



North Central Texas Council of Governments

**NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FRA CORRIDOR ID**

October 25, 2024

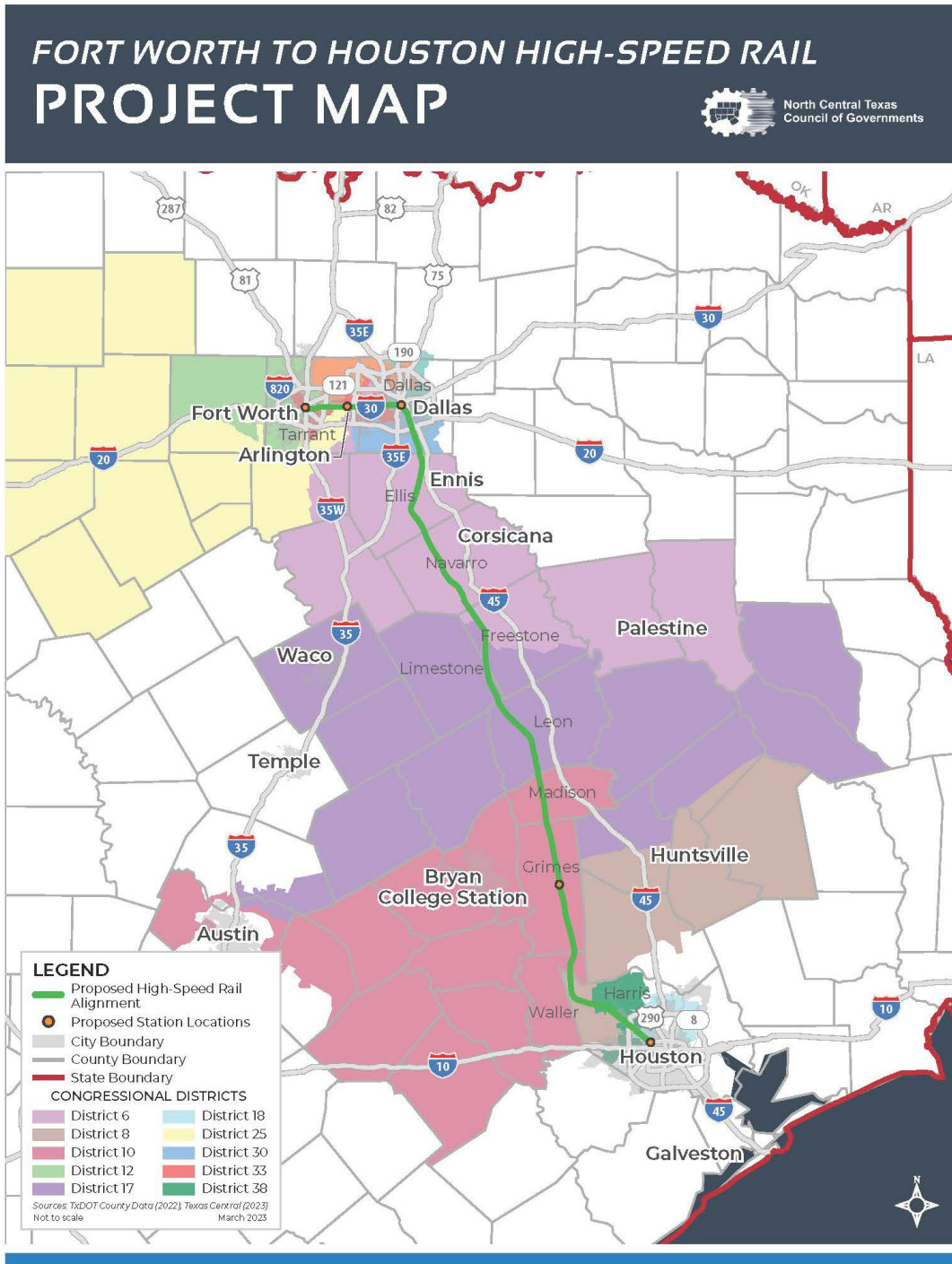
Amended: November 7, 2024

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR FRA CORRIDOR ID**

INTRODUCTION

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is requesting written proposals from consulting firms to produce the primary deliverables for Step 1 of the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program, which are the Statement of Work (SOW), Budget, and Schedule for the corridor's Service Development Plan (SDP), for the Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridor. This corridor is a proposed 271-mile route, which is envisioned as a closed system operation with speeds topping out at over 200 miles per hour. The corridor will begin in downtown Fort Worth, will generally follow Interstate 30 east to Arlington, and continue into downtown Dallas. From downtown Dallas, the corridor will generally follow Interstate 45 to a proposed Brazos Valley HSR Station in Roans Prairie located in Grimes County and will terminate at a proposed HSR station on the northwest side of Houston. NCTCOG has and will continue to coordinate with Amtrak on the Dallas to Houston segment of this HSR corridor. The need for HSR service is a result of increasing travel demand and the inability of the existing and proposed transportation network to safely and reliably accommodate the growing travel market between Fort Worth, Dallas, and Houston as evidenced by increased travel times and diminished level of service. The project map from NCTCOG's application to the FRA Corridor ID Program is shown below for reference.

Exhibit 1: Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail Corridor Project Map



NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is a voluntary association of, by, and for local governments, and was established to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments

and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions.

Since 1974, NCTCOG has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metropolitan Area. NCTCOG’s Transportation Department is responsible for regional transportation planning for all modes of transportation. The Department provides technical support and staff assistance to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and its technical committees, which compose the MPO policy-making structure. In addition, the Department provides technical assistance to the local transit providers of North Central Texas in planning, programming, coordinating, and implementing transportation decisions.

