

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

NCTCOG Offices, CP II, 1st Floor

Regional Forum Room

Chair: Alexander Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch

Vice Chair: Lindsay Graf, City of Plano

1. Welcome and Introductions.

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

PRESENTATION

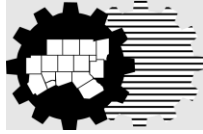
2. **Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure Study.** Kate Zielke, Program Supervisor, NCTCOG, will discuss the integrating Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure (TSI) Study. This study seeks to reduce future flood risk by promoting sustainable growth, recommending regional stormwater detention locations, and promoting preservation of greenspaces.

Kate Zielke, Program Supervisor, NCTCOG, shared about the work being done on the integrating Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure (TSI) study. Kate shared about the various models that have been developed for the project, the green stormwater infrastructure and nature based solutions that will result from the project, and the interconnection of transportation and stormwater infrastructure. Those interested in providing input on this project may be interested in attending a TSI County Government Workshop on July 31 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Registration for the workshop is now open.

ACTION ITEMS

3. **Meeting Summary.** Review and approve the January 29, 2025, meeting summary, which can be viewed here.

Alexander Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



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4. **FY2026 Vice Chair Nominations.** RISE Members will bring forward nominations for a Vice Chair to serve a one-year term for FY2026. The FY2025 Vice Chair will be appointed to the role of Chair for FY2026, as per the RISE Coalition bylaws.

NCTCOG called for vice chair nominations to serve for FY2026. Cory Heiple (City of Carrollton) nominated himself for the position. NCTCOG noted that a call for nominations would also be shared via email. Vice chair nominations will be accepted through May 30, 2025.

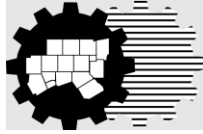
DISCUSSION

5. **FY2026 Work Plan Discussion and Brainstorming.** NCTCOG will lead a discussion on efforts to be included in the Work Plan for FY2026. Members will discuss the priorities for the next fiscal year, including preferred sustainability focus areas and member recruitment strategies.

NCTCOG staff reviewed the [Draft FY2026 Work Plan](#) and highlighted differences from the previous work plan. The group provided feedback on potential key topics to focus workshops, webinars, and other efforts on. Topics discussed include sustainable procurement, making the business case for sustainability, and greenspace planning. Feedback from the discussion will be incorporated into the FY2026 Work Plan and brought to the RISE Coalition for approval at the July 30th meeting. Any additional comments and feedback on the current draft Work Plan can be shared with Corinne Buckley at cbuckley@nctcog.org.

6. **Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Update.** NCTCOG will briefly go over the Air Quality Improvement Plan's energy measures to receive feedback from the RISE Coalition as NCTCOG staff continues to work on the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.

Savana Nance (NCTCOG) provided an update on the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan and led a discussion on energy measures. Savana began the discussion with a focus on the measures that impact public entities. The group unanimously agreed that measures targeting public entities are greatly needed. LEED certification was brought up, including the need to consider buildings certified under a previous version of LEED that may no longer be certified as well as placing a stronger emphasis on the operations and maintenance aspect of the certification. Lenna Smith (City of Plano) pointed out that many aging cities are at a point where they are doing reconstruction, so these concerns are top of mind. However, lack of funding and limitations balancing multiple projects at once make some of these updates challenging. Alexander Pharmakis (City of Farmers Branch) pointed out that for smaller cities, the facilities department has a lot on their plate, so efficiency upgrades are not top of mind. Brandi Kelp (City of Fort Worth) brought up the challenge of peak demand and its impact on finances.



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Savana also sought feedback on energy measures targeted at the residential sector. Larry Howe (Citizens' Climate Lobby) brought up the need for contractor education on heat pumps and resistance heat. Brandi Kelp emphasized the need for weatherization as a precursor to efficiency efforts, and Alexander Pharmakis shared that Farmers Branch is implementing a residential rebate program focused on windows and insulation for low to middle income homes. The group agreed that getting rebates and tax credits in the budget and making these programs scalable, as well as finding the staff time to administer these programs were major barriers. The group also discussed the implementation of solar, with additional concerns about funding. Alexander Pharmakis brought up how codes suggested by the regional codes group are regularly adopted by cities in the region, so codes that support net zero or energy efficiency measures adopted over time could have a positive long-term impact. Susan Alvarez (NCTCOG) suggested engaging economic development on this topic as they can build connections with industry and manufacturing. Savana will bring another update to the group at the next RISE Coalition meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. **FY2025 Work Plan and Project Updates.** NCTCOG will discuss progress on the FY2025 Work Plan initiatives.

