

## **AGENDA**

**Regional Transportation Council  
Thursday, February 9, 2023  
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

**1:00 pm Full RTC Business Agenda  
(NCTCOG Guest Secured Wireless Connection Password: rangers!)**

**Pledge to the United States and Texas Flags**

- 1:00 – 1:10**
1. **Opportunity for Public Comment on Today's Agenda**  
☒ Information Minutes: 10  
Item Summary: Members of the public may comment on any item(s) on today's agenda at this time. If speaking, please complete a Speaker Request Card, available at the meeting, and provide to the North Central Texas Council of Governments designated staff person. A maximum three (3) minutes is permitted per speaker. At the conclusion of this item, no further opportunities for public comment will be provided for the duration of the meeting.  
Background: N/A
- 1:10 – 1:15**
2. **Approval of January 12, 2023, Minutes**  
☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes: 5  
Presenter: Duncan Webb, RTC Chair  
Item Summary: Approval of the January 12, 2023, meeting minutes contained in [Electronic Item 2](#) will be requested.  
Background: N/A
- 1:15 – 1:20**
3. **Consent Agenda**  
☒ Action ☐ Possible Action ☐ Information Minutes : 5
    - 3.1. **Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2022 and Fiscal Year 2023 Unified Planning Work Program**  
Presenter: Vickie Alexander, NCTCOG  
Item Summary: Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will be requested. Direction for staff to also administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, to reflect the approved modifications will also be sought.  
Background: The Unified Planning Work Program is required by federal and State transportation planning regulations and provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality planning tasks to be conducted by Metropolitan Planning Organization staff. The FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP was approved by the Regional Transportation Council and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Executive Board in July 2021 and identifies the activities to be carried out

between October 1, 2021, and September 30, 2023. Amendments to this document are being proposed to reflect a project update, funding adjustments, and the creation of a new UPWP chapter to reflect initiatives that have been approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) but are outside of the timeframe of the current Work Program. The proposed amendments are provided in [Electronic Item 3.1.1](#) and will be posted on the NCTCOG website for public review and comment as part of the February public outreach opportunity. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 3.1.2](#). The Surface Transportation Technical Committee took action at its January 27, 2023, meeting to recommend Regional Transportation Council approval.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Administrative

**3.2. Fiscal Year 2023 Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase Two**

Presenter: Mindy Mize, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will seek the Council's support to recommend NCTCOG Executive Board approval of up to \$1,041,000 in funding of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives: Phase Two that will initiate in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. Last month, the Surface Transportation Technical Committee recommended Regional Transportation Council approval.

Background: Since 2014, the NCTCOG Executive Board has been authorizing annual large-scale advertising purchase and placement initiatives for the Transportation Department. [Electronic Item 3.2.1](#) provides a reminder of Phase One FY 2023 budget previously approved as well as more information on Phase Two FY 2023 education campaign costs along with examples of past education campaigns and associated campaign performance measure summaries. Education campaigns in Phase Two will support Car Care Awareness, Drive Aware North Texas, Engine Off North Texas, Freight North Texas, HOV 2+ Incentive Program (GoCarma), Know Before You Fly, National Drive Electric Week, Ozone Season Emissions Reduction Campaign (Air North Texas), Report Smoking Vehicles Program, Saving Money and Reducing Truck Emissions, Transit COVID Recovery Campaign, and Flexible Funding for Public Involvement/Notifications. Flexible Funding for Public Involvement/Notifications is for possible unanticipated costs that may arise, such as a specialized public meeting series that may need notifications posted. Education campaigns will be in multiple languages and

may be presented through out-of-home advertising, print, screen, online, audio, and social media mediums.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality, Safety

**1:20 – 1:35**

**4. Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report**

☐ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☒ Information      Minutes: 15  
Presenter: Michael Morris, NCTCOG

1. Executive Board Work Session Air Quality Summary ([Electronic Item 4.1](#))
2. Changing Mobility Data, Insights, and Delivering Innovative Projects During COVID Recovery ([Electronic Item 4.2](#))
3. USDOT Announcement of Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program Awards
4. Mobility 2045 Update Executive Summary ([www.nctcog.org/PlanInProgress](http://www.nctcog.org/PlanInProgress))
5. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Policy Bundle Workshop, February 15, 2023 ([www.nctcog.org/policybundle](http://www.nctcog.org/policybundle))
6. Development of FY2024 and FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program: Project Ideas
7. Auto Occupancy/High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Subsidy Report ([Electronic Item 4.3](#))
8. Air Quality Funding Opportunities for Vehicles ([www.nctcog.org/aqfunding](http://www.nctcog.org/aqfunding))
9. Upcoming Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Events (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/events>)
10. DFW Clean Cities Annual Survey Open (<https://www.dfwcleancities.org/annualreport>)
11. Local Government Energy Reporting Due March 3 ([Electronic Item 4.4](#))
12. Local Clean Air Project Spotlight ([Electronic Item 4.5](#))
13. February Public Meeting Notice ([Electronic Item 4.6](#))
14. Public Comments Report ([Electronic Item 4.7](#))
15. Recent Correspondence ([Electronic Item 4.8](#))
16. Recent News Articles ([Electronic Item 4.9](#))
17. Recent Press Releases ([Electronic Item 4.10](#))

**1:35 – 1:45**

**5. Cotton Belt Trail Phase One and Phase Two Partnership**

☒ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes: 10  
Presenter: Karla Windsor, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request approval regarding funding for the Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail in partnership with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Silver Line rail project from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport in Grapevine to Shiloh Station in Plano.

Background: The DART Silver Line rail project is coordinating a parallel regionally significant Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail corridor that will provide pedestrian and bicycle access to rail stations in seven cities across three counties.

Accommodations for the approximate 26-mile regional trail have been included as part of DART's planning for the commuter rail corridor. Additional funding is needed for construction of the Phase 1 bridge sections of the trail intended to be completed by the Silver Line rail design-build contractor prior to the rail beginning revenue service. Funds will also be requested to provide an extension of betterment walls associated with the Silver Line rail project. A two-contractor approach will be used for construction, partnering with DART for additional trail bridges and trail segments in the corridor. An expedited Phase 2 will be implemented with a second contractor to be procured by DART to construct various remaining trail bridges, street crossings, and trail sections before the Silver Line rail revenue service. Supported by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), applications will be submitted by DART to the Texas Department of Transportation Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects and the US Department of Transportation 2023 RAISE grant for the Phase 2 construction and will leverage existing federal and local funding currently programmed for trail construction in the corridor. Regional Transportation Council funding to support this leveraging of funds will be requested. Staff will provide an overview of funding recommendations and DART partnership grant applications to implement various sections of this priority regional trail corridor. Additional information is provided in [Electronic Item 5](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Bike/Ped +, Safety

1:45 – 1:55

6. **Regional Safety Performance Targets Update 2023-2027**

☒ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Sonya Landrum, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of federally required regional Roadway Safety Performance targets for 2024-2027 and will provide an update on 2021 actual performance. Roadway Safety targets are focused on reducing serious injuries and fatalities for motorized and non-motorized travelers.

Background: In December 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law. The FAST Act requires certain performance measures be included in the long-range metropolitan transportation planning process. These measures were established by a series of four rulemakings: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, System Performance/Freight/Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, and Transit Asset Management. In December 2017, the Regional Transportation Council adopted 2018 targets for Roadway Safety performance and in February 2019 affirmed that support through target year 2022. Adoption of new safety performance target setting for 2024-2027 is now needed. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the North Central



Texas region, the North Central Texas Council of Governments is required to set regional targets for Roadway Safety. These safety targets will be used to track and report on the region's performance through existing documents such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the State of the Region report. The proposed 2024 Roadway Safety targets and reduction schedule for 2024 – 2027 targets will be presented as [Electronic Item 6](#) along with the preliminary biennial report for 2021 targets vs. 2021 actual performance.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety

1:55 – 2:05

7. **Certification of Emerging and Reliable Transportation Technology Round Two: Swyft**

☒ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Brendon Wheeler, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) action to advance Swyft Cities' proposal to interested local governments that may wish to submit locations for the technology provider to consider. This technology follows the requirements established by the RTC as defined in Policy P22-02, including the utilization of the initial certification track or pilot corridor for eventual commercial service that fulfills a transportation need identified by the Mobility 2045 Update.

Background: In May 2022, the RTC adopted Policy P22-02 to develop a process for the Transportation Infrastructure Certification Program (now named CERTT). This program serves to guide a consensus-building path among the RTC, interested local governments, and transportation technology providers in bringing innovative transportation solutions to our region with the end goal of a commercial application serving a long-range transportation need. This transparent process ensures a level playing field for transportation technology providers wishing to prove their technology and for local governments wishing to attract unique and innovative transportation technologies to solve their transportation needs. Swyft is a gondola-like transportation developer based in California, focused on developing overhead transportation gondolas operating in either a gridded or linear fashion. Staff is continuing to review letters of interest from technology providers wishing to join this program and will update the RTC and Surface Transportation Technical Committee on the results of these applications as they advance through the process. Additional details are provided in [Electronic Item 7.1](#) and Policy P22-02 is provided as [Electronic Item 7.2](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety, Transit

**2:05 – 2:15      8.      Fiscal Year 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program**

☒ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes:      10

Presenter:      Jeff Neal, NCTCOG

Item Summary:      Staff will request a recommendation for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of projects to be submitted for funding consideration through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program.

Background:      In December 2022, the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) announced the solicitation of project applications for the FY 2023 RAISE Discretionary Grant Program regarding strategic capital investments in surface transportation projects that will have significant local or regional impacts. A copy of the amended Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is published at:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-nofo>, providing specific program details and application requirements for the \$2.275 billion program. [Electronic Item 8](#) provides information regarding candidate projects. Applications are due to the US DOT by February 28, 2023. For agencies in the region submitting projects, please be aware you must complete the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) registration process, usually requiring two-four weeks for completion, prior to submitting applications. Assuming the projected timing for application development, agency requests to receive a letter of support from the RTC should be submitted to Nicholas Allen by Wednesday, February 10, 2023, at [nallen@nctcog.org](mailto:nallen@nctcog.org).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed:      Bike/Ped +, Roadway

**2:15 – 2:25      9.      Federal Railroad Administration Grant Programs**

☒ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes:      10

Presenter:      Brendon Wheeler, NCTCOG

Item Summary:      Staff will request Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of intercity rail corridors/projects to be submitted for funding consideration and/or inclusion in future project development activities through two programs administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA): Corridor Identification and Development Program and Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program. Staff efforts for both programs may include coordination with external partners, including the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Amtrak, as well as development of application materials to support the primary applicant(s).

Background:      In December 2022, the United States Department of Transportation announced the solicitation of applications for FRA's Corridor Identification and Development (ID) Program (new) and Federal-State Partnership (FSP) for Intercity Passenger Rail Program. Both programs are designed to advance intercity passenger rail, of which high-speed rail projects are eligible. The Corridor ID Program is designed to

facilitate the development of intercity passenger rail corridors, establishing a pipeline of intercity rail projects, to guide future project development and capital investments. In summer 2022, FRA sought expressions of interest for this Corridor ID Program to which the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) responded in August 2022 with the Dallas-to-Fort Worth High-Speed Rail corridor. The Texas Department of Transportation also responded to FRA with an expression of interest in October 2022 citing several intercity passenger rail corridors throughout the state, including renewed service between the Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas and the Houston Amtrak Station, and new service east of Marshall, Texas connecting the Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas to the Meridian, Mississippi Union Station. The Federal State Partnership (FSP) for the Intercity Passenger Rail Program focuses on advanced project development and implementation of intercity passenger rail projects. Application deadlines are included as follows: Corridor ID Program – March 20, 2023, and FSP Intercity Passenger Rail Program – March 7, 2023. [Electronic Item 9.1](#) includes previous letters of support from the RTC for Amtrak’s Heartland Flyer expansion. RTC’s resolution, R22-01, reaffirming support for intercity passenger rail along the IH 20 corridor between Dallas-Fort Worth and Atlanta, Georgia is included as [Electronic Item 9.2](#). Expressions of Interest submitted by NCTCOG and TxDOT for FRA’s Corridor ID Program cited above are included as [Electronic Item 9.3](#). Further information can be found in [Electronic Item 9.4](#).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Air Quality, Transit

2:25 – 2:35 10.

**Federal and State Legislative Update**

☐ Action      ☒ Possible Action      ☐ Information      Minutes: 10

Presenter: Rebekah Gongora, NCTCOG

Item Summary: Staff will provide an update on federal, and State legislative actions related to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Background: Transportation issues continue to be a focus for both the United States Congress and the Texas Legislature. The 1st session of the 118th U.S. Congress convened on January 3, 2023. The 88th Texas Legislature convened on January 10, 2023. This item will allow staff to provide updates on key positions of the Regional Transportation Council and allow any additional positions to be taken, if necessary.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Roadway, Safety

**2:35 – 2:45     11.   Latest Transportation Performance Metrics for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region**

☐ Action                      ☐ Possible Action    ☒ Information                      Minutes:    10

Presenter:           Michael Morris, NCTCOG

Item Summary:      Staff will present the latest congestion performance measures related to the mobility success of the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) region.

Background:        [Electronic Item 11](#) contains two graphics: the first figure has previously been presented to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and demonstrated the congestion levels in the DFW region over time. The second figure is recent information that indicates the DFW region is the 14<sup>th</sup> most congested region in the United States (US). This is an amazing finding since the DFW region is the 4<sup>th</sup> soon to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest region in the US. This graphic compares Dallas-Fort Worth's congestion levels with other more congested cities.

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Administrative, Roadway

**2:45 – 2:55     12.   Roadway Safety Plan**

☐ Action                      ☐ Possible Action    ☒ Information                      Minutes:    10

Presenter:           Sonya Landrum, NCTCOG

Item Summary:      Staff will provide an overview of the newly developed Regional Roadway Safety Plan including analysis, High Injury Network, recommended countermeasures, and next steps.

Background:        From 2016-2020, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) 12-county area experienced 3,752 fatalities and 19,405 serious injuries on its roadways. The Regional Roadway Safety Plan is the first regionwide plan to eliminate all fatal crashes on our roadways by 2050 in accordance with safety positions adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the Texas Transportation Commission. Staff will provide an overview of the newly developed Roadway Safety Plan, including goals, analysis, emphasis areas, and recommended safety countermeasures. The plan also includes a High Injury Network, which is a prioritized list of the most dangerous roadway segments in the region. The Regional Roadway Safety Plan will serve as a guide for the implementation of future systemic safety projects and programs to work towards a goal of zero fatalities on the region's roadways by 2050. Staff will provide an overview of the Roadway Safety Plan as [Electronic Item 12](#). A draft version of the Roadway Safety Plan can be reviewed on the Transportation Safety web page: [North Central Texas Council of Governments - Transportation Safety \(nctcog.org\)](http://North Central Texas Council of Governments - Transportation Safety (nctcog.org)).

Performance Measure(s) Addressed: Safety

13. **Progress Reports**

☐ Action      ☐ Possible Action      ☒ Information

Item Summary: Progress Reports are provided in the items below.

- RTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 13.1](#))
- STTC Attendance ([Electronic Item 13.2](#))

14. **Other Business (Old or New):** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.

15. **Future Agenda Items:** This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of future interest before the Council.

16. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for ***1:00 pm on March 9, 2023, in the Transportation Council Room.***

**MINUTES****REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL  
January 12, 2023**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on January 12, 2023, at 1:30 pm in the Transportation Council Room. The following members or representatives were present: Daniel Aleman, Steve Babick, Dennis Bailey, Rick Bailey, Adam Bazaldua, Gyna Bivens, J.D. Clark, Ceason Clemens, Jorga Clemson (representing Mayor Ron Jensen), John Cordary (representing David Salazar), Michael Crain, Theresa Daniel, Jeff Davis, Janet DePuy, Andy Eads, Gary Fickes, Renee Franklin, George Fuller, Barry Gordon, Rick Grady, Lane Grayson, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Brandon Jones, Brad LaMorgese, Pham Long (representing Councilmember Gonzalez), B. Adam McGough, Cara Mendelson, Cesar Molina (representing Board Member Dianne Costa), Ed Moore, Omar Narvaez, Manny Ramirez, Jim Ross, Chris Schulmeister, Perry Schrag (representing Mayor John Keating), Gary Slagel (representing Vice Chair, Michele Wong Krause), Jeremy Tompkins, William Tsao, Scott Turnage (representing Oscar Trevino), Chris Watts, and Duncan Webb.

Others present at the meeting included: Vickie Alexander, Julie Anderson, Dennis Bailey, Melissa Baker, Allie Beedle, Kenny Bergstrom, Natalie Bettger, Bill Bilyeu, Alberta Blair, Stephanie Boardingham, David Boski, Jack Carr, Molly Carroll, Angie Carson, Curt Cassidy, Jeff Coalter, Dina Colarossi, Clarence Daugherty, Jeff Davis, Savannah Doshier, Andria Dotson, Kevin Feldt, Susan Fletcher, George Fuller, Jillian Giles, Rebekah Gongora, Lane Grayson, Zoe Halfmann, Paulette Hartman, Robert Hinkle, Tracy Hornfield, Hayden Horton, Donna Huerta Simmons, Richard Isarraraz, Joel James, Zoe Johnson, Jan Joplin, Dan Kessler, Gus Khankarli, Tony Kimmey, Chris Klaus, Michael Knowles, Eron Linn, Paul Luedtke, Stanford Lynch, Valerie Miller, Mindy Mize, Steve Montgomery, Erin Moore, Omar Narvaez, Evan Paret, Michael Peters, John Polster, Kelly Porter, James Powell, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Guillermo Quintanilla, Kathryn Rotter, Ryan Sartor, Perry Schrag, Walter Shumac, Toni Stehling, Shannon Stevenson, Kimberlin To, Jonathan Toffer, Lauren Trimble, William Tsao, Isaac Vasquez, Dan Vedral, Caroline Waggoner, Beth Webb, Brendon Wheeler, Cheryl Williams, Amanda Wilson, Asa Woodberry, Casey Wright, and Susan Young.

1. **Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Today's Agenda:** This item allows members of the public an opportunity to comment on agenda items. Regional Transportation Council Chair Duncan Webb asked if there were any public comments. No members of the public chose to speak at the meeting or provide written comments.
2. **Approval of the December 8, 2022, Minutes:** The minutes of the December 8, 2022, meeting were approved as submitted in Electronic Item 2. Rick Grady (M); Adam Bazaldua (S). The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items were included on the Consent Agenda.
  - 3.1. **February 2023 Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** Ken Bunkley requested Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of revisions to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), along with the ability to amend the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and other planning and administrative documents with TIP-related changes. February 2023 revisions to the 2023-2026 TIP were provided as Electronic Item 3.1.1 for the Council's consideration. These modifications have been reviewed for



consistency with the Mobility Plan, the air quality conformity determination, and financial constraint of the TIP. Also provided was Electronic Item 3.1.2, an Administrative Amendment processed through the November 2022 cycle. Commissioner Theresa Daniel asked why Modification Number 2023-0251 was being withdrawn and wanted to verify that the project was still going to proceed. Ken responded that the project is still proceeding but the request to add the project to the TIP/STIP had been delayed to the May 2023 modification cycle to allow time for environmental review by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

A motion was made to approve Item 3.1 on the Consent Agenda. Rick Grady (M); Cara Mendelsohn (S). The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Orientation to the Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris wished everyone a Happy New Year. He noted the noted the blue sheeted Reference Item 4.5.1 provided to everyone for the US Technology Lane 75 to SH 121 to IH 635, it's fully funded with Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) design. thanked Barbara Malley, Federal Highway Administration, and North Central Texas Council of Governments Staff on the work for the Air Quality Conformity Approval and noted it was presented in Agenda Item 7. He presented and congratulated Commissioner Webb with the Road Hand Award from Texas Department of Transportation. He mentioned the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) meetings dates for 2023 were made available for reference in Electronic Item 4.1. Michael briefly noted the partnership meeting with the Governor for the State of Tennessee. Michael asked Whitney Vandiver with the Air North Texas Partner Awards to come forward to present their teams' awards, details mentioned in Electronic Item 4.2. Michael mentioned the 1-20 Corridor Rail Project and AmTrak services from Dallas-Fort Worth to Atlanta, to Florida, and to the Northeast. Michael noted Jeff Neal is leading the Fiscal Year 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Discretionary Grant Program and encouraged everyone to coordinate with Jeff Neal if working on any of the grants. The remaining items were not presented.
5. **Medal of Honor – Museum Partnership Program: Leadership Institute:** Michael Morris and Karla Windsor requested Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of a financial contribution of \$1.895 million in Regional Transportation Council Local funds to support the Medal of Honor Institute, the leadership component of the National Medal of Honor Museum currently under construction in Arlington. Phase 1 Base Improvements (\$1,696,000); financial commitment on an existing construction contract and Phase 2 Supplemental Improvements (\$199,000); future construction commitment. This item included communication received from the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation about partnership opportunities provided in Electronic Item 5.1, a letter of support to the RTC to be signed by members in Electronic Item 5.2, and additional information in Electronic Item 5.3 that provided background information about the upcoming project and recommended financial contribution. Financial participation is a donation, not a reimbursement-based grant. Also included is the methodology staff used to identify eligible transportation elements. Staff briefed RTC in December regarding the proposal to request the entire RTC to sign the commitment letter, including recognition of members with current and previous military service. Michael thanked Councilmember Rick Grady and North Central Texas Council of Governments staff, Karla Windsor, Kevin Kokes, and legal counsel, Ken Kirkpatrick, for all of their work making sure we respect the military and how items are signed with regard to respective military service. There were multiple questions that Michael Morris responded basically wanting a system integrated district.

A motion was made to approve \$1.895 contribution in RTC Local Funds to support the Medal of Honor Institute, the leadership component of the National Medal of Honor Museum and to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP/STIP) and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes. Rick Grady (M); Theresa Daniels (S). Jim Ross abstained from voting due to being a Member of the Medal of Honor Museum Board Member. The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Legislative Update:** Rebekah Gongora provided an update on federal, and State legislative actions related to transportation and air quality issues affecting the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Transportation issues continue to be a focus for both the United States Congress and the Texas Legislature. The 1st session of the 118th US Congress convened on January 3, 2023. Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations: \$1.7 trillion Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 approved December 23, 2022; appropriates \$30 billion for the U.S. Department of Transportation (Discretionary Appropriations); no change to Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds. State budget – Comptroller’s budget revenue estimate for Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 (FY24 – 25) is \$188.2 billion of available general revenue for FY24-25; \$32.7 billion surplus, limited by constitutional spending limit; and Rainy-Day Fund expected to have an all-time high of \$27.1 billion. The 88th Texas Legislature will have a projected 2022-23 ending balance of \$32.7 billion, in addition to \$155.5 billion in total collections of available general revenue-related funds in 2024-25. The 2023 RTC Legislative Program includes the following topics: adequately fund transportation and utilize tools, expand transportation options in mega-metropolitan regions, enhance safety, improve air quality, and pursue innovation and technology. Bills of Interest – Transportation funding: proposes an additional \$200/\$100 fee for the registration of electric/hybrid vehicles to the State Highway Fund (HB 820), proposes an additional \$100 registration fee of electric vehicles to State Highway Fund (HB 960), proposes gas tax increases (SB 254, HB 321), local option registration fee increases (El Paso, Travis County only), and additional electric vehicle fee bills are expected to be filed. Bills of Interest: temporary paper tags would end with dealer issued license plates (HB 718), adds additional penalties to temporary tag violators (HB 914). Safety: hands free cell phone usage (SB41), school bus passing (HB 648), move over law penalties (HB 898), and driving under the influence (multiple). LIRAP/LIP funds would redistribute LIRAP funds to counties (HB 1175). Broadband creates the Texas Connectivity Fund (SJR 27). Air Quality has Texas Emissions Reduction Plan changes (SB 104), allowance of electric vehicle charging on state property/state parks (HB 821), and climate change reporting (HB 57) and (HB 846). Bicycle/Pedestrian requires three- to six-feet feet when passing (HB 421).
7. **Status of Conformity Determination - Received:** Chris Klaus announced that a Transportation Conformity determination was received by the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) on December 16, 2022, for Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas – 2022 Update and the 2023 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This air quality action allows revised and new projects to proceed and also restarts a four-year time clock for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) through December 15, 2026. By federal requirement, the analysis demonstrates that projected emissions from transportation projects are within emission limits (Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets) established by the State Implementation Plan (SIP), ensures federal funding and approval is applied to transportation projects that are consistent with air quality planning goals, and ensures that transportation control measures are given priority for federal funding. Staff presented any effects on final project recommendations due to the Transportation Conformity review

process. Brendon Wheeler confirmed that no projects were materially affected by this review for consistency among the MTP recommendations, the TIP entries, and Conformity networks. Only editorial refinements such as recategorization of projects and adjustments to project costs, limits, and phasing to align with TIP affected the Plan document. These refinements affected plan documents including roadway recommendations maps and tables, transit recommendations table, financial plan expenditures table, associated performance metrics with final networks forecasting, and associated plan narrative text within the MTP document. Final financial plan maintained financial constraint by shifting plan expenditures to accommodate recategorization of projects while maintaining the same plan total of \$148.3 billion: Infrastructure Maintenance, \$42.8 billion; Management and Operations, \$9.6 billion; Growth, Development, and Land Use Strategies, \$1.5 billion; Rail and Bus, \$44.9 billion; and High Occupancy Vehicle Managed Lanes, Freeways, Tollways, and Arterials, \$49.5. Electronic Item 7.1 contained the US Department of Transportation conformity approval, which now allows new and modified projects in the MTP and TIP to proceed. Electronic Item 7.2 contained minor refinements made to the roadway and transit project recommendations tables because of the conformity review process.

8. **Recent Presentations by the Director: Implications for 2023:** Michael Morris Michael Morris summarized two end-of-the year presentations that have merit in focusing on policy conversations, technology emphasis areas and legislative needs because Dallas-Fort Worth is the fourth largest region in the nation and 14<sup>th</sup> in congested areas. He explained that it was important to discuss these themes to help determine where the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) may be headed in 2023. The last 12 months resulted in dozens of executive level presentations from city managers' associations to policy officials, to elected officials' groups, and national presentations in Washington DC. Two presentations exemplify these efforts. The first presentation was to the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition (TRTC) on December 7, 2022, provided in Electronic Item 8.1. The second presentation, Future of Transportation (Not your Father's Oldsmobile), was presented at the Transportation Crossroads Conference on December 16, 2022, and was provided in Electronic Item 8.2. Michael noted that the material in both presentations was interchangeable and could have been used to speak to either group. During the RTC meeting, Michael highlighted a few pages from each presentation. Regarding congestion levels and population in the Dallas-Fort Worth area during 2021, the area grew by 400,000 people from 2019 to 2021, that is 150,000+ people per year and one million people per seven years. From 2008 to 2021, 1.6 million people came to the region and the transportation congestion level increased 2 percentage points. He explained the small increase was due to previous RTC leadership taking an aggressive position to build dynamically priced managed lanes and create partnerships with the North Texas Tollway Authority and the transportation authorities, and traffic engineers on traffic signals. Michael noted that although the RTC can do more and be better, there is no other place in the country that can show this type of performance measure as a result of the activities of this particular region. RTC member governments pass local bond programs and the RTC creates innovative technologies and opportunities for other states to come to the Dallas-Fort Worth region to learn more about projects and programs that are implemented within the region in hopes of implementing similar projects and programs and receiving the same results. Michael asked Natalie Bettger of NCTCOG to bring back to the Council a map that demonstrates how smaller regions are a lot more congested and how low the congestion level is in the Dallas-Fort Worth region compared to other regions of the same size. Michael briefly discussed the status of the North Tarrant Express (NTE): IH 820/SH183 "NexTE" Phase. Freeway mobility as a service was mentioned. Examples of services that would be included from passive to active are a context for private sector partnership,

creation of “Digital Twins”: dynamic lane configuration, electric vehicle recharging; induction loops; Dial 511 for Response Service, Guaranteed Transit: Transit Liability or is it Free, Dynamically Priced Managed Lanes: Choice Lanes, Funding for Gentrification Policy, and funding for Context Sensitive Design. All of these lead to the fact that the RTC wants to be more active in managing its freeway system in the future. Staff will bring policies to the RTC on these topics in the future. The RTC has directed staff that it wants to be the most advanced transportation network in the country, both in technology and innovative. Staff continues to pursue equal access to the internet which is a legitimate transportation mode under federal law. Through this mode staff pursues equal access to education, telemedicine, and interviews for all and the elimination of food deserts. Work will continue on freeway mobility as a service, including P3, Digital Twin, and Choice Lanes; new high-speed rail in Fort Worth, Arlington, Dallas, and Houston; unmanned aircraft systems such as Bell plus; and an autonomous people mover such as those used by General Motors and in the International District in Dallas. In addition, staff is working in Las Colinas to help bring next generation autonomous vehicles to the already existing Las Colinas people mover that is no longer in operation. Michael also highlighted I.H.30 next generation freeway design such as induction charging and dynamic lanes; heavy truck replacement including hydrogen fuel cell/electric; autonomous heavy-duty vehicles, the Alliance Mobility Innovation Zone at Hillwood; and technology drivers to reduce roadway fatalities. Dan Lamers will provide an agenda item at the February RTC meeting on the status of the high-speed rail project. The area is approximately 18-20 months from an environmental clearance on high-speed rail between Fort Worth, Arlington, and Dallas. New legal paperwork will be provided that shows that the new rail system will be Fort Worth to Houston and not Fort Worth to Dallas and then Dallas to Houston. The one-seat ride that the Regional Transportation Council requested is being honored. Staff will also provide information on the Fort Worth to Houston high-speed rail commitment at the February meeting.

9. **Walk to School Day Promotion 2022:** Karla Walker briefed the Council on the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) 2022 Walk to School Day promotional efforts and the results of the events held at participating schools. Annual event that involves schools and communities across the country and the world walking to school on the same day. Community presence on the streets reminds us to help create calm, safe routes for students to walk and bicycle to school. Goals of the program: safety education, health, reduced congestion, transportation choice, etc. This year, Walk to School Day was held on October 12, 2023. Typically held the first Wednesday of October but was postponed due to the Yom Kippur holiday. Prizes were awarded to schools based on the planned events and the order of applications received, Walk to School Day banner, Bike raffle entries for participating students, and draw-string bag “Prize Packs”. Due to overwhelming interest, schools that received prize packs were given a limited number to raffle off/distribute as worked best for their events. To incentivize participation in Walk to School Day, NCTCOG raffled off four bikes to participating students in Walk to School Day. Two 20” bikes and two 24” bikes 973 total entries into the bike raffle from 14 schools! Statewide: 198 events, up from 166 in 2021 and 164 in 2019, were registered with WalkBikeRollToSchool.org for the state of Texas. 2,789 events were registered nationwide! 104 events were registered with the event tracker from Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hunt, and Tarrant Counties. NCTCOG helped 20 schools celebrate Walk to School Day with special prizes! Save the date for next year’s Walk to School Day: Wednesday, October 4, 2023. Next year’s event preparation will begin Spring 2023. To be added to the Walk to School Day 2023 mailing list, fill out the interest form at: [www.nctcog.org/WalkToSchool](http://www.nctcog.org/WalkToSchool). Electronic Item 9 contained additional details.

10. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Electronic Item 10.1 and 10.2.
11. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
12. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
13. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) is scheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, February 9, 2023, in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.



The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments  
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

TO: Regional Transportation Council

February 3, 2023

FROM: Vickie Alexander  
Program Manager  
Program Administration

SUBJECT: Modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program  
for Regional Transportation Planning

The Unified Planning Work Program for Regional Transportation Planning (UPWP) is required by federal and State transportation planning regulations and provides a summary of the transportation and related air quality planning tasks to be conducted by Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff. The FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP was approved by the Regional Transportation Council and NCTCOG Executive Board in July 2021 and identifies the activities to be carried out between October 1, 2021, and September 30, 2023.

Listed below, and in the following attachment, is the fifth set of proposed modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP. Included in these amendments are a project update, two funding adjustments, and the creation of a new UPWP chapter to reflect initiatives that have been approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) but are outside of the timeframe of the current Work Program. The intent to reference these RTC-approved FY2024 through FY2026 projects in the UPWP is to aid in the federal review of the TIP. The proposed modifications will be posted on the NCTCOG website for public review and comment as part of the February 2023 public outreach opportunity.

**The following modification affects an existing project for which a text update and financial adjustment are being proposed:**

- 5.08 Roadway and Railroad Safety – Transportation Safety Planning (add \$50,000 State Planning and Research funds and update text to reflect the development of an inventory and coordination of safety activities across the region, and the provision of a report on implemented activities to the Texas Department of Transportation)

**The following modifications have previously been approved by the Regional Transportation Council and are now being incorporated into the Unified Planning Work Program:**

- 3.03 Air Quality Management and Operations – Regional Energy Management (add \$100,000 Department of Energy funds and \$20,000 Regional Transportation Council Local funds to reflect receipt of a grant award to continue work activities)



- X. NCTCOG Planning and Implementation Activities Beyond the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program (add new chapter to reflect projects for FY2024 through FY2026 approved by the Regional Transportation Council for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program)

Please contact Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins at (817) 608-2325 or [VPruitt-Jenkins@nctcog.org](mailto:VPruitt-Jenkins@nctcog.org) or me at (817) 695-9242 or [valexander@nctcog.org](mailto:valexander@nctcog.org) if you have any questions or comments regarding these proposed modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP prior to the Regional Transportation Council meeting. Your approval of these modifications will be requested at the meeting, as well as your direction for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, to reflect the approved modifications.

vpj  
Attachment

## AMENDMENT #5 TO THE FY2022 AND FY2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

### 5.08 Roadway and Railroad Safety

This subtask is ongoing throughout FY2022 and FY2023, supporting planning efforts to develop safety policies, programs, and projects.

#### Transportation Safety Planning

##### *Transportation Planning Funds*

Staff coordinates with the Regional Safety Advisory Committee, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Texas Department of Public Safety, Federal Highway Administration, local governments, and other partners to develop strategies for regional safety planning efforts, data collection, and analysis. These partners also assist in developing policies, programs, and projects to improve safety related to the transportation system. Anticipated products include:

- Collection, processing, maintenance, and analysis of regional safety data, including crash data from TxDOT's Crash Records Information System, fatality data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, and hazardous material spill data from the National Response Center;
- Regional Safety Information System implementation and assessment activities;
- Monitoring and promotion of the implementation of regional intersection improvements outlined in NCTCOG's Intersection Safety Implementation Plan (ISIP) and the Texas ISIP;
- Regional and federal safety performance measure tracking and reporting activities;
- Safety-related education and training courses for member agencies, which may include, but not be limited to, Vision Zero Plan Development, Highway Safety Manual, Employer Traffic Safety Program, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration courses, and National Safety Council training courses;
- Coordination of regional Wrong-Way Driving Mitigation Program and mitigation strategies; and
- Coordination efforts for the Regional Safety Advisory Committee.

##### *Other Funding Sources*

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds, **State Planning and Research funds**, local funds, Transportation Development Credits, and grants will also be utilized to support this program. Anticipated products include:

- Regional Safety Information System application tool;
- Development and implementation of driver safety public education, outreach, and information programs, including a contributing factor public education campaign and development of a Drive Aware North Texas website;
- Regional Roadway Safety Plan development activities;
- Development and maintenance of an inventory of safety strategies and countermeasures included in Roadway Safety Plans, Local Safety Plans, Vision Zero Safety Plans, or similar documents developed by regional partner agencies; **and**
- Systemic safety improvement funding program activities; **and**.

- Inventory and coordination of safety activities across the region and provision of an annual update of implemented activities to the Texas Department of Transportation that includes performance measures, coordination and outreach, work plan and priorities, achievements, and next steps.

#### **X. NCTCOG Planning and Implementation Activities Beyond the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program**

The following table reflects planning and implementation projects that have been approved by the Regional Transportation Council for FY2024 through FY2026. These projects will be carried out by the North Central Texas Council of Governments and are or will be included in the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. The FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program covers the period of October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2023. Initiation of the projects in the table below falls outside the timeframe of this Work Program and the projects are being shown here to reflect NCTCOG's commitment to the projects and aid in the federal review of the Transportation Improvement Program.

#### **FY2024 - FY2026 Projects Approved by the Regional Transportation Council for Inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program**

<b>TIP Code</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Match Source</b>	<b>Total</b>
11622.4	Travel survey, data collection, model refinement program: to provide travel information used to create analytical tools for all planning, air quality, and management projects in the MPA; analysis of transit performance in real time and forecast future ridership amongst the three major transit agencies; inclusion of nonmotorized trips in the regional travel model; development of dynamic traffic assignment model for roadway network analysis; conduct travel surveys and intersection operational analyses	STBG	TDCs	\$7,960,000
16000	Input/output economic model: software to provide analysis for demographic forecasting, scenario analysis, and transportation project evaluation; technical support for complex interactions among transportation behaviors and provide connectivity between transportation investment and economic effect	STBG	TDCs	\$1,500,000
11655.2	Revenue and project tracking system (RAPTS): track, monitor, and assess regional transportation and air quality projects through the RAPTS website; includes software development and NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$1,316,000

TIP Code	Project Description	Funding Source	Match Source	Total
11694.1	Regional air quality initiatives: identify and implement initiatives to improve air quality and attain federal standards, including strategies to support increased adoption of zero-emission and other low-emission vehicles, implementation and evaluation of new emissions-reducing transportation technologies, development of regional resources to advance emissions-reducing efforts, and coordination efforts across local stakeholders	STBG	TDCs	\$9,300,000
16001	Regional scrap tire abatement program development and implementation: scrap tire public educ, outreach, and awareness campaign; provide tech support to local govts, incl ordinance & model creation to inc regulation and enforcement; database for abandoned tire locations, haulers, dealerships, & end users in the region; identify & impl additional policies for regional improvement; assist local govts, businesses & citizens in proj & program impl; further research into existing & potential end uses to incl local scrap tire utilization as a resource; collection events	STBG	TDCs	\$790,000
11615.4	Regional geospatial imagery: data collection/planning; data collection/planning cooperative digital aerial photography data collection to improve travel demand model, and corridor alignment planning, and track population/employment changes, and support various additional analytical transportation planning activities	STBG	State	\$2,300,000
16002	McKinney line passenger rail study; from Parker Road Station in Plano to McKinney North; McKinney line passenger rail conceptual engineering study including alternative route analysis and funding options; includes consultant and NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$1,000,000
16003	Mansfield line passenger rail study; from Midlothian to Fort Worth Central Station; Mansfield line passenger rail conceptual engineering study, including alternative route analysis and funding options; includes consultant and NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$1,000,000
11554.2	People mover test track: including analysis of various technologies and alignment options for warranted people mover locations in the DFW region and connect those locations to existing regional transportation networks; includes Plano Legacy Area autonomous transportation system	STBG	TDCs	\$375,000
16004	Northwest and Southwest Fort Worth subarea studies; Northwest study: bounded by US 377 to W, SH 114 to N, FM 730 to W, and IH 820 to S; Southwest study: IH 20/IH 820 to N, FM 1187 to W, US 377 to S, and Chisholm Trail to E; develop subregional transportation plans to identify needed improvements and establish a multimodal transportation network with additional focus areas on land-use, safety, and congestion; areas outside this study area will also be included as they impact travel within the area; includes consultant and NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$1,100,000
16005	Southwest Airlines surface transportation planning study; Stemmons Freeway to Dallas North Tollway; study to evaluate improvement to existing roadway and transit options to maximize accessibility to Love Field Airport now and in the future	STBG	TDCs	\$75,000

TIP Code	Project Description	Funding Source	Match Source	Total
16006	Environmental impact statement coordination on regional projects; provide technical, planning, engineering, and environmental assistance to transportation agencies and the RTC to advance corridors identified for improvement in, or being evaluated for, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); provide support to advance regional projects through the environmental process; facilitate coordination meetings that monitor and ensure the continued progress of environmental document completion	STBG	TDCs	\$400,000
11613.3	Regional goods movement/corridor studies: conduct general corridor studies, planning, and implementation activities in support of the region's good movmnt incl; NCTCOG staff time & consultant assistance to assess impact of truck, rail, & other freight; movmnt, data collection & analysis, safety, coord with private sector partners in freight business; monitoring truck lane corridors, HazMat, econ analysis, land use compatibility, passenger & freight rail integration, public outreach/education, and oversight of partner implementation projects	STBG	TDCs	\$5,200,000
11650.1	Transportation technical support; technical assistance for developing, monitoring, environmentally approving, and implementing corridor studies/projects according to capital asset management principles	STBG	TDCs	\$2,660,000
11633.4	M&O – Program oversight coordination and compliance, including department streamlining initiatives, procurement (education, outreach w/ potential bidders, incl web updates), contract mgmt; enhancement of resources & compliance w/ Buy America & DBE prgm (incl outreach to vendors, and development of partnership w/ regional & state cert agencies), & legal (coordination of RTC policies, evaluation, development, regulation of legal instruments to implement MPO projects)	STBG	TDCs	\$445,000
11647.2	Land use/transportation and bike/pedestrian initiatives includes bicycle/pedestrian planning, transit-oriented development, regional pedestrian safety program, implementation of sustainable development initiatives, regional wayfinding, and ADA compliance; includes NCTCOG staff time and possible consultant assistance to develop and implement funding programs, collect and analyze data; school siting/land use connections, safe routes to school, safety and education	STBG	TDCs	\$6,940,000
11692.1	Regional parking management tools & strategies program; conduct data collection and/or planning to develop and implement data driven tools and strategies to support public sector in management of parking at multimodal locations	STBG	TDCs	\$550,000
14038.2	Management and oversight of regional safety program; including regional data tools and analysis, traffic incident management, Drive Aware North Texas safety campaign, strategic targeting of aggressive driving and road rage, includes consultant, NCTCOG staff time, and equipment	STBG	TDCs	\$14,565,000

TIP Code	Project Description	Funding Source	Match Source	Total
11663.2	Entire managed lane system; develop, test, & implement technology to detect & verify auto occupancy on regional managed lane system including public outreach, education, & integration into existing tolling software/hardware; project involves consultant assistance & NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$5,661,000
16007	Special events management; including measures such as extended transit service for events, staging of tow trucks to clear incidents quickly, clearing roadways quickly after incidents, etc. to reduce congestion during special events; includes NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$1,550,000
11691.1	Implement and operate traveler information system; develop concept of operations and deployment of trans sys management and operations data engine to improve operational efficiency on the region's transp network by integrating data sources incl regional traffic management and traveler information sys; ITS data updates and compliance; coordination with regional partners on information sharing and agreement tracking; administration of mobility assistance patrol; includes NCTCOG staff time	STBG	TDCs	\$7,099,000
11616.1	Regional traffic signal retiming project; develop and implement traffic signal coordination in the DFW non-attainment area; includes improving signal operation and progression through traffic signal retiming, equipment and implementation, and evaluation of the resultant improvements; includes NCTCOG staff time and consultant assistance	CMAQ	State/Local	\$8,870,000
11612.3	Region-wide Employer Trip Reduction Program (ETR); track and implement ETR strategies through commuter/employer outreach; management/oversight of tryparkingit.com; performance monitoring/reporting; maintain/update the TDM toolkit, trip reduction manual for employers, outreach materials; managed lane reimbursement; includes NCTCOG staff time and consultant assistance	STBG	TDCs	\$3,929,800
11657.2	M&O – air quality public education and outreach program; implement strategic communication efforts to educate and inform the region on transportation and air quality related issues, including strategies for improvement, funding opportunities, training initiatives, and new programs/policies; major efforts will focus on transportation and air quality, public outreach, education, and engagement programs	CMAQ STBG	TDCs TDCs	\$3,025,000 \$3,025,000
11699	Regional vanpool program for eastern and western subregion; operate vanpool subsidy initiative for commuters traveling long distances and in areas with little or no fixed-route service; includes cost of vehicle leasing and part of administrative costs	STBG	TDCs	\$3,600,000
14014	McKinney Avenue Transit Authority M-Line extension from Uptown to Knox-Henderson neighborhood; conduct a study to recommend alignments & stops, eval the cost of impl, operation, & maintenance, provide tech assist producing ridership est & prelim env analysis, ID potential funding, & develop timeline; incl NCTCOG staff time & may incl consultant asst	STBG	TDCs	\$600,000



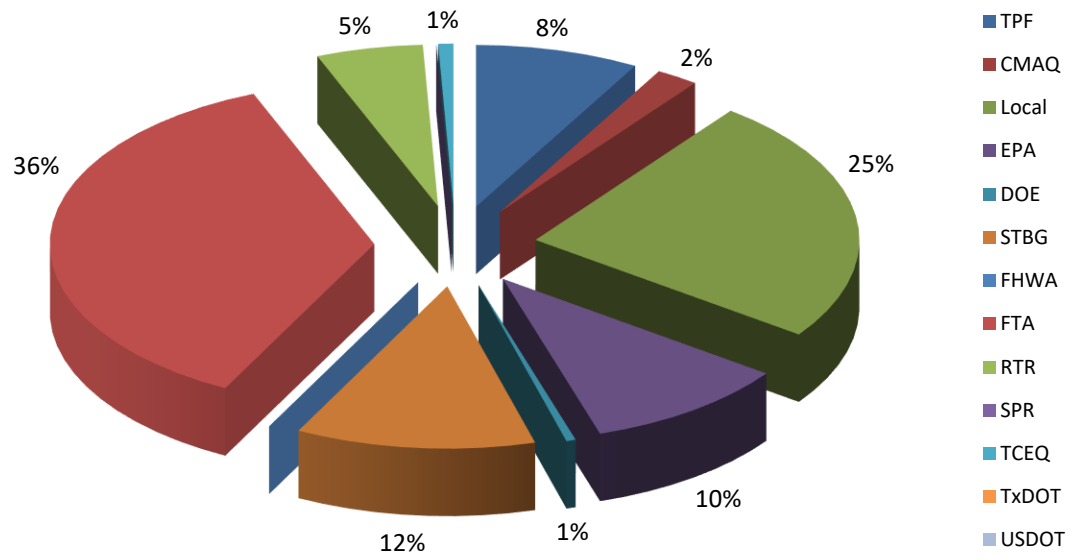
TIP Code	Project Description	Funding Source	Match Source	Total
16008	Technology and Innovation 3.0; staff support for future projects focused on improving regional broadband access for transportation uses, coordinating and supporting emerging mobility technology deployments and connected vehicle/infrastructure improvements; supporting workforce development and research initiatives; and managing administrative tasks to facilitate projects	STBG	TDCs	\$10,400,000
20160	Conduct study to review accessibility of transit service, especially for individuals with disabilities, and identify needed system enhancements; includes NCTCOG staff time and consultant assistance	RTR	----	\$500,000
			Subtotal	\$105,735,800

## **E. Funding Summary**

Subtask	TPF <sup>1</sup>	Additional Funding		Total
		Amount	Source	
3.01	\$2,906,700			
		\$1,183,300	RTR	
		\$976,200	STBG	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$5,066,200
3.02	\$1,297,200			
		\$270,000	TCEQ	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$1,567,200
3.03				
		\$1,530,600	CMAQ	
		<b>\$341,500</b>	DOE	
		\$7,402,250	EPA	
		\$12,300	FHWA	
		<b>\$16,300,279</b>	Local	
		\$5,824,000	STBG	
		\$275,000	TCEQ	
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>\$31,685,929</b>
3.04	\$1,704,900			
		\$976,600	FTA	
		\$816,800	STBG	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$3,498,300
3.05				
		\$25,256,050	FTA	
		\$1,459,400	Local	
		\$2,659,000	RTR	
		\$1,000,000	STBG	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$30,374,450
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,908,800</b>	<b>\$66,283,279</b>		<b>\$72,192,079</b>

<sup>1</sup> Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) includes both FHWA PL-112 and FTA 5303 funds. TxDOT will apply Transportation Development Credits sufficient to provide the match for FHWA PL-112 and FTA 5303 programs. As the credits reflect neither cash nor person hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.

### Task 3.0 Funding Summary

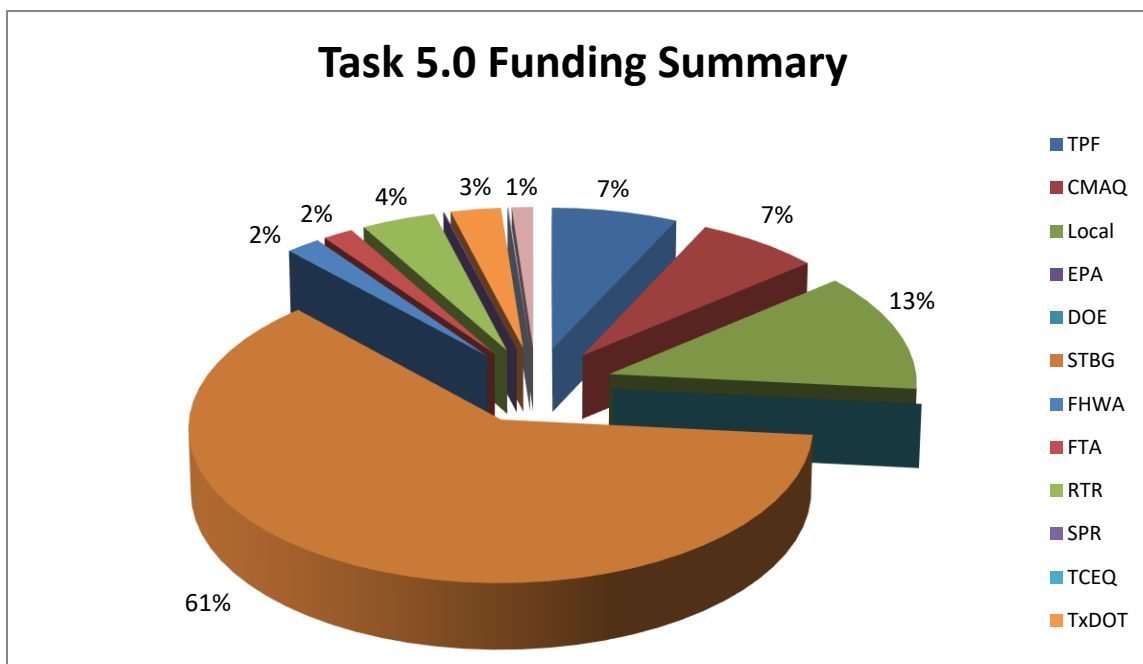


## E. Funding Summary

Subtask	TPF <sup>1</sup>	Additional Funding		Total
		Amount	Source	
5.01	\$1,366,400			
		\$178,400	Local	
		\$50,000	NTTA	
		\$3,455,000	RTR	
		\$15,575,400	STBG	
		\$73,600	TxDOT	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$20,698,800
5.02	\$1,314,600			
		\$149,000	RTR	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$1,463,600
5.03	\$904,200			
		\$19,708	CMAQ	
		\$467,000	FTA	
		\$730,009	Local	
		\$19,708	RTR	
		\$7,626,200	STBG	
		\$78,375	USDOT	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$9,845,200
5.04	\$203,700			
		\$222,200	STBG	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$425,900
5.05	\$1,317,800			
		\$7,093,400	CMAQ	
		\$2,000,000	FHWA	
		\$5,404,180	Local	
		\$653,000	RTR	
		\$10,044,100	STBG	
		\$1,776,300	TXDOT	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$28,288,780
5.06	\$387,800			
		\$2,008,000	Local	
		\$8,226,900	STBG	
		\$1,297,000	FTA	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$11,919,700
5.07	\$65,000			
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$65,000
5.08	\$642,800			
		\$15,800	Local	
		<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>SPR</b>	
		\$1,532,300	STBG	
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>\$2,240,900</b>

Subtask	TPF <sup>1</sup>	Additional Funding		Total
		Amount	Source	
5.09	\$260,600			
		\$819,400	Local	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$1,080,000
5.10	\$193,000			
		\$1,171,100	DOD	
		\$556,500	Local	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$1,920,600
5.11	\$606,400			
		\$386,600	Local	
		\$20,378,800	STBG	
		\$1,036,600	TXDOT	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$22,408,400
5.12				
		\$472,800	Local	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$472,800
5.13				
		\$2,496,000	Local	
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$2,496,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,262,300</b>	<b>\$96,063,380</b>		<b>\$103,325,680</b>

<sup>1</sup> Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) includes both FHWA PL-112 and FTA 5303 funds. TxDOT will apply Transportation Development Credits sufficient to provide the match for FHWA PL-112 and FTA 5303 programs. As the credits reflect neither cash nor person hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.



**EXHIBIT VIII-4**  
**FY2022 AND FY2023 UPWP FUNDING SUMMARY**

Funding Source	Task 1.0 Administration	Task 2.0 Data Development	Task 3.0 Short Range Planning	Task 4.0 Metropolitan Transportation Planning	Task 5.0 Special Studies	Total
<b>FTA Activities</b>	<b>44.21.00</b>	<b>44.22.00</b>	<b>44.24.00</b> <b>44.25.00</b>	<b>44.23.01</b>	<b>44.23.02</b> <b>44.24.00</b> <b>44.22.00</b> <b>44.27.00</b>	
TPF <sup>1</sup>	\$6,336,050	\$3,779,100	\$5,908,800	\$3,986,800	\$7,262,300	\$27,273,050
CMAQ	\$2,979,900	\$0	\$1,530,600	\$0	\$7,113,108	\$11,623,608
DOD	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,171,100	\$1,171,100
DOE	\$0	\$0	\$341,500	\$0	\$0	\$341,500
EPA	\$0	\$0	\$7,402,250	\$0	\$0	\$7,402,250
FHWA	\$0	\$0	\$12,300	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$2,012,300
FTA	\$0	\$0	\$26,232,650	\$270,000	\$1,764,000	\$28,266,650
Local	\$510,200	\$373,000	\$17,759,679	\$688,810	\$13,067,689	\$32,399,378
NCTCOG						
Local	\$143,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$143,800
NTTA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
RTR	\$345,300	\$0	\$3,842,300	\$814,600	\$4,276,708	\$9,278,908
SPR	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
STBG	\$1,793,700	\$3,742,500	\$8,617,000	\$3,460,000	\$63,605,900	\$81,219,100
TCEQ	\$0	\$0	\$545,000	\$0	\$0	\$545,000
TxDOT	\$320,350	\$79,800	\$0	\$0	\$2,886,500	\$3,286,650
USDOT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$78,375	\$78,375
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$12,429,300</b>	<b>\$7,974,400</b>	<b>\$72,192,079</b>	<b>\$9,220,210</b>	<b>\$103,325,680</b>	<b>\$205,141,669</b>

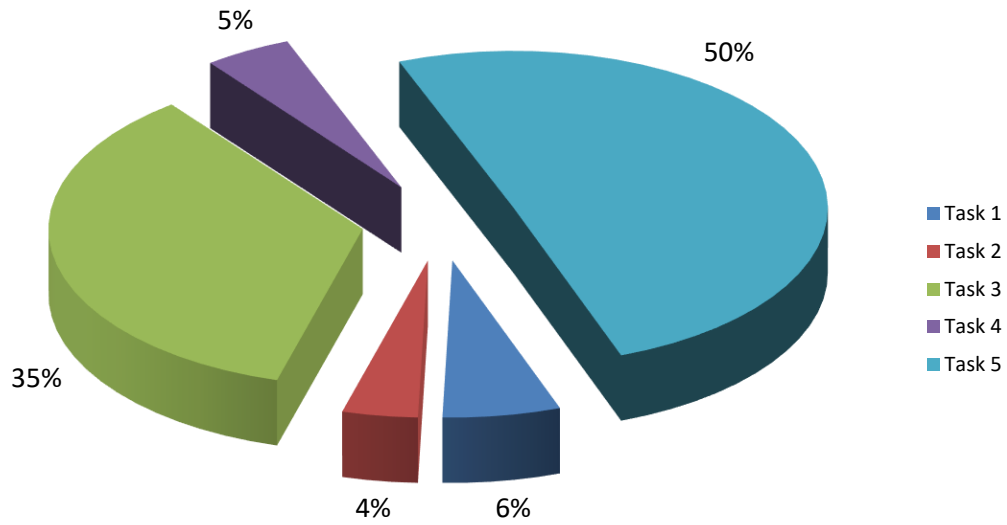
<sup>1</sup> Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) includes both FHA PL-112 and FTA 5303 funds. TxDOT will apply Transportation Development Credits sufficient to provide the match for FHWA PL-112 and FTA 5303 programs. As the credits reflect neither cash nor person hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.

Combined Transportation Planning Funds <sup>2</sup>	\$24,335,529.00
Estimated Unexpended Carryover	\$4,719,097.00
<b>TOTAL TPF</b>	<b>\$29,054,626.00</b>

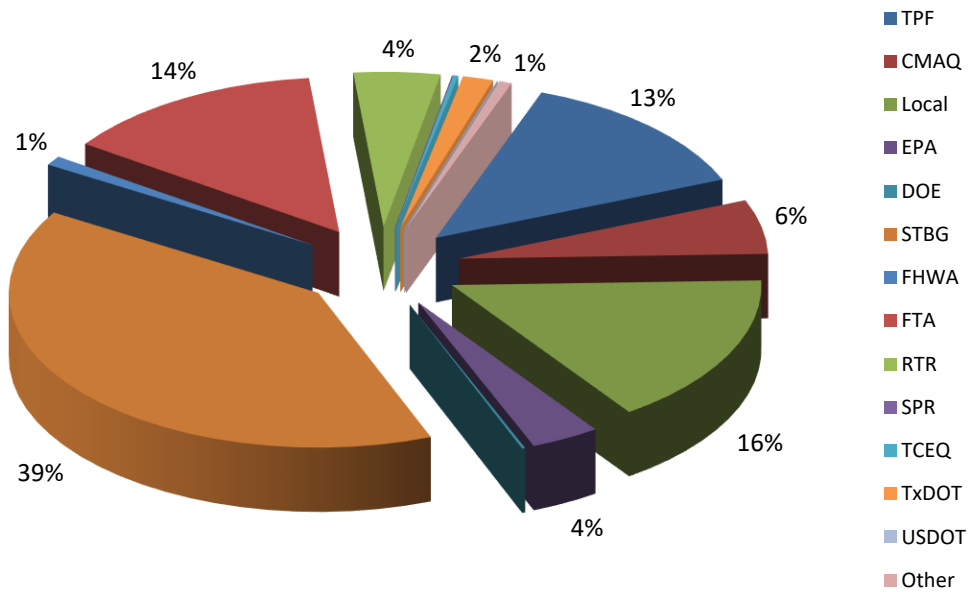
<sup>2</sup> Estimate based on prior years' authorizations.



## Summary of Funding by Task



## Summary of Total Funding



# ***Modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program***

**Regional Transportation Committee  
February 9, 2023**

**Transportation Department  
North Central Texas Council of Governments**

## ***Total Programming Increase in Other Funding Sources***

UPWP Project	Funding Source	Additional UPWP Funding
Transportation Safety Planning	SPR - \$50,000	\$50,000
Regional Energy Management	DOE - \$100,000 RTC Local - \$20,000	\$120,000
<b>Total Increase</b>		<b>\$170,000</b>

# ***Modification Schedule***

**January 27**

**Action by Surface Transportation Technical Committee**

**February 6**

**Initiation of Public Outreach**

**February 9**

**Action by Regional Transportation Council**

**February 23**

**Action by NCTCOG Executive Board**

**February 24**

**Submittal of Modifications to Texas Department of Transportation**

## ***Requested RTC Action***

### **Approve:**

- **Proposed UPWP modifications outlined in Electronic Item 3.1.1**
- **Direction for staff to administratively amend the Transportation Improvement Program and other administrative/planning documents, as appropriate, to reflect the approved modifications**

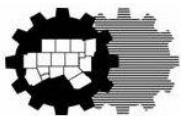
# ***Unified Planning Work Program***

## ***Contact Information***

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**Assistant Director of Transportation**  
**817-695-9248**  
**[dkessler@nctcog.org](mailto:dkessler@nctcog.org)**

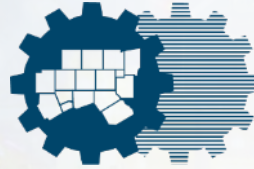
**Vickie Alexander**  
**Program Manager**  
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**[valexander@nctcog.org](mailto:valexander@nctcog.org)**

**Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins**  
**Administrative Program Coordinator**  
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**[VPruitt-Jenkins@nctcog.org](mailto:VPruitt-Jenkins@nctcog.org)**



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments  
Transportation Department

**<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/study/unified-planning-work-program>**



NCTCOG PRESENTATION

# FISCAL YEAR 2023 EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS FOR TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES: PHASE TWO

MINDY MIZE | REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION  
COUNCIL | 2.9.2023

# THE THREE E'S FOR EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

Engineer - Develop initiative

Educate - Inform the audience on initiative

Enforce - Make sure initiative is being implemented





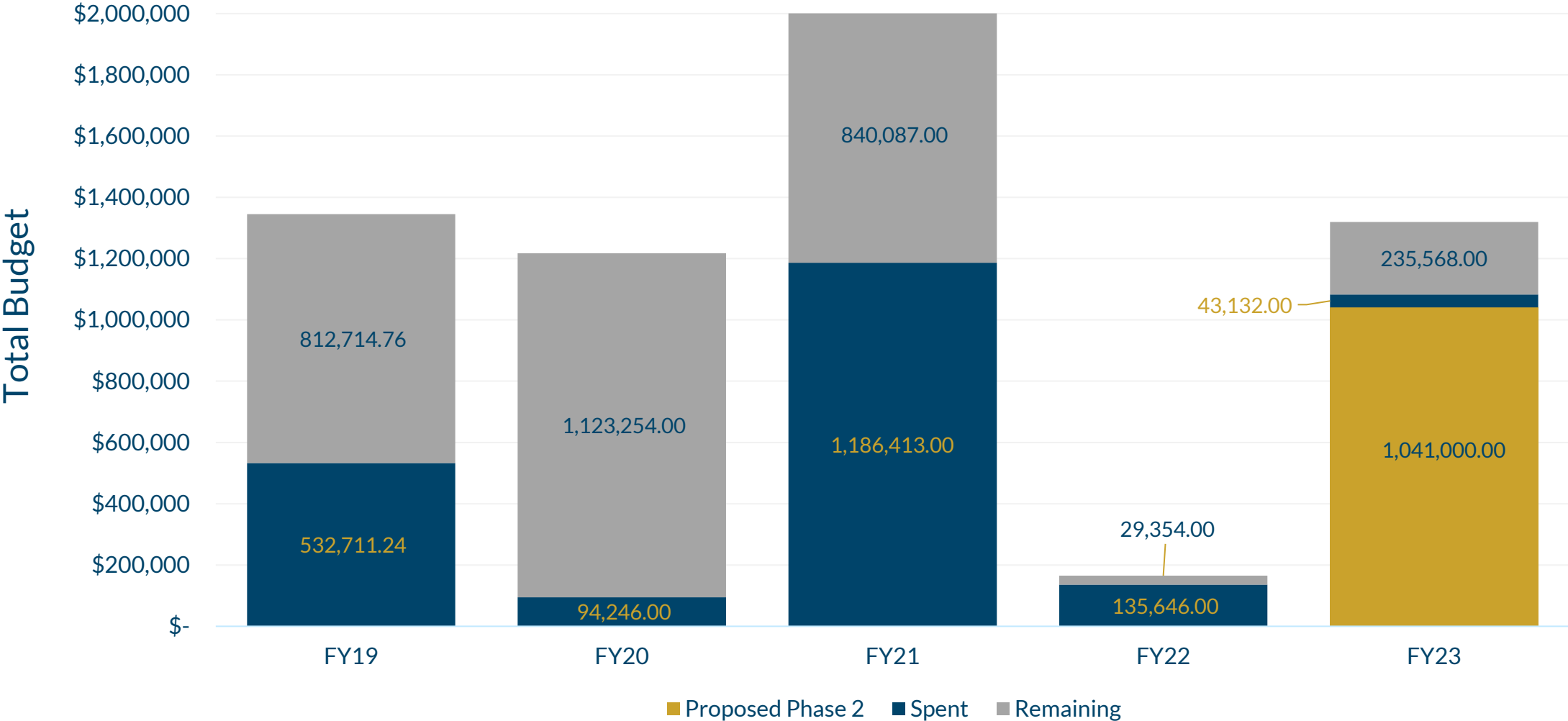
# EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS OVERVIEW

Education campaigns for Transportation Initiatives allows for:

- Lower Media Buy Rates
- Increased and Targeted Audience Reach
- Increased Website Traffic and Engagement
- Greater Public Participation
- Cross Communication for Campaigns
- Improved Efficiencies with Media Outlets



# EDUCATION CAMPAIGN BUDGET OVERVIEW FROM 2019-2023



# EXAMPLE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE MEASURES SUMMARY– TRY PARKING IT

**Goal:** Increase the number of North Texas commuters that visit and create an account on the TPI website. Increase the number of users that actively track their alternative commute information on the TPI website.

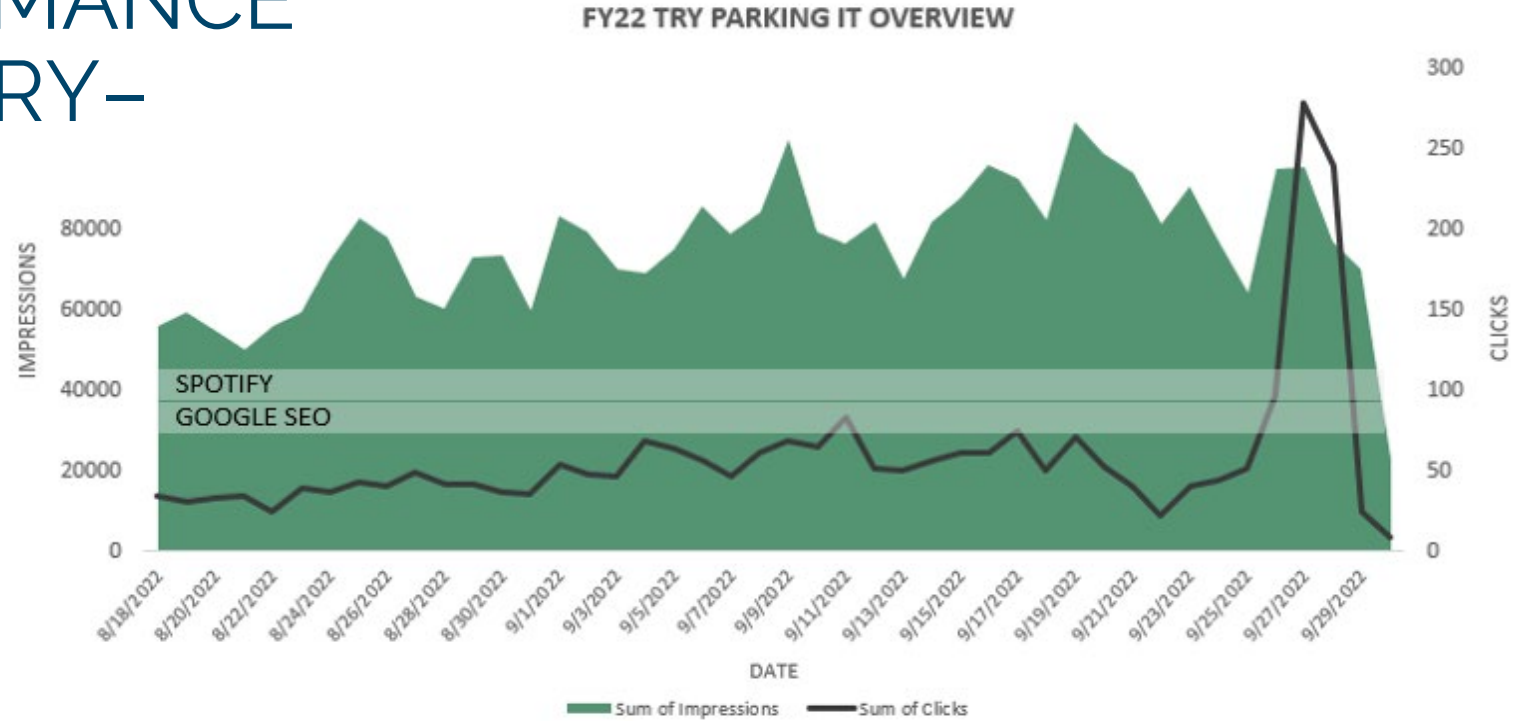
## **Strategy & Audience Breakdown:**

Commuters (drivers and passengers) in North Texas ages 18 and up.