Project Purpose

Successful navigation of the Corridor ID Program will position this corridor and any breakout projects for future funding from FRA’s Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program. The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to assist NCTCOG in completing Step 1 of FRA’s Corridor ID process. The consultant shall provide technical project assistance and advisory services for the completion of the primary deliverables of Step 1. Fulfilling these deliverables, as specified in NCTCOG’s Grant Agreement with FRA, is required to move forward to Corridor ID Step 2 where NCTCOG will develop the SDP, with future consultant assistance. Exhibit 2 summarizes Steps 1-3 of the Corridor ID Program. **Participation in Step 1 does not preclude participation in future procurements for Step 2 or Step 3. Deliverables resulting from Step 1 will be made available to potential Step 2 proposers.**

Exhibit-2:FRA-Summary-of-Corridor-ID-Grant-Steps¶

Grant	Step 1: Scoping	Step 2: Service Development Plan	Step 3: Preliminary Engineering / NEPA
Funding	\$500k / 0% match	\$X / 10% match <i>(SX determined during Step 1)</i>	\$X / 20% match <i>(SX determined during Step 2)</i>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Service Development Plan SOW framework, sponsor develops scope, schedule, and budget for Corridor SDP, accounting for work on-going and/or undertaken to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor develops a service development plan in accordance with Corridor SOW and in coordination with FRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In coordination with FRA, sponsor completes preliminary engineering for capital projects Sponsor completes environmental review in coordination with FRA for capital projects
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After kick-off meeting, FRA will review work undertaken to date Step 1 grant deliverable is SDP SOW to include corridor-specific scope, schedule, and budget for service development planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final service development plan includes a Capital Project Inventory as part of the Phased Implementation Plan If readiness criteria are met, capital projects identified in SDP may be advanced into Step 3 Project Development, at FRA’s discretion and subject to funding availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital projects that complete Step 3 will move to Project Pipeline and may be prioritized for funding under Fed-State Partnership Program

