



January 2024

Welcome to Local Motion, a monthly email newsletter from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department.



Happy New Year! We're celebrating our 50th anniversary as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth region this year! Stay tuned throughout 2024 for special content related to transportation planning and how it has changed to help our region thrive.

Federal planning funds awarded to Fort Worth-to-Houston high-speed rail



High-speed rail from Fort Worth to Houston has been included in the federal government's Corridor Identification and Development Program, the Biden-Harris administration announced recently. This designation allows the corridor to receive up to \$1 million in planning funds. The North Central Texas Council of Governments submitted the Fort Worth-to-Houston project (via Dallas), and Amtrak submitted a separate application for the Dallas-to-Houston line; both applications were awarded up to \$500,000 and propose using the corridor Texas Central received a Record of Decision on from the Federal Railroad Administration between Dallas and Houston.

NCTCOG has been planning the North Texas line, which would run along Interstate Highway 30 from Fort Worth to Dallas, with a stop in Arlington, and connect to the Dallas-to-Houston project. Through the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study, NCTCOG examined 43 potential alignments, with high-speed rail along the IH 30 corridor emerging as the preferred method to connect people seamlessly from throughout the region to the planned Dallas-to-Houston route via a one-seat ride.

The DFW High-Speed Transportation Connections Study is set to move into a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, focusing on route alignment, possible station locations and potential social and environmental impacts. NCTCOG is working with the Federal Transit Administration on final steps before the Dallas-Fort Worth corridor can advance to the formal NEPA process. For more information, visit www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs.

Cedar Hill wins top air quality award



Air North Texas recently named Cedar Hill its Partner of the Year in recognition of the city's efforts to improve air quality throughout ozone season.

Cedar Hill executed a campaign throughout the year to promote the city as a place where families and businesses flourish in a safe and clean environment. The campaign included website content that saw over 2,500 page visits, advertising consisting of a monthly print newsletter and quarterly online newsletter, and 5,000 printed flyers to raise awareness about Earth Month.

Cedar Hill worked throughout the year to increase community involvement, hosting over 25 events that drew almost 100,000 participants. The city also established the Beautification and Environmental Sustainability Board to support sustainability projects and a clean air initiative. Further illustrating its commitment to a future of clean air, the city is developing environmental education workshops.

In addition to Cedar Hill, three other Dallas-Fort Worth area cities were recognized by Air North Texas for their use of outreach strategies to encourage individuals and employers to

actively seek ways to bring the region into attainment of the federal government's ozone standards.

The City of Denton was recognized for Outstanding Outreach for its use of website and social media content, advertising efforts, and a variety of community events.

The City of Grand Prairie was recognized for Outstanding Education and also earned the Arlo Ambassador Award for its use of the Air North Texas mascot throughout the year.

The City of Plano was recognized for Outstanding Initiative for efforts to create an in-depth educational webpage dedicated to air quality on its website.

Air North Texas is a regional public awareness campaign that includes 38 partners pursuing environmental awareness in North Texas. For more, visit www.airnorthtexas.org.

Federal grant could provide more options for EV charging



It is no secret that electric vehicle registrations have been on the rise across the state, with Dallas-Fort Worth leading the way. Over 90,000 EVs are currently registered across the region.

There is a natural question that accompanies their increase in popularity. Where can they be charged? Charging options are also increasing, with over 8,000 chargers at more than 2,900 charging stations across the region, according to afdc.energy.gov.

NCTCOG is looking to make sure EV owners can confidently operate their vehicles using this growing network. NCTCOG has applied for \$3.66 million in federal funding through the Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator Program (RAA) on behalf of the region to improve EV charging infrastructure.

RAA is a competitive program created by the Federal Highway Administration. The main goal is to create a more reliable network of charging stations by fixing the chargers that have already been installed but are not currently operating. There are approximately 230 eligible charging ports across 124 sites in North Texas that have been identified as requiring attention. These charging stations may have first-generation equipment or older software that does not meet the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) standards.

