



October 2022

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

Find an active way to get to school Oct. 12

Students of all ages across North Texas are encouraged to participate in this year's observance of Walk to School Day, scheduled for October 12. More than 120 events are planned throughout Texas, with over 50 campuses throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area participating.

The event brings together students, their parents, schools and public officials to celebrate walking, promote healthy behaviors and galvanize support for pedestrian safety improvements.

Walking and biking to school can include the following benefits:

- Encourage students to establish healthy habits
- Improve academic performance
- Reduce traffic congestion near schools
- Improve air quality
- Teach students about the importance of traffic safety
- Build stronger school-community relationships

As part of a NCTCOG promotion of Walk to School Day this year, 20 schools registered their event with NCTCOG and will receive free promotional materials. Each promotional kit includes a Walk to School Day banner and/or other safety and encouragement items for students. The schools will also be able to enter their students' names into a raffle to win a new bicycle. NCTCOG anticipates offering free promotional events again for the 2023 Walk to School Day.



While walking to school is featured only one day a year, NCTCOG encourages students to continue opting for active ways to get to school after October 12. The right infrastructure will increase mobility for students across the region, regardless of where they live.

NCTCOG invests in Safe Routes to School projects such as improved sidewalks and

crosswalks. In 2020, the Regional Transportation Council awarded nearly \$7 million for six Safe Routes to School projects across North Texas through the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects (TACFP). Later this year, the RTC will consider another series of funding requests as part of the 2022 TACFP.

October is Fall Car Care Month



Are you Car Care Aware? October is Fall Car Care Month and that means taking a few extra steps to make sure your vehicle is in good operation. This may not only prolong the life of your car, but save you time and keep you and your passengers safe. Keeping your check engine light off also ensures your car is not polluting more than necessary, which means better air quality for all of us in the region.

Make sure your coolant levels are topped off with antifreeze to prevent your car from overheating and leaving you stranded. Winter months bring potential driving hazards such as icy roads, so it's important to prepare by checking your brakes and tires in the fall as

the weather cools down. Worn treads on a tire can seriously impact a car's ability to stop in the rain. If your tread depth is less than 4/32", you should consider replacing the tires. Also, if you hear squeaking brakes, this is your vehicle's way of telling you there may be an issue that needs attention.

Stay safe and remember to be Car Care Aware! For more information, visit www.ntxcare.org.

Companies look to bring transportation solutions to N. Texas through new program

The Regional Transportation Council's Certification of Emerging and Reliable Transportation Technology (CERTT) allows for cutting-edge technology providers to implement innovative solutions for transportation issues in the Dallas-Fort Worth region while simultaneously working toward obtaining any federal or state certification needed. On September 8, the RTC initiated the process for NCTCOG to proceed with its first round of potential proposals. NCTCOG has worked with two technology providers for this first round: JPods and TransPod. Each technology serves a different transportation niche, and NCTCOG anticipates great interest from local governments.

JPods is a gondola-like personal rapid transit solution that operates on a fixed guideway above a road. Capable of linear and gridded layouts, JPods promises low-cost, reliable, on-demand transportation of people and goods. It is well-suited for local trips in areas of high traffic and population density, and areas seeking increased mobility to transit connections.

TransPod is a hyperloop technology, aiming to provide inter-city, ultra-high-speed transportation of both people and cargo via near-vacuum tubes. TransPod is currently designing a line in Alberta, Canada, between Calgary and Edmonton, and has established

test facilities in France.

NCTCOG will hold a pre-submittal meeting for local governments with TransPod and JPods at the NCTCOG offices, 616 Six Flags Drive, at 9 a.m. Friday, October 21. Representatives from both technology providers will be available to answer questions interested local governments may have about their technologies.

Local governments may then propose potential locations to the technology providers. The deadline for local government proposals is Friday, November 18.

To learn more about these technologies, contact Brendon Wheeler at BWheeler@nctcog.org for an information packet. NCTCOG requests that interested local governments RSVP for the pre-submittal meeting at <https://forms.office.com/r/YXLCdeWktr>.

By the Numbers

\$50 million

The amount RTC is set to consider for a management, operation, and safety program that will fund various initiatives intended to make the system safer for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.



DCTA selects Cristina as new CEO

The Denton County Transportation Authority Board of Directors has appointed Paul Cristina as the agency's new president and CEO. Cristina was chosen from among three finalists after having led the agency as interim CEO since March. Before being named DCTA's interim leader, Cristina worked as its deputy CEO.

A 2001 graduate of the US Air Force Academy, Cristina has also worked as director of public-private partnerships at BNSF Railway Co., where he led engagement with public agencies across the railroad's 23,500-mile rail network on projects that improved safety, mobility and efficiency for the railroad and the traveling public.

