

# **Phase 2 Public and Agency Engagement Plan**

Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed  
Transportation Connections Study

July 2023





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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This Public and Agency Engagement Plan was developed by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) in support of the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study connecting Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas. The plan outlines public and agency engagement activities, tools, and a schedule needed to support the preparation of an environmental document in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and applicable federal and state laws. NCTCOG will implement the Public and Agency Engagement Plan by working with federal transportation partners and the consultant selected to provide technical support for the study.

### **1.1 STUDY OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND**

The Dallas-Fort Worth area has a population of 8.2 million today and is anticipated to be home to more than 11 million people by 2045. As the region continues to grow, high-speed transportation choices in North Texas need to be studied. The NCTCOG long-range metropolitan transportation plan, *Mobility 2045 – 2022 Update*, includes grade-separated high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth as a future transportation recommendation.

High-speed transportation service between downtown Dallas and downtown Fort Worth would connect to a separate potential high-speed passenger rail service being planned between Dallas and Houston, Texas and potential high-speed passenger rail service linking Fort Worth to south Texas metropolitan areas such as Austin, San Antonio, and Laredo. High-speed transportation in Texas would improve mobility by providing more choices of travel and could reduce congestion by providing an alternative to driving between major cities.

The study scope of work consists of two phases. Phase 1 of the study is complete and was conducted from April 2020 to September 2022 (substantial completion). This phase developed and evaluated transportation technologies and alignments. The Phase 1 study recommended a corridor along Interstate Highway (I-)30 with high-speed rail as the mode. Phase 2 will refine and evaluate the reasonable alternatives recommended in Phase 1, further refine the engineering design, and analyze/document the efforts of the project through the NEPA process. Phase 2 will also include the development of ridership estimates, operation and maintenance plans, a financial plan as well as continued public and agency engagement.

NCTCOG worked collaboratively with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) during Phase 1 to define the project characteristics, such as alignment, potential station locations, and technology type. Following Phase 1, FTA was identified as the lead federal agency for Phase 2 based on the proposed service aligning with the characteristics of intercity rail or transit operations.



## **1.2 SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

A Public and Agency Engagement Plan was specifically developed for the study. The plan outlined public and agency engagement activities and tools to support the development and analysis of alternatives. Multiple outreach and communications strategies (e.g., public meetings, project website, social media, presentations/briefings, newsletters) were used to engage a diverse audience in public input opportunities and provide information about the project.

### **1.2.1 Public Meetings**

During the Phase 1 Alternative Analysis, NCTCOG hosted three series of public meetings to help identify alternatives, provide information about the analysis, and solicit public and stakeholder feedback. Input from the public and stakeholders helped to check the progress and approach as the study was developed and to offer insights about various parts of the alignments that may not be captured in the available data sets. The three series of public meetings were held in September 2020, January 2021, and May 2021, each having the purpose of sharing information on the progress and soliciting feedback. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings were all held virtually rather than in-person. The virtual meetings allowed for the observation of social distancing requirements while maintaining the overall study schedule and gathering input at appropriate points in the study process. Individuals could participate in the live public meetings either online through the Public Information Management Application (PIMA) or by telephone through a Telephone Town Hall service. The presentations were also pre-recorded and available a week before the meeting on the project website.

In October 2021, a series of open houses were held in the four cities along the preferred alignment. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, safety measures were taken at the open houses and the materials presented were also shared online on the project website. The open houses provided an opportunity for the public to walk through Phase 1 and speak to the project team directly about questions or concerns.

Public meeting summaries documenting meeting notices, public comments, the presentation/meeting materials, and participants were prepared for each series of meetings. These summaries along with the pre-recorded presentations are posted on the project website ([www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs](http://www.nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs) under Presentations & Public Outreach Efforts).

### **1.2.2 Stakeholder and Agency Engagement**

A variety of stakeholders and agencies were engaged throughout Phase 1 of the study. In total, the study team convened 185 gatherings, including regularly scheduled meetings/briefings with FTA and FRA, the Technical Work Group established for the project, elected officials, the NCTCOG Regional Transportation Council, and NCTCOG Surface Transportation Technical Committee.

The Technical Work Group for the study was created in mid-2020 and the first meeting was held in September of that year. NCTCOG invited representatives from local municipalities, transit providers, and transportation agencies within the Phase 1 study area to participate. The group



provided input on the development and evaluation of alternatives and information and expertise to guide the study team throughout Phase 1. The Technical Work Group held eight meetings in total.

Individual study update and stakeholder feedback meetings were held with state and federal agencies and organizations along the potential alignments, including Dallas and Tarrant counties; cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Arlington, and Grand Prairie; Dallas Area Rapid Transit; Trinity Metro; Texas Department of Transportation Dallas and Fort Worth Districts; federal and state resource agencies such as US Army Corps of Engineers and Texas Historical Commission; and organizations such as the Sierra Club, Trinity Park Conservancy, and various neighborhood associations, among others. Private entities were engaged as well, including BNSF Railroad, Union Pacific Railroad, and major property owners. As the study progresses, additional stakeholder and agency engagement will occur, including continued outreach to private entities and organizations along the potential alignments.

### **1.2.3 Technology Forum**

In addition to the public and agency engagement effort, a Technology Forum was hosted as a series of events conducted from September 2020 to March 2021, involving high-speed transportation technology professionals. The forum was structured to educate the industry about the potential alignments between Dallas and Fort Worth, share opportunities for industry involvement as the project advances toward a future delivery opportunity, and obtain industry input to help inform the next steps to be taken toward developing a successful high-speed solution. Technical feedback received from high-speed transportation technology professionals was incorporated into the project design criteria and operational characteristics used to evaluate modes.

### **1.2.4 Website and Newsletters**

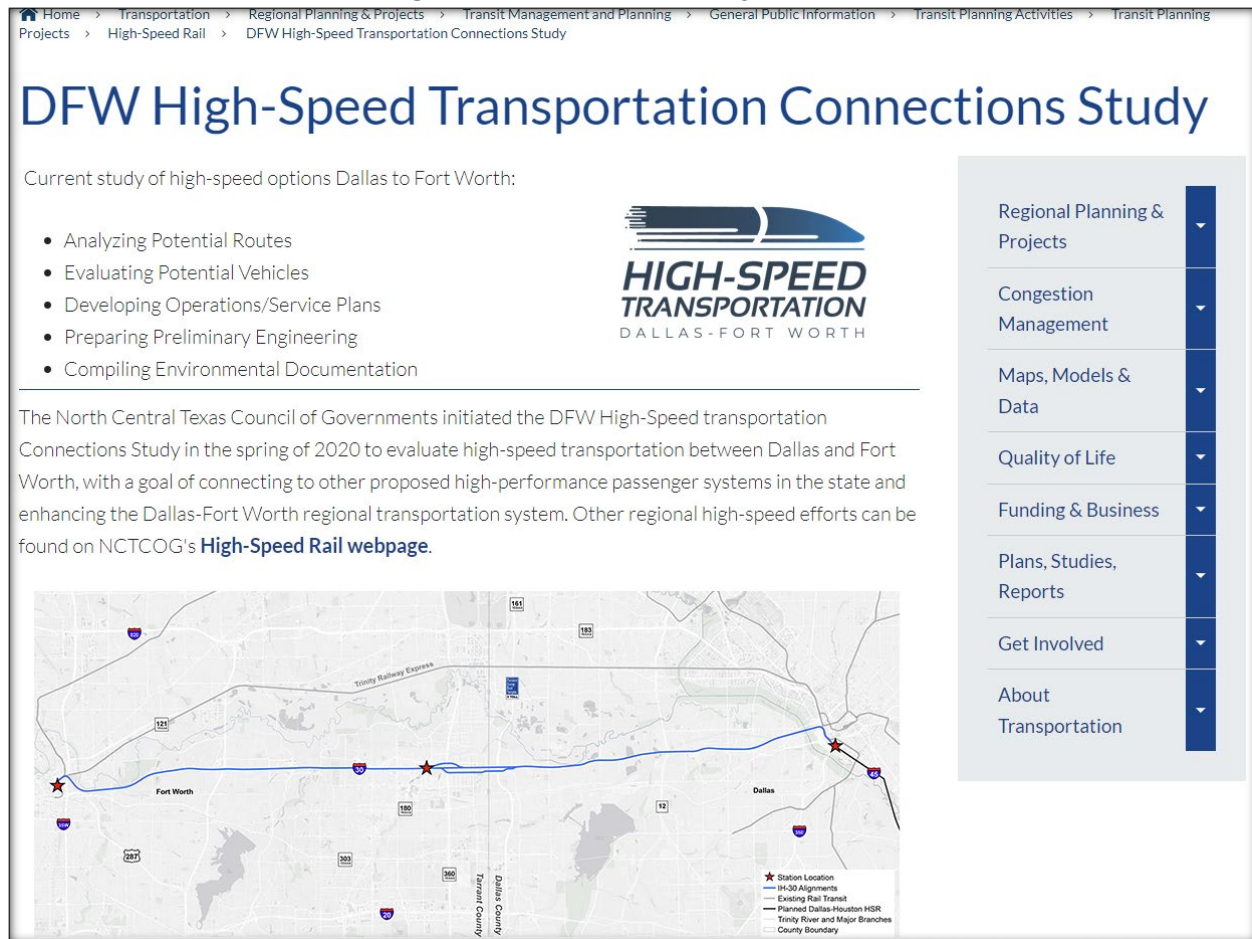
Prior to the study kickoff, NCTCOG developed a website (<http://nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs>) for stakeholders and the public to learn about the project and provide comments and feedback directly to the study team.

