III. BACKGROUND

MOBILITY PLAN EFFORTS

Mobility 2025 Update

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas/Fort Worth Metropolitan Area, is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the metropolitan transportation plan for the region. The Regional Rail Corridor Study (RRCS) corridors were all part of previous metropolitan transportation plans and selected for inclusion in the RRCS effort because of those plans.

At the outset of the RRCS work, Mobility 2025 Update: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas was the adopted plan. It contained recommendations for rail, freeway, HOV, and Managed Lane development for corridors throughout North Central Texas. The map in Exhibit III-1 shows the rail component of this plan.
EXHIBIT III-1
MOBILITY 2025 UPDATE
Rail System

Legend
- Commuter Rail
- Light Rail
- North Crosstown Corridor Study
- Possible Eastern Terminus
- Staged Rail *
- Special Events
- Intercity Rail Corridor
- Freeways/Parkways
- Existing Rail Corridors

All existing railroad rights-of-way should be monitored for potential future transportation corridors.

New facility locations indicate transportation needs and do not represent specific alignments.

* STAGED RAIL
(Must meet two of the following)
- Refined rail forecasts are necessary to determine technology and alignment
- Extension into Olympic Village Site (South Oak Cliff LRT)
- Institutional structure for implementation to be determined
- DART and FWTA expansion (preferred) or New transit authorities will be created
- Other sources of funding to be pursued

At a minimum, evaluate the engineering feasibility and environmental implications of:
- rail along the Santa Fe line and the Burlington Northern line, including the feasibility of an alternative connection along S.H. 190;
- rail along the full Cottonbelt Corridor, from Parker Road to DFW Airport; and
- rail along the Cottonbelt Corridor from DFW Airport with an eastern transition to light rail along LBJ Freeway at an Addison Intermodal Center.
This plan contains rail recommendations in varying stages for all of the corridors included in the RRCS effort. Commuter rail, staged rail, light rail, intercity rail and special event service were all used to describe possible levels of rail consideration in each corridor. The terminology reflected ridership levels, proximity to other rail technologies, proximity to special event locations, and current operational technologies for each corridor. All corridors noted were, at a minimum, to be preserved for possible future passenger rail service. The eight corridors studied surfaced during the development of the Mobility 2025 Update and were identified for further study as a result of this effort. Many of the corridors had been part of previous long range planning efforts by NCTCOG.

During the initial RRCS work, NCTCOG developed the next generation metropolitan transportation plan, Mobility 2025: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2004 Update. Exhibit III-2 shows the rail map from the 2004 Update.

Again, the RRCS corridors were defined as future rail opportunities, showing regional rail as the possible technology for the future. Clearly indicated was the need for further project definition, as conducted in the RRCS.

Historically, NCTCOG has generated long-range metropolitan transportation plans for three decades, going back to the 1990 Total Transportation Plan. Passenger rail has been part of the regional transportation solution since that first effort, with some of the RRCS corridors being present in every plan since the beginning. The RRCS effort represented an opportunity to take the long-range planning level recommendations to
the next step in the implementation process by evaluating the feasibility and overall priority for implementation of each corridor.

**Mobility 2025: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Amended April 2005**

The RRCS corridor recommendations were included in the Mobility 2025 plan as amended in April 2005. The recommended technology, station, and interlining assumptions from the final RRCS system became part of the operative long-range plan. Subsequent metropolitan transportation plans will continue to include these recommendations as placeholders until a corridor specific Alternatives Analysis has been conducted. At that stage, the sponsor of the rail service implementation will use such analysis to replace the feasibility analysis level recommendations from RRCS with corridor and station-specific recommendations commensurate with seeking funding and implementation.
EXHIBIT III-2

MOBILITY 2025 - 2004 UPDATE: RAIL PLAN

Source: Mobility 2025, Amended April 2005
AIR QUALITY CONCERNS

Current Status/Commitments

The North Central Texas region is a non-attainment area for ozone. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, NCTCOG serves the interests of member governments by implementing transportation plans, programs, projects, and policies as part of the air quality plan to reduce ozone. The projects shown in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are evaluated through a process called air quality conformity to determine the ability to improve emission levels and reduce ozone. The most recent conformity analysis conducted by NCTCOG was for the years 2007, 2010, 2015 and 2025. Various levels of passenger rail system development were committed to be in place for each of the conformity years. The 2007 rail assumptions are shown in
Exhibit III-3, 2010 rail assumptions are shown in Exhibit III-4, and the 2015 assumptions in Exhibit III-5. The full rail system shown in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan as amended in April 2005, which included the final recommendations of the Regional Rail Corridor Study, was part of the 2025 conformity analysis. By including the rail improvements in the various conformity scenarios, the commitment to have the service in place is evident.