He served over five years as a civil engineer officer in the Air Force, including in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After leaving the Air Force, Cristina worked as a civil engineer and planning consultant in Florida. Cristina also holds a Master of Business Administration from Florida State University.

Safety vests signify RTC's commitment to a better roadway system

Members of the RTC were recently presented with safety vests to symbolize their commitment to improving safety across the transportation network. The vests were distributed at the September RTC meeting and can be worn throughout the region as members visit various transportation sites to show their support for a roadway system that prioritizes safety.



NCTCOG has made reducing serious or fatal crashes in North Texas a top priority through Drive Aware North Texas and other efforts. To further demonstrate its commitment, the RTC is set to consider approval of a \$50 million Management, Operations, Air Quality and Safety Program that will fund various initiatives intended to make the system safer for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

The RTC has a stated position that even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable and is working closely with the Texas Department of Transportation and the state's other metropolitan planning organizations to develop solutions that will make the roads less dangerous.

The hope is that this funding and the overall commitment shown by the RTC will help reverse the trajectory of fatality rates on the transportation system and provide the people of North Texas a safer way to travel.

Survey seeks answers for campus mobility

Sometimes the hardest part about college is getting there.

We're here to help.

We need your feedback on campus mobility improvements!

Scan the QR code below to take a short survey. Responses automatically enter you to win one of two \$50 Amazon gift cards!



Take the survey.
surveymonkey.com/r/CampusMobility



NCTCOG has partnered with area colleges and universities to reimagine how students, faculty, staff and others can access and get around campuses using mobility hubs. The purpose of the Intermodal Transportation Hubs for Colleges and Universities study is to develop a comprehensive guide for planning and strategic implementation of mobility hubs at campuses around the region.

Mobility hubs are places on or near campus where people can connect with transit, bike, scooter or car sharing services. To help campuses identify needs of mobility hubs a survey is being conducted through mid-October. The survey is available at <https://surveymonkey.com/r/campusmobility>.

Public input needed on recently launched transit studies

The North Central Texas Council of Governments held public meetings in September on two transit studies underway in the region, as planners look to shape the system of the future.

An in-person meeting September 8 in Denton gave residents and commuters in Denton County a chance to provide how public transportation service can meet their needs. Similarly, a virtual meeting was held September 19 to kick off a study of transit needs in eastern Dallas, Kaufman and Rockwall counties.

The transit studies for Denton County and Eastern Dallas, Kaufman, and Rockwall counties are focused on how to fill transit gaps in these areas and develop a comprehensive strategy to best serve the current and future needs of these areas.

Residents are encouraged to continue engaging with planners working on both studies. A brief survey available at bit.ly/DentonCoTransitStudy seeks input from users of the transportation system in Denton County and will remain open through October 8. Questions and comments about the East Dallas, Kaufman, and Rockwall Counties Transit Study can be emailed to nctcogEDKR@PublicInput.com.

Studies in Tarrant, Collin, and southern Dallas counties have been completed and will contribute to the understanding of studies that are in progress. Internal and regional connections in North Texas are a priority in improving a transportation system that provides North Texans with enhanced mobility to their daily commute. This will be made possible through a developed system that allows riders to connect throughout the region on the transit lines of regional agencies.

NCTCOG opens online input opportunity Oct. 10

Residents will have a chance to comment on regional transportation and air quality planning activities beginning Monday, October 10, as NCTCOG opens an online public input opportunity. Information on car care awareness and modifications to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will be posted at www.publicinput.com/nctcogOct22, where North Texans can provide comments until Tuesday, November 8.



October is Fall Car Care Month and NCTCOG invites residents to utilize educational materials to ensure vehicles are properly taken care of and are contributing to the regional air quality solution. The public will be able to access information online to see where they can get discounts on auto repair or replacement parts to keep their vehicle from excessive tailpipe pollution, and to see where vehicle maintenance clinics are being held throughout the region. More information about the Car Care Awareness campaign can be found at www.ntxcare.org.

The UPWP provides a summary of transportation and air quality planning activities that will be conducted in the 12-county metropolitan planning area.

Additionally, information on the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP); vehicle incentive and funding opportunities; and Map Your Experience, an online mapping tool used to gather public input; will be posted for review.

For special accommodations due to a disability or for language interpretation, contact Jackie Castillo at 817-695-9255 or jcastillo@nctcog.org at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. To submit comments and questions to NCTCOG, email nctcogoct22@publicinput.com or visit www.publicinput.com/nctcogOct22.

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.

--Imagery provided by NCTCOG and DCTA