The website, shown below in Figure 1, includes a brief outline of the project, as well as the proposed alignment map.





Figure 1. DFW HSCT Study Website



The website is updated regularly to provide the latest information and is interactive, rather than just informational. Options to allow the public to sign up for email and mailing lists, request presentations, and post comments are available.

The information that can be found on the website includes:

- Upcoming public meeting information
- An archive of all press releases and newsletters published on the study
- All available project information, including all Phase 1 analysis documents, policy statements, flyers, fact sheets and the study purpose and needs statement
- All public meeting and open house presentations and documents; available in English and Spanish
- Links to relevant studies and reports



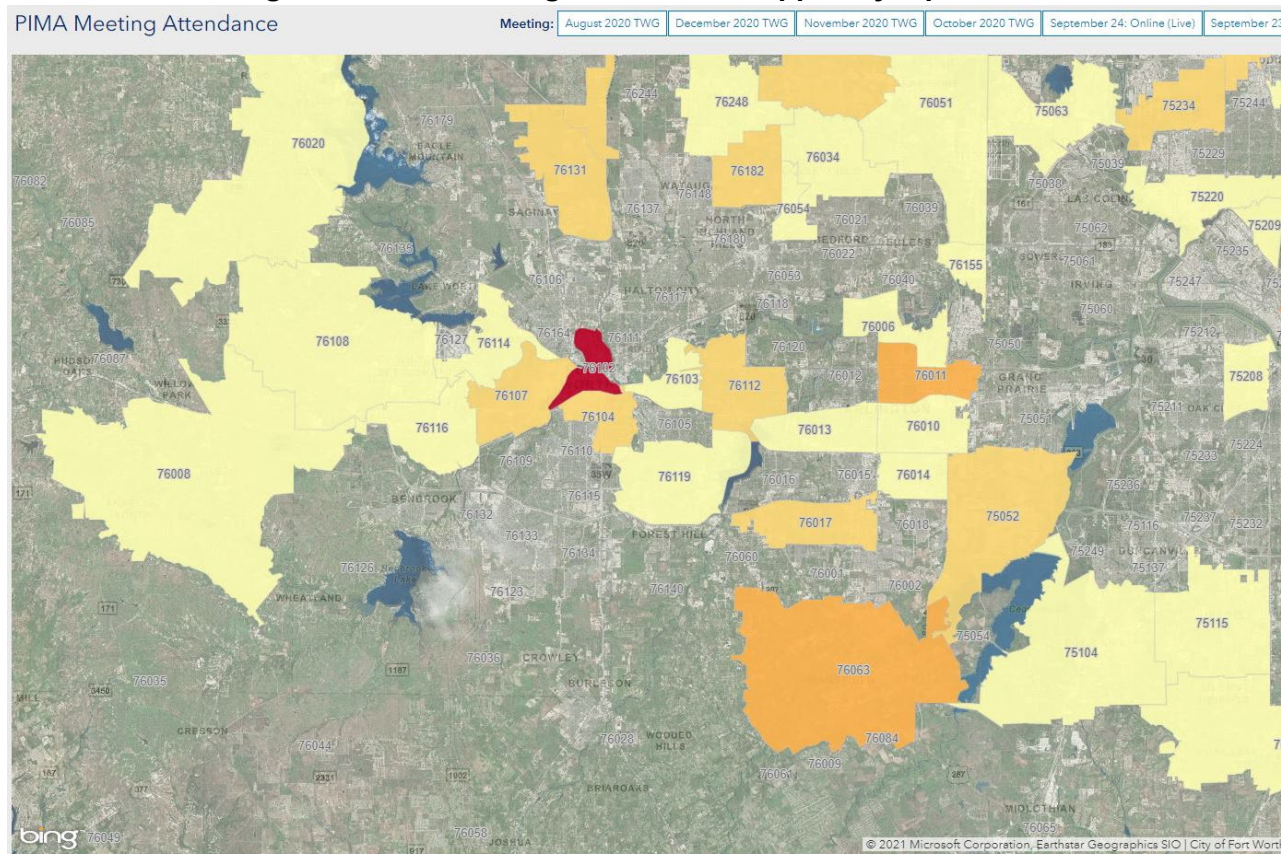
### 1.2.5 Lessons Learned

The public and agency engagement team on this project pivoted nimbly throughout Phase 1, beginning by changing the planned outreach from entirely in-person to virtual stakeholder and public meetings from March 2020 to September 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meetings were held at different times on different days to maximize participation. Some meetings were held in the evenings while others were held at lunchtime during the week.

One benefit of virtual meetings is the ability to analyze data to understand the geographic location of participants. This analysis resulted in the identification of gaps in the study area with low attendance, in east Fort Worth and west Dallas in particular. To increase study awareness and participation in these areas, the study team initiated a comprehensive public outreach campaign to engage local civic groups and businesses. In all, the team reached out to over 400 local groups with project information and requesting to host or participate in a meeting to present the project. An example of the data analysis is shown below.

**Figure 2. PIMA Meeting Attendance Mapped by Zip Code**






This input fed directly into PIMA and allowed staff to respond quickly to comments. Ultimately, this information shaped the outcome of Phase 1.

**Figure 3. PIMA Comment Form**

**Map layer testing**  
Project for test map layer functionality.

 Open Project Documents ▾

1) Tell us about yourself and stay up to date with the project

Zip Code \* Required Last Name \* Required

2) Select any of the following topics that apply to your comment: (Select up to 3)

3) Below, you will find a map with the remaining ten alignments. On the left side of the map, you can toggle through layers to hide or show individual alignments, so you can review each one separately. In your review of the alignments, do you have any areas of concern? Please explain in detail. \* Required

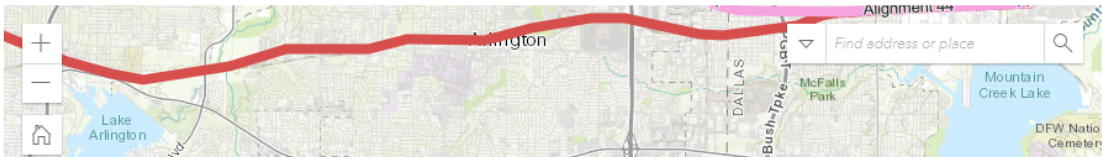
Please do not place any personally identifiable information (name, phone, or email) within your comment.

