

# INTERAGENCY TRANSPORTATION REPORT - MARCH 2020

RTC / TxDOT / NTTA / DART / DRMC / DFW Airport / HSR



## **RESOLUTION ON THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION'S PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE 2020 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

At the March 12, 2020 meeting, the **Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approved a resolution requesting that the Texas Transportation Commission consider an alternative strategy to fund the I-35 Capital Express Central Project in Austin.**

Each year the Texas Transportation Commission approves the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP). The UTP is used by the Texas Transportation Commission and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as TxDOT's 10-year plan to guide transportation project development. The 2020 UTP was approved on September 1, 2019.

In February 2020, the Texas Transportation Commission was briefed on **proposed updates to the 2020 UTP to address a \$4.3 billion funding gap** for the I-35 Capital Express Central Project in Austin.

The RTC's resolution affirms support for the I-35 project and offers for consideration an alternative strategy to fund the project via use of tolled-managed lanes.

For more information, please see this video by the North Central Texas Council of Governments [www.youtube.com/nctcogtrans](http://www.youtube.com/nctcogtrans).

### **Public Comments**

The public comment period for the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP will be open from March 13 – April 13.

- Public comments on the proposed changes to the UTP can be submitted online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/utp2020update>

### **Public hearing**

A public hearing is currently scheduled on April 7, 2020 at TxDOT's Austin District Office (Building 7 Hearing Room); 7901 N. I-35; Austin, Texas.

### **Commission Action**

The Texas Transportation Commission is scheduled to take action on the proposed changes to the 2020 UTP at their regular meeting on April 30, 2020.

## **MCKINNEY AVENUE TROLLEY FUNDING**

At their February meeting, **the RTC approved \$650,000 to support the McKinney Avenue Trolley.**

The McKinney Avenue Trolley Authority (MATA) requested support from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to implement an improved Service Frequency Plan, including funding to increase the number of railcars during weekdays to enhance connectivity between Uptown and Downtown Dallas. The funding will support operational functions for the first two years of increased service while MATA secures additional long-term funding.

## **HYPERLOOP CERTIFICATION FACILITY – PROPOSAL APPROVED**

At their February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, **the RTC approved a proposal for Virgin Hyperloop (VHL). The proposal includes an alignment along SH 360 from Arlington to DFW Airport. There is also a contingent corridor along 635 from roughly 121 to Luna Road included in the proposal for consideration.**

The NCTCOG is leading the region's response to VHL RFP seeking sites for the development and operations certification track, a welcome center, a pod final assembly center, operations and safety training center, and production development test center.

NCTCOG submitted a preliminary, Phase I proposal on behalf of the region in November 2020. The region was short-listed and invited to submit a Phase II detailed proposal to VHL.

While the City of Dallas offered two alignments for the certification track, neither were selected for inclusion in the proposal to VHL.

## **2020 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES CALL FOR PROJECTS**

**NCTCOG staff briefed RTC members on the 2020 Transportation Alternatives call for projects.** This program funds: shared-use bike paths, on-street bikeways, bicycle/pedestrian signalization, protected intersections, sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, traffic controls and calming measures, signage, road diets, and bicycle/pedestrian counters.

The funding allocation for the "eastern subregion", of which Dallas is a part, is \$11.7 million. **Proposals are due by May 15, 2020 and projects will be approved by the RTC in September 2020.**

The City applies for the grant annually, and city staff is aware of the deadlines for submittal and is having on-going meetings to discuss the City's application.

## UPCOMING RTC MEETINGS

Date	Time	Location
April 9, 2020	1:00 PM	North Central Texas Council of Governments
May 14, 2020	1:00 PM	North Central Texas Council of Governments



### EXIT FROM SOUTHBOUND I-45 TO EASTBOUND 175 NOW OPEN

In late February, TxDOT opened the exit to eastbound 175 from southbound I-45. The new Exit 282 is about 1.5 miles south of the historic "deadman's curve" exit.

The exit from westbound 175 to northbound I-45 is scheduled to open in April.

Exit to 175 (eastbound) from I-45 (southbound) now open.

Exit to I-45 (northbound) from 175 (westbound) to open in April.

