

Appendix A
Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Program
Scoping Report

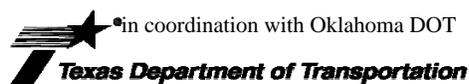


Scoping Report

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Program

November 20, 2013

Prepared by CH2M HILL



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DFW	Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport
EIS	environmental impact statement
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FRA Environmental Procedures	<i>Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts</i>
IH	Interstate Highway
mph	miles per hour
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MSA	metropolitan statistical area
MSDC	Minority Supplier Development Council
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
ODOT	Oklahoma Department of Transportation
OK	Oklahoma
Program	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Program
ROD	Record of Decision
Study	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study
TOPRS	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
TRE	Trinity Railway Express
TSA	Transportation Security Administration
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service

Summary

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are preparing a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate intercity passenger rail service alternatives for the Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail program (Program). The Program would provide new and/or higher speed intercity passenger rail service along an 850-mile corridor extending from Oklahoma City, Okla., to south Texas (including the cities of Corpus Christi and Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley). The Rio Grande Valley includes the cities of McAllen, Harlingen, and Brownsville and surrounding communities along the river. While all of these south Texas cities are within the alternative corridors and are being evaluated, it is possible that not all of them will ultimately be served by passenger rail. Preparation of this service-level EIS is one of two primary objectives of the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS or Study). In addition to the service-level EIS, the Study also includes preparation of a service development plan for the corridor to guide further development and capital investment in passenger rail improvements identified in the EIS Record of Decision (ROD). The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is a partnering state agency in the development of the Study and the EIS. The service-level EIS will evaluate a reasonable range of corridor alternatives and passenger rail service options and will make decisions regarding the preferred corridor, location of train service termini, location of intermediate stops, level of service, and future planning for projects to implement the Program. Alternatives considered will include a No Action (No Build) alternative, as well as multiple build alternatives. The build alternatives may include infrastructure improvements in existing or prior rail corridors, the development of one or more new rail corridors, or a combination of both, as well as varying levels of service.

Previous studies have identified three geographic passenger rail market areas that comprise the program corridor. Each of these market areas has a distinct level of existing passenger rail demand and service, and opportunity for development, while remaining connected to and interdependent with the passenger rail network across the overall program corridor. In addition to the overall Program corridor, the EIS will evaluate each of the three geographic sections:

- Northern Section: Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth
- Central Section: Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio
- Southern Section: San Antonio to south Texas (Laredo, Corpus Christi, and the Rio Grande Valley)

The purpose of this report is to summarize the public scoping process and comments received during the public scoping period for the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Program service-level EIS. The report provides a brief background of the study, a description of the public scoping process and meetings, a list of other outreach activities, and a summary of the public and agency comments received during scoping.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a service-level EIS for the Program was issued on March 7, 2013, and published in the Federal Register on March 13, 2013. In the NOI, public agencies with legal jurisdiction were requested to advise TxDOT and the FRA of (1) the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency and (2) the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed study. Public scoping meetings were announced and held as an important component of the public scoping process for the environmental review.

During the public scoping period, 12 public scoping meetings were held between March 25 and April 4, 2013, with a total of approximately 340 people attending. In addition, there were three agency meetings during the scoping period, three stakeholder meetings held in February 2013, and one environmental interest group meeting held on April 18, 2013. FRA also initiated government-to-government contact with federally recognized tribes. TxDOT and FRA received approximately 1,200 comments from agencies, organizations, and individuals regarding the Program. General issue areas frequently identified as a result of public scoping are listed below:

- Agriculture – impacts on farmland and productivity/viability of agricultural activities
- Benefits of passenger rail service, including but not limited to air quality, congestion relief, and economic development
- Connections to local transit and the promotion of mass transit
- Employment opportunities
- Energy consumption and technology used for the trains
- Freight and passenger rail compatibility
- General support for the study
- Health
- Impacts on plant and animal species, including associated habitats
- Impacts on wildlife corridor movement
- Integration of the system with existing and planned regional and local transportation/transit efforts
- Location of rail corridor
- Location of stations
- Noise impacts
- Open space

- Parks and recreation
- Potential devaluation of property
- Questions about cost and financing of the system
- Regional and local economic growth
- Ridership
- Right-of-way
- Safety/hazards
- Water quality and runoff

Following the public scoping process, information based on the comments received during public scoping will be considered during the selection and evaluation of alternatives in the service-level EIS process.

The analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of program alternatives will then be documented to the draft EIS, which FRA and TxDOT will make available for public comment. Publication of the draft EIS is anticipated in 2014. A 45-day comment period will begin following publication of the Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in the Federal Register. TxDOT will distribute notices of availability to recipients on the study mailing list and to potentially affected property owners. In addition, the EIS will be posted on TxDOT's website (<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/statewide/texas-oklahoma-rail.html>) and on the TOPRS website (www.txokrail.org). Public hearings will be held in the study area to provide the public the opportunity to review a summary of the contents of the draft EIS and to provide comments.

After the public comment period and the review of agency and public comments on the draft EIS, TxDOT, in conjunction with FRA, will identify preferred routes, potential station locations, and service-level alternatives, as well as the frequency of passenger rail service for the corridor route alignment within each of the three corridor sections. The final service-level EIS is expected to be completed in 2014 with issuance of a ROD in late 2014. Following completion of the service-level EIS, project-level assessment(s) will address component projects to be implemented within the selected alternative and, where appropriate, will incorporate by reference, the data and evaluations included in the service-level EIS. Subsequent evaluations will concentrate on the issues specific to the component of the alternative selected in the service-level EIS and analyze the specific environmental consequences and measures, if necessary, to mitigate environmental impacts at a site-specific level of detail.

1.0 Introduction

The 850-mile Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Program (Program) corridor extends from Oklahoma City in the north through Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio to destinations in south Texas, which is the region south of San Antonio, including the cities of Corpus Christi and Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley. The Rio Grande Valley includes the cities of McAllen, Harlingen, and Brownsville and surrounding communities along the river. Existing passenger rail service includes intercity service on the Heartland Flyer (Oklahoma City to Fort Worth), Texas Eagle (Chicago to San Antonio via Dallas and Fort Worth), and Sunset Limited (Los Angeles to New Orleans via San Antonio) operated by Amtrak, and regional/commuter rail service on the Trinity Railway Express (Dallas to Fort Worth) and Capital MetroRail (Austin) operated by Texas operators. Intercity passenger rail between Oklahoma City and San Antonio provides service to cities and communities generally along the Interstate 35 (IH-35) corridor.

This scoping report summarizes the public scoping process for the Program. This report includes a description of the Study; explains the purpose of public scoping; describes the public scoping notification process; summarizes the 12 public scoping meetings, the 3 agency meetings, the 3 stakeholder meetings, and the environmental interest group meeting; summarizes the comments received from the public and agencies; and describes the next steps for the Study.

1.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Program is to evaluate options to enhance intercity mobility by providing passenger rail service as a competitive transportation alternative in a manner that would accomplish the following:

- Provide the infrastructure for a high-quality intercity rail service that will reduce travel times, increase reliability, and increase traveler comfort.
- Encourage more efficient and environmentally sensitive modes of intercity travel.
- Provide an equitable and affordable intercity travel alternative to automobile, bus, and air service.
- Provide enhanced interconnectivity between intercity rail services, regional transit services, and major regional airports.
- Enhance environmental sustainability by facilitating regional land use and transit-oriented development plans within the Program corridor.
- Enhance interregional access to employment, entertainment, recreation, health, and shopping opportunities for existing and future residents in the Program corridor.
- Coordinate with and not negatively affect freight rail operations or facilities.

- Be a cost-efficient investment where the projected train service revenue would be expected to exceed its operations and maintenance costs.

These potential improvements are needed because population and business growth in the study area have resulted in growing congestion along the IH-35 corridor and intercity passenger rail service is an alternative to meet future demand for travel.

Texas is the second most populous state in the United States and its population is expected to grow by 39 percent from 2010 to 2035, with 92 percent of the population growth between 2010 and 2030 to occur in metropolitan counties. Oklahoma City is expected to experience a population increase of 25 percent from 2000 to 2035, with intensified population densities in the metropolitan area. In addition, population forecasts anticipate that the percentage of people who are 65 years old or older will grow from about 13 percent to nearly 20 percent by 2030 in Oklahoma and from 10 percent to more than 17 percent in Texas. This aging population will rely more heavily on public transportation such as intercity rail. Long-range transportation plans in Texas and Oklahoma have identified the need to improve passenger rail services to meet the future demand brought on by these changes in population. Forecasts predict that economic growth in Texas will more than double from 2010 to 2035, with the manufacturing and information sectors expected to have the highest rates of growth. The Oklahoma economy is expected to grow in manufacturing and services as well as agriculture and will continue to diversify. Long-range transportation plans in Texas and Oklahoma have identified the need to improve passenger rail services to meet the future demand brought on by these changes in population.

With existing congestion along major freeways, passenger rail service will reduce overall fuel consumption and create a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions can be expected. There is a need to enhance rail as a modal choice to move passengers from air travel and private vehicle travel modes, which would improve the efficiency of passenger rail by increasing the number of passengers per train. There is also a need to improve air quality in the Program study area. There is a need for faster, more reliable passenger rail service to enhance its attractiveness as an intercity modal alternative.

1.2 Background

The IH-35 corridor, running from Duluth, Minn., to Laredo, Texas, is one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S., extending through 6 of the largest urban areas and 9 of the 50 largest cities in the U.S. The population in the area spanning Dallas and Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio has been growing rapidly over the past several decades, with growth rates in some areas as high as 27 percent. Texas has grown in population to become the second most populous state in the U.S., with most of the state's population centered in the eastern half of the state along and east of the IH-35 corridor, the most important travel corridor in Texas.

IH-35 is also one of the most strategic trade routes in the U.S., with Oklahoma and Texas at the crossroads with links north to south and east to west for shipping goods into and across the U.S.

This means that international truck traffic demand, intercity truck traffic demand, and passenger travel demand compete for highway capacity, creating massive congestion inside the urban areas through which the highway runs. Projections for the Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio portion of the corridor show that average speeds along IH-35 would drop from 55 to 15 miles per hour (mph) by 2035 if improvements are not made to the highway system, according to TxDOT Research Project 0-5930 *Potential for Development of an Intercity Passenger Transit System in Texas*.

The purpose of TOPRS is to evaluate alternatives to provide higher speed passenger rail service to meet future intercity travel demand and to improve rail facilities, reduce journey times, and improve connections with regional public transit services. This Study will evaluate alternatives for passenger rail service development to meet intercity travel demand, which includes improved passenger rail service on existing rail routes and new passenger rail service. Passenger rail service can operate at different speeds and frequencies. Conventional rail primarily uses existing tracks, with an average speed of 45 to 60 mph and maximum speeds of 70 to 90 mph. Conventional rail typically operates three to six trains per day in each direction, with stops 15 to 60 miles apart. Higher speed rail uses some dedicated tracks, with an average speed of 70 to 85 mph and maximum speeds of 110 to 125 mph. Higher speed rail typically operates four to eight trains per day in each direction, with stops 30 to 90 miles apart. High-speed rail uses fully dedicated tracks, with an average speed of 100 to 140 mph and maximum speeds of 165 to 220 mph. High-speed rail typically operates 12 to 24 trains per day in each direction, with stops 50 to 100+ miles apart.

TxDOT has received a grant from FRA to prepare a service-level EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). ODOT is a partnering state agency in the development of the EIS. The EIS will comply with FRA's *Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts* (64 Federal Register 28545 [May 26, 1999]) (FRA Environmental Procedures) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQs) NEPA implementing regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] §§ 1500-08). A service development plan will then be prepared to guide further development of the preferred alternative selected through the EIS process.

An NOI to prepare a service-level EIS for the Program was issued on March 7, 2013, and published in the *Federal Register* on March 13, 2013. In the NOI, public agencies with legal jurisdiction were requested to advise TxDOT and the FRA of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency, as well as the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Public scoping meetings were announced and held as an important component of the public scoping process for both the state and federal environmental review, as well as the general public. After the public scoping process, the analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of project alternatives will then be documented into the draft service-level EIS. A service-level EIS evaluates and compares alternatives at a high level, described in terms of corridors, general routes, potential station cities, and overall levels of service, in order to make

decisions about which route and/or service should be carried forward for further development and subsequent project-level environmental review. Publication of the draft service-level EIS is anticipated in 2014 with a 45-day comment period to provide the public the opportunity to review the EIS and to provide comments. After the public comment period and the review of agency and public comments on the draft EIS, TxDOT, in conjunction with FRA, will identify preferred route and service alternatives. The final service-level EIS is expected to be completed in 2014 with issuance of a ROD by late 2014. The ROD will determine that the EIS process is complete and allow TxDOT and FRA to move forward with the selected Program alternative for subsequent further development and project-level environmental review. Figure 1-1 summarizes the TOPRS schedule, including the service-level EIS.

1.3 Description of Program

The Program service-level EIS will consider a No Action Alternative and a range of alternatives that will be determined during the alternatives analysis process. The No Project Alternative (no-project or no-build) represents the conditions in the Program corridor as it existed in 2013 and as it would exist based on programmed and funded improvements to the intercity transportation system and other reasonably foreseeable projects. The service-level EIS will evaluate a reasonable range of corridor alternatives and make decisions regarding the preferred corridor, location of train service termini, location of intermediate stops, level of service, and future planning for projects to implement the service. During public scoping, input was provided on preferred routes, potential station locations, and service-level alternatives, as well as the frequency of passenger rail service, for further consideration by TxDOT and FRA.

The Program corridor is an approximately 850-mile north/south corridor roughly paralleling IH-35, originating in the north at Oklahoma City and terminating in south Texas, including the cities of Laredo, Corpus Christi, and the Rio Grande Valley region (Figure 1-2). To ensure that planning considers the unique character and interrelationships among the key regional rail market areas in the Program corridor, the analysis will consider the overall corridor as well as each of the three city pair sections:

- Northern Section: Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth
- Central Section: Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio
- Southern Section: San Antonio to south Texas

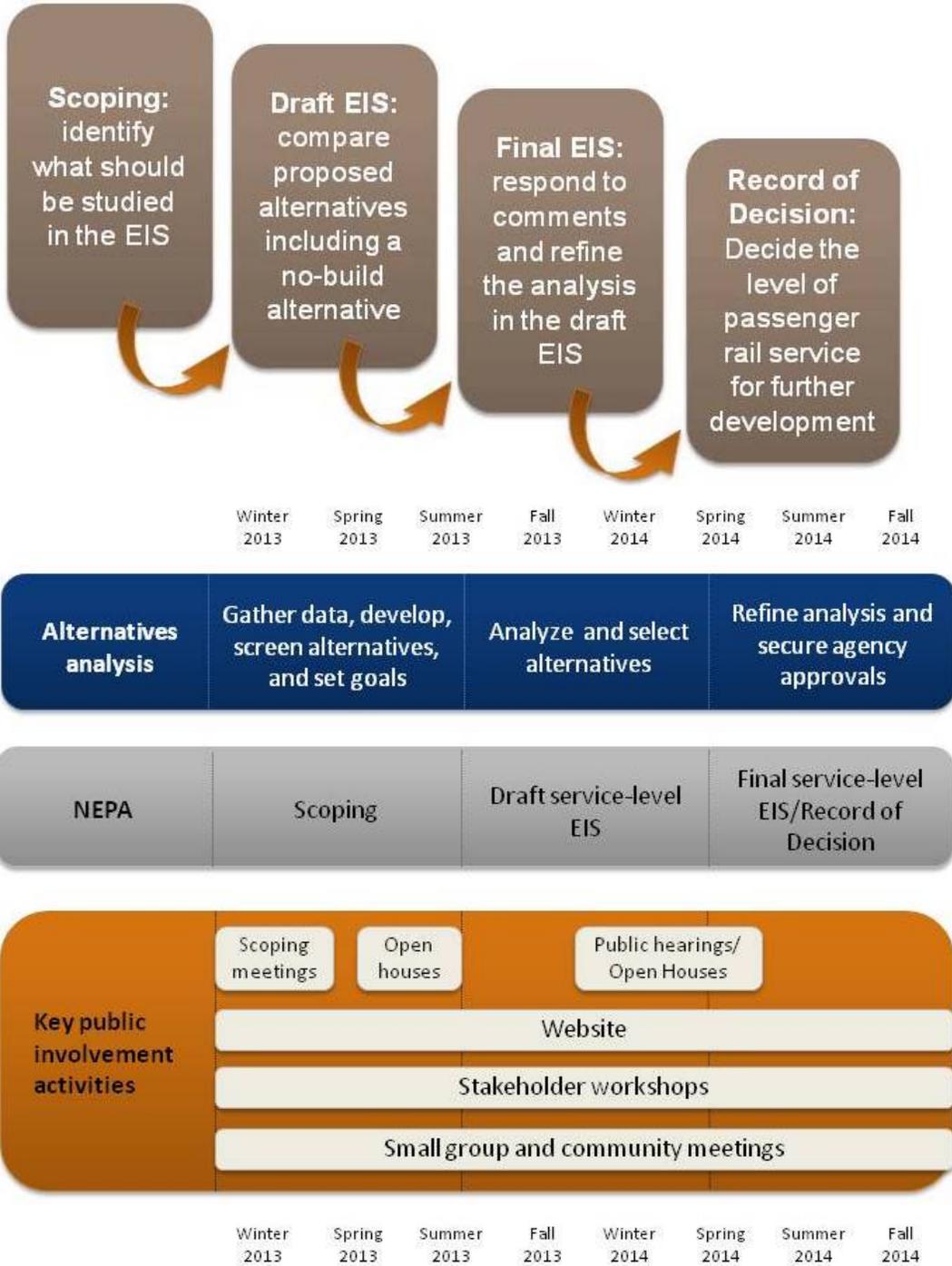


Figure 1-1: Program Steps and Schedule



Figure 1-2: Proposed Program System

These three sections represent existing and anticipated future intercity passenger rail markets with differentiated passenger rail service needs. Regional networks beyond the Program corridor will be considered to the degree necessary to fully inform service development planning and service environmental work for the Program corridor.

1.4 Purpose of Public Scoping

Scoping is an important element in the process of determining the focus and content of an EIS. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth and helps eliminate from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the proposed study. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of affected agencies, any affected Tribe, and other interested parties, including the public. Significant issues may be identified through public and agency comments. The CEQ Regulations Section 1501.7 describes scoping as a required early and open process to be used in preparing an EIS under NEPA.

Scoping is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of a project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on a proposal. Rather, scoping helps ensure that a comprehensive EIS will be prepared that informs the decision-making process. As part of the Program, a public scoping process was implemented that included notifications, meetings, online tools, and other opportunities for interested parties to become aware of the Program and to provide scoping comments.

The intent of the Program public scoping process is to:

- Inform public agencies and interested members of the public about the proposed Study, including compliance with NEPA requirements, and the FRA's and TxDOT's actions in relation to the Study.
- Assist with identifying a range of alignments and potential station locations along the Program corridor that may be considered in the EIS.
- Assist with identifying the range of concerns and study-related issues to be considered in the EIS.
- Assist with identifying mitigation measures, strategies, and approaches to mitigation that may be useful and explored further in the EIS.
- Develop an expanded mailing list of agencies and individuals interested in the future actions relative to the EIS.

The public scoping process and the input gathered during the scoping period are documented herein for the Program service-level EIS.

1.5 Notification of EIS Scoping

Public scoping activities for the draft service-level EIS were conducted between March 13 and April 26, 2013 (scoping period), with the 12 scoping meetings scheduled between March 25 and April 4, 2013. The process was initiated by the issuance of the NOI (Appendix A). The federal process began with the publication of the NOI in the *Federal Register* on March 13, 2013. The NOI discussed the background of the Program system, the purpose of the passenger rail system, and the role of public involvement during the scoping process. The NOI also provided contact names for additional information regarding the Study and listed the dates and locations of public scoping meetings.

Notification for the scoping period consisted of multiple media outlets, existing stakeholder mailing lists, and social media notification. For each announcement method used by the consultant team, information regarding the scoping purpose and methods for providing comments was outlined in English, as well as general project information provided in Spanish. The following sections describe the specific notification methods and timeframe of the notification, and Table 1-1 summarizes this information.

1.5.1 Print Media

Print media included press releases, paid newspaper advertisements, and newsletters. Sections 1.5.1.1 through 1.5.1.3 summarize the notification efforts through the print media, and copies of the print media are included in Appendix B.

1.5.1.1 Press Release

TxDOT distributed a press release throughout the Program corridor. Targeted press releases were distributed to the relevant media outlets 10 days before each scoping open house.

1.5.1.2 Paid Newspaper Advertisements

Paid newspaper advertisements describing the overall scoping process and opportunities for comment were published in newspapers as listed below; each ad included three dates at meeting locations in proximity of the papers' distribution areas as a way to encourage attendance. Each advertisement included the Study website address for information about other scoping meeting dates.

- Dallas Morning News – Monday, March 11, 2013
- Austin American Statesman – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Caller-Times (Corpus Christi) - Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore) – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City) – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Fort Worth Star-Telegram – Tuesday, March 12, 2013

- Herald Democrat (Sherman-Denison) – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Killeen Daily Herald – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Laredo Morning Times – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- San Antonio Express News – Tuesday, March 12, 2013
- Brownsville Herald – Wednesday, March 13, 2013
- Waco Tribune-Herald – Tuesday, March 14, 2013

1.5.1.3 Newsletter

A four-page newsletter was created to provide more detailed information about the scoping process, in both English and Spanish. It was distributed electronically to the stakeholder email list, with a request that this information also be distributed to the interested parties lists. Additionally, it was provided to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and transit agencies for distribution in print. It was also available for open house attendees to use as a reference and to distribute to their neighbors or organizations.

1.5.2 Electronic Notification

Electronic notification included updates to the study website, email recipients, and social media (see Table 1-1). Sections 1.5.2.1 through 1.5.2.3 summarize the electronic notification efforts, and copies are included in Appendix C.

1.5.2.1 Study Website

The Study website advertised the scoping period information and event details, in both English and Spanish. An online open house, also in both languages, was available for those who could not attend one of the 12 meetings.

1.5.2.2 Email

A poster announcing all 12 scoping meeting dates and other opportunities for submitting scoping comments was created and sent to previously engaged stakeholders. This list included over 200 organizations, local jurisdictional agencies, and transit agencies, among others. Emails were sent to these stakeholders asking them to forward the poster electronically to their existing mailing lists and to place the printed posters in areas with high public visibility them, such as offices, meeting locations, public notice boards, and other locations.

Geographically targeted email reminders were also sent to the stakeholder list prior to each scoping open house.

1.5.2.3 Social Media

TxDOT's Facebook and Twitter accounts announced the scoping process and scoping open houses 1 week and then 1 day prior to each meeting.

Table 1-1: Notification Methods, Timeframe, and Targeted Audience

Outreach/Notification	Timeframe	Audience	Spanish Language
Press release	Starting Thursday, March 21, 2013	Newspaper-reading public and agency members	No
Newspaper paid ad: Dallas Morning News	Monday, March 11, 2013	Newspaper-reading public and agency members	Yes
Newspaper paid ad: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin American Statesman • Caller-Times (Corpus Christi) • Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore) • Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City) • Fort Worth Star-Telegram Herald • Democrat (Sherman-Denison) • Killeen Daily Herald • Laredo Morning Times • San Antonio Express News 	Tuesday, March 12, 2013	Newspaper-reading public and agency members	Yes
Brownsville Herald	Wednesday, March 13, 2013	Newspaper-reading public and agency members	Yes
Waco Tribune-Herald	Tuesday, March 14, 2013	Newspaper-reading public and agency members	Yes
Poster and newsletter emailed to stakeholders	Wednesday, March 13, 2013, and Friday, March 29, 2013	Local agencies, community organizations, transportation agencies, other stakeholders	Email in English only, materials in Spanish and English
Poster mounted in public places	Starting Wednesday, March 13, 2013	Stakeholder meeting locations, MPO meeting locations	Yes

Outreach/Notification	Timeframe	Audience	Spanish Language
Newsletter available at MPO and TxDOT locations	Starting Wednesday, March 13, 2013	Stakeholder meeting locations, MPO meeting locations	Yes
TxDOT Facebook and Twitter	Monday, March 25, 2013, through April 5, 2013	Younger, transportation-minded public; general public; and local agencies	No
Study website	Monday, March 11, 2013	General public, transportation-minded public, and local agencies	Yes
Reminder emails about open houses	Monday, March 18; Monday, March 25; and Friday, March 29	Local agencies, community organizations, transportation agencies, other stakeholders	Email in English only, materials in Spanish and English

1.5.3 Media Coverage

In addition to print media and electronic notification, many newspaper articles and TV clips covered the study and the scoping process and advertised the open houses. Sections 1.5.3.1 and 1.5.3.2 summarize the media coverage during March and April 2013.

1.5.3.1 March 2013

- March 14, 2013 - "TxDOT, feds wants to know how you feel about the 'Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study' they're conducting." *Dallas Morning News* [Dallas, Texas]. <http://transportationblog.dallasnews.com/2013/03/txdot-feds-wants-to-know-how-you-feel-about-the-texas-oklahoma-passenger-rail-study-theyre-conducting.html/>
- March 25, 2013 - "State studying passenger rail options to possibly include Waco-area stops." *Waco Tribune-Herald* [Waco, Texas]. www.wacotrib.com/news/roads-transportation/state-studying-passenger-rail-options-to-possibly-include-waco-area/article_e07a120e-1c20-5d42-967a-742cdb2ec168.html
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1.6 Scoping Process

During the 45-day scoping period, TxDOT asked the public, tribes, and other agencies to comment on what factors to analyze in the EIS. Specifically, TxDOT asked for input on the following topics:

- Purpose and need for the proposed passenger rail study
- Reasonable range of alternatives
- Potentially affected resources and extent of analysis for those resources

The public provided scoping comments using multiple methods between the publication of the NOI on March 13 and the end of the comment period, on April 26, 2013. Comments provided in the following formats were collected:

- In writing at a scoping meeting
- Verbally at scoping meetings (court reporters were present in Laredo and Harlingen)
- Through the Study website’s comment form (www.txokrail.org/comment)
- By mail to Program, 12750 Merit Drive, Suite 1100, Dallas, Texas, 75251

1.6.1 In-Person Open Houses

TxDOT hosted 12 public scoping open houses; each included the same information and followed the same format. Meeting locations were Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible, transit accessible (where possible), and accommodated a minimum of 100 people in a single large room. Each lasted from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., during which time community members were invited to:

- Listen to a brief presentation orienting participants to the meeting, the information available, and how to provide comments. (A looped PowerPoint presentation with Spanish narration was available.)
- Review display boards describing the scoping process, the NEPA process, draft purpose and need statements, a proposed range of service levels, and a proposed range of conceptual alternatives.
- Talk to TxDOT and consultant staff about the service-level NEPA process and ask questions.
- Complete a comment card providing scoping comments, in English or Spanish.
- Provide verbal comments to a court reporter (only in Laredo and Harlingen), in English or Spanish.

Translation services were provided upon request, and signs were provided indicating where participants could attend the Spanish-narrated PowerPoint presentation. In south Texas, each meeting had at least one Spanish-speaking staff member present. A looped, Spanish-narrated PowerPoint presentation was projected from a laptop at each meeting. Copies of the public scoping meeting materials, including the comment form in English and Spanish, are included in Appendix D.

1.6.2 Online Scoping Open House

In addition to in-person scoping meetings, the Study's website included an online scoping meeting that was "open" for the duration of the 45-day scoping period. The online scoping meeting included:

- Embedded graphics describing the scoping process, the NEPA process, draft purpose and need statements, a proposed range of service levels, and a proposed range of conceptual alternatives (identical to display boards for public scoping open houses).
- A web-based form (in English and Spanish) for providing scoping comments.
- A Spanish-narrated PowerPoint presentation that included each display board.

2.0 Public and Agency Involvement During Scoping

Throughout the scoping period, TxDOT and FRA encouraged public and agency input through a variety of activities. As noted above, the FRA published the NOI in the *Federal Register* on March 13, 2013, initiating the public scoping process. There were a number of meetings scheduled for all three sections prior to and during the scoping period, which included 3 agency meetings, 12 public scoping meetings, and 1 environmental interest group meeting. Table 2-1 lists the dates and locations of the meetings. Public scoping meetings are summarized in Section 2.1, and Section 2.2 and 2.3 summarize agency and other meetings.

TABLE 2-1: Public Scoping Meetings and Locations within the Program Corridor

Date/Time	City	Location/Address
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS		
Northern Section		
March 25, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Oklahoma City, OK	Metro Tech Center 1900 Springlake Drive Oklahoma City, OK
March 26, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Ardmore, OK	Ardmore Train Station 251 E. Main Street Ardmore, OK
April 1, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Belton, TX	Central Texas Council of Governments Training Room 2180 N. Main Street Belton, TX
April 2, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Sherman, TX	Sherman Senior Center 1500 N. Broughton Street Sherman, TX
Central Section		
March 25, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Waco, TX	Heart of Texas Council of Governments, Training Room 1514 S. New Road Waco, TX
March 27, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Austin, TX	Texas Department of Transportation Austin District Office, Building 7 7901 N. IH 35 Austin, TX

Date/Time	City	Location/Address
March 28, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Fort Worth, TX	Texas Department of Transportation Training Offices 2501 SW Loop 820 Fort Worth, TX
April 3, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Dallas, TX	Minority Supplier Development Council (MSDC) Offices 8828 N. Stemmons Freeway Suite 550 Dallas, TX
Southern Section		
April 1, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	San Antonio, TX	Windcrest Civic Center 9310 Jim Seal Drive Windcrest, TX
April 2, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Corpus Christi, TX	Texas Department of Transportation 1701 S. Padre Island Drive Corpus Christi, TX
April 3, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Laredo, TX	Texas Department of Transportation 1817 Bob Bullock Avenue Laredo, TX
April 4, 2013 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Harlingen, TX	Harlingen Town Hall 118 E. Tyler Avenue Harlingen, TX

AGENCY SCOPING MEETINGS

March 25, 2013 2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.	Oklahoma City, OK	Metro Tech Center 1900 Springlake Drive Oklahoma City, OK
March 27, 2013 2:0 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Austin, TX	Texas Department of Transportation Austin District Office, Building 7 7901 N. IH 35 Austin, TX
April 3, 2013 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Dallas, TX	MSDC Offices 8828 N. Stemmons Freeway Suite 550 Dallas, TX

ENVIRONMENTAL INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS

April 18, 2013	Austin, TX	Texas Department of Transportation Building 200, Room 1A-2 200 E. Riverside Drive Austin, TX 78704
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2.1 Summary of Public Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings were open to both the general public and agencies. Approximately 340 people attended the public scoping meetings and approximately 1,200 comments were submitted online, by email, and at an open house in writing; also, at two open houses court reporters recorded verbal comments. U.S. Census data from 2010 indicated small areas with a low literacy level in south Texas. In these cases, a court reporter was sent to record verbal comments, in Harlingen and Laredo; the court reporter was provided with a bilingual staffer to translate for non-English-speaking populations in the area that might wish to provide verbal comments. Three comments were collected this way in Laredo and Harlingen. More than 1,140 online comments were collected through the Study website's comment form, which was available in both English and Spanish; however, there were about 70 duplicate emails, resulting in approximately 1,070 comments. Twenty-six comments were also collected through letters, and about 50 emails were sent directly to TxDOT. Approximately 340 people attended the open houses, and 56 written comments were collected at these events. Of the 1,300-plus comments, most were from the general public, and approximately 25 were from business owners or organizations, while about 10 comments were collected from state or local agencies.

The open house format featured display boards in a U-shaped area around the room, providing information to attendees about the purpose and need of this study, maps of the areas being reviewed, different options that could be reviewed, and how to get involved in the process. Newsletters and guides to scoping were handed out to all meeting attendees and comment forms were available to either fill out during the meeting or to take home and mail in. A PowerPoint presentation showing all of the display boards in Spanish and featuring Spanish narration was available to meeting attendees. TxDOT, ODOT, and consultant staff were present and available at all meetings to answer questions about the Study.

The comments provided during the public scoping meetings are summarized and described briefly in the following sections. Copies of the materials provided at the public scoping meetings are included in Appendix D.

2.1.1 Oklahoma City, OK – March 25, 2013

On March 25, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Metro Tech Center. Thirty-one attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, which is on file with TxDOT and ODOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees, and five of the forms were returned at the end of the meeting. A letter addressed to Mark Werner, Project Manager – TxDOT, was also included in the comment box. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Provide alternative to car travel along IH-35
- Provide accessibility for passengers with special needs, including the blind, disabled, and elderly
- Allow new audiences access to local businesses

- Increase visitor travel
- Concern about speed at grade crossings
- Concern about noise increase within current rail corridor
- Affordable rail service could provide for an increase in tourism
- Boost economy with increased ridership
- Provide alternative to highway travel between cities
- Reduce travel times between major cities
- Reduce pollution from car traffic
- Allow passengers to carry on bicycles, crated pets, and luggage

2.1.2 Waco, TX – March 25, 2013

On March 25, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. Twenty-one attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, which is on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and three comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Increase travel to cities along the corridor
- Business travelers could work while traveling
- IH-35 needs transit alternatives to reduce traffic
- Less pollution than cars from the highway
- Increase frequency of trains running between cities to encourage business travelers to take the train

2.1.3 Ardmore, OK – March 26, 2013

On March 26, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Ardmore Train Station. Fourteen attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT and ODOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and three comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Increase mobility between Dallas and Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, and Ardmore
- Accessibility for passengers with special needs, including the blind, disabled, and elderly
- More frequent schedules would make larger cities more accessible
- Noise from trains at rail crossings

- Boost economy and revitalize towns with existing train stations
- Increase tourism for weekend and holiday stays
- Reduce highway traffic if train schedules were timely
- Decrease highway congestion by providing alternative to highway travel
- Reduce pollution from car traffic
- Allow passengers to carry on bicycles, crated pets, and luggage
- Connections expanding further north than Oklahoma City
- Prioritize high-speed rail from Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio, then higher speed rail from Dallas to Oklahoma City and San Antonio to south Texas, with high-speed rail eventually replacing all of the higher speed rail lines.
- Frequency of trains is the most important aspect to increase ridership

2.1.4 Austin, TX – March 27, 2013

On March 27, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the TxDOT Austin office. Forty-two attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and seven comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Increase business travel along corridor
- Provide alternative to driving along IH-35
- Need increased frequency of trains running between cities to encourage business travelers to take the train
- Lower impact along existing rail lines, but with increased frequency
- Electric trains would be quieter
- Boost regional tourism between stops along the corridor
- Reduce traffic on IH-35
- Use an elevated rail to minimize impacts on current right-of-way
- Consider maglev as environmentally friendly option
- Improve air quality from less traffic on highways and air traffic

2.1.5 Fort Worth, TX – March 28, 2013

On March 28, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the TxDOT Fort Worth office. Twenty-five attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and three comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Provide alternative to driving along IH-35
- Stops located in both Dallas and Fort Worth would be convenient
- Boost regional tourism between stops along the corridor
- Could reduce IH-35 traffic
- Decrease air traffic by providing alternative
- Improve air quality from less traffic on highways and less air traffic
- Connection needs to go through DFW Airport to increase travelers

2.1.6 Belton, TX – April 1, 2013

On April 1, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Central Texas Council of Governments. Thirty-eight attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and five comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Provide alternative to driving along IH-35
- Create passenger rail south of San Antonio
- Noise needs to be minimal near neighborhoods and through towns
- Boost regional tourism between stops along the corridor
- Stay within highway rights-of-way to avoid farmlands
- Could reduce highway traffic
- Improve air quality from less traffic on highways and less airplane traffic
- Increase frequency of current Amtrak trains and add cars to allow for more passengers
- Create additional public transportation from train stations to other locations within cities (i.e., bus routes)

2.1.7 San Antonio, TX – April 1, 2013

On April 1, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Windcrest Civic Center. Twenty-three attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and six comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Connect trains into Kansas to expand rail connection options
- Allow bicycles as carry-ons on trains
- Frequency of service is more important than higher speeds
- Stations need better parking and platforms than current stations
- Boost economy in areas south of San Antonio
- High-speed rail would be beneficial between Dallas and San Antonio

2.1.8 Sherman, TX – April 1, 2013

On April 1, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Sherman Senior Center. Twenty-two attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and one comment form was returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Provide safe transportation for riders that coexist with freight traffic
- Different track options need to be reviewed, both current tracks and new infrastructure
- Development along the corridor would have to be paid for to support the tracks
- Limit vehicle and pedestrian traffic within the high-speed rail right-of-way
- Need to work in conjunction with Lone Star Rail District and Cotton Belt Rail District

2.1.9 Corpus Christi, TX – April 2, 2013

On April 2, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the TxDOT office in Corpus Christi, TX. Nineteen attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and six comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Improve travel between large cities in Texas
- Lower pollution levels by having fewer cars on the highway
- Rail should go through a central location, not along the shoreline
- Boost tourism

- Have rental car agencies at the depot
- Need safe railroad crossings at grade-level crossings
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Upgrade existing rail lines to use for passenger rail
- Coordinate with other local public transportation for scheduling purposes

2.1.10 Dallas, TX – April 3, 2013

On April 3, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the MSDC offices. Twenty-nine attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and five comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Alignments could alter traffic to local businesses
- Benefit economy by having a well-planned schedule to allow for business travelers
- Reduce pollution levels from less highway traffic
- Focus on dedicated high-speed rail between Dallas and San Antonio
- Direct connections to Dallas need to be created, rather than Fort Worth or DFW Airport
- High-speed rail needs to be faster than what auto travel time would be to encourage people to ride the train instead of drive

2.1.11 Laredo, TX – April 3, 2013

On April 3, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the TxDOT Laredo office. Thirty-one attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and five comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Improvements to pollution and traffic outweigh cons of noise
- Boost economy with a stop in Laredo
- Lower highway fatalities by taking cars off the road
- Reduce oil dependence
- Extend line into Mexico
- Higher speed preferred to shorten travel times

2.1.12 Harlingen, TX – April 4, 2013

On April 4, 2013, TxDOT held a public scoping meeting at the Harlingen Town Hall. Forty-two attendees were listed on the sign-in sheet, on record with TxDOT. Comment forms were handed out to all meeting attendees and seven comment forms were returned at the end of the meeting. Multiple comments focused on the following issues:

- Offer free parking for rail passengers
- Work with connection to possible commuter rail built in the Valley
- Provide an alternative for highway traffic
- Boost tourism and economy
- Increase in taxes could cause negative effects on agriculture, tourism, and other businesses
- Elevate tracks to minimize safety issues
- Provide easy, relaxing travel alternative

2.2 Agency Scoping Meetings

TxDOT hosted one pre-scoping agency meeting on February 26, 2013 and three agency scoping meetings, which were held the same day as three public open houses in Oklahoma City, Austin, and Dallas. These agency meetings were held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on the same day as the public scoping meeting in the three respective locations. The interest of the agencies in the study during the pre-scoping meeting was documented using a form that asked for contact information and a statement of interest. The agencies were encouraged to submit comments during the scoping process and invited to attend the public scoping meetings. Agencies were asked to provide formal scoping comments in writing prior to the end of the scoping period. Transit districts, counties, cities, and MPOs, as well as state and federal regulatory agencies, were invited to the agency scoping meetings.

2.3 Summary of Other Related Outreach Activities

In addition to the public and agency scoping meetings described above, a few additional outreach activities were conducted just prior to the start of the scoping period. These events were conducted to increase awareness of the scoping process and the Study as a whole, as well as to encourage and request feedback and input.

2.3.1 Stakeholder Workshops

A stakeholder workshop was held for elected officials, transit agencies, and other organizations that were interested in the study. These stakeholders were encouraged to attend and to help advertise the public open houses to their constituents. This meeting was held three times during February 2013, with the same content presented at each meeting. A meeting was planned for February 25 in Oklahoma City, but a snowstorm prevented the meeting from taking place.

2.3.2 Environmental Interest Group Meeting

A meeting was held to inform the environmental groups about the Study and to encourage them to invite their constituents and members to attend the public open houses. This meeting was held on April 18, 2013, at the TxDOT office in Austin. The groups were identified by the public involvement team based upon previous interest and work with TxDOT. These groups were invited by phone to attend. The information presented and discussed was the same as at the stakeholder meetings. No comments were received during this meeting.

2.3.3 Tribal Coordination

FRA mailed invitation letters to 26 federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma and Texas on April 11, 2013, to initiate government-to-government contact, alert them of the study, and invite them to participate in the scoping process. Two responses have been received by FRA. The Delaware Nation expressed interest in the study and study area and confirmed they will be a consulting party. Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma requested additional information for their review to more thoroughly evaluate their interest in relation to this project for National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review. FRA will schedule meetings with the tribes.

3.0 Scoping Summary of Issues

The scoping efforts included opportunities for the public to provide input on the purpose and need, on possible future passenger rail routes, potential station locations, and service levels, as well as on environmental issues. The Program scoping process identified issues with the proposed sections, suggestions for alignment and station locations, and areas of potential concern related to the Study. The comments received during the scoping process are summarized below. Comments were submitted in the following ways:

- Via Study website
- Verbally to court reporters at public scoping meetings
- Comment forms submitted at public scoping meetings
- Mailed comment forms
- Mailed personal comment letters
- Mailed agency letters
- Emails

Approximately 1,200 comments from agencies, organizations, and individuals were received, and several individuals submitted two or more comments. Tables 3-1 through Table 3-4 (at the end of this section) reproduce the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and then categorized by topic area. The scanned images of the complete original comments are reproduced in Appendices E through G. Appendix H provides a summary of the comments received with a tally by topic.

In general, the comments addressed the following topics (order of the topics below has no significance):

- Location of rail corridor
- Location of stations
- Benefits of passenger rail service, including but not limited to air quality, congestion relief, and economic development
- Connections to local transit and the promotion of mass transit
- Right-of-way
- General support for the Study
- Noise impacts

- Questions about cost and financing of the system
- Ridership
- Regional and local economic growth
- Employment opportunities
- Potential devaluation of property
- Parks and recreation
- Open space
- Water quality and runoff
- Energy consumption and technology used for the trains
- Integration of Study with existing and planned regional and local transportation/transit efforts
- Impacts on plant and animal species, including associated habitats
- Impacts on wildlife corridor movement
- Safety/hazards
- Health
- Agriculture – impacts on farmland and productivity/viability of agricultural activities
- Freight and passenger rail compatibility

3.1 Scoping Summary of Potential Alignments and Stations

This section summarizes comments received during the public scoping process for the Program pertaining to potential alignments and stations, environmental impacts and constraints, and benefits of a passenger rail service. This discussion will guide the development of options to be evaluated as part of the alternatives analysis process for the Study.

3.1.1 Support and Opposition

A number of people expressed support for or opposition to the Program in their comments. Of these, most were in favor of the Program and rail in general, citing the benefits of an improved rail system. Sections 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2 summarize these viewpoints.

3.1.1.1 Support

Several commenters expressed their support for high-speed rail specifically. Among the most frequently cited benefits were:

- Trains keep cars off the road.
- A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger.
- South Texas has no passenger rail service.
- Railroad stations are more convenient than airports, and rail cars are more comfortable.
- Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.

Commenters also mentioned the high price of gasoline as a benefit of switching from driving to rail.

Other benefits of rail cited in the comments included:

- Rail is a quicker and cheaper way to travel overall.
- Rail offers improved safety and is a good travel option for those who cannot or prefer not to drive (e.g., don't own a car, seniors, etc).
- Rail could attract tourists.
- Rail would improve the state's economy and provide jobs.
- Rail is better for the environment overall.
- Rail would provide a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

3.1.1.2 Opposition

The most frequently cited reasons cited by commenters in opposition were that the cost would be too high, that the system would not be a good use of taxpayer money or that tax money should be spent on other things, and that it would lead to increased debt. Other comments indicated that Texans are not likely to switch from cars to rail, that existing bus and air service is sufficient, and that eminent domain is not acceptable. Some commenters were simply opposed to a high-speed train option but would support incremental improvement of passenger rail. A number of comments cited concerns regarding the impacts on agricultural activities and production with the loss of farmland and/or division of farmland due to the development and operation of passenger rail.

3.1.2 Cost, Affordability, and Funding

Issues of cost, affordability, and funding of new passenger rail service were raised by a number of commenters. One concern was that rail travel would have to be made affordable for passengers and that if rail travel was not less expensive than flying, it might not be feasible. One suggestion to help lower travel costs was to partner with casinos.

A number of commenters mentioned the cost of passenger rail improvements. Some felt that the cost would be excessive and would constitute an undue burden on taxpayers, especially

considering current Texas and Oklahoma budget issues. One commenter mentioned that the cost of the California High-Speed Train System is higher than originally projected. On the other hand, some commenters felt that rail would be a good investment and would ultimately cost taxpayers less than maintenance and construction of freeways. Some other concerns indicated that the “last mile” (connecting riders from train stations to their ultimate destinations) would make train travel costly and that trains traveling at 220 mph would not be cost-effective.

Another frequently raised question was related to funding sources for passenger rail improvement projects. Several people mentioned potential funding partnerships, such as public/private, as a means of sharing costs with mass transit providers. Another suggestion was to make rail self-supporting, and that private entities and riders, not taxpayers, cover the cost entirely. One commenter wondered whether travelers to and from Mexico could provide a major source of revenue, and another suggested that a “fast parcel delivery” car be used to offset cost.

3.1.3 Services and Amenities on Trains

A number of people mentioned specific services and amenities that they would like to see offered on passenger trains. These comments included general concerns about improving rail cars to make travel comfortable, as well as specific suggestions like making Wi-Fi and food available to passengers. Some commenters also requested that they be able to bring dogs, luggage, and even cars on trains. The most frequent comment of this type was that passengers should be allowed to bring bicycles on the train. One commenter requested that travel with firearms be allowed.

3.1.4 Services and Amenities at Stations

In their comments, several people mentioned that stations should be upgraded and expanded to accommodate enhanced rail service. A number of commenters asked that travel connections be made available at stations, such as connections with other rail lines and airports, transit connections, shuttle buses, rental cars, and bike-share programs. Another frequent comment was that adequate and safe long- and short-term parking should be made available at stations. Commenters indicated that access should be provided for wheelchairs and disabled people. Other comments included suggestions to provide auto kiosks at unattended stations, and that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) not be included.

3.1.5 Station Locations

Many people commented on cities they would like to see connected by rail. The most frequently mentioned connections were to Houston, Laredo, Brownsville/Harlingen, Waco, and north from Oklahoma City to Kansas City and beyond. General comments about potential station locations indicated that they should serve downtown areas (although one commenter suggested that they be placed on the outskirts of cities where more land is available), that there should be a central rail hub, and that rail should serve only large cities and college towns.

Another theme in the comments was connecting rail to south Texas, with a number of commenters noting that passenger rail is not currently available in this area. Frequently

mentioned towns and regions in this area included Laredo, Corpus Christi, Brownsville/South Padre Island, the South Rio Grande Valley, McAllen, and Harlingen. Several commenters also mentioned the benefit of rail service continuing south to Mexico.

Other locations mentioned as potential rail connections were Austin, San Marcos, El Paso, College Station, Krum/Denton, Temple, and Ardmore.

3.1.6 Alternatives/Routes

Another common method commenters used to express their preference for rail connections was to indicate pairs of cities or overall routes that they would like to see served by rail. Numerous commenters mentioned routes that are subsets of the San Antonio to Dallas and Fort Worth corridor and several within the Dallas and Fort Worth to Oklahoma City corridor (and north). There were also several comments that requested rail connections between east and west Texas and cities beyond, including Los Angeles, Denver, New Orleans, Alabama, Georgia, and Washington D.C. Several commenters noted that overall north-south or east-west rail corridors should pass through the DFW Airport.

In addition to mentioning specific routes and station locations, a number of people commented on operational improvements, including improving the frequency, speed, and reliability of service. Some comments specifically mentioned improving speed between specific city pairs, such as Dallas and Fort Worth and San Antonio (some commenters indicated a preference for true high-speed rail in this corridor), San Antonio and Austin, or the entire Program corridor from south Texas to Oklahoma City.

3.2 Environmental Concerns

During the scoping period, a number of comments were received regarding environmental issues and concerns. These topics included agriculture, air quality, energy, growth, health, local and regional economy, natural environment, noise, and right-of-way. The following summarizes the comments received regarding these environmental concerns.

3.2.1 Agriculture

Impacts on farmland and agricultural activities were raised as the primary concern. Passenger rail service was identified as devastating and destructive to agricultural land and activity with the loss of prime farmland and productive and viable farmland. Comments included concern that new track would cause agricultural impacts, such concern that rail would divide farmland, permanently affect and take farmland out of production, cause challenges and obstacles associated with moving large farming equipment and animals around property divided by a rail corridor. Comments expressed the need for and importance of preserving existing farmland and agriculture. Comments also identified Blackland Prairie soils and eco-region as the most productive farmland in Texas, as well as the need to avoid impacts on this land and associated farming operations; activities needed to protect this land were also mentioned. Additional comments requested the use of existing right-of-way and corridors to minimize or avoid impacts

on agriculture. One comment also identified the problem of keeping feral hogs off the right-of-way.

Although major concerns were raised about impacts on agriculture, there were a few comments indicating that agriculture could be promoted with passenger rail. This benefit could result from passengers having a view of active farms and agricultural lands and people becoming connected to other cities and towns to enjoy local produce and other foods at neighborhood restaurants.

3.2.2 Air Quality

Air quality was a major concern identified during the scoping period. A number of people expressed support for passenger rail service as a way to improve air quality and to reduce emissions, vehicle traffic, and air travel. Many people indicated that air quality would be improved if vehicle congestion and driving were reduced and that the Study would help provide a solution to the existing congestion. Other comments suggested the use of alternative energy sources for passenger rail service to further improve air quality.

3.2.3 Energy

Energy efficiency was recognized as a benefit of passenger rail service. Many people believe passenger rail service is more efficient, requires less energy than planes or cars, and reduces gas/fuel consumption by reducing the number of cars on the road. Additional comments requested that the latest technology and efficient power sources be used for the passenger rail service.

3.2.4 Growth

Several comments stated that passenger rail service would help grow/expand cities and regions as well as support anticipated growth and demand for services and transportation systems. Laredo and Waco were identified as cities with both growth potential and a current growth trend. South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley were identified as important regions that are experiencing growth and have potential to expand further. Growth was also recognized for areas outside of Texas—specifically, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Mexico were identified in the comments—and passenger rail was noted as a method to support this anticipated growth and the desire for growth. A few comments indicated that passenger rail service would help improve the livability of communities.

3.2.5 Health

A number of comments expressed support for passenger rail service as a healthy transportation option and indicated that air pollution levels are critical and need to be reduced. Many comments indicated that passenger rail service would decrease vehicle congestion and reduce air pollution levels to create a healthier environment and provide a positive impact on cardiovascular and respiratory health.

3.2.6 Local and Regional Economy

Many comments cited positive impacts from an improved and expanded passenger rail system on the local and regional economy and job growth. There is strong support for passenger rail service and the direct connection to stimulating the economy with new jobs and increased job opportunities. A number of comments mentioned the strengthening and revitalization of the economy through the development and operation of passenger rail service.

Comments also stated that tourism would be promoted and encouraged with the use of passenger rail service and that it would ultimately bring money into the local and regional economies. Additional comments mentioned the opportunity to bring people to smaller rural towns and the ability to visit areas outside of large metropolitan areas. Passenger rail service was also identified as an affordable and fast travel option to colleges and universities, particularly to attend sporting events.

Passenger rail service was identified as an economical way to travel, especially for those who cannot afford to fly or do not have access to airports or cars, which include primarily five categories of individuals: elderly, disabled, fixed income, low income, and veterans. Some comments also requested that the passenger rail service be competitive in pricing compared to driving, flying, and taking the bus so that it would be more affordable to people in those groups.

Several comments stated that passenger rail service would encourage cities to build mass transit systems. There were also comments recognizing that local economies may be stimulated with the development of rail stations. A number of comments noted that rail would provide efficiency and productive opportunities for businesses to be connected to different cities and regions through rail, as well as the ability to work while riding on the train. Additional comments identified the enhancement of trade and commerce along the IH-35 corridor that would be associated with the development of rail.

3.2.7 Natural Environment

Most of the comments regarding the natural environment identified passenger rail service as the most efficient way and cleanest way to move a large number of people, and that is less intrusive than vehicle travel and highways. Rail is viewed as a transportation mode with minimal impact on open space, vegetation habitat, and waterways, whereas highways and vehicle emissions contribute to the loss of trees and habitat. Although many comments referred to the benefits of rail on the natural environment, some expressed concern about the loss, disruption, and displacement of the natural landscape and wildlife and impacts on water caused by erosion and runoff.

Some comments requested the ability to provide for wildlife movement corridors along the rail corridor to prevent fragmenting and isolating wildlife and habitat. Concerns and requests to avoid impacts on parks, preserves, open space, eco-regions, and refuges were also received.

3.2.8 Noise

Comments about noise were mixed, with some stating that noise would be generated by trains and others stating that rail could reduce overall noise levels. In some comments, train horns and rail lines were identified as sources of noise, while in others trains were not anticipated to contribute to the existing noise levels in metropolitan areas and instead were believed to produce minimal noise. There was concern that noise from trains could disrupt farming activities and affect cattle, horses, deer, birds, etc. Comments also included requests to minimize the noise generated at night and to include “quiet zones.”

3.2.9 Right-of-Way

Many comments requested that the Study use existing right-of-way and rail easements, including but not limited to the UPRR corridor and IH-35 corridor, as well as existing utility corridors (e.g., pipelines, power lines, transmission lines) and existing stations. Some comments indicated that there is plenty of existing right-of-way to accommodate passenger rail, that obtaining and acquiring new right-of-way should be the last option, and that the rail corridor should be located parallel to existing right-of-way. Additional comments stated that requiring rail right-of-way would be no different than needing additional right-of-way for more highway lanes or toll roads. It was also requested that the Blackland eco-region east of IH-35 be avoided and that the passenger rail corridor be located west of IH-35.

3.3 *Technical/Engineering Concerns*

This section summarizes public comments received pertaining to technical and engineering concerns for the Program. These topics include ridership, planning, freight, safety, and technology.

3.3.1 Ridership

Several people pointed out the importance of correctly projecting ridership to the success of implementing improved passenger rail and requested that a thorough demand/ridership analysis be completed as part of the Study. A few commenters noted that increased speed and frequency would increase ridership. Some commenters expressed concern that ridership would be low on new passenger rail service.

3.3.2 Planning

Some people expressed an interest in ensuring that existing transportation plans are incorporated into the Study. Specifically mentioned were the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments commuter rail study, including the Oklahoma City to Norman BNSF corridor and the planned Shreveport to Dallas/Fort Worth rail link. Commenters also mentioned the benefit of expediting this Study to save money and avoid outdated conclusions.

3.3.3 Freight

Several commenters mentioned concerns or ideas related to potential impacts on freight rail that could be caused by introducing additional passenger rail service. Comments included reasonably compensating freight lines used by passenger rail and double tracking to avoid conflicts between freight and passenger rail. Other comments recommended that money be spent on improving freight rail instead of passenger rail and that freight rail should be improved to get trucks off the road. One commenter suggested that a terminal be provided to accommodate loading freight from trucks onto trains.

3.3.4 Safety

Most of the comments regarding safety indicated that rail is an efficient form of transportation and would make the roads safer and cleaner and would lead to fewer cars on the road, resulting in fewer accidents and fatalities. IH-35 and IH-10 were identified as congested and dangerous highway corridors. Many comments expressed how the Project would alleviate much of the heavy traffic and congestion. In addition, a number of comments stated that rail provides a safer and more comfortable alternative than vehicle travel, especially for the elderly and when traveling alone or at night.

At-grade crossings were considered to be dangerous and were the primary safety concern expressed in a number of comments. According to some of these comments, crossings should be minimized, if not eliminated, and adequate warning should be secured or the associated signaling should be improved. Grade-separated crossings were requested. Comments also included the need to evaluate the safety of crossings and to create safe crossings, especially in key locations such as IH 37. Additional concerns regarding crossings included required wait times for at-grade crossings and the speed of trains at these crossings.

Some specific safety-related uses of improved passenger rail were mentioned. These included aiding in evacuations in the event of a natural disaster and, specifically, expediting the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from south Texas in the event of an approaching hurricane. Another commenter suggested that faster trains could be used to connect people to medical services and that ambulance facilities could be included on trains.

Another safety concern related to the potential for illegal immigration and drug trafficking on passenger trains.

3.3.5 Technology

General comments about the desired approach to providing passenger rail improvements were almost evenly divided: roughly the same number of people requesting incremental improvements as those urging that true high-speed rail be built instead of incremental improvements.

Several suggestions were made about the technology that should be used for new passenger rail service. These included general comments such as using the best quality materials and planning for maintenance, using state-of-the-art equipment for high-speed rail alternatives, and making

trains as fast as possible. Other commenters suggested specific technologies such as maglev and solar-powered trains. Some comments made suggestions about alignment locations, like putting elevated trains in highway medians, using existing rail lines, and building dedicated tracks for high-speed rail.

A number of commenters made suggestions about using specific existing rail lines for expanded passenger rail service. These included incorporating the Trinity Railway Express (TRE), connecting the Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle, providing higher speeds and express service along Texas Eagle Routes, improving frequency of Heartland Flyer service, and placing high-speed rail in the abandoned Southern Pacific right-of-way. One commenter suggested that special attention be given to upgrading existing rail infrastructure in the San Antonio-Houston-Dallas and Fort Worth “triangle.”

3.4 Elected Officials, Agencies, and Tribal Responses to NOI

Agency representatives attended three agency scoping meetings held on March 25, March 27, and April 3, 2013, and prepared letters in response to the NOI. Elected officials also submitted letters in response to the NOI. This section summarizes the comments received from agencies, elected officials, and federally recognized tribes in response to the NOI and/or provided at one of the agency scoping meetings. This section is subdivided into elected officials, federal agencies, state agencies, regional agencies, and local agencies. Agency and elected official comments are reproduced in Appendix E and comments from tribes are reproduced in Appendix F.

3.4.1 Elected Officials

3.4.1.1 Northern Section: Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth

3.4.1.1.1 City of Ardmore

The vice mayor for the city of Ardmore, Sheryl Ellis, provided comments at the public open house in Ardmore on March 26, 2013. Vice Mayor Ellis expressed support for passenger rail service. The availability to have connections to other areas was recognized as critical for work/business, leisure, and general travel for the city of Ardmore and the region. Passenger rail service was identified as a solution to relieve and decrease interstate traffic congestion and promote growth and construction of additional infrastructure. Noise from train horns was noted as a concern. Vice Mayor Ellis also supported a passenger rail stop in Ardmore.

3.4.1.2 Central Section: Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio

No elected official from the Central Section provided comments during the scoping period.

3.4.1.3 Southern Section: San Antonio to South Texas

No elected official from the Southern Section provided comments during the scoping period.

3.4.1.4 Others

3.4.1.4.1 Kansas State House of Representatives, Representative Pete DeGraaf, District 82

Representative Pete DeGraaf strongly supports expanding intercity passenger rail along the IH-35 corridor in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. He also supports expanding the Heartland Flyer services north from Oklahoma City into Wichita, Kan. An expanded passenger rail service through these states would benefit the region by improving mobility for business and leisure travelers. Representative DeGraaf also supports expansion of existing rail from Newton, Kan., to Houston, Texas to allow the Heartland Flyer to connect with the existing passenger rail service provided by the Southwest Chief. This would allow for an east-west connection to the Missouri and Colorado region. Mr. DeGraaf encourages the Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas to work together to develop an interconnected passenger rail system that includes bringing the Heartland Flyer north through Guthrie, Ponca City, Mulvane, Wichita, Newton, and Kansas City.

3.4.1.4.2 City of Wichita, Kan., Vice Mayor Pete Meitzner

The vice mayor supports the connection of the Heartland Flyer from Oklahoma City to Wichita to the north and then connection with the Southwest Chief in Newton. Mr. Meitzner would also support a day route between Fort Worth and Kansas City. The city of Wichita and the Kansas Department of Transportation support the extension of the current service and believe this would secure IH-35 as a major transportation and trade route for the three states.

3.4.2 Federal

3.4.2.1 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided recommendations for continued interagency and community coordination and recommendations, information sources, and guidance for various actions and analyses such as:

- Using of the Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol methodology, a product of the Texas Environmental Resource Stewards effort, which uses broad-scale electronic data to identify important ecological areas in Texas.
- Analyzing impacts on water resources, cultural and historic resources, biological resources and wildlife (including wildlife movement impacts), noise and vibration (on residents and wildlife), energy resources, air quality (including greenhouse gases and climate change), environmental justice communities, and invasive species.
- Addressing Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) properties within or near Program corridors.
- Requiring Study-specific locations to be identified as direct impacts and to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.

- Consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to make sure that current and consistent surveying, monitoring, and reporting protocols are applied in protection and mitigation efforts.
- Assessing cumulative impacts
- Assessing growth inducement
- Implementing government-to-government consultation between FRA and tribal governments
- Addressing how the proposed action would support or conflict with land use plans (federal, state, tribal, or land use plans, policies, and controls in the study areas)

3.4.2.2 U.S. Border Patrol

The U.S. Border Patrol, Laredo Sector, is interested in intercity passenger rail service as an alternative mode of transportation for its employees. The U.S. Border Patrol participates in the Public Transportation Incentive Program and views rail as a viable option to include in its program. There are several employees in the Border Patrol/Laredo Sector assigned throughout several areas (Laredo, Cotulla, Hebbronville, Freer, Zapata) who currently reside outside of their duty station and commute every day. The director of security, policy, and compliance with the Laredo Sector requested additional information on the proposed routes, station locations, hours of operation, and fares.

3.4.3 Tribal Coordination

The Delaware Nation submitted a response letter to FRA and expressed interest in the study and study area and confirmed they will be a consulting party. Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma requested additional information to more thoroughly evaluate their area of interest in relation to this program for National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review.

3.4.4 State

3.4.4.1 Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

TPWD provided recommendations to maintain the proposed rail alignments within existing railroad right-of-way whenever possible. If new alignment corridors are required, TPWD recommends constructing the passenger rail along existing roads or major utility corridors to reduce habitat fragmentation. TPWD expressed concern about potential impacts on natural resources that could occur with the proposed Program and recommended early agency consultation at key milestones. They identified potential crossings of the Texas Conservation Action Plan's eco-regions of Texas. These included Cross Timbers, Southern Texas Plains, East Central Texas Plains, Texas Blackland Prairies, Edwards Plateau, and Western Gulf Coastal Plain. Eco-regions in proximity to IH 35 were identified on a map. Input was provided at a coarse scale because the Program study area is still general and broad-based. TPWD requested

ongoing communication with the Program team during the early planning phase of the Study to provide guidance in the avoidance and minimization of impacts on natural resources.

TPWD provided general guidance on avoidance and minimization of impacts on natural resources, including native grasslands/rangelands; riparian corridors including major rivers and tributaries; aquatic resources (freshwater mussels/designated mussel sanctuaries, fish, etc); TPWD-managed and non-managed areas; Species of Greatest Conservation Need habitat; species on the USFWS county lists; and fragmentation of wildlife travel corridors. Additional habitats of concern include whooping crane stopover habitat, USFWS-designated critical habitat, and Colonial Waterbird Rookeries.

TPWD outlined the required procedures to address direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that could adversely affect natural resources. They included recommendations for station landscaping, bridge design to maintain streams, characteristics and aquatic and terrestrial movement, use of best management practices during construction to minimize wetland impacts, use of wildlife crossings, and compliance with applicable state and federal regulations.

TPWD informed TxDOT and FRA that the taking of any TPWD lands, such as state parks and wildlife management areas would require an easement or transfer of property authorized by the TPWD commission. This can be a time-intensive effort and requires compensatory mitigation. Coordination with the Grants-in-Aid Branch of TPWD and local park administrators would be necessary to prevent conversion of grant-assisted lands to other than public outdoor recreation use, as prohibited by Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

TPWD listed the applicable state and federal regulations that would pertain to Program, including federal regulations (Migratory Bird Treaty Act), Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and U.S. Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Applicable state regulations include Chapter 86 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (state-owned streambeds); Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code (Managed Areas); Section 68.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (regulates state-listed species); Sections 12.015, 12.019, and 66.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and Texas Administrative Code 57.251-259 (regulates the introduction and stocking of fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants into public waters of the state).

Finally, TPWD provided general guidance and information sources regarding analysis of impacts on species and habitat (by eco-region) and encouraged close coordination with TPWD once the study area boundaries have been established.

3.4.4.2 Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department

The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department expressed concerns regarding current passenger service not meeting the needs of travelers to Oklahoma and Texas and emphasized improving this service as well as the importance of identifying and providing service to major and critical destinations for travelers. Connectivity and station amenities and services should be

supportive of all passengers and were identified as priorities. Passenger rail service and associated stations were viewed as supporting and promoting livable communities.

3.4.5 Regional

3.4.5.1 Northern Section: Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth

3.4.5.1.1 City of Arlington

The city of Arlington expressed support for the Study and recommended that the alignment be placed as close as possible to the central portion of the north Texas region. Arlington recommended that the stations be placed in the urban centers of cities and towns instead on the outskirts of the region. By placing the stations and the alignment in centrally located regions, ridership and rail service would be improved. Potential impacts on the Arlington region should be addressed as necessary based on the placement of the alignment and stations.

3.4.5.2 Central Section: Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio

No agency comments specific to the Central Section were received during the scoping period.

3.4.5.3 Southern Section: San Antonio to South Texas

3.4.5.3.1 City of Brownsville

The City Commission of the city of Brownsville established a resolution (Resolution No. 2013-027) to endorse the Study and extending intercity passenger rail service to the city of Brownsville. They stated the need to provide intercity rail service between San Antonio and Brownsville to provide travelers better modes of transportation, including residents of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The Study would promote the general welfare and economic development of the Brownsville urbanized area, as well as provide a safe mode of transportation during emergency evacuations of the elderly and handicapped in the event of a hurricane. The resolution indicates that the intercity passenger rail would benefit from the economic development opportunities that would arise with increased tourism in the area.

3.4.5.3.2 City of Laredo

The city manager stated his support of the Program and his preference to include alternative routes that include the city of Laredo. He indicated that the city is the home of the largest and most efficient inland port of entry on the U.S.-Mexico border. In 2012, Laredo handled 3.5 million cross-border truck crossings, which averages approximately 9,842 truck crossings per day. The port also handled in excess of 8.7 million passenger vehicle crossings per day. The total number of vehicles that crossed through the bridge system in 2012 was more than 12 million. There are more than 830 trade-handling and transportation-related businesses in Laredo, in Webb County, Texas. Trade numbers provided by the city showed that Laredo is ranked sixth among all ports in the United States and was the only one to have double-digit growth. International trade and commerce were recognized at the state, national, and international level.

The city manager also indicated that offering high-speed passenger rail in the Laredo and U.S.-Mexico border region would further promote and stimulate trade and tourism with Mexico. It would also provide a safe, convenient, and comfortable mode of travel. He stated that Laredo currently does not have air service to San Antonio or Austin and providing intercity passenger rail service to this southern region of the state would meet a transportation need. It would also improve mobility between Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey, Mexico, enhancing international trade and commerce between the United States, Mexico, and regions to the south.

3.4.5.3.3 City of South Padre Island

The city of South Padre Island expressed support for the extension of intercity passenger rail through the Lower Rio Grande Valley given the major populations centers in this region and the large vehicular border crossings in the Brownsville/U.S.-Mexico border area. The city stated that, based on 2010 census data, the population in the Lower Rio Grande Valley is 430,000 for the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and 800,000 for the Hidalgo County MSA, which is three times greater than the population of Laredo and should be taken into consideration when selecting alternative corridors to study. Border crossings for personal vehicle passengers were estimated by the city at 21.8 million in comparison to Laredo border crossings for vehicles, which is estimated at 8.7 million passenger vehicle crossings per day. Given the existing and projected population, the city of South Padre Island expressed strong support for including intercity passenger rail service in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The city stated that the Lower Rio Grande Valley has three major airports that could serve as hubs/multimodal transfer centers, drawing on a greater population to use high-speed passenger rail service going north. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus. The Lower Rio Grande Valley, and South Padre Island in particular, have multiple tourist destinations that could be served by high-speed passenger rail service and multimodal connections. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus of service.

3.4.5.3.4 Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Brownsville MPO provided the Program team a purpose and need statement as an attachment to its scoping letter. The purpose and need objectives were specific to Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel, and South Padre Island. The attachment indicated the following for development of rail service in this region:

- The existing UPRR corridor should be used to minimize costs associated with establishing a new corridor.
- Cameron County (specifically South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international tourists. Providing rail service to and from Port Isabel to South Padre Island would decrease roadway congestion.

- The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. This growth in population would be well served with the development of intercity rail service to meet future travel demands.
- The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, it makes sense to include rail service at this location to provide travelers an alternative mode of transportation when traveling to areas north of the Brownsville area.
- Residents of Cameron County would benefit economically from the creation of intercity passenger rail service because of job growth and increased tourism.
- Intercity passenger rail service to Brownsville would decrease congestion on U.S. 77, which is designated as a future connector to IH-69.

The Brownsville MPO indicated that providing passenger rail service in this region would expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from south Texas in the event of an approaching hurricane. Providing passenger rail service as an alternative to vehicles during emergency evacuation events would serve the public interest and promote health and the general welfare of the public.

3.4.6 Organizations

3.4.6.1 Northern Section: Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth

No comments from organizations specific to the Northern Section were received during the scoping period.

3.4.6.2 Central Section: Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio

3.4.6.2.1 Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce expressed support of passenger rail service and emphasized the need to connect and include a stop in the city of Waco. Economic growth was acknowledged as important and diverse within the city of Waco. IH-35 was recognized as a heavily congested corridor, and the chamber indicated that passenger rail service would help alleviate this congestion, improve the efficiency of the movement of people and goods, create a safe environment, and improve environmental quality.

3.4.6.3 Southern Section: San Antonio to South Texas

3.4.6.3.1 Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

The Brownsville Chamber of Commerce stated its support for using the existing UPRR corridor to provide passenger rail service and to help reduce roadway congestion and connect to other regions while promoting South Padre Island and the Lower Rio Grande Valley, which was identified as one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The chamber stated that

population growth in the Lower Rio Grande Valley requires the development of passenger rail for accommodating future travel demand needs, which would also promote the general welfare and economic development in the area. Passenger rail service was also recognized as an affordable travel option and an effective method of transportation for the elderly and disabled.

3.5 Summary Comment Tables

Tables 3-1 through Table 3-4 summarize the comments submitted during the scoping process. Within each table, the comments are organized by type of commenter (agency, organization, or individuals) and are generally listed alphabetically by commenter. Tables 3-1a through 3-1f provide comments from elected officials and agencies (respectively U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, International Boundary and Water Commission, state agencies outside Texas, state agencies in Texas, MPOs, and regional and local government agencies. Table 3-2 provides comments from tribes. Table 3-3a and 3-3b provide comments from organizations and businesses, respectively. Table 3.4 provides comments from individuals. All tables reproduce the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and then categorized by topic area.

Table 3-1a: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (United States Environmental Protection Agency)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
Griffin	Debra	<p>The Region 6 office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the March 13, 2013 Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. To assist in the scoping process for this project, we have identified several issues for your attention in the preparation of the EIS and enclosed detailed scoping comments for your consideration. EPA is most concerned about the following issues: alternatives development, impacts to water and biological resources, invasive species management, habitat protection, air quality, indirect and cumulative impacts, climate change, environmental justice, and mitigation. EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed project. Please send one hard copy of the draft EIS and four CDs to this office when completed and submitted for public comment. When you are ready to file the draft EIS with EPA, you may now electronically file it by using our e-NEPA Electronic Filing website http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/submiteis/index.html. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rhonda Smith at 214-665-8126 or John MacFarlane of my staff at 214-665-7491 or macfarlane.john@epa.gov for assistance.</p>	Other

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
Griffin	Debra	Proposed Project In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) intends to prepare a Service Level/Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Texas Department of Transportation and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, to analyze the impacts of a proposed new and/or improved high-speed intercity passenger rail service along an 850-mile corridor extending from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to the south Texas cities of Laredo and Brownsville. This EIS will be used by the FRA in its decision making process to determine whether the project is in the public interest. The FRA will serve as the lead Federal agency under the NEPA process and is responsible for the preparation of the EIS. General EPA suggests utilizing the Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol (REAP) methodology to determine ecologically sensitive areas within the proposed project area that should be avoided or protected. REAP is a product of the Texas Environmental Resource Stewards (TERS) effort which analyzes existing broad-scale electronic data to identify important ecological areas in Texas. For more information on REAP, please call John MacFarlane at 214-665-7491.	Process
Griffin	Debra	Tiering: EPA understands the FRA will use a "tiered" approach to this project. The Tier 1, or Service Level, EIS will assess the broad corridor-wide impacts of a passenger rail system. The more detailed Tier 2 documentation would be required to examine the potential impacts of the site-specific projects that are advanced to implement the Tier 1 alternative selected. Any Tier 2 documents should incorporate by reference the general discussions and concentrate solely on the issues specific to the statement subsequently prepared 1. Statement of Purpose and Need The EIS should clearly identify the underlying purpose and need to which the FRA is responding in proposing the alternatives. The purpose of the proposed	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	action is typically the specific objectives of the activity, while the need for the proposed action may be to eliminate a broader underlying problem or take advantage of an opportunity.	
Griffin	Debra Alternatives Analysis NEP A requires evaluation of reasonable alternatives, including those that may not be within the jurisdiction of the lead agency ³ . A robust range of alternatives will include options for avoiding significant environmental impacts. The EIS should "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives by developing a defined screening process. The screening process should rate each alternative against a set of pre-determined criteria. Each alternative should then be analyzed for its level of impact on a resource, e.g. no effect, negligible effect, minor effect, major effect, significant effect. Only that alternative that effectively meets or best meets all of the screening criteria should be recommended as the preferred alternative. The EIS should provide a clear discussion of the reasons for the elimination of alternatives which are not evaluated in detail. Section IS02.14(d) requires the alternatives analysis to "include the alternative of no action." No Action means the proposed activity would not take place, and the resulting environmental effects from taking no action would be compared with the effects of permitting the proposed activity or an alternative activity to go forward.	Process
Griffin	Debra Affected Environment This section should provide information on the existing resources and condition of the natural and built environment. It is a description of baseline conditions. These baseline conditions provide the context for evaluating environmental consequences and should	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
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	<p>include historical cumulative effects to the extent feasible.</p> <p>Environmental Consequences</p> <p>A majority of EISs contain a well-written section on the affected or existing environment. However, where most EISs fall short is the discussion of the environmental consequences of the proposed project. An analysis should follow an equation. First, what is the action? In this example, the action is filling wetlands. Second, what is the intensity or extent of impacts? In this example, the extent of proposed impacts is five acres. Third, is that significant? The EIS must answer that question and prove that the action of filling five acres of wetlands is not significant by discussing rationale. If the action is significant, then the EIS must contain appropriate mitigation measures.</p>	
Griffin	<p>Debra</p> <p>Water Resources <i>Water Supply and Water Quality</i> Public drinking water supplies and/or their source areas often exist in many watersheds. Source water is water from streams, rivers, lakes, springs, and aquifers that is used as a supply of drinking water. Source water areas are delineated and mapped by the state for each federally regulated public water system. The 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act require federal agencies to protect sources of drinking water for communities. The EIS should address the potential effects of project discharges, if any, on surface water quality. Specific discharges should be identified and potential effects of discharges on designated beneficial uses of affected waters should be analyzed.</p>	Impacts
Griffin	<p>Debra</p> <p><i>Stormwater</i> The EIS should describe the original (natural) drainage patterns in the project locale, as well as the drainage patterns of the area during project operations. Also, the EIS</p>	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
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	<p>should identify whether any components of the proposed project are within a 50 or 100-year floodplain. The EIS should note that, under the Clean Water Act (CWA), any construction project disturbing a land area of one or more acres requires a construction stormwater discharge permit.</p>	
Griffin	<p><i>Waters of the United States, including Wetlands</i> The project applicant should coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine if the proposed project requires a Section 404 permit under the CW A. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands and other special aquatic sites. The EPA recommends the FRA include a jurisdictional delineation for all waters of the U.S., including ephemeral drainages, in accordance with the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual and the December 2006 Region Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual. A jurisdictional delineation will confirm the presence or absence of waters of the U.S. in the project area and help determine whether or not the proposed project would require a Section 404 permit. If a permit is required, the EPA will review the project for compliance with Federal Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Materials (40 CFR 230), promulgated pursuant to Section 404(b)(1) of the CW A. EPA encourages on-going coordination with the USACE during the planning, scoping, and construction phases. The EIS should demonstrate planning efforts to avoid, minimize, and compensate for wetland losses associated with the dredging, dredged material disposal, and other construction and operation activities. The EIS should also include an analysis of the potential for contaminated sediments to adversely impact the aquatic environment during construction and operation of the terminal.</p>	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
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Griffin	Debra	<i>Impaired Waters</i> The CWA requires States to develop a list of impaired waters that do not meet water quality standards, establish priority rankings, and develop action plans, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), to improve water quality. The EIS should provide information on CWA Section 303(d) impaired waters in the project area, if any, and efforts to develop and revise TMDLs. The EIS should describe existing restoration and enhancement efforts for those waters, and any mitigation measures that will be implemented to avoid further degradation of impaired waters.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) - Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 includes a special provision that protects publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites from being acquired for transportation projects. Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (L WCF) states that either the land or park appurtenances acquired with L WCF funds cannot be eliminated or acquired without coordination with the National Park Service and mitigation that replaces the eliminated items. If any 4(f) or 6(f) properties are within or near project corridors, they should be documented. A more thorough evaluation of potential impacts, alternatives, and mitigation should be included in appropriate Tier 2 documentation. Please be aware that vibration and noise can also adversely impact 4(f) and 6(f) properties.	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
Griffin	Debra	Project Specific Locations (PSL) - PSLs outside the right-of-way that would be established to support construction of the roadway such as borrow and disposal sites, staging and storage areas, and concrete and aggregate plants, must be identified as direct impacts. The project team should strive to locate PSLs so they avoid environmentally sensitive areas. Ideally, PSLs should be located in previously disturbed, upland areas.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Biological Resources. Habitat. and Wildlife - The EIS should identify all petitioned and listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that might occur within the project area. The EIS should identify and quantify which species or critical habitat might be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by each alternative and mitigate impacts to these species. EPA recommends that the FRA consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to ensure that current and consistent surveying, monitoring, and reporting protocols are applied in protection and mitigation efforts.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Invasive Species - Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species (February 3, 1999), mandates that federal agencies take actions to prevent the introduction of invasive species, provide for their control, and minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause. Executive Order 13112 also calls for the restoration of native plants and tree species. If the proposed project will entail new landscaping, the EIS should describe how the project will meet the requirements of Executive Order 13112. In addition, we encourage alternative management practices that limit herbicide use (as a last resort), focusing instead on other methods to limit invasive species vegetation and decrease fire risk. Possible alternatives include mowing and weed control fabric, which may need a layer of soil to	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
		prevent degradation due to ultraviolet light.	
Griffin	Debra	Air Quality - The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and non-NAAQS pollutants, criteria pollutant nonattainment areas, and potential air quality impacts of the proposed project (including cumulative and indirect impacts). Such an evaluation is necessary to understand the potential impacts from temporary, long-term, or cumulative degradation of air quality.	Process
Griffin	Debra	The EIS should describe and estimate air emissions from potential construction and maintenance activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize those emissions. EPA recommends an evaluation of the following measures to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics).	Process
Griffin	Debra	<i>Existing Conditions</i> -The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and criteria pollutant nonattainment areas in the vicinity of the project.	Process
Griffin	Debra	<i>Quantify Emissions</i> -The EIS should estimate emissions of criteria and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics) from the proposed project and discuss the timeframe for release of these emissions over the lifespan of the project. The EIS should describe and estimate emissions from potential construction activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize these emissions. • Provide a comparison of proposed project emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO _x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with the general conformity de minimis levels (40 CFR 93.153) for the Dallas/Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	moderate nonattainment area (100 tons/year NO _x , 100 tons/year VOCs) to determine the applicability of general conformity to this project.	
Griffin	<p><i>Specify Emission Sources</i> -The EIS should specify all emission sources by pollutant from mobile sources (on and off-road), stationary sources (including portable and temporary emission units), fugitive emission sources, area sources, and ground disturbance. This source specific information should be used to identify appropriate mitigation measures and areas in need of the greatest attention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify in the EIS any construction phases/other aspects of project alternatives that may already be accounted for in existing Transportation Improvement Program Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Dallas Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS moderate nonattainment area. 	Process
Griffin	<p><i>Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan</i> -The EIS should include a draft Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan and ultimately adopt this plan in the Record of Decision. In addition to all applicable local, state, or federal requirements, we recommend the following control measures (Fugitive Dust, Mobile and Stationary Source and Administrative) be included in the Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan in order to</p>	Process
Griffin	<p>reduce impacts associated with emissions of particulate matter and other toxics from construction-related activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fugitive Dust Source Controls: The EIS should identify the need for a Fugitive Dust Control Plan to reduce Particulate Matter 10 and Fine Particulate Matter 2.5 emissions during 	Mitigation

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<p>construction and operations.</p> <p>We recommend that the plan include these general commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stabilize heavily used unpaved construction roads with a non-toxic soil stabilizer or soil weighting agent that will not result in loss of vegetation, or increase other environmental impacts. • During grading, use water, as necessary, on disturbed areas in construction sites to control visible plumes. • Vehicle speed - Limit speeds to 25 miles per hour on stabilized unpaved roads as long as such speeds do not create visible dust emissions. • Limit speeds to 10 miles per hour or less on unpaved areas within construction sites on un-stabilized (and unpaved) roads. • Post visible speed limit signs at construction site entrances. • Inspect and was construction equipment vehicle tires, as necessary, so they are free of dirt before entering paved roadways, if applicable. • Provide gravel ramps of at least 20 feet in length at tire washing/cleaning stations, and ensure construction vehicles exit construction sites through treated entrance roadways, unless an alternative route has been approved by appropriate lead agencies, if applicable. • Use sandbags or equivalent effective measures to prevent run-off to roadways in 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
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	<p>construction areas adjacent to paved roadways. Ensure consistency with the project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, if such a plan is required for the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweep the first 500 feet of paved roads exiting construction sites, other unpaved roads en route from the construction site, or construction staging areas whenever dirt or runoff from construction activity is visible on paved roads, or at least twice daily (less during periods of precipitation). • Stabilize disturbed soils (after active construction activities are completed) with a non-toxic soil stabilizer, soil weighting agent, or other approved soil stabilizing method. • Cover or treat soil storage piles with appropriate dust suppressant compounds and disturbed areas that remain inactive for longer than 10 days. Provide vehicles (used to transport solid bulk material on public roadways and that have potential to cause visible emissions) with covers. Alternatively, sufficiently wet and load materials onto the trucks in a manner to provide at least one foot of freeboard. • Use wind erosion control techniques (such as windbreaks, water, chemical dust suppressants, and/or vegetation) where soils are disturbed in construction, access and maintenance routes, and materials stock pile areas. Keep related windbreaks in place until the soil is stabilized or permanently covered with vegetation. <p>Mobile and Stationary Source Controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If practicable, lease new, clean equipment meeting the most stringent of applicable Federals or State Standards. In general, commit to the best available emissions control technology. 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<p>Tier 4 engines should be used for project construction equipment to the maximum extent feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where Tier 4 engines are not available, we recommend use of EPA-verified particulate traps, oxidation catalysts and other appropriate controls where suitable to reduce emissions of diesel particulate matter and other pollutants to no more than Tier 2 levels. • Consider using electric vehicles, natural gas, biodiesel, or other alternative fuels during construction and operation phases to reduce the project's criteria and greenhouse gas emissions. • Plan construction scheduling to minimize vehicle trips. • Limit idling of heavy equipment to less than 5 minutes and verify through unscheduled inspections. • Maintain and tune engines per manufacturer's specifications to perform at EPA certification levels, prevent tampering, and conduct unscheduled inspections to ensure these measures are followed. <p>Administrative controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop construction traffic and parking management plan that maintains traffic flow and plan construction to minimize vehicle trips. 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any sensitive receptors in the project area, such as children, elderly, and the infirmed, and specify the means by which impacts to these populations will be minimized (e.g. located construction equipment and staging zones away from sensitive receptors and building air intakes). • Include provisions for monitoring fugitive dust in the fugitive dust control plan and initiate increased mitigation measures to abate any visible dust plumes. 	
Griffin	Debra Climate Change - Scientific evidence supports the concern that continued increases in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activities will contribute to climate change. Global warming is caused by emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases. On December 7, 2009, the EPA determined that Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) contribute to air pollution that "endangers public health and welfare" within the meaning of the Clean Air Act. Higher temperatures and increased winter rainfall will be accompanied by a reduction in snow pack, earlier snowmelts, and increased runoff. Some of the impacts, such as reduced groundwater discharge, and more frequent and severe drought conditions, may impact the proposed projects. The EIS should consider how climate change could potentially influence the proposed project, specifically within sensitive areas, and assess how the projected impacts could be exacerbated by climate change and strategies for climate change adaptation planning. For example, measures for climate change adaptation should consider potentially increased drainage needs.	Process
Griffin	Debra Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Emissions On February 18, 2010, the CEQ issued draft language to Federal Agencies on analyzing the	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
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	<p>effects of GHG emissions and climate change when describing the environmental effects of a proposed agency action in accordance with NEPA. CEQ's draft guidance defines GHG emissions in accordance with Section 19(i) of Executive Order 13514 Federal Leadership in Environment, Energy, and Economic Performance (October 5, 2009) to include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (C~), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbon (HFCs), perfluorocarbon (PFCs), and sulfurhexafluoride (SF 6). Because CO₂ is the reference gas for climate change based on their potential to absorb heat in the atmosphere, measures of non-CO₂ GHGs should be reflected as CO₂-equivalent (Core) values. EPA supports evaluation and disclosure of GHG emissions and climate change effects resulting from the proposed project during all project phases, including</p> <p>(1) pre-construction (e.g., transportation, mobilization, and staging), (2) construction, (3) operation, (4) maintenance, and (5) decommissioning. We recommend that the GHG emission accounting/inventory include each proposed stationary source (e.g., power plant, liquefaction facility, compressor and metering stations, etc.) and mobile emissions source (e.g., heavy equipment, supply barges, rail transports, etc.). We also recommend that the EIS establish reasonable spatial and temporal boundaries for this analysis, and that the EIS quantify and disclose the expected annual direct and indirect GHG emissions for the proposed action. In the analysis of direct effects, we recommend that the EIS quantify cumulative emissions over the life of the project, discuss measures to reduce GHG emissions, including consideration of reasonable alternatives. EPA recommends that the EIS consider mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to reduce action related GHG emissions, and include a discussion of cumulative effects of GHG emissions related to the proposed action.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
Griffin	Debra	<p>Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste/Solid Waste</p> <p>The EIS should address potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of hazardous waste from construction and operation of the proposed project. The document should identify projected hazardous waste types and volumes, and expected storage, disposal, and management plans. It should identify any hazardous materials sites within the project's study area and evaluate if those sites would impact the project in any way.</p>	Process
Griffin	Debra	<p>Coordination with Tribal Governments</p> <p>Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments (November 6, 2000), was issued in order to establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications, and to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes. If applicable, the EIS should describe the process and outcome of government-to-government consultation between the FAA and with any and each of the tribal governments within the project area, issues that were raised (if any), and how those issues were addressed in the selection of the proposed alternative. Because this project will have a portion of the proposed rail line in Oklahoma, EPA strongly recommends that the FRA initiate consultation with Tribal governments as early as possible because of the unique legal relationship the U.S. Government has with federally recognized tribes based on the Constitution, treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and court decisions. This relationship includes recognition of the right of tribes as sovereign governments to self-determination, and an acknowledgment of the federal government's trust responsibility to tribes. The precise nature of this relationship will vary depending upon the identity of the tribes and nature of</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
United States Environmental Protection Agency			
		trust resources involved.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>National Historic Preservation Act</p> <p>Consultation for tribal cultural resources is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Historic properties under the NHP A are properties that are included in the National Register of Historic Places or that meet the criteria for the National Register. Section 106 of the NHPA requires a federal agency, upon determining that activities under its control could affect historic properties, consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO). Under NEPA, any impacts to tribal, cultural, or other treaty resources must be discussed and mitigated. Section 106 of the NHP A requires that Federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on cultural resources, following regulation in 36 CFR 800.</p> <p>The EIS should address the existence of cultural and historic resources, including Indian sacred sites, in the project areas, and address compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. It should also address Executive Order 13007, distinguish it from Section 106 of the NHPA, and discuss how the FRA will avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity, accessibility, or use of sacred sites, if they exist. The EIS should provide a summary of all coordination with Tribes and with the SHPO/THPO, including identification of NRHP eligible sites, and development of a Cultural Resource Management Plan.</p>	Process
Griffin	Debra	<p>Environmental Justice and Impacted Communities</p> <p>Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<p>Populations and Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994) and the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice (August 4, 2011) directs federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations, allowing those populations a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Guidance 7 by CEQ clarifies the terms low-income and minority population (which includes Native Americans) and describes the factors to consider when evaluating disproportionately high and adverse human health effects. The EIS should include an evaluation of environmental justice populations within the geographic scope of the projects. If such populations exist, the EIS should address the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations, and the approaches used to foster public participation by these populations. Assessment of the project's impact on minority and low-income populations should reflect coordination with those affected populations. The EIS should also describe outreach and public involvement conducted to all other communities that could be affected by the project, since rural communities may be among the most vulnerable to health risks associated with the project. Please refer to EPA's EJ website⁸ for additional information.</p>	
Griffin	<p>Debra</p> <p>Indirect and Cumulative Impacts</p> <p>The indirect impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and communities in the vicinity of the project are affected by the proposed project later in time or farther removed in distance. We recommend focusing on induced growth and development and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.</p> <p>The cumulative impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<p>communities in the vicinity of the project have already been, or will be, affected by past, present, or future activities in the project area. These resources should be characterized in terms of their response to change and capacity to withstand stresses. Trends data should be used to establish a baseline for the affected resources, to evaluate the significance of historical degradation, and to predict the environmental effects of the project components. For the cumulative impacts assessment, we recommend focusing on resources of concern or resources that are "at risk" and/or are significantly impacted by the proposed project, before mitigation. For this project, the FRA should conduct a thorough assessment of the cumulative impacts to aquatic and biological resources and air quality, especially in the context of the other developments occurring and proposed in the area.</p> <p>The EIS should also delineate appropriate geographic boundaries, including natural ecological boundaries, whenever possible, and should evaluate the time period of the project's effects. For instance, for a discussion of cumulative wetland impacts, a natural geographic boundary such as a watershed or sub-watershed could be identified. The time period, or temporal boundary, could be defined as from 1972 (when the CWA established Section 404) to the present.</p> <p>Please refer to the Council on Environmental Quality's "Considering Cumulative Effects Under the National Environmental Policy Act: and EPA's "Consideration Of Cumulative Impacts In EPA Review of NEPA" Documents for assistance with identifying appropriate boundaries and identifying appropriate past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects to include in the analysis.</p>	
Griffin	<p>Debra</p> <p>Mitigation and Monitoring</p> <p>Within the process of developing the EIS, if impacts to waters of the U.S. and wetlands</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
United States Environmental Protection Agency		
	<p>require a USACE permit and are significant, a draft mitigation plan should also be developed and made available to EPA prior to the release of the Final EIS. A draft mitigation plan should strive for avoidance and minimization first and should outline appropriate compensation and enhancement measures for unavoidable impacts to wetlands and special aquatic sites. A draft plan should include the evaluation of the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative, according to the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines and should outline a monitoring plan. Please note that any compensatory mitigation plan must fully comply with the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule (Mitigation Rule) effective June 9, 2008.</p>	
Griffin	<p>Debra</p> <p>Coordination with Land Use Planning Activities</p> <p>The EIS should discuss how the proposed action would support or conflict with the objectives of federal, state, tribal or local land use plans, policies and controls in the project areas. The term "land use plans" includes all types of formally adopted documents for land use planning, conservation, zoning and related regulatory requirements. Proposed plans not yet developed should also be addressed if they have been formally proposed by the appropriate government body in a written form (CEQ's Forty Questions, #23b).</p>	Process
<p>^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.</p>		

Table 3-1b: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (International Boundary And Water Commission)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FEDERAL AGENCIES			
International Boundary And Water Commission (USIBWC)			
Little Owl	Rebecca	Please include the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) on the announcement of the availability of the Draft Service Level EIS. The project corridor may cross USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project in the service areas of McAllen and Harlingen.	Other
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.			

Table 3-1c: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (State Agencies outside Texas)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES		
Kansas House, District 82		
DeGraaf	Rep. Pete I would like to echo my support of expanding passenger rail along the I-35 corridor. I serve as the Chairman of the General Government Budget committee in the Kansas House of Representatives and also serve on the House Appropriations committee. I and other representatives in the Kansas legislature are strongly supportive of developing a passenger rail partnership between Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. We see great value in extending the Heartland Flyer north from Oklahoma City into Wichita Kansas.	Support
DeGraaf	Rep. Pete Expanding north to Newton Kansas would allow for productive business travel along the I-35 corridor all the way down to Houston Texas and also allow the Heartland Flyer to connect with the already existing passenger rail Southwest Chief going east to west into Missouri and Colorado. The use of trains for vacation and business travel is becoming more popular and ability to connect existing rail service seems to make good business sense. More and more businesses understand that rail travel is restful and far more productive than traveling by car or air. It is my hope that Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas will work together in developing an interconnected passenger rail system that includes bring the Heartland Flyer north through Guthrie, Ponca City, Mulvane, Wichita, Newton, and into Kansas City.	Local and regional economy
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.		

Table 3-1d: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (State Agencies within Texas)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
Schmerler	Jessica	See attachments (map and email)	
Schmerler	Jessica	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has reviewed preliminary information received at the first Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Agency Scoping Meeting on March 27, 2013, and offers the following information for consideration when moving forward with this project and preparing a service-level Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).	Process
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Project Description</p> <p>The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) commenced in winter 2013 and is expected to be completed by fall 2014. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level EIS. The EIS will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor (called a service-level EIS). The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor. Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding. Hi -speed passenger rail has been under consideration in Texas since the late 1980s. In the 1990s, a private consortium was awarded a franchise to design, build, and operate high-speed rail in the state. Although demand appeared to support</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
		the development of high-speed rail, lack of funding and other obstacles prevented the project from moving forward. Since then, other proposals for high-speed passenger rail in Texas have been submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), with each proposal showing revenues that exceed operating expenses but requiring some amount of funding to build.	
Schmerler	Jessica	In 2000, FRA designated the South Central corridor, including the area from San Antonio to Dallas/Fort Worth, as a future high-speed rail corridor. In 2010, TxDOT received a grant from FRA to study passenger rail in this corridor. The TOPRS will consider a range of passenger rail options for the 850-mile corridor. Today’s passenger rail service can range in speed from 79 miles per hour to more than 220 miles per hour. The different speed options will influence ridership, the number and location of stations, and costs. TxDOT and FRA will make decisions about TOPRS after reviewing input from the public and other public agencies.	Process
Schmerler	Jessica	Recommendation: TPWD recommends using existing railroad right-of-way (ROW) whenever possible. Where new construction is the only feasible option, TPWD recommends constructing the passenger rail along existing roads, pipelines, transmission lines, or other utility ROWs and easements to reduce habitat fragmentation. By utilizing previously disturbed existing utility corridors, county roads, highway, and railroad ROWs, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources would be mitigated by avoiding and/or minimizing the impacts to undisturbed	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES		
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department		
	habitats.	
Schmerler	<p>Jessica</p> <p>Purpose and Scale of this Analysis</p> <p>The purpose of this letter is to communicate to TxDOT/FRA the general concerns TPWD has regarding potential impacts to natural resources from the construction of the proposed passenger rail. This letter is not intended to replace coordination with TPWD as the proposed project progresses. However, TPWD hopes to make TxDOT/FRA aware of potential concerns early in the planning process to help guide the design and location of the proposed passenger rail and minimize adverse impacts to natural resources to the extent possible.</p>	Process
Schmerler	<p>Jessica</p> <p>The proposed passenger rail may potentially cross the following Texas Conservation Action Plan’s (TCAP) eco-regions of Texas as shown on the attached map. (Including)Cross Timbers, Southern Texas Plains, East Central Texas Plains, Texas Blackland Prairies, Edwards Plateau and Western Gulf Coastal Plain. TPWD reviewed the eco-regions of Texas as designated by the TCAP. The TCAP’s purpose is to provide a statewide "roadmap" for research, restoration, management, and recovery projects addressing Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and important habitats. SGCN include terrestrial, freshwater, and marine birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, fishes, plants, and plant communities. The goal of the plan is ultimately to conserve and improve the status of these species and, as possible, prevent listings under the Endangered Species Act. More information on the TCAP can be found at</p>	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES		
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department		
	<p>hgp://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/. Potential impacts to natural resources will generally vary by eco-region. This letter will attempt to address some of these potential impacts on a regional scale. Because a study area has not yet been determined, eco-regions that are traversed by IH 35 are included on the attached TCAP eco-region map. An additional eco-region that is not traversed by IH 35 was added (Western Gulf Coastal Plain eco-region) because there are several potential passenger rail routes in South Texas as displayed on the TOPRS corridor map that was issued at the Agency Scoping Meeting.</p>	
Schmerler	<p>Jessica</p> <p>Information regarding natural resources and potential impacts is provided at a coarse scale, and general recommendations that apply to all eco-regions have been provided for your planning reference. As this project progresses and a study area is determined, it is recommended that TxDOT/F RA contact TPWD early in the planning process for site-specific information and recommendations.</p>	Process
Schmerler	<p>Jessica</p> <p>General Recommendations — All Eco-regions</p> <p>Below are bulleted lists of potential natural resource concerns that could be a result of the proposed project and recommendations to minimize adverse impacts. The recommendations and potential natural resource concerns listed below are applicable to all eco-regions listed above.</p> <p>Natural Resource Concerns: Clearing of woody vegetation, Introduction of non-native species in native grasslands/rangelands, Clearing/fragmentation of riparian corridors (route would cross most major rivers and many tributaries), Impacts to" aquatic species (freshwater mussels/designated mussel sanctuaries, fish, etc.), Direct</p>	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
		and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to TPWD managed areas — taking of TPWD property, Direct and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to non-TPWD managed areas (federal, city, county, non-governmental organizations, etc.), Impacts to SGCN from TCAP as well as species shown on TPWD and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) county lists, Fragmentation of wildlife travel corridors, Removal of Whooping Crane stopover habitat in its migration corridor, Taking of USFWS designated critical habitat, Impacts to Colonial Waterbird Rookeries.	
Schmerler	Jessica	Recommendations: Use native vegetation and water conservation in station landscaping, Use bridge spans rather than culverts where feasible to retain stream, characteristics and aquatic and terrestrial movement, Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction in wetlands/temporary crossings to minimize impacts, Construct wildlife crossings, particularly in wildlife travel corridors, Comply with applicable state and federal regulations (listed below).	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Threatened and Endangered Species The TPWD county lists of rare and protected species may be obtained online at http://www.fgpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/maps/gis/ris/endangered species.phtml . The USFWS should be contacted for guidance, permitting, survey protocols, and mitigation for federally listed species. For USFWS threatened and endangered species lists by county please visit http://www.fws.gov/endangered/ .	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Managed Areas	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES		
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department		
	<p>Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code requires demonstration of no feasible or prudent alternative to taking of TPWD lands such as State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). If the proposed passenger rail will cross any TPWD lands it will require an easement or transfer of property authorized by the TPWD Commission. This process can take several months to a year, and compensatory mitigation will be required. If the proposed project has the potential to impact a TPWD State Park, please contact David Riskind at (512) 389-4897 and if the project has the potential to impact a WMA, please contact DCI111iS Gissell at (512) 389-4407. Please note that Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code also applies to public areas that are managed by counties and cities. Coordination with the Grants-In-Aid Branch of TPWD and local park administrators is necessary to prevent conversion of grant-assisted lands to other than public outdoor recreation use as prohibited by Section 6(1) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.</p>	
Schmerler	<p>Jessica</p> <p>State and Federal Regulations State and federal regulations that would pertain to the proposed project include (but are not limited to) the following: Federal Regulations: Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, U.S. Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.</p>	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
Schmerler	Jessica	State Regulations: Chapter 86 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (State-owned Streambeds), Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code (Managed Areas), Section 68.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (Regulates State-listed Species), Sections 12.015, 12.019, and 66.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 57.251-.259 (regulates the introduction and stocking of fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants into public waters of the state).	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Recommendation: TPWD recommends TxDOT/F RA strive to avoid impacts to potential natural resource concerns applicable to all eco-regions listed above and address avoidance, minimization, and mitigation plans for impacts to these resources in the service-level EIS. TPWD also recommends TxDOT/FRA address compliance with the above-listed state and federal regulations, as well as any others that pertain to the proposed passenger rail project, in the service- level EIS.	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	General Recommendations by Eco-region Cross Timbers Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Cross Timbers eco-region are listed below. Clearing of mesquite brush (northern part of the eco-region provides suitable habitat for the Texas kangaroo rat and Texas horned lizard), Clearing of woody vegetation/fragmentation (southern pan of the eco-region, provides suitable habitat for Black-capped Vireo (BCVI) and Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA), Wintering bald eagles, Interior least tem habitat (along and within the Red River).	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
Schmerler	Jessica	Texas Blackland Prairies Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Texas Blackland Prairies, Eco-region are listed below. Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland-dependent species, Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat.	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Edwards Plateau Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Edwards Plateau eco-region are listed below. Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat, Karst species (salamanders and karst invertebrates), Bats (direct impacts to roosts), Edwards aquifer - water quality, Spring-fed streams.	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Southern Texas Plains Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Southern Texas Plains eco-region are listed below. Rare and protected plants, Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat), Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi, Interior Least Tern (in and near Laredo, e.g., Lake Casa Blanca, Rio Grande), Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., in Coastal Sand Plain), Clearing/fragmentation of unique riparian corridors (i.e., ramaderos), Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks, Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas horned lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake), Noise and lights in an otherwise minimally developed landscape.	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
STATE AGENCIES			
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department			
Schmerler	Jessica	Western Gulf Coastal Plains Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Western Gulf Coastal Plains eco-region are listed below. Large unfragmented tracts under single ownership/management, Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., Coastal Sand Plain), Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat), Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi, Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks, Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas homed lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake)	Impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	East Central Texas Plains Potential natural resource concerns associated with the East Central Texas Plains eco-region are listed below. Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland dependent species, Houston toad critical habitat. Please also refer to the email that was sent to Brian Hausknecht of CH2M Hill on March 11, 2013 regarding recommended Geographic Information System (GIS) data to assist in the TOPRS analysis. This email contains several GIS data sources that pertain to the above-listed natural resource concerns. This email is attached for your reference. TPWD appreciates the opportunity to provide preliminary input during the first agency scoping period for the Texas — Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. Please contact me if you have any questions.	Impacts
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.			

Table 3-1e: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (Metropolitan Planning Organizations)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES			
Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization			
Lund	Mark	On behalf of the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am forwarding a Purpose and Needs Statement (Attachment One) herein, concerning the Passenger Rail Study. In addition to the points outlined in the aforementioned attachment, there is another factor worthy of consideration.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Lund	Mark	Specifically, provision of passenger rail service can help expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from South Texas, in the event of an approaching hurricane. This objective serves the public interest and promotes the health and general welfare of the community. The current plans or arrangements of evacuating persons via airlifts is inefficient and dependent on the existence of favorable weather conditions. (see attachment)	Residents, businesses, and visitors
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.			

Table 3-1f : Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Elected Officials and Agencies (Regional and Local Government Agencies)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES			
City of South Padre Island			
Newman	Marcy	TxDOT has indicated the primary intent of High Speed Passenger Rail Service is to connect downtown to downtown on the major cities on the route – OKC, DFW, Austin and San Antonio, but the southern terminus in flux. During the Public Scoping meeting in Harlingen, it was suggested that Laredo is the preferred option. 1. The population centers in Lower Rio Grande Valley greater than 430K (2010 census) for Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and greater than 800K (2010 census) for the Hidalgo County MSA. These are more than triple that in the Laredo /Webb County area (250K (2010 census)) and the border crossings for personal vehicles / personal vehicle passengers (21.8M) are far in excess of Laredo (8.8M) as well. This population and border crossing differential warrants additional study and consideration for High Speed Passenger Rail service and connections to the Lower Rio Grande Valley.	Routes
Newman	Marcy	2. The Lower Rio Grande Valley has three major airports that could serve as hubs / multi-modal transfer centers drawing on a greater population to utilize HSPR service going north – This should be considered when determining the southern terminus. 3. The Lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island in particular, has multiple tourist destinations that could be served by HSPR service and multi-modal connections. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus of service.	Travel options
City of Arlington			
Winkelblech	Alicia	The City of Arlington is supportive of the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. We	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	<p>feel it is in the best interest of the region to run this service as close to the middle of the North Texas region as possible. Stations should not be located on the outskirts of the region. This will maximize accessibility to the service and improve ridership. As the third largest city in the DFW region, it is requested that Arlington be specifically included in discussions regarding potential impacts.</p>	
Vice-Mayor of Wichita, KS		
Meitzner	<p>Pete</p> <p>I am the Vice-Mayor of Wichita, KS and I have been the person leading our charge to connect the Flyer from Oklahoma City, north, through Wichita, KS and connect with the SW Chief in Newton KS. Also, a day route between Fort Worth to Kansas City as a separate route would be highly desired, we understand the first phase to prove the validity of the expansion of passenger rail service would be the extension of the current service. This could be done at a minimal cost, and we in Wichita, are eager and willing to help support this, along with Kansas Department of Transportation. This will prove to further secure the IH-35 corridor as a transportation and trade route for our 3 states, and more. Thank you for your consideration and I urge the study to include this expansion.</p>	Routes
City of Brownsville		
Martinez	<p>Antonio</p> <p>RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013-027, M A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Brownsville Endorsing the Establishment of Passenger Rail Service to Brownsville, Texas. WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Brownsville has determined that establishment of passenger rail service between San Antonio, Texas and Brownsville, Texas is needed to afford travel choices for residents of the lower Rio Grande Valley; and WHEREAS, the City Commission hereby finds that proposed passenger rail service between Brownsville and San Antonio, Texas will promote both</p>	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	<p>the general welfare and economic development of the Brownsville urbanized area; and WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes that having passenger rail service available to evacuate elderly persons and persons with disabilities in the event of an approaching hurricane would serve the public interest and constitute an efficient and safe means of accommodating the special needs of these individuals; and WHEREAS, that the residents of South Texas will benefit from the economic development opportunities that will accrue due to increased tourism to this area by virtue of Passenger Rail services. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Commission of the City of Brownsville endorses the establishment of needed passenger rail service to and from Brownsville, Texas. FURTHERMORE, City of Brownsville staff will forward this resolution to TxDOT staff as evidence of the need for such rail improvements, in connection with the on-going Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. Approved this 16TH day of April 2013.</p>	
Laredo City Manager		
Villarreal	<p>Carlos</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments regarding the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. In discussing high-speed passenger rail that part of the intent of the federal legislation regarding high-speed passenger rail was to include Laredo in a rail corridor. You may ask why Laredo should be included in a high-speed passenger rail project. The City of Laredo is the home of the largest, most-efficient inland port of entry on the U.S./Mexico border. In 2012, Laredo, Webb County, handled 3,592,428 cross border truck crossings. That averages out to about 9,842 truck crosses a day. The port also handled in excess of 8,785,366 passenger vehicle crossings. The total number of vehicles that crossed through the bridge system in 2012 is in excess of 12 million. There are more than 830 trade handling and transportation-related businesses in Laredo,</p>	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	Webb County, Texas. Current trade numbers show that Laredo is ranked sixth of all ports in the United States and the only one to have double-digit growth out of all of the district. The significance of the flow of commerce through Laredo is not just a local or state issue. It has been recognized at the highest levels of the federal government as being in the national interest. The need to keep up with the ever-increasing flow of international trade through Laredo, Webb County, clearly outpaces the funding that is available.	
Villarreal	Carlos I see high-speed passenger rail as offering many benefits to Laredo, Webb County, the state of Texas and the nation. High-speed passenger rail is a way to further promote and stimulate trade and tourism with Mexico. It offers a safe, convenient and comfortable way to travel.	Benefits of train travel
Villarreal	Carlos High-speed passenger rail delivers a new mobility which would relieve congestion on the state highway system and reduce state highway maintenance costs. Rail also offers a reduced impact on the environment thereby preserving air quality.	Travel options
Villarreal	Carlos High-speed passenger rail would be an economic boon to south Texas by creating hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs building rail infrastructure and maintaining and possibly manufacturing rail cars. In closing, it is obvious to those of us in Laredo, a city which has no air service to San Antonio or Austin, that high-speed passenger rail would fill this transportation gap. It would also complement the flow of traffic between Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey. Finally, it would enhance and benefit international trade and commerce between the United States, Mexico and points south.	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments		Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES			
Villarreal	Carlos	The City of Laredo supports a high-speed passenger rail project in south Texas and is geographically the best suited to handle future passenger rail service. Thank you.	Support
Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department			
Atkinson	Eve	Thank you for notifying our agency, the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, regarding the study on the service level of rail passenger service. We are concerned that the current passenger rail service is not meeting the needs of travelers to Oklahoma, but also service to areas between Oklahoma City and Texas. The mission of Oklahoma Tourism is to make tourism an even bigger, more vital part of our economy. We concentrate on three areas to energize our state's tourism industry: Enhancing Oklahoma's image to accurately reflect who we are through advertizing and addressing travel perceptions. We must rely on each other to advance tourism in Oklahoma. Our role is to continue building partnerships and assisting tourism leaders.	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
Atkinson	Eve Government funding of passenger rail infrastructure: What are the benefits from government supported passenger rail service for leisure travel? Can it be justified as an efficient way to move vacationers? Is mass transportation for leisure trips a “greater good” for society? There are studies showing highway systems are subsidized. Who benefits the most from highway construction and maintenance? Many highway projects are built using an 80/20 match, with USDOT programs. Is it sustainable to continue increasing the width of highways beyond a certain number of lanes? Is safety culture (benefiting travelers and employees) a benefit from government management of rail transit? According to Progressive Railroading (August 2012), AMTRAK is working to expand a program to improve the railroad's safety culture; improving workforce development initiatives; and investing in more systems and technology that help reduce energy consumption and operating expenses. Private corporations and government are interested in safety when worker insurance rates increase. Perhaps auto insurance companies would invest in passenger rail if traffic accidents are reduced.	Funding
Atkinson	Eve Effects on the natural environment (such and water quality and habitat) 1) Routes avoiding Oklahoma State Parks, Federally funded municipal parks and wildlife refuges should be prioritized 2) Ways to accommodate wildlife / livestock crossing areas should be catalogued for future consideration. 3) Ways to accommodate wetlands should be catalogued, and rated.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
Atkinson	Eve Known needs for funding and an implementation schedule: Improve the reliability of the OKC-Fort Worth route. Make it an efficient mode of travel, rather than a traveling amusement ride. (Ad hoc comments) Passenger and freight trains travel at different speeds on the same corridor. Use Positive Train Control. Support the AMTRAK strategic plan: The funding stability that's given managers the opportunity to think big-picture will help them execute the plan. No longer worried about whether the organization will exist by the next fiscal year, Amtrak managers now can focus on carrying out longer-term strategies. Plus, Boardman (the current director) has been on the job for almost four years and had plenty of time to observe the railroad's operations and gain a firm understanding of what's working and what's not. (Progressive Railroading, August 2012) Modernize the cars: "The train is relatively old. If you expect to use electronic devices, make sure to arrive early so you can snag a seat with an outlet." (www.redriverhistorian.com /readingtherails.html)	Travel options
Atkinson	Eve We are addressing the need to revitalize the Oklahoma State Parks System because it is an integral part of tourism and one of the most significant recreational components for our citizens. It takes a significant amount of our attention as we continue to protect and preserve their ecosystems. I work with the Recreational Trails Program and Land and Water Conservation Fund, both Federal Programs to develop trails and parks across the State of Oklahoma in Oklahoma State Parks and in municipalities in Oklahoma. I participate in the grant application evaluation process and American Disabilities Act compliance. I travel to around 20 projects per year. I have a BA in Geography from the University of Colorado, 1979. I have 20 years of experience with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. I also worked with the City of Boulder Planning Department, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments, in the Transportation	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	Planning Department.	
Atkinson	Eve Priorities to address regarding the purpose of the study: Improving the service. The service exists between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, but there needs to be action on improving the service. If there have not been studies reporting the level of customer satisfaction, then there should be. Ad hoc comments say it needs to be more reliable. An investigation on the Amtrak site states it meets the time schedule 80% of the time. The site says the delays are due to repairs of the track, rather than the presence of other trains (AMTRAK website), March 2013. More frequency: Viewing Trip Advisor, a travel website, a Texas visitor points out a short trip to Oklahoma City requires a two night stay, as the train arrives late and leaves too early the next day for any meaningful sightseeing. Therefore, a weekend trip from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City would begin Friday afternoon and end Sunday afternoon. In contrast, using a passenger car requires only a one-night stay and the cost for gasoline and parking are distributed among the number of passengers, whereas the cost of train tickets per passenger outweigh the gas and parking costs.	Affordability
Atkinson	Eve Consider the destinations of the travelers. Sources of factual information may already exist regarding the number and frequency of trips through origin-destination studies in Geography or Marketing departments of major Oklahoma and Texas Universities. Oklahoma Destinations. Are there more car trips, therefore more demand, for rail services to Oklahoma rather than from Oklahoma? The population of the metro area of Dallas-Fort Worth is larger than the population of the state of Oklahoma population. Furthermore, there are points of origination beyond the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area such as Houston, Austin, and San Antonio. Consider also, Oklahoma has two cities for	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	<p>main destinations, the Oklahoma metro and Tulsa metro. Currently, only Oklahoma City has a rail service. If there is no service further than Oklahoma City, a potential market of passengers will be ignored. There will probably be rail service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa in the next 20 years, so we encourage development of a more reliable, frequent and faster service to Oklahoma City. Demand for Oklahoma destinations are sports events (collegiate football, basketball (professional and collegiate), outdoor sports activities such as bass fishing and OHV recreation, family visits/duties, scholarly activities at the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University and Casino experiences. The participants in outdoor vehicle sports, horse racing or rodeo events probably would not generate rail passengers due to the amount of equipment needed to transport, but the fans would be likely to use the service. The main generators of commerce in downtown Oklahoma City are within 4 to 5 blocks of each other. Among the most notable are the Federal Court, various Federal offices, the Devon building, the Devon Arena Events Center, Sand Ridge, USGS Geologic Library, the Oklahoma City Art Museum, Oklahoma City Memorial, the Skirvin Hilton Hotel, the Oklahoma City Metro Library (holds research reference materials) and the Oklahoma County Court house, and Oklahoma County Jail. These are within walking distance of the train station. The State Capital and many State Departments, the Oklahoma History Museum (for history research) and University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Children’s Hospital are one mile from the train station, but they are not within walking distance due to a hill and exposure to car traffic.</p>	
Atkinson	Eve Origination points south of San Antonio: Which area generates more trips to Oklahoma: Corpus Christi, Brownsville/ McAllen or Laredo? Is there a demand for leisure trips from south Texas to Oklahoma? Research regarding the number of trips and the	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	<p>destination of travelers needs to be shown. Perhaps the data or studies can be found at Texas A&M University from the Texas Transportation Institute. Texas Destinations: Regarding Oklahomans as a source of passengers, Oklahomans travel to Texas for cultural activities (music, sports, shopping, and heritage tourism opportunities, but also for corporate regional meetings and governmental offices because it is a regional center. What is the most frequent destination of Texas-bound travelers? Is the airport (DFW), Dallas or Fort Worth the most frequent destination from the Oklahoma metro? There is a demand for passenger service to the airport because DFW is the hub for the Oklahoma and Texas area. The closest hubs for non-stop service other than Will Rogers are DFW, Houston and St. Louis. Other airports (Wichita, Tulsa, Dallas-Love, Amarillo, Kansas City) feed into these three (DFW, Houston, St. Louis) for the most part. However, the cost per passenger can again outweigh family use of a passenger car to the airport. For example flights from DFW or Dallas Love airport are generally cheaper than flights from Oklahoma City, but if the train costs more than the plane there is no incentive.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
Atkinson	<p>Eve</p> <p>The trip purpose: How important is it to provide service to quasi leisure trip demand? Quasi leisure can be described as a mixed purpose trip, such as medical visits, shopping trips for specialties, “leisure business” such as conventions, music or dance competitions, pageants, Latin dancing, ball room dancing, chapter meetings in clubs and organizations such as professional organizations but can serve purposes of tourism. The payoffs for taking the train would be less driving stress (according to the Texas Transportation Institute, The Dallas-Fort Worth area is the 6th worst of the nation, http://www.weather.com/activities/driving/slideshow/traffic.html?page=10&scheme=image-horiz-plain.css) Leisure business would require adding stops along the route to a major destination, before the metro area is reached. Fostering a mixed purpose trip, (meeting passenger needs) would require more stops to include useful destinations, combining utilitarian destinations with attractions. It is possible to serve the work ethic of “work then play” or “work hard, play hard” by providing opportunities to arrive at a multi- purpose destination. An intermediate hub with light rail links allowing dispersal of trips may work. Altering the schedule to allow all the passengers along the way from Oklahoma City to a point in Texas to transfer to high speed rail throughout the Texas metropolis, could allow passengers to arrive by 10 am in the morning to the airport, to the Dallas Convention Center or to downtown Fort Worth. This would be the ideal scenario. A study or report on frequent destinations from other studies could support this scenario.</p>	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
Atkinson	<p>Eve</p> <p>Livability: Neighborhood and regional traffic conditions How can the service be improved to make the communities where the passenger train has stations more livable? There are two components of availability which support livability, frequency of service and a well designed site. If the train does not arrive during waking hours (6 am to midnight), it is as if the service does not exist. Also contributing to low use rates is poor traffic circulation. If the station site is congested, the parking is complicated, the site is unkempt, complex or requires walking through bus or traffic drop off lanes, it is inaccessible. Furthermore, a train station could be a point of avoidance, similar to a city bus station, if it is designed poorly and not well maintained. If the area appears unsafe people will not want to use the service until gasoline prices or costly parking or lack of parking cause a hardship. Off site design is not a part of this study, but on site design and improved connections needs to be.</p>	Safety
Atkinson	<p>Eve</p> <p>Site and Design criteria Stations and stops need to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. Also include close temporary parking for seniors and families. Cross walks should be well marked, with crossing signal lights imbedded in the adjacent streets. There should be some outlying parking, a well-lit and open layout to facilitate the change of travel mode. Include accessible service counters, ramps instead of stairs, signs to answer basic questions like arrival and departure times, fares, restroom locations, well marked waiting areas and benches or sitting platforms. Photos of the inside of the rail cars and carry-on stowage should be posted to prepare people to load. Compensate for a lack of an attendant at the OKC AMTRAK station by providing auto kiosks, or a limited choice computer to make information available 24/7. Provide other self service facilities to increase travelers’ knowledge and comfort. Coordinate plans with other mass transit modes: Include improvements supporting various modes of</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
	<p>travel. Design the site to accommodate buses, shuttle and taxi pick up, drop off lanes separated from passenger car drop off and loading, and temporary parking. Relocating tracks is not as flexible as providing shuttles to improve connectivity. A flexible, demand driven destination shuttle to take people to areas more than 4 blocks away but less than 2 miles away could work. People would wait in “bench rows” according to their destination, and which ever fills up first, leaves first. A transit logistics manager could shift the routes to allow an infrequent destination to “piggy back” on a more frequent one. Studies have been done showing the most efficient way to load an airplane, so a transportation logistics expert could develop a flexible route system.</p>	
Atkinson	<p>Eve</p> <p>Measures to share investment costs in the Mass transit system: Investigate ways the mass transit industry and corporations could contribute to costs of passenger rail infrastructure and benefit from passenger rail service. Auto and health insurance companies could benefit from reduced traffic congestion on highways which generate accidents. Mass transit can reduce the number of accidents and injuries. Again, research existing studies performed at Universities and Institutions to present the facts. Oil and gas companies can be given incentives to invest in mass transit linking their investment to tradeoffs for carbon emissions. It reduces the carbon footprint of vehicle use, which decreases carbon emissions.</p>	Cost
<p>^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.</p>		

Table 3-2: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Tribes^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
OKLAHOMA			
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma			
Fourkiller	Tamara Francis	Thank you for consulting with the Delaware Nation. We appreciate your willingness to conduct proper consultation with our nation. We received your letter regarding the above referenced project on April 23, 2013. Upon examination we are interested in these areas. Therefore, we will be a consulting party. Please send further project plans along with cultural resource surveys to our offices and set up a meeting date for the month of June. Should you have any questions regarding this email or future consultation feel free to contact our offices.	Other
Delaware Nation			
Jacobs	Ms. Johnnie	Thank you for the correspondence regarding the above referenced project. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has historic interest in various parts of Texas and Oklahoma. In order for us to more thoroughly evaluate our area of interest in relation to this project for NHPA Section 106 review, we would like to request that you send our office a copy of the GIS project line shape file so that we can do further examination. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.	Other
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.			

Table 3-3a: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Organizations and Businesses (Organizations)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
ORGANZIATIONS			
Brownsville Chamber of Commerce			
Burton	Angela R.	When we look at the purpose of the study Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island should be the preferred corridor for the following reasons:	Routes
Burton	Angela R.	1. Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor. 2. Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion. 3. The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs. 7. The rail service will promote both the general welfare and economic development in the area.	Local and regional economy
Burton	Angela R.	4. The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With the continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail. 5. In the event of an emergency the passenger rail service could effectively evacuate elderly and disabled people. 6. The rail service will provide an affordable means of travel to area residents.	Travel options
Greater Waco Chamber			
Meadors	Matthew	I am writing on behalf of the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the organization's approximately 1,600 member firms to express the Chamber's strong support for expanded rail service in Texas, and to ask the Texas Department of	Support

Committer (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
ORGANZIATIONS		
	Transportation to ensure that Waco is connected to future rail systems.	
Meadors	Matthew Waco enjoys a diversified and growing economy, excellent natural resources, outstanding educational institutions, world-class business and industrial parks, unified and visionary leadership, and much more. The community’s physical location along the dynamic IH-35 corridor, situated halfway between Austin and Dallas, is enviable. However, our great location has also created a number of challenges. The IH-35 corridor is heavily congested, impeding the efficient movement of people and goods, and creating safety and environmental quality concerns. Further, we have limited access to air service.	Routes
Meadors	Matthew Access to a modern, efficient rail system will help address these challenges and position Waco and central Texas for continued economic growth into the future. We wish you and your team much success with the current study. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance.	Support
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.		

Table 3-3b: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Organizations and Businesses (Businesses)^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Bailey	Bill (AW)	I am very interested in the study that is to take place, and I want to express my strong support for the route to come through Waco. Waco is a major city on the IH-35 corridor and must be included in the route. Thank you for your kind consideration.	Support
Bailey	Wes	As a Waco businessman and President of the Waco Business League, I wanted to touch base with you and voice my support of the proposed passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to South Texas. This would be great for Texas AND great for Waco. It is my firm belief that Waco's connectivity to such a rail system is extremely important to our community's continued economic growth and vibrancy – not to mention the economic growth of the whole region.	Support
Bailey	Wes	When you consider the very limited air service we have in Waco – coupled with a terribly congested IH-35 roadway, this new passenger rail system will be similar to manna from heaven. Please know that Wacoans want it! And we need it! Thank you very much.	Congestion
Brown	S. Boyce	We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Bucol	Mark S.	As one who travels to Texas on business trips four to six times per year I would welcome being able to travel between DFW and San Antonio by train. The traffic congestion on the IH-35 corridor is getting worse by the year and to accommodate growth in commerce, the passenger rail system needs to be expanded.	Travel options
Bucol	Mark S.	The private sector can build, operate and maintain the trains, while the public sector finances the infrastructure improvements of tracks, signals, and stations. Most of the traveling public will use trains that have top speeds of 90 to 110 mph as long as the trip time is equal or less than travel by automobile and the fare is reasonable. Bullet train systems of 180 to 220 mph are extremely expensive to build and operate. Less extravagant passenger train systems of moderate speeds are more likely to get funded and attract private investment than the very high cost rail systems like those built in Europe and China.	Funding
Bucol	Mark S.	To meet the needs of Texas for the next 20 years a rail passenger route system that connects major cities in Texas with adjoining states is necessary as highways become more crowded and air travel becomes less convenient and much more expensive.	Connectivity
Chase Goodman	Felicia	The mission of the Cooper Foundation is to make Waco a better place to live. A critical part of making Waco a better place is ensuring our community's long-term economic success. For this reason, the Cooper Foundation strongly supports passenger rail service in Waco.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Chase Goodman	Felicia	Both passenger and freight rail service are crucially important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Locally, Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and our region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for your consideration.	Local and regional economy
Christensen	Tate	I am writing to you today in regards to an extremely important matter and wish to express my support for passenger rail service. We support passenger rail service and want to encourage TxDOT to ensure Waco is connected to any future rail system. Passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns.	Support
Esrock	Brett	Providence Healthcare Network, Waco's leading employer, supports passenger rail service and passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.	Support
Gutierrez	Christopher H.	I am a very active player in Regional Economic Development. Please note my support for passenger rail service. Not only is passenger and freight rail service critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position, it	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES		
	is an essential reliever to the overburdened TxDOT highway system.	
Gutierrez	Christopher H. Connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the Waco community, as well as the region's continued economic growth. Given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns, it is absolutely essential that the passenger rail service from Oklahoma to South Texas become a reality and most importantly that there specifically be a Waco Junction serving as a hub to our region. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.	Local and regional economy
Hicks	David The purpose of this letter is to express my strong support of passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining our state's enviable national and global competitive position. As you consider plans for this service, please keep in mind that Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to this region's economic vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is the center of Texas as more Texans can be found within a 100 mile radius of Waco than from any other spot in Texas. I wish you well in this project and would be happy to participate in any way I can.	Support
Hookham	Bernadette As an architect in the local community, I support passenger rail service and freight rail service as it is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position as well as supports a more sustainable means of transportation for people and movement of construction materials thru the region.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Hookham	Bernadette	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for your assistance. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.	Local and regional economy
Hulse	Monte	Please accept this letter as support for rail service, both passenger and freight, for Waco and Central Texas. It is vital for our economic growth. We have limited air service and our roads are congested hampered by environmental and safety concerns. Thank you for your support in making sure Waco is connected to any rail lines proposed through our area.	Support
Klemp	Richard	The Kansas Star Casino in Mulvane, Kansas supports efforts by Texas to advance passenger rail service into Oklahoma in order to extend service into the Wichita area and eventually meeting in Newton, Kansas to connect the Heartland Flyer with the Southwest Chief.	Routes
Kultgen	Peter	I would urge that Waco along with the other major cities in Central Texas be included in whatever configuration of passenger rail the TxDOT study is considering. As our community continues to grow and with its central location it is very important that we have access to any such passenger route. The further benefit of helping to relieve congestion on IH-35 should help save the State of Texas money in the long run. Thank you for your consideration.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Lee	Jeff	I am one of the executives for Members Choice Credit Union in Waco, TX. Our organization enjoys a membership base of 30,000+ members and I would like to communicate to you that Waco would be able to support passenger rail service. I agree with my peers that passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.	Support
Lee	Jeff	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is in a nice position with easy access to major cities and must be included in the vision. As we examine our future growth for Waco, this must be in the plan. In advance, thank you for your review of my correspondence to you and your team.	Support
LeRow	Stefan	As a resident of Waco, TX and frequent traveler on IH-35, I strongly support the proposed passenger rail system from Oklahoma City to Laredo, TX. If economically feasible, I would love Waco to be included in the routing of this service. Please let me know how I can support your efforts in making this idea a reality.	Support
Lopez	Carlos	I support the passenger Rail Service from Oklahoma City to South Texas.	Support
Pieri	Parker F.	It has come to my attention that the state of Texas will be conducting a study on a proposed passenger rail line from Oklahoma to South Texas. Passenger (and freight) rail service is very important to keeping the state of Texas competitive in the regional, national, and international economy. It is vital that Waco be connected to these rail systems so that the greater Waco community can continue its economic growth, especially given the communities limited access to air service, congested roads, and	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES		
	safety and environmental concerns. If you have any questions or would like additional input, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.	
Pueblitz	Paula I believe that the rail system is a great idea. I would personally use it. I have family in North east Texas and in Brownsville. I hope that this railway system comes to light	Support
Recks	James I understand that the Great State of Texas recently received a grant to study expanded rail service in Texas. As a business person in Waco who travels IH-35, I appreciate the amount of planning and effort TxDOT expends to try to keep pace with the growing Texas population and its transportation needs. Let me say THANK YOU for all the great work you are doing. May I also say that the residents of Waco are 100% in favor of your possible rail service expansion and we in Waco want and need to be a stop on any proposed line! Keep Waco in mind and keep up the good work!	Support
Sheldon	Rick Please accept this letter as an absolute YES for rail in the future! TxDOT's rail passenger and freight service is absolutely vital to the future of Texas and, especially, Waco and the Central Texas area because of our lack of air service, along with congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns. Good luck and let us know if there is anything we can do to help.	Support
Solano	Alfred We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Solano	Alfred	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for the work that you do to further the continued economic growth and success of our State.	Local and regional economy
Stafford	Chad	I am writing in support of the proposed study of passenger rail service from Dallas/Fort Worth to Oklahoma City and up through Wichita, KS to Newton, KS along the 1-35 corridor. I am president of Wichita based Occidental Management and we are a real estate development firm and actively involved with economic development in the South Central Region of Kansas. This connection would not only open up business travel with, potentially, Amtrak but would also allow for dramatic increases in commerce between Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. These connectors make the IH-35 Corridor a very attractive and affordable business attractor to further the jobs growth of all three States.	Local and regional economy
Stanton	Tom	As Executive Director of the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation in Waco, Texas, I wanted to express support for passenger rail service, as it is critically important to maintaining the state's national and global competitive position.	Support
Stanton	Tom	Waco's connectivity to any and all rail state rail systems is vital to our community and the region's continued economic growth and development, particularly given the competitiveness of limited air service, interstate congestion, not to mention environmental and safety concerns.	Connectivity
Stanton	Tom	We ask and urge that Waco is assured connection to any future rail system. Thank you for your insight in development of this much needed method of state transportation.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
BUSINESSES			
Still	Willard	What a wonderful opportunity for Texas to have the \$5.6 million Federal grant to help fund a rail study. With a good route and stops near populated areas, a well-designed rail system would complement our excellent highway system by relieving congestion and adding a great deal of safety as Texans travel.	Support
Still	Willard	You would expect me to support Waco being a stop for the rail system and I do so. Waco is a growing Texas community and is home to Baylor University, TSTC, and McLennan Community College along with many productive and successful industries. It is the major community between Dallas and Austin and because of that we have limited access to ample air service. Passenger rail could make a real difference for this community by reducing travel on IH-35 to reach a more major airport.	Connectivity
Still	Willard	Thanks for your work to begin this important study. Whatever we in Waco may do to assist you would be our privilege. We are bullish on an effective rail system for Texas and we would be grateful for your support of a stop in Waco.	Support
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.			

Table 3-4: Summary of Public Scoping Comments – Individuals^a

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Austin	Mary	Trains are an economical way to travel. Therefore, people who can't afford to fly or unable to have access to an airport are stranded in small towns. It is scary to drive in city traffic.	Local and regional economy
Austin	Mary	Yes, trains blow their whistles but cars and trucks are noisy too. Railroad crossing don't kill people - people not stopping is this cause.	Noise
Austin	Mary	Small town America has a lot of interesting and education things to see. Trains would make it easier to see and enjoy this with trains.	Local and regional economy
Austin	Mary	With more people on trains means less cars and less accidents. Many people are hit by cars while walking or biking, so safer.	Safety
Austin	Mary	With so many highways, we are losing a lot of trees and habitat for animals and then there is the emission from so many cars and trucks.	Natural environment
Austin	Mary	Faster, more modern trains would be nice, but we need to keep train travel that senior citizen and people of medium income can afford. We love to travel but planes are not what is needed for rural areas. If you decide to build new tracks - please don't bypass the small towns – we need safe transportation. Personal: I had to go to San Antonio to help my child. Without the train in Ardmore it would have almost cost prohibitive for me to travel. Driving that far by myself was not an option.	Local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brown	Linda M	I was not able to attend the public meetings related to IH 35. I have traveled IH 35 at least twice a day Monday through Friday for 20 years, sometimes more trips than that. Austin is a popular destination, and becoming more so every year. In my opinion, more lanes is not a satisfactory option. Looking to the future, ideas need to be "out of the box" to keep Austin moving. As other cities like Chicago, New York, London, Austin needs mass transit. If not a subway, then elevated trains. I would definitely use a commuter train that ran down the middle of IH 35 from Georgetown to Kyle, Buda, San Marcos, San Antonio, for example. A train is not slowed by traffic conditions, and being down IH 35 would allow stops to be within walking distance of government offices and the entertainment district	Support
Brown	Roy G	The proposed expansion of rail service will greatly help and benefit all residents, businesses, and visitors by providing a much needed alternatives to our overcrowded airports and highways.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Brown	Roy G	At current speeds there is not much concern about existing crossings, but for high speed rail there would need to be designated tracks with no or very few crossings.	Safety
Brown	Roy G	By promoting tourism (advertising) and providing frequent service between the large cities to encourage taking the train, it would greatly benefit the regional and local economies not only by bringing in money, but by encouraging cities to build mass transit systems	Local and regional economy
Brown	Roy G	I see none as long as crossing are either secured by adequate warnings or eliminated altogether.	Safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brown	Roy G	There would be no more effect than in any other place in the world where trains are frequently used. In fact, trains are the greenest way to move large numbers of people - far less intrusive than the interstates.	Natural environment
Brown	Roy G	I have lived in Washington, D.C., and ridden the trains in the northeast. I have ridden trains in and out of Chicago. I have ridden trains all over the Europe, including high speed trains in France and Britain. I know that wherever good train service is provided, it is heavily patronized and enjoyed, and the same will be true here in Texas and the Heartland. Let's go!!!	Support
Cervenka	Jo	The people of Texas love their cars and will not change their habits very easily. Time, personal choice and independence of movement is important to Texans. Speed in reaching a destination is not always needed or wanted. The grand idea of building a high speed passenger rail across Texas is not the answer to moving people from point A to points B, C, and D. The taking of personal property from certain people to benefit the schedule of other persons and calling it progress is wrong.	Against
Cervenka	Jo	Yes, traffic during certain hours in the morning and afternoon, to and from work, is terrible on certain parts of the IH-35 corridor in Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio. Staggering the work hours might help that problem. There have been times when I had no problem at all with the traffic while driving through these cities. Transportation problems with trucks on the interstate roads are the problem. The trucks are not using the present toll roads because of the costs, so I am told. Independent truckers need a job too, I understand! How can we better use the freight lines to move some of the necessary goods and services? Working with the freight railroads should be looked at for improvements.	Congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Cervenka	Jo	Has a feasibility study of an elevated rail line over existing right of ways been looked at or thought about? Sure, there are curves that would slow down the train - but, you could still keep the line elevated while straightening out the curves and not impair the present use of the land.	Question
Cervenka	Jo	I object to foreign companies buying and operating a high speed rail system. I object to the state turning present (paid for) interstate highways into toll roads.	Against
Cervenka	Jo	How many studies have been conducted on this same topic? I know, the past studies that have been done before are available and do not need to be repeated.	Question
Cervenka	Robert	All high speed passenger rail proposals for Texas have been defeated before. Texas is not ready for high speed rail. At destination, there is no infrastructure in place to move passengers to the where they want to go.	Against
Cervenka	Robert	The last mile being the most costly and difficult to complete. Families traveling could not afford to travel compared to the cost of an automobile.	Cost
Cervenka	Robert	Most of the problems traveling are not cars, but trucks, now many trucks. Freight should be moved by rail and stacks trailers and trailer trains. Our freight railroads are a disgrace.	Freight
Cervenka	Robert	As a rancher a high speed rail through the ranch would be devastating. It would be impossible to move large equipment and animals to the other side. Highway frontage adds value to farm land. Rural agriculture would resist high speed passenger rail, but would not oppose freight rail expansion. It would be impossible to keep Texas Ferrell hogs off of the right of way. We don't need to destroy more agricultural land.	Agriculture

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Cervenka	Robert	Enclosed road takes away value. Noise and pollution add to devaluing. Nobody wants to live by a noisy rail-line.	Noise
Cervenka	Robert	Two freight rails, side by side, in present right of way, and being one way, would solve our freight problems and get trade off highways.	Right of way
Cervenka	Robert	Cities and government don't need to continue incentives to bring people to Texas. Our schools, jails highways and water needs are being overloaded now. High speed rail is right for Europe and Japan, even large cities in congested areas of the USA, but not all over Texas.	Against
Egly	Larry	Today I read an article about TxDOT asking for comments about a potential OK to Dallas to San Antonio rail line. I think it makes a lot of sense to establish a rail line along those lines.	Support
Egly	Larry	When I go from Killeen, TX, to Joliet, IL, I take AMTRAK. It's slower, but much less expensive than flying. Also, I can read, play games or just relax while the train crew takes care of getting me to Joliet. Joliet, as well as other cities surrounding Chicago, utilizes the Metro rail system to commute in that area. The fares are very reasonable. Again, I don't have to do the driving, so I can read, visit with my family or just relax.	Benefits of train travel
Egly	Larry	I think TxDOT should study the feasibility of: 1. A high speed rail train along the route under consideration. 2. A normal speed train along the route. 3. What will be the costs of running either 1 or 2 above on their own dedicated rail line. I say this because AMTRAK uses other railroads tracks, so sometimes its passengers have to wait on a siding so the railroad that owns the line can use it.	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Egly	Larry	A rail line will be more environmentally friendly than individuals driving their cars on the same route.	Natural environment
Egly	Larry	I think that it is great that TX is considering doing this study. I hope that the oil industry is not allowed to scuttle the idea because they would probably sell less gas if TX developed such a rail line.	Support
Lancaster	Terry	I am a native Texan-senior, retired. I'm sorry but Texas just does not have what it takes to develop a large project such as this. The Super Collider and Trans-Texas projects all merely drained millions of tax dollars from other doable causes. Do we need mass transit? Yes, definitely, but we needed it 30 years ago. Only way to do it would be to lease the overhead rights from existing railroads like BNSF and connect DFW to Houston-San Antonio. Do the large metropolitan areas first and plan for later connections to outlying centers like Austin and Waco, etc, later, possibly with a trunk line connection. P.S. I am ex-railroader for 15 years.	Support
Muhl	Rene	I am definitely in favor of creating a rail transportation system throughout Texas and especially from Fort Worth to Denton and Oklahoma.	Support
Muhl	Rene	IH-35 is so congested and a rail system would go a long way to help alleviate the problem. The rail should also include transportation from Fort Worth to San Antonio and beyond.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Frank	Loraine	Congratulations for being farsighted about high speed rail services and conducting a serious Texas-Oklahoma Rail Study. Though I live in Oklahoma, my families and friends all love to go to Dallas and points south to the gulf and Houston. Some even have families along that route. with rail service all of us would visit more often! I share your vision and also believe that 1. Building now will never be cheaper 2. Your best route might be following the old "Texas Eagle" (Is that the right name?) 3. Weather would not deter travelers, businesses, or increase accidents on the highways. 4. Our Heartland Flyer train to Fort Worth always has many passengers but the Dallas route would be much more popular. Wish you a successful outcome to your study leading to Texas being the initiator in starting high speed rail in the heartland of the country!	Support
Heard	Tom	Passenger rail is a tremendous benefit to tons that have it. TxDOT should not think just of having stations in big cities.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Heard	Tom	train horns are noisy. TxDOT should look at more grade separated crossings.	Safety
Heard	Tom	High speed rail on dedicated tracks is too harmful to agriculture to be done in Texas	Local and regional economy
Heard	Tom	TxDOT should be mindful that adding at-grade road crossings will someday be a problem to expanding passenger trains.	Traffic conditions
Heard	Tom	Why does an EIS study need to be done on existing freight railroad where cross ties and coal trains exist?	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Heard	Tom	It is good to see TxDOT studying conventional rail like all the other states, finally. It is clear that high speed rail on dedicated tracks is dead in Texas. TxDOT needs to develop a rail plan based around utilizing existing tracks with the freight railroads. That may mean more passing tracks and double tracking sections but both parties benefit from this. Texas is falling more and more behind other states. Texas needs to get started doing this.	Support
Abeyta	Amy	High Speed train travel is the future! A line between all the major cities of Texas would be so beneficial for human communication and commerce! El Paso should of course be included. Big vision but doable! Great for the state's interrelatedness and for the environment!	Support
Ables	Chuck	Texas is sooo far behind.	Support
Acosta	Eugene	I am writing you in support of the high speed rail project for Texas. As a frequent business traveler, 30 + flights per year, I would welcome the opportunity to take a train to the Austin, San Antonio, and Houston areas. It would be easier for planning, conserve fuel and all the other conservation benefits. This project makes good business sense for frequent regional travelers like myself.	Support
Adams	Mike	My wife and I support the extension of Light Rail systems to all of Texas. Give us a safe, clean alternative to air travel.	Support
Adams	Ed	There are way too many cars and trucks on our roads. Let's bring on the trains.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Aeschbach	Heinz and Margaret	We would like to urge government agencies to work on developing rail systems in all parts of the U. S. The U. S. has been far too slow in developing an efficient passenger and freight rail system, both light rail in urban areas, regular passenger rail (everywhere double track) and high speed trains for intercity traffic. Trains are much more ecological, safer, more comfortable, healthier for passengers (the stress of driving and air travel is very problematic. On the long run trains are an excellent investment providing cheaper transportation than cars and airplanes.	Support
Aiken	Debra	High speed rail throughout Texas would help greatly to reduce the pollution in both the air and water. It's time we had this here.	Support
Aiuvalasit	Michael	I am writing to encourage the expansion of high speed commuter rail lines in Texas. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A high speed rail line that follows IH-35 would be a great addition to transportation options.	Support
Aiuvalasit	Michael	Currently, the AMTRAK options between Dallas and Austin are too slow to be worthwhile for me to use. If I had an alternative to driving on IH-35 I would certainly take advantage of it, as would many Texans.	Routes
Akers	Jerry	Rail saves time and money. Driving is more expensive in time and money. In other words, it is time for Texas to take a step toward the 21st century. Build it.	Support
Akkaraju	Giri	Mass transit has many well studied and published benefits, including, less wear and tear on roads, less accidents and more productive use of travelers time.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Alardin	Susan	I fully agree that we need PASSENGER rail service running through the Texas-Oklahoma corridor, most specifically from Laredo to Dallas.	Support
Alardin	Susan	IH-35 has become an extreme risk for all drivers. I live in Laredo but work in Temple and must commute home on weekends and I have seen numerous accidents and many near accidents. I was very pleased to discover the 130 toll road that bypasses Austin. I prefer to pay to drive safe than take a chance with the HEAVY traffic on IH-35. I only wish the toll road continued on to Laredo, bypassing San Antonio because IH-10 has become just as bad as IH-35. I believe this Passenger Rail would alleviate much of the heavy traffic if the rate is fair (equal to or less than what you pay for gas) and it does not take as long as a greyhound bus to get where you need to go.	Safety
Alardin	Susan	Currently Amtrak runs from Temple to San Antonio but it takes 5 hours. You can drive it in 2 hours (a little less, with no traffic if you take the 130 toll road which has a posted speed limit of 85 mph) so why would you want to take Amtrak or Greyhound? We need a direct express passenger service for commuters and travelers who want to get where they need to go as quick as possible without long layovers, and stops in every town, similar to the train service on the east coast.	Travel times
Allen	Ned	With fuel prices expected to stay high, population growth to continue, and highway traffic projected to increase, it is time to move forward with most Texans dream of high speed rail. We own the easements along the freeways already, we need to build the infrastructure and operate a state or Amtrak-owned high speed rail system up and down IH-35 from Oklahoma to Laredo, IH-45 from Galveston to Dallas, and IH-10 from Beaumont to El Paso. It is time to bring Texas into the 21st century with 21st century infrastructure.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Allred	Patrick D.	This comment is in reference to the Rail passenger Service that is being studied between Texas and Oklahoma. I'm in favor for it especially if it runs from Laredo-San Antonio-Austin since there is a lot of traffic between those cities on IH-35.	Support
Allred	Patrick D.	With the Ford Eagle Shale, there is a need to either expand IH-35 to 3 lanes each way from Laredo to San Antonio or install passenger train service between the two cities in order to get out of the way from all the trucks/18-wheelers that use IH-35 to go back and forth from their work site. This is in addition to all the 18-wheelers that used IH-35 to cross into Mexico via the Port of Laredo as part of the NATFA agreement between the United States and Mexico. I feel there is also a need for passenger train service between San Antonio and Austin as well. IH-35 is pretty much built out to the max as there is no other land on it to be able to expand it. While there is that new highway from Seguin to Austin, it's pretty much out-of-the-way for most people who want to save time and money. If you ever driven between the two cities, you know that the experience is something similar to the Daytona 500 of NASCAR where a lot of cars are kind of bunched up for most of the trip. In conclusion, I'm all for passenger service between Laredo, Texas to Oklahoma City.	congestion
Alpert	Emily	I would like to express my support for the proposed rail corridor from Oklahoma City to Brownsville/South Padre Island. Currently our options here in the Valley are to fly or drive to destinations North. We could choose bus service, but there are Security issues with that mode of transportation.	support
Alpert	Emily	Rail is fast, efficient and reasonably priced. When I am traveling on business in the Northeastern part of the country, I frequently use rail to get to a variety of destinations. In fact, I wish you would develop a monorail system from Brownsville to McAllen following the 77/83 corridor. Please contact me if you need more	benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		information. Thank you.	
Altmeyer	David	We need more high speed rail in Texas. It is good for the environment and the people of Texas. It is a win, win for Texas and all Texans.	support
Alvarez	Yolanda C.	Please support the Texas/OK passenger rail study on going and passed.	support
Alvarez	Humberto	Plus less gasoline usage. Use of the rail will increase tourism.	local and regional economy
Alvarez	Humberto	I approve for the development of the Texas-Oklahoma rail. It will relieve congestion and make travel more accessible to other cities if we not want to drive. Think of senior citizens who no longer are capable of driving, using the rail.	support
Anderson	Leo	I am interested in reducing noise, traffic and having life be more healthful. Bring on the train!	support
Anderson	Vicki	I think the option of rail service from South Texas is really exciting. We are elderly and live in Zapata but have to travel to San Antonio every 3 months for specialized medical treatment. We are soon to be to the point where a long car trip will not be safe for us. A passenger train would allow us to visit our friends and family in Oklahoma and Missouri. The traffic on 35 is awful and getting worse, any mass transit alternative would be an asset. Hope it gets done in our lifetime.	support
Aqeel	Alina	Rails provide a good alternative to cars. Rails reduce the number of cars on the road and reduces air pollution.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Araiza	Alex	I feel like having this would be very beneficial for those who have to commute to other cities, but also would help cut down on pollution coming from cars.	Travel options
Arnold	Gretchen	I am writing to express my strong support of, and confidence that passenger rail service between Corpus Christi and San Antonio is very needed and would be heavily utilized. On a daily basis, thousands of people drive from Corpus Christi to San Antonio to catch an airplane, catch a train, shop or do business. I am most certain the same number of people drive from San Antonio to Corpus Christi daily for business or recreational purposes	support
Arnold	Gretchen	The motorized vehicle mode of transportation between Corpus Christi and San Antonio is a source of congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption. The drive itself has little to offer in terms of interest or aesthetics. Quite frankly, it is one of the more plain, boring and uninteresting drives in Texas. So much so, that most of my associates hate the boring and time-wasting drive. Because the lone drive is mandatory (no other mode available), drivers are forced to the mindless drudgery of the boring drive and either doze off or race to get it over-with, causing numerous fatal accidents on this stretch of Texas road annually. Motorists would be clamoring to get out of the driver's seat and into a train seat to read, work, or relax on the Corpus Christi/San Antonio leg of their journey.	congestion
Arnold	Gretchen	The San Antonio connection of an Amtrak hub greatly increases the value of this component of the system. Travel anywhere in the U S via train is open to all with this one opening leg of passenger service. Some environmental impact may occur during the project, however that would be minimal as the rail line would take place on existing rail line and build-outs would be minimal. The associated reduction in air emissions by taking thousands of vehicles off of the road daily would more than offset	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		any negative environmental impact of the project. This one leg opening up for passenger service could be instrumental in the continued attainment of air quality standards and therefore no conformity planning requirements that Corpus Christi, TxDOT regional MPOs and San Antonio currently enjoy. I encourage TxDOT to support this study and move ahead with moving South Texas ahead in alternative modes of transportation.	
Arredondo	Richard	I would like to see high speed rail in Texas. Texans travel frequently to major Texas cities and either have to drive or fly. Neither option is very appealing. Driving costs too much because of high gas prices and is also very dangerous driving alongside huge 18 wheeled trucks. Flying is faster but you have to go through long lines for security checks, pay baggage fees, and pay for expensive plane tickets. Please bring high speed rail to Texas so we have a fast, clean, safe, alternative form of transportation.	support
Art	David	<p>Rail transportation option is preferred due to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Attwell	Barbara	We would ride the rail every chance we get - and when we go to Europe this is what we do. We fully support any and all rail as it reduces pollution, traffic, and is very relaxing.	support
Attwell	Barbara	I would only ask that when you lay the lines through rural areas that you regularly provide for tunnels underneath for wildlife. Yes - wildlife, It deserves to exist here as much as we do. Thank you for your considerations.	natural environment
Awtrey	David	We would love to see the passenger service completed from Oklahoma city to Newton, KS, and on to Kansas City and Chicago. This is important because of the potential energy savings and it eventually become profitable. It would increase passenger usage greatly because of the access to other cities.	Connectivity
Baeza	Christine C.	My only comment is: It's about time!! GO FOR IT!!!	support
Bailey	Wes	As a business owner in Waco, Texas and current president of the Waco Business League, I just want to voice my support of the passenger rail service that would serve our community. I am delighted that Waco is currently shown to be included on the pathway, and I believe there would be great support of the rail service from the greater Waco area. Thank you.	support
Bailey	Brooke	Please move forward on bringing passenger rail to Texas. I would hope the days of Southwest Airlines blocking this are over, and we can move forward. Although I am a native Texan (Austinite), I have lived in areas of the country and in Europe where rail was used extensively and was such a nice, relaxing alternative to driving. In Scotland I never owned a car, and in Chicago I put less than 1,000 miles a year on my car-that is a huge impact when amplified by many. Although the implementation costs are high, the long-term benefits to our transportation needs, stress levels, and society	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		outweighs this (although I would hope there would be STRONG oversight). Please do this, we've been waiting for 30 years!	
Baker	Candace	I would definitely use rail service. I am currently an Amtrak user and have taken the train both east and west. Rail service from Laredo to San Antonio would provide a great service to connecting airlines providing more alternatives for travel.	support
Baker	Candace	I would also use the train for travel within Texas as an aging citizen who does not drive at night. In addition, it would provide for additional safety when traveling alone.	safety
Ballou	Tom	I like trains and like to ride trains. I'm on the board of our local Rural Rail District. Given equal convenience, time and cost, I would choose the train for travel. However, the convenience, time and cost are all important. Designing the long distance, city to city portion of this system is easy. The difficult part is the terminal system for getting people on/off and mobile. Texas cities are not equipped with adequate mass transit systems like, for instance, Washington, D.C. where one can get off the high speed train from New York, walk down one level, get on the Metro and a few minutes later get off in the basement of the hotel where you are staying or few blocks away at most. People in Texas are tied to their cars. Perhaps a study of using a variation of the "Auto-Trains" used for seasonal people repositioning on the East coast and extensively in Europe would work for us and make the long distance rail attractive. Perhaps a new design car, a bi-level as used by Amtrak, but with the lower or upper level used for cars and the other for the people. The speed at the terminal would be the key. Of course, we'd probably have to limit the cars hauled to compacts/city commuters and leave the Crown Vics and Suburbans at home in order to make it work. Getting this to actually work in Texas is going to take some out-of-the-box thinking. I don't think "If you build it, they will come", is going to work. Let me know	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		if I can help.	
Barbosa	Ron	The residents of Texas need more mass transit options to help protect the quality of life for all.	support
Barker	Charlotte A.	Thank you for this opportunity to respond. A rail system to South Texas is much needed and would be beneficial. The European rail system has proven the efficiency of rail for travel and the success of Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth indicates it would be an excellent additional travel choice for South Texas businesses and residents alike.	support
Barker	Charlotte A.	The benefits of having a rail system available in S. TX would be environmentally appropriate. Reducing energy consumption and automobile and air traffic; benefiting our air quality; a safer travel option; benefit our economy with added visitors and job opportunities. - I personally travel to Austin and Houston several times per year, on both personal and business trips, and would preferably utilize a rail system over driving or air travel.	natural environment
Barnes	John	I want Texas to have high-speed rail service. I suggest Texas uses the existing rights of way and builds elevated rails above the highway. Zero land purchase expense is a good thing.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Barozinski	Brenda	First of all. This form should be in only English. I thought Oklahoma had a law that all communication is only English. I recently rode the train from Oklahoma City to San Antonio. I had never been on a train, I was shocked at the depot in Oklahoma City. Only opened during the train arrival and departure times. When arrived absolutely NO one around to answer or direct people. Went night before to check on location and parking, no one to direct me in parking questions, had to get a number off the billboard. I enjoyed the ride but was also surprised by how old the train was and the interior. But, I think the train service is good for Oklahoma but I think the commission should also explore rail service from Tulsa to Oklahoma City to Texas.	Stations
Barrera	Roberta	I would support this endeavor and vote on any bonds that it would support. I have been waiting to hear that someone is thinking about doing this. This is the USA and we are far behind in our quality of life of offering an alternative to the highway. I know so many people who commute from San Antonio to Corpus every day. The weekend highway traffic is filled with people visiting Corpus and Corpus people visiting San Antonio.	support
Barrett	Claire	I support the development of rail in Texas and in the United States. Our air quality can be greatly improved if we have save, comfortable options for travel.	support
Barros	Russell	I support a rail transportation system for people between Oklahoma and south Texas.	support
Barry	Sean	Speed and frequency are critical to making intercity rail successful in Texas. True high-speed rail would be nice, but higher-speed rail would be acceptable to get the route open sooner (and get more folks riding sooner...with a long-term plan to upgrade to true HSR, much as the model taken in the Northeast Corridor). Ultimately the train doesn't have to be the fastest way to get from one city to the next, but it	High speed

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		needs to at least be somewhat competitive, meaning much faster service with much shorter layovers is needed as compared with the current Texas Eagle service.	
Barry	Sean	Multiple trains each day in each direction (preferably at least 6 trains/direction/day) are needed to make the service workable with schedules. Also, the train needs to serve downtowns in all cities (not suburbs, not airports, etc.) and the stations need to have transit connections, be in walkable locations near hotels, have taxis, car-sharing, bike-sharing, etc. readily available, as well as car rentals for folks whose final destination is not the central city.	frequency
Barry	Sean	Lastly, Waco desperately needs to be included on the route. It is a joke that the current Texas Eagle bypasses such an important city along the corridor.	Connectivity
Batts	Flora	I strongly support the development of higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. It's a great step towards reducing traffic on the IH-35 corridor, reduces pollution, provides more alternatives to travel and is a safer, cleaner way to get across this great state.	support
Baughman	Peter	I strongly support higher speed passenger rail from South Texas to Oklahoma City.	support
Bazzrea	Farah	I can only say, "Thank you." We are in dire need of quality, high-speed rail transportation. I have four children living in the Austin-San Antonio corridor--and two granddaughters. To have high-speed rail service in Ardmore for Central Texas, the Rio Grande Valley and points beyond is the stuff dreams are made of. You will enhance the lives of Okies and Texans for generations to come. "Thank you. Thank	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		you. Thank you."	
Bear	Randy	Leveraging passenger rail could potentially reduce the need for more road infrastructure to be developed as well as improve the environment from an emissions perspective.	Cost
Bear	Randy	I currently leverage Megabus between San Antonio and Austin as much as possible. The convenience of traveling by shared services greatly improves my workday, since I can also do work on the bus.	support
Beard	Cynthia	I support the increase in long-distance passenger rail service in Texas for these reasons: 1. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. 2. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports. 3. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. The air quality in the Dallas Metroplex is horrible and needs to improve. 4. Existing rail tracks could be used for more passenger services. This would be an efficient, budget-friendly use of existing infrastructure.	support
Beard	Cynthia	4. Existing rail tracks could be used for more passenger services. This would be an efficient, budget-friendly use of existing infrastructure.	Cost
Beck	Jennifer	Rather take train than drive or fly.	support
Bednar	Deaton	More rail, please. Trains keep more cars off the road. Air quality improvements. Less car crashes. Plus it is more fun to ride a train. Let's do it!	benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bell	Carmen	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Bennett	Carolyn W	I am VERY ready for high speed rail! We, Texas, has been mulling over this topic for decades now. Though Europe and Asia have successfully incorporated their rail systems into the public norm, the folks here in Texas have stubbornly refused to use what should have been such an easy fix... But NO... Too many people want their very own, individual gas guzzler trucks and SUVs in this state. Individualism that sucks our resources dry and creates the largest boondoggle of an interstate highway traffic monster right through the heart of our state... I have often imagined travelling across this huge state by high speed rail...taking a moment to breathe...read a book while I speed to Dallas, Houston, Austin, or San Antonio, with or without my family members of all ages. All within the quiet walls of 'advanced,' 20th Century progress (not even dreaming of 21st Century technology and benefits.) Go OK/TX Rail!!!!	support
Bennett	Jo	Our state needs other alternate methods of safe, convenient good for the environment transportation..especially in high density areas for instance between Dallas and Houston	Travel options
Bentley	Brian	I would support high speed rail between OKC and South Texas. It is a better option for the citizens and the environment compared to building more roads, or adding more	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		planes.	
Benton	Barry Robert	I live in the Rio Grande Valley and would love rail passenger service throughout Texas and beyond. I would use it religiously. Flying has become more expensive and more stressful every year. I don't have to tell you all the upsides to rail from reduced traffic congestion, safety, less pollution and economy. Just do it. Better yet, tell me what I can do to help.	Support
Benton	Stan	Texas is a very large state (almost half as large as Alaska), and the chief means of getting from one part to another is by car. I drive on narrow, 70 mph speed limit highways, and see many zooming by me going 10 to 20 mph over the speed limit. As I near the cities, the congestion becomes frustrating, and dangerous, with drivers speeding to cut in and out, and others going 20 mph below the speed limit, hogging the fast lane with nobody in front of them. I don't see texting, but see many drivers talking into their cell phones, not looking at the road in front of them. (From my own experience, I am talking mostly of Austin and San Antonio.) I would love to be able to use inexpensive public transportation (but not flying, as I can't afford that).	congestion
Benton	Stan	As far as air quality goes, one also sees many of these speeding vehicles smoking to the point where it appears they are on fire. A high speed train, powered by wind and solar, could make a large impact on the air quality, especially in our cities.	Air quality
Benton	Barry Robert	I live in the Rio Grande Valley. Please do this project. I promise to ride often. We all know the many, many reasons trains are better than cars or plane. Please, just do it.	support
Betterton	Elaine	My husband and I want to buy an electric car but the range worries us for long distance trips. Having a viable rail service for Texas would fill that void for us	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		without having to hassle with airports, which we wouldn't do. We want to do what's right for the world and the combination of electric vehicles and a good rail system in the state/nation would go a long way to improving our air quality and reducing the stress on the roads/infrastructure. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	
	Beverly T.	The building of rail-lines disturbs the natural landscape and wildlife the least. All disturbances of the environment eventually affect our water system and I really, really, really wish more people realized this. Three things for life...air, WATER, and food and I think water will become a HUGE issue before the other two. For me, I would love to travel by TRAIN to California.	natural environment
	Beverly T.	The train trip not only uses less resources than flying but it is a less expensive way to travel. As it is, I must drive to San Antonio which adds time then pay gas and pay parking. My expenses are as much a concern as the environment.	affordability
Birdwell	Amy	I am excited to hear that TxDOT is planning on expanding our public rail systems. We need more public rail and we really need high speed rail. I am for high speed rail line expansions in Texas. Thank you.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bischof	Robin	I believe Texas needs more passenger rail. When people have the option to take a train, there are few cars on the road. I know I would even travel more if there were more rail passenger options. For example, if there was high speed rail between Dallas and Austin, I would definitely make the trip more often.	support
Bischof	Robin	Having fewer cars on the road means less pollution so that our air quality is better and there is less automobile-produced run off going into our water supply. People are also healthier because there are fewer toxins in our air to breathe. Trains can reduce air pollution by half when compared to cars and even airplanes.	Air quality
Blasingame	Rodney	I am in total support of this passenger rail system. I would use it frequently. I am 60 years old and I have family all along this route. I am 12 miles east of Waco, Texas. It would be so easy for me to catch the train in Waco and go North or South.	support
Blaze	MJ	High speed rail service would reduce the amount of traffic congestion on already crowded highways, and provide a cost-effective and time-effective means of transit for many people. I fully support this effort to provide a high-speed rail on the IH-35 corridor.	support
Blodgett	Elaine	One of the many things we need in Texas is a better transportation system. Anything you can do to help would be deeply appreciated.	Travel options
Blomquist	Franklin	In the past the railroads passenger service was top notched. I traveled many miles on the train. I would like to see this kind of service return. I'm sure it would cost a lot of money to restore the service, but I think the future will find that you will have no more room for highways.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Blount	James R	What with light rail in Dallas and Houston, dependable, efficient, public, intra-city transportation is becoming a reality in Texas. What is sorely lacking is state-of-the-art, inter-city, rail transportation. There is no good reason why we can't have it. It's becoming a reality California. The same could happen in Texas.	support
Boatright	Larry	We need rail service.	support
Bodeharrison	Olukanyin	Fast rail linking Oklahoma to Texas. Please start this rail ASAP. Our veterans will benefit from it a lot. The rest of us will benefit from it also for several reasons- 1. Save the air we breathe in. 2. Save energy. 3. Save the road. Thank you.	support
Boelsche	Joyce	Please make the Austin to Oklahoma City train line happen! I know of many instances that I would have taken a train instead of an airplane or car if I could have. This line will save fuel and at the same time reduce pollution by car or airline fuel. That will make our air cleaner and our lungs cleaner. I look forward to being able to use this train route.	support
Bogholtz	Erick	We should have had high speed rail back in the 1980's but Texas let Southwest Airlines lobby it out of the picture because they said it would hurt their business. We need the alternative to get cars off the road.	support
Bombay	Bart	I write in support of high-speed passenger rail for Texas. Whenever I travel on business in France, my trips are always facilitated by the high-speed rail travel in that country. I am able to travel between major cities more quickly and efficiently than is possible by air or auto. I don't need to worry about horrendously complicated security screenings or arriving to airports more than an hour before my flight. I just arrive to the train station shortly before my departure.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bombay	Bart	Then when I get on the train, I can be productive on my laptop computer during the entire journey, which is a huge benefit to my business output. From the perspective of business success and personal convenience, high speed rail is a huge improvement over other options. But the business and convenience factors are not the only benefits.	local and regional economy
Bombay	Bart	High speed rail also lessens the congestion of autos on highways, which not only benefits the people who must drive on those highways, but also gives an excellent benefit to the environment and air/water quality by reducing emissions of CO2 and other pollutants. Human health and safety benefit from cleaner air and safer travels, which indirectly benefits businesses across a wide spectrum. Please help bring Texas the many benefits of high-speed rail between our major cities.	congestion
Bondoc Jr.	Benito A.	I think this would be a great way to travel. In bringing this extra option to Laredo. I would use the services if it were to happen.	support
Booth	George	Vote NO! Against the rail... A huge waste of money just like the \$12 billion taxpayers have already paid. Your children and grandchildren don't want the debt...	Against
Borst	Gayle	I very much support the expansion of passenger rail in Texas!!! Life is too short to deal with the kind of traffic congestion, energy consumption and environmental pollution that we have now.	support
Bourland	Gordon	I strongly support development of increased passenger train service in Texas, especially high-speed service between major metropolitan area such as Fort Worth-Dallas and Austin, Houston, and San Antonio.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bourland	Gordon	Such rail service would be beneficial due to reducing automobile traffic and automobile-produced air pollution, reduced fuel consumption by trains (compared to automobiles and possibly airplanes), as well as increased comfort and reduced stress (compared to having to drive a car).	congestion
Bourland	Patricia	I support the rail alternative for Texas: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger.	energy
Bourland	Patricia	South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks!	benefits of train travel
Bowen	George	I would be very interested in service from Ardmore to Dallas.	support
Bradbury	Theresa	Most of the rest of the world has found it beneficial, why can't Texas? This has been discussed most of the last twenty years, it is time Texas got with the program.	support
Bramblett	Sharon	Please make high speed passenger rail service available to us between OKC, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Laredo, and Houston. The OKC-DFW route is a model of how to do it. You must seriously consider rail as a more viable option to building more roads - it's the future. Thank you,	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bramblett	Sharon	It is much more efficient, carrying large numbers of people in a short time. It will reduce more expensive car and short plane trips, saving so much energy, not to mention improving air quality.	Travel options
Bramblett	Claud	Invest more in high speed rail. The only practical solution to reducing vehicle traffic is to have rail alternatives.	support
Brannon	Emily	Having just read that TxDOT is considering passenger rail service through the State that will connect North Texas and South Texas excites me. I would love knowing that I have an alternative to flying and/or driving when I visit my friends in Corpus Christi. Rail is so much cleaner than airplane or auto use and is such a pleasant way to travel. Bravo!	support
Bransom	Melissa	More rail travel options are a great idea! Commuters would welcome the alternative; I know I would! My concerns are the environmental impact considerations during and after construction,	Travel options
Bransom	Melissa	safety for travelers, and the potential for on-board security at all times. Also, would local businesses do the work or would the bidders be open to global businesses? I look forward to the outcomes of the survey. Thank you for asking!	safety
Brantley-Gearhart	Kristine	Please pursue developing the rail from Oklahoma to South Texas, so more people can utilize this environmentally saving transportation. It will also reduce traffic (TxDOT will be relieved), and encourage and increase older adult travel (and others who struggle in traveling).	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Braswell	Peggy	After having used European high-speed rail, it is very exciting to think that we might actually have that option here in South Texas. I can envision using this service frequently! Please move forward on this project.	support
Bratu	Dr. Cristian	I cannot tell you how excited I am about the prospect of having a train connection between Oklahoma and Texas. It is entirely unacceptable that, at a time when modern countries boast tens of thousands of miles of rail (and even fast trains), Texas is still lagging behind in terms of rail transportation. I drive very often on IH-35 and we all know how congested this highway can get. I am grateful that TxDOT is now adding extra lanes to IH-35 on certain sections but no matter how many lanes we add, the problem of traffic will NOT go away if we don't have an alternative to IH-35. Rail is the solution to that problem. I believe that having a train connection between OK and TX is an extremely important project and I hope it will be adopted and implemented as soon as possible.	Travel options
Braun	David	Convenient, speedy, and safe travel around the state (and beyond) will improve air quality, and reduce the impact of travel on global warming.	benefits of train travel
Bray	Brent	We actually need alternative transportation here in Texas, as the carbon footprint left by all of the automobiles sharing the road is huge, and could be lessened if we have high speed rail throughout Texas. This will help reduce air pollution, and traffic in the urban areas. We need a better mass transit system than we have as the system in Travis County is ridiculous. Not much mass transit outside of the City of Austin. The problem here is that nobody wants to pay for better mass transit. Pretty sorry state of affairs here.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bray	Jennifer J.	Texas needs high speed rail. The Interstate 35 corridor is one of the most deadly highways in North America. My city, Corpus Christi, would greatly benefit from increased tourism if there was high speed rail connecting Corpus Christi to San Antonio. High speed rail connecting San Antonio to Austin to Dallas is a no-brainer.	safety
Bray	Jennifer J.	Do what's right to 1) help the environment, 2) reduce traffic fatalities on Texas highways, and 3) increase tourism and travel in Texas.	natural environment
Brehm	Angelica	I would like to see you approve a new, higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. Below are some reasons why: -Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips.	support
Brehm	Angelica	South Texas has no passenger rail service. -The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers - Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time.	Connectivity
Brehm	Angelica	A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. -Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Air quality
Brenner	David	I read the department of transportation is considering high speed rail along the 1-35 corridor. I believe this is essential to bringing Texas (Dallas-Austin-San Antonio) into a world class competitive corridor and strongly endorse this consideration.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brewer	Cameron	As a citizen of Norman, OK, an employee in Oklahoma City and my hometown being San Antonio, this study is important to me. I have been a passenger on the Amtrak lines between San Antonio and Oklahoma City numerous times. Most often, I rode the Heartland Flyer between Gainesville, TX and Norman, OK, however, I have ridden the train all the way from Oklahoma City to San Antonio three different times (each round trip). My main comment is that I would like the study to include total passenger time to get from Oklahoma City and San Antonio, and why people often prefer driving because the time it takes for this entire trip is far too long. Each trip took between 13-14 hours. The first two trips were test runs, and the third out of necessity due to car issues. My question is why would I take a train that is 13-14 hours that is barely cost efficient, if at all, to driving where I could make the trip in 7 hours? Please, please study the layover times in the DFW area and other areas on scheduling to make the time more efficient. If I were able to make the trip in 8-9 hours by train, and breakeven on cost, I would do this in a heartbeat.	Travel times
Bridges	Diana	I am very excited about the possibility of this new rail line. I think it's a huge step in the right direction. I look forward to hearing more about this in the near future.	support
Bridges	Terry S	When, oh when, will passenger rail service come back to College Station. Train travel is my preference but I have to drive at least an hour to get to a train. I heard reliable rumors about a year ago that we would be linked to Amtrak. Haven't heard anything since. We already have the rails and the name of our city says it all. What is the problem?	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brittain	Cindy	I have had the chance to use trains in other parts of the world that were a VERY VERY wonderful means of getting around. SO I SAY YES to the Texas/Oklahoma rail proposal! I live very close to IH-35.oh my yes, we need to take some cars off the road, and get the lovely people into the trains!	support
Brooks	Michael	I really support this Rail Proposal, and the higher the speed the better. Rail is one of the safest most efficient ways to travel.	support
Brooks	Michael	It also has the potential to take thousands of vehicles off the highways, and decrease highway congestion and reduce emissions.	congestion
Brooks	Michael	These rail choices, rather than highway only choices can also reduce the impact on wetlands and wildlife by decreasing the potential of vehicle accidents and chemical and fuel spills on the highways. Please fund all Rail transportation proposals to the highest extent possible. Thanks.	safety
Brooks	Scott A.	I do NOT support any taxes used for passenger rail service. Passenger rail is an inconvenient and inflexible mode of transportation that will not be self-supporting because automotive (including buses) transportation is more flexible and convenient. As long as fuel is inexpensive, cars and buses will always remain the most popular mode of transportation. To spend tax funds on passenger rail would be a complete waste of money! In fact, if tax funds are being spent on this study, I think it's a complete waste. There's a reason why the idea of passenger rail has fizzled out in Texas. Why are we wasting money on this again?	Against