By improving the current charging infrastructure, this grant could assist in the widespread adoption of EVs across the region and state. For more information on EVs, visit www.dfwcleancities.org.

By the Numbers:

\$3.66 million

Federal funding NCTCOG has applied for through the Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator Program to improve EV charging infrastructure in North Texas.

Mobility 2050: Next long-range plan will seek to provide options to keep up with growth



Gear up, Dallas-Fort Worth. NCTCOG has embarked on a journey into the future with Mobility 2050! The long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan must be updated every four years and serves as a blueprint for the region’s mobility landscape for the next 20 years and beyond. Picture this: a comprehensive, multimodal mobility plan that’s not just about getting from Point A to Point B, but improving connectivity, accessibility and safety for all North Texans. Yes, you heard that right – the future of North Texas transportation is advancing, and it’s all geared toward #ConnectNorthTexas.

Mobility 2050 is not simply a top-down dictation of what’s to come. A central focus in planning is to assess the current state of accessibility to critical elements of daily life, such as jobs, healthcare, education and healthy food, while looking ahead at what people might need in the future. This approach aims to address the diverse needs of our region and make mobility the catalyst for economic, educational, and healthcare opportunities.

The plan relies on a set of major inputs that are underway. Key elements include: a new demographic forecast, financial plan, environmental justice analysis and updated performance measures. These inputs are instrumental in crafting a forward-looking, equitable and sustainable transportation strategy that aligns with the region’s evolving dynamics. We’re talking about a system that keeps pace with the region.

NCTCOG staff is working on multimodal projects, programs, and policies to piece it all together. Mobility 2050 is about giving people options. We are making a plan that can flex and bend with the unprecedented changes facing Dallas-Fort Worth. Stay tuned for more updates and provide your input on the plan at nctcog.org/planinprogress.

NCTCOG seeking public input on funding for 2024 All-Star Game, 2026 World Cup

TRANSPORTATION ONLINE INPUT OPPORTUNITY

MONDAY, JAN. 8 - TUESDAY, FEB. 6, 2024

NCTCOG is asking for public input online beginning Monday, Jan. 8 on a variety of topics, including special events coming to Tarrant County. Comments on the 2024 Regional Transportation Funding Program and the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan will also be sought. Information will be posted online for review and comment at www.publicinput.com/nctcogJan24 until Feb. 6.

Arlington will host the 2024 Major League Baseball All-Star Game in July and has been named a host for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The RTC recently took action to support transportation planning efforts related to these events as well as the “Wings Over Cowtown” air show, scheduled for April 2024 at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth.

The 2024 Regional Transportation Funding Program is the culmination of NCTCOG’s efforts in evaluating funding requests from agencies in the Dallas Fort-Worth region. Staff members are proposing to award federal and regional funding to projects across North Texas.

The Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan is a regional plan created through the collaboration of local governments to improve air quality, protect public health and address extreme weather events. The development of this plan is supported through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program.

Information and resources about Map Your Experience, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP), vehicle incentive and funding opportunities and Try Parking It will also be made available online.

For special accommodation due to a disability, language interpretation or to request printed copies of the information, contact Jackie Castillo at 817-695-9255 or jcastillo@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the deadline. Reasonable accommodation will be made.

Public can weigh in on plan to improve DFW air quality




Public outreach opportunities to discuss the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan continue in January, with meetings scheduled in several counties throughout the region. Meetings will kick off with an in-person-virtual hybrid option Jan. 8 at the North Central Texas Council of Governments in Arlington. For the schedule of upcoming meetings and how to participate, visit www.publicinput.com/dfwaqip.

NCTCOG is collaborating with local governments on the development of the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan with the help of local partners after the federal government awarded the region \$1 million in planning funds through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program. The DFW AQIP is a comprehensive plan to improve air quality, enhance sustainability and promote equity. With 10 Dallas-Fort Worth area counties in nonattainment for ozone, air quality is an important focus of NCTCOG's transportation planning responsibilities.

In the second phase of the CPRG program, entities can apply for a portion of \$4.6 billion to help with implementation of the plans they develop.

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.

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