## **Future Recommendations:**

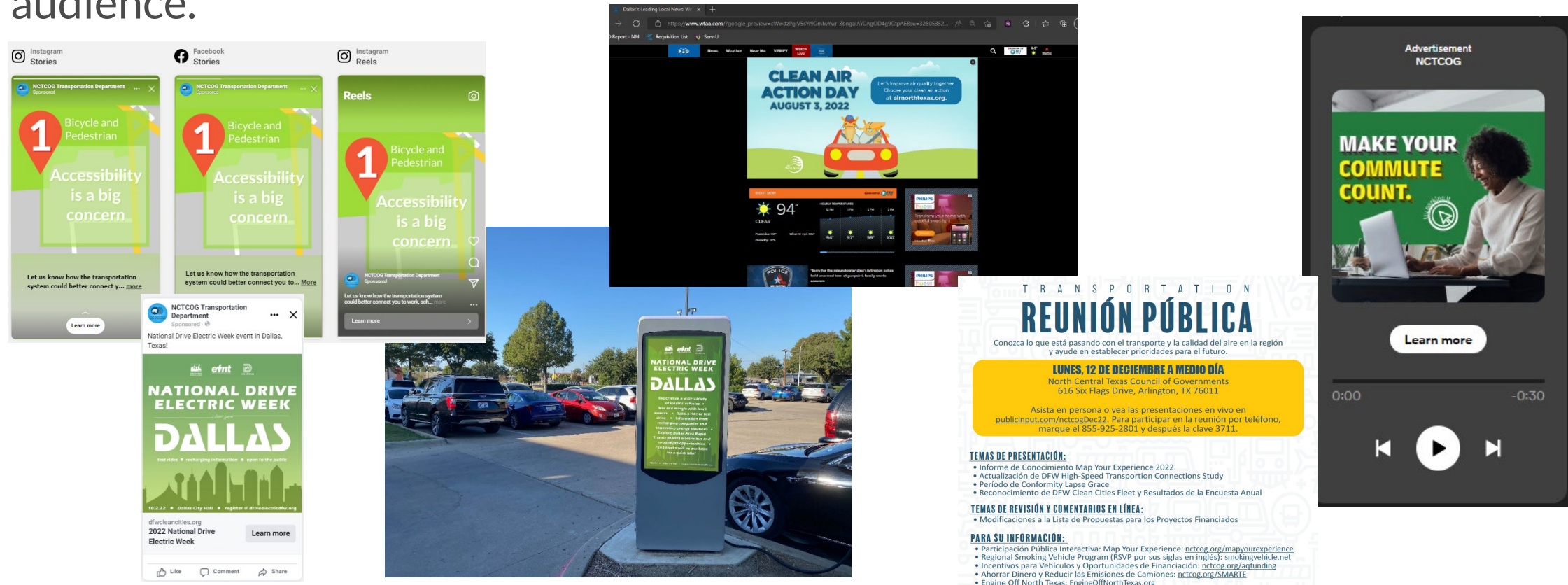
- Encourage TPI team to research with public involvement (PI) staff on chambers of commerce outreach as well as potential chamber memberships
- Continue paid outreach on Spotify to strengthen audience and analytics in FY23. Recommend a three-month minimum for streaming component of the campaign.
- Research opportunities for additional languages to promote Try Parking It.
- Continue improving Google Ads campaign set up for Google SEO and Google display options in advance of FY23 Try Parking It campaign. Set up meeting with a Google Business representative as needed.

**FY22 Budget: \$30,000**



# EDUCATION CAMPAIGN STRATEGY AND EXAMPLES

Media procurements and placements are monitored and adjusted based on the current market environment and a campaign's key message(s) and target audience.



# TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Educational Campaign for Transportation Initiatives: Phase One was approved by STTC, RTC, and Executive Board in November and December 2022.

Purchase and Placement of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives for FY2023 - Phase 1					
Program Name	Funding Source	Funding Amount	Match Source	Match Total	Total
Public Involvement	TPF/STBG/RTC Local	\$ 78,700	TDCs	15,740	\$ 78,700
Congestion Management Program (Try Parking It)	STBG	\$ 200,000	TDCs	40,000	\$ 200,000
OVERALL TOTAL		\$ 278,700		55,740	\$ 278,700



# TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Purchase and Placement of Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives for FY2023 - Phase 2					
Program Name	Funding Source	Funding Amount	Match Source	Match Total	Total
Car Care Awareness	STBG	\$ 15,000	TDCs	3,000	\$ 15,000
Drive Aware North Texas	STBG	\$ 300,000	TDCs	60,000	\$ 300,000
Engine Off North Texas	STBG	\$ 21,000	TDCs	4,200	\$ 21,000
Freight North Texas	STBG	\$ 150,000	TDCs	30,000	\$ 150,000
HOV 2+ Incentive Program (GoCarma)	STBG	\$ 160,000	TxDOT	\$ 40,000	\$ 200,000
Know Before You Fly	RTC Local	\$ 10,000	NA	0	\$ 10,000
National Drive Electric Week	STBG	\$ 10,000	TDCs	2,000	\$ 10,000
Ozone Season Emissions Reduction Campaign (Air North Texas)	CMAQ	\$ 205,000	TDCs	41,000	\$ 205,000
Report Smoking Vehicles Program	STBG	\$ 15,000	TDCs	3,000	\$ 15,000
Saving Money and Reducing Truck Emissions	STBG	\$ 5,000	TDCs	1,000	\$ 5,000
Transit COVID Recovery Campaign	CMAQ	\$ 100,000	TDCs	20,000	\$ 100,000
Flexible Funding*	STBG/CMAQ/ TPF/FTA/RTR/L OCAL	\$ 10,000	TDCs/TBD	2,000	\$ 10,000
OVERALL TOTAL		\$ 1,001,000		\$40,000 in cash match and 166,200 in TDCs	\$ 1,041,000

\*Flexible Funding for Public Involvement/Notifications Only - Specific funding source, including match source, will be determined by the project(s) using the Flexible Category, and could also include RTC Local.

**Total up to \$1,041,000 to cover paid education campaign expenses for approval.** Campaigns in the table above are included in the FY2022 and FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program, which was approved by the RTC and Executive Board.





# PROPOSED ACTION

Support NCTCOG Executive Board to Approve Funding up to \$1,041,000 for Education Campaigns for Transportation Initiatives that will initiate in FY2023 for Phase Two, such as:

Car Care Awareness

Drive Aware North Texas

Engine Off North Texas

Freight North Texas

HOV 2+ Incentive Program (GoCarma)

Know Before You Fly

National Drive Electric Week

Ozone Season Emissions Reduction Campaign (Air North Texas)

Report Smoking Vehicles Program

Saving Money and Reducing Truck Emissions

Transit COVID Recovery Campaign

Flexible Funding for Public Involvement/Notifications



# CONTACT US



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Hilary Nguyen

Communications Coordinator

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# Status Report and Discussion on Air Quality

Executive Board • January 26, 2023

**Mike Eastland, Executive Director**  
**Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager**  
**Michael Morris, Director of Transportation, PE**



# Overview

Introduction and Roles of Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) vs. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) - Mike Eastland

TCEQ State Implementation Plan History – Chris Klaus

Aggressive Air Quality Commitments by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and NCTCOG Executive Board – Chris Klaus

Questionable Air Quality Implications During COVID – Michael Morris

# Emission Monitoring

## National Ambient Air Quality Standards (Criteria Pollutants)

	<u>Attainment</u>	<u>Nonattainment</u>
Ozone		
Lead		
Carbon Monoxide		
Nitrogen Dioxide		
Particulate Matter		
Sulfur Dioxide		Partial Nonattainment In Navarro County Due to Aggregate Plant

## Monitoring and Increased Regulations

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (i.e., Carbon Dioxide)

# EPA Clean Air Act in North Central Texas

## Clean Air Act (CAA)

- Federal stationary and mobile air emission regulations to protect public health and public welfare

## Current and Historical Ozone Standards



- **1-Hour 1990 Standard – Attained in 2006**

- 125 ppb limit
  - Moderate for four counties in DFW: Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant



- **8-Hour 1997 Standard - Revoked**

- Less than 85 ppb limit
  - Moderate, then Serious for nine counties in DFW: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, and Tarrant



- **8-Hour 2008 Standard**

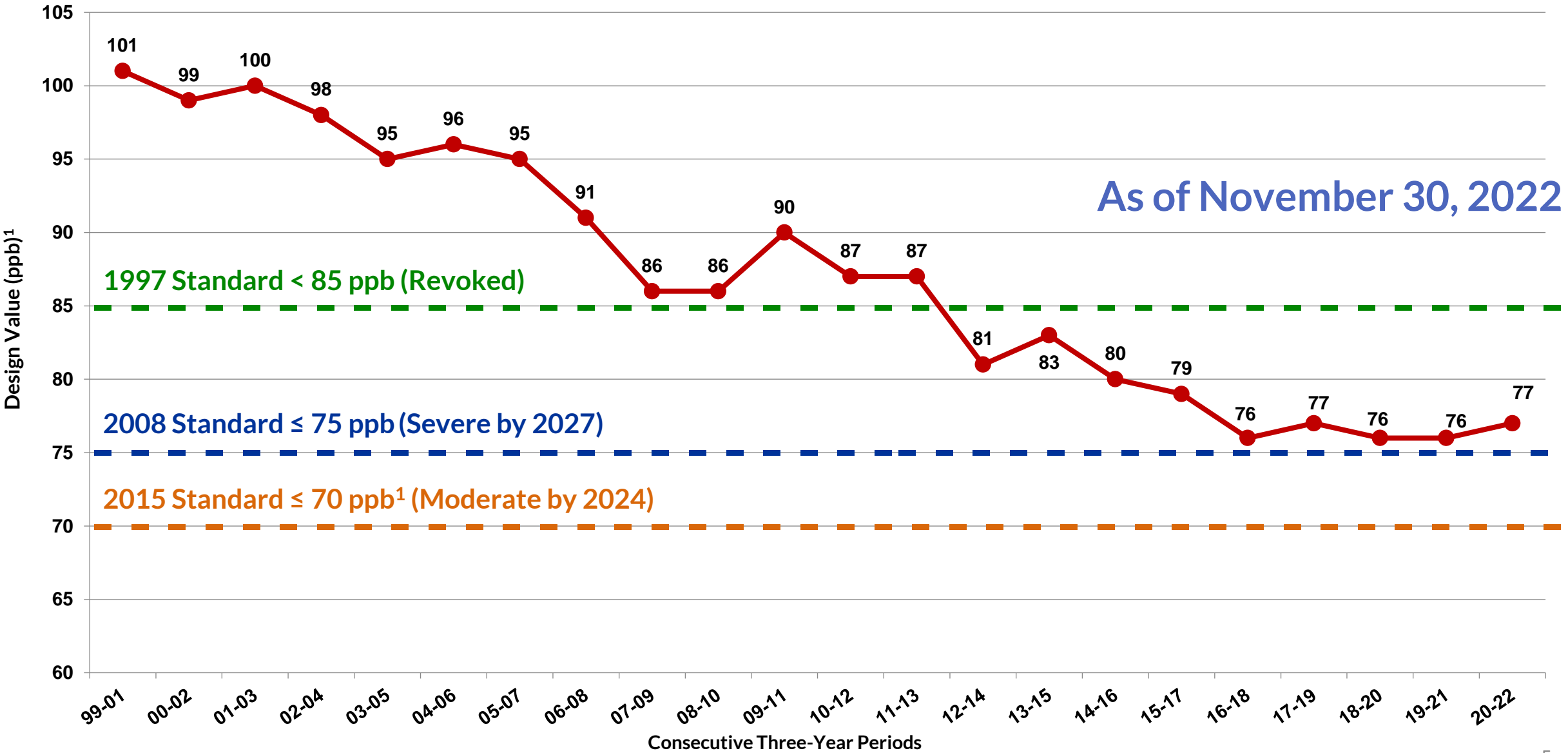
- Less than or equal to 75 ppb
  - Moderate, then Serious, now Severe
  - The nine counties, plus Wise County to make 10 counties



- **8-Hour 2015 Standard**

- Less than or equal to 70 ppb
  - Marginal, and now Moderate
  - Nine counties: excludes Rockwall county

# Ozone Design Value Trends



<sup>1</sup>Attainment Goal - According to the US EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards, attainment is reached when, at each monitor, the *Design Value* (three-year average of the annual fourth-highest daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration) is equal to or less than 70 parts per billion (ppb).

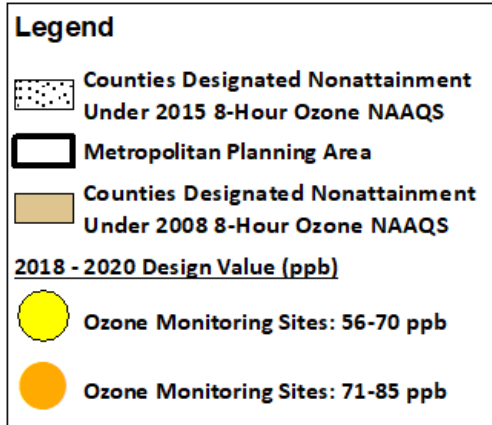
Source: NCTCOG TR Dept

5

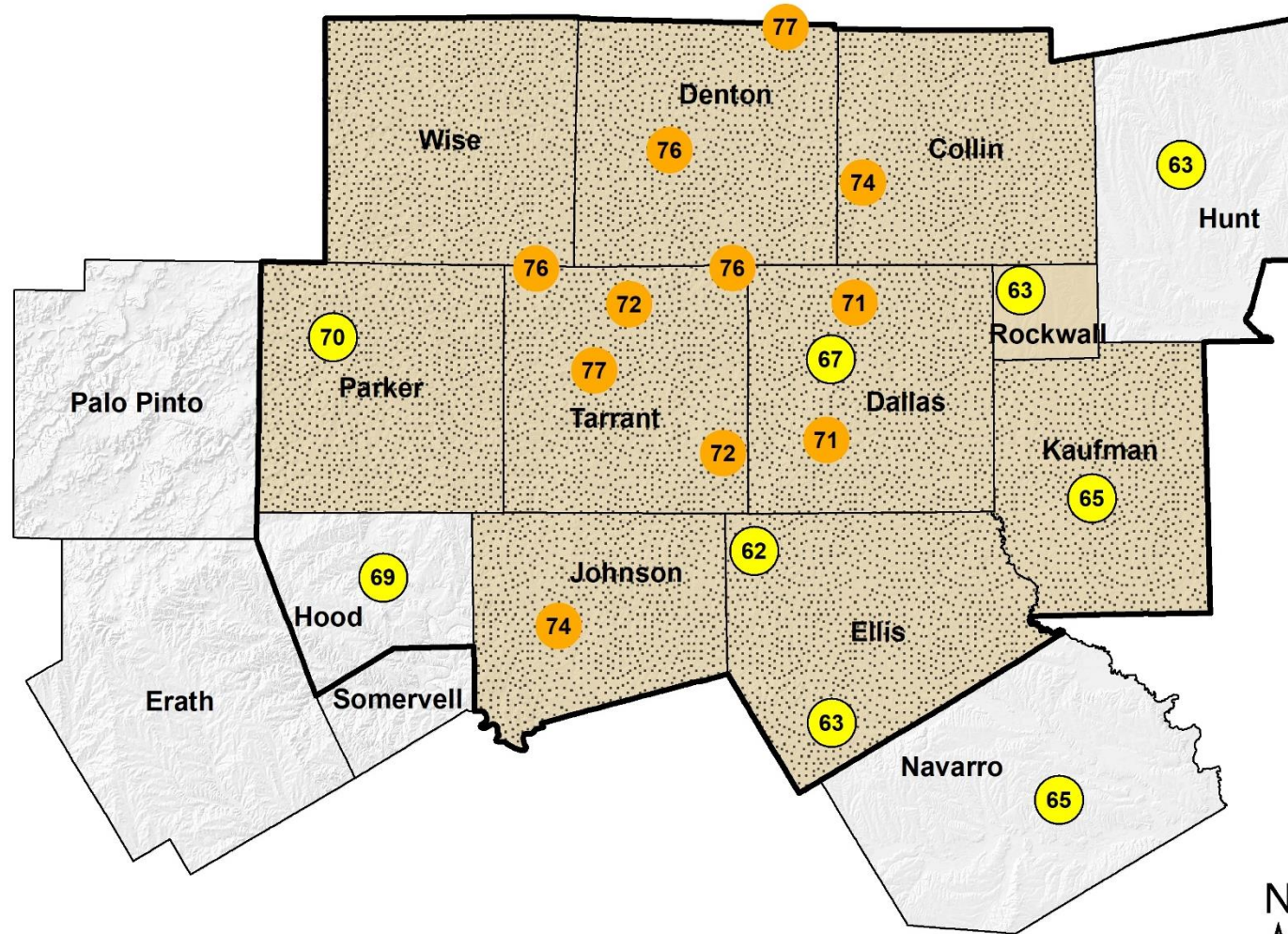


# Monitor Locations with Associated Fourth Highest Value

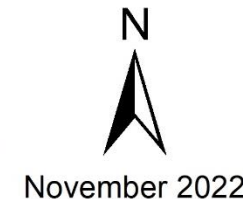
As of November 30, 2022



Colors represent Air Quality Index Breakpoints

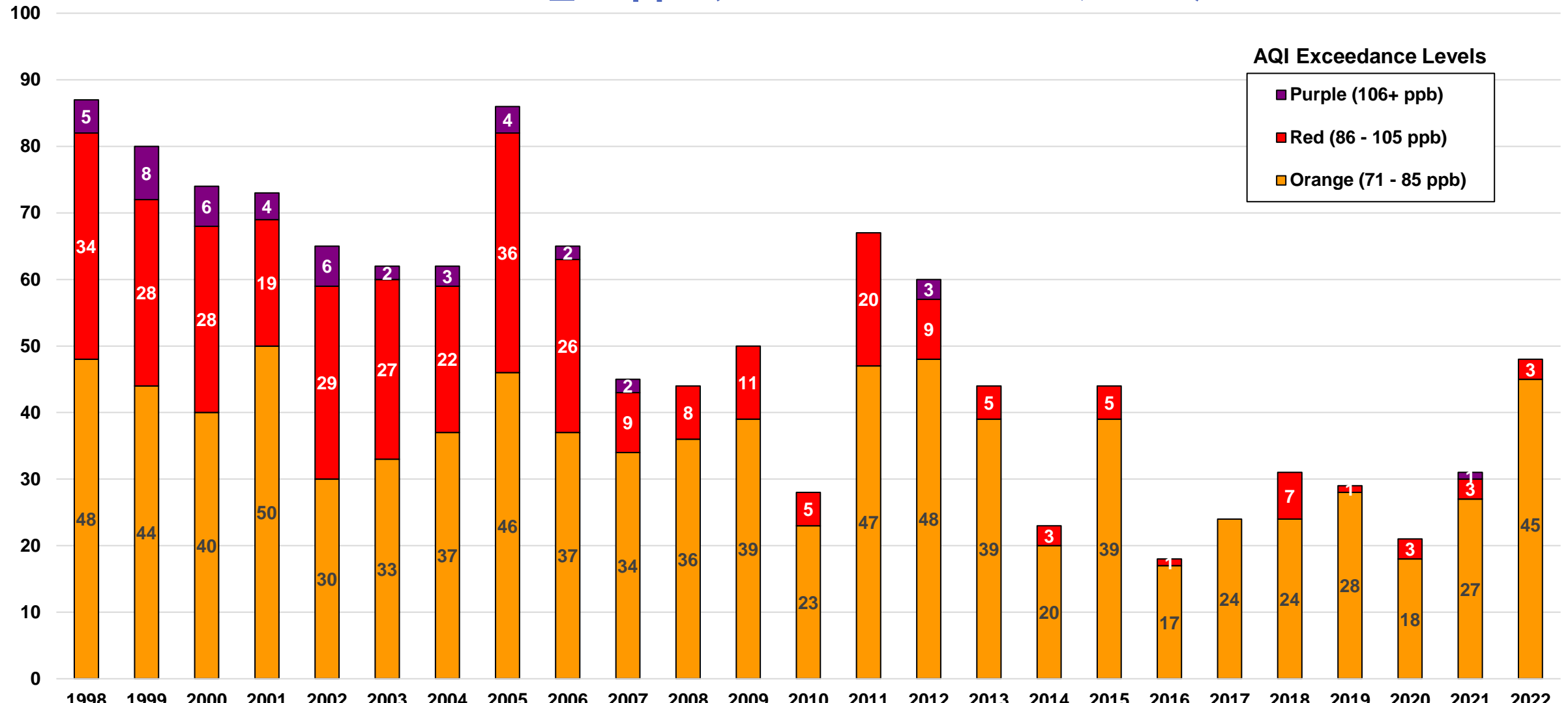


Prevailing Wind Direction During Summer Ozone Season



# 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards - Exceedance Trends

Based on  $\leq 70$  ppb (As of November 30, 2022)



Exceedance Level indicates daily maximum eight-hour average ozone concentration.  
Exceedance Levels are based on Air Quality Index (AQI) thresholds established by the EPA for the revised ozone standard of 70 ppb.

Source: TCEQ, [http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr\\_monthly.pl](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/8hr_monthly.pl)  
ppb = parts per billion

# NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC Emissions Apportionment

DFW 10-County Nonattainment Area Nitrogen Oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> ) (tons/day)						
Sources	Analysis Years				% Change from 2006 to 2023	% Change from 2023 to 2026
	2006	2017	2023	2026		
On-Road Mobile	284.27	130.77	72.30	60.20	-75%	-17%
Non-Road Mobile	98.06	45.54	34.38	32.03	-65%	-7%
Off-Road Mobile	32.92	25.24	23.59	24.59	-28%	4%
Point (All sources)	57.55	54.80	42.34	42.00	-26%	-1%
Oil & Gas (Production & Drill Rigs)	80.07	13.87	3.61	1.86	-95%	-48%
Area	29.02	26.55	31.33	32.17	8%	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>581.89</b>	<b>296.77</b>	<b>207.55</b>	<b>192.85</b>	<b>-64%</b>	<b>-7%</b>
DFW 10-County Nonattainment Area Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) (tons/day)						
Sources	Analysis Years				% Change from 2006 to 2023	% Change from 2023 to 2026
	2006	2017	2023	2026		
On-Road Mobile	116.50	64.91	38.74	33.27	-67%	-14%
Non-Road Mobile	64.69	34.01	42.68	44.12	-34%	3%
Off-Road Mobile	5.74	3.66	4.60	4.86	-20%	6%
Point (All sources)	50.44	47.38	23.53	23.56	-53%	0%
Oil & Gas (Production & Drill Rigs)	44.88	32.18	24.72	11.80	-45%	-52%
Area	290.46	236.70	265.77	275.73	-9%	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>572.71</b>	<b>418.84</b>	<b>400.04</b>	<b>393.34</b>	<b>-30%</b>	<b>-2%</b>



# Why Point Source Trend Occurring?

**Considering Population Growth, Regional Development, and Increased Demand:**

## **Power Plants**

- **2007 Air Quality Plan - Control Strategies Limiting Emissions From Large and Small Systems**
- **Increased Energy Generation From Renewables (Wind, Solar)**
- **Decrease In Coal Plants Throughout State**
  - **No Coal Plants In North Texas**
- **Partnerships And Programs**
  - **State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) Local Government Energy Reporting and Reduction Goals**
  - **Leadership In Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)**
  - **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)**
  - **Energy Star**
  - **South Central Partnership For Energy Efficiency Resource (SPEER)**

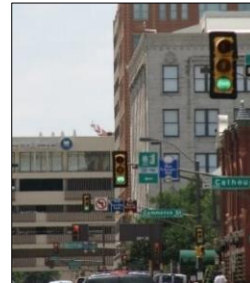
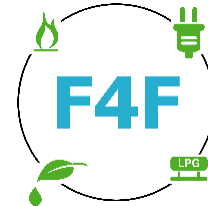
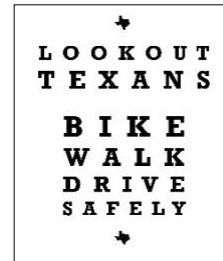
## **Cement Kilns**

- **2007 Air Quality Plan - Control Strategies Lowering Emissions From Both Wet and Dry Operations**
- **One Remaining Wet Operations Facility In Texas (Waco)**

# Sample of Mobile Source Air Quality Initiatives



Rideshare. Record. Reward.



# Management and Operations, Air Quality, and Regional Safety Program

Category	RTC Share
Planning Activities, Data Collection, and Engineering Activities	\$25.24M
Air Quality Initiatives	\$11.65M
Implementation/Operations Activities (e.g., Auto Occupancy, Special Events, Mobility Assistance Patrol)	\$51.74M
Travel Demand Management/Transit	\$6.75M
Innovative Technologies	\$10.40M
<b>2023-2026 Funding</b>	<b>\$105.78M</b>

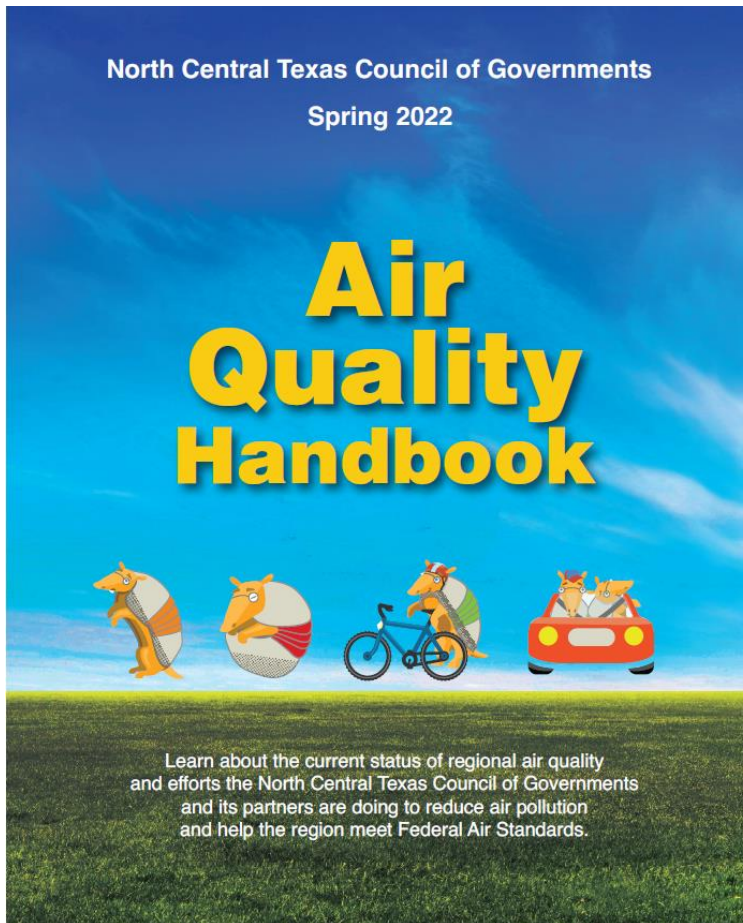
An additional funding of \$50M of RTC-selected funds were approved to be set aside for a regional safety program to support RTC policy to assist in fatality prevention on the transportation system



# Air Quality Handbook

## Multilingual

### English



[https://nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Quality/Air/AQ2022printer\\_Spring.pdf](https://nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Quality/Air/AQ2022printer_Spring.pdf)

### Spanish

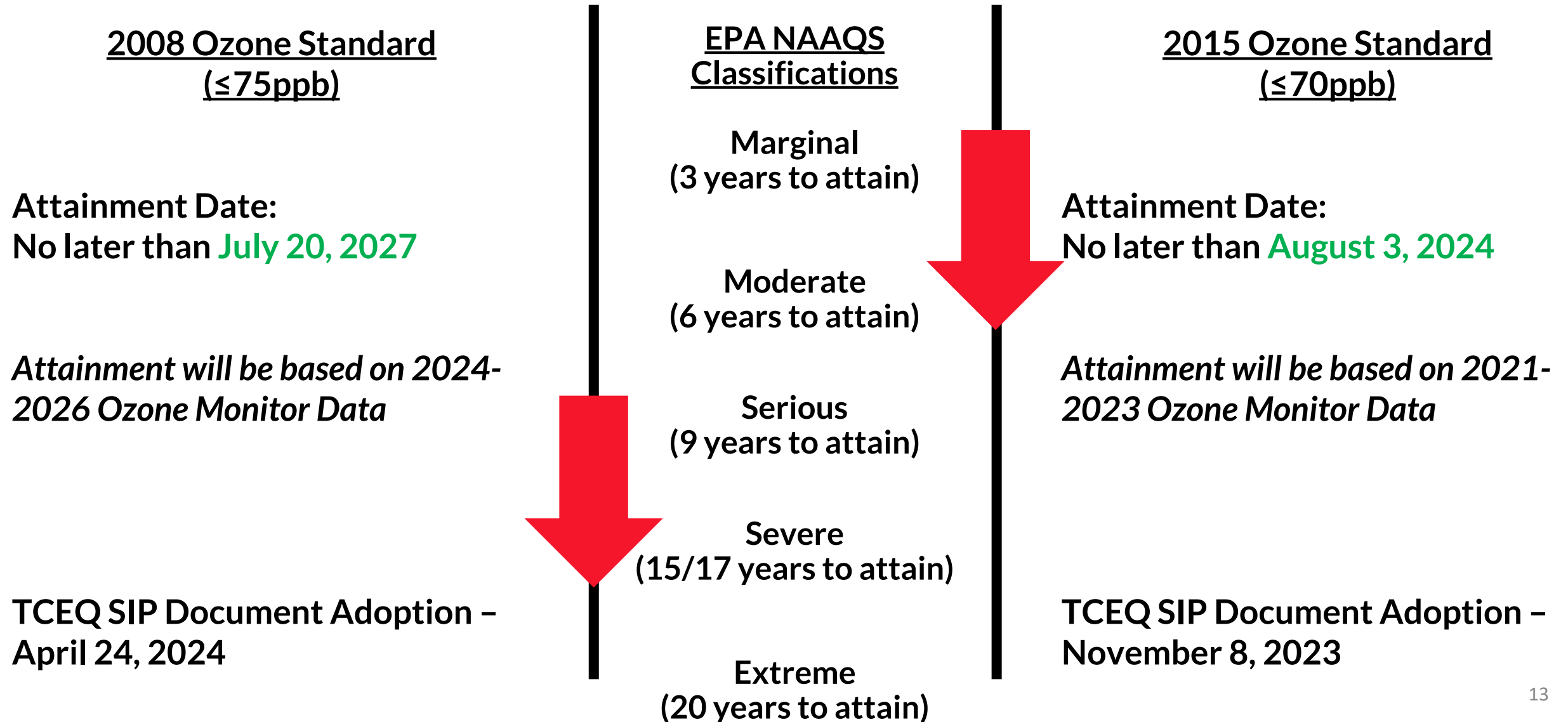


<https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Quality/Air/AQ2022SPANISH.pdf>

### Vietnamese (Coming soon)



# Timeline and Milestones



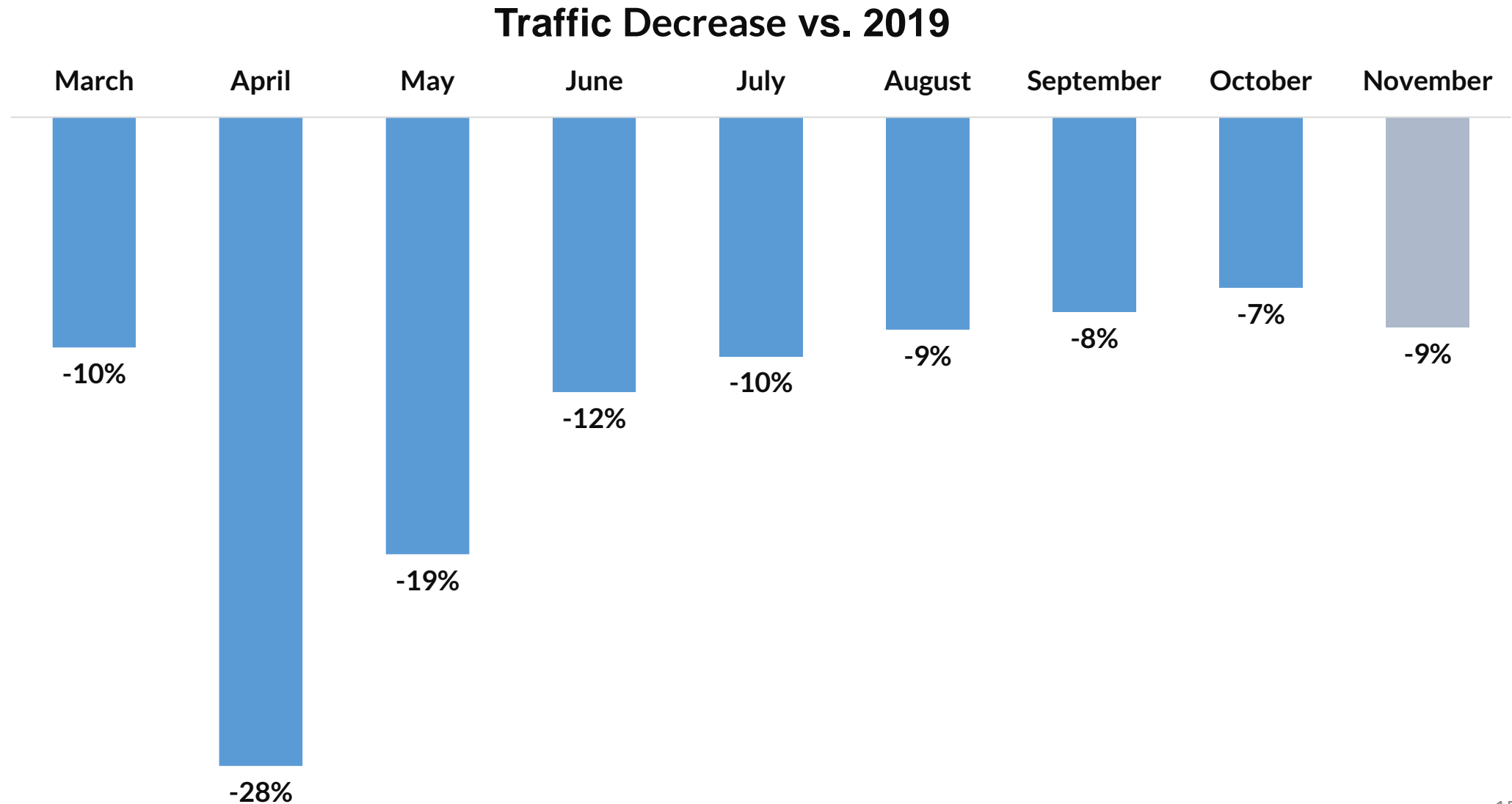
# **(Future) Major Source Fees for Failure to Attain**

**“Section 185” Fee Program For Major Stationary Sources Of NO<sub>x</sub> And VOC  
Clean Air Act Requirement Due To Reclassification From “Serious” To “Severe”  
Plan Under Development By TCEQ To Propose To EPA  
Attainment Required By End Of 2026 To Meet Severe Attainment Date  
Design Value Based On 2024-2026 Regional Monitor Data**

**If Unable To Reach Attainment  
Per Ton Penalty Fee As Soon As 2028  
Fees Collected Annually Until Attainment Of 2008 Ozone Standard  
Implemented By TCEQ  
Sources Such As Power Plants And Cement Plants Particularly Implicated  
Anticipated Fee For DFW ~ \$45 Million**



# Average Weekday Freeway Volumes In 2020



# COVID-19 Impacts vs. Air Quality



0



Ozone Exceedance	May		August	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Frequency	5	4	5	10
Severity	Orange	1 Red/3 Orange	Orange	2 Red/8 Orange

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Freeway Volumes	-19%,	-9%
Airport Passengers	-80%,	-57%
Transit Ridership	-55%,	-57%



# FOR MORE INFORMATION

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<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/air/ozone>

# **CHANGING MOBILITY**

**DATA, INSIGHTS, AND DELIVERING INNOVATIVE  
PROJECTS DURING COVID RECOVERY**

**Regional Transportation Council  
February 2023**

**Michael Morris, P.E.  
Director of Transportation**

# TRAVEL BEHAVIOR BY MODE

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Bicycle/Pedestrian (+4%, Nov)

Toll Road (+4%, Oct)

Airport Passengers (+2%, Nov)

Freeway Volumes (+1%, Dec)

---

0

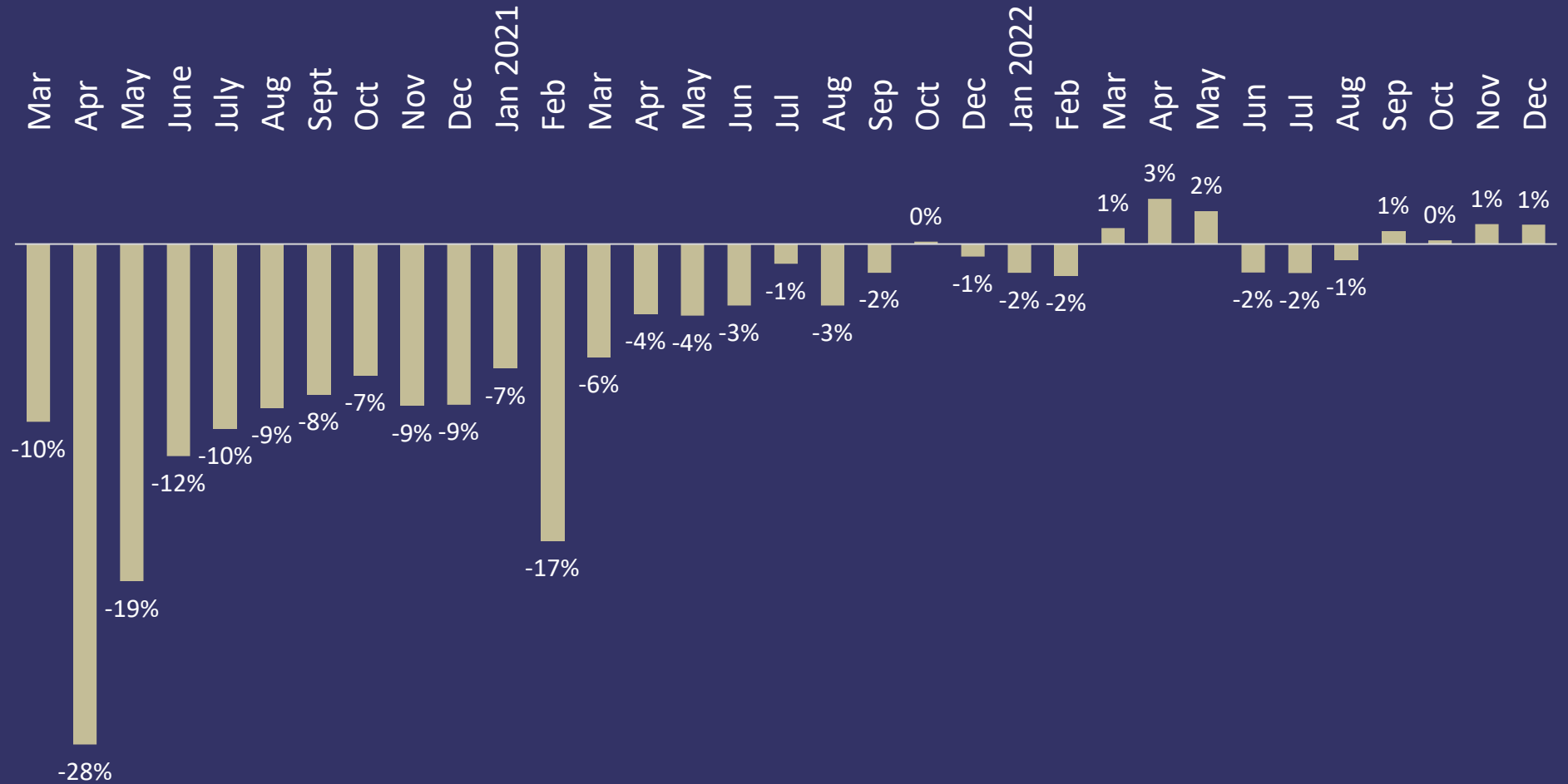
Transit Ridership (-36%, Dec)



# ROADWAY TRENDS

Average  
Weekday  
Freeway  
Volumes

## Traffic Decrease vs Baseline



Source: TxDOT Dallas/TxDOT Fort Worth Radar Traffic Counters. As of October 2020, growth was calculated based on Fort Worth.

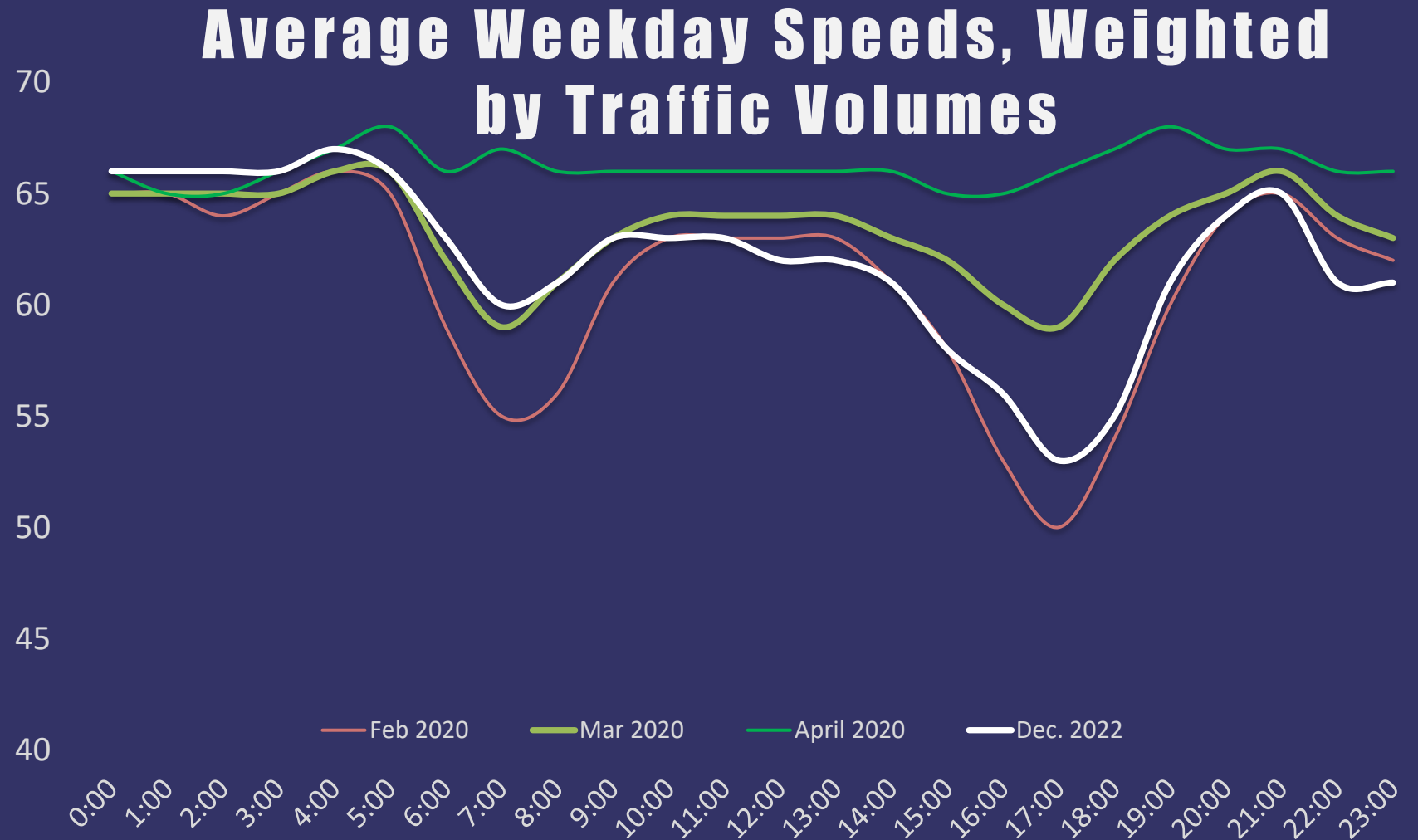
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in freeway volumes in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

Note: Data for November 2021 was not collected for the majority of the locations.

# ROADWAY TRENDS

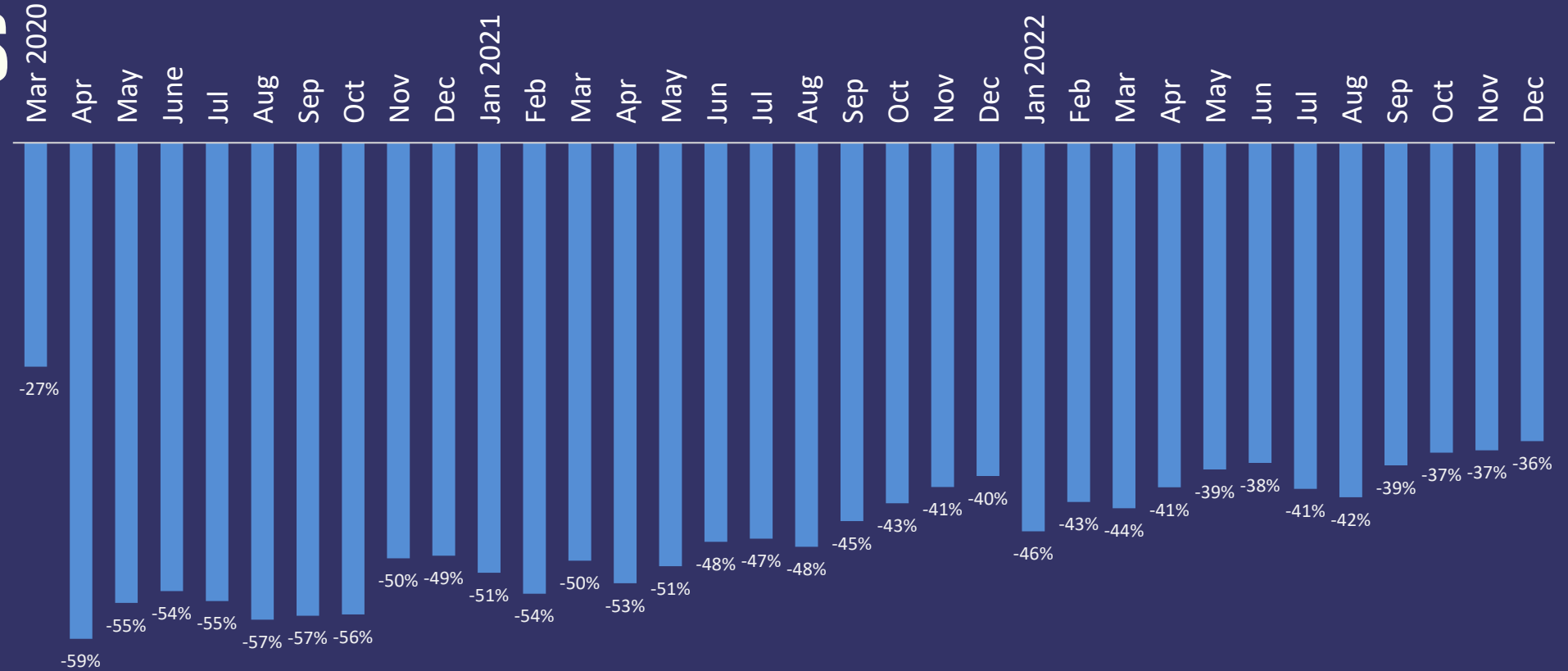
Regional Average  
Freeway Speeds



# TRANSIT IMPACTS

Weekday  
Ridership

## Passenger Decrease vs Baseline



Source: DART, DCTA, and Trinity Metro

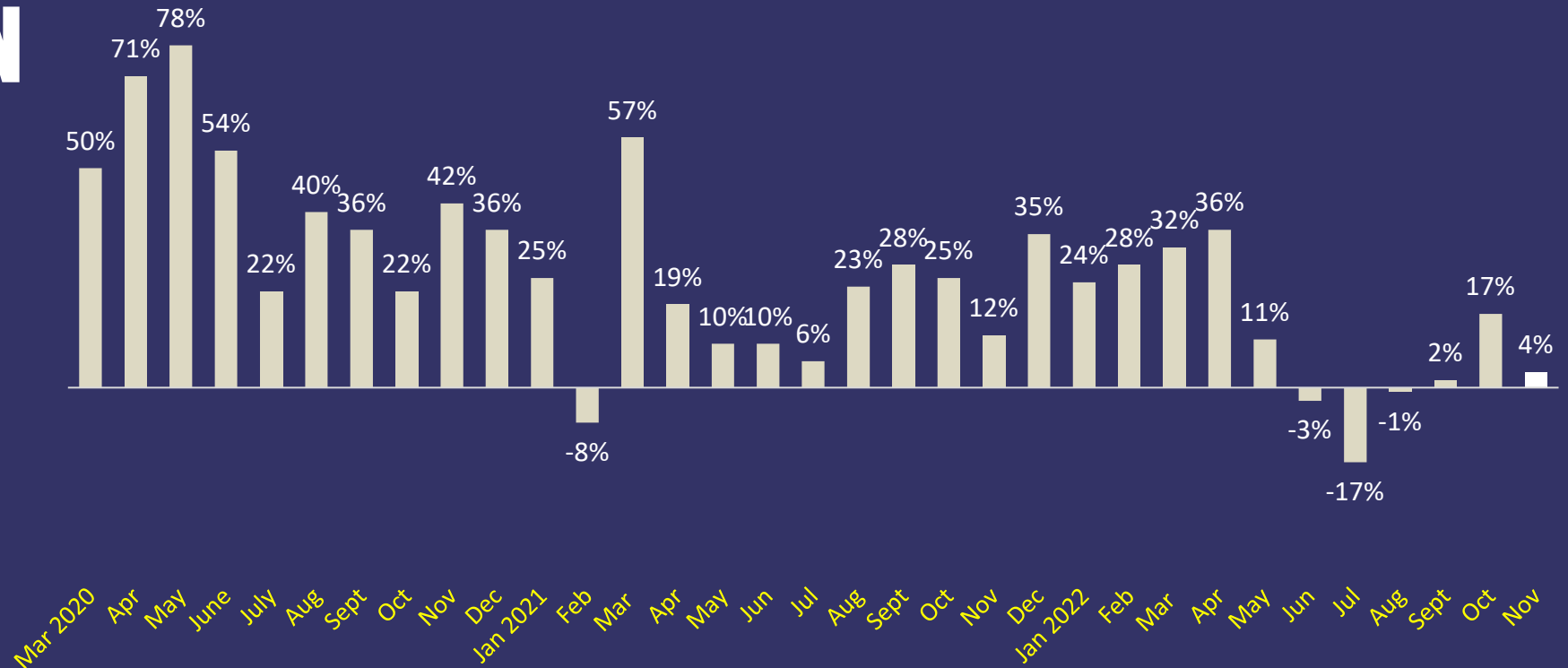
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Transit ridership impacted in Feb 2021 by week-long winter storm.

# BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPACTS

## Trail Counts

## Increase in Full Week Trail Usage vs Baseline



Source: NCTCOG - collected at sites located in Plano, North Richland Hills, Denton, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Allen

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020; No adjustments for weather were applied.

Note: Trail usage impacted in Feb 2021 by week-long winter storm.

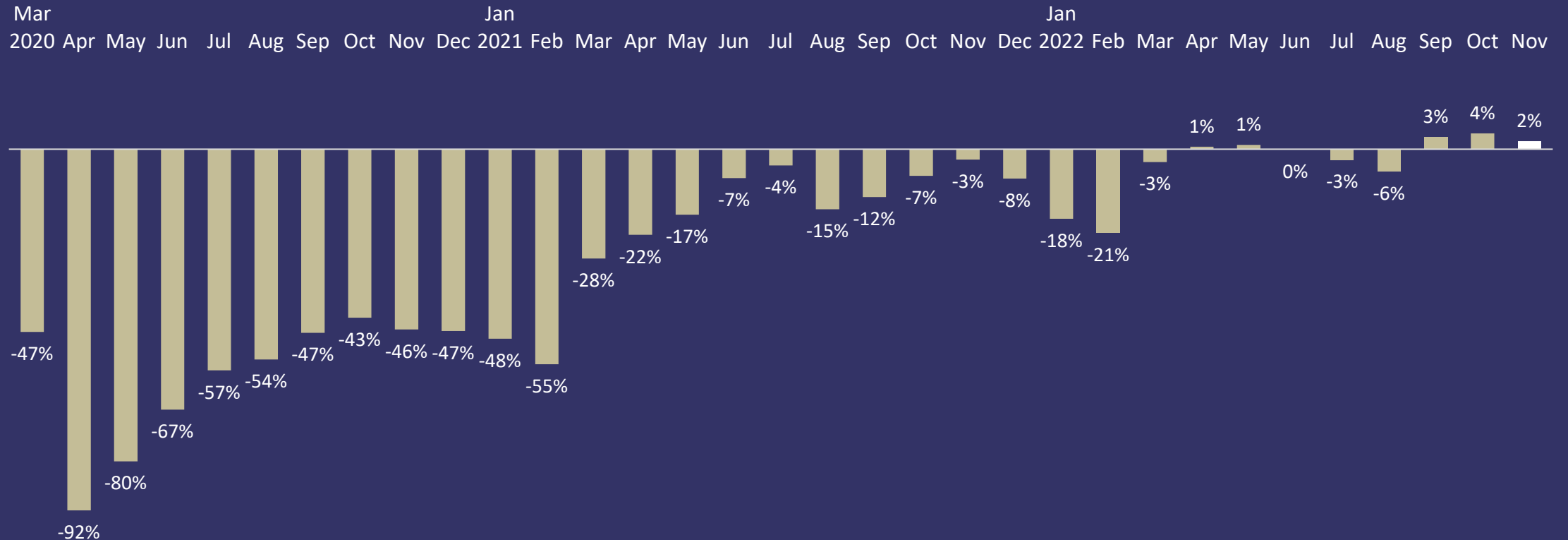
Note: Trail usage impacted in July 2022 by extreme hot weather.



# AIRPORT TRENDS

## Passengers

### Change in Airport Passengers vs Baseline



Source: Dallas Love Field and DFWIA websites

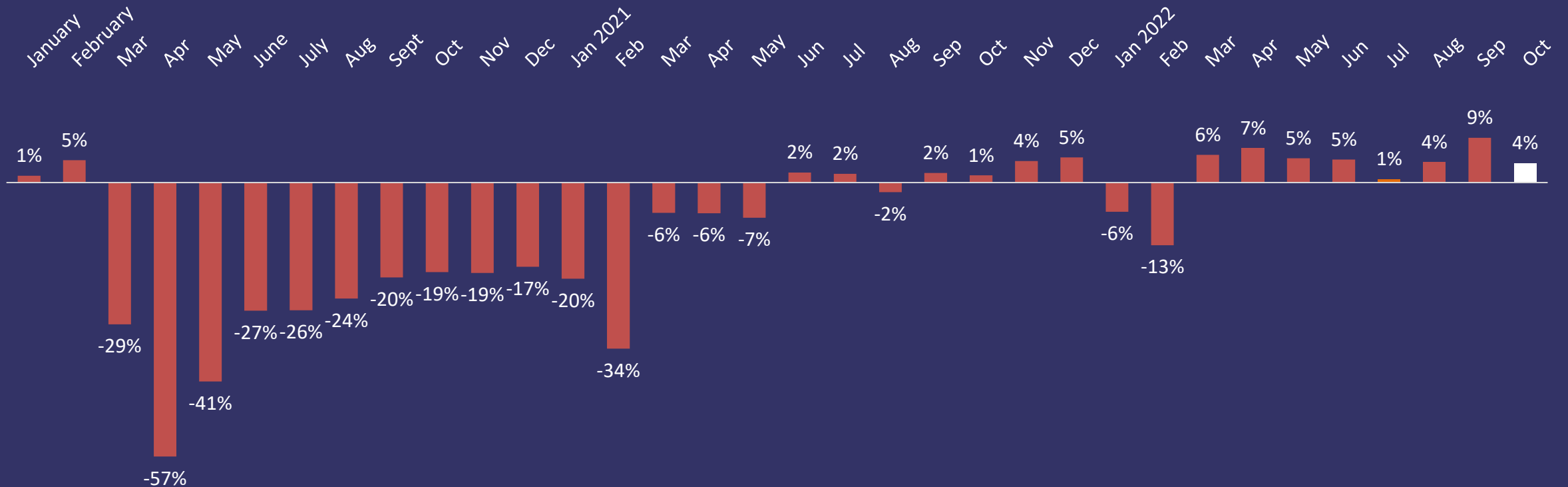
Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Airlines experienced many flight cancellations in Dec. 2021 due to omicron variant affecting staff.

# FUNDING IMPACT

## NTTA Transactions

### Change in Tollway Transactions vs Baseline



Source: NTTA

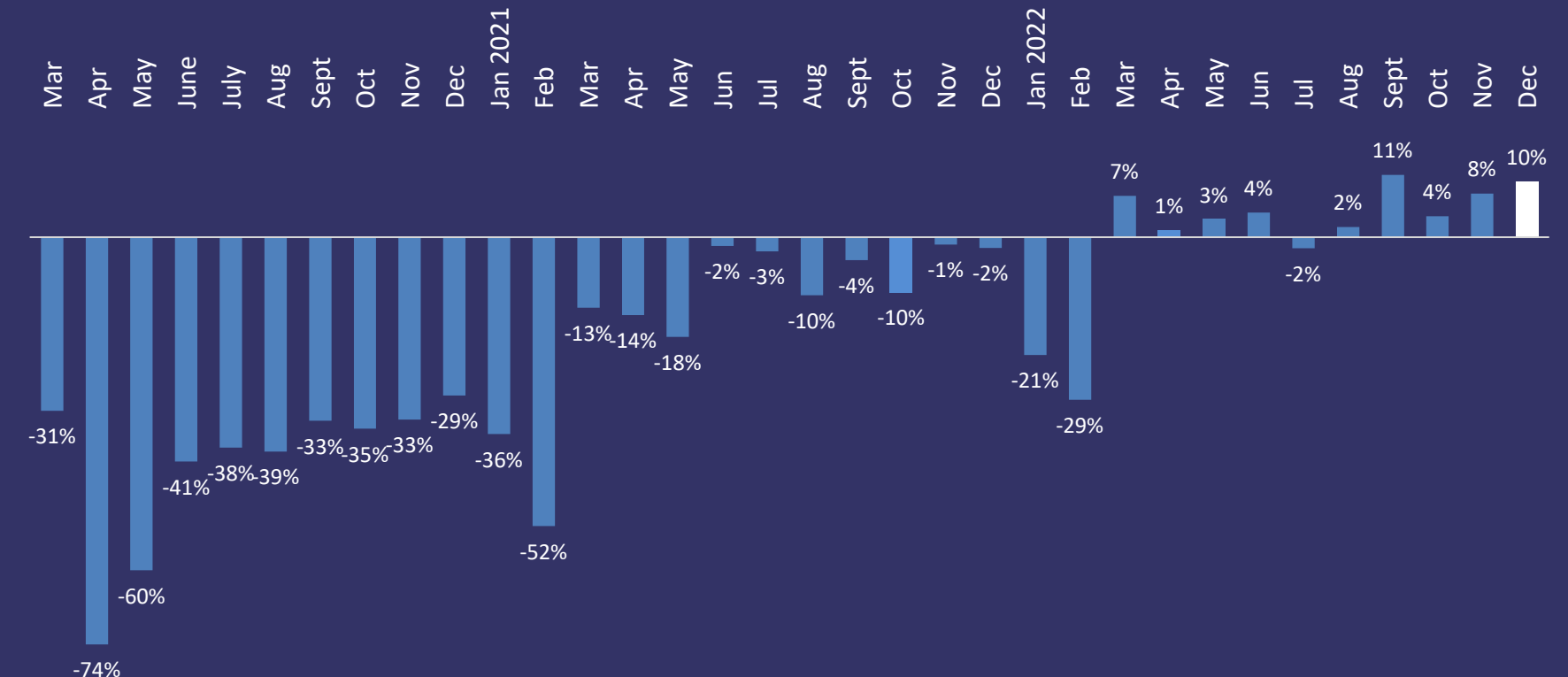
Notes: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.

# FUNDING IMPACT

## I-35E TEXpress Lane Transactions

### Change in Transactions vs Baseline



Source: TxDOT

Note: Baseline is March 2019-February 2020.

Note: Drop in transactions in Feb 2021 due in large part to week-long winter storm.



# High-Occupancy Vehicle Quarterly Report

Regional Transportation Council  
February 9, 2023



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

# Managed Lane System

## Current Express/HOV + New Managed Lanes

-  Current Express/HOV Lanes
-  Current TEXpress Managed Lanes
-  TEXPress Managed Lanes Under Construction
-  Managed Technology Lane
-  Major Roadways

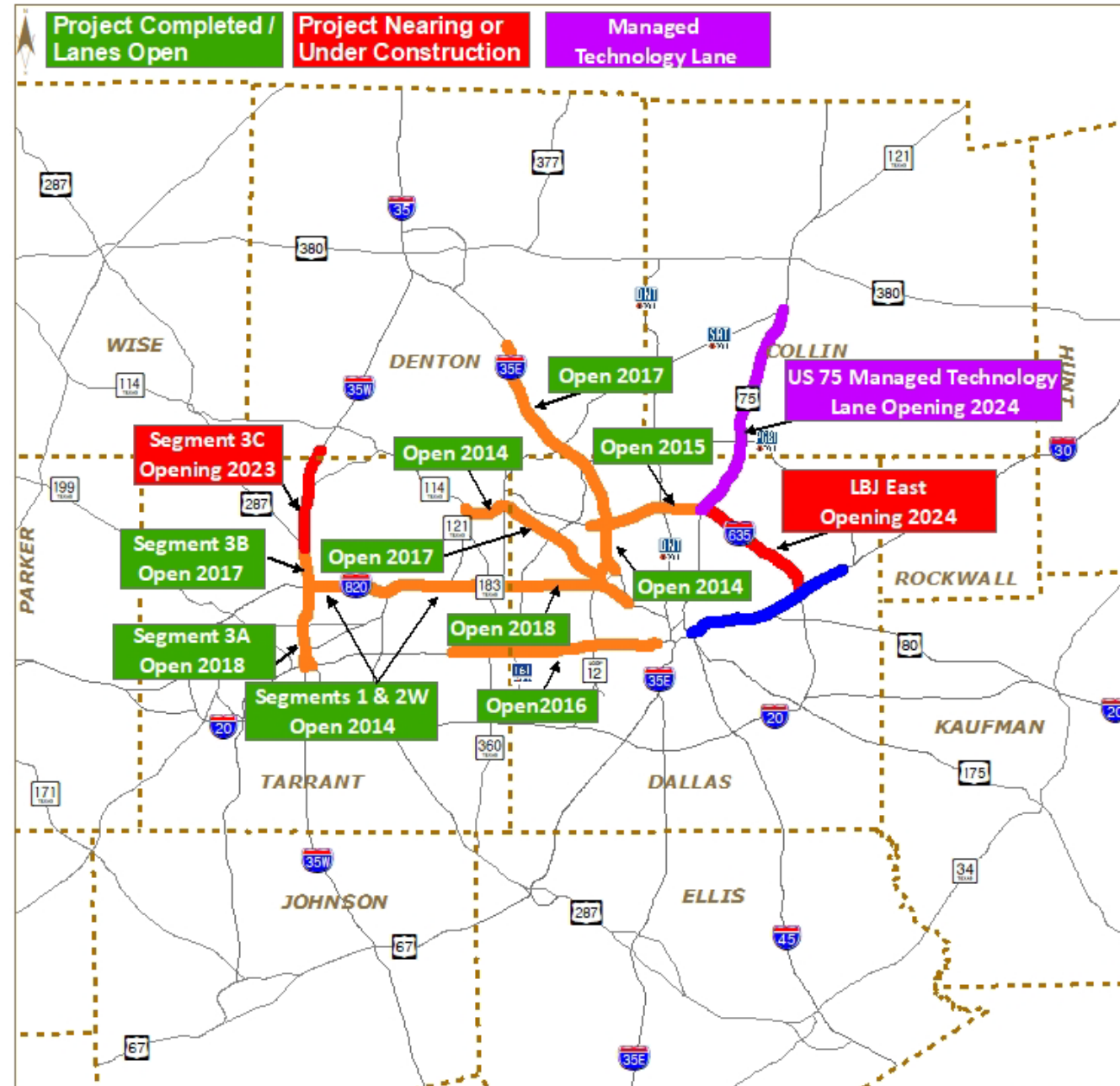
Fort Worth CBD



Dallas CBD



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments



# Toll Managed Lane Data Monitoring

*Cumulative December 2013 – November 2022*

How much HOV 2+ Subsidy has the RTC been responsible for?

*\$ 7,906,433 as of November 2022*

How much of the Vanpool Toll reimbursement has the RTC been responsible for?

*\$ 12,407 from October 2014 – November 2022*

How long can the RTC keep the HOV policy at 2+?

*For now, it remains 2+ and it will continue to be monitored quarterly*

Have there been any additional NTTA customer service needs?

*No, minimal impact*

Have the speeds on the Toll Managed Lane facilities dropped below 35 mph?

*No*

# Toll Managed Lane Data Monitoring

*Cumulative December 2013 – November 2022*

Facility	HOV 2+ Subsidy Costs	NTTA Customer Service (Additional Needs)	Project Performance Events (Speeds < 35 mph)
<b>North Tarrant Express</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SH 183/121 from IH 35W to SH 121</li> <li>• IH 35W from IH 30 to US 287</li> </ul>	\$4,283,325	Negligible	0
<b>LBJ Express</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IH 635 from Preston Road to Greenville Avenue</li> <li>• IH 35E from Loop 12 to IH 635</li> </ul>	\$3,623,108	Negligible	0
<b>DFW Connector</b> SH 114 from Kimball Avenue to Freeport Parkway	N/A	Negligible	0
<b>IH 30 Managed Lanes</b> IH 30 from SH 161 to Westmoreland Road	N/A	Negligible	0
<b>IH 35E Managed Lanes</b> IH 35E from FM 2181 (Teasley) to LBJ	N/A	Negligible	0





Update

Automated Vehicle Occupancy Verification

Through December 31, 2022



# HOV Users

January 24, 2020 – December 31, 2022

Users: 57,305

Vehicles: 55,959

Occupant Passes: 10,164



# Total and HOV Transactions

January 24, 2020 – December 31, 2022

Total Transactions – 3,288,178

LBJ/NTE Partners – 2,201,665

TxDOT – 1,086,525

Total HOV Transactions – 1,463,534 (~44%)

LBJ/NTE Partners – 1,003,638

TxDOT – 459,902

Unique Vehicles – 57,490



# Questions/Contacts

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Senior Program Manager

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Program Manager

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817-695-9282



# Local Government Energy Reporting

Regional Transportation Council

February 9, 2023

North Central Texas Council of Governments





# Local Government Energy Reporting

Pursuant to [Texas Health and Safety Code §388.005\(c\)](#), the Texas State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) requires all political subdivisions, state agencies, and institutes of higher education in a non-attainment area or an affected county to establish a goal to reduce electricity consumption by at least **five percent** each year and report progress annually.

North Texas counties affected: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise

## Action Required:

- **Submit the required report by Friday, March 3, 2023**, via the SECO Local Government Energy Reporting [webpage](#)
  - Use SECO's "[Energy Consumption Reporting Dashboard](#)" to Review Prior Years' Data and Compare Against Peer Entities

## Resources for Reporting:

- For frequently asked questions, refer to the South-Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER) energy reporting guide on their website at [www.eepartnership.org/energy-reporting-faq/](http://www.eepartnership.org/energy-reporting-faq/)
- Use this [Reporting Help Guide \(PDF\)](#) to gather all necessary information prior to reporting online



# SECO No-Cost Resources to Assist Entities in Meeting the 5 Percent Reduction Goal

Preliminary Energy Assessments (PEAs): provide recommendations for cost-effective efficiency measures that could be implemented to reduce utility consumption or utility costs. A PEA may include:

- Analysis of utility bills and other building information to determine facilities' energy and cost utilization
- Recommended maintenance procedures and capital energy retrofits
- Development of an overall energy management policy
- Facility benchmarking using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager

To learn more and apply for a PEA, see SECO's website at [Preliminary Energy Assessments \(texas.gov\)](https://www.seco.state.tx.us/energy-assessments)

Technical Assistance Program (TAP): Through the TAP, SECO contracts with leading engineering firms to provide customized, on-site, energy-related services ranging from basic consultation to feasibility studies. To learn more and apply to participate in the TAP, see SECO's website at [Technical Assistance for Local Governments \(texas.gov\)](https://www.seco.state.tx.us/technical-assistance)

Texas LoanSTAR (Saving Taxes and Resources) Revolving Loan: Finances energy-related, cost-reduced retrofits of facilities supported by the state. Borrowers receive low-interest loans to help pay for these efforts. Applicants repay the loans from the energy cost savings realized by the projects. Open enrollment for this program is available through Thursday, August 31, 2023. For more information, see SECO's website at [LoanSTAR Revolving Loan Program \(texas.gov\)](https://www.seco.state.tx.us/loanstar)





# Contact Us



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Local Government Energy Reporting



Regional Transportation Council

NCTCOG PRESENTATION

# Local Clean Air Project Spotlight

Regional Transportation Council

February 9, 2023

North Central Texas Council of Governments

# Project Spotlight – City of Dallas

<b>Awarded Project</b>	Two Diesel Hybrid Electric Crawler Tractors; 92% NOx Emissions Reduction
<b>Technology Replaced</b>	Two Diesel Crawler Tractors
<b>Project Geographic Area</b>	City of Dallas, McCommas Bluff Landfill
<b>Implementation Date</b>	April 2022
<b>Awarded Amount</b> <b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$249,589 \$998,354
<b>Call for Projects</b>	Clean Fleets North Texas 2019
<b>Funding Source</b>	Environmental Protection Agency National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program





# Project Spotlight – City of Dallas



Crawler Tractor #1



Crawler Tractor Screen



Crawler Tractor #2



# Contact Us



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Amy Hodges  
Principal Air Quality Planner  
[AHodges@nctcog.org](mailto:AHodges@nctcog.org) | 817-704-2508



# TRANSPORTATION

## PUBLIC MEETING

FEB. 6 · NOON · 616 SIX FLAGS DR. ARLINGTON, TX

### PRESENTATIONS

#### Regional Safety Program & AV2.1 Regional Planning Exercise for Partners

Due to the increase in fatalities and serious injury crashes across the State and the Dallas-Fort Worth region, NCTCOG has been working with the Texas Department of Transportation and other Metropolitan Planning Organizations within Texas on a Statewide Safety Task Force. The focus is to identify strategies to reduce crashes on the transportation system. As part of this effort, the Regional Transportation Council recently approved a safety funding program, and staff will provide an overview of the engineering, enforcement and educational projects being developed through the program.