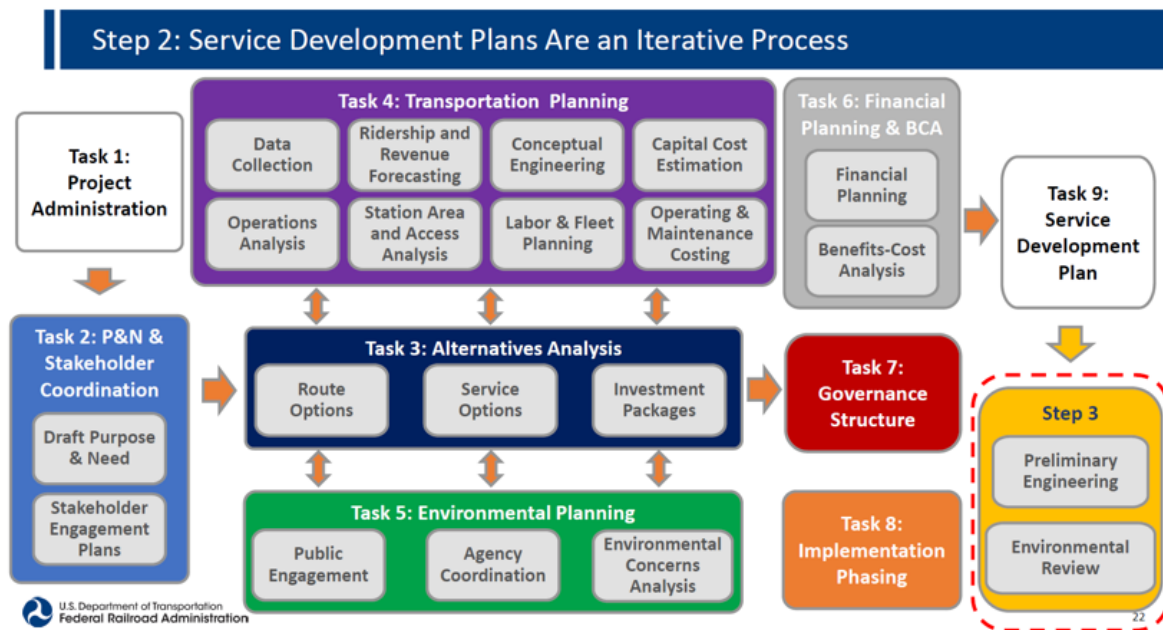


Source: Federal Railroad Administration¶

The diagram below provided by FRA (Exhibit 3) highlights the tasks and subtasks the SDP (Step 2) shall include once complete. The completion of these tasks and subtasks will be outlined in the Statement of Work, Budget, and Schedule to be developed in Step 1. The diagram also emphasizes how the successful completion of the SDP leads into the preliminary engineering and environmental review of this high-speed rail corridor as part of Step 3 of the Corridor ID Program. Step 1 is a critical step to develop an effective SDP, ensuring the corridor moves efficiently through the project planning and development phases onto implementation and successful commercial operation (see Exhibit 4).

This project intends to leverage previous high-speed rail planning work along this corridor, including the planning advanced by Texas Central Railroad (TCR), more commonly referred to as Texas Central, a private entity planning HSR between Dallas and Houston. More discussion on this Dallas to Houston segment and the segment between Fort Worth and Dallas is included in the Project Background section below.

