



March 2024

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

Arlington chosen to host World Cup semifinal, 8 other matches



Arlington will host more matches than any city when the 2026 World Cup comes to North America. In February, AT&T Stadium was awarded a semifinal as well as eight other World Cup matches by FIFA, soccer's international governing body.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has been developing a transportation plan to help effectively handle the massive amount of fans who will descend on Arlington for the matches and related events. The transportation plan includes a public transit component that will use a combination of passenger rail and buses to help move people around the area. This transportation plan will be tested during the 2024 MLB All-Star Game at Globe Life Field in July.

Los Angeles, Atlanta and New York/New Jersey will each host eight matches. The World Cup final will be played at Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. The 2026 World Cup will be the largest to date. The event will feature 48 teams in 104 matches across 16 host cities. FIFA selected 11 cities in the United States, 2 in Canada and 3 in Mexico to host the event.

- Imagery provided by the City of Arlington

McKinsey, InfraStrategies to lead strategic assessment of transit system



The NCTCOG Executive Board has approved contracts with two consultants to help develop a next generation transit system for the region. McKinsey & Company and InfraStrategies LLC will be paid approximately \$2.2 million to help design a system that accommodates the North Central Texas of the future. The Executive Board authorized payment of \$980,000 to McKinsey and \$1,212,200 to InfraStrategies.

The Dallas-Fort Worth area is served by three existing public transportation providers: Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Denton County Transportation Authority and Trinity Metro in Fort Worth. The 12-county metropolitan area has a population of over 8 million people and is forecast to grow to more than 11 million by 2045. Much of the projected population surge is expected to occur outside existing transit authority service areas, requiring an innovative approach for moving people across the region in the future.

The study to explore Regional Transit 2.0 aims to examine crucial transportation investments that could accommodate the anticipated population growth and support sustainable development across the region while also serving cities that lack the sales tax capacity to join one of the three traditional transit providers. Thirteen DART member cities pay a one-cent sales tax to belong to the transit authority. The cities of Denton, Highland Village and Lewisville pay a half-cent sales tax to support DCTA. Trinity Metro has two member cities – Fort Worth and Blue Mound – that pay a half-cent sales tax. Grapevine pays three-eighths of a cent to support TEXRail commuter rail service. North Richland Hills also belongs to the partnership. The Transit 2.0 study will:

1. Develop a transit legislative program
2. Develop strategies to increase transit authority membership
3. Develop collaborations between existing transit authorities
4. Develop strategies for authority board partnerships and teamwork
5. Develop strategies for infill development
6. Review fare-collection strategies
7. Develop recommendations for the transit authority-member city paradox

The transit authorities have a history of working together, including the following examples:

- DCTA's A-train commuter rail and DART's Green Line light rail meet in Carrollton.
- Trinity Metro and DART jointly own, operate and maintain the Trinity Railway Express commuter rail corridor between Dallas and Fort Worth.
- Trinity Metro and DART both offer rail service to Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.
- Trinity Metro and DCTA serve the vicinity of Alliance Airport with bus service.

- Imagery provided by Getty Images

Public input sought in study of transit needs in 76104 ZIP code



NCTCOG is conducting a transit needs study for Fort Worth's 76104 ZIP code, and residents have a chance in March to contribute to the dialogue. Transportation planners want to identify innovative transit solutions that will increase access to necessities such as employment and medical care for residents of this part of the city and have scheduled a public meeting for 5:45 p.m. March 25 at the Ella Mae Shamblee Library to discuss the project and receive feedback.

The 76104 transit study will assess public transportation needs in order to identify innovative solutions to increase mobility and access for residents to food, healthcare, housing and jobs in a part of Fort Worth identified as an area of persistent poverty. The planning study will also identify strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to transit for the ZIP code a UT-Southwestern Medical Center study identifies as having the lowest life expectancy in Texas.

This project, made possible through a \$270,000 Areas of Persistent Poverty grant awarded to NCTCOG, is examining transit services provided in the 76104 ZIP code

and enhancements that could be made to better meet demand. The study is also looking at transit fares and their impact on equitable access to these transit services.

NCTCOG is coordinating with residents, nonprofit organizations and community leaders to establish consensus and develop a plan to improve community access to the basic needs. The area is served by Trinity Metro's fixed-route bus service and on-demand ZIP Zone micro transit.

Imagery provided by Trinity Metro

By the Numbers:

9

The number of 2026 World Cup matches that will be played in Arlington. FIFA announced in February that AT&T Stadium will host a semifinal and eight other matches, more than any other host site.

NCTCOG continues to prioritize AQ improvement as ozone season begins



March marks the beginning of ozone season in North Texas, the period when ground-level ozone typically reaches its highest concentration.

