozone Season Emissions Reduction Campaign	CMAQ	\$205,000	TDCs	41,000	\$ 205,000
Regional Smoking Vehicle Program	STBG	\$10,500	TDCs	2,100	\$ 10,500
Transit Pandemic Recovery	CMAQ	\$100,000	TDCs	20,000	\$ 100,000
SMARTe	STBG	\$10,500	TDCs	2,100	\$ 10,500
Total		\$326,000			\$ 326,000

*TDCs in the amount of 65,200 may be used as match but are not included in the total dollar amount.

Total up to \$326,000 to cover education campaign expenses for approval.

Education Campaign Strategy and Example

Media procurements and placements are monitored based on the current market environment. Since March 2020, we shifted our education outreach strategy to:

- Direct-to-consumer media placements
- Digital advertising that can be revised based on evolving market recommendations
- Revised creative to promote a “households ride together” message

TRANSPORTATION UPDATES
COMPILED BY VALERIE WOOD COWORTH

ONGOING PROJECT

San Rayburn Tollway widening
Construction continues on an additional lane in each direction of the San Rayburn Tollway between Denton Tap Road in Coppell and US 75 in McKinney to keep up with traffic demand. The additional lanes along the 26-mile route are being added to the inside median to reduce disruption to existing traffic. This spring, work on intersection bridges was done at Carls Hill Drive and Southridge Drive and at Huffines Boulevard and Marchant Boulevard. Bridge work is ongoing at the intersections of Denton Tap Road, MacArthur Boulevard, Lake Vista Drive and Nelson Parkway, according to the latest report from the North Texas Tollway Authority.
Timeline: January 2019-December 2021
Cost: \$200 million
Funding source: North Texas Tollway Authority

UPCOMING PROJECT

Maximize Henry neighborhood street improvement project
The city of Lewisville is finishing design on a project to reconfigure portions of Maxentia, Henry, Red Bud and Mesquite streets. The streets will be reconstructed with concrete pavement, curbs and gutters, according to a city memo. New utility and drainage lines will also be installed, the memo stated. Willow Street will be milled and covered in asphalt once the sewer line is replaced, according to the memo. Lewisville City Council voted June 1 to authorize city staff to seek rights of way and easements from 12 property owners in the area to the project can advance.
Timeline: Construction expected to begin in fall 2020
Cost: \$4.2 million
Funding source: city of Lewisville

Team & Community
...It's what we stand for.

FRISCO
2020 PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER

Town & Country
ROOFING & CONSTRUCTION • WINDOWS

GoCarma The new, easy, and only way to get HOV discounts on TEXpress Lanes

Download GoCarma for Apple or Android devices in the App Store or Google Play. Register once, then just drive! You'll pay half price on TEXpress Lanes when riding together during weekday rush-hour periods by using GoCarma, and you'll help improve air quality in your community.

gocarma.com/dfw

Example of revised messaging in Community Impact Newspaper mailed directly to consumers

Proposed Schedule

Event	Anticipated Time
STTC, RTC, and Executive Board Action on Recommended FY2020 and FY2021 UPWP	Summer 2019
STTC, RTC, and Executive Board Latest Action on Recommended Modifications for FY2020 and FY2021 UPWP	Summer 2020
STTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 1	September 25, 2020
RTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 1	October 8, 2020
Executive Board Authorization of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 1	October 22, 2020
STTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 2	January 22, 2021
RTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 2	February 11, 2021
Executive Board Authorization of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 2	February 25, 2021
STTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 3	April 23, 2021
RTC Action on Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 3	May 13, 2021
Executive Board Authorization of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives FY2021 Phase 3	May 27, 2021

Proposed Action

Support an RTC Recommendation to NCTCOG Executive Board to Approve Funding up to \$326,000 for Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives that will initiate in FY21, such as:

- **Ozone Season Emissions Reduction Campaign**
- **Regional Smoking Vehicle Program**
- **Transit Pandemic Recovery**
- **Saving Money and Reducing Truck Emissions Program**

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Regional Vanpool Program Modifications To Improve Overall Efficiency

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
MAY 13, 2021**

Background/ Overview

-
- NCTCOG and Transit Agencies Reviewed Current Program
 - Several Areas Identified for Improvement
 - Temporary Flexibility Needed During Transition to One Regional Program (no new funding needed)
 - Goal
 - Improve Overall Efficiency & Effectiveness
 - Reduce Rider Confusion
 - Eliminate Unintended Competition Between Transit Agencies

Proposed Modifications

1. Establish Clear Provider Boundaries
2. Address Rider Equity Concerns Through Temporary Flexible Subsidies
3. Issue Regional Cooperative Vanpool Procurement: One Regional Program Administered by the Three Transit Agencies

Boundary Modifications








Correct Funding Apportionments for Urbanized Areas

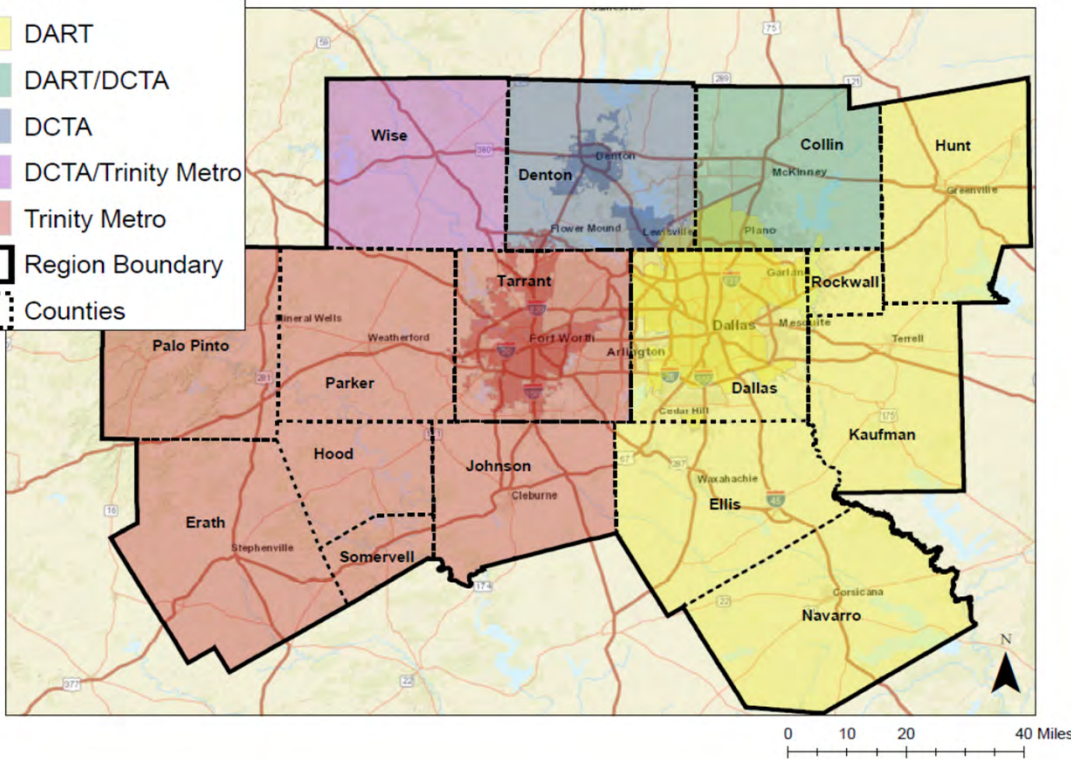
Eliminate Contested Trips

Deliver Consistent Messaging to Riders

Proposed Origination-Based Boundaries

Legend

	DART
	DART/DCTA
	DCTA
	DCTA/Trinity Metro
	Trinity Metro
	Region Boundary
	Counties



Transit Agency	Origination	Destinations
DART	Dallas, Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro & Rockwall Counties	Throughout DFW
	Collin County	Throughout DFW except Denton County
Trinity Metro	Tarrant, Johnson, Parker, Hood, Erath, Somervell & Palo Pinto Counties	Throughout DFW
	Wise County	Throughout DFW except Denton County
DCTA	Denton	Throughout DFW
	Collin and Wise Counties	Denton County

Proposed Temporary Subsidy Correction

Subsidy

- RTC currently subsidizes 30%-35% depending on funding year (decreases over time)
- Covers portion of program costs: staffing, vehicle lease cost, and emergency ride home services

Impact to Rider Cost

- Due to contract timing, subsidy disproportionate: variation on vendor costs to transit authorities, rider groups experience wide range of prices
- Seeking a temporary flexibility to subsidy to assist riders while NCTCOG pursues a Cooperative Regional Vanpool procurement with the transit providers
- No additional or new funding needed; funding previously approved by RTC will accommodate temporary fluctuations in subsidies

Regional Cooperative Procurement

Gain Consistency Between the Three Transit Agencies

Lower Costs for the Riders

Reduce Administrative Costs

Eliminate Confusion

Schedule

Milestone	Estimated Timeframe
Meetings with Transit Authorities to review items	December 2020-February 2021
STTC Information	March 26, 2021
RTC Information	April 8, 2021
STTC Action	April 23, 2021
RTC Action	May 13, 2021
Implement Updated Vanpool Boundaries	Late Spring/Early Summer 2021
Issue Regional Cooperative Procurement	Late Summer 2021

Action Requested

RTC Approval:

- To adjust service area boundaries based on vanpool origination.
- To allow providers flexibility to utilize current funds to provide equitable vanpool subsidies to rider groups until agencies are integrated into a regional vanpool program.
- To revise administrative documents as appropriate to incorporate project modifications.

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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN PERFORMANCE MEASURES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MAY 13, 2021

Shannon Stevenson
Senior Program Manager
Transit Management & Planning

FEDERAL MEASURES SCHEDULE

Measures	Upcoming RTC Action	Next Anticipated RTC Action	Target-Setting Schedule
PM3: System Performance, Freight, and CMAQ	October 2020 ✓	Late 2022	Biennial
PM2: Pavement and Bridge	November 2020 ✓	Late 2022	Biennial
PM1: Roadway Safety	February 2021 (Information) ✓	Early 2022	Annual
TAM: Transit Asset Management	April 2021 (Information) ✓	Early 2022	Every 4 years
PTASP: Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan	April 2021 (Information) May 2021 (Action)	Early 2025	Every 4 years

TRANSIT SAFETY TARGETS

- Recommend Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) regional transit safety targets be consistent with transit providers, with 7 targets under the following measures:
 - **Fatalities** – Death confirmed within 30 days, excluding suicide, trespassers, illness, or natural causes
 - **Injuries** – Harm to person that requires immediate medical attention away from the scene
 - **Safety Events** – Collision, derailment, fire, hazardous material spill, or evacuation
 - **System Reliability** – Major mechanical failure preventing vehicle from completing or starting scheduled trip
- Recommend **zero** fatality targets in line with established regional safety position:
 - **Even one death in the transportation system is unacceptable. Staff will work with our partners to develop projects, programs, and policies that assist in eliminating fatalities across all modes of travel.**
- Recommend **5% improvement** from FY 2016 – FY 2019 baseline average in other targets to be achieved by FY 2025

TRANSIT SAFETY TARGETS

Measure	Targets
Fatalities	1. Total number of reportable fatalities 2. Rate per 100K vehicle revenue miles
Injuries	3. Total number of reportable injuries 4. Rate per 100K vehicle revenue miles
Safety Events	5. Total number of reportable safety events 6. Rate per 100K vehicle revenue miles
System Reliability	7. Mean distance between major mechanical failures

PROPOSED TRANSIT SAFETY TARGETS

Target	Baseline Average	Proposed Target
1. Fatalities - Total Number	6.00	0.00
2. Fatalities - Rate per 100k Miles	0.01	0.00
3. Injuries - Total Number	150.50	142.98
4. Injuries - Rate per 100k Miles	0.23	0.22
5. Safety Events - Total Number	516.00	490.20
6. Safety Events - Rate per 100k Miles	0.81	0.77
7. System Reliability - Miles Between Major Mechanical Failures	18,896.00	19,841.00

ACTION REQUESTED

RTC Approval:

- To adopt PTASP regional transit safety targets
- To allow revision of administrative documents as appropriate to address safety targets

**REGIONAL
PERFORMANCE
MEASURES
SCHEDULE**

Date	Action
January 26	Regional Transit Safety Targets Provider Meeting
March 26	STTC Info on PTASP and TAM <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propose PTASP Targets• Update Regional TAM Performance
April 8	RTC Info on PTASP and TAM
April 23	STTC Action on PTASP
May 13	RTC Action on PTASP

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OKC could finally get a commuter rail line connecting downtown to Will Rogers World Airport

By William Crum, Oklahoman

Published 6:01 AM April 24, 2021, Updated 12:49 pm April 25, 2021

High-capacity commuter rail lines converging in downtown Oklahoma City and including service to Will Rogers World Airport have taken a step toward being realized.

Endorsement by the Regional Transportation Authority board on Wednesday of the RTA's Transit System Plan was one of two major developments this week.

The Legislature passed and sent to the governor a measure to limit liability for transit system partners such as railroads that contract to allow commuter trains to operate on their tracks.

The regional corridors outlined in the Transit Plan are intended to build on and interface with existing bus systems in Oklahoma City, Edmond, Norm and Midwest City, and planned Bus Rapid Transit lines running northwest, northeast and south from downtown.

The Oklahoma City Streetcar circulating through downtown is designed to deliver inbound commuters to their final destination and connect outbound riders with regional transit options.

Where would the new Oklahoma City transit systems be?

The four corridors identified in the plan and OK'd for further study and eventual implementation are:

- The North-South Corridor connecting Edmond, Oklahoma City, Moore and Norman.
- The East Corridor from Tinker Air Force Base through Midwest City and Del City to downtown.
- The West Corridor from the Yukon area to downtown and serving fast-growing suburban neighborhoods in western Oklahoma County and Canadian County.
- The Airport Corridor from Will Rogers World Airport to downtown.

Improving public transportation in Oklahoma City

The intention is for high-capacity heavy- and light-rail services to converge at the renovated Santa Fe Station in the central business district that serves as a hub for bus and streetcar routes.

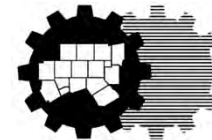
Goals are to improve mobility and connectivity, equity and accessibility, economic and workforce development, and produce a sustainable transit system designed to serve the region for decades.

The Transit Plan is to be forwarded to the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) for inclusion in its Encompass 2045 plan.

Senate Bill 967 was passed by the House this week and sent to the governor for his signature. It includes railroads such as BNSF that could contract to allow RTA trains on its tracks in liability protections.

STATUS OF TEXAS VOLKSWAGEN ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM FUNDING

**Regional Transportation Council
May 13, 2021**



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

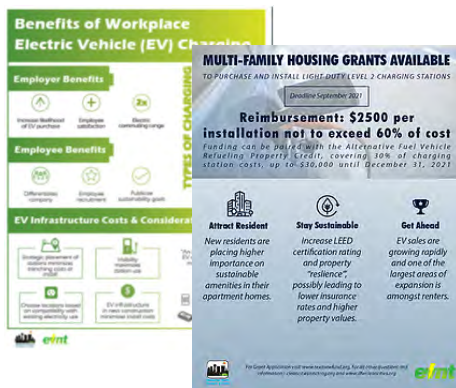
KEY TAKEAWAYS



NCTCOG Region Remains the Only Region That Has Requested All Available Funding for Diesel Replacements



Slow Demand for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Level 2 Rebates; Assistance Needed Promoting the Incentives and Raising Awareness Among Regional Multi-Unit Dwellings, Workplaces, and Publicly Available Sites



Multi-family Charging Resources Including Free Informational Flyers At:
www.dfwcleancities.org/multifamily

Workplace Charging Resources Including Free Informational Flyers At:
www.dfwcleancities.org/workplace-charging

TEXAS VOLKSWAGEN ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM

Statewide Allocation	Program	DFW Area Allocation	Schedule	Status*
~\$169.5 Million	School, Shuttle, and Transit Buses	\$11,684,806	Closed	>\$17.3 Million Requested All Available Funds Awarded
	Refuse Vehicles	\$8,346,290	Closed	\$9,448,544 Requested \$3,832,085 Awarded
	Freight & Port Drayage Vehicles	\$6,677,032	Closed	\$8,765,496 Requested \$5,215,224 Awarded
	Electric Forklifts and Port Cargo-Handling Equipment	\$6,677,032	To Be Determined	
	Electric Airport Ground Support Equipment			
	Ocean-Going Vessel Shore Power			
~\$35.5 Million	ZEV Infrastructure - Level 2 Rebate	\$10,465,958 (Statewide)	Open; First-Come First Served Until 9/9/2021	\$732,500 Requested \$322,500 Awarded \$10,143,458 Available
	ZEV Infrastructure – DC Fast Charge Funding	~\$25 Million (Statewide)	Possible Opening Spring/Summer 2021	

*Data reflects information posted at www.texasvwfund.org as of April 27, 2021

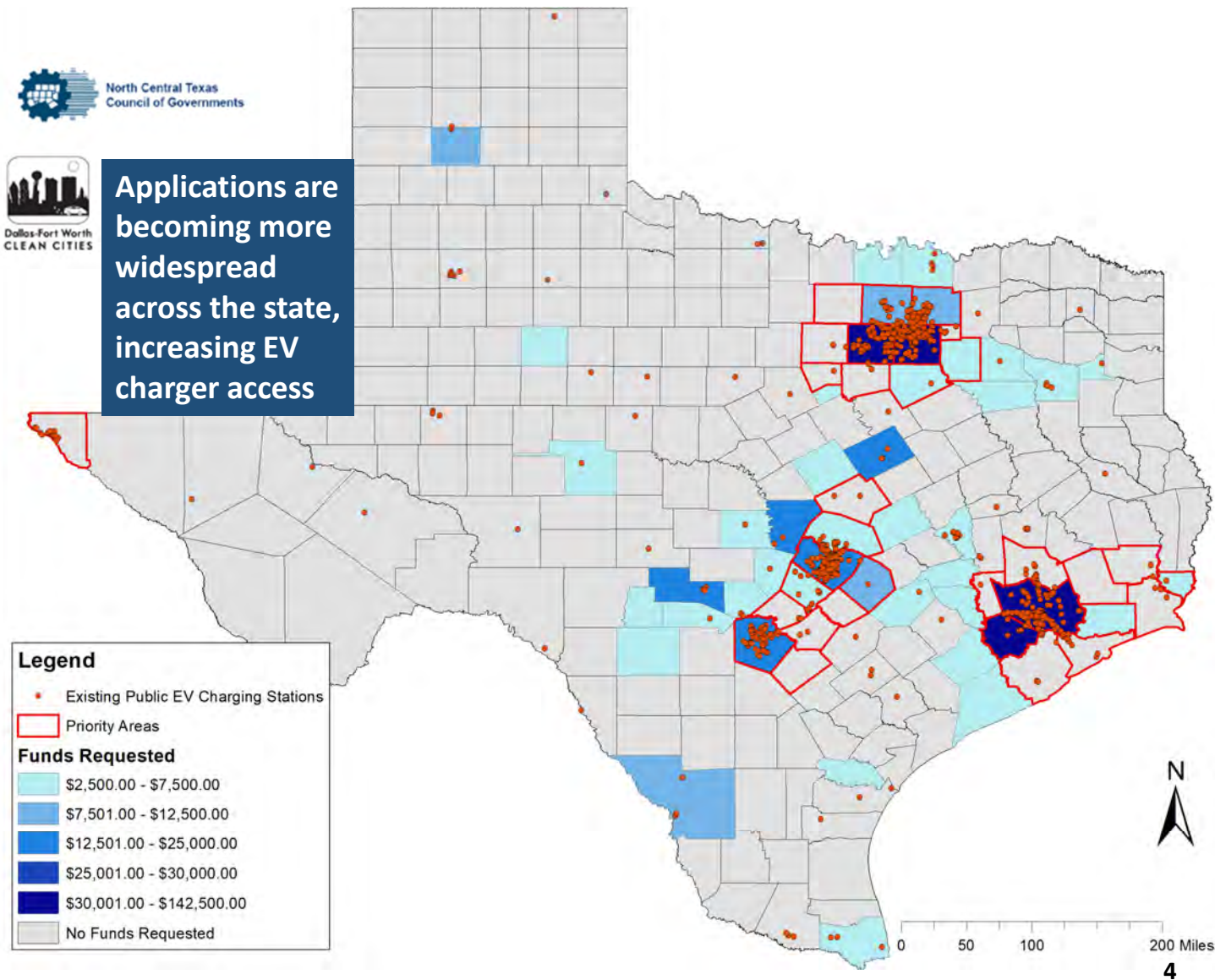
GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF ZEV LEVEL 2 FUNDING REQUESTS

Priority Areas

Area	Counties
Dallas-Fort Worth Area	Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Wise
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Area	Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Waller
San Antonio Area	Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Wilson
Austin Area	Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, Williamson
El Paso County	El Paso
Bell County	Bell
Beaumont-Port Arthur Area	Hardin, Jefferson, Orange



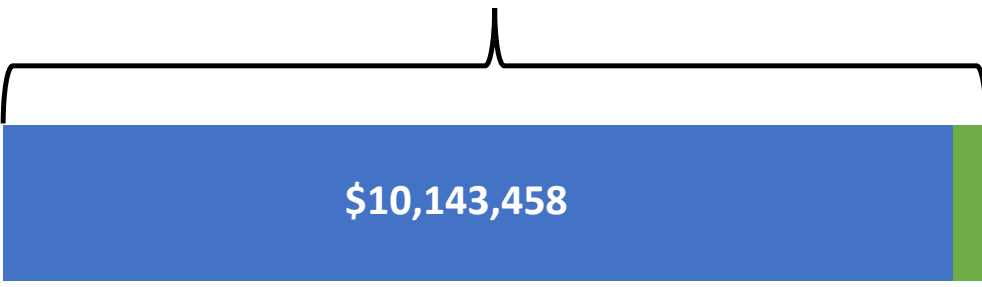
Applications are becoming more widespread across the state, increasing EV charger access



0 50 100 200 Miles

TxVEMP ZEV Infrastructure Level 2 Rebate

Total Statewide Allocation of Funds = **\$10,465,958**



■ Funds Remaining

■ Funds Awarded
\$322,500

All Rebates First Come, First Served

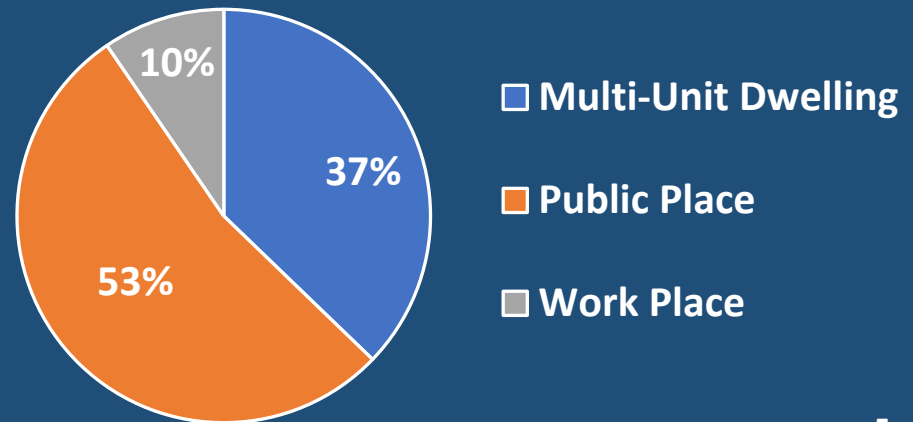
DEADLINE: 9/9/2021 or until funds run out, whichever is first

Quick Facts

305

Charger Rebates Requested
For Total of \$732,500

Infrastructure Distribution to Date



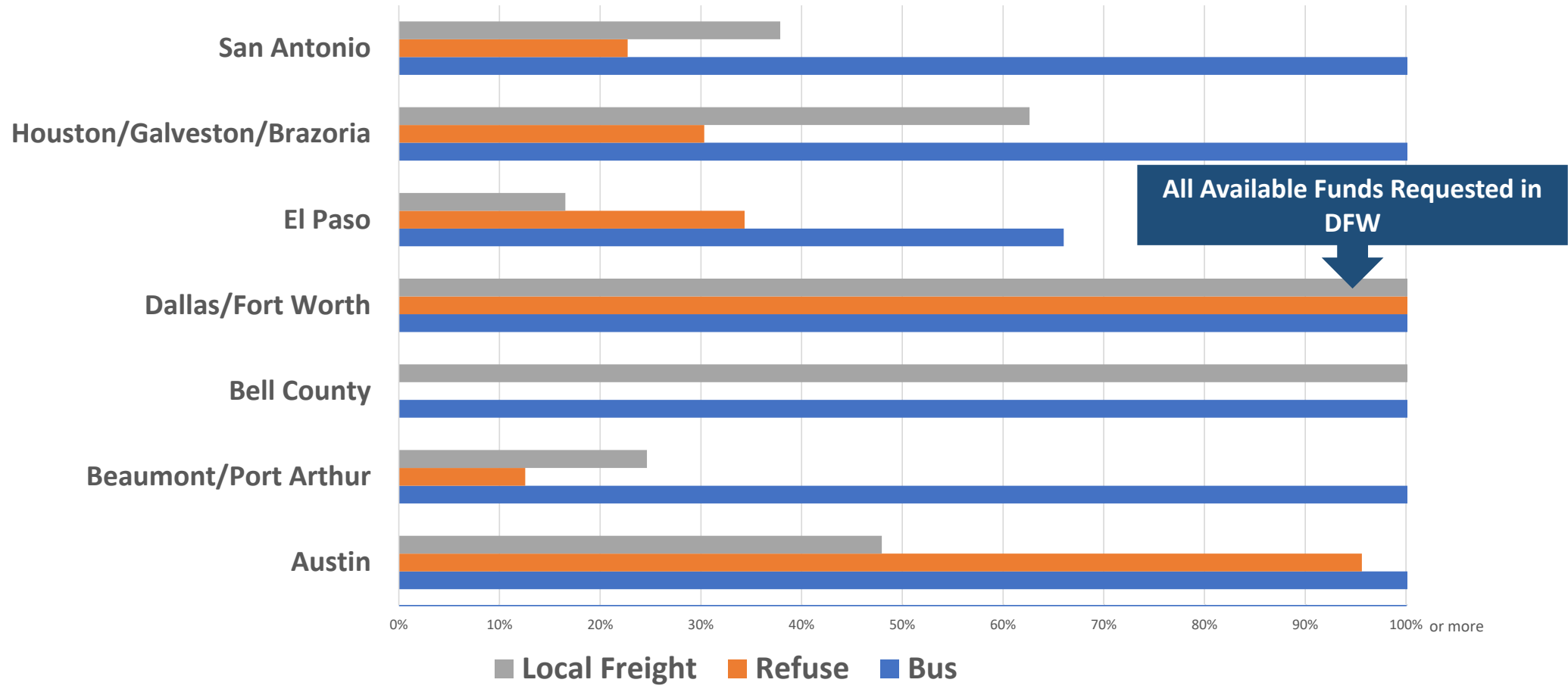
□ Multi-Unit Dwelling

■ Public Place

■ Work Place

PERCENT FUNDING REQUESTED BY REGION

Percent Available Funds Requested by Funding Round



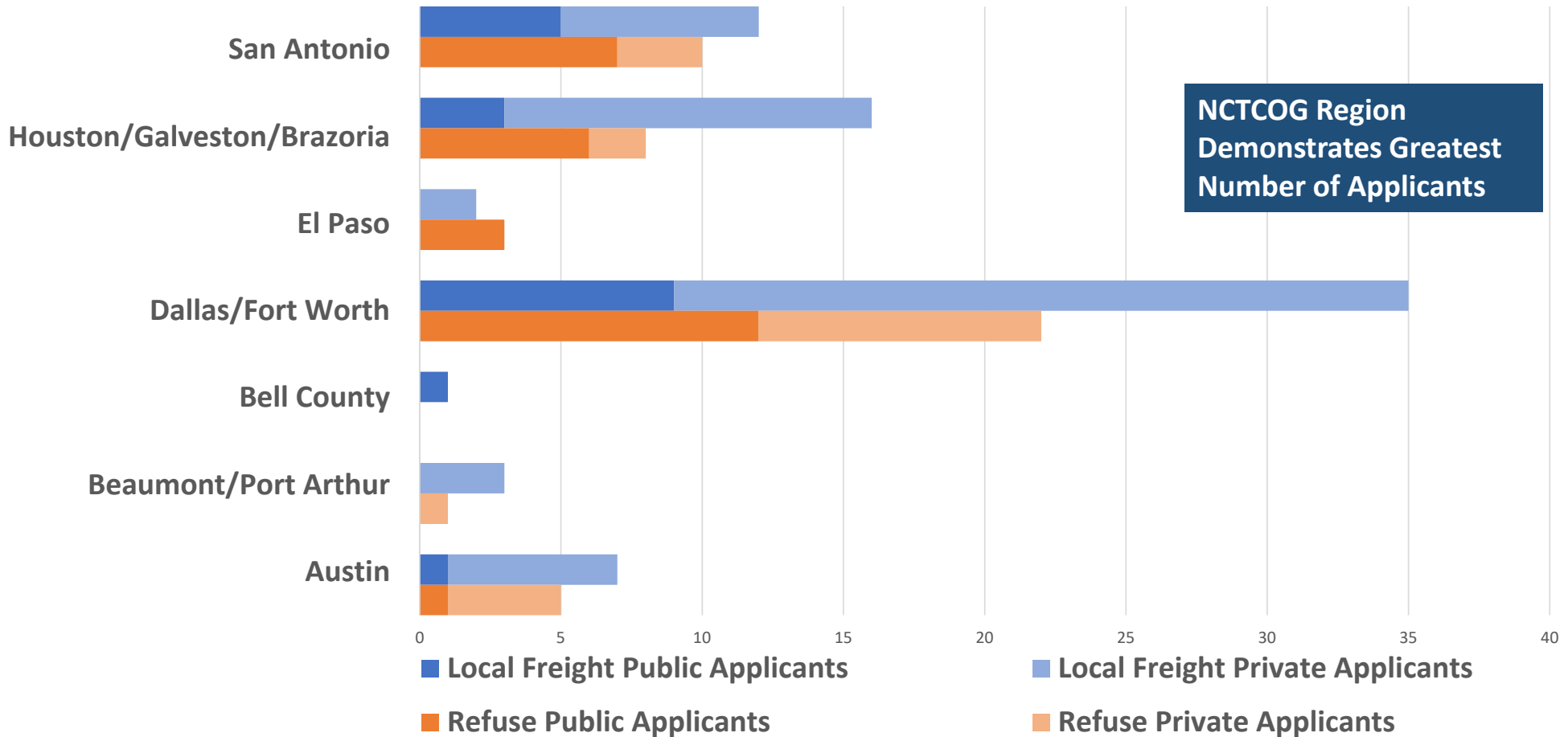
All Available Funds Requested in DFW



Data reflects information posted at www.texasvfwfund.org as of April 27, 2021

NUMBER OF APPLICANTS BY REGION

Local Freight and Refuse Vehicle Applicants



Data reflects information posted at www.texasvfund.org as of April 27, 2021

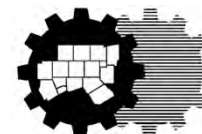
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www.nctcog.org/aqfunding, “Hot Topics”



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 23, 2021

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **D2 Eastern End Alignment-Zone B Progress Update 1**

Background

On March 24, 2021, the City Council passed a resolution (CR 21-433) in support of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) D2 project. The resolution included a map that broke the alignment into two zones (Copy attached). Zone A where the alignment is set with no significant changes and Zone B-eastern end of the alignment where discussions with DART, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Deep Ellum Foundation (DEF), and other stakeholders are continuing to optimize the project's interface in that area regarding any necessary modifications, refinements and/or enhancements to the project. Further, Section 6 of the resolution contained a provision for elected and appointed officials of the City, DART, NCTCOG, and TxDOT to be briefed on a regular basis to document progress and stakeholder feedback.

Progress

Since the passage of the resolution, City, DART, NCTCOG, and TxDOT staff have been meeting on a regular basis to generate the workplan that delineates the respective roles of each partner agency as well as future discussions and involvement of the stakeholders with associated timeline. Attached to this memorandum is the work plan and timeline that has been developed to guide this process.

The partner agencies are committing the necessary resources to guide this process so that a resolution to the eastern end of the alignment refinements, adjustments, and/or modifications in Zone B are achieved no later than December 2021.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ghassan Khankarli, Interim Director, Department of Transportation, at ghassan.khankarli@dallascityhall.com.

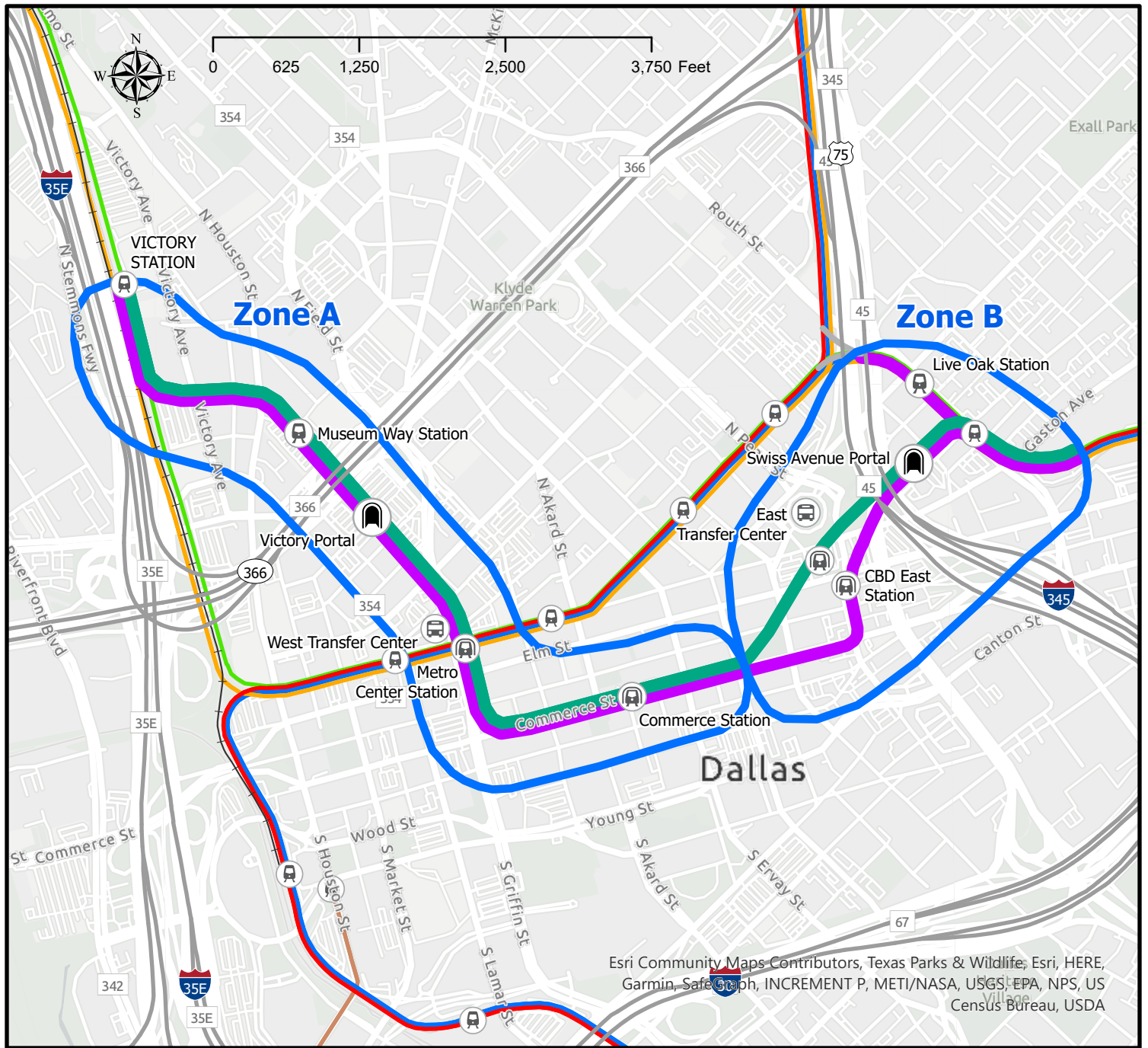
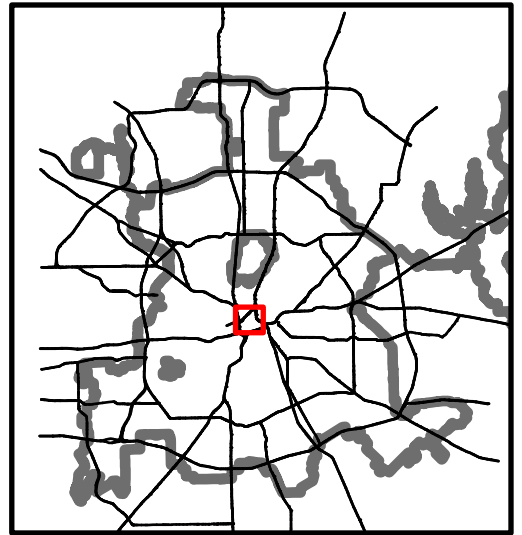
Majed Al-Ghafry, P.E.
Assistant City Manager

[Attachments]

<p>c: TC Broadnax, City Manager Chris Caso, City Attorney Mark Swann, City Auditor Billierae Johnson, City Secretary Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager</p>	<p>Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion Directors and Assistant Directors</p>
---	---

Attachment 1 DART D2 Project Council District 2, 14

- █ Locally Preferred Alternative - City Council Resolution September 2017
 - █ DART's Current Proposed Alternative
- | | | | |
|--|--|--|-----------------|
| █ BLUE LINE | █ RED LINE | | TRINITY RAILWAY |
| █ GREEN LINE | █ MCKINNEY AVENUE TROLLEY | | |
| █ ORANGE LINE | █ DALLAS STREETCAR | | |



Esri Community Maps Contributors, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, INCREMENT P, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA

D2 Subway East End Evaluation Work Plan

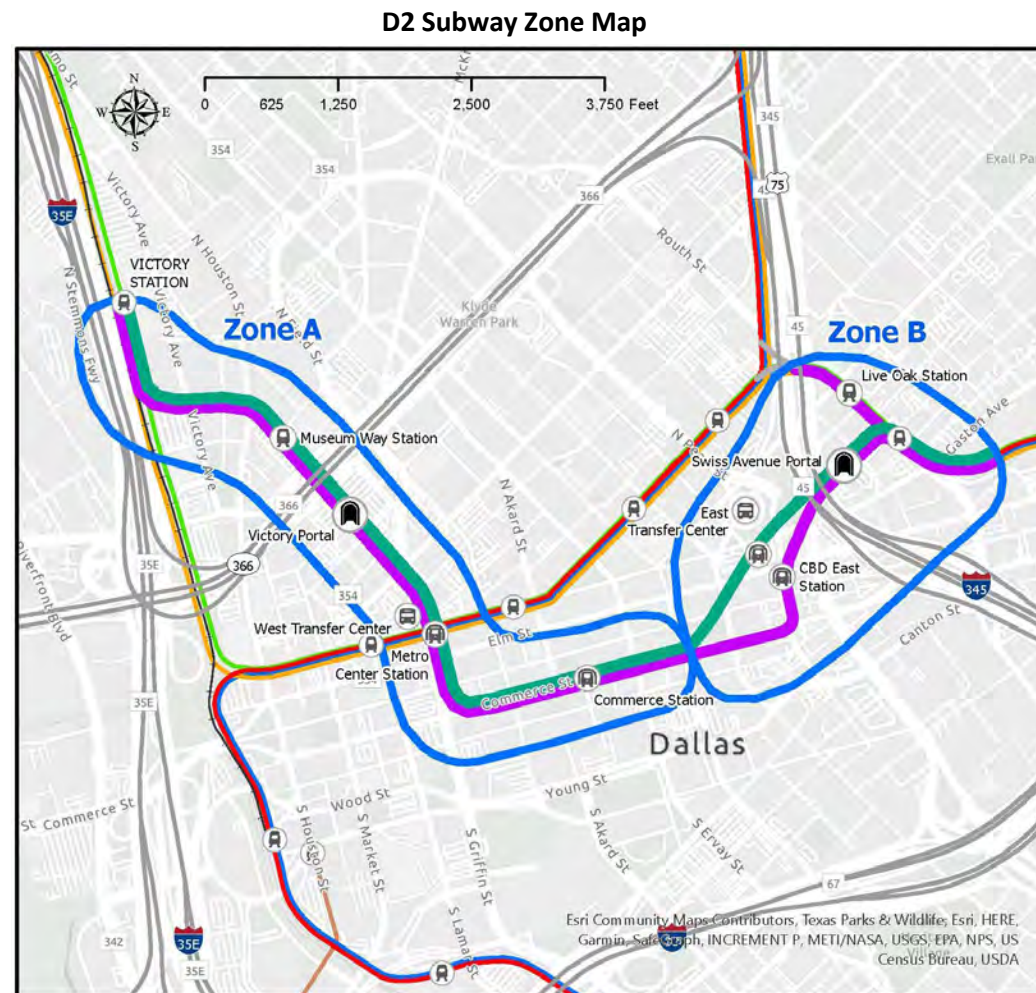
Introduction & Background

The East End Evaluation is a collaborative effort of the City of Dallas, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). This work plan outlines evaluation process, schedule, agency roles/responsibilities, and key milestones for public and stakeholder involvement.

On March 24, 2021, the Dallas City Council approved a resolution to advance the D2 Subway, including support to issue the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision and submit the project to the Federal Transit Administration for review. The Dallas City Council resolution set the alignment for D2 in Zone A. It also provided direction for the City, DART, TxDOT, NCTCOG, and stakeholders to continue efforts to conduct an additional evaluation of project refinements, enhancements, and/or modifications along the east end of the project in Zone B to address and mitigate technical, environmental, and alignment concerns.

Within Zone B, the TxDOT I-345 Feasibility Study is still in progress and coordination is needed to optimize the interface of D2 with the future I-345 design options. The public and downtown stakeholders will be engaged throughout the process prior to a technical recommendation.

Continued Dallas City Council support for the D2 Subway project is subject to a mutual binding interlocal agreement(s) by and between the City, DART, NCTCOG, and TxDOT, as well as a subsequent City Council resolution no later than March 2022.



Source: Map by Transportation GIS, February 2021

Evaluation Process

The East End Evaluation process will include:

- Documentation and discussion of key issues and concerns with agencies and stakeholders to identify desired outcomes and to help define key parameters to guide the evaluation
- Development of alternatives based on input from agencies and stakeholders. This will include a set of refinements, enhancements, and/or modifications to the current (baseline) 30% design of the D2 Subway included in the April 2021 Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision.
- Evaluation and comparison of key factors to enable decision-makers and elected officials to clearly understand the differences in potential impacts, benefits, costs, scope, and schedule as compared to the baseline. The evaluation will also consider the context of future scenarios of the east end area, which may include different I-345 options and land use development scenarios.
- Development of an agency staff recommendation and development of a draft interlocal agreement.

Public, Stakeholder, & Agency Engagement

The public and agency engagement effort will seek to actively inform, educate, involve, and seek feedback on scenarios and alternatives from the public and stakeholders. All four agencies will participate and present information at public and stakeholder meetings. Presentation materials should include all four agency logos to demonstrate the collaborative effort. Throughout the process, monthly progress reports will be provided to the Dallas City Council and committees, DART Board and committees, Regional Transportation Council, and Federal Transit Administration. The evaluation process will include stakeholder and public meetings at key points to help guide and inform the process. Individual meetings with key stakeholders, organizations, and property owners will continue to be held on an as needed basis to solicit input and keep stakeholders in both Zone A and Zone B informed.

Both the D2 Subway process and I-345 Feasibility Study include comprehensive public and agency involvement/engagement plans. The East End Evaluation effort will build upon these prior efforts to continue to engage the public and stakeholders and ensure a transparent process and documentation of input on the vision, scenarios, and range of potential D2 Subway refinements, enhancements, and modifications that may be developed and evaluated. Input during the East End Evaluation will be used in documentation for any subsequent National Environmental Policy Act actions for both D2 and I-345.

Public meetings are assumed to be virtual unless COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Virtual public meetings will be recorded and posted on the agency websites. Each agency will help to promote public meetings through their communication channels.

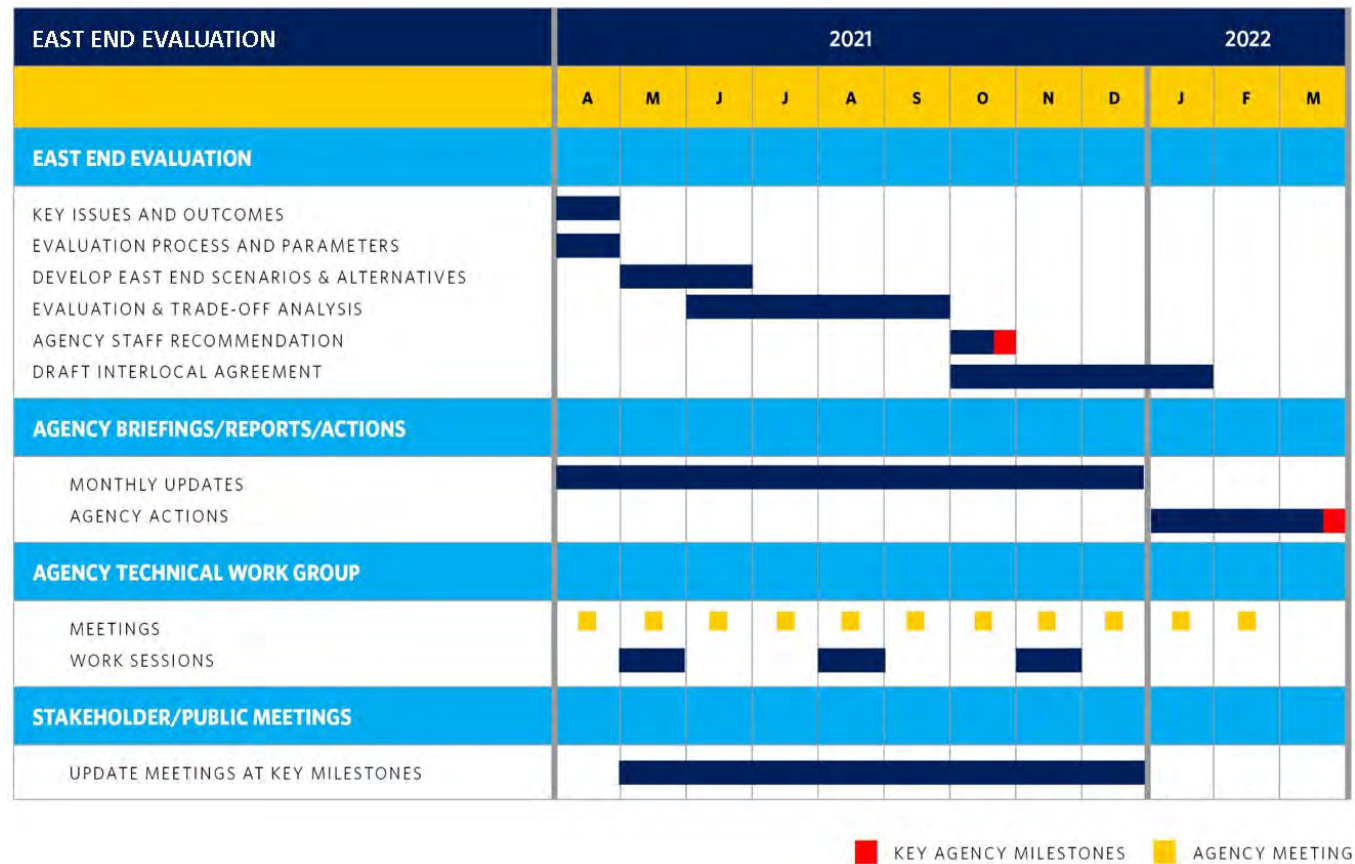
Project webpages already exist for the D2 Subway project (www.DART.org/D2) and I-345 Feasibility Study (<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/dallas/111519.html>). These webpages will continue to be used for the east end evaluation progress updates and other project updates. The websites will provide easy access to project information, public meeting materials, reports, and other materials. The City of Dallas and NCTCOG may also provide links to information on their respective websites.

D2 Subway East End Evaluation Work Plan

Schedule

The following graphic shows the schedule for the east end evaluation process. A recommendation and agreement on a path forward are needed by October 2021 to allow for time to work on an interlocal agreement and work through agency approval processes prior to and no later than March 2022.

East End Evaluation Process Schedule



Draft Vision & Key Issues

Early in the process, the City, DART, TxDOT and NCTCOG will document key issues and a vision to guide the development and evaluation of options. The overall vision will be based on looking at the D2 Subway, I-345, local street network, and other related infrastructure projects in a coordinated and holistic manner to:

- Minimize right-of-way needs
- Maximize economic development potential
- Reduce the potential for “throw-away” reconstruction of local streets
- Lessen business, property, and travel impacts during construction
- Enhance the city street grid and pedestrian network to reconnect neighborhoods

Agency Roles & Responsibilities

The City of Dallas Transportation Department will be the overall lead for the effort. All agencies will support the process, share information, and work together in a collaborative manner. Each agency will have a role in reviewing any reports, preparing presentation materials, and briefing their respective leadership and/or elected officials.

