



TRINITY METRO®



Mayor's Urban Rail Committee Supporting Economic Development and Tourism

FINAL | March 2025



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APPENDICES

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1 Introduction

Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker announced in May 2024 the launch of the Mayor’s Urban Rail Committee Supporting Economic Development & Tourism in partnership with Trinity Metro to explore opportunities for urban rail as an innovative transportation solution in Fort Worth.



“We know that Fort Worth remains one of the fastest-growing cities in America,” Parker said. “With that growth comes immense challenges and opportunities. I believe right now that we are well-poised for the opportunity to explore urban rail opportunities, particularly in supporting our growing economic development and tourism industries.”

This Summary Report documents the presentations and discussions during the four committee meetings held on September 12, September 19, October 10, and October 17, 2024 while also identifying next steps.



2 Purpose & Objectives of the Committee

The purpose of the committee was defined by Chair Jay Chapa at the start of the committee's first meeting, as follows:

"To explore the potential of urban rail, capitalizing on opportunities for economic development and tourism while also providing transit options for local residents."

The committee members were charged with three main tasks over the course of four meetings:



1 Determine if there is a likelihood to develop a fixed rail system designed to move people along the entertainment districts within Fort Worth based on potential ridership, costs and funding.



2 Explore financial support and mechanisms of construction and operations.



3 Determine potential legislative needs and priorities as it relates to economic development, tourism, and rail projects.



In forming the committee, Mayor Parker focused on making it a collaborative effort between the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County's public transportation provider, Trinity Metro. The committee membership was comprised of leaders in business, tourism and transportation in Fort Worth, including:

Robert Allen | CEO, Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership

Kenneth Barr | Principal, Barr Consulting Group, former Fort Worth Mayor

Mike Brennan | President, Near Southside, Inc.

Roy Brooks | Commissioner, Tarrant County

Joel Burns | Owner, FW Welcome LLC, former Fort Worth Councilmember

Craig Cavileer | Managing Partner, Stockyards Heritage Development Co.

Jay Chapa (Chair) | CEO, J Chapa Strategic Solutions, LLC

Charles Edmonds | Owner, Charles Edmonds & Associates, Inc.

Nick Genua | Investment Banker, Buis & Company

Michelle Green-Ford | President and CEO, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce

Jarred Howard | CEO, Fort Worth Juneteenth Museum

Bob Jameson | President and CEO, Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau

Kayla Kelly | Director of Operations, Texas A&M – Fort Worth

Anette Landeros | President and CEO, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Russell Laughlin | Executive Vice President, Hillwood

Karl Mattlage | Former Colorado DOT Commissioner / Attorney

Steve Montgomery | President & CEO, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce

Paxton Motheral | Vice President, Cassco Development Company

Rachel Navejar | Business Development Director, The Rios Group, Inc.

Paul Paine | President, Fort Worth Stockyards, Inc.

Andy Taft | President, Downtown Fort Worth, Inc.

Jarratt Watkins | Attorney, Winstead

Scott Wilcox | CFO, Amon Carter Museum of American Art

Karla Windsor | Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

Moody Younger | Co-Managing Partner, Younger Partners

Ann Zadeh | Executive Director, Community Design Fort Worth, former Fort Worth Councilmember

The committee was supported by staff and consultants from the City of Fort Worth and Trinity Metro.

3

Current State of Transportation & Transit in Fort Worth

The history of transportation in the City of Fort Worth can be characterized by a series of different eras primarily dominated by the influx of different transportation technologies and a corresponding land use and urban form response. The early 19th century is defined by the transition from a frontier outpost into a major nexus of railway and freight activity. As the city matured, the transportation system became more organized around a series of electric streetcars that facilitated the growth of new neighborhoods adjacent to the city core. Finally, as the city approached the 20th century and post-war era, Fort Worth heavily embraced local and regional highways and the dominance of automobiles as the primary form of mobility while the streetcar system faded away. Today, that mobility system is serving a rapidly growing suburban city with an extensive network of multimodal infrastructure anchored by freight, aviation, surface transportation, and a bus- and commuter rail-focused public transit system with Trinity Metro.

In terms of the surface transportation system, Fort Worth has over 10,000 total lane miles of roadway. With such a high volume of vehicles on the road in an auto-centric system, congestion and the associated noise, pollution, and quality of life impacts have increased over time. The figure below illustrates the top 12 most congested corridors and intersections across the city.