4) Would you like a response to your question or concern?

☐ Send me a response

5) To drop a pin on an area of concern, tap the location. If you drop one in a wrong location, click the correct location to move your existing pin on the map. Only one pin can be dropped on the map at a time. If zoomed in, please use arrow keys to pan around the map, or use the + or - keys to zoom in and out.

Tap another location to move your pin. Use arrow keys to pan around. Use + or - keys to zoom in and out.



### 1.3 STUDY AREA

The initial (Phase 1) study area was bounded by I-35E, I-35W, State Highway (SH) 183, and US 287/Spur 303/Loop 12. It spanned Dallas and Tarrant counties and the cities of Dallas, Irving, Cockrell Hill, Grand Prairie, Arlington, Pantego, Dalworthington Gardens, Hurst, Euless, Bedford, Richland Hills, North Richland Hills, Haltom City, and Fort Worth, a distance of approximately 31 miles.

- Texas-Oklahoma Passenger Rail Study Corridor, South Texas to Oklahoma City – Service Level Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement  
(<https://railroads.dot.gov/environment/completed-environmental-reviews/texas-oklahoma-passenger-rail-study-corridor-south>)
- Dallas-Fort Worth Core Express Study Alternatives Analysis  
(<https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/statewide/dfw-core-express.html>)
- Supplemental Alignment Alternative Analysis for Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Rail Core Express Service  
([https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Plan/Transit/DFW\\_HSR\\_AA\\_COG.pdf](https://www.nctcog.org/nctcg/media/Transportation/DocsMaps/Plan/Transit/DFW_HSR_AA_COG.pdf))



Following Phase 1, the study area for Phase 2 was refined based on the recommendation of the I-30 alignment. Figure 5 shows the Phase 2 study area, which includes portions of the cities of Fort Worth, Arlington, Grand Prairie, and Dallas.

**Figure 5. Phase 2 Refined Study Area**





#### 1.4 PHASE 2 STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Approximately 141,000 people live within the Phase 2 study area in Figure 5. Minorities comprise over 55 percent of the total Phase 2 study area population. More than a third of the Phase 2 study area population identified as Hispanic or Latino (see Table 1). In total, 130 census blocks encompass the Phase 2 study area; of those, six did not report a median household income. Of study area reporting census blocks, over six percent have a median household income below the 2021 poverty threshold for a family of four (\$26,500).

**Table 1. Race or Ethnicity of Phase 2 Study Area**

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of Population
Hispanic or Latino	34%
White	44%
Black or African American*	16%
Asian*	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native*	<0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander*	<0.5%
Some Other Race*	<0.5%
Two of More Races*	1%
<b>2019 Phase 2 Study Area Population: 140,891</b>	

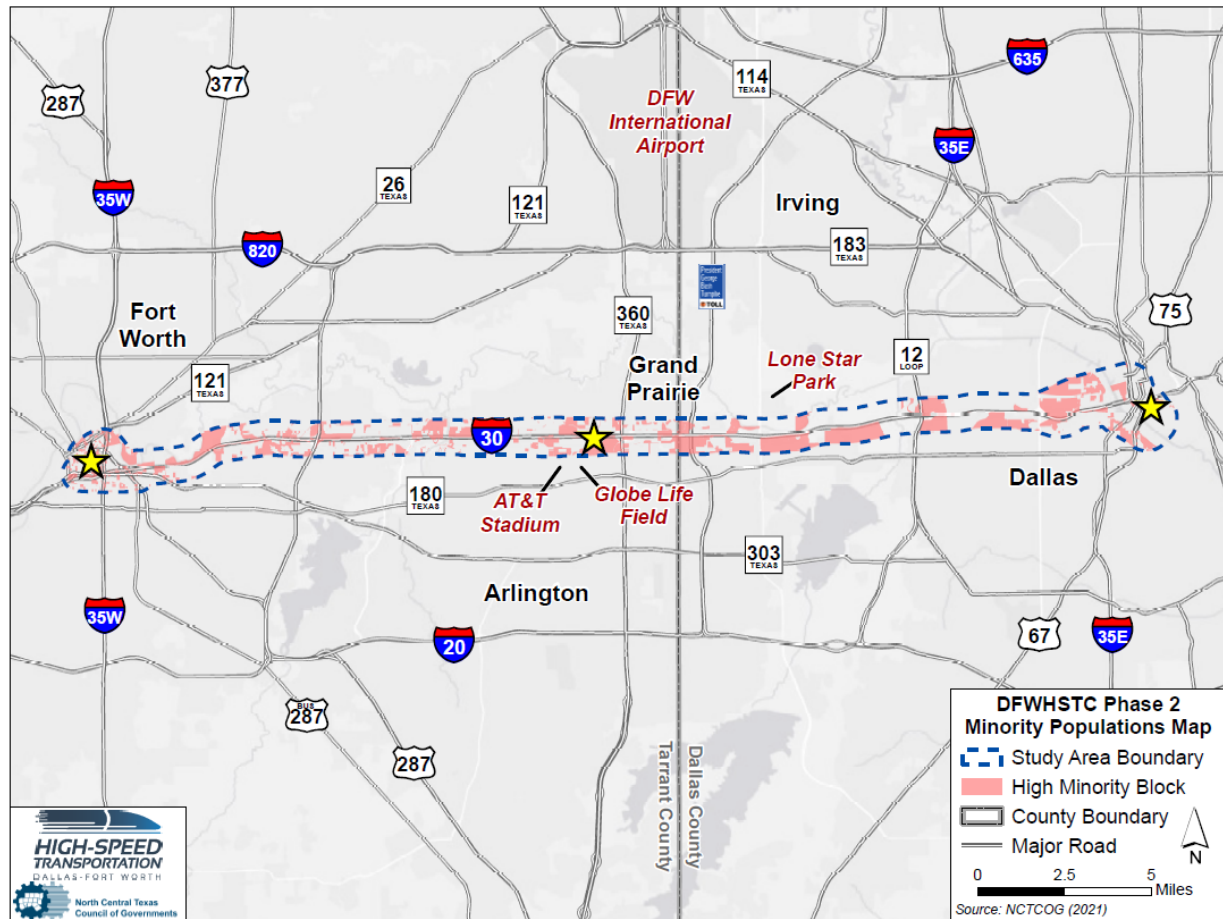
Source: American Community Survey 2019 Five-Year Estimates

\* Total race numbers include individuals who have identified themselves as a race plus individuals who have identified themselves as a race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.