Summary of Agency Roles and Responsibilities

Agency	Primary Responsibilities
City of Dallas Lead Agency (Transportation Department lead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and distribute monthly reports for Dallas City Council with input from all agencies • Set dates for council committee and/or city council briefings on study progress • Land use/economic development and city street network vision • Urban design concepts for various scenarios and D2 alternatives • Lead stakeholder and public meetings • Public meeting and stakeholder meeting logistics and notification • Stakeholder and public meeting comment/feedback summaries • Coordination and involvement of other City departments • Interlocal agreement among all agencies
DART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of stakeholders in coordination with City, TxDOT, and NCTCOG • Support public meeting logistics • Technical support for engineering feasibility of D2 options using DART design criteria • Cost estimates of D2 options • Urban design enhancements for baseline option • Documentation of potential impacts/benefits compared to D2 baseline (real estate, operations, construction, transit access, sensitive land uses, etc.) • Regular communication with Federal Transit Administration and feedback on options in coordination with the City • Monthly briefings to DART Planning and Capital Programs Committee • Distribute monthly report to DART Board
TxDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support public meeting logistics • Evaluate and provide feedback on D2 options relative to I-345 scenarios • Technical support for engineering feasibility of freeway designs using TxDOT/FHWA design criteria • I-345 drainage/traffic information • Cost estimates related to I-345 options
NCTCOG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support public meeting logistics • Schedule team meetings and workshops • Team meeting agendas, meeting summaries, including action items and decisions/feedback • Document process and recommendation • Monthly reports to the Regional Transportation Council • Assess financial considerations, including funding sources and commitments

CHANGING MOBILITY

DATA, INSIGHTS, AND DELIVERING
INNOVATIVE PROJECTS DURING COVID
RECOVERY

Regional Transportation Council
May 2021

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation

TRAVEL BEHAVIOR BY MODE



Bicycle/Pedestrian (+73%, March)



Freeway Volumes (-6%, March)

Airport Passengers (-28%, March)

Toll Roads (-34%, February)

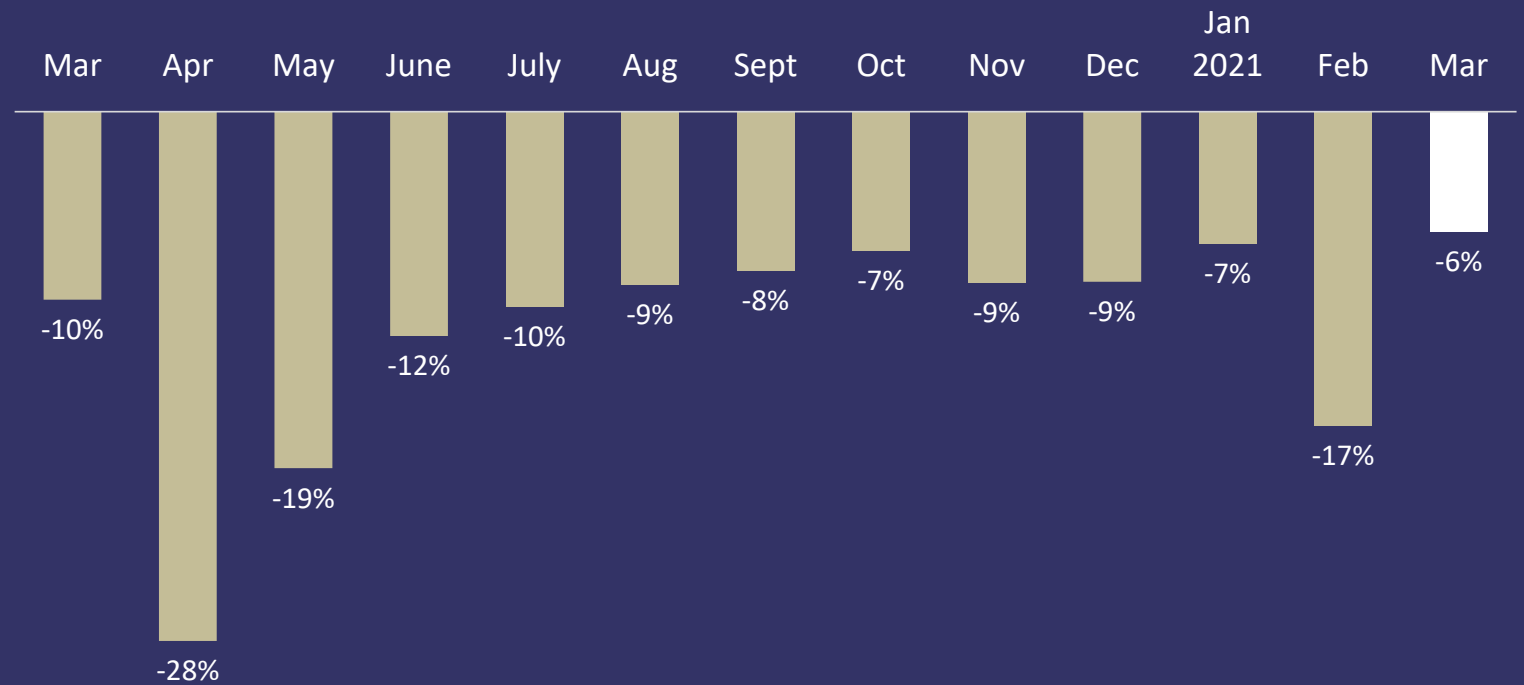
Transit Ridership (-50%, March)



ROADWAY TRENDS

Average
Weekday
Freeway
Volumes

Traffic Decrease vs Baseline



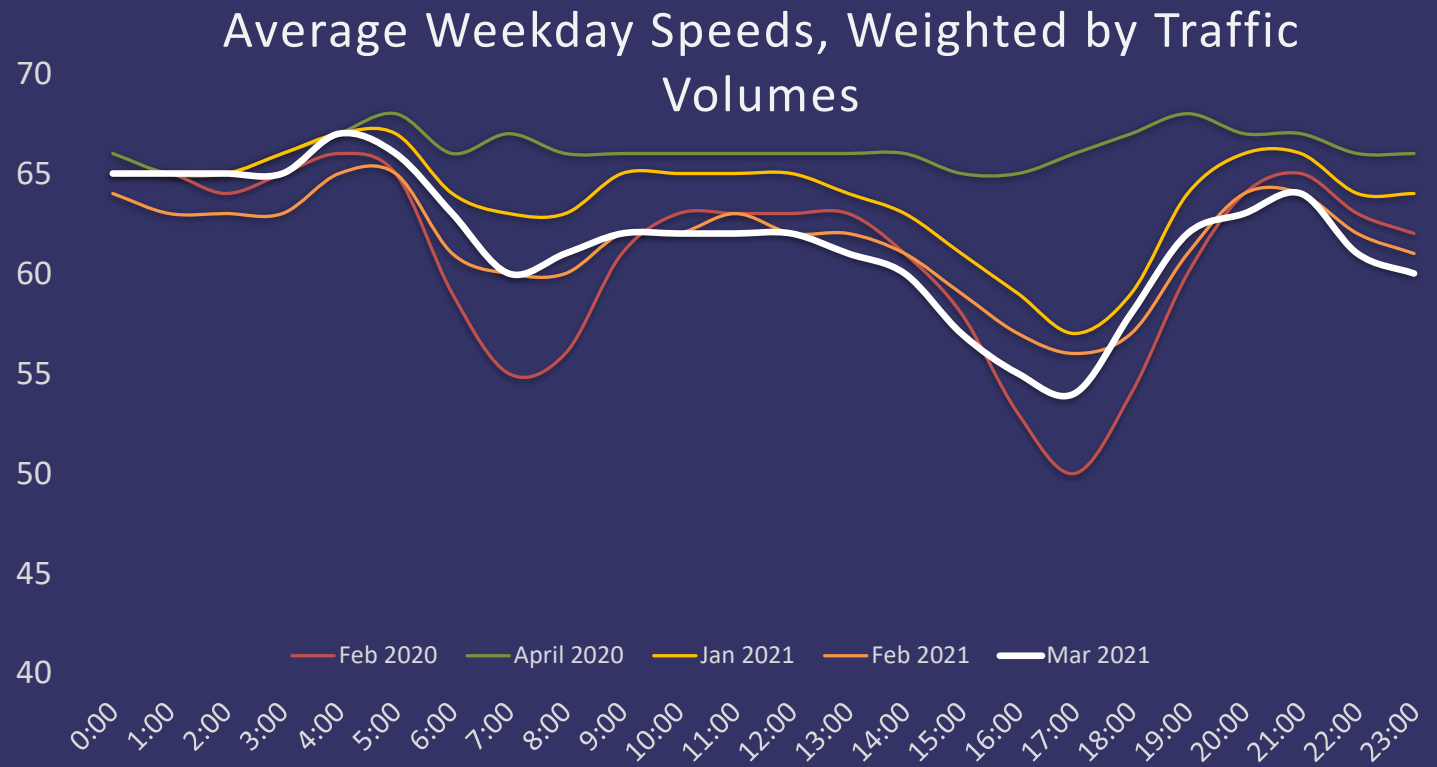
Source: TxDOT Dallas/TxDOT Fort Worth Radar Traffic Counters. As of October, growth calculated based on Fort Worth

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in freeway volumes in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

ROADWAY TRENDS

Regional Average
Freeway Speeds

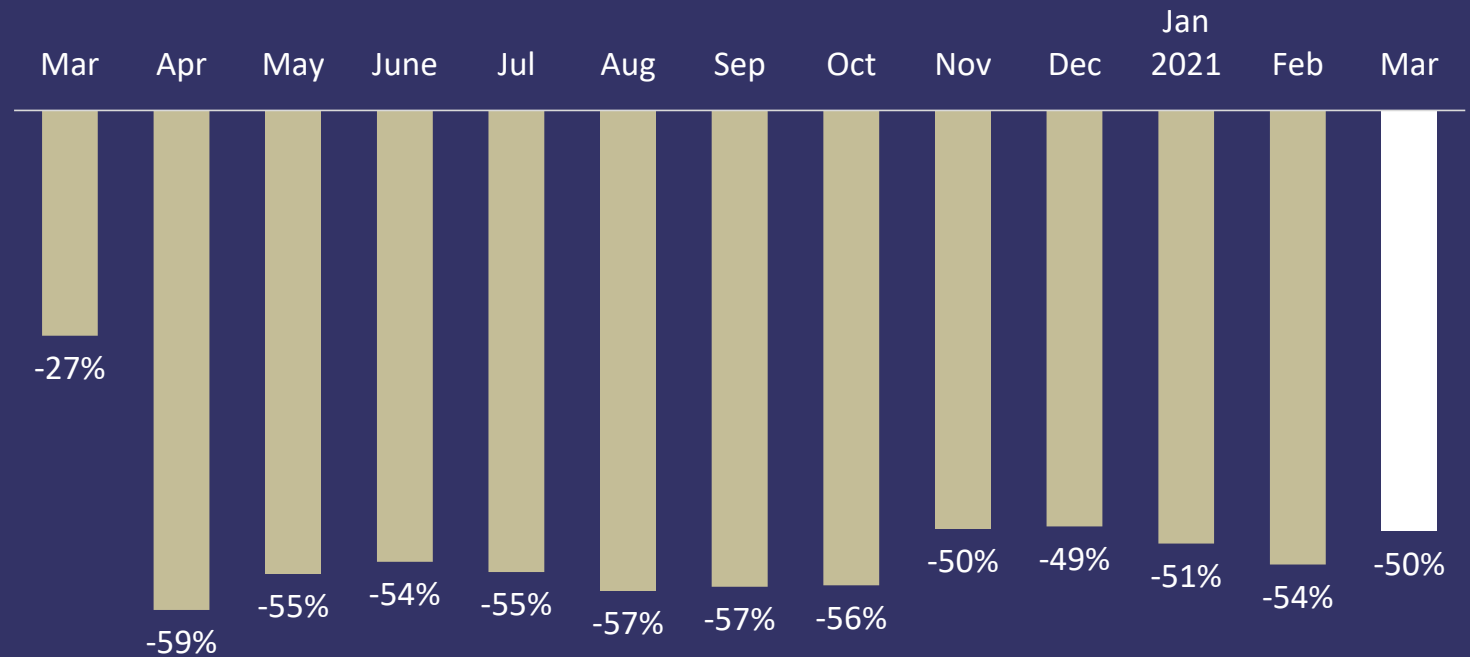


Source: TxDOT Sidefire Devices

TRANSIT IMPACTS

Weekday Ridership

Passenger Decrease vs Baseline



Source: DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro

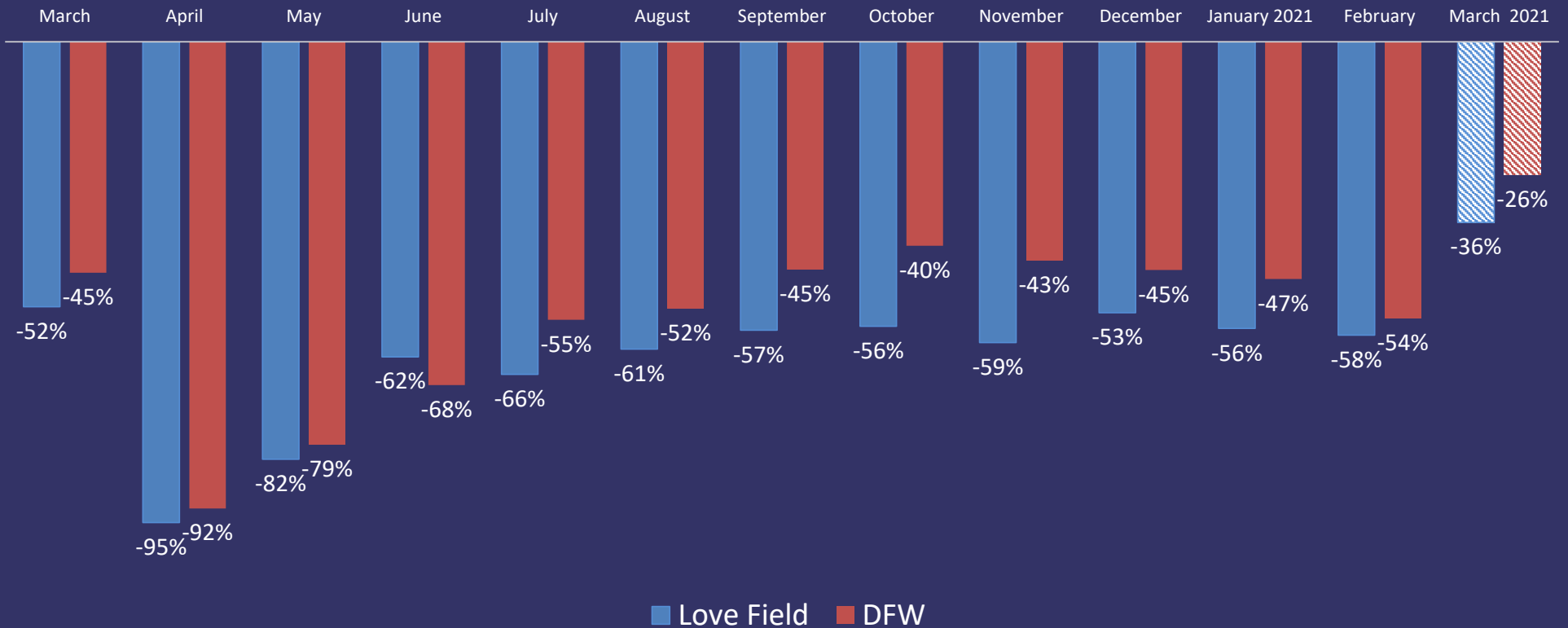
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Transit ridership impacted in Feb 2021 by week-long winter storm.

AIRPORT TRENDS

Passengers

Change in Airport Passengers vs Baseline



Source: Dallas Love Field and DFWIA Websites
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



0



Transit Sales Tax Allocation (-5.8%, February)

Motor Fuel Tax (-5.2%, February)

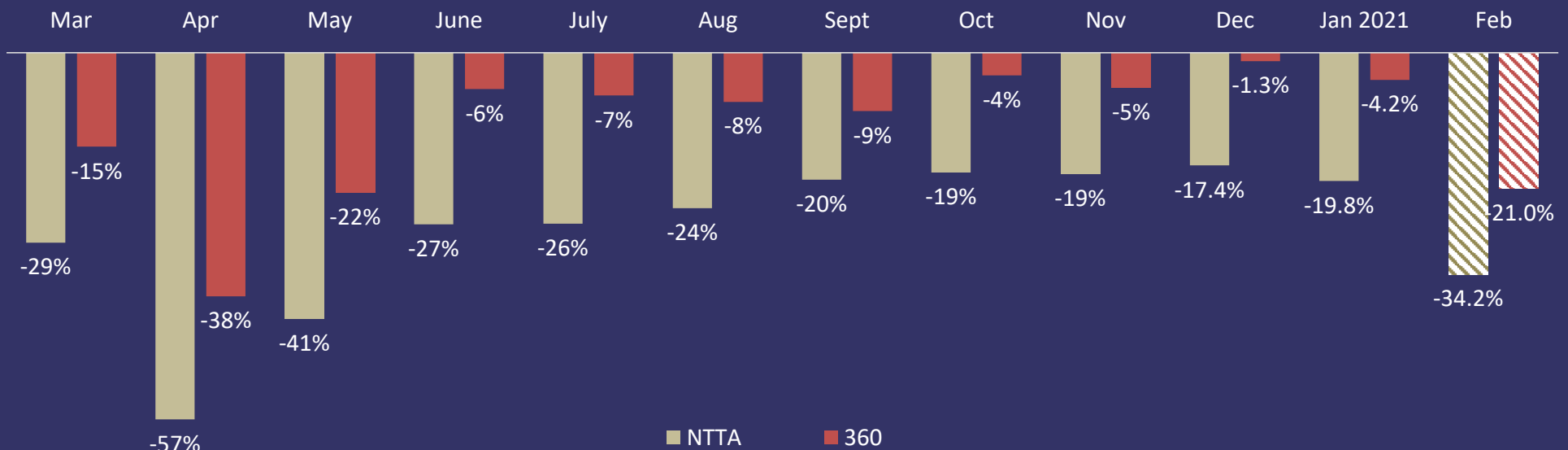
Sales Tax (-13.3%, February)

Motor Vehicle Sales and Rental Tax (-13.8%, February)

FUNDING IMPACT

NTTA Transactions, Including SH 360

Change in Tollway Transactions vs Baseline



Source: NTTA

Notes: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020. Change for NTTA includes 360 Tollway; Despite decline in transactions, the revenues are sufficient to meet debt service for SH 360.

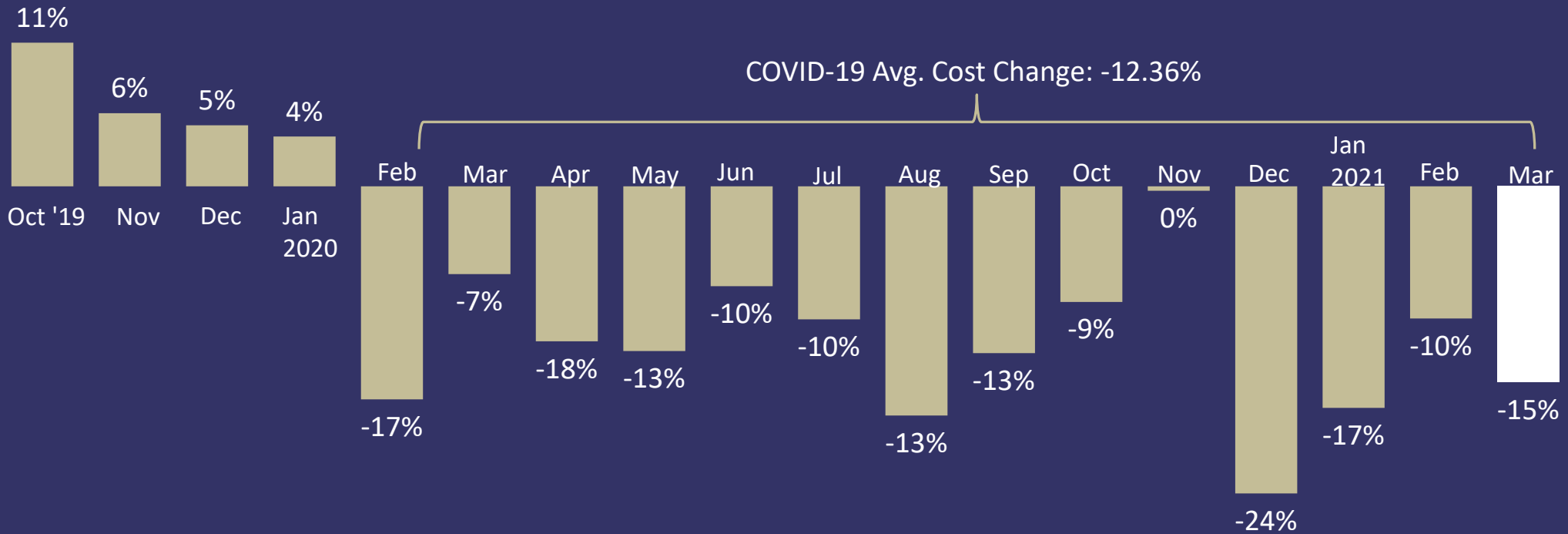
No current impact to RTC backstop expected.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

Construction Cost Changes

October 2019 to March 2021

Monthly Average Construction Cost Changes
(Letting Low Bid vs. Sealed Engineer's Est.)



Sources: TxDOT Connect and Monthly TxDOT Letting Reports

Notes: Does not include CSJ 2266-02-151; Includes grouped and non-grouped projects; Includes Dallas and Fort Worth District data

DASHBOARD PLATFORM

www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19

Newly launched online dashboard to display Changing Mobility information to the public

Replicates material presented to committees with enhanced interactivity

Separate dashboard for each metric tracked

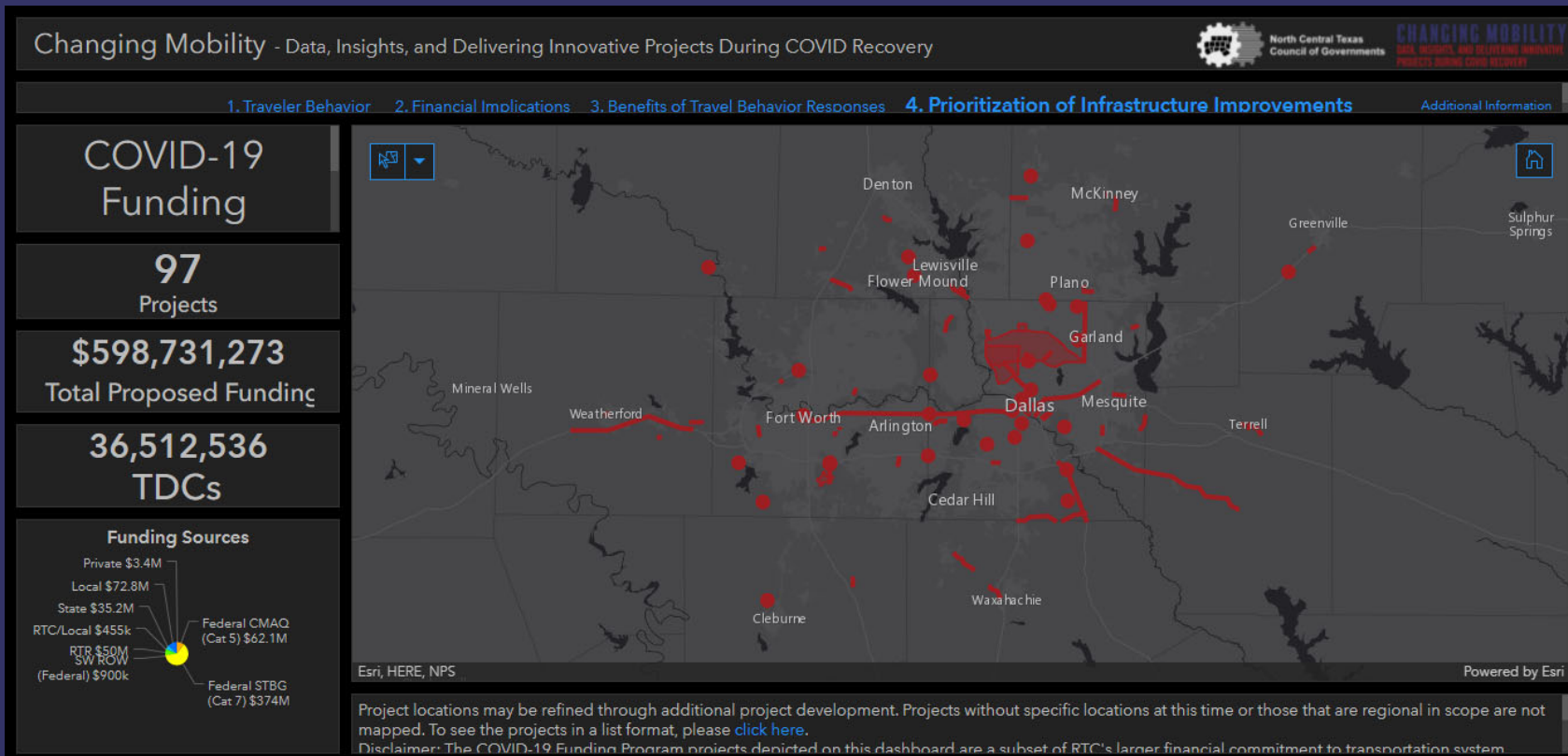
Clean layout to help the public understand the story of the metrics at a glance



DASHBOARD PLATFORM

www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19

Map and list of all projects funded through COVID-19 #00X Program



As of March 2021

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

Date	Projects/Programs	Relevant Actions		Cumulative Total	
		West	East	West	East
Mar-13	Final SAFETEA-LU East-West Equity Total	\$649.76	\$1,558.48	\$649.76	\$1,558.48
Jan-16	Final MAP-21 East-West Equity Total	\$320.98	\$847.62	\$970.74	\$2,406.10
Dec-16	FY 2017-2026 Regional 10-Year Planning Effort - Category 2 Funds (Transfer from the East to the West)	\$100.00	(\$100.00)	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.10
Oct-17	Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding for a project in Hunt County (City of Quinlan) awarded through the Statewide TA Set-Aside Call for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in October 2017 (Minute Order #115076)	\$0.00	\$0.30	\$1,070.74	\$2,306.40
Dec-17	Category 12 funding for various overpass reconstruction projects along the IH 30 corridor in Hunt County as approved in the December 2017 update to Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$102.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,408.40
Sep-18	Category 12 funding for the construction of an interchange at IH 45 and FM 664 in Ellis County as approved in the 2019 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$34.00	\$1,070.74	\$2,442.40
Dec-18	Transfer of Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) funds from the East to the West as approved by the RTC in December 2018 through the CMAQ/STBG: Strategic Partnerships Round 3/Intersection Improvements/MTP Policy Bundle TDC Program	\$5.80	(\$5.80)	\$1,076.54	\$2,436.60
Aug-19	Category 12 Clear Lanes funding for various projects in the region was awarded 69% East/31% West instead of being split 68% East/32% West, which gave the East a small amount of additional revenue compared to the West	\$0.00	\$33.59	\$1,076.54	\$2,470.19
Aug-19	Category 12 Strategic Priority funding for various projects in the East (IH 30 in Dallas County, IH 35 in Denton County, and IH 30 in Hunt County) and in the West (Southeast Connector in Tarrant County and SH 170 in Denton/Tarrant Counties) as approved in the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$208.33	\$1,018.85	\$1,284.87	\$3,489.04
Jan-20	Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funding for projects in Dallas County (City of Balch Springs) and Parker County (City of Hudson Oaks) awarded through the Statewide Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and TA Set-Aside Calls for Projects as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in January 2020 (Minute Order #115662)	\$2.13	\$0.96	\$1,287.00	\$3,490.00
Aug-20	Transfer of Regional Toll Revenue funds from Denton County to the Western Subregion in exchange for an equal amount of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds as approved by the Regional Transportation Council through the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program (Round 2)	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$1,317.00	\$3,520.00

No changes since last presentation in February 2021

RTC Director's Report
May 13, 2021

ELECTRONIC ITEM 4.5

As of March 2021

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

Date	Projects/Programs	Relevant Actions		Cumulative Total	
		West	East	West	East
Aug-20	Category 12 Strategic Priority funding for the IH 30 Canyon project in Dallas County as approved by the Texas Transportation Commission in the 2021 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	\$0.00	\$112.00	\$1,317.00	\$3,632.00
Sep-20	Additional Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set Aside funding awarded to the Eastern subregion through the 2020 TA Set Aside Call for Projects as approved by the RTC; Western subregion will receive an equal amount of CMAQ and/or STBG funding as part of a future project selection initiative to offset this extra funding.	(\$1.86)	\$1.86	\$1,315.14	\$3,633.86
Updated FAST Act Equity Percentage Share as of March 2021				26.57%	73.43%

Cumulative East-West Equity Share	Cumulative Total	
	West	East
Cumulative Total	\$1,315.14	\$3,633.86
Cumulative Percentage Shares	26.57%	73.43%
RTC Approved Target Shares	32%	68%

No changes since last presentation in February 2021

RTC Director's Report
May 13, 2021



High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Report

Regional Transportation Council
Meeting

May 13th, 2021



Managed Lane System

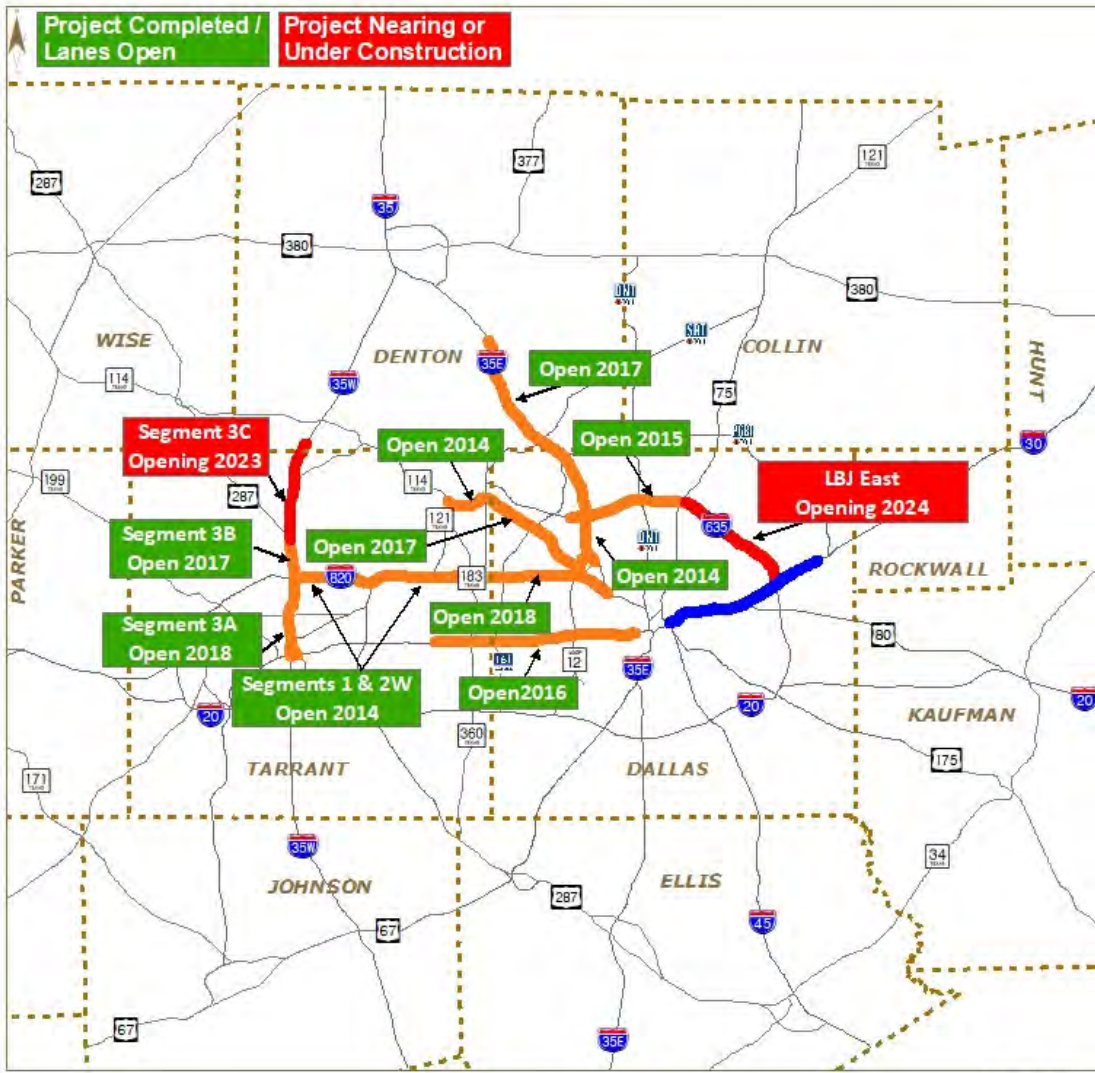
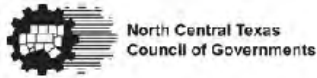
Current Express/HOV + New Managed Lanes

- Current Express/HOV Lanes
- Current TExpress Managed Lanes
- TEXPress Managed Lanes Under Construction
- Major Roadways

Fort Worth CBD



Dallas CBD



October 27, 2020

Toll Managed Lane Data Monitoring

Cumulative December 2013 – February 2021

How much HOV 2+ Subsidy has the RTC been responsible for?

\$ 6,124,691 as of February 2021

How much of the Vanpool Toll reimbursement has the RTC been responsible for?

\$ 12,407 from October 2014 – March 31st, 2021

How long can the RTC keep the HOV policy at 2+?

For now, it remains 2+ 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 2021

Facility	HOV 2+ Subsidy Costs	NTTA Customer Service (Additional Needs)	Project Performance Events (Speeds < 35 mph)
North Tarrant Express <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SH 183/121 from IH 35W to SH 121 • IH 35W from IH 30 to US 287 	\$2,887,740	Negligible	0
LBJ Express <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IH 635 from Preston Road to Greenville Avenue • IH 35E from Loop 12 to IH 635 	\$3,236,951	Negligible	0
DFW Connector SH 114 from Kimball Avenue to Freeport Parkway	N/A	Negligible	0
IH 30 Managed Lanes IH 30 from SH 161 to Westmoreland Road	N/A	Negligible	0
IH 35E Managed Lanes IH 35E from FM 2181 (Teasley) to LBJ	N/A	Negligible	0



Update

Automated Vehicle Occupancy Verification

Through Wednesday,
March 31, 2021



HOV Users

January 24, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Users: 37,345

Vehicles: 39,269

Occupant Passes: 6,710



Total and HOV Transactions

January 24, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Total Transactions – 1,185,624

LBJ/NTE Partners – 763,124

TxDOT – 422,500

Total HOV Transactions – 479,081 (~40%)

LBJ/NTE Partners – 294,458

TxDOT – 184,623

Unique Transactions – 30,738



Future Data Items

- Total and HOV Transactions by Corridor
- Average Speed on Managed Lane by Corridor
- Average Speed on General Purpose Lanes by Corridor
- Others?

Questions/Contacts

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Berrien Barks

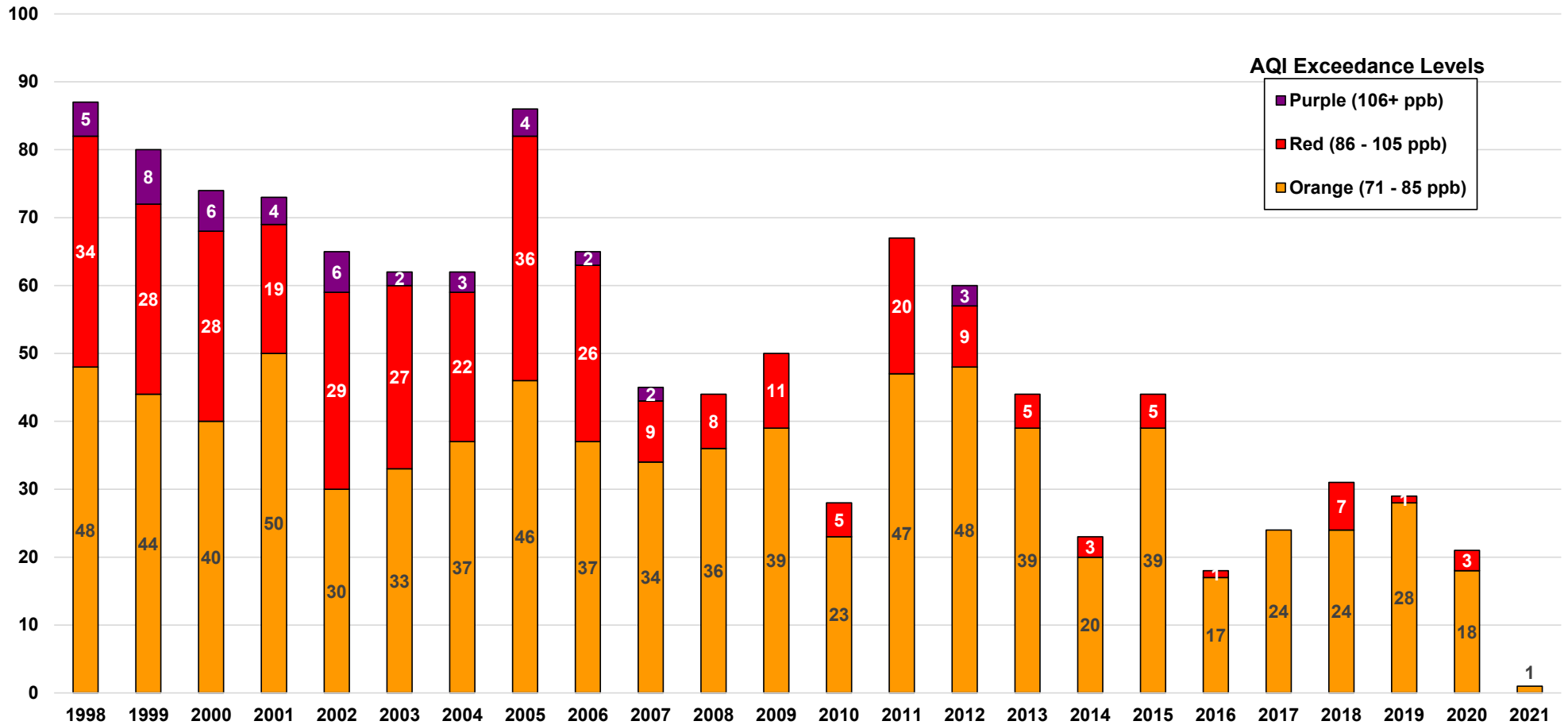
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8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS

Based on ≤ 70 ppb (As of May 6, 2021)



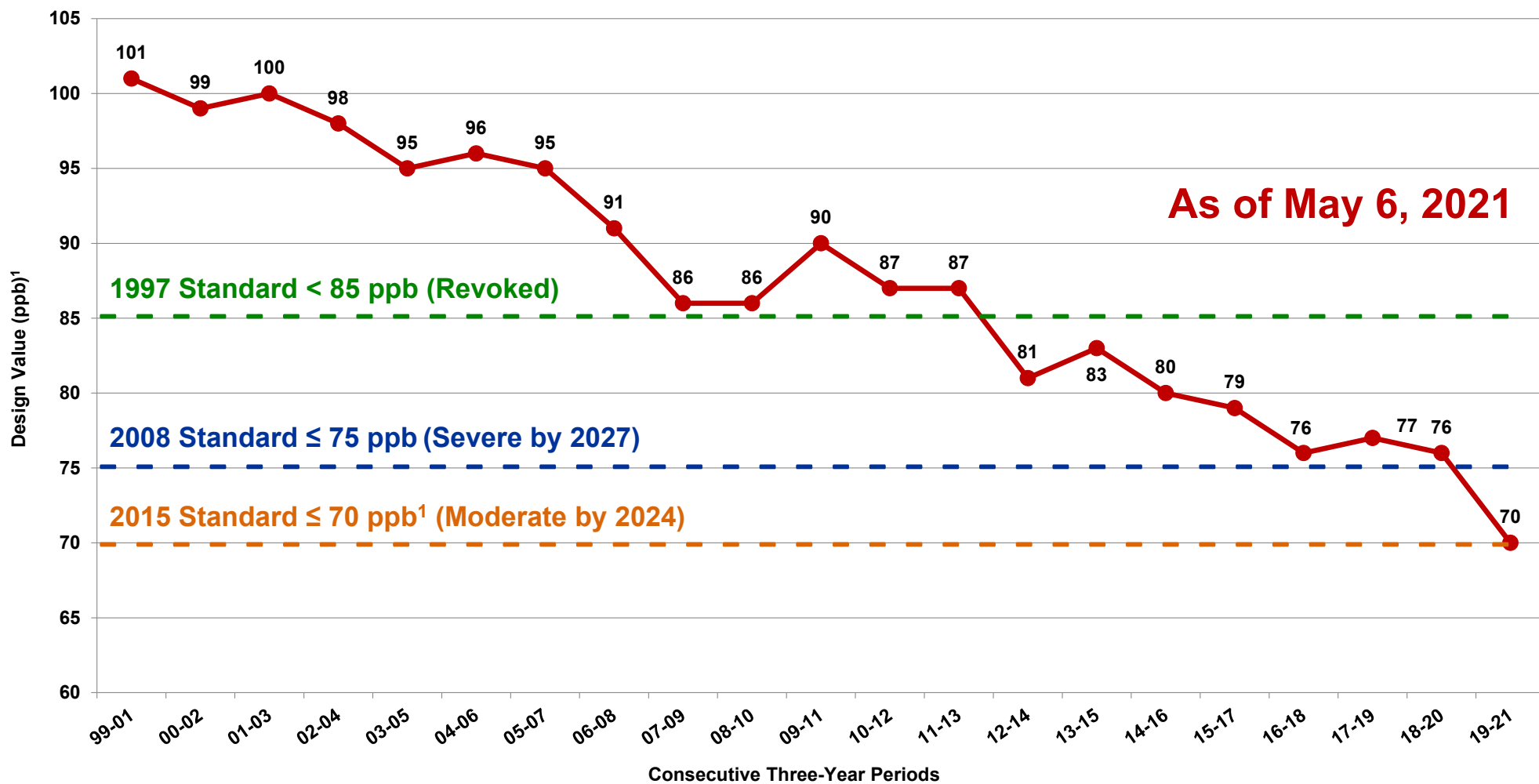
AQI Exceedance Levels

- Purple (106+ ppb)
- Red (86 - 105 ppb)
- Orange (71 - 85 ppb)

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

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

8-HOUR OZONE NAAQS HISTORICAL TRENDS



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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

Mobility 2045 Update

Look Out Texans Campaign

DFW Clean Cities Update: 2019 Impacts and Fleet Recognition Awards

Online Public Input Opportunity Dates

Monday, March 8, 2021 - Wednesday, April 7, 2021 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment.

Purpose and Topics

The online public input opportunity was provided in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff posted information regarding:

1. Mobility 2045 Update
2. Look Out Texans Campaign
3. DFW Clean Cities Update: 2019 Impacts and Fleet Recognition Awards

The NCTCOG online public input opportunity was provided to inform and seek comments from the public. Comments and questions were submitted by email at transinfo@nctcog.org, online at www.nctcog.org/input, by mail at PO Box 5888, Arlington, TX 76005 and by fax at 817-640-3028. Printed copies of the online materials were also made available by calling 817-608-2365 or emailing transinfo@nctcog.org.

Summary of Presentations

Mobility 2045 Update presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/03/MTTP.pdf>

Mobility 2045 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that defines a long-term vision for the region's transportation system and guides spending of federal and State transportation funds. This includes funding for highways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other programs that reduce congestion and improve air quality.

The Plan was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) on June 14, 2018, and Transportation Conformity was achieved on November 21, 2018. Mobility 2045 has nine goals and its vision is to improve the region's mobility today and tomorrow by embracing technology and innovation.

NCTCOG staff is currently working on an update to Mobility 2045 and focused on updating travel and demographic data, refining projects, building upon a performance-based planning framework and launching virtual public involvement tools that encourage feedback from the public.

Public involvement and plan development efforts will take place throughout the 2021 calendar year and spring 2022. The official comment period for the Mobility 2045 update will take place in April and May of 2022. The RTC will take action on the update in June 2022.

Look Out Texans Campaign presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/03/LOT.pdf>

Use of Dallas-Fort Worth regional biking and walking trails increased by 70 percent at the beginning of the pandemic. Due to high crash fatalities, both Dallas and Fort Worth were named Pedestrian-Bicycle Focus Cities by the Federal Highway Administration. Because of these two events, NCTCOG staff is re-launching Look Out Texans (LOT), a regional bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign.

Research conducted for the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan found that young adults aged 23 to 33 as well as minority populations are most likely to be involved in pedestrian crashes and fatalities. This information was used to craft targeted messaging for the LOT campaign, and promotional efforts will include paid advertising with BCycle, Facebook, Spotify, YouTube, DART and Trinity Metro.

More information, resources and safety tips can be found at www.LookOutTexans.org.

DFW Clean Cities Update: 2019 Impacts and Fleet Recognition Awards presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/03/D FWCC-Fleet-Rec.pdf>

NCTCOG is the host organization for Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities (DFWCC), a US Department of Energy initiative to reduce total energy impacts in the transportation sector. As part of these efforts, DFWCC surveys local fleets each year about alternative fuel use and other fuel-saving activities.

Forty-two fleets participated in the 2019 Annual Survey and assisted in reducing approximately 420 tons of ozone-forming nitrogen oxides and approximately 72,094 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. To view the 2019 Annual Report and for more information on the 2020 Annual Survey, visit www.dfwcleancities.org.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, MAIL, EMAIL and SOCIAL MEDIA

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

March 28, 2021

Carli,

Attached are my comments & justifications on the presentations that you set me on March 12. The due date is April 7.

Mobility 2045

2022 Update Presentation

Comment - Pg. 9 - I am pleased to see these goals & I trust that achieving these goals will be carefully monitored. With ^{the} ever-increasing population in the North Texas area, innovations in mobility become ever more important.

→ Question

Re Transportation Conformity & Conformity expenses - what does "conformity" refer to?

In much of your literature, conformity refers to conformity of air & water quality standards, but I don't believe that it refers to this here.

Lookout Texas

Comment This is a great piece for awareness. I would like to see this circulated widely into the community.

DFW Clean Cities Fleet Recognition & Annual Survey Results

Comment - I find it very encouraging that progress has been made within some organizations over →

→ Question - Pg. 9. Greatest Progress in GGR

Reduction - SPAN Transit - what does SPAN
stand for and where is this transit
system? 97% increase in ridership is
quite an accomplishment.

Thank you

Phyllis Arline



RECEIVED

APR - 2 2021

TRANSPORTATION

MINUTES**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY****COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4****Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips****Start of 2021 Ozone Season****Car Care Awareness****Online Public Input Opportunity Dates**

Monday, April 12, 2021 - Tuesday, May 11, 2021 – The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) posted information at www.nctcog.org/input for public review and comment.

Purpose and Topics

The online public input opportunity was provided in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Plan, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and amended on November 8, 2018. Staff posted information regarding:

1. COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4
2. Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips
3. Start of 2021 Ozone Season
4. Car Care Awareness

The NCTCOG online public input opportunity was provided to inform and seek comments from the public. Comments and questions were submitted by email at transinfo@nctcog.org, online at www.nctcog.org/input, by mail at PO Box 5888, Arlington, TX 76005 and by fax at 817-640-3028. Printed copies of the online materials were also made available by calling 817-608-2365 or emailing transinfo@nctcog.org.

Summary of Presentations***COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4 presentation:***

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/COVID-19-INFRASTRUCTURE-PROGRAM-ROUND-4.pdf>

Project list:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/COVID-19-Handout.pdf>

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the economy has suffered large setbacks, and there is an urgency to stimulate it. The main idea behind the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program is to inject much needed cash into the local and state economy using infrastructure investment.

Most of the projects included on the program's project list have been the subject of discussions between NCTCOG staff and regional partners over the past several years and meet one or more of the Regional Transportation Council policies outlined in Mobility 2045 and/or assist in reaching the region's federal performance measures. NCTCOG staff is recommending funding a fourth round of projects.

Projects were divided into project types and evaluated against each other. Selection criteria included air quality benefits, cost effectiveness, consistency with Mobility 2045, traffic volumes, if the project addressed a safety issue and if the project addressed federal performance measures.

Additionally, when the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) was signed into law in December 2020, \$9.8 billion of additional funding was set aside for transportation infrastructure, with approximately \$54 million allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. This program proposes to incorporate the aforementioned funding into this fourth round of project selection.

For a comprehensive list of projects being funded, please refer to the project listing on the public input page: www.nctcog.org/input.

Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips presentation:
<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/Regional-SOV-Trip-Reduction-Res.pdf>

NCTCOG's Travel Demand Management (TDM) goal is to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel on roadways by offering alternatives to driving alone. Traditional TDM strategies include telecommuting, transit, ridesharing, vanpools and flexible work schedules.

In October 2020, staff introduced the development of a Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution in an effort to retain some of the positive benefits of reducing trips realized during COVID-19 restrictions. The resolution outlines support for the establishment of a regional trip reduction target of 20 percent to reduce the number of SOV commute trips during the peak period. It encourages public and private sector employers to reduce employee SOV trips by implementing employer-specific trip reduction programs, encourages both public and private sector employers to monitor and track agency participation through an online commute tracking platform and encourages use of www.TryParkingIt.com to aid in tracking and monitoring activities.

The RTC will evaluate public agencies' participation and implementation of the program through a new policy established as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle with non-participation possibly impacting the level of Transportation Development Credits received through the Policy Bundle Survey process. For private sector agencies, the RTC will monitor the agency's participation and implementation of the program through www.TryParkingIt.com or a comparable tracking platform, with participation possibly resulting in awarding regional funding for TDM-related efforts such as transit passes.

In addition, NCTCOG staff will provide the RTC with annual updates on the status of the trip reduction target to reduce SOV commute trips and include www.TryParkingIt.com usage rates, number of users, trips reduced and emissions reduced.

The RTC is expected to take action on the Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips on May 13, 2021.

Start of 2021 Ozone Season presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/Start-of-Ozone-Season.pdf>

Ozone is a gas composed of three atoms of oxygen and occurs both in the Earth's upper atmosphere and at ground level. Ground-level ozone is commonly referred to as "bad ozone" and forms when emission sources emit nitrogen oxides and/or volatile organic compounds that react in the presence of sunlight. Ozone can make it more difficult to breathe, aggravate lung diseases and inflame and damage the airway.