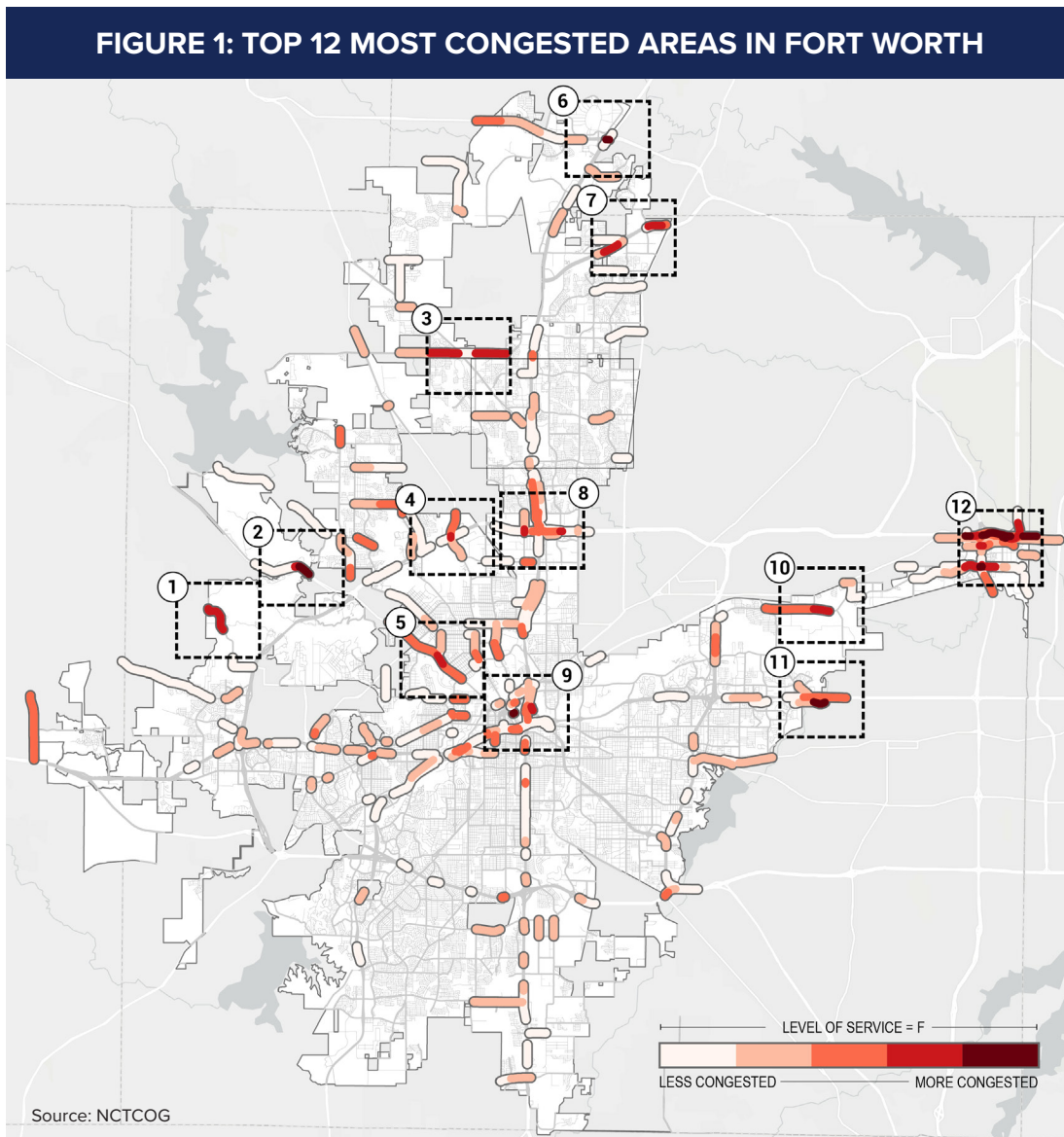
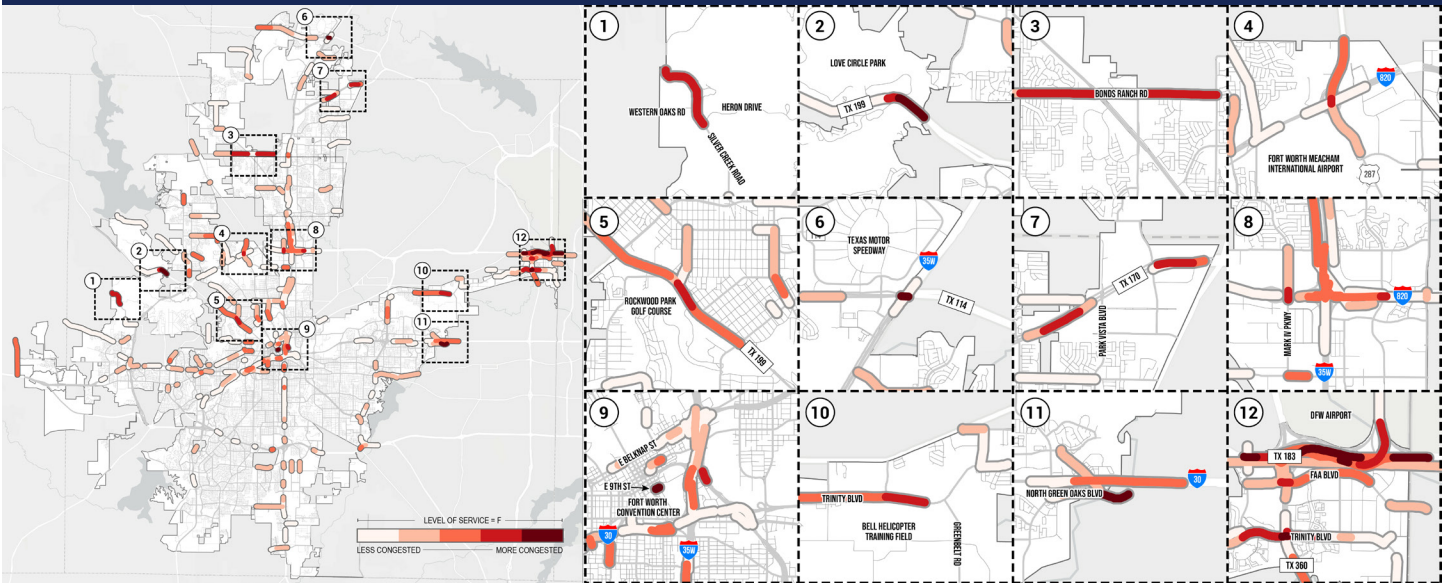


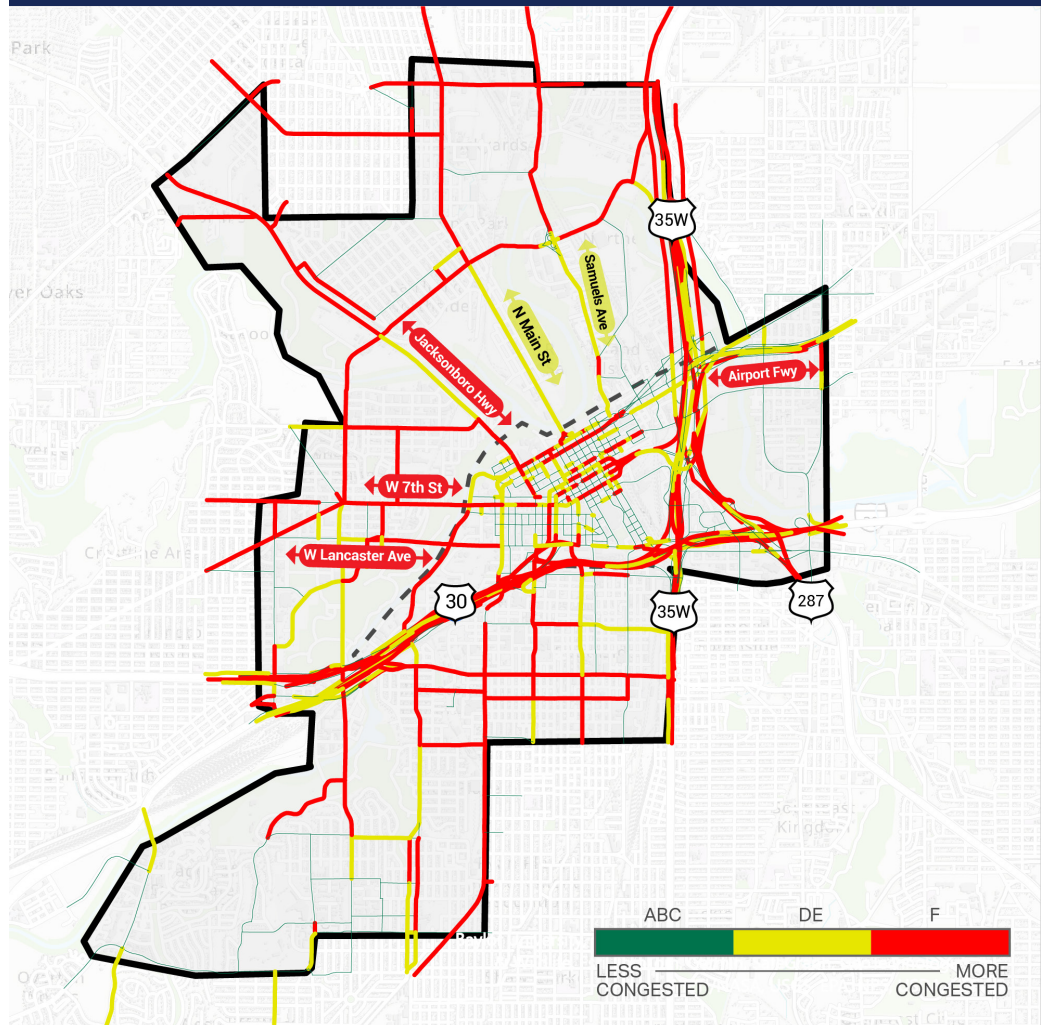
FIGURE 2: TOP 12 MOST CONGESTED AREAS IN FORT WORTH



