

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Virtual: [Microsoft Teams](#)

Chair: Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton

Vice Chair: *Vacant*

1. Welcome and Introductions.

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

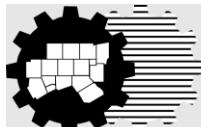
PRESENTATION

2. **Switch Together 2026.** Joaquin Escalante, Senior Texas Program Associates with Solar United Neighbors, will present on Solar United Neighbor's work in Texas and share about the Switch Together program.

Joaquin Escalante (Solar United Neighbors) shared about the work that Solar United Neighbors is doing to support and bring together individuals interested in going solar. Joaquin shared about recent projects Solar United Neighbors has helped support in Texas and the benefits of local solar programs. Joaquin also highlighted their Switch Together program, a group purchasing campaign that provides consumer protection and economic benefits through collaboration. Rosa Mendez (City of Dallas) shared about their participation in Switch Together and the positive resident feedback they received in response to the program. More information on Switch Together and how cities can participate can be found in the [meeting presentation](#).

3. **HAQ App: A Scalable Approach to Integrating Heat and Air Quality Risk.** Marsha Prior, PhD, Director of Equity & Community Partnerships, Anusha Govind, MD, Director of Clinical Research & Evidence Translation, and Keith Thode, MS, Director of Technology & Operations, will present on the Heat and Air Quality (HAQ) app and discuss opportunities for North Texas communities to utilize this smart tool.

Marsha Prior, Anusha Govind, and Keith Thode (Heat and Air Quality App) shared about the Heat and Air Quality (HAQ) App, which brings together resources related to heat, air quality, and health into one location. Presenters highlighted the combined risk that extreme temperatures and poor air quality pose, especially to vulnerable and at-risk populations, and how the HAQ app can improve awareness for these populations and support on-the-ground decision making. A demo of the app was shared, along with potential collaboration



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opportunities as the app continues to expand and develop. More information on the HAQ app can be found in the [meeting presentation](#).

ACTION ITEMS

4. **Meeting Summary.** Review and approve the October 29, 2025, meeting summary, which can be viewed [here](#).

Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Rosa Mendez (City of Dallas) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION

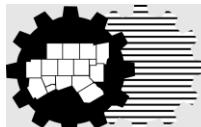
5. **Vice Chair Nominations.** RISE Members will bring forward nominations for a Vice Chair to serve the remainder of the FY2026 term. The FY2026 Vice Chair will be appointed to the role of Chair for FY2027, as per the RISE Coalition bylaws.

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) shared that Lindsay Graf is no longer with the City of Plano and is therefore unable to fulfill the remainder of her term as Chair. Per RISE Coalition Bylaws, current Vice Chair Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton) will move into the role of Chair for the remainder of FY 2026. Corinne called for nominations to be brought forward for a new Vice Chair to fill the remainder of the FY2026 term. Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) nominated Rosa Mendez (City of Dallas). Members were also told they could submit nominations via email for two weeks following the meeting, with a vote to be conducted virtually once nominations are finalized.

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

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) shared that the deadline for submission of the Dallas Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan: Comprehensive Action Plan had been extended to June 1, 2026. NCTCOG will be posting a draft of the Comprehensive Action Plan to the [program website](#) by January 30th for a public comment period. Members were encouraged to view and share the draft as well as provide comments.

Corinne shared that, based on feedback from the previous meeting, the FY26 webinars will focus on the topics of sustainable procurement and energy efficiency. Planning for the webinar on sustainable procurement is currently in progress, with an anticipated date in March. Registration information will be distributed via email when available. Corinne also sought input on specific topics the group would like the energy efficiency webinar to focus on. Alex Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) requested a summary on the regional codes



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group and their discussions around energy efficiency. Additionally, any energy-related recommendations they may have that were not approved but can help members be more informed on codes benefiting homeowners would be appreciated. Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton) suggested it would be helpful to hear about what can be done at the municipal level in terms of updating energy efficiency infrastructure for city facilities. Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) expressed an interest in hearing about data centers and their impact on the grid, with a specific focus on how their connection to the grid may impact residents and their rates.