## **LBJ EAST GROUNDBREAKING ON APRIL 14TH**

The LBJ East project will officially break ground on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

- PROJECT INFORMATION

Project will increase capacity by:

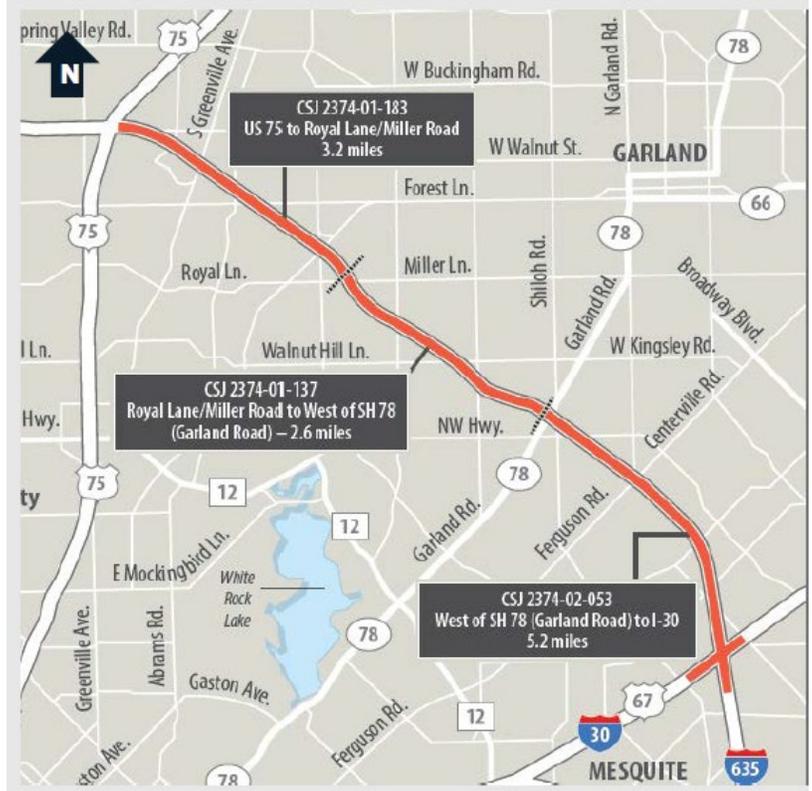
- Adding one general purpose lane in each direction
- Constructing two new continuous frontage roads in each direction
- Reconstructing existing “grandfathered” toll managed lanes, (one in each direction)
- Improving I-635/I-30 interchange

Project limit

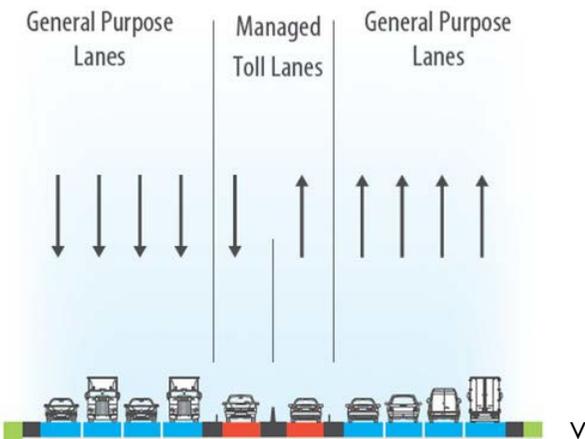
- US 75 to I-30 including the I-30 interchange

Project length

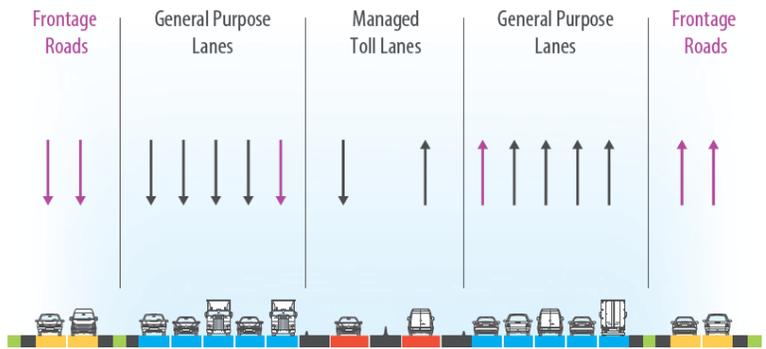
- 11 miles



### EXISTING Typical Section



### PROPOSED Typical Section





## **DART MAINTAINING OPERATIONS IN MIDST OF CORONAVIRUS, ENHANCING CLEANING PROCEDURES**

**There are no changes or impact to routes or rail line operations, but additional cleaning of trains and buses are part of the COVID-19 action plan.** DART reports that "high touch areas" like rails, handles and entry buttons are getting daily attention.

