

North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

North Texas Regional Integration of Sustainability Efforts (RISE) Coalition

February 20, 2024

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

Chair: Katherine Barnett, City of Denton

Vice Chair: Alexander Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Crysta Guzman (NCTCOG) welcomed attendees and briefly went over housekeeping items.

ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

2. **Meeting Summary.** Review previous meeting summary and vote on approval. The October 20, 2023 Meeting Summary can be viewed [here](#).

The October meeting summary was unanimously approved as presented. A motion to approve was made by Alexander Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch. The motion was seconded by Katherine Barnett, City of Denton.

3. **Selection of Vice Chair.** The group will select a new vice chair to fill the current vacancy.

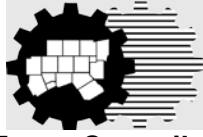
A vote was held to elect a new Vice Chair due to the recent vacancy left by Mendie White who has left the City of Lewisville. Alex Pharmakis, City of Farmers Branch, self-nominated to serve out the remainder of the current term. Cory Heiple, City of Carrollton, motioned to accept his nomination. Heather Harrington, City of Plano, seconded the motion to accept the nomination. A vote to confirm his election to Vice Chair was held and was unanimously approved.

4. **FY2024 Work Program and Project Update.** NCTCOG will provide an update to the group on FY2024 Work Program initiatives:

- FY2024 Events – Discuss regional education opportunities including recent and upcoming workshops and webinars.

Member feedback on workshops/webinars included a focus on the following topics:

- Community Engagement: How to show and communicate sustainability to the community. Normally this is focused on *green* initiatives. Instead would like to



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look at how to showcase other things besides green initiatives. Interested in things such as DE&I, and how to bring people into things they can do as a community group, and as a municipality what they can do.

- Water supply and conservation and energy use together.
- Potential action items in view of diverse local ordinances.
- Micro mobility – a collective discussion on what other municipalities have done and what has worked. If you do it, how did you get others behind it and what challenges were faced.
- Workshop topic on potentially engaging with the community to better understand the hinderances in greater EV adoption (e.g. charging infrastructure, range, cost, etc.)

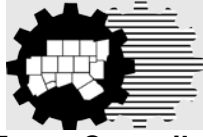
5. **FY2024 Member Cost Share Commitments.** NCTCOG staff will provide an update on the status of cost shares for FY2024.

Cassidy Campbell, NCTCOG, led a discussion on the needs of the RISE Coalition and a future direction for the group. NCTCOG staff have very preliminarily discussed the idea of combining RISE with two other groups with similar focuses and topic areas, the Sustainable Public Rights of Way (SPROW) and integrated Stormwater Management (iSWM), to leverage time and budgets for the best outcomes for each group.

Staff asked members to consider what pulls the cost of the benefits members receive into a range that makes participation in the cost share program worth it for interested communities. Member responses to these prompts included:

- Having tangible benefits and measures,
- Best practices sharing and platform,
- Providing technical assistance,
- Networking events,
- Challenges and competitions,
- Policy advocacy, and
- Progress reports of what COG has done for RISE over past year. Show the data and analytics of outreach and measures.

Members expressed concern over ensuring the message of RISE does not get lost with a merger with SPROW. They can see the other program areas taking on more of a sustainability effort, but this is also an internal struggle at cities. Staff shared that the Agency is seeing more interest in Green Infrastructure; there is a cost benefit over grey infrastructure.



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Staff will bring this item forward again at the May meeting as a follow-up item once group has a chance to digest the information for further discussion and potentially working on the new work program.

- 6. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Update and Discussion.** NCTCOG will provide an update on CPRG efforts to date, including developing a list of strategies to be eligible for future implementation grant funding. RISE members will be asked to provide input on strategies and to discuss the role of the Coalition in future CPRG planning.

Susan Alvarez, NCTCOG, shared an update on the Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant efforts and a brief timeline. Proposed measures in the categories of water/wastewater, waste management, agriculture/forestry/land use, energy, and transportation. Members were encouraged to submit feedback asked to provide letters of support. A template [Word document](#) has been drafted for use by individual entities, cities, or counties. Letters of support can be shared electronically with Savana Nance, snance@nctcog.org, or mail to Savana Nance, Senior Air Quality Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments, 616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, Texas 76011.

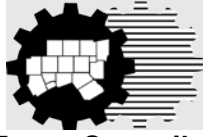
- 7. Community Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool.** Discuss the [Resilient Michigan](#) self-assessment tool and begin a broader discussion regarding how cities can put these types of tools to use. Novella Landau, City of Carrollton, will provide a brief overview of how the City is planning to perform a comprehensive sustainability assessment/gap analysis.

The self-assessment is a tool to help a city see where they are with their energy use, climate planning, etc. Came across this option when looking for an alternative to STAR, which is no longer in use. Researched and found several ways to go about a whole community assessment using a variety of tools. Found that the Resilient Michigan self-assessment tool is similar to the old STAR tool. Also suggest joining the LEED for Cities and Communities Cohort as they pair you with another city to serve as a mentor and help you walk through the process, which takes around one year.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- 8. 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 on upcoming meetings, webinars, workshops, and other events and items of interest to members. Full details for each item can be found in the [meeting presentation](#). A reminder was given for the Local Government Energy Reporting, due to SECO March 4, 2024. For technical assistance with the reporting, local governments can



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reach out to cities@eepartnership.org. Members were encouraged to complete the 2023 DFWCC Annual Fleet Survey by March 11, 2024.

