



North Central Texas Council of Governments

MEETING SUMMARY

Public Works Council

Thursday, May 16, 2024

9:30 AM, Virtual Meeting Through Microsoft Teams

Chair: Carrie Jones, City of Plano
Vice Chair: Matt Leppla, City of Weatherford

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Carrie Jones (Plano) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Erin Blackman (NCTCOG) took attendance via a written checklist to ensure at least 11 PWC members were present for a quorum and to provide accurate attendance records. The attendance checklist is included at the end.

ACTION ITEMS

2. Meeting Summary

A motion was brought forward by Joseph Cotton (Allen) and seconded by Mark Hines (Collin County) to approve the February 15 meeting summary. All voted for approval, none opposed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) Public Works Recruitment and Retention Plan

Dr. Carr acknowledged NCTCOG and the PWC for their collaboration on this project. The College of Business students, Madison Dalton, Tiffany Melkowski, Daniela Pedraja, and Kylie Sosa presented their project aimed at developing an innovative outreach strategy for recruitment focused on reaching the next generation to address current and future workforce gaps in technical and field positions within public works.

Madison discussed survey strategies and incentives for student engagement, including reaching out to high school principals and enticing students to complete the survey with a small gift voucher. She also discussed the importance of understanding student demographics through this survey to target advertisements and identifying the social media platforms used. Daniela proposed a print ad campaign with physical and digital copies of designs with QR codes to link to other content (e.g., student survey or a commercial). The print ad should share stories of people working in public works. Tiffany shared insights from attending a recent high school career day at Shannon High School in Haltom City, emphasizing the need for public works awareness. They were able to conduct the survey and the number one question they asked students was if they were familiar with career opportunities in public works and most students had no idea or even what public works was.

Tiffany and Dr. Carr highlighted the lack of public works knowledge among students and proposed an ad campaign to address this. The concept includes a segmented commercial that can be customized for different regions. This commercial could include a scene of students sitting in a park doing homework. All around them, public works jobs are shown (e.g., park staff picking up trash, a garbage truck passing by, street crews fixing potholes, city engineer discussing projects, etc.). The ad would end where the students were doing their homework. There could be a shot of a student planting a tree and the older version of the student shown as a public works worker for



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the city. The idea to promote is “Become a partner in your community today, ask us how!” to attract civic-minded people who care about the community and who want to make a difference.

Kylie introduced the idea of using virtual reality via smartphones to engage young students and educate them about public works careers. She played an example video of a landscape that moves around via a smartphone. This technology could be used in career fairs and the landscapes could be customized. Matt Leppla (Weatherford) asked if the virtual reality is already built. Kylie said no and it would be up to the PWC to decide what they would want to include. She has seen it done at UTA and will find the clip to send.

The UTA team received positive feedback from the PWC on the campaign’s potential for education and awareness.

Erin Blackman (NCTCOG) played a raw, unedited video of Alex Keller, NCTCOG Environment and Development Department’s Communication Specialist, interviewing field staff from Fort Worth. This would enhance the effort to promote public works careers. Erin and Alex also visited Weatherford to conduct interviews. More to come on this.

4. **Bridge Asset Condition Improvement through Logical and Cost-Effective Intervention**

Dr. Nur Yazdani, UTA Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering, introduced his graduate student, Naima Zenika to present on this project. The objective was to find a solution to improve bridge conditions by analyzing maintenance and inspection reports for 109 bridges in the NCTCOG region.

Naima described the methodology to categorize prevalent defects (e.g., cracking, corrosion) based on samples and inspection reports. The AASHTO manual guidelines were used to match defects with condition states. Cracking was the most prevalent defect in concrete bridges, corrosion was common in steel elements, and delamination was prevalent in poor concrete bridges. A user-friendly BCA (Benefit-Cost Analysis) tool was developed to identify cost-effective interventions. The features of this tool include bridge ID and inspection data (quantities, condition states) and calculates total maintenance or repair costs. Environmental justice considerations and vulnerability prioritization are possible.

Dr. Yazdani further explained that the tool enables logical decisions based on past, present, and future conditions; however, market testing and stakeholder engagement are essential for improvement. This approach can extend beyond bridges to other infrastructure. Jeff Neal (NCTCOG, Transportation Department) expressed interest in collaboration for reporting on bridge conditions as federal funding programs need benefit-cost calculations for bridge systems. A comprehensive system could facilitate regional cooperation.