#### Mobility 2045 Update Transportation Conformity Determination

On Dec. 16, 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation granted a successful transportation conformity determination for the Mobility 2045 Update. The Clean Air Act of 1990 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations with a nonattainment designation to perform an air quality analysis when a new metropolitan transportation plan is developed. Staff will present any effects on final project recommendations due to the Transportation Conformity review process.

### ONLINE REVIEW & COMMENT (NO PRESENTATION)

#### Modifications to the Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Regional Transportation Planning provides a summary of transportation and related air quality planning activities to be conducted in North Central Texas. Proposed modifications to the FY2022 and FY2023 UPWP will be posted online for review and comment.

*For special accommodations due to a disability or for language interpretation, contact Jackie Castillo at 817-695-9255 or [jcastillo@nctcog.org](mailto:jcastillo@nctcog.org) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made.*

*Need a ride to the public meeting? Request a \$6 roundtrip ride from the DFW CentrePort Station to NCTCOG with the Via app! Download the app at: [arlingtontx.gov/via](https://www.arlingtontx.gov/via).*

*Attend in person, watch the presentations live at [publicinput.com/nctcogFeb23](https://publicinput.com/nctcogFeb23), or participate via phone by dialing 855-925-2801 then code 2862.*



#### RESOURCES & INFORMATION

**Regional Smoking Vehicle Program (RSVP):**  
[smokingvehicle.net](https://smokingvehicle.net)

**Vehicle Incentive & Funding Opportunity:**  
[nctcog.org/aqfunding](https://nctcog.org/aqfunding)

**Engine Off North Texas**  
[EngineOffNorthTexas.org](https://EngineOffNorthTexas.org)

**Mobility 2045 - 2022 Update:**  
**Administrative Revisions**  
[nctcog.org/trans/plan/mtp/mobility-2045-2022-update](https://nctcog.org/trans/plan/mtp/mobility-2045-2022-update)

## PUBLIC COMMENTS REPORT

### WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

#### Purpose

The public comments report is in accordance with the NCTCOG Transportation Department Public Participation Process, which became effective June 1, 1994, as approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the transportation policy board for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and amended on May 12, 2022.

This report is a compilation of general public comments submitted by members of the public from Tuesday, Dec. 20, through Thursday, Jan. 19. Comments and questions are submitted for the record and can be submitted via Facebook, Twitter, fax, email, online and in person at the monthly RTC meeting.

This month, public comments were received on a number of topics across social media platforms and via email. Comments related to safety were in the majority.

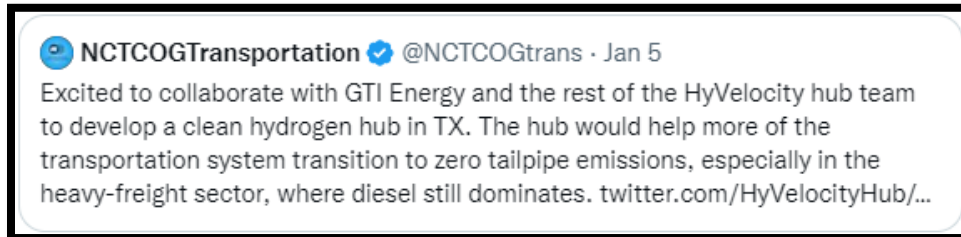
In addition, comments can be submitted through Map Your Experience, the Transportation Department's online mapping tool. The tool allows users to drop a pin on a location in the region and leave a detailed comment. No new comments were submitted this month through the tool. However, you can view past comments by visiting:

<http://nctcogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/CrowdsourcingReporter/index.html?appid=b014e6d39b604b3ca329d9094ed1e9e2>.

#### Air Quality

##### Twitter –

1. Glad to have you on the team! — HyVelocityHub (@HyVelocityHub)



#### Bicycle and Pedestrian

1. 1/4 🚲 Wholesome vid of casual 2-person bike on neighborhood streets in East Dallas. Sharing in case raw footage of street conditions, road design & candid reactions of Dallas native + outside visitor are useful to planners, esp regarding Master Bike Plan cc @jhart\_OU @NCTCOGtrans — Hexel (@hexel\_co)





#### 2/4 Insights for riders:

- 🚲 E-bike makes carrying passenger a breeze
- 🚲 Rear saddle seat comfortable & stable for adults; just go slow esp on turns
- 🚲 Avoid bumpy roads. Tip: learn your streets in advance
- 🚲 Use bell for alerting pedestrians 🔔 — Hexel (@hexel\_co)



#### 3/4 Insight for planners

- 🚗 Despite only 2-lanes, cars move uncomfortably fast thx to 15ft wide lanes
- 🚗 Couldn't dare take passenger over US-75 crossing w/ cars
- 🚲 Bumpy streets destabilizes otherwise comfy passenger
- 🚲 More bulbs at intersections would make crossing easier — Hexel (@hexel\_co)



4/4 I've noticed ppl riding privately owned scooters. My fav sight on weekends is a rack w/ multiple bikes

A few ppl biking & scooting despite little/no cycle infra on our streets proves that many more will too as soon as city takes action — Hexel (@hexel\_co)



## **Innovative Vehicles/Technology/Automated/People Mover**

### **Twitter –**

1. We're thrilled to announce our agreement w/ @NCTCOGtrans. It unlocks massive potential to save lives and allows any local government in TX, & beyond, to easily secure [one.network](https://us.one.network/news/one-network-selected-to-provide-work-zone-data-in-north-central-texas/)'s work zone data sharing technology. Read: <https://us.one.network/news/one-network-selected-to-provide-work-zone-data-in-north-central-texas/>#THISisITS #WorkZone — one.network (@onenetworkHQ)



## **Public Meetings/Forums**

### **Twitter –**

1. Congratulations to Collin Co. Commissioner Duncan Webb for receiving the Regional Transportation Council's Road Hand Award! Commissioner Webb has spent the last decade advocating for TxDOT and local transportation projects, both behind the scenes and with the public. @NCTCOGtrans —TxDOT Dallas (@TxDOTDallas)



## **Roadway Projects/Planning/Programs**

### **Facebook –**

1. Staying in town this holiday season? Need something other than the TV to keep the kids busy? Check out these educational and kid-friendly resources about air quality and the importance of clean air habits: <https://www.airnorthtexas.org/teach> #AirNorthTexas #AirNTx — NCTCOG Transportation Department



what is the time line for the work on the I-20 and loop 820 by SW Arlington in Ft Worth  
— George Knudson

### **Response by NCTCOG Transportation staff:**

Hello, Mr. Knudson,

Thank you for your comment. TxDOT has a dedicated webpage for IH 20/IH 820/US 287 Southeast Connector Project: <https://www.southeastconnector.com/>. As of now, TxDOT expects major construction activities will begin in spring 2023, and substantial completion will occur in 2027. You can also subscribe to e-mail alerts for regular project status updates through the website.

## **Phone Call –**

### **1. Rick Lindsey**

Mr. Lindsey called with a question about roadway congestion concerns on arterials in the Las Colinas area (Macarthur and O'Connor) due to east-west traffic not being connected well to SH 161/SH 114 or SH 183.

### **Summary of Response by NCTCOG Transportation staff:**

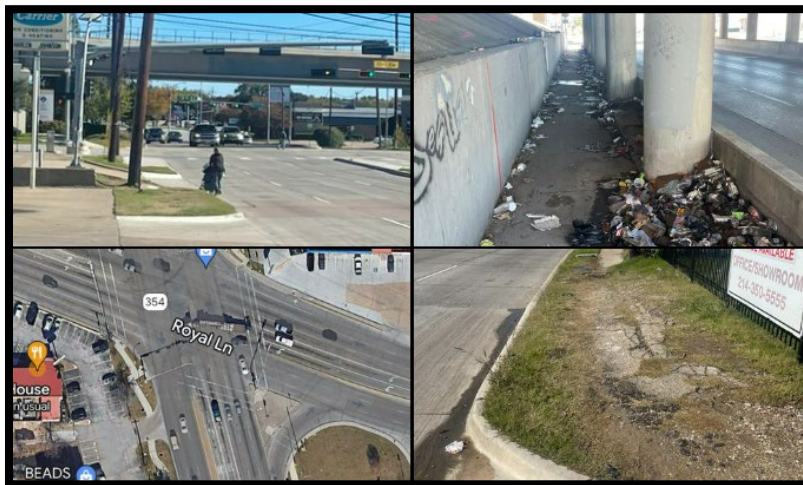
NCTCOG Transportation staff reviewed the recently updated 2045 Mobility Plan recommendations and provided information about the online [recommendations explorer](#) tool.

## **Safety**

## **Twitter –**

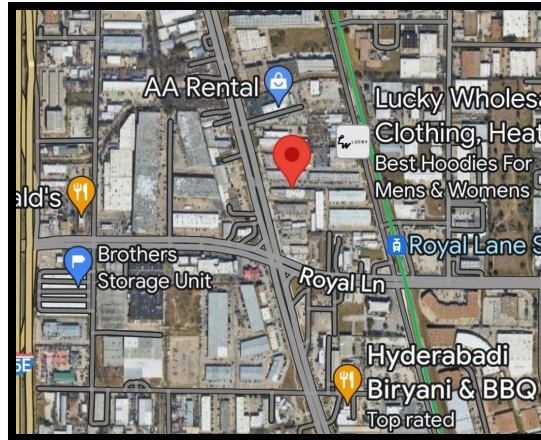
1. Last Friday (1/13) hit by car walking to unveiling of Ktown roadsigns in Northwest Dallas. Asked several people about revitalization plans for area. Many more layers of official recognition to come, but safety & walkability just an afterthought. @NCTCOGtrans @VoteOmarNarvaez — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

Royal Lane/Harry Hines area a brutal environment for pedestrians—e.g., missing sidewalks or sidewalks placed right next to high-speed 6-8 lane arterials; short pedestrian walk signal internals in massive intersections. In a commercial district adjacent to a DART rail station.... — Thomas Bamonte (@TomBamonte)



Oh gosh so much to unpack there:

- The @dallasnews article talked a lot about Shin Chon Market, but the new Koreatown designation doesn't cover it
- Despite being designed (and soon to be named) after the district, the station is positioned on the wrong side of Denton Drive — Hexel (@hexel\_co)



For several decades, the intersection of Royal Lane and Harry Hines Boulevard in northwest Dallas has unofficially been known to locals as "Koreatown."



Rich Kim, owner of Shin Chon Market and Food Court, talks with a customer in Dallas on Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022. (Lola Gomez / Staff Photographer)

I see three fundamental problems with the design of the built environment here:

(A) Unsafe & inconvenient to point of impossibility to TRIP CHAIN within the district. This mean **BUSINESSES CAN'T FEED EACH OTHER WITH CUSTOMERS**. Patrons drive in for one purpose then just leave — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

(B) Quantity & (subjectively) quality of business is high, but MIXTURE (density + diversity) of primary uses is low. This makes even more difficult for biz to feed each other.

When street is almost entirely restaurants, they become competition not allies. — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

(C) Local residential population is super low. Ppl say "there are couple apartments here & there" but nowhere near enough

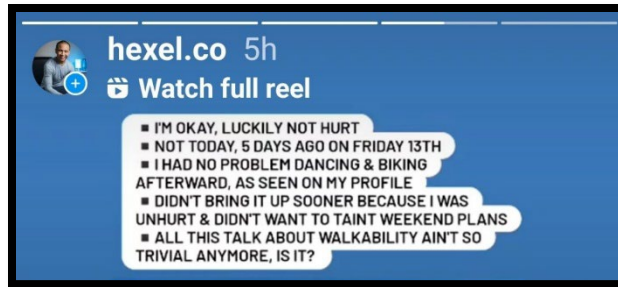
Regional customers = tourists you always need to compete for. High local pop = not threatened by Carrollton, Richardson, Plano, and beyond . — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

These are all entirely fixable issues. But what drives me nuts is I'm a "lone voice crying in the wilderness" when it comes to solutions; Americans see walkability as a hobby, not a matter of life and death of a neighborhood. — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

Don't get discouraged. Keep walking, biking, and speaking up. Agree that lack of walkability undercuts the economic and cultural potential of this district, while making it hazardous for the surprising number of pedestrians who do have to navigate the hostile streetscape. — Thomas Bamonte (@TomBamonte)

!!!💡 you ok? —Susan Alvarez 🌻 (SusanGAlvarez)





— Hexel (@hexel\_co)

I'm sorry my guy! You were even extra safe by walking behind the car smh — Mitchell Davis (@therealallpro)

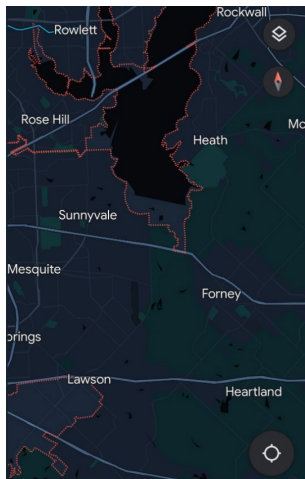
Told someone at event what happened & how car backed into me (no vid yet) they said "well you're supposed to walk in front of car so driver can see you" Sure... like that always works... and as if no-look reverse was more likely than no-look forward 😬 — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

## Transit

### Twitter –

1. Does Forney technically border Dallas, thereby qualifying to join DART?

Christmas gatherings have brought to my attention the (anecdotal) growing commuter population there. BRT express routes come to mind as a right-sized solution.



Has @NCTCOGtrans studied commuter-pair cities outside Dallas & Ft Worth?

Forney-Frisco seems common among peers (college-educated 2nd gen immigrant office worker). Direct bus won't be faster than 1hour drive, but would be safer, cheaper, more sustainable, & reduce congestion — Hexel (@hexel\_co)

Denton & Fort Worth have the North Texas Xpress. Currently down to a single departure time in morning/evening. <https://dcta.net/getting-around/rail-bus-services/regional-routes> — Eric Pruett (@BashfulBits)



COPY

RECEIVED

JAN 19 2023

TRANSPORTATION

January 12, 2023

The Honorable Andrew Sommerman  
Dallas County Commissioner - District 2  
Records Building  
500 Elm Street  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor – Suite 7200  
Dallas, TX 75202

RE: Funding for the Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail Critical Sections in Addison

Dear Commissioner Sommerman:

The Town of Addison is formally requesting approval to reallocate \$717,338 of funding awarded in 2018 from the Dallas County Trail and Preserve Program (TAPP) for a section of the Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail in Addison. The Commissioners Court funding was originally allocated for a segment of the Cotton Belt Trail in Addison located west of Surveyor Boulevard to Marsh Lane, see Attachment 1.

These County TAPP funds will be used as leverage and part of the required 20 percent local match for additional federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding to be requested in an upcoming grant application by Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

The Cotton Belt Trail through Addison is in the middle of a much longer 26-mile regional trail corridor being implemented by DART along the Silver Line commuter rail corridor between DFW Airport and Plano, with funding primarily from the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), see Attachment 2.

The RTC recently awarded funding to the Town of Addison to be used by DART for the construction of a \$12 million bridge for the Cotton Belt Trail over Midway Road. This reallocation of the County TAPP funds would be leveraged to connect the Addison Center Station to the Midway bridge which is the Town's highest priority section for completion.

With this letter the Town of Addison requests approval for the County's TAPP funding commitment for the Cotton Belt Trail to be used to support the grant application and DART's

**CITY MANAGER'S  
OFFICE**

P.O. Box 9010  
Addison, TX 75001

phone: 972.450.7001  
fax: 972.450.7043

ADDISONTEXAS.NET

IT ALL COMES  
TOGETHER.

construction of this connecting section of trail in Addison (east of Midway to the Dallas North Tollway).

Thank you for Dallas County's strong support of multimodal transportation options and your partnership to implement this critical trail corridor for the region. Please contact me with any questions and to let know your decision. We understand that a reallocation of the funds to the area east of the original award will need to go back to the Commissioners court. That action will need to occur before the June 5<sup>th</sup> deadline for the State application.

Sincerely,



David Gaines, City Manager  
Town of Addison

DG/igp

Attachments: 1-Map (Addison Section of Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail)  
2-Map (Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail)

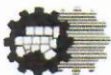
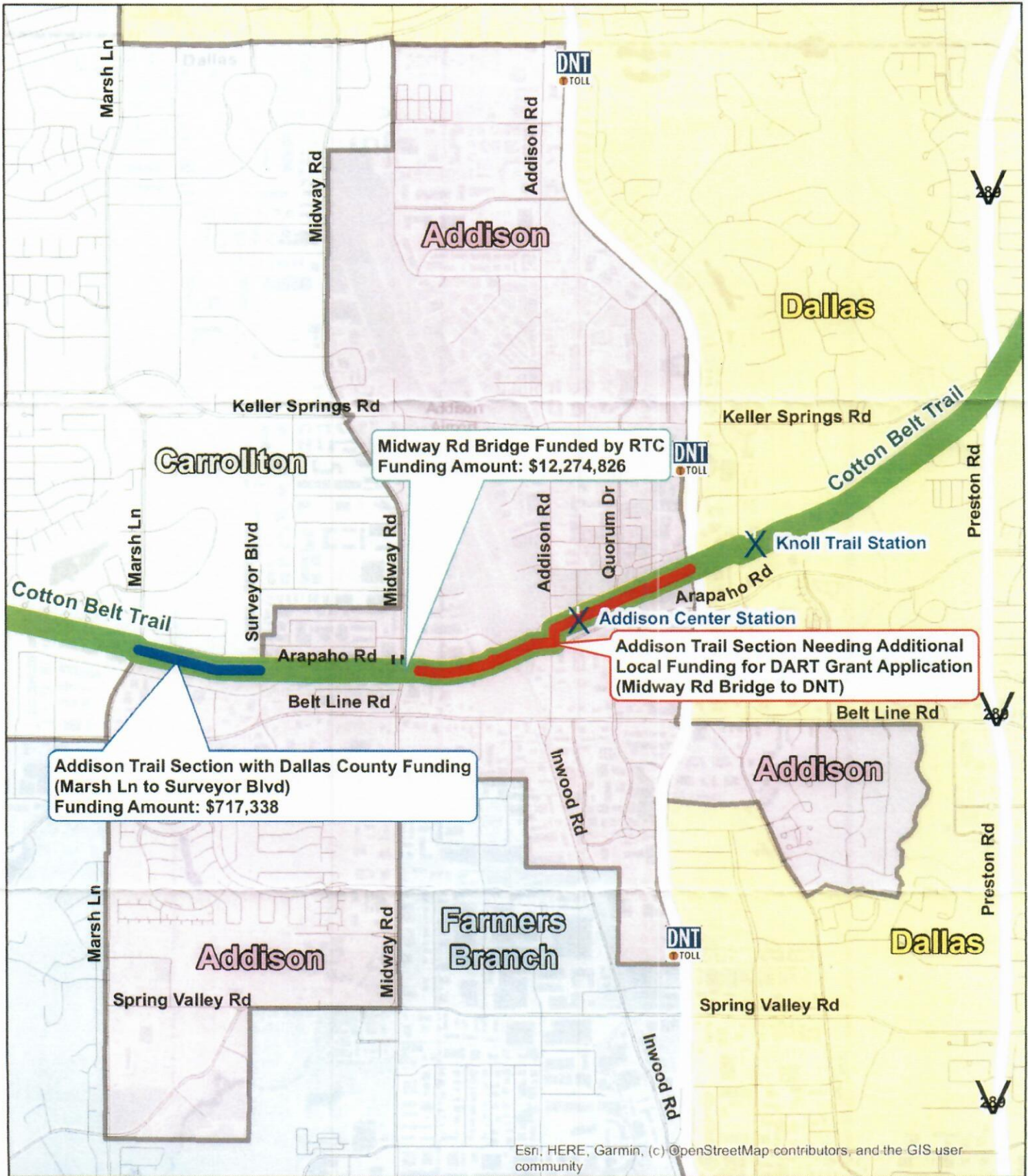
cc: Alberta Blair, P.E., Director of Public Works, Dallas County  
Dee Leggett, Executive Vice President/Chief Development Officer, DART  
Michael Morris, PE, Director of Transportation, NCTCOG  
Karla Windsor, AICP, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG



# Attachment 1: Addison Section of Cotton Belt Regional Velocity Trail

COPY

Date: 1/5/2023



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

## Legend

Cotton Belt Corridor

0 0.5 1 Miles



COPY

## **Attachment 2: Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail**

Date: 1/5/2023



Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

### Legend

**Cotton Belt Trail**



Fort Worth Report

## After Mansfield neighbors blocked concrete batch plant, Texas poised to adjust air quality regulations

By Haley Samsel

Lush green trees and backyard chickens dot the landscape of ranch-style homes on a country road just outside of Mansfield. Neighbors once feared air pollution and road traffic from a proposed concrete batch plant would ruin this peaceful community they call home.

Three years and thousands of dollars later, the group of Tarrant County homeowners became the first in the state to [successfully convince](#) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to deny a concrete batch plant permit request in 2021.

The ramifications of [that legal battle](#) continue to be felt today, with 2023 set to be a crucial year for concrete batch plant regulations and the future of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Lawmakers will soon debate whether – and how – to take action on the issue during the legislative session, which kicks off in January.

“Our case did ignite some (people) to look much closer at the TCEQ’s process and the fairness and the balancing that should be in that process, which was certainly missing,” said Roger Hurlbut, an attorney and neighbor who helped coordinate the effort to oppose the batch plant. “The system was designed to ensure that, basically, a batch plant could go in ... The people that were affected by it, the neighbors, didn’t have much chance.”

State lawmakers are also expected to vote on a bill renewing the TCEQ’s operations and identifying areas for improvement as part of the state’s [sunset review process](#), which assesses an agency’s performance every 12 years. A commission, made up mostly of state lawmakers, [issued a report in November](#) recommending more transparency and tougher penalties on frequent violators of pollution regulations.

As legislators head to Austin this month, TCEQ staff are considering [new air quality standards](#) for companies seeking to build a concrete batch plant.

### What is a concrete batch plant?

At concrete batch plants, workers combine materials like sand, water, cement and other raw materials to create concrete for construction sites. In Texas, concrete, cement and other aggregate industries (such as gravel and sand quarries) generate more than \$10 billion in revenues each year, according to [the Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association](#).

Commission staff are conducting an air quality analysis of acceptable amounts of pollution at concrete batch plants – a controversial issue at the center of the Mansfield legal battle.

The Mansfield group successfully argued in court that emissions of a certain pollutant at concrete batch plants, crystalline silica, were entirely prohibited by Texas regulations at the time. The commission later [amended its permit language](#) to clarify that crystalline silica emissions were not prohibited.

“The odds were against us, and I think the odds are still against most people going against these batch plants,” Hurlbut said. “But I think the tide is changing, when there are people – like there seem to be right now – who are addressing the unfairness of the system.”

The review process will address public concern about how the TCEQ’s air quality standards protect human health and the environment, said Estella Wieser, a commission spokesperson. “Given that science and technology are constantly improving we routinely review rules to ensure that all permits are held to this standard,” Wieser wrote by email. “Due to this and the growing public concern, the agency initiated an update to the Standard Air Permit for the Concrete Batch Plants.”

Commission staff are expected to release a draft of proposed amendments to the permit in early 2023, Wieser said. Environmental advocates, residents and industry groups will weigh in during a 30-day public comment period and a public meeting after publication of the proposal.

Josh Leftwich, president and chief executive of the Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association said the review is likely to be a very technical and complex process. Any changes should be science and evidence-based, he added.

#### **What’s the timeline for the amendment process?**

- November 2022: Stakeholder meetings
- Early 2023: Proposal publication, 30-day public comment period and public meeting
- Mid-2023: Adoption of new policy at TCEQ commissioners meeting
- Effective date of policy changes will be specified in final permit

“As they’re working through that, we will definitely be involved and making sure we’re using the best available technologies for our plants and whatever best management practices that we can implement as well,” Leftwich said. “Our members are very well aware of what is going on and we will adapt if anything does change.”

Cliff Kaplan, program director of the environmentally focused [Hill Country Alliance](#) in the Austin area, is a member of [Texans for Responsible Aggregate Mining](#). The statewide coalition, which also includes the Mansfield group, is pushing for more environmental regulations on concrete batch plants, along with sand quarries and gravel mines.

Kaplan and his fellow advocates are urging the TCEQ to make the results of its air quality review public. The commission should also take into account the cumulative impact of plants being permitted in close proximity to each other and to communities of color, Kaplan said. “The TCEQ has an opportunity here to demonstrate a real desire to make their processes more inclusive, more transparent and to make their permits more protective of communities, and we hope that they’ll take that opportunity,” Kaplan said.

#### **Bills would increase public participation in concrete plant permits**

While the permit amendment process continues, state lawmakers also are paying attention to growing concern over the impact of concrete batch plants on the environment and public health.

Ahead of the legislative session's kickoff in January, several legislators – including state Rep. Nicole Collier, D-Fort Worth – have [introduced bills](#) expanding opportunities for public participation in the commission's permit approval process, among other proposals.

Currently, residents living within 440 yards of a concrete batch plant can apply for a contested case hearing, or the formal legal process of opposing a permit application. Collier wants to double that distance to 880 yards, and allow other people located near a proposed plant — including representatives of hospitals, schools or places of worship — to apply for a hearing.

Collier, who did not respond to requests for comment through her office, [told The Texas Tribune](#) she understands the need to produce more concrete that builds more infrastructure in the state. But health and safety should also be of concern, she said.

“Schools, daycares, places of worship and medical facilities have the same potential to be affected by the dust ... produced by these batch plants, and those implications can extend far beyond the 440-yard setback required by statute,” Collier said.

Collier has introduced similar legislation in previous sessions without success. That's also true of state Rep. Jarvis Johnson, D-Houston, who has filed legislation that would require companies to host a community meeting prior to moving forward in the permit process. His proposed bills would also limit the ability of companies to build plants in cities like Houston, which has no zoning regulations.

Those proposals have run into Republican opposition, but Johnson plans to persuade his colleagues by arguing that the plants hurt property values, which translates to fewer tax dollars for surrounding governments, he told The Texas Tribune.

### **Batch plants are misunderstood, industry association says**

Legislation adding further regulations on concrete batch plants would likely face opposition from trade associations representing the aggregates industry.

Leftwich, the president and chief executive of the Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association, said many Texans have misconceptions about how concrete batch plants operate. Plants operating by the TCEQ's standards emit minimal emissions because there's no crushing taking place on-site, leading to less dust, he said.

With population growth booming in Texas, concrete batch plants are necessary to meet the demand for construction sites, Leftwich said. Their expansion is also necessary due to time constraints. Concrete mixtures harden quickly and must be transported to a site within 30 minutes.

“You can't just push them all to the countryside or the outskirts of town,” Leftwich said. “It looks like a lot of the leadership here during the (legislative) session are very focused on infrastructure, too. They've messaged that they are wanting to push more infrastructure here in Texas and get funding for infrastructure, and our materials are the building blocks of any infrastructure projects.”

Leftwich is confident that Texas concrete producers will adapt to regulations since they are “highly regulated as it is,” he said. But Kaplan argues that the industry is used to following

tighter rules in other business-friendly states, while Texas has lagged behind on regulating plants to use better pollution controls.

“At the end of the day, to really get most operators or the industry as a whole to use best management practices that are more protective of their neighbors and of Texas’ natural resources, some additional regulations are required,” Kaplan said.

Since helping lead the Mansfield group of homeowners to a legal victory in 2021, Hurlbut has taken a step back from the fight for regulations on batch plants. But he remains concerned that the TCEQ system is designed to ensure that plants are rubber stamped for approval.

The commission must make major changes to how they notify residents about permit applications, which currently consists of a newspaper advertisement. Texans also need more help navigating the “byzantine” contested case hearing process, he added.

“I always remain optimistic, but knowing how the sausage is made in bureaucracies, I can’t be expecting a whole lot,” Hurlbut said. “But we can always be hopeful.”



Plano Magazine

## How new DART stations could affect our city

By Joshua Baethge

Major changes are coming to the Plano landscape this year as work commences on two new Dallas Area Rapid Transit train stations. They will serve a new rail line, known as the Silver Line, that will provide a direct connection from Plano to DFW Airport. Along the way, it will pass through Richardson, Dallas, Addison, Carrollton, Coppell and Grapevine.

For the Plano city leaders, the new DART line is about more than a faster ride to the airport. It's an opportunity to improve transportation within the city, connecting neighborhoods and spurring new development.

The new station, 12th Street Station, near the intersection with K Avenue, will have two train platforms. Riders on the DART Red Line will stop at a new raised platform, similar to stations in downtown Carrollton or Forest Lane in Dallas. The Silver Line connection will be an at-grade platform between K Avenue and Municipal.

Plano and DART officials have collaborated on the design of the station and its overall concept, one of which includes a wave theme.



*Renderings courtesy of DART*

A few years ago, long-range plans called for an expansive walkable neighborhood. Those grandiose concepts have been scaled back to focus within a half mile of the station, hoping to foster additional development there and nearby downtown.

"I think the goal is transit-oriented development, similar to what we see downtown," Plano Comprehensive Planning Manager Mike Bell says. "It will be more intense with more residential development. Right now, that area is almost all commercial."

The Shiloh Road Station near the intersection of East Plano Parkway will also be the eastern terminus of the Silver Line. Unlike Plano's Parker Road Station, which serves as the end of the Red and Orange Lines, city leaders hope to make the new facility more of a destination spot. Its location is near a large cluster of businesses, known as the "research and development crossroads."

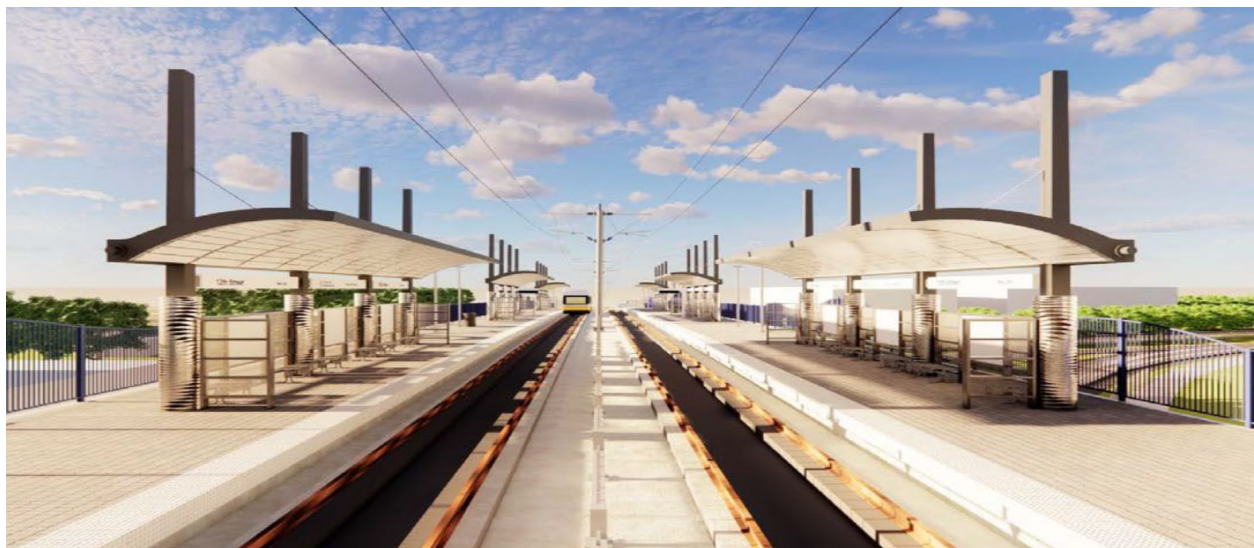
"We'd like to capitalize on the fact that there are a lot of jobs in that area," Bell says. In late 2022, the city began the first phase of the station planning project, which included an existing conditions assessment report. Those results were discussed during two Planning and Zoning Commission meetings.

In early 2023, the city will form a stakeholder group that will work to refine the strategic vision at both stations. They hope that they will serve as a catalyst for growth within the city, particularly at the 12th Street station where many nearby neighborhoods are ripe for redevelopment. "We're hoping that it will be an economic driver for us both at 12th Street and then with the Collin Creek Mall redevelopment," Bell says. "We are always looking at more ways to connect downtown."

Finding ways to better move people across the city will continue to be a challenge in the coming decades. Currently, city and regional transportation committees are evaluating factors such as automated people-movers and driverless shuttles in some of Plano's urban clusters, like the Legacy West corridor. Engineers are also looking into potentially procuring a grant for a JPod system, which would serve as a kind of elevated monorail, but with single cars.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has also conducted studies on a future Irving to Frisco rail line that would pass through Plano, though this development could be decades away.

After more than 30 years of planning and countless debates among Plano and DART officials, the Silver Line is tentatively slated to begin operations by the end of 2024.



*12th Street Station aerial rendering at 12th Street and K Avenue.  
Renderings courtesy of DART*



## **Rental scooters and e-bikes returning to Dallas in 2023 with restrictions**

Electric rental scooters and bikes will return to Dallas in 2023. But this time, there are some regulations designed to prevent what happened a few years ago.

Dallas tried [allowing scooters in 2018](#) but ended up [banning them in 2020](#) because of safety concerns.

According to Kathryn Rush, the chief planner for transportation for the city of Dallas, the goal this time around is to provide a more safe, orderly, and equitable system.

"So, people should see a lot less chaos and a lot less clutter on the streets," Rush said. Some of the ways the city plans to achieve that are by allowing just three companies – Lime, Bird and Superpedestrian. There will also be fewer scooters on the streets to make things more manageable.

"If the demand is there, though, companies will be able to increase the number of scooters on the streets," Rush said.

The scooters and e-bikes will only be available for rent from 5 a.m. until 9 p.m. Rush said that's to help cut down on some of the joyriding and party use – things that are not intended to be for transportation.

They will also have a maximum speed limit of 20 mph or 10 mph in areas that the city deems slow-ride zones like Deep Ellum. The rental companies can remotely enforce those speed limits and automatically shut the scooters down in Dallas' no-ride zones.

"Sidewalks have always been illegal. It's still illegal. But we are working on providing and installing more bike lanes and more facilities to make it safer for people to ride these devices in the streets," Rush said.

Companies will face tougher penalties for not following the city's regulations and riders could face fines of up to \$20 for not parking the scooters correctly when they're done. Riders will actually have to provide a photo of their parking spot.

"There will be education on the devices showing how to do that as well as on our website. But at the end of every ride, before a ride can be ended, riders will have to take a photo showing how they parked the device and if it is not parking correctly they could be fined \$20," Rush said.

Dallas also hopes to distribute the scooters more. There will be a limited number available in central Dallas and at least 15% will be located in what the city describes as equity opportunity zones.

"Those are low-income and majority-minority areas. So even though we will have fewer numbers of scooters on the streets, we hope that access to them will be greater than it was before," Rush said.

"We are going to be pushing this much needed transportation mode out into neighborhoods that desperately need them, that maybe didn't get to see them the first round," Dallas city councilmember Omar Narvaez told [FOX 4 in December](#).

Before the ban in 2020, Dallas also had issues with some of the scooters and bikes ending up in rivers and floodplains.

"We are also being very diligent about putting up signs as well as geofencing around parks and trails so that it's difficult to even get these devices close to kind of these natural and protected areas," Rush said.

The new scooters and e-bikes are expected to be back on Dallas streets within the next few weeks.

<https://www.fox4news.com/news/rental-scooters-and-e-bikes-returning-to-dallas-in-2023-with-restrictions>

Dallas Morning News

## **A first look: 12.9-mile Five Mile Creek Trail would link Oak Cliff neighborhoods with LOOP**

Proposed 78 years ago as southern Dallas' own Turtle Creek, this project deserves funding.

By Sharon Grigsby

The “can this really be Dallas?” view from atop an old railroad trestle on the city’s west side hints at the glorious potential of the proposed Five Mile Creek Trail.

Even with the trees and undergrowth in hibernation, this tucked-away spot near the creek’s headwaters is a meditative canvas of nature’s pastoral handiwork.

I would have spent the entire balmy January afternoon up there, but many more stops awaited in my west-to-east exploration of the route envisioned for a 12.9 mile hike-and-bike trail connecting dozens of underserved Oak Cliff neighborhoods.

It’s a good thing I did climb back down through the bramble onto Coombs Creek Drive, not far from the Westmoreland DART Station. There I stumbled upon an ugly example of why this trail needs to be built now, not later.

As cars ripped around the sharp blind curve underneath the trestle, Eduardo and Jasmine Hernandez kept careful watch as they picked their way through the gravel shoulder of the sidewalk-bereft street.

They know it’s a dangerous walk, especially with their two young sons in tow, but this is the only route to the closest grocery store.

While Five Mile Creek Trail would be a welcomed recreational asset connecting into the rest of the city’s trail system, it also would provide desperately needed infrastructure to keep families like the Hernandezes safe.

The trail — an engineering puzzle involving multiple highway, rail and creek crossings — is a costly endeavor, estimated at \$70 million.

But an avalanche of available federal and state funds makes now the time for local leaders to dedicate the city’s portion of the needed money.

Dallas has set a fast pace in growing its trail network, but look at the maps and you’ll see a big gap across Oak Cliff.

The Texas office of [Trust for Public Land](#), responsible for so many transformative green space projects locally, aims to fill that hole with the Five Mile Creek Trail.

The nonprofit’s plan, in partnership with residents and the Dallas Park and Recreation Department, would provide connectivity across southern Dallas and create opportunities for all of us to enjoy the natural beauty of the watershed.

Linking to Chalk Hill Trail on the west, the route would begin near the Westmoreland station and follow the creek greenbelt along Pentagon and Five Mile parkways before crossing I-35E and I-45 then plugging into [The LOOP trail](#).

Since the City Council approved [the Five Mile Creek Urban Greenbelt master plan](#) in 2019, Trust for Public Land has purchased and put 125 acres under park development as part of its efforts to correct the systemic inequities that permeate southern Dallas.

The nonprofit-city partnership [opened South Oak Cliff Renaissance Park](#) in November 2021 and [expects to finish Charles R. Rose Community Park](#) this year. The design for [Woody Branch](#) is underway and the final park should open in 2025.

Now comes the harder part of the project, the trail, which Trust for Public Land wants to begin building next year and complete by 2030.

In yet another chapter of this city's sorry history when it comes to southern Dallas and racial equity, the promise to devote resources to Five Mile Creek stretches back to the 1944 Bartholomew Plan.

That blueprint envisioned Five Mile as the equal of what already was planned for Turtle Creek. A decade later, then-Park Director L.B. Houston made headlines when he questioned why the city continued to delay action on the southern Dallas asset.

Still nothing happened.

## Proposed Five Mile Creek Trail



Today the Turtle Creek corridor is one of the premier urban green spaces in the country. The changes promised 78 years ago for Five Mile Creek can be found only in planning records.

That's the wrong Trust for Public Land — with a strong assist from Mayor Eric Johnson — wants to right.

The almost 187,000 residents living near Five Mile Creek include about 57,000 children. Black residents account for 61% of the area; 33% are Latino. Low-income households make up 51% of the population.

Only 54% of this area has convenient park access, compared to the 73% average for the city as a whole.

Also among the sobering research Trust for Public Land showed at the Dec. 8 Park Board meeting is the prevalence of health problems in the watershed area, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression.

The trail would connect residents not just to other Oak Cliff neighborhoods and additional trails, but to 17 parks, two colleges, two light rail stations, three hospitals and 10 schools.

One of my fellow explorers was Taylor Toyne, park board member, Trust for Public Land national board member and CEO of the nonprofit For Oak Cliff.

Throughout our tour, Toyne pointed to the dangerous crossings with which pedestrians currently contend. "A five- or 10-minute walk doesn't seem like a long way until you have to do it under circumstances like not even having decent crosswalks," he said.

Growing up in a home just across the street from the greenbelt, Toyne often played in the creek. Today [his nonprofit operation sits nearby](#) in the former Moorland YMCA.

"The greenbelt and creek are already beautiful just off of what God did with them, but as we put the love and care into it and build the trail, the community will feel seen," Toyne told me.

Creating connectivity through the neighborhoods and educational opportunities for children is a big step forward, he said. "This can change the entire landscape of Oak Cliff."

Trust for Public Land has worked hard to give residents the lead in planning. The nonprofit is about to create a community committee specifically to address neighborhood wants and needs in each trail segment.

Planners also want to make sure the new route complements the area's few existing trails, such as Runyon Creek, near the University of North Texas at Dallas, and Honey Springs-Cedar Crest, near South Oak Cliff High School.

In addition to private fundraising, Robert Kent, Texas state director of Trust for Public Land, said his group is applying for money from newly available federal and state sources.

The federal dollars are mostly 80-20 matches with local funds, and the Dallas mayor is determined to find a way for the city to ante up its share.

[In his November State of the City address](#), Johnson singled out the Five Mile Creek project and the need to "bring this long-overdue infrastructure into Oak Cliff."

Most immediately, he wants to secure \$15.4 million to fund the first several miles of the trail's western end, much of which is already designed.

Johnson has considered several options, including using a portion of the \$20 million in city sales tax revenue currently earmarked for its racial equity effort.

His current plan is a partnership with the Regional Transportation Council to expedite and fund the project. Having the RTC's support — which translates to funding and infrastructure expertise — would be a huge benefit.

Subsequent cost-share funds might come from the 2024 bond program, which is in early planning stages.

The lead gifts in the \$6.3 million Trust for Public Land has raised so far came from the Boone Family Foundation, Lyda Hill Philanthropies and the Eugene McDermott Foundation.

Park Board president Arun Agarwal acknowledged Dallas is home to a number of great green-space projects competing for funds. The key, he said, is where city dollars can be best leveraged.

Given the many neighborhoods the Five Mile Creek Trail would touch and its connections into the bigger system, "this is the best return on the city's money," he told me.

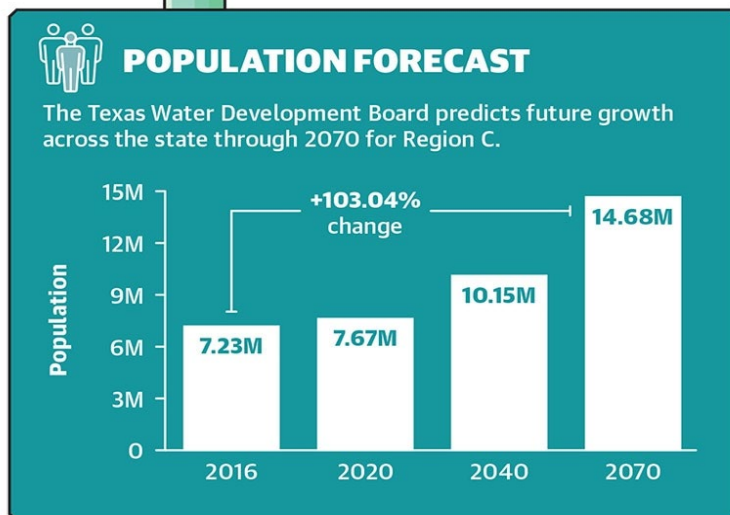
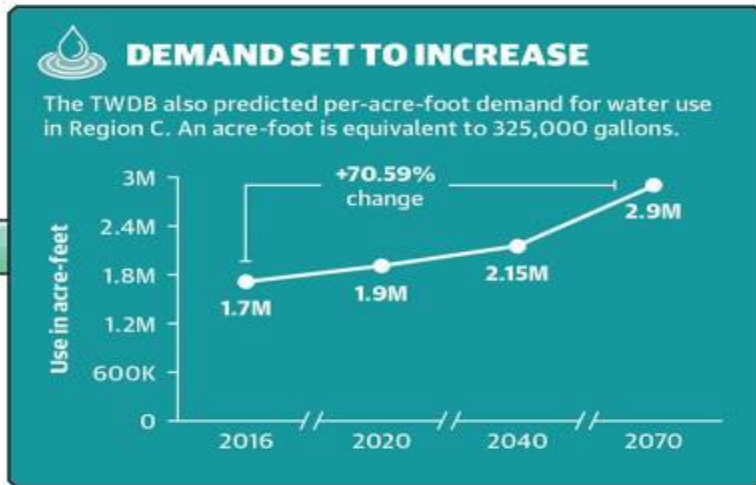
Park department assistant director Ryan O'Connor, also part of our trail tour, said the Five Mile Creek project is "the perfect confluence" of growing interest in building out the trail system, City Hall's focus on equity and the strong possibility of federal and state money.

Neighborhoods across Oak Cliff deserve the same robust trail system so many of us in other parts of the city already enjoy. This isn't about spandex and expensive bikes but a way for people to exercise, enjoy the outdoors and get to work and retail.

"We wouldn't stand for this kind of inequity in Lake Highlands, much less Preston Hollow," Kent said. "Families like the Hernandezes need this trail right this very second."

## Agencies look to meet water demand as North Texas population sees continued growth

By Cody Thorn



SOURCE: TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD/COMMUNITY IMPACT

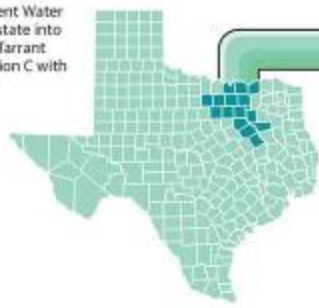




## PLANNING FOR FUTURE WATER USE

The Texas Development Water Board separates the state into 16 different regions. Tarrant County is part of Region C with 15 other counties.

■ Region C



Region C spans across the North Central Texas area, including these counties:

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| • Collin    | • Henderson |
| • Cooke     | • Jack      |
| • Dallas    | • Kaufman   |
| • Denton    | • Navarro   |
| • Ellis     | • Parker    |
| • Fannin    | • Rockwall  |
| • Freestone | • Tarrant   |
| • Grayson   | • Wise      |

The demand for water in Tarrant County has seen steady growth with the area's population expansion over the past 40 years. A state agency and a number of local water-related organizations are doing their part to plan for further growth and ensure there will be enough water to meet the demand that comes with it.

The Tarrant Regional Water District, based in Fort Worth, is one of the main wholesale water distributors in North Texas, providing water to more than 70 towns across 11 counties, according to its website.

Towns, such as Keller, Roanoke, Fort Worth, Trophy Club and Westlake, receive water that has gone through the TRWD.

Water that reaches Tarrant County comes from the TRWD and a combination of its four reservoirs. Each of those—Lake Bridgeport, Eagle Mountain Lake, Cedar Creek Reservoir and Richland-Chambers Reservoir—plays a role in delivering water to residents in Tarrant County.

The TRWD stores extra water in either Benbrook Lake or Lake Arlington, owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the city of Arlington, respectively, to keep up with the projected growth in the region.

The district has a wetlands area at the Richland-Chambers Reservoir to help preserve water, and there are plans to make another wetland area at Cedar Creek, according to Zach Huff, TRWD water resource engineering director.

The Cedar Creek Wetland is a multi-million-dollar project that will start construction in 2025, Huff added. A \$11.2 million contract was awarded in December 2021 for the planning and design of the facility. The final cost is unknown, according to TRWD officials.

The 3,000-acre project is expected to produce 80 million gallons of water a day and supply enough water to serve an additional 560,000 people by 2032, according to a district press release.

“[The district] is continually studying water supply alternatives in its planning, and that data shows we are ready to begin the Cedar Creek Wetlands,” said Rachel Ickert, TRWD chief water resources officer.



One future project was purchasing raw water from Dallas Water Utilities in 2060 that was in the 2016 report but was removed in the 2020 report, according to TRWD.

## **Projected growth**

The projected growth the TRWD is planning for comes from data supplied by the Texas Water Development Board, a state agency based in Austin.

The Texas Water Development Board was formed in 1957 at the end of a seven-year drought that was the worst in the state's history. The development board predicts not only what water demands will be through 2070, but also the growth that could happen in different areas of the state.

The state's 254 counties are divided into 16 regions by the board. Region C features Tarrant, Dallas, Denton and Collin counties, all of which have at least one city with a population of 100,000 or more, according to 2020 U.S. Census data.

The board's 2021 water report stated Region C's population is increasing by more than 300 people per day.

"The purpose behind [the water plans] is just making sure we identify the projected population growth and the projected water demands by sectors of use," said Temple McKinnon, the Texas Water Development Board's director of water supply planning. "The state water plans' purpose is to identify where water supply needs will be if there is a recurrence of drought of record; that is the benchmark we plan to."

The 2021 Region C water plan shows a 2.4% increase in the projected population in 2070 to 14.6 million people from the 2016 Region C plan. The difference equates to 330,000 more residents projected to be in the region. As of 2020, the Region C population was 7.6 million.

Texas Water Development Board officials noted Region C's population more than tripled from 1960-2010 from fewer than 2 million to more than 6 million.

Tarrant County is the third-most populous county in the state, according to the 2020 U.S. Census, behind Harris County in the Houston area and Dallas County. The most recent census showed Tarrant County with a 16.7% increase in population from 2010, up to 2.11 million in 2020.

The Texas Water Development Board projects a 92% increase in Region C's population from 2020 to 2070. The projections show Tarrant County will reach 2.2 million people in 2030 and 3.1 million people in 2070.

"That's the wild card, because there are so many people that are migrating here from other states," said J. Kevin Ward, Trinity River Authority general manager and Region C board chair. "Our demographics are changing pretty rapidly."

Ward noted that sometimes cities have differing projections than the state demographer for future growth. Venus, a town southwest of Midlothian in Region C, expects a larger population burst than the state is predicting, he said.

The town is asking for more water and wastewater from the Mountain Peak Special Utility District, expecting a population of 35,000 by 2030, up from just over 5,000 as of 2020.

“We don’t like going beyond that state demographer, but they show us the applications from developers of subdivisions,” Ward said. “[If] the developers put down 5,000 [multifamily] units on the ground in the next three years, it’s easy to see how it could double or triple your population in a year.”

Ward, who has been involved in water-related jobs since 1987, said he has seen that kind of growth before in Tarrant County.

He pinpointed Keller, which has grown from a population of 13,668 in 1990 to more than 45,397 in 22 years—a 232% increase—according to numbers from the U.S. Census.

“Keller was a very small community and very rural, and hardly anyone lived out there,” Ward said. “Now, it is just wall to wall. The other cities that are up there, they are sandwiched around it and are in the same situation.”

With the projected rise in population in Region C, there is also a similar rise in water demand projections—a 67% increase to 2.9 million acre-feet per year. An acre-foot of water is measured as 1 foot tall, 66 feet wide and 660 feet long—the equivalent of 325,000 gallons of water.

In 2016, Region C accounted for 25% of all of Texas’ population but less than 10% of water used, according to the 2021 Texas Water Development Board report.

Tarrant County is expected to rise from using the seventh-most water per acre-foot in the state to fourth by 2070, according to the Texas Water Development Board projections.

“The water development board is there to ensure we aren’t over planning but we aren’t under planning,” Ward said. “If you under-plan, it shuts the economy down. With over-planning, you’d have some extra in case you need it, and you might need it.”

## **Water sources**

The Texas Water Development Board’s plans for water usage throughout the state are used by the 30 different sellers of water in Region C.

The TRWD plays a part in delivering the water from its many reservoirs to households and businesses throughout Tarrant County. They are one of five major wholesale companies in Region C. The other companies are Dallas Water Utilities, the North Texas Municipal Utility District, the Upper Trinity Regional Water District and the Greater Texoma Utility Authority.

The TRWD delivers untreated water to more than 70 entities, but the four largest are Fort Worth, Mansfield, Arlington and the Trinity River Authority, according to TRWD Public Affairs Officer Chad Lorange.

## **Water customers**

Once the TRWD delivers water to the wholesalers, those customers then treat the water and ship it off to the cities and towns in Tarrant County, according to Lorange.

Keller, Westlake, Roanoke and Trophy Club all buy water from the city of Fort Worth.

Trophy Club purchases 80% of its water from Fort Worth, but the Trophy Club Municipal Utility District uses a blend of the Fort Worth water and water from its four wells to save on cost, according to town officials.

The Trinity River Authority, which was formed in 1955 and is based in Arlington, sells to 21 different customers, Communications Manager Vanessa Joseph said.

The company delivers water and wastewater throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area to more than 1.5 million customers, its website states.

The Trinity River Authority owns and operates five wastewater facilities, the closest being in Roanoke, and four water treatment plants, including in Euless.

Mary Gugliuzza, the media relations/communication coordinator for the Fort Worth Water Department, said the city sells the water it treats to 32 customers in four surrounding counties and provides drinking water to 1.2 million people.

This past May, Dallas Water Utilities and the TRWD partnered on a 150-mile, \$2.3 billion integrated pipeline project, which added water supply capacity and adds a connection to water supply in East Texas.

The joint pipeline will save billions in capital and costs over the life of the project, according Region C. Both companies were looking at constructing similar projects and worked together to construct one pipeline.

### **Planning for future needs**

According to the 2021 water development board report, Region C gets nearly all of its water from reservoirs, and 90% of its water is used for its municipal supply.

Dallas and Tarrant counties are the two biggest users of water in Region C, using a combined 64% of the total municipal supply and 68% of the water that is used by manufacturing.

“Population plays a huge part in our projections,”

Huff said. “We looked at how it might grow, and then we looked at a lot of how that population uses water.”

The TRWD has a strategy in place that if the state ever matches the drought of record from the 1950s, the organization would still maintain one year of water supply after the drought ended.

According to a press release from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts on Dec. 14, the state is in the worst drought since 2011. The drought has cost the state \$7.6 billion in agriculture losses and \$17 billion in total losses, according to the state.

Region C accounted for one-third of the state's current and recommended reuse supplies, more than any of the 16 regions in the state. The report states Region C has increased water efficiency and has reduced the need to develop new water supplies.

The per-capita use of water from 2001-20 decreased from 225 gallons to 186 gallons due to water conservation efforts in Region C, the Texas Water Development Board stated in the 2021 report. The water needed for the TRWD by 2070 will nearly double what was needed in 2020.

It will grow from 495,119 acre-feet to a projected 926,855 acre-feet.

"We've got a lot of different strategies in the water plan to get us there with varying degrees of when they'd be implemented," Ward said. "They would actually produce a little more than what we would need by 2070. The various projects would get us to 1.8 million acre-feet, which would get us past what we would need. In this day and time, with all the uncertainties, a little bit extra is not a bad idea."

Planetizen

## Fort Worth Could Start Contributing to Sidewalk Repair Costs

A proposal in the city council could shift the burden of sidewalk repairs away from property owners, who are currently responsible for 100 percent of expenses.

By Diana Ionescu

After noticing the disparate states of sidewalks in different parts of her own neighborhood, Fort Worth journalist Emily Wolf examines the city's sidewalk paving policy to find out why some sidewalks in the city are more well-maintained than others.

As it turns out, "Fort Worth has required private homeowners to maintain sidewalks since the 1960s but stopped enforcing the penalties included in that ordinance several decades ago.

What's resulted is a patchwork of sidewalks in various states of disrepair across the city, with little recourse for owners with lower incomes or disabilities." The issue is particularly evident in front of rental properties, Wolf notes. "Sidewalks in front of rentals, in particular, were often littered with large fractures and divots, the rentals' owners far away from the realities of the area."

Whether coincidentally or not, months after Wolf published a piece about the city's inconsistent sidewalk policy and the challenges it poses for residents with disabilities, among others, "city staff presented a proposal to city council to establish a cost-sharing program similar to Dallas.

Under the proposal, the city would use a portion of the fiscal year 2023 PayGo funding, totaling \$2.6 million, to develop the program." The program would have the city pay for 50 percent of the cost of repairs, "with a particular emphasis on low-income homes, seniors and disabled residents."

**FULL STORY:** [Walking the walk: government reporter explores the reasons for Fort Worth's crumbling sidewalks](#)

## Hyperloop momentum has stalled. Here are the challenges facing high-speed tech.

"It's mostly a distraction [from] tackling the major transportation problems that we have," said one transportation researcher.

By Kalena Thomhave

In February 2022, the North Central Texas Council of Governments announced that it would move forward with high-speed rail after the long process of selecting which mode of high-speed travel should connect Dallas and Fort Worth. With the decision, the council opted not to move forward with a hyperloop, the proposed transportation technology that would transport people and goods at high speeds in low-pressure tubes.

"Hyperloop was in the running all the way toward the end, but it's still in the stages where it's not fully developed yet and actually commercialized," said Brendon Wheeler, a program manager at the Council. To move the project along, Wheeler explained, the Council needed to submit the plan for environmental review, and the unproven hyperloop just couldn't meet the Council's timeline. High-speed rail, on the other hand, is tried and true technology.

While the theory behind the hyperloop idea is more than a century old, it's risen in popularity over the past decade, with at least nine hyperloop start-ups cropping up with plans to research and eventually commercialize the technology.

Recently, however, the initial excitement has stalled. "Overall, I think the amount of activity in the commercial space on hyperloop has been reduced," said Richard Geddes, professor of public policy at Cornell University and director of the Cornell Program in Infrastructure Policy.

Geddes said venture capital, which funded many hyperloop companies, has pulled back from its initial investments. Earlier this year, Virgin Hyperloop reportedly laid off more than 100 employees and announced it would pivot to transporting cargo, not people. And last month, Virgin pulled its name from the business, renaming the company Hyperloop One, a brand it had used between 2016 and 2017. It remains the only company to have successfully tested its technology with humans.

Still, for city officials, the hyperloop represents a tantalizing opportunity: a high-speed transportation system for which the government pays and plans little, said Paul Lewis, chief finance officer and policy director at the Eno Center for Transportation. But it also represents a considerable risk, and any amount of taxpayer dollars is often anathema to risk, said Geddes.

Hyperloops would require building entirely new transportation infrastructure. Elon Musk's The Boring Company has explored building tunnels underground.

Yet the 1.5-mile Las Vegas loop, which transports people underground via driver-operated Teslas, cost approximately \$50 million — not including the cost of hyperloop technology — and was paid for by the Las Vegas Visitors and Convention Authority. Lewis said that officials also need to get right-of-way clearance for every party on a proposed route, as construction may require tunneling under a city or farmers' land, making it a substantial political obstacle.

Finally, hyperloops are best for transit corridors that are a straight shot, with no hills or bends, since the specialized pods aim to travel at consistent speeds of up to 600 miles an hour.

Geddes, who believes the hyperloop idea has merit, said they need a “stage of intensive development.” But it takes time for new transportation technologies to develop, he added.

“It took decades before airplanes could carry passengers for money,” Geddes said, as aviation needed to be proven safe and economical.

But the policy issues are even greater for hyperloops since there was no infrastructure to worry about in the sky. “The hyperloop is something that’s never going to happen on a large scale from a transportation standpoint,” Lewis said, pointing to political obstacles like right-of-way issues and the cost of building any hyperloop system.

“It’s mostly a distraction [from] tackling the major transportation problems that we have,” he said. Although hyperloop companies entice cities, “the potholes they have in their streets are still unfilled, and the buses are still running late.”

Even so, some cities still hope for a hyperloop.

Though the North Central Texas Council of Governments will not be moving forward with the hyperloop for the Dallas-Fort Worth high-speed corridor, it launched a program in May 2022 that could help expedite public certification of new and emerging transportation technologies. The program allows companies to connect with local governments in the region that may be interested in using their technology to solve transportation needs.

Wheeler said that the council had approved participating companies, and local governments have since submitted applications to partner with them. TransPod, a Canadian hyperloop company that uses electromagnetic fields instead of compressed air to move its pods, is one of those companies. “We still have hyperloop on the brain,” Wheeler said.



## Registration now open for Residential Food Scrap Composting Pilot Program in Plano

By Jake Reynolds

Residents of Plano can now enroll in the [Residential Food Scrap Composting Pilot Program](#), which provides participants an environmentally friendly alternative to food scrap disposal.

Registration for the program opened Jan. 2 and is limited to 500 participants, according to Pilot Project Lead Jaime Bretzmann. The program allows residents to dispose of food scraps not typically suited for backyard trash piles, including cooked meats and bones, eggs and eggshells, seafood, baked goods, coffee filters, tea bags, fruits, vegetables, nuts and more.

Those who sign up for the program are issued kits that contain food scrap collection pails, program instructions, a fertilizer sample and a coupon for Texas Pure Products compost. Participants will drop off scraps at designated food sites, where a hauler will then take them to a local commercial composter. From there, the scraps are converted into compost and used to enrich local soils.

"We're trying to duplicate natural recycling, but we can make it happen a little bit faster using our understanding of nature's decomposition process," Bretzmann said during a live-streamed webinar. "And with the end result of creating a natural, slow-release fertilizer that we can use to enrich our local soils here in Plano."

Last March, the Sustainability & Environmental Education Division of Plano received a \$60,200 grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to fund the Residential Food Scrap Composting Pilot Program, according to the NCTCOG's [website](#).

"[The city of Plano] has been busy preparing for the opening of our [program] for Plano residents since the grant was awarded," Bretzmann said. "As a pilot program, this is going to help guide future city and waste reduction initiatives."

For the program to move past the pilot stage and receive further funding, Bretzmann said participation from Plano residents is essential. At the end of the program, the city of Plano will evaluate the metrics to determine if they will expand and move past the pilot stage.

"The ultimate goal is for the pilot program to move beyond the pilot stage and be open to larger than 500 residents," Bretzmann said. "Success of this pilot is contingent upon participation."

The Residential Food Scrap Composting Pilot Program will end June 13. Registration is [online](#) and participation in the program costs \$45, which will go toward extending the grant-funded program past the designated pilot period, according to the city's [website](#).

For more information on the Residential Food Scrap Composting Pilot Program, including information on enrolling, those interested can visit [www.plano.gov/foodcomposting](http://www.plano.gov/foodcomposting).

Dallas Morning News

## **Boomtown growth should balance economy and ecology**

Follow the road map laid out by Vision North Texas.

By Steve Houser

The economic benefits of rapid growth in North Texas tend to be the focus of various officials in the region, but the negative effects are seldom expressed. The region's population [is projected to reach 12 million](#) by 2050, according to the Texas Demographic Center.

The consequences of this growth include three times more traffic than we have now, decreasing air and water quality, increased flooding, and continued loss of what little green space we have left.

Even more troubling is that government officials, developers and builders seem to be ignoring a plan created by the North Central Texas Council of Governments to provide guidance to help find a better balance between economy and ecology in planning for growth. That plan, called Vision North Texas, was established in 2005 as a public, private and academic regional partnership created to serve as a forum for dialogue and action on these important issues.

The choices that we make today will determine our future — the quality of life we enjoy, our ability to compete with other global regions, and the health of our natural environment. With the explosive growth in population within the 16 counties of North Texas, how can we accommodate the growth and what quality of life will residents experience?

After five years of workshops, presentations, research and debates, the North Texas 2050 document — [North Central Texas Council of Governments - Vision North Texas](#) — was published to describe the preferred future envisioned by participants along with actions to achieve it.

The 2050 document outlined 12 principles for development excellence and provided alternative growth scenarios that communities could follow to build a better tomorrow. The growth scenario of “business as usual” or continued urban sprawl produced the least number of benefits vs. other preferred scenarios. This scenario projected the loss of 900,000 acres of agricultural land and substantial natural habitat, the doubling of impervious surfaces, increased temperatures, and flooding, among other negative consequences.

Unfortunately, today's development patterns are not much better than when the report was completed in 2010. Many communities are still following the same old business-as-usual growth scenario. Recently, [The Dallas Morning News, in its “Boomtown”](#) series of articles, noted the thousands of homes currently being built. However, they are typical tract houses using the same unsustainable development layouts or patterns that have been used in Plano, McKinney, Allen and other cities for the last 30 years. Better developments include energy-efficient homes with solar panels and low water use landscapes in walkable communities with an abundance of nearby parks and transit. Recent commercial property development or redevelopment in most local towns has not been in accordance with the preferred future envisioned in the 2050 document.

By comparison, consider Mockingbird Station in Dallas as the type of growth and redevelopment we need: a higher-density, mixed-use development (or housing mixed with businesses) located on a transit corridor such as the DART rail system. The design reduces our dependance on

vehicles and gasoline and helps our poor air quality, which has been in nonattainment with federal standards for more than 27 years.

In searching for answers, I recall a Vision North Texas meeting when developers stated three reasons why they were not building “greener” or more sustainable communities: 1) They didn’t know how to build green developments, 2) They didn’t know how to make money building green, and most important, 3) There wasn’t a market for building green.

We will only develop better and more successful communities when we can balance our economy with our ecology, and the public demands greener and more sustainable communities. Future generations are relying on us to provide a better tomorrow, and the answer lies in the choices we make every day.

Dallas Morning News

## Owners of Plano's Willow Bend mall say they're close to sharing new plans

The Shops at Willow Bend, which opened in 2001, has struggled to fill its corridors since it was built.

By Maria Halkias

The Shops at Willow Bend's new owners are preparing redevelopment plans to submit to the city of Plano in a few weeks.

[Centennial, a Dallas-based real estate investment firm, purchased the mall in May](#) with investors Dallas-based Cawley Partners and New York-based Waterfall Asset Management.

Whitney Livingston, president of Centennial, said the company has been meeting with city officials and area residents to be sure the plans match the needs of the area.

The company wants to reduce the retail space and add residential and a hotel. The mall, which opened in 2001 and was the last traditional enclosed mall to open in Texas, has struggled to fill its 1.4 million square feet since it was built.

"We're still looking at a dominant mixed-use destination, and we're pleased with the feedback from area residents who want to see the mall survive," Livingston said. "But everyone also understands that we need to add different uses from what's there now."

The mall sits on a 107-acre site on the northwest corner of the Dallas North Tollway and West Park Boulevard. There's room to add apartments and other buildings.

Undeveloped land and surface parking has been sitting empty around the mall. The property has a total of 4,200 parking spaces including in three existing parking garages that are expensive to build today.

Livingston said all the center's anchors, including Dillard's, Macy's, Neiman Marcus, The Crayola Experience and the North Texas Performing Arts Center, are included in the redevelopment plans.

Centennial is in "active negotiations" with more than one dine-in movie theater operator to take over Willow Bend's theater, Livingston said. [An unfinished luxury theater was abandoned during the pandemic.](#)

She declined to identify what companies are interested in the theater and the hotel.

City officials have been supportive, Livingston said, and once plans are filed with the city, Centennial will host events at the mall to solicit feedback from area residents.

"We want to deliver what the community wants," she said. Centennial is redeveloping other malls near Chicago and Los Angeles, and Cawley Partners has developed more than 12 million square feet of North Texas office space, including along the Dallas North Tollway.

Livingston wasn't ready to say when construction will begin. "That's still a ways out," she said.

## Dallas County has 20 of the busiest roads in Texas, report shows

By Cody Thorn

While still below prepandemic levels, traffic congestion continues to grow on Texas roadways, and 20 of the most gridlocked are located in Dallas County, according to a Texas A&M Transportation Institute report.

The **annual report** recently showed an increase in congested highways and streets in 2021, with 20 of the top 100 located locally.

The report started in 2009 and rates the 100 busiest segments of roadways in the state with a study looking at congestion and the delay it costs in terms of time spent stuck in gridlock. There were 1,860 roadways in 23 urban areas that were reviewed during the study—funded by the Texas Department of Transportation—which looked at how much longer drivers were on the road in traffic jams compared to noncongested conditions.

The delays have a large financial impact. According to research, a total of \$3.8 billion was lost between wasted fuel and lost time in 2021. Truck congestion costs were \$620 million.

The 2021 numbers showed an increase, but the report stated the COVID-19 effects still had conditions below the prepandemic congestion. The West Loop in Houston was the most gridlocked stretch in 2021 for the second year in a row, and eight of the top 10 remained unchanged from the previous two years. Researchers emphasized traffic will eventually return to familiar intensity as the state's population grows and its economy recovers, according to a press release.

“Traffic congestion isn't just a big-city problem, and that problem is almost sure to get worse as our population surges by almost 20 million in the next 25 years,” said David Schrank, the TTI's lead researcher on the annual study. “With that kind of growth, Texas needs to use every possible means to keep people and goods moving. We need to add capacity, operate the system efficiently and give people options for how to travel.”

The Dallas-Fort Worth area accounted for 37 of the top 100 busiest roadways—up from 34 in 2021. Dallas County lays claim to 20 of the top 100 busiest roadways in Texas, including three in the top 10. Woodall Rodgers Freeway between US 75 and North Beckley Avenue took the No. 2 spot in the state causing more than 1 million hours of delays and more than \$34.2 million lost due to congestion. That was followed by sections of US 75, I-345 and I-45 between US 75 and US 175, which came in at No. 7, and US 75 between I-635 and Woodall Rodgers Freeway, which came in at No. 9.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

## **Dallas-Fort Worth is fastest growing metro in US. But how will it fare in recession?**

By Jenny Rudolph

Dallas-Fort Worth is the fastest growing metro in the U.S. and the expansion isn't stopping anytime soon, real estate experts say.

