

Technical Memorandum – Year-Three Report: RCTP Statewide Metrics 2019-20

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SUBJECT: RCTP Statewide Metrics 2019-20: Year-Three Report

Background

The purpose of the regionally coordinated transportation planning effort is to provide more efficient and effective public transportation services, especially for priority populations including individuals with disabilities, individuals 65 and older, people with low incomes, veterans, and children. Texas uses a decentralized, stakeholder-driven approach, with 24 designated planning regions charged with developing and adopting a unique regional transportation plan. Stakeholders in each planning region select one agency to serve as the lead agency in this effort. The lead agency generally serves as the fiscal agent for receiving regional planning funds from the Texas Department of Transportation Public Transportation Division (TxDOT-PTN). Lead agencies manage an inclusive process for developing the coordinated plan, monitor progress of the plan, and update the plan.

Lead agencies, in collaboration with regional stakeholders, develop and include a metric for each identified gap in transportation service or local service priority in the coordinated plan. The purpose of each metric is to measure the extent to which each priority was met or gap filled. Metrics may vary from one planning region to another; however, each region's metrics should demonstrate that individuals in the region, including persons 65 and older and individuals with disabilities, have improved access to an effective and efficient network of public transportation services. The data on these metrics is reported to TxDOT-PTN, which collects common data elements statewide.

Statewide Metrics

TxDOT-PTN, in collaboration with working groups comprised of lead agency representatives and other stakeholders from across the state, developed statewide metrics to measure performance for regionally coordinated transportation planning efforts in Texas. Twenty-three of the 24 planning regions reported a status for each metric during the past reporting year (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020). The exception was Coastal Bend Planning Region which currently does not have a lead agency. Statewide metrics concentrate on three central themes, each discussed in the following sections:

- **Collaboration.**
 - o This section includes data documented by each planning region and reported to TxDOT-PTN through the online survey, which is supported by sign-in sheets and other materials that are also uploaded online through the survey website or sent directly via email to a TTI representative.
- **Resolution of unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.**
 - o This section focuses on regions that document the implementation and achievement of goals and strategies associated with unserved or underserved needs, gaps in services, and/or duplicative services.
- **Newly identified unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.**
 - o This section details new needs that have been identified by regions.

Collaboration

There are three metrics to measure collaboration:

1. Active, formal partnerships.
2. Organizations and individuals that received information about regional transportation activities.
3. Organizations and individuals that actively participated in regional transportation activities.

The following section summarizes progress on collaboration metrics.

Active, Formal Partnerships

Lead agencies develop formal partnerships to conduct regional transportation planning activities and/or implement strategies or objectives from the regionally coordinated transportation plan. Active, formal partnerships are defined as:

“a current, functioning arrangement between entities that formally commit to share responsibilities and contribute funding, staff time, expertise, facilities or other resources to achieve a specific project or objective. The commitment must be through a contract, inter-agency agreement, memorandum of understanding or other formal agreement that specifies responsibilities and commitments of each.”

Lead agencies identified the number of active formal partnerships in place or developed during the reporting period and provided supporting documentation for each. Nineteen of the 23 planning regions that reported partnerships listed at least one active, formal partnership. Table 1 lists the top eight planning regions with the highest number of active, formal partnerships for selected planning regions. Five other planning regions reported between 5 and 9 partnerships and the remaining 6 planning regions reported 4 or less partnerships.

Comparing 2020 with the previous years, the number of formal partnerships for a region is the highest (30) compared to the previous two years (27). The overall number of formal partnerships has decreased, however. 2018 and 2019 had multiple regions with 20 or more formal partnerships. This year, only two regions have 20 or more formal partnerships.

Table 1. Planning Regions with the most Active, Formal Partnerships

Number of Active, Formal Partnerships		
2018	2019	2020
South Plains (27)	Concho Valley (27)	Middle Rio Grande (30)
East Texas (25)	South Plains (27)	Concho Valley (26)
Capital Area (22)	West Central Texas (22)	West Central Texas (19)
Concho Valley (20)	Capital Area (22)	Nortex (16)
North Central* (19)	Nortex (20)	North Central (14)
West Central Texas (19)	South Texas (14)	South Texas (13)
Nortex (18)	Upper Rio Grande (13)	Golden Crescent (11)
Lower Rio Grande (18)	North Central (13)	Upper Rio Grande (10)

Organizations and individuals that received information about regional transportation activities

Lead agencies identified the number of organizations and individuals that received information during the reporting period specifically on how to participate in the regional transportation planning process or related planning activities. Twenty-one of the 23 planning regions that submitted reports had at least three organizations or individuals receive information about regional planning activities. Eight planning regions had 30 or more organizations or individuals that received information and seven planning regions had between 20 and 30 entities. Table 2 lists the top nine planning regions with the highest number of organizations and individuals that received information about participating in regional planning activities. Common dissemination

methods included email, phone, committee meetings, public forums, agency webpage information, and community events.