## **INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF DALLAS FOR RIDER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

At the March 10, 2020 meeting, the **DART Board approved a resolution for DART to expand its Rider Assistance Program (RAP) to include selected seniors and disabled persons in the City of Dallas service area.**

Currently, the City operates the Senior Medical Transportation Program (SMTP) which offers free transportation provided by a contractor for medical appointments within the City of Dallas, with "door to door" service. To qualify for the SMTP, clients must not be registered for DART Paratransit and/or Medicaid's LogistiCare Program. Participants are low to moderate income persons 60 and older who reside within the City of Dallas and do not qualify for other transportation programs.

In 2019, City of Dallas staff sought DART's assistance in evaluating the SMTP program to determine if there were more cost-effective methods of providing this service. DART recommended that Dallas replace SMTP with a program like DART's less costly but high-quality RAP program. Furthermore, DART recommended that Dallas require participants to share in the cost of the transportation service.

Under the agreement, the City and DART will determine eligible participants. The City will fund 100% of the cost for the first six months. After that, participants will contribute \$25 a month and the City will contribute \$75 a month. DART will administer the program. The agreement ends April 30, 2022.

City funding totals \$674,457 through the term of the agreement; 50% of the funding is from the City of Dallas general fund, and 50% is from a federal grant.



**The next NTTA Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 10:00 AM at the North Texas Tollway Authority headquarters at 5900 West Plano Parkway, Plano, Texas 75093.**



## **DRMC MEETING**

The March 13<sup>th</sup> DRMC meeting was canceled due to Covid-19 concerns.

**The April 3<sup>rd</sup> DRMC meeting has been rescheduled to April 14<sup>th</sup>. Networking will begin at noon and the meeting will start at 12:30.**

The April meeting is a joint meeting with the Tarrant Regional Transportation Committee (TRTC). **It will be held at La Cima Club, 5215 N. O'Connor Road, Suite 2600, Irving, Texas.** Texas Transportation Commission Chair, Bruce Bugg, will be the speaker at this joint meeting.

2019 Airport of the Year



## **COVID-19 UPDATE**

**Dallas Fort Worth International (DFW) Airport has been designated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as one of 11 airports to screen passengers for the coronavirus, also known as COVID-19.**

Steps have been taken to ensure the Airport successfully meets this vital obligation. Currently, all direct DFW flights to and from China and South Korea have been suspended and flights to other regions have been impacted as well. Customs and Border Protection, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Centers for Disease Control remain on site screening passengers who have traveled to specific regions and countries.

DFW has implemented enhanced sanitation efforts in all terminals and airport buildings. DFW continues to work closely with federal, state and local public health partners to support efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus. The safety of customers, employees and partners is the top priority. This is an ever-evolving situation. To get the latest information, please visit [www.dfwairport.com/covid19](http://www.dfwairport.com/covid19).

## **DFW ENHANCES EFFORTS TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**DFW joined more than 250 transportation leaders in signing the Transportation Leaders Against Human Trafficking** pledge on Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at an event in Washington, D.C. The pledge was among the "100 Pledges in 100 Days" announced by U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao which focused on efforts to combat human trafficking in the transportation sector.

DFW Airport is also continuing a partnership that began in 2018 with A21, a global anti-trafficking nonprofit organization, to promote awareness in all terminals. The campaign titled “Can you see me?” has an average potential reach of almost 6.5 million people each month. It aims to bring awareness to the issue, educates passengers on the signs of trafficking and provides numbers to call for help.

**At the March 5, 2020 Board meeting, the DFW Airport Board approved of a new agreement with the Department of Homeland Security’s Blue Lightning Initiative.** This initiative provides airports with awareness and best practice materials to assist in the training of employees to identify the signs of human trafficking and report suspected cases. Additionally, this will allow DFW Airport to utilize the Department of Homeland Security’s visual graphics and subject matter experts.

### **DELTA ADDS 3X DAILY SERVICE TO SEATTLE**

Delta will be adding three daily nonstop flights to Seattle, Washington beginning June 8. The flights will operate on the new and fuel-efficient Airbus A220. The A220 provides free Wi-Fi and more comfortable seats for customers.



**TEXAS  
CENTRAL**

### **NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING PUBLISHED**

**On March 10, 2020, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in the Federal Register for safety standards for the Texas Central Railroad high-speed system.**

The FRA is proposing a rule of particular applicability (RPA) to establish safety standards for the Texas Central Railroad (TCRR) high-speed rail system. The proposed standards are not intended for general application in the railroad industry but would apply only to the TCRR systems planned for development in Texas.

Written comments to the RPA must be submitted to the FRA within 60 days of the publication in the Federal Register (approximately May 10, 2020). The FRA anticipates holding three public hearings to receive oral comments on the NPRM. The date, time and location of these meetings has not yet been established.