

# INTERAGENCY TRANSPORTATION REPORT – OCTOBER 2024

RTC / TxDOT / DART / Dallas County / DRMC / DFW Airport / NTTA / High Speed Rail



## **GUS KHANKARLI NAMED CHAIR OF THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

At their June meeting, Dr. Ghassan “Gus” Khankarli, **Director of the City of Dallas Department of Transportation and Public Works, was named Chair of the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC)** for the 2024-2025 term.

STTC has approximately 80 members and prepares recommendations for surface transportation planning and funding for Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approval. Dr. Khankarli has served on STTC for many years both at the City of Dallas and during his tenure with the Texas Department of Transportation, previously serving as Vice-Chair, Secretary.

## **JUDGE CLAY LEWIS JENKINS NAMED CHAIR OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**In July, Dallas County Judge Clay Lewis Jenkins was elected Chair of the RTC,** taking over for Fort Worth Mayor Pro Tem Gyna Bivens. Judge Jenkins was appointed to RTC in 2011, and previously served one-year terms as Secretary and Vice-Chair. Notably, Judge Jenkins will lead RTC during the 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, which begins in January.

## **50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

**The Regional Transportation Council celebrated 50 years of acting as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Ft. Worth region** at the Infrastructure Summit 2024 on August 8.

Speakers, including current and former elected officials, highlighted successes in the transportation sector throughout the region brought on by the collective problem-solving championed by the RTC.

## **LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

**The RTC presented Legislative Priorities for the 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature on September 12.** Staff highlighted six general priorities including: Adequately Fund Transportation; Utilize and Develop Tools; Enhance Safety; Expand Transportation Options; Pursue Innovation and Technology; and Improve Air Quality.

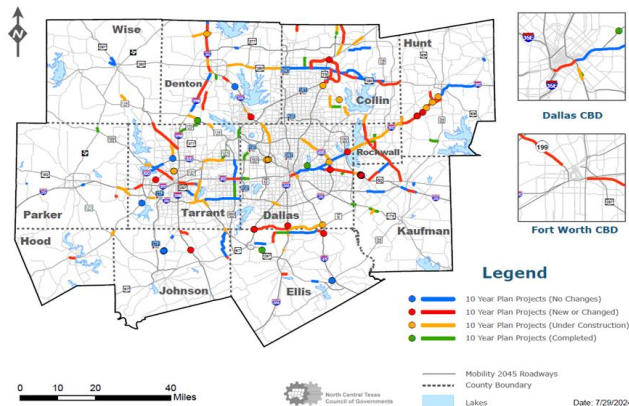
These legislative priorities have been organized into three different categories: Legislation for NCTCOG to pursue; Legislation for NCTCOG to pursue in partnership with other agencies; and Legislation that RTC staff and/or members may provide testimony to the Legislature.

After a robust discussion which included weight exceptions for alternative fuel vehicles, and the future of transit funding, RTC voted to pass the program, with the opportunity to refine the priorities at a future date. The full RTC Legislative Program can be found here: [October RTC Agenda Materials](#).

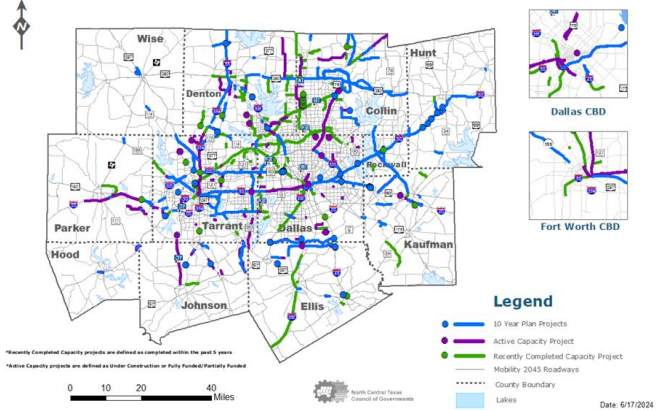
## 2025 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM AND REGIONAL 10-YEAR PLAN UPDATE

On August 8<sup>th</sup>, RTC approved the **2025 Unified Transportation Program and Regional 10-year Plan update**. Texas State law requires that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) develop 10-year plans for project selection, including those project chosen by the MPO, by the local TxDOT district, and by the Texas Transportation Commission. Projects are selected through several criteria, including equity of the allocations across the region, and a focus on projects that contribute to the overall regional transportation system for both vehicles and active transportation modes.