Following the group's request for a professional development focused training at the October meeting, NCTCOG will be coordinating a LEED Green Associate focused training. Corinne sought clarification on whether the group would be interested in an exam preparation course or continuing education credits, with members unanimously expressing an interest in an exam preparation course. Susan Alvarez (NCTCOG) suggested looking into the LEED Green Associate training class offered by Kirksey Architecture as a potential resource.

INFORMATION ITEMS

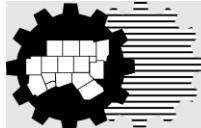
7. **FY2026 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2026.

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) shared that cost shares had been sent out to all members at the beginning of January and encouraged members to reach out if they had not received their cost share. Those interested in joining the RISE Coalition can reach out to Corinne at cbuckley@nctcog.org to inquire about membership or request an invoice.

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.

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](#).

- [NCTEDD Upcoming Board Meeting](#) – The North Central Texas Economic Development District planned to meet on February 2nd, with the meeting featuring a presentation from the new U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development region VI Administrator. This meeting has since been cancelled and will be rescheduled to a later date.



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- Creating Connections: A Community Engagement Model Webinar – Texas Municipal League is hosting a community engagement webinar on February 5th, which will explore the key pillars of public engagement.
- 2026 TRACS Summit – Registration is open for the 2026 Texas Regional Alliance for Campus Sustainability Summit, which will be held March 1st - 3rd at St. Edward's University.
- 2026 South Central Climate Resilience Forum – The Forum will be held on April 15th - 17th in San Antonio and will focus on fostering dialogue and action on climate resilience from across the south central region.

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.

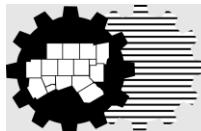
Sujata Gautam, City of McKinney – City Council just adopted the first Sustainability Roadmap. McKinney also recently received their SolSmart Bronze designation. They will be presenting at next Friday's Lake Lavon Watershed meeting, and are gearing up for planning their spring series.

Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton – Carrollton just closed the submission period for the third phase of their storm drain art contest, which will be installed in March. They are also picking back up on establishing a Green Business Certification program.

Kylie Wieden, City of Grand Prairie – Grand Prairie is getting ready to implement their sustainability plan, Sustain GP, and are working on getting related outreach items ready for the upcoming busy season.

Julissa Amador, City of Denton – Denton is finalizing their sustainability framework, which will be going to Council soon, along with a dashboard to go along with the framework. They are working on updating their GHG inventory and recently closed out on the previous year of their Green Business program.

Melissa Canclini, City of Lewisville – Lewisville is currently focused on EVs, having recently received their bronze Charging Smart designation as well as wrapping up EV and alternative fuel vehicle purchases for their fleet. Lewisville applied for and was awarded NCTCOG's EV Infrastructure Grant, which they will be working on this year. They are also working on their 2035 Vision Plan and looking for opportunities to add additional sustainability programs to the plan.



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Lenna Smith, City of Plano – Plano received their LEED for Cities Gold designation. They are currently preparing for spring programs and events, as well as working on conducting a clean fleet study. Plano is also hiring to fill a sustainability position.

Lauren Foust, City of Cedar Hill – Cedar Hill had no updates to share.

Alex Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch – City Council adopted their Active Transportation Plan and Complete Streets Policy. Farmers Branch applied for NCTCOG's EV Infrastructure Grant for fast chargers and are preparing an announcement to share their LEED for Cities designation.

Dorothy Kindell, Tarrant Regional Water District – TRWD is continuing to work on finalizing their sustainability plan, with hopes for an update later this year.

