



Central Texas Council of Governments  
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## Central Texas Transportation Grants, Resources, and Updates Newsletter

07/25/2022

### Federal and State Legislative Updates

#### Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council

The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council was created in 2015 under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), but became permanent when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law. The council, with representatives from 13 federal agencies, oversees more than \$100 billion worth of projects. The agency is designed to speed up megaprojects that depend on federal approval. The council can help move along projects that involve conventional energy production, renewable energy production, broadband, transmission lines, pipelines and hydropower dams. Since FAST became law, the Permitting Council has helped improve the permitting process for more than 50 projects, saving projects more than a billion dollars, and resolving numerous interagency conflicts. It also has saved projects substantial amounts of time. From 2010 to 2018, on average, it took projects four and a half years to complete reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The average now for covered projects is two and a half years – a 45 percent time savings. The Council utilizes a Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard, an online tool for Federal agencies, project developers, and interested members of the public to track the Federal government's environmental review and authorization processes for large or complex infrastructure projects. For more information on the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, [click here!](#)

#### TxDOT Freight Advisory Committee

On Jul.20, 2022, TxDOT's Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) held a regular meeting discussing the freight network needs assessment as part of the Texas Delivers 2050 Freight Mobility Plan. A commodity flow profile of the State found that the volume of freight was expected to go from approximately 4 to 7 billion tons from 2019 to 2050 with industrial organic chemical and plastics expected to enter the top ten commodities moving in the State. The biggest freight network needs around the State were in mobility and reliability, safety, asset preservation, and network design. For more information, [click here!](#)  
To follow updates for the next meeting, [click here!](#)

### Central Texas Regional Transportation Advisory Group (CTRTAG) Updates

#### Local Agency Update

As part of CTRTAG's implementation of the 2022-26 Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan, one of the strategies in the implementation matrix is to introduce a "Local Agency Update" to CTRTAG meetings. This Update will serve to have local city leaders address the Board to discuss their public transportation needs and efforts! The first Local Agency Update will be held at the next CTRTAG meeting on Thursday, Aug..11th.

To access the 2022-26 RCTP, [Click Here!](#)

If you are interested in providing a Local Agency Update for your City/County, contact [dominic.elizondo@ctcog.org](mailto:dominic.elizondo@ctcog.org).

As part of the coordination of resources and efforts for the implementation of the 2022-26 RCTP, staff has created a new Central Texas Transportation Facebook page to post resources and updates on implementation of the RCTP. Like and follow the page [here!](#)

### Funding Opportunities and Resources

#### Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program

USDOT has issued a NOFO announcing more than \$573 million in grant funding for FY 2022 for the program. This program will help improve safety, eliminate lengthy delays at railroad crossings in communities across the country and ultimately lower the costs of transporting goods. This program provides at least \$1 million in funding (with 20% minimum match) for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. Eligible applicants include local governments and political subdivisions. Eligible projects include

- Grade separation or closure;
- Track relocation;
- The improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety
- Other means to improve the safety and mobility of people ;

The deadline to apply is Oct.4. For more information, click [here!](#)