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brown	Tyler	My comment relates to the Human Environment as a whole. That means Walking, street life, being a part of a community. These are all things that are encouraged by rail transportation and discouraged by wider, bigger roads. Invest in this now and you will see the benefits of denser real estate development, higher property taxes, better land use, and a more profitable society in the long run. Invest in Roads and you will see continued suburban sprawl, continued unsustainable development practices, and a continued deterioration of our society and our economy. The choice is yours TxDOT. Either lead or fail us all.	quality of life
Brownell	Katherine	I am support high speed rail for the State of Texas. Our state is past due for a reliable, green way to travel around our state. Cars and airplanes are fine but we need other alternatives. I have traveled in other countries and love using rail and high-speed rail for travel.	support
Bruny		Interested in having alternatives to traveling with less congestion...hoping to see the vision of Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail study become a reality.	support
Buentello	Elena	This proposed is a must a long overdue. This rail system will take stress off of the infrastructure and provide the people of Texas and Oklahoma communities with transportation options!	support
Bulla	D.D.	Texans need alternatives to cars. We need more rail options. We should have high speed rail between DFW, Houston, San Antonio and Austin. We could have had this years ago except Southwest Airlines killed it. European rail travel is a true delight and has a much lower carbon footprint. Texas doesn't need to lead the nation in pollution any more. Let's give our residents a choice when it comes to transportation. High Speed Trains from city center to city center could be faster, more efficient, less hassle	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and less damaging to the environment.	
Bulla	Dale	This is a very confusing survey. Can't really tell what it is measuring. What is EIS? What do each of the items in Human environment refer to? What are the specifics of Natural Environment that are mentioned. I have never filled out such a survey which I really didn't know what it was talking about.	Process
Bunch	Julie	I think this would be a good thing because it would get more cars off the road which would decrease pollution and there would also be fewer accidents.	congestion
Burgin	Alyssa	If we can bring this type of passenger rail to Texas, we will be able to eliminate many road miles of automobiles, each with their individual passengers. The resulting cut in emissions would be substantial. Plus, there would be a cost savings for many Texans. I travel about 40,000 miles a year through Texas, the overwhelming majority of those miles being for business only. I would definitely use a passenger rail line if we had one going through Texas to Corpus Christi.	Air quality
Burnham	Anne	I support the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger rail because I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices.	Air quality
Busti	Steve	Having a passenger rail will help reduce traffic congestion, especially on IH-35 through Austin. It is also a better choice for the environment as air quality will be improved by keeping more gas-guzzling cars and trucks off the road.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Busti	Steve	When I was in Europe, their passenger rail system was incredible! I was able to travel country to country without the need of a car. If America had that kind of rail system we'd be much better for it. Plus high speed rail will get you there much faster than conventional automobiles. I am in full support of expanding passenger rail.	Travel options
Butler	Sylvia	ITS A GOOD IDEA FOR JOBS	support
Cadena	Patricia	I support adding the passenger rails to the proposed areas. An elderly population is one segment that would benefit by its availability which adds to human health and safety. another aspect would be one more avenue of evacuation when hurricanes threaten especially for those without vehicles and/or less tolerant of bus travel. Since the rail lines already exist in Corpus Christi I can see no impact on the environment especially in comparison to industrial ones that already exist.	quality of life
Cadena	Aida	Please seriously consider high speed rail here in Texas. This is a great option for folks who can't make the drive for a variety of reasons. This just makes sense!	support
Cameron	Jean	We need high speed rail in Texas that at least runs from Houston to Dallas and stops in College Station. Another helpful route would run through Austin from San Antonio to Dallas.	High speed
Campbell	Sherrill	I am very much in favor of increasing more passenger rail service in Texas. As I grow older and foresee not wanting to drive as much because of vision issues, I really welcome other modes of transportation.	support
Campbell	Sherrill	I am also concerned with air pollution and waste of natural resources that keeping more cars on the road insures.	Air quality

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Campos	Dolores	Rail service to South Texas, especially Laredo, is a great idea. Please continue to pursue this project. Great job!!	support
Cano	Christian	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Cano	Christian	South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time.	benefits of train travel
Cantu	Roel	South Texas does not currently have rail service. If indeed rail service was to be available for us South Texans we would jump at the opportunity to visit friends and relatives more often. We would have less pollution and wear and tear to our car. A truly win/win situation.	Connectivity
Cardenas	Juanita	I agree on the Railway for an alternative way of travel, I foresee IH-35 as a very congested interstate in the near future and these would alleviate some of the congestion. Hopefully, all safety precautions will be taken into consideration, given the land where these railways will be operating.	Travel options
Cardenas	Juanita	Time of travel should be carefully studied, because we will be wanting something fast and safe to reach our destination.	Travel times
Carr	Mia	Don't feel U have given enough info.	Process
Carter	Joshua	I am currently a college student at UTA that was in Austin for a Day trip a few days	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		ago for recreation. The cost of gas is outrageous and I believe the state would benefit from this rail system. Is there any way this rail system can go to Houston, TX, alongside I 10? I say this since Houston is the biggest city in Texas and IH-35 does not run through Houston, Houston needs a rail system like every other city that will be included in this project.	
Caylor	Margaret	Rail would bring a clean environment, convenience, less traffic, more jobs, faster service and less noise. Please keep me informed of the progress.	support
Cazabon	Catherine	More affordable public transportation in Texas would make travel in this state more efficient. Tourist dollars can help many communities become more self-supporting!	Travel options
Chadwick	Douglas	I am very much in favor of efforts to expand high-speed rail service as an alternative to additional paved-road construction.	Travel options
Chamberlain	Clinton	I applaud the effort to investigate improving passenger rail travel between and within Texas and Oklahoma. Access to fast, efficient rail transport would help alleviate congestion on our highways, which in turn would reduce pollution and improve air quality and the health of humans and the rest of the natural environment. Having lived in other parts of the country as well as in other nations where passenger rail networks are more extensive, as well as faster and more efficient than here, I can attest that a well-developed passenger rail infrastructure makes travel easier and more pleasant, and it definitely helps keeps cars off the road.	congestion
Chamberlain	Ida	Having our old train station in Laredo is a great opportunity for those who travel frequently or not to either San Antonio or Corpus Christi. I do travel quite often to these cities and would like traveling by train rather than using my car. As people get older, they look for a more convenient and affordable ways to get away and enjoy	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		other great destinations. I remember when I was young we would travel to Chicago, IL, to see my dad, a factory worker. So my mom would take us 3 kids on a long journey from Laredo all the way to Chicago's Union Station. Please bring this service back to Laredo.	
Chamberlain	Richard	It would be great to be able to travel through Texas with ease and the convenience of public transportation. This will not only benefit the industry, it will benefit each city in gaining revenue and capital because travel is easier throughout state.	Travel options
Chambers	Allison	With all the new construction of freeways, my husband and I, keep thinking they should be building rails too!! There are too many people on the roads as it is. I see more people in huge trucks and SUVs driving alone than with passengers. Texas would benefit tremendously by making rail transportation possible and easily accessible for commuters and travelers. Please consider making Texas more eco friendly by building a new rail system!!	Travel options
Chapa	David	Over the years, I have seen the traffic on IH-35 increase and security being at risk. In my experience, part of it is greatly due to the increase in the import/export business. More trailers and 18-wheeler trucks are traveling on the same highway as passengers.	congestion
Chapa	David	Due to this, and a forecast increase in trailers on the highway, Laredo is a prime choice for the train. Passengers would have a better traveling option and the decrease in traffic will make our highways safer for travel. On a side note, an alternative route to Houston will also clear traffic from the already over-crowded highways and it would further help connect the Gulf to the inside of the state.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Chatham	Faith	I favor more passenger rail service in Texas. We cannot afford to continue expanding highways and putting more cars on the road without increasing other ground transportation options. We need affordable rail with schedules both ways each day between major urban areas. Texas Transportation dollars should help construct rail.	affordability
Chavarria	Gus Sr	Anytime that you remove cars from the road you are helping the environment. You are saving lives due to the environment and traffic accidents. Let's hope that one day we can make our country car free.	natural environment
Childress	Gary L.	We need to dramatically increase our rail services to include many new areas being serviced. There is no reason our rail services in this country should not equal or exceed the availability, safety and usefulness of the systems in Asia and Europe. For energy independence...for clean environmental reasons and to reduce the congestion on our roadways. INVEST IN OUR NATION'S RAIL SYSTEM (we subsidize air and road transportation now, so that excuse is lame).	Connectivity
Chowdhury	Jolene	My family would support this imitative.	support
Clark	Mary	I rather enjoy traveling by rail when I can and being able to travel all over Texas by rail would be wonderful. I suffer from problems in my legs and being able to get up and stretch and walk around is so much easier when done by rail.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Clark	Leighton	I like to travel by Train. I like to go to Huston and to Corpus Christie - but I hate the drive, although I know lots of people who do it regularly. Please consider the following points: 1) Trains will keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. 2) A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. 3) The existing Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers ANYWHERE! People will love 4) Train stations are a lot more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. You can get a lot done (safely) on a train that cannot be done driving a car. Please make this happen!	congestion
Clark	Leighton	5) Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 6) By accommodating more passengers with trains, we'll reduce the need to continually expand roads which encroach on wild lands.	natural environment
Clark	Roger	America needs better north/south transportation alternatives. The extension of passenger rail north of Oklahoma City to Kansas City and beyond to Omaha and Minneapolis makes sense as well as extending south to Houston. This could be a long distance route for some but more importantly it makes many city pair connections.	Routes
Clarke	Rita	Except for "THE BIGGEST" - why does Texas have to always be THE LAST! in almost every human advancement?!? It's demeaning, discretionary, pig-headed, ignorant, destructive and almost entirely driven by powerful, wealthy white males. I'm really sick of it. I rarely tell anyone that I live in Texas....it saves me a lot of grief!! No more idiotic highway construction!! Build the high-speed rail system and get out of the stinking OIL BUSINESS!!!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Claver	Rev. Karl A.	Texas needs more passenger trains, and more routes, so we can get Texans off the highway and on to the rails. Tracks must be repaired, so trains can travel safely at around 90-100 mph. Routes to Laredo, Brownsville, Corpus Christi should be restored, as well as El Paso to Fort Worth (via Midland), Dallas to Houston, and a route to Denver. Texans love to ski in Colorado, but there are no trains to the Rocky Mountain State. Also the Heartland Flier needs to be extended to Kansas City.	Connectivity
Claver	Rev. Karl A.	Amtrak is more fuel efficient and causes less pollution than busses, cars or airlines, so the carbon footprint is more environmentally friendly when travelling by rail.	natural environment
Claver	Rev. Karl A.	The price of gas is increasing, and to keep Texans mobile, more Amtrak passenger service is vital to the Texas economy. Instead of wasting money by constantly digging up LBJ freeway in Dallas, and adding more lanes, improving rail transportation is a much wiser solution.	local and regional economy
Cleere	Patricia	Rail transportation for both goods and passengers is far superior to air, auto or bus forms of travel, not to mention more environmentally sound. As the cost of petrol rises, people are welcoming rail travel as an expedient alternative to highway trips. On the East Coast is the one Auto Train in the United States between Orlando and Washington, D.C., which is a delight as well as highly efficient. If there were one East-West train, say between Orlando and Los Angeles, and one on a northern route from the northeast through Chicago, then on to northern California or Washington State, I am sure they would be highly welcomed by the public.	Connectivity
Clevenger	Gaylynn	Texas (especially central Texas) continues to grow at a rapid rate and our highways are simply not able to handle the numbers of vehicles. We need rail service now more than ever!	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Cloughley	Robyn	Please, a train!!!!	support
Cobos	Miguel	This is a great idea, as a student in Austin and originally from Edinburg, Texas I can speak for many of my fellow students by saying that this indeed is a necessary investment. The often 5 to 6 hour drive would be better replaced by a train ride by saving gasoline consumption.	Travel options
Colbert	Mildred	More choice in transportation, relaxation, and safety. The bus line is very unreliable, schedules are very late and the delays make for lack of connections. The rail will be exciting for those who never had access to the rail-lines. Would like the comfort it would provide, more spacious seating and dining area would be very beneficial.	Travel options
James III	Alfred	Yesterday's Wichita Eagle had a good article (copy enclosed) on your extension plans for Amtrak service, stating your several options for extension of the OK-TX route, and inviting comment. My wife and I are frequent Amtrak passengers, utilizing the Chicago-Los Angeles train through Newton, KS, as well as many other connecting routes east and west. We have done so four times so far just this year. It is usually on time, very comfortable, and usually full, very popular despite the early morning arrival/departures. We find most passengers, as ourselves, strongly prefer rail to air travel. As you know, BNSF is wanting to retire the present route from Newton to Albuquerque in favor of a southern route through Wichita/Amarillo, which is better trackage and would add two major cities to the route to Albuquerque. Wichita's Vice-Mayor Pete Meitzner and former KS Lt. Gov. Shelby Smith have spoken strongly in favor of this and we wish to add our endorsement. It makes economic sense as Oklahoma/Texas experience and several recent studies have shown. Transportation Secretary LaHood has strongly endorsed and urged Amtrak plans, and has stated that again, the public is way ahead of the legislators. We respectfully urge your serious	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		consideration.	
Collins	Kristi	We need this badly. Some express lines would also serve enormously.	support
Collins	Kristi	The money spent on freeways and so on that supports the auto industry has held us hostage since WWII. Eliminating passenger rail in the process was always an overreach and never should have happened, the advantages to which ran its course within 20 years of its inception. Bring back the long and short distance passenger rail extensively.	Travel options
Colon	Pedro J.	I think that a rail service of that nature to connect Texas with Oklahoma is a great idea. Will be faster and cheaper for people in both states to communicate. Environmental friendly also. Talking from myself I will use such services to visit other state. Hope the prices will not be too high. But I will like to see the project become a reality.	Connectivity
Columbus	Whitney	We need to reduce pollution and continue to offer public transportation to combat the rising cost of gas!	Travel options
Conklin	Spencer	I support high speed rail or bullet trains like they have in Europe that run on electricity. We should build that here now.	support
Conrad	Roxanne	I am highly in favor of expanded rail service! As someone who travels a great deal, I rely on Amtrak for a lot of my long-distance trips, and although I often see comments that Amtrak "needs to increase ridership," every train I board is full, with every seat and bedroom sold out, especially on long haul routes heading east, west and north. Amtrak needs better routes, faster, newer trains and most of all, the means to offer	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		convenience to travelers to get where they need to go quickly. Thank you.	
Cooper	Janet	A rail line would fit my needs perfectly, and would be safer than by road or air. Also less polluting.	safety
Corley	Pat	Strongly support improved passenger rail service to south Texas, and north from Oklahoma City, through Wichita, to Kansas City. I would use such a service several times yearly if available.	support
Cox	RoyAnn	Trying to increase the amount of asphalt and cement to accommodate the number of cars on the highway will never work. We will only decrease the quality of our lives, air and community. It has been shown that rail is more efficient in moving people and products, therefore we must work to increase the lines between cities, urban and rural.	support
COX	MASON W	<p>I support TxDOT's proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail service for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
COX	MASON W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. 	Connectivity
Craft	Adrea	I support all rail/high speed rail projects. I am a frequent passenger of the Texas Eagle from Austin to Chicago and I would LOVE to see improvements in ALL rail services. If I could take the train, I would never fly again. Rail service is the norm in Europe; I feel it can(and should) be here too.	support
Craig	Mark	I am writing in support of the proposed high speed rail line between Oklahoma City and San Antonio. This rail line would provide a greatly needed option for travel in this area. Anyone that travels here knows how congested IH 35 is (and getting more so), and that air travel is also packed. Rail would move more people for less energy, which would save money and the environment. And it would take traffic off the highways and airways. It's all good. Please help rail happen in Texas!	congestion
Crane	Virgil	High speed rail is a necessary element in the progress of moving larger numbers of people. As Texas continues to grow in population high speed rail is a requirement to help in preserving our environment.	congestion
Crawford	Dana	I support the rail!	support
Crawley	John	Rail should have never given way to the automobile. The more highways we build the more real estate is destroyed and we still have traffic congestion. LONG LIVE RAILWAY!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Crettenden	Denise	We need more passenger rail options in South Texas. Currently our only options are to drive to a bigger town to take an interstate train. We travel to San Antonio and Austin and the ability to make that trip by rail would be great. The ability to travel to other cities like Corpus Christi would be great as well -- we would be able to travel more often. Passenger rail is very important to help make fewer car trips, which would greatly improve the air quality here. Passenger rail would also help connect smaller towns with each other and with larger cities without putting more cars on the road or paving over more land with roads. It would also enable people without cars or with cars that are not reliable enough for long trips to visit other cities for errands or to commute for jobs. We need a wider variety of options in South Texas to reduce car use, improve air quality, save energy, and allow travel for those without vehicles.	Connectivity
Crooks	Charles	After looking at the map, it would be beneficial in my opinion to adjust the route from Denton to places south. To bypass either of the major population areas is a mistake. My suggestion is to from Denton to Fort Worth, east on the Trinity to Dallas, then south to Waxahachie on existing track, and from Waxahachie to Hillsboro on the abandoned right of way. (Waxahachie has just completed restoring the depot located at the north end of the abandoned right of way).	Routes
Crow	Crystal	Why would we not want more railway transportation? It is exponentially better for the environment than cars, more cost efficient than planes, and is certainly a great alternative for so many people and would open up the door for travel for so many in our great state that have never had the opportunity, be it because their cars are not dependable enough to go long distances or because of a fear of flying.	benefits of train travel
crust	Monica	In general, the more eco-friendly changes that take place, the better. That includes transportation. This being done, while leaving the maximum amount of naturally	natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		occurring green space possible, along with the least amount of additional toxins introduced, will be good.	
Cullen	Beth	Population growth in Texas is growing--rail would help lessen the impact of all of the above by decreasing the number of cars on the road.	congestion
Curtis	Cynthia	A better, safer, energy-saving alternative is needed for passenger rail service to be expanded. This would enable families and individuals to travel affordably and comfortably in a timely manner. The highways by car and bus are far too overcrowded and unmanageable for the elderly. Gasoline is costly for the traveler in a private auto. Congestion is paramount in this day and age, perpetuated by inexperienced drivers, distracted drivers and angry drivers. Distances are long and continuous construction is hazardous.	Travel options
Curtis	Connie	How will building this impact the environment ? will it destroy farmlands? I need more info	Process
Czar	Melissa	I want more Rail services and Rail service options like the Texas/Oklahoma line proposal in Texas.	support
Dale	Steve	I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices. I am writing to express my support for the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Davis	Chad	As part of the MY35 committee, I proposed the route from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City by connecting, Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, Lawton, and Oklahoma City. This would connect 4 major Military posts and would be on a route that would be much more suited for the level terrain needed for rail. The right-of-way costs would be much less than the IH35 corridor and would avoid much of the environmental wetlands that are on the IH35 corridor.	Routes
Davis	Sara	Bringing a passenger train to Corpus Christi would solely provide a positive impact to the well-being, and safety of the residents. Vehicle traffic on major and minor roads has greatly increased since the explosion of the Eagle Ford Shale across south Texas increasing the numbers of accidents, and causing more tax dollars to be spent on road maintenance. By adding a passenger train to an already existing track, residence of south Texas would have a safer and less hectic means of transportation, making the experience of traveling more enjoyable. In addition, currently the only means of evacuation in the event of a natural disaster is solely by vehicle. This sole means of evacuation creates limitations on the general population, placing a great strain on buses, and personally owned vehicles; if you are without, how do you leave? Therefore, adding a passenger train would help alleviate any problems to these solutions, providing basic train evacuation for the elderly, sick, handicapped, or those without vehicles.	Travel options
Davis	Tori	Please add more passenger rail for Texas, especially commuter rail in cities.	support
Davis	Phillip	We desperately need high speed passenger and freight rail service in Texas. The ill-fated TTC project placed too much emphasis on highway and truck and needed more focus on mass transit and freight rail service. Build the rail and get the 18 wheelers off	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		my Interstates, please!	
Davis	Dale	This is the dumbest idea I've heard of lately. No way will it ever be economically feasible. TxDOT already complains about insufficient funds to maintain our roads, and now wants to spend billions on a high-speed rail project? You already waste more than enough of our tax dollars on senseless projects, like small-town airports, etc. Read my lips: No New Taxes!! Concentrate on roads!!	Against
Day	Daniel	If this happens, that's great and even better if my bicycle can come along free of charge. I'm not expecting anything to happen with this project which is a tragedy to the welfare of Texas.	support
de la Cruz	Adriana	I believe a passenger rail system would greatly benefit South Texas. As a frequent traveler, I have had the opportunity to travel by train to Fort Worth, Texas via Amtrak. It is a slower means of travel but for a person on a budget it is a great option. The ride is actually comfortable and scenic.	Travel options
de la Cruz	Adriana	The only drawback that I saw as to my experience traveling by train is that there is no passenger rail system in Laredo, Texas. A small trip to San Antonio, Texas was necessary to catch the train. It would be convenient for Laredo to obtain a passenger rail system since it does get a vast amount of travelers from Mexico and other parts of Texas. I just wonder how will this affect the community in taxes and the environment? Is there a planned route?	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
De La Rosa	David	Would really be nice for it to run from Oklahoma to Brownsville Texas. If it went all the way down to the border, I feel there would be lots more passengers on it. Right now there is many bus lines going down to the Rio Grande Valley and in the past years many accidents causing many lives have occurred on these bus lines and also in personal cars. I think these trains would get lots of cars of the interstates especially with all the traffic in Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio. I would definitely take it down to the Rio Grande Valley.	Safety
De La Rosa	Mary	I think the high speed railway system in South Texas would benefit many families who wish to travel without having the hassle of all the training commuting along our interstate. It has become so dangerous to travel on the road especially on IH-35. There have been several times I have wanted to travel with my (6) grandchildren but I do not wish to expose to that dangerous interstate. I also want them to experience how wonderful is to travel on the train. I have memories of traveling with my grandparents when I was a little girl. I hope you consider us here in Laredo, Texas where I live.	safety
Dean	Peggy	I am in favor of rail service as an alternative to cars on the highway. More efficient, safer, more convenient, less air pollution, less noise	Travel options
DeHoyos	Arminda	I really hope that Laredo gets a passenger train. This would bring a lot of people in to Laredo and increase revenue. I remember when I lived in California, I would take the Am Track train from San Diego to Los Angeles daily back and forth without having to worry about feeling tired or sleepy on the road. There are times I would like to go to San Antonio and not drive but I would hate to take the bus since they tend to get really crowded. A two story train like the Amtrak train would be perfect for Laredo	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Demarest	Stephni M.	High speed rail in Texas would be a great benefit to reduce traffic on IH35. The resulting reduction in cars on the road would improve air quality. Thank you for your consideration.	congestion
DeMartinis	Melanie	I would like to see more rail options available in Texas, both inter-city, intra-city, and inter-state. I would like to see the plan for rail transportation between Oklahoma City and South Texas come to fruition. Please put me down as in support of this plan.	Travel options
Denton	Lynn	I highly support the addition of passenger/commuter rail from the OKC/South Texas corridor. This stretch of IH-35 is well known for the volume of traffic and high rates of accidents and injuries. Our current reliance on surface roads is expensive, dangerous and out-dated. Given the predicted population growth in the area, a rail solution will improve mobility, eliminate wasted time/increase productivity for commuters, enhance safety with reduced vehicle usage and thereby improve air and water quality for the region.	congestion
DeRousie	Lilia	I think the railroad will help to minimize the traffic. Regarding wildlife and wetlands, our area is very rich on birding and nature, is that going to be affected? If it does please keep it to a minimum.	congestion
DeRousie	Lilia	Maybe not too much noise at night? also please keep it to the minimum. Out of than that I think the railroad is a great means of transportation, please keep it affordable. I am all for it.	noise
Descant	Steven	I give full support for the proposed passenger rail line running out of Laredo, Texas. We need alternative means of transportation in Texas to cut traffic, accidents, accident fatalities, commute times, and pollution.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Detrich	Rosalind	I am very much in favor of a faster rail system from OKC to Texas. I have ridden on the Heartland Flyer numerous times and always appreciated having that option. Public transportation options are very important and I hope that this faster option will be available in the near future. Thanks!	Travel options
Devine	Jeanne	I support the development of high-speed passenger rail service throughout Texas, including South Texas. It is an economical, environment-friendly alternative to air and highway travel. Given the insufficient funds available to build and maintain our existing highways, passenger rail provides a cost-effective alternative. I hope you will expand high-speed passenger rail service to include our entire state. Thank you for your consideration.	affordability
DiBenedetto	Scott	I know that government funds are very limited these days, but I am hoping that as a society we are smart enough to know that spending some government funds now to create far greater societal benefits in the near future is the right thing to do. Quality rail has so many long term benefits, some quantifiable, some not. Energy consumption is much lower for rail then cars or planes. Environmental (most notably air quality) benefits are numerous.	travel options
DiBenedetto	Scott	Being able to take a rail trip from OK or North Texas to the beaches of Corpus Christi gives an added incentive to visit there instead of driving to the Florida panhandle. Unlike driving, time on a train can be relaxing and/or productive as opposed to stressful.	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
DiFalco	Chuck	You, namely the State of Texas, TxDOT, and all of its contractors and consultants, are approaching passenger rail completely backwards. The issue of cost should be the first consideration. I know what your project process involves – throw all that away. Passenger rail should be self-supporting. That should not be just a goal, or even a requirement, but it should be the first requirement. I don't mean indirect revenues from economic impacts from rail development. "Economic impacts" are just guesses about the future at best, and are self-serving dreams at worst. Texas passenger rail should pay for itself directly or it shouldn't be done, period. And don't play games by saying that operational revenues will exceed expenses if we the taxpayers get stuck with a huge capital cost bill. I don't want my tax dollars subsidizing another big government project like Texas passenger rail.	Cost
Dikcis	Steven	It's about time scheduled rail passenger service is coming to south Texas!! I recently was looking into taking an Amtrak train between San Antonio to Austin and back. The Amtrak passenger service schedule is abysmal! As our south Texas population expands (and ages); we'll need another reliable mode of transportation besides automobiles to get to other cities. Your study should also include scheduled rail service from San Antonio to Houston and San Antonio to Corpus Christi as well. Thank you for making this effort a reality.	Travel options
Dishaw	Ryan	Please consider high speed rail for the Texas / Oklahoma area. We need transportation alternatives to help alleviate traffic problems. High speed rail would offer a faster, more environmentally friendly alternative to the thousands of people that drive their cars from city to city in Texas and Oklahoma.	High speed

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Doll	Rebecca	I would like to see Texas lead the nation into rail transportation already used all over the world.	support
Domke	Jim	American life is built around the car, drive-in restaurants, banks, etc. Once you get to a location, you need a car to get to friends homes, museums, businesses. I'd like to see system that enables you to get 200+ miles easily and still have access to your car. I think Amtrak offers this to Florida. Imagine being able to relax and read or sleep while you go from Dallas to Houston. We had the system in place a hundred years ago, but instead of building on it, destroyed it.	support
Donald	Dana	This is something that should have happened a long time ago. Texas is way behind on giving people any choices for easy affordable alternatives for transportation.	support
DONALDSON	RICHARD	Any increased passenger rail in Texas would be a godsend. IH-35 is an overstuffed parking lot-a waste of time and resources.	support
Dorsey	Susan	I strongly support all efforts to increase rail services for the transportation of people. Highway construction is too costly and slower.	support
Douglass	Sandra	There are many reasons to put in high speed trains. It puts fewer cars on the road. By doing this we would reduce possible accidents, improve air quality and reduce the noise.	congestion
Douglass	Sandra	Not only that if we use the right of ways the state already has, for example: over existing highways or train lines, we would not add to the impact to the environment. It would improve the health of the state population, which would cost less tax dollars.	natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Douglass	Sandra	Further, the trains would cost the tax payers less. Less repairs to or expanding highways, less work on air pollution and noise pollution. Last, it could increase tourism. People would hop on the train for the weekend to coast or visit family or friends.	Cost
Douville	Kathryn D	I think it's a great idea. Wish we had high speed rail across the country. As long as the environmental impact is slight I'm all for it.	support
Dowis	James	Please do what you can to ensure that Texas gets the passenger rail that is needed. Austin to OKC, through Dallas, would greatly cut down on the amount of pollution from cars and planes, not to mention save people lots of time and frustration. The NW and NE have invested in passenger rail that has served them very well. We have to look to what our needs are in the future, make responsible decisions now and do what is best for the environment. Now is not the time to think short term. Not on this issue.	Travel options
Dowling	Pauline	I am a winter Texan, I personally travel from New York State to the Rio Grande Valley every year. Often many of us from all over the U.S. and Canada, have discussed how much easier rail trail to the valley would be. As we grow older many do not wish to travel by air or to drive the long distances. At this time we can only go by train to San Antonio, then by bus. No one wishing to do that. Many would choose the rail travel if available, as the warm temperatures are better for our health; we would be able to stay for a longer period of time if efficient rail service were available We think this would be a very attractive service to most traveling to the valley..	Travel options

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Drury	Señor Kevin	In my humble opinion, the propagation of government-subsidized public transportation is an excellent example of an egregious waste of taxpayers' money. Let the free market system work to our advantage. If these routes are viable, a private company (AMTRAK is a government entity) will develop the system. This will create jobs. Those jobs will generate more taxes. Think of it like privatizing the passenger rail industry AND getting a tax increase without having to work at it. (En mi humilde opinión, la propagación de las subsidiado por el gobierno el transporte público es un excelente ejemplo de una pérdida atroz de dinero de los contribuyentes. Deje que el sistema de libre mercado funciona a nuestro favor. Si estas rutas son viables, una empresa privada (AMTRAK es una entidad gubernamental) desarrollará el sistema. Esto creará puestos de trabajo. Los puestos de trabajo que generará más impuestos. Piense en ello como la privatización del sector ferroviario de pasajeros y conseguir un aumento de los impuestos, sin tener que trabajar en ello.)	Against
Dubble	Scott	Please expand rail transportation options in Texas. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options
Dube	Charles	In total support: * Everything to gain in air quality and traffic safety (less cars and less highway congestion) * Improves commerce and local economy by joining these metropolitan areas. The biggest concern is the opposing lobby money and influence to kill this effort. More than a decade ago, the same "study" was done to bridge Houston to DFW for great reasons. It went NOWHERE. The best thing we can do is to hire	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		government leaders that actually get things done instead of the same self serving lackeys of lobbyists that couldn't care less about "passenger rail" service.	
Simecek	Pat	My main concern is losing my home to another transportation project. In the early 1990's it was the bullet train. A few short years ago it was the Trans-Texas corridor. I live within a mile of the proposed routes of these two projects. My mortgage is almost paid in full. I don't want to start over in mortgage payments or looking for a new place to live.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Simecek	Pat	The noise factor should be considered as any new transportation projects are noisy like the bullet train would have been.	noise
Simecek	Pat	I don't want valuable farm land to be taken and paved over. As subdivision grow, we are losing more and more land. We need soil, plants, trees, water supplies. We need rural areas for a break between cities. We need the country for refreshment and relaxation, scenery, a change of pace.	Natural environment
Simecek	Pat	Realistically, how many people would give up their vehicles for a high-speed railway?	Against
Duffy	Anita	I think a rail system that does not use fossil fuels would be a great addition to our Texas transportation system. Anyone who drives the IH-35 interstate knows what a hazard this is to drivers and the environment. The fumes from the large trucks and cars makes it difficult to breathe for all living animals. Of course I do not expect our Republican state to do anything to improve life.	energy
Duhon	Patricia	I think having a high-speed rail system through Texas is a great idea. The traffic congestion is getting pretty serious in Central Texas and this would allow more of us	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		to travel longer distances without the gasoline emissions. Removing cars from the highways should improve safety. I would think there would be plenty of open, undeveloped space to put in the railway without causing undue financial harm to small farmers and businesses.	
Durham	David R	I am writing to show my support and approval of TxDOT's proposed high speed passenger rail system here in Texas. I frequently use the Amtrak traveling between Austin and Fort Worth and found it to be a very valuable alternative to the IH-35 corridor hassle and is very comparable in time. I would love seeing, and I believe it would be dollars very very well spent, to expand and accelerate the passenger train network in Texas with high and/or higher speed rail service...even more frequencies also. However, I would also suggest a route from the Austin area direct to Houston and Galveston as both Hwy 290 and 71 are heavily traveled year round between these two large cities. Also, I would propose a route from Dallas/Fort Worth along the IH-20 corridor on into El Paso where a train could meet up with the Sunset Limited out to California...passing through Midland/Odessa and Abilene. Texas is ready for this!! The Amtrak I frequently ride is often full or close to capacity. The Amtrak traveling out west to El Paso is also well utilized and a vital part of many Texans and visitors to Texas transportation system. PLEASE proceed at all speed with this project.	support
Eddins	brad	We will use rail long after gasoline is unaffordable for private car and private truck transport. Let's build it ASAP!	Travel options
Eldevik	Randi	Several times over the years, I have traveled by train back and forth between Oklahoma City and various points in Texas; I would like to be able to continue traveling this way. I am very much in favor of passenger rail service between	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Oklahoma City and Texas. I often go to Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin.	
Elkins	Helen	I support the plan to expand rail service in Texas. As our highways become more congested, fast passenger rail service would do a great deal to remove vehicles from our highways. Fewer cars on the highways would reduce emissions and improve air quality, while also improving traffic safety.	congestion
Ellis	Jennifer	I am writing to register my support for moving forward on Passenger rail from Oklahoma City to South Texas. As populations continue to increase exponentially in Texas, we need more and better transportation options. Having rail service that stretched the state would help with traffic congestion, air quality concerns, and offer Texans a great new option for traversing the state-- one that is better for individuals and the state as a whole than continuing to rely so heavily on cars and planes for our transportation options. Please help bring Texas forward into the 21st century concerning transportation options by installing passenger rail from Texas' head to toe. Thanks for your consideration of my comments.	Travel options
Enders	Sandra	Alleviate traffic congestion thus reducing gas consumption	congestion
English	Rick	It is time that the Southwest begins to lead in environmental matters that will effect generations to come. One way is to push for increased rail options for transportation. Major cities like Dallas and Houston must continue to add more light rail to their transportation mix while the region as a whole must add rail BETWEEN major hubs. While our density is not as significant as the Northeast corridor, the "L" shaped corridor from Tulsa through OKC, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, and over to Houston	support

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		and New Orleans can sustain vastly increased rail.	
Estrada-Berg	Brenda	Any modern, advanced metropolitan areas have high speed rail (electric). I have ridden on trains from Venice to Rome, Nagoya to Tokyo, plus the train from San Antonio to Fort Worth. It's laughable. Do we have to stay in our 3rd world condition in this area of growth?	Connectivity
Etheredge	Caleb	Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways. Please add more rail options. They have to be well planned and high quality though or else they will be underutilized. LSTAR should be a no brainer. My major concern is land use and the future planning of cities. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. New rail stations can help revive the small towns in Texas that used to have bustling city squares but are now left to decay. This should be the way forward for city planning. Thank you.	Travel options
Eubanks	Earl	I think that this is something that we've needed for years. Hi-speed rail would help tie smaller towns together without building more and bigger hi-ways. There would also need to have better local public transportation.	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Evans	Carrie	<p>I wholeheartedly support Texas-Oklahoma rail service!!!!!!!!!!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	Travel options
Everett	Tina	Railways offer an alternative to travel and vacationing that would be a great addition to Corpus Christi.	Travel options
Fahrenthold	Pat	Please increase passenger train service in South Texas.	support
Farnsworth	Robert	<p>This Preliminary Feasibility Study recommends six regional passenger rail corridors for further development and implementation (listed and discussed below). All six corridors are identified with at least one of the state's four major metropolitan areas of Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston San Antonio, and Austin. Significant large traffic generators exist along each corridor, and highway and airline traffic between and among the points reflects the high level of travel demand present. Furthermore, existing rail infrastructure within the corridors lessens the complexity and cost of project implementation. Earlier studies for feasibility of the three legs that make up the "Texas Triangle" (DFW-Houston-San Antonio) were completed in the 1990s, that is 15 years ago, and those studies then indicated the feasibility of such service. Given the exponential growth rates within the Triangle since those studies were completed, and given the changed state of the nation's fuel situation, there is every reason to</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		believe that those findings remain valid. Regional rail implementation will require close cooperation with the current owners of the rights-of-way in order to reach agreement on the amount of consideration allowed the owners. Since all the freight rail routes already are operating at or near capacity, the introduction of the additional regional rail traffic will likely be the tipping point in traffic to force the needed improvements. Not the least factor is increasing track capacity by the installation of double track, where necessary, new and extended sidings, and updated signal systems.	
Farnsworth	Robert	<p>Recommended regional rail frequencies on these selected corridors is three to five trains in each direction daily. Train speeds should allow for an initial average corridor speed, including stops, of not less than 50 mph, and eventually increasing to an average speed of 60 mph on most routes. In order to attain such average speeds, the track must be maintained to an allowable speed of 79 mph. Trains would consist of a single locomotive and at least two passenger cars, one of which would be a control car to enable push-pull operations of the trains, obviating the requirement to turn the trains at each terminus. It seems prudent that all trains into and through Dallas and Fort Worth be given access to DFW International Airport, as the regional service will supplement the regional airline services to the smaller local and regional airports, and it will provide transportation alternatives to travelers who do not live within proximity of any airport. Often overlooked as a factor in earlier studies, however, is that the regional rail service will attract people who are traveling to and between intermediate points on the system in addition to the end point to end point travel often assumed. This omission was a primary flaw of the Texas High Speed rail project’s ridership projections.</p> <p>A. Dallas-Fort Worth – Waco – Temple – Austin – San Antonio This segment truly is a corridor route, considering the number of significant and, therefore,</p>	High speed

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	<p>necessary station stops. In addition to the end points, stations would be located along the route at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillsboro • Waco/McGregor • Temple • Taylor • Round Rock • Austin • San Marcos • New Braunfels/Schertz <p>B. Fort Worth-Dallas – Houston This route is envisaged to be non-stop between the two end points; however, stops could be located in Corsicana or Waxahachie and in Montgomery County or Spring.</p> <p>C. San Antonio – Houston The current Amtrak service on this route stops only at the two named end points. The regional rail service would have stops at the following additional localities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seguin • Schulenburg • Columbus • Rosenberg <p>D. Houston – Beaumont-Port Arthur This segment could operate as an extension of the San Antonio – Houston route, Its short length, 83 miles, limits the number of available stops. Liberty would be a plausible site for an intermediate station. In addition, if the route were extended into the State of Louisiana, it could run to Lake</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Charles and Lafayette and even as far as New Orleans. The current Amtrak service of the Sunset Limited is not a factor in the transportation equation in any case. That train operates only three days per week in each direction, and it is often several hours late in arriving at its limited number of stops.	
Farnsworth	Robert	<p>Texas Regional Rail Service. Preliminary Feasibility Analysis</p> <p>I. Purpose of this Preliminary Analysis</p> <p>A. Over the past twenty years numerous, rigorous studies have been completed that addressed the growing population of the State of Texas and that growth’s projected impact on future mobility within the state. At first, almost all of them focused on the increasing congestion of the state’s principal highways, including both the Interstate Highway System and the major federal and state highway system, and how the cost to the individual citizen would be forced to increase as a result of increased fuel consumption, increased time required for travel, and increased pollution mitigation costs. More recently, the studies have begun to look at alternatives to the standard remedy of building more and bigger highways, a solution that demonstrably leads to even more highway congestion. The primary alternative to highway travel has evolved to the utilization of the skies, encouraged by the development of jet-powered aircraft and the concomitant reduction in the cost per mile of air travel. Again, this form of travel has witnessed a rapid increase in demand that has resulted in flight traffic congestion at all of the nation’s major airports and limitations placed on the use of existing air corridors by the over-taxed air control system.</p> <p>B. This preliminary study will summarize the findings of the studies that have been completed, many of them by recognized transportation experts. This study will</p>	frequency

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>then present a case for the development of a new and aggressive effort to revive and revitalize the passenger rail system within the State of Texas. This study will focus on the demand for regional rail between and among the population centers of Eastern Texas.</p> <p>II. Background Modern transportation policy in the United States was set during the Eisenhower Administration in the early 1950s when Congress committed to construct the 41,000 mile Interstate Highway System, the design based on the President’s observations of the German Autobahn System which linked major cities and regions with high speed, limited access highways. This decision came following the historic role which the American railroads played in mobilizing the nation for its participation in World War II. The subsequent and steady decline of America’s railroads during the 1950s and 1960s can be traced directly to the stepped completion of the Interstate Highway System (IHS) across the nation. That the IHS was the major part of the national transportation policy is demonstrated by the huge and indispensable role played by the federal government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% federal funding to the state highway departments • Federally coordinated system of construction and operations standards • Aggressive funding from the national Congressional body Conversely, federal financial and tax reporting regulations stymied new investments in rail infrastructure through the replacement-betterment accounting rules that severely restricted tax expensing of new construction to only replacing in-kind. “Betterment” construction was required to be amortized over the life of the construction, resulting in major tax penalties relative to foregone tax benefits for such investment. Meanwhile, local tax jurisdictions bled the railroads cash-dry through heavy tax appraisals and assessments, a policy which led inexorably to the systematic abandonment of marginal rail lines 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>and to the railroad companies’ aggressive elimination of “redundant” and “excess” capacity (second, third, fourth mail tracks). Meanwhile, rail traffic declined in actual tonnage as well as in percentage of freight carried—to 30%—while freight carried by trucks not only increased in the volume and percentage of freight carried but also in the volume of high-value freight. Concurrently with this radical change in freight mode choice, more and more people were choosing to travel longer distances by automobile on the IHS while eschewing travel by passenger rail. Mail contracts on passenger trains helped to support otherwise losing passenger operations until Congress chose to move postal contracts to the fledgling airline industry in late 1967. The subsequent decline in rail passenger service, which was greatly frustrated by federal Interstate Commerce Commission rules governing fares and route maintenance finally culminated in the federally mandated formation of the National Rail Passenger Corporation, better known as “Railpax.” Activated on May 1, 1971, “Amtrak.” —as the new system was and continues to be known—assumed the ownership and operation of the national rail passenger system, the participating rail carriers to “buy into” the new system with a cash payment. Five carriers chose not to participate for individual reasons: the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad; the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad; Southern Railroad; Georgia Railroad; and Chicago, South Shore and South Bend. They were required to continue existing passenger operations until January 1, 1975. Thus, the Quad Cities Rocket and the Peoria Rocket continued to race and/or crawl into Chicago, and the Rio Grande Zephyr continued to operate west of Denver. How did the birth of Amtrak affect passenger rail service in Texas? The following trains were discontinued on or shortly before May 1, 1971: Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1/2 San Francisco Chief, ran through Wichita, Amarillo and Clovis • #15/16 Texas Chief, ran through Wichita, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>Houston, and to Galveston</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #65/66 Houston to Temple • #75/76 Temple to Clovis • #77/78 Brownwood to San Angelo • #93/94 Amarillo to Lubbock Earlier passenger train discontinuances included: Fort Worth and Denver Railroad (Burlington Route)— • #1/2 Texas Zephyr. Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston • #7/8 Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (Katy)— • #1/2 Texas Special. Kansas City, Dallas, Waco, San Antonio Texas and Pacific Railroad/Missouri Pacific Railroad (Mopac)— • #21/22 “West” Texas Eagle. Fort Worth to El Paso Texas passenger trains that remained in operation under the aegis of Amtrak were— • Texas Chief-Lone Star. Wichita, Oklahoma City, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, Houston • Texas Eagle. St. Louis, Little Rock, Texarkana, Dallas-Fort Worth, McGregor/Waco, Temple, Austin, San Antonio • Sunset. New Orleans, Houston, San Antonio, Del Rio, El Paso, points west <p>The Texas Chief was later discontinued, leaving just the Texas Eagle and the Sunset trains serving the State of Texas. The Texas Eagle operates one train per day in each direction, while the Sunset operates one train in each direction only three days per week. Ironically, the Federal Republic of Germany, the model for super highway construction in the United States, in 1972 decided to place a new emphasis on rail travel, especially in regional and metropolitan areas. Increasing population growth and its accompanying density had led to such a high level of highway congestion whose remedy through the expansion of the highway network was impractical if not</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>insolvable. Concurrently, German, French, and Japanese private-government consortia initiated feasibility and design studies for future high-speed rail systems. The Japanese were the first to inaugurate their system, the Shinkansen, followed by the French TGV and finally by the German ICE systems. It was also about this time that actual engineering and construction plans began to be drawn up for the high-speed rail tunnel which now links France with Great Britain by passing under the English Channel. Below is a map of the current (April 2, 2007) Amtrak System.</p> <p>MAP 1. AMTRAK SYSTEM MAP APRIL 2007 Source Amtrak System Timetable, April 2, 2007</p> <p>III. Roles of Transportation Modes</p> <p>A. Regional and Long Distance Modal Choices The transportation consumer selects the mode of travel based on personal needs and desires. The business traveler requires speed, reliability, and accessibility to the destination. The special event attendee requires cost effect</p>	
Farnsworth	Robert	<p>Texas Regional Rail Service. Preliminary Feasibility Analysis</p> <p>I. Purpose of this Preliminary Analysis</p> <p>A. Over the past twenty years numerous, rigorous studies have been completed that addressed the growing population of the State of Texas and that growth's projected impact on future mobility within the state. At first, almost all of them focused on the increasing congestion of the state's principal highways, including both the Interstate Highway System and the major federal and state highway system, and how the cost to the individual citizen would be forced to increase as a result of increased fuel consumption, increased time required for travel, and increased pollution mitigation costs. More recently, the studies have begun to look at</p>	Process

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	<p>alternatives to the standard remedy of building more and bigger highways, a solution that demonstrably leads to even more highway congestion. The primary alternative to highway travel has evolved to the utilization of the skies, encouraged by the development of jet-powered aircraft and the concomitant reduction in the cost per mile of air travel. Again, this form of travel has witnessed a rapid increase in demand that has resulted in flight traffic congestion at all of the nation’s major airports and limitations placed on the use of existing air corridors by the over-taxed air control system.</p> <p>B. This preliminary study will summarize the findings of the studies that have been completed, many of them by recognized transportation experts. This study will then present a case for the development of a new and aggressive effort to revive and revitalize the passenger rail system within the State of Texas. This study will focus on the demand for regional rail between and among the population centers of Eastern Texas.</p> <p>II. Background Modern transportation policy in the United States was set during the Eisenhower Administration in the early 1950s when Congress committed to construct the 41,000 mile Interstate Highway System, the design based on the President’s observations of the German Autobahn System which linked major cities and regions with high speed, limited access highways. This decision came following the historic role which the American railroads played in mobilizing the nation for its participation in World War II. The subsequent and steady decline of America’s railroads during the 1950s and 1960s can be traced directly to the stepped completion of the Interstate Highway System (IHS) across the nation. That the IHS was the major part of the national transportation policy is demonstrated by the huge and indispensable role played by the federal government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% federal funding to the state highway departments 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federally coordinated system of construction and operations standards • Aggressive funding from the national Congressional body Conversely, federal financial and tax reporting regulations stymied new investments in rail infrastructure through the replacement-betterment accounting rules that severely restricted tax expensing of new construction to only replacing in-kind. “Betterment” construction was required to be amortized over the life of the construction, resulting in major tax penalties relative to foregone tax benefits for such investment. Meanwhile, local tax jurisdictions bled the railroads cash-dry through heavy tax appraisals and assessments, a policy which led inexorably to the systematic abandonment of marginal rail lines and to the railroad companies’ aggressive elimination of “redundant” and “excess” capacity (second, third, fourth mail tracks). Meanwhile, rail traffic declined in actual tonnage as well as in percentage of freight carried—to 30%—while freight carried by trucks not only increased in the volume and percentage of freight carried but also in the volume of high-value freight. Concurrently with this radical change in freight mode choice, more and more people were choosing to travel longer distances by automobile on the IHS while eschewing travel by passenger rail. Mail contracts on passenger trains helped to support otherwise losing passenger operations until Congress chose to move postal contracts to the fledgling airline industry in late 1967. The subsequent decline in rail passenger service, which was greatly frustrated by federal Interstate Commerce Commission rules governing fares and route maintenance finally culminated in the federally mandated formation of the National Rail Passenger Corporation, better known as “Railpax.” Activated on May 1, 1971, “Amtrak.” —as the new system was and continues to be known—assumed the ownership and operation of the national rail passenger system, the participating rail carriers to “buy into” the new system with a cash payment. Five carriers chose not to participate for individual reasons: the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad; the 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad; Southern Railroad; Georgia Railroad; and Chicago, South Shore and South Bend. They were required to continue existing passenger operations until January 1, 1975. Thus, the Quad Cities Rocket and the Peoria Rocket continued to race and/or crawl into Chicago, and the Rio Grande Zephyr continued to operate west of Denver. How did the birth of Amtrak affect passenger rail service in Texas? The following trains were discontinued on or shortly before May 1, 1971: Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1/2 San Francisco Chief, ran through Wichita, Amarillo and Clovis • #15/16 Texas Chief, ran through Wichita, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, Houston, and to Galveston • #65/66 Houston to Temple • #75/76 Temple to Clovis • #77/78 Brownwood to San Angelo • #93/94 Amarillo to Lubbock <p>Earlier passenger train discontinuances included: Fort Worth and Denver Railroad (Burlington Route)—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1/2 Texas Zephyr. Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston • #7/8 Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (Katy)— • #1/2 Texas Special. Kansas City, Dallas, Waco, San Antonio Texas and Pacific Railroad/Missouri Pacific Railroad (Mopac)— • #21/22 “West” Texas Eagle. Fort Worth to El Paso Texas passenger trains that remained in operation under the aegis of Amtrak were— • Texas Chief-Lone Star. Wichita, Oklahoma City, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, Houston 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Eagle. St. Louis, Little Rock, Texarkana, Dallas-Fort Worth, McGregor/Waco, Temple, Austin, San Antonio • Sunset. New Orleans, Houston, San Antonio, Del Rio, El Paso, points west <p>The Texas Chief was later discontinued, leaving just the Texas Eagle and the Sunset trains serving the State of Texas. The Texas Eagle operates one train per day in each direction, while the Sunset operates one train in each direction only three days per week. Ironically, the Federal Republic of Germany, the model for super highway construction in the United States, in 1972 decided to place a new emphasis on rail travel, especially in regional and metropolitan areas. Increasing population growth and its accompanying density had led to such a high level of highway congestion whose remedy through the expansion of the highway network was impractical if not insolvable. Concurrently, German, French, and Japanese private-government consortia initiated feasibility and design studies for future high-speed rail systems. The Japanese were the first to inaugurate their system, the Shinkansen, followed by the French TGV and finally by the German ICE systems. It was also about this time that actual engineering and construction plans began to be drawn up for the high-speed rail tunnel which now links France with Great Britain by passing under the English Channel. Below is a map of the current (April 2, 2007) Amtrak System.</p> <p>MAP 1. AMTRAK SYSTEM MAP APRIL 2007 Source Amtrak System Timetable, April 2, 2007</p> <p>III. Roles of Transportation Modes</p> <p>A. Regional and Long Distance Modal Choices The transportation consumer selects the mode of travel based on personal needs and desires. The business traveler requires speed, reliability, and accessibility to the destination. The special event</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		attendee requires cost effect	
Favela	Janelle	It would be wonderful to have an alternative means of transportation. Can't wait for the TRE to extend this far!	Travel options
Felter	Joyce	We NEED as much rail service as they have in Europe or on our east coast.	support
Fengel	Jordan	There needs to be a rail system implemented. As thousands of families and individuals continue to move to Texas, there is not the infrastructure to support the traffic. IH35 continues to be overwhelmed and the lack of true thoroughfare is creating additional air quality issues, increased pollution, increased waste in fossil fuels and also traffic takes time away from individuals. Please consider these comments useful towards the granting of a rail system.	congestion
Ferguson	Don	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study what a crock of crap!	Against
Ferrell	Robert G.	I believe that high speed rail will greatly improve not only environmental quality, but also attract more business to the area as effective and comfortable mass transit of this type is an excellent employee recruiting tool.	local and regional economy
Ferris	Cyndi	I am in full support of passenger rail in Texas. Safety is a huge issue: highways are congested, speed limits are too high, and drivers are distracted with mobile devices. I pledge to use rail instead of the highways. I would be more inclined to travel if Texas had a rail system.	safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Fertitta	Joe	I would love to see a high speed passenger train running between the major cities in Texas. This would really help reduce the amount of traffic on our already overcrowded Texas highways, which would save money and lives by reducing traffic fatalities. In fact, he benefits are many should this become a reality.	High speed
Fisher	Jennifer	Texas needs a passenger train rail! Let's shift into modern times and get with the program. Our state is huge; we've got a large population; we need safety, ease of transportation and community! In my mind there is no good reason we don't already have one.	support
Fitzgerald	David	This would be a great addition to our transportation system. I for one would try and use it as much as possible, especially for trips to SA-Austin. It would also be a great economic and environmental benefit. Take a look at the Europe train system -- its convenient, economical, fun to ride and on time!!!	Travel options
Fleming	Ryan	we need high speed rail.	High speed
Flores	Juan Jaime	(1) Is the noise level less or more than a regular train? (2) What are the probabilities of an accident? (3) Is there any impact on any type of wildlife? (4) Does it cut across any state park? and (5) Is there any chance that it might come all the way down to the city of McAllen?	impacts
Fonseca	Vince	I strongly support expanded and higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. As a public health physician and the former Texas State Epidemiologist, allowing expansion and improvement in transportation (decreasing congestion) while minimizing the impact on health (poor air quality's impact on cardiovascular and respiratory diseases) is critical. A health Texas economy	Air quality

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		requires healthy Texans.	
Ford	Jason	I fully support any and all improvements to higher-speed passenger rail on existing or new lines (please examine current rights of way, such as IH-35, where most people live along anyway, rather than the Katy line) from San Antonio to Dallas. Can't comment on other portions of the line. The current Amtrak service is SLOW. The 90-mile drive from Austin to San Antonio takes THREE HOURS on Amtrak, and times are inconvenient. The 3-hour drive from Austin to Dallas takes SIX HOURS on Amtrak--if you're lucky. It's fun if you're not in a hurry, but not practical from a regular commuter standpoint.	High speed
Ford	Jason	Also, most importantly, make sure any train line is accessible to bicycles, as in you can put your bike on the train. Amtrak allows this on many of its lines in California, for instance, and it draws a lot of passengers. Then if you switch trains in the middle of nowhere on Amtrak, no bikes are allowed (they have to be boxed, which usually harms the bike).	Travel options
Foreman	Charles	I am very much in favor of the proposed passenger rail service. Some questions: 1. How much of the operating cost (in percentage) will be paid by passenger revenue and how much by government entities? 2. Would most of the rail line use existing right-of-way? Add parallel, separate tracks? 3. If existing rail infrastructure is used, how will high speed schedules be met? 4. Are there, or will there be, concurrent, specific plans to connect "feeder" bus and light rail lines to the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail line? A personal response to me is not necessary if you have this information posted on a website. If so, let me know the website. If not, a response would be appreciated!	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Fox	Charles	Running a passenger rail service from Laredo to Oklahoma City is an excellent idea. Us seniors in all of these areas will clearly need such a service to allow us to visit both ends of such a rail service. Costs of train service will better match what most seniors can afford and give opportunities for them to expand their travels and better able to visit family and friends. Please make this process a reality.	Travel options
Frackowiak	Lisa	The traffic around Austin is already badly congested and forecast to only get worse as the population grows. High speed rail would be a great option to help with commuting and cutting down on congestion and pollution. It would help the environment and also save Texans time and money for local travel. Expanding the high speed rail to the areas surrounding Austin would help immensely, as this would encourage and facilitate travel from rural areas to the city.	congestion
Fralin	Richard	My son and I took an Amtrak rail trip from Austin to Los Angeles, then north to San Francisco, then Seattle, and return to Austin via Chicago and St. Louis. It was a delightful experience, a chance to meet people and see the world around us without having to focus on driving. Traveling this way saved on gas and CO2, enhanced air quality and water quality, and brought us in touch with the natural world. I've long wished for a national rail system like those in Europe, but this would be at least a step in that direction.	natural environment
Fruth	Roman	I'm all for increased passenger rail service not just in Texas but in the entire country and in Canada and Mexico. Right now the biggest snag in the Amtrak system is in Chicago; changing trains in Chicago usually requires an expensive overnight stay	support
Fry	Greg	I am for one very interested in rail travel, would love if it would allow me to commute from Gainesville to Denton for work. This would save much wear and tear on our	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		vehicles and be much safer. Wondering why you would not schedule a meeting in Gainesville, but have one in Sherman which is not in the impact area? Thank you.	
Fuller	Laurie	in support of higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. I have just moved from Houston to OKC and would use this alternative to driving often.	High speed
Fulton	Carol	I am in favor of providing passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City. I try to avoid traveling on IH-35 because the traffic is so heavy and the driving is so unpleasant and dangerous, especially with the many semi-trailers that must travel that route. Two weeks ago I had to go to Austin and chose to travel on IH-35 and noticed many more trucks that appeared to have fracking equipment on them. These trucks are especially dangerous. Their loads are very heavy and the loads are sometimes so wide that they have to have special escort cars. As I get older, I find driving a car in heavy traffic very nerve-wracking. I believe I am still a good driver but many of the younger, more impatient drivers on the road are not, in my opinion, careful drivers. Sometimes they appear to be very distracted with electronic equipment. I believe trains would be a much safer form of transportation, especially as our Texas population ages.	congestion
Funk	Justin	I think will this would be great.	support
Futrell	Linda	I would love to see passenger trains come to Texas. I believe it would get some of the cars off the Highways. The freeways would be safer with fewer cars.. I am concerned about the condition of our present tracks. Would they need to be updated. How would the cost compare to air fair?	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Gabel	Richard	What happened to the Texas Triangle? I'm all in favor of a high speed rail between the major cities in Texas: Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin. Also, all in favor of the high speed rail along IH-35 all the way north to Wichita, Kansas, including a stop at Oklahoma City. This is long overdue. The traffic on IH-35 is so congested that it's becoming more and more dangerous to travel this highway. Don't think it's worth the money to invest in this transportation project unless it's going to be high speed rail. People want to get from one place to another fast.	Routes
Gagon	Charlene	I strongly favor passenger rail development in Texas. There should be service between Dallas/Fort Worth and Austin, as well as direct service from Austin to Houston. It is difficult to see why rail service between the major cities in Texas does not already exist. Rail service will bring transportation in our state into the 21st century, be better for the environment, and improve the traffic situation on the dangerous and overused IH-35.	Routes
Gallagher	Pat	We would ride the train. Did once about 17 years ago. Was great fun.	support
Galvan	Ralph	Our rail system is still stuck in the fifties and has not advanced. Europe and Asia have the latest advances in rails and we have fallen behind, in comparison we are third world in rail systems. Along with our infrastructure, this country is on the verge of stagnating in the 19th century while the world moves in the 21st century.	Travel options
Gamble	Laurie	I would really like to see rail lines between Dallas, Austin, Houston, and San Antonio!	support
GARCIA	GEORGE	Shorter, pass. trains are much less noisy. Diesel/electric are much cleaner. Health could be aided. Due to the Eagle Ford Shale over the next 20-40 yrs., lots of pass. cars potentially could be eliminated, besides truckers falling asleep and side-swipes and/or	quality of life

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		head-ons. On any given calendar day, from 4-8 long cargo trains travel from LRD to SAT. WILDLIFE/veg. de minimus or no impact. Wetlands/streams do not exist from Laredo to SAT. Water quality, except for a fuel spill from a Passenger train over a river, would be non-existent. If time for load/unloading were minimal, and cost considerations were not much more than vehicle fuel costs, I would Love to have my Vehicle TRANSPORTED mostly from LRD to SAT, less often to AUS, and rarely to DFW!!! Area of pot. effect: Town Lake in AUS. Big help from SAT to Georgetown, but esp. thru AUS. EIS should be minimized/expedited.	
Garcia	Gil G.	I rode on the train as a child and I would look forward to traveling via railways again.	support
Garcia	Virginia	Although I wholeheartedly support the concept of having faster rail between major cities in Texas and Oklahoma, I am concerned about the impact to neighboring communities. What changes will they have to endure? What is the usual increase in noise and will there be some kind of protection or barrier? Along the proposed routes, how much of an environmental impact will there be with natural flora and fauna and will this eliminate existing parks/nature/etc. Of course, I am specifically curious about what might happen in Laredo, Texas but I am sure other communities will have similar concerns. I also hope that as decisions are made that the public remain updated and included in what transpires. For me personally, I already travel to San Antonio to drop off or pick up family who takes the Amtrak train to Chicago every once in a while. Leaving from Laredo on passenger rail would be an ideal situation for my non-flying parents who are not willing to take an uncomfortable and slow bus. A passenger train I don't know how a state sponsored rail system will work in conjunction with Amtrak or existing passenger rail (are there others??) but I would hope there would be some agreement or collaboration. Unfortunately, the Laredo town hall meeting is scheduled for Wednesday and I will not be able to attend I would	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		I appreciate being notified by email of subsequent public meetings.	
Garcia	Jonathan	I believe this rail system would be very beneficial in reducing traffic in some cities, as well as, allowing faster travel times. As a Laredoen, I have always felt that traveling outside of Laredo always takes hours to reach anywhere. San Antonio is 2 hours away, Austin is 4 hours away, Dallas 8 hours away. I feel that more people, including myself, would travel to these locations more if the time to get there wasn't so long.	congestion
Garcia	Julie	I think this would be a great idea, because the highway are getting so congested.	support
Garcia	Rose	All for high speed rail.	support
Gard	Veronica	I support strongly any increase in public transport, especially trains, to link San Antonio with its surrounding cities such as Austin, Oklahoma City, Houston and Dallas. Coming from Europe I am so used to plentiful, regular, reasonable and user-friendly transport systems that I am stunned at the lack of such systems in Texas. Driving such huge distances to get anywhere is so counterproductive, expensive and bad for the environment that it is high time Texas took up the challenge of public transport.	travel
Gardner	Cheryl C	Passenger rail is one step toward badly needed mass transportation in Texas. Mass transport is resource-efficient and has the potential to help air quality, reduce consumption of natural resources used by single-passenger vehicles, and generally improve life.	benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Garland	Colleen	I support the expansion of rail systems statewide, and I would love to see higher speed passenger rail between Oklahoma and south Texas. At the rate the population of Texas is growing and projected to continue growing, our roads cannot support the use that is demanded of them. Rail would provide a viable alternative to our already congested roads, while reducing air pollution. Texas is way behind the curve on mass transit, let's take a step in the right direction!	High speed
Garza	Luis	As a former resident of a state that had access to mass transit systems (Massachusetts), it is very disconcerting to think that the area of Texas I live in has access to almost none. I believe a mass transit rail system from Oklahoma to South Texas would indeed be beneficial to the residents of both states. There's lots of traffic congestion that could be alleviated by having a mass transit system that people could use, as well as allowing those without any form of personal transportation to use a system that will be less costly and more environmentally friendly than buying a car, etc.	Travel options
Garza	Margie	I would just like to take this time to comment on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail study. As a resident of the City of Laredo for more than twenty years and a federal public servant, I believe that this project would greatly benefit our area. Laredo is considered the gateway to the United States mainly in part because of its geographical location and Interstate 35 which runs from Laredo, Texas to Duluth, Minnesota. This, in my opinion, makes Laredo the perfect location for a passenger train. As a federal public servant for more than ten years, I have seen first-hand how hundreds of people make their way south to Laredo, Texas from the northern states and, vice versa from Mexico in personally owned vehicles and in passenger commercial buses. As far as in my personal experiences, I can speak for my family in saying that we often travel to San Antonio, Houston, Austin and Dallas on one/two-day trips and have often spoken	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		about the possibilities and advantages of a having a passenger train along IH-35. I highly support this project and hope that it does become a reality. Thanks to the Texas Department of Public Safety for introducing this study and allowing me to comment on this topic.	
Garza	Nancy	I think the potential of having train service throughout Texas to Oklahoma is fantastic. I remember when I was a young child we went on a field trip with the school to Sinton on a train. I would love to be able to go to surrounding places without having to drive or fly. Please do bring the train service back.	support
Gaslin	Jacob	I like the idea of a rail system across Texas, and with the construction of IH-69 going on, I would think it would be a great idea that the rail system not only goes to Brownsville, but that the system also goes the McAllen and then connects to Mexico to help create an international passenger rail system that can connect the McAllen metropolitan area to Mexico City and other locations. This rail system can create jobs for the McAllen area and hopefully attract larger corporations to the area where McAllen can finally get a decent skyline for a city that large.	local and regional economy
Gates	Tom	I believe that passenger train service among these cities as shown on the map would be used most of the time if there would be a provision to load my personal automobile onto the train, as we do on the Port Aransas ferry, along with my personal items that would be in the auto. I then could relax as the train delivered me to within fifty or a hundred miles of the destination that I was going to as it appears that the large cities are within that driving range. I would not have to depend on rental cars or other types of transportation after reaching the area I was traveling to. It would be ideal if the passenger trains path would also include Houston as many people from this area travel to specialized medical facilities in that city and taking one`s own automobile	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		would be ideal as well as keeping from being tired due to the stress of driving that distance in that traffic. If you would study the ferry you will find that the loading and unloading of vehicles is very time efficient. I believe most people would endorse this type of service and use it rather than driving long distances on the highways. I know my family and I would. Thanks.	
Gebhardt	Anita	Rail transportation is the answer to many of our issues -- congestion, pollution, economic growth, jobs, and so on. I loved taking the DART train and buses to work when I lived in the suburbs, and taking Amtrak to Chicago once, a number of years ago. Instead of more privately-operated toll roads, why not a modern, fast, efficient rail system?	Travel options
Gent	Debra	I would like to see and would use passenger rail service from Oklahoma to South Texas. Thank you.	support
Gerhardt	Paul	Would love to see this rail project take off!	support
Geserick	Jonathan	The only way I would take high speed rail is if I could take my car on it as well so that I would not have to rent a car at my destination. Without being able to take my car, I would probably fly instead.	Travel options
Geserick	Jonathan	If I was to take high speed rail, I would like to take my car with me so that I would not have to rent one at the destination. Without being able to take my car, I would probably fly instead of taking the high speed rail.	Travel options
Gettelman	Barbara	Please bring us high-speed rail! It would reduce accidents on IH-35 and give an economic boost to cities along the route!	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
gibbons	Gail	I support more rail service in Texas, in all of our cities to cut down on car traffic and oil/gas dependence. east west corridors as well as north south.	congestion
Gifford	Susan	Europe has been using train travel as a major method of transportation for many years, but the US was developed more as a car based country. Cities like New York use trains regularly for internal movement and for travelling between Boston to DC. These are considered commutes. Living in San Antonio, I would love to see better mass transit and trains are a part of that, but I would also love to visit Dallas and I would prefer to do that without driving... We need a workable transit system here in Texas...	Travel options
Gilbertson	JoAnn	Commuting thru Texas via rail is not only good for tourism economy as riding the rail is a destination, in itself it is an adventure, but also improves air quality by implementing the car pooling effect and reducing the carbon of many tourists traveling in separate cars. There does need to be golf cart rental and/or trolley system to get the visitor from train station to destination points and lodging. This is bringing tourists and business travelers into 2013. The proposed rail could run parallel with the Fulton corridor to North Beach. North Beach used to have a train station at Surfside Park and Surfside Park is waiting to be reunited with its history. Surfside park is on the Corpus Christi Beachwalk and next to two of the top 25 attractions in the state of Texas. I support the rail system.	local and regional economy
Gillespie	John	This is loooooong overdue.	support
Ginsburg	Mitchell	I commute each day from my home in San Antonio to my job in Austin on the IH 35 corridor. Traffic has increasingly gotten worse over time. I, and many other commuters, pollute the air with carbon emissions from our cars. We waste important	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		fossil fuels which are in short supply. In addition, the increased traffic slows trucks which causes more emissions as the trucks move slower, use more fuel stopping and starting and in general is bad for the environment. A commuter rail line which would connect the south Texas corridor would effectively eliminate the need for commuters to drive to and from work each day. High speed rail is efficient, has low carbon emissions and can transport plenty of people with minimal effort. It works in Europe, where travel does not require a car. I would use this high speed rail every day. I lived in Chicago and both my grandfather and my father took the train to downtown every day. To fail to follow through with this plan would be a huge mistake in the long term. Union Pacific has already offered use of its easement to allow this project to move forward. This project will protect the environment, open up traffic on the IH 35 corridor and will make travel to work convenient and consistent. This project is a great idea, and since the easements for the rail lines already exist, the effect on the environment will be minimal in comparison to the damage done now using our only choice, driving. Trains work in Chicago, New York, Atlanta, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and everywhere in Europe and Asia. We are behind on the technology and we need to use all of our efforts to make this rail line a reality. I vote YES for commuter high speed rail as proposed.	
Glenn	Mary	I am requesting information on how expensive this will be to the riding public and to the environment at large.	impacts
Glover	Kayla	Rail sounds good to me.	support
Goen	Steve	In regards to rail passenger service in Texas, I am making the following suggestions. 1. The Heartland Flyer route should be immediately extended north from OKC to at least Newton, KS and possible as far east as Kansas City. This would enable the HF to	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>serve points north, especially Wichita, KS and would finally create a connection with Amtrak Trains 3 and 4 (Southwest Chief) to/from Kansas City. For this train to terminate in OKC has always been a wasted opportunity.</p> <p>2. The Texas Eagle should be changed from a Chicago-San Antonio route, to a Chicago-El Paso route, or perhaps even allow it to terminate in Phoenix. To do this Trains 21 and 22 would need to use the Union Pacific (ex-Texas and Pacific) route west of Fort Worth. This would allow passenger service to serve the following new stops: Weatherford, Ranger, Abilene, Sweetwater, Colorado City, Big Spring, Odessa, Midland, Pecos and perhaps either Van Horn or Sierra Blanca. The Texas Eagle would then make connections with the Sunset Limited at El Paso instead of at San Antonio. Also, since Phoenix no longer has direct Amtrak service into that city, Phoenix is a large enough metropolitan area to possibly warrant the Texas Eagle to operate beyond El Paso and into that city.</p> <p>3. Because my plan is to have the Texas Eagle operate across Texas on an east-west axis, I am suggesting that the Heartland Flyer be extended south of Fort Worth in order to continue service to Cleburne, McGregor, Temple, Taylor, Austin, San Marcos and San Antonio. This same train could also be extended even further south if operation to Laredo was justified. In addition I would suggest that station stops be added at Krum (a stop for Denton) and at New Braunfels. Yes, I realize that New Braunfels is not that far from either San Antonio and San Marcos, but this entire region is rapidly growing and I feel that New Braunfels would generate enough revenue to justify making it a stop.</p> <p>4. I would leave the current Sunset Limited (Trains 1 and 2) alone although I would look into adding an experimental stop somewhere between San Antonio and Houston,</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>such as at Seguin, Luling or Rosenberg.</p> <p>5. Both TxDOT and ODOT need to prepare their self for a possible reroute of the Southwest Chief (Amtrak Trains 3 and 4) off of the current Raton Pass line, and onto the BNSF transcon via Amarillo. If this comes to pass I would suggest stops west of Newton, Kansas to be: Wichita, Wellington, Alva, Woodward, Pampa, Amarillo, Hereford, Clovis, Vaughn, Belen. West of Belen both Amtrak and the state of New Mexico will have to decide if they want to maintain service to Albuquerque or not since Albuquerque is not on the BNSF transcon. However there is a large balloon track there which could easily handle the entire train if Amtrak wanted to run the train into ABQ. If not, New Mexico's largest city would be without transcontinental passenger service for the first time since the arrival of the Santa Fe in the 1880's. As you can see my proposal would have the Texas Eagle operate completely across Texas on an east-west axis which would help alleviate traffic off I30 and I20. The Heartland Flyer would then serve all of Texas and Oklahoma on a north-south routing from at least Newton, KS to San Antonio, and would continue to provide service to Central Texas and San Antonio previously offered by the southern portion of the Texas Eagle. I would also consider renaming the Heartland Flyer to something more representative of its new route if this came to pass. The Sunset Limited would remain unchanged. And in the event that the Southwest Chief is rerouted off its current line thru Colorado and northeast New Mexico, the Texas Panhandle would then receive the train which would be the first passenger service to Amarillo and Pampa since the San Francisco Chief was discontinued on May 1, 1971. As for any possible passenger service to the Rio Grande Valley, this could be provided from either San Antonio to Corpus Christi (Robstown) and on to Brownsville (all via the UP) or from Houston (via Bay City). I'm not sure that there would be enough traffic to sustain service to the</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>lower Rio Grande Valley but there could be. The other problem is that Corpus Christi is not on the mainline and any train that would directly serve CC and Brownsville would have to make a side trip in and out of Corpus from Odem. Possible stops on this train would be at either Odem, Corpus or Robstown, and at Kingsville, Raymondville, Harlingen and Brownsville. San Benito could also be added if traffic warranted. I would also strongly suggest that some type of Fort Worth-Dallas-Houston service was re instituted in the future. Either a train that connected with both the Heartland Flyer and Texas Eagle at Fort Worth, or at a minimum a Dallas-Houston train. The most direct route would be over the BNSF line via Teague. Stops along this route need to be at Waxahachie, Corsicana, Teague, and possibly at Tomball (another fast-growing area). An experimental stop at North Zulch could also be added for nearby Bryan-College Station. The other route would be via the former Southern Pacific line (now UP). Stops on this route could be Ennis, Corsicana, Hearne and College Station. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or want additional feedback. I am a nationally recognized railroad historian and author of eight books featuring the railroads of Texas and the Great Southwest. As such I think I have a good background and knowledge of where Texas needs to direct and maintain any intercity rail passenger traffic. Steve Allen Goen</p>	
Gomez	Jasmine	Please include Austin	Routes
Gomez	Mary L.	We need high speed passenger railway from San Antonio to Austin. The IH35 freeway has been congested since NAFTA, and it is just getting worse with 1000 people moving to Texas every day.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Gonzales	Arturo	I strongly support a rail project in Texas. It would help with cutting cost for travel or commuting to work. help get to lessen the old model cars off the road that spew pollution into the air. Make travel safer long distances within Texas, possibly lessen sleepy driver accidents.	affordability
Gonzalez	Inelda Z.	Wildlife/vegetation is of great concern to various areas within Texas. The regulatory process is a major area that needs to be included in the final decision.	natural environment
Gonzalez	Roberto	I just wanted to comment on how beneficial it would be to bring passenger rail service to Laredo. In my opinion, Laredo is the top candidate for several reasons. One of them is that you are just going to parallel the IH-35 corridor. If the Rio Grande Valley or Corpus Christi is chosen, it would deviate from the original intent of alleviating travel time on the IH-35 corridor. Another reason is that unfortunately, IH-35 does not feel as safe as it used to be. With 18-wheelers reigning king on this interstate, people need an alternative to feel safe when making much needed travel up the corridor. With the Eagle Ford Shale boom, the number of 18-wheelers and other heavy duty drilling vehicles has multiplied many times over on not only IH-35 but on neighboring highways and roads. Just a couple of years ago, I reminisced about when I would see the passenger cars next to the old Tex-Mex building in downtown Laredo and when I traveled into the interior of Mexico on a passenger train. These thoughts led me to investigate about passenger services. Of course I would have to travel to San Antonio to obtain some sort of passenger train service. Wanting to get on a train, my wife and I traveled to Cedar Park to ride the steam train. It was a good experience, but it would be better if actual rail services were actually available to service travelers.	Travel options
Gordon	Jeremie	I think a high speed rail from Oklahoma City to San Antonio would be fantastic. It about time we start getting serious about high speed mass transit along the IH-35	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		corridor. I live in Cedar Park and would ride the high speed rail every time I travel to/from DFW. In the last 5 years I have often delayed trips or added additional travel time to my agenda in order to account for the uncertainties of wrecks or highway shutdowns when I'm on IH-35. There doesn't seem to be any hope for reducing the amount of traffic on IH-35 from Dallas to San Antonio.	
Gorrell	Mickey	I am a citizen of Oklahoma City and have been a 'super commuter' of Dallas for 2 years now. I fully support a passenger rail line from OKC to DFW. I would love to have this option. Flying is actually not very time saving in this short of a distance. Driving can be overly time consuming if caught in traffic. I would love the alternative to catch a passenger train. I travel to Dallas weekly and have been for 2 years.	Travel options
Gossage	Matthew	Please expand and support train and rail transit in Texas and Oklahoma. It is better for the passengers in giving and alternative to driving and would consume fewer greenhouse gases.	support
Gould	George	Southwest Airlines has a flight from Hobby A/P to Dallas every two hours. Can we have a train connection once a day or every other day ?	Travel options
Gouwens	Sharon I	I want an alternative to travel in autos and air that is quick and safe and allows me to relax. We have really enjoyed our train travel and find it a more human scale way to get around.	Travel options
Graeber	Larry	I'm encouraged by this new prospect of passenger rail transportation. I'm convinced it would be of great advantage to the quality of life for the millions who live in its vicinity.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Graf	Georgio	I believe that a magnetic monorail service built above/ next to our existing highway/ roadway, would be an efficient and attractive architectural aesthetic, cognitive to environmental factors such as less use of ground space. The elevated monorail would be fairly easy to create structurally and easily incorporated at stopping zones along the way. summary: re: monorail service magnetic / solar powered roof panels. Single rail elevated, one directional. It would be efficient, expedient, aesthetically and environmentally sound. It would be utilized by the masses. The monorail track could be easily manipulated into towns and cities by a host building or space. Its directional path could be routed to malls and public transportation areas. This planning process will be the choice mode of future mass transportation. Thank you.	elevated rail
Graham	Joyce M	get more cars off the highways!	congestion
Gray	Melinda	I fully support the creation of higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Green	Janis	Let rail transportation construction proceed quickly.	support
Gregor	Sandra	I would love and use expanded rail choices from Austin to major cities in Texas and beyond.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Griffith	Matt	Is this where I request that high speed rail begin construction across Texas? Oh, please, yes! Ease of travel between SAT, AUS, DFW, and HOU would allow us to expand residential access and commerce while reducing gas consumption and pollution. We are so behind the more developed countries like Korea, Germany and Japan. We need this to grow.	support
Griffith	Virginia	WE NEED HIGH SPEED RAIL IN TEXAS. The air pollution in the Austin area has become critical. We are almost above the cutoff level set by the EPA before they require businesses and municipalities to implement strict and costly policies and manners of business to try and bring these levels down. WE NEED TO KEEP OUR POLLUTION LEVELS BELOW THE CUTOFF POINT SET BY THE EPA. Our small businesses and citizens cannot afford to pay for the changes and higher costs that will be imposed on us if we surpass these pollution levels. In addition, our health will suffer with the high pollution levels. Please be forward thinking and do the right thing for our citizens and our great state.	Air quality
Grish	Michael	I am writing in support of high speed rail transportation in Texas. As our population increases, Texans need more effective and efficient transportation options than simply more highways. The idea of building more highways with more lanes is unsatisfactory. Rail makes more sense. Rail uses half the overall energy that cars and airplanes use per passenger. Amtrak's current rail service between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth is considered one of the best in the nation by its customers. Rail stations are more convenient and easier to use than airports. Finally, rail service can improve air quality in Texas by reducing car and airplane usage.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Grohe	Andrew L.	IH-35 is over-crowded in my estimation, high speed rail has the ability to impact this issue. I would travel to Dallas more often if there was high speed rail, it is more comfortable and safer - it may be more cost effective when wear and tear to the auto is considered.	congestion
Grundy	Stephan	Improving train availability in Texas would be highly beneficial, making travel more convenient for many as the price of petrol rises and thus helping to stimulate the state economy	Travel options
Guerra	Jesus Justo	<p>A fast railway system as an additional corridor for mass transit-transport system would provide several advantages, conveniences, and security for people using such a mode of transport by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing a faster, safer, cost-effective and reduction of traffic on an over-burden old infrastructure system that requires too much of our fossil-fuel resources of this country. 2. Allowing to transport patients on a fast-rail way emergency room that can keep patients stable with continuous treatment while in route and allowing medical personnel to be part of that system. 3. Relieve the holiday and vacation traffic congestion. 4. Would require a smaller infrastructure maintenance labor force. 5. The Railway system could be operated by Solar Energy. 6. Such a system could be finance through the markets in wall-street and get the general public to participate in its funding by buying stock/bonds etc. to support this 	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		system.	
Guerrero	Valerie	What city in the Rio Grande Valley will the passenger train stop in? Hopefully McAllen?.	Routes
Guinn	Jane	Please - a high speed rail is the perfect means of travel in Texas. We need it, and from conversations with associates around the state - it would be well used.	support
Gunnell	Keith	<p>I am basing my input on more than a decade of using mass transit and POV commuting to/from work from Manassas, VA and downtown Washington DC. Also, surface v. air transportation between northern VA and the NYC area. I believe TxDOT would find the Virginia Rail Express (VRE) to be a valuable reference because of the similarity of purpose. Also, I would recommend that TxDOT also contact various media services in the DC area to review an impromptu experiment they conducted comparing cost and impact of surface v. air transportation between DC and NYC. Based on the foregoing, I recommend considering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequency of service between the DFW metro area - San Antonio, and DFW metro area -Houston should encourage surface transportation decisions of the public to focus on heavy rail. Why? It seems logical to believe that if a person can move between these major points in minimal time (requires either high-speed rail or limited number of stops). They will arrive at their destination rested and will have the option of getting some work done en route. It would also increase the concept of "Perfect Substitution" between scheduled air carriers and Amtrak or the Texas equivalent to VRE. 2. Creating a surface transportation facility (centralized services) similar the brilliantly designed facility in Fort Worth is also important. What one should avoid 	funding

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		are facilities such as the Amtrak facility located in San Antonio. The Sunset Limited Museum is the quality of building that should be used to support rail service...not the current building. Also, the closest available parking for Amtrak customer in San Antonio is located about 7 blocks from the station. This causes a passenger to walk in a high-crime area from the Mariner Garge, underneath US 87/281, past other rundown store fronts before approaching the current facility. At best, the facility and the noticeable lack of supporting services is UNSAT. We have been fortunate not to have anyone injured or killed walking to/from the station. I'm unsure of the crime statistics for this area other than the generalized comments of SAPD officers and the Express-News indicating this is a high crime area therefore not safe to walk during the hours of darkness. Should TxDOT decide to impanel citizens for any future projects concerning rail service, I would be delighted offer my support.	
Gunsalus	G	Let's get the conversation started. Less traffic, less pollution, more efficiency. How much is it going to cost? How will it be paid for?	Cost
Guzman	Maria	It would be wonderful to have a rail system since I travel a lot to the following cities, Austin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi, and Dallas.	support
Gwartney	Kurt	I support a rail line connecting the Oklahoma City metro area to the Texas Gulf Coast (Houston and/or Galveston). There are many businesses, tourism, and other economic activities that would be helped if there was reliable and speedy rail service between OKC and Houston, two energy centers, that would be very beneficial.	local and regional economy
Haas	Paula	I hope that Texas and Oklahoma will move forward with passenger rail -- and I think it is critically important for the rail service to extend up through Kansas, to Kansas City, MO. In particular, I hope it comes up through Newton and Strong City, KS. It	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		would be extremely helpful to have passenger rail that would enable me and others here in the Flint Hills of Kansas to travel to Kansas City and down into Oklahoma and Texas without driving our own cars. I think it also would be used by eco-tourists with an interest in the Flint Hills, which is the last stand of the tall-grass prairie in North America. Thank you!	
Hablinski	John	I find it absolutely unacceptable that our entire nation doesn't have the best high speed passenger rail system in the world instead we rank somewhere below Somalia. Some years back I wanted to travel from Dallas to Houston by train only to learn I would have to go through San Antonio, several hundred miles out of my way. We simply must build a state of the art high speed passenger rail system. If we don't link our nation together with high speed rail the era of the US being the world's super power is over.	local and regional economy
Hall	Frances	Fast and efficient rail service is badly needed in the United States. Europe is way ahead of the US in this transportation issue.	Travel options
Hallahan	Michele	Texas deserves a high speed rail - we are already decades behind some of the most advanced countries in the world; France for example has had high speed rail since the early 1990s! There are so many benefits to railways, not least the issue of climate change and air quality, as well as reducing congestion on the already jam packed highways. Please consider also: Trains will keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips in TX. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly HALF that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service - this is appallingly underserved. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers! Railroad stations are far more convenient and FAR less stressful than airports and comfortable	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. I travel frequently for work and would happily choose rail travel over planes ANY DAY. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Trains use less fossil fuel for transport per person than cars or trucks. Train travel is elegant, efficient, environmentally preferable, and builds community in a way that air or road travel does not.	
Hallen	Vikki	YES! We need rail service! Rail service between Texas cities and TX and other states would be wonderful..helping air quality, natural habitats, traffic accidents, road rage! San Antonio definitely needs city type rail service and how wonderful would it be to just get on a train SA to Austin for a night or weekend!	benefits of train travel
Hamilton	Vanston	High speed rail would be wonderful, we need more alternatives to automobiles. This would get so many people off our roads and put less CO2 in the atmosphere.	congestion
Hamiton	Ron	I have often thought about using AMTRAK to go to locations between southern Texas and Oklahoma, but the current rail system is both too slow and does not run often enough to make using rail feasible. If high speed rail was introduced I would certainly use it. It needs to be not only faster but more frequent. Thank you for considering adding high speed rail.	High speed
Hammett	Rafael	Texas badly needs a high speed rail across the state. Infrastructure builds economy. Invest in Texas' future.	Travel options
Hansen	Yvonne	Rail transport is very likely to improve air quality due to fewer cars and exhausts on the highways, thus reducing harm to human health. In addition, fewer cars is likely to result in fewer traffic accidents and fatalities, thus safer than driving cars. The effort, energy, cost, investment, etc., to build more highways is far costlier than rail	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		transport, which might also have the capacity to haul cars for use at the end of a rail journey. Building highways often takes wildlife, wetlands, habitat and more leaving those areas gone forever. Also water quality is far less likely to be tainted by rail building than by highways of which many of various sizes are often built and overbuilt. The process of conducting an EIS reveals the benefits of rail, and the harm from highways and the cars that travel those roads. An EIS indicates most favorable routes thus saving valuable environments and reducing harm to air and water. Should an EIS be adequate and done based on total systems - natural, human, mechanical, etc. - regulations can then be developed that follow the results of an EIS.	
Harlan	Jody	I am writing to encourage you in the strongest possible language to expand passenger rail services between Tulsa/Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth. As the communications director for the Oklahoma Department for Rehabilitation Services, which provides employment and independent living services to more than 92,000 Oklahomans, I am personally aware of barriers to employment created by limited transportation options. Sometimes it's the disability, sometimes it's economic barriers to purchasing and maintaining reliable vehicles, but whatever the reasons, poor public transportation keeps people we know from becoming taxpayers and ending their dependence on disability benefits and social services. In 2002, we did a state-wide needs assessment that showed the greatest barrier of all was transportation between rural towns and the larger cities where Oklahomans with disabilities need to go for employment, medical services, entertainment and other opportunities. Our research also showed at one point that north Texas cities that chose to expand their transportation options with rail made \$12 for every \$1 they invested. Public transportation is not just for people with disabilities and seniors. it's for all of us. I have been to San Francisco, Washington, D.C., New York, Paris, London, Rome,	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Caribbean cities, Mexico, even Dallas-Fort Worth. We need the opportunities for economic development and quality of life in Oklahoma that exist in those cities. Please don't stop at OKC. Include Tulsa. Thank you working to make this dream a reality.	
Harland	Josie	Why takes it here that long to build Railroads? People coming old and not more able to drive, some don't have anybody and what do the going on the Road and bringing herself and others in Danger. Why other Country are able to build Railroad and much quicker as here. It's Time to build them for all of us and that less Cars on the Road.	travel options
Harper	Pat	I used to live in Los Angeles and I left because of the poor air quality. I m looking to move again after 12 years because of the poor air quality in the Dallas metro area. It is time to stop pandering to the oil companies and provide good transportation including high speed rail.	Air quality
Harper	Adrienne	We need this in my opinion	support
Harris	Sharon A.	Please move forward to provide more passenger rail service in the State of Texas.	support
Harris	Mike	We need light rail in Austin and more Amtrak.	support
Harris	June	I have used high speed rail to get around in other parts of the world, (Washington DC, and Paris). It is a convenient and efficient way to travel. I would love to be able to get from Austin to San Antonio or the DFW area using rail.	Travel options
Hart	Nancy	Passenger rail is only a matter of time...either that or we pave the two states...devastating for all living things. People are not going to stop coming to Texas..thus the sooner the better. Let's get enlightened and moving!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hartman	Eddie	Rapid Transit Rail will provide a viable option to air travel between the major business/cultural centers in Texas and Oklahoma. However, the system should focus on non-stop service between the population areas. Last Summer I wanted to travel from Dallas to San Antonio with my family on Amtrak and the trip was to take 10 hour! That is not a reasonable alternative to car or air travel.	Travel options
Hartman	Laurie	I strongly support a passenger rail system in Texas and Oklahoma. The efficiency in travel would greatly increase, and it would reduce both the fossil fuel consumption and pollution levels in the state. Additionally, it would enhance the flora and fauna in the state due to less need for road traffic. Our nation is decades behind others in modernizing and utilizing passenger rail service. Let us all stand together for this, there are so many positive aspects in moving forward with rail service. Thank you.	Travel options
Hayes	Ken	Rail is the most environmentally sound mass transit we can build. It is also the most comfortable, especially for the elderly. Amtrak has some serious issues with being on schedule but it is much more comfortable and enjoyable than flying, driving or the bus. If we get rail comparable to what is running in Europe that would be great.	benefits of train travel
Hein	Russell	Unfortunately, I will be traveling and can't be in Sherman to hear the discussion. I have been involved in several rail projects over the course of my career. My first question is what is this going to do that Amtrak doesn't? Second question is, are you going to use existing track? Based on the answers I would probably have more questions.	impacts
Herbison	Katherine	I would love to see these proposed rail lines have the capacity to carry bikes (not boxed). There are many trails in south Texas that would be great to explore and using the rail system would give cyclists an opportunity to explore them without being tied	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		to where the car is parked or using more expensive transportation systems. I would be very interested in service up to Tulsa, Missouri, and Kansas and increased service to the Dallas area from OKC. These cities are close enough that flying seems ridiculous but the length of the drive itself can be a deterrent. In stating that the idea is to expand along the interstate corridor I am hoping that it would result in minimal unnecessary disturbances to the surrounding human and natural environments.	
Hermitte	Marie	Trains keep cars off the road and reduce airline trips, thus providing positive environmental benefits. Fewer car and air trips improve air quality and reduce noise impacts in communities. Furthermore, traffic congestion and accidents are reduced, as rail is a safer alternative than automotive travel. Additionally, South Texas is not currently served by rail, and this part of the state should be linked to areas farther north. I fully support expanding rail options in Texas.	natural environment
Hernandez	Eddy E.	<p>I would like to request that the TOPRS Committee strongly consider the Brownsville/South Padre Island metro area as a destination for the southern rail line. I believe the Brownsville metro area has many advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing US rail corridor • Rail lines from Brownsville, TX to Monterrey MX • Passenger air transportation from Brownsville to US and Mexican destinations • Close proximity to a major vacation destination for US and Mexican travelers, South Padre Island. • Coming soon – an Interstate to speed travel to major cities IH-69 	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hernandez	Katrisha	Texas takes pride in being innovators and trend setters! We need this rail, we want this rail for so many reasons. If I had the option of taking a high speed train everywhere I went I would never use my car or fly. We need convenient and reliable public transportation. Building highways is not the answer. TEXAS WANTS RAIL!	Travel options
Hernandez	Sergio C	The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs.	congestion
Hernandez	Alex	Texas desperately needs upgrading its infrastructure and roadways are at the top of the list. It is frustrating to know that with so much wide open space in this great state, road travelers are forced into two and three lane bottlenecks every 40 or 50 miles on IH-35 from San Antonio to Dallas. High speed rail should have happened 20 years ago. Anyone with any foresight can see the economic windfall from shortening the distance between Texas' major cities. Texas' potential is measured by its size and we will never live up to our true potential if we do not bring all Texans closer together to interact on so many different levels that a modern transportation system can provide, i.e., economic, trade, personal, pleasure, academic. More importantly, it is now no longer a choice of whether we need to bring in high speed rail. It is a necessity. The unbelievable movement of truck, people, and workers in distant and underdeveloped towns all across our state as a result of the oil fracking boom, scream for desperately needed upgrades and investment in our infrastructure. We should all hope that this resurgent Texas economy can grow because of our infrastructure, and not in spite of it.	Travel options
Hernandez	Jesus	We need rail now!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
HERNANDEZ	GLORIA	I love the idea of the passenger rail expansion to include Corpus Christi and the Rio Grande Valley. My family is in that area and being limited in traveling due to a handicap, this would be a great advantage. I hope my input helps.	Travel options
Hersey	Rita	All of the above will of course need to be studied for the best outcomes. Air travel has become a very unpleasant means of travel.	Travel options
Hess	S.	Let Texas step into the 21st century and help ease traffic congestion, the burden of road repairs, and use trains: a more environmentally sustainable method of high speed travel than air. Trains are incredibly reliable and not subject to as many of the weather vagaries of air travel. Business travelers and students can work while commuting. Seniors who may not wish to drive because of road fatigue and younger people who cannot afford cars and insurance can still get to their destinations using high speed rail. The cost of high speed train service can be mitigated by attaching a parcel/freight car to transmit urgent packages. Revenues for conveying parcels can offset passenger rail fees. Please note support from North Central Texas for high speed rail!	Travel options
Hickle	Karen	More passenger rail service in Texas would be a great benefit to the state. Efficient rail service between the major cities would help reduce traffic problems and help reduce air pollution. With the population explosion in this state the roads are becoming overcrowded and overused, causing maintenance problems. It is time to change the way Texans think and travel.	local and regional economy
Hilliard	John	More rail service out of Fort Worth. More destinations and high speed rail between OKC and FTW would be wonderful! It's such a busy corridor I believe both states would benefit.	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hips	N P	I think this would be a wonderful idea and would love to ride the train to Austin and San Antonio.....but would not. This is going to be another way for the illegals to get into and across Texas. I do not think it will be safe for us "white" folks to ride. Garland has six or seven buses leaving and arriving all the time from Mexico. Who stops and investigates who is on these buses? This town has become a sanctuary city. Schools are 50% Hispanic (per school district). I think it is more like 80%. Trains would make it easier for these people to get here. Thank you.	safety
Hobbs	Elaine	Texas and the United States as a whole, are behind in using high speed rail. We have SO MUCH flat land, if you go to other countries, the high speed trains are a way of life. The best way to move a large amount of people efficiently is by rail. We need to catch up to the rest of the world! I am a born and raised Texan from the Panhandle of Texas. We need to get over our love affair with cars and trucks, even though they will always be around. I rode the commuter train in Plano to Dallas and thought that it was awesome! It was also packed!!	support
Hochstatter	Ryan	I fully support the move to make trains a major mode of transportation in Texas and Oklahoma. The effects are beneficial and long term: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hoffman	Marc	Texas should absolutely pursue rail transit between Austin and San Antonio. Actually between Dallas and San Antonio would be idea. Traffic along IH-35 has become so congested and of course will only get worse due to the growth in this state. I am sure that there would be many passengers of rail transit who would take advantage of this route. We have taken transit from San Antonio to Dallas with Amtrak and it was not a good experience with many delays and too many stops. Please strongly consider rail transit!	Travel options
Holland	Joshua	I think that the train should stop in Austin. It is rapidly growing and the train could serve to help move around a lot of the new residents.	Routes
Holland	Martha	Every car that can be kept off the road the better the air quality will be. I have Asthma and it is a real issue for me and the millions of others who are harmed by the pollution.	Air quality
Hornsby	Chris	High Speed Rail along this corridor is long overdue and should have happened 20 years ago.	support
Hufford	Amy	My family drives to Dallas from Austin on a regular basis to see my in-laws. Almost every time we are on IH-35, we see at least one accident that has occurred and is backing up traffic. As we pass the accident scenes, I am always grateful that my family is not involved. Accidents at these speeds typically have injuries or deaths. Driving IH-35 on or around a weekend between Austin and Dallas feels like you are taking your life in your hands. We would strongly prefer to ride a fast, reliable train to Dallas. We would probably also visit San Antonio more often as well if there were a fast train to get there and back on the same day. Corpus Christi is also a possible destination for us.	safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hunn	Clay	We desperately need efficient rail connection between DFW and Austin/San Antonio. IH-35 is overcrowded and is dangerous. There is no room for expansion. Rail is efficient, better for the environment and ideal for that travel distance. I would definitely use such a service..the sooner the better, I say. And the faster the better, and the more likely people will be to use it. Rail should be central in Texas future transportation planning..	Travel options
Hunt	Amy	I think High Speed Rail would be an extremely smart project economically as well as for the environment. Economically it would spur more tourism when you make cities in Texas easier and faster to get to and you are opening up the commute corridor. Potential employees may be willing to work further away if they can get there faster by rail then they could by car. Environmentally, it, of course, is more fuel efficient and decreases the amount of traffic on the roads.	High speed
Hunt	Erin	I am strongly in favor of the proposed rail line between Oklahoma City and South Texas. As a resident of Dallas, I have never been to Mexico even for a day trip because the drive is too far and flying is too expensive, but a rail line down there would be perfect for day trips. It would be cheaper and much more convenient for passengers, and get more cars off the road, meaning less traffic and better air quality. Plus it would increase foot traffic and tourism in the stops along the way.	Travel options
Hunter	Margery	Please, please, please put in high-speed rail to south Texas. We are decades behind the rest of the world on this and it is SO BADLY NEEDED!!!	support
Hye	Marie-Helene	We enjoy and use high speed train transportation in Western Europe. It is a safe, efficient, fast, low cost way of public transportation. WHY DON'T we have it ALREADY?	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Ingram	Marcia	We have traveled in Europe many times via high speed rail. It is convenient, reasonable and we are able to walk the aisles on long trips. My husband and I support high speed rail in Texas.	support
Inman	Rob	How about high speed rail between Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio?	High speed
Jackson	K. S.	I believe high speed rail will be good for Texas. It would cut down on traffic congestions and allow for an alternative way to travel. I would like to add for the planners to be aware of the movement of animals in the area where the rails will be constructed. Allow for a route for animals to cross the rail lines without causing an accident, which may be very destructive.	Travel options
Jackson	Tracy	High speed rail will be great for commuting and to ease traffic on 35. Also the rail will provide jobs. The high speed train should have limit stops for express service. New rail should be use for high speed service. Existing rail for trains under 100 mph can be use frequent stop along the 35 corridor. Also, high speed rail will provide competition for the airlines.	local and regional economy
Jain	Ajay	Texas needs high speed rail.	support
Burleson	Mickey	I believe that Texas is not yet ready for high-speed rail and feel strongly that it would be a mistake to invest in a project like this at this time. We have seen in the eastern US that the only so-called bullet train has not been the success it was predicted to be. It has not reached the speeds projected for it for various reasons and therefore does not offer the service promised. Riders' costs are high for the service provided and there are many complaints about it.	Against

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Burleson	Mickey	In my city, Temple, I have noted that a majority of the riders have ties to the military at Fort Hood. When we get out of Afghanistan and troop numbers are cut, ridership out of Temple will also be cut.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Burleson	Mickey	In regard to environmental damage caused by construction of rails suitable for bullet trains, there are many. The last time a route was suggested, one which was supposed to use current routes as much as possible, it was learned that current routes were suitable only for a very short distance. The then proposed route was to run east of the current north-south interstate through the mid-section of the state. This route cut through the Blackland Prairie eco-region, a region known to be the most productive farmland in the state, a region that has no need for irrigation. It is also already the most impacted productive land in the nation, losing more acreage annually to development than any other.	Natural environment
Burleson	Mickey	If we are wanting to build high speed rail because of the projected population growth, we must keep in mind that there are competing needs for this productive land with the increased population growth. "More" people will need "more" food. Pretty much all of the productive land in the world is already in production. We cannot make the desert grow crops without piping in water that is already scarce and projected to be in great demand as the population grows. To turn a blind eye to this fact would be totally irresponsible.	Natural environment
Burleson	Mickey	Blackland Prairie soils are appropriately called vertisols. These soils are known for their shrink- swell capacities. When it rains they swell. In droughts they shrink. And in the process they are constantly turning over. This process causes gilgai, locally known as hog wallows or buffalo wallows. Sometimes they form in the shape of long shallow trenches. This property is devastating to road beds, and for a rail to	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		accommodate bullet trains, it has to be smooth and flat. No rub-boards or potholes allowed. To achieve the kind of foundation needed for this kind of rail, soil must be removed and replaced with rock, the kind that comes from the hill country, the closest source. Not only will the construction of the rails damage the land through which the rail bed is built, it will also severely impact the sites from which the rock is extracted. This is off-site damage that must be calculated into the damage caused by the project.	
Burleson	Mickey	Hauling the rock over roadways is extremely damaging to existing roads and requires costly repairs, another cost that should be factored into the overall cost.	Natural environment
Burleson	Mickey	If my understanding is correct, the bullet train is an electric train that requires electrical hookups periodically along the way. This means construction of new power lines and adjacent maintenance rights-of-way which damage more land, and require additional construction, adding costs to the project which the public should be informed about and which should not be overlooked when figuring the negative impact of the project.	Natural environment
Burleson	Mickey	Construction will undoubtedly impact or destroy precious wetlands and exceedingly rare tall-grass prairie remnants. In recent studies the native Blackland Prairie ecosystem was considered the most endangered in the USA. Existing wildlife corridors will be destroyed or severely impacted by the rail bed and required fencing. Wildlife on the Blackland is already in short supply and new intrusions further reduce the populations.	Natural environment
Burleson	Mickey	Because of the cost of constructing new, safe crossings, it is likely that there will be a limited number of crossings and more county roads dead-ending at the tracks, which will seriously inconvenience rural residents and negatively alter school bus routes.	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Burleson	Mickey	Although the Department has announced that it will study the project in three different sections, it must remember that EIS regulations declare that a project cannot be divided into smaller parts to reduce the appearance of the environmental impact. The environmental impact of the whole project must be considered when the decision is made to go ahead with a project.	Process
Burleson	Mickey	Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my concerns about the project. I think it is clear that I oppose the construction of a Bullet Train route at this time, think it is impractical, wasteful, too environmentally destructive and likely to fail. However, I am not opposed to improving our current rails and passenger service.	Against
Burleson	Mickey	In California production costs have been far higher than projected and may yet kill the project.	Cost
Burleson	Mickey	We have known failure and much waste despite TxDOT's recent extensive efforts and related extravagant investment devoted to selling the proposed Trans Texas Corridor.	Against
Burleson	Mickey	We see the new toll roads not being used nearly as much as projections would indicate. We look at the impressive strip of toll booths at the main entrances to these roads - 6 to 8 booths wide across the width of the highway. Until recently, only one booth per side was needed, and now we find that even that has been closed. Apparently the tolls are not productive enough to keep that one booth for each direction's traffic open.	Cost
Burleson	Mickey	I have read the early studies from the 80's and 90's regarding a proposed thoroughfare similar to the TTC, studies done by the Transportation Institute at the University of Texas which predicted how long it would take to drive from Dallas to San Antonio on IH-35 by the first decade of the 2000's. They were way off and didn't come close to	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the true situation. I don't see how we can trust the scare tactics of current predictions any more than we could those earlier ones from a similar source.	
Burleson	Mickey	Many Texans would like the idea of a Bullet Train. It looks so sleek and modern and the thought of moving at the proposed speeds at ground level is thrilling. Most of us would want to ride it for the experience...but only once. We Texans love our cars too much and like the convenience of having our own car when we get to our destination. We are very different from Europeans or Japanese when it comes to our transportation. (Just as different as we are about gun control.) If we're in a big hurry, we're going to take a plane. But, unlike easterners, we're used to long distances between destinations and don't seem to mind long drives. And if we're going to ride the rails we're going to want them to be a bargain, cheaper than paying for our auto's gas.	Against
Burleson	Mickey	I just don't think the Bullet Train will fly with Texans. We don't want to pay for a boondoggle	Against
Burleson	Mickey	In the current economy I think we ought to start out with a smaller investment. It won't hurt to update, enhance and promote train travel on our current rails. Improve the rails. Where they're rough, make them smooth. Improve the comforts and service provided on our current passenger trains, improve the restrooms and dining facilities, and increase the number of passenger trains running. Provide better services for vacation travelers with layovers in quaint cities and towns along the way, investments in these towns to provide appealing attractions, and informational brochures about what's to see along the way. Promote package trips to appeal to various interest groups.... If train travel catches on in Texas, then we can think about a bullet train.	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Burleson	Mickey	At our scoping meeting the figure we were given for the current annual ridership in Texas on Amtrak was not encouragingly high, but it was almost double the actual ridership because Amtrak counts each boarding of the train and each exiting separately; so in most cases each rider is counted twice – once when he embarks and once when he departs. This is not the case only when a rider boards in one state and departs in another. The quoted figure should not be considered when decisions are made. Projected ridership is too important an issue in a decision of whether to go forward with a bullet train plan.	Cost
Jaudzemis	Thomas	My wife and I frequently drive from far south Texas to points north, and the north-south interstate is a MESS. We would love to be able to take a train to San Antonio, Austin, or Dallas / Fort Worth. It would be safer, less stressful, and more environmentally responsible. It would allow us to improve our quality of life because we would be able to enjoy cultural events, entertainment and sports not available in our area. and on the occasions we did drive it might help reduce some of the awful traffic between San Antonio and Dallas (the worst is around Austin).	Travel options
Jay		Please ensure that the quality of life of citizens of both states is not unduly affected by construction.	quality of life
Jean	Terry	It would be great to use the rail from Waco to Dallas or Waco to Austin as I do these trips a lot for business and pleasure, not to have wear on my car and not to be put into traffic and dangers on I 35. Also I feel much environmentally safer!	Travel options
Jeansonne	Sarah	My extended family and I FULLY support high speed rail. We use the Amtrak to Fort Worth, and would be happy to avoid IH-35 forever.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Jeske	Tim	Hello, I am a proponent of passenger rail in Texas. It can be a great alternative to IH-35, if it is done properly. The current Amtrak service goes through the Waco area but there are several things that make it unattractive to me and my young family of three. The first issue I have with Amtrak is the schedule. Currently, service only runs once per day and that is around 11am. We prefer to go to Dallas or Austin for leisure but cannot use Amtrak as a feasible means of transportation. The second issue I have with Amtrak is reliability. The current service is not known for its timeliness, if we were to ride Amtrak we need to know the service will be there if we ride it. Therefore, I urge this study to recommend the following. First, have the service with multiple trains. Flexibility is key for us so having the opportunity to catch multiple trains at different times is crucial. Second, make the tickets competitive with the cost of driving to the destination. Like most Central Texans we will drive if it's cheaper and we love our trucks. Thanks for your time.	High speed
Jimenez	Anna	I would like to see passenger train service for Laredo, Texas. It would provide an alternate mode of transportation and I believe it would be a great success.	Travel options
JOHANSSON	DAVID	Having been fortunate to travel abroad extensively, it is very clear that a modern, fast, safe, and reliable passenger and freight rail system is essential for building commerce and relieving traffic congestion. I am an Austin Metrorail user and fan, and I strongly support high speed rail development as a Texas taxpayer.	travel options
Johnson	Mark	I believe that high speed rail is essential to transportation in Texas and Oklahoma, especially as it relates to business in each states.	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Johnston	Elise	I believe that given adequate rail service that more people from Texas and Oklahoma would "ride the rails". The use of automobiles will always be a part of the landscape, but for longer journeys rail travel is a palatable, economical, alternative.	travel options
Johnston	Bonnie	I'm strongly in favor of seeing high-speed rail connect Houston, Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio. Ideally, it would be great if there was a train from College Station to each of these cities.	High speed
Jones	Larry	It's about time I would use it instead of planes or vehicles if high speed. I have been on then in the. East and are great quite forms of moving people.	Travel options
Joseph	Maggi	Trains reduce car and short plane ride traffic improving air quality and reducing congestion on roads. Trains consume less energy. South Texas has no passenger rail service and would greatly benefit from comfortable rail cars that make it possible to work while travelling or just enjoy a relaxing ride.	Travel options
Kahler	Harvey	My first-hand experience with Texas rail passenger service is limited to a trip from Chicago to Dallas/Fort Worth on the Eagle a decade ago. I had experience with rail passenger service in Northwest Indiana as a regional planner, dealing with the Cardinal/Hoosier State and the Valparaiso - Chicago commuter service in the 1980s among other responsibilities. Being a rail passenger advocate in my retirement, I've gone over the aerial photos to get a sense of the curvature and speed restrictions that would be faced; and I looked up the city and county populations at likely stations on these corridors. Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth A successful start-up with the Heartland Flyer provides a core around which expansion can be implemented. Hopefully, Kansas will join Oklahoma and Texas with a Kansas City - Oklahoma City - Dallas/Fort Worth train to complement the Heartland Flyer. Dallas/Fort Worth -	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>Waco - Austin - San Antonio This seems to me to be the highest-priority intra-state corridor with an extension of the Heartland Flyer and at least two additional daily round trips. San Antonio to Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo Service to the populous (Lower) Rio Grande Valley, McAllen/Harlingen area, gets awkward in not serving Corpus Christi directly. Robstown and Sinton are about ten mile west and northwest. The Rio Grande Valley with more population would seem to be a greater priority than Laredo. At least one round trip could be provided by extending one of the Dallas/Fort Worth - San Antonio daily round trips and another could be provided between San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley. I'm surprised that Dallas/Fort Worth - Houston and San Antonio - Houston, two legs of the Texas Triangle, are not part of the plan. Sufficient intermediate ridership might be generated at Waco and College Station for a daily pair Dallas/Fort Worth - Houston round trips. Similarly, a San Antonio - Houston routing for two daily round trips through College Station and Austin would seem to promise success, even if it isn't as short and fast as the current Sunset route. The problem is that the timings at Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio coincide for the respective originations, and the close schedules are inconvenient for a lot of potential riders. Another opportunity may be daily round trips from Austin to Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio complementing the other trains. I am glad that Texas is looking at these corridors with perhaps a more pragmatic eye toward incremental development. I have observed that intermediate cities are crucial for rail corridors. Even if high speed rail is developed between Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio, it is highly desirable that some trains, aided by a stretch of high speed running to be more competitive overall, continue over conventional rail lines to reach outlying destinations such as Oklahoma City and McAllen/Harlingen.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Kallerman	Dick	YES, high speed passenger rail all over East Texas ASAP!	support
Kaswan	Mark	Rail has proven to be one of the most energy-efficient and least environmentally damaging modes of long-distance travel, compared to auto and air travel. I strongly support the extension of high-speed rail to south Texas. For those of us in the southern tip, hundreds of miles from the nearest large city, it would be immensely helpful to have high-speed rail links to the rest of the state. The savings come on multiple fronts: Reduced cost of travel, increase fuel efficiency, reduced emissions, health benefits from a cleaner environment, reduced traffic on the roads -- the benefits are clear across the board. The presence of existing commercial rail lines along this corridor, which could be upgraded to handle higher-speed passenger service, would reduce the cost of implementing a new service. This would benefit not only the health and well-being of south Texas, but would provide an economic boost, as well.	Travel options
Katz	Kitty L	I strongly support bringing high speed rail to Texas. I've read the Texas Department of Transportation high speed rail proposal paper on the website and I believe the connections between Dallas to San Antonio, and Austin to Houston with a connection to Bryan/College Station would strongly benefit the economy. Especially between College Station and Houston the connection would allow the already potentially developing Bio-Medical Corridor to reach its potential. Cutting the travel time and eliminating the travel headaches that are already in place and only getting worse in, around, and between these cities will benefit everybody. The traffic in Austin is horrible, I won't even go there anymore unless a solution is found. High speed rail would be the solution. Also when you have event there like South by Southwest, high speed rail would allow people from all over Texas to attend, and have many more alternatives as to where to stay. One issue in that paper that I thought was interesting was that if the high speed rail only went as far as Hempstead in Houston, the rail	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		wasn't potentially profitable immediately. I agree, and I think we need to spend whatever it costs to get the rail connected all the way to downtown. Either elevate the rail lines, or put them where the HOV lanes are now. The paper I read indicated that if the rail went all the way downtown it would be immediately profitable. In my opinion, Hempstead is out in the middle of nowhere. If you brought it to the connection of 610 and 290, I think that's way too far out too. The rail needs to go downtown to work. It should go to the train station where you catch the train to New Orleans. I would be willing to pay more taxes for high speed rail.	
Kauffman	Karl	High speed rail has so much going for it and would improve quality of life exponentially.	High speed
Kauffman	Karma	I'd like to express my support for high-speed rail in Texas. High-speed rail would reduce the number of cars on the road and therefore improve air quality. Also, high-speed rail uses less energy per passenger than car or plane. Plus, there are some really great places to visit in Texas and it would be great to be able to just jump on a train and go visit these places without having to drive for hours first.	congestion
Kaufmann	James	I support passenger rail travel investment in general, and this project seems a good idea. It will help the environment by reducing emissions. It may also facilitate a net reduction in noise pollution by alleviating the need for aviation.	natural environment
Kay	Philip	We need high speed rail to bring us into the 21st century and beyond!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Kaylo	Janet	I could tick off all the blocks above, as an indication of how many human and environmental areas are affected by introducing a high-speed rail between major cities across any State. Extending rail service from Oklahoma to cities in South Texas would impact the environment, traffic, wildlife, and definitely fall under 'alternatives' - that is, alternatives to the car industry providing Big Oil with a continuous, unsustainable demand-stream. Some of the benefits for passengers are: Trains are more comfortable than sitting in a car for hours, as well as safer, much more relaxing than having to concentrate on driving, and generally are less expensive on an individual's pocket over time, if not in specific gas prices per car for each trip. Rail services would allow travelers to read, talk, TEXT!! and we know how much people love to text - WHILE traveling, which is limited and/or prohibited while driving. Travelers could work on their computers, catch up on reading, and text away to their heart's content. More people could visit family and friends who live in the TX/OK corridor, and more frequently, too. New businesses would spring up as a result of creating a speedy rail system from the North to the South of Texas, including ones we can't even think of yet, that require transporting people from one place to another for real face-time. All developed countries have fast rail service between major cities in their countries. Texas is a great place to start setting an example of how this can be done also in the US, even and especially in a massive geographical State such as ours. I and all the people I know in Texas would support a Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail with great enthusiasm.	Travel options
Kellman	Steven G.	South Texas currently lacks efficient, reliable passenger rail service. High-speed train service connecting San Antonio with other parts of the state and the nation would be beneficial by reducing congestion on already crowded highways, and minimizing air pollution from automobiles and trucks. By facilitating transportation, it would spur	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		commerce in the region. I urge you to support the development of high-speed rail service in our state.	
Kelly	Brandon	I would love the ability to travel across both the metroplex and the country via a rail system, yet we don't even have a rail from DFW to either Dallas or Fort Worth. That seems absurd.	Travel options
Kelly	Jill	I have a daughter who lives in Norman, OK. I travel frequently from my home in Grapevine to Oklahoma City, to Austin, and to San Antonio. This rail is an excellent idea, and I fully support its implementation. I'm certain that I would utilize this service regularly. Thank you.	Travel options
Kendrick	Carolyn	Love it!	support
Kester	Cheryl	How will this affect imminent domain?	right of way
Killian	Dawn	I am strongly interested in getting high speed rail connecting DFW, Houston and Austin!	support
King	Dan	Anyone who has lived in any country with a real mass transit system realizes the advantages of having mass transit and high speed rail. We need to get beyond the 1950's narcissistic, look at me in my own shinny vehicle, self flattery.	support
King	Ross	Any kind of public transportation which is efficient would be a plus in Texas. We have way too many roads and highways, which cause many people to have to afford a vehicle to get to work or to anything else. High speed rail seems a good alternative for many who go from OK to TX.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Kinser	Shea	I would love to see more rail in Texas! The traffic along IH-35 between DFW and Austin is atrocious, and adding better rail service along this route would be extremely beneficial for the state. Not only would this improve traffic, but taking cars off the roads would help improve air quality!	congestion
Kirkpatrick	Gabriel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	Travel options
Klein	James	I am in favor of this project, though I would want to minimize its environmental impact.	support
Kleinman	Susan	I believe our traffic problems can be alleviated by providing good alternatives to the car, and that people will use the alternative when it is convenient and fast. I understand trains can provide such an alternative. I am concerned about safety in the crowded highways, as well as drivers who are increasingly showing riskier behavior. Also, the air quality is not going to get any better by using the car as the only means of transportation, even as they get cleaner. More highways decreases open space, as well, and they are eyesores usually. Thanks, Susan Kleinman.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Klores	Jill	The train is a great idea. I would use it from Dallas to Houston. I would urge this to move forward, however all of the environmental issues must be carefully considered and studied so as to have minimal impact.	Travel options
Klugiewicz	Ariana	It would be so wonderful to be able to take a train from south Texas to northern Texas rather than to drive!	Travel options
Kohutek	Michael	Bus companies already serve this area. Why spend monies to study a situation that private bus companies are well able to handle? Airlines also provide passenger service. What is the point of rail passenger service in this study's market area? Mobility? What commerce is impeded by the lack of passenger rail service this study is considering? What is the anticipated minimum carrying capacity of each level of services' trains? What is the cost per passenger seat mile of each level of service? (I suggest this cost per seat mile be identified by service segment by service level discretely. For example, the cost per seat mile of 3 conventional trains per day between San Antonio and Laredo will likely less than the cost per seat mile of 12 high speed trains per day running on a dedicated right-of-way between Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston.) What is the amount of rail infrastructure investment required by service level by segment?	against
Kraemer	Stephanie	Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands more transportation options.	support
Krasner	Larry	I think a high-speed, quiet, environmentally safe train from Dallas to San Antonio would be used and become an economic success.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Krawczynski	Philip	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - This would be great. Certainly a step in the right direction in my view. I have had the pleasure of traveling across Europe by rail and found it to be a wonderful experience. I am sure Texas could continue to build more pavement, I just do not believe that is the answer. We need to move more people at one time, and rail would certainly accomplish that. There are times I would like to travel from Temple to Austin or Dallas for events, but traffic on IH-35 is an obstacle I am not willing to tackle. While I am sure this endeavour would be expensive, I think Texas should begin the process now, as an alternative in addition to building more pavement. The processes could be merged together, for cost effectiveness. I would like to see rail built above in the center highway divides. As in Houston rail and passenger cars do not mix well together. Rail lines could then break off into the Park and Ride areas as they have in Houston to help reduce cost of purchasing and building out complete new areas. Ill-regardless of how this process pans out, this is a huge step in the right direction and I would rather see some of my highway funds be placed in the advancement of Texas Rail than just more pavement.	Travel options
Kroll	Brannon	I am in favor of Higher Speed Rail. Give me the opportunity to get from San Antonio to Dallas in relatively the same amount of time as by car with a degree of flexibility on travel time. While I would love to have Highest Speed Rail at 200+mph, I realize that building specialized tracks is unrealistic. That said, being able to travel at ~120mph, I can get where I need to go in the amount of time or less that it would take me to drive. I would also recommend stops in Laredo/Corpus/McAllen (branch line), San Antonio, New Braunfels, San Marcos, Austin, Temple, Waco and Dallas. I would also recommend a line going to Houston from San Antonio with the goal of getting there in 3 hours or less.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Kugler	Chris	Reduce traffic and hopefully pollution.	congestion
Kuhl	Lee Maidana	As the state continues to grow, our need for mass transit is critical. Not only do we need to meet those needs, we need to do so in a way that will have the least impact on the environment and the species, with the least amount of harm to both. As long as the railway does not impact the environment in any negative manner, I support the railway system. My concern is for the environment and all of its precious species.	Travel options
Kuhn	Cecilia	I am in favor of high speed rail for moving around in Texas. Thank you.	support
Kurtz	Kenny	There MUST be thorough assessment of likely demand. This has the potential to become a boondoggle on the order of Amtrak.	demand assessment
La Point	Peggy	I am in strong support of all passenger rail service in Texas. We must move away from the single passenger vehicle. High speed rail service between our major cities would be an enormous benefit to our state.	Travel options
Labatt	Laura	Moving more people around the State of Texas with fewer cars on the road is an important goal for our State.	Travel options
Lachner	Deanne	The train is a much safer way for families with children to travel. Parents can legally hold and comfort their children.	safety
Lacy	David	For any new rail development to truly meet the public need....it needs to stop in large cities along or close to the route. Cities like Waco, Temple, and other similar cities need to have stops on the proposed route. Stopping only at large metro cities will not meet the public demand.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Lamb	Johnny	What about Sherman area to Dallas, lots of people work in Dallas from this area.	Routes
Lamberth	Michael	more passenger rail is ALWAYS better	support
Lamberty	Jean	I would like to see the availability of rail transportation in TX increase. It is the sensible alternative to car and air travel.	Travel options
Landry	Genest	Bicycles are currently more allowed on the Heartland Flyer. If I were able to take my bicycle with me, I would defiantly use the train rather than drive to Dallas for weekend excursions. In fact, I would likely travel to Dallas and other Texas Curries much more frequently if I could throw my bicycle on a train with wi-fi available. Having my bicycle with me allows me the freedom of mobility once I arrive at my travel destination	Travel options
Langthorn	LIZ	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - We need public transport, but it does necessarily need to be only high speed. Better commuter service would be a great start, like more than one time to catch the Heartland Flyer in either direction.	Travel options
Lanman	Gary	I would like to be on record as strongly supporting the expansion of passenger rail in all forms to the area for many reasons. Safety is a big reason as over 30,000 people are killed on the nation's highways each year while the death rate on public transportation is very low. Passenger rail can greatly help air quality by removing many cars off of the roads. When you are considering passenger rail, please consider adding more than one frequency each day and I feel that is very important to having a successful operation. I also believe that connecting major population centers is very important and this system should be connected to Kansas City.	safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Larkin	Kris	I would like to see this same study done for Kansas and Oklahoma. There is a great need to complete a railroad line from Oklahoma City through Ponca City - Wichita connecting with Kansas City. It would greatly reduce traffic and be much safer for people traveling.	Travel options
Laven	Hans	I favor electric passenger rail service as the most economical and healthful option for transportation throughout South and central Texas.	energy
Lawrence	Ben	It's about time; we are at the bottom in rail service. It would be good for Texas and Oklahoma, but with the people we have in charge you won't get it done and I hate to say that because we really do need this. Good luck.	support
Leach	Yvette	I want a high speed rail system in Texas.	support
Lebel	Marlene	This will be beneficial to reduce road traffic and the resulting air pollution.	congestion
Lednicky	Tom	I would like to have options when it comes to commuting from Austin to San Marcos and New Braunfels. I think commuter rail is cost effective.	Travel options
lee	Mark	More light rail please!	support
Lehman	Carl	We have friends and relatives in Oklahoma, both Oklahoma City and Tulsa, and 20 years ago used to frequently drive on IH-35 to visit them. We also used to drive to Austin, Fort Worth, and Dallas. However, for the past 10 years, we have only driven once because of the traffic congestion around Austin, Fort Worth, and Dallas. We have been taking the Amtrak Texas Eagle instead, and find it a great way to avoid the traffic on IH-35. However, the Texas Eagle takes all day to get us to Fort Worth and Oklahoma City. A high speed train would be the ideal way for us to travel, and I'm	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		sure or friends and relatives would use a high speed train to come visit us. I think a high speed train connecting San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Houston, Texas, plus Oklahoma City, and even Tulsa, Oklahoma, is needed and would be heavily patronized. Thank you for considering the high speed train option, and I hope to see construction start on it in the near future. We will definitely be among the first riders, and would continue to use it frequently.	
Leiva	Wendy	So many of us are hoping that this passenger rail project will go through! Rail service from South Texas to North Texas would be an excellent option to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. You've probably seen these same comments from others, but please remember: - Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. - A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. - South Texas has no passenger rail service. - The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers - Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. - Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options
Lerch	Heather	I support high speed rail from Oklahoma to Texas because of the benefits to air quality as well as to quality of life and convenience. Expansion of the current Heartland Flyer service would create opportunities for more travelers. Oklahomans often vacation in south Texas - particularly locations such as Galveston or Houston - because these are the nearest places we can reach coastal vacation destinations and mega-city attractions (for example, many bands will play in Houston and skip OKC and Tulsa). There is no doubt Okies would be on that train to get to the beach rather than undertaking a long drive. Oklahoma is also on the verge of ozone nonattainment,	Air quality

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and every little bit helps. More train service equals more awesome.	
Leshin	Len	I am greatly in favor of the passenger rail extending to Corpus Christi. I would use it about once a month to get to Austin or San Antonio, more often during football season.	Travel options
Leyendecker	Carolyn	I would like to see the new rail service come to Laredo.	Travel options
Lindsey	Nerissa	Is this going to be high speed rail like they are proposing in California and already have in Europe and other countries in the world? Would people be able to take their bikes on the train like in Europe? If so, I think it will be great. I live in Laredo and if given the choice I would prefer to take the train rather than drive. Driving on IH-35 is stressful and can be dangerous, I would enjoy traveling much more if it were by train.	travel
Linn	Jacquelyn	I have thought for many years that we need high speed rail service across the nation. It needs to be affordable and within reach.	support
Llauger	Michelle	Less cars, less gas consumption by individuals, less corruption by state officials to sell our roads to corporations and foreigners. Less cars on the road, less road accidents and deaths.	safety
Logan	T	Of course it makes sense to have alternatives.	Travel options
Loggins	Most Rev. DJ	Rail would be an excellent idea for Texas, as well as the nation. Many other countries who are our National Allies, have thriving rail systems. England/Great Britain, Germany, and India just to name a couple. We could learn much by their example.	Travel options
Londos	Skip	Friends, I write to express several concerns, all centered around lessening our collective dependence on autos and fossil fuels for transportation. Texas needs to	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		expand alternative modes of transportation for safety, health, social, environmental and moral reasons. Please consider the following suggestions: * More and improved rail transport -- high speed and otherwise * Lower traffic speeds within municipalities to increase safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers * More sidewalks in all municipalities, especially near schools, bus stops, and other pedestrian sensitive areas. Thank you!	
Long	Cheri	I would like to have high speed trains in Texas...actually a train that went from Toronto all the way to Mexico City would have so many customers it would surprise the investors I think. Just getting around the state and to Oklahoma would be nice.	Travel options
LOPEZ	THOMAS	Increased rail transport will decrease environmental and safety issues related to excessive automobile traffic.	natural environment
Lopez	Mario A.	I live in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV). The LRGV has a large population. However, I often feel isolated from the rest of Texas, because the LRGV is hundreds of miles away from other large population centers. For those of us who live in the LRGV, travelling to San Antonio, Austin, or Houston usually means driving long distances in our cars. I go to Houston or San Antonio several times every year, and I would like to be able to ride a train to get there. I usually enjoy driving, but it would be nice to be able to ride a train to avoid crowded highways where traffic accidents can happen too easily. If Texas does decide to link the LRGV with the rest of the state by passenger rail, I believe that the trains will be very well utilized. Studying the environmental impacts of new railroad construction is important. However, I believe that the overall effect of passenger rail on the environment will be positive, mainly by contributing to improved air quality.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Lopez	Edna	How is Austin going to adjust to the high migration that the city is experiencing? Traffic is very slow in southwest (examples: the Y, Brodie Lane) where hundreds of families live and need to commute each day. On this side of town, the offer of housing is very limited and points towards development heading to Dripping Springs, and Highway 290 West is quite congested already once it reaches the Y, it only has 2 lanes.	Connectivity
Loveerde	Judy	Train travel in our state should be enhanced as soon as possible. With a senior-citizen booming population, more and more citizens will take to the roads and I am afraid this is not good because of the huge traffic and congestion situations that I have seen and experienced now since right before the Eagle Ford Shale Business. It is only getting worse. A safe and viable railroad for passengers throughout Texas is a great idea and its time has come. Please hasten to get this going and available. Tourism and business will prosper immensely all along the way.	congestion
Lucas	Quentin	Reduce the number of cars on the street. Reduce air pollution. Read a book while on the train. Not have a car and insurance. Save money. Austin is going to continue to grow we need to support that growth with an intelligent transportation system.	Travel options
Luce	Lila	What a welcome piece of news, to think that we might be seeing an expansion of passenger railway service in southern Texas! Here, we would welcome another way to get around, besides car, plane and bus. I wish that I could hop on a train, as I could in the northeast, to travel between Austin and Corpus to visit family. We have experimented with the available bus service, not adequate, and the planes are inconvenient and expensive, driving is long and tiring. We would welcome a good train service. Personally, I would much rather be on a train, than drive a car, because I would be able to do other things, like read a book, work on the computer, and play	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		games with my children. In more general terms, I would welcome the many ways in which trains would be better for the overall Texas social, human and natural environment. The noise of highways, the killing of wild animals, the use of gas, the pollution of the air, are some of the things that would improve on a general basis.	
Lujan	Deidra	This would be a great way to get the Texas economy booming even more. A train like this would get people to want to spend the day or weekend in their own state. From shopping to sporting events, I know, as a 25 year old, I would be visiting Austin even more so if it made the trip there faster. We need to catch up with all of Europe and start using trains as a way to tour our own beautiful country! Lets ride!	local and regional economy
L'Utt	Tyler Paul	I am pleased to be able to go anywhere in Dallas and even Denton now by train. The more trains, the better. Let's have more please.	support
MacAlpine	Gordon	There are far too many cars on the road, and high-speed rail would go a long way toward protecting people, animals, and the environment, as well as conserving fuel and mitigating global warming.	congestion
MacDougal	Lorn	The mistaken idea that most American transportation should be private is coming home to roost in the changes to the climate, the traffic that wastes so much time and energy, the deaths caused by human error and distraction at the wheel, the constant presence of noise, the laziness and aggression of drivers. We are falling behind other societies who have had the foresight to build multipurpose infrastructures. The dependence on the automobile has done damage to the human body which needs to move to function optimally; our disastrous health care situation would be mitigated by comprehensive alternative transportation! Children no longer play in the streets or walk/bike to school in fear of being hit. Most children in America have never been on	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		a train hence its pleasures are unknown to us. I can't express enough how much I hope to see our transportation evolve in the areas of trains, trams, light rail, and bike lanes everywhere as in the Netherlands, along all the major routes and the primary source of movement in the cities. But many people wonder how they'll get around once reaching their destination by train. We need bike sharing programs at every station and throughout towns. That will be true progress, but all is so slow to change except the deleterious effects of our wasteful ways on the environment.	
Mack	Linda	It would be wonderful to have more fast trains coming through Texas. Maybe one could take me straight to my hometown (Indianapolis, IN) without having to traveling the entire country to get there.	Travel options
Maduzia	David	I believe it is in the best interest of the current, as well as future, generations of Texans to have a passenger rail system that we can be proud of. Having taken trains in France, Spain, China, as well as on the East Coast of the United States I don't understand why Texas does not have a passenger rail system that is equal or better than any of these places.	Travel options
Magill	Chad	As a local City Councilman, I am very interested in helping Corpus Christi be as involved as possible. Please let me know how I and our community can be a part of the discussion - we are very much interested!	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Mair	Verona	We in this area would like to see the Heartland Flyer come from Newton, KS thru Ponca City, Ok to connect with the current Oklahoma City route and further. The amount of car and truck traffic on IH-35 is so dangerous and fast the rail would be much safer. Would also cut down on the cost of maintaining the highways. Especially beneficial for older folks needing the hospitals and doctors n the Oklahoma City area. Starting in 1999 I was on a committee to further this route and we even talked with the colleges and hospitals and they were willing to supply a shuttle to and from the train station for their patrons. I imagine even the shopping centers would do the same. Please try to get this happening. Thanks,	congestion
Maker	Emily	I would LOVE to see a rail from TX to Oklahoma! I drive up and down 35 very regularly to visit family but would do it more often if there were a rail! Wow! This would be so efficient and very helpful.	Travel options
Maldonado	Rachel	I understand that Texas is a big oil/ gas state. However, it has been proven that in our current economy, that people would use public transportation more often if it were more readily available. I am asking this be taken in consideration not only as an environmental issue, but as a social economic issue as well. If people have the means to work and get where they need to be, they will. Thank you.	Travel options
Maloff	Chalda	Trains keep cars off the road, and they are more convenient for travelers than flying or driving.	congestion
Manes	Thomas	I have used passenger rail service between San Marcos and Dallas/Fort Worth several times, and it has always been a wonderful experience. It is much more relaxed and less stressful than air travel. The only problems have been occasional long waits due to freight traffic on the same rails, and just the fact that it takes a lot more time in	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>general. The speed of the train is often very slow. The current system would not work for someone on a tight schedule. I've also had problems because of train arrival and departure times, such as when trying to arrange trips from San Marcos to Oklahoma City or Tulsa. This was virtually impossible to schedule, requiring cab rides and hotel stays that would have added considerably to the overall trip expense, plus the fact that there is no service to Tulsa. The only practical solution for a couple of trips from San Marcos to Tulsa was to arrive in Dallas by train, catch a city bus from the train station to Love Field, and fly from there to Tulsa, then catch a bus or cab from the Tulsa airport into the city. Not simple. I've also attempted to arrange a trip from San Marcos to Little Rock, but the late arrival time made it impractical, since I would have had to arrange a rental car due to my final destination being near Fayetteville. I'm relieved that TxDOT is considering the expansion of rail and high speed rail service. It's long overdue. I would definitely use this service more if it were available, and to more places, such as the Rio Grande Valley. Thank you.</p>	
Marlett	Steve	I would not be a regular passenger, but it would be nice if there were more than one departure and one arrival time for Oklahoma City. Especially arrival as the station is closed when the train rolls in, so far as I know.	Frequency
Marron	Patrick	We have to manage our resources carefully and at the same time keep in mind our quality of life.	quality of life
Marsh	Jonathan	I am in favor of a rail line/system in from Oklahoma through Texas.	support
Marshall	Kristine	Access to efficient, well-priced rail travel would substantially improve the quality of life in Texas. Anyone who has traveled abroad or spent time in the Northeast knows the value of rail travel. Why not make this experience available to millions of Texans,	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		too? I heartily support any efforts to create a high-speed rail system that would serve the major metropolitan areas in Texas. Thank you.	
Marshall	Ron	High speed rail is more energy efficient.	support
Martin	Kelly R.	Please provide passenger train service from Guthrie, OK to Dallas /Fort Worth and on to San Antonio via Waco. This service should be at least twice daily in both directions and operate at 80 -100 mph speeds. The key is service frequency and speeds faster than 70 mph. Take a look at what the IL DOT is doing in the St. Louis to Chicago corridor: in rural areas, train speeds will be 110 mph.	Routes
Martinez	Ricardo	Great initiative, less people on roads = safer roads, good to our environment, opportunity for travel.	Travel options
Maschal	Tim	It's time to bring high speed rail to Texas. Eventually, Texas major highways will run out of space for expansion. My family and I would use an efficient rail system to travel around Texas and Oklahoma!	Travel options
Maschal	Kristi	I would support a high speed train for mass transit throughout the state of Texas to decrease pollution and improve accessibility.	support
Mashek	Chris	I support passenger rail because the current IH-35 interstate expansion will not accommodate the growing needs for transportation. I commute from Belton to Waco every day of work week and this significantly affects my family's budget. I would use passenger rail if stops could be made between Waco and Belton/Temple area. Room for bicycles onboard the trains would be advantageous. Has there been consideration for commercial rail to reduce the high percentage of trucks along IH-35? If so where	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		can I find more information on this?	
Mass	Ellen	Rail travel is much more relaxing (to me at least) than flying. my biggest concern is the cost of the ticket vs. that of flying. Years ago I checked into going from Brownsville to my parents in NW Florida and the cost was prohibitive. it would have cost me almost 4 times as much even with the possibility of taking a bus from Brownsville to the San Antonio station. plus it took 3 times as long. the time wasn't an issue for me but the cost certainly was! Rail travel, if instituted will have to be cost efficient to lower income levels if it is to be utilized.	affordability
Mathis	Aaron	I support high speed rail as long as the facts demonstrate it a more efficient alternative to passenger cars and planes.	High speed
Mattle	Amanda	I think passenger rail service would be a wonderful alternative to automobile and plane travel. Texas' population is growing rapidly and the addition of this service could reduce the number of passenger vehicles on the roadways, leading to reduced air pollution from emissions. It could also reduce the number of short airplane trips while giving commuters and out of town travelers some leisure time on their trip. Trains are also more efficient than cars and planes per passenger, important again due to the growing population. I think that train stations are less of a hassle to navigate than airports, too! I would welcome an Amtrak passenger train service because of its potential to help protect our air quality, reduce our oil usage, and provide more transportation options to Texans. Thank you.	Travel options
Maxwell	Donna	I support the continued development of passenger rail in Texas. We have done a lot in the DFW area, but there is much to do across the state and region. Thank you	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Mayfield	Teresa J	The availability of mass transit over long distances in the state of Texas will help reduce traffic and emissions and provide a convenient method of travel that allows passengers time for leisure while in transit. I support the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail Line.	Travel options
Maynard-Moody	Carey	Passenger rail offers citizens a transportation alternative that protects the environment, provides for the mobility impaired, enhances work productivity during transport time, reduces cost of highway accident response, affords more safety for moving people, enhances economic connectivity and work productivity.	Travel options
Mayo	Judy	We have relatives in OK and would certainly use the train for transportation. I am concerned at the amount of non-renewable resources used by automobiles - riding together on trains will reduce not only the amount of fuel required, but also the emissions and their effect on human health and environmental climate change. A reduced requirement for new roads will also reduce polluted run-off from impermeable surfaces and will save natural habitat. As you are aware, Texas traffic is often congested and thus dangerous - train use will help to alleviate this problem. I hope that you will pursue building a Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail project.	congestion
McAuley	Anita	There are so many reasons why Texas should be committed to passenger rail. As the major cities in Texas become more and more populated, passenger rail is essential to get people in and out of these large major metropolitan areas since the lack of a passenger rail system will rain down so many more environmental issues (i.e. dirty air) and automobile safety issues not to mention the constant need to find more and more precious downtown space for people to park vehicles. Passenger rail is a 21st century solution to ballooning traffic and dirty air that has been held back for way too long. Surely, we have reached a time where it is no longer just needed but absolutely	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		necessary. I know in San Antonio we have had relatively clean air up until just recently. Do we really need to have super dirty air before anything positive is done to deal with it. Please let's get going on these rail projects and we can address these issues, and, as an added benefit, provide jobs for Texans.	
McCaleb	Brad	I am proposing a possible rail extension from Austin to Houston, through Bryan/College Station. As Texas A&M and the school in Austin continue to grow and the Houston, Austin and Bryan/College Station metropolitan areas grow there will be more demand for transportation services directly between these regions. A HSR connection would make travel for business, students, faculty, and other events (SEC and BIG 12 game weekends) much safer and more efficient with a reduced impact on the smaller communities between these regions. When we compare the total project cost for upgrading and maintaining highway facilities, the potential environmental impacts and the ability to move large numbers of people very quickly during natural disaster events, the HSR option becomes very competitive.	Routes
McClain	Joseph	I am totally in favor of this study and the project. It would have far-reaching positive impact on a series of environmental issues, noise, traffic and ease of travel. I wholeheartedly endorse it.	natural environment
McClung	Larry	I would very much like to see high speed passenger rail service in Texas and throughout the country, as an alternative to automobile and air travel.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
MacKinnon	Kevin	We attended the recent Public Open House regarding the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study held in San Antonio. First, we should note that we are frequent long distance train travelers and have logged more than 25,000 miles on trains across the USA. Our more recent trip, in February, 2013 covered about 3,200 miles from San Antonio and return.	Transit Options
MacKinnon	Kevin	Additional train would reduce cars, however, additional waiting time at grade crossing.	safety
MacKinnon	Kevin	Train travel has less environmental (natural) over cars, additional ROW would be the same as adding additional highways or toll roads. See attached letter.	Natural environment
MacKinnon	Kevin	Several of our travels have been along a portion of this rail study corridor while traveling on Amtrak's "Texas Eagle". We have observed an increase in-passengers traveling in both directions over the past 5 years. We believe this increase in ridership is also verified by recent Amtrak data. Our observations of our fellow train passengers would suggest that these folks most likely choose to train travel because they do not have a car or they cannot afford to fly.	Residents, businesses, and visitors

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
MacKinnon	Kevin	We believe that the number of passengers will continue to increase as the general population ages, and if we take steps to encourage train ridership. Presently, only one train moves north and south each day, which limits options for passengers. While options are available at Fort Worth for other connecting services at the train station, similar options do not exist at other stations along the - corridor. For example, presently, bus service is available from San Antonio to the South, but this service is not available at the train station. Train service east-west at San Antonio is presently restricted to 3 trains per week each-direction. We would suggest adding one daily train each direction would help increase train ridership between corridor cities. We would suggest these additional trains should focus-on corridor travel rather than long distance travel.	Routes
MacKinnon	Kevin	We would also suggest that better coordination between trains and other modes of travel at San Antonio and other stations is critically needed to encourage ridership on current corridor trains. We suggest that it is difficult to increase train ridership while we do not have many options at major city stations, such as Austin, where one needs to either have a ride or taxi to leave the station. Clearly, a trip to the State Capital is easier by car than by train, due to the present lack of train options and the connecting transportation.	Transit Options
MacKinnon	Kevin	Regarding the type of intercity passenger rail, we would offer these comments for consideration. Expanding conventional train service would appear to be the least costly, both in term of dollars and environmental impacts. Adding trains by way of “higher speeds” or “high speed” trains would require additional right of way and has the potential of additional negative environmental impact.	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
MacKinnon	Kevin	Thank you for our opportunity to comment on this study. We have also attached your “Scoping Comment Form.	Process
MacKinnon	Kevin	Additional train options would provide more travel options along the corridor.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
MacKinnon	Kevin	Additional trains may provide increased noise and potential for more accidents at grade crossing.	safety
MacKinnon	Kevin	Could provide for increased tourism in corridor. Agricultural impacts negatively if additional trackage is needed.	local and regional economy
McCord	Marc W.	The need for mass transportation options is critical. The time and cost required to build more highways is prohibitive, and the amount of fuel consumed by cars is unsustainable in the near future. Mass rail transit makes sense for a 21st century state. I strongly encourage building the high speed rail line between Oklahoma City and South Texas as a way to reduce air pollution, fossil fuel consumption, traffic congestion and other factors that cost us far too much money and/or threaten our health and safety.	Travel options
McCord	Lynn	I think we need the rail system for our local economy. We cannot afford to delay these alternatives any longer. This will increase jobs and would probably attract more Corporations to enter our Texas market. I think we should not focus and get clouded by the airline impact because the long term effect far outweighs the short term.	local and regional economy
McCrea	Dennis	1) I have lived outside of the United States where rail service is widely available, both	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>on a subway basis and regular inter-city service.</p> <p>2) The idea of having an economically viable and competitive way of travel here in South Texas is a very attractive and I believe popular means of travel between the metropolitan areas of Texas and beyond.</p> <p>3) Please pursue this idea to fruition.</p>	
McCullough	Chris	Please bring a useful rail system to Oklahoma and Texas. As an OKC resident who travels to Dallas at least once a month, I know I would use the rail system every time if the times were more accessible. Please consider making this expansion as I know from personal experience there is a need for it. I spent 6 months backpacking in Europe and used the rail system the entire time. Incredible stuff.	Travel options
McDonald	James	Please provide additional passenger rail from Oklahoma to South Texas, specifically the Austin to DFW corridor. Thank you.	Routes
McFaden	Tex	Depending on the type of rail, this potential project could reduce the noise and traffic in areas, thus improving roadway safety and air quality, especially in the larger cities. Any improvement to air quality and reduction in noise and traffic certainly has a positive impact on the natural environment, as well as the longevity and day-to-day conditions of the roadways. As an alternative means of transportation, there is no reason to not look at alternative power sources for the rail engine, to include solar. A combination of alternative energy sources could further enhance the positive effects on the environment and save in overall, long-term costs of the railway.	Air quality
McFaden	Tex	The main concern is making the railway affordable so that the average non-traveling resident sees it as an opportunity to travel. With the possibility of casinos coming to	affordability

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>Texas, this could rapidly become a booming business venture, especially if it's cheap enough for the local resident to use it for a shopping day in OKC or cities in Texas, or to travel to the casino. Having a partnership of some sort with potential land/casino owners, perhaps a sponsorship (in terms of advertising or building the rail station at the casino or covering the cost of the facility) could truly make this one of the most attractive travel options in America... something that others would envy and emulate. The only people who ever listen to my opinion are the ones who've learned that I'm never wrong, and thus have listened and made a fortune and been blessed with fantastic luck along the way. You don't know me... but I am right about this and hopefully you have people there with the vision to see the same things that I see and to act on those concepts.</p>	
McFaden	Tex	<p>As a retired, disabled combat veteran, I'm telling what I would do if those options existed, and I'm a no-income, reclusive combat veteran. If I'm willing to ride the rail for the right price, then trust me when I say that you would open up the flood gates for millions in DFW alone. Consider this... cheap, fast rail for Mavericks and Thunder fans! The fans alone, for a cheap fare, would pack those local venues every time the two teams faced each other!! Throw in the Spurs... THE COLLEGE GAMES!!!! You have a bonanza staring you in the face... and if you need help with concepts and marketing, feel free to draft me into your organization. I believe this could be one of the most incredible opportunities for these two states, and the local economies. Consider this as well... instead of driving in for the Red River Rivalry, folks take the rail... they use local cabs, shuttles or car rentals for their stay, because the rail was fast and cheap, and they saved the wear and tear on their own vehicle (which may not have made the trip anyway). The positives are endless. Maybe I need to market this idea to other states too!</p>	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
McGee	Jessica	I think the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail is a great idea! I would love to be able to have the option of not driving these long distances with the increase of oil tanker trucks invading Hwy 35. My vote is YES!!!	support
McGlasson	Elizabeth	Rail is good. Let's invest in our future.	support
McIntyre	Kellen	I am in full support of all proposed additional commuter rail throughout Texas. Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands on more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways. Rail makes sound environmental sense. Trains keep cars off the road and reduce the number of short-distance airplane trips. Trains are more efficient, too, since the overall energy consumption per passenger is nearly half that of planes or cars.	local and regional economy
McKaskle	Emily	I would love to see a high speed rail between Oklahoma and south Texas. I personally would use this service for much of my travel around the state in the place of my current travel by plane and automobile.	Travel options
McKenzie	John	I hope the TX-OK rail study moves ahead with the OK City to The Rio Grande Valley service. I am from Kingsville. I remember the days when there was passenger service to Laredo/Corpus Christi/ the Rio Grande Valley. The service to Corpus Christi from San Antonio ended in 1962. The service to the Rio Grande Valley ended in April 1966. This was a big loss to the area. People rode the train but the Missouri Pacific wanted out of the passenger business. I do know that the track to the Rio Grande Valley is in good condition. People in this area really want passenger train service.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		The train to the Valley ran from Brownsville- Houston. The train had plenty of riders. It also carried mail. Getting a mail contract should be something to consider when this service comes about since that would be a good source of revenue. I wish this project all the best. We need passenger service.	
McKim	Mark	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	energy
McKinney	Daphne	A TX-OK Passenger Rail is a wonderful idea. People here in Laredo talk about the lack of available transportation to other cities. Our airport is so small that direct flights only go to a couple of cities. If a rail was to be built, both residents and visitors would have easier and more affordable access in and out of Laredo.	Travel options
McKinney	Daphne	Working in the entertainment industry, this means that more business could potentially come here. Not to mention, travel on IH-35 can be awful. There are so many semi-trucks on that highway that not only is safety and issue, but congestion is almost always a result. Also, driving to Corpus Christi is mostly single-lane. People drive onto the shoulder to let people pass. Driving at night is especially unsafe because of all of the passing.	local and regional economy
McManus	Sid	I support the development of high speed rail in Texas. With a continued growing population alternative transportation to cars and planes is vital part of keeping Texas	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		strong economically and environmentally.	
McMurtrey	Michael	<p>I strongly support the development of high-speed passenger rail in Texas for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. 2. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. 3. South Texas has no passenger rail service. 4. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers 5. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports, and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. 6. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	energy
McPhail	Michael	<p>I strongly support creating high speed passenger rail between Dallas-Fort Worth and San Antonio. As someone who has to travel from Irving to Austin semi-frequently I know first-hand the deplorable condition IH-35 is in. It's guaranteed to get worse as time goes on and more and more people move to Texas, as is the air pollution in North Texas. It seems half the children in North Texas have asthma because of the smog caused by car exhaust. The terrible wrecks on our traffic snarled highways just seem to get worse and worse due to traffic. We must get more travelers off the road and onto the rails.</p>	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
McPhail	Michael	Air travel is handy but expensive and not as widely available to all Texans as one would hope. Improving existing freight rail lines to maximize the effectiveness and attractiveness of current passenger rail service would create some benefit, true, but it would not be enough to improve travel conditions on that heavily traveled stretch of road enough.	Travel options
McPhail	Michael	The state's research shows there is a market for high speed rail in that area. Therefore a high speed rail line between Dallas-Fort Worth and San Antonio makes the most sense. Currently there is not enough travel demand to justify the expense of extending high speed rail service north of Dallas-Fort Worth to Oklahoma City or south of San Antonio to the Mexico border (or even as far away as Monterrey) according to the state's research according to the state's research. The state should work with other governmental entities, though, to re-engineer and update the existing rail lines servicing these communities to maximize the speed of passenger rail service.	Routes
Meador	Nancy	How will this work if the rail lines are controlled by the freight lines? I know for a fact that Amtrak is expected to get off on a side line when there is a freight train coming through, so how will that affect the speed rail? Or are you considering a separate rail lines to be laid exclusive for the speed rail only? If that were the case, then there are environmental issues to consider, human and natural....	Freight
Medina	Gracie	I am interested in the potential of the rail system aiding our employees with commuting options in support of the Public Transportation Incentive Program. We have employees assigned throughout several areas (Laredo, Cotulla, Hebbronville, Freer, Zapata) that currently reside outside of their duty station, therefore, commute every day. I would like information regarding the proposed route, stopping points, hours of operation, etc. I would also like to know what would be the fare charge per	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		rider to determine if this would be an alternative for our employees to use for their commute. I am the Director of Security, Policy and Compliance with the office of Border Patrol of the Laredo Sector. I am very interested in seeking options for our employees to alleviate their commute and associated costs. I look forward to speaking to someone and interested in attending future meetings.	
Medina	Mike	There is a need to move many workers to the Eagle Ford areas. from larger cities around Cotulla.	support
Mein	Joen	Do we really want to continue building roads all over this state/planet! Everything has a limit before systems begin to break down and all life suffers when this happens. High speed rail (as in Europe) is clean, safe, enjoyable, efficient, and a pleasure--I know this from personal use. We should understand by now that we can never build enough roads and freeways and why would we want to? Overbuilding of highways, roads, flyovers, etc., divides cities and towns, breaks up neighborhoods, ruins green areas, always being repaired, made larger and larger, and allows drivers to pretty much drive as fast as they please. Too many lives are lost. Period. Let us begin to save land, build fast speed trains, reduce madness on the roads, save lives, and enjoy the scenery and relax with a good book, take a nap, and have a coffee or a good conversation.	Travel options
Melcer	Scott	Light rail is the most effective way to reduce traffic, pollution, and dependence on foreign oil.	congestion
Melchor	Antonio	My idea for this plan would be for my son and his daughter to come to San Antonio via rail, this would only require about a two hour drive from Wichita KS to Oklahoma city OK. After that they could do long term parking and travel in Comfort to Texas	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and arrive safely and not totally exhausted, and save the air from emissions and save cash.	
Meyer	Wendy	I would love it if we could get to Austin, Houston and San Antonio by high speed rail! Planes use up too much fuel and are so uncomfortable any more, and driving on I 35 is way overrated. I used to live in Germany and I miss having a train system that can get you anywhere faster than driving and with a lot less stress.	travel options
Meyers	Beth	While I admit that I am not updated on all the details of the proposed study, my concerns are how it affects the human environment as well as the animal environment. As always, there is a balance and every time we move into new areas, we are flushing out the wildlife that thrives without us. Already we are seeing the results of overdevelopment as the animals scurry for new resources to survive - coming into urban areas. Adding the railway also means that there will be development along the route, particularly around the proposed stops. Also I have concerns on how much more concrete we are adding and how much land we are taking up. I lived in the northeast and rode the subways of New York for many years. It hugely decreased the need for cars, which is something that the DFW area needs to figure out how to do.	natural environment
Miciano	Jaquelyn	The passenger rail is an excellent proposal for the State of Texas. Moving around Texas is difficult without private transportation. Most citizens posses their own vehicles to get to one point to another. The implementation of a railroad system will as well as result to rerouting bus line routes within a city. With the increasing price of gasoline, it is more than likely that the people will choose the option of public transportation thus reducing the fossil fuel consumption from individual vehicles. Having an environment friendly train is also a deep concern within the country. Although the state is rich in crude oil, it is equally important to take into consideration	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the environmental effects of this proposal.	
Miciano	Jaquelyn	Aside from everything else, I personally would rather take the train to Dallas for \$100 than an air flight that costs \$700 which I find ridiculous.	affordability
Miller	Karen	<p>Here are the pros to having a passenger railway system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. I am concerned about the preservation or devastation of the environment and its inhabitants(human and otherwise) along any proposed routes. 	travel options
Mills	Anita	High speed rail in Texas is an opportunity that is late in coming! It has the potential not only to reduce auto-based pollution, but also to unclog freeways and thus contribute to improved healthful conditions for all of us. This needs to be pursued!	congestion
Mistry	Shilpa	Having ridden high speed trains around parts of Europe, I found them to be very efficient methods to travel moderate distances without the hassle of driving. This could also be a more affordable method for many people to travel without the inconvenience of airports and expenses of flying. Also, there is the consideration of the effect of removing cars from the road and therefore eliminating the release of	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		some of the greenhouse gas emissions in our state. With the increasing emphasis on climate change, and the continuing push to go green, a high speed train to ease travel through the biggest heavily populated state makes more than enough sense.	
Mock	Marilyn	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Moen	Robert	I represent All Aboard Minnesota, a new grassroots group forming here to promote intercity train development. We feel that a conventional speed passenger train route from Minneapolis-Des Moines-Kansas City-Wichita-Oklahoma City-Dallas/Fort Worth-that splits to serve both San Antonio/Austin and Houston is an important missing link in the national train network. There was such a train in the 1960's called the Twin Star Rocket and it was a 12-15 car train that handled substantial business between the Lone Star state and the North Star state, thus the name. We believe that had this train survived into the Amtrak era and been combined with the Amtrak Texas Chief train (operated until 1979) it would still be busy and operating today. The Texas Chief was discontinued for political reasons, not lack of traffic. The traffic on Interstate 35 which parallels this route demonstrates the demand for such service. Such a train would link more city pairs by combining the Minneapolis-Kansas City corridor with the Kansas City-Dallas/Fort Worth corridor along with the Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio and Houston corridors. It would get higher ridership and gain economies of scale that would ultimately cost the involved states less than if these	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		corridors were operated separately. Such a train should have companion service that operates on a 12 hour opposite schedule so that Oklahoma would have both daytime and nighttime service. (The nighttime schedule is necessary to connect with the Amtrak east/west transcontinental trains). We urge Oklahoma and Texas to keep such a service in mind as they make plans for passenger rail expansion.	
Monaghan	Bernadette	Let's join the new century and upgrade the TX transportation system.	support
Mongere	Anne	I certainly would like high speed rail service to be built in Texas.	support
Mongold	Geraldine	I totally support the expansion of rail service in Texas. As a life-long Texas resident, I have watched the building of more and larger highways which serve only to enable more pollution and more vehicular traffic while reducing the livability of our towns and cities. I work as a consultant and many of my colleagues travel extensively between Texas cities for work. Expanded rail service would enable business and leisure travel without a negative impact on our air and the natural beauty of Texas.	congestion
Moon	Carolyn	I would be delighted to have passenger rail available from Corpus Christi to the Valley and North Texas and would be happy to use it.	Support
MORALES	JOEL	I believe the rail corridor that would extend into deep south Texas, specifically Cameron County would have a positive impact on the region. The reduced auto and bus traffic would improve the air quality as this area continues to grow. With the alternate transportation traffic accidents would likely decrease as well. The economic impact would also be felt along the route as well.	Travel options
Morales	Marisa	The best way to travel around a nation should be by train, like in Europe.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Moran	Theresa	I support this rail--my son lives in Dallas so it we would both use this rather than drive or fly. Great idea! Thank You	Support
Morgan	Samantha	I support the proposed Oklahoma-Texas high-speed Passenger Rail that would include a route from Corpus Christi to San Antonio. A route to Houston would be good to consider if that were possible as well. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service.	Routes
Morgan	Samantha	Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. On my last trip out of town me and my family saw an accident scene where the car was literally not even a car or truck frame anymore, just completely mangled, burnt-up pieces of metal being loaded onto a flatbed. Also witnessed numerous people with TVs in the front seat, cell phones in front of face, while going 75 and above on the highway. Ridiculous and scary. Takes the fun out of driving these days. Rail would be an option that I have never experienced and would reduce traffic and risk of accidents like that, and accidents waiting to happen.	safety
Morris	Micky	I have checked all of the "all that apply" because encouraging and mandating expanded fast rail service would benefit the people of Texas throughout the spectrum of life. It is time to "return to the future" in Texas. Texas regulatory services and the Legislature should think about positive methods and effects in the future and quit kowtowing to special interests that only want to maintain the status quo. The status quo is not working, and will only be exponentially damaging to the state and its	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		citizens in the future. Fast rail is a tremendously positive method of transportation for the future.	
Morris	Jody	I believe rail travel is much more safe and effective with less pollution.	safety
Morrison	wesley	I would love to see a high speed rail service between South Texas and Oklahoma. I 35 is so crowded and it would be a great alternative to driving on an overcrowded highway.	congestion
Morrow	Karl-Heinz	We need to have better public transportation in Texas. Let's move forward with high speed rails and other train transportation services.	Travel options
Muchler	Gloria	I believe in doing all we can to have better communication, contact and transportation with all of the States. but, am wondering about the Environmental Impact of this interstate rail. I hope and pray we can make it environmentally friendly for man and beasts and flora and fauna. Thanks for your invitation to ask a question.	natural environment
Mueller	Joseph P	Rail will reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and accommodate travelers.	congestion
Mulholland	JoAnn	This is needed and has been needed for decades. It will help people of all incomes.	Travel options
Mulholland	JoAnn	Don't take people's land if they don't want to sell. I hate this "right of domain" nonsense. Texas has plenty of land to accomplish this. Attention to the environment is important. Work with the Sierra club and other environmental organizations to achieve this,	Impacts
Munoz	Tara	We would love to see more passenger rail in Central Texas, esp. high speed. Traffic is a huge issue here and alleviating traffic by having more people travel rail would be a	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		much appreciated thing!	
Murry	Bob	Please give us fast trains. This will be great.	support
Muschenheim	Steve	I am for the passenger rail service connecting San Antonio, South Texas and Dallas. It would be a boon for our area especially on South Padre Island.	Support
Navarro	Martha S.	I think it is a terrific idea to have a passenger train. It will provide additional needed transportation to our community. My childhood home was next to the railroad tracks and although it was noisy at times, I loved it. From the train itself to the conductor and when it would be stopped to be inspected, the sight was spectacular to a 7 year old. Passing by the old train station just blew up my imagination. I hope a passenger train makes its way to Laredo so children can have the opportunity to not only see a timeless beauty but ride in it too. Plus it makes sense to have one since our city is lined with tracks in convenient areas.	Travel options
Nazak	Jennifer	I strongly support a high-speed passenger rail service connecting Oklahoma and South Texas. It would help air quality, reduce our use of oil, reduce traffic, and improve people's quality of life.	Natural environment
Neal-Tomlinson	Sylvia	High speed rail between South Texas and Oklahoma is a great idea and much needed!	High speed
Newcombe	Mae	Austin just needs more public transportation. It has gotten too big to sustain all the cars. Literally everyone I know complains about it. Too much traffic is one of the quickest ways to lower the quality of life.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Newman	Marcy	We are interested in the alternative locations and consideration for South Texas in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.	travel options
Newman	Kathy B.	I'm in favor of rail transportation for Texas. Here are some reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	Travel options
Nguyen	Andrew	High-speed rail between Dallas/Austin/San Antonio/Houston will vastly reduce carbon emission.	High speed
Nickels	Daniel	My wife both enjoy riding on AMTRAK. We have taken several trips over the years and would probably take more if we had local access to AMTRAK.	support
Nickels	Judy	Just want to add my comment on how WONDERFUL if we could have passenger rail come all the way from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, TX. My husband and I are great fans of Amtrak and try to take it whenever we can however, at this time we must drive to San Antonio or Houston and it would be OUTSTANDING if we could have a stop in Corpus Christi and the Valley. We shall keep our fingers crossed. Thank you for considering these routes.	support
Nieland	Thomas	Mass transit especially trains would help a lot in reducing car traffic congestion, air	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and water pollution, and fuel consumption!	
Noble	Ron	I think high speed rail between the cities mapped out would be a great help to our highway system. Many people could and would take the train if it was truly fast, and competitively priced with air travel. As it is today, a trip from San Antonio to Dallas is not just a one hour flight. You need to be to the airport at least 1.5 hours before the flight and if you check baggage you must wait 15 or 20 minutes for you bag(s). Then, if you rent a car there is time to get the rental car. In all a one hour flight to Dallas could take you 4.5 or 5 hours until you are ready to get to your destination in Dallas. Of course, if you hit rush hour, you could add another hour to your drive. If a train could go 100 MPH or even 150 MPH, then the trip would take 2 or 3 hours. If there were good reliable ground transportation in Dallas, then getting to your destination could take a total of 3 to 4 hours. Some saving in time and a lot less hassle. Think about the possibilities if the train could travel at 200 MPH.	Travel options
Nolan	Dan	More passenger rail will mean less driving and cleaner air.	congestion
Northrop	Emily	We need the rail in order to get some cars off the roads. This will make the roads safer, reduce our use of fossil fuels, and improve our environment. Thanks.	congestion
Norton	Chuck	The development of more passenger railways in Texas would be of great benefit to the people of the state and would be beneficial to the natural environment. The expansion of passenger rail service across Texas and connecting to neighboring states would give travelers an eco-friendly alternative to travel by highways,	natural environment
Norton	Chuck	reducing the traffic congestion on the roads and reducing the emission of pollutants by cars and trucks. For the elderly and disabled, rail travel is a safe and attractive option. Passenger rail service promotes economic activity, including tourism, and	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		makes the area more attractive to potential business investors.	
Novoa	Dee Ann	I totally support a rail system for Texas. I live in Laredo and would really enjoy going to SA or Austin on the rail. While there are a lot of road blocks ahead, please pursue. Thanks, Dee Ann	support
Null	Robert	As a traveling Texan, I would like to see high speed rail as a mode of transportation around this great state. As population continues to grow, roads will become increasingly more congested and with rising gas prices, more people will begin to seek faster, cheaper modes of transportation from point to point within the state and high speed rail offers that solution. I implore you to do right by Texas drivers and help improve the state's economy by expanding rail services throughout the state.	High speed
Ochoa	Victoria	HSR will bring billions of dollars into the economy. With a multiplier effect of 2.8 and the immediate 2 million jobs it would bring (not to mention the thousands of jobs that would be created as the service grew in time), it is a no-brainer for the economy. It would also bring a plethora of cars off of the road, where congestion is a pain for the economy and the environment. For the sake of the economy and environment, HSR is imperative for Texas.	local and regional economy
O'Day Laufman	Gabrielle	I have long believed that there should be a network of high speed rail service linking major cities across the country. I live in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. My son lives in Ok and my in-laws live in Houston. What a joy it would be to jump on a train and be there in 2 or 3 hours, rather than spend hours jumping through airline hoops and still arrive an hour outside of the destination city. Airline travel should be reserved for long haul trips; short trips for the car; medium distance should be for rail. What's missing in this "ideal" situation is the rail part. Count me in! It' great for the traveling	Travel times