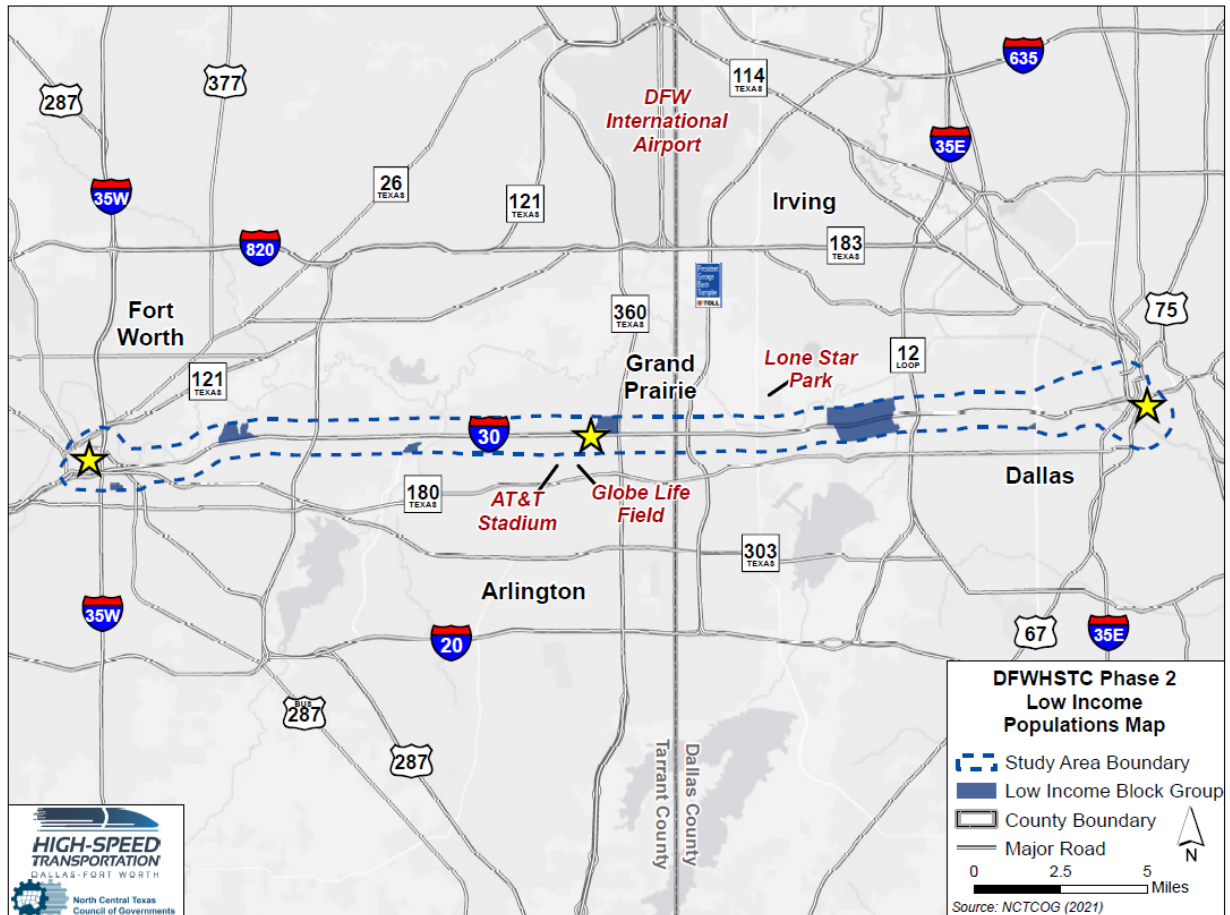




Figure 6. Minority Demographics of Phase 2 Study Area



**Figure 7. Low Income Demographics of Phase 2 Study Area**



Within the Phase 2 study area, approximately 65 percent of residents age five and over speak English, 30 percent speak Spanish, two percent speak other Indo-European languages, two percent speak Asian or other Pacific Islander languages, and one percent speak some other language. The data indicates a high presence of individuals with limited English proficiency. Nearly 15 percent of residents in the study area age five and over speak Spanish and have limited English proficiency (see Table 2). Moreover, approximately two percent of residents age five and over speak other languages and have limited English proficiency.

**Table 2. Percent of Total Population with Limited English Proficiency\***

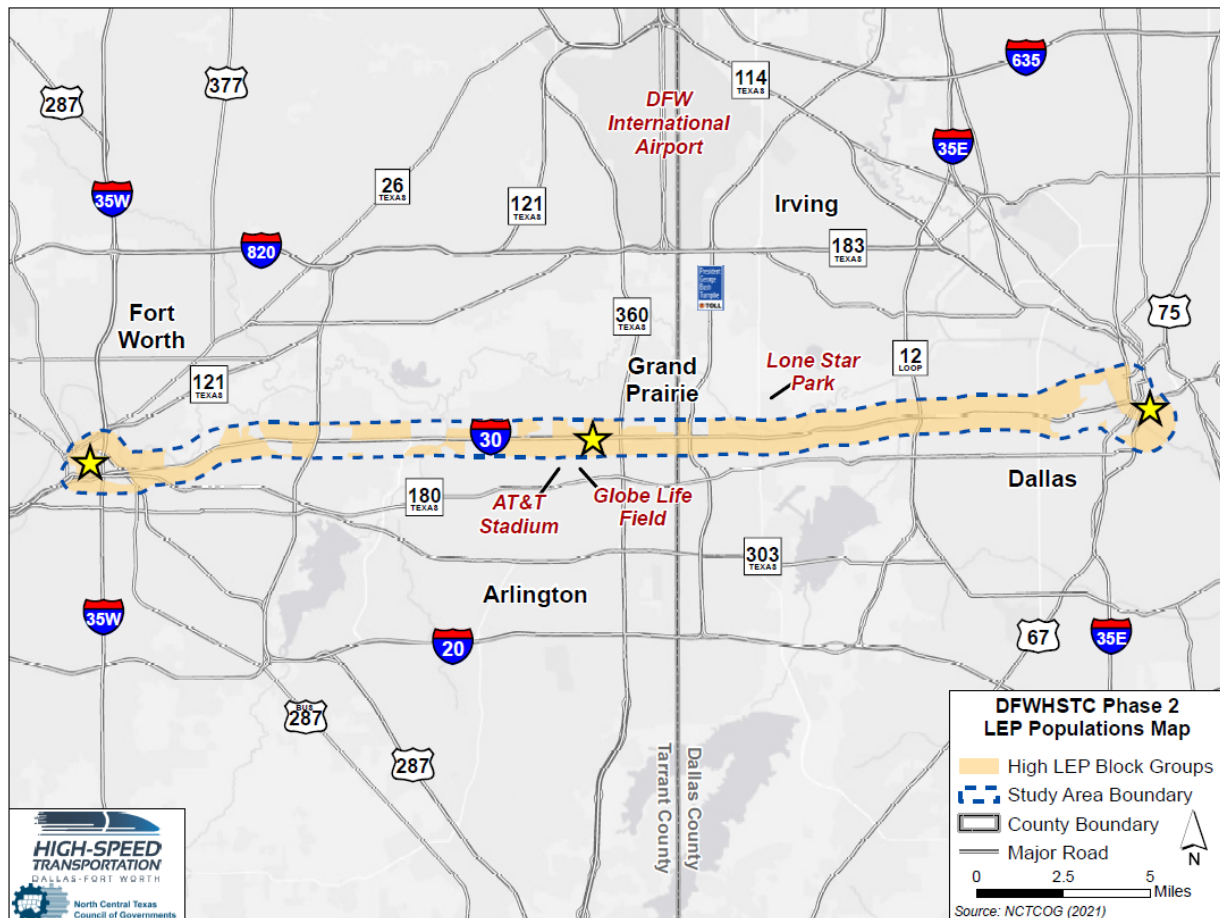
Language	Percent of Population
Speak Spanish and speak English less than “very well”	15%
Speak Asian or Other Pacific Islander languages and speak English less than “very well”	<1%

Speak other Indo-European languages and speak English less than "very well"	<0.5%
Speak other languages and speak English less than "very well"	<0.5%
<b>2019 Refined Study Area Population Age Five and Over: 175,592</b>	

Source: American Community Survey 2019 Five-Year Estimates

\*Limited English proficiency population includes any person age five years or older who speaks a non-English language as his/her primary language and who reported being able to read, speak, write, or understand English less than "very well."