The Metroplex is already home to 7.8 million people, but by 2045 that number could increase by 3.4 million people, according to new forecasts from the commercial real estate agency JLL. Migration from cities on the East and West coasts will continue to be a major source of population increase.

While DFW is still smaller than major metros New York City and Los Angeles, it surpassed both cities in percentage of jobs added. The Metroplex saw 6.5% job growth in the year ending in October, while LA and New York saw 4.3%, according to JLL's latest DFW Resiliency report.

Meanwhile, DFW had the greatest industry diversity compared to Texas' other major cities. The diversity of job sectors helps the DFW economy maintain its strength and withstand declines in select industries.

More than 20% of DFW's employment came from trade, transportation and utilities, and more than 18% came from professional and business services. Other major job sectors include education and health services, government, leisure and hospitality and financial activities.

Beating out New York and Los Angeles, DFW has led the nation in sales from real estate investments bought and sold since 2020. The Metroplex generated sales volume of more than \$43 billion from the fourth quarter of 2021 to the third quarter of 2022, according to JLL's report.

DFW also has the largest industrial development pipeline across the nation due to greater need for industrial space. The Metroplex has more than 62 million square feet of industrial space under development.

While economists have predicted a looming recession, DFW is positioned to weather the storm well and recover quicker thanks to consistent job growth, wide range of employment industries and proven resiliency in past downturns. During previous economic declines, the Metroplex recovered quicker than major cities like New York, Austin and Houston.

Fort Worth Report

## **Developer wants to clear Colleyville forest for homes. Hundreds of residents say no.**

By Haley Samsel and Seth Bodine

Just beyond rows of large homes in northeastern Tarrant County, trees stretch as far as the eye can see in one of Colleyville's last remaining pieces of [Cross Timbers forest](#).

To Tim Waterworth and what he calls a ragtag group of neighbors, the 14-acre property on Wilkes Road is more than just "a bunch of old trees." The forest is home to nearly 1,000 large trees that represent some of the last natural space not lost to development, he said.

"It's something I just think that people shouldn't take for granted," Waterworth, a wealth management adviser and 25-year Colleyville resident, said. "Colleyville has hit a tipping point in development, and people are very sensitive to hold on to what little green space we have left."

More than 500 residents have submitted letters opposing a Southlake-based developer's plan to build The Bluffs at Colleyville, a gated community of 19 luxury homes with prices starting at \$2 million. Neighbors came together under the name [Save Colleyville Trees](#) to create an opposition campaign, complete with a website, video and petition, Waterworth said.

Colleyville planning and zoning commissioners voted unanimously to reject the proposal in November. But, following an appeal by Southlake-based [WillowTree Custom Homes](#) and Sage Group Inc., the decision is now in the hands of the City Council, which met for a Jan. 5 public hearing dedicated to the proposal.

The Thursday night meeting was the developer's first chance to present its revised proposal to the public and answer questions from council members.

No action was taken because of council rules, with a formal vote expected for a special Feb. 7 session. The date is subject to change in the case Colleyville officials don't receive more information on elements of the plan, said Mayor Bobby Lindamood. To overturn the rejection, developers would need five of seven council members to vote in favor of the proposal.

<https://youtu.be/mXxISljOZiU>

More than 50 residents filled council chambers, with all speakers expressing opposition to the proposal. Several council members, including Lindamood, were skeptical of how WillowTree Custom Homes could remove hundreds of trees on a steep slope without causing drainage problems to nearby Big Bear Creek.



Lindamood said the plan makes him “extremely nervous” — and wants to make sure the tree preservation and removal counts are correct.

“(The tree counts) doesn’t add up,” Lindamood said. “I’m not a tree professional, but I do know how to read those plans.”

Curtis Young, a principal at [Sage Group Inc.](#) and the lead representative for the proposal, said developers have already made several concessions to address resident concerns. Those adjustments include reducing the number of lots on the property by increasing lot size and purchasing additional land to keep traffic out of the adjacent Ross Downs neighborhood, Young said.

“We’ve already been at this for six or seven months. We’ve thought this through very carefully,” Young told council members. “Our intent here is to work out something that is best for the city that may not make everyone happy, but it’s best for all involved here and yields a very high quality development for Colleyville because it’s a beautiful piece of property.”

### **Plans meet urban forestry requirements, but neighbors want park**

Beyond increased traffic flow, neighbors say they’re concerned about WillowTree Custom Homes’ proposal to remove about 5.48 acres of tree canopy, or about 47% of trees estimated on the property.

MaryAnn Nicholson, a 27-year resident and board member for the statewide [Texas Garden Club](#), said she fears that removal will hurt wildlife and the community at large. She urged Colleyville officials to negotiate with the property owner to purchase the wooded area and preserve it as a city park. The Tarrant Appraisal District estimates the 12 acres currently owned by the developers is worth about \$2 million.

### **What’s a heritage tree in Colleyville?**

Colleyville forestry regulations define heritage trees as post oaks, blackjack oaks, cotton wood, water oak, and green and white ash trees that have attained a significant age. More information on the specific definition, and penalties for removing heritage trees, can be found [here](#).

“It is essential to keep trees and wildlife habitats for survival of all wildlife species as well as for the enjoyment of current and future residents,” Nicholson said. “I would be happy to volunteer for any type of work that is needed in order to make that a reality for the citizens of Colleyville.”

Young’s proposal meets Colleyville rules to preserve at least half of the canopy. Developers would also be required to make up for the hundreds of removed “heritage” trees by either

planting 276 large trees, paying a \$176,600 fee or combining the two methods. A city [staff report](#) also found that the zoning change complies with Colleyville's comprehensive plan.

In an email statement before the hearing, Young said the sloped property will require a certain amount of grading to safely install streets, utility services and home sites. Grading involves adjusting the slope and soil elevation around a construction site before building.

Removing trees is a necessary part of accomplishing that goal, Young said, and developers have proposed a "tree preservation buffer" to preserve the trees planted by the current property owner.

"We have every intention to work with the city to minimize the amount removed," Young said. "This high quality residential neighborhood would undoubtedly result in the support and enhancement in the property values of our neighbors and the city at large."

### **Amid rapid development, residents hopeful plan will be denied**

Several residents said the incremental increase in tax revenue from the development isn't worth the cost. Emily Lucht, a member of the Save Colleyville Trees group, said there's already a lot of construction in the area.

The city is rapidly developing, with Colleyville officials approving [a \\$8.3 million project](#) to build "gateway pillars" as part of a beautification project. Several residents, including Lucht, call the pillars an eyesore that has contributed to residential opposition against development.

"The thought of having to then add development into it, and take out a bunch of really old and really historically significant green space just really upset everybody," Lucht said. "And made everybody that much more gung ho to keep it green and not tear down."

Young said some of the public comments were "a bit hyperbolic" because many trees will be preserved. Developers will continue working with city staff, including Colleyville's urban forester, on the project proposal, he said.

### **Residents say more than 50% of trees will be removed**

Per Colleyville regulations, at least 50% of the entire subdivision must be preserved, excluding trees located in existing utility easements or right-of-way. Once the lots are ready for homebuilders, at least 75% of the trees on each lot must be preserved. Tim Waterworth of Save Colleyville Trees fears this rule will wipe out more trees as part of the building process.

Before the Jan. 5 hearing, Waterworth expected council members to favor developers, in part because of misunderstanding around the tree ordinance and how many trees will be preserved once homes are built on the property.

But several council members, including George Dodson, appeared to share neighbor concerns over the narrowness of the home lots.

“I would be much more positive if it were half the number of lots that we’re looking at,” Dodson said. “That’s sort of where I stand right now. I would like to see further analysis of the trees that will have to be taken out.”

Lindamood assured residents that since he was elected last summer, the council has not approved any high-density housing projects. The high amount of public attention on the development has brought council members around to their cause, Waterworth said, and he has high hopes Colleyville officials will make an offer to acquire the property for parkland.

“The track that it’s on, if the city says it’s too many houses and they cut back the amount of houses, that’s cutting down the economic feasibility for the developer,” Waterworth said. “I just wish they would get it over with. I hope we don’t go on for 10 months like this.”

Dallas Morning News

## Naval Air Station Fort Worth completes \$4.8M runway repair project

Crews poured 23,000 five-gallon buckets of Delpatch epoxy.

By Eric Zarate

Patching the runway last month at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth was a record-breaking endeavor for an Ohio-based defense contractor.

Completing the \$4.8 million Runway 18 repair project, crews poured 23,000 five-gallon buckets of Delpatch epoxy to reestablish tarmac length from [9,000 feet back to 12,000 feet](#), according to the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service.

“The NAS JRB Fort Worth Runway 18 repair project is in fact our single largest project to date that utilized Delpatch,” said Ethan Fuller, pavement division manager for Delpatch manufacturer [D.S. Brown Co.](#) “We were certainly excited to team up with the Navy and provide a permanent solution for the runway at NAS JRB Fort Worth.”

Most of the repair work took place along the joints of each concrete panel. Crews removed the existing damaged concrete around the joints, until reaching solid concrete, then filled with Delpatch.

The former [Carswell Air Force Base](#), home of the legendary Strategic Air Command during the Cold War Era, became the first [Joint Reserve Base](#) in 1994.

“This project extends the life of the runway for another 20-plus years,” base director of facilities, engineering and acquisition Lt. Isaac Leskawat said.

Except for five days in December when the runway was closed while base personnel traversed the tarmac to collect foreign object debris (FOD), all the repairs were made on an active runway.

“It was a challenging project but a worthwhile one to help support the Navy and the F-35 program,” Fuller said. “Supporting our military is something we take very seriously.”

Dallas Morning News

## Will Dallas-Fort Worth businesses have enough water in the future?

A summit put on by Texan by Nature, a nonprofit organization started by Laura Bush, recently informed business leaders that the time to conserve the state's natural resources, including water, is now.

By Alexandra Skores

[Texas' population is estimated to increase by more than 70% over the next 50 years](#), from over 29 million people in 2020 to more than 51 million by 2070.

With that population increase comes the need for more water, and about 45% of the water needed to sustain that population will need to come from conservation and reuse.

How will the state accommodate the influx of people and businesses moving in and have enough water for them and for those of us already here?

"Before you make a decision to move your new headquarters to Texas and to take advantage of the various tax benefits that are associated, the question you should be asking is, 'Is there sufficient water for my industry to keep working?'" Sarah Schlessinger, CEO of [Texas Water Foundation](#), told a crowd of over 200 at Southern Methodist University in November.

A conservation summit put on by Texan by Nature, a nonprofit organization started by Laura Bush, informed business leaders that the time to conserve the state's natural resources, including water, is now.

Schlessinger said businesses and nonprofits need to consider water security in their Texas relocation plans, especially as the state continues to see rapid economic growth.

Many experts are calling on cities to start preparing for the growth to come.

Becky Grubbs-Bowling, assistant professor and extension lead at Texas A&M's AgriLife Dallas urban water innovation and sustainability hub, said the demand is affecting our existing resources. Water conservation is at the forefront of researchers' minds in educating the public.

"We are not going to have enough water to support the number of people that are living here," Grubbs-Bowling said.

D-FW is one of the [fastest-growing metroplexes](#) in the country. Collin County had the second-largest population growth of any U.S. county in 2021, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

"Whatever industry you're from, whatever sector, you can see here that there is a challenge and it should concern every single one of you," Schlessinger told business leaders.

But she said Texas is ahead of the curve just by having a water plan that looks at supply and demand.

Surging growth imperils sustainability

The Texas Water Development Board breaks down the state by regions to show the demand. [The region that most of D-FW sits in](#) is projected to continue to grow to over 8 million people by the year 2030, with demand surging in the same direction.

The state's 50-year water plan addresses the needs of all user groups in the state — municipal, irrigation, manufacturing, livestock, mining and steam-electric power — during a repeat of the drought of record, [according to the website](#).

[The Texas Water Development Board says](#) the capital cost to design, construct and implement its 2,400 recommended water management strategy projects by 2070 is \$80 billion in 2018 dollars, without accounting for future inflation.

As millions of people move to North Texas over the next decade, water development boards have started planning for infrastructure improvements.

Considering the number of companies that relocated to D-FW in 2022, the largest relocation was [industrial giant Caterpillar Inc.](#) which moved its headquarters from suburban Chicago to Irving. The corporate move made D-FW [home to 24 Fortune 500 companies](#).

In Caterpillar's [2021 sustainability report](#), the firm created goals to reach by 2030, including the implementation of water management strategies at all of the company's facilities in water high-risk areas.

Robert Horton, vice president of environmental and affairs at D-FW International Airport, said the airport has monitored the critical dependencies it has on water. D-FW International Airport is often cited as one of the main reasons firms relocate here.

"We have to look at our consumption and be responsible in how we consume water, but at the same time, the quality of water is also important," Horton said.

Horton has seen a lot of attention being placed on development practices in the area, noting the location where D-FW airport resides.

"At the airport, we have to look at our landscape," Horton said. "We have to look at the areas that are vulnerable and that are susceptible to flooding. We have to make sure that, in terms of our land development practices, we don't compromise the natural systems ability to absorb some of those floods or that excessive rainfall event and trigger flooding that would damage infrastructure."

He said the airport uses drought tolerant landscaping and fixtures that minimize water usage. The airport also purchased recycled and reclaimed water from Fort Worth for irrigation and the airport's thermal energy system.

Abraham Tueme, director of sustainability at Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages, said the D-FW facility is one of the most efficient for water usage in the firm. The company has seven production facilities, six of which are in Texas. Water is used from municipal water sources in manufacturing processes. The Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages plant uses water from the city of Fort Worth, which receives its raw water from Tarrant Regional Water District.

In 2020, Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages partnered with The Coca-Cola Foundation, to pledge \$2 million in support of global environmental organization, The Nature Conservancy's, efforts to meet water needs across our region.

The firm works with cities for different alternatives to source water, sometimes using rainwater for usage like washing Coca-Cola's big rigs.

"It's a very robust process and ideology on conservation, ensuring that we are able to operate in an efficient way that also protects generations of the future," Tueme said.

Grocery store chain Kroger, [which recently announced a mega-merger with Albertsons](#), has a "Zero Hunger, Zero Waste" social and environmental impact plan. Stores have implemented a five-point water-reduction retrofit program, which includes retrofitting pre-rinse spray valves, bathroom faucet aerators, urinal flush valves, commodes and flush valves.

Outside the stores, the company retrofitted irrigation sprinkler systems to reduce water consumption and installed more drought-tolerant landscaping to further conserve.

There are many ways to try to prepare for that influx of people that will need water.

Schlessinger pointed business leaders to a new statewide initiative, ["Texas Runs on Water."](#) It's modeled to have the same impact as the slogan that made waves for anti-littering in Texas in 1986, "Don't Mess with Texas."

"Texas Runs on Water" launched last year in Houston, the Texas Hill Country and the Panhandle. This year, it plans to expand into West Texas, San Antonio and South Texas to continue to spread the message about water conservation.

"No water, no everything," Schlessinger said. "We are one of the fastest growing states in the nation. We have one of the strongest economies in the world and it should be no surprise to you that we are also challenged with water insecurity."

The state is looking at different ways to mitigate the problem.

Infrastructure takes years

[The first new major reservoir](#) in Texas in nearly 30 years is the Bois d'Arc Lake, a 16,641-acre lake located northeast of the city of Bonham in Fannin County. It took approximately 15 years of planning and permitting for construction to begin in May 2018.

The lake began to hold water in April 2021, according to the website. By spring 2023, water delivery is scheduled to begin.

When it is fully operational, it will provide water to over 2 million North Texans, providing up to 82 million gallons of water a day.

After last [summer's record drought](#), it was clear that water concerns are very real. [The state is no longer under drought conditions](#), but droughts are unpredictable and can extend well beyond the summer months. This year, Texas experienced its worst drought since 2011, when the a drought cost the state's economy nearly \$7.62 billion in direct agricultural losses and nearly \$17 billion in total losses, [according to the Texas Water Development Board](#).

"This present drought has spelled disaster for the state's cotton industry," Comptroller Glenn Hegar said in a statement earlier this year. Texas produces about 40% of the nation's cotton, according to [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) estimates.

Grubbs-Bowling said people don't connect with these sorts of problems until it happens to them.

Hegar visited with organizations that are involved in water planning and management.



“With the population ballooning and businesses booming, it comes as no surprise that Texas will need a lot of water to stay afloat,” Hegar said in a statement. “But planning for Texas’ future water needs requires the dedication and resourcefulness of organizations and passionate individuals.”

In 2021, Texan by Nature launched the [Texas Water Action Collaborative](#), which matches companies with conservation projects to benefit Texas’ water resources. The program is doing a pilot project in the Trinity River Basin and expanding to another river basin in Texas by the fourth quarter of this year to accelerate investments in water conservation.

Joni Carswell, president and CEO of Texan by Nature, said the group is encouraging companies to work with schools and scientists on conservation projects to satisfy their ESG goals. Environmental, social and governance (ESG) refers to standards for a company’s behavior.

Ambika Chandra, a professor at the University of Texas A&M, said she’s paying attention to the problem of the growing freshwater resources needed for human consumption. One of the solutions, and a bulk of Chandra’s research, involves turf grass breeding.

Turf-grass breeding can be one solution to solving water usage. These holistic systems of turf grass can be used in lawns or athletic fields, and they need less water, Chandra said.

“We can breed the best drought-resistant variety of grass,” Chandra said. “But if our consumers are not educated enough to know how to reduce watering in their home lawns and other places, then you don’t see the impact as much as you wish to.”

It’s a challenge to educate Dallas residents about water quantity, Grubbs-Bowling said.

One of the quickest ways to shift behavior, Grubbs-Bowling said, is to channel education through kids. Agrilife creates community events to engage all ages.

“If you can get kids excited about something, they’re going to take it home and share it with their home and with their parents,” Grubbs-Bowling said.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

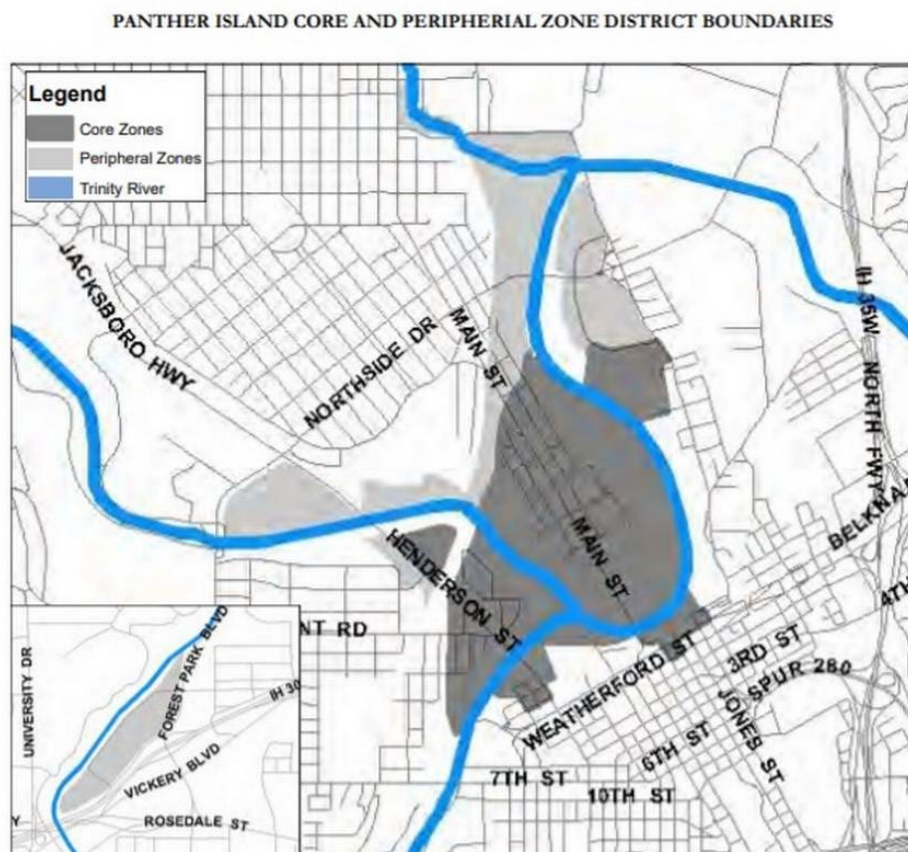
## Firm hired to shape the vision for Fort Worth's Panther Island entertainment district

By Jenny Rudolph

The future Panther Island redevelopment along Trinity River reached a new milestone Tuesday, nearly one year after the project got a green light for federal funding.

The Fort Worth City Council approved bringing on HR&A Advisors as the real estate and economic development consultant for Panther Island. The firm will serve as the project manager and help shape the vision for the roughly 800 acres between downtown and the Stockyards.

Conceived more than 20 years ago, Panther Island could become a waterfront entertainment district with restaurants, bars, shopping and apartments. The development would follow construction of bypass channels for Trinity River that will reduce risks of flooding. New bridges already span the future channels on North Henderson Street and White Settlement Road.



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This map, pulled from a city of Fort Worth zoning document, shows both the core and peripheral zones of the Panther Island project.

Work with the HR&A team will begin in the first quarter and should conclude by the end of the year, city partners say.

“The pieces are really coming together for Panther Island,” Fort Worth’s director of economic development, Robert Sturns, said in a statement. “Local partners and the business community are making a strong economic development push at the district, but we want to be smart about how we do it.”

The City Council voted to allocate up to \$560,000 for the consulting services, with up to \$435,000 coming from the city’s partners. Tarrant County is also providing up to \$150,000 for an economic development study.

## **PANTHER ISLAND PROJECT**

A 1.5-mile channel will connect sections of the Clear and West Forks of the Trinity River north of downtown Fort Worth to create Panther Island, which will actually have two islands. As it was conceived more than 20 years ago, Panther Island is intended to be a highly dense, walkable district that supports 10,000 residents as well as retail and office space.

[https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/8456985/?utm\\_source=showcase&utm\\_campaign=visualisation/8456985](https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/8456985/?utm_source=showcase&utm_campaign=visualisation/8456985)

HR&A Advisors was selected by city partners who have taken a lead on the project, including Tarrant County, Tarrant Regional Water District, Tarrant County College, the Real Estate Council of Greater Fort Worth, Downtown Fort Worth Inc. and Streams and Valleys. The firm was chosen to issue consulting services and analysis on the future of Panther Island’s development.

The national firm has offices in Dallas, New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Raleigh and Washington D.C. Previous HR&A projects include Dallas’ Klyde Warren Park and other waterfront projects like Washington D.C.’s Anacostia River, the University of Texas research campus, Houston’s Buffalo Bayou and the Ion Innovation District near Rice University.

Back in October, the city released a request for proposals for a real estate consultant in hopes of finding a firm with waterfront or special-case district development experience.

“The expertise and market knowledge that HR&A and their team will bring to the table over the next several months is critical to making sure that we have a complete picture of what’s possible for Panther Island,” Sturns said. “That way, we can make the most of this opportunity and ensure that it makes the kind of impact that has been envisioned for so many years.”

In addition to HR&A’s role as project manager and lead for economic development and real estate, the firm’s consulting team consists of Salcedo Group Inc., a Grand Prairie-based civil engineering firm; K Strategies, a Dallas-based outreach firm; and Lake Flato, a design and urban planning firm with offices in San Antonio and Austin.

HR&A was selected for its ability to address needs in economic development, real estate strategy, zoning analysis and public engagement. HR&A will evaluate the impact of development on surrounding districts including Fort Worth’s downtown and the Northside neighborhood, city partners say.

So what steps are up next?

HR&A will get to work shortly this year with an assessment of existing plans, regulations and conditions before transitioning to development strategies, governance and implementation. Stakeholder and community engagement will be an important part of the process, city partners say. Panther Island is the economic development piece in a flood control project that spans back decades. Last year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allocated \$403 million in federal funding for the Central City Flood Control Project.

Fort Worth Report

## **Fort Worth appears ready to move ahead on naming Panther Island bridges. White Settlement Road, though, still stalled.**

By Rachel Behrndt

From the names of notable Fort Worthians to the classic “Bridgey McBridgface,” Fort Worth residents submitted over 1,700 suggestions to rename the three bridges connected to the Panther Island Project.

Henderson Street bridge, North Main Street bridge and White Settlement bridge are all unofficial names. The city [solicited](#) suggestions to rename the bridges in February 2022. Submissions closed in March.

Ten months later, Fort Worth City Council will revisit the name suggestions at an upcoming Jan. 24 work session. City staff will present the most popular themes of the names submitted by residents. The process of renaming the bridge was delayed while the city council focused on higher-priority issues, said Michelle Gutt, Fort Worth’s communications director.

The renaming on Panther Island bridges presents an opportunity to elevate notable figures of Fort Worth’s past, said Peter Martínez, a history professor at Tarrant County College. “I think that would be huge,” Martínez said.

The names will be reviewed by a committee of members from the city of Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Tarrant Regional Water District, Streams & Valleys and Visit Fort Worth. The committee will then select five names to put forward for public voting, the city said.

The naming process has broader implications for White Settlement Road, which Mayor Mattie Parker said could be due for a change pending the renaming of White Settlement Bridge.

“I think from that we’ll get some lessons learned to decide if and when we’re going to embark on White Settlement Road and what that would look like,” Parker [previously told](#) the Report.

Parker declined to comment this week on how the upcoming discussion about renaming the bridges might impact the renaming of White Settlement Road.

Pat Peterson, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and a founder of the [Intertribal Community Council of Texas](#), said she was disappointed in the lack of progress to rename White Settlement Road.

The road is named after the town it leads to, [White Settlement](#), which is enveloped by west Fort Worth. The name White Settlement refers to a group of homesteaders, under the protection of the soldiers in Fort Worth, that pushed out Native American tribes from the area.

“I don’t know what it’s going to take to get them up and moving and really get the ball rolling on it,” Petersen said. “I guess it’s just not a priority at this point.”

Naming public infrastructure after the city's history and including Native Americans in the process is a powerful way to incorporate history into the everyday lives of Fort Worth residents, said Marjeanna Burge, a citizen of the Comanche Nation.

Despite the city branding itself as "where the West begins" Native Americans have historically not been included in discussion about preserving Fort Worth's history, Burge said.

"Native Americans are usually called the invisible minority," Burge said. "To see something publicly that acknowledges our existence is exciting... Native American people were the original inhabitants, but we are missing in the public eye, in the way of historical significance."

Several suggestions included the names of notable Native American figures and tribes, including Wichita, Comanche and Tawakoni. Several residents suggested [Quanah Parker](#) Bridge; Parker was the last chief of the Quahada Comanche Indians.

"The name not only shines a light on little known Native American history but also plays into the "Western" culture of Fort Worth," a response read.

Other respondents urged council members to honor notable Latino figures in the Fort Worth community, such as [Paulie Ayala](#) and [Pauline Gasca-Valenciano](#). People also suggested [Dolores Huerta](#) and [Selena Quintanilla Pérez](#). Other suggestions include Spanish words such as Tejano, a word used to identify Texan Mexican Americans.

"Fort Worth lacks the representation of these individuals in the (Latino) community," one respondent said. "The culture should be promoted and celebrated."

Naming a bridge after significant local figures of Latino descent would help incorporate Mexican American history into the fabric of the city, Martínez said.

"I think it gives a bigger narrative and more significance to the legacy of the Mexican American people in the city of Fort Worth," Martínez said.

Martínez offered his own suggestions of notable Texas Latinos, including [Sam Garcia](#) and [Gustavo "Gus" Garcia](#).

Both Martínez and Burge urge city leaders to engage with Latino and Native American communities and allow them to discuss how best to represent their communities' history through the naming of infrastructure.

### **Names of historical figures**

Several anonymous respondents offered explanations for their submissions. One, who suggested the bridges be named after [Gen. William Jenkins Worth](#), [Father Esteban Jasso](#) and [Opal Lee](#) said the bridges should be named after individuals who contributed to Fort Worth's development.

"One dedicated to our traditional history, one to justice and equality, and another to our future moral purpose," the respondent said.

Many other people suggested a single name. Some of the most popular answers include [Louis Zapata](#) Bridge. Zapata was the first Hispanic member of Fort Worth's City Council.

“He was very instrumental in helping the Hispanic community prosper,” one response read. Other suggestions included naming a bridge after [Atatiana Jefferson](#). Former Fort Worth police officer Aaron Dean was recently [found guilty](#) of manslaughter in the death of Jefferson in her home Oct. 12, 2019. Fort Worth City Council will consider [renaming a community center](#) in memory of Jefferson. The council meets at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 10.

“She deserves to be remembered,” a respondent wrote.

Army Staff Sgt. Bryan A. Burgess Memorial Bridge is another popular suggestion. Burgess, a Cleburne native, [died](#) March 29, 2011, while serving in Afghanistan.

“Please choose the North Main Bridge since Bryan loved to visit the Historic Stockyards every time he came home,” a response read.

Opal Lee and Leon Bridges were also popular suggestions.

Some submissions focused on themes. Residents suggested words with a Western flair such as Stockyards Road, Longhorn and Bluebonnet. Other submissions invoked values such as friendship and heritage.

Several submissions [referenced criticism](#) of the long-planned Central City Flood Control Project, also known as the Panther Island Project. The project recently [received \\$403 million](#) in federal funding, following decades of doubt about the handling of the massive flood control project. Several respondents suggested “boondoggle” as the new name for the bridges.

### **Less serious submissions**

Some didn’t approach the survey quite as earnestly. Some respondents stuck with suggesting historical figures. One, who suggested Bruce Lee, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin D Roosevelt offered a simple explanation for their choices: “Just some cool people.” Hard to argue with that. Another respondent turned to bribery to promote his suggestions of: Bridgey McBridgeface, Bridgey McBridgeface Jr. and Bridgey McBridgeface III.

“Please have mine win. Please. I’ll give you a hug,” the submission urged.

Another embraced Fort Worth’s long-standing rivalry with its neighbor to the east, suggesting: Dallas Sucks Bridge No. 1, Dallas Sucks Bridge No. 2 and Dallas Sucks Bridge No. 3. The respondent offered some wiggle room, though.

“It’s more of a theme than anything,” they said. “Feel free to run with it.”

Some suggestions sought to memorialize events, including: [“U2 @ Tarrant County Convention Center 1987”](#) Memorial Bridge.”

The proposer offered this as an explanation: “Go, bridges!”

<https://fortworthreport.org/2023/01/10/fort-worth-appears-ready-to-move-ahead-on-naming-panther-island-bridges-white-settlement-road-though-still-stalled/>



NBC DFW

## Here's How Dallas-Fort Worth Traffic Compares to the Rest of the U.S.

By NBCDFW Staff

If you think you're spending more time in traffic around North Texas lately, you're probably right.

A new [study from INRIX](#), a transportation data and analytics company, shows Dallas-Fort Worth congestion is creeping back to pre-pandemic levels.

According to the study, the typical North Texas driver lost 56 hours in congestion in 2022, up 12 hours from the year before but still 11% below pre-pandemic levels. The national average of hours lost in traffic is 51.

Sitting in traffic also cost DFW drivers an average of \$953, according to the study.

DFW ranked 14th in the U.S. in congestion - behind Stamford, CT and ahead of Baltimore, MD.

Here's a look at the top urban areas for congestion and the number of hours spent in traffic.

### 10 MOST CONGESTED CITIES IN THE U.S.

1. Chicago, 155 hours
2. Boston, 134 hours
3. New York, 117 hours
4. Philadelphia, 114 hours
5. Miami, 105 hours
6. Los Angeles, 95 hours
7. San Francisco, 97 hours
8. Washington, D.C., 83 hours
9. Houston, 74 hours
10. Atlanta, 74 hours
11. New Orleans, 77 hours
12. Portland, 72 hours
13. Stamford, 73 hours
14. Dallas, 56
15. Baltimore, 55

London was the most congested city globally for the second straight year, with drivers losing 156 hours to congestion.



KRLD

## **Transportation leaders suggest Texas lawmakers plan for continued growth amid budget surplus**

By Alan Scaia

Texas lawmakers returned to Austin Tuesday for their biennial session. The state legislature is scheduled to meet for 140 days every two years.

Transportation leaders say the state should start planning now to accommodate continued population growth. The U.S. Census says the state's population increased 16% from 25.1 million in 2010 to 29.1 million in 2020, more than any other state.

<https://omny.fm/shows/krl-d-news/transportation-leaders-suggest-state-leaders-plan>

North Texas is adding about a million people every seven years.

Texas lawmakers returned to Austin Tuesday for their biennial session. The state legislature is scheduled to meet for 140 days every two years.

Transportation leaders say the state should start planning now to accommodate continued population growth. The U.S. Census says the state's population increased 16% from 25.1 million in 2010 to 29.1 million in 2020, more than any other state.

North Texas is adding about a million people every seven years.

"This is an amazing region, and the people here probably fully understand this," says North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Director Michael Morris. "You've got to take pretty bold steps to work on really big projects, whether it be high speed rail, aggressive air quality programs, aggressive safety programs."

Earlier this year, TxDOT and NCTCOG broke ground on a \$2 billion reconstruction of the interchange of Interstates 820 and 20 and U.S. Highway 287 in southeastern Tarrant County.

"We don't build projects, we build systems," Morris says. "This actually is part of the statewide transportation system. This helps people from the whole state get to the Entertainment District in Arlington faster, DFW International Airport, all the things that occur in Downtown Fort Worth. It's the next phase of a project that's building a seamless transportation system in the region."

Interstate 20 in southern Tarrant County is ranked the 79th most congested highway in the state by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. The institute says 37 of the 100 most congested highways are in the Metroplex.

Interstate 610 in West Houston is ranked the state's most congested. In North Texas, four highways rank in the top ten: Woodall Rodgers Freeway is the second most congested highway in the state, 35W from Northeast 28th Street to North Loop 820 is 6th, the elevated highway

linking U.S. 75 to Interstate 45 in Dallas ranks 7th, and U.S. 75 from Interstate 635/LBJ Freeway to Woodall Rodgers ranks 9th.

As North Texas' population grows, Morris says the state cannot build enough additional lane miles to support cars alone. He says the state and communities should start planning now for additional options for transportation.

Morris cites Trinity Metro's planned extension of TEXRail to Fort Worth's Near Southside and ultimate goal of extending the line to Southeast Fort Worth.

"You'll be able to go from the hospital district to DFW Airport, downtown to the Hospital District," he says. "We implement dozens of policies and modes of transportation."

For highways, Morris says he will meet with state lawmakers about a potential pilot project to build some parts of roads with induction loops that could charge electric cars as they drive similar to the way a charging pad can recharge a phone without plugging it in.

"You could go, say, in lane two and for the next 40 miles, you're going to get a boost in electric, so you don't have these fears of range problems," he says, saying induction loops could be designed so they do not draw from the state's grid but rather from an option like solar panels along the road.

Morris says the Texas legislature can start planning now for infrastructure that can benefit the state's economy in the future. He says lawmakers can also start working with manufacturers now to test equipment to recharge cars as they travel.

Dallas Morning News

## Why Dallas mayor's call for more parks is relevant

Besides the known benefits in health and recreation, parks provide economic growth and development.

By Aran Agarwal

As our nation's most densely populated urban environments continue to grow and increasing traffic congestion leads to higher levels of pollution that hasten the looming impact of climate change, it is time we recognize the [powerful and counteracting benefits that city parks](#) can offer to supplement critical infrastructure growth, offset public health issues and enhance economic development.

While it is widely acknowledged that city parks add intrinsic value and benefits to local communities in terms of recreational activities, environmental aesthetics and urban sustainability, what is not so often considered is the benefit that these local gems provide in terms of economic growth and development. But this piece is an essential financial aspect of the consideration that city planners and urban developers must assume when accounting for an innercity revitalization and transformation project.

The notion that city parks provide our metropolitan areas with a firm foundational footing is not new. More than 150 years ago, Frederick Law Olmsted, generally regarded as the founder of American landscape architecture, responsible for the landscape surrounding the Capitol in Washington, D.C., conducted a study on the value of the property closely neighboring Central Park in New York City. In order to justify the \$13 million he proposed to design and build Central Park, Olmsted found that, over a 17-year period from 1856 to 1873, there was a \$209 million increase in property value directly related to the construction of Manhattan's urban jewel.

Whether or not there are economic impacts of local and regional parks is a point no longer debatable. A study published in April 2020 by the [Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University](#) summarized the economic role that local parks play in urban development and found that, in 2017, local park agency spending "generated more than \$166 billion in economic activity boosting national gross domestic product by \$87 billion and supporting over 1.1 million jobs that paid \$50.8 billion in salaries, wages and benefits." And, in Texas specifically, over 62,000 jobs were created that paid \$2.9 billion in labor income and added \$4.8 billion to the gross state product.

It's also important to note that the study performed by the CRA focuses exclusively on public park and recreation systems operated by local governments and does not include the national or state park systems, a further confirmation to the conclusion reached by Olmsted a century and a half ago, that a financial investment in local park and recreation activities will quantifiably enhance a community by increasing both property values and local revenue, bringing in homebuyers and adding to the local labor force.

There is, quite clearly, an increasing awareness that local park systems are significantly more valuable to an urban area than a peaceful location to walk a dog or push a stroller. Local park and recreation agencies are major city employers that, collectively — and literally— generate billions of dollars of revenue in economic activity for their communities.

We all know an example in Dallas, like Klyde Warren Park's effect on economic development. This has been proved over and over again in other locations like Chattanooga, Tenn., where property values rose 127% after an effort by local residents to repair the quality of life. In

Atlanta, condominium prices increased from \$115 to \$250 per square foot with the construction of Centennial Park. In Boulder, Colo., property tax revenue increased \$500,000 annually with the creation of a greenbelt. And in San Antonio, after an investment of \$425,000, Riverwalk Park has become the most popular attraction in the city's \$3.5 billion tourism industry.

These are cherry-picked examples from hundreds and hundreds more across the country in which a revitalization effort that included parks and recreation development has energized and galvanized a beleaguered region. In each of these cases, the common denominator is a group of solid financial decision-makers who truly understand the economic impact that these urban open spaces have on a local community.

Locally, according to Trust for Public Land, a national nonprofit organization that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of being outside, 73% of Dallas residents live within a 10-minute walk from a park. While this may seem like a decent metric, on a scale relative to the rest of our country, this places Dallas just below average in terms of accessibility. So, there is clearly work to be done.

Which is why we are so fortunate to have a mayor who understands the current situation and has a clear vision for the future. In his state of city address in November, Mayor Eric Johnson requested an inventory of vacant and underused city land in order to evaluate the possibility and suitability of transforming that land into park space. Johnson is committed to closing the gap between Dallas and other comparable urban locations and wants to ensure that every Dallas resident has access to parks, trails and other green spaces.

Clearly, we are all starting to understand how vitally important parks and recreation are to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community. Cities, like Dallas, are distinguished by a place of beauty amid a hectic and chaotic lifestyle, and parks, like ours, provide a sea of tranquility in an ocean of daily commotion. We've always known that parks provide a sense of public pride and unity to a community. Now, as it turns out, we see they provide financial value as well.

Dallas Morning News

## **FAA releases audio from deadly Wings Over Dallas Air Show crash between air boss, pilots**

"Fighters will be a big pull and up to the right," was the last transmission from the air boss before the crash at 1:21 p.m.

By Lana Ferguson

Newly released audio from the Wings Over Dallas air show gives insight into the moments before and after the [collision that killed six airmen](#) and destroyed two WWII-era aircraft in November.

A 36-minute air traffic control recording *The Dallas Morning News* obtained from the FAA contains conversations between multiple pilots and the show's air boss, who is responsible for airshow operations on the taxiways, runways, and demonstration area.

The Nov. 12 midair collision at Dallas Executive Airport involved a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and a Bell P-63 Kingcobra. One pilot was in the P-63 while two pilots and three crew members were in the B-17.

The Commemorative Air Force, which hosted the Wings Over Dallas show, identified those who died as [Terry Barker, Craig Hutain, Kevin Michels, Dan Ragan, Len Root and Curt Rowe](#). No one on the ground was injured or killed.

Videos from spectators posted on social media show the P-63 banking and striking the B-17, which was flying straight. The impact disintegrated the P-63 and cracked the B-17 in two, with the front half of the fuselage exploding in flames as it hit the ground.

### **'Knock it off. Roll the trucks.'**

In the minutes before the collision, the air boss asks the bombers, including the B-17, if they have the fighters in sight and if the fighters see the B-17, according to aviation expert Richard Levy, who reviewed the audio at request of *The News*.

"It seems there is a visual contact made between aircraft," Levy said.

The air boss directs the fighters, including the P-63, to fly along the 500 foot line away from spectators and the bombers to do the same from the 1,000 foot line.

He tells the fighters to come through first and ahead of the bombers, Levy said.

"Fighters will be a big pull and up to the right," was the last transmission from the air boss before the crash at 1:21 p.m.

A moment of silence in the audio occurs before the air boss, with urgency in his voice, says "Knock it off. Knock it off. Roll the trucks. Roll the trucks."

He tells some aircraft to hold position and seemingly diverts others to Lancaster Airport nearby as emergency responders and fire engines began responding to the crash.

### **When will a detailed report be released?**



The National Transportation Safety Board [released its preliminary report](#) Nov. 30.

The four-page report did not determine a cause for the crash, but provided details about the minutes and maneuvers leading up to the collision.

The report confirmed the instructions heard in the audio about traveling along the 500 and 1,000 foot lines but when the fighter formation approached the performance area, the report says, the P-63 was in a left bank and collided with the left side of the B-17, just behind the wing section.

A full report on the collision is expected to take 12 to 18 months.

Dallas Morning News

## How Frisco's \$10 billion Fields project is raising the game four years after its launch

In addition to newly announced Universal Parks and Resorts theme park, the 2,500-acre Frisco community will include thousands of homes, businesses, entertainment and retail.

By Steve Brown

Four years after it was announced, Frisco's \$10 billion Fields community is entering a new phase in its evolution into one of the region's hottest developments.

The first residents should be living in the 2,500-acre mega-project at the Dallas North Tollway and Panther Creek Parkway by the end of this year.

And companies are eyeing nearby building sites for future employment centers, retail and entertainment.

The just-announced 97-acre [Universal Parks and Resorts theme park](#) on the tollway is one of the largest additions so far to the project that also includes the [PGA of America's new golfing resort](#).

"For the next 10 to 20 years, Fields will be an amazing project to watch happen," said Plano-based builder John Landon.

His Landon Homes just bought land to [build 1,200 houses in the community](#) — Fields' largest single-family property purchase yet.

The project, which stretches between Preston Road and U.S. Highway 380, is planned to include as many as 14,000 homes and apartments plus commercial space.

Landon said he began talking to the Fields developers four years ago.

"I think it's going to be one of the top master-planned communities in the U.S.," he said.

That was the plan from the beginning. The project started in 2018 when Hunt Realty and Karahan Cos. teamed up to [acquire the largest remaining vacant property in Frisco](#) from the estate of the late Dallas businessman Bert Fields. Investors Chief Partners and Crosstie Capital partnered on the massive property.

Just a few months after the land sold, PGA of America said it would [move its headquarters from Florida to the Fields project](#) and build two golf courses, a resort and a headquarters building. The headquarters [opened last August](#), and the [Omni PGA Frisco Resort](#) is scheduled to open in May overlooking the 660-acre PGA campus. The golf courses are to open this spring.

"The pace of activity at Fields has far exceeded that of our original expectations," said Chris Kleinert, CEO and president of Hunt Investment Holdings, which oversees Hunt Realty.

Kleinert said when the property was purchased in 2018, he expected it to be a multi-decade development.

"Today, a little over four years since the acquisition, roads are being built, home sites are being prepared, demand for locating at Fields is high amongst office, retail and restaurant users, and

there are several more exciting things we will be bringing to Fields once details are finalized,” he said. “We have always intended Fields to be a thoughtfully designed, integrated live, work and recreate destination, and these plans are coming together much faster than we could have possibly imagined.”

Along with the homes and commercial space, Fields has set aside more than 250 acres for parks and open spaces, including 25 miles of trails.

During the last four years, there’s been a steady stream of project announcements at Fields, including two [new mixed-use commercial developments](#) on the tollway and [U.S. Highway 380](#).

Developer Fehmi Karahan said the project success so far is even greater than he envisioned.

“It’s incredible what’s happening, and I’m shocked at how much interest we have,” Karahan said. “This is 10 times bigger than Legacy West,” his last very successful development about seven miles south in Plano.

Karahan said multiple businesses are talking with developer KDC about planned offices in [the 180-acre Fields West mixed-use project](#) along the tollway.

“Retailers are saying they want to be part of this development,” Karahan said.

At the north end of the community at U.S. 380 and Legacy Drive, construction is set to begin in March on the area’s first apartment community, Karahan said.

AC and Element hotels are also planned in the North Fields project between PGA Parkway and U.S. 380.

Karahan said as the developers have planned the community, designs have been refined. “We are elevating everything to a higher standard,” he said.

Universal executives who visited North Texas looking for a site for their [new kids-themed attraction](#) were driving through Frisco on the tollway when they saw the huge “Fields” signs lining the highway, Mayor Jeff Cheney said. The Orlando-based company then made inquiries about the project.

“It certainly wouldn’t happen without the Fields development,” Cheney said. The Fields developers “have already been great partners bringing the PGA.”

Taylor-Morrison Homes is almost ready to start building [the first of hundreds of houses it plans](#) on the north side of Panther Creek Parkway. Construction crews are finishing up streets and utilities to support the new neighborhood.

Taylor-Morrison execs declined to comment on the status of their community. But the builders’ website said the first homes will be started in early 2023.

Housing analyst Ted Wilson said he isn’t surprised that Taylor-Morrison and Landon Homes took large positions at Fields.

“Finding future home lots in Frisco is vanishing — there is not much land left there,” said Wilson, principal with Dallas-based Residential Strategies. “It’s going to be a really top-notch

development. And the PGA golf course not only has local importance but is recognized nationally, especially for relocation buyers coming to this area.”

## Dallas to create citywide biking network

*By Kevin Cummings*

Dallas city staff is working to update its plan for what bike mobility will look like in the future with the goal of increasing accessibility to biking infrastructure and creating a citywide biking network.

After gathering resident feedback, city staff is putting together the new draft of its bike plan, which it hopes to unveil in March.

So far, Jessica Scott, bicycle manager with Dallas' Transportation Department, said much of the input received includes demand for increased maintenance of existing bike facilities in addition to requests for more protected and separated facilities.

"One of the really big reasons that we're doing this update is to not only capture how the city of Dallas has changed since 2011 ... but also to capture the really significant change in the technical and professional world of bicycle facilities," Scott said.

According to a map on the city's bike plan webpage, proposed new facilities in the Lakewood area include developing bicycle boulevards—streets that use traffic-calming measures, such as speed bumps and traffic diverters—along Fisher Road from Lawther Drive to Rockaway Drive and along Sondra Drive from Sperry Street to Abrams Road.

Proposed projects in Lake Highlands also include bicycle boulevards in addition to a proposed visually separated lane along Whitehurst Drive and Audelia Road from Walnut Hill Lane to Abrams Road, and a proposed biking trail along Walnut Street from Dallas' city limit to Greenville Avenue.

Other biking facility types proposed across the city include new shared-traffic routes and physically separated bikeways.

Scott said city staff hope to bring its finalized draft of the update to City Council by April or May, allowing for some of the proposed projects to be included in the next bond election. She added that implementation will prioritize "quick win," low-cost projects and those connecting to other existing forms of transit.

<https://communityimpact.com/dallas-fort-worth/lake-highlands-lakewood/city-county/2023/01/16/dallas-to-create-citywide-biking-network/>

## Free ride-share program in West Dallas connects residents to new opportunities

*To go places in life, you have to be able to move freely. For the community of West Dallas, a new mobility program backed by Toyota and DART is helping residents reach their destinations.*

*By Terry Wagner*

On a recent day in West Dallas, it's only a matter of minutes before Circuit ride-share driver Jakwan Riddick sees one of his regular passengers — a man he now considers a friend and who many call Mr. Johnny. The senior, who needs a wheelchair to get around, has been shopping for snacks at one of the neighborhood's main shopping centers and, for Riddick, who's busy stowing the wheelchair in the back of the vehicle, he's brought a gift: a Dr Pepper and a bag of Fritos.

It's not uncommon for Riddick to really get to know his riders, many of whom he helps daily. "I want to be the bridge to help them get to where they want to go," explains Riddick.

For people all over North Texas, using ride-share apps is an easy go-to when driving one's own car doesn't make sense, such as enjoying a night out with friends without worrying about getting behind the wheel. But in West Dallas, there's a ride-share service that fulfills a far more basic need for people who don't own vehicles and who rely on public transit to go about their days — to run errands, take their children to the doctor, or travel to and from work. And by having on-demand access to free rides through a smartphone app, they can save significant time, leading to an overall improvement in quality of life.

Toyota began researching a mobility service as part of its efforts in West Dallas, where a new STEM school is also being created. Following community meetings and an evaluation of area needs, Toyota collaborated with Circuit to provide a transportation option that connects West Dallas residents to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), as well as access to neighborhood-level needs, such as going to the grocery store or a medical appointment.

"We worked in community meetings to really understand where the mobility gaps were. The service we helped establish includes access to the main retail and grocery area in the community, education through the West Dallas STEM school, and connecting elsewhere throughout the city," says Kelli Gregory, Toyota Motor North America's senior mobility analyst and program leader for social innovation and strategic partnerships. "This mobility program ties into our overall efforts in West Dallas and integrates into DART's system."

Residents learn about the service via word of mouth from neighbors and observing the fleet of six electric, six-door vehicles as they zip around the community. Wrapped in colorful advertising or artwork created by students in the community, the shuttles are hard to miss.

"We love the fact that now people have embraced us and can utilize us to connect to public transit even further," says Jesse Landry, co-founder of RYDE/Texas Operations. RYDE owns the fleet of vehicles in West Dallas and other Texas cities and operates in partnership with Circuit.

In January 2023, DART joined with Toyota to support the service. "DART is very happy to help support this important program to ensure that our residents in West Dallas have easy access to the DART system," says Jing Xu, DART assistant vice president of service planning and

scheduling. “DART’s participation in this on-demand shuttle service furthers the agency’s commitment to environmentally friendly shared mobility, local communities and economies in West Dallas. This one-year pilot program will allow DART to evaluate service effectiveness before determining long-term goals and strategies in the area.”

The shuttles — known as the West Dallas Circuit Circulators — currently operate Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., traveling around a 3-mile service area that stretches from the Trinity River to the north and east, North Westmoreland Road to the west, and Interstate 30 to the south. Passengers can also take rides to/from EBJ Union Station and the West End Station, so they have quick access to a major transportation hub. Some of the most frequent pickup/drop-off points along the route include DART bus stops, Sylvan Thirty, Trinity Groves, Fish Trap Lake Park, Lakewest Assisted Living, and numerous apartment communities, grocery stores and pharmacies.

### **Getting personal**

As a resident of the community himself, Riddick appreciates the need that Circuit fulfills. And because of his personal connection with many of the riders, he often picks them up if he sees them along his route, even if they haven’t yet requested a ride on the app.

During two hours of a typical day of back-and-forth in West Dallas, Riddick makes multiple stops at Lakewest Assisted Living, helping mostly older adults with wheelchairs, walkers and canes both during pickup and drop-off. He collects another woman from the Cash Saver carrying multiple bags of groceries, which he helps load into the vehicle, and then carries to the front door of her apartment.

Another passenger is a 60-year-old woman who’s taking college courses and needs a ride to cash a check. Across the street, a mother and her napping infant daughter are heading to CVS for medicine. At the 7-11, while a resident of the assisted living center runs inside to get a hot dog, a frustrated man yells and curses at Riddick because his phone isn’t working, and he needs a ride.

“Don’t worry, man. I’ll take you where you need to go,” Riddick says, immediately bringing a smile to the man’s face, as he seems to suddenly recognize Riddick from a previous ride.

“Oh, thank you, you don’t know how much I need this. It’s hot,” the man says before getting into the back seat and starting up a lively conversation with the other passengers.

When the woman returns with her hot dog, the chatter and laughter become almost deafening, but over discussions of the day’s events in the neighborhood, politics and rumors of Shaquille O’Neal coming to the rec center that weekend, the five-minute commute to various locations feels more like a carload of friends than strangers randomly brought together.

And that’s proving to Toyota that this service is truly meeting a need in the community and providing people with options. “I think the freedom of movement is life changing,” Gregory says.

“It’s been a big pat on the back serving the people in the West Dallas Community,” says Riddick. “I love them just as much as they love me.”

<https://www.dallasnews.com/fwddfw/2023/01/17/free-ride-share-program-in-west-dallas-connects-residents-to-new-opportunities/>



## Report shows Denton County has 4 of busiest roads in Texas

*By Destine Gibson*

Traffic congestion continues to grow on Denton County roadways, according to a report from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

Denton County claims four of the 100 busiest roadways in Texas. For example, I-35E from Business 121 to I-635 is the county's busiest road at No. 36—up six spots from its previous ranking—with more than 226,000 hours of delays and more than \$43.6 million lost due to congestion.

The [annual report](#) showed an increase in congested highways and streets in 2021. The report started in 2009 and rates the 100 busiest segments of roadways in the state with a study looking at congestion and the delay it costs in terms of time spent stuck in gridlock.

There were 1,860 roadways in 23 urban areas that were reviewed during the study, which was funded by the Texas Department of Transportation. The study looked at how much longer drivers were on the road in traffic jams compared to noncongested conditions.

Traffic delays have a large financial impact. According to research, a total of \$3.8 billion was lost between wasted fuel and lost time in 2021. Truck congestion costs were \$620 million.

The 2021 numbers showed an increase, but the report stated the COVID-19 effects still had conditions below the prepandemic congestion. The West Loop in Houston was the most gridlocked stretch in 2021 for the second year in a row, and eight of the top 10 remained unchanged from the previous two years. Researchers emphasized traffic will eventually return to familiar intensity as the state's population grows and its economy recovers, according to a press release.

"Traffic congestion isn't just a big-city problem, and that problem is almost sure to get worse as our population surges by almost 20 million in the next 25 years," said David Schrank, the TTI's lead researcher on the annual study. "With that kind of growth, Texas needs to use every possible means to keep people and goods moving. We need to add capacity, operate the system efficiently and give people options for how to travel."

The Dallas-Fort Worth area accounted for 37 of the top 100 busiest roadways, which is up from 34 in 2021.

See the 100 busiest roadways in Texas [here](#).

<https://communityimpact.com/dallas-fort-worth/lewisville-coppell/transportation/2023/01/17/report-shows-denton-county-has-4-of-busiest-roads-in-texas/>

Dallas Morning News

## **Dallas airshow fatalities raise questions about air boss qualifications**

The FAA should review its requirements for these important safety officials.

By Dallas Morning News Editorial

The federal investigation of the fatal Wings Over Dallas airshow two months ago won't be completed for more than a year. But preliminary findings have raised some concern about the qualifications of "air bosses" at these popular events, which draw tens of thousands of spectators across Texas and the country every year.

Six pilots and crew members were killed when two World War II-era warbirds collided in midair at Dallas Executive Airport as shocked spectators looked on, many of them recording the explosion on their smartphones.

An air boss is the primary operations and safety official who at an airshow functions like a parade marshal, making sure each of the planes involved is carefully positioned both on the runways and in the air.

During an airshow, no Federal Aviation Administration-certified air traffic controller is directing the airshow planes. That's all done by the air boss, who is often equipped with a headset, walkie-talkie and binoculars, stationed on a platform and making sure everything goes according to plan.

But despite this great responsibility, it was only in 2020 that the FAA began requiring an air boss to have a "letter of authorization" showing he or she had passed certain training requirements. Though approved by the FAA, those requirements have been established not by the agency, but by the International Council of Air Shows, an industry trade group.

ICAS's Air Boss Recognition Program requires that applicants be evaluated on dozens of tasks, including their ability to conduct detailed preflight briefings of FAA airshow rules and regulations.

Of concern is that the National Transportation Safety Board's preliminary report about the Dallas crash released Nov. 30 noted that the pilots had no briefings to coordinate their altitudes either before or during their flights. That finding, plus video and audio recordings of the moments before, during and after the accident, should prompt the FAA to review the required qualifications of air bosses.

George Cline, a longtime air boss, instructor and former air traffic controller, said the FAA should be more stringent and develop its own enforceable rules and regulations to certify air bosses, as it does for pilots and air traffic controllers, not simply issue letters of authorization.

We don't know to what extent, if any, the air boss working the fatal Dallas crash bears responsibility, or what other factors contributed to the tragedy. That's for the federal officials to determine.

But at the very least, this terrible accident has illuminated a possible gap in FAA oversight that needs closing. Air shows operate as nonstandard FAA operations and are governed by mounds of flight standard regulations that the air boss must ensure are followed. It's time to add some for the air bosses themselves.

Dallas Morning News

## **Dallas parking meter rates could rise; city says it's an effort to increase more spots**

The Dallas City Council could vote sometime this summer on a series of changes related to parking

By Everton Bailey, Jr.

Parking meter rates in areas such as Deep Ellum and downtown could soon have a \$1 minimum, up from as low as 5 cents in some areas, if Dallas transportation officials get their way with [proposed new city rule changes and more parking regulations](#).

That's what they want to do in an effort to free up on-street parking spots in heavy traffic areas and increase city revenue.

In addition, loading zone areas would be marked more clearly, and more clear signage would be installed to inform motorists where parking isn't allowed or where pay is required.

Transportation Director Gus Khankarli told council members Wednesday that the city's current lack of regulations managing street curbs fosters illegal parking, leads to valet parking monopolizing available spots for hours, and creates "significantly below market rate" valet licenses and residential parking permit fees. He also said the city has challenges with parking enforcement, and the majority of parking meters are "obsolete."

"The current conditions we have make it difficult in finding on-street parking in popular areas, which can discourage folks from visiting these areas for short trips," Khankarli said.

The proposals to better manage on-street parking and curbs are still being developed, and feedback will be sought from the public, as well as representatives from DART, Downtown Dallas Inc., the Deep Ellum Foundation and other groups, he said. A list of recommendations for city code amendments and other rule changes could be brought to the City Council for a vote during the summer.

Khankarli said he didn't yet have a price estimate on how much all the changes would cost.

The city currently has no set rules or criteria for installing parking meters, adjusting rates or time restrictions. It means rates in Dallas can change from block to block.

City officials said last year that parking meter rates hadn't been updated in 10 to 20 years and ranged from 5 cents to \$1.50.

Kathryn Rush, chief planner in the city's transportation department, said the range of rates could widen between \$1 to \$6 to put Dallas more in line with other large cities, adding block-specific rates and more proactive enforcement to make sure people aren't staying over their time limit.

Rates could be increased up or down from 25 cents to 50 cents every six months depending on need, she said.

"If the price is too high and many curb spaces remain vacant, nearby stores lose customers, employees lose jobs, and the city loses tax revenue," Rush said. "If the price is too low and no spaces are vacant, people will be discouraged from visiting an area, and drivers who cruise for a space waste time, fuel, congest traffic and pollute the air."

Rules could be changed to allow meter revenue in some high-traffic areas to go towards area improvements, like sidewalk repairs, tree planting and street maintenance, she said.

“Other cities have seen that few businesses will support charging for on-street parking,” Rush said. “But if part of the meter revenue is dedicated to specific additional public services in those metered neighborhoods, residents would be more inclined to support this performance pricing.”

Council member Jesse Moreno, whose district includes Deep Ellum, said he was encouraged by the changes and suggested an analysis be done of parking outside of city buildings that sit empty for hours after they close.

He said he understood drivers’ frustrations for how long it can take to find parking in busy areas, but he didn’t believe it’s an issue.

“I do think we need to recognize that when you have a good product, when you have a good business, folks are going to find you and people are going to find a place to park,” he said.

Council member Cara Mendelsohn, who represents Far North Dallas, disagreed. She pointed to neighboring cities such as Plano, Frisco, Richardson and Addison having many free and available parking options. She said available parking was vital to the growth of the city.

“The truth is that when I’m looking to go to dinner with friends, very often they do not want to come into this area because of parking,” she said.

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Dallas Morning News

## **Dallas ranked among the most congested cities in the U.S. as work from home is phased out**

Congestion cost Dallas \$3.1 billion in 2022, according to INRIX

By Noor Adatia

Have you been experiencing longer delays while driving in North Texas?

That's because traffic levels across the country are approaching pre-pandemic levels, one study says.

However, while current congestion on the roads mirrors 2019 conditions, traffic hasn't completely returned to normal, according to data company INRIX, which analyzes real-time and historic traffic patterns. And compared to other major cities in the United States, Dallas-Forth Worth isn't even facing the worst increase in congestion.

In its ranking, [INRIX's 2022 'global traffic scorecard'](#) examined GPS data to figure out commuting routes as well as peak and free-flow speed data to calculate time lost on roads.

In North Texas, drivers lost an average of 56 hours in 2022, up 15 hours from 2021 but still 11% below pre-pandemic levels. Dallas ranked 14th in terms of congestion.

Urban areas that saw the greatest amount of delays were Chicago, at 155 hours lost, Boston at 134, and New York City at 117. Miami and Las Vegas saw the biggest increases. The national average of hours lost in congestion came in at 51.

Congestion in 2022 also came with a price. In Dallas, congestion cost the city \$3.1 billion, or \$953 per driver, while traffic in Chicago cost \$9.5 billion or \$2,618 per driver, according to this study.

With most activities returning to normal in 2022, the year was expected to more closely resemble 2019, but high gas prices put a wrench in these predictions.

"That trend was halted as oil prices began to rise across the world and were further exacerbated by the invasion of Ukraine by neighboring country Russia," the study reads.

Fuel costs rose by 32% in 2022, according to the study. In spite of soaring gas prices, people continued to drive, but are getting less far — with miles per vehicle only slightly increasing over 2021.

Another finding from the study shows that safety concerns did not change in 2022, even with fewer drivers on the road due to the increase of hybrid work. Last year, the rate of traffic-related deaths was "significantly higher" than in the years between 2011 through 2019.

In addition, telecommuting, or working from home, remained "relatively strong" among many global and national workers. As a result, not all cities saw an increase in commutes to their downtown or city centers.

**What are the most congested cities?**

Compared to cities with smaller populations, Dallas' ranking comes as a surprise to some. D-FW is [considered the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the U.S.](#), with nearly 8 million residents.

Other Texas cities also made it into the top 25, with Houston ranked ninth and Austin 18th.

Here are the top 15 most congested cities in the U.S., according to the study, along with their average amount of traffic delays.

- Chicago — 155 hours
- Boston — 134 hours
- New York City — 117 hours
- Philadelphia — 114 hours
- Miami — 105 hours
- Los Angeles — 95 hours
- San Francisco — 97 hours
- Washington, D.C. — 83 hours
- Houston — 74 hours
- Atlanta — 74 hours
- New Orleans, 77 hours
- Portland, Ore. — 72 hours
- Stamford, Conn. — 73 hours
- Dallas — 56 hours
- Baltimore — 55 hours



Dallas Morning News

## Documents provide details — but no cause yet — of deadly 2021 pileup in Fort Worth

The National Transportation Safety Board released 1,400 pages of information on the 130-car crash.

By Sarah Bahari

In the early hours of Feb. 11, 2021, an illuminated highway sign on Interstate 35W in Fort Worth offered a stark warning:

“ICY CONDITIONS EXIST/PLEASE USE CAUTION.”

Less than three hours after that message appeared, more than 130 cars and semi-tractors had skidded across the ice-coated toll lanes in one of the [deadliest crashes in U.S. history](#).

With nowhere to go, the vehicles piled onto one another, strewn more than 1,100 feet along the highway. Six people died and more than 60 were injured.

New details about the crash emerged Wednesday with the release of 1,400 pages of documents related to the National Transportation Safety Board’s investigation.

The report includes interviews with witnesses and first responders, details about the speeds of cars and treatment of the roads in the days and hours leading to the crash. It does not, however, offer any conclusions about the probable cause of the crash, investigator findings or recommendations.

State Rep. Ramon Romero, a Fort Worth Democrat whose district includes the area around the crash site, said Wednesday that much remains unknown about the pileup and pressed the NTSB to provide more details.

Romero has pushed for the removal of a [concrete barrier that divides](#) the toll lanes from the general-use lanes on the right, which he believes may have contributed to the crash’s death toll. Barriers also separate the toll lanes from northbound traffic on the left, leaving careering vehicles nowhere to go.

“We want to know that our highways are safe and that this will not happen again,” Romero said. “Right now, we don’t know that.”

The crash occurred at the beginning stages of 2021’s devastating winter storm, just days before much of Texas lost power and water.

In preparation for the freeze, the report says North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners, a private company that manages the highway, treated the roads with a salt brine. After a smaller collision the morning of Feb. 11, maintenance crews again treated the lanes, less than two hours before the pileup.

About 15 minutes before the crash, the average speed was 65 mph in the right lane and 82 mph in the left lane, according to one of the documents. The speed limit is 75 mph.

Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker declined to comment on the documents Wednesday through a city spokeswoman, saying she had not had the opportunity to review them.

A final report with a probable cause and recommendations is expected this spring, a spokesperson for the NTSB said.

For now, Romero said he urges drivers to avoid these toll lanes when there is a threat of freezing precipitation.

“It is a dangerous roadway anytime there is a freeze,” he said. “This would happen again if the conditions are similar.”

WBAP

## **Federal Funds to Improve North Texas Bike & Pedestrian Paths**

Over \$63-million in funding is aimed at making pedestrian and bike paths safer in North Texas. The Infrastructure Bill passed by Congress last year earmarked \$55-million for transportation projects in Dallas, Tarrant, Collin, and Denton Counties.

The Regional Transportation Council approved the federal funding for construction of 13 active transportation projects. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is adding an \$8-million match to a \$55-million federal grant to make \$63-million available for projects.

The NCTCG's Kevin Kokes says one of the projects stretches across the Metroplex, involving Dallas Area Rapid Transit improving paths from DFW Airport to Plano. Another project includes money for pedestrian and bicycle paths involving a regional trail connecting existing trails within communities such as Allen and Frisco. The projects must be completed within three years.

<https://www.wbap.com/2023/01/18/federal-funds-to-improve-north-texas-bike-pedestrian-paths/>

Dallas Morning News

## **Frisco Mayor Jeff Cheney responds to concerns about Universal**

The mayor said H-E-B generates more traffic than the new theme park will bring.

By Susan McFarland

With the [announcement](#) that Universal Parks & Resorts bought a site for a theme park in Frisco along the Dallas North Tollway, some residents are apprehensive.

Last week residents who attended a meeting held by city officials at nearby Trent Middle School voiced [concerns about traffic](#). Discussions continued this week during the Frisco City Council meeting.

In response to traffic concerns, Mayor Jeff Cheney announced new data he learned of a few hours prior to the meeting.

“The number one reaction without question has been about traffic,” Cheney said. “This is a 97-acre site. The anticipated traffic impact is actually less than what H-E-B does on 14.6 acres. As proposed, it will actually be one of the lowest, if not the lowest traffic generator projects on our entire stretch of the tollway.”

Residents were also concerned about crime, human trafficking, the park’s business model, what type of employees the park will attract, city transparency on the deal, Frisco turning into “Arlington 2.0,” and environmental impacts.

Some who spoke, including Laura and Zachary Countryman, referenced a peer-reviewed journal article about a case study of crime concentration in Orlando because of Universal Studios.

“From 2015 to 2017, surrounding neighborhoods experienced a 198% increase in crime around the park which resulted in a crime rate more than double the state and national average,” Zachary Countryman said. “Crime goes up around theme parks. My wife and I chose to live in Frisco in part because of its excellent safety record. We would hate to see that change in the wrong direction.”

Laura Countryman said Frisco’s superb quality of life is endangered by “bringing in theme parks to encroach on what’s essentially a bedroom community.”

“I don’t think that Universal’s incentives can offset the peace of mind that people sought when they chose to work and raise a family in Frisco,” she said. “Our city identity is really not one of being a tourist trap, especially not for the sake of making a quick buck or a sensational headline.”

Cheney said council read the study and crime statistics were the first thing brought up during initial discussions.

He said this park, because the age is geared toward children, will see different results.

“The commitment to Frisco is to make sure it’s for the younger population which wouldn’t bear that same fruit as far as crime goes,” Cheney said.

The mayor said part of the deal is to also confirm there cannot be a bait and switch, saying the park is for children but then a decade later roller coasters come in and then it's something completely different.

Emily Rottenberg questioned the sustainability of a park geared for ages 3 through 9 with hours of operation while they are in school. She also was concerned about the pay level of jobs created at the park and where the employees would live.

"These aren't C-level jobs. These aren't high paying jobs when you compare them to other jobs in the city of Frisco," Rottenberg said. "Also where are the people who are going to take these low paying jobs live? Is there going to be apartments associated with it, higher density properties?"

Rottenberg also talked about what she said was "the clandestine nature of the deal compared to other deals between Fields and the city."

"They were really, really open about the PGA. That seemed to be transparent. This kind of seemed to be done after dark, late at night, thrown in ... and then have an announcement sprung on the citizens," she said.

