

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

NCTCOG Offices, CP II, 1st Floor

Regional Forum Room

Chair: Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton

Vice Chair: Julissa Amador, City of Denton

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) welcomed attendees and reviewed housekeeping items.

PRESENTATION

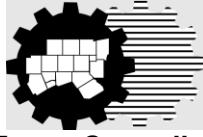
- FIFA Sustainability Committee Update.** Meghna Tare, Chief Sustainability Officer, University of Texas at Arlington, will provide an update on sustainability efforts surrounding the upcoming FIFA World Cup events in Dallas-Fort Worth.

Meghna Tare (University of Texas at Arlington) provided an update on planning efforts for the FIFA World Cup events that will be held in Dallas-Fort Worth in June and July. Meghna outlined the sustainability goals and discussed ongoing efforts related to sustainability that are being implemented throughout the region. Some of the examples that were highlighted include expanding on the City of Dallas's pre-existing air quality efforts and partnering with NCTCOG on the Community Clean Up challenge. More details on these efforts can be found in the [meeting presentation](#).

ACTION ITEMS

- Meeting Summary.** Review and approve the January 29, 2026, draft meeting summary, which can be viewed [here](#).

Rosaerlinda Mendez (City of Dallas) made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

DISCUSSION

4. **Green Business Panel Discussion.** NCTCOG will facilitate a panel discussion with cities of Dallas, Denton, and Plano on their green business certification programs and opportunities for regional collaboration.

NCTCOG facilitated a discussion with Julissa Amador (City of Denton), Natalie Requenez (City of Dallas) and Michelle Long (City of Plano) on their green business programs. Each panelist provided a brief overview of their city's program and answered questions around the establishment and implementation of the programs. Topics discussed included challenges faced with their programs, measuring program participation, funding mechanisms, creating value for participants, and opportunities for regional collaboration. Questions from meeting participants included more information on verifying interested participants, how to engage with smaller businesses, how long the certification is valid for, and whether non-profits can participate. More details on the panelists programs can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) and on the [RISE Coalition website](#).

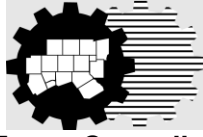
5. **FY2027 Work Plan Discussion and Brainstorming.** NCTCOG will lead a discussion on efforts to be included in the Work Plan for FY2027. Members will discuss the priorities for the next fiscal year, including preferred sustainability focus areas and member recruitment strategies.

NCTCOG highlighted key changes to the FY2027 Work Plan. These included adjusting language around air quality planning under Task 2, adding the Celebrating Leadership in Development Excellence (CLIDE) Awards Program under Deliverable 5, adjusting the training workshop to focus on Continuing Education credits under Deliverable 6, and adjusting the budget to reflect the additional deliverable.

NCTCOG sought feedback on which topics members would like to see the group focus on in FY2027. Julissa Amador requested resilience hubs, and Melissa Canclini requested water planning. NCTCOG shared that these topics, as well as topics identified in the sustainability survey, would be incorporated into the draft work plan and brought to the group to approve at the next meeting.

6. **Cost Share Amount Adjustments.** NCTCOG will discuss potential adjustments to cost share amounts for colleges, universities, and non-profits.

NCTCOG reminded members that the RISE Coalition bylaws were updated in FY2025 when RISE merged with the Center of Development Excellence, during which the scope of voting membership was expanded to include universities and non-profit organizations.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

The bylaws subcommittee previously determined that cost share amounts for universities and non-profits should be equivalent to that of other local government partners, but NCTCOG shared that universities had since shared that the cost share amount was too high to justify RISE membership. NCTCOG asked if members would be interested in adjusting the cost share amount to make membership more feasible for these groups. Lauren Foust (City of Cedar Hill) asked if RISE is currently fully funded with current participation. NCTCOG shared that the majority of funding for RISE is through the Center of Development Excellence funding received through the Executive Director's Office, with cost shares from members rounding out remaining costs. However, the program has historically been underfunded. Melissa Canclini asked if there had been any suggested cost share adjustments, to which NCTCOG shared one university had indicated \$500 would be more feasible. Lauren Foust asked how many universities and non-profits currently pay into the program, and NCTCOG clarified that there are currently none. Melissa Canclini stated that she would be interested in modifying the cost share amount, and NCTCOG requested volunteers to participate in an ad hoc bylaws subcommittee. Melissa Canclini, Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton), and Rosaerlinda Mendez volunteered to participate.