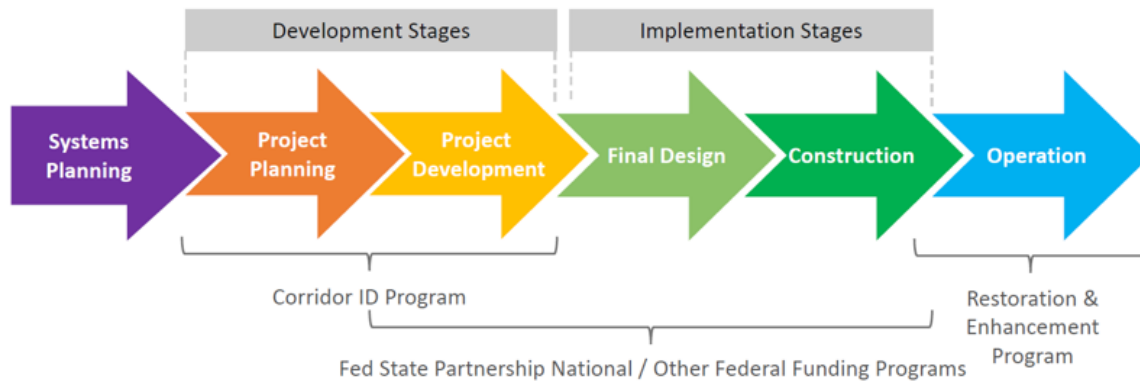
Exhibit-3:FRA-Corridor-ID-Step-2-Service-Development-Plan-Tasks-and-Subtasks¶



Source: Federal Railroad Administration¶

Exhibit 4: FRA Project Lifecycle Stages

FRA Project Lifecycle Stages – Corresponding FRA Funding Programs



Source: Federal Railroad Administration

Project Background

The FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program is a comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development program that is guiding the development of passenger rail corridors throughout the country and creating a pipeline of projects for future implementation. More information can be found on the FRA's webpage for the program ([Corridor Identification and Development Program | FRA \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fra.dot.gov/Corridor-Identification-and-Development-Program)). As part of the Fiscal Year 2022 FRA Corridor ID discretionary grant offering, NCTCOG applied for, and was awarded, a \$500,000 grant to enter into and complete Step 1 of the Corridor ID Program, as described in the Project Purpose section above. NCTCOG executed a grant agreement with FRA in May 2024, and work to complete preliminary tasks for Step 1 is underway (see Scope of Work section below).

High-speed passenger rail service within North Central Texas is not intended to be a stand-alone service; rather, service within the region is an integral component of a larger statewide and potential national network. High-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth has been included in NCTCOG's metropolitan transportation plan since the approval of *Mobility 2025: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for North Central Texas* in March 2011. Subsequently, high-speed rail has been included in *Mobility 2035*, *Mobility 2040*, and the current plan, *Mobility 2045 Update* (www.nctcog.org/mobilityplan).

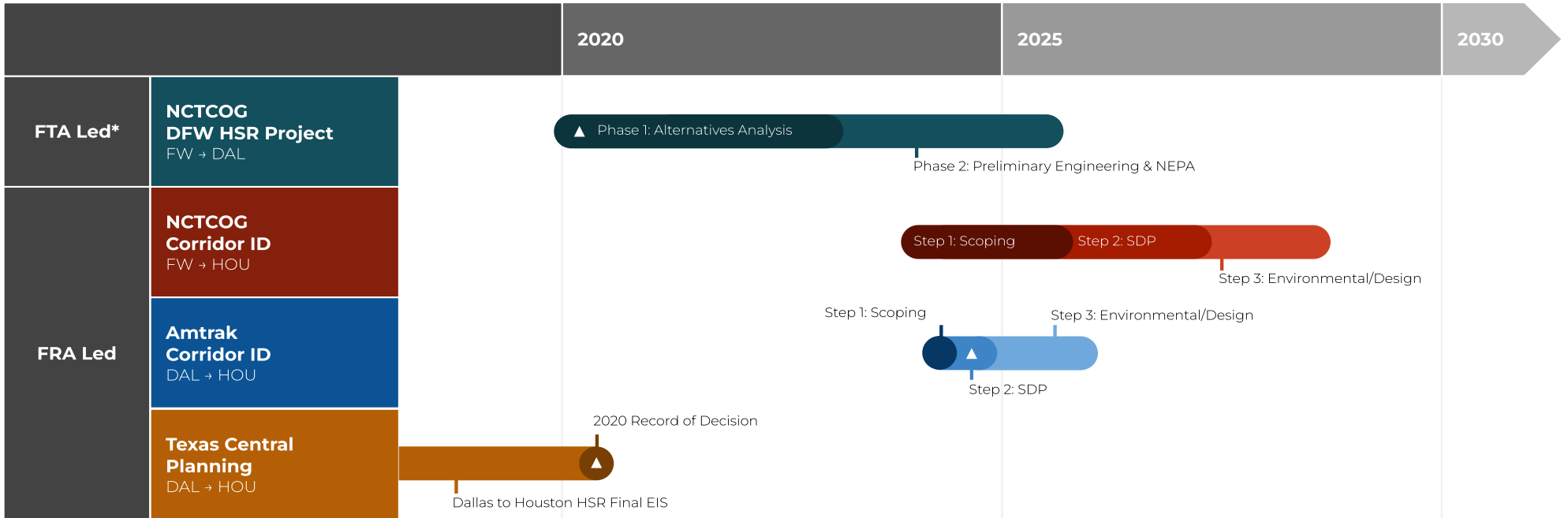
A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Dallas to Houston HSR project was completed in May 2020 through Texas Central's efforts, with FRA serving as the lead agency; the corridor received a Record of Decision in September 2020. Amtrak is interested in a potential