North Texas is currently under two ozone standards, one for 2008 and one for 2015. The attainment deadline for the 2008 standard was July 20, 2018. The region did not meet the standard, and therefore, its air quality status was reclassified as serious. It must achieve attainment by July 20, 2021. The nonattainment deadline for the 2015 standard is August 3, 2021.

Everyone in the region can help improve air quality by working from home, using mass transit, avoiding unnecessary trips, carpooling, etc. More information on air quality and ozone alerts is available at <https://www.airnorthtexas.org>.

Car Care Awareness presentation:

<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Involve/InputMeetings/2021/04/CA-Final.pdf>

The Car Care Awareness campaign aligns with National Car Care Awareness Month in both April and October. The campaign seeks to advance air quality benefits for the region, informs owners about vehicle maintenance and helps build stronger community relations.

NCTCOG began hosting car care clinics in April 2013. The clinics, which have a hands-on, educational approach, provide vehicle owners the chance to speak with qualified technicians about their check engine light and any other issue they might be experiencing with their vehicle.

Due to the pandemic, NCTCOG staff moved the campaign entirely online and hopes to be able to return to an in-person approach in October 2021. The Car Care Clinic website, which launched in 2016, houses free educational materials, vehicle maintenance tips and program status updates.

For more information, visit www.ntxcarcare.org. Email comments and questions to ntxcarcare@nctcog.org.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, MAIL, EMAIL and SOCIAL MEDIA

Email

COVID-19 #00X Transportation Infrastructure Program: Round 4

John Godwin, City of Terrell

I am writing to express our great appreciation for and continued support of those two projects included in Infrastructure Program Round 4 for the City of Terrell. We believe these safety enhancement projects will have significant positive impacts on our overall downtown, especially US 80 and Spur 227, and be a tremendous first step for us as we work towards the development of complete streets. Accessibility, equity, and safety are keys to our long term success.

We also hope for consideration of future opportunities for funding for access road construction along Interstate 20 in Terrell and all of Kaufman County as we move forward over the next few years. This project, including interchange improvements, is a partnership with Kaufman, which has approved bonds in support of the work. Upon completion, this project will have significant impacts on safety, economic development, and traffic congestion in our area.

On behalf of the city council and staff of the City of Terrell, we again thank you for your support of the two approved projects, as well as the ability to use some of our transportation credits towards their completion. We look forward to working with you in the future on these and other significant transportation projects.

Regional Trip Reduction Resolution for Single Occupancy Vehicle Trips

Michael Harrington

I am a statistician. After creating Combarry™ I now can count Hariot, Pascal, and Fibonacci as my peers.

Studies of traffic patterns have happened and demonstrate some inescapable truths. The first is that forced Car Pooling is quite impossible. This is due to shopping behaviors, errands people run, work place hours, schools they or their children attend, meetings, doctors appointments, and so forth. In fact it is the subject of math where $N \neq NP$ versus $N = NP$ type solutions.

On a pure basis it cannot succeed from the drive way anyways, people need a way to meet up after all for the ride or the likelihood that their rides will match is as near as impossible as can be.

Not only would the system ultimately fail it would cost every politician involved to be voted out of office quickly and would end any other plans said politicians had desires to implement.

Response by NCTCOG Transportation Department Staff

Mr. Harrington,

Thank you for providing your feedback on the proposed resolution to establish a regional target to reduce drive alone vehicle trips on our regional roadways during peak driving periods. The purpose of the resolution is not to force commuters to carpool. It is our goal to reduce roadway congestion and improve our region's air quality by reducing the number of drive-alone trips by encouraging commuters to use alternative commute options. This can be achieved through an assortment of Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies that are available in the North Central Texas region. In addition to carpooling, these alternatives to driving alone include vanpooling, taking transit, biking, walking, telecommuting, and flexible or variable work schedules. We understand that every commuter is different and their commute needs may differ. The proposed

resolution gives commuters the option to choose the alternative commute solution that works best for them and does not mandate carpooling.

For additional information on TDM strategies available in North Central Texas, we welcome you to visit www.nctcog.org/trans/manage/tdm. We also welcome you to track your alternative commutes at TryParkingIt.com where commuters can earn rewards by using alternatives to driving alone.

Mail

Phyllis Silver

Please see attachment for comment submitted via mail.

4/29/2021

Carl:

These are my comments and questions for the Regional Transportation Public Input

Opportunity due May 11!

Proposed Regional Single - Occupancy Vehicle Trip Reduction Target Development Resolution = great!

Comments:

This is a great idea - taking something as negative as the pandemic and observing the positive effects of such things as the reduction of air pollution. Then you're taking the extra step - devising ways that we can maintain some of these effects, at least to a degree, under better (non-pandemic)

circumstances, especially like the notation on pg (no pg.#) - Resolution Target Setting Areas of Consideration. Recommending a realistically achievable target that results in high benefits and reduced negative impacts.

Recommendation

on that same page, realizing that parking lots are generally private property & trusting that design recommendations ^{standards} can still be made to reduce accidents, I recommend that more safety features, such as fewer exits from parking lots so that it will not interfere with oncoming traffic and also better visibility (free from barriers to visibility) as motorists are leaving a parking lot to enter the main road.

MAY - 5 2021

TRANSPORTATION

COVID 19 Infrastructure Program? Round 4 Packet:
Question
Page 4 -

Eligibility Criteria - what is a Major Collector
and what is the Federal Functional Classification
System?

Comment -

I am pleased with the choice of projects listed
in the packet, as summarized in the chart on page 7.

Start of 2021 Ozone Season Packet.

Comments: Thank you for making the distinction between
the two types of ozone and for reminding us what
contributes to the bad ground-level ozone.

Question - page 8 - on the bar graph, what do the numbers
in the purple, red, and orange areas of the graph
represent? Is it the number of days that we exceeded
each level of the Air Quality Index?

COVID-19 H 00X Infrastructure Program
(Round 4) Funding Recommendations; Bicycle - Pedestrian

Comment: COVID-19 ID# 052 - I am pleased that
sidewalks will be constructed in this area - I would
like it to be sooner than FY2023.

Same report Funding Recommendation Complete Streets

Question I'm not sure why the two Richardson Projects
have no ID #. I notice the total scoring is only 50.
Are you planning on implementing these projects? I'm not
sure I understand these entries. Can you clarify this for me?

Car Care Awareness

Comment: Thank you for the Car Care tips, especially as it
relates to tire inflation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REPORT

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

Purpose

The public comments report is in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Process, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and amended on November 8, 2018.

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

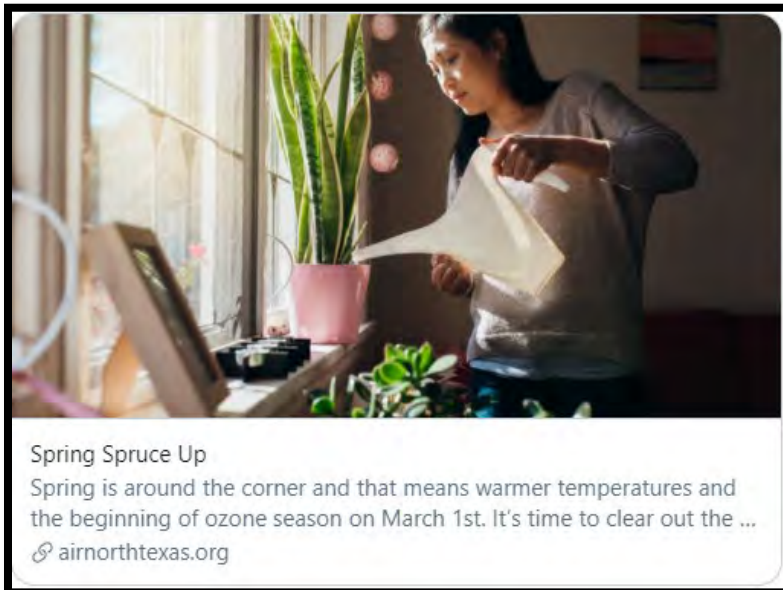
This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Transit comments were in the majority.

In addition, comments were accepted through a new, online map tool. Users can drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. This month, there were 43 bicycle and pedestrian comments, three transit comments and 22 roadway comments. To read them, visit: <http://nctcoggis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

Air Quality

Twitter –

1. It's Spring! That means warmer temperatures and the beginning of ozone season from March 1st to November 30th. @NCTCOGtrans has some sustainable spring-cleaning tips, easy gardening ideas, and some important ozone season info. #mindfulliving



Project Planning

Email –

1. Kevin Keough

Hello, where can I go to find the most current information regarding the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Regional Outer Loop, which at some point of the planning process was contemplated to run through/by Aubry? Thank you.

Response by NCTCOG staff

Good morning,

Thank you again for your question and your patience as we compiled an answer.

The latest work performed on the Denton County portion of the proposed Regional Outer Loop was the work Kate Zielke managed in preparing the Denton Greenbelt Corridor Feasibility Study. The study was made possible through a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant aimed at integrating sustainability best practices into transportation planning according to the web-based Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST). The study provided recommendations on a development plan for the Regional Outer Loop across the Denton Greenbelt that also provided environmental stewardship and sustainability measures by preserving recreational trails and nearby wildlife habitats. The final report for the feasibility study can be accessed directly at:

https://www.nctcog.org/nctcog/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Quality/Environ/Denton-Greenbelt-Corridor-Feasibility-Study_FINAL_3-2019.pdf.

At roughly the same time the linked report above was being finalized and completed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Dallas District had initiated a feasibility study for the US 380 corridor in Denton County to determine if, how, and where a future US 380 freeway facility could be located. In addition to an alternative that could reconstruct the existing US 380 corridor, by December 2020 TxDOT had identified several potential new-location corridors for evaluation, including an option that could utilize the existing FM 428 and proposed Regional Outer Loop corridors between Loop 288 in Denton and the future Dallas North Tollway (DNT) extension in Celina. NCTCOG is currently providing technical assistance and coordination for TxDOT, Denton County, and numerous local governments and other stakeholders assessing the economic, environmental, and engineering viability of all the proposed options, as well as obtaining feedback for those agencies and the public regarding each alternative's possible benefits and impacts. TxDOT anticipates conducting at least one additional public meeting opportunity in late 2021 before completing the feasibility study final report in early 2022 with the recommendation of a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative would then advance into a greater and more in-depth Federal environmental analysis that once approved could result in phased construction over time (dependent on available funding). More details on TxDOT's US 380 Denton County Feasibility Study, including maps and slides prepared for the most recent December 2020 virtual public meeting, can be found at:

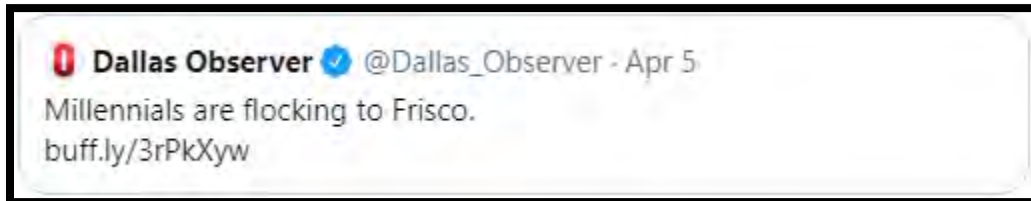
<http://www.keepitmovingdallas.com/projects/us-highways/us-380-denton-county-feasibility-study>.

If you have any additional questions, please let us know.

Twitter –

1. I don't find the Census Bureau data that could support annual population variation by age band, and this is a stupid definition of millennial

BUT as long as we let @TxDOT and @NCTCOGtrans continue to subsidize suburbs at our expense, we shouldn't be surprised to see Frisco grow – not seeking eric johnson's endorsement (@PhilipTKingston)



2. "We need to focus on the human scale and build the rest of the infrastructure around that." - Michael Morris from @NCTCOGtrans #FutureDallas – Gillea Allison (@GilleaA)

3. "We need to focus on the human scale and build the rest of the infrastructure around that." - Michael Morris from @NCTCOGtrans #FutureDallas – Coalition Dallas (@CoalitionNewDAL)

So is Micheal Morris still Lord Voldemort when it comes to Walkable infrastructure or is he just saying this cause of the new administration? That's the real question here... – Itz Ya Boy (@Tivo_Kinevil)

Public Involvement

Twitter –

1. For my fellow NW Dallasites, @NCTCOGtrans is currently holding a meeting about the possible future of Bachman Lake. Docs and meeting registration here:

<https://nctcog.org/trans/plan/land-use/land-use-projects/bachman-lake-area-planning-study>

Note, especially, the potential entrances to @DallasLoveField and the "land bridge" being studied. – Robert Wilonsky (@RobertWilonsky)



Will the land bridge be called Bachman Lake Overdrive? – Matt Rigney (@ShotTheSerif)
 I'll believe the changes when I see them, but airing all my internal grievances in map sure was cathartic – Eric Haney (@EricHan39664040)
 Thanks for the work you do to keep Dallas citizens informed. – Kelley Sparkman (@KelleySparkman)

2. Don't forget to register for this week's webinar: Communicating Data During COVID-19! Contact Caitlin Cook, ccook@ampo.org for registration details.

Not a working group member? No problem! It's not too late to sign up for our AMPO working groups: <https://ampo.org/working-groups/working-group-application> – Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (@Assoc_MPOs)

GIS & Data Visualization Webinar





JAMES MCCLANE
North Central Texas COG
Presenter



PAUL FLAVIEN
Broward MPO
Presenter



LISA HOUDE
Denver Regional COG
Presenter



MARA KAMINOWITZ
Baltimore Metroplan Council
Leadership & Moderator

Join the AMPO GIS & Data Visualization Working Group for our upcoming webinar:

Communicating Data During COVID-19

Wednesday, March 31
2:00 PM ET

3. How are #transportation agencies such as @iowadot, @MaineDOT1 & @NCTCOGtrans increasing inclusivity with virtual public involvement?

The Spring issue of #HNTB's #TransportationPoint magazine explores #PIMA — the tool making this possible. Learn more. <https://bit.ly/2PSnhaD> – HNTB (@HNTBCorp)



4. I'm moderating a CILT webinar on Apr 13 on The Exciting Future of Urban Planning and Mobility. Speakers from @ArupGroup @sidewalklabs @NCTCOGtrans @TransportforWM @seattledot

Hope you can join. Free to attend.

Short ad <https://youtube.com/watch?v=E7vkjpRUCoU>

Register <https://ciltna.com/events/technology-innovations-and-the-future-of-urban-mobility/> – Andrew Young (@ajcgyoung)



Safety

Email –

1. Darwin Yeary

Dear Sirs, I live in Weatherford Texas, 30 miles west of Ft Worth.

, The last several years, driving to Ft worth has become a freighting experience. Tractor trailer rigs and OVR tractor box trailer rigs, going 70 MPH in all lanes has become a death defying experience. I know some states require some big rigs to remain in one lane, with the exception of turning on an exit lane. Can new speed signs and requiring one lane for these Big Rigs improve the safety for passenger car Drivers in automobiles, as well as what other states have done?

For over 10 years now, loud muffler and no muffler noise, has made life miserable with "Disturbing the Peace" laws being disregarded by pickups with glass packs, and Cecil trucks louder than ever in Texas Cities and Towns. These unconcerned, once enforced laws certainly need new regulation requirements from nctcog. This use of no-noise control by younger motorist, has led to street racing, and annual multiple police complaint calls. Loss of life has resulted in vehicles competing in running and racing. These auto and truck mechanical requirements, left out of Texas laws by Auto manufactures is unacceptable.

On Hwy 51 N in Weatherford, the "City Traffic and Safety Board" has ignored the need for Traffic monitored speed control, as well as neglecting Red Traffic Lite protection for pedestrians as well as Auto crossing safety. Heavy residence areas are living in that north side area of Weatherford. The City is gambling with the lives of taxpayers, in order to save spending money to provide the protection needed on this Hwy 51N side of town. This certainly amounts to unequal discrimination against taxpaying Citizens, living in this area.

Thank you for addressing these long ignored Traffic safety changes needed, for these Texas residents and motorist.

Transit

Email –

1. Tiffani Hodges

As a 17 year DeSoto resident, I DO NOT want public transportation in my city and wish this issue would stop coming up. Residents of Desoto want better dining, shopping, and entertainment options. We do not want or need public transportation. Not now or ever.

2. Staci Blakemore

Good Day everyone

I would like to vote no for public transportation of any kind. I believe it would add to the traffic and take away moving lanes on the street. Beltline has traffic from I-20 Beltline all the way down in the evening on any given day.

Thank you have a wonderful day

Twitter –

1. PSA: @CityOfDallas -stop spending energy on social niceties - just clean up your messes.

Saw 2 piles of HUMAN FECES at the Victory Center Rail Station rotting behind the handicap ramp; w/ weeds everywhere, dim lighting and no security presence: it's reminiscent of a horror film. – rachel + leotta 🐾🐾 (@rachel_leotta)

I'm rarely one to complain about mass transit. It is what it is. And it's usually better than my expectations.

But I really felt like I'd stepped into a dark, scary place once I left the AAC Victory Center Plaza less than a parking garage away. That was wholly unexpected. – rachel + leotta 🐾🐾 (@rachel_leotta)

I've used mass transit, & that station, for 10+ years. I've never once felt threatened by traveling alone the way I did tonight.

Neglect is the worst kind of abuse.

Taxpayers provided the infrastructure - please don't let it rot. @CityOfDallas @TarrantTransit @NCTCOGtrans – rachel + leotta 🐾🐾 (@rachel_leotta)

I used to live there (Keller)... has it gotten bad? – Steve Wilson (@R9Dissemination)

Keller, even in its center is nowhere near the same as Dallas.

Keller still has plenty of space, single family housing, and lots of growth.

Dallas is clinging to high density dvlpmnt & ent. districts for stability while city bureaucracy slows growth and keeps mobility stagnant. – rachel + leotta 🌟🐼🌟 (@rachel_leotta)

Safety, presumably a top 5 local government priority, is the first to go when development dollars aren't flowing.

In order for a city to maintain a healthy budget and allocate dollars responsibly, minimize the special projects, listen to residents and prioritize from there. – rachel + leotta 🌟🐼🌟 (@rachel_leotta)

2. Going through old stuff on my phone and wish I could remember where this was from.

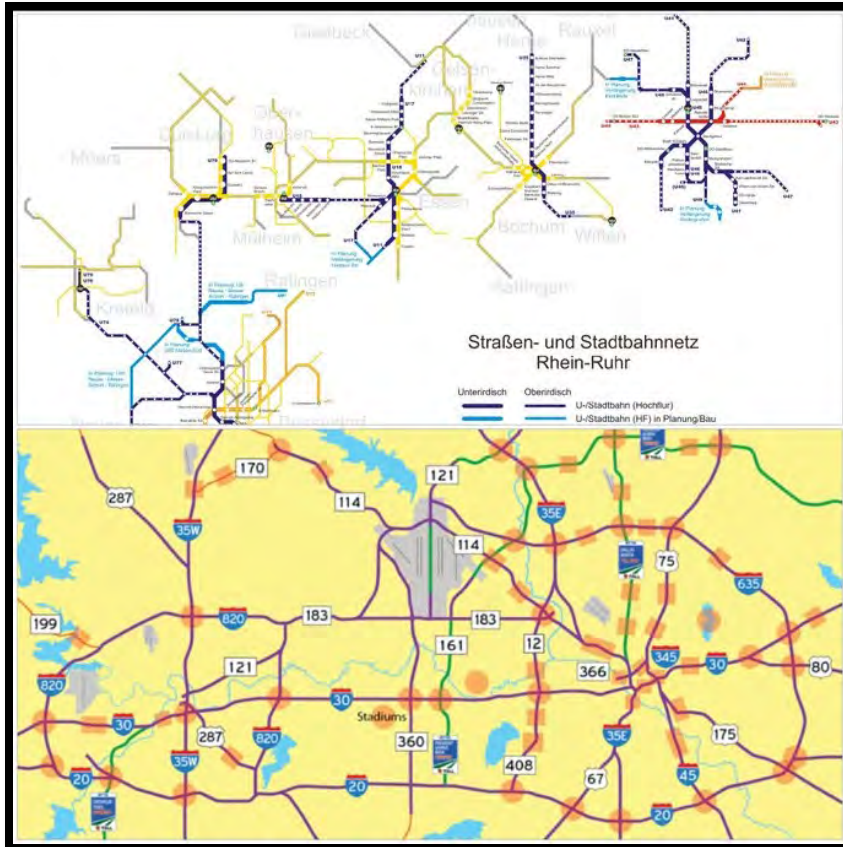
It's amazing how often "you have to do something" becomes "let's build a new road/lane." – Loren S. (@txbornviking)

Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, credits tolls for the \$14 billion in new road projects under construction in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

“If you're the fourth-largest region in the country and you're growing by 1 million people every 10 years, you have to do something,” Morris said.

Imagine, had @NCTCOGtrans invested/directed the same \$14B over the past decade in better public #transit along w/ improved land-use policies, I'm positive we'd have better mobility through DFW.

(pic is rail network for Rhine-Ruhr region of German. Similar population&size as DFW) – Loren S. (@txbornviking)



3. In near future there will be a connection to DART'S Silver Line which will go all the way to Plano. @TrinityMetro is working on extending TEXRail to Fort Worth's @nearsouthside. Exciting news! https://star-telegram.com/news/business/growth/article250621594.html?fbclid=IwAR3JLj8G--PveyHX8vW8MsLQs8L-I_2H6l9bNSu41Yt6uA0pfX2ei0PdIk0. @CityofFortWorth @DFWAirport @TarrantCountyTX @NCTCOGtrans – Sal Espino Michel (@SAL_FW)



4. People with the funds to travel by plane will never want to take 3 or 4x the time and hassle to get to the airport versus driving/uber. Total waste of money. I can drive to DFW in 20 minutes. Why would I drag my bags on a train and have it take 2 hours? – Matthew Marchant (@MatthewMarchant)



Roadway

Email –

1. William Mills

The orange lane marking lines on the pavement on SH 121 are a great idea. Thanks.

Facebook –

1. The White Settlement bridge in Fort Worth is now open and some are so excited, they've crossed the bridge and gone around the roundabout multiple times! Read more about it here: <https://www.kens5.com/.../287-82619cd2-ed20-4990-93e8....> – NCTCOG Transportation Department



Congratulations on this huge accomplishment! – Dallas Lite & Barricade, Inc.



March 29, 2021

RECEIVED

APR 02 2021

Michael Morris
NCTCOG
616 Six Flags Drive
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005

TRANSPORTATION

Dear Mr. Morris,

Denton County Transportation Authority's (DCTA) annual audit for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020 has been completed. DCTA's Audited Financials are available for your reference on our website located at:

[https://www.dcta.net/Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.](https://www.dcta.net/Comprehensive%20Annual%20Financial%20Report)

Kindly advise if you require a hard copy and I will be happy to send you the printed format.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding information provided in this document.

Sincerely,

Amber Karkauskas, CGFO
Controller
Phone: 972-316-6122
Email: akarkauskas@dcta.net



Dallas Area Rapid Transit
P.O. Box 660163
Dallas, TX 75266-0163
214-749-3278

RECEIVED

APR 05 2021

April 2, 2021

TRANSPORTATION

Dear D2 Subway Project Stakeholder:

On behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), we are pleased to inform you that on April 9, 2021, the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD) will be issued for the Dallas CBD Second Light Rail Alignment (D2 Subway) Project and will be available at www.DART.org/D2. D2 Subway is a second light rail transit (LRT) line through downtown Dallas that would consist of a 2.5-mile alignment extending from the existing Victory Station through the core of downtown Dallas, reconnecting to the Green Line along North Good Latimer Expressway in the Deep Ellum area. The FTA has issued this single FEIS/ROD document pursuant to 23 USC 139(n)(2).

The FTA, in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 771, has determined that the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and related federal environmental statutes, regulations, and executive orders have been satisfied for the project.

The FEIS/ROD is being made available to appropriate governmental agencies, legislative bodies and interested organizations. A limited number of hard copies are being distributed to agencies. Additional hard copies of the FEIS/ROD are available at DART headquarters (1401 Pacific Avenue, Dallas, TX 75202) and the Dallas Public Library, 1515 Young St, Dallas, TX 75201. Please note that library hours may be affected by COVID-19 restrictions.

If you have any questions about the availability of the document, please contact DART Community Engagement at 214-749-2721. We appreciate any input that you may have provided and look forward to your continued participation on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Leininger".

David Leininger
Interim President & Chief Executive Officer

- c: DART Board
J. Todd Plesko, DART, Interim Executive Vice President, Growth/Regional Development
Kay Shelton, DART, Interim Vice President, Capital Planning
David Ehrlicher, DART, Interim Vice President, Capital Design & Construction



Dallas Area Rapid Transit
P.O. Box 660163
Dallas, TX 75266-0163
214-749-3278

RECEIVED

APR 08 2021

TRANSPORTATION

April 2, 2021

Via FedEx

Mr. Michael Morris
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Re: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) – Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan

Dear Mr. Morris:

In accordance with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requests for transit agencies to share their Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan with their Metropolitan Planning Office, we have enclosed the latest DART TAM Plan. This plan was revised in 2020 to provide an update on the assets owned by DART, their condition, and the processes DART follows to maintain a State of Good Repair.

This plan is in full compliance with the Federal Transit Administration Regulations for Transit Asset Management - Regulations (CFR) Title 49, Parts 625 and 630.

If you need further information, please feel free to contact Mr. Darryl Spencer, Sr. Assistant Vice President, Engineering at 214-828-6721 or dspencer@dart.org.

Sincerely,

/s/ David Leininger

Reviewed and approved, but not signed due to
COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic

David Leininger
Interim President & Chief Executive Officer

Enc: DART TAM Plan

c: Carol Wise, Executive Vice President, Chief Operations Officer



April 5, 2021

Michael Morris
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
Centerpoint Two, 616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

Dear Michael,

The Texas Trees Foundation is pleased to announce that work on the *design through construction phase* of the Southwestern Medical District Harry Hines Streetscape Plan has formally begun. Further, design work on the Green Park at the intersection of Harry Hines Boulevard and Inwood Road is positioned to follow close behind. We cannot overstate the importance of these two milestone activities. As the project gains momentum, it is clear that it will create an environment for health and healing that will honor the front-line workers of the Medical District. The spirit of our work will carry with it our gratitude for their courage and relentless dedication to the well-being of our community during this unprecedented year. All of our partners can take great pride in the fact that we are helping create a better place for healing and wellness for all who enter the Medical District and places for our first responders to recover and renew in safe spaces that extend beyond the footprints of the buildings that make up the District.

During the time that we have been sheltering in place we have continued to advance the planning for the streetscape and park initiatives and we are thrilled with our progress. We have:

- ✓ Finalized the **vision for a 10-acre Green Park** at the intersection of Harry Hines Boulevard and Inwood Road, transforming a piece of utilitarian infrastructure into a place for gathering and renewal of mind, body and spirit through a connection with nature.
- ✓ Created the **Best Practices Advisory Committee** of 65 industry leaders focused on Arts/Humanities, Education/Research, Environment, Economic Development, Operations and Transportation/Mobility that will bring global expertise to critique and elevate the design of Harry Hines to become a “best practice” in streetscape design and performance.
- ✓ Contracted with **MIG, Inc.** for a robust Equitable Engagement effort that will ensure all voices are heard and the design effort is the result of a meaningful partnership with the community and with stakeholders.
- ✓ Engaged a multidisciplinary design team led by **Peter Walker Partners and Kimley-Horn Associates** to complete construction documents for Harry Hines streetscape improvements.
- ✓ Partnered with **Dr. Evelyn Montgomery, the Old Red Museum’s Director of Collections and Exhibits**, to research the history of the Medical District as a foundational document that will inform design and result in a book about the District.
- ✓ Retained **Priority Group Inc.** to assist with construction document review and coordinate with government partners regarding the technical aspects of the design.

- ✓ Established a **first-of-its-kind outdoor living laboratory** where longitudinal research can examine the restorative and health benefits of nature to improve the linked integrative health of the whole person.

We have begun the equitable engagement outreach efforts which will initially focus on the more than 37,000 employees of the integrated academic, research and medical facilities and the various organizations and businesses within the Medical District. In recent conversations with District stakeholders, they overwhelmingly voiced a strong desire for a calming, beautiful oasis that can heal the body, mind, and spirit.

One of our highest priorities is to complete a minimum of 30% of the design work for the **Green Park** so that it will qualify as a “shovel ready project.” Reaching the 30% design completion milestone is critical as it positions our project for a greater possibility of federal and state infrastructure funding.

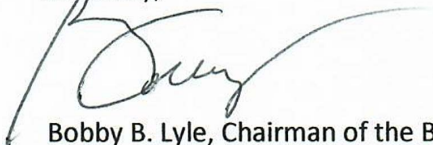
We are extremely grateful to all our partners who have collaborated to provide both private and public funds that have enabled this ambitious project to reach its current status in spite of the challenges of the past year. Our team is poised and ready to press forward to identify and seek out the most likely sources of funds necessary to ensure the completion of the goals to which we all aspire. We could not have achieved the results to date without your help and we look forward to working in partnership with you to complete our task.

We have included in this letter a high-level overview of the project, and we invite you to view the detailed vision plans for both the [Southwestern Medical District Streetscape Plan](#) and the [Green Park Vision Report](#) at texastrees.org/southwesternmedicaldistrict/. On this website you will also be introduced to the members of the Best Practices Advisory Committee. These professionals have agreed to share their perspectives and expertise to make this project a national example of evidence-based design and best management practices at the intersection of *design, health, and people*. These volunteers, like you, are investing their time and resources to make this vision an international model for a Medical District.

Your support and patience have been reassuring during this unprecedented time in history. Like you, we also know that this legacy project will be transformative for the Medical District and our City. That is part of the inspiration that keeps us pressing ahead. We will keep you abreast of all our activities and we look forward to sharing with you additional projects designs and news of our progress. If you have questions, please contact either of us. *We will be reaching out to bring stakeholders together to test out vision ideas in late May.*

Thank you for being our partner!

Sincerely,



Bobby B. Lyle, Chairman of the Board
Texas Trees Foundation



Janette K. Monear, President & CEO
Texas Trees Foundation



Southwestern Medical District Project Update

March 2021

Multi-Disciplinary Team

Design Team:

- **Landscape Architecture** | PWP Landscape Architecture
 - Subconsultants:
 - Atelier Ten (Lighting)
 - ETM Associates (Operations/Maintenance)
 - Sweeney Associates (Irrigation)
 - Buro Happold (Mobility)
 - Hyphae Design Lab (Environmental)
- **Equitable Engagement** | MIG Equity Studio
 - Subconsultant:
 - J. Williams Group (Local Support)
- **Engineering & Technical Services** | Kimley-Horn Consultants

Green Spine Collaboration

- **City of Dallas:** City of Dallas Bond Funds \$7.5 M awarded for construction
- **North Central Texas Council of Governments:** \$6 M awarded for construction
 - The project team is coordinating the Green Spine redesign efforts with the Harry Hines Corridor Study which runs through the SWMD extending from downtown to Loop 12.
- **Dallas County:** Major Capital Improvement Program \$7.5M awarded for construction

Timeline

Green Spine | Harry Hines Boulevard:

- Equitable Engagement Kick Off | **September 2020**
- Project Design Kick Off | **December 2020**
- Visioning | **January to July 2021**
- Design Development | **August to November 2021**
- 100% Construction Doc Finalized | **June 2022**
- Bidding & Construction Complete | **July 2025**

Green Park | Harry Hines Blvd and Inwood Road:

- Visioning Concept Finalized | **April 2020**
- Design Development for Environmental Clearance | **June to December 2021**
- Project Funding | **January to December 2022**
- 100% Construction Doc Finalized | **December 2023**
- Bidding & Construction Complete | **November 2025**

Timeline +/- Variances:

- By advancing shovel ready drawings for the park environmental clearances for both projects can be completed together as well as holistic design considerations. (+)
- Team selection, scope revisions to fit budget, and contract finalization. (-)
- Restricted access to survey information located in City of Dallas vaults due to COVID-19. (-)

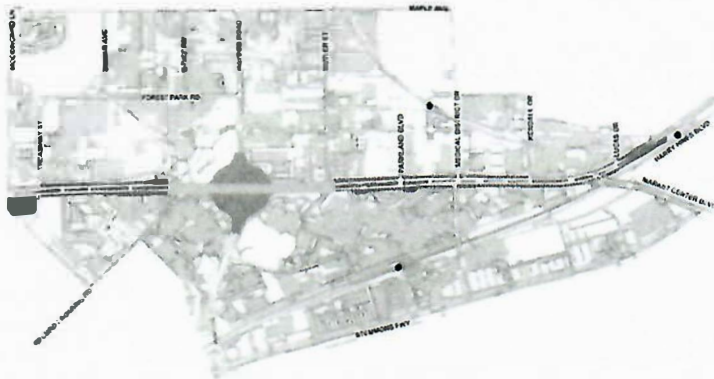
Project Importance

Studies show that immersion in nature has a profound impact on human health, such as boosting overall health, reducing stress, promoting active lifestyles, reducing urban heat island effect, improving mental health and cognitive function, improving safety, and creating a stronger community. Project goals are to leverage the restorative and health benefits of the environment to improve human wellness and create a sense of place in the District. Texas Trees Foundation (TTF) and partners believe that this project is more important than ever because it brings people closer to nature and the restorative benefits that it provides during and after this trying time. It also will help ensure that the cutting-edge work being conducted within the District's institutions, as demonstrated by the COVID-19 response, is amplified by creating a truly healthy environment.

Southwestern Medical District Project Update

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Project Scope



- Green Spine Streetscape Improvements from Mockingbird to Record Crossing and Butler Street to Lucas | 17.32 Acres (approx.)
- Green Park and Green Park Right-of-Ways from Record Crossing to Butler Street | 11.35 Acres (approx.) and 9.37 Acres (approx.)

Environmental

Foster a livable Medical District that carefully considers the health of the natural environment and develops design solutions that improves the environmental quality for the community.

The project team has been charged with reducing the Urban Heat Island that exists in the District. The current tree canopy in the District is 7% and our goal is to reach a minimum of 30% tree canopy which would impact the ambient air temperature and the shade of the pavement which is instrumental in decreasing the urban heat island effect. The Urban Heat Island Management Plan, completed in conjunction with Georgia Tech, models a 15° temperature drop by a 5% increase in canopy cover.

Hyphae Design Laboratory, a subconsultant of PWP, has been hired to bridge the gap between environmental/health issues that plaque the District and the built environment. Their expertise will allow environmental hotspots to have several design typologies modeled so that the interventions with the greatest benefits can be implemented. The Foundation is also working with the Nature Conservancy and Center for Advancing Transportation Emissions, Energy and Health (CARTEEH) and in process of setting up air quality monitors that will be overseen by the City of Dallas.

Equitable Engagement

Advance equitable engagement as the cornerstone of the Southwestern Medical District Urban Streetscape and Park projects.

Implementation of the project, starting with improvements to Harry Hines Boulevard, will be directly tied to stakeholder concerns, desires, input, and feedback. To do so, Texas Trees Foundation wants to depart from conventional forms of outreach to ensure the community members, particularly those in and around the district, are directing the project in a co-design process. The desired outcome is to create a sustainable constituency that can have an open and ongoing dialogue throughout the duration of the project and beyond. Currently, the project team has vetted the draft Equitable Engagement Plan with several stakeholders and interviewed UT Dallas Center for BrainHealth, Texas Women's University, Ronald McDonald House of Dallas and in the near future additional hospital and neighborhood representatives.

The Foundation is in process of establishing an Equitable Engagement Partner Coalition to support outreach efforts. This will be a multi-faceted group of local leaders and representative partners that can support and facilitate the engagement efforts, including the groups engaged in the stakeholder interviews. The Coalition will advise the team on best practices for local constituencies to refine the engagement process and will help make connections with other local leaders and organizations. During the process, TTF will ask for assistance from the Coalition in disseminating information about future engagement efforts and the project's progress. Finally, the Coalition will gather additional ideas and feedback for the project, likely through hosting or co-hosting meetings, events, or activities.

Engagement and planning efforts are also being coordinated with the NCTCOG Harry Hines Corridor Study and NCTCOG Bachman Lake & Love Field Area plan.

Southwestern Medical District Project Update

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Living Health Laboratory | Evidenced-Based Design

Decisions about the built environment are made on credible research and modeling to achieve the best possible outcomes and serve as a collaborative, longitudinal research platform where natural prescriptions can be quantified against urban health challenges.

Woven into the fabric of design will be performance objectives and metrics that are set at the beginning of the project and accomplished through evidence-based design. We are implementing a design process that will model, optimize, and validate solutions to achieve desired health impacts. Additionally, we are strategizing to create a health research framework that will address a healthier and greener environment by addressing the top Dallas County health concerns of asthma, allergies, skin cancer, heat stroke, mental health, and high blood pressure.

Health research will be led by a new Texas Trees staff position, Health Research and Education Coordinator, that will synchronize studies from various universities and institutions that will measure a variety of health indicators before, during and after the project is complete. In addition, this position will host the Research Advisory Council that will give input on best practices, research collaborations, and funding sources. To date the Foundation has coordinated these efforts with the University of Washington, the University of Virginia, the University of Texas A&M, AgriLife Extension, and Texas Transportation Institute / CARTEEH.

Evidence-based practice is also set in motion by the formation of the Best Practice Advisory Panel that is igniting strategic dialogue and incorporating new innovative ideas into the project. The Foundation has assembled the Best Practice Advisory Panel from national experts in the disciplines of public policy, urban & campus design, environmental impacts, economic development, mobility, placemaking, smart cities, innovation, public safety, long term maintenance, health & research, and art, history, & culture. This panel augments and pushes the project team to think beyond boundaries of standard design and operating procedures. The Advisory Panel is comprised of 65 national advisors from 50 organizations. On March 5th, the Foundation will host this group along with the design consultants to synergize conversations that will spark creative strategies that challenge the urban public framework and become a catalyst for change.

Management Structures and Partnerships

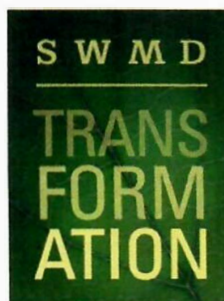
Support future sustainable governance, development, and operations of signature components of the SWMD projects are of chief importance.

The Foundation along with consultant HR&A Advisors are developing a model to create a sustainable plan where all parties recognize the economic value the project and serve as good stewards of the investment. The result of this effort will be partners and stakeholders that are true project champions and creates a legacy that graces our city, continues to attract top doctors and staff, and solidifies the District status as a national leader among medical centers.

Marketing and Communication

Raise awareness about the project to build a constituency for its implementation.

The Foundation has created a communication framework that strategically outlines a timetable and outreach plan to inform the project constituency partners and stakeholders of key project milestone advancements. The marketing plan incorporates all engagement efforts and Doug Rucker & Co. has developed a project logo, branding guidelines, and print & digital advertisements.



Federal Stimulus Money Could Improve Dozens of North Texas Roads

By Ken Kalthoff

North Texas transportation planners and contractors are gearing up for a big windfall from the infrastructure stimulus spending President Biden unveiled Wednesday.

Members of Congress are debating how large the spending should be, but most agree an infrastructure improvement plan of some size is necessary.

North Texas would be eligible for a large amount.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments maintains a long list of potential transportation projects.

"It's exciting these conversations, for not just the size of the programs, but is there an opportunity to tear down traditional silos and create a new greater vision," NCTCOG Transportation Director Michael Morris said.

For instance, Morris said improved internet access may be considered a green transportation option that saves people from driving.

"We possibly may be talking about equal access to the internet, maybe as a transportation mode," Morris said.

President Biden also asked for spending on technology breakthroughs on climate issues, with a substantial portion of the money devoted to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, like Paul Quinn College in Southern Dallas.

"I'm really excited about that," said Dallas building contractor Greg Cody. He attended a Historically Black University in North Carolina.

Today he is the owner of GCC Enterprises which teamed up with a Hispanic-owned firm Azteca on a renovation project, preparing for bigger things to come.

"It just goes to show if we pool our resources together, we can come up with something that increases our capacity," Cody said.

The Regional Black Contractors Association of Dallas is working to promote inclusion for minority-owned businesses in this big economic stimulus plan.

"This is an opportunity to create jobs and we want to look for ways to say yes as opposed to shut people out," RBCA President Kim Shaw said.

Among the big projects that could be in line for federal money is the complete reconstruction of the I-30 Canyon in Dallas. Deck parks are proposed to bridge the downtown segment of I-30 to the Cedars neighborhood that got cut off in the original freeway construction.

A bigger vision also removes the elevated roadway that divides downtown from Deep Ellum.

Adding technology for autonomous vehicles of the future and reconnecting neighborhoods could boost favor with the Biden Administration.

“Interstate 30 is a perfect example that I believe checks all the boxes,” Morris said.

Other examples of big transportation projects from the NCTCOG that could get a boost include:

*High Speed Rail: Dallas to Houston

*High Speed Rail: Dallas to Fort Worth

*Autonomous Transit (Tarrant, Midtown)

*Technology (Freeway Induction Loops)

*State Highway 183 (Section 2E+)

*Y Connector (IH820/IH20)

You can view the entire agenda here

- <https://www.nctcoq.org/nctcq/media/Transportation/Committees/STTC/2021/agenda-packet-mar.pdf?ext=.pdf>.

On the first page, click the link about 3/4 the way down the page that says "Electronic Item 3.1"

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/traffic/transportation-planners-and-contractors-watch-federal-stimulus-money/2594350/>

More than 1,200 bridges in Fort Worth area need to be replaced, road group says

By Mary Dimitrov, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

More than 7,000 bridges in the Fort Worth area need to be repaired, including 1,250 that should be replaced, according to a recent report from the American Road & Transportation Builders Association.

The proposed repairs total almost \$5 billion.

“The cost to repair data is submitted by states and collected by the Federal Highway Administration,” said John Schneidawind, the association vice president of public affairs. “We use that to estimate the cost to repair each structure where the inspection report indicates work needs to be done.”

The association considers bridges to be structurally deficient if one or more of their key structures is rated in poor or worse condition by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Bridge Inventory database.

Despite bridges being deemed structurally deficient, drivers shouldn’t worry about using them, though they might not be safe to use in the future.

“Structurally deficient bridges are not unsafe but do need to be fixed and are considered to be in poor condition,” Schneidawind said. “If there are safety concerns about a bridge, the state or local government will take steps to reduce traffic or weight on the structure.”

President Joe Biden’s \$2 trillion infrastructure plan, released Wednesday, could address some of Texas’ infrastructure issues, including bridges.

“It will fix the 10 most economically significant bridges in the country in need of reconstruction,” the plan read, but didn’t detail which bridges. “It also will repair the worst 10,000 smaller bridges, providing critical linkages to communities.”

Republicans and Democrats were divided about the plan.

“The congresswoman’s goal is to work on bipartisan solutions that would make a real difference for Texans but unfortunately the administration put forth a trillion-dollar partisan proposal that does little to accomplish this and instead raises taxes and leaves Texans subsidizing projects from San Francisco to New York,” said Andrea Coker, a spokesperson for Rep. Beth Van Duyne, R-Texas.

But Rep. Marc Veasey, D-Texas, said the plan “will make the lives of these folks easier by improving the forms of transportation that they travel on by making historic investments in our nation’s infrastructure, all while creating good-paying jobs for Americans that have been hurt by the pandemic.”

Despite the differing political opinions, Biden’s plan “will accelerate a long overdue conversation about how to modernize our roads, bridges, public transit and other infrastructure systems,” ARTBA President and CEO Dave Bauer said.

Shifting into high gear

Demolition nears end; construction beginning soon on \$1 billion project

By Steve Brown, Dallas Morning News

The \$1 billion redevelopment plan for Plano's Collin Creek Mall is getting ready to shift into high gear.

Razing of most of the 37-year-old regional shopping center will be completed in the next few months as developers start rebuilding the massive mixed-use project that will take Collin Creek's place. The huge shopping center on U.S. Highway 75 closed its doors two years ago.

"We are starting demolishing the J.C. Penney and Dillard's stores in about two weeks," said developer Mehrdad Moayed.

His Centurion American Development Group bought most of the 1.1 million square-foot shopping mall in 2018. In November of last year, he bought the final big piece — J.C. Penney's department store, which sold out of the retailer's bankruptcy.

"Penney and Dillard's are the last two buildings we have to demolish," he said. "It will take us about 90 days.

"We are now recycling all the parking lots — grinding it up and putting it into piles."

Starting this summer, construction will begin on the new infrastructure to support all the buildings planned at Collin Creek.

"Hopefully by June we should start our parking garage," Moayed said. "We have 4,800 parking spaces underground."

Moayed said his development team is already in talks with retailers and restaurants that will occupy new buildings at Collin Creek. "I have got 30 different retailers that are interested in going back in," he said. "We are actually encouraged about the activity we are getting with retail coming back.

"We are getting the stores that we want," Moayed said. "There are 10 restaurants going in."

Residential developers are also lining up to build apartments and townhomes on the Collin Creek site, which is on the west side of U.S. 75 at 15th Street.

"I have one builder — one of the largest multifamily builders in the U.S. — that wants to partner with us," Moayed said. "They've drawn up plans on two 400-unit apartment buildings.

"That's 800 units they are starting immediately."

And builders are drawing up plans for townhouse communities planned on the west side of the mall site. "We've going under contract on all 500 units of our townhome building sites with four builders," Moayed said. "They are going to be nice-looking townhomes with \$500,000 as an average price."

A large public park area will be a centerpiece of the development.

But Centurion American has ditched plans for a lagoon water feature. "It just didn't work for us," Moayed said.

The entire Collin Creek project is a public-private venture between Centurion American and the city of Plano, which is spending millions of dollars on infrastructure upgrades for the property, which is just west of downtown Plano.

“All the new utilities and streets start in July,” Moayedi said. “It’s going to take a while to build. It’s not going to happen overnight.”

But by the end of 2022, the first new dining and shopping venues should be ready to open, he said.

“We are 18 months away from serving food and having a bunch of construction nearing completion.”

Biden's new infrastructure plan could be North Texas' 'time to shine'

Amtrak has mapped out multiple possible new train routes in Texas and talk about the Texas Central bullet train is back.

By Elizabeth Thompson, Dallas Morning News

President Joe Biden's infrastructure plan promises mass investments to the country's transportation systems, and it could be the Dallas-Fort Worth region's "time to shine," with additional proposed Amtrak routes and other possible projects, like the Texas Central bullet train.

Biden unveiled the \$2 trillion plan Wednesday as a "once-in-a-generation investment" in the U.S.'s infrastructure, including \$80 billion for railways. Transportation administrators, both public and private, say the possibilities to increase rail capability for the Lone Star State are endless.

The plan "is the beginning of the process," said Karine Jean Pierre, principal deputy White House press secretary on a call for regional reporters Thursday. It has yet to be approved by Congress, leaving a lot of room for specific projects and provisions to be mapped out.

Amtrak CEO Bill Flynn lauded the legislation [in a statement](#), calling it "what this nation has been waiting for."

"With this federal investment, Amtrak will create jobs and improve equity across cities, regions, and the entire country – and we are ready to deliver," Flynn said. "America needs a rail network that offers frequent, reliable, sustainable and equitable train service. Now is our time, let's make rail the solution."

Amtrak released a map of prospective new services Wednesday, which would take place over the next 15 years, including routes connecting Dallas to Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Houston, with improved services to Oklahoma City.

Texas railroad riders currently have few options and limited times to choose from on Amtrak. The additional routes would make more of a "triangle" for transportation across some of Texas' major cities. With more routes available, train travel will be more relevant and also more visible, said Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari.

"Our desire is to be much greater utility to Texas than we've been in the past," Magliari said.

The federal government's interest in investing in rail could also put Texas' high-speed rail project, Texas Central, which would build a bullet train connecting North Texas to Houston in a 90-minute train ride, on the road to success. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has also eyed the Lone Star State for advancements in rail.

"Think about Texas, think about what it would mean in Texas to have excellent high-speed rail," Buttigieg said on a Wall Street Journal podcast. "...When it comes to rail, why should Texas be inferior to China?"

Texas Central CEO Carlos Aquilar told the [Fort Worth Star-Telegram](#) it could be the first company to build a bullet train in the U.S.

Director of Transportation Michael Morris at the North Central Texas Council of Governments said the infrastructure bill is "a perfect time for the Dallas-Fort Worth region to shine." He invited Buttigieg to Texas to review the projects the council of governments has been working on.

The council of governments is working on several projects that could be included in the plan, including high-speed rail, increased internet access, freeways for autonomous cars, autonomous people movers and hydrogen fuel-cell cars.

“With either a new transportation bill or with a stimulus bill, we’re going to be able to move a whole bunch of these really, really big projects,” Morris said, “but we didn’t wake up yesterday doing this. We’re always working on getting our big projects ready.”

The infrastructure bill is sure to get opposition in Congress, where many Republicans, including Texans, have argued against the legislation’s large price tag, which would raise corporate taxes 28%.

Rep. Kevin Brady, R-The Woodlands, called the package the “biggest economic blunder of our lifetime.”

“Smart infrastructure investment can boost the economy over time, GOP-Democrats agree,” Brady said in a tweet. “Imposing \$2 tril taxes on U.S. job creators during recovery is a net loser for America. Less U.S. growth & investment, jobs moving overseas.”

President Norman Anderson of CG/LA Infrastructure, an infrastructure investment firm, said a partnership between the private and public sectors could be key to addressing key projects without raising taxes.

While Texas Central is a private project, Morris argued that the federal government could have a role to play in seeing it through.

“One of the conversations we will be having is if high-speed rail is going to be built in the United States, the government should environmentally clear and hold the right of way,” Morris said. “...it creates a lot more consumer protections.”

Morris and Anderson argued for a high-speed train model like that used in Europe, where multiple train companies use the same train station — much like an airport.

“Texas is the state that’s creative around infrastructure,” Anderson said. “You do need rail between Houston and Dallas, it makes sense it’s an optimal distance, it’s going to remove a tremendous amount of carbon from the atmosphere, so it should be a Biden administration model demonstration project.”