**Figure 8. LEP Demographics of Phase 2 Study Area**



In accordance with the US Department of Transportation Safe Harbor Provision described in the *Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons* (<https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/civil-rights-library/policy-guidance-concerning-recipients-responsibilities-limited>), NCTCOG analyzed which language groups exceed the 1,000 persons, or five percent, Safe Harbor threshold in the study area. Five language groups exceed the Safe Harbor threshold (see Table 3). However, given the small population size compared to the financial burden of translation, translating documents into all languages is not practical. Thus, NCTCOG will concentrate on translating information into



Spanish, the second largest language group in the Phase 2 study area. NCTCOG will provide translation or interpretation into other languages upon request (see Section 5.1.8, Language Assistance).

**Table 3. Languages/Language Group Spoken in Phase 2 Study Area (in 2019)**

	Phase 2 Study Area Population	Spanish	Other Indo-European Languages	Vietnamese	Arabic	Other and Unspecified Languages
Individuals	252,591	84,592	3,016	1,946	1,203	2,265
Percent of Study Area Population		34%	1%	<1%	<0.5%	<1%

Source: American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates for Census Tracts, 2015-2019.

## 1.5 STUDY SCHEDULE

Phase 2 will be completed in approximately 18 months.

As part of NEPA documentation, NCTCOG will host four informal public open house meetings at the beginning of Phase 2 to seek public input on issues to consider in the document. Following the publication of the NEPA document, public meetings/hearings will be scheduled, tentatively in Summer/Fall 2024.

## 1.6 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The following is the contact information for key NCTCOG staff:

Dan Lamers, PE  
Senior Program Manager  
Office: 817-695-9263  
Email: [dlamers@nctcog.org](mailto:dlamers@nctcog.org)

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Program Manager  
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Email: [bwheeler@nctcog.org](mailto:bwheeler@nctcog.org)

Amanda Wilson, AICP  
Senior Program Manager - Public Involvement and Government Relations  
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Sandy Wesch, PE, AICP  
Engineering Support  
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Email: [swesch@nctcog.org](mailto:swesch@nctcog.org)

## **2.0 AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

NCTCOG serves as the local agency sponsor managing and overseeing the study and serves as a liaison between the consultant and other partners. FTA served as the grant administrator and FTA will provide technical oversight and be the federal lead agency for Phase 2. A consultant team, HNTB, was retained to conduct the technical analyses and develop engineering drawings and the required NEPA documentation. The study team is defined as FTA, NCTCOG, and the HNTB consultant team.

## **3.0 PUBLIC AND AGENCY ENGAGEMENT PLAN GOALS**

This Public and Agency Engagement Plan identifies public engagement activities and addresses how information about the study is provided to the public and stakeholders. The purpose of the public engagement activities in Phase 2 is to solicit feedback regarding the design of the recommended alternative, environmental effects, and operations/service planning for high-speed passenger service. Not only will information be provided to the public, but active engagement with the public is encouraged.

The public and agency engagement outlined in this plan will:

- Provide multiple opportunities for engagement to deliver information and encourage input
  - Utilize a variety of engagement tools including traditional public meetings, open houses, videos, social media, publications, a study website, a public involvement management application, and other methods as detailed in Section 5.1, Methods of Public Engagement and Section 6.3 Ongoing Agency Coordination
- Engage stakeholders in the discussion of visions and ideas for high-speed transportation
  - Identify stakeholders who could be affected by and/or may have an interest in the study
- Document the public engagement and outreach efforts that will be carried out during the study
  - Create a database for cataloging public and agency comments and responses to those comments
  - Document every public meeting/hearing



- Provide opportunities for participation by minority, low-income, non-English speaking, elderly, and disabled stakeholders, as well as other groups traditionally not involved in study development processes
- Deliver accurate, uncomplicated study information throughout the process
  - Communicate technical study information clearly and succinctly to afford stakeholders the opportunity to be informed and involved in the decision-making process
- Engage stakeholders including the public, local governments, transportation agencies, and resource agencies early to provide continuous opportunities for study review and support in identifying potential social, economic, and environmental effects
- Meet agency and public engagement requirements of NEPA in Phase 2
  - Maintain compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies of lead and participating government entities

The overarching goal of the Public and Agency Engagement Plan for Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study is to provide opportunities for meaningful participation, thus ensuring the full and fair participation by potentially affected communities and stakeholders in the study area. These include but are not limited to environmental justice communities, persons with limited English proficiency, and others protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and related statutes and guidance such as:

- Presidential Executive Order 12898
- Presidential Executive Order 13166
- US Department of Transportation environmental justice guidance (<https://www.transportation.gov/transportation-policy/environmental-justice/environmental-justice-strategy>)
- US Department of Transportation Order 5610.2(a) ([https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental\\_justice/ej\\_at\\_dot/orders/order\\_56102a/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/orders/order_56102a/))
- US Department of Transportation limited English proficiency guidance (<https://www.transportation.gov/civil-rights/civil-rights-awareness-enforcement/dots-lep-guidance>)

NCTCOG has identified the location of protected populations in the initial and Phase 2 study areas (see Section 1.3, Study Area Demographics) and has incorporated strategies to engage protected populations. These strategies will continue to be evaluated and improved throughout the study as barriers to participation are identified.

#### 4.0 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

While the consultant will lead and coordinate public engagement activities such as public meetings/hearings, stakeholder outreach, and agency coordination described in Section 5.0, Public Engagement, and Section 6.0, Agency Engagement, to meet NEPA documentation requirements, NCTCOG will continue to lead all general study communications.



#### **4.1 RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

No person shall release study materials or deliverables to any agency, organization, or person without prior written consent of the NCTCOG Project Manager or their designee.

#### **4.2 MEDIA RELATIONS**

NCTCOG staff are the primary media relations contact for the study. Media outreach efforts will include distributing news releases about engagement opportunities to more than 240 reporters at local media outlets and community news sources, including minority news media. The robust media list maintained by NCTCOG staff includes major local television stations and newspapers as well as several radio stations (see Appendix B). NCTCOG will post all study news releases on the study website in a format accessible to the public.

#### **4.3 REVIEW OF MEETING MATERIALS**

The consultant will develop content to be distributed and used in public meetings and hearings. NCTCOG and FTA will review all content prior to publication. All materials should be available for review a minimum of 10 working days before the meeting/hearing. These typically include a meeting agenda, maps, exhibits, presentations, talking points, sign-in sheets, comment cards, and handouts. Meeting and hearing notices, including required legal notices, will be available for review a minimum of 30 working days before the meeting or hearing.

### **5.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

Multiple outreach and communications strategies will be implemented to engage diverse audiences in public input opportunities and provide information about the study.

#### **5.1 METHODS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

The following activities will engage the public throughout the study.

##### **5.1.1 Study Website**

During Phase 1, NCTCOG developed a website for the study, which includes study-related content. The study website (<http://nctcog.org/dfw-hstcs>) will continue to serve as an informational portal for the public and stakeholders and for soliciting comments about the study.

NCTCOG will make periodic updates to keep stakeholders up to date on study progress and disseminate information about locations of public meetings, hearings, and other public study-related events. The website is a publicly accessible archive of study materials including fact sheets, articles, surveys, frequently asked questions, maps, graphics, videos, meeting summaries, newsletters, and comment forms.

The website is not solely informational—it is also interactive. Options to allow the public to sign up for email and mailing lists, request a presentation, and post comments are available.



### **5.1.2 Study Email Account**

A study email account ([DFW\\_HST@nctcog.org](mailto:DFW_HST@nctcog.org)) will continue to streamline communications with the public. NCTCOG will continue to send outgoing emails to stakeholders from the account to share information about the study, to set up stakeholder meetings, and to coordinate public meeting logistics. This account will continue to receive public comment forms.