**Dallas-Fort Worth Regional 10 Year Plan Projects**  
FY 2017 - FY 2034



**Recently Completed & Active Capacity Transportation Projects including 10 Year Plan Projects**



Maps for projects included in the 10-year Plan for the NCTCOG area are above. During July and August, TxDOT conducted public involvement for the plan, and the Texas Transportation Commission approved the Statewide plan in August.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**The November RTC meeting has been canceled** due to conflicts with the National League of Cities Summit.

The RTC members voted to combine the November and December meetings. As such, the **next RTC meeting is in-person and is scheduled for December 12<sup>th</sup>**, at 1:00 PM in the Transportation Council Room at the NCTCOG headquarters (616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, Texas 76011).



## **IH-345 STAKEHOLDER MEETING**

On September 27, 2024, the City hosted an IH-345 Stakeholders Workshop. Thirty-five people attended the meeting including City staff from Parks, Transportation & Public Works, Planning & Development, Economic Development, Housing, and the City Managers Office. External stakeholders included Downtown Dallas, Inc. (DDI), American Institute of Architects (AIA), Deep Ellum Foundation, Downtown Dallas Parks Conservancy, North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

The meeting's intent was to get all stakeholders in the same room to begin discussing possible decking locations and funding strategies; possible configuration of oversized bridges and/or micro-decks; review of the scope of the Reimagining Downtown Dallas Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant; and continued discussion of design elements where there were still conflicting opinions.

This group will continue meeting in person on a regular basis as a mechanism for reaching community consensus on the IH-345 design and connectivity efforts.

## **LAKE JUNE/US-175 PROJECT UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

**TxDOT started construction of the Lake June/US-175 project in June.** This project replaces the Lake June bridge over US-175 and constructs a pedestrian trail parallel to US-175 from Lake June Road to Second Avenue.

**FIGURE 1: CURRENT CONFIGURATION**



SOURCE: The Loop Dallas

Current view of US 175 at Lake June Bridge (looking northwest from Lake June Bridge).

**FIGURE 2: FUTURE CONFIGURATION**



SOURCE: The Loop Dallas

Future rendering view of US 175 at Lake June Bridge (also looking northwest from Lake June Bridge).

Additionally, the project includes improvements to Lake June Road from US-175 to Gillette.

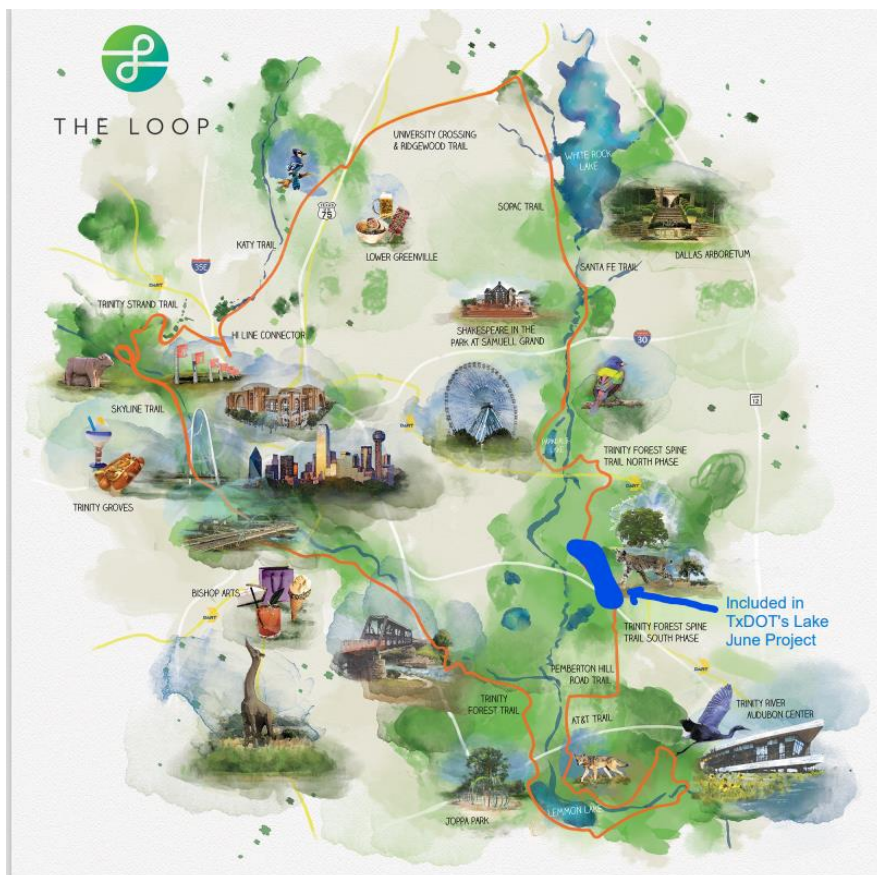
This project received a \$12 million RAISE grant from the US Department of Transportation and included funding from a variety of sources including The Loop Dallas, Dallas County, the City of Dallas, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and TxDOT.