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		public, great for the environment, and leaves the airlines for what they do best -- over 750 miles. Most people think of flying as the fastest means of transportation, like 45 minutes to Houston from DFW. That's not the way to look at it. Door-to-door is the way. With any flight you must add at least 3 and a half hours to get to the airport, check-in, security, flight delays. On the other end, you have baggage claim and then actually getting to your destination in the city. So you're actually looking at about 5 hours, all in. And at every step of the way you're needled nearly to insanity by security demands, obnoxious airline personnel, etc. I've lived in Europe where there is rail to everywhere. What a joy that would be for the U.S.	
Odom	Julie	It's time for rail, preferably high speed rail, in Texas. Our freeways cannot keep up with the number of people moving to our state and if the estimates hold true, the population explosion will continue throughout the next several decades. When I moved to Austin in 1982, I could drive to my parent's house in Oklahoma City in about six hours - weekend, weekday, holiday - it always took the same amount of time. Today, that is just not possible, especially on a Friday or a holiday. IH-35 from Round Rock to Dallas is a parking lot much of the way. What are the alternatives? Only air. With so few flights, that must be planned far in advance or the price is not affordable for the average person. Texas is so far ahead in so many areas, yet we fall far behind when it comes to transportation. It really is embarrassing the lack of progress that has been made here in Austin on the never-ending traffic problems in the last THIRTY years. Houston and Dallas have plenty of freeways... Getting around the state is another problem, and one that could be solved by rail. IH-35 is obsolete. Unless it was 8-10 lanes, it wouldn't be big enough to handle the traffic, and we all know that is not possible. We need alternatives. Alternatives other than more roads, which will only add more cars. It's time for rail.	congestion

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O'Lena	Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	Travel options
Tennyson	E.L.	With respect to your Texas - Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study, several years ago I studied this issue for the Transportation Research Board back when the Missouri-Kansas- Texas Railroad was studying electrification. I am aware that Union Pacific has bought it out and that times have changed. Southwest Airlines has grown to become the most successful airline in the United States. They blocked previous rail efforts but now see that for trips under 550 miles, rail is better than air for convenience, time and cost.	Process
Tennyson	E.L.	If this letter raises any questions in your mind, feel free to ask me about them, I am not seeking a consulting job nor do I represent any one that might benefit from this project other than the general public. We have a nephew in New Braunfels.	Question
Tennyson	E.L.	At present, air travel costs \$ 65 plus 16 cents per mile, while electric rail costs \$ 3 plus 24 cents per mile. The break-even point is 600 miles. Beyond that 88 % of the trips will prefer by air. Oklahoma City to San Antonio is 489 miles, a rail market. The urban population of this route, including Dallas, is ten million, likely to produce 13,700 daily passengers of various types. Trip makers from San Antonio to Austin and Dallas, Oklahoma City to Dallas, casual local trips from Ardmore to Waco and	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Temple to San Marcos and commuters from New Braunfels to San Antonio, Dallas to Fort Worth and Norman to Oklahoma City. It is likely that a train every two hours will be both economical and necessary with 'a. peak hour train in commuter districts. Double track will be required to 'accommodate both freight and passenger trains but where the old M-K-T right-of-way is available in the right place, freight and passenger might be separated with single track for each outside commuter districts, If a relocated freight line made sense in some districts, do it, but a whole new passenger railroad is not viable. 220 miles-an-hour speeds are more costly than air travel here, even if viable in France and Japan.	
Tennyson	E.L.	For 16 years, I contracted for the Keystone Corridor service in Pennsylvania starting from scratch with a current population of 4.2 million along I-76. Without the trains at peak hours, I-76 would be blocked by gridlock. Since I retired, the Keystone Corridor has been upgraded to 110 miles per hour. That may be the most economical speed for your Texas - Oklahoma corridor. A trip from San Antonio to Oklahoma City would take 7.5 hours making all stops. Non-stop service is for the air lines. Trains might leave San Antonio at 6:am, 8, 10, noon, 2:pm, 4, 6 and 8:pm to Austin only, plus a commuter train at 5:pm to Austin. The present Amtrak service takes 14.5 hours with a layover in Fort Worth. Not good, only 34 miles per hour.	Transit Options
Tennyson	E.L.	For speed with economy you will need multiple-unit electric trains capable of towing a dining car. They. cost about \$ 390 per car hour compared to \$450 per hour for diesel operation, and are 12% faster with the same track and stations. For lighter travel-hours, shorter trains are economical this way. I believe you will have to incorporate Trinity Railway Express into this-operation. It is physically present. It can be a separate division. It would benefit greatly from electrification.. For example, electric railcars will draw 240 kilowatt-hours per car-hour = \$ 33.60 so with 50 passengers per	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		car with 83 seats, the cost of power is only 1. cent per passenger-mile at 66 miles per hour average speed including stops. A diesel propelled car needs 0.4 gallons per mile so at 58 miles per hour will cost 3 cents per passenger-mile 180 % more than electric. For a time, the Keystone Corridor was downgraded to diesel operation so ridership fell 40 %because of the slower speed and less frequent operation with locomotive hauled trains, The electric trains are also locomotive hauled now, with costly penalties but the riders have come back.	
Tennyson	E.L.	At 66 miles per hour average, with an average of 50 passengers per 83-seat car, it will cost \$ 5.91 per car-mile and 12 cents per passenger-mile with fares of perhaps \$ 3 per boarding plus 19 cents per mile, with a discount on the \$ 3 for commuters who do not buy a ticket every trip. They buy ten-trip or monthly tickets. The profit will go a long way to funding the investment, but not all the way. With perhaps 625 million annual passenger-miles, a profit of \$ 43,750,000 per year will fund \$ 650 million of bonds to help with construction. Taking 625 million annual passenger-miles off the highway will save about five lives a year plus \$ 100 million per year on motor fuel that could support another \$ 1.5 billion of bonds. Prudent electrification may require an investment of roughly \$ 1.6 million per mile of track.	Cost
Tennyson	E.L.	Urban property values near stations will likely rise considerably, greatly benefitting local communities. Airports will not suffer as population growth will keep them busy. They will save on costly expansion for their least profitable trips.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Tennyson	E.L.	Trinity Railway Express needs an hour and 5 minutes to make its Dallas to Fort Worth trips. With electric multiple unit cars, they should make it in 45 minutes. That will cut their hourly cost and the number of hours while increasing their patronage and revenue. I made the schedules on the Keystone Corridor, so I know what can be	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		done actually. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District also operates this type of service, confirming the results.	
Tennyson	E.L.	Try for a cost plus fixed fee consultant. Beware of consultants who will try to sell you far more than you need. They hope for 12 % of the project cost as their fee, so will grossly overload you with bells and whistles. So will Union Pacific but their management is vastly improved now. If you bargain shrewdly and honestly with them, you should get equity if they also benefit in some way.	Cost
Tennyson	E.L.	Amtrak's Texas Eagle has been well promoted by local interests and has grown well but this project will impact the Texas Eagle. You have two choices. Terminate the Eagle at Dallas, or buy three electric locomotives to use to move The Eagle from Dallas to San Antonio. It will have to skip a couple of your minor stations to stay on time.	Routes
Olivarez	Tania	Totally needed due to economic and environmental concerns! South Texas is poor and many don't own a car; and for the ones that own a car it will reduce traffic and, more importantly, gas expenses which will therefore reduce pollution!! It will just make a better world!	Travel options
Oliver	RJ	High speed rail is the only way to help alleviate the congestive traffic on Texas Highways and is a much more economical and environmentally sound way of moving people and goods through Texas. It will also help remove the brown clouds that envelope our major cities like Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Austin. It 's time the Texas Transportation Department stops supporting Big Oil and starts supporting the people of this state by encouraging clean, efficient high speed rail.	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Oliver	Lauren	I would support any measures to expand rail service from Oklahoma to South Texas that would alleviate car travel and road congestion. We need more public transportation options, both within and between cities to support population growth in Texas and to continue to safeguard and improve air quality. Thank you.	congestion
Osborn	Gloria	We need to get more cars off the roads.	congestion
Osborne	David	I HIGHLY support high speed rail. It would benefit all citizens in so many ways. Even those that do not ride will benefit greatly. Please, please move forward with this project as quickly as possible.	Support
Osten	John	I believe this rail line could be a good alternative for the IH-35 corridor auto/truck congestion and important economic development tool/opportunity if (and this is a big if) it goes through urban areas and their centers. Also, is it going to complement the Austin-San Antonio Commuter Rail or is it going to be located on a completely different route? Respectfully, John Osten San Antonio Resident	congestion
Ostrower	Victor	This questionnaire seems poorly conceived. It's unclear what you want. Effective mass transport is highly desirable, but it isn't worth much if not used. High speed rail is a great concept, but will it be used. It will require easy, convenient, and economical access at origins and destinations. I'm not sure how likely that will be despite its desirability. Good luck	Connectivity
Pace	Edgar and Cinda	These comments relate to just about all of the topics above. Rail service between the major Texas-Oklahoma cities would relieve traffic congestion on highways, reduce pollution from cars meaning less noise and cleaner air. Please start; building more rail service in Texas.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pancake	Amy	The U.S. needs more public transportation and rail is one important means of that. We must start to address with seriousness the environmental decline of the country and the world.	Support
Pantoja	Felipe	Howdy! On the alternatives to transportation, the railway from South Texas to Oklahoma sounds like a great choice! However, a few questions arise. How is this going to affect our household economy? What funds are going to be used to make this project a reality? Is the foreign (Mexican citizens, primarily) population going to be a major source of revenue for this project-a great amount of Mexican citizens not only use our current highways for pleasure but also for business-?	funding
Parchman	Laura	I hope this becomes a reality because I have been hoping for this since 2005 when I came back to Texas from Japan, where rail travel between cities is the norm. Please, please, please, make this a reality!	support
Paredes Jr	Pedro	My comment regarding the new Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study: There is an area that is south a short distance from the Tourist Rest stop on IH35 where it connects with US83. It is next to the railroad lines where a terminal could be developed close to the trucking centers providing access to tractor trailer traffic and transfer of people going back and forth. I recently read that our country does not have this type of transportation yet. It would be great in many ways to have such a system here, setting the stage for the rest of the country to follow.	support
Paris	Brian	I think it's time Texas adds high speed rail! I travel the state for work and it's impossible to navigate IH-35 between Hillsboro and San Antonio without massive delays and several accidents. Please add me to the mailing list.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Parker	Darel	The idea that Texas doesn't already have an established passenger rail system between South Texas and the rest of the state seems ridiculous if not downright regressive. The most vocal opposition to a passenger rail system seem to be focused on the cost of such a project. I would remind those voices that roads and highways cost money also. We continue to throw tax dollars at new construction, wider highways, and toll roads, none of which solve the actual problem: There are too many automobiles on the road. Now imagine Austin or San Antonio or San Marcos without the additional traffic created by visitors from the Rio Grande Valley or shoppers from Mexico. Give these travelers an option that doesn't involve spending five hours packed tightly into a car or bus, or the expense of air travel, and they will use it. Does it completely solve the problem? No. But it's better than funneling an ever increasing amount of traffic into cities and communities that are already burdened beyond the limits of their infrastructure. Modern passenger rail is something Texas should have committed to a decade ago. Let's not waste another decade wondering what to do with all this traffic. The time is now.	congestion
Parker-Boyd	Jacqueline	This would be a great contribution to alternative travel options. This would help consumers save money on travel expenses, with more rail and route options. Air travel could be reduced for individuals who travel between cities for business. Less traffic could equal faster turn-arounds on roadway maintenance and improvements. Job creation. Less harmful amount of emissions introduced into the environment than planes and cars.	travel options
Parrish	Mary	It's rather sad that a state nearly the size of Europe doesn't have a comparable railway system. As a person who lived overseas, I believe the time is now for Texas to have a high speed railway system. This will not only make traveling easier, more affordable, safer and more enjoyable, but will greatly advance this mighty state's infrastructure.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Besides, we don't want to be outdone by France, do we?	
Partin	Amy	Having a train that travels from north Texas to south Texas would be better on our pocket books as well as the environment. People would be driving less. I would be more willing to travel if I had the option of taking a train.	affordability
Patel	Rajni	We need to have few cars on the road as we are adding so much pollution. Also Railway is much safer for transportation, more economical too.	congestion
Patterson	Patience	It is critical that the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, along with the Native American Graves Protection Act are all strictly adhered to and that all processes should afford the public a chance to comment through those processes.	Process
Paul	Wendy	Rail is great because it puts less automobiles on the road leading to less carbon monoxide omissions. Then ALL of us can breathe!	Air quality
Peace	Annalisa	I strongly support passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City for the following reasons: Trains keep more cars off the road. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. As one who frequently travels to Austin for business, I would welcome the option to travel by rail rather than drive the nightmare that is IH 35. Thank you, Annalisa Peace	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Peace	Jimmy	We need alternatives to cars and planes.	Support
Pearce	Wanda	This would be great for us.	Support
Pearson	Kiesha	I fully support the addition of high speed rail service in Texas. It will offer safer travel alternatives, provide more jobs and reduce air quality issues. Please drive this issue for continued support.	Travel options
Pedroza	Noemi	Passenger trains great idea.	Support
Pena	Michael	I feel like having a passenger train go through Laredo would be a great idea. It would boost up the economy as well and tourism here, which is what Laredo really needs. With Laredo growing at the rate it is, this would at the best interest of the city and our community. Many people do not have the means of transportation and this would be perfect.	local and regional economy
Pena	Mark S.	As a lifelong Texan and resident of the Rio Grande Valley, I believe it is truly unfortunate that high-speed rail service is not an alternative form of transportation in Texas. Apart from being safer, more sustainable and environmentally sensitive, high speed rail would better connect metropolitan centers and promote greater economic vibrancy for our state. My family and I would use and prefer high-speed rail service if it were available, and we hope Texas will continue to lead the nation and make high-speed rail a top priority for our state.	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pena Garza	Sophia	A passenger rail to south Texas (specifically to the Rio Grande Valley--McAllen area) would be wonderful. Due to my health issues I am not able to easily drive myself to the San Antonio and Austin areas. I would also love to be able to travel north to Oklahoma where my mother is originally from. Being able to travel without concentrating on driving would allow me and my family to see more of the state and country and be very fun and exciting. I am also happy that passenger rail travel is better for the environment than car or air travel. A passenger rail to south Texas would be wonderful. Please create it!	Support
Pennington	Ann	High speed rail is an attractive alternative to travel by car or plane for relatively short distances. For me, it is more comfortable and less tiring than either car or plane travel, considering the travel time involved.	Benefits of train travel
Perales	David P.	This rail way would be a good alternative for the present method of travel currently available. It could be highly use to get from the southern part of Texas to other cities. Not only for business but for pleasure, as in other events such as Sporting events. I just think that a lot of people would benefit from having that go through our area.	Travel options
Percival	Kristina Leigh	Grand Prairie is in both Tarrant and Dallas, it really has no public transportation. How will this Texas/Oklahoma rail system benefit us?	Question
Perlaky	Daniel	Rail has been proven numerous times as a better alternative to planes and I'd like to see more access to rail lines and inter-city connections.	Travel options
Peters	Nancy	I would like to see a fast rail from OKC to Texas for myself and for our disabled individuals and elderly who would benefit from this.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pettit	Mary	We need better transportation systems in Texas. Trains would be ideal. They would save resources and time for many of us.	Travel options
Phillips	Pamela	Texas needs more rail service. I would love to go to Austin, Houston, etc. on the train. I could get to the airport faster and safer and it would make a big difference in my life. I would think rail would promote more jobs...think Taxis and addition Van companies and would also lead to better transportation in Texas over all...High speed rail is a Good idea!	Support
Picha	Jonathan	I feel that high speed rail is important along with local forms of public transportation that is reliable and efficient. High speed rail also needs to stay away from environmental sensitive areas and not encroach upon protected areas or disturb natural environments by laying track and bisecting natural habitats.	Support
Piper	Victoria	Would love to see high speed rail connect the state!	Support
Piraro	Kaitlin	I would absolutely love to have more passenger rail in Texas. My mom lives in Dallas and I have more family in Tulsa and it would be great to avoid driving several hours to visit them. Having more rail would decrease emissions caused by extra cars on the road or short plane trips between cities and make holiday travel a much more enjoyable and less environmentally-taxing experience. I take the bus to school every day and walk as much as possible. I'm always looking for more ways to cut my carbon footprint and having more rail would be a great way to continue that.	Travel options
Plasencia	Cathy	I care about air quality, reducing use of oil, and having more transportation choices. I would like to see rail services increased for higher speed passenger trains for Texas. I support this initiative for all of the reasons listed below. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. sincerely, Cathy Plasencia	
Plate	Linda	Will the new service involve laying new tracks possibly impacting wildlife and streams? Will an environmental impact study be performed by and independent company?	Natural environment
Portele	Catherine	I think high speed rail is very important so as to provide more options for travel, but I also consider getting more cars off the roads to be part of my support for high speed rail.	Travel options
Porter	John	I believe a high speed rail service would be invaluable to Texas and its citizens.	Support
Pottin	Sandra	This new way to travel would bring more tourism here to Laredo and surrounding areas which would also boost the economy here in south Texas so maybe this economic downturn we are all facing might impact us for a positive output and will also bring in more jobs so I think it's a great idea to bring in a new way to travel and attract tourism here to south Texas	local and regional economy
Potts	Emily	I think that high speed rail is the direction that we need to be moving in. While this will not solve all of our traffic and environmental problems, I believe it is one of many solutions to alleviate traffic, improve air quality and encourage better stewardship of our natural resources.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Powers	J	I SUPPORT THE HIGH SPEED RAIL BETWEEN OKLAHOMA CITY AND SOUTH TEXAS! THIS WOULD REDUCE TRAFFIC ON OUR ALREADY CONGESTED HIGHWAYS. HOPEFULLY IT WOULD AVOID AWARDED MORE CONTRACTS TO FOREIGN AND OUT-OF- TEXAS CONTRACTORS FOR MORE ROADS. IT WOULD REDUCE AIR POLLUTION BY LOWERING THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES ON OUR ROADS, REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF FUEL PER-PERSON TO TRAVEL THE SAME ROUTE AND INCREASE THE SAFETY OF TRAVELERS. THE NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATING IN PAST YEARS WITH HEAVY TRAFFIC RESULTING IN INCREASED TRAVEL TIMES AND HIGHWAY SHUTDOWNS. MANY PEOPLE THAT WOULD NOT HAVE CHOSEN MASS TRANSIT IN THE PAST WOULD NOW BE RECEPTIVE BECAUSE OF THE TRAFFIC AND INCREASED FUEL COSTS.	congestion
Prather	Steve	A review of the literature supports the feasibility of passenger rail in the IH-35 corridor. It has been one of the most studied transportation issues in the U.S. Previous attempts to implement high speed rail in Texas failed primarily due to lobbying by Southwest Airlines.	Support
Pratt	Byron	I'm 58. I remember fondly of riding the train. It seemed way cooler than the auto and who in the hell could afford the airplane:) Sure, the railroads were built by megalomaniacal idiots who did not know what the 'f' they were doing (other than making money), but even given that, the railroads more or less worked well Eventually. We need to bring them back. I'll leave you with this: The City of New Orleans by Steve Goodman Riding on the City of New Orleans, Illinois Central Monday morning rail Fifteen cars and fifteen restless riders, Three conductors and twenty-five sacks of mail. All along the southbound odyssey The train pulls out at	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>Kankakee Rolls along past houses, farms and fields. Passin' trains that have no names, Freight yards full of old black men And the graveyards of the rusted automobiles.</p> <p>CHORUS: Good morning America how are you? Don't you know me I'm your native son, I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans, I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done. Dealin' card games with the old men in the club car. Penny a point ain't no one keepin' score. Pass the paper bag that holds the bottle Feel the wheels rumblin' 'neath the floor. And the sons of pullman porters And the sons of engineers Ride their father's magic carpets made of steel. Mothers with their babes asleep, Are rockin' to the gentle beat And the rhythm of the rails is all they feel.</p> <p>CHORUS Nighttime on The City of New Orleans, Changing cars in Memphis, Tennessee. Half way home, we'll be there by morning Through the Mississippi darkness Rolling down to the sea. And all the towns and people seem To fade into a bad dream And the steel rails still ain't heard the news. The conductor sings his song again, The passengers will please refrain This train's got the disappearing railroad blues. Good night, America, how are you? Don't you know me I'm your native son, I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans, I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done. ©1970, 1971 EMI U Catalogue, Inc and Turnpike Tom Music (ASCAP)</p>	
Jara	Jose Alfredo	<p>Le comento que estaria muy bien que se realizara el transporte de el tren ya que tendria buen beneficio tanto ambiental como en lo economico para las familias. Veo que un gran numero de jovenes universitarios acuden a universidades como UTSA, UT, etc. y son de las areas que tienen en proyecto hacer la ruta de el tren, por lo tanto estas familias se estarian tambien beneficiando en lo economico para visitar a sus hijos y viceversa. Que mas beneficios traeria este proyecto de el tren? Estoy a favor. Gracias.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Presley	Brenda	I am in favor of high speed trains in Texas to help reduce congestion on freeways and give people alternatives for travel.	Congestion
Preston	R.	All of the above apply but also, I would like to be able to get to attractions in large cities without having to drive in the traffic, getting lost, having to drive in unfamiliar areas and driving after dark.	Travel options
Price	Karen	I am in favor of extending rail service in Texas. Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail has been very successful. Extension would benefit Texas economically, environmentally, and quality of life by reducing the cost of building more highways, high energy costs, vehicle exhaust, and crowding and maddening traffic jams.	local and regional economy
Price	J. R.	I am in favor of more intercity trains (Amtrak or private railroads) and transit rail because of a concern about traffic and air quality. Building more highways, or spending billions of dollars and years of hassle widening present interstate and state highways, does not assist this country in lessening the demand for fossil fuels. Building highways has a huge negative impact on the quality of air in urban areas. Also, travel by rail is certainly less stressful than travel by air, which impacts our quality of life. This is what I would like to see in Texas: (1) More frequency of Amtrak trains on existing routes, and improved speeds. We do not necessarily need high speed trains initially, if we could have trains that average 60-70 mph to be more competitive with our individual cars. One train a day in each direction is not necessarily convenient. A morning departure to OKC from FTW would help tremendously. Trains running between Marshall and San Antonio several times a day on existing tracks would attract riders doing business at all the cities along the Eagle route. Also, creating routes that include Waco, instead of McGregor would make more sense economically. (2) Additional routes between SAT-HOU-DAL-FTW (the	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Texas Triangle) with stations at airports at SAT, IAH, DAL, and DFW. (3) New routes from Fort Worth to El Paso and Fort Worth to Amarillo through Lubbock. (4) Extend the Texas Eagle route to Corpus Christi and the Valley. For the area: (5) Extend passenger rail from OKC to Tulsa and onto Kansas City. (6) Extend a route from FTW to LBB to AMA to Denver so people could go to Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco by way of the California Zephyr. Business travelers would not travel between DFW and DEN most likely, but many leisure travelers would, if they could. Efficiency in air travel would improve if more people could ride trains between the short markets (DFW to AUS or SAT, or DFW to IAH) to catch airplanes to cities that are 750 miles or more away from each other.	
Pritchard	Holly	We need high speed rail in Texas. The population continues to explode here, and I can personally attest to the need to alleviate traffic congestion in Austin, San Antonio, San Marcos and the entire IH35 corridor! Additionally, the air quality in Texas is some of the worst in the nation. I would be proud of my chosen state if it became a leader in progressive energy and transportation solutions. It would also be extremely awesome to be able to get to Houston, Dallas, etc. in half the time it takes or less to drive there by car.	congestion
Prodger	Diane	Passenger rail travel is a much used transport system in most of Europe and there is no reason why it should not work here as well. It is "smart" because it is far safer than traveling by car, creates less air pollution by reducing the number of cars and planes needed, lessens road congestion and provides valuable time to passengers during their journey. As someone who has travelled many times by train in the UK, France and Argentina, I have found that there is something very convenient and very relaxing about this form of transport.	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pueblitz	Paula	I believe that the rail system is a great idea. I would personally use it. I have family in Northeast Texas and in Brownsville. I hope that this railway system comes to light.	Support
Pyle	Lacey	More high speed rail in Texas would be great for the economy. People would take pleasure trips more often, and business trips would be less costly for companies. Also, being stuck in traffic, especially in between Austin and anywhere else, is really bad for your health and peace of mind - with a train, you don't have to worry about anything while drivers are under stress the entire drive. Don't forget the chance of a crash in a car, that's still the biggest killer in the US and train crashes are far less likely. And of course air quality and the environment - Texas has both a lot of people and big open spaces - more rail and less cars would be the best solution for continued coexistence.	local and regional economy
Quereau	Tobin	For many reasons I support the development of better high speed passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City. The reduction in traffic on IH 35, the reduction in energy use to transport passengers along this route, the increase in air quality, and the provision of options for travel all contribute to the potential value of this project.	congestion
Quigley	Keith	Glad to see we are considering extended rail into south Texas. All in favor of more rail travel. Thanks	Support
Quintanilla	Estela	Just this year a toll road between Lockhart and Austin was built with a speed limit of 85 miles an hour. There have been several accidents involving wildlife crossing the road, particularly during the night. How safe will this high speed train be if wildlife will also be crossing those tracks? The impact on both human lives and wildlife may be major. Also, if we travel by train to other major cities, will there be rental car	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		agencies and taxi service nearby once travelers get to their destinations? Many of us travel to see doctors, for entertainment or to the airports since we only have two airlines servicing Laredo. Southwest Airlines services Corpus, and McAllen but Laredo has been bypassed by the airline with the cheapest fares.	
Quiter	Michelle	I am in favor of the train from San Antonio to Oklahoma. My suggestion would be to have at least four times per day to go either north or south. I would try Amtrak if there was a more convenient schedule. Thank you.	Support
RAGHAVAN	SRINI	I think that a high speed rail between Oklahoma and south Texas would be GREAT!! If I had an option today to take a high speed train from Dallas to Austin/San Antonio and Houston, I will immediately do it! I see the following advantages for commuters on high speed rail: - Stress Free Travel (No traffic jams, congestion) - Safe (Reduces traffic could mean less accidents) - Less Pollution (Less cars = less pollution) - Cost Effective (more competition to airlines) - Work while you travel (with high speed internet on trains, that would be great!!) Thank you! Srin	Benefits of train travel
Rambow	Rosemary	Rail is good for Texas. Less automobile traffic and faster. Cleaner air as a result.	congestion
Ramo-Gechter	Suzanne	High-speed Rail in South Texas would be such a boon to our community! Laredo is already a large inland port, and we see a lot of tourist traffic from Mexico. I can imagine that high-speed rail would bring even more of that tourist trade farther north, benefiting the economies of all of South and Central Texas. For my own part, a high-speed rail system would have been of huge benefit to me this year as I went back to school in Austin, but needed to keep my two jobs in Laredo. Being able to take the train back and forth would have been a time saver and aided me in my studies (since I could have studied during my commute). Judging from comments I have received	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		from parents whose children attend college in San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas - all along the IH-35 corridor, really - they too would make use of the rail system. Because Laredo is more than 2 hours from the nearest larger city, having high-speed rail would make it much easier for people here to get to medical professionals they currently have to drive long hours to reach, cultural events in San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas, as well as shopping, day trips, and visiting family and friends in this great (but very large!!) state! In short, I am highly in favor of high-speed rail in South Texas, and I urge you to make Laredo the "final stop." It would make a city that is currently far from everything, much more accessible, and it would make the rest of the state much much more accessible to us. Many thanks, Suzanne Ramo-Gechter	
Ramos	Miki	Texas needs more rail options. We are an expanding economy and population. A rail connecting us to Oklahoma is sensible. It will relieve congestion and will reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions and ground level ozone that is hazardous to public health.	congestion
Rand	Derrick	Adding high speed rail between the cities is an excellent alternative to the congestion problem on IH-35. I live in Dallas and every time I travel to Austin to see my family there's always a fatal accident clogging up the freeway. Every holiday there's a traffic jam sometimes all the way from Austin to Waco. Providing rail would give us a safe alternative to expensive and hassle ridden air travel! Air quality improves through reduced burning of jet fuel, safety is improved through less wrecks. How else are you going to address the problem that is IH-35 with the rate of growth expected in Texas over the next 25 years? Building more traffic lanes is not a solution!	Travel options
Rand	Audrey	Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail We've needed this for years, but I think that NOW Texans are more receptive to its idea because of the increased vehicle load on our	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		streets and highways. Passenger rail would decrease noise, poor air quality and our stress levels from fighting that bumper to bumper traffic on IH-45 and IH-35, and increase human health due to the safety factor of getting off the highway for that long trip from San Antonio to Dallas. If we don't plan now for the future, how will we manage all of these folks flocking to Texas to enjoy our wonderful state and way of life? I traveled to Japan and rode 3 different speeds of their bullet trains. Those folks have it together! Let's take their lead and give Texas drivers an alternative to being stuck in traffic on our interstate byways! Thanks for listening! Audrey Rand	
Ray	Robert	I greatly support the proposed rail service from Oklahoma City to San Antonio, for both air quality and convenience.	Air quality
Ray	Jan	I think anything that lessens the traffic in Texas is a good thing.	Support
Reagan	Michael R.	My question is will this mode of transportation actually generate enough revenue to be viable and make a profit? Personally, I think it is a boondoggle that smacks of Obamanomics. This will be no different than AMTRAK. How many times has that gone bankrupt and been bailed out by the Federal Government? Too many. I cannot see where this is an economically feasible project. I am adamantly against this albatross and waste.	Against
Reagle	Marla	I support more rail service in Texas.	Support
Reback	Storms	I am all for bringing a passenger rail line from Texas to Oklahoma. The car culture is killing the planet. We need to have other options. Trains makes sense, especially in a state as big as this one.	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Reddy	Kessie	Why only Oklahoma to Texas. Why not expand this to a National model and get all states to participate. You would save a bunch, if you combine all studies, since some states like California have already done most of the grunt work.	Process
Redmond	Lissa	We need some form of mass transit in this state. it is ridiculous for us to have no other forms of transportation except for cars to get to where we need to go. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to travel from Dallas to Austin or Houston w/o having to drive on our crowded, and always under-construction highways!	travel options
Reeck	Thomas	With fuel costs rising and an ever increasing population, the IH-35 corridor will become more crowded and unbearable in terms of traffic congestion. Therefore, I fully support development of railways in Texas to ease the strain on our existing transportation systems.	congestion
Reed	Raymond	We need rail transportation between cities to reduce traffic congestion.	Travel options
Reeser	Rose Ann	I'm writing to urge TxDOT to work toward a usable network of passenger trains for Texas. The current route under consideration, Oklahoma City to South Texas, would be a good step in that direction. More enormous toll roads are not the answer to moving large numbers of people in and between our urban centers. On the East Coast, trains move hundreds of thousands of people per day, reducing energy consumption, pollution and land needed for roads and parking lots. With the numbers of people moving to the Southwest every day, (re)building an efficient passenger train system NOW seems like an obvious choice. We have enjoyed using what Amtrak service does exist now, traveling between Chicago and Austin, Austin and Oklahoma City, and Austin and Fort Worth by train. However, because the passenger trains must yield to the freight traffic, schedules are unreliable, so it's not an efficient way to travel if	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		one is on a tight schedule. Please allocate funding for passenger train development. We would use it, as would thousands of Texans and Oklahomans. Thank you.	
Reeves	Susan Jane	Less cars on road for longer trips. More mobility for seniors n those who do not drive. More jobs.	Travel options
Reeves	Susan Jane	Good rail transportation provides the ease in travel within and outside Texas. It promotes a healthy and safe environment for all. The cost of operating a motor vehicle is forcing many to rely on public transportation.....both older people and younger people. This will also bring much needed employment to the state.	Benefits of train travel
Reim	Mike	Currently the Heartland Flyer runs through but does not stop at Krum TX. If the Heartland Flyer could include a stop at Krum TX, passengers would be close enough to connect to the existing Denton TX DCTA Rail system which goes all the way into Dallas via DART Rail and serves many cities in between (e.g., Lewisville, TX, Carrollton, TX, etc). Instead of spending millions of dollars to build new rail lines save money and use existing rail lines. Again, have a Heartland Flyer stop in Krumm TX then provide vans/bus transport to Denton (approx 10 miles) to connect to the Denton TX DCTA Rail system. Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Appreciate all your efforts. Mike Reim	Routes
Reinhuber	Joachim	I commute regularly from San Marcos to Corpus Christi/ Kingsville. My experience with German high speed rail has been fantastic. I think opening a rail line from Oklahoma through Dallas, Waco, Austin, San Antonio (with a stop in San Marcos!), to Corpus and then along the new I67 corridor into the Valley would be an incredible boost to this dynamic area. I would use it regularly.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Reiter	John	That train would be wonderful.	Support
Resendiz	Susan	Any rail system must include Houston. The Houston Medical Center is a hub for medical care for people from South Texas and Mexico. A rail system from Brownsville to Houston would make a large difference for that route, especially since the road is not very good. I hope the King Ranch is not an impediment to such rail service.	Routes
Reynolds	Jonathan	I would like to add my support for additional passenger rail service from Dallas/Fort Worth to Oklahoma City and points north. The more north bound passengers that we can accommodate, the better off we'll all be. Any method to reduce car traffic on IH-35 is very beneficial to the area environmental quality. I highly support a passenger rail station in Krum, Texas. The city is very supportive of this, and with the Denton passenger potential, this service would be very popular. I also support an additional passenger north bound early morning run from Fort Worth.	congestion
Rice	Joan	Since air traffic has become so cumbersome and Texas is so big, trains seem like the logical and ecological way to travel nowadays. We would visit family in Oklahoma and other contiguous states if we didn't have to spend whole days driving to and from them.	Support
Richards	Gill	More rail transport for Texas- Air quality and climate change are our most urgent concerns. Every passenger mile in automobiles and commercial jets reduces our air quality. Rail transport is perfect for Texas- plenty of right of way, public networks already in the big cities, state and national need for new investments. Now is the time- what's being done? Gill Richards	Air quality

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Riddle	Iva L	Texas needs more passenger rail service, and Texas needs more high speed rail service. We need the option of going by rail instead of flying or driving.	Support
Riecker	John T	I STRONGLY FAVOR more rail service in Texas, especially high-speed rail between San Antonio and Dallas, connecting on to Oklahoma City. Here are some of my reasons for supporting this: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks for considering my comments! John T. Riecker	Benefits of train travel
Riley	Cynthia A	I am strongly in favor of high speed passenger rail! Please make it possible for us to get to Dallas, San Antonio, etc. without suffering the nightmare that is sitting on IH-35. Thanks.	Travel options
Rinard	Thomas	I believe that Texas is behind in mass transit on both a city and state level. I welcome an alternative to driving on the interstate in commuting between major cities in Texas.	Travel options
Rinker	Robert	I think a modern high speed rail line from Dallas to Austin (and beyond) would be a great alternative to IH-35, or Southwest.	Support
RIVERA	CESAR	We rely on fossil fuels far too much. It is time for America and Texas to catch up to the rest of the world in public transportation. Other countries provide safe, fast and convenient public transportation at fairly low costs for city to city commuters. Yet, America lags behind and holds on to this love affair with oil. I am a commuter and I	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		utilize a commuter bus. It takes me longer to get to where I'm going but is a better alternative to driving. Texas should have invested in a rail between San Antonio and Austin instead of wasting money on another toll road. Let's wake up and get greener. We are ravaging our natural resources when there are other alternative, renewable resources, fuels and technologies available to us. Let's get moving, Texas.	
Rivera	Jose J	Dear Sirs: We care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices. A new, higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas, would give millions of Texans the option to take the train rather than drive or fly across the state. Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands on more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways. The facts are that: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. We strongly support the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail. Thank you, Jose J. Rivera	Travel options
Rivera	Juan C.	I would very much like to see this passenger train come to the Laredo area. I believe that it just make sense to bring this form of transportation here. It will alleviate traffic congestion, will help reduce carbon emissions, from having less vehicles on the highway, will improve the economic growth of the area, by providing people the	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		opportunity to come to and from Laredo, that wouldn't normally do so, because they do not own a vehicle. Etc., etc, etc.	
Rivera	Luis	I do believe it would be a magnificent idea to have in the beautiful state of Texas such High Speed Rail Train like the one proposed. Hopefully we can get it and hopefully, I would be alive when implemented. Is a good plan; it would reduce pollution by hundreds of vehicle that would have the alternative to joint this initiative. Thanks.	Support
Roane	Jerry	Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study public comments to CH2M HILL Energy in the future will drive decisions and traditional trains simply use too much energy per passenger mile at 2812 BTU per passenger mile. This is not green it is not energy saving. What replaces trains for ground passenger transport has to be more energy efficient to compete against what will replace passenger train travel. The market has clearly rejected Amtrak but because of federal government subsidies Amtrak has been on its last leg for 42 years. Change is hard and the problem with trains medium speed or slow speed as apparently high speed is off the table with plenty of reasons for it to be off the table, is they pollute far too much NOx and they burn tremendous amounts of valuable fossil fuels for each customer served. Not only are trains energy intensive but the tracks they roll on are a biohazard with all those land polluting poisons that kill not only bacteria in the wood timbers but many small creatures around the gravel beds and ties. Trains were an important part of the expansion into the West but that is over and it is time to look at better alternatives that can serve the customers much better at lower energy cost and without putting air pollutants into the air for our children to breathe. The NOx pollution from a diesel train is phenomenal. Even the brand new trains that will be in service for 40 years are heavy polluters compared to the competition. The trains on the rails now will not come out of service for maybe 50 years depending on maintenance plans so they will be polluting essentially at	Against

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>unfettered 1970s levels for many years to come. It is irresponsible for our government to support inefficient high polluting heavy vehicle to move lightweight people. Trains are great for gravel and till coal is shut down hauling coal from Wyoming to Texas but the amount of gravel to be hauled may be less with a paradigm shift in transportation from the present form to the next revolution. According to the Portland Cement Association half of all concrete (gravel and klinker) is used in making the present form of roads. As transportation evolves to high tech systems concrete and asphalt roads will be offset if not replaced with smaller less raw material intensive forms. This will greatly decrease the amount of gravel hauled by trains and with coal being replaced by massive finds in shale natural gas using fracking and cars that can deliver themselves to the buyer via Google's self driving car electronics the railroad business will be quite different from what it is today. Its strength is hauling mining bull dozers and military heavy artillery or just about any really large and heavy object. Its weakness as evidenced by Amtrak's economic abject failure is moving individual passengers door to door. There are no rental agencies at train stations as one simple example of how little demand there is for service from trains. At the airport there are at least 30 car rental companies all clamoring for customer business. If trains were anywhere in the same realm there would be at least one car rental company positioned at the train station yet there is not. Evidence has not in the past made any difference in the FRA's quest to still provide train passenger service in the face of economic failure. This comment is not all negative. This comment is for moving forward providing customer focused superior service with an energy budget that is actually fully sustainable in real time. I suggest building TriTrack along the edge of railroad right of way and use that much more efficient people mover for passenger service. That advantage is now that underutilized right of way edge that is now just something to mow or accidentally burn to a profit center. The customers get high speed service</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>depending on laws and regulations either at 180 mph service or 201 mph service to all the major US regions with a door to door provision so that trip time for the customer is still at 180 mph door to door with 18 second slow down periods for any turns. This is a hybrid of maglev-like acceleration but without the cost of old-school maglev and because the car weight is less than the weight of the occupants you are not falling back into the train problem of moving massive amounts of steel and iron to move a 190 pound person. More importantly from an energy standpoint at any speed that is competitive today the aerodynamic drag is drastically lower allowing for high speed at low energy levels. In fact the energy level is under the energy budget that PV solar panels along the route just under the wheels of the vehicle will provide 24/7. By using on site generation of all the electric power necessary to move the transportation network it is clear to the public that no air pollution is made at all for this passenger service. The PV solar panels will be by the side of the trains running diesel with no version of a particulate filter so the panels will need to be washed down regularly to remove the chemical stew that trains emit of which are 260 suspected and known human carcinogens. Handicapped persons --- If you some day find yourself in a wheelchair for whatever reason your mobility is going to be challenged. What evolving transportation will do for your new position is provide you bedside to bedside travel totally unassisted. If you can blow in a tube to manipulate your wheelchair you will be able to legally drive yourself to anywhere in the US network. The vehicle for a wheelchair will be your property and thus configured for your specific needs and wants and the wheelchair version opens in the middle and also squats down to let you drive your electric wheelchair into the driving position of the ADA compliant space. From your wheelchair driving by wire and no need to get out of your special space foam cushion in your chair you will be able to close the car and drive on city streets without a state driver's license. This is under the NEV laws in all</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>states that matter. Driving to the nearest guideway grid intersection as your dashboard tells you or letting Google Self Driving electronics drive you there is you are further impaired, you enter the guideway where the computer takes over driving and merges into a line and enters a triangular guideway that is 14.5 inches on a side. This guideway contains the linear motor which is maglev-like but does not depend on high speed power electronics for trajectory control but just creates a thousand or so pound force of launch power to the vehicle for the first 1500 feet of guideway only. Then a motor inside the car running as a BEV moves you at 180 mph or 201 mph to the other end of that guideway. No cross traffic no merges. Once you come back down to the ground to make a turn, you slow to 40 mph, do your street turn, then back up on a guideway. This network of guideways is the key to both mobility and to economy as it is the network effect that made the railroads work and what will make the replacement work. The network effect of a fully implemented system is where the value to the customer comes and where the profit to the operation comes from. In the middle section of each of these trips depending on the distances this person in a wheelchair wants to go a higher speed segment may be implemented that goes 363 mph but is not Siemens maglev but again energy sustainable and cost effective far below the cost of the abandoned Siemens design of the 1970s which was and is a power hog. My condensed comment -- Please allow for an alternatives analysis much like the I70 corridor study for Denver to Vail to legitimately consider the technologies available today to greatly improve customer experience and get the nation off of sweet crude oil and stop polluting the air. One expert states that in Texas that 10% of the NOx pollution is from trains. That is horrific since trains do not move 10% of objects in Texas and watching the last train I observed the black soot blowing out the top of a 65 mph Amtrak train would never pass the opacity requirement for a power plant as it</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		climbed a slight incline. TriTrack	
Roberts	Sunny	I think the train sounds good. It would lower air and ground traffic and make it easier to get across the state and hopefully cheaper than air or car.	congestion
Roberts	Mark	Please check out California's well-documented costs for passenger rail service (exorbitant costs) verses bus service (there are lots of PRIVATELY OWNED bus lines that can transport passengers at a fraction of the cost and change routes per demand that rail can't do)! See recent broadcast on CBS 60 Minutes.	Against
Robinson	Howard	Quicker, cheaper, cleaner transport which reduces noise and air pollution in the DFW area has to be a win-win for us all. It will also prove to be a revenue booster for the area!	Benefits of train travel
Rodgers	Christine	I live in Tulsa OK and support the development of quality passenger rail service in Texas and Oklahoma. It has huge ramifications for environmental health and climate quality. It will also allow citizens of this and surrounding areas the ability to travel in the future as fossil fuel resources decrease in quantity and increase in price. I would hate to see this part of the country isolated through an inability to face the future. As of now and knowing my small efforts are not enough to make a very big dent in environmental problems such as Climate Change (Global warming) I still try to live as simply as possible so I can decrease my personal impact on the climate and the life systems of the planet. I have a background in life sciences and fully understand the threat to all the life systems of the planet including our air, weather and water systems from our wasteful over-use of fossil fuels. My husband and I, do not take part in consumer culture, we grow as much food as we can and try to buy and eat locally while recycling everything we must purchase. We avoid unnecessary use of petroleum	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>based travel. My husband and I have chosen not to use air travel for transportation even though we have family all over the country. When we have the time and energy to drive long distances to visit grandchildren we rent a fuel efficient auto so that when home we need only a very used and low mileage car for our limited transportation in town, keeping it to a minimum. I realize that the amount of automobile and air travel in this country cannot continue at current levels without very devastating effects to our environment and the economy. I love traveling to Dallas to visit a friend and go to the art museums especially and other cultural events and places. I have not used the train from OKC yet, though I have heard good things about it. I am still hoping for good rail service between OKC and Tulsa first. That would be amazing! I bet it would be even more likely to happen when there is excellent rail service all the way to South Texas where we also have family. I am sure rail travel will become more and more appreciated and used as the public in this part of the country becomes more familiar with such a new (to us) form of travel. As I age I believe it would make much more sense than either driving or flying. The cost of mining a decreasing petroleum resource will soon make the usual forms of transportation cost prohibitive. Every day I become more aware of just how wasteful and destructive we are, selfishly using such large quantities of fossil fuels that we will leave my grandchildren and possibly my children living in a world much less bountiful and healthy than the one my generation was able to enjoy. Texas and Oklahoma should not be left in the dust as other parts of the country move forward, building better infrastructure and becoming better prepared for a more limited future.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
RODRIGUEZ	M.	I am all for this idea of rail as an alternative mode of commercial transportation. I believe the highways were already too congested with trailer trucks and now with the activity that Eagle Ford Shale is producing, the congestion is out-of-control! It is no longer fun to plan a trip outside of Laredo just thinking that one will have to drive in all that traffic which increases stress levels! I am also in favor of passenger rail transportation. This option would allow many to travelers who don't have a vehicle, don't fly and don't like bus transportation to have a fourth option. An option which may become a main choice of traveling for many, including tourists!	congestion
Rodriguez	Gabriel	The railway study is an amazing thing. Thank you for looking into the future with such an awesome plan.	Support
Rogerio	Lisa	Very interested in making this happen.	Support
Rogers	Craig	An extension of Amtrak from San Antonio to Corpus Christi would be a benefit to both cities. San Antonians come to Corpus for our beaches, fishing and boating. Corpus Christians travel to San Antonio for the Riverwalk, shopping and dining. It seems like a natural connection to let folks avoid the two hour drive.	local and regional economy
Rooke	Molly	Rail makes good sense for many reasons: environmental, safety, quality of life, efficiency, energy security and additional and improved transportation options for more Texans. Trains keep cars off the road and reduce the number of short-distance airplane trips, which improves our air quality. The reduced car congestion and traffic would also make our highways safer. Trains are more efficient, too, since the overall energy consumption per passenger is nearly half that of planes or cars, which improves our energy security. South Texas has no passenger rail service, and it would be good to add that. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers, so we need to build on that with increased, good quality passenger rail service to more of Texas. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and rail could serve smaller cities with stops along the way that are left out of airline service. Comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time which allows the travelers' time to be more productive, relaxing and enjoyable. I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more and better transportation choices, and I would happily use additional rail often.	
Rosales	Santos	I really like this idea. I know it would create more jobs in Oklahoma and Texas but I was worried about the noise level as well as the safety, traffic, and the area the rail would get put at.	support
Rosales	Rooolfo	Do the plans for Oklahoma to South Texas include Waco, Austin, San Antonio, and then where? I would think that a line to Brownsville through Haringen and another line to Corpus Christie would be awesome. Also are we considering connecting to Houston and then eventually to El Paso?	Question
Rose	Donna	I am in favor of the Oklahoma-Texas passenger rail service, and I have heard countless other express their wishes for passenger rail service in Texas. I know several people who have attempted to use the existing line which runs through Austin through north and east Texas, but due to how slow it was they found it to be an untenable solution. My family members would personally use this service for both business and personal travel on a regular basis instead of using our vehicles. Please do what you can to make this a reality that will help the Southwest become as convenient a place to travel and do business as the northeastern US and many other parts of the world. It will help build our economy and secure our long-term future. Thank you for	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		considering my comments. Donna Rose	
Rose	Roger	Hello, my name is Roger Rose and I missed the opportunity to be at the meeting here in Laredo last week. I am currently a Grad. student at Texas A&M International, here in Laredo, majoring in History. My Undergrad degree was in Urban Planning and Administration and I love working on projects of this scale. I am working on two proposals to submit to the Laredo City Council, one involving a World Birding Center here in Laredo, the second to create a tourist friendly Plaza/Market square here in Laredo. A train station could be a perfect cornerstone for such a project. I am not sure of the market that would use rail here, I would suggest many seasonal migrants. The biggest competitor would be the Auto bus service to places like Houston, Dallas and Chicago. If you were to have perhaps an overnight service from Laredo, that would arrive in Dallas the following morning, or service that would continue farther north. You would have to offer something that the bus services do not offer. No Interstate 35 check points. The station here could be set up similar to a TSA check point at airports. The service could be operated on a 3 or 4 day a week schedule. Please get in touch if there's any assistance I can provide. Roger Rose	Support
Rose	Mary Sue	I want to support mass transit in and through the state of Texas. . . specifically high speed, reliable rail service. We must get high volumes of traffic off of our highways, both to preserve energy resources (gas and diesel) and to maintain the condition of highways so that they don't have to be repaired and replaced. Not only will high speed and reliable rail service reduce car traffic, it will improve air quality. People will continue to want to get from place to place and in increasing numbers as our population grows. It is smart planning to make these improvements to people moving now. Already the IH-35 corridor is overcrowded as is the I45 corridor in Houston.	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Rail service is needed and now, so let's get started!	
Roset	Janet	Let's move into this century with transportation that makes sense and helps to save our precious environment.	Support
Ruark-Cavett	Sosha	I would like to see a safe and effective way to reduce congestion and air pollution while still being able to travel through large swaths of Texas.	Travel options
Ruiz	Gabriel	I believe the passenger railroad study TxDOT is conducting is a very proactive way to minimize the future congestion issues along IH35. I would like to see the railroad in Laredo, Texas. I know of many people who would rather ride the train than drive 2:30 hours to San Antonio. I believe it would also increase commerce and overall be very productive for all cities involved.	congestion
Rushing	Debir	it would be nice o know we can travel without so much traffic congestion and pollution-not to mention enabling commuters to avoid the stress of fellow travelers on the roads.	congestion
Rushing	R L	The more forms of transportation that are available to the public, the better. A rail system that has a higher degree of speed, will help commerce. The more people that take the rail system will help to lower highway traffic and highway accidents. I rarely go to Dallas or Fort Worth because of the insane amount of highway traffic. The rail system needs more than one set of tracks going from Oklahoma City to Dallas. It needs at least two. There needs to be more than one passenger train a day between the two states. I hope the rail system grows, but I figure the controlling powers will squash this like a bug because there is a lot of money to be made building highways and selling petroleum products.	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Russell	Tom	The expansion to high speed rail is thinking outside the box. It involves so many factors in our lives. Fuel savings, better air quality, less highway traffic, alternative choices for travel, safer way to travel. We must make decisions that don't always fit the profit picture for BIG businesses.	Benefits of train travel
Russell	Nancy	I have read the article in the Dallas Morning News on April 1, 2013. My comments: This is a great idea. It will only work, however, if you include the following: **You need a means for people to have transportation at the destination. Solutions could include the following: 1. Have a significant increase in Texas Oklahoma public transportation (very expensive) 2. Have the ability to "ferry" your car to the destination on the train. (expensive) **3. Have a fleet of small commuter cars at each destination for passengers to rent at a nominal cost and for a short time period (e.g. \$15/per 24 hours with a limit of 5 days....with the purchase of a railroad ticket) (least expensive) **This is the BEST solution for Texas and Oklahoma because of the culture of the states with little experience in public transportation and sense of independence.	Connectivity
Rusteberg	Fred	The possibilities of mass transit/passenger rail traffic by utilizing existing rail infrastructure between Brownsville, The Rio Grande Valley, Laredo, and Oklahoma City need to be strongly considered and pursued as a viable and necessary means of transportation in our future. Especially as the population continues to grow and strains on our operation of motor vehicles and corresponding highway infrastructure construction and maintenance continue, together with negative effects to the environment and compromises of quality of life issues, we need to pursue and provide alternate and cost-efficient options relating to mass transit. Utilization of existing rail to help accomplish this must be pursued.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Sakach	Bill	I am a big supporter and user of trains. When I visit San Francisco for my work in sales I always take CalTrain down the peninsula to visit my customers in the South Bay. When I lived in Chicago I would take the trains to cities outside the metro area. If it's fast and on schedule business and families will use it. You can work on email on the train or read books rather than the stress of driving. It so reduces traffic congestion on roads and helps with air Quality by moving a greater number of people with less energy too. Please put high speed rail in TX.	Benefits of train travel
Salinas	Orfa L	I want to let you how much having rail service means to me. Since moving to Dallas I have been using the DART system and have been able to get to my VA medical appointments. With the cost of gas and an old car I really appreciate being able to get to my many doctor and other appointments. I don't have a big income just my job disability and my veteran benefit money so I can't afford to go visit my Mom who is 92 years old and lives in South Texas. If we had affordable rail service in all parts of Texas we could get the benefits that Dallas citizens know and appreciate to all Texans. Rail systems take a lot of drivers off the streets and highways. That means less accidents, less gasoline being used and less parking problems. Looking for parking results in more accidents, more pollution and more money for gasoline that poor folks don't have.	Travel options
Salinas	Silvia	My family, friends, coworkers and I like to travel to San Antonio, Houston, Austin or Dallas. We would loovee to be able to travel by train to all of these cities and all over the United States too! My friends and I travel to all these cities very often so if we had train transportation we would take it all the time. We love trains and love to take care of our environment!	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Salinas	Ricardo A.	I saw the study for the passenger rail service and I think it would be a great idea, only if the people of Laredo would open up and change their routine of doing things. Recently I went to San Antonio with my family to Fiesta Texas and we had a great time. The most difficult thing was coming back extremely exhausted and fighting to stay awake. The issue of having to wake up very early in the morning and then to drive 2hrs, spend the whole day and then drive back; as a father is mind bottling because of your family's safety on the way back. If the rail service can work around providing families with a trip, where they can get off in San Antonio, Austin, Dallas or any other city on the way with rental cars accessibility or transportation to places of interest, at reasonable prices, I think it could work. I rather pay up to \$200 for a family of four for a round trip on the train where I know at least we will get back safer and not having to fall asleep. With gasoline prices, a round trip will cost you about \$150 for gas, so for an extra \$50, I rather pay it and get some rest on the way back on a train and get home safely. Thanks Ricardo Salinas	Travel options
Salinas, Jr.	Gerry	As a small business owner and resident of Laredo, Texas, I believe a passenger rail service that ran from up and down IH-35 from Oklahoma City, OK to Laredo would be a tremendous boost to business, commuter safety and overall standard of living. Below are 4 reasons why I would strongly support the construction of a passenger rail service. 1.) The Eagle Ford shale boom is expected to last for decades in South Texas and with it hundreds, if not thousands of additional vehicles will be traveling up and down IH-35 to satellite offices in Laredo or San Antonio (which are the closest major cities to all the development). With the Eagle Ford shale boom expected to last for 30, 40, 50 years it would be wise to eliminate passenger traffic and alleviate the congestion (and wear and tear) on this very important roadway. 2.) Every year thousands of Mexican shoppers travel up and down IH-35 and bring	Congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		with them millions of dollars to support local businesses and stores. Making it easier for them to travel and providing them with more options would allow for an opportunity to increase business with our Mexican neighbors.	
Salinas, Jr.	Gerry	<p>3.) Mass transit is sorely lacking in the United States, and especially in Texas. If you visit Europe it is mind-boggling how easy it is to maneuver around the entire continent with so many different rail systems and accessible destinations. A passenger rail service would eliminate pollution by reducing our carbon foot print and avoid furthering climate change. It would also serve the purpose of reducing our reliance on foreign oil and allowing the U.S. to better control its energy future. Any step that gets us closer to energy independence and reduces money sent overseas (particularly to people who do not support our American values) is a definite plus.</p> <p>4.) Lastly, and selfishly, for my own convenience I would love a passenger rail system. I have to travel to San Antonio at least once every 2 weeks and would absolutely love the opportunity to travel by rail. Not only would it be safer than traveling by automobile, it would allow me to enjoy time with my family and friends without having to focus so intently on the road ahead. I could also use the time to catch up on work. In conclusion, a passenger rail system stretching from Oklahoma City or Dallas, and running to Laredo would be a WIN, WIN, WIN, WIN situation!</p>	travel options
Sandel	Morris	Austin needs to discourage personal transportation (one person driving around town alone moving a ton or so of machinery in the process). Buses and trains are the obvious solution. Reference any European city.	Support
Sanders	John C.	Having a good passenger rail system in Texas would ease traffic congestion. Help reduce air pollution. And improve quality of life!	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Saunier	C E	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced	Travel options
Sautter	Bethany	We NEED a rail system here! With so many people moving from out of town and out of state, our roads can barely handle it right now. Prepare for the future and go rail!!!	Support
Schas	Bill	I support high speed passenger rail service, and expanded cargo rail service. IH-35 is a parking lot between San Antonio and Austin on many occasions, and is the site of frequent injury accidents. Air quality in Central Texas is getting worse with our growing population. Any development that can reduce vehicular traffic and fuel consumption will help improve these issues.	congestion
Schill	Brian	Rail service would be an asset to Texans in terms of environmental benefits, keeping highway traffic down, and making travel more pleasant. Some rail passengers would rent cars at their destination, too. I go to Austin, Waco and Dallas a few times a year, and I would certainly consider riding the train, since it is very tiring to sit behind the wheel for hours on end.	Natural environment
Schnack	Kate	I would like to see more passenger rail service in Texas. I would use a system that could take me from Austin to Dallas or South Texas or Oklahoma. I believe that we can reduce the carbon dioxide emissions with more people choosing rail service. We could also reduce the number of automobile related deaths. I would also like to see	travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		local service in Austin. I do not want any e-mails. You can call me or send me something through the US mail.	
Schoech	D.	I rode a train from N. Texas to Oklahoma when I was a kid. We basically have the same or worse train service now. Why are we so far behind? The trains of Europe are a good example of what can be accomplished with fast passenger trains.	Travel options
Schott	Susan A	Other than the noise issue from the trains I do believe this is a good option.	Support
Schultz	Larry W.	I am pleased to see Texas and Oklahoma engaged in this study on passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and south Texas. This would be very beneficial to young people more interested in less pollution, better health, and alternatives to car travel. This would also be good for people who for medical reasons cannot drive. Trains also are energy efficient which is good for the environment.	Travel options
Schultz	Larry W.	I would hope the study could be extended north to include at least Wichita and preferably Kansas City as there are a number of people who would travel from Kansas City and Wichita to Oklahoma City and Dallas/Fort Worth, and even beyond.	Routes
Schumacher	Ryan	I think it's a great idea. I travel between Texas's major cities quite often, and I find the high volume of traffic appalling. I think an efficient, reliable train service could go a long toward relieving congestion and providing other benefits like the reduction of greenhouse gases and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.	congestion
Schumacher	Ryan	A comfortable train ride could be much less stressful than an automobile commute, too. I think Texas has both the major cities and long distances to be a significant leader in this category. I would really like to see the state be at the forefront of a	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		positive change for once.	
Schwedes	Chris	Texas is a huge state composed of Austin, Houston, Dallas, San Antonio metro areas. These metropolitan areas are separated by large distances that many Texans cover in passenger cars and worst yet full size pickups on a day to day basis. Putting in place a functional, efficient, and speedy passenger or multipurpose rail line just makes sense.	Travel options
Scott	Susan	Please please please do all you can to provide Texans with an alternative to driving or flying when we need to travel from one city to another. Expanding passenger rail services would give us another convenient alternative. Also, not having to drive on IH-35 when traveling between Austin and Dallas would be a huge incentive to use high speed rail between the two cities. Please take into account the following points when considering expanding high speed rail in Texas.	Travel options
Scott	Susan	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks for the consideration.	congestion
Scott	Jeremiah	This would be an excellent start to a statewide rail network. PLEASE MAKE IT HAPPEN!	Support
Scott	Joshua	What high speed technologies are being considered for this project? I am concerned that this will just be an opportunity for a manufacturer to offload outdated inventory,	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		rather than a state-of-the-art rapid transit alternative.	
Searcy	Wendy	I agree that this would be a great thing.	Support
Sebolt	Terry	I wanted to weigh in and give my support for the expansion of high-speed, light rail in Texas. I am a native Texan, and I love our wide open spaces and our open highways. However, as our population grows, those spaces slowly disappear. Our highways are no longer avenues for adventure, but instead are becoming an overcrowded, noise and pollution-filled wasteland. They cost more to maintain, and the numerous slowdowns and accidents are costly to each of us on a personal level. When I lived in Europe, I saw how efficient and easy a rail system can be. The German rail system was particularly pleasant and efficient. The general populace used it regularly. It was clean, inexpensive, and had few scheduling or mechanical problems. Natural areas were preserved, money was saved, and the people were well served. I would like to see something similar happen here. I know it is possible. I know it is in our own best interests. It is a much better alternative to just building more and more roads. Thank you.	congestion
Sederholm	Gwen	Let's have more trains and fewer cars.	Support
Segura	Jade	Is the closest to east Texas in Dallas or would go closer this way? I live close to Shreveport Louisiana...(By I20)	Routes
Shadowen	Robert	I support adding high speed rail in Texas. We often drive to San Antonio for various family activities, and if we had a reasonable alternative to driving we would certainly utilize it. I also have family near Oklahoma City, so could also use the train for family travel to/from there. I am in favor of developing train travel because it is environmentally beneficial (more efficient than driving cars), it is a great way to	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		travel since it is less stressful than driving or flying, and especially with high speed rail the travel times are competitive. Probably like many we have traveled by train mostly in Europe and China, and really enjoyed it.	
Shafer	Chrysteen	I would like to see the development of the light rail system proposed by President Obama a few years ago. It would be wonderful to see our country make progress toward a more sustainable and livable future by revamping the long-distance public transportation options. Like the Conservation Corps last century, investment in our infrastructure helps relieve poverty now while improving the quality of life for generations to come.	travel options
Shaffer	Tria	RE: Train route for S. Texas I am in favor of extending rail service to S. Texas. It will get cars off the highways, relieving congestion and reducing tailpipe emissions; it will get noisy, polluting planes out of the air; it is safe; the train is fun and stress-free.	congestion
Shaffer	Tria	I have reviewed the proposed route and have a suggestion: Why is Houston not connected to Austin? It would be so nice to hop down to Houston, go to the museum district and get home in one day. Austin and Houston need to have a direct connection that doesn't go through San Antonio. Thanks for taking my comments.	Routes
Shallenberger	Vonnie	I live in Fort Worth, which has a very sad example of public transportation for a city of its size. The world is changing, and Texas needs to be ahead of the curve in providing fast, clean public transportation to all the places that both residents and tourists would like to go. Not to mention the benefit to the working class...better public transportation would pay for itself in clean air and tolls in no time!	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Shamel	Charles	Public transportation is desperately needed by Texas' growing population. High-speed trains are very fuel efficient, safe and clean. My wife and I wide and love Amtrak and would like to see expanded service between all major cities in Texas.	travel options
Sharpe	Fran	Rail service throughout Texas would be very helpful in that it would reduce the need for more inter-state highways, etc., and probably provide faster and safer travel and maybe even cheaper in the long run.	Cost
Shelton	Christine	Texas definitely is in need of a mass transit system. I live in Denton, TX, and traffic has become a problem with the growth of Denton. I was raised in Connecticut with a mass transit system that was easy for people not to have cars and you could go to work in New York every day and be on time. Building rails across Texas, Ok., is a great idea for the traffic problem, and to allow people to travel more freely due to the rising cost of gas.	travel options
Shepherd	Keith	We need additional rail service in our great state to help relieve roadway overcrowding. Parts of the local IH-35 corridor have not been upgraded since it was built in the 50's, regardless of it being called the NAFTA freeway. Light rail would ease peoples commute to work and many would use it to save on the costs associated with personal vehicle ownership. Having been to the Netherlands, France, Germany and Belgium recently and seeing how well their rail systems work there is no reason why we couldn't have it here too.	congestion
Shick	Taryn	I think a passenger rail option across Texas would be excellent. It could eliminate much of the traffic congestion that is currently a regular event. It could reduce costs to individuals while increasing revenues to state and city budgets.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Shick	Taryn	It would reduce emissions from cars, improving air quality and other environmental factors. But please be considerate of wildlife areas when building the rail and be sure to take proper precautions to avoid displacing wildlife from their homes. When that is not possible, please relocate the wildlife to another, similar habitat.	Natural environment
Shrek	Kamel	Hi, I am writing in support of Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail, because I think it will be a very good idea to connect many cities. It will be good for tourism and it will provide many jobs.	Connectivity
Shrek	Kamel	Also, it will save fuel and lives by less accident on the highways. It is an important economical transportation needed by many people.	energy
Siano	Christiaan	Improving and expanding the rail system in Texas, especially along the IH35 corridor would provide safe alternative to driving. I use this route between Austin and Dallas on a regular basis. Although there is much work being done to expand the IH35 corridor, and I understand that will take time, it is nevertheless in a state of perennial congestion, somewhere along the line, very often do to traffic accidents. Expanding it alone will not eliminate the safety factor. We still have thousands of people on the road who have to be alert, pay attention, not be distracted on cell phones or texting or kids. A rail system would provide a safe, effective, economical, and efficient alternative. Therefore, I fully support this high speed rail project.	congestion
Sibley	William	YES, YES, YES! AN IMMEDIATE YES TO THE TEXAS - OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL!	Support
Simmons	A. D.	I do not understand why any study of potential passenger train service in Texas would not include an examination of the DFW to Houston corridor as a natural part of the process. I'm all in favor of expanded service OKC to Laredo/Brownsville/Corpus	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Christie, linking through the DFW area, and also connecting DFW to Kansas City and St. Louis through OKC, Wichita and Tulsa, and Springfield. All of these options would be enhanced if connections or through service direct to Houston were also available. DFW makes a very good natural hub, with service to El Paso and Amarillo/Denver heading off in one direction and trains to Houston and the Texas Rio Grande region in the other. Service to New Orleans via Shreveport would also be potentially viable. By varying the starting point of a train between Dallas and Fort Worth, depending on which direction it was headed, a high frequency of intercity trains between those two points could be achieved linking the two nodes of the metropolis together. Texas should also consider promoting an additional long distance daily train route linking DFW to Washington DC via Jackson MS, Birmingham AL, and Atlanta GA. A train on this route could also be extended to Los Angeles via El Paso. Please consider expanding the scope of this study to include DFW/Houston options.	
Simpson	Christina	I am in favor of high speed rail between Oklahoma and South Texas. Rail travel is a beneficial alternative to automobile travel and I would like to see it expanded.	Travel options
Simpson	Katie	I live in Dallas, and the Light Rail system is very popular here both for commutes and for pleasure travel. I have friends who spent their anniversary taking a train down to San Antonio and back, and they were delighted at just how low-stress the travel was compared to taking a plane. I really believe there is a market for a high-speed rail that connects Texas and Oklahoma, possibly running in a sort of parallel to IH-35, and I hope that you will not make the same mistake DART did with its bus lines, waiting until the demand hits a certain point before making it happen. (The DART buses have been in an awful catch-22 where DART cuts service because fewer people are riding, but then the reason fewer people are riding is that the reduced service makes it hard to	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		get anywhere meaningful in a reasonable time.)	
Sitters	Jake D	I don't have a problem with high speed rail. I say, include high speed rail from San Antonio to El Paso. For me, at age 83, that's a 10-hour drive. Re the responses, Yes/Si and No/No, isn't it a bit redundant? EVERYBODY in Texas, including those who speak only one language, knows either one.	Support
Skaggs	Jim	This is an extremely ill advised expenditure of tax funds. The potential ridership and benefits are too little and the cost are too much. We do not need a \$14 million study to show it is not cost-effective and, therefore, cannot be sustained. It seems that every time an entity creates an organization, such as TxDOT's rail organization, it gets out of control and becomes an advocate with no checks and balances to provide balanced alternatives analyses. For the cost of this potential rail, substantial roadway improvements can be implemented which will serve orders of magnitude more travelers without huge taxpayer subsidies for every rider. Roadway improvements would enhance overall quality of life for many times more people. There are no examples of successful passenger trains in similar US area as the one being studied. The North Atlantic corridor has about the only reasonable US train ridership but it's corridor population is far greater than the Oklahoma-Texas corridor, with much shorter riders.	Against

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Smetak	Roman	I'm one of those goddam wanna know it alls, so tell me all about it and don't harm the environment, don't screw up anything use rick perry's land but don't pay him a dime or anything because he's a criminal, and has stolen enough from the Texas taxpayers already.	Support
Smith	Rolando	This is the best news that this region has received re: public and intercity transport. Why the delay?	Support
Smith	Rolando	Undoubtedly, this Passenger Train Proposal is long overdue. I cannot see anything other than success resulting from this project. I believe that rail company(s) would be surprised at the positive and profitable response from the public as you offer this as an alternative form of transportation.	Support
Smith	Luvada	I would like to add my name to the Texas/Oklahoma study and to request consideration of a similar study of Texas/Shreveport, LA(soon)	Support
Smith	Myra	I moved from NY to TX last year. I miss the availability of public transportation. I hate that I have to drive everywhere I want to go. Even the DART is not especially convenient. When I see all of the traffic on 30, 20 and 35 at rush hour, I think why not a commuter rail system. I do wonder if Texans would embrace it as well as those in the Northeast. Commuters do give up some freedom of movement and do depend on schedules. But seeing so many single drivers in huge trucks -- it is bad for the environment and bad for the human soul to be stressed in traffic for hours.	Travel options
Smith	Sue	It will be difficult to get Texans out of their personal cars. So it is either make all highways 20 lanes wide or use mass transit.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Smith	Shelley	Please increase availability of rail service in Texas.	Support
Smith	Ellen B.	<p>I support the higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. <p>Please adopt this. Thank you!</p>	travel options
Smith	Terri	Texas residents would benefit from a high speed train that connects Oklahoma to Dallas, then, Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Highways and interstates are overcrowded. The environment needs a break from single family passenger cars.	Routes
Smith	Terri	Air travel is too costly for many residents. Trains will be a job creator. Older population will spend more on local trips if they can travel without driving (which can be dangerous for older drivers.)	Cost
Pugh	Dan	President Obama has articulated a plan -to make passenger rail service available to 80% of the United States population. The combined populations of all the cities and their environs listed above total something approaching 80% of Texas total population. It follows that to come close to meeting the national goal, rail service	Transit Options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		would have to be extended to all of the Texas cities listed above, and a few more.	
Pugh	Dan	<p>PRIORITY ONE: SUNSET LIMITED DAILY FREQUENCY</p> <p>Three times a week in each direction may not be sustainable for the Sunset Limited. The schedule is confusing to the public and financially expensive per passenger seat mile for the operator. Maintenance and overhead costs are relatively fixed when they could be divided by more trains whistling by. The Sunset Limited is part of the Amtrak national passenger rail network and is one of only two trains in the country which operate less than daily. The current Sunset Limited functions with moderately high occupancies. The obvious solution: daily service. Having daily east-west passenger rail service across Texas would be a major convenience to the public and would improve commercial ties to and between Houston and San Antonio.</p>	Transit Options
Pugh	Dan	<p>Concept</p> <p>Return of daily service all the way from California to Florida would be the best approach. In the absence of that, on a temporary basis the service improvements could be limited to Texas and Louisiana. By such an interim plan, the present three-times-a-week service could be left in place while passenger service on the other days of the week is instituted across the more heavily traveled central portion of the route. Presumably this would include at least the segment between San Antonio and Houston or, preferably, the larger portion between El Paso and New Orleans.</p>	Routes
Pugh	Dan	One pragmatic way to approach expanding service is to ask how much could be achieved with the addition of a single train set. Good question Given the current	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		three-day-a-week schedule, there are four days with no service. The trip between New Orleans and San Antonio is a daylight run of about 15 hours. In a week, a single train set could make this run three times each direction and have a day left for maintenance. This works. The new train set would operate westbound on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. It would operate eastbound Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. This scheme would instantly double service on the Sunset Limited between New Orleans and San Antonio from days a week to six, providing an easy way to test the incremental market and build a broader base for future expansions.	
Pugh	Dan	<p>PRIORITY TWO: BIGGEST CITIES IN TEXAS</p> <p>How can this be? Dallas and Houston, the two biggest cities in Texas, have no passenger rail service between them. Did we say this correctly? Dallas and Houston, the two biggest cities in Texas, have no passenger rail service between them. No way to stretch out and enjoy a comfortable seat, a good meal, or a cool drink.</p>	Routes
Pugh	Dan	This is -a market waiting to be tapped. The present volume of people disembarking T116 Texas Eagle at Longview and continuing on to Houston or Shreveport by bus demonstrates the demand. Additionally, an intermediate stop in College Station I Bryan would tap the large college travel market.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Pugh	Dan	<p>Concept</p> <p>On a trial basis, one train set would be enough to make the round trip every day from Houston to either Dallas or Fort Worth. Overnight maintenance activity could be scheduled at either end. However, Houston might be the preferred location so an early morning run could be scheduled to Fort Worth to make connections with the Heartland Flyer and Texas Eagle. One train set dedicated to such a limited</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		experimental route could make the trip each weekday and still have the weekend left for maintenance if necessary.	
Pugh	Dan	The strong expectation would be that justification for a second frequency in each direction would be demonstrated early on. A decision on this, however, needn't be considered until there are statistics in hand. Once the route is firmly established, northbound and westbound extensions on to Chicago (called Super Chief) or West Texas (called Canon Ball Express) could be studied. Fort Worth seems to be the logical long-term hub for the Texas Eagle, Heartland Flyer, and proposed future passenger service, although there might also be lesser hubs at DFW Airport and/or Dallas Union Station.	Routes
Pugh	Dan	PRIORITY THREE: IH-35 CORRIDOR INCLUDING SOUTH TO THE BORDER Passenger trains are often hailed as a way to relieve overcrowded freeways. So, where is the most overcrowded freeway in Texas? No question, it's Interstate 35, even with the Texas Eagle already running parallel to this route. Extension of the Heartland Flyer also along this route is urgently recommended. It would provide a second frequency along this congested corridor and also provide direct train service between the state capitals of Austin and Oklahoma City.	congestion
Pugh	Dan	With both the Heartland Flyer and Texas Eagle traveling parallel south to San Antonio, there would be more relief to the IH-35 corridor and opportunity to respond to increasing congestion in Laredo and the Lower Rio Grande Valley.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pugh	Dan	Some old timers might remember the day when both the Missouri Pacific and Southern Pacific- operated daily passenger train service to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The need remains. Corpus Christi, McAllen, Harlingen, and Brownsville could each justify having end-point stations for passenger trains. However, since Harlingen is between McAllen and Brownsville, is on the existing main rail line, and has a downtown passenger train station still in good structural condition, it is recommended as the initial southern terminus. From there, convenient bus service is available to the 1-est of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and northern Mexico.	Routes
Pugh	Dan	PRESENT STATE-WIDE SERVICE Texas has three inter-city long-distance passenger. These trains are operated by Amtrak on Union Pacific and B.N.S.F. tracks. In addition, a growing number of metropolitan areas supports excellent local commuter trains. However, these local facilities utilize much different train sets than the long-distance overnight trains discussed in this report. (The combination of long-distance passenger trains with sleepers and local commuter trains with frequent stops enhances the viability of both, although present recommendations are focused just on long distance routes.)	Transit Options
Pugh	Dan	Corpus Christi is about midway between San Antonio and the Lower Rio Grande Valley and, as an intermediate stop, provides even more justification for the route.	Routes
Pugh	Dan	Likewise, in pro-Amtrak days the Missouri Pacific provided passenger train service to Laredo with the Aztec Eagle. It's time to restore this tradition to the rapidly growing border town.	Routes
Pugh	Dan	Concept	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		It is possible that either the Heartland Flyer or the Texas Eagle could be extended south from San Antonio to either Laredo or Harlingen. For reasons of scheduling daylight stops, maintaining a six- hour headway, meeting the Sunset Limited in San Antonio, and not disrupting the Texas Eagle -present schedule, this looks like possibly the best configuration: (Pg 4-5 of attachment Schedules) Such a configuration would not interfere with a possible ultimate extension of the Heartland Flyer form Oklahoma City to Kansas City.	
Pugh	Dan	The Sunset Limited operates three times a Week in each direction between Los Angeles and New Orleans. The trip takes about 47 hours. The portion from El Paso to Beaumont takes 23 hours. Texas intermediate stops include El Paso, San Antonio, Houston, and Beaumont. The train consist provides bi-level coaches, sleeping cars, dining car, and lounge car.	Transit Options
Pugh	Dan	The Texas Eagle operates between Chicago and Los Angeles three times a week in each direction. The trip takes about 75 hours. On the portion of the run between Chicago and San Antonio the train operates daily in about 32 hours. In all cases, the Texas intermediate stops include San Marcos, Austin, Temple, Waco, Fort Worth, Dallas, Longview, and Texarkana. This Texas internal portion of the run takes about 15 hours. The train consist provides bi-level coaches, sleeping cars, dining car, and lounge car.	Transit Options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Pugh	Dan	Texas' five busiest depots lie along the Texas Eagle route. They are Fort Worth (141,696 ONIOFFS in FY12), San Antonio (70,161), Dallas (55,764), Longview (49,126), and Austin (41,638). The Fort Worth inter-modal station serves as an interchange between the Texas Eagle, the Heartland Flyer, and local buses-. The San Antonio depot serves as an interchange between the Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited. Dallas Union Station is an interchange between the Texas Eagle and local buses. The Longview depot provides access to long-distance buses to Houston. This fact helps demonstrate the need for Dallas - Fort Worth area train service to Houston. The Austin depot is downtown in a city drawing large -numbers of visitors.	Transit Options
Pugh	Dan	The Heartland Flyer operates daily between Fort Worth and Oklahoma City. It makes connection with the Texas Eagle at Fort Worth. The trip takes about 4 hours. The train consist provides bi-level coaches and a cafe car.	Transit Options
Pugh	Dan	PASSENGER RAIL GOALS Passenger rail service in Texas is an important component of the public transportation network.	Support
Pugh	Dan	Reliability, comfort, convenience, cost effectiveness, connectivity, and safety are all important parts of the program. To provide these features, three guiding principles are required: I. Intermediate-term, the passenger rail network must provide service Statewide. It is easy to think of a network grid with interconnecting nodes in the major cities, including both clockwise and counter- clockwise movements around the Texas triangle. Extensions would continue to be made until 80% of Texas population has rail	Transit Options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>service.</p> <p>2. Long-term, the passenger rail network should provide at least twice-daily service each way around the Texas triangle. This is required for both convenience and connectivity. Creating convenient connections throughout the system is not possible with less than twice daily service on at least this core hub.</p> <p>3. High-performance train sets and track maintenance are required for good service. Train sets must include long-distance and over-night facilities with dining and entertainment amenities. Track improvements must support reliable operations and faster trip -times.</p>	
Pugh	Dan	<p>SHORT-TERM STRAIGHT-FORWARD SOLUTIONS</p> <p>Fortunately, this is not rocket science. However, it requires a series of improvements based on the obvious need to move more and more people with less and less fossil-fuel consumption. This is where passenger rail succeeds the best.</p>	Energy
Smith, Jr.	Paul J.	<p>I support strong improved passenger rail service along the IH-35 corridor. Any upgrade to the existing intercity passenger rail service, which consists of the Texas Eagle and Heartland Flyer, should use existing facilities where possible. However, even if the existing rights of way are used, they will require extensive upgrade. Initially, at least, the goal should be to upgrade the existing service to 110 to 125 mph service. This would be a significant improvement over the current snail paced trains.</p>	Travel options
Smith, Jr.	Paul J.	<p>Most importantly, however, is to increase the frequency of the trains. One or two trains a day will not cut it. Equally important, the stations must be upgraded. As it is, most of them have limited parking and few if any services. Whether so-called high</p>	frequency

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		speed rail service is appropriate is debatable. It is much more expensive than upgrading the existing system to 110 - 125 mph service. The users should pay for the service; it should not be underwritten by the taxpayers. Is this doable? Many of Amtrak's short corridor and state supported trains come close to covering their operating costs and, since they are hoisted by other carriers, most of the embedded capital costs. The hoist railroads claim that Amtrak does not pay its fair share of the costs to hoist its trains, which is a reasonable argument, but there is a high probability that the users could cover the host of an upgraded IH-35 corridor, especially if the upgrades are limited to 110 to 125 mph service. Again, it is the really high speed stuff, built on dedicated rights-of-way, that drives up the cost.	
Smith, Jr.	Paul J.	Another step that would be helpful for passenger rail in an expanded IH-35 corridor is to implement policies that would show motorists the true cost of driving. As it is they only see the cost embedded in the federal and state fuel taxes, which cover only the cost of the federal and state highways. If the costs of local streets and county roads were embedded in the price of fuel, instead of property and other taxes, many motorists might be persuaded to take the train instead of the family buggy. I am a serious rail industry supporter and passenger train user. I own stock in several of the nation's railroads. In addition, I have ridden over every mile of Amtrak's system with the exception of Chicago to New Orleans and Portland to Boston. I read Amtrak's financials, as well as those of the companies in which I own stock, regularly. I have more than a passing interest in improving passenger rail along the IH-35 corridor.	Cost
Snyder	Jo Hill	Rail service from Oklahoma City is an emerging need for me personally. I can travel to visit my children and for events in Dallas/Fort Worth safely, economically and conveniently. One thing I would appreciate is an easier step-up from the platform to the train. I am considering a rail vacation. Besides personal reasons, I appreciate the	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		environmental contribution of rail travel. It improves air quality and reduces the impact on our overcrowded highway system. I believe increase in rail travel will eventually decrease the need to tear up more land for highways which effects wildlife, water and other endangered plants and animals.	
Sokolic	Kathy	I don't know why we don't have more active passenger trains. The time for America to move away from the personal car is now. Let's get more rail!!	Support
Solano	Alexander	High-speed passenger rail would be a fantastic way to cut down on both intra- and inter-city commute traffic, reducing air pollution and traffic and generally making Texas a nicer place to live thanks to less cars sitting on the freeway. Texas is a big state and I travel south from Fort Worth to Houston or San Antonio frequently; a rail alternative to driving on the interstate would save time, money, frustration, and environmental impact for me and thousands of other people who have to travel across the state.	Connectivity
Solano	Nicole	I live in South Fort Worth and there are no options for public transportation. I would like to see more options like a light rail system that gets everyone around the DFW area.	Travel options
Soto	Minerva	I will be very pleased if the State will open Railway service as indicated. Thank you	Support
Souza	Tina Allen	My comment is that all efforts be made to see this rail system become a reality. It is time for Texas to advance into the future, and what better way to do it than a clean way.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Spanne	Joan	Passenger rail is an efficient, comfortable, and comparatively low impact means of transit, when considered alongside flying or driving personal vehicles. I strongly favor expansion of passenger rail services over expanding highway capacity in our most traveled corridors. When making choices among travel options, rail is the first option I consider for distances between 1 and 10 hours distant by automobile.	Travel options
Sparks	Ron	If anything will help increase the services in South Texas then expand the Amtrak line from San Antonio to Corpus Christi and further south to the valley.	Support
Sparks	Carole	I am very much in favor of expanding high-speed rail, not just from OK to TX, TX but throughout the states. It is very much an efficient method of transportation and gives alternate means of travel to those who otherwise might not be able to travel those long distances by car or bus. Please give this proposal your highest priority to implement! It's a project that I feel is well past time to achieve modern/progressive/ options for travel. Thanks for considering the project. I had almost given up that my dream might become reality.	Travel options
Sperling	Beth	I have taken the Heartland Flyer to and from OKC to FTW a number of times and absolutely love it! Any improvements and additions would be wonderful!	Support
Spitzack	Kalee	I'm in favor of better public transportation. It will reduce GHG emissions by getting people off the road. It will also reduce traffic and improve air quality.	congestion
Stangel Jr	Frank	Please make the train from TXX to OKC possible, eventually branching out to various cities on each end. Thanks.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Stanley	Lars	Any increase in rail transportation is very desirable to me, particularly along the IH-35 corridor. The proposed rail line from South Texas to Oklahoma is a good expenditure of tax funds, much better than spending it on more freeways, which have become congested beyond usefulness. Thanks.	Cost
Steele	Debra	My big concern would be how would this fast rail be paid for? As a single older woman, I am having a hard time with the rising prices, taxes, and with less pay! Depending on how this rail would be financed, and the expense to taxpayers -- if the costs are NOT being put on us, then I am all for it. Where the rail is... is, of course, another question. Why can't this rail go to New Mexico and Colorado? I would think those would be more popular places to go than Oklahoma?	funding
Sterling	Janice	I hope we get high-speed rail and that it continues up to either Wichita or Tulsa. Air quality is better when using rail as opposed to vehicles or airplanes. If rate of speed were fast it would be competitive to airplanes. Could use existing rail easements. US is woefully behind Asia and Europe for high-speed rail I support this passenger rail plan	Air quality
Sterzing	H. Keith Mephodie	High speed rail to all major cities is an essential component of any 21st century transportation plan! Please approve and proceed as rapidly as possible!	Support
Stewart	Ruth	The adage of "build it and they will come" seems to apply to road increase and proliferation of traffic The destruction of vast swaths of land required for roads affects the ecology of the area, the business (for better or for worse) and the habitation of wildlife. The polluted air resulting from the innumerable vehicles increases health issues for involved. Seldom is there a positive outcome other than for construction, car manufacturers and oil companies. I would certainly ride trains to Austin and	travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Dallas, were this a reasonable option.	
Stippecc	Rudy and Barbara	It is time that the obstructionists cease their rhetoric on keeping the State of Texas from moving on with PROGRESS. There are so many issues facing Texas but the primary issue is Global Warming otherwise known as Climate Change. The obstructionists need to accept the fact, we repeat, accept the fact that Climate Change is happening NOW; they need to open their eyes to see the devastation being caused by the change in weather patterns, the worsening and the increasing of specific events such as tornadoes, storms, etc.; they need to accept the fact that human beings are causing Climate Change by spewing into the atmosphere toxic pollution, spreading toxic pollution all over our lands and continuing to allow the Big Oil and Gas Companies to pollute; and they need to bring a halt to their greed for more money and power and put all of their efforts to the good of us all instead of for the Big Oil and Gas Companies. We are in desperate need of a massive decrease in the pollution of our home, Earth. Whatever can be done to increase the health and well being of humans along with wildlife and vegetation should and must be done and must be done now. Time is running out on turning the tide against Climate Change. It seems that many live in the NOW and find it hard to think ahead. We are completely on board with turning the tide against Climate Change by cleaning up the air we breathe and the water we must drink; cleaning up our lands from the oil spills and toxic pollutants, etc.; and reducing the number of cars and especially trucks on our roadways, etc. One of the ways to attack Climate Change is to establish a Texas State owned and operated Passenger Railway System with Oklahoma. This would definitely be the beginning, hopefully of bringing Texas up to par with other states.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Stolfa	Anthony	To whom it may concern. I have had the good fortune to travel abroad and have marveled at the environmental and human efficiency that European high speed rail has to offer. For far too long we have sat in traffic tie ups from Oklahoma City to San Antonio and Houston. The Airport offers solutions for long distance travel. But for shorter distances, we are left with basically one option, the car. Like Europe, we are running out of room to build roads and place cars on them. The most efficient and environmentally friendly way to move people is through rail, as long as that rail is fast.	congestion
Stolfa	Anthony	Too many people are dying on overcrowded roadways. The polar caps cannot absorb any more auto emissions. Let's please stop wasting money on overpriced roadways. Taking into account the billions spent on road construction, auto and airline bailouts, and subsidies already supplied to the companies that support those modes of transportation, rail becomes much more attractive.	safety
Stolfa	Anthony	If you consider the cost of maintenance, patrolling, traffic accidents and other factors, rail is less expensive. That is why Europe and Asia rely so heavily on high speed passenger rail. So much so, that they spent money on connecting England to the rest of Europe through rail under the English Channel. Once a high speed rail is established, it will be much easier and cheaper to maintain than the roads we currently take to travel from city to city.	Cost
Stolfa	Anthony	Please work towards a high-speed rail service throughout the country. The immediate need in Texas is high speed rail from Dallas to San Antonio and Houston as well as north to Oklahoma City. An extension to Kansas City and Tulsa would tie the high speed rail to the national network that would link to Chicago. Rail offers options for those who cannot travel by car including the elderly and disabled. It offers a way to	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		breathe easier which will improve the lives of our children. The cost of capital (borrowing) is cheap right now with interest rates at all time lows. The price of failing to invest in this infrastructure is too high.	
Stolzenburg	Lucy	I am thrilled that TxDOT is considering a high speed rail system from South Texas to Oklahoma! I am a veteran of rail travel throughout Asia and Europe. My son has moved from Texas to a city with rail and he refuses to own a car! It is inconceivable that we in Texas, a state with citizens that are always on the go, has not implemented a high speed rail! Rail is reasonably priced, uses less fuel than cars, is a cleaner method of transportation than autos and gets those cars off the road, avoiding those nasty traffic jams.	Cost
Stolzenburg	Lucy	A recent study published in the Wall Street Journal found that children living near roadways choked with traffic had a higher incidence of autism. Given the choice of sitting in traffic on IH-35 or high speed rail, I think the student population of the IH-35 corridor would absolutely pack the trains on the weekends. Let's do it and do it now!	health
Stone	Paula	We need passenger trains! We have needed them for years; we are so far behind Europe in ease of travel. Trains reduce the number of cars and cut the amount of smog and pollution, but more than that, they just make travel easier. I would LOVE to be able to catch a train to the heart of all the great Texas cities. I would visit my family more if I didn't have to make those long, boring, dangerous drives. We NEED a GREAT train system like Europe has!	congestion
Stowers	Alan	Great idea. Please proceed. One suggestion. Please make connections in San Antonio as convenient as possible. Some passengers may want to travel east or west.	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Streever	Paula	We need the train/rail from Oklahoma City to Austin for so many reasons!	Support
Stubbs	Chris	I think we need a high speed rail for the entire country. I think we should have a high speed rail from Corpus Christi to Victoria TX, to San Antonio and all the way through the heartland, through OK City, to St. Louis, to Omaha Nebraska, then to Chicago probably. Just makes environmental sense. Some people don't like to fly. We don't need an oil pipeline through the heartland, we need a high speed rail through the heartland. DO IT!!!!	Routes
Sullivan	Heather I.	I write in favor of rail transport in Texas! It reduces car traffic, helps air quality, and is a much more human AND natural environmentally friendly means of travel. The trip to Austin from San Antonio, for example, can be a nightmare in traffic--same with the trip to Dallas. But with a train, communication and transport would be so much easier and more pleasant. This is a smart choice for Texas and our future!	congestion
Sullivan	Karen M.	Hi speed trains would be terrific. - Less air pollution -- Less dependency on oil -- Cheaper transportation -- Less car accidents	safety
Summerlin	Jesse	High speed rail is an intelligent way t transport people efficiently and cost effectively while minimizing pollution.	Cost
Swafford	Kathie	I would like to see Amtrak instituted between Oklahoma and south Texas. The savings in fuel, noise reduction, safety caused by fewer cars/trucks on the roads, and transportation monies saved are important to all of us. Thank you.	congestion
SWIERCZYN SKI	ADAM	This is a great project, please continue. The environment and human health issues would be lessened by this project.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Swierczynski	Katie	I would very interested in using this train, but strong consideration on the impact of the fuel used and other environmental and human considerations should be exercised.	energy
Syler	Susan	I am in favor of high speed passenger rail particularly along the IH-35 corridor and the IH-10 corridor.	Support
Ta	Kiem	Would be so happy to see the rail road be active and go the south Texas specially because I have families in the Laredo, Corpus Christi, Brownville cities. Can't come to visit them at this point because I can't drive therefore, I have to fly and it is expensive. If I have a week of vacation and the rail is available I could go and visit them in Laredo. I have friends in Wichita, Kansas City, MO therefore, railroad go to those cities would be useful too. I hope I see it happen in my life time. thank you,	Travel options
Tabor-Huerta	Laura	I would love to take a train to work and downtown one day. I live on Boxcar Run and as you can guess from that name a train track runs by it. I saw some stats and I like that trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger! Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. We have too many cars kicking out pollution in Texas its plain and simple. Thank you.	energy
Tabor-Huerta	Laura	South Texas has no passenger rail service-what a shame. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers!-yeah! Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. I love riding on trains. It brings a peacefulness to my trip. It has the aura of the "old west" every time I ride even if it is a short trip.	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
TANNER	BRENDA	Please DO extend Texas Railways!!!! I believe this would serve many purposes!!	Support
Taylor	Scott	Our state, and country as a whole, Invest more in rail to address our growing congested roads. This would create good paying jobs and give a needed alternative to driving.	local and regional economy
Taylor	Keegan	Rail would be awesome in Texas. Austin traffic was poorly dealt with by their city council previously and the congestion at some points is dreadful. I know that changing the culture to ride a rail would be difficult but it is a better investment than the Toll roads that no one uses. Dallas, Houston, and Corpus Christy have DISGUSTING air quality and even visiting over a weekend I can tell that my breathing is different. If a rail system was used the cities would have cleaner air and there would be less sickness. I would Love to see this take effect. Texas taking the lead in public transit would be phenomenal.	congestion
Teague	Susan and John	All Texans will benefit by passenger train service to major cities in so many ways. Why has this option for the Texas workforce been left so undervalued and underfunded and off the table for so long. Why has there been no real logic, good science and fairness regarding real problem solving for transportation needs that the State of Texas has had knowledge of for so long? Passenger rail is logical and good science and fair and will benefit the State of Texas in so many ways including limiting traffic congestion, car accidents and will also keep drinking drivers coming from sporting events and other venues off the road. Passenger rail to major cities will cut air pollution. It keeps oil and toxic run off from roads out of our drinking water sources and saves ecological and sensitive watersheds and green areas from excessive road building in areas of Texas that need to be left in their natural state. It gives citizens an alternative way of transportation and enhances tourism in a less destructive	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		way. Passenger rail is enjoyable and is a long overdue mode of transportation.	
Templet	Mel	Commonsense to reach out to the future.	Support
Terrell	Julie	I am in support or more passenger rail in Texas. It will not only help with air quality but make the roads safer and cleaner with less cars on the Road.	Air quality
Terry	Thomas	Passenger rail service should be expanded throughout Texas as well as the entire nation. Fewer automobiles on our highways would help reduce carbon emissions and allow for another mode of connecting transportation for our growing population. I used to ride the train between Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, when I was young and during World War II workers could ride from areas all around Oklahoma City to Tinker Air Force Base and other industries to work. They still could be providing transportation for thousands of workers if they hadn't removed all the tracks. I support public rail service and it's expansion throughout the United States.	Travel options
Thomas	Heather Joy	We need high speed rail in South Texas!	Support
Thompson	Michael	Better and more environmentally sensitive transportation for the future. I know I would use it.	Support
Thompson	Forrest R	Expanding improving our rail service in Texas will help remove more cars from our highways improving our air quality and reducing traffic on our interstate highways. These highways are already over worked. This proposed new high speed rail will bring our state up to standards found in Japan and Europe.	congestion
Thurstin	Eric	First of all, let me say that I think this study is so important to help Texas and Oklahoma move ahead with better rail infrastructure and more transportation	routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>alternatives for people living in the metro areas that will see an increase in service. I just had two comments/questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there any interest in including a rail connection between Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston? It just seems like the two largest population centers in the state are in need of a rail connection since there is so much car and air traffic already between them. • Should the proposed rail link between Shreveport and Dallas-Fort Worth also be considered with this study? I know that's a separate initiative, but it seems like it would also impact rail service in the region should it come to fruition. 	
Tiffer-Violett	Darling	I am so excited that this issue has come up again for consideration. Passenger rail or train rail running from S. Texas thru Oklahoma, would be so much more convenient for many people who commute between San Antonio and Austin (and vice versa) because of work. It would remove a lot of the traffic between the IH35 corridor, and not only the convenience	Travel options
Tiffer-Violett	Darling	and hopefully removal of pollutants in the air because of less automobiles in the road, but think about the benefits to our wildlife and air quality. I am so, so excited about this and it is my wish that it comes into fruition.	Air quality
Tingle	Lisa	This beautiful city deserves a rail system to protect and preserve the land, the people, the animals and the water.	Natural environment
Tingle	Lisa	We have grown entirely too fast to have this many cars on our grossly inferior road system. It is appalling to me that we STILL do not have a rail system between the big cities of Texas. PLEASE, make this happen, for everyone.	congestion
Todd	David	I strongly endorse efforts to introduce high-speed passenger rail service into Texas, in order to reduce fuel use, traffic congestion, air pollution, and collision risks on our	safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		highways.	
Townsend	Thomas A.	I am for this. Complete disclosure will ensure it coming into fruition.	Support
Tracy	Sarah	I would welcome warmly the opportunity to take a high-speed rail line to D-FW Metro/Austin/San Antonio. I believe that it would improve air quality, reduce traffic, and have an overall positive effect on the economy of the two states. As a 13-year resident of Oklahoma (having moved here from the east coast), I love this region, but I can say that one of the things I do miss--greatly--is the opportunity to take high-speed train lines to other parts of my state and adjacent states. High-speed rail would be a great step in improving the quality-of-life for Texans and Oklahomans.	Travel options
Trecha	Matthew	I recently took the train from East Lansing, MI down to visit friends in both Fort Worth and San Antonio, taking the train between Fort Worth and San Antonio on a round-trip and then back to Michigan from Fort Worth. The snail's pace of the rail was both frustrating and not understandable when my friend and I drove from Fort Worth to Austin and saw the crazy flying overpasses being built by the state of Texas. Nowhere in the Midwest have I ever seen such expense dumped into highways while public transit is left to languish. In fact, Governor Snyder of Michigan accepted federal rail funds after WI and OH turned them down and, as a result, I enjoyed 110 mph service between Kalamazoo, MI and Porter, IN on my way South. This high speed rail study presents the chance to make Texas more attractive to visit and live. Currently, it is much too car-centric for a recent college graduate as myself who wants to avoid car use as much as possible. The opportunity to make Texas a leader in rail should not be embraced on both sides of the aisle as it will make the state more mobile, increase inter-city business and draw new investment to the Lone Star State. I	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		hope it can come to fruition and quickly! Best of luck.	
Tremaine	Lisa	I approve whole-heartedly with a high speed rail system in Texas. Oil is going away. There are too many cars. Please provide good public transportation!	congestion
Treuter	Gina	I support High Speed Rail for Texas! Please be conscious and considerate of the environmental impact to the natural environmental issues of the state. Thank you!	Support
Trevino	Edward	This is one mode of transportation that has been missing in South Texas for years. I remember back in 1964 when I returned to Laredo for leave after training in the Air Force I took the train from Laredo to San Antonio and then from San Antonio to Tucson AZ. This was fairly priced and a comfortable trip. It's enjoyable to take a nice trip, relax and enjoy the view. Rental cars are now becoming reasonable in pricing so once you reach your destination you have mode of transportation. I've traveled from west coast to east coast and I always prefer ground travel (driving) over air travel, only problem is you see the view but have to concentrate on driving safely. Buses are too crowded where the train provides a comfortable atmosphere. To me this idea of Rail travel being brought back is awesome.	travel options
Trice	Mary Lou	Driving on I 35 is dangerous. Many wrecks every day. I don't know if it would be better to use rails for shipping (which would get most of the 18-wheelers off the road) or for passengers. The problems with using it for passengers is that once you get to your destination then you have to rent a car. Maybe we should use rails for both shipping goods and for passengers.	congestion
Trice	Mary Lou	There is an enormous amount of toxic gasses spewing forth from exhaust pipes. This is impacting the health of folks that live here. Also our lakes and streams are being	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		poisoned by the exhaust fumes.	
Triplett	Roy	I believe the rail service from Oklahoma to Dallas would be highly used as airlines are cutting more service and increasing costs. OKC and Tulsa have limited flights and full planes so it is getting harder to use air travel. I feel every effort should be used to get this approved. I for one would certainly use it as a system over air travel often	travel options
Turman	Donna	I am interested in seeing the further development of high speed rail not just from OK to South Texas but a rail that runs east-west as well. Such a rail would take traffic off the road, enhancing safety, and require less state and federal money than the construction and maintenance of additional and existing highways. I hope the rail study will help bring high speed rail to Texas.	Routes
Turner	Matt	Air travel has become ridiculously uncomfortable and SLOW lately. And IH-35 through central Texas has been a headache and death trap forever. I've been wondering why we don't have a fast train (high speed or bullet) between at least the major cities of Texas. Especially, the triangle from Houston to Dallas to San Antonio / Austin. I sure know I'd have taken the Austin - Dallas segment many times already by now. Especially now as our inner cities are getting more populous, trains make more sense, on so many levels.	travel options
Tuttle	Suzanne	I support the proposal to bring high speed rail service to the Texas-Oklahoma corridor and beyond, particularly if it can be constructed within existing corridors. Having this option will take vehicular traffic off our highways	travel options
Tuttle	Suzanne	and help improve air quality, plus could spare undeveloped wild lands from the creation of more roads, thereby saving wildlife habitat and preserving water quality.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Thank you.	
TX		The future of America and its citizens require us to move forward with technologies that are energy efficient, sustainable and environmentally viable. Mass transit is one of those technologies.	Travel options
Ugalde, Jr.	Guillermo R.	I am very much supportive of this railway system! It is needed in our area and will help decongest the automobile traffic on the IH-35 corridor. As we continue to see an increase in population, this project is well overdue. Mass transit is vibrant and effective in every other industrial country, as well as in advanced metropolitan areas around our country. It's about time that we stop playing catch-up, and start leading in the search for proactive solution within our transit system.	congestion
Upadrasta	Suneet	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Vanderlaan	Ann	Expanding rail service in Texas, IF properly publicized, would improve transportation options, reduce traffic and the need for continuous road expansion, and encourage a more leisurely, European-style of travel sorely lacking in the US.	Process
Vaughan	Jane	I would love to see a rail system in Texas-- also, may cut down on DUI	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Verdel	Tom	The scope of this study should include extension of the South Central Corridor from Oklahoma City to Tulsa and eventually linking with rail service to Kansas City and/or St Louis. Failing to acknowledge the logical long-range goal of a transcontinental north-south route from Brownsville to Chicago is short-sighted and a mistake. TxDOT has led the way in future rail planning for the central and southwest United States. Don't stop now and don't ignore the natural future of rail growth in the US.	Routes
Olivares	Norma	Me parece una muy buena idea y me encantaria tener este servicio como opcion para viajar.	Support
Vigness	Jule	The pollution of fossil fuels and traffic from so many citizens in private cars are seriously endangering many standards of health and safety. We are too populous to continue making enough road for everyone. We need public transport. I support it.	Natural environment
Villalon	Xavier	I am in favor of the railroad concept from Laredo Texas to San Antonio Texas. This should have happened years ago, so I'm happy this is being considered now. Please make this happen!:)	Support
Villarreal	Maria E.	We are in desperate need of a passenger train services here in Brownsville Texas... Please consider our growing town to establish this service: Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor. Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion. The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs. The Brownsville/South Padre Island	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With the continued growth of entanglements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail.	
Villarreal	Ron	All for the passenger rail system. You have my yes vote...	Support
Vlahodimitropoulos	Alex	More passenger rail is needed to help with constant traffic congestion, reduce GHG emissions, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.	congestion
Vogelson	Mary	We desperately need more fast rail in the Texas urban corridors. The DFW area health, environmental and water are already suffering due to the increasing amounts of pollution generated daily. With the continued expansion of fracking and the enormous amount of traffic delays, accidents and costs due to poor transportation planning and options, our dependency on oil, gas and automobiles decreases our lives daily! Is it not possible to help increase our quality of life by reducing some of the source point pollution as well as reduce some of the unacknowledged massive pollution coming from air traffic sources by adding fast rail to the Texas landscape? Thank you.	Natural environment
Voltmann	Steve	I am in favor of safe rapid rail passenger transport. It would reduce traffic, air pollution and airport noise.	Support
von Ohlen	Beatriz	I feel that train transportation is better for the environment and will reduce the number of cars on the highways.	congestion
Waldrop	Bob	I support the concept of high speed rail linking Texas destinations into Oklahoma. I travel between OKC and Texas destinations several times a year, and would certainly	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		use such a service.	
Walker	Molly	Austin and the surrounding community is growing leaps and bounds. We need to get cars off the street and people in public transportation. Start using public transportation, one is amazed how much easier, less expensive, and much more pleasant. Getting to work less stressed, on time, and saving the environment at the same time. Public transportation is needed in East Austin especially.	growth
Walker	Tom	The number of stops between OKC and Fort Worth makes rail travel between those cities too slow for business travelers. The same is true for Fort Worth to San Antonio. Given the time it takes, rail travel is too expensive for pleasure passengers. I can to San Antonio much faster than I can travel by rail, and only at a fraction of the cost.	frequency
Wallace	Susan	As a Texan with a 20 mile commute to work every day that takes at least an hour each way, I am in favor of any plan that will reduce the congestion, noise and pollution on Texas roads. Our road construction is 20 years behind the rampant growth and yet developers continue to get the green light to throw up more and more residential developments with absolutely no regard for the health and safety of fellow Texans. If high speed rail can reduce the noise and congestion on our over-clogged roads then I am all in favor.	congestion
Ware	Dennis	Why we are so far behind the rest of the world is unknown. what is known is that the rest of the world is not "waiting" on the USA. Why is it so hard for us to do things that make sense.....financially, environmentally, safety, and convenience.	Travel options
Warner	Jesse	Texas could use as much passenger rail service it can get. I am all for rail.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Warren	Mobi	I strongly support high speed rail for Texas and would be a regular user if it were available to travel between Texas cities. High speed rail makes so much sense for our state for all the following reasons: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks for your consideration	Connectivity
Waskey	Susan	I am for high speed rail in Texas from Dallas to San Antonio, and Dallas to Houston. It will get cars off this extremely congested corridor, which will improve safety and improve air quality in the state and in the cities. The Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth areas are already ozone non-attainment areas, and Austin and San Antonio's air quality are in jeopardy due to the growth in those metropolitan areas.	congestion
Watson	Lowell	I support extending rail transportation as a method of reducing CO2 emissions.	Support
Watson	Thomas	I support development of high speed rail between Oklahoma and south Texas which will help to improve air quality, human health, and traffic safety in Texas by removing automobiles from our already overcrowded IH-35, reducing harmful auto emissions to improve air quality and reducing traffic congestion.	safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Watters	Jaclyn	I'd love a new rail in Texas. I don't own a car and transportation around the state is tough and very expensive, as well as wasteful in terms of gas and the environment. Imagine how much pollution and gas we would save if some of my friends who drive 5 hours to see their girlfriends every weekend had another choice! Public transport is the way if the future and in my experience in Texas it is well used once in place.	Travel options
Wayland	Gregory	Improving passenger rail transportation inside Texas and connections to other destinations would be a great transportation boon to our state. The continual adding and expanding highways degrades our environment and is not the most efficient use of our resources. Having a true mix of transportation options would also help during peak commuter periods in and around large metropolitan areas.	Travel options
Wayland	Gregory	It would also help improve our air and water quality let alone not adding more traffic noise.	noise
Weehler	Christian	Give us more rail options so I can leave the car at home.	Support
Weller	K	I am writing to express the need for passenger rail and the need to extend it north to Kansas City. This will allow more business family and tourist traffic without the need for yet more highway lanes. Please keep moving forward on this. Thank you.	local and regional economy
Wells	Matt	All reasons noted above.	Support
Werner	Brooke	I would love to see more rail service throughout the state. We like to travel but are often limited due to time. If we could rely on rail getting us to and from destinations we would travel more often.	Travel options
Werner III	Braynard H	I'm strongly in favor of a high speed rail project that runs through the busy IH-35	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		corridor from San Antonio to Dallas. I don't have a strong opinion on the other segments in the study, but having spent most of my life living in this corridor and regularly travelling between cities on the proposed route, I believe this high speed rail project would significantly reduce congestion, attain high ridership and help out economically by keeping goods and people moving. Less traffic, less pollution, less lost time—That sounds like a win for everybody.	economy
West	John Lamont	I certainly support the proposed high speed rail for southern Texas from Dallas-Fort Worth all the way to Laredo as well as the Valley. One important consideration is the convenience of availability of other modes of transportation from the railway terminals. If I have to wait at the destination rail station for more than 15 - 20 minutes for a bus or local rail then in all probability I would opt to drive,	Travel options
Wetmore	Larry	I think this rail service would link S TX to the rest of Amtrak's service area and encourage an alternative to driving cars, thereby improving TX air quality. trains are much more efficient than cars or airplanes.	Travel options
Wheeler	Diana	Hello, As a resident of Texas I wanted to voice my strong support for more rail options! Cars and trucks are inefficient and far more polluting than mass transit - like rail. And besides, rail is just plain fun:) Every day I bike to get my kids from school and I go right over Mopac (Loop 1). The road traffic I see is terrible, but the train is immune from that congestion. If there were more rail options, I would definitely be taking the train on more trips instead of flying or driving. For example, we drive to San Antonio at least once a month. I would absolutely pay to take a train instead. And if there were a train from Austin to Dallas or Houston, then going to those cities would not be as unpleasant a trip as it is now, by car.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Wheeler	Patricia	I support TxDOT plans for expanding rail transportation in TX (and beyond!). There are many reasons why this will be beneficial to all Texans as well as visitors: 1) Train transportation will keep more cars off the road thus benefitting the environment. 2) A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. 3) Train travel is more enjoyable and less stressful than driving. 4) Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion is reduced. This benefits people and our environment.	congestion
Wheeler	Patricia	5) Train travel encourages tourism because people could travel faster and more widely. When visiting Ireland, we were able to visit many cities from Dublin to Cork by train. This saved car rental, gas, time, and the scary experience of trying to drive on the wrong side of the road! I know I would visit Austin, Houston, Galveston and Corpus (and points north like even up to Wichita, Ks) a lot more if I didn't have to drive. Again, I will support any effort to improve train travel in Texas.	local and regional economy
Whitacre	Craig	I travel back and forth from Oklahoma City to both Dallas and Houston. The IH-35/I45 drive is quite a mess on most weekends. I'm interested in rail travel. I have ridden the Heartland Flyer a few times. Any expansion of rail service would be appreciated and used.	Travel options
White	Nancy	I am in favor of the Texas-Oklahoma Rail line proposed.	Support
white	Linda	I am looking forward to this transportation addition it is a safe and wonderful way to travel.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Whitlow	Mary	I am all for the higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. It will be a great thing for Texas!	Support
Whitney	Eric	I think I would use the train often in travelling between San Antonio and Dallas. Sometimes I go to Houston too, so it should be included as a destination if it isn't already. The map I saw was not clear about Houston. I would like to see light rail extended down to Laredo, too. The train would be convenient for me and many other Texans even as currently proposed, without the leg down to Laredo. I also think the train should hit Corpus, El Paso, and Brownsville.	Routes
Whitney	Eric	There are far too many cars on the road now. I think rail would reduce car traffic, and anything that does that is a good thing. Too much land and money is used up in providing more roads and space for more damn cars. Trains aren't as noisy as cars and airplanes. I like that; there's too much noise as it is.	congestion
Whitney	Eric	I don't believe trains pollute nearly as much as cars or planes do. Light rail will certainly cut down on car use, and also it would probably cut down on airplane use within Texas and that's good because planes are a significant source of air pollution too. Air pollution is bad in Texas--just look at how many kids have asthma--so if a train can lower car and plane usage it will lower air pollution in general and kids can breathe easier. If you get a bunch of drivers off the road and onto trains, I think it will be safer to travel in Texas just because you reduce the number of vehicles in motion at any one time. That surely reduces the chances for accidents.	Air quality
Whitney	Eric	Everyone hates going through the airport security routine, and besides everyone knows it's just theater that the politicians want so they can say they're doing something about security. Trains don't have that problem, or at least, they don't have	benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		near as much of it. I would prefer a train just so I can avoid using air travel. Trains are nice because you can work or read or maybe just relax, and you don't have to worry about driving or maintaining a vehicle, or about getting a traffic ticket or any of the other related hassles of driving. You just get on the train and ride. A train would help folks who are too old to drive to get around better, and it would help people who can't afford a car but could buy a train ticket. Texas ought to think about folks like that.	
Whitney	Eric	Oil and gas consumption will be reduced, and that is good for the environment and for everyone's pocketbook. TxDOT ought to build a solar power plant specifically to cover the electrical use of the light rail system, and then you'd have nothing but a huge gain, environmentally speaking. Traffic fossil fuel usage contributes to global warming, and we better get smart real quick about cutting back on it. Light rail is part of the answer. Finally, light rail gives you more choices, and who is against that? Let's have it in Texas right now.	energy
Wiggins	James E	I am wildly in favor of getting high speed rail in Texas, wherever it goes. Mass transportation is always a good thing, since it has multiple benefits. It gets some cars/trucks off of the road, which improves our environmental (think clean air!) situation.	travel options
Wiggins	James E	It helps people who don't have cars get from point A to point B in a cost effective way. Texas is a huge state, and having higher speed rail would improve its outlook in a business sense. Thanks for listening, and let's get this done!	local and regional economy
Wilbanks	Tom	I like the idea of the high speed rail line from Texas to Oklahoma which is being considered. I have used this in France - and it is great.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Wilcox	George	I think that a high speed passenger rail line from Oklahoma to South Texas would greatly reduce traffic on Texas highways and provide for a more environmentally friendly method of transportation for a lot of Texans.	congestion
Wilhelm	Franya	We need as many means of transportation that will free up our roads and highways. It's the 21st century, after all!	Support
Wilkerson	Sandra	Two Questions: 1. Why is there no consideration for passenger rail from Galveston - Houston - Dallas Corridor? 2. Where is TxDOT getting the funding to "support" the Air Traffic Control Towers? From the \$50M Fleet reduction? Really?	routes
Williams	Trudy	I would like to utilize a high speed rail system to Dallas, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and El Paso.	Support
Williams	David	It is my view that the study should target the use of the fastest, most modern passenger transportation modality at the time the rail links are put in place. We should NOT be considering using passenger rail modalities existing today. We SHOULD be looking at the maglev trains in China and European technology. Realistically, at the rate this study and actual implementation of study recommendations proceed, it will be many years before we see a solution to a problem that exists now and is just getting worse (just like congestion in Texas highways.) By the time we are ready to go, technology such as used in China and Europe will have advanced even more. For this study end up scoping anything but using the best possible future technology would be a great disservice to this country, in addition to being a waste of taxpayer funds.	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Williams	Judy	What a great idea! I would certainly travel this way.	Support
Willson	Matt	I am strongly in favor of expanded high speed rail service in Texas. There are several reasons: * Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. * A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. * South Texas has no passenger rail service. * The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. * Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. * Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options
Wilson	Laura W.	I am in favor of transit, alternatives to cars. I believe there are health benefits with walkable cities. Evidently Houston is not on the planned route, at least I see there is no meeting scheduled in Houston on that list. But I'm still very much in favor of Texas Oklahoma developing passenger rail. High speed is not nearly as important as Alternative to autos, in my book.	Travel options
WINSETT	ELSA	I think that is great... a passenger train would open up soo many opportunities for travel in Texas and Oklahoma. I my opinion it is a great impact on the economy, plus the experience of traveling on a train is one that every child looks forward too.	Travel options
WINSETT	ELSA	I would also like to see it routed thru West Texas, especially the Hill Country..... that would be a beautiful ride in a train! I hope I live to ride the train!!!	Routes
Wolfe	Christina	I would like to see more high speed trains operating in Texas.	Support
Wood	David	I support the building of rail systems here in Texas. It makes sense for sustainability	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		development here for so many reasons.	
Wood	Shelva	Exactly WHERE will it go???	Question
Wood	Isabel	TX needs passenger and light rail.	Support
Wood	Robin	I think more passenger rail options would be a great thing. If there were more mass transit options it would cut down on pollution, traffic accidents, travel time, personal fuel usage/costs, and be helpful to the planet.	Travel options
Wood	Laurie	Please make the rail a viable alternative to the options we now utilize for travel. The road conditions from overuse continue to deteriorate and with rapidity. I saw on the evening news yesterday that Austin is contemplating a Gondola to help solve the congestion in the city. That is quite a creative response to an old and tedious issue in a city that is heaving in its population.	Travel options
Worsham	Benjamin	I would like to show my support of a passenger rail system connecting Hidalgo County and the Rio Grande Valley to the rest of the state and Oklahoma, specifically the connection that would connect McAllen/Edinburg directly to San Antonio.	Connectivity
Worsham	Benjamin	This would go a long way to improve the economy of the both the valley and San Antonio area and allow those who cannot afford to travel an affordable and timely option.	local and regional economy
Worsham	Benjamin	This would also make the proposed Hidalgo County Commuter Rail System more viable and give a boost to its development. The direct connection would also allow for a dedicated passenger rail line, instead of a shared freight line, which would also allow for safer and quicker travel.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Wright	James A.	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options
Wright	Robert	A high-speed train along the IH-35 corridor has long been desired and needed. Connecting city centers, with their local transportation hubs, to other city centers will take much automobile congestion off the highway, provide a more relaxed and cheaper alternative for travel than either airplane or automobile, and have beneficial environmental effects by reducing the consumption of fossil fuels. This is a much better alternative than concreting multi-lane highways.	Connectivity
Wu	Jennifer	Please consider including Houston in the rail study. The large number of energy jobs and the state-of-the-art medical center make Houston a popular destination for visitors from Dallas, Austin, and OKC. Thank you!	local and regional economy
Wunderlin	Beverly	I am in support of the construction of rail travel, particularly high speed rail. I care about the wildlife and the beauty of the natural environment.	Support
Wyman	Stephen	TX is prime territory for high speed rail!	Support
Yan	Jeffrey S.	How is the project financially justified?	funding
Yates	Dick	Passenger transportation is 100 years behind other areas of the USA. It is not only	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		time, but past time to get this mode of transportation available in Texas.	
Yocham	Katie	If planned and executed with minimal environmental impact and using renewable energy, this rail would be a great asset! I went to Baylor as an undergrad and would have utilized this a thousand times over. It just isn't convenient to have the closest stop in McGregor. Keep up the good work!	energy
Young	Susan	I support a high speed passenger rail system to run from Oklahoma City to south Texas. I would LOVE to be able to take a high speed train to San Antonio, Dallas or Oklahoma City. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Connectivity
Zacha	Kimberly	I am excited about the potential of the Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail system. I can't wait to be able to use it.	Support
Zahn	Bernie	This will also open up job opportunities in preparation for the rail, during, and completion. I lived in Europe for a couple of years. I always took the rail, bus, or walked most everywhere. It was fun, enjoyable, and a way to visit with others. It also is a great way to organize your day. So things that we put off we can finish up. Then of course there is the internet and texting or calling. All in all, I think this would be fantastic. Please keep me posted on this! P.S. I am one of those that would like to work for the Dept. of Transportation!	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Zametz	James	I would just like to say that I am for the proposed speed rail line to run from OKC to Austin. I believe that alternative transportation options are vital to America's future and environmental health. Thank you.	Support
Zarella	Laura	I agree with a passenger rail system between Texas and Oklahoma. Having a rail service will help remove the number of cars on the road, lessen the amount of accidents which occur due to driving miles and getting tired. Since we already have one in place extending it to South Texas would be a great benefit. We have been asking for a Rail Service between Austin and San Antonio due to the number of people who travel to and fro for work, visiting families, attending college, etc.	congestion
Zarella	Laura	Please keep in mind this Rail Service needs to be affordable for passengers.	affordability
Zeigler	John	Traffic congestion and pollution are only continuing to increase. Building more roads and manufacturing more automobiles is not a sustainable solution. We need more efficient and environmentally friendly mass transit. We are killing ourselves and the environment with our auto related effluent.	congestion
ZIEBARTH	KARL	We are going to choke to death stuck in traffic if we just keep building more roads, even toll roads. Realistic rail alternatives will improve air quality and reduce noise and congestion -- if done right.	congestion
ZIEBARTH	KARL	The key to successful rail passenger service is frequency and reliability first, speed second. High speed (>110 mph) is probably not realistic given RoW acquisition, center-city access, and cost issues. So, concentrate on higher speed rail (HrSR) -- reliable service in 79 -110 mph range, using as much as possible existing RoW, including shared RoW with freight carriers. The latter involves 2 major issues: protection of freight rail from excess liability, especially punitive liability which	frequency

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		makes plaintiffs lawyers salivate, by passing some form of sovereign immunity or cap on damages as reasonable levels (TX medical punitive capped at \$500,000 per incident, don't know OK law).	
ZIEBARTH	KARL	the second is compensation on reasonable (not UP) basis for capacity on freight line which is used by passenger -- suggest user charge based on time/space occupied or flat rate per rev passenger mile. Frequency of service is critical variable -- for example, the daily Fort Worth - OK City train only works for round trip from OK City end -- desperately need a second train based on Fort Worth. Then, logical expansion of service would be to extend to Austin, meaning that between Austin and Fort Worth there would be 3 pairs of trains (2 being extension of Heartland Flyer service + existing Texas Eagle).	affordability
ZIEBARTH	KARL	Incremental expansion of this type is far more cost effective. Concentrate new funding on track improvements (sidings, tie condition, rail, line and surface) and on eliminating bottlenecks (complete Valley View siding so as to improve Texas Eagle schedule and eliminate interference with UP E-W main line and reduce crossing interference at Tower 55). Second but critical issue is equipment -- breakdowns of AMTRAK stock are all too frequent, consider second hand Talgo, etc. as substitute. Finally, connectivity at terminals -- cross platform if possible -- is key to expanding the catchment pool. Now, relatively few potential passengers have easy or inexpensive access to rail stations. This must involve city planners, MPO, and local transit agencies.	funding
Zirschky	Katrina	I would love for this to happen. There is so very little in the way of public transportation down here and it would make life so much easier!	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Zuniga	Kevin	I spent a month last summer living and working in Germany for the Army and I must say that the option of a public transit rail system from Texas to Oklahoma is a great idea. The fear is an initial under-investment that cannot be upgraded easily! If we're going to build a rail, open things up for private competition until the most advanced options available are on the table. If this project is rushed and standard rail lines are used (slow trains) then the likelihood that people will want to utilize them will be small. If high-speed rails come to Texas I'm certain people will commute both ways and I for one will definitely use them for vacations, etc. Good luck!	funding
	Amy	This would be a wonderful development for Texas.	Support
	Arlo	Please only build new rail with PRIVATE funds. If companies cannot make it profitable, then apparently not enough people can use it to justify the cost. Austin has seen too many government funded railways built with no one riding them. Not once have I see anyone waiting at any of the rail stations in our area, other than the Metro employees themselves! Enough with tax dollars going to speculative transportation schemes!	Cost
	Bailey	Rails are good for the environment, good for the economy, good for safety, and good for quality of life. America needs to get on board.	natural environment
	Camden	Please allow bikes to be placed on train going both to and from Oklahoma.	bikes
	Carmen	It would be great to travel north TX in train, avoid all traffic at the highway and all the long hours spent in the car. Yes, if it would be available at the right ticket price, I would love to travel by train instead than by car, of course that they would have to be in place a better way of transportation once we get to the desire destination, better bus route and connectivity with places of interest.... it would be nice to travel to San	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Antonio, Austin, Corpus for the weekend without the long drive....	
	Carol	Texas lags behind in public transportation options. More people traveling by train would give another option in travel and keep more drivers off the roads. Even though we are a state of big oil and cars, there ARE other ways to travel and trains are a good one. There are many reasons to use trains more and private vehicles less from environmental to safety. Thank you.	Travel options
	Chris Z	Please add or reprovision more rails, a direct rail for Express from Corpus Christi Hub to Houston Hub would be Super Fantastic. Also High Speed between hubs Dallas/Fort Worth - Houston - San Antonio - Austin - Corpus Christi would be great. Please grow a set and make this rail system happen. A functional efficient rail system was needed 40 years ago.	Routes
	Dana	Yes we want this!	Support
	David	I recall just a Railway was in use back in the late 70's. A railway corridor leading to STX from Austin as it leads to NTX would be ideal as a traffic solution. The current use of bus as an alternative method over POV results in the same delays. The current bottlenecks in major cities on IH-35 is mind boggling. Railway was once used in the past, why were they removed?	Travel options
	David	I am very much in favor of more passenger rail service in Texas. If we could connect our major cities by high-speed rail we would see benefits in convenience, air quality, and traffic. I recently visited Europe and was very impressed by the comfort and speed of rail transportation. Please bring it to Texas. Thanks for your time.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
	Eden	I love the idea of having a passenger rail in Texas! This is something we definitely need! I'm hoping for a fast train, also hoping for something a little less expensive than Amtrak. I've taken passenger trains in the northeast and in England, and I've always thought: "Why don't we have these in Texas?"	Travel options
	Erin	I would like to see passenger rail within large Texas cities as well as between them. Rails connecting San Antonio, Austin, Dallas and Houston would also be beneficial. Passenger rails would benefit Texans by improving air quality, and reducing time spent in traffic.	Routes
	Gary	I support high speed rails in Texas because it lets people have choices, reduces traffic and helps in our dependence from oil and gas.	Travel options
	Imelda	Federally Funded? They should use the money to fund Border Patrol pay and keep our border safe!!! They should also fund education!!! not a train that will take jobs away from bus drivers... No, do not build it!! Bad, bad idea	Against
	JAIME R.	Just want to say that this would be the greatest thing since the building of IH-35. Please approve this corridor.	Support
	Janet	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
	Jason	Passenger rail (both high-speed and local trains) must be aggressively developed to offset the growing congestion along the IH-35 parking lot...I mean corridor. Give travelers multiple options like toll roads, high-speed rail and local rail or bus service, and integrate them into a system of options so that people can choose the transport method that best suits their individual needs. I've seen how transit, rail, and air transport hubs, linking large cities and small towns, worked when I was stationed in Germany. It worked because the different modes were all inter-connected.	congestion
	Jeffery	This project would really benefit the state as a whole. I hope that the investment is made in an intelligent manner to provide a high quality service to as many Texans as possible.	Support
	Jesse	High Speed Rail for Texas!	Support
	Jim	First let me say I am in favor a high speed rail system rather than the rail system that is being proposed. High speed would be so superior on so many levels. It seems the rest of the industrial countries of the world can do it so could the US. But any rail rather than truck or vehicle would enhance protecting the environment and air quality. It would reduce vehicle and truck traffic which will enhance safety for all. It seems to be a no brainer except for those that want to keep TX in the dark ages. If Texas leadership wants to create livable wage jobs here is their opportunity.	High speed
	Jim	Congestion on trip from San Antonio to Dallas during Thanksgiving holiday has become unbearable.	congestion
	Joe	I think having a passenger train to Brownsville and her Valley of the Rio Grande would be great. I've traveled on Amtrak throughout the country and enjoy it very much. I've taken Greyhound bus from Houston to Brownsville and sometimes the bus	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	is late or it has even broken down a couple of times along the way, if we had a train going down to Brownsville I would definitely ride it as well as some other people that I know from Houston.	
Jose	I think that rail service would be a great alternative to driving or flying out of the Rio Grande Valley. I think that it would help so many of us who can't afford the escalating gas prices, or the high cost of flying, in order to be able to get to visit family living so far away, as well as being able to finally visit museums and other cultural points of interests.	Travel options
Kari	Texas needs more rail systems!	Support
Laura	I am in support of intrastate high-speed passenger rail that mimics the European model of travel. I was so impressed by the capabilities of mass transit when I visited Europe, and I hope the someday the US will progress to options that allow more traveler options and benefit the environment (air, land, water, resources). There was a time when I commuted daily from San Antonio to Austin, and it was exhausting and my time was not productive.	Travel options
Lawrence	It is time to bring Texas into the future...or truly into the present when you consider the train facilities of other parts of the United States of America. High speed rail service is a necessary service that would benefit a majority of the people of Texas. It is time that high speed rail service is planned and implemented and not let it be thwarted once again by the "airline lobbies" that have kept this service from becoming a reality up until now.	Travel options
Marigay	Yes, let's get into the 21st century!!	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Lund	Mark	On behalf of the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am forwarding a Purpose and Needs Statement (Attachment One) herein, concerning the Passenger Rail Study. In addition to the points outlined in the aforementioned attachment, there is another factor worthy of consideration.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Lund	Mark	Specifically, provision of passenger rail service can help expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from South Texas, in the event of an approaching hurricane. This objective serves the public interest and promotes the health and general welfare of the community. The current plans or arrangements of evacuating persons via airlifts is inefficient and dependent on the existence of favorable weather conditions. (see attachment)	Residents, businesses, and visitors
	Mitzi	As a Native Texan trying to get around in Texas all my life - the one highway -North and South- has always been obsolete. Rail is cleaner, faster, safer and hopefully comparable in transportation cost compared to auto. I would definitely use it just like I use SH130 even though I pay for its use. Let's move forward!!! but it MUST NOT degrade areas of wildlife and water quality. With all of our knowledge and sources we should be able to minimize our impact of build-out. We MUST also plan for 'no sprawl' by not commercializing along the lines....people should be able to ride while looking at land and the beautiful Texas landscape. Thanks!	Travel options
	Nathalie	More train transportation is a fantastic idea and will prevent potential highway congestion, wrecks, and save money for the consumer. It also reduces personal stress!!	Travel options
	Peter	I would very much like to see a passenger rail line built between Oklahoma and South Texas. I live in the Austin area, which is choked with traffic and would ride a	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		passenger train to go to Dallas and other destinations if one were available (Amtrak is impractical because so few trains run). Trains are a good alternative to auto travel and would help provide more travel options to people who do not have cars, or do not want to fight traffic. We need a real rail system in Texas.	
	Rose	I commute to work from Kyle to N. Austin every day, seems I have to keep leaving my home earlier and earlier in order to get to work on time. I would love for there to be a commuter rail that would bypass all the traffic on IH 35 into Austin. That would be my mode of transit into work. I feel a commuter rail system would alleviate a lot of congestion, pollution and mental aggravation that rush hour traffic creates. I am concerned though, what this would mean to the environment (i.e.: cutting down trees, wildlife habitats affected, effect on streams.....) when constructing this system. I am also concerned about tax raises, we already pay high property taxes in Hays County. Thank you!	Travel options
	Ryan	I am opposed to high speed rail. It is incredibly expensive and underutilized in most areas of the nation. It may be suitable within the state of Texas to move people from one densely populated urban area (i.e. Houston) to another (i.e. Dallas). However I see little need for rail traffic going into Oklahoma. Also there is the subject of building a rail system which will obviously require property be condemned and seized via eminent domain. This will anger many. Please abandon high speed rail as a solution to our transportation needs. It is a 19th century answer to a 21st century issue.	Against
	Samia	Texas is getting too populated in the urban areas. Rail is a must.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
	Sandra	I think a passenger train would be a great idea it would attract more tourism and that would boost the economic downturn we are facing here locally and it would also be a great opportunity for more jobs and an experience to travel in a train	local and regional economy
	Sofia	With the economy in recession, this will be a great and economic way to get around. It is much better environmentally than cars and planes and is faster and more reliable than a bus. This is something us citizens not only need, we deserve to have something we can use like this and put our hard earned money to great use. Totally in favor of this great investment! It is about time south Texas gets something worth bragging about!	local and regional economy
	Teresa	I support expanding the passenger rail system in Texas as a clean and efficient alternative transportation for public use.	Travel options
	Teri	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Travel options
Mendenhall	Terry	We need a better rail system in Texas. Highways and air travel should not be the only viable options for travel between cities in and outside of Texas.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
	Tiffany	I would love to have a high speed train between Oklahoma and South Texas. Here are some positive reasons to have one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. 	Travel options
	Zach	MORE TRAINS!!!!	Support
Burton	Angela R.	When we look at the purpose of the study Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island should be the preferred corridor for the following reasons:	Routes
Burton	Angela R.	1.Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor. 2.Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion. 3.The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs. 7. The rail service will promote both the general welfare and economic development in the area.	local and regional economy
Burton	Angela R.	4.The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		main runway. With the continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail. 5. In the event of an emergency the passenger rail service could effectively evacuate elderly and disabled people. 6. The rail service will provide an affordable means of travel to area residents.	
Schultz	Stephen	Hi, I found some excitement in your article, about extending rail service to the coast. I hope it's to / thru Aransas pass (near Corpus Christi). Ee often go to San Antonio and Fort Worth. This would save our driving. as retired seniors, we have taked bus trips also. Used to enjoy the trips to dallas areas, from fort worth. We hope this does become reality. I know we have rails down here, but commercial stuff. thanks, Stephen	Benefits of train travel
Shana	Horton	I am looking for a map that shows all proposed rail routes with county lines and highways, if possible. The map on the website does not have any county lines or highways, making it difficult to tell which property might be impacted. Thank you, Shana Horton	Question
David	Meer	NBC News mentioned funds to develop a rail line from Ok to south TX, running through Dallas with stop in Waco. We have family and grandchildren in Waco, so we would be VERY interested in this route, depending on time, days avail, and time of this segment.	Benefits of train travel
Simmons	Kevin	I want to support the expansion of rail service in Texas. While on sabbatical as a Fulbright scholar in Europe, I had the chance to experience the convenience of high speed passenger rail. It's unbelievable that we cannot have a similar system. My wife and I plan to be at the Sherman meeting on April 2.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Cates	Ann	I would like to inquire on the status of a line from Dallas to Houston? I don't see Houston included in this study, but are there any additional studies planned that would include Houston on the rail line?	Question
Newman	Marcy	I would like to request a list of the stakeholders for the TXOK High Speed Rail Study - those invited and those that attended the February 2013 stakeholder meeting on the project. Thanks.	Question
Shrek	Kamel	Hi, I am writing to support Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail. I think it is a very good idea for tourism and to provide alternative economical transportation needed by many people. It will help in reducing accidents on the highways and save lives. Also, it will help the environment by using less cars on the highways. Finally, it will help creating more jobs and business for many areas.	Support
Humm	William	<p>Please send me the studies and data that support the statements included in the Service Level Environmental Impact Statement for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City, Notice by the Federal Railroad Administration on 03/13/2013 as cited below:</p> <p>Projections for the Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio portion of the corridor show average speeds along IH-35 would drop from 55 to 15 miles per hour by 2035.</p> <p>The central section, via existing IH-35, is characterized by substantially higher automobile and truck volumes than any other intercity corridor in the state. These volumes are projected to increase steadily through 2035, by which time traffic volumes are projected to result in freeway speeds as low as 15 miles per hour, contributing to very substantial delays.</p>	Question

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Camacho	Monica	When will they do a study for the I10 corridor?	Question
Kelly	Lydia	I would like to be included on emails that have to do with public involvement opportunities on all things transportation in the SA-BC MPO region. I'm retiring and won't have access to the info from work; but want to stay involved. Thanks	Question
Morales	Mary	Thank you, thank you, thank you for the possibility of getting passenger rail service to South Texas. I rode the train all the way to St. Louis, MO when Laredo had AMTRAK service. Since Laredo is the largest inland port in the USA, I feel that there must be a lot of potential passengers who would use the service. I have relatives in Oklahoma City, Fort Worth and Missouri whom I am sure would use the service if available. I know I would. Air travel has gotten so burdensome. I am 68 years old, white haired and have had a knee replacement. It is getting more and more difficult to deal with the TSA pat downs. I know if I had the choice of train travel or plane travel, I would much prefer the train. Again, thank you for this forum. God's best to you and all who are working on this great undertaking for the central-southern United States of America. Sincerely, Mary Morales	Support
Wheeler	Patricia	Dear TxDOT, I filled out your survey today on extending rail transportation in Texas but had difficulty submitting it through Survey Monkey. Usually you get some sort of "thank you for your submission," but the form hung up. Therefore, I am sending my comments via your email. I support TxDOT plans for expanding rail transportation in TX (and beyond!). There are many reasons why this will be beneficial to all Texans as well as visitors:	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>1) Train transportation will keep more cars off the road thus benefitting the environment.</p> <p>2) A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger.</p> <p>3) Train travel is more enjoyable and less stressful than driving.</p> <p>4) Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion is reduced. This benefits people and our environment.</p> <p>5) Train travel encourages tourism because people could travel faster and more widely.</p> <p>When visiting Ireland, we were conveniently able to visit many cities from Dublin to Cork by train. Stations were usually within walking distance to the city center. We occupied four seats facing each other with a table between them. Brilliant! This facilitated the use of laptops (which were in abundant use), eating, and game-playing for the children. The train was spotless and we were offered a variety of refreshments for purchase from a wheeled cart. The ticket cost was surprisingly inexpensive. We saved car rental, gas, time, frustration, and the scary experience of trying to drive on the wrong side of the road! I know we would visit Austin, Houston, Galveston and Corpus (and points north--like even up to Wichita, KS)-- a lot more if we didn't have to drive.</p> <p>Again, I will support any effort to improve train travel in Texas.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Oliveira	Carlos	The I 35 corridor is becoming a very busy highway (CARS,TRUCKS,EAGLEDORD SHELL PROVIDING SERVICE TRUCKS) AND THE AIR SERVICE PROVIDESUS WITH A VERY LIMITED CHOICE. WE ARE IN NEED OF ANOTHER FORM OF TRANSPORTATION, THE SPEED RAIL IS THE MOST FEASIBLE... THANK YOU	Travel options
Pichot	Tom	We fly to Oklahoma City about five times per year. We need high speed trains should we change. We also travel to Hondo Tex forty miles west of San Antonio about eight to ten times a year. Again High Speed is necessary. Tom Pichot	Support
Allen	Marks	Please include Natural Gas generating electricity into your train studies. Electric Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City. The Heartland Flyer extended to Wichita, Kansas. Many people from Wichita have direct flights to Dallas every day. Natural gas is our low priced resource and the industry can partner with passenger train legislation in every state. Electrical infrastructure regionally adds expense but that's the best fuel source in the long term. An environmental fast train in our region. Amtrak will have their many stops cities. High Speed trains on separate tracks going 200 mile distances. 150 mph trains is legal now, the future can add speeds. Class 9 rails are need. KDOT has to soon help Wichita getting on the DOT High Speed Rail map so the city can qualify for Federal NEPA studies. Wichita is the passenger train connector city between the southern and northern trains to Kansas City, to St. Louis, to Chicago. We need electric trains rolling in our region that are using natural gas generating the	Energy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		electricity.	
Monroe	James	I am a former Railway Mail Clerk. Moved up here from Texas in 1950. All my family, brothers and sisters, live in Texas and I am too old to drive. If they would put the train back on like it was in 1950, Newton and Fort Worth, I would be able to visit my brother in San Antonio, brother in Fort Worth, sister in Waco, sister in Houston. I have relatives all over Texas. There are weddings, graduations, funerals, etc. I would like to attend.	Support
Groff	Horace	<p>As a former public official I am very much aware of the impact of Texas population growth is having on our transportation system. No one wants to increase fuel taxes, motor vehicles are mandated to be more fuel efficient and the cost of building and maintaining the highway system makes it impossible for government to keep pace with the demands for an efficient transportation system.</p> <p>An efficient and convenient rail system will do much to relieve the current and future congestion in many areas of our state. Rail travel will also give the traveling public another option to avoid the congestion and hassle of air travel.</p> <p>I urge the pursuit of this project and look forward to its completion and implementation. Texas needs a modern passenger rail system.</p>	congestion
Garry	Susan	This is a comment for the TX-Okla rail scoping study. I agree with Mickey Burleson, who has pointed out: Texans are not ready for high speed rail and an investment in same will prove a waste of taxpayer money, agency time and effort. Current ridership on Amtrak is not high and is lower than publicized figures indicate. Amtrak counts each entry and each exit as a separate rider; so publicized numbers are skewed. If current service included more trains, better facilities on board (and at stations) and	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>rates that beat the cost of gas for auto travel, then Texans might prefer the inconvenience of public transportation. If we can take our cars for the same or less money, we will. If we're in a big hurry we will prefer plane travel. Accurate projected ridership is critical to making a wise decision about such a project, and national surveys have shown that time and again eventual usage of recently completed toll roads and rails has been much lower than predicted; so we cannot rely on ridership predictions. The most costly environmental damage of a bullet train would be the destruction of prime farmland. A new route would likely be built through the Blackland Prairie ecoregion, home of the most productive soil in Texas and the most severely impacted by development in our nation. The same projected population increase TxDOT claims would necessitate something like a bullet train would also necessitate production of more food and would require use of every inch of arable soil the world has to offer. Since all the world's arable soil is already in production, there would be serious competition we cannot responsibly ignore for the thousands of acres a bullet train would consume. If this is to be an electric train, there would be still more productive land gobbled up by new transmission lines coming in to the route at points along the way, and this loss and construction should be factored in to overall financial and environmental costs. Because of shrink/swell characteristics of soils of the Blackland Prairie and hazards they cause to road and rail beds, soils will have to be removed and rock brought in to guarantee a smooth rail bed. Nearest sources for rock will be the Hill Country where further lands will be environmentally degraded. Hauling hundreds of truckloads of rock required will do costly damage to roads, many of which are county-maintained. These activities cause off-site damage which must be factored into costs and losses resulting from the project. Valuable wetlands and exceptionally rare tall-grass prairie plant communities will be destroyed and cannot be replaced. Wildlife on the Blackland is already scarce and impacted severely by</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		development. Corridors that permit wildlife movement to water and food will be blocked and their numbers greatly decreased. Crossings will be limited and many roads blocked because of the expense of construction. This will also negatively impact rural residents and school bus travelers.	
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Except those are good concerns, rail travel would be good for our citizens and community - great travel to OKC/DFW and good to bring others to Ardmore.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	A more full future schedule would be helpful.	Process
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Don't bypass Ardmore! Thank you for coming to Ardmore!	Routes
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	City and train or just city needs to plan transportation from the train to the final destination, Lake Murray, Harry Murphy, convention center, etc.	Routes
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Citizens do complain about the freedom engineers have to "toot their horn" for long periods of time at rail crossings.	Noise
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	If schedules permitted - riders could come to Ardmore for weekend and holiday stays.	local and regional economy
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Train ridership should eliminate interstate traffic congestion	congestion
Ellis	Vice Mayor	Of course, building a rail but keeping it in downtown Ardmore is paramount as well	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
	Sheryl	as keeping other rail traffic.	
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Grow the Amtrak business and go slow with regard to building infrastructure.	Funding
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	I would like to ride the train north and be able to make connections.	Routes
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	I would like to take a bike, a dog, large luggage and be able to bring back full shopping bags.	Benefits of train travel
Ellis	Vice Mayor Sheryl	Please plan for rail crossing and street repair ahead of time.	existing tracks
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		Those who cannot drive can now travel more independently	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		More activity, more businesses, more tax revenue, better safety.	Safety
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		It will be positive if you leverage existing stations, those sections of towns will revitalize, especially with more frequent service.	local and regional economy
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		Positive - the more frequent the trains, the more positive the impact.	frequency
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		Positive - the more frequent the trains, the more positive the impact. Fewer cars, positive impact. Look at the numbers.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Ardmore - Anonymous 1		At first higher speed from Dallas through Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Kansas City. High speed from DFW to San Antonio and Houston. Higher speed from San Antonio southward. Eventually high speed will replace higher speed. Frequency is important. We must have more than one train a day while this study is going on.	Travel options
Ardmore - Anonymous 2		Better, more frequent schedules would make larger, more populated areas accessible	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Ardmore - Anonymous 2		Minimal	Safety
Ardmore - Anonymous 2		Bolster tourism	local and regional economy
Ardmore - Anonymous 2		Could reduce traffic with timely schedules	congestion
Ardmore - Anonymous 2		Mass transportation helps the environment - reduces traffic	Natural environment
Austin - Anonymous 1		Rail will bring our cities closer together and although this is not a commuter service, it will enable us to have more options for where we live, work and play.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Austin - Anonymous 1		Rail makes it easier to visit other cities on the network besides you primary destination. Someone visiting S.A. can easily visit Austin or DFW.	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Austin - Anonymous 1		It probably makes sense to serve our city centers and major airports so that we can divert short haul air traffic to the higher capacity rail corridor.	Routes
Austin - Anonymous 2		I think that the high speed is the most viable option. Conventional trains, such as Amtrak, do not run frequently enough. They do not have dedicated tracks and will make it difficult to use regularly. Those individuals that.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Austin - Anonymous 2		Using the electric high speed trains will be better and more quiet for the community. Having the dedicated tracks will provide less horn noise as the other trains shouldn't cross.	quality of life
Austin - Anonymous 2		Tourism will boost as visitors will be able to travel quickly to another city or state with minimal issues. In addition, those areas that have a weak economy can allow its residents.	local and regional economy
Austin - Anonymous 2		With this train system in place, it will lessen cars on the road which will reduce travel time and road repairs. Also, if bikes are allowed on these trains there will be more locations for residents.	congestion
Austin - Anonymous 2		I don't really have an opinion on this. I'm sure that some resources could be affected by track laying, however, it will be better as it will reduce the carbon footprint emitted by regular highway travelers.	Natural environment
Austin - Anonymous 3		Live and work in other cities like Dallas to Austin, or San Antonio to OKC, will be able to work, attend concerts and sporting events, and travel with ease between cities. This will boost visitors, economy and business.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Austin -		On these tracks, in addition, it will be safer as these trains don't stop as often and	Safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Anonymous 3		move quickly through intersections.	
Austin - Anonymous 3		To work in other locations and bring those funds back to their communities.	local and regional economy
Austin - Anonymous 3		And visitors to bike, hike, walk and enjoy other areas of the city or state and be home in time for dinner	congestion
Austin - Anonymous 4		Air quality - electric trains run more efficiently and cleaner than electric, should be preferred. The more desirable the train service is, the more you reduce vehicle VMT, which is better for air quality.	Natural environment
Austin - Anonymous 4		The questions above (on the comment form) are biased because they only ask about the negative impacts of improved rail service, not the positive impacts.	Process
Austin - Anonymous 4		You should definitely go with the higher speed option, at least, and preferably the high speed option. In order to increase ridership in any meaningful way you need to make the service fast and convenient enough that a significant number of people will choose it over cars or air travel.	Transit options
Austin - Anonymous 4		The focus should be on how to increase ridership on the rail lines, and provide good connections with transit in each of the cities. This is important for economic development in the state, air quality, mobility and equity in providing reasonable priced transportation options.	Connectivity
Austin - Anonymous 5		Study should emphasize public private partnerships to improve freight mobility with in IH-35 corridor and provide an efficient alternative to air or vehicle travel (highway)	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Austin - Anonymous 5		EIS should focus/emphasize improved air quality due to reduced highway travel and reduced commercial passenger air travel for short duration trips between city centers.	Natural environment
Austin - Anonymous 5		True high speed rail should be the focus of the study. Incremental speed/service improvements of passenger rail on existing freight rail lines is a waste of time and money and will not receive widespread support	Process
Erickson	Chris	I think that the route should go along IH-35 to Laredo, with the possibility that the train could eventually go to Monterrey, to facilitate international travel.	Routes
Erickson	Chris	You should use Maglev. It is more quiet than other forms of high speed rail.	Impacts
Erickson	Chris	If the project is to be successful, it will need to induce ridership. Individual ridership is absolutely critical.	Ridership
Erickson	Chris	An elevated maglev should be used to minimize negative effects on other travelers.	Elevated rail
Erickson	Chris	Please do not limit your study to only studying conventional train technology, but you must also study maglev. It is more environment friendly.	Process
Erickson	Chris	There are 2 things this high speed rail must do to be successful. Go as fast as possible, as efficiently as possible in order to induce ridership. This is best accomplished by using 2 magnetic levitation (MAGLEV) system. It is more expensive up front, but cheaper/more efficient in the long run. Maglev is the future of high speed rail, and will go faster than other existing systems. A very fast train will help induce ridership, which is the goal if there is to be a future for rail transportation. The second thing is to, as close as possible, have the route closely parallel IH-35, so that drivers can see	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the Maglev train pass them like they're standing still. This will be the most successful way to induce ridership. People driving on IH-35 should be jealous of people riding the Maglev train.	
Margolies	Paul	Positive impact to give alternatives to driving on congested highways. You can't pour enough new concrete to keep up. Just more grid lock.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Margolies	Paul	Impact is negligible with existing rail in play. Strive to set medium speed commuter rail started with adequate frequency.	frequency
Margolies	Paul	Impact is negligible with existing rail in play. Strive to set medium speed commuter rail started with adequate frequency. To continue "as is" is not acceptable.	local and regional economy
Margolies	Paul	Alleviate traffic, provide safe walkways, etc will be a huge help	congestion
Margolies	Paul	More rail options for passengers would reduce pollution and green house gasses.	Natural environment
Margolies	Paul	To take 24 months to complete the project on such an urgent need to move ahead faster should not be tolerated and is a waste of funding and time. These studies with no results have been concluded in the past to no avail.	Process
Margolies	Paul	Texas with the fastest growth in the economy and population growth, has been the slowest in the entire nation to make decisions and secure funding for passenger rail needs.	Process
Margolies	Paul	Central Texas from WACO to San Antonio should be the primary priority for focus. South section should be a low priority, less population you could expedite this by simply visiting Denver, Southern California, Portland and others and clone their	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		obvious successes and jump start faster.	
Walthall	Roy	Why are we (Texas) doing this study?	question
Walthall	Roy	If Amtrak's SW Chief is soon re-routed from Kansas City to Wichita to Oklahoma City to Fort Worth to Abilene to Sweet Water to Lubbock to Clovis to Albuquerque, does TxDOT's RPDiv. Have a study in-place to have a PIRRA Texas dedicated passenger train between Fort Worth - Waco - Byron college Station-Houston-Galveston?	local and regional economy
Walthall	Roy	Should such a re-routing take place and the state of Texas' current subsidy for the Heartland Flyer is freed-up would it be the recommendation of the RPDiv. to TxDOT and to the governor, Lt. governor, speaker and chairs of the TX. House appropriations and senate finance committees to redirect those funds to support the operation of such a conventional rail passenger service that connects Texas' two largest population centers?	local and regional economy
Walthall	Roy	In conjuncture with the re-routing of the SW chief and as a direct result of sequestration - there will be a moment a release of Amtrak assest e.g. locomotives, coaches, lounge cars - also Amtrak will do away with their "switcher crew" in San Antonio (a great savings in money) - that affects both the Texas Eagle - Daily service CHI-SA, three times a week service SA-CA and the sunset limited no LA, which may be totally eliminated - However, the other discussion we are hearing is expanding the crescent service NYC - PHIL - WDC - Atlanta - Birmingham - New Orleans - to Beaumont, Houston and San Antonio.	Routes
Walthall	Roy	If the two inner-city services were altered Texans would have both daily service to the West Coast (LA) to the East Coast (NYC, PHIL, WDC) and to the Great Lakes	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		(Chicago). Then if we could connect with conventional multi-service train sets DFW to the Houston Metropolitan area and a train service to serve the 3.5 million Texans in the valley (San Antonio - Corpus Christi - Brownsville) then Texas would have a total complete transportational intermodal network.	
Walthall	Roy	Also in relationship to routes the mid-size cities of Texas, e.g. WACO, Temple, Abilene, San Angelo, the valley, etc. may soon see the elimination, or severe cut-back of their American Eagle air service. The recent merger of American airlines and US Airways was chiefly engineered to save money by eliminating those very expensive and money losing feeder routes. If in the next 6-9 months these mid size cities lose their air service does the TxDOT-RPDiv. have any plans in place to have passenger rail service fill that void?	Routes
Walthall	Roy	All of these events are being driven currently by sequestration and business cutbacks and mergers and presents to Texas a cross-croada in transportation, where without additional expenditures (only a transfer of existing funds) we can have a 1st class conventional rail system.	local and regional economy
Walthall	Roy	It has always been my goal and my political science theory (as that what I've been taught for 27 years) that the goal should be to 1) Have a conventional rail system in place that serves Texans; 2) Allow over time passengers to get use to riding it; 3) use highway funding to make over under passes to eliminate as many road-rail crossings as possible; 4) eventually as ridership increases the legislature will fund more appropriations for rail and signaling improvements and ticket fares will pay for additional train sets and operational cost; 5) finally before we know it along those pre-existing corridors (without interfering with property rights we experienced on the trans Texas corridor how that one issue killed it) Texas will have trains running at 135	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	mph and we will have achieved HSR, without a public backlash or huge indebtedness.	
Belton - Anonymous 1	Rail is needed to enhance economic development, visitor experience, and residential travel.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Belton - Anonymous 1	Rail is needed for enhancement of these aspects of state need.	local and regional economy
Belton - Anonymous 1	Rail is needed as a reliever to IH 35. Cannot build enough lane miles to accommodate demand, both current and projected. Multiple modes, including transit and H/B.	congestion
Belton - Anonymous 2	The concept is something I support. The area not addressed today is local transportation at the city's services. In order for any rail system to be financially viable there must be reliable and frequent transportation from the train station to the various businesses and population centers within the municipality where the train stops. Without those services you end up with a "train to nowhere" system that becomes nothing more than a money pit. Also, to the extent possible, I favor the use of existing track and right of way.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Belton - Anonymous 3	We need more passenger rail if at all possible.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Belton - Anonymous 3	"Quiet Zones" in towns would be nice.	Noise
Belton -	As long as improvements are existing rail or highway rights-of-way, agriculture	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Anonymous 3		should not be affected.	economy
Belton - Anonymous 3		More trains mean less cars on the highways.	congestion
Belton - Anonymous 3		More trains mean less pollution.	Natural environment
Belton - Anonymous 3		This effort should start with more cars on existing Amtrak trains, then more Amtrak train frequencies. Incremental improvements should be done to go to higher speed, up to 110 mph. New right-of-ways should be done as a last resort. If our airlines collapse, then we may need to pursue new rights-of-way, but not yet. Farmers are concerned over split properties and taking of land. If it comes to new rights-of-way, use existing highways as much as possible.	Right of way
Belton - Anonymous 4		We need to use current rail and routes as quickly as possible to get traffic off IH-35.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Belton - Anonymous 4		Need silent zones.	Noise
Belton - Anonymous 4		Allow businesses to get back and forth to meeting in a more environmentally friendly way.	local and regional economy
Belton - Anonymous 4		It would be great to reduce road traffic.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Belton - Anonymous 4		Not concerned.	Natural environment
Belton - Anonymous 4		Make current trains longer and more cars. Increase speeds as quickly as possible. Have more than one train per day. Go to South Texas as there is no service there.	Transit options
Belton - Anonymous 5		Net positive effects due to increased commerce.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Belton - Anonymous 5		Rail should increase public safety by removing vehicles from congested areas.	Safety
Belton - Anonymous 5		Anticipate a positive effect on local and regional economy by increasing commerce opportunities.	local and regional economy
Belton - Anonymous 5		Multimodal rail is a much needed addition to the transportation alternatives. All options should be explored.	congestion
Belton - Anonymous 5		I anticipate a net positive effect on the environment by removing vehicles from the roads.	Natural environment
Canaler	Cristina	Stay outside city at airport area share long term/short term parking with airport or parking garage in major cities	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Canaler	Cristina	Need extra safe railroad crossings at IH 37.	Safety
Canaler	Cristina	Can only be good for CC and South Texas. We have very limited transportation for	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		South TX. I would travel (tourism) more with better transportation and rail service.	economy
Canaler	Cristina	I think effect would be minimal outside the city. I've driven IH 35 and hate it. Would love to visit my family up North quickly.	congestion
Canaler	Cristina	What is the effect now with current existing rail? Use some rail or build new rail near existing rail?	Natural environment
Canaler	Cristina	Cost. Build using best quality materials. Plan for maintenance (not like CC city streets). Fuel costs? Fares should be equitable but provide for necessary expenses, maintenance and emergencies.	Cost
Canaler	Cristina	Medical. My mother has doctors in SA and can't drive alone	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Canaler	Cristina	Inter city. Rail from SS of CC to downtown to cut down traffic on SPID. The current extension of cross-town expressway is not adequate.	Routes
Canaler	Irena	Good idea for interstate travel, especially for people that travel alone short distances. Have a rail to Houston (under bridge North bound).	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Canaler	Irena	Pick a central big location accessible big streets or highways not at shoreline.	Connectivity
Canaler	Irena	Tourism within the state would be increased - out of state I don't think so. You can advertise the cities you go to.	local and regional economy
Canaler	Irena	Build a big parking lot, maybe have a shuttle bus, nice depot, have rental car agencies	Benefits of train

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		at the depot.	travel
Canaler	Irena	Use existing rail, why would it affect water quality habitat for animals. Put in a high fence.	Natural environment
Canaler	Irena	Have to be able to load suit cases, walkers, wheel chairs for disabled people. Fares comparable to bus. Fast buses for long routes from valley to San Antonio to Dallas, others should be slower. Have TVs, playrooms or tables to do paperwork. Use natural gas or green energy.	Benefits of train travel
Espinosa	Edward	I could see a day when Valley College kids can go to school in Kinissville be home for dinner that evening.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Espinosa	Edward	Railroad crossing have been upgraded all along the Brownsville subdivision.	Safety
Espinosa	Edward	It would increase on both ends.	local and regional economy
Espinosa	Edward	Brownsville/Corpus traffic would decrease so less cars on the road = less envisions into atmosphere.	congestion
Espinosa	Edward	If you run along existing line no problems. Maybe even use the existing live with upgrades.	Natural environment
Espinosa	Edward	You've got my vote. This is a good alternative form of transportation for our arena. The job growth and opportunity will be increased 100%.	support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Rios	Michael	There are a lot of conferences/travel to Dallas passenger line good and quicker	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Rios	Michael	Economic improvements good but need to protect environment.	local and regional economy
Rios	Michael	Like the train be less pollution; better for environment; locals have asthma from pollution.	Natural environment
Rios	Michael	Against Eagle For Shale project; look at documentary called “Gasland” for problems (online in 2009) with gas/pollution, concerns about air quality and water quality. Like if trains had cleaner fuel and hybrid cars on the road. Save money too. Have TxDOT be an advocate for clean fuel; people are slowly dying. A lot of people moving here.	Natural environment
Volkman	Dale	How will the daily train schedules compare with local transportation schedules (i.e., buses, commuter trains, etc.)? Severe mismatch in schedules will cause a disinterest from the public.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Volkman	Dale	Use modern equipment to inspect rails and new technology for train engines. Europe uses electric trains which are quieter than diesel.	Safety
Volkman	Dale	The easier the modes of transportation in and out of an area will increase potential businesses and visitors.	local and regional economy
Volkman	Dale	Passenger trains will not likely reduce traffic conditions unless properly scheduled with more localized transportation.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Volkman	Dale	There would be a minimal increase of negative environmental impacts if the rails run parallel to current transportation infrastructures.	Natural environment
Volkman	Dale	Passengers should be able to purchase tickets that will take advantage of local transportation and provide a schedule from beginning to ending destination.	Cost
Volkman	Mary	Positive as long as a high level of frequency and accessibility to all parts of the city and “the island” are coordinated with all other modes of public transportation.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Volkman	Mary	See Germany, France and Spain. Study European train/passenger systems that are highly effective and learn from their expensive successes/failures. These are “hot topics” always in Germany.	Process
Volkman	Mary	Must be advertised, promoted and presented to the public so that they will become more educated and realize the need.	local and regional economy
Volkman	Mary	Reduces congestion, provides long-term benefit! Safe biking routes to connect to train stops, buses/trains ideally.	congestion
Volkman	Mary	Compliance with all EPA guideline/laws. Hope standards must protect both water supply, resources and habitats in every way must blend-green	Natural environment
Volkman	Mary	Germany has the best rail system that we have ever used on a daily living and tourist basis since the 1960's. Present my lifetime.	Process
Dallas - Anonymous 1		A rail line, with convenient service and a good schedule with interchange to other modes of transit, will be a benefit to the economy.	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Dallas - Anonymous 1		A rail line should take cars off of congested IH-35 corridor.	congestion
Dallas - Anonymous 1		To the extent that rail travelers are not auto travelers our air quality should improve.	Natural environment
Dallas - Anonymous 2		How alignment will affect businesses? Increased or decreased traffic for local business.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Dallas - Anonymous 2		Relieve congestion on Interstates. Will the rail connect with other public transit in cities served?	congestion
Duble	Ken	The only passenger rail with any hope of success is 220 mph service. Without this as the ultimate commitment, this endeavor has no hope of viability. When a passenger takes rail in Texas, he forfeits the use of a personal automobile. The passenger either rents one at the other end which is a cost, or does without. Nobody is going to do this if it doesn't save time.	High speed
Duble	Ken	True HSR would be comparable in time commitment to air within this corridor for urban users due to the time spent getting to and from the airport, the need to get there an hour early, and the lighter restrictions on carry-on baggage that would eliminate the wait at the carousel. If priced competitively with air travel, this would work, particularly for business travelers.	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Duble	Ken	How to make the funding/politics work: Rather than do small incremental changes throughout the entire line that will have minimal impact on attracting ridership, the goal should be to open the HSR first between downtown San Antonio and downtown Austin. We could then extend it to Temple, Waco, Dallas, Denton and OKC. All the while, Amtrak should maintain existing service as a feeder.	Cost
Duble	Ken	Inaugurating true HSR service on these segments will get the public used to the idea and make the cities not yet linked jealous, thus building political support incrementally. This is what California is doing.	Support
Duble	Ken	Quality first. Think big by thinking small.	Affordability
Ryan	Patrick	I think that dedicated high-speed rail (speed >150 mph) should be strongly considered between D-FW and San Antonio. For DFW to Oklahoma City and San Antonio to McAllen, it is less likely to be cost effective. A concern is lack of public transportation in San Antonio and Austin. Rail service may be more attractive to riders if the proposed rail service were integrated with a car sharing service, e.g. zip car.	Transit Options
Tamayo	Luis	None of what I saw showed an existing direct North - South connection through Dallas. This should be an alignment for consideration. It should be prioritized higher than alignments through Fort Worth (existing) or the DFW airport. In particular high speed rail should serve Dallas directly. "Higher" speed rail and conventional rail are poor options when compared to driving these distances. High speed rail needs to be seriously considered.	Routes
Fort Worth -		Favor more transportation hours	Residents, businesses, and

