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Mar 24, 2010 5:19 pm US/Central

Plans For Texas High-Speed Rail Service Unveiled



Reporting

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[Texas High Speed Rail and Transportation Corporation](#)

A statewide group of government agencies wants you to be able to get from Dallas to Austin in an hour, without going to the airport.

How's that possible? [The Texas High Speed Rail and Transportation Corporation \(THSRTC\)](#) wants to build a high-speed rail line through the state and use 200-mile per hour trains to travel on them. The lines, connecting Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, Waco and Austin, would form a sideways "T" through the heart of the state and is being dubbed the T-Bone Corridor.

But of course the plan comes at a cost and there's the question of who will pay for it.

CBS 11 News found that the initial proposal had some North Texas drivers excited. "I've never rode anything 200 miles an hour. But if that's the fastest way to go I would do it," said Darrell Mechell. Other drivers seemed thrilled with the prospect of letting someone else do the work. "You don't have to drive or anything like that. You don't have to steer. You sleep on the train. It would be fun," Ryan Dingman said enthusiastically.

Some drivers on board with idea of a bullet train on a T-bone path through Texas, but there are a number of things slowing down the high-speed project.

As it stands, there are nine cities, five counties and 65 state and federal lawmakers that have joined forces to build the Texas project. The elevated rail would cover nearly 500 miles.

Proponents say the system would avoid the delays passengers often experience at airports and the tickets would be cheaper.

If those grandiose expectations sound familiar, they should. Similar tax dollar based projects have been pitched before in Texas. But this project hopes to get off the ground with 'fuel' from private investors.

"There's private capital at risk. There is very little public support we think for a heavily taxpayer financed high speed rail system," explained former Harris County Judge Robert Eckels. "We have enough trouble trying to pay for DART and TRANSIT and Tarrant County and Houston's metro.

Asian and European companies, already operating high-tech rail systems, are showing an interest in the project. What they see in Texas are 16 million people, projected to be 40 million by 2050, terrain suitable for rail and a right of way that parallels existing highways.

"Nobody's written a check, yet. But we think as time goes by and they start looking..." Eckels said with optimism. "There have been two companies that have done pretty extensive studies that show this is a pretty good corridor to look at. "

And those investors will have to dig deep; the Texas high-speed rail project could cost up to \$20 Billion.

Plans even call for the system to eventually link to Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee.

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