

Project Tracker Implementation Plan



Transportation Planning and Programming Division

March 1, 2018

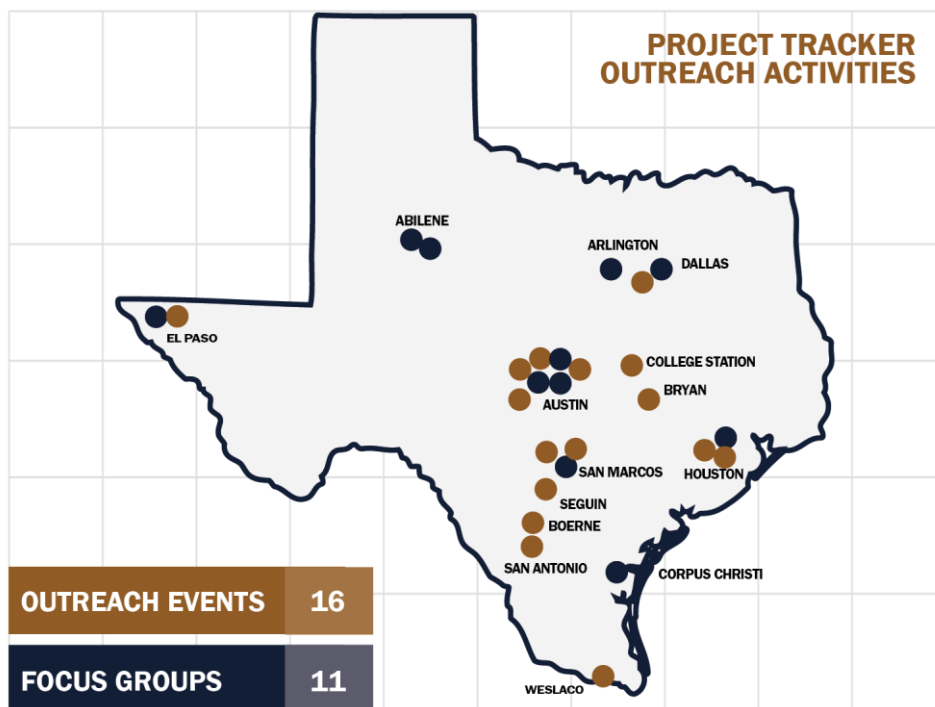
INTRODUCTION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is committed to continuously improve customer service, transparency and accountability. One of the best ways to achieve these goals is through Project Tracker, an online tool that serves as the gateway to information about more than 11,000 TxDOT projects, providing 24/7-access for all — the public, employees and elected officials.

Sunset Commission: Recognizing the importance of this tool, the Sunset Commission is requiring the following changes regarding Project Tracker:

- TxDOT will regularly evaluate and make improvements to the online Project Tracker system and adopt related rules.
- TxDOT will develop materials to increase awareness and use of the online Project Tracker tool for local elected officials. (Management action – non-statutory)

Effort to Improve Project Tracker and Increase Awareness Underway: In response to these requirements, TxDOT has and will continue to conduct an improvement effort, which is being informed by input from local elected officials, stakeholders and TxDOT employees. The graphic below highlights the outreach activities to gather input and raise awareness of the tool.



Input by the numbers:

- ▶ 2,000+ survey responses
- ▶ 185+ focus group participants
- ▶ 30+ raising awareness events/activities planned or completed.

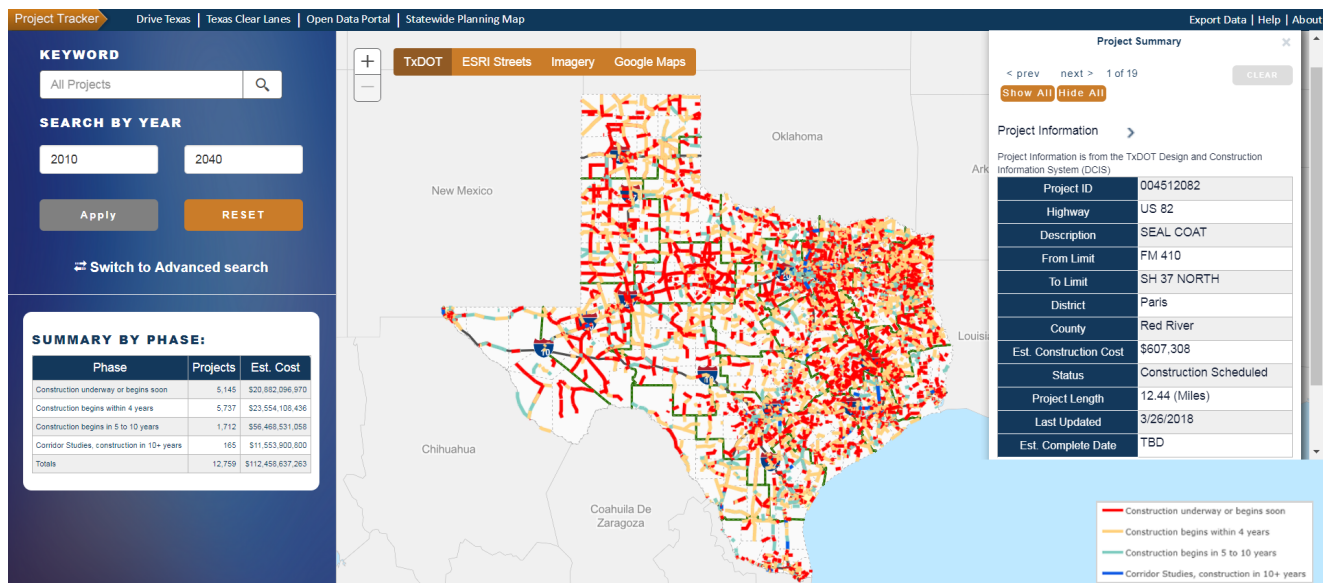
More details related to completed and planned outreach are provided in the attached progress report.