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Anonymous 1			visitors
Fort Worth - Anonymous 1		Rail may facilitate more frequent tourist trips to San Antonio and Brownsville (South Padre island) from Fort Worth (in my case).	local and regional economy
Fort Worth - Anonymous 1		Desirable if determined to be more efficient than air or auto travel.	Travel options
Fort Worth - Anonymous 1		Concerned about auto and air travel impact on air quality. Especially in DFW area.	Natural environment
Fort Worth - Anonymous 1		Would like to see better integration of rail and air transportation. If new high speed rail infrastructure is built, this is especially important. Allowing airlines to operate high speed trains would in my opinion eliminate significant financial bias.	Transit options
Fort Worth - Anonymous 2		Route within Dallas - Fort Worth metroplex needs to have a stop in Tarrant County, or specifically, Fort Worth. This is for fair access to this service for residents and businesses that would benefit.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Fort Worth - Anonymous 2		I like the potential of this project concept to reduce depending on automobile and reducing VMT and air pollution. I strongly support it.	congestion
Spierer	Gema	The service should stimulate the area economy. I see no downside.	local and regional economy
Spierer	Gema	Will reduce IH-35 corridor passenger traffic somewhat.	congestion
Spierer	Gema	No negatives - positives emission reduction	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Spierer	Gema	DFW route must go to DFW only and let local rail feed high speed and airlines.	Routes
Spierer	Gema	Use Dorothy Spur corridor. To liner Arlington TX - DFW - North. Let TRE and possible E-W IH-30 pay rail and up provide 2nd E-W feeder. Trail and DART liner O DFW. Challenge: Design one DFW base HSR through terminal.	Routes
Allison	Terry	Especially the taxpayers!	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Allison	Terry	There will be all of the above (safety and neighborhood livability) accompanying this project.	Safety
Allison	Terry	The increased taxes will likely have a detrimental effect on ag tourism and every other financial/social endeavor.	local and regional economy
Allison	Terry	Not much as history reveals, as ridership is always low.	Ridership
Allison	Terry	We Okies and Texans will require years, if ever, for anyone to convince us to give up our trucks and cars. They would only give them up if the government raises vehicular fuel and licensing fees to such a high cost that most cannot afford their trucks anymore (à la Europe and other places with socialist/communist authorities).	Safety
Allison	Terry	In the meantime, the costs will be huge. So huge that the taxpayer (those with businesses, jobs, etc.) will have to pay for ever the increasing costs. This scenario has been repeated time after time wherever these systems have been proposed, partially-built and "completed". They (these systems) are not feasible. Only a few people (politicians, contractors, others?) profit, the rest of us pay and pay and pay. And they	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		(we) pay some more.	
Allison	Terry	The costs already budgeted are rather excessive. What would the construction cost be? Look at the history of existing systems for an answer to that question. It is clear!	Cost
Harlingen - Anonymous 1		What speed train will be traveling? What are the delays to traffic? What improvements are needed on existing tracks?	congestion
Harlingen - Anonymous 2		New merging university in McAllen and Brownsville may have 30 students commute between McAllen has international airport to Mexico City. Edinburg has big school. Tourism from North come to South Padre Island or shopping from Mexico.	Routes
Barnes	James	If existing track is used, should not be any issues on residents that are used to it.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Barnes	James	If crossings are evaluated safety issues will be minimized.	Safety
Barnes	James	Should be a boon tourism. One exception - a bus service already goes from airports to SPI. A rail to Pt. Isabel is a waste.	local and regional economy
Barnes	James	Study to minimize a blocking of road crossings is important.	Safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Barnes	James	Hopefully TSA would not be involved with any to do with this. Which means federal money should not be used. There should be no limitations on CHL holders and Gun free zones will invite problems especially this close to the cartels across the border. I would travel to San Antonio to participate in Firearm shooting matches. Easy travel with firearms is required.	Cost
Earley	Dorothy Ann	I can only imagine positive effects on residents, businesses, and visitors.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Earley	Dorothy Ann	Only minor effects I'm sure?	Safety
Earley	Dorothy Ann	All positive	local and regional economy
Earley	Dorothy Ann	Only minor effects.	congestion
Earley	Dorothy Ann	If passengers are traveling by rail instead of auto (or even bus) I can only see positive effects for the environment.	Natural environment
Earley	Dorothy Ann	Passenger rail service to Harlingen with free parking. I would benefit personally. I would never drive to San Antonio or Dallas again!	Routes
Edge	Jim	This rail system would be a great advantage for the Valley area in conjunction with the plans for commuter rail in the Valley.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Edge	Jim	It would provide an alternative for people in our area. The Valley is the fastest	Safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		growing area in Texas.	
Edge	Jim	Tourism is important with the influx of Winter Texans from points North.	local and regional economy
Edge	Jim	This should be minimal. Trains are more efficient travel.	Natural environment
Edge	Jim	The rail system needs to come to McAllen where it will meet up with Valley Commuter Rail.	Routes
Townsend	Virginia	If there was a lot of money it would be convenient.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Townsend	Virginia	Depends on where it is.	Safety
Townsend	Virginia	I'm sure it would be a plus.	local and regional economy
Townsend	Virginia	OK I'd be happy with the 70-90 mph	High speed
Townsend	Virginia	OK Less gas for cars	Natural environment
Townsend	Virginia	My real concern is money availability. Tedo broke, state broke, us almost broke. We must not have another taxing entity. This passenger rail study that has been done here in the Valley has been a complete waste of time and almost \$500,000 in money.	Affordability
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Effects on all the above is on balance, positive.	Residents, businesses, and

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
			visitors
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Safety is enhanced by reduction in highway fatalities.	Safety
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Will revolutionize the regions. Massive economic development impact.	local and regional economy
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Will ease traffic congestion.	congestion
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Reduction in pollution = good for earth, me!	Natural environment
Laredo - Anonymous 1		Reduction in oil dependence and massive positive impact on environment	Natural environment
Laredo - Anonymous 2		If it ain't a bullet train (we still #1 in the world?) don't waste your time and my money. In the 70's I took the train from Laredo to Detroit. It took two days to get out of Texas. It stopped like every 25-50 miles at every major ranch.	Cost
Garza	Carlos	The effects on visitors will be a big improvement on the waiting time and crossing times.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Garza	Carlos	We believed the effect on noise will be minor comparing the effects and pollution of all the visitors.	Safety
Garza	Carlos	If you develop a big station (train stop) will cause a great effect.	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
			economy
Garza	Carlos	Will improve the traffic conditions on a good way.	congestion
Graf	Richard	I am wholly in favor of a passenger rail line between Mexico, Laredo and San Antonio. As a commissioner in T. Rio County it can only help reduce traffic while increasing tourists, providing a stop is placed in Pearsull. I hope that we can get a stop in Pearsull.	Support
Medina	Juan	It's a good idea to have a railroad station in Laredo because persons that like travel by train don't have to go to San Antonio and pick the train there.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Medina	Juan	I think it is safe to travel by train and more comfortable than travel by bus or auto.	Safety
Medina	Juan	I guess the economy will grow because not only people from Laredo use the train but people that come from Mexico and other counties.	local and regional economy
Medina	Juan	I think there is not much effect on the traffic congestion because there's a railroad station that is not in use for passengers anymore.	congestion
Medina	Juan	I think there no hard environmental effects on the natural environment.	Natural environment
Medina	Juan	I hope this project becomes a reality very soon.	Support
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 1		Businesses would see increase from a new audience which the trains would provide a new group of visitor would see what our city has to offer.	Residents, businesses, and visitors

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 1		With the current noise of the city a train service wouldn't add much to that.	Safety
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 1		A cheap rail service would bring a new audience to new area, while also promoting agriculture by providing a view of farm lands.	local and regional economy
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 1		Inter-city rail would take strain from the business-hour traffic jams and corps. Could offer plans to workers to promote the service.	congestion
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 1		One train running full with 500+ passengers produce a much smaller footprint than each of those individual driving their own automobiles.	Natural environment
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 2		Train speed over grade crossings	Safety
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 2		What company will operate trains	question
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 3		Accessibility for all people by ensuring the blind and the low vision population can also use the service; project like this truly helps them and making it possible for them to also utilize service at the same time ensure accessibility for all.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 4		Optional business class car gives people more options instead of driving.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 4		Service should accommodate bicycles if possible, bicycle racks.	Bikes
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 4		Allow crated pets	Safety
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 4		More advertising? I always tell people about Amtrak and almost everyone doesn't know there is that option or how to book a ticket.	Travel options
Oklahoma City - Anonymous 4		Reduce travel time between OKC - San Antonio to less than 14 hours (it's a 7 hour drive).	Routes
Davis	Steve	To offer clean, efficient travel options. Along the routes the economy will benefit from tourism and development.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Davis	Steve	Since most rail service would occur in an existing operation rail corridor the effects would be minimal.	Safety
Davis	Steve	Big gains to be made with tourism agriculture would benefit from increased sales at	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		nearby restaurants serving Texas and Oklahoma specialties.	economy
Davis	Steve	With increased frequency of passenger service you take more private autos off the road. This can already be noticed in the DFW area.	frequency
Davis	Steve	Again negligible effects on the environment as rail service is efficient and causes much less pollution than several hundred cars.	Natural environment
Davis	Steve	The need to have valuable transportation options remember during world war II our nation's trains hauled at capacity thousands of troops and private citizens to their destinations. Could this be done by Amtrak today? Doubtful - as too many cities have diminished ability to even service or support passenger rail. When traveling by rail you don't encounter the security issues encountered when flying. Plus, it's just a better way to meet your fellow passengers, enjoy scenery and get some paperwork done, as well as have some leisure time.	Transit Options
McKelvey	Paul	If the problem we are trying to solve is congestion on I - 35, passenger rail is not the way to solve it. To be effective, passenger rail has to serve the state's major population centers. A north - south line from Oklahoma to South Texas misses Houston, the state's largest city. The congestion is most closely related to the number of trucks making a north - south transit of the state on IH - 35. Putting those on the railroad is the most cost - effective way to deal with the problem. While passengers and trucks both require timely service, the cost of providing timely service for trucks in lower. The rolling stock already exists and the means of production are in place. Additional cars could readily be built using American labor.	Congestion
McKelvey	Paul	For passenger service, the rolling stock does not exist and would have to be built. Typically, this means importing cars from other countries that have production	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		facilities. American labor gets cut out. Texas jobs are involved.	economy
McKelvey	Paul	Freight service rolling stock requires far less maintenance than does passenger rolling stock, another savings. Timely service is a major consideration. To make the deal attractive, the transit time from South Texas to Oklahoma should be quicker than truck transit time over the same distance. This will require cooperation between rail lines and unions, but nothing they have not already done with the traffic between Los Angeles Long Beach and the Port of New York - New Jersey. It used to take 2 weeks for a rail car to cross Chicago due to interlining requirements. Today, trains regularly make a 72 - hour coast to coast run.	Freight
McKelvey	Paul	I like passenger rail, but it has to connect major population centers - Houston, San Antonio - first. It has to be faster than driving a car to attract sufficient customers. It has to be safe. There should be no crossings at grade anywhere.	Safety
McKelvey	Paul	Most of the passenger traffic on IH - 35 appears to be intra - county and intra - state. Campo appears to be developing a solution for that traffic. Freight moved from rail largely because trucks could provide better service. They could because rail lines were not customer - oriented.	Congestion
McKelvey	Paul	Truckers were. The organization and technologies for rapid rail freight have arrived. We should play to those strengths rather than spend money on a passenger rail line for which there is mainly hope, not established traffic.	Affordability

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Lewis	Ruth	I am so for the high speed passenger rail service. I only wish it was already in service. We have needed it for a long time. Just recently I wanted to take a train from Dallas or Fort Worth to Des Moines, Iowa. I would have to go up to Chicago and then back down to Des Moines. This speed passenger service would take a lot of travel off our highways and give elderly people a way to travel when they don't like to drive, including myself. I only hope I live long enough to enjoy a lot of letter so we can get the high speed train rolling.	Travel options
Villalon	Xavier	This should have happened a long time ago! Please make this a reality ASAP. All cities involved would prosper.	Support
Hoelscher	Larry	Impede use of land. Take ag land out of production. Could impede our access of neighboring towns.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Hoelscher	Larry	It would present a safety factor at the crossings and also noise level could be an unsafe environment.	Safety
Hoelscher	Larry	It could take land out of production. It would limit access to land. Could change the usefulness of prime land as we now know it.	local and regional economy
Hoelscher	Larry	Getting farm equipment to the other side of the rail could be problematic because of the size of equipment and other traffic on the road.	Agriculture
Hoelscher	Larry	This could create erosion problems, and change the flow of water in the field. The noise could frighten the cattle, horses, deer, etc., as well as birds and other nature.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hoelscher	Larry	The rail needs to be placed to the west of IH-35. The unstable blackland to the east of IH-35 is not suitable for many safety factors which must be taken into consideration. Many farming and cattle operations will be negatively affected by this rail on the east side of IH-35.	Safety
Thompson	Helen	This would have a very positive impact on our citizens to access shows and shopping in the Dallas, Fort Worth area and businesses shuttle.	Residents, businesses, and visitors
Thompson	Helen	I see no negative impact.	Safety
Thompson	Helen	It would definitely enhance local economy. It would enhance tourism and quality of life.	local and regional economy
Thompson	Helen	I see no negative effect on traffic car-actions except it would enhance accessible to Oklahoma City for Dallas Fort Worth.	Congestion
Thompson	Helen	It would have a positive effect in reducing emissions from cars	Natural environment
Thompson	Helen	I see enhanced rail service would have a very positive impact on the local economy. Speed rail would be a real plus for those working in Dallas/Fort Worth or Oklahoma City. Tourism would be enhanced making Ardmore a "destination" for shopping and recreation. As a "senior" it would enhance travel for me and my friends to OKC and Fort Worth/Dallas.	Safety
Oklahoma City - Anonymous		Rail travel should help all these	Residents, businesses, and visitors

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Oklahoma City - Anonymous		Tourism should be helped	local and regional economy
Oklahoma City - Anonymous		Little or none	Congestion
Oklahoma City - Anonymous		America, every state should have rail travel! Other countries around the world have it today and so should we. Not everyone can afford to fly and many won't like me. I am 81 and have made over 12 trips on the flyer with my wife and many friends, thus we in America need more rail travel as it is the safest way to travel. Extend Amtrak, I say.	Support
Wallace Jr	HC	We don't need high speed rail. All you have to do is upgrade what you now have in Amtrak. New equipment and more trains. With 35 improvement why bother spending more money and tearing up the best farm land in Texas.	Against
Peterson	Harold	I am writing in response to the high speed rail proposal. I am in favor of the proposal as written. I was a resident of Norman, OK from 1998 to 2004. During that time I made several visits to the Dallas/Fort Worth area, both to visit family in Fort Worth and to attend the annual OU/TX game (perhaps referred to as TX/OU in your area). While I only used the Oklahoma Flyer once due to its slow speed and late departures/arrivals relative to the posted schedule, I definitely would have utilized the more efficient option provided by high speed rail had it been available. Should I have the opportunity to move back to the area, I would similarly make use of said option in the future.	Support
Harlan	Jody	Public transportation has historically been a prominent issue impacting economic opportunities and daily life for one in six Oklahomans who have some type of disability. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, nearly 577,000 or 15.76% of the state's	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		civilian, non-institutionalized population age five and older have disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to write on behalf of this important constituency in support of expanding rail service between Tulsa/Oklahoma City and Dallas—Fort Worth. As the communications director for the Oklahoma Department for Rehabilitation Services, which annually provides employment and independent living services to more than 92,000 Oklahomans, I am personally aware of barriers to employment created by limited transportation options.	
Harlan	Jody	The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) conducted a statewide survey in 2002 to explore the nature of transportation needs and problems experienced by citizens with disabilities and to learn how transportation issues affect their lives, including their ability to work, live independently at home, access medical and disability services and interact with other people. Responses were received from 3,856 individuals representing all 77 Oklahoma counties based.	Safety
Harlan	Jody	While the data was compiled some time ago, the needs remain because very little has happened to significantly change access to public transportation in Oklahoma. Approximately two-thirds (65.5%) of respondents reported there are persons in their households who are dependent on public transportation or rides from relatives and friends because they do not drive or own a car. Almost half (48.1%) of all respondents said they could not drive due to their disabilities.	Transit Options
McCradic	Anthony	There was some government money sent to Texas A&M to research and investigate High Speed Rail, but I have not seen anything out it. In addition there are a lot of government funds which have been allocated to building or reconstructing roadways, but it didn't include the development of a solid metro system	Question

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
FERGUSON	DAVID	The presentation and conversation with TXRAIL was very informative. Much planning and thought has gone into this study and I was very impressed. The key is arrival and departure times from a location. People who want to be somewhere do not want to waste time waiting for an event to occur. If I have a Medical appointment in SA, I want to leave CC in time to get there and then get back the same day, without a lot of time between events. If I am going from CC to Dallas, I do not want to take the long way around, shortest path, least opportunity for delays.	Frequency
FERGUSON	DAVID	If people are going to the beach for the weekend they want to arrival in CC for dinner and not return until after mid-day of their last vacation day. And they would like to have baggage checked no matter which speed train they use. The sooner the better to implement the service the better. It will assist us all in giving us the availability to improved shopping, travel options, better health care, education opportunities, career growth. It can allow people to live in distant cities from their work and commute each day, improving their quality of life. Documents and goods could be sent same-day from depot desk to depot desk. This project is a win-win for us all, environmentally, investment, fuel, maintenance cost rail/highways.	local and regional economy
Vornberg	Caroline	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schriever	George	Please, Get your heads out of the sand and put in Hi Speed Rail. It better for everything, with the exception of the air lines and the gas companies. The rest of the world is passing us buy...	Support
	William	It's time Texas takes the lead and develops a viable passenger rail system. Oklahoma City, Dallas and other Texas cities will continue to grow at alarming rates. A rapid link between Oklahoma and Texas cities is imperative to meet both growth demands and reduce car traffic on interstate highways. This rail link will also provide consistent travel unfettered by weather or highway traffic. It may also help in the quest to reduce carbon emissions and fuel consumption.	Travel options
	Dave	Let's have high speed rail.	Support
Tam	Kinman	Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Tuch	Christopher	It's time to think about our environment and future. The passenger rail is a great idea!!!	Support
Aguilar	Joseph	I would like to see the expansion of the Light Rail System to include stops/connection to and from the following: D/FW area to San Antonio, San Antonio to Corpus Christi, Laredo, and the Valley, Houston to Austin, El Paso to Austin, and Houston to Corpus Christi to the Valley. I know that is a big task and probably not feasible but it would	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		curb fuel demand and offer a way for seniors and others who do not drive a safe way to travel.	
Lee	James	I strongly favor the expansion of rail networks in Texas, and throughout the country. If the rails are properly maintained, this form of transportation is the most comfortable and safest there is. It also helps the environment by taking large numbers of cars off the road.	Natural environment
Prado	Homero Jr.	As a retired member of the US. Air Force I have visited city overseas and in the US with high speed railway systems. They greatly improve travel accommodations for locals and visitors, offer employment, and reduce traffic. I would truly enjoy to see a high speed railway system in South Texas (Laredo).	Travel options
Joyas	Brenda	The Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail service is long overdue. So many people commute between these areas, the environmental impact to these areas as far as roads, cars, run-off is highly affecting our wildlife and flora. This will reduce the contaminants caused by vehicles, crashes from people driving sleepy, or multitasking-texting. Please approve this as soon as possible.	Natural environment
Martin	Jennifer	Yes, I support the possibility of trains for Texas. We are well overdue to get with the environmental program and cut down on carbon emissions.	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Meyer	Carrie	<p>I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices. That's why I support the Texas Department of Transportation considering new, higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. I live in Corpus Christi and would love to be able to take a passenger train to San Antonio, Austin, Dallas or even Amarillo! Here are the reasons I support TxDOT creating train service in our state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. • A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. • Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. <p>Thank you.</p>	Natural environment
Meyer	Carrie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Texas has no passenger rail service. • The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers • Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. 	Routes
Harrington	Galia	I am excited about the potential for high speed rail in Texas, particularly due to peak oil and the use of unsafe drilling practices for oil that are destroying some communities and our environment. I want to see us moving toward a more sustainable mass transit system than air and roads.	energy
Long	Mary	I support high speed rail for Texas.	Support
Keener	Herbert	For the future of Texas it is imperative that we start providing an economical and clean way to move large amounts of people around. In the end if we do this we will be	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		putting less strain on our infrastructure while a cleaner environment.	
Kaplan	Allison	I am in favor of the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail.	Support
Matheson	Neill	I think it is important for Texas to invest in public transportation, especially passenger trains. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. Also, Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	congestion
Drinan	Camille	Having local rail transportation is Long Overdue. We are so far behind other countries and cities. Having local rail transportation will reduce traffic (that is only going to get worse, since we are the fastest growing city in the nation). It will also reduce pollution, thus improving the air quality for this area. We should be able to provide fast local rail transportation to all vital areas; including; Denton, DFW Airport; Waco; Dallas; Weatherford; Fort Worth.	congestion
Traylor	Richard	Improved rail can and needs to be done. There is no reason we are not leading other nations instead of trailing.	Support
Sheen	Janis	It is time that Texas and the United States develop mass rail system. Europe and Asia have shown how superior quality rail can transform habits. Mass rail between hubs on the Eastern and Western seaboards of the US prove how promising mass rail can be for the nation.	Travel options
Dobbs	Tammy	Yes I would like to have passenger rail.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Reinhardt	Patricia	I believe in public transportation and want to see it across the nation and in Texas. We need high speed rail. It's about time we got smart and got rail.	Support
Salazar	Jesus F.	Transportation by rail is less time on the way to where you're going and saves gasoline, this also helps the envioment. But I believe that transportation by rail will save more lives on our highways, for the 18-wheelers now own the roads. Now we can travel in class and let the driving to others. Who's to know what the future has in store? So for now Lets Rail it. Bring it on!!!	Natural environment
Nelso	Mollie	I think a high speed rail through TX would be a great thing. It is high time we join the rest of the world and country in utilizing mass transit more efficiently.	Support
Puente	Estevan	That is one area we lack in is public transportation. Yes I would like something like this to happen. I would like to take a high speed train to San Antonio or Houston for a weekend. I'm sure a lot more people would travel like this. They are proven forms of transportation in the eastern states and also in Europe. We are more than big enough and capable of handling something like this, environmentally friendly people might not like it but in the end it might help reduce the carbon footprint with less cars on the road. It would be great to look into CNG/LCNG locomotives since it truly is in abundance here in Texas, let's use what we have. I really do hope this issue gets pressed more and find a way to do it. Also let's try and make it affordable all around even for low income families. For them it could be a way to catch up and reunite with family in other cities. Just my thoughts and two cents. Thanks!!!	Travel options
Soper	James	We need high speed rail now. It will happen, but act now before we run out of ROW building roads.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brennecke	Paula	I am concerned this project would revive the "Trans-Texas Corridor". I would not want this built by a non-US company. I would want to ensure safe crossings were available to citizens in small communities.	Safety
	Deborah	We would be delighted to have alternative transportation around the state. Giving people the choice to personal and business travel is essential for improved air quality and convenience.	Travel options
Fawcett	Blair	I think that a safe, effective railway system that securely transports our citizens from one state or county to another would be a very effective way of traveling. For example, I have family in North Texas and live in South Texas. It would behoove me to have a way of traveling that does not only use car travel. In fact, currently, my options are limited to flight or car vehicle, and I think that a rail that traveled North to South would be great. Particularly if the rail ran through Fort Worth and Houston, two populous areas in Texas. But I affirm that that is my only bias. Otherwise, I think it's a delightful idea if it is executed properly and with elaborate and inclusive safety measures. I put forth the example of Japanese railways systems. One never needs to own a car to travel from Okinawa to Tokyo, for example. Thanks for your consideration, and have a wonderful day.	Safety
Hansen	Linda	We completely support the proposed Oklahoma/Texas passenger rail project. Rail provides the least environmentally damaging method of transportation. It gives travelers the opportunity to support clean air efforts, less cars on the road, and less oil usage while providing a comfortable ride and the ability to arrive at our destination relaxed and happy. Rail has gathered increasing support over the last couple of years and we believe the Oklahoma/Texas project will be well received by travelers. Thank	Natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		you for your time, Linda	
Semrow	Carolyn	If Texas had passenger train service I and others would visit cities more often for shopping and entertainment. I have often wanted to go to a Dallas Maverick's basketball game if there were train service that could get me there in time for the game and return me to Hearne afterward I would love it as well as taking in the culture offered in most large cities (ballet, opera, art museums, museum of science). When I lived in the Chicago area I was able to enjoy the City because of passenger train service allowed me to have a nice dinner take in a show, shop or a new exhibit at the art museum than get on the train and relax not having to worry about traffic, alcohol, or being tired. In cities like Chicago and Cleveland people work in the city and live in the country 20-40 miles away take the train back and forth everyday both these states have plenty of automobiles the train don't reduce car ownership it give people alternative means of travel. Please consider passenger train service in Texas the railroad line are already there and in some places the old depot is a historic building.	Travel options
Temple	Steve	I support and extension of rail service in Texas because the automobile, roads, and sprawl are taking over the state especially the IH-35 corridor. I am concerned that our consumer lifestyles that demand even land and resources be supplemented and even replaced by rail services to get around in cities and between cities. This will cut down on sprawl and increase investment opportunities in areas where density will increase around train stations. High speed rail however is not a good option without local train	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		service and better bus transit services to feed its fewer stops. Rail service needs to be combined with more thoughtful controls on development, rather than just letting developers have their way. Our highway corridors are horrible and ugly due to all the adjacent development - driving on the highways makes out state look trashy. Also increased rail services can mitigate road construction because there will be a viable option but only if rail is thorough enough to do so. High speed rail alone will not do this. Please look at successful rail in other countries.	
Norwood	Patricia, MD	It's time Texas had high speed rail along the I 35 corridor, cutting down travel times between these cities, taking cars off the roads and conserving gasoline.	congestion
Torres	Alfredo Jr.	As a resident of Laredo, TX, I find this railroad study and project to be a great opportunity for my area and city. It will help alleviate traffic and be a great asset for tourism. It will also be an effective solution to those who travel and do not have a car. A passenger railway is something I believe Laredo will greatly benefit from, as well as, all residents of Texas. You can count on my support.	local and regional economy
Webb	Martha	The establishment of expanded passenger rail service in Texas would benefit all residents by decreasing air pollution from automobiles. It also increases the opportunity for travel for older citizens like myself who prefer not to drive long distances or in heavy traffic.	Air quality
Short	Bettye	I make the trip from Austin to Dallas at least 5x a year. Think of all my wasted time and gasoline. And it's always under construction, slowing my trip down and making it dangerous. Please increase the frequency of trains between these two cities.	Travel options
ERWIN	STEVE	On a personal level, I would prefer to travel by train. Less problematic that going to airports. I can work or relax/read while traveling. Rail is more on-time than planes;	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		weather does not affect the schedule. While rail travel may not make much of an impact, it would reduce the number of cars on the road. That is especially welcome to someone like me who passes through the Austin area and get caught up in heavy commuter traffic. I travel by rail loyally (TRE) in Dallas/Fort Worth. Have traveled from Dallas to College Station via rail; much preferred over driving.	
Owings	Terry	I am a strong supporter of High Speed Rail in Texas. What follows are some of the reasons for this support. There are signs on highways throughout Texas signaling the number of traffic fatalities for the current year. Last year, that number exceeded 4000. Much of those deaths were on the arteries between our major cities. Also, the heavy traffic in the corridors between our cities makes those drives much longer than they would be if people could drive at rated speed. The congestion is a major source of pollution as well. High Speed Rail can have a major positive impact on those issues.	Safety
Owings	Terry	However, the economic impact would be even greater. That is, high speed rail would offer ordinary people to travel quickly between cities and allow for people in Austin and San Antonio, for example, travel to Dallas or Houston for a ball game or, to attend any number of other attractions in those cities. Likewise, residents of Dallas and Houston can have access to the attractions in Austin and San Antonio. This could even allow for round trips for events without the need for an overnight stay. Hence, even greater use by people on the go.	local and regional economy
Reid	Ruth	I support increasing passenger rail service in Texas. This will require fewer cars to travel these routes, avoid auto pollution, avoid some road construction, and be good for the public. Please approve passenger rail expansion.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Osborne	Rusty	I would suggest that TxDOT consider San Marcos, TX, as an additional stop for the proposed rail project. San Marcos, as a major college town, has a student population of +/- 30,000 who would benefit from a planned boarding/disembarkment station.	Routes
Devereaux	Victoria	I am very much in favor of passenger rail in Texas. I live outside of Austin and would love to be able to go into the city via rail. The traffic along IH-35 is getting even worse. It is dangerous and time consuming. It is far better, and cheaper in the long run, to do something now. I am stunned that it was not in the planning 50 years ago. As a child I remember riding the train into Austin from San Marcos. Why not now? The amount of money spent in band-aid fixes to the interstates could be used wisely for mass transit. It is better for every community, the environment, air quality, water quality...I could go on. I hope that passenger rail becomes a reality.	Travel options
	GibbonsM.C.	We need more mass transit.	Support
Fox	Marcia	Please work on more options for public transportation. I have very fond memories of riding the train from Dallas to Waco and Houston to visit relatives. The train was fast and enjoyable. Now it doesn't seem to be as reliable.	Travel options
Jimenez	Omar	There is so much going on on IH-35 with traffic between cities and a way that we can get around it if there will be rail that would connect Dallas-S.A. as well as cities south of S.A. Greyhound is just too much and there can be rail between McAllen-Harlingen, it would be benefit everyone in the Valley. I would suggest as well to get started on the rail project from Georgetown to S.A. as well in which would benefit that area as well without the traffic. I think this is a great idea and to have the bullet trains if it will get to Point A to Point B faster.	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Tijerina	Yolanda	We need different types of transit than just the planes with rates increasing. I would prefer for consumers have an option for different types of transit available.	Travel options
Bletzer	Siri	I think it is a great idea! It will help our environment by reducing pollution and allow car traffic to flow more smoothly and reduce the number of accidents.	Natural environment
Bordonaro	James	I support running a rail line (preferably high speed) to the west of the IH-35 interstate right of way in those parts of the proposed route that are highly congested to hold down cost. In rural areas the rail line should attempt to run as close as possible to the existing highway to minimize environmental impacts. I would consider using the rail from Wichita to the Corpus Christie area as we've got friends in both Round Rock and Rockport.	congestion
Tickner	Robert K.	The Cities of Krum and Denton, Denton County have passed resolutions of support for the establishment of Rail Passenger Service to Denton County in 2010. This request is to establish a Station Stop on the Amtrak Heartland Flyer service using the BNSF rail line through the City of Krum. This station will provide service to the general area of Denton County and it's cities with a 2010 census population of 662,614 and growing. On August 10, 2010, a Grant Application was filed through TxDOT for a Federal grant to fund a Preliminary Engineering Study and NEPA for this station location. The Application number was HSR2010000400. The North Central Council of Governments, Regional Transportation Council has unanimously approved support for establishment of this new station stop for Denton County, Krum and Denton on January 9, 2008. Amtrak also has issued a letter of support for this proposed station stop in a letter dated August 5, 2010. The BNSF Railway also supports moving forward with the study of the project in a letter dated August 6, 2010. December 1, 2011 a Kansas City-Wichita-Oklahoma City-Fort Worth Corridor	Politics

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Passenger Rail Service Development Plan, the Krum/Denton station proposal was considered and referenced for future service expansions. Please keep this station stop in the current study for service to the City of Krum, Denton, and Denton County. Please advise if you need additional information.	
Varnum	James	I would love to see high speed transit between OKC and Texas. I would make the trip down much more frequently if there was a quick and convenient way to travel. I love the heartland flyer, and more an even more efficient train would be extremely beneficial to interstate visits	Travel options
Eames	Wendy	I would love to see fast, efficient rail in a corridor, starting in Houston, swinging through San Antonio up to Austin, ending in Dallas. So many people like me have family spread around Texas, esp. in the cities, and like my daughter, a college student, could really use fast, affordable rail to visit family. A rail pass, similar to what is offered in Europe, would encourage foreign visitors to travel economically to visitor sites in these areas.	Travel options
Pasztor	Gregory	Establishment of frequent rail service among the cities of Oklahoma and Texas would reduce automobile pollution thereby improving air quality, human health, and reducing automobile accident deaths. Any environmental impact the rail right-of-way might pose would be offset many times over by the reduction of use of carbon based fuels resulting from fewer cars on the road.	Travel options
Hernandez	Jeannette	We need a speed rail in this area	Support
Schwarz	Jann	We are excited to hear about the possibility of Rail Service and hope it will be available near us.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Cook	Elizabeth	Texas is in need of high speed rail service. The most-traveled corridors are clogged with auto traffic and trucks. Rail would provide an alternative for travelers and improve overall safety. Thank you.	congestion
Almanza	Laura	Would love to see less cars (especially single passenger) on the road, as well as I would like options for travel other than by air or automobile; bus transportation is not an option due to the lack of efficiency. Thank you.	congestion
Dilworth	Wolf	Texas needs to be on the cutting edge of bringing High speed rail to the US, we could have a HS rail corridor from Texas up through the Midwest to Chicago, or... Trains can carry people and automobiles, even some freight, just like in Europe.	Travel options
Sizemore	Deborah L.	I support the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail service. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. I am taking a long-distance Amtrak trip in May 2013. For SURE, I will use passenger rail north to Oklahoma City and down to South Texas, if you build it. Please build it! Thank you.	Travel options
Creech	Carol	As a health educator, I can confirm that air pollution and traffic congestion from vehicular transport gravely impact the health of north Texas area residents. Additional rail options are desperately needed. Fort Worth and Amtrak have proven how valuable this option is. We need more rail services!	health

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Kendall	Paul	I travel to Houston and other major cities in Texas regularly. I would definitely prefer to take rail as opposed to driving (which I do) or flying (which I refuse to do). High speed rail is definitely a winning proposition for Texas!	Travel options
Whitaker	Jane	As an aging citizen of Texas, I would like to see more passenger rail transportation in Texas. I dislike having to drive on crowded highways like IH-35 and would rather travel by train between cities. Good rail transport would keep more cars off the highways. Decent public transportation within cities would also be appreciated.	Travel options
Wilson	Melissa	Rail for passenger transportation is needed from Dallas-Austin-San Antonio to Corpus Christi and the Rio Grande Valley. This will improve air quality, human health, and travel safety by decreasing congestion on Interstate 37. It will also increase back and forth travel for business and pleasure, improving the economies of all cities. I fully support the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail as long as it extends to Corpus Christi and the Valley.	congestion
French	Christa	I'm thrilled that this is being considered. I would love to have the option to reach San Antonio and Corpus Christi by rail. I have family in both cities and travel there frequently. Greyhound is currently not a comfortable or time-friendly option. I would love to be able to read a book to my kids instead of watching the road!	Travel options
Craig	Elizabeth G.	Texas needs rail.	Support
Baldwin	Carol	We really need to invest in rail alternatives to automobile traffic. The number of cars on the road today, the amount of gas they use and the pollution they produce in huge and growing.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Thomas	Brenda	I support the rail strongly. Thank you.	Support
Craig	Charlie	Let's get more rail service in Central and South Texas. Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands on more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways.	Travel options
Craig	Charlie	Rail makes sound environmental sense. Trains keep cars off the road and reduce the number of short-distance airplane trips. Trains are more efficient, too, since the overall energy consumption per passenger is nearly half that of planes or cars. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	natural environment
Hughes	Crystal	My comment is in favor of a high speed passenger train between Oklahoma and South Texas. I am in favor of rail service because it takes cars off of Texas' highways. I live in Dallas where there are cars everywhere which adds to more pollution. The air quality in Dallas is terrible and it is largely due to all the exhaust fumes from cars and trucks. Roads alone cannot serve all of our travel needs. Trains can help and the energy it takes to operate a train is nearly half that of planes or cars.	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hughes	Crystal	The current Amtrak service between Fort Worth and Oklahoma City is a favorite of Amtrak customers. This needs to be extended to South Texas. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports. Just visit the DFW airport and you know that it is not a convenient place to get to and it is very congested. All in all it just makes sense to expand rail service in Texas. I hope that you will.	Routes
Rackley	Giselle	Please seriously consider a new passenger line in Texas. Extension can help commuters who use airplane travel almost on a daily basis from Dallas down to San Antonio and the surrounding Hill County.	Travel options
LeCody	Peter	In any future development of passenger rail service, our elected and appointed officials must understand that the current rail station facilities and infrastructure now in place at all stations in Texas will be totally inadequate to handle additional train frequencies and passenger loads. Local and regional planning organizations must realize that by adding additional intercity passenger rail service, the demands for connectivity at rail stations will increase exponentially. Thought must be given and plans drawn for adequate and additional future station platforms, waiting and ticketing areas, infrastructure and connections for bus / local and regional passenger rail / vehicle parking / taxi / car rental / bike and other modes of transportation. Railway stations can also serve as an important means to rejuvenate inner city zones with the development of retail space such as restaurants and shops that offer a variety of services. The more conveniences that are offered to the traveling public, the more the public will embrace and use the rail services.	Politics
LeCody	Peter	Intercity passenger rail service that is planned for Texas must consider the following five tenants: 1) Reliability - when a train is scheduled to leave at 10:00am and arrive at its destination at 12:30pm, it should achieve an on time performance factor of 85%	Frequency

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		to be considered a reliable travel option. 2) Frequency and convenience - running fewer than three trains a day between city pairs will not be sufficient to attract a wide segment of the traveling public, especially business travelers. A morning, mid-day and afternoon schedule at minimum is required for any rail line. 3) Trip times - must be at least equal to or better than travel time by automobile. 4) Parking - virtually all rail stations in Texas offer inadequate parking facilities and must be improved to not only offer many who will travel on Intercity passenger rail service the ability to park and ride, but allow for expansion of facilities for car rental agencies and other future rental modes. 5) Comfort and amenities - intercity service in Texas must offer a high degree of service including some level of food service, Wi-Fi internet connections, coach and business class service, clean and comfortable coaches and other options as may be available.	
Maschal	William	I am 100% in favor of rail transportation and would use it anywhere I could. Please do whatever you can to push this potential project to a successful conclusion. It was a tragedy that the high speed rail constitutional amendment failed a number of years ago when everything seemed to be lining up to proceed with that project. How far along Texas would be today if only the amendment had passed.	Support
Latham	Garl Boyd	(See attachments for appendices A-E)	Other
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>ROUTES AND SERVICES</p> <p>As specific plans are developed, there will be a need to review all the ways they might complement existing/proposed regional and local transit services (such as the DART system in Dallas and the future streetcar lines in San Antonio).</p> <p>When final route alignments are selected for the Texas-Oklahoma service,</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>consideration must also be given to the "South Central Corridor" project, as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Two of the corridor's three legs are covered by the TOPRS. If nothing else, this designation may provide an additional source of capital funding for infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>Whatever service is established through these proposals must offer the frequencies sufficient to make trains a reasonable and convenient transportation option. At the initial stages of implementation, this is more important than any other single aspect of the operation, save safety.</p> <p>The heart of this project, both literally and figuratively, is the Central Section. Detailed comments regarding Dallas/Austin/San Antonio operations follow some general remarks concerning the study's two other sections.</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>THE NORTHERN SECTION</p> <p>Any substantive improvements along this section depend upon the cooperation of Oklahoma (and, ideally, Kansas). Both states currently seem uninterested in the future (or, even worse, are content to act as if they believe the future will never come).</p> <p>Apparently, Kansas has already given up on the so-called "Northern Flyer Extension" – and Oklahoma has even gone so far as to place their former Frisco right-of-way between Oklahoma City and Sapulpa up for sale, effectively ending any serious discussion of restored passenger service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa.</p> <p>Presuming Oklahoma has a change of heart, the most logical next-step would be to establish a second daily frequency along today's Heartland Flyer route. Ultimately,</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>both trains should then be extended north: the morning train out of Fort Worth all the way to Kansas City, Missouri and the evening departure as far as Newton, Kansas (establishing a connection there with east/west Amtrak service operating along the former Santa Fe Railway main line).</p> <p>National network access on both the southern and northern ends of this route segment is an operational imperative. The fact it may not happen any time soon serves as an example of the intrinsic danger when piecing together multi-state compacts. Fundamentally, this is indicative of the federal government's failure to properly support a comprehensive system of intercity passenger train services.</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>THE SOUTHERN SECTION</p> <p>Although the line segments between San Antonio, the Gulf coast and the Valley are shown on the Initial Demand Assessment map as possessing a "lower demand," I am absolutely convinced that it is the combination of a San Antonio I Corpus Christi route and a Corpus Christi I Brownsville route which offers the most advantages to Texas and Texans.</p> <p>While a Laredo service might be attractive for international travel (although no Mexican railway passenger connections are currently available) and would give the rapidly growing towns along the corridor an alternative to Interstate 35, trains to Corpus Christi, Harlingen and Brownsville (with connections to McAllen) would not only effectively serve residents of those areas, but business and leisure travelers as well.</p> <p>Laredo may have a population of almost a quarter-million people (making it the tenth largest city in Texas), but its economy is based almost solely upon international trade.</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>Conversely, Corpus Christi alone is over 20% larger than Laredo and enjoys a well diversified economic base, including a healthy tourism market. In addition, there are over one million people living within the greater Harlingen/McAllen/Brownsville metropolitan areas.</p> <p>I would encourage serious consideration of the identified line segments' viability, while paying special attention to the way these routes would compliment other services operating to and through the San Antonio gateway.</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>THE CENTRAL SECTION</p> <p>Operational frequency — From the outset, there should be at least three daily trains, each way, between San Antonio and Dallas (with one being the existing Texas Eagle). The possibility of a fourth train, operating on an overnight schedule, should be seriously considered. This is especially important if the overnight train's arrival can be dovetailed with its terminal city's morning commutation service, and if one type of car within the new Starliner fleet is designed with economy sleeping accommodations.</p> <p>Scheduling - With certain route improvements in place, the current Dallas I San Antonio running time of 10:05 for AMTK train 21 and 8:20 for AMTK train 22 can be reduced to 11:00 in both directions. While not ideal, that change alone will transform public perception of the service and, when combined with additional frequencies and other enhancements, will revitalize intrastate travel by train.</p> <p>On-board service - All trains must be equipped with both coach and supplemental fare (reserved seat) accommodations of some sort. Hot food and cold beverages should be sold during the train's entire journey, with tables and lounge seating available in non-</p>	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>revenue areas of the stations. The handling of checked baggage, including bicycles, needs to be available on at least one train, each way, daily.</p> <p>East Texas connections - Direct connections (preferably through service) to the east Texas cities of Mineola, Longview, Marshall and Texarkana, as well as Shreveport, Louisiana, need to be planned. The East Texas Corridor Council (with 35 member communities) is in a position to help coordinate this effort.</p> <p>Dallas - it is imperative that both downtown Dallas and downtown Fort Worth are served by every run. Dallas-bound travelers must never be required to change trains in Fort Worth/DART connections, as well as service to the major airfields, should be mentioned in intercity timetables. [N.B. Sadly, there is no single-seat service option currently available on DART's system between Dallas' Union Terminal (a.k.a. "Union Station") and either Love Field or DIFW International. See Appendix B] It is worthy of note that, of all the major station sites along the Central Section, Dallas Union Terminal is in the greatest need of attention, despite possessing one of the most architecturally significant and well maintained station buildings en route. [See Appendix C]</p> <p>Routing between Dallas and Fort Worth - The current Trinity Railway Express (T.R.E.) alignment has often been mentioned as a possible pathway for Amtrak trains. This would be logical to meet the needs of Dallas I San Antonio service (no reverse move in or out of Fort Worth's I.T.C., reducing engagement with Tower 55's plant from three times per trip to one, the addition of a possible CentrePort [DIFW international Airport] stop, etc.); however, it is vital that negotiations with the UP allow for other intercity passenger services (such as future trains operating directly from Dallas to Oklahoma via Fort Worth) to use the former Texas and Pacific</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>Railway via Arlington. The rerouting of Dallas I San Antonio traffic must not give the UP cause to consider their T&P main a "freight only" corridor!</p> <p>D/FW Airport service - The possibility of a new stop at T.R.E.'s CentrePort Station should be reviewed (see above). Unfortunately, such a stop will still necessitate a motor vehicle (bus, van, etc.) connection of some type for airline passengers - and as it now stands, travelers arriving on T.R.E. trains en route to D/FW Airport terminals are even required to make an additional bus-to-bus transfer during their connecting trip! Successful negotiations with the Airport's Board, the ultimate goal being a simplification of the transfer process, must take place prior to advertising the CentrePort stop as a true intermodal connection.</p> <p>Fort Worth maintenance activities - At present, Amtrak's Mechanical Department and Commissary in Fort Worth services trains 21 and 22 (The Texas Eagle) while its consist dwells at the I.T.C. Included is the fueling of locomotives, replenishing of potable water in cars and the removal of accumulated trash. These routines can easily require 20 minutes (or more) and, in the interest of time, should not take place in conjunction with more time sensitive intrastate movements. Regrettably, this decision may be costly (If an additional facility is required) and problematic (if that action is deemed responsible for reducing positions within the Fort Worth Mechanical Department). Possible locations for restored/rebuilt coach yards include Dallas (Union) and Texarkana (Union). Servicing on the route's south end can continue, as before, at the San Antonio (AMTKISP) maintenance base.</p> <p>Routing between Fort Worth and Temple — To some, this segment presents an obvious choice for rerouting, with trains moving from the current BNSF (nee Santa Fe) main line over to the Union Pacific (nee M-K-T/Katy) main. [This possibility was</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>briefly mentioned under "Stations."] One of the primary benefits of this action would be restoration of passenger service to Waco (now sewed by way of McGregor, approximately 19 miles west/southwest). One may also be justified in believing that operation over a single railroad line (UP, either all the way from Dallas to San Antonio, or at least from Dallas to the Lone Star Rail connection point) could aid in our quest for efficient train handling. Theoretical militating factors include additional route miles on UP property (subject to negotiation), abandonment of service to McGregor (a city which has been one of the most avid and vocal passenger train supporters in Texas) and Cleburne (with strong historical ties to the railroad industry and a depot building just over one decade old). As previously stated, rerouting would also require a new station site in Temple (although the former Katy depot building still exists and could be refurbished for 21st century passenger use).</p> <p>Hillsboro and the abandoned M-K-T main to Dallas - The probable stop in Hillsboro (along the UP between Fort Worth and Temple) would presumably be located downtown, just south of the former site of Dana Jct. (nee Dallas Jct.), the point where Katy's Fort Worth and Dallas main lines diverged. The Dallas side (between Hillsboro and Waxahachie) hasn't been intact as a through route for over 25 years; however, it was the primary passenger main prior to the mid-1960s. Abandoned in segments, the majority of that right-of-way was held in easement and lost when the infrastructure was removed. It seems reasonable to project an eventual return of our San Antonio I Dallas trains to this more direct alignment (possibly by constructing new trackage along the median of a rebuilt Interstate 35E), but that remains many years away. The railroad right-of-way still exists for the first few miles south from Waxahachie. I make mention of this issue primarily because the Hillsboro /Waxahachie segment was misidentified on several scoping maps as currently being available for use. [See</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>Appendix D]</p> <p>Routing between Granger and Round Rock - South of Temple (Opal), Amtrak trains currently use the former Katy main through Granger to Taylor, then turn onto UP's ex-MP (nee I-GN) main line, proceeding by way of Hutto, Round Rock and McNeil to Austin. [Amtrak's Taylor stop is located at the Missouri Pacific depot.] Once the proposed Lone Star Rail District regional commuter trains are operating, it will be theoretically possible to diverge from Amtrak's present alignment at Granger and join the LSTAR route near Georgetown. Potential benefits include direct service to Georgetown (three times the size of Taylor) and an increased number of miles on trackage predominately dedicated to passenger trains. Unfortunately, in this scenario, Taylor would at least temporarily lose its Amtrak service (although it is mentioned as a future commuter train terminus in Austin's "Project Connect" plans).</p> <p>Joint operations with LSTAR - A proposal which holds the greatest potential for time savings and operational efficiencies along the study area's Central Section is the concept of sharing UPRR's MP/I-GN corridor with Lone Star Rail between</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>IT CAN BE DONE!</p> <p>Domestic passenger train service originally imploded because of political realities and a generally held belief that our "drive-or-fly" approach to passenger transport was both adequate and sustainable, not due to any inherent flaws in railroad technology. As soon as we begin making serious investments in our railway system, the results will quickly become self-evident. Will Texas be left with an antiquated roadway system, expensive gasoline, monstrous traffic congestion and no transportation alternatives whatsoever, or will we be intelligent enough to add rail-based solutions to our mix of travel options before the pain becomes unbearable? Five years from now,</p>	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		we could still be talking and studying and still have nothing, or we could already be enjoying expanded service along established routes and new service on others, while successfully laying the foundation for future improvements — including true H.S.R. Ultimately, no matter how many wonderful, sensible plans are created, nothing substantive will occur until these things become important to the general public. When that happens, no political force will be able to stop it!	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>"Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."</p> <p>That famous quip, from the pen of author Charles Dudley Warner, basically sums up the current status of intercity passenger train service throughout Texas.</p> <p>I continue to be fully supportive of any effort leading to increased rail-based passenger operations, including all modes - from local transit to long-haul services. I regularly use the intercity, regional and commuter trains, as well as light rail and streetcar lines, which now exist. Furthermore, I find my need to drive along Texas roadways proportionally reduced as railway investment increases.</p> <p>It is my sincere hope that railroad technology - for both freight and passengers — is eventually viewed as an integral part of any comprehensive transportation network plan.</p> <p>Regarding the elements of this project, I'm not concerned about any human or natural environmental issues. Overall, the myriad environmental factors within the study area can only be improved through an expanded railroad presence!</p>	Support
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>OUR STARTING POINT</p> <p>I'm very pleased to see your commitment to review all possible combinations of</p>	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>service and technology.</p> <p>As passenger train operations are reestablished throughout Texas, it really isn't necessary to begin with true high-speed trains, dedicated infrastructure or multi-billion dollar price tags.</p> <p>In fact, for pennies on the dollar when compared to H.S.R., we could improve and expand conventional intercity passenger train service —indicating to a new generation of riders what trains are like and proving to the skeptical that a market truly exists.</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>CALIFORNIA'S EXAMPLE</p> <p>That approach definitely worked for Gene Skoropowski. For several years, he was the Director of California's Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, the state agency responsible for intercity passenger train service linking the capital city of Sacramento with the San Francisco Bay Area.</p> <p>A decade of dramatic increases in patronage followed his commitment to take whatever funds might be made available and spend them upon service improvements. His justification was simple: potential passengers, "when offered reliable, comfortable train service, will ride in droves.</p> <p>We're not talking about "bullet trains" gliding along the Capital Corridor, either. They were — and are — standard locomotive-hauled consists, operating on existing trackage alongside freight trains and running at a top speed of 79 miles-per-hour.</p> <p>Today, California's Capital, San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner corridors account for over one- sixth of Amtrak's total annual ridership.</p>	Residents, businesses, and visitors

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>“DUAL SERVICE” IS NOT AN OXYMORON</p> <p>Based upon California's example (and there are many others), railroading should never be perceived as an "either/or" proposition. The railroad industry will be our partners in this endeavor. The operation of modern, efficient freight service over main line routes in no way precludes the addition/expansion of fast, frequent, marketable and successful passenger train service. This approach to growth surely makes a lot of sense here in Texas, where we currently see only one daily round trip between Dallas, Austin and San Antonio (and no direct passenger train service between Dallas and Houston, whatsoever). Many Texans are actively searching for travel alternatives, TODAY! We need to concentrate on the sort of projects which can bear fruit in a relatively short period of time, without the need for additional right-of-way, experimental technologies or break-the-bank budgets.</p>	Travel options
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>WE HAVEN'T EVEN CRAWLED, YET!</p> <p>We must accept reality: the best way to allocate limited capital resources for an expanded passenger train network is through targeted investments in extant properties and the comprehensive redevelopment of conventional services. “Incrementalism” is the key: a methodical approach to cost-effective improvements over a reasonable span of time. There has never been an instance where a region, state, province or nation has established high-speed rail operations before expanding its existing system to capacity! After all, a child will learn to walk before he attempts to run. The political will necessary to actually design, construct, operate and maintain a true high-speed railway network in Texas is not yet evident. Still, for the past 40 years, many well-meaning people have maintained a "high-speed or nothing" mindset - which, in 40 years time, has essentially left us with just that: practically NOTHING![See Appendix</p>	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		A1]	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>S0, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?</p> <p>The rebuilding of the railway passenger industry, one which has been almost totally lost to our modern age, involves five major aspects (apart from the obvious need for public support including, but not limited to, funding).</p> <p>People are the single most important part - the professionals who'll be working together as Texas begins to reach its transportation goals. Next comes the railroad-owned infrastructure itself, and the relationship developed over time between the various railway companies and the other major players (as previously mentioned).</p> <p>The three remaining things - our routes and services, stations and support facilities, and various pieces of equipment needed to make it properly function - are briefly outlined, below.</p>	Travel options
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>EQUIPMENT</p> <p>Texas cannot depend upon Amtrak to supply the passenger cars and locomotives necessary to cover service expansion, nor can we presume the current styles operating are totally adequate for the job. I propose the establishment of a Texas-owned fleet of cars ("Starliners"), initially using classic designs (such as former Santa Fe Hi-Level equipment) and soon supplemented with new rolling stock patterned after the "California Car" concept (now in service). Simultaneously, research and development can begin on a completely unique type of bi-level coach, especially designed and constructed with Texas' needs in mind. Modern day equivalents to the dining, lounge and parlor cars of old will play a crucial role in creating the appropriate on-board</p>	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>atmosphere. Amenities unique to rail-based environments add immensely to passenger comfort and help establish a truly marketable product. Diesel—electric locomotives can first be based upon off-the-shelf designs, aesthetically sleek and technologically "green." Future motive power styles include those which could take advantage of eventual main line electrification.</p>	
Latham	Garl Boyd	<p>STATIONS</p> <p>It is oft presumed that existing passenger stations (including support facilities) are adequate to handle future needs. Unfortunately, this is an erroneous assumption.</p> <p>For example, within the study’s Central Section, every big city station - Dallas’ Union Terminal, Fort Worth’s Intermodal Transportation Center, Austin's former Missouri Pacific Depot and San Antonio's Southern Pacific Station - will need to have several serious deficiencies addressed, including a lack of track and platform space, inadequate waiting areas and pedestrian controls, insufficient equipment servicing, baggage and express handling and ancillary systems, etc.</p> <p>Furthermore, several other secondary and tertiary stations will either require extensive platform work (e.g. Cleburne and McGregor, along the former Santa Fe [BNSF] main line) or completely new facilities, including depot buildings and platforms (e.g. Hillsboro and Waco, on Union Pacific's ex-“Katy” main), depending upon the way trains are routed between Temple and Fort Worth. Additionally, a UP/Katy routing will also necessitate the relocation of Temple’s station.</p> <p>Both Fort Worth and San Antonio are blessed with two large-scale downtown station facilities - and both cities will present unique challenges: Fort Worth primarily due to the interlocking plant at Tower 55 and San Antonio because of the major investment</p>	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		VIA (the city's local transit agency) is making at the MP depot site. [See “Issues involving the San Antonio station facility”]	
Brown-Raines	Cheryl	We have to be friendly to our environment. Our children should not inherit a world that is dirty and limited because we disrespected air and water quality issues. Mass transportation is superior and critical to our progress.	Natural environment
McKenzie	John	The TX DOT study for Oklahoma City to South TX passenger rail is a great move. I believe that this will be a wise investment for TX. Passenger service could provide real relief to the painfully congested IH-35. People will use passenger trains if they are available. South TX used to have passenger service up until April 1965. We need passenger service again.	congestion
McKenzie	John	I also think Brownsville to Houston service should be considered. It is strange how the biggest city in TX has only one tri-weekly passenger train. The talk of high speed rail from Houston to Dallas is good but we should also look at conventional passenger train service for starters. I support the study and I hope we see passenger train service in South TX very soon. We need it.	Routes
Campos	Alicea	In a state as vast as TX, I believe passenger rail would be a great thing. It could only help to alleviate pollution by taking cars off the road. It would also have economic impact resulting in jobs as well as access to transportation for those who can't afford cars. I believe this would be a major step forward.	Affordability
Claver	Karl A.	Rail is cleaner, safer, and more efficient than most other forms of transportation. The passenger train is also more environmentally friendly. Texas, and the entire nation needs more passenger trains. Instead of constantly rebuilding the highways, and adding more lanes, existing rail lines need to be expanded, and improved so modern	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		passenger trains may wish the public to their destination.	
Claver	Karl A.	The line between Laredo/Brownsville all the way past Oklahoma into Kansas and Missouri is a perfect place to begin. And it must begin right now.	Connectivity
Serafy	Nick	I support this project. When considering routes that will be used to attract Mexican tourists to Texas, be aware that there are existing rail bridges to Mexico that connect to rail lines to Monterrey in Laredo and Brownsville. There is also a new rail bridge that will open in Brownsville by the end of 2013.	Routes
Timmer	Rose	I strongly support this project and know that our community of Brownsville will benefit greatly from it.	Support
	Linhda	I care about our environmental standards here in Austin and would like for us to support new or additional infrastructures for public transportation by offering more alternatives such as passenger rail.	natural environment
Thomas	Mark L.	I would like to enthusiastically encourage the expansion of passenger rail service in the Oklahoma City to South Texas corridor. Expansion of rail service would have a number of long-term economic and environmental benefits. Passenger trains are more energy efficient than automobiles or trains. In the long run, trains would be a much more cost efficient option than continued highway expansion.	energy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Thomas	Mark L.	Development of higher quality, higher speed train service would ultimately alleviate highway and airport congestion, thus relieving pressure and improving those modes of transportation as well. Expanded higher speed train service would have less of a negative impact on wildlife, and produce less pollution, than continued expansion of highways with increased automobile miles driven. My family and I have used Amtrak service a number of times, on the Heartland Flyer between Norman, OK and Fort Worth, and on the Sunset Limited, between Houston and points beyond to the west (Alpine, TX and Los Angeles). These train journeys have been very good. Amtrak ridership continues to set records. The demand would only increase with improved service frequency and speed.	congestion
	Kevin	Why is Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation, being bypassed? Doesn't make sense to me.	Routes
Gardner	Manuela	It would be great to have a higher speed passenger rail service in Texas. It would mean reduction in emissions which would benefit the environment and wildlife. It would also give people a hopefully more price effective way to travel longer distances.	natural environment
Newman	Marcy	TxDOT has indicated the primary intent of High Speed Passenger Rail Service is to connect downtown to downtown on the major cities on the route – OKC, DFW, Austin and San Antonio, but the southern terminus in flux. During the Public Scoping meeting in Harlingen, it was suggested that Laredo is the preferred option. 1. The population centers in Lower Rio Grande Valley greater than 430K (2010 census) for Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and greater than 800K (2010 census) for the Hidalgo County MSA. These are more than triple that in the Laredo /Webb County area (250K (2010 census)) and the border crossings for personal vehicles / personal vehicle	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		passengers (21.8M) are far in excess of Laredo (8.8M) as well. This population and border crossing differential warrants additional study and consideration for High Speed Passenger Rail service and connections to the Lower Rio Grande Valley.	
Newman	Marcy	2. The Lower Rio Grande Valley has three major airports that could serve as hubs / multi-modal transfer centers drawing on a greater population to utilize HSPR service going north – This should be considered when determining the southern terminus. 3. The Lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island in particular, has multiple tourist destinations that could be served by HSPR service and multi-modal connections. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus of service.	Travel options
Bucol	Mark S.	As one who travels to Texas on business trips four to six times per year I would welcome being able to travel between DFW and San Antonio by train. The traffic congestion on the IH-35 corridor is getting worse by the year and to accommodate growth in commerce, the passenger rail system needs to be expanded.	Travel options
Bucol	Mark S.	The private sector can build, operate and maintain the trains, while the public sector finances the infrastructure improvements of tracks, signals, and stations. Most of the traveling public will use trains that have top speeds of 90 to 110 mph as long as the trip time is equal or less than travel by automobile and the fare is reasonable. Bullet train systems of 180 to 220 mph are extremely expensive to build and operate. Less extravagant passenger train systems of moderate speeds are more likely to get funded and attract private investment than the very high cost rail systems like those built in Europe and China.	Funding

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Bucol	Mark S.	To meet the needs of Texas for the next 20 years a rail passenger route system that connects major cities in Texas with adjoining states is necessary as highways become more crowded and air travel becomes less convenient and much more expensive.	Connectivity
McInturff	Alfred	High Speed rail between Oklahoma and Texas would be an excellent answer to crowded roads and air pollution as well being economically sound.	local and regional economy
Sotelo	Jorge	I think that it is a good idea that we pursue this type of transportation in Texas.	Support
Rogers	Keith	It is ESSENTIAL that we develop mass transit in Texas and throughout the US. We as Texans and Americans cannot continue to consume oil at our current pace. It is folly that we will greatly regret. This is an economic and national security must. We have put off mass transit for far too long at the behest of those that stand to benefit financially from our, potentially catastrophic, dependence on oil.	energy
MacAlpine	Barbara	I strongly support higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. As a resident of San Antonio, I see the need for a better option than planes or driving to get to Dallas/Fort Worth or Oklahoma City. We in South Texas have no passenger rail service, and we are a large population.	Travel options
MacAlpine	Barbara	Trains would keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. In terms of environmental benefit, this would be huge because a train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. Thus Texas air quality would be improved if vehicle congestion and driving were reduced.	natural environment
Graveline	Angela	We need more high-speed rail. It is a cheaper, faster, energy-efficient, and sustainable option for ground transportation.	Affordability

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Addison	Aaron	Please study the expansion north from Oklahoma City to Wichita and Newton, KS which would allow connection to Amtrak points further North. If Texans had an opportunity to more quickly and directly take a train to Kansas City or Chicago then I think they are far more likely to ride the train from DFW to OKC.	Travel options
Addison	Aaron	Increased passenger traffic on rail improves Air Quality, Traffic Safety, and has a positive effect on Human Health. Also, increased passenger rail traffic helps protect the environment and reduces carbon emissions by diverting auto traffic.	natural environment
Heine	Danielle	Would absolutely love to have an alternative commute to Oklahoma and Texas from Wichita, Kansas. I hope that our city is a part of the discussion of change!	Travel options
Wall	Matthew	An extensive railway system in Texas would reduce energy consumption and traffic, as well as provide a safer and cleaner alternative to vehicular travel on highways. Moreover, this option would allow patrons to work on their studies, projects, etc. or even enjoy a time of reflection and relaxation while commuting--a stark contrast to being behind the wheel on congested interstates. Railways are green, convenient, and right for Texas.	energy
Mitchell	Diana	I live in Wichita, KS and have used the Heartland Flyer service currently available from Oklahoma City to Fort Worth - about 3 times a year. I know that a study is being done to possibly extend service into Wichita, KS. That would be great and I would take advantage of that service, probably doing twice as many, if not more, trips. AND if service were available even further south, like to San Antonio or Austin, I would use it monthly. I hope you will make Wichita, KS part of the Heartland Flyer service and that you are also extend this to include San Antonio or Austin as well. Keep up the good work!	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Leisy	Aimee	I am very much in favor of a high speed passenger train from South Texas through Oklahoma and into Wichita, Kansas. I have driven IH-35 many times from Wichita to San Antonio, Texas. I am from Wichita, but lived in San Antonio, Texas from 1999 - 2001. I have driven IH-35 many times and continue to do so to visit friends and family in Dallas and in San Antonio. Over the years the traffic, especially in Texas, has increased dramatically. In addition, the constant road construction poses many hazards to drivers. Just last month, I was involved in an accident in Waco Texas because of a piece of wood in the road. The accident, which was not my fault, cost me a great deal of time and money. It would greatly benefit me and many other Kansans, Oklahomans, and Texans if there was an easier, safer, less congested way to travel through the IH-35 corridor. I think that a Kansas-Oklahoma-Texas passenger train is the answer to these transportation problems.	Travel options
Stewart	Susan	I would like to be able to use the Austin/OK City to bring my grandchildren from OK to visit. The long layover in FT Worth is uncomfortable. While the Fort Worth station is nice, it isn't an easy place for children to wait for four hours. More time options during the day would be nice as well.	Travel options
Johnston	Liz	I would absolutely love to see more passenger rail options available. IH-35 is too congested and harrowing to drive on. I would be more likely to take my family on day trips to Dallas from Austin if I did not have to drive on IH-35. Rail is the more environmentally sustainable option. There will never be enough lanes on IH-35 for all the congestion. But what I would really love to see is passenger rail to at least Wichita, if not all the way to Minneapolis. My family, like many others, have numerous friends and family all along the IH-35 corridor. Rail would be a wonderful way to stay in touch.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
ANDERSON	STEVE	Eliminate all of the small town stops if you want this project to succeed. Major cities and college towns only. Everyone else needs to travel to one of those stops to board a train. Trains can move faster, make fewer stops, and get out of the way of freight trains if they keep moving. What's the possibility of building new passenger-only rail in the expressway right-of-ways? Maybe that should be planned going forward when an expressway project is undergoing widening or lane adjustment.	Connectivity
Carter	Bill	My comment is that I am strongly in favor of establishing a high-speed rail option connecting the major cities of Texas with each other. I would use rail if available for my occasional travel from Austin to Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Corpus Christi, and the cities of the Rio Grande Valley. Train travel allows work (or rest) in transit, unlike driving, and is only about half as polluting mile for mile as driving or air travel. I have enjoyed using Amtrak for vacation travel to visit family in New Orleans and Washington DC, but would be a more frequent user of rail if it provided rapid connections to frequent destinations.	Connectivity
Carter	Bill	My question is whether there are any proposals or studies regarding high speed rail connecting major Texas cities, and how I could register my support more directly.	Question
Vinson	Paul Everett	Houston is left out of the high speed rail proposal. The largest city in Texas and fourth largest in the nation should have HSR.	High speed
Miller	Kaye	It would be very practical, and fill a need to have a train run from Dallas-Fort Worth to Oklahoma City, OK to Wichita, KS; then go on to Kansas City and Chicago. AND if we were to use a train like the TGV that goes 300 mph with limited stops, that would be phenomenal!!! Those trains are not only fast, but they are very quiet. A fast train is a must for this idea to capture the attention of the masses, and be practical for	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		weekend vacationers, vacationers in general, as well as, the business needs of these communities.	
Philbin	Andrew	Why is this project being considered rather than the Dallas Houston project? It appears in the best interest of Texas to get its own cities connect first. I love HSR I just think this route should not happen till we get out major cities connected first.	Connectivity
	Brendon	I support bringing passenger rail up the IH-35 corridor from south Texas to Oklahoma City, with further extension of the Heartland Flyer line possible through Wichita. I would use this service on trips down to Oklahoma and Texas instead of having to fly. Thank you for the consideration.	Support
Birlin	Michael	The line should be IMHO a connector line between the Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle.	Routes
Farrier	Harold	Our Wichita, KS community is very excited about the passenger train rail service to Texas and also to Kansas City. It would be such a blessing for travel and traffic. The benefits to the environment and fuel consumption would be wonderful. PLEASE include Wichita in your planning. And EXPEDITE the process, so we can start traveling to Texas cities very soon.	Travel options
Merrick	Ron	Any rail passenger improvements will improve the environment, reduce traffic deaths and injuries, and improve mobility. The sooner a passenger rail system connecting major points in Texas can be implemented, the better our quality of life will be. We already have significant rail passenger stations in most of these cities, now we just need to add the high-speed track and the trains.	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Moore	Vardeman	The IH-35 highway corridor is beyond capacity, has been for some time, and will continue to be when planned improvements and construction is completed. A viable rail alternative is required for both passengers and freight. Upgrading the rail between Dallas/Fort Worth and San Antonio is a cost effective alternative to further highway work during normal times. During times of disruptions to international oil supplies, rail is an essential alternative to highway traffic both freight and passenger. We heavily subsidize highway and air traffic even those subsidies are often hidden from view. Texas needs to look at a program to upgrade rail in this corridor. I recommend taking a look at what Illinois is doing for the corridor between St. Louis and Chicago as a way to run a rail corridor improvement program. Additionally, the passenger rail segment between Dallas and Fort Worth is a disaster and urgently needs revision.	congestion
Bradley	Ronn	I would love to see the Heartland Flyer come to Wichita, KS. I would travel south on it on a regular basis.	Travel options
Banyon	Evelina Villareal	I am excited for the prospect of developing the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Train system. I am an avid fan of train touring although I had my first trip aboard Amtrak only last December 26 for a holiday with my relatives in Southern California. I have always wanted to take the train, something I did not enjoy in my home country, Philippines, growing up. With the prospect of having a train transportation that will bring me to Oklahoma, Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and down south of Texas easy is something to look forward to. I fervently hope the study that is being done to make this project come true as planned. More power. Salamat nang marami (thank you very much).	Support
Duncan	Sylvia	We need more high speed rail all over the country, so let's do this in Texas. It's more convenient and comfortable than air or bus travel. It could take cars off the roads and	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		only improve air quality and vehicle congestion.	
Neufeldt	Roger	This would be a reasonable alternative that would gain traffic between these destinations.	Support
Hodapp	Dennis	I want to add my support to your interest in improving the rail service. Of course I would like the Heartland Express extended to Newton Ks with a stop in Wichita. It seems the equipment is available and the time would allow connections to the Southwest Chief. I'm older and of modest support and lower cost for dependable transportation are important to me. I hope this happens.	Travel options
Clark	Steve	I am completely in favor of passenger rail service between Brownsville, Texas, and Oklahoma City, Okla., and the sooner the better I would use it frequently, as would other members of my family, as opposed to driving.	Travel options
Krause	Joe and Jean	Rail service for commuters in Texas would be very beneficial.	Support
Abrego	Santiago	I believe that we need the railroad for more than just freight! I travel from Brownsville to San Antonio about twice a month, my friends also do the same. So what can I do to make this a reality?	Support
	Sumner	I am all FOR passenger rail to Brownsville. In a previous TxDOT study, passenger rail to Brownsville was in the plan. The PROBLEM is that the Union Pacific Railroad is going to abandon 8 miles of right-of-way [from its Olmito rail yard south to the B&M Bridge crossing] and the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority wants to replace it with a TOLL Road to the international bridge crossing. They are totally out of sync with what is being talked about on a state and national level relating to	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		passenger rail. I have written to them about this concern, and have not received an answer, except to say: "We will have our consultants look into it." This group needs to be contacted and brought into the conversation soon.	
Tirsun	Justin	As a resident of Brownsville, TX I am excited to see such a grand undertaking being started. I wanted to state support for passenger rail to Brownsville both because of the economic benefits that the entire line will gain, and because of the existing need for such transportation. I look forward to the EIS for the project and hope that Brownsville is included in the Study. It provides the capacity to access an area of over a million Americans, and potentially the multi-million Matamoros region next door.	local and regional economy
Cook	John A. PhD	We need to pay attention to environmental studies but most of all we NEED mass transit--especially to connect the Rio Grande Valley. With the new multi-campus University of Texas, connecting Edinburg to Brownsville is particularly useful to the economy, but even more importantly to connect the cosmopolitan areas of the heart of TX to Oklahoma will strengthen the economies in every location!	local and regional economy
	Craig	I am in favor of developing a passenger rail system for South Texas. We already have the basic rail infrastructure. I think a Brownsville to Oklahoma link would be very good for all points along that route for expanded economy. Many folks would take advantage of train travel for the comfort, convenience, and of course nostalgia.	Routes
Cornyn	Olivia	Please do add rail service to the other options for travel, in the Great State of Texas.	Support
Gonzalez	Sister Irma	I would love to see passenger rail return to the Rio Grande Valley.	Support
Hernandez	Freddy	I think that a passenger railway is a great idea. Not only would it provide a safe and efficient mode of transportation, but it would boost the economy of an entire region,	local and regional

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		by creating jobs and make travel for business or pleasure more accessible.	economy
Meschi	J R	I think rail service from the Rio Grande Valley would be well received and a popular option for traveling north. Additionally, it would reduce traffic on the well traveled arteries, reducing automobile accidents. During high season times on South Padre Island, additional methods of travel, such as rail, would open an entirely new market for tourism to our area. I hope TxDOT will strongly consider approving the railroad travel proposal.	congestion
Brashear	Carol	My concerns are about the lack of 21st century attention to track infrastructure and the politics involved in nation-wide rail service. It will be too expensive until it becomes nationwide. Thank you.	Politics
Winkelblech	Alicia	The City of Arlington is supportive of the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. We feel it is in the best interest of the region to run this service as close to the middle of the North Texas region as possible. Stations should not be located on the outskirts of the region. This will maximize accessibility to the service and improve ridership. As the third largest city in the DFW region, it is requested that Arlington be specifically included in discussions regarding potential impacts.	Routes
Monroe	Alta	If you've traveled lately across Texas it is obvious that there is a huge need NOW for additional modes of transportation across the state. The airlines have cut back on flights and not everyone is wanting to fly these days due to all the scrutiny everyone boarding must go through. This is a great idea....	Travel options
Winslow	Bonnie	For some years, travelers riding the Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth were able to roll their bicycles directly into a rail car for a ride between OKC	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and Fort Worth. This opened up many opportunities for commuting between the smaller towns, and for supporting bicycle tourism between and within Texas and Oklahoma. Due to an upgrade in railroad cars, this practice has been discontinued. Bicycle tourism has increased significantly over the past ten years among all ages and backgrounds. Commuting to work by bicycle has increased 64% in the past twenty years. Providing convenient ridership opportunities for the bike commuter and tourist should be given serious consideration as TDOT considers expanding its passenger rail service in Texas. This study and future infrastructure planning must consider not only roll-on access to railroad cars, but also boarding platforms, convenient connectivity to other modes of transportation, and safe access routes to and from the railroad station.	
Winslow	Bonnie	The study should consider increased economic/health/environmental benefits by allowing bicycle travel via passenger rails. Although the focus of this study is not bicycling, cycling does provide an additional alternative in transportation to alleviate congestion between Texas communities. Bicycle tourism is a multi-million dollar industry. The Texas passenger rail system with foresight could position itself to benefit from the emerging bike tourism industry. Key to a successful rail/bike relationship is to 1)re-establish roll-on access between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, and 2)to assure other cross country passenger rail services such as Amtrak’s Sunset Limited will accept bike roll-ons as well.	local and regional economy
Logan	Tom	Just a comment, I very much believe that this is a great project with positive impact to the entire area in many terms.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Meitzner	Pete	I am the Vice-Mayor of Wichita, KS and I have been the person leading our charge to connect the Flyer from Oklahoma City, north, through Wichita, KS and connect with the SW Chief in Newton KS. Also, a day route between Fort Worth to Kansas City as a separate route would be highly desired, we understand the first phase to prove the validity of the expansion of passenger rail service would be the extension of the current service. This could be done at a minimal cost, and we in Wichita, are eager and willing to help support this, along with Kansas Department of Transportation. This will prove to further secure the IH-35 corridor as a transportation and trade route for our 3 states, and more. Thank you for your consideration and I urge the study to include this expansion.	Routes
Sheets	Morrie	Please bring the Flyer through Wichita--I travel thru Dallas each week and have been stuck there by cancelled flights 3 of the last four times this month alone---I would much rather use your service and sit in a chair other than sleeping on the airport floor for the evening---please give this deep consideration as a option for your continued success	Travel options
Fischer Stout	Deborah	I would like to see an extension of this train through Wichita to KC.	Routes
Babich	David	Expanding rail service to Wichita from the established route from San Antonio to Oklahoma City is a rational project. That route is important on a national scale that will complete a north/south route to Chicago which then connects to the west coast and the east. Increased passenger rail will also reduce pollution and extend the life of our existing highways. Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas need to collaborate to make this happen.	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Maynard	James D.	I would like to see passenger rail extended from the DFW area through OKC to the Wichita/Newton area.	Routes
Harzman	Brad	I strongly support the expansion of the rail line north to Wichita and Kansas City. I'd enthusiastically support the line stopping in Emporia, Kansas, where I live.	Travel options
Gallegos	Therese	I strongly support the decision to establish a passenger train route between Brownsville and San Antonio. I love traveling by train and use it out East (between DC, NY, and Boston) instead of driving. My mother has taken the train from DC to San Antonio twice. Then I had to drive up to meet her train. It was very inconvenient. If service was established down to the Valley, my family and I would certainly use it. Anyone whose children have left the Valley would welcome a safer, less stressful way for us to visit them and for them to visit us. If people could take the train to and from San Antonio, the highways would be safer and the air would be cleaner. Lives, literally, would be saved. Please, make it happen.	Travel options
Burk	David	I have ridden the Amtrak from Newton, KS to Ft. Madison, IA many times in the past and will continue to do so. I believe that we need to support TX to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth - OK City to Wichita, KS and connect in Newton to the SW Chief. Most developed countries around the world have great train service because it reduces trucks, cars and other vehicles on the roads. This in turn reduces air pollution and accidents, both of which help human health. Making the final connection between Ok. City and Newton will, I believe, considerably increase the customer base for the railroad.	congestion
Hauck	Steve	Please strongly consider the opportunity to take further steps to advance the route of the Heartland Flyer further north, through Wichita to connect with the Southwest	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Chief in Newton, KS. Quality passenger rail is essential for continued economic growth in our region. It is affordable, convenient and generates new jobs. Thank you.	
Burk	David	I have taken the SW Chief from Newton, KS to Ft. Madison, IA many times over the past 40 years. Originally, I was able to catch it from Wichita, KS. I will continue to ride it in the future, due to many factors. Riding the train reduces the number of vehicles on the road, thus increasing the air quality and reducing the number of accidents on the road. Both of these contribute to each of our health. Another plus is that additional passenger train service reduces the wear and tear on our highways, saving the tax payers maintenance cost. I request that Texas takes further steps to advance the current heartland Flyer from OK City north through Wichita to Newton, KS. Thank-you for your consideration.	congestion
Stafford	Chad	I am writing in support of the proposed study of passenger rail service from Dallas/Fort Worth to Oklahoma City and up through Wichita, KS to Newton, KS along the 1-35 corridor. I am president of Wichita based Occidental Management and we are a real estate development firm and actively involved with economic development in the South Central Region of Kansas. This connection would not only open up business travel with, potentially, Amtrak but would also allow for dramatic increases in commerce between Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. These connectors make the IH-35 Corridor a very attractive and affordable business attractor to further the jobs growth of all three States.	local and regional economy
Santo	Susie	I would like to encourage Texas to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth to OKC north through Wichita and connect in Newton to SW Chief. This would be very important to the region and provide numerous	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		opportunities. Thank you.	
Nichols	Lynn	I believe the passenger railroad initiative is one of the most important economic development projects for all States involved. It will enhance trade, transportation and commerce through the IH-35 corridor. Energy costs are increasing, and it provides a way to move large volumes of people safely and timely. Not including, other trade. I would support moving forward on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study!	local and regional economy
Page	Karyn	Supporting infrastructure improvements, especially connecting port or border states with inland destinations is imperative for national economic sustainability. More emphasis on infrastructure improvement is needed to counter the erosion of the US's capability to remain globally competitive. The success of TX-OK project would aid KS as it pursues an interest in high speed rail development with neighboring states.	Connectivity
Osten	Bub	I would like to know what updates would have to be made to the rails and ties in order to bring them up to the standard of the train speed of an Oklahoma-Texas passenger train. And what that speed might be.	Question
Guerrero	Luis	Hello, I live close to our railroad in the Rio Grande Valley. Our area has had tremendous growth throughout this decade, and us down here in the valley, feel unappreciated by the decisions people in our capital do. I believe that it is time to bring Railroad passenger rails to the Valley. We are a region with a population of over 1 million people. We are far from rural now. Let's put a stop to this discrimination and lets help the Valley and our region prosper economically and social. BRING RAILROAD SERVICE here with a boarding station in McAllen, TX, the biggest city in our county.	Growth

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Rodriguez	Constanza	Hello, I believe that our region is ready for a passenger rail service. As Mexico's economy grows and we are affected since we are in the border it is obvious why a rail service is needed for this area. McAllen is a city on the growth that will soon play a key play in the economy. Our city is growing and we need you guys to help us give back. Many people travel from McAllen to San Antonio, or McAllen to Brownsville daily. We need a service that is fast and efficient. The rail service is the future for transportation. Please bring it here.	Travel options
Lopez	Oscar	The railway transportation from the Valley to San Antonio and Houston would be beneficial to many Valley residents as the roadways are always filled with travelers coming and going to both cities. It is safer and most fuel efficient to have public transportation that is reliable and economic.	congestion
Lopez	Oscar	If it is affordable would save the country vast quantities of oil. Many of the travelers generally drive large trucks and SUV's to those destinations. It would also make railway travel accessible to other parts of the country.	energy
Durham	Roger	Many people in the Dallas/Fort Worth area would like to travel by train to Austin, San Antonio, or Oklahoma City, but cannot do so because the present train times are not convenient. More frequent service would take many automobiles off the overcrowded and dangerous IH-35,	Frequency
Durham	Roger	Improving traffic flow and air quality, and reducing gasoline consumption.	Air quality
Durham	Roger	If at all possible, the service should be extended north to Wichita, KS.	Routes
Diaz	Fred E	This is a great idea and the most sensible yet. I believe it should be a commuter rail with a refreshment car. The highways to Laredo and Brownsville are packed with	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		truck traffic. Laredo processes over 20,000 trucks a day. The need is very much there as we senior citizens cannot drive to those cities because the trucks are very intimidating. There are many accidents on the highway caused by driver exhaustion. This can be collaborated with DPS records. During Hurricanes it makes sense to provide passenger train for evacuations. Schools could use the rails to carry large student populations to San Antonio. Young people could do field trips to valuable displays and enhance their education.	
Diaz	Fred E	Trains are much more economical than cars. The rail will provide many jobs. The old adage that if you build a bridge...they will come is very true. Train service should be restored immediately. We don't need sleeper cars. We need reliable, dependable and timely service at an affordable rate,	Affordability
Salinas	Orlando	It is of utmost importance that any rail plans for a north-south Texas rail corridor include the Rio Grande Valley and the Texas-Mexico border.	Travel options
Lopez	Maureen	This is long overdue! The stream of traffic to and from the RGV of Texas and San Antonio is constant and heavy. Why should all of these tens of thousands of cars pollute the state when people could use mass transit which would be less expensive both for the environment and, hopefully, the pocketbooks of travelers?	congestion
Lopez	Maureen	It would be especially help if it could be a high-speed train like those they have in Europe and Japan and if the train(s) could stop in the upper RGV (Edinburg/McAllen/Pharr) before heading north. I would suggest only those two stops then an express journey to (hopefully) downtown S.A. and parts north. I can imagine with a new university being formed between UTPA and UT-Brownsville that (if local travel is allowed) you would also have a number of students traveling between the	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		two stops (i.e. upper and lower valley) as well as students traveling to S.A. for a wide variety of reasons including family, shopping, and wider educational opportunities. There would be SO many benefits that would ensue that it is impossible to list them all with the limited space provided. The RGV is growing so fast and the current choices of travel north so limited that it is almost inconceivable that the number of people who would use a passenger train wouldn't be in the thousands, daily (especially weekends), if the service is provided and space available. The key would be keeping costs reasonable/low.	
Moore	Mary Ann	I am in favor of passenger rail service to the Rio Grande Valley. The sooner the better.	Support
	Rogelio	I believe that bringing rail service to the valley would be economically beneficial to the area and to the cities in McAllen, Brownsville and Harlingen, TX. It would also create jobs in the area.	local and regional economy
Zavala	Dagoberto	Just a comment of support and long overdue rail service to south Texas. Very supportive with fuel cost, traffic congestion, and baby boomers reaching retirement age. Travel on rail systems in the eastern US and loved it.....	Travel options
Stearns	James	Rail service into the RGV would be not only be prudent but would also move freight plus people. It's a long needed service and I believe it help immensely.	Freight
Rubenstein	Shirley	I would like to see high speed rail in Texas to link all of the major cities.	Support
Kennedy	Suzanne	I support the new, high speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma and South Texas. IH-35 has been a boondoggle for a long time now and I would welcome an	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		alternative mode of transportation that is economically friendly.	
Young	Hilary	I travel several times a year between Austin and Oklahoma City. I support efficient, effective high speed rail between Austin and Oklahoma City if it could run on schedule and be an efficient alternative to driving (6 hours) or flying (around 4 hours). It is attractive to have an alternate travel method that would not add to traffic or pollution, would lessen the congestion on IH-35 and on airplanes, and would consume less energy per passenger than do cars and airplanes.	Travel options
Williams	Twila	I hope that Texas will put in a rail system linking the valley to OKC. I moved to the Valley from OKC and have family and friends there. Please move forward with this rail system. I look forward to riding from the Valley to OKC via rail.	Travel options
Ware	Marie-Pierre	We need this train, please:).	Support
Weinberg	Eric	The trains should come from Texas all the way through Kansas including stopping in Wichita Kansas. The trains should go from Texas all the way north. One of the stops should be in Wichita Kansas so that people can load or unload the train from here. Also all train companies should maintain their lines as well. The passenger train would be a great way to get people places across America.	Travel options
DeGraaf	Rep. Pete	I would like to echo my support of expanding passenger rail along the 1-35 corridor. I serve as the Chairman of the General Government Budget committee in the Kansas House of Representatives and also serve on the House Appropriations committee. I and other representatives in the Kansas legislature are strongly supportive of developing a passenger rail partnership between Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. We see great value in extending the Heartland Flyer north from Oklahoma City into	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Wichita Kansas.	
DeGraaf	Rep. Pete	Expanding north to Newton Kansas would allow for productive business travel along the IH-35 corridor all the way down to Houston Texas and also allow the Heartland Flyer to connect with the already existing passenger rail Southwest Chief going east to west into Missouri and Colorado. The use of trains for vacation and business travel is becoming more popular and ability to connect existing rail service seems to make good business sense. More and more businesses understand that rail travel is restful and far more productive than traveling by car or air. It is my hope that Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas will work together in developing an interconnected passenger rail system that includes bring the Heartland Flyer north through Guthrie, Ponca City, Mulvane, Wichita, Newton, and into Kansas City.	local and regional economy
Riggs	Christopher	I strongly urge all government agencies involved with this project to move ahead as quickly as possible on connecting a southern rail route with Kansas. It is long overdue. The economies of all the states involved will benefit, I believe. Thank you!	local and regional economy
Racunas	Tom	I am writing to support and encourage Texas to take further steps to expand the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City into and through Wichita, Kansas and connect to the Southwest Chief in Newton, Kansas. I see this as a good economic and social/cultural benefit to Kansas citizens. Thank you for your consideration.	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Miller	Janet	I favor the rail link passing through Wichita. Improvements in the infrastructure will be a further incentive to companies considering setting up offices here. Jobs will be created, economic development will follow, and a vibrant city will evolve. Establishing the rail link will itself create employment. Wichita has much to offer tourists especially in the arts. They will flourish with visitors from other cities given easy access to come for the symphony, opera, ballet, music theatre, Botanica, a world class zoo and more.....they all need people to come and see, stay in hotels, eat in our restaurants. Wichita could become a destination city with a good rail link.	local and regional economy
Schmidt	Linda	I feel it is important for passenger rail service to have a connection in Wichita, KS. This would be an important travel alternative to connect Wichita to areas along the IH-35 corridor.	Support
Simons	Luke	I support increased rail transportation between OKC and south TX. I have to travel to Austin area often and would love opportunity to take rail from OKC - even better if rail service eventually includes Tulsa. Thanks!	Travel options
Fields	Rebecca	I am in support for TX to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth - Ok City north through Wichita and connect in Newton to the SW Chief.	Support
Cubbage	Diana	I hope you will support and create ample support to extend the railway system up from Texas to Wichita and then into Kansas City. The need of many and the advantage for both business and pleasure makes this a good project to energize.	local and regional economy
Kelly	Jonna	Please continue the railway through Wichita and to Newton, Kansas. I firmly believe this will benefit both Texas and Kansas in many ways.	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Stair	Evan	Studies such as what is being proposed here are long drawn out affairs that can take a decade, if not more to complete. The studies are typically outdated when released. This is a needless waste of tax-dollars. This study should be expedited in order to address increasing need for regional mass transportation. Federal funding availability is typically well below Regional and Express High Speed Rail needs. The project should consider, and assume, less than \$10 billion a year will be available nationally for passenger rail development. Specifically, incremental and specific project design should be considered over a universal high level overview. A series of small projects should be proposed that can be taken from Service Development Plan (SDP) to Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to Preliminary Design (PD) to Final Design (FD) within months, not years.	Funding
Stair	Evan	The state of Missouri has been successful in garnering a great deal of federal funding using this method through a Public-Private Partnership with the Union Pacific Railroad. Individual projects include adding a bridge over the Osage River, adding a passing siding at California Missouri, and grade crossing upgrades. Special attention should be given to upgrading existing rail infrastructure in the San Antonio - Houston - Dallas-Fort Worth triangle. This includes a new segment between Dallas/Fort Worth through Bryan/College Station Texas to Houston being considered by a private entity for High-Speed Rail development. It is a mistake to omit this leg from project scope. Some TxDOT involvement will likely be required for this new private project. The leg between Fort Worth and Oklahoma City should be targeted as a multi-frequency 90-mph Conventional speed operation per FRA definition. It should be primed for later Regional High-Speed Rail development.	Funding

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Dickerson	David	I strongly support improving passenger rail service in the Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas corridor. This is a welcome initiative and I thank TxDOT for leading. I hope the Oklahoma Department of Transportation will actively support the effort rather than undermining it as they have done every non-highway transportation development proposal in the past.	Politics
Dickerson	David	To make this effort truly effective and to have the greatest impact, frequency of service must be a primary focus. Frequency must be high enough to offer meaningful alternative to driving and offer flexibility in departure and arrival times along the route. I think a minimum of 4 round trips per day between Oklahoma City and the DFW Metroplex will be required to establish service. Hopefully this will begin to reduce the number of automobiles on the Interstate 35 corridor but is certainly not a "silver bullet" solution. Viable passenger rail service will reduce traffic congestion, improve safety by reducing the traffic volume, and improve air quality in densely populated areas by reducing automobile emissions.	Frequency
Dickerson	David	I hope to see "enhanced" conventional passenger rail improvements as the initial focus rather than focusing on high speed rail exclusively. If the KS/OK/TX corridor can be upgraded to 110 mph service like the Chicago-St Louis line, that will have greater immediate impact than studying HSR for decades. This higher speed conventional service could be fully operational in less than five years if sufficient emphasis and investment by the states involved can be garnered. HSR should be the eventual goal, but in order to change the auto-centric culture we should provide rail alternatives as soon as possible. Has this approach been considered? Thank you and I look forward to future developments.	High speed

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Harvey	Hank	Expand passenger trains in Texas and through the Midwest. It makes sense any way you look at it.	Support
Wagner	Scott	As a City Councilman from Kansas City I would like TxDOT to consider moving further north along this route to include Kansas and the City of Wichita in this study. Filling the gap that exists creates an opportunity to connect the IH-35 from corridor from the Dallas/Fort Worth area all the way to Kansas City, Missouri. We encourage TxDOT, OkDOT and KDOT to work on filling that gap and will ask MoDOT how it can assist you.	Travel options
Lynn	Krystine	My experience is solely with the southern section and parts of the southern end of the central section. I am a private citizen who has a strong interest in rail. Should European style high speed rail on a dedicated right of way be selected, the optimal path would seem to be the abandoned Southern Pacific right of way (San Antonio-Alice-Falfurrias-Edinburg-McAllen) as this could be a dedicated right of way directly to McAllen unencumbered by sharing with freight railroads. The right of way does have a lot of visual evidence remaining and could be rebuilt, but large segments are missing or difficult to spot from Highway 281, which parallels the right of way. This right of way passes through dry brush and scrub which is subject to frequent red flag fire weather warnings. Systems must be planned to ensure hot box caused fires will be detected quickly and also that the grade be well groomed. Fire hazard control will be a constant challenge with this section. If the above route were to be built conventionally, it would not be competitive with other modes in time, but it would win on quality and comfort.	Routes
Lynn	Krystine	Plus, it would provide access to the Eagle Ford shale, which might help carry the costs of the project. However, oil is a very dirty business with a poor environmental	natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		record. Furthermore, construction north of the Edinburg, TX area has all but obliterated the right of way for many miles (a problem that will be made worse in the future as the construction never stops in the Valley and never slows down). Action must be taken as soon as possible to secure any right of way that serves McAllen. McAllen is indeed linked to Harlingen by the Rio Valley Switch Co. However, rail service to McAllen might be best served by rebuilding abandoned Missouri Pacific trackage from Raymondville to Edinburg via Hargill and Faysville due to the poor state of the RSVC track at the present time. I can ride my bicycle and keep up with their train. Most of that right of way still exists.	
Lynn	Krystine	I am not too inclined to believe a model without checked baggage could work, but I am willing to give it a chance if it's cost and time competitive with air travel (which I absolutely avoid) as the European high speed rail network is presently. If Amtrak long distance style service were implemented, I would choose it over competing modes of transportation. Austin, Houston and Corpus Christi would be my primary destinations with trips at least once a month. However, with TX-OK rail access to Amtrak in San Antonio, I would be inclined to choose rail over any other mode for long distance travel. Presently, my preferred mode of long distance travel is by bus. If such service were selected, I would recommend routing over UP trackage to Harlingen with stations in Harlingen and Brownsville.	Travel options
Lynn	Krystine	It would not be difficult to rebuild Southern Pacific trackage from Harlingen to Edinburg via Santa Rosa, Edcouch; Elsa as the right of way is in good shape having only recently been abandoned. I make this recommendation on the basis of the current poor condition of the Rio Valley Switching Company's mainline and the extremely high number of at grade crossings with high traffic along said mainline. I feel a strong railroad safety campaign will be necessary to reduce the increased fatalities that may	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		occur due to careless drivers. I also recommend not routing along Commerce St. in Harlingen due to the high number of at grade crossings and the prolonged delays the average freight train causes.	
Lynn	Krystine	Would the people down here pay for it? I believe so. Travel by train has an air of efficiency and luxury that is so very much lacking. Even the lowest proposed level of service exceeds the level of service offered by current options. Also, I'd rather meet a CBP or TSA on a train than at Falfurrias or in a screener line. My experience with train travel is that it turns people from pigs to gentry. Therefore, in consideration of all the difficulties this project faces, I fully support it.	Cost
van Asselt	Mr Jan	I register my comment in favor of Rail Service up the corridor IH-35. We need more rail service in general, our highways are too crowded with large truck traffic and too many vehicles in general. My wish would be that McPherson would be more connected by railroad; when I came to McPherson in 1955 from The Netherlands, we arrived at a local train station. Our train came from New York via Chicago. All connections for passenger train service have disappeared. We do have long, long freight trains passing through but none stop here. Any freight that comes into McPherson, which is considerable, comes from a regional service; there is no passenger service connected with it.	congestion
	Daniel	I believe this would be a great idea to have down here in the valley! It would make it easier to travel from here to cities in the northern part of the state, as well as it would be very cost affective for the people using the train system. They wouldn't have to worry about having to fuel up their cars, which would more than likely cost them more money, then having to take a train to i.e. San Antonio, Austin, or Dallas. With more money in their wallets and bank accounts the probability of them spending more	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		goes up, hence it would help many local businesses increase their revenue, as we as help the Texas economy grow even more. This is why I believe that a passenger rail system will help the valley tremendously, and in effect the rest of the state would benefit as well.	
Fry	Scott	I support this project with a southern terminus in Brownsville, Texas.	Support
Klemp	Richard	The Kansas Star Casino in Mulvane, Kansas supports efforts by Texas to advance passenger rail service into Oklahoma in order to extend service into the Wichita area and eventually meeting in Newton, Kansas to connect the Heartland Flyer with the Southwest Chief.	Routes
Mitchell	Jimmie	I take the train a couple times a year up to OK, and I would like to see that this rail system be continued and expanded. I would also like to see the passenger rail service extended on a daily basis between Austin and Houston, I have family in New Orleans and cannot take the train there because of the schedule set forth by Amtrak. Not only is this a personal issue for me, I also realize that using the train, rather than a private vehicle is much better for the environment. The amount of money that goes into paying for the upkeep of the roads would be lessened if less cars are on it, and mass transportation will improve air quality for all living creatures. Due to the fact that we have experienced 270 months of higher than normal temperatures something needs to be done to lessen our unhealthy impact on our environment, and if better service were offered to the public more people would utilize mass transportation. It will have to be done eventually, so why not now?	natural environment
Ybarra	Lupe	I would like to voice my comment of my wholehearted approval of the Amtrak passenger service being extended to accommodate the Rio Grande Valley traffic. For	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>years we have had to travel to San Antonio in order to access the Amtrak service for my elderly parents. For years we have had to go the day before, rent a hotel, and see them off in the early morning hours when the train would leave. My father, who will be 88 this year, has a middle ear condition that prevents him from flying anymore. This condition causes excruciating pain whenever there is a change in air pressure in the airplane, such as ascending or, especially, descending. We have a lot of family in California still, and this would greatly benefit them and other elderly people who can no longer fly. Given the booming growth of the Valley, I feel it is high time that more services become available to our area, in order to meet the growing needs of this population. Yes, I reiterate my approval that the Amtrak service be extended to Brownsville, TX, in order to facilitate the connection of the Rio Grande Valley to San Antonio and beyond. Thank you for considering Amtrak expansion to our area.</p>	
Atkinson	Eve	<p>Thank you for notifying our agency, the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, regarding the study on the service level of rail passenger service. We are concerned that the current passenger rail service is not meeting the needs of travelers to Oklahoma, but also service to areas between Oklahoma City and Texas. The mission of Oklahoma Tourism is to make tourism an even bigger, more vital part of our economy. We concentrate on three areas to energize our state's tourism industry: Enhancing Oklahoma's image to accurately reflect who we are through advertising and addressing travel perceptions. We must rely on each other to advance tourism in Oklahoma. Our role is to continue building partnerships and assisting tourism leaders.</p>	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Atkinson	Eve	Government funding of passenger rail infrastructure: What are the benefits from government supported passenger rail service for leisure travel? Can it be justified as an efficient way to move vacationers? Is mass transportation for leisure trips a “greater good” for society? There are studies showing highway systems are subsidized. Who benefits the most from highway construction and maintenance? Many highway projects are built using an 80/20 match, with USDOT programs. Is it sustainable to continue increasing the width of highways beyond a certain number of lanes? Is safety culture (benefiting travelers and employees) a benefit from government management of rail transit? According to Progressive Railroading (August 2012), AMTRAK is working to expand a program to improve the railroad's safety culture; improving workforce development initiatives; and investing in more systems and technology that help reduce energy consumption and operating expenses. Private corporations and government are interested in safety when worker insurance rates increase. Perhaps auto insurance companies would invest in passenger rail if traffic accidents are reduced.	Funding
Atkinson	Eve	Effects on the natural environment (such and water quality and habitat) 1) Routes avoiding Oklahoma State Parks, Federally funded municipal parks and wildlife refuges should be prioritized 2) Ways to accommodate wildlife / livestock crossing areas should be catalogued for future consideration. 3) Ways to accommodate wetlands should be catalogued, and rated.	natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Atkinson	Eve	Known needs for funding and an implementation schedule: Improve the reliability of the OKC-Fort Worth route. Make it an efficient mode of travel, rather than a traveling amusement ride. (Ad hoc comments) Passenger and freight trains travel at different speeds on the same corridor. Use Positive Train Control. Support the AMTRAK strategic plan: The funding stability that's given managers the opportunity to think big-picture will help them execute the plan. No longer worried about whether the organization will exist by the next fiscal year, Amtrak managers now can focus on carrying out longer-term strategies. Plus, Boardman (the current director) has been on the job for almost four years and had plenty of time to observe the railroad's operations and gain a firm understanding of what's working and what's not. (Progressive Railroading, August 2012) Modernize the cars: "The train is relatively old. If you expect to use electronic devices, make sure to arrive early so you can snag a seat with an outlet." (www.redriverhistorian.com/readingtherails.html)	Travel options
Atkinson	Eve	We are addressing the need to revitalize the Oklahoma State Parks System because it is an integral part of tourism and one of the most significant recreational components for our citizens. It takes a significant amount of our attention as we continue to protect and preserve their ecosystems. I work with the Recreational Trails Program and Land and Water Conservation Fund, both Federal Programs to develop trails and parks across the State of Oklahoma in Oklahoma's State Parks and in municipalities in Oklahoma. I participate in the grant application evaluation process and American Disabilities Act compliance. I travel to around 20 projects per year. I have a BA in Geography from the University of Colorado, 1979. I have 20 years of experience with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. I also worked with the City of Boulder Planning Department, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments, in the Transportation Planning Department.	natural environment

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Atkinson	Eve	Priorities to address regarding the purpose of the study: Improving the service. The service exists between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, but there needs to be action on improving the service. If there have not been studies reporting the level of customer satisfaction, then there should be. Ad hoc comments say it needs to be more reliable. An investigation on the Amtrak site states it meets the time schedule 80% of the time. The site says the delays are due to repairs of the track, rather than the presence of other trains (AMTRAK website), March 2013. More frequency: Viewing Trip Advisor, a travel website, a Texas visitor points out a short trip to Oklahoma City requires a two night stay, as the train arrives late and leaves too early the next day for any meaningful sightseeing. Therefore, a weekend trip from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City would begin Friday afternoon and end Sunday afternoon. In contrast, using a passenger car requires only a one-night stay and the cost for gasoline and parking are distributed among the number of passengers, whereas the cost of train tickets per passenger outweigh the gas and parking costs.	Affordability
Atkinson	Eve	Consider the destinations of the travelers. Sources of factual information may already exist regarding the number and frequency of trips through origin-destination studies in Geography or Marketing departments of major Oklahoma and Texas Universities. Oklahoma Destinations: Are there more car trips, therefore more demand, for rail services to Oklahoma rather than from Oklahoma? The population of the metro area of Dallas-Fort Worth is larger than the population of the state of Oklahoma population. Furthermore, there are points of origination beyond the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area such as Houston, Austin, and San Antonio. Consider also, Oklahoma has two cities for main destinations, the Oklahoma metro and Tulsa metro. Currently, only Oklahoma City has a rail service. If there is no service further than Oklahoma City, a potential market of passengers will be ignored. There will probably be rail	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa in the next 20 years, so we encourage development of a more reliable, frequent and faster service to Oklahoma City. Demand for Oklahoma destinations are sports events (collegiate football, basketball (professional and collegiate), outdoor sports activities such as bass fishing and OHV recreation, family visits/duties, scholarly activities at the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University and Casino experiences. The participants in outdoor vehicle sports, horse racing or rodeo events probably would not generate rail passengers due to the amount of equipment needed to transport, but the fans would be likely to use the service. The main generators of commerce in downtown Oklahoma City are within 4 to 5 blocks of each other. Among the most notable are the Federal Court, various Federal offices , the Devon building, the Devon Arena Events Center, Sand Ridge, USGS Geologic Library, the Oklahoma City Art Museum, Oklahoma City Memorial, the Skirvin Hilton Hotel, the Oklahoma City Metro Library (holds research reference materials) and the Oklahoma County Court house, and Oklahoma County Jail. These are within walking distance of the train station. The State Capital and many State Departments, the Oklahoma History Museum (for history research) and University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Children’s Hospital are one mile from the train station, but they are not within walking distance due to a hill and exposure to car traffic.</p>	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Atkinson	Eve	<p>Origination points south of San Antonio: Which area generates more trips to Oklahoma: Corpus Christi, Brownsville/ McAllen or Laredo? Is there a demand for leisure trips from south Texas to Oklahoma? Research regarding the number of trips and the destination of travelers needs to be shown. Perhaps the data or studies can be found at Texas A&M University from the Texas Transportation Institute. Texas Destinations: Regarding Oklahomans as a source of passengers, Oklahomans travel to Texas for cultural activities (music, sports, shopping, and heritage tourism opportunities, but also for corporate regional meetings and governmental offices because it is a regional center. What is the most frequent destination of Texas-bound travelers? Is the airport (DFW), Dallas or Fort Worth the most frequent destination from the Oklahoma metro? There is a demand for passenger service to the airport because DFW is the hub for the Oklahoma and Texas area. The closest hubs for non-stop service other than Will Rogers are DFW, Houston and St. Louis. Other airports (Wichita, Tulsa, Dallas-Love, Amarillo, Kansas City) feed into these three (DFW, Houston, St. Louis) for the most part. However, the cost per passenger can again outweigh family use of a passenger car to the airport. For example flights from DFW or Dallas Love airport are generally cheaper than flights from Oklahoma City, but if the train costs more than the plane there is no incentive.</p>	local and regional economy
Atkinson	Eve	<p>The trip purpose: How important is it to provide service to quasi leisure trip demand? Quasi leisure can be described as a mixed purpose trip, such as medical visits, shopping trips for specialties, “leisure business” such as conventions, music or dance competitions, pageants, Latin dancing, ball room dancing, chapter meetings in clubs and organizations such as professional organizations but can serve purposes of tourism. The payoffs for taking the train would be less driving stress (according to the Texas Transportation Institute, The Dallas Fort Worth area is the 6th worst of the</p>	Benefits of train travel

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>nation: http://www.weather.com/activities/driving/slideshow/traffic.html?page=10&scheme=image-horiz-plain.css) Leisure business would require adding stops along the route to a major destination, before the metro area is reached. Fostering a mixed purpose trip, (meeting passenger needs) would require more stops to include useful destinations, combining utilitarian destinations with attractions. It is possible to serve the work ethic of “work then play” or “work hard, play hard” by providing opportunities to arrive at a multi- purpose destination. An intermediate hub with light rail links allowing dispersal of trips may work. Altering the schedule to allow all the passengers along the way from Oklahoma City to a point in Texas to transfer to high speed rail throughout the Texas metropolis, could allow passengers to arrive by 10 am in the morning to the airport, to the Dallas Convention Center or to downtown Fort Worth. This would be the ideal scenario. A study or report on frequent destinations from other studies could support this scenario.</p>	
Atkinson	Eve	<p>Livability: Neighborhood and regional traffic conditions How can the service be improved to make the communities where the passenger train has stations more livable? There are two components of availability which support livability, frequency of service and a well designed site. If the train does not arrive during waking hours (6 am to midnight), it is as if the service does not exist. Also contributing to low use rates is poor traffic circulation. If the station site is congested, the parking is complicated, the site is unkempt, complex or requires walking through bus or traffic drop off lanes, it is inaccessible. Furthermore, a train station could be a point of avoidance, similar to a city bus station, if it is designed poorly and not well maintained. If the area appears unsafe people will not want to use the service until gasoline prices or costly parking or lack of parking cause a hardship. Off site design is</p>	Safety

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		not a part of this study, but on site design and improved connections needs to be.	
Atkinson	Eve	Site and Design criteria: Stations and stops need to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. Also include close temporary parking for seniors and families. Cross walks should be well marked, with crossing signal lights imbedded in the adjacent streets. There should be some outlying parking, a well-lit and open layout to facilitate the change of travel mode. Include accessible service counters, ramps instead of stairs, signs to answer basic questions like arrival and departure times, fares, restroom locations, well marked waiting areas and benches or sitting platforms. Photos of the inside of the rail cars and carry-on stowage should be posted to prepare people to load. Compensate for a lack of an attendant at the OKC AMTRAK station by providing auto kiosks, or a limited choice computer to make information available 24/7. Provide other self service facilities to increase travelers' knowledge and comfort. Coordinate plans with other mass transit modes: Include improvements supporting various modes of travel. Design the site to accommodate buses, shuttle and taxi pick up, drop off lanes separated from passenger car drop off and loading, and temporary parking. Relocating tracks is not as flexible as providing shuttles to improve connectivity. A flexible, demand driven destination shuttle to take people to areas more than 4 blocks away but less than 2 miles away could work. People would wait in "bench rows" according to their destination, and which ever fills up first, leaves first. A transit logistics manager could shift the routes to allow an infrequent destination to "piggy back" on a more frequent one. Studies have been done showing the most efficient way to load an airplane, so a transportation logistics expert could develop a flexible route system.	Routes
Atkinson	Eve	Measures to share investment costs in the Mass transit system: Investigate ways the mass transit industry and corporations could contribute to costs of passenger rail	Cost

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		infrastructure and benefit from passenger rail service. Auto and health insurance companies could benefit from reduced traffic congestion on highways which generate accidents. Mass transit can reduce the number of accidents and injuries. Again, research existing studies performed at Universities and Institutions to present the facts. Oil and gas companies can be given incentives to invest in mass transit linking their investment to tradeoffs for carbon emissions. It reduces the carbon footprint of vehicle use, which decreases carbon emissions.	
Hemberger	Rev. Robert	I write in support of pursuing with serious study the possibility of passenger rail service from TX to Kansas City. This is an idea whose time may be here. Especially interesting would be some train service that would connect us in Wichita with the KC and St. Louis markets. Air travel to those places is terribly inconvenient.	Travel options
Gibbs	Mark	Please give strong consideration to rail corridor improvements that would overlap with existing or future commuter rail projects. For instance, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) has just started an eighteen-month commuter rail study that includes the Oklahoma City to Norman BNSF corridor. Capacity improvements, including double tracking, will likely be needed along this route and these may become more viable if they will also enhance the potential and capacity for intercity rail between Oklahoma and Texas. The ACOG study is on a very similar timeline to this study and I hope there will be effective coordination between these two important passenger rail studies. Please also give consideration to utilizing existing commuter and light rail links. For instance, if Oklahoma City to Fort Worth trains were routed via Denton, interchange with the DCTA A Train and then the DART Green Line would represent a useful short to medium term rail link to Dallas. This would help address the problem of how to effectively serve both Dallas and Fort	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		Worth from Oklahoma City.	
Babich	Paul	I'd like to see the route extended through Wichita and on to Newton to connect with east-west routes there in Newton. Wichita is a major city in the area, but it lacks rail service. It is logical to extend the route up to Wichita and on to Newton.	Routes
Soto	Josh	Make it happen. More jobs, safe alternative, better for environment. What's not to love?	Support
Watson	Murray	It has been brought to my attention that the State of Texas received a grant of Federal Funds for study of the need of a passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to Laredo, which would hopefully include space for freight. It's critical to those of us here in the Central Texas area that Waco is included as one of the stops for the passenger service and to send off freight. This area will grow and take advantage of the opportunity and economic developments that lie ahead. In addition to the main rail, I think it is equally important that you make connects at both ends for those who have a need to go beyond Oklahoma City or Laredo.	Support
Meadors	Matthew	I am writing on behalf of the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the organization's approximately 1,600 member firms to express the Chamber's strong support for expanded rail service in Texas, and to ask the Texas Department of Transportation to ensure that Waco is connected to future rail systems.	Support
Meadors	Matthew	Waco enjoys a diversified and growing economy, excellent natural resources, outstanding educational institutions, world-class business and industrial parks, unified and visionary leadership, and much more. The community's physical location along the dynamic IH-35 corridor, situated halfway between Austin and Dallas, is enviable. However, our great location has also created a number of challenges. The IH-35	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		corridor is heavily congested, impeding the efficient movement of people and goods, and creating safety and environmental quality concerns. Further, we have limited access to air service.	
Meadors	Matthew	Access to a modern, efficient rail system will help address these challenges and position Waco and central Texas for continued economic growth into the future. We wish you and your team much success with the current study. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance.	Support
Chase Goodman	Felicia	The mission of the Cooper Foundation is to make Waco a better place to live. A critical part of making Waco a better place is ensuring our community's long-term economic success. For this reason, the Cooper Foundation strongly supports passenger rail service in Waco.	Support
Chase Goodman	Felicia	Both passenger and freight rail service are crucially important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Locally, Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and our region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for your consideration.	local and regional economy
Stanton	Tom	As Executive Director of the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation in Waco, Texas, I wanted to express support for passenger rail service, as it is critically important to maintaining the state's national and global competitive position.	Support
Stanton	Tom	Waco's connectivity to any and all rail state rail systems is vital to our community and the region's continued economic growth and development, particularly given the competitiveness of limited air service, interstate congestion, not to mention	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		environmental and safety concerns.	
Stanton	Tom	We ask and urge that Waco is assured connection to any future rail system. Thank you for your insight in development of this much needed method of state transportation.	Support
Christensen	Tate	I am writing to you today in regards to an extremely important matter and wish to express my support for passenger rail service. We support passenger rail service and want to encourage TxDOT to ensure Waco is connected to any future rail system. Passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns.	Support
Still	Willard	What a wonderful opportunity for Texas to have the \$5.6 million Federal grant to help fund a rail study. With a good route and stops near populated areas, a well-designed rail system would complement our excellent highway system by relieving congestion and adding a great deal of safety as Texans travel.	Support
Still	Willard	You would expect me to support Waco being a stop for the rail system and I do so. Waco is a growing Texas community and is home to Baylor University, TSTC, and McLennan Community College along with many productive and successful industries. It is the major community between Dallas and Austin and because of that we have limited access to ample air service. Passenger rail could make a real difference for this community by reducing travel on IH-35 to reach a more major	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		airport.	
Still	Willard	Thanks for your work to begin this important study. Whatever we in Waco may do to assist you would be our privilege. We are bullish on an effective rail system for Texas and we would be grateful for your support of a stop in Waco.	Support
Bailey	Bill (AW)	I am very interested in the study that is to take place, and I want to express my strong support for the route to come through Waco. Waco is a major city on the IH-35 corridor and must be included in the route. Thank you for your kind consideration.	Support
Lopez	Carlos	I support the passenger Rail Service from Oklahoma City to South Texas.	Support
Pieri	Parker F.	It has come to my attention that the state of Texas will be conducting a study on a proposed passenger rail line from Oklahoma to South Texas. Passenger (and freight) rail service is very important to keeping the state of Texas competitive in the regional, national, and international economy. It is vital that Waco be connected to these rail systems so that the greater Waco community can continue its economic growth, especially given the communities limited access to air service, congested roads, and safety and environmental concerns. If you have any questions or would like additional input, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.	Support
Recks	James	I understand that the Great State of Texas recently received a grant to study expanded rail service in Texas. As a business person in Waco who travels IH-35, I appreciate the amount of planning and effort TxDOT expends to try to keep pace with the	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		growing Texas population and its transportation needs. Let me say THANK YOU for all the great work you are doing. May I also say that the residents of Waco are 100% in favor of your possible rail service expansion and we in Waco want and need to be a stop on any proposed line! Keep Waco in mind and keep up the good work!	
Lucchese	Kathryn	I understand that there will be some discussion this week of a passenger rail line between Oklahoma and Houston, and I just wanted to beg for a stop (again) in College Station and a connection with the Bush Intercontinental Airport. We spend endless hours driving back and forth between these two locations, and when returning from abroad from conferences and research it is exhausting to have to drive another two hours to get home.	Support
Lucchese	Kathryn	The air pollution in Houston and frequent traffic snarls argue for a train line, as well. I also believe we would visit Dallas/Fort Worth more often if we did not have drive so long to do so. Reading, doing work or grading papers are all things that can be done when not driving -- not to mention napping safely! Thank you for your consideration of the public interest and increased productivity!	congestion
Bailey	Wes	As a Waco businessman and President of the Waco Business League, I wanted to touch base with you and voice my support of the proposed passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to South Texas. This would be great for Texas AND great for Waco. It is my firm belief that Waco's connectivity to such a rail system is extremely important to our community's continued economic growth and vibrancy – not to mention the economic growth of the whole region.	Support
Bailey	Wes	When you consider the very limited air service we have in Waco – coupled with a terribly congested IH-35 roadway, this new passenger rail system will be similar to	congestion

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		manna from heaven. Please know that Wacoans want it! And we need it! Thank you very much.	
Sheldon	Rick	Please accept this letter as an absolute YES for rail in the future! TxDOT's rail passenger and freight service is absolutely vital to the future of Texas and, especially, Waco and the Central Texas area because of our lack of air service, along with congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns. Good luck and let us know if there is anything we can do to help.	Support
Gutierrez	Christopher H.	I am a very active player in Regional Economic Development. Please note my support for passenger rail service. Not only is passenger and freight rail service critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position, it is an essential reliever to the overburdened TxDOT highway system.	Support
Gutierrez	Christopher H.	Connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the Waco community, as well as the region's continued economic growth. Given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns, it is absolutely essential that the passenger rail service from Oklahoma to South Texas become a reality and most importantly that there specifically be a Waco Junction serving as a hub to our region. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.	local and regional economy
Kultgen	Peter	I would urge that Waco along with the other major cities in Central Texas be included in whatever configuration of passenger rail the TxDOT study is considering. As our community continues to grow and with its central location it is very important that we have access to any such passenger route. The further benefit of helping to relieve congestion on IH-35 should help save the State of Texas money in the long run. Thank you for your consideration.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Hookham	Bernadette	As an architect in the local community, I support passenger rail service and freight rail service as it is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position as well as supports a more sustainable means of transportation for people and movement of construction materials thru the region.	Support
Hookham	Bernadette	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for your assistance. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.	local and regional economy
Solano	Alfred	We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.	Support
Solano	Alfred	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Thank you for the work that you do to further the continued economic growth and success of our State.	local and regional economy
LeRow	Stefan	As a resident of Waco, TX and frequent traveler on IH-35, I strongly support the proposed passenger rail system from Oklahoma City to Laredo, TX. If economically feasible, I would love Waco to be included in the routing of this service. Please let me know how I can support your efforts in making this idea a reality.	Support
Lee	Jeff	I am one of the executives for Members Choice Credit Union in Waco, TX. Our organization enjoys a membership base of 30,000+ members and I would like to communicate to you that Waco would be able to support passenger rail service. I agree with my peers that passenger and freight rail service is critically important to	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.	
Lee	Jeff	Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is in a nice position with easy access to major cities and must be included in the vision. As we examine our future growth for Waco, this must be in the plan. In advance, thank you for your review of my correspondence to you and your team.	Support
Hulse	Monte	Please accept this letter as support for rail service, both passenger and freight, for Waco and Central Texas. It is vital for our economic growth. We have limited air service and our roads are congested hampered by environmental and safety concerns. Thank you for your support in making sure Waco is connected to any rail lines proposed through our area.	Support
Hicks	David	The purpose of this letter is to express my strong support of passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining our state's enviable national and global competitive position. As you consider plans for this service, please keep in mind that Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to this region's economic vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is the center of Texas as more Texans can be found within a 100 mile radius of Waco than from any other spot in Texas. I wish you well in this project and would be happy to participate in any way I can.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Brown	S. Boyce	We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns	Support
Martinez	Antonio	RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013-027, M A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Brownsville Endorsing the Establishment of Passenger Rail Service to Brownsville, Texas. WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Brownsville has determined that establishment of passenger rail service between San Antonio, Texas and Brownsville, Texas is needed to afford travel choices for residents of the lower Rio Grande Valley; and WHEREAS, the City Commission hereby finds that proposed passenger rail service between Brownsville and San Antonio, Texas will promote both the general welfare and economic development of the Brownsville urbanized area; and WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes that having passenger rail service available to evacuate elderly persons and persons with disabilities in the event of an approaching hurricane would serve the public interest and constitute an efficient and safe means of accommodating the special needs of these individuals; and WHEREAS, that the residents of South Texas will benefit from the economic development opportunities that will accrue due to increased tourism to this area by virtue of Passenger Rail services. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Commission of the City of Brownsville endorses the establishment of needed passenger rail service to and from Brownsville, Texas. FURTHERMORE, City of Brownsville staff will forward this resolution to TxDOT staff as evidence of the need for such rail improvements, in connection with the on-going Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. Approved this 16TH day of April 2013.	Support

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Esrock	Brett	Providence Healthcare Network, Waco's leading employer, supports passenger rail service and passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.	Support
Brown	Herb	I read in the recent issue of NARP News that TxDOT "is beginning a process to evaluate improvements necessary for enhanced passenger train service between Oklahoma City and South Texas." I'm wondering why a connection between Oklahoma City and Kansas City doesn't come first? I'm sure the rails are already in place between the two cities and would be a seeming easy change to make. In essence, the trip between Austin or San Antonio to Kansas City would help relieve the congested IH-35 corridor. Let me know what obstacles exist to prohibit the extension of rail service between Oklahoma City and Kansas City. I, for one, would definitely use the service from Austin to Kansas City many times each year.	Support
Burk	David	I plan on continuing to take the train for several reasons. People riding trains are not driving, this reduces traffic accidents and increases the quality of our air. Both of these increase the longevity of people's lives. A further consideration is that train travel reduces wear and tear on our highways which reduces the taxpayers' money to help maintain highways.	congestion
Burk	David	I have taken the Chief to Ft. Madison, IA over the past 40 years, originally I was able to take it from Wichita, KS, but now I catch it from Newton, KS. I would like to support Texas in taking further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from OK	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		city north through Wichita to Newton, KS. Thank-you for your consideration.	
Villarreal	Carlos	Thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments regarding the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. In discussing high-speed passenger rail that part of the intent of the federal legislation regarding high-speed passenger rail was to include Laredo in a rail corridor. You may ask why Laredo should be included in a high-speed passenger rail project. The City of Laredo is the home of the largest, most-efficient inland port of entry on the U.S./Mexico border. In 2012, Laredo, Webb County, handled 3,592,428 cross border truck crossings. That averages out to about 9,842 truck crosses a day. The port also handled in excess of 8,785,366 passenger vehicle crossings. The total number of vehicles that crossed through the bridge system in 2012 is in excess of 12 million. There are more than 830 trade handling and transportation-related businesses in Laredo, Webb County, Texas. Current trade numbers show that Laredo is ranked sixth of all ports in the United States and the only one to have double-digit growth out of all of the district. The significance of the flow of commerce through Laredo is not just a local or state issue. It has been recognized at the highest levels of the federal government as being in the national interest. The need to keep up with the ever-increasing flow of international trade through Laredo, Webb County, clearly outpaces the funding that is available.	local and regional economy
Villarreal	Carlos	I see high-speed passenger rail as offering many benefits to Laredo, Webb County, the state of Texas and the nation. High-speed passenger rail is a way to further promote and stimulate trade and tourism with Mexico. It offers a safe, convenient and comfortable way to travel.	Benefits of train travel
Villarreal	Carlos	High-speed passenger rail delivers a new mobility which would relieve congestion on the state highway system and reduce state highway maintenance costs. Rail also offers	Travel options

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		a reduced impact on the environment thereby preserving air quality.	
Villarreal	Carlos	High-speed passenger rail would be an economic boon to south Texas by creating hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs building rail infrastructure and maintaining and possibly manufacturing rail cars. In closing, it is obvious to those of us in Laredo, a city which has no air service to San Antonio or Austin, that high-speed passenger rail would fill this transportation gap. It would also complement the flow of traffic between Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey. Finally, it would enhance and benefit international trade and commerce between the United States, Mexico and points south.	local and regional economy
Villarreal	Carlos	The City of Laredo supports a high-speed passenger rail project in south Texas and is geographically the best suited to handle future passenger rail service. Thank you.	Support
Delagarza	MR. E.	The idea of making a -- a railroad -- passenger railroad to San Antonio and up north, it's just been I've been thinking of that for many years. I'm surprised that it hasn't been done any earlier simply because I think it is one of the best things to happen to Laredo. As we know and if we study history in the 1880s, railroad came to Laredo, and, if it hadn't been for the railroad train, Zapata would have been Laredo. Or the way Zapata was growing -- it was Miere or Guerrero, actually, here in Laredo across the street -- that was the community that was larger than Laredo in the 1800s. But when the railroad came to Laredo, Laredo grew -- outgrew everybody along the border; and since Laredo was on the north side of the river, it became a prominent railroad city. And, of course, the history shows that the railroad had a lot to do with the growth of Laredo, the growth of the area; and when we study the history, we know that Laredo was very influential and very much into the agriculture during World War I and World War II. A lot of agriculture -- and mostly vegetables, onions, cantaloupes,	local and regional economy

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		and watermelons, and all of that -- were taken out of Laredo by the train routes and taken to the war. The Laredo area, all of this area, was very good in providing services and produce for the community -- or for the state and for the nation. So the railroad was a very important aspect of it. Now -- and that was commercial loads, freight, whatever.	
DELAGARZA	MR. E.	Now, the passenger train can do wonders for this city considering what we have out there on the roads. The traffic, the -- the -- the huge amount of traffic (trucks and the 18-wheelers) and what have you of which Texas -- it used to take two-and-a-half hours, now it takes us longer to get to San Antonio. For example, a train will help with -- I think with passengers will help to do a lot of things. My concern was -- and I asked a while ago was, if -- if the railroad (or the government) was going was, if -- if the railroad (or the government) was going to take land away from the land owners around the track, which was, I think, the reason that the -- the Highway, which was the 69 or 59 project from -- that Perry had -- was talking about a lot failed because he was taking too much land and not being paid the proper amount. According to this -- to this gentleman (Mark) I think he said that that might not happen because there's a different -- a different thing happening here with the train; and I hope it doesn't happen. I mean, I don't have land out there, but I would really dislike you coming and taking my land for peanuts when I've paid so much for it. So -- so I think that -- that this is good if it happens.	congestion
DELAGARZA	MR. E.	We do really need that highway, having the rail -- the rail -- the train. We do really need a passenger train. I think the Laredo-San Antonio route is the most straightest route that there is in any place in -- in -- in the south and USA and Texas that has to the northern states from Mexico. Put it here and it just go -- just carrying people to -- across all the way over there would make it beautiful. The other thing that I have is	Routes

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the area to be concerned for placing -- of course, I'm getting ahead of myself. Where are you going to -- where the station is going to be. And I'm getting ahead of myself. But I think I -- I've gone through a bunch of cities, numerous cities in Mexico, for example, where they have railroad trains and they have the city here and the station is outside the city. (Indicating.) So you have to travel a lot, but there's plenty of space out there anyways, and I think it would probably be the most appropriate way to do it, just outside the city limits where you have lots of space to do parking and whatever you need to do, and that can build itself up to a better -- better place to work from. So, you know, there's a whole bunch of the -- but those are things that were coming to my mind as I came here, as they was -- as I was listening to -- to Mark and the young lady here today talking about it and just to let -- let you know, let Phil -- he -- know about it. Or, you know, there might be other things that I will write down anyway. Well, I have more stuff but I -- I'm just going to stop right there.	
GARCIA	MR. J.	Yeah. About four years ago I started an interest in -- in getting a train to south Texas. I wrote quite a few letters to Senator Henry Cuellar and, also, to Amtrak querying why we didn't have any trains in south Texas when all of the rest of the state had trains that left from San Antonio to El Paso to Dallas to Houston, but nothing was coming out to south Texas. So I think this is an important part of our transportation system that is critically needed, especially with the growth in population of Laredo and some of the other southern border -- cities along the border.	Travel options
GARCIA	MR. J.	One of my suggestions at that time was to run a train, believe it or not, from San Antonio to Laredo to Corpus, back up to San Antonio, but on my -- my thinking on this was to have a monorail system. And my reasoning for that was because of the huge amount of traffic that is now in Cotulla, and most of the south Texas area, with this oil boom that's just recently happened here, this would avoid any kind of delays,	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		any kind of possible, I want to say -- what was it? -- like a -- any -- any kind of hazard or any kind of trash or anything that may occur on these -- during the transit between here and San Antonio.	
GARCIA	MR. J.	So by providing a monorail system it would lift the train up and over all of this that's happening already in this area. It'll relieve the area hunters that are hunting, that have huge ranch and investments in hunting here, also,	Elevated rail
GARCIA	MR. J.	The problem that we have with the immigration problem that's -- we have encountered on a daily basis with immigrants jumping on trains trying to find a way to use the trains as a vehicle to go north without proper clearance of immigration. I think all of this was important things that I used as bullet points when I was addressing this issue two or three years ago. Nothing has changed in these issues except that it's been compounded and that also with this are drug concerns, the movement of drugs between Laredo and north Texas or, I should say, deep south Texas to north Texas.	Illegal activity
GARCIA	MR. J.	So while I embrace the fact that the train is coming to south Texas again, those are some of my concerns and issues that I'd like to address at this time.	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	See attachments (map and email)	
Schmerler	Jessica	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has reviewed preliminary information received at the first Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Agency Scoping Meeting on March 27, 2013 and offers the following information for consideration when moving forward with this project and preparing a service-level Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Project Description</p> <p>The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) commenced in winter 2013 and is expected to be completed by fall 2014. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level EIS. The EIS will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor (called a service-level EIS). The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor. Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding. Hi - speed passenger rail has been under consideration in Texas since the late 1980s. In the 1990s, a private consortium was awarded a franchise to design, build, and operate high-speed rail in the state. Although demand appeared to support the development of high-speed rail, lack of funding and other obstacles prevented the project from moving forward. Since then, other proposals for high-speed passenger rail in Texas have been submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), with each proposal showing revenues that exceed operating expenses but requiring some amount of funding to build.</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schmerler	Jessica	In 2000, FRA designated the South Central corridor, including the area from San Antonio to Dallas/Fort Worth, as a future high-speed rail corridor. In 2010, TxDOT received a grant from FRA to study passenger rail in this corridor. The TOPRS will consider a range of passenger rail options for the 850-mile corridor. Today's passenger rail service can range in speed from 79 miles per hour to more than 220 miles per hour. The different speed options will influence ridership, the number and location of stations, and costs. TxDOT and FRA will make decisions about TOPRS after reviewing input from the public and other public agencies.	Process
Schmerler	Jessica	Recommendation: TPWD recommends using existing railroad right-of-way (ROW) whenever possible. Where new construction is the only feasible option, TPWD recommends constructing the passenger rail along existing roads, pipelines, transmission lines, or other utility ROWs and easements to reduce habitat fragmentation. By utilizing previously disturbed existing utility corridors, county roads, highway, and railroad ROWs, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources would be mitigated by avoiding and/or minimizing the impacts to undisturbed habitats.	natural environment
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Purpose and Scale of this Analysis</p> <p>The purpose of this letter is to communicate to TxDOT/FRA the general concerns TPWD has regarding potential impacts to natural resources from the construction of the proposed passenger rail. This letter is not intended to replace coordination with TPWD as the proposed project progresses. However, TPWD hopes to make TxDOT/FRA aware of potential concerns early in the planning process to help guide the design and location of the proposed passenger rail and minimize adverse impacts</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		to natural resources to the extent possible.	
Schmerler	Jessica	The proposed passenger rail may potentially cross the following Texas Conservation Action Plan's (TCAP) eco-regions of Texas as shown on the attached map. (Including)Cross Timbers, Southern Texas Plains, East Central Texas Plains, Texas Blackland Prairies, Edwards Plateau and Western Gulf Coastal Plain. TPWD reviewed the eco-regions of Texas as designated by the TCAP. The TCAP's purpose is to provide a statewide "roadmap" for research, restoration, management, and recovery projects addressing Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and important habitats. SGCN include terrestrial, freshwater, and marine birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, fishes, plants, and plant communities. The goal of the plan is ultimately to conserve and improve the status of these species and, as possible, prevent listings under the Endangered Species Act. More information on the TCAP can be found at http://www.tpwd.state.TX.us/landwater/land/tcap/ . Potential impacts to natural resources will generally vary by eco-region. This letter will attempt to address some of these potential impacts on a regional scale. Because a study area has not yet been determined, eco-regions that are traversed by IH 35 are included on the attached TCAP eco-region map. An additional eco-region that is not traversed by IH 35 was added (Western Gulf Coastal Plain eco-region) because there are several potential passenger rail routes in South Texas as displayed on the TOPRS corridor map that was issued at the Agency Scoping Meeting.	natural environment
Schmerler	Jessica	Information regarding natural resources and potential impacts is provided at a coarse scale, and general recommendations that apply to all eco-regions have been provided for your planning reference. As this project progresses and a study area is determined, it is recommended that TxDOT/F RA contact TPWD early in the planning process for	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		site-specific information and recommendations.	
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>General Recommendations — All Eco-regions</p> <p>Below are bulleted lists of potential natural resource concerns that could be a result of the proposed project and recommendations to minimize adverse impacts. The recommendations and potential natural resource concerns listed below are applicable to all eco-regions listed above.</p> <p>Natural Resource Concerns: Clearing of woody vegetation, Introduction of non-native species in native grasslands/rangelands, Clearing/fragmentation of riparian corridors (route would cross most major rivers and many tributaries), Impacts to aquatic species (freshwater mussels/designated mussel sanctuaries, fish, etc.), Direct and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to TPWD managed areas — taking of TPWD property, Direct and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to non-TPWD managed areas (federal, city, county, non-governmental organizations, etc.), Impacts to SGCN from TCAP as well as species shown on TPWD and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) county lists, Fragmentation of wildlife travel corridors, Removal of Whooping Crane stopover habitat in its migration corridor, Taking of USFWS designated critical habitat, Impacts to Colonial Waterbird Rookeries.</p>	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Use native vegetation and water conservation in station landscaping, Use bridge spans rather than culverts where feasible to retain stream, characteristics and aquatic and terrestrial movement, Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction in wetlands/temporary crossings to minimize impacts, Construct wildlife crossings, particularly in wildlife travel corridors, Comply with applicable state and federal regulations (listed below).</p>	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Threatened and Endangered Species</p> <p>The TPWD county lists of rare and protected species may be obtained online at http://www.tfpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/maps/gis/ris/endangered species.phtml. The USFWS should be contacted for guidance, permitting, survey protocols, and mitigation for federally listed species. For USFWS threatened and endangered species lists by county please visit http://www.fws.gov/endangered/.</p>	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Managed Areas</p> <p>Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code requires demonstration of no feasible or prudent alternative to taking of TPWD lands such as State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). If the proposed passenger rail will cross any TPWD lands it will require an easement or transfer of property authorized by the TPWD Commission. This process can take several months to a year, and compensatory mitigation will be required. If the proposed project has the potential to impact a TPWD State Park, please contact David Riskind at (512) 389-4897 and if the project has the potential to impact a WMA, please contact DCI111iS Gissell at (512) 389-4407. Please note that Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code also applies to public</p>	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		areas that are managed by counties and cities. Coordination with the Grants-In-Aid Branch of TPWD and local park administrators is necessary to prevent conversion of grant-assisted lands to other than public outdoor recreation use as prohibited by Section 6(1) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.	
Schmerler	Jessica	State and Federal Regulations State and federal regulations that would pertain to the proposed project include (but are not limited to) the following: Federal Regulations: Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, U.S. Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	State Regulations: Chapter 86 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (State-owned Streambeds), Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code (Managed Areas), Section 68.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (Regulates State-listed Species), Sections 12.015, 12.019, and 66.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 57.251-.259 (regulates the introduction and stocking of fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants into public waters of the state).	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	Recommendation: TPWD recommends TxDOT/F RA strive to avoid impacts to potential natural resource concerns applicable to all eco-regions listed above and address avoidance, minimization, and mitigation plans for impacts to these resources in the service-level EIS. TPWD also recommends TxDOT/FRA address compliance with the above-listed state and federal regulations, as well as any others that pertain to	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the proposed passenger rail project, in the service- level EIS.	
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>General Recommendations by Eco-region</p> <p>Cross Timbers</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Cross Timbers eco-region are listed below. Clearing of mesquite brush (northern part of the eco-region provides suitable habitat for the Texas kangaroo rat and Texas horned lizard), Clearing of woody vegetation/fragmentation (southern pan of the eco-region, provides suitable habitat for Black-capped Vireo (BCVI) and Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA), Wintering bald eagles, Interior least tern habitat (along and within the Red River).</p>	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Texas Blackland Prairies</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Texas Blackland Prairies, Eco-region are listed below. Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland-dependent species, Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat.</p>	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Edwards Plateau</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Edwards Plateau eco-region are listed below. Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat, Karst species (salamanders and karst invertebrates), Bats (direct impacts to roosts), Edwards aquifer - water quality, Spring-fed streams.</p>	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Southern Texas Plains</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Southern Texas Plains eco-region are listed below. Rare and protected plants, Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat), Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi, Interior Least Tern (in and near Laredo, e.g., Lake Casa Blanca, Rio Grande), Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., in Coastal Sand Plain), Clearing/fragmentation of unique riparian corridors (i.e., ramaderos), Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks, Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas horned lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake), Noise and lights in an otherwise minimally developed landscape.</p>	impacts
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>Western Gulf Coastal Plains</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Western Gulf Coastal Plains eco-region are listed below. Large unfragmented tracts under single ownership/management, Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., Coastal Sand Plain), Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat), Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi, Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks, Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas homed lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake)</p>	impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Schmerler	Jessica	<p>East Central Texas Plains</p> <p>Potential natural resource concerns associated with the East Central Texas Plains eco-region are listed below. Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland dependent species, Houston toad critical habitat.</p> <p>Please also refer to the email that was sent to Brian Hausknecht of CH2M Hill on March 11, 2013 regarding recommended Geographic Information System (GIS) data to assist in the TOPRS analysis. This email contains several GIS data sources that pertain to the above-listed natural resource concerns. This email is attached for your reference. TPWD appreciates the opportunity to provide preliminary input during the first agency scoping period for the Texas — Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. Please contact me if you have any questions.</p>	impacts
Pullman	Robert	<p>As you know, we are interested in working with TxDOT as the department develops plans for the IH-35 Corridor. We would seek the evaluation of Tubular Rail’s Drive on Drive off Truck Ferry (DDF) patented concept for the Oklahoma City to Rio Grande Valley alignment. Our hypothesis is simple; that development of the DDF will yield benefits to public safety, lower congestion levels and highway maintenance costs; create economic benefits for shippers and carriers through lower shipping and operating costs and is environmentally beneficial. Our claim, which we seek to have evaluated by or in conjunction with the TxDOT, is that the system will produce sufficient revenue to cover capital and operating costs, thus at least solving part of the highway funding issue and producing usable rail for passenger applications. At the end of March I made a fact finding trip through Kansas and Missouri evaluating acceptance and need. The transportation challenges faced in that part of the country differ from those in Texas only by geography and the below summation is based on</p>	Travel options

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		<p>comments and concerns we heard expressed from, elected officials, railroads, private industry associations and the Missouri Department of Transportation. While the Kansas conversations centered on passenger rail and the need for funding to maintain Amtrak’s Southwest Chief (\$100 million requested by BNSF), the Missouri discussions were very much about highway issues, particularly funding.</p> <p>In Kansas, which has the third most miles of railroads after Texas and Illinois, we found a growing resignation amongst elected officials that the State will most likely lose the Southwest Chief, Amtrak’s long distance train from Chicago to Los Angeles with several stops in Kansas. Currently running on a BNSF line roughly paralleling the BNSF’s TransCon through Kansas, the Southwest Chief needs a cash infusion to maintain this line at a track class that can accommodate 79mph speeds for passenger travel. BNSF’s freight on the line is not sufficient in volume nor is it time sensitive enough for the railroad to make the necessary investment. Politically, it is unlikely that the three states will collectively come up with the 100 million dollars plus 10 million annually to keep the once daily train running on this route. It is likely to be diverted through Oklahoma and Texas on a less direct route and merged with another train.</p>	
Pullman	Robert	<p>The situation is of interest to Tubular Rail as this is the very type of situation that the DDF could assist Amtrak’s operations as the line has current capacity but would need upgrading for DDF operations yet allowing passenger type use to continue. In conjunction with trackage in Missouri and Colorado, a continuous 700 mile segment could be assembled. In the last two weeks the Missouri Senate has passed a one percent increase in the State’s sales tax, at writing the measure is before the Missouri House of Representatives. If passed there, the measure would then go to the voters in</p>	Connectivity

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		2014 and an uncertain outcome.	
Pullman	Robert	<p>As written, the revenues from this measure are to be dedicated to transportation. Adding a lane in each direction to IH-70 is estimated to cost 3 billion dollars. What is not clear is if the sales tax measure will produce enough funds during its ten year life to meet IH-70's needs as well as other areas of the state. What is certain is that the Dedicated Trucks Lanes project will not proceed as a toll road. Missouri's rail picture is much more complicated than that found in Kansas but current active rail lines total 2500 miles less than the state had at its peak. We have identified some trackage that could be part of a tri-state system.</p> <p>In meeting with the Missouri DOT we learned that their biggest problem is that of funding. While there had been high hopes for the four state Dedicated Truck Lanes project, political reality has set in and hopes are now pinned on the sales tax measure.</p> <p>Two of the MoDOT personnel in the meeting dealt with trucking issues on a regular basis and were thus well versed on some of the Hours of Service issues as well as the overall commercial driver shortage. The other personnel were more from the planning side of transportation and had many question and comments on how a DDF project would impact existing traffic and if there was enough volume of longer haul trucks to be cost effective. We hope the MoDOT will be part of that evaluation.</p>	Freight

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Pullman	Robert	The brief outline below is taken from the DDF Proposal/concept paper. □ Implementation Issues: o Legal, particularly eminent domain and restoration of abandoned rail ROW's; o Political; o Financing-revenues from truck, rail, and business related to ROW (fiber optics, pipeline etc.) o Partners: State DOT's, FRA, US DOT, STB; o Competition; o Regulatory; o Coalition Building; o Business Model emphasizing a more limited Governmental role; o Developmental and Organizational issues, including ownership, operations and governmental issues; o Inertia □ External Benefits: o Restoration of standard freight service; o Risk Factors; o Environmental pros and cons; o Loss of fuel tax revenue vs. lower maintenance; o HAZMAT; o Towns with restored rail service; o Development ideas, explaining how to develop the system from concept through construction and operation; o Supportive of short range, alternative- fuel trucks. (fuel cell, battery, etc.) □ Technical Issues: o 45 to 50 mph average speed; o Requires class 3 track standard; o Engineering and selection of Design Build contractors; o Operator, operations, and potential customer inputs for types of service; o Engineering survey of existing conditions and obstructions; o Identify tasks, assign priorities, and determine responsibilities; o Width in cities and loop bypasses, economic development for impacted areas; o Location – determining what areas have both demand and available rail assets; o Prototyping of two full scale cars and testing	Study
Pullman	Robert	These issues are a place to start a feasibility assessment. We are sure there are more that will be raised but the unconventionality of the DDF approach must be viewed in light of the current situation and what forecasts are predicting for the future, both freight and climate. Much attention has been paid in recent years to the Public Private Partnership PPP approach to infrastructure needs. We don't disagree that there are huge reserves of funds available for investment but if Governmental agencies want to	Feasibility

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		tap these funds they must present options to investors that make sense to both the investment community and the public as well. In proposing the development of the DDF we seek a Partnership at the low cost “front end” and in so doing establish an approach that will lower risk levels prior to implementation. We also develop efficiencies over current transport methods to produce a revenue stream that actually lowers user’s costs rather than raising them.	
Heithaus	Autumn	I am in total support for Texas to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth - Ok City north through Wichita and connect in Newton to the SW Chief. Since 2006, I, with Mr. Evan Stair from Norman, OK, started the organization, the Northern Flyer Alliance. We have been working together to build support for bringing passenger rail service up through the IH-35 Corridor for the past seven years. The City of Wichita has taken over our efforts to support this initiative and our Kansas Legislators really want passenger rail service to expand from Newton, KS through Oklahoma and the State of Texas. The support exists in Kansas by our citizens and many of us in Kansas want this! I have collected many Resolutions over the years from Kansas organizations and cities that support passenger rail service along the IH-35 Corridor. I will help you in any way that I can to build this goal and bring passenger rail	Support
Little Owl	Rebecca	Please include the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) on the announcement of the availability of the Draft Service Level EIS. The project corridor may cross USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project in the service areas of McAllen and Harlingen.	Other
McKenzie	John	I hope the passenger train service to south TX does happen. I remember when south TX had a passenger train which ran from Houston to Brownsville up until April 1966.	Support

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		Ridership was high but the Missouri Pacific wanted out of the passenger business. People will ride the train. Major cities along the way will benefit. It will be a great and safe alternative to the congested highways. There are a number of colleges as well as military installations along the route. I believe passenger train service will be a wise investment for Texas' future. We need it.	
Jacobs	Ms. Johnnie	Thank you for the correspondence regarding the above referenced project. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has historic interest in various parts of Texas and Oklahoma. In order for us to more thoroughly evaluate our area of interest in relation to this project for NHPA Section 106 review, we would like to request that you send our office a copy of the GIS project line shape file so that we can do further examination. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.	Other
Fourkiller	Tamara Francis	Thank you for consulting with the Delaware Nation. We appreciate your willingness to conduct proper consultation with our nation. We received your letter regarding the above referenced project on April 23, 2013. Upon examination we are interested in these areas. Therefore, <u>we will be a consulting party</u> . Please send further project plans along with cultural resource surveys to our offices and set up a meeting date for the month of June. Should you have any questions regarding this email or future consultation feel free to contact our offices	Other
Griffin	Debra	The Region 6 office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the March 13, 2013 Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. To assist in the scoping process for this project, we	Other

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<p>have identified several issues for your attention in the preparation of the EIS and enclosed detailed scoping comments for your consideration. EPA is most concerned about the following issues: alternatives development, impacts to water and biological resources, invasive species management, habitat protection, air quality, indirect and cumulative impacts, climate change, environmental justice, and mitigation. EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed project. Please send one hard copy of the draft EIS and four CDs to this office when completed and submitted for public comment. When you are ready to file the draft EIS with EPA, you may now electronically file it by using our e-NEPA Electronic Filing website http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/submiteis/index.html. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rhonda Smith at 214-665-8126 or John MacFarlane of my staff at 214-665-7491 or macfarlane.john@epa.gov for assistance.</p>	

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Griffin	Debra	Proposed Project: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) intends to prepare a Service Level/Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Texas Department of Transportation and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, to analyze the impacts of a proposed new and/or improved high-speed intercity passenger rail service along an 850-mile corridor extending from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to the south Texas cities of Laredo and Brownsville. This EIS will be used by the FRA in its decision making process to determine whether the project is in the public interest. The FRA will serve as the lead Federal agency under the NEPA process and is responsible for the preparation of the EIS. General EPA suggests utilizing the Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol (REAP) methodology to determine ecologically sensitive areas within the proposed project area that should be avoided or protected. REAP is a product of the Texas Environmental Resource Stewards (TERS) effort which analyzes existing broad-scale electronic data to identify important ecological areas in Texas. For more information on REAP, please call John MacFarlane at 214-665-7491.	Process
Griffin	Debra	Tiering: EPA understands the FRA will use a "tiered" approach to this project. The Tier 1, or Service Level, EIS will assess the broad corridor-wide impacts of a passenger rail system. The more detailed Tier 2 documentation would be required to examine the potential impacts of the site-specific projects that are advanced to implement the Tier 1 alternative selected. Any Tier 2 documents should incorporate by reference the general discussions and concentrate solely on the issues specific to the statement subsequently prepared 1. Statement of Purpose and Need: The EIS should clearly identify the underlying purpose and need to which the FRA is responding in proposing the alternatives. 2. The purpose of the proposed action is	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		typically the specific objectives of the activity, while the need for the proposed action may be to eliminate a broader underlying problem or take advantage of an opportunity.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Alternatives Analysis: NEPA requires evaluation of reasonable alternatives, including those that may not be within the jurisdiction of the lead agency. 3. A robust range of alternatives will include options for avoiding significant environmental impacts. The EIS should "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, 4. by developing a defined screening process. The screening process should rate each alternative against a set of pre-determined criteria. Each alternative should then be analyzed for its level of impact on a resource, e.g. no effect, negligible effect, minor effect, major effect, significant effect. Only that alternative that effectively meets or best meets all of the screening criteria should be recommended as the preferred alternative. The EIS should provide a clear discussion of the reasons for the elimination of alternatives which are not evaluated in detail. Section IS02.14(d) requires the alternatives analysis to "include the alternative of no action." No Action means the proposed activity would not take place, and the resulting environmental effects from taking no action would be compared with the effects of permitting the proposed activity or an alternative activity to go forward.</p>	Process

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Griffin	Debra	Affected Environment: This section should provide information on the existing resources and condition of the natural and built environment. It is a description of baseline conditions. These baseline conditions provide the context for evaluating environmental consequences and should include historical cumulative effects to the extent feasible. Environmental Consequences A majority of EISs contain a well-written section on the affected or existing environment. However, where most EISs fall short is the discussion of the environmental consequences of the proposed project. An analysis should follow an equation. First, what is the action? In this example, the action is filling wetlands. Second, what is the intensity or extent of impacts? In this example, the extent of proposed impacts is five acres. Third, is that significant? The EIS must answer that question and prove that the action of filling five acres of wetlands is not significant by discussing rationale. If the action is significant, then the EIS must contain appropriate mitigation measures.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Water Resources: <i>Water Supply and Water Quality</i> Public drinking water supplies and/or their source areas often exist in many watersheds. Source water is water from streams, rivers, lakes, springs, and aquifers that is used as a supply of drinking water. Source water areas are delineated and mapped by the state for each federally regulated public water system. The 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act require federal agencies to protect sources of drinking water for communities. The EIS should address the potential effects of project discharges, if any, on surface water quality. Specific discharges should be identified and potential effects of discharges on designated beneficial uses of affected waters should be analyzed.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	<i>Stormwater</i> The EIS should describe the original (natural) drainage patterns in the project locale, as well as the drainage patterns of the area during project operations. Also, the EIS should identify whether any components of the proposed project are	Impacts

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		within a 50 or 100-year floodplain. The EIS should note that, under the Clean Water Act (CWA), any construction project disturbing a land area of one or more acres requires a construction stormwater discharge permit.	
Griffin	Debra	<i>Waters of the United States, including Wetlands</i> The project applicant should coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine if the proposed project requires a Section 404 permit under the CW A. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands and other special aquatic sites. The EPA recommends the FRA include a jurisdictional delineation for all waters of the U.S., including ephemeral drainages, in accordance with the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual and the December 2006 Region Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual. A jurisdictional delineation will confirm the presence or absence of waters of the U.S. in the project area and help determine whether or not the proposed project would require a Section 404 permit. If a permit is required, the EPA will review the project for compliance with Federal Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Materials (40 CFR 230), promulgated pursuant to Section 404(b)(1) of the CW A. EPA encourages on-going coordination with the USACE during the planning, scoping, and construction phases. The EIS should demonstrate planning efforts to avoid, minimize, and compensate for wetland losses associated with the dredging, dredged material disposal, and other construction and operation activities. The EIS should also include an analysis of the potential for contaminated sediments to adversely impact the aquatic environment during construction and operation of the terminal.	Impacts

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Griffin	Debra	<i>Impaired Waters</i> The CWA requires States to develop a list of impaired waters that do not meet water quality standards, establish priority rankings, and develop action plans, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), to improve water quality. The EIS should provide information on CWA Section 303(d) impaired waters in the project area, if any, and efforts to develop and revise TMDLs. The EIS should describe existing restoration and enhancement efforts for those waters, and any mitigation measures that will be implemented to avoid further degradation of impaired waters.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) - Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 includes a special provision that protects publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites from being acquired for transportation projects. Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (L WCF) states that either the land or park appurtenances acquired with L WCF funds cannot be eliminated or acquired without coordination with the National Park Service and mitigation that replaces the eliminated items. If any 4(f) or 6(f) properties are within or near project corridors, they should be documented. A more thorough evaluation of potential impacts, alternatives, and mitigation should be included in appropriate Tier 2 documentation. Please be aware that vibration and noise can also adversely impact 4(f) and 6(f) properties.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Project Specific Locations (PSL) - PSLs outside the right-of-way that would be established to support construction of the roadway such as borrow and disposal sites, staging and storage areas, and concrete and aggregate plants, must be identified as direct impacts. The project team should strive to locate PSLs so they avoid environmentally sensitive areas. Ideally, PSLs should be located in previously disturbed, upland areas.	Impacts

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
Griffin	Debra	Biological Resources. Habitat and Wildlife - The EIS should identify all petitioned and listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that might occur within the project area. The EIS should identify and quantify which species or critical habitat might be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by each alternative and mitigate impacts to these species. EPA recommends that the FRA consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to ensure that current and consistent surveying, monitoring, and reporting protocols are applied in protection and mitigation efforts.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Invasive Species - Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species (February 3, 1999), mandates that federal agencies take actions to prevent the introduction of invasive species, provide for their control, and minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause. Executive Order 13112 also calls for the restoration of native plants and tree species. If the proposed project will entail new landscaping, the EIS should describe how the project will meet the requirements of Executive Order 13112. In addition, we encourage alternative management practices that limit herbicide use (as a last resort), focusing instead on other methods to limit invasive species vegetation and decrease fire risk. Possible alternatives include mowing and weed control fabric, which may need a layer of soil to prevent degradation due to ultraviolet light.	Impacts
Griffin	Debra	Air Quality - The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and non-NAAQS pollutants, criteria pollutant nonattainment areas, and potential air quality impacts of the proposed project (including cumulative and indirect impacts). Such an evaluation is necessary to understand the potential impacts from temporary,	Process

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		long-term, or cumulative degradation of air quality.	
Griffin	Debra	The EIS should describe and estimate air emissions from potential construction and maintenance activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize those emissions. EPA recommends an evaluation of the following measures to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics).	Process
Griffin	Debra	<i>Existing Conditions</i> -The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and criteria pollutant nonattainment areas in the vicinity of the project.	Process
Griffin	Debra	<i>Quantify Emissions</i> -The EIS should estimate emissions of criteria and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics) from the proposed project and discuss the timeframe for release of these emissions over the lifespan of the project. The EIS should describe and estimate emissions from potential construction activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize these emissions. • Provide a comparison of proposed project emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with the general conformity de minimis levels (40 CFR 93.153) for the Dallas/Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS moderate nonattainment area (100 tons/year NOx, 100 tons/year VOCs) to determine the applicability of general conformity to this project.	Process
Griffin	Debra	<i>Specify Emission Sources</i> -The EIS should specify all emission sources by pollutant from mobile sources (on and off-road), stationary sources (including portable and temporary emission units), fugitive emission sources, area sources, and ground disturbance. This source specific information should be used to identify appropriate mitigation measures and areas in need of the greatest attention. • Clearly identify in	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		the EIS any construction phases/other aspects of project alternatives that may already be accounted for in existing Transportation Improvement Program/Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Dallas/Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS moderate nonattainment area.	
Griffin	Debra	<i>Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan</i> -The EIS should include a draft Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan and ultimately adopt this plan in the Record of Decision. In addition to all applicable local, state, or federal requirements, we recommend the following control measures (Fugitive Dust, Mobile and Stationary Source and Administrative) be included in the Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan in order to	Process
Griffin	Debra	<p>reduce impacts associated with emissions of particulate matter and other toxics from construction-related activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fugitive Dust Source Controls: The EIS should identify the need for a Fugitive Dust Control Plan to reduce Particulate Matter 10 and Fine Particulate Matter 2.5 emissions during construction and operations. <p>We recommend that the plan include these general commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stabilize heavily used unpaved construction roads with a non-toxic soil stabilizer or soil weighting agent that will not result in loss of vegetation, or increase other environmental impacts. • During grading, use water, as necessary, on disturbed areas in construction sites to control visible plumes. • Vehicle speed 	Mitigation

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit speeds to 25 miles per hour on stabilized unpaved roads as long as such speeds do not create visible dust emissions. • Limit speeds to 10 miles per hour or less on unpaved areas within construction sites on un-stabilized (and unpaved) roads. • Post visible speed limit signs at construction site entrances. • Inspect and was construction equipment vehicle tires, as necessary, so they are free of dirt before entering paved roadways, if applicable. • Provide gravel ramps of at least 20 feet in length at tire washing/cleaning stations, and ensure construction vehicles exit construction sites through treated entrance roadways, unless an alternative route has been approved by appropriate lead agencies, if applicable. • Use sandbags or equivalent effective measures to prevent run-off to roadways in construction areas adjacent to paved roadways. Ensure consistency with the project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, if such a plan is required for the project.. • Sweep the first 500 feet of paved roads exiting construction sites, other unpaved roads en route from the construction site, or construction staging areas whenever dirt or runoff from construction activity is visible on paved roads, or at least twice daily (less during periods of precipitation). • Stabilize disturbed soils (after active construction activities are completed) with a non-toxic soil stabilizer, soil weighting agent, or other approved soil stabilizing method. 	

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover or treat soil storage piles with appropriate dust suppressant compounds and disturbed areas that remain inactive for longer than 10 days. Provide vehicles (used to transport solid bulk material on public roadways and that have potential to cause visible emissions) with covers. Alternatively, sufficiently wet and load materials onto the trucks in a manner to provide at least one foot of freeboard. • Use wind erosion control techniques (such as windbreaks, water, chemical dust suppressants, and/or vegetation) where soils are disturbed in construction, access and maintenance routes, and materials stock pile areas. Keep related windbreaks in place until the soil is stabilized or permanently covered with vegetation. • Mobile and Stationary Source Controls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If practicable, lease new, clean equipment meeting the most stringent of applicable Federals or State Standards. In general, commit to the best available emissions control technology. Tier 4 engines should be used for project construction equipment to the maximum extent feasible. • Where Tier 4 engines are not available, we recommend use of EPA-verified particulate traps, oxidation catalysts and other appropriate controls where suitable to reduce emissions of diesel particulate matter and other pollutants to no more than Tier 2 levels. • Consider using electric vehicles, natural gas, biodiesel, or other alternative fuels during construction and operation phases to reduce the project's criteria and greenhouse gas emissions. • Plan construction scheduling to minimize vehicle trips. 	

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit idling of heavy equipment to less than 5 minutes and verify through unscheduled inspections. • Maintain and tune engines per manufacturer's specifications to perform at EPA certification levels, prevent tampering, and conduct unscheduled inspections to ensure these measures are followed. • Administrative controls: • Develop construction traffic and parking management plan that maintains traffic flow and plan construction to minimize vehicle trips. • Identify any sensitive receptors in the project area, such as children, elderly, and the infirmed, and specify the means by which impacts to these populations will be minimized (e.g. located construction equipment and staging zones away from sensitive receptors and building air intakes). • Include provisions for monitoring fugitive dust in the fugitive dust control plan and initiate increased mitigation measures to abate any visible dust plumes. 	
Griffin	Debra	Climate Change - Scientific evidence supports the concern that continued increases in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activities will contribute to climate change. Global warming is caused by emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases. On December 7, 2009, the EPA determined that Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) contribute to air pollution that "endangers public health and welfare" within the meaning of the Clean Air Act. Higher temperatures and increased winter rainfall will be accompanied by a reduction in snow pack, earlier snowmelts, and increased runoff. Some of the impacts, such as reduced groundwater discharge, and more	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		frequent and severe drought conditions, may impact the proposed projects. The EIS should consider how climate change could potentially influence the proposed project, specifically within sensitive areas, and assess how the projected impacts could be exacerbated by climate change and strategies for climate change adaptation planning. For example, measures for climate change adaptation should consider potentially increased drainage needs.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Emissions</p> <p>On February 18, 2010, the CEQ issued draft language to Federal Agencies on analyzing the effects of GHG emissions and climate change when describing the environmental effects of a proposed agency action in accordance with NEPA. CEQ's draft guidance defines GHG emissions in accordance with Section 19(i) of Executive Order 13514 Federal Leadership in Environment, Energy, and Economic Performance (October 5, 2009) to include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbon (PFCs), and sulfurhexafluoride (SF₆). Because CO₂ is the reference gas for climate change based on their potential to absorb heat in the atmosphere, measures of non-CO₂ GHGs should be reflected as CO₂-equivalent (CO₂e) values. EPA supports evaluation and disclosure of GHG emissions and climate change effects resulting from the proposed project during all project phases, including</p> <p>(1) pre-construction (e.g., transportation, mobilization, and staging), (2) construction, (3) operation, (4) maintenance, and (5) decommissioning. We recommend that the GHG emission accounting/inventory include each proposed stationary source (e.g., power plant, liquefaction facility, compressor and metering stations, etc.) and mobile emissions source (e.g., heavy equipment, supply barges, rail transports, etc.). We also</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		recommend that the EIS establish reasonable spatial and temporal boundaries for this analysis, and that the EIS quantify and disclose the expected annual direct and indirect GHG emissions for the proposed action. In the analysis of direct effects, we recommend that the EIS quantify cumulative emissions over the life of the project, discuss measures to reduce GHG emissions, including consideration of reasonable alternatives. EPA recommends that the EIS consider mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to reduce action related GHG emissions, and include a discussion of cumulative effects of GHG emissions related to the proposed action.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste/Solid Waste</p> <p>The EIS should address potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of hazardous waste from construction and operation of the proposed project. The document should identify projected hazardous waste types and volumes, and expected storage, disposal, and management plans. It should identify any hazardous materials sites within the project's study area and evaluate if those sites would impact the project in any way.</p>	Process
Griffin	Debra	<p>Coordination with Tribal Governments</p> <p>Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments (November 6, 2000), was issued in order to establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications, and to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes. If applicable, the EIS should describe the process and outcome of government-to-government consultation between the FAA and with any and each of the tribal governments within the project</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>area, issues that were raised (if any), and how those issues were addressed in the selection of the proposed alternative. Because this project will have a portion of the proposed rail line in Oklahoma, EPA strongly recommends that the FRA initiate consultation with Tribal governments as early as possible because of the unique legal relationship the U.S. Government has with federally recognized tribes based on the Constitution, treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and court decisions. This relationship includes recognition of the right of tribes as sovereign governments to self-determination, and an acknowledgment of the federal government's trust responsibility to tribes. The precise nature of this relationship will vary depending upon the identity of the tribes and nature of trust resources involved.</p>	
Griffin	Debra	<p>National Historic Preservation Act</p> <p>Consultation for tribal cultural resources is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Historic properties under the NHP A are properties that are included in the National Register of Historic Places or that meet the criteria for the National Register. Section 106 of the NHPA requires a federal agency, upon determining that activities under its control could affect historic properties, consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO). Under NEPA, any impacts to tribal, cultural, or other treaty resources must be discussed and mitigated. Section 106 of the NHP A requires that Federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on cultural resources, following regulation in 36 CFR 800.</p> <p>The EIS should address the existence of cultural and historic resources, including Indian sacred sites, in the project areas, and address compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. It should also address Executive Order 13007, distinguish it from Section</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		106 of the NHPA, and discuss how the FRA will avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity, accessibility, or use of sacred sites, if they exist. The EIS should provide a summary of all coordination with Tribes and with the SHPO/THPO, including identification of NRHP eligible sites, and development of a Cultural Resource Management Plan.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Environmental Justice and Impacted Communities</p> <p>Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994) and the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice (August 4, 2011) directs federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations, allowing those populations a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Guidance 7 by CEQ clarifies the terms low-income and minority population (which includes Native Americans) and describes the factors to consider when evaluating disproportionately high and adverse human health effects. The EIS should include an evaluation of environmental justice populations within the geographic scope of the projects. If such populations exist, the EIS should address the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations, and the approaches used to foster public participation by these populations. Assessment of the project's impact on minority and low-income populations should reflect coordination with those affected populations. The EIS should also describe outreach and public involvement conducted to all other communities that could be affected by the project, since rural communities may be among the most vulnerable to health risks associated with the project. Please refer to</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		EPA's EJ website ⁸ for additional information.	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Indirect and Cumulative Impacts</p> <p>The indirect impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and communities in the vicinity of the project are affected by the proposed project later in time or farther removed in distance. We recommend focusing on induced growth and development and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.</p> <p>The cumulative impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and communities in the vicinity of the project have already been, or will be, affected by past, present, or future activities in the project area. These resources should be characterized in terms of their response to change and capacity to withstand stresses. Trends data should be used to establish a baseline for the affected resources, to evaluate the significance of historical degradation, and to predict the environmental effects of the project components.</p> <p>For the cumulative impacts assessment, we recommend focusing on resources of concern or resources that are "at risk" and/or are significantly impacted by the proposed project, before mitigation. For this project, the FRA should conduct a thorough assessment of the cumulative impacts to aquatic and biological resources and air quality, especially in the context of the other developments occurring and proposed in the area.</p> <p>The EIS should also delineate appropriate geographic boundaries, including natural ecological boundaries, whenever possible, and should evaluate the time period of the</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)		Comments	Topic
		<p>project's effects. For instance, for a discussion of cumulative wetland impacts, a natural geographic boundary such as a watershed or sub-watershed could be identified. The time period, or temporal boundary, could be defined as from 1972 (when the CWA established Section 404) to the present.</p> <p>Please refer to the Council on Environmental Quality's "Considering Cumulative Effects Under the National Environmental Policy Act, and EPA's "Consideration Of Cumulative Impacts In EPA Review of NEPA Documents" for assistance with identifying appropriate boundaries and identifying appropriate past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects to include in the analysis.</p>	
Griffin	Debra	<p>Mitigation and Monitoring</p> <p>Within the process of developing the EIS, if impacts to waters of the U.S. and wetlands require a USACE permit and are significant, a draft mitigation plan should also be developed and made available to EPA prior to the release of the Final EIS. A draft mitigation plan should strive for avoidance and minimization first and should outline appropriate compensation and enhancement measures for unavoidable impacts to wetlands and special aquatic sites. A draft plan should include the evaluation of the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative, according to the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines and should outline a monitoring plan. Please note that any compensatory mitigation plan must fully comply with the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule (Mitigation Rule) effective June 9, 2008.</p>	Process
Griffin	Debra	<p>Coordination with Land Use Planning Activities</p> <p>The EIS should discuss how the proposed action would support or conflict with the objectives of federal, state, tribal or local land use plans, policies and controls in the project areas. The term "land use plans" includes all types of formally adopted</p>	Process

Commenter (last name, first name)	Comments	Topic
	documents for land use planning, conservation, zoning and related regulatory requirements. Proposed plans not yet developed should also be addressed if they have been formally proposed by the appropriate government body in a written form (CEQ's Forty Questions, #23b).	
^a Comments are the verbatim, unedited content of each comment, listed by commenter and categorized by topic area.		

4.0 Next steps

Following the service-level EIS scoping process, the study team will conduct an alternatives analysis to identify an initial set of proposed route and service level alternatives based on the purpose and need of the Program and will consider the comments received during the scoping process. These initial alternatives will then be evaluated to determine which alternatives TxDOT and FRA will fully evaluate through the service-level EIS process and which alternatives would be considered infeasible or would not meet the Program purpose and need and which would therefore be removed from further consideration. Throughout the alternatives analysis process, the study team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies.

Once TxDOT and FRA have determined that alternatives that will be evaluated in the draft service-level EIS, the study team will begin analysis of existing conditions in the study area and potential service-level impacts of the study alternatives. Throughout the evaluation process, the study team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies. TxDOT will also continue to conduct public outreach to apprise the public the Study's progress and provide the opportunity for input.

The analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of the alternatives will then be documented in the draft service-level EIS, which FRA and TxDOT will publish for public comment. A 45-day comment period will begin after publication of the Notice of Availability of the draft service-level EIS in the *Federal Register*. TxDOT will distribute Notices of Availability to recipients on the Study mailing list and to potentially affected property owners. In addition, the draft EIS will be posted on the Study website. Public hearings will be conducted in the study area to provide the public the opportunity to review a summary of the contents of the draft service-level EIS and to provide comments. These public hearings will be advertised in local newspapers, included in the Notice of Availability, and posted on the Study website.