**Rail Benefit, Emissions and Lanes Saved**

The rail system commitments shown in this reports’ exhibits are an important part of the air quality State Implementation Plan (SIP) for North Central Texas. There are many ways of measuring this benefit. To communicate this benefit in a way the public could easily understand, the ridership estimated for each corridor in the Regional Rail Corridor Study was compared to the equivalent person-carrying capacity of a freeway during the peak period. The underlying assumption relates to removing vehicles from the roadway by converting vehicular travelers to public transit in general and passenger rail in particular. In every corridor, the ridership estimated was equivalent to at least one lane of freeway traffic in each direction during the peak period, (the ridership in the W-1 UP Fort Worth – Dallas Corridor was great enough to be equivalent to two lanes of freeway capacity in each direction). This freeway equivalent estimate was based on basic freeway carrying capacity (2,300 vehicles/lane/hour), average peak hour auto occupancy (1.14 persons/vehicle), and peak hour transit shares (19.6 percent from recent NCTCOG observed data). For example, the calculation for the 6,200 daily riders in the E-2 corridor would be as follows:

\[
\left( \frac{6,200 \times 0.196}{1.14} \right) \div 2,300 \cong 1 \text{ Freeway Lane}
\]
This demonstrates the impact these rail corridor improvements could have on parallel roadways and the potential reduction in emissions resulting from the provision of rail service in these areas.
EXHIBIT III-3

2005 AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY – 2007 RAIL SYSTEM COMMITMENTS

Legend

Rail Lines
- DART Blue Line 10/20
- DART Red Line (Parke to Westmoreland) 10/20
- DART 2nd Red Line (Parker to Cedars) 10
- Las Colinas APM 5/15
- TRE 20/60
- 2007 Roadways

Source: Mobility 2025, Amended April 2005

Date Created: January 27, 2005
EXHIBIT III-4

2005 AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY – 2010 RAIL SYSTEM COMMITMENTS

Legend

Source: Mobility 2025, Amended April 2005
EXHIBIT III-5

2005 AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY – 2015 RAIL SYSTEM COMMITMENTS

Roadway Network

- Cotton Belt West (SW Fort Worth to DFWIA) 20/60
- Denton (Denton to Carrollton) 20/60
- Trinity Railway Express 20/60
- DART Northwest/Southeast (Carrollton to Buckner) 10/20
- DART NW Irving (Parker to DFWIA) 10/20
- DART Red Line (Parker to Westmoreland) 10/20
- DART Blue Line 10/20
- Las Colinas APM 5/15
- DFW APM 2/2

Legend

Dallas CBD Second Alignment
NW Irving to follow current CBD LRT Alignment
NW/SE to follow new 2nd CBD LRT Alignment

Source: Mobility 2025, Amended April 2005
REGIONAL TRANSIT INITIATIVES

Coordinated Regional Activities

While the work directed by the RTC emphasizes the coordinated comprehensive transportation plan for the region, ancillary efforts were undertaken to promote the ability of the region to implement planned services. To achieve the implementation of regional public transit service, in particular regional rail passenger service, expansion of existing transit authority boundaries and an additional institutional structure and funding capacity are required. Permissive state legislation any new institution or additional funding must be achieved before local citizens may consider implementing these new or amended structures or providing the necessary funding.

The Regional Transit Initiative, as described in more detail in Chapters V and VII, undertook the mission of studying a variety of institutional and financial mechanisms and the needed legislative efforts that would allow their possible implementation. The resulting agreement from this coordinated regional effort calls for consideration of an additional institution – a regional passenger rail district. It also places a value and priority on the expansion of the services of the existing three regional transit agencies – DART, FWTA, and DCTA.

The preferred funding mechanism is a sales and use tax of one-half percent in the new regional passenger rail district area and in the FWTA service area. Maintenance of the one percent sales and use tax in the DART service area is supported, as well as the option for cities in the DART service area to have an additional one-half percent sales and use tax available for non-public transit purposes (such as economic development, crime fighting, etc.)
Goals for Future Framework

The RTI Legislative Committee took the message of the guiding principles to the North Central Texas legislative delegation and all area mayors and county judges in the region prior to the initiation of the 2005 Texas Legislative Session. Briefings for local and state elected officials were hosted September 20, September 29, and November 22, 2004.

While no legislation was filed that would fulfill all of the desires for an implementation framework as outlined in the guiding principles, a bill was introduced by State Representative Fred Hill that would call for establishment of a regional passenger rail district through local actions. HB 3228, Representative Hill’s bill, would have provided permission for local governments to call for elections that would consider establishment of a district, without any funding authority. It was not approved in the session. However, a provision in an omnibus transportation bill that did become law, calls for a joint committee of local elected officials and state representatives and senators to further discuss the issue and arrive at agreed upon proposals to be made in the 2007 Texas Legislative session.