IMPROVEMENTS TO PROJECT TRACKER

Based on the feedback of approximately 2,000 Texans, the new version of Project Tracker will feature:

- Improved search function
- At-a-glance project summaries
- More intuitive web design

These improvements were based on recommendations from stakeholders, which were gathered through six focus group meetings held across Texas. More information about the input gathered through the focus groups can be found in the Project Tracker Phase 1 Outreach Report, which is posted on the Project Tracker homepage of www.txdot.gov (<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/project-tracker.html>).



Screenshot of the new version of Project Tracker, which will launch in spring 2018.

The new version of Project Tracker is more user-friendly and allows users to search for projects by a keyword, which is similar to a Google search and makes it easier to access information quickly. The improved tool also offers users the opportunity to view the project map and summary information all on one screen. Prior to the launch of the new version, an additional round of focus groups was conducted in which participants tested the improvements and offered minor refinements.

ONGOING PUBLIC INPUT

When the new version of Project Tracker launches, TxDOT's outreach effort will not end. The agency will continue to gather feedback from Project Tracker users through the following:

- **Pop-up Survey:** A pop-up survey will be embedded on the Project Tracker website to gather ongoing input from users.
- **Contact Information:** All Project Tracker promotional materials will include an email address (Project.Tracker@txdot.gov) and the TxDOT mainline phone number (512) 463-8588 so users can contact TxDOT easily with comments or questions.

RAISE AWARENESS & INCREASE USAGE AMONG LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

TxDOT has and will continue to raise awareness among local elected officials and stakeholders through targeted outreach efforts. Below are a few examples of the outreach efforts targeting local elected officials, which have been completed or scheduled for 2018.

TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE'S "TEXAS TOWN & CITY" MAGAZINE - 10,000+ LOCAL OFFICIALS

TxDOT submitted an article about Project Tracker in the issue focused on infrastructure. Texas Town & City Magazine is distributed to more than 10,000 local officials across the state.

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS (TEMPO) – 25 MPOS

TxDOT staff will present an overview of Project Tracker and highlight recent improvements at the TEMPO spring meeting on March 2. TEMPO has members from 25 metropolitan planning organizations across Texas.

TEXAS COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATIONS – 1,270 COMMISSIONERS AND JUDGES

TxDOT staff will host demonstration booths at the Texas County Judges and Commissioners regional conferences. Through these conferences, TxDOT will have the potential to reach the 1,270 commissioners and judges who belong to the Association.

- o **West Texas County Judges and Commissioners Association Conference – April 24-27.**
- o **North and East Texas County Judges and Commissioners Association Conference - May 14-17**
- o **South Texas County Judges and Commissioners Association Conference – June 11-14**

Training for local elected officials and their staff: TxDOT understands the key role local elected officials and their staffs will have in using the information provided through Project Tracker. TxDOT will continually seek opportunities to provide training for this important group.

ADOPT RELATED RULES

The Texas Transportation Commission is required to adopt rules before Sept. 1, 2018, to ensure the Sunset Commission requirements are met. TxDOT will be proposing rules that provide for continued improvements to Project Tracker.

Rule Proposals Related to Project Tracker Improvements:

- The agency will launch the new version of Project Tracker in spring 2018. This version will include improved search function, at-a-glance project summaries and more intuitive web design.
- **TxDOT will:**
 - Review and update the Project Tracker help document to make it compatible with the new version of the tool.
 - Create a set of “best practices” for TxDOT employees responsible for uploading information to Project Tracker. These best practices will establish deadlines for updating information based on project milestones to ensure that accurate project information is presented in a timely manner.
 - Develop a glossary of common work descriptions for projects. This glossary will ensure that projects are being communicated in terms that the public can easily understand, and that consistent work descriptions are used across all projects.

Rules Related to Regularly Evaluating Project Tracker:

- **TxDOT will:**
 - Establish a Working Group to review the ongoing user feedback and recommend additional improvements when warranted.
 - Conduct a comprehensive review of the reporting system to determine if improvements are necessary at least every four years.
- In conducting the review, TxDOT will incorporate feedback from internal and external users of the system and advice from its public involvement office.
- If improvements are necessary, TxDOT will further develop an implementation plan for such improvements.