After close of the public comment period and review of agency and public comments on the draft EIS, TxDOT, in conjunction with FRA, will identify preferred route and service-level alternatives. The final service-level EIS is expected to be completed in late 2014, with issuance of a ROD by the end of 2014. Following completion of the service-level EIS, the selected alternative may be further developed and would undergo project-level environmental review that may incorporate by reference the data and evaluations included in the service-level EIS. Subsequent project-level evaluations would concentrate on issues specific to each project.

Appendix A

Notice of Intent

name of the individual submitting the comment (or of the person signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's Privacy Act Statement for the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) published in the **Federal Register** on December 29, 2010 (75 FR 82132), or you may visit <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-12-29/pdf/2010-32876.pdf>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Elaine M. Papp, Chief, Medical Programs Division, 202-366-4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov, FMCSA, Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may renew an exemption from the vision requirements in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), which applies to drivers of CMVs in interstate commerce, for a two-year period if it finds "such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved absent such exemption." The procedures for requesting an exemption (including renewals) are set out in 49 CFR part 381.

Exemption Decision

This notice addresses 5 individuals who have requested renewal of their exemptions in accordance with FMCSA procedures. FMCSA has evaluated these 5 applications for renewal on their merits and decided to extend each exemption for a renewable two-year period. They are:

Richard D. Carlson (MN)
Robert P. Conrad, Sr. (MD)
Donald P. Dodson, Jr. (WV)
James A. Stoudt (PA)
Ralph A. Thompson (KY)

The exemptions are extended subject to the following conditions: (1) That each individual has a physical examination every year (a) by an ophthalmologist or optometrist who attests that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the requirements in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), and (b) by a medical examiner who attests that the individual is otherwise physically qualified under 49 CFR 391.41; (2) that each individual provides a copy of the ophthalmologist's or optometrist's report to the medical examiner at the time of the annual medical examination; and (3) that each individual provide a

copy of the annual medical certification to the employer for retention in the driver's qualification file and retains a copy of the certification on his/her person while driving for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official. Each exemption will be valid for two years unless rescinded earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be rescinded if: (1) The person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained before it was granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315.

Basis for Renewing Exemptions

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1), an exemption may be granted for no longer than two years from its approval date and may be renewed upon application for additional two year periods. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, each of the 5 applicants has satisfied the entry conditions for obtaining an exemption from the vision requirements (63 FR 66226; 64 FR 16517; 65 FR 20245; 65 FR 57230; 65 FR 78256; 66 FR 16311; 66 FR 17994; 67 FR 57266; 67 FR 76439; 68 FR 10298; 68 FR 13360; 68 FR 15037; 69 FR 52741; 70 FR 12265; 70 FR 14747; 70 FR 16887; 70 FR 2701; 70 FR 7545; 72 FR 12665; 74 FR 9329; 76 FR 15360). Each of these 5 applicants has requested renewal of the exemption and has submitted evidence showing that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the requirement specified at 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) and that the vision impairment is stable. In addition, a review of each record of safety while driving with the respective vision deficiencies over the past two years indicates each applicant continues to meet the vision exemption requirements.

These factors provide an adequate basis for predicting each driver's ability to continue to drive safely in interstate commerce. Therefore, FMCSA concludes that extending the exemption for each renewal applicant for a period of two years is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

Request for Comments

FMCSA will review comments received at any time concerning a particular driver's safety record and determine if the continuation of the exemption is consistent with the requirements at 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315. However, FMCSA requests that interested parties with specific data concerning the safety records of these

drivers submit comments by April 12, 2013.

FMCSA believes that the requirements for a renewal of an exemption under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315 can be satisfied by initially granting the renewal and then requesting and evaluating, if needed, subsequent comments submitted by interested parties. As indicated above, the Agency previously published notices of final disposition announcing its decision to exempt these 5 individuals from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10). The final decision to grant an exemption to each of these individuals was made on the merits of each case and made only after careful consideration of the comments received to its notices of applications. The notices of applications stated in detail the qualifications, experience, and medical condition of each applicant for an exemption from the vision requirements. That information is available by consulting the above cited **Federal Register** publications.

Interested parties or organizations possessing information that would otherwise show that any, or all, of these drivers are not currently achieving the statutory level of safety should immediately notify FMCSA. The Agency will evaluate any adverse evidence submitted and, if safety is being compromised or if continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA will take immediate steps to revoke the exemption of a driver.

Issued on: March 4, 2013.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2013-05746 Filed 3-12-13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Service Level Environmental Impact Statement for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

ACTION: Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing this notice to advise the public that it will prepare a Service Level/Tier 1 EIS with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to study potential new and/or improved high-speed intercity passenger rail service along an 850-mile corridor

extending from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to the south Texas cities of Laredo and Brownsville (proposed action). In addition to the Service Level EIS, the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (Study) also includes preparation of a service development plan for the corridor for each of three sections of the corridor: Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth, Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio, and San Antonio to south Texas. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is a partnering state agency in the development of the EIS. The Service Level EIS will evaluate a reasonable range of corridor alternatives and make decisions regarding the preferred corridor, location of train service termini, location of intermediate stops, the level of service, and future planning for projects to implement the service. Alternatives under consideration will include a No Action (No Build) alternative, as well as multiple build alternatives. The build alternatives may include infrastructure improvements in existing or prior rail corridors, the development of one or more new rail corridors, or a combination of both, as well as varying levels of service. FRA is issuing this Notice to solicit public and agency input in the development of the scope of the EIS and to advise the public that FRA and TxDOT will conduct outreach activities regarding the scope of the EIS. To ensure all significant issues are identified and considered, the public is invited to comment on the scope of the EIS, including the purpose and need, alternatives to be considered, impacts to be evaluated, and methodologies to be used in the evaluation.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the Service Level EIS for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study should be provided to TxDOT by April 26, 2013. Comments will also be accepted at public scoping meetings to be held from March 25, 2013, through April 4, 2013, at the times and locations identified below:

- Oklahoma City: Metro Tech Center, 1900 Springlake Drive, Oklahoma City, OK on March 25, 2013 from 2 p.m. through 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Ardmore: Ardmore Train Station, 251 E. Main Street, Ardmore, OK on March 26, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Sherman: Sherman Senior Center, 1500 N. Broughton Street, Sherman, TX on April 2, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Fort Worth: TxDOT Training Offices, 2501 SW Loop 820, Fort Worth,

TX on March 28, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.

- Dallas: MSDC Offices, 8828 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX on April 3, 2013 from 2 p.m. through 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Belton: Central Texas Council of Governments, 2180 N. Main Street, Belton, TX on April 1, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Waco: Heart of Texas Council of Governments, 1514 S. New Road, Waco, TX on March 25, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Austin: TxDOT Austin Office, Building 7, 7901 N. IH 35, Austin, TX on March 27, 2013 from 2 p.m. through 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Windcrest: Windcrest Civic Center, 9310 Jim Seal Drive, Windcrest, TX on April 1, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Harlingen: Harlingen City Hall, 502 E. Tyler Avenue, Harlingen, TX on April 4, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Corpus Christi: TxDOT Offices, 1701 S. Padre Island Drive, Corpus Christi, TX on April 2, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.
- Laredo: TxDOT Offices, 1817 Bob Bullock Avenue, Laredo, TX on April 3, 2013 from 6 p.m. through 8 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the scope of this study should be mailed or emailed to Mr. Mark Werner, Rail Division, Texas Department of Transportation, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483. The email address is provided on the project Web site: www.txokrail.org.

The buildings used for the scoping meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. Any individual who requires special assistance, such as a sign language interpreter, to participate in the meetings should contact Mr. Mark Werner, Project Manager, Texas Department of Transportation, (512) 486-5137, seven calendar days prior to the meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Mark Werner, Project Manager, TxDOT, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483, (512) 486-5137; or Ms. Catherine Dobbs, Office of Railroad Policy and Development, Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6347. Information and documents regarding the Service Level EIS and environmental process will be made available for the duration of the environmental process at: www.txokrail.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Environmental Review Process

The Service Level (Tier 1) EIS will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA and the FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts as set forth in 64 FR 28545 dated May 26, 1999 (Environmental Procedures). The Service Level EIS will also address Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 303) and other applicable Federal and state laws and regulations. The Service Level EIS and any subsequent project (Tier 2) environmental documents will be developed in accordance with CEQ regulations, FRA's Environmental Procedures, and FRA's Update to NEPA Implementing Procedures (78 FR 2713; January 14, 2013).

FRA and TxDOT will use a tiered process, as provided for in 40 CFR 1508.28, in the completion of the environmental review of the Study. "Tiering" is a staged environmental review process applied to environmental reviews for complex projects. The Service Level EIS will address first tier of broad corridor issues and alternatives. Subsequent project-level second tier NEPA evaluations will analyze site-specific projects based on the decisions made at the Service Level. The Service Level NEPA assessment will result in an EIS with the appropriate level of detail for corridor decisions and will address broad overall issues of concern, including but not limited to:

- Confirm the purpose and need for the proposed action.
- Confirm the study area appropriate to assess reasonable alternatives.
- Identify a comprehensive set of goals and objectives for the corridor in conjunction with stakeholders. These goals and objectives will be crafted to allow comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of study alternatives necessary to achieve the goals, including train operations, vehicles, and infrastructure.
- Develop alternative evaluation criteria based on purpose and need, goals and objectives.
- Identify the range of reasonable alternatives to be considered, consistent with the current and planned use of the corridor and the existing services within and adjacent to the study area, as well as considering a no action/no build alternative.
- Identify the general corridor alignment(s) and right-of-way requirements of the reasonable build alternatives.

- Identify, at a corridor planning level, the infrastructure and equipment investment requirements for the reasonable build alternatives.
- Include the consideration of the No-Build Alternative which will be studied as the baseline for comparison with the build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative represents other transportation modes such as auto, air travel, intercity bus, and existing rail and the physical characteristics and capacities as they exist at the time of the Service Level EIS, with planned and funded improvements that will be in place at the time rail improvements would become operational.
- Evaluate and describe, at a corridor planning level, the potential environmental consequences (benefits and adverse effects to the human and natural environment) associated with the reasonable alternatives.
- Establish the timing and sequencing and future NEPA processes for component actions to implement the proposed action.
- Identify preferred alternatives for corridor route alignment within each of the three corridor sections.

Subsequent to this Service Level EIS, project level assessment(s) will address component projects to be implemented within the selected general corridor and where appropriate will incorporate by reference the data and evaluations included in the Service Level EIS. Subsequent evaluations will concentrate on the issues specific to the component of the alternative selected with the Service Level EIS, identify the Project alternatives that meet the purpose and need for each component project, and analyze the specific environmental consequences and measures necessary to mitigate environmental impacts at a site-specific level of detail. This Service Level EIS process will be coordinated with the ongoing preliminary engineering and environmental planning efforts for the Dallas/Fort Worth—Houston passenger rail corridor.

II. Project Background

The 850-mile Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor extends from Oklahoma City in the north through Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio to destinations in south Texas including Laredo, Corpus Christi, and Brownsville. Existing passenger rail service includes intercity service on the Heartland Flyer (Oklahoma City to Fort Worth), Texas Eagle (Fort Worth to San Antonio), and Sunset Limited (Los Angeles to New Orleans via San Antonio) operated by Amtrak, and regional/commuter rail service on the Trinity Railway Express (Dallas to Fort

Worth) and Capital MetroRail (Austin) operated by Texas operators. Intercity passenger rail between Oklahoma City and San Antonio provides service to cities and communities generally along the Interstate 35 (I-35) corridor. The purpose of Study is to evaluate alternatives to provide higher speed passenger rail service to meet future intercity travel demand and to improve rail facilities, reduce journey times, and improve connections with regional public transit services. These improvements are needed because of the current and forecast population and business growth within the study area that has resulted in growing congestion on highways and rail services along the Interstate 35 (I-35) corridor.

The I-35 corridor, running from Duluth, Minnesota, to Laredo, Texas, is a congressionally identified corridor of national significance and is one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S., running through six of the largest urban areas and nine of the 50 largest cities in the U.S. International truck traffic demand, intercity truck traffic demand, and passenger travel demand compete for highway capacity, creating substantial congestion inside the urban areas through which the highway runs. Projections for the Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio portion of the corridor show average speeds along I-35 would drop from 55 to 15 miles per hour by 2035.

Transportation plans for Texas and Oklahoma have identified substantial population growth and population aging within the Study corridor. Texas population is expected to grow by 39% from 2010 to 2035. The population of the Texas Triangle (a region of Texas bounded by Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio) has been growing rapidly over the last several decades, with growth rates in some areas as high as 27%. Texas' population has grown making it the second most populous state in the U.S. with most of the state's population centered in the eastern half of the state, along and east of the I-35 corridor. Oklahoma City is expected to see a population increase of 25% from 2000 to 2035, with intensified population densities in the metropolitan area. Populations within the Study area are also aging, with the percentage of people who are 65 years old or older expected to grow from about 13% to nearly 20% by 2030 in Oklahoma and from 10% to over 17% in Texas, with the aging population expected to rely more heavily on public transportation such as intercity rail. Long range transportation plans in Texas and Oklahoma have identified the need to improve passenger rail services to meet

the future demand brought on by these changes in population.

While a common need exists for increased passenger rail service across the 850-mile Study corridor, the corridor has been divided into three sections where the passenger rail needs and opportunities within each section, while interdependent, are distinct. Each section will both be evaluated separately by section and as parts of the overall rail corridor in the Service Level EIS.

The north section between Oklahoma City and Dallas/Fort Worth has existing intercity passenger rail service (Heartland Flyer) with one train in each direction per day, where annual ridership has increased by as much as 10% within the last three years. In this section, over 60% of train passengers would otherwise have taken private vehicles and up to 29% of passengers would otherwise have not made the journey. This passenger rail service is constrained by operation on a busy freight railroad line resulting in delays and schedules with inconvenient layovers for connecting with other rail or transit services in Fort Worth. Rail improvement planning in this section has identified the need for enhanced railroad facilities and better coordination with other connecting passenger rail services to increase the attractiveness of rail as a travel mode choice. Additional needs in this section include direct connection to the City of Dallas and the Dallas/Fort Worth airport (DFW), improved train control systems to increase train speed and allow safe operation of increased numbers of freight and passenger trains within the existing rail corridor, and additional roadway/railroad grade separations to enhance safety where rail and roadways cross.

The central section between Dallas/Fort Worth and San Antonio via Austin has existing intercity passenger rail service in the form of the Texas Eagle, the southernmost portion of daily Amtrak service between Chicago and San Antonio. From Fort Worth, there are daily connections with the Heartland Flyer providing intercity rail service north to Oklahoma City. From San Antonio, there are connections with the Sunset Limited running three times weekly east to New Orleans and west to Los Angeles. Approximately 23% of Amtrak train trips ending in Texas originate within the state.

The central section is characterized by the highest level of intercity travel demand within the state. This is, in part, a result of its linking three of the four largest metropolitan areas within the state, all of which are projected to

continue to grow in the future. The central section, via existing I-35, is characterized by substantially higher automobile and truck volumes than any other intercity corridor in the state. These volumes are projected to increase steadily through 2035, by which time traffic volumes are projected to result in freeway speeds as low as 15 miles per hour, contributing to very substantial delays. Air travel between the central section termini (i.e., Dallas/Fort Worth and San Antonio) is characterized by higher passenger volumes than any other intrastate connection. With the exception of the Dallas/Fort Worth-to-Houston connection, air travel demand between Dallas/Fort Worth and San Antonio is more than twice the demand of any other intrastate intercity connection. Enhanced passenger rail service in the central section would serve a clear need for additional transportation capacity and options. It would assist in meeting the strong demand for intercity travel in this highly populated corridor, thereby diverting some of the heavy automobile and truck volumes occurring at present and projected for the future.

The southern section between San Antonio and the cities of Laredo, Corpus Christi, and Brownsville does not have passenger rail services. Instead, Amtrak provides passenger service south of San Antonio by motor coach. The border areas of Brownsville and Laredo have heavy commercial truck traffic on the highways and freight traffic along existing freight railroad lines. The growing congestion in the border cities is affecting the economic viability of the region. Other intercity public transportation, including transportation to other destinations in the U.S. and Mexico, is provided by motor coaches operated by an assortment of Mexican and U.S. operators. A need exists to provide travel mode options to address future passenger travel demand in this area and reduce roadway congestion resulting from the passenger buses combined with commercial truck traffic. Rail service in this section would provide an efficient, safe, equitable, and affordable alternative to highway, bus, or air travel. In this section, cross-border travel demand to Mexican destinations such as Monterrey, a major business hub, results in strong potential passenger rail demand.

III. Scoping and Public Involvement

FRA encourages broad participation in the Service Level EIS process during scoping and subsequent review of the resulting environmental documents. Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested agencies and the

public at large to ensure the full range of issues related to the proposed action and all reasonable alternatives are addressed and all significant issues are identified. In particular, FRA is interested in determining whether areas of environmental concern exist where the potential may exist for significant impacts identifiable at a corridor level. Appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and appropriate railroads are being notified of the proposed Project and comments are being solicited. Public agencies with jurisdiction are requested to advise the FRA and TxDOT of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency and the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed improvements.

An iterative public involvement/information program will support the process. The program will involve stakeholder workshops, newsletters, a Web site, public open houses, small group and community meetings, and other methods to solicit and incorporate public input throughout the Service Level EIS process. To ensure that the full range of issues relating to the proposed action is addressed, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments and questions concerning the proposed action should be directed to TxDOT or to the FRA at the addresses provided above. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the web site at www.txokrail.org, or sending an email using the link on the Web site.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 7, 2013.

Corey Hill,

Director, Passenger and Freight Programs.

[FR Doc. 2013-05732 Filed 3-12-13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-06-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[U.S. DOT Docket Number NHTSA-2011-0169]

Reports, Forms, and Record Keeping Requirements

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment on obtaining vehicle information for the general public; Correction.

SUMMARY: Before a Federal agency can collect certain information from the

public, it must receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below is being forwarded to OMB for review and comments. A **Federal Register** notice (77 FR 11621) with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the proposed information collection for the agency's new consumer Vehicle-child restraint system (CRS) Fit program and consolidation of existing collection of vehicle safety information (OMB Control Number 2127-0629) was published on February 27, 2012. The February 2012 "Request for comments" notice described a new collection of information for which NHTSA intend to seek OMB approval concerning recommendations from vehicle manufacturers regarding child restraint systems (CRSs) that fit in their individual vehicles. Furthermore, NHTSA planned to combine the new information collection with an existing collection for obtaining vehicle information for consumer information purposes. The agency received comments from the public on the new and existing collection of information. However, since the agency has not published its final decision on the new consumer information program, it is not able at this time to address comments received from the public regarding the new provisions for the collection of information on vehicle-CRS matchups from vehicle manufacturers. Thus, this "Correction" notice now focuses on renewing the existing collection of vehicle safety information and only addresses comments received from that information collection. Comments pertaining to the new Vehicle-CRS Fit Program will be addressed at a later time in a new submission, when the agency publishes its final decision on the new program.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 12, 2013.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Complete copies of each request for collection of information may be obtained at no charge from Johanna Lowrie, U.S. Department of Transportation, NHTSA, Room W43-410, 1200 New Jersey Ave SE., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Lowrie's telephone number is (202) 366-5269. Please identify the relevant collection of information by referring to its OMB Control Number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Appendix B

Public Scoping Meeting Announcements – Print Media

Media Advisory



TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

--- MEDIA ADVISORY ---

For Immediate Release

March 19, 2013

TXDOT SEEKS INPUT FROM RESIDENTS IN WACO, AUSTIN AND BELTON ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL

TxDOT kicks off study with public meetings to research viability of passenger rail line

WHEN/WHERE: All meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m.

- March 25 – Waco – Heart of Texas COG, 1514 S. New Road
- March 27 – Austin – TxDOT Austin District Office, 7901 N. I-35, Bldg. 7
- April 1 – Belton – Central Texas COG, 2180 N. Main St.

Background — The federally-funded Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option that can help reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly along the highly-congested I-35. These open houses are the first step in a very inclusive process aimed at gathering public input for the study. The above open houses are three of 12 such meetings taking place in March and April along the corridor. The public may view all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

For media inquiries, contact TxDOT Media Relations at MediaRelations@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8700.

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Texas Department of Transportation[®]

News

125 E. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483
(512) 463-8700 FAX (512) 463-9896

TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

--- MEDIA ADVISORY ---

For Immediate Release

April 2, 2013

HARLINGEN MEETING LOCATION CHANGED TO ACCOMMODATE MORE PUBLIC INPUT ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL

TxDOT kicks off study with public meetings to research viability of passenger rail line

WHEN/WHERE: The meeting will run from 6 to 8 p.m.

- April 4 – Harlingen – Harlingen Town Hall, 118 E. Tyler Ave. (previously scheduled at City Hall, 502 E. Tyler Ave.)

Background – The federally-funded Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option that can help reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly along the highly-congested I-35. These open houses are the first step in a very inclusive process aimed at gathering public input for the study. The above open houses are four of 12 such meetings taking place in March and April along the corridor. The public may view all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

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For Immediate Release

March 19, 2013

TXDOT SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT FROM CORPUS CHRISTI, HARLINGEN, LAREDO, SAN ANTONIO ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL

TxDOT kicks off study with public meetings to research viability of passenger rail line

WHEN/WHERE: All meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m.

- April 1 – San Antonio – Windcrest Civic Center, 9310 Jim Seal Dr.
- April 2 – Corpus Christi – TxDOT Offices, 1701 S. Padre Island Dr.
- April 3 – Laredo – TxDOT Offices, 1817 Bob Bullock Ave.
- April 4 – Harlingen – Harlingen City Hall, 502 E. Tyler Ave.

Background – The federally-funded Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option that can help reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly along the highly-congested I-35. These open houses are the first step in a very inclusive process aimed at gathering public input for the study. The above open houses are four of 12 such meetings taking place in March and April along the corridor. The public may view all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

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For Immediate Release

March 19, 2013

TXDOT SEEKS INPUT FROM RESIDENTS IN ARDMORE AND OKLAHOMA CITY ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL

TxDOT kicks off study with public meetings to research viability of passenger rail line

WHEN/WHERE: All meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m.

- March 25 – Oklahoma City – Metro Tech Center, 1900 Springlake Dr.
- March 26 – Ardmore – Ardmore Train Station, 251 E. Main St.

Background – The federally-funded Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option that can help reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly along the highly-congested I-35. These open houses are the first step in a very inclusive process aimed at gathering public input for the study. The above open houses are two of 12 such meetings taking place in March and April along the corridor. The public may view all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

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--- MEDIA ADVISORY ---

For Immediate Release

March 19, 2013

TXDOT SEEKS INPUT FROM RESIDENTS IN DALLAS, FORT WORTH AND SHERMAN ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL

TxDOT kicks off study with public meetings to research viability of passenger rail line

WHEN/WHERE: All meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m.

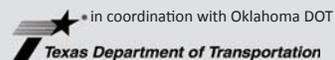
- March 28 – Fort Worth – TxDOT Training Offices, 2501 S.W. Loop 820
- April 2 – Sherman – Sherman Senior Center, 1500 N. Broughton St.
- April 3 – Dallas – DFW Minority Supplier Development Council (MSDC) Offices, 8828 N. Stemmons Fwy., Ste. 550

Background – The federally-funded Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option that can help reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly along the highly-congested I-35. These north Texas open houses are the first step in a very inclusive process aimed at gathering public input for the study. The north Texas open houses are three of 12 such meetings taking place in March and April along the corridor. The public may view all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

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###

Scoping Ad



Participate in scoping the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

The first step in the EIS process is scoping; when TxDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. The public scoping comment period ends on April 26, 2013.

To provide scoping comments:

- Mail to: Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483
- Submit comments online at www.TXOKrail.org
- Attend a scoping meeting (see website for all 12 locations)

Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

Oklahoma City, OK

Mon., Mar. 25, 6 - 8 p.m.
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Dr.

Ardmore, OK

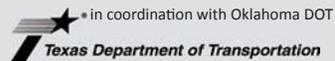
Tues., Mar. 26, 6 - 8 p.m.
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main St.

Sherman, TX

Tues., Apr. 2, 6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N Broughton St.

Visit www.TXOKrail.org to learn more.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aides or services are requested to contact Mark Werner at (512) 486-5137 at least three days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. • *Las personas con discapacidades que estén pensando en asistir a esta reunión y que necesiten servicios o ayuda auxiliar se le pide que se pongan en contacto con Mark Werner al (512) 486-5137, por lo menos tres días antes de la reunión, para poder hacer los arreglos necesarios.*



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Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

Austin, TX

Wed., Mar. 27, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

San Antonio, TX

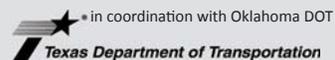
Mon., Apr. 1, 6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Belton, TX

Mon., Apr. 1, 6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

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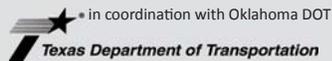
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Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

Waco, TX

Mon., Mar. 25, 6 - 8 p.m.
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Fort Worth, TX

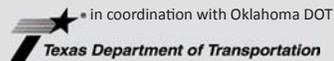
Thurs., Mar. 28, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Training Offices
2501 S.W. Loop 820

Dallas, TX

Wed., Apr. 3, 6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy,
Suite 550

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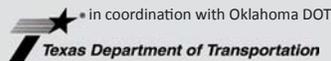
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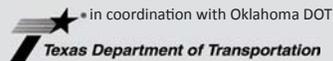
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TxDOT Offices
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Harlingen, TX
Thurs., Apr. 4, 6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.

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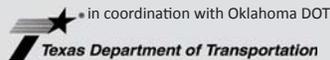
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1514 S. New Rd.

Austin, TX
Wed., Mar. 27, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

Belton, TX
Mon., Apr. 1, 6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

Visit www.TXOKrail.org to learn more.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aides or services are requested to contact Mark Werner at (512) 486-5137 at least three days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. • *Las personas con discapacidades que estén pensando en asistir a esta reunión y que necesiten servicios o ayuda auxiliar se le pide que se pongan en contacto con Mark Werner al (512) 486-5137, por lo menos tres días antes de la reunión, para poder hacer los arreglos necesarios.*



Participate in scoping the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

The first step in the EIS process is scoping; when TxDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. The public scoping comment period ends on April 26, 2013.

To provide scoping comments:

- Mail to: Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT,
125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483
- Submit comments online at www.TXOKrail.org
- Attend a scoping meeting (see website for all 12 locations)

Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

Corpus Christi, TX
Tues., Apr. 2, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

Laredo, TX
Wed., Apr. 3, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock Ave.

Harlingen, TX
Thurs., Apr. 4, 6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.

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Oklahoma City, OK
Mon., Mar. 25, 6 - 8 p.m.
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Dr.

Ardmore, OK
Tues., Mar. 26, 6 - 8 p.m.
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main St.

Sherman, TX
Tues., Apr. 2, 6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N Broughton St.

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Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

Austin, TX

Wed., Mar. 27, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

San Antonio, TX

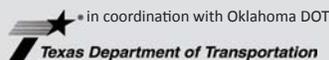
Mon., Apr. 1, 6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Corpus Christi, TX

Tues., Apr. 2, 6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

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251 E. Main St.

Sherman, TX

Tues., Apr. 2, 6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N Broughton St.

Dallas, TX

Wed., Apr. 3, 6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy,
Suite 550

Visit www.TXOKrail.org to learn more.

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- Submit comments online at www.TXOKrail.org
- Attend a scoping meeting (see website for all 12 locations)

Upcoming scoping meetings in your area:

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Mon., Mar. 25, 6 - 8 p.m.
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Austin, TX

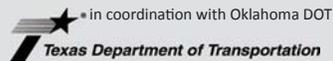
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Belton, TX

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2180 N. Main St.

Dallas, TX

Wed., Apr. 3, 6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy,
Suite 550

Visit www.TXOKrail.org to learn more.

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Appendix C

Public Scoping Meeting Announcements – Electronic Notification

emails

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: TXOKRAIL [TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2013 11:12 AM
Subject: 12 upcoming Tx-Ok Passenger Rail Study Open Houses – spread the word!
Attachments: TOPRS Newsletter 3.12.13-DIGITAL.pdf; TOPRS Poster - 3.7.13.pdf

Importance: High

We are excited to invite you to a series of 12 scoping open houses that will be held the last week of March and first week of April for the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS). As you may know, the study will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma city to south Texas, concluding in a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

We would like to get your help in advertising the study and the 12 public scoping meetings, as well as the public scoping period which ends on April 26, 2013.

We would appreciate it if you could do one or more of the following:

- **Email** the newsletter (attached) to your existing list of stakeholders/interested parties
- **Print** and hang up the poster (attached) in your office or other public locations
- **Share** the newsletter and/or poster with any other local organizations/groups that you think would be interested in the project (schools, social service providers, etc).

If you have any questions or would like to submit a comment either visit the project website at TXOKrail.org or contact Mark Werner by phone (512) 486-5137 or by post (Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT/125 E. 11th Street/Austin, TX 78701-2483).

Be Safe. Drive Smart

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: TXOKRAIL [TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2013 2:52 PM
Subject: Tx-Ok Passenger Rail Study open houses start tonight
Attachments: TOPRS Poster - 3.7.13.pdf

Importance: High

We know your time is too valuable to sit in traffic. That's why we need to hear from you about potential passenger rail in the IH-35 corridor. Come to an open house to tell us what you think.

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study will be hosting 12 open houses from Oklahoma City to south Texas, starting with meetings tonight in Waco and Oklahoma City (3/25 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm). Check out the attached poster for all of the dates and locations.

Help spread the word - tell your friends, neighbors, and co-workers! Can't make one of the 12 open houses over the next two weeks? [Send us your comments online](#) or read more about the study at www.TxOkRail.org

You are receiving this email because you or your organization has expressed interest in the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please reply to this email.

Be Safe. Drive Smart

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: TXOKRAIL [TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 4:55 PM
Subject: Tx-OK Passenger Rail Study Open Houses start Monday 3/25
Attachments: TOPRS Poster - 3.7.13.pdf

Importance: High

Don't forget - Open houses start next Monday!

These public "Scoping Open Houses" are the first step in a very inclusive, open process seeking public input about what should be evaluated in the service-level environmental impact study (EIS). There are 12 open houses taking place in March and April along the corridor.

Waco - March 25 – Heart of Texas COG – 1514 S. New Rd., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Austin - March 27 – TxDOT Austin Office – 7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Fort Worth – March 28 – TxDOT Training Offices – 2501 S.W. Loop 820, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Belton - April 1 – Central Texas COG, 2180 N. Main St., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Sherman – April 2 – Sherman Senior Center, 1500 N. Broughton St., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Dallas – April 3 – DFW MSDC Offices – 8828 N. Stemmons Fwy., Ste. 550, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

View all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) is a federally funded, TxDOT managed (in coordination with the Oklahoma DOT) study evaluating existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option to reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly the already congested IH-35 corridor.

Be Safe. Drive Smart

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: TXOKRAIL [TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 5:05 PM
Subject: Tx-Ok Passenger Rail Study Open Houses in south Texas 4/1-4/4
Attachments: TOPRS Poster - 3.7.13.pdf

Importance: High

Don't forget - Open houses start next Monday and come to south Texas April 1-4!

These public "Scoping Open Houses" are the first step in a very inclusive, open process seeking public input about what should be evaluated in the service-level environmental impact study (EIS). There are 12 open houses taking place in March and April along the corridor.

San Antonio - April 1 – Windcrest Civic Center – 9310 Jim Seal Dr., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Corpus Christi - April 2 – TxDOT Offices - 1701 S. Padre Island Dr., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Laredo - April 3 – TxDOT Offices – 1817 Bob Bullock Ave., 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Harlingen - April 4 – Harlingen City Hall – 502 E. Tyler Ave., 6:00 – 8:00 pm

View all of the open house locations/dates and provide comments online at www.TXOKrail.org.

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) is a federally funded, TxDOT managed (in coordination with the Oklahoma DOT) study evaluating existing passenger rail services in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas as a potential future transportation option to reduce demands on the state's roadways, particularly the already congested IH-35 corridor.

Be Safe. Drive Smart

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: TXOKRAIL [TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2013 9:10 AM
Subject: Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study – Invitation to Agency Scoping Meetings

Agency Scoping Meeting Participants:

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Rail Division is conducting a study to evaluate a range of passenger rail service development options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas, generally along Interstate 35. The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will consider the corridor as a whole, as well as within three sections:

- Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth
- Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio
- San Antonio to south Texas (Corpus Christi, Brownsville, and Laredo)

As part of the study, a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as the lead agency. At the completion of the study, a service development plan will be prepared to guide further investment and development of passenger rail within the corridor.

Agency and public scoping for the service-level EIS will run through April 26, 2013 (see the attached Notice of Intent for more information).

TxDOT will convene Agency Scoping Meetings at the following locations, followed the same day by public scoping open houses (6:00 to 8:00 pm):

Monday, March 25, 2013

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Metro Tech Center

1900 Springlake Drive

Oklahoma City, OK

Wednesday, March 27, 2013

2:00 to 4:00 pm

TxDOT Austin District Office

7901 N IH-35, Building 7

Austin, TX

Wednesday, April 3, 2013

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Dallas/Fort Worth Minority Supplier Development Council offices

8828 N. Stemmons Fwy., Suite 550

Dallas, TX

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting. Please RSVP to Mark Werner at mark.werner@txdot.gov and include any questions you might have. Formal comments should be mailed to the location below, via the website (www.TXOKrail.org), or submitted at one of the Scoping Meetings.

Mailed comments can be sent to:
Attn: TOPRS Scoping Comments

TxDOT - RRD
125 E. 11th St.

Austin, TX 78701

Be Safe. Drive Smart

PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Participate in scoping the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). The first step in the EIS process is scoping; when the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. **The public scoping comment period ends on April 26, 2013.**

To provide scoping comments:

- Mail to: Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483
- Submit comments at www.TXOKrail.org
- Attend one of the scoping meetings listed below

Public Open House Schedule

Want more information on the project? Feel free to join us at any of the following 12 public open houses.

Oklahoma City, OK

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Drive

Austin, TX

Wednesday, March 27
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy,
Suite 550

Waco, TX

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Training Offices
2501 S.W. Loop 820

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock Ave.

Ardmore, OK

Tuesday, March 26
6 - 8 p.m.
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main Street

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

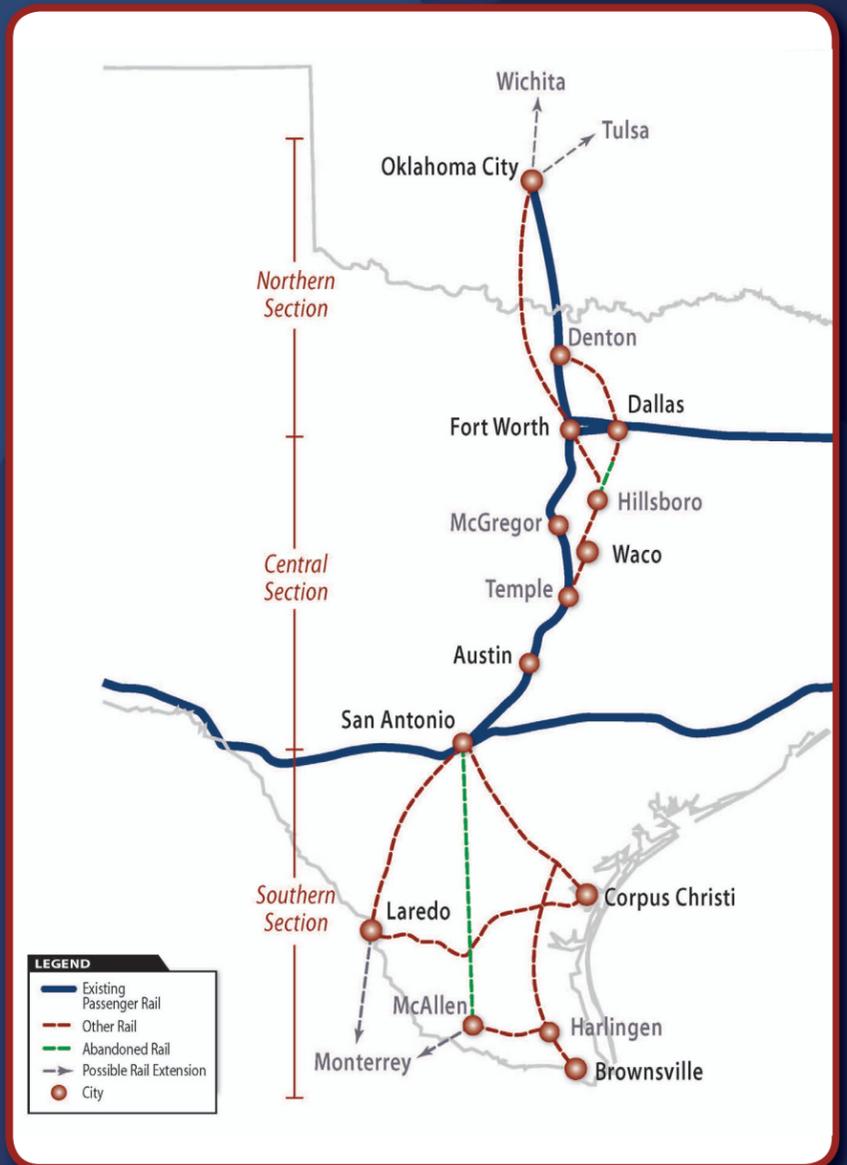
Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N. Broughton St.

Harlingen, TX

Thursday, April 4
6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aides or services are requested to contact Mark Werner at (512) 486-5137 at least three days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.



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Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

March 2013

TxDOT launches study of passenger rail from Oklahoma City to South Texas

Texas' population and economy are booming, with much of its growth occurring in the already-congested IH-35 corridor. While the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) continues to look at roadway improvements to keep all of us and our economy moving, other options, such as passenger rail service, fit the needs of many travelers and would reduce demand on the state's roadways. Through the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS), TxDOT will consider how passenger rail service could fit into this corridor.

TOPRS will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). The study will consider the corridor as a whole, as well as within three segments:

- Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth
- Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio
- San Antonio to Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo

Because the corridor extends north of the Red River to Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is an important partner in the study. In addition, transit service providers, railroads, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and cities and counties, as well as community members, will be engaged throughout the study.



Map of the TOPRS corridor.

Para leer este boletín informativo en español, consulte la página 3.

What is scoping?

During scoping, the first step in the EIS process, TxDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS.

During the scoping period, TxDOT will accept public comments in writing, through the TOPRS website, and at public meetings held throughout the corridor. After the public scoping period ends on April 26, 2013, TxDOT will compile all comments received and determine the scope of the EIS.

Get involved

We want to hear from you during the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS). There will be many ways to get involved with the study, ranging from attending open houses or meetings, reviewing written information, or reviewing information and providing input through the project website.

A series of 12 open houses will take place in March and April 2013 throughout the corridor. Each meeting will contain a brief presentation of the project and its objectives, displays to show the areas impacted and staff to answer questions.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, feel free to join in on an online meeting at www.TXOKrail.org.



The interior of a passenger rail line offers amenities for commuters.

More about TOPRS

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) is expected to be completed in 24 months. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

The EIS, a federally required document that complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor. The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor.

Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding.

Ready to submit your comments?

Please submit your comments through April 26, 2013. Comments received by this date will be included in the scoping summary report.

ATTEND A MEETING:

Comments can be submitted verbally or in writing at any of the 12 public meetings listed on Page 5.

ONLINE:

Submit your comment online by going to www.TXOKrail.org.

MAIL:

Comments can be mailed directly to Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Contact Us

Feel free to contact us with any comments or questions.

(512) 486-5137
www.TXOKrail.org

TxDOT lanza un estudio sobre trenes de pasajeros desde Oklahoma City al Sur de Texas

Tanto la población como la economía de Texas se encuentran en pleno auge, con una gran parte de este crecimiento ocurriendo en el ya congestionado corredor IH-35. Mientras que el Departamento de Transporte del estado de Texas (TxDOT; por sus siglas en inglés), continua realizando mejorías en las vías de transporte para mantenernos a nosotros y a nuestra economía en movimiento, existen otras opciones, como el servicio de tren de pasajeros, que cumplen muy bien con las necesidades de muchos viajeros y reducirían la demanda sobre las carreteras y autopistas del estado. A través del Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) (Estudio de trenes de pasajeros entre Texas y Oklahoma), TxDOT evaluará la forma en la que el servicio de tren de pasajeros podría incluirse en este corredor.

TOPRS evaluará un rango de servicios de tren de pasajeros dentro de un corredor de 850 millas desde Oklahoma City hasta el Sur de Texas y concluirá con una declaración sobre el impacto ambiental al nivel del servicio (EIS; por sus siglas en inglés). El estudio considerará el corredor como una unidad entera y también separada en tres segmentos:

- De Oklahoma City a Dallas/Fort Worth
- De Dallas/Fort Worth a San Antonio
- De San Antonio a Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo

Debido a que el corredor se extiende más al norte de Red River hasta Oklahoma, el Departamento de Transporte del Estado de Oklahoma (ODOT; por sus siglas en inglés) es un socio importante en este estudio. Además,



Mapa del corredor TOPRS.

proveedores de servicios de tránsito, ferrocarriles y organizaciones de planeación metropolitana (MPOs; por sus siglas en inglés) y ciudades y condados, así como miembros de la comunidad, participarán a lo largo del estudio. en el estudio.

¿Qué es el estudio de evaluación?

Durante el estudio de evaluación, el primer paso en el proceso EIS, TxDOT y la Administración Federal de Ferrocarriles (FRA; por sus siglas en inglés) invitarán al público a dar su opinión acerca de lo que se debe estudiar en el EIS a nivel de servicio.

Durante el periodo de evaluación, TxDOT aceptará comentarios por escrito del público a través del sitio web de TOPRS, y en reuniones abiertas al público que se llevarán a cabo a lo largo del corredor. Después del periodo de evaluación inicial que termina el 26 de Abril del 2013, TxDOT juntará todos los comentarios recibidos y determinará el alcance del EIS.

Participe

Queremos saber su opinión durante el Estudio de Trenes de Pasajeros Texas-Oklahoma. Habrá muchas formas de participar en el estudio, desde jornadas de puertas abiertas o reuniones, revisar información por escrito, o revisar información y brindar contribuciones a través de la página web del proyecto.

Una serie de 12 jornadas de puertas abiertas se llevará a cabo en Marzo y Abril del 2013 a lo largo del corredor. Cada reunión incluirá una breve presentación del proyecto y de sus objetivos, exhibiciones para mostrar las áreas afectadas y personal para responder preguntas.

Si no le es posible asistir a una reunión, le invitamos a que participe en una de nuestras reuniones en línea en www.TXOKrail.org.



El interior de un tren de pasajeros que ofrece comodidades para los viajeros.

Más acerca de TOPRS

Se estima que el Estudio de Trenes de Pasajeros Texas-Oklahoma (TOPRS) se completará en 24 meses. El estudio documentará los costos, beneficios e impactos de las alternativas de trenes de pasajeros en comparación con una alternativa que no requiere construcción por medio de una declaración de impacto ambiental al nivel de servicio (EIS).

El EIS, un documento requerido por el gobierno federal que cumple con la Ley Nacional de Política Ambiental (NEPA; por sus siglas en inglés), proporcionará una revisión de alto nivel de las necesidades de ferrocarriles y de las posibles opciones de servicio en el corredor. El estudio podría concluir con una conclusión de avanzar proyectos individuales para un estudio más detallado o con una decisión en contra de realizar más inversiones en trenes de pasajeros en el corredor.

Antes de poder construir cualquier proyecto identificado, el Departamento de Transporte de Texas (TxDOT) necesitará llevar a cabo más revisiones ambientales y determinar la fuente de financiamiento.

¿Listo para presentar sus comentarios?

Por favor presente sus comentarios antes del 26 de abril del 2013. Todos los comentarios que se reciban antes de esta fecha serán incluidos en el resumen del informe de evaluación inicial.

ASISTIR A UNA REUNIÓN:

Los comentarios pueden presentarse o bien verbalmente o por escrito en cualquiera de la 12 reuniones públicas detalladas en la página 5.

EN LÍNEA:

Presente su comentario en línea en www.TXOKrail.org.

POR CORREO:

Los comentarios se pueden enviar directamente por correo a la siguiente dirección:

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Contáctenos

Le invitamos a que se ponga en contacto con nosotros para cualquier comentario o pregunta que tenga.

(512) 486-5137

www.TXOKrail.org

Public Meeting Schedule

Programa de Reuniones Públicas

Want more information on the project? Feel free to join us at any of the following 12 public meetings throughout Oklahoma and Texas. All meeting locations are ADA accessible. Any special requests must be made 3 days in advance.

¿Desea obtener más información acerca del proyecto? Le invitamos a que nos acompañe en cualquiera de las 12 reuniones públicas en Oklahoma y Texas que se indican a continuación. Todas las instalaciones donde se llevarán a cabo las reuniones son accesibles para personas con discapacidades. Solicitudes especiales deben realizarse con al menos 3 días de anticipación.

Oklahoma City, OK

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Dr.

Waco, TX

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Ardmore, OK

Tuesday, March 26
6 - 8 p.m.
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main St.

Austin, TX

Wednesday, March 27
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Training Offices
2501 S.W. Loop 820

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N. Broughton St.

Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy.,
Suite 550

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock Ave.

Harlingen, TX

Thursday, April 4
6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.



Existing rail lines in Austin, McGregor and Waco, Texas. (left to right)

Líneas actuales de ferrocarril en Austin, McGregor y Waco, Texas (de izquierda a derecha)

website

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

[Home](#) > [Inside TxDOT](#) > [Projects](#) > [Studies](#) > [Statewide](#)



Texas' population and economy are booming, with much of its growth occurring in the already-congested I-35 corridor. While TxDOT continues to explore roadway improvements to keep all of us and our economy moving, other options, such as passenger rail service, fit the needs of many travelers and would reduce demand on the state's roadways. Through the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study, TxDOT will consider how passenger rail service could fit into this corridor.

Oklahoma City to South Texas

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement. The study will consider the corridor as a whole, as well as three discrete portions of the corridor:

- Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth
- Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio
- San Antonio to Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo

Scoping Comments

Send your [scoping comments](#) through April 26, 2013.

Comments may also be mailed to:

Mark Werner
TxDOT – RRD
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Scoping is designed to gather input on three topics:

- The purpose and need for the study.
- The range of intercity passenger rail alternatives to be studied in the EIS.
- Environmental resources that could be affected by the proposed rail alternatives.

Please note that this is a public process. As part of the agency record for this action, comments you submit may be released in their entirety to a third-party requester, including identifiable personal information such as name, physical address, phone number, or email, if provided.

Partners

Because the corridor extends into Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is an important partner in the study. In addition, transit service providers, railroads, metropolitan planning organizations, cities and counties, and community members will be engaged throughout the study.

More Information

- [Overview](#)
- [Compliance](#)
- [Get Involved](#)
- [Meeting Materials](#)
- [Study Area Map](#)
- [Scoping Comments](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Overview

[Home](#) > [Inside TxDOT](#) > [Projects](#) > [Studies](#) > [Statewide](#) > [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail](#)



The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) commenced in winter 2013 and is expected to be completed by fall 2014. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

Environmental Impact Statement

The EIS, a federally required document that complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor (called a service-level EIS). The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor. Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding.

History

High-speed passenger rail has been under consideration in Texas since the late 1980s. In the 1990s, a private consortium was awarded a franchise to design, build, and operate high-speed rail in the state. Although demand appeared to support the development of high-speed rail, lack of funding and other obstacles prevented the project from moving forward. Since then, other proposals for high-speed passenger rail in Texas have been submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), with each proposal showing revenues that exceed operating expenses but requiring some amount of funding to build.

In 2000, FRA designated the South Central corridor, including the area from San Antonio to Dallas/Fort Worth, as a future high-speed rail corridor. In 2010, TxDOT received a grant from FRA to study passenger rail in this corridor.

Different Types of Passenger Rail

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study will consider a range of [passenger rail options](#) for the 850-mile corridor. Today's passenger rail service can range in speed from 79 miles per hour to more than 220 miles per hour. The different speed options will influence ridership, the number and location of stations, and costs.

Decision Making

TxDOT and FRA will make decisions about TOPRS after reviewing input from the public and other public agencies.

More Information

- [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Home](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Compliance

[Home](#) > [Inside TxDOT](#) > [Projects](#) > [Studies](#) > [Statewide](#) > [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail](#)



Because the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study is federally funded, the TxDOT must prepare a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Through the NEPA process, TxDOT will document the impacts, benefits, and costs of proposed passenger rail alternatives compared to a no-build alternative (a no-build alternative provides a baseline for comparison in a future condition where the project being studied is not built, but other planned and funded projects are included).

The service-level EIS will rely on conceptual passenger rail alternatives and will use existing information to document the benefits, impacts, and costs of those alternatives with the intent of learning enough to identify a preferred alternative or more likely, a package of preferred alternatives for different sections of the corridor. Depending on the identified preferred alternatives, more detailed studies may be required under NEPA.

Scoping

The first step in the EIS process is scoping. During scoping, TxDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. Specifically, TxDOT will seek input about the following:

- The purpose and need for the study.
- The range of passenger rail alternatives to be studied in the EIS.
- Environmental resources that could be affected by the proposed rail alternatives.

During scoping period, TxDOT will accept public comments in writing (at open houses or through the mail), through this website, and at public meetings held throughout the corridor. After the public scoping period ends, TxDOT will compile all comments received and determine the scope of the EIS.

Service-Level Draft EIS

The service-level draft EIS will document the impacts, benefits, and costs of each passenger rail alternative compared to the no-build alternative. The draft EIS will consider a broad range of topics, including natural resources such as fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water quality, as well as community resources such as economic development, land use, and historic properties.

Once the draft EIS is complete, TxDOT and FRA will publish it for public review. The review period will include many ways for the public to provide comments, including at least one public hearing. After the public review period is complete, TxDOT and FRA will agree on a preferred alternative, or a package of preferred alternatives for different sections of the corridor, for passenger rail service in the corridor.

Service-Level Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD)

Once a preferred alternative is identified, TxDOT will prepare a final EIS that responds to comments received on the draft EIS. It will also include additional detail, such as mitigation measures for unavoidable impacts that might result from the preferred alternative. Once the final EIS is complete, FRA will issue a record of decision (ROD), which codifies the FRA's concurrence with the service-level NEPA process and paves the way for TxDOT to move forward with project-level activities.

To complete the service-level EIS, a service development plan will also be prepared. This plan will outline the benefits and financial plan for the corridor based on the preferred alternatives. It will prioritize the projects to be developed within the corridor, identify costs, and potential funding sources.

More Information

- [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Home](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Get Involved

[Home](#) > [Inside TxDOT](#) > [Projects](#) > [Studies](#) > [Statewide](#) > [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail](#)



We want to hear from you during the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS). There will be many ways to get involved with the study, ranging from attending open houses or meetings, reviewing written information, or reviewing information and providing input online.

Online Open House

If you can't make one of the scoping open houses listed below, join our online open house now. Review all of the display boards in either [English](#) or [Spanish](#) and then tell us what you think using the [online comment form](#). We appreciate your input!

Scoping Open Houses

All scoping public open houses will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Children are welcome to attend. There are 12 opportunities to attend. Locations are listed below.

- [Meeting Notice](#)

Ardmore, OK

Tuesday, March 26
Ardmore Train Station
251 E Main St.

Austin, TX

Wednesday, March 27
TxDOT Austin District
7901 N I-35, Bldg. 7

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
Central Texas COG
2180 N Main St.

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
TxDOT Corpus Christi District
1701 S Padre Island Drive

Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
TxDOT Ft. Worth District
2501 SW Loop 820

Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 3
MSDC Offices
8828 N Stemmons Fwy, Suite 550

Harlingen, TX - Location Update

Thursday, April 4
Harlingen Town Hall
118 E Tyler Ave.
(Please note, the meeting will not be held at City Hall, 502 E Tyler Ave.)

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
TxDOT Laredo District
1817 Bob Bullock Loop

Oklahoma City, OK

Monday, March 25
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Drive

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Drive, Windcrest

Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2

Sherman Senior Center
1500 N Broughton St.

Waco, TX

Monday, March 25
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S New Road

Scoping Comments

Send your [scoping comments](#) through April 26, 2013.

Comments may also be mailed to:

Mark Werner
TxDOT – RRD
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Scoping is designed to gather input on three topics:

- The purpose and need for the study.
- The range of intercity passenger rail alternatives to be studied in the EIS.
- Environmental resources that could be affected by the proposed rail alternatives.

Please note that this is a public process. As part of the agency record for this action, comments you submit may be released in their entirety to a third-party requester, including identifiable personal information such as name, physical address, phone number, or email, if provided.

More Information

- [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Home](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Meeting Materials

[Home](#) > [Inside TxDOT](#) > [Projects](#) > [Studies](#) > [Statewide](#) > [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail](#)



This page includes materials produced as part of the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Items posted here will include finalized material used at meetings, such as public scoping meetings, technical working groups, and other public events.

Date	Title	Format
03/13	Notice of Intent, published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, March 13, 2013	

03/13 Stakeholder Workshop Meeting Presentation



03/22 Online Open House



03/22 Línea de Puertas Abiertas



03/25 Poster



More Information

- [Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study - Home](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Appendix D

Public Scoping Meeting Materials

PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Participate in scoping the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). The first step in the EIS process is scoping; when the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. **The public scoping comment period ends on April 26, 2013.**

To provide scoping comments:

- Mail to: Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483
- Submit comments at www.TXOKrail.org
- Attend one of the scoping meetings listed below

Public Open House Schedule

Want more information on the project? Feel free to join us at any of the following 12 public open houses.

Oklahoma City, OK

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Drive

Austin, TX

Wednesday, March 27
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy,
Suite 550

Waco, TX

Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Training Offices
2501 S.W. Loop 820

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock Ave.

Ardmore, OK

Tuesday, March 26
6 - 8 p.m.
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main Street

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

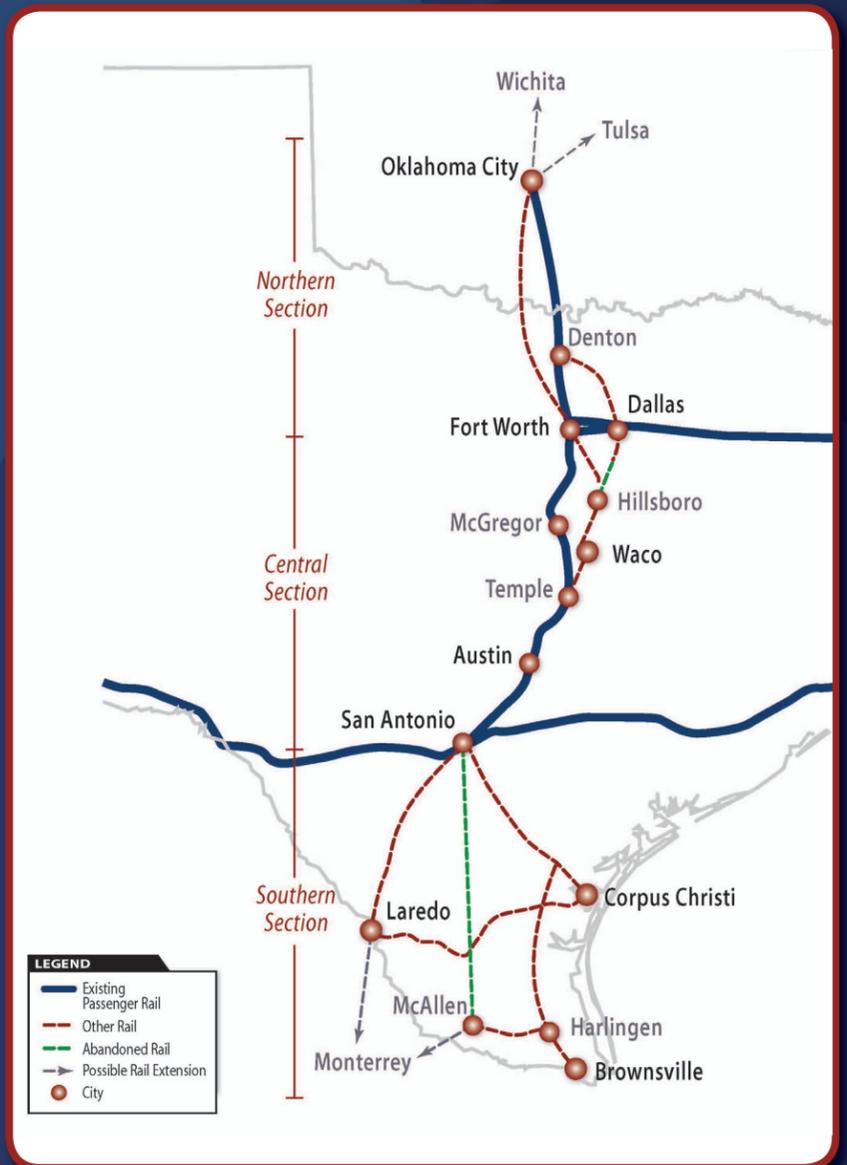
Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N. Broughton St.

Harlingen, TX

Thursday, April 4
6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aides or services are requested to contact Mark Werner at (512) 486-5137 at least three days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.



Visit www.TXOKrail.org to learn more.

Las personas con discapacidades que estén pensando en asistir a esta reunión y que necesiten servicios o ayuda auxiliar se le pide que se pongan en contacto con Mark Werner al (512) 486-5137, por lo menos tres días antes de la reunión, para poder hacer los arreglos necesarios.

TxDOT launches study of passenger rail from Oklahoma City to South Texas

Texas' population and economy are booming, with much of its growth occurring in the already-congested IH-35 corridor. While the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) continues to look at roadway improvements to keep all of us and our economy moving, other options, such as passenger rail service, fit the needs of many travelers and would reduce demand on the state's roadways. Through the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS), TxDOT will consider how passenger rail service could fit into this corridor.

TOPRS will evaluate a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas and will conclude with a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). The study will consider the corridor as a whole, as well as within three segments:

- Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth
- Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio
- San Antonio to Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo

Because the corridor extends north of the Red River to Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is an important partner in the study. In addition, transit service providers, railroads, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and cities and counties, as well as community members, will be engaged throughout the study.



Map of the TOPRS corridor.

Para leer este boletín informativo en español, consulte la página 3.

What is scoping?

During scoping, the first step in the EIS process, TxDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will invite the public to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS.

During the scoping period, TxDOT will accept public comments in writing, through the TOPRS website, and at public meetings held throughout the corridor. After the public scoping period ends on April 26, 2013, TxDOT will compile all comments received and determine the scope of the EIS.

Get involved

We want to hear from you during the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS). There will be many ways to get involved with the study, ranging from attending open houses or meetings, reviewing written information, or reviewing information and providing input through the project website.

A series of 12 open houses will take place in March and April 2013 throughout the corridor. Each meeting will contain a brief presentation of the project and its objectives, displays to show the areas impacted and staff to answer questions.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, feel free to join in on an online meeting at www.TXOKrail.org.



The interior of a passenger rail line offers amenities for commuters.

More about TOPRS

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) is expected to be completed in 24 months. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level environmental impact statement (EIS).

The EIS, a federally required document that complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor. The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor.

Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding.

Ready to submit your comments?

Please submit your comments through April 26, 2013. Comments received by this date will be included in the scoping summary report.

ATTEND A MEETING:

Comments can be submitted verbally or in writing at any of the 12 public meetings listed on Page 5.

ONLINE:

Submit your comment online by going to www.TXOKrail.org.

MAIL:

Comments can be mailed directly to Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Contact Us

Feel free to contact us with any comments or questions.

(512) 486-5137

www.TXOKrail.org

TxDOT lanza un estudio sobre trenes de pasajeros desde Oklahoma City al Sur de Texas

Tanto la población como la economía de Texas se encuentran en pleno auge, con una gran parte de este crecimiento ocurriendo en el ya congestionado corredor IH-35. Mientras que el Departamento de Transporte del estado de Texas (TxDOT; por sus siglas en inglés), continua realizando mejorías en las vías de transporte para mantenernos a nosotros y a nuestra economía en movimiento, existen otras opciones, como el servicio de tren de pasajeros, que cumplen muy bien con las necesidades de muchos viajeros y reducirían la demanda sobre las carreteras y autopistas del estado. A través del Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) (Estudio de trenes de pasajeros entre Texas y Oklahoma), TxDOT evaluará la forma en la que el servicio de tren de pasajeros podría incluirse en este corredor.

TOPRS evaluará un rango de servicios de tren de pasajeros dentro de un corredor de 850 millas desde Oklahoma City hasta el Sur de Texas y concluirá con una declaración sobre el impacto ambiental al nivel del servicio (EIS; por sus siglas en inglés). El estudio considerará el corredor como una unidad entera y también separada en tres segmentos:

- De Oklahoma City a Dallas/Fort Worth
- De Dallas/Fort Worth a San Antonio
- De San Antonio a Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo

Debido a que el corredor se extiende más al norte de Red River hasta Oklahoma, el Departamento de Transporte del Estado de Oklahoma (ODOT; por sus siglas en inglés) es un socio importante en este estudio. Además,



Mapa del corredor TOPRS.

proveedores de servicios de tránsito, ferrocarriles y organizaciones de planeación metropolitana (MPOs; por sus siglas en inglés) y ciudades y condados, así como miembros de la comunidad, participarán a lo largo del estudio. en el estudio.

¿Qué es el estudio de evaluación?

Durante el estudio de evaluación, el primer paso en el proceso EIS, TxDOT y la Administración Federal de Ferrocarriles (FRA; por sus siglas en inglés) invitarán al público a dar su opinión acerca de lo que se debe estudiar en el EIS a nivel de servicio.

Durante el periodo de evaluación, TxDOT aceptará comentarios por escrito del público a través del sitio web de TOPRS, y en reuniones abiertas al público que se llevarán a cabo a lo largo del corredor. Después del periodo de evaluación inicial que termina el 26 de Abril del 2013, TxDOT juntará todos los comentarios recibidos y determinará el alcance del EIS.

Participe

Queremos saber su opinión durante el Estudio de Trenes de Pasajeros Texas-Oklahoma. Habrá muchas formas de participar en el estudio, desde jornadas de puertas abiertas o reuniones, revisar información por escrito, o revisar información y brindar contribuciones a través de la página web del proyecto.

Una serie de 12 jornadas de puertas abiertas se llevará a cabo en Marzo y Abril del 2013 a lo largo del corredor. Cada reunión incluirá una breve presentación del proyecto y de sus objetivos, exhibiciones para mostrar las áreas afectadas y personal para responder preguntas.

Si no le es posible asistir a una reunión, le invitamos a que participe en una de nuestras reuniones en línea en www.TXOKrail.org.



El interior de un tren de pasajeros que ofrece comodidades para los viajeros.

Más acerca de TOPRS

Se estima que el Estudio de Trenes de Pasajeros Texas-Oklahoma (TOPRS) se completará en 24 meses. El estudio documentará los costos, beneficios e impactos de las alternativas de trenes de pasajeros en comparación con una alternativa que no requiere construcción por medio de una declaración de impacto ambiental al nivel de servicio (EIS).

El EIS, un documento requerido por el gobierno federal que cumple con la Ley Nacional de Política Ambiental (NEPA; por sus siglas en inglés), proporcionará una revisión de alto nivel de las necesidades de ferrocarriles y de las posibles opciones de servicio en el corredor. El estudio podría concluir con una conclusión de avanzar proyectos individuales para un estudio más detallado o con una decisión en contra de realizar más inversiones en trenes de pasajeros en el corredor.

Antes de poder construir cualquier proyecto identificado, el Departamento de Transporte de Texas (TxDOT) necesitará llevar a cabo más revisiones ambientales y determinar la fuente de financiamiento.

¿Listo para presentar sus comentarios?

Por favor presente sus comentarios antes del 26 de abril del 2013. Todos los comentarios que se reciban antes de esta fecha serán incluidos en el resumen del informe de evaluación inicial.

ASISTIR A UNA REUNIÓN:

Los comentarios pueden presentarse o bien verbalmente o por escrito en cualquiera de la 12 reuniones públicas detalladas en la página 5.

EN LÍNEA:

Presente su comentario en línea en www.TXOKrail.org.

POR CORREO:

Los comentarios se pueden enviar directamente por correo a la siguiente dirección:

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Contáctenos

Le invitamos a que se ponga en contacto con nosotros para cualquier comentario o pregunta que tenga.

(512) 486-5137
www.TXOKrail.org

Public Meeting Schedule

Programa de Reuniones Públicas

Want more information on the project? Feel free to join us at any of the following 12 public meetings throughout Oklahoma and Texas. All meeting locations are ADA accessible. Any special requests must be made 3 days in advance.

¿Desea obtener más información acerca del proyecto? Le invitamos a que nos acompañe en cualquiera de las 12 reuniones públicas en Oklahoma y Texas que se indican a continuación. Todas las instalaciones donde se llevarán a cabo las reuniones son accesibles para personas con discapacidades. Solicitudes especiales deben realizarse con al menos 3 días de anticipación.

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Monday, March 25
6 - 8 p.m.
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Heart of Texas COG
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TxDOT Austin Office
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Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Training Offices
2501 S.W. Loop 820

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest, TX

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
6 - 8 p.m.
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.

Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2
6 - 8 p.m.
Sherman Senior Center
1500 N. Broughton St.

Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
DFW MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons Fwy.,
Suite 550

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
6 - 8 p.m.
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock Ave.

Harlingen, TX

Thursday, April 4
6 - 8 p.m.
Harlingen City Hall
502 E. Tyler Ave.



Existing rail lines in Austin, McGregor and Waco, Texas. (left to right)

Líneas actuales de ferrocarril en Austin, McGregor y Waco, Texas (de izquierda a derecha)



Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

**Welcome to the
scoping open house!**

INTRODUCTION



Texas Department of Transportation

in cooperation with
Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Welcome!

At this scoping open house you can provide input to help shape the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS).

Tonight, you can review information and provide input on:

- The study's **purpose** and **need**
- Possible future passenger **rail routes, stations, and service levels**
- **Issues** to study

Please fill out a comment form before you leave. We want to hear from you!

Esta noche usted puede:

Más información acerca de una "reunión informativa", proporcionando a su entrada, lo que contribuirá a configurar el entre Texas-Oklahoma Rail Pasajeros Estudio (TORPE).

Obtenga información y dar su opinión sobre:

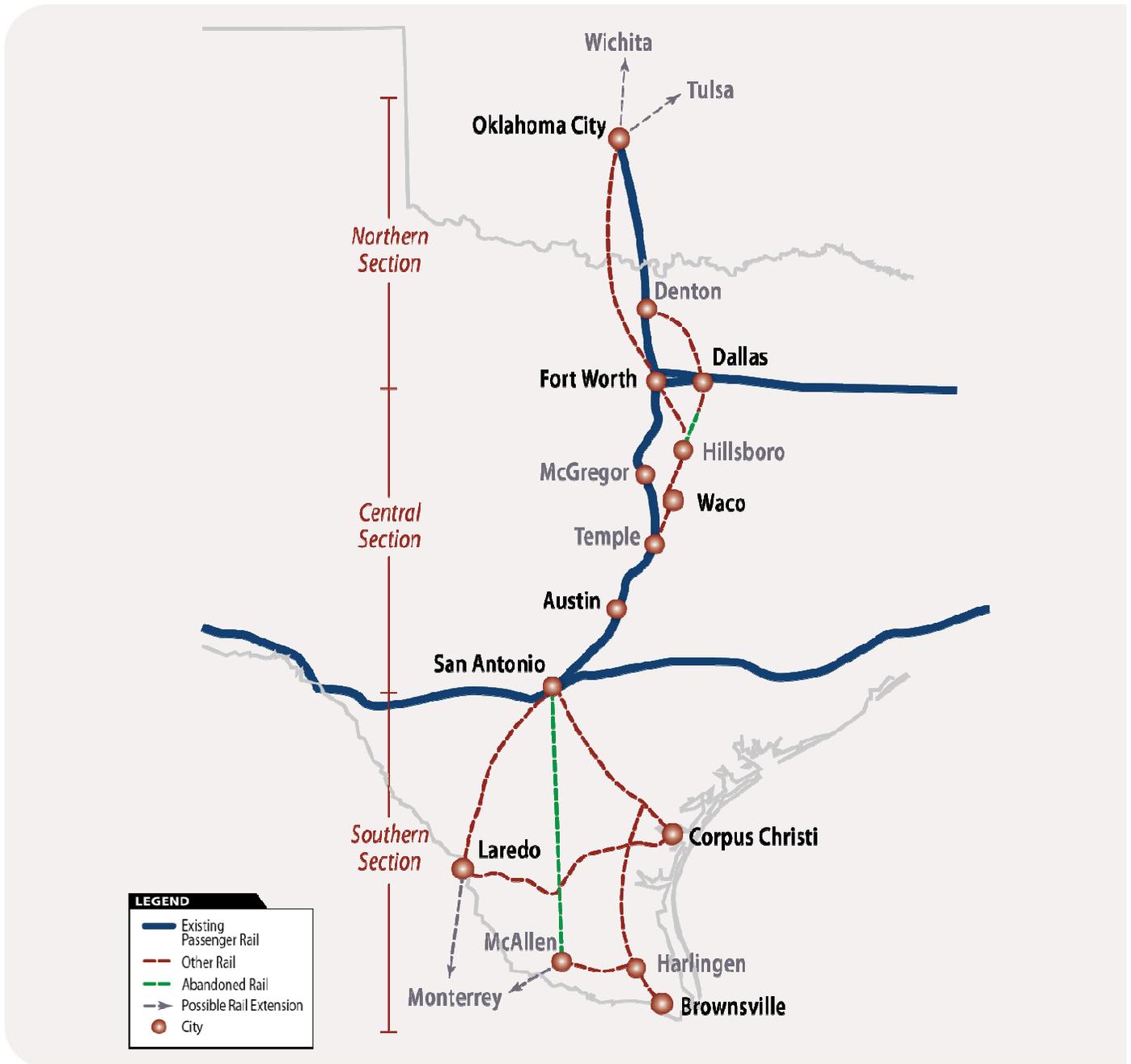
- El estudio del propósito y la necesidad
- Los valores y los temas a estudiar
- Rutas de pasajeros por ferrocarril y estaciones

Llenar un formulario de comentarios y se basan en los mapas que nos diga lo que piensa. Queremos saber de ti!

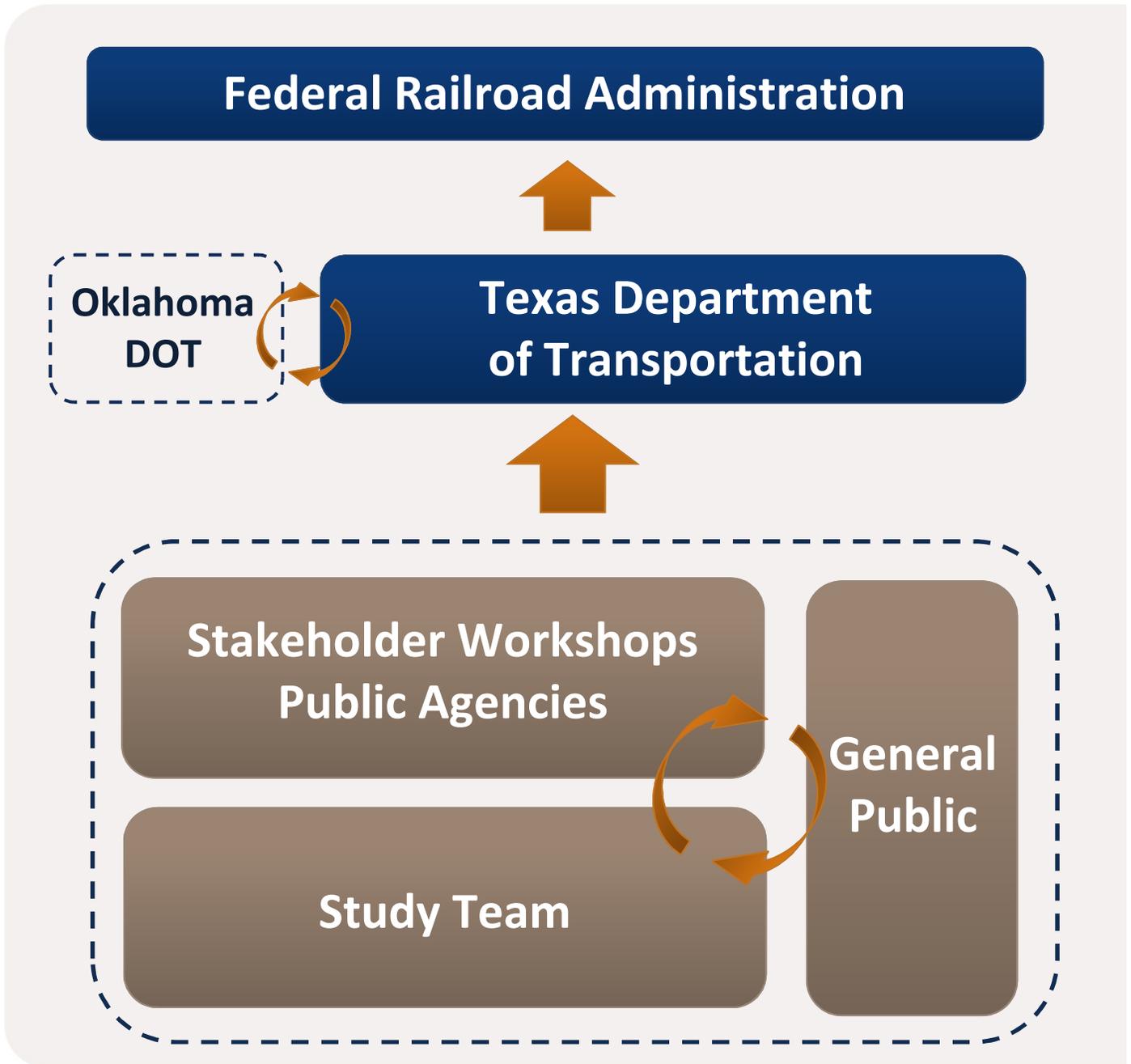
What is the TOPRS?

- The study will look at a range of passenger rail service options in an 850-mile corridor from Oklahoma City to south Texas
 - **North section:** Oklahoma City to Dallas and Fort Worth
 - **Central section:** Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio
 - **South section:** San Antonio to Corpus Christi, Brownsville, and Laredo
- The study is funded by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) through Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in coordination with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT)

Where is the study area?



How are decisions made?



What is the process?

24-month Schedule

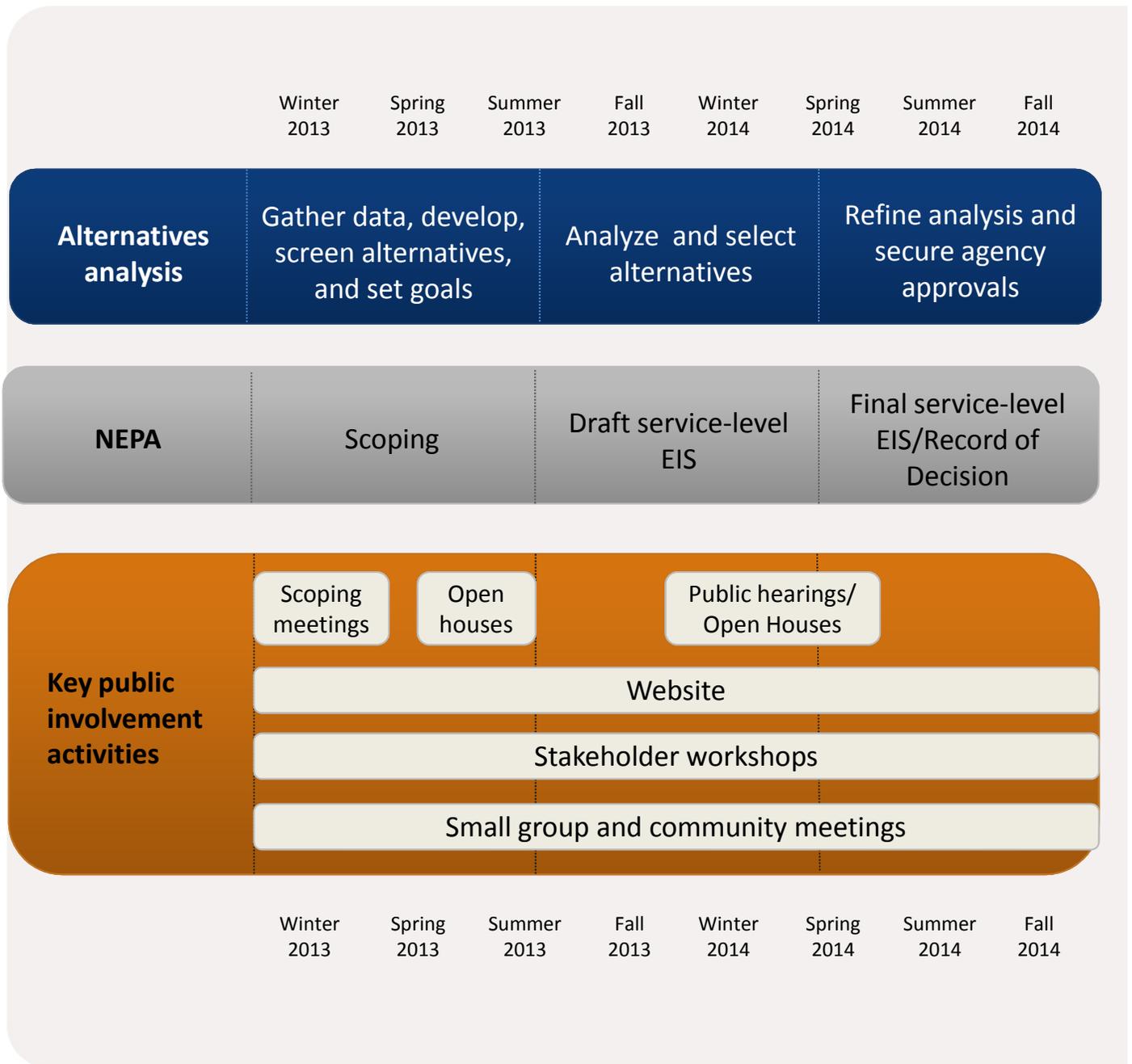
- **Scoping** – (*learn more*) – collect public comments through April 26, 2013
 - ★ Tonight – tell us about the area and needs for the study
 - ★ Summer 2013– tell us what you think about draft alternatives

- **Service-level draft EIS** – (*compare*) – study and compare the alternatives against each other and “no-build”
 - ★ Public review of the study results and suggest an alternative to move forward for further study

- **Service-level final EIS** – (*refine*) – include public and agency comments into a final document, with a preferred alternative

- **Record of Decision (ROD)** – (*decide*) – determine that the EIS process is complete and allow TxDOT to move forward with projects

Schedule



PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE STUDY



Texas Department of Transportation

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Oklahoma DOT



TEXAS-
OKLAHOMA
PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

What's the purpose of the study?

- The purpose of TOPRS is to evaluate alternatives to provide intercity passenger rail service to meet future needs and to improve rail facilities, reduce journey times, and improve connections with public transit.



Do you agree? Are there any other reasons to do this study?

Why is the study needed?

- These possible improvements are needed because population and business growth in the study area has resulted in growing congestion in the IH-35 corridor.
 - IH-35 is a nationally significant highway where average speeds may drop to 15 mph by 2035
 - Intercity passenger rail service is an alternative to meet future demand for travel

What do you think? Are there any other needs that should be looked at during the study?

Purpose and need: North section

Current Heartland Flyer rail service:

- One train each direction per day
- Annual ridership has increased by 10% in the last three years
- Most passengers would have driven or not made these trips at all
- Operates on a busy freight rail line, which causes delays and inconvenient schedules



Some needs in this section:

- Enhanced railroad facilities (such as automated train controls) to increase speeds and maintain safety
- Better coordination with other passenger rail services to increase the attractiveness of rail
- Direct connection to the City of Dallas and the Dallas/Fort Worth airport (DFW)
- More roadway/railroad grade separations to enhance safety where rail and roadways cross

Purpose and need: Central section

Current Texas Eagle Amtrak service:

- From Fort Worth, daily connections with the Heartland Flyer (intercity rail service to Oklahoma City)
- From San Antonio, connections with the Sunset Limited to New Orleans and Los Angeles
- About 23% of Amtrak train trips start and end in Texas (travel only within the state)
- The section with the highest demand for intercity travel (has high auto and truck volumes)
- There is a high volume of intrastate air travel in this section



Some needs in this section:

- Offer alternatives to driving and flying
- Improve connectivity and trip coordination between rail providers
- Rail access to airports including DFW, Austin, and San Antonio

Purpose and need: South section

Currently no passenger rail services:

- Amtrak provides passenger service south of San Antonio by motor coach
- Motor coaches provide much of the intercity public transportation within the region and destinations in the US and Mexico
- Population and business growth along the border area is increasing congestion, particularly for commercial trucks

Some needs in this section:

- New intercity travel options, such as passenger rail, that do not add to highway congestion
- Efficient, safe, equitable, and affordable alternative to highway, bus, or air travel
- Consider the cross-border travel demand to Mexican destinations such as Monterrey, a major business hub and potential source of passenger rail demand

SERVICE-LEVEL EIS



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PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

What is a service-level EIS?

- The service-level EIS is a high level study that leads to big-picture decisions (federally required through NEPA)
- TxDOT will document the impacts, benefits, and costs of proposed passenger rail alternatives

Scoping:
identify what should be studied in the EIS

Draft EIS:
compare proposed alternatives including a no-build alternative

Final EIS:
respond to comments and refine the analysis in the draft EIS

Record of Decision:
Decide the level of passenger rail service for further development

What's being studied?

- An EIS looks at a broad range of topics, including:

Natural resources

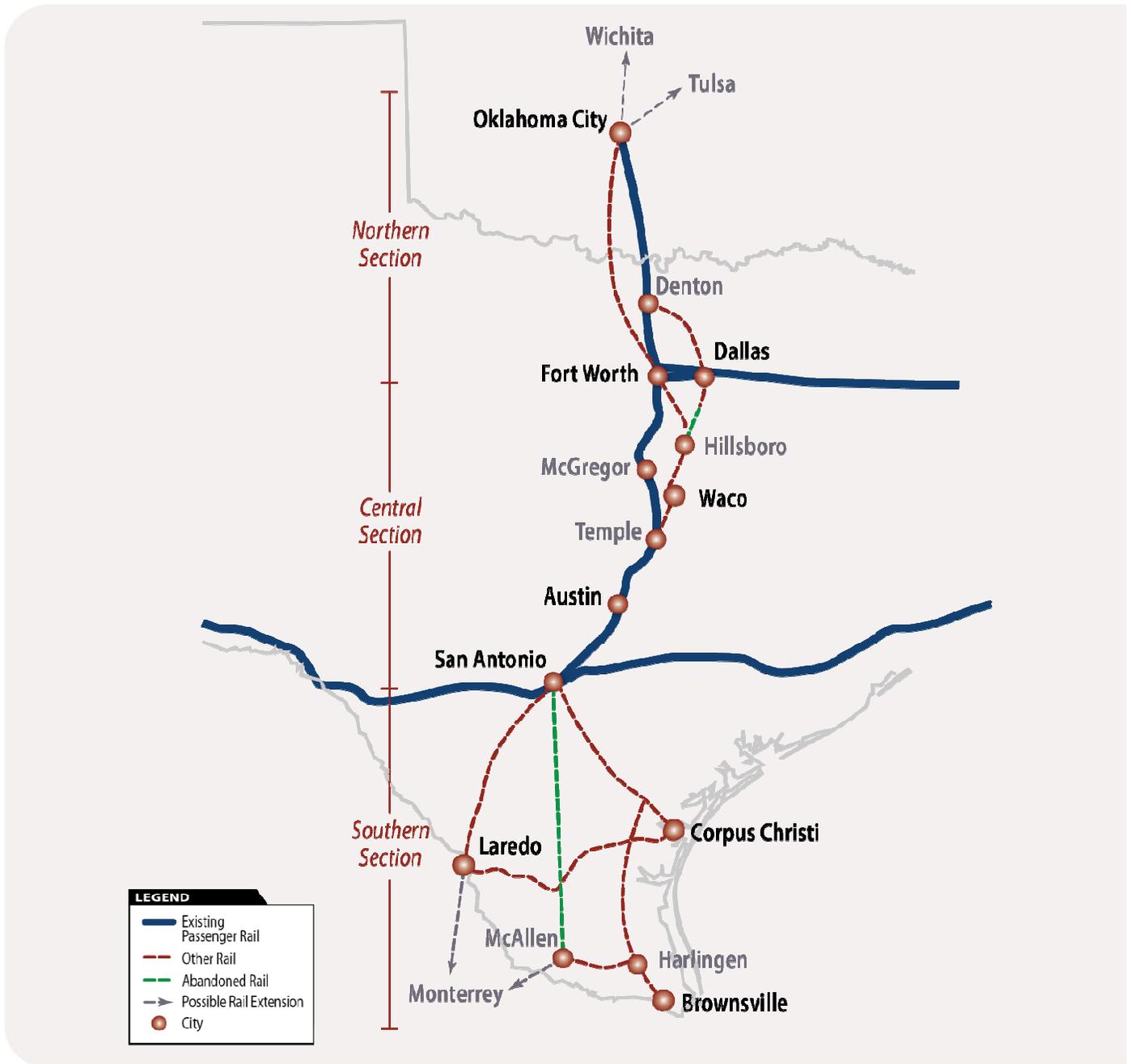
- Air quality
- Energy
- Fish & wildlife habitat
- Wetlands
- Water quality

Community resources

- Cultural resources
- Economic development
- Historic properties
- Land use
- Noise & vibration
- Safety & security
- Transportation

What other resources/topics should be studied?

Existing rail in the study area



INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL



Texas Department of Transportation

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Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Passenger rail service options

Passenger rail serves multiple cities along a railway, with limited stops. It can operate at different speeds and frequencies.

	Maximum/ average miles per hour	Stops/ frequency	Typical characteristics
Conventional <i>(mostly uses existing tracks)</i> 	Max: 70-90 mph Average: 45-60 mph	Stops 15 to 60 miles apart 3-6 trains/day each direction <i>(no more than 12)</i>	Un/reserved seats; limited business class seating, café food service, and checked baggage; diesel locomotive hauled 
Higher speed <i>(some dedicated tracks)</i> 	Max: 110-125 mph Average: 70-85 mph	Stops 30 to 90 miles apart 4-8 trains/day each direction <i>(as many as 12)</i>	Reserved seats; business class seating; café food service; no checked baggage; diesel and electric locomotive hauled 
High speed <i>(fully dedicated tracks)</i> 	Max: 165-220 mph Average: 100-140 mph	Stops 50 to 100+ miles apart 12-24 trains/day each direction	Reserved seats; business class seating; café and at-seat food service; no checked baggage; electric multiple unit locomotive 

Common Attributes: Single or double deck trains, stations with parking, operation on existing or dedicated tracks

What isn't being studied?

The study is examining connections between cities in Oklahoma and south Texas, along the IH-35 corridor.

Other modes	Why not?
Commuter rail	Being studied separately in some areas Generally confined to the influence area of a city rather than providing intercity travel
Light rail	Provides connections within cities and suburbs
Streetcar	Provides connections within cities
Highways, airports, and other non-rail modes	Passenger rail is an alternative to these other intercity travel modes Existing and future highway and air travel congestion reduces options (including bus service)

What types of improvements could be studied?

- Improved passenger rail service on existing rail routes
 - Station improvements
 - Improved connections to other transit service
 - Improved speeds and frequencies
- New passenger rail service
 - Service to new cities
 - Station improvements or new stations
 - Various speeds and frequencies
 - New or existing routes
 - locations

What other improvements could be considered?

EXISTING CONDITIONS



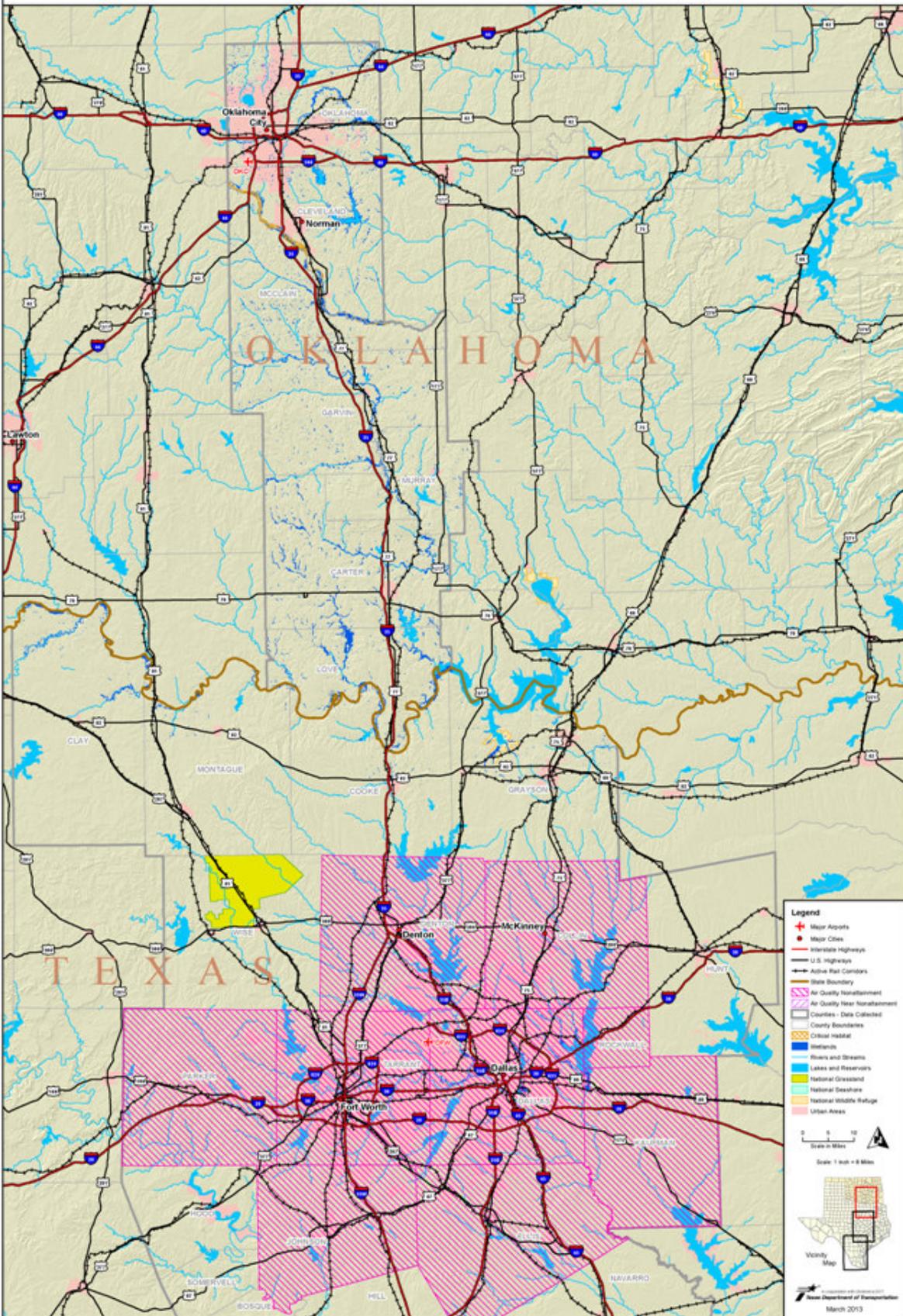
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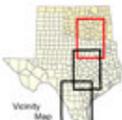
PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

North Section - Oklahoma City to Dallas-Fort Worth
Examples of Natural Resources

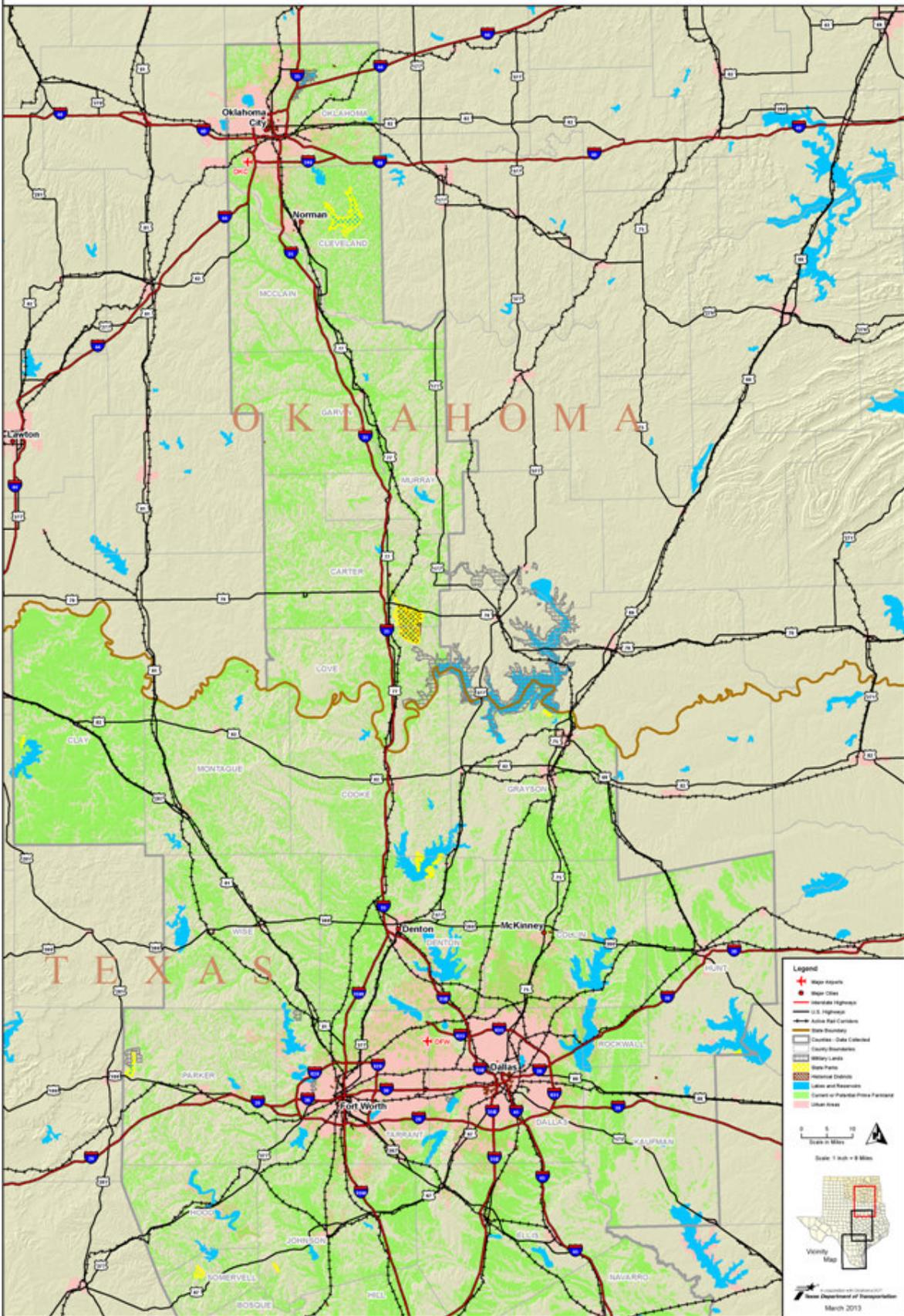


- Legend**
- ✚ Major Airports
 - Major Cities
 - Interstate Highways
 - U.S. Highways
 - Amtrak Rail Corridor
 - State Boundary
 - ▨ Air Quality Nonattainment
 - ▨ Air Quality Near Nonattainment
 - ▨ Counties - Data Collected
 - ▨ County Boundaries
 - ▨ Critical Habitat
 - ▨ Wetlands
 - ▨ Rivers and Streams
 - ▨ Lakes and Reservoirs
 - ▨ National Grassland
 - ▨ National Seashore
 - ▨ National Wildlife Refuge
 - ▨ Urban Areas

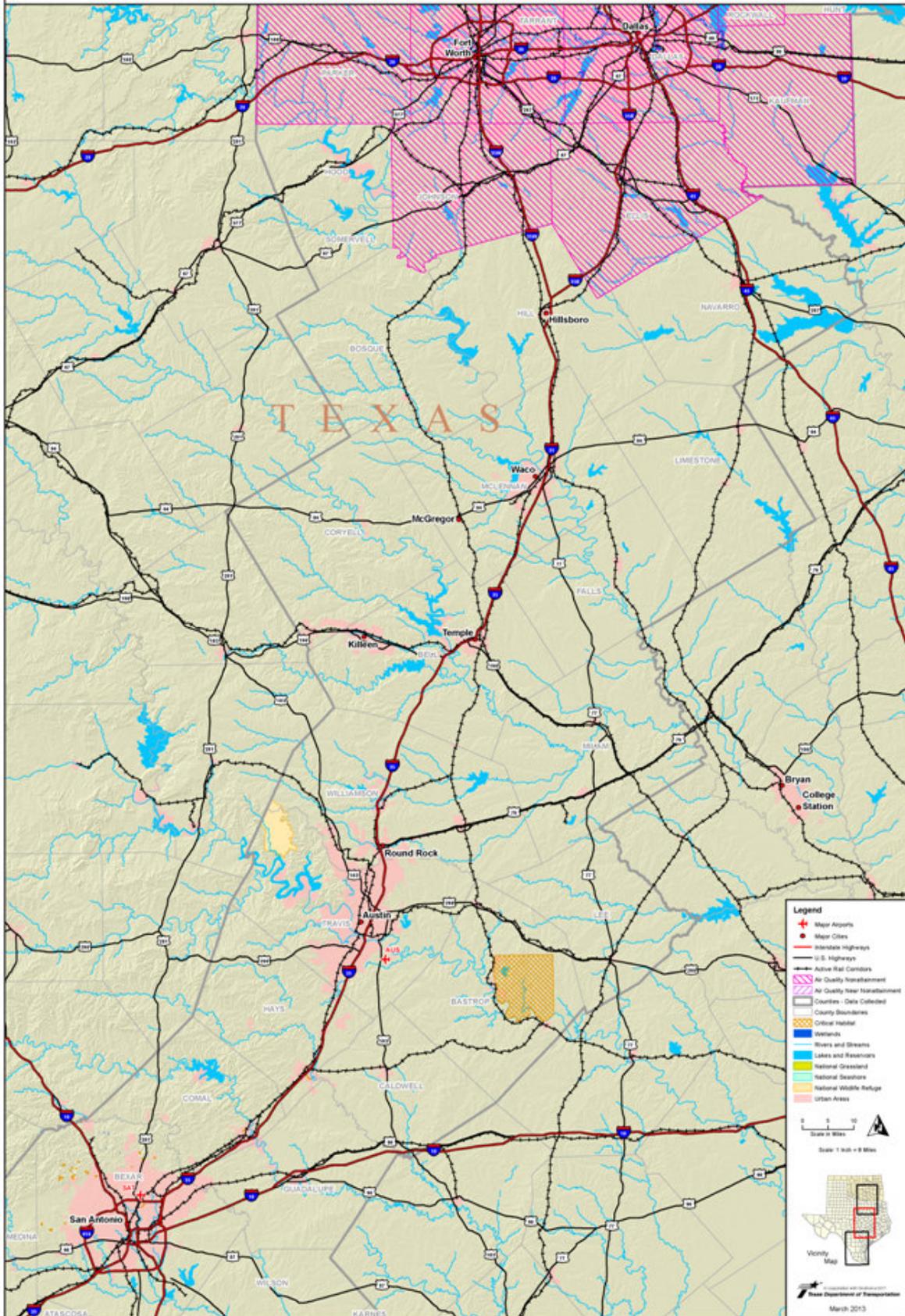
Scale 1 inch = 8 Miles



North Section - Oklahoma City to Dallas-Fort Worth
Examples of Community Resources



Central Section - Dallas-Fort Worth to San Antonio
Examples of Natural Resources



Legend

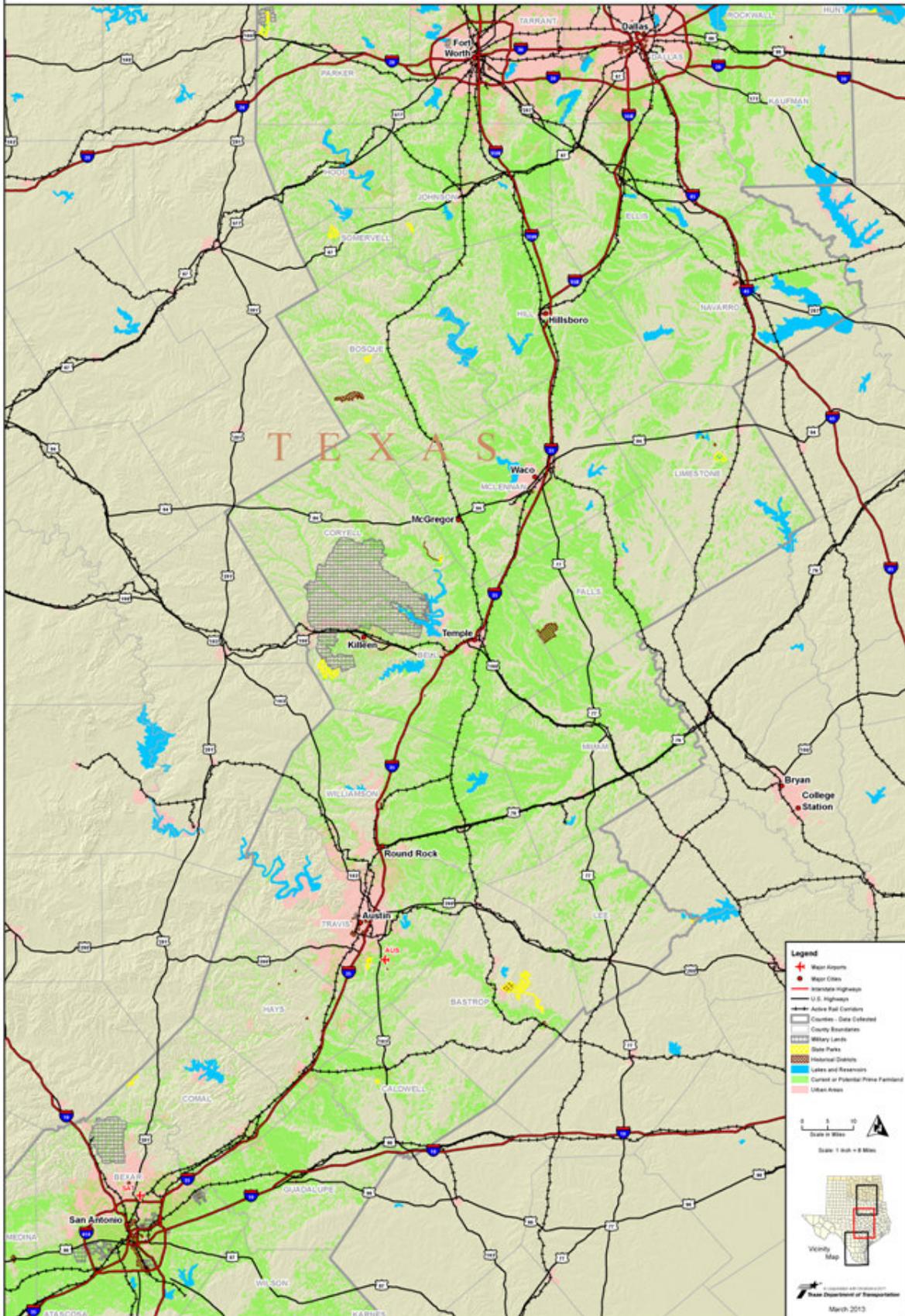
- Major Airports
- Major Cities
- Interstate Highways
- U.S. Highways
- Active Rail Corridors
- Air Quality Nonattainment
- Air Quality Near Nonattainment
- Counties - Data Collected
- County Boundaries
- Critical Habitat
- Wetlands
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- Lakes and Reservoirs
- National Grassland
- National Seashore
- National Wildlife Refuge
- Urban Areas

Scale: 1 inch = 8 Miles

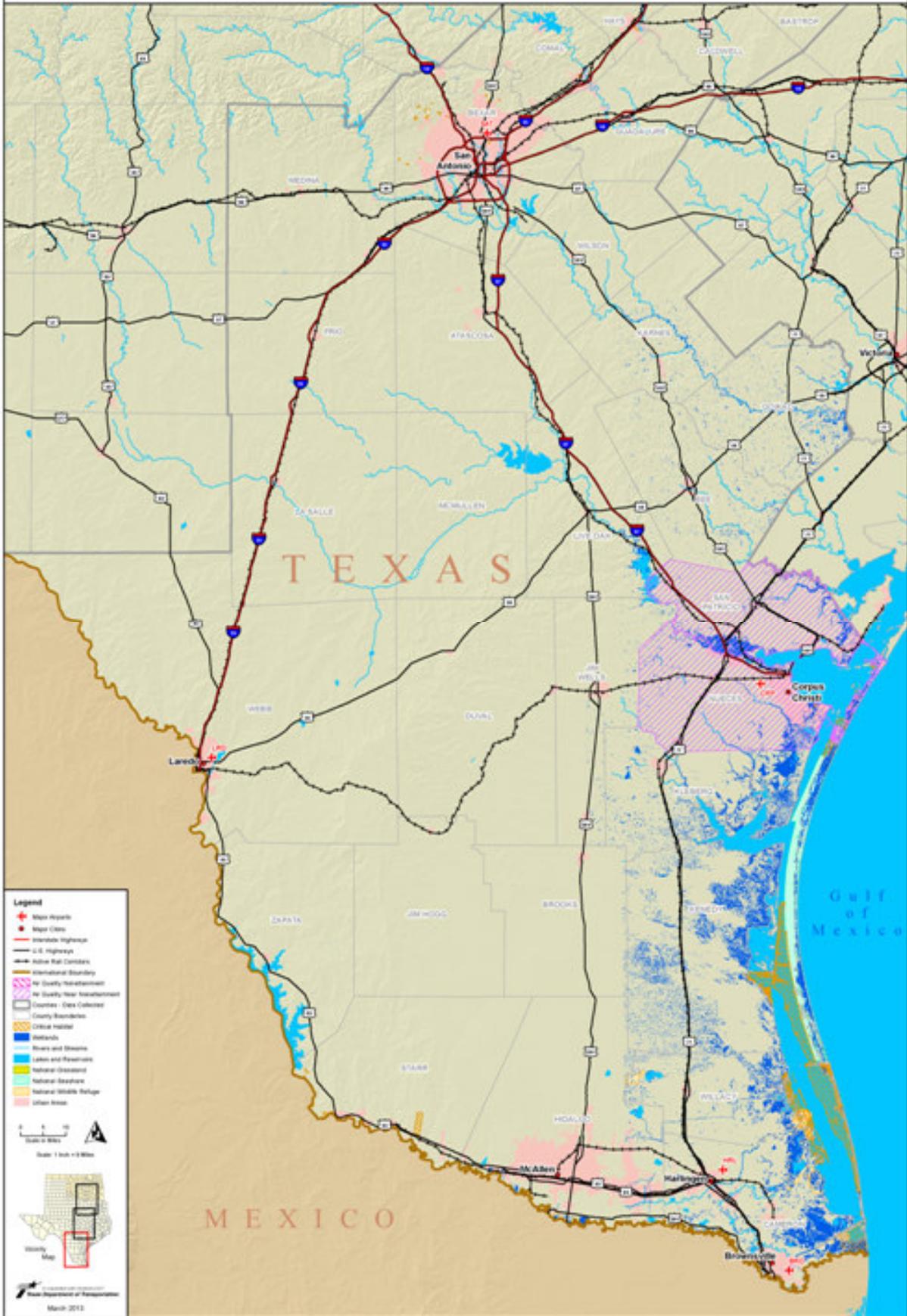
Worthy Map

Texas Department of Transportation
 March 2013

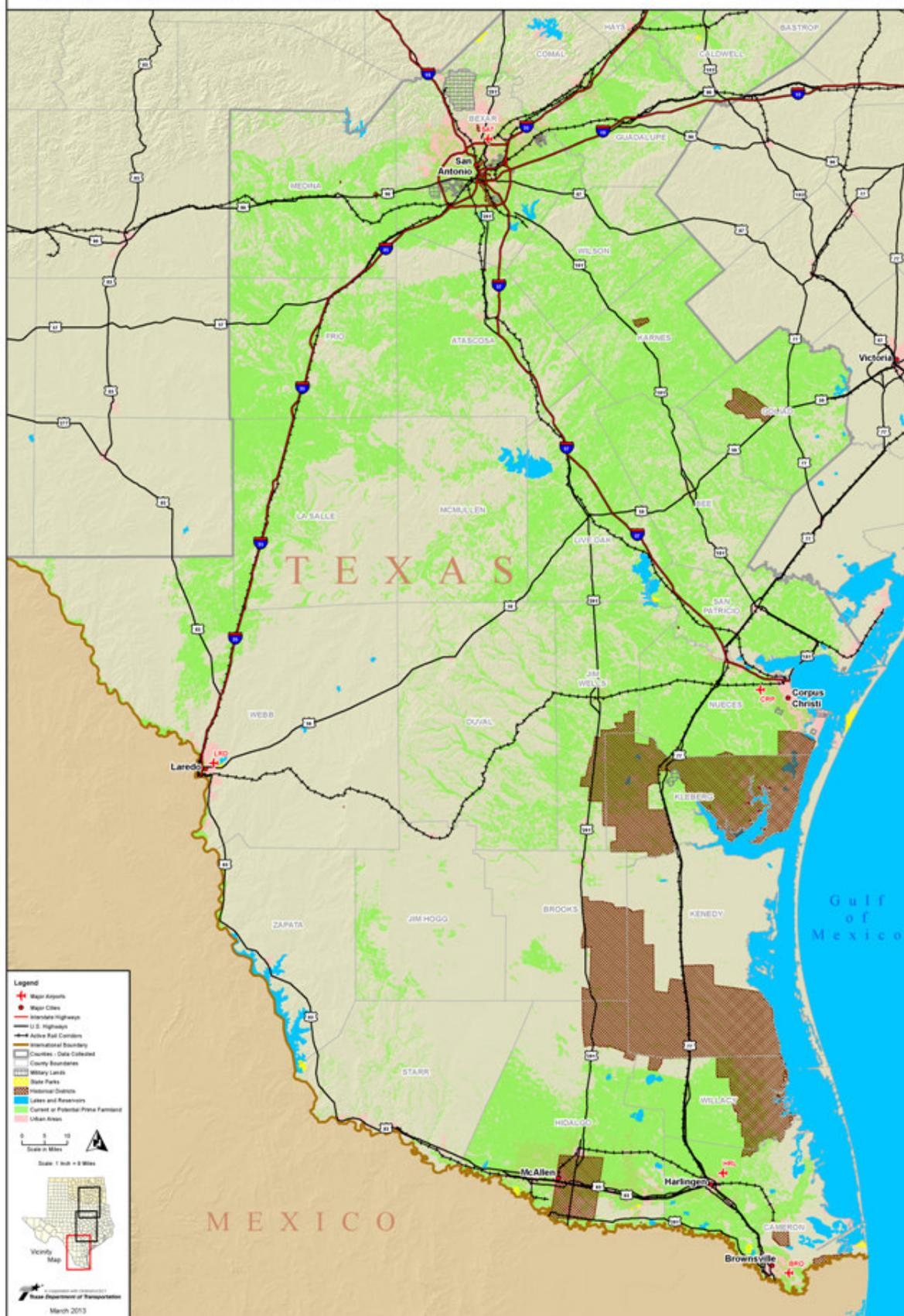
Central Section - Dallas-Fort Worth to San Antonio
Examples of Community Resources



South Section - San Antonio to South Texas
Examples of Natural Resources



South Section - San Antonio to South Texas
Examples of Community Resources



CONNECTION OPTIONS



Texas Department of Transportation

in cooperation with
Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

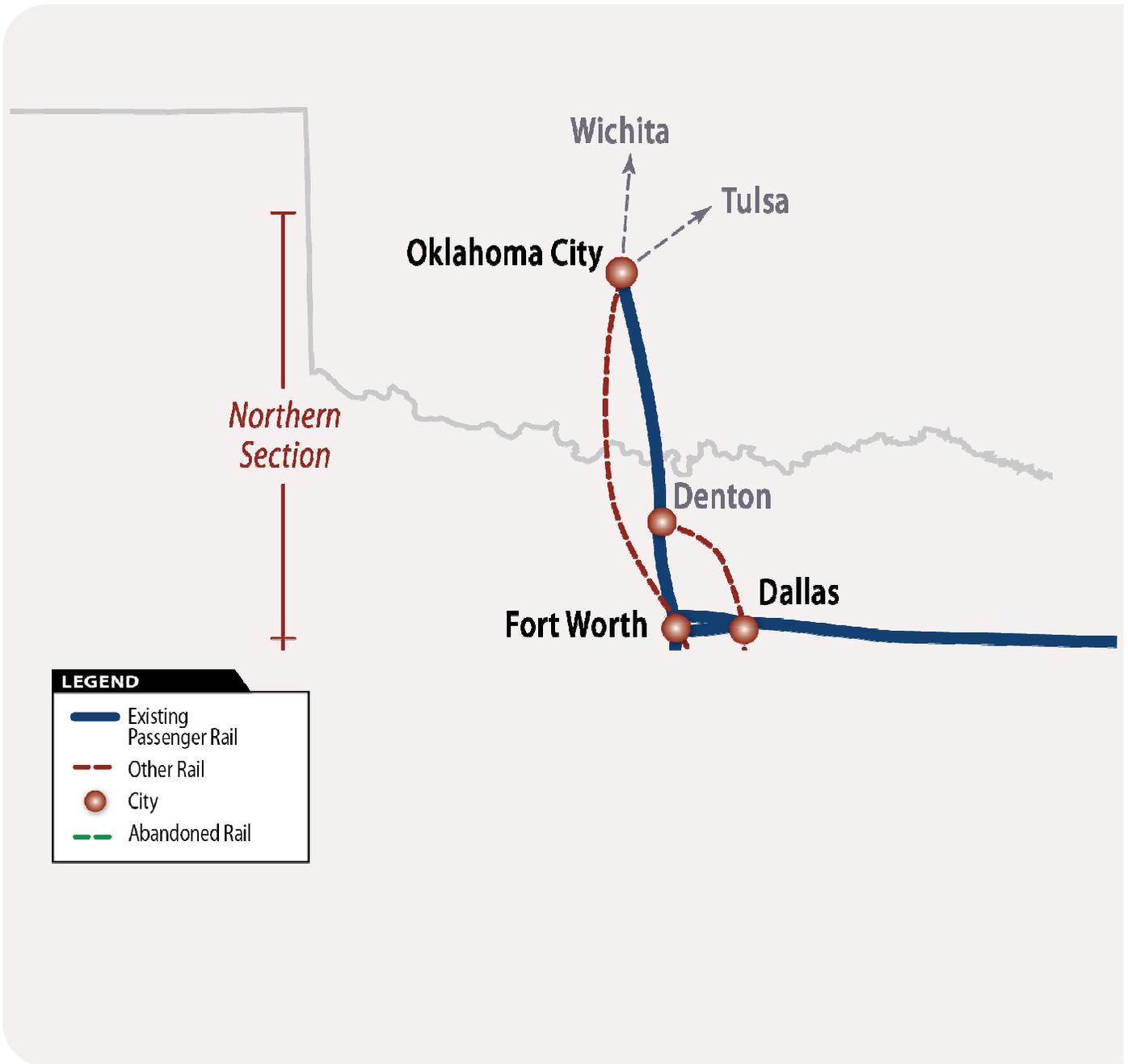
What services should be evaluated?

The service-level EIS will compare passenger rail alternatives in the area shown on the map.



Which cities should be connected by passenger rail?

North Section Options



Central Section Options

LEGEND

- Existing Passenger Rail
- Other Rail
- City
- Abandoned Rail



South Section Options



Section Options

Which cities should be served by passenger rail?

What types of improvements should be considered?

- Incremental improvements (i.e. grade separations)
- Additional rail within existing rail corridors
- High speed rail in a new corridor
- Passenger rail schedules

What else should be looked at?

Next steps

- The study team will review public comments and develop alternatives
- The study team will use the purpose and need to screen alternatives
- The study team will host another open house where you can review the alternatives that will be studied in the service-level EIS



Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Guide to participating: Scoping for Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in coordination with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is holding a “scoping process” to hear from you about the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS).

- TxDOT wants to hear from you as we start to study passenger rail service as a viable option for improving congestion in the IH-35 corridor.

Read on to learn more about how you can participate in this important step in the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS) process.

Submit comments through April 26, 2013

“Scoping” is the first step in the federal environmental documentation process. During this time, TxDOT and FRA invite you to provide input about what should be studied in the service-level EIS. During the “scoping process” you can learn about the service-level EIS process, potential options for intercity passenger rail between Oklahoma City and south Texas, and provide comments on what should be studied and potential impacts.

What are “scoping” comments?

“Scoping” is designed to gather input on three topics:

- The purpose and need for the study.
- The range of intercity passenger rail alternatives to be studied in the service-level EIS.
- Environmental resources that could be affected by the proposed rail alternatives.

You can also tell us any other thoughts or concerns you have about the study.

TxDOT and FRA will compile all of the comments into a “scoping report.” Similar comments will be grouped and considered together. Decisions about what to include in the EIS will be documented in a “scoping report.”

Send your comments by April 26:

Mail:

Mark Werner, Rail Division, TxDOT
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Website:

www.TXOKrail.org

In-person:

At one of the in-person open houses
(see details below)

Open houses

In addition to the online open house, there will be 12 in-person open houses (*locations, dates & times below*).

All open houses will be held from **6:00 to 8:00 pm** and are drop-in events where you can come at any time and stay as long as you like. Children are welcome.

Oklahoma City, OK

Monday, March 25
Metro Tech Center
1900 Springlake Dr.

Ardmore, OK

Tuesday, March 26
Ardmore Train Station
251 E. Main St.

Waco, TX

Monday, March 25
Heart of Texas COG
1514 S. New Rd.

Austin, TX

Wednesday, March 27
TxDOT Austin Office
7901 N. IH-35, Bldg. 7

Fort Worth, TX

Thursday, March 28
TxDOT Training
Center
2501 S.W. Loop 820

Belton, TX

Monday, April 1
Central Texas COG
2180 N. Main St.

San Antonio, TX

Monday, April 1
Windcrest Civic Center
9310 Jim Seal Dr.,
Windcrest

Sherman, TX

Tuesday, April 2
Sherman Senior
Center
1500 N. Broughton St.

Corpus Christi, TX

Tuesday, April 2
TxDOT Offices
1701 S. Padre Island
Dr.

Dallas, TX

Thursday, April 3
MSDC Offices
8828 N. Stemmons
Fwy, Suite 550

Laredo, TX

Wednesday, April 3
TxDOT Offices
1817 Bob Bullock
Loop.

Harlingen, TX

Thursday, April 4
Harlingen City Hall
502 E Tyler Ave.

Each open house will include:

- A welcome area where you can learn about the meeting format.
- A short presentation from TxDOT staff (every 30 minutes).
- Areas where you can review information, talk to staff, and write scoping comments.
- Una presentación en Español.

Equal access

To ensure equal access, auxiliary aids/services to persons with disabilities will be provided.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend a scoping open house and who may need auxiliary aides or services are requested to contact Mark Werner at (512) 486-5137 at least three days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Si usted requiere este documento en un formato alternativo, favor de comunicarse a la siguiente línea directa (512) 486-5137.

Types of intercity passenger rail

	Maximum/ average speed	Stops/ frequency	Typical characteristics
Conventional <i>(mostly uses existing tracks)</i> 	Max: 70-90 mph Average: 45-60 mph	Stops every 15 to 60 miles 3-6 trains/day each direction	 <p>Unreserved and Reserved seats, limited business class seating, limited café food service, limited checked baggage, diesel loco hauled</p>
Higher speed <i>(some dedicated tracks)</i> 	Max: 110-125 mph Average: 70-85 mph	Stops 30 to 90 miles apart 6-12 trains/day each direction	 <p>Reserved seats, business class seating, café food service, no checked baggage, diesel and electric loco hauled</p>
High speed <i>(fully dedicated tracks)</i> 	Max: 165-220 mph Average: 100-150 mph	Stops 50 to 100+ miles apart 12-24 trains/day each direction	 <p>Reserved seats, business class seating, café and at-seat food service, no checked baggage, electric multiple unit</p>

Common Attributes: Single or double deck trains, stations with parking and transit access, operation on existing or dedicated tracks

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. **The identity of individuals is kept confidential.** The results are reported as totals only, and **used solely to help improve future community engagement.** Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

Tape

Tape



Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

**¡Bienvenido a la reunión
de consulta pública!**



Esta noche usted puede:

Obtener más información y proporcionar sus aportes, lo cual contribuirá a determinar los objetivos y el alcance del Estudio de Tren de Pasajeros entre Texas-Oklahoma (TORPE).

Obtenga información y opine sobre:

- El propósito y la necesidad del estudio
- El contenido y los temas a estudiar
- Rutas de trenes de pasajeros y estaciones

Llene un formulario de comentarios y basado en los mapas díganos lo que piensa. ¡Queremos saber su opinión!

INTRODUCCIÓN



Texas Department of Transportation

in cooperation with
Oklahoma DOT



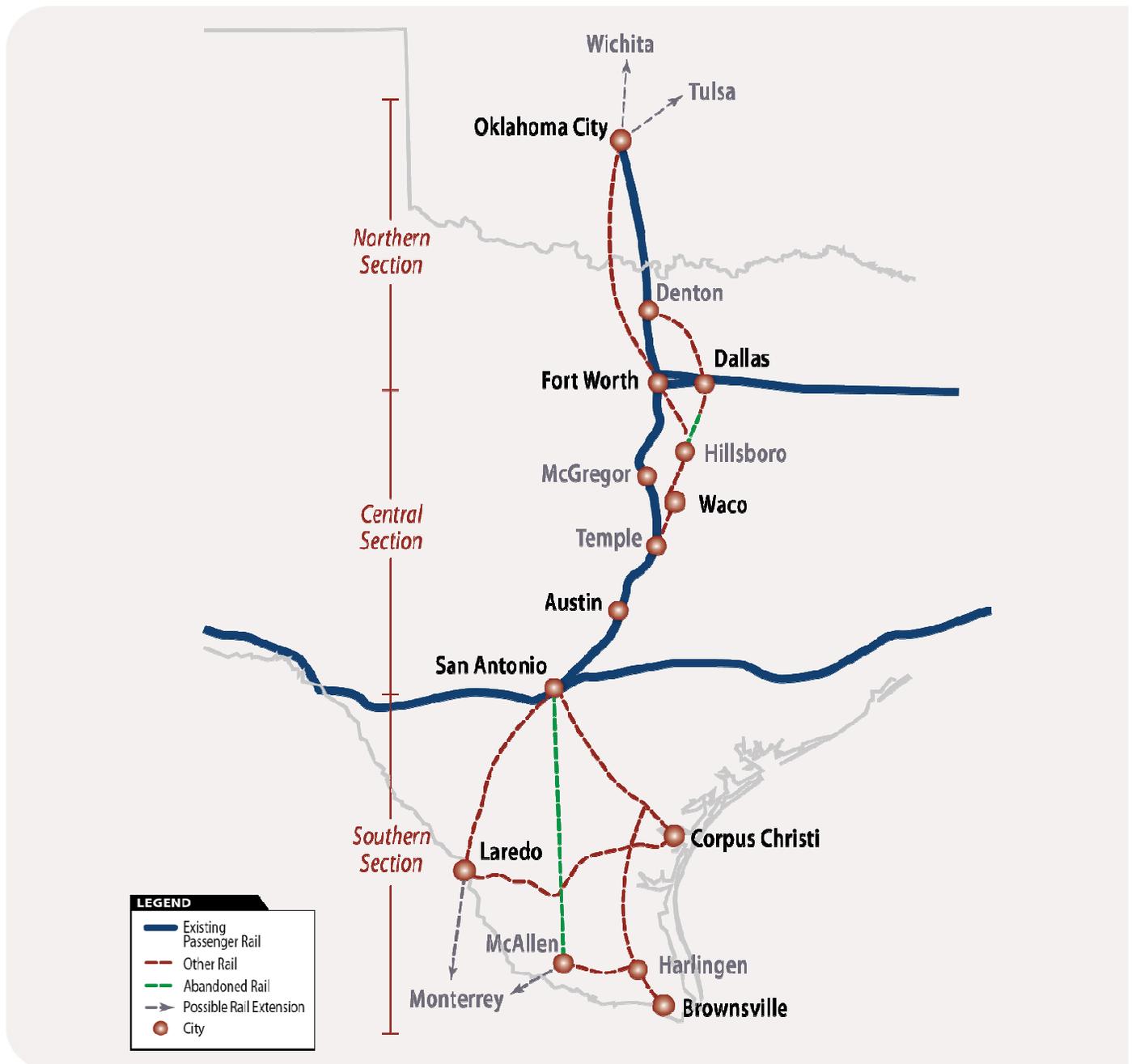
PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

¿Qué es el TOPRS?

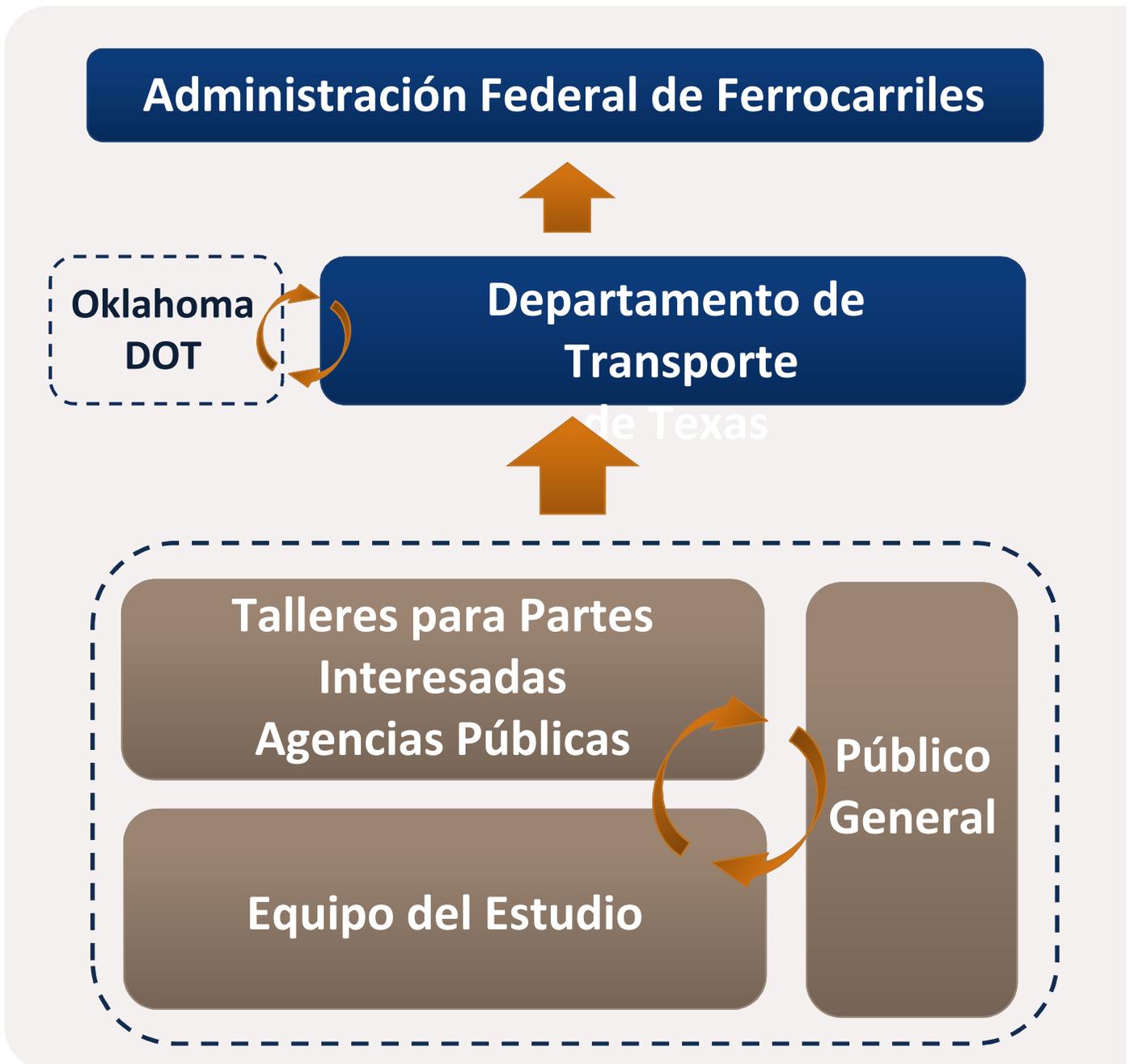
- El estudio examinará opciones de ferrocarril de pasajeros en un corredor de 850 millas entre la ciudad de Oklahoma y el sur de Texas
 - **Sección Norte:** De Oklahoma City a Dallas y Fort Worth
 - **Sección Central:** De Dallas y Fort Worth a San Antonio
 - **Sección Sur:** De San Antonio a Corpus Christi, Brownsville, y Laredo
- El estudio es financiado por la Administración Federal de Ferrocarriles (FRA) a través del Departamento de Transporte de Texas (TxDOT), en coordinación con el Departamento de Transporte de Oklahoma (ODOT)



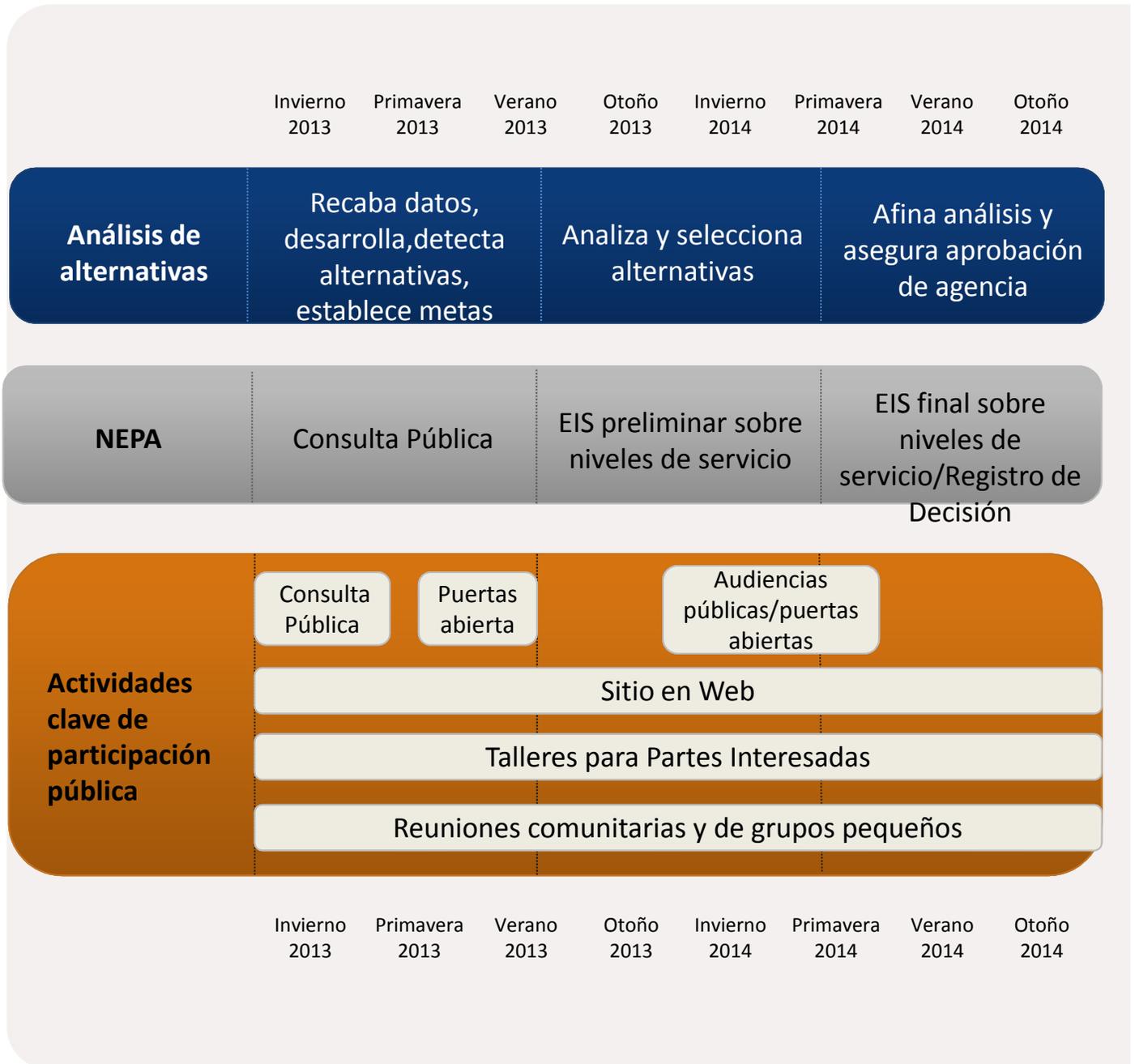
¿Qué área abarca el Estudio?



¿Cómo se toman las decisiones?



Programa



OBJETIVO Y NECESIDAD DEL ESTUDIO



Texas Department of Transportation

in cooperation with
Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

¿Cuál es el objetivo del estudio?

- El objetivo del TOPRS es evaluar alternativas de servicio interurbano de tren de pasajeros para satisfacer necesidades futuras y mejorar instalaciones ferroviarias, reducir tiempos de viaje y optimizar las conexiones con el tránsito público.



¿Está de acuerdo? ¿Existen otras razones para realizar este estudio?



¿Por qué es necesario el estudio?

- Estas posibles mejoras son necesarias debido a que el crecimiento de la población y los negocios en el área de estudio ha producido congestión en el corredor IH-35.
 - La ruta IH-35 es una autopista importante a nivel nacional en la cual las velocidades promedio podrían llegar a bajar hasta a 15 mph para el 2035
 - El servicio de tren de pasajeros interurbano es una alternativa para satisfacer futuras demandas de transporte

¿Qué piensa? ¿Existen otras necesidades que deberían considerarse durante el estudio?



EIS A NIVEL DE SERVICIO



Texas Department of Transportation

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Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

¿Qué es la EIS a nivel de servicios?

- La EIS a nivel de servicios es un estudio de alto nivel que lleva a decisiones de gran dimensión (requerida federalmente por la ley NEPA)
- El TxDOT documentará los impactos, beneficios y costos de las alternativas de tren de pasajeros

Consulta Pública:
identifica lo que debe estudiar la EIS

EIS Preliminar:
compara alternativas propuestas incluyendo alternativa "no-build"

EIS Final:
responde a comentarios y afina el análisis de la EIS

Registro de Decisión:
Decide el nivel de servicio de tren de pasajeros a desarrollar



¿Qué está siendo estudiado?

- Una EIS examina una amplia gama de temas, incluyendo:

Recursos

naturales

- Calidad del aire
- Energía
- Hábitat de peces y vida silvestre
- Humedales
- Calidad del agua

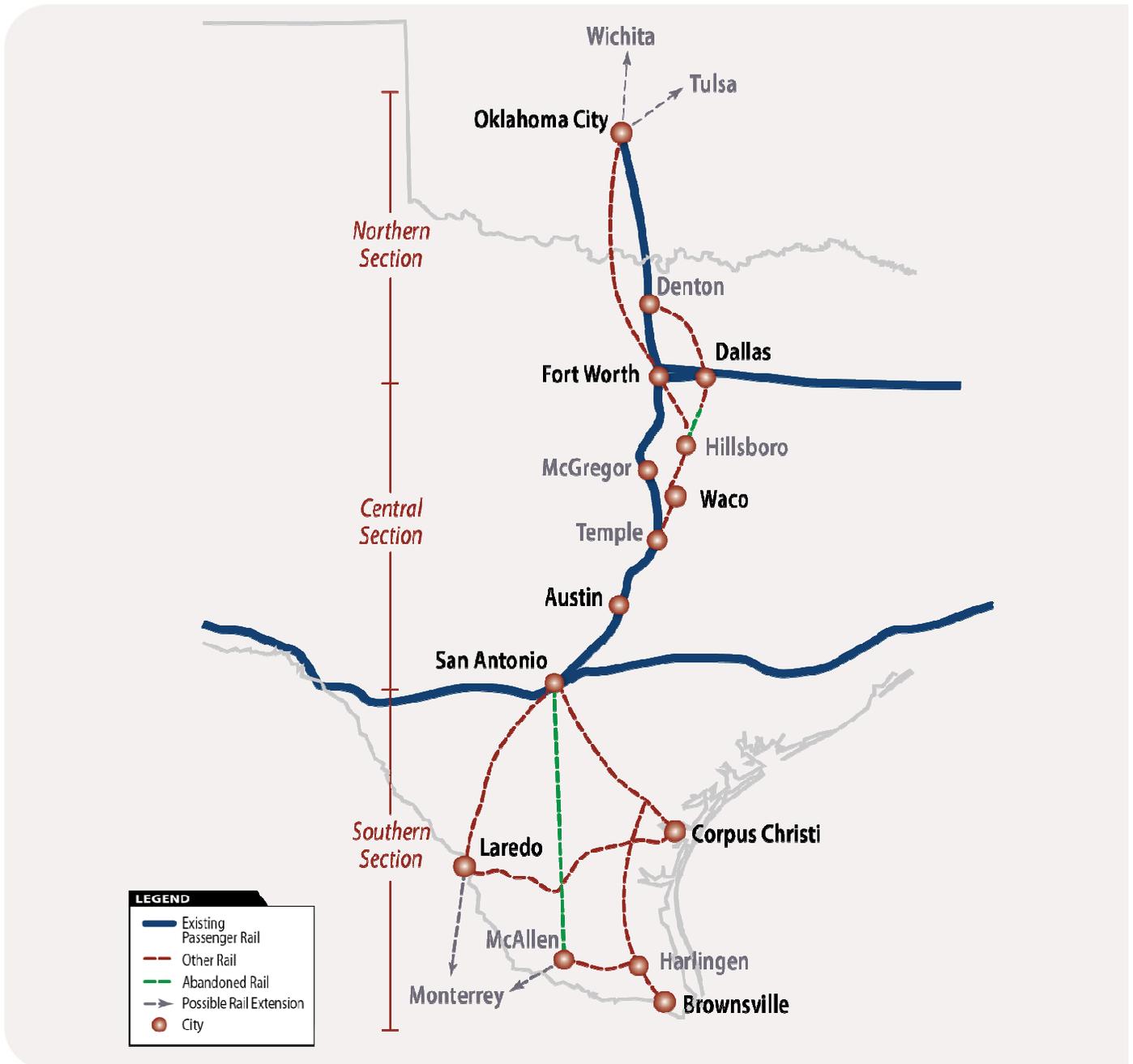
Recursos comunitarios

- Recursos culturales
- Desarrollo económico
- Propiedades históricas
- Uso de tierras
- Ruido y vibración
- Seguridad
- Transporte

¿Qué otros recursos/temas deben ser estudiados?



Trenes existentes en el área de estudio



¿QUÉ SE ESTUDIA?



Texas Department of Transportation

in cooperation with
Oklahoma DOT



PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Opciones de servicio de tren de pasajeros

El tren de pasajeros da servicio a múltiples ciudades a lo largo de la vía, con paradas limitadas. Puede operar a distintas velocidades y frecuencia.

	Millas máximas/ promedio por hora	Paradas/ frecuencia	Características típicas
Convencional <i>(uso de vías existentes)</i> 	Max: 70-90 mph Promedio: 45-60 mph	Paradas a 15 - 60 millas de distancia 3-6 trenes/día en cada dirección <i>(no más de 12)</i>	Asientos no reservados; asientos clase ejecutiva limitados, servicio cafetería y revisión equipaje ; locomotora diesel 
Velocidad más alta <i>(agunas vías asignadas)</i> 	Max: 110-125 mph Promedio: 70-85 mph	Paradas a 30 - 90 millas de distancia 4-8 trenes/día en cada dirección <i>(hasta 12)</i>	Asientos reservados; asientos clase ejecutiva; servicio cafetería; sin revisión de equipaje; locomotora diesel y eléctrica 
Alta velocidad <i>(sólo vías asignadas)</i> 	Max: 165-220 mph Promedio: 100-140 mph	Paradas a 50 hasta 100+ millas de dist. 12-24 trenes/día en cada dirección	Asientos reservados; asientos clase ejecutiva; servicio cafetería y en cabina; sin revisión equipaje; locomotora eléctrica múltiple 

Atributos comunes: *Trenes de uno o dos pisos, estaciones con estacionamiento, operan en vías existentes o en vías especialmente asignadas*

¿Qué está siendo estudiado?

El estudio está examinando conexiones entre ciudades en Oklahoma y el sur de Texas, a lo largo del corredor IH-35.

Otras modalidades	¿Por qué no?
Trenes suburbanos	Están siendo estudiados por separado en algunas áreas Generalmente confinados al área de influencia de una ciudad en lugar de proveer transporte interurbano
Trenes ligeros	Proveen conexiones entre la ciudad y suburbios
Tranvías	Proveen conexiones entre la ciudad
Autopistas, aeropuertos y otras modalidades no ferroviarias	El tren de pasajeros es una alternativa a estas otras modalidades de transporte interurbano La congestión existente y futura en las carreteras y vuelos aéreos reduce las opciones (incluyendo el servicio de bus)



¿Cuáles son algunas de las mejoras?

- Mejora el servicio de pasajeros en las rutas a ciudades existentes
 - Mejoras de la estación de tren
 - Conexiones entre trenes mejoradas
 - Velocidades y periodicidad mejoradas
- Nuevo servicio de tren de pasajeros
 - servicio a nuevas ciudades
 - Nuevas ubicaciones de estación de tren y ciudades
 - Hay varias velocidades y frecuencias
 - Nuevos itinerarios de servicio de tren
 - lugares

¿Qué otras mejoras podrían tomarse en cuenta?

¿Qué servicios deberían ser evaluados?

La EIS a nivel de servicios comparará las alternativas de tren de pasajeros en el área que se muestra en el mapa.



¿Qué ciudades debería conectar el tren de pasajeros?

Pasos siguientes

- El equipo de estudio revisará los comentarios públicos y desarrollará alternativas
- El equipo de estudio utilizará el objetivo y necesidades para detectar alternativas
- El equipo de estudio organizará otra reunión abierta al público en donde podrá revisar las alternativas a ser estudiadas en la EIS a nivel de servicio



Objetivo y necesidad: Sección norte

Servicio ferroviario Heartland Flyer actual:

- Un tren en cada dirección diario.
- La cantidad de pasajeros al año ha aumentado en un 10% en los últimos tres años.
- La mayoría de los pasajeros habrían conducido un automóvil o no habrían hecho estos viajes.
- Opera en una línea de ferrocarril de carga de tráfico intenso lo que causa retrasos e inconvenientes.



Algunas necesidades en esta sección:

- Instalaciones ferroviarias mejoradas (como controles de trenes automatizados) para mejorar las velocidades y mantener la seguridad.
- Mejor coordinación con otros servicios de trenes de pasajeros para aumentar el atractivo del ferrocarril.
- Conexión directa con la Ciudad de Dallas y el aeropuerto Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW).
- Más pasos a desnivel viales/ferroviarios para mejorar la seguridad en los puntos de cruce del ferrocarril y carreteras.

Propósito y necesidad: Sección central

Servicio Eagle Amtrak Texas actual:

- Desde Fort Worth, conexiones diarias con el Heartland Flyer (Servicio de trenes interurbano con la ciudad de Oklahoma).
- Desde San Antonio, conexiones con Sunset Limited con Nueva Orleans y Los Ángeles
- Alrededor del 23% de los viajes de los trenes Amtrak inician y finalizan en Texas (para viajes dentro del estado únicamente).
- La sección con la demanda más grande de viajes interurbanos (tiene altos volúmenes de automóviles y camiones).
- Existe un alto volumen de viajes aéreos interestatales en esta sección.



Algunas necesidades en esta sección:

- Otra alternativa a conducir y volar.
- Mejora la conectividad y coordinación de viajes entre los proveedores de servicio de trenes.
- Acceso ferroviario a los aeropuertos incluyendo DFW, Austin y San Antonio.

Objetivo y necesidad: Sección sur

No existen servicios de tren de pasajeros en la actualidad:

- Amtrak provee un servicio de pasajeros al sur de San Antonio mediante autobuses.
- Los autobuses proveen la mayor parte del transporte público interurbano dentro de la región y con destinos en los EE.UU. y México.
- El crecimiento de la población y negocios a lo largo de la frontera está aumentando la congestión, particularmente por los camiones comerciales.

Algunas necesidades en esta sección:

- Nuevas opciones para viajes interurbanos, tal como trenes de pasajeros, que no aumenten la congestión a las carreteras.
- Una alternativa eficiente, segura, equitativa y asequible a las carreteras, buses o viajes en avión.
- Considerar la demanda de viajes transfronterizos hacia destinos mexicanos tales como Monterrey, un centro importante de negocios y fuente potencial de demanda para trenes de pasajeros.

Opciones de servicio del tren de pasajeros

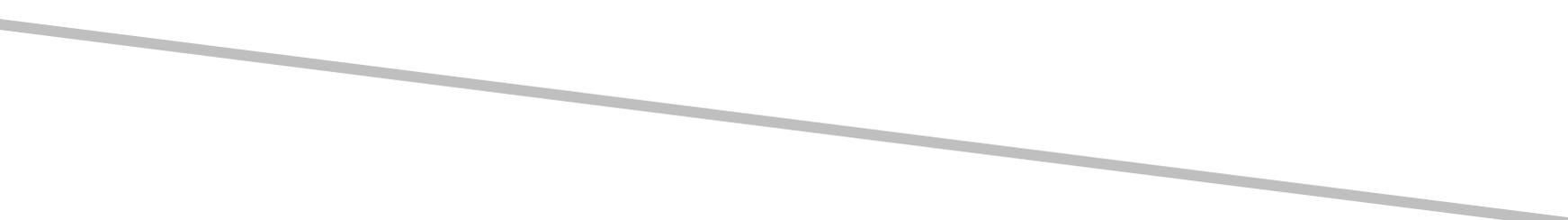
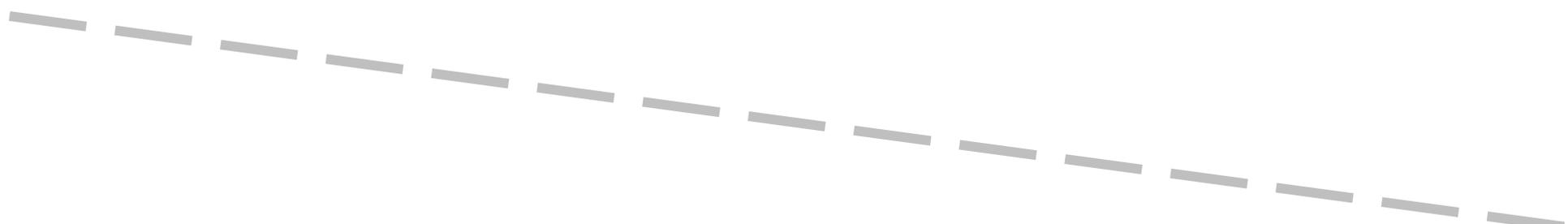
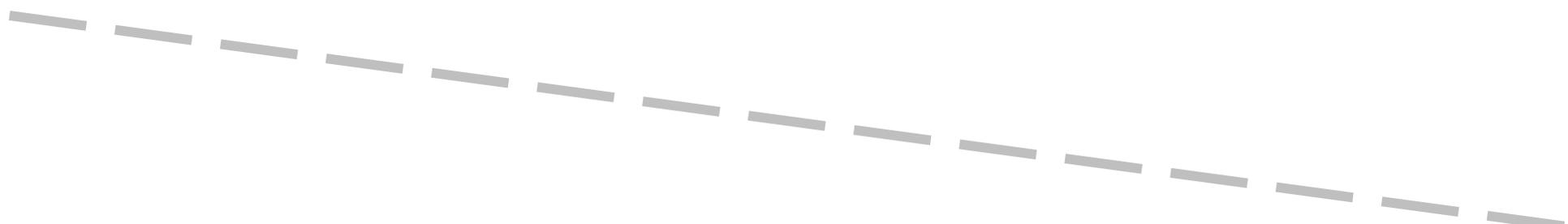
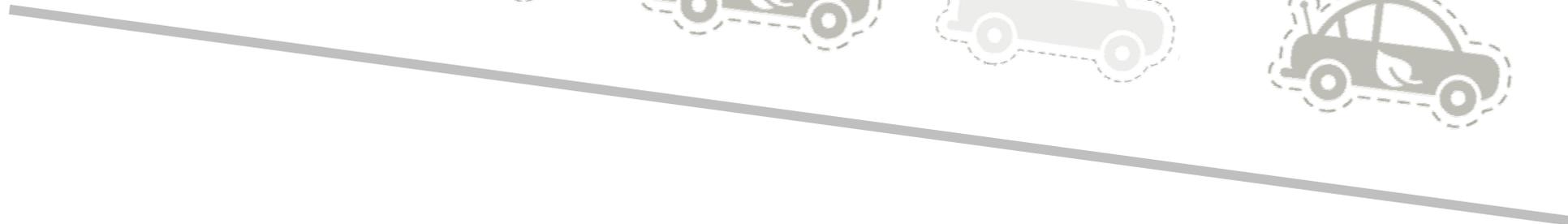
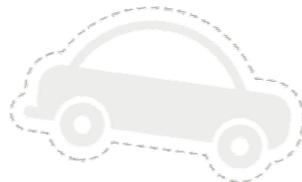
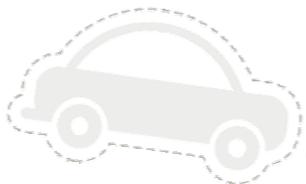
El tren de pasajeros da servicio a múltiples ciudades a lo largo de la línea ferroviaria, con paradas limitadas. Puede operar a distintas velocidades y frecuencias.

	Millas máximas/ promedio por hora	Paradas/ frecuencia	Características típicas
Convencional <i>(uso las vías existentes)</i> 	Máx.: 70-90 mph Promedio: 45-60 mph	Paradas a 15 a 60 millas de distancia 3-6 trenes/día en cada dirección <i>(no más de 12)</i>	Asientos no/reservados; asientos de clase ejecutiva limitados, servicio de cafetería y revisión de equipaje; locomotora diésel. 
Más alta velocidad <i>(Algunas vías dedicadas)</i> 	Máx.: 110-125 mph Promedio: 70-85 mph	Se detiene cada 30 a 90 millas de distancia 4-8 trenes/día en cada dirección <i>(tantos como 12)</i>	Asientos reservados; asientos de clase ejecutiva limitados, servicio de café y comidas, equipaje no facturable, por locomotora diésel y eléctrica 
Alta velocidad <i>(sólo vías dedicadas)</i> 	Máx.: 165-220 mph Promedio: 100-140 mph	Paradas a 50 a 100+ millas de distancia 12-24 trenes/día en cada dirección	Asientos reservados; asientos clase ejecutiva; servicio de cafetería y en cabina; sin revisión de equipaje, unidades múltiples eléctricas de locomoción 

Atributos comunes: *Trenes de una y dos plantas, estaciones con estacionamiento, operación en vías existentes o dedicadas.*

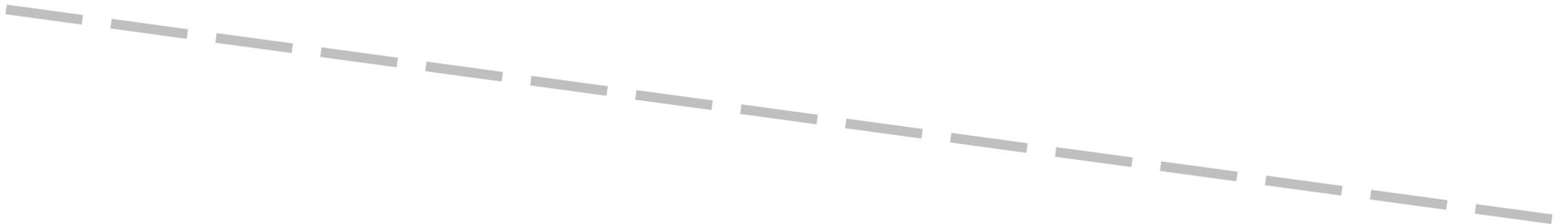
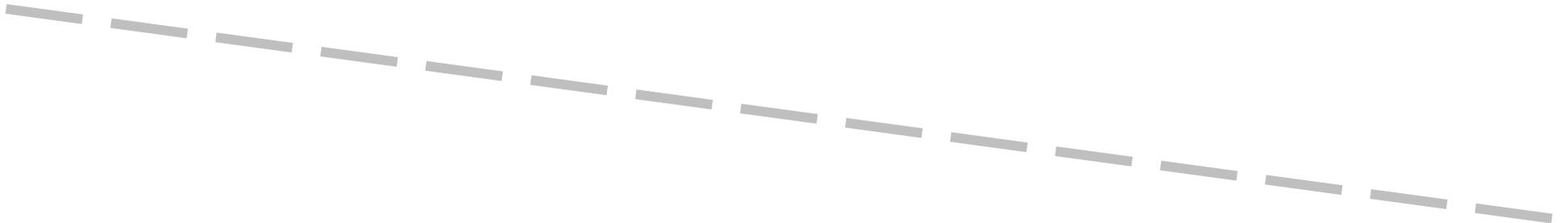
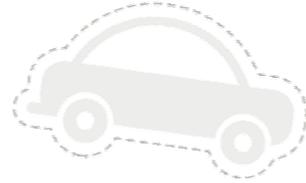
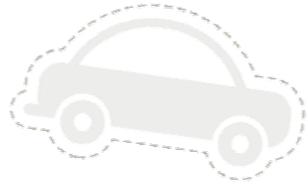
Colorea los coches! Dibuje un tren para usted y sus amigos a montar en!

Obtenga más información en www.TxOkRail.org



Color the cars! Draw a train for you and your friends to ride on!

Learn more at www.TxOkRail.org



Appendix E

**Public Scoping Comments –
Agencies
and Elected Officials**

Federal Agencies

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#)

TxDOT Internet E-Mail



rebecca.littleowl@ibwc.gov

Tuesday, April 30, 2013 6:14 PM

To: [TXOKRAIL](#)

Name: Mrs. Rebecca Little Owl<rebecca.littleowl@ibwc.gov>

Address:

4171 N. Mesa St.
C-100
El Paso, TX 79902

Phone:

(915) 832-4734

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Please include the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) on the announcement of the availability of the Draft Service Level EIS. The project corridor may cross USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project in the service areas of McAllen and Harlingen.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 6

1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200

Dallas, TX 75202-2733

April 23, 2013

Mr. Mark Werner
Rail Division, Texas Department of
Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Subject: Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City

Dear Mr. Werner,

The Region 6 office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the March 13, 2013 Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

To assist in the scoping process for this project, we have identified several issues for your attention in the preparation of the EIS and enclosed detailed scoping comments for your consideration. EPA is most concerned about the following issues: alternatives development, impacts to water and biological resources, invasive species management, habitat protection, air quality, indirect and cumulative impacts, climate change, environmental justice, and mitigation.

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed project. Please send one hard copy of the draft EIS and four CDs to this office when completed and submitted for public comment. When you are ready to file the draft EIS with EPA, you may now electronically file it by using our *e-NEPA Electronic Filing* website <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/submiteis/index.html>. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rhonda Smith at 214-665-8126 or John MacFarlane of my staff at 214-665-7491 or macfarlane.john@epa.gov for assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra A. Griffin".

Debra A. Griffin
Associate Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

Enclosure

**DETAILED SCOPING COMMENTS
FOR THE NOTICE OF INTENT (NOI)
FOR THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION (FRA)
TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)
FOR THE PROPOSED
TEXAS-OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL STUDY**

Proposed Project

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) intends to prepare a Service Level/Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Texas Department of Transportation and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, to analyze the impacts of a proposed new and/or improved high-speed intercity passenger rail service along an 850-mile corridor extending from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to the south Texas cities of Laredo and Brownsville. This EIS will be used by the FRA in its decision making process to determine whether the project is in the public interest. The FRA will serve as the lead Federal agency under the NEPA process and is responsible for the preparation of the EIS.

General

EPA suggests utilizing the Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol (REAP) methodology to determine ecologically sensitive areas within the proposed project area that should be avoided or protected. REAP is a product of the Texas Environmental Resource Stewards (TERS) effort which analyzes existing broad-scale electronic data to identify important ecological areas in Texas. For more information on REAP, please call John MacFarlane at 214-665-7491.

Tiering

EPA understands the FRA will use a "tiered" approach to this project. The Tier 1, or Service Level, EIS will assess the broad corridor-wide impacts of a passenger rail system. The more detailed Tier 2 documentation would be required to examine the potential impacts of the site-specific projects that are advanced to implement the Tier 1 alternative selected. Any Tier 2 documents should incorporate by reference the general discussions and concentrate solely on the issues specific to the statement subsequently prepared¹.

Statement of Purpose and Need

The EIS should clearly identify the underlying purpose and need to which the FRA is responding in proposing the alternatives². The purpose of the proposed action is typically the specific objectives of the activity, while the need for the proposed action may be to eliminate a broader underlying problem or take advantage of an opportunity.

¹ 40 CFR 1508.28

² 40 CFR 1502.13

Alternatives Analysis

NEPA requires evaluation of reasonable alternatives, including those that may not be within the jurisdiction of the lead agency³. A robust range of alternatives will include options for avoiding significant environmental impacts. The EIS should "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives"⁴ by developing a defined screening process. The screening process should rate each alternative against a set of pre-determined criteria. Each alternative should then be analyzed for its level of impact on a resource, e.g. no effect, negligible effect, minor effect, major effect, significant effect. Only that alternative that effectively meets or best meets all of the screening criteria should be recommended as the preferred alternative. The EIS should provide a clear discussion of the reasons for the elimination of alternatives which are not evaluated in detail.

Section 1502.14(d) requires the alternatives analysis to "include the alternative of no action." No Action means the proposed activity would not take place, and the resulting environmental effects from taking no action would be compared with the effects of permitting the proposed activity or an alternative activity to go forward.

Affected Environment

This section should provide information on the existing resources and condition of the natural and built environment. It is a description of baseline conditions. These baseline conditions provide the context for evaluating environmental consequences and should include historical cumulative effects to the extent feasible.

Environmental Consequences

A majority of EISs contain a well-written section on the affected or existing environment. However, where most EISs fall short is the discussion of the environmental consequences of the proposed project. An analysis should follow an equation. First, what is the action? In this example, the action is filling wetlands. Second, what is the intensity or extent of impacts? In this example, the extent of proposed impacts is five acres. Third, is that significant? The EIS must answer that question and prove that the action of filling five acres of wetlands is not significant by discussing rationale. If the action is significant, then the EIS must contain appropriate mitigation measures.

Water Resources

Water Supply and Water Quality

Public drinking water supplies and/or their source areas often exist in many watersheds. Source water is water from streams, rivers, lakes, springs, and aquifers that is used as a supply of drinking water. Source water areas are delineated and mapped by the state for each federally-regulated public water system. The 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act require

³ 40 CFR Section 1502.14(c)

⁴ 40 CFR 1502.14(a)

federal agencies to protect sources of drinking water for communities. The EIS should address the potential effects of project discharges, if any, on surface water quality. Specific discharges should be identified and potential effects of discharges on designated beneficial uses of affected waters should be analyzed.

Stormwater

The EIS should describe the original (natural) drainage patterns in the project locale, as well as the drainage patterns of the area during project operations. Also, the EIS should identify whether any components of the proposed project are within a 50 or 100-year floodplain. The EIS should note that, under the Clean Water Act (CWA), any construction project disturbing a land area of one or more acres requires a construction stormwater discharge permit.

Waters of the United States, including Wetlands

The project applicant should coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine if the proposed project requires a Section 404 permit under the CWA. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands and other *special aquatic sites*. The EPA recommends the FRA include a jurisdictional delineation for all waters of the U.S., including ephemeral drainages, in accordance with the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual* and the December 2006 *Region Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual*. A jurisdictional delineation will confirm the presence or absence of waters of the U.S. in the project area and help determine whether or not the proposed project would require a Section 404 permit. If a permit is required, the EPA will review the project for compliance with *Federal Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Materials* (40 CFR 230), promulgated pursuant to Section 404(b)(1) of the CWA. EPA encourages on-going coordination with the USACE during the planning, scoping, and construction phases.

The EIS should demonstrate planning efforts to avoid, minimize, and compensate for wetland losses associated with the dredging, dredged material disposal, and other construction and operation activities. The EIS should also include an analysis of the potential for contaminated sediments to adversely impact the aquatic environment during construction and operation of the terminal.

Impaired Waters

The CWA requires States to develop a list of impaired waters that do not meet water quality standards, establish priority rankings, and develop action plans, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), to improve water quality. The EIS should provide information on CWA Section 303(d) impaired waters in the project area, if any, and efforts to develop and revise TMDLs. The EIS should describe existing restoration and enhancement efforts for those waters, and any mitigation measures that will be implemented to avoid further degradation of impaired waters.

Section 4(f) and Section 6(f)

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 includes a special provision that protects publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites from being acquired for transportation projects. Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF) states that either the land or park appurtenances acquired with LWCF funds cannot be eliminated or acquired without coordination with the National Park Service and mitigation that replaces the eliminated items. If any 4(f) or 6(f) properties are within or near project corridors, they should be documented. A more thorough evaluation of potential impacts, alternatives, and mitigation should be included in appropriate Tier 2 documentation. Please be aware that vibration and noise can also adversely impact 4(f) and 6(f) properties.

Project Specific Locations (PSL)

PSLs outside the right-of-way that would be established to support construction of the roadway such as borrow and disposal sites, staging and storage areas, and concrete and aggregate plants, must be identified as direct impacts. The project team should strive to locate PSLs so they avoid environmentally sensitive areas. Ideally, PSLs should be located in previously disturbed, upland areas.

Biological Resources, Habitat, and Wildlife

The EIS should identify all petitioned and listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that might occur within the project area. The EIS should identify and quantify which species or critical habitat might be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by each alternative and mitigate impacts to these species. EPA recommends that the FRA consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to ensure that current and consistent surveying, monitoring, and reporting protocols are applied in protection and mitigation efforts.

Invasive Species

Executive Order 13112, *Invasive Species* (February 3, 1999), mandates that federal agencies take actions to prevent the introduction of invasive species, provide for their control, and minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause. Executive Order 13112 also calls for the restoration of native plants and tree species. If the proposed project will entail new landscaping, the EIS should describe how the project will meet the requirements of Executive Order 13112.

In addition, we encourage alternative management practices that limit herbicide use (as a last resort), focusing instead on other methods to limit invasive species vegetation and decrease fire risk. Possible alternatives include mowing and weed control fabric, which may need a layer of soil to prevent degradation due to ultraviolet light.

Air Quality

The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions (baseline or existing conditions), National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and non-NAAQS pollutants, criteria pollutant nonattainment areas, and potential air quality impacts of the proposed project (including cumulative and indirect impacts). Such an evaluation is necessary to understand the potential impacts from temporary, long-term, or cumulative degradation of air quality.

The EIS should describe and estimate air emissions from potential construction and maintenance activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize those emissions. EPA recommends an evaluation of the following measures to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics).

- *Existing Conditions* – The EIS should provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and criteria pollutant nonattainment areas in the vicinity of the project.
- *Quantify Emissions* – The EIS should estimate emissions of criteria and hazardous air pollutants (air toxics) from the proposed project and discuss the timeframe for release of these emissions over the lifespan of the project. The EIS should describe and estimate emissions from potential construction activities, as well as proposed mitigation measures to minimize these emissions.
 - Provide a comparison of proposed project emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with the general conformity de minimis levels (40 CFR 93.153) for the Dallas/Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS moderate nonattainment area (100 tons/year NO_x, 100 tons/year VOCs) to determine the applicability of general conformity to this project.
- *Specify Emission Sources* – The EIS should specify all emission sources by pollutant from mobile sources (on and off-road), stationary sources (including portable and temporary emission units), fugitive emission sources, area sources, and ground disturbance. This source specific information should be used to identify appropriate mitigation measures and areas in need of the greatest attention.
 - Clearly identify in the EIS any construction phases/other aspects of project alternatives that may already be accounted for in existing Transportation Improvement Program/Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Dallas/Fort Worth 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS moderate nonattainment area.
- *Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan* – The EIS should include a draft Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan and ultimately adopt this plan in the Record of Decision. In addition to all applicable local, state, or federal requirements, we recommend the following control measures (Fugitive Dust, Mobile and Stationary Source and Administrative) be included in the Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan in order to

reduce impacts associated with emissions of particulate matter and other toxics from construction-related activities:

- Fugitive Dust Source Controls: The EIS should identify the need for a Fugitive Dust Control Plan to reduce Particulate Matter 10 and Fine Particulate Matter 2.5 emissions during construction and operations. We recommend that the plan include these general commitments:
 - Stabilize heavily used unpaved construction roads with a non-toxic soil stabilizer or soil weighting agent that will not result in loss of vegetation, or increase other environmental impacts.
 - During grading, use water, as necessary, on disturbed areas in construction sites to control visible plumes.
 - Vehicle speed
 - Limit speeds to 25 miles per hour on stabilized unpaved roads as long as such speeds do not create visible dust emissions.
 - Limit speeds to 10 miles per hour or less on unpaved areas within construction sites on un-stabilized (and unpaved) roads.
 - Post visible speed limit signs at construction site entrances.
 - Inspect and wash construction equipment vehicle tires, as necessary, so they are free of dirt before entering paved roadways, if applicable.
 - Provide gravel ramps of at least 20 feet in length at tire washing/cleaning stations, and ensure construction vehicles exit construction sites through treated entrance roadways, unless an alternative route has been approved by appropriate lead agencies, if applicable.
 - Use sandbags or equivalent effective measures to prevent run-off to roadways in construction areas adjacent to paved roadways. Ensure consistency with the project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, if such a plan is required for the project.
 - Sweep the first 500 feet of paved roads exiting construction sites, other unpaved roads en route from the construction site, or construction staging areas whenever dirt or runoff from construction activity is visible on paved roads, or at least twice daily (less during periods of precipitation).
 - Stabilize disturbed soils (after active construction activities are completed) with a non-toxic soil stabilizer, soil weighting agent, or other approved soil stabilizing method.
 - Cover or treat soil storage piles with appropriate dust suppressant compounds and disturbed areas that remain inactive for longer than 10 days. Provide vehicles (used to transport solid bulk material on public roadways and that have potential to cause visible emissions) with covers. Alternatively, sufficiently wet and load materials onto the trucks in a manner to provide at least one foot of freeboard.
 - Use wind erosion control techniques (such as windbreaks, water, chemical dust suppressants, and/or vegetation) where soils are disturbed in construction, access and maintenance routes, and materials stock pile areas. Keep related

windbreaks in place until the soil is stabilized or permanently covered with vegetation.