Table 2. Planning Regions with the Highest Number of Organizations/Individuals that Received Information

Number of Organizations/Individuals that have Received Information		
2018	2019	2020
Concho Valley (41)	Brazos Valley (75)	Upper Rio Grande (131)
East Texas (30)	Concho Valley (71)	Concho Valley (71)
Permian Basin (25)	Nortex (60)	Brazos Valley (68)
Capital Area (22)	Middle Rio Grande (45)	Nortex (49)
Upper Rio Grande (21)	Golden Crescent (42)	Panhandle (46)
Panhandle (20)	Permian Basin (33)	South East Texas (37)
Central Texas (20)	East Texas (32)	Middle Rio Grande (36)
South Plains (19)	Upper Rio Grande (31)	Permian Basin (31)
West Central Texas (19)	West Central Texas (27)	South Texas (26)

Organizations and individuals that actively participated in regional transportation activities.

Lead agencies identified the number of organizations and individuals that actively participated in regional transportation planning pursuits during the reporting period. Active participation is defined as, “regular, ongoing participation.”

Active participation includes ongoing coordination through meetings, committee participation, emails, phone calls or other assistance. The most common method of an organization participating in the plan is by way of joining a committee or task force. Other methods included promoting goals or strategies and regularly providing feedback for planning and implementation. Twenty-two of the 23 planning regions that submitted reports had at least 3 organizations or individuals that actively participated in regional planning activities. Ten planning regions reported participation of more than 20 organizations or individuals and 7 planning regions reported between 10 and 20. Table 3 lists the top eight planning regions with the most organizations and individuals that actively participated in regional planning activities.

Table 3. Planning Regions with the Most Active Participation

Number of Organizations/Individuals that have Actively Participated		
2018	2019	2020
East Texas (30)	Gulf Coast (73)	Upper Rio Grande (75)
Capital Area (22)	Middle Rio Grande (45)	Middle Rio Grande (41)
Concho Valley (21)	South Plains (34)	Brazos Valley (38)

Number of Organizations/Individuals that have Actively Participated		
2018	2019	2020
Central Texas (20)	East Texas (30)	Panhandle (35)
Panhandle (20)	Concho Valley (29)	Gulf Coast (26)
South Plains (20)	Capital Area (22)	Concho Valley (24)
South East Texas (20)	Brazos Valley (22)	Capital Area (23)
Deep East Texas (18)	West Central Texas (22)	East Texas (23)

Resolution of Unmet Transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.

There are two metrics used to measure the resolution of unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies:

1. Strategies that moved from the planning phase to the implementation phase.
2. Goals that are fully achieved during the planning period.

This section describes the progress on resolving unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.

Moving from Planning to Implementation

Lead agencies identified the number of strategies or objectives in the most recent regionally coordinated transportation plan that moved from the planning phase to the implementation phase during the reporting period. Lead agencies were asked to provide a description of the strategy, the primary priority population impacted, how or why it was moved to the implementation phase, and provide documentation to support this action. Eighteen of the 23 planning regions that submitted reports had at least one strategy, goal, or objective move from the planning to the implementation phase; Five planning regions had 11 or more, and 13 regions had between 1 and 9. Table 4 lists the top planning regions with strategies, goals, or objectives that moved from the planning phase to the implementation phase.

Table 4. Planning Regions that Moved a Strategy, Goal, or Objective from the Planning Phase to the Implementation Phase

Number of Strategies, Goals, or Objectives that Moved from the Planning Phase to the Implementation Phase		
2018	2019	2020
Central Texas (37)	Central Texas (36)	Central Texas (37)
North Central* (20)	Middle Rio Grande (32)	Middle Rio Grande (22)
Concho Valley (8)	West Central Texas (14)	North Central (14)
West Central Texas (8)	Concho Valley (13)	Panhandle (12)

Number of Strategies, Goals, or Objectives that Moved from the Planning Phase to the Implementation Phase		
2018	2019	2020
Texoma (8)	Nortex (13)	Upper Rio Grande (11)
Panhandle (5)	Upper Rio Grande (13)	Brazos Valley (9)
Lower Rio Grande (5)	North Central (13)	Golden Crescent (8)
South Texas (5)	East Texas (10)	Concho Valley (7)
Golden Crescent (5)		Texoma (7)

Fully Achieved Strategies, Goals, and Objectives

Lead agencies identified the number of goals, objectives, or strategies from the most recent regionally coordinated transportation plan that were fully achieved or completed during this reporting period. Lead agencies were asked to provide a description of the fully achieved goal, objective, or strategy, how or why it was fully achieved (noted on each planning region’s corresponding status sheet in Appendix B). Thirteen of the 23 planning regions that submitted reports fully achieved at least one strategy, goal, or objective during the reporting period. This amount is an increase from nine planning regions the previous year. Table 5 lists the top six planning regions with strategies, goals, or objectives that were fully achieved or completed during the reporting period.

