North Central Texas Council of Governments

# MEETING SUMMARY

***i*SWM Implementation Subcommittee**
***integrated* Stormwater Management (iSWM) Program**

Tuesday July 15, 2025 from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

**Chair:** Ranjan Muttiah, City of Fort Worth
**Vice Chair:** Travis Attanasio, City of Burleson

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

**ACTION ITEMS**

2. **Approval of April 30, 2025, Meeting Summary.** The meeting summary will be presented to the Subcommittee for approval: Summary (Katie Hunter, NCTCOG)

   Motion to approve: Grace Darling
   Second: Travis Attanasio
   Motion passed.

3. **Review and Confirmation of FY26 Work Program.** NCTCOG will solicit discussion and confirmation of work program tasks for FY26. (Katie Hunter, NCTCOG)

   Motion to approve: Grace Darling
   Second: Travis Attanasio
   Motion passed.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Stephanie Griffin (Halff Associates) asked if someone could volunteer to take over Lee Stimpson's (Independent Contractor) responsibilities, and suggested that, if not, the item could be added to the FY26 work program. Katie Hunter (NCTCOG) clarified that the related training is hosted by a different entity within COG, and Halff would need to apply if they want to provide that training. Grace Darling (ACC) asked whether any current work is being defunded, and Katie confirmed that no projects are being cut.

Ranjan Muttiah (Committee Chair, City of Fort Worth)proposed discussing prioritization of tasks in the upcoming work program. Sam Sarkar (Halff) noted that the cumulative impacts analysis has been completed, but they still need to meet with communities, suggesting this could be the top priority. The second task, which has carried over from previous years, focuses on promoting iSWM. Tasks 1, 3, and 4 have all been continued from prior years and could be tackled sequentially or concurrently, as has been done in the past. Tasks 5, 6, and 7, however, require more clarification. Katie Hunter mentioned that today's meeting includes activities to help define both short- and long-term goals. Grace clarified that tasks 1 through 4 are ongoing from previous years, while tasks 5 through 8 are new, and asked whether a task force would be needed or if the discussion would remain within the committee. Katie confirmed that the work will be discussed at the committee level and incorporated into FY26 planning. Sam added that previous meetings have included discussions on what updates are needed, and Randy Peterman (Halff) has compiled a list to guide future work. Kate noted that today's discussion will help finalize the details, and the language presented in the meeting slides will become part of the Public Works Council's FY26 work plan.

4. **Sticky Dot Exercise.** The subcommittee will use a sticky dot exercise to discuss desired short-term and long-term updates to the iSWM manual and website, followed by a group discussion. (Katie Hunter, NCTCOG)

   The group participated in the exercise, and several items with strong support were noted. This set the stage for the next agenda item.

5. **iSWM Manual and Website Updates**. The subcommittee will discuss desired short-term and long-term updates to the iSWM Manual and website. (Katie Hunter, NCTCOG)

   Sam Sarkar initiated a discussion by asking whether analytics have been reviewed since the Central Texas floods. Grace Darling inquired about how frequently the data is updated. Ranjan Muttiah responded that the information is updated dynamically when errors are found but has not undergone significant structural changes recently. Grace asked whether elements like the rainfall tables are dynamic, noting that rainfall trends appear to be increasing. Ranjan explained that the previous version of the manual used USGS data from the late 1990s, later updated to NOAA Atlas 14, and that NOAA Atlas 15 is expected to include more recent rainfall data and projections. Grace asked if NOAA updates the Atlas annually, but Ranjan clarified that it does not. With NOAA experiencing funding cuts, Grace wondered if the updates would still be released. Ranjan confirmed that Atlas 15 is scheduled, though Stephanie Griffin noted that not all states would receive it simultaneously. Sam added that updates may no longer follow a predictable 10-year cycle. Ranjan said the rainfall tables in the manual were last updated with the release of Atlas 14 and could be revised again after Atlas 15. Grace asked about how updates are distributed across a large state like Texas, to which Sam replied that NOAA takes a regionalized approach, using gauges and grids to monitor rainfall accumulation. Grace also asked if this data is public, and Ranjan confirmed that it is.

