

North Central Texas Council of Governments

# SUMMARY

## North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

May 1, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

NCTCOG Offices, CPII, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Metroplex Conference Room

Chair: Katherine Barnett, City of Denton

Vice Chair: Alexander Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch

### 1. Welcome and Introductions.

Crysta Guzman (NCTCOG) welcomed attendees and briefly went over housekeeping items. Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG), a new planner who will help facilitate the RISE Coalition, was introduced. Attendees introduced themselves and their organizations.

### ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

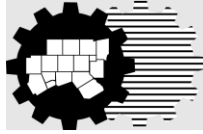
2. **Meeting Summary.** Review previous meeting summary and vote on approval. February 20, 2024, Meeting Summary can be viewed [here](#).

Due to there being no quorum, members were unable to vote on approval of the February meeting summary. The meeting summary will be sent out to members via electronic communication for approval.

3. **FY25/FY26 Vice Chair Nominations and Reappointments.** RISE members will bring forward nominations for a Vice Chair to serve a two-year term of FY25/FY26. The FY23/FY24 Vice Chair will be appointed to the role of Chair for FY25/FY26, as per the RISE Coalition bylaws. NCTCOG staff also will discuss the upcoming appointment/reappointment process.

Crysta Guzman called for vice chair nominations to serve for FY25/26. Nicole Warhoftig (City of Plano) nominated Lindsay Graf (City of Plano). Crysta noted that NCTCOG would also call for nominations via email and would accept nominations until May 15, 2024.

NCTCOG led a discussion about the appointment/reappointment process for RISE voting members. Non-voting members inquired about the requirements for becoming a voting member. Staff clarified that only cities paying in cost shares are eligible for RISE voting membership, with each city designating one primary voting member. Due to all voting members serving their two-year terms concurrently, NCTCOG requested the formation of



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a Bylaws Task Force composed of voting and non-voting members to address updating membership and the (re)appointment process. No attendees volunteered to serve on the Bylaws Task Force. NCTCOG will follow up via email calling for volunteers.

- 4. FY2025 Work Plan Discussion and Brainstorming.** NCTCOG Staff will lead a discussion on the future direction of the RISE Coalition and efforts to be included in the Work Plan for FY2025. The Members will discuss the priorities for the next fiscal year, including preferred sustainability focus areas and member recruitment strategy.

NCTCOG staff led a discussion around the future direction of RISE and requested the formation of a Work Plan Task Force composed of voting and non-voting members to address member recruitment; building a value proposition for cost-share participation; joint meetings/merging with other closely aligned groups; and Work Plan content for FY2025.

Staff also discussed the opportunities to incorporate other NCTCOG projects, such as the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and the 2026 FIFA World Cup, into the FY2025 Work Plan. The group brought forward suggestions about incorporating regional greenspaces, as well as placing an emphasis on the regional aspect of the group to generate more pull from the group and create additional opportunities for getting buy in.

Larry Howe (Citizens' Climate Lobby), Lindsay Graf (City of Plano), Brandi Kelp (City of Fort Worth), and Anna Clark (Cooksey Strategic Communications) volunteered to serve on the Work Plan Task Force. NCTCOG will follow up with these members via email.

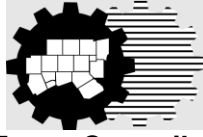
### INFORMATION ITEMS

- 5. FY2024 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG staff will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2024.

NCTCOG staff provided a brief update on the status of member cost share commitments. Cost shares have been received from all billed participants, totaling \$16,600. Given that this is only 41.5% of the total \$40,000 budgeted in the FY2024 Work Plan, NCTCOG again brought up shifting the future direction of the group and potentially combining with the Sustainable Public Rights of Way (SPROW) and/or integrated Stormwater Management (iSWM) groups to leverage time and budgets.

- 6. FY2024 Work Program and Project Update.** NCTCOG will provide an update to the group on FY2024 Work Program initiatives:
  - FY2024 Events – Discuss regional education opportunities.

