

Policy Support to Advance High-Speed Rail in the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into Phase 2 National Environmental Policy Act Process (P22-01)

Existing Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policy, P21-01 (Policy Support to Advance the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study into Phase 2), was adopted on July 8, 2021. Guiding the efforts of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff, this existing policy outlined the desires of the RTC to advance both high-speed rail and hyperloop into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

Following further coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration, hyperloop technology is unable to advance through the NEPA process to environmentally clear a specific corridor for a hyperloop facility at this time due to hyperloop's lack of safety certification and demonstration status.

The RTC is interested in maintaining the momentum of Phase 1 efforts, including public and private stakeholder consensus, and maintaining early opportunities for private investors and operators in high-speed rail to gain interest in the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth corridor. In order to achieve environmental clearance of the Interstate Highway (IH) 30 corridor for a high-speed mode in a timely manner, the RTC directs staff to advance high-speed rail along the IH 30 corridor into the NEPA process and to coordinate with the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration in determining the appropriate approval process for environmental clearance.

While not included in the federal NEPA process, the RTC directs staff to continue to monitor hyperloop technology advancement through the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Technology Readiness Levels index as identified in Phase 1. Staff will bring regular updates to the RTC on the progress of hyperloop's advancement.

The RTC directs staff to continue coordination with local governments and the Texas Department of Transportation in Phase 2 efforts, including preliminary engineering and environmental documentation required by the National Environmental Policy Act. Additionally, the RTC reaffirms support for a modally integrated IH 30 corridor, including high speed rail, managed lanes, general purpose freeway lanes, and frontage roads, consistent with the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

RTC directs staff to integrate these alignment and mode recommendations into future mobility, air quality, safety, and other regional planning activities as appropriate.