

**2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects
For the North Central Texas Region**

Approximately \$20 million will be available for competitive award in the 12-county North Central Texas region through the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region.

Applications requesting funding may submit under two project categories: Active Transportation or Safe Routes to School. General types of projects eligible under this program include shared-use paths, on-street bikeways, bicycle/pedestrian signalization, sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, traffic controls and calming measures, signage, and road diets (incorporating pedestrian and bicycle accommodations). Safe Routes to School projects are intended to improve the safety of students walking and bicycling to a primary school (grades K-8) and encourage more students to walk and bicycle to school.

Eligible entities to submit and receive Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds include local governments; regional transportation authorities and transit agencies; and other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails.

Projects submitted under this Call for Projects will be evaluated to identify the projects or programs that represent the best use of available TA funds by implementing the priorities adopted by the Regional Transportation Council and the transportation needs of local communities and the region.

More information regarding the 2020 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region can be obtained online at www.nctcog.org/tap.

The Call for Projects opened on March 2, 2020 and closes May 15, 2020 at 5 pm. Proposed projects on TxDOT right-of-way must submit a letter from the TxDOT District Engineer offering consent for the proposed project. The deadline to submit requests for Letters of Consent is **April 10, 2020**. The full CFP schedule is available below.

NCTCOG staff is available upon request to answer questions related to the application process or potential project applications for the 2020 TA Call for Projects. For more information please feel free to contact Daniel Snyder, Transportation Planner, (817) 608-2394 or dsnyder@nctcog.org.

Schedule

| Milestone | Date |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) — Info on CFP | November 20, 2019 |
| Call for Projects Public Workshop | January 21, 2020 |
| Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) — Info on CFP | January 24, 2020 |
| Regional Transportation Council (RTC) — Action on CFP | February 27, 2020 |
| Call for Projects Opens | March 2, 2020 |
| Deadline for Meetings to Review Applications for Completeness, Requests for Letters | April 10, 2020 |
| Call for Projects Closes | May 15, 2020, 5 PM |
| Review of Projects / Scoring by NCTCOG | May - July 2020 |
| Public Meetings | August 2020 |
| STTC – Action on Selected Projects | August 28, 2020 |
| RTC – Action on Selected Projects | September 10, 2020 |
| Individual Meetings with TxDOT District Staff for Awarded Projects | September - October 2020 |
| Submittal Deadline for TIP Modifications | October 23, 2020 |
| Approval of Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) | March - April 2021 |
| Deadline for Project Sponsors to Execute Agreements with TxDOT | September 2021 |
| Deadline for Project Sponsors to Open Bids and Obligate Funds (end of FY23) | August 2023 |



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

March 10, 2020

Secretary Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Secretary Dortch:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, we would like to submit comments on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) notice published in the February 6, 2020, Federal Register, Use of the 5.850-5.925 GHz Band, **Docket Number FCC-19-129**.

As the MPO for the North Texas region, the RTC and NCTCOG are responsible for transportation planning in a 12-county area with a current population estimate approaching 8 million. In such a large and fast-growing region, it is imperative to "think outside the box" to consider ways people can safely travel in the future without increasing traffic congestion or decreasing air quality. Accordingly, the MPO has been making a concerted effort in the past several years to pursue innovation in transportation technology through investments in Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) operations and partnerships with automated vehicle developers.

According to the US Department of Transportation, there were 6 million reported traffic crashes in 2017 alone. The impact of those crashes on human life was staggering: 37,133 fatalities and more than 2.7 million injuries, in addition to \$250 billion lost in direct costs and an additional \$550 billion when loss of life and quality of life factors are included. The cost of crashes is significantly higher than the cost of traffic congestion, which in itself is a significant drag on our economy. Clearly, traffic safety in the United States is of critical importance for the health and well-being of Americans.

Due to the amount of growth in our region, traffic congestion is a significant challenge in North Texas. Mobility 2045, NCTCOG's long-range transportation plan, estimates that congestion will cost \$27.2 billion per year. NCTCOG believes that ITS, and connected vehicle solutions that utilize the 5.850-5.925 GHz Band, will be key to more effectively utilizing roadway capacity and managing congestion.

Therefore, NCTCOG urges the FCC to ensure any rules regarding the 5.9 GHz Band support the development of Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) and Cellular-V2X (C-V2X), two promising traffic safety communications technologies collectively referred to as V2X. NCTCOG defers to the FCC on the need to accommodate increasing wireless communications

March 10, 2020

but cautions against any move to privilege other technologies before transportation safety. Indeed, the proposed rulemaking does not provide evidence that 30 MHz is sufficient for transportation safety and makes no provision for a buffer or guard band between the unlicensed band and the transportation safety band. It also makes no guarantee that DSRC will have access to the 5.9 GHz Band, which could affect local funded projects in North Texas.