- Mobile and Stationary Source Controls:
 - If practicable, lease new, clean equipment meeting the most stringent of applicable Federal⁵ or State Standards. In general, commit to the best available emissions control technology. Tier 4 engines should be used for project construction equipment to the maximum extent feasible⁶.
 - Where Tier 4 engines are not available, we recommend use of EPA-verified particulate traps, oxidation catalysts and other appropriate controls where suitable to reduce emissions of diesel particulate matter and other pollutants to no more than Tier 2 levels.
 - Consider using electric vehicles, natural gas, biodiesel, or other alternative fuels during construction and operation phases to reduce the project's criteria and greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Plan construction scheduling to minimize vehicle trips.
 - Limit idling of heavy equipment to less than 5 minutes and verify through unscheduled inspections.
 - Maintain and tune engines per manufacturer's specifications to perform at EPA certification levels, prevent tampering, and conduct unscheduled inspections to ensure these measures are followed.

- Administrative controls:
 - Develop construction traffic and parking management plan that maintains traffic flow and plan construction to minimize vehicle trips.
 - Identify any sensitive receptors in the project area, such as children, elderly, and the infirmed, and specify the means by which impacts to these populations will be minimized (e.g. located construction equipment and staging zones away from sensitive receptors and building air intakes).
 - Include provisions for monitoring fugitive dust in the fugitive dust control plan and initiate increased mitigation measures to abate any visible dust plumes.

Climate Change

Scientific evidence supports the concern that continued increases in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activities will contribute to climate change. Global warming is caused by emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases. On December 7, 2009, the EPA determined that Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) contribute to air pollution that "endangers public health and welfare" within the meaning of the Clean Air Act. Higher temperatures and increased winter rainfall will be accompanied by a reduction in snow pack, earlier snowmelts, and increased runoff. Some of the impacts, such as reduced groundwater discharge, and more

⁵ EPA's website for nonroad mobile resources is <http://www.epa.gov/nonroad/>.

⁶ Diesel engines < 25 hp rated power started phasing in Tier 4 Model Years in 2008. Larger Tier 4 diesel engines will be phased in depending on the rated power (e.g., 25 hp - <75 hp: 2013; 75 hp - <175 hp: 2012-2013; 175 hp - <750 hp: 2011-2013; and ≥ 750 hp 2011 - 2015).

frequent and severe drought conditions, may impact the proposed projects. The EIS should consider how climate change could potentially influence the proposed project, specifically within sensitive areas, and assess how the projected impacts could be exacerbated by climate change and strategies for climate change adaptation planning. For example, measures for climate change adaptation should consider potentially increased drainage needs.

Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Emissions

On February 18, 2010, the CEQ issued draft language to Federal Agencies on analyzing the effects of GHG emissions and climate change when describing the environmental effects of a proposed agency action in accordance with NEPA. CEQ's draft guidance defines GHG emissions in accordance with Section 19(i) of Executive Order 13514 Federal Leadership in Environment, Energy, and Economic Performance (October 5, 2009) to include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorcarbon (HFCs), perfluorocarbon (PFCs), and sulfurhexafluoride (SF₆). Because CO₂ is the reference gas for climate change based on their potential to absorb heat in the atmosphere, measures of non-CO₂ GHGs should be reflected as CO₂-equivalent (Core) values. EPA supports evaluation and disclosure of GHG emissions and climate change effects resulting from the proposed project during all project phases, including (1) pre-construction (e.g., transportation, mobilization, and staging), (2) construction, (3) operation, (4) maintenance, and (5) decommissioning. We recommend that the GHG emission accounting/inventory include each proposed stationary source (e.g., power plant, liquefaction facility, compressor and metering stations, etc.) and mobile emissions source (e.g., heavy equipment, supply barges, rail transports, etc.). We also recommend that the EIS establish reasonable spatial and temporal boundaries for this analysis, and that the EIS quantify and disclose the expected annual direct and indirect GHG emissions for the proposed action. In the analysis of direct effects, we recommend that the EIS quantify cumulative emissions over the life of the project, discuss measures to reduce GHG emissions, including consideration of reasonable alternatives. EPA recommends that the EIS consider mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to reduce action related GHG emissions, and include a discussion of cumulative effects of GHG emissions related to the proposed action.

Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste/Solid Waste

The EIS should address potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of hazardous waste from construction and operation of the proposed project. The document should identify projected hazardous waste types and volumes, and expected storage, disposal, and management plans. It should identify any hazardous materials sites within the project's study area and evaluate if those sites would impact the project in any way.

Coordination with Tribal Governments

Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* (November 6, 2000), was issued in order to establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have tribal implications, and to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes. If applicable, the EIS should describe the process and outcome of government-to-

government consultation between the FRA and with any and each of the tribal governments within the project area, issues that were raised (if any), and how those issues were addressed in the selection of the proposed alternative.

Because this project will have a portion of the proposed rail line in Oklahoma, EPA strongly recommends that the FRA initiate consultation with Tribal governments as early as possible because of the unique legal relationship the U.S. Government has with federally-recognized tribes based on the Constitution, treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and court decisions. This relationship includes recognition of the right of tribes as sovereign governments to self-determination, and an acknowledgment of the federal government's trust responsibility to tribes. The precise nature of this relationship will vary depending upon the identity of the tribes and nature of trust resources involved.

National Historic Preservation Act

Consultation for tribal cultural resources is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Historic properties under the NHPA are properties that are included in the National Register of Historic Places or that meet the criteria for the National Register. Section 106 of the NHPA requires a federal agency, upon determining that activities under its control could affect historic properties, consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO). Under NEPA, any impacts to tribal, cultural, or other treaty resources must be discussed and mitigated. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that Federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on cultural resources, following regulation in 36 CFR 800.

The EIS should address the existence of cultural and historic resources, including Indian sacred sites, in the project areas, and address compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. It should also address Executive Order 13007, distinguish it from Section 106 of the NHPA, and discuss how the FRA will avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity, accessibility, or use of sacred sites, if they exist. The EIS should provide a summary of all coordination with Tribes and with the SHPO/THPO, including identification of NRHP eligible sites, and development of a Cultural Resource Management Plan.

Environmental Justice and Impacted Communities

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* (February 11, 1994) and the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice (August 4, 2011) directs federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations, allowing those populations a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Guidance⁷ by CEQ clarifies the terms low-income and minority population (which includes Native Americans) and describes the factors to consider when evaluating disproportionately high and adverse human health effects. The EIS should include an evaluation of environmental justice populations within

⁷ Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act, Appendix A (Guidance for Federal Agencies on Key Terms in Executive Order 12898), CEQ, December 10, 1997.

the geographic scope of the projects. If such populations exist, the EIS should address the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations, and the approaches used to foster public participation by these populations. Assessment of the project's impact on minority and low-income populations should reflect coordination with those affected populations. The EIS should also describe outreach and public involvement conducted to all other communities that could be affected by the project, since rural communities may be among the most vulnerable to health risks associated with the project. Please refer to EPA's EJ website⁸ for additional information.

Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

The indirect impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and communities in the vicinity of the project are affected by the proposed project later in time or farther removed in distance. We recommend focusing on induced growth and development and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

The cumulative impacts analysis should identify how resources, ecosystems, and communities in the vicinity of the project have already been, or will be, affected by past, present, or future activities in the project area. These resources should be characterized in terms of their response to change and capacity to withstand stresses. Trends data should be used to establish a baseline for the affected resources, to evaluate the significance of historical degradation, and to predict the environmental effects of the project components.

For the cumulative impacts assessment, we recommend focusing on resources of concern or resources that are "at risk" and/or are significantly impacted by the proposed project, before mitigation. For this project, the FRA should conduct a thorough assessment of the cumulative impacts to aquatic and biological resources and air quality, especially in the context of the other developments occurring and proposed in the area.

The EIS should also delineate appropriate geographic boundaries, including natural ecological boundaries, whenever possible, and should evaluate the time period of the project's effects. For instance, for a discussion of cumulative wetland impacts, a natural geographic boundary such as a watershed or sub-watershed could be identified. The time period, or temporal boundary, could be defined as from 1972 (when the CWA established Section 404) to the present.

Please refer to the Council on Environmental Quality's "Considering Cumulative Effects Under the National Environmental Policy Act"⁹ and EPA's "Consideration Of Cumulative Impacts In EPA Review of NEPA Documents"¹⁰ for assistance with identifying appropriate boundaries and identifying appropriate past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects to include in the analysis.

⁸ <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/>

⁹ <http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/ccenepa/ccenepa.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/policies/nepa/cumulative.pdf>

Mitigation and Monitoring

Within the process of developing the EIS, if impacts to waters of the U.S. and wetlands require a USACE permit and are significant, a draft mitigation plan should also be developed and made available to EPA prior to the release of the Final EIS. A draft mitigation plan should strive for avoidance and minimization first and should outline appropriate compensation and enhancement measures for unavoidable impacts to wetlands and special aquatic sites. A draft plan should include the evaluation of the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative, according to the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines and should outline a monitoring plan. Please note that any compensatory mitigation plan must fully comply with the *Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule (Mitigation Rule)* effective June 9, 2008.¹¹

Coordination with Land Use Planning Activities

The EIS should discuss how the proposed action would support or conflict with the objectives of federal, state, tribal or local land use plans, policies and controls in the project areas. The term "land use plans" includes all types of formally adopted documents for land use planning, conservation, zoning and related regulatory requirements. Proposed plans not yet developed should also be addressed if they have been formally proposed by the appropriate government body in a written form (CEQ's Forty Questions, #23b).

¹¹ http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/wetlandsmitigation_index.cfm

State Agencies



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April 22, 2013



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Mr. Mark Werner
Texas Department of Transportation – Railroad Division
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

RE: Texas – Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Agency Scoping Letter

Dear Mr. Werner:

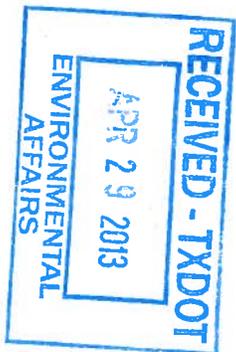
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has reviewed preliminary information received at the first Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Agency Scoping Meeting on March 27, 2013 and offers the following information for consideration when moving forward with this project and preparing a service-level Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Project Description

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) commenced in winter 2013 and is expected to be completed by fall 2014. It will document the costs, benefits, and impacts of rail service alternatives compared to a no-build alternative in a service-level EIS.

The EIS will provide a high-level review of rail needs and potential service options in the corridor (called a service-level EIS). The study could conclude with a decision to advance individual projects for more detailed study or a decision against making further investments in passenger rail in the corridor. Before any identified project could be constructed, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would need to complete additional environmental review and identify funding.

High-speed passenger rail has been under consideration in Texas since the late 1980s. In the 1990s, a private consortium was awarded a franchise to design, build, and operate high-speed rail in the state. Although demand appeared to support the development of high-speed rail, lack of funding and other obstacles prevented the project from moving forward. Since then, other proposals for high-speed passenger rail in Texas have been submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), with each proposal showing revenues that exceed operating expenses but requiring some amount of funding to build.



Mr. Mark Werner

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In 2000, FRA designated the South Central corridor, including the area from San Antonio to Dallas/Fort Worth, as a future high-speed rail corridor. In 2010, TxDOT received a grant from FRA to study passenger rail in this corridor.

The TOPRS will consider a range of passenger rail options for the 850-mile corridor. Today's passenger rail service can range in speed from 79 miles per hour to more than 220 miles per hour. The different speed options will influence ridership, the number and location of stations, and costs.

TxDOT and FRA will make decisions about TOPRS after reviewing input from the public and other public agencies.

Recommendation: TPWD recommends using existing railroad right-of-way (ROW) whenever possible. Where new construction is the only feasible option, TPWD recommends constructing the passenger rail along existing roads, pipelines, transmission lines, or other utility ROWs and easements to reduce habitat fragmentation. By utilizing previously disturbed existing utility corridors, county roads, highway, and railroad ROWs, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources would be mitigated by avoiding and/or minimizing the impacts to undisturbed habitats.

Purpose and Scale of this Analysis

The purpose of this letter is to communicate to TxDOT/FRA the general concerns TPWD has regarding potential impacts to natural resources from the construction of the proposed passenger rail. This letter is not intended to replace coordination with TPWD as the proposed project progresses. However, TPWD hopes to make TxDOT/FRA aware of potential concerns early in the planning process to help guide the design and location of the proposed passenger rail and minimize adverse impacts to natural resources to the extent possible.

The proposed passenger rail may potentially cross the following Texas Conservation Action Plan's (TCAP) ecoregions of Texas as shown on the attached map.

- Cross Timbers
- East Central Texas Plains
- Edwards Plateau
- Southern Texas Plains
- Texas Blackland Prairies
- Western Gulf Coastal Plain

TPWD reviewed the ecoregions of Texas as designated by the TCAP. The TCAP's purpose is to provide a statewide "roadmap" for research, restoration, management, and recovery projects addressing Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and important habitats. SGCN include terrestrial, freshwater, and marine birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, fishes, plants, and plant

communities. The goal of the plan is ultimately to conserve and improve the status of these species and, as possible, prevent listings under the Endangered Species Act. More information on the TCAP can be found at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/>.

Potential impacts to natural resources will generally vary by ecoregion. This letter will attempt to address some of these potential impacts on a regional scale. Because a study area has not yet been determined, ecoregions that are traversed by IH 35 are included on the attached TCAP ecoregion map. An additional ecoregion that is not traversed by IH 35 was added (Western Gulf Coastal Plain ecoregion) because there are several potential passenger rail routes in South Texas as displayed on the TOPRS corridor map that was issued at the Agency Scoping Meeting.

Information regarding natural resources and potential impacts is provided at a coarse scale, and general recommendations that apply to all ecoregions have been provided for your planning reference. As this project progresses and a study area is determined, it is recommended that TxDOT/FRA contact TPWD early in the planning process for site-specific information and recommendations.

General Recommendations – All Ecoregions

Below are bulleted lists of potential natural resource concerns that could be a result of the proposed project and recommendations to minimize adverse impacts. The recommendations and potential natural resource concerns listed below are applicable to all ecoregions listed above.

Natural Resource Concerns:

- Clearing of woody vegetation
- Introduction of non-native species in native grasslands/rangelands
- Clearing/fragmentation of riparian corridors (route would cross most major rivers and many tributaries)
- Impacts to aquatic species (freshwater mussels/designated mussel sanctuaries, fish, etc.)
- Direct and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to TPWD managed areas – taking of TPWD property
- Direct and indirect (visual/noise) impacts to non-TPWD managed areas (federal, city, county, non-governmental organizations, etc.)
- Impacts to SGCN from TCAP as well as species shown on TPWD and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) county lists
- Fragmentation of wildlife travel corridors
- Removal of Whooping Crane stopover habitat in its migration corridor
- Taking of USFWS designated critical habitat
- Impacts to Colonial Waterbird Rookeries

Recommendations:

- Use native vegetation and water conservation in station landscaping
- Use bridge spans rather than culverts where feasible to retain stream characteristics and aquatic and terrestrial movement
- Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction in wetlands/temporary crossings to minimize impacts
- Construct wildlife crossings, particularly in wildlife travel corridors
- Comply with applicable state and federal regulations (listed below)

Threatened and Endangered Species

The TPWD county lists of rare and protected species may be obtained online at http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/maps/gis/ris/endangered_species.phtml. The USFWS should be contacted for guidance, permitting, survey protocols, and mitigation for federally listed species. For USFWS threatened and endangered species lists by county please visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

Managed Areas

Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code requires demonstration of no feasible or prudent alternative to taking of TPWD lands such as State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). If the proposed passenger rail will cross any TPWD lands it will require an easement or transfer of property authorized by the TPWD Commission. This process can take several months to a year, and compensatory mitigation will be required. If the proposed project has the potential to impact a TPWD State Park, please contact David Riskind at (512) 389-4897 and if the project has the potential to impact a WMA, please contact Dennis Gissell at (512) 389-4407.

Please note that Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code also applies to public areas that are managed by counties and cities. Coordination with the Grants-In-Aid Branch of TPWD and local park administrators is necessary to prevent conversion of grant-assisted lands to other than public outdoor recreation use as prohibited by Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act.

State and Federal Regulations

State and federal regulations that would pertain to the proposed project include (but are not limited to) the following:

Federal Regulations:

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act
- Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Clean Water Act
- U.S. Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

State Regulations:

- Chapter 86 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (State-owned Streambeds)
- Chapter 26 of Parks and Wildlife Code (Managed Areas)
- Section 68.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code (Regulates State-listed Species)
- Sections 12.015, 12.019, and 66.015 of the Parks and Wildlife Code and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 57.251-.259 (regulates the introduction and stocking of fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants into public waters of the state)

Recommendation: TPWD recommends TxDOT/FRA strive to avoid impacts to potential natural resource concerns applicable to all ecoregions listed above and address avoidance, minimization, and mitigation plans for impacts to these resources in the service-level EIS. TPWD also recommends TxDOT/FRA address compliance with the above-listed state and federal regulations, as well as any others that pertain to the proposed passenger rail project, in the service-level EIS.

General Recommendations by Ecoregion

Cross Timbers

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Cross Timbers ecoregion are listed below.

- Clearing of mesquite brush (northern part of the ecoregion provides suitable habitat for the Texas kangaroo rat and Texas horned lizard)
- Clearing of woody vegetation/fragmentation (southern part of the ecoregion provides suitable habitat for Black-capped Vireo (BCVI) and Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA))
- Wintering bald eagles
- Interior least tern habitat (along and within the Red River)

Texas Blackland Prairies

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Texas Blackland Prairies ecoregion are listed below.

- Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland-dependent species
- Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat

Edwards Plateau

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Edwards Plateau ecoregion are listed below.

- Clearing/fragmentation of BCVI and GCWA habitat
- Karst species (salamanders and karst invertebrates)
- Bats (direct impacts to roosts)
- Edwards aquifer - water quality
- Spring-fed streams

Southern Texas Plains

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Southern Texas Plains ecoregion are listed below.

- Rare and protected plants
- Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat)
- Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi
- Interior Least Tern (in and near Laredo, e.g., Lake Casa Blanca, Rio Grande)
- Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., in Coastal Sand Plain)
- Clearing/fragmentation of unique riparian corridors (i.e, ramaderos)
- Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks
- Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas horned lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake)
- Noise and lights in an otherwise minimally developed landscape

Western Gulf Coastal Plains

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the Western Gulf Coastal Plains ecoregion are listed below.

Mr. Mark Werner
Page 7 of 7
April 22, 2013

- Large unfragmented tracts under single ownership/management
- Fragmentation and introduction of invasive plant species in grasslands (e.g., in Coastal Sand Plain)
- Clearing/fragmentation of brush (Ocelot and Jaguarundi habitat)
- Impacts to Ocelot and Jaguarundi
- Entrapment of wildlife, including listed species (the Texas tortoise in particular), between tracks
- Impacts to state-listed reptiles (Texas horned lizard, Texas tortoise, Reticulate collared lizard, Texas indigo snake)

East Central Texas Plains

Potential natural resource concerns associated with the East Central Texas Plains ecoregion are listed below.

- Remnant native prairies/habitat for grassland birds and other grassland dependent species
- Houston toad critical habitat

Please also refer to the email that was sent to Brian Hausknecht of CH2M Hill on March 11, 2013 regarding recommended Geographic Information System (GIS) data to assist in the TOPRS analysis. This email contains several GIS data sources that pertain to the above-listed natural resource concerns. This email is attached for your reference.

TPWD appreciates the opportunity to provide preliminary input during the first agency scoping period for the Texas – Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. Please contact me at (512) 389-8054 or at Jessica.Schmerler@tpwd.state.tx.us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jessica E. Schmerler
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

JES:gg.ERCS-5368

Attachments (2)

Jessica Schmerler

From: Julie Wicker
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 8:53 AM
To: brian.hausknecht@ch2m.com
Cc: Mark.Werner@txdot.gov; Kathy Boydston; Jessica Schmerler
Subject: GIS data for TOPRS analysis

Hi Mr. Hausknecht,

It was nice to meet you and your staff at the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (TOPRS) Resource Agency Meeting. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) would like to be a participating agency in the NEPA process on the TOPRS project. Our interest in this project includes potential direct and indirect impacts to natural resources and conservation and recreation lands, as well as proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of those impacts. Please send all email and written correspondence regarding this project to the Habitat Assessment Program Supervisor, Kathy Boydston (Kathy.Boydston@tpwd.state.tx.us), 4200 Smith School Road, Austin TX, 78744.

Below I have compiled a list of geospatial data files that may be of use to you in your constraints analysis and development of corridor level alternatives. Please note that because approximately 95% of Texas is private land and has never been surveyed for important natural resources, natural resource inventory data in Texas is severely lacking. The data that are available require a lot of ground-truthing, and additional surveys will almost always be required (especially in the case of rare and protected species). Available GIS files should be used as a starting point for on-the-ground surveys.

I assume you (or your GIS staff) already have many of these files. Although I included links below for more information on these resources where available, I will wait to hear back from you about which of these you may need before I compile them or direct you to internet locations for download.

- [Texas Natural Diversity Database](#) (please request updated information at least quarterly during project development, as new records are constantly being mapped. For example, current projects being completed by TXNDD staff include entering hundreds of records of rare and protected freshwater mussel species. Additionally, the TXNDD will soon include locations of native prairie communities documented in north central Texas by the Native Prairie Association of Texas).
- TXNDD Managed Areas layer
- [Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas](#)
- [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Designated Critical Habitat](#)
- [Central Texas Karst Zones](#)
- [Central Texas Salamander Data](#)
- [Edwards Aquifer Zones \(transition, contributing, and recharge\)](#)
- [Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan Statewide Inventory 2012](#)
- [Ecologically Significant Stream Segments](#)
- [Freshwater Mussel Sanctuaries](#)
- [Whooping Crane Migration Corridor](#)
- [Rivers and Streams](#)
- Springs
- [National Wetlands Inventory Data](#) (although this national dataset is useful, it should not be the only source used for wetlands data in Texas)
- [Reservoirs](#)
- Golden-cheeked Warbler Predictive Habitat Model
- [Wildlife Viewing Trails](#) (I don't have a shapefile of this one but there is a map viewer on the website)

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you need anything else!

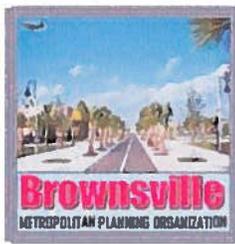
Julie C. Wicker
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Wildlife Division - [Habitat Assessment Program](#)
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

Phone: (512)389-4579
Fax: (512)389-4599

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Local Agencies

04/26/2013	Eve Atkinson - <i>Comment part 3</i>	Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department	Oklahoma City,	OK	73034																															<p>However, the cost per passenger can again outweigh family use of a passenger car to the airport. For example flights from DFW or Dallas Love airport are generally cheaper than flights from Oklahoma City, but if the train costs more than the plane there is no incentive. The trip purpose: How important is it to provide service to quasi leisure trip demand? Quasi leisure can be described as a mixed purpose trip, such as medical visits, shopping trips for specialties, "leisure business" such as conventions, music or dance competitions, pageants, Latin dancing, ball room dancing, chapter meetings in clubs and organizations such as professional organizations but can serve purposes of tourism. The payoffs for taking the train would be less driving stress (according to the Texas Transportation Institute, The Dallas Forth Worth area is the 6th worst of the nation, www.weather.com/activities/driving/slideshow/traffic.html?page=10&scheme=image-horiz-plain.css) Leisure business would require adding stops along the route to a major destination, before the metro area is reached. Fostering a mixed purpose trip, (meeting passenger needs) would require more stops to include useful destinations, combining utilitarian destinations with attractions. It is possible to serve the work ethic of "work then play" or "work hard, play hard" by providing opportunities to arrive at a multi- purpose destination. An intermediate hub with light rail links allowing dispersal of trips may work. Altering the schedule to allow all the passengers along the way from Oklahoma City to a point in Texas to transfer to high speed rail throughout the Texas metropolis, could allow passengers to arrive by 10 am in the morning to the airport, to the Dallas Convention Center or to downtown Ft Worth. This would be the ideal scenario. A study or report on frequent destinations from other studies could support this scenario. Livability: Neighborhood and regional traffic conditions How can the service be improved to make the communities where the passenger train has stations more livable? There are two components of availability which support livability, frequency of service and a well designed site. If the train does not arrive during waking hours (6 am to midnight), it is as if the service does not exist. Also contributing to low use rates is poor traffic circulation. If the station site is congested, the parking is complicated, the site is unkempt, complex or requires walking through bus or traffic drop off lanes, it is inaccessible. Furthermore, a train station could be a point of avoidance, similar to a city bus station, if it is designed poorly and not well maintained. If the area appears unsafe people will not want to use the service until gasoline prices or costly parking or lack of parking cause a hardship. Off site design is not a part of this study, but on site design and improved connections needs to be. Site and Design criteria Stations and stops need to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. Also include close temporary parking for seniors and families. Cross walks should be well marked, with crossing signal lights imbedded in the adjacent streets.</p>
04/26/2013	Eve Atkinson - <i>Comment part 4</i>	Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department	Oklahoma City,	OK	73034																															<p>There should be some outlying parking, a well-lit and open layout to facilitate the change of travel mode. Include accessible service counters, ramps instead of stairs, signs to answer basic questions like arrival and departure times, fares, restroom locations, well marked waiting areas and benches or sitting platforms. Photos of the inside of the rail cars and carry-on stowage should be posted to prepare people to load. Compensate for a lack of an attendant at the OKC AMTRAK station by providing auto kiosks, or a limited choice computer to make information available 24/7. Provide other self service facilities to increase travelers' knowledge and comfort. Coordinate plans with other mass transit modes: Include improvements supporting various modes of travel. Design the site to accommodate buses, shuttle and taxi pick up, drop off lanes separated from passenger car drop off and loading, and temporary parking. Relocating tracks is not as flexible as providing shuttles to improve connectivity. A flexible, demand driven destination shuttle to take people to areas more than 4 blocks away but less than 2 miles away could work. People would wait in "bench rows" according to their destination, and which ever fills up first, leaves first. A transit logistics manager could shift the routes to allow an infrequent destination to "piggy back" on a more frequent one. Studies have been done showing the most efficient way to load an airplane, so a transportation logistics expert could develop a flexible route system. Measures to share investment costs in the Mass transit system: Investigate ways the mass transit industry and corporations could contribute to costs of passenger rail infrastructure and benefit from passenger rail service. Auto and health insurance companies could benefit from reduced traffic congestion on highways which generate accidents. Mass transit can reduce the number of accidents and injuries. Again, research existing studies performed at Universities and Institutions to present the facts. Oil and gas companies can be given incentives to invest in mass transit linking their investment to tradeoffs for carbon emissions. It reduces the carbon footprint of vehicle use, which decreases carbon emissions. Government funding of passenger rail infrastructure: What are the benefits from government supported passenger rail service for leisure travel? Can it be justified as an efficient way to move vacationers? Is mass transportation for leisure trips a "greater good" for society? There are studies showing highway systems are subsidized. Who benefits the most from highway construction and maintenance? Many highway projects are built using an 80/20 match, with USDOT programs. Is it sustainable to continue increasing the width of highways beyond a certain number of lanes? Is safety culture (benefiting travelers and employees) a benefit from government management of rail transit? According to Progressive Railroading (August 2012), AMTRAK is working to expand a program to improve the railroad's safety culture; improving workforce development initiatives; and investing in more systems and technology that help reduce energy consumption and operating expenses.</p>



April 24, 2013

Mark Werner
TxDOT – RR Division
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Werner:

On behalf of the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am forwarding a Purpose & Needs Statement (Attachment One) herein, concerning the Passenger Rail Study. In addition to the points outlined in the aforementioned attachment, there is another factor worthy of consideration.

Specifically, provision of passenger rail service can help expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from South Texas, in the event of an approaching hurricane. This objective serves the public interest and promotes the health and general welfare of the community. The current plans or arrangements of evacuating persons via airlifts is inefficient and dependent on the existence of favorable weather conditions.

Please call me at (956) 548-6154 if you have any questions on these important issues. Thank you for your assistance with these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Lund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Lund".

Mark Lund
MPO Director

xc MPO Policy & Technical Committee Members

ATTACHMENT ONE

TEXAS – OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Purpose & Needs Statement

Establishment of Passenger Rail Service to Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island, serves the following purposes and needs:

- Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor.
- Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion.
- The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs.
- The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With the continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail.
- Citizens of Cameron County will benefit from the economic development opportunities that will accrue to the new jobs associated with increased tourism brought to South Texas by virtue of Passenger Rail services.
- Provision of passenger rail service to Brownsville will help to lessen roadway congestion on U.S. 77, which is designated as a future leg of I-69.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2013-027

**A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of
Brownsville Endorsing the Establishment of Passenger
Rail Service to Brownsville, Texas**

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Brownsville has determined that establishment of passenger rail service between San Antonio, Texas and Brownsville, Texas is needed to afford travel choices for residents of the lower Rio Grande Valley; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission hereby finds that proposed passenger rail service between Brownsville and San Antonio, Texas will promote both the general welfare and economic development of the Brownsville urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes that having passenger rail service available to evacuate elderly persons and persons with disabilities in the event of an approaching hurricane would serve the public interest and constitute an efficient and safe means of accommodating the special needs of these individuals; and

WHEREAS, that the residents of South Texas will benefit from the economic development opportunities that will accrue due to increased tourism to this area by virtue of Passenger Rail services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Commission of the City of Brownsville endorses the establishment of needed passenger rail service to and from Brownsville, Texas.

FURTHERMORE, City of Brownsville staff will forward this resolution to TxDOT staff as evidence of the need for such rail improvements, in connection with the on-going Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study.

Approved this 16TH day of April 2013

~~CITY OF BROWNSVILLE~~



Antonio Martinez
Mayor

ATTEST:



Estela Von Hatten
City Secretary



Approved as to Form and Legality

This 18 day of April, 2013



Mark Sossi
City Attorney

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

mnewman@myspi.org

Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 1:58 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Marcy Newman<mnewman@myspi.org>

Address:

City of South Padre Island
Public Works
4601 Padre Boulevard
South Padre Island, TX 78597

Phone:

(956) 761-3221

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I would like to request a list of the stakeholders for the TXOK High Speed Rail Study - those invited and those that attended the February 2013 stakeholder meeting on the project. Thanks.

04/01/2013	Lynn McCord		San Antonio	TX	78247				X										I think we need the rail system for our local economy. We can not afford to delay these alternatives any longer. This will increase jobs and would probably attract more Corporations to enter our Texas market. I think we should not focus and get clouded by the airline impact because the long term effect far outweighs the short term.
04/24/2013	Lynn Nichols		Andover	KS	67002														I believe the passenger railroad initiative is one of the most important economic development projects for all States involved. It will enhance trade, transportation and commerce through the I-35 corridor. Energy costs are increasing, and it provides a way to move large volumes of people safely and timely. Not including, other trade. I would support moving forward on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study!
04/10/2013	M. RODRIGUEZ		LAREDO	TX	78040				X										I am all for this idea of rail as an alternative mode of commercial transportation. I believe the highways were already too congested with trailer trucks and now with the activity that Eagle Ford Shale is producing, the congestion is out-of-control! It is no longer fun to plan a trip outside of Laredo just thinking that one will have to drive in all that traffic which increases stress levels! I am also in favor of passenger rail transportation. This option would allow many to travelers who don't have a vehicle, don't fly and don't like bus transportation to have a fourth option. An option which may become a main choice of traveling for many, including tourists!
04/10/2013	Mae newcombe		Austin	TX	78741	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			Austin just needs more public transportation. It has gotten too big to sustain all the cars. Literally everyone I know complains about it. Too much traffic is one of the quickest ways to lower the quality of life.
04/10/2013	Maggi Joseph		San Antonio	TX	78228		X	X	X										Trains reduce car and short plane ride traffic improving air quality and reducing congestion on roads. Trains consume less energy. South Texas has no passenger rail service and would greatly benefit from comfortable rail cars that make it possible to work while travelling or just enjoy a relaxing ride.
04/18/2013	Manuela Gardner		Corpus Christi	TX	78418		X		X		X	X	X		X				It would be great to have a higher speed passenger rail service in Texas. It would mean reduction in emissions which would benefit the environment and wildlife. It would also give people a hopefully more price effective way to travel longer distances.
04/11/2013	Marc Hoffman		San Antonio	TX	78258		X	X	X						X	X			Texas should absolutely pursue rail transit between Austin and San Antonio. Actually between Dallas and San Antonio would be idea. Traffic along I-35 has become so congested and of course will only get worse due to the growth in this state. I am sure that there would be many passengers of rail transit who would take advantage of this route. We have taken transit from San Antonio to Dallas with Amtrak and it was not a good experience with many delays and too many stops. Please strongly consider rail transit!
04/10/2013	Marc W. McCord		Celina	TX	75009	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X			The need for mass transportation options is critical. The time and cost required to build more highways is prohibitive, and the amount of fuel consumed by cars is unsustainable in the near future. Mass rail transit makes sense for a 21st century state. I strongly encourage building the high speed rail line between Oklahoma City and South Texas as a way to reduce air pollution, fossil fuel consumption, traffic congestion and other factors that cost us far too much money and/or threaten our health and safety.
04/14/2013	Marcia		Austin	TX	78731														Please work on more options for public transportation. I have very fond memories of riding the train from Dallas to Waco and Houston to visit relatives. The train was fast and enjoyable. Now it doesn't seem to be as reliable. Thank you, Marcia Fox
04/10/2013	Marcia Ingram		McAllen	TX	78503		X		X		X	X	X		X				We have traveled in Europe many times via high speed rail. It is convenient, reasonable and we are able to walk the aisles on long trips. My husband and I support high speed rail in Texas.
04/01/2013	Marcy Newman		South Padre Island	TX	78597										X	X			We are interested in the alternative locations and consideration for South Texas in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.
04/18/2013	Marcy Newman, Public Works Director, City of South Padre Island		South Padre Island	TX	78597										X	X			TxDOT has indicated the primary intent of High Speed Passenger Rail Service is to connect downtown to downtown on the major cities on the route - OKC, DFW, Austin and San Antonio, but the southern terminus in flux. During the Public Scoping meeting in Harlingen, it was suggested that Laredo is the preferred option. 1.The population centers in Lower Rio Grande Valley greater than 430K (2010 census) for Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and greater than 800K (2010 census) for the Hidalgo County MSA. These are more than triple that in the Laredo /Webb County area (250K (2010 census)) and the border crossings for personal vehicles / personal vehicle passengers (21.8M) are far in excess of Laredo (8.8M) as well. This population and border crossing differential warrants additional study and consideration for High Speed Passenger Rail service and connections to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. 2.The Lower Rio Grande Valley has three major airports that could serve as hubs / multi-modal transfer centers drawing on a greater population to utilize HSPR service going north - This should be considered when determining the southern terminus. 3.The Lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island in particular, has multiple tourist destinations that could be served by HSPR service and multi-modal connections. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus of service.
04/10/2013	Margaret Caylor		Marble Falls	TX	78654	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Rail would bring a clean environment, convenience, less traffic, more jobs, faster service and less noise. Please keep me informed of the progress.
04/10/2013	Margery Hunter		Dallas	TX	75223	X	X	X	X	X	X					X			Please, please, please put in high-speed rail to south Texas. We are decades behind the rest of the world on this and it is SO BADLY NEEDED!!!
04/04/2013	Margie Garza		Laredo	TX	78041														I would just like to take this time to comment on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail study. As a resident of the City of Laredo for more than twenty years and a federal public servant, I believe that this project would greatly benefit our area. Laredo is considered the gateway to the United States mainly in part because of its geographical location and Interstate 35 which runs from Laredo, Texas to Duluth, Minnesota. This, in my opinion, makes Laredo the perfect location for a passenger train. As a federal public servant for more than ten years, I have seen first-hand how hundreds of people make their way south to Laredo, Texas from the northern states and, vice versa from Mexico in personally owned vehicles and in passenger commercial buses. As far as in my personal experiences, I can speak for my family in saying that we often travel to San Antonio, Houston, Austin and Dallas on one/two-day trips and have often spoken about the possibilities and advantages of a having a passenger train along IH-35. I highly support this project and hope that it does become a reality. Thanks to the Texas Department of Public Safety for introducing this study and allowing me to comment on this topic.

1 MR. C. VILLARREAL: Good evening. Welcome
2 to Laredo. I am Carlos Villarreal, Laredo City Manager.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments
4 regarding the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study.

5 In discussing high-speed passenger rail
6 with Congressman Henry Cuellar today, he reminded me
7 that part of the intent of the federal legislation
8 regarding high-speed passenger rail was to include
9 Laredo in a rail corridor.

10 You may ask why Laredo should be included
11 in a high-speed passenger rail project. The City of
12 Laredo is the home of the largest, most-efficient inland
13 port of entry on the U.S./Mexico border.

14 In 2012, Laredo, Webb County, handled
15 3,592,428 cross border truck crossings. That averages
16 out to about 9,842 truck crosses a day. The port also
17 handled in excess of 8,785,366 passenger vehicle
18 crossings. The total number of vehicles that crossed
19 through the bridge system in 2012 is in excess of
20 12 million.

21 There are more than 830 trade handling and
22 transportation-related businesses in Laredo, Webb
23 County, Texas. Current trade numbers show that Laredo
24 is ranked sixth of all ports in the United States and
25 the only one to have double-digit growth out of all of

♀

3

1 the district.

2 The significance of the flow of commerce

3 through Laredo is not just a local or state issue. It
4 has been recognized at the highest levels of the federal
5 government as being in the national interest. The need
6 to keep up with the ever-increasing flow of
7 international trade through Laredo, Webb County, clearly
8 outpaces the funding that is available.

9 I see high-speed passenger rail as
10 offering many benefits to Laredo, Webb County, the state
11 of Texas and the nation. High-speed passenger rail is a
12 way to further promote and stimulate trade and tourism
13 with Mexico. It offers a safe, convenient and
14 comfortable way to travel.

15 High-speed passenger rail delivers a new
16 mobility which would relieve congestion on the state
17 highway system and reduce state highway maintenance
18 costs. Rail also offers a reduced impact on the
19 environment thereby preserving air quality.

20 High-speed passenger rail would be an
21 economic boon to south Texas by creating hundreds, if
22 not thousands, of jobs building rail infrastructure and
23 maintaining and possibly manufacturing rail cars.

24 In closing, it is obvious to those of us
25 in Laredo, a city which has no air service to San

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4

1 Antonio or Austin, that high-speed passenger rail would
2 fill this transportation gap. It would also complement
3 the flow of traffic between Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey.
4 Finally, it would enhance and benefit international
5 trade and commerce between the United States, Mexico and

TXDOT Open House - Texas to Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (4_3_2013)
6 points south.

7 The City of Laredo supports a high-speed
8 passenger rail project in south Texas and is
9 geographically the best suited to handle future
10 passenger rail service. Thank you.

1 COURT REPORTER CERTIFICATION

2

3 COUNTY OF BEXAR)

4 STATE OF TEXAS)

5

6 I, Dicie Lee Eytcheson, a Certified
7 Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do
8 hereby certify that this transcript is as true and
9 accurate a record as possible, transcribed by me through
10 computer-aided transcription.

11 And further certify that I am not a
12 relative or employee of any of the parties hereto, nor
13 interested directly or indirectly in the outcome of this
14 session.

15 WITNESS MY HAND, this the _____
16 day of _____, A. D. 2013.

17

18

19

20 _____
21 Dicie Lee Eytcheson, Texas CSR 5392
22 Expiration Date: 12/31/14
23 Firm Registration No. 631
24 Kim Tindall & Associates, LLC
25 645 Lockhill Selma, Suite 200
San Antonio, Texas 78216
Phone: (210) 697-3400
Fax: (210) 697-3408

♀

04/10/2013	Alexander Solano		Fort Worth	TX	76140		X	X	X											High-speed passenger rail would be a fantastic way to cut down on both intra- and inter-city commute traffic, reducing air pollution and traffic and generally making Texas a nicer place to live thanks to less cars sitting on the freeway. Texas is a big state and I travel south from Fort Worth to Houston or San Antonio frequently; a rail alternative to driving on the interstate would save time, money, frustration, and environmental impact for me and thousands of other people who have to travel across the state.
04/18/2013	Alfred McInturff		Midlothian	TX	76065/4723		X	X	X											High Speed rail between Oklahoma and Texas would be an excellent answer to crowded roads and air pollution as well being economically sound.
04/14/2013	Alfredo Torres Jr.		Laredo	TX	78045															Dear Sir or Madam, As a resident of Laredo, TX, I find this railroad study and project to be a great opportunity for my area and city. It will help alleviate traffic and be a great asset for tourism. It will also be an effective solution to those who travel and do not have a car. A passenger railway is something I believe Laredo will greatly benefit from, as well as, all residents of Texas. You can count on my support.
04/17/2013	Alicea Campos		San Antonio	TX	78240				X					X						In a state as vast as TX, I believe passenger rail would be a great thing. It could only help to alleviate pollution by taking cars off the road. It would also have economic impact resulting in jobs as well as access to transportation for those who can't afford cars. I believe this would be a major step forward.
04/23/2013	Alicia Winkelblech		Arlington	TX	76010				X					X	X					The City of Arlington is supportive of the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. We feel it is in the best interest of the region to run this service as close to the middle of the North Texas region as possible. Stations should not be located on the outskirts of the region. This will maximize accessibility to the service and improve ridership. As the third largest city in the DFW region, it is requested that Arlington be specifically included in discussions regarding potential impacts.
04/10/2013	Alina Aqeel		Allen	TX	75002		X				X									Rails provide a good alternative to cars. Rails reduce the number of cars on the road and reduces air pollution.
04/10/2013	Allison Chambers		Watauga	TX	76148		X	X	X	X			X	X						With all the new construction of freeways, my husband and I, keep thinking they should be building rails too!! There are too many people on the roads as it is. I see more people in huge trucks and SUVs driving alone than with passengers. Texas would benefit tremendously by making rail transportation possible and easily accessible for commuters and travelers. Please consider making Texas more eco friendly by building a new rail system!!
04/12/2013	Allison Kaplan		Austin	TX	78752				X											I am in favor of the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail.
04/23/2013	Alta Monroe		South Padre Island		78597				X											If you've traveled lately across Texas it is obvious that there is a huge need NOW for an additional modes of transportation across the state. The airlines have cut back on flights and not everyone is wanting to fly these days due to all the scrutiny everyone boarding must go through. This is a great idea....
04/10/2013	Alyssa Burgin		San Antonio	TX	78258		X	X		X										If we can bring this type of passenger rail to Texas, we will be able to eliminate many road miles of automobiles, each with their individual passengers. The resulting cut in emissions would be substantial. Plus, there would be a cost savings for many Texans. I travel about 40,000 miles a year through Texas, the overwhelming majority of those miles being for business only. I would definitely use a passenger rail line if we had one going through Texas to Corpus Christi.
04/10/2013	Amanda Mattle		Dallas	TX	75214		X		X											I think passenger rail service would be a wonderful alternative to automobile and plane travel. Texas' population is growing rapidly and the addition of this service could reduce the number of passenger vehicles on the roadways, leading to reduced air pollution from emissions. It could also reduce the number of short airplane trips while giving commuters and out of town travelers some leisure time on their trip. Trains are also more efficient than cars and planes per passenger, important again due to the growing population. I think that train stations are less of a hassle to navigate than airports, too! I would welcome an Amtrak passenger train service because of its potential to help protect our air quality, reduce our oil usage, and provide more transportation options to Texans. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Amy		Austin	TX	78723	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				This would be a wonderful development for Texas.
04/10/2013	Amy Abeyta		San Antonio	TX	78209															High Speed train travel is the future! A line between all the major cities of Texas would be so beneficial for human communication and commerce! El Paso should of course be included. Big vision but doable! Great for the state's interrelatedness and for the environment!
04/10/2013	Amy Birdwell		Garland	TX	75043				X											I am excited to hear that TxDOT is planning on expanding our public rail systems. We need more public rail and we really need high speed rail. I am for high speed rail line expansions in Texas. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Amy Hufford		Austin	TX	78757				X											My family drives to Dallas from Austin on a regular basis to see my in-laws. Almost every time we are on I-35, we see at least one accident that has occurred and is backing up traffic. As we pass the accident scenes, I am always grateful that my family is not involved. Accidents at these speeds typically have injuries or deaths. Driving I-35 on or around a weekend between Austin and Dallas feels like you are taking your life in your hands. We would strongly prefer to ride a fast, reliable train to Dallas. We would probably also visit San Antonio more often as well if there were a fast train to get there and back on the same day. Corpus Christi is also a possible destination for us.
04/10/2013	Amy Hunt		Austin	TX	78749				X											I think High Speed Rail would be an extremely smart project economically as well as for the environment. Economically it would spur more tourism when you make cities in Texas easier and faster to get to and you are opening up the commute corridor. Potential employees maybe willing to work further away if they can get there faster by rail then they could by car. Environmentally, it of course, is more fuel efficient and decreases the amount of traffic on the roads.
04/10/2013	Amy Pancake		Austin	TX	78745	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X					The U.S. needs more public transportation and rail is one important means of that. We must start to address with seriousness the environmental decline of the country and the world.
04/10/2013	Amy Partin		San Marcos	TX	78666		X		X	X										Having a train that travels from north texas to south texas would be better on our pocket books as well as the environment. People would be driving less. I would be more willing to travel if I had the option of taking a train.
04/10/2013	Andrew L. Grohe		San Antonio	TX	78212		X	X	X											I-35 is over-crowded in my estimation, high speed rail has the ability to impact this issue. I would travel to Dallas more often if there was high speed rail, it is more comfortable and safer - it may be more cost effective when wear and tear to the auto is considered.
04/10/2013	Andrew Nguyen		Austin	TX	78750	X	X	X	X		X		X							High-speed rail between Dallas/Austin/San Antonio/Houston will vastly reduce carbon emission.

Appendix F

Public Scoping Comments – Tribes



The Delaware Nation
Cultural Preservation Office
P.O. Box 825 - 31064 State Highway 281- Anadarko, OK 73005
Phone: 405/247-2448 – Fax: 405/247-8905

NAGPRA ext. 1180
Section 106 ext. 1181
Museum ext. 1181
Library ext. 1196
Clerk ext. 1182

April 23, 2013

RE: Invitation to Participate in Section 106 Consultation for
Tier 1 EIS for the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor,
South Texas to Oklahoma City

Dear Mr. David Valenstein,

Thank you for consulting with the Delaware Nation. We appreciate your willingness to conduct proper consultation with our nation. We received your letter regarding the above referenced project on April 23, 2013. Upon examination we are interested in these areas. Therefore, we will be a consulting party. Please send further project plans along with cultural resource surveys to our offices and set up a meeting date for the month of June.

Should you have any questions regarding this email or future consultation feel free to contact our offices at 405-247-2448 or by email tfrancis@delawarenation.com.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Tamara Francis Fourkiller
Cultural Preservation Director

CC: Nikki Ahtone (Assistant Director)
nahtone@delawarenation.com

From: [Mark Werner](#)
To: [Walbrun, Mark/DFW](#); [Hausknecht, Brian/SDO](#); [Green, John/HCH](#)
Cc: [Hull, Kristin/PDX](#)
Subject: FW: Federal Railroad Administration, EIS for Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South TX to OKC
Date: Friday, April 19, 2013 7:06:04 AM

First response from the Tribal letters. Similar request to what the resource agencies were asking for.

From: Johnnie L. Jacobs [mailto:jjacobs@choctawnation.com]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 8:59 AM
To: catherine.dobbs@dot.gov; Mark Werner
Subject: Federal Railroad Administration, EIS for Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South TX to OKC

Dear Ms. Dobbs and Mr. Werner,

Thank you for the correspondence regarding the above referenced project. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has historic interest in various parts of Texas and Oklahoma. In order for us to more thoroughly evaluate our area of interest in relation to this project for NHPA Section 106 review, we would like to request that you send our office a copy of the GIS project line shapefile so that we can do further examination. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Ms. Johnnie Jacobs
NHPA Section 106 Coordinator
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Historic Preservation Department
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74701
jjacobs@choctawnation.com

This message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure. If you have received this message in error, you are hereby notified that we do not consent to any reading, dissemination, distribution or copying of this message. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately and destroy the transmitted information. Please note that any view or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Choctaw Nation.

Talk. Text. Crash.



Appendix G

Public Scoping Comments – Organizations, Businesses, and Individuals

Open House Comments

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Those who cannot drive can now travel more independently

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

more activity, more business more tax revenue, better safety

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

It will be positive - if you leverage existing stations, those sections of towns will revitalize, especially with more frequent service.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Positive - The more frequent the trains, the more positive the impact

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Same as above - fewer cars - positive impact - look at the numbers

Other (use back or attach pages)

At first higher speed from Dallas through Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Kansas City. High speed from DFW to San Antonio and Houston. Higher speed from San Antonio southward. Eventually high speed will replace higher speed. Frequency is important. We must have more than one train a day while this study is going on.

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

75070

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

Tape

Tape

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

BETTER, MORE FREQUENT SCHEDULES
WOULD MAKE LARGER, MORE POPULATED AREAS ACCESSIBLE

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

MINIMAL

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

BOLSTER TOURISM

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

COULD REDUCE TRAFFIC WITH TIMELY SCHEDULES

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

MASS TRANSPORTATION HELPS THE ENVIRONMENT - REDUCES TRAFFIC

Other (use back or attach pages)

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:
 I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

Tape

Tape

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Except these ARE good concerns, RAIL TRAVEL would be good for our Citizens & Community - great to travel to OKC/DFW & good to bring others to Ardmore.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Citizens do complain ABOUT the freedom engineers have to "toot their horn" for long periods of time at RAIL crossings -

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

IF schedules permitted - riders could come to Ardmore for weekend & holiday stays

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Train ridership should eliminate interstate traffic congestion

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Of course, building a RAIL but keeping it in downtown Ardmore is paramount as well as keeping other rails traffic -

Other (use back or attach pages)

- x Grow the Amtrak business & go slow with regard to building infrastructure.
- x I would like to ride the train north & be able to make connections.
- x I would like to take a bike - a dog - large luggage & be able to bring back full shopping bags ☺.
- x Please plan for rail crossing & street repair ahead of time
- x A more full future schedule would be helpful -
- x Don't BYPASS Ardmore!
- x City & train or just City needs to plan transportation from the train to the final destination - LAKE MURRAY - WAREY MURPHY - Convention Center, etc.

THANK YOU for coming to Ardmore!

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Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)); check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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Place
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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *Rail will bring our cities closer together and although this is not a commuter service, it will enable us to have more options for where we live, work, and play.*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Rail makes it easier to visit other cities on the network besides your primary destination. Someone visiting S.A. can easily visit Austin or DFW.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

It probably makes sense to serve our city centers, and major airports so that we can divert short haul air traffic to the higher capacity rail corridor.

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<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male	78751
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: I think that the High speed is the most viable option. Conventional trains, such as Amtrak, do not run frequently enough. They do not have dedicated tracks and will make it difficult to use regularly. Those individuals that cont.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): using the electric High speed trains will be better ^{to} more quiet for the community. Having the dedicated tracks will provide less horn noise as other trains shouldn't cross cont

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): Tourism will boost as visitors will be able to travel quickly to another city or state with minimal issues. In addition, those areas that have a weak economy can allow its residents cont.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): with this train system in place, it will lessen cars on the road which will reduce travel time and road repairs. Also, if bikes are allowed on these trains there will be more locations for residents cont.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): I don't really have an opinion on this. I'm sure that some resources could be affected by track laying, however, it will be better as it will reduce the carbon footprint emitted

Other (use back or attach pages) by regular highway travellers

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Language Spoken at Home

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- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78660

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Live and work in other cities like Dallas to Austin, or San Antonio to OKC, will be able to work, attend concerts + sporting events, and travel with ease between cities. This will boost visitors, economy and businesses

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

on these tracks. in addition, it will be safer as these trains don't stop as often and moves quickly through intersections

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

to work in other locations and bring those funds back to their communities.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

and visitors to bike, hike, walk, and enjoy other areas of the city or state and be home in time for dinner

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male	78668
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Air quality - Electric trains run more efficiently and cleaner than electric; should be preferred. The more desirable the train service is, the more you reduce vehicle VMT, which is better for air quality.

The questions above are biased because they only ask about the negative impacts of improved rail service, not the positive impacts. You should definitely go with the higher speed option, at least, and preferably the high speed option. In order to increase ridership in any meaningful way, you need to make the service fast and convenient enough that a significant number of people will choose it over cars or air travel.

The focus should be on how to increase ridership on the rail lines, and provide good connections with transit in each of the cities. This is important

for economic development in the state, air quality, mobility, and equity in providing reasonably-priced transportation options.

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Study should emphasize public private partnerships to improve freight mobility w/in I-35 corridor & provide an efficient alternative

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

to air or vehicle travel (highway)

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

EIS should focus/emphasize improved air quality due to reduced highway travel & reduced commercial passenger air travel for short duration trips between city centers.

Other (use back or attach pages)

True high speed rail should be focus of study. Incremental speed/service improvements of passenger rail on existing freight rail lines is a waste of time and money and will not receive widespread support.

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78747

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

USE MAGLEV!!!

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

I think that the route should go along I-35 to Laredo, with the possibility that the train could eventually go to Monterrey, to facilitate international travel.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

You should use maglev. It is more quiet than other forms of high speed rail.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

If the project is to be successful, it will need to induce ridership. Induced ridership is absolutely critical.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

An elevated monorail/maglev should be used to minimize negative effects on other travellers.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Please do not limit your study to only studying conventional train technology, but you must also study Maglev. It is more ^{environment} friendly.

Other (use back or attach pages) There are 2 things this high speed rail must do to be successful. Go as fast as possible, as efficiently as possible in order to induce ridership. This is best accomplished by using a magnetic levitating (MAGLEV) system. It is more expensive up front, but but cheaper/more efficient in the long run. Maglev is the future of high speed rail, and will go faster than other existing systems. A very fast train will help induce ridership, which is the goal if there is to be a future for rail transportation. The second thing is to, as close as possible, have the route closely parallel I-35, so that drivers can see the maglev train pass them like they're standing still. This will be the

most successful way induce ridership. People driving on I-35 should be jealous of people riding the maglev train.

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Language Spoken at Home

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Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
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ZIP Code

78610

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Chris Erickson
4722 FM 1327
Buda, TX. 78610

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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: Positive impact to give alternatives to driving on congested highways. You can't pour enough new concrete to keep up. Just more gridlock.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): Impact is negligible with existing rail in place. Strive to set medium speed commuter rail started with adequate frequency.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): Same as above, to continue "as is" is not acceptable.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): Alleviate traffic, provide safe walkways, etc will be a huge help.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): More rail options for passengers would reduce pollution and green house gases.

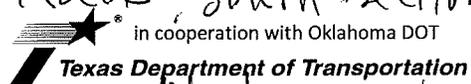
Other (use back or attach pages)

1. To take 24 months to complete this project with such an urgent need to move ahead faster should not be tolerated and is a waste of funding & time. These studies with no results have been conducted in the past to no avail.

2. TEXAS with the fastest growth in the economy and population growth, has been the slowest in the entire nation to make decisions and receive funding for passenger rail needs.

Central TX from WACO to San Antonio should be the primary priority & focus. South section should be a low priority, less population.

You could expedite by simply visiting Denver, Southern Calif, Portland, Ore, and others and clone their obvious successes & jump start faster.



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Language Spoken at Home

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- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78664

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- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

no

no

no

I would be happy to volunteer to help rail passenger development.

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Paul Mangolies
pmargo@sbcglobal.net
Round Rock.

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

WHY ARE WE (TEXAS) DOING THIS STUDY?

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

If AMTRAK's S.W. Chief is soon re-routed from Kansas City to Wichita to Oklahoma City to Fort Worth to Abilene to Sweetwater to Lubbock to Clous to Albuquerque ... does TXDOT's - RPDIV have a study in-place to have a PIRRA Texas dedicated passenger train between Fort Worth - WACO - Bryan College Station - Houston - Galveston?

In connection to the above, should such a re-routings take place and the State of Texas' current subsidy for the Heartland Flyer is freed-up would it be the recommendation of the RPDIV to TXDOT and to the GOVERNOR, Lt. Governor, Speaker, and chairs of the Tx. House Appropriations and SENATE

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ZIP Code

76705

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FINANCE COMMITTEES TO REDIRECT THOSE FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE OPERATION OF SUCH A CONVENTIONAL RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE THAT CONNECTS TEXAS' TWO LARGEST POPULATION CENTERS?

Also in conjunction with the re-routings of the SW Chief chiefly and as a direct result of sequestration — there will be at that moment a release of AMTRAK assets e.g. locomotives, coaches, lounge cars — also AMTRAK will do away with their 'switcher crew' in San Antonio (a great savings in money) — that affects both the Texas Eagle — DAILY service CHI — SA, but 3x WK service SA — LA and the Sunset Limited NO — LA, which may be totally eliminated — However, the other discussion we are hearing is expanding the CRESCENT service NYC — PHIL — W.D.C. — ATLANTA — BIRMINGHAM — New Orleans — to BEAUMONT, HOUSTON and SAN ANTONIO.

If the two inner-city services were altered TEXANS would have both daily service to the West Coast (LA) to the East Coast (NYC, Phil, W.D.C.) and to the GREAT LAKES (CHICAGO). Then if we could connect with conventional multi-service trainsets DFW to the HOUSTON METROPOLITAN AREA and a train service to serve the 3.5 million TEXANS in the Valley (SAN ANTONIO — CORPUS CHRISTI — BROWNSVILLE) then TEXAS would have a total complete transportation intermodal network.

Also in relationship to that the mid-size cities of TEXAS, e.g. WACO, TEMPLE, ABILENE, SAN ANGELO, the valley, ect. may soon see the elimination, or severe cut-back of their American Eagle AIR service. The recent merger of American Airlines and US Airways was chiefly engineered to save money by eliminating those very expensive and money losing feeder routes. If in the next 6-9 months these mid-size cities lose their AIR service does the TXDOT — RPD, have any plans in place to have passenger RAIL service fill that void?

All of these events are being driven currently by sequestration and business cutbacks & mergers and presents to TEXAS A CROSS-ROADS IN TRANSPORTATION, where without additional expenditures (only a transfer of existing funds) we can have a 1ST CLASS CONVENTIONAL RAIL SYSTEM.

It has always been my goal and my political science theory (as that is what I've taught for 27 yrs) that the goal should be to 1) have a conventional rail system in place that serves TEXANS; 2) allow over time passengers to get use to riding it; 3) use highway fundings to make over and under passes to eliminate as many road-rail crossings as possible; 4) eventually as ridership increases the Legislature will fund more appropriations for rail and signaling improvements and ticket fares will pay for additional trainsets and operational costs; 5) finally before we know it along those pre-existing corridors (w/o interfering with property rights (we experienced on the TRANSTXUS CORRIDOR how that one issue killed it) TEXAS will have TRAINS RUNNING AT +135 mph and we will have achieved HSR, without a public backlash, or huge indebtedness

Roy Walthall

WACO TRANSIT BOARD

TEXAS STATE REP. of NAT'L ASSN. of RAIL PASSENGERS
rwalthall@yahoo.com

P.S. Tom Head, Peter Lacadz and I will be in Washington DC in the 3RD week of April and hopefully will talk with Amtrak officials and many members of the TA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION + SENATORS CORNYN AND CRUZ ABOUT WHAT they've heard about the SW chief and the cutbacks to the American Eagle

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Rail is needed to enhance economic development, visitor experience, resident travel.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Rail is needed for enhancement of these aspects of state need.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Rail needed as reliever to I435 - cannot build enough lane miles to accommodate demand - current and projected. Multiple modes, including transit and H/B.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

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- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76513

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)); check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

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- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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Place
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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

The concept is something I support. The area not addressed today is local transportation at the cities serviced. In order for any rail system to be financially viable there must be reliable & frequent transportation from the train station to the various business & population centers within the municipality where the train stops. Without those services you end up with a "train to nowhere" system that becomes nothing more than a money pit. Also, to the extent possible I favor the use of existing track & right-of-way.

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *We need more passenger rail, if at all possible.*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): *"Quiet Zones" in towns would be nice.*

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): *As long as improvements are on existing rail or highway rights-of-way, agriculture should not be affected.*

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): *More trains mean less cars on the highways.*

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): *More trains mean less pollution.*

Other (use back or attach pages) *This effort should start with more cars on existing Amtrak trains, then more Amtrak train frequencies. Incremental improvements should be done to go to higher speed, up to 110 mph. New right-of-ways should be done as a last resort. If our airlines collapse, then we may need to pursue new rights-of-way, but not yet. Farmers are concerned over split properties and taking of land. If it comes to new rights-of-way, use existing highways as much as possible.*

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

We need to use current rail & Routes as quickly as possible to get traffic off I-35.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Need silent zones.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Allow businesses to get back and forth to meeting in a more environmentally friendly way

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

It would be great to reduce road traffic.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Not concerned.

Other (use back or attach pages)

Make current trains longer; Add more cars, Increase speeds as quickly as possible. Have more than ONE train per day. Go to south Texas as there is not service there.

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Net positive effects due to increased commerce.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Rail should increase public safety by removing vehicles from congested areas.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Anticipate a positive effect on local and regional economy by increasing commerce opportunities.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Multimodal rail is a much needed addition to the transportation alternatives. All options should be explored.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

I anticipate a net positive effect on the environment by removing vehicles from the roads.

Other (use back or attach pages)

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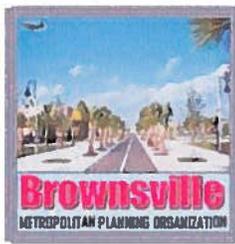
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Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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April 24, 2013

Mark Werner
TxDOT – RR Division
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Werner:

On behalf of the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am forwarding a Purpose & Needs Statement (Attachment One) herein, concerning the Passenger Rail Study. In addition to the points outlined in the aforementioned attachment, there is another factor worthy of consideration.

Specifically, provision of passenger rail service can help expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from South Texas, in the event of an approaching hurricane. This objective serves the public interest and promotes the health and general welfare of the community. The current plans or arrangements of evacuating persons via airlifts is inefficient and dependent on the existence of favorable weather conditions.

Please call me at (956) 548-6154 if you have any questions on these important issues. Thank you for your assistance with these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Lund". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Lund
MPO Director

xc MPO Policy & Technical Committee Members

ATTACHMENT ONE

TEXAS – OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Purpose & Needs Statement

Establishment of Passenger Rail Service to Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island, serves the following purposes and needs:

- Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor.
- Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion.
- The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs.
- The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With the continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail.
- Citizens of Cameron County will benefit from the economic development opportunities that will accrue to the new jobs associated with increased tourism brought to South Texas by virtue of Passenger Rail services.
- Provision of passenger rail service to Brownsville will help to lessen roadway congestion on U.S. 77, which is designated as a future leg of I-69.

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *stay outside city at airport area share long term/short term parking w/airport or parking garage in major cities*
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): *need ^{extra} safe RR crossings at IH 37*
- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): *can ~~only~~ only be good for CC & south TX. we have very limited transportation for south TX. I would travel (tourism) more with better transp + rail service*
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): *I think effect would be minimal outside the city. I've driven IH 35 + hate it. would love to visit my family up north quickly*
- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): *what is the effect now w/ current/existing rail? Use same rail or build new rail near existing rail?*
- Other (use back or attach pages) *Cost. build using best quality materials. Plan for maintenance (not like CC city streets). Fuel costs? fares sb equitable but provide for necessary expenses, maint. & emergencies. Medical - my mother has doctor's in SA + can't drive alone. Inter city - rail from SS of CC to Downtown to cut down traffic on SPID. The current extension of cross-town xpressway is not adequate.*

name: *Cristina Canales*

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<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<u>78411</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
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(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:
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Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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NAME: _____

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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:** *Good idea for interstate travel, especially for people that travel along short distances - Have rail to Houston.*
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):** *(under bridge) North Beach
Pick a central big location accessible by big streets or highways, not @ shoreline.*
- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):** *Tourism within the state would be increased - out of state I don't think so. You can advertise the cities you go to.*
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):** *Build a big parking lot, maybe have a shuttle bus, nice depot & have rental car agencies @ depot.*
- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):** *Use existing rail, why would it affect water quality habitat ~~and~~ animals. Put in a high fence.*
- Other (use back or attach pages)** *Have to be able to load suit cases, walkers, wheel chairs for disabled people.
Fares comparable to bus
Fast buses for long routes from valley to San Antonio & Dallas - others should be slower -
Have TVs, play rooms or tables to do paperwork.
Use natural gas or green energy.*

NAME: *Jana Canales*

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

I could see a day when Valley College kids can go to school in Kingsville and be home for dinner that evening.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Railroad crossings have been upgraded all along the Brownsville Sub. Division.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

It would increase on both ends.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Brownsville/Corpus traffic would decrease so less cars on road = less emissions into atmosphere

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

If you run along existing line no problems. Maybe even use the existing line with upgrades.

Other (use back or attach pages)

You got my Vote. This is a good alternative form of transportation for our area. The job growth and opportunity will be increased 100%.

NAME: *Edward Espinosa*

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President Obama has articulated a plan to make passenger rail service available to 80% of the United States population. The combined populations of all the cities and their environs listed above total something approaching 80% of Texas total population. It follows that to come close to meeting the national goal, rail service would have to be extended to all of the Texas cities listed above, and a few more.

PRESENT STATE-WIDE SERVICE

Texas has three inter-city long-distance passenger trains. These trains are operated by Amtrak on Union Pacific and B.N.S.F. tracks. In addition, a growing number of metropolitan areas supports excellent local commuter trains. However, these local facilities utilize much different train sets than the long-distance overnight trains discussed in this report. (The combination of long-distance passenger trains with sleepers and local commuter trains with frequent stops enhances the viability of both, although present recommendations are focused just on long distance routes.)

The Sunset Limited operates three times a week in each direction between Los Angeles and New Orleans. The trip takes about 47 hours. The portion from El Paso to Beaumont takes 23 hours. Texas intermediate stops include El Paso, San Antonio, Houston, and Beaumont. The train consist provides bi-level coaches, sleeping cars, dining car, and lounge car.

The Texas Eagle operates between Chicago and Los Angeles three times a week in each direction. The trip takes about 75 hours. On the portion of the run between Chicago and San Antonio the train operates daily in about 32 hours. In all cases, the Texas intermediate stops include San Marcos, Austin, Temple, Waco, Fort Worth, Dallas, Longview, and Texarkana. This Texas internal portion of the run takes about 15 hours. The train consist provides bi-level coaches, sleeping cars, dining car, and lounge car.

Texas five busiest depots lie along the Texas Eagle route. They are Fort Worth (141,696 ON/OFFS in FY12), San Antonio (70,161), Dallas (55,764), Longview (49,126), and Austin (41,638). The Fort Worth inter-modal station serves as an interchange between the Texas Eagle, the Heartland Flyer, and local buses. The San Antonio depot serves as an interchange between the Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited. Dallas Union Station is an interchange between the Texas Eagle and local buses. The Longview depot provides access to long-distance buses to Houston. This fact helps demonstrate the need for Dallas - Fort Worth area train service to Houston. The Austin depot is downtown in a city drawing large numbers of visitors.

The Heartland Flyer operates daily between Fort Worth and Oklahoma City. It makes connection with the Texas Eagle at Fort Worth. The trip takes about 4 hours. The train consist provides bi-level coaches and a café car.

PASSENGER RAIL GOALS

Passenger rail service in Texas is an important component of the public transportation network.

Reliability, comfort, convenience, cost effectiveness, connectivity, and safety are all important parts of the program. To provide these features, three guiding principles are required:

1. Intermediate-term, the passenger rail network must provide service Statewide. It is easy to think of a network grid with interconnecting nodes in the major cities, including both clockwise and counter-clockwise movements around the Texas triangle. Extensions would continue to be made until 80% of Texas population has passenger rail service.
2. Long-term, the passenger rail network should provide at least twice-daily service each way around the Texas triangle. This is required for both convenience and connectivity. Creating convenient connections throughout the system is not possible with less than twice-daily service on at least this core hub.
3. High-performance train sets and track maintenance are required for good service. Train sets must include long-distance and over-night facilities with dining and entertainment amenities. Track improvements must support reliable operations and faster trip times.

SHORT-TERM STRAIGHT-FORWARD SOLUTIONS

Fortunately, this is not rocket science. However, it requires a series of improvements based on the obvious need to move more and more people with less and less fossil-fuel consumption. This is where passenger rail succeeds the best.

PRIORITY ONE: SUNSET LIMITED DAILY FREQUENCY

Three times a week in each direction may not be sustainable for the Sunset Limited. The schedule is confusing to the public and financially expensive per passenger seat mile for the operator. Maintenance and overhead costs are relatively fixed when they could be divided by more trains whistling by. The Sunset Limited is part of the Amtrak national passenger rail network and is one of only two trains in the country which operate less than daily.

The current Sunset Limited functions with moderately high occupancies. The obvious solution: daily service. Having daily east-west passenger rail service across Texas would be a major convenience to the public and would improve commercial ties to and between Houston and San Antonio.

Concept

Return of daily service all the way from California to Florida would be the best approach. In the absence of that, on a temporary basis the service improvements could be limited to Texas and Louisiana. By such an interim plan, the present three-times-a-week service could be left in place while passenger service on the other days of the week is instituted across the more heavily traveled central portion of the route. Presumably this would include at least the segment between San Antonio and Houston or, preferably, the larger portion between El Paso and New Orleans.

One pragmatic way to approach expanding service is to ask how much could be achieved with the addition of a single train set. Good question. Given the current three-day-a-week schedule, there are four days with no service. The trip between New Orleans and San Antonio is a daylight run of about 15 hours. In a week, a single train set could make this run three times each direction and have a day left for maintenance. This works. The new train set would operate westbound on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. It would operate eastbound Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. This scheme would instantly double service on the Sunset Limited between New Orleans and San Antonio from three days a week to six, providing an easy way to test the incremental market and build a broader base for future expansions.

PRIORITY TWO: BIGGEST CITIES IN TEXAS

How can this be? Dallas and Houston, the two biggest cities in Texas, have no passenger rail service between them. Did we say this correctly? Dallas and Houston, the two biggest cities in Texas, have no passenger rail service between them. No way to stretch out and enjoy a comfortable seat, a good meal, or a cool drink.

This is a market waiting to be tapped. The present volume of people disembarking the Texas Eagle at Longview and continuing on to Houston or Shreveport by bus demonstrates the demand. Additionally, an intermediate stop in College Station / Bryan would tap the large college travel market.

Concept

On a trial basis, one train set would be enough to make the round trip every day from Houston to either Dallas or Fort Worth. Overnight maintenance activity could be scheduled at either end. However, Houston might be the preferred location so an early morning run could be scheduled to Fort Worth to make connections with the Heartland Flyer and Texas Eagle. One train set dedicated to such a limited experimental route could make the trip each weekday and still have the weekend left for maintenance if necessary.

The strong expectation would be that justification for a second frequency in each direction would be demonstrated early on. A decision on this, however, needn't be considered until there are statistics in hand. Once the route is firmly established, northbound and westbound extensions on to Chicago (called Super Chief) or West Texas (called Canon Ball Express) could be studied.

Fort Worth seems to be the logical long-term hub for the Texas Eagle, Heartland Flyer, and proposed future passenger service, although there might also be lesser hubs at DFW Airport and/or Dallas Union Station.

PRIORITY THREE: I-35 CORRIDOR INCLUDING SOUTH TO THE BORDER

Passenger trains are often hailed as a way to relieve overcrowded freeways. So, where is the most overcrowded freeway in Texas? No question, it's Interstate 35, even with the Texas Eagle already

running parallel to this route. Extension of the Heartland Flyer also along this route is urgently recommended. It would provide a second frequency along this congested corridor and also provide direct train service between the state capitals of Austin and Oklahoma City.

With both the Heartland Flyer and Texas Eagle traveling parallel south to San Antonio, there would be more relief to the I-35 corridor and opportunity to respond to increasing congestion in Laredo and the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Some old timers might remember the day when both the Missouri Pacific and Southern Pacific operated daily passenger train service to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The need remains. Corpus Christi, McAllen, Harlingen, and Brownsville could each justify having end-point stations for passenger trains. However, since Harlingen is between McAllen and Brownsville, is on the existing main rail line, and has a downtown passenger train station still in good structural condition, it is recommended as the initial southern terminus. From there, convenient bus service is available to the rest of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and northern Mexico.

Corpus Christi is about midway between San Antonio and the Lower Rio Grande Valley and, as an intermediate stop, provides even more justification for the route.

Likewise, in pre-Amtrak days the Missouri Pacific provided passenger train service to Laredo with the Aztec Eagle. It's time to restore this tradition to the rapidly growing border town.

Concept

It is possible that either the Heartland Flyer or the Texas Eagle could be extended south from San Antonio to either Laredo or Harlingen. For reasons of scheduling daylight stops, maintaining a six-hour minimum headway, meeting the Sunset Limited in San Antonio, and not disrupting the Texas Eagle present schedule, this looks like possibly the best configuration:

Southbound

Heartland Flyer
Oklahoma City 6:30am dpt.
Fort Worth 10:30am arr. - 11:00am dpt.
San Antonio 7:00pm arr. - 7:30pm dpt.
Laredo 11:30pm arr.

Texas Eagle
Chicago 5:00pm dpt.
Fort Worth 4:30pm arr. - 5:00pm dpt.
San Antonio 1:00am arr. - 2:30am dpt.
Corpus Christi 6:00am arr. - 6:30am dpt.
Harlingen 10:30am arr.

Northbound

Texas Eagle
Harlingen 8:30pm dpt.
Corpus Christi 12:30am arr. - 1:00am dpt.
San Antonio 4:30am arr. - 6:00am dpt.
Fort Worth 1:00pm arr. - 1:30pm dpt.

Heartland Flyer
Laredo 7:30am dpt.
San Antonio 11:30am arr. - noon dpt.
Fort Worth 8:00pm arr. - 8:30pm dpt.

Chicago 1:00pm arr.

Oklahoma City 12:30am arr.

Such a configuration would not interfere with a possible ultimate extension of the Heartland Flyer from Oklahoma City to Kansas City.

Dan Pugh, M.S., A.I.C.P. retired
P.O. Box 20
Rockport, Texas 78381

361 729-5550

IDEALIZED FUTURE TEXAS TRIANGLE DAILY PASSENGER TRAIN CONCEPT PROVIDING
TWO FREQUENCIES EACH DIRECTION ON EACH LEG & CONNECTIONS ELSEWHERE

2/2013

COUNTER-CLOCKWISE

Heartland Flyer

Kansas City
Oklahoma City - 6:30am dpt.
Fort Worth 10:30am arr. - 11:00am dpt.
San Antonio 7:00pm arr. - 7:30pm dpt.
Laredo 11:30pm arr.

Texas Eagle

Chicago 5:00pm dpt.
Fort Worth 4:30pm arr. - 5:00pm dpt.
San Antonio 1:00am arr. - 2:30am dpt.
Corpus Christi 6:00am arr. - 6:30am dpt.
Harlingen 10:30am arr.

Sunset Limited

Los Angeles
El Paso 3:00pm arr.- 3:35pm dpt.
San Antonio 4:50am arr. - 6:25am dpt.
Houston 11:10am arr. - 12:10pm dpt.
New Orleans 9:40pm arr. -

Crescent

San Antonio 3:30pm dpt.
Houston 8:00pm arr. - 8:30pm dpt.
New Orleans 6:00am arr. - 7:00am dpt.
New York City 2:00pm arr.

Canon Ball Express

Houston 8:00am dpt.
Fort Worth 1:00pm arr. - 1:30pm dpt.
Abilene Lubbock Amarillo Denver

Super Chief *

Houston 3:00pm dpt.
Fort Worth 8:00pm arr. - 8:30pm dpt.
Chicago 8:00pm arr.

CLOCKWISE

Super Chief *

Chicago 8:00am dpt.
Fort Worth 7:30am arr. - 8:00am dpt.
Houston 1:00pm arr.

Canon Ball Express

Denver Amarillo Lubbock Abilene
Fort Worth 2:30pm arr. - 3:00pm dpt.
Houston 8:00pm arr.

Sunset Limited

New Orleans - 9:30am dpt.
Houston 7:00pm arr. - 7:30pm dpt.
San Antonio 12:30am arr. - 3:00am dpt.
El Paso 1:30pm arr. - 2:00pm dpt.
Los Angeles

Crescent

New York City 3:00pm dpt.
New Orleans 8:00pm arr. - 9:30pm dpt.
Houston 7:00am arr. - 7:30am dpt.
San Antonio 12:30pm arr.

Texas Eagle

Harlingen 8:30pm dpt.
Corpus Christi 12:30am arr. - 1:00am dpt.
San Antonio 4:30am arr. - 6:00am dpt.
Fort Worth 1:00pm arr. - 1:30pm dpt.
Chicago 1:00pm arr.

Heartland Flyer

Laredo 7:30am dpt.
San Antonio 11:30am arr. - noon dpt.
Fort Worth 8:00pm arr. - 8:30pm dpt.
Oklahoma City 12:30am arr. -
Kansas City

* This train might turn at St. Louis & head directly to the East Coast (per historic Pennsylvania RR)

TEXAS CITIES SERVED BY IDEALIZED DAILY PASSENGER TRAIN CONCEPT

At full development eighteen of the largest cities in Texas would be served by at least one daily passenger train in each direction. The three largest cities would be served by four daily trains in each direction.

	Canon Ball Express	Crescent	Heartland Flyer	Sunset Limited	Super Chief	Texas Eagle
Dallas / Fort Worth / Arling	X		X		X	X
Houston / Sugarland / Bayt	X	X		X	X	
San Antonio / New Braunfe		X	X	X		X
Austin / Round Rock / San			X			X
El Paso				X		
McAllen / Edinburg / Missio						X
Corpus Christi						X
Brownsville / Harlingen						X
Temple / Killeen / Fort Hood			X			X
Beaumont / Port Arthur		X		X		
Lubbock	X					
Laredo			X			
Amarillo	X					
Waco			X			X
College Station / Bryan	X				X	
Longview					X	X
Abilene	X					
Texarkana					X	X

IDEALIZED LONG-TERM LOUISIANA DAILY PASSENGER TRAIN CONCEPT
January 2013

LOUISIANA POPULATION CENTERS

LOCATION	2010 POPULATION*	10-YEAR GROWTH	EXISTING RAIL SERVICE
State Total	4,533,372 persons	1.4 %	
New Orleans / Metairie / Kenner	1,167,764	4.9 %	4+6/7 = <5/day
Baton Rouge	802,484	.3 %	none
Shreveport / Bossier City	398,604	.8 %	none
Lafayette	273,738	1.25 %	6/7 = <1/day

* Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census SMSA populations

PROPOSED LOUISIANA PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

New Orleans is presently served by the City of New Orleans, the Crescent, and the Sunset Limited. Lafayette is served by the Sunset Limited. Major passenger transportation draws also include the commercial airports at DFW and New Orleans.

Studies are underway for initiating passenger rail service between Shreveport and the DFW Airport. This makes lots of sense, particularly for coach and lounge car rail service. Experience could also determine the feasibility of multiple frequencies and extensions to Baton Rouge and New Orleans, including Baton Rouge - New Orleans direct local service.

If one train set left Shreveport early in the morning it could make two round trips per day to DFW with an intermediate stop at Dallas Union Station. Another train set could leave New Orleans early in the morning and stop in Baton Rouge, Shreveport, and Dallas Union Station on the way to DFW, returning to the Big Easy that same evening. This combined effort would provide Shreveport three round trips per day to Dallas and DFW. Appropriate names these passenger trains might be the Daylight Special, Red Stick Special, and Creole Special.

Connections to existing national trains at New Orleans and the Texas Eagle at Dallas would enhance the viability of all services.

If it turns out that round trips from New Orleans to DFW are not feasible within one business day, then the route could be shortened. The daily train to and from DFW could originate and terminate in Baton Rouge. This would still provide direct service from there to DFW and connections by train to Austin, Little Rock, and Oklahoma City. Frequent local commuter trains could be instituted between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. We might call these locals the Louisiana Pelican and Louisiana Tiger.

NOTES ON TEXAS STATE-WIDE PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

February 2013

TEXAS POPULATION CENTERS

There are twenty five standard metropolitan statistical areas in Texas with over 100,000 persons each. This situation provides a convenient planning tool, although knowledge of the unique conditions and locations of each urban area is essential for developing passenger rail plans. Here are summary population numbers, plus current passenger rail statistics:

LOCATION	2010 POPULATION*	LAST 10-YEAR GROWTH	EXISTING RAIL SERVICE
State Total	25,145,561 persons	20.6 %	
Dallas / Fort Worth / Arlington**	6,371,773	23.5 %	2+2 = 4/day
Houston / Sugarland / Baytown	5,946,800	26.1 %	6/7 = <1/day
San Antonio / New Braunfels**	2,142,508	25.2 %	2+6/7 = <3/day
Austin / Round Rock / San Marcus**	1,716,289	37.3 %	2/day
El Paso	800,647	17.8 %	6/7 = <1/day
McAllen / Edinburg / Mission	774,769	36.1 %	none
Corpus Christi	428,185	6.2 %	none
Brownsville / Harlingen	406,220	21.2 %	none
Temple / Killeen / Fort Hood	405,300	22.6 %	2/day
Beaumont / Port Arthur	388,745	1.0 %	6/7 = <1/day
Lubbock	284,890	14.1 %	none
Laredo	250,304	29.6 %	none
Amarillo	249,881	10.3 %	none
Waco	234,906	10.0 %	2/day

College Station / Bryan	228,660	23.7 %	none
Longview**	214,369	10.5 %	2/day
Tyler	209,714	20.0 %	none
Abilene	165,252	3.1 %	none
Wichita Falls	151,306	- 0.1 %	none
Odessa	137,130	13.2 %	none
Midland	136,872	18.0 %	none
Texarkana (TX & AR)	136,027	4.8 %	none
Sherman / Denison	120,877	9.3 %	none
Victoria	115,384	3.3 %	none
San Angelo	111,823	5.7 %	none

* Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas over 100,000 persons

** Most passenger ON/OFFS, in rank order: Fort Worth, San Antonio, Dallas, Longview, Austin

INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS

All of the cities listed except one have been growing in population during the past decade. Five of the cities growing at over two percent per year have no passenger rail service.

Only nine of Texas large cities have any passenger rail service at all. That leaves sixteen with no service. Count them.

There is no direct passenger rail service of any kind between the two largest cities in Texas, Dallas and Houston.

Houston's only passenger rail service operates three times a week in each direction. Conventional wisdom holds that service which operates less than daily in each direction is difficult to sustain financially, even with high occupancy rates. Enough said.

The largest urban area in Texas with no passenger rail service is the Lower Rio Grande Valley, comprised of the areas of McAllen/Edinburg/Mission and Brownsville/Harlingen. These areas are home to 1.2 million people and are growing at the rate of 28.6 % every decade (2.9 %/year). These are not affluent areas. Presumably, potential utilization of passenger rail service would be above average, particularly considering the additional number of cities on the Mexican side of the border.

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

there are a lot of conferences/travel to Dallas
passenger line good & quicker

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

economic improvements good but need to
protect environment.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

like the train be less pollution; better for
environment; locals have asthma from pollution

Other (use back or attach pages)

against Eagle For Shale project; look at
documentary called "Gasland" for problems with
gas pollution, concerns about air quality and
water quality. Like if trains had cleaner fuel
and hybrid cars on the road. Save money
too. Have TxDOT be an advocate for clean
fuel; people are slowly dying. A lot of people
moving here.

NAME: Michael Rios

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Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
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Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
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ZIP Code

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- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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NAME:

Place
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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

How will the daily train schedules compare with local transportation schedules (i.e., buses, commuter trains, etc.)? Severe mismatch in schedules will cause a disinterest from the public.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Use modern equipment to inspect rails and new technology for train engines. Europe uses electric trains which are quieter than diesel.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

The easier the modes of transportation in and out of an area will increase potential businesses and visitors.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Passenger trains will not likely reduce traffic conditions unless properly scheduled with more localized transportation.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

There would be a minimal increase of negative environmental impacts if the rails run parallel to current transportation infrastructures.

Other (use back or attach pages)

Passengers should be able to purchase tickets that will take advantage of local transportation and provide a schedule from beginning to ending destination.

NAME: Dale Volkman

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78418

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *Positive as long as frequency and accessibility to all parts of the city + "the island" are coordinated with all - other modes of public transportation*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): *SEE: Germany/Spain train - public and learn from their experience - successes & failures - These*

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): *are "hot topics" Must be advertised, promoted, & presented to the public so that they will become more*

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): *"educated" realize the real benefit!!! Reduces congestion - provide long-term benefit!!! safe biking routes to connect to train stops - busses/trams ideally*

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): *Compliance with all EPA guidelines/laws - High standards should protect both our water supply, resources, + habitats in every way. must blend - green*

Other (use back or attach pages) *Germany has the best rail system that we have ever used on a daily living + tourist basis since the 1960's - present my lifetime.*

NAME: *Mary Volkman*

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

A rail line with convenient service and a good schedule, with interchange to other modes of transit, will be a benefit to the economy.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

A rail line should take cars off of congested I-35 corridor.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

To the extent that rail travelers are not auto travelers, our air quality should improve.

Other (use back or attach pages)

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Gender Identity

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ZIP Code

76040

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

How alignment will affect businesses? Increased or decreased traffic for local business.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Relieve congestion on Interstates. Will the rail connect with other public transit in cities served?

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

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Gender Identity

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ZIP Code

75231

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

The only passenger rail with any hope of success is 220 mph service. Without this as the ultimate commitment, this endeavor has no hope of viability. When a passenger takes rail in Texas, he forfeits the use of a personal automobile. The passenger either rents one ^(at the other end) which is a cost, or does without. Nobody is going to do this if it doesn't save time.

True HSR would be comparable in time commitment to air within this corridor ~~due to~~ for urban users due to the time spent getting to and from the airport, the need to get there an hour early, and the lighter

My address:

Ken Duple
Recording secretary
Cedars Neighborhood Assoc.
1111 S Alcaid St Unit 209
Dallas, TX 75215-1020

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ZIP Code

75215

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Fold

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restrictions on carry-on baggage that would eliminate the wait at the carousel. If priced competitively with air travel, this would work, particularly for business travelers.

How to make the Funding/Politics work

Rather than do small and incremental changes throughout the entire line that will have minimal impact on attracting ridership, the goal should be to open true HSR first between downtown San Antonio and downtown Austin. We could then extend it to Temple, Waco, Dallas, Denton and OKC. All the while, Amtrak should maintain existing service as a feeder.

~~By~~ Imaginating true HSR service on these segments will get the public used to the idea and make the cities not yet linked jealous, thus building political support incrementally. This is what California is doing.

Quality first. Think big by thinking small

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages) I think that dedicated high-speed rail (speed >150 mph) should be strongly considered between D-FW and San Antonio. For DFW to Oklahoma City and San Antonio to McAllen, it is less likely to be cost-effective. A concern is lack of public transportation in San Antonio and Austin. Rail service may be more attractive to riders if the proposed rail service were integrated with a car sharing service, e.g. Zipcar.

Patrick Ryan, PE 214.228.9975

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Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

NONE OF WHAT I SAW SHOWED AN EXISTING DIRECT NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTION THROUGH DALLAS. THIS SHOULD BE AN ALIGNMENT FOR CONSIDERATION. IT SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED HIGHER THAN ALIGNMENTS THROUGH FORT WORTH (EXISTING) OR TO THE DFW AIRPORT.

IN PARTICULAR HIGH SPEED RAIL SHOULD SERVE DALLAS DIRECTLY. "HIGHER" SPEED RAIL AND CONVENTIONAL RAIL ARE POOR OPTIONS WHEN COMPARED TO DRIVING THESE DISTANCES. HIGH SPEED RAIL NEEDS TO BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED.

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- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

75204

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on
- NO NO NO

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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LUIS DAMAYO CITY OF DALLAS.

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Favor more transportation options

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Rail may facilitate more frequent tourist trips to San Antonio and Brownsville (South Padre Island) from Fort Worth (in my case)

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Desirable if determined to be more efficient than air or auto travel.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Concerned about auto and air travel impact on air quality, especially in DFW area.

Other (use back or attach pages)

Would like to see better integration of rail and air transportation. If new high speed rail infrastructure is built, this is especially important. Allowing airlines to operate high speed trains would in my opinion eliminate significant financial bias.

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<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male	<u>76013</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Route within Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex needs to have a stop in Tarrant County, or specifically, Ft. Worth. This is for fair access to this service for residents and businesses that would benefit.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

I like the potential of this project concept to reduce dependency ^{on} ~~of~~ automobile and reducing VMT & Air pollution. I strongly support it.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

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- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76018

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

THE SERVICE SHOULD STIMULATE THE AREA ECONOMY
I SEE NO DOWNSIDE

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

WILL REMOVE I-35 CORRIDOR PASSENGER CARS TRAFFIC.
SOMEWHAT.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

NO NEGATIVES — POSITIVES EMISSION REDUCTION.

Other (use back or attach pages)

DFW ROUTE MUST GO TO DFW ONLY
AND LET LOCAL RAIL FEED HI SPEED AND
AIRLINES.

USE DORTHY SPUR CORRIDOR TO
LINK ARLING-TON TX - DFW - NORTH.
LET TRE & POSSIBLE E-W I-30
PAX RAIL OR UP PROVIDE 2ND E-W FEEDER.

TXRAIL & DART LINK @ DFW

CHALLENGE! ~~ONE~~ DESIGN ONE DFW BASE HSR THRU

TERMINAL.

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- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78118

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- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

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GERMAN K SPIELBERG
3901 JONETTE DR
RICHLAND HILLS TX 76118

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *Especially the taxpayers!*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

There will be all of above accompanying this project.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

The increased taxes will likely have a detrimental effect on ag, tourism & every other financial/social endeavor.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Not much, as history reveals, as ridership is always low.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

We, OKies & Texans, will require years, if ever, for anyone to convince us to give up our trucks & cars. They would only give them up if the government raises vehicular, fuel & licensing fees to such a high cost that most cannot afford their trucks anymore (i.e. Europe & other places) in socialist/communist authorities). In the meantime, the costs will be huge. So huge that the taxpayer (those w/ businesses, jobs, etc.) will have to pay for ever the increasing costs.

This scenario has been repeated time after time whenever these systems have been proposed, partially-built & "completed". They (these systems) are not feasible!

Only a few ^{people (politicians, contractors, others?)} profit, the rest of us pay, pay & pay. And they ^(we) pay some more.

NAME: Terry C. Allison

The costs, already budgeted, are rather excessive. What would the construction costs be? Look at the history of existing systems for an answer to that question. It is clear!

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Race/Ethnicity

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- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español (Portuguese)
- Other: _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78504

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

what speed train will be travelling. What are delays to traffic. what improvements are needed on existing tracks.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

NAME :

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<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	<u>78804</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

*new merging Univ in McAllen of Brownsville ^{30ths. students}
may have one in students commute between
McAllen has international airport to Mexico
City; Edinburg has big school
Tourism from N Come to South Padre Island
or shopping from Mexico*

NAME:

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *IF EXISTING TRACK IS USED, SHOULD NOT BE ANY ISSUES ON RESIDENTS THAT ARE USED TO IT.*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):
IF CROSSINGS ARE ELEVATED SAFETY ISSUES WILL BE MINIMIZED

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):
SHOULD BE A BOON TO TOURISM. ONE EXCEPTION: A BUS SERVICE ALREADY GOES FROM AIRPORTS TO SPI. A RAIL TO PT ISABEL IS A WASTE.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):
STUDY TO MINIMIZE BLOCKING OF ROAD CROSSINGS IS IMPORTANT

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages) *HOPEFULLY TSA WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED WITH ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS. WHICH MEANS FEDERAL MONEY SHOULD NOT BE USED. THERE SHOULD BE NO LIMITATIONS ON CPL HOLDERS. GUN FREE ZONES WILL INVITE PROBLEMS ESPECIALLY THIS CLOSE TO THE CARTELS ACROSS THE BORDER. I WOULD TRAVEL TO SAN ANTONIO TO PARTICIPATE IN FIREARM SHOOTING MATCHES. EASY TRAVEL WITH FIREARMS IS REQUIRED.*

NAME: *James E. Barnes*

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Language Spoken at Home

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- Español
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- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78572

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

I can only imagine positive effects on residents, businesses, visitors.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

only minor effects, I'm sure!

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

all positive!

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

only minor effects

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

If passengers are traveling by rail instead of auto (or even bus) I can only see positive effects for the environment.

Other (use back or attach pages)

*Passenger Rail Service to Harlingen
(with free parking)
would benefit me personally.
I would never drive to San Antonio or Dallas
again!*

NAME:

Dorothy Ann Barley

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- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

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- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78583

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

This rail system would be a great advantage for the Valley area in conjunction with the plans for commuter rail in the Valley

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

It would provide an alternative for people in our area. The Valley is the fastest growing area in Texas

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Tourism is important with the influx of Winter Texans from points north

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

This should be minimal. Trains are more efficient travel

Other (use back or attach pages)

The rail system needs to come to McAllen where it will meet up with Valley Commuter Rail

NAME:

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Race/Ethnicity

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- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78570

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

NAME Jim Edge
HCCRD
Hidalgo, TX

Place stamp here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

If there was a lot of money - it would be convenient.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Depends on where it is.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

I'm sure it would be a plus.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

O.K. I'd be happy with the 70-90 m.p.h.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

O.K. - Less gas for cars.

Other (use back or attach pages)

*My real concern is money availability
Feds - broke State - broke US almost broke
We must not have another taxing entity.*

*This passenger rail study that has been done
here in the valley has been a complete waste
of time and almost \$500,000 in money.*

NAME:

Virginia Townsend

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Gender Identity

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- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

18572

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Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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NAME:

When you are getting
 older you look for
 relaxing, convenient
 ways to travel.
 We have grandchildren
 all over the state,

Place
 stamp
 here

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 Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

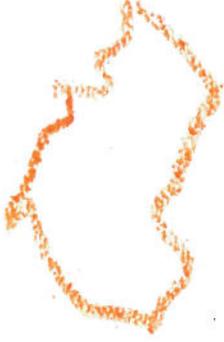
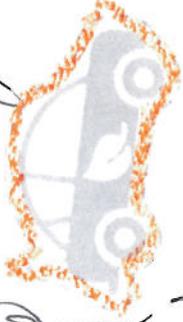
Tape

Remember, Mission has a permit
 to have freight into Mexico. Lots of
 maquilas on the west side of Reynosa.

Color the cars! Draw a train for you and your friends to ride on!

Learn more at www.TxOkRail.org

The future of light rail in the Valley!



Transportation
blood



money

money

money

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on all the above is, on balance, Positive

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

safety is enhanced by reduction in highway fatalities

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

will revolutionize the region. Massive Eco Dev. impact

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

will ease traffic congestion

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

reduction in pollution = good for earth, me!

Other (use back or attach pages)

- Reduction in oil dependence

- Massive positive impact on environment

NAME:

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Gender Identity

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- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78043

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Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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NAME:

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here

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Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

I fit aint a bullet train (we still #1) in the world?) don't waste your time & my money. IN the 70's I took the train from Laredo to Detroit. It took two days to get out of Texas. It stopped like every 25-50 miles @ every MAJOR Ranch.

NAME:

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ZIP Code

78045

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stamp
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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

The effects on visitors will be a big improvement on the waiting time and crossing times.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

We believed the effects on noise will be minor comparing the effects and pollution of all the visitors.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

If you develop a big station (train stop) will cause a great effect.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Will improve the traffic conditions on a good way.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

NAME:

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Language Spoken at Home

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- Other: _____
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- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

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- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78040

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NAME: Carlos Garza

Place
stamp
here

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

I am wholly in favor of a passenger rail line between Mexico, Laredo & San Antonio. As a commissioner in T.R.W County it can only help reduce traffic while increasing tourists providing a stop is placed in Pearsall. I hope that we can get a stop in Pearsall.

NAME: Richard Graf

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Language Spoken at Home

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- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78061

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NAME: Richard A. Graf
215 Hulsache
Pearson TX 78061

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE A RAILROAD STATION IN LAREDO

BECAUSE PERSONS THAT LIKE TRAVEL BY TRAIN DON'T HAVE TO GO TO

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

I THINK IS SAFER TRAVEL BY TRAIN AND MORE CONVENIENT THAT
TRAVEL BY BUS OR AUTO.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

I GUESS THE ECONOMY WILL GROW BECAUSE NOT ONLY PEOPLE FROM
LAREDO USE THE TRAIN BUT PEOPLE THAT COME FROM MEXICO AND OTHER
COUNTRIES.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

I THINK THERE'S NO MUCH EFFECTS ON TRAFFIC CONDITIONS BECAUSE
THERE'S A RAILROAD STATION THAT IS NOT IN USE FOR PASSENGERS
ANY MORE.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

I THINK THERE'S NO HARM ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ON THE NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT.

Other (use back or attach pages)

I HOPE THIS PROJECT BECOMES A REALITY VERY SOON.

REGARDS.

Juan C. Melin

NAME:

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- Asian or Pacific Islander
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Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

78643

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- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

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NAME: JUAN A. MEDINA
2916 MERCEZ ST.
L A BENO TX 78043

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Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Fold

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NAME: X. Villalón
112 TRAXCALA
LAUREN TX 78045

SAN ANTONIO TX 780
RIO GRANDE DISTRICT
03 APR 2013 PM 5 L



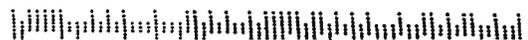
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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

This should have happened a long time ago!
Please make this a reality ASAP. ~~So~~ All
cities involved would prosper.

NAME: Xaver Vigneron

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *Businesses would see increase from a new audience which the trains would provide a new group of visitor would see what our city has to offer.*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): *With the current noise of the city a train service wouldn't add much to that.*

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): *A cheap rail service would bring a new audience to new area, while also promoting agriculture by providing a view of farm lands.*

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): *Intercity rail would take strain from the business how states govts + corp could offer plans to the workers to promote the service.*

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): *One train running full with 500+ passengers produces a much smaller footprint than each of those individuals driving their own automobiles.*

Other (use back or attach pages)

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

TRAIN SPEED OVER GRADE CROSSINGS

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

what company will operate TRAINS

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<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male	<u>76179</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

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Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

Accessibility for all peoples by ensuring the blind and the low vision population can also use the service; a project like this truly helps them and ~~very~~ making it possible for them to also utilize service at the same time ensures accessibility for all.

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ZIP Code

73116

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

optional business class car gives people more options instead of driving

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Service should accommodate bicycles if possible, bicycle racks

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

*- allow crated pets
- more advertising? I always tell people about Amtrak and almost everyone doesn't know there is that option or how to book a ticket*

- reduce travel time between OKC - San Antonio to less than 14 hrs (it's a 7hr drive)

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Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<u>73118</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

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Place
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here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

To offer clean, efficient travel options. Along the routes, the economy will benefit from tourism and development.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Since most rail service would occur in an existing operating rail corridor the effects would be minimal.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Big gains to be made with tourism - agriculture would benefit, from increased sales at nearby restaurants serving Texas & Okla specialties.

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

With increased frequency of passenger service you take more private autos off the road. This can already be noticed in the DFW area -

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Again - negligible effects on the environment as rail service is efficient and causes much less pollution than several hundred cars.

Other (use back or attach pages)

The need to have valuable transportation options - Remember during World War II our nations trains hauled at capacity thousands of troops and private citizens to their destinations. Could this be done by Amtrak today? Doubtful - as too many cities have diminished ability to even service or support passenger rail - When traveling by rail you don't encounter the security issues encountered when flying, plus it's just a better way to meet your fellow passengers, enjoy the scenery and get some paperwork done, as well as have some leisure time.

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- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

73102

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Steve Davis
3909 Cashion PK
OKC 73102

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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March 25, 2013

Mark Werner, Rail division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

March 25, 2013

Comments for the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study in Support of Expanded Passenger Rail Services between Tulsa and Dallas-Fort Worth

Mr. Werner:

Public transportation has historically been a prominent issue impacting economic opportunities and daily life for one in six Oklahomans who have some type of disability. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, nearly 577,000 or 15.76% of the state's civilian, non-institutionalized population age five and older have disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to write on behalf of this important constituency in support of expanding rail service between Tulsa/Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth.

As the communications director for the Oklahoma Department for Rehabilitation Services, which annually provides employment and independent living services to more than 92,000 Oklahomans, I am personally aware of barriers to employment created by limited transportation options.

The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) conducted a statewide survey in 2002 to explore the nature of transportation needs and problems experienced by citizens with disabilities and to learn how transportation issues affect their lives, including their ability to work, live independently at home, access medical and disability services and interact with other people. Responses were received from 3,856 individuals representing all 77 Oklahoma counties based.

While the data was compiled some time ago, the needs remain because very little has happened to significantly change access to public transportation in Oklahoma.

- Approximately two-thirds (65.5%) of respondents reported there are persons in their households who are dependent on public transportation or rides from relatives and friends because they do not drive or own a car.
- Almost half (48.1%) of all respondents said they could not drive due to their disabilities.

Comments for the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study in Support of Expanded
Passenger Rail Services between Tulsa and Dallas-Fort Worth - Page 2

- A majority (58.3%) of survey respondents considered transportation to be a major or significant problem in their lives. This percentage reached 71.5% among respondents with visual disabilities, 67.3% among those with mental illness and 64.2% in respondents with developmental disabilities.
- Among those who said transportation was a major problem, the most frequent concerns were lack of intercity transportation, insufficient public transportation or none at all in their locale, lack of sidewalks, limited or no door-to-door transportation and inaccessible streets, walkways and intersections.

Sometimes the problem is the disability. Sometimes it is economic barriers to purchasing and maintaining reliable vehicles; but whatever the reasons, limited public transportation keeps real people from becoming taxpayers and ending their dependence on disability benefits and social services.

All of these problems affecting employment, access to medical care, independence and quality of life will improve when passenger rail transportation is expanded in from Tulsa-Oklahoma to Dallas-Fort-Worth.

Public transportation is not just for people with disabilities, seniors and those with lower income who can't afford to drive. Public transportation is for all of us.

At one time, our research showed that north Texas municipalities that chose to expand their transportation options with rail earned \$12 in increased tax revenue for every \$1 they invested. Not a bad deal.

I have been happy to use reliable, safe public transportation in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Paris, Rome, Mexico, and even Dallas-Fort Worth. We need the opportunities for economic development and quality of life in Oklahoma that exist in those cities. And please don't stop at OKC. Include Tulsa.

Thank you for working to make this dream a reality in our state.

Best wishes,



Jody Harlan, Communications Director

DRS Communications Office

405-951-3473 cell 405-326-3600 jharlan@okdrs.gov

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

Provide more info about existing passenger rail.

Probably too early, but what would ticket cost be comparable too?

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ZIP Code

78250

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I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE (2-3-4 DAILY) FREQUENT SERVICE AT 90 MPH RATHER THAN JUST HIGH SPEED*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Need to ~~have~~ bring WACO INTO LOOP

SAN ANTONIO AMTRAK LACKS PARKING; HAS POOR PLATFORM & INADEQUATE SEATING

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Need to improve RR STATIONS - GOOD PARKING, GOOD SEATING, NEAR DOWNTOWN -

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

BIKES ACCESSABLE

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

CURRENT AMTRAK SERVICE IS HAMPERED BY SLOW SPEED SAN ANTONIO TO AUSTIN; BALANCE OF TEXAS EAGLE MAKES GOOD TIME & APPROACHES 79 MPH.

HOPEFULLY SERVICE BETWEEN FTW + DAL WILL IMPROVE WITH AMTRAK GOING TO TAW RIGHT-OF-WAY & TOWER 55 IMPROVEMENTS

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

EXTENDING HEARTLAND FLYER INTO KANSAS could give TEXANS MORE OPTIONS FOR TRAVEL TO WEST VIA "SW CHIEF" + "ZEPHYR"

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

MAKING CHANGES THAT WOULD PERMIT AMTRAK PASSENGERS TO TRANSPORT BICYCLES AS "CARRY-ON" ITEMS FOR LIMITED

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

DISTANCES (SA-AUSTIN) (AUSTIN-ALPINE) WOULD GREATLY INCREASE R.D. TRIP AND PROMOTE REGIONAL TOURISM.

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

CONTEMPLATED AMTRAK CHANGES TO TX EAGLE DEPARTURE + ARRIVAL TIMES AT CHICAGO WOULD MODIFY SCHEDULE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO RENDER IT LESS CONVENIENT FOR CENTRAL TEXANS

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GW Houston
Box 224
SA, TX 78291

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

I hope HSR rail is built between Dallas area & San Antonio. I like the idea of triangle at Temple-Waco-Bryan-College Station. This region, particularly Austin-San Antonio, will not be competitive if we do not have HSR service.

NAME:

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NAME Barbara McMillin
151 Comfort Drive
SA, TX 78228

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Austin, TX 78701-2483

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- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:** *Many locations you have on the Southern Option have not seen rail service in many years and would also be very beneficial to their economy as well as an alternative mode of transportation. ~~It would~~ This could create advantages for businesses along the route.*
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):**

- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):** *Where there are rail lines there will be rail related or dependent industries. Putting tracks back where they once were would be a huge benefit to the economies of the surrounding areas.*
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):**

- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):**

Other (use back or attach pages) *I know from preliminary discussions and research that there are communities south of San Antonio that would be interested in rail service, both passenger and freight. The organization I am with ~~are~~ looking into what it would take to relay the old right of way from San Antonio, more specifically, Elmendorf, to Kenedy, TX. We are looking at this as a tourist/passenger operation with freight option owned and operated by a Not-for-Profit 501c3 organization, the San Antonio Railroad Heritage Museum. We are needing a location where we can operate steam locomotives without interfering with the Operations of the Union Pacific Railroad. If you all have any questions regarding what ~~our~~ ^{our} organization is looking at please contact me at the following after ~~my~~ my name. -Thanks-*

NAME: *Gary Rodriguez* *Day: (210) 522-1641 Cell: (210) 306-0969 email: garyr@sarhm.com*

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Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

Need 4 more funding
Need 4 people to understand & gain knowledge of TX
Need 4 the effect of non Texas
Bikes People + Student's & Commuters
Better Commuters
More Bike Accessible
Need 4 Certain Section Plan

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Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

The ability to safely transport people to these destinations, + co-exist with freight traffic

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Do we use existing track, or go beyond those limits & look at new infrastructure.

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Development along these corridors. How do we pay & support these tracks

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Limit vehicle & pedi traffic to high speed rail right of way

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

Find funding for the Rail Rehabilitation & Improvement Fund
How does this work with the Lone Star Rail District
& Cotton Belt Rail District

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Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

Interested in route from OKC
to Sherman

On-line Comments

Date	contact information		City	State	ZIP	Human environment					Natural environment				EIS process				Question and/or comment
	Name	Organization:				Noise	Air quality	Human health	Traffic or safety	Other human environment topic	Wildlife or vegetation	Wetlands or streams	Water quality	Other natural environment topic	Alternatives	Area of potential effect	EIS/regulatory process	Other EIS process topic	
04/07/2013	A. D. Simmons		Marianna	FL	32447										X	X			I do not understand why any study of potential passenger train service in Texas would not include an examination of the DFW to Houston corridor as a natural part of the process. I'm all in favor of expanded service OKC to Laredo/Brownsville/Corpus Christie, linking through the DFW area, and also connecting DFW to Kansas City and St. Louis through OKC, Wichita and Tulsa, and Springfield. All of these options would be enhanced if connections or through service direct to Houston were also available. DFW makes a very good natural hub, with service to El Paso and Amarillo/Denver heading off in one direction and trains to Houston and the Texas Rio Grande region in the other. Service to New Orleans via Shreveport would also be potentially viable. By varying the starting point of a train between Dallas and Fort Worth, depending on which direction it was headed, a high frequency of intercity trains between those two points could be achieved linking the two nodes of the metropolis together. Texas should also consider promoting an additional long distance daily train route linking DFW to Washington DC via Jackson MS, Birmingham AL, and Atlanta GA. A train on this route could also be extended to Los Angeles via El Paso. Please consider expanding the scope of this study to include DFW/Houston options.
04/19/2013	Aaron Addison		Fort Worth	TX	76177		X	X	X		X	X	X	X					Please study the expansion north from Oklahoma City to Wichita and Newton, KS which would allow connection to Amtrak points further North. If Texans had an opportunity to more quickly and directly take a train to Kansas City or Chicago then I think they are far more likely to ride the train from DFW to OKC. Increased passenger traffic on rail improves Air Quality, Traffic Safety, and has a positive effect on Human Health. Also, increased passenger rail traffic helps protect the environment and reduces carbon emissions by diverting auto traffic.
04/10/2013	Aaron Mathis		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78216		X		X					X					I support high speed rail as long as the facts demonstrate it a more efficient alternative to passenger cars and planes.
04/10/2013	ADAM SWIERCZYNSKI		DENTON	TX	76209		X	X	X		X	X	X						This is a great project, please continue. The environment and human health issues would be lessened by this project.
04/11/2013	Adrea Craft		Austin	TX	78745														I support all rail/high speed rail projects. I am a frequent passenger of the Texas Eagle from Austin to Chicago and I would LOVE to see improvements in ALL rail services. If I could take the train, I would never fly again. Rail service is the norm in Europe; I feel it can(and should) be here too.
04/10/2013	Adriana de la Cruz		Laredo	TX	78046	X			X							X			I believe a passenger rail system would greatly benefit South Texas. As a frequent traveler, I have had the opportunity to travel by train to Fort Worth, Texas via Amtrak. It is a slower means of travel but for a person on a budget it is a great option. The ride is actually comfortable and scenic. The only drawback that I saw as to my experience traveling by train is that there is no passenger rail system in Laredo, Texas. A small trip to San Antonio, Texas was necessary to catch the train. It would be convenient for Laredo to obtain a passenger rail system since it does get a vast amount of travelers from Mexico and other parts of Texas. I just wonder how will this affect the community in taxes and the environment? Is there a planned route?
04/05/2013	Adrienne Harper		Spiro	OK	74959														We need this in my opinion
04/10/2013	aida cadena		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78228				X										Please seriously consider high speed rail here in Texas. This is a great option for folks who can't make the drive for a variety of reasons. This just makes sense!
04/19/2013	Aimee Leisy		Wichita	KS	67211				X										I am very much in favor of a high speed passenger train from South Texas through Oklahoma and into Wichita, Kansas. I have driven I-35 many times from Wichita to San Antonio, Texas. I am from Wichita, and lived in San Antonio, Texas from 1999 -2001. I have driven I-35 many times and continue to do so to visit friends and family in Dallas and in San Antonio. Over the years the traffic, especially in Texas, has increased dramatically. In addition, the constant road construction poses many hazards to drivers. Just last month, I was involved in an accident in Waco Texas because of a piece of wood in the road. The accident, which was not my fault, cost me a great deal of time and money. It would greatly benefit me and many other Kansans, Oklahomans, and Texans if there was an easier, safer, less congested way to travel through the I-35 corridor. I think that a Kansas-Oklahoma-Texas passenger train is the answer to these transportation problems.
04/10/2013	Ajay Jain		Garland	TX	75044				X										Texas needs High Speed Rail.
04/03/2013	alan stowers		corpus christi	TX	78418					X									Great idea. Please proceed. One suggestion. Please make connections in san antonio as convenient as possible. some passengers may want to travel east or west.
04/10/2013	Alex Araiza		San Antonio	TX	78230		X		X										I feel like having this would be very beneficial for those who have to commute to other cities, but also would help cut down on pollution coming from cars.
04/02/2013	Alex Hernandez		San Antonio	TX	78245				X										Texas desperately needs upgrading its infrastructure and roadways are at the top of the list. It is frustrating to know that with so much wide open space in this great state, road travelers are forced into two and three lane bottlenecks every 40 or 50 miles on I-35 from San Antonio to Dallas. High speed rail should have happened 20 years ago. Anyone with any foresight can see the economic windfall from shortening the distance between Texas' major cities. Texas' potential is measured by its size and we will never live up to our true potential if we do not bring all Texans closer together to interact on so many different levels that a modern transportation system can provide, i.e., economic, trade, personal, pleasure, academic. More importantly, it is now no longer a choice of whether we need to bring in high speed rail. It is a necessity. The unbelievable movement of truck, people, and workers in distant and underdeveloped towns all across our state as a result of the oil fracking boom, scream for desperately needed upgrades and investment in our infrastructure. We should all hope that this resurgent Texas economy can grow because of the our infrastructure, and not in spite of it.
04/10/2013	Alex Vlahodimitropoulos		Austin	TX	78701		X	X	X		X	X	X	X					More passenger rail is needed to help with constant traffic congestion, reduce GHG emissions, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

04/10/2013	Alexander Solano		Fort Worth	TX	76140		X	X	X										High-speed passenger rail would be a fantastic way to cut down on both intra- and inter-city commute traffic, reducing air pollution and traffic and generally making Texas a nicer place to live thanks to less cars sitting on the freeway. Texas is a big state and I travel south from Fort Worth to Houston or San Antonio frequently; a rail alternative to driving on the interstate would save time, money, frustration, and environmental impact for me and thousands of other people who have to travel across the state.
04/18/2013	Alfred McInturff		Midlothian	TX	76065/4723		X	X	X										High Speed rail between Oklahoma and Texas would be an excellent answer to crowded roads and air pollution as well being economically sound.
04/14/2013	Alfredo Torres Jr.		Laredo	TX	78045														Dear Sir or Madam, As a resident of Laredo, TX, I find this railroad study and project to be a great opportunity for my area and city. It will help alleviate traffic and be a great asset for tourism. It will also be an effective solution to those who travel and do not have a car. A passenger railway is something I believe Laredo will greatly benefit from, as well as, all residents of Texas. You can count on my support.
04/17/2013	Alicea Campos		San Antonio	TX	78240				X					X					In a state as vast as TX, I believe passenger rail would be a great thing. It could only help to alleviate pollution by taking cars off the road. It would also have economic impact resulting in jobs as well as access to transportation for those who can't afford cars. I believe this would be a major step forward.
04/23/2013	Alicia Winkelblech		Arlington	TX	76010				X					X	X				The City of Arlington is supportive of the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study. We feel it is in the best interest of the region to run this service as close to the middle of the North Texas region as possible. Stations should not be located on the outskirts of the region. This will maximize accessibility to the service and improve ridership. As the third largest city in the DFW region, it is requested that Arlington be specifically included in discussions regarding potential impacts.
04/10/2013	Alina Aqeel		Allen	TX	75002		X				X								Rails provide a good alternative to cars. Rails reduce the number of cars on the road and reduces air pollution.
04/10/2013	Allison Chambers		Watauga	TX	76148		X	X	X	X			X	X					With all the new construction of freeways, my husband and I, keep thinking they should be building rails too!! There are too many people on the roads as it is. I see more people in huge trucks and SUVs driving alone than with passengers. Texas would benefit tremendously by making rail transportation possible and easily accessible for commuters and travelers. Please consider making Texas more eco friendly by building a new rail system!!
04/12/2013	Allison Kaplan		Austin	TX	78752				X										I am in favor of the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail.
04/23/2013	Alta Monroe		South Padre Island		78597				X										If you've traveled lately across Texas it is obvious that there is a huge need NOW for an additional modes of transportation across the state. The airlines have cut back on flights and not everyone is wanting to fly these days due to all the scrutiny everyone boarding must go through. This is a great idea....
04/10/2013	Alyssa Burgin		San Antonio	TX	78258		X	X		X									If we can bring this type of passenger rail to Texas, we will be able to eliminate many road miles of automobiles, each with their individual passengers. The resulting cut in emissions would be substantial. Plus, there would be a cost savings for many Texans. I travel about 40,000 miles a year through Texas, the overwhelming majority of those miles being for business only. I would definitely use a passenger rail line if we had one going through Texas to Corpus Christi.
04/10/2013	Amanda Mattle		Dallas	TX	75214		X		X										I think passenger rail service would be a wonderful alternative to automobile and plane travel. Texas' population is growing rapidly and the addition of this service could reduce the number of passenger vehicles on the roadways, leading to reduced air pollution from emissions. It could also reduce the number of short airplane trips while giving commuters and out of town travelers some leisure time on their trip. Trains are also more efficient than cars and planes per passenger, important again due to the growing population. I think that train stations are less of a hassle to navigate than airports, too! I would welcome an Amtrak passenger train service because of its potential to help protect our air quality, reduce our oil usage, and provide more transportation options to Texans. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Amy		Austin	TX	78723	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		This would be a wonderful development for Texas.
04/10/2013	Amy Abeyta		San Antonio	TX	78209														High Speed train travel is the future! A line between all the major cities of Texas would be so beneficial for human communication and commerce! El Paso should of course be included. Big vision but doable! Great for the state's interrelatedness and for the environment!
04/10/2013	Amy Birdwell		Garland	TX	75043				X										I am excited to hear that TxDOT is planning on expanding our public rail systems. We need more public rail and we really need high speed rail. I am for high speed rail line expansions in Texas. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Amy Hufford		Austin	TX	78757				X										My family drives to Dallas from Austin on a regular basis to see my in-laws. Almost every time we are on I-35, we see at least one accident that has occurred and is backing up traffic. As we pass the accident scenes, I am always grateful that my family is not involved. Accidents at these speeds typically have injuries or deaths. Driving I-35 on or around a weekend between Austin and Dallas feels like you are taking your life in your hands. We would strongly prefer to ride a fast, reliable train to Dallas. We would probably also visit San Antonio more often as well if there were a fast train to get there and back on the same day. Corpus Christi is also a possible destination for us.
04/10/2013	Amy Hunt		Austin	TX	78749					X									I think High Speed Rail would be an extremely smart project economically as well as for the environment. Economically it would spur more tourism when you make cities in Texas easier and faster to get to and you are opening up the commute corridor. Potential employees maybe willing to work further away if they can get there faster by rail then they could by car. Environmentally, it of course, is more fuel efficient and decreases the amount of traffic on the roads.
04/10/2013	Amy Pancake		Austin	TX	78745	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X			The U.S. needs more public transportation and rail is one important means of that. We must start to address with seriousness the environmental decline of the country and the world.
04/10/2013	Amy Partin		San Marcos	TX	78666		X		X	X									Having a train that travels from north texas to south texas would be better on our pocket books as well as the environment. People would be driving less. I would be more willing to travel if I had the option of taking a train.
04/10/2013	Andrew L. Grohe		San Antonio	TX	78212		X	X	X										I-35 is over-crowded in my estimation, high speed rail has the ability to impact this issue. I would travel to Dallas more often if there was high speed rail, it is more comfortable and safer - it may be more cost effective when wear and tear to the auto is considered.
04/10/2013	Andrew Nguyen		Austin	TX	78750	X	X	X	X		X		X						High-speed rail between Dallas/Austin/San Antonio/Houston will vastly reduce carbon emission.

04/20/2013	Andrew Philbin		college station	TX	77845					X									Why is this project being considered rather than the Dallas Houston project? It appears in the best interest of Texas to get its own cities connect first. I love HSR I just think this route should not happen till we get out major cities connected first.
04/10/2013	Andrew Preisler		Grapevine	TX	76051	X	X		X	X	X	X	X						No
04/19/2013	Angela Graveline		Austin	TX	78751														We need more high-speed rail. It is a cheaper, faster, energy-efficient, and sustainable option for ground transportation.
04/10/2013	Angelica Brehm		Austin	TX	78704		X		X										I would like to see you approve a new, higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. Below are some reasons why: -Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. -A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. -South Texas has no passenger rail service. -The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers -Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. -Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Anita Duffy		Hillsboro	TX	76645		X				X								I think a rail system that does not use fossil fuels would be a great addition to our Texas transportation system. Anyone who drives the I-35 interstate knows what a hazard this is to drivers and the environment. The fumes from the large trucks and cars makes it difficult to breathe for all living animals. Of course I do not expect our Republican state to do any thing to improve life.
04/10/2013	Anita Gebhardt		Dallas	TX	75228		X		X										Rail transportation is the answer to many of our issues -- congestion, pollution, economic growth, jobs, and so on. I loved taking the DART train and buses to work when I lived in the suburbs, and taking Amtrak to Chicago once, a number of years ago. Instead of more privately-operated toll roads, why not a modern, fast, efficient rail system?
04/10/2013	Anita McAuley		San Antonio	TX	78233		X	X	X										There are so many reasons why Texas should be committed to passenger rail. As the major cities in Texas become more and more populated, passenger rail is essential to get people in and out of these large major metropolitan areas since the lack of a passenger rail system will rain down so many more environmental issues (i.e. dirty air) and automobile safety issues not to mention the constant need to find more and more precious downtown space for people to park vehicles. Passenger rail is a 21st century solution to ballooning traffic and dirty air that has been held back for way too long. Surely, we have reached a time where it is no longer just needed but absolutely necessary. I know in San Antonio we have had relatively clean air up until just recently. Do we really need to have super dirty air before anything positive is done to deal with it. Please let's get going on these rail projects and we can address these issues, and, as an added benefit, provide jobs for Texans.
04/10/2013	Anita Mills		Dallas	TX	75208		X	X	X										High speed rail in Texas is an opportunity that is late in coming! It has the potential not only to reduce auto-based pollution, but also to unclog freeways and thus contribute to improved healthful conditions for all of us. This needs to be pursued!
04/10/2013	Ann Pennington		Arlington	TX	76001		X	X	X										High speed rail is an attractive alternative to travel by car or plane for relatively short distances. For me, it is more comfortable and less tiring than either car or plane travel, considering the travel time involved.
04/10/2013	ann vanderlaan		round rock	TX	78664		X		X										Expanding rail service in Texas, IF properly publicized, would improve transportation options, reduce traffic and the need for continuous road expansion, and encourages a more leisurely, European-style of travel sorelacking in the US.
04/03/2013	Anna Jimenez		Laredo	TX	78045														I would like to see passenger train service for Laredo, Texas. It would provide an alternate mode of transportation and I believe it would be a great success.
04/11/2013	Annalisa Peace		San Antonio	TX	78215		X		X										I strongly support passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City for the following reasons: Trains keep more cars off the road. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. As one who frequently travels to Austin for business, I would welcome the option to travel by rail rather than drive the nightmare that is IH 35.
04/12/2013	Anne Burnham		Austin	TX	78701		X		X										I support the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger rail because I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices.
04/10/2013	anne mongere		lewisville	TX	75077				X										I certainly would like high speed rail service to be built in Texas
04/12/2013	Anthony McCradic		Grand Prairie	TX	75050				X										There was some government money sent to Texas A&M to research and investigate High Speed Rail, but I have not seen anything out it. In addition there are a lot of government funds which have been allocated to building or reconstructing roadways, but it didn't include the development of a solid metro system
03/14/2013	Anthony Stolfa		McKinney	TX	75070		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				To whom it may concern. I have had the good fortune to travel abroad and have marveled at the environmental and human efficiency that European high speed rail has to offer. For far too long we have sat in traffic tie ups from Oklahoma City to San Antonio and Houston. The Airport offers solutions for long distance travel. But for shorter distances, we are left with basically one option, the car. Like Europe, we are running out of room to build roads and place cars on them. The most efficient and environmentally friendly way to move people is through rail, as long as that rail is fast. Too many people are dying on overcrowded roadways. The polar caps cannot absorb any more auto emissions. Let's please stop wasting money on overpriced roadways. Taking into account the billions spent on road construction, auto and airline bailouts, and subsidies already supplied to the companies that support those modes of transportation, rail becomes much more attractive. If you consider the cost of maintenance, patrolling, traffic accidents and other factors, rail is less expensive. That is why Europe and Asia rely so heavily on high speed passenger rail. So much so, that they spent money on connecting England to the rest of Europe through rail under the English Channel. Once a high speed rail is established, it will be much easier and cheaper to maintain than the roads we currently take to travel from city to city. Please work towards a high-speed rail service throughout the country. The immediate need in Texas is high speed rail from Dallas to San Antonio and Houston as well as north to Oklahoma City. An extension to Kansas City and Tulsa would tie the high speed rail to the national network that would link to Chicago. Rail offers options for those who cannot travel by car including the elderly and disabled. It offers a way to breathe easier which will improve the lives of our children. The cost of capital (borrowing) is cheap right now with interest rates at all time lows. The price of failing to invest in this infrastructure is too high.

04/10/2013	Beatriz von Ohlen		Brownsville	TX	78521	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X			I feel that train transportation is better for the environment and will reduce the number of cars on the highways.
04/04/2013	Ben Lawrence		Bonham	TX	75418														It's about time we are at the bottom in rail service. It would be good for Texas & Okla but with the people we have in charge you want get it done and I hate to say that because we really do need this. Good luck Retired railroader.
04/10/2013	Benito A. Bondoc Jr.		Laredo	TX	78041					X									I think this would be a great way to travel. In bringing this extra option to Laredo. I would use the services if it were to happen.
04/05/2013	Benjamin Worsham		Edinburg	TX	78542														I would like to show my support of a passenger rail system connecting Hidalgo County and the Rio Grande Valley to the rest of the state and Oklahoma, specifically the connection that would connect McAllen/Edinburg directly to San Antonio. This would go a long way to improve the economy of the both the valley and San Antonio area and allow those who cannot afford to travel an affordable and timely option. This would also make the proposed Hidalgo County Commuter Rail System more viable and give a boost to it's development. The direct connection would also allow for a dedicated passenger rail line, instead of a shared freight line, which would also allow for safer and quicker travel.
04/10/2013	Bernadette Monaghan		Bedford	TX	76021					X									Let's join the new century and upgrade the TX transportation system.
04/10/2013	Bernie Zahn		Richardson	TX	75080	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				This will also open up job opportunities in preparation for the rail, during, and completion. I lived in Europe for a couple of years. I always took the rail, bus, or walked most everywhere. It was fun, enjoyable, and a way to visit with others. It also is a great way to organize your day. So things that we put off we can finish up. Then of course there is the internet and texting or calling. All in all I think is would be fantastic. Please keep me posted on this! P.S. I am one of those that would like to work for the Dept. of Transportation!
04/10/2013	Beth Cullen		San Antonio	TX	78240	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			Population growth in Texas is growing--rail would help lessen the impact of all of the above by decreasing the number of cars on the road.
04/10/2013	Beth Meyers		Carrollton	TX	75010														While I admit that I am not updated on all the details of the proposed study, my concerns are how it affects the human environment as well as the animal environment. As always, there is a balance and everytime we move into new areas, we are flushing out the wildlife that thrives without us. Already we are seeing the results of overdevelopment as the animals scurry for new resources to survive - coming into urban areas. Adding the railway also means that there will be development along the route, particularly around the proposed stops. Also I have concerns on how much more concrete we are adding and how much land we are taking up. I lived in the northeast and rode the subways of New York for many years. It hugely decreased the need for cars, which is something that the DFW area needs to figure out how to do.
03/31/2013	Beth Sperling		Edmond	OK	73012					X									I have taken the Heartland Flyer to and from OKC to FTW a number of times and absolutely love it! Any improvements and additions would be wonderful!
04/10/2013	Bethany Sautter		Austin	TX	78704		X		X										We NEED a rail system here! With so many people moving from out of town and out of state, our roads can barely handle it right now. Prepare for the future and go rail!!!
04/14/2013	Bettye Short		Austin	TX	78745				X										I make the trip from Austin to Dallas at least 5x a year. Think of all my wasted time and gasoline. And its always under construction, slowing my trip down and making it dangerous. Please increase the frequency of trains between these two cities.
04/10/2013	Beverly T.		Corpus Christi	TX	78411						X	X	X		X	X	X		The building of rail-lines disturbs the natural landscape and wildlife the least. All disturbances of the environment eventually effect our water system and I really really really wish more people realized this. Three things for life...air, WATER, and food and I think water will become a HUGE issue before the other two. For me, I would love to travel by TRAIN to California. The train trip not only uses less resources than flying but it is a less expensive way to travel. As it is, I must drive to San Antonio which adds time then pay gas and pay parking. My expenses are as much a concern as the environment.
04/11/2013	Beverly Wunderlin		Coppell	TX	75019		X	X			X	X	X	X					I am in support of the construction of rail travel, particularly high speed rail. I care about the wildlife and the beauty of the natural environment
04/20/2013	Bill Carter		Austin	TX	78741			X	X	X									My comment is that I am strongly in favor of establishing a high-speed rail option connecting the major cities of Texas with each other. I would use rail if available for my occasional travel from Austin to Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Corpus Christi, and the cities of the Rio Grande Valley. Train travel allows work (or rest) in transit, unlike driving, and is only about half as polluting mile for mile as driving or air travel. I have enjoyed using Amtrak for vacation travel to visit family in New Orleans and Washington DC, but would be a more frequent user of rail if it provided rapid connections to frequent destinations. My question is whether there are any proposals or studies regarding high speed rail connecting major Texas cities, and how I could register my support more directly.
04/10/2013	Bill Sakach		Austin	TX	78733			X		X									I am a big supporter & user of trains. When I visit San Francisco for my work in sales I always take CalTrain down the peninsula to visit my customers in the South Bay. When I lived in Chicago I would take the trains to cities outside the metro area. If its fast and on schedule business & families will use it. You can work on email on the train or read books rather than the stress of driving. It so reduces traffic congestion on roads & helps with air Quality by moving a greater number of people with less energy too. Please put high speed rail in TX.
04/10/2013	Bill Schas		Helotes	TX	78023			X			X				X	X			I support high speed passenger rail service, and expanded cargo rail service. I-35 is a parking lot between San Antonio and Austin on many occasions, and is the site of frequent injury accidents. Air quality in Central Texas is getting worse with our growing population. Any development that can reduce vehicular traffic and fuel consumption will help improve these issues.
04/13/2013	Blair Fawcett		Houston	TX	77006			X	X	X				X					I think that a safe, effective railway system that securely transports our citizens from one state or county to another would be a very effective way of traveling. For example, I have family in North Texas and live in South Texas. It would behoove me to have a way of traveling that does not only use car travel. In fact, currently, my options are limited to flight or car vehicle, and I think that a rail that traveled North to South would be great. Particularly if the rail ran through Fort Worth and Houston, two populous areas in Texas. But I affirm that that is my only bias. Otherwise, I think it's a delightful idea if it is executed properly and with elaborate and inclusive safety measures. I put forth the example of Japanese railways systems. One never needs to own a car to travel from Okinawa to Tokyo, for example. Thanks for your consideration, and have a wonderful day.

04/10/2013	Bob Waldrop		Oklahoma City	OK	73106			X	X	X											I support the concept of high speed rail linking Texas destinations into Oklahoma. I travel between OKC and Texas destinations several times a year, and would certainly use such a service.
04/10/2013	BobMurry		Corpus	TX	78418					X											Please give us fast trains. This will be great.
04/10/2013	Bonnie Johnston		Bryan	TX	77802-3603																I'm strongly in favor of seeing high-speed rail connect Houston, Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio. Ideally, it would be great if there was a train from College Station to each of these cities.
04/23/2013	Bonnie Winslow		Guthrie	OK	73044																For some years, travelers riding the Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth were able to roll their bicycles directly into a rail car for a ride between OKC and Ft Worth. This opened up many opportunities for commuting between the smaller towns, and for supporting bicycle tourism between and within Texas and Oklahoma. Due to an upgrade in railroad cars, this practice has been discontinued. Bicycle tourism has increased significantly over the past ten years among all ages and backgrounds. Commuting to work by bicycle has increased 64% in the past twenty years. Providing convenient ridership opportunities for the bike commuter and tourist should be given serious consideration as TDOT considers expanding its passenger rail service in Texas. This study and future infrastructure planning must consider not only roll-on access to railroad cars, but also boarding platforms, convenient connectivity to other modes of transportation, and safe access routes to and from the railroad station. The study should consider increased economic/health/environmental benefits by allowing bicycle travel via passenger rails. Although the focus of this study is not bicycling, cycling does provide an additional alternative in transportation to alleviate congestion between Texas communities. Bicycle tourism is a multi-million dollar industry. The Texas passenger rail system with foresight could position itself to benefit from the emerging bike tourism industry. Key to a successful rail/bike relationship is to 1)re-establish roll-on access between Oklahoma City and Ft. Worth, and 2)to assure other cross country passenger rail services such as Amtrak's Sunset Limited will accept bike roll-ons as well.
04/10/2013	brad eddins		austin	TX	78749					X											We will use rail long after gasoline is unaffordable for private car and private truck transport. Let's build it ASAP!
04/24/2013	Brad Harzman		Emporia	KS	66801		X		X												I strongly support the expansion of the rail line north to Wichita and Kansas City. I'd enthusiastically support the line stopping in Emporia, Kansas, where I live.
03/28/2013	Brad McCaleb					X	X		X												I am proposing a possible rail extension from Austin to Houston, through Bryan/College Station. As Texas A&M and the school in Austin continue to grow and the Houston, Austin and Bryan/College Station metropolitan areas grow there will be more demand for transportation services directly between these regions. A HSR connection would make travel for business, students, faculty, and other events (SEC and BIG 12 game weekends) much safer and more efficient with a reduced impact on the smaller communities between these regions. When we compare the total project cost for upgrading and maintaining highway facilities, the potential environmental impacts and the ability to move large numbers of people very quickly during natural disaster events, the HSR option becomes very competitive.
04/10/2013	Brandon Kelly		Garland	TX	75044		X		X					X	X						I would love the ability to travel across both the metroplex and the country via a rail system, yet we don't even have a rail from DFW to either Dallas or Ft. Worth. That seems absurd.
04/02/2013	Brannon Kroll		San Antonio		78205					X											I am in favor of Higher Speed Rail. Give me the opportunity to get from San Antonio to Dallas in relatively the same amount of time as by car with a degree of flexibility on travel time. While I would love to have Highest Speed Rail at 200+mph, I realize that building specialized tracks is unrealistic. That said, being able to travel at ~120mph, I can get where I need to go in the amount of time or less that it would take me to drive. I would also recommend stops in Laredo/Corpus/McAllen (branch line), San Antonio, New Braunfels, San Marcos, Austin, Temple, Waco and Dallas. I would also recommend a line going to Houston from San Antonio with the goal of getting there in 3 hours or less.
03/19/2013	Braynard H Werner III		Houston	TX	77006					X											I'm strongly in favor of a high speed rail project that runs through the busy I-35 corridor from San Antonio to Dallas. I don't have a strong opinion on the other segments in the study, but having spent most of my life living in this corridor and regularly travelling between cities on the proposed route, I believe this high speed rail project would significantly reduce congestion, attain high ridership and help out economically by keeping goods and people moving. Less traffic, less pollution, less lost time--That sounds like a win for everybody.
03/19/2013	Braynard H Werner III		Houston	TX	77006					X											I'm strongly in favor of a high speed rail project that runs through the busy I-35 corridor from San Antonio to Dallas. I don't have a strong opinion on the other segments in the study, but having spent most of my life living in this corridor and regularly travelling between cities on the proposed route, I believe this high speed rail project would significantly reduce congestion, attain high ridership and help out economically by keeping goods and people moving. Less traffic, less pollution, less lost time--That sounds like a win for everybody.
04/01/2013	Brenda barozinski		Sand Springs	OK	74063														X		First of all. This form should be in only English. I thought Oklahoma had a law that all communication is only English. I recently rode the train from okla city to San Antonio. I had never been on a train, I was shocked at the depot in okla city. Only opened during the train arrival and departure times. When arrived absolutely NO one around to answer or direct people. Went night before to check on location and parking, no one to direct me in parking questions, had to get a number off the billboard. I enjoyed the ride but was also surprised by how old the train was and the interior. But, I think the train service is good for Oklahoma but I think the commission should also explore rail service from Tulsa to Oklahoma City to Texas.
04/10/2013	Brenda Estrada-Berg		San Antonio	TX	78230		X	X	X					X							Any modern, advanced metropolitan areas have high speed rail (electric). I have ridden on trains from Venice to Rome, Nagoya to Tokyo, plus the train from San Antonio to Fort Worth. It's laughable. Do we have to stay in our 3rd world condition in this area of growth?
04/12/2013	Brenda Joyas		Brownsville	TX	78526	X	X		X		X	X	X								The Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail service is long over due. So many people commute between these areas, the environmental impact to these areas as far as roads, cars, run-off is highly affecting our wildlife and flora. This will reduce the contaminants caused by vehicles, crashes from People driving sleepy, or multitasking-texting. Please approve this as soon as possible.
04/10/2013	Brenda Presley		Austin	TX	78759					X											I am in favor of high speed trains in Texas to help reduce congestion on freeways and give people alternatives for travel.
04/10/2013	BRENDA TANNER		FAIRVIEW	TX	75069		X		X	X				X					X		Please DO extend Texas Railways!!!! I believe this would serve many purposes!!!
04/16/2013	brenda thomas		corpus christi	TX	78411																i support the rail strongly. thank you.

04/20/2013	Brendon		Wichita	KS	67217				X											I support bringing passenger rail up the I-35 corridor from south Texas to Oklahoma City, with further extension of the Heartland Flyer line possible through Wichita. I would use this service on trips down to Oklahoma and Texas instead of having to fly. Thank you for the consideration.
04/10/2013	Brent Bray		Pflugerville	TX	78660-2318		X		X											We actually need alternative transportation here in Texas, as the carbon footprint left by all of the automobiles sharing the road is huge, and could be lessened if we have high speed rail throughout Texas. This will help reduce air pollution, and traffic in the urban areas. We need a better mass transit system than we have as the system in Travis County is ridiculous. Not much mass transit outside of the City of Austin. The problem here is that nobody wants to pay for better mass transit. Pretty sorry state of affairs here.
04/10/2013	Brian Bentley		Denton	TX	76209	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							I would support high speed rail between OKC and South Texas. It is a better option for the citizens and the environment compared to building more roads, or adding more planes.
04/01/2013	Brian Paris		Malakoff	TX	75148				X											I think it's time Texas adds high speed rail! I travel the state for work and its impossible to navigate I-35 between Hillsboro and San Antonio without massive delays and several accidents. Please add me to the mailing list
04/10/2013	Brian Schill		Spring Branch	TX	78070-3327		X	X	X	X										Rail service would be an asset to Texans in terms of environmental benefits, keeping highway traffic down, and making travel more pleasant. Some rail passengers would rent cars at their destination, too. I go to Austin, Waco and Dallas a few times a year, and I would certainly consider riding the train, since it is very tiring to sit behind the wheel for hours on end.
04/10/2013	Brooke Bailey		Austin	TX	78703			X	X	X					X					Please move forward on bringing passenger rail to Texas. I would hope the days of Southwest Airlines blocking this are over, and we can move forward. Although I am a native Texan (Austinite), I have lived in areas of the country and in Europe where rail was used extensively and was such a nice, relaxing alternative to driving. In Scotland I never owned a car, and in Chicago I put less than 1,000 miles a year on my car-that is a huge impact when amplified by many. Although the implementation costs are high, the long-term benefits to our transportation needs, stress levels, and society outweighs this (although I would hope there would be STRONG oversight). Please do this, we've been waiting for 30 years!
04/10/2013	brooke werner		anna	TX	75409															I would love to see more rail service throughout the state. We like to travel but are often limited due to time. If we could rely on rail getting us to and from destinations we would travel more often.
04/10/2013	Brownsville Chamber of Commerce		Brownsville	TX	78520															When we look at the purpose of the study Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Rancho Viejo, Port Isabel and South Padre Island should be the preferred corridor for the following reasons: 1.Use of the existing Union Pacific Rail corridor can be utilized more quickly, and with less expense, than establishing a new corridor. 2.Cameron County (especially South Padre Island) is a premier tourist destination for Texans, as well as national and international visitors. Rail service to/from Port Isabel/South Padre Island will lessen roadway congestion. 3.The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs. 4.The Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport has plans to extend its main runway. With the continued growth of enplanements from Mexican flights, provision of rail services to points north would reduce demand on roadways in Texas, by allowing these travelers to go north via rail. 5. In the event of an emergency the passenger rail service could effectively evacuate elderly and disabled people. 6. The rail service will provide an affordable means of travel to area residents. 7. The rail service will promote both the general welfare and economic development in the area.
04/10/2013	Bruny		Harlingen	TX	78552				X											Intrested in having alternatives to traveling with less congestion...hoping to see the vision of Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail study become a reality.
04/24/2013	Bub Osten		Eufaula	OK	74432				X											I would like to know what updates would have to be made to the rails and ties in order to bring them up to the standerd of the train speed of an Oklahoma,Texas passenger train. And what that speed might be.
04/10/2013	Byron Pratt		Austin	TX	78701															I'm 58. I remember fondly of riding the train. It seemed way cooler than the auto and who in the hell could afford the aeroplane :) Sure, the railroads were built by meglamoniacial idiots who did not know what the "f" they were doing (other than making money), but even given that, the railroads more or less worked well Eventually. We need to bring them back. I'll leave you with this: The City of New Orleans by Steve Goodman Riding on the City of New Orleans, Illinois Central Monday morning rail Fifteen cars and fifteen restless riders, Three conductors and twenty-five sacks of mail. All along the southbound odyssey The train pulls out at Kankakee Rolls along past houses, farms and fields. Passin' trains that have no names, Freight yards full of old black men And the graveyards of the rusted automobiles. CHORUS: Good morning America how are you? Don't you know me I'm your native son, I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans, I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done. Dealin' card games with the old men in the club car. Penny a point ain't no one keepin' score. Pass the paper bag that holds the bottle Feel the wheels rumblin' 'neath the floor. And the sons of pullman porters And the sons of engineers Ride their father's magic carpets made of steel. Mothers with their babes asleep, Are rockin' to the gentle beat And the rhythm of the rails is all they feel. CHORUS Nighttime on The City of New Orleans, Changing cars in Memphis, Tennessee. Half way home, we'll be there by morning Through the Mississippi darkness Rolling down to the sea. And all the towns and people seem To fade into a bad dream And the steel rails still ain't heard the news. The conductor sings his song again, The passengers will please refrain This train's got the disappearing railroad blues. Good night, America, how are you? Don't you know me I'm your native son, I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans, I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done.
04/10/2013	C E Saunier		Pflugerville	TX	78660	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced
04/11/2013	Caleb Etheredge		San Antonio	TX	78204		X	X	X	X	X	X								Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's
04/05/2013	camden		Oklahoma City	OK	731369	X	X	X	X	X					X					Please allow bikes to be placed on train going both to and from Oklahoma.

03/25/2013	Cameron Brewer		Norman	OK	73069														As a citizen of Norman, OK, an employee in Oklahoma City and my hometown being San Antonio, this study is important to me. I have been a passenger on the Amtrak lines between San Antonio and Oklahoma City numerous times. Most often, I rode the Heartland Flyer between Gainesville, TX and Norman, OK, however, I have ridden the train all the way from Oklahoma City to San Antonio three different times (each round trip). My main comment is that I would like the study to include total passenger time to get from Oklahoma City and San Antonio, and why people often prefer driving because the time it takes for this entire trip is far too long. Each trip took between 13-14 hours. The first two trips were test runs, and the third out of necessity due to car issues. My question is why would I take a train that is 13-14 hours that is barely cost efficient, if at all, to driving where I could make the trip in 7 hours? Please, please study the layover times in the DFW area and other areas on scheduling to make the time more efficient. If I were able to make the trip in 8-9 hours by train, and breakeven on cost, I would do this in a heartbeat.
04/13/2013	Camille Drinan		Fort Worth	TX	76135		X		X										Having local rail transportation is Long Overdue. We are so far behind other countries and cities. Having local rail transportation will reduce traffic (that is only going to get worse, since we are the fastest growing city in the nation). It will also reduce pollution, thus improving the air quality for this area. We should be able to provide fast local rail transportation to all vital areas; including; Denton, DFW Airport; Waco; Dallas; Weatherford; Fort Worth.
04/10/2013	Candace Baker		Laredo	TX	78045		X	X	X	X					X				I would definitely use rail service. I am currently an Amtrak user and have taken the train both east and west. Rail service from Laredo to San Antonio would provide a great service to connecting airlines providing more alternatives for travel. I would also use the train for travel within Texas as an aging citizen who does not drive at night. In addition, it would provide for additional safety when traveling alone.
03/27/2013	Carey Maynard-Moody		Lawrence	KS	66044		X		X										Passenger rail offers citizens a transportation alternative that protects the environment, provides for the mobility impaired, enhances work productivity during transport time, reduces cost of highway accident response, affords more safety for moving people, enhances economic connectivity and work productivity.
04/01/2013	Carl Lehman		San Antonio	TX	78222					X									We have friends and relatives in Oklahoma, both Oklahoma City and Tulsa, and 20 years ago used to frequently drive on I-35 to visit them. We also used to drive to Austin, Ft. Worth, and Dallas. However, for the past 10 years, we have only driven once because of the traffic congestion around Austin, Ft. Worth, and Dallas. We have been taking the Amtrak Texas Eagle instead, and find it a great way to avoid the traffic on I-35. However, the Texas Eagle takes all day to get us to Ft. Worth and Oklahoma City. A high speed train would be the ideal way for us to travel, and I'm sure our friends and relatives would use a high speed train to come visit us. I think a high speed train connecting San Antonio, Ft. Worth, Dallas, and Houston, Texas, plus Oklahoma City, and even Tulsa, Oklahoma, is needed and would be heavily patronized. Thank you for considering the high speed train option, and I hope to see construction start on it in the near future. We will definitely be among the first riders, and would continue to use it frequently.
04/04/2013	carmen		LAREDO	TX	78045					X					X				it would be great to travel north tx in train, avoid all traffic at the highway and all the long hours spend in the car ... yes if it would be available at the right ticket price would love to travel by train instead than by car of course that they would have to be in place a better way of transportation once we get to the desire destination, better bus route and connectivity with places of interest it would be nice to travel to San antonio, austin, corpus, ... for the weekend without the long drive
04/10/2013	Carmen Bell		Austin	TX	78723					X									Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy
04/10/2013	Carol		Austin	TX	78768		X	X	X										Texas lags behind in public transportation options. More people traveling by train would give another option in travel and keep more driver's off the roads. Even though we are a state of big oil and cars, there ARE other ways to travel and trains are a good one. There are many reasons to use trains more and private vehicles less from environmental to safety. Thank you.
04/16/2013	Carol Baldwin		Corpus Christi	TX	78402					X				X					We really need to invest in rail alternatives to automobile traffic. The number of cars on the road today, the amount of gas they use and the pollution they produce in huge and growing.
04/23/2013	Carol Brashear		Round Rock	TX	78664					X									My concerns are about the lack of 21st century attention to track infrastructure and the politics involved in nation wide rail service. It will be too expensive until it becomes nation wide. Thank you.
04/15/2013	Carol Creech		Fort Worth	TX	76112		X	X	X	X									As a health educator, I can confirm that air pollution and traffic congestion from vehicular transport gravely impact the health of north Texas area residents. Additional rail options are desperately needed. Fort Worth and Amtrak have proven how valuable this option is. We need more rail services!
04/10/2013	Carol Fulton		San Antonio	TX	78249					X									I am in favor of providing passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City. I try to avoid traveling on I-35 because the traffic is so heavy and the driving is so unpleasant and dangerous, especially with the many semi-trailers that must travel that route. Two weeks ago I had to go to Austin and chose to travel on I-35 and noticed many more trucks that appeared to have fracking equipment on them. These trucks are especially dangerous. Their loads are very heavy and the loads are sometimes so wide that they have to have special escort cars. As I get older, I find driving a car in heavy traffic very nerve-wracking. I believe I am still a good driver but many of the younger, more impatient drivers on the road are not, in my opinion, careful drivers. Sometimes they appear to be very distracted with electronic equipment. I believe trains would be a much safer form of transportation, especially as our Texas population ages.
04/11/2013	Carole Sparks		Cameron	TX	76520		X		X		X	X	X	X					I am very much in favor of expanding high-speed rail, not just from Ok. to Tx. but through out the states. It is very much an efficient method of transportation and gives alternate means of travel to those who otherwise might not be able to travel those long distances by car or bus. Please give this proposal your highest priority to implement! It's a project that I feel is well past time to achieve modern/progressive/ options for travel. Thanks for considering the project. I had almost given up that my dream might become reality.
04/12/2013	Caroline Vornberg		Garland	TX	75043					X	X								Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy
04/10/2013	Carolyn Kendrick		Fort Worth	TX	76244														Love it!
04/03/2013	Carolyn Leyendecker		Laredo	TX	78041														I would like to see the new rail service come to Laredo
04/03/2013	Carolyn Moon		Corpus Christi	TX	78411														I would be delighted to have passenger rail available from Corpus Christi to the Valley and North Texas and would be happy to use it.

04/24/2013	David Babich		Wichita	KS	67226				X										Expanding rail service to Wichita from the established route from San Antonio to Oklahoma City is a rational project. That route is important on a national scale that will complete a north/south route to Chicago which then connects to the west coast and the east. Increased passenger rail will also reduce pollution and extend the life of our existing highways. Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas need to collaborate to make this happen.
04/10/2013	David Braun		San Antonio	TX	78247		X		X				X	X					Convenient, speedy, and safe travel around the state (and beyond) will improve air quality, and reduce the impact of travel on global warming.
04/10/2013	David Brenner		Austin	TX	78731				X										I read the department of transportation is considering high speed rail along the 1-35 corridor. I believe this is essential to bringing Texas (Dallas-Austin-San Antonio) into a world class competitive corridor and strongly endorse this consideration.
04/24/2013	David Burk		Wichita	KS	67202		X	X	X										I have taken the SW Chief from Newton, KS to Ft. Madison, IA many times over the past 40 years. Originally, I was able to catch it from Wichita, KS. I will continue to ride it in the future, due to many factors. Riding the train reduces the number of vehicles on the road, thus increasing the air quality and reducing the number of accidents on the road. Both of these contribute to each of our health. Another plus is that additional passenger train service reduces the wear and tear on our highways, saving the tax payers maintenance cost. I request that Texas takes further steps to advance the current heatland Flyer from OK City north through Wichita to Newton, KS. Thank-you for your consideration.
04/24/2013	David Burk		Wichita	KS	67202		X	X	X										I have ridden the Amtrak from Newton, KS to Ft. Madison, IA many times in the past and will continue to do so. I believe that we need to support TX to take further steps to advance the current Heatland Flyer from Ft. Worth - OK City to Wichita, KS and connect in Newton to the SW Chief. Most developed countries around the world have great train service because it reduces trucks, cars and other vehicles on the roads. This in turn reduces air pollution and accidents, both of which help human health. Making the final connection between Ok. City and Newton will, I believe, considerably increase the customer base for the railroad.
04/10/2013	David Chapa		Laredo	TX	78045				X					X					Comment: Over the years, I have seen the traffic on I-35 increase and security being at risk. In my experience, part of it is greatly due to the increase in the import/export business. More trailers and 18-wheeler trucks are traveling on the same highway as passengers. Due to this, and a forecast increase in trailers on the highway, Laredo is a prime choice for the train. Passengers would have the a better traveling option and the decrease in traffic will make our high ways safer for travel. On a side note, an alternative route to Houston will also clear traffic from the already over-crowded highways and it would further help connect the Gulf to the inside of the state.
04/04/2013	David De La Rosa		Dallas	TX	75229				X						X				Would really be nice for it to run from Oklahoma to Brownsville Texas. If it went all the way down to the border, I feel there would be lots more passengers on it. Right now there is many bus lines going down to the Rio Grande Valley and in the past years many accidents causing many lives have occurred on these bus lines and also in personal cars. I think these trains would get lots of cars of the interstates especially with all the traffic in Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio. I would definitely take it down to the Rio Grande Valley.
04/26/2013	David Dickerson		Edmond	OK	73012		X		X	X				X					I strongly support improving passenger rail service in the Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas corridor. This is a welcome initiative and I thank TXDOT for leading. I hope the Oklahoma Department of Transportation will actively support the effort rather than undermining it as they have done every non-highway transportation development proposal in the past. To make this effort truly effective and to have the greatest impact, frequency of service must be a primary focus. Frequency must be high enough to offer meaningful alternative to driving and offer flexibility in departure and arrival times along the route. I think a minimum of 4 round trips per day between Oklahoma City and the DFW Metroplex will be required to establish service. Hopefully this will begin to reduce the number of automobiles on the Interstate 35 corridor but is certainly not a "silver bullet" solution. Viable passenger rail service will reduce traffic congestion, improve safety by reducing the traffic volume, and improve air quality in densely populated areas by reducing automobile emissions. I hope to see "enhanced" conventional passenger rail improvements as the initial focus rather than focusing on high speed rail exclusively. If the KS/OK/TX corridor can be upgraded to 110 mph service like the Chicago-St Louis line, that will have greater immediate impact than studying HSR for decades. This higher speed conventional service could be fully operational in less than five years if sufficient emphasis and investment by the states involved can be garnered. HSR should be the eventual goal, but in order to change the auto-centric culture we should provide rail alternatives as soon as possible. Has this approach been considered? Thank you and I look forward to future developments.
04/12/2013	DAVID FERGUSON		CORPUS CHRISTI	TX	78418				X	X	X								The presentation and conversation with TXRAIL was very informative. Much planning and thought has gone into this study and I was very impressed. The key is arrival and departure times from a location. People who want to be somewhere do not want to waste time waiting for an event to occur. If I have a Medical appointment in SA, I want to leave CC in time to get there and then get back the same day, without a lot of time between events. If I am going from CC to Dallas, I do not want to take the long way around, shortest path, least opportunity for delays. If people are going to the beach for the weekend they want to arrive in CC for dinner and not return until after mid-day of their last vacation day. And they would like to have baggage checked no matter which speed train they use. The sooner the better to implement the service the better. It will assist us all in giving us the availability to improved shopping, travel options, better health care, education opportunities, career growth. It can allow people to live in distant cities from their work and commute each day, improving their quality of life. Documents and goods could be sent sameday from depot desk to depot desk. This project is a win-win for us all, environmentally, investment, fuel, maintenance cost rail/hiways.
04/10/2013	David Fitzgerald		San Antonio	TX	78240														This would be a great addition to our transportation system. I for one would try and use it as much as possible, especially for trips to SA-Austin. It would also be a great economic and environmental benefit. Take a look at the Europe train system -- its convenient, economical, fun to ride and on time!!!
04/10/2013	DAVID JOHANSSON		Austin	TX	78717	X	X	X	X										Having been fortunate to travel abroad extensively, it is very clear that a modern, fast, safe, and reliable passenger and freight rail system is essential for building commerce and relieving traffic congestion. I am an Austin Metrorail user and fan, and I strongly support high speed rail development as a Texas taxpayer.
03/30/2013	David Lacy		Waco	TX	76703				X										For any new rail development to truly meet the public need...it needs to stop in large cities along or close to the route. Cities like Waco, Temple, and other similar cities need to have stops on the proposed route. Stopping only at large metro cities will not meet the public demand.

03/26/2013	Dr. Cristian Bratu		Waco	TX	76712															Dear Madam, dear Sir, I cannot tell you how excited I am about the prospect of having a train connection between Oklahoma and Texas. It is entirely unacceptable that, at a time when modern countries boast tens of thousands of miles of rail (and even fast trains), Texas is still lagging behind in terms of rail transportation. I drive very often on I-35 and we all know how congested this highway can get. I am grateful that TxDOT is now adding extra lanes to I-35 on certain sections but now matter how many lanes we add, the problem of traffic will NOT go away if we don't have an alternative to I-35. Rail is the solution to that problem. I believe that having a train connection between OK and TX is an extremely important project and I hope it will be adopted and implemented as soon as possible.
04/11/2013	Earl Eubanks		San Antonio	TX	78217	X		X	X											I think that this is something that we've needed for years. Hi-speed rail would help tie smaller towns together without building more and bigger hi-ways. There would also need to have better local public transportation.
04/10/2013	Ed Adams		Dallas	TX	75209	X	X	X	X		X	X	X							There are way too many cars and trucks on our roads. Lets bring on the trains.
04/10/2013	Eddie Hartman		Murphy	TX	75094														X	Rapid Transit Rail will provide a viable option to air travel between the major business/cultural centers in Texas and Oklahoma. However, the system should focus on non-stop service between the population areas. Last Summer I wanted to travel from Dallas to San Antonio with my family on AmTrax and the trip was to take 10 hour! That is not a reasonable alternative to car or air travel.
04/10/2013	Eddy E. Hernandez		Brownsville	TX	78523				X										X	I would like to request that the TOPRS Committee strongly consider the Brownsville/South Padre Island metro area as a destination for the southern rail line. I believe the Brownsville metro area has many advantages: •Existing US rail corridor •Rail lines from Brownsville, TX to Monterrey MX •Passenger air transportation from Brownsville to US and Mexican destinations •Close proximity to a major vacation destination for US and Mexican travelers, South Padre Island. •Coming soon - an Interstate to speed travel to major cities I-69
04/02/2013	Eden		Boerne	TX	78006															I love the idea of having a passenger rail in Texas! This is something we definitely need! I'm hoping for a fast train, also hoping for something a little less expensive than Amtrak. I've taken passenger trains in the northeast and in England, and I've always thought: "Why don't we have these in Texas?"
04/11/2013	Edgar and Cinda Pace		San Antonio	TX	78247				X	X										These comments relate to just about all of the topics above. Rail service between the major Texas-Oklahoma cities would relieve traffic congestion on highways, reduce pollution from cars meaning less noise and cleaner air. Please start building more rail service in Texas.
04/10/2013	edna lopez		austin	TX	78736		X	X												How is Austin going to adjust to the high migration that the city is experiencing? Traffic is very slow in southwest (examples: the Y, Brodie Lane) where hundreds of families live and need to commute each day. On this side of town, the offer of housing is very limited and points towards development heading to Dripping Springs, and Highway 290 West is quite congested already once it reaches the Y, it only has 2 lanes.
04/01/2013	Edward Trevino		Laredo	TX	78041															This is one mode of transportation that has been missing in South Texas for years. I remember back in 1964 when I returned to Laredo for leave after training in the Air Force I took the train from Laredo to San Antonio and then from San Antonio to Tucson AZ. This was fairly priced and a comfortable trip. It's enjoyable to take a nice trip, relax and enjoy the view. Rental cars are now becoming reasonable in pricing so once you reach your destination you have mode of transportation. I've traveled from west coast to east coast and I always prefer ground travel (driving) over air travel, only problem is you see the view but have to concentrate on driving safely. Buses are too crowded where the train provides a comfortable atmosphere. To me this idea of Rail travel being brought back is awesome.
04/10/2013	Elaine Betterton		Austin	TX	78728				X											My husband and I want to buy an electric car but the range worries us for long distance trips. Having a viable rail service for Texas would fill that void for us without having to hassle with airports, which we wouldn't do. We want to do what's right for the world and the combination of electric vehicles and a good rail system in the state/nation would go a long way to improving our air quality and reducing the stress on the roads/infrastructure. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/11/2013	Elaine Blodgett		McDade	TX	78650				X											One of the many things we need in Texas is a better transportation system. Anything you can do to help would be deeply appreciated.
04/10/2013	Elaine Hobbs		Round Rock	TX	78665		X		X										X	Texas and the United States as a whole, are behind in using high speed rail. We have SO MUCH flat land, if you go to other countries, the high speed trains are a way of life. The best way to move a large amount of people efficiently is by rail. We need to catch up to the rest of the world! I am a born and raised Texan from the Panhandle of Texas. We need to get over our love affair with cars and trucks, even though they will always be around. I rode the commuter train in Plano to Dallas and thought that it was awesome! It was also packed!!
04/03/2013	Elena Buentello		Corpus Christi	TX	78401															This proposed is a must a long overdue. This rail system will take stress off of the infrastructure and provide the people of Texas and Oklahoma communities with transportation options!
04/10/2013	Elise Johnston		Dallas	TX	75287		X	X			X	X	X							I believe that given adequate rail service that more people from Texas and Oklahoma would "ride the rails". The use of automobiles will always be a part of the landscape, but for longer journeys rail travel is a palatable, economical, alternative.
04/15/2013	Elizabeth Cook		Carrollton	TX	75010				X											Texas is in need of high speed rail service. The most-traveled corridors are clogged with auto traffic and trucks. Rail would provide an alternative for travelers and improve overall safety. thank you.
04/16/2013	Elizabeth G. Craig		Driftwood	TX			X		X		X	X	X							Texas needs rail.
04/11/2013	Elizabeth McGlasson		Austin	TX	78748															Rail is good. Lets invest in our future.