Source: NCTCOG

The figure to the right illustrates in further detail the level of expected congestion that would occur in the broader city center area based on NCTCOG's 2045 data. That data does not yet fully account for increased urban development stemming from the significant investment initiatives occurring around downtown, including high-speed rail, A&M campus investment and associated innovation district, convention center expansion, and a potential full build-out of Panther Island and Butler Place in 2045. As a result, there is concern regarding the capacity of the existing network to enable and facilitate future growth that is already committed or planned. The result is that the allocation of space for surface transportation will increase in premium over time.

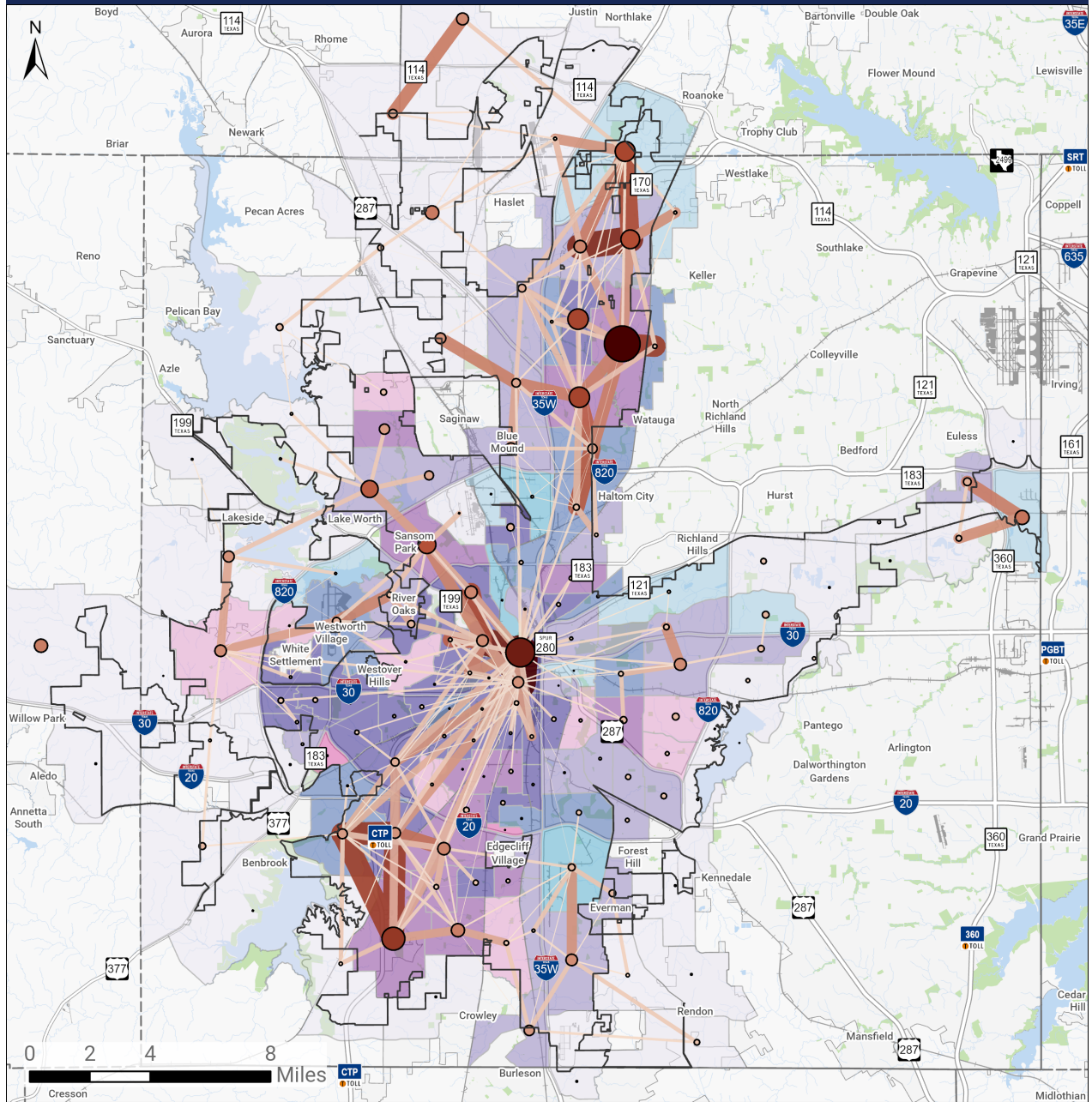
FIGURE 3: FORECASTED 2045 LEVEL OF SERVICE IN CITY CORE



Source: NCTCOG

Private auto vehicle travel, which makes up 84% of trips in the city, currently average approximately 31 minutes for the typical resident. Transit usage is currently less than 1% of overall trip volume. In general, most morning travel within Fort Worth city limits is located west or northeast of downtown. In terms of trips that begin in the city and end outside of it, many folks are moving eastwards towards adjacent municipalities like Trophy Club, Westlake, Keller, and Watauga.

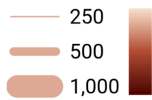
FIGURE 4: TRIP PATTERN ANALYSIS CITYWIDE



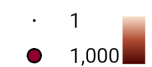
2023 AM Travel Patterns Within Fort Worth

Source: AECOM

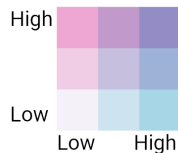
Inter-District Trips



Intra-District Trips



Origins per Sq. Mi.
Destinations per Sq. Mi.



Fort Worth
County Boundary



Trinity Metro serves as the primary public transit agency for the city, currently operating local and express bus routes in combination with the TEXRail commuter rail service and the Trinity Railway Express commuter rail line with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). In addition to the core bus and rail service, the agency also supports a free downtown circulator service, and various on-demand micro and paratransit services to extend coverage beyond the traditional bus system. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant decline in transit usage in Fort Worth and other cities across the country; however, current projections indicate that bus ridership will exceed pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2025. Despite the ridership growth, Fort Worth ridership still lags behind peer cities such as Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Columbus, and Charlotte in per capita transit investment.

Fort Worth is also establishing itself as a leader in transportation innovation, utilizing advanced technologies to improve overall mobility and system sustainability. Advanced traffic management systems are monitoring traffic patterns continuously and making adjustments during the day to create a smoother experience for residents and travelers. Beyond advanced traffic management systems, the city has also established the Alliance Mobility Innovation Zone that is pushing emerging ideas such as drone deliveries, hydrogen fuel cells, and automated vehicles and freight systems.