Fort Worth residents want better public transit. What about the mayoral candidates?

By Gordon Dickson and Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

It's pretty clear that Fort Worth residents want more tax dollars spent on trains, buses and better overall mobility in the city.

But what do the candidates for city offices support?

Numerous public opinion surveys in recent years have shown broad support for transit. In the most recent example, the [Real Estate Council of Greater Fort Worth](#) commissioned a survey of voters in January that determined 82% of respondents favor rail as a means of travel in the city and the region.

The survey of Fort Worth voters also showed that 70% of residents support using existing local sales tax revenue to fund a comprehensive transportation and mobility project. Of those, 56% supported a half-cent sales tax, and 46% supported a 50-cent fee on annual vehicle registrations, to improve bus and rail.

In response to a questionnaire, candidates for Fort Worth mayor largely said they supported the transit system but shied away from committing more money to Trinity Metro.

Only Councilwoman Ann Zadeh, who is running for mayor, said definitively she would work to boost the service's funding, arguing that a better transit system would connect people to jobs and attract companies. Zadeh touted her background as a city planner, saying she had a deep understanding of the city's transit needs.

"It is clear that we must think about transportation in a more comprehensive way than has been the case in the past," Zadeh said.

Candidate Steve Penate said he would look for budget items with "unnecessary funds allocated to them" and reallocate those dollars to transportation and infrastructure.

Most candidates said they supported alternatives to a traditional bus system, like the Zipzones, a ride share service through Trinity Metro that mimics Lyft or Uber but at a cheaper price.

Councilman Brian Byrd, who is running for mayor, applauded Trinity Metro improvements in the Las Vegas Trail area of west Fort Worth, where he said demand had increased. He said he also supported a bus rapid transit line from downtown to the Handley area of east Fort Worth as long as there is input from the East Fort Worth Business Association and residents. The line would run along East Lancaster Avenue with buses in dedicated lanes.

Byrd also said Trinity Metro should look for more innovative solutions, like ride share and private investment.

Improving the city's transit system will require better communication and stronger partnerships, said mayoral candidate Mattie Parker. She suggested expanding alternatives to a traditional bus route, like the Zipzone, and partnering with DART and DCTA.

“Rather than coming from a place of frustration about our current funding structure, I am choosing to be optimistic about our ability to pivot and be ready for the quickly evolving transportation options that are emerging because of technology,” she said.

Mayoral candidate Deborah Peoples said infrastructure has focused too much on adding lanes to arterials and other roads, which she believes increases to congestion and pollution.

“I will focus on a balanced approach to infrastructure investments including light rail to make it easier and more efficient to travel around all parts of our city,” she said.

Trinity Metro, which is the lead public transit agency for Tarrant County, is [redesigning its bus network](#).

[Trinity Metro last year asked for \\$10 million](#) from the city’s 2021 budget short-term improvements and additional funding for longer-term fixes. But City Manager David Cooke’s budget provided only \$1.5 million, of which about \$650,000 was set aside for sidewalks and other improvements at bus stops.

The agency operates on a half-cent sales tax in Fort Worth and other member cities — far less than neighboring Dallas Area Rapid Transit, which collects a full 1-cent sales tax. Trinity Metro also has entered into partnerships with North Richland Hills and Grapevine, but those agreements are mostly to operate the TEXRail commuter train line connecting those cities.

Without more funding, Trinity Metro’s core bus system unfortunately will remain only “bare bones,” said Jeff Davis, Trinity Metro board chairman.

“We know where the demand is, but we don’t have the funds to meet the needs,” he said.

North Texas has 3 of the worst bottlenecks for trucks in the country

By David Ajamy, Dallas Business Journal

Dallas' interchange between Interstates 45 and 30 is one of the worst trucking bottlenecks in the country, according to a study [by the American Transportation Research Institute](#).

While traffic can typically flow between the two highways at just over 43 mph, that speed drops during afternoon rush hour, falling to below 34 mph between 4-6 p.m.

The interchange is one of 12 in the state to make the research institute's Top 100 list, making Texas the worst state in the nation for bottlenecks.

The [annual survey](#) ranks truck bottlenecks by measuring truck speeds and truck volumes based on GPS data from more than 1 million freight trucks.

California and Washington state (with eight each) trail Texas with Georgia, Connecticut and Pennsylvania tied in third for most bottlenecks in a state, according to the Arlington, Va.-based ATRI, a nonprofit transportation research organization that focuses on the trucking industry.

The worst bottleneck in the country is in Fort Lee, New Jersey, at the interchange between I-95 and State Route 4, followed by the I-71 and I-75 interchange in Cincinnati. Nos. 3 and 4 on the list are both in Georgia: Interstate 285 at I-85 North, and I-20 at I-285 West. In fifth is the I-45 and I-69/US 59 interchange in Houston, the ATRI survey found.

The average peak-hour truck speed at a bottleneck was 43 mph, up 33.9 percent year over year, the survey found. Twenty-five percent of the top 100 bottlenecks had average truck speeds of less than 45 mph.

See an executive summary of the truck bottleneck survey [here](#).

Here is the complete list of Texas bottlenecks and their rankings:

- **No. 5** - Houston, TX: I-45 at I-69/US 59
- **No. 12** - Dallas, TX: I-45 at I-30
- **No. 15** - Austin, TX: I-35
- **No. 17** - Houston, TX: I-45 at I-610 (North)
- **No. 22** - Houston, TX: I-10 at I-45
- **No. 38** - Houston, TX: I-10 at I-610 (West)
- **No. 43** - Dallas, TX: US 75 at I-635
- **No. 45** - Houston, TX: I-610 at I-69/US 59 (West)
- **No. 50** - Houston, TX: I-610 at US 290
- **No. 58** - Houston, TX: I-10 at I-610 (East)
- **No. 69** - Fort Worth, TX: I-35W at I-30

- **No. 80** - Houston, TX: I-45 at I-610 (South)

UTA team working to predict lifespan of Texas roads

By Herb Booth, UTA News

A University of Texas at Arlington civil engineering professor is leading a \$2.8 million Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) project that will scan pavements on Texas roads to determine their condition and remaining service life.

Ali Abolmaali, chair of the [Civil Engineering Department](#) and the Tseng Huang Endowed Professor, said he and his team will evaluate more than 3,500 lane miles through TxDOT. “We’ll go out and take core samples of the old and new roads where structural challenges are pinpointed,” he said. “Of course, we’ll patch the holes where we take the core samples as the project work is done.”

Abolmaali said the team will use tools such as a scanning electron microscope, a Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy and an energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy to determine the material properties of each core sample through its chemical composition.

Using finite element modeling and artificial intelligence, the team will predict the service life of the pavements. The results of this project ultimately will assist with optimized resource allocation for infrastructure repair and rehabilitation.

“The artificial intelligence-based system will learn as we go from the massive amounts of data the team collects,” Abolmaali said. “It’s an artificial intelligence-based and machine-learning approach. Ultimately, we’re trying to predict how much life is left in a road.”

The co-principal investigators on the project are Vistasp Karbhari, civil engineering professor, and Maria Konsta-Gdoutos, civil engineering professor and associate director for the [Center for Advanced Construction Materials](#).

TxDOT project manager Danny Henderson noted the valuable role of research and partnerships with UTA in meeting the region’s transportation needs, now and into the future.

“We’re glad to be collaborating with UT Arlington on innovative opportunities to address important issues in transportation,” Henderson said.

Peter Crouch, dean of the College of Engineering, said Abolmaali’s work on infrastructure is vital to a thriving society.

“The roadmap provided through this team’s research can help ensure the preservation of important transportation assets,” Crouch said. “This work is especially crucial given our state’s explosive growth and limited resources to deliver infrastructure.”

Other research professors and postdoctoral fellows on the project are Panagiotis Danoglidis, Arash Emami and Maziar Mahdavi.

‘Fired up.’ A Panther Island bridge in downtown Fort Worth is finally open

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

With no fanfare, the White Settlement Road bridge near downtown opened to traffic Friday, more than six years after Fort Worth dignitaries gathered for an explosive ceremony to kick start [construction of Panther Island](#).

Construction crews dragged barricades off the roadway just before 4 p.m., but little was said about the bridge’s opening. The seemingly perpetually delayed bridge had become a bane for businesses in the area that were cut off from downtown.

“The entire area is excited for that bridge to be opened up,” said Steve Metcalf, president of the White Settlement Road Development Task Force. “We’re fired up.”

Of the three bridges under construction for the \$1.17 billion Panther Island project, White Settlement is the only one without an obvious detour, forcing downtown motorists who want to reach Metcalf’s Dealer Alternative, [2701 White Settlement Rd.](#), or nearby Angelo’s BBQ to take a long route down West Seventh Street.

The lack of thru traffic put a damper on business along White Settlement Road. Metclaf said on average over the last few years [Dealer Alternative’s business](#) had been down about 15%. With COVID-19 restrictions, business was down nearly 30% last year, though he said he wanted to remain positive about the bridge opening.

“I don’t want to worry about spilled milk,” he said.

[At Angelo’s BBQ, 2533 White Settlement Rd.](#), sales have been down 20% to 25% since the road closed, owner Jason George said. He’s hoping things will pick up soon, especially if drivers who want to avoid congested West Seventh start using White Settlement. That congestion may pick up as the city moves forward with improvements to West Seventh that will likely cause lane closures.

“Compared to how our lunches have been over the past few years, today was very, very good,” George said.

Chopped beef sandwiches are just \$3 this week to celebrate the opening, which he said was a surprise. Some workers had told him the bridge could open last Thursday, but at one point a large electric sign advertised April 7.

The spans are needed to connect Panther Island to the rest of Fort Worth and must be finished before the Army Corps of Engineers can begin digging a 1.5-mile bypass channel between the two forks of the Trinity River. The channel portion of the project has lacked federal funding for several years.

When Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, U.S. Rep. Kay Granger and others gathered to celebrate the official start of the project in November 2015 with a ceremonial explosion, the bridges were expected to open between 2017 and 2018, according to Star-Telegram archives. Design issues held up construction and their opening was pushed to 2019. Then [project officials said the White Settlement bridge](#) would be finished by late summer 2020, but the date was pushed back again to the end of last year. COVID-19 and construction delays pushed the date into 2021

with [speculation during Trinity River Vision Authority board meetings that White Settlement would open](#) in February or March. TxDOT put the opening date in “early 2021.”

Bridges for North Main and Henderson should open in the coming months. The bridges cost about \$90 million, but damages may be assessed related to delays of White Settlement, a TxDOT spokesperson said.

Some lanes on the bridge may close to traffic as crews from contractor Sterling Texas wrap up work, according to a media advisory TxDOT posted Friday afternoon. Pedestrians may cross on the south side of the bridge, but the north sidewalk is still closed.

A spokesperson for the Trinity River Vision Authority said the city and TxDOT did not formally announce the opening. Metcalf said he received calls from the city a few days before it opened.

About 30 minutes after the barricades were removed, Metcalf said he started to see cars trickling over the bridge.

“I imagine some of those people driving over the bridge don’t know it’s been closed for nearly seven years,” Metcalf said.

Concerned about water quality, Fort Worth companies pour money into the Trinity Basin

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The [November 2018 presentation said](#) it all: “It Takes Great Water to Make Great Beer. To Make Great Water Takes Great Responsibility.”

That’s how Molson Coors summed up its motivations for investing close to \$9 million into improving water supply in the Trinity River basin. For nearly a decade, Fort Worth’s MillerCoors brewery — [the largest and oldest in the city](#) — has worked with the Tarrant Regional Water District to fund erosion control projects in the Richland-Chambers reservoir.

More companies than ever are interested in pursuing similar initiatives, said Darrel Andrews, the water district’s assistant environmental director. But many of those corporations have faced a consistent issue in Texas: Government agencies and nonprofit groups are not always ready with project proposals that fit the company’s goals, Andrews said.

“There had to be a way to get a bigger group together that we can plug folks into because you hate to have people that want to invest in environmental stewardship and then not have a project for them,” Andrews said.

A diverse group of conservation organizations, government agencies and multinational corporations [have formed the Texas Water Action Collaborative](#), or TxWAC, to address the challenge head on. While there are plans to add more companies, the list of founding members includes Molson Coors, Frito-Lay North America, PepsiCo North America, Coca-Cola North America and Keurig Dr. Pepper.

The new partnership modeled after [a similar initiative in California](#), seeks to invest millions into projects that will improve water quality and quantity in the Upper Trinity River basin, which is centered in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Besides private companies, the Trinity River Authority, the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service and the water district are all on board.

Texas is unique in that more than 95% of land is privately owned, requiring solutions that engage landowners directly, said Joni Carswell, the CEO of Texan By Nature, the environmental nonprofit founded by Laura Bush. Her organization is taking the lead on coordinating the group’s communications and matching corporate money with conservation proposals.

“You really have to have projects that bring together civic leaders, industry leaders, private landowners and conservation leaders to do widespread initiatives and make a real difference for water,” Carswell said. “The hardest part of that is figuring out the right partners, the timeline of the project, and then how you’re going to measure the return.”

How did the collaboration come together? Molson Coors has [put millions toward incentive payments](#) to landowners who take steps to reduce erosion and sedimentation. The more soil particles and pollutants that enter a lake, the less capacity it has for water, said Aaron Hoff, the water district’s watershed programs manager. With more sediment in the water, city water departments also have to pay more to treat it, leading to higher costs for residents, Hoff said.

With the water's district's help, Coors' donations are sent to government subdivisions [known as soil and water conservation districts](#), which are run by locally elected landowners.

"Through collective partnership, we have restored an estimated eight billion gallons of water to the watershed, and we look forward to scaling our impact by working with more organizations through this collaborative," Kim Marotta, senior director of global sustainability for Molson Coors, said in a statement.

Last year, Molson Coors approached Hoff and other officials with ideas to bring more corporate funding into the mix. Their proposals went beyond the water district's jurisdiction in Tarrant County and the Trinity River basin, Hoff said.

"It really became a case where we didn't want to be making decisions for companies, landowners, cities and nonprofits who operate these other regions of the Trinity that are outside of our locus," Hoff said. "This is a way to expand this partnership, not just within one watershed but the entire DFW metropolitan area and hopefully even further south into the rest of the Trinity basin."

Carswell echoed the desire to use the new collaborative as a template that could be followed in the Brazos River basin and other river systems in Texas. She hopes to resolve some of the "perceived mismatches" between corporate and environmental goals in the state.

"In Texas, we're all proud of our state and we want to do well by it, but we go about it in different ways," Carswell said. "Now, with the focus on environmental goals and climate impact, there really is opportunity to drive dialogue and close those gaps in terminology. You're all saying the same thing, just using different words. We can do this together."

Texan By Nature is finishing its survey of corporations and conservation groups about their priorities when it comes to water issues in the Trinity, Carswell said. For the water district, that means addressing long-term trends showing a slight uptick in soil nutrients and chlorophyll a in the Trinity River.

A higher percentage of chlorophyll a indicates higher algae growth, which eats up oxygen in the water and can lead to fish kills, Hoff and Andrews said.

"Part of why we started the watershed program is because we started seeing these long term trends," Andrews said. "The reason TRWD gets involved is the same reason why Molson Coors and Coca-Cola and the other partners get involved: a heightened sense of environmental awareness. The world has just become more sensitive to environmental issues."

By the end of summer, the collaborative hopes to start matching conservation groups with interested companies, Carswell said. As more water systems throughout Texas begin to work together on directing funding toward the right projects, Texan by Nature can start to look at other environmental needs as well, she said.

"This is a real opportunity to build on a collaborative, more educational model that started in California and really utilize the personalities and the frameworks that we have here in Texas to make a tremendous difference," Carswell said. "More than ever, it's necessary as the population is growing, more industry is moving here all the time. It really is an opportunity to set up this model."

State rejects hearing requests regarding Midlothian cement plant's pollution plan

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

More than a year of protests and organizing from Midlothian activists came down to a few minutes of discussion last week among top leaders at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The result was not what Laura Hunt or Midlothian Breathe, her group fighting cement plant pollution in Ellis County, had hoped for.

State commissioners [voted unanimously to reject hearing requests](#) from 35 residents who argued that cement manufacturer Holcim US Inc.'s application to increase carbon monoxide emissions at its Midlothian plant would negatively affect their health and the environment.

Hunt, a pediatrician who [co-founded Midlothian Breathe in September 2019](#) after learning of Holcim's application, was among those who filed for a contested case hearing. Residents who believe they will be personally affected by an industrial permit are eligible to apply for hearings, which are similar to civil trials in state district court.

"It's frustrating but not that surprising, and really overall, I just feel a kind of relief," said Hunt, whose daughter experienced severe respiratory issues after the family moved to Midlothian in 2015. "It's hard to be fighting something long term when you have limited ability to influence the outcome. Now with our offensive — air monitoring projects, more community education, legislative action — we honestly seem to have more power to influence those outcomes."

After Midlothian Breathe successfully [pushed for a public meeting in August](#), the commission gave [initial approval to Holcim's bid](#) to burn more petroleum coke, a solid carbon material that resembles coal and can lead to particulate matter pollution, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. During the March 31 meeting, commissioners voted to make that decision final.

The permit gives Holcim permission to increase its maximum output of carbon monoxide from about 4,300 tons to 7,100 tons per year, the Star-Telegram reported last year. A [recent analysis of state pollution data](#) published by Paul Quinn College found that Holcim was the No. 1 industrial polluter in North Texas in 2019. Four of the top five industrial polluters in the region call Midlothian home, according to the report.

Jocelyn Gerst, a spokeswoman for Holcim, said the company has been in the Midlothian community for almost four decades and is committed to protecting the health of its 130-plus employees and the public.

"Our team has worked diligently to develop an application that meets federal and Texas air quality standards as we support the construction of critical infrastructure for communities, as well as home and commercial construction that promotes local and regional economic growth," Gerst wrote in an email.

While the commissioners were unanimous in their vote to dismiss the hearing requests, there was disagreement within the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality about whether to allow the hearings to move forward.

In February, Garrett Arthur, a senior attorney with [the commission's independent Office of the Public Interest Counsel \(OPIC\)](#), recommended that commissioners grant hearing requests from Hunt and 10 other applicants, including Midlothian Breathe.

The reason? All of those [residents can be considered "affected persons"](#) due to their proximity to Holcim as well as their personal concerns about health effects and air quality, according to Arthur. Because Holcim is classified as a "significant source of air emissions" by federal standards, even residents who live farther from the facility could be considered affected persons, Arthur wrote.

However, Toby Baker, the executive director of the agency, recommended the rejection of all contested case hearings because residents lived farther than a mile from Holcim and can't prove they are at higher risk of suffering from emissions than other members of the general public.

Fewer than 10 of the people who requested a hearing cited a personal concern, and of those who did, the closest lives 1.21 miles from Holcim's plant, commissioner Jon Niermann said during the March 31 meeting.

"The question in my mind is really whether at that distance a person is affected in a manner different from the general public," Niermann said. "There would be considerable dispersion at more than a mile from the fence line. At the distance of the nearest requester, it seems to me that a person is not affected in a manner different from the general public."

Arthur, the senior attorney, wrote in February that there "are no distance restrictions imposed by law on whom may be considered an affected person" when it comes to cement plants. That's not the case with concrete batch plants, where [residents must live within 440 yards](#) to be considered "affected."

Hunt said the one-mile requirement is arbitrary and intentionally vague, especially given that Holcim owns nearly all of the property that makes up the land within one mile of the site.

"There's nothing written into stone to really define what is the maximum distance where you can be considered an affected party," Hunt said. "It's a moving target, depending on the commissioners' convenience and the convenience of industry."

Jane Williams, a long-time environmental activist who chairs the Sierra Club's National Clean Air Team, said Midlothian Breathe's predicament is not unique to Texas.

"No matter what state you're in, no matter what local jurisdiction you're in, these cement plants are very savvy at getting local authorities to be friendly toward whatever they want to do," Williams said. "You're really in a David v. Goliath battle from the beginning. You're fighting not only the industry, but also usually the process of the state government."

Holcim's permit will go through its final steps in the next few months, unless Midlothian Breathe or other residents decide to file for a rehearing from the commissioners. That option is still a "little up in the air," Hunt said, as she and Midlothian Breathe consult with an environmental lawyer, they retained in case their contested case hearing requests were granted.

In the meantime, Hunt remains involved with [Texans for Responsible Aggregate Mining](#), a coalition of 16 activist groups that launched in September to fight for more statewide regulations on sand and gravel mines along with cement, concrete and asphalt plants.

More Midlothian residents have expressed interest in purchasing and deploying PurpleAir monitors, a brand of low-cost air quality sensors that have become increasingly popular among environmental activists in North Texas, Hunt said.

As COVID-19 restrictions ease, she hopes to [engage neighbors at public events](#) and bring more attention to the issues she has discovered through her research with Midlothian Breathe. The group plans to continue its role as “watchdog and interpreter for the community,” she said.

“One of our Midlothian Breathe members said the other day, unprompted: ‘There’s been some ups and downs with our group over time, but in spite of what’s happened, we’re in an upswing right now,’” Hunt said. “We’re in a good place.”

Comment period open for new development in Stop Six

By Fort Worth Business Press

Three candidates are in the running to develop the vacant property at 5401 and 5425 E. Berry Street in Fort Worth's Historic Stop Six neighborhood. Now, the public gets to weigh in on their proposals and help determine the future of the Lake Arlington/Berry/Stalcup Urban Village.

Stop Six was originally known as Cowanville, a community of small farms and homesteads founded by Amanda Davis, an African American pioneer of the late 1800s. By the early 20th century, Cowanville was a thriving working-class African American neighborhood, Fort Worth Housing Solutions said on its website.

The Northern Texas Traction Co. ran an electric-powered, interurban streetcar through the community from 1902 to 1934. Cowanville was the sixth stop on the 90-minute trip from the Tarrant County Courthouse to Dallas, thus the modern name of Stop Six.

The 300-unit public housing J.A. Cavile Apartments opened at Rosedale and Etta streets in December 1953 but were demolished starting in December 2020, clearing a 22-acre site off Etta Street, south of East Rosedale Street for redevelopment. The site is in a Neighborhood Empowerment Zone and a Designated Investment Zone.

The three proposals for redevelopment of the area available on the project page on the city's website. Once residents look over the three proposals, they can visit the website to take a short survey asking for their feedback on the pros and cons of each proposal, and which one they like best.

The project page is here: <http://bit.ly/FWProjectPage> The public comment period is open until 11:59 p.m. April 14.

Option 1: Innovan Neighborhoods LLC

The first proposal is courtesy of Innovan Neighborhoods LLC, which has more than 30 years of real estate development experience in DFW and a portfolio of more than \$2.5 billion in real estate projects in the region.

Their proposed project is 41 townhomes, a portion of which would expand options for affordable housing in the area (the units would be available to families at 80% of the area's median income). Another portion of the townhomes would be live/work townhomes, with living space above and retail space on the ground floor for neighborhood-based businesses to grow. The development would prioritize community-oriented open space and include a linear park, a community garden, a play area and a ball field.

Innovan Neighborhoods has spearheaded the Southside Master Plan in Dallas and plans to partner with Bennett Benner Partners (among others) who are involved in the revitalization of

Cowan Place in Stop Six and who helped develop the master plan for Crockett Row at West 7th in Fort Worth.

View the proposal: <http://bit.ly/StopSix1> Option 2: Legacy Construction Solutions The second proposal comes from Legacy Construction Solutions; whose co-founder and head developer has a family history in the area dating back over 63 years.

Their proposed project is a multifamily/commercial mixed-use development that offers residential units, office/retail space, a sports field house and a multi-court gym/training facility that will allow high-caliber athletes to train at a professional level.

Legacy Construction Solutions would partner with RPGA Design and HRM Construction to work on this development. RPGA Design is known for a variety of mixed-use multifamily and senior housing developments in cities throughout Texas.

View the proposal: <http://bit.ly/StopSix2> Option 3: Rollins East Fort Worth Development Team The third proposal is courtesy of Rollins East Fort Worth Development Team, a full-service real estate development and investment organization which brings 110 years of management experience and large-company expertise to the table.

Their proposed project can include housing and retail, food services, a training center, a community services center, a medical/wellness center and a walking trail.

Rollins East Fort Worth Development Team is a joint venture between RPMG and Hazel Lewis Wiltz Ltd., comprised of other professional real estate contractors and engineers. Previous projects include performing early-stage planning for a 156-acre single-family development at Clear Creek Village in Fort Worth, and complete construction plans for a 32-acre single-family development at Wichita Estates in Highland Village.

View the proposal: <http://bit.ly/StopSix3>

This North Texas city projects a population jump from 30,000 to 160,000 in 10 years

By Bill Hethcock, Dallas Business Journal

The Collin County city of Celina is booming, both in terms of rooftops and residents. Residential building permits were up 50 percent last year and they're pacing to jump even more this year as the city tries to surpass the much larger city of Frisco in single-family home growth. Celina's population of about 30,000 has tripled in the past four years and is expected to hit about 160,000 people by the end of the decade.

Meanwhile, Corson Cramer Development, a new Dallas-based residential land development firm, has purchased 220 acres for a [new community named North Sky Celina](#) west of Preston Road off Louisiana Drive.

As planned, the community will have 783 residential homesites. The homes are expected to range in price from the low \$200,000s to the \$400,000s.

Celina has created a 30-year plan for how they want the city to grow and a vision that allows developers to deliver high-quality communities more quickly than in other North Texas cities, City Manager [Jason Laumer](#) said.

In the following interview, Laumer discusses the city's growth and other topics.

What do you see as single biggest challenge right now, on the economic development front in Celina?

I think it's continuing to keep up with the growth and expansion. I can't prove it, but I think we're going to be the fastest growing city in America. If you're looking at Frisco, they were No. 1 from 2010-2020 according to the Census. I think all that growth is coming our way.

What is your population right now?

It's approximately 30,000. When I started about four years ago, we were less than 10,000 people. And now we're 30,000 people. We're expecting to add 10,000 people in 2021 alone.

What's your projection for 10 years out?

We expect to be about 160,000 people in 10 years. Our ultimate buildout is about 370,000. We're slightly bigger than Frisco, just to give you an idea of our land mass.

What does North Sky Celina bring to the city?

Corson Cramer Development is great for the city. They're great developers. The city has been lucky because we have a lot of great developers. We're on the planning corridor 10 miles from the tollway and 10 miles from Preston. We have two great school districts, and so because of our market we're really attracting good developers who want to do high-quality projects. We like development. We're very pro-development that's done according to our vision.

What's that vision?

Our vision is trying to build neighborhoods and not just subdivisions. So, when I say neighborhoods I mean, incorporating trails and open space and tying it together and providing opportunities for our residents to meet each other so they feel like they're more of a community.

So that might be something as small as a fire pit with some Adirondack chairs or as large as a pool and amenity center, playgrounds. It's really neat when you can incorporate access to trails for people to walk to a playground and two moms to meet each other and their kids to meet each other. And I think that's what really builds community, and that's the kind of developments we want, and I think North Sky will be like that.

How much have your building permits grown by?

In terms of building permits, we've ranked as the fastest growing in DFW for the past two years. We were up 50 percent last year. We're the No. 2 single-family city in the Metroplex and we're tracking our permits this year to be up another 50 percent, which is really almost ridiculous.

Who are you No. 2 behind?

Frisco. We're hoping to pass them up this year. Most years, Frisco does about 2,400 permits a year. Last year we did 1,862. We're on track this year, if nothing changes in the market, to do 3,000 permits. That's a huge increase. We did 776 permits in the first three months of this year.

Where are your new residents coming from?

It's a combination. We have a lot of people moving into the Metroplex from out of state. Someone told me the other day they were driving down Preston and saw an Arizona license plate and a California license plate and an Illinois license plate. I run into a lot of families that moved here from Frisco or from Plano to try to get a little further north or they like our downtown square. You know, the feeling of community and small-town charm that we're trying to keep as we grow.

Where do most of the residents of Celina work?

It's also a combination. Because of COVID, because of our Internet capabilities with fiber, I think we have a lot of people that work from home or alternate between working at home and going to the office. A lot of people work down the tollway. There are as many jobs now at 121 and the tollway as there are in the Central Business District of Dallas. That's a tremendous amount of growth in jobs there, and a lot of our residents take advantage of that.

What else is driving growth, generally?

It's part of the Metroplex's overall growth. Good geography and good timing. The DFW Metroplex continues to grow. Last time I heard, it was about 100,000 people a year and I think a lot of them are deciding to pick Celina. People like the idea of small-town charm and a little bit more open space, and the historic downtown.

What will the Collin County outer loop bring to Celina?

The Collin County outer loop over time is going to be much like the tollway. Over time it is going to be a major transportation hub to go east-west just like tollway is to go north-south. And so, as we've seen as the tollway expands, your growth continues. I think the outer loop will be the same way.

ARLINGTON FIRST-TIME RECIPIENT OF DALLAS-FORT WORTH CLEAN CITIES COALITION'S FLEET RECOGNITION AWARD

By My Arlington TX

The Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition recently announced the winners of its Fleet Recognition Awards, highlighting 22 public-sector fleets for their efforts to reduce petroleum use and improve air quality in North Texas. This year, the winners included eight Gold Level, six Silver Level and eight Bronze Level recipients.

The cities of Euless and Southlake, and Dallas Area Rapid Transit brought home the Gold for the second year in a row. Joining these repeat winners were first-time Gold recipients the cities of Carrollton, Dallas, Denton and Lewisville, as well as Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

Awards were presented based on entities' scores on the DFW Clean Cities Annual Survey. Each entity could earn up to 45 points for emissions reduction, 25 points for reducing fuel consumption, 20 points for partnerships, and 10 points for outreach and awareness efforts. Gold Level status required 59-100 points; Silver Level status required 48-58; and Bronze Level status required 40-47.

The winners of Silver recognition were the cities of Bedford, Coppell, Irving and Mesquite, and Denton and Prosper independent school districts.

The following were recognized with Bronze status: Arlington, Addison, Frisco, Flower Mound, North Richland Hills and Watauga, along with Tarrant County and Trinity Metro. Arlington, Bedford and Frisco were first-time clean fleet honorees.

This year's winners were instrumental in helping the region reduce:

- 26,029,278 gallons of gasoline equivalent
- 840,208 pounds of ozone-forming nitrogen oxides (NOx)
- 72,094 tons of greenhouse gas emissions

In addition to the fleet recognition, Clean Cities also highlighted significant improvements in areas such as the reduction of NOx, transition to alternative fuels and gasoline gallon equivalent savings through the new Shining Stars Awards. Six entities – the cities of Denton and North Richland Hills, Denton ISD, DFW Airport, Span Transit and Trinity Metro – were named Shining Stars. Entities were eligible for both categories of awards.

The Clean Cities initiative is a locally based, public-private partnership that promotes practices and decisions to reduce petroleum consumption and improve air quality in the transportation sector. Clean Cities has a goal of increasing petroleum reduction by 15% a year. The annual survey helps track that progress. For more information, visit www.dfwcleancities.org.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and

collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered 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.

Dallas City Council Passes Resolution Approving Construction Of The DART D2 Subway Project To Improve Dallas Public Transit

By Digital Journal

The Dallas City Council has approved the construction of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) D2 Subway Project to bring improvement to public transit in Dallas.

According to the newly approved project, a second light-rail line will run through downtown Dallas and extend from Victory Park to Deep Ellum. The support for the resolution was unanimous. DART will pay half of the \$1.7 billion and the other half will come from federal sources. The project requires increased coordination between DART and the city government with relevant inputs from the state government too. The city council will have to vote on the resolution again in 2022 based on the progress made in 2021.

Hundreds of thousands of riders use the DART system every day to commute from places of learning, work, leisure, and worship. New businesses and residences are being built every day. On account of the explosive growth in population, the city hopes that the D2 Subway project will improve the passenger carrying capacity, add operational flexibility, and bolster the entire light rail system's reliability. The city council said that the resolution is an attempt to make the mass transit in the city walkable, transit-oriented and sustainable in the long term. Paul N. Wageman, chair of the DART Board of Directors, said that the board appreciates the Dallas city council's continued support of the transportation initiative.

However, some neighborhoods are not on board with the idea, as reported in an [article](#) by D-Magazine, a local online and print magazine. Residents of Deep Ellum, where the east side of the subway alignment emerges above ground, have opposed the design. Because of the push back, the resolution that passed also includes a commitment to continue to work towards addressing community concerns. The resolution splits the project into two zones - Zone A on the west side and Zone B on the east side. The \$1.7 billion spending limit on DART is a cause of concern, as it is not clear how much leeway the feds will allow the agency for its work in Zone B.

The president of the Deep Ellum Foundation, an organization made up of business and property owners managing and funding that neighborhood's Public Improvement District, said in an email, "We will work diligently with our stakeholders, City Council and staff, NCTCOG, DART and TxDOT over the next several months to hopefully devise a workable alternative alignment for D2 on the east side."

[Ward Maedgen](#) Accident Attorneys, a [law firm serving Dallas](#), TX and surrounding areas, is following all developments with the D2 Subway project on account of its importance to the community. The firm released a blog post summarizing the approval status of the current resolution. The blog post also puts into perspective the community's reaction to the project by highlighting another article from D-Magazine. The law firm handles personal injury cases of many types such as car accidents, motorcycle accidents, truck / big rig accidents, wrongful death, medical malpractice, defective products, brain and head injury, construction injury, premises liability, and insurance bad faith claims.

The planning for the D2 Subway project began in 2007 and reached a milestone of 30 percent level of preliminary design in October 2020. In a statement talking about the benefits and logistics of the project, Paul Wageman said to Mass Transit magazine, "The DART D2 Subway project demonstrates a commitment to strengthening the DART system and creating a more transit-oriented and accessible network for the benefit of our riders and the residents of North Texas. The next

several months will be focused on continuing the collaborative, multi-agency effort among DART, the city of Dallas, the North Central Texas Council of Governments and [Texas Department of Transportation] to evaluate any proposed refinements, enhancements, and/or modifications to the east end of the corridor in coordination with stakeholders."

Read more: <http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/5032457#ixzz6rpOty0bM>

Developing deep roots

Deep Ellum has gone through many phases — now community stakeholders are trying to balance growth while maintaining authenticity.

By Taylor Tompkins, Dallas Business Journal

DEEP ELLUM, Dallas — [Scott Rohrman](#) and his team at 42 Real Estate had a rule about what type of tenants they wanted in their Deep Ellum properties — no national chains, and that included Starbucks.

Rohrman said the coffee giant approached him multiple times to put a location in [one of his Deep Ellum properties](#), but he didn't think a Starbucks fit with the area's personality.

Other neighborhood stakeholders disagree. When [Jeff Swaney was developing property](#) in Deep Ellum during the 1990s, he said he unsuccessfully petitioned Starbucks to put a location in the changing neighborhood.

"Why did I want a Starbucks? Because I wanted to corporatize it? No," Swaney said. "I just thought getting a Starbucks would signal to everyone that it was OK."

Does a Starbucks fit in Deep Ellum? The question illustrates the struggle historically rich neighborhoods face when at the crossroads of growth and maintaining authenticity. Throughout its nearly 150-year history, the neighborhood has repeatedly risen from its own ashes after each boom-and-bust cycle. While all stakeholders may not agree on how to get there, they're working toward a similar goal — sustained economic viability without sacrificing authenticity.

"Whether people like what you do or don't like what you do, there's a passion," said [Joe Beard](#), president and CEO of Westdale, one of the [largest property owners in Deep Ellum](#). "Everybody's trying to make it better and also keep the unique fabric of the community."

Now, it's booming so much that some see sustained prosperity in perpetuity for the Dallas neighborhood. As the area just east of downtown Dallas evolves, stakeholders are working on parallel tracks to ensure the neighborhood can sustain the growth while maintaining the district's personality.

"With the additional office and residential density," said [Jon Hetzel](#), president of the Deep Ellum Foundation, "I don't think we're at risk of it ever collapsing again."

Rich history

Deep Ellum was established in the late 1800s as a freedmen's town, bound by train tracks and deemed too far from downtown Dallas to be valuable.

Former slaves settled in the area and created a business and entertainment district that hosted jazz legends "Blind" Lemon Jefferson, Bessie Smith and Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter in the 1920s. One common thread throughout the highs and the lows of Deep Ellum was its music scene — from the jazz of the 1920s, punk scene of the 1980s and eclectic touring outfits that visit today. About 45 of the neighborhood businesses are bars, nightclubs or venues that host live music.

From Deep Ellum's founding through the Great Depression, manufacturing outposts for future corporate giants such as Ford and Coca-Cola took root.

The train tracks were eventually removed. Then, construction on Central Expressway wiped out nearly all the neighborhood's original businesses and houses, most of which were owned by Black residents. The construction of Central Expressway cut Deep Ellum off from surrounding communities, changing the landscape for decades to come.

"Deep Ellum — like a lot of historic infill neighborhoods that were underrepresented and not particularly affluent — got ripped apart by highways," Hetzel said. "The 345 cut right through the former heart of Deep Ellum, and 30 cut us off from Fair Park and Exposition Park when those highways came in."

During the real estate boom and bust of the 1970s and 1980s, warehouse parties and live music venues were a neighborhood signature.

"There was nothing but auto repair shops and light industrial stuff, and it really resonated with me because I grew up in the northeast and the light industrial aspects reminded me of the town I grew up in," said [Frank Campagna](#), co-founder of Kettle Art Gallery, who was involved in the revitalization of live music in Deep Ellum during the time. "When I opened my place, it was one of the very first original music nightclubs in town. It wasn't even a nightclub; it was just a big warehouse."

In 1983 the city's Deep Ellum plan was unveiled, laying out plans to keep the neighborhood's atmosphere while outlining zoning and infrastructure improvements and guidelines. What followed was the beginning of a wave of real estate buying, planning and development that came to fruition in the past decade.

"When I started in 2007, nobody went to Deep Ellum. It was a ghost town," said Hetzel, who is also a partner at Madison Partners, another property owners in the neighborhood. "It's a running joke around the office — it's an instant success after 30 years of effort."

Dallas hotspot

Today, Deep Ellum is more than desirable. With an average commercial property value of \$1.5 million, many parcels' values have risen over 200 percent in the last 20 years.

Large property owners rehabbed buildings or repurposed some of the historic locations in the neighborhood, which has attracted tech companies and corporate tenants and retail and residential properties. Some individuals who were active in the DIY punk and party scene in the '80s have shifted to owning restaurants, art galleries, bars or venues.

Revitalization, which has rapidly picked up in the past two decades and has been mostly driven by property owners, has shaped how Dallasites and tourists spend time and money in the neighborhood.

Hetzel said touching base with other landowners to discuss leasing strategy and what kind of businesses are being targeted has helped create a more unified vision for the neighborhood while maintaining its personality.

“When we buy a new building in Deep Ellum, we have some ideas of what we’d like to see in there, but we are also open to other ideas,” he said. “That’s how you get an organic growing neighborhood as opposed to a big master-planned deal like you see in the northern suburbs.”

Rohrman has now sold many of his Deep Ellum properties to Asana Partners, one of the three largest landowners in the district, along with Westdale and Madison Partners. When he began rehabbing the area in the early 2010s, he realized that landowners like him have a big say in who stays and leaves once a neighborhood begins to change.

To keep the neighborhood’s fabric intact after rehabbing its commercial buildings, he said he could afford to keep rates low for some of his tenants.

“People have to understand when you do that ... you’re picking winners and losers. And is that fair? I don’t know that it is. I need someone to help me find the right silver bullet to make areas better, but not displace (tenants),” he said.

Displacement is a concern across the country when historically underfunded neighborhoods begin to get attention from commercial investors. According to the Urban Institute’s [Brett Theodos](#), there are new and emerging models on revitalizing a neighborhood without fundamentally changing the neighborhood’s businesses and tenants.

“It’s tough to do right because the private market is a firehose in terms of volume of capital and where it goes,” Theodos said. “Obviously, at the moment, that capital is not directed at disinvested communities. But if those communities flip and start to become attractive to private market capital in a big way, then all of a sudden (capital) rushes in, and it can really fundamentally change what was there.”

Approaches in which stewardship of neighborhoods falls to private individuals or public-interest entities such as local governments, co-ops or nonprofits by owning the land that developments are built on have proven successful in preserving businesses and residents in neighborhoods where property values are going up.

Over the past 12 years, Westdale, Madison Partners and Asana Partners have consolidated most of the parcels in the neighborhood. Hetzel said one of the significant advantages of that consolidated ownership is having a more unified vision for the community.

“Thankfully, almost all the property owners really view their role as a stewardship role, not just the making money role, which is I think they need a real strength of the neighborhood,” he said.

What is Deep Ellum’s future?

COVID-19’s impact on Deep Ellum has been much like the rest of the state and the nation; restaurants and bars have had to pivot, while some businesses didn’t make it through the shutdowns that began in March 2020.

However, people are returning to the neighborhood now that vaccines are becoming more widely available, and Gov. Greg Abbott allowed businesses to decide how to implement safety precautions.

On an afternoon in late March, signs of life were seen throughout the neighborhood. Groups crowded around digital kiosks waiting to pay for parking, while across the street, masked people clumped in six-foot intervals standing in line at beignet shop Le Bon Temps. Residents walked their dogs which sniffed at crumbs dropped from diners eating on patios.

To take the next steps forward out of the pandemic, stakeholders are looking to the Deep Ellum Public Improvement District Strategic Plan that was put into place in 2019 and run by the Deep Ellum Foundation. The plan lays out the short-term future aspirations for the community through 2025.

The four pillars of the plan — safety, accessibility and interconnectedness, inviting environment, authentic community and destination — were centered around what business owners, landlords, residents and visitors said were some of their key concerns.

The neighborhood's public safety program is funded through donations by business and property owners and residents and is implemented by the Deep Ellum Foundation. The money goes to hiring off-duty police officers during high-traffic hours, improving lighting and installing security cameras.

The foundation is also working to enhance transportation and the infrastructure supporting it to ensure navigating the neighborhood has fewer pressure points. For example, before the pandemic, rideshare drop-off and pick-up zones were designated to ensure accessibility.

The murals that decorate Deep Ellum were a way to keep the neighborhood's artistry on display while attracting visitors and beautifying the neighborhood.

Deep Ellum got the designation of a cultural district from the Texas Commission on the Arts to stimulate "the economy while realizing other cultural and civic benefits."

Today, the neighborhood is entering a new phase. It is more polished and corporatized than ever before, with Uber announcing a major expansion into the area and Baylor, Scott and White growing its headcount, too. The neighborhood has diversified its business mix, and the strategic plan outlines steps to help Deep Ellum become "Dallas' first truly 24-hour neighborhood."

One key aspect of creating a neighborhood that doesn't rely strictly on nightlife is adding more residential density to the area, Beard said.

"It's so important to have residents to build a real community — not a place that closes up or strictly an entertainment zone, where people come in and come out. Having those people that are on the street, and who are patronizing the local businesses, taking walks and walking their dog, and also needing the services that residents need," Beard said. "It's very important to get that residential population up to some critical mass that then services can be provided that people need. It is part of creating the real neighborhood."

[Mike Snider](#), the owner of the AllGood Café on Main Street, said he'd watched the cycles that have brought the neighborhood to its knees over his more than 40 years there.

Like all Deep Ellum stakeholders, he wonders if the current momentum can be sustained. He recalled a conversation with another person in the community in 2019 after Uber announced it was expanding at [The Epic office development](#) on the neighborhood's outskirts. Less than two

years after Uber's big announcement, COVID-19 rocked the area's vibrant nightlife scene, and the rideshare giant slowed its Dallas expansion amid depressed sales.

"She thought, we're at the top, and it's going to stay up there for a long time," he said. "I said, 'Well, it always goes up and always come back down again.'"

Traffic clogs Fort Worth's suburbs. How council candidates would fix the congestion

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Far north Fort Worth residents know the scenario well: a two-lane road surrounded by thousands of homes and shopping centers that rapidly gets clogged with traffic. Or a bottleneck where a wider road shrinks as drivers try to merge onto the highway.

Either way, living in Fort Worth's suburbs north of Loop 820 often means waiting in traffic.

Traffic jams are a classic symptom of a rapidly growing city. More than 200,000 people now live north of the loop in Fort Worth. As the Star-Telegram pointed out in 2020, subdivisions have sprung up faster than the plans to widen old roads have come to fruition.

Retiring District 7 council member Dennis Shingleton told the Star-Telegram then that he thought pausing development was the only way for Fort Worth to catch up with the rapid growth in the far northern suburbs. But that's unlikely given the popularity of Fort Worth. More than 20,000 people move to the city each year. Late last year he called on the council to pause to approving rezoning for multifamily developments, arguing greater density was adding to his district's traffic woes.

"I'm at the point where, if it were up to me and me alone, I'd probably call a hiatus to any development up there," Shingleton said in January 2020, saying then that getting a handle on suburban sprawl was the biggest issue facing the district, which stretches from central Fort Worth north past AllianceTexas and into Denton County.

Come May 1 it will no longer be up to Shingleton as large number candidates vie for his seat.

Generally, those running think the city should require more of developers, according to responses to a Star-Telegram questionnaire. The race has drawn 10: Connie Cottrell, Morris Curlee Jr., Leonard Firestone, Lee Henderson, Joseph Lockhart Jr., Michele Stephens McNeill, Zeb Pent, Irvin (Tee) Thomas, Jake Wurman and Miguel Zamora.

Thomas said there was no logic in allowing a developer to build "thousands of homes" on a two-lane road without first requiring the developer to widen roads and ensure access to the subdivision.

Wurman suggested developers and the city work together to build streets before housing developments are approved.

"If they want to build 2,000 homes in an up-and-coming area of the city, build the traffic nodes or other important infrastructure from the start," he said.

Henderson was critical of the slow pace that bond projects are put out for bids. He drew a contrast between the rapid growth in the north and development in the Walsh area, a large suburban growth area in west Fort Worth.

"We need to establish rules that require developers to build adequate infrastructure in larger developments, in conjunction with city planning," he said.

The city can charge developers for road and other construction in two ways.

Impact fees are assessed on the type of development. For a residential subdivision, a developer pays per lot. These fees are pooled and used for projects in the same geographic area, said Ty Thompson, assistant director of Development Services.

A second option charges developers for a proportional cost of a particular project. The fees vary based on a formula that considers the type and size of the development.

The two pots of money can often be combined, but regardless projects typically require equal or greater investment from the city, Thompson said. That means work can sit while the city waits for additional funds, usually through a bond package.

Cary Moon, an incumbent running in District 4, which has also seen significant growth in the north, argued road projects could be done quicker if they were left up to the private sector. In response to the questionnaire, Moon said right-of-way acquisition, utility relocations and design could be “be removed from the desks of city employees and put on the desk of design builders in the private sector” to expedite the process.

Opponent Kristie Hanhart said the city needed to vet developers better to ensure they would pay for their share of road projects.

Tara Wilson said the city should invest more in public transportation and modernize the bus system to increase ridership.

“This will reduce traffic on major roads, and is also good for the environment,” she said.

Jorge L. Chavez and Max Striker are also running in District 4 but did not turn questionnaires.

Sprawl has not come as quickly to the western portion of Fort Worth, but developments like Walsh are poised to add thousands of homes to District 3 in the coming years.

Candidates Daniel Fattori and Adrian Smith said the city had sided with developers and business interests too often. They argued for more input from residents about future development. District 3 candidate Michael Crain, the district manager for council member Brian Byrd, said the city planners and developers should work together to identify growth areas.

“The city’s comprehensive plan addresses such issues and should be evaluated and re-evaluated on a regular basis,” he said.

Biden pitches \$2.3T infrastructure plan as cure for Texas grid failure, but it's not in the fine print

Texas needs billions to winterize power plants, gas lines. The Biden plan dangles hope but lacks details or promises.

By Todd J. Gillman, Dallas Morning News

The White House cites Texas' deadly power outages as a key selling point for a \$2.3 trillion infrastructure package, leaving a clear – but potentially misleading – implication that Texas would get the billions needed to avert such catastrophes in the future.

“We saw what happened in Texas, and that’s an example of a resiliency problem,” Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said Monday.

But the plan doesn’t specify any funds for the Texas grid.

And even if Texas gets all the funds envisioned for grid upgrades nationwide, that might not be enough to weatherize all of the generating plants and natural gas lines that failed when an arctic blast smothered the state in mid-February.

Complaints about vagueness have mounted since President Joe Biden unveiled his plan on March 31. That hasn’t stopped him, cabinet members and top aides from invoking the Texas crisis.

As Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm put it while pitching the plan at a White House briefing last week: “After what happened in Texas, can anybody really doubt that electricity and the electric grid is part of the foundation of who we are as a nation? And we need to invest in it if we want to make sure power keeps coming to our homes.”

The infrastructure plan remains mostly conceptual. The White House touts funding to improve 20,000 miles of roadway and 10,000 bridges, plus rail lines and housing projects and a clean energy transformation and much more. But so far there are no lists of projects or specifics on how they’d be selected.

On Monday, the White House issued state-by-state fact sheets to underscore the need for large-scale investment, while continuing to avoid promises.

Among the facts about Texas: 818 bridges and 19,400 miles of highway are in poor condition. Texans who commute by bus or rail spend 80% more time getting to and from work. Texas will need \$45 billion over the next 20 years to ensure enough drinking water for its growing population.

Nationwide, the Biden plan calls for \$115 billion to repair roads and bridges, \$85 billion for public transit and \$111 billion for water.

What fraction of those sums Texas might end up with will depend on whether Congress uses population-based formulas, competitive grants, earmarks or other mechanisms to slice the \$2.3 trillion pie.

“I doubt that Congress will legislate a state-by-state allocation. I think what you’re likelier to see is a mix of support for discretionary programs that help us with policy goals [and] formula funds,” Buttigieg said, defending the goal-setting approach and lack of details, while insisting that “any individual community and certainly any individual state stands to benefit in a big way.”

Republicans balk at lumping roads, bridges and rail with clean energy, affordable housing, childcare and elder care. Apart from that expansive definition of infrastructure, they also blast the price tag and call the plan a “Trojan horse” for tax hikes on corporations, Biden’s main financing mechanism.