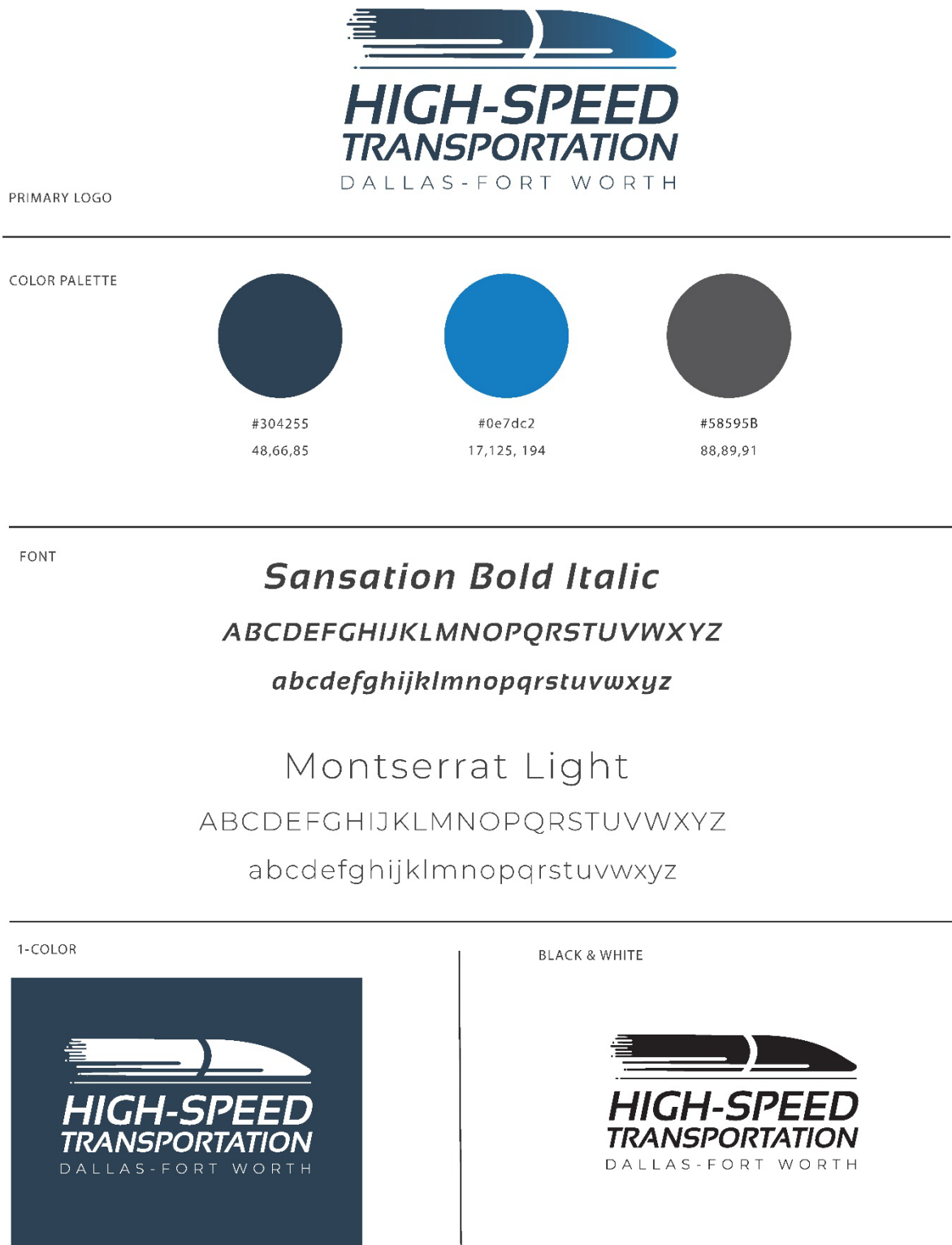
### **5.1.3 Branding**

One goal in Section 3.0 (Public and Agency Engagement Plan Goals) is to provide clear, accurate study information throughout the engagement process. The tone of the materials presented at public meetings and online will be factual and educational. Messaging will communicate technical study information succinctly, in plain language, to afford the public the opportunity to be informed and involved in the decision-making process.

Templates will be used for presentations and handouts for consistency. A branding package, which includes a logo, font, and colors (see Figure 9), has been developed for use during the study to create a uniform appearance.



Figure 9. Study Logo and Colors





#### **5.1.4 Newsletters and NCTCOG Publications**

A study-specific publication, DFW High-Speed Update, was created to provide information on the different types of high-speed transportation technologies being studied in Phase 1, study updates, and other questions about the study that are often asked. Publication began in February 2021. In Phase 2, this publication will be quarterly as the team completes the NEPA document.

A frequently asked questions publication was created and will continue to be updated. The frequently asked questions document and electronic newsletters are posted on the study website and shared on social media for additional exposure.

Additionally, information about the study will be shared through other NCTCOG print and electronic newsletters that provide updates on activities of the Regional Transportation Council and the NCTCOG Transportation Department and serve as public meeting notice. These documents will be used to highlight study activities and related public engagement opportunities in either feature or sidebar articles. These publications include:

- Local Motion (monthly publication)
- Mobility Matters (bi-annual publication)

These newsletters will continue to be mailed and emailed to study corridor contacts.

#### **5.1.5 Video**

Public meetings (see Section 5.3, Public Meetings/Hearings) held at NCTCOG offices will be livestreamed and video recorded; recordings will be posted to the website. Throughout the study, additional videos, such as 3D renderings, may be published during Phase 2 to help the public visualize the study.

#### **5.1.6 Social Media**

The NCTCOG Transportation Department maintains a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo, and YouTube. Staff will continue to post study updates and opportunities for public engagement on the appropriate social media channels. NCTCOG transportation policy committee members and community leaders are encouraged to share information to reach wider and more diverse audiences and help involve new audiences in the planning process. Videos, publications, and frequently asked questions posted on the study website can also be shared on NCTCOG social media outlets.

#### **5.1.7 Presentations and Briefings**

NCTCOG will provide presentations/briefings to elected officials, stakeholder groups, and interested organizations upon request. The study website will include a link to a request form.



### 5.1.8 Language Assistance

In accordance with the NCTCOG Language Assistance Plan (Appendix B of the NCTCOG Public Participation Plan, <https://www.nctcog.org/trans/involve/public-participation-plan>), efforts are made to ensure all interested persons are able to provide input during the study regardless of their ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. NCTCOG has identified limited English proficiency populations in the study area (see Section 1.4). Throughout the study, NCTCOG will continue to identify barriers to limited English proficiency populations' participation in transportation decision-making, find approaches to overcoming those hurdles, and implement the necessary strategies to involve these groups.

The study website includes instructions for translating the website based on the web browser.

NCTCOG will make every effort to accommodate attendees with special needs wishing to participate if sufficient notice is given. General study and meeting materials, including videos, will be provided in English and Spanish. Upon request, language translation beyond English and Spanish, including sign and foreign language interpreters and handouts in large print or Braille, will be available. Public meeting/hearing notices will provide the telephone number and email address to request special arrangements at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting for translation and/or interpretation assistance. Spanish-speaking members of the study team will be identified on their nametags.

### 5.1.9 Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA)

PIMA is a public involvement tool that allows the holistic management of stakeholders. The program archives the stakeholder database, comment matrix, and meeting attendance. It also provides opportunities for electronic commenting and can host virtual meetings. The PIMA Geographic Information System (GIS) component tracks stakeholder feedback and sentiment geographically. The public engagement team uses the application to coordinate stakeholder engagement in addition to evaluating the effectiveness of public and agency involvement efforts to better target outreach efforts.