Cheney said regarding the announcements of PGA Frisco and Dallas Cowboys headquarters The Star, "those were announced and voted on the same day. And part of that reason is that had it been announced in advance it would have potentially blown those deals up. That's how a deal like this would normally be done."

Cheney said staff worked with Universal so there would be a buffer after the announcement, so citizens can understand exactly what the project is and more importantly what the project isn't.

"There is a lot of misperceptions about what is being proposed ... But that actually allows a full month of citizen input which we've never done on one of these large scale public projects," Cheney said.

The mayor also addressed environmental concerns, specifically water usage.

"We invested in reuse water lines throughout the entire city," he said. "That was honestly part of what enabled us to land the PGA ... that saves so much money. The Star uses our reuse water lines and we will certainly work with Universal because water here in Frisco has always been an important thing."

Eddy Williams was concerned about a possible \$30 million incentive deal, something the mayor did not discuss.

"Is that strictly rumor? Or on the table?" he asked.

Cheney said there has not been an agreement finalized with Universal and when it is, it will be publicly announced.

The mayor encouraged residents to attend future town hall meetings for more information.

Dallas Morning News

## 5 takeaways from new report on 130+ vehicle crash in Fort Worth. When will we know more?

The report offers a glimpse at eye-witness accounts, whether speed was a factor, and what changes officials made to be more cautious in the future.

By Aria Jones, Isabella Volmert and Lana Ferguson

Nearly two years after a [massive, deadly pileup on an icy Fort Worth toll road](#) involving over 100 vehicles, the National Transportation Safety Board released a [report](#) Wednesday detailing some of the factors leading up to the crash.

The [board's report](#) offers information and details safety measure changes after six people died and dozens were injured in the crash. The pileup — which began about 6 a.m. on Feb. 11, 2021 — sent more than 130 cars and semitrucks sliding across a stretch of toll lanes on Interstate 35W. Heaps of vehicles stretched for more than 1,100 feet after the crash, one of the deadliest in Texas history.

While the 1,400-page report provides new details about the crash, a cause has not yet been determined by the NTSB.

The report did not include conclusions from investigators, what they recommend or whether investigators believe proper precautions were taken to protect the roads — and those driving them — in frigid temperatures.

Still, the recently released report offers a glimpse into what may have happened that day. Here's what we know:

### What did first responders see?

First responders described a morning of chaos as emergency crews struggled to get close to the crash, which occurred about two miles north of downtown Fort Worth between Northeast 28th Street and Northside Drive, according to interview transcripts the NTSB released. A few first responders described to investigators that their emergency vehicles slid for dozens of yards before halting as they arrived on the scene.

"Everyone that was there was falling, I mean, the whole time," one Fort Worth fire department engineer said.

One MedStar EMS responder said when he first saw the wreck: "I was probably in a daze for about 30 seconds just because I've never seen anything quite like that before."

A different MedStar employee was on his way to work when he became part of the pileup. When he saw brake lights ahead of him near 28th Street, he began to ease his breaks only to begin sliding.

The employee told investigators he turned his vehicle into the center barrier, attempting to slow down before colliding with the car ahead of him. Then, a semi-truck barreled into his vehicle and he temporarily lost consciousness, he said.

"I hear cars outside just crashing," he recalled after waking up. "After every single crash, there was another scream. It was just — it was kind of bone-chilling."

The EMS medic told investigators that the stretch of the tollway has minimal shoulder space and few exits in either direction.

“There was no room to get around anything,” he said. “Everything just piled up and just created a complete barrier, (a) blockage.”

EMS and other emergency responders said in interviews they did not see sand treatment on the tollway where the pileup happened.

“Matter of fact, that’s one of the first things I looked at and was thinking, ‘Where’s the sand at, you know?’” a Fort Worth fire department lieutenant said of the southbound toll lanes. She described the road as “a sheet of ice.”

The lieutenant said that earlier that day, she responded to a weather-related crash at about 3 a.m., about five miles from the pileup in the northbound lanes of I-35. She told investigators she notified fire communications that the road should be sanded, and said she saw a pickup truck from the North Tarrant Express sanding the roads near that crash driving north.

### **Role of road treatment still unconfirmed**

[Families and victims of the crash](#) have faulted the agency that manages the North Tarrant Express for not sanding or properly preparing the tollway before the freeze, although the NTSB’s report doesn’t offer any conclusion on the role of weather treatment.

According to the preliminary report, the North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners, a consortium of companies that built and operates the TEXPress toll lanes, said the roads were pretreated with a brine or salt solution, including the two southbound toll lanes in the vicinity of the crash the morning of Feb. 9, approximately 44 hours before the crash.

The NTE said the optimum time for efficiency is to treat the roads with the brine 1 to 3 days in advance of a storm.

According to a timeline of events released in the new report, parts of the toll and general use lanes of I-35W were spot-treated with salt, including entrance and exit ramps, after a 3 a.m. crash the same day about five miles to the north. It was not clear where exactly these spot treatments occurred.

By 3:40 a.m. the NTE activated cautionary signs warning motorists of icy conditions, all to the north, about 8 miles from the crash location.

In multiple interviews with the NTE, employees said brake checking and visual observation were common practices for monitoring ice accumulation. Multiple employees said they did not receive formal certification for spot-checking icy road conditions beyond learning how to operate equipment during snow and ice.

One employee said: “They basically just tell us to drive and stop and if we skid, you know, that’s pretty much it.”

A supervisor who was responsible for managing corrective and spot treatments of roads for NTE confirmed that a certification process does not exist for spot-checking, and that “it’s just more of a training.”



A supervisor said crews did not lay down salt on the southbound toll lanes on the night before the crash because “there was no moisture in the area.” He told investigators that he was working with about two fewer employees than what is “typical” for the night shift.

### **Was speed a factor?**

Some documents appear to indicate — but do not conclude — that speed might have played a role in the pileup.

About 15 minutes before the collisions began, the average speed of vehicles driving on the road was 65 mph in the right lane and 82 in the left lane, according to highway sensors installed by the private toll road operator.

The speed limit is 75 mph.

However, the average speed soared to 103 mph at 5:59 a.m., about 12 minutes before the crash began, documents show.

The National Transportation Safety Board did not have additional details about what caused the brief jump in speed, nor did it say that it triggered the accident.

### **What changes have been made to weather preparedness?**

North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners changed some of its winter weather operations after the crash, although the report notes the initiatives were done “independent of the cause or causes of this particular accident.”

Most of the improvements were made to equipment.

It doubled the number of its maintenance vehicles equipped for winter weather from three to six. It added three pickup trucks to the fleet, bringing the total to 13. Ten of those trucks can spray brine solution now, where previously only three could.

NTEMP added 18 weather sensors, which can tell air and pavement temperatures, to areas where freezing is most likely to occur. The sensors provide employees with real-time alerts when certain conditions are detected on the road.

### **What’s next?**

The public docket includes factual information on the crash, such as weather conditions, road treatment and car speeds. But the 1,400 pages of documents offer limited insight on what caused the deadly pileup and guidance for the future.

A final report with conclusions, findings and recommendations, is expected to be released in late winter or early spring, said NTSB spokeswoman Sarah Sulick. This document will provide an investigation analysis, likely causes of the crash and any other contributing factors.

Sulick added that the report will also include recommendations on how to prevent incidents like these from happening again.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

## **Dissed again? Some Hemphill residents say they were left out in this plan for townhomes**

By David Silva Ramirez

A townhome project on Hemphill Street is headed toward a potential city council vote next month, but residents in the predominantly Hispanic area are concerned because they say there was little community input on the project.

The proposed project, on the corner of Hemphill Street and West Morningside Drive — south of downtown Fort Worth and west of Interstate 35W — would include 24 two-story attached townhomes.

The location was previously a used car lot and is now a COVID-19 testing site. Ricardo Avitia, a community organizer for Hemphill No Se Vende (Hemphill is Not for Sale), said residents feel disrespected and that the project wasn't properly communicated.

"No one wants to feel that they were left out," he said. A representative of the developer said the company reached out about the project to groups representing the area. Residents of Hemphill have felt that they were left out of development processes in the past, and some are concerned that residents are being bypassed again.

"To have this transpire is truly disheartening for the community as a whole," Avitia said. "We're a low-income, majority Hispanic [and] aging community."

### **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The Fort Worth zoning commission unanimously recommended the zoning change for 2517 Hemphill St. to 2531 Hemphill St. during a Jan. 11 meeting. The future of the project now depends on a Feb. 14 city council vote.

Fort Worth-based Townsite Company proposed the project, saying the townhomes would be rented and would offer "another residential option at a lower price point than the larger rental projects in the area."

TownSite co-founder Mary Nell Poole said she obtained letters of support from David Motheral, vice president of the Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative, and the South Hemphill Heights Neighborhood Association.

Poole said she would provide the Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative with design presentations as the process moves forward.

"Hopefully [this] will be a catalyst for other new development along the corridor," she said.

She said the townhome buildings are planned to stay within the relative size of nearby businesses and not overshadow the nearby residential area.

Poole did not share what the rental price would be for the townhomes.

The Hemphill commercial corridor is a target for urban redevelopment by the city. According to the city's zoning report, the proposed zoning change is compatible with surrounding land uses

and aligns with the Comprehensive Plan, a guide for development, zoning and more throughout the city.

## **CONCERNS ABOUT COMMUNICATION**

Avitia opposed the project during the zoning commission hearing, saying residents were not properly alerted about the proposed zoning change because signage was not posted on the property.

According to city ordinance, the city manager “shall direct the erection of at least one sign upon each property proposed to be rezoned” and the sign shall be posted no less than 10 days before the public hearing.

The ordinance also states that a written notice of public hearings of proposed zoning changes “shall be sent to owners of real property lying within 300 feet of the property upon which the change in classification is proposed” no less than 10 days before the hearing.

Notices can be either sent or posted. According to the city’s zoning report, mail notifications were sent to residents within 300 feet of the site and notifications were emailed to surrounding organizations. These were sent on Dec. 30.

Avitia said he found out about the proposal through the zoning agenda, even though he’s a member of the Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative.

“In the last six months, not one time was this brought up,” he said. Hemphill residents held varied opinions of the proposed change. Bernard Garcia said the process should be correct and transparent but said there should be more mixed-use development in the area.

“It’s just an empty lot,” he said. “Might as well provide some business and more housing to the area.” Resident LaNell Garfias said she believes the Hemphill area needs change for the better, but she’s concerned about the specific project. “Urban residential means they can just build more condos and stuff the neighborhood doesn’t need,” she said.

“Yes, it needs change, but not by pushing everyone out.” Avitia said he doesn’t want to comment on the specifics of the project. He said at this point he doesn’t want to take away the disrespect he feels for his community. Avitia was among the residents in 2021 who opposed housing development that had sparked fears of gentrification.

Poole said she has been in contact with District 9 council member Elizabeth Beck and did not hear back when she initially reached out to the Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative.

Poole said she would be willing to meet with the task force before the city council meeting. The Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative is set to meet on Jan. 26 to discuss the case.

Beck said she will attend that meeting, the outcome of which could determine if she continues the case for 30 days for more community input before it is considered by the city council.

## North Texas could be home to nuclear power plant until 2053. Why are residents opposed?

*Tarrant, Somervell residents voice concerns about Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant*

By Haley Samsel

There's no escaping the fact that Terry McIntire's family farm sits less than four miles from the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant. Every time the Fort Worth resident visits Somervell County to take care of his 96-year-old father, he drives past a warning siren installed near his family cemetery.

"Most people probably don't even think about it," McIntire said. "But if there's an accident, the 10-mile perimeter includes all of Glen Rose and all of our family property. The air would be unsafe to breathe, and probably the land would be uninhabitable forever."

Comanche Peak's future in North Texas is also in the air as the plant's owner, Vistra, petitions the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to keep reactors online through at least 2053. The company's current licenses for two nuclear units, which have the capacity to power 1.2 million homes under normal electricity conditions, expire in 2030 and 2033, respectively.

The plant has had a massive presence – both physically and economically – in Somervell County, about 50 miles southwest of Fort Worth, since construction began on nuclear reactors in 1974. Vistra says Comanche Peak is the county's largest taxpayer, accounting for more than \$30 million in state and local taxes per year and more than 600 full-time employees.

Nuclear energy is uniquely positioned to provide reliable, carbon-free power to a country searching for cleaner sources of electricity, Jim Burke, president and CEO of Vistra, said in [an October announcement](#). (While nuclear energy does not produce carbon dioxide, construction of the plants and the transportation of uranium and nuclear waste [generates emissions](#), researchers have found).

"Renewing the licenses of this plant is critical for grid reliability and our environment and is a benefit to the economy, the local community, and our company," Burke said. "Our team stands ready to continue a proud tradition of safety, dependability, and operational excellence at Comanche Peak, and we are excited to be filing this application for extension."

That view isn't shared by all living in the 50-mile radius of the plant, including Tarrant, Hood and Somervell counties. Several residents have expressed concern over safety measures and the plant's long-term sustainability amid challenges posed by aging infrastructure, drought and low-level earthquakes.

### How do Comanche Peak's nuclear reactors work?

Both of Comanche Peak's reactors are pressurized-water reactors. "These reactors pump water into the reactor core under high pressure to prevent the water from boiling," according to the [Department of Energy](#).

"The water in the core is heated by nuclear fission and then pumped into tubes inside a heat exchanger. Those tubes heat a separate water source to create steam. The steam then turns an

electric generator to produce electricity. The core water cycles back to the reactor to be reheated and the process is repeated.”

At a Jan. 17 virtual public meeting hosted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, nearly 100 attendees asked questions about how the commission will evaluate the plant’s environmental impact and shared their experiences with Comanche Peak.

[Janet Mattern](#), a southwest Fort Worth resident living within 50 miles of the plant, said the commission has an obligation to educate the public about the risks of extending the life of the reactors. Mattern also serves on the board of the League of Women Voters of Tarrant County.

“[Recent reports](#) have stated that when nuclear power plants were initially approved in the ‘80s and ‘90s that the NRC underestimated the risks to public safety at that time,” Mattern said. “We need to make sure that those risks are communicated to the public prior to the renewal of this license.”

Susybel Gosslee, chair on hazardous waste issues for the League of Women Voters of Texas, asked the NRC to consider how the increasing frequency of drought conditions could lead to more wildfires and limit the availability of water for plant operations. Rita Beving of Dallas urged agency staff to dig into how natural gas drilling in the region could lead to more earthquakes near the plant.

Beving expressed concern that the plant’s safety measures did not account for higher seismic activity, which [researchers have connected](#) to deep injection wells and fracking.

“This plant needs further scrutiny and further evaluation,” Beving said. “Even though I know officials have been very pleased with this plant, everyone should be very concerned as this plant ages since some of its components have been around since the 1980s.”

Before the meeting, Vistra spokesperson Meranda Cohn said there is a considerable safety margin between seismic activity the plant is built to handle and any potential seismic activity in the area. All recorded earthquakes in the area have fallen well within that margin, Cohn said.

There is no potential for “toxic runoff” at Comanche Peak, she added. The plant must constantly release water from Squaw Creek Reservoir into the Brazos River, and the water is routinely monitored to ensure it meets state and federal standards, Cohn said.

“Our highest priority is the safety of the public, our people, and our plants,” Cohn wrote.

“Comanche Peak is designed to meet the stringent requirements of the NRC, and it meets all codes, standards, and regulations with respect to safe operations and environmental impacts.”

Comanche Peak also received testimonies of support from community leaders, including Glen Rose ISD Superintendent Trig Overbo and Somervell County Judge Danny Chambers. Plant staff have always been good neighbors, Chambers said, and county staff are regularly in contact with Comanche Peak leaders.

#### **How to weigh in on Comanche Peak**

Public comments on the Comanche Peak environmental impact review can be submitted at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket ID: NRC-2022-0183 or by mail to the following address:  
Office of Administration

Mailstop: TWFN-7-A60M  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001  
Requests for extensions to the hearing and comment deadlines can be sent to [hearing.docket@nrc.gov](mailto:hearing.docket@nrc.gov).

Residents with concerns should visit the plant's visitors' center and get their questions answered, he added.

"I don't have anything bad to say because obviously Somervell County wouldn't be what it is today without the power plant and without what is injected into our community through the workforce, through the financial output," Chambers said. "There's no reason for it not to go on because I don't know how you'd replace what it puts on the grid without it here today."

Technical issues prevented several people from unmuting their microphones to ask questions or comment over the course of the meeting, which lasted for more than two hours. The commission originally planned two in-person public meetings in Glen Rose on Jan. 10 but moved the session online due to COVID-19 concerns.

Attendees urged commission staff to host an in-person meeting and delay their deadlines to submit comments or apply for a public hearing. Public comments are due by email or mail by Jan. 30, as are requests for public hearings. Instructions to apply for a public hearing are published on [The Federal Register](#).

"I thank you very much for doing this particular meeting online, but even some of these people have not had access to express their comments," Gosslee, the League of Women Voters of Texas member, said. "There needs to be a public hearing for the people that live close to it and for the people who live many miles away."

To qualify for a hearing, members of the public must explain why they're affected by a nuclear facility and the reasons why they believe a proposed action raises environmental or safety questions, according to [NRC guidelines](#). Scott Burnell, a public affairs officer for the NRC who answered questions at the meeting, said people typically have to show proximity to the plant by being located within a 50-mile radius of the reactor.

McIntire, who stands to inherit his family farm in Somervell County, doesn't expect the efforts of activists to stop the relicensing of the project. But the NRC should exercise more oversight of the plant – and find a [permanent storage location](#) for nuclear waste so that it doesn't stay in Glen Rose, he said.

"The best we can do is hope that it'll be safer, and there will be better oversight for the next 20 years," McIntire said.

## **Report shows increase in congested highways and streets in Tarrant County**

By Cody Thorn

Texas A&M Transportation Institute's annual report recently showed an increase in congested highways and streets in 2021.

The report started in 2009 and rates the 100 busiest segments of roadways in the state with a study looking at congestion and the delay it costs in terms of time spent stuck in gridlock. There were 1,860 roadways in 23 urban areas that were reviewed during the study—funded by the Texas Department of Transportation—which looked at how much longer drivers were on the road in traffic jams, compared to uncongested conditions.

According to the Texas A&M Transportation Initiative, Tarrant County had 11 of the top 100 busiest stretches of roadway in the state – eight of which were busier in 2021 than 2020.

The delays have a large financial impact. According to research, a total of \$3.8 billion was lost between wasted fuel and lost time in 2021. Truck congestion costs were \$620 million.

The 2021 numbers showed an increase but the report stated the COVID-19 effects still had conditions below the pre-pandemic congestion. The West Loop in Houston was the most gridlocked stretch in 2021 for the second year in a row and eight of the top 10 remained unchanged from the previous two years. Researchers emphasized that traffic will eventually return to familiar intensity as the state's population grows and its economy recovers, according to a press release.

"Traffic congestion isn't just a big-city problem, and that problem is almost sure to get worse as our population surges by almost 20 million in the next 25 years," said David Schrank, TTI's lead researcher on the annual study. "With that kind of growth, Texas needs to use every possible means to keep people and goods moving. We need to add capacity, operate the system efficiently, and give people options for how to travel."

The Dallas-Fort Worth area accounted for 37 of the top 100 busiest roadways – up from 34 in 2021. Tarrant County lays claim to 11 of the top 100 busiest roadways in Texas, including three in the top 25. I-35W between SH 183 and I-30 was sixth—up three spots—with more than 814,000 hours of delays and more than \$70 million lost due to congestion.

At 14th was I-35W between SH 183 and Hwy. 287, a jump of 20 spots. The annual cost was more than \$80 million and saw more 480 hours of delays.

The section of I-820 between I-35W and SH 183 saw a meteoric rise from 1,430th in 2020 to 23rd in 2021. There were more than 334,000 hours of delays with an estimated cost of \$56 million.



The study says to help alleviate the issues, roads will need to be built at a brisk pace. The Texas Clear Lane initiative from TxDOT has been assigned \$29 billion to work on non-tolled projects in the four metro areas. There are 27 construction projects underway and 58 planned.

“Texas Clear Lanes is paying off in a big way, as we estimate \$4 in benefits for every \$1 spent on road expansion projects,” TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams said in a press release. “That helps us achieve our mission – connecting Texans with their state. TxDOT is all about making personal travel safer and smoother, along with efficiently moving freight to support greater supply chain efficiency and economic growth.”

## **Take a ‘day-cation’ on DCTA’s modern trains for a comfortable, affordable trip through Dallas-Fort Worth**

For Dallas-Fort Worth residents who are looking for an affordable and accessible way to get around the metroplex, [Denton County Transportation Authority](#) offers multiple avenues of reliable transportation including the [A-train](#) and [GoZone](#).

The robust commuter rail service is not only for Denton County residents, Director of Marketing and Communications David Magaña said.

“It can get you to Victory Park, to the Fort Worth Stockyards, to the Perot Museum and various other attractions,” he said.

Magaña said the DCTA uses very modern trains, which makes for a comfortable ride. The A-train offers five stations which are also served by [DCTA’s GoZone on-demand ridesharing service](#) as well as connectivity to bus services at the Downtown Denton Transit Center.

### **The five A-Train stations include:**

- Downtown Denton Transit Center (DDTC)
- MedPark Station
- Highland Village/Lewisville Lake Station
- Old Town Station
- Hebron Station
- DART Trinity Mills Station (Green Line Connection)

### **DCTA’s cutting-edge technology**

Senior Director of Rail Operations Rony Philip said the DCTA’s commuter trains use state-of-the-art technology manufactured by Stadler Rail, based in Switzerland. The trains use technology which is focused on fuel efficiency and minimizing air pollution.

“The DCTA is diesel-powered and has focused heavily on providing the residents of Denton County with a pollution-free ride across the 21.3 miles of track,” Philip said.

Philip said as part of the Rail Improvement Act in 2008, all major freight and commuter rail operators were asked by the Federal Railroad Administration to implement Positive Train Control, a federal effort to increase train rail safety across the nation. The DCTA project was certified by the FRA in December 2020 and is one of the first rails in Texas to implement the protocol.

### **Ridership growth and future expansion**

Like most transit agencies in the country, DCTA saw a decrease in ridership in 2020, Senior Manager of Rail Operations Alex McGlinchey said. But now, A-train ridership numbers are steadily increasing. In 2021, DCTA saw 113,000 riders and 176,000 riders in 2022.

“Now, just through two months of fiscal year 23, we’ve already got a little over 55,000 riders,” McGlinchey said. “So we’re definitely on a positive trend again on ridership.”

The transit authority is also trying to create a schedule that is easy for riders to remember, he said. The trains leave the Downtown Denton Transit Center and the DART Trinity Mills Station at the top and bottom of the hour.

To run with such a high level of frequency, the system has regular vehicle maintenance as well as crossing replacements.

“It accomplishes two goals: it helps enhance safety and it also helps improve the passenger experience,” McGlinchey said.

DCTA is always working to enhance its services, and right now, the transit authority is in the middle of a feasibility study looking at extending the A-train to Downtown Carrollton where it would connect with the [future DART Silver Line](#). This connection would eventually allow riders to take the A-train to Carrollton, get on the Silver Line and go to [Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport](#).

Philip said the engineering study is evaluating the needs of both DCTA and Carrollton as well as exploring funding possibilities. The study is currently in its final stages and when complete, will be presented to the DCTA Board for further recommendations.

### **Services and amenities**

A special amenity most riders may not know about is the A-train Rail Trail, a biking, walking and jogging trail that runs along the length of the A-train, Magaña said. The trail, built in collaboration with Denton County, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Texas Department of Transportation, features rest areas, walking paths, benches, trash cans as well as safety features for bikers and joggers and connects to many other parks and trails in Denton County.

“Whether you’re a pedestrian, cyclist or runner, you can use the trail to visit destinations within the Member cities: Denton, Highland Village and Lewisville,” he said.

Magaña said he can vouch from personal experience that the A-train is a great way to take a “day-cation.”

“Over the holidays, I brought my family and let each of the kids invite some friends,” he said. We went on a day trip to Denton and had a ball. I really appreciated not having to drive around and enjoyed the ride very much, so I would encourage everybody to keep in mind that mass transit is a wonderful option.”

DCTA is also mindful of community events and makes an effort to have trains available later into the night when there are events in downtown Dallas. DCTA runs operations Monday through Saturday, which offers passengers flexibility in their transportation needs.

### **DCTA’s A-train schedule:**

- Monday-Thursday: 67 trains running at 30-minute frequency

- Friday: 69 trains running at 30-minute frequency
- Saturday: 31 trains running hourly

Plus, DCTA's GoZone service has a Guaranteed Ride Home plan that ensures passengers arriving at Trinity Mills will still have a ride, even if they missed the last A-train.

**GoZone Guaranteed Ride Home hours of operation:**

- Monday through Thursday: 9 p.m.-1 a.m.
- Friday and Saturday: 10 p.m.-2 a.m.

DCTA Communications Specialist Melinda Bartram said the transit authority also offers free, long-term parking for up to 10 days at the MedPark, Old Town and Hebron stations.

"There's a simple form on our website that you fill out, and then people can actually park their cars there, hop on the train and go on their trip without that added expense of parking," she said.

For more information about the A-train, GoZone, the Rail Trail and more, visit the DCTA's website [here](#).

News Wire

## **Blyncsy Announces Work Zone Reporting for WZDx for All Agencies**

Agencies can now use Blyncsy's machine vision technology, Payver, for real-time work zone reporting.

Today, Blyncsy announced a new initiative that will allow agencies to detect work zones and report to the federal Work Zone Data Exchange ("WZDx") data feed without the need for agencies to create their own RFPs. The announcement follows the company's recent contract with North Central Texas Council of Governments to make work zone data more easily accessible to the public.

Blyncsy's Payver technology uses machine vision to automatically detect work zones and uploads this data to public WZDx feeds. Payver uses crowdsourced dashcam imagery and artificial intelligence to put work zones on the map, powered by over 400,000 dashcams already in cars across the nation. With this extensive coverage, Payver has the ability to upload and detect work zones and other related equipment in as little as 60 seconds.

The WZDx initiative emerged in part to increase safety in work zones as well as to accommodate the quickly approaching future of autonomous driving. According to the [FHWA](#), there were a total of 857 work zone traffic fatalities in 2020, making work zone fatalities over 3x the rate of non-work zone freeways.

Infrastructure-to-driver and infrastructure-to-vehicle communication is vital to improving work zone safety, especially for autonomous vehicles. However, monitoring work zones and making that data public has been extremely difficult for agencies. Many infrastructure owners maintain the data in their work zones manually and work zones are often adjusted as needed, making it difficult for third parties to access and understand this information.

Work zone safety inspections are currently heavily reliant on manual surveys. By taking the need for manual inspections away, Payver allows real-time communication between infrastructure and drivers of today and tomorrow.

As part of this initiative, Blyncsy is offering rapid pilots to agencies to test and deploy machine-vision detections of their work zones and report the data to the WZDx data feed in 24 hours for a week at a cost of \$5,000.

As the future of autonomous driving quickly approaches, work zone data has become imperative. Data describing work zones as well as the presence of workers in those zones can make roads smarter and safer for everyone.

"For years, we have been building infrastructure for humans that can respond to intricate situations on roads. With Payver, agencies can finally be able to build infrastructure through the lens of an autonomous vehicle," said Mark Pittman, CEO of Blyncsy.

Payver's vision-based approach to data collection makes the technology a unique tool for agencies since many autonomous vehicles will use vision-based software to understand the world around them.

"By giving agencies the power to see their work zones using the same kind of technology that autonomous vehicles do, we can ensure that our infrastructure is ready for the inevitable future of autonomous driving," said Pittman.

## Free ride-share program in West Dallas connects residents to new opportunities

To go places in life, you have to be able to move freely. For the community of West Dallas, a new mobility program, backed by Toyota and DART, is helping residents reach their destinations.

By Terri Wagner

On a recent day in West Dallas, it's only a matter of minutes before Circuit ride-share driver Jakwan Riddick sees one of his regular passengers — a man he now considers a friend and who many call Mr. Johnny. The senior, who needs a wheelchair to get around, has been shopping for snacks at one of the neighborhood's main shopping centers and, for Riddick, who's busy stowing the wheelchair in the back of the vehicle, he's brought a gift: a Dr Pepper and a bag of Fritos.

It's not uncommon for Riddick to really get to know his riders, many of whom he helps daily. "I want to be the bridge to help them get to where they want to go," explains Riddick.

For people all over North Texas, using ride-share apps is an easy go-to when driving one's own car doesn't make sense, such as enjoying a night out with friends without worrying about getting behind the wheel. But in West Dallas, there's a ride-share service that fulfills a far more basic need for people who don't own vehicles and who rely on public transit to go about their days — to run errands, take their children to the doctor, or travel to and from work. And by having on-demand access to free rides through a smartphone app, they can save significant time, leading to an overall improvement in quality of life.

Toyota began researching a mobility service as part of its efforts in West Dallas, where a new STEM school is also being created. Following community meetings and an evaluation of area needs, Toyota collaborated with Circuit to provide a transportation option that connects West Dallas residents to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), as well as access to neighborhood-level needs, such as going to the grocery store or a medical appointment.

"We worked in community meetings to really understand where the mobility gaps were. The service we helped establish includes access to the main retail and grocery area in the community, education through the West Dallas STEM school, and connecting elsewhere throughout the city," says Kelli Gregory, Toyota Motor North America's senior mobility analyst and program leader for social innovation and strategic partnerships. "This mobility program ties into our overall efforts in West Dallas and integrates into DART's system."

Residents learn about the service via word of mouth from neighbors and observing the fleet of six electric, six-door vehicles as they zip around the community. Wrapped in colorful advertising or artwork created by students in the community, the shuttles are hard to miss.

"We love the fact that now people have embraced us and can utilize us to connect to public transit even further," says Jesse Landry, co-founder of RYDE/Texas Operations. RYDE owns the fleet of vehicles in West Dallas and other Texas cities and operates in partnership with Circuit.

In January 2023, DART joined with Toyota to support the service. "DART is very happy to help support this important program to ensure that our residents in West Dallas have easy access to the DART system," says Jing Xu, DART assistant vice president of service planning and

scheduling. “DART’s participation in this on-demand shuttle service furthers the agency’s commitment to environmentally friendly shared mobility, local communities and economies in West Dallas. This one-year pilot program will allow DART to evaluate service effectiveness before determining long-term goals and strategies in the area.”

The shuttles — known as the West Dallas Circuit Circulators — currently operate Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., traveling around a 3-mile service area that stretches from the Trinity River to the north and east, North Westmoreland Road to the west, and Interstate 30 to the south. Passengers can also take rides to/from EBJ Union Station and the West End Station, so they have quick access to a major transportation hub. Some of the most frequent pickup/drop-off points along the route include DART bus stops, Sylvan Thirty, Trinity Groves, Fish Trap Lake Park, Lakewest Assisted Living, and numerous apartment communities, grocery stores and pharmacies.

<https://youtu.be/uuubueiu-ly>

## **Getting personal**

As a resident of the community himself, Riddick appreciates the need that Circuit fulfills. And because of his personal connection with many of the riders, he often picks them up if he sees them along his route, even if they haven’t yet requested a ride on the app.

During two hours of a typical day of back-and-forth in West Dallas, Riddick makes multiple stops at Lakewest Assisted Living, helping mostly older adults with wheelchairs, walkers and canes both during pickup and drop-off. He collects another woman from the Cash Saver carrying multiple bags of groceries, which he helps load into the vehicle, and then carries to the front door of her apartment.

Another passenger is a 60-year-old woman who’s taking college courses and needs a ride to cash a check. Across the street, a mother and her napping infant daughter are heading to CVS for medicine. At the 7-Eleven, while a resident of the assisted living center runs inside to get a hot dog, a frustrated man yells and curses at Riddick because his phone isn’t working, and he needs a ride.

“Don’t worry, man. I’ll take you where you need to go,” Riddick says, immediately bringing a smile to the man’s face, as he seems to suddenly recognize Riddick from a previous ride.

“Oh, thank you, you don’t know how much I need this. It’s hot,” the man says before getting into the back seat and starting up a lively conversation with the other passengers.

When the woman returns with her hot dog, the chatter and laughter become almost deafening, but over discussions of the day’s events in the neighborhood, politics and rumors of Shaquille O’Neal coming to the rec center that weekend, the five-minute commute to various locations feels more like a carload of friends than strangers randomly brought together.

And that’s proving to Toyota that this service is truly meeting a need in the community and providing people with options. “I think the freedom of movement is life changing,” Gregory says.

“It’s been a big pat on the back serving the people in the West Dallas Community,” says Riddick. “I love them just as much as they love me.”

*To learn more about the West Dallas Circuit Circulators, visit [ridecircuit.com/westdallas](http://ridecircuit.com/westdallas).*





Dallas Morning News

## **Second phase on the way at Lewisville's \$1 billion Crown Centre development**

The mixed-use project is part of Bright Realty's Castle Hills community, which includes thousands of homes and commercial space.

By Steve Brown

Developers are eyeing construction of the second phase of a Lewisville office campus.

[Bright Realty in 2019](#) broke ground on the first phase of its 140-acre Crown Centre office campus at State Highway 121.

The first office building in the project opened in 2020. The four-story, 109,000-square-foot office project [is the first of 30 buildings](#) planned in the development.

Last year retail inventory and analytics firm [WIS International leased most of the new building](#).

And now Bright Realty is planning to start Castle Hills Crown Centre - Phase 2, according to planning documents filed with the state.

The four-story, 147,000-square-foot speculative office building will be built on Regent Way and will start construction in March, according to the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation.

The \$30 million project is scheduled to open in 2024.

Dallas architect Corgan designed the building.

The more than \$1 billion mixed-use Crown Centre development is part of Bright Realty's Castle Hills community, which includes thousands of homes and commercial space.

Almost 3 million square feet of offices, 2,000 apartments, 140,000 square feet of retail and restaurants plus hotels are planned in Crown Centre on S.H. 121 at Parker Road.

The site for Crown Centre is some of the last remaining undeveloped land in the 5,000-acre Castle Hills community.

Castle Hills has been under construction for more than two decades.

Dallas-Fort Worth is one of the country's [fastest growing office markets](#) with more than 7 million square feet of buildings on the way.

Dallas Morning News

## The coolest new office building in Dallas is off Northwest Highway

A budget-friendly building for Half Price Books by Cunningham Architects doesn't skimp on visual drama.

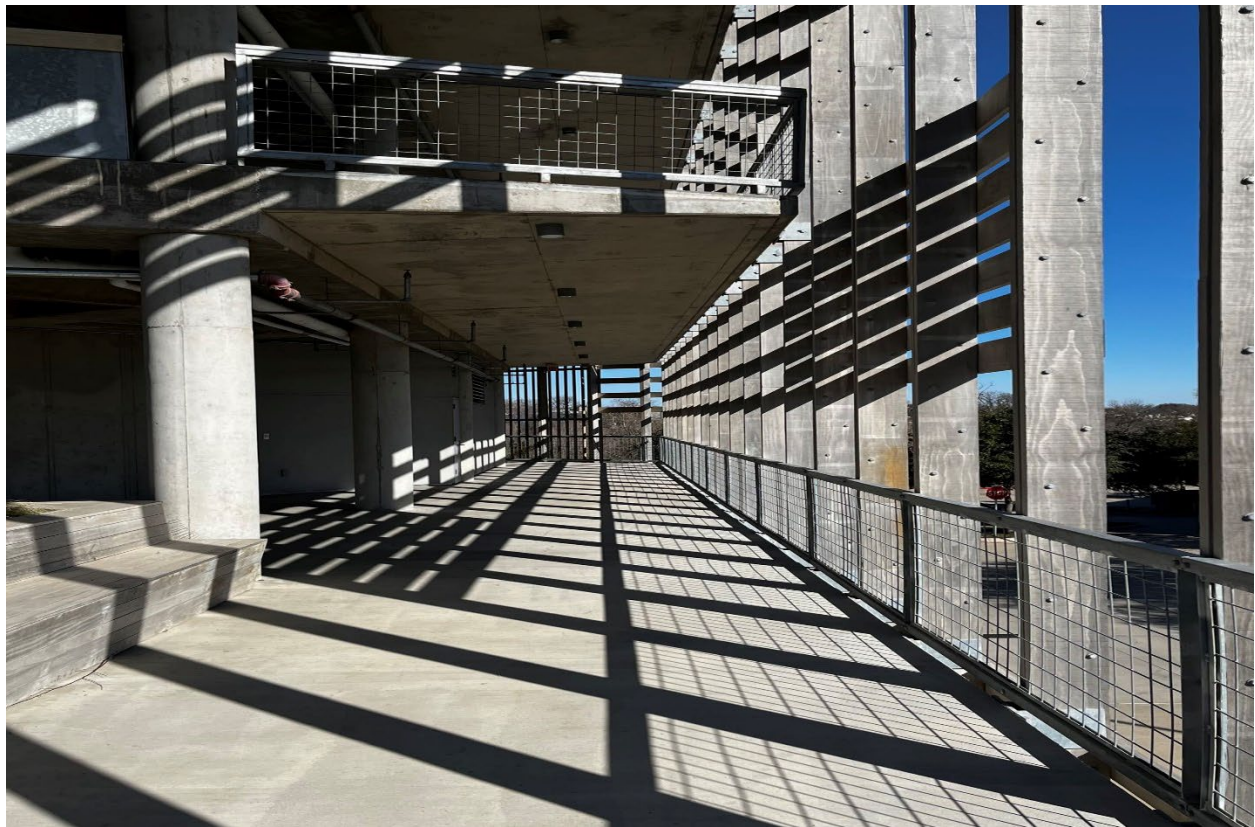
By Mark Lamster

The speculative office building is not a typology that is known for architectural invention, but a striking new structure just off Northwest Highway is an unlikely and welcome exception. Although it is set back from the road off Shady Brook Lane, you are unlikely to miss its wedge-shaped form, which its designer, Dallas architect Gary "Corky" Cunningham, likens to the Jawa "sandcrawler" from *Star Wars*.

The building takes the conventional glass-box office and turns it inside-out, with hallways and circulation spaces (lobby, stairs, landings) moved to the exterior, where they are shielded from the sun by deep overhangs and a screen of slate-gray wooden slats.

"One can take a lap around the building whenever fresh air or a stretch of the legs is needed," says [Cunningham](#), who is best known for his residential and cultural projects, like Cistercian Abbey Church (which recently won the [25-Year Award](#) of the Texas Society of Architects) and the expansion of Temple [Emanu-El](#).

Though the design was conceived before COVID, its open spaces are ideally suited to the pandemic era. "Humans need light and air and movement, and they should be able to bring their dogs to work," says Cunningham.



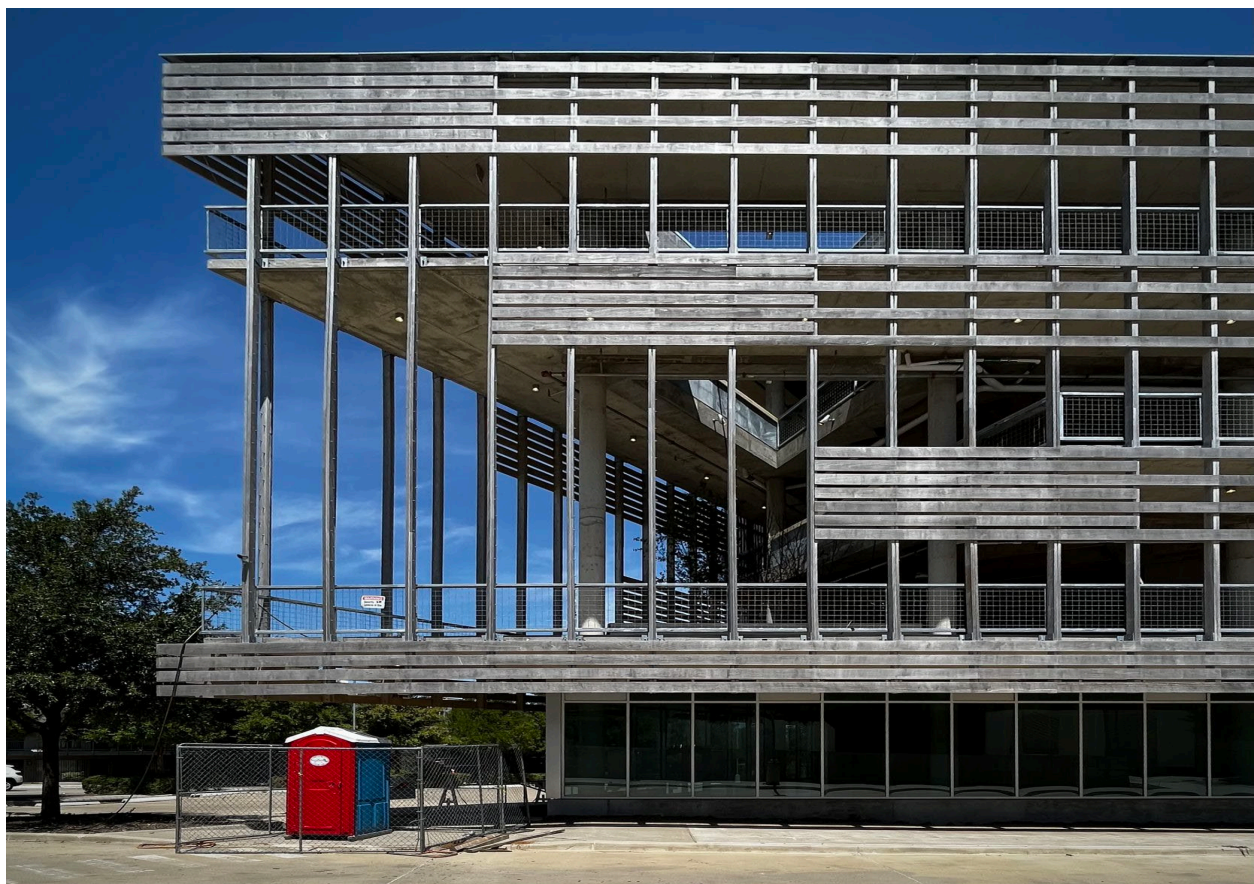
Striking shadows along the circulation paths on architect Gary "Corky" Cunningham's office building for Half Price Books. (Mark Lamster / Mark Lamster)

On the building's second floor, the perimeter walk expands into an a prow-shaped, open-air gathering and event space, with built-in seating and a stand of River Birch trees. (The plantings are the work of the distinguished landscape architect David [Hocker](#).)

The building's invention extends beyond its flipped plan to its use of materials. The trellis screen is composed not of metal louvers but sustainably sourced Accoya wood that required no finishing. (Cunningham has even left the construction markings.) That wood was treated through a process known as [acetylation](#), by which its molecular structure was adjusted so it does not absorb water, rendering it stable.

The project was commissioned by the [Half Price Books](#) company as a means of supplemental income and is located across the street from its flagship store, also a Cunningham design. Construction is almost complete, though tenants began moving in at the end of last year.

Innovation need not be expensive. Here, a low budget drove design creativity. The four-story, 42,000-square-foot building was produced for just over \$200 per square foot, a fraction of the cost of more conventional office buildings. Reducing the amount of enclosed space turns out to be a good way to save on material and furnishing costs. The overhangs and sun-screens reduce the building's heat-load, meaning reduced energy costs.



A speculative office building featuring a wooden sun shade designed by Dallas architect Gary "Corky" Cunningham. (Mark Lamster / Mark Lamster)



This is the kind of project that's possible when clients turn to smaller, independent architectural practices, rather than corporate firms that churn out buildings as if they were widgets. And yet too many clients fear calling on smaller firms, often worrying about ego-driven design and a lack of manpower.

Cunningham, one of the city's most respected architects, bristles at those perceptions, and in particular the solo genius label. "I am not the star-dude making all the calls and moves," he says, noting the contributions of team members Michael Bessner and Tom Doheart. "Our office has an approach where the process is honestly collaborative with decisions and design moves coming from a lot of people."

More like this please, Dallas.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

## **Want to park closer to your favorite University Park Village shop? That'll cost you**

By Abby Church

Parking closer to your favorite store at University Park Village may cost you between \$7 and \$12 under a new parking initiative.

University Park Village has unveiled Up Front Plus Parking spots in its lot just off South University Drive. Nine spots are spread throughout the shopping complex; There's one in front of newly opened restaurant Flower Child, another in front of the Apple store, three in front of Athleta, two more in front of Lululemon and another two in front of Soma Intimates.

Each sign's QR code takes shoppers to a page where they have the option to pay \$7 for a two-hour visit, \$10 for a four-hour visit and \$12 for a six-hour visit, along with a 30-cent service fee. The signs also warn shoppers who park in the spots that "Payment is required and strictly enforced."

And on Monday afternoon, few of the paid spots hosted any cars. In a parking lot that is historically pandemonium without a space in sight come a busy weekend, that could likely change — but not without a bit of a fuss. The shopping center's parking initiative was met with outrage on Reddit after a user posted a picture of the parking sign in front of Flower Child. "I'll walk," one user wrote.

"I refuse to go there," another lamented. "That parking lot makes me want to die." The paid parking has some threatening to stop shopping at University Park Village if it spreads lot-wide.

"If this goes into practice for all the spots I'll never venture over there," one user wrote. "I rarely go over as it is but I detest paying to park for places like that."

Up Front Plus Parking isn't necessarily new for Simon Property Group, the company that owns University Park Village, as well as North East Mall in Hurst. Atlanta-based mall Lenox Square has a whole lot of Up Front Plus Parking spaces. The mall's website boasts the 800-space gated lot's attendant, as well as efficiency with quick access to the mall's entrance.

Shoppers who use the parking lot even get a complimentary water bottle. It's unclear if such amenities will be offered with the spaces at University Park Village. Representatives with Simon Property Group didn't immediately respond to an email requesting comment.

City of Arlington

## **ARLINGTON RAPID ON-DEMAND, SELF-DRIVING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE ROLLING OUT MORE SPACIOUS FLEET**

By Susan Schrock

Arlington RAPID, the City's on-demand, self-driving public transportation service, announced that it is beginning to roll out a fleet of more spacious, accessible vehicles to take passengers around Downtown and The University of Texas at Arlington.

Over the next several months, RAPID will upgrade its fleet to use May Mobility's Toyota Sienna Autono-MaaS vans. The first vehicle, which is available now, is wheelchair accessible and can carry up to four ambulatory riders or two ambulatory riders and one wheelchair user. The vehicle enables passengers of differing abilities to utilize shared, autonomous transit together.

Arlington RAPID, now in its second year of service, has provided more than 31,000 on-demand rides since its launch in March 2021.

Arlington RAPID's fleet of autonomous vehicles (AVs) is available to riders through the Via app or by calling Via's customer service line at 817-784-7382. The service is currently available from noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The City is operating **Arlington RAPID (Rideshare, Automation, and Payment Integration Demonstration)** in partnership with Via, May Mobility, and UT Arlington. The introduction of the new wheelchair accessible autonomous vehicles into the RAPID fleet signifies another step forward in the partnership's vision to use AVs to create accessible, flexible and efficient public transportation.

RAPID is expected to receive grant support from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, allowing the convenient, dependable public transportation to continue operating in the heart of The American Dream City through at least 2024.

The RAPID service area is currently bounded by Division Street to the north, Mary Street to the east, Mitchell Street to the south, and Davis Drive to the west. In all, more than 18 miles of Downtown streets have been mapped for the vehicles to take the most efficient path to pick up and drop off riders.

Via's standard fares, typically \$3 but up to \$5 depending on distance, apply to rides taken on Arlington RAPID by the general public. The discounted rate for UTA students is \$1 off the standard fare per trip.

The Sienna Autono-MaaS is Toyota's autonomous-mobility as a service (Autono-MaaS) vehicle based on the Sienna. It features Toyota's highly adaptable Vehicle Control Interface (VCI), which enables seamless technology integration with May Mobility's autonomous driving kit (ADK) for robust operation of key vehicle control systems, such as steering, braking and acceleration.

**For more information about Arlington RAPID, please visit [www.arlingtontx.gov/rapid](http://www.arlingtontx.gov/rapid).**





Dallas Morning News

## **TxDOT to hold public hearings for controversial Collin County U.S. 380 bypass alignment**

Affected resident told Collin County commissioners the newest proposal will destroy livelihoods and wipe out wildlife habitat.

By Susan McFarland

Residents who will be affected by the Texas Department of Transportation's recommendation for the U.S. 380 bypass alignment shared their opposition with Collin County Commissioners Monday that the new recommendation will destroy houses, livelihoods, a forest with 100-year old trees and displace wildlife.

The final draft of an environmental impact study will be discussed during two public meetings in February, TxDOT announced earlier this month.

TxDOT is recommending its Blue Alternative, which is composed of Segments A, E and C, a plan that would take the freeway from Coit Road and existing U.S. 380 around the northern portion of McKinney, connecting back to existing U.S. 380 near FM 1827, east of McKinney.

The proposed eight-lane freeway would displace 22 residents and 35 businesses.

Some said they would not be able to afford to buy a new home in Collin County if they are forced to move. Most of the speakers said Segment D would be a better option and affect fewer people.

Rick Eubank said Segment C would divide his property in half, which has a pumpkin patch business on it and sits among one of the largest contiguous forests left in Collin County.

"I am shocked that Segment C is currently the favored route. I've been going to TxDOT meetings and everything looked like it was going toward Segment D. And all of a sudden this has changed," Eubank said.

Eubank said he will not be compensated by TxDOT because the road will be about 200 feet from his house and will not run through it.

"I'll have to live right beside the bypass because I will not be able to afford to move. Also, I bought this for the peace and quiet which won't be the case," he said.

Gary Gibson said his family's 16 acres will be destroyed by Segment C.

Gibson and his wife bought the property in 1985 waited until 1999 to move there. The couple did not build their dream home on the land until recently, after learning TxDOT had decided on Segment D for the project.

"We finished it September of 2021 and we finished a barn in April of 2022. This was our dream home. We sold our cabin in Colorado, used all our retirement funds so we could retire there and enjoy nature and our animals," Gibson said. "Segment C would cut right through our property, go through our house and our barn. We had been reassured that none of that would happen."

Gibson said his land is unique and runs along a spring-fed creek that drains a reservoir.

"Our house sits on a hill that drops 50 feet down to a creek with a valley below. Our property is covered with 100-year-old pecans and cedars. It's the home of gray fox, possums, raccoons, it's a special ecosystem that runs from the conservation lake all the way to the east fork of the Trinity River. Section C would destroy an ecosystem that is unique," he said. "Segment C also runs through beautiful homesteads ... Whereas Segment D goes through bottomland and effects very little environment and very few homesteads."

Amber Block told commissioners her family's 11-acre property is used for therapeutic horse riding for kids at risk.

"I have a community riding arena that will be completely displaced," Block said. "I will lose my riding arena, I will lose all of our hay production plus I raise honey bees as my ag exemption and they are located in my front pasture so I will lose all of that."

Block said many stories, like hers, do not factor into TxDOT's displacement numbers because the highway will not run through the house.

"It's frustrating because these personal impact stories just don't seem to matter. But they matter to us," she said. "If they could just move it over all of our lives could continue. That's all we are asking you, to see our human side to it. And hopefully we will get a little action from the people who represent us."

The draft of TxDOT's environment impact study can be found online at [www.keepitmovingdallas.com/US380EIS](http://www.keepitmovingdallas.com/US380EIS).

The public meetings will be held in an open-house, come-and-go format where the public may come and go, with the first from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16 at Collin County Courthouse Central Jury Room, 2100 Bloomdale Road. The second meeting will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21 at Rhea's Mill Baptist Church, 5733 N. Custer Road.

Fort Worth Business Press

## **13th Transportation Summit will explore mobility in Tarrant County**

By Gary Fickes

Going into our 13th year, I am honored to once again host the Tarrant Transportation Summit. Our annual event has brought together elected officials, business leaders, transportation experts and members of the public to discuss the present state and future of our mobility system in Tarrant County.

This year, we lean into that trend with our theme: “Automate, Accelerate, Elevate & Innovate: The Center of Global Mobility.” In Tarrant County, we have worked hard to create an environment where entrepreneurs and innovators can test and implement the latest technologies, with our local communities reaping the benefits. We are looking forward to a day of insightful discussion and learning about what technology and tools are being used to advance mobility locally and globally.

The 2023 Tarrant Transportation Summit will be held at the Hurst Conference Center on Friday, Feb. 17, from 8 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.

We are fortunate this year to have Robert Poole, director of transportation policy and Searle Freedom Trust Transportation Fellow at Reason Foundation, as our keynote speaker. Mr. Poole is an MIT-trained engineer and advised the administrations of Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush on infrastructure and mobility.

As one of the earliest proponents of private financing of roadways, we look forward to hearing Mr. Poole speak about innovations in highway financing and about what lessons we can apply in Texas.

In addition to our outstanding keynote speaker, we have a lineup of panels and speakers covering automation, upcoming road projects, and aviation.

As the past 18 months have shown, supply chain resiliency is crucial to economic growth, as well as our national security. Our first panel will explore smart port technology, which uses big data and automation to run port facilities efficiently and safely, holding much promise for increasing resilience in the supply chain.

Locally, the 2022 Tarrant County bond election and recent federal infrastructure spending will accelerate the development of important road projects. Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius, Fort Worth Interim Director of Transportation & Public Works Lauren Prieur and Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition Executive Director Victor Vandergriff will discuss how these new projects will impact our region.

Alliance Aviation President Christian Childs and DFW International Airport Executive Vice President of Global Strategy and Development John Ackerman will address our regional aviation infrastructure and how we can manage airspace in a world with unmanned aerial system vehicles. Caroline Mays, Director of Planning and Modal Programs at TxDOT, will give remarks on multimodal transportation and economic development.

In addition, a discussion with Brooke Akins of Cintra and Craig Hulse from North Richland Hills about the economic impact of managed lanes on the communities they serve will be led by Robert Hinkle, Director of Corporate Affairs for NTE Mobility Partners and LBJ Infrastructure Group.

We've put together a program for our audience that looks at the present and future with excellent speakers and ideas. As in years past, this is a fantastic opportunity to listen, learn and network with like-minded people interested in Tarrant County's transportation future. Please join us on Friday, February 17, for an engaging, informative, and entertaining day at the Tarrant Transportation Summit.

Registration is \$100 per person and [online registration is available](#).

## Governor Abbott Signs Historic Infrastructure Agreement With U.S. Military

Governor Greg Abbott today signed the largest [Statewide Intergovernmental Support Agreement](#) (S-IGSA) between the State of Texas and the United States Military to bolster infrastructure and transportation improvements on federal military property across the state.

This historic 10-year agreement authorizes the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to complete roadway maintenance and repair projects as well as purchase bulk materials through a state-federal partnership.

"I'm proud to sign the largest S-IGSA between a state and the U.S. military," said Governor Abbott. "By entering this partnership between the State of Texas and the U.S. military, we are ensuring infrastructure projects at our bases are built faster and more efficiently to support growth and development in these important communities. Texas will always support the brave men and women who serve in our military, and together we will continue to help these heroes serve and protect the greatest nation in the history of the world."

"Thank you to everyone here for all your hard work, dedication, and vision that went into developing the S-IGSA in the Department of Defense," said Assistant Secretary Jacobson. "This 10-year S-IGSA is the type of partnership that strengthens our Army's relationship with the State of Texas, and we look forward to seeing what other innovative partnerships come next."

"The U.S. Navy has three installations that are privileged to call Texas home," said Captain Smith. "The Navy is proud to partner with the State of Texas in the first S-IGSA, saving us up to \$36 million over the next 10 years just in road maintenance alone."

"The U.S. Air Force has a tremendous presence in Texas, and we're proud to participate in the S-IGSA," said Deputy Assistant Secretary Moriarty. "This agreement allows the U.S. Air Force to leverage opportunities with TxDOT to do maintenance on our roads and reduce the burden of the men and women who work in our military installations. This is just another strong indication of support for our military from the State of Texas."

The Governor was joined at the signing ceremony by Assistant Secretary to the United States Army Installation, Energy and Environment Rachel Jacobson; Deputy Assistant Secretary of the United States Air Force for Installations Robert Moriarty; Navy Region Southeast Chief of Staff Captain Gregory Smith; Senator Cesar Blanco; Representative Lina Ortega; Representative Ray Lopez; TxDOT Chairman Bruce Bugg; and TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams.

In May 2021, Governor Abbott signed [House Bill 3399](#) allowing TxDOT to provide road services on federal military property. Following this authorization, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) began discussions about implementing a S-IGSA with the State of Texas.

This S-IGSA is anticipated to decrease project lead time, reduce civilian staff burden, and result in an estimated cost savings of 25% to all participating military installations. This agreement will be DOD's largest S-IGSA involving the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Air Force with a single public partner.

View the Statewide Intergovernmental Support Agreement (S-IGSA) [here](#).



Fort Worth Report

## Navy nears completion of cleanup process for contaminated sites at Fort Worth base

By Haley Samsel and Izzy Acheson

Nearly a decade ago, staff at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Fort Worth realized they had a problem.

Long before the Navy took over operations, the site was known as Carswell Air Force Base — a hub for training pilots and supporting heavy bombers during the Cold War. While the Air Force closed the base in 1994, environmental cleanups and oversight didn't become the Navy's responsibility until 20 years later.

Soon after assuming environmental duties, Navy staff found the Air Force had not yet conducted an inventory of what the Department of Defense calls "[military munitions/unexploded ordnance](#)" sites on the base. [Those sites](#) can range from former shooting ranges to fields containing partially detonated explosives used during training activities.

Through a 2015 assessment, the Navy discovered three contaminated sites across the base in northwest Fort Worth, according to Bob Fisher, the environmental restoration branch head for the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command. The contaminated sites comprise a former skeet range; a former small arms pistol range; and a former machine gun range and rifle range located next to each other.

"Initially we had no documentation that any were there, but we suspected that there may be some because it was a pretty common practice for military installations, particularly those installations that had pilots, to have skeet ranges and other smaller ranges where they would practice and train their eye," Fisher said.

Eight years later, Navy officials believe they're rounding the corner on the cleanup process, with environmental remediation — including soil removal and replacement — planned in early 2023.

Ranges, like the three targeted for cleanup, pose environmental issues because they may have soil, groundwater and surface water contamination from the residue of explosives; heavy metals; and, in some cases, chemical agents, according to [the Environmental Protection Agency](#).

Lead from the shotgun shells and a chemical used in skeet shooting targets were the main concerns for environmental and health risks at the Fort Worth base, Fisher said. The site was never used for exploding munitions, such as grenades or other bombs, according to a spokesperson for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

Between 2016 and 2019, crews fully remediated the larger skeet range — known as UXO 1 — through disposing and renewing soil at the site, said Candy Pafford, a spokesperson for the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth. In 2021, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality approved cleanup of the site, according to an agency spokesperson.

Now, the Navy is focused on the two remaining sites. The machine gun and rifle ranges — the smallest of the three — are scheduled for soil removal and disposal this year, Pafford said. The area, known as UXO 3, will be remediated to the “unlimited use/unrestricted exposure” standard set by the Environmental Protection Agency so that the land could be used for any purpose, she added.

The small arms pistol range, called UXO 2, has been used as a parking lot since 1990, Pafford said. The parking lot was not constructed to function as a cap or part of the cleanup, Fisher said, but the lot is serving as a viable barrier to any contaminants. Navy officials want to incorporate existing structures as much as possible into the cleanup process, he added.

“The bigger picture for sites like this is that we look at what are the long-term beneficial uses of this property within the installation,” Fisher said. “That north central part of the installation is used for track and field. They’ve got baseball fields, so there’s a lot of recreation activities. We would tailor our cleanup activities to allow those types of activities to continue.”

Staff are still evaluating the levels of contamination and risk at the two remaining sites, Fisher said. Those remediation investigations should be completed over the next two years, but officials don’t anticipate a significant amount of cleanup will be necessary, he said.

The Navy is following federal protocol established to clean [Superfund sites](#), or polluted areas that require a long-term response due to hazardous contamination. (The Fort Worth sites are not classified as Superfund sites).

Since the process can require a decade or more of cleanup, documentation and monitoring, the Navy may not fully close out these cleanups for several more years even if they are functionally safe for use, Fisher said.

If a site is not cleaned up to where it can be turned back over for residential use, then the Navy will have the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring the site does not endanger public health or the environment, he added. Sometimes that process can take 30 or more years.

“We retain responsibility for these contaminants in perpetuity,” Fisher said. “Whatever we need to do, we account for that in the way that we budget and plan, and we’ll make sure we stay engaged on these as long as we need to.”

It's International

## **Texas sharing for One.network**

Workzone software company's data will be available to multiple transport agencies

By Adam Hill

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has selected workzone data software company One.network to offer data-sharing solutions.

These will be available to member communities and US transportation agencies via the TXShare Cooperative Purchasing Program, which NCTCOG operates, and the idea is that these will let them manage their workzones and create feeds through the national Work Zone Data Exchange (WZDx).

The US Department of Transportation's WZDx, which One.network helped to frame, provides the information to GPS app providers, regional agencies and other third parties.

NCTCOG is a collaborative planning organization in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, serving 16 counties and more than 230 local governments including cities, special districts and school districts.

"With simple installation and intuitive operation, our software allows traffic managers to digitize work zones for increased safety and efficiency," said James Harris, One.network's founder and CEO.

"We know many of the communities operate with small traffic management staff and we are committed to not wasting their time with complicated procurement and operations protocols.

While we recognize one size never fits all in transportation, we want to deliver an out-of-the-box solution with all the components readily available."

Craig Johnson, senior purchasing manager for NCTCOG, explains: "Understanding that WZDx data has become instrumental for roadway users, we saw the opportunity to make these services available to any public sector agency that desires to access them."

One.network says its traffic management module can generate detailed information that is essential for GPS services, including the precise extent of road and lane closures, temporary speed restrictions and detour routes. Its map-based interface is designed to be simple to use and removes any technical barrier for data entry, allowing all teams within an agency to collaborate under a single operational view.

"We know work zones are among the most dangerous places on any road network," said Harris. "We're committed to driver safety and protecting the lives of workers. This agreement with NCTCOG has massive potential to do just that."

## As \$70 million Rosedale Project moves ahead, residents remain concerned about grocery store, homelessness

By Rachel Behrndt

Developers will soon submit initial plans for the redesigned Evans and Rosedale project to the city. However, some residents are still left with questions despite a years-long public engagement process.

In its [annual progress report](#) to residents of the Historic Southside, developer [Hoque Global](#) shared updated site plans, the results of a traffic study, and updates to landscaping and design based on neighborhood input.

The room was filled on Jan. 19 with residents looking to learn more about the [\\$70 million urban village](#) that they've been told will be a catalyst for growth and opportunities in their neighborhood.

### What is an urban village?

Urban villages are walkable, bicycle-friendly, transit-oriented, mixed-used neighborhoods that offer housing and job opportunities. They are often characterized by multifamily housing, commercial space and public amenities like parks, and open spaces.

City of Fort Worth and Hoque Global staff were also on hand to present project updates and field questions from residents.

The question of attracting a grocery store to the development has proved especially difficult for developers, city staff and elected officials. Getting a grocery store into the neighborhood is a top priority, residents said. Southeast Fort Worth is home to multiple [food deserts](#). The nearest major grocery store to the Historic Southside is a Walmart over three miles away.

City officials have been promising a grocery store to the neighborhood for 20 years, but have never delivered, said Wallace Bridges, a meeting attendee who also serves as a trustee on the Fort Worth ISD school board.

"What has a city, or whoever, done in terms of trying to entice, draw, get or whatever we have to do to get an actual grocery store?" Bridges asked. "Where are we at with that process? And what are the challenges that keep it from happening?"

Developers and city staff said attracting a grocer to the area is dependent on the project finally breaking ground — that can't happen until the developers submit the permits to the city and get them approved.

"They're going to want to see what the residential development around it is, what the income levels are, so we've got to get the residential in place to allow us to continue to attract development," said Robert Sturns, Fort Worth's economic development director.

The traffic study found that the new development will not significantly alter road capacity, Arthur Santa-Maria, vice president with Hoque Global, said. However, the roads around the area are already rated as struggling with long and even longer delays.

Residents fear that the residential and retail developments will push traffic into the surrounding neighborhoods.

“We want this to be a really walkable area, and by nature, you have to have slower traffic,” Santa-Maria said.

The development will include several live-work retail spaces. Residents expressed concern that those spaces could eventually only be occupied by businesses whose prices are out of step with the income levels of the surrounding neighborhood.

“When you go after the largest retailers and have all the big developments, it can sometimes overlook the smaller developments that are going to impact the people that live in the community and have the opportunity to benefit economically from the larger picture,” Edward Spears, pastor at Faith & Love Church of God in Christ, said.

Spears asked that residents be involved in recruiting the retailers that would occupy those spaces to ensure they are rooted in the community, and several other residents nodded along. “There are a lot of business owners out there or potential business owners out there, we might need to know about,” Sturns said in response. “So if you are aware of people that are wanting to engage with this project, yeah, I think it makes sense to start those conversations.”

The city has also set aside about \$7 million, spread across the city, for projects in areas targeted for revitalization such as Evans and Rosedale. The incentive, funded through the Fort Worth Local Development Corporation’s Supported Projects Policy, is meant to capture smaller scale projects that are not large enough for the city’s other incentive programs.

Santa-Maria also announced several changes to the project’s plan based on feedback from residents which included getting rid of gravel sidewalks residents said could impact accessibility and plans to integrate work from local artists into the cosmetic design of the development. Depending on how quickly the city processes permitting for the Evans and Rosedale project, construction could begin in April, 2023 and be finished by 2025.

## **Evans Plaza**

Evans Plaza is a prominent feature of the Historic Southside neighborhood. The green space will become about an acre of dedicated park under the city’s plans. That means the green-space will be preserved despite development growing around it.

The city has committed \$1.2 million to the park’s development so far. The money will be used in acquiring land, federal environmental review, design and construction. Soon, the city will engage with the neighborhood to consult on the design of the park.

Residents attending the meeting cited pressing concerns about the safety and usability of the park. Currently several homeless people consistently occupy the park, residents said, discouraging residents from using the area for its intended purpose.

The city must have considerate and deliberate conversations about public safety to ensure that the area is attractive to visitors and shoppers, Sturns said.

“The last thing you want is, we go through all this effort, we create these homes, we attract grocery stores, but nobody wants to come here,” Sturns said.

The city expects that increased programming and use of the park will discourage homeless people from loitering there, Lori Gordon, with the city's parks and recreation department, said.

Residents were skeptical, adding that brighter lights and increased police patrols are a better way to address the issue.

Several historic plaques built into the current Evans Plaza need to be better preserved, Johnny Lewis, a member of the Historic Southside's neighborhood association, said.

Construction of the park is expected to begin in June 2024 and end June 2025, developers said.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

## **Hemphill residents ask City Council to deny new townhome project after tense debate**

By David Silva Ramirez

Tempers flared during a community meeting Thursday night over proposed townhomes along the Hemphill Street corridor, with residents recommending the Fort Worth City Council block the development.

The meeting, held by the Hemphill Corridor Development Collaborative, comes after some residents said there needed to be more community input on the zoning request that would allow the project to move forward. The 24 two-story attached townhomes would be built on the corner of Hemphill Street and West Morningside Drive — south of downtown Fort Worth and west of Interstate 35W.

Fort Worth-base Townsite Company proposed the zoning change for the project, saying the townhomes would be rented and would offer “another residential option at a lower price point than the larger rental projects in the area.”

The location was previously a used car lot and is now a COVID-19 testing site. Some residents of the predominantly Hispanic area have distrusted development along the corridor, challenging what they view as gentrification since at least 2021.

Ricardo Avitia of Hemphill No Se Vende said the pending rezoning request was not properly advertised on the property site, and residents were not given enough opportunity to weigh in.

City ordinance states that a written notice of public hearings of proposed zoning changes “shall be sent to owners of real property lying within 300 feet of the property upon which the change in classification is proposed” no less than 10 days before the hearing. Notices can be sent or posted.

According to the city’s zoning report, mail notifications were sent to residents within 300 feet of the site and notifications were emailed to surrounding organizations. These were sent on Dec. 30.

The city also is required to erect at least one sign on property proposed for rezoning at least 10 days before a public hearing. There was no signage on the Hemphill site around the time of a zoning commission meeting Jan. 11, which angered residents. During the Jan. 11 meeting, a city lawyer said the lack of signage does not disqualify the zoning change.

At the Thursday community meeting, District 9 Councilwoman Elizabeth Beck said she would heavily consider the neighborhood before voting for any changes. She said she would consider a continuance of 30 days if residents felt they needed more time to discuss the project.

Beck told the Star-Telegram that she wants to ensure that the city follows through with properly labeling zoning changes, but she said there is no malicious intent from the city or the developer throughout the process. Beck left the meeting early to participate in Tarrant County Homeless Coalition’s annual count of unsheltered people Thursday night.



Her departure bothered some residents in attendance, setting the stage for a contentious debate. Some residents oppose the townhomes because of concerns about rent prices and what that would mean for the future of the area. Residents fear the townhomes could affect property values of nearby homes and drive out residents.

TownSite co-founder Mary Nell Poole attended Thursday's meeting and said that the rent prices would be in a medium range compared to other nearby townhomes.

She couldn't offer specifics. Residents commented that they wanted a price tag before they could move forward, something that Poole said she could try to obtain.