04/26/2013	Eve Atkinson - <i>Comment part 3</i>	Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department	Oklahoma City,	OK	73034																															<p>However, the cost per passenger can again outweigh family use of a passenger car to the airport. For example flights from DFW or Dallas Love airport are generally cheaper than flights from Oklahoma City, but if the train costs more than the plane there is no incentive. The trip purpose: How important is it to provide service to quasi leisure trip demand? Quasi leisure can be described as a mixed purpose trip, such as medical visits, shopping trips for specialties, "leisure business" such as conventions, music or dance competitions, pageants, Latin dancing, ball room dancing, chapter meetings in clubs and organizations such as professional organizations but can serve purposes of tourism. The payoffs for taking the train would be less driving stress (according to the Texas Transportation Institute, The Dallas Forth Worth area is the 6th worst of the nation, www.weather.com/activities/driving/slideshow/traffic.html?page=10&scheme=image-horiz-plain.css) Leisure business would require adding stops along the route to a major destination, before the metro area is reached. Fostering a mixed purpose trip, (meeting passenger needs) would require more stops to include useful destinations, combining utilitarian destinations with attractions. It is possible to serve the work ethic of "work then play" or "work hard, play hard" by providing opportunities to arrive at a multi- purpose destination. An intermediate hub with light rail links allowing dispersal of trips may work. Altering the schedule to allow all the passengers along the way from Oklahoma City to a point in Texas to transfer to high speed rail throughout the Texas metropolis, could allow passengers to arrive by 10 am in the morning to the airport, to the Dallas Convention Center or to downtown Ft Worth. This would be the ideal scenario. A study or report on frequent destinations from other studies could support this scenario. Livability: Neighborhood and regional traffic conditions How can the service be improved to make the communities where the passenger train has stations more livable? There are two components of availability which support livability, frequency of service and a well designed site. If the train does not arrive during waking hours (6 am to midnight), it is as if the service does not exist. Also contributing to low use rates is poor traffic circulation. If the station site is congested, the parking is complicated, the site is unkempt, complex or requires walking through bus or traffic drop off lanes, it is inaccessible. Furthermore, a train station could be a point of avoidance, similar to a city bus station, if it is designed poorly and not well maintained. If the area appears unsafe people will not want to use the service until gasoline prices or costly parking or lack of parking cause a hardship. Off site design is not a part of this study, but on site design and improved connections needs to be. Site and Design criteria Stations and stops need to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. Also include close temporary parking for seniors and families. Cross walks should be well marked, with crossing signal lights imbedded in the adjacent streets.</p>
04/26/2013	Eve Atkinson - <i>Comment part 4</i>	Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department	Oklahoma City,	OK	73034																															<p>There should be some outlying parking, a well-lit and open layout to facilitate the change of travel mode. Include accessible service counters, ramps instead of stairs, signs to answer basic questions like arrival and departure times, fares, restroom locations, well marked waiting areas and benches or sitting platforms. Photos of the inside of the rail cars and carry-on stowage should be posted to prepare people to load. Compensate for a lack of an attendant at the OKC AMTRAK station by providing auto kiosks, or a limited choice computer to make information available 24/7. Provide other self service facilities to increase travelers' knowledge and comfort. Coordinate plans with other mass transit modes: Include improvements supporting various modes of travel. Design the site to accommodate buses, shuttle and taxi pick up, drop off lanes separated from passenger car drop off and loading, and temporary parking. Relocating tracks is not as flexible as providing shuttles to improve connectivity. A flexible, demand driven destination shuttle to take people to areas more than 4 blocks away but less than 2 miles away could work. People would wait in "bench rows" according to their destination, and which ever fills up first, leaves first. A transit logistics manager could shift the routes to allow an infrequent destination to "piggy back" on a more frequent one. Studies have been done showing the most efficient way to load an airplane, so a transportation logistics expert could develop a flexible route system. Measures to share investment costs in the Mass transit system: Investigate ways the mass transit industry and corporations could contribute to costs of passenger rail infrastructure and benefit from passenger rail service. Auto and health insurance companies could benefit from reduced traffic congestion on highways which generate accidents. Mass transit can reduce the number of accidents and injuries. Again, research existing studies performed at Universities and Institutions to present the facts. Oil and gas companies can be given incentives to invest in mass transit linking their investment to tradeoffs for carbon emissions. It reduces the carbon footprint of vehicle use, which decreases carbon emissions. Government funding of passenger rail infrastructure: What are the benefits from government supported passenger rail service for leisure travel? Can it be justified as an efficient way to move vacationers? Is mass transportation for leisure trips a "greater good" for society? There are studies showing highway systems are subsidized. Who benefits the most from highway construction and maintenance? Many highway projects are built using an 80/20 match, with USDOT programs. Is it sustainable to continue increasing the width of highways beyond a certain number of lanes? Is safety culture (benefiting travelers and employees) a benefit from government management of rail transit? According to Progressive Railroading (August 2012), AMTRAK is working to expand a program to improve the railroad's safety culture; improving workforce development initiatives; and investing in more systems and technology that help reduce energy consumption and operating expenses.</p>

03/14/2013	Greg Fry		Gainesville	TX	76240				X										I am for one very interested in rail travel, would love if it would allow me to commute from Gainesville to Denton for work. This would save much wear and tear on our vehicles and be much safer. Wondering why you would not schedule a meeting in Gainesville, but have one in Sherman which is not in the impact area? Thank you.
04/15/2013	Gregory Pasztor		san antonio	TX	78209-3317		X	X	X					X					Establishment of frequent rail service among the cities of Oklahoma and Texas would reduce automobile pollution thereby improving air quality, human health, and reducing automobile accident deaths. Any environmental impact the rail right-of-way might pose would be offset many times over by the reduction of use of carbon based fuels resulting from fewer cars on the road.
04/10/2013	Gregory Wayland		New Braunfels	TX	78130	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						Improving passenger rail transportation inside Texas and connections to other destinations would be a great transportation boon to our state. The continual adding and expanding highways degrades our environment and is not the most efficient use of our resources. Having a true mix of transportation options would also help during peak commuter periods in and around large metropolitan areas. It would also help improve our air and water quality let alone not adding more traffic noise.
04/05/2013	Gretchen Arnold		Corpus Christi	TX	78404									X			X		April 5, 2013 Mark Werner TxDOT - RRD 125 E. 11th St. Austin, Texas 78701 Re: San Antonio to Rio Grande Valley / Corpus Christi / Laredo Passenger Rail Service Dear Mr. Werner: I am writing to express my strong support of, and confidence that passenger rail service between Corpus Christi and San Antonio is very needed and would be heavily utilized. On a daily basis, thousands of people drive from Corpus Christi to San Antonio to catch an airplane, catch a train, shop or do business. I am most certain the same number of people drive from San Antonio to Corpus Christi daily for business or recreational purposes. The motorized vehicle mode of transportation between Corpus Christi and San Antonio is a source of congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption. The drive itself has little to offer in terms of interest or aesthetics. Quite frankly, it is one of the more plain, boring and uninteresting drives in Texas. So much so, that most of my associates hate the boring and time-wasting drive. Because the lone drive is mandatory (no other mode available), drivers are forced to the mindless drudgery of the boring drive and either doze off or race to get it over with, causing numerous fatal accidents on this stretch of Texas road annually. Motorists would be clamoring to get out of the drivers seat an into a train seat to read, work, or relax on the Corpus Christi/San Antonio leg of their journey. The San Antonio connection of an Amtrak hub greatly increases the value of this component of the system. Travel anywhere in the U S via train is open to all with this one opening leg of passenger service. Some environmental impact may occur during the project, however that would be minimal as the rail line would take place on existing rail line and build-outs would be minimal. The associated reduction in air emissions by taking thousands of vehicles off of the road daily would more than offset any negative environmental impact of the project. This one leg opening up for passenger service could be instrumental in the continued attainment of air quality standards and therefore no conformity planning requirements that Corpus Christi, TxDOT regional MPOs and San Antonio currently enjoy. I encourage TxDOT to support this study and move ahead with moving South Texas ahead in alternative modes of transportation.
04/10/2013	Guillermo R. Ugalde, Jr.		Laredo	TX	78046				X										I am very much supportive of this railway system! It is needed in our area and will help decongest the automobile traffic on the I-35 corridor. As we continue to see a increase in population, this project is well overdue. Mass transit is vibrant and effective in every other industrial country, as well as in advanced metropolitan areas around our country. It's about time that we stop playing catch-up, and start leading in the search for proactive solution within our transit system.
04/10/2013	Gus Sr Chavarria		Mansfield	TX	76063	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					Anytime that you remove cars from the road you are helping the environment. You are saving lives due to the environment and traffic accidents. Lets hope that one day we can make our country car free.
04/10/2013	gwen sederholm		austin	TX	78759		X	X	X		X			X	X				let's have more trains and fewer cars.
04/10/2013	h. keith mephodie sterzing		Cedar Park	TX	78613-3465	X	X	X	X	X				X	X				High speed rail to all major cities is an essential component of any 21st century transportation plan! Please approve and proceed as rapidly as possible!
04/26/2013	hank harvey		Parkville	MO	64192	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				Expand passenger trains in Texas and through the Midwest. It makes sense any way you look at it.
04/10/2013	Hans Laven		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78212-2977	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	I favor electric passenger rail service as the most economicl and healthful option for transportation throughout South and central Texas.
04/20/2013	Harold Farrier		Wichita	KS	67203														Our Wichita, KS community is very excited about the passenger train rail service to Texas and also to Kansas City. It would be such a blessing for travel and traffic. The benefits to the environment and fuel consumption would be wonderful. PLEASE include Wichita in your planning. And EXPEDITE the process, so we can start traveling to Texas cities very soon.

04/03/2013	Ida Chamberlain		Laredo	TX	78045														Having our old train station in Laredo is a great opportunity for those who travel frequently or not to either San Antonio or Corpus Christi. I do travel quite often to these cities and would like traveling by train rather than using my car. As people get older they look for a more convient and affordable ways to get away and enjoy other great destinations. I remember when I was young we would travel to Chicago,IL to see my dad, a factory worker. So my mom would take us 3 kids on a long jouney from Laredo all the way to Chicago's Union station. Please bring this sevice back to Laredo.
04/01/2013	Imelda		Zapata	TX	78076														Federally Funded? They should use the money to fund Border Patrol pay and keep our border safe!!! They should also fund education!!! not a train that will take jobs away from bus drivers... No, do not build it!! Bad, bad idea
04/11/2013	Inelda Z. Gonzalez		Harlingen	TX	78552					X								X	Wildlife/vegetation is of great concern to various areas within Texas. The regulatory process is a major area that needs to be included in the final decision.
04/10/2013	Isabel Delatorre-Hansen		Brownsville	TX	78521-5633				X					X					(Debe decir : "Su comentario SE REFIERE a....")
04/10/2013	Isabel Wood		San Antonio	TX	78232					X									Tx needs passanger and light rail.
04/10/2013	Iva L Riddle		Arlington	TX	76010				X										Texas needs more passenger rail service, and Texas needs more high speed rail service. We need the option of going by rail instead of flying or driving.
04/10/2013	j powers		fort worth	TX	76107													X	i SUPPORT THE HIGH SPEED RAIL BETWEEN oKLAHOMA CITY AND SOUTH TEXAS! THIS WOULD REDUCE TRAFFIC ON OUR ALREADY CONGESTED HIGHWAYS. HOPEFULLY IT WOULD AVOID AWARDING MORE CONTRACTS TO FOREIGN AND OUT-OF- TEXAS CONTRACTORS FOR MORE ROADS. IT WOULD REDUCE AIR POLLUTION BY LOWERING THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES ON OUR ROADS, REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF FUEL PER-PERSON TO TRAVEL THE SAME ROUTE AND INCREASE THE SAFETY OF TRAVELERS. THE NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDER HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATING IN PAST YEARS WITH HEAVY TRAFFIC RESULTING IN INCREASED TRAVEL TIMES AND HIGHWAY SHUTDOWNS. MANY PEOPLE THAT WOULD NOT HAVE CHOSEN MASS TRANSIT IN THE PAST WOULD NOW BE RECEPTIVE BECAUSE OF THE TRAFFIC AND INCREASED FUEL COSTS.
04/23/2013	J R Meschi		South Padre Island	TX	78597														I think rail service from the Rio Grand Valley would be well received and a popular option for traveling north. Additionally, it would reduce traffic on the well traveled arteries, reducing automobile accidents. During high season times on South Padre Island, additional methods of travel, such as rail, would open an entirely new market for tourism to our area. I hope TxDOT will strongly consider approving the railroad travel proposal.
04/04/2013	J. R. Price		Fort Worth	TX	76109-3535													X	I am in favor of more intercity trains (Amtrak or private railroads) and transit rail because of a concern about traffic and air quality. Building more highways, or spending billions of dollars and years of hassle widening present interstate and state highways, does not assist this country in lessening the demand for fossil fuels. Building highways has a huge negative impact on the quality of air in urban areas. Also, travel by rail is certainly less stressful than travel by air, which impacts our quality of life. This is what I would like to see in Texas: (1) More frequency of Amtrak trains on existing routes, and improved speeds. We do not necessarily need high speed trains initially, if we could have trains that average 60-70 mph to be more competitive with our individual cars. One train a day in each direction is not necessarily convenient. A morning departure to OKC from FTW would help tremendously. Trains running between Marshall and San Antonio several times a day on existing tracks would attract riders doing business at all the cities along the Eagle route. Also, creating routes that include Waco, instead of McGregor would make more sense economically. (2) Additional routes between SAT-HOU-DAL-FTW (the Texas Triangle) with stations at airports at SAT, IAH, DAL, and DFW. (3) New routes from Fort Worth to El Paso and Fort Worth to Amarillo through Lubbock. (4) Extend the Texas Eagle route to Corpus Christi and the Valley. For the area: (5) Extend passenger rail from OKC to Tulsa and onto Kansas City. (6) Extend a route from FTW to LBB to AMA to Denver so people could go to Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco by way of the California Zephyr. Business travelers would not travel between DFW and DEN most likely, but many leisure travelers would, if they could. Efficiency in air travel would improve if more people could ride trains between the short markets (DFW to AUS or SAT, or DFW to IAH) to catch airplanes to cities that are 750 miles or more away from each other.
04/10/2013	Jaclyn watters		Austin, TX	TX	78705			X	X	X	X			X	X				I'd love a new rail in Texas. I don't own a car and transportation around the state is tough and very expensive, as well as wasteful in terms of gas and the environment. Imagine how much pollution and gas we would save if some of my friends who drive 5 hours to see their girlfriends every weekend had another choice! Public transport is the way if the future and in my experience in Texas it is well used once in place.
03/26/2013	Jacob Gaslin		McAllen	TX	78504													X	I like the idea of a rail system across Texas, and with the construction of I-69 going on, I would think it would be a great idea that the rail system not only goes to Brownsville, but that the system also goes the McAllen and then connects to Mexico to help create an international passenger rail system that can connect the McAllen metropolitan area to Mexico City and other locations. This rail system can create jobs for the McAllen area and hopefully attract larger corporations to the area where McAllen can finally get a decent skyline for a city that large.
04/11/2013	Jacquelyn Linn		Whitney	TX	76692														I have thought for many years that we need high speed rail service across the nation. It needs to be affordable and within reach.
04/10/2013	Jacqueline Parker-Boyd		Austin	TX	78753			X		X								X	This would be a great contribution to alternative travel options. This would help consumers save money on travel expenses, with more rail and route options. Air travel could be reduced for individuals who travel between cities
04/10/2013	Jade Segura		Longview	TX	75605			X		X									Is the closest to east Texas in Dallas or would go closer this way? I live close to Shreveport Louisiana....(By I20)
04/01/2013	JAIME R.		OKLAHOMA CITY	OK	73112														Just want to say that this would be the greatest thing since the building of I35. please approve this corridor.
04/11/2013	Jake D Sitters		Castroville	TX	78009														I don't have a problem with high speed rail. I say, include high speed rail from San Antonio to El Paso. For me, at age 83, that's a 10-hour drive. Re the responses, Yes/Si and No/No, isn't it a bit redundant? EVERYBODY in Texas, including those who speak only one language, knows either one.

04/10/2013	James A. Wright		Hurst	TX	76054		X	X	X	X				X	X	X			Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/15/2013	James Bordonaro		Emporia	KS	66801				X		X								I support running a rail line (preferably high speed) to the west of the I-35 interstate right of way in those parts of the proposed route that are highly congested to hold down cost. In rural areas the rail line should attempt to run as close as possible to the existing highway to minimize environmental impacts. I would consider using the rail from Wichita to the Corpus Christie area as we've got friends in both Round Rock and Rockport.
04/24/2013	James D. Maynard		Bristow	OK	74010														I would like to see passenger rail extended from the DFW area through OKC to the Wichita/Newton area.
04/10/2013	James Dowis		Austin	TX	78746		X	X	X										Please do what you can to ensure that Texas gets the passenger rail that is needed. Austin to OKC, through Dallas, would greatly cut down on the amount of pollution from cars and planes, not to mention save people lots of time and frustration. The NW and NE have invested in passenger rail that has served them very well. We have to look to what our needs are in the future, make responsible decisions now and do what is best for the environment. Now is not the time to think short term. Not on this issue.
04/10/2013	James E Wiggins		Dallas	TX	75218		X		X										I am wildly in favor of getting high speed rail in Texas, wherever it goes. Mass transportation is always a good thing, since it has multiple benefits. It gets some cars/trucks off of the road, which improves our environmental (think clean air!) situation. It helps people who don't have cars get from point A to point B in a cost effective way. Texas is a huge state, and having higher speed rail would improve its outlook in a business sense. Thanks for listening, and let's get this done!
04/10/2013	James Kaufmann		El Paso	TX	79902	X				X									I support passenger rail travel investment in general, and this project seems a good idea. It will help the environment by reducing emissions. It may also facilitate a net reduction in noise pollution by alleviating the need for aviation.
04/04/2013	James Klein		Corpus Christi	TX	78411		X		X										I am in favor of this project, though I would want to minimize its environmental impact.
04/12/2013	James Lee		Arlington	TX	76017		X												I strongly favor the expansion of rail networks in Texas, and throughout the country. If the rails are properly maintained, this form of transportation is the most comfortable and safest there is. It also helps the environment by taking large numbers of cars off the road.
04/10/2013	James McDonald		Austin	TX	78703		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			Please provide additional passenger rail from Oklahoma to South Texas, specifically the Austin to DFW corridor. Thank you.
04/10/2013	James R Blount		San Antonio	TX	78229-5049	X	X	X	X		X	X	X						What with light rail in Dallas and Houston, dependable, efficient, public intracity transportation is becoming a reality in Texas. What is sorely lacking is state of the art, intercity, rail transportation. There is no good reason why we can't have it. It's becoming a reality California. The same could happen in Texas.
04/13/2013	James Soper		Austin	TX	78764		X	X	X	X		X	X						We need high speed rail now. It will happen, but act now before we run out of ROW building roads.
04/25/2013	James Stearns		Mission	TX	78572														Rail service into the RGV would be not only be prudent but would also move freight plus people. It's a long needed service and I believe it help immensely.
04/15/2013	James Varnum		Oklahoma City	OK	73103														I would love to see high speed transit between okc and Texas. I would make the trip down much more frequently if there was a quick and convenient way to travel. I love the heartland flyer, and more an even more efficient train would be extremely beneficial to interstate visits
04/10/2013	James Zametz		Fort Worth	TX	76110				X										I would just like to say that I am for the proposed speed rail line to run from OKC to Austin. I believe that alternative transportation options are vital to America's future and environmental health. Thank you
04/10/2013	Jan Ray		Georgetown	TX	78626		X		X										I think anything that lessens the traffic in Texas is a good thing.
04/10/2013	Jane Guinn		Rockport	TX	78382														Please - a high speed rail is the perfect means of travel in Texas. We need it, and from conversations with associates around the state - it would be well used. Thank you - Jane Guinn
04/11/2013	jane vaughan		arlington	TX	76014	X	X		X	X									I would love to see a rail system in Texas-- also, may cut down on DUI!
04/15/2013	Jane Whitaker		Wimberley	TX	78676				X										As an aging citizen of Texas, I would like to see more passenger rail transportation in Texas. I dislike having to drive on crowded highways like I35 and would rather travel by train between cities. Good rail transport would keep more cars off the highways. Decent public transportation within cities would also be appreciated.
04/10/2013	Janelle Favela		Arlington	TX	76002		X		X						X				It would be wonderful to have an alternative means of transportation. Can't wait for the TRE to extend this far!
04/10/2013	Janet		Austin	TX	78749		X	X	X		X	X	X		X				Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Janet Cooper		Corpus Christi	TX	78401		X		X						X				A rail line would fit my needs perfectly, and would be safer than by road or air. Also less polluting.

04/11/2013	Jennifer Beck		Ingleside	TX	78362		X		X										Rather take train than drive or fly
04/10/2013	Jennifer Ellis		Austin	TX	78704		X	X	X										I am writing to register my support for moving forward on Passenger rail from Oklahoma City to South Texas. As poplutions continue to increase exponentially in Texas, we need more and better transportation options. Having rail service that stretched the state would help with traffic congestion, air quality concerns, and offer Texans a great new option for traversing the state-- one that is better for individuals and the state as a whole than continuing to rely so heavily on cars and planes for our transportation options. Please help bring Texas forward into the 21st century concerning transportation options by installing passenger rail from Texas' head to toe. Thanks for your consideration of my comments.
04/10/2013	Jennifer Fisher		Austin	TX	78744														Texas needs a passenger train rail! Let's shift into modern times and get with the program. Our state is huge, we've got a large population, we need safety, ease of transportation and community! In my mind there is no good reason we don't already have one.
04/10/2013	Jennifer J. Bray		Corpus Christi	TX	78404				X										Texas needs high speed rail. The Interstate 35 corridor is one of the most deadly highways in North America. My city, Corpus Christi, would greatly benefit from increased tourism if there was high speed rail connecting Corpus Christi to San Antonio. High speed rail connecting San Antonio to Austin to Dallas is a no-brainer. Do what's right to 1) help the environment, 2) reduce traffic fatalities on Texas highways, and 3) increase tourism and travel in Texas.
04/12/2013	Jennifer Martin		Cedar Park	TX	78613		X	X											Yes, I support the possibility of trains for Texas. We are well overdue to get with the environmental program and cut down on carbon emissions.
04/10/2013	Jennifer Nazak		Ormond Beach	FL	32176				X	X									I strongly support a high-speed passenger rail service connecting Oklahoma and South Texas. It would help air quality, reduce our use of oil, reduce traffic, and improve people's quality of life.
04/01/2013	Jennifer Wu		Houston	TX	77005				X										Please consider including Houston in the rail study. The large number of energy jobs and the state-of-the-art medical center make Houston a popular destination for visitors from Dallas, Austin, and OKC. Thank you!
04/10/2013	Jeremiah Scott		Richardson	TX	75080														This would be an excellent start to a statewide rail network. PLEASE MAKE IT HAPPEN!
04/10/2013	Jeremie Gordon		Cedar Park	TX	78613		X		X										I think a high speed rail from Oklahoma City to San Antonio would be fantastic. It about time we start getting serious about high speed mass transit along the I-35 corridor. I live in Cedar Park and would ride the high speed rail every time I travel to/from DFW. In the last 5 years I have often delayed trips or added additional travel time to my agenda in order to account for the uncertainties of wrecks or highway shutdowns when I'm on I-35. There doesn't seem to be any hope for reducing the amount of traffic on I-35 from Dallas to San Antonio.
04/10/2013	Jerry Akers		Austin	TX	78731-3751														Rail saves time and money. Driving is more expensive in time and money. In other words, it is time for Texas to take a step toward the 21st century. Build it.
04/01/2013	Jerry Roane - comment part 1		Georgetown	TX	78628		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study public comments to CH2M HILL Energy in the future will drive decisions and traditional trains simply use too much energy per passenger mile at 2812 BTU per passenger mile. This is not green it is not energy saving. What replaces trains for ground passenger transport has to be more energy efficient to compete against what will replace passenger train travel. The market has clearly rejected Amtrak but because of federal government subsidies Amtrak has been on its last leg for 42 years. Change is hard and the problem with trains medium speed or slow speed as apparently high speed is off the table with plenty of reasons for it to be off the table, is they pollute far too much NOx and they burn tremendous amounts of valuable fossil fuels for each customer served. Not only are trains energy intensive but the tracks they roll on are a biohazard with all those land polluting poisons that kill not only bacteria in the wood timbers but many small creatures around the gravel beds and ties. Trains were an important part of the expansion into the West but that is over and it is time to look at better alternatives that can serve the customers much better at lower energy cost and without putting air pollutants into the air for our children to breathe. The NOx pollution from a diesel train is phenomenal. Even the brand new trains that will be in service for 40 years are heavy polluters compared to the competition. The trains on the rails now will not come out of service for maybe 50 years depending on maintenance plans so they will be polluting essentially at unfettered 1970s levels for many years to come. It is irresponsible for our government to support inefficient high polluting heavy vehicle to move lightweight people. Trains are great for gravel and till coal is shut down hauling coal from Wyoming to Texas but the amount of gravel to be hauled may be less with a paradigm shift in transportation from the present form to the next revolution. According to the Portland Cement Association half of all concrete (gravel and klinker) is used in making the present form of roads. As transportation evolves to high tech systems concrete and asphalt roads will be offset if not replaced with smaller less raw material intensive forms. This will greatly decrease the amount of gravel hauled by trains and with coal being replaced by massive finds in shale natural gas using fracking and cars that can deliver themselves to the buyer via Google's self driving car electronics the railroad business will be quite different from what it is today. Its strength is hauling mining bull dozers and military heavy artillery or just about any really large and heavy object. Its weakness as evidenced by Amtrak's economic abject failure is moving individual passengers door to door. There are no rental agencies at train stations as one simple example of how little demand there is for service from trains. At the airport there are at least 30 car rental companies all clamoring for customer business. If trains were anywhere in the same realm there would be at least one car rental company positioned at the train station yet there is not. Evidence has not in the past made any difference in the FRA's quest to still provide train passenger service in the face of economic failure.

04/10/2013	jill klores		dallas	TX	75214						X	X	X	X					The train is a great idea. I would use it from Dallas to Houston. I would urge this to move forward, however all of the environmental issues must be carefully considered and studied so as to have minimal impact.
04/02/2013	jim		zapata	TX	78076		X	X	X	X	X				X				First let me say I am in favor a high speed rail system rather than the rail system that is being proposed. High speed would be so superior on so many levels. It seems the rest of the industrial countries of the world can do it so could the US. But any rail rather than truck or vehicle would enhance protecting the environment and air quality. It would reduce vehicle and truck traffic which will enhance safety for all. It seems to be a no brainer except for those that want to keep Tx in the dark ages. If Texas leadership wants to create livable wage jobs here is their opportunity.
04/10/2013	Jim		san antonio	TX	78240				X										congestion on trop from San Antonio to Dallas during Thanksgiving holiday has become unbearable
04/10/2013	Jim Domke		Arlington	TX	76017				X	X					X				American life is built around the car, drive-in restaurants, banks, etc. Once you get to a location you need a car to get to friends homes, museums, business. I'd like to see system that enables you to get 200+ miles easily and still have access to your car. I think Amtrack offers this to Florida. Imagine being able to relax and read or sleep while you go from Dallas to Houston. We had the system in place a hundred years ago, but instead of building on it, destroyed it.
03/17/2013	Jim Skaggs		Austin	TX	78746				X						X				This is an extremely ill advised expenditure of tax funds. The potential ridership and benefits are too little land the cost are too much. We do not need a \$14 million study to show it is not cost-effective and, therefore, cannot be sustained. It seems that every time an entity creates an organization, such as TxDot's rail organization, it gets out of control and becomes an advocate with no checks and balances to provide balanced alternatives analyses. For the cost of this potential rail, substantial roadway improvements can be implemented which will serve orders of magnitude more travelers without huge taxpayer subsidies for every rider. Roadway improvements would enhance overall quality of life for many times more people. There are no examples of successful passenger trains in similar US area as the one being studied. The North Atlantic corridor has about the only reasonable US train ridership but it's corridor population is far greater than the Oklahoma-Texas corridor, with much shorter riders.
04/26/2013	Jimmie Mitchell		Temple	TX	76504			X											I take the train a couple times a year up to OK, and I would like to see that this rail system be continued and expanded. I would also like to see the passenger rail service extended on a daily basis between Austin and Houston, I have family in New Orleans and cannot take the train there because of the schedule set forth by Amtrak. Not only is this a personal issue for me, I also realize that using the train, rather than a private vehicle is much better for the environment. The amount of money that goes into paying for the upkeep of the roads would be lessened if less cars are on it, and mass transportation will improve air quality for all living creatures. Due to the fact that we have experienced 270 months of higher than normal temperatures something needs to be done to lessen our unhealthy impact on our environment, and if better service were offered to the public more people would utilize mass transportation. It will have to be done eventually, so why not now?
04/10/2013	Jimmy Peake		Flower Mound	TX	75028		X	X	X						X				We need alternatives to cars and planes.
04/10/2013	Jo Bennett		Hurst	TX	76053-7147														Our state needs other alternate methods of safe, convenient good for the environment transportation..especially in high density areas for instance between Dallas and Houston
03/28/2013	Jo Hill Snyder		Oklahoma		73113			X	X	X	X	X	X						Rail service from Oklahoma City is an emerging need for me personally. I can travel to visit my children and for events in Dallas/Fort Worth safely, economically and conveniently. One thing I would appreciate is an easier step-up from the platform to the train. I am considering a rail vacation. Besides personal reasons, I appreciate the environmental contribution of rail travel. It improves air quality and reduces the impact on our overcrowded highway system. I believe increase in rail travel will eventually decrease the need to tear up more land for highways which effects wildlife, water and other endangered plants and animals.
04/11/2013	Joachim Reinhuber		San Marcos	TX	78666		X	X	X						X				I commute regularly from San Marcos to Corpus Christi/ Kingsville. My experience with German high speed rail has been fantastic. I think opening a rail line from Oklahoma through Dallas, Waco, Austin, San Antonio (with a stop in San Marcos!), to Corpus and then along the new I67 corridor into the Valley would be an incredible boost to this dynamic area. I would use it regularly.
04/10/2013	Joan Rice		La Grange	TX	78945	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							Since air traffic has become so cumbersome and Texas is so big, ,trains seem like the logical and ecological way to travel nowadays. We would visit family in Oklahoma and other contiguous states if we didn't have to spend whole days driving to and from them.
04/10/2013	Joan Spanne		Duncanville	TX	75116		X		X										Passenger rail is an efficient, comfortable, and comparatively low impact means of transit, when considered alongside flying or driving personal vehicles. I strongly favor expansion of passenger rail services over expanding highway capacity in our most traveled corridors. When making choices among travel options, rail is the first option I consider for distances between 1 and 10 hours distant by automobile.
04/10/2013	JoAnn Mulholland		Dallas	TX	75218				X					X					This is needed and has been needed for decades. It will help people of all incomes. Don't take people's land if they don't want to sell. I hate this "right of domain" nonsense. Texas has plenty of land to accomplish this. Attention to the environment is important. Work with the Sierra club and other environmental organizations to achieve this,
04/10/2013	JoAnn Gilbertson		Corpus Christi	TX	78402		X								X				Commuting thru Texas via rail is not only good for tourism economy as riding the rail is a destination ,in itself it is an adventure, but also improves air quality by implementing the car pooling effect and reducing the carbon of many tourists traveling in separate cars. There does need to be golf cart rental and/or trolley system to get the visitor from train station to destination points and lodging. This is bringing tourists and business travelers into 2013. The proposed rail could run parallel with the Fulton corridor to North Beach. North Beach used to have a train station at Surfside Park and Surfside Park is waiting to be reunited with its history. Surfside park is on the Corpus Christi Beachwalk and next to two of the top 25 attractions in the state of Texas. I support the rail system.

04/10/2013	Jose J Rivera		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78259				X		X	X							Dear Sirs: We care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices. A new, higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas, would give millions of Texans the option to take the train rather than drive or fly across the state. Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands on more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways. The facts are that: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. We strongly support the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail.
04/12/2013	Joseph Aguilar		Corpus Christi	TX	78412						X								I would like to see the expansion of the Light Rail System to include stops/connection to and from the following: D/FW area to San Antonio, San Antonio to Corpus Christi, Laredo, and the Valley, Houston to Austin, El Paso to Austin, and Houston to Corpus Christi to the Valley. I know that is a big task and probably not feasible but it would curb fuel demand and offer a way for seniors and others who do not drive a safe way to travel.
04/11/2013	Joseph McClain		Laredo	TX	78043	X	X	X	X	X		X	X						I am totally in favor of this study and the project. It would have far-reaching positive impact on a series of environmental issues, noise, traffic and ease of travel. I wholeheartedly endorse it.
04/10/2013	Joseph P Mueller		Corpus Christi	TX	78411	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Rail will reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and accomodate travellers.
04/28/2013	Josh Soto		Laredo	TX	78040				X										Make it happen. More jobs, safe alternative, better for environment. What's not to love?
03/28/2013	Joshua Carter		Grand Prairie	TX	75052														I am currently a collage student at UTA that was in Austin for a Day trip a few days ago for recreation. The cost of gas is outrageous and I believe the state would benefit from this rail system. Is there anyway this rail system can go to Houston Tx along side I 10? I say this since Houston is the biggest city in Texas and I35 does not run through Houston, Houston needs a rail system like every other city that will be included in this project.
03/27/2013	Joshua Holland		Austin	TX	78759										X				I think that the train should stop in Austin. It is rapidly growing and the train could serve to help move around a lot of the new residents.
03/26/2013	Joshua Scott		Austin	TX	78752														What high speed technologies are being considered for this project? I am concerned that this will just be an opportunity for a manufacturer to offload outdated inventory, rather than a state-of-the-art rapid transit alternative.
04/10/2013	Josie Harland		San Antonio	TX	78242		X		X				X						Why takes it here that long to build Railroads? People coming old and not more able to drive, some don't have anybody and what do the going on the Road and bringing herself and others in Danger. Why other Country are able to build Railroad and much quicker as here. It's Time to build them for all of us and that less Cars on the Road.
04/10/2013	Joyce Boelsche		Buda	TX	78610		X	X											Please make the Austin to Oklahoma City train line happen! I know of many instances that I would have taken a train instead of an airplane or car if I could have. This line will save fuel and at the same time reduce pollution by car or airline fuel. That will make our air cleaner and our lungs cleaner. I look forward to being able to use this train route.
04/10/2013	Joyce Felter		San Antonio	TX	78209		X		X	X									We NEED as much rail service as they have in Europe or on our east coast.
04/11/2013	Joyce M Graham		Harlingen	TX	78550		X	X	X		X				X				get more cars off the highways!
04/03/2013	Juan C. Rivera		Laredo	TX	78041				X										I would very much like to see this passenger train come to the Laredo area. I believe that it just make sense to bring this form of transportation here. It will alleviate traffic congestion, will help reduce carbon emissions, from having less vehicles on the highway, will improve the economic growth of the area, by providing people the opportunity to come to and from Laredo, that wouldn't normally do so, because they do not own a vehicle. Etc., etc, etc.
04/11/2013	Juan Jaime Flores		Mission	TX	78572-5872	X			X		X								(1) Is the noise level less or more than a regular train? (2) What are the probabilities of an accident? (3) Is there any impact on any type of wildlife? (4) Does it cut across any state park? and (5) Is there any chance that it might come all the way down to the city of McAllen?
04/11/2013	Juanita Cardenas		Laredo	TX	78045				X						X				I agree on the Railway for an alternative way of travel, I forsee I-35 as a very congested interstate in the near future and these would alleviate some of the congestion. Hopefully all safety precautions will be taken into consideration given the land where these railway will be operating., Time of travel should be carefully studied , because we will be wanting something fast and safe to reach our destination.
04/03/2013	Judy Loverde		Corpus Christi	TX	78411				X		X								Train travel in our state should be enhanced as soon as possible. With a senior-citizen booming population, more and more citizens will take to the roads and I am afraid this is not good because of the huge traffic and congestion situations that I have seen and experienced now since right before the Eagle Ford Shale Business. It is only getting worse. A safe and viable railroad for passengers throughout Texas is a great idea and its time has come. Please hasten to get this going and available. Tourism and business will prosper immensely all along the way.
04/10/2013	Judy Mayo		Georgetown	TX	78633		X	X	X	X			X						We have relatives in OK and would certainly use the train for transportation. I am concerned at the amount of non-renewable resources used by automobiles - riding together on trains will reduce not only the amount of fuel required, but also the emissions and their effect on human health and environmental climate change. A reduced requirement for new roads will also reduce polluted run-off from impermeable surfaces and will save natural habitat. As you are aware, Texas traffic is often conjested and thus dangerous - train use will help to alleviate this problem. I hope that you will pursue building a Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail project.
03/29/2013	Judy Nickels		Corpus Christi	TX	78412														Just want to add my comment on how WONDERFUL if we could have passenger rail come all the way from san antonio to corpus christi, tx. My husband and I are great fans of Amtrak and try to take it whenever we can however, at this time we must drive to San Antonio or Houston and it would be OUTSTANDING if we could have a stop in Corpus Christi and the Valley. We shall keep our fingers crossed. Thank you for considering these routes.
04/11/2013	Judy Williams		Fort Worth	TX	76126		X	X	X										What a great idea! I would certainly travel this way.
04/10/2013	jule Vigness		austin	TX	78703	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							The pollution of fossil fuels and traffic from so many citizens in private cars are seriously endangering many standards of health and safety. We are too populous to continue making enough road for everyone. We need public transport. I support it.

04/10/2013	Julie Bunch		Alice	TX	78332				X										I think this would be a good thing because it would get more cars off the road which would decrease pollution & there would also be less accidents.
04/10/2013	julie garcia		San Antonio	TX	78215		X												I think this would be a great idea, because the highway are getting so congested.
04/11/2013	Julie Odom		Round Rock	TX	78681				X										It's time for rail, preferably high speed rail, in Texas. Our freeways cannot keep up with the number of people moving to our state and if the estimates hold true, the population explosion will continue throughout the next several decades. When I moved to Austin in 1982, I could drive to my parents house in Oklahoma City in about six hours - weekend, weekday, holiday - it always took the same amount of time. Today, that is just not possible, especially on a Friday or a holiday. I-35 from Round Rock to Dallas is a parking lot much of the way. What are the alternatives? Only air. With so few flights, that must be planned far in advance or the price is not affordable for the average person. Texas is so far ahead in so many areas, yet we fall far behind when it comes to transportation. It really is embarrassing the lack of progress that has been made here in Austin on the never-ending traffic problems in the last THIRTY years. Houston and Dallas have plenty of freeways... Getting around the state is another problem, and one that could be solved by rail. I-35 is obsolete. Unless it was 8-10 lanes, it wouldn't be big enough to handle the traffic, and we all know that is not possible. We need alternatives. Alternatives other than more roads, which will only add more cars. It's time for rail.
04/10/2013	Julie Terrell		Austin	TX	78716		X		X										I am in support or more passenger rail in Texas. It will not only help with air quality but make the roads safer and cleaner with less cars on the Road.
04/10/2013	June Harris		Austin	WA	78758														I have used high speed rail to get around in other parts of the world, (Washington DC, and Paris). It is a convenient and efficient way to travel. I would love to be able to get from Austin to San Antonio or the DFW area using rail.
03/31/2013	Justin Funk		Duncan	OK	73533														i think will this would be great.
04/23/2013	Justin Tirsun		Brownsville	TX	78520														As a resident of Brownsville, TX I am excited to see such a grand undertaking being started. I wanted to state support for passenger rail to Brownsville both because of the economic benefits that the entire line will gain, and because of the existing need for such transportation. I look forward to the EIS for the project and hope that Brownsville is included in the Study. It provides the capacity to access an area of over a million Americans, and potentially the multimillion Matamoros region next door.
04/07/2013	K Weller		Lafayette	IN	47904				X										I am writing to express the need for passenger rail and the need to extend it north to Kansas City. This will allow more business family & tourist traffic without the need for yet more highway lanes. Please keep moving forward on this. Thank you.
04/10/2013	K. S. Jackson		San Antonio	TX	78218				X		X								I believe high speed rail will be good for Texas. It would cut down on traffic congestions and allow for an alternative way to travel. I would like to add for the planners to be aware of the movement of animals in the area where the rails will be constructed. Allow for a route for animals to cross the railines with out causing an accident which may very destructive.
04/10/2013	Kaitlin Piraro		Austin	TX	78752				X										I would absolutely love to have more passenger rail in Texas. My mom lives in Dallas and I have more family in Tulsa and it would be great to avoid driving several hours to visit them. Having more rail would decrease emissions caused by extra cars on the road or short plane trips between cities and make holiday travel a much more enjoyable and less environmentally-taxing experience. I take the bus to school everyday and walk as much as possible. I'm always looking for more ways to cut my carbon footprint and having more rail would be a great way to continue that.
04/10/2013	Kalee Spitzack		Dallas	TX	75252		X	X	X	X									I'm in favor of better public transportation. It will reduce GHG emissions by getting people off the road. It will also reduce traffic and improve air quality.
04/01/2013	Kamel Shrek		Laredo	TX	78045														Hi , I am writing in support of Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail , because I think it will be a very good idea ot connect many cities . It will be good for turism and it will provide many jobs . Also , it will save fuel and lives by less accident on the highways. It is an important economical transportation needed by many people.
04/01/2013	Kamel Shrek		Laredo	TX	78045														Hi, I am writing in support of the Texas Oklahoma Passenger rail project , because I think it is very good idea to help turism, providing more jobs ,and alternative economical way of transportation needed by many people . It will save some fuel , lives , and less accidents on the highways .
04/10/2013	karen hickle		san marcos	TX	78666		X		X										More passenger rail service in Texas would be a great benefit to the state. Efficient rail service between the major cities would help reduce traffic problems and help reduce air pollution. With the population explosion in this state the roads are becoming over crowded and over used causing maintenance problems. It is time to change the way Texans think and travel.
04/10/2013	Karen M. Sullivan		Weslaco	TX	78596		X	X	X	X									Hi speed trains would be terrific. - Less air pollution -- Less dependency on oil -- Cheaper transportation -- Less car accidents
04/11/2013	Karen Miller		Corpus Christi	TX	78418			X	X	X	X	X	X	X					Here are the pros to having a passenger railway system: •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. I am concerned about the preservation or devastation of the environment and it's inhabitants(human and otherwise) along any proposed routes.
04/11/2013	Karen Price		Ingleside	TX	78362		X		X	X									I am in favor of extending rail service in Texas. Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail has been very successful. Extension would benefit Texas economically, environmentally, and quality of life by reducing the cost of building more highways, high energy costs, vehicle exhaust, and crowding and maddening traffic jams.
04/10/2013	Kari		Austin	TX	78748			X		X	X								Texas needs more rail systems!
04/17/2013	Karl A. Claver		Plano	TX	75075		X	X	X		X	X	X		X				Rail is cleaner, safer, and more efficient than most other forms of transportation. The passenger train is also more environmentally friendly. Texas, and the entire nation needs more passenger trains. Instead of constantly rebuilding the highways, and adding more lanes, existing rail lines need to be expanded, and improved so modern passenger trains may wish the public to their destination. The line between Laredo/Brownsville all the way past Oklahoma into Kansas and Missouri is a perfect place to begin. And it must begin right now.
04/11/2013	Karl Kauffman		Waxahachie	TX	75167	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		High speed rail has so much going for it and would improve quality of life exponentially.

03/29/2013	Katrina Zirschky		Kingsville	TX	78363				X											I would love for this to happen. There is so very little in the way of public transportation down here and it would make life so much easier!
04/10/2013	katrisha Hernandez		Austin	TX	78727		X	X	X						X					Texas takes pride in being innovators and trend setters! We need this rail, we want this rail for so many reasons. If I had the option of taking a high speed train everywhere I went I would never use my car or fly. We need convenient and reliable public transportation. Building highways is not the answer. TEXAS WANTS RAIL!
04/20/2013	Kaye Miller		Derby	KS	67037				X											It would be very practical, and fill a need to have a train run from Dallas-Ft Worth to Oklahoma City, OK to Wichita, KS; then go on to Kansas City and Chicago. AND if we were to use a train like the TGV that goes 300 mph with limited stops, that would be phenomenal!!! Those trains are not only fast, but they are very quiet. A fast train is a must for this idea to capture the attention of the masses, and be practical for weekend vacationers, vacationers in general, as well as, the business needs of these communities.
04/11/2013	Kayla Glover		Bryan	TX	77802															Rail sounds good to me.
04/10/2013	Keegan Taylor		Georgetown	TX	78626															Rail would be awesome in Texas. Austin traffic was poorly dealt with by their city council previously and the congestion at some points is dreadful. I know that changing the culture to ride a rail would be difficult but it is a
04/02/2013	Keith Gunnell		San Antonio	TX	78259														X	I am basing my input on more than a decade of using mass transit and POV commuting to/from work from Manassas, VA and downtown Washington DC. Also, surface v. air transportation between northern VA and the NYC area. I believe TxDOT would find the Virginia Rail Express (VRE) to be a valuable reference because of the similarity of purpose. Also, I would recommend that TxDOT also contact various media services in the DC area to review an impromptu experiment they conducted comparing cost and impact of surface v. air transportation between DC and NYC. Based on the foregoing, I recommend considering: 1. Frequency of service between the DFW metro area - San Antonio, and DFW metro area -Houston should encourage surface transportation decisions of the public to focus on heavy rail. Why? It seems logical to believe that if a person can move between these major points in minimal time (requires either high-speed rail or limited number of stops). They will arrive at their destination rested and will have the option of getting some work done en route. It would also increase the concept of "Perfect Substitution" between scheduled air carriers and Amtrak or the Texas equivalent to VRE. 2. Creating a surface transportation facility (centralized services) similar the brilliantly designed facility in Ft. Worth is also important. What one should avoid are facilities such as the Amtrak facility located in San Antonio. The Sunset Limited Museum is the quality of building that should be used to support rail service...not the current building. Also, the closest available parking for Amtrak customer in San Antonio is located about 7 blocks from the station. This causes a passenger to walk in a high-crime area from the Mariner Garge, underneath US 87/281, past other rundown store fronts before approaching the current facility. At best, the facility and the noticeable lack of supporting services is UNSAT. We have been fortunate not to have anyone injured or killed walking to/from the station. I'm unsure of the crime statistics for this area other than the generalized comments of SAPD officers and the Express-News indicating this is a high crime area therefore not safe to walk during the hours of darkness. Should TxDOT decide to impanel citizens for any future projects concerning rail service, I would be delighted offer my support.
04/10/2013	Keith Quigley		Bedford	TX	76021	X	X		X						X					Glad to see we are considering extended rail into south Texas. All in favor of more rail travel. Thanks
04/18/2013	Keith Rogers		College Station	TX	77845				X										X	It is ESSENTIAL that we develop mass transit in Texas and throughout the US. We as Texans and Americans can not continue to consume oil at our current pace. It is folly that we will greatly regret. This is an economic and national security must. We have put off mass transit for far to long at the behest of those that stand to benefit financially from our ,potentially catastrophic, dependence on oil.
04/10/2013	Keith Shepherd		Blue Mound	TX	7.6E+08				X											We need additional rail service in our great state to help relieve roadway overcrowding. Parts of the local I-35 corridor have not been upgraded since it was built in the 50's, regardless of it being called the NAFTA freeway. Light rail would ease peoples commute to work and many would use it to save on the costs associated with personal vehicle ownership. Having been to the Netherlands, France, Germany and Belgium recently and seeing how well their rail systems work there is no reason why we couldn't have it here too.
04/10/2013	Kellen McIntyre		San Antonio	TX	78201		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			I am in full support of all proposed additional commuter rail throughout Texas. Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands on more transportation options. And based on the financial success of the nation's highest speed train routes, Amtrak's Acela service, passenger rail service is a better public investment than building more highways. Rail makes sound environmental sense. Trains keep cars off the road and reduce the number of short-distance airplane trips. Trains are more efficient, too, since the overall energy consumption per passenger is nearly half that of planes or cars.
04/04/2013	Kelly R. Martin		Ponca City	OK	74601															Please provide passenger train service from Guthrie, OK to Dallas /Ft. Worth and on to San Antonio via Waco. This service should be at least twice daily in both directions and operate at 80 -100 mph speeds.The key is service frequency and speeds faster than 70 mph.Take a look at what the IL DOT is doing in the St. Louis to Chicago corridor : in rural areas train speeds will be 110 mph.
04/10/2013	Ken Hayes		Austin	TX	78704-1343		X	X	X	X										Rail is the most environmentally sound mass transit we can build. It is also the most comfortable, especially for the elderly. Amtrak has some serious issues with being on schedule but it is much more comfortable and enjoyable than flying, driving or the bus. If we get rail comparable to what is running in Europe that would be great.
03/14/2013	Kenny Kurtz		Dallas	TX	75238															There MUST be thorough assessment of likely demand. This has the potential to become a boondoggle on the order of Amtrack.
04/10/2013	Kessie Reddy		Helotes	TX	78023	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Why only Oklahoma to Texas. Why not expand this to a National model and get all states to participate. You would save a bunch, if you combine all studies, since some states like California have already done most of the grunt work.
04/18/2013	Kevin		Houston	TX	77082										X	X				Why is Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation being bypassed ? Doesn't make since to me.
04/03/2013	Kevin Zuniga		Laredo	TX					X											I spent a month last summer living and working in Germany for the Army and I must say that the option of a public transit rail system from Texas to Oklahoma is a great idea. The fear is an initial under-investment that cannot be upgraded easily! If we're going to build a rail, open things up for private competition until the most advanced options available are on the table. If this project is rushed and standard rail lines are used (slow trains) then the likelihood that people will want to utilize them will be small. If high-speed rails come to Texas I'm certain people will commute both ways and I for one will definitely use them for vacations, etc. Good luck!

04/07/2013	Kiem Ta		Stillwater	OK	74075														Would be so happy to see the rail road be active and go the south Texas specially because I have families in the Laredo, Corpus Christi, Brownville cities. Can't come to visit them at this point because I can't drive therefore, I have to fly and it is expensive. If I have a week of vacation and the rail is available I could go and visit them in Laredo. I have friends in Wichita, Kansas City, MO therefore, railroad go to those cities would be useful too. I hope I see it happen in my life time. thank you.
04/10/2013	Kiesha Pearson		Desoto	TX	75115		X		X					X					I fully support the addition of high speed rail service in Texas. It will offer safer travel alternatives, provide more jobs and reduce air quality issues. Please drive this issue for continued support.
04/10/2013	Kimberly Zacha		Flower Mound	TX	75028														I am excited about the potential of the Texas-Oklahoma passenger rail system. I can't wait to be able to use it.
04/12/2013	Kinman Tam		Allen	TX	75013		X	X	X	X									Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Kitty L Katz		College Station	TX	77840			X	X	X			X	X	X				I strongly support bringing high speed rail to Texas. I've read the Texas Department of Transportation high speed rail proposal paper on the website and I believe the connections between Dallas to San Antonio, and Austin to Houston with a connection to Bryan/College Station would strongly benefit the economy. Especially between College Station and Houston the connection would allow the already potentially developing Bio-Medical Corridor to reach it's potential. Cutting the travel time and eliminating the travel headaches that are already in place and only getting worse in, around, and between these cities will benefit everybody. The traffic in Austin is horrible, I won't even go there anymore unless a solution is found. High speed rail would be the solution. Also when you have event there like South by Southwest, high speed rail would allow people from all over Texas to attend, and have many more alternatives as to where to stay. One issue in that paper that I thought was interesting was that if the high speed rail only went as far as Hempstead in Houston, the rail wasn't potentially profitable immediately. I agree, and I think we need to spend whatever it costs to get the rail connected all the way to downtown. Either elevate the rail lines, or put them where the HOV lanes are now. The paper I read indicated that if the rail went all the way downtown it would be immediately profitable. In my opinion, Hempstead is out in the middle of nowhere. If you brought it to the connection of 610 and 290, I think that's way too far out too. The rail needs to go downtown to work. It should go to the train station where you catch the train to New Orleans. I would be willing to pay more taxes for high speed rail.
04/05/2013	Kris Larkin		Cottonwood Falls	KS	66845				X										I would like to see this same study done for Kansas and Oklahoma. There is a great need to complete a railroad line from Oklahoma City through Ponca City - Wichita connecting with Kansas City. It would greatly reduce traffic and be much safer for people traveling.
03/24/2013	Kristi Collins		Arlington	TX	76012	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	We need this badly. Some express lines would also serve enormously.
04/10/2013	Kristi Collins		Arlington	TX	76012	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				The money spent on freeways and so on that supports the auto industry has held us hostage since WWII. Eliminating passenger rail in the process was always an overreach and never should have happened, the advantages to which ran its course within 20 years of its inception. Bring back the long and short distance passenger rail extensively.
04/11/2013	Kristi Maschal		Arlington	TX	76001				X										I would support a high speed train for mass transit throughout the state of Texas to decrease pollution and improve accessibility.
04/10/2013	Kristina Leigh Percival		Grand Prairie	TX	75051										X	X			Grand Prairie is in both Tarrant and Dallas, it really has no public transportation. How will this Texas/Oklahoma rail system benefit us?
04/10/2013	Kristine Brantley-Gearhart		Austin	TX	78734		X	X	X										Please pursue developing the rail from Oklahoma to South Texas, so more people can utilize this environmentally saving transportation. It will also reduce traffic (TXDOT will be relieved), and encourage and increase older adult travel (and others who struggle in traveling).
04/10/2013	Kristine Marshall		Austin	TX	78749				X					X					Access to efficient, well-priced rail travel would substantially improve the quality of life in Texas. Anyone who has traveled abroad or spent time in the Northeast knows the value of rail travel. Why not make this experience available to millions of Texans, too? I heartily support any efforts to create a high-speed rail system that would serve the major metropolitan areas in Texas. Thank you.
04/26/2013	Krystine Lynn - comment part 1		La Feria	TX	78559					X	X	X		X	X				My experience is solely with the southern section and parts of the southern end of the central section. I am a private citizen who has a strong interest in rail. Should European style high speed rail on a dedicated right of way be selected, the optimal path would seem to be the abandoned Southern Pacific right of way (San Antonio-Alice-Falfurrias-Edinburg-McAllen) as this could be a dedicated right of way directly to McAllen unencumbered by sharing with freight railroads. The right of way does have a lot of visual evidence remaining and could be rebuilt, but large segments are missing or difficult to spot from Highway 281, which parallels the right of way. This right of way passes through dry brush and scrub which is subject to frequent red flag fire weather warnings. Systems must be planned to ensure hot box caused fires will be detected quickly and also that the grade be well groomed. Fire hazard control will be a constant challenge with this section. If the above route were to be built conventionally, it would not be competitive with other modes in time, but it would win on quality and comfort. Plus, it would provide access to the Eagle Ford shale, which might help carry the costs of the project. However, oil is a very dirty business with a poor environmental record. Furthermore, construction north of the Edinburg, TX area has all but obliterated the right of way for many miles (a problem that will be made worse in the future as the construction never stops in the Valley and never slows down). Action must be taken as soon as possible to secure any right of way that serves McAllen. McAllen is indeed linked to Harlingen by the Rio Valley Switch Co. However, rail service to McAllen might be best served by rebuilding abandoned Missouri Pacific trackage from Raymondville to Edinburg via Hargill and Faysville due to the poor state of the RSVC track at the present time. I can ride my bicycle and keep up with their train. Most of that right of way still exists.

04/17/2013	Linhda		austin	TX	78704				X					X						I care about our environmental standards here in Austin and would like for us to support new or additional infrastructures for public transportation by offering more alternatives such as passenger rail.
04/10/2013	Lisa Frackowiak		Smithville	TX	78957			X	X	X				X						The traffic around Austin is already badly congested and forecast to only get worse as the population grows. High speed rail would be a great option to help with commuting and cutting down on congestion and pollution. It would help the environment and also save Texans time and money for local travel. Expanding the high speed rail to the areas surrounding Austin would help immensely, as this would encourage and facilitate travel from rural areas to the city.
04/03/2013	Lisa Rogerio		Laredo	TX	78045														X	Very interested in making this happen.
04/10/2013	Lisa Tingle		Austin	TX	78737		X	X	X	X										This beautiful city deserves a rail system to protect and preserve the land, the people, the animals and the water. We have grown entirely too fast to have this many cars on our grossly inferior road system. It is appalling to me that we STILL do not have a rail system between the big cities of Texas. PLEASE, make this happen, for everyone.
04/10/2013	lisa tremaine		dallas	TX	75220		X	X	X			X	X	X						I approve whole-heartedly with a high speed rail system in Texas. Oil is going away. There are too many cars. Please provide good public transportation!
04/10/2013	lissa redmond		pflugerville	TX	78660															we need some form of mass transit in this state. it is ridiculous for us to have no other forms of transportation except for cars to get to where we need to go. wouldn't it be nice to be able to travel from dallas to austin or houston w/o having to drive on our crowded, and always under construction highways!
04/19/2013	Liz Johnston		Austin	TX	78723															I would absolutely love to see more passenger rail options available. I-35 is too congested and harrowing to drive on. I would be more likely to take my family on day trips to Dallas from Austin if I did not have to drive on I-35. Rail is the more environmentally sustainable option. There will never be enough lanes on I-35 for all the congestion. But what I would really love to see is passenger rail to at least Wichita, if not all the way to Minneapolis. My family, like many others, have numerous friends and family all along the I-35 corridor. Rail would be a wonderful way to stay in touch.
04/01/2013	LIZ Langthorn		okc	OK	73103															Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study We need public transport, but it does necessarily need to be only high speed. Better commuter service would be a great start, like more than one time to catch the Heartland Flyer in either direction.
04/10/2013	Lorn MacDougal		Austin		78704		X	X	X	X	X									The mistaken idea that most American transportation should be private is coming home to roost in the changes to the climate, the traffic that wastes so much time and energy, the deaths caused by human error and distraction at the wheel, the constant presence of noise, the laziness and aggression of drivers. We are falling behind other societies who have had the foresight to build multipurpose infrastructures. The dependence on the automobile has done damage to the human body which needs to move to function optimally; our disastrous health care situation would be mitigated by comprehensive alternative transportation! Children no longer play in the streets or walk/bike to school in fear of being hit. Most children in America have never been on a train hence its pleasures are unknown to us. I can't express enough how much I hope to see our transportation evolve in the areas of trains, trams, light rail, and bike lanes everywhere as in the Netherlands, along all the major routes and the primary source of movement in the cities. But many people wonder how they'll get around once reaching their destination by train. We need bike sharing programs at every station and throughout towns. That will be true progress, but all is so slow to change except the deleterious effects of our wasteful ways on the environment.
04/11/2013	Lowell Watson		Austin	TX	78739			X						X						I support extending rail transportation as a method of reducing CO2 emissions.
04/10/2013	Lucy Stolzenburg		Austin	TX	78737				X	X	X	X		X	X					I am thrilled that TxDOT is considering a high speed rail system from South Texas to Oklahoma! I am a veteran of rail travel throughout Asia and Europe. My son has moved from Texas to a city with rail and he refuses to own a car! It is inconceivable that we in Texas, a state with citizens that are always on the go, has not implemented a high speed rail! Rail is reasonably priced, uses less fuel than cars, is a cleaner method of transportation than autos and gets those cars off the road, avoiding those nasty traffic jams. A recent study published in the Wall Street Journal found that children living near roadways choked with traffic had a higher incidence of autism. Given the choice of sitting in traffic on I-35 or high speed rail, I think the student population of the I-35 corridor would absolutely pack the trains on the weekends. Let's do it and do it now!
04/10/2013	Luis Garza		McAllen	TX	78504	X			X	X		X		X	X					As a former resident of a state that had access to mass transit systems (Massachusetts), it is very disconcerting
04/25/2013	Luis Guerrero		Pharr	TX	78577				X											Hello, I live close to our railroad in the Rio Grande Valley. Our area has had tremendous growth throughout this decade, and us down here in the valley, feel unappreciated by the decisions people in our capital do. I believe that I do believe it would be a magnificent idea to have in the beautiful state of Texas such High Speed Rail Train like
04/10/2013	Luis Rivera		Laredo	TX	78045															I do believe it would be a magnificent idea to have in the beautiful state of Texas such High Speed Rail Train like
04/26/2013	Luke Simons		Fayetteville	AR	72703				X											I support increased rail transportation between OKC and south TX. I have to travel to Austin area often and would love opportunity to take rail from OKC - even better if rail service eventually includes Tulsa. thanks!
04/26/2013	Lupe Ybarra		Weslaco	TX	78596					X										I would like to voice my comment of my wholehearted approval of the Amtrak passenger service being extended to accommodate the Rio Grande Valley traffic. For years we have had to travel to San Antonio in order to access the Amtrak service for my elderly parents. For years we have had to go the day before, rent a hotel, and see them off in the early morning hours when the train would leave. My father, who will be 88 this year, has a middle ear condition that prevents him from flying anymore. This condition causes excruciating pain whenever there is a change in air pressure in the airplane, such as ascending or ,especially, descending. We have a lot of family in California still, and this would greatly benefit them and other elderly people who can no longer fly. Given the booming growth of the Valley, I feel it is high time that more services become available to our area, in order to meet the growing needs of this population. Yes, I reiterate my approval that the Amtrak service be extended to Brownsville, TX, in order to facilitate the connection of the Rio Grande Valley to San Antonio and beyond. Thank you for considering Amtrak expansion to our area.
04/10/2013	Luvada Smith		Dallas	TX	75241									X						I would like to add my name to the Texas/Oklahoma study and to request consideration of a similar study of Texas/Shreveport, LA(soon)
04/10/2013	Lynn Denton		Austin	TX	78737		X			X										I highly support the addition of passenger/commuter rail from the OKC/South Texas corridor. This stretch of I35 is well known for the volume of traffic and high rates of accidents and injuries. Our current reliance on surface roads is expensive, dangerous and out-dated. Given the predicted population growth in the area, a rail solution will improve mobility, eliminate wasted time/increase productivity for commuters, enhance safety with reduced vehicle usage and thereby improve air and water quality for the region.

04/01/2013	Lynn McCord		San Antonio	TX	78247				X										I think we need the rail system for our local economy. We can not afford to delay these alternatives any longer. This will increase jobs and would probably attract more Corporations to enter our Texas market. I think we should not focus and get clouded by the airline impact because the long term effect far outweighs the short term.
04/24/2013	Lynn Nichols		Andover	KS	67002														I believe the passenger railroad initiative is one of the most important economic development projects for all States involved. It will enhance trade, transportation and commerce through the I-35 corridor. Energy costs are increasing, and it provides a way to move large volumes of people safely and timely. Not including, other trade. I would support moving forward on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study!
04/10/2013	M. RODRIGUEZ		LAREDO	TX	78040				X										I am all for this idea of rail as an alternative mode of commercial transportation. I believe the highways were already too congested with trailer trucks and now with the activity that Eagle Ford Shale is producing, the congestion is out-of-control! It is no longer fun to plan a trip outside of Laredo just thinking that one will have to drive in all that traffic which increases stress levels! I am also in favor of passenger rail transportation. This option would allow many to travelers who don't have a vehicle, don't fly and don't like bus transportation to have a fourth option. An option which may become a main choice of traveling for many, including tourists!
04/10/2013	Mae newcombe		Austin	TX	78741	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			Austin just needs more public transportation. It has gotten too big to sustain all the cars. Literally everyone I know complains about it. Too much traffic is one of the quickest ways to lower the quality of life.
04/10/2013	Maggi Joseph		San Antonio	TX	78228		X	X	X										Trains reduce car and short plane ride traffic improving air quality and reducing congestion on roads. Trains consume less energy. South Texas has no passenger rail service and would greatly benefit from comfortable rail cars that make it possible to work while travelling or just enjoy a relaxing ride.
04/18/2013	Manuela Gardner		Corpus Christi	TX	78418		X		X		X	X	X		X				It would be great to have a higher speed passenger rail service in Texas. It would mean reduction in emissions which would benefit the environment and wildlife. It would also give people a hopefully more price effective way to travel longer distances.
04/11/2013	Marc Hoffman		San Antonio	TX	78258		X	X	X						X	X			Texas should absolutely pursue rail transit between Austin and San Antonio. Actually between Dallas and San Antonio would be idea. Traffic along I-35 has become so congested and of course will only get worse due to the growth in this state. I am sure that there would be many passengers of rail transit who would take advantage of this route. We have taken transit from San Antonio to Dallas with Amtrak and it was not a good experience with many delays and too many stops. Please strongly consider rail transit!
04/10/2013	Marc W. McCord		Celina	TX	75009	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X			The need for mass transportation options is critical. The time and cost required to build more highways is prohibitive, and the amount of fuel consumed by cars is unsustainable in the near future. Mass rail transit makes sense for a 21st century state. I strongly encourage building the high speed rail line between Oklahoma City and South Texas as a way to reduce air pollution, fossil fuel consumption, traffic congestion and other factors that cost us far too much money and/or threaten our health and safety.
04/14/2013	Marcia		Austin	TX	78731														Please work on more options for public transportation. I have very fond memories of riding the train from Dallas to Waco and Houston to visit relatives. The train was fast and enjoyable. Now it doesn't seem to be as reliable. Thank you, Marcia Fox
04/10/2013	Marcia Ingram		McAllen	TX	78503		X		X		X	X	X		X				We have traveled in Europe many times via high speed rail. It is convenient, reasonable and we are able to walk the aisles on long trips. My husband and I support high speed rail in Texas.
04/01/2013	Marcy Newman		South Padre Island	TX	78597										X	X			We are interested in the alternative locations and consideration for South Texas in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.
04/18/2013	Marcy Newman, Public Works Director, City of South Padre Island		South Padre Island	TX	78597										X	X			TxDOT has indicated the primary intent of High Speed Passenger Rail Service is to connect downtown to downtown on the major cities on the route - OKC, DFW, Austin and San Antonio, but the southern terminus in flux. During the Public Scoping meeting in Harlingen, it was suggested that Laredo is the preferred option. 1.The population centers in Lower Rio Grande Valley greater than 430K (2010 census) for Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and greater than 800K (2010 census) for the Hidalgo County MSA. These are more than triple that in the Laredo /Webb County area (250K (2010 census)) and the border crossings for personal vehicles / personal vehicle passengers (21.8M) are far in excess of Laredo (8.8M) as well. This population and border crossing differential warrants additional study and consideration for High Speed Passenger Rail service and connections to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. 2.The Lower Rio Grande Valley has three major airports that could serve as hubs / multi-modal transfer centers drawing on a greater population to utilize HSPR service going north - This should be considered when determining the southern terminus. 3.The Lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island in particular, has multiple tourist destinations that could be served by HSPR service and multi-modal connections. This should be considered when determining the southern terminus of service.
04/10/2013	Margaret Caylor		Marble Falls	TX	78654	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Rail would bring a clean environment, convenience, less traffic, more jobs, faster service and less noise. Please keep me informed of the progress.
04/10/2013	Margery Hunter		Dallas	TX	75223	X	X	X	X	X	X					X			Please, please, please put in high-speed rail to south Texas. We are decades behind the rest of the world on this and it is SO BADLY NEEDED!!!
04/04/2013	Margie Garza		Laredo	TX	78041														I would just like to take this time to comment on the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail study. As a resident of the City of Laredo for more than twenty years and a federal public servant, I believe that this project would greatly benefit our area. Laredo is considered the gateway to the United States mainly in part because of its geographical location and Interstate 35 which runs from Laredo, Texas to Duluth, Minnesota. This, in my opinion, makes Laredo the perfect location for a passenger train. As a federal public servant for more than ten years, I have seen first-hand how hundreds of people make their way south to Laredo, Texas from the northern states and, vice versa from Mexico in personally owned vehicles and in passenger commercial buses. As far as in my personal experiences, I can speak for my family in saying that we often travel to San Antonio, Houston, Austin and Dallas on one/two-day trips and have often spoken about the possibilities and advantages of a having a passenger train along IH-35. I highly support this project and hope that it does become a reality. Thanks to the Texas Department of Public Safety for introducing this study and allowing me to comment on this topic.

04/10/2013	Mary Parrish		Waco	TX	76710				X				X				X	It's rather sad that a state nearly the size of Europe doesn't have a comparable railway system. As a person who lived overseas, I believe the time is now for Texas to have a high speed railway system. This will not only make traveling easier, more affordable, safer and more enjoyable, but will greatly advance this mighty state's infrastructure. Besides, we don't want to be outdone by France, do we?
04/10/2013	Mary Pettit		Bulverde	TX	78163				X									We need better transportation systems in Texas. Trains would be ideal. They would save resources and time for many of us.
04/10/2013	Mary Sue Rose		Austin	TX	78703				X									I want to support mass transit in and through the state of Texas . . . specifically high speed, reliable rail service. We must get high volumes of traffic off of our highways, both to preserve energy resources (gas and diesel) and to maintain the condition of highways so that they don't have to be repaired and replaced. Not only will high speed and reliable rail service reduce car traffic, it will improve air quality . People will continue to want to get from place to place and in increasing numbers as our population grows. It is smart planning to make these improvements to people moving now. Already the I35 corridor is overcrowded as is the I45 corridor in Houston. Rail service is needed and now, so let's get started!
04/10/2013	Mary Vogelson		Dallas	TX	75220			X	X	X			X	X				We desperately need more fast rail in the Texas urban corridors. The DFW area health, environmental and water are already suffering due to the increasing amounts of pollution generated daily. With the continued expansion of fracking and the enormous amount of traffic delays, accidents and costs due to poor transportation planning and options, our dependency on oil, gas and automobiles decreases our lives daily! Is it not possible to help increase our quality of life by reducing some of the source point pollution as well as reduce some of the unacknowledged massive pollution coming from air traffic sources by adding fast rail to the Texas landscape? Thank you.
04/10/2013	Mary Whitlow		Dallas	TX	75225	X	X	X	X									I am all for the higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. It wil be a great thing for Texas!
04/10/2013	MASON W COX		AUSTIN	TX	78752			X		X								I support TxDOT's proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail service for the following reasons: •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Matt		Austin	TX	78734													.
04/10/2013	Matt Griffith		Austin	TX	78745				X	X				X	X			Is this where I request that high speed rail begin construction across Texas? Oh, please, yes! Ease of travel between SAT, AUS, DFW, and HOU would allow us to expand residential access and commerce while reducing gas consumption and pollution. We are so behind the more developed countries like Korea, Germany and Japan. We need this to grow.
04/10/2013	Matt Turner		Austin	TX	78704					X								Air travel has become ridiculously uncomfortable and SLOW lately. And I-35 through central Texas has been a headache and death trap forever. I've been wondering why we don't have a fast train (high speed or bullet) between at least the major cities of Texas. Especially, the triangle from Houston to Dallas to San Antonio / Austin. I sure know I'd have taken the Austin - Dallas segment many times already by now. Especially now as our inner cities are getting more populous, trains make more sense, on so many levels.
04/11/2013	Matt Wells		Fort Worth	TX	76116	X	X	X	X			X	X	X				All reasons noted above.
04/10/2013	Matt Willson		Austin	TX	78703			X		X				X				I am strongly in favor of expanded high speed rail service in Texas. There are several reasons: * Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. * A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. * South Texas has no passenger rail service. * The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. * Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. * Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Matthew Gossage		Austin	TX	78702		X	X	X									Please expand and support train and rail transit in Texas and Oklahoma. It is better for the passengers in giving and alternative to driving and would consume fewer greenhouse gases.
03/30/2013	Matthew Trecha		Detroit	MI	48202					X								I recently took the train from East Lansing, MI down to visit friends in both Ft. Worth and San Antonio, taking the train between Ft. Worth and San Antonio on a round-trip and then back to Michigan from Ft. Worth. The snail's pace of the rail was both frustrating and not understandable when my friend and I drove from Ft. Worth to Austin and saw the crazy flying overpasses being built by the state of Texas. Nowhere in the Midwest have I ever seen such expense dumped into highways while public transit is left to languish. In fact, Governor Snyder of Michigan accepted federal rail funds after WI and OH turned them down and, as a result, I enjoyed 110 mph service between Kalamazoo, MI and Porter, IN on my way South. This high speed rail study presents the chance to make Texas more attractive to visit and live. Currently, it is much too car-centric for a recent college graduate as myself who wants to avoid car use as much as possible. The opportunity to make Texas a leader in rail should not be embraced on both sides of the aisle as it will make the state more mobile, increase inter-city business and draw new investment to the Lone Star State. I hope it can come to fruition and quickly! Best of luck.
04/19/2013	Matthew Wall		Denton	TX	76201		X	X	X	X			X	X	X			An extensive railway system in Texas would reduce energy consumption and traffic, as well as provide a safer and cleaner alternative to vehicular travel on highways. Moreover, this option would allow patrons to work on their studies, projects, etc. or even enjoy a time of reflection and relaxation while commuting--a stark contrast to being behind the wheel on congested interstates. Railways are green, convenient, and right for Texas.

04/10/2013	Michael McMurtrey		Carrollton	TX	75007														I strongly support the development of high-speed passenger rail in Texas for the following reasons: 1. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. 2. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. 3. South Texas has no passenger rail service. 4. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers 5. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports, and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. 6. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/01/2013	Michael McPhail		Irving	TX	75061														I strongly support creating high speed passenger rail between Dallas-Fort Worth and San Antonio. As someone who has to travel from Irving to Austin semi-frequently I know first-hand the deplorable condition I-35 is in. It's guaranteed to get worse as time goes on and more and more people move to Texas, as is the air pollution in North Texas. It seems half the children in North Texas have asthma because of the smog caused by car exhaust. The terrible wrecks on our traffic snarled highways just seem to get worse and worse due to traffic. We must get more travelers off the road and onto the rails. Air travel is handy but expensive and not as widely available to all Texans as one would hope. Improving existing freight rail lines to maximize the effectiveness and attractiveness of current passenger rail service would create some benefit, true, but it would not be enough to improve travel conditions on that heavily traveled stretch of road enough. The state's research shows there is a market for high speed rail in that area. Therefore a high speed rail line between Dallas-Fort Worth and San Antonio makes the most sense. Currently there is not enough travel demand to justify the expense of extending high speed rail service north of Dallas-Fort Worth to Oklahoma City or south of San Antonio to the Mexico border (or even as far away as Monterrey) according to the state's research according to the state's research. The state should work with other governmental entities, though, to re-engineer and update the existing rail lines servicing these communities to maximize the speed of passenger rail service.
04/01/2013	Michael Pena		Laredo	TX	78041														I feel like having a passenger train go through Laredo would be a great idea. It would boost up the economy as well and tourism here which is what Laredo really needs. With Laredo growing at the rate it is, this would at the best interest of the city and our community. Many people do not have the means of transportation and this would be perfect.
03/25/2013	Michael R. Reagan		Jacksonville	TX	75766														My question is will this mode of transportation actually generate enough revenue to be viable and make a profit? Personally, I think it is a boondoggle that smacks of Obamanomics. This will be no different than AMTRAK. How many times has that gone bankrupt and been bailed out by the Federal Government? Too many. I cannot see where this is an economically feasible project. I am adamantly against this albatross and waste.
04/10/2013	Michael Thompson		Austin	TX	78704														better and more environmentally sensitive transportation for the future. I know I would use it.
04/10/2013	Michele Hallahan		Austin	TX	78704														Texas deserves a high speed rail - we are already decades behind some of the most advanced countries in the world; France for example has had high speed rail since the early 1990s! There are so many benefits to railways, not least the issue of climate change and air quality, as well as reducing congestion on the already jam packed highways. Please consider also: Trains will keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips in TX. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly HALF that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service - this is appallingly underserved. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers! Railroad stations are far more convenient and FAR less stressful than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. I travel frequently for work and would happily choose rail travel over planes ANY DAY. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Trains use less fossil fuel for transport per person than cars or trucks. Train travel is elegant, efficient, environmentally preferable and builds community in a way that air or road travel does not.
04/10/2013	Michelle Llauger		Bastrop	TX	78602														Less cars, less gas consumption by individuals, less corruption by state officials to sell our roads to corporations and foreigners. Less cars on the road, less road accidents and deaths.
04/02/2013	michelle quiter		san antonio	TX	78229														I am in favor of the train from San Antonio to Oklahoma. My suggestion would be to have at least four times per day to go either north or south. I would try Amtrack if there was a more convenient schedule. Thank you.
03/31/2013	Mickey Gorrell		Yukon	OK	73099														I am a citizen of Oklahoma City and have been a 'super commuter' of Dallas for 2 years now. I fully support a passenger rail line from OKC to DFW. I would love to have this option. Flying is actually not very time saving in this short of a distance. Driving can be overly time consuming if caught in traffic. I would love the alternative to catch a passenger train. I travel to Dallas weekly and have been for 2 years.
04/10/2013	Micky Morris		Dallas	TX	75233														I have checked all of the "all that apply" because encouraging and mandating expanded fast rail service would benefit the people of Texas throughout the spectrum of life. It is time to "return to the future" in Texas. Texas regulatory services and the Legislature should think about positive methods and effects in the future and quit kowtowing to special interests that only want to maintain the status quo. The status quo is not working, and will only be exponentially damaging to the state and it's citizens in the future. Fast rail is a tremendously positive method of transportation for the future.
04/10/2013	Miguel Cobos		Edinburg	TX	78541														This is a great idea, as a student in Austin and originally from Edinburg, Texas I can speak for many of my fellow students by saying that this indeed is a necessary investment. The often 5 to 6 hour drive would be better replaced by a train ride by saving gasoline consumption.
04/10/2013	Mike Adams		Hutto	TX	78634														My wife and I support the extension of Light Rail systems to all of Texas. Give us a safe, clean alternative to air travel.
04/10/2013	mike harris		austin	TX	78766														we need light rail in austin and more amtrack
04/10/2013	Mike Medina		Laredo	TX	78045														There is a need to move many workers to the Eagle Ford areas. from larger cities around Cotulla.
04/10/2013	Mike O'Lena		Dallas	TX	75206														•Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.

04/10/2013	Morris Sandel		Austin	TX	78702	X	X	X	X										Austin needs to discourage personal transportation (one person driving around town alone moving a ton or so of machinery in the process). Buses and trains are the obvious solution. Reference any European city.
04/10/2013	Most Rev. DJ Loggins, EMG, OSB, Celt. Orth.		Hutto	TX	78634-5031														Rail would be an excellent idea for Texas, as well as the nation. Many other countries who are our National Allies have thriving rail systems. England/Great Britain, Germany, and India just to name a couple. We could learn much by their example.
04/26/2013	Mr Jan van Asselt		McPherson	KS	67460				X										I register my comment in favor of Rail Service up the corridor I-35. We need more rail service in general, our highways are too crowded with large truck traffic and too many vehicles in general. My wish would be that McPherson would be more connected by railroad; when I came to McPherson in 1955 from The Netherlands, we arrived at a local train station. Our train came from New York via Chicago. All connections for passenger train service have disappeared. We do have long, long freight trains passing through but none stop here. Any freight that comes into McPherson, which is considerable, comes from a regional service; there is no passenger service connected with it.
04/10/2013	Myra Smith		Burleson	TX	76028	X	X	X	X										I moved from NY to TX last year. I miss the availability of public transportation. I hate that I have to drive everywhere I want to go. Even the DART is not especially convenient. When I see all of the traffic on 30, 20 and 35 at rush hour, I think why not a commuter rail system. I do wonder if Texans would embrace it as well as those in the Northeast. Commuters do give up some freedom of movement and do depend on schedules. But seeing so many single drivers in huge trucks -- it is bad for the environment and bad for the human soul to be stressed in traffic for hours.
03/14/2013	N P Hips		Garland	TX	75041	X		X	X	X									I think this would be a wonderful idea & would love to ride the train to Austin & San Antonio....but would not. This is going to be another way for the illegals to get into & across Texas. I do not think it will be safe for us "white" folks to ride. Garland has six or seven buses leaving & arriving all the time from Mexico. Who stops & investigates who is on these buses? This town has become a sanctuary city. Schools are 50% hispanic (per school district). I think it is more like 80%. Trains would make it easier for these people to get here. Thank you.
04/03/2013	Nancy Garza		Corpus Christi	TX	78415														I think the potential of having train service throughout Texas to Oklahoma is fantastic. I remember when I was a young child we went on a field trip with the school to Sinton on a train. I would love to be able to go to surrounding places without having to drive or fly. Please do bring the train service back.
04/11/2013	Nancy Hart		buda	TX	78610	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						Passenger rail is only a matter of time...either that or we pave the two states...devastating for all living things. People are not going to stop coming to Texas..thus the sooner the better. Let's get enlightened and moving!
04/11/2013	Nancy Meador		Harwood	TX	78632														How will this work if the rail lines are controlled by the freight lines? I know for a fact that Amtrak is expected to get off on a side line when there is a freight train coming through, so how will that affect the speed rail? Or are you considering a separate rail lines to be laid exclusive for the speed rail only? If that were the case, then there are environmental issues to consider, human and natural....
03/28/2013	Nancy Peters		Eufaula	OK	74432														I would like to see a fast rail from OKC to Texas for myself and for our disabled individuals and elderly who would benefit from this.
04/01/2013	Nancy Russell		Sherman	TX	75092				X										I have read the article in the Dallas Morning News on April 1, 2013. My comments: This is a great idea. It will only work, however, if you include the following: **You need a means for people to have transportation at the destination. Solutions could include the following: 1. Have a significant increase in Texas Oklahoma public transportation (very expensive) 2. Have the ability to "ferry" your car to the destination on the train. (expensive) **3. Have a fleet of small commuter cars at each destination for passengers to rent at a nominal cost and for a short time period (e.g. \$15/per 24 hours with a limit of 5 days...with the purchase of a railroad ticket) (least expensive) **This is the BEST solution for Texas and Oklahoma because of the culture of the states with little experience in public transportation and sense of independence.
04/10/2013	Nancy White		Georgetown	TX	78628	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						I am in favor of the Texas-Oklahoma Rail line proposed.
04/11/2013	nathalie		NRh	TX	76182				X										More train transportation is a fantastic idea and will prevent potential highway congestion, wrecks, and save money for the consumer. It also reduces personal stress!!
04/10/2013	Ned Allen		Floresville	TX	78114														With fuel prices expected to stay high, population growth to continue, and highway traffic projected to increase, it is time to move forward with most Texans dream of high speed rail. We own the easements along the freeways already, we need to build the infrastructure and operate a state or Amtrak-owned high speed rail system up and down IH-35 from Oklahoma to Laredo, IH-45 from Galveston to Dallas, and IH-10 from Beaumont to El Paso. It is time to bring Texas into the 21st century with 21st century infrastructure.
04/12/2013	Neill Matheson		Dallas	TX	75208		X	X	X										I think it is important for Texas to invest in public transportation, especially passenger trains. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. Also, Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/02/2013	Nerissa Lindsey		Laredo	TX	78040														Is this going to be high speed rail like they are proposing in California and already have in Europe and other countries in the world? Would people be able to take their bikes on the train like in Europe? If so, I think it will be great. I live in Laredo and if given the choice I would prefer to take the train rather than drive. Driving on I35 is stressful and can be dangerous. I would enjoy traveling much more if it were by train.
04/17/2013	Nick Serafy		Brownsville	TX	78520														I support this project. When considering routes that will be used to attract Mexican tourists to Texas, be aware that there are existing rail bridges to Mexico that connect to rail lines to Monterrey in Laredo & Brownsville. There is also a new rail bridge that will open in Brownsville by the end of 2013.
04/10/2013	Nicole Solano		Fort Worth	TX	76140				X										I live in South Fort Worth and there are no options for public transportation. I would like to see more options like a light rail system that gets everyone around the DFW area.
04/04/2013	noemi pedroza		Laredo	TX	78044														Passenger trains great idea
04/10/2013	NORMA OLIVARES		MISSION	TX	78572				X										Me parece una muy buena idea y me encantaria tener este servicio como opcion para viajar.
04/23/2013	Olivia Cornyn		San Antonio	TX	78230	X	X	X	X	X									Please do add rail service to the other options for travel, in the Great State of Texas.
03/26/2013	OLUKANYIN BODEHARRISON		MUSKOGEE	OK	74401								X						Fast rail linking OK to Texas. Please start this rail ASAP. Our veterans will benefit from it a lot. The rest of us will benefit from it also for several reasons- 1. Save the air we breath in 2. Save energy 3. Save the road Thank you.

04/15/2013	Omar Jimenez		Dallas	TX	75253				X											There is so much going on on I-35 with traffic between cities and a way that we can get around it if there will be rail that would connect Dallas-S.A. as well as cities south of S.A. Greyhound is just too much and there can be rail between McAllen-Harlingen, it would be benefit everyone in the Valley. I would suggest as well to get started on the rail project from Georgetown to S.A. as well in which would benefit that area as well without the traffic. I think this is a great idea and to have the bullet trains if it will get to Point A to Point B faster.
04/10/2013	Orfa L Salinas		Dallas	TX	75231			X	X											I want to let you how much having rail service means to me. Since moving to Dallas I have been using the DART system and have been able to get to my VA medical appointments. With the cost of gas and an old car I really appreciate being able to get to my many doctor and other appointments. I don't have a big income just my job disability and my veteran benefit money so I can't afford to go visit my Mom who is 92 years old and lives in South Texas. If we had affordable rail service in all parts of Texas we could get the benefits that Dallas citizens know and appreciate to all Texans. Rail systems take a lot of drivers off the streets and highways. That means less accidents, less gasoline being used and less parking problems. Looking for parking results in more accidents, more pollution and more money for gasoline that poor folks don't have.
04/25/2013	Orlando Salinas		Elsa	TX	78543									X	X					It is of utmost importance that any rail plans for a north-south Texas rail corridor include the Rio Grande Valley and the Texas-Mexico border.
04/25/2013	Oscar Lopez		Edinburg	TX	78539				X											The railway transportation from the Valley to San Antonio and Houston would be beneficial to many Valley residents as the roadways are always filled with travelers coming and going to both cities. It is safer and most fuel efficient to have public transportation that is reliable and economic. If it is affordable would save the country vast quantities of oil. Many of the travelers generally drive large trucks and SUV's to those destinations. It would also make railway travel accessible to other parts of the country.
04/17/2013	P Hayes		RICHARDSON	TX	75085															Add me to the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study mailing list please. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Pamela Phillips		San Antonio	TX	78216		X		X											Texas needs more rail service. I would love to go to Austin, Houston, etc. on the train. I could get to the airport faster and safer and it would make a big difference in my life. I would think rail would promote more jobs...think Taxis and addition Van companies and would also lead to better transportation in Texas over all...High speed rail is a Good idea!
04/05/2013	Pat Corley		Oklahoma City	OK	73112				X											Strongly support improved passenger rail service to south Texas, and north from Oklahoma City, through Wichita, to Kansas City. I would use such a service several times yearly if available.
04/11/2013	Pat Fahrenthold		San Antonio	TX	78249		X		X					X						Please increase passenger train service in South Texas.
04/10/2013	Pat Gallagher		Dallas	TX	75209															We would ride the train. Did once about 17 years ago. Was great fun.
04/10/2013	Pat Harper		McKinney	TX	75070		X		X											I used to live in Los Angeles and I left because of the poor air quality. I m looking to move again after 12 years because of the poor air quality in the Dallas metro area. It is time to stop pandering to the oil companies and provide good transportation including high speed rail.
04/10/2013	Patience Patterson		Fort Worth	TX	76133		X		X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X	It is critical that the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, along with the Native American Graves Protection Act are all strictly adhered to and that all processes should afford the public a chance to comment through those processes.
04/11/2013	Patricia Bourland		Dallas	TX	75229				X											I support the rail alternative for Texas: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks!
04/04/2013	Patricia Cadena		Corpus Christi	TX	78412			X	X											I support adding the passenger rails to the proposed areas. An elderly population is one segment that would benefit by its availability which adds to human health and safety. another aspect would be one more avenue of evacuation when hurricanes threaten especially for those without vehicles and/or less tolerant of bus travel. Since the rail lines already exist in Corpus Christi I can see no impact on the environment especially in comparison to industrial ones that already exist.
04/10/2013	Patricia Cleere		College Station	TX	77841						X									Rail transportation for both goods and passengers is far superior to air, auto or bus forms of travel, not to mention more environmentally sound. As the cost of petrol rises, people are welcoming rail travel as an expedient alternative to highway trips. On the East Coast is the one Auto Train in the United States between Orlando and Washington, D.C., which is a delight as well as highly efficient. If there were one East-West train, say between Orlando and Los Angeles, and one on a northern route from the northeast through Chicago, then on to northern California or Washington State, I am sure they would be highly welcomed by the public.
04/10/2013	Patricia Duhon		San Marcos	TX	78666		X		X					X	X	X				I think having a high-speed rail system through Texas is a great idea. The traffic congestion is getting pretty serious in Central Texas and this would allow more of us to travel longer distances without the gasoline emissions. Removing cars from the highways should improve safety. I would think there would be plenty of open, undeveloped space to put in the railway without causing undue financial harm to small farmers and businesses.
04/14/2013	Patricia Norwood, MD		San Antonio	TX	78209		X	X	X											It's time Texas had high speed rail along the I 35 corridor, cutting down travel times between these cities, taking cars off the roads and conserving gasoline.
04/13/2013	Patricia Reinhardt		CC	TX	78404	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	I believe in public transportation and want to see it across the nation and in Texas. We need high speed rail. It's about time we got smart and got rail.
04/10/2013	Patricia Wheeler		Plano	TX	75074				X	X										I support TXDOT plans for expanding rail transportation in TX (and beyond!). There are many reasons why this will be beneficial to all Texans as well as visitors: 1) Train transportation will keep more cars off the road thus benefitting the environment. 2) A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. 3) Train travel is more enjoyable and less stressful than driving. 4) Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion is reduced. This benefits people and our environment. 5) Train travel encourages tourism because people could travel faster and more widely. When visiting Ireland, we were able to visit many cities from Dublin to Cork by train. This saved car rental, gas, time, and the scary experience of trying to drive on the wrong side of the road! I know I would visit Austin, Houston, Galveston and Corpus (and points north like even up to Wichita, Ks) a lot more if I didn't have to drive. Again, I will support any effort to improve train travel in Texas.

03/24/2013	R L Rushing		Madill	OK	73446				X											The more forms of transportation that are available to the public, the better. A rail system that has a higher degree of speed, will help commerce. The more people that take the rail system will help to lower highway traffic and highway accidents. I rarely go to Dallas or Fort Worth because of the insane amount of highway traffic. The rail system needs more than one set of tracks going from Oklahoma City to Dallas. It needs at least two. There needs to be more than one passenger train a day between the two states. I hope the rail system grows, but I figure the controlling powers will squash this like a bug because there is a lot of money to be made building highways and selling petroleum products.
04/10/2013	R. Preston		Tom Bean	TX	75489		X	X	X				X		X	X				All of the above apply but also, I would like to be able to get to attractions in large cities without having to drive in the traffic, getting lost, having to drive in unfamiliar areas and driving after dark.
04/10/2013	Rachel Maldonado		Round Rock	TX	78664-6659		X	X	X				X		X					I understand that Texas is a big oil/ gas state. However, it has been proven that in our current economy, that people would use public transportation more often if it were more readily available. I am asking this be taken in consideration not only as an environmental issue, but as a social economic issue as well. If people have the means to work and get where they need to be, they will. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Rafael Hammett		Dallas	TX	75218		X	X	X		X		X		X					Texas badly needs a high speed rail across the state. Infrastructure builds economy. Invest in Texas' future.
04/10/2013	Rajni Patel		Irvng	TX	75062		X	X	X		X	X	X	X						We need to have few cars on the road as we are adding somuch pollution.Also Railway is much safer for trasportation, more economical too.
04/11/2013	Ralph Galvan		San Antonio	TX	78201		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X				Our rail system is still stuck in the fifties and has not advanced. Europe and Asia have the latest advances in rails and we have fallen behind, in comparison we are third world in rail systems. Along with our infrastructure, this country is on the verge of stagnating in the 19th century while the world moves in the 21st century.
03/20/2013	Randi Eldevik		Stillwater	OK	74074															Several times over the years, I have traveled by train back and forth between Oklahoma City and various points in Texas; I would like to be able to continue traveling this way. I am very much in favor of passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Texas. I often go to Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin.
03/31/2013	Randy Bear		San Antonio	TX	78207		X		X											Leveraging passenger rail could potentially reduce the need for more road infrastructure to be developed as well as improve the environment from an emissions perspective. I currently leverage Megabus between San Antonio and Austin as much as possible. The convenience of traveling by shared services greatly improves my workday, since I can also do work on the bus.
04/10/2013	Raymond Reed		College Station	TX	77840	X	X		X		X	X	X	X						We need rail transportation between cities to reduce traffic conjection
04/10/2013	Rebecca Doll		Wimberley	TX	78676		X		X		X		X							I would like to see Texas lead the nation into rail transportation already used all over the world.
04/26/2013	Rebecca Fields		Wichita	KS	67208													X		I am in support for TX to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Ft Worth - Ok City north through Wichita and connect in Newton to the SW Chief.
04/26/2013	Rep. Pete DeGraaf	Kansas Representative	Mulvane	KS	67110				X	X										I would like to echo my support of expanding passenger rail along the I-35 corridor. I serve as the Chairman of the General Government Budget committee in the Kansas House of Representatives and also serve on the House Appropriations committee. I and other representatives in the Kansas legislature are strongly supportive of developing a passenger rail partnership between Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. We see great value in extending the Heartland Flyer north from Oklahoma City into Wichita Kansas. Expanding north to Newton Kansas would allow for productive business travel along the I-35 corridor all the way down to Houston Texas and also allow the Heartland Flyer to connect with the already existing passenger rail Southwest Chief going east to west into Missouri and Colorado. The use of trains for vacation and business travel is becoming more popular and ability to connect existing rail service seems to make good business sense. More and more businesses understand that rail travel is restful and far more productive than traveling by car or air. It is my hope that Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas will work together in developing an interconnected passenger rail system that includes bring the Hearland Flyer north through Guthrie, Ponca City, Mulvane, Wichita, Newton, and into Kansas City.
03/15/2013	Rev. Karl A. Claver		Plano	TX	75075		X	X	X	X										Texas needs more passenger trains, and more routes, so we can get Texans off the highway and on to the rails. Amtrak is more fuel efficient and causes less pollution than busses, cars or airlines, so the carbon footprint is more environment friendly when travelling by rail. Tracks must be repaired, so trains can travel safely at around 90-100 mph. Routes to Laredo, Brownsville,Corpus Christi should be restored, as well as El Paso to Ft. Worth (via Midland), Dallas to Houston, and a route to Denver. Texans love to ski in Colorado, but there are no trains to the Rocky Mountain State. Also the Heartland Flier needs to be extended to Kansas City. Instead of wasting money by constantly digging up LBJ freeway in Dallas, and adding more lanes, improving rail transportation is a much wiser solution. The price of gas is increasing, and to keep Texans mobile, more Amtrak passenger service is vital to the Texas economy. Thank you..
04/26/2013	Rev. Robert Hemberger		Wichita	KS	67202				X											Dear Committee: I write in support of pursuing with serious study the possibility of passenger rail service from TX to Kansas City. This is an idea whose time may be here. Especially interesting would be some train service that would connect us in Wichita with the KC and St. Louis markets. Air travel to those places is terribly inconvenient.
04/03/2013	Ricardo A. Salinas		Laredo	TX	78043															I saw the study for the passenger rail service and I think it would be a great idea, only if the people of Laredo would open up and change their routine of doing things. Recently I went to San Antonio with my family to Fiesta Texas and we had a great time. The most difficult thing was coming back extremely exhausted and fighting to stay awake. The issue of having to wake up very early in the morning and then to drive 2hrs, spend the whole day and then drive back; as a father is mind bottling because of your family's safety on the way back. If the rail service can work around providing families with a trip, where they can get off in San Antonio, Austin, Dallas or any other city on the way with rental cars accessibility or transportation to places of interest, at reasonable prices, I think it could work. I rather pay up to \$200 for a family of four for a round trip on the train where I know at least we will get back safer and not having to fall asleep. With gasoline prices, a round trip will cost you about \$150 for gas, so for an extra \$50, I rather pay it and get some rest on the way back on a train and get home safely
04/10/2013	Ricardo Martinez		Edinburg	TX	78541				X											Great initiative, less people on roads = safer roads, good to our environment, opportunity for travel.

03/27/2013	Robert Farnsworth- <i>comment part 2</i>		Austin	TX	78758																																
03/27/2013	Robert Farnsworth- <i>comment part 3</i>		Austin	TX	78758																																

This route is envisaged to be non-stop between the two end points; however, stops could be located in Corsicana or Waxahachie and in Montgomery County or Spring. C.San Antonio - Houston The current Amtrak service on this route stops only at the two named end points. The regional rail service would have stops at the following additional localities: •Seguin •Schulenburg •Columbus •Rosenburg D.Houston - Beaumont-Port Arthur This segment could operate as an extension of the San Antonio - Houston route, its short length, 83 miles, limits the number of available stops. Liberty would be a plausible site for an intermediate station. In addition, if the route were extended into the State of Louisiana, it could run to Lake Charles and Lafayette and even as far as New Orleans. The current Amtrak service of the Sunset Limited is not a factor in the transportation equation in any case. That train operates only three days per week in each direction, and it is often several hours late in arriving at its limited number of stops. Even the Amtrak reservation system on line carries a notation for this train that states that it may be several hours late due to excessive rail freight traffic on the route. Such tardiness is intolerable for the proposed regional rail service. E.Austin - Bryan-College Station -Houston Two major highways connect Austin with Houston, U.S. 290 and Texas 71/IH-10, and both experience continually heavy vehicle traffic. The demand for Austin-Houston service is apparent. The route is not. Time studies show that a route from Austin and through Taylor to Bryan-College Station and thence to Houston is an effective choice. The stop at Taylor could provide a walk-across connection with other trains serving Temple and Waco. Projected stations include the following: •Round Rock •Taylor •Hearne •College Station •Navasota F.Fort Worth-Dallas-Shreveport/Boosier City This route is being demanded by the citizens who live in East Texas. Planned intermediate stations include the following: •Mineola •Longview •Marshall Texas Regional Rail Service. Preliminary Feasibility Analysis I.Purpose of this Preliminary Analysis A.Over the past twenty years numerous, rigorous studies have been completed that addressed the growing population of the State of Texas and that growth's projected impact on future mobility within the state. At first, almost all of them focused on the increasing congestion of the state's principal highways, including both the Interstate Highway System and the major federal and state highway system, and how the cost to the individual citizen would be forced to increase as a result of increased fuel consumption, increased time required for travel, and increased pollution mitigation costs. More recently, the studies have begun to look at alternatives to the standard remedy of building more and bigger highways, a solution that demonstrably leads to even more highway congestion. The primary alternative to highway travel has evolved to the utilization of the skies, encouraged by the development of jet-powered aircraft and the concomitant reduction in the cost per mile of air travel.

Again, this form of travel has witnessed a rapid increase in demand that has resulted in flight traffic congestion at all of the nation's major airports and limitations placed on the use of existing air corridors by the over-taxed air control system. B.This preliminary study will summarize the findings of the studies that have been completed, many of them by recognized transportation experts. This study will then present a case for the development of a new and aggressive effort to revive and revitalize the passenger rail system within the State of Texas. This study will focus on the demand for regional rail between and among the population centers of Eastern Texas. II.Background Modern transportation policy in the United States was set during the Eisenhower Administration in the early 1950s when Congress committed to construct the 41,000 mile Interstate Highway System, the design based on the President's observations of the German Autobahn System which linked major cities and regions with high speed, limited access highways. This decision came following the historic role which the American railroads played in mobilizing the nation for its participation in World War II. The subsequent and steady decline of America's railroads during the 1950s and 1960s can be traced directly to the stepped completion of the Interstate Highway System (IHS) across the nation. That the IHS was the major part of the national transportation policy is demonstrated by the huge and indispensable role played by the federal government: •95% federal funding to the state highway departments •Federally coordinated system of construction and operations standards •Aggressive funding from the national Congressional body Conversely, federal financial and tax reporting regulations stymied new investments in rail infrastructure through the replacement-betterment accounting rules that severely restricted tax expensing of new construction to only replacing in-kind. "Betterment" construction was required to be amortized over the life of the construction, resulting in major tax penalties relative to foregone tax benefits for such investment. Meanwhile, local tax jurisdictions bled the railroads cash-dry through heavy tax appraisals and assessments, a policy which led inexorably to the systematic abandonment of marginal rail lines and to the railroad companies' aggressive elimination of "redundant" and "excess" capacity (second, third, fourth mail tracks). Meanwhile, rail traffic declined in actual tonnage as well as in percentage of freight carried—to 30%—while freight carried by trucks not only increased in the volume and percentage of freight carried but also in the volume of high-value freight. Concurrently with this radical change in freight mode choice, more and more people were choosing to travel longer distances by automobile on the IHS while eschewing travel by passenger rail. Mail contracts on passenger trains helped to support otherwise losing passenger operations until Congress chose to move postal contracts to the fledgling airline industry in late 1967.

03/27/2013	Robert Farnsworth - <i>comment part 4</i>		Austin	TX	78758																																<p>The subsequent decline in rail passenger service, which was greatly frustrated by federal Interstate Commerce Commission rules governing fares and route maintenance finally culminated in the federally mandated formation of the National Rail Passenger Corporation, better known as "Railpax." Activated on May 1, 1971, "Amtrak." –as the new system was and continues to be known–assumed the ownership and operation of the national rail passenger system, the participating rail carriers to "buy into" the new system with a cash payment. Five carriers chose not to participate for individual reasons: the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad; the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad; Southern Railroad; Georgia Railroad; and Chicago, South Shore & South Bend. They were required to continue existing passenger operations until January 1, 1975. Thus, the Quad Cities Rocket and the Peoria Rocket continued to race and/or crawl into Chicago, and the Rio Grande Zephyr continued to operate west of Denver. How did the birth of Amtrak affect passenger rail service in Texas? The following trains were discontinued on or shortly before May 1, 1971: Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad– #1/2 San Francisco Chief, ran through Wichita, Amarillo and Clovis #15/16 Texas Chief, ran through Wichita, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, Houston, and to Galveston #65/66 Houston to Temple #75/76 Temple to Clovis #77/78 Brownwood to San Angelo #93/94 Amarillo to Lubbock Earlier passenger train discontinuances included: Fort Worth & Denver Railroad (Burlington Route)– #1/2 Texas Zephyr. Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston #7/8 Denver, Amarillo, Dallas, Houston Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (Katy)– #1/2 Texas Special. Kansas City, Dallas, Waco, San Antonio Texas & Pacific Railroad/Missouri Pacific Railroad (Mopac)– #21/22 "West" Texas Eagle. Fort Worth to El Paso Texas passenger trains that remained in operation under the aegis of Amtrak were– Texas Chief-Lone Star. Wichita, Oklahoma City, Gainesville, Fort Worth, Temple, Houston Texas Eagle. St. Louis, Little Rock, Texarkana, Dallas-Fort Worth, McGregor/Waco, Temple, Austin, San Antonio Sunset. New Orleans, Houston, San Antonio, Del Rio, El Paso, points west The Texas Chief was later discontinued, leaving just the Texas Eagle and the Sunset trains serving the State of Texas. The Texas Eagle operates one train per day in each direction, while the Sunset operates one train in each direction only three days per week. Ironically, the Federal Republic of Germany, the model for super highway construction in the United States, in 1972 decided to place a new emphasis on rail travel, especially in regional and metropolitan areas. Increasing population growth and its accompanying density had led to such a high level of highway congestion whose remedy through the expansion of the highway network was impractical if not insolvable. Concurrently, German, French, and Japanese private-government consortia initiated feasibility and design studies for future high-speed rail systems. The Japanese were the first to inaugurate their system, the Shinkansen, followed by the French TGV and finally by the German ICE systems.</p>
03/27/2013	Robert Farnsworth - <i>comment part 5</i>		Austin	TX	78758																																<p>It was also about this time that actual engineering and construction plans began to be drawn up for the high-speed rail tunnel which now links France with Great Britain by passing under the English Channel. Below is a map of the current (April 2, 2007) Amtrak System. MAP 1. AMTRAK SYSTEM MAP APRIL 2007 Source Amtrak System Timetable, April 2, 2007 III.Roles of Transportation Modes A.Regional and Long Distance Modal Choices The transportation consumer selects the mode of travel based on personal needs and desires. The business traveler requires speed, reliability, and accessibility to the destination. The special event attendee requires cost effectiveness, accessibility to the event, and reliability in knowing that he/she will arrive in time to attend the event. Family and friend visitation criteria include cost effectiveness, time effectiveness, reliability, and accessibility to the destination. Finally, the pleasure traveler looks for route, destination access, cost effectiveness, and reliability. The criteria for each choice generally include the same factors, but in differing priorities and in differing contexts. Modal accessibility to the consumer is often determined by the volume of demand. For example, the primary choice for many people is the personal vehicle, but access to adequate roadway infrastructure depends almost entirely on proximity to routes having high average daily traffic (ADT) levels. Airline flight availability depends on nearness to a market sufficient to sustain the profitability of the particular route. Therefore, modal availability often reflects the nature of trip demand. Chart 1 below illustrates the modal choice ranked by distance of travel. Local trip selection is dominated by utilization of the personal vehicle, then reach out to commercial choices of taxis and bus. As the trip distance increases, the modal choice broadens to ascending levels of commercial providers, reflected in the narrowing points of the pyramids. Surface and air modal choices parallel one another through the mid range of trip distance. At the top of each pyramid stands the category of "Special" transportation, in other words, charter services to include bus, train, and plane. CHART 1. TRANSPORTATION MODAL UTILIZATION IV.About Texas The State of Texas has the reputation of great, open spaces that are generally sparsely populated. First-time visitors to the Austin area are amazed and astounded by the green trees and the density of population. Often times, they may have visited either Houston or Dallas, and they just assumed that those two cities were anomalous to the remainder of the state's lack of population density. The State of Texas comprises approximately 261,900 square miles, divided into 256 counties. Within this immense territory reside about 23 million residents, thus yielding an overall population density of nearly 90 persons per square mile, truly not an impressive number. However, the state may be divided along the 100th meridian into two different states, Eastern and Western. The western half of the state comprises 116,600 square miles, or about 45.5 % of the state's total land area divided into 87 counties, 34% of the total number of counties in Texas.</p>

04/10/2013	Ron Barbosa		Grapevine	TN	76051-3127		X	X	X		X	X	X	X					The residents of Texas need more mass transit options to help protect the quality of life for all.
04/10/2013	Ron Hamiton		Southlake	TX	76092														I have often thought about using AMTRAK to go to locations between southern Texas and Okalhoma, but the current rail system is both too slow and does not run often enough to make using rail feasible. If high speed rail was introduced I would certainly use it. It needs to be not only fasster but more frequent. Thank you for concidering adding high speed rail.
04/10/2013	Ron Marshall		Sunnyvale	TX	75182	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						High speed rail is more energy efficient.
04/20/2013	Ron Merrick		Houston	TX	77071		X	X	X										Any rail passenger improvements will improve the environment, reduce traffic deaths and injuries, and improve mobility. The sooner a passenger rail system connecting major points in Texas can be implemented, the better our quality of life will be. We already have significant rail passenger stations in most of these cities, now we just need to add the high-speed track and the trains.
04/10/2013	Ron Noble		San antonio	TX	78259-2620				X										I think high speed rail between the cities mapped out would be a great help to our highway system. Many people could and would take the train if it was truly fast, and competitively priced with air travel. As it is today, a trip from San Antonio to Dallas is not just a one hour flight. You need to be to the airport at least 1.5 hours before the flight and if you check baggage you must wait 15 or 20 minutes for you bag(s). Then, if you rent a car there is time to get the rental car. In all a one hour flight to Dallas could take you 4.5 or 5 hours until you are ready to get to your destination in Dallas. Of course, if you hit rush hour, you could add another hour to your drive. If a train could go 100 MPH or even 150 MPH, then the trip would take 2 or 3 hours. If their were good reliable ground transportation in Dallas, then getting to your destination could take a total of 3 to 4 hours. Some saving in time and a lot less hassle. Think about the possibilities if the train could travel at 200 MPH.
04/03/2013	Ron Sparks		Miami	FL	33166				X				X		X			X	If anything will help increase the services in South Texas then expand the Amtrak line from San Antonio to Corpus Christi and further south to the valley.
03/30/2013	Ron Villarreal		Aransas Pass	TX	78336														All for the passenger rail system. You have my yes vote...
04/21/2013	RonnBradley		Augusta	KS	67010													X	I would love to see the Heartland Flyer come to Wichita, KS. I would travel south on it on a regular basis.
04/10/2013	Rooifo Rosales		San Antonio	TX	78201				X										Do the plans for Oklahoma to South Texas include Waco, Austin, San Antonio, and then where? I would think that a line to Brownsville through Haringen and another line to Corpus Christie would be awesome. Also are we considering connecting to Houston and then eventually to El Paso?
04/10/2013	rosalind detrich		Cushing	OK	74023		X		X										I am very much in favor of a faster rail system from OKC to Texas. I have ridden on the Heartland Flyer numerous times and always appreciated having that option. Public transportation options are very important and I hope that this faster option will be available in the near future. Thanks!
04/11/2013	Rose		Kyle	TX	78640	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				I commute to work from Kyle to N. Austin everyday, seems I have to keep leaving my home earlier and earlier in order to get to work on time. I would love for there to be a commuter rail that would bypass all the traffic on IH 35 into Austin, that would be my mode of transit into work. I feel a commuter rail system would alleviate a lot of congestion, pollution and mental aggravation that rush hour traffic creates. I am concerned though, what this would mean to the environment (ie: cutting down trees, wildlife habitats affected, effect on streams....) when constructing this system. I am also concerned about tax raises, we already pay high property taxes in Hays County. Thank you!
04/10/2013	Rose Ann Reeser		West Lake Hills	TX	78746	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							I'm writing to urge TxDOT to work toward a usable network of passenger trains for Texas. The current route under consideration, Oklahoma City to South Texas, would be a good step in that direction. More enormous toll roads are not the answer to moving large numbers of people in and between our urban centers. On the East Coast, trains move hundreds of thousands of people per day, reducing energy consumption, pollution and land needed for roads and parking lots. With the numbers of people moving to the Southwest every day, (re)building an efficient passenger train system NOW seems like an obvious choice. We have enjoyed using what Amtrak service does exist now, traveling between Chicago and Austin, Austin and Oklahoma City, and Austin and Fort Worth by train. However, because the passenger trains must yield to the freight traffic, schedules are unreliable, so it's not an efficient way to travel if one is on a tight schedule. Please allocate funding for passenger train development. We would use it, as would thousands of Texans and Oklahomans. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Rose Garcia		San Antonio	TX	78214														All for high speed rail.
04/17/2013	Rose Timmer		Brownsville	TX	78526														I strongley support this project and know that our community of Brownsville will benefit greatly from it.
04/10/2013	Rosemary Rambow		San Antonio	TX	78209-2447		X		X	X	X	X	X	X					Rail is good for Texas. Less automobile traffic and faster. Cleaner air as a result.
04/10/2013	Ross King		Ft Worth	TX	76110														Any kind of public transportation which is efficient would be a plus in Texas. We have way too many roads & highways, which cause many people to have to afford a vehicle to get to work or to anything else. Hige speed rail seems a good alternative for many who go from OK to TX.
03/15/2013	Roxanne Conrad		Fort Worth	TX	76120														I am highly in favor of expanded rail service! As someone who travels a great deal, I rely on Amtrak for a lot of my long-distance trips, and although I often see comments that Amtrak "needs to increase ridership," every train I board is full, with every seat and bedroom sold out, especially on long haul routes heading east, west and north. Amtrak needs better routes, faster, newer trains and most of all, the means to offer convenience to travelers to get where they need to go quickly. Thank you.
04/01/2013	Roy Triplett		Tulsa	OK	74133														I believe the rail service from Oklahoma to Dallas would be highly used as airlines are cutting more service and increasing costs. Okc & Tulsa have limited flights and full planes so it is getting harder to use air travel. I feel every effort should be used to get this approved. I for one would certainly use it as a system over air travel often
04/10/2013	RoyAnn Cox		Denton	TX	76209	X	X	X	X				X						Trying to increase the amount of asphalt and cement to accommodate the number of cars on the highway will never work. We will only decrease the quality of our lives, air and community. It has been shown that rail is more efficient in moving people and products, therefore we must work to increase the lines between cities, urban and rural.

04/10/2013	Rudy and Barbara Stippec		Denton	TX	76209-3404		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	It is time that the obstructionists cease their rhetoric on keeping the State of Texas from moving on with PROGRESS. There are so many issues facing Texas but the primary issue is Global Warming otherwise known as Climate Change. The obstructionists need to accept the fact, we repeat, accept the fact that Climate Change is happening NOW; they need to open their eyes to see the devastation being caused by the change in weather patterns, the worsening and the increasing of specific events such as tornadoes, storms, etc.; they need to accept the fact that human beings are causing Climate Change by spewing into the atmosphere toxic pollution, spreading toxic pollution all over our lands and continuing to allow the Big Oil and Gas Companies to pollute; and they need to bring a halt to their greed for more money and power and put all of their efforts to the good of us all instead of for the Big Oil and Gas Companies. We are in desperate need of a massive decrease in the pollution of our home, Earth. Whatever can be done to increase the health and well being of humans along with wildlife and vegetation should and must be done and must be done now. Time is running out on turning the tide against Climate Change. It seems that many live in the NOW and find it hard to think ahead. We are completely on board with turning the tide against Climate Change by cleaning up the air we breathe and the water we must drink; cleaning up our lands from the oil spills and toxic pollutants, etc.; and reducing the number of cars and especially trucks on our roadways, etc. One of the ways to attack Climate Change is to establish a Texas State owned and operated Passenger Railway System with Oklahoma. This would definitely be the beginning, hopefully of bringing Texas up to par with other states.
04/10/2013	Russell Barros		San Antonio	TX	78210				X										I support a rail transportation system for people between Oklahoma and south Texas.
03/31/2013	russell hein		denison	TX	75020										X				Unfortunately I will be traveling and can't be in Sherman to hear the discussion. I have been involved in several rail projects over the course of my career. My first question is what is this going to do that Amtrack doesn't? Second question is, are you going to use existing track? Based on the answers I would probably have more questions.
04/14/2013	Rusty Osborne		Austin	TX	78733					X					X				I would suggest that TXDOT consider San Marcos, TX, as an additional stop for the proposed rail project. San Marcos, as a major college town, has a student population of +/- 30,000 who would benefit from a planned boarding/disembarkment station.
04/14/2013	Ruth Reid		Corpus Christi	TX	78414			X	X	X		X		X					I support increasing passenger rail service in Texas. This will require fewer cars to travel these routes, avoid auto pollution, avoid some road construction, and be good for the public. Please approve passenger rail expansion.
04/10/2013	Ruth Stewart		San Antonio	TX	78249			X	X	X		X			X				The adage of "build it and they will come" seems to apply to road increase and proliferation of traffic. The destruction of vast swaths of land required for roads affects the ecology of the area, the business (for better or for worse) and the habitation of wildlife. The polluted air resulting from the innumerable vehicles increases health issues for involved. Seldom is there a positive outcome other than for construction, car manufacturers and oil companies. I would certainly ride trains to Austin and Dallas, were this a reasonable option.
03/18/2013	Ryan		Van Alstyne	TX	75495						X				X				I am opposed to high speed rail. It is incredibly expensive and underutilized in most areas of the nation. It may be suitable within the state of Texas to move people from one densely populated urban area (i.e. Houston) to another (i.e. Dallas). However I see little need for rail traffic going into Oklahoma. Also there is the subject of building a rail system which will obviously require property be condemned and seized via eminent domain. This will anger many. Please abandon high speed rail as a solution to our transportation needs. It is a 19th century answer to a 21st century issue.
04/10/2013	Ryan Dishaw		Austin	TX	78756			X		X					X				Please consider high speed rail for the Texas / Oklahoma area. We need transportation alternatives to help alleviate traffic problems. High speed rail would offer a faster, more environmentally friendly alternative to the thousands of people that drive their cars from city to city in Texas and Oklahoma.
04/10/2013	Ryan Fleming		Austin	TX	78751														we need high speed rail.
04/12/2013	Ryan Hochstatter		Corinth	TX	76210		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X				I fully support the move to make trains a major mode of transportation in Texas and Oklahoma. The effects are beneficial and long term: Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Ryan Schumacher		Denton	TX	76201			X	X	X	X				X				I think it's a great idea. I travel between Texas's major cities quite often, and I find the high volume of traffic appalling. I think an efficient, reliable train service could go a long toward relieving congestion and providing other benefits like the reduction of greenhouse gases and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. A comfortable train ride could be much less stressful than an automobile commute, too. I think Texas has both the major cities and long distances to be a significant leader in this category. I would really like to see the state be at the forefront of a positive change for once.
03/31/2013	S. Lewis Coleman		San Antonio	TX	78201														No question at this time!
04/11/2013	S. Hess		Mesquite	TX	75181			X		X					X				Let Texas step into the 21st century and help ease traffic congestion, the burden of road repairs, and use trains: a more environmentally sustainable method of high speed travel than air. Trains are incredibly reliable and not subject to as many of the weather vagaries of air travel. Business travelers and students can work while commuting. Seniors who may not wish to drive because of road fatigue and younger people who cannot afford cars and insurance can still get to their destinations using high speed rail. The cost of high speed train service can be mitigated by attaching a parcel/freight car to transmit urgent packages. Revenues for conveying parcels can offset passenger rail fees. Please note support from North Central Texas for high speed rail!

04/11/2013	Scott Dubble		Austin	TX	78723	X	X	X	X						X	X	X		Please expand rail transportation options in Texas. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/26/2013	Scott Fry		Brownsville	TX	78526														I support this project with a southern terminus in Brownsville, Texas.
04/11/2013	Scott Melcer		Austin	TX	78722		X		X										Light Rail is the most effective way to reduce traffic, pollution, and dependence on foreign oil.
04/12/2013	Scott Taylor		Mckinney	TX	75071														Our state, and county has a whole, Invest more in rail to address our glowing congestion roads. This would create good paying jobs and give a needed alternative to driving.
04/26/2013	Scott Wagner	City Councilman	Kansas City	MO	64106										X				As a City Councilman from Kansas City I would like TxDOT to consider moving further north along this route to include Kansas and the City of Wichita in this study. Filling the gap that exists creates an opportunity to connect the I-35 from corridor from the Dallas/Fort Worth area all the way to Kansas City, Missouri. We encourage TxDOT, OkDOT and KDOT to work on filling that gap and will ask MoDOT how it can assist you.
04/08/2013	Sean Barry		Austin	TX	78752										X				Speed and frequency are critical to making intercity rail successful in Texas. True high-speed rail would be nice, but higher-speed rail would be acceptable to get the route open sooner (and get more folks riding sooner...with a long-term plan to upgrade to true HSR, much as the model taken in the Northeast Corridor). Ultimately the train doesn't have to be the fastest way to get from one city to the next, but it needs to at least be somewhat competitive, meaning much faster service with much shorter layovers is needed as compared with the current Texas Eagle service. Multiple trains each day in each direction (preferably at least 6 trains/direction/day) are needed to make the service workable with schedules. Also, the train needs to serve downtowns in all cities (not suburbs, not airports, etc.) and the stations need to have transit connections, be in walkable locations near hotels, have taxis, car-sharing, bike-sharing, etc. readily available, as well as car rentals for folks whose final destination is not the central city. Lastly, Waco desperately needs to be included on the route. It is a joke that the current Texas Eagle bypasses such an important city along the corridor.
03/21/2013	Señor Kevin Drury		Moore	OK	73170										X				In my humble opinion, the propagation of government-subsidized public transportation is an excellent example of an egregious waste of taxpayers money. Let the free market system work to our advantage. If these routes are viable, a private company (AMTRAK is a government entity) will develop the system. This will create jobs. Those jobs will generate more taxes. Think of it like privatizing the passenger rail industry AND getting a tax increase without having to work at it. En mi humilde opinión, la propagación de las subsidiado por el gobierno el transporte público es un excelente ejemplo de una pérdida atroz de dinero de los contribuyentes. Deje que el sistema de libre mercado funciona a nuestro favor. Si estas rutas son viables, una empresa privada (AMTRAK es una entidad gubernamental) desarrollará el sistema. Esto creará puestos de trabajo. Los puestos de trabajo que generará más impuestos. Piense en ello como la privatización del sector ferroviario de pasajeros y conseguir un aumento de los impuestos, sin tener que trabajar en ello.
04/11/2013	Sergio C Hernandez		Brownsville	TX	78521				X										The Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The Valley's population growth requires development of passenger rail towards accommodating future travel demand needs.
04/10/2013	Sharon A. Harris		Carrollton	TX	75007		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				Please move forward to provide more passenger rail service in the State of Texas.
04/10/2013	Sharon Bramblett		Austin	TX	78751-3206		X		X						X	X			Please make high speed passenger rail service available to us between OKC, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Laredo, and Houston. It is much more efficient, carrying large numbers of people in a short time. It will reduce more expensive car and short plane trips, saving so much energy, not to mention improving air quality. The OKC-DFW route is a model of how to do it. You must seriously consider rail as a more viable option to building more roads - it's the future. Thank you,
04/10/2013	Sharon I Gouwens		Fort Worth	TX	76132		X	X	X	X			X	X					I want an alternative to travel in autos and air that is quick and safe and allows me to relax. We have really enjoyed our train travel and find it a more human scale way to get around.
04/10/2013	Shea Kinser		Fort Worth	TX	76126														I would love to see more rail in Texas! The traffic along I-35 between DFW and Austin is atrocious, and adding better rail service along this route would be extremely beneficial for the state. Not only would this improve traffic, but taking cars off the roads would help improve air quality!
04/10/2013	shelley smith		austin	TX	78704		X		X										Please increase availability of rail service in Texas.
04/10/2013	shelva wood		plano	TX	75023		X				X								Exactly WHERE will it go???
04/10/2013	Sherrill Campbell		Denton	TX	76209		X												I am very much in favor of increasing more passenger rail service in Texas. As I grow older and foresee not wanting to drive as much because of vision issues, I really welcome other modes of transportation. I am also concerned with air pollution and waste of natural resources that keeping more cars on the road insures.
04/10/2013	Shilpa Mistry		DALLAS	TX	75233		X		X										Having ridden high speed trains around parts of Europe, I found them to be very efficient methods to travel moderate distances without the hassle of driving. This could also be a more affordable method for many people to I would like to see high speed rail in Texas to link all of the major cities.
04/25/2013	shirley rubenstein		dallas	TX	75254														I would like to see high speed rail in Texas to link all of the major cities.
04/11/2013	Sid McManus		Fort Worth	TX	76132		X		X										I support the development of high speed rail in Texas. With a continued growing population alternative transportation to cars and planes is vital part of keeping Texas strong economically and environmentally.
04/10/2013	Silvia Salinas		Mission	TX	78572		X		X										My family, friends, coworkers and I like to travel to San Antonio, Houston, Austin or Dallas. We would looove to be able to travel by train to all of these cities and all over the United States too! My friends and I travel to all these cities very often so if we had train transportation we would take it all the time. We love trains and love to take care of our environment!
04/15/2013	Siri Bletzer		San Antonio	TX	78256														I think it is a great idea! It will help our environment by reducing pollution and allow car traffic to flow more smoothly and reduce the number of accidents.
04/23/2013	Sister Irma Gonzalez		Brownsville	TX	78520-7436				X										I would love to see passenger rail return to the Rio Grande Valley.

04/10/2013	Skip Londos		Waco	TX	76710				X										Friends, I write to express several concerns, all centered around lessening our collective dependence on autos and fossil fuels for transportation. Texas needs to expand alternative modes of transportation for safety, health, social, environmental and moral reasons. Please consider the following suggestions: * More and improved rail transport -- high speed and otherwise * Lower traffic speeds within municipalities to increase safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers * More sidewalks in all municipalities, especially near schools, bus stops, and other pedestrian sensitive areas. Thank you! Sincerely, Skip Londos
04/10/2013	Sofia		McAllen	TX	78504														With the economy in recession, this will be a great and economic way to get around. It is much better environmentally than cars and planes and is faster and more reliable than a bus. This is something us citizen not only need, we deserve to have something we can use like this and put our hard earned money to great use. Totally in favor of this great investment! It is about time south texas gets something worth bragging about!
04/10/2013	Sophia Pena Garza		McAllen	TX	78504				X	X									A passenger rail to south Texas (specifically to the Rio Grande Valley--McAllen area) would be wonderful. Due to my health issues I am not able to easily drive myself to the San Antonio and Austin areas. I would also love to be able to travel north to Oklahoma where my mother is originally from. Being able to travel without concentrating on driving would allow me and my family to see more of the state and country and be very fun and exciting. I am also happy that passenger rail travel is better for the environment than car or air travel. A passenger rail to south Texas would be wonderful. Please create it!
04/10/2013	Sosha Ruark-Cavett		Austin	TX	78753				X	X	X			X	X				I would like to see a safe and effective way to reduce congestion and air pollution while still being able to travel through large swaths of Texas.
04/10/2013	spencer conklin		austin	TX	78727		X	X	X	X				X					I support high speed rail or bullit trains like they have in Europe that run on electricity. We should build that here now.
04/02/2013	SRINI RAGHAVAN		PLANO	TX	75023		X	X	X										I think that a high speed rail between Oklahoma and south Texas would be GREAT!! If I had an option today to take a high speed train from Dallas to Austin/San Antonio and Houston, I will immediately do it! I see the following advantages for commuters on high speed rail: - Stress Free Travel (No traffic jams, congestion) - Safe (Reduces traffic could mean less accidents) - Less Pollution (Less cars = less pollution) - Cost Effective (more competition to airlines) - Work while you travel (with high speed internet on trains, that would be great!!) Thank you! Srin
04/10/2013	Stan Benton		Von Ormy	TX	78073		X		X										Texas is a very large state (almost half as large as Alaska), and the chief means of getting from one part to another is by car. I drive on narrow, 70 mph speed limit highways, and see many zooming by me going 10 to 20 mph over the speed limit. As I near the cities, the conjection becomes frustrating, and dangerous, with drivers speeding to cut in and out, and others going 20 mph below the speed limit, hogging the fast lane with nobody in front of them. I don't see texting, but see many drivers talking into their cell phones, not looking at the road in front of them. (From my own experience, I am talking mostly of Austin and San Antonio.) I would love to be able to use inexpensive public transportation (but not flying, as I can't afford that). As far as air quality goes, one also sees many of these speeding vehicles smoking to the point where it appears they are on fire. A high speed train, powered by wind and solar, could make a large impact on the air quality, especially in our cities.
04/10/2013	Stephan Grundy		Dallas	TX	75205														Improving train availability in Texas would be highly beneficial, making travel more convenient for many as the price of petrol rises and thus helping to stimulate the state economy
04/10/2013	Stephanie Kraemer		Coppell	TX	75019				X					X					Rail can take Texas farther. Roads alone cannot serve all our travel needs--now or in the future. As our population grows, our economy demands more transportation options.
04/11/2013	Stephen Wyman		Georgetown	TX	78633-4362	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				TX is prime territory for high speed rail!
04/10/2013	Stephni M. Demarest		Austn	TX	78736		X		X										High speed rail in Texas would be a great benefit to reduce traffic on IH35. The resulting reduction in cars on the road would improve air quality. Thank you for your consideration.
04/20/2013	STEVE ANDERSON		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78254														Eliminate all of the small town stops if you want this project to succeed. Major cities and college towns only. Everyone else needs to travel to one of those stops to board a train. Trains can move faster, make fewer stops, and get out of the way of freight trains if they keep moving. What's the possibility of building new passenger-only rail in the expressway right-of-ways? Maybe that should be planned going forward when an expressway project is undergoing widening or lane adjustment.
04/10/2013	Steve Busti		Austin	TX	78701		X		X				X						Having a passenger rail will help reduce traffic congestion, especially on I-35 through Austin. It is also a better choice for the environment as air quality will be improved by keeping more gas-guzzling cars and trucks off the road. When I was in Europe, their passenger rail system was incredible! I was able to travel country to country without the need of a car. If America had that kind of rail system we'd be much better for it. Plus high speed rail will get you there much faster than conventional automobiles. I am in full support of expanding passenger rail.
04/22/2013	Steve Clark		Brownsville	TX	78520														I am completely in favor of passenger rail service between Brownsville, Texas, and Oklahoma City, Okla., and the sooner the better I would use it frequently, as would other members of my family, as opposed to driving.
04/10/2013	Steve Dale		Austin	TX	78717		X	X	X			X			X				I care about our air quality, reducing our use of oil, and having more transportation choices. I am writing to express my support for the proposed Oklahoma-Texas Passenger Rail.
04/14/2013	STEVE ERWIN		HURST	TX	76053				X					X					On a personal level, I would prefer to travel by train. Less problematic that going to airports. I can work or relax/read while traveling. Rail is more on-time than planes; weather does not affect the schedule. While rail travel may not make much of an impact, it would reduce the number of cars on the road. That is especially welcome to someone like me who passes through the Austin area and get caught up in heavy commuter traffic. I travel by rail lovally (TRE) in Dallas/Fort Worth. Have traveled from Dallas to College Station via rail; much preferred over driving.

04/10/2013	Steven Descant		Laredo	TX	78045										X	X	X		I give full support for the proposed passenger rail line running out of Laredo, Texas. We need alternative means of transportation in Texas to cut traffic, accidents, accident fatalities, commute times, and pollution.
04/02/2013	Steven Dikcis		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78209														Its about time scheduled rail passenger service is coming to south Texas!! I recently was looking into taking an Amtrak train between San Antonio to Austin and back. The Amtrak passenger service schedule is abysmal! As our south Texas population expands (and ages); we'll need another reliable mode of transportation besides automobiles to get to other cities. Your study should also include scheduled rail service from San Antonio to Houston and San Antonio to Corpus Christi as well. Thank you for making this effort a reality.
04/10/2013	Steven G. Kellman		San Antonio	TX	78231-1519			X	X	X	X					X			South Texas currently lacks efficient, reliable passenger rail service. High-speed train service connecting San Antonio with other parts of the state and the nation would be beneficial by reducing congestion on already crowded highways, and minimizing air pollution from automobiles and trucks. By facilitating transportation, it would spur commerce in the region. I urge you to support the development of high-speed rail service in our state.
04/11/2013	Storms Reback		Austin	TX	78751					X									I am all for bringing a passenger rail line from Texas to Oklahoma. The car culture is killing the planet. We need to have other options. Trains makes sense, especially in a state as big as this one.
04/11/2013	Sue Smith		Denton	TX	76201			X		X									It will be difficult to get Texans out of their personal cars. So it is either make all highways 20 lanes wide or use mass transit.
04/23/2013	Sumner		Brownsville	TX	78566														I am all FOR passenger rail to Brownsville. In a previous TxDot study, passenger rail to Brownsville was in the plan. The PROBLEM is that the Union Pacific Railroad is going to abandon 8 miles of right-of-way [from its Olmito rail yard south to the B&M Bridge crossing] and the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority wants to replace it with a TOLL Road to the international bridge crossing. They are totally out of sync with what is being talked about on a state and national level relating to passenger rail. I have written to them about this concern, and have not received an answer, except to say: "We will have our consultants look into it" This group needs to be contacted and brought into the conversation soon.
04/10/2013	Suneet Upadrasta		Austin	TX	78731		X	X	X	X									Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Sunny Roberts		Austin	TX	78723-2314														I think the train sounds good. It would lower air and ground traffic and make it easier to get across the state and hopefully cheaper than air or car.
04/10/2013	Susan A Schott		Dallas	TX	75208		X			X									Other than the noise issue from the trains I do believe this is a good option.
04/10/2013	Susan Alardin		Laredo	TX	78045														I fully agree that we need PASSENGER rail service running through the Texas-Oklahoma corridor, most specifically from Laredo to Dallas. I-35 has become an extreme risk for all drivers. I live in Laredo but work in Temple and must commute home on weekends and I have seen numerous accidents and many near accidents. I was very pleased to discover the 130 toll road that bypasses Austin. I prefer to pay to drive safe than take a chance with the HEAVY traffic on I-35. I only wish the toll road continued on to Laredo, bypassing San Antonio because I-10 has become just as bad as I-35. I believe this Passenger Rail would alleviate much of the heavy traffic if the rate is fair (equal to or less than what you pay for gas) and it does not take as long as a greyhound bus to get where you need to go. Currently Amtrak runs from Temple to San Antonio but it takes 5 hours. You can drive it in 2 hours (a little less, with no traffic if you take the 130 toll road which has a posted speed limit of 85 mph) so why would you want to take Amtrak or Greyhound? We need a direct express passenger service for commuters and travelers who want to get where they need to go as quick as possible without long layovers, and stops in every town, similar to the train service on the east coast.
04/10/2013	Susan and John Teague		Austin	TX	78734		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	All Texans will benefit by passenger train service to major cities in so many ways. Why has this option for the Texas workforce been left so undervalued and underfunded and off the table for so long. Why has there been no real logic, good science and fairness regarding real problem solving for transportation needs that the State of Texas has had knowledge of for so long? Passenger rail is logical and good science and fair and will benefit the the State of Texas in so many ways including limiting traffic congestion, car accidents and will also keep drinking drivers coming from sporting events and other venues off the road. Passenger rail to major cities will cut air pollution. It keeps oil and toxic run off from roads out of our drinking water sources and saves ecological and sensitive watersheds and green areas from excessive road building in areas of Texas that need to be left in their natural state. It gives citizens an alternative way of transportation and enhances tourism in a less destructive way. Passenger rail is enjoyable and is a long overdue mode of transportation.
04/10/2013	Susan Dorsey		Mesquite	TX	75181					X									I strongly support all efforts to increase rail services for the transportation of people. Highway construction is too costly and slower.
04/10/2013	Susan Gifford		San Antonio	TX	78249			X	X	X		X	X	X					Europe has been using train travel as a major method of transportation for many years, but the US was developed more as a car based country. Cities like New York use trains regularly for internal movement and for travelling between Boston to DC. These are considered commutes. Living in San Antonio, I would love to see better mass transit and trains are a part of that, but I would also love to visit Dallas and I would prefer to do that without driving... We need a workable transit system here in Texas...
04/10/2013	Susan Jane Reeves		Ft Worth	TX	76110		X	X	X	X		X	X	X					Less cars on road for longer trips.more mobility for seniors n those who do not drive..more jobs.
04/10/2013	susan jane reeves		Ft Worth	TX	76110			X	X	X		X	X	X					Good rail transportation provides the ease in travel within and outside Texas.It promotes a healthy and safe environment for all.The cost of operating a motor vehicle is forcing many to rely on public transportation.....both older people and younger people.This will also bring much needed employment to the state.
04/10/2013	Susan kleinman		Austin	TX	78759			X		X									I believe our traffic problems can be alleviated by providing good alternatives to the car, and that people will use the alternative when it is convenient and fast. I understand trains can provide such an alternative. I am concerned about safety in the crowded highways, as well as drivers who are increasingly showing riskier behavior. Also, the air quality is not going to get any better by using the car as the only means of transportation, even as they get cleaner. More highways decreases open space, as well, and they are eyesores usually.

04/10/2013	Susan Resendiz		Laredo	TX	78043				X											Any rail system must include Houston. The Houston Medical Center is a hub for medical care for people from South Texas and Mexico. A rail system from Brownsville to Houston would make a large difference for that route, especially since the road is not very good. I hope the King Ranch is not an impediment to such rail service.
04/11/2013	Susan Scott		Austin	TX	78735					X		X								Please please please do all you can to provide Texans with an alternative to driving or flying when we need to travel from one city to another. Expanding passenger rail services would give us another convenient alternative. Also, not having to drive on I-35 when traveling between Austin and Dallas would be a huge incentive to use high speed rail between the two cities. Please take into account the following points when considering expanding high speed rail in Texas. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced. Thanks for the consideration.
04/19/2013	Susan Stewart		Luling	TX	78648															I would like to be able to use the Austin/OK City to bring my grandchildren from OK to visit. The long layover in FT Worth is uncomfortable. While the Ft Worth station is nice, it isn't an easy place for children to wait for four hours. More time options during the day would be nice as well.
04/10/2013	Susan Syler		Austin	TX	78731				X		X									I am in favor of high speed passenger rail particularly along the I-35 corridor and the I-10 corridor.
04/10/2013	susan wallace		prosper	TX	75078				X		X									As a Texan with a 20 mile commute to work everyday that takes at least an hour each way, I am in favor of any plan that will reduce the congestion, noise and pollution on Texas roads. Our road construction is 20 years behind the rampant growth and yet developers continue to get the green light to throw up more and more residential developments with absolutely no regard for the health and safety of fellow Texans. If high speed rail can reduce the noise and congestion on our over-clogged roads then I am all in favor.
04/10/2013	Susan Waskey		Argyle	TX	76226				X		X									I am for high speed rail in Texas from Dallas to San Antonio, and Dallas to Houston. It will get cars off this extremely congested corridor, which will improve safety and improve air quality in the state and in the cities. The Houston & Dallas Fort Worth areas are already ozone non-attainment areas, and Austin & San Antonio's air quality are in jeopardy due to the growth in those metropolitan areas.
04/10/2013	Susan Young		Austin	TX	78751				X		X									I support a high speed passenger rail system to run from Oklahoma City to south Texas. I would LOVE to be able to take a high speed train to San Antonio, Dallas or Oklahoma City. Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. South Texas has no passenger rail service. The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers. Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/24/2013	susie santo		wichita	KS	67230															I would like to encourage Texas to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth to OKC north through Wichita and connect in Newton to SW Chief. This would be very important to the region and provide numerous opportunities. Thank you.
04/25/2013	Suzanne Kennedy		Austin	TX	78704						X									I support the new, high speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma and South Texas. I-35 has been a boondoggle for a long time now and I would welcome an alternative mode of transportation that is economically friendly.
04/11/2013	Suzanne Ramo-Gechter		Laredo	TX	78045							X		X						High-speed Rail in South Texas would be such a boon to our community! Laredo is already a large inland port, and we see a lot of tourist traffic from Mexico. I can imagine that high-speed rail would bring even more of that tourist trade farther north, benefiting the economies of all of South and Central Texas. For my own part, a high-speed rail system would have been of huge benefit to me this year as I went back to school in Austin, but needed to keep my two jobs in Laredo. Being able to take the train back and forth would have been a time saver and aided me in my studies (since I could have studied during my commute). Judging from comments I have received from parents whose children attend college in San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas - all along the I-35 corridor, really - they too would make use of the rail system. Because Laredo is more than 2 hours from the nearest larger city, having high-speed rail would make it much easier for people here to get to medical professionals they currently have to drive long hours to reach, cultural events in San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas, as well as shopping, day trips, and visiting family and friends in this great (but very large!!) state! In short, I am highly in favor of high-speed rail in South Texas, and I urge you to make Laredo the "final stop." It would make a city that is currently far from everything, much more accessible, and it would make the rest of the state much more accessible to us.
04/10/2013	Suzanne Tuttle		Fort Worth	TX	76135				X		X		X		X					I support the proposal to bring high speed rail service to the Texas-Oklahoma corridor and beyond, particularly if it can be constructed within existing corridors. Having this option will take vehicular traffic off our highways and help improve air quality, plus could spare undeveloped wildlands from the creation of more roads, thereby saving wildlife habitat and preserving water quality. Thank you.
04/11/2013	SYLVIA BUTLER		DALLAS	TX	75220															ITS A GOOD IDEA FOR JOBS
04/21/2013	Sylvia Duncan		Plano	TX	75075				X		X								X	We need more high speed rail all over the country, so let's do this in Texas. It's more convenient and comfortable than air or bus travel. It could take cars off the roads and only improve air quality and vehicle congestion.
04/10/2013	Sylvia Neal-Tomlinson		Austin	TX	78749						X									High speed rail between South Texas and Oklahoma is a great idea and much needed!
04/10/2013	t logan		Austin	TX	78704				X		X				X					of course it makes sense to have alternatives
04/13/2013	Tammy Dobbs		Denton	TX	76205															Yes I would like to have passenger rail.
04/10/2013	Tania Olivarez		Edinburg	TX	78541					X	X									Totally needed due to economic and environmental concerns! Southtexas is poor and many dont own a car, and for the ones that own a car it will reduce teaffic n more importantly gas expenses which will therefore reduce pollution!! It will just make a better world!
04/10/2013	Tara Munoz		Austin	TX	78728															We would love to see more passenger rail in Central Texas, esp. high speed. Traffic is a huge issue here and alleviating traffic by having more people travel rail would be a much appreciated thing!

04/11/2013	Tex McFaden		Dallas	TX	75230														Depending on the type of rail, this potential project could reduce the noise and traffic in areas, thus improving roadway safety and air quality, especially in the larger cities. Any improvement to air quality and reduction in noise and traffic certainly has a positive impact on the natural environment, as well as the longevity and day-to-day conditions of the roadways. As an alternative means of transportation, there is no reason to not look at alternative power sources for the rail engine, to include solar. A combination of alternative energy sources could further enhance the positive effects on the environment and save in overall, long-term costs of the railway. The main concern is making the railway affordable so that the average non-traveling resident sees it as an opportunity to travel. With the possibility of casinos coming to Texas, this could rapidly become a booming business venture, especially if it's cheap enough for the local resident to use it for a shopping day in OKC or cities in Texas, or to travel to the casino. Having a partnership of some sort with potential land/casino owners, perhaps a sponsorship (in terms of advertising or building the rail station at the casino or covering the cost of the facility) could truly make this one of the most attractive travel options in America... something that others would envy and emulate. The only people who ever listen to my opinion are the ones who've learned that I'm never wrong, and thus have listened and made a fortune and been blessed with fantastic luck along the way. You don't know me... but I am right about this and hopefully you have people there with the vision to see the same things that I see and to act on those concepts. As a retired, disabled combat veteran, I'm telling what I would do if those options existed, and I'm a no-income, reclusive combat veteran. If I'm willing to ride the rail for the right price, then trust me when I say that you would open up the flood gates for millions in DFW alone. Consider this... cheap, fast rail for Mavericks and Thunder fans! The fans alone, for a cheap fare, would pack those local venues every time the two teams faced each other!! Throw in the Spurs... THE COLLEGE GAMES!!!! You have a bonanza staring you in the face... and if you need help with concepts and marketing, feel free to draft me into your organization. I believe this could be one of the most incredible opportunities for these two states, and the local economies. Consider this as well... instead of driving in for the Red River Rivalry, folks take the rail... they use local cabs, shuttles or car rentals for their stay, because the rail was fast and cheap, and they saved the wear and tear on their own vehicle (which may not have made the trip anyway). The positives are endless. Maybe I need to market this idea to other states too!
04/10/2013	Theresa Bradbury		fort worth	TX	76108	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Most of the rest of the world has found it beneficial, why can't Texas? This has been discussed most of the last twenty years, it is time Texas got with the program.
04/11/2013	Theresa Moran		Austin	TX	78736				X										I support this rail--my son lives in Dallas so it we would both use this rather than drive or fly. Great idea! Thank You
04/24/2013	Therese Gallegos		Brownsville	TX	78526			X	X	X									I strongly support the decision to establish a passenger train route between Brownsville and San Antonio. I love traveling by train and use it out East (between DC, NY, and Boston) instead of driving. My mother has taken the train from DC to San Antonio twice. Then I had to drive up to meet her train. It was very inconvenient. If service was established down to the Valley, my family and I would certainly use it. Anyone whose children have left the Valley would welcome a safer, less stressful way for us to visit them and for them to visit us. If people could take the train to and from San Antonio, the highways would be safer and the air would be cleaner. Lives, literally, would be saved. Please, make it happen.
04/10/2013	Thomas A. Townsend		Garland	TX	75043-5629									X	X	X	X		I am for this . Complete disclosure will ensure it coming into fruition.
04/10/2013	Thomas jaudzemis		Laguna Vista	TX	78578		X		X	X				X					My wife and I frequently drive from far south Texas to points north, and the north-south interstate is a MESS. We would love to be able to take a train to San Antonio, Austin, or Dallas / Forth Worth. It would be safer, less stressful, and more environmentally responsible. It would allow us to improve our quality of life because we would be able to enjoy cultural events, entertainment and sports not available in our area. and on the occasions we did drive it might help reduce some of the awful traffic between San Antonio and Dallas (the worst is around Austin).
04/11/2013	THOMAS LOPEZ		WACO	TX	76707		X	X	X		X			X					Increased rail transport will decrease environmental and safety issues related to excessive automobile traffic.
04/10/2013	Thomas Manes		Wimberley	TX	78676			X		X	X								I have used passenger rail service between San Marcos and Dallas/Ft. Worth several times, and it has always been a wonderful experience. It is much more relaxed and less stressful than air travel. The only problems have been occasional long waits due to freight traffic on the same rails, and just the fact that it takes a lot more time in general. The speed of the train is often very slow. The current system would not work for someone on a tight schedule. I've also had problems because of train arrival and departure times, such as when trying to arrange trips from San Marcos to Oklahoma City or Tulsa. This was virtually impossible to schedules, requiring cab rides and hotel stays that would have added considerably to the overall trip expense, plus the fact that there is no service to Tulsa. The only practical solution for a couple of trips from San Marcos to Tulsa was to arrive in Dallas by train, catch a city bus from the train station to Love Field, and fly from there to Tulsa, then catch a bus or cab from the Tulsa airport into the city. Not simple. I've also attempted to arrange a trip from San Marcos to Little Rock, but the late arrival time made it impractical, since I would have had to arrange a rental car due to my final destination being near Fayetteville. I'm relieved that TXDOT is considering the expansion of rail and high speed rail service. It's long overdue. I would definitely use this service more if it were available, and to more places, such as the Rio Grande Valley. Thank you.
04/10/2013	Thomas Nieland		Alamo	TX	78516		X		X		X			X					Mass transit especially trains would help a lot in reducing car traffic congestion, air and water pollution, and fuel consumption!
04/10/2013	Thomas Reeck		Austin	TX	80026				X										With fuel costs rising and an ever increasing population, the I-35 corridor will become more crowded and unbearable in terms of traffic congestion. Therefore, I fully support development of railways in Texas to ease the strain on our existing transportation systems.
04/10/2013	Thomas Rinard		Waco	TX	76706														I believe that Texas is behind in mass transit on both a city and state level. I welcome an alternative to driving on the interstate in commuting between major cities in Texas.

04/10/2013	Thomas Terry		Fort Worth	TX	76131-4259			X	X	X			X	X	X					Passenger rail service should be expanded throughout Texas as well as the entire nation. Fewer automobiles on our highways would help reduce carbon emissions and allow for another mode of connecting transportation for our growing population. I used to ride the train between Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, when I was young and during World War II workers could ride from from areas all around Oklahoma City to Tinker Air Force Base and other industries to work. They still could be providing transportation for thousands of workers if they hadn't removed all the tracks. I support public rail service and it's expansion throughout the United States.
04/10/2013	Thomas Watson		Austin	TX	78737-9029			X	X	X										I support development of high speed rail between OK and S TX which will help to improve air quality, human health, and traffic safety in Texas by removing automobiles from our already overcrowded I-35, reducing harmful auto emissions to improve air quality and reducing traffic congestion.
04/11/2013	Tiffany		Plano	TX	75074					X										I would love to have a high speed train between Oklahoma and South Texas. Here are some positive reasons to have one: •Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. •A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. •South Texas has no passenger rail service. •The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers •Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. •Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
03/25/2013	Tim Jeske		Waco	TX	76710													X		Hello, I am a proponent of passenger rail in Texas. It can be a great alternative to I-35, if it is done properly. The current Amtrak service goes through the Waco area but there are several things that make it unattractive to me and my young family of three. The first issue I have with Amtrak is the schedule. Currently, service only runs once per day and that is around 11am. We prefer to go to Dallas or Austin for leisure but cannot use Amtrak as a feasible means of transportation. The second issue I have with Amtrak is reliability. The current service is not known for its timeliness, if we were to ride Amtrak we need to know the service will be there if we ride it. Therefore, I urge this study to recommend the following. First, have the service with multiple trains. Flexibility is key for us so having the opportunity to catch multiple trains at different times is crucial. Second, make the tickets competitive with the cost of driving to the destination. Like most Central Texans we will drive if its cheaper and we love our trucks.
04/11/2013	Tim Maschal		Arlington	TX	76001	X	X	X	X			X	X	X						It's time to bring high speed rail to Texas. Eventually, Texas major highways will run out of space for expansion. My family and I would use an efficient rail system to travel around Texas and Oklahoma!
04/10/2013	Tina Allen Souza		Leander	TX	78641	X	X	X	X							X				My comment is that all efforts be made to see this rail system become a reality. It is time for Texas to advance into the future, and what better way to do it than a clean way.
04/03/2013	Tina Everett		Corpus Christi	TX	78418				X											Railways offer an alternative to travel and vacationing that would be a great addition to Corpus Christi.
04/11/2013	Tobin Quereau		Austin	TX	78759			X		X	X									For many reasons I support the development of better high speed passenger rail service between San Antonio and Oklahoma City. The reduction in traffic on IH 35, the reduction in energy use to transport passengers along this route, the increase in air quality, and the provision of options for travel all contribute to the potential value of this project.
04/01/2013	Tom Ballou		New Braunfels	TX	78132					X										I like trains and like to ride trains. I'm on the board of our local Rural Rail District. Given equal convenience, time and cost, I would choose the train for travel. However, the convenience, time and cost are all important. Designing the long distance, city to city portion of this system is easy. The difficult part is the terminal system for getting people on/ff and mobile. Texas cities are not equipped with adequate mass transit systems like, for instance, Washington, D.C. where one can get off the high speed train from New York, walk down one level, get on the Metro and a few minutes later get off in the basement of the hotel where you are staying or few blocks away at most. People in Texas are tied to their cars. Perhaps a study of using a variation of the "Auto-Trains" used for seasonal people repositioning on the East coast and extensively in Europe would work for us and make the long distance rail attractive. Perhaps a new design car, a bi-level as used by AmTrak, but with the lower or upper level used for cars and the other for the people. The speed at the terminal would be the key. Of course, we'd probably have to limit the cars hauled to compacts/city commuters and leave the Crown Vics and Suburbans at home in order to make it work. Getting this to actually work in Texas is going to take some out-of-the-box thinking. I don't think "If you build it, they will come", is going to work. Let me know if I can help.
03/13/2013	Tom Gates		Corpus Christi	TX	78411															I believe that passenger train service among these cities as shown on the map would be used most of the time if there would be a provision to load my personal automobile onto the train, as we do on the Port Aransas ferry, along with my personal items that would be in the auto. I then could relax as the train delivered me to within fifty or a hundred miles of the destination that I was going to as it appears that the large cities are within that driving range. I would not have to depend on rental cars or other types of transportation after reaching the area I was traveling to. It would be ideal if the passenger trains path would also include Houston as many people from this area travel to specialized medical facilities in that city and taking one's own automobile would be ideal as well as keeping from being tired due to the stress of driving that distance in that traffic. If you would study the ferry you will find that the loading and unloading of vehicles is very time efficient. I believe most people would endorse this type of service and use it rather than driving long distances on the highways. I know my family and I would. Thanks.
04/11/2013	Tom Lednický		Austin		78745			X	X	X	X					X				I would like to have options when it comes to commuting from austin to san marcos and new braunfels. I think commuter rail is cost effective.
04/23/2013	Tom Logan		Brownsville	TX	78521					X										Just a comment, I very much believe that this is a great project with positive impact to the entire area in many terms.
04/26/2013	Tom Racunas		Wichita	KS	67212															I am writing to support and encourage Texas to take further steps to expand the current Heartland Flyer from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City into and through Wichita, Kansas and connect to the Southwest Chief in Newton, Kansas. I see this as a good economic and social/cultural benefit to Kansas citizens. Thank you for your consideration.
04/10/2013	Tom Russell		Okla. City	OK	73127			X	X	X						X				The expansion to high speed rail is thinking outside the box. It involves so many factors in our lives. Fuel savings, better air quality, less highway traffic, alternative choices for travel, safer way to travel. We must make decisions that don't always fit the profit picture for BIG businesses.
03/14/2013	Tom Verdel		Sand Springs	OK	74063					X							X			The scope of this study should include extension of the South Central Corridor from Oklahoma City to Tulsa and eventually linking with rail service to Kansas City and/or St Louis. Failing to acknowledge the logical long-range goal of a transcontinental north-south route from Brownsville to Chicago is short-sighted and a mistake. TxDOT has led the way in future rail planning for the central and southwest United States. Don't stop now and don't ignore the natural future of rail growth in the US.

04/10/2013	Vikki Hallen		Canyon Lake	TX	78133		X	X			X								YES! We need rail service! Rail service between Texas cities and Tx and other states would be wonderful..helping air quality, natural habitats, traffic accidents, road rage! San Antonio definitely needs city type rail service and how wonderful would it be to just get on a train SA to Austin for a night or wkend!
04/10/2013	Vince Fonseca		San Antonio	TX	78212		X		X										I strongly support expanded and higher speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and South Texas. As a public health physician and the former Texas State Epidemiologist, allowing expansion and improvement in transportation (decreasing congestion) while minimizing the impact on health (poor air quality's impact on cardiovascular and respiratory diseases) is critical. A health Texas economy requires healthy Texans.
04/10/2013	Virgil Crane		San Antonio	TX	78230	X	X		X			X	X						High speed rail is a necessary element in the progress of moving larger numbers of people. As Texas continues to grow in population high speed rail is a requirement to help in preserving our environment.
04/03/2013	Virginia Garcia		Laredo	TX	78040									X					Although I wholeheartedly support the concept of having faster rail between major cities in Texas and Oklahoma, I am concerned about the impact to neighboring communities. What changes will they have to endure? What is the usual increase in noise and will there be some kind of protection or barrier? Along the proposed routes, how much of an environmental impact will there be with natural flora and fauna and will this eliminate existing parks/nature/etc. Of course, I am specifically curious about what might happen in Laredo, Texas but I am sure other communities will have similar concerns. I also hope that as decisions are made that the public remain updated and included in what transpires. For me personally, I already travel to San Antonio to drop off or pick up family who takes the Amtrak train to Chicago every once in a while. Leaving from Laredo on passenger rail would be an ideal situation for my non-flying parents who are not willing to take an uncomfortable and slow bus. A passenger train I don't know how a state sponsored rail system will work in conjunction with Amtrak or existing passenger rail (are there others??) but I would hope there would be some agreement or collaboration.
04/11/2013	Virginia Griffith		Austin	TX	78746									X					WE NEED HIGH SPEED RAIL IN TEXAS. The air pollution in the Austin area has become critical. We are almost above the cutoff level set by the EPA before they require businesses and municipalities to implement strict and costly policies and manners of business to try and bring these levels down. WE NEED TO KEEP OUR POLLUTION LEVELS BELOW THE CUTOFF POINT SET BY THE EPA. Our small businesses and citizens can not afford to pay for the changes and higher costs that will be imposed on us if we surpass these pollution levels. In addition, our health will suffer with the high pollution levels. Please be forward thinking and do the right thing for our citizens and our great state.
04/11/2013	Vonnie Shallenberger		Fort Worth	TX	76132		X	X	X		X		X		X	X			I live in Fort Worth, which has a very sad example of public transportation for a city of its size. The world is changing, and Texas needs to be ahead of the curve in providing fast, clean public transportation to all the places that both residents and tourists would like to go. Not to mention the benefit to the working class...better public transportation would pay for itself in clean air and tolls in no time!
04/01/2013	Wanda pearce		Midwest City	OK	73130														This would be great for us.
04/26/2013	Ware, Marie-Pierre		Little Elm	TX	75068														We need this train, please:)
04/15/2013	wendy Eames		Round Rock	TX	78664									X					I would love to see fast, efficient rail in a corridor, starting in Houston, swinging through San Antonio up to Austin, ending in Dallas. So many people like me have family spread around Texas, esp. in the cities, & like my daughter, a college student, could really use fast, affordable rail to visit family. A rail pass, similar to what is offered in Europe, would encourage foreign visitors to travel economically to visitor sites in these areas.
04/10/2013	Wendy Leiva		Round Rock	TX	78681			X	X										So many of us are hoping that this passenger rail project will go through! Rail service from South Texas to North Texas would be an excellent option to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. You've probably seen these same comments from others, but please remember: - Trains keep more cars off the road and reduce the number of short airplane trips. - A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger. - South Texas has no passenger rail service. - The current Amtrak Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City and Dallas-Fort Worth is ranked best by Amtrak customers - Railroad stations are far more convenient than airports and comfortable rail cars turn travel time into work or leisure time. - Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.
04/10/2013	Wendy Meyer		Dallas	TX	75206-5842		X		X										I would love it if we could get to Austin, Houston and San Antonio by high speed rail! Planes use up too much fuel and are so uncomfortable any more, and driving on I 35 is way overrated. I used to live in Germany and I miss having a train system that can get you anywhere faster than driving and with a lot less stress.
04/10/2013	Wendy Paul		Dallas	TX	75229		X		X										Rail is great because it puts less automobiles on the road leading to less carbon monoxide omissions. Then ALL of us can breath!
04/11/2013	wendy searcy		bedford	TX	76021	X	X	X	X		X	X	X						I agree that this would be a great thing.
04/09/2013	Wes Bailey		Waco	TX	76701												X		As a business owner in Waco, Texas and current president of the Waco Business League, I just want to voice my support of the passenger rail service that would serve our community. I am delighted that Waco is currently shown to be included on the pathway, and I believe there would be great support of the rail service from the greater Waco area. Thank you.
04/10/2013	wesley morrison		new braunfels	TX	78130				X						X	X			I would love to see a high speed Rail service between South Texas and Oklahoma. I 35 is so crowded and it would be a great alternative to driving on an overcrowded highway
04/10/2013	Whitney Columbus		Benbrook	TX	76126	X	X	X	X	X									We need to reduce pollution and continue to offer public transportation to combat the rising cost of gas!
04/12/2013	William		Dallas	TX	75209		X	X		X	X	X	X		X				It's time Texas takes the lead and develop a viable passenger rail system. Oklahoma City, Dallas and other Texas cities will continue to grow at alarming rates. A rapid link between Oklahoma and Texas cities is imperative to meet both growth demands and reduce car traffic on interstate highways. This rail link will also provide consistent travel unfettered by weather or highway traffic. It may also help in the quest to reduce carbon emissions and fuel consumption.
04/16/2013	William Maschal		Round Rock	TX	78664														I am 100% in favor of rail transportation & would use it anywhere I could. Please do whatever you can to push this potential project to a successful conclusion. It was a tragedy that the high speed rail constitutional amend. failed a number of years ago when everything seemed to be lining up to proceed with that project. How far along Texas would be today if only the amend had passed.
04/11/2013	William Sibley		christine	TX	78012														YES, YES, YES! AN IMMEDIATE YES TO THE TEXAS - OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL!
04/15/2013	Wolf Dilworth		Austin	TX	78747	X	X	X	X										Texas needs to be on the cutting edge of bringing High speed rail to the US, we could have a HS rail corridor from Texas up through the midwest to Chicago, or... Trains can carry people and automobiles, even some freight, just like in Europe.
04/10/2013	x		austin	TX	78701										X				testing survey response feedback
04/10/2013	x		austin	TX	78701										X				testing survey response feedback

Comments Recorded via Other Methods

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

marksrage.allen@gmail.com

Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 8:50 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. Marks Allen<marksrage.allen@gmail.com>

Address:

9321 W. Central #3
Wichita, KS 67212

Phone:

(316) 285-9066

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Please include Natural Gas generating electricity into your train studies. Electric Heartland Flyer from Ft. Worth to Oklahoma City. The Heartland Flyer extended to Wichita, Kansas. Many people from Wichita have direct flights to Dallas everyday.

Natural gas is our low priced resource and the industry can partner with passenger train legislation in every state. Electrical infrastructure regionally adds expense but that's the best fuel source in the long term. An environmental fast train in our region.

Amtrak will have their many stops cities. High Speed trains on separate tracks going 200 mile distances. 150 mph trains is legal now, the future can add speeds. Class 9 rails are need.

KDOT has to soon help Wichita getting on the DOT High Speed Rail map so the city can qualify for Federal NEPA studies. Wichita is the passenger train connector city between the southern and northern trains to Kansas City, to St. Louis, to Chicago.

We need electric trains rolling in our region that are using natural gas generating the electricity.

Round Bank (East)
1601 North I-35
P.O. Box 154068
Waco, TX 76715-4068
Voice: (254) 799-4921
Fax: (254) 799-2752

American Plaza (West)
200 West Highway 6
P.O. Box 2507
Waco, TX 76702-2507
Voice: (254) 776-8200
Fax: (254) 776-4116

RECEIVED
APR 23 2013
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DIVISION



April 19, 2013

Texas Department of Transportation
Bill Glavin
125 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

RECEIVED
APR 24 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Re: Passenger Rail Service

Director Glavin:

The purpose of this letter is to express my strong support of passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining our state's enviable national and global competitive position.

As you consider plans for this service, please keep in mind that Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to this region's economic vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is the center of Texas as more Texans can be found within a 100 mile radius of Waco than from any other spot in Texas.

I wish you well in this project and would be happy to participate in any way I can.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David G. Hicks".

David G. Hicks
President & CEO

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

73401

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Mary Austin
208 Allen Dr
Ardmore, OK 73401

01 APR 2013 PM 6 1



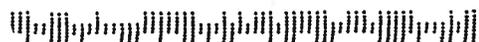
Mark Werner, Rail Division
 Texas Department of Transportation
 125 E. 11th Street
 Austin, TX 78701-2433

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: Attach more pages if necessary.

- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:** Trains are an economical way to travel, therefore people who can't afford to fly or unable to have ~~access~~ ^{access} to an airport are stranded in small towns. It is scary to drive in city traffic.
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):** Yes, trains blow their whistles but cars & trucks are noisy too. R.R. crossings don't kill people - people not stopping is this cause.
- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):** Small town America has a lot of interesting & educational things to see. Trains would make it easier for to see & enjoy this with trains.
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):** With more people on trains means less cars and less accidents. Many people are hit by car while walking or biking - so safer!
- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):** With so many highways we are losing a lot of trees and habitat for animals and then there is the emission from so many cars & trucks.
- Other (use back or attach pages)** Faster, more modern trains would be nice! But we need to keep train travel that senior citizen and people of medium income can afford. We love to travel but planes are not what is needed for rural areas. If you decide to build new tracks - please don't bypass the small towns. We need safe transportation.

Personal: I had to go to San Antonio to help my child. Without the train in Ardmore it would have almost cost prohibitory for me to travel - driving that far by myself was not an option.

From: Bill Bailey [<mailto:bill@baileyinsurance.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 11:41 AM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Oklahoma to South Tx. Rail Study

I am very interested in the study that is to take place, and I want to express my strong support for the route to come through Waco. Waco is a major city on the I-35 corridor and must be included in the route. Thank you for your kind consideration.

A.W. (Bill) Bailey, Jr.

From: Wes Bailey
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 6:12:33 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Subject: Passenger Rail Service

Dear Director Glavin – As a Waco businessman and President of the Waco Business League, I wanted to touch base with you and voice my support of the proposed passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to South Texas. This would be great for Texas AND great for Waco. It is my firm belief that Waco's connectivity to such a rail system is extremely important to our community's continued economic growth and vibrancy – not to mention the economic growth of the whole region.

When you consider the very limited air service we have in Waco – coupled with a terribly congested I-35 roadway, this new passenger rail system will be similar to manna from heaven. Please know that Wacoans want it! And we need it! Thank you very much.

Wes Bailey, CIC
President, Bailey Insurance & Risk Management, Inc.
P.O. Box 298
Waco, Texas 76703
Telephone # 254-753-5317
wes@baileyinsurance.com

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April 22, 2013

Mr. William Glavin
Director, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation

Via Electronic Mail

Dear Director Glavin:

We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.

Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.

Sincerely,



S. Boyce Brown

Herbert L. Brown
1405 Redden Cove
Cedar Park, TX 78613
512-257-0274



Mr. Mark Werner
TxDOT-RRD
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

SUBJECT: Rail Service From Oklahoma City To South Texas

Good Morning:

I read in the recent issue of NARP News that TxDOT "is beginning a process to evaluate improvements necessary for enhanced passenger train service between Oklahoma City and South Texas." I'm wondering why a connection between Oklahoma City and Kansas City doesn't come first?

I'm sure the rails are already in place between the two cities and would be a seemingly easy change to make. In essence, the trip between Austin or San Antonio to Kansas City would help relieve the congested I-35 corridor.

Let me know what obstacles exist to prohibit the extension of rail service between Oklahoma City and Kansas City. I, for one, would definitely use the service from Austin to Kansas City many times each year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herb".

Herb Brown

AustinNSR@sbcglobal.net

512-257-0274

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: Mark Werner [Mark.Werner@txdot.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 7:07 AM
To: Hull, Kristin/PDX; Hausknecht, Brian/SDO; Walbrun, Mark/DFW; Steffen, Brandy/PDX
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Another comment

-----Original Message-----

From: Orlando Jamandre
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 9:05 AM
To: Mark Werner
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

TOPRS comment via AskTxDOT

-----Original Message-----

From: lmb2.at.home@netzero.com [<mailto:lmb2.at.home@netzero.com>]
Sent: Sunday, April 07, 2013 9:41 AM
To: AskTxDOT
Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Ms. Linda M Brown<lmb2.at.home@netzero.com> **Requested Contact Method:** E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service
Complaint: No

Comment: I was not able to attend the public meetings related to IH 35. I have traveled IH 35 at least twice a day Monday through Friday for 20 years, sometimes more trips than that. Austin is a popular destination, and becoming more so every year. In my opinion, more lanes is not a satisfactory option. Looking to the future, ideas need to be "out of the box" to keep Austin moving. As other cities like Chicago, New York, London - Austin needs mass transit. If not a subway, then elevated trains. I would definitely use a commuter train that ran down the middle of IH 35 from Georgetown to Kyle, Buda, San Marcos, San Antonio for example. A train is not slowed by traffic conditions, and being down IH 35 would allow stops to be within walking distance of government offices and the entertainment district

Be Safe. Drive Smart.

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- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76107

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold



Mr. Roy G. Brown
1724 Thomas Pl.
Fort Worth, TX 76107
www.farmland.org

NORTH TEXAS TEX PRINCE
DALLAS TX 752
05 APR 2013 11:51



Tape

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Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

RECEIVED
APR 08 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Tape



Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: Attach more pages if necessary.

- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:** *The proposed expansion of rail service will greatly help and benefit all residents, businesses and visitors by providing a much needed alternative to our overcrowded airports and highways.*
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):** *at current speeds there is not much concern about existing crossings, but for high speed rail there would need to be designated tracks with no or very few crossings.*
- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):** *By promoting tourism (advertising) and providing frequent service between the large cities to encourage taking the train, it would greatly benefit the regional and local economies not only by*
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):** *bringing in money, but by encouraging cities to build mass transit systems I see none as long as crossings are either secured by adequate warnings or eliminated altogether.*
- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):** *There would be no more effect than in any other place in the world where trains are frequently used. In fact trains are the greenest way to move large numbers of people - far less intrusive than the interstates.*
- Other (use back or attach pages)**

I have lived in Washington D.C. and ridden the trains in the northeast. I have ridden trains in and out of Chicago. I have ridden trains all over Europe, including high speed trains in France and Britain. I know that wherever good train service is provided it is heavily patronized and enjoyed, and the same will be true here in Texas and the Heart-land. Let's GO !!!



I WAS NOT ABLE TO SEND THIS THROUGH E-MAIL

Scoping Comment Form

Submit your comments here. Please submit your comments through April 26, 2013. Comments received by this date will be included in the scoping summary report. You can also use the form to send the [study](#) a question or to add your name to the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study mailing list.

Envíe sus comentarios aquí. Por favor, envíe sus comentarios a través de 26 de Abril, 2013. Los comentarios recibidos por esta fecha se incluirá en el informe resumido de alcance. También puede utilizar el formulario para enviar el estudio una pregunta para agregar su nombre a la lista de pasajeros de Texas-Oklahoma correo Rail Estudio.

*** Please provide your contact information.** Por favor proporcione su información de contacto.

Name/Nombre:

Address/dirección:

City/Ciudad:

State/Estado:

ZIP Code/ Código postal:

Email:

Phone/Teléfono:



Does your comment relate to any of the following topic areas? (check all that apply) ¿Su comentario se refieren a cualquiera de las siguientes áreas temáticas? (marque todas las que apliquen)

Human environment / Entorno humano

- Noise / Ruido
- Air quality / Calidad del aire
- Human health / La salud humana

TRAFFIC

Natural environment / Medio natural

- Wildlife or vegetation / Fauna y vegetación
- Wetlands or streams / Los humedales y arroyos

EIS process / EIS proceso

- Alternatives / Alternativas
- Area of potential effect / Área de efecto potencial

Question and/or comment Pregunta y / o comentario

I have taken the Chief to Ft. Madison, IA over the past 40 years, originally I was able to take it from Wichita, KS, but now I catch it from Newton, KS. I plan on continuing to take the train for several reasons. People riding trains are not driving, this reduces traffic accidents and increase the quality of our air. Both of these increase the longevity of peoples lives. A further consideration is that train travel reduces the wear and tear on our highways which reduces the tax payers money to help maintain the highways. I would like to support Texas in taking further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Ok City north through Wichita to Newton, KS. Thank-you for your consideration.

Note: Any information provided to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) may be released under the Freedom of Information Act. This includes the release of identifiable personal information such as personal name, address, phone number, etc., that is provided in the response.

Nota: Toda la información proporcionada al Departamento de Transporte de Texas (TxDOT) puede ser liberado bajo la Ley de Libertad de Información. Esto incluye la publicación de información de identificación personal como nombre personal, dirección, número de teléfono, etc, que se proporciona en la respuesta.

Response requested? Requiere respuesta?

- Yes/Sí
 No/No

Add to the [mailing list](#) Agregar a la lista de correo

- Yes/Sí
 No/No

I would like my comment to be private (as much as possible) Me gustaría que mi comentario sea privada (tanto como sea posible)

- Yes/Sí
 No/No

Thank you for your comment. If you would like to submit a PDF, JPEG, or GIF along with your comment, please send it via email to TXOKrail@TxDOT.gov. Gracias por tu comentario. Si usted desea enviar un archivo PDF, JPEG, GIF o junto con su comentario, por favor envíe por correo electrónico a TXOKrail@TxDOT.gov.



Comment on the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Submitted by Mickey Burleson, 5101 Berger Rd., Temple, Texas 76501 (254-984-2265)

I believe that Texas is not yet ready for high-speed rail and feel strongly that it would be a mistake to invest in a project like this at this time. We have seen in the eastern US that the only so-called bullet train has not been the success it was predicted to be. It has not reached the speeds projected for it for various reasons and therefore does not offer the service promised. Riders costs are high for the service provided and there are many complaints about it.