### 5.1.10 Surveys

Surveys may be used to help inform stakeholders about the high-speed rail technology and I-30 alternative to assist in determining community preferences and priorities. The information gleaned from the surveys could also be used to help support and refine public engagement efforts.

### 5.1.11 Additional Methods

Study outreach will be enhanced by continuing to request that partner transportation organizations, local governments, and other community organizations within the corridor include study information in their own newsletters, publications, and/or websites. Staff will submit articles and information to cities and chambers of commerce for inclusion in print and electronic newsletters, social media, and websites.



Public engagement opportunities can also be displayed on digital message signs along roadways in the corridor. These messages can provide information on upcoming public meetings with additional information available on 511DFW (<http://www.511dfw.org/>).

## 5.2 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND DATABASE

The study team maintains a database of names, addresses, and email addresses to distribute communications and meeting notifications. As of July 2023, there are 7,995 persons in the database. The database is categorized into groups, which include:

- Property owners adjacent to the project alternatives and route alignments
- Homeowner and neighborhood associations
- Federal, state, and local government elected officials and staff
- Federally-recognized Native American Tribal governments
- Federal, state, regional, and local government agencies or jurisdictions
- Businesses and business organizations
- Educational institutions
- Faith-based organizations
- Environmental justice communities and stakeholders
- Limited English proficiency stakeholders
- Members of the media
- Community clubs and groups
- Advocacy groups
- High-speed transportation technology companies

The study team will continue to add interested persons and stakeholders to the database upon request. This includes people who attend meetings or those who sign up online, email, or comment via the study website.

### 5.2.1 Mailing and Email List

Public engagement mail and email lists are the most direct forms of communication used by NCTCOG to inform and engage the public and partners. Persons in the project database will receive public meeting notices, information about public review and comment opportunities, announcements of workshops or open houses, and other material suitable for mass mailings.

Beyond the project database, NCTCOG agency-wide public engagement mail and email lists are continually maintained and expanded based on sign-up sheets at public meetings, community events, and requests sent through the NCTCOG Transportation Department and study websites. Public meeting notices for this project will continue to be mailed and emailed to individuals, elected officials, transportation partners, organizations, and other interested persons and groups (chambers of commerce, economic development groups, advocacy





groups, neighborhood associations, major employers, civic organizations, etc.) on the NCTCOG public engagement contact list.

As noted under Section 5.1.1 (Study Website), NCTCOG has developed and currently maintains a website for the study. Options to allow the public to sign up for email and mailing lists are available on the study website.

### **5.2.2 Stakeholder Interviews**

Similar to Phase 1, stakeholder interviews may be conducted with agencies and individuals with links to environmental justice and non-English speaking communities and upon request. Interviewees may include minority chambers of commerce, religious institutions, and nonprofit organizations. The purpose of these interviews will be to:

- Develop contact lists
- Identify effective outreach strategies and communities' preferred means of communication
- Identify effective locations and times for meetings
- Identify how environmental justice and non-English speaking persons may influence, benefit from, or be impacted by the project
- Identify persons that could facilitate the dissemination of information regarding the study and public meetings/hearings

### **5.3 PUBLIC MEETINGS/HEARINGS**

Public meetings/hearings will be held to provide information, gather input, and build consensus among the public and stakeholders. Public meetings/hearings will promote meaningful participation by communities, interested persons, and stakeholders. Open houses will also be held to seek public input on issues to consider in the NEPA process.

In Phase 2, it is anticipated that any in-person meeting will be scheduled in a series located in multiple areas of the corridor for persons to attend and minimize travel to meetings/hearings.

In-person meetings will follow an open house format to allow attendees to ask questions. Presentations or videos on a loop may be used to ensure attendees receive available information regardless of arrival time. Renderings of critical areas and typical sections may be developed to help the public visualize the study. Prior to the public hearings, copies of the NEPA document will be placed at public locations close to the proposed corridor such as city offices and public libraries.

When public meetings/hearings are held at NCTCOG offices, the meetings/hearing will be recorded, livestreamed, and posted to the NCTCOG website and YouTube page. If virtual hearings are hosted through PIMA, participants will also be able to join virtual podiums and

participate live. One meeting per series will be held at NCTCOG offices to ensure the availability of a livestream.

If conditions do not allow for in-person meetings/hearings, PIMA software will be used to hold meetings virtually. Members of the public will be able to participate remotely and have the option to view previously recorded meetings online, view and participate in live meetings, or participate through other methods including a telephone call-in component. Virtual meeting information will be shared in the same manner as physical meeting notifications including posting information on the study website, meeting notices, sharing on social media, and sending to mailing and email lists.

### **5.3.1 Purpose of Meetings**

The following outlines the purpose of each of the proposed public meetings and hearings.

- Open Houses– The study team will lead a series of four open houses in the cities of Fort Worth, Arlington, Grand Prairie, and Dallas to present the proposed alignment to be evaluated in the NEPA process and outline the FTA NEPA process for the public.
- Public Meetings/Hearings – Following the publication of the draft NEPA document, NCTCOG and FTA will conduct a series of three public meetings/hearings to solicit comments on the NEPA document and design.

### **5.3.2 Locations**

To facilitate public participation, each series of in-person public meetings or hearings will include at least three meetings in the western, central, and eastern portions of the study area. The following criteria are considered when selecting meeting locations:

- Meetings will be held in accessible locations, preferably near transit lines or routes.
- Meetings will be held in buildings which are in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Meetings will be held at locations where parking is available at no charge or NCTCOG will absorb parking costs.
- If preferable, NCTCOG will partner with sponsors of existing community events to maximize community attendance in the public meeting/hearing.

As stated in Section 5.3 (Public Meetings/Hearings) virtual meetings will be held in the event physical meetings cannot take place, and virtual components from each meeting will also be available.

### **5.3.3 Notification Process**

During Phase 2, the standard NCTCOG Public Participation Plan (<https://www.nctcog.org/trans/involve/public-participation-plan>) requirements for public meetings/hearings will be used and may include enhancements and supplementation to increase awareness and participation. Public meeting/hearing notices will be mailed and



emailed to individuals, elected officials, transportation partners and organizations within the corridor area listed on the NCTCOG public engagement mail and email lists and in the study stakeholder database. For public hearings, notices will also be mailed to property owners adjacent to the proposed alignment.

#### **5.3.4 Advertising**

Paid advertising will be used to announce public meetings/hearings and opportunities for public review and comment. Paid advertising will complement other outreach and communications efforts. Ads and notices will be published in local newspapers, including minority publications and non-English newspapers. Advertisements will be translated into the language of the publication. Advertising will be placed in the following publications:

- *The Dallas Morning News* (print and online)
- *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (print and Spanish online only)
- *Community Impact newspapers*
- *Al Día*
- *Star Local newspapers*
- *TRÉ Magazine Dallas*

Notices will also be mailed to public libraries within the corridor and city and county offices for posting, and notices are posted on the Texas Register website as part of the Open Meetings requirement. Public meeting notices will also be posted on NCTCOG social media channels, the study website, in NCTCOG publications, and other methods found in Section 5.0 (Public Engagement) of this plan.

#### **5.4 MEETING MATERIALS**

Materials to be used at the public meetings and hearings may include presentations, presentation handouts, study maps and exhibits, sign-in sheets (for the public, media, consultants, NCTCOG staff, and elected officials), name tags, comment cards, verbal comment registration forms, and an agenda for meeting topics. Talking points will also be developed for members of the study team for use at the public meetings and hearings.

#### **5.5 COMMENTING**

Comment forms will be available at each public meeting/hearing. Interested persons will be able to turn in comments at each meeting or mail or email comments to NCTCOG to be included in the meeting series record. The timeframe for comments during the public review of the NEPA document will be 30 days. If meetings cannot take place in-person (see Section 5.3), commenting periods may be extended.