Peer Group	Agency	Service Area Size in Square Miles	Investment
Texas Peer	Dallas Area Rapid Transit	698	\$227.71
	Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority	542	\$213.06
	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas	1,309	\$175.43
	VIA Metropolitan Transit	1,210	\$116.84
	Trinity Metro	404	\$100.10
Aspirational Peer	Calgary Transit	317	\$727.72
	City of Charlotte, North Carolina	675	\$292.87 ← Proposed Revenue
	Denver Regional Transportation District	2,342	\$214.48
	Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority	542	\$213.06
	Kansas City Area Transportation Authority	459	\$158.91
	Trinity Metro	404	\$100.10

Data Source: NTD Complete Monthly Ridership (with adjustments and estimates) monthly update: Annual Ridership from UPT Table most recent 12 months Jun 2023-May 2024; Service Area, Cost, and Population Data from Master Table most recent fiscal year for each agency. Calgary Transit data was sourced from City of Calgary and Calgary Transit website. Investment was converted to USD.

4

City, Transit Agency & Regional Planning Efforts

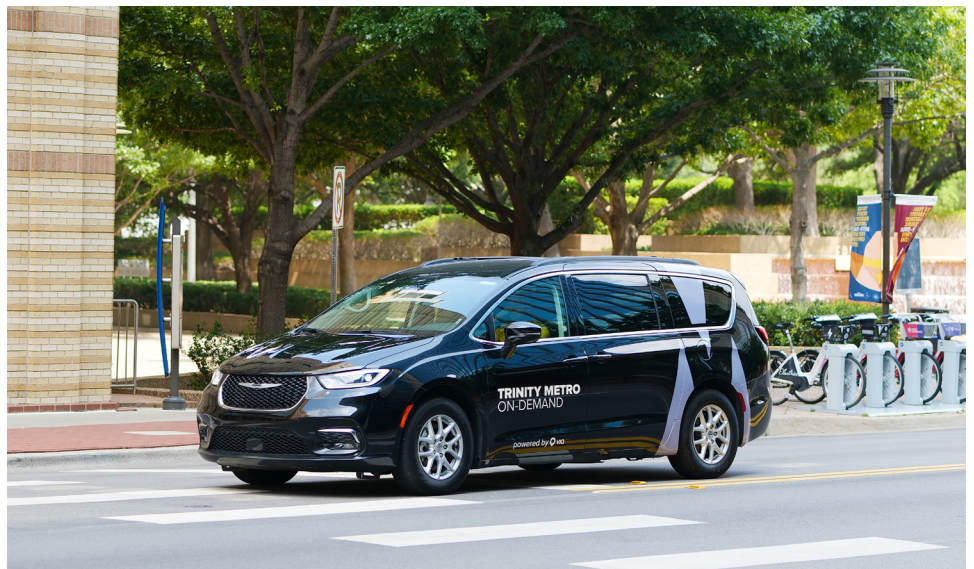
The modern transportation planning process is established in guidance based on the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 that promoted a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing process. The City of Fort Worth and Trinity Metro are two of many transportation infrastructure owners and operators in the North Texas region for which regional planning efforts are coordinated through the NCTCOG acting as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

NCTCOG develops the region's long-range transportation plan, or metropolitan transportation plan. NCTCOG is developing the Mobility 2050 plan.¹ This multimodal plan looks forward 25 years, identifying transportation demand across the region and investment needs to match the predicted travel demand. Transit is one component to a holistic approach to balance travel needs outside of a vehicle-centric community.

In early 2024, NCTCOG hired McKinsey & Company and InfraStrategies, LLC to identify a system to accommodate the future of transit in North Texas commonly referred to as Regional Transit 2.0.² This effort seeks to identify and develop strategies for increasing transit authority membership, partnerships and teamwork opportunities, infill development, and fare collection.

The City of Fort Worth is in the process of developing the 2050 Comprehensive Plan. The plan will guide the city over the next 25 years on issues such as zoning, transportation, public safety, economic growth, and public health. This plan partially establishes a relationship between expected land development and the transportation system that will serve it.³

The City is also developing the Moving a Million (M1M) Plan, which pursues a connected multimodal approach for providing comprehensive and safe transportation options for Fort Worth residents. Along with improving the performance and safety of the roadway system, the M1M Plan seeks to provide options for all residents, including enhanced transit, active transportation options (such as bicycle and pedestrian options), and improvements to help the flow of goods and services within and through the City.⁴





Fort Worth has also been studying how to re-establish and plan for central business district transportation connections through the Connecting the Core - Mobility Plan.⁵ This plan, similar to M1M, will develop a suite of projects and policies to support mobility needs in the central area of the city. A key finding discussed is that two percent of trips to the core are served through transit. There is a large opportunity to increase the transit mode share with an expanded, robust transit network that includes high-capacity transit, and other circulator services.

Several significant planning efforts are underway or have recently been completed regarding Panther Island. A vision and strategy for Panther Island was presented in March 2024.⁶ This refined vision sets the stage to unlock the economic development potential on Panther Island. The plan identifies the opportunity for high-capacity transit across the island. In September 2024, an Urban Land Institute (ULI) panel of national real estate experts visited the area, interviewed stakeholders, and developed recommendations for the City Council. The city is also reviewing and revising its form-based code to be aligned with the recommendations from the vision and strategy plan unveiled this year.

Trinity Metro published a network redesign plan in 2021 named A Better Connection.⁷ This plan made improvements to the bus network, and expanded boundaries for Trinity Metro on-demand services (formerly known as ZIPZONES) for first-mile and last-mile trips. More recently, as a way to collect feedback on the transit system, Trinity Metro has conducted robust polling and facilitated customer focus groups to understand attitudes toward transit and rail among users and non-users in Fort Worth and the surrounding cities in Tarrant County. This research found extraordinary support for public transportation with more than three in four respondents stating they wanted more investment in bus, rail, ride share and other mobility services. Trinity Metro also completed an economic impact analysis of the agency's current programs. The study found Trinity Metro has an annual economic impact of \$705 million supporting 3,700 jobs in the community.

More recently, Trinity Metro engaged the community through a series of interactive events in summer 2024 to discuss a wide range of transit topics including on-demand services, improvements to and openings of rail transit stations, re-branding of bus lines, and re-launch of the bike sharing program.⁸ Trinity Metro is preparing a 5-Year Strategic Action Plan which will identify near-term opportunities to enhance services and increase ridership, while building to a longer-term vision for transit throughout Tarrant County.

5 2010 Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Study

During the Mayor’s first Urban Rail Committee meeting held on September 12, 2024, a presentation was made on the background and outcomes of the previous 2010 Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Study.

In July 2008, Mayor Mike Moncrief and the City Council appointed a Modern Streetcar Study Committee to evaluate the feasibility of developing a modern streetcar system to complement the regional rail system, including identifying a starter alignment and recommending implementation steps. In December 2008, the Modern Streetcar Study Committee recommended to the city council next steps for implementation of a modern streetcar system that would connect Downtown to up to six urban villages. One of the first steps recommended was to hire a consultant to conduct additional planning work and to prepare the schematic design of the streetcar alignments.