**FIGURE 3: FUTURE PEDESTRIAN TRAIL**



SOURCE: The Loop Dallas

Future rendering view of pedestrian trail along US 175.



**The pedestrian trail component of this project completes an important portion of the The Loop Dallas, a fifty-mile city-wide trail system.**

Construction is anticipated to be complete in the spring of 2026.

### **SPEED LIMIT REDUCED ON SEGMENTS OF US-75 AND LOOP 12**

Per the Dallas City Council direction, **TxDOT reduced the speed limits on segments of US-75 and Loop 12.**

On US-75, the speed limit was reduced from 70 MPH to 65 MPH between Woodall Rodgers and Mockingbird.

On Loop 12 the speed limit was reduced by 5 MPH for most of the roadway between IH-35E to IH-45. TxDOT has also deployed multiple speed feedback trailers to remind drivers of the new limits and inform them of their speeds.



## **PARTNERING ON GRANTS**

**The City of Dallas and DART have recently partnered on several successful grant applications**, including FY23 and FY24 Safe Streets and Roads for All grants that will improve safety and reduce vehicle crashes with pedestrians along several corridors on the High Injury Network.

As part of the grants, DART will provide upgraded bus stops to improve access to transit and consider consolidation or relocation of stops to align with safer pedestrian crosswalks.

## **DART INCREASES SERVICE, OFFERS RIDERS A DISCOUNT FOR THE STATE FAIR OF TEXAS**

DART increased service on the Green, Red, Blue, and Orange lines during the State Fair providing more frequent trains and extending service on some lines to accommodate Fair-goers. In addition, riders were able to use a discount code to receive \$5 off the admission price every day of the Fair.

## **DART ANNOUNCES NEXT PHASE OF SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS**

**Starting September 16, DART is implementing service enhancements across rail and bus** routes to reflect increasing ridership, including increased weekend ridership.

The Red, Green, Blue, and Orange lines will run every 20 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Several bus routes will also see a change in services, including a reconfiguration of routes in the Southwestern Medical District, schedule changes, and upgraded bus stops.

More details can be seen at this news release [DART Announces Next Phase of Service Enhancements, Most Will Be Effective September 16, 2024.](#)

## **UPCOMING MEETING**

**The next DART Board meeting will be on Tuesday, October 22, 2024**, at the DART Headquarters Building, 1401 Pacific Avenue in Dallas.



**UPDATE - RIVERFRONT BOULEVARD PROJECT**

After many delays, **Dallas County's Riverfront Boulevard project is moving forward.** Construction bids will close in November with anticipated start date in the spring of 2025.

As a reminder, there were technical design challenges within the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way (under the railroad that crosses Riverfront just north of the Courthouse) that significantly impacted the timely implementation of this project. The project limits were modified to exclude roadway reconstruction within the UPRR right of way. This proposed change of scope required approval by the RTC and subsequent state and federal approvals.



**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM AND UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

The Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC) adopted a Legislative Program for the 89th Texas Legislature at the October Board Meeting. Highlighted priorities include allowing TxDOT to fund public transit projects, expanded ability for local governments - particularly Counties - to make land-use decisions, and extending the January 2027 deadline to issue debt for the Texas Mobility Fund.

DRMC staff is also tracking the race for Speaker of the House for the upcoming Legislative Session and will be tracking the election as several seats may switch parties and change the total number of Republican and Democrat members.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

Over the past few months, DRMC has hosted a variety of subject matter experts and officials on a wide range of topics, including the state of the electric and autonomous vehicles market and upcoming projects for the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA). Glenn Hegar, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, has been invited to speak via Zoom at the November meeting.