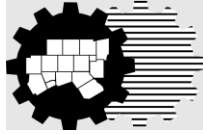
NCTCOG also brought forward the topic of increasing value for members to encourage more participation. Lauren shared that, as a small city who is in the beginning stages of their sustainability efforts, it would be helpful to hear from cities with more tenured programs to understand how their programs started and grew, perhaps like a mentorship. Julissa Amador shared that it would be helpful to have a digital space for knowledge sharing, such as materials from conferences. Rosaerlinda Mendez shared that a discussion board where members can pose questions would also be helpful. Cory Heiple shared that, with many cities hiring summer interns, it would be helpful to have universities on the RISE Coalition to act as a feeder program.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. **FY2026 Work Plan and Project Updates.** NCTCOG will discuss progress on the FY2026 Work Plan initiatives.

NCTCOG shared with the group that the Dallas-Fort Worth Comprehensive Action Plan, which members had previously provided feedback on, is in the final stages of completion.

NCTCOG also provided updates on progress putting together webinars, sharing that speakers are still being identified for the sustainable procurement webinar. NCTCOG also shared that the scope of the energy efficiency webinar is being narrowed down to focus on energy codes, with other energy efficiency topics to be covered in webinars under NCTCOG's Regional Energy Management program.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

With regards to the LEED Green Associate exam preparation course, NCTCOG will be partnering with USGBC to host the class in July. The course will be open to the public at a cost, with RISE members to receive one complimentary registration.

It was also shared that the regional sustainability survey is now open, with responses being requested by May 29th. Melissa Canclini sought clarification on whether the survey could be pushed out and shared, to which NCTCOG confirmed it could be. Julissa Amador asked how many responses had been received. NCTCOG clarified that the survey had just opened, so no responses had been received yet.

8. **FY2026 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2026.

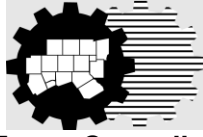
NCTCOG shared which entities have committed costs shares to date, with current commitments totaling \$17,625. Those interested in joining the RISE Coalition can reach out to Corinne Buckley at cbuckley@nctcog.org to request an invoice or inquire about how to become a member.

9. **NCTCOG Regional Opportunities.** NCTCOG will provide information on other opportunities in the North Central Texas region that relate to sustainability and the Coalition's focus areas.

NCTCOG staff presented updates on upcoming meetings, opportunities, webinars, and workshops that may be of interest to members. More details are available in the [meeting presentation](#).

- [North Texas Zero Emissions Vehicles Call for Projects](#) – NCTCOG is currently accepting applications for rebates to replace Class 6 or Class 7 “vocational vehicles” with zero-emission trucks. The next application deadline is Friday, May 15.
- [New Environment and Development Outreach Page](#) – NCTCOG's Environment and Development department has developed a new outreach page for entities to submit requests for staff to speak, table, and provide demonstrations at events.
- [Stakeholder Project Update Meetings](#) – NCTCOG's integrating Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure (TSI) program is hosting multiple stakeholder meetings throughout the month of May for interested parties to receive updates and provide input on the study.
- [New Urban Forestry Webpage](#) – NCTCOG has developed a new Urban Forestry webpage with relevant resources, tools, and funding opportunities.
- [Community Efficiency Leadership Coalition \(CELC\)](#) – The CELC, coordinated through the South-central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER), is a free collaborative network for cities, school districts, and other public entities to engage on energy efficiency topics.

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- UTA Net Zero Home Race Game to Analyze Knowledge of Available Retrofits – University of Texas at Arlington professor June Park is seeking research partners interested in implementing a game on residential energy retrofits in their communities.
- TACDC Sustainable Development Trainings – The Texas Association of Community Development Corporations (TACDC) is offering ten virtual trainings on topics related to green infrastructure and sustainable development.
- Community Centers Energy Efficiency Retrofits for the State Energy Program – The State Energy Conservation Office is currently accepting applications from eligible community centers to receive low-interest loan funding for energy efficiency retrofit projects. The deadline has been extended to December 18, 2026.
- Greater & Greener Conference – City Parks Alliance, in partnership with Austin Parks and Recreation and the Trail Conservancy, is hosting the Greater & Greener Conference on June 13-16, 2026, in Austin.
- Lone Star Sustainability Forum – The 2026 Lone Star Sustainability Forum is being held by the Institute for Leadership in Capital Projects (I-LinCP) on August 5-7, 2026, in San Antonio

OTHER BUSINESS

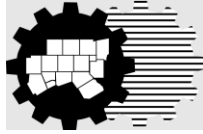
10. **Participant Roundtable.** Participants will have an opportunity to share activities happening in their communities/organizations to identify areas for collaboration and sharing sustainability programs or success stories.

Mary Abercrombie, City of McKinney – McKinney is in the starting stages on implementing their Sustainability Roadmap and is currently finishing up their spring seminar series. They are also pursuing EVs, coordinating waste focus groups with the community, and undergoing an internal restructure of their municipal recycling program.

Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton – Carrollton is wrapping up the third phase of their storm drain art contest with 20 total art installations. They recently joined the Wyland Mayor's National Water Conservation Challenge, which is a national challenge where residents pledge to reduce their water usage using a checklist. They are currently ranked fourth in the nation in the challenge.

Julissa Amador, City of Denton – Denton recently presented their sustainability framework and are going before City Council in June for adoption. They are also working on providing a climate action report to residents following the climate plan that was adopted in 2024.

Olivia Osbourne, City of Plano – Plano was involved in a variety of Earth month events, including their employee green week, community events, and a corporate cleanup event.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

There are also ongoing efforts looking at utility assessment and refinement on local government buildings. Plano also shared that they have a new Sustainability Coordinator who will be attending future RISE meetings.

Rosaerlinda Mendez, City of Dallas – Dallas is still working on their sustainability plan and reviewing what has been accomplished since the implementation of their climate action plan. They are in the process of interviewing involved departments to understand what is and is not working, as well as working with a consultant to review progress and gaps to identify their focus for the future.

Kylie Wieden, City of Grand Prairie – Grand Prairie has been engaged in Earth month activities. They recently rolled out their sustainability plan, Sustain GP, as well as a website for the plan. Positive feedback has been received from residents.

Lauren Foust, City of Cedar Hill – Cedar Hill held their Cedar Hill Arbor Day and Beautification Event on April 18th. At the event, they announced the Traphene Hickman Library had been certified LEED Silver.

Melissa Canclini, City of Lewisville – Lewisville recently held a community event for e-waste collection. They are partnering with Corinth and Denton to do a regional bike ride celebrating National Bike Month in May. Lewisville is also presenting updates on their sustainability plan to their mayor, and through the process have learned the importance of communication with residents to keep them in the loop.

Walter Williams, North Texas Association of Energy Engineers – Walter shared that they are a community service committee who offer free energy assessments for non-profits, as well as work with students.

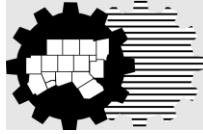
11. **Future Agenda Items.** Suggestions for future agenda items.

Melissa Canclini requested a presentation on the pros and cons of clean energy, as well as a presentation on introducing the bio-economy and its potential impacts on the North Texas region.

12. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 29, 2026. This meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams. [RSVP and add to calendar.](#)

13. **Adjournment.**

Julissa Amador motioned to adjourn the meeting. Melissa Canclini seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Corinne Buckley at (817) 704-2510 or cbuckley@nctcog.org.

If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact Ashley Barnett at (817) 695-9231 or abarnett@nctcog.org at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.

DRAFT

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RISE Coalition
April 29, 2026
9:30 a.m., NCTCOG Offices

VOTING MEMBER & ALTERNATE SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Cory Heiple		City of Carrollton
Krista Pender*		City of Carrollton
Lauren Foust		City of Cedar Hill
Colten Richardson*		City of Cedar Hill
Rosaerlinda Cisneros		City of Dallas
Oppong Hemeng*		City of Dallas
Julissa Amador		City of Denton
Kaitlynn Davis*		City of Denton
Alex Pharmakis		City of Farmers Branch
Maria Minter*		City of Farmers Branch
Avery Pesek		City of Fort Worth
Betsy Yost*		City of Fort Worth
Kylie Wieden		City of Grand Prairie
Jody Cason*		City of Grand Prairie
Melissa Canclini		City of Lewisville
Shante Akafia*		City of Lewisville
Sujata Gautam		City of McKinney
Mary Abercrombie*		City of McKinney
Olivia Osborne		City of Plano
Savannah Mauter*		City of Plano
Devin Taylor		Tarrant Regional Water District
Jason Gehrig*		Tarrant Regional Water District

* Indicates alternate member



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MEMBER & GUEST SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Caleb Robbins		Atmos Energy
Maverick Allen		Blink Energy
Larry Howe		Citizens' Climate Lobby
K. Qadri		City of Dallas
Natalie Requenez		City of Dallas
Hannah Smith	✓	City of Flower Mound
Nicholas Nix		City of Forney
Aly Foreman		City of Frisco
Hassan Shah		City of Fort Worth
Michelle Long	✓	City of Plano
Aaron McEwin		Jordan & Skala Engineers
Ryan Jewell		McKinstry
Russ Gambler		SBC Global
Randy Plumlee		SPEER
Joe Trammel		Tarrant County
Al Hemmelgarn	✓	Third Voice
Meghna Tare	✓	UTA
Walter H Williams III	✓	2w3 Solutions
Susan Alvarez	✓	NCTCOG
Corinne Buckley		NCTCOG
Crysta Guzman		NCTCOG
Madisson Dunn	✓	NCTCOG
Adeline Robertson	✓	NCTCOG
Kris Yowtak		NCTCOG