Given the state of traffic safety in the United States and the very real potential of V2X technology to reduce traffic crashes and fatalities, the FCC must use prudence in regulating the 5.9 GHz Band. Regardless of the growth of other industries, there must be enough spectrum left for traffic safety purposes.

In this vein, NCTCOG asks the FCC to base its rulemaking on what transportation case studies and the evidence of communities around the country have demonstrated: ITS operations have improved traffic management operations, and the potential for further developments in V2X technology warrant a careful approach to the discussion about reallocating the current spectrum. For example, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has shown that V2X could greatly reduce crashes nationwide.

Furthermore, although recent advances in autonomous vehicle technology have rightly excited many, the technology is still in its infancy. It would be presumptuous to hope automated vehicles alone will drastically reduce the number of crashes in the United States. In fact, V2X technologies enable automated vehicles to communicate with vehicles that are beyond the line of sight and to coordinate their actions, features which are especially important for advancing freight technology that could help improve highway safety and increase economic output.

In summary, NCTCOG urges the FCC to rely on current research about ITS operations and V2X to inform its decision about whether to reallocate a portion of the 5.9 GHz spectrum for purposes other than transportation safety. A decision made in haste could preempt future advances in the technology and their consequent safety and economic impacts

We appreciate the chance to provide these comments and look forward to working with the FCC as regulations are drafted or revised. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (817) 695-9241 or mmorris@nctcog.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments

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**RESOLUTION ON THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S PROPOSED
UPDATES TO THE 2020 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
(R20-02)**

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, the RTC is responsible for the approval of transportation projects and policies in the region's long-range transportation plan (Mobility 2045) pursuant to its federal responsibilities under Title 23 of the United States Code; and,

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2020, the Texas Transportation Commission (Commission) was briefed on potential updates to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to address a \$4.34 billion funding gap for the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project which would add two non-tolled managed lanes and one frontage road lane in each direction from US 290E to US 290W/SH 171; and,

WHEREAS, to address the \$4.34 billion funding gap, the Commission proposes to allocate \$3.4 billion in Commission Strategic Priority and Texas Clear Lanes funds (Category 12), reprioritize \$600 million in existing Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funds allocated to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization/Austin District; and include an additional \$300 million in Category 12 funds in the 2021 UTP; and,

WHEREAS, TxDOT will be holding a public meeting on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP on March 12, 2020, at 4:00 pm at each TxDOT District office and via WebEx; and,

WHEREAS, TxDOT's public comment period for the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP will be open from March 13-April 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, TxDOT will be holding a public hearing on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP on April 7, 2020, at 10:00 am at a location to be determined in Austin; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission is scheduled to take action on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP at its regular meeting on April 30, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the RTC has a long-standing partnership with the Commission and TxDOT on advancing major transportation projects and as such has an interest in providing feedback to the Commission on its proposed changes to the 2020 UTP.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. The RTC supports the Texas Transportation Commission's efforts to advance needed major capital improvements to the IH 35 corridor in the central Austin area as a high-priority project for the State of Texas. The

RTC recommends the Commission consider alternate mechanisms to fund the IH 35 Capital Express Central Project that would permit additional high-priority statewide and regional projects to advance in parallel. The RTC only supports Plan B.

Section 2. The RTC requests the Commission review successful managed lanes projects (IH 635, North Tarrant Express) implemented by TxDOT in the Dallas-Fort Worth region as examples of projects that leveraged scarce public-sector funds to build major transportation projects creating reliable travel times and significant congestion relief.

Section 3. The RTC directs staff to provide comments to the Commission during the open comment period, public meetings and public hearings on the proposed revisions to the 2020 UTP in the form of this resolution, the attached presentation (Attachment 1), and video presentation. Plan B is presented in this material.

Section 4. The Regional Transportation Council requests the Texas Transportation Commission to extend the deadline for public comments in order to be sensitive to schedule conflicts related to COVID-19.

Section 5. This resolution shall be transmitted to the members of the Texas Transportation Commission, the members of the North Texas legislative delegation, metropolitan planning organizations in the State of Texas, private-sector leadership groups, and other interested stakeholders.

Section 6. This resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

Andy Eads, Chair
Regional Transportation Council
County Judge, Denton County

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 12, 2020.

Theresa Daniel, Ph.D., Secretary
Regional Transportation Council
Commissioner, Dallas County