Table 5. Planning Regions with Fully Achieved or Completed Strategies, Goals, or Objectives

Number of Strategies, Goals, or Objectives that were Fully Achieved		
2018	2019	2020
Concho Valley (6)	Middle Rio Grande (28)	Middle Rio Grande (22)
Middle Rio Grande (4)	Concho Valley (17)	Concho Valley (14)
Central Texas (3)	Upper Rio Grande (9)	Capital Area (4)
South Texas (3)	South Texas (4)	Golden Crescent (4)
East Texas (2)	East Texas (2)	Gulf Coast (4)
		Lower Rio Grande (4)

Identification of New Unmet Transportation Needs, Gaps, and Inefficiencies

The regionally coordinated transportation effort is intended to aid in serving the transportation needs of the entire community, especially the priority populations who are the most dependent on public transportation. Although transportation systems across Texas provide access that can meet a portion of people’s needs, key gaps persist and grow. There are two metrics to measure the identification of new unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies:

1. Newly identified unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.
2. Newly identified unmet transportation needs with specific corresponding steps for resolution.

Lead agencies listed the newly identified unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies in their region and were asked to provide the following information:

- Description of newly identified unmet transportation need, gap, or inefficiency.
- Identify the specific primary priority population(s) impacted.
- Specific corresponding steps or strategies for resolution added to their most recent regionally coordinated transportation plan if applicable.

Eleven of the 23 planning regions that submitted reports reported at least one new unmet needs, gaps, or inefficiencies during the reporting period. The top seven planning regions with the most number of newly identified unmet needs are listed in Table 6. The four other planning regions listed one new identified unmet need.

Table 6. Planning Regions with newly identified unmet transportation needs

Number of Newly Identified Unmet Needs, Gaps, or Inefficiencies		
2018	2019	2020
Central Texas (10)	Middle Rio Grande (15)	Middle Rio Grande (21)
Middle Rio Grande (5)	Central Texas (13)	Central Texas (10)
Capital Area (4)	Gulf Coast (4)	Gulf Coast (5)
East Texas (3)	South Plains (3)	Capital Area (4)
Golden Crescent (3)	Panhandle (2)	Golden Crescent (4)
Gulf Coast (3)	East Texas (3)	Panhandle (2)
Texoma (2)	West Central Texas (2)	South Texas (2)
	Texoma (2)	

Findings and Recommendations

This section notes the findings from the data collection process. The third and final year of data collection was adjusted to anticipate data review and corrections. TTI updated the powerpoint presentation to clarify the data submission process. This included survey screen shots and animations to show lead agencies how to save and submit their data. In addition, a review period was added following the data submission deadline. This process ensured that lead agencies were given the opportunity to correct or clarify any data questions or errors found from the online survey. Overall, planning regions were able to submit their data with less complications and issues.

Findings

Year three of the statewide metric collection shows progress across many of the planning regions. Overall, four metrics increased from the initial year 2017-18. These include the number of organizations and individuals that received information or actively participated in regional transportation activities, strategies that moved to the implementation phase, and goals fully achieved. The number of active formal partnerships decreased by 29 percent from year one. Newly identified unmet transportation need also decreased, which could signal that planning regions are doing a reliable job of identifying and addressing needs. Table 7 shows an overall annual and total comparison for all metrics.

Table 7. Overall Yearly Comparison of Statewide Metrics

Statewide Metric	2018	2019	Annual Change in 2019	2020	Annual Change in 2020	Annual Change in three years
Active, formal partnerships.	256	229	-11%	183	-20%	-29%
Organizations and individuals that received information about regional transportation activities.	342*	580	70%	692	19%	102%
Organizations and individuals that actively participated in regional transportation activities.	316*	450	42%	461	2%	46%
Strategies that moved from the planning phase to the implementation phase.	125	178	42%	152	-15%	22%
Goals that are fully achieved during the planning period.	29	64	121%	64	0%	121%
Newly identified unmet transportation needs, gaps, and inefficiencies.	135	46	-66%	52	13%	-61%

*Does not include NCTCOG's list of organizations for 2018

Recommendations

Based on this year's data collection experience, TTI is recommending two considerations for next cycle:

- Review and revise regional planning metrics
- Clarification on metrics submitted

The regional planning metrics are intended to show how each planning region is progressing according to their regionally coordinated transportation plan. While the current metrics show this to a degree, there is room for improvement and more accurate representation of progress. One

good example is the metric for number of goals that are fully achieved during the planning period. The number of goals and strategies varies by planning region. While some regions may have many targeted and specific goals and strategies, other regions may have larger overarching goals. As such, a true comparison is not attainable from the metric of counting the number of goals. A better metric would be the percentage of goals achieved, which would be a ratio of goals achieved versus the total of number of goals for that specific region. This would better show region specific progress which would then be comparable to other regions, therefore normalizing the process.

