



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Denton Enterprise Airport

ACM: Frank Dixon

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUBJECT

Consider approval of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign a letter of collaboration with the Texoma Innovation Engine project, an initiative to develop National Science Foundation Type-1 and Type-2 regional innovation engines focused on transforming the north central Texas and southern Oklahoma logistics industry; providing an effective date.

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND

To position the Texoma region as a global leader in logistics innovation, a collaborative effort is underway, spearheaded by a consortium of local universities and various organizations. Funded by a National Science Foundation (NSF) Type-1 innovation development grant, the initiative aims to establish a robust logistics innovation ecosystem that addresses future logistics requirements, fosters innovative solutions, and facilitates their commercialization on a global scale. The City of Denton, and Denton Enterprise Airport and the Economic Development Department, specifically, have been invited to be a collaboration partner in this initiative.

Background:

The project began when the NSF announced the inaugural Regional Innovation Engines awards in May 2023, selecting a proposal led by the University of North Texas (UNT) from a pool of over 700 submissions. With a grant of \$1 million spanning two years, the team began to lay the groundwork for a logistics innovation ecosystem in the Texoma region.

Currently, the university team is collaborating with a diverse array of stakeholders, including industry leaders, local governments, venture capital firms, entrepreneurs, and workforce development organizations. Their collective efforts are focused on crafting an ecosystem that not only propels the region to the forefront of logistics and supply chain innovation but also nurtures economic growth and job creation.

The envisioned innovation ecosystem is structured around the concept of an NSF Type-2 Engine, with the potential to secure up to \$160 million over a decade. This Engine comprises four core "cylinders," each dedicated to advancing specific aspects of logistics innovation:

1. Logistics and supply chain information technology
2. Autonomous systems (air, ground, and robotics)
3. Electrification (vehicles, grid, charging, batteries)
4. Logistics workforce development and job creation

Within each cylinder, multiple innovation hubs will be established, serving as focal points for research, development, and deployment of groundbreaking solutions. By tackling the most pressing challenges faced by logistics companies and local governments, these hubs aim to drive tangible economic impact and employment opportunities across the region.

Letter of Collaboration:

Collaboration lies at the heart of this initiative, with an extensive roster of organizations already on board, including the South Dallas County Inland Port Transportation Management Association, Baylor Scott & White Medical, Toyota Motors NA, and many others. The City of Denton Economic Development Department and Denton Enterprise Airport have been invited to participate as a collaborating stakeholder in this initiative. This partnership would not only serve the goal of regional logistics innovation, but illustrate Denton’s focus on leveraging innovation to drive business growth, economic vitality, and quality of life.

Stakeholders can contribute to the planning and development of the Texoma logistics innovation ecosystem by identifying logistical challenges and research opportunities. They can assist in shaping the structure of innovation hubs within the region, ensuring alignment with industry needs and regional priorities. They may also serve on advisory boards, offering valuable insights and connections to fellow industry collaborators. Furthermore, stakeholders can play a pivotal role in recruiting additional collaborators, ranging from companies and local governments to entrepreneurs and venture capitalists, thereby strengthening the foundation for a successful Type-2 proposal.

Approval of this item would authorize the City Manager to sign the **attached** letter of collaboration, signaling the City of Denton’s participation in this effort.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

n/a

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the Resolution

FISCAL INFORMATION

n/a

EXHIBITS

1. Agenda Information Sheet
2. Resolution
3. Letter of Collaboration

Respectfully submitted:
Ryan Adams
Director of Airport