

## Chapter II

# Public Involvement

Public involvement is solicited and strongly encouraged in the coordinated metropolitan transportation planning process. Increasing communication among citizens, elected officials, and staff permits stakeholders to work together to achieve desired goals and objectives. The public involvement process emphasizes the importance of involvement from all levels of government to individual citizens. When the public is involved, the direction and content of the planning efforts are more likely to address the wide range of issues that impact decision makers. Involving the public during the planning phase of any project should reduce the time and cost of project implementation.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) hold public meetings as part of their public involvement process. Public input opportunities are held during development and update of the Transportation Improvement Program/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP/STIP) along with individual project implementation, which ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The TxDOT public involvement process also ties into a statewide process overseen by the Texas Transportation Commission. Assurance of adequate local input is required prior to final approval by the Commission.

In February 2015, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) adopted a revised NCTCOG Transportation [Public Participation Plan](#). The Public Participation Plan is consistent with provisions in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST

Act). These procedures require that a public meeting on the draft TIP be conducted at least 30 days prior to RTC approval, which includes a 30-day written comment period. Additional components of the Public Involvement Process include reasonable public access to technical and policy information, open public meetings, and explicit consideration and response to public input. The public notification form is available at all public meetings to allow interested individuals the opportunity to receive notification of future public meetings. A copy of the current NCTCOG Public Participation Process is provided in the following pages of this chapter. Public meeting notices, minutes and presentations can be found online at

<http://www.nctcog.org/trans/outreach/meetings/archives.asp>.

## TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETINGS

**Draft 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program**  
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a federally and state-mandated list of funded projects with committed funding for construction or implementation within a four-year period. A new TIP is developed every two years through a collaboration among NCTCOG, the Texas Department of Transportation, local governments and transportation authorities. Staff will present the draft list of projects to be funded between 2017 and 2020.

**Update on Efforts to Better Link Schools and Transportation**  
The new Community Schools and Transportation Program encourages improved coordination, site planning and safe, multimodal transportation to and from schools. Although school construction in the region continues to increase, walking and biking to school is historically decreasing. Schools are one of the largest trip generators and expenditures of public funds and have long-lasting impacts on the region's transportation facilities, development and quality of life. Staff will present an overview of the program as well as provide information on community benefits and upcoming public involvement opportunities.

**Other Information to be Highlighted at the Meetings:**

- Proposed Modifications to the List of Funded Projects
- Vehicle Repair and Replacement Assistance Available Through AirCheckTexas Program
- Clean Fleets North Texas Funding Recommendations
- April Car Care Clinics

**TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016**  
**6:30 PM**  
Hebron & Josey  
Public Library  
4220 N. Josey Lane  
Carrollton, TX 75010

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2016**  
**2:30 PM**  
North Central Texas  
Council of Governments  
616 Six Flags Drive  
Arlington, TX 76011

**MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016**  
**6:30 PM**  
Bessie Mitchell House  
411 Ball Street  
Grapevine, TX 76051

For anyone wanting to ride transit to the March 15 public meeting, NCTCOG will offer a free connection to the meeting upon request on a first-come, first-serve basis. To request a free round-trip ride between NCTCOG and the Trinity Railway Express CentrePortDFW Airport Station, contact Jahnae Stout at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at 817-608-2335 or [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org).

**TRE** CentrePortDFW Airport Station  
Arrival Options March 16

Eastbound Train	2:10 pm
Westbound Train	2:20 pm

For special accommodations due to a disability or language translation, contact Jahnae Stout at 817-608-2335 or [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Reasonable accommodations will be made. Para ajustes especiales por discapacidad o para interpretación de idiomas, llame al 817-608-2335 o por email: [jstout@nctcog.org](mailto:jstout@nctcog.org) con 72 horas (mínimo) previas a la junta. Se harán las adaptaciones razonables.

A video recording of the Arlington meeting will be online at [www.nctcog.org/input](http://www.nctcog.org/input).

During development of the 2017-2020 TIP, public meetings were held to obtain a consensus of the constituency served by the program. Draft project listings were presented to the public at Public Meetings held on March 15, 16, and 21, 2016, in Carrollton, Arlington, and Grapevine. Also a video recording of the public meeting in Arlington was posted online for those unable to attend any of the public meetings in person.

These meetings were held to educate, inform, and seek comments from the public on

transportation issues and the specific projects proposed for funding listed in the TIP. Comments were solicited from those present who wished to speak for the record and any other citizens who wished to submit comments in writing during the comment period ending April 13, 2016.

NCTCOG regularly supports and holds meetings for the NCTCOG Executive Board, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), and the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC). These committees review, endorse, or approve the development of the TIP and the supporting air quality conformity analysis. These meetings are open to the public, and meeting agendas are available to all interested parties.

Throughout the year, modifications to the programmed projects in the TIP are often necessary to either update project information or to facilitate changes to TxDOT's project letting schedules. Based on the nature of the change, these modifications are either processed administratively or require STTC and RTC approval to proceed. Then, significant

project modifications are transmitted to TxDOT for incorporation into the Statewide TIP (STIP) in accordance with the State's rules for modification of the STIP. This process will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. These project modifications are communicated to the public through the public participation process as appropriate.

**Public meetings occur throughout the region:**

- At diverse, accessible locations
- Preferably near public transportation
- At convenient and varied dates and times

NCTCOG staff considers environmental justice issues in the transportation planning process when conducting public meetings.

Given the large Metropolitan Area, staff plan public meetings at diverse, accessible locations across the region at both day and evening times. Other efforts to involve minority communities include publication of newspaper display ads in local minority publications and press releases to reporters at minority news sources.

Invitations are mailed to more than 4,900 individuals and e-mailed to more than 8,600 individuals and organizations contained in NCTCOG's public notification database. All public meeting notifications are posted on the Texas Secretary of State Texas Register web site as part of the Open Meetings requirement. Public meeting notices are also mailed to public libraries and city/county offices for posting in public access areas. More recently, public meetings have been posted on social media outlets such as NCTCOG's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. In addition to the three public meetings, video recordings are posted to the NCTCOG website for those unable to make it to the meetings in person.

For more information or public meetings minutes, please visit us at:  
<http://www.nctcog.org/trans/outreach/meetings>