Following the recommendation of the Modern Streetcar Study Committee, the City hired HDR Engineering, Inc. in April 2010 to further the investigation and planning of the Modern Streetcar Project. The Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Study Team was comprised of representatives from the City of Fort Worth, NCTCOG, and the Fort Worth Transportation Authority.



Kansas City Streetcar

Source: By Jason Doss from Kansas City, MO - KC Streetcar, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=48655233>

The 2010 Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Study established the study purpose and objectives as the following:



Goal

Support and facilitate development in targeted areas: the Urban Villages and Mixed-Use Growth Centers identified in the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

- Determine if a streetcar could serve as the necessary catalyst for this development, while also being an effective technology for central area circulation.



Objective

Identify the single most viable initial streetcar project serving central Fort Worth.

- The initial segment should have a “stand-alone” functionality, but also provide the basis for a larger network which could be developed over time.



In addition, the study team established the following evaluation criteria for investigation of various potential corridors of the Modern Streetcar starter line.

- Existing and anticipated population in the alignment corridor
- Existing and anticipated employment in the alignment corridor
- Major destinations served
- Developable land
- Potential yield from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and other locally generated sources
- Assessed value base
- Compatibility with City and TIF district plans
- Relative lack of engineering or traffic management constraints to implementation
- Estimated ridership
- Capital and operating cost
- Public and stakeholder support

In addition to the corridor analysis, an extensive Economic Benefit Analysis was conducted analyzing the following:

Existing Development Served

- Assists in determining potential for early success
- Population and employment
- Hotel rooms and major venues connected
- Enrollment and faculty/staff at higher education facilities
- Parking spaces
- Assessed value in zone

New Development Potential

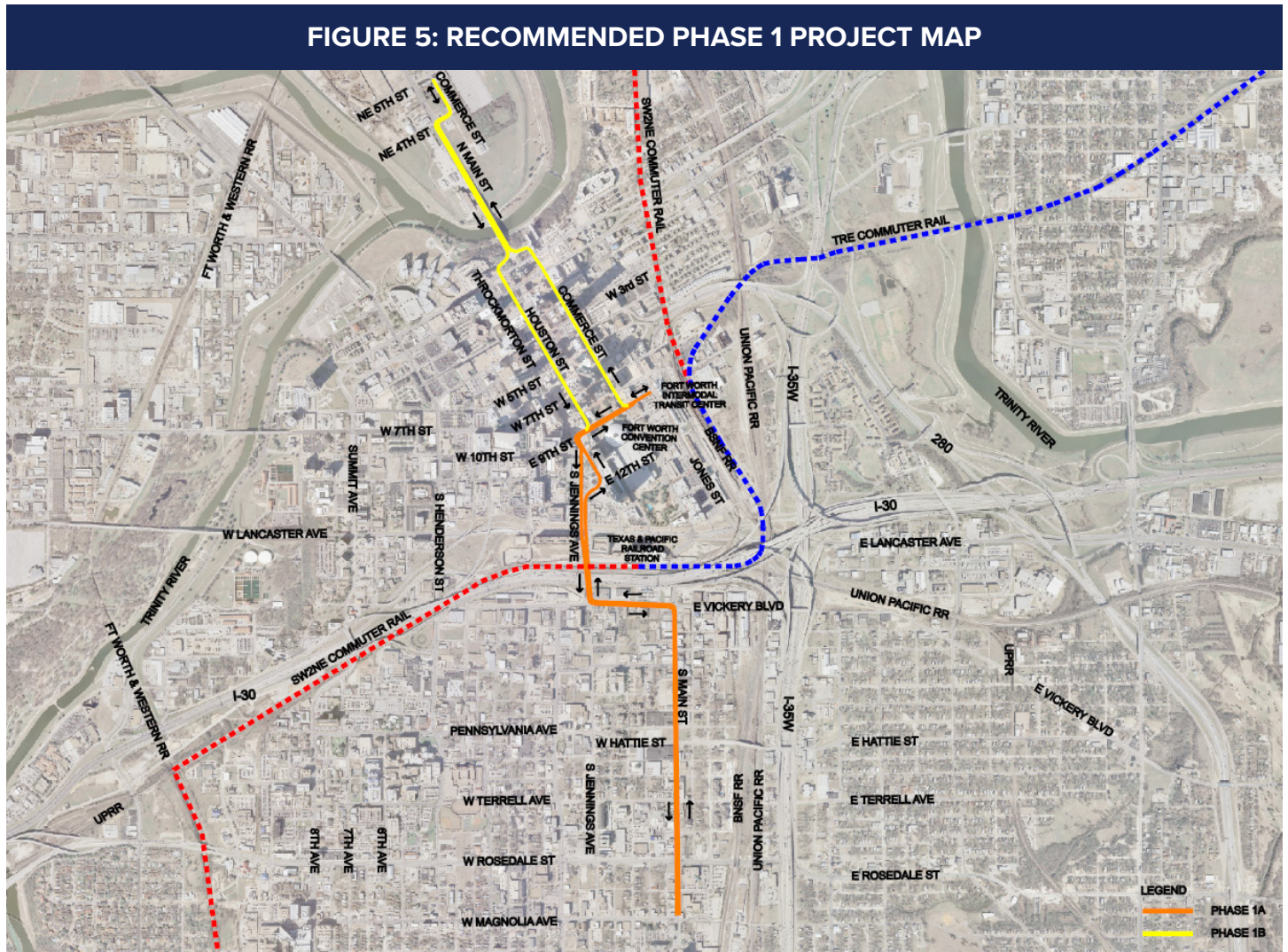
- Maximum projected growth in next 15 years
 - Absorption potential for development
 - Most favorable conditions
 - Adjusted for planned local development

Benchmark Measures

- Capital cost relative to taxable assessed value
- New development potential relative to capital cost (leverage potential)
- Total capital cost relative to ridership

Key findings of the Economic Analysis included: (1) Development value added over base growth by induced development (15 yrs): \$334,000,000, (2) Project Cost as % of Assessed Value in benefited area: 3.77%, and (3) Dollars of Assessed Value Added (15 yrs) in benefited area per \$ of Capital Cost of Line: 4/1

At the conclusion of the alternative corridor evaluation, the study team presented to the Modern Streetcar Study Committee a Phase 1 Starter Corridor represented in the following map.



Source: 2010 Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Feasibility Study, HDR Engineering, Inc.

6






Rail Transit General Characteristics

Rail transit can take many forms depending on the need served. Generally, the spectrum of rail transit on fixed guideways spans from smaller capacity, slower moving, shorter distance and frequent stops served typically by streetcars to larger capacity, faster moving, longer distance and infrequent stops served by light, heavy, or regional rail systems.