Dr. Yazdani offered presentations and training on using the tool if communities were interested. He inserted his email in the chat (yazdani@uta.edu). Matt Leppla mentioned that it looks like a great tool that could help him understand Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) inspection reports and to maintain bridges.

5. **Promotion of TXShare’s Pavement Analysis Contract**

Diane Palmer-Boeck (NCTCOG, TXShare) mentioned TXShare is exploring contracts related to pavement analysis and innovative niche areas. TXShare can function as an arm of the entities’



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procurement department if they do not have one. Diane said that they met with staff from the Town of Addison and staff highlighted the need for these pavement analysis contracts regionally. They asked that a survey be distributed to gauge interest and needs. James Gaertner (Waxahachie) was provided a copy of the survey and will send to Erin for inclusion in meeting follow up. The survey will also be sent to American Public Works Association (APWA), Texas Chapter members for feedback.

Diane also mentioned the article she wrote to promote TXShare and pavement analysis contracts to be shared in Texas Municipal League publications. The PWC was offered the opportunity to comment, but none were received.

TXShare can further assist communities by providing training opportunities to streamline procurement processes. Diane encouraged meeting attendees to contact her for more information or to be involved in TXShare evaluation committees. A few attendees mentioned challenges (e.g., finding contractors to do street work and repairs following a pavement analysis, translating federal reporting to local use for project planning), and Diane was open to discuss further. She put her email in the chat (dpalmerboeck@nctcog.org).

6. **Regional Public Works Draft FY25 Work Program.**

Kate Zielke (NCTCOG) introduced the draft FY25 Work Program for the Regional Public Works Program. Tasks would include a continuation of general regional public works activities, Public Works Construction Standards, Sustainable Public Rights of Way, integrated Stormwater Management program, hydrologic and flooding technical assistance, regional training and presentation opportunities, labor force and career paths, TXShare contracts, and partnerships to explore training opportunities.

Kate asked for ideas for additional work program activities. Matt Leppla emphasized the value of learning from other municipalities with different structures and suggested including opportunities for cross-training, cross-partnerships, and networking. Kelly Rourk (Denton County) proposed an Employee Exchange Program where two municipalities trade employees for a week to share experiences. Kate thanked the group for the ideas and will incorporate them into the draft FY25 Work Program to be voted on at the August PWC meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. **Public Works Council Member Terms Expiring**

Erin displayed multiple slides of those PWC members with terms that will expire September 30, 2024.

Standing seats include Arlington (Chris Funches), Carrollton (Jody Byerly), Collin County (Mark Hines), Dallas (Derek White), Dallas County (Cecelia Rutherford), Denton (Brett Bourgeois), Denton County (Stephen Belknap), Fort Worth (Juan Cadena), Frisco (David Chacon, replaced by Dane Stovall), Garland (Mike Rozelle), Irving (Walter Thomas), McKinney (Paul Sparkman), Plano (Carrie Jones), and Richardson (Jim Dulac). Standing seats are city/county-based, so the representative may continue to serve or seek a replacement internally.

Subregion seats include Denton/Lake Cities (Jeffrey McSpedden, Hickory Creek), DFW North (Clayton Riggs, Flower Mound), East (Scott Monaghan, Fate), Mid-Cities (Caroline Waggoner,



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North Richland Hills), Northeast (Andrew Figueroa, Celina), Northeast Dallas (Ronnie O'Brien, Rowlett), Southeast Dallas (Brooks Williams, Ferris), Southwest (Jeremy Hutt, Cleburne), Southwest Dallas (Robert Woodbury, Cedar Hill), and West (Matt Leppla, Weatherford).

Only one term is expiring for the private seats – Texas Council of Engineering Labs/ Geoprofessionals Serving Texas (Lyndon Cox, Terracon). Lyndon confirmed that Reese Taylor (Braun Intertec) will be replacing him starting in FY25.

8. **FY2024 Public Works Work Program Update**

Erin displayed a slide listing the cities/counties that have paid their FY24 Public Works Program cost shares, as well as any donations received. More than 55 communities are participating, including one donation, accounting for 106 percent of the budget.

