

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 5, 2024

Honorable Members of the City Council Economic Development Committee: Tennell
TO Atkins (Chair), Omar Narvaez (Vice Chair), Carolyn King Arnold, Adam Bazaldua, Paul
Ridley, Chad West, Kathy Stewart

SUBJECT **High-Speed Rail Economic Impact Study Update**

Background

During the City Council briefing on Major Downtown Transportation Initiatives on March 6, 2024, the City Council directed staff to engage a consultant to conduct a study of the economic impacts of a Dallas to Fort Worth high-speed rail alignment.

Following that meeting, staff developed a scope and discussed study deliverables with two vendors who were already under contract with the City for related work. After further consideration, staff recommended a full procurement to ensure the selection of a highly qualified firm comprised of a team with extensive worldwide experience and knowledge in this discipline.

This coordination was briefed to the Economic Development Committee by memorandum on June 3, 2024.

Alignment Concerns & Council Resolution

On June 12, 2024, in response to concerns raised about the Dallas to Fort Worth alignment presented at the March 6, 2024, City Council briefing, the Council adopted a resolution stating:

- 1) *"That, at this time, except for streetcar expansion projects currently under consideration, City Council does not support construction of new aboveground passenger rail lines through the Central Business District, Uptown, and Victory Park Areas.*
- 2) *That many large projects are underway in the city and, except for streetcar expansion projects currently under consideration, City Council is prioritizing redevelopment of the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center and the needs of Rail Park and other historically significant parks and residential neighborhoods ahead of construction of new aboveground passenger rail lines through the Central Business District, Uptown, and Victory Park areas.*
- 3) *The City Council commits to revisit the proposed Dallas to Fort Worth high speed rail alignment discussion after it receives and considers the economic impact study requested by the City Council at the March 6, 2024, City Council briefing."*

Revised Alignment Advanced by NCTCOG Staff

At the July 11, 2024, Regional Transportation Council (RTC) workshop on high-speed rail, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff presented an alternative family of alignments that would move the Dallas to Fort Worth high-speed rail alignment west of downtown Dallas. This revised alignment option was advanced in response to the June 12, 2024, City Council resolution referenced above, and the revised alignment may be considered for action by RTC at their August 8, 2024 meeting.

Request for Connectivity to the Convention Center

At the same RTC workshop on high-speed rail, there was a request that the City of Dallas formally ask the NCTCOG to include the provision of direct connection from the high-speed rail station to the City's Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center as part of the RTC's Dallas to Fort Worth high-speed rail alignment work.

Pursuant to that request, Interim City Manager Kimberly Bizer Tolbert will send communication to Mr. Michael Morris, Director of Transportation for the NCTCOG, requesting this important connectivity be included as part of the RTC's high-speed rail study.

Economic Impact Study – Procurement Open

A Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals (RFCSP) to study the economic impact of high-speed rail on the City of Dallas was issued on July 25, 2024. The scope of the study includes assessing the impact of the various presented alignments. Optional scope was included to study the economic impact to the region and to the cities of Arlington and Fort Worth, should those cities decide they would like to be included in the study. If these cities decide to participate in the study, they will engage through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and reimburse their pro-rata share of the cost.

Staff anticipates bringing an agenda item forward in October 2024 for contract award with the selected vendor, with work starting quickly thereafter.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ghassan "Gus" Khankarli, Ph.D. P.E., PMP, CLTD, Director of the Department of Transportation, Kevin Spath, Director (I) of Economic Development or me.

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Assistant City Manager

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