Ten counties are in nonattainment for ozone, and NCTCOG is working with regional and state partners to determine how to meet the EPA's ozone standards and protect the health of the growing region. Dallas-Fort Worth is working to meet two National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone – 75 parts per billion (2008) and 70 ppb (2015). The region has experienced significant improvement in its ozone levels in recent years, despite the design value creeping up to 81 ppb last year. In North Texas, ozone season lasts until Nov. 30.

NCTCOG manages several programs aimed at improving regional air quality, including Air North Texas, which provides individuals, businesses and governments opportunities to help the region reach attainment by making a series of small changes to their routines. For updates on regional air quality and to learn how to help improve it, visit airnorthtexas.org/signup.

Work is also continuing to be done on the DFW Air Quality Improvement Plan, which is a collaborative effort between local governments throughout the region. The plan will create a roadmap for the region to improve air quality, protect public health and reduce impacts of extreme weather.

NCTCOG also hosts or participates in several events throughout the year, such as Walk to School Day and National Drive Electric Week, that encourage alternative modes of transportation and healthier habits and could contribute to better regional

air quality. For more information on the region's clean air efforts, visit nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/Stay-Informed.

- Imagery provides by Getty Images

EPA announces stronger soot standard

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced the strengthening of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particulate matter (PM2.5), commonly known as soot. This means two North Texas counties could be in nonattainment when the standard is officially upgraded.

To reflect new scientific understanding of the effects of particulate matter pollution, the EPA is upgrading the primary (health-based) annual PM2.5 standard from 12 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) to 9.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. This means Dallas and Tarrant counties may be in nonattainment of the standard.

According to the EPA, the stricter standard could result in 4,500 fewer premature deaths and 290,000 fewer lost workdays in 2032.

States will now work to certify data, and the EPA will calculate design values for PM2.5. By Feb. 7, 2025, states will submit their recommended designations to the EPA. The new standard is expected to take effect in February 2026.

Regional innovation to be highlighted at March 11 public meeting



TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETING

MARCH 11 · NOON · 616 SIX FLAGS DR. ARLINGTON, TX 76011

NCTCOG is hosting a hybrid public meeting at noon Monday, March 11 and invites residents to come and learn more about the transportation planning process.

The meeting will be held at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive. Residents can also watch the meeting live at publicinput.com/nctcogMarch24, or participate over the phone by dialing 855-925-2801, then code 10174.

At the meeting, staff will provide details about broadband as a transportation service, recent grant awards for hydrogen and electric vehicle infrastructure projects, the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan (DFW AQIP), Bike & Roll to School Day and post-COVID transit ridership. Feedback is also encouraged. Public comments will be accepted until April 9.

On Dec. 4, a stakeholder meeting allowed for the discussion about public investment in internet service technology and internet training programs. Following the meeting, a series of suggested steps to increase municipal broadband activities in the region were developed.

NCTCOG was recently awarded several grants from both the Federal Highway Administration and the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation to support the transition to zero-emission vehicles in the region and beyond. The funding will be used to repair and replace electric vehicle chargers, build hydrogen refueling stations throughout the Texas Triangle and develop a resilient EV charging plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

The DFW AQIP is a collaboration of local governments in the region to help improve air quality, protect public health and address extreme weather events. The

development of this plan is supported through a grant from the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program.

Bike & Roll to School Day will take place on May 8. NCTCOG will hold raffles for fun safety themed giveaways and new bicycles to generate interest and excitement for students at participating schools.

COVID-19 caused a significant decline in transit ridership. As a result, NCTCOG staff has continued to collaborate with regional transit agencies to prioritize rider safety and restore user numbers.

Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Unified Planning Work Program as well as information on the start of 2024 Ozone Season will be posted online for review and comment.

Resources and information about Interactive Public Input: Map Your Experience, the Department of Energy Multimodal Delivery Project, Try Parking It, the Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP) and vehicle incentive and funding opportunities will also be made available online and at the meeting.

For residents who want to take transit to the meeting, \$6 roundtrip rides from the Centreport/DFW Airport Station to NCTCOG are available through the Arlington Transportation app. To download the app, visit arlingtontx.gov/ondemand. For special accommodation due to disabilities or language interpretation, contact 817-695-9255 or email jcastillo@nctcog.org.

50th Anniversary Focus: People in Planning



NCTCOG is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its status as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization in 2024. Throughout the year, we are highlighting aspects of the planning process with a special series of videos and other interactive content.

In February, we focused on equity, presenting a video on the Environmental Justice Index. This month, we look at what has helped the NCTCOG Transportation Department navigate the changing landscape of the planning process over the past five decades: its people. We talked to longtime employees of the department about their roles, exciting projects they have worked on and what they have found inspiring about NCTCOG. Watch: [50th Anniversary Focus: People in Planning - YouTube](#).

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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