   The group then turned to website-related issues, including concerns about the http vs. https versions. NCTCOG is working with its RIS department to address this. Kate Zielke (NCTCOG) shared that feedback gathered through sticky dot exercises will be brought to the next iSWM meeting. Randy Peterman noted that multiple users have identified website navigation as a priority, and an app was even suggested. In response, Kate introduced Umair Khan, who is being trained on Dreamweaver and will support webpage updates. Randy suggested conducting a user survey to pinpoint problems. Kate added that Jennifer Rovezzi (City of Denton) and Julian Holmes (City of Mansfield) had also identified website usability issues in earlier workshops. Grace asked whether case studies are available on the site, and Kate confirmed that training materials, case studies, and other content beyond meeting summaries would be included on the iSWM webpage.

   Randy mentioned there had been short-term interest in Best Management Practices (BMPs), which could help guide Halff's efforts. This ties into the stormwater quality monitoring program, which could also inform case studies, especially related to inlet protection. Stephanie noted that several sticky dot comments received 3–4 red dots, highlighting user concerns with standardized BMPs, challenges in plan review, website usability, and incorrect or misleading information. Katie began listing some of the written suggestions received.

Ranjan brought up whether Green Infrastructure (GI) should be recognized as a distinct category, rather than being grouped under BMPs. He argued that water quality treatment can include structural devices, but GI deserves separate attention. Lee Stimpson supported this, explaining from his teaching experience that BMPs can be both permanent and temporary, and not all are structural. iSWM addresses both types, but these often start to overlap near the end of the construction period. During early design, engineers must decide whether to pursue green or gray infrastructure. Providing schematics and calculation sheet guidance for GI could help, especially since many GI features are not maintained after installation, leading to poor drainage. Sam added that reorganizing the manual to separate GI would be a major effort, not just an addition of content, since practices like bioretention are already included. Stephanie agreed this would be more of a long-term effort. Finally, Randy shared that one common question from those new to iSWM is which manual contains the specific information they need, indicating a need for clearer guidance or organization.

6. **City of Lewisville Implementation Documentation Review.** Travis Attanasio will provide an overview of the recent documentation review process for the City of Lewisville. (Travis Attanasio, City of Burleson)

Katie Hunter received documentation from the City of Lewisville for review as part of the iSWM (Integrated Stormwater Management) program, with Travis Attanasio (Vice Chair, City of Burleson) leading the review process. To achieve either Silver or Gold designation, a city's implementation must be evaluated by three iSWM communities. Gold status requires full implementation of all categories, while Silver allows for full or partial implementation. Travis contacted individuals from the iSWM roster to gather reviewers, ultimately involving Denton, Dallas, and Burleson. His own city, though not officially part of the program, also participated due to the difficulty of finding reviewers within the tight 30-day timeframe, which posed a significant challenge for city staff.

The review concluded that Lewisville met the requirements for the Silver tier. While the process was effective, coordinating reviewers under time constraints was stressful. Katie noted that cities can find submission guidance directly on the iSWM website. Lewisville had expressed interest in the program during a previous TSI visit, after which Katie referred them to the website for further steps. Stephanie Griffin asked if decisions are usually made by an ad hoc committee, but Travis responded that the current system is sufficient and that he aimed to select reviewers from cities of similar size, although that wasn’t always feasible. He emphasized that Lewisville’s manual and implementation were robust. Sam Sarkar pointed out that Lewisville is the first community reviewed under the updated 17-category requirement, and Ranjan Muttiah noted it had been some time since a community had gone through the full review process. Katie estimated Lewisville is the 12th or 13th community to do so.

There was also discussion about possibly extending the review period. Kate Zielke suggested increasing the 30-day window to 45 or 60 days, which Travis supported. Ranjan clarified that the current standard is 30 business days, but Stephanie proposed switching to 60 calendar days for easier tracking. Katie said that delays beyond 30 days don't negatively impact the process, and Kate recommended bringing the 60-day change to a vote in the future.