partnership with Texas Central for this corridor and was successful in their application to include the Dallas to Houston HSR corridor in FRA's Corridor ID Program as well. Given the level of planning already completed for this segment, Amtrak successfully navigated Steps 1 and 2 and was recently granted nearly \$64 million by FRA to complete Step 3 of the Corridor ID Program. NCTCOG is currently conducting the Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation Connections Study (DFWHSTC) between Dallas, Arlington, and Fort Worth. In 2020, NCTCOG began an alternatives analysis (Phase 1) of high-speed transportation options (alignments and modes) between Fort Worth and Dallas with oversight by both the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and FRA. Upon completion of the alternatives analysis (Phase 1) in early 2022, high-speed rail was selected as the preferred mode along an alignment generally following the existing Interstate Highway 30 (IH 30) corridor. NCTCOG is currently advancing Phase 2 of the study, which includes preliminary engineering, environmental documentation, operating and maintenance plans, ridership estimates, project management plan, implementation plan, and a financial plan for the corridor.

It is expected that the previous planning work by Texas Central and the current project development by Amtrak in the Corridor ID Program for the Dallas to Houston segment, as well as the preliminary engineering, environmental documentation, and other project deliverables for the Dallas to Fort Worth segment advanced by NCTCOG will serve as the basis to develop an SDP for the Fort Worth to Houston HSR corridor. It is intended that all the details of the Dallas to Houston segment included within a Fort Worth to Houston HSR SDP will exactly match the SDP as produced by Amtrak. The progress and connections between projects and organizations that are supporting high-speed rail planning on the Fort Worth to Houston corridor are summarized in the diagram on the next page (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail Corridor Planning Project Timelines and Connections

Planning Support for Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail Corridor



*FTA and FRA co-led the Alternatives Analysis for Dallas to Fort Worth HSR and FRA is a Cooperating Agency for the FTA-led NEPA study

▲ Input from the DFW HSR alternatives analysis, preliminary engineering, and NEPA documentation related to the Dallas to Fort Worth segment will support development of Step 1 deliverables of the Fort Worth to Houston HSR Corridor ID process.

▲ Input from the Service Development Plan (CID Step 2) of Amtrak's Corridor ID project will support the Dallas to Houston segment of the Fort Worth to Houston HSR Corridor ID project, and serve as templates for the Dallas to Fort Worth segment.

▲ Input from the Texas Central FEIS supports the Service Development Plan (CID Step 2) and ongoing preliminary engineering and NEPA re-evaluation (CID Step 3) of Amtrak's Corridor ID project.