Other residents were still concerned about the lack of signage prior to the zoning commission meeting and wanted a flat-out denial of the rezoning to start the process over.

Poole said that wouldn't be feasible. While some residents said they preferred a continuance of 30 days to continue to discuss the merits of the project, the majority of people at the meeting voted to recommend the City Council oppose it.

The zoning change request could go for a vote before the council on Feb. 14. Beck still has the option to continue the case for 30 days.

Dallas Morning News

## How can feds believe cars were going 100 mph in deadly 2021 Fort Worth pileup?

Watchdog Dave Lieber challenges that stunning claim made in a federal investigative report

By Dave Lieber

In a massive report released last week about the horrific I-35W black ice pileup in February 2021, several numbers stand out.

133 vehicles involved.

6 people dead.

60+ people were taken to hospitals.

1,100-foot-long accident field from front to back.

But there's another number in [the report](#) by [National Transportation Safety Board](#) investigators that sticks out like an electric vehicle in an Exxon Mobile employee parking lot.

That number is a finding that in the minutes before the smashup, the average rate of speed on the south-bound toll road on I-35W in Fort Worth was 100 miles per hour.

How can that be?

It was around 6 a.m., still dark, with misty air and light freezing rain. Roadway signs further north along the route of the TEXpress lanes warned: WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY; ICY CONDITIONS EXIST, PLEASE USE CAUTION.

"People weren't driving that fast," says Megan Reynolds, a nurse from Haslet who drove on the highway in her red Jeep and ended up in the middle of the crash. She told The Watchdog that her car got hit so many times "that I lost count."

"Nobody was going 100 mph," she told The Watchdog. "That seems ridiculous."

Ed Wallace, host of the Saturday morning Wheels with Ed Wallace on 570AM KLIF, says: "The weather was not good. It was night and dark. Therefore, I have serious doubts anyone was driving at 100 miles an hour given what I see as the conditions on the road with light sleet falling."

Hurst lawyer Eddie S. Gaytan, who is representing several drivers ensnared in the crash, told me two of his clients said they were driving between 40 and 50 mph. Of the 100 mph claim, he added: "I don't see any way that's possible."

Matt Ducote, general manager of Moritz Kia dealerships, said: "That is a shocking number, for sure. That's so hard to believe. I drive that road consistently during the week, and I don't see those kind of speeds. There's no doubt that I do see some excessive speeds. But 100 mph is very rare. If I'm going 80 I very rarely get passed on the toll road, but every now and then, yeah."

If that number is wrong, what does that say about North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners, a private company that manages the roadway and supplied NTSB investigators with the figure? And what does it say about the investigators, who accepted that finding and added it to their report?

Sarah Taylor Sulick of the NTSB said, "Because this is an ongoing investigation, we won't be able to comment" on the finding.

Robert Hinkle, spokesperson for road manager North Tarrant Express Mobility Partners, told me: "While we are limited by NTSB federal regulations on what we can comment publicly until the investigation is complete and the final NTSB report is published, we are confident in the procedures that we followed."

I certainly do understand that drivers take advantage of toll roads to speed. Usually, toll roads are so narrow that there's no room for police to pull drivers over. And I understand that Texans are known, in general, to be among the poorest of drivers in icy conditions.

The speed limit for the free roadway adjacent to the toll road is 65 mph. On the toll road, it's 75 mph.

Here's how they came up with 100 mph. The road manager uses Microwave Vehicle Detectors to measure speed. These devices, placed along the route, can collect the speed of passing cars. The monitors work using low-power microwave radar designed for vehicle detection.

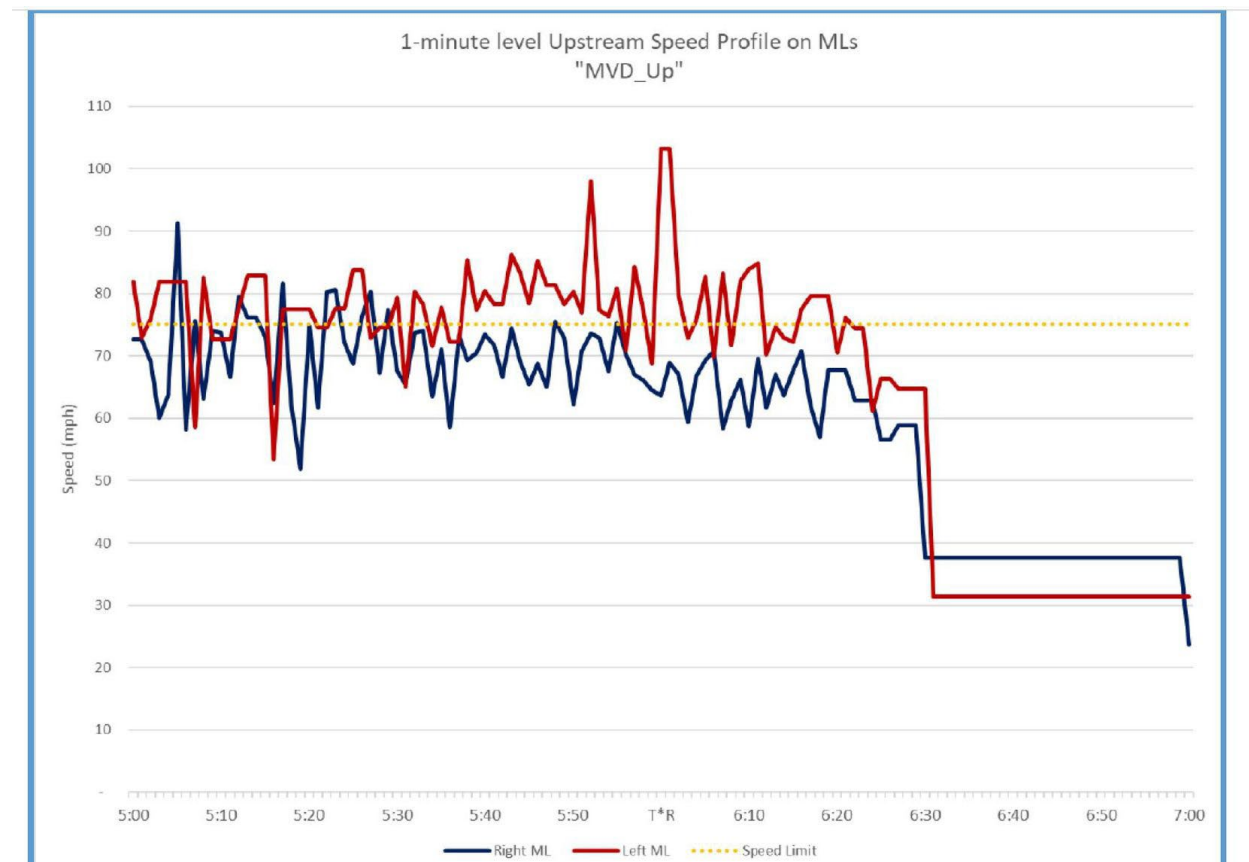


Chart in NTSB report showing a supposed spike in traffic speed over 100 mph, which is difficult to believe. (David Lieber / Courtesy of NTSB)

One way the data can be used: If there's a sudden slowdown, workers check TV monitors to quickly learn if there's an accident.

The MVD data in this case shows that before the accident the average speed in the left toll lane ranged from 79 to 82 mph. The right toll lane shows 65 to 69 mph.

The report states, "The average speed in the left lane at one point less than 15 minutes before the accident, just as it started to rain, exceeded 100 mph."

An accompanying chart shows a spike around 6 a.m., 11 minutes before the pileup, of vehicles speeding between 100 and 105 mph.

Note that this may not be only one vehicle, and because it's reported as the average speed rather than top speed, I wonder if there were vehicles above and below that marking.

As traffic backed up, the detectors showed drivers slowing to speeds of between 38 and 32 mph.

A final NTSB report is due in the spring. The remaining questions to be answered are these: What's the explanation for that spike in speed? What caused the crash? Was the roadway properly treated for an ice storm? And what can be done to make certain nothing like this ever happens again?

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

## **Texas A&M-Fort Worth could mean more jobs, a stronger workforce and lower taxes**

By Jenny Rudolph

Business leaders and politicians have no shortage of superlatives when describing the future Texas A&M-Fort Worth campus on the south end of downtown. Developer John Goff calls the project “the most significant thing for the city in the last 100 years.”

Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker predicts it is “an opportunity that will pay dividends for generations.” To a casual observer, looking at the site’s current parking lots and plain concrete law school, those assessments might seem like exaggerations.

But with construction starting this summer on the first of three planned buildings, experts say the new campus will indeed be transformative, well beyond just educating college students.

What was once Hell’s Half Acre, wild west red-light district in the late 1800s, will become a shiny new jewel in downtown’s crown and an economic engine for the entire city — attracting major high-tech industries, creating new and higher-paying jobs, and elevating Fort Worth’s ability to compete on a national level.

The project also has the potential to help ease the property tax burden on Tarrant County homeowners and small businesses, if Texas A&M-Fort Worth attracts major corporate headquarters.

### **NEW BUSINESS MEANS MORE JOBS**

Goff is confident that will happen. “A&M is going to bring, through their expertise and sheer inertia, a lot of corporate relocations,” said Goff, who owns Crescent Real Estate LLC. Goff was a driving force behind the campus project, after former Mayor Betsy Price approached him for ways to help Fort Worth recover from the pandemic.

He said he is already working with two companies that want to move their entire businesses downtown adjacent to the future campus.

“The university creates software engineers that (the company) needs, and they have a tough time accessing that talent,” Goff said. “This is going to happen.

There’s going to be many more of those.” The project — estimated at \$255 million — involves three new buildings along Commerce Street across from the Water Gardens. The complex will have an education extension building and a research and innovation center, where students will learn alongside private industry partners.

Construction is slated to begin this summer on the Law & Education Building with a 2025 target for completion. No dates are set for construction on the other two buildings.

Robert Sturns, the Fort Worth economic development director, said companies want to be in a place where they can hire skilled employees, build on existing strengths and leverage with local partners.

“When you’re talking about corporate relocations, those decision-makers want their company to have a presence in locations where there’s a high concentration of top talent,” Sturns said.

Price, the former mayor, also has heard multiple businesses express interest in the area surrounding the campus. The potential for new companies means more jobs for local residents, not just A&M graduates.

“Those businesses will provide them jobs, too,” Price said. “It isn’t just students that new companies are going to be hiring — it will be our local community. A lot of them will be hired.”

Hillwood President Mike Berry discussed the large scope of the project during a recent forum of the Real Estate Council of Greater Fort Worth.

“I’ve had the chance to really look inside at the power of the infrastructure that Texas A&M brings,” Berry said. “You just look across all their skill sets in the schools and their expertise, and it’s really like four corporate relocations to downtown in one.”

Fort Worth is the largest city in the U.S. without a Tier 1 research university within its city limits.

When talking to companies considering relocation to Fort Worth, Parker said, the predominant question they ask is whether the city has the workforce to fill the jobs tomorrow.

## **SHIFTING THE TAX BURDEN OFF HOMEOWNERS**

Not only will new companies bring jobs, but more corporate relocations may help ease the residential tax burden.

Bobby Ahdieh, the dean of Texas A&M University School of Law, described the correlation between building young talent, attracting companies and potentially shifting the county’s tax base in the long term. “If you attract companies, then young professionals come and want to be here as well,” Ahdieh said.

“All of which then increases the commercial tax base of the city, which is an important need and priority.” Right now, Fort Worth’s tax base is about 60% residential and 40% commercial, Parker said.

This means that more than half of the tax burden falls on property owners, including homeowners, small businesses and apartment complex owners, because Fort Worth doesn’t have as many large corporations and industries as other major cities.

When a new company comes to Fort Worth, it may purchase property including office space or equipment.

Put simply, because a commercial property is taxable, it can gradually shift the tax burden off residential property owners.

“There will be other businesses that will want to relocate and be situated next to Texas A&M and the convention center district,” Parker said, “which absolutely lends itself to helping our tax base and really expanding on the commercial side.”

Retired SMU economist Bud Weinstein said attracting more corporations that purchase business property and pay taxes on those assets can lower the burden on residential taxpayers with all other factors held constant.

“As a rule, the higher the percentage of the tax base on the commercial and industrial side, the better that is for homeowners,” Weinstein said.

## **WORKFORCE TRAINING BEYOND THE COLLEGE-AGED STUDENT**

The addition of Texas A&M’s campus may play a role in improving the education of Tarrant County overall. According to the university, 1 in 4 Tarrant County households have an annual income lower than \$30,000, and almost half of the 1.2 million adults in Tarrant County over the age of 25 do not have a college degree.

Parker said less than one-third of Fort Worth students attend a two- or four- year credential within six years of high school graduation.

Two economic hurdles Fort Worth faces when competing with other Texas cities are workforce training and attracting top talent. Texas A&M-Fort Worth is an example of “good work on the ground to change those data points,” Parker said.

A&M’s Ahdieh said for individuals who don’t have the resources or time to pursue a full bachelor’s or master’s degree, the campus offers workforce training programs and certificate programs that can take as little as one year.

“Certificates can add to someone’s professional credentials, their ability to succeed and grow in their industry,” Ahdieh said. “The law school has been very focused on this community — what are the programs and offerings that will bring visibility and value to the community.”

## **POSITIVE IMPACT ON SURROUNDING ECONOMY, HOME VALUES**

Texas A&M’s growth in Fort Worth could mean greater demand for apartments and increased home values, said Arben Skivjani, president of the Dallas/Fort Worth Area Association for Business Economics.

“When you have such a great university moving into the area, you have a lot of students coming in and pretty soon you’re going to see a lot of student housing development taking place around the area,” Skivjani said.

More student housing could bring more retail stores, with more jobs and more sales tax revenue in the long term, Skivjani said.

“Whenever you have a new university or school, it helps home values go up because it brings stability to the area,” Skivjani said. Local leaders expect even bigger things from the new campus, beyond the three buildings and grass quad.

“I like to joke that Aggies like to do it bigger and better,” said Parker.

“If you think about the investment they’re making with these three buildings, that absolutely is room for tremendous growth, and I think they’re just getting started.”

Parker said it remains to be seen what could grow beyond the initial three-building campus and will depend on what the system needs and if there are more opportunities to relocate other programs or agency work to Fort Worth. “I have not run across anyone in our city that doesn’t want to roll up their sleeves and find more ways to collaborate and expand,” Parker said.

Goff said the project is going to be much bigger than what people imagine. "Every time I meet with them, there are more ideas coming in," said Goff, who helps run the Fort Worth-Tarrant County Innovation Partnership. Goff said the partnership will be focused on getting companies and philanthropies engaged in the school to make sure the project stays on track. Goff said if the project faces any roadblocks, they will bust through them.

"It's been amazing the way the city can collect itself and gather around a great opportunity like this," Goff said. "This is going to be a game changer. That inertia will affect all of downtown. It's going to force it to happen."



## Fort Worth Report

### **As fracking increases in the Barnett Shale, Arlington city leaders avoid scrutiny**

With demand for natural gas surging during the Russia-Ukraine war, Texans say their homes are on the frontlines of new drilling.

By Haley Samsel and Amal Ahmed

When she saw the drilling rig go back up, Kim Feil started closing windows.

She didn't want a repeat of 2013, when she experienced nosebleeds after natural gas drilling began at the site just a quarter mile from her home in Arlington, Texas, in the Barnett Shale.

A [2019 study](#) found people living between 500 and 2,000 feet of fracking sites have an elevated risk of nosebleeds, headaches, dizziness or other short-term health effects.

For five years after fracking surged in the late 2000s, Feil blogged [almost every day](#) and regularly attended council meetings. She warned neighbors of potential health effects, including studies finding [higher risk of asthma attacks](#), from chemicals used during the drilling process. By 2014, as natural gas prices plummeted, fracking activity began to slow down.

Recently, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and gas prices skyrocketing, that economic equation changed again. Profits from natural gas drilling [surged to new heights](#). The Railroad Commission of Texas, which oversees the oil and gas industry, reported the most active gas well permits in seven years.

This past summer, as the price of oil and gas [hit historic highs](#), the city of Arlington quietly approved nearly a dozen permits for new gas wells near the homes of its residents without holding any public hearing, leaving Feil and other members of the community without a chance to comment or protest the activity.

That's a change from earlier activity, when companies including Total Energies and XTO started fracking in the [Barnett Shale](#), a geologic formation containing trillions of cubic feet of fossil fuels. The shale lies under the [heavily populated](#) Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, home to more than 7 million people. Drilling brought heavy industry and noise, air and water pollution to Arlington, an otherwise typical suburban city of 400,000 nestled between Fort Worth and Dallas.

So far, despite the recent permit activity, only one drill site is active now – the Truman drill site half a mile from AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys. In November, [Feil watched](#) as crews for French energy giant Total's subsidiary, known as TEP Barnett or TEEP Barnett, returned to erect a new rig near her home. She's already reported a rotten egg smell to a city inspector.

"I'm just at the mercy of which way the wind blows," Feil said.

#### **New gas wells approved behind closed doors**

City staff say public hearings for new wells are unnecessary because most of the new permits are in existing drill zones approved by previous City Council members.

As long as companies drill within one of those approved zones, their permit request can be greenlit internally by city staff without a council vote or public hearing. Seventeen of Arlington's

51 permitted gas drilling sites have an approved drill zone, according to city data. A majority of the drill zones were approved in 2013 or earlier.

Arlington calls the process “administrative approval.” Under this protocol, a natural gas company’s only obligation is to notify property owners who live within 1,320 feet that drilling will begin soon, said Susan Schrock, a city spokesperson. The city declined to make officials available for a phone interview.

According to records reviewed by *Floodlight News* and *Fort Worth Report*, historically, the city did not frequently use the administrative approval process. Over the past 10 years, Arlington used the process 81 times, or an average of eight per year. By contrast, in 2022, the city approved 17 wells administratively.

Of TEP Barnett’s current [31 drill sites](#) in Arlington, five are in established drill zones, according to city data.

Over the past three years, TEP Barnett applied for 62 new gas wells in Arlington, per data from the Railroad Commission of Texas—87% of those were at sites with established drill zones and eligible for administrative approval.

Leslie Garvis, a spokesperson for TEP Barnett and Total Energies, said the company has not built any new drill sites in Arlington since [acquiring existing facilities](#) from Chesapeake Energy in 2016. Drilling new wells at existing sites allows the company to further develop the area’s natural gas resources without increasing TEP Barnett’s footprint, she said.

While TEP Barnett has not expanded its physical footprint, the company has increased its number of applications for new wells. In 2022, TEP Barnett applied for 25 more new gas well permits in Tarrant County than they did the year before, according to data from the Railroad Commission.

Since drilling in the Barnett began, many residents have supported the expansion of natural gas drilling as an economic opportunity. Property owners [sign lease agreements](#) with gas companies allowing them to collect royalties from gas revenue. In Arlington, the drilling boom put the city in a position to [donate \\$100 million](#) in royalties to a foundation funding neighborhood, nature and other charity projects.

But, without public hearings, Ranjana Bhandari said there’s no opportunity for residents to ask city officials or Total questions about potential drilling activity and associated pollution. Bhandari serves as executive director of the environmental advocacy organization Liveable Arlington, which has become one of the most vocal opponents of fracking in the city and helped galvanize dozens of residents to show up at council meetings about drill sites.

“The way that I see this move by the city is a move to remove public hearings as part of the permitting,” Bhandari said. “Nothing can replace that public forum—it’s a time honored requirement. Look at what they’re doing. They’re sticking something so insanely polluting and obtrusive in your backyard.”

### **Limited visibility, limited impact**

The renewed focus on administrative approval has limited Liveable Arlington’s ability to lead visible opposition campaigns to fracking, which previously stalled efforts to expand drilling.

Many permitted drill sites are concentrated in lower-income neighborhoods, often with a higher concentration of renters and people who don't speak English as their primary language.

Landlords are entitled to receive notice of new drilling activity while many renters remain in the dark, Bhandari said. These residents don't have the time or access to follow what's happening, she added.

Livable Arlington's success has come from turning out crowds at public hearings to pressure local officials into denying new drill permits. In January 2022, Arlington City Council members [denied a permit](#) for three new wells next to a daycare center after Livable Arlington and the daycare owner filed suit against the city. Two years earlier, Arlington [earned national headlines](#) for voting down gas drilling near a community of color as leaders reckoned with the city's record on racial equity.

Katheryn Rogers, a volunteer who tracks natural gas permits for Liveable Arlington, said the hearings serve as a chance to educate residents and prove there is community opposition to new drilling.

"We do get wins," Rogers said. "If we've got a full chamber and we're up there saying, 'OK, scientists say this about drilling,' that's educating them as to what's fixing to happen in their backyard. Council also needs to be held accountable for what they're voting for."

In the absence of public hearings, Livable Arlington volunteers try to fill in the gaps through door-to-door canvassing, an email newsletter and an online permit tracker.

"All the illnesses, the property damage, the quality-of-life issues they've faced," Bhandari said. "All of that gets aired at a public hearing. And that's what they are trying to suppress."

### **'Unusual' obstacles to obtaining public records**

As the city is turning more to a quieter administrative approval process for the permits, it also appears to be limiting or delaying access to public records. These days, open records requests about permits that used to be granted in a few days have taken weeks, if not months, to be filled. It's a marked shift from the relationship Bhandari used to have with city officials, many of whom know her from more than a decade of activism.

"What I've seen is that the city is becoming more combative and trying to avoid turning over information if they're able to," said [Jayla Wilkerson](#), a lawyer representing Liveable Arlington.

"But it's not unusual for a government entity to work harder to hide information as they see how that information is being used – which is unfortunate because that's the purpose of public information law."

Molly Shortall, an attorney for the city of Arlington, did not respond to specific questions about the city's policies toward gas drilling records. Arlington has always complied with the Texas Public Information Act and requested decisions from Attorney General Ken Paxton's office when they thought records contained information that is not open to the public, Shortall said.

Information that is [not subject to public disclosure](#) includes personnel records, pending litigation, trade secrets and real estate deals. The city's priority is to release open information to the public efficiently and promptly, Shortall said. Large amounts of data related to gas wells in Arlington are currently posted online and freely viewable on the city's website, she added.

In one instance, city lawyers referred Liveable Arlington's request for drill zone maps to the attorney general's office for a ruling. The city tried to claim that the information was proprietary – an argument that wouldn't have held up in court, Wilkerson said.

TEP Barnett had 10 business days to provide evidence to explain why the information was proprietary. When the company didn't respond, the attorney general's office ruled that Arlington's claim wasn't valid. However, the attorney general suggested that the city could instead withhold the information on the grounds that it contained information about "critical infrastructure." Releasing the map, the office said, could pose a terrorism threat.

Arlington followed the attorney general's advice and denied the release of the information to Liveable Arlington, setting a possible precedent for future requests. The Attorney General's Office did not respond to request for comment.

"This struck me as unusual in lots of ways," Wilkerson said. "The city didn't initiate [the security threat] part of the claim. It was the state government that said, 'Hey you have another option here as a way to hide information.'"

Bhandari fears that this pattern is already in motion – and could be here to stay.

"It's been a terrible shift in how the [government] is treating its own residents," Bhandari said. "And I want to know why. Why can't they honestly tell us why they're doing what they're doing?"

Dallas Morning News

## **Cost estimates increase to \$2.8 billion for new downtown Dallas convention center**

The redevelopment could provide better amenities for residents and visitors, and increase tourism revenue, according to city officials.

By Everton Bailey, Jr.

Dallas estimates it'll spend at least \$3.5 billion on the development of a new downtown convention center and revamping related sites such as the attached arena and nearby cemetery by 2030.

[The latest financial breakdown](#) to replace the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center released by the city includes a \$2.8 billion estimate to build the new convention center with a park over Interstate 30, up from the previous proposed quote of \$2 billion.

The city plans to use bond money to cover the costs of construction and pay off those bonds through revenue generated from two new sources, including a [recent voter-approved increase in taxes collected from Dallas room rentals](#).

That money is also planned to go toward \$26 million to demolish the current convention center, \$91.8 million toward the architecture and engineer design work for the new building and \$35.8 million to pay for part of the project management.

The city plans to use other funds for almost \$498 million in expected future spending, such as \$4 million to redesign the Pioneer Cemetery and \$386 million for renovations of the Memorial Auditorium and The Black Academy of Arts and Letters, which are both attached to the convention center but will remain where they are when the rest of the building is demolished.

City staff will present the update on the master plan for the new convention center to council members during a committee meeting on Tuesday.

City Council has already approved committing [at least \\$23 million in planning for the project](#) since 2021, including \$22.3 million to engineering and design firm WSP Inc. The rest is planned to reimburse Union Pacific Railroad for engineering work related to possibly building over its tracks near the convention center.

Craig Davis, president and CEO of VisitDallas, said he didn't believe the rising construction costs were a concern because current projections show the city could receive higher than anticipated funds to pay for it.

"We'll still be well within budget," he said.

Davis said 24 groups have booked events at the convention center for 2030 and later based on the promise that the expanded venue would be open by then.

He said they conducted focus groups involving members of industry groups showing them initial plans of the new convention center, and they're more excited about the prospect of redevelopment that could happen around the building, like more restaurants, hotels and other activities.

"Our customers are trusting us to deliver this and they're excited about it," Davis said.



View Looking South



A view of the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center side by side with a render of a proposed new downtown Dallas convention center on the west side of Lamar Street/Botham Jean Boulevard and possible future development around it.

A new convention center is a centerpiece of the city's redevelopment plans for a huge swath of downtown stretching from the Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station at the southwest end of the central Business District to the Dallas Farmers Market a little more than a mile southeast.

The City Council [voted last February](#) to tear down the convention center and build a new one, with several officials saying it's the best chance for Dallas to compete with other cities for major events, provide better amenities for residents and visitors and increase tourism revenue. The planned footprint of the new convention center would essentially rotate 90 degrees from the current building so the entrance runs parallel with the west side of Lamar Street/Botham Jean Boulevard.

Construction for the new center is projected to begin in 2024 and finish by 2028.

The demolition of the current building would open up access to around 30 acres in the area, which city officials envision could be turned into a mixed-use entertainment district connecting downtown to the Cedars neighborhood. It could lead to more hotels, restaurants, office space, housing and other amenities.

The new building is planned to be 2.5 million square feet, about 500,000 square feet larger than the current facility, with 10% more exhibit hall space, more than double the amount of meeting room space and nearly triple the amount of ballroom space. The amount of parking space would remain around 2,000 with a split of underground and above ground options. Plans also call for adding a food hall and rooftop terrace. The existing heliport would migrate over to the new convention center.

Dallas is planning to use two funding methods to pay for the convention center and related projects, expected to bring in almost \$4 billion over 30 years.

The state in 2021 approved the city's request to keep a portion of the state's percentage of hotel sales taxes, hotel mixed beverage taxes and hotel occupancy taxes collected from businesses within a 3-mile radius of the convention center. It will last for 30 years – until 2051 – and is expected to bring in \$2.2 billion.

The state allows that money to be used for a convention center and for a multipurpose arena or a venue that includes a livestock facility.



Separately, Dallas voters in November approved the city to raise the amount of hotel occupancy taxes collected from customers of hotels, motels and short-term rentals from 13% to 15%. The increase is expected to bring in \$1.5 billion over 30 years, with \$1.2 billion slated for the convention center replacement and [up to \\$300 million to renovate Fair Park's](#) Cotton Bowl, Coliseum, Automobile Building, Band Shell, Centennial Building and Music Hall.

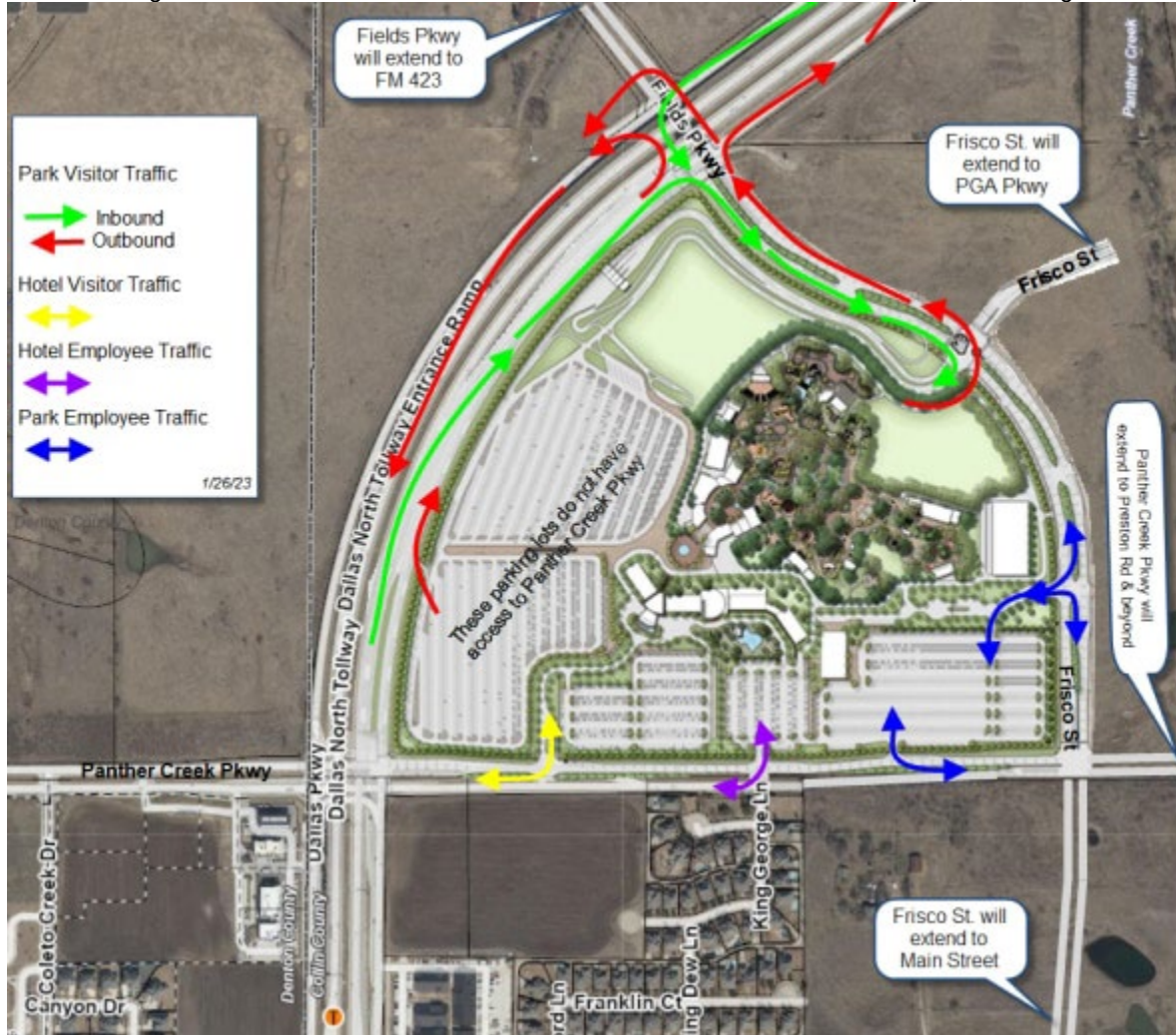
Under state law, the hotel occupancy tax increase money can only be used for these purposes.

According to the city, the current projections for three decades of revenue are higher than expected. The hotel occupancy tax revenue could be \$1.9 billion, and the other funding method, known as a project financing zone, could be \$2.9 billion.

Dallas Morning News

## Frisco traffic study shows Universal Studios will draw less traffic than H-E-B

Current zoning for the site could draw more than three times the traffic than the theme park, according to the study,



Frisco city officials released a traffic study regarding the proposed Universal Studios park, including a traffic flow map of the site. (City of Frisco)

By Susan McFarland

Universal Studios in Frisco is expected to draw less weekday traffic than [H-E-B](#), Stonebriar Centre and Collin College, according to a [traffic comparison](#) city officials posted online.

The [traffic impact analysis](#) shows the current mixed-use zoning would likely draw more than three times the traffic that Universal would on weekdays.

The theme park will draw more traffic on Saturday than the other entities, other than the Stonebriar shopping center, according to the study. The Saturday analysis also includes an event at Toyota Stadium and the Ford Center.



After the [announcement about the park](#) Jan. 11, residents went to [community meetings](#) and a [City Council meeting](#) with questions about traffic and potential impacts the of the park.

The analysis, which shows one-way trips, breaks down heavy traffic areas by weekday and Saturday, listing acreage for each site. A car that enters a property would count as two trips upon exit.

### **Weekday comparison**

Universal Studios is planned for a 97-acre site with 7,600 weekday daily trips in and out of the park. Peak a.m. hours list 735 trips; peak p.m. hours show 753 trips.

H-E-B sits on 14.6 acres with 10,322 daily trips. In the morning, in and out trips are listed at 315 and the evening peak is 985.

Stonebriar Centre, on 104 acres, includes 50,938 trips with the a.m. peak at 1,156 and the p.m. peak at 4,679.

Collin College is on 75 acres, with the study showing 9,890 daily trips with peak hours the same for morning and evening at 946.

Costco is on 17.6 acres with 6,570 daily trips, 124 peaking in the morning and 648 in the evening.

### **Saturday comparison**

On Saturday, trips in and out of Toyota Stadium's 47 acres during an event are 12,365 with Ford Center events listed at 7,659. Universal Studios is expected to have 14,880 Saturday trips; H-E-B's Saturday trips are listed at 12,404; Stonebriar's Saturday trips are 64,134; and Costco's are listed at 8,317.

### **Current zoning comparison**

The current mixed-use zoning could draw 28,720 weekday trips with peak trips expected at 3,518 in the morning, 3,442 in the evening and 12,648 on Saturday.

The traffic study is posted on a new theme park [page](#) on the city's website. The page also contains information about [two community meetings](#) with Universal Parks and Resorts. Those will be held from [7:30 to 9 a.m.](#) and from [6 to 7:30 p.m.](#), Tuesday, Jan. 31 at Collin College's Frisco campus in the Conference Center Building, 9700 Wade Blvd. [Registration](#) is suggested for those meetings, refreshments will be served.

Dallas Morning News

## **McKinney may need \$120M for U.S. 380 bypass relocation costs**

Although the state will eventually reimburse some of the money, officials say that money is not in the budget and hope regional partners will share the cost.

By Susan McFarland

McKinney officials are trying to determine how they will come up with a potential \$120 million to cover their portion for right of way and utility relocation required by TxDOT if the preferred Blue Alternative plan is used for the proposed 380 bypass alignment.

TxDOT [announced the recommendation](#) Jan. 13, which is composed of Segments A, E and C for the project. [It would take the freeway from Coit Road and existing U.S. 380 around north McKinney, connecting back to existing U.S. 380 near FM 1827, east of McKinney.](#)

McKinney officials said during their work session Tuesday they preferred TxDOT go with Segment B — a proposed route through Prosper.

TxDOT requires an agreement with local agencies to participate in 10% of the cost of right of way and utility relocation.

Gary Graham, McKinney's director of engineering, said once TxDOT made the decision on the new preferred route, his team did a high-level look at the numbers and estimated the cost would be about \$113 million.

"That's money that the city of McKinney has to go out and buy easements and contract for now ... to get our utilities out of the way so they can build the 380 project," Graham said.

Similarly, the Spur 399 project for right of way and utilities will cost about \$7 million, Graham said.

Out of the \$120 million, TxDOT would reimburse the city of McKinney \$80 million, but Graham said that reimbursement could take years.

"Together, that \$120 million is staring us right in the face," Graham said. "TxDOT wants to have these projects ready to bid and send out to contractors in 2026. Typically those utilities are moved before the ready to let date.

"So let's say it's the end of 2026, early '27, that's \$120 million we are going to have to front and pay for to get those utilities out of the way to prepare for either one of those projects. Right now, we don't have that in our capital improvement project budgets."

Graham said the plan is to look to regional partners — Collin County commissioners and the North Central Council of Governments — to see if there is any financial assistance available.

During the Collin County Commissioners Court [meeting on Monday](#), commissioners discussed the need for McKinney and other cities, but did not have enough information about the scope of the project to know how much assistance they would be able to provide.

Residents against the new route made pleas for officials to oppose it, with many speaking about losing their livelihoods and the significant environmental impact Segment C will have on McKinney.

Mayor George Fuller said the U.S. 380 project is going to happen one way or another, so the city's job is to look at the impact as a whole.

"There are certainly things the city and all the participants could do that maybe throws a wrench into it and delays the project, and we risk seeing \$6 billion in very, very needed road improvement, highway improvement and mobility for the entire region be derailed and not happen at all," Fuller said.


Next steps will include two public meetings held by TxDOT in an open-house, come-and-go format, with the first from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday Feb. 16 at Collin County Courthouse Central Jury Room, 2100 Bloomdale Road. The second meeting will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday Feb. 21 at Rhea's Mill Baptist Church, 5733 N. Custer Road.

Fuller said city staff will continue deliberating about costs and possible help from other entities.

"Our goal would be to see 100% participation and the taxpayers of McKinney not bear any of that expense," Fuller said. "Those are all the things we'll be discussing, deliberating over, strategizing and negotiating in the coming days, weeks and months."

## McKinney City Council considers adding a \$200M bond item for McKinney National Airport

By Shelbie Hamilton, Miranda Jaimes



# NOW BOARDING?


A proposed McKinney bond election held in May could provide \$200 million to fund a new terminal that would support commercial passenger service at the McKinney National Airport.

**\$300.7M**  
total cost for the proposed project

**533K**  
passengers estimated to depart in the first year of service

**4 GATES**  
with room to expand and about 12 flights per day

SOURCE: CITY OF MCKINNEY/COMMUNITY IMPACT



## PREPARING FOR TAKEOFF

The proposed terminal would be located on land east of McKinney National Airport's existing fixed-based operations terminal and air control tower. The land was purchased by the city in 2018 in anticipation of expanding the airport.

**KEY**

- 1 Proposed new terminal with additional parking
- 2 Customs facility to process international flights and passengers
- 3 Citrus aircraft maintenance and repair facility
- 4 New taxiway
- 5 Runway extensions
- 6 Drainage and taxiway improvements
- 7 Fixed base operator terminal
- 8 Taxiway rehabilitation and relocation

**SPURRING DEVELOPMENT**

The Texas Department of Transportation has selected a route east of the airport as its preferred option for the Spur 309 extension project.

**FUELING UP LOCAL ECONOMIES**

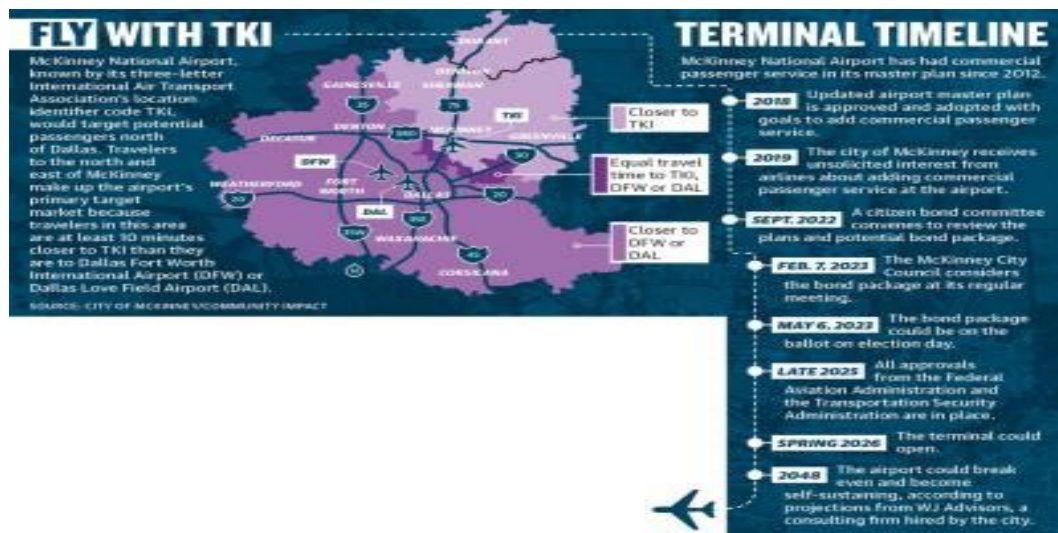
The proposed new terminal would facilitate additional economic impact for the area, both directly and indirectly. The creation of new jobs, increased revenue to the airport and additional tax revenue to the city are all expected, according to an economic impact study.

**Potential annual economic impact (conservative estimates)**

	new jobs	wages and benefits	economic output	McKinney tax revenue	tax revenue benefiting state, local and federal government
2026	2,700+	\$200M+	\$600M+	\$3M+	\$75M+
2040	3,800+	\$280M+	\$840M+	\$4M+	\$105M+

SOURCE: CITY OF MCKINNEY/COMMUNITY IMPACT





A bond proposition could cause activity at the [McKinney National Airport](#) to soar in 2023.

[McKinney City Council](#) is considering a [\\$200 million bond item](#) to be added to the May election ballot at its Feb. 7 meeting. The single-item bond could fund an expansion project that would add a new terminal and commercial passenger service.

[Five subcommittees representing members of the community](#), local government, representatives from other cities and third-party aviation experts met three times throughout October and November to discuss the potential expansion. The project would entail constructing a new terminal and parking lots as well as infrastructure improvements and a new taxiway. The Texas Department of Transportation's [Spur 399 extension project](#) could also run parallel to the east side of the airport, based on [TxDOT](#) recommendations, and create an additional roadway to support the expansion.

"There's tremendous economic impact and benefit to the city and the region," McKinney Mayor George Fuller said. "You're talking thousands of jobs, and you're talking probably a billion dollars in economic annual impact."

The project would cost \$300.7 million in total, but the bond committee intends to [ask McKinney voters for \\$200 million](#). The city anticipates between \$60 million and \$100 million in additional funding from federal sources to bridge the gap. The project, if approved by voters, could be operational as soon as spring 2026.

### **Adding commercial passenger service**

McKinney leaders presented plans for a [proposed terminal that would bring in commercial airlines for passenger services](#) at the committee's first meeting on Oct. 12.

The proposed terminal would be 144,000 square feet and include four gates with room to grow to 16 gates and 2,000 parking spaces as well as include dining, retail and enhanced passenger amenities, such as play areas for children near gates, according to the presentation. Curating a convenient experience was a goal of the design team, which included members of both City Council and city staff, Assistant City Manager Barry Shelton said.



The initial four-gate terminal could see between four and 20 commercial flight departures per day, according to initial demand forecasts. If approved, the project could begin the three years of construction needed in 2023.

[McKinney National Airport](#) provides general aviation services, such as private business flights, flight training and medical transport. The airport has been undergoing various expansion projects for some time, and it continues to operate at 100% occupancy, all while operating on its own revenues.

Commercial service has been in the airport's master plan since 2012, Shelton said. After voters turned down a \$50 million bond proposition to fund the airport in 2015, city officials found other ways to expand, including using property tax and sales tax dollars, generating revenue from fuel sales, and leasing hangar and office spaces.

Brian Loughmiller, [McKinney Economic Development Corp.](#) board chair, serves on the executive committee for the airport bond committee and said the proposed proposition will be different from 2015. During that election there were seven bond proposals totaling [\\$160.3 million](#), said Loughmiller, who was also the city's mayor during that period. [Five of the seven proposals passed](#), with the exceptions being the airport improvements and \$10 million for downtown parking. He said the proposition for the airport failed because it was not specific enough.

"We didn't identify specific projects like we did with some of the road projects that we identified and other things that did pass," he said. "In the past there wasn't a lot of promotion for what the airport could be. ... There's got to be an education to the public as to why this [current bond proposal] makes sense."

This proposed proposition is more specific and tied to the single project, Loughmiller said.

The city began looking into the project after receiving unsolicited interest from commercial airlines to add passenger service at the airport in 2019, Shelton said. The city then hired consultants to look into demand and airline interest to see whether it is a viable option. Since then, the city has discussed the potential of commercial passenger service with various airlines.

"We're talking about the whole range [of carriers], so we're not limiting ourselves. Of course, we would like to have a mix so that we have something for all passengers," Shelton said.

### **Funding airport expansions**

The project is eligible for "considerable" grant funding through the [Federal Aviation Administration](#), McKinney National Airport Director Ken Carley said at a committee meeting.

Projections presented in the bond committee meetings by Adam Giombetti, a consultant from WJ Advisors hired by the city to provide insight into aviation project financing, noted that, assuming a 5% interest rate and a [30-year repayment term](#), the project would likely break even in 2048 and become self-sustaining after that.

Estimates included in an economic impact study completed by [Intervistas Consulting Inc.](#)

indicated the output for the first year of operations once the terminal opens could range between \$600 million-\$850 million, with the former figure representing a conservative estimate, Shelton said.

“We have a very successful airport today, so I think we’ve been able to look at this prospect very objectively, because we’re not desperate for cash flow,” Carley said.

The proposed bond would initially be paid off through city taxes, with the potential to be refinanced later on, McKinney Chief Financial Officer Mark Holloway said.

The city does not expect to raise the debt service portion of the city’s tax rate, which includes property taxes, if the bond passes, Holloway said.

“We can issue the debt, if approved by the voters, to build the terminal without first raising the tax rate, and secondly, without hindering our ability to further lower our tax rate over time,” Shelton said.

Additionally, by drawing travelers from across Dallas-Fort Worth as well as portions of southern Oklahoma in the airport’s target area defined in the demand analysis, the airport would provide an “economic boost” both through jobs and money spent by visitors, Shelton said.

Despite the city’s financial capabilities, the concept of “off-ramps” was built into the plan to allow for council and staff to stop the project process if needed, city leaders said. Shelton noted the results of the analyses and airline interest could have led to an off-ramp had their outlooks not been so positive.

The process could stall if the bond does not pass city council or voters, or if other factors emerge, such as economic instability. The city also anticipates having an environmental impact study back later this year, and results will also influence airport plans, Shelton said.

Fuller said a number of things could deter the project even if a bond is passed by voters. If further analysis found that the airport would gridlock the city with traffic or cause too much noise—all concerns brought up by the bond committee—he would no longer want the project to move forward, he said.

“It’s important to acknowledge that although we’re taking steps forward towards our ability to add commercial service, none of these—even a bond election—means that we will add commercial service,” Fuller said.

### **Supporting regional transportation**

If approved, the McKinney National Airport would be the third commercial passenger airport in the North Texas area, joining [Dallas Fort Worth International Airport](#) and [Dallas Love Field Airport](#). Airlines operating in the area all expect to have a third airport join the two existing North Texas airports to service the region, City Manager Paul Grimes said.

Edward Shelswell-White, the chief customer officer of [SkyEnergy](#), an aviation consulting firm,

said Dallas Love Field Airport is federally limited to 20 gates, which it has. DFW Airport is restricted by its runway space and the number of operations it can handle per hour, he said.

“The ability to have a third airport increases the overall capacity and access to air transportation for people who live in the Collin and Denton county areas, and even north of there, frankly. Places farther outlying it would become basically their closest, most convenient airport,” Shelswell-White said.

Study estimates reflect that demand, predicting 533,000 passengers could depart from McKinney National Airport in the first year of commercial passenger service. The study did not include estimates for arrivals.

If the bond is not approved by city council or voters, the airport would remain a general aviation airport and continue its existing operations, Shelton said. The airport as it stands today generates about \$3.5 million in annual ad valorem tax revenue for the city, Carley said.

Loughmiller said the city is taking a proactive approach to the growth of McKinney by looking so closely at the project.

“We do have interest now from airlines. We do have the capacity and the land to build it; it’s just the next step in the evolution of McKinney,” he said.



CBS DFW

## **Paper is the problem: Grand Prairie police chief wants to permanently get rid of paper tags**

By Doug Dunbar

The sale of fake license plates is a multi-million-dollar business in Texas.

Now Grand Prairie's police chief is hoping to help change the law to permanently get rid of paper tags. Chief Daniel Scesney says the paper is the problem. "You can see just how simple this is," as he showed us fake plates created by GPPD public information officer Mark Beseda.

"He's using a very basic program that's available to anybody. There's nothing police-related here."

As easy as they are to make, fake plates are even easier to buy. Police say there are plenty of listings on Facebook Marketplace.

"Usually between \$70 and \$100 you can get you a paper tag," said Officer James Jones. "And that's a lot of money for printing off a piece of paper, so these guys are making a killing."

Sometimes, the same plate is copied over and over again. In November, Grand Prairie officer Brandon Tsai died in a crash while chasing a car with a fraudulent license plate.

That exact same tag was spotted on more than 200 other vehicles around the same time.

All it took was a copy machine to make those 200 sheets of paper worth up to \$20,000 on the black market. And that's a fraction of what's believed to be out there. The North Central Texas Council of Governments estimates there are at least one million fake tags on the roads right now.

We watched Grand Prairie police officers James Jones and Thomas Berrettini pull over several vehicles with paper plates. While a real plate is registered with the DMV and shows the owner's name and address, the fakes lead nowhere. "Somebody gets out here and gets in a wreck and hits somebody and drives off, we have no way to track that vehicle," said Officer Jones.

Officer Berrettini recalled an accident he responded to recently. Four people in a car with a fake plate had crashed into another vehicle then ran away on foot. "The car was unregistered, fake license plate, there was nothing that led us to the house," he said. "Except for a garage door opener." Berrettini said he went down the street pushing the button until he found a home where the garage door opened, then knocked on the door. "They ended up admitting that it was 14-year-olds that were driving the car," he said.

During our ride-along with GPPD, one driver admitted to buying his fake plate on Facebook. He told CBS11 he gave his vehicle information and address to the seller, then paid for the plate through Zelle. Afterwards, he received an email with the plate, which he printed out himself.

The driver said he bought the fake because he couldn't afford to legally register his pickup. Now he'll have to pay the registration and the cost of multiple tickets.

A spokesperson for Facebook's parent company Meta told CBS 11, "We prohibit the sale of fraudulent temporary vehicle tags and encourage people to report suspicious listings to us.

We've been collaborating with the Texas DMV to understand the scope and scale of the problem; we continuously work to improve our detection efforts and remove listings that violate our policies."

Chief Scesney says it's time to tear up paper plates for good. "We should go to completely metal plates."

He says the framework is already in place for special license plates. "Today you can take that tag, transfer it to a brand-new car, the dealership turns a form into the DMV and off you go."

CBS11 found that the option is available for any vehicle owner who wants to fill out a VTR-904 form, no matter what kind of plates are on the car.

That's the idea behind a new bill filed by State Rep. Craig Goldman; he says HB718 would eliminate all paper plates, with no exceptions. He said law enforcement agencies across the state support the measure. That includes Chief Scesney, who has already made multiple trips to Austin to drum up support. "Every lawmaker I met with - on both sides of the aisle - were very positive about this issue."

We asked the DMV about moving to a metal-only system. The agency said while it doesn't take a position on proposed legislation, it will work with lawmakers "to develop any proposed ideas to continue combating fraud." See the DMV's full statement below.

We also reached out to the Texas Auto Dealers Association. The group repeatedly declined to comment on HB718, instead pointing to HB3927, a 2021 law designed to increase oversight of the paper tag system. In a statement the TADA said, "we hope that these efforts will be given the opportunity to be fully implemented."

Chief Scesney and his officers say until paper plates are eliminated, fraud will continue to be a widespread issue. "This is a way that's being used by our society's worst of the worst to conceal their identity and commit crimes," said Scesney. "It touches every single person in the U.S. in one way or another."

#### **Full statement from Texas Auto Dealers Association:**

"Texas Franchised Dealers are united with state officials with the goal to reduce fraudulent tags. The TxDMV recently made a number of changes and added protections that have already helped reduce the prevalence of fraudulent tags and we hope that these efforts will be given the opportunity to be fully implemented." – Jennifer Stevens, Spokesperson

#### **Full statement from DMV:**

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) is committed to supporting the prevention, detection, and investigation of temporary tag fraud, misuse and abuse. Through the many enhancements to dealer licensing procedures, the eTAG system, and improved partnerships with law enforcement, there has been a significant reduction in the number of fraudulent Texas

temporary tags being used on the roads. The department will continue to work closely with local, state, and federal law enforcement entities to combat fraud wherever it exists. Although there will always be criminals who will find ways to circumvent the law, TxDMV has addressed many outstanding concerns and will continue to prioritize the reduction of fraud.

Regarding QR codes: The new tags are more complex and secure than previous tags and include additional data and security features to make it easier for law enforcement to identify counterfeit tags. In addition to QR codes, the new design contains embedded data and text which cannot be replicated and is linked to the Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (TLETS), accessible only by law enforcement. For security purposes, we do not discuss specific details about the security features.

Regarding a system of using only metal plates: Current state law requires dealers to issue a buyer's temporary tag at the time of sale. Any change to that process would require legislative action and is not something the department could act on without statutory authority.

Department staff will work with members of the legislature as a resource to help develop any proposed ideas to continue combating fraud wherever it is identified. Proposed ideas are reviewed for operational feasibility, financial impact, and their potential to create or perpetuate fraud schemes.

Regarding HB 718: As a state agency, TxDMV does not take a position on proposed legislation. Department staff will work with Representative Goldman, and other members of the legislature, to develop any proposed ideas to continue combating fraud.

Regarding the tracking of reports of fraudulent temporary tag use in Texas and other states: As an administrative agency, TxDMV tracks and investigates complaints against licensed motor vehicle dealers in Texas, including complaints about dealers' possible misuse of the temporary tag system. Department staff refers suspected criminal activity to law enforcement for appropriate investigation and enforcement. We also review information related to fraudulent activity reported by law enforcement agencies, both inside and outside the state, and work with the investigators to provide information supportive to their enforcement operations.

Regarding HB 3927: Since the implementation of this bill, TxDMV has denied access to the eTAG system to 172 dealers and placed limits on the number of temporary tags licensed Texas dealers can create, consistent with the actual sales volume of their business and other business-specific factors. Following the implementation of this bill and other enhanced licensing processes, we have seen the number of new dealers with complaints filed against them in their first year decrease by almost half.

[Paper is the problem: Grand Prairie police chief wants to permanently get rid of paper tags - CBS DFW \(cbsnews.com\)](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/paper-is-the-problem-grand-prairie-police-chief-wants-to-permanently-get-rid-of-paper-tags/)

The ShortHorn

## **RAPID to add new and more inclusive Rideshare vehicles**

By Rabbia Molai

Arlington RAPID officials have begun adding new and more inclusive vehicles to their existing line-up.

Arlington's Rideshare, Automation and Payment Integration Demonstration is an autonomous ride service. The city created the program in partnership with Via Transportation, May Mobility and UTA to provide rides throughout downtown Arlington and UTA, according to a Jan. 24 city press release.

In an effort to be more inclusive, they have now begun to add May Mobility's Toyota Sienna Autono-MaaS vans. These vehicles, the first of which is already in use, are able to seat up to four single riders or two single riders and one wheelchair rider.

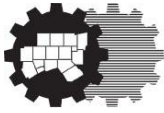
"It features Toyota's highly adaptable Vehicle Control Interface (VCI), which enables seamless technology integration with May Mobility's autonomous driving kit (ADK) for robust operation of key vehicle control systems, such as steering, braking and acceleration," the press release said.

Ann Foss, Arlington Transportation Department Planning and Programming Manager, said they plan to begin trading all their current vehicles with the updated Toyota Sienna vans.

"Currently, we have one of the new Toyota Sienna vans, and that is in addition to the four Lexus SUVs that we've had operating as part of the RAPID service from the beginning," Foss said.

Since opening in March 2021, they have provided over 31,000 rides throughout Arlington and UTA, according to the statement. The service currently offers services from Division Street to the north, Mary Street to the east, Mitchell Street to the south and Davis Drive to the west.

RAPID also expects to receive a grant from the North Central Texas Council of Governments to keep providing the service until at least 2024, the press release said.



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

## PRESS RELEASE

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## Region's Transportation-AQ Balance Receives Federal Approval

Long-range plan to improve transportation system may proceed

**Jan. 5, 2023** (Arlington, TEXAS) – The U.S. Department of Transportation has determined the Metropolitan Transportation Plan approved by the Regional Transportation Council in June conforms with federal air quality regulations, allowing current and future multimodal improvements in the long-range plan to move forward.

A conformity determination is required because 10 Dallas-Fort Worth area counties are in nonattainment for ozone pollution and are working to meet federal standards for ozone pollution.

Among the projects that may now proceed are the U.S. Highway 75 technology lanes and U.S. 380 in Collin County on the eastern side of the region. On the western side, North Tarrant Express (Interstate Highway 820 and State Highway 183), between Interstate Highway 35W and SH 121, may advance. Programs pursuing broadband connectivity and advancing safety and technology solutions may also continue.

The \$148.3 billion Mobility 2045: 2022 Update makes recommendations for transportation improvements over the next 20-plus years through policies, programs and projects designed to improve regional air quality and mobility and increase efficiency, safety and system capacity.

Long-range transportation plans such as Mobility 2045: 2022 Update are federally required to be updated at least every four years. Mobility 2045 was originally adopted in 2018. Since then, planners have continued to refine policy, program and project recommendations. This plan's financial analysis considers capital, operation and maintenance costs associated with the preservation and continued operation of the existing transportation system, as well as the costs associated with the recommended improvements.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) may also proceed, according to the Department of Transportation. The TIP is a multiyear list of projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area approved for federal, state and local funding. The program identifies roadway and transit projects programmed for construction within the next four years.

Learn more about Mobility 2045: 2022 Update at: [www.nctcog.org/PlaninProgress](http://www.nctcog.org/PlaninProgress).

**Major Expenditures (in billions)**

Infrastructure Maintenance	\$39.5
Management and Operations	\$9.6
Growth, Development and Land Use Strategies	\$1.5
Rail and Bus	\$44.9
Roadways	\$52.8
Total	\$148.3

**About the Regional Transportation Council:**

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for regional transportation planning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since 1974. The MPO works in cooperation with the region's transportation providers to address the complex transportation needs of the rapidly growing metropolitan area. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise counties. The RTC's 45 members include local elected or appointed officials from the metropolitan area and representatives from each of the area's transportation providers. More information can be found at [www.nctcog.org](http://www.nctcog.org).

**About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:**

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development.

NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions. NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 229 member governments including 16 counties, 167 cities, 19 school districts and 27 special districts. For more information on the Transportation Department, visit [www.nctcog.org/trans](http://www.nctcog.org/trans).

# Cotton Belt Trail Phase 1 and Phase 2 Partnership



Karla Windsor

Regional Transportation Council

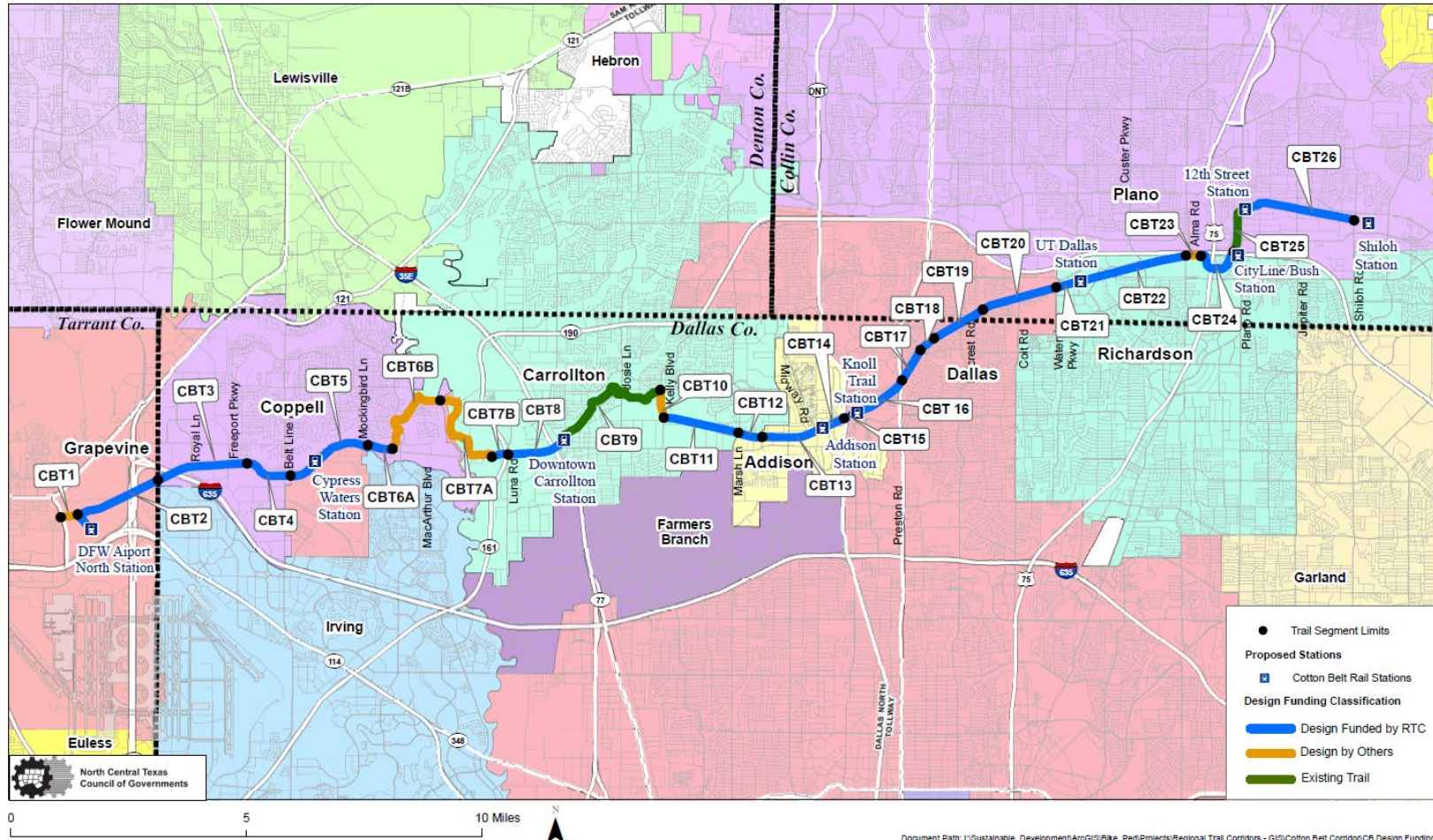
February 9, 2023





# History

Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail: DFW Airport to Plano  
Trail Design Funding



- Regional priority
- Seven cities in three counties
- 24+ miles of trail
- DART partnership to implement with the Silver Line Rail
- Engineering design currently underway
- Increasing construction costs

# Background/Timeline

Date	
2018 (Oct)	RTC approved funding for design (\$8.2M) and construction of the Cotton Belt Trail “critical” sections (\$19.46M federal and \$1.81M local)
2018 (Sept)	Dallas Co. approved funding for other trail sections (\$5.2M)
2019 (June)	RTC approved Transportation Alternatives funding for other trail sections (\$8.5M federal and \$1.9M local)
2020 (Sept)	RTC approved additional funding for design (\$8.2M to \$14.9M)
2020 (Nov)	Notice to Proceed Trail engineering design
2022 (Dec)	RTC approved Transportation Alternatives funding for trail bridges at Midway Rd and Jupiter Rd

# Phase 1: Priority Projects for Construction

Phase 1 Design/Build Contractor (AWH)	Funding Needed
Critical Bridges (Dallas): DNT, White Rock Creek, Preston Green Park, Hillcrest Rd	\$13.25M
Trail Intersection Crossings of Silver Line Rail line and Engineering Services	\$4.5M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17.75M</b>

# Phase 2: Priority Projects for Construction

## DART Partnership Focus:

Construction, utility relocation, and project support of the remaining trail bridges and the associated trail sections in the eastern portion of the corridor (prior to Silver Line Rail Revenue Service)

Phase 2 Contractor:	Funding Approach
Trail Bridges (FUNDED): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Midway Rd (Addison)</li><li>Jupiter Rd (Plano)</li></ul>	2022 NCTCOG Urbanized Area TA Call for Projects <u>RTC Awarded funding on Dec. 8, 2022</u>
Trail Bridges and Approaches (PENDING): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>McKamy (Dallas)</li><li>Custer Rd (Richardson)</li><li>Various connecting trail segments between bridges, crossings, and signals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><u>Application</u>: 2023 USDOT RAISE Grant*</li><li><u>Application</u>: 2023 TxDOT Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects*</li></ul>

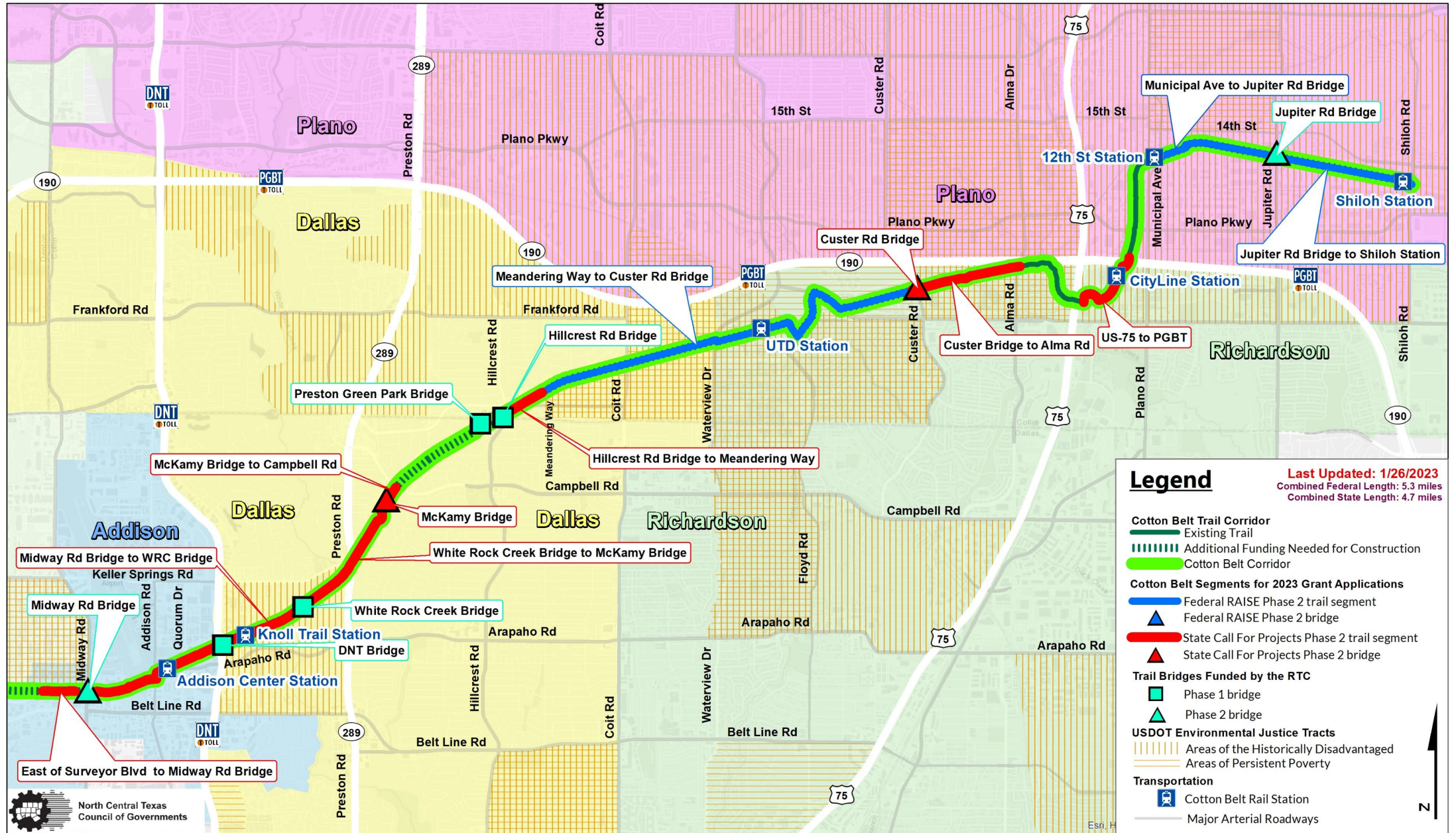
\*If federal funding is not awarded; will return to RTC for support



**DRAFT**

# Cotton Belt Regional Veloweb Trail

Highlighted Segments for Funding: Addison to Plano



# Phase 2: Grant Applications

PROJECT		SUBMITTAL (Agency)	COST/FUNDING STATUS				
TITLE	DESCRIPTION/LIMITS		TOTAL COST	GRANT FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	NEW RTC FEDERAL FUNDS TO FLEX WITH DART LOCAL FUNDS	LEVERAGED / AVAILABLE FUNDS
<b>2023 RAISE Discretionary Grant Program</b>	Construct trail segments, bridges, signals, and crossings in Dallas, Richardson and Plano	DART	<b>\$40.2 M</b>	<b>\$25.0 M</b>	<b>\$1.1 M</b>	<b>\$7.5 M</b>	<b>\$6.6 M</b>
<b>2023 TxDOT Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program Call for Projects</b>	Construct trail segments, bridges, signals, and crossings in Addison, Dallas, Richardson, and Plano	DART	<b>\$52.7 M</b>	<b>\$30.0 M</b>	<b>\$3.6 M</b>	<b>\$3.9 M</b>	<b>\$15.2M</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$92.9 M</b>	<b>\$55.0 M</b>	<b>\$4.7 M</b>	<b>\$11.4 M</b>	<b>\$21.8 M</b>

# Schedule

Date	Task
Jan 27	STTC Action
Jan 27	Preliminary Application deadline (TxDOT TA Call for Projects)
Feb 9	RTC Action
Feb 28	Application deadline (USDOT RAISE grant)
March 27	TxDOT notifies project sponsors of eligibility and provides detailed application
June 5	Detailed Application deadline (TxDOT TA Call for Projects)
June 28	Anticipated USDOT RAISE Grant Award Notice
Oct 26	Anticipated Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) Award Notice
Oct 27	TIP Modifications deadline
March/April 2024	FHWA TIP approval (anticipated)

# Long Term Strategy and Phase 3 Partnership



- **DART to lead trail construction**
  - Contractor procurement
  - Manage contractor, flagging, inspections, etc. during construction phases
  - Funding transfer from FHWA to FTA and DART
- **Local obligation**
  - Partner with DART to expedite the project quickly
  - No unnecessary delays in permit approvals
  - No required additional improvements to other unrelated infrastructure beyond the scope of the trail project
- Continue to prioritize the Regional Cotton Belt Trail for other funding opportunities, focusing on an East to West implementation approach (constructability, meets environmental justice criteria for federal grant, etc.)
- Continue to partner with cities to advance additional segments until fully funded for construction



# Silver Line Rail Support

- \$500,000 in construction funding is needed by DART to ensure continuation of the betterment walls in the rail corridor adjacent to the Plano ISD property in Dallas (North of Sugar Cane Wy generally between Pinyon Ln and Sage Ln).
- The Silver Line Rail design/build contractor will construct the walls with the rail project.