“I have no idea how this would apply to the power grid,” said Bob Poole, director of transportation policy at the Reason Foundation, a libertarian think tank. “I think we can expect major changes in the scope of the proposal, including a reduced-price tag.”

And consider this: Roads and bridges are owned by state and local governments, so there’s nothing unusual about funneling federal funds to such projects. But all but about 16% of electricity sold in the United States comes from investor-owned utilities and other non-governmental entities, according to the Energy Information Institute.

“I understand we want to improve the resilience and efficiency of our grid,” said Rick Geddes, director of the Cornell University program in infrastructure policy. But “it would be very unusual for the federal government to just give a private company a big grant.”

Good timing

The Texas power outages from Feb. 14-19 cost at least 200 lives and left 4.5 million Texans shivering in the dark for days.

For a president aiming to sell a gargantuan stimulus plan, the timing has been fortuitous.

“As you saw in Texas and elsewhere, our electric and power grids are vulnerable to storms, catastrophic failures, and security lapses, with tragic results. My American Jobs Plan will put hundreds of thousands of people to work... laying thousands of miles of transmission line; building a modern, resilient, and fully clean grid,” Biden said when he unveiled the plan March 31 at a carpenter training center in Pittsburgh.

In 25 pages, the plan includes no promise of any outlay to avert a similar disaster in Texas, however.

In terms of keeping the lights on the next time Texas is walloped by an arctic blast, the most relevant idea is building 20 gigawatts of high-voltage power lines to provide “a more resilient electric transmission system,” using tax credits to leverage tens of billions in private investment.

That’s an expansion of capacity somewhere, not a promise to insulate Texas generating plants.

And 20 GW is less than half of what Texas lost during the February storm.

Texas can’t import that many electrons even in a crisis, thanks to decades of isolation from the two huge grids that span the rest of the country.

Ending that grid independence is a touchy subject in Texas. Biden’s plan doesn’t broach the topic.

Next, a bailout for Texas’ grid would hit resistance from states where utilities and their customers – not federal taxpayers – already made the investments needed to keep the juice on when the mercury plummets.

“Most Americans would not want to pay a higher tax if the ratepayers in Texas itself don’t want to pay,” said Geddes, the Cornell professor of policy analysis and management.

“The resilience of the grid should be borne by the user,” he argued. “If you pay for my bread, or my electricity, I might not be so careful about how much I consume.”

Historically, infrastructure of all types relies on user fees. Gasoline taxes of 18.3 cents per gallon go into the Highway Trust Fund, for instance.

There’s no equivalent “user fee” on electricity. Utility companies and ratepayers cover costs.

Overdue winterizing

At the worst, around 8 a.m. on Feb. 16, some 51,173 megawatts of generating capacity were offline, nearly half the 107,514 MW in installed capacity.

Failures due to cold accounted for nearly all of that, according to a preliminary report issued last Tuesday by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which manages the state’s grid.

ERCOT attributed 54% of the outages directly to the impact of weather on generators: frozen equipment, water lines and valves; ice and snow on wind turbines and solar panels; equipment flooded as it melted. Another 26% stemmed from fuel shortages, also largely due to frigid weather.

The findings point to the need for winterizing.

But that was never a secret.

After a 2011 winter storm, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission urged Texas to winterize – and noted the state had largely ignored the same recommendations after a 1989 storm.

FERC put the cost of upgrading each gas well at \$2,800 to \$34,000. Texas has more than 130,000. So that alone could cost \$4 billion. Pipelines, power plants and wind turbines also failed for lack of insulation.

As Texans clamor for modernization, Biden’s plan dangles the prospect of help from Washington.

Monday’s fact sheet notes that from 2010 to 2020, “Texas has experienced 67 extreme weather events, costing the state up to \$200 billion in damages. The President is calling for \$50 billion to improve the resiliency of our infrastructure and support communities’ recovery from disaster.”

Weatherizing the grid isn’t included in the \$50 billion envisioned for resiliency, though.

Instead, it’s among a number of goals included in a \$100 billion section devoted to hitting a target of zero carbon emissions by 2035. Keeping the lights on in Texas or anywhere else is not an explicit aim.

That includes \$16 billion to hire hundreds of thousands of workers to plug abandoned oil and gas wells and clean up old mines; \$5 billion to clean and redevelop former industrial sites; \$10 billion for a Civilian Climate Corps to “mobilize the next generation of conservation and resilience workers.”

That leaves \$69 billion, which includes tax credits to “spur jobs modernizing power generation and delivering clean electricity,” and encourage “clean energy generation and storage,” and state and local grants “to support clean energy, worker empowerment, and environmental justice.”

Biden aides have been unable to say how much of the infrastructure plan would go to weatherization.

During a briefing for regional news outlets on Monday with Buttigieg, Bharat Ramamurti, deputy director of the White House National Economic Council, maintained that whatever is invested would quickly pay for itself.

“The problems with our power grid are costing us \$70 billion a year, according to the Department of Energy, and are costing lives, as we saw in Texas. We can make an investment in improving our power grid and make up those \$70 billion in a year or two,” he said.

Asked by *The Dallas Morning News* how much of the winterizing funds would go to Texas, he demurred.

“As with a lot of this, the goal here is to set out a vision and then work with Congress to determine some of the details,” he said.

Sasha Mackler, director of the energy project at the Bipartisan Policy Center, sees the vagueness at this stage as an invitation to haggling, rather than a shortcoming.

“They’re putting forward the goals and opening the door to congressional engagement,” he said. “It’s vague at this point by design.”

Improvements are coming to Beach and Basswood intersection

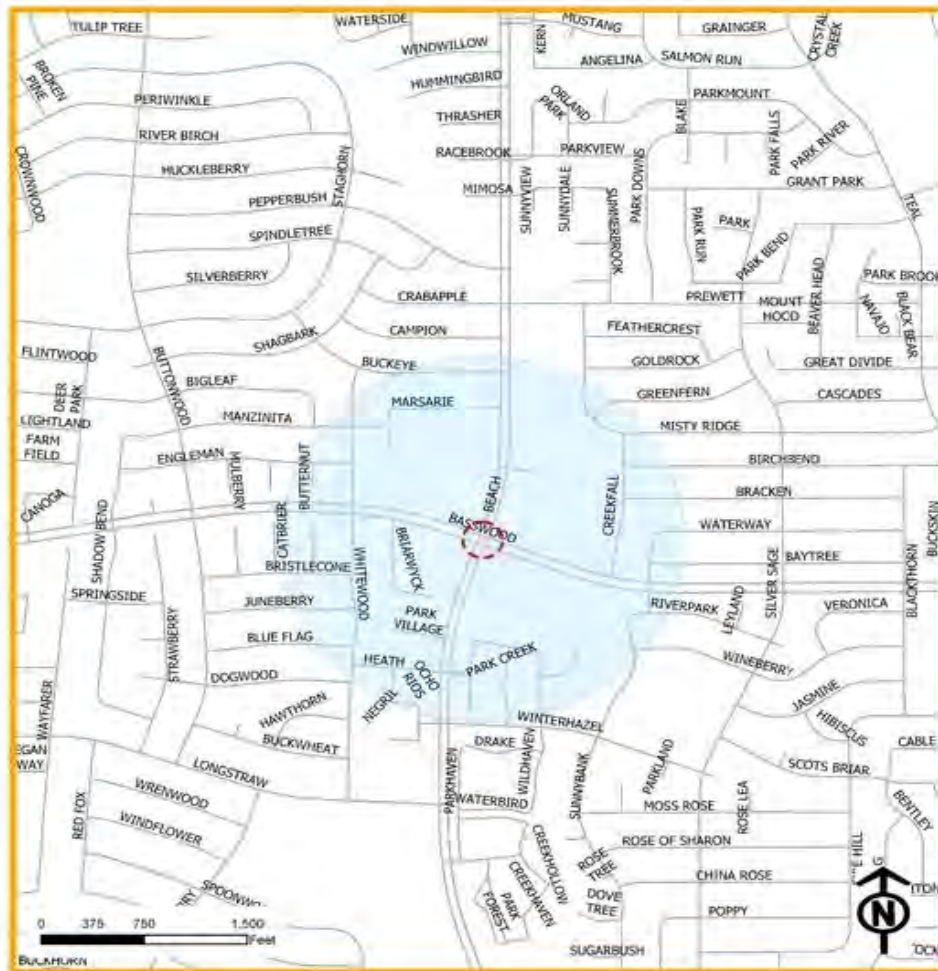
By City Of Fort Worth

The city's Transportation & Public Works Department is hosting a virtual community meeting to update residents on construction plans for improvements at the North Beach Street and Basswood Boulevard intersection.

This project will improve the intersection with a full signal modification and the addition of a northbound dual left turn lane as well as secondary eastbound and westbound offset left turn lanes. This will decrease wait times at intersection signals while increasing visibility, safety and traffic flow.

The virtual meeting will be at **6 p.m. April 19** via [Webex](#). The meeting number is 182 712 3935. The meeting password is *beachbasswood*. The phone-in number is 469-210-7159.

To learn more, contact Project Manager Iskal Shrestha [via email](#) or at 817-392-7254.



The White House gave Texas' infrastructure a C. Here's why

When it came to roads and bridges, the report pointed to the 818 bridges and over 19,400 miles of highway in the state that are believed to be in "poor condition."

By Jennifer Prohov, WFAA

The Biden White House released state-by-state breakdowns Monday that show the dire state of America's hard and soft infrastructure as a way to further publicize [its \\$2.3 trillion infrastructure plan](#), the Associated Press [reports](#).

Texas got a "C" grade when it came to its own "Infrastructure Report Card" from the Biden Administration. The highest grade was a C+, according to the AP, which went to Utah. The state report cards are part of the push for the package, dubbed the [American Jobs Plan](#).

The report was sectioned out into 12 different areas of concern that the package would provide funding for across the country:

- Roads and bridges
- Public transportation
- Resilient infrastructure
- Drinking water
- Housing
- Broadband
- Caregiving
- Childcare
- Manufacturing
- Home energy
- Clean energy jobs
- Veterans' health

"For decades, infrastructure in Texas has suffered from a systemic lack of investment," the White House report stated. "The need for action is clear."

When it came to roads and bridges, the report pointed to the 818 bridges and over 19,400 miles of highway in the state that are believed to be in "poor condition."

"Since 2011, commute times have increased by 11.4% in Texas and on average, each driver pays \$709 per year in costs due to driving on roads in need of repair," according to the report.

The section for resilient infrastructure discussed the spate of extreme weather events Texas has seen in the past 10 years, not including the most recent example of the winter storms that caused many in the state to lose access to power and clean water back in February.

From 2010 to 2020, extreme weather has cost the state up to \$200 billion in damages, according to the report. The Biden administration believes investing in resilient infrastructure is key and is a piece of the infrastructure package.

Making infrastructure in the state more resilient could look like preparing the electrical grid for more extreme weather events, and weatherizing equipment for more severe cold and heat than typical. State lawmakers have been working on plans this legislative session to require those actions to take place to protect the stability of Texas' power grid.

Broadband access was another acute issue pointed out by the report card, which stated "more than 12% of Texans live in areas where, by one definition, there is no broadband infrastructure that provides minimally acceptable speeds."

About 14% of Texas households don't have an internet subscription, per the report, and around 43% live in places where there is only one internet provider.

Childcare was another pain point for the state, according to the administration, with about 48% of people living in what they coined a "childcare desert."

Home energy costs also were an area of concern, with the average low-income family in Texas spending about 8 to 10% of their income on such costs.

The AP reports Biden will meet with Democratic and Republican lawmakers Monday to discuss the proposal. Many Republicans have been less than receptive to the package, though, particularly because of [plans to rely on higher corporate taxes](#) to pay for it.

For each topic, the report laid out a sentence or two addressing how the proposed infrastructure package would tackle the problems presented, usually with a dollar amount attached. To read the report and see roughly how the money would be used, [click here](#).

Fort Worth's TEXRail line and DART's Silver Line will connect at DFW Airport

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Two rival public transportation agencies in Dallas and Fort Worth are close to finalizing an agreement that supporters say could revolutionize development of walkable neighborhoods with access to passenger rail in North Texas.

Fort Worth's public transportation agency, Trinity Metro, which has operated the TEXRail commuter trains since 2019, has reached an agreement to allow Dallas Area Rapid Transit to run [its planned new Silver Line rail cars](#) into the existing TEXRail station at DFW Airport.

Trinity Metro's board of directors approved the historical agreement after a 90-minute closed session Monday. The deal must also be approved by DART's board of directors, which was expected to consider the matter Tuesday evening.

If finalized, the agreement would set the stage for development of a commuter rail line that within two or three years will stretch 55 miles all the way from Fort Worth's medical district to Shiloh Road in Plano — cutting diagonally across the Metroplex, from southwest to northeast.

[Supporters of regionwide rail](#) say the joining of the two rail lines, which will remain independently operated by the respective Fort Worth and Dallas transit agencies, provides an unprecedented opportunity for transit-oriented development in suburban Metroplex cities that once were considered car-dependent.

In Tarrant County, [North Richland Hills and Grapevine are already pursuing mixed-use developments](#) within a short walk of their TEXRail stations — including single-family homes, apartments and condominiums, shops, restaurants, breweries and many other attractions. The railroad tracks also closely follow the historical Cotton Belt Trail, a paved pathway that provides bicycle and pedestrian access to some of the train stations.

Several DART cities, including Addison and Carrollton, also feature mixed-use developments along the tracks.

"It's the answer to densifying our tax base, creating these urban villages," Jeff Davis, Trinity Metro board chairman, said in an interview after the unanimous board approval. "We've got a great opportunity to do that at every station."

DART, TRINITY METRO FINALLY REACH AGREEMENT

The TEXRail line runs 27 miles from downtown Fort Worth through North Richland Hills and Grapevine, with a terminus at DFW Airport's Terminal B. Trinity Metro expects to extend that line another two miles to the south, to Fort Worth's medical district and Near Southside, in the next three years.

The [DART Silver Line](#), which is under construction, would run 26 miles from DFW Airport to Carrollton, Addison, north Dallas and Plano, ending at the latter city's Shiloh Road.

The key to the agreement was agreeing to a price that DART would need to pay for access to the TEXRail station at DFW Airport's Terminal B, Davis said.

After months of negotiations, Trinity Metro agreed to accept a payment from DART of \$27.5 million for access to the Terminal B station. Coincidentally, that is roughly the same amount of money that DART charged Trinity Metro for access to the Cotton Belt railroad tracks used by TEXRail, which opened to the public in 2019.

Officials from DART could not be reached immediately to comment.

During a committee discussion Tuesday evening, DART board chairman Paul Wageman explained to fellow board members that getting access to TEXRail's site at DFW Airport was essential to ensure that construction of the Silver Line remained on time.

"This right-of-way is really essential," he said. "It allows us to begin real work over there."

The DART committee unanimously recommended approval of the item, which was to be finally voted on later Tuesday night.

Davis said Trinity Metro, which spent roughly \$80 million building the Terminal B station, hired an appraisal firm and determined the value of providing DART access to the station was \$49 million. Because the Regional Transportation Council had already agreed to pay for \$21.5 million of the station's costs, that left the remaining tab of \$27.5 million to be covered by DART.

If DART approves the deal, Trinity Metro would receive \$21.5 million immediately and another \$6 million when Silver Line service begins.

Trinity Metro likely will use the proceeds to pay down some of its roughly \$60 million in debt issued for TEXRail, Davis said.

The agreement could also signify a new era of cooperation between Trinity Metro and DART, whose leaders have often bickered over joint projects in the past.

Davis called the agreement "a reset."

"I think it's important for both agencies," he said. "It's a reset of the relationship we have. We are moving forward with confidence with DART and trying to be a good partner with them."

DART also operates light-rail at DFW Airport. The Orange Line, which has a station at the airport's Terminal A, runs from DFW to Irving/Las Colinas and downtown Dallas.

Tarrant County still deciding how to choose projects to include in upcoming transportation bond

By Kristine Hughes, Community Impact Newspaper

April 16 is the deadline for Tarrant County municipalities to submit project ideas for the **\$400 million transportation bond program** that voters will consider in November.

On April 13, Tarrant County commissioners discussed the process for considering whether to hire a consultant to help narrow down the list of projects proposed for the package. County Administrator GK Maenius said he would speak to the commissioners individually and to the bond planning committee and then come back to the court with a recommendation within a week or two.

The transportation bond program seeks to increase mobility, reduce congestion, enhance safety and improve connectivity throughout the county. **Fort Worth** has proposed several dozen projects to be considered. The cities of Keller and **Colleyville** have also submitted projects for consideration.

The last Tarrant County transportation bond program was developed in 2006. It allocated funding in four categories: local arterial improvements, transit-related improvements, improvements to projects on the Texas Department of Transportation's highway system and commissioner discretionary road improvements. Ongoing projects include White Chapel Boulevard in Southlake.

With sewage plant clash on horizon, Granbury stops new development for six more months

By Haley Samsel, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Facing the prospect of [a years-long dispute over a sewage plant](#), Granbury will pause all new development in the city's eastern corridor for at least six more months after a unanimous City Council vote last week.

The moratorium on new construction, [originally adopted in December](#), will now last through Oct. 5 and can be extended if necessary.

If Granbury's single wastewater treatment plant begins to operate at 90% or more of its capacity, the pause on development could be expanded to the entire city, according to Alex Southern, the city's spokesperson. In an email, Southern said the plant is running at about 65% of its capacity.

"As quickly as Granbury is growing, especially on our east side heading toward Fort Worth, that will probably happen sooner than later if we don't get another (wastewater treatment plant) online," Southern said.

The vote comes as Granbury awaits a final decision from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality regarding a permit application to build a new plant discharging up to 2 million gallons of treated wastewater per day into a tributary of Rucker Creek, which flows into Lake Granbury and the Brazos River.

While the city's permit earned initial approval in May, a group of Hood County property owners [known as Granbury Fresh](#) rallied more than 400 households to submit comments to the TCEQ opposing the permit, leader Victoria Calder told the Star-Telegram last year.

Many of those residents expressed concern that the wastewater effluent could lead to negative impacts on water quality and property values, with the possibility of causing algae blooms and massive fish kills.

"In a perfect, perfect world, it might never smell," Calder said in September. "In a perfect, perfect world, we might not ever have a raw sewage spill, or it may not have the contaminants. But it's not a perfect world. [Raw sewage spills happen](#) and they will happen here ... and it could be extremely dangerous for the public welfare and public health interest."

Granbury Fresh members and city officials alike agree that the city of about 10,000 people needs additional wastewater treatment services to meet demand in Hood County, [one of the fastest growing counties](#) in the country, according to [U.S. Census Bureau figures](#). But they disagree on how the city should approach the problem.

Now, more than seven months after the TCEQ held a public meeting with residents and Granbury officials, the state environmental agency has not issued a response to comments or a decision on the application. The COVID-19 pandemic and the large number of comments submitted by Hood County residents may have contributed to the delay, according to Calder.

Once the response to comments is issued, Granbury Fresh's attorney is prepared to file for a contested case hearing if necessary, Calder said. Residents affected by a permit application have the right to request a hearing, which is similar to a civil trial in state district court.

City manager Chris Coffman has referred to the hearing as a “lawsuit” that Granbury will have to defend against.

“Unfortunately, it is almost a certainty in cases like this, and is a shame because it doesn’t help anyone and only drags out the process by months and sometimes years,” Southern said by email.

Calder and fellow Granbury Fresh leader Anita Branch spoke in support of the moratorium during the council meeting, urging city officials to explore options such as expanding the existing treatment plant or building a regional treatment plant in a different location. In a heated exchange with Calder, Coffman said expanding the current treatment plant is not possible.

Branch and Calder also questioned whether the 180-day extension was enough time to resolve disputes over the permit.

“A moratorium that lasts an additional six months is not going to get us to the end of the resolution of this standoff that we have at this time,” Branch, a retired engineer, said. “It’s going to take at least three years to get through the contested case hearings, and then 12 to 18 months on top of that ... before the construction of the sewage treatment plant would be complete.”

Beyond upgrading its wastewater technology to a more efficient process, Granbury is not considering other options to build treatment capacity, [public works director Rick Crownover said in December](#).

Caught in the middle of the debate are developers hoping to build in east Granbury. Phil Hope, the managing director of Hope Development Partners, asked Granbury officials to not suspend all development activity that takes place before construction, such as discussing future plans with city engineers. Coffman said he would meet with developers about the issue.

“Allow the development community to come in and talk through all of the processes they would have to go through anyway, but not to a point that they have to apply for applications for construction,” Hope said. “We support the moratorium and want this thing resolved as soon as you can get it resolved ... We have no ax to grind on where (the plant) is located, just that it gets done.”

A New Plan for Tearing Down I-345

The Toole Design Group's I-345 Framework Plan, an update to TxDOT's highway study, offers detailed analysis of how removing an urban highway would impact mobility in Dallas.

By Peter Simek, D Magazine

Tearing down highways is long and difficult work, particularly in a city with a culture that is so wedded to the automobile. Consider this: it has been five years since the Texas Department of Transportation released the [CityMAP study](#), which analyzed the implications and logistics around tearing down Interstate 345, that little strip of connective concrete that cuts off Deep Ellum from downtown. *D Magazine* [devoted an issue of the magazine](#) to the I-345 removal idea way back in 2014. And can you believe it has been nearly eight years since urban planner Patrick Kennedy proposed the then-radical concept [in a column in D](#)? Since then, highway removal efforts have gone mainstream. The country's new transportation secretary is even using them [as policy talking points](#).

Enter [a new study that attempts to kick](#) Dallas' highway removal project into a new gear. It refines some of the plans outlined in CityMAP. This 90-plus page report is being called the I-345/45 Framework Plan (admittedly not as catchy a title as CityMAP), and it was developed by the Toole Design Group, LLC, an engineering and urban design firm that helped plan the I-375 highway removal in Detroit. It attracted an extensive list of partner organizations and individuals and produced the report following a substantial amount of public input. This plan refines the CityMAP study in three keyways:

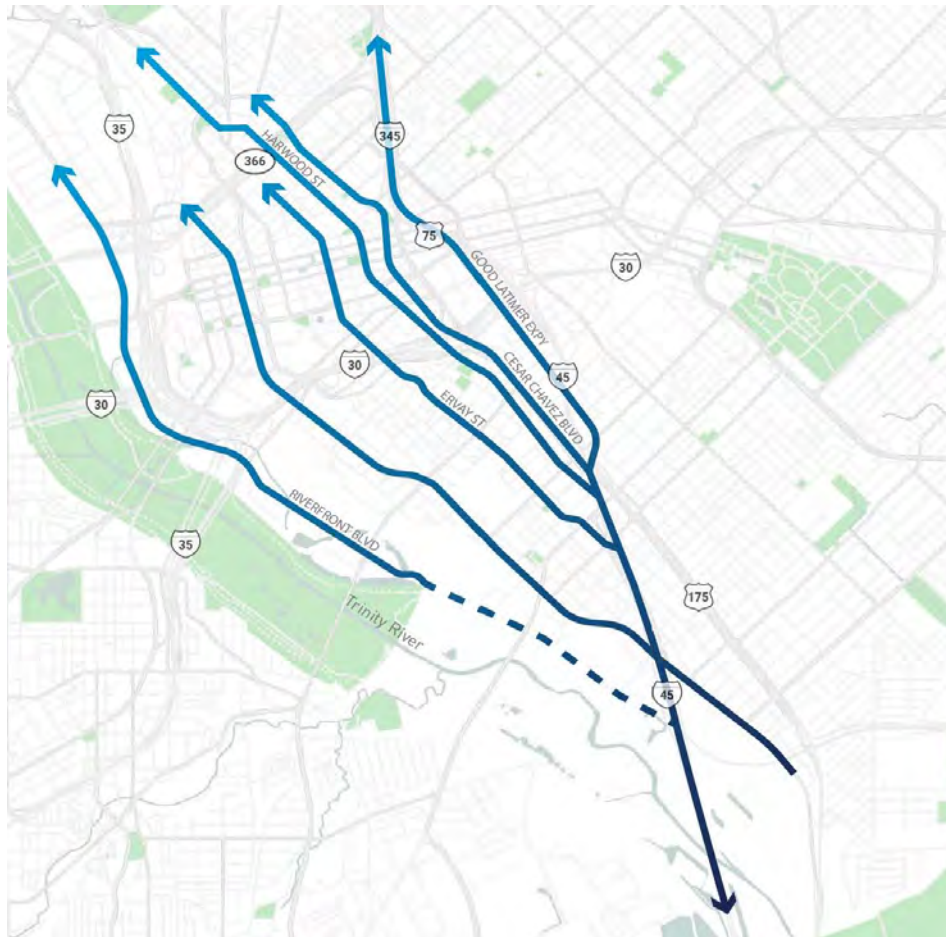
1. It provides a more holistic view of the reasons for removing I-345.
2. It dives more deeply into how such a removal would affect mobility, including a fascinating analysis of how a reconstituted street grid could handle traffic.
3. It offers a land use vision for how to maximize the potential benefits of the highway removal.

Now, full disclosure: the report is also dedicated to the memory of the late Wick Allison, the founder of *D Magazine*, who had been a champion of the I-345 project since Kennedy first raised the possibility in our pages. The Coalition for a New Dallas, an organization co-founded by Wick, is also a driving force behind the completion of the "Framework Plan," and tomorrow [the Coalition is hosting an online symposium](#) that will both present this new plan and outline its policy priorities heading into [this May's city council elections](#).

The timing of the report's release is significant for another reason. There is a lot of transportation planning happening in and around downtown Dallas right now, and top city and regional planning officials want to plan all three major downtown projects—Dallas Area Rapid Transit's D2 downtown subway connection, the I-30 canyon rebuild, and I-345—in tandem. At a recent council briefing, Michael Morris, the transportation director of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, said that TxDOT expects to complete a I-345 traffic study sometime soon.

[The Toole study](#)—which I will refer to as the Framework Plan for the rest of this piece—offers an important counterpoint to that TxDOT study. It provides broader vision and technical comparisons to help check whatever TxDOT's assumptions turn out to be.

Let's dive into some of the details:



The new plan shows how reconstructed boulevards could handle I-345 traffic.
I-345/45 Framework Plan

Two Highway Removal Options

Unlike CityMAP, the Framework Plan doesn't bother studying the option of keeping the elevated highway as is. Instead, it proposes two options:

- Transform I-345 into a surface boulevard and improve the existing street network to mitigate any traffic impact from the highway removal by shifting that capacity to surface streets
- Rebuilding I-345 as a "depressed highway," but one within a narrower trench than laid out in CityMAP to mitigate the highway's impact on the adjacent street grid

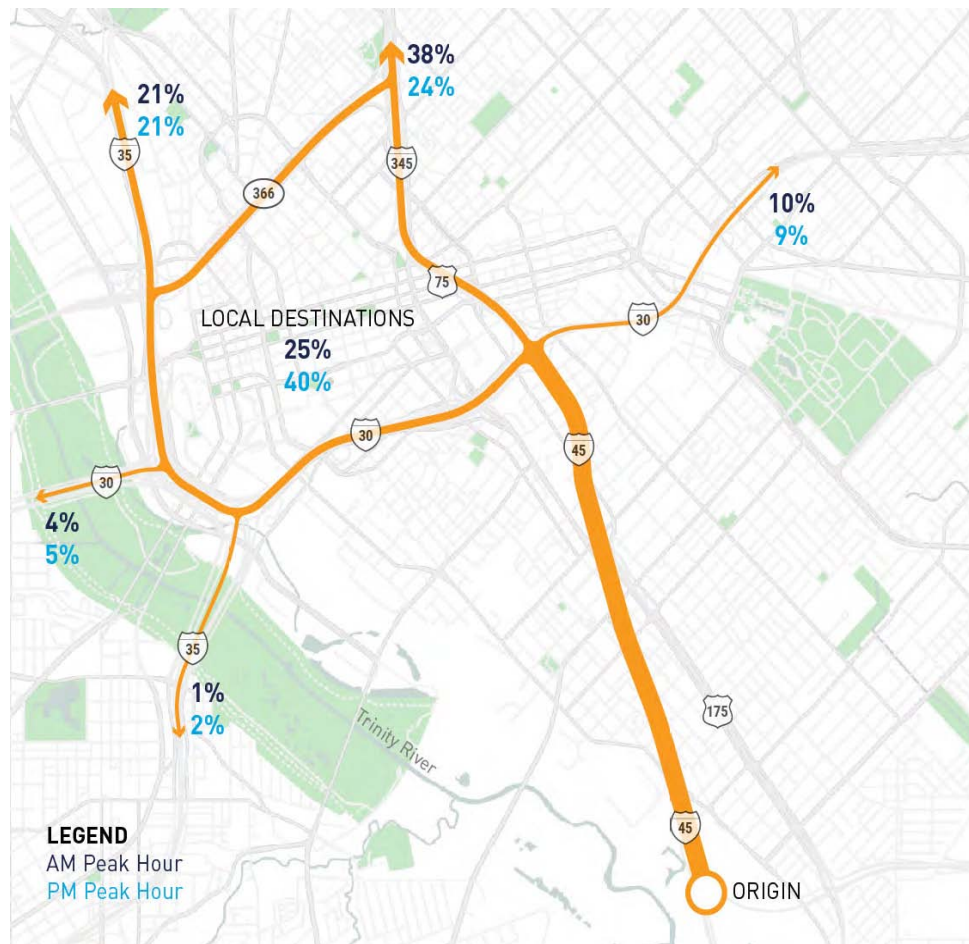
The study presents renderings that show what a reconstituted street network could look like. It maps how roads like Riverfront Blvd. and Lamar St./ Botham Jean Blvd. could create new connections from southern to northern Dallas that would alleviate the need to funnel all the existing traffic through the I-345 corridor.

Unlike CityMAP, the plan notably ignores maintaining I-345 as an elevated highway and reimagines the design of the so-called "trench," or burial, option. This new plan instead proposes a shallower highway trench than the one proposed in CityMAP. It also creates

additional street connections to divert highway traffic onto surface streets to reduce the required carrying capacity of a below-grade I-345. This would allow for a narrower barrier between downtown and Deep Ellum that could be spanned by bridges that restore a street grid that is friendly to pedestrians.

But if neither of these proposals provide for the same traffic capacity supplied by the existing elevated highway, where will all the traffic go? This is of particular concern to southern Dallas residents who use I-345 to commute to jobs north of downtown. Even if highway removal creates opportunities for the creation of future jobs closer to downtown at some point in the future, that hardly helps someone who needs to get to work tomorrow.

The answer to that question is the most fascinating and significant aspect of this new report.



Only a portion of I-345 traffic needs to be downtown.
I-345/45 Framework Plan

Reimagining Mobility and Traffic Capacity

So how would removing I-345 affect traffic? While admitting that “there are no tools to forecast the traffic impacts of removing a highway,” the Framework Plan analyzes traffic impact by analyzing historical traffic data for I-345. It then compares it with traffic data for surface streets.

It arrives at two fascinating observations about I-345's peak capacity and total traffic volume on the highway.

According to traffic counts, I-345 can move a peak of 2,250 vehicles per hour through downtown. This, of course, doesn't mean that 2,250 cars are screaming past downtown 24 hours a day; that is the maximum capacity number used by traffic engineers. But what the Framework Plan discovered is that I-345 typically carries closer to 2,000 cars per hour during peak morning and afternoon rush hours.

And here is where things get interesting: by comparing total capacity with the speed at which the traffic flows, the study found that I-345 can move the most cars when traffic is flowing at around 40 mph. Any faster, and that means there are fewer cars on the road, so less capacity.

Any slower, and there is congestion, which means the highway is carrying more cars at slower speeds, meaning it moves fewer cars per hour.

Think about that for a minute. I-345 is most efficient when it is moving cars at a speed that is hardly any faster than how fast you can travel on a surface street. Keep that data point in your head, and let's jump into the second fascinating aspect of this mobility analysis.

According to this new study, I-345's eight highway lanes currently move about 18,000 vehicles per day. If the highway were removed, the study argues that around 1,800 vehicles would "evaporate," meaning they are headed to destinations that don't necessarily require I-345 to reach. In the absence of the highway, they would simply take another route. So, think of that total number of vehicles that rely on I-345 as something closer to 16,200 per day.

The Framework Plan crunched the numbers on the current capacity of surface streets and found that 2.5 arterial streets could carry about the same traffic as one I-345 highway lane.

The plan then maps out six existing streets that, taken together, could provide traffic capacity for some 16,000 vehicles per day. In other words, the report demonstrates how the existing street grid could handle I-345's existing capacity. And since we also know that I-345 moves traffic most efficiently when vehicles are moving at 40 mph, the report argues there is no substantial loss of mobility when comparing I-345 with a reconstituted street grid.

That analysis helps show how, in some of the case studies included in the Framework Plan, the removal of a major inner-city urban highway – like the Embarcadero in San Francisco – did not impact overall mobility. Highways in urban centers are no more efficient than surface streets at moving traffic.



The land freed up by removing I-345 could be transformed into a neighborhood center.
I-345/45 Framework Plan

Highway Removal as a Silver Bullet

We should be wary of silver bullet fixes, particularly in areas as complex and multi-faceted as urban development. But the proposed removal of I-345 – if executed correctly – does have the potential to positively impact a wide variety of Dallas’ endemic urban problems. The new report identifies several of them:

Creating jobs: the new study estimates removing I-345 could lead to the creation of 39,000 new jobs and housing for 11,519 residents, which is higher than previous estimates.

Breaking a cycle of unsustainable infrastructure investment: If highways don’t alleviate congestion, as this study suggests, this means that Texas’ highway-centric transportation strategy is both extremely expensive and fundamentally unsustainable. According to the new report, 40 percent of Texas’ transportation budget (\$8.6 billion) goes to maintaining the current system, and 30 percent of the budget is allocated for building new highways.

Hitting climate goals: This new study treats environmental justice as a key reason to remove the highway. The report recounts the history of how the construction of Dallas’ urban freeways

destroyed and displaced many Black communities, while helping to entrench a cycle of disinvestment in many of those places. “While I-345 currently gives residents vehicular access between their neighborhood and services/jobs away from the neighborhood, it also disrupts the urban fabric and exposes nearby residents to air pollution,” the report states.

Currently, single-occupant vehicle trips account for 88 percent of Dallas’ overall percentage of greenhouse gas emissions. The city’s Climate Action Plan wants to reduce that to 62 percent by 2050. Removing highways to create more walkable communities is an essential component of meeting the climate plan’s benchmarks.

Creating new urban districts: Another improvement on CityMAP is the Framework Plan’s neighborhood vision plans, which show the potential for development after I-345 is removed. The renderings help drive home how much land the elevated highway impacts, and the scale of opportunity that exists once it is removed. This is not only significant for the specific neighborhoods impacted by the highway removal, but the city as a whole. As the report notes, most of Dallas’ recent economic growth has occurred in more dense and walkable urban places.

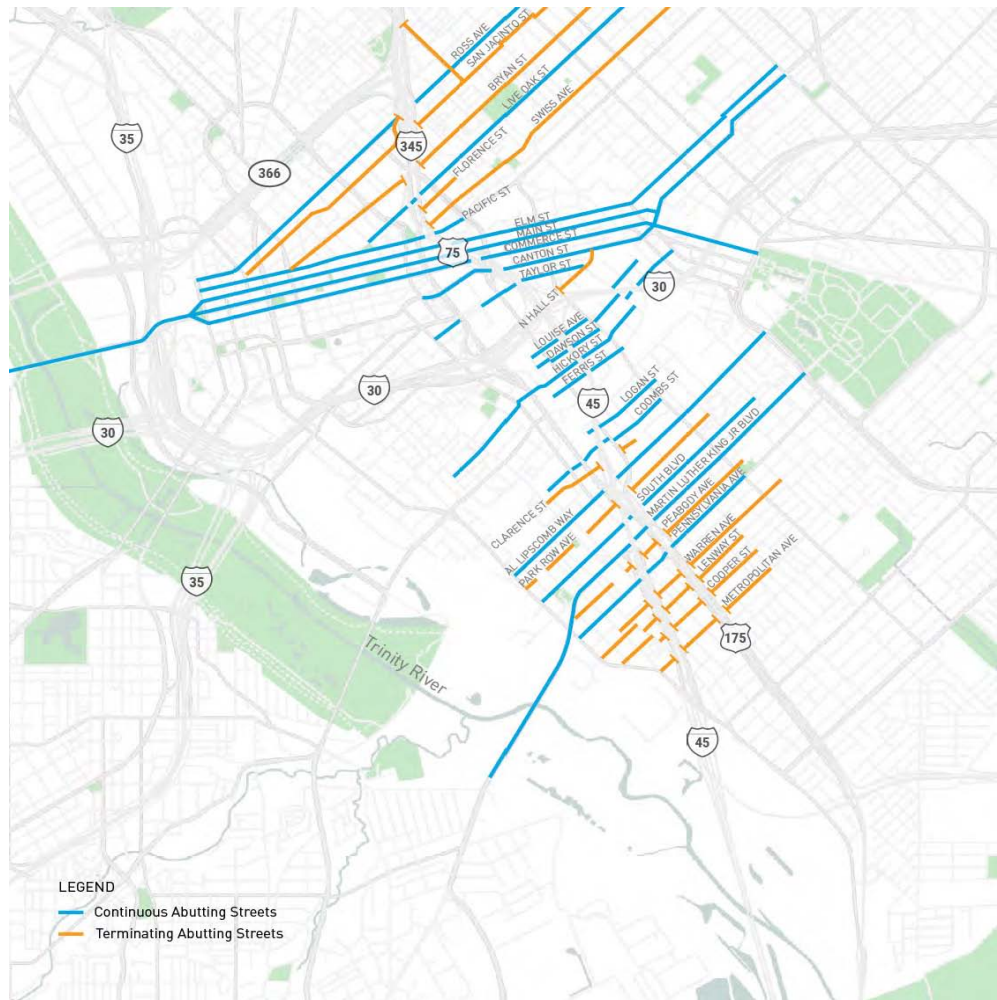
But only 38 areas in all of North Texas [can be considered walkable and urban places](#), which accounts for only around 0.1 percent of the entire region’s land area.

That’s a problem. Because walkable urban neighborhoods are in such short supply, they are extremely expensive places to live. That creates economic pressures on the real estate market that helps perpetuate cycles of gentrification and displacement. The only way to break these cycles is to build more walkable communities, to create additional supply to meet demand.

Removing I-345 presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rapidly increase the number of walkable, self-sustaining urban communities in the city. If developed properly, this could bring both jobs and affordable housing to the doorstep of neighborhoods that need it most.

The report lacks a more detailed analysis of land use policies that could ensure that new developments include affordable housing, services that meet the needs of surrounding communities, and job opportunities for southern Dallas neighborhoods. That will require complicated policy tools that are worthy of their own extensive study. That needs to be done.

In addition to fears of how a removal of I-345 will affect mobility, there are understandable concerns that new development will follow in the typical Dallas, Uptown-esque fashion, creating a shiny, pricy new neighborhood serving only those who can afford it.



Removing I-345 would allow for the street grid to be stitched back together.
I-345/45 Framework Plan

What's Next?

As I mentioned up top, the Coalition for a New Dallas [will present this plan](#) to the public tomorrow. The three major downtown Dallas transportation projects—D2, Interstate 30's redesign, and I-345—are all moving into advanced stages of planning. This report comes at a time when public officials are looking to tie those three projects together in ways that could determine their shape and scope and their impact on the neighborhoods they exist within.

The pending TxDOT I-345 traffic study will also lay out some assumptions that could shape the public debate around the future of the removal project. This report adds context to that conversation, offering a weighty counterpoint should TxDOT argue that removing the road will trigger a transportation catastrophe.

But more than fodder for highway removal champions, this report continues a new model for long-range planning that CityMAP initiated. CityMAP gave public officials a clear set of shared values and objectives that have helped guide the planning process around I-345 and the other highways that crisscross our city. It is one of the things that has helped Dallas avoid the kind of blow-up that has consumed TxDOT's Interstate 45 expansion project in Houston, which has

devolved into a political and legal nightmare. This Framework Plan – a kind of CityMAP II – should provide similar guidance as those negotiations move into the next phase.

It is significant, then, that this new report is not merely the product of a single design consultant, but the product of a wide range of community organizations and partners. In that sense, it also offers a model for the kind of community engagement that should take place as I-345—and the other major downtown transportation projects—move forward.

North Texans asked to provide input on transportation projects

By City Of Fort Worth

North Texans are encouraged to comment on multiple transportation projects and programs during the next public input opportunity, which **continues through May 11**.

North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will present details on the fourth round of the COVID-19 00X Transportation Infrastructure Program, which awards to projects across the region to expedite transportation actions that help stimulate the local economy.

Staff will also present information related to a proposed single-occupancy trip reduction resolution that establishes a regional trip reduction target to reduce drive-alone commute trips through Travel Demand Management strategies such as teleworking, ridesharing, active transportation and transit.

Additionally, information related to several regional air quality initiatives will be provided. The 2021 ozone season began March 1 and runs through Nov. 30. Currently, Dallas-Fort Worth does not meet federal air quality standards for the pollutant ozone. Staff will present an introduction to the pollutant, an overview of the region's progress and information on how the public can contribute to the regional air quality solution by keeping their car in good condition. Finally, modifications to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Development Project Listing will be available for online review and comment. The Map Your Experience tool, Regional Smoking Vehicle Program and vehicle incentive opportunities will also be highlighted.

Learn more or receive [a recording of the presentations](#). To request hard copies of the information, contact Carli Baylor [by email](#) or at 817-608-2365.

6 rural Texas counties file lawsuit against Dallas-Houston high speed train

By Teresa Gubbins, Dallas Culture Map

A lawsuit has been filed against the high-speed train being planned between Dallas and Houston, calling out its environmental impact. The suit has been filed by a group that includes six mostly rural Texas counties, 10 landowners, and Texans Against High-Speed Rail Inc., an anti-rail group.

Plaintiffs include: The Counties of Grimes, Freestone, Leon, Madison, Navarro, and Waller; and landowners Ronny Caldwell, Calvin House, Donovan Maretick, David & Heather Miseldine, Ronald & Becky Scasta, Gene & Michaelle Whitesides, and Logan Wilson III.

The [lawsuit](#) was filed on April 14 against the U.S. Department of Transportation, and alleges that DOT's Federal Railroad Administration conducted a shoddy review of the environmental impact of the rail line, including its proposed use of Japanese bullet-train technology that won't connect to existing railways.

Texas Central Railroad, the developer, is not included in the lawsuit.

The complaint says that Central Japan Railway Co.'s Tokaido Shinkansen HSR technology won't run on any other tracks and no other trains can run on its tracks, and therefore won't support the existing national rail network.

"If construction starts but cannot be completed or the project collapses after operations commence, miles and miles of the rural Texas environment will be scarred with a useless, hulking, rusting piece of iron," the complaint says.

Construction on the rail line won't start until it receives approval from the Surface Transportation Board, a federal agency that regulates rail. According to the lawsuit, Texas Central has not submitted an application to the STB.

The case is Texans Against High-Speed Rail Inc. et al. v. U.S. Department of Transportation et al., case number 6:21-cv-00365, in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas.

"Before putting any pen to paper, FRA had already made up its mind about what it was going to do and simply did it," the lawsuit says. "Throughout the process, and likely related to having acted so far outside its lawful mission, FRA made inexplicable and irrational decisions while running roughshod over [National Environmental Policy Act]'s procedural requirements, the [Administrative Procedure Act]'s constraint on arbitrary and capricious decision-making, and Texans' private property rights. FRA merely papered the file in an attempt to justify decisions that had already been made."

Traffic alert! This busy far north Fort Worth intersection is about to be rebuilt

by Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star Telegram

A busy intersection in far north Fort Worth is about to get a makeover, and motorists can expect minor delays in the area for much of the rest of this year while the work is being performed.

The intersection of North Beach Street and Basswood Boulevard, which is frequently used by commuters traveling from northern Tarrant County to central and downtown Fort Worth, is scheduled to be rebuilt and modernized. North Beach Street in particular is often used by drivers as an alternative to [Interstate 35W, which also is under construction in far north Fort Worth](#).

When the interchange is completed, the most noticeable change for motorists will be double left-turn lanes in all four directions, city officials said. The area is known for long lines during peak travel periods, and many motorists who wish to turn left can become frustrated because the existing single left-turn lanes only hold a handful of cars.

The lines for left-turn traffic can also block traffic wishing to go straight through the intersection from the left main lane.

“The main goal and purpose of this project is to improve the queuing for left-turn movement, which is contributing to the delay at that intersection,” said Lauren Prieur, Fort Worth transportation and public works assistant director.

Construction is expected to begin as early as Tuesday.

Residents who wish to learn more about the project are invited to a virtual community meeting at 6 p.m. Monday. [Information on how to log into the meeting](#) is available at the city’s website, fortworthtexas.gov.

The contractor for the project will be McClendon Construction Co., of Burleson.

The estimated cost of the intersection makeover is \$2.4 million. The city’s 2018 bond proceeds will cover \$1.7 million, and the remainder will come from impact fees, which are paid to the city by developers as a way to cover the cost of extending city services to their properties.

Prieur said that, while motorists may experience delays caused by the presence of a work zone at the intersection and the temporary relocation of lanes at different times, the contractor intends to keep the same number of lanes that are out there today open at all times.

North Beach Street currently has three main lanes and one left-turn lane in each direction. Basswood Boulevard has two main lanes and a left turn lane in each direction.

“We don’t shut down any of the lanes,” she said. “We don’t shut down the roadway. At all times, that intersection will be open.”

Although the specific timeline for improving each quadrant of the intersection could change, Prieur said the plan at the moment calls for work to begin first on the eastbound side of Basswood Boulevard, followed by the westbound side of Basswood Boulevard, the southbound side of North Beach Street and then the northbound side of North Beach Street.

Construction is expected to be completed in December, including any weather delays.

About 31,228 vehicles per day use that stretch of North Beach Street and 19,086 vehicles use that portion of Basswood Boulevard, according to [North Central Texas Council of Governments 2019 traffic counts](#).

\$1.3 billion is needed to keep up with Fort Worth's growth. City can do less than half

By Luke Ranker, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

At least a few times a year — basically any time Fort Worth gets heavy rain — water swells over Wagley Robertson Road in the northern suburbs, blocking already congested traffic.

“You can't drive a school bus, you can drive an emergency vehicle or anything else down the road when it rains,” said Rusty Fuller, president of the North Fort Worth Alliance.

Far north residents like Fuller may be the most frustrated in the city when it comes to traffic. Growth has notoriously outpaced the city abilities to manage traffic.

“We keep being told it's too expensive,” Fuller said.

Fort Worth planners have identified nearly \$1.3 billion worth of projects — more than half, about \$677 million, would tackle roads and mobility in a city where suburban growth has congested streets. New or improved city buildings, libraries or fire and police stations make up a little more than a quarter, and park improvements are about 17%.

But voters will likely be asked to support about \$500 million in a 2022 bond election, meaning residents will need to voice their concerns loudly for projects in their area to make the cut. A preliminary list of projects voters might consider next year will be made public in May. Residents can chime in about their priorities through fall with a series of public meetings.

That's a tall order for the city, which has in the past struggled to complete projects rapidly. Typically, debt funded projects should be completed in about five years, with the city asking voters for more debt every four years.

In 2019 the Star-Telegram found that more than a third of projects voters approved in 2014 were unfinished. A couple of those still remain, and roughly two thirds of the 2018 projects won't be completed when voters are asked to approve more in May 2022. Most involve road work in Fort Worth's suburbs, according to a presentation to the City Council this past week.

The slow pace of street projects in congested areas is frustrating to residents, City Manager David Cooke acknowledged, but for a city growing as rapidly as Fort Worth — about 20,000 people a year — it may be impossible to change.

“I think some of this will always be playing catch up,” Cooke said. “I don't know that we would go out and build a four-lane street in advance.”

The only major street work left from the 2014 bond election is a \$20 million improvement of McCart Avenue from Risinger Road to Twin Leaf Drive that was held up by right-of-way acquisition.

The Reby Cary Youth Library, also funded in 2014, will open this summer. Construction has not started on a planned far west fire station in the Walsh area. Finding an appropriate piece of land delayed that project, but city planners said the growth in Walsh has not necessitated a new fire station yet.

Back in 2019, city employees developed a plan to move bond projects along quicker, which included starting the design process sooner and obtaining right-of-way and utility relocations before the project was fully designed.

With a few roads in the far north the city had planned to improve intersections rather than widening the whole road under the theory that efficient intersections would alleviate congestion, said Assistant City Manager Dana Burghdoff.

To expedite 2022 projects, she said design work will begin before bond money is allocated. Rather than waiting until a project is about 60% designed to begin relocating utilities and buying right-of-way, the process will start when a project is at least a third designed.

Though the wish list reaches well over \$1 billion, Cooke said the city won't pitch voters on more than \$500 million in bond debt. The city's debt capacity is about \$600 million, an estimate based on growth in the tax base and future interest. The city should keep about \$100 million of that capacity unused.

Debt is not the only way the city can fund projects.

With roadwork, Tarrant County can take on part of some projects. Earlier this month the council approved a 50% match for some county bond projects — \$155.15 million for arterials and \$25.55 million for some railroad crossings.

Two of those arterial projects are in the same area where Fuller described flooding and congestion on Wagley Robertson. Roughly \$20 million is set aside for Bonds Ranch Road from from Wagley Robertson to U.S 287. Like with that project, to fix flooding on Wagley Robertson, the city will likely have to work with the county as the road crosses in and out of the city limits.

The city will also look to partner with the state and the North Central Texas Council of Governments on work related to state highways, particularly in the Walsh area.

Impact fees, charged to builders to offset the cost of roadwork, is another option that some candidates for City Council in the May election said they'd like to explore.

The city has a perennial conversation about raising impact fees, which vary based on the type and scope of a project, Cooke said. Those fees are often combined with bond money to lessen the debt required and move projects along, but developers often pass the cost onto property buyers.

2022 BOND PROJECTS

Specific projects have not been named for the 2022 bond election, but council members and residents like Fuller already have priorities in mind.

Besides Wagley Robertson, Fuller said the North Fort Worth Alliance would like to see more work done to Bonds Ranch Road, specifically past U.S. 287. On Keller Hicks Road, children often have to walk in the ditch to get to nearby schools because of a lack of sidewalks, he said.