PROJECT SUPPORT

NCTCOG shall serve as project manager to implement a mutually agreed upon Scope of Work, monitor the progress of consultant activities, and serve as a liaison between the consultant and other partners, including FRA and Amtrak. The selected consultant will enter into a contract with NCTCOG for the agreed upon Scope and Budget. NCTCOG shall also serve as the contract manager and procurement administrator for the project.

SCOPE OF WORK

The work to be performed by the consultant will consist of providing effective project management; support for agency and stakeholder engagement; technical support and project planning for the development of the SDP SOW; cost estimation for the development of the SDP Budget; and additional project planning for the development of the SDP Schedule. NCTCOG is only requesting consultant assistance for a subset of the overall tasks needed to complete FRA Corridor ID Step 1. NCTCOG staff will be fully carrying out the Corridor ID Step 1 Project Administration and Management task/subtasks (including the final performance report), as well as the Existing Planning and Development Materials subtask, which is a compilation of the efforts and deliverables to date. Proposals should only address the completion of the tasks defined in this Scope of Work but should be familiar with FRA's Corridor ID Step 1 structure of tasks and subtasks as referenced above (FRA's Step 1 outline not included here). Proposers are encouraged to exercise creativity in responding to the project tasks and needs.

Task 1: Project Management

The consultant shall carry out project management for the completion of this Scope of Work. This will include a regular (biweekly) schedule of project meetings with the NCTCOG project team and other staff as needed. The consultant will also develop a mutually agreed upon project schedule to ensure the project is completed within the contract performance period and budget. Finally, the consultant will need to develop and carry out robust quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) processes for each task and deliverable. All project management elements should be defined and included in a project management plan that will be referenced and updated as needed as the project progresses.

Deliverable:

- Project Management Plan

Task 2: Partner and Stakeholder Coordination

The consultant shall support NCTCOG in coordination with project partners and stakeholders. This will include support for NCTCOG's regular (every three weeks/monthly) coordination meetings with FRA and for additional meetings and communications on an as needed basis to support the completion or revision of Step 1 tasks. The consultant will also develop a list or inventory of items needed from Amtrak and Texas Central's separate Corridor ID project for the Dallas to Houston High-Speed Rail corridor. This list will encompass items needed to complete NCTCOG's Step 1 process, items needed to support the development of the Step 2 SDP, and general coordination strategies to ensure effective collaboration with Amtrak and Texas Central on the entire Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail corridor as both projects advance. The consultant will document the elements of this task in a Partner and Stakeholder Coordination Support Plan that can be utilized throughout the project.

Deliverable:

- Partner and Stakeholder Coordination Support Plan

Task 3: FRA Corridor ID Step 2 Service Development Plan Statement of Work

The consultant shall develop a Statement of Work for the development of the FRA Corridor ID Step 2 Service Development Plan. The consultant must follow the instructions and structure found in FRA's Draft Statement of Work Framework (to be provided by NCTCOG) to fully scope all required tasks and subtasks for the SOW (see Exhibit 2). The consultant will coordinate with NCTCOG and FRA on the effective and accurate utilization of relevant past work on this corridor, as identified in NCTCOG's Step 1 deliverable referenced above, Existing Planning and Development Materials, to determine which SOW tasks and subtasks may be partially complete, fully complete, or not addressed at all based on FRA's objectives for the SDP. Related to this, the consultant will also identify any further relevant materials that may fulfill necessary elements of the SDP, in addition to those identified in NCTCOG's Existing Planning and Development Materials. Examples of past work include the concurrent National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process being conducted on the Dallas to Fort Worth segment and the Finalized Environmental Impact Statement and FRA Corridor ID deliverables for Amtrak and Texas Central's Dallas to Houston segment. Additionally, the consultant will provide strategic program advisory services on planning, designing, and implementing a high-speed rail service that links the Fort Worth to Dallas and Dallas to Houston segments; the consultant will outline how to leverage the SDP tasks and subtasks to prepare the Dallas to Fort Worth project to be a commercial, financial, and operational success as it links to Amtrak's Dallas to Houston project, achieving the Fort Worth to Houston HSR vision. The consultant may also be requested to