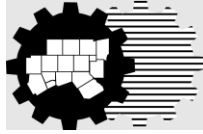
NCTCOG staff provided an update on upcoming events projects within the scope of the FY2025 work plan, including a webinar on Engaging Communities on Sustainability. Staff also provided an update on the 2025 CLIDE Awards program, with winners to be announced at the upcoming General Assembly on June 13th, 2025. Finally, staff shared information about a regional sustainability survey, which is open to all regional stakeholders and will be used to assess the state of sustainability in the region and identify shared goals and challenges. Feedback from the survey will be incorporated into the key topics for the FY2026 Work Plan, with responses requested by June 13th, 2025. The survey can be found [here](#).

- SECO Contract Scope of Work: Discuss opportunities for cross collaboration with SECO work.

NCTCOG staff provided an update on projects within the SECO contract scope of work that are connected to the work of RISE. Staff thanked those that had ordered energy and water conservation signage and shared that signs would be sent out by the end of July. Staff also encouraged attendees to reach out if they were interested in signage but unable to order, so that staff know if there is a level of interest in repeating something similar in the future.

NCTCOG staff also shared an outdated mapping tool that had been previously uncovered by staff on the Conserve North Texas website. The map displays [sustainability in the built](#)

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environment by highlighting buildings and communities with different sustainability certifications. Staff shared that since they were unaware of the map's existence until recently, it had not been updated since 2018. In order to maintain more up to date information, the resources on this map will be transferred onto a webpage with external links. RISE Coalition members shared that they were unaware of the tool's existence but may be interested in the information it provides.

8. **FY2025 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2025.

NCTCOG shared who has committed cost shares to date, with current commitments totaling \$12,300. 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. **FY2026 Member Cost Share Update.** NCTCOG will share updates and changes being made to invoice distribution for FY2026.

NCTCOG shared an update on how cost shares for FY2026 will be distributed. Cost share distribution will be conducted electronically for FY2026, with cost shares anticipated to be emailed out in late August/early September. Staff highlighted that cost shares should be sent directly to the person who approves them. Members were encouraged to reach out to Corinne Buckley at cbuckley@nctcog.org if they had another contact.

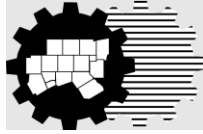
10. **89th Texas Legislative Session Update.** NCTCOG staff will discuss the status of bills of interest. RISE Coalition members are invited to share any pertinent sustainability issues, topics, news, or bills of interest to date.

NCTCOG staff shared a high-level overview of climate- and energy-related bills being tracked during the 89th Texas Legislative Session. A full matrix of related bills is available [here](#).

11. **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, webinars, workshops, and opportunities that may be of interest to members. Full details of all opportunities can be found in the meeting presentation.

- [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant \(EECBG\) Roundtable – Hear EECBG awardees share about their plans to spend EECBG funds at this upcoming NCTCOG webinar on May 27, 2025, at 10:00 AM.](#)



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- [Regional EV Infrastructure Working Group](#) – This working group met on May 14 to share information about EV infrastructure. The recording and presentation can be found on the DFW Clean Cities [events page](#).
- [North Texas Zero Emissions Vehicles Project](#) – NCTCOG has been awarded \$60 million to replace existing non-zero-emission Class 6&7 vocational vehicles with non-zero emission vehicles, with a Call for Projects opening in Summer 2025.
- [Air Quality Funding Opportunities](#) – Multiple funding opportunities for projects that address air quality are currently open.
- [AI: Challenges and Opportunities for Water Resources Webinar](#) – NCTCOG hosted a webinar exploring opportunities for use of AI in the water resources sector. The recording and presentation are available on the [Water Resources page](#).
- [Municipal Water Utility Management Webinar](#) – Alamo Area Council of Governments and West Central Texas Council of Governments held a virtual training session for municipal water utility management.
- [TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair & Conference](#) – TCEQ's Annual Trade Fair & Conference is being held on June 3-4, 2025, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Center in San Antonio, Texas.

OTHER BUSINESS

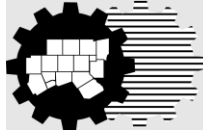
12. **Participant Roundtable.** Participants will have an opportunity to share activities happening in their communities/organizations to identify areas for collaboration and sharing sustainability programs or success stories.

Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton – Carrollton submitted their LEED for Cities application and certified Gold. They thanked Plano and Farmers Branch for their help during this process and offered their assistance to any other cities interested in pursuing the LEED for Cities certification. Carrollton also brought up the possibility of developing an updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory as a group and offered to lead the charge on this.

Lenna Smith, City of Plano – Plano submitted their LEED for Cities application the week prior. They also recently renewed their contract with UT Dallas with air quality monitors throughout air quality facilities. Plano is continuing to push their residential food scrap composting program, and recently wrapped up their employee green week.

Lauren Foust, City of Cedar Hill – Cedar Hill had their Earth Day and Beautification Day in April. They had 415 people come out and help with the cleanup event.

Kylie Wieden, City of Grand Prairie – Grand Prairie is still in the beginning stages of sustainability planning and recently took some related ideas to their Health and Safety Board. They also held a free tree giveaway, which was a big success.