Clarification of metric submissions is another area of improvement. One example of this is the number of organizations and individuals that received information about regional planning activities. This metric can vary widely and may not be easy for lead agencies to quantify. As more activities and information get disseminated online, this metric may have to be reconsidered on how to count the number of individuals and organizations receiving information. Other examples include large public forums and meetings where there may or may not be a sign-in. A narrower definition or further clarification may help to smooth the data received by lead agencies.

The following two tables provide additional summary information. Table 8 lists the corresponding lead agencies for each planning region. Table 9 shows a summary of all statewide metrics data collected by region.

Table 8. Lead Agency Designations by Planning Region

No.	Planning Region	Lead Agency
1	Panhandle	Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC)
2	South Plains	South Plains Association of Governments (SPAG)
3	Nortex	Nortex Regional Planning Commission (Nortex RPC)
4	North Central	North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
5	Ark-Tex	Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG)
6	East Texas	East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG)
7	West Central Texas	City of Abilene
8	Upper Rio Grande	Project Amistad
9	Permian Basin	Midland Odessa Urban Transit District
10	Concho Valley	Concho Valley Transit District (CVTD)
11	Heart of Texas	Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG)
12	Capital Area	Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)
13	Brazos Valley	Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)
14	Deep East Texas	Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG)
15	South East Texas	South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC)
16	Gulf Coast	Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)
17	Golden Crescent	Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC)
18	Alamo Area	Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)
19	South Texas	South Texas Development Council (STDC)
20	Coastal Bend	N/A
21	Lower Rio Grande	Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC)
22	Texoma	Texoma Council of Governments
23	Central Texas	Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG)
24	Middle Rio Grande	Southwest Area Regional Transit District (SWART)

Table 9. Year-End Comparison of Metrics by Planning Region

No.	Planning Region	Active, Formal Partnerships			Info Received			Active Participation			Planning to Implementation Phase			Fully Achieved			Newly Identified		
		2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
1	Panhandle	9	9	4	20	19	46	20	19	35	5	1	12	0	0	1	0	2	2
2	South Plains	27	27	5	19	17	18	20	34	18	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	3	0
3	Nortex	18	20	16	11	60	49	0	19	15	0	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	North Central*	19	13	14	4,424	0	24	2,567	0	3	20	13	14	8	0	0	103	0	0
5	Ark-Tex	14	8	5	12	6	5	13	11	5	4	5	2	0	0	1	1	1	1
6	East Texas	25	4	4	30	32	23	30	30	23	4	10	3	2	2	2	3	2	0
7	West Central Texas	19	22	19	19	27	19	14	22	19	8	14	2	1	1	1	0	2	0
8	Upper Rio Grande	4	13	10	21	31	131	16	19	75	4	13	11	0	9	3	0	0	0
9	Permian Basin	4	4	4	25	33	31	14	9	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
10	Concho Valley	20	27	26	41	71	71	21	29	24	8	13	7	6	17	14	0	0	0
11	Heart of Texas	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Capital Area	22	22	1	22	22	23	22	22	23	4	4	5	0	0	4	4	0	4
13	Brazos Valley	7	7	0	17	75	68	16	22	38	3	0	9	1	0	0	0	1	0
14	Deep East Texas	1	1	5	4	8	0	18	8	11	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
15	South East Texas	0	0	0	6	4	37	20	18	20	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
16	Gulf Coast	9	9	9	12	21	21	13	73	26	0	4	3	0	0	4	3	4	5
17	Golden Crescent	9	11	11	5	42	13	4	4	5	5	4	8	1	0	4	3	0	4
18	Alamo Area	4	0	0	0	5	5	4	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	South Texas	0	14	13	17	22	26	14	16	15	5	5	5	3	4	1	0	0	2
20	Coastal Bend**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	Lower Rio Grande	18	4	5	15	3	3	15	18	18	5	2	2	0	1	4	0	0	1
22	Texoma	6	4	1	17	17	23	8	12	8	8	4	7	0	0	3	2	2	1
23	Central Texas	1	1	1	20	20	20	20	20	20	37	36	37	3	0	0	10	13	10
24	Middle Rio Grande	15	9	30	4	45	36	9	45	41	4	32	22	4	28	22	5	15	21

* Region 4 completed the final year of their regional plan in 2017-2018. This region is on a different reporting cycle than other planning regions.

**As of 2020, Region 20 does not have a lead agency and did not submit data.