"The city keeps waiting for more development to happen, but while they wait people can't get from Point A to Point B in a timely manner," he said.

Roger Venables, the city's aviation director who is leading the 2022 bond initiative, told council members this week sidewalks, streetlights and other neighborhood safety items would be a priority next year.

East side council member Gyna Bivens wants work done on Randol Mill Road.

Far east portions of her District 5, especially near the Trinity River, have remained quasi rural despite being surrounded by Metroplex suburbs. Though not as fast as the far north, growth is coming to the area in the form of several large housing developments, but Randol Mill remains a small road.

Bivens was briefly excited during a recent discussion on road work that might be in the 2022 election after Cooke said the city had anticipated talking about Randol Mill. But Cooke said he doubted traffic counts on the road would push it high on the priority list.

"How does Randol Mill ever really get fixed in this kind of scenario?" Bivens wondered. "And if it doesn't get fixed, how do we stop building homes? Because our infrastructure is just being blown away."

Dallas Street Impact Fee Proposed

Fee could help raise cash for street and transportation problems

By Ken Kalthoff, NBC DFW

A street impact fee for new construction proposed for Dallas Monday could help pay for streets, traffic signals and sidewalks for which the city never seems to have enough money.

The suggested fee could be around \$1400 on each new single-family home and much more on bigger projects like shopping centers or apartment complexes.

Dallas Builders Association Executive Director Phil Crone said the fee would further add to the soaring cost of construction materials and to the expense builders face from extremely slow Dallas building permits.

“It does feel like a slap in the face for homebuilders and everybody in the city,” Crone said. “Dallas is already a competitive disadvantage both from the cost standpoint and just from the suburban shift we’ve seen since the pandemic came on. The city needs to be thinking about policies that bring families back in instead of pushing them back out.”

Lee Kleinman is about to complete eight years as a Dallas City Council Member watching transportation issues.

“The reality of it is, when you build an apartment complex or an office tower or something like that, you are bringing more traffic into a neighborhood,” Kleinman said. “These impact fees help offset some of that.”

New reports presented to the Dallas City Council Transportation Committee Monday showed more than half the city’s 1,400 traffic signals are more than 40 years old. Hundreds of them can’t communicate to synchronize and manage traffic.

Dallas city leaders want a walkable city but some places have no sidewalks and others have very old walkways with a policy that makes property owners pay to fix them.

“We’re looking at eliminating that part of the program so the city just carries the burden of sidewalk repair.

City officials suggested an unexpected increase in sale tax revenue could pay for needed pavement markings that urgently need replacement but the rest of the needs remain largely underfunded.

“This is what people expect their city taxes to pay for and this is quality of life,” Council Member Cara Mendelsohn said. “So far today, all of these things need to be better funded for our residents.”

But several members also said the new fee on new construction would be very unpopular.

“We are trying to build houses in the southern part of town, and we don't want to turn developers around and say here is an impact fee. I can see in the future we could do it but right now we need more housing to get built on the ground,” City Councilman Tennell Atkins said.

Councilman Chad West wanted more input from builders before taking a position.

“We need to vet it out on who it is going to impact before council starts making recommendations,” West said. “I’m not going to feel comfortable supporting this today.”

A briefing document said the city was planning to spend \$600,000 to hire a consultant to take input and study possible revenue from the new fees.

“That’s probably the most Dallas thing ever, that we’ll pay several hundred thousand dollars to have a study to ask us what we think about it and give the city a recommendation and as you can see here, we’re doing it for free,” Crone said.

According to a Dallas briefing Monday, among comparable cities in Texas, Houston and San Antonio do not have street impact fees, but Austin, Fort Worth, Arlington, Frisco, Garland, McKinney and Rowlett do.

Crone said those that have the fee have large vacant areas that may support large new developments that need entirely new roads and sidewalks.

In Dallas, Crone said new construction is already paying its way with requirements to build those improvements in locations immediately adjacent to a new structure.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/dallas-street-impact-fee-proposed/2609914/>

DART's silver line will connect directly to Trinity Metro at DFW Airport

By Teresa Gubbins, Culture Map Dallas

There's a new public transportation connection in the works that will make travel easier across Dallas-Fort Worth.

At its April 14 meeting, the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Board of Directors authorized a payment of \$21.5 million to Trinity Metro for the construction of approximately 2 miles of rail and platform facilities that will link the Cotton Belt line, AKA the Silver line, to Terminal B at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

The reimbursement is associated with the facilities to be shared by the DART Silver Line.

DART will also give Trinity Metro \$6 million for access rights to Terminal B for the future DART Silver Line project once it begins service in 2023.

The Trinity Metro Board of Directors approved a similar agreement on April 13.

Paul N. Wageman, chairman of the DART Board of Directors, said in a statement, "we are pleased to finalize the agreement with Trinity Metro. It marks another important right of way segment that DART has secured and is critically needed to complete the construction of the Silver Line."

Wageman said that the Silver Line will address demand by "a growing number of residents and employees in the eastern portion of the region for a convenient and efficient connection to DFW Airport."

The 26-mile Silver Line project will traverse seven cities between DFW Airport, Grapevine, Coppell, Dallas, Carrollton, Addison, Richardson, and Plano, and include 10 new stations. The primary purpose of the Silver Line is to provide rail service to employment, population, and activity centers in the northern part of the DART service area.

When completed, the Silver Line will connect with the Trinity Metro TEXRail commuter rail line at DFW North station and provide access to downtown Fort Worth and Tarrant County.

The Silver Line will also connect with the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) A-train commuter rail line which goes to Denton County; DART's Green Line which goes to Dallas Love Field and downtown Dallas via Downtown Carrollton Station; and DART's Red and Orange Lines at CityLine/Bush Station, which goes to Downtown Plano and the eastern side of the DART network.

The Silver Line can't connect directly to DART's current rail network because they use two different kinds of systems.

DART uses electric-powered light rail vehicles that get their power from overhead electrical cables.

The Silver Line will be a diesel multipler unit, similar to TexRail, with electrical engines that are powered by diesel, and therefore have no overhead lines.

Exclusive: Local developer plans massive 775-acre mixed-use development in Midlothian

By Ryan Salchert, Dallas Business Journal

A Dallas-based developer and a group of local landowners are planning to bring an enormous mixed-use development to Midlothian, according to a site plan obtained by the *Dallas Business Journal*.

The project would be located north of W. Main Street between U.S. Highway 287 and U.S. 67. It would include nearly 5 million square feet of industrial space, including two 1 million-square-foot warehouses: retail, commercial space, a church, 67.8 acres of mixed-use space, 23 acres of apartments, 95.4 acres of single-family homes, 23.1 acres of townhomes and a park, according to plans.

The Ellis County Appraisal District identifies the property owners as Fulson Midlothian Partners LP, a Dallas-based entity, and Cann Real Estate LTD, a Fort Worth-based entity. Fulson Midlothian Partners LP owns about 536 acres in the area while Cann Real Estate LTD owns about 239 acres. The entities are owned by two separate landowners, according to [Charlie Anderson](#), general partner of Fulson Midlothian Partners LP. Together, the entities are working to get the sites rezoned as one.

The document containing the site plan did not name the project's developer, only identifying them as a Dallas-based company that has delivered over 6 million square feet in the last four years. Anderson declined to name the developer.

The document indicates that the new development could generate more than \$4 million in property tax revenue annually for the city and \$9 million in tax revenue for the Midlothian Independent School District. It would also allow for some large warehouses to be built, [which are in high demand](#) across the Metroplex.

"It's something unique that not many sites have. We can accommodate these large users that need 800,000 to 1.5 million square feet. We hope we can attract some users that would otherwise go to Alliance or Hutchins or Lancaster," Anderson said. "The Midlothian area has a high-quality base of potential employees. That's what these large users are looking for. Since many of these large users are also Fortune 1000 companies, it brings very high quality, high credit type businesses to the area."

Separating the proposed industrial space from the residential portions of the project is an existing creek and dense treeline, says Anderson. While the industrial land is flat and without many trees, Anderson describes the residential side of the project as having rolling hills, comparing its similarities to the Texas Hill Country. If the project does receive rezoning approval, work could begin in 18 months.

While this is the largest project Anderson is involved with, he has also assembled large tracts of land for eight others across North Texas, all under different entities.

A mixed-use project that combines both residential and industrial uses is not very common but could become more popular as industrial demand continues. In nearby Waxahachie, Jerry Jones' Blue Star Land has plans for a [125-acre mixed-use development](#) that would include up to 1 million square feet of warehouse space. Plans also call for multifamily and retail.

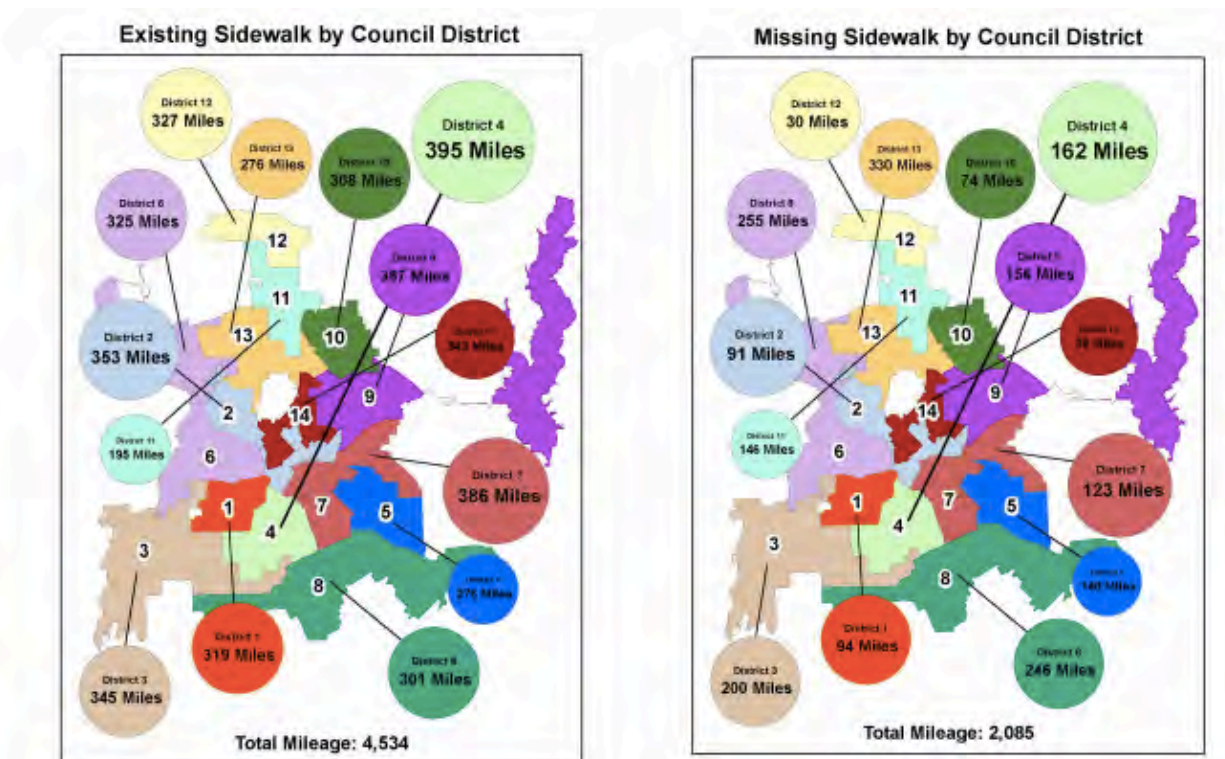
Dallas Is Missing More Than 2,000 Miles of Sidewalk

There will soon be a plan to fix the city's broken sidewalk system. But who's going to put the plan into action?

By Alex Macon, D Magazine

Dallas has crummy sidewalks. If you've spent any amount of time walking here, you already know this. And if city officials didn't already know this, they certainly do now that the early returns are in on a survey meant to inform a forthcoming "Sidewalk Master Plan." It's [one](#) of several such previously adopted or still-in-the-works master plans (including the city's own separate but related [strategic mobility plan](#)) that tell us just how badly we've stepped in it over the last 70-plus years of car-centric transportation planning. These plans also show us a better way — if city council members decide to pay for it.

The preliminary data, collected and analyzed by design consultants Kimley-Horn and presented Monday to the city council's transportation committee, show that the city right now has a sidewalk system covering more than 4,500 miles. That sounds like a lot until you read the next bullet point, which reckons there are more than 2,000 miles of roadway with missing sidewalk. As with so many things, sidewalks in Dallas are not equitably distributed:



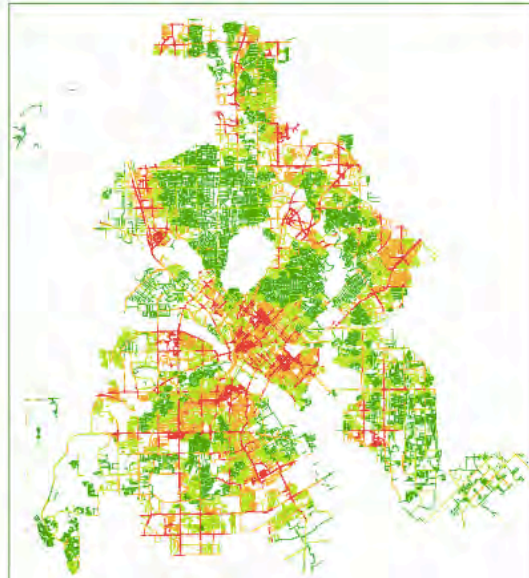
The consultants looked at more than 1,000 survey responses and used information gathered in public meetings to help identify areas of particular need. They also considered:

- Pedestrian safety determined by pedestrian fatalities and injuries in specific areas.
- Activity areas, meaning places where development and infrastructure work are already planned.
- Street size, judging that a bigger street will have more car traffic and therefore more chances for cars to run people over.

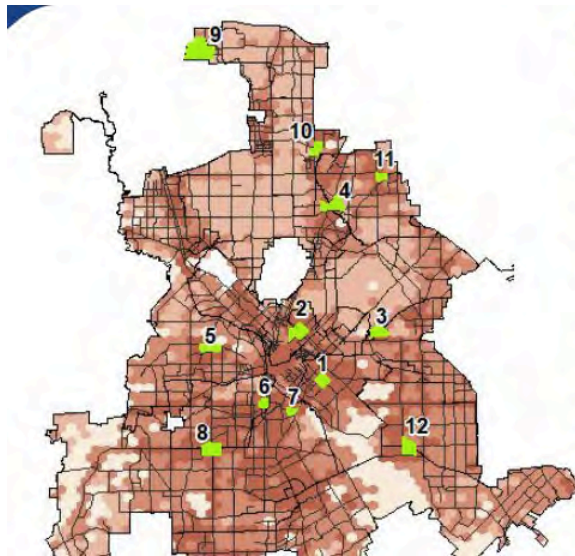
Taking all that into account, Kimley-Horn created a sidewalk prioritization map:

Prioritization Map

- Low
- Medium-Low
- Medium-High
- High



And a list of very specific neighborhoods where sidewalks could make a world of difference:



Area #	Council District(s)	Description
1	7	MLK JR
2	2, 14	Renaissance Oaks & Haskell
3	7, 9	Tenison Park East
4	10, 13	Fair Oaks
5	6	Hampton Crossing
6	1	Southern Gateway
7	4	Cedar Creek
8	1, 3, 4	Hampton & Illinois
9	12	Carrollton Gateway
10	11	Coit/365
11	10	Woodbridge
12	5, 8	Elam Creek

Identifying these focus areas isn't the end of it. Not the start, either. The timeline calls for "report and implementation" in June, when the Sidewalk Master Plan will be readying for its big debut. Then the city can start building out sidewalks, remaking streets to be hospitable to people on foot and furthering Dallas' transformation into a more walkable, equitable, sustainable place.

Or not. Maintaining the sidewalks, we have is already expensive. Adding and maintaining more would cost an additional tens of millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, according to the consultants at Kimley-Horn. The city budget funds the development of a sidewalk master plan, but not its implementation.

“The goal of this plan is to prioritize sidewalk needs so that as funding becomes available, we can do it,” Public Works Director Robert Perez told city council members, who seemed to agree that Dallas needs better sidewalks. These are, it should be said, members of the same city council that scrapped to no end over a comparatively measly [\\$7 million in police overtime funding](#) last budget season. In a couple months, these city council members will have a sidewalk plan. But will they have the political will to come up with the millions and millions of dollars it’s going to take to make Dallas [stop hating pedestrians](#)?

Dallas-Fort Worth gets a failing grade again for its air quality, study finds

The air remains pretty unhealthy to breathe, with some levels getting worse year-over-year.

By Jennifer Prohov, WFAA

The air across Dallas-Fort Worth [remains unhealthy to breathe](#), the American Lung Association found.

Collin, Dallas, Denton and Tarrant Counties all have a high level of ozone pollution, for which each got an "F" grade in the [State of the Air 2021 report](#).

And the quality of the air has actually gotten worse over the past year, the report found. The number of unhealthy days of high ozone went up year-over-year in cities across Texas, including Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and El Paso.

But that wasn't the case for American cities at large.

Between 2017 and 2019, more than 123.2 million people in the U.S. lived in counties that got an "F" for ozone levels, a significantly lower number than previous years, [the report found](#). That means about 3 out of every 8 people live somewhere with an "F" grade in ozone air pollution.

Researchers attributed the high levels of ozone pollution to warming temperatures as we've seen some of the hottest years on record globally. With climate change driving warmer temperatures, they warn, ozone pollution is more likely to form and becomes more difficult to clean up.

While ozone levels remain problematic, Dallas County's average annual concentration of particle pollution remained acceptable, [the report found](#), giving it a "pass" grade, while its annual average number of high particle pollution days got a "C," a passing grade, as well.

Overall, the county has seen a consistent downward trend in these levels of pollution over the past 20 or so years, with the air getting widely cleaner as time goes on. But, within the last few years, levels have started to rise again.

But in Tarrant County, the outlook when it comes to particle pollution is much better. There, they not only got a "pass" grade for the average annual concentration of particle pollution, but the [report also gave the county](#) an "A" for the annual average number of high particle pollution days.

Tarrant County has steadily seen particle pollution levels continue to fall or remain stagnant. The report did not include data for Collin or Denton County on particle pollution. Even with its "C" grade, Dallas County did not fare as poorly as other counties across the country.

Around 20.7 million people, about 6.3% of the country's population, live in counties that failed all three measures of air pollution, the report said.

Researchers found that often, the people living with the worst quality air were people of color. Of the 20.7 million living in the worst conditions in the U.S., about 14 million are people of color, according to the report.

"People of color were 61% more likely than white people to live in a county with a failing grade for at least one pollutant, and over three times as likely to live in a county with a failing grade for all three pollutants," [the report stated](#).

While the D-FW area didn't fail all three, overall, the air here still isn't that great. Dallas-Fort Worth ranked 17 out of 229 metropolitan areas across the country for high ozone days and still is in the top 50 for particle pollution levels.

So, what exactly is ozone or particle pollution?

Ozone is an invisible pollutant that can be extremely bad for one's health, according to the American Lung Association. The pollutant is "currently one of the least-well-controlled... in the U.S" and can be deadly.

It's known better as smog, which is produced when ozone mixes with other pollutants. It can be harmful to breathe, particularly because of how it chemically reacts with the tissue in your lungs, according to the American Lung Association.

You've probably heard of ozone before, in reference to the ozone layer. That's a good layer of the gas that protects the earth from ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

But when ozone gets produced and concentrated on the ground, it can be deadly, particularly for those who already have difficulty breathing.

Ozone is created from certain gases that come from burning fossil fuels (think a car's tailpipe) or from when chemicals evaporate. When those gases get hit with sunlight, ozone smog is created.

People who work or exercise outside, those with asthma or COPD, anyone over the age of 65, and children and teens are particularly vulnerable to ozone pollution, the American Lung Association said. The pollution itself can cause immediate breathing problems or premature death when levels are high.

Particle pollution also can come from your tailpipes— it's the "dirty" part of your exhaust, essentially made up of tiny particles that can be harmful to breathe in, the American Lung Association explains. The smaller those particles become, the harder it is for our bodies to keep them out, allowing the smallest ones to enter our lungs and bloodstreams.

Those exposed to particle pollution have a higher risk of heart disease, lung cancer and asthma attacks, according to the American Lung Association. Researchers say this kind of pollution alone can cause lung cancer too.

People who are obese, low-income, current and former smokers, have cardiovascular or lung disease are all at a greater level of risk from particle pollution, along with people of color and those under the age of 18.

Both types of pollution can cause premature death, according to the American Lung Association, as well as problems like asthma attacks and cardiovascular damage.

Developmental and reproductive harm has also been linked to high pollution levels.

10 tips from the American Lung Association on how to protect yourself from pollution:

1. *Check daily air pollution forecasts in your area. The color-coded forecasts can let you know when the air is unhealthy in your community. Sources include local radio and TV weather reports, newspapers and online at airnow.gov.*
2. *Avoid exercising outdoors when [pollution levels are high](#). When the air is bad, walk indoors in a shopping mall or gym or use an exercise machine. Limit the amount of time your child spends playing outdoors if the air quality is unhealthy.*
3. *Always avoid exercising [near high-traffic areas](#). Even when air quality forecasts are green, the vehicles on busy highways can create high pollution levels up to one-third a mile away.*
4. *Use less energy in your home. Generating electricity and other sources of energy creates air pollution. By reducing energy use, you can help improve air quality, curb greenhouse gas emissions, encourage energy independence and save money! Check out the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [easy tips for conserving energy at home](#).*
5. *Encourage your child's school to reduce exposure to school bus emissions. To keep exhaust levels down, schools should not allow school buses to idle outside of their buildings. Many school systems are using the U.S. EPA's [Clean School Bus Campaign](#) to clean up these dirty emissions.*
6. *Walk, bike or carpool. Combine trips. Use buses, subways, light rail systems, commuter trains or other alternatives to driving your car.*
7. *Don't burn wood or trash. [Burning firewood](#) and trash are among the major sources of particle pollution (soot) in many parts of the country.*
8. *Use hand-powered or electric lawn care equipment rather than gasoline-powered. Old two-stroke engines like lawnmowers and leaf or snow blowers often have no pollution control devices. They can pollute the air even more than cars, though engines sold since 2011 are cleaner.*
9. *Don't allow anyone to smoke indoors and support measures to make all public places [tobacco-free](#).*
10. *Get involved. Start by checking out our [Healthy Air Campaign](#) which has more information about what you can do.*

DCTA gathering feedback on proposed on-demand system transition

The restructuring proposal aims to expand service area, add “virtual stops” in lieu of fixed route stops, improve regional mobility, as well as the rider experience.

By Mischa Wanek-Libman, MASS TRANSIT

Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) has started collecting feedback regarding its proposed network restructuring that would see the authority transition to a mostly on-demand service system and cease operation of the majority of its fixed-route bus service.

Via would operate the GoZone on-demand service within designated zones using dedicated vans that will be wheelchair accessible. Riders would book a trip through an app, call DCTA’s customer service line or visit DCTA’s Downtown Transit Center to book a trip in person. Once booked, the rider would be directed toward a “virtual bus stop” where a driver would pick them up.

“With the proposed GoZone service, pick-up and drop-off points will multiply compared to the existing fixed-route service. So not only do the proposed GoZones cover more territory, but they also provide more virtual stops which is a major convenience factor for users,” DCTA Communications Coordinator Kayla Laird wrote in a blog on the proposed service.

GoZone would replace all fixed route bus service in Denton and Lewisville, with the exception of Denton Connect Routes 3 and 7. Additionally, the University of North Texas shuttle and UNT Lyft program will remain in operation to ensure transportation around campus.

DCTA will collect feedback on the program through June 25 in preparation for a July 2021 presentation to the board. The GoZone service is scheduled to launch in September 2021, but DCTA notes any significant change to the plan would result in a delay in its roll out.

The transition to GoZone service would be implemented in two phases. Phase 1 includes roll out of base service in Denton and Lewisville/Highland Village, Sunday and holiday on-demand service, a Sunday A-train replacement service, a late-night “guaranteed ride home” service, and a Saturday service hours extension. To aid in the transition between the two service plans, DCTA plans to operate both its fixed-route services and GoZone services during the first two weeks. Following that, only service on fixed-routes 3 and 7 will remain and operate in parallel with GoZone service to evaluate which meets riders’ needs.

Phase 2A, which would launch in early 2022 would expand GoZone service to Castle Hills and incorporate Access services and Phase 2B would include the addition of weekday late-night hours. The final phase’s launch is targeted for the summer of 2022.

“We are looking forward to the enhanced quality of service, increased service area and extended hours of service that have been proposed for GoZone service,” DCTA CEO Raymond Suarez said. “The proposed GoZone on-demand rideshare service will improve the rider experience, enhance service delivery and build our efficiency as a mobility provider.”

Feedback can be provided to DCTA via dctafeedback.net and an interactive map of the proposed service is available at <https://dctafeedback.net/gozone/map#/>.

Bob Hampton led a vivid life - Hurst mayor, Tarrant County commissioner & Cold War spy

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Bob Hampton lived a life of public service as a former Hurst mayor and Tarrant County commissioner — and he had an interesting past that included time as a Cold War spy.

He died Monday after a brief illness at age 89.

“He started his adult life as a counter-intelligence officer in Germany during the Korean War,” his son, Fort Worth attorney Carter Hampton, said in an interview. “He went to his grave never admitting he had ever been in East Germany. He was a loyal soldier, and I teased him about it.”

Hampton was born Nov. 4, 1931 at his family’s home in Azle. He had four brothers and two sisters.

His father operated a general store with an ice house in Azle, but he lost the store during the Great Depression and the family moved to a farm, Hampton remembered during a recently recorded [Hurst oral history project](#).

He graduated high school at age 16, in 1948. He then attended schools now known as Weatherford College, Texas Wesleyan University and the University of North Texas, where in 1951 he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in public school administration and a minor in math.

He enlisted in the Army and originally underwent infantry training but scored well on the Armed Forces Qualification Test and was sent to counterintelligence school in Maryland.

He served as a field agent and special investigator with top secret clearance for several years.

Hampton loved his time in counterintelligence for many reasons, said Sue Hampton, his daughter-in-law.

“He didn’t have to wear a uniform. He got to wear a business suit and hat and tie,” she said, adding that he often moved about the southern half of the French occupation zone in southwest Germany in an executive car.

“The exciting part was he had a brand new, black Opel Kapitän sedan,” she said. “He said it was hell on wheels.”

Hampton returned to North Texas in 1957 and bought a house in Bedford, then moved to Hurst in 1960.

At the time, “there were practically no houses north of Bedford-Eules Road,” he said in the oral history.

He worked for many years at Bell Helicopter, where he was a group engineer in the research and development department and helped design the [Bell JetRanger OH-58 Kiowa helicopter](#).

He and his wife, Annette, bought a Hurst jewelry store from the retiring owner and operated it for about 10 years. He said the most luxurious item he sold during that time was a 15-carat diamond ring, which fetched \$35,000.

“That was the largest diamond I ever handled,” he said.

Hampton became interested in local government and served as a Hurst planning and zoning commissioner from 1960-62.

He then was elected to the [Hurst City Council in 1963](#) and served until 1965, when he moved to Fort Benning, Ga., for his work at Bell Helicopter. He returned to North Texas and served again on City Council from 1968-70, when he was elected mayor.

He served as mayor until 1980.

“I enjoyed the challenge of trying to keep things on course,” Hampton said during the oral history. “One of the things I decided early on was that I can’t be a jack of all trades. I’m going to concentrate on the budget, transportation and water — and the bond election for the library.”

During his time as mayor, Hampton served on the executive board of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which is federally recognized as the Dallas-Fort Worth region’s official planning body. He said he was particularly interested in a proposal to create a transportation authority that could spend money in both Tarrant and Dallas counties.

Hampton won a seat on Tarrant County Commissioner’s Court, where he served from 1985-1996. He continued to focus on transportation and mobility projects.

He pushed for the county to build higher-quality roads, and to spend the money on higher-quality road equipment. Previously, he said, the county would only make minor repairs to roads that needed major work, a frustrating process that Hampton and others called “patching patches.”

In addition to his wife of 66 years, Annette Hampton, and son Carter Hampton, other survivors include: son Dean Hampton, daughter Jeanna Smith and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Services are pending, family members said.

Hampton wished for his body to be donated to UT-Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, but because Hampton had a relatively mild case of COVID late last year the donation could not be accepted, family members said.

I-35W was treated for ice 44 hours before deadly pileup in Fort Worth, NTSB says

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The company responsible for preventing ice on the Interstate 35W TEXPress lanes applied a brine solution to the roadway 44 hours before a 133-car pileup that killed six people during a winter storm Feb. 11, according to a [NTSB preliminary report](#) released Wednesday.

The company, North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners, is responsible for the upkeep of toll and non-toll lanes at the site of the crash, which occurred on the southbound TEXPress lanes between Northside Drive and 28th Street. Company officials said Wednesday afternoon that they believed the anti-icing brine should have still been working, even though nearly two full days passed between the time it was applied and the series of crashes.

In its report, the National Transportation Safety Board, an independent federal investigation agency, cautioned that the contents of the document were preliminary and could be supplemented or corrected during the ongoing investigation. A final report is expected later this year or in early 2022.

“In the days before the crash, the area had experienced 36 consecutive hours of below freezing temperatures,” the report states. “In anticipation of forecast freezing rain and sleet, NTE Mobility Partners Segments 3 (NTEMP S3) reported that they had pretreated the traffic lanes with an Ice Slicer NM brine solution. The solution was applied to the two southbound toll lanes in the vicinity of the crash on February 9 at 10:12 a.m.”

The crash occurred about 6 a.m. on Feb. 11.

[Ice Slicer NM, also known as Ice Slider CB, is a commercial deicing and ice-prevention product](#) made mostly of sodium chloride. It is widely used by highway crews as a replacement for white salt and can be used on roads as a granular product, or in a liquid brine.

The report also noted that, about four hours before the crash, the weather station at Fort Worth’s Meacham Airport three miles north of the crash site reported light freezing rain and mist.

At 3:40 a.m., a dynamic message sign operated by NTE Mobility Partners began to display a message “ICY CONDITIONS EXIST. PLEASE USE CAUTION” in response to a crash about five miles to the north, at I-35W and Western Center Boulevard, according to the report.

NTE Mobility Partners confirmed that the area where the pileup occurred was last treated with the anti-icing brine solution about 44 hours before the incident.

Robert Hinkle, NTE Mobility Partners spokesman, said the company’s crews continually monitored roadways for ice formation in the hours before the pileup, and “the crews monitoring the roadways detected no icy conditions at the accident site.”

Hinkle also said the brine solution should have still been effective at preventing ice 44 hours after it was applied.

“The Ice Slicer NM brine solution NTE used is a high-quality brine and is effective for up to 72 hours,” Hinkle said in an email. “Because no rain occurred between the brining treatment on

February 9th and the accident, the brine would remain on the roadway for the period of its intended use.”

The NTSB report also disclosed for the first time that two of the six people killed in the crash had left their cars and were pedestrians on the highway when they were struck. Dozens of other motorists were injured, and, in all, 36 people were taken to hospitals, many crowded into ambulances with others who were wounded.

NTSB “is conducting a focused investigation to examine the road treatment strategies used to address the freezing conditions,” the report states.

NTE Mobility Partners, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Fort Worth Police Department, the Fort Worth Fire Department and the Metropolitan Area EMS Authority are playing a supporting role in the probe, NTSB says.

The company that makes [Ice Slicer, Desert Mountain Corp. of Kirtland, N.M.](#), says that while Ice Slicer can be used in a liquid brine to prevent ice from forming, it should be used in solid form to attack ice that has already formed.

“With chemical liquids such as brine, you are applying 23% chemical and 77% water,” the [company explained on its website](#). “With solid applications you are applying 100% active material. The current practice of simultaneously applying liquid and solid deicers is also proving to be a very effective deicing method. In a nutshell, where ‘dilution’ is an issue, such as in heavy precipitation, solid application is the best approach.”

In the pre-dawn hours of Feb. 11, witnesses on northbound I-35W in the same area reported that a sheet of black ice had formed on the road, making travel treacherous. Many passers-by shot video of the cars and 18-wheelers careening out of control and crashing into each other, all trapped between the toll lanes’ concrete barriers — and much of that footage went viral on social media.

Reducing Drive-Along Trips Prioritized by North Texas Government Council, Public Input Requested

Transportation planners at the North Central Texas Council of Governments are seeking public input about a proposed resolution to reduce drive-alone trips by 20 percent.

BY KIM ROBERTS, THE TEXAN

The North Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is seeking public input about a resolution promoting the reduction of single-occupancy or drive-alone vehicle trips by 20 percent.

The resolution is an effort to continue to reap the positive benefits of less traffic during the COVID-19 pandemic, Caryn Sanders, a transportation planner with NCTCOG, told *The Texan*.

With the reduced traffic due to lockdowns and other restrictive measures, the region saw improvements in air quality, she added, although Sanders could not provide specifics about those improvements.

While NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments and does not have regulatory authority, it does have persuasive authority with many of the area's governments and officials.

According to its website, the organization "is responsible for programming billions of dollars in funding for transportation projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area."

The resolution, which will be presented with public input to NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council at its meeting on May 14, "supports the establishment of a regional trip reduction target of 20 percent to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) commute trips during the peak period."

The resolution does not include a date by which this target should be reached or a mechanism for measuring the reduction among the general public.

The primary means for measuring reductions is a voluntary program of public and private employers who report their commuting behavior through a [TryParkingIt app](#).

Currently, the program has about 3,000 participants.

NCTCOG encompasses 14 counties in North Texas with a population of about 7.7 million. Sanders said they will encourage more participants to join the self-reporting program in order to measure reductions. If employers participate, they may be rewarded with financial incentives, like transit passes for employees.

The resolution provides for NCTCOG staff to provide annual updates to the Regional Transportation Council about the success of the program in reducing drive-alone trips based on numbers voluntarily reported through limited participation via the TryParkingIt app.

To assist in formulating a target goal for drive alone traffic, Sanders said they looked to other regions that have established similar goals. Examples include Austin which aimed to reduce trips by 20 percent by 2020 and Seattle which aimed to reduce trips by 28.8 percent by 2023.

NCTCOG's Travel Demand Management has several strategies to reduce traffic congestion, and this is just one of them, explained Sonya Landrum, program manager. "We are not trying to

eliminate traffic. That is not feasible. If we remove too many vehicles from the roadway, we will have safety issues.”

She added that they encourage carpooling, use of transit, compressed work weeks, and telecommuting even just one or two days a week as options for reducing traffic congestion.

During 2020, the greatest change among the voluntary participants in TryParkingIt was a significant increase in telecommuting.

Public input about the resolution and its goals is being accepted through May 11. More information about the proposal can be found on the NCTCOG [website](#).

Living along the TEXRail line. It's not just another Dallas-Fort Worth commuter train

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Matthew Ward steps out of his two-bedroom townhome, looking sharp in his dark blue pilot's uniform and with his roller luggage in tow.

He walks seven minutes to the TEXRail Iron Horse Station in North Richland Hills and buys a \$2.50 one-way ticket to DFW Airport, where in a couple of hours he will be at the controls of an Embraer 175 aircraft bound for Albuquerque.

Ward is among a growing number of people who are not only using the fledgling TEXRail line to get to work, but also making a decision to live a short walk or bike ride to the tracks. Last year he bought a home in the neighborhood specifically because he knew it would give him an easy, stress-free commute to work.

Although ridership has only gradually increased since TEXRail opened in 2019 — and the COVID pandemic kept many passengers away for much of last year — officials in cities along the line such as Fort Worth, North Richland Hills and Grapevine say their longer-term plans to build transit-oriented neighborhoods around the stations are continuing full steam ahead.

"I think for a while TEXRail was kind of a hidden gem," Ward said. "I think there's a lot of people that aren't utilizing it that definitely could."

IRON HORSE & SMITHFIELD STATIONS

The [two stations in North Richland Hills](#) in particular are drawing intense interest from developers. Residents are gobbling up the houses and townhomes that are for sale, and pre-leasing the well-appointed apartments that are under construction nearby.

The city's leadership began working on transit-oriented development concepts in the early 2000s, knowing that decades of effort would be needed to complete the projects, Mayor Oscar Trevino said.

"These stations are not built for today. They're built for 10 to 15 years down the line," Trevino said during a recent presentation to the [Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition](#).

At the city's Iron Horse Station, in a once-industrial and warehouse area just north of Loop 820, 158 acres of transit-oriented development is underway.

A development dubbed Iron Horse Commons includes construction of 49 single-family homes and 115 [townhomes built by CB Jeni](#). Prices on the homes, all of which are a five- to 10-minute walk to the train station, range from \$275,000 to \$400,000, and the area is 85% built out.

Across the street from TEXRail, a four-story, 300-unit apartment complex known as Cavelli at Iron Horse Station is under construction. It will feature amenities such as a resort-style pool and dog park and is expected to open later this year.

Later this year, construction is expected to begin on another four-story apartment complex — this one adjacent to the TEXRail station — called Iron Horse Villas. It will include 291 units, and

11,000 square feet of commercial space, where shops will be able to serve the needs of TEXRail passengers.

North Richland Hills also is encouraging development of 260 acres surrounding Smithfield Station. Four builders are selling homes in the \$260,000 to \$400,000 range at Urban Trails, a new neighborhood along Mid-Cities Boulevard a short walk to the station. Also, a new Keyworth Brewery is expected to open a few blocks from the station on nearly Davis Boulevard, and the Birdville school district is building a new Smithfield Elementary School that is expected to open in August.

With TEXRail expected to connect to Dallas Area Rapid Transit's new Silver Line in three years, TEXRail riders will have easy access to jobs and entertainment sites in Dallas and Collin counties, Trevino noted. The agency that operates TEXRail, [Trinity Metro, recently reached an agreement with DART](#) to connect the two rail lines at a shared station outside DFW Airport's Terminal B.

"A lot of people coming into this area will be more than likely using that station to get to DFW Airport, Grapevine and Addison. We'll have created opportunities for people going to Richardson, Plano," he said. "This is a start. This isn't the end-all project."

GRAPEVINE

When TEXRail opened in 2019, the agency operating the rail line, Trinity Metro, found that it wasn't just drawing riders during the usual weekday rush hours. One of the busiest ridership periods each week was on Saturdays, and the favorite destination of many travelers was the Grapevine Main Station.

The city on the north end of DFW Airport has been a tourism draw for decades, with its historical Main Street shopping area and its many resorts such as the Gaylord Texan and [Great Wolf Lodge](#). But the opening of the TEXRail station in the city's downtown area has created a new wave of development.

"We did some intercept surveys and found that a good number of people riding the trains were Tarrant County people but had not been to Grapevine before," P.W. McCallum, Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau executive director, said during a Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition meeting. He added that it's also common for travelers with a long layover at DFW Airport to take the short train ride to Grapevine to visit for a few hours, and that these visitors can often be seen in shops and restaurants with their luggage in tow.

This week the city is celebrating the [grand opening of Main Station](#), a multimillion-dollar development featuring a European style Harvest Hall with seven kitchens, a 150-foot observation tower and a 38,000-square-foot Peace Plaza.

Also, adjacent to the station is Hotel Vin. The six-story Marriott Autograph Collection hotel opened late last year.

McCallum said Grapevine also promotes TEXRail as an option for conventioners to get to his city.

"In today's world, when you're promoting events, people want to reduce their carbon footprint," he said. "The idea that you can fly into DFW and then from DFW to Grapevine you can ride TEXRail, you're able to tell your attendees and delegates that you've been responsible."

MORE DEVELOPMENT ON THE WAY

Word is spreading about how easy it is to use TEXRail, especially among those who work in aviation and need quick access to DFW Airport.

As Ward was boarding the train at Iron Horse Station on a recent early afternoon, a woman in a flight attendant's uniform also arrived at the station. Seconds later, a woman in a TSA uniform arrived, presumably on her way to work as well.

None of them seemed to know each other, but they all bought tickets for the same 1:07 p.m. train.

"I know a couple of pilots and flight attendants who live here and do the same thing," said Ward, who originally is from Nebraska and moved to North Richland Hills a little more than a year ago.

He plans to stay at least five years, and he is eager to see the area develop with more shops. He also would like more frequent service on TEXRail, which operates every half-hour during peak morning and afternoon periods, but only hourly during middays and at night.

"I see all these townhome developments going up everywhere. It's like they're taking every little piece of land they can and building it out for either apartments, student housing or townhomes or developments like this," he said. "I can definitely see a lot more of that."

Richardson looking at multiple ways to address aging infrastructure

By William C. Wadsack, Community Impact Newspaper

As part of ongoing work to maintain its streets, Richardson is recommending nearly \$98 million in street and alley reconstruction projects for its upcoming November bond packages.

“The first ring [Dallas] suburbs, particularly here in North Texas, all began to really develop approximately at the same time, so we all have the same issues,” Richardson Deputy City Manager Don Magner said. “If you look at Farmers Branch, Carrollton, Irving, Richardson—we’re all dealing with infrastructure that has a useful life of 25 or so years, and much of that infrastructure now is 40-50 years old.”

A citywide analysis of Richardson streets conducted by Fugro USA Land Inc. in 2020 showed a nearly 12% decline in the condition of the city’s roadways compared to the previous analysis done in 2014.

Assistant Director of Engineering Jim Dulac said the company drove every street in Richardson, including both directions of divided roadways, as part of its assessment.

“It’s important that we remember that this is a snapshot of our roadways,” Dulac told City Council during a March 15 briefing. “And it’s the best assessment that we have as a single citywide network on our overall conditions.”

Richardson’s annual maintenance program has helped the city keep more streets in good and satisfactory condition, Magner said. But the condition of streets categorized by the assessment as poor, or fair have continued to decline since the 2014 analysis. Currently, more than 70% of the city’s streets are at least 40 years old.

“[More than] two-thirds of the city was well developed by the time we were in the late [19]70s,” Dulac said.

While Richardson’s overall street network remains classified as “satisfactory,” Magner said the city has been having less success with preventive maintenance because of the growth of the community.

The 2020 assessment identified \$269.3 million in repairs to city streets and alleys. But Richardson has earmarked only about \$98 million worth of crucial streets projects to be included in the municipal bond package tentatively set to go before voters this fall, Magner said.

“These projects are too large to tackle in any other way [besides a bond],” he said, noting streets in this condition have not been the focus of prior bond programs or annual maintenance. “If these projects don’t get funded via [this] bond program, they will likely have to wait for the next bond program.”

Streets in need

To choose streets to recommend for the bond package, Magner said city staff started by looking

at the lowest-rated roadways.

“But even that, quite frankly, had us with an inventory of streets that were really beyond what we thought the bond program would be able to incorporate,” he said.

The nearly \$98 million in work proposed for the bond includes rebuilds on residential and commercial streets as well as high-traffic roadways and alleys. Dulac said some of the more expensive projects will involve multiple lane divided roadways. Costs for those street repairs also cover large utility, water and sewer lines.

The planned reconstruction of Custer Parkway between Campbell and Renner roads is the highest-priced project being recommended for the bond at more than \$20 million. While the residential and commercial street projects being eyed for the bond will not be as expensive as the Custer reconstruction, both types are equally vital to the city, Dulac said.

“This is the first time in [the commercial streets] category that we’ve had a fairly significant number of streets,” Dulac said. “You’ll see in some of our corporate areas, we’re recommending [projects for] consideration.”

The largest price tag in the residential category is the approximately \$12 million to redo West Shore Drive from Campbell to Arapaho Road.

The proposed bond projects also include more than \$10 million for work on alleys and around \$10 million for sidewalk reconstruction throughout the city.

“We have certainly been focused and talked about facilities [previously], but if there is an infrastructure that every community must be attentive to, it is your streets, alleys and sidewalks,” City Manager Dan Johnson said during the March 15 council meeting.

The projects being recommended for the bond package will all be complete rebuilds of the streets they are addressing, Magner said.

“The vast majority of the streets are going to be the same [number of lanes and medians] that they are today,” he said. “It’ll only be that the quality is drastically improved as a result of the rebuild.”

While the streets assessment played a part in the recommendations for the bond package, Magner said city staff also looked at things such as traffic volume, drainage, and water and sewer conditions.

“If we’re gonna tear it all up, we want to go ahead and replace it and really remedy multiple deficiencies in our infrastructure,” Magner said.

Next steps

Beyond the potential bond funds, Richardson staff said there could be federal stimulus money for infrastructure projects in the near future in addition to the possibility of grants from the county

level.

“It really will be a multifaceted strategy that we employ to try to address as many streets as we can that don’t make the bond program,” Magner said.

City Council is looking to confirm the propositions this summer and then considering calling the bond election in August. The bond package is expected to be on the Nov. 2 ballot. As that process continues, city staff will continue pursuing grants. Magner said staff will be flexible enough to “pluck out” any projects that may qualify for other funding.

Richardson’s annual maintenance program will take on several future projects that are not included in the bond or do not qualify for funding elsewhere, Magner said.

“Over the next five years, we’ll have approximately \$27 million in annual maintenance funds,” he said. “We’ll be working in the field deploying those projects while we’re deploying the bond program projects. ... Some [projects] may have to wait to the next bond program because of their size and their magnitude, but we’ll be getting a number of others completed during this period of time as well. “Outgoing Council Members Steve Mitchell and Mark Solomon both praised staff’s plans to address the city’s infrastructure needs. While these projects could create a lot of construction in the city, Mitchell said he knows many residents are ready for that. Solomon pointed out that as a transportation hub, it is critical that Richardson keep its infrastructure “moving in the right direction.”

“Just like there’s no way you can redo your home at one time, typically you’ve got to take it out, bite by bite,” he said during council’s April 5 meeting. “I think that’s what we’re doing here today. And we’re doing that as a continuing thing.”

When will Texas get around to rebuilding Interstate 35W in south Fort Worth, Burleson?

By Gordon Dickson, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Good news for commuters in south Fort Worth — sort of.

The good news is, the Texas Department of Transportation is moving forward with plans to rebuild a 10-mile stretch of Interstate 35W, from just north of I-20 in Fort Worth to just south of Texas 174 in Burleson.

It's a massive reconstruction that involves rebuilding existing lanes — including major interchanges at I-35W and I-20, as well as I-35W and Texas 174 — and modernizing ramps and frontage roads.

Also, the freeway, which currently has three main lanes in each direction, would be widened to five or six lanes.

But, it looks like the construction won't begin until 2027 at the earliest, according to information on file at the [Texas Department of Transportation](#). And, the work could continue until 2036.

Residents who want to know more about the project may attend a virtual public meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday. Information about how to attend the virtual meeting is available at www.txdot.gov.

A recorded, narrated video will be played to explain the project to attendees, and information such as design schematics and maps will be available, Texas Department of Transportation spokesman Val Lopez said in an email.

“The existing I-35W interstate highway consists of three 12-foot general purpose lanes and two 12-foot frontage road lanes in each direction,” according to a transportation department fact sheet. “TxDOT evaluated the section of I-35W from I-20 to East Renfro Street and is proposing to reconstruct and widen the main lanes with five to six 12-foot main lanes in each direction. Proposed frontage roads would be reconstructed to include two to three 12-foot lanes and 10-foot shared-use paths in each direction.”

DART Board of Directors Announces Nadine Lee as New President & Chief Executive Officer

By Gordon Shattles, DART

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Board of Directors today announced the appointment of Nadine Lee as its new president & chief executive officer. Lee, an experienced transit industry leader and engineer who has worked in the transportation industry for nearly 30 years, will assume her new position on July 12.

"The DART Board is pleased to welcome a leader of Nadine's caliber and experience to direct the agency during these challenging and exciting times," said Paul N. Wageman, chairman of the DART Board of Directors. "DART is an essential resource for the residents of our region, as well as a growth engine for all of North Texas. Nadine possesses the passion and expertise to grow DART into an even greater, more successful organization, and to create a lasting impact for our customers and local communities."

Before joining DART, Lee served as the chief of staff of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). In this role, Lee coordinated programs and services across the nation's third busiest transit agency and led an effort to make bus service more equitable and dependable for residents. Previously, she was the deputy chief innovation officer in Metro's Office of Extraordinary Innovation where she led the development of Vision 2028, Metro's 10-year strategic plan to improve mobility and quality-of-life for Los Angeles County residents.

"I am honored to be selected for the opportunity to lead this exceptional organization of dedicated and talented professionals," said Lee. "DART's employees have always demonstrated a deep commitment and dedication to its customers, mission, and each other. I look forward to building on the foundation that has been created here and developing new programs and opportunities for the customers and communities we serve."

Prior to her tenure at Metro, she led the development and implementation of the Flatiron Flyer Bus Rapid Transit for Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD), a project that produced a 40% increase in corridor ridership in its first few months of service. Lee also led RTD's Northwest Rail and Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility projects in the FasTracks Program.

"Nadine's deep knowledge and understanding of how growing transportation choices can improve the quality of life for customers aligns perfectly with DART's longstanding mission," said David Leininger, DART's interim president & chief executive officer. "I am confident that her distinguished track record of leadership and innovation will ensure the agency's continued success in serving the residents of North Texas."

Lee was appointed to the Leadership APTA Committee in 2019 and is a past director of the WTS International board. She was also honored as the WTS International Woman of the Year in 2019. A registered Professional Engineer in Colorado and Kansas, Lee received her B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

DART's New Bus Network Hints at the Future of Public Transit in North Texas

It's not as flashy as a light rail extension but creating a more efficient bus system signals that DART is finally focusing on the people who actually use public transit.

By Alex Macon, D Magazine

In the fall of 2019, DART ran a simple little experiment. The transit agency would run more buses on seven routes and see what happened. Would higher frequency—defined here as a bus arriving at a given stop at least every 15 to 20 minutes midday, if not faster—motivate more people to get on board?

“We were seeing immediate ridership gains within weeks,” says Rob Smith, DART’s assistant vice president of service planning and development. “There were more than 10 percent increases in ridership. On some days as much as 25 percent.”

