

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

October 21, 2022

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Teams Meeting

[View Meeting Presentation](#)

Chair: Katherine Barnett, City of Denton

Vice Chair: Mendie White, City of Lewisville

1. **Welcome and Introductions.**

Breanne Johnson, NCTCOG, welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced the newly appointed FY23-24 Chair, Katherine Barnett (City of Denton), and Vice Chair, Mendie White (City of Lewisville). Participants introduced themselves via the Teams chat.

ACTION ITEMS

2. **Meeting Summary.** Review previous meeting summary and vote on approval. The July 22, 2022 Meeting Summary can be viewed [here](#).

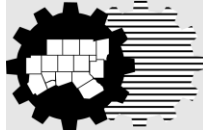
A motion to approve the July 22, 2022 Meeting Summary was made by Nicole Warhoftig, City of Plano. The motion was seconded by Mendie White, City of Lewisville. There was no opposition, and the summary was approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. **FY2022 Work Program and Project Update.** (*Members and NCTCOG*) NCTCOG will provide an update to the group on FY2023 Work Program initiatives:
 - FY2023 Event Planning – Discuss regional education opportunities including potential ideas for workshops and webinars.
 - Energy workshop series sponsored by the City of Dallas

Breanne Johnson, NCTCOG, provided a summary of the Coalition's goals as outlined in the FY2023 Work Program, including the hosting of four quarterly meetings, two webinars, a workshop on equity, and a series of three workshops on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and weatherization. Breanne asked the group for suggestions of speakers and subject matter experts who may contribute to the equity and energy workshops.

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For the equity workshop, Mendie suggested the Texas Energy Poverty Research Institute (TEPRI) as a potential speaker. James Orenstein, Solar Synergy, suggested Dallas's Office of Equity and Inclusion.

For the energy workshop series, Katherine suggested SPEER as a resource, as well as the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN). Cassidy Ellis, Ameresco, suggested reaching out to Matt Popkin with RMI, who leads the City Renewables Accelerator. Lori Clark, NCTCOG, pointed out the overlap between this workshop series and a solar energy workshop NCTCOG is planning in the Spring with ICMA focusing on local governments.

- **Regional GHG Inventory & ICLEI GHG Inventory Cohort**

Jenny Narvaez, NCTCOG, gave an update on the Regional GHG Emissions Inventory being conducted by NCTCOG and 12 cohort cities in the region. NCTCOG staff have completed the data analysis for the 12-county inventory region and are currently entering the data into ClearPath, ICLEI's inventory platform. NCTCOG continues to provide weekly progress updates to the cohort cities.

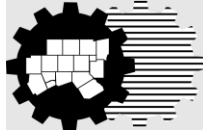
- **Final update on Organic Waste to Fuel Feasibility Study**

Breanne shared that NCTCOG, UTA, and the project contractor have officially completed work on the Regional Organic Waste to Fuel Feasibility Study. The study outcomes show strong potential in Collin, Denton, Dallas, and Tarrant Counties for new and expanded anaerobic digestion facilities to process various organic feedstocks into RNG fuel. The final Study will be posted online to the [project webpage](#) on or before November 1, 2022.

4. **Coalition Member Recruitment Strategy.** *(Members and NCTCOG)* NCTCOG Staff will give a brief update on recruitment activities since the last meeting as well as any upcoming recruitment and funding opportunities. Staff will provide an update on the FY2023 Call for Members and current membership commitments. The Members will discuss a recruitment strategy.

Breanne gave an update on member recruitment activities completed since the last meeting. Breanne, Katherine, and Mendie presented at NCTCOG's annual Public Works Roundup to a group of local government staff from around the region. Cost Share invoices have been sent to all 8 communities that submitted membership commitments for FY2023.

Communities interested in joining the RISE Coalition may check their Cost Share amount on the [RISE Membership page](#). Email Breanne Johnson at BJohnson@nctcog.org for more information on joining.



North Central Texas Council of Governments

Breanne asked for volunteers for the RISE Recruitment Subcommittee. Katherine Barnett, Mendie White, and Jaime Bretzmann (City of Plano) volunteered.

- 5. Featured Sustainability Presentation.** (*Cassidy Ellis, Ameresco*) A federal energy policy expert for Ameresco will provide an overview of the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The IRA includes funding and incentives for clean energy jobs, energy efficient buildings, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and more.

Cassidy Ellis, Ameresco, gave a presentation on funding and incentives in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) available to local governments and residents for energy efficiency, clean energy, and climate programs. The IRA, signed into law on August 16, 2022, includes nearly \$370 billion for energy and climate initiatives. The IRA also includes an emphasis on equity, job creation, and domestic materials. Programs included in the IRA are anticipated to reduce net annual GHG emissions by nearly 2 billion tons by 2030.

Clean energy tax incentives included in the IRA include enhanced Investment and Production Tax Credits and the introduction of direct pay for tax exempt entities, such as state and local governments. Bonus credits are available for projects that utilize domestic materials, are located in energy communities, and/or are located in and benefit low-income communities. Projects must also meet prevailing wage requirements and utilize registered apprenticeships to claim full credits.

The IRA also includes tax credits for residents undertaking energy efficiency improvements on their homes and for energy efficient commercial buildings, as well as rebate programs for residential whole-home retrofits and electrification. Transportation tax credits are available for electric vehicle purchases, commercial clean vehicles, and alternative fuel refueling properties.