- **Public Works Roundup**

Erin provided an update on planning for the 25th Annual Public Works Roundup scheduled for August 22 at the Hurst Conference Center. The Call for Sponsors opened in April and the Call for Presentations opened in May. The deadline to submit an abstract will be extended to mid-June. Erin reminded the PWC to please consider submitting an abstract to present at the Roundup and speakers are needed for each of the topics. Registration will open in June.

- **New Inspectors Training**

Erin announced that the New Inspectors Training will take place June 11-12 in Dallas. City of Dallas staff are teaching this training with unique content each day. Current cost-sharing participants in the FY24 Public Works Program were emailed a link to register one to two staff. Seats are limited to 50 attendees.

- **Cost Share Review Subcommittee**

Erin met with five volunteers (Michael Owen – Fort Worth, Robert Woodbury – Cedar Hill, Dillon Luna – Northlake, Cecelia Rutherford – Dallas County, and Sam Davis – TexasMaterials) on May 13 to review the Public Works Program cost share for FY26-FY30. The method used to calculate the FY21-FY25 cost shares was reviewed, which takes into account an equal share, population share, growth share, area share, and income share. The Subcommittee got a preview of what cost shares could look like with most of the new data included (e.g., updated population numbers). The Subcommittee asked NCTCOG to evaluate a few other methods for the June meeting. The Subcommittee will likely present its recommendations to the PWC in August for approval.

- **Sustainable Public Rights of Way (SPROW) Subcommittee**

NCTCOG staff will schedule a meeting with those interested in participating in SPROW. Kate said the bylaws do not require a PWC volunteer to chair the subcommittee.

- **integrated Stormwater Management (iSWM) Subcommittee**

Casey Cannon (NCTCOG) provided an update on the chair's behalf. The next meeting is on July 24 and in person for the first time in years. Meeting agenda items include a FY25 Work Program discussion and a special presentation on the National Flood Insurance Program. Other upcoming events include iSWM training for the development community and an iSWM community workshop for feedback. Dates for these events have not yet been identified. Upcoming deliverables include outreach presentations and research on cumulative impacts of small footprint development.

9. **Other Program Activities**

- **Update on State Flood Planning Process**

Kate mentioned that the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan has been posted by the Texas Water



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Development Board (TWDB) for public comment. A meeting is scheduled for May 30 in Austin. The public comment period will end June 17. For more information, visit <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning/sfp/index.asp>.

- **Cooperative Technical Partnership (CTP) Program and the Community Rating System (CRS) Users Group**

Kate said the CTP Program's East Fork and Hog Branch activities are 72 percent and 88 percent complete, respectively. The major activities remaining include floodplain mapping (East Fork only), flood resilience meeting, and flood risk products.

Erin mentioned that the goal for the CRS Users Group is to bring communities together regularly for training and to offer continuing education credits (CECs). NCTCOG staff are planning for a meeting with elected officials and the Flood Management Task Force in late August/early September. Erin invited the PWC to provide feedback on floodplain training topics of interest related to CRS.

- **Integrating Transportation and Stormwater Infrastructure (TSI)**

Kate said NCTCOG staff and project partners are in the stakeholder involvement part of the TSI project. Several Technical Advisory Group meetings have occurred and a Water Rights and Green Stormwater Infrastructure Webinar has been scheduled for June 25 (1:00 p.m.). Kate mentioned partners are looking to schedule site visits and windshield tours of areas that flood and invited the communities in the PWC to participate, if interested. NCTCOG is also looking to put together a developer advisory group.

- **Public Works Emergency Response Team (PWERT)**

Clay Riggs (PWERT Chairperson) was unavailable for the PWC meeting, and so Erin mentioned that they will be starting the PWERT quarterly meetings back up. They will likely occur on the second Thursday of January, April, July, and October. The PWC may contact Erin to get connected with Clay as needed.

- **Texas Chapter of American Public Works Association (TX-APWA)**

Katie Barron, (TX-APWA President) provided information on the following upcoming events:

- May 19-25, National Public Works Week
- May 29, North Central Branch Social Event – Rangers Game
- June 3-5, TX-APWA Annual Conference
- June 18, North Central Branch Membership Lunch

More information can be found at <https://www.apwa.org/> or <https://nct-apwa.com/>.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

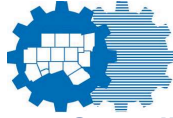
10. Future Agenda Items

No recommendations were provided.

