

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

April 29, 2022

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Teams Meeting

Chair: Pharr Andrews, City of Dallas

Vice Chair: Katherine Barnett, City of Denton

1. Welcome and Introductions.

RISE Chair Pharr Andrews, City of Dallas, welcomed the group to the meeting. Participants introduced themselves via the Teams chat.

ACTION ITEMS

2. **Meeting Summary.** Review previous meeting summary and vote on approval. The January 28, 2022 Meeting Summary can be viewed [here](#).

A motion to approve the January 28, 2022 Meeting Summary was made by Katherine Barnett, City of Denton. The motion was seconded by Alex Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch. There was no opposition, and the summary was approved unanimously.

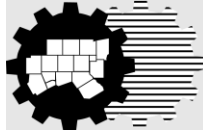
DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. **FY2022 Work Program and Project Update and Discussion.** (40 minutes, Members and NCTCOG) NCTCOG will provide an update to the group on several initiatives related to the FY2022 Work Program:

- Regional GHG Inventory & ICLEI GHG Inventory Cohort

Jenny Narvaez, NCTCOG, provided an update on the regional greenhouse gas inventory being undertaken by NCTCOG and a cohort of ten North Texas cities. Data collection and analysis is still underway for the energy, transportation, water, and wastewater sectors. The cohort continues to meet weekly to discuss inventory progress and outstanding data needs. Jenny also shared that a fellow from the Environmental Defense Fund Summer Fellowship program will be joining NCTCOG to continue progress on the GHG emissions reduction toolkit in June 2022.

- Update on Regional Tree Cooperative Concept



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Breanne Johnson, NCTCOG, shared that NCTCOG is moving forward with a regional tree cooperative purchase program, and will host a focus group on May 3rd to discuss ideal tree species, sizes, and quantities to be included in the RFP for prospective growers. To learn more about the program or join the focus group, contact Crysta Guzman at CGuzman@nctcog.org.

- Organic Waste to Fuel Feasibility Study

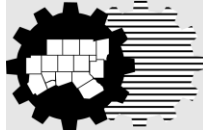
Breanne updated the group on the status of NCTCOG's EPA-funded Organic Waste to Fuel Feasibility Study. The study contractor is preparing to begin assessments of potential anaerobic digestion sites in North Texas, using UTA's POWER Tool as the data model. The next stakeholder meeting sharing the results of this site assessment will be held in early summer 2022. More information on this project [online here](#).

- March 11th Virtual Sustainability Survey Results Discussion

Breanne shared an overview of the results from the Virtual Sustainability Survey held on March 11th. Survey participants represented 13 cities, 3 utility providers, and 1 school district. Respondents shared their current sustainability goals and targets, as well as the successes and challenges they've faced in implementing sustainability in their organization. The survey also identified the top most pressing sustainability needs in the region, as well as resources and topics for further learning that the participants are most interested in seeing from the RISE Coalition. A more extensive look at the survey results is available in the [meeting presentation slides](#) and the [survey summary fact sheet](#).

- FY2022 Event Planning – Discuss regional education opportunities including potential ideas for workshops, webinars, etc.

Breanne announced that NCTCOG will be hosting an Urban Heat Island Mitigation and Urban Forests Webinar on Thursday, June 2nd. [Event details here](#). This webinar is a collaboration between the RISE Coalition and the Center for Development Excellence, and is connected to the RISE FY22 focus area of urban heat island mitigation. The group also discussed ideas for a workshop focused on equity in sustainability. Cassidy Ellis, SPEER, suggested reaching out to the Texas Energy Poverty Research Institute (TEPRI) to speak about their work on the Energy Opportunities Coalition. The newly formed Equity Subcommittee will meet on May 5th to discuss planning for this workshop and other ways to incorporate equity into the work of RISE. If you are interested in joining the Equity Subcommittee, contact Breanne at BJohnson@nctcog.org.



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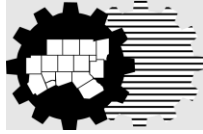
- 4. RISE Member Presentation.** *(10 minutes, Katherine Barnett, City of Denton)* Katherine Barnett will share information on the City of Denton's Sustainability Framework and Climate Action Planning processes, with a focus on how the City is funding these projects. The City of Denton recently approved a funding mechanism for these sustainability initiatives by leveraging existing funds paid by utilities to the City.

Katherine Barnett spoke to the group about how the City of Denton has approved a long-term plan for funding sustainability projects and Climate Action Planning within the city. The City of Denton has earmarked funding specifically for its Sustainability Framework out of fees paid to the City by a new data center being built in Denton. The data center is expected to be a high energy user, and this funding arrangement sets a precedent for future energy-intensive businesses coming into the city. The energy supply for the City of Denton is also from 100% renewables, mitigating the impacts of this energy use on the environment and air quality. In addition to Climate Action Planning and the City's Sustainability Framework, these funds will support weatherization programs for citizens, a local food model for neighborhood gardens, citizen engagement in the Framework-setting process, and other sustainability and resilience-based programs.

- 5. Featured Sustainability Presentation.** *(30 minutes, NCTCOG staff)* The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, signed by President Biden on November 15, 2021, contains \$1 trillion in funding for projects nationwide related to transportation, broadband access, and utilities upgrades. NCTCOG staff will provide an overview of relevant funding opportunities for local governments looking to increase the sustainability of their transportation and utility sectors, such as electric vehicle (EV) charging expansion, fleet electrification, renewable energy projects, and water infrastructure improvements.