Streetcars can be electric-powered through overhead or in-ground electric service or through batteries and recharging points. Light rail transit is served through overhead electric service. Commuter rail, like TEXRail, is powered by small diesel, on-board engines that power electric motors, similar to hybrid vehicles. Commuter rail, like TRE, is powered by diesel locomotives that pull passenger rail cars.

Streetcars have a route length range of 2 to 5 miles with station spacing at .25 to 1 mile. In contrast, light rail lines may have route lengths from 5 to 30 miles with station spacing at .5 to 5 miles. Commuter rail serves much longer distance typically between 25 and 70 miles with station spacing between 5 and 30 miles.

FIGURE 6: RAIL TRANSIT GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

	BRT 	Streetcar 	Light Rail 	Heavy Rail 	Commuter Rail 
Power	Diesel/Electric/Hybrid	Overhead/In-Ground/ Battery Electric	Overhead Electric	Overhead/In-Ground Electric	Diesel Locomotive / On-Board Engine
Exclusive ROW	Yes – Primarily w/mixed sections	Mixed w/Traffic	Yes – Primarily w/mixed sections	Yes – Subway/ Elevated Track	Yes- Always
Passenger Capacity	Single Unit: 35-55 seats Articulated: 90-120 seats	1-2 cars/35 seats per (plus standing room)	2 cars/120-145 seats (plus standing room)	4-8 cars/50 seats per (plus standing room)	3 cars/200 seats TRE = 160
Route Length	5-20 miles	2-5 miles	1-30 miles	5-40 miles	25-70 miles
Construction cost/mile	Avg: \$28M	Avg: \$40M	Avg: \$186M	Avg: \$963M	Avg: \$73M
Typical Speeds	10-30 mph	10-30 mph	30-60 mph	30-60 mph	30-60 mph
Stops/Stations	0.5 – 5 mi.	0.25 – 1 mi.	0.5 – 5 mi.	1-20 mi	5-30 mi
Frequency	15-30 min.	15-30 min.	15-30 min.	30-60 min.	30-60 min

Source: American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

FIGURE 7: TRANSIT OPTIONS: U.S. TEN LARGEST METROS

The 10 largest U.S. metropolitan areas have developed systems of heavier rail that supports a network of light rail, heavy rail, and streetcar systems to distribute trips to destinations.

	Streetcar	BRT	Light Rail	Heavy Rail	Commuter
New York City		x	x	x	x
Los Angeles	x	x	x	x	x
Chicago				x	x
Houston		x	x		
Phoenix	x		x		
Philadelphia	x	x	x	x	x
Dallas	x		x		x
Washington DC	x			x	x
Atlanta	x			x	
Miami				x	x
Fort Worth					x

Source: American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

7 Project Development

Project development begins in the planning stage. A proposed project should be consistent with other local and regional plans. For example, projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) must be consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) prepared by NCTCOG, serving as the Dallas-Fort Worth MPO. All projects slated for federal funding must be consistent with the MTP. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that projects with any federal funds follow the NEPA planning process to measure potential natural, cultural, and historic resources in the project area.

For urban rail or a high-capacity transit route/network, project development generally begins with the planning and scoping phase which can take 2 years. This is followed by financial programming, preliminary design (1-2 years), and detailed design (1-2 years). Project development ends with awarding a contract and construction which can take 2-3 years. The entire process may take 8-10 years from planning to operation. There are opportunities to streamline this timeframe where parts of the process can overlap and run in conjunction with other processes. Funding is usually the most challenging part of the project taking several years to pull together the desired amount. Should funding be identified early the project could also be completed in a shorter timeframe.

FIGURE 8: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Source: Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

8

Fort Worth Corridors Evaluation including Conceptual Cost Analysis

The Urban Rail Committee requested Trinity Metro and its consultant HDR Engineering, Inc. to review and update key data and findings from the previous 2010 Fort Worth Modern Streetcar Study focusing on the three following corridors:

Downtown to Panther Island and Stockyards

- Central Station to Stockyards/ Exchange Avenue via N. Main Street - 3.1 miles
- Future Extension to TEXRail Northside Station via N.E. 28th Street

Downtown to Near Southside

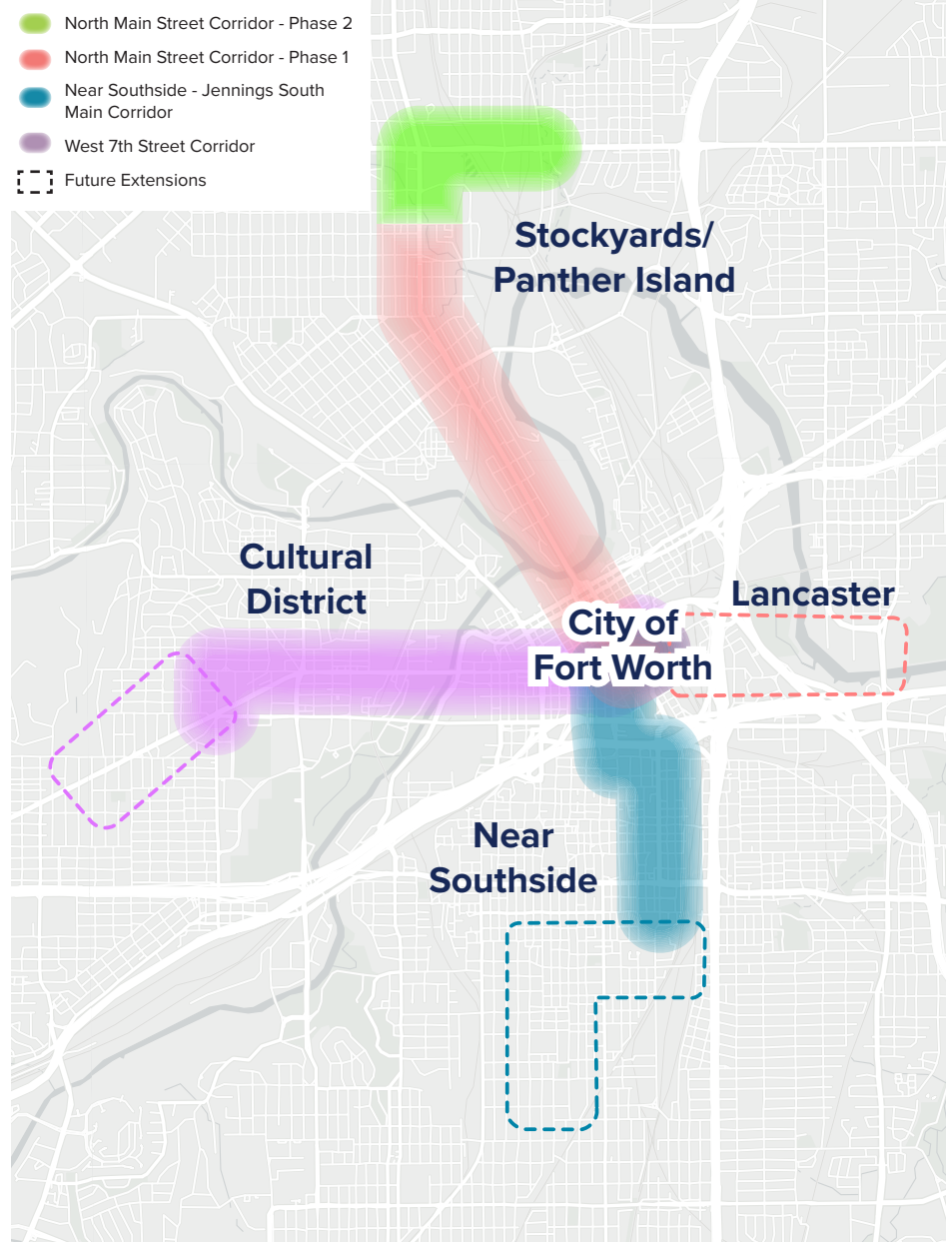
- Central Station to W. Magnolia Avenue via Jennings Avenue & W. Vickery Boulevard - 1.9 miles