develop accompanying whitepapers, technical memos, templates, and/or examples to assist in the future development and implementation of the SDP. Overall, the consultant shall develop a Statement of Work that ensures the SDP, once completed in Step 2, can be a strong foundation for the implementation of FRA Corridor ID Step 3 Project Development and further steps in project and service planning, engineering, and eventual operation.

Deliverables:

- FRA Corridor ID Step 2 Service Development Plan Statement of Work
- Accompanying technical whitepapers, memos, templates, and examples to assist with SDP development and Implementation

Task 4: SDP Budget

The consultant shall prepare a budget for developing the draft and finalized SDP based on the necessary expertise and financial resources identified in the SOW developed in Task 3 above and any additional requirements set by FRA. This budget will be organized by task and subtask to deliver a full understanding of the costs and budget needs of each element of the SDP. Finally, the consultant will identify critical paths through the SDP tasks and subtasks for the completion of the SDP within the overall and task-level budgets. This will include the identification of budget risk points for each task and subtask, and critical path scenarios and strategies to mitigate those potential budget risks and variations. The budget should be developed in an intuitive, user-friendly method and format so that it can be carried forward as a tool for Corridor Step 2 project management. The budget could also be added to the schedule tool described in Task 5 so the budget implications to project schedule changes are understood.

Deliverable:

- Service Development Plan Project Budget

Task 5: SDP Schedule

The consultant shall develop a schedule for developing the draft and finalized SDP based on the identified resources and time needed to complete each task and subtask in the SOW developed in Task 3 above and any additional requirement set by FRA. The schedule will be organized by task and subtask to deliver a full understanding of the time needed for each element of the SDP and whether any tasks or subtasks have dependencies or can be carried out concurrently. Finally, the consultant will identify critical paths through the SDP tasks and subtasks for the completion of the SDP within the overall and task-level schedules. This will include the identification of schedule risk points for each task and subtask, and critical path scenarios and strategies to mitigate those potential schedule risks and variations. The budget should be developed in an

intuitive, user-friendly method and format so that it can be carried forward into Corridor Step 2 project management. This could include the integration of a dynamic scheduling tool that can allow the user to adjust or test out various additional project schedule scenarios to assess impacts to the overall schedule and budget of the project.

Deliverable:

- Service Development Plan Project Schedule

PRICING PROPOSAL

The consultant shall provide a detailed budget using the template excel file provided. The budget shall detail out separately the maximum raw salary by position, overhead, and profit. Additionally, any direct expenses shall be detailed. One tab should be completed for the Prime, which includes the total cost for each subconsultant. A separate tab should be completed showing the breakdown of cost for each subconsultant.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Proposers shall develop a schedule of tasks with completion deadlines and methodologies for the project. NCTCOG will select all the identified tasks or a subset of the tasks to be completed. This scope of services is based on a 10-month schedule from an anticipated contract execution or Notice to Proceed on or before April 1, 2025, to acceptance of the final deliverable. A draft schedule that was developed for NCTCOG’s project management plan with FRA is included as Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6: Draft Project Schedule

Activity	Due Date
Consultant Notice to Proceed	4/1/2025
2.2 Statement of Work	7/1/2025
FRA Review Period	7/31/2025
Sponsor Implementation of Edits	8/14/2025
Final FRA Review/Approval	8/28/2025
Submission of Subtask 2.3 Approved Project Schedule to FRA (Draft)	9/9/2025
FRA Review Period	10/9/2025
Sponsor Implementation of Edits	10/23/2025
Submission of Subtask 2.3 Approved Project Schedule to FRA (Final)	11/6/2025