## UPCOMING MEETING

The next DRMC Board meeting is scheduled at **11:00 AM on Friday, November 1, 2024**, at the NTTA headquarters in Plano (5900 West Plano Parkway, Plano, Texas 75093).



## DFW AIRPORT STARTS WORK ON \$9 BILLION CAPITAL PLAN, “DFW FORWARD”

- **DFW started work on its nearly \$9 billion capital improvement plan, "DFW Forward,"** which will improve terminals, add new facilities and amenities, grow the number of gates, improve roadways and connectivity, enhance the airfield and mark the airport's largest capital investment since opening in 1974.
- **The project includes reconstruction of Terminal C,** the airport's busiest and most outdated terminal, into a modern and spacious experience to include all-new facilities, including shops and restaurants, lounge space, check-in areas, security checkpoints and improved restrooms. **The overall completion of Terminal C is expected in 2030.**
- **The project includes expansions of both Terminal C and Terminal A.** The expansions will **add 115,000 square feet and four gates to Terminal C and 140,000 square feet and five gates to Terminal A.** Both expansions will include new restaurant and retail options, seating areas and restrooms.
- In coordination with Terminal C's first construction phase, the adjacent south parking garage will be completely rebuilt with more parking with modern parking management technologies. **The entrance to the south parking garage is closed to prepare for demolition later this year. The north and central garages will remain available.**

## FIJI AIRWAYS' STARTS NEW NONSTOP SERVICE TO NADI, FIJI

- Fiji Airways will begin **new, nonstop flights between Nadi, Fiji and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) starting December 10, 2024.**

- This new international service will operate **three times per week** every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

## **CATHAY PACIFIC STARTS NEW NONSTOP SERVICE TO HONG KONG**

- Cathay Pacific will begin **new, nonstop service from DFW to Hong Kong starting April 24, 2025**. The announcement marks the return of direct flights between the two regions, which have been without nonstop service since 2020.
- The route will operate **four times a week**. Flights will depart from DFW on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**The November and December board meetings will be held on Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.** For more information, please visit [www.dfwairport.com/board](http://www.dfwairport.com/board).

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## **NEW BOARD APPOINTEE AND OFFICERS SWORN IN**

At their September meeting, the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) Board of Directors elected **Scott Levine, Collin County appointee, to serve as Board Chair** and **Mojoy Haddad, Tarrant County appointee, to the position of Vice Chairman**

At the same meeting, Andy Wambsganss was sworn in as a new Tarrant County appointee.

## **2025 LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS ON TOLLWAY REFORM**

Tollway reform is anticipated to be a hotly debated in the upcoming legislative session. Dade Phelan, current Speaker of the House, has listed this as a priority for the 2025 Session. Similarly, State Representative Terry Canales, the Chair of the Transportation Committee for the past two sessions, has pledged to study toll reform.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

NTTA Board meetings are typically held the third Wednesday of the month at 10:00 AM at the NTTA headquarters in Plano. **The November and December board meetings will be held on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>.** For more information, please visit [Board Of Directors | NTTA](#).





## **AMTRAK AWARDED \$80 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING FOR DALLAS HOUSTON HIGH SPEED RAIL**

In August, Amtrak was awarded a \$63.9 million grant from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to advance planning for the Dallas to Houston high-speed rail project. The grant requires a 20% match, bringing the total funding to nearly \$80 million.

This grant is significant as it moves the Dallas to Houston high-speed rail project into step three of the FRA's Corridor Identification Program, making it eligible to apply for the FRA's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) grant program. While it's unclear how much funding the Dallas to Houston project may receive under the FSP program, last year, California's high-speed rail was awarded \$3.4 billion. This year, the total funding limit for the country is \$1,057,596,637. Applications are due by December 16, 2024, with anticipated award notifications in April 2025.

## **ANDY BYFORD VISIT**

Andy Byford, Amtrak's Senior Vice President for High Speed Rail Programs, was in Dallas on Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. During the short visit, he met with a few City Councilmembers, toured the high-speed rail station site, and met with member of the Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce. He provided updates on the Dallas to Houston high speed rail project and on other, nationwide, Amtrak initiatives.