



August 2024

Welcome to Local Motion, a monthly email newsletter from the North Central Texas Council of Governments Transportation Department.

RTC discusses high-speed rail route that would get project back on track



The Regional Transportation Council is considering an alternative path for high-speed rail into Dallas that would divert the last mile of the project west of downtown before continuing to the approved Dallas high-speed rail station, past the southern edge of downtown in the Cedars. RTC members discussed the alternative, offered by North Central Texas Council of Governments staff members, during a work session in July. The RTC is expected to hear further details of the plan when it meets August 8 at the Irving Convention Center, as part of the Infrastructure Summit 2024.

NCTCOG is involved in a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review of the proposed Fort Worth-to-Dallas high-speed rail project, which would also include a station in Arlington. The route could be environmentally cleared as early as March 2025.

While this western concept being discussed avoids an area of downtown Dallas with great potential for economic development, it loses the opportunity to connect passengers of high-speed rail to/from Houston with the Eddie Bernice Johnson Union Station, the new Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center and other nearby destinations, as the downtown alignment could have provided.

The new option being discussed would still connect to the approved Dallas high-speed rail station with planned service to Houston, allowing passengers to board the train in Fort Worth or Arlington and reach Houston without having to change trains, in accordance with the RTC's "one-seat ride" policy. For information on the workshop and to learn more about the project, visit nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs.

Follow these tips for a safe return to school



As the new school year begins this month, it is essential to prioritize safety on the roads. However your children get to school, these tips will help make the journey safe.

If you drive your child to school:

- Observe school zone speed limits and pickup/drop-off procedures and look out for pedestrians.
- Obey extended stop signs on buses and do not proceed until the stop sign folds back in place.
- Look out for bicyclists when opening your door while parallel parked.
- Regularly check the brakes, lights and tires to ensure the vehicle is well-maintained.
- Ensure that your child exits the vehicle on the curb side, away from traffic.

If your child is taking the bus to school:

- Inform your child to wait until the bus stops completely before approaching it.
- Teach your child to stand at least six feet (two or three big steps) away from the road.
- Remind your child to look for passing vehicles when getting off the bus.

If your child walks or rides a bike to school:

- Encourage your child to wear bright clothing for early morning rides.
- Go over the route to school with them multiple times.
- Teach your child to always look for crosswalks and pedestrian signals.
- Provide appropriate equipment such as a bike helmet, umbrella, jacket, sunscreen and a water bottle.
- Establish good habits such as looking left and right at intersections, making eye contact with drivers before crossing, and obeying all traffic signals and signs.

By staying informed and proactive, you can contribute to safer roads for everyone commuting this school year. For more tips on how North Texans can share the road, whether they drive, walk, or bicycle, visit lookouttexas.org.

DFW population closing in on 8.5 million



North Texas' population continues to surge, with the 16-county region adding approximately 200,000 residents last year, according to estimates approved by the NCTCOG Executive Board

in June. This growth, which outpaces the previous year, pushes the estimated population to near 8.5 million. Rockwall (5.2%), Ellis (4.7%) and Collin (4.6%) counties led the region.

Godley (39.1%), Celina (30.9%) and Pilot Point (26.1%) were the fastest-growing cities by percentage. Fort Worth added nearly 27,000 to eclipse the 1 million resident milestone. Only Dallas (30,201) added more people than Fort Worth. The population of the 12-county metropolitan planning area is now nearly 8.3 million people.

Public involvement crucial to Mobility 2050 planning



As NCTCOG develops Mobility 2050, the long-range transportation plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, public input is being gathered on accessibility to jobs, healthcare, education and healthy food.

From November 2023 to June 2024, NCTCOG received 340 Map Your Experience comments and heard from 2,126 survey participants. Analysis of this input reveals that only 35% of respondents feel roadways fully meet their job access needs. Transit is the preferred mode for job access, but only 7% report their needs being met via transit. For accessing healthy food, walking and biking are preferred, but only 31% report their needs being met by these modes.

Top public concerns include roadways not keeping pace with growth and lack of a robust transit network. The 2050 demographic forecast shows Dallas-Fort Worth will surpass 12 million people in 25 years.

Population growth is extending into suburbs, leading to longer commute times. Vehicle hours spent in delay are projected to rise 144% by 2050, with annual cost of delay reaching \$32.3 billion. One potential solution to this is to promote mixed-use, higher density communities, which could shorten commute times and encourage infill development and density around public transportation, healthcare, education and healthy food.