# Requested Action

## Regional Transportation Council Approval:

- \$17.75 Million with 3.55 Million Regional Transportation Development Credits for Phase 1 Cotton Belt Trail Priority Projects
- \$500,000 with 100,000 Regional Transportation Development Credits for Silver Line Rail betterment wall extension at the Plano ISD property
- To administratively amend the TIP/STIP and other planning/administrative documents to incorporate these changes
- Support the DART partnership submittal of the TxDOT Statewide TA Call for Projects application and funding contribution of \$3.9M federal for Phase 2 Projects
- Support the DART partnership submittal of the USDOT 2023 RAISE grant application and funding contribution of \$7.5M federal for Phase 2 Projects

# Contact Us



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Regional Transportation Council

# Regional Safety Performance Targets Update – 2023-2027

Sonya J. Landrum | Program Manager

February 9, 2023

# Recent and Upcoming Federal Performance Measure Action

Rulemaking	Upcoming RTC Target-Setting Action	Next Anticipated RTC Target-Setting Action	Target-Setting Schedule
Transit Safety (PTASP)	May 2021 	Early 2025	Every 4 Years
Transit Asset Management (TAM)	September 2022 	Late 2026	Every 4 Years
PM3 – System Performance, Freight, and CMAQ	September 2022 	Late 2024	Biennial
PM1 – Roadway Safety	February 2023	Early 2024 (Information/Update)	Targets established as reductions over 5-year period
PM2 – Pavement and Bridge	Spring 2023	Late 2024	Biennial

# Safety Performance Targets

- Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval of current performance targets established through 2022
- Need to seek approval of new five-year targets
- MPOs have the option to support State targets or adopt our own targets
- Identified to monitor through the Statewide Safety Task Force

Number of Fatalities

Rate of Fatalities\*

Number of Serious  
Injuries

Rate of Serious  
Injuries\*

Bicyclist and  
Pedestrian Fatalities  
and Serious Injuries

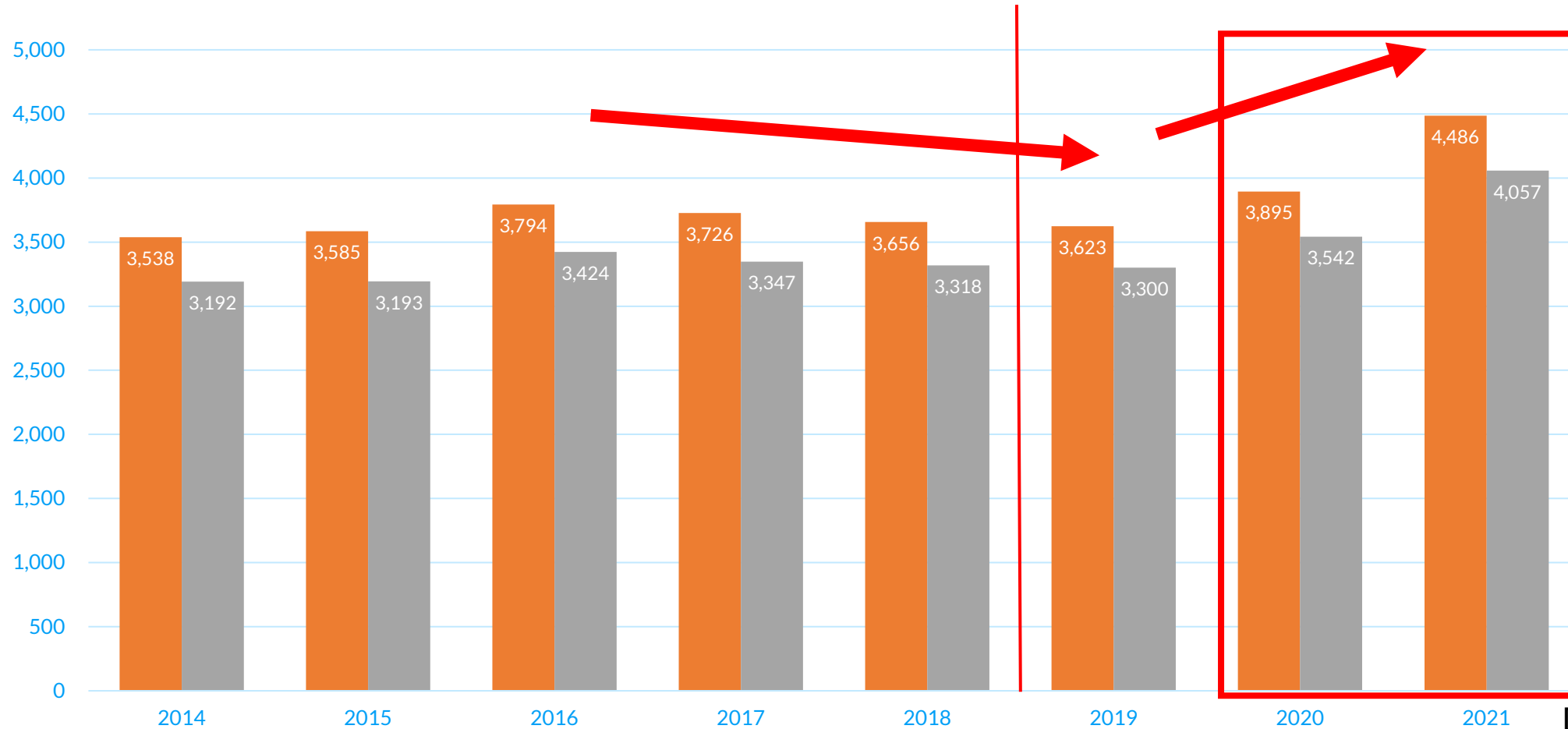
\*Rates calculated per  
100 million vehicle  
miles traveled



# Texas Fatalities and Fatal Crashes 2014 - 2021



Road to Zero  
May 2019



In 2021, traffic-related fatalities were at 4,486 compared with 3,895 lives lost on Texas roadways in 2020. (15% increase)

Data as of 03/28/2022



Fatalities Fatal Crashes



# Preliminary NCTCOG Safety Performance Update for 2021

Safety Performance Measures	Original 2021 Target	PY2021 Actual Performance	PY2015-2019 Baseline Performance	Met Target?	Better than the Baseline?	Met or Made Significant Progress?
Number of Fatalities	572.4	614.2	557.2	No	No	No
Rate of Fatalities	0.762	0.814	0.781	No	No	
Number of Serious Injuries	3,375.3	3,647.6	3,663.1	No	Yes	
Rate of Serious Injuries	4.485	4.843	5.200	No	Yes	
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	592.3	617.0	569.8	No	No	

Original 2021 Target was calculated in early 2021 and included observed data for 2017-2019 and projected data for 2020-2021. PY2021 actual performance includes 2017-2021 observed data.





# Safety Performance Targets Past and Future

## Past

### TxDOT

Two percent reduction across each of the five performance targets by target year 2022

In 2021, TxDOT updated fatalities, fatality rates, and bike and pedestrian fatalities to 50 percent reduction by 2035 and zero by 2050

### NCTCOG

Two percent reduction across each of the five performance targets by target year 2022

## Future

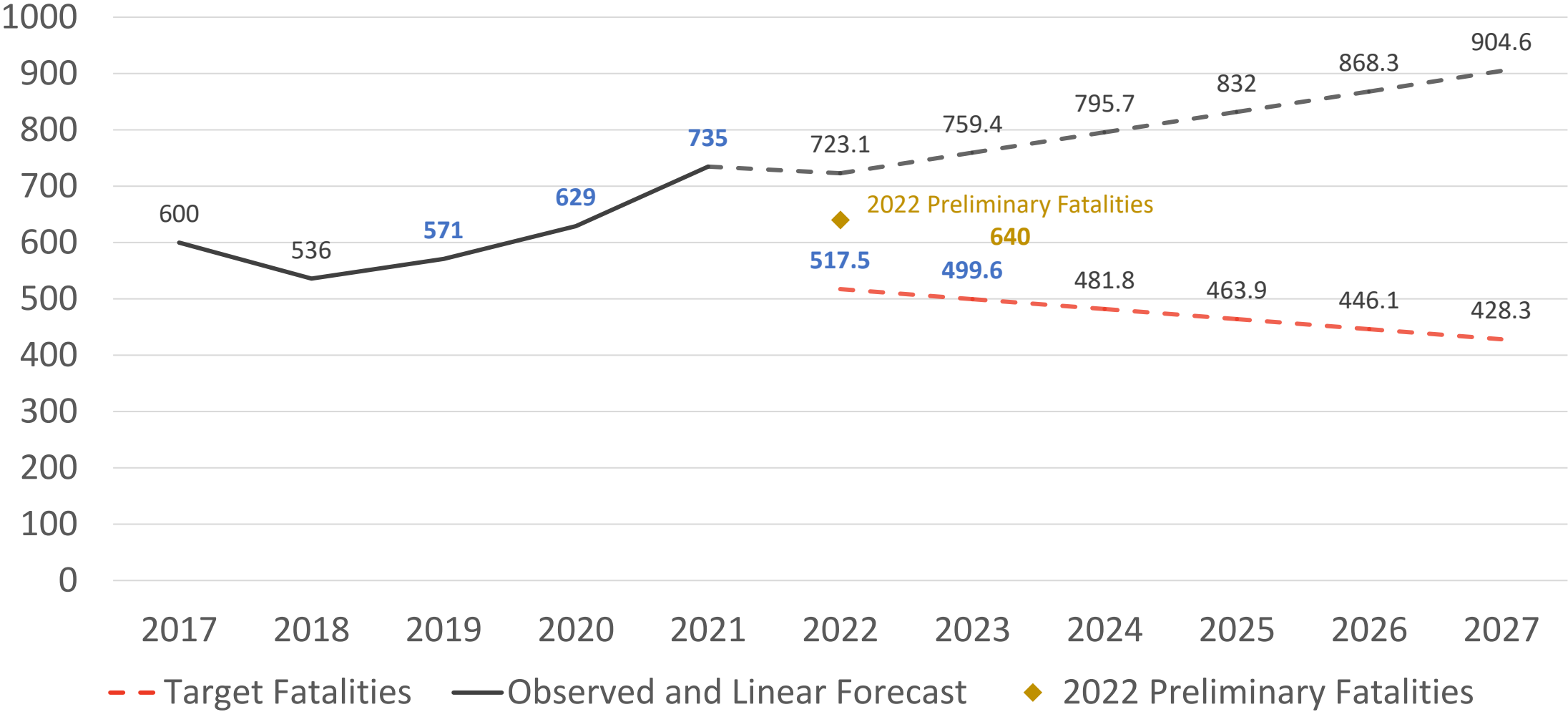
### TxDOT

Fatalities, fatality rates, and bike and pedestrian fatalities to 50 percent by 2035 and zero by 2050

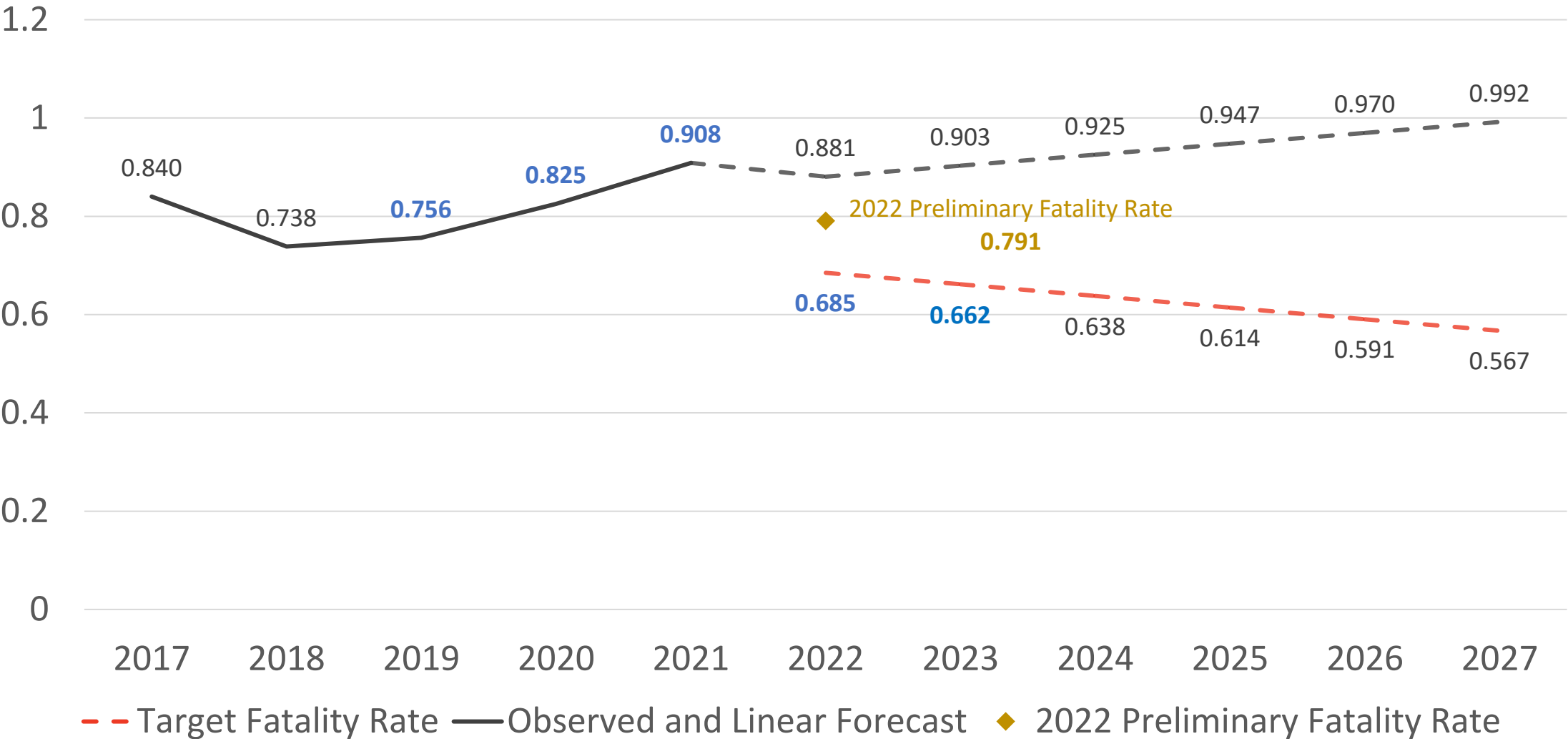
Serious injuries, serious injury rates, and bike and pedestrian serious injuries two percent reduction every year



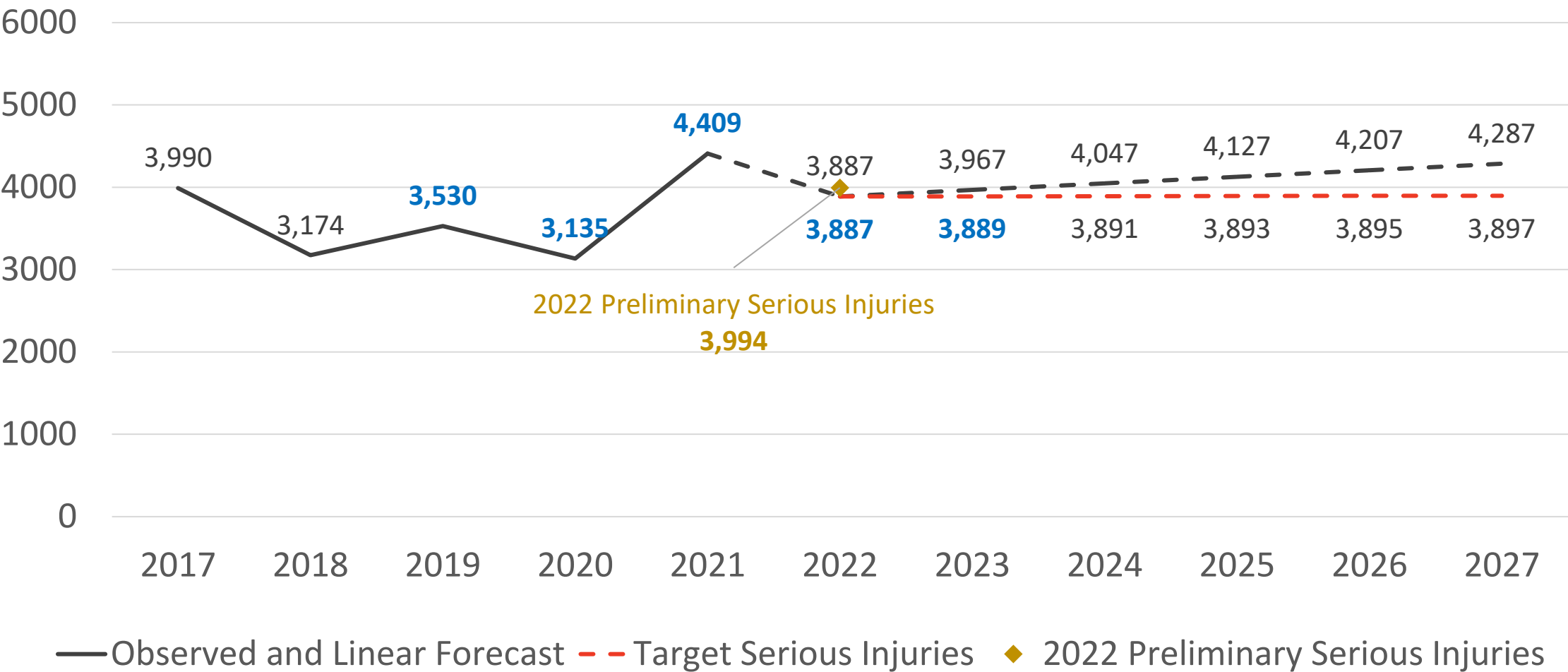
# Observed, Projected and Proposed Target Fatalities (2017-2027)



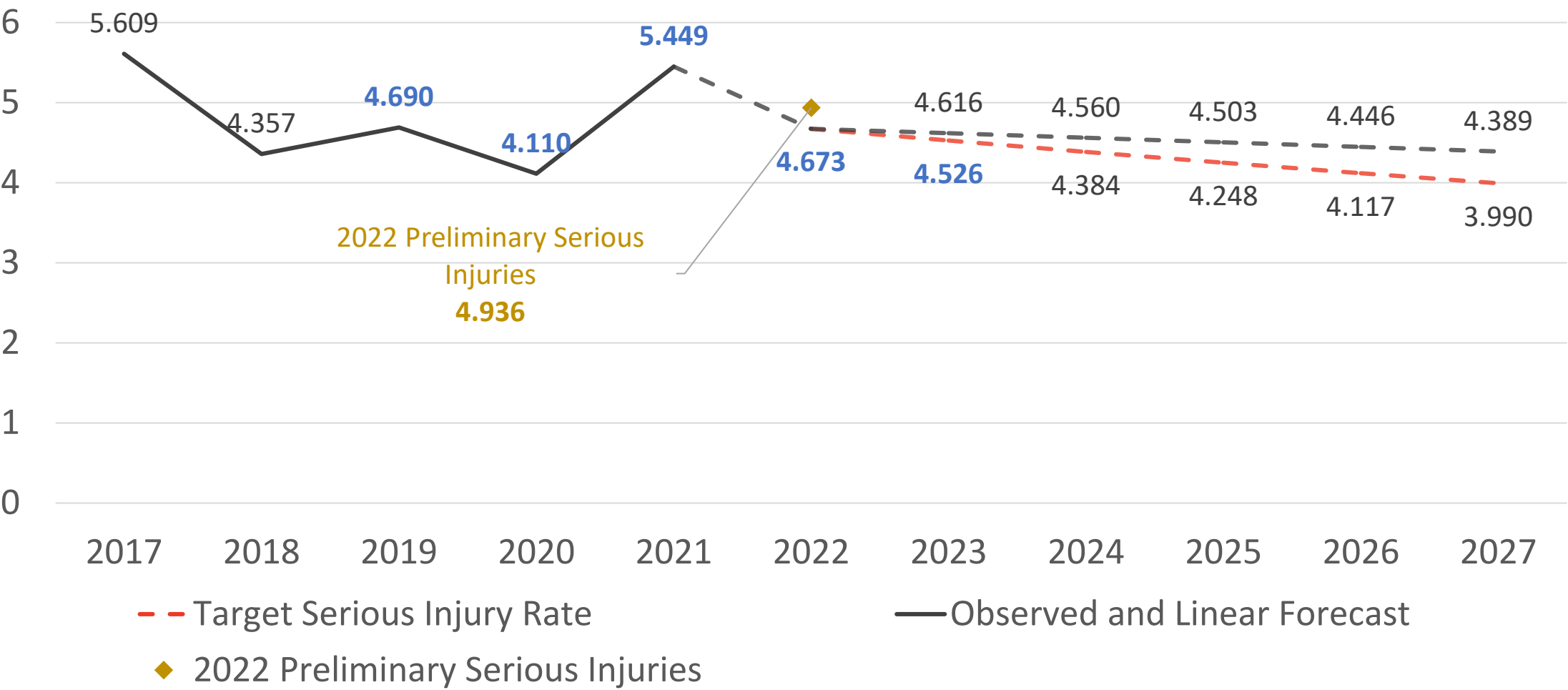
# Observed, Projected and Proposed Fatality Rates (2017-2027)



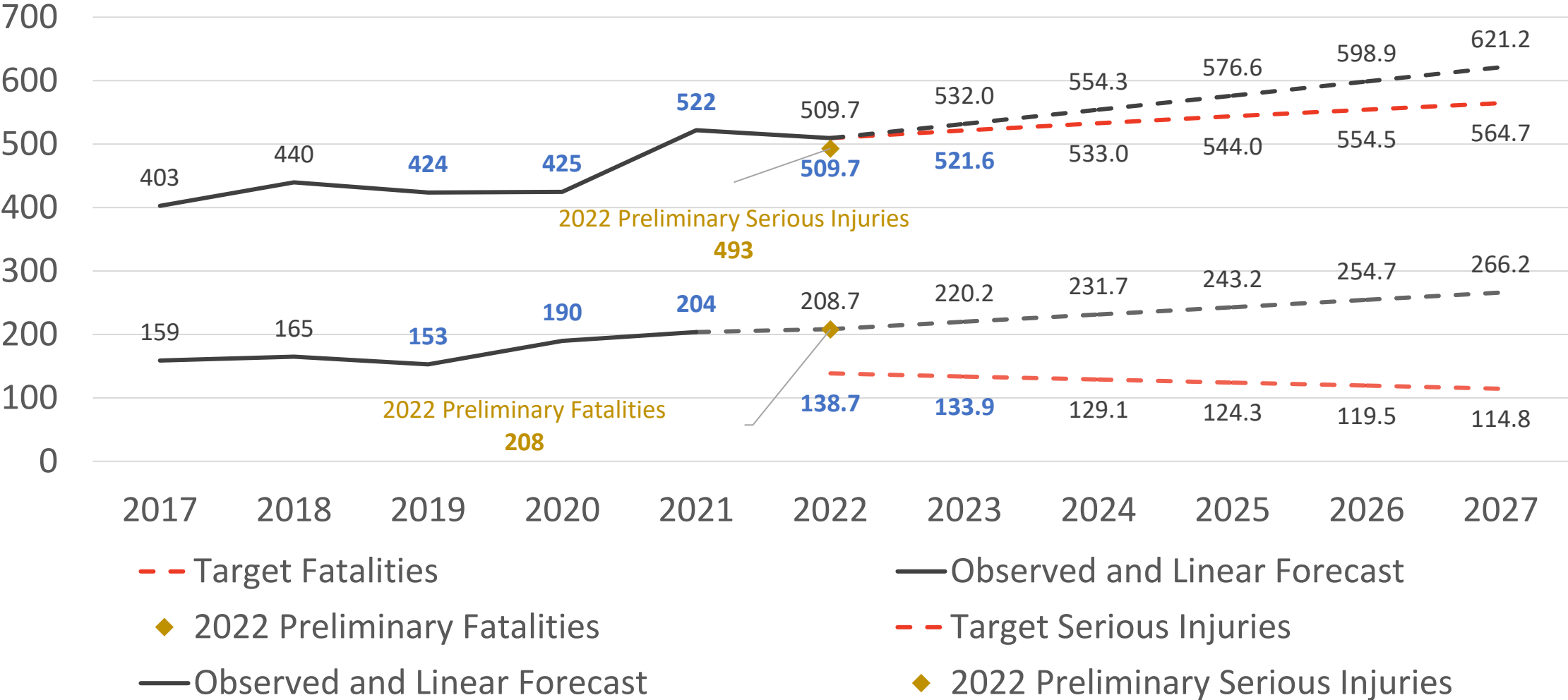
# Observed, Projected and Proposed Serious Injuries (2017-2027)



# Observed, Projected and Proposed Serious Injury Rates (2017-2027)



# Observed, Projected and Proposed Bike/Ped Fatalities and Serious Injuries (2017-2027)



# Proposed NCTCOG Safety Performance Target Setting for 2023-2027

Targets: Number of Fatalities and Fatality Rate	
Year	Percentage Reduction*
2023	3.4%
2024	3.6%
2025	3.7%
2026	3.8%
2027	4.0%

Targets: Number of Serious Injuries and Serious Injury Rate	
Year	Percentage Reduction
2023	2%
2024	2%
2025	2%
2026	2%
2027	2%

The number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries target will use both reduction percentages to calculate the combined measures.

\*Based on linear trendline of 50 percent reduction by 2035 and zero by 2050.



# NCTCOG Safety Performance Targets 2023

Safety Performance Targets	2022 Adopted Targets	Proposed 2023 Targets	Target Reduction
No. of Fatalities	579.5	590.4	50% by 2035
Fatality Rate	0.755	0.767	50% by 2035
No. of Serious Injuries	3,032.9	3,711.5	2% per year
Serious Injury Rate	3.939	4.615	2% per year
No. of Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	594.7	637.3	50% by 2035 for fatalities, 2% per year for serious injuries





# Requested Action

Approve 2023 safety performance targets and the target reduction schedule for 2023 – 2027.



# Roadway Safety Team



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## Certification of Emerging and Reliable Transportation Technology

# Swyft

BRENDON WHEELER, P.E.  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL  
FEBRUARY 9, 2023



# RTC Policy P22-02

## Purpose

Provide transparent process for RTC coordination with providers

Periodic solicitation/opportunity for new technology applications

Ensure level playing field for providers and local governments

## Guiding Principles

Must serve long-range transportation need (MTP)

Technology provider responsible for certification process

NCTCOG will facilitate mutual cooperation

Local governments to consider contingency needs, implementation timeframe, and public use goals and expectations



# RTC Policy P22-02

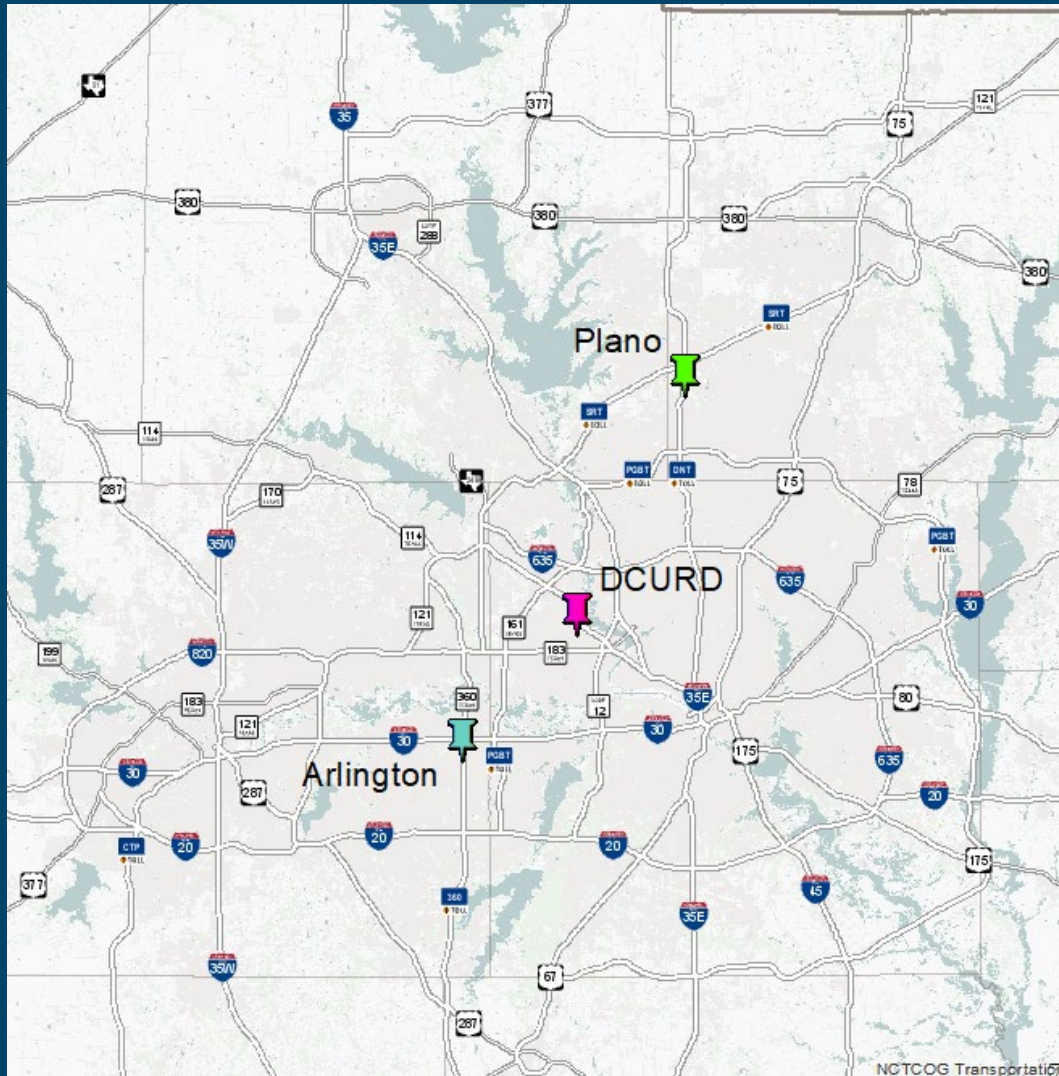
## Process:

- 1) NCTCOG staff to ensure technology solution conforms to policy guidance and long-range transportation need (MTP).
- 2) NCTCOG staff to brief RTC; RTC to take action on initiating process.
- 3) Solicit local government interest in submitting potential locations.
- 4) Technology provider to determine preferred location to pursue.
- 5) RTC to initiate development activities; NCTCOG staff to provide support.





# *CERTT* Round 1 Results



TransPod:  
Arlington

JPods:  
Arlington  
Dallas County Utility & Reclamation  
District (DCURD)  
Plano



# ***CERTT***

## Round 2 Applicant Status

Applicant/ Technology Provider	Technology/Mode	Market Solution	Purpose/Benefit	Application Status
The Boring Company	Tunnel Solutions (subgrade transportation)/ Personal Rapid Transit	Regional/Local	People, Goods, Utility/Air Quality, and Congestion Reduction	Application rescinded by provider
Swyft	Personal Rapid Transit (elevated pod/modern gondola)	Local/Sub-Regional	People/Air Quality and Congestion Reduction	Proposal submitted; staff review complete



# Swyft

Personal rapid transit (PRT) system using overhead fixed-cable gondola-like pods (6 passengers/pod)

Low-speed network that runs along/within existing public ROW

Proofs of concept in Mountain View, CA and Christchurch, NZ

Using private financing and can support planning of special districts, P3s, etc.





# Swyft: Route Considerations

Supports first/last-mile transit connections,  
can function as a fixed-guideway ATS

Phased deployment beginning with 1 to 2  
miles and 2 to 5 stations, connecting to  
mass transit and activity centers

Contingency incorporates funds for  
removal of structures into project budget;  
open to investigating other means of  
solving first/last-mile needs



# Next Steps

## Pending RTC action:

- Staff to develop Submittal Package for interested local governments
- Staff will arrange for pre-submittal meeting with NCTCOG, cities, and technology provider to address detailed questions
- Staff is available for questions or to discuss opportunities on locations that may traverse multiple jurisdictions



# Schedule

Date	Action
January 27, 2023	STTC Action
<b>February 9, 2023</b>	<b>RTC Action</b>
February 13, 2023	Info Packet Mailout
March 20, 2023	Pre-Submittal Conference
April 10, 2023	Deadline for Submittals



# Requested RTC Action

Staff requests RTC initiate Step 3 of RTC Policy P22-02 to allow local governments to submit potential locations of interest for Swyft to consider.



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Certification of Emerging and Reliable  
Transportation Technology (CERTT) Program

Additional imagery provided by: The Boring Company  
and Swyft Cities



Policy Support to Develop Process for the  
Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program  
(P22-02)

The Dallas-Fort Worth region has positioned itself as an innovator in using advancing technology to address transportation issues. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) continues to receive interest from technology developers on implementing new and innovative infrastructure technology that is not currently in operation for a commercial application anywhere in the United States. As is the case with many new technologies, these transportation infrastructure solutions require certification by the appropriate governing entities (either local, state, or federal). This certification requirement may come in many forms, depending on the application, including safety certification to ensure the safety and welfare of the traveling public, as well as certification for use within the region as required by NCTCOG.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and process by which the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) may choose to coordinate with a technology provider to implement a certification facility in the Dallas-Fort Worth region for commercial application. To ensure flexibility with the various types of infrastructure being developed, the following process is structured in a transparent way for potential technology developers and local governments/transportation entities to express interest and collaborate on implementation opportunities. This process would allow for periodic expressions of interest to be facilitated in a timely manner.

The following are the guiding principles of this Innovative Transportation Technology Infrastructure Certification Program:

- Potential projects must serve a long-range transportation need as identified in the recommendations of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or be considered for inclusion in a future Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- The technology developer is solely responsible for navigating any certification process(es) with the appropriate regulating authority(ies) for the developer's specific technology as required.
- If the proposed technology is implemented and fails to perform as intended, or the certification process ends or fails, the project-sponsoring local government must have verifiable assurances that the transportation need identified will still be appropriately addressed. It is encouraged that this contingency be included in any technology infrastructure proposal. Public funds may or may not be used for the certification needs of the emerging infrastructure technology.
- NCTCOG will facilitate mutual cooperation between local governments and transportation entities where potential project limits extend across multiple jurisdictional boundaries.
- When considering locations for proposed technology facilities, local governments and transportation entities should consider the following:
  - Expected timeframes for infrastructure to be operational for public use
  - Public use goals and performance expectations of proposed transportation infrastructure.

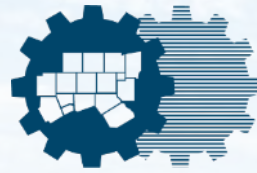
Following the guidelines listed above, the RTC directs staff to implement the following transparent process outlined in the steps below once NCTCOG or the RTC is approached by an infrastructure technology provider to enter into this process. This process is structured to allow for periodic solicitation or acceptance of proposed technology infrastructure solutions. The following process outlines how proposals brought to NCTCOG will be handled and does not

preclude local governments and transportation entities from engaging directly with technology entities.

- 1) NCTCOG staff will confirm infrastructure technology solution proposed by provider conforms with this policy and a long-range transportation need as identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- 2) NCTCOG staff will provide RTC with a summary of the technology provider's proposal, including any requirements and available details on the proposed operation of the technology. The RTC will take action on whether to initiate the development process for certification of the infrastructure technology.
- 3) Upon RTC action, local governments will submit potential locations of interest that utilize public right-of-way and serve a regional long-range transportation need.
- 4) The technology provider will determine the preferred location and project development opportunity to pursue based on the proposals provided by the local governments through NCTCOG.
- 5) The RTC will initiate project development activities and coordination efforts among the appropriate transportation agencies, local governments, and the technology provider. The RTC will direct NCTCOG staff to provide support in the project development activities and coordination efforts as needed. Project development activities and coordination efforts may include appropriation of public funds for project development and implementation.

The RTC directs staff to provide regular briefings when proposals are received and during project development. The RTC also directs staff to integrate the resulting recommendations from projects that advance into future mobility, air quality, safety, and other regional planning activities as appropriate.





**NCTCOG PRESENTATION**

# **REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) – FY 23**

**JEFFREY C. NEAL – SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (RTC) – ACTION ITEM**  
**February 9, 2023**

# FY 23 RAISE GRANT PROGRAM – OVERVIEW

## Funding Availability

**\$115 Million**  
Planning Grants

**\$2.16 Billion**  
Capital Grants

**50% / 50%**  
Urban / Rural Areas

## Cost Sharing (Federal)

**Up to 80%**  
Urban Areas

**Up to 100%**

- a. Rural Areas
- b. Areas of Persistent Poverty
- c. Historically Disadvantaged

## Maximum Award

**\$25 Million**  
– per Project (All)

**\$45 Million**  
– per Project (FY 23 only)

**\$345 Million**  
– per State ( $\leq 15\%$ )

## Minimum Award

**\$5 Million**  
Urban Areas (Capital)

**\$1 Million**  
Rural Areas (Capital)

**No Minimum**  
Planning Grants

## Applicant Eligibility

1. State / Territorial Government (or political subdivision)
2. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
3. Local / Tribal Government (or political subdivision)
4. Public Agency / Chartered Authority
5. Public Special Purpose District (including Port)
6. Multi-Jurisdictional Group of Above Entities

*Application Limit – Three per Agency*

## Project Eligibility

1. Highway, Bridge, or Road (Title 23)
2. Public Transportation (Chapter 53 of Title 49)
3. Passenger / Freight Rail / Intermodal
4. Port Infrastructure (incl. inland / land ports of entry)
5. Airport Surface Transportation (pt. B, subtitle VII, Title 49)
6. Stormwater Runoff Improvement (aquatic species habitat)
7. Tribal Surface Facility (vested Federal title / maintenance)
8. TOD / Non-Motorized / Mobility On-Demand

## Other Details

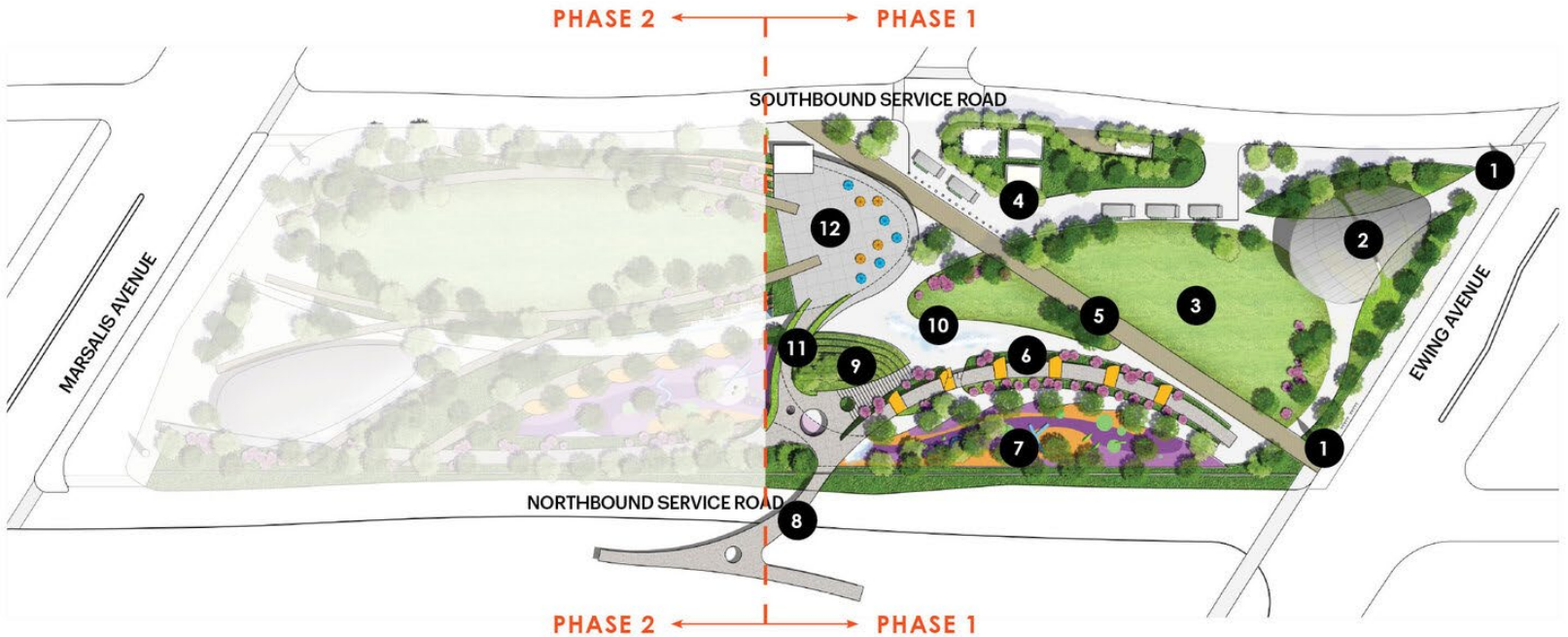
FY 22 RCP “Reconnecting Extra” projects with “recommended” overall merit rating & at least one “high” merit criteria score will automatically advance to FY 23 RAISE 2<sup>nd</sup> tier analysis.

**Application Deadline – February 28, 2023**  
**Award Announcement – June 28, 2023**  
**Obligation Deadline – September 30, 2027**  
**Expenditure Deadline – September 30, 2032**





# FY 23 RAISE CANDIDATE #1- SOUTHERN GATEWAY DECK PARK- PHASE 2.0



- |                  |                            |                  |                  |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 Iconic Element | 4 Park Drive (Food Trucks) | 7 Play           | 10 Water Feature |
| 2 Stage Pavilion | 5 12th Street Entrance     | 8 Zoo Bridge     | 11 Restrooms     |
| 3 Lawn           | 6 Escarpment Feature       | 9 History Stairs | 12 Flex Building |

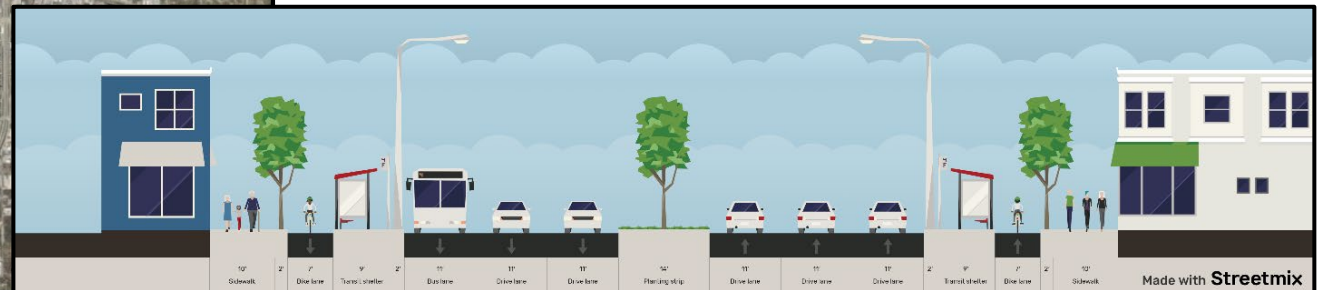
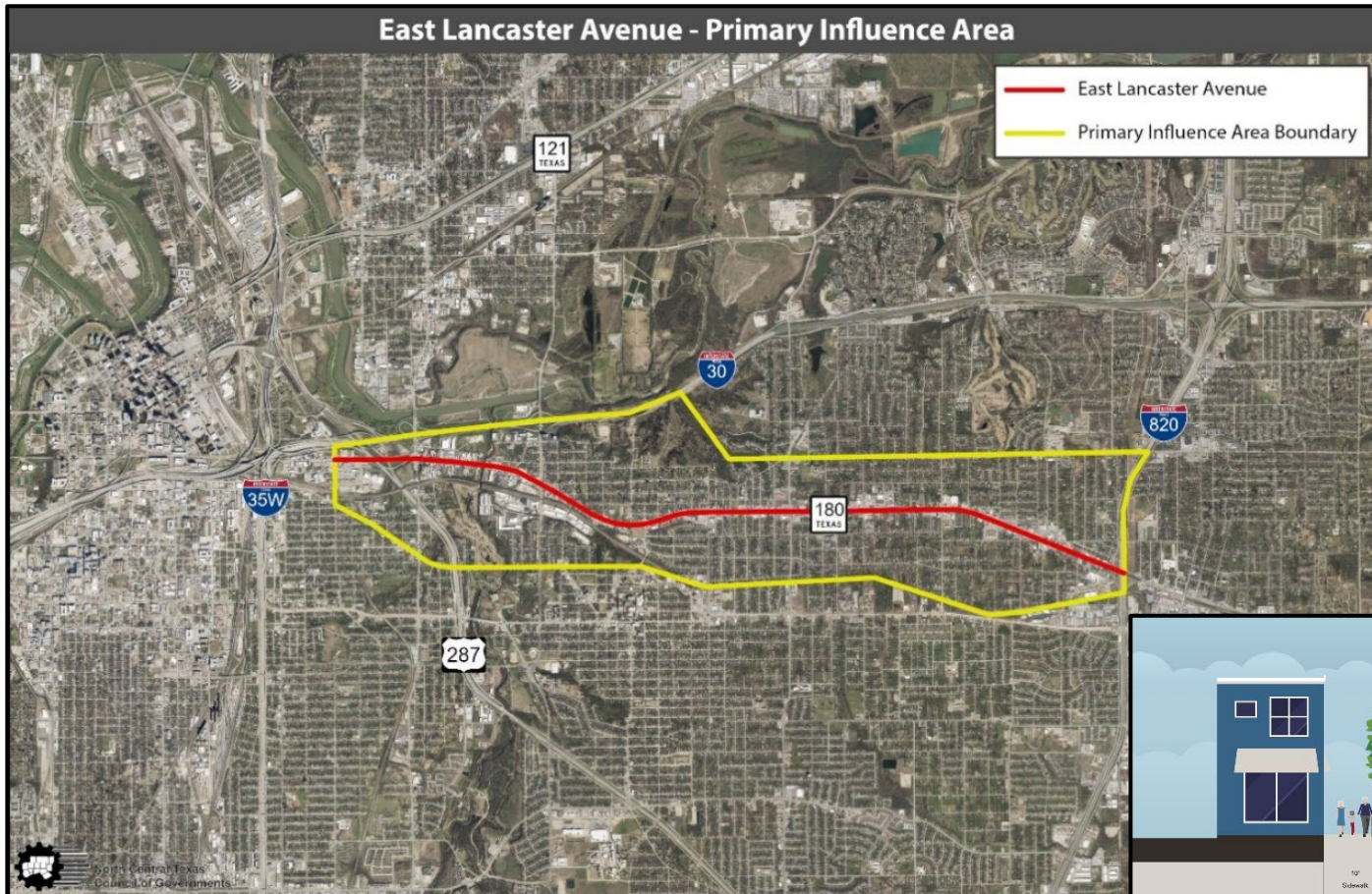


# FY 23 RAISE CANDIDATE #2– KLYDE WARREN PARK – PHASE 2.0





# FY 23 RAISE CANDIDATE #3- EAST LANCASTER AVENUE COMPLETE STREETS & TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY PROJECT



# FY 23 RAISE GRANT PROGRAM – CANDIDATE PROJECTS & FUNDING REQUESTS

PROJECT			COST / FUNDING STATUS						
TITLE	DESCRIPTION / LIMITS	E / W	NON-FEDERAL			FEDERAL			TOTAL COST
			NCTCOG / TxDOT	Local / Private	%	NCTCOG / TxDOT	RAISE Grant	%	
FY 23 RAISE CANDIDATE PROJECTS – NCTCOG									
Southern Gateway Deck Park – Phase 2	Construct foundational structural, safety, multimodal transportation, & hardscape elements to expand deck park over to Marsalis Avenue bridge.	EAST	N/A	\$20,000,000 <sup>1</sup>	30%	\$7,000,000 <sup>2</sup>	\$40,000,000	70%	\$67,000,000
Klyde Warren Park – Phase 2	Construct foundational structural, safety, multimodal transportation, & hardscape elements for Pavilion Deck / 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Plaza & West Lawn Deck.	EAST	N/A	\$18,045,600 <sup>3</sup>	23%	\$36,800,000 <sup>4</sup>	\$24,968,890	77%	\$79,814,490
East Lancaster Avenue Complete Streets & Transit Technology Project	Reconstruct aging East Lancaster Avenue (Pine Street – IH 820) into a context-sensitive multimodal corridor, with accommodations for an integrated high-capacity bus transit service, to revitalize a critical economic and socially significant asset for East Fort Worth.	WEST	\$44,713,968 <sup>5</sup>	\$18,430,160 <sup>6</sup>	35%	\$93,855,872 <sup>7</sup>	\$25,000,000	65%	\$182,000,000
FY 23 RAISE CANDIDATE PROJECT – LOCAL/REGIONAL PARTNERS (with NCTCOG funding requests)									
Cotton Belt Trail – DART / NCTCOG Partnership <sup>8</sup>	DART / NCTCOG partnership to construct Cotton Belt Trail segments in Richardson & Plano connecting to / from multiple DART Silver Line Rail stations.	EAST	N/A	\$10,480,000	26%	\$4,720,000	\$25,000,000	74%	\$40,200,000

1. **Construction:** Combined funds from City of Dallas, Dallas County, & Southern Gateway Public Green Foundation

2. **Engineering:** Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) + Transportation Development Credits (TDC) for match

3. **Construction:** \$7,899,100 – City of Dallas; \$1,300,900 – Dallas County; \$8,845,600 – Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation

4. **Construction:** \$36,800,000 STBG (includes \$10,000,000 of RTC's contribution to be paid back over time)

5. **Engineering (PE), Right-of-Way (ROW), & Federal Match:** \$14,475,000 Existing TxDOT funds (\$3,225,000 PE + \$1,250,000 ROW + \$10,000,000 Match) + \$30,238,968 New TxDOT funds (\$6,775,000 PE + \$3,750,000 ROW + \$19,713,968 Match)

6. **Utilities:** \$2,000,000 (Franchise); **Construction:** \$16,430,160 City of Fort Worth (2022 Bond Program / other City sources per Resolution 5568-05-2022)

7. **Construction:** \$40,000,000 Existing TxDOT Federal (Cat 2) + \$53,855,872 New TxDOT Federal (Cat 2) to be requested in Unified Transportation Program (UTP)/10-Year Plan

8. Per RTC Action – Item #5 (February 2023):



# FY 22 FEDERAL GRANT OUTCOMES – STATUS OF SUBMITTED NCTCOG PROJECTS

- International Parkway Advanced Mobility Program (NCTCOG / DFW Airport)
  - Not selected for FY 22 RAISE
  - Additional local funds identified to expedite project with local design-build procurement
- South Dallas County Inland Port (SDCIP) Multimodal Connectivity
  - Not selected for FY 22 Multimodal Discretionary Grant Program (MPDG) INFRA / RURAL
  - Plan to resubmit for FY 23 MPDG INFRA / RURAL (Spring 2023)
- IH 30 Downtown Dallas “Canyon” (NCTCOG / TxDOT)
  - Not selected for FY 22 MPDG INFRA / MEGA
  - Will coordinate with TxDOT on plan to resubmit for FY 23 MPDG INFRA / MEGA (Spring 2023)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. / Cedar Crest Boulevard
  - Not selected for FY 22 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)
  - Will coordinate with partners on plan to resubmit for FY 23 SS4A (Spring 2023)
- Ultimate IH 35W / SH 121 Interchange Phase One – Sylvania Avenue Bridge
  - USDOT review ongoing for FY 22 Bridge Investment Program (BIP) – Small Bridge Projects (< \$100M)
- Prairie Creek Road / Union Pacific Rail (UPRR) Grade Separation
  - USDOT review ongoing for FY 22 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (RCEP)





# FY 23 RAISE GRANT PROGRAM – SCHEDULE

November 30, 2022	FY 23 RAISE Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Released
January 12, 2023	RTC Information – Director’s Report (Item #7)
January 27, 2023	STTC Action – FY 23 RAISE Projects
<b>February 9, 2023</b>	<b>RTC Action – FY 23 RAISE Projects</b>
February 10, 2023	RTC Letter of Support Deadline <i>(for projects submitted by partnering agencies, send requests to Nicholas Allen – <a href="mailto:nallen@nctcog.org">nallen@nctcog.org</a>)</i>
February 23, 2023	Executive Board Action
February 28, 2023	FY 23 RAISE Application Deadline – Grants.gov
June 28, 2023	FY 23 RAISE Award Announcement Deadline (USDOT)



# FY 23 RAISE GRANT PROGRAM – REQUESTED RTC ACTION

- Recommend approval of:

Submittal of proposed projects for funding consideration through FY 23 RAISE Discretionary Grant Program, as defined on slide #6 (green)

Allocation of new NCTCOG / TxDOT funds for East Lancaster RAISE project to be approved through Unified Transportation Program (UTP) process:

- \$30,238,968 State funds for engineering, ROW, & Federal match
- \$53,855,872 Federal (Cat 2) funds for construction

Administratively amend NCTCOG / State Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP / STIP) and other planning / administrative documents to include proposed projects, if selected for FY 23 RAISE Grant awards



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USDOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): <https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law>  
USDOT RAISE Grant Program: <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants>





The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments  
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

September 24, 2021

Ms. Deborah Fischer Stout  
President  
Northern Flyer Alliance, Inc.  
876 North Diane Drive  
Olathe, KS 66061

Dear Ms. Stout:

Thank you for your recent request of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to support your efforts in extending and improving the Amtrak Heartland Flyer service currently operating between Fort Worth, Texas and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The Regional Transportation Council (RTC), policy board of NCTCOG in its role as the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, support the proposed improvements to the Heartland Flyer as part of a national, interconnected rail system. This support has been shown for years in the region's metropolitan transportation plan, *Mobility 2045*, as well as through previous action in December 2007 to unanimously support the cities of Denton and Krum in their development of a new station on this Amtrak line, which we understand is a part of the improvements currently being considered for this corridor. Please see the enclosed January 2008 letter from the RTC to the City of Denton detailing this support.

The recommendations and policies in *Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas* support service expansion in the passenger rail transportation networks throughout the region, including Amtrak's Heartland Flyer service. This service would serve a critical link connecting the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan region to Oklahoma City and beyond.

Additionally, through previous coordination, a Memorandum of Understanding was developed between the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments and NCTCOG to cooperatively plan high-speed rail between the two regions. This partnership led to a successful study by the Texas Department of Transportation, entitled Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study, which analyzed future high and higher speed passenger rail corridors between the two states. This partnership and shared vision between the two regions serve as a common foundation to support improvements to the Amtrak's Heartland Flyer as proposed.

If you have any questions regarding the RTC's position on high-speed rail planning in the North Central Texas region or related to this letter of support for Amtrak improvements along the Heartland Flyer route, please contact me at (817) 695-9241.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Morris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names clearly legible.

Michael Morris, P.E.  
Director of Transportation  
North Central Texas Council of Governments

BW:cmg  
Enclosure



## Regional Transportation Council

The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments  
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)



January 9, 2008

Mr. Mark Nelson  
Chief Transportation Officer  
City of Denton  
215 East McKinney  
Denton, TX 76201

Dear Mr. Nelson:

On December 13, 2007, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) unanimously approved support to the City of Denton and the City of Krum in their development of a new Amtrak rail station. The RTC agrees that this additional station would provide a northern access point to the Amtrak system and would fill a gap in service not covered by the other stations in Dallas, Fort Worth, or Cleburne.

Additionally, recommendations made in Mobility 2030: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, support inter-regional passenger rail service like that provided by Amtrak's Texas Eagle and Heartland Flyer routes. The pursuance of additional Amtrak stations in the region is consistent with the current metropolitan transportation plan.

You can count on the support of the RTC during your work to pursue this station location with Amtrak. If any assistance in this effort is needed, please contact Michael Morris at (817) 695-9240.

Sincerely,

T. Oscar Trevino Jr., P.E.  
Chair, Regional Transportation Council  
Mayor, City of North Richland Hills

CE:cmg

**RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL ALONG THE  
I-20 CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE DALLAS-FORT WORTH REGION AND THE ATLANTA,  
GEORGIA REGION**

**(R22-01)**

**WHEREAS**, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and has been and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

**WHEREAS**, a joint Memorandum of Understanding on coordinated planning for future passenger rail service between the North Central Texas Region and the East Texas Region was signed on August 7, 2007; and,

**WHEREAS**, NCTCOG continues to coordinate with the I-20 Corridor Council, a non-profit organization and multi-state coalition, comprised elected officials and other stakeholders along the I-20 corridor, working to establish a passenger rail connection between Dallas-Fort Worth and Atlanta, Georgia, and ultimately connecting to the East Coast; and,

**WHEREAS**, The North Central Texas region has been identified as a potential hub for passenger rail routes serving distant regions and this Amtrak service coexists with the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2045: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas; and,

**WHEREAS**, in December 2021, Amtrak and Canadian Pacific Railway entered into an agreement to participate in a joint study with the goal of the introduction of an Amtrak train route between Dallas, Texas and Meridian, Mississippi, pending US Surface Transportation Board approval of Canadian Pacific's acquisition of Kansas City Southern Railway; and,

**WHEREAS**, the proposed I-20 corridor passenger rail project would not only provide an east-west connection between two of the nation's fastest-growing urban mega-regions, Dallas-Fort Worth with 7.5 million in population and the greater Atlanta region with 6 million in population, but would also connect the rural communities and smaller cities along the route.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:**

**Section 1.** The RTC reaffirms its support for a passenger rail connection between the Dallas-Fort Worth region and Atlanta, Georgia region along the I-20 corridor.

**Section 2.** NCTCOG will continue planning for future passenger rail service along the I-20 corridor.

**Section 3.** This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.



---

Dr. Theresa Daniel, Chair  
Regional Transportation Council  
Dallas County Commissioner

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area on March 10, 2022.



---

Cary Moon, Secretary  
Regional Transportation Council  
Councilmember, Fort Worth





The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments  
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

August 22, 2022

Amit Bose  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Administrator Bose:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) would like to submit the high-speed passenger rail corridor along, or near, IH 30 between Dallas and Fort Worth for consideration in the Corridor Identification and Development Program, as published in the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA's) May 13, 2022, Federal Register notice: **Docket No. FRA-2022-0031**.

The NCTCOG Transportation Department serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the 12-county Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, with the RTC serving as the MPO's policy body. As the MPO, we work closely with regional, state, and federal partners to plan transportation projects that will increase mobility, improve air quality, and encourage more efficient land use.

The DFW region has grown to over eight million in population and is currently the fourth largest metropolitan area in the country, with the proposed corridor connecting the ninth and 13<sup>th</sup> largest cities in the nation. A high-speed transportation network between Dallas and Fort Worth is the vital missing piece of a larger planned, high-speed passenger transportation system in Texas. Specifically, the project would provide a link between the proposed high-speed rail service between Dallas and Houston on the east and high-speed passenger services linking Fort Worth to Austin, San Antonio, and on to south Texas on the west, ultimately connecting the major metropolitan areas of the Texas Triangle.

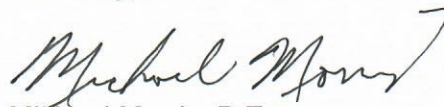
NCTCOG initiated the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study in the spring of 2020 to evaluate high-speed transportation between Dallas and Fort Worth, with the goal of connecting to other proposed high-performance passenger systems in the state and enhancing the Dallas-Fort Worth regional transportation system. Working closely with the FRA, the Federal Transit Administration, transportation agencies, stakeholders, and the community, 43 alignments and five technologies were initially studied in the 230-square mile study area. This first phase of the study concluded in 2021 and was approved by the RTC. High-speed rail was selected as the preferred mode, and a route in the IH 30 corridor was recommended to be further evaluated through the preparation of a National Environmental Policy Act process and preliminary engineering.

August 22, 2022

The Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections corridor endpoints connect to 200 miles of local and regional rail, providing connectivity to historically unserved, underserved, low-income, suburban, and rural communities throughout North Texas. The integrated connectivity of this multi-modal network creates mutual benefit for all rail services within the region, enhancing regional equity and geographic diversity of intercity rail service.

The RTC and NCTCOG are pleased to have the opportunity to submit an expression of interest for the Dallas to Fort Worth high-speed passenger rail corridor and look forward to working with the FRA on the development of future rail corridors. For additional information or questions, please contact me at (817) 695-9241 or [mmorris@nctcog.org](mailto:mmorris@nctcog.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Morris", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Morris, P.E.  
Director of Transportation  
North Central Texas Council of Governments

RG:kw



125 EAST 11TH STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | 512.463.8588 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

October 5, 2022

The Honorable Amit Bose  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose:

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) supports stakeholder interest in considering federal funding options for conventional intercity passenger rail expansion. Please accept this letter of interest filed in response to docket number FRA-2022-0031. In addition to the September 8, 2022, letter from the Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas Departments of Transportation supporting the Heartland Flyer extension, we appreciate the opportunity to offer expressions of interest to determine the potential viability of service expansion on the corridors listed below:

- Additional train sets on the Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City Amtrak Station to Fort Worth Central Station.
- Additional train sets on existing Texas Eagle and Sunset Limited routes between Houston Amtrak Station, Amtrak Station San Antonio, and Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas.
- Renewed intercity service between Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas and Houston Amtrak Station.
- New and enhanced, conventional intercity service options studied in the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study that would include connecting Amtrak Station San Antonio to the Rio Grande Valley.
- New service east of Marshall, TX connecting the Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas to the Meridian, Mississippi Union Station.

I respectfully request consideration of these corridors through the Corridor Identification Program and look forward to working with your team in the coming years. If you have any questions, please call me at (512) 305-9515, or you or your staff may contact Jeff Davis, Director, Rail Division Director at Jeffrey.Davis@txdot.gov or (512) 927-9648.

Sincerely,

Marc D. Williams P.E.  
Executive Director

cc: Brandye Hendrickson, Deputy Executive Director, Planning and Programming  
Caroline Mays, Director, Planning and Modal Programs  
Jeffrey Davis, Director, Rail Division





NCTCOG PRESENTATION

# FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION GRANT PROGRAMS

Brendon Wheeler | Regional Transportation Council | 2.9.2023

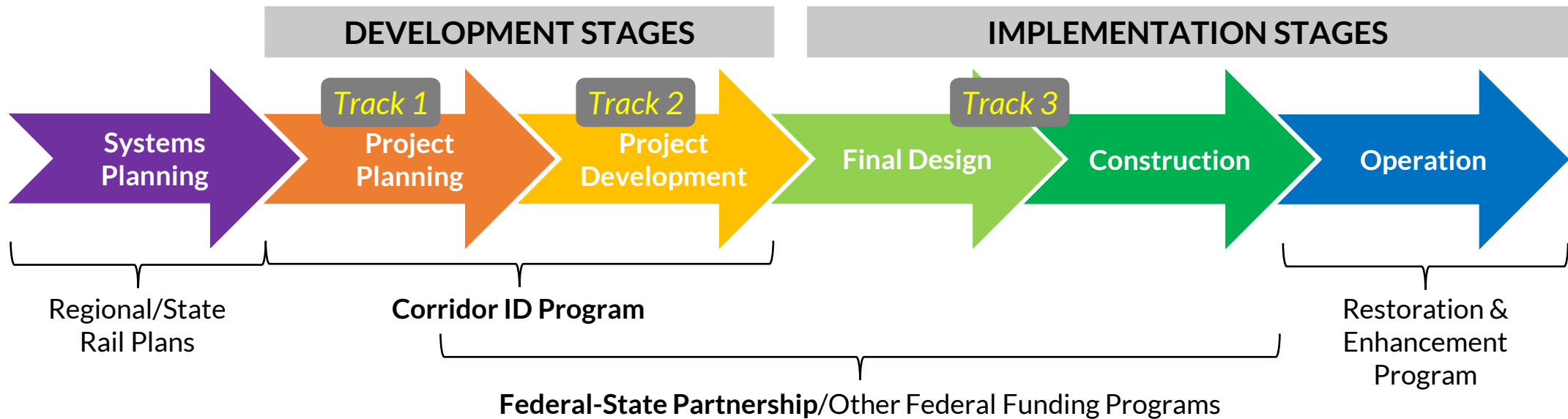
# Federal Railroad Administration Grant Programs

**Corridor Identification and Development (ID) Program** creates foundational framework for identifying and developing new or improved intercity passenger rail services, setting up a **PIPELINE** of projects.

- *Step 1: Corridor Development Initiation*
- *Step 2: Service Development Planning*
- *Step 3: Project Planning/Development*

**Federal-State Partnership (FSP) Intercity Passenger Rail Program** advances project development and **FUNDS** capital rail projects for new, expanded, or improved intercity passenger rail service, with preference for capital projects progressed from Corridor ID Program.

- *Track 1: Project Planning*
- *Track 2: Project Development*
- *Track 3: Final Design/Construction*



# Corridor Identification and Development (ID) Program

## Funding Availability

**\$1.8 Billion**

FY2022-2026 Overall

### Corridor ID Steps:

1. Service Development Plan (SDP) Initiation/Scoping
2. SDP Preparation/Approval
3. Project Development

## Cost Sharing (Federal)

**100%**

– Step #1

**Up to 90%**

– Step #2

**Up to 80%**

– Step #3

## Maximum Award

**\$500,000**

– Step #1

**No Maximum**

– Step #2 (TBD)

**No Maximum**

– Step #3 (TBD)

## Other Details

### Letters of Interest:

Previously requested by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) when Corridor ID was established & published in the Federal Register on May 13, 2022.