11. Roundtable Topics/Other Business

Michael mentioned that Fort Worth's Parks and Recreation Department would like information on what other cities do related to establishment periods for landscaping and how they handle this for maintaining medians and landscaped areas. He asked the PWC to share his contact information with their Parks staff.

Michael also suggested an online forum for interactive discussions. Erin mentioned that NCTCOG would need to look into the logistics of this. Annie Anand (Fort Worth) liked this idea and offered her input on technical possibilities as needed.



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12. **The Next PWC Meeting**

Carrie reminded the group that the next PWC is scheduled for in-person on August 15 at 9:30 a.m. at NCTCOG offices in Arlington.

13. **Adjournment.**

Carrie adjourned the meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Erin Blackman by phone at (817) 608-2360 or by email at ebblackman@nctcog.org.

DRAFT

Public Works Council Meeting Attendance
May 16, 2024

Public Sector Standing Member

Allen

Joseph Cotton

Arlington

Keith Brooks

Christopher Funches

Carrollton

Jody Byerly

Collin County

Mark Hines

Dallas

Ali Hatefi

Derek White

Dallas County

Cecelia Rutherford

Denton

Brett Bourgeois

Denton County

Stephen Belknap,
represented by Kelly Roark

Fort Worth

Juan Cadena

Michael Owen

Frisco

Dane Stovall, represented by
Fernando Rogriguez

Garland

Mike Rozelle

Grand Prairie

Brister Merritt

Irving

Walter Thomas

Lewisville

Aaron Russell

McKinney

Paul Sparkman

Mesquite

John Mears, represented by
Mitchell Talley

Plano

Carrie Jones

Richardson

Jim Dulac

Tarrant County

Joseph Jackson

Public Sector Subregional Representative

Denton/Lake Cities Subregion

Jeffrey McSpedden, Town of
Hickory Creek

DFW North Subregion

Clayton Riggs, Town of
Flower Mound

East Subregion

Scott Monaghan, City of Fate

Mid-Cities Subregion

Caroline Waggoner, City of
North Richland Hills

Northeast Subregion

Andrew Figueroa, City of
Celina

Northeast Dallas Subregion

Ronnie O'Brien, City of
Rowlett

Northeast Tarrant Subregion

Keith Miertschin, City of
Grapevine

Northwest Subregion

Dillon Luna, Town of
Northlake

Northwest Dallas Subregion

Danielle Rix, City of Farmers
Branch

Northwest Tarrant Subregion

Larry Hoover, City of White
Settlement

Southeast Subregion

James Gaertner, City of
Waxahachie

Southeast Dallas Subregion

Brooks Williams, City of
Ferris

South Tarrant Subregion

Raymond Coffman, City of
Mansfield

Southwest Subregion

Jeremy Hutt, City of Cleburne

Southwest Dallas Subregion

Robert Woodbury, City of
Cedar Hill

West Subregion

Matt Leppla, City of
Weatherford

Private Sector Representative

Associated General
Contractors

Sam Davis, TexasBit

Connor VanSteenberg, AGC
of Texas

Council of Engineering
Companies

Chris Cha, Pacheco Koch

Ted Sugg, CobbFendley

Texas Council of Engineering
Labs / Geoprofessionals
Serving Texas

Lyndon Cox, Terracon
Consultants

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Guests

Susan Alvarez, NCTCOG
Annie Anand, Fort Worth
Zelalem Arega, Fort Worth
Brian Avirett, Shield Engineering
Katie Barron, University Park (TX-APWA President)
Erin Blackman, NCTCOG
Jacob Blakely, Ennis
Glenn Caldwell, Terrell
Casey Cannon, NCTCOG
Madison Dalton, UTA student
Dr. Kevin Carr, UTA
Luis Gatica, Aledo
Alex Keller, NCTCOG
Tiffany Melkoski, UTA student
Jeff Neal, NCTCOG (Transportation Department)
Daniel Ortiz, Ennis
Daniela Pedraja, UTA student
Diane Palmer-Boeck, TXShare
Kylie Sosa, UTA student
Eric Tate, Atmos Energy
Douglas Taylor, Ennis
Jeffrey Underhill, Fort Worth
Dr. Nur Yazdani, UTA
Naima Zenika, UTA student
Kate Zielke, NCTCOG

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