It confirmed something that makes intuitive sense. People are more likely to ride a bus if they know they won’t have to spend a lot of time waiting around for one. This was what DART heard directly from riders, many of whom were also apprehensive of the impenetrable tangle of multi-colored lines that make up the current bus network map. “When we’ve talked to riders, we keep hearing the same stories,” Smith says. “They’re looking for routes that are more direct and easier to understand.”

DART’s new bus network is an effort to give people what they want. Yes, it will hopefully get more people to ride. But the [proposed network](#), recently unveiled [via a nifty interactive map](#), is in large part designed to make DART better for the riders it already has.

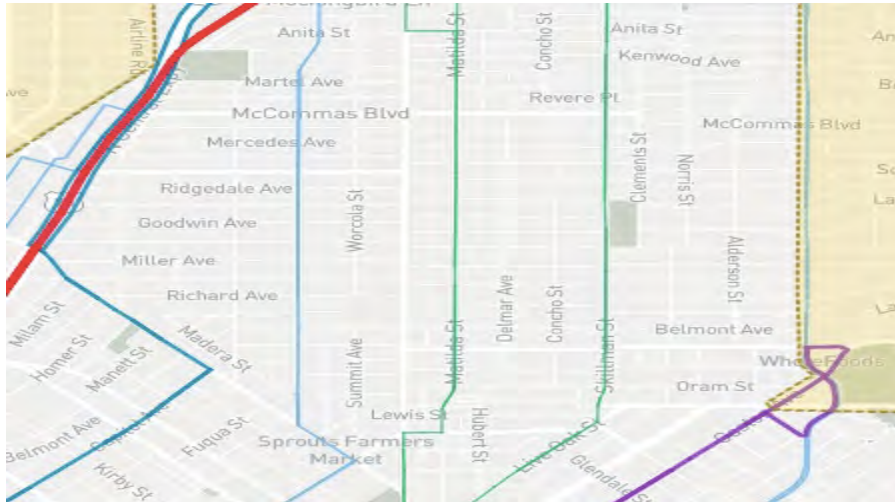
The transit agency is accepting feedback on the draft through June 8. The agency will polish it off this summer and present a final version of the plan to DART’s board of directors. If they sign off, the new network will become operational in January.

Whatever tweaks may be coming between now and then, the network will have fewer and longer routes concentrated in the places where people actually ride. This means straight lines over zigzags and curlicues, with fewer transfers for riders. These routes will enjoy higher frequency, meaning more buses and less waiting at bus stops. They’ll run for longer hours and on weekends. Where routes have been eliminated in areas with low ridership, they will be replaced by GoLink, the DART equivalent of Uber or Lyft that provides on-demand rides to connect with the higher-frequency network. The system map will look a little less like a 3-year-old was given a box of crayons and creative direction over the street grid.

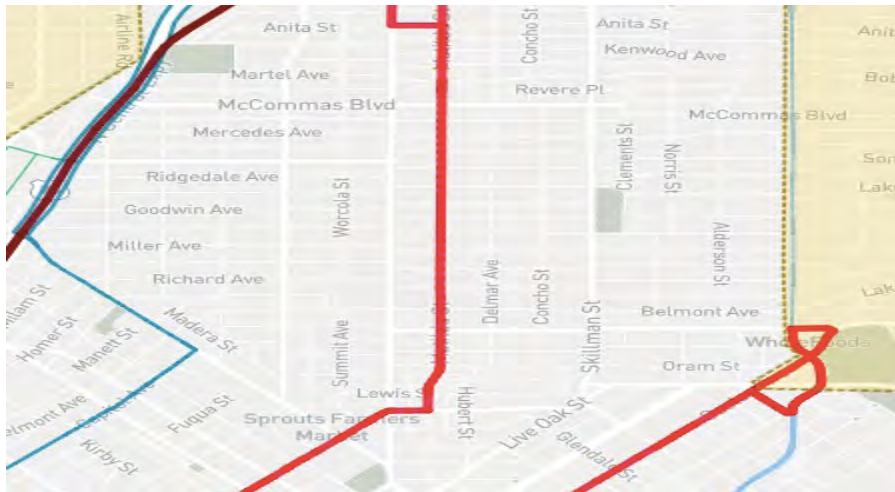
A new bus network is not sexy. Not compared to [downtown subways](#) or [light rail extensions](#) connecting northern suburbs to DFW Airport. But it signals a quiet revolution in how the regional transit agency is approaching the task [at which it has too often failed](#): helping people get around North Texas without their own vehicle.

DART has sometimes been hamstrung by its very structure. Sales tax revenue from 13 member cities helps pay for the agency’s operations. Each of those cities, stretched as they are across North Texas’ greater sprawl, expect DART service. Providing that breadth of coverage is what led DART to build the country’s longest light rail network. It is also partly what led that rail system to rank as one of America’s least efficient.

The biggest philosophical difference in this new bus model is an emphasis on ridership over coverage, although DART officials may prefer to describe it as a hybrid approach. Smith says that with GoLink filling in for many discontinued bus routes, especially in several suburban areas with low ridership, DART's coverage area is technically expanding. Regardless, you should see fewer empty buses rolling through places like Preston Hollow and North Irving, where riders will instead have to dial up a GoLink shuttle.



Existing network: Three bus routes heading through Lower Greenville toward downtown, with a midday frequency of 31 to 45 minutes for the light blue line on McMillan Avenue, and 46 to 60 minutes for the green lines on Matilda and Skillman streets.



New network: One bus route with improved frequency running through Lower Greenville toward downtown. The red line on Matilda Street turning on to Ross Avenue indicates that on this route at midday a bus will arrive every 11 to 15 minutes. Frequency is also being improved for that route in the lower right corner of the image, which now runs along Gaston Avenue from the southwest corner of Lakewood to downtown. Under the new network, it would continue on to Jefferson Boulevard in Oak Cliff and through all the way to Cockrell Hill.

The new plan also had to be “budget-neutral,” Smith says, meaning that running the new network will cost as much as operating the one DART has now. Increasing bus frequency required tradeoffs. These are small sacrifices the agency believes riders are largely willing to make. Last summer, [DART surveyed riders](#) and found that most people would prefer a slightly

longer walk followed by a short wait for the bus over a short walk with a long wait. This kind of planning should also address one of DART's most immediate problems.

Transit ridership has been on a downslide since 2006. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed it off a cliff. DART is now running with about half the ridership it had before the pandemic, Smith says. The network redesign was in the works before COVID, and the problem hasn't changed. It's only grown more acute. The answer, planners are betting, remains the same. Increase bus frequency and more people will ride.

"The bus should come every 15 or 20 minutes all day," says Jarrett Walker, a lauded transit consultant who DART hired after he helped successfully transform [bus networks in Houston](#), Seattle, and elsewhere. "That's the level of service where people start perceiving that a bus is going to come when they need it. It's an important inflection point in ridership, where ridership tends to be disproportionately higher on high-frequency services."

In redesigning the bus network, DART and Walker's firm tried to start fresh. The revamp was long overdue. Most of the current network was designed in the 1980s. Some routes have been in place since long before DART even existed, dating back to World War II, [according to a report by](#) Walker's firm. This new network at least slightly changes almost every bus route in North Texas. Its success can't be measured by ridership alone, however. Public transit, Walker says, is meant to give people freedom. [In other words, it should give people access.](#)

"The whole point of cities is access to opportunity," he says. "The point is for people to be close to lots of different things they can do."

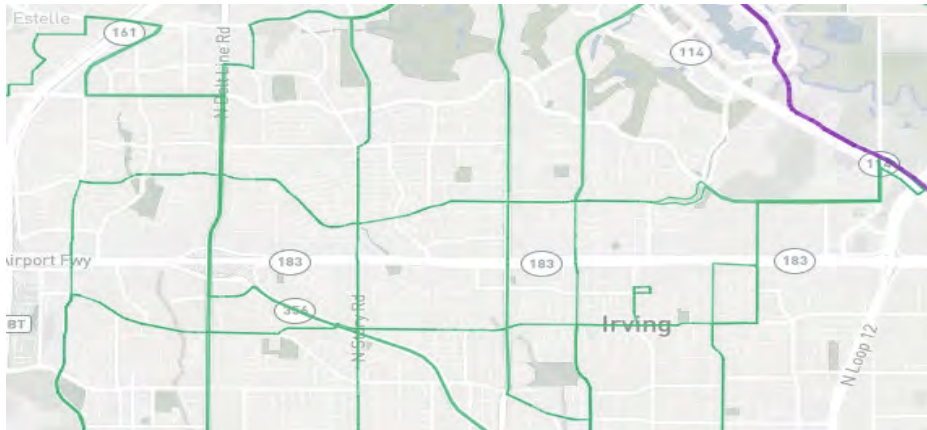
A transit system should be judged by how much access it provides: to jobs, to schools, to grocery stores, to your friends and family. This new system expands access, making more of North Texas reachable within a 60-minute trip, he says. And that will make more people ride. "People have trips they need to make and they only have so much time in which to make them. We're simply increasing the likelihood that anyone who looks up their trip on a trip planner realizes the trip is reasonable for them."

[A report prepared](#) by Walker's firm breaks down access in numerical terms. Using the new bus system, the average North Texas resident would have access to more than 30,000 additional jobs within an hour, a 28 percent improvement. Better access benefits everyone, Walker says, including the low-income residents who make up much of DART's bus ridership. According to his firm's report, "nearly four times more low-income residents would be near frequent service at rush hours." Residents who are losing some coverages are "disproportionately White and higher-income," although your average rich White person will still enjoy better transit access by and large, according to the report.

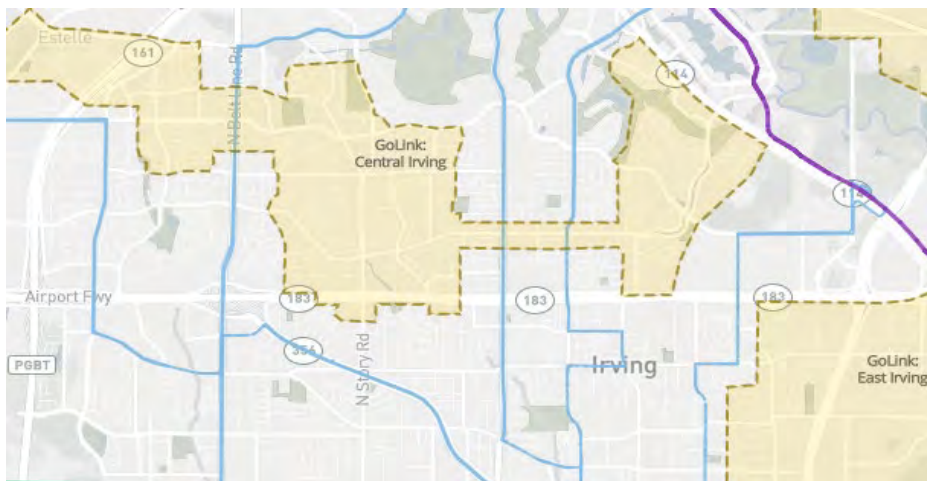
"The reality of public transit is if you use it to get to absolutely every last person wherever they are you spend enormous sums trying to get the last 10 percent of them in the hardest-to-reach places," Walker says.

DART's numbers show that regular riders are more likely to use buses than rail, although the new network is intended to complement that system rather than be an alternative to it. "We do not care what mix of rail and bus riders use," Walker says. "We care they get where they're going." However, the longer and more direct routes should translate to fewer transfers for riders. Several routes that now go to a rail station and don't do much else would be straightened out to

follow an east-west or north-south orientation. Other routes provide new connections that rail doesn't. Addison, which has no rail station, is set to get a new frequent bus route to Garland, for example.



Existing network: Bus routes (shown by the green lines) running on a 46- to 60-minute midday frequency cross Irving just southeast of DFW Airport. The purple line in the top right is the light rail heading to the airport.



New network: Bus routes (light blue lines) have been consolidated and made more frequent, now running every 31 to 45 minutes. They're also longer and more direct. The route coming in from the left side of the image and heading southeast runs from the airport all the way to downtown Dallas. Where low-ridership routes were eliminated, in the beige cut-outs labeled "Central Irving" and "East Irving," riders can now order a GoLink shuttle (DART's version of an Uber) for a ride to connect to the rest of the network.

The new bus network will revamp DART's service as soon as next year.

"First and foremost, before we can even talk about attracting new riders, we have to improve the lives of our existing riders," says DART board member Patrick Kennedy, who spent years pushing the agency to rethink its bus network. In the meantime, DART is hoping to set itself up for the future. "Instead of thinking of 20-year capital projects where we get one or two rail lines, we're going to start thinking in five-year increments," he says. "This is a pathway for us to continue to invest and reinvest in our improved operations."

President Joe Biden's administration seems willing to help pay for this sort of smaller-scale transportation infrastructure. That is an enticing prospect for a transit agency that has so much

money tied up in light rail extensions [that may or may not happen](#) it had to keep its big bus redesign budget-neutral.

Federal grants could help fund further investment in something like [Bus Rapid Transit](#). Or the feds could just pay for more bus drivers to run more frequent routes. A route with 20-minute frequency is good, but a bus consistently coming every 15 minutes is even better. Some other small but significant improvements are already underway. DART has over the last several years been consolidating bus stops, and it has introduced a system to better prioritize stops that should qualify for improvements in the form of benches, shelters, and lighting.

Improvements like dedicated bus lanes would require buy-in from member cities. “Ninety percent of transit ridership is based on density, parking costs, last-mile connections,” says Kennedy, one of seven DART board members appointed by the city of Dallas. “There’s only so much we can do as a transit agency. We have to be much better aligned with the city.”

He suggests that Dallas work with DART on a municipal transit plan. Voters in Austin last year approved [a massive \\$7 billion expansion](#) of the MetroCap bus and rail transit there, evidence that transit advocates, city transportation officials, and transit agencies can in fact work well together—and that voters can support spending on public transit. (Kennedy is eager to point out that DART’s bus network redesign creates more frequent core routes [than Austin’s own redesign](#).)

For now, the bus network is a short-term bridge that can help link Dallas’ north and south “until we can get our act together and get the right design and incentives and policy in place to fix the jobs-people imbalance in the city,” Kennedy says. “This should be considered as a starting point and not an ending point.”

Plano City Council approves entity to operate parking garages for Collin Creek redevelopment

By Kristine Hughes, Community Impact Newspaper

The Plano City Council on April 26 approved without discussion the creation of a local government corporation to own and operate the east and west parking garages of the Collin Creek redevelopment project.

The entity's creation was the result of a development agreement and subsequent funding agreement between the city of Plano and developer Centurion American, according to a city staff memo. According to the memo, the corporation provides "all the safeguards for spending public funds" and "does insulate the city from owning the garages as a city facility." The memo stated Centurion American funded the creation of the corporation, and there is no financial impact to the city.

With the vote, the council authorized the certificate of formation and the bylaws, the appointment of a board of directors, hiring an executive director and the transfer of real property to Plano parking facilities.

The initial board will comprise Mark Israelson, Peter Braster, Jack Carr, Denise Tacke and Jason Gregorash.

Dallas approves first transportation plan to improve how people travel in the city

Connect Dallas is being touted as the first framework the city has developed to prioritize projects over the next five years.

By Everton Bailey Jr., Dallas Morning News

Dallas elected officials have signed off on a transportation plan — a first in the city’s 180-year history — meant to improve how people travel over the next five years.

The City Council on Wednesday unanimously approved the Connect Dallas mobility plan, a strategy focused on all modes of transportation that has been under discussion since 2018. The plan, laid out in a nearly 100-page report, was created with input from the public and others.

The plan is supposed to help city officials prioritize future projects and policy decisions related to driving, walking, biking, public transit and all other forms of transportation, authorities say. It’s also meant to provide a framework for evaluating proposed projects and ways to implement them and track progress.

“We have the framework now for a plan that is going to transform how individuals who don’t have access to transportation, as well as those who do have access to transportation, are able to move across the city,” said council member Casey Thomas, who thinks the plan will benefit current and future residents.

The plan, which takes effect immediately, will be used to prioritize current and future projects, according to the resolution approved by the council. Some of the initiatives that fall under the plan are working with DART to help provide more access to existing transit service and establishing a city Vision Zero program with a goal of having no traffic deaths by 2030. The city had 185 traffic fatalities in 2019, according to [the Texas Department of Transportation](#).

Dallas’ Transportation Department must provide the City Council with an annual progress report starting in 2022 on how well the city is following the strategy.

According to the report, a Dallas transportation plan was needed to help address issues such as how to improve pedestrian safety; growing road needs and traffic concerns as the population increases; and longstanding disparities and systemic obstacles to accessing public transit.

Nearly half of more than 4,500 miles of sidewalks Dallas owns and maintains are missing, and much of the existing walkways are damaged or obstructed in some way, according to the city. The areas most lacking are in northwest Dallas’ District 13 (330 miles) and District 6 in West Dallas (255 miles). The southernmost city districts, the Mountain Creek area in District 3 and Red Bird area in District 8, have 200 miles of missing sidewalk apiece.

Under Connect Dallas, all city transportation-related decisions are supposed to be viewed through lenses of improving safety, supporting housing, equitable access for all residents, economic development, environmental sustainability and technology innovation.

Assistant City Manager Majed Al-Ghafry, who oversees transportation and public infrastructure, said before the council vote that a proposed transportation project that provides affordable housing and economic development opportunities should rank higher for consideration than one without.

According to the report, the transportation vision for Dallas by 2045 would include:

- Less emphasis on new roads and express lanes.
- More than 200 miles of new infrastructure for investments in regional light-rail and streetcar lines.
- Over 800 miles of new bike trails and facilities around Dallas.
- More money poured into sidewalk construction and maintenance.

Officials to Celebrate Groundbreaking of Haslet Parkway on Thursday

The roadway represents key east-west logistics artery

By NBC DFW

Transportation leaders from across Tarrant County will assemble on Thursday to celebrate the groundbreaking of Haslet Parkway, a four-lane east-west thoroughfare that will enhance the distribution of goods while providing better mobility to residents of the area.

Haslet Parkway was planned as a gateway to facilitate effective freight movement and better quality of life for residents, said.

Officials will discuss the project, including the funding partnership helping to make it a reality, during the in-person celebration at 120 Intermodal Parkway at 9:30 a.m.

Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, Tarrant County Commissioner Gary Fickes, Haslet Mayor Bob Golden, and North Central Texas Council of Governments Director of Transportation Michael Morris will attend the ceremony and discuss how the project was conceived and how it will impact mobility and reliability for Haslet and the region.

"Haslet Parkway is a prime example of what can be accomplished through regional cooperation. This was truly a team effort, beginning with the tireless work of the City of Haslet and Tarrant County, who have been terrific partners since the beginning," Michael Morris, director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments, said. "The North Central Texas Council of Governments and Regional Transportation Council were pleased to play a part in the funding of this important project, along with our valued local, state and federal partners.

This new parkway will help tie the community together and ensure residents have access to jobs, whether they work in the city or across the region."

The roadway is part of the \$64.4 million AllianceTexas/Haslet Accessibility Project, which received a \$20 million Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development grant from the federal government in 2018.

Construction on the roadway, which has been underway since fall 2020, is scheduled for completion in 2023.

26 acres of Panther Island land hits the market as bridges start to open

By Robert Francis, Fort Worth Business Press

Twenty-six acres of land in the Panther Island development are coming to the market. With the White Settlement Bridge now open, infrastructure improvements made and Encore Panther Island's multifamily community soon to open, LanCarte Commercial, in collaboration with Panther Island Property Group, has announced that the largest portfolio of privately-owned land on Panther Island is coming to market.

Located just north of Downtown Fort Worth along the banks of the Trinity River, the area, known as Upstream at Panther Island, includes roughly 26 acres across ten parcels suited for mixed-use, office, multi-family, and retail development, with future riverfront opportunities and ample frontage.

Seven of the ten parcels feature frontage that will be adjacent to a planned canal or waterfront, according to LanCarte Commercial. At present, parcels 1-6 of Upstream are ready for development, according to a news release. The development of the final four parcels will correspond with later phases of the collaborative Panther Island/Central City Flood Project.

Mark Brock, Managing Partner of Lionhead Real Estate, the largest private investor on the Island, said: "We're excited to be partnering with LanCarte in an incredible next chapter for Panther Island. We've been invested on Panther Island for over a decade and having had the benefit of watching the progress from the sidelines, the marked increase in activity and completion of several key development milestones over the past few months are signaling to us that 'lift-off' moment has arrived."

In early April, White Settlement Bridge opened, and the Main Street Bridge is set to open in June.

"We couldn't be more enthusiastic about both Upstream and Panther Island," said Sarah LanCarte of LanCarte Commercial. "There are few locations like this anywhere – a riverfront opportunity directly across the river from the skyline of (Fort Worth). Panther Island's time is now, and Upstream is poised to accelerate the momentum."

As envisioned, the \$1.17 billion Panther Island project would entail digging a 1.5-mile bypass channel and rerouting the Trinity River north of the Tarrant County Courthouse. That channel would add flood control protection as well as carve out an 800-acre center island, which would create waterfront economic development opportunities, including a San Antonio-style Riverwalk.

While plans have been in place for some time, the federal funds needed to complete the project have so far not materialized. That led to an impasse between the Tarrant Regional Water District, which is in charge of the project, and the City of Fort Worth, its major partner.

TxDOT, NCTCOG to discuss bicycle use on state highway system

By STAR Local Media

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Dallas District is partnering with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to offer a virtual public hearing on district transportation projects, programs and policies affecting bicycle use on the state highway system.

The virtual public hearing will begin at 4 p.m. May 6. This is not a live event, and the materials and presentations can be viewed any time beginning at 4 p.m. May 6 through 11:59 p.m. May 21.

To log into the virtual public hearing, go to keepitmovingdallas.com/bicycle.

Pre-recorded video presentations will include both audio and visual components. Additional materials, including written transcripts of the presentations, exhibits and supporting documents will also be available. The materials will not be available until May 6.

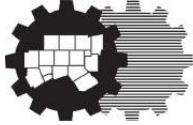
The purpose of the hearing is to provide information on transportation projects that might affect bicycle use, plans, policies and programs for the TxDOT Dallas District and NCTCOG and to receive public comments.

Comments from the public regarding the district transportation projects, programs and policies affecting bicycle use on the state highway system are requested and can be submitted online via survey at the project website, by email to Melissa.Meyer@txdot.gov, or by mail to TxDOT Dallas District Office, Attn: Melissa Meyer, 4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, Texas 75150-6643.

Verbal comments may be submitted by calling and leaving a voicemail at 833-933-0441. All comments must be received or postmarked on or before May 21. Responses to written comments received and public testimony provided will be made available online at keepitmovingdallas.com/bicycle once they have been prepared.

The virtual public hearing will be conducted in English. If you need an interpreter or document translator because English is not your primary language or you have difficulty communicating effectively in English, one will be provided to you. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. If you need interpretation or translation services or you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation to attend and participate in the virtual public hearing, contact Emily McCann, TxDOT Dallas District Public Information Officer, at 214-320-4485 no later than 4 p.m., Friday. Advance notice is required as some services and accommodations may require time for TxDOT to arrange.

For additional information or to be added to the mailing list of individuals or organizations interested in bicycle use on the state system, or if you have any general questions or concerns regarding the virtual hearing, contact Meyer at 214-319-3506 or Melissa.Meyer@txdot.gov.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Brian Wilson
(817) 704-2511
bwilson@nctcog.org

N. Texans Asked to Provide Input on Transportation Projects

Comments accepted online April 12-May 11

Apr. 12, 2021 (Arlington, Texas) — North Texans are encouraged to comment on multiple transportation projects and programs during the next public input opportunity, which begins April 12 and continues through May 11.

North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will present details on the fourth round of the COVID-19 00X Transportation Infrastructure Program, which awards to projects across the region to expedite transportation actions that help stimulate the local economy.

Staff will also present information related to a proposed single-occupancy trip reduction resolution that establishes a regional trip reduction target to reduce drive-alone commute trips through Travel Demand Management strategies such as teleworking, ridesharing, active transportation and transit.

Additionally, information related to several regional air quality initiatives will be provided. The 2021 ozone season began March 1 and runs through November 30. Currently, Dallas-Fort Worth does not meet federal air quality standards for the pollutant ozone. Staff will present an introduction to the pollutant, an overview of the region's progress and information on how the general public can contribute to the regional air quality solution by keep their car in good condition.

Finally, modifications to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Development Project Listing will be available for online review and comment.

The Map Your Experience tool, Regional Smoking Vehicle Program, and vehicle incentive opportunities will also be highlighted.

For more information and an audio recording of the presentations, visit www.nctcog.org/input. To request hard copies of the information, call 817-608-2365 or email Carli Baylor at cbaylor@nctcog.org.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

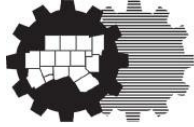
NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered in the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit www.nctcog.org/trans.

About the Regional Transportation Council:

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties.

The RTC's 44 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at www.nctcog.org.

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North Central Texas
Council of Governments

MEDIA ADVISORY
Contact: Brian Wilson
(817) 704-2511
bwilson@nctcog.org

Officials to Celebrate Groundbreaking of Haslet Parkway April 29

Roadway represents key east-west logistics artery, improved mobility

April 28, 2021 (Arlington, Texas) – Transportation leaders from across Tarrant County will assemble April 29 to celebrate the groundbreaking of Haslet Parkway, a four-lane east-west thoroughfare that will enhance the distribution of goods while providing better mobility to residents of the fast-growing area.

Planned as a gateway to facilitate effective freight movement and better quality of life for residents, Haslet Parkway is a prime example of what can be accomplished through regional cooperation. Officials will discuss the project, including the funding partnership helping make it a reality, during the in-person celebration at 120 Intermodal Parkway.

The roadway is part of the \$64.4 million AllianceTexas/Haslet Accessibility Project, which received a \$20 million Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant from the federal government in 2018. Construction of the roadway, which has been underway since fall 2020 is scheduled for completion in 2023.

“Haslet Parkway is a prime example of what can be accomplished through regional cooperation. This was truly a team effort, beginning with the tireless work of the City of Haslet and Tarrant County, who have been terrific partners since the beginning,” said Michael Morris, P.E., director of transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments. “The North Central Texas Council of Governments and Regional Transportation Council were pleased to play a part in the funding of this important project, along with our valued local, state and federal partners. This new parkway will help tie the community together and ensure residents have access to jobs, whether they work in the city or across the region.”

DETAILS

Who: Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, Tarrant County Commissioner Gary Fickes, Haslet Mayor Bob Golden and NCTCOG Director of Transportation Michael Morris, P.E., will discuss how the project was conceived and how it will impact mobility and reliability for Haslet and the region.

What: Groundbreaking ceremony for construction of Haslet Parkway

When: 9:30 a.m. Thursday, April 29

Where: 120 Intermodal Parkway
Haslet, TX 76052

(Across from the Volkswagen facility. Follow signage to site.)

Project funding: Project is about \$64.4 million (includes engineering, right-of-way, utilities and construction) and includes:

- \$23.1 million in Regional Transportation Council funds
- \$20 million BUILD Grant

- \$20.2 million of local funds (including matches) from City of Haslet, Tarrant County and private sector sources
- \$1.1 million from the Texas Department of Transportation

Note: COVID-19 safety and health precautions will be in place for this in-person event. Face coverings are encouraged.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

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About Haslet:

Haslet is a city of 1,994 residents located adjacent to Alliance Airport and IH 35W in Tarrant and Denton Counties. Established in 1883, Haslet has matured from rural beginnings to become the home of unique residential and commercial opportunities fostering wellness, safety and civic engagement. Haslet is poised for substantial growth for the next several years with five new residential subdivisions and multiple Haslet-based corporations offering jobs such as Amazon, JCPenney and Williamson-Dickie.

###

What They Are Saying

“Haslet Parkway is a prime example of what can be accomplished through regional cooperation. This was truly a team effort, beginning with the tireless work of the City of Haslet and Tarrant County, who have been terrific partners since the beginning. The North Central Texas Council of Governments and Regional Transportation Council were pleased to play a part in the funding of this important project, along with our valued local, state and federal partners. This new parkway will help tie the community together and ensure residents have access to jobs, whether they work in the city or across the region.”

- Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, North Central Texas Council of Governments.

**RESOLUTION APPROVING TERMINATION OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
FINANCIAL BACKSTOP FOR THE SH 360 LOAN
(R21-03)**

WHEREAS, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and has been and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

WHEREAS, in 2013, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), and RTC developed a funding and implementation strategy to expedite needed improvements for SH 360 as a toll facility south of IH 20 to US 287, whereby TxDOT would advance the construction of the project and provide a loan of up to \$300 million (SH 360 Loan), NTTA would operate the facility and repay the TxDOT loan through project revenues, and RTC would provide a financial backstop; and,

WHEREAS, on December 5, 2013, the RTC approved a financial backstop for repayment of the SH 360 Loan in the event project revenues were not sufficient for the North Texas Tollway Authority to make required annual debt service payments to the Texas Department of Transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the source of the RTC financial backstop for the SH 360 Loan repayment was from uncommitted Western Subregion funds allocated in 2018 and beyond; and,

WHEREAS, in February 2014, TxDOT and NTTA entered into a SH 360 Project Agreement which detailed their respective responsibilities with respect to SH 360, including the terms of SH 360 Loan; and,

WHEREAS, in February 2014, TxDOT, NTTA, and RTC entered into a SH 360 Financial Backstop Agreement which detailed the terms and conditions of the RTC's financial backstop commitment; and,

WHEREAS, SH 360 South was opened to traffic in May 2018; and,

WHEREAS, RTC programed \$15 million in Western Subregion funds as a placeholder to cover any potential draws on the RTC financial backstop; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the SH 360 Project Agreement, NTTA has requested to repay the SH 360 Loan in full and transfer SH 360 South into the NTTA System, thereby eliminating the need for the RTC financial backstop for the project; and,

WHEREAS, under the revised terms of the SH 360 Project Agreement, revenue share (50% TxDOT/RTC and 50% NTTA) would begin in 2050; however, NTTA may delay revenue share to 2053 in the event the following SH 360 improvements are completed:

- 1) 360T Elbow;
- 2) 360T Widening;
- 3) 360T/US 287 Interchange; and
- 4) 360T Section 2 (US 287 to US 67)

WHEREAS, local governments have requested NTTA to extend the wayfinding sign pilot an additional 5 years; and,

DRAFT

WHEREAS, RTC staff recommends that the RTC SH 360 Financial Backstop be terminated at NTTA's request.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. RTC supports NTTA's request to repay the SH 360 Loan to TxDOT in full and transfer the project into the NTTA System.

Section 2. RTC supports revenue share (50% TxDOT/RTC and 50% NTTA) for SH 360 South to begin in 2050, but may be deferred to 2053 at NTTA's election if the following SH 360 improvements are completed:

- 1) 360T Elbow;
- 2) 360T Widening;
- 3) 360T/US 287 Interchange; and
- 4) 360T Section 2 (US 287 to US 67)

Section 3. RTC supports the extension of the NTTA's wayfinding sign pilot for an additional 5 years.

Section 4. Based on NTTA's request to pay the SH 360 Loan in full and transfer of the SH 360 South project to the NTTA System, RTC approves of the termination of the SH 360 Financial Backstop.

Section 5. RTC directs staff to include the SH 360 improvements enumerated in Section 2 in the appropriate Mobility Plan in a sufficient timeframe to enable NTTA to complete such improvements.

Section 6. RTC directs staff to reprogram the \$15 million in Western Subregion funds that have been set aside to cover the RTC financial backstop.

Section 7. RTC authorizes NCTCOG's Director of Transportation to execute the Mutual Termination of the SH 360 Financial Backstop Agreement consistent with the terms of this resolution.

Section 8. This resolution will be transmitted to Texas Transportation Commission, the North Texas Tollway Authority, and impacted local governments along the SH 360 corridor.

Section 9. This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

Roger Harmon, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Johnson County

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on May 13, 2021.

Ann Zadeh, Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Councilmember, City of Fort Worth

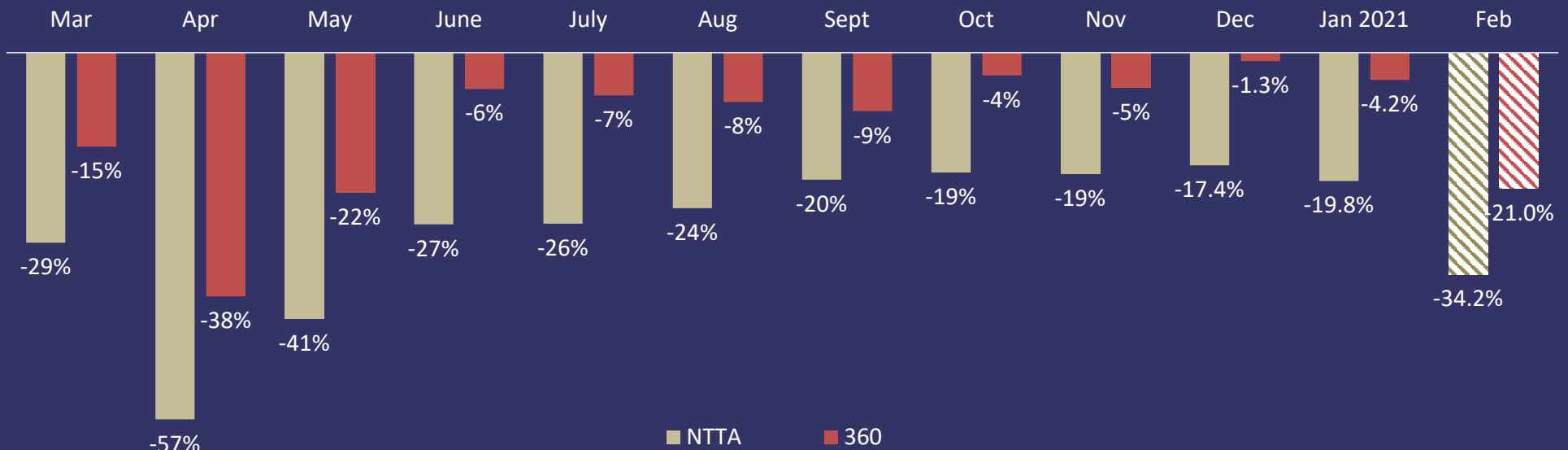
APPROVAL TO TERMINATE SH 360 FINANCIAL BACKSTOP

Regional Transportation Council
May 13, 2021

FUNDING IMPACT

NTTA Transactions, Including SH 360

Change in Tollway Transactions vs Baseline



Source: NTTA

Notes: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020. Change for NTTA includes 360 Tollway; Despite decline in transactions, the revenues are sufficient to meet debt service for SH 360.

No current impact to RTC backstop expected.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

Elements of Proposed RTC Resolution Regarding SH 360 NTTA Loan Repayment to TxDOT (Approximately from Green Oaks to US 287)

- 1) Context: Urgency is due to increasing interest rates (currently 4.25% to \approx 3.25%) = \$50M savings)
Part of a larger re-financing
- 2) Agreements (i.e., Two of Them)
 - Project agreement (NTTA and TxDOT)
 - \$300M loan/today's payment is \$330M
 - Backstop agreement (TxDOT, NTTA and RTC)
- 3) Benefits:
 - Relieves the requirement of the RTC financial backstop
 - Releases \$15M in RTC contingency funds for project selection (i.e., STBG federal funds)
 - Elimination of possibility of SH 360 toll rate increases due to RTC step-in
 - Possibility of next stage SH 360 improvement happening sooner
 - Some portion of \$330M selected by the Commission for the DFW region
 - Advance system landscaping

Elements of Proposed RTC Resolution Regarding SH 360 NTTA Loan Repayment to TxDOT (Approximately from Green Oaks to US 287)

4) Major Negotiated Items

- Extending wayfinding signing pilot program from 5 to 10 years (local government meeting confirmation on April 19, 2021)
- Advancing a partnership program that memorializes the advancement of certain transportation improvements in the SH 360 corridor, (specifically SH 360 T Elbow, widening, interchange at US 287, and SH 360 T Section 2) while solidifying revenue sharing to begin no later than 2053

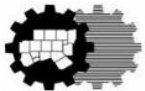
5) Next Steps:

- Local government meeting April 19 (Tarrant County, Grand Prairie, Arlington and Mansfield) ✓
- TxDOT Action ✓
- NTTA Action ✓
- STTC Action ✓
- RTC Action in May

“Trade Fair” Partnerships with Lubbock Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Rio Grande Valley MPO

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MAY 13, 2021



North Central Texas
Council of Governments
Transportation Department

Status of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Funds

- Given the large carryover balance of STBG funds, NCTCOG staff has been working on solutions to reduce the balance to a more manageable level, including:
 - The RTC Milestone Policy, Round 2
 - Quarterly project tracking
- As part of the region's 10 Year Plan this year, a proposal to advance projects currently funded with Category 2 with STBG funds will be brought forth.
- Additionally, today NCTCOG staff is proposing two "Trade Fair" partnerships to enable other regions to advance projects while our implementing agencies finish getting projects ready for construction.


Background/Historical Context

- TxDOT has a previous history of coordination among regions to expedite project delivery as a part of the development of the Unified Transportation Program (UTP).
- After each region selected projects for inclusion in the UTP in years past, TxDOT Headquarters held periodic “trade fair” meetings.
- In these meetings, different regions of the state “negotiated” or “balanced” project readiness with the availability of funding and “traded” annual allocation amounts.
- This process moved funding allocations around, instead of being evenly distributed each year.
- It enabled projects to proceed in the year in which funds were needed vs. the year in which funds were individually available to any given region (so long as the total allocation was balanced statewide each year).

Policy Objectives Supporting this Proposal

- Underscores that formula allocation at the State level is necessary to ensure equitable distribution of funding across regions
 - Once each region is certain that their total allocations will not change, they are more likely to be willing to negotiate innovative programs and partnerships to expedite projects
- Continues the long-standing tradition of “Trade Fairs” with other partners in the State
- Buys down carryover balances and reduces risk within the region’s Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program

AAMPO “Trade Fair” in Progress

- In early 2018, NCTCOG had discussions with the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) regarding a funding partnership for a feasibility study for High-Speed Transportation from Dallas-Fort Worth to Laredo.
 - Initially, it was determined that the RTC would contribute \$300,000 in federal funds, and AAMPO would provide a \$200,000 local match.
 - It was later determined that moving local funds between regions is challenging.
 - In the fall of 2018, the RTC agreed to program \$500,000 in RTC Local funding for a NCTCOG led feasibility study regarding High-Speed Transportation from Dallas-Fort Worth to Laredo; in return, AAMPO agreed to allocate \$200,000 in CMAQ funding to the DFW region.
- 

Proposed Lubbock MPO “Trade Fair” Partnership

- The Lubbock MPO has approached NCTCOG staff about a potential trade fair partnership between our regions.
- Lubbock MPO receives \$6 million of STBG funding per year.
- In order to cashflow priority projects, the Lubbock MPO needs an additional \$10.5 million in FY 2023 and additional \$10.5 million in FY 2025 for two separate projects.
- Proposal:
 - The RTC “loans” the Lubbock MPO \$21 million in STBG cashflow in the years noted above.
 - In turn, the Lubbock MPO will transfer back \$21 million of STBG allocations over three years (FY2028, FY2029, FY2030) until fully repaid

Proposed Rio Grande Valley MPO “Trade Fair” Partnership

- In addition, the Rio Grande Valley MPO has approached NCTCOG staff about a potential trade fair partnership between our regions.
- Rio Grande Valley MPO receives \$25 million of STBG funding per year.
- In order to cashflow priority projects, the Rio Grande Valley MPO needs an additional \$14.6 million in FY 2022
- Proposal:
 - The RTC will “loan” the Rio Grande Valley MPO \$14.6 million in STBG cashflow in the year noted above.
 - In turn, the Rio Grande Valley MPO will transfer back \$14.6 million of STBG allocations in FY2026.

Overview of “Trade Fair” Partnership Plan


Fiscal Year	Lubbock MPO	NCTCOG	RGVMPO
2022	-	(\$14,578,845)	\$14,578,845
2023	\$10,500,000	(\$10,500,000)	-
2025	\$10,500,000	(\$10,500,000)	-
2026	-	\$14,578,845	(\$14,578,845)
2028	(\$6,903,818)*	\$6,903,818	-
2029	(\$6,994,465)*	\$6,994,465	-
2030	(\$7,101,717)*	\$7,101,717	-

*Amounts returned in FY2028 and FY2029 will be the full amounts Lubbock MPO receives in the UTP for those years. Any remaining amount not covered in these years will come from FY2030 (or future year) allocations.

Requested Action

- RTC Approval:
 - Of a “Trade Fair” Partnership with the Lubbock MPO of transferring:
 - \$10,500,000 in STBG cash flow/allocation in FY 2023
 - \$10,500,000 in STBG cash flow/allocation in FY2025
 - Receiving \$6,903,818 back in FY 2028
 - Receiving \$6,994,465 back in FY 2029
 - Receiving \$7,101,717 back in FY 2030
 - Of a “Trade Fair” Partnership with the Rio Grande Valley MPO of transferring:
 - \$14,578,845 in STBG cash flow/allocation in FY 2022
 - Receiving \$14,578,845 back in FY 2026

Requested Action, cont.

- Directing staff to enter into interlocal agreements with the Lubbock MPO and Rio Grande Valley MPO that outline the terms of agreement
 - Directing staff to monitor the funds transfer agreement process at TxDOT to ensure that the terms of agreements are honored over time
- 

CONTACT/QUESTIONS?

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AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT TRANSIT FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MAY 13, 2021

SHANNON STEVENSON, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER

TRANSIT MANAGEMENT & PLANNING

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

- The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 was signed by President Biden on March 11, 2021 and provides \$30.5 billion nationwide in additional emergency funds to help alleviate funding shortfalls for the nation's public transportation systems due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Also provides a small amount of funding under the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (i.e., Section 5310)
- This is the third round of emergency relief funding provided to the transit industry following the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#) and [Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act \(CRRSAA\)](#), which provided \$39 billion to the industry
- Seeking RTC action as soon as possible; ARP funding is not required to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), but will be added later for informational purposes
- Projects awarded under the Section 5310 Program must be included or be consistent with the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan ([Access North Texas](#))

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

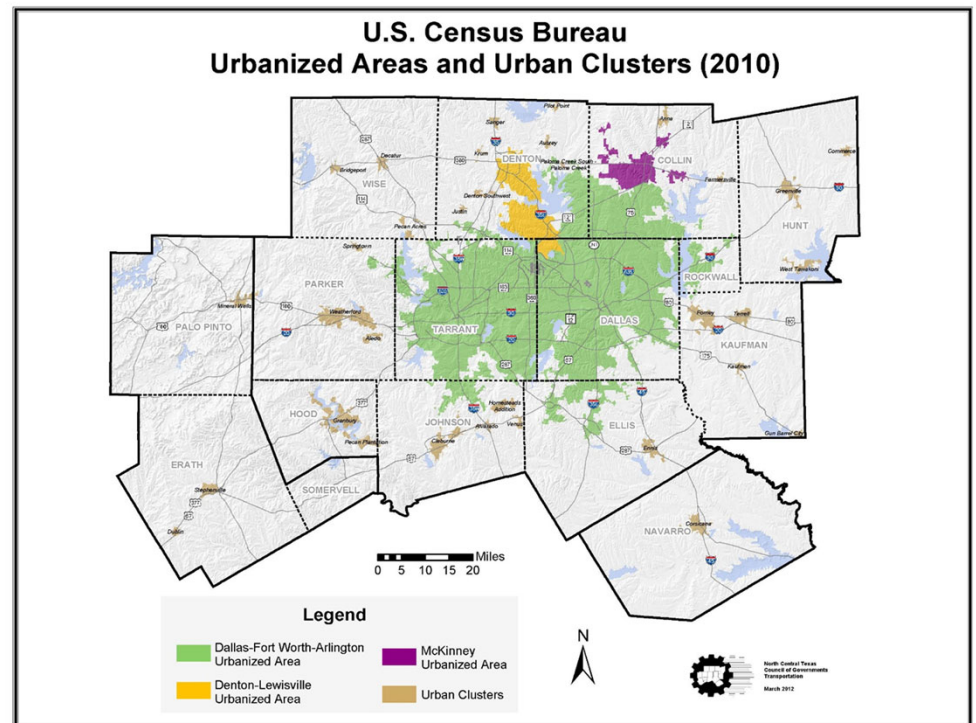
- Funding is being provided at 100-percent federal share, with no local match required, and prioritizes the use of funds for operational and payroll needs but also supports expenses traditionally eligible under the funding programs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Expenses incurred on or after January 20, 2020 are eligible for reimbursement. Funding must be obligated by 9/30/2024 and disbursed by 9/30/2029.
- Primary objective is to ensure that public transit agencies receive sufficient funding; under this bill, when combined with their CARES Act & CRRSAA apportionments, to equal at least 132 percent of urbanized areas' public transit operating costs
- NCTCOG will not be retaining any funds for administrative purposes to direct the maximum amount available to the transit providers
- For North Texas, this impacts only five (5) transit providers in the region

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDING

NCTCOG: Designated Recipient of FTA Urbanized Area (UZA) Formula funds for North Texas

Available Funding for North Texas¹

UZA	Section 5307	Section 5310	TOTAL
DFW-Arlington	\$339,826,672	\$661,260	\$340,487,932
Denton-Lewisville	\$14,073,192	\$41,939	\$14,115,131



¹ FTA funding for the McKinney UZA is administered through TxDOT

ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

- Qualifying recipients will receive Section 5307 funding based on their 2018 Operating Expenses
 - Section 5307 Emergency Assistance¹ funding for urbanized areas may not exceed 132% of total 2018 Operating Expenses
 - DART, DCTA, Trinity Metro, PTS, and STAR are the transit providers that fall below the 132% threshold
 - All other transit providers exceed 132% of 2018 operating expenses due to CARES Act Funding
- Qualifying recipients will receive Section 5310 funding based on eligibility and overall need
 - Projects must be included or be consistent with Access North Texas
 - Project selection to be determined and will follow normal TIP process
- Apportionment Data
 - 2018 National Transit Database (NTD) Operating Expenses
 - CARES Act & CRRSAA sub-allocation tables

¹Emergency Assistance funding includes both CARES Act and CRRSAA apportionments

METHODICAL REVIEW OF FORMULA ALLOCATIONS

- Did the RTC correctly allocate CARES Act and CRRSAA funding and account for TRE?
 - **Yes**
- Did Congress allocate any ARP funding to North Texas because any agencies were below the 132% threshold?
 - **Yes**
- Were DART, Trinity Metro, PTS, STAR, and DCTA below the 132% threshold?
 - **Yes**
- Does the RTC have discretion on how to distribute ARP funds?
 - **Yes**

5307 ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY CONT.

DFW-Arlington UZA	2018 Operating Expenses	132% of 2018 Operating Expenses	CARES Act + CRRSAA Allocation	Recommended for ARP Funding?
City of Arlington	\$3,291,878	\$4,345,279	\$10,955,694	No
City of Grand Prairie	\$801,084	\$1,057,431	\$3,852,375	No
City of Mesquite	Reported to NTD by STAR Transit	N/A	\$3,442,401	No
City/County Transportation	\$310,255	\$409,537	\$899,600	No
Community Transit Services	\$193,513	\$255,438	\$1,781,036	No
Dallas Area Rapid Transit	\$510,268,560*	\$673,554,500	\$358,138,748	Yes
Trinity Metro/ Fort Worth Transportation Authority (FWTA)	\$71,452,030*	\$94,316,680	\$55,161,034	Yes
North Central Texas Council of Governments	N/A	N/A	\$796,572	No
Northeast Transportation Services	Reported to NTD by FWTA	N/A	\$4,813,723	No
Public Transit Services	\$472,239	\$623,356	\$396,081	Yes
Span, Inc.	\$1,026,700	\$770,025	\$2,204,136	No
STAR Transit	\$3,869,114	\$5,107,231	\$4,698,957	Yes
Denton-Lewisville UZA	2018 Operating Expenses	132% of 2018 Operating Expenses	CARES Act + CRRSAA Allocation	Recommended for ARP Funding?
Denton County Transportation Authority	\$28,350,849	\$37,423,121	\$23,461,867	Yes

NTD: National Transit Database

*Accounts for TRE operating expenses, which are reported by DART to NTD

5307 ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY CONT.