Rosa Mendez, City of Dallas – Dallas recently started working with a consultant team to develop a five-year priority climate action plan, which will be a supplement to the previously developed long-term climate plan. The new plan will identify any gaps in the existing plan and look at identifying additional resources that may be needed. Dallas will be happy to share the results they receive from the consultancy team with the group.

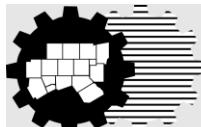
Natalie Nava, City of Fort Worth – Fort Worth had no updates to share.

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

Corinne Buckley (NCTCOG) brought up the possibility of developing a regionwide set of guidelines for green business standards. Members unanimously expressed an interest in developing a set of standards. Corinne suggested hosting a panel at the next RISE meeting for cities with existing green business programs to share challenges and opportunities as a preliminary step towards developing regional guidelines. Julissa Amador (City of Denton), Lenna Smith (City of Plano), and Rosa Mendez (City of Dallas) volunteered as potential participants of the panel.

Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) brought forward an interest in hearing about the impacts of cities pulling out of public transit systems, referencing multiple elections being held across the region to determine whether cities may withdraw from DART.

Sujata Gautam (City of McKinney) requested an update from FIFA on sustainability efforts.



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11. Next Meeting Date. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 29, 2026. This meeting will be held in person at NCTCOG Offices. [RSVP and add to calendar.](#)

Upcoming meeting dates for 2026:

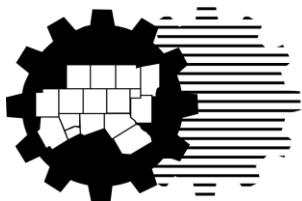
- July 29, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. – Online

12. Adjournment.

Melissa Canclini (City of Lewisville) made a motion to adjourn. Sujata Gautam (City of McKinney) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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.



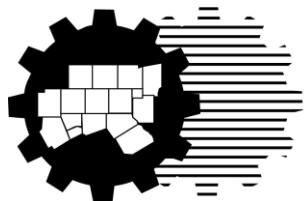
RISE Coalition Meeting
9:30 am, Wednesday, January 28, 2026
Microsoft Teams

Attendees

RISE Coalition Members		
Name	Entity	Signature
Cory Heiple (Chair)	City of Carrollton	X
Lauren Foust	City of Cedar Hill	X
Rosaerlinda Mendez	City of Dallas	X
Julissa Amador	City of Denton	X
Alexander Pharmakis	City of Farmers Branch	X
Avery Pesek	City of Fort Worth	X
Natalie Nava*	City of Fort Worth	X
Kylie Wieden	City of Grand Prairie	X
Sujata Gautam	City of McKinney	X
Melissa Canclini	City of Lewisville	X
Lenna Smith	City of Plano	X
Dorothy Kindell	TRWD	X

* Indicates alternate member

Other Attendees	
Name	Entity
Caleb Robins	Atmos Energy
Eric Tate	Atmos Energy
Joy Tapia	Atmos Energy
Larry Howe	Citizens' Climate Lobby
Novella Landau	City of Carrollton
Khurram Qadri	City of Dallas
Brandy Kelp	City of Fort Worth
Anusha Govind	Heat and Air Quality App
Keith Thode	Heat and Air Quality App
Marsha Prior	Heat and Air Quality App
Rakib Siddique	IEA Inc.
Lane Rylander	Moonshot
Ryan Jewell	McKinstry
Joaquin Escalante	Solar United Neighbors
Sam Silerio	Solar United Neighbors
James A. McClinton	Tarrant County
Alisha Lagrini	Tarrant County College
Max Morales	Travis County
Adeline Robertson	NCTCOG
Cassidy Campbell	NCTCOG
Christi Upton	NCTCOG
Corinne Buckley	NCTCOG



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Crysta Guzman	NCTCOG
Madisson Dunn	NCTCOG
Shala Geer-Smith	NCTCOG
Susan Alvarez	NCTCOG

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