By 2050, only 37% of the population will live in areas served by transit, down from 48% in 2019, according to NCTCOG data. This highlights the need for multimodal solutions, such as passenger rail, to serve areas where people are moving. NCTCOG is collecting input for the plan through the end of the year. If you have not already provided yours, visit nctcog.org/m50.

Electric vehicle owners to gather in Fort Worth for annual celebration Oct. 6



The annual Dallas-Fort Worth National Drive Electric Week (NDEW) is returning to Tanger Outlets in Fort Worth on October 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The NDEW event will showcase various makes and models of electric vehicles, with the goal of educating the public on the benefits of owning and operating EVs.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to enjoy EV displays, food, games, prizes, EV ride-and-drives, and engage with community members and industry professionals involved with sustainability. Stop by and experience an electrifying event! To attend the event or participate as an exhibitor or sponsor, visit dfwcleancities.org/ndew. Register for free.

Details

Date: Sunday, October 6, 2024

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Tanger Outlets

15853 North Freeway

Fort Worth, TX 76177

NCTCOG to host transportation public meeting Aug. 12

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETING

AUGUST 12 · NOON · 616 SIX FLAGS DR. ARLINGTON, TX 76011

SUBMIT COMMENTS & QUESTIONS TO NCTCOG:



nctcogAugust24@PublicInput.com | PublicInput.com/nctcogAugust24
Phone: (855) 925-2801 (Enter code 10355) | Fax: 817-640-3028
P.O. Box 5888, Arlington, TX 76005-5888



NCTCOG is hosting a hybrid public meeting August 12 to give residents an opportunity to provide input on a series of transportation-related topics. The hybrid meeting is scheduled for noon at NCTCOG's Arlington offices, 616 Six Flags Drive. North Texans unable to attend will have the option to watch the presentations live at publicinput.com/nctcogAugust24 or participate via phone by dialing 855-925-2801, then code 10355. Public comments will be accepted until September 10.

The Mobility 2045 Update guides the spending of federal and state transportation funds based on regional goals. Relevant sections in the Mobility 2045 Update have been amended to include recent federal grants awarded to NCTCOG for publicly accessible alternative fuel infrastructure projects, including hydrogen refueling infrastructure for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations. A presentation will be given on the sections that have been modified. The updated information can be found in Environmental Considerations Chapter 4 and Appendix C at nctcog.org/mobility2045.

Federal regulations require demographic forecasts to be evaluated every four years to coincide with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan development cycle. One of the initial steps in NCTCOG's demographic forecasting process is the review of regional control totals for population and employment. Over the past year, NCTCOG staff has completed an analysis of various control total forecasts and will present the results to the public.

The Transit Strategic Partnerships Program is a competitive grant program that funds innovative transit projects supporting services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income populations from public agencies looking to implement service and those seeking partnership with an existing transit provider. The May 2024 cycle for proposal submissions has closed, and

an update on selected projects will be provided for review and comment. For more information, visit nctcog.org/strategicpartnerships-transit.

Additionally, NCTCOG will present proposed transit projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration through the final award of Fiscal Year 2024. Those projects are:

- Urbanized Area Formula
- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
- State of Good Repair
- Bus and Bus Facilities

The input opportunity meets the federal requirement for public participation in Programs of Projects. Dallas Area Rapid Transit hosts its own public meeting and can be contacted directly for more information.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) maintains a comprehensive list of funded transportation projects from now through 2026. To maintain an accurate project listing, this document is updated regularly and will be posted for review and comment.

Information will also be provided about the following initiatives and programs: Interactive Public Input: Map Your Experience, NCTCOG's Spatial Data Cooperative Program, Air Quality Programs and Funding Opportunities, and Access North Texas.

Roundtrip rides from CentrePort/DFW Airport Station to NCTCOG are available for \$6 through the Arlington Transportation app. Download the app at arlingtontx.gov/ondemand. For special accommodation due to disabilities or language interpretation, contact 817-695-9255 or email jcastillo@nctcog.org.

For more information about Local Motion topics, contact Brian Wilson at 817-704-2511 or bwilson@nctcog.org. Visit www.nctcog.org/trans for more information on the department.

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