## Applicant Eligibility

1. Amtrak
2. State/Territorial Government (or political subdivision)
3. Groups of States
4. Tribal Government (or political subdivision)
5. Regional Passenger Rail Authorities
6. Interstate Compact Entities

*No application limit per agency*

## Project Eligibility

### Eligible

1. Short-distance ( $\leq 750$  miles) intercity passenger services
2. Restoring route service formerly operated by Amtrak
3. Increasing frequencies of long-distance service

### Ineligible

1. Commuter rail
2. Intercity passenger rail segment not functional as stand-alone intercity corridor
3. Technology under development, but not yet proven



# Federal-State Partnership (FSP) Intercity Passenger Rail Program

## Funding Availability

**\$2.283 Billion**  
FY2022 FSP Program

**\$7.2 Billion**  
FY2022-2026 FSP  
Program – Bipartisan  
Infrastructure Law (BIL)

## Cost Sharing (Federal)

**80%**  
– All FSP “Tracks”

### FSP “Tracks”:

1. Project Planning
2. Project Development
3. Final Design/Construction

## Min / Max Award & Type

**No Min/Max**  
– All

### Single/Multiple Year Awards

1. Letters of Intent
2. Phased Funding Agreement

## Applicant Eligibility

1. Amtrak
2. State/Territorial Government (or political subdivision)
3. Groups of States
4. Tribal Government (or political subdivision)
5. Regional Passenger Rail Authorities
6. Interstate Compact Entities

*No application limit per agency; projects preferred where Amtrak is **NOT** sole applicant*

## Project Eligibility

1. Replace, rehabilitate, or repair intercity passenger rail infrastructure, equipment, or facilities
2. Improve intercity passenger rail performance (reduced trip time/congestion; increased service/speed/reliability; electrification)
3. Expand or establish new intercity passenger rail (including high-speed rail and other applicable intercity passenger rail options)
4. Group of related projects listed above
5. Planning, environmental studies, and final design for project(s)/group(s) listed above





# FRA's Corridor ID Program

## *Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor (Amtrak)*

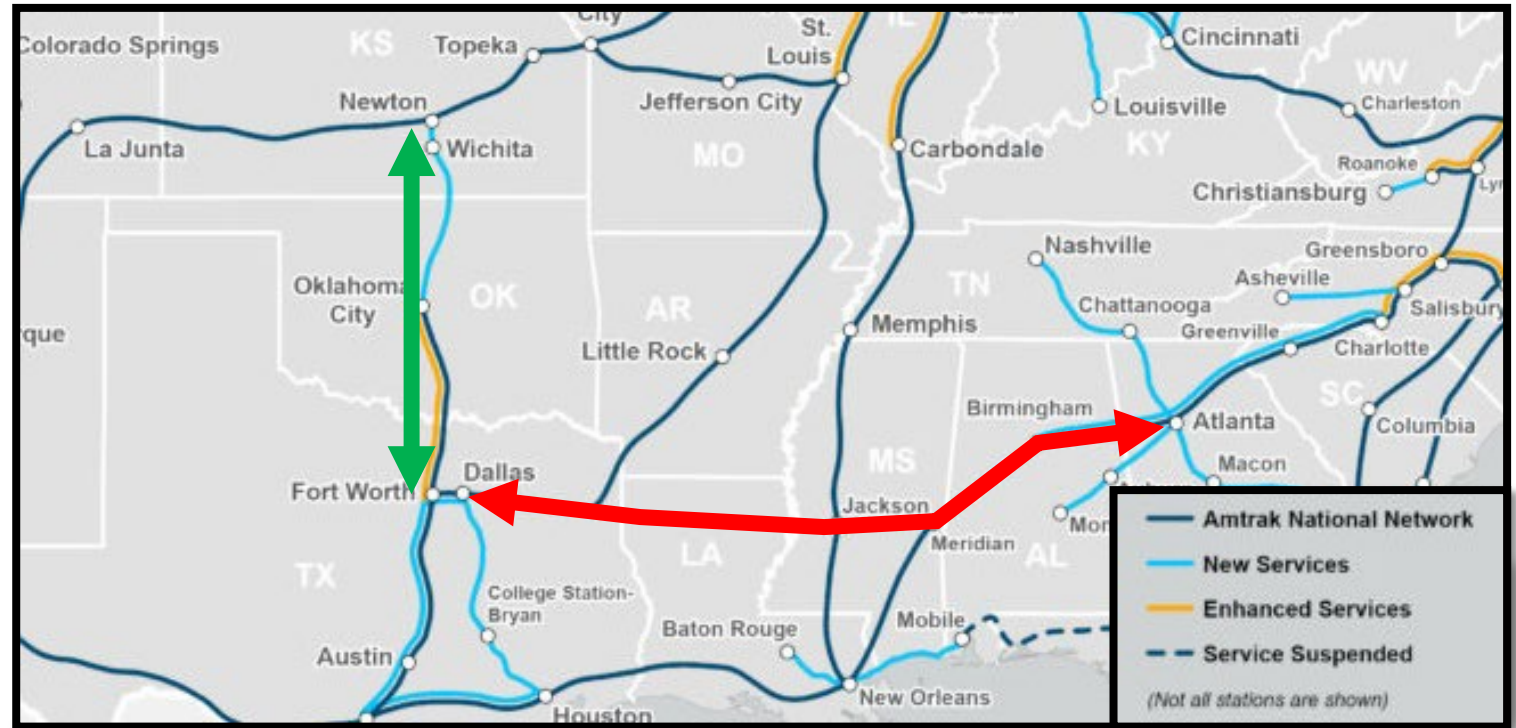
### *Heartland Flyer*

RTC Resolution (R22-01)  
reaffirmed corridor support in  
March 2022

### *Dallas-Fort Worth to Atlanta*

RTC Resolution (R22-01)  
reaffirmed corridor support in  
March 2022

Expressions of Interest submitted for both corridors to FRA  
by others (including TxDOT)



Amtrak Connects Us Map (April 2, 2021)



# FRA's Corridor ID Program

## *Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail Corridor*



High-Speed Rail

### ***(Fort Worth to Dallas + Dallas to Houston)***

Expressions of Interest submitted to FRA

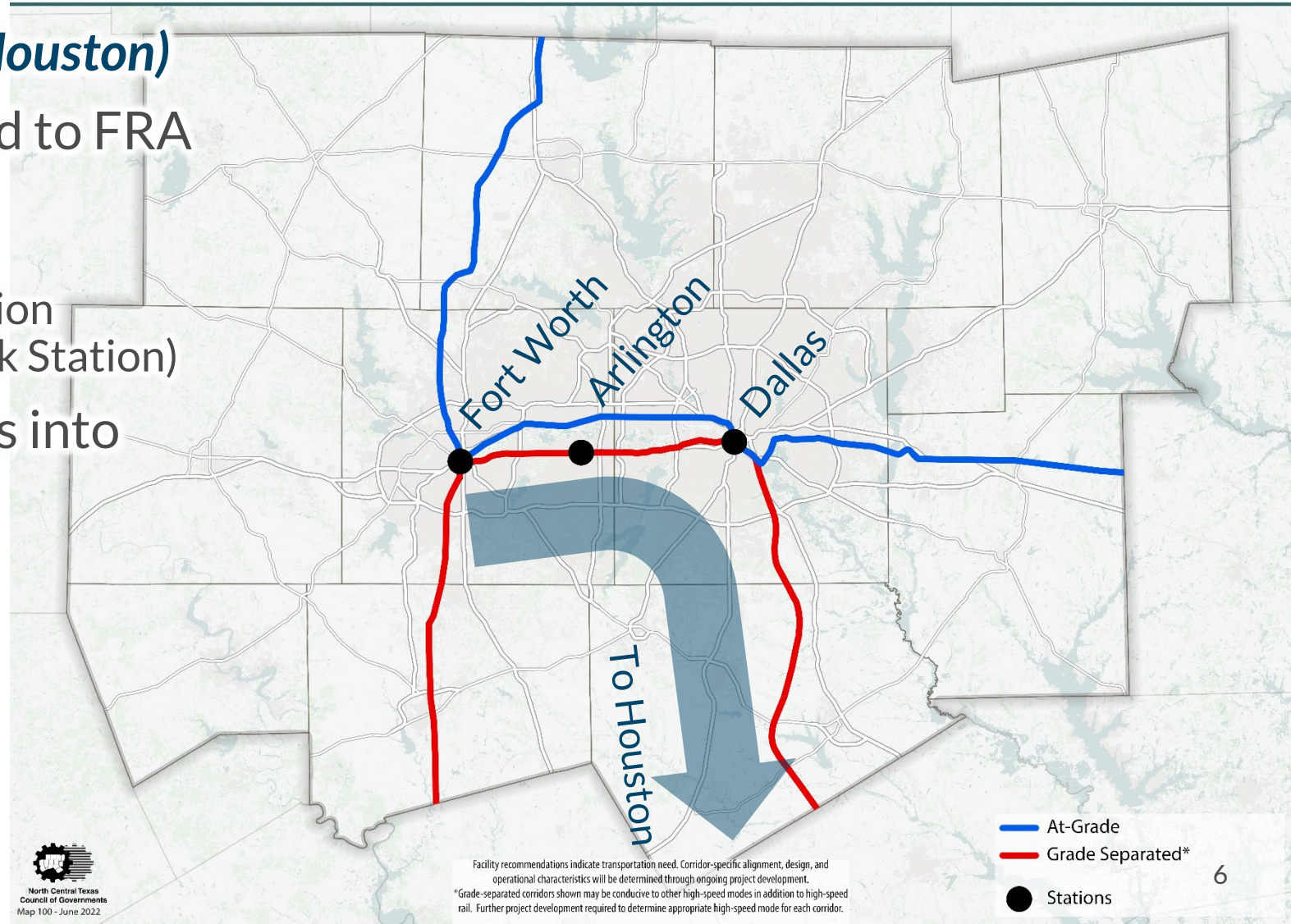
by:

- NCTCOG (Dallas to Fort Worth)
- TxDOT (Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station in Dallas to Houston Amtrak Station)

Desire to combine both segments into one corridor

Primary Applicant:

- Amtrak? (if interested)
- NCTCOG?



FRA Grant Programs



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments  
Map 100 - June 2022



# FRA's FSP Intercity Passenger Rail Program

## *Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail*



High-Speed Rail

Integrated corridor through FRA's Corridor ID Program registers Fort Worth to Dallas and Dallas to Houston as one high-speed rail corridor

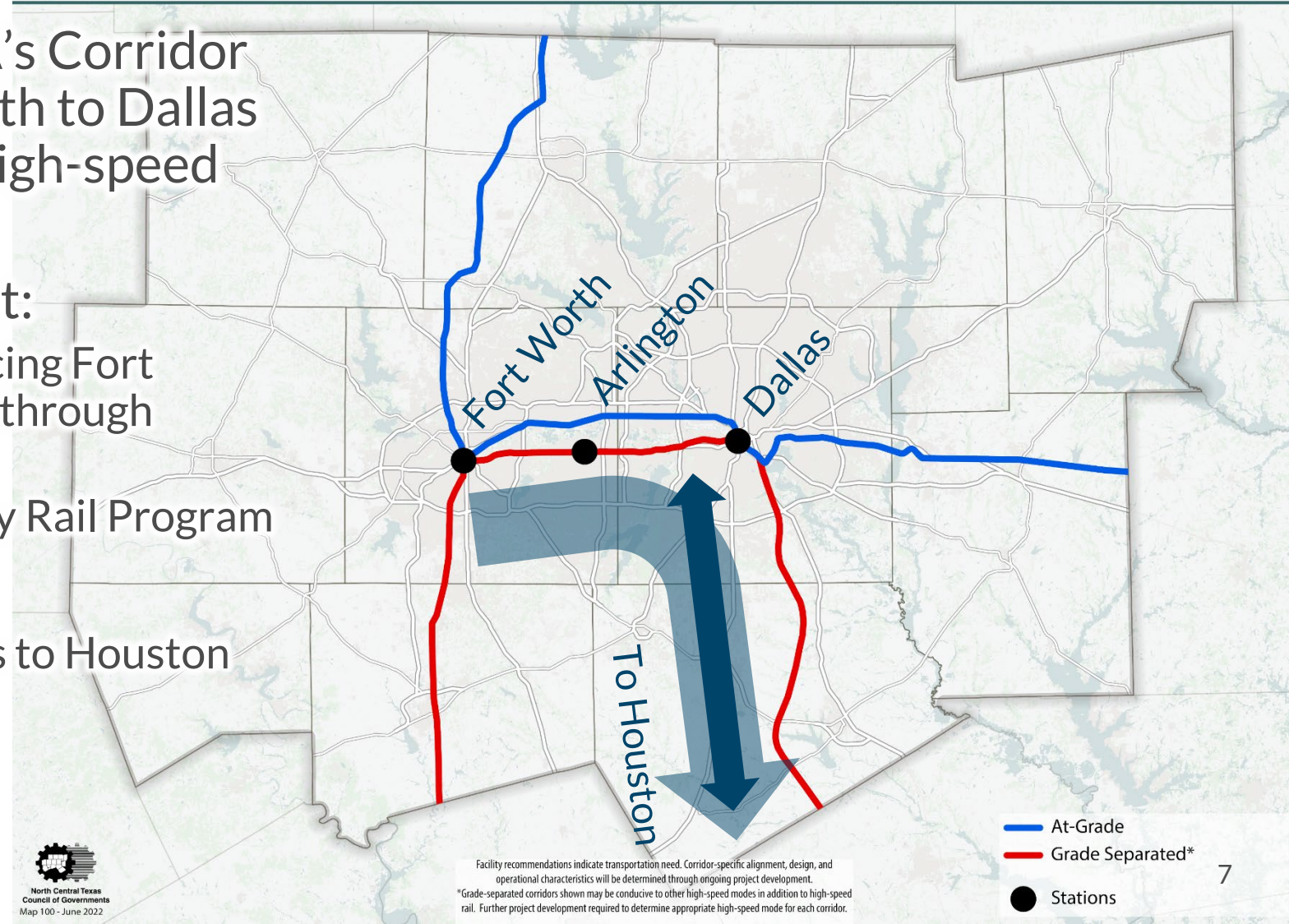
### **Fort Worth to Dallas HSR Segment:**

NCTCOG supports through advancing Fort Worth to Dallas High-Speed Rail through federal environmental process

Segment not ready for FSP Intercity Rail Program

### **Dallas to Houston HSR Segment:**

Amtrak (if desired) to submit Dallas to Houston High-Speed Rail segment



FRA Grant Programs

# Requested RTC Action

## Corridor ID Program:

*(Application Deadline: March 20, 2023)*

### Fort Worth to Dallas High-Speed Rail

- Coordinate with Amtrak and TxDOT on integrated corridor application
- Primary Applicant: Amtrak (preferred) or NCTCOG

### Dallas-Fort Worth to Atlanta (Amtrak)

- Support primary application by others
- Provider letter of support

### Heartland Flyer (Amtrak)

- Support primary application by others
- Provider letter of support



## Federal-State Partnership Intercity Passenger Rail Program:

*(Application Deadline: March 7, 2023)*

### Dallas to Houston High-Speed Rail

- Support application by others (Amtrak?)
- Provide letter of support

# Contact Us



Dan Lamers, P.E.  
Senior Program Manager  
[dlamers@nctcog.org](mailto:dlamers@nctcog.org)  
817-695-9263



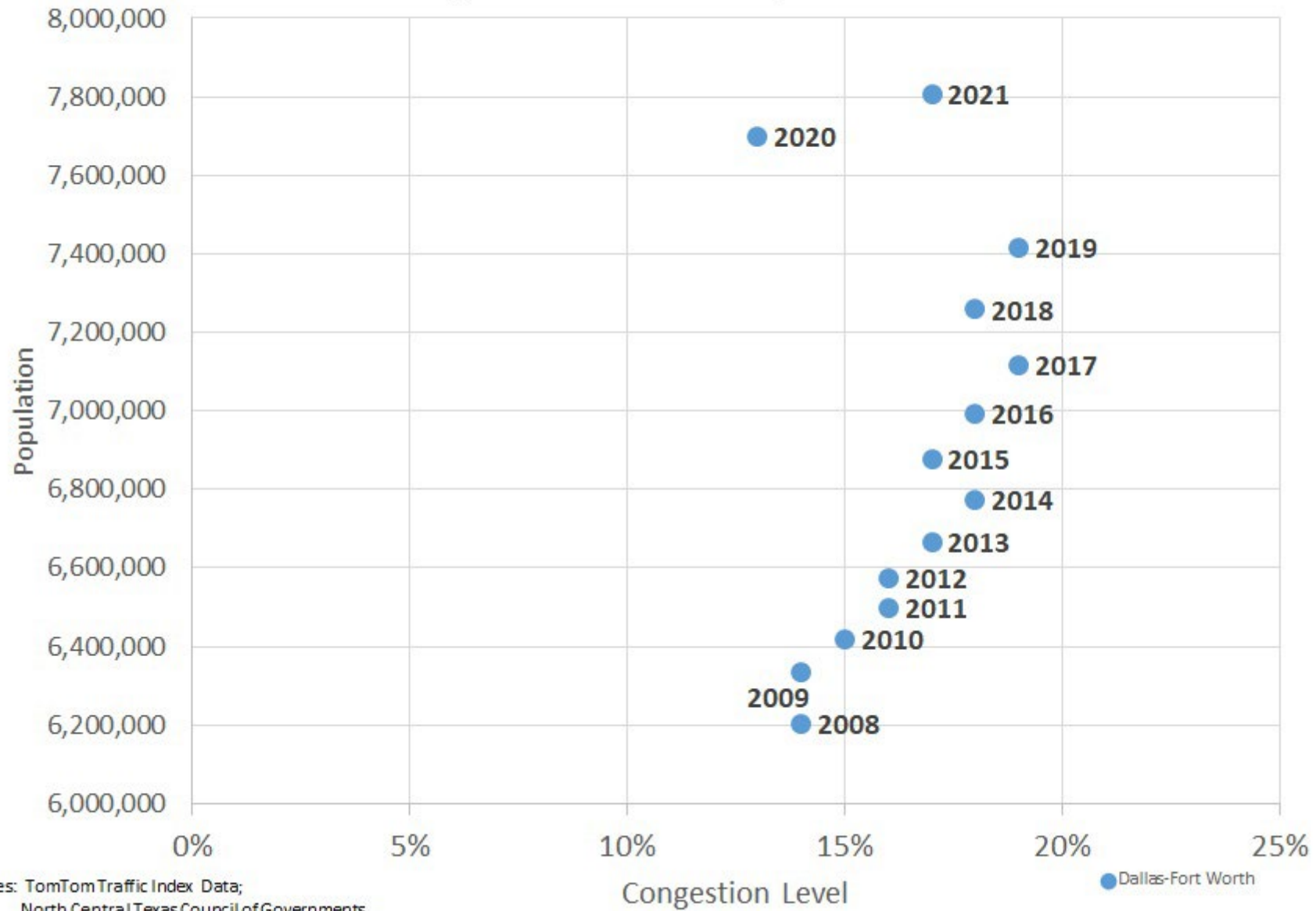
Brendon Wheeler, P.E.  
Program Manager  
[bwheeler@nctcog.org](mailto:bwheeler@nctcog.org)  
682-433-0478



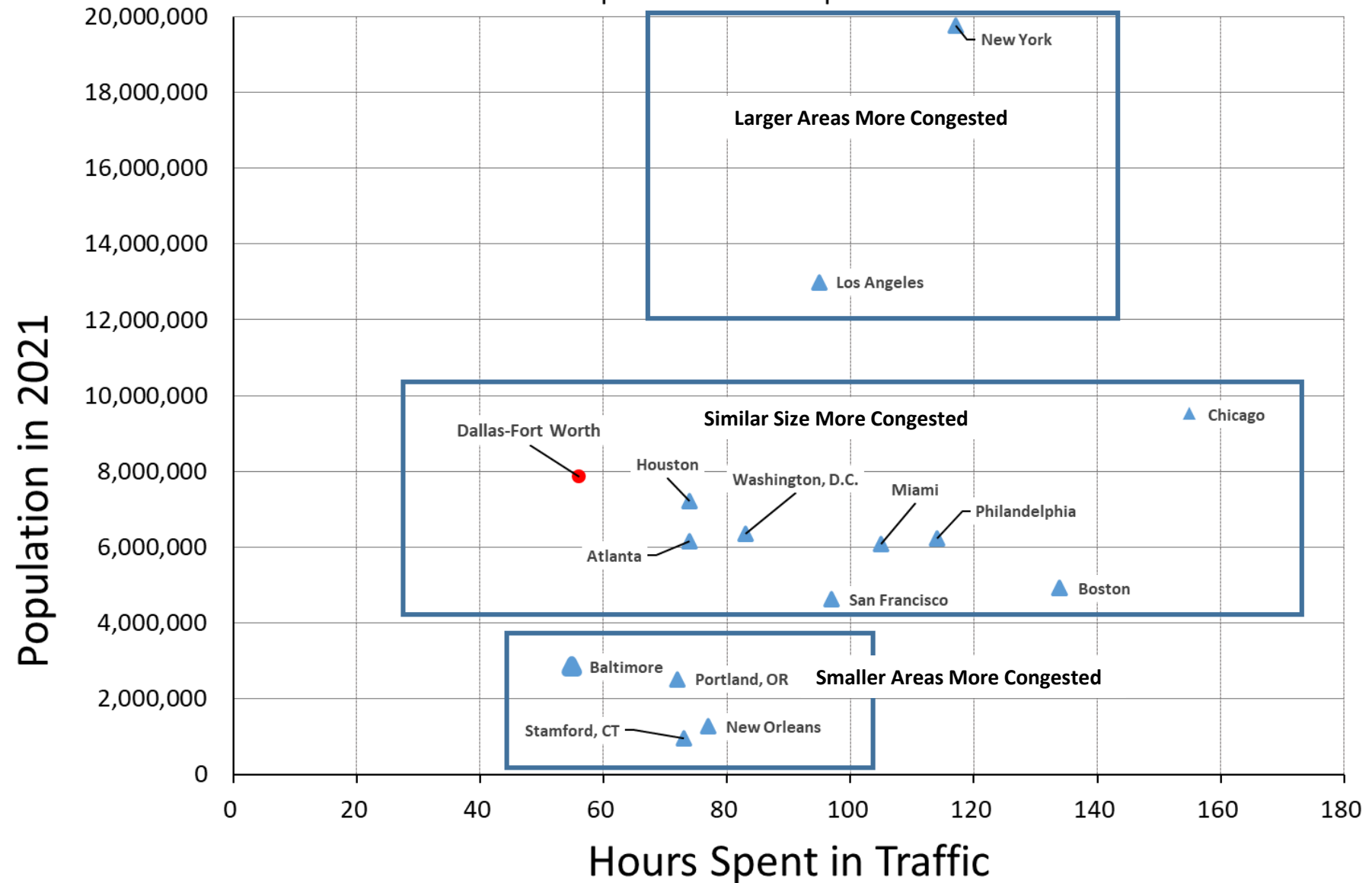
Rebekah Gongora  
Communications Manager  
[rgongora@nctcog.org](mailto:rgongora@nctcog.org)  
682-433-0477



## Dallas-Fort Worth Congestion Levels and Population



# 15 Most Congested Regions Comparison of Hours Spent in Traffic and Population of Metropolitan Areas







**DRIVE  
AWARE**  
north texas

# NCTCOG Roadway Safety Plan

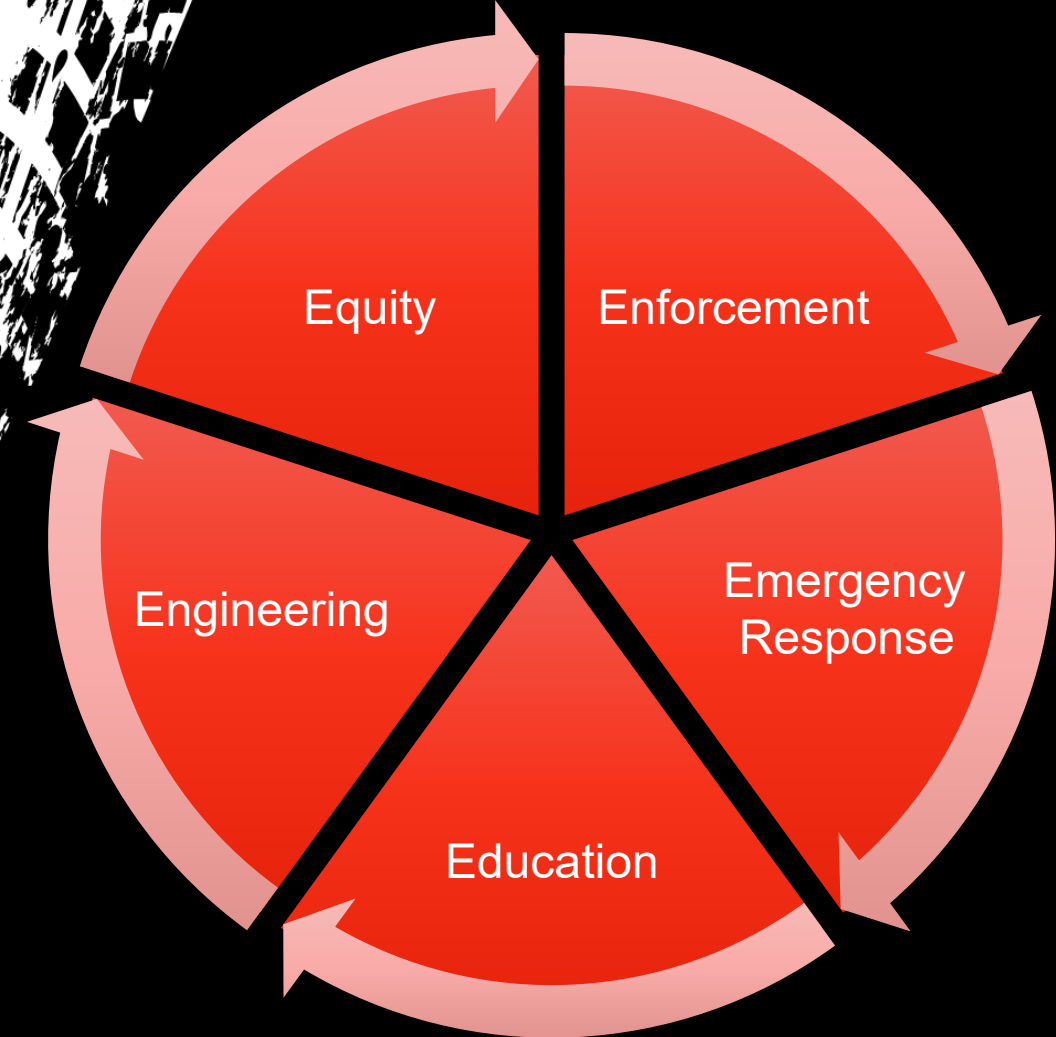
Regional Transportation Council

February 9, 2023

Sonya J. Landrum, Program Manager  
Roadway Safety Program Area

# What is a Roadway Safety Plan?

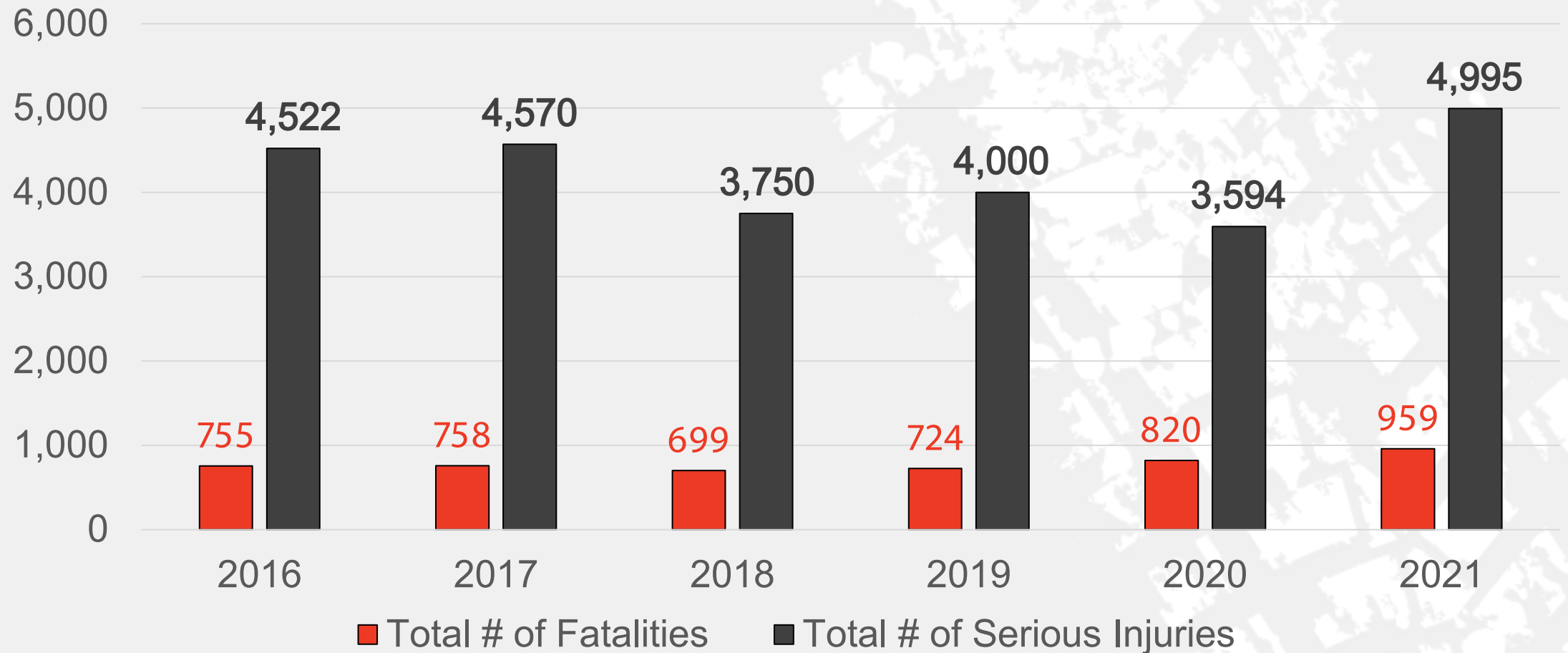
- A Roadway Safety Plan provides a framework for identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing roadway safety improvements on local roads.
- It serves as a guide to identify crash factors which contribute to a high number of fatal and serious injuries
- Appropriate safety projects and countermeasures are then selected
- The overall goal is to eliminate fatal crashes by 2050.



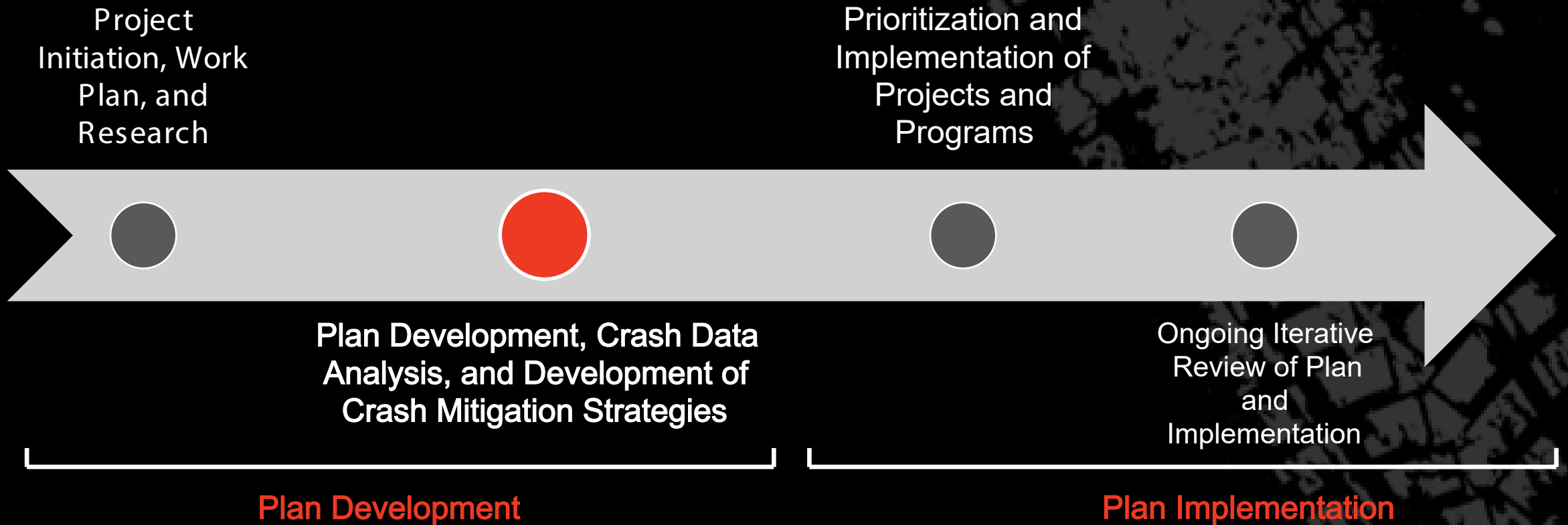
# Need for a Roadway Safety Plan

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) like the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) are required to monitor and set targets for a specific set of performance measures
- Initial safety performance targets for 2018 were approved by Regional Transportation Council (RTC) in December 2017
- RTC Established Regional Safety Position:  
*“Even one death on the transportation system is unacceptable. Staff will work with our partners to develop projects, programs, and policies that assist in eliminating serious injuries and fatalities across all modes of travel”*
- Texas Transportation Commission adoption of Minute Order 115481  
*“The Texas Transportation Commission directs the Texas Department of Transportation to work toward the goal of reducing the number of deaths on Texas roadways by half by the year 2035 and to zero by the year 2050. The commission acknowledges a majority of motor vehicle crashes can be prevented, thereby reducing fatalities.”*

# Fatal and Serious Injuries Within the 12-County Area (2016-2021)



# NCTCOG Roadway Safety Plan Development Process



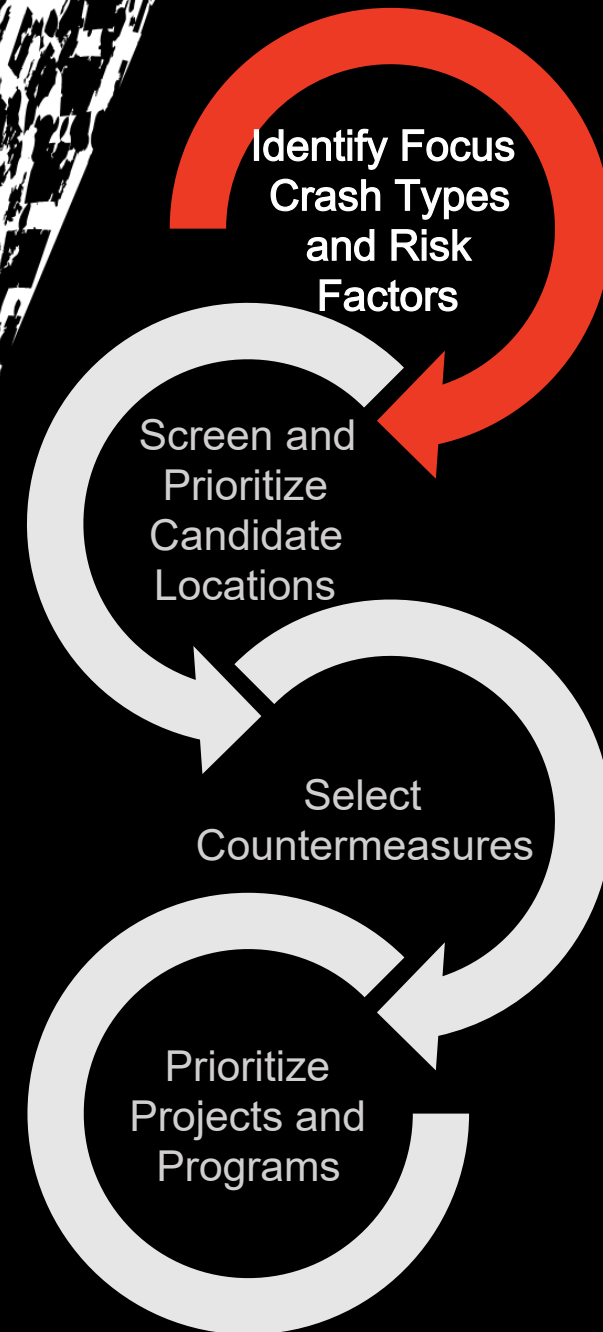
# Systemic Safety Approach

The Systemic Safety Analysis approach evaluates crash risk across an entire roadway system instead of managing risk at specific locations

This method helps identify what types of roadways and roadway characteristics produce fatal and serious injuries in the future.

## Guiding Principles:

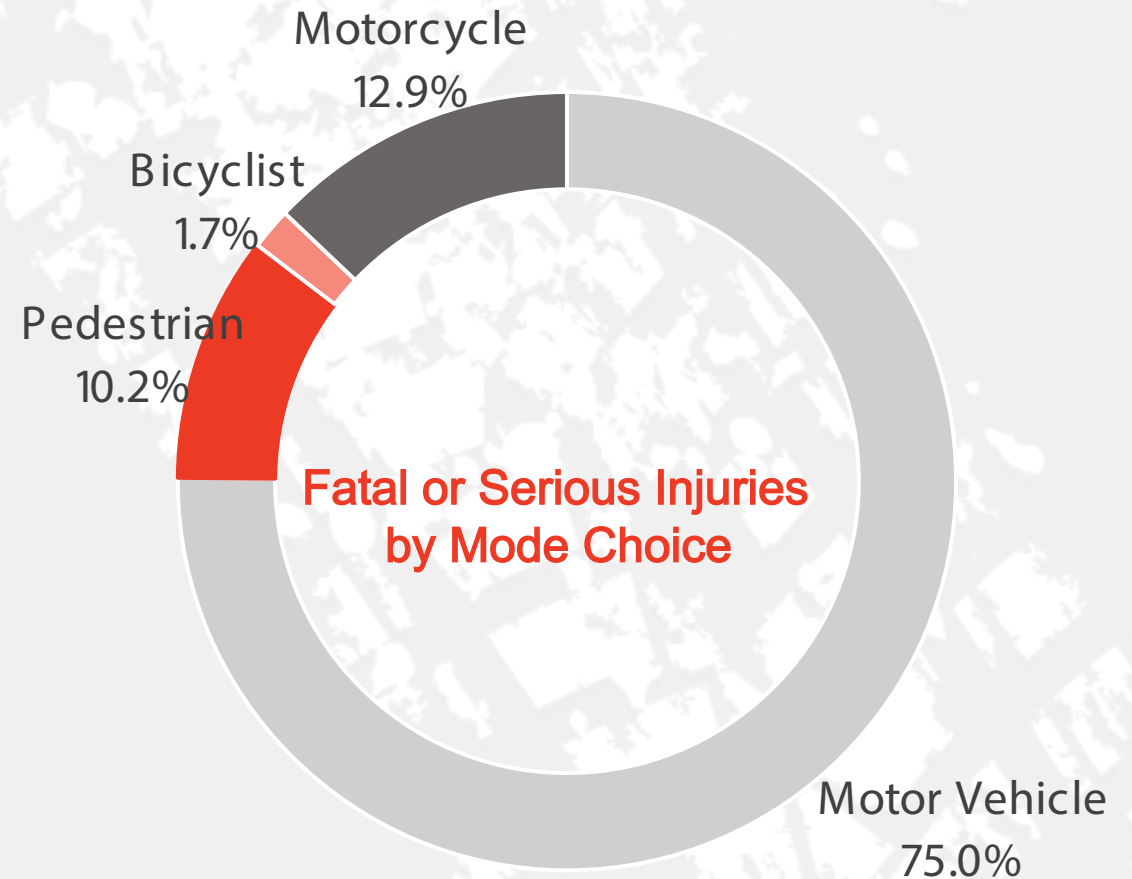
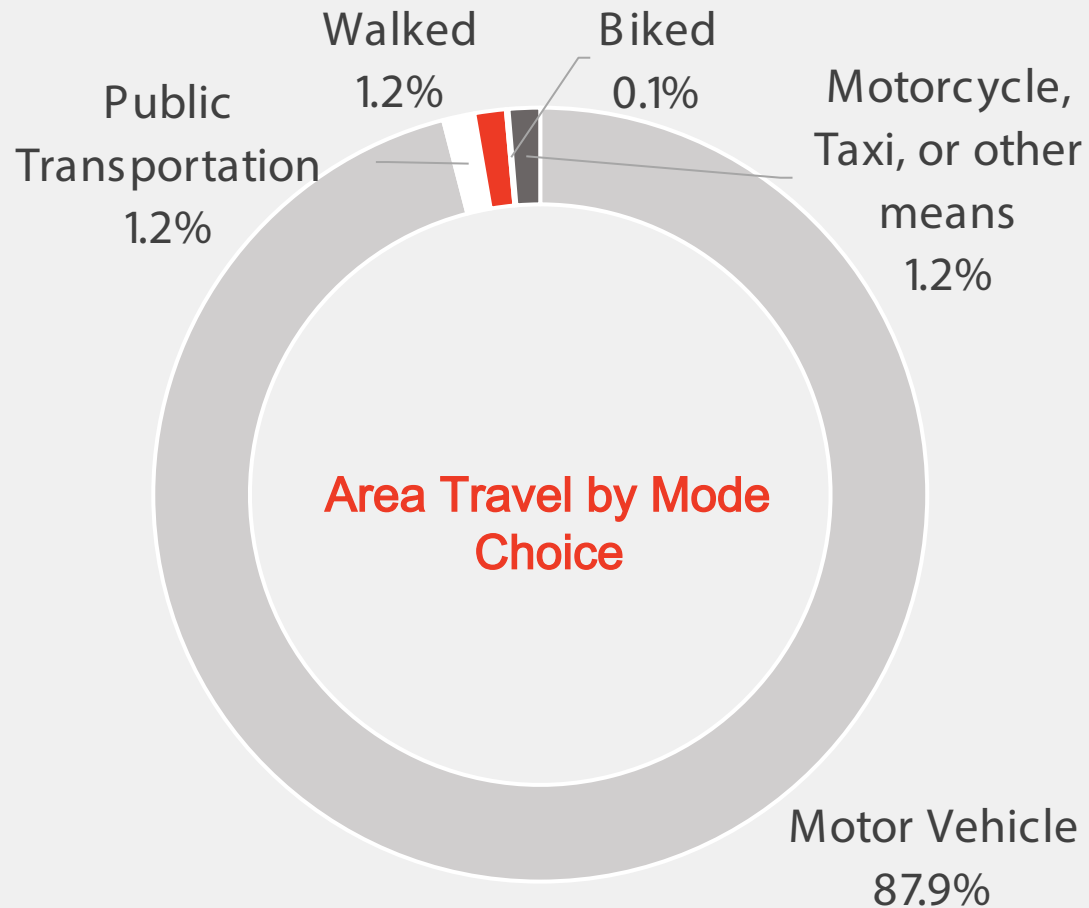
- Deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable
- Humans make mistakes
- Humans are vulnerable
- Responsibility is shared
- Safety is proactive
- Redundancy is crucial





# Region-wide Analysis

## Percentage Fatal and Serious Injuries by Travel Mode (2016-2020)





# Regional Safety Plan Emphasis Areas Based on Overrepresentation Analysis

## Regional Emphasis Areas

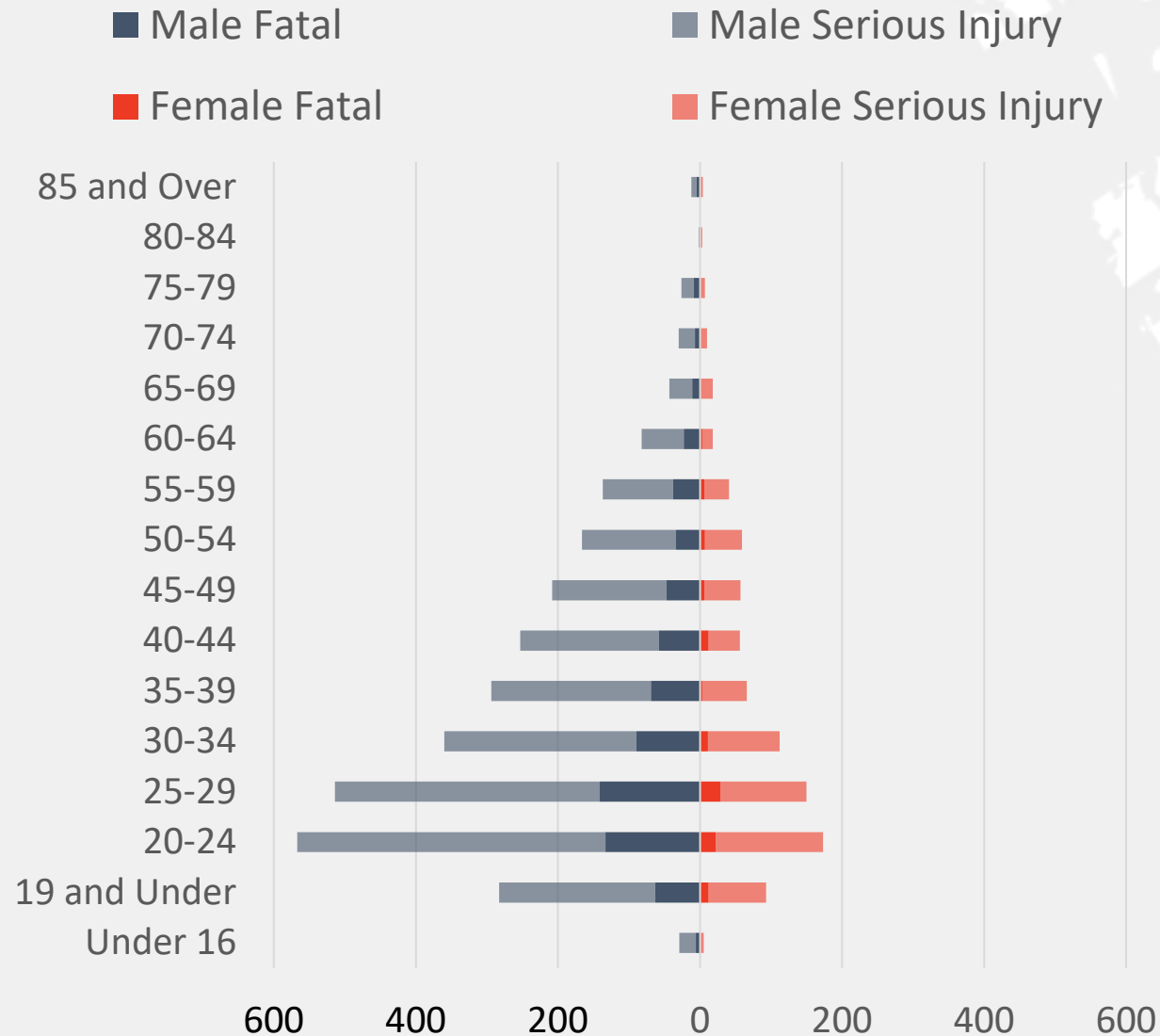
- Speeding
- Distracted driving
- Impaired driving
- Intersection safety
- Bicyclist and pedestrian safety
- Roadway and lane departures
- Occupant protection
- Motorcycles

## Additional “Areas of Concern”

- Wrong way driving
- Crashes occurring at night\*
- Younger drivers\*
- Older road users (65+)\*

\*Represented within multiple emphasis areas

# Example: Speeding Related Fatal and Serious Injuries



**24%**

*Of* SPEEDING related  
fatal and serious injuries  
were cited as **NOT**  
having worn a seatbelt

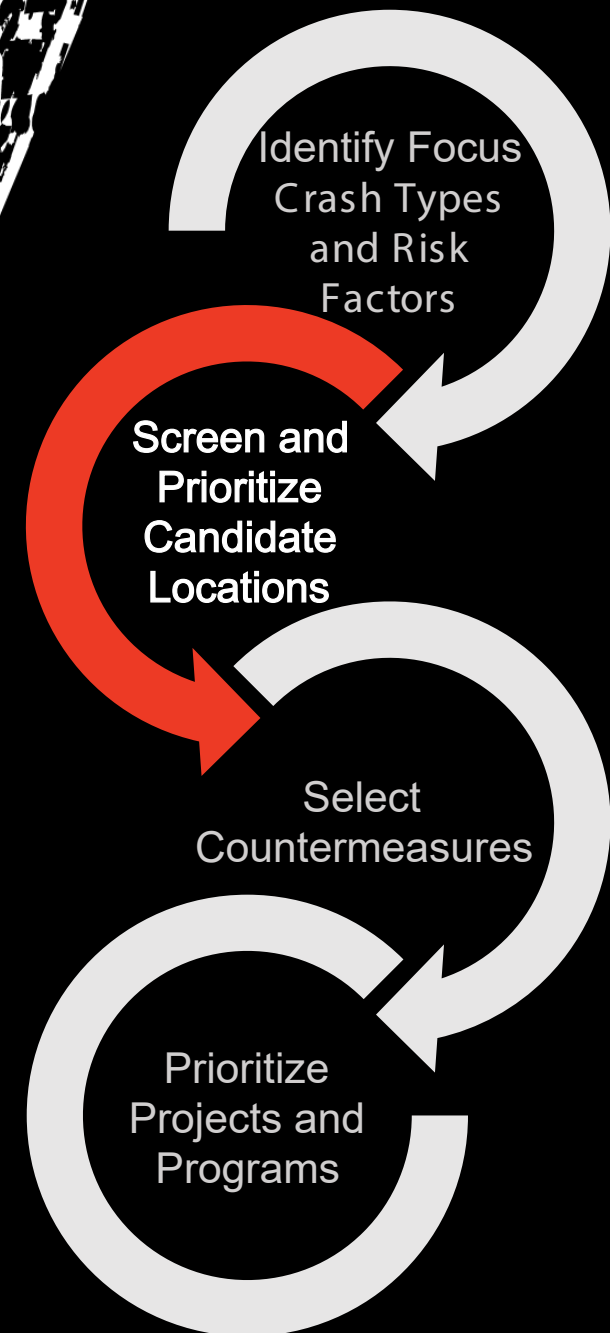


# High Injury Network

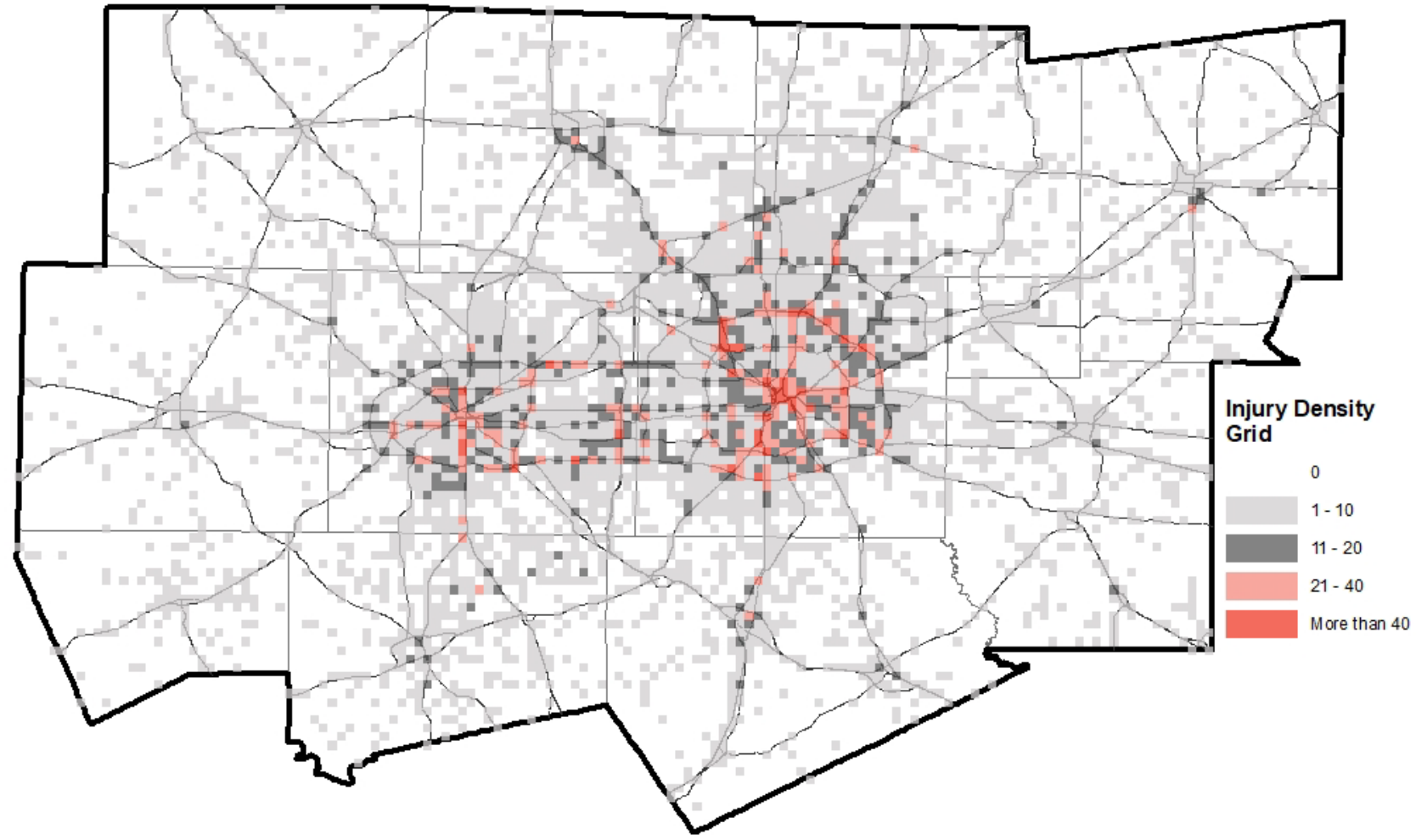
The Systemic Safety Analysis approach evaluates risk across an entire roadway system versus managing risk at specific locations.

However, it is also helpful to identify roadways that have a history of a high number of fatal and serious injuries.

- Network of designated road segments where the highest concentrations of fatal and serious injury crashes occur
- Five-year range of crash data from 2016-2020
- Can be used to help prioritize safety improvements in the region and be used in tandem with the findings of our systemic analysis



# High Injury Network: Fatal and Serious Injuries by Location (2016-2020)



Each Square represents a 4sq mile area.

# Countermeasure Selection

The third step in the Systemic Safety Analysis approach identifies potential countermeasures for each of the 8 emphasis areas.

## What are safety countermeasures?

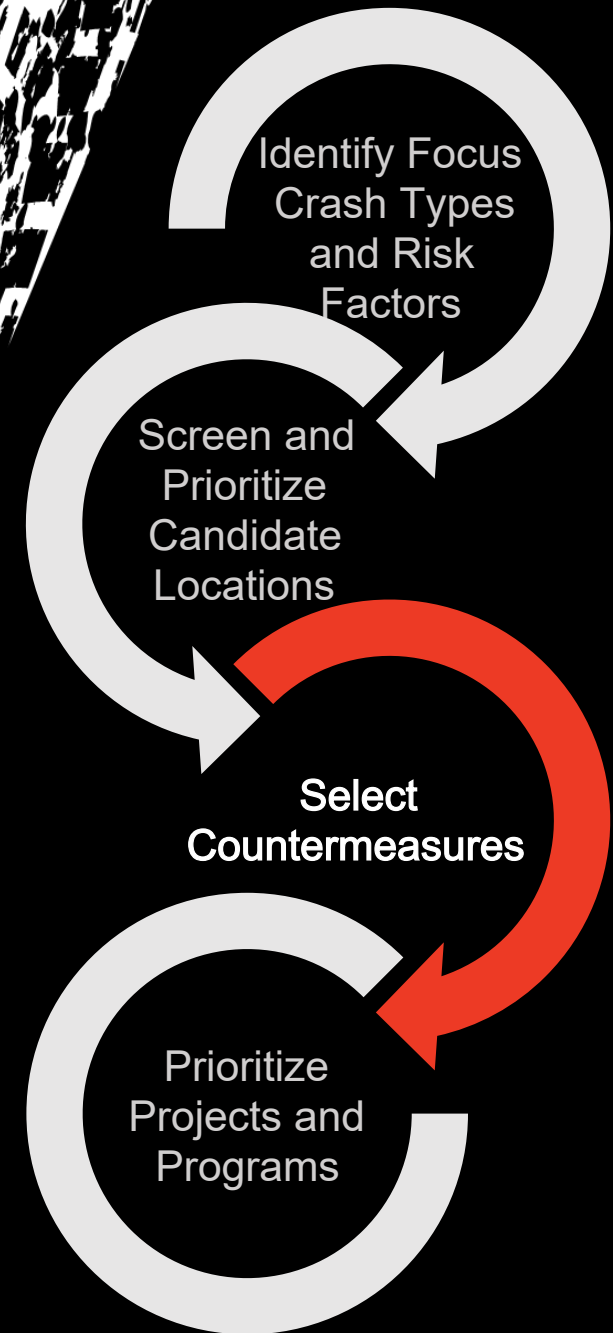
Safety countermeasures can be any action undertaken to decrease the risk of a crash occurring or to reduce the severity of a crash.

Countermeasures may involve engineering upgrades, behavioral education campaigns, traffic enforcement programs, or emergency response.

Countermeasure selection should be data driven and risk-based.

Things to consider:

1. Cost
2. Location(s)
3. Proven effectiveness
4. Time to implement



# Example Countermeasures: Speeding

Countermeasure	Category	Estimated Reduction in Fatal and Serious Injuries	Cost to Benefit Ratio
Improve the effectiveness of educational techniques, tools, and strategies for speeding- younger male drivers	Education	9%	9 to 1
Increase and sustain high-visibility speeding enforcement	Enforcement		
Appropriate Speed Limits for All Road Users	Engineering	26%	
Variable Speed Limits	Engineering	51%	9 to 1- 40 to 1
Pull Out / Enforcement Zones	Engineering		
Speed Safety Cameras	Engineering, Enforcement	20-47%	
Build or redesign roadways with traffic calming countermeasures and "selfenforcing" speed	Engineering		

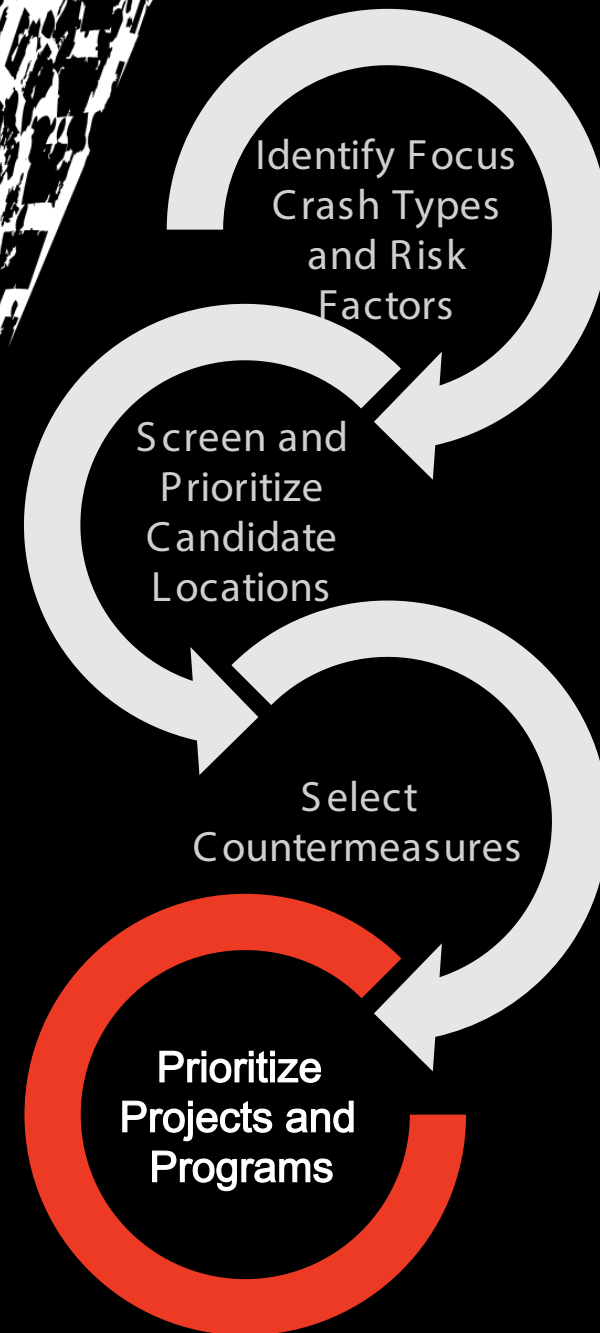
The Roadway Safety Plan will include countermeasures for all regional emphasis areas

# Next Step- **Prioritize Safety Projects, Programs, and Policies**

Develop a list of high-priority safety improvement projects scheduled for implementation. This considers both high-crash locations and system-wide analysis. Note that this step will occur after the Roadway Safety Plan itself is completed.

Main Tasks within the final step of the Systemic Safety Analysis

1. Create decision process for selecting countermeasures
2. Develop safety projects, programs, and policies
3. Prioritize project implementation





# NCTCOG Safety Coordination and Efforts

Emphasis Areas	NCTCOG Roadway Safety Plan	NCTCOG Regional Ped Safety Action Plan	Statewide TxDOT/MPO Safety Task Force	RTC M&O Safety Funding	RTC Legislative Program
Speeding	X	X	X	X	X
Distracted Driving	X	X		X	X
Impaired (DUI)	X	X	X	X	X
Intersections	X	X		X	
Bicycle/Pedestrian	X	X	X	X	X
Roadway Lane Departure	X				
Occupant Protection (Seatbelts)	X		X	X	
Motorcycles	X		X	X	
Workzones			X		X
Wrong Way Driving	X			X	
Crashes Occurring at Night	X	X		X	
Roadway Illumination		X		X	
Younger Drivers	X			X	
Older Road Users (65+)	X				
Freight				X	X

# NCTCOG Safety Program Contacts

Sonya Landrum  
Program Manager  
[slandrum@nctcog.org](mailto:slandrum@nctcog.org)

Natalie Bettger  
Senior Program Manager  
[nbettger@nctcog.org](mailto:nbettger@nctcog.org)

Kevin Kroll  
Senior Transportation Planner  
[kkroll@nctcog.org](mailto:kkroll@nctcog.org)

Michael Misantonis  
Transportation Planner  
[mmisantonis@nctcog.org](mailto:mmisantonis@nctcog.org)

Camille Fountain  
Senior Transportation Planner  
[cfountain@nctcog.org](mailto:cfountain@nctcog.org)

[DriveAwareNTX.org](http://DriveAwareNTX.org)  
[driveawarentx@nctcog.org](mailto:driveawarentx@nctcog.org)



**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster**  
**February 2022 - January 2023**

<b>RTC MEMBER</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>2/10/22</b>	<b>3/10/22</b>	<b>4/14/22</b>	<b>5/12/22</b>	<b>6/9/22</b>	<b>7/14/22</b>	<b>8/18/22</b>	<b>9/8/22</b>	<b>10/13/2022</b>	<b>11/10/2022</b>	<b>12/08/222</b>	<b>1/12/2023</b>
Daniel Alemán Jr (01/22)	Mesquite	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Steve Babick (06/22)	Carrollton	--	--	--	--	P	E	E	A	A	P	P	P
Dennis Bailey (02/21)	Rockwall County	E(R)	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	P	A	P
Rick Bailey (07/22)	Johnson County	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Adam Bazaldua (09/21)	Dallas	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	E(R)	A	E(R)	P	P
Elizabeth M. Beck (08/21)	Fort Worth	A	P	P	E	P	A	E(R)	P	A	P	P	A
Gyna Bivens (08/21)	Fort Worth	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
J. D. Clark (07/22)	Wise County	P	P	E(R)	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ceason Clemens (10/22)	TxDOT, Dallas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P
Dianne Costa (10/19)	DCTA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	A(R)
Michael Crain (06/22)	Fort Worth	--	--	--	--	E(R)	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P
Theresa Daniel (11/18)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeff Davis (11/19)	Trinity Metro	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	A(R)	P	P	P
Janet DePuy (09/21)	Richardson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P
Andy Eads (1/09)	Denton County	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Gary Fickes (12/10)	Tarrant County	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
George Fuller (07/17)	McKinney	P	P	E(R)	E	P	P	P	E	A	P	P	P
Raul H. Gonzalez (09/21)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Barry L. Gordon (12/20)	Duncanville	P	E(R)	P	E	A	P	P	E	P	P	E(R)	P
Rick Grady (09/18)	Plano	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lane Grayson (01/19)	Ellis County	P	E	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mojoy Haddad (10/14)	NTTA	E	E	A	P	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	E
Clay Lewis Jenkins (04/11)	Dallas County	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P
Ron Jensen (06/13)	Grand Prairie	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E(R)
Brandon Jones (05/21)	Lewisville	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
John Keating (12/19)	Frisco	A	A	P	A	A	A(R)	A	P	P	A	E	E(R)
Brad LaMorgese (07/22)	Irving	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	E	E	E	P
B. Adam McGough (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
William Meadows (02/17)	DFW Airport	P	A	P	E	E	E	E	E(R)	E	P	E	A
Cara Mendelsohn (07/20)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ed Moore (07/22)	Garland	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A	P	E	P	P
Omar Narvaez (09/21)	Dallas	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P
Ramirez, Manny	Tarrant County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Jim R. Ross (07/21)	Arlington	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	A	P	P
David Salazar (10/22)	TxDOT, FW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	E(R)	P	E(R)
Chris Schulmeister (07/20)	Allen	P	P	P	E(R)	P	P	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P

P= Present  
A= Absent  
R=Represented by Alternate  
--= Not yet appointed

E= Excused Absence (personal illness, family emergency,  
jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment  
of obligation arising out of elected service)

**Regional Transportation Council Attendance Roster**  
**February 2022 - January 2023**

<b>RTC MEMBER</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>2/10/22</b>	<b>3/10/22</b>	<b>4/14/22</b>	<b>5/12/22</b>	<b>6/9/22</b>	<b>7/14/22</b>	<b>8/18/22</b>	<b>9/8/22</b>	<b>10/13/2022</b>	<b>11/10/2022</b>	<b>12/08/222</b>	<b>1/12/2023</b>
Jeremy Tompkins (10/19)	Euless	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
T. Oscar Trevino Jr. (6/02)	Nrth Rch Hills	P	P	P	E(R)	P	A(R)	P	P	P	P	P	A(R)
William Tsao (3/17)	Dallas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Duncan Webb (6/11)	Collin County	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chad West	Dallas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	A
Michele Wong Krause	DART	P	P	P	P	E(R)	E(R)	P	P	P	E	P	E(R)

Note: Date in parenthesis indicates when member was  
1st eligible to attend RTC meetings

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jury duty, business necessity, or fulfillment  
of obligation arising out of elected service)

Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster  
January 2022 - January 2023

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/28/22	2/25/22	3/25/22	4/22/22	5/27/22	6/24/22	07/22/22	08/26/22	09/23/22	10/28/2022	12/2/2022	1/27/2023
Joe Atwood	Hood County	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	P
Melissa Baker	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	A	P	P
Micah Baker	Dallas County	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Bryan Beck	Grapevine	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	E	A	A	A
David Boski	Mansfield	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Keith Brooks	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Shon Brooks	Waxahachie	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Tanya Brooks	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	P
Ceason Clemens	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Cohen	Southlake	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kent Collins	Coppell	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
John Cordary, Jr.	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	A
Jackie Culton	Duncanville	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	A	P	A	P
Clarence Daugherty	Collin County	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chad Davis	Wise County	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	A	P	P	P
Arturo Del Castillo	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	A
Caryl DeVries	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	A	P	P
Greg Dickens	Hurst	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	A	A	A	A
Rebecca Diviney	Denton	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	E	P
Phil Dupler	FWTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chad Edwards	Trinity Metro	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Claud Elsom	Rockwall County	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	P	P	A	P
Eric Fladager	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	P	P	A	P
Chris Flanigan	Allen	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Ann Foss	Arlington	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	A
Eric Galt	Mesquite	--	--	--	--	--	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Ricardo Gonzalez	TxDOT FW	*	*	*	*	*	*	E	P	P	P	A	P
Gary Graham	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Tom Hammons	Carrollton	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	P	P	P	P
Ron Hartline	The Colony	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	P	A	A	A
Shannon Hicks	Addison	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Matthew Hotelling	Flower Mound	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	P	P	P	P
John Hudspeth	TxDOT Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Jeremy Hutt	Cleburne	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Thuan Huynh	McKinney	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	A	P	P	P
Joseph Jackson	Tarrant County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Joel James	NTTA	--	--	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	A	P	P

P=Present    A=Absent    R=Represented    E=Excused (personal illness, family emergency, jury duty, business necessity)  
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Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster  
January 2022 - January 2023

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/28/22	2/25/22	3/25/22	4/22/22	5/27/22	6/24/22	07/22/22	08/26/22	09/23/22	10/28/2022	12/2/2022	1/27/2023
Kelly Johnson	NTTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	P	A	P	A
Major L. Jones	Eules	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A	P	A
Gus Khankarli	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Alonzo Liñán	Keller	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Eron Linn	DART	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	E	P	P	P
Clay Lipscomb	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	A	P	A	P
Paul Luedtke	Garland	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	P	E	P
Stanford Lynch	Hunt County	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	A	P	E	P
Chad Marbut	Weatherford	--	--	--	--	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	A
Alberto Mares	Ellis County	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	A
Wes McClure	Mesquite	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Brian Moen	Frisco	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	P
Mark Nelson	Richardson	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	P	E	P	P
Jim O'Connor	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Cintia Ortiz	Parker County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	A
Eric Oscarson	Burleson	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	A	A	A	A	A
Kenneth Overstreet	Bedford	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kevin Overton	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	P
Tim Palermo	DCTA	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	A	P	P	P
Dipak Patel	Lancaster	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	A	A	A
Martin Phillips	Fort Worth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A
John Polster	Denton County	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	A	A
Kelly Porter	Fort Worth	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	E	P	P
Tim Porter	Wylie	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	A	P	P
Lauren Prieur	Fort Worth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	A
Greg Royster	DFW Int. Airport	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	A	P	P
Kathryn Rush	Dallas	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	P	P	P
Moosa Saghian	Kaufman County	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
David Salmon	Lewisville	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	A	P	P	P
Ryan Sartor	Farmers Branch	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Brian Shewski	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P
Walter Shumac, III	Grand Prairie	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	E	P	P	P
Randy Skinner	Tarrant County	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	P
Caleb Thornhill	Plano	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	A	A	A
Press Tompkins	Greenville	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Logan Tucker	Duncanville	--	--	--	--	--	*	A	A	A	A	A	A
Jennifer VanderLaan	Johnson County	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P
Gregory Van	Haltom City	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	P	P	A	P	P
Daniel Vedral	Irving	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	P	P	P	P
Caroline Waggoner	North Richland	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	P	A	P	A	P
Robert Woodbury	Cedar Hill	*	*	*	*	*	*	P	A	P	P	A	P
Larry Wright	Colleyville	*	*	*	*	*	*				A	A	A

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Surface Transportation Technical Committee Attendance Roster  
January 2022 - January 2023

STTC MEMBERS	Entity	1/28/22	2/25/22	3/25/22	4/22/22	5/27/22	6/24/22	07/22/22	08/26/22	09/23/22	10/28/2022	12/2/2022	1/27/2023
Jamie Zech	TCEQ	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	A	A	A	A

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