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Rosaerlinda Cisneros, City of Dallas – Dallas is looking for a vendor to help with the development of a CCAP. They are looking to focus on city operations with this CCAP to provide a direction of what the city needs to do over the next five years.

Natalie Nava, City of Fort Worth – Fort Worth is developing an energy conservation plan for city facilities through the Inflation Reduction Act. They are also opening a new Material Recovery Facility in October to increase the capacity of recycling, and are starting a new recycling campaign focused on rethinking waste. Fort Worth is also developing a riparian development ordinance to incentivize new developers to leave green space around riparian areas and are working with multiple other local organizations to organize a community cleanup event ahead of the FIFA World Cup.

Alexander Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch – Farmers Branch just completed their most recent greenhouse gas emissions inventory, consistent with their goal to update every four years. They shared that they are happy to be a resource to anyone else doing an inventory and would be open to updating their schedule to be consistent with the region. Farmers Branch is also working with a consultant on the development of an active transportation plan, which will go to council soon for approval. Farmers Branch is in the final stages of completing SolSmart adoption and is working towards getting their LEED for Cities certification by the end of 2025. They also now have two new EVs in their fleet purchased with EECBG funding and recently established a well-received wildflower garden area in one of their parks.

Julissa Amador, City of Denton – Denton is launching a rebate program for lawn equipment. They are working on a sustainability framework with a focus on municipal operations and community barriers. They shared they would be reaching out about the greenhouse gas inventory because they have a lot of new staff that are unfamiliar with the process.

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

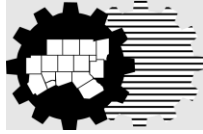
Cory Heiple suggested an update on the legislative session and its impacts on the work of RISE.

14. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 30, 2025. This meeting will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. [Add to calendar.](#)

A previous version of the agenda stated that the next meeting will be held in person. This has been corrected to reflect that the meeting is being held virtually.

15. **Adjournment.**

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Alexander Pharmakis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rosaerlinda Cisneros 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.



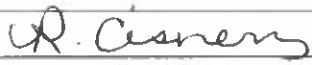

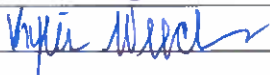

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RISE Coalition

May 14, 2025
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 |
| Katherine Barnett | | City of Denton |
| *Kaitlynn Davis | | City of Denton |
| Alex Pharmakis |  | City of Farmers Branch |
| *Shane Davis | | 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 |
| Lindsay Graf | | City of Plano |
| *Lenna Smith |  | City of Plano |
| Dorothy Kindell | | Tarrant Regional Water District |
| *Jason Gehrig | | Tarrant Regional Water District |

* Indicates alternate member

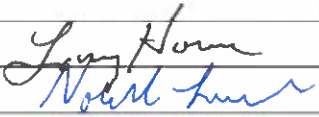
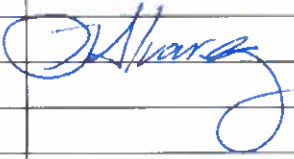
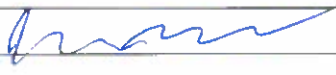


RISE Coalition

May 14, 2025

9:30 a.m., NCTCOG Offices

MEMBER & GUEST SIGN IN SHEET

| NAME | SIGNATURE | REPRESENTS |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Grace Darling | | Arlington Conservation Council |
| Eric Tate | | Atmos Energy |
| Larry Howe |  | Citizens' Climate Lobby |
| Novella Landau | | City of Carrollton |
| Alireza Hatefi | | City of Dallas |
| Heather Berryman | | City of Fort Worth |
| Cody Whitenburg | | City of Fort Worth |
| Brandi Kelp | | City of Fort Worth |
| Emily Asbury | | City of Irving |
| Melissa Canclini | | City of Lewisville |
| Alyson Foreman | | City of Lewisville |
| Kerry Shields | | City of McKinney |
| Anna Clark | | Cooksey Communications |
| Madison Peppers | | DFW Intl. Airport |
| Renee Bellew | | EPA - Region 6 |
| Jose Canario | | EEVEO |
| Yarcus Lewis | | Federal Reserve Bank |
| Lydia Vollmann | | Grant Our Community Non Profit |
| Kathy Fonville | | NTMWD |
| Chris Hill | | SMU |
| James McClinton | | Tarrant County |
| Autumn Radle | | Texas PACE Authority |
| Heather Firn | | Trinity River Authority |
| James Orenstein | | Trinity River Community Solar Systems |
| Megnah Tare | | UTA |
| Laurel Zaima-Sheehy | | |
| Susan Alvarez |  | NCTCOG |
| Corinne Buckley | | NCTCOG |
| Cassidy Campbell | | NCTCOG |
| Lori Clark | | NCTCOG |
| Joaquin Escalante |  | NCTCOG |
| Crysta Guzman | | NCTCOG |
| Alyssa Knox | | NCTCOG |
| Savana Nance | | NCTCOG |

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