Downtown to Cultural District

- Central Station to Montgomery Street/Camp Bowie Boulevard via W. 7th Street - 3.2 miles

Corridors identified are for conceptual purposes. Dashed corridor extensions highlighted on the map were identified by Stakeholders and were not included in this report. Analysis and evaluation of all corridors will be completed during the Project Development phase.

FIGURE 9: CORRIDOR MAP



Source: HDR Engineering, Inc.

In addition to the review and update of previous information from the 2010 Modern Streetcar Study, such as capital cost, operating and maintenance cost, major destinations served, and key engineering constraints, Trinity Metro and HDR conducted an assessment of future population and employment in year 2045, and potential transit capture within each corridor. The results of this corridor analysis are reflected in the following table:

Criteria	Downtown to Panther Island and Stockyards	Downtown to Near Southside	Downtown to Cultural District
Limits (From-To)	Central Station to 9th Street to Main Street/Exchange Street	Central Station to Jennings Street to Vickery Boulevard to S. Main Street & W. Magnolia Avenue	Central Station to 7th Street & Montgomery Street/Camp Bowie Boulevard
Length (Miles)	3.1 miles	1.9 miles	3.2 miles
Capital Cost (2024)	\$285M - \$350M	\$220M - \$265M	\$295M - \$360M
Annual Operations & Maintenance Cost (2024)	\$6M per year	\$4M per year	\$6.5M per year
Future Population in the Corridor (2045)	19,400	21,179	20,885
Future Employment in the Corridor (2045)	106,919	128,478	128,527
Development-Related Future Population Estimates (2045)	10,795	4,152	2,172
Development-Related Future Employment Estimates (2045)	63,849	24,557	12,845
Potential Transit Capture (Current Demographics Ridership - 2045 Daily)	6,316	7,483	7,471
Potential Transit Capture (Future Development Additional Ridership - 2045 Daily)	3,264	2,035	531
Major Destinations Served	Convention Center, Sundance Square, Panther Island, Stockyards	Convention Center, Lancaster Corridor, Main Street to Magnolia	Convention Center, West 7th Street, Cultural District
Available Developable Land	169 acres (vacant); 44 acres (parking lots)	65 acres (vacant); 54 acres (parking lots)	34 acres (vacant); 55 acres (parking lots)
Key Engineering or Traffic Management Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Friction - pedestrian overpasses, on-street parking, special events Special Pavers - Downtown & Stockyards RR Crossing - Main Street/Grand/10th Street Bridge Crossings - Viaduct, 7th to 10th Street Marine Creek Utilities - TBD, 42" Water in Main Street Assume no catenary, battery-powered throughout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Configuration - one-way streets; Municipal Court Plaza/Old City Hall; parking impacts Underpass Bridge - Jennings/US 30 (clearance, depth) Utilities/3rd Party/Drainage - TBD Assume no catenary, battery-powered throughout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Configuration - one-way streets; 6th Street westbound Special Pavers - W 7th Street, Camp Bowie Boulevard RR Crossing - 7th Street/Wooley Existing Bridge Crossing - 7th Street/Trinity River Utilities/3rd Party/Drainage - TBD Assume no catenary, battery-powered throughout
Phasing Options (Next nearest logical termination point)	TEXRail Northside Station at 28th Street	8th Avenue along Magnolia Avenue	Dickies Arena
Route/Corridor Options (Current/future possible corridor/connections)	Main Street, Ellis Avenue		West 7th Street, Lancaster Avenue, New Bridge across Trinity River

The information provided for capital and operating expenses are early estimations and will be refined as more is known about project scope, schedule and budget.

9 Funding Options

Project development also requires the identification of funding – not just for the construction of the project – but also for the continued operation of the system after construction. Transit systems do not typically recover capital and operational costs through fares alone. The following options highlight common funding sources that have been utilized by transit agencies for funding rail construction and operations. Additional sources will be explored as more is learned about the project.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5309 Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants (CIG)

FTA provides CIGs specifically for the construction of fixed rail systems, such as streetcars, light rail, heavy rail, and commuter rail systems. Of the CIGs available, two options can potentially be pursued, depending on the cost of the project:

- **New Starts:** The New Starts program considers projects that a) have capital costs of \$400 million or more or b) request at least \$150 million in CIG funding. New Starts funding will cover up to 60% of CIG funding.
- **Small Starts:** The Small Starts program considers projects that a) have capital costs less than \$400 million and are requesting less than \$150 million in CIG funding. Small Starts funding will cover up to 80% of CIG funding.

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants

RAISE is a competitive grant program offering up to \$25 million for surface transportation projects, including transit. Projects must have a significant local or regional impact, with an additional emphasis on historically disadvantaged communities. Federal funds will cover up to 80% of eligible costs.

Flexible Funds from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

FHWA provides flexible options through TxDOT and NCTCOG for funding transit projects. Projects go through a competitive process at NCTCOG to determine eligibility and worthiness:

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ):** CMAQ funds provide flexible funding for projects that can demonstrate a reduction in pollutants in accordance with the Clean Air Act. The Dallas-Fort Worth area has been designated as a nonattainment area by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, making CMAQ funds available for the region.
- **Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG):** STBG funds are perhaps the most flexible funds available for transportation projects including transit. Unlike CMAQ funding, STBG projects do not have an air-quality reduction requirement.

State of Texas - Texas Department of Transportation

- **Texas Mobility Funds:** Texas Mobility Funds, approved by voters in 2001 and enacted by the 77th State Legislature as Proposition 15, provides bond proceeds to provide participation by the state in the payment of costs of constructing publicly owned toll roads and other public transportation projects, including transit.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

TIFs are special districts that allow for the capture of additional property tax revenue in a designated area, usually for the economic development of said area. Established by the City, the TIF would capture all or a portion of any increments in tax revenue over a base year generated in the area for the use of economic reinvestment.

Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRZ)

Similar to TIFs, Texas allows for the creation of TRZ to provide funding for transportation projects. The TRZ, also established by the city, designates an area – usually directly served by the transportation improvement – where any increments in property tax revenue go towards funding the transportation project.