Regarding the approval process, once reviewers submit their findings, the results do not require subcommittee approval unless the city disputes them. Katie noted this keeps the process efficient by avoiding delays from waiting for formal meetings. If a community disagrees with the reviewers’ comments, they have the option to bring the issue to the subcommittee, which is outlined in Step 4 of the process. A formal letter of recognition has already been mailed to Lewisville, and they have invited NCTCOG to a city council meeting for acknowledgment.

The group also discussed the benefits of iSWM recognition. Ranjan explained that recognized communities can include this in their MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) reports and are highlighted on the iSWM website. Stephanie added that cities can use the recognition in their own communications, such as websites or newsletters. Sam emphasized that the recognition ensures future development adheres to iSWM standards. Ranjan mentioned that many iSWM practices align with widely accepted BMPs (Best Management Practices) used for MS4 permits and the CRS (Community Rating System) program. Grace Darling raised a question about smaller communities' awareness of the program, and Ranjan responded that there are about 100 communities within the 16-county area. Kate pointed out that some communities apply iSWM principles without going through the formal scoring process. Promoting broader participation remains one of the program's work tasks.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

7. **Regional Public Works Program Update.** NCTCOG will provide an update on the FY25 Regional Public Works Program. (Kate Zielke, NCTCOG)
Katie Hunter provided a brief Public Works update and mentioned their upcoming pubic work round up.

8. **Integrated Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure Study Update.** NCTCOG will describe the study and its relevance to iSWM. (Kate Zielke, NCTCOG)
Kate Zielke Provided an update on the TSI study and mentioned some upcoming events that the group may be interested in attending.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND ROUNTABLE DISCUSSIOM**

**9. Upcoming Events and Conferences**

**9. Upcoming NCTCOG Meetings**

Katie Hunter asked whether October 14 works well for the group and noted that the next meeting would be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. Ranjan Muttiah added that the group is following the PWC process of alternating between virtual and in-person meetings.

**10. Future Agenda Items and Schedule for the Next iSWM Meeting (October 14, 2025)**

Katie Hunter mentioned that the next meeting will include a guest speaker Mitch Heinemann. The next meeting will also included revisiting the short-term and long-term goals for manual and website.

**12. Roundtable Discussion**

Jose Lopez from the City of Dallas raised a concern that iSWM drawings often lack sufficient detail, which is a common challenge in the field—especially for new contractors and subcontractors. He noted that having more detailed, general construction guidelines would be particularly helpful for smaller-scale projects. In response, Kate Zielke explained that the Public Works Council (PWC) had intentionally kept some drawings less detailed to allow for flexibility, as different communities have varying standards and implementation practices. Lee Stimpson added

that the iSWM drawings were designed to serve as schematics rather than full construction details, leaving it up to design engineers to provide the necessary specifics to contractors.

Jose emphasized that even with that intent, providing details for commonly encountered issues in the field could greatly support consistent implementation. Ranjan Muttiah pointed out that contractors typically rely on engineering sheets when preparing bids and asked what those contractors are referencing in the absence of detailed drawings. The representative reiterated that on smaller projects, some baseline guidance would be useful. Ranjan invited him to document these recurring issues and submit them to the subcommittee for review. Sam asked if there are particular construction controls he would like to see included, and the representative agreed to send additional information to COG staff.

He also noted staffing challenges within the City of Dallas, mentioning that they are currently experiencing high turnover among inspectors. Additionally, he pointed out a technical issue with the iSWM website—specifically that the link appears as “http” but redirects to a secure “https” version, which could cause confusion and may need to be corrected.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Attendance**

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| Travis Attanasio | City of Burleson |
| Erin Blackman | NCTCOG |
| Jacob Blakley | City of Ennis |
| Grace Darling | ACC |
| Ed Green | City of Ennis |
| Stephanie Griffin | Halff |
| Katie Hunter | NCTCOG |
| Joseph Jackon | Tarrant County |
| Jose Lopez | City of Dallas |
| Deepa Modi | City of Ennis |
| Ranjan Muttiah | City of Fort Worth |
| Randy Peterman | Halff |
| Jennifer Rovezzi | City of Denton |
| Zachary Rowen | City of Denton |
| Sam Sarker | Halff |
| Lee Stimpson | Consultant |
| Kate Zielke | NCTCOG |
| Umair Khan | NCTCOG |
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