NCTCOG staff members Lori Clark (Transportation Dept.) and Breanne Johnson (Environment & Development Dept.) presented on key funding opportunities for local governments and other entities available in the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Areas of funding discussed included energy, transportation, water, and wastewater infrastructure programs. More information on all of the funding available in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is available at [Build.gov](https://www.build.gov). Renewables Advancing Community Energy Resilience (RACER) is a new energy grant program for local governments, utilities, and community partners supporting resilience planning and rapid energy restoration. The Law also sets up an energy efficiency revolving loan fund, a grant program for energy improvements at public school facilities, codes implementation support, and over \$50 billion in clean energy grants.

Transportation funds include programs for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and the Healthy Streets program aimed at mitigating urban heat islands and improving air quality. Water and wastewater infrastructure funding is primarily going to the Clean Water and



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Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, both administered by the Texas Water Development Board. Specific funds under each of these programs are earmarked for lead service line replacement and addressing emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

More information on all of these grant opportunities is available within the [presentation slides for this meeting](#).

INFORMATION ITEMS

6. **NCTCOG Regional Opportunities.** *(10 minutes, NCTCOG Staff)* NCTCOG will go over other opportunities in the North Central Texas region that relate to sustainability and the Coalition's focus areas.

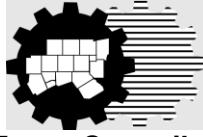
Several key items were briefly covered by NCTCOG staff.

- PACE – NCTCOG is moving forward with a regional PACE program and is currently working internally to brief NCTCOG's Board and put the pieces in place to issue a Request of Proposals for a 3rd party contractor during summer 2022.
- Public Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Working Group – This group meets monthly to discuss publicly accessible EV charging project ideas in anticipation of competitive grant opportunities. To join, contact Bailey Muller at BMuller@nctcog.org.
- EV Ride and Drive Capacity Building – This working group was created to brainstorm ways to build electric vehicle Ride and Drives into local events. To join, contact Soria Adibi at SAdibi@nctcog.org.

OTHER BUSINESS

7. **Participant Roundtable** *(25 minutes, All)* Coalition member governments will be asked to briefly share what is happening in their communities. As time allows, participants will have an opportunity to share activities happening in their communities/organizations. This roundtable serves as an opportunity to identify areas for collaboration and sharing sustainability programs or success stories.

- Dallas: Pharr Andrews shared that of the 263 milestones included in the City's CECAP 2022 Work Plan, 45% are currently ongoing and set to be completed by September. These milestones are included in the City's online CECAP dashboard. City of Dallas is also working on an Urban Agriculture and Food Security Plan and a Fleet Electrification Plan, both of which have opportunities for public input. The City has formed an Environmental Commission and an Environmental Health Subcommittee.
- Fort Worth: Sandra Hernandez shared that Fort Worth is expanding their sustainability efforts and working to implement their Environmental Plan.



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- Farmers Branch: Alex Pharmakis announced that Farmers Branch has approved a solar farm located on an old landfill that will power City facilities with 100% renewable solar energy. The City also has a solar purchasing co-op for residents, and has budgeted funds for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- James Orenstein, Trinity River Community Solar, shared that SolarAPP+ provides home solar permitting and may have permitting options for electric vehicles as well. From the [SolarAPP+ webpage](#): “The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has launched a collaborative effort with key code officials, authorities having jurisdiction, and the solar industry to develop standardized plan review software that can run compliance checks and process building permit approvals for eligible rooftop solar systems.”

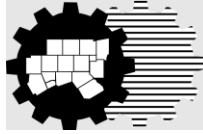
8. **Future Agenda Items.** Suggestions for future agenda items.

9. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Friday, July 22, 2022.

10. **Adjournment.**

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Breanne Johnson at (817) 695-9148 or bjohnson@nctcog.org. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact department staff at (817) 695-9210 or EandD@nctcog.org at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.

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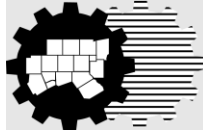


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Meeting Participants

Meeting attendance was recorded via Microsoft Teams.

Official RISE Members	
Pharr Andrews	City of Dallas
Katherine Barnett	City of Denton
Mendie White	City of Lewisville
Alexander Pharmakis	City of Farmer's Branch
Nicole Warhottig	City of Plano (alternate)
Avery Pesek	City of Fort Worth (alternate)
Meeting Guests	
Justin Ahn	Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport
Brian Beck	City of Denton
Brad Smith	GFF, Inc.
Dani Tucker	DEVA Services
Dub Taylor	Texas PACE Authority
Cassidy Ellis	SPEER
Jonathan Fredi	Atmos Energy
Harry Swanson	
Sandra Hernandez	City of Fort Worth
James McClinton	Tarrant County
James Orenstein	Trinity River Community Solar Systems
Joe Iglesias	
Larry Howe	Citizens Climate Lobby
Lee Battle	City of Allen
Yarcus Lewis	Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Kevin Overton	City of Dallas
Sam Sarkar	Halff Associates
Timothy Oleary	
Tyler Leverenz-Soetaert	City of Flower Mound
Breanne Johnson	NCTCOG



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Jenny Narvaez	NCTCOG
Edith Marvin	NCTCOG
Cassidy Campbell	NCTCOG
Lori Clark	NCTCOG
Soria Adibi	NCTCOG
Casey Cannon	NCTCOG
Chris Klaus	NCTCOG
Nicholas Vanhaasen	NCTCOG

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