\$27 billion from the IRA is allocated to the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, which provides grants to state and local governments to deploy clean energy in low-income areas. \$250 million is allocated to Climate Pollution Reduction Grants through the EPA to cover the cost of developing emissions reduction plans, and nearly \$5 billion to cover plan implementation.

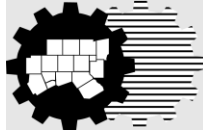
For an extended picture of the funding available and additional resources, view Cassidy's [full presentation on the IRA here.](#)

INFORMATION ITEMS

- 6. NCTCOG Regional Opportunities.** (*NCTCOG*) 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:

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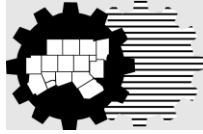


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- PACE – NCTCOG is moving forward with a regional PACE program and is currently developing documents to release an RFP in early 2023.
- Public Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Working Group – This group meets monthly to discuss publicly accessible EV charging project ideas in anticipation of competitive grant opportunities. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 26th at 1:00 pm. To join, contact Michael Kirsch at MKirsch@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 Lori Clark at LClark@nctcog.org.

OTHER BUSINESS

7. **Participant Roundtable** (*All*) 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.
 - Denton: Katherine Barnett shared that the City is currently working on their Climate Action Plan and is expanding their outreach and engagement efforts related to sustainability. The City's best-attended events are its gardening classes.
 - Lewisville: Mendie White shared that the City is working to implement micromobility ordinances for scooters and e-bikes, as well as a certified pollinator garden ordinance for residents looking to transition their lawn to be more sustainable. This would pair with a revision to the current lawn mowing ordinance, which has one of the lowest lawn height minimums in the region. The City is also hoping to expand its water conservation credit program.
 - Fort Worth: Avery Pesek shared that the City has recently instituted the first increase to its environmental fund since 1984, to be used to expand litter abatement programs. The City now has 17 residential compost drop-off sites for its pilot program and has a Master Composters program. Fort Worth is also doing special event recycling through a grant from NCTCOG.
 - Plano: Jaime Bretzmann shared that the City is kicking off its residential composting pilot with 500 residents, utilizing guidance from Fort Worth's program. Plano is working on its fall solar co-op through Solar United Neighbors to help residents with rising energy bills. The City also has a water-wise landscape tour showcasing residents with sustainable lawns and gardens, and is giving away 500 trees to residents in its annual fall tree giveaway. Jaime also introduced Heather Harrington, Plano's new Senior Sustainability Coordinator.
 - TRWD: Dorothy Kindell shared that TRWD is releasing an RFSOQ in early December to conduct a feasibility study for installing backup generation at critical pump stations. TRWD is also looking into the potential for solar generation at pump



North Central Texas Council of Governments

stations. Staff from all departments have also formed a formal sustainability group to develop an organizational sustainability plan.

- Mendie White shared that the RCE North Texas Summit is coming up on November 9-10, 2022. The Summit will be held at UT Dallas. Details and registration are [online here](#).
- Edith Marvin, NCTCOG, asked the group for guidance on a question she received about how best to address hotter-burning fires from EVs and whole home batteries that are damaging residential and commercial garages. James Orenstein recommended SEAC and IREC as resources for battery safety.

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

Cassidy Ellis mentioned that SECO may be a good speaker for the April 2023 meeting. By April, SECO will have a better idea of how they will be utilizing and allocating funding from the IRA and other federal programs to Texas communities.

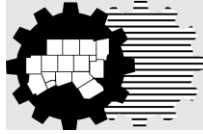
9. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Friday, January 27, 2023. This meeting will be held in-person at NCTCOG's offices in Arlington, pending approval from Coalition members.

Mendie, Avery, and Jaime are supportive of holding an in-person meeting in January. Katherine supports having an in-person meeting in 2023, but maybe not in January as it is cold and flu season. Dorothy is supportive of having an in-person meeting any time in 2023. Jaime offered the City of Plano's Environmental Education Center as a site to host a future meeting.

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 Liliana Sheppard at (817) 695-9231 or LSheppard@nctcog.org at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.

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Meeting Participants

Meeting attendance was recorded via Microsoft Teams.

Official RISE Members	
Katherine Barnett	City of Denton
Mendie White	City of Lewisville
Jaime Bretzmann	City of Plano
Nicole Warhoftig	City of Plano (alternate)
Avery Pesek	City of Fort Worth (alternate)
Dorothy Kindell	Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD)
Meeting Guests	
Brian Beck	City of Denton
Autumn Radle	Texas PACE Authority
Cassidy Ellis	Ameresco
James Orenstein	Solar Synergy, LLC
James Wood	DFW International Airport
Tyler Leverenz	City of Flower Mound
Lee Battle	City of Allen
Kelly Biegler	Atmos Energy
Susan Au	Tarrant County
Yarcus Lewis	Dallas Federal Reserve Bank
Larry Howe	Citizens Climate Lobby
Jonathan Fredi	Atmos Energy
Heather Harrington	City of Plano
Daniel Friedman	City of Denton
Edith Marvin	NCTCOG
Jenny Narvaez	NCTCOG
Lori Clark	NCTCOG
Nicholas Vanhaasen	NCTCOG
Vivek Thimmavajjhala	NCTCOG