In California production costs have been far higher than projected and may yet kill the project.

We have known failure and much waste despite TxDot's recent extensive efforts and related extravagant investment devoted to selling the proposed Trans Texas Corridor.

We see the new toll roads not being used nearly as much as projections would indicate. We look at the impressive strip of toll booths at the main entrances to these roads – 6 to 8 booths wide across the width of the highway. Until recently only one booth per side was needed, and now we find that even that has been closed. Apparently the tolls are not productive enough to keep that one booth for each direction's traffic open.

I have read the early studies from the 80's and 90's regarding a proposed thoroughfare similar to the TTC, studies done by the Transportation Institute at the University of Texas which predicted how long it would take to drive from Dallas to San Antonio on I-35 by the first decade of the 2000's. They were way off and didn't come close to the true situation. I don't see how we can trust the scare tactics of current predictions any more than we could those earlier ones from a similar source.

Many Texans would like the idea of a Bullet Train. It looks so sleek and modern and the thought of moving at the proposed speeds at ground level is thrilling. Most of us would want to ride it for the experience...but only once. We Texans love our cars too much and like the convenience of having our own car when we get to our destination. We are very different from Europeans or Japanese when it comes to our transportation. (Just as different as we are about gun control.) If we're in a big hurry, we're going to take a plane. But, unlike easterners, we're used to long distances between destinations and don't seem to mind long drives. And if we're going to ride the rails we're going to want them to be a bargain, cheaper than paying for our auto's gas.

I just don't think the Bullet Train will fly with Texans. We don't want to pay for a boondoggle.

In the current economy I think we ought to start out with a smaller investment. It won't hurt to update, enhance and promote train travel on our current rails. Improve the rails. Where they're rough, make them smooth. Improve the comforts and service provided on our current passenger trains, improve the

restrooms and dining facilities, and increase the number of passenger trains running. Provide better services for vacation travelers with layovers in quaint cities and towns along the way, investments in these towns to provide appealing attractions, and informational brochures about what's to see along the way. Promote package trips to appeal to various interest groups.... If train travel catches on in Texas, then we can think about a bullet train.

At our scoping meeting the figure we were given for the current annual ridership in Texas on Amtrak was not encouragingly high, but it was almost double the *actual* ridership because Amtrak counts each boarding of the train and each exiting separately; so in most cases each rider is counted twice – once when he embarks and once when he departs. This is not the case *only* when a rider boards in one state and departs in another. The quoted figure should not be considered when decisions are made. Projected ridership is too important an issue in a decision of whether to go forward with a bullet train plan.

In my city, Temple, I have noted that a majority of the riders have ties to the military at Fort Hood. When we get out of Afghanistan and troop numbers are cut, ridership out of Temple will also be cut.

In regard to environmental damage ...

caused by construction of rails suitable for bullet trains, there are many. The last time a route was suggested, one which was supposed to use current routes as much as possible, it was learned that current routes were suitable only for a very short distance. The then proposed route was to run east of the current north-south interstate through the mid-section of the state. This route cut through the Blackland Prairie ecoregion, a region known to be the most productive farmland in the state, a region that has no need for irrigation. It is also already the most impacted productive land in the nation, losing more acreage annually to development than any other.

If we are wanting to build high speed rail because of the projected population growth, we must keep in mind that there are competing needs for this productive land with the increased population growth. "More" people will need "more" food. Pretty much all of the productive land in the world is already in production. We cannot make the desert grow crops without piping in water that is already scarce and projected to be in great demand as the population grows. To turn a blind eye to this fact would be totally irresponsible.

Blackland Prairie soils are appropriately called vertisols. These soils are known for their shrink- swell capacities. When it rains they swell. In droughts they shrink. And in the process they are constantly turning over. This process causes gilgai, locally known as hog wallows or buffalo wallows. Sometimes they form in the shape of long shallow trenches. This property is devastating to road beds, and for a rail to accommodate bullet trains, it has to be smooth and flat. No rub-boards or potholes allowed. To achieve the kind of foundation needed for this kind of rail, soil must be removed and replaced with rock, the kind that comes from the hill country, the closest source. Not only will the construction of the rails damage the land through which the railbed is built, it will also severely impact the sites from which the rock is extracted. This is off-site damage that must be calculated into the damage caused by the project.

Hauling the rock over roadways is extremely damaging to existing roads and requires costly repairs, another cost that should be factored into the overall cost.

If my understanding is correct, the bullet train is an electric train that requires electrical hookups periodically along the way. This means construction of new powerlines and adjacent maintenance rights-of-way which damage more land, and require additional construction, adding costs to the project which the public should be informed about and which should not be overlooked when figuring the negative impact of the project.

Construction will undoubtedly impact or destroy precious wetlands and exceedingly rare tallgrass prairie remnants. In recent studies the native Blackland Prairie ecosystem was considered the most endangered in the USA. Existing wildlife corridors will be destroyed or severely impacted by the railbed and required fencing. Wildlife on the Blackland is already in short supply and new intrusions further reduce the populations.

Because of the cost of constructing new, safe crossings, it is likely that there will be a limited number of crossings and more county roads dead-ending at the tracks, which will seriously inconvenience rural residents and negatively alter school bus routes.

Although the Department has announced that it will study the project in three different sections, it must remember that EIS regulations declare that a project cannot be divided into smaller parts to reduce the appearance of the environmental impact. The environmental impact of the whole project must be considered when the decision is made to go ahead with a project.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my concerns about the project. I think it is clear that I oppose the construction of a Bullet Train route at this time, think it is impractical, wasteful, too environmentally destructive and likely to fail. However, I am not opposed to improving our current rails and passenger service.

Mickey Burleson
5101 Berger Rd.
Temple, TX 76501

Mark Werner
TXDOT - RRD
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701

7870132493 0011



TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Mersac2000@hotmail.com

Sent:Monday, April 01, 2013 11:27 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Monica Camacho<Mersac2000@hotmail.com>

Address:

4818 Rockford

San Antonio, TX 78249

Phone:

(210) 347-8829

Requested Contact Method:

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: When will they do a study for the I10 corridor?

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

ann.cates@north-houston.com

Sent: Monday, April 01, 2013 10:59 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Ann Cates<ann.cates@north-houston.com>

Address:

16825 Northchase Drive #160

Houston, TX 77060

Phone:

(281) 875-0660 Ext. 11

Requested Contact Method:

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I would like to inquire on the status of a line from Dallas to Houston? I don't see Houston included in this study, but are there any additional studies planned that would included Houston on the rail line?

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold



Jo Cervenka
1965 Mount Moriah Rd
Riesel TX 76682

AUSTIN TX 787
RIO GRANDE DISTRICT
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Tape

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

78701248399



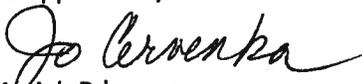
Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Waco Texas Public Meeting, March 25, 2013 at Heart of Texas COG
Scoping Comment Form

- *The People of Texas love their cars and will not change their habits very easily.
- * Time, personal choice and independence of movement is important to Texans. Speed in reaching a destination is not always needed or wanted.
- *The grand idea of building a high speed passenger rail across Texas is not the answer to moving people from point A to point B, C, and D.
- *The taking of personal property from certain people to benefit the schedule of other persons and calling it progress is wrong.
- *Yes, traffic during certain hours in the morning and afternoon, to and from work, is terrible on certain parts of the I-35 corridor in Austin, Dallas - Ft. Worth, Houston, San Antonio.
- * Staggering the work hours might help that problem. There have been times when I had no problem at all with the traffic while driving through these cities.
- *Transportation problems with trucks on the interstate roads are the problem. The trucks are not using the present toll roads because of the costs, so I am told. Independent truckers need a job too, I understand!
- * How can we better use the freight lines to move some of the necessary goods and services? Working with the freight railroads should be looked at for improvements.
- *Has a feasibility study of an elevated rail line over existing right of ways been looked at, or thought about? Sure there are curves that would slow down the train – but, you could still keep the line elevated while straightening out the curves and not impair the present use of the land.
- *I object to the state turning present (paid for) interstate highways into toll roads.
- *I object to foreign companies buying and operating a high speed rail system.

How many studies have been conducted on this same topic? I know, the past studies that have been done before are available and do not need to be repeated.

I appreciate the opportunity to make comments about this new – old – idea.

Jo Cervenka 
1965 Mount Meriah Rd.
Riesel, Texas 76682-3209
254 875-2286 or 254 744-777 - cell

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

74682

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Mr. Robert L. Cervenka
1965 Mount Moriah Rd.
Riesel TX 76682-3209

AUSTIN TX 787
RIO GRANDE DISTRICT
04 APR 2013 PM 4 L



RECEIVED
APR 05 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Tape

Tape

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

78701248399



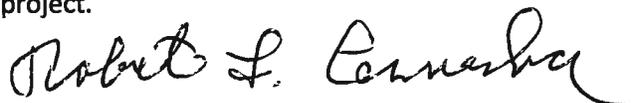
Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form:

Public Meeting in Waco, Texas on Monday March 25, 2013- Heart of Texas COG

- All high speed passenger rail proposals for Texas have been defeated before.
- Texas is not ready for high speed rail. At destination, there is no infrastructure in place to move passengers to the where they want to go.
- The last mile being the most costly and difficult to complete.
- Families traveling could not afford to travel compared to the cost of an automobile.
- Most of the problems traveling are not cars, but trucks, now many trucks.
- Freight should be moved by rail and stack trailers and trailer trains.
- Our freight railroads are a disgrace.
- As a rancher – a high speed rail through the ranch would be devastating. It would be impossible to move large equipment and animals to the other side.
- Highway frontage adds value to farm land. Enclosed road takes away value.
- Noise and pollution add to devaluing. Nobody wants to live by a noisy rail-line.
- Rural agriculture would resist high speed passenger rail, but would not oppose freight rail expansion.
- Two freight rails –side by side – in present -right of way, and being –one way – would solve our freight problems and get trade off highways.
- It would be impossible to keep Texas Ferrell hogs off of right of way.
- We don't need to destroy more agricultural land.
- Cities and government don't need to continue incentives to bring people to Texas. Our schools, jails highways and water needs are being overloaded now.
- High speed rail is right for Europe and Japan, even large cities in congested areas of the USA, but not all over Texas.

Thanks for hearing our complaints and allowing us to express our opinions concerning this overreaching project.



Robert L. Cervenka
1965 Mount Moriah Road
Riesel, TX 76682-3209

254 875-2286 or 254 716-3966 cell

From: Felicia Goodman [<mailto:felicia@cooperfdn.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 10:31 AM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Support for Passenger Rail Service in Waco

Dear Mr. Glavin:

The mission of the Cooper Foundation is to make Waco a better place to live. A critical part of making Waco a better place is ensuring our community's long-term economic success. For this reason, **the Cooper Foundation strongly supports passenger rail service in Waco.**

Both passenger and freight rail service are crucially important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Locally, Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and our region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Felicia Chase Goodman

Executive Director

Cooper Foundation

1801 Austin Avenue

Waco, TX 76701

(254) 754-0315

fax (254) 754-7004

From: Debbie White [<mailto:deb@barshconstruction.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 4:25 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Passenger Rail Service

Mr. Glavin,

I am writing to you today in regards to an extremely important matter and wish to express my support for passenger rail service. We support passenger rail service and want to encourage TXDOT to ensure Waco is connected to any future rail system. Passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position. Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns.

Respectfully,

Tate Christensen, President
Barsh Construction Company
304 Douglas Avenue
Waco, Texas 76712
254-772-7130
tatec@barshconstruction.com

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

willclift@yahoo.com

Sent: Friday, March 15, 2013 4:50 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Categories:Blue Category

Name: Mr. Will Clift<willclift@yahoo.com>

Address:

PO Box 1332

1332

Mount Ida, AR 71957

Phone:

(907) 242-1039

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I will be sending you a letter for info in regards to the up-coming meetings.

Thanks

Will Clift ME

11 MR. E. DELAGARZA: The idea of making a --
12 a railroad -- passenger railroad to San Antonio and up
13 north, it's just been I've been thinking of that for
14 many years. I'm surprised that it hasn't been done any
15 earlier simply because I think it is one of the best
16 things to happen to Laredo.

17 As we know and if we study history in the
18 1880s, railroad came to Laredo, and, if it hadn't been
19 for the railroad train, Zapata would have been Laredo.
20 Or the way Zapata was growing -- it was Miere or
21 Guerrero, actually, here in Laredo across the street --
22 that was the community that was larger than Laredo in
23 the 1800s. But when the railroad came to Laredo, Laredo
24 grew -- outgrew everybody along the border; and since
25 Laredo was on the north side of the river, it became a

♀

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1 prominent railroad city.

2 And, of course, the history shows that the
3 railroad had a lot to do with the growth of Laredo, the
4 growth of the area; and when we study the history, we
5 know that Laredo was very influential and very much into
6 the agriculture during World War I and World War II. A
7 lot of agriculture -- and mostly vegetables, onions,
8 cantaloupes, and watermelons, and all of that -- were
9 taken out of Laredo by the train routes and taken to the
10 war. The Laredo area, all of this area, was very good
11 in providing services and produce for the community --
12 or for the state and for the nation. So the railroad

13 was a very important aspect of it. Now -- and that was
14 commercial loads, freight, whatever.

15 Now, the passenger train can do wonders
16 for this city considering what we have out there on the
17 roads. The traffic, the -- the -- the huge amount of
18 traffic (trucks and the 18-wheelers) and what have you
19 of which Texas -- it used to take two-and-a-half hours,
20 now it takes us longer to get to San Antonio. For
21 example, a train will help with -- I think with
22 passengers will help to do a lot of things.

23 My concern was -- and I asked a while ago
24 was, if -- if the railroad (or the government) was going
25 to take land away from the land owners around the track,

♀

6

1 which was, I think, the reason that the -- the Highway,
2 which was the 69 or 59 project from -- that Perry had --
3 was talking about a lot failed because he was taking too
4 much land and not being paid the proper amount.

5 According to this -- to this gentleman
6 (Mark) I think he said that that might not happen
7 because there's a different -- a different thing
8 happening here with the train; and I hope it doesn't
9 happen. I mean, I don't have land out there, but I
10 would really dislike you coming and taking my land for
11 peanuts when I've paid so much for it. So -- so I think
12 that -- that this is good if it happens.

13 We do really need that highway, having the
14 rail -- the rail -- the train. We do really need a
15 passenger train. I think the Laredo-San Antonio route

16 is the most straightest route that there is in any place
17 in -- in -- in the south and USA and Texas that has
18 prominent cities to go to and would make only a big plus
19 to the northern states from Mexico. Put it here and it
20 just go -- just carrying people to -- across all the way
21 over there would make it beautiful.

22 The other thing that I have is the area to
23 be concerned for placing -- of course, I'm getting ahead
24 of myself. Where are you going to -- where the station
25 is going to be. And I'm getting ahead of myself. But I

♀

7

1 think I -- I've gone through a bunch of cities, numerous
2 cities in Mexico, for example, where they have railroad
3 trains and they have the city here and the station is
4 outside the city. (Indicating.) So you have to travel
5 a lot, but there's plenty of space out there anyways,
6 and I think it would probably be the most appropriate
7 way to do it, just outside the city limits where you
8 have lots of space to do parking and whatever you need
9 to do, and that can build itself up to a better --
10 better place to work from.

11 So, you know, there's a whole bunch of
12 the -- but those are things that were coming to my mind
13 as I came here, as they was -- as I was listening to --
14 to Mark and the young lady here today talking about it
15 and just to let -- let you know, let Phil -- he -- know
16 about it. Or, you know, there might be other things
17 that I will write down anyway.

18 Well, I have more stuff but I -- I'm just

TXDOT Open House - Texas to Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (4_3_2013)
19 going to stop right there.

1 COURT REPORTER CERTIFICATION

2

3 COUNTY OF BEXAR)

4 STATE OF TEXAS)

5

6 I, Dicie Lee Eytcheson, a Certified
7 Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do
8 hereby certify that this transcript is as true and
9 accurate a record as possible, transcribed by me through
10 computer-aided transcription.

11 And further certify that I am not a
12 relative or employee of any of the parties hereto, nor
13 interested directly or indirectly in the outcome of this
14 session.

15 WITNESS MY HAND, this the _____
16 day of _____, A. D. 2013.

17

18

19

20 _____
21 Dicie Lee Eytcheson, Texas CSR 5392
22 Expiration Date: 12/31/14
23 Firm Registration No. 631
24 Kim Tindall & Associates, LLC
25 645 Lockhill Selma, Suite 200
San Antonio, Texas 78216
Phone: (210) 697-3400
Fax: (210) 697-3408

♀

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: Hull, Kristin/PDX
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 1:08 PM
To: Steffen, Brandy/PDX
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Kristin Hull
Project Manager
CH2M HILL
2020 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97202
Direct 503.736.4160
Cell 503.360.2252
Fax 503.223.1494
www.ch2mhill.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Werner [<mailto:Mark.Werner@txdot.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 1:07 PM
To: Hull, Kristin/PDX
Subject: Fw: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Kristin, here is one that didn't come in on the TOPRS site.

From: Orlando Jamandre
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 2:49:06 PM
To: Mark Werner
Cc: mark.walbrun@ch2m.com
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

TOPRS comment received via AskTxDOT

Orlando

-----Original Message-----

From: eglylarry@gmail.com [<mailto:eglylarry@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 1:50 PM
To: AskTxDOT
Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Mr. Larry Egly<eglylarry@gmail.com>
Address:
1206 Cedar Dr.
Killeen, TX 76543

Phone:
(254) 630-9141

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service
Complaint: No

Comment: Today I read an article about TXDOT asking for comments about a potential OK to Dallas to San Antonio rail line.

I think it makes a lot of sense to establish a rail line along those lines.

When I go from Killeen, Tx to Joliet, IL, I take AMTRAK. It's slower, but much less expensive than flying. Also, I can read, play games or just relax while the train crew takes care of getting me to Joliet.

Joliet, as well as other cities surrounding Chicago, utilizes the Metra rail system to commute in that area. The fares are very reasonable. Again, I don't have to do the driving, so I can read, visit with my family or just relax.

I think TXDOT should study the feasibility of: 1. A high speed rail train along the route under consideration. 2. A normal speed train along the route. 3. What will be the costs of running either 1 or 2 above on their own dedicated rail line. I say this because AMTRAK uses other railroads tracks, so sometimes its passengers have to wait on a siding so the railroad that owns the line can use it.

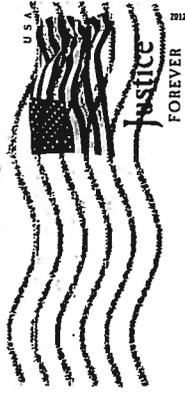
A rail line will be more environmentally friendly than individuals driving their cars on the same route.

I think that it is great that TX is considering doing this study. I hope that the oil industry is not allowed to scuttle the idea because they would probably sell less gas if TX developed such a rail line.

Be Safe. Drive Smart.



Loraine Frank
2514 Boxwood Ave.
Norman, OK 73072



OKLAHOMA CITY OK 730

03 APR 2013 PM 2 L

Mr Bill Glann, Director
Tx DOT's rail Division
125 E 11th St
Austin Tx

7870124839 78701-2483



APR 05 2012

RAIL DIVISION

Dear Mr Bill Glavin

Congratulations for being farsighted about high speed rail service & conducting a serious Texas-Oklahoma Rail Study. Though I live in Oklahoma, my families and friends all love to go to Dallas & points South to the Gulf & Houston. Some even have families along that route. With rail service all of us would visit more often!!

I share your vision and also believe that

- ① building now will never be cheaper.
- ② Your best route might be following the old "Texas Eagle". (Is that the right name?)
- ③ Weather would not deter travelers, businesses or increase accidents on the highways.
- ④ Our Heartland Flyer train to Ft Worth always has many passengers but the Dallas route would be much more popular.

Wish you a successful outcome to your Study leading to Texas being the initiator in starting high speed rail in the heartland of the Country!

Sincerely,
Loraine Frank
2514 Boxwood
Norman OK 73072
(405) 329-0888

TXDOT Open House - Texas to Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study (4_3_2013)
16 is the most straightest route that there is in any place

20 MR. J. GARCIA: Yeah. About four years
21 ago I started an interest in -- in getting a train to
22 south Texas. I wrote quite a few letters to Senator
23 Henry Cuellar and, also, to Amtrak querying why we
24 didn't have any trains in south Texas when all of the
25 rest of the state had trains that left from San Antonio

♀

8

1 to El Paso to Dallas to Houston, but nothing was coming
2 out to south Texas. So I think this is an important
3 part of our transportation system that is critically
4 needed, especially with the growth in population of
5 Laredo and some of the other southern border -- cities
6 along the border.

7 One of my suggestions at that time was to
8 run a train, believe it or not, from San Antonio to
9 Laredo to Corpus, back up to San Antonio, but on my --
10 my thinking on this was to have a monorail system. And
11 my reasoning for that was because of the huge amount of
12 traffic that is now in Cotulla, and most of the south
13 Texas area, with this oil boom that's just recently
14 happened here, this would avoid any kind of delays, any
15 kind of possible, I want to say -- what was it? -- like
16 a -- any -- any kind of hazard or any kind of trash or
17 anything that may occur on these -- during the transit
18 between here and San Antonio.

19 So by providing a monorail system it would
20 lift the train up and over all of this that's happening
21 already in this area. It'll relieve the area hunters

22 that are hunting, that have huge ranch and investments
23 in hunting here, also, the problem that we have with the
24 immigration problem that's -- we have encountered on a
25 daily basis with immigrants jumping on trains trying to

♀

9

1 find a way to use the trains as a vehicle to go north
2 without proper clearance of immigration. I think all of
3 this was important things that I used as bullet points
4 when I was addressing this issue two or three years ago.
5 Nothing has changed in these issues except that it's
6 been compounded and that also with this are drug
7 concerns, the movement of drugs between Laredo and north
8 Texas or, I should say, deep south Texas to north Texas.

9 So while I embrace the fact that the train
10 is coming to south Texas again, those are some of my
11 concerns and issues that I'd like to address at this
12 time.

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COURT REPORTER CERTIFICATION

COUNTY OF BEXAR)
STATE OF TEXAS)

I, Dicie Lee Eytcheson, a Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that this transcript is as true and accurate a record as possible, transcribed by me through computer-aided transcription.

And further certify that I am not a relative or employee of any of the parties hereto, nor interested directly or indirectly in the outcome of this session.

WITNESS MY HAND, this the _____ day of _____, A. D. 2013.

Dicie Lee Eytcheson, Texas CSR 5392
Expiration Date: 12/31/14
Firm Registration No. 631
Kim Tindall & Associates, LLC
645 Lockhill Selma, Suite 200
San Antonio, Texas 78216
Phone: (210) 697-3400
Fax: (210) 697-3408

♀

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

susan_garry@hotmail.com

Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 6:34 PM**To:** TXOKRAIL**Categories:**Blue Category

Name: Ms. Susan Garry<susan_garry@hotmail.com>

Address:

2200 County Rd. 458
Coupland, TX 78615

Phone:

(512) -

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: This is a comment for the TxOkla.rail scoping study. I agree with Mickey Burluson, who has pointed out: Texans are not ready for high speed rail and an investment in same will prove a waste of taxpayer money, agency time and effort. Current ridership on Amtrak is not high and is lower than publicized figures indicate. Amtrak counts each entry and each exit as a separate rider; so publicized numbers are skewed. If current service included more trains, better facilities on board (and at stations) and rates that beat the cost of gas for auto travel, then Texans might prefer the inconvenience of public transportation. If we can take our cars for the same or less money, we will. If we're in a big hurry we will prefer plane travel. Accurate projected ridership is critical to making a wise decision about such a project, and national surveys have shown that time and again eventual usage of recently completed toll roads and rails has been much lower than predicted; so we cannot rely on ridership predictions. The most costly environmental damage of a bullet train would be the destruction of prime farmland. A new route would likely be built through the Blackland Prairie ecoregion, home of the most productive soil in Texas and the most severely impacted by development in our nation. The same projected population increase TxDOT claims would necessitate something like a bullet train would also necessitate production of more food and would require use of every inch of arable soil the world has to offer. Since all the world's arable soil is already in

production, there would be serious competition we cannot responsibly ignore for the thousands of acres a bullet train would consume. If this is to be an electric train, there would be still more productive land gobbled up by new transmission lines coming in to the route at points along the way, and this loss and construction should be factored in to overall financial and environmental costs. Because of shrink/swell characteristics of soils of the Blackland Prairie and hazards they cause to road and rail beds, soils will have to be removed and rock brought in to guarantee a smooth railbed. Nearest sources for rock will be the Hill Country where further lands will be environmentally degraded. Hauling hundreds of truckloads of rock required will do costly damage to roads, many of which are county-maintained. These activities cause off-site damage which must be factored into costs and losses resulting from the project. Valuable wetlands and exceptionally rare tallgrass prairie plant communities will be destroyed and cannot be replaced. Wildlife on the Blackland is already scarce and impacted severely by development. Corridors that permit wildlife movement to water and food will be blocked and their numbers greatly decreased. Crossings will be limited and many roads blocked because of the expense of construction. This will also negatively impact rural residents and school bus travelers.

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

groffjh@cableone.net

Sent:Sunday, April 21, 2013 6:19 PM**To:** TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. Horace Groff<groffjh@cableone.net>

Address:

203 Rolling Acres Rd.

Denison, TX 75021

Phone:

(903) 465-0954

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: As a former public official I am very much aware of the impact of Texas population growth is having on our transportation system. No one wants to increase fuel taxes, motor vehicles are mandated to be more fuel efficient and the cost of building and maintaining the highway system makes it impossible for government to keep pace with the demands for an efficient transportation system.

An efficient and convenient rail system will do much to relieve the current and future congestion in many areas of our state. Rail travel will also give the traveling public another option to avoid the congestion and hassle of air travel.

I urge the pursuit of this project and look forward to its completion and implementation. Texas needs a modern passenger rail system.

From: Christopher Gutierrez, CCIM [<mailto:txlandinfo@sbcglobal.net>]
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 5:46 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Support for Texas Passenger Rail and a Waco Hub

Mr. Gavin,

I am a very active player in Regional Economic Development. Please note my **support for passenger rail service**. Not only is passenger and freight rail service critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position, it is an essential reliever to the overburdened TXDOT highway system.

Connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the Waco community, as well as the region's continued economic growth. Given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns, it is absolutely essential that the passenger rail service from Oklahoma to South Texas become a reality and most importantly that there specifically be a Waco Junction serving as a hub to our region.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Christopher H. Gutierrez, CCIM
Texas Commercial & Industrial
Real Estate Services, Inc.
1620-F W. Loop 340 Suite 10
Waco, Texas 76712-6838

PHONE: 254-744-8016
FAX: 214-481-0330
txlandinfo@sbcglobal.net
www.texcomrealestate.com

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However, TCIRES and its affiliates are not liable for its precise
accuracy or effectiveness. All information is subject to change.*

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76554

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013



Fold

Fold

Tom HEARD
P.O. Box 836
Little River, TX 76554

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: Attach more pages if necessary.

- Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: PASSENGER RAIL IS A TREMENDOUS BENEFIT TO TOWNS THAT HAVE IT. TxDOT SHOULD NOT THINK JUST OF HAVING STATIONS IN BIG CITIES.
- Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): TRAINS HORNS ARE NOISE. TxDOT SHOULD LOOK AT MORE GRADE SEPARATED CROSSINGS.
- Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): HIGH SPEED RAIL ON DEDICATED TRACKS IS TOO HARMFUL TO AGRICULTURE TO BE DONE IN TEXAS.
- Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): TxDOT SHOULD BE MINDFUL THAT ADDING AT GRADE ROAD CROSSINGS WILL SOMEDAY BE A PROBLEM TO EXPANDING PASSENGER RAIL.
- Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): WHY DOES AN "EIS" STUDY NEED TO BE DONE ON EXISTING FREIGHT RAILROAD WHERE CREOSOTE TIES AND COAL TRAINS EXIST?
- Other (use back or attach pages) IT IS GOOD TO SEE TxDOT STUDYING CONVENTIONAL RAIL LIKE ALL THE OTHER STATES, FINALLY. IT IS CLEAR THAT HIGH SPEED RAIL ON DEDICATED TRACKS IS DEAD IN TEXAS. TxDOT NEEDS TO DEVELOP A RAIL PLAN BASED AROUND UTILIZING EXISTING TRACKS WITH THE FREIGHT RAILROADS. THIS MAY MEAN MORE PASSING TRACKS AND DOUBLE TRACKING SECTIONS BUT BOTH PARTIES BENEFIT FROM THIS. TEXAS IS FALLING MORE AND MORE BEHIND OTHER STATES TxDOT NEEDS TO GET STARTED DOING THIS.

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#)

TxDOT Internet E-Mail



amheithaus@sbcglobal.net

Friday, April 26, 2013 10:40 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Autumn Heithaus<amheithaus@sbcglobal.net>

Address:

11807 Birch
Wichita, KS 67212

Phone:

(316) 721-3387

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I am in total support for Texas to take further steps to advance the current Heartland Flyer from Ft Worth - Ok City north through Wichita and connect in Newton to the SW Chief. Since 2006, I, with Mr. Evan Stair from Norman, OK, started the organization, the Northern Flyer Alliance. We have been working together to build support for bringing passenger rail service up through the I-35 Corridor for the past seven years. The City of Wichita has taken over our efforts to support this initiative and our Kansas Legislators really want passenger rail service to expand from Newton, KS through Oklahoma and the State of Texas. The support exist in Kansas by our citizens & many of us in Kansas want this! I have collected many Resolutions over the years from Kansas organizations and cities that support passenger rail service along the I-35 Corridor. I will help you in anyway that I can to build this goal and bring passenger rail

Round Bank (East)
1601 North I-35
P.O. Box 154068
Waco, TX 76715-4068
Voice: (254) 799-4921
Fax: (254) 799-2752

American Plaza (West)
200 West Highway 6
P.O. Box 2507
Waco, TX 76702-2507
Voice: (254) 776-8200
Fax: (254) 776-4116



April 19, 2013

Texas Department of Transportation
Bill Glavin
125 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Passenger Rail Service

Director Glavin:

The purpose of this letter is to express my strong support of passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining our state's enviable national and global competitive position.

As you consider plans for this service, please keep in mind that Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to this region's economic vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns. Waco is the center of Texas as more Texans can be found within a 100 mile radius of Waco than from any other spot in Texas.

I wish you well in this project and would be happy to participate in any way I can.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David G. Hicks". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David G. Hicks
President & CEO

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. **The identity of individuals is kept confidential.** The results are reported as totals only, and **used solely to help improve future community engagement.** Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male	<u>76656</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:
 I am employed by TxDOT I do business with TxDOT I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

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H Larry Hoelscher
329 County Road 379
Lott, TX 76656

AUSTIN TX 787
RIO GRANDE DISTRICT
09 APR 2013 PM 3 L



RECEIVED
APR 09 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

XX **Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:** Impede use of land. Take ag land out of production. Could impede our access to neighboring towns.

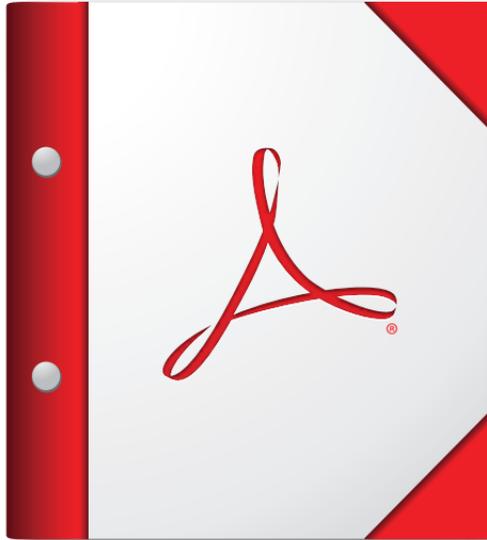
XX **Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):** It would present a safety factor AT THE crossings and also the noise level could be unsafe in the environment.

XX **Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):** It could take land out of production. It would limit access to land. Could change the usefulness of prime land as we now know it.

XX **Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):** Getting farm equipment to the other side of the rail could be problematic because of the size of equipment and other traffic on the road.

XX **Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):** This could create erosion problems, change the flow of water in the field. The noise could frighten the cattle, horses, deer, etc. as well as birds and other nature.

XX **Other (use back or attach pages)** The rail needs to be placed to the west of I-35. The unstable blackland to the east of I-35 is not suitable for many safety factors which must be taken into consideration. Many farming and cattle operations will be negatively effected by this rail on the east side of I-35.



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[Get Adobe Reader Now!](#)

RE: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Kristin.Hull@CH2M.com

Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 8:55 AM

To: TXOKRAIL; Brandy.Steffen@CH2M.com

I called Shana back on 3/27. Left a message.

Kristin Hull
Project Manager
CH2M HILL
2020 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97202
Direct 503.736.4160
Cell 503.360.2252
Fax 503.223.1494
www.ch2mhill.com

-----Original Message-----

From: TXOKRAIL [<mailto:TXOKRAIL@txdot.gov>]
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2013 2:18 PM
To: Steffen, Brandy/PDX
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

From: shana.horton@gmail.com [shana.horton@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2013 4:26 PM
To: TXOKRAIL
Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Ms. Shana Horton<shana.horton@gmail.com>
Address:
505 W. 7th #318
Austin, TX 78701

Phone:
(512) 573-3670

Requested Contact Method: Phone

Reason for Contact: Customer Service
Complaint: No

Comment: Dear Sir or Madam:

I would like to receive a phone call from someone who can give me details regarding the specific routes under consideration for the Texas-Oklahoma Rail line(s).

Thank you,
Shana Horton

Be Safe. Drive Smart

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

shana.horton@gmail.com

Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2013 4:13 PM**To:** TXOKRAIL**Categories:**Blue Category

Name: Ms. Shana Horton<shana.horton@gmail.com>

Address:

505 W. 7th #318
Austin, TX 78701

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Dear Sir or Madam:

I am looking for a map that shows all proposed rail routes with county lines and highways, if possible. The map on the website does not have any county lines or highways, making it difficult to tell which property might be impacted.

Thank you,

Shana Horton

From: Monte Hulse [<mailto:mhulse@fnbct.com>]

Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 8:49 AM

To: Bill Galvin

Cc: Mark Werner

Subject: Rail Service

Director Galvin,

Please accept this letter as support for rail service, both passenger and freight, for Waco and Central Texas.

It is vital for our economic growth. We have limited air service and our roads are congested hampered by environmental and safety concerns.

Thank you for your support in making sure Waco is connected to any rail lines proposed through our area.

Monte Hulse CEO

First National Bank of Central Texas

Waco, TX 76710

RE: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

TXOKRAIL

Sent: Sunday, April 21, 2013 7:49 PM**To:** whumm@att.net

Mr. Humm-

Thank you for your comment. The data in the purpose and need statement that you refer to can be found in "Potential Development of an Intercity Passenger Transit System in Texas - Final Report" by the Texas Transportation Institute, May 2010.

The report is available online at <http://tti.tamu.edu/publications/catalog/record/?id=32702>.

Sincerely,

The Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Team

From: whumm@att.net [whumm@att.net]**Sent:** Monday, April 01, 2013 4:57 PM**To:** TXOKRAIL**Subject:** TxDOT Internet E-Mail**Name:** Mr. William Humm<whumm@att.net>**Address:**

172 Rieti Drive
Crowley, TX 76036

Requested Contact Method: Mail**Reason for Contact:** Customer Service**Complaint:** No

Comment: Please send me the studies and data that support the statements included in the Service Level Environmental Impact Statement for the Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City, Notice by the Federal Railroad Administration on 03/13/2013 as cited below:

Projections for the Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio portion of the corridor show average speeds along I-35 would drop from 55 to 15 miles per hour by 2035.

The central section, via existing I-35, is characterized by substantially higher automobile and truck volumes than any other intercity corridor in the state. These volumes are projected to increase steadily through 2035,

4/25/13

RE: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

by which time traffic volumes are projected to result in freeway speeds as low as 15 miles per hour, contributing to very substantial delays.

Thank you for your assistance.



Alfred James III, 6515 Shepherds Crossing Ln, Bel Aire, KS 67226
To: Mr. Mark Werner, TXDOT-RRD, 125 E. 11th St., Austin, TX 78701
April 20, 2013

Dear Mr. Werner

Yesterday's Wichita Eagle had a good article (copy enclosed) on your extension plans for Amtrak service, stating your several options for extension of the OK-TX route, and inviting comment.

My wife and I are frequent Amtrak passengers, utilizing the Chicago-Los Angeles train through Newton, Ks., as well as many other connecting routes east and west. We have done so four times so far just this year. It is usually on time, very comfortable, and usually full, very popular despite the early morning arrival/departures. We find most passengers, as ourselves, strongly prefer rail to air travel. As you know, BNSF is wanting to retire the present route from Newton to Albuquerque in favor of a southern route through Wichita/Amarillo which is better trackage and would add two major cities to the route to Albuquerque. Wichita's Vice-Mayor Pete Meitzner and former KS Lt. Gov. Shelby Smith have spoken strongly in favor of this and we wish to add our endorsement. It makes economic sense as Oklahoma/Texas experience and several recent studies have shown. Transportation Secretary LaHood has strongly endorsed and urged Amtrak plans, and has stated that again, the public is way ahead of the legislators.

We respectfully urge your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alfred James III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alfred James III

AJ/s, c: Meitzner, Smith
encl

Broadway in downtown Wichita on Thursday.

Comments wfs: 125 E. 11th St. Austin, Tx 78701

MARK WEMER TXDOT-RRD
125 E. 11th St. Austin, Tx 78701

Please see SPARKING, Page 00

Study to look at passenger rail on I-35 corridor

BY BILL WILSON
The Wichita Eagle

Texas and Oklahoma officials have launched a joint study to look at bringing passenger rail up the I-35 corridor from south Texas to Oklahoma City, with further extension of the Heartland Flyer line possible through Wichita.

The study's initial goal, Texas Department of Transportation officials said, is improving mobility for residents in a state rapidly outgrowing its road system with more than a thousand residents moving in daily. TDOT is holding public meetings and is accepting public comment on its website.

"We have drivers spending so many hours a week sitting in traffic on our major roadways," said Veronica Beyer, a TDOT spokeswoman. "That's time that should be spent with their

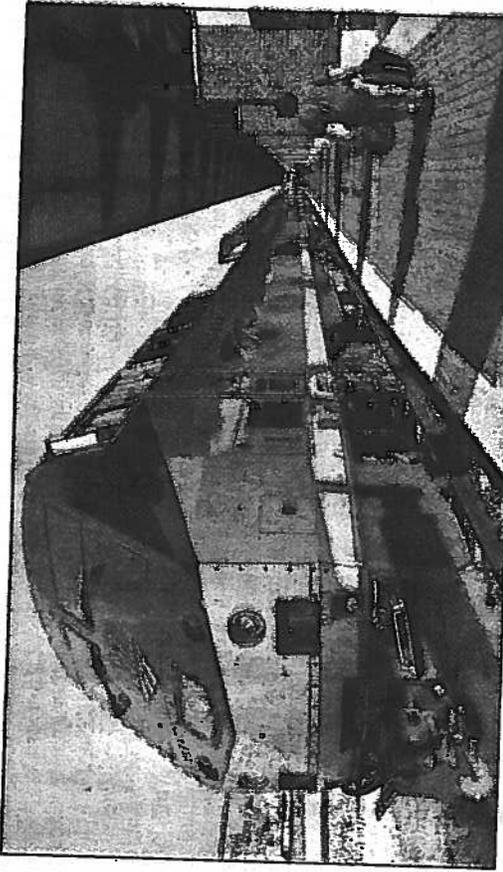
COMMENTS

Where to comment on the Texas-Oklahoma joint passenger rail study:
<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/statewide/texas-oklahoma-rail.html>

families. So with our public meetings, we're gaining information from our citizens on how to get them out of this congestion."

The study will look at a variety of passenger rail options along the corridor and will conclude with an environmental impact study in the area, according to the TDOT website. It targets service in the

Please see RAIL, Page 4B



Mike Hutmacher/FILE photo
The Heartland Flyer readies for departure to Oklahoma City from the Fort Worth station.

RAIL

From Page 1B

two states and options for extension of the line north to Kansas City that could include Wichita.

In addition, the study will look at three sections of the two-state corridor: Oklahoma City to Dallas/Fort Worth, DFW to San Antonio and San Antonio to the Corpus Christi area.

"What this says is that Texas is once again not sitting idle and is taking a leadership role in expanding passenger rail," said Wichita Vice Mayor Pete Meitzner, who is leading the city's efforts.

Lindsay Douglas, chief of governmental affairs for KDOT, said the Texas-Oklahoma study brings the need for a passenger rail partnership between Kansas and Oklahoma into more focus, as the Sooner State considers a more northern route or a possible northeast route into Tulsa that would bypass Kansas and Wichita.

In February, members of a private Tulsa group told The Eagle they believe private passenger rail is a better fit for the Oklahoma City-to-Tulsa line and a perfect complement for the northern Heartland Flyer into Wichita.

"What's important about that study is to see where Oklahoma will end up as far as continuing

north into Kansas," Douglas said. "One of the things we have to get accomplished before we expand the Heartland is getting a partnership with Oklahoma, so as they continue to have discussions about passenger rail, we have to continue to be engaged."

Meitzner said the city's support was bolstered by the recently released Community Investments Plan, which showed that 74 percent of survey respondents support the establishment of passenger train service between Wichita and regional cities.

"Maybe a little surprisingly," Meitzner said of the survey results. "It falls in line with the meetings I've had with some of our business community, who

support this because it's another way to connect us with our neighbors, transportation-wise, along the I-35 corridor."

The TDOT website is open to comments from all interested parties, so Meitzner is urging Wichita supporters to weigh in. The deadline for submitting comments is April 26.

"It is a chance, up until the deadline, for us to let our neighbors to the south know of our interest," he said.

Meanwhile, city and KDOT officials continue to monitor federal funding opportunities for similar studies and for the project at large.

Reach Bill Wilson at 316-268-6290 or bwilson@wichitaeagle.com.

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

lkelly13@yahoo.com

Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 7:56 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Lydia Kelly<lkelly13@yahoo.com>

Address:

2617 Roosevelt Ave
San Antonio, TX 78214

Phone:

(210) 857-7461

Requested Contact Method:

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I would like to be included on emails that have to do with public involvement opportunities on all things transportation in the SA-BC MPO region. I'm retiring and won't have access to the info from work; but want to stay involved. Thanks

From: Peter Kultgen [<mailto:pkatbk@bkford.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 3:03 PM
To: 'bill.glavin@txdot.gov'
Cc: 'mark.werner@txdot.gov'
Subject: Passenger Rail Service

Gentlemen – I would urge that Waco along with the other major cities in Central Texas be included in whatever configuration of passenger rail the TexDot study is considering. As our community continues to grow and with its central location it is very important that we have access to any such passenger route. The further benefit of helping to relieve congestion on I-35 should help save the State of Texas money in the long run.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Peter Kultgen, President, Bird-Kultgen Ford, Waco

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: Hull, Kristin/PDX
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 10:06 AM
To: Steffen, Brandy/PDX
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

For the scoping record

Kristin Hull
Project Manager
CH2M HILL
2020 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97202
Direct 503.736.4160
Cell 503.360.2252
Fax 503.223.1494
www.ch2mhill.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Werner [<mailto:Mark.Werner@txdot.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 9:29 AM
To: Hull, Kristin/PDX; Hausknecht, Brian/SDO
Cc: Walbrun, Mark/DFW; Jennifer Moczygemba
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: Orlando Jamandre
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 11:11 AM
To: Mark Werner
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

TOPRS comment

Orlando

-----Original Message-----

From: terilanc@gmail.com [<mailto:terilanc@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 10:05 AM
To: AskTxDOT
Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Mr. Terry Lancaster<terilanc@gmail.com>
Address: 1200 E. Main
Teague, TX 75860

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service
Complaint: No

Comment: I am a native Texan-senior, retired. I'm sorry but Texas just does not have what it takes to develop a large project such as this. The Super Collider and Trans-Texas projects all merely drained millions of tax dollars from other doable causes. Do we need mass

transit? Yes, definitely, but we needed it 30 years ago. Only way to do it would be to lease the overhead rights from existing railroads like BNSF and connect DFW to Houston-San Antonio. Do the large metropolitan areas first and plan for later connections to outlying centers like Austin & Waco, etc, later, possibly with a trunk line connection. P.S. I am ex-railroader for 15 years.

Be Safe. Drive Smart

TEXAS - OKLAHOMA PASSENGER RAIL STUDY

Scoping Comments

Attention: Mr. Mark Werner, Texas Department of Transportation, Railroad Division

125 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas 78701-

Respectfully submitted by Garl Boyd Latham

Post Office Box 600, Schertz, Texas 78154-0600

214-826-5726 / gblatham@aol.com

INTRODUCTION

"Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."

That famous quip, from the pen of author Charles Dudley Warner, basically sums up the current status of intercity passenger train service throughout Texas.

I continue to be fully supportive of any effort leading to increased rail-based passenger operations, including all modes – from local transit to long-haul services. I regularly use the intercity, regional and commuter trains, as well as light rail and streetcar lines, which now exist. Furthermore, I find my need to drive along Texas roadways proportionally reduced as railway investment increases.

It is my sincere hope that railroad technology – for both freight and passengers – is eventually viewed as an integral part of any comprehensive transportation network plan.

Regarding the elements of this project, I'm not concerned about any human or natural environmental issues. Overall, the myriad environmental factors within the study area can only be improved through an expanded railroad presence!

OUR STARTING POINT

I'm very pleased to see your commitment to review all possible combinations of service and technology.

As passenger train operations are reestablished throughout Texas, it really isn't necessary to begin with true high-speed trains, dedicated infrastructure or multi-billion dollar price tags.

In fact, for pennies on the dollar when compared to H.S.R., we could improve and expand conventional intercity passenger train service – indicating to a new generation of riders what trains are like and proving to the skeptical that a market truly exists.

CALIFORNIA'S EXAMPLE

That approach definitely worked for Gene Skoropowski. For several years, he was the Director of California's *Capitol Corridor* Joint Powers Authority, the state agency responsible for intercity passenger train service linking the capital city of Sacramento with the San Francisco Bay Area.

A decade of dramatic increases in patronage followed his commitment to take whatever funds might be made available and spend them upon service improvements. His justification was simple: potential passengers, "when offered reliable, comfortable train service, will ride in droves."

We're not talking about "bullet trains" gliding along the *Capitol Corridor*, either. They were – and are – standard locomotive-hauled consists, operating on existing trackage alongside freight trains and running at a top speed of 79 miles-per-hour.

Today, California's *Capital*, *San Joaquin* and *Pacific Surfliner* corridors account for over one-sixth of Amtrak's total annual ridership.

"DUAL SERVICE" IS NOT AN OXYMORON

Based upon California's example (and there are many others), railroading should never be perceived as an "either/or" proposition.

The railroad industry will be our partners in this endeavour. The operation of modern, efficient freight service over main line routes in no way precludes the addition/expansion of fast, frequent, marketable and successful passenger train service.

This approach to growth surely makes a lot of sense here in Texas, where we currently see only one daily round trip between Dallas, Austin and San Antonio (and no direct passenger train service between Dallas and Houston, whatsoever).

Many Texans are actively searching for travel alternatives, TODAY! We need to concentrate on the sort of projects which can bear fruit in a relatively short period of time, without the need for additional right-of-way, experimental technologies or break-the-bank budgets.

WE HAVEN'T EVEN CRAWLED, YET!

We must accept reality: the best way to allocate limited capital resources for an expanded passenger train network is through targeted investments in extant properties and the comprehensive redevelopment of conventional services.

"Incrementalism" is the key: a methodical approach to cost-effective improvements over a reasonable span of time. There has never been an instance where a region, state, province or nation has established high-speed rail operations before expanding its existing system to capacity! After all, a child will learn to walk before he attempts to run.

The political will necessary to actually design, construct, operate and maintain a true high-speed railway network in Texas is not yet evident. Still, for the past 40 years, many well-meaning people have maintained a "high-speed or nothing" mindset – which, in 40 years time, has essentially left us with just that: practically NOTHING! [See Appendix A]

SO, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

The rebuilding of the railway passenger industry, one which has been almost totally lost to our modern age, involves five major aspects (apart from the obvious need for public support including, but not limited to, funding).

People are the single most important part – the professionals who'll be working together as Texas begins to reach its transportation goals. Next comes the railroad-owned infrastructure itself, and the relationship developed over time between the various railway companies and the other major players (as previously mentioned).

The three remaining things – our routes and services, stations and support facilities, and various pieces of equipment needed to make it properly function – are briefly outlined, below.

EQUIPMENT

Texas cannot depend upon Amtrak to supply the passenger cars and locomotives necessary to cover service expansion, nor can we presume the current styles operating are totally adequate for the job.

I propose the establishment of a Texas-owned fleet of cars ("*Starliners*"), initially using classic designs (such as former Santa Fe Hi-Level equipment) and soon supplemented with new rolling stock patterned after the "California Car" concept (now in service). Simultaneously, research and development can begin on a completely unique type of bi-level coach, especially designed and constructed with Texas' needs in mind.

Modern day equivalents to the dining, lounge and parlor cars of old will play a crucial role in creating the appropriate on-board atmosphere. Amenities unique to rail-based environments add immensely to passenger comfort and help establish a truly marketable product.

Diesel-electric locomotives can first be based upon off-the-shelf designs, aesthetically sleek and technologically "green." Future motive power styles include those which could take advantage of eventual main line electrification.

STATIONS

It is off' presumed that existing passenger stations (including support facilities) are adequate to handle future needs. Unfortunately, this is an erroneous assumption.

For example, within the study's Central Section, every big city station – Dallas' Union Terminal, Fort Worth's Intermodal Transportation Center, Austin's former Missouri Pacific Depot and San Antonio's Southern Pacific Station – will need to have several serious deficiencies addressed, including a lack of track and platform space, inadequate waiting areas and pedestrian controls, insufficient equipment servicing, baggage and express handling and ancillary systems, etc.

Furthermore, several other secondary and tertiary stations will either require extensive platform work (e.g. Cleburne and McGregor, along the former Santa Fe [BNSF] main line) or completely new facilities, including depot buildings and platforms (e.g. Hillsboro and Waco, on Union Pacific's ex-"Katy" main), depending upon the way trains are routed between Temple and Fort Worth. Additionally, a UP/Katy routing will also necessitate the relocation of Temple's station.

Both Fort Worth and San Antonio are blessed with two large-scale downtown station facilities – and both cities will present unique challenges: Fort Worth primarily due to the interlocking plant at Tower 55 and San Antonio because of the major investment VIA (the city's local transit agency) is making at the MP depot site. [See "Issues involving the San Antonio station facility"]

ROUTES AND SERVICES

As specific plans are developed, there will be a need to review all the ways they might complement existing/proposed regional and local transit services (such as the DART system in Dallas and the future streetcar lines in San Antonio).

When final route alignments are selected for the Texas-Oklahoma service, consideration must also be given to the "South Central Corridor" project, as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Two of the corridor's three legs are covered by the TOPRS. If nothing else, this designation may provide an additional source of capital funding for infrastructure improvements.

Whatever service is established through these proposals must offer the frequencies sufficient to make trains a reasonable and convenient transportation option. At the initial stages of implementation, this is more important than any other single aspect of the operation, save safety.

The heart of this project, both literally and figuratively, is the Central Section. Detailed comments regarding Dallas / Austin / San Antonio operations follow some general remarks concerning the study's two other sections.

THE NORTHERN SECTION

Any substantive improvements along this section depend upon the cooperation of Oklahoma (and, ideally, Kansas). Both states currently seem uninterested in the future (or, even worse, are content to act as if they believe the future will never come).

Apparently, Kansas has already given up on the so-called "Northern Flyer Extension" – and Oklahoma has even gone so far as to place their former Frisco right-of-way between Oklahoma City and Sapulpa up for sale, effectively ending any serious discussion of restored passenger service between Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Presuming Oklahoma has a change of heart, the most logical next-step would be to establish a second daily frequency along today's Heartland Flyer route. Ultimately, both trains should then be extended north: the morning train out of Fort Worth all the way to Kansas City, Missouri and the evening departure as far as Newton, Kansas (establishing a connection there with east/west Amtrak service operating along the former Santa Fe Railway main line).

National network access on both the southern and northern ends of this route segment is an operational imperative. The fact it may not happen any time soon serves as an example of the intrinsic danger when piecing together multi-state compacts. Fundamentally, this is indicative of the federal government's failure to properly support a comprehensive system of intercity passenger train services.

THE SOUTHERN SECTION

Although the line segments between San Antonio, the Gulf coast and the Valley are shown on the Initial Demand Assessment map as possessing a "lower demand," I am absolutely convinced that it is the combination of a San Antonio / Corpus Christi route and a Corpus Christi / Brownsville route which offers the most advantages to Texas and Texans.

While a Laredo service might be attractive for international travel (although no Mexican railway passenger connections are currently available) and would give the rapidly growing towns along the corridor an alternative to Interstate 35, trains to Corpus Christi, Harlingen and Brownsville (with connections to McAllen) would not only effectively serve residents of those areas, but business and leisure travelers as well.

Laredo may have a population of almost a quarter-million people (making it the tenth largest city in Texas), but its economy is based almost solely upon international trade. Conversely, Corpus Christi alone is over 20% larger than Laredo and enjoys a well diversified economic base, including a healthy tourism market. In addition, there are over one million people living within the greater Harlingen / McAllen / Brownsville metropolitan areas.

I would encourage serious consideration of the identified line segments' viability, while paying special attention to the way these routes would compliment other services operating to and through the San Antonio gateway.

THE CENTRAL SECTION

- **Operational frequency** – From the outset, there should be at least three daily trains, each way, between San Antonio and Dallas (with one being the existing Texas Eagle). The possibility of a fourth train, operating on an overnight schedule, should be seriously considered. This is especially important if the overnight train's arrival can be dovetailed with its terminal city's morning commutation service, and if one type of car within the new *Starliner* fleet is designed with economy sleeping accommodations.
- **Scheduling** – With certain route improvements in place, the current Dallas / San Antonio running time of 10:05 for AMTK train 21 and 8:20 for AMTK train 22 can be reduced to less than six hours in both directions. While not ideal, that change alone will transform public perception of the service and, when combined with additional frequencies and other enhancements, will revitalise intrastate travel by train.
- **On-board service** – All trains must be equipped with both coach and supplemental fare (reserved seat) accommodations of some sort. Hot food and cold beverages should be sold during the trains' entire journey, with tables and lounge seating available in non-revenue areas of the consist. The handling of checked baggage, including bicycles, needs to be available on at least one train, each way, daily.
- **East Texas connections** – Direct connections (preferably through service) to the east Texas cities of Mineola, Longview, Marshall and Texarkana, as well as Shreveport, Louisiana, need to be planned. The East Texas Corridor Council (with 35 member communities) is in a position to help coordinate this effort.
- **Dallas** – It is imperative that both downtown Dallas and downtown Fort Worth are served by every run. Dallas-bound travelers must never be required to change trains in Fort Worth! DART connections, as well as service to the major airfields, should be mentioned in intercity timetables. [N.B. Sadly, there is no single-seat service option currently available on DART's system between Dallas' Union Terminal (a.k.a. "Union Station") and either Love Field or D/FW International. See Appendix B] It is worthy of note that, of all the major station sites along the Central Section, Dallas Union Terminal is in the greatest need of attention, despite possessing one of the most architecturally significant and well maintained station buildings en route. [See Appendix C]
- **Routing between Dallas and Fort Worth** – The current Trinity Railway Express (T.R.E.) alignment has often been mentioned as a possible pathway for Amtrak trains. This would be logical to meet the needs of Dallas / San Antonio service (no reverse move in or out of Fort Worth's I.T.C., reducing engagement with Tower 55's plant from three times per trip to one, the addition of a possible CentrePort [D/FW International Airport] stop, etc.); however, it is vital that negotiations with the UP allow for other intercity passenger services (such as future trains operating directly from Dallas to Oklahoma via Fort Worth) to use the former Texas & Pacific Railway via Arlington. The rerouting of Dallas / San Antonio traffic must not give the UP cause to consider their T&P main a "freight only" corridor!

- **D/FW Airport service** – The possibility of a new stop at T.R.E.'s CentrePort Station should be reviewed (see above). Unfortunately, such a stop will still necessitate a motor vehicle (bus, van, etc.) connection of some type for airline passengers – and as it now stands, travelers arriving on T.R.E. trains en route to D/FW Airport terminals are even required to make an additional bus-to-bus transfer during their connecting trip! Successful negotiations with the Airport's Board, the ultimate goal being a simplification of the transfer process, must take place prior to advertising the CentrePort stop as a true intermodal connection.
- **Fort Worth maintenance activities** – At present, Amtrak's Mechanical Department and Commissary in Fort Worth services trains 21 and 22 (The Texas Eagle) while its consist dwells at the I.T.C. Included is the fueling of locomotives, replenishing of potable water in cars and the removal of accumulated trash. These routines can easily require 20 minutes (or more) and, in the interest of time, should not take place in conjunction with more time sensitive intrastate movements. Regrettably, this decision may be costly (if an additional facility is required) and problematic (if that action is deemed responsible for reducing positions within the Fort Worth Mechanical Department). Possible locations for restored/rebuilt coach yards include Dallas (Union) and Texarkana (Union). Servicing on the route's south end can continue, as before, at the San Antonio (AMTK/SP) maintenance base.
- **Routing between Fort Worth and Temple** – To some, this segment presents an obvious choice for rerouting, with trains moving from the current BNSF (nee Santa Fe) main line over to the Union Pacific (nee M-K-T/Katy) main. [This possibility was briefly mentioned under "Stations."] One of the primary benefits of this action would be restoration of passenger service to Waco (now served by way of McGregor, approximately 19 miles west/southwest). One may also be justified in believing that operation over a single railroad line (UP, either all the way from Dallas to San Antonio, or at least from Dallas to the Lone Star Rail connection point) could aid in our quest for efficient train handling. Theoretical militating factors include additional route miles on UP property (subject to negotiation), abandonment of service to McGregor (a city which has been one of the most avid and vocal passenger train supporters in Texas) and Cleburne (with strong historical ties to the railroad industry and a depot building just over one decade old). As previously stated, rerouting would also require a new station site in Temple (although the former Katy depot building still exists and could be refurbished for 21st century passenger use).
- **Hillsboro and the abandoned M-K-T main to Dallas** – The probable stop in Hillsboro (along the UP between Fort Worth and Temple) would presumably be located downtown, just south of the former site of Dana Jct. (nee Dallas Jct.), the point where Katy's Fort Worth and Dallas main lines diverged. The Dallas side (between Hillsboro and Waxahachie) hasn't been intact as a through route for over 25 years; however, it was the primary passenger main prior to the mid-1960s. Abandoned in segments, the majority of that right-of-way was held in easement and lost when the infrastructure was removed. It seems reasonable to project an eventual return of our San Antonio / Dallas trains to this more direct alignment (possibly by constructing new trackage along the median of a rebuilt Interstate 35E), but that remains many years away. The railroad right-of-way still exists for the first few miles south from Waxahachie. I make mention of this issue primarily because the Hillsboro / Waxahachie segment was misidentified on several scoping maps as currently being available for use. [See Appendix D]

- ***Routing between Granger and Round Rock*** – South of Temple (Opal), Amtrak trains currently use the former Katy main through Granger to Taylor, then turn onto UP's ex-MP (nee I-GN) main line, proceeding by way of Hutto, Round Rock and McNeil to Austin. [Amtrak's Taylor stop is located at the Missouri Pacific depot.] Once the proposed Lone Star Rail District regional/commuter trains are operating, it will be theoretically possible to diverge from Amtrak's present alignment at Granger and join the LSTAR route near Georgetown. Potential benefits include direct service to Georgetown (three times the size of Taylor) and an increased number of miles on trackage predominately dedicated to passenger trains. Unfortunately, in this scenario, Taylor would at least temporarily lose its Amtrak service (although it is mentioned as a future commuter train terminus in Austin's "Project Connect" plans).
- ***Joint operations with LSTAR*** – A proposal which holds the greatest potential for time savings and operational efficiencies along the study area's Central Section is the concept of sharing UP's MP/I-GN corridor with Lone Star Rail between Round Rock/Georgetown (see above) and San Antonio. Functional benefits include a substantially reduced possibility of delay due to opposing, non-scheduled traffic and various economies of scale resulting from the use of joint passenger station, dispatching, maintenance-of-way and crew base facilities. Political benefits include a unified voice when standing before elected officials and a shared desire for the success of certain capital programmes (including the Texas Rail Relocation and Improvement Fund). LSTAR's goal of running 75-minute express trains from San Antonio to Austin – literally half the time now required by Amtrak trains to cover the same distance – would be reason enough to join forces!
- ***Issues involving the Austin station facility*** – If not before, then at least since January of 1973 (when Amtrak reestablished regularly scheduled passenger service to our capital city), there have been many derisive comments made regarding Austin's station facilities. Because of ill-advised construction downtown and inadequate transportation planning, a true "Union" station (which would include MetroRail) may no longer be feasible. Nonetheless, the Seaholm Station project (intended to serve LSTAR and replace Amtrak's existing depot), in conjunction with various aspects of Project Connect, will help tie divergent aspects of Austin's rail-based passenger network together – in part through the development of a streetcar/"urban rail" system. Once again, strength is derived from joining forces with other agencies. Suddenly, a dramatically improved centre-city terminal for Austin not only sounds possible, but likely!

- ***Routing to/through San Antonio (overview)*** – As part of its current system, Union Pacific operates three vital and historic Class I railroad properties in Texas. One, the Southern Pacific Lines, will play an important role when developing our downtown San Antonio terminal facilities. The other two, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway and the Missouri Pacific Lines, have corridors entering San Antonio from the north and are an integral part of the Central Section study area. UP combined the use of these properties in many locations and, from the assets of former competitors, essentially created a two track main line between San Marcos and San Antonio (even though the tracks physically diverge in several locations). Because of intermediate station stops, it will probably be necessary to identify and exclusively use only one of these routes for our service.
- ***Routing to/through San Antonio (via MP/I-GN)*** – The planning documents which LSATR has produced show their trains remaining on the former Missouri Pacific (UP) all the way into downtown San Antonio (and beyond). One advantage of this routing is the ability to construct a station stop adjacent to the International Airport property. There are several reasons why intercity trains from Dallas and intermediate points may also wish to offer intermodal connections at that location. If so, Amtrak's Texas Eagle and affiliated runs could maintain joint corridor operation with LSTAR until reaching the MP depot (VIA's Westside Multimodal Transit Center). However, it will be necessary for Amtrak trains to continue serving the Southern Pacific depot site (for a variety of reasons; see station comments, below). If our new intercity trains remain on the LSTAR alignment, they could stop at the MP/VIA Westside location (and, in the process, directly serve VIA's transit centre), then diverge onto the SA&AP and run via Tower 112 to reach the SP station. [Today's Amtrak train #22 typically uses this same pathway when making its San Antonio arrival.]
- ***Routing to/through San Antonio (via M-K-T)*** – If it is decided that the former Katy line (adjacent to Interstate 35) is the intercity route of choice for our entrance into San Antonio, there are existing locations where the new trains could leave LSTAR's corridor behind (e.g. San Marcos; Ogden). [N.B. San Marcos' station design allows for passenger platforms to be easily constructed on the Katy side of the depot.] Once on the M-K-T nearing downtown, a connecting track (originally part of the Camp Travis Lead) could be rebuilt, allowing passenger trains to easily transition between the Katy and SP main lines and proceed directly into the current Amtrak station site.
- ***Issues involving the San Antonio station facility*** – All long-distance intercity passenger trains serving San Antonio, whether operated by Amtrak or some other entity, should use the Southern Pacific station, primarily leaving the Missouri Pacific depot for commuter/regional service. There are several reasons for this, most revolving around concerns of inadequate space and infrastructure at the MP site, combined with the fact that our new trains (along with Amtrak's current services) will all require maintenance attention in San Antonio (and corresponding platform time). In the process of solidifying Amtrak's presence at the SP facility, all passenger activities should be moved back into the original station building (commonly known today as "Sunset Station"). [See Appendix E]

IT CAN BE DONE!

Domestic passenger train service originally imploded because of political realities and a generally held belief that our "drive-or-fly" approach to passenger transport was both adequate and sustainable, not due to any inherent flaws in railroad technology. As soon as we begin making serious investments in our railway system, the results will quickly become self-evident.

Will Texas be left with an antiquated roadway system, expensive gasoline, monstrous traffic congestion and no transportation alternatives whatsoever, or will we be intelligent enough to add rail-based solutions to our mix of travel options before the pain becomes unbearable?

Five years from now, we could still be talking and studying and still have nothing, or we could already be enjoying expanded service along established routes and new service on others, while successfully laying the foundation for future improvements – including true H.S.R.

Ultimately, no matter how many wonderful, sensible plans are created, nothing substantive will occur until these things become important to the general public. When that happens, no political force will be able to stop it!

Garl Boyd Latham

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A (parts 1, 2 and 3)

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C (parts 1 and 2)

APPENDIX D (parts 1, 2 and 3)

APPENDIX E

Appendix A (1)

High Speed Rail is not the starting point [excerpt]

By Garl B. Latham, originally posted to the *Progressive Railroading* web site

http://myprogressiverailroading.com/myprogressiverailroading_blogs/b/gblatham/archive/2010/06/30/high-speed-rail-is-not-the-starting-point.aspx

...can any one of us confidently state that the political will necessary to accomplish the design, construction, operation and maintenance of a true U.S. high-speed network now exists? I find it doubtful. Surely, as has been the case for two generations, it's likely that a "high-speed or nothing" approach will give us precisely that: *nothing!*

Even if such a thing was politically tenable, I don't believe the best way to allocate limited capital resources for an improved/expanded North American passenger train network is through the establishment of true high speed railway services. ...although I have no doubt it would be successful, spending even the smallest amount of funds toward dedicated, passenger-only rights-of-way and infrastructure without FIRST creating a comprehensive domestic transportation/energy/environmental policy is sheer folly!

...there is not a single location in the world where true high-speed train transportation has been developed prior to the buildout and maximisation of its conventional railway network. Not one! In order for H.S.R. to be successful, passengers must have access to local transit, commuter and regional services, and a healthy intercity system, so their trips may be completed in an efficient and timely fashion.

...the question isn't *if* H.S.R. should have a role in U.S. society, but *when*. One learns to walk before he can run!

People are actively looking for alternatives TODAY! The sort of improvements which can be achieved through serious investment in our domestic railroad system can bear fruit in a relatively short period of time, and can prove to the skeptic that U.S. citizens will not only be willing to ride trains when gasoline is costly and traffic horrific, but will choose to ride trains simply because they're efficient, relaxing and fun!

The use of railroad technologies as political pawns may be predictable, but that doesn't make it justifiable. The longer it's allowed to continue unchecked, the longer we'll be forced to wait before any substantive improvements are made regarding U.S. passenger train service.

Certainly, High Speed Rail has its place; but, it CANNOT be our starting point!

Appendix A (2)

The myth of "Higher Speed Rail" [excerpt]

By Garl B. Latham, originally posted to the *Progressive Railroading* web site

http://myprogressiverailroading.com/myprogressiverailroading_blogs/b/gblatham/archive/2010/07/09/the-myth-of-quot-higher-speed-rail-quot.aspx

...Passenger trains in these United States - the sort of which, today, would be considered "corridor" runs - were operating at "higher-speeds" during the 1930s. Furthermore, the first passenger train to exceed 100 miles-per-hour set its record in 1893! ...

Let us consider names like *Zephyr* and *Hiawatha* and *Rocket* and what they mean – then, these matters can be honestly discussed. My gracious; I have ridden Santa Fe's *Super Chief* at speeds exceeding the century mark...

Here in Dallas, our service to Houston was once quite enviable. Quick reading of a mid-century *Guide* can make a profound impression: multiple daily trains – safe, dependable, comfortable – each operating on an approximate four hour carding. Even now, such timing would be competitive with the always difficult and sometimes excruciating drive along Interstate 45. Offer such trains to an iPod and MP3 crowd, along with the current-day equivalent of traditional on-board amenities such as dining, club-lounge and parlor observation cars, and you probably couldn't schedule enough daily departures to satisfy the demand!

[Please note my use of the phrase "modern day equivalent." A secretary/stenographer might be a needless extravagance, but computer "Wi-Fi" could be immensely popular.]

Now, of course, we can only busy ourselves studying shiny "T-Bone" brochures and reading the latest government proposals, while those who would patronise the railroads find that Amtrak doesn't even offer one train at any speed between the two cities.

So, are we simply awaiting an incremental approach? Surely, I would love to see it! Someday, though, we must stop trying to take that idea too far.

"Incremental high speed rail" can be a fabulous marketing term. Alas, it carries no practical weight. Most people, seeing that phrase used in context, rightfully presume the investments they're being asked to make involve services which, given enough capital over a long enough period of time, will eventually reach the level of service and dependability as the "bullet trains" of overseas. This is not the case. No matter how much cash is poured into the infrastructure, you'll still be operating on rights-of-way originally surveyed and engineered for steam-era traffic.

In fact, the vast majority of these alignments – with their curves, inner-city paths and crossings at grade – can never be made to serve as true high-speed routes (Amtrak's N.E.C. being the sole exception to date). Instead, such investments can go a long way toward proving the public's desire for further improvements on *other* alignments, including (but not limited to) full-bore H.S.R. ...

...the best approach...would be to reestablish as many of the main line routes and services as possible, based upon my Grid and Gateway concept..., creating what might be compared to an Interstate Highway system-style national railway network.

It won't take 110 mile-per-hour top speeds to make all this work, either. Witness the successes in places like North Carolina, Illinois, California and the Pacific Northwest! Concentrate upon removing the worst bottlenecks (slow speed areas, delay-prone interlocking plants, inadequate terminal facilities) and you'll find a far more reasonable approach to trip time efficiency. After all, Amtrak's Acela, with a top speed of 150 m/h, is greatly hampered by such slow spots – to the point where its best average terminal-to-terminal speed is but 86 m/h.

Want to attract business? Sensible speeds and frequencies combined with "set your watch by it" reliability will do it, every time!

Due to its gross misuse and imprecise application, the very term "higher speed rail" has become tainted. It is not only ultimately meaningless in itself, but has become a sign of governmental arrogance and disrespect for private enterprise. ...

Appendix A (3)

Intermodal madness [excerpt]

By Garl B. Latham, originally posted to the *Progressive Railroading* web site

http://myprogressiverailroading.com/myprogressiverailroading_blogs/b/gblatham/archive/2011/05/31/intermodal-madness.aspx

Recently, a pro-H.S.R. piece appeared in the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*. Long-time columnist Bob Ray Sanders indicated his strong support for a "bullet train" project, linking various metropolitan regions along the "Texas Triangle," including Houston, San Antonio, Austin and "Dallas/Fort Worth" (however that location is eventually defined).

Certainly, my general opinions concerning this type of issue (institute a national policy first, followed by conventional services, prior to developing true H.S.R.) have often been discussed...

...Even today, an Amtrak traveler arriving at Dallas' Union Terminal can make direct connections with DART services to reach his final destination, never once adding a motor vehicle to the city's already crowded roadways. Conversely, an intermodal container arriving in Dallas on a freight train will be transferred to a truck for final delivery, every time. Which alternative offers the best chance for "congestion relief"?!

The greatest public gain for the least public investment can be derived through incremental improvements to conventional passenger service along existing rights-of-way, developing routes which offer a reasonable alternative to the private automobile – at least for certain trips.

A practical *alternative* to motor vehicles, of all sorts, is desperately needed to help address energy, environmental and economic issues, safety concerns, land use patterns, the transportation requirements of an aging population and the like. Instead of doing whatever is necessary to preserve the status quo just a little while longer, we should be investing in our future. Autocentrism should be relegated to the second half of the twentieth century where it belongs. ALL forms of transportation – even passenger trains! – should be part of the mix when making our plans for tomorrow.

Appendix B

<http://transportationblog.dallasnews.com/2010/04/guest-blogger-send-orange-line.html/>

Send Orange Line to Union Station and let streetcars replace second downtown line

Tuesday, 20 April 2010

Today, we offer one of our most frequent commenters a chance to pitch his views about the importance of Union Station, or as he prefers to call it Union Terminal, front and center. Garl Boyd Latham, a native of Dallas and resident of Irving, is a career Railroader and lifelong student of transportation. His background includes 10 years with Amtrak and 5 years in community affairs at DART, where he received the "Golden Star" – the agency's highest-level employee award.

By Garl Boyd Latham

DART's Orange Line, its completion recently at issue due to the agency's financial outlook, once again appears to be a priority. Unfortunately, that work may come at the expense of the second downtown Dallas light rail alignment – deemed necessary for the efficient operation of trains through the centre city.

Although Linda Koop suggests a new D2 route is still vital to Dallas and a direct connection between the new Convention Center Hotel and D/FW Airport remains an imperative, I have a suggestion which would be far less expensive and mean much more to the region's future vitality:

Cover a major portion of D2 with streetcar services, keep Green Line trains where they are, and send the Orange Line directly into Union Station.

These options, naturally, will require capital commitments of their own. Still, DART's overall costs would be greatly reduced and the improvements to our regional transportation system would be far more meaningful if this approach was taken.

A primary consideration should be the future of Union Station as a true passenger transport facility. Although Woodbine Development has been a good steward of the structure itself, the site is viewed by many as little more than an adjunct to the Hyatt Regency Hotel, with a role more akin to a banquet room and meeting hall than a true railroad depot.

Union Station is busier today than at any other time within the past 40 years and it tends to be mentioned whenever things like expanded intercity services (such as true high-speed trains) are discussed, yet the railway infrastructure there is woefully inadequate. The complex is completely unprepared to handle any meaningful expansion of passenger service.

This is actually one reason why a routing of Orange Line trains into the depot is a good idea! A meaningful expansion of railroad operations would force all the players involved, including the City of Dallas (the owner), Woodbine (the manager), DART (the primary passenger carrier), TRE (the commuter train agency), Amtrak (the intercity service provider), and the UP, BNSF and DGNO (the common carrier railroad companies) to openly communicate regarding the station's future.

It would require the City to take its responsibilities seriously as the operator of the largest passenger train terminal in Texas and the Great Southwest. It would increase the desire for retail space there and strengthen the potential value of properties along the western edge of downtown. It would solidify Union Station's role as the nexus of Dallas' ground transport network.

Direct Orange Line service into Union Station will also help our region sincerely embrace the concept of true intermodalism. The possibility that our main train station might not offer direct connections to our two passenger airports seems unconscionable in the 21st century!

Tomorrow's travelers will demand seamless service across all modes – and through trains operating between Union Station, Love Field and D/FW is one of the requirements. Our area could meet such a goal in the short term by committing itself to this idea.

Appendix C (1)

The ultimate purpose of a railroad station

By Garl B. Latham, originally posted to the *Progressive Railroading* web site

http://myprogressiverailroading.com/myprogressiverailroading_blogs/b/gblatham/archive/2011/06/28/railroad-stations-should-be-for-trains.aspx

Jacquielynn Floyd, a columnist for *The Dallas Morning News*, wrote an essay printed in the June 28th [2011] edition of the paper which outlined her top ten suggestions for the city's new mayor.

Item number three (impressively high on the list) concerned Dallas' downtown. A "bonus hint" involved her recommendation for our Union Station (historically Union Terminal) facility. Since "Union Station is the first and last place a lot of guests/commuters see," she is in favour of making it a more "user-friendly" place. Her proposals included the establishment of "a pub, a newsstand, a coffee house."

Certainly, it's nice our local depot rates at all, especially near the top of such a short menu. I have no problems whatsoever with her advice, only with the building's shortcomings. The fact that our train station currently doesn't even possess a simple newsstand or offer any light snacks or beverages (apart from a couple of vending machines in the Lobby) should be considered a disgrace! Floyd was absolutely right to highlight the issue.

Unfortunately, as reasonable as her ideas might be, they barely skim the surface of Union Terminal's myriad problems.

I'll admit, regarding the care and feeding of D.U.T., I am quite possibly more biased than anyone else alive today. I was born and reared in Dallas and the station has remained a constant part of my life. I have very definite ideas concerning its ongoing use.

I'll also admit that amenities such as magazines, souvenirs and fresh-brewed coffee can be purchased at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, easily accessible through a climate-controlled passenger concourse tunnel.

Still, what should be a public gathering place of significance – purchased by Dallas taxpayers in 1974 as a transportation centre and civically owned-and-operated since that time – has been demonstrably underutilised, with its purpose misunderstood, its properties mishandled, and its potential marginalised.

Sadly, these facts aren't unique, either to Dallas or railroading. So often, while working to save an historic building from destruction, a political jurisdiction will move too quickly toward what is now known as "adaptive reuse." Their apparent goal becomes filling the structure with something as soon as possible so gainsayers will have no reason to scream "white elephant " or "boondoggle."

This routine becomes increasingly evident when dealing with train stations, since the concept of restored and revitalised railway passenger service seems so difficult for many to grasp. Unfortunately, the disconnect regarding historic depot properties tends to remain true even when discussing future transit, commuter/regional, conventional intercity and high-speed operations! The assumption is usually either "we'll never need passenger trains, anyway" or "no matter what might be done to alter the facilities, they'll still be available for railroad use."

Both of those assumptions are incorrect, of course. The need for trains of all types should be increasingly evident to all but ideologues of a Libertarian bent (who, if consistent, would also oppose all *other* public transportation expenditures – even for roadways). Furthermore, it has been proven time and again that substantive alterations create insurmountable operating challenges with surviving depots, to the point where a "union station" building may be extant, yet bereft of all railroad traffic.

It's not too late for Dallas. Since our "Union Station" is already municipally owned and occupies the most logical location for a true "union" passenger train facility, we've been given additional time to renew interest, properly plan and invest in its long-term health and welfare. We only need to begin making those plans and investments now!

First of all, we must understand there is a logical, justifiable need for a single central location dedicated to arriving, departing and connecting passengers using various modes of rail-based transport. At the same time, we must admit that Union Terminal's potential modern-day role as THE gateway for Dallas is in serious danger, transcending Jacquelynn Floyd's coffee house dilemma and affecting the site's ability to serve tomorrow's travelers and visitors.

An example: both DART's new Green Line and upcoming Orange Line have been designed to by-pass the station, thereby effectively *eliminating* the opportunity to establish direct, frequent, single-seat service between Dallas' main, downtown railroad terminal and either one of our two major airports! If intermodalism is ever going to be anything more than a catchphrase, we **MUST** plan for efficient air/rail connectivity!

We must also address pedestrian control. Did you know that arriving and departing passengers are not required to enter the station building at all? How would dining and shopping establishments within the depot generate business if the structure is simply seen as another obstacle for travelers to circumnavigate whilst walking between the C.B.D. and the several platforms? In addition, how many realise it is no longer possible to freely negotiate all areas of the ground floor or, often, even walk from the main Lobby to the concourse without first going outside?! ALL public areas of the terminal should remain open and accessible.

The City of Dallas is responsible for removing most of the depot's infrastructure (tracks, platforms, yards, etc.). The station's current – and future – use as a railroad passenger facility has been severely compromised. Therefore, Union Terminal will require both a major interior redesign and serious expansion in order to support prospective transportation customers.

These multi-layered projects could be completed in phases, over time, without greatly inconveniencing users.

I understand that much-needed renovation activities have already been accomplished, modernising various structural and electromechanical systems, making the changes necessary to embrace Wolfgang Puck catering operations and a new generation of wedding receptions. The past 37 years of control by the Woodbine Development Corporation has certainly helped protect the building, and that company should be sincerely commended for its work. However, the needs of a major urban area for an efficiently functioning downtown railroad passenger terminal should easily outweigh the structure's current primary use as a hotel banquet room and corporate meeting centre.

The political commitment to rededicate the "Union Station" facility as a RAILROAD STATION will require the City of Dallas to renegotiate its existing long-term contracts with Woodbine Development and the Hyatt Regency Dallas for use of the depot building. It will also require local elected officials to do something which, potentially, will be even more difficult: accepting train travel as an integral part of our transportation mix and making the essential physical and mental transformations necessary for our society's future.

This coming October, dear Union Terminal will celebrate its 95th anniversary of service to the citizens of Dallas. Wouldn't it be wonderful if that occasion could be marked by an official decision to invest in the property and adequately prepare it for another 95 years of operation? Isn't it nice to contemplate the possibility that, in 2106, our children's children will still be enjoying Big D's Beaux-Arts gateway...and using it when taking trips by train?!

It's great to have a good cup o' Joe to go with my copy of the *News*! Far better is coffee and a paper within the confines of a properly functioning railroad station which, as a natural extension of itself, provides me with everything else I might require to comfortably complete a journey – including some trains to ride!

After all, serving trains and the passengers who travel upon them should be a railroad station's ultimate purpose.

Appendix C (2)

<http://forum.dallasmetropolis.com/showthread.php/6792-DART-D2-Downtown-Dallas-Subway-2nd-LRT-Alignment/page8>

The Following was taken from a document distributed at DART's D2 Committee Meeting on November 1st [2007] (Garl B. Latham authored the document):

DALLAS UNION TERMINAL (a.k.a. "Union Station")

Dallas must develop and nourish a single nexus for rail-based passenger transportation. By definition, that point should be the location which, today, goes by the name "Union Station"!

Dallas' main train station (originally "Union Terminal") is already serving important transportation functions.

For DART, it is the one point along its system where all railway operations converge, from Red and Blue line light rail trains to the commuter / regional service of the Trinity Railway Express.

Since Amtrak also calls upon the depot (and has since 1974), it can literally be said that the station is a "union" terminal!

Unfortunately, the station's modern-day role as THE railroad gateway for Dallas is in serious danger. All DART light rail services now under construction are being designed to BY-PASS the facility!

The City of Dallas is responsible for removing much of the depot's infrastructure (tracks, platforms, yards, etc.). The station's current - and future - use as a railroad passenger facility has been severely compromised.

The past 33 years of control by Woodbine Development has helped protect the building, and that company should be commended for its work; however, the needs of a major urban area for an efficiently functioning downtown railroad passenger terminal should easily outweigh the structure's current primary use as a hotel banquet room and corporate meeting centre.

DART's D2 Committee [of which the author is a member] should focus part of its energy on the logical, justifiable need for a single central location designed to serve arriving, departing and connecting passengers using various modes of rail-based transport.

Dallas' Union Terminal will eventually require both a major renovation and a serious expansion in order to support tomorrow's trains.

Just like the streetcar services previously mentioned [in another document written by the author but not copied here], that rebuilding will happen, whether DART accepts an active role in the process or not. DART will help design the future D.U.T. to help serve its needs, or another entity will be created to do the work and reap the rewards.

...A multi-layered redevelopment scheme for D.U.T. could be completed in phases, over time. Phase one, which should be part of the current D2 effort, requires (among other things) the following:

- * The political commitment to rededicate the "Union Station" facility as a RAILROAD STATION! This decision will demand the City of Dallas renegotiate their existing long-term contract with Woodbine Development Corporation for use of the depot building.
- * Eliminating short-term automobile parking which currently exists between the station building and the railway tracks. That space, once dedicated to railroad use, must be reclaimed for such.
- * Rebuilding the curbside area immediately adjacent to the station's western entrance to accommodate bus bays, serving DART transit vehicles and AMTRAK "Thruway" intercity coaches.
- * Moving the existing light rail lines east of their present locations toward the depot building, so that they straddle the first platform.
- * Using the then-vacated location of DART's southbound light rail line to relay depot Track 8, giving the T.R.E. (and other future regional services) some expansion room.
- * Making changes to the north end of the platform tracks, which will enable the T.R.E. to gain access to the depot without using any Union Pacific Railroad-controlled infrastructure.
- * Constructing a new platform between the light rail lines and the bus bays to handle streetcar services, offering a safe and convenient location for street railway connections to and from L.R.T., regional and intercity operations.
- * Beginning implementation of various security measures at the depot, including pedestrian control...which currently is essentially non-existent.

Appendix D

Re: Waxahachie – Hillsboro

Part 1: Filing before the Surface Transportation Board (by the author)

Part 2: Initial response by City of Waxahachie (including map)

Part 3: Final agreement / copy of letter from Union Pacific Railroad

Ref: S.T.B. Docket Number AB 33 229 X

24 December 2005

Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Director of Proceedings
Washington, D.C.

Re: Docket Number AB 33 229 X

Proposed Abandonment of Union Pacific Railroad's "Waxahachie Industrial Lead"

To all concerned parties:

I feel it would be in the best interest of both the City of Waxahachie and Ellis County, Texas – as well as the entire State – for the S.T.B. to review the proposed abandonment of the Union Pacific line currently known as the "Waxahachie Industrial Lead," extending from milepost 798.03 in the city limits of Waxahachie to milepost 802.66 (within the Nena community area).

This route is the last vestige of the former Missouri-Kansas-Texas ("Katy") Railroad's main line which ran compass south/southwest from Waxahachie to Hillsboro and served to connect the Dallas area with the M-K-T main via Fort Worth. The line was severed once the Union Pacific purchased the Katy's property. This action (among other things) effectively eliminated the possibility of near-term, cost effective intercity passenger train service routed directly between Dallas and San Antonio. Regrettably, it was apparent that the Texas Department of Transportation was not interested in working to stop the line's destruction, nor was anything done to secure the property for future use. The line's abandonment caused the right-of-way to be lost south of Nena through the towns of Forrester, Italy and Milford.

Historically, Waxahachie served as an important junction point for various railroad operations south out of Dallas. The M-K-T, as previously noted, passed through town en route to Austin and San Antonio. In addition, passenger and freight trains along the Burlington-Rock Island Joint Texas Division (nee Trinity and Brazos Valley) to Houston and Galveston called upon Waxahachie, by way of Katy trackage rights between that city and Dallas. Although this specific operational routine would no longer be possible, a similar scenario might be an option for tomorrow's travelers – if certain steps are taken today.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has already identified the need for a Dallas – Waxahachie commuter ("regional") passenger train service and has added that line to its planning maps. The existing U.S. D.O.T. South Central High Speed Rail Corridor project calls for improved passenger operations along three lines emanating from the Dallas / Fort Worth Metropolitan Area, including a route between "Dallas / Fort Worth" (however that general location is eventually defined) and San Antonio via Austin. The expansion of the South Central Corridor project to include a new Dallas – Houston alignment is in the discussion stage and would certainly be a logical addition to the initiative.

These three proposals – Dallas / Waxahachie, Dallas / San Antonio and Dallas / Houston – have the theoretical ability to work in tandem to serve cities along the so-called "Texas Triangle," while continuing to function efficiently within their respective markets.

It would be wonderful if Waxahachie was once again a vital junction point for passenger train services operating between Dallas, Houston and San Antonio! The preservation of the line segment in question – or at least its right-of-way – may be the key ingredient necessary in order for that possibility to come true. When non-commutation intercity passenger trains are reestablished from Dallas to Waxahachie, those runs could continue on the existing BNSF route toward Teague, thence to the Gulf coast. At the same time, trains could also diverge onto UP's Waxahachie Industrial Lead, gaining access to the current UP main line to Waco via Hillsboro, through a shared Interstate 35E corridor or some other alignment (perhaps identified by TXDOT's Trans-Texas Corridor project).

No matter how our 21st Century passenger railroads might be routed when heading cross-country, they will still need access to the city centres. Without this specific line segment in place, corridor options due south of Waxahachie will be severely restricted. Passenger transportation planners may find their field of possibilities so compromised through the loss of this particular piece of trackage that it will be impractical to include Waxahachie on any Dallas – San Antonio railway map, at any cost.

I am not proposing that the Union Pacific be required to underwrite a passenger train network which has not yet even been formally identified, much less one in which they would not find themselves direct participants! What I am proposing, however, is a short period of additional time to get various agencies – such as the North Central Texas C.O.G., the Texas D.O.T., Ellis County and the City of Waxahachie, and others – involved in a discussion of this matter from the above outlined perspective, and do what is necessary to secure the land for future development.

We may not be talking about a traditional rail banking initiative or rails-to-trails proposal; but, this is nothing less important. In fact, considering the health and welfare of the entire north central Texas region for generations to come, this small matter may end up being vital in a way far greater than its diminutive size and scope might indicate.

I stand ready to assist in any way possible. If this board has questions concerning any of my comments, I am always eager to discuss them.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Garl Boyd Latham

P O Box 50805
Dallas, Texas 75250-0605

972-252-1726
214-826-5726

gb1atham@aol.com

GBL/s

copy:

Mr. Mac H. Shumate, Jr.
Union Pacific Railroad

Hon. Jay Barksdale
Mayor, City of Waxahachie

Mr. Michael Morris
North Central Texas Council of Governments

Mr. Mario Medina
Texas Department of Transportation

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January 10, 2006

215534

Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit, Suite 713
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 229X), Union Pacific Railroad Company- Abandonment exemption—in Ellis County, Texas (Waxahachie Industrial Lead)

Dear Mr. Williams:

Enclosed please find an original and 10 copies of Request for Issuance of a Notice of Interim Trail Use, for filing with the Board in the above referenced matter. A copy is being served on Applicant's representative.

The filing fee is waived for the City of Waxahachie, Texas.

FILING FEE WAIVED

Sincerely,

CHAPMAN & CHAPMAN LLP

By:

James S. Chapman
Attorney for the City of
Waxahachie, Texas

cc: Mack Shumate, Union Pacific

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings

JAN 11 2006

Part of
Public Record

FILED

JAN 11 2006

SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD

2155 34

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY §
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION §
IN ELLIS COUNTY, TEXAS §
(WAXAHACHIE INDUSTRIAL LEAD) §

DOCKET NO. AB-33
(SUB-NO. 229X)

RECEIVED
JAN 11 2006

REQUEST FOR ISSUANCE OF A
NOTICE OF INTERIM TRAIL USE

CITY OF WAXAHACHIE, TEXAS
401 S. Rogers
Waxahachie, Texas 75165

Proposed Trail User

FILED FEE WAIVED

CHAPMAN & CHAPMAN LLP
JAMES S. CHAPMAN
P.O. Box 641
Waxahachie, Texas 75168
(972) 938-2720
(972) 937-9446 (fax)

Attorney for Proposed Trail User

FILED

JAN 11 2006

SECTION
TRANSPORTATION BOARD

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings

JAN 11 2006

Part of
Public Record

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

▲
JAN 11 2006
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UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY §
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION §
IN ELLIS COUNTY, TEXAS §
(WAXAHACHIE INDUSTRIAL LEAD) §

DOCKET NO. AB-33
(SUB-NO. 229X)

**REQUEST FOR ISSUANCE OF A
NOTICE OF INTERIM TRAIL USE**

Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29(a), the THE CITY OF WAXAHACHIE, TEXAS (the City) hereby requests that the Board issue a Notice of Interim Trail Use (NITU) authorizing the City to negotiate with the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) during a 180-day period for rail banking and interim recreational trail use of the right-of-way involved in this proceeding as well as the potential acquisition of the property in fee.

The following is submitted in support of that request.

1. Map of the Right-of-Way (49 C.F.R. §1152,29(a)(1)

A map of the involved right-of-way is attached as Exhibit A. The right-of-way extends from Milepost 798.03 near Waxahachie to Milepost 802.60 near Nena, a distance of 4.57 miles in Ellis County, Texas (the "Line").

2. Willingness to Assume Financial Responsibility (49 C.F.R. §1152,29(a)(2)

In order to establish interim trail use and rail banking under 16 U.S.C §1247(d) and 49 C.F.R. §1152.29, the City is willing to assume full responsibility for management of and for any legal liability arising out of the transfer or use of (unless the user is immune from liability, in which case it need only indemnify the railroad against any potential liability), and for the payment of any and all taxes that may be levied or assessed against the right-of-way owned and operated by UP. The property extends between Milepost 798.03 near Waxahachie to Milepost

802.60 near Nena, a distance of 4.57 miles in Ellis County, Texas (the "Line"). The right-of-way is part of a line of railroad proposed for abandonment in Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 229X).

3. **Continuing Responsibilities; Future Reactivation of Rail Service**

49 C.F.R. §1152.29(a)(3)

The City acknowledges that use of the right-of-way is subject to the user's continuing to meet its responsibilities described above and subject to possible future reconstruction and reactivation of the right-of-way for rail service. A copy of this statement is being served on the railroad on the same date it is being served on the Board.

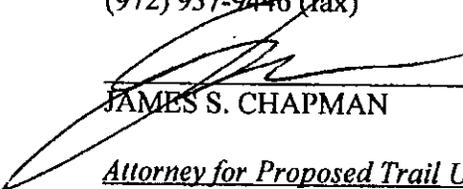
CONCLUSION AND REQUESTED RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Board should issue a Notice of Trail Interim Use authorizing the City and UP to negotiate for rail banking, interim recreational trail use and potential acquisition in fee of the right-of-way involved in this proceeding.

CITY OF WAXAHACHIE, TEXAS
401 S. Rogers
Waxahachie, Texas 75165

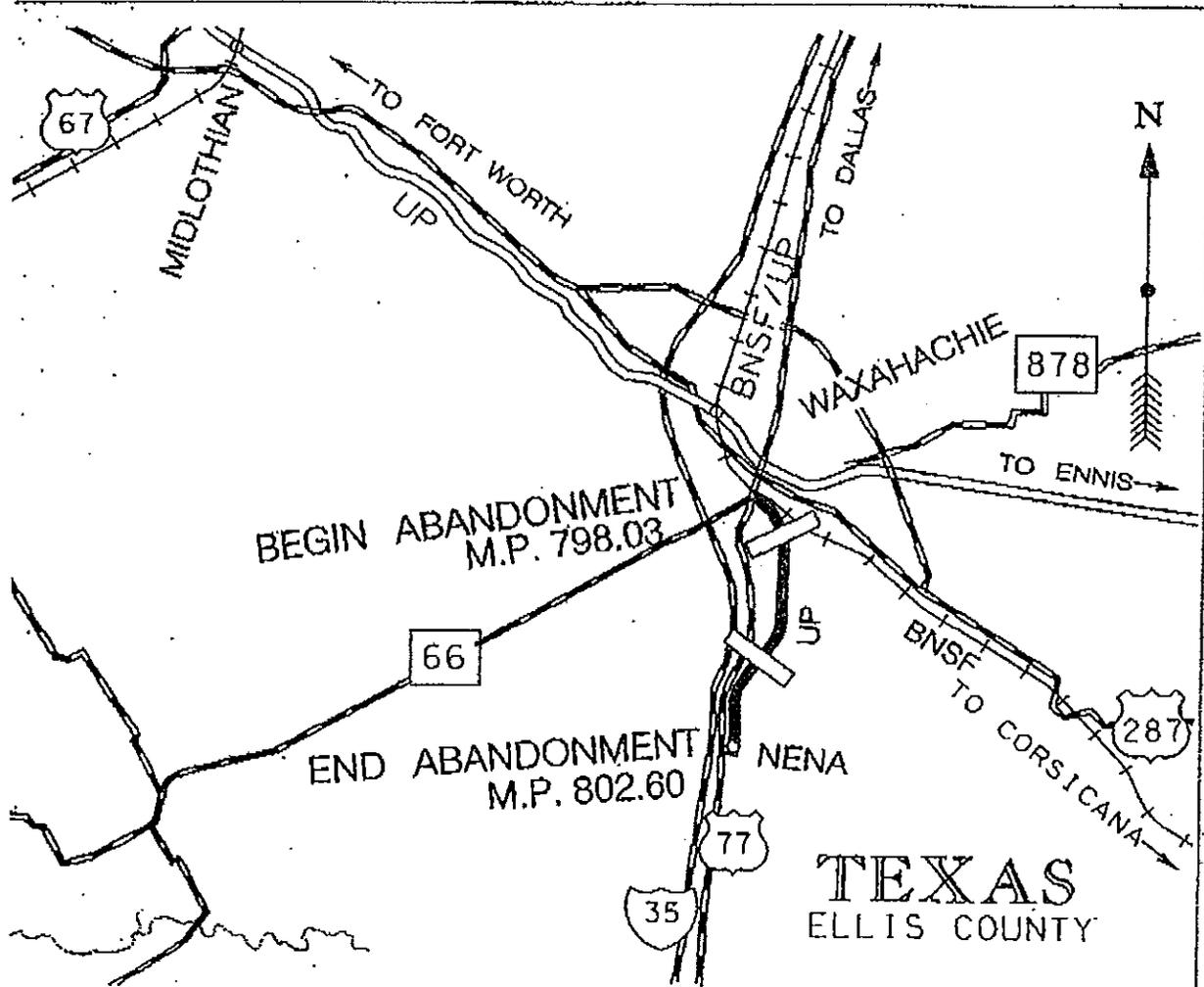
Proposed Trail User

CHAPMAN & CHAPMAN LLP
P.O. Box 641
Waxahachie, Texas 75168
(972) 938-2720
(972) 937-9446 (fax)



JAMES S. CHAPMAN

Attorney for Proposed Trail User



BRIDGE NO.	BRIDGE TYPE	TOTAL LENGTH	DATE
BR 788.1	1-102' SPAN TT	434'	1890
	81' SPAN TPT		1891
BR 800.9	1-100' SPAN TT	154'	1905
	11 SPAN TPT		1908

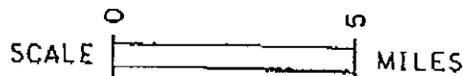
STATION	MILE POST	AGENCY
WAXAHACHIE	798.10	NO
NENA	802.60	NO

L E G E N D

- UPRR LINES TO BE ABANDONED
- OTHER RR LINES
- OTHER RAILROADS
- 50+ YEAR OLD STRUCTURES
- PRINCIPAL HIGHWAYS
- OTHER ROADS

WAXAHACHIE INDUSTRIAL LEAD
A TOTAL OF 4.67 MILES
IN ELLIS COUNTY, TEXAS

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CO.
WAXAHACHIE INDUSTRIAL LEAD
INCL. 50+ YEAR OLD STRUCTURES



FILE: O:\abandonments\ab0158_wax.dgn

DATE: 12-Apr-05 14:43



Mack H. Shumate, Jr.
Senior General Attorney, Law Department

October 31, 2007

Mr. Vernon Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

RE: Proposed Abandonment of the Waxahachie Industrial Lead from Milepost 798.03 to Milepost 802.60, a distance of 4.57 miles in Ellis County, Texas; STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 229X)

**COMPLETION OF TRAIL USE TRANSACTION WITH THE
CITY OF WAXAHACHIE, TEXAS**

Dear Mr. Williams:

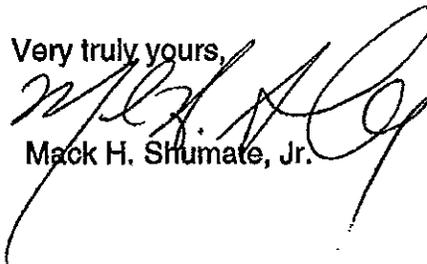
The Union Pacific Railroad Company, ("Union Pacific") filed a Notice of Exemption under 49 C.F.R. 1152 sub-part f to abandon the 4.57 mile line of railroad known as the Waxahachie Industrial Lead extending from Milepost 798.03 near Waxahachie to Milepost 802.60 near Neena in Ellis County, Texas (the "Line") on November 17, 2005. The Board by decision having a service date of December 7, 2005 ordered that the exemption would be effective on January 6, 2006 unless stayed pending reconsideration. On January 11, 2006, the City of Waxahachie, Texas late-filed a request for the issuance of a Notice of Interim Trail Use. Union Pacific indicated to the Board its willingness to negotiate for interim trail use. The initial negotiating term was for a period of 180-days. The NITU negotiating period was extended by Board decision six times with the latest negotiating period ending on October 24, 2007.

On October 2, 2007, the Union Pacific and the City of Waxahachie, Texas entered into a Donation and Purchase and Sale Agreement covering the entire Line. The Donation and Purchase and Sale Agreement was entered into in accordance with and is subject to the National Trails System Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d), and the terms and conditions contained in the Decision served February 1, 2006 by the Board in STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 229X). If rail service on the Line is reactivated pursuant to the National Trails System Act, then Union Pacific shall have the right to repurchase the property for the then current fair market value of the property including all improvements thereon as determined by appraisal.

October 31, 2007
Mr. Vernon Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board

Ten (10) additional copies of this letter and exhibit are enclosed for the Board's use and distribution.

Very truly yours,



Mack H. Shumate, Jr.

Enclosures

cc: City of Waxahachie

Appendix E

A world of VIAs [excerpt]

By Garl B. Latham, originally posted to the *Progressive Railroading* web site

http://myprogressiverailroading.com/myprogressiverailroading_blogs/b/gblatham/archive/2012/06/05/a-world-of-vias.aspx

...VIA, with the City of San Antonio and Bexar County in full support, is now involved in a REAL, honest-to-goodness streetcar plan. It involves a starter system of two lines (nominally north/south and east/west), crossing downtown and connecting both popular tourist destinations and passenger transport nodes...

Integral to the streetcar proposal, VIA's future development goals and San Antonio's "SA2020" plan is the creation of a new Westside Multimodal Transit Center...

...one of the street railway lines, the proposed Lone Star Rail regional service north into (and beyond) Austin, and (at least in theory) Amtrak are all to call on the newly resurrected [MP/I-GN] depot...

...San Antonio was never blessed with a true Union Station. Each system called upon its own depot: one each for the Southern Pacific Lines (T&NO), the Missouri Pacific Lines (I-GN) and the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad.

It's the former MP depot...which is to become VIA's west side home.

...There was a reason why the Alamo City never had a true Union Station: the necessary track work was never executed which would have made such a station operationally feasible. This is vital to note if Amtrak services are really to be included in the project...

Section 4.7 of [the Texas Rail Plan] covers the importance of railway passenger trains' "connectivity with other rail services as well as intercity bus and local transit services." They mention a goal of "seamless transfer" and hopes for the concerted "development of intermodal stations." The first example used in that document is "the proposed San Antonio West Side Multimodal Center," for which TxDOT submitted a grant application. Page 4-92 specifically mentions "Amtrak...services" as a part of the mix.

Certainly, VIA can't be held solely accountable for making erroneous assumptions regarding intercity passenger service requirements if TxDOT's Rail Division agreed with its depot assessment, and TxDOT should be forgiven if they were simply allowing Amtrak to define its own future needs. Besides, at least in theory, intercity passenger trains could serve the MP site in some fashion. Still, one reason Dallas' Union Terminal has an inadequate number of platforms tracks today – even for its current needs, much less tomorrow's – is because the city listened to Amtrak back in 1974 and believed them when they declared the station's future infrastructure requirements.

...the original SP depot is still extant. Had those in positions of power understood what was at stake and has supported such a concept, that specific structure could have remained active as a train station.

Instead, once the building was lovingly refurbished, it was rechristened "Sunset Station" and turned into a live music venue with bar service. Amtrak was forced to build new structures, for passengers, employees and maintenance, adjacent to the original depot. Today's passenger trains still use the one remaining original platform and shed.

At the time this work was being completed, I heard several arguments against restoring the facility for railway passenger use, among them that the building was now far too big for that singular purpose (untrue) and that the historic structure would be placed in danger through its constant contact with the general public (versus making it a BAR; are you KIDDING ME?!).

Just for the record, the so-called "Sunset Station" now stands locked and empty most days, open only to special events through prior arrangement (something about the historic structure being placed in danger through its constant contact with bar patrons...).

By all appearances, it stands ready to reclaim its rightful role as a train station, once the right people buy into the idea and the right sources of cash are secured. Things could certainly be worse.

Unfortunately, the site's utility as a modern railroad passenger terminal was additionally undermined by construction of the nearby Alamo Dome; however, "difficult" and "impossible" aren't synonymous.

...every route Amtrak now operates or has ever operated to or through San Antonio could be made to efficiently call upon the SP depot. Future trains to the Gulf coast and the Valley could easily use that station. Even re-extending the Texas Eagle back to Laredo could still work out of Espee depot, without any reverse movements (using the Tower 105 crossing and a restored Katy/SP connection at the Camp Travis lead)...

...let us consider keeping San Antonio a two train station town. That might not be the ultimate solution, had reasonable solutions been considered from the start, but they weren't – and what we're able to accomplish at this juncture is quite different that what was possible a quarter-century ago.

Allow Amtrak and any future [long distance] intercity passenger operators to concentrate their operations at the SP site. Bring all travelers' services, including ticketing and baggage, back inside the former SP depot building (and please, lose the "Sunset Station" moniker!). Connect the SP and MP stations with a streetcar line.

...go ahead and create VIA's West Side station at the former Missouri Pacific location. It will be a wonderful (though ironic) way to make local history come full circle and it holds a great deal of significance to residents.

...Design the new multimodal terminal in such a way that pedestrian flow is routed THROUGH the building, not around it. The head house should not only be used for VIA offices (or other restricted purposes) but, just like the SP depot, provide for all the traveler's needs: passenger information, food service, newsstands, shops. Back to Dallas...: a fatal flaw in its new-and-improved design is the fact that, to most DART passengers, the station building is simply something to circumnavigate on your way into town. There is practically no value to the station's floor space, since the majority of the thousands of passengers who use that depot daily never go inside.

Early conceptual designs of VIA's West Side Multimodal facility shows many of the passenger activities taking place outside. This is a tragic mistake.

At a terminal like this, both train-to-train and mode-to-mode transfers will be of great importance. All direct rail-based connections should be made in the same area: from the public's perspective, "behind" the building, at trackside. Streetcar operations can be centred at one of the adjacent railway platforms, along with all of the other train services.

Unlike Dallas..., no motor vehicles, whatsoever – no buses, no taxi cabs, no parking – should be allowed between the trains and the depot structure. Buses can be across the street in the plaza area, as EE&K's* drawings show: a convenient, contiguous facility for connections...but not in the way of the trains.

[*nee Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects, a Perkins Eastman Company]

Continue to dream and plan for the future. Believe in the possibilities! Don't allow a lack of faith to hinder progress – and don't let this opportunity pass us by, like so many other have in the past. Who knows how many more chances we'll get to do this right?!

In a good year, San Antonio attracts nearly 30 million tourists, visitors and business travelers to the city. If only a relative handful choose to travel by train, the city will be glad it took these things seriously, accepted the constraints of existing railroad properties, reclaimed history and otherwise planned with tomorrow in mind.

From: Jeff Lee [<mailto:Jeff.Lee@memberschoicectfcu.org>]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 9:45 AM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Passenger Rail Service
Importance: High

Dear Mr. Glavin,

I am one of the executives for Members Choice Credit Union in Waco, TX. Our organization enjoys a membership base of 30,000+ members and I would like to communicate to you that Waco would be able to support passenger rail service. I agree with my peers that passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.

Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.

Waco is in a nice position with easy access to major cities and must be included in the vision. As we examine our future growth for Waco, this must be in the plan.

In advance, thank you for your review of my correspondence to you and your team.

Kindest regards,

Jeff Lee

Executive Vice President

Members Choice Credit Union

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or entity to which it is addressed. The message, together with any attachment, may contain confidential and/or privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, printing, saving, copying, disclosure or distribution is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please immediately advise the sender by reply email and delete all copies.

Protect yourself from online fraud: Fraud is a serious issue, and we want to make sure your account information stays secure. Never email your personal or account information, we will never ask you to. Do not download email attachments, we will never send you any. Keep your password secure, and never share your passwords with anyone. Act quickly if you feel you have been a victim of fraud, please call the credit union immediately.

From: Stefan LeRow [<mailto:slerow@capstonemechanical.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 10:57 AM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Waco support for passenger rail service

Mr. Glavin –

As a resident of Waco, TX and frequent traveler on IH-35, I strongly support the proposed passenger rail system from Oklahoma City to Laredo, TX. If economically feasible, I would love Waco to be included in the routing of this service.

Please let me know how I can support your efforts in making this idea a reality.

Stefan LeRow | Sr. VP Project Operations | Capstone Mechanical
Office 254.537.9026 | Fax 254.399.8085
7100 Imperial Drive, Waco, TX 76712
www.capstonemechanical.com



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RECEIVED
APR 10 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Dear Mr. Werner,

I am so for the high speed passenger rail service. I only wish it was already in service - we have needed it for a long time.

Just recently I wanted to take a train from Dallas or Ft. Worth to Des Moines, Iowa. I would have to go up to Chicago - then back down to Des Moines.

This speed passenger service would take a lot of travel off our highways & give elderly people a way to travel when they don't like to drive, including myself. I only hope I live long enough to enjoy this rail service.

I hope you get a lot of letters so we can get the high speed train rolling.

Ruth Lewis
207 Kiowa Dr. West
Lake Kiowa, Texas
76240

1
1025

-----Original Message-----

From: Carlos Lopez - CALOPEZ [<mailto:calopez@wal-mart.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 9:44 AM

To: bill.gavin@txdot.gov

Cc: Mark Werner

Subject: Support for passenger rail service

I support the passenger Rail Service from Oklahoma City to South Texas.

Carlos Lopez

Market Manager- Wa-Mart

C/O Wal-mart #1254

1521 I-35 East

Bellmead, Tx. 76705

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Talk. Text. Crash.

[Talk. Text. Crash.]<<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/traffic/safety/share-road/distracted.html>>

-----Original Message-----

From: kathrynlucchese@mac.com [mailto:kathrynlucchese@mac.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 21, 2013 10:18 PM

To: AskTxDOT

Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Ms. Kathryn Lucchese<kathrynlucchese@mac.com>

Address:

1008 Puryear Drive

College Station, TX 77840

Phone:

(979) 764-7505

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I understand that there will be some discussion this week of a passenger rail line between Oklahoma and Houston, and I just wanted to beg for a stop (again) in College Station and a connection with the Bush Intercontinental Airport.

We spend endless hours driving back and forth between these two locations, and when returning from abroad from conferences and research it is exhausting to have to drive another two hours to get home.

The air pollution in Houston and frequent traffic snarls argue for a train line, as well. I also believe we would visit Dallas/Ft Worth more often if we did not have drive so long to do so. Reading, doing work or grading papers are all things that can be done when not driving - not to mention napping safely!

Thank you for your consideration of the public interest and increased productivity!

Kate Lucchese

Educator & Author



Mr. and Mrs. Kevin L. MacKinnon

**518 Penstemon Trail
San Antonio, TX 78256-1630**

Home: 210-314-8939

Cell: 210-748-7170



April 16, 2013

Mr. Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Re: Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Dear Mr. Werner:

We attended the recent Public Open House regarding the Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study held in San Antonio. First, we should note that we are frequent long distance train travelers and have logged more than 25,000 miles on trains across the USA. Our more recent trip, in February, 2013 covered about 3,200 miles from San Antonio and return.

Several of our travels have been along a portion of this rail study corridor while traveling on Amtrak's "Texas Eagle". We have observed an increase in passengers traveling in both directions over the past 5 years. We believe this increase in ridership is also verified by recent Amtrak data. Our observations of our fellow train passengers would suggest that these folks most likely choose to train travel because they do not have a car or they cannot afford to fly.

We believe that the number of passengers will continue to increase as the general population ages, and if we take steps to encourage train ridership. Presently, only one train moves north and south each day, which limits options for passengers. While options are available at Fort Worth for other connecting services at the train station, similar options do not exist at other stations along the corridor. For example, presently, bus service is available from San Antonio to the South, but this service is not available at the train station. Train service east-west at San Antonio is presently restricted to 3 trains per week each direction. We would suggest adding one daily train each direction would help increase train ridership between corridor cities. We would suggest these additional trains should focus on corridor travel rather than long distance travel.

We would also suggest that better coordination between trains and other modes of travel at San Antonio and other stations is critically needed to encourage ridership on current corridor trains. We suggest that it is difficult to increase train ridership while we do not have many options at major city stations, such as Austin, where one needs to either have a ride or taxi to leave the station. Clearly, a

trip to the State Capital is easier by car than by train, due to the present lack of train options and the connecting transportation.

Regarding the type of intercity passenger rail, we would offer these comments for consideration. Expanding conventional train service would appear to be the least costly, both in term of dollars and environmental impacts. Adding trains by way of "higher speeds" or "high speed" trains would require additional right of way and has the potential of additional negative environmental impact.

Thank you for our opportunity to comment on this study. We have also attached your "Scoping Comment Form.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kevin L. MacKinnon".

Kevin L. MacKinnon

Encl.: Scoping Comment Form

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: ADDITIONAL TRAIN OPTIONS
WOULD PROVIDE MORE TRAVEL OPTIONS ALONG THE CORRIDOR

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):
ADDITIONAL TRAINS MAY PROVIDE INCREASED NOISE
AND POTENTIAL FOR MORE ACCIDENTS AT GRADE CROSSING

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):
COULD PROVIDE FOR INCREASED TOURISM IN CORRIDOR Ag.
IMPACTS NEGATIVELY IF ADDITIONAL TRACKAGE IS NEEDED

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): ADDITIONAL TRAIN WOULD
REDUCE CARS - HOWEVER, ADDITIONAL WAITING TIME AT GRADE
CROSSING

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): TRAIN TRAVEL HAS
LESS ENVIRONMENT (NATURAL) OVER CARS - ADDITIONAL R-O-W
WOULD BE THE SAME AS ADDING ADDITIONAL HIGHWAYS OR
TOLL ROADS

Other (use back or attach pages)
- SEE ATTACHED LETTER

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#)

TxDOT Internet E-Mail



jomcke49@yahoo.com

Thursday, April 25, 2013 11:46 PM

To: [TXOKRAIL](#)

Name: Mr. john mckenzie<jomcke49@yahoo.com>

Address:

223 E. Fordyce
kingsville, TX 78363

Phone:

(361) 455-4035

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I hope the passenger train service to south tx does happen. I remember when south tx had a passenger train which ran from Houston to Brownsville up until April 1966. Ridership was high but the Missouri Pacific wanted out of the passenger business. People will ride the train. Major cities along the way will benefit. It will be a great and safe alternative to the congested highways. There are a number of colleges as well as military installations along the route. I believe passenger train service will be a wise investment for Texas' future. We need it.

From: Matt Meadors [<mailto:mmeadors@wacochamber.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 4:21 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Texas - Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Dear Director Glavin;

I am writing on behalf of the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the organization's approximately 1,600 member firms to express the Chamber's strong support for expanded rail service in Texas, and to ask the Texas Department of Transportation to ensure that Waco is connected to future rail systems.

Waco enjoys a diversified and growing economy, excellent natural resources, outstanding educational institutions, world-class business and industrial parks, unified and visionary leadership, and much more. The community's physical location along the dynamic I-35 corridor, situated halfway between Austin and Dallas, is enviable. However, our great location has also created a number of challenges. The I-35 corridor is heavily congested, impeding the efficient movement of people and goods, and creating safety and environmental quality concerns. Further, we have limited access to air service.

Access to a modern, efficient rail system will help address these challenges and position Waco and central Texas for continued economic growth into the future.

We wish you and your team much success with the current study. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Matt

Matthew T. Meadors | President/CEO
Greater Waco Chamber | 101 S. Third St. Waco, TX 76701
Phone: (254) 757-5623 | Fax: (254) 757-5639
WacoChamber.com

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

dgm@tx.rr.com

Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 5:23 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. David Meer<dgm@tx.rr.com>

Address:

6305 Stonehill
Dallas, TX 75254

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: NBC News mentioned funds to develop a rail line from Ok to south Tx, running through Dallas with stop in Waco.

We have family and grandchildren in Waco, so we would be VERY interested in this route, depending on time, days avail, and time of this segment.

Thank you,
David Meer

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

jhmonroe73@cox.net

Sent:Friday, April 19, 2013 4:42 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. James Monroe<jhmonroe73@cox.net>

Address:

210 S Vine St
Wichita, KS 67213

Phone:

(316) 263-3855

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I am a former Railway Mail Clerk. Moved up here from Texas in 1950. All my family, brothers and sisters, live in Texas and I am too old to drive. If they would put the train back on like it was in 1950, Newton & Ft Worth, I would be able to visit My Brother in San Antonio, Bro. in Ft Worth, sister in Waco, sister in Houston. I have relatives all over Texas. There are weddings, graduations, funerals, etc. I would like to attend.

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

maryp142011@hotmail.com

Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 2:25 PM**To:** TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Mary Morales<maryp142011@hotmail.com>

Address:

5218 Salvador Ln.
Zapata, TX 78076

Phone:

(956) 765-6668

Requested Contact Method:

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Thank you, thank thank you, thank you for the possibility of getting passenger rail service to South Texas. I rode the train all the way to St. Louis, MO when Laredo had AMTRAK service. Since Laredo is the largest inland port in the USA, I feel that there must be a lot of potential passengers who would use the service. I have relatives in Oklahoma City, Ft. Worth and Missouri whom I am sure would use the service if available. I know I would. Air travel has gotten so burdensome. I am 68 years old, white haired and have had a knee replacement. It is getting more and more difficult to deal with the TSA pat downs. I know if I had the choice of train travel or plane travel, I would much prefer the train. Again, thank you for this forum. God's best to you and all who are working on this great undertaking for the central-southern United States of America. Sincerely, Mary Morales

Staley, Jennifer/PDX

From: Mark Werner [Mark.Werner@txdot.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 8:24 AM
To: Hull, Kristin/PDX; Hausknecht, Brian/SDO; Walbrun, Mark/DFW; Steffen, Brandy/PDX
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

And another.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jefferson Grimes
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 10:21 AM
To: Mark Werner
Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

I just received this and am forwarding it to you for inclusion in the public comments. Thnx

Jefferson Grimes
Director
Office of Public Involvement
Texas Department of Transportation
Phone: (512) 475-3097
Cell: (512) 415-2672

-----Original Message-----

From: cr8joy@charter.net [<mailto:cr8joy@charter.net>]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 6:54 AM
To: Jefferson Grimes
Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Ms. Rene Muhl<cr8joy@charter.net>
Address:
3832 Heywood Ave
Fort Worth, TX 76109

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service
Complaint: No

Comment: I am definitely in favor of creating a rail transportation system throughout Texas and especially from Ft Worth to Denton and Oklahoma. I-35 is so congested and a rail system would go a long way to help alleviate the problem. The rail should also include transportation from Ft Worth to San Antonio and beyond.

Be Safe. Drive Smart.

RE: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

TXOKRAIL

Sent: Monday, March 25, 2013 4:16 PM**To:** tien.nguyen@senerusa.com**Categories:** Blue Category**Attachments:** TOPRS Poster - 3.7.13.pdf (2 MB)

Hello Tien,

Thank you for your comment! You are correct, the Dallas meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 3, 2013 (not Thursday). We will correct the date on the website and send out a reminder email to our mailing list ASAP! I've attached a poster with all of the open house dates.

Thanks again for alerting us of the mistake and we hope to see you at the Dallas open house.

Sincerely,
Brandy

From: tien.nguyen@senerusa.com [tien.nguyen@senerusa.com]

Sent: Monday, March 25, 2013 12:35 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Mr. tien.nguyen<tien.nguyen@senerusa.com>

Address:

100 montgomery street
Suite 2190
San Francisco, CA 94104

Phone:

(415) 391-3158

Requested Contact Method: Phone

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: The date for the Dallas Public Scoping Meeting is Wednesday April 3, 2013 , not Thursday April 3, 2013 ? Thursday should be April 4, 2013. Please, verify

4/25/13

RE: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Thank you

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

cartolive@aol.com

Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 2:37 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. carlos oliveira<cartolive@aol.com>

Address:

7917 mcpherson ste 207
laredo, TX 78045

Phone:

(956) 727-3801

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: the I 35 corridor is becoming a very busy high way
(CARS, TRUCKS, EAGLEDORD SHELL PROVIDING SERVICE TRUCKS) AND THE AIR SERVICE
PROVIDESUS WITH A VERY LIMITED CHOICE. WE ARE IN NEED OF ANOTHER FORM OF
TRANSPORTATION, THE SPEED RAIL IS THE MOST FEASIBLE... THANK YOU

-----Original Message-----

From: AskTxDOT

Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2012 11:07 AM

To: Bill Glavin; Orlando Jamandre

Subject: FW: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

We received the attached message through TxDOT's website. It is forwarded for your handling.

Thank you for your help.

TxDOT Communications

-----Original Message-----

From: pingpaul@austin.rr.com [<mailto:pingpaul@austin.rr.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2012 7:52 AM

To: AskTxDOT

Subject: TxDOT Internet E-Mail

Name: Mr. Paul McKelvey<pingpaul@austin.rr.com>

Address:

1207 Red Ranch Circle
Cedar Park, TX 78613

Phone:

(512) 250-3452

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Re: Oklahoma-South Texas Passenger Rail If the problem we are trying to solve is congestion on I-35, passenger rail is not the way to solve it. To be effective, passenger rail has to serve the state's major population centers. A north-south line from Oklahoma to South Texas misses Houston, the state's largest city. The congestion is most closely related to the number of trucks making a north-south transit of the state on IH-35. Putting those on the railroad is the most cost-effective way to deal with the problem. While passengers and trucks both require timely service, the cost of providing timely service for trucks is lower. The rolling stock already exists and the means of production are in place. Additional cars could readily be built using American labor.

For passenger service, the rolling stock does not exist and would have to be built. Typically, this means importing cars from other countries that have production facilities. American labor gets cut out. Texas jobs are involved.

Freight service rolling stock requires far less maintenance than does passenger rolling stock, another savings. Timely service is a major consideration. To make the deal attractive, the transit time from South Texas to Oklahoma should be quicker than truck transit time over the same distance. This will require cooperation between rail lines and unions, but nothing they have not already done with the traffic between Los Angeles-

Long Beach and the Port of New York-New Jersey. It used to take 2 weeks for a rail car to cross Chicago due to interlining requirements. Today, trains regularly make a 72-hour coast to coast run.

I like passenger rail, but it has to connect major population centers - Houston, San Antonio - first. It has to be faster than driving a car to attract sufficient customers. It has to be safe. There should be no crossings at grade anywhere.

Most of the passenger traffic on IH-35 appears to be intra-county and intra-state. Campo appears to be developing a solution for that traffic.

Freight moved from rail largely because trucks could provide better service. They could because rail lines were not customer-oriented.

Truckers were. The organization and technologies for rapid rail freight have arrived. We should play to those strengths rather than spend money on a passenger rail line for which there is mainly hope, not established traffic.

Harold Peterson
7911 Westhaven Drive SW Apt 3
Huntsville, AL 35802-1431
March 22, 2013

Mr. Mark Werner
Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483



Dear Mr. Werner:

My name is Harold Peterson, and I am writing in response to the high speed rail proposal. I am in favor of the proposal as written.

I was a resident of Norman, OK from 1998 to 2004. During that time I made several visits to the Dallas/Fort Worth area, both to visit family in Fort Worth and to attend the annual OU/TX game (perhaps referred to as TX/OU in your area). While I only used the Oklahoma Flyer once due to its slow speed and late departures/arrivals relative to the posted schedule, I definitely would have utilized the more efficient option provided by high speed rail had it been available. Should I have the opportunity to move back to the area, I would similarly make use of said option in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harold Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Harold Peterson

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

pichot@netscorp.net

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2013 10:59 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Ms. Tom Pichot<pichot@netscorp.net>

Address:

2202 Lyon St
Laredo
Texas 78043
Laredo, TX 78043

Phone:

(956) 220-3053

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: We fly to Okla City about five times per year. We need high speed trains shoud we change. We also travel to Hondo Tex forty miles west of San Antonio about eight to ten times a year. Again High Speed is necessary.

Tom Pichot

From: Parker Pieri [<mailto:Parker.Pieri@dwyergroup.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 9:24 AM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Passenger Rail Service

Mr. Glavin,

It has come to my attention that the state of Texas will be conducting a study on a proposed passenger rail line from Oklahoma to South Texas. Passenger (& freight) rail service is very important to keeping the state of Texas competitive in the regional, national, & international economy. It is vital that Waco be connected to these rail systems so that the greater Waco community can continue its economic growth, especially given the communities limited access to air service, congested roads, and safety & environmental concerns.

If you have any questions or would like additional input, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.

Best Regards,

*Parker F. Pieri, CFE
Director of Finance
The Dwyer Group*

Phone: (254) 745-2409

Fax: (254) 745-2495

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We believe in counting our blessings every day in every way!

** CFE (Certified Franchise Executive) is a certification bestowed upon qualifying individuals by the International Franchise Association.*

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PROVIDENCE *Healthcare Network*

PROVIDENCE HEALTH CENTER
6901 Medical Parkway
Waco, Texas 76712
(254) 751-4000

DEPAUL CENTER
301 Londonderry Drive
Waco, Texas 76712
(254) 776-5970

PROVIDENCE HOME CARE
528 Meadowlake Center
Waco, Texas 76712
(254) 399-2500

PROVIDENCE PARK
300 W. Highway 6
Waco, Texas 76712
(254) 761-8500

April 22, 2013

Mr. William "Bill" Glavin, Director
Texas Department of Transportation – Rail Division
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Sent Via Email:
bill.glavin@txdot.gov

Dear Mr. Glavin:

Providence Healthcare Network, Waco's leading employer, supports passenger rail service and passenger and freight rail service which is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.

Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to our community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.

Sincerely,



Brett A. Esrock, FACHE
President/CEO

BAE/np

cc: Mark Werner – Sent Via Email – mark.werner@tx.dot.gov

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#)

TxOk passenger rail public comments atten. Mark Werner.



Robert Pulliam [tubularrail@aol.com]

Thursday, April 25, 2013 5:33 PM

To: [TXOKRAIL](#)

Attachments: [TXOK pass rail.pdf \(219 KB\)](#) [[Open in Browser](#)]

Mark, for the comment section per Federal Register

Robert Pulliam

Tubular Rail Inc.

Houston TX

713 834 7905c

713 681 9501

www.tubularrail.com



Tubular Rail, Inc.

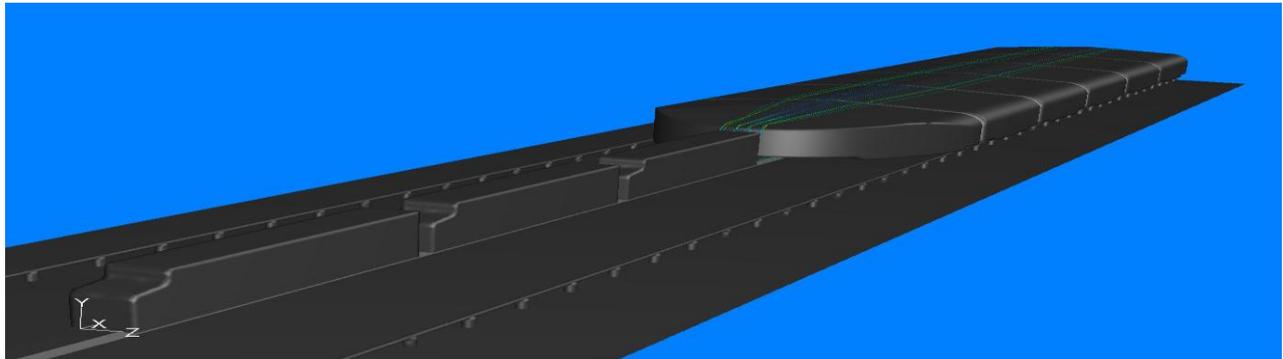
5000 Milwee, Suite 43

Houston, TX 77092

713-681-9501

www.tubularrail.com

info@tubularrail.com



Mr. Mark Werner,
Project Manager, TxDOT
125 E. 11th Street,
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Mr. Werner.

As you know, we are interested in working with TxDOT as the department develops plans for the I-35 Corridor. We would seek the evaluation of Tubular Rail's Drive on Drive off Truck Ferry (DDF) patented concept for the Oklahoma City to Rio Grande Valley alignment. Our hypothesis is simple; that development of the DDF will yield benefits to public safety, lower congestion levels and highway maintenance costs; create economic benefits for shippers and carriers through lower shipping and operating costs and is environmentally beneficial. Our claim, which we seek to have evaluated by or in conjunction with the TxDOT, is that the system will produce sufficient revenue to cover capital and operating costs, thus at least solving part of the highway funding issue and producing usable rail for passenger applications.

At the end of March I made a fact finding trip through Kansas and Missouri evaluating acceptance and need. The transportation challenges faced in that part of the country differ from those in Texas only by geography and the below summation is based on comments and concerns we heard expressed from, elected officials, railroads, private industry associations and the Missouri Department of Transportation. While the Kansas conversations centered on passenger rail and the need for funding to maintain Amtrak's Southwest Chief (\$100 million requested by BNSF), the Missouri discussions were very much about highway issues, particularly funding. In Kansas, which has the third most miles of railroads after Texas and Illinois, we found a growing resignation amongst elected officials that the State will most likely lose the Southwest Chief, Amtrak's long distance train from Chicago to Los Angeles with several stops in Kansas. Currently running on a BNSF line roughly paralleling the BNSF's TransCon through Kansas, the Southwest Chief needs a cash infusion to maintain this line at a track class that can accommodate 79mph speeds for passenger travel. BNSF's freight on the line is not sufficient in volume nor is it time sensitive enough for the railroad to make the necessary investment. Politically, it is unlikely that the three states will collectively come up with the 100 million dollars plus 10 million annually to keep the once daily train running on this route. It is likely to be diverted through Oklahoma and Texas on a less direct route and merged with another train.

The situation is of interest to Tubular Rail as this is the very type of situation that the DDF could assist Amtrak's operations as the line has current capacity but would need upgrading for DDF operations yet allowing passenger type use to continue. In conjunction with trackage in Missouri and Colorado, a continuous 700 mile segment could be assembled.

In the last two weeks the Missouri Senate has passed a one percent increase in the State's sales tax, at writing the measure is before the Missouri House of Representatives. If passed there, the measure would then go to the voters in 2014 and an uncertain outcome.

As written, the revenues from this measure are to be dedicated to transportation. Adding a lane in each direction to I-70 is estimated to cost 3 billion dollars. What is not clear is if the sales tax measure will produce enough funds during its ten year life to meet I-70's needs as well as other areas of the state. What is certain is that the Dedicated Trucks Lanes project will not proceed as a toll road.

Missouri's rail picture is much more complicated than that found in Kansas but current active rail lines total 2500 miles **less** than the state had at its peak. We have identified some trackage that could be part of a tri-state system.

In meeting with the Missouri DOT we learned that their biggest problem is that of funding. While there had been high hopes for the four state Dedicated Truck Lanes project, political reality has set in and hopes are now pinned on the sales tax measure.

Two of the MoDOT personnel in the meeting dealt with trucking issues on a regular basis and were thus well versed on some of the Hours of Service issues as well as the overall commercial driver shortage. The other personnel were more from the planning side of transportation and had many question and comments on how a DDF project would impact existing traffic and if there was enough volume of longer haul trucks to be cost effective. We hope the MoDOT will be part of that evaluation.

The brief outline below is taken from the DDF Proposal/concept paper.

- Implementation Issues:
 - Legal, particularly eminent domain and restoration of abandoned rail ROW's;
 - Political;
 - Financing-revenues from truck, rail, and business related to ROW (fiber optics, pipeline etc.)
 - Partners: State DOT's, FRA, US DOT, STB;
 - Competition;
 - Regulatory;
 - Coalition Building;
 - Business Model emphasizing a more limited Governmental role;
 - Developmental and Organizational issues, including ownership, operations and governmental issues;
 - Inertia
- External Benefits:
 - Restoration of standard freight service;
 - Risk Factors;
 - Environmental pros and cons;
 - Loss of fuel tax revenue vs. lower maintenance;
 - HAZMAT;

- Towns with restored rail service;
- Development ideas, explaining how to develop the system from concept through construction and operation;
- Supportive of short range, alternative- fuel trucks. (fuel cell, battery, etc.)
-
- Technical Issues:
 - 45 to 50 mph average speed;
 - Requires class 3 track standard;
 - Engineering and selection of Design Build contractors;
 - Operator, operations, and potential customer inputs for types of service;
 - Engineering survey of existing conditions and obstructions;
 - Identify tasks, assign priorities, and determine responsibilities;
 - Width in cities and loop bypasses, economic development for impacted areas;
 - Location – determining what areas have both demand and available rail assets;
 - Prototyping of two full scale cars and testing

These issues are a place to start a feasibility assessment. We are sure there are more that will be raised but the unconventionality of the DDF approach must be viewed in light of the current situation and what forecasts are predicting for the future, both freight and climate.

Much attention has been paid in recent years to the Public Private Partnership PPP approach to infrastructure needs. We don't disagree that there are huge reserves of funds available for investment but if Governmental agencies want to tap these funds they must present options to investors that make sense to both the investment community and the public as well. In proposing the development of the DDF we seek a Partnership at the low cost "front end" and in so doing establish an approach that will lower risk levels prior to implementation. We also develop efficiencies over current transport methods to produce a revenue stream that actually lowers user's costs rather than raising them.

Sincerely,

Robert Pulliam
Tubular Rail Inc.
Houston TX

From: James Recks [<mailto:jrecks@j-hawk.com>]

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 8:39 AM

To: Bill Glavin; Mark Werner

Subject: TxDot Rail Service in Texas

Bill and Mark,

I understand that the Great State of Texas recently received a grant to study expanded rail service in Texas. As a business person in Waco who travels I-35, I appreciate the amount of planning and effort TxDot expends to try to keep pace with the growing Texas population and its transportation needs. Let me say THANK YOU for all the great work you are doing.

May I also say that the residents of Waco are **100%** in favor of your possible rail service expansion and we in Waco **want and need to be a stop on any proposed line!**

Keep Waco in mind and keep up the good work!

Best regards,

James Recks, CFO
AMC Financial Holdings, Inc.
4547 Lake Shore Drive
Waco, Texas 76710

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

bigpoppy72@yahoo.com

Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2013 1:54 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. stephen schultz<bigpoppy72@yahoo.com>

Address:

106 misty lane
aransas pass, TX 78336

Phone:

(512) 234-5790

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: hi, i found some excitement in your articla, about extending rail service to the coast. i hope its to / thru Aransas pass (near corpus christi). we often go to san antonie and fort worth. this would save our driving. as retired seniors, we have taked bus trips also. used to enjoy the trips to dallas areas, from fort worth. we hope this does become reality. i know we have rails down here, but commercial stuff. thanks, Stephen

From: Bert Bryan [<mailto:bert@ricksheldonrealestate.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 2:47 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Support Letter for Rail Passenger Service

Sent on behalf of Rick Sheldon:

April 17, 2013
Support Letter for Rail Passenger Service

Dear Director Glavin,

Please accept this letter as an absolute YES for rail in the future!

TxDOT's rail passenger and freight service is absolutely vital to the future of Texas and, especially, Waco and the Central Texas area because of our lack of air service, along with congested roads, environmental concerns and safety concerns.

Good luck and let us know if there is anything we can do to help.

Respectfully,
Rick Sheldon

Ms. Bert Bryan
Rick Sheldon Real Estate, LLC
601 Sonterra Blvd.
San Antonio, TX 78205
210.490.2500
210.490.4465 F
bert@ricksheldonrealestate.com
DropBox Link: <https://dropbox.yousendit.com/BertBryan>

Talk. Text. Crash.

TxDOT Internet E-Mail

kamelshrek@yahoo.com

Sent:Monday, April 01, 2013 4:30 PM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. Kamel Shrek<kamelshrek@yahoo.com>

Address:

P.O. Box 450173
Laredo, TX 78045

Phone:

(956) 723-6359

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: Hi, I am writning to support Texas Oklahoma Passenger Rail. I think it is a very good idea for turism and to provide alternative economical transportation needed by many people. It will help in reducing accidents on the highways and save lives . Also, it will help the environment by using less cars on the highways .Finally , it will help creating more jobs and business for many areas .

Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.



I have specific concerns about the following: Attach more pages if necessary.

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

① My main concern is losing my home to another transportation project. In the early 1990s it was the bullet

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings): Train.

of a few short years ago, it was the Trans-Texas Corridor. I live within a mile of the proposed routes

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): of these two

projects. My mortgage is almost paid in full. I don't want to start over in mortgage payments or

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): looking for a new place to live.

② The noise factor should be considered as any new

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat): transportation

projects are noisy like the bullet train would have been.

Other (use back or attach pages)

③ I don't want valuable farm land to be taken and paved over. As subdivisions grow, we are losing more and more land. We need soil, plants, trees, water supplies. We need rural areas for a break between cities. We need the country for refreshment and relaxation, scenery, a change of pace.

④ Realistically - how many people would give up their vehicles for a high speed railway?

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/~~Do~~ not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76501

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Place
stamp
here

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

Tape

Tape

MS PAT SIMECEK
2638 APPLE CIDER ROAD
TEMPLE TX 76501-3600

AUSTIN TX 787
RIO GRANDE DISTRICT
24 APR 2013 PM 5 L



MARK WERNER, RAIL DIVISION
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
125 EAST 11 STREET
AUSTIN TX 78701-2483

78701248399



TxDOT Internet E-Mail

ksimmons@austincollege.edu

Sent: Sunday, March 31, 2013 10:45 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Name: Mr. Kevin Simmons<ksimmons@austincollege.edu>

Address:

1620 Andy Drive
Sherman, TX 75092

Phone:

(903) 818-2779

Requested Contact Method: E-Mail

Reason for Contact: Customer Service

Complaint: No

Comment: I want to support the expansion of rail service in Texas. While on sabbatical as a Fulbright scholar in Europe, I had the chance to experience the convenience of high speed passenger rail. It's unbelievable that we cannot have a similar system. My wife and I plan to be at the Sherman meeting on April 2.

From: Alfred Solano [<mailto:alfred.solano@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 1:00 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Rail Service Supporter

Mr. Glavin,

We support passenger rail service; passenger and freight rail service is critically important to maintaining the state's enviable national and global competitive position.

Waco's connectivity to these rail systems is critically important to the community's and region's continued economic growth and vibrancy, particularly given our limited air service, congested roads, environmental concerns, and safety concerns.

Thank you for the work that you do to further the continued economic growth and success of our State.

Alfred Solano
Texas Document Solutions, Inc.
6700 Woodway Drive
Waco, Texas 76712
(254) 881-7500 Office
(254) 495-2150 Cell

Visit our Website: [Texas Document Solutions, Inc.](http://TexasDocumentSolutions.com)

From: Tom Stanton
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 4:41:37 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Casey Sadler
Subject: Passenger rail service

Dear Bill,

As Executive Director of the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation in Waco, Texas, I wanted to express support for passenger rail service, as it is critically important to maintaining the state's national and global competitive position.

Waco's connectivity to any and all rail state rail systems is vital to our community and the region's continued economic growth and development, particularly given the competitiveness of limited air service, interstate congestion, not to mention environmental and safety concerns.

We ask and urge that Waco is assured connection to any future rail system. Thank you for your insight in development of this much needed method of state transportation.

Sincerely,

Tom Stanton
Executive Director
Rapoport Foundation

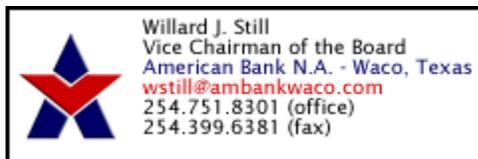
From: Willard J. Still [<mailto:wstill@ambankwaco.com>]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 2:37 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Rail study

Good afternoon Director Glavin.

What a wonderful opportunity for Texas to have the \$5.6 million Federal grant to help fund a rail study. With a good route and stops near populated areas, a well-designed rail system would complement our excellent highway system by relieving congestion and adding a great deal of safety as Texans travel.

You would expect me to support Waco being a stop for the rail system and I do so. Waco is a growing Texas community and is home to Baylor University, TSTC, and McLennan Community College along with many productive and successful industries. It is the major community between Dallas and Austin and because of that we have limited access to ample air service. Passenger rail could make a real difference for this community by reducing travel on I-35 to reach a more major airport.

Thanks for your work to begin this important study. Whatever we in Waco may do to assist you would be our privilege. We are bullish on an effective rail system for Texas and we would be grateful for your support of a stop in Waco.



E.L. TENNYSON, P.E.
2233 ABBOTSFORD DRIVE, RFD 55
VIENNA, VA 22181-3220



REGISTERED
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER

Mr. Mark Werner, R.R.D.
Texas Department of Transportation
125 East Eleventh Street,
Austin, TX. 78701 - 2409

April 22, 2013

Dear Mr. Werner:

With respect to your Texas - Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study, several years ago I studied this issue for the Transportation Research Board back when the Missouri-Kansas- Texas Railroad was studying electrification. I am aware that Union Pacific has bought it out and that times have changed. Southwest Airlines has grown to become the most successful airline in the United States. They blocked previous rail efforts but now see that for trips under 550 miles, rail is better than air for convenience, time and cost.

At present, air travel costs \$ 65 plus 16 cents per mile, while electric rail costs \$ 3 plus 24 cents per mile. The break even point is 600 miles. Beyond that 88 % of the trips will prefer by air. Oklahoma City to San Antonio is 489 miles, a rail market. The urban population of this route, including Dallas, is ten million, likely to produce 13,700 daily passengers of various types. Trip makers from San Antonio to Austin and Dallas, Oklahoma City to Dallas, casual local trips from Ardmore to Waco and Temple to San Marcos and commuters from New Braunfels to San Antonio, Dallas to Fort Worth and Norman to Oklahoma City. It is likely that a train every two hours will be both economical and necessary with a peak hour train in commuter districts. Double track will be required to accommodate both freight and passenger trains but where the old M-K-T right-of-way is available in the right place, freight and passenger might be separated with single track for each outside commuter districts, If a relocated freight line made sense in some districts, do it, but a whole new passenger railroad is not viable. 220 miles-an-hour speeds are more costly than air travel here, even if viable in France and Japan.

For 16 years, I contracted for the Keystone Corridor service in Pennsylvania starting from scratch with a current population of 4.2 million along I-76. Without the trains at peak hours, I-76 would be blocked by gridlock. Since I retired, the Keystone Corridor has been upgraded to 110 miles per hour. That may be the most economical speed for your Texas - Oklahoma corridor. A trip from San Antonio to Oklahoma City would take 7.5 hours making all stops. Non-stop service is for the air lines. Trains might leave San Antonio at 6:am, 8, 10, noon, 2:pm, 4, 6 and 8:pm to Austin only, plus a commuter train at 5:pm to Austin. The present Amtrak service takes 14.5 hours with a layover in Fort Worth. Not good, only 34 miles per hour.

For speed with economy you will need multiple-unit electric trains capable of towing a dining car. They cost about \$ 390 per car hour compared to \$ 450 per hour for diesel operation, and are 12% faster with the same track and stations. For lighter travel hours, shorter trains are economical this way. I believe you will have to incorporate Trinity Railway Express into this operation. It is physically present. It can be a separate division. It would benefit greatly from electrification. For example, electric rail cars will draw 240 kilowatt-hours per car-hour = \$ 33.60 so with 50 passengers per car with 83 seats, the cost of power is only 1. cent per passenger-mile at 66

miles per hour average speed including stops. A diesel propelled car needs 0.4 gallons per mile so at 58 miles per hour will cost 3 cents per passenger-mile 180 % more than electric. For a time, the Keystone Corridor was downgraded to diesel operation so ridership fell 40 % because of the slower speed and less frequent operation with locomotive hauled trains, The electric trains are also locomotive hauled now, with costly penalties but the riders have come back.

At 66 miles per hour average, with an average of 50 passengers per 83-seat car, it will cost \$ 5.91 per car-mile and 12 cents per passenger-mile with fares of perhaps \$ 3 per boarding plus 19 cents per mile, with a discount on the \$ 3 for commuters who do not buy a ticket every trip. They buy ten-trip or monthly tickets. The profit will go a long way to funding the investment, but not all the way. With perhaps 625 million annual passenger-miles, a profit of \$ 43,750,000 per year will fund \$ 650 million of bonds to help with construction. Taking 625 million annual passenger-miles off the highway will save about five lives a year plus \$ 100 million per year on motor fuel that could support another \$ 1.5 billion of bonds. Prudent electrification may require an investment of roughly \$ 1.6 million per mile of track.

Urban property values near stations will likely rise considerably, greatly benefitting local communities. Airports will not suffer as population growth will keep them busy. They will save on costly expansion for their least profitable trips.

Trinity Railway Expresss needs an hour and 5 minutes to make its Dallas to Fort Worth trips. With electric multiple unit cars, they should make it in 45 minutes. That will cut their hourly cost and the number of hours while increasing their patronage and revenue. I made the schedules on the Keystone Corridor so I know what can be done actually. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District also operates this type of service, confirming the results. Try for a cost plus fixed fee consultant.

Beware of consultants who will try to sell you far more than you need. They hope for 12 % of the project cost as their fee, so will grossly overload you with bells and whistles. So will Union Pacific but their management is vastly improved now. If you bargain shrewdly and honestly with them, you should get equity if they also benefit in some way.

Amtrak's Texas Eagle has been well promoted by local interests and has grown well but this project will impact the Texas Eagle. You have two choices. Terminate the Eagle at Dallas, or buy three electric locomotives to use to move The Eagle from Dallas to San Antonio. It will have to skip a couple of your minor stations to stay on time.

If this letter raises any questions in your mind, feel free to ask me about them, I am not seeking a consulting job nor do I represent any one that might benefit from this project other than the general public. We have a nephew in New Braunfels.

Best wishes for the success of your study.

Respectfully suggested,



The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity	Language Spoken at Home	Gender Identity	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	73401
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Español	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose	

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:
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Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

Delia A. Thompson
315 N. 5th St
Chadwick, OK
73401



Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

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Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a scoping open house.

I have specific concerns about the following: Attach more pages if necessary.

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors:

This would have a very positive impact on our citizens to access shows & shopping in the Dallas Ft Worth area & business shuttle.

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

I see no negative impact

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism):

It would definitely enhance local economy it would enhance tourism & quality of life

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

I see no negative effect on traffic conditions except it would enhance accessibility

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

It would have a positive effect in reducing carbon emissions from cars

Other (use back or attach pages)

I see enhanced rail service would have a very positive impact on the local economy good rail would be a real plus for those working in Dallas Ft Worth or Okla. City - Tourism would be enhanced making Oklahoma a "destination" for shopping & recreation. As a "Senior" it would enhance travel for me & my friends to OKC & Ft Worth Dallas.

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

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Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

~~XXXXXX~~ 73112

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

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- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

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WRB 3840 N.W. 33rd
Okla. City, Ok 73112

OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73112

27 MAR 2013 PM 5 L



Tape

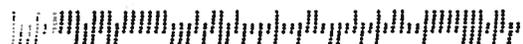
Tape

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483



Tape

78701248399



Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study

Scoping Comment Form

Provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns that you have on the service-level environmental impact statement (EIS). Comments will become part of the scoping report, which will help TxDOT decide what to study. Submit comments by **April 26, 2013**, by mail, online at www.TXOKrail.org, or at a **scoping open house**.

I have specific concerns about the following: *Attach more pages if necessary.*

Effects on residents, businesses, and visitors: *Rail travel should help all these*

Effects on safety and neighborhood livability (such as noise and railroad crossings):

Effects on the local and regional economy (such as agriculture and tourism): *Tourism should be helped*

Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc): *Little or none*

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages) *America, every state should have rail travel !!!!!*

Other countries around the world have it yet today, and so should we....

Not everyone can afford to fly and many won't, like me

I'm 81 and have made over 12 trips on the Flyer, with my wife and many friends,

, thus we in America need more rail travel, as the safest way to go. Expend

AMTRK , I say

The Texas Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

TxDOT requests demographic information at public events to evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach activities. The identity of individuals is kept confidential. The results are reported as totals only, and used solely to help improve future community engagement. Providing this information is voluntary. Check all that apply.

Race/Ethnicity

- African-American
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Unknown/Do not wish to disclose

Language Spoken at Home

- English
- Español
- Other: _____
- Do not wish to disclose

Gender Identity

- Male
- Female
- _____
- Do not wish to disclose

ZIP Code

76513

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)): check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project/item I'm commenting on

I WORKED FOR THE MET RAILROAD IN DALLAS, TX FOR 42 YEARS
HW

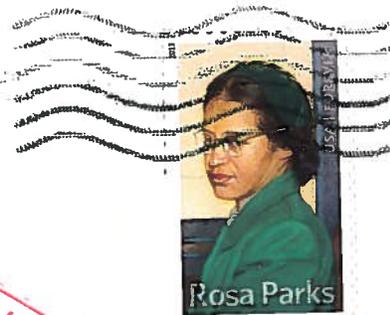
Please mail comments by April 26, 2013

Fold

Fold

H. C. Wallace Jr.
5596 W FM 436
Belton, TX 76513-7647

AUSTIN TX 787
RAIL GRANDE DISTRICT
04 APR 2013 PM 5 L



RECEIVED
APR 05 2013
RAIL DIVISION

Mark Werner, Rail Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Tape

7870124839



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Effects on traffic conditions (for cars, walking, biking, etc):

Effects on the natural environment (such as water quality and habitat):

Other (use back or attach pages)

We don't need high speed rail -
all you have to do is upgrade
what you now have in Amtrak.
New equipment and more trains -

With 35 improvement why bother
spending more money and tearing
up the best farm land in Texas

From: Kim Woodfin [<mailto:kim.woodfin@brazos.us.com>] **On Behalf Of** Murray Watson
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 3:47 PM
To: Bill Glavin
Cc: Mark Werner
Subject: Passenger Rail Service

Dear Director Glavin,

It has been brought to my attention that the State of Texas received a grant of Federal Funds for study of the need of a passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to Laredo, which would hopefully include space for freight. It's critical to those of us here in the Central Texas area that Waco is included as one of the stops for the passenger service and to send off freight. This area will grow and take advantage of the opportunity and economic developments that lie ahead. In addition to the main rail, I think it is equally important that you make connects at both ends for those who have a need to go beyond Oklahoma City or Laredo.

Respectfully submitted,

Murray Watson, Jr.

This transmission may contain information that is privileged, confidential and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law.

If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution, or use of the information contained herein (including any reliance thereon) is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you received this transmission in error, please immediately contact the sender and destroy the material in its entirety, whether in electronic or hard copy format. Thank you.

Rail transportation

teacher.artist@yahoo.com

Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2013 10:27 AM

To: TXOKRAIL

Dear TxDOT,

I filled out your survey today on extending rail transportation in Texas but had difficulty submitting it through Survey Monkey. Usually you get some sort of "thank you for your submission," but the form hung up. Therefore, I am sending my comments via your email.

I support TXDOT plans for expanding rail transportation in TX (and beyond!). There are many reasons why this will be beneficial to all Texans as well as visitors:

- 1) Train transportation will keep more cars off the road thus benefitting the environment.
- 2) A train's overall energy consumption is nearly half that of planes or cars per passenger.
- 3) Train travel is more enjoyable and less stressful than driving.
- 4) Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion is reduced. This benefits people and our environment.
- 5) Train travel encourages tourism because people could travel faster and more widely.

When visiting Ireland, we were conveniently able to visit many cities from Dublin to Cork by train. Stations were usually within walking distance to the city center. We occupied four seats facing each other with a table between them. Brilliant! This facilitated the use of laptops (which were in abundant use), eating, and game-playing for the children. The train was spotless and we were offered a variety of refreshments for purchase from a wheeled cart. The ticket cost was surprisingly inexpensive. We saved car rental, gas, time, frustration, and the scary experience of trying to drive on the wrong side of the road! I know We would visit Austin, Houston, Galveston and Corpus (and points north--like even up to Wichita, Ks)-- a lot more if we didn't have to drive.

Again, I will support any effort to improve train travel in Texas.

Sincerely,
Patricia Wheeler

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Appendix H

Summary and Tally of Public Scoping Comments

Summary and Tally of Public Scoping Comments

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
POTENTIAL ALIGNMENTS AND STATIONS		
<i>Support and Opposition (166 comments)</i>		
General support for rail.	Northern, Central, Southern	124
General support for high-speed rail.	Northern, Central, Southern	25
All previous Texas high-speed rail proposals have been rejected. Texas is not ready. Improve existing rail systems.	Central, Southern	10
The people of Texas love their cars and will not change their habits easily. Speed is not always the most important factor.	Central	2
Additional service is not needed. Bus and air travel already serve the travel demand.	Northern, Southern	2
Texans do not want foreign companies buying and/or operating a high-speed rail system.	Central	1
Rail is not as flexible and convenient as automobile travel.	Central	1
Opposed to using eminent domain to condemn properties.	Central	1
<i>Cost, Affordability, and Funding (50 comments)</i>		
Rail projects are a waste of funds and will lead to increased debt.	Southern, Central	7
Rail travel is fast, efficient, and reasonably priced.	Northern, Central, Southern	7

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Rail projects should not be government-subsidized. Rail projects should be funded by private companies.	Northern, Central, Southern	6
Rail is less expensive than air travel.	Northern, Central	5
Trains use fewer resources and are a less expensive way to travel than driving. Passenger expenses are as important as the environment.	Southern	3
Need affordable rail with schedules between major urban areas (i.e., not just Oklahoma City to Fort Worth).	Northern	2
Rail should be affordable to passengers.	Northern, Central	2
Trains would cost the taxpayers less than other infrastructure improvements.	Northern, Southern	2
Money should be spent on road improvements, rather than rail.	Northern, Central	2
Texas transportation dollars should help construct rail.	Northern	1
High-speed rail is an economical and environmentally friendly alternative to air and highway travel. High-speed rail is cost-effective because of high cost of building/maintaining highways.	Central	1
Rail travel would have to be less expensive than flying to be feasible.	Southern	1
Partner with casinos to reduce costs to travelers.	Northern	1
Concern regarding funding of this project based on current Texas/Oklahoma budget issues.	Southern	1
Passenger rail would result in jobs.	Southern	1
Passenger rail would allow access to transportation for those who can't afford vehicles.	Southern	1
Rail is less expensive than automobile travel.	Central	1
Last Mile would make rail travel costly and difficult to complete.	Central	1

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Trains running at 220 mph will not be cost-effective in Texas.	Other	1
Fund border security and education rather than rail improvements.	Southern	1
Mexican riders should provide a source of revenue.	Southern	1
Expedite studies to save money and avoid outdated conclusions.	Northern	1
Too expensive until rail system becomes nationwide.	Central	1
<i>Services and Amenities on Trains (60 comments)</i>		
Rail travel is more comfortable and relaxing than other forms of travel.	Northern, Central, Southern	43
Allow riders to bring bicycles on trains.	Northern, Southern	9
Allow riders to bring luggage on trains.	Northern, Southern	2
Include amenities to make riding rail more comfortable (e.g., food, wi-fi).	Northern	2
Allow dogs on trains.	Northern	1
Allow riders to bring cars on trains.	Southern	1
Make travel with firearms available.	Southern	1
Include medical services on trains.	Southern	1
<i>Services and Amenities at Stations (39 comments)</i>		
Rail stations need to be more convenient than airports.	Northern, Central, Southern	19
Include travel connections at stations, including parking, shuttle buses, rental car agency kiosks, and light rail links.	Northern, Central, Southern	12

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Need reliable and timely service.	Southern	4
Provide access for wheelchairs, including special features in parking lots of stations.	Northern, Southern	2
Do not include Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) checkpoints at stations.	Southern	1
Add bicycle-share programs at stations.	Central	1
Station Locations (168 comments)		
Connect to Houston.	Central, Southern, Other	32
Include a station at Waco.	Central	29
Include rail service to Laredo.	Central, Southern	22
Include a station at Corpus Christi.	Southern	16
Connect to Corpus Christi/South Padre Island.	Northern, Southern	13
Station at Brownsville/South Padre Island.	Central, Southern	12
Connect to Rio Grande Valley.	Central, Southern	12
Connect to Mexico (Nuevo Laredo, Monterrey, and Mexico City).	Northern, Central, Southern	9
Connect to Houston and/or Galveston.	Northern, Central, Southern	6

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Include a station at Austin.	Central	5
Include a station at El Paso.	Northern, Central, Southern	3
Include a station at Ardmore.	Northern	2
Connect to San Marcos.	Central	1
Include a station at McAllen.	Southern	1
Include a station at Temple.	Central	1
Include a station at Harlingen.	Southern	1
Connect OKC to Fort Worth.	Southern	1
Connect McAllen and Harlingen.	Southern	1
Include a station at College Station.	Central	1
<i>Alternatives/Routes (136 comments)</i>		
Connect Wichita, Kansas City, and points north.	Northern, Southern, Other	28
Connect south Texas, as there is currently no rail service in the area.	Northern, Central, Southern	21
Provide high-speed service from Austin to San Antonio and Dallas.	Northern, Central, Southern	20
Provide high speed service from south Texas to San Antonio, Dallas, and Oklahoma City.	Northern, Central	10
Connect to Kansas.	Other	10
Provide frequent service between DFW and San Antonio.	Southern	7

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Connect to other existing systems and networks, existing rail services, and/or encourage the expansion of existing mass transit systems.	Northern, Southern	6
Start by improving existing passenger rail service incrementally.	Northern, Central, Southern	6
Improve overall east-west service throughout Texas.	Northern, Central, Southern	4
Provide service from Corpus Christi to San Antonio.	Northern, Southern	3
Build true high-speed rail rather than incremental improvements to existing rail service.	Northern, Southern	2
Consider Shreveport to DFW link in the Study.	Northern	2
Connect DFW to Denver and points west (i.e., Los Angeles).	Central	2
Study feasibility of high-speed rail and conventional rail service on dedicated rail line.	Central	1
Incorporate Trinity Railway Expressway (TRE).	Other	1
Special attention should be paid to upgrading rail infrastructure in San Antonio, Houston, and Fort Worth.	Northern	1
Trains must be as fast as possible.	Northern	1
Connect Denton to Fort Worth, then south to Waxahachie and Hillsboro.	Northern	1
Connect Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, Lawton, and Oklahoma City.	Northern	1
Connect Sherman and Dallas.	Northern	1
Provide service from Guthrie, Okla., to DFW, Waco, and San Antonio.	Northern	1
Connect Houston and Austin.	Central	1
Direct north-south route through Dallas and DFW.	Northern	1

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Connect Southwest Chief and Texas Eagle rail service.	Northern	1
Connect College Station and Bush International Airport.	Southern	1
Analyze long-distance daily routes connecting DFW to Washington, D.C., via Jackson, Mississippi, Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta.	Central	1
Higher speeds and express serviced along Texas Eagle routes.	Central	1
Develop a statewide network.	Central	1
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS		
<i>Agriculture (13 comments)</i>		
Blackland Prairie soils and eco-region is the most productive farmland in the state – need to protect this land and avoid impacts on the land and associated farming operations and activities.	Central	4
high-speed rail is devastating and destructive to agriculture with the loss of prime farmland and productive/viable farmland; impossible to move large equipment and animals to the other side of the rail alignment; highway frontage adds value to farmland; rural agriculture would resist high-speed rail but not oppose freight rail expansion; impossible to keep feral hogs off the right-of-way; need to preserve existing farmland/agricultural lands.	Central	3
Rail would potentially divide farmland and permanently affect and take farmland.	Central	2
Rail could promote agriculture by providing riders with views of farmlands and bringing people to dine at restaurants that use local produce and meats.	Northern	2
Agriculture impacts if new track is needed.	Southern	1
Using existing right-of-way and corridors would minimize or avoid impacts on agriculture.	Central	1
<i>Air Quality (158 comments)</i>		
Rail system would reduce traffic.	Northern, Central, Southern	71

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
High-speed rail will benefit air quality and reduce energy consumption, emissions, automobile traffic, and air travel.	Northern, Central, Southern, Other	58
Texas air quality will be improved if vehicle congestion and driving are reduced.	Northern, Central, Southern	26
High-speed rail powered by wind and solar and/or other alternative energy source and natural gas could make a big air quality impact, especially in the cities.	Central, Southern	3
Energy (60 comments)		
Train's overall energy consumption is less than planes or cars per passenger – trains are more efficient.	Northern, Central Southern	31
Reduce gas consumption.	Northern, Central, Southern	23
Consider alternative power sources and cutting edge technology for passenger rail service.	Northern, Central, Southern	6
Growth (25 comments)		
Rail will help grow the region with connections to Mexico, Oklahoma, and Kansas, as well as support the anticipated growth and demand.	Southern, Other	14
Rail will help grow/expand cities, such as Laredo or Waco, and regions, such as south Texas/the Valley or Kansas and Oklahoma, as well as support the anticipated growth and demand.	Central, Southern, Other	9

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Improved livability of communities.	Northern, Southern	2
<i>Health (36 comments)</i>		
Rail travel is a healthy transportation option.	Northern, Central, Southern	26
Air pollution levels are critical and need to be reduced – high-speed rail will help.	Northern, Central	6
Expansion and improvement in transportation with the decrease in congestion while minimizing the impact on health (air quality impact on cardiovascular and respiratory diseases) is critical.	Central, Southern	4
<i>Local and Regional Economy (101 comments)</i>		
Rail will provide jobs, stimulate job growth, and get the economy stronger/revitalize and support in-state economy.	Northern, Central, Southern	39
Promoting tourism and encourage using rail service will benefit regional and local economies by bringing in money (add visitors and job opportunities) and encourage cities to build mass transit systems.	Northern, Southern	30
Trains are an economical way to travel, especially for those who cannot afford to fly or do not have access to airports or cars (elderly, disabled, fixed income, veterans).	Northern, Central, Southern	11
Rail service will help provide affordable travel options to colleges/universities and sporting events throughout the state (both professional and college sports).	Northern, Central	5
Rail provides opportunities for individuals to be productive while riding on the train for work.	Northern, Central, Southern	5

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Trains will help bring people to smaller and rural towns and see areas outside of larger cities.	Northern, Central, Southern	4
Make train service affordable to elderly, disabled, veterans, and poor/fixed income.	Northern	3
Development of stations will help stimulate the surrounding area.	Northern, Southern	2
Enhance trade, transportation, and commerce through the IH-35 corridor.	Other	2
<i>Natural Environment (108 comments)</i>		
Rail is better for the overall environment.	Northern, Central, Southern	57
Trains are the greenest way to move large number of people – far less intrusive than the interstates.	Northern, Central, Southern	20
Rail alignment should minimize the amount of impact on open space, vegetation, habitat, and waterways.	Northern, Central, Southern	15
Rail will disturb and/or displace natural landscape and wildlife and the water system (erosion/runoff).	Central, Southern	6
Rail will benefit wildlife and nature.	Central, Southern	4
Provide ability for wildlife corridor movements, potential opportunities with tunnels underneath the rail lines.	Central, Southern	3
Avoid impacts to parks and preserves/open space and refuges, including Texas Conservation Action Plan eco-regions.	Northern	2
Loss of trees and habitat with highways and emissions with trucks and cars.	Northern	1

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Noise (18 comments)		
Rail could reduce noise levels.	Northern, Central, Southern	5
Noise and pollution contribute to land devaluation; rail lines are noisy.	Central, Southern	3
Train horns are noisy.	Northern, Central	3
Need to minimize noise at night and also have “quiet zones.”	Central, Southern	3
Trains are not anticipated to contribute to the existing city noise, minimal noise.	Northern, Southern	2
Noise comes from trains, cars, and trucks.	Northern	1
Noise could disrupt farming – impact cattle, horses, deer, birds, etc.	Central	1
Right-of-Way (20 comments)		
Use existing right-of-way and rail easements, including but not limited to UPRR corridor and IH-35 corridor, as well as existing utility corridors (i.e., pipelines, power lines, transmission lines).	Northern, Central, Southern	13
Two freight rails side by side in present right-of-way and being one way will solve freight problems and get trade off the highways.	Central	1
Plenty of right-of-way for rail.	Northern	1
Utilize existing stations.	Northern	1
Run rails parallel to existing right-of-way/corridors.	Southern	1
Required rail right-of-way would be no different than needing additional right-of-way for more highway lanes or toll roads.	Southern	1

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
New right-of-way should be the last option.	Central	1
Rail corridor should be west of IH-35 (to avoid Blackland to the east of IH-35).	Central	1
TECHNICAL/ENGINEERING CONCERNS		
<i>Ridership (26 comments)</i>		
Increased speed and frequency of service will increase ridership.	Northern, Central, Southern	23
Need a thorough demand/ridership analysis.	Northern, Central	2
Important to correctly project ridership.	Central	1
<i>Planning (2 comments)</i>		
Elevated trains in highways medians.	Central	1
Review the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments commuter rail study that includes the Oklahoma City to Norman BNSF corridor when analyzing impacts.	Northern	1
<i>Freight (6 comments)</i>		
Improvements to freight rail is needed to remove truck off overcrowded highways.	Central	2
Increased freight rail into the Rio Grande Valley.	Southern	1
Double track to avoid freight delays.	Other	1
Need to reasonably compensate freight line used by passenger rails.	Northern	1
Should spend money on rapid freight instead of passenger rail.	Central	1
<i>Safety (63 comments)</i>		
Rail is efficient and will make the roads safer and cleaner with fewer cars on the roads and less accidents. IH-35 and IH-10 are dangerous and risky with all the traffic; the project will alleviate much of the heavy traffic and congestion.	Northern, Central, Southern	41

Comment	Geographic Section(s)	Number of Comments
Rail provides a safer alternative to vehicle travel, especially for traveling alone, the elderly, and at night.	Central, Southern	6
Need to evaluate the safety of crossings and create safe crossings, especially in key locations (such as IH-35).	Northern, Southern	4
Additional wait times required at grade crossings and concerned about train speeds at crossings.	Northern, Southern	2
Need to designate tracks with no or very few crossings associated with high-speed rail.	Northern, Central	2
Crossings can be dangerous and should be secured by adequate warnings or eliminated.	Central, Northern	2
Crossings are not dangerous; people need to stop at crossings.	Northern	1
TxDOT should look at more grade-separated crossings.	Central	1
Eliminate as many road-rail crossings as possible and improve signaling.	Central	1
Concern over illegal immigration and drug trafficking.	Southern	1
Rail could expedite the safe evacuation of elderly persons and person with disabilities from south Texas in the event of an approaching hurricane.	Southern	1
Rail could expedite evacuations during natural disasters.	Southern	1
<i>Technology (6 comments)</i>		
Use elevated solar powered magnetic monorail.	Central	5
System should be solar powered.	Southern	1

This report was written on behalf of the Texas Department of Transportation by

CH2MHILL