DFW-Arlington UZA	2018 Operating Expenses	132% of 2018 Operating Expenses	Recommended ARP Allocation	Total Recommended COVID Relief¹	Percent of 2018 Operating Expenses (Total COVID Relief)
Dallas Area Rapid Transit	\$510,268,560	\$673,554,500	\$300,035,477	\$658,174,225	129%
Trinity Metro/ Fort Worth Transportation Authority (FWTA)	\$71,452,030	\$94,316,680	\$39,155,646	\$94,316,680	132%
Public Transit Services	\$472,239	\$623,356	\$227,275	\$623,356	132%
STAR Transit	\$3,869,114	\$5,107,231	\$408,274	\$5,107,231	132%
Denton-Lewisville UZA	2018 Operating Expenses	132% of 2018 Operating Expenses	Recommended ARP Allocation	Total Recommended COVID Relief¹	Percent of 2018 Operating Expenses (Total COVID Relief)
Denton County Transportation Authority	\$28,350,849	\$37,423,121	\$14,073,192	\$37,534,988	132%

¹Total COVID Relief includes the aggregate of CARES Act, CRRSAA, and ARP Funding Allocations

SCHEDULE

ACTION	DATE
ARP Act Signed into Law	March 11, 2021
FTA Released Funding Allocations	March 29, 2021
STTC Action	April 23, 2021
RTC Action	May 13, 2021
NCTCOG Executive Board Action for Subrecipients	May 27, 2021
Subrecipient Agreement Execution	June 2021

ACTION REQUESTED

RTC Approval:

- Approval of funding allocations
- To revise administrative documents as appropriate to incorporate additional funds



REGIONAL PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ACTION PLAN

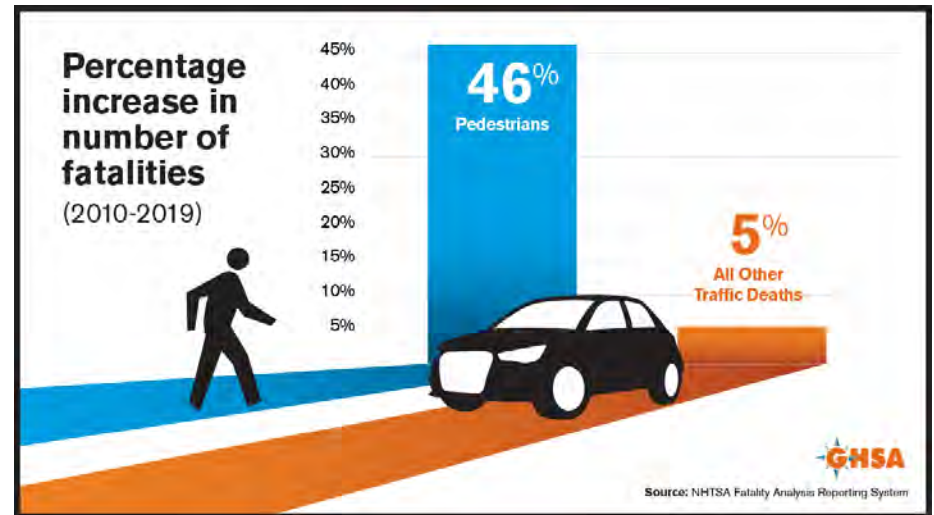
Regional Transportation Council

May 13, 2021



Kevin Kokes AICP, Program Manager, Sustainable Development

Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities: 2020 U.S. Preliminary Data



Regional Pedestrian Safety

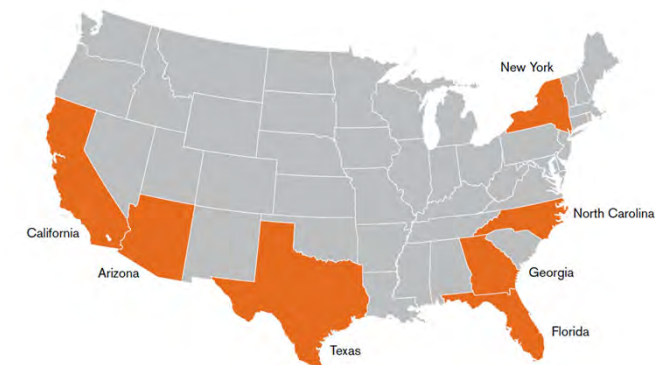
Action by Regional Transportation Council (RTC)
February 14, 2019

Regional Safety Position

“Even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable. Staff will work with our partners to develop projects, programs, and policies that assist in eliminating serious injuries and fatalities across all modes of travel”

Dallas and Fort Worth
are designated by FHWA as
Pedestrian Safety Focus Cities


7 States
Account for 54% of Pedestrian Deaths,
Jan-June 2020




Source: State Highway Safety Offices

Pedestrian Crashes and Fatalities 12-County MPA

AGE RANGE with the highest number of FATAL AND SERIOUS INJURY PEDESTRIAN CRASHES is

23-29
for **MALES** 

and

25-33
for **FEMALES** 


Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS)
for MPA region from 2014-2018

70% 

of All Fatal & Serious Injury Pedestrian Crashes involve

MALES

Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS)
for MPA region from 2014-2018




More than

2/3

of FATAL & SERIOUS INJURY PEDESTRIAN CRASHES are happening at

NON-INTERSECTIONS

Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS)
for MPA region from 2014-2018



Nearly **2/3** of all pedestrian crashes and **80%** of fatal pedestrian crashes happen in

DARK LIGHTING CONDITIONS

Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System (CRIS)
for MPA region from 2014-2018

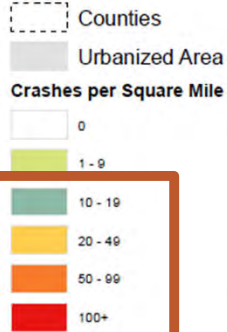
Key Elements of the Regional Plan



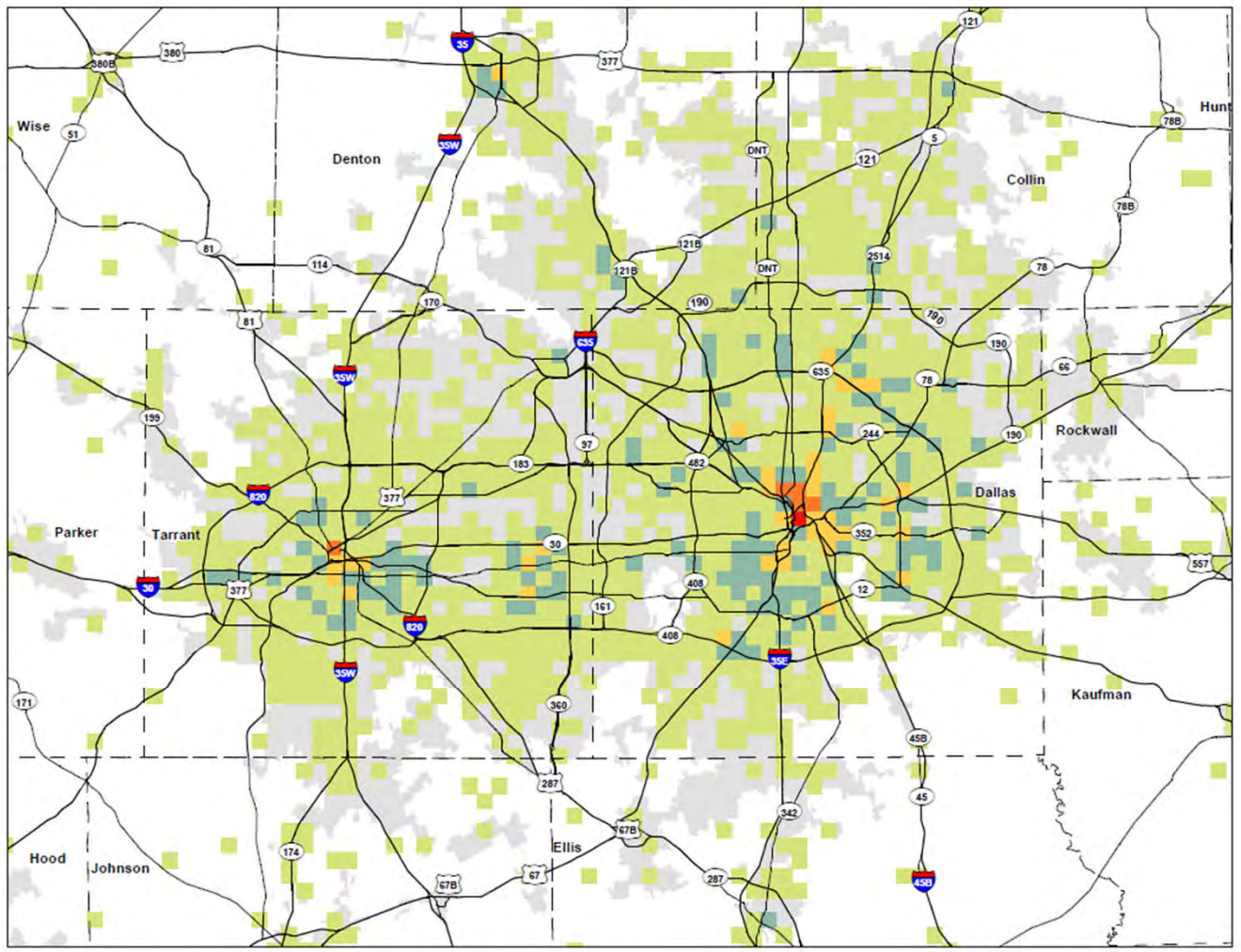
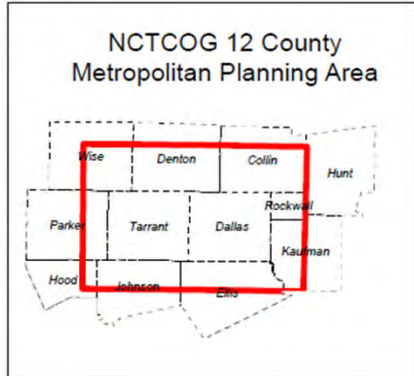
1. **Demographics and contributing factors** based on reported crashes
2. **Pedestrian Crash density maps**
3. **Priority Pedestrian safety corridors** based on areas with highest reported crash history
4. **Goals and Policies** in support of RTC safety position and regional coordination:
 - *RTC “encourages the implementation of all reasonable pedestrian safety countermeasures that enable the region to achieve adopted safety performance targets” [From PSAP: [RTC action item anticipated in June 2021](#)]*
5. **Action Plan** to guide pedestrian safety projects and programs

Urbanized Area Pedestrian Crashes per Square Mile (2014 - 2018)

Legend



Areas examined for high-risk crash corridors



1.) Source: TxDOT's Crash Records Information System - 2014 - 2018 data is current as of January 2019. 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.

Plan Goals:



- ❖ **Eliminate** all serious injury and fatal pedestrian crashes across the region by 2050
(Supports RTC and the TxDOT/TTC safety goals)
- ❖ **Balance the safety and needs** of all users of all ages and abilities in the transportation system design, maintenance and operation phases, with priority given to the most vulnerable users
- ❖ **Provide a high level of comfort** in the design, construction and maintenance of transportation facilities
- ❖ **Integrate** within roadway design the most direct facility alignments that prioritize safe pedestrian movements
- ❖ **Implement** all reasonable pedestrian safety countermeasures to achieve adopted regional safety performance targets

Plan Policies:

(Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure Projects and Programs)



1	Education/Evaluation/Encouragement	Collaborate to implement the Plan
2	Education/Evaluation/Encouragement	Develop educational programs and resources
3	Engineering	Integrate proven safety countermeasures as part of all future roadway projects
4	Engineering	Prioritize implementation of safety countermeasures along the regional pedestrian safety corridors
5	Engineering	Perform Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS) analysis as part of the roadway design process
6	Enforcement	Provide law enforcement information and training of the laws concerning the most vulnerable roadway users
7	Enforcement	Support state legislation on safety topics (lower speed limits in urban districts, motorists to stop/ yield to pedestrians, the use of a wireless communication device while operating a motor vehicle)

Plan Action Items:

(Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure Projects and Programs)



1	Education/ Evaluation/ Encouragement	Develop performance measures
2	Education/ Evaluation/ Encouragement	Coordinate/support educational programs/campaigns
3	Education/ Evaluation/ Encouragement	Coordinate/support policies, programs and marketing campaigns
4	Education/ Evaluation/ Encouragement	Update the Plan at least every five years
5	Education/ Evaluation/ Encouragement	Conduct annual monitoring
6	Engineering	Facilitate projects and programs that improve pedestrian safety
7	Engineering	Conduct Roadway Safety Audits (RSA) for the pedestrian safety corridors
8	Engineering	Implement safety improvements in the pedestrian safety corridors
9	Enforcement	RTC legislative program related to safety
10	Enforcement	Information for law enforcement personnel (pedestrian rights/responsibilities and pedestrian crash reporting)

Project Schedule

April 2019:	Stakeholder Committee Meeting #1
May 6 – July 5, 2019:	Online public opinion safety survey
May 2020:	Stakeholder Committee Meeting #2
January 2021:	Stakeholder Committee Meeting #3
February 24, 2021:	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Briefing
April 23, 2021:	STTC Information
 May 13, 2021:	RTC Information
May 28, 2021:	STTC Action
June 10, 2021:	RTC Action
2021-2022:	Road Safety Audits for Select Corridors
2022:	Integration into Mobility Plan (2045 Update)

Thank You!



Contacts

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Senior Transportation Planner

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Kevin Kokes, AICP

Program Manager

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Bobby Kozub

Transportation Planner

rkozub@nctcog.org

Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
May 2020 - April 2021

RTC MEMBER	Entity	5/14/20	6/11/20	7/9/20	8/13/20	9/10/20	10/8/20	11/12/20	12/10/20	1/14/21	2/11/21	3/11/21	4/8/21
Tennell Atkins (09/17)	Dallas	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Richard E. Aubin (06/18)	Garland	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dennis Bailey (02/21)	Rockwall County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P
Mohamed Bur (06/18)	TxDOT, Dallas	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Pat Deen (08/19)	Parker County	P	P	P	P	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 County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kevin Falconer (07/17)	Carrollton	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant County	E	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
Barry Gordon (12/20)	Duncanville	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E(R)	P	P	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P
Roger Harmon (1/02)	Johnson County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ivan Hughes (09/19)	Addison	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas County	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A(R)	P
Carl L. Johnson (09/22)	TxDOT, FW	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P
Jungus Jordan (4/07)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
Mike Leyman (09/19)	Mansfield	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
B. Adam McGough (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	A	P	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	E(R)	P	P
Allen E. Meagher (12/20)	Irving	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	E(R)	E(R)	E(R)	P
Cara Mendelsohn (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Miklos (12/19)	Mesquite	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	E(R)
Cary Moon (06/15)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ignacio Nuñez (12/20)	Arlington	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P
Philip J. Ritter (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
John Ryan (05/18)	Denton	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chris Schulmeister (07/20)	Allen	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Casey Thomas II (07/20)	Dallas	--	--	A	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	E(R)	A	E(R)
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Euless	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P= Present

A= Absent

R=Represented by Alternate

--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment
of obligation arising out of elected service)

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster
May 2020 - April 2021**

RTC MEMBER	Entity	5/14/20	6/11/20	7/9/20	8/13/20	9/10/20	10/8/20	11/12/20	12/10/20	1/14/21	2/11/21	3/11/21	4/8/21
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Paul Wageman (10/19)	DART	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
B. Glen Whitley (2/97)	Tarrant County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	E(R)
W. Jeff Williams (10/15)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Ann Zadeh (06/17)	Fort Worth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was 1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

P= Present

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
March 2020 - March 2021

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	3/27/20	4/24/20	5/22/20	6/26/20	7/24/20	8/28/20	9/25/20	10/23/20	12/4/20	1/22/21	2/26/21	3/26/21
Joe Atwood	Hood County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Melissa Baker	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Micah Baker	Dallas County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Katherine Beck	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Marc Bentley	Farmers Branch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Boski	Mansfield	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Keith Brooks	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tanya Brooks	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Cohen	Southlake	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kent Collins	Coppell	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rick Cortez	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hal Cranor	Euless	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fred Crosley	Trinity Metro	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Davis	Wise County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caryl DeVries	Grand Prairie	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Dickens	Hurst	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Disheroon	Johnson County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Phil Dupler	FWTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chad Edwards	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chris Flanigan	Allen	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ann Foss	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mike Galizio	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gary Graham	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ron Hartline	The Colony	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shannon Hicks	Addison	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Terry Hughes	Weatherford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jeremy Hutt	Cleburne	--	--	--	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Thuan Huynh	McKinney	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tony Irvin	DeSoto	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by WebEx/Audio Conference. Individual attendance not taken.

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster
March 2020 - March 2021

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	3/27/20	4/24/20	5/22/20	6/26/20	7/24/20	8/28/20	9/25/20	10/23/20	12/4/20	1/22/21	2/26/21	3/26/21
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Knippel	Frisco	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eron Linn	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Paul Luedtke	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Wes McClure	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Moen	Frisco	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mark Nelson	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jim O'Connor	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kevin Overton	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Palermo	DCTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Todd Plesko	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shawn Poe	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
John Polster	Denton County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tim Porter	Wylie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bryan G. Ramey II	Duncanville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kathryn Rush	Dallas	--	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
David Salmon	Lewisville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Brian Shewski	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ray Silva-Reyes	Colleyville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Anjelica Solano	NTTA	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	*
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dave Timbrell	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Press Tompkins	Greenville	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gregory Van Nieuwenhuize	Haltom City	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Daniel Vedral	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland Hills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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-- =Not yet eligible to attend *Meeting held by WebEx/Audio Conference. Individual attendance not taken.

MINUTES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE March 26, 2021

The Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) held a meeting on Friday, March 26, 2021, at 1:30 pm, by videoconference. The Regional Transportation Council Bylaws establish that the Technical Committee approved membership in attendance at a meeting shall constitute a quorum for action to be taken, therefore individual attendance was not taken for committee members or other attendees.

1. **Approval of February 26, 2021, Minutes:** The minutes of the February 26, 2021, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 1. Daniel Vedral (M); Stanford Lynch (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** There were no items included on the Consent Agenda.
3. **COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program (Round 4):** Brian Dell presented recommendations for the fourth round of the COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Program. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there is interest to stimulate the economy through infrastructure investments. Proposed projects meet one or more of the policies outlined in Mobility 2045 and/or assist in reaching the region's federal performance measure targets. Project types include roadway, complete streets, bicycle/pedestrian, intersection improvements, and strategic partnerships. A summary of the eligibility and selection criteria was presented, and details were provided in the electronic handout version of Electronic Item 3.2. Also discussed was recent stimulus funding totaling \$9.8 billion that was set aside for transportation infrastructure as part of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA). Of that amount, \$803 million was allocated to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and \$164 million was allocated to Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Texas. Approximately \$54 million was allocated to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Mr. Dell noted these funds would be added to the region's existing balance of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 and FY2023 through the upcoming Unified Transportation Program. In addition, he noted staff proposed to incorporate these funds into existing project selection efforts through future rounds of COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure and the Regional 10-Year Plan. A summary of proposed funding recommended through COVID-19 #00X Infrastructure Round Four was highlighted by project type and funding category with overall total funding approximately \$175.65 million over the next several years. The list of proposed projects was provided in Electronic Item 3.1, with updates identified in the electronic handout version emailed to members. Also highlighted was the current west/east funding distribution, approximately 24.5 percent in the west and 75.5 percent in the east. It was noted approved projects would be included through the Transportation Improvement Program modification August submittal deadline cycle and Federal Highway Administration approval was anticipated in October 2021. Michael Morris noted it was important to highlight that west/east funding percentages changed from the original proposed list of projects to the revised listings and that the balances will be adjusted as additional projects are advanced. Committee Chair Brian Moen asked if the \$54 million coming to the region was included through this effort. Mr. Morris clarified that the \$54 million would not be available until FY2022. Shawn Poe asked how staff separated the context sensitive design/complete streets projects from the roadway projects in their evaluation since some projects could be evaluated in more than one category. Staff noted that for projects with overlap between two categories, staff evaluated in both categories to determine under which category the project scored higher. Chair Moen asked if another round of the COVID-19 Infrastructure Program was anticipated. Mr. Morris

noted that staff were currently focused on the Unified Transportation Program but would bring back another round of the program in approximately six months. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of the proposed projects outlined in the revised tables provided to members via email in Electronic Item 3.1 and to also recommend approval for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents as needed. John Polster (M); Shawn Poe (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **2021 Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emissions Grant Program:** Lori Clark presented details of a proposed regional submittal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low or No Emissions Grant Program. The program is expected to award \$180 million nationwide in funding for advanced technology transit projects that reduce energy consumption, harmful emissions, and direct carbon emissions. Eligible projects include acquisition of low- or no-emission buses, related equipment and facilities, and workforce development. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is an eligible applicant and staff proposed submittal of a project, on behalf of the region, to electrify the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Link that connects the CentrePort Station to the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. The project would include the purchase of battery electric buses, charging stations, and administrative costs. Ms. Clark noted that since the mail out, updated project cost estimates have been received, with anticipated award of approximately \$7.5 million in federal funds. Staff proposed the required match be covered with up to 1.5 million in regional Transportation Development Credits. The schedule for this effort was reviewed, including the application deadline of April 12, 2021. Details were provided in Electronic Item 4. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of a proposed project application for the Fiscal Year 2021 Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emission Grant Program requesting up to \$7.5 million in Federal Transit Administration funds, including the use of up to 1.5 million regional Transportation Development Credits as match. Action also included a recommendation for RTC approval for staff to administratively amend the transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and other planning/administrative documents to include the proposed project, if awarded. Greg Royster (M); Jim O'Connor (S). The motion passed unanimously.
5. **Proposed Regional Single-Occupancy Vehicle Trip Reduction Target Development Resolution:** Caryn Sanders provided an overview of the proposed Regional Transportation Council (RTC) resolution that would establish a regional single-occupancy vehicle commute trip reduction target for the region. The North Central Texas Council of Governments' Travel Demand Management (TDM) goal is to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel on roadways by offering alternatives to driving alone. Traditional TDM strategies include telecommuting, transit, ridesharing, vanpools, and flexible work schedules. In October 2020, staff introduced the development of an RTC resolution in an effort to retain some of the positive benefits of reducing trips realized during COVID-19 restrictions and proposed a realistically achievable target that results in high benefits and reduced negative impacts. The Regional Single Occupancy Vehicle Trip Reduction resolution would seek to reduce all SOV trips with a specific target goal percentage to be maintained each year. Further information on the proposed resolution was provided in Electronic Item 5.1 and Electronic Item 5.2 contained the draft resolution. Ms. Sanders highlighted various sections of the resolution. The resolution outlines support for the establishment of a regional trip reduction target of 20 percent to reduce the number of SOV commute trips during the peak period, encourages public and private sector employers to reduce employees' SOV trips by implementing employer-specific trip reduction programs, encourages both public and private sector employers to monitor and track agency participation through an online commute tracking platform, and encourages use of www.TryParkingIt.com (or a comparable tracking platform)

to aid in tracking and monitoring activities. In addition, the RTC will evaluate public agencies' participation and implementation of the program through a new policy established as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle with non-participation possibly impacting the level of Transportation Development credits received through the Policy Bundle Survey process. For private sector agencies, the RTC will monitor the agency's participation and implementation of the program through www.TryParkingIt.com or a comparable tracking platform, with participation possibly resulting in awarding regional funding for TDM-related efforts such as transit passes. Also outlined in the resolution, staff will provide the RTC with annual updates on the status of the trip reduction target to reduce SOV commute trips and include www.TryParkingIt.com usage rates, number of users, trips reduced, and emissions reduced. The schedule for this effort was highlighted. RTC action is expected to be requested on May 13, 2021. John Polster asked if the resolution would be mandatory for private-sector companies, and if not, did staff expect that it would eventually become mandatory. Michael Morris noted the policy would not be mandatory, but that there would be some incentives used such as including the policy in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle program or by potentially providing transit passes. Committee Chair Brian Moen discussed the use of www.TryParkingIt.com and asked if the software was geared toward individuals or if there was an option for employers that have a telecommuting policy to demonstrate that in the tracking software. Mr. Morris noted the software was currently set up for individuals but upgrading the software to allow a representative from an agency submit monthly reports on behalf of their employees may be an option to consider. Mr. Polster asked if staff was looking to have public agencies provide to NCTCOG a policy showing it encourages/allows employees to telecommute, or would the agency need to provide documentation of those employees who actually follow the policy. He also discussed trip reduction strategies in the San Francisco area. Mr. Morris noted that he believed it would take into consideration that a public agency has a policy and not get into the details of what individual employees were actually telecommuting, but that staff would discuss. A motion was made to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval of the Resolution to Develop a Regional Single Occupancy Vehicle Trip Reduction Target to Reduce Drive Alone Vehicles Trips in North Central Texas, provided in Electronic Item 5.1. John Polster (M); Walter Shumac III (S). The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Fiscal Year 2021 Project Tracking Update:** Brian Dell provided an update on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Project Tracking Initiative that was implemented to help reduce the region's carryover funding balances. As noted previously, there have been significant implementation delays on projects throughout the region and there is a need to draw down the region's carryover balances. In October 2020, staff provided the Committee a list of projects by phase that were scheduled to advance or obligate funds during the coming year. Agencies would be required to report project status on a more frequent basis and quarterly Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC)/Regional Transportation Council (RTC) presentations will provide opportunities to address issues that might be hindering progress on projects and ensure funds are being obligated in a more timely manner. A summary of FY2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), and Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funds allocated in the Unified Transportation Program for the region, as well as FY2020 carryover funds, were highlighted including a comparison of October 2020 and March 2021 information. The summary included FY2021 project phases, project phases obligated to date, and project phases past their original estimated start date. A list of the projects that were scheduled to begin in FY2021 and their current status was provided in Electronic Item 6.1. Mr. Dell noted that although FY2021 is halfway over, only 21 percent of CMAQ, 7 percent of STBG, and small portion of TA-Set Aside funds have been obligated. Since projects have not progressed as quickly as needed and STBG funds have the largest balance, staff will be proposing a STBG/Category 2 funding partnership as part of the

region's 10-Year Plan this spring. In addition, it was noted that approximately \$7 million of TA Set Aside funds are at risk of lapsing this year if the projects on the list do not obligate by the end of the fiscal year. Staff will continue to monitor project progress and work with project sponsors and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to resolve issues that may be causing delays in project implementation. Additional details on the initiative were provided in Electronic Item 6.2. Committee members and staff discussed the causes of delay, which primarily seems to be underestimation of how long project phases take before a project is delivered particularly when considering federal portions of the process. Chad Edwards discussed past training and noted it may be helpful for some members to reeducate themselves. Mr. Dell noted in December 2020 NCTCOG, in partnership with TxDOT, provided Transportation Improvement Program training and that members would be provided a link to the training which also included discussion on local government project procedures. He noted staff was also working to compile a series of documents and materials for the website elaborating on the workshop that will be helpful to members. There was also discussion on whether training should be part of a prequalification process to receive funds, if risk evaluations would be helpful, and whether additional funding allocations may be depended on an entity's timeliness on current project delivery. Mr. Polster asked if funded projects are ready earlier than scheduled, would those projects be eligible for earlier implementation compared to entities with projects that are behind. Mr. Morris noted that if a funded project is ready to go to construction, regardless of the year for which it is funded, the project will likely be expedited since more other projects are often delayed. He added this would be the case regardless of whether another entity is behind on its schedule. Staff noted there had been internal discussions on different approaches to encourage an entity to move projects forward, and that it seemed the Committee was willing for staff to be more assertive in its efforts to prevent the delay of projects. Staff will consider options to help projects move forward in a more timely manner if current efforts do not result in improvements.

- 7. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Schedule:** Amy Johnson presented efforts to update Mobility 2045, which was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in June 2018. Federal guidelines require the Dallas-Fort Worth region to update the region's long-range transportation plan a minimum of every four years. In addition, Transportation Conformity expires in November 2022. As a result, efforts to update Mobility 2045 have begun. The updated plan will include a base year of 2023, a horizon year of 2045, and use revised 2045 demographics and revenue forecasts. One of the major focus areas to be included in the updated plan will be performance measurement. Efforts will focus on lining up the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan to help go beyond the federal performance requirements and create the foundation to inform project selection, prioritization, and Mobility 2045 adoption. Ms. Johnson reviewed progress to date, as well as current staff efforts. A webpage has been created to allow for public involvement and is available at www.nctcog.org/planinprogress. In addition, staff has developed the Map Your Experience tool that will help take qualitative comments and put them into a data package for staff and is available as a full suite of input tools and process that will help with plan development. Current efforts include performance measures development, policy and program review, Policy Bundle review, agency and partner coordination, and development of the financial plan. Mobility Plan themes address mobility, quality of life, system sustainability, and implementation and include nine goals. The schedule for the Mobility Plan updated was highlighted with draft recommendations expected in early 2022. Details were provided in Electronic Item 7. John Polster discussed ongoing planning efforts in the northeast quadrant of Denton County and anticipated growth, as well as the need to specifically address the Outer Loop between Denton and Collin County. He asked if entities would have an opportunity to discuss demographics before final decisions are made. Dan Kessler noted staff have conducted a validation process through the forecasting model and are working

closely with the Research and Information System Department on new 2045 demographics which are expected to be available for local partner view between April and June 2021. He added that the demographic forecast methodology has been updated, so if there are areas that need further refinement based on local review, options will be discussed.

8. **Director of Transportation Report on Selected Items:** Michael Morris highlighted slides from Changing Mobility: Data, Insights and Delivering Innovative Projects during COVID Recovery provided in Electronic Item 8.1. Additional details were also available at www.nctcog.org/pm/covid-19. He highlighted travel behavior by mode, and specifically noted that roadway patterns continue to differ from pre COVID-19 patterns. In addition, he highlighted financial implications of COVID-19 to transit sales tax, sales tax, motor fuels tax, and motor vehicle sales and rental tax. Also highlighted were funding impacts to toll roads in the region, as well as TEXpress lanes which continue to show improvement. Mr. Morris also discussed data from www.TryParkingIt.com, lowered construction costs, and efforts to move projects forward in order to benefit from lower costs. He also discussed Legislative progress on the return of the \$2 billion. He noted two meetings have been held with James Bass regarding election by the Commission not to fund approximately \$2 billion into categories of projects in the region, most likely in Category 2 and 4. He noted that progress has been made on both the House and Senate sides to correct for the action by the Commission. Mr. Morris also discussed State requirements for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meetings. Previous to COVID-19, the RTC met in person at the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) with both the Chair and members physically present at the meeting. As a result of the disaster declaration, State law has permitted both the RTC Chair and members to meet remotely and continue to conduct business. If the Governor of Texas were to no longer renew the disaster declaration, the RTC would still have flexibility by State law to have the RTC Chair in attendance physically at the NCTCOG office with RTC members continuing to meet remotely which is referred to as Phase 2. The desire is to eventually reach Phase 3 with both the RTC Chair and members meeting again physically at NCTCOG, but he noted there is no direction as to when that may occur due to the large membership of the RTC and the need to socially distance. John Polster noted that in conversations with members of the public, when explained how the gas tax works and how much an individual is contributing on average, many understand the need for additional tools. He asked if staff could put together some information about the mileage an average person in Texas drives, how much gas tax that person would pay, and how much of a bridge that could build. Mr. Morris noted that staff have prepared something similar in the past and can include in future presentations.
9. **Legislative Update:** Nicholas Allen provided an update on federal legislative actions. On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan, the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill. The bill provides \$30.5 billion in funding for public transit agencies, as well as \$25 billion to the aviation industry. In addition, the House Appropriations Committee announced it would bring back earmarks and similar discussion is occurring in the Senate. The House Appropriations Committee is accepting project requests from members of Congress for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. Each member will be limited to ten project requests, projects must have community support, and other measures will ensure transparency and accountability. Funding to for-profit entities will be banned. Likewise, the House Transportation Infrastructure Committee will accept earmark requests for highway and transit projects in the next reauthorization bill. Mr. Allen also provided an update on State legislative actions. Bill filing ended March 12 and the Texas Legislature will adjourn on May 31, 2021. The Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committee recently met on various articles of the budget, including the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas Department of Transportation funding. Bill topics related to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Legislative Program were highlighted. Related to

transportation funding, bills have been filed that would increase or index gas and diesel taxes, create additional fees at the time of registration for electric vehicles, propose changes to usage of the State Highway Fund, and authorize obligation from the Texas Mobility Fund. Bills filed related to tolling and comprehensive development agreements (CDAs) include those that would require tolls would no longer be collected once a project has been paid, toll collection enforcement, and requirements of non-tolled lanes adjacent to tolled projects. In addition, a few bills have been introduced that would create CDA for projects, most notably IH 35 in Austin. Air quality-related bill topics include a bill filed that would allow counties that had participated in LIRAP to use those funds on other air quality improvements, the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan and electric vehicle infrastructure. A number of bills have also been introduced regarding roadway safety. Some bills would allow local communities more autonomy to reduce speed limits and others would help make roadways safer for cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, several high-speed rail bills have been filed related to eminent domain and recreating a committee to advise the legislature on issues related to high-speed rail. These bills are similar to what we saw last session, none have been heard in committee at this time. Legislative updates will continue to be provided to members during the legislative session.

10. **Regional Transit Performance Measures: Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and Transit Asset Management:** Shawn Dintino provided an update on proposed Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) performance measures. He highlighted recent presentations by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) regarding the various federal performance measures and their statuses. PTASP regional safety performance measures are new, and targets will be set on a four-year schedule. Recent Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations require operators of public transit who receive section 5307 Urbanized Area funds to adopt and implement safety plans, which include safety targets. All the providers in the region adopted their individual plans/targets by December 2020, which began a 180-day clock for the Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt transit safety targets at a regional level. NCTCOG staff recommended the targets be consistent with those adopted by transit providers, with seven targets relating to the four measures: fatalities, injuries, safety events (collision, derailment, fire, etc.) and system reliability (mean distance between major mechanical failures). Proposed targets include the total number of fatalities and the rate of fatalities per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles (VRM), the total number of injuries and the rate per 100,000 VRM, the total number of reportable safety events and the rate per 100,000 VRM, and the mean distance between major mechanical failures. All targets strive for a reduction, except the average distance between breakdowns for which an increasing number indicates improvement. Mr. Dintino described the process staff used to develop regional targets and a baseline for Fiscal Year 2023 targets. The baseline average for the seven targets were highlighted, as well as the initial proposed regional targets. Most targets recommend a 5 percent improvement over the baseline to be achieved by FY2023. For fatalities, the recommended target was proposed in line with the established regional safety position that even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable. Existing efforts to improve transit safety have been put in place by providers and NCTCOG and include a recent cooperative camera procurement that put cameras on buses for small providers throughout the region, grade crossing improvements, employee safety training, vehicle inspections, between-car barriers, and solar-powered bus stop lighting. Potential future efforts include enhanced vehicle lighting, infrastructure monitoring, and sidewalk improvements. Details were provided in Electronic Item 10.

Ezra Pratt provided an update on regional Transit Asset Management (TAM) targets and performance. TAM is a business model that prioritizes funding based on the condition of transit assets to achieve or maintain transit networks in a state of good repair. TAM supports a series of practices including, but not limited to, regular maintenance, inspections, tracking

asset condition over time, planning for maintenance and replacement cost, and replacing each asset at the appropriated time. NCTCOG coordinated with public transportation providers in the region to ensure all agencies either developed their own TAM plan or participated in a group-sponsored plan offered by NCTCOG or the Texas Department of Transportation. Regional targets for the four TAM performance measures, adopted by the RTC in 2018, were highlighted. All targets were approved at 0 percent of the various metrics: rolling stock, percent of transit vehicles that meet or exceed the industry standard defined as the FTA's default useful life benchmark; infrastructure, percent of rail track segments are under performance restrictions; equipment (any non-revenue vehicle owned and operated by providers) percent that meet or exceed the industry standard also defined by the FTA useful life benchmark; and facilities (buildings, stations, park and rides, etc.) percent of transit facilities rated below adequate on the industry standard Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) scale. Regional performance, as reported in the National Transit Database for each of the four measures was highlighted and details were provided in Electronic Item 10. Rolling stock performance has been consistent or improved for several of the asset types. However, there has been a decline in performance for the small bus asset type. Mr. Pratt noted that a Request for Proposals is currently underway for vendors as part of the cooperative vehicle procurement program with subrecipients. Staff expects small bus performance to greatly improve over the next couple of years as vehicles that exceed the useful life are replaced. For infrastructure, regional performance has improved significantly, particularly for commuter rail and hybrid rail modes. Equipment, non-revenue vehicles, have seen a large decline in performance between FY2018 and FY2019 for all three asset types. This target will be revisited, and staff will be coordinating with providers in the region to discuss the performance. Finally, overall transit facilities meet or nearly meet the regional target as measured by the TERM assessment tool. It was noted that 65.5 percent of total facilities have undergone a conditions assessment since FY2018. Every year, approximately 25 percent are assessed so over time there will be a broader picture of the facilities in the region. The timeline for this effort was highlighted, with Committee action on the proposed PTASP targets expected at the April 23, 2021, meeting. Phil Dupler asked if NCTCOG's and the transit agencies targets/TAM plans must be the same. He also asked if there were consequences for not meeting the regional targets. Mr. Pratt noted that the NCTCOG and transit agency targets are not required to be the same; however, consistent targets within the region would be preferred and this topic is something that will be revisited in the coming months. In addition, he noted there are currently no consequences when regional targets are not met but added that the targets lay the groundwork for performance-based planning and identify areas of priority for investment and improvement.

11. **Regional Vanpool Program Modifications to Improve Overall Efficiency:** Dora Kelly presented information on the North Central Texas Regional Vanpool Program operated by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), Trinity Metro, and the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA). The group recently began assessing the Regional Vanpool Program to identify ways to modernize and improve the program's overall efficiency. Each of the agencies operates their program differently, which can be confusing to users. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff has proposed to revise efforts into one regional program to ensure consistency throughout the region. Ms. Kelly reviewed the vanpool service areas covered by each transit agency, as well as the vanpool vehicle all agencies have in common and their cost. She noted costs per van by agency can vary among the programs due to differences in contracts with vendors. Although there are several concerns such as unclear boundaries and varying costs to riders that make it difficult for riders to decipher among the programs, of greatest concern is the competition of the current structure. Ms. Kelly also reviewed service area boundaries, noting that modification of the vanpool boundaries was being proposed to address funding apportionments, contested trips, inconsistent messaging to riders, and by request from DART to formally

define. A map of the proposed origination-based boundaries was provided in Electronic Item 11. Also highlighted were funding and subsidies. Funding through FY2020 has an approved subsidy of 35 percent. When each agency begins using FY2021 funding, the new approved subsidy will be 30 percent. The subsidy percentage is based on the funding year being used by each agency, not by fiscal year. With variation on vendor costs to transit authorities, rider groups experience a wide range of prices. Temporary flexibility was proposed to the subsidy to assist riders while NCTCOG pursues a cooperative regional vanpool procurement with the transit providers. No additional funding would be needed as funding was previously approved by RTC to accommodate the temporary fluctuation in the subsidy. Funding by fiscal year was highlighted and it was noted there is no funding programmed for 2019 and 2020 funds were returned since there were 2018 funds still available to be utilized. Phase 1 of the proposed temporary subsidy structure would be for June 2021 through May 2022. The additional subsidy is proposed to bring the cost to riders down to be consistent across the region until the regional procurement is in place. In Phase 2, proposed from June 2022 to January 2025, Ms. Kelly noted the proposed subsidy and that an increase in vanpools over time has been included in the calculation increasing the subsidy in Phase 2 by 20 percent. The timeline for the regional procurement was highlighted, as well as the upcoming schedule which includes Committee action on April 23 and Regional Transportation Council action on May 13, 2021. Details were provided in Electronic Item 11. Robert Woodbury asked if staff has looked into transit services outside of the three large transit providers. Ms. Kelly noted that no work has been done beyond the areas of the three transit agencies. Michael Morris encouraged members who may have individuals in need a vanpool services outside of the three transit agencies to contact staff.

12. **Air Quality Program Report:** Nicholas Van Haasen presented information on the results of the region's 2020 ozone season and information regarding the 2021 ozone season. The close of the 2020 ozone season marked the end of a three-year monitoring period for both the 2008 and 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Based on data from the three-year period, the region failed to meet the design values, which are the designated regulatory tests for regional attainment, of equal to or less than 75 parts per billion (ppb) for the 2008 NAAQS and equal to or less than 70 ppb for the 2015 NAAQS. He noted that the region has unofficially failed to meet attainment and is expected to be reclassified to a stricter classification for both standards. After reclassification, the region will have until no later than July 20, 2027, to meet the new attainment deadline for the 2008 NAAQS and August 3, 2024, for the 2015 NAAQS. Mr. Van Haasen highlighted the federal attainment requirements for the region and the values at the ozone monitors for 2019, 2020, and the current 2021 values. In addition, he also highlighted the 8-hour ozone NAAQS historical trends for the region. Details were provided in Electronic Item 12. For the 2021 ozone season, he noted the region's current design value was 68 ppb and that no exceedance days have been experienced to date. If maintained, the current design value would satisfy both the 2008 and 2015 NAAQS. North Central Texas Council of Governments staff will continue to investigate pertinent areas of interest that may impact higher ozone readings, contributors to exceedance days, and potential areas to help further improve air quality and reach attainment. Members with ideas for plans and projects that may have air quality benefits were encouraged to contact staff, and additional information was made available to members at www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone.

Anthony Moffa provided an overview of the improper use of Texas temporary tags and the impacts to the region. A temporary tag is intended to be used as a temporary form of vehicle registration until permanent plates are issued for a vehicle, should be tied to the sale of a vehicle, and are only valid for 60 days. Access to creation, distribution, and use of temporary tags is not well regulated. Abuse has become widespread since implementation of the Two Steps on Sticker program, elimination of the Mobile Emissions Task Force, through abuse of

the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) database, and easy access to online merchants of temporary tags. Abuse of temporary tags circumvents mandatory emissions inspections, allows users to avoid tolls, leads to state revenue loss, increases risk to officer safety, funds illegal activities, and conceals the identify when used in crimes. Data from the Travis County Constables office from January 2019 to March 2021 estimates that over 1.1 million fraudulent tags have been created resulting in nearly \$80 million in lost revenue. Some potential solutions to this problem include rule changes within the DMV, limiting the number of tags that can be created, contacting online merchants selling fraudulent temporary tags. In addition, bills have been introduced at the Texas Legislature that would allow the DMV flexibility to deny dealers access to the database and adds temporary tags to the penal code. Resuming the Mobile Emissions Task Force may also be a potential solution, which could be achieved through Local Initiative Projects appropriations that would distribute back funds paid by counties into the Clean Air Account or through a Regional Transportation Council backstop. Additional details were provided in Electronic Item 12.

13. **Fast Facts:** Staff presentations were not given. Information was provided to members electronically for the following items.
 1. Spring 2021 'Virtual' Traffic Incident Management Executive Level Course Announcement (Electronic Item 13.1)
 2. Road Safety Audit Virtual Workshop for Pedestrian Safety (Electronic Item 13.2) (www.nctcog.org/rsaworkshop)
 3. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/funding-and-resources/fundingvehicle>)
 4. Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/dfw-clean-cities-meetings>)
 5. Status of Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program Funding Programs (Electronic Item 13.3)
 6. February Online Input Opportunity Minutes (Electronic Item 13.4)
 7. April Online Input Opportunity Notice (Electronic Item 13.5)
 8. Public Comments Report (Electronic Item 13.6)
 9. Written Progress Reports:
 - Local Motion (Electronic Item 13.7)
 - Partner Progress Reports (Electronic Item 13.8)
14. **Other Business (Old and New):** There was no discussion on this item.
15. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee is scheduled for 1:30 pm on April 23, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.



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

May 2021

INSIDE

Pick up your bike and get active in May

Bike Month kicked off May 1 and will include Bike to Work Week, which culminates in Bike to Work Day. Historically an opportunity for people across the country to bicycle to the office, Bike to Work Week and Bike to Work Day have looked a little different since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic last year.

For ideas of how you can get active, throughout the month, even if you can't bike to work, see the story on page 2.

New program allows fleets to try before buying

If you have been thinking about purchasing an alternative fuel vehicle or advanced technology, but you still have questions, a new program allows you to try the technology first.

Try and Drive Alternative is a regional initiative managed by the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition (DFWCC) that provides fleet managers and consumers the chance to borrow clean vehicle technologies, such as alternative fuel vehicles, for a trial period before making an investment.

Fleets and consumers are connected to participating technology providers via a directory maintained by DFWCC. Technologies listed in the directory include telematics, alternative fuel vehicles, alternative fueling infrastructure and more. The directory, more information about the program and how to be listed as a provider are available at www.nctcog.org/dfwtrydrive.

Vehicles and equipment can be borrowed for a single day, a week, or longer, depending on the arrangement with the vendor. This trial period can provide the opportunity for side-by-side comparisons with traditional equipment and ensure that operational needs can be met without a commitment to purchase. In addition, alternative fuel vehicles and other clean vehicle technologies can provide several benefits including reduced emissions, as well as maintenance and fuel cost savings.

By providing first-hand experiences of clean vehicle technologies, Try and Drive Alternative can play an important part in helping fleets see the benefits of these technologies with the hope of increasing their adoption and improving regional air quality. This effort is important because Dallas-Fort Worth is in nonattainment for ozone and is working to meet the federal government's standards for the pollutant. For more information, visit www.dfwcleancities.org.



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

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

North Texans encouraged to ride their bikes to work, elsewhere in May

Since spring of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, North Texans have sought opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, including using the region's bicycle and pedestrian trails. Trail usage was up substantially in 2020 and last year's gains have been sustained in 2021. May is National Bike Month, and with many people still at home and driving fewer miles, there are still opportunities to turn to active transportation, whether to exercise or take a leisurely ride with friends or family.



Bike to Work Week kicks off May 17. There are many opportunities to enjoy two-wheel transportation this month, even for people still working from home during the pandemic.

Some people who have returned to their offices may

want to try a different kind of commute. National Bike to Work Week will be celebrated May 17-23, while Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 21. Bicycling to the office is not an option for everyone. But many of those working from home find themselves with more flexible schedules.

Maybe they have been wanting to explore a trail near home but have not found the time. With the weather warming up and more daylight, exploring it before or after the workday is an option, or they may want to pedal to the neighborhood coffee shop to meet a friend.

For those who live close enough to work to allow them to travel by bike, a two-wheel commute is less expensive and better for the region's air quality. While not everyone can bicycle all the way to work, due to distance or other obstacles, they have options. They may choose to commute by multiple modes, bicycling to a transit station and riding public transportation the rest of the way.

The region's transit agencies make this easier by allowing bicycles on their buses and trains. Residents who use their bicycles to get to work, whether they pedal all the way or use a combination of modes, can record their trips at www.tryparkingit.com, the region's alternative-commute and ride-matching website, and earn rewards.

Even for those who haven't ridden in a while, May is a good month to give biking a try. Hop on that bike for a quick spin around the neighborhood or for a short trip to the store or a restaurant.

Bike Month was established in 1956 and is celebrated by cities across the nation, according to the League of American Bicyclists.

TRANSIT

Check out the spring Mobility Matters

The Spring 2021 issue of Mobility Matters, NCTCOG's semiannual newsletter, is available.

The latest issue highlights the North Texas Center for Mobility Technologies, a partnership involving the Texas Research Alliance, local universities and NCTCOG. This center aims to help develop mobility innovations and solutions, while providing the region's employers with the necessary talent and research capacity.

This issue also profiles Ann Zadeh, Fort Worth Councilmember and secretary of the RTC. She discusses her passion for public engagement and outreach and how it changed due to COVID-19.

Changing Mobility, a project that identifies the impacts of COVID-19 on transportation and air quality, is also featured. Changing Mobility also examines ways infrastructure projects can aid the region's economic recovery .

This issue of Mobility Matters also features a message by Director of Transportation Michael Morris on how the transit agencies are preparing to welcome riders back and an update on the DFW High-Speed Transportation Connections Study.

Read Mobility Matters online at www.nctcog.org/mobilitymatters.

REGIONALNews

NCTCOG updating Access North Texas plan

NCTCOG staff has begun updating Access North Texas, the regional public transportation coordination plan, to document transportation needs and challenges for older adults, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, and transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

The effort kicked off in April and is expected to be finalized next spring, with implementation set for summer 2022.

Access North Texas is also an effort to coordinate public, human service and community transportation in the 16-county region, as well as outline strategies to improve access to work, medical appointments, education and the community over the next four years.

Public outreach is being conducted virtually through 1) county-specific virtual meetings, 2) a public transportation survey, and 3) NCTCOG's Map Your Experience tool. These three public outreach efforts will continue through July 2021 and will provide opportunities for residents to identify transportation needs in their communities.

To learn more about Access North Texas or provide feedback on regional public transportation, visit the Access North Texas website at www.accessnorthtexas.org or contact NCTCOG staff directly at accessnorthtexas@nctcog.org.

Silver Line will connect to TEXRail at DFW Airport

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit Board of Directors has taken the next step in the development of the Silver Line commuter rail project from Plano to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

In April, the board authorized a payment of \$21.5 million to Trinity Metro for the construction of rail and platform facilities that will link the Silver Line to Terminal B at DFW Airport, where it will meet Trinity Metro's TEXRail. With the connection at DFW Airport, the \$1.3 billion Silver Line will complete a commuter rail link from downtown Fort Worth to Plano when the rail line opens in 2023,

TEXRail has offered passenger service from downtown Fort Worth to DFW airport since January 2019.

The 26-mile Silver Line will run through Grapevine, Coppell, Dallas, Carrollton, Addison, Richardson, and Plano, and include 10 new stations.

Transportation Resources

Facebook

Facebook.com/nctcogtrans

Twitter

Twitter.com/nctcogtrans

YouTube

YouTube.com/nctcogtrans

Instagram

Instagram.com/nctcogtrans

Publications

NCTCOG.org/trans/outreach/publications.asp

Partners

Dallas Area Rapid Transit
DART.org

Denton County Transportation Authority
DCTA.net

North Texas Tollway Authority
NTTA.org

Texas Department of Transportation
TxDOT.gov

Trinity Metro
RideTrinityMetro.org

By the Numbers

\$21.5 million

The payment DART authorized for the construction of rail and platform facilities that will link the Silver Line with TEXRail at DFW Airport.

PUBLIC *Involvement*

High-speed transportation meetings set May 19-20



HIGH-SPEED TRANSPORTATION

DALLAS - FORT WORTH

NCTCOG is continuing analysis of high-speed transportation between Dallas and Fort Worth as part of the DFW High-Speed Transportation Connections Study.

The third series of virtual public meetings will be held at noon Wednesday, May 19, and 6 pm Thursday, May 20, allowing North Texans to hear about the study and share their opinions.

The study is evaluating high-speed transportation alternatives to modernize and enhance travel between Dallas, Arlington and Fort Worth. The alternatives analysis portion of this study is in its final stages before the federal environmental documentation process begins. These public meetings will help planners develop an assessment of the remaining 10 alignments (seven near the Interstate Highway 30 corridor and three near SH 180) and three travel technologies (high-speed rail, maglev and hyperloop).

North Texans may participate in the meetings online at www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs. Residents can also participate by calling 855-756-7520. They should use extension 72698# for the May 19 meeting and extension 72699# on May 20. Comments received between May 14 and June 18 will be considered and included as part of the official public meeting record. Comments and questions can be submitted at DFW_HST@nctcog.org or on the project webpage. Presentation materials will be posted for review before the meetings at www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs.

Capable of traveling up to 250 mph, high-speed transportation provides an alternative to driving across town, including during peak traffic hours, and could also change how North Texans access other regions. In time, the technology selected will offer a connection to other planned high-speed transportation systems.

To request printed copies of the information, call 817-695-9240 or email DFW_HST@nctcog.org.

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