NCTCOG staff provided updates on upcoming events within the scope of the FY2024 work plan, including a workshop on Influencing Leadership on Sustainability and a webinar on



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Water Conservation and Energy. Full details for each event can be found in the [meeting presentation](#).

7. **Energy Plan Poll.** NCTCOG will share a poll with attendees to gather information on their energy plan efforts. Responses will help guide related efforts over the coming year.

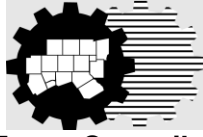
Joaquin Escalante (NCTCOG) shared and requested that attendees fill out an [Energy Plan Survey](#). This survey will be used to gauge an understanding of how NCTCOG can support local governments in developing an energy plan and/or provide assistance with current energy plans. It will also help staff to understand which resources local governments are in need of when developing energy plans and determine how NCTCOG can best support those efforts. Responses are requested by May 10, 2024. Any questions can be sent to [energy@nctcog.org](mailto:energy@nctcog.org).

Joaquin also shared multiple funding opportunities open through the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy supporting the planning and operation of the electric grid. Additional details can be found on the [Department of Energy's website](#).

8. **NCTCOG Regional Opportunities.** NCTCOG will go over other opportunities in the North Central Texas region that relate to sustainability and the Coalition's focus areas.
  - **Charging Smart.** NCTCOG will give a brief overview of Charging Smart, a new designation program that awards communities for EV readiness. Through this program DFWCC will provide personalized, no-cost technical assistance to local governments in setting and achieving EV readiness goals.

Carolyn Burns (NCTCOG) introduced the Charging Smart program, a technical assistance and designation program that provides support to local governments developing electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. Carolyn discussed the key functions and frameworks of the program, as well as the different Charging Smart designations. Attendees inquired about whether the program is just for cities or if state agencies are able to apply as well. NCTCOG staff clarified that the program is aimed at local governments developing permits to deploy EV infrastructure. Additional information can be found on the [DFW Clean Cities website](#). Those that are interested in participating should reach out to [cleancities@nctcog.org](mailto:cleancities@nctcog.org).

NCTCOG staff presented updates on upcoming meetings, webinars, workshops, and other opportunities that may be of interest to members. Attendees further emphasized the importance of green spaces and their role connecting communities following discussion of the upcoming urban forestry webinars. Full details on all opportunities can be found in the [meeting presentation](#).



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### OTHER BUSINESS

9. **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.

**Nicole Warhoftig, City of Plano** – Plano is continuing to work through the LEED for Cities certification process. They recently received funding for a food scraps collection program, which they are looking to expand. They are also developing a window replacement program for residents using EECBG funding. Another focus is EV infrastructure, as their inaugural 100% electric trash collection truck debuted on the streets earlier that week. They are currently working with a consultant to identify new EV charging locations.

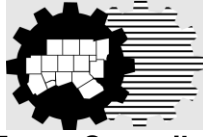
**Betsy Yost, City of Fort Worth** – Fort Worth received EECBG funding and is in the process of developing an energy conservation plan, which they recently posted an RFP for. They are expecting to get the project started sometime in July.

**Dorothy Kindell, Tarrant Regional Water District** – TRWD is continuing to work on their power resiliency project, establishing back up generation to be used in the case of an outage. They are looking at microgeneration and solar with hopes to have the project wrapped up soon. TRWD also recently started an internal sustainability committee that has generated a lot of interest and are hoping to see participation increase in the future. They are in the process of working with a consultant on an internal sustainability plan.

**Brandi Kelp, City of Fort Worth** – Fort Worth is in the middle of their riparian era initiative. They are working on spreading the word about their Open Space Prioritization Tool, and working with developers to increase awareness about where these areas are.

**Aimee Rockhill, City of Arlington** – Coming from a health perspective, Arlington is interested in the 2026 FIFA World Cup and how it might be a catalyst for sustainability in the region.

