



Economically Efficient, Environmentally Compatible Transportation the Rail Way

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The Case for the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor

Texas is at a critical juncture. Our highways, airports and waterways are in an advanced state of technological development and have been built out to reach every corner of the state. But our railroad tracks and signals, on which so much of the state's future economic growth depends, lack the capacity and flexibility needed to support economic growth.

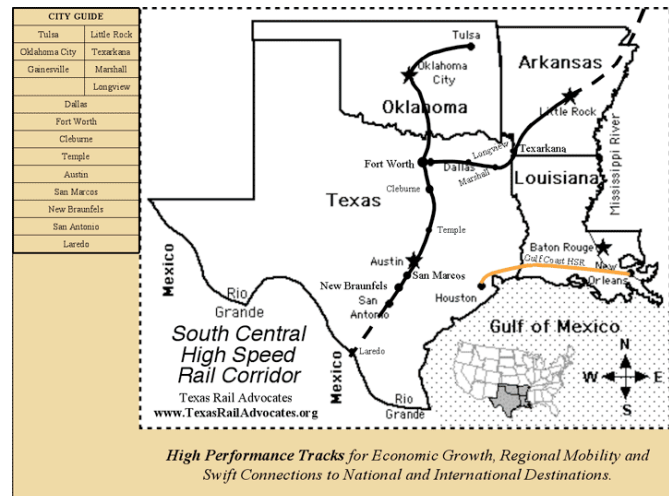
The problem is political: Since 1916, the federal government has invested hundreds of billions of dollars in Texas' highways, ocean ports, inland waterways and airports, but nothing in the state's privately owned railroad main lines. Faced with an obsolescent rail sector, passenger and freight demand has spilled over onto the government-owned highways and airports-and overwhelmed them.

Now it's time for Texas to turn its attention to the latent logistical capacity and undeveloped economic potential of its privately owned railroad facilities. And none is more critical than the line the U.S. Department of Transportation has designated the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor.

This Corridor is the "buckle" on the NAFTA "belt" that links Canada to Mexico via the U.S. heartland. Its development is essential to full development of NAFTA's -vast economic potential.

But before the South Central Corridor can be funded and developed, it must be studied and computer-modeled by professional planners. Only a professional study can determine the full extent of the Corridor's economic potential and the amount of federal funding required to update this valuable but obsolescent resource.

Some hint of what the study will say about Texas may be gauged from the nationwide figures appearing in the Bottom Line Report published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The Report said that if U.S. rail infrastructure is merely maintained at its current capacity, the U.S. highway system will require up to \$50 billion in additional investment by 2020 in order to handle the additional freight traffic forced off the crippled rail system. Conversely, AASHTO said, an updated rail infrastructure will pay for itself many times over in highway cost savings.



High-frequency passenger-train service at speeds of 90-110 mph between key cities along the South Central Corridor route will become a popular choice of travelers. Grade separations that eliminate the busiest highway grade crossings, and upgraded protection devices at the crossings that remain, will make these trains the safest form of travel in Texas.

Double tracking and fail-safe anti-collision signaling will improve freight-train performance thereby having a significant-impact on the state's economic growth and quality of life. The new tracks will carry high-speed intermodal trains at 80-90 mph. Shippers who now must depend on trucks to carry high-priority consumer merchandise will be able to switch those shipments to less expensive rail transportation with no loss of speed or reliability. NAFTA trade is mostly merchandise. With an improved South Central Corridor, it will move off our crowded highways and onto safe, speedy railroad tracks.

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Air, highway and waterway transportation all leaped forward during the 20th century because the federal government invested in them. Rail transportation lagged because federal investment never took place. As we enter the 21st century with our roads and airports congested and our air polluted with petroleum exhaust, rail alone holds out the promise of advanced mobility higher speeds, more volume and capacity, all-weather reliability, with no EPA sanctions!

Monies spent on the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor will yield substantial improvements in mobility, choice of modes, transportation efficiency, and a healthier environment. By entering into a public/private partnership with the railroads that serve this federally designated corridor; Texas can have a high performance railroad component as part of this international trade route that links Mexico, the Mid West and Canada. Public/private partnerships are increasingly popular with railroads and governmental entities. In these agreements each party pays for the benefits received.

No additional acquisition of land is needed. **No** congestion because of slow, cumbersome, dangerous road construction. Travelers will have a CHOICE of fast, frequent passenger trains to cities along this three state route. Shippers will get expedited service without having to pay a premium. **Now** is the time to act! **Now** is the time to choose the South Central High Speed Rail Corridor: high performance tracks for Economic Growth, Regional Mobility and Swift Connections to national and international destinations.

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