During formal public hearings, a court reporter will be for available to document verbal comments.



The project website also includes an option to submit a comment at any time during the study. Furthermore, comments are accepted continually by mail to the NCTCOG offices, email to the project email address, or calling an NCTCOG telephone line.

A database for cataloging public and agency comments in PIMA has been created and will be maintained throughout the study.

## **5.6 PUBLIC MEETING/HEARING DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation will be prepared after each series of public meetings/hearings and open houses in Phase 2. The documentation will include a cover page; summary of the meetings/hearings; comment/response matrix documenting comments, concerns, recommendations, and agency responses; copies of meeting/hearing notices and mailing lists; sign-in sheets; comments received; handouts; meeting exhibits; presentation; media and social media coverage statistics; additional outreach prior to public meetings/hearings; and photos. A summary of modifications made based on comments received will also be included. Public hearing documentation will include transcripts.

## **6.0 AGENCY IDENTIFICATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

NCTCOG will coordinate or consult with other federal, regional, and local agencies or authorities throughout the study as necessary and as requested. This will include conducting meetings with city and county staff, local transportation officials, elected officials, utility companies, transportation agencies, resource agencies, and railroads. The purpose of these targeted discussions will be to solicit early input and comments on alternatives and their potential effects. The meetings, comments, and responses to issues discussed at these meetings will be documented. The following describes other scheduled or anticipated agency engagement activities.

### **6.1 FEDERALLY-RECOGNIZED TRIBAL NATIONS**

NCTCOG will continue to seek to engage federally-recognized tribal nations early in the transportation planning process. To honor the government-to-government relationship with these sovereign nations, NCTCOG will rely on FTA to communicate with tribal nations. NCTCOG may support this effort by:

- Identifying tribal nations with an area of interest in the study area
- Drafting correspondence
- Providing additional information as needed

### **6.2 COOPERATING AGENCIES**

Entering Phase 2, NCTCOG will coordinate with FTA to identify appropriate cooperating agencies. A cooperating agency is any federal agency, other than a lead agency, which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact that may be



involved in a proposed project or project alternative. Potential cooperating agencies include the following:

- Federal Railroad Administration
- Federal Highway Administration
- Texas Department of Transportation
- US Army Corps of Engineers

### 6.3 ONGOING AGENCY COORDINATION

As needed, NCTCOG will continue ongoing coordination with federal and state resource agencies, local governments, and transportation providers to review and receive input on specific resource evaluations and effects/impacts. Agency coordination will support ongoing alternatives development by identifying measures to avoid potential impacts. If impacts cannot be avoided, NCTCOG will coordinate with agencies to identify minimization and mitigation measures.

### 7.0 UPDATES TO PUBLIC AND AGENCY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The Public and Agency Engagement Plan will be updated periodically to include revisions based on public and/or agency input. The plan can be updated and expanded to meet additional engagement needs. Table 4 shows revision history for this document.

**Table 4. Revision History**

Effective Date	Reason for and Description of Change
7/21/2023	Updated at beginning of Phase 2





## **Appendix A**

### **Media List**

#### **Newspapers**

African Herald	Fort Worth Weekly
Al Día	Frisco Enterprise
Allen American	The Garland Texan
Alliance Regional Newspaper	Grizzly Detail
Azle News	Herald Banner/Commerce Journal
Benbrook News	Hood County News
Blue Ribbon News	Kaufman Herald
Bridgeport Index	Korea Daily Texas
But Viet News	Korean Journal N. Texas
Carrollton Leader	La Vida News -- The Black Voice
Celina Record	Lake Cities Sun
Cleburne Times Review	Lewisville Leader
Collin County Commercial Record	Little Elm Journal
Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc.	McKinney Courier-Gazette
Community Impact Newspaper	Mesquite News
Coppell Gazette	Midlothian Mirror
Cowcatcher Magazine	Murphy Monitor
Daily Commercial Recorder	Natural Awakenings Dallas Magazine
Dallas Business Journal	Nguoi Viet
Dallas Chinese Daily	North Dallas Gazette
Dallas Chinese News	Novedades
Dallas Examiner	Park Cities News
Dallas Morning News	Park Cities People
Dallas Observer	Pilot Point Post-Signal
Dallas Post Tribune	Plano Star Courier
Dallas Weekly	Princeton Herald
Denton Record-Chronicle	Quinlan-Tawakoni News
DFW Child	Rambler Newspapers
El Hispano News	Richardson Morning News
Ellis County Press	River Oaks News
Ennis Daily News	Rowlett Lakeshore Times
Farmersville Times	Sachse News
Focus Daily News	Sanger Courier
Forney Messenger	Senior News
FW Inc.	Southern Dallas County Business & Living Magazine
Fort Worth Business Press	Springtown Epigraph
Fort Worth Magazine	Star Local Media
Fort Worth Star-Telegram	



Suburban News  
Suburbia News (Seagoville)  
Tarrant County Commercial Record  
Terrell Tribune  
Texas Lawyer  
Texas Tribune  
The Associated Press  
The Colony Courier-Leader

The Leader (Flower Mound)  
The Texan  
Tre Magazine  
Waxahachie Daily Light/Ellis County  
Weatherford Democrat  
Wise County Messenger  
Wylie News

**Community Publications**

380 Guide/380 News  
Advocate Magazine  
Bisnow.com  
City Lifestyle (McKinney and Prosper)  
Collin County Magazine  
Cross Timbers Gazette  
Culturemap Dallas  
DFW Newsflash  
Ellis County Citizen  
Forney Post  
Fort Worth Black News  
Glen Rose Reporter  
Green Source DFW  
Housewarmers  
Informate (DFW Latino Magazine)  
inForney

Iroha  
Irving Weekly  
Katy Trail Weekly  
Lantana Living  
Lifestyle Frisco  
Local Profile  
Murphy Messenger  
North Texas Catholic  
Our Texas  
Planet Rockwall  
Plano Magazine  
Robson Ranch Pioneer Press  
Texas Jewish Post  
The Texas Catholic/El Catolico de Tejas  
White Rock Lake Weekly

**TV/Radio**

KBEC 1390 AM  
KERA 90.1 (NPR)  
KETR 88.9  
KGVJ, KIKT  
KLTY 94.9 FM  
KLUV 98.7 FM  
KNON FM 89.3 "The Voice of the People"  
KRLD 1080 AM  
Fort Worth Community Cable TV  
WBAP 820 AM  
CBS Newspath  
Fort Worth Community Cable TV

KDFW Fox 4  
KETK NBC 56  
KLTV ABC 7  
KTVT CBS 11  
KXTX Telemundo 39  
KXAS NBC 5  
KYTX CBS 19  
Univision 23  
WFAA ABC 8  
Car Guy Media  
KGVJ, KIKT  
Transportation Radio

**Wire/National**

Bloomberg News

Reuters

**Appendix A – Media List**  
**Phase 2 Public and Agency Engagement Plan**



Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed  
Transportation Connections Study

Public Works Financing  
The Bond Buyer  
Infrastructure Journal  
Business Insider  
USA Today  
The Wall Street Journal  
The Verge  
American Journal of Transportation  
United Press International

NGT News  
Smart Cities Dive  
t4America.org  
The Overhead Wire  
Institute for Transportation & Development  
Policy  
Strategic Partnerships  
Supply and Demand Chain Executive

**Student Newspapers**

North Texas Daily  
TCU 360  
The Daily Campus  
The East Texan  
The Lasso  
The Mercury  
The Rambler  
The Shorthorn

Collin College  
Brookhaven Courier  
Richland Chronicle  
The Et Cetera  
The News-Register  
The Collegian  
The TVCC News-Journal