**Chris Hill, SMU** – Having come across RISE while doing research for a newly developing construction and demolition waste course, SMU is interested in engaging with the group and providing support in disseminating committee initiatives. They also shared about a new sustainability focused advising group at SMU that has received significant student interest and emphasized that students are keen to participate in sustainability projects. SMU also offered the opportunity for an academic partnership on grant opportunities for those interested.



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**Anna Clark, Cooksey Communications** – Cooksey is seeking to gain an understanding about sustainability efforts in the region and is hoping to share relevant information with their real estate clients.

**Larry Howe, Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL)** – CCL shared about the recently released Extreme Weather Report from the Office of the State Climatologist and advised organizations to share this report to help get the word out. Inquiries were made about the cost share requirements for RISE, as well as the role of the CPRG within the work of RISE. CCL suggested that an updated be provided about the greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

### 10. **Future Agenda Items.** Suggestions for future agenda items.

Attendees indicated an interest in revisiting the Local and Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory that the RISE Coalition had previously contributed to as RISE may play a role in updating the emissions inventory for the agency's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

### 11. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. This meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams.

### 12. **Adjournment.**

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Corinne Buckley at (817) 704-2510 or [cbuckley@nctcog.org](mailto: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](mailto:abarnett@nctcog.org) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.



**RISE Coalition**  
May 1, 2024  
10:00 a.m., NCTCOG Offices

**MEMBER & GUEST SIGN IN SHEET**

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Grace Darling		Arlington Conservation Council
Eric Tate		Atmos Energy
Novella Landau		City of Carrollton
Alireza Hatefi		City of Dallas
Heather Berryman		City of Fort Worth
Cody Whitenburg		City of Fort Worth
Emily Asbury		City of Irving
Melissa Canclini		City of Lewisville
Alyson Foreman		City of Lewisville
Kerry Shields		City of McKinney
Madison Peppers		DFW Intl. Airport
Renee Bellew		EPA - Region 6
Jose Canario		EVVEO
Yarcus Lewis		Federal Reserve Bank
Lydia Vollmann		Grant Our Community Non Profit
Kathy Fonville		NTMWD
Larry Howe		Plano Solar Advocates / CITIZENS COUNCIL
Autumn Radle		Texas PACE Authority
Heather Finn		Trinity River Authority
James Orenstein		Trinity River Community Solar Systems
Megnah Tare		UTA
Laurel Zaima-Sheehy		
Susan Alvarez		NCTCOG
Erin Blackman		NCTCOG
Carolyn Burns		NCTCOG
Cassidy Campbell		NCTCOG
Lori Clark		NCTCOG
Joaquin Escalante		NCTCOG
Crysta Guzman		NCTCOG
Amy Hodges		NCTCOG
Alyssa Knox		NCTCOG
Savana Nance		NCTCOG

CITIZENS COUNCIL  
LOBBY



**RISE Coalition**  
May 1, 2024  
10:00 a.m., NCTCOG Offices

**VOTING MEMBER & ALTERNATE SIGN IN SHEET**

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Katherine Barnett		City of Denton
Lauren Betz		City of Cedar Hill
Rosaerlinda Cisneros		City of Dallas
*Shane Davis		City of Farmers Branch
*James Douglas		City of Denton
*Jason Gehrig		Tarrant Regional Water District
Lindsay Graf	<i>Lindsay Graf</i>	City of Plano
Cory Heiple		City of Carrollton
Dorothy Kindell		Tarrant Regional Water District
*Krista Pender		City of Carrollton
Avery Pesek		City of Fort Worth
Alex Pharmakis		City of Farmers Branch
*Nicole Warhottig	<i>Nicole Warhottig</i>	City of Plano
*Betsy Yost		City of Fort Worth
OPEN		City of Lewisville
<i>Rachel Patterson</i>	<i>Rachel Patterson</i>	<i>City of Plano</i>
<i>Lenna Smith</i>	<i>Lenna Smith</i>	<i>City of Plano</i>
<i>Brandi Kelp</i>	<i>Brandi Kelp</i>	<i>City of Fort Worth</i>

\* Indicates alternate member