Staff also presented a short overview of the many recent grant awards the Agency has received. These awards include:

Infrastructure Development:

- Charging & Fueling Infrastructure – Community Program,
- Charging & Fueling Infrastructure – Corridor Program,

Infrastructure Planning:

- Planning Resilient EV Charging in Texas
- Resilient EV Charging Infrastructure Planning White Paper
- Houston to Los Angeles (H2LA) – Interstate 10 Hydrogen Corridor Project

Infrastructure Reliability:

- EV Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator Program

Infrastructure Training:

- Guaranteeing Access to Underserved and Marginalized Populations by Building Employment Opportunities (GUMBO)

Electric Vehicle Readiness:

- Charging Smart

Innovative Solutions

- Multimodal/Drone Delivery Demonstration to Disadvantaged Communities and Mobility Challenged Populations

Staff also presented opportunities that may be of interest to the group. They include the Department of Energy's EMPOWER Workplace Charging Project and funding opportunities for vehicles and infrastructure. Details for all the regional opportunities that were shared can be found in the [presentation](#) on the committee page.

OTHER BUSINESS

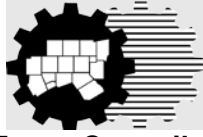
9. **Participant Roundtable.** Participants will have an opportunity to share activities happening in their communities/organizations to identify areas for collaboration and sharing sustainability programs or success stories.

Denton: Working through climate action plan adoption schedule.

Farmers Branch: Working on active transportation plan that is focused on active mobility. Pedestrian and biking are high priority. About to launch an irrigation system audit program.

TRWD: Working on finalizing plan. Started power resilience study. Looking at backup power at the pump station; solar at a couple of sites may be feasible.

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www.nctcog.org/envir



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Plano: Working on LEED for Cities certification and happy to help anyone else going through the process.

Dallas: Working with a consultant on properties that would be fit for solar. Seeking community feedback on this item and will have a virtual town hall.

NTMWD: Happy to submit a letter of support from the Resource Conservation Council for the DFW AQIP.

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

No future items were suggested.

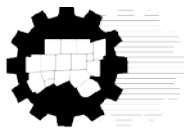
11. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. This meeting will be held in-person at the NCTCOG offices.

12. **Adjournment.**

Alex Pharmakis motioned to adjourn the meeting; Kat Barnett seconded the motion.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Crysta Guzman at (817) 695-9107 or cguzman@nctcog.org. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact Crysta Guzman at (817) 695-9107 or cguzman@nctcog.org at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made to assist your needs.

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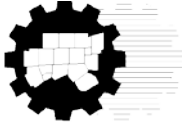


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VOTING MEMBER & ALTERNATE SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Katherine Barnett	X	City of Denton
Lauren Betz		City of Cedar Hill
Rosaerlinda Cisneros	X	City of Dallas
*Shane Davis		City of Farmers Branch
*James Douglas		City of Denton
*Jason Gehrig		Tarrant Regional Water District
Heather Harrington	X	City of Plano
Cory Heiple	X	City of Carrollton
Dorothy Kindell	X	Tarrant Regional Water District
*Krista Pender		City of Carrollton
Avery Pesek	X	City of Fort Worth
Alex Pharmakis	X	City of Farmers Branch
*Nicole Warhoftig		City of Plano
*Betsy Yost		City of Fort Worth
OPEN		City of Lewisville

* Indicates alternate member



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GUEST SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	SIGNATURE	REPRESENTS
Grace Darling	X	Arlington Conservation Council
Eric Tate	X	Atmos Energy
Novella Landau	X	City of Carrollton
Alireza Hatefi	X	City of Dallas
Heather Berryman	X	City of Fort Worth
Cody Whitenburg		City of Fort Worth
Emily Asbury		City of Irving
Melissa Canclini	X	City of Lewisville
Alyson Foreman	X	City of Lewisville
Kerry Shields	X	City of McKinney
Madison Peppers	X	DFW Intl. Airport
Renee Bellew		EPA - Region 6
Jose Canario	X	EVVEO
Yarcus Lewis	X	Federal Reserve Bank
Lydia Vollmann	X	Grant Our Community Non Profit
Kathy Fonville	X	NTMWD
Larry Howe	X	Plano Solar Advocates
Autumn Radle	X	Texas PACE Authority
Heather Firn	X	Trinity River Authority
James Orenstein	X	Trinity River Community Solar Systems
Megnah Tare		UTA
Laurel Zaima-Sheehy	X	
Susan Alvarez	X	NCTCOG
Erin Blackman	X	NCTCOG
Carolyn Burns	X	NCTCOG
Cassidy Campbell	X	NCTCOG
Lori Clark		NCTCOG
Joaquin Escalante	X	NCTCOG
Crysta Guzman	X	NCTCOG
Amy Hodges	X	NCTCOG
Alyssa Knox	X	NCTCOG
Savana Nance	X	NCTCOG