

I. PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

In keeping with its responsibilities for planning to meet the transportation demands of the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) commissioned a study of existing freight railroad corridors for possible passenger rail service. Interest in pursuing expanded passenger rail service in the region comes in part from projections of growth in population and employment in the coming 20 years that are predicted to result in a severely congested transportation system. Additionally, developing rail service is also viewed as a mechanism for focusing population and employment growth to contribute to quality of life for the region.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) public transportation staff coordinated the work effort with a multi-pronged approach that included NCTCOG staff and consultants consisting of four teams. The lead public transportation staff manager coordinated the overall team effort, while the Transportation Director provided oversight for the entire project. Team 1 coordinated all staff work, performed the travel modeling/ridership projections, developed land use data, led transit oriented development (TOD) efforts, and was responsible for all public involvement arrangements and coordination. Team 2 acted as a liaison with the freight railroads in the region and contributed to the overall effort. Team 3 examined the possibilities for providing passenger service on corridors in Tarrant, Johnson, Dallas, Denton, Collin, and Ellis Counties.

The fourth team was selected to perform additional detailed support tasks for the overall project and continues to do so as this report is completed. The work efforts of Team 4

are focused on supplying an additional level of information to promote implementation of facilities deemed desirable by the region's policy and technical leaders.

This report documents work culminated in an August 13, 2004, Transportation Summit of elected and appointed leadership in the region, who endorsed the plan for desired regional rail passenger service and agreed upon concepts for implementation. It provides a description of the results of the study and the process used to reach those results. A CD-ROM is also included with this report that captures all of the public website information on the project that has been made available by NCTCOG.

An additional report, Regional Rail Corridor Study – Corridors Report, presents the detailed information compiled and developed for use in the study process, and resulting analysis leading to the recommendations.

NCTCOG's *Regional Mobility Initiatives on Regional Rail*, Vol. IX, No. 1, October 2005, provides a popular summary of the study and follow-on activities. In the summary, the corridors have been renamed. Below is a listing of the numbered corridors described in this Study Report and the accompanying Corridors Report, correlated to the popular names used in the Regional Mobility Initiatives document.

- W1 – Union Pacific Mainline
- W-2 – Hulen/DFWIA Line
- W-3 – Trinity Railway Express (west)
- W-4 – Cleburne Line
- E-1 – Trinity Railway Express (east)
- E-2 – Denton Line
- E-3 – McKinney Line
- E-4 – Frisco Line
- E-5 – Midlothian Line
- E-6 – Waxahachie Line

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The NCTCOG staff and consultants would like to acknowledge all of the technical staff and elected officials who participated in the Regional Rail Corridor Study Policy and Technical Committee meetings held throughout the region as the effort was under way. Additionally, the service of many technical staff, elected and appointed leaders who served on the Regional Transit Initiative (RTI) committees is also commended. These committees were put into action in January 2004 to examine overall institutional, financial, and legislative issues for regional passenger rail implementation. RTI efforts culminated in the August 2004 Transportation Summit, where regional leaders agreed upon guiding principles for implementing regional rail service.