Sponsorships/Philanthropy

Several rail systems receive funding via either commercial or philanthropic sponsorships to help fund construction and operations. Sponsorships for these systems can range from naming rights (TECO Line in Tampa), temporary advertisement vehicle wraps (Kansas City, Seattle, Atlanta, Philadelphia), station sponsorships (Detroit, Kansas City, Oklahoma City), and philanthropic donations (Detroit, Dallas M-Line).

Other Taxes

Property taxes have been used to fund transit improvements in Texas. In 2020, Austin voters approved an 8.75 cent per \$100 valuation increase to cover the city's proposed light rail line, as well as additional bus rapid transit service. Local sales taxes can be used for transit funding, as long as total sales taxes do not exceed 8.25% for the municipality. The City of San Antonio is currently pursuing an additional tax on cell phone bills, approximately 9 cents per \$100, to help fund its transit operations.⁹

10 Selected Committee Engagement

The Urban Rail Committee provided general comments on the information presented in the meetings. Most of these comments are reflected in the desire for more information as outlined in the committee vision and next steps described below.

The committee favored Trinity Metro and the City of Fort Worth continuing to explore high-capacity transit (including potential urban rail) and conducting a more detailed analysis of more robust fixed guideway transit options. These analyses included examination of priority corridors, public engagement strategies, economic development impacts, and linkages to regional planning efforts.

Several members expressed that the timing is appropriate for a bold vision for transportation improvements in Fort Worth that include high-capacity transit (and urban rail). There was no explicit dissent to this vision expressed by committee members.



Researchers for this effort identified several issues that the committee and city may wish to consider when pursuing the implementation of urban rail. Additional comments received from Urban Rail Committee Members will be addressed in later phases of project implementation evaluating corridors, funding options, and governance models.


- Streetcars do not inherently spur economic development on their own. Often, property development along streetcar lines also benefits from tax incentives, zoning changes, and marketing to facilitate growth.¹⁰ While streetcars have proven successful in cities such as Detroit, Kansas City, Dallas, and Cincinnati, these cities engaged in redevelopment efforts along their current routes in coordination with their introduction.
- Choosing the best approach should also consider a combination of users. Questions like the following will help narrow down various primary users: Is the system for the out-of-town visitor? Workers at major destinations? Current and future inhabitants along the line? Daily commuters?
- Who will be the owner and operator of the proposed system? The City of Fort Worth? Trinity Metro? A new entity specifically established for the system? This might be determined based on the goals for the service and how and whether it is integrated with other transit services (i.e., fares, schedules and routes).
- Currently, TxDOT owns and maintains North Main Street (Business US 287) between Downtown and the Stockyards. The project owner will need to work with TxDOT to construct the project in their corridor. Alternatively, an off-system parallel route may be considered that can connect the same points.
- Both North Main (Business US 287) and West 7th Street have at-grade railroad crossings, which experience 31 and 19 train crossings, respectively, per day.¹¹ The construction of an urban rail line may need to strongly consider rail grade separations to allow for unobstructed operations or plan for delays in the transit operation. A grade-separated rail crossing may provide an operational advantage over surface transportation impeded by the at-grade rail crossing.
- To help ensure its success, an initial line should consider corridors with a sizable number of potential users, activity generators, and destinations of interest. In addition, the line should connect to other modes of transportation to allow for an enhanced transit network.
- Streetcar and light rail systems that share the roadway with vehicle traffic can contribute to that roadway's congestion, especially when there are frequent station stops unless dedicated lanes are provided for the streetcar service which would mitigate the impact to congestion. All major existing roadways in and out of Downtown are forecasted to have unacceptable levels of congestion.


12 Committee Vision and Next Steps


The committee views this discussion as an opportunity for the City of Fort Worth and Trinity Metro to cooperatively and collaboratively create a bold, forward-looking vision of urban rail transit service to support continued growth of the city and the downtown core resulting in additional economic development that is tied to the larger regional rail transit network.


The committee recommends that the City of Fort Worth and Trinity Metro collaboratively pursue a study of urban rail alternatives to recommend a mode, routes, and preliminary stations. A future study should include a detailed data analysis of corridors, gather public feedback, and recommend a priority urban rail transit corridor.


Next steps for the Urban Rail Initiative as presented by Chair Chapa, and agreed upon by committee members, include the following:


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Trinity Metro and the City of Fort Worth will conduct detailed data analysis on potential corridors to include a system plan (with potential routes and service types)
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Prioritize a starter route(s) (utilizing a public input process in conjunction with the data analysis)
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Seek funding needed for next steps in the amount of \$5 million while also pursuing funding for final design and construction
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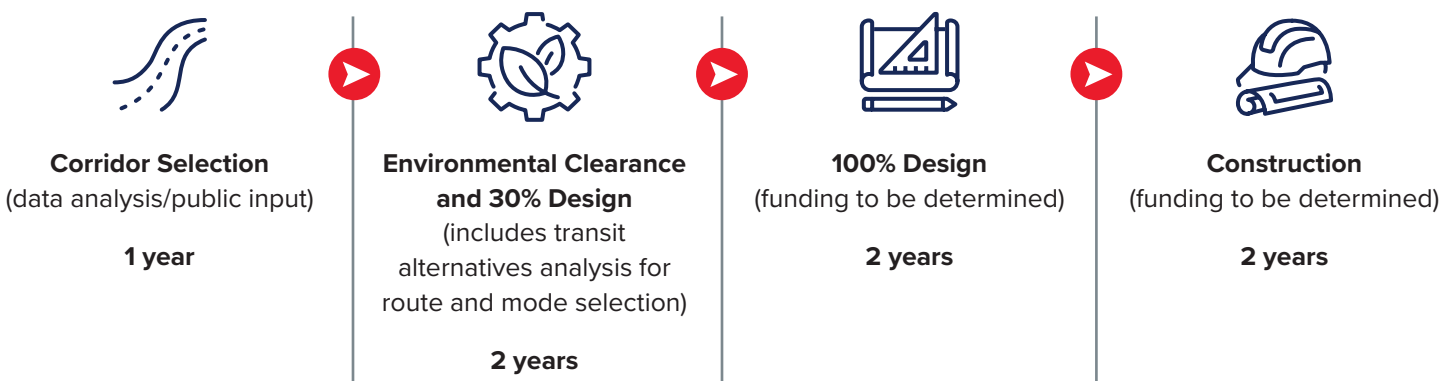
Determine an appropriate mode
- 

Conduct initial planning, environmental clearance, and preliminary design
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Identify legislative priorities that support funding for operational and capital expenses

In addition, Chair Chapa provided a tentative timeline for a potential Urban Rail Project implementation, following other similar national project examples.

From start to finish, this project is estimated to require 7 to 10 years to implement. This timeline is contingent upon securing funding. Some committee members expressed a desire to implement the project in a shorter timeframe.



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This report was prepared for Trinity Metro and the City of Fort Worth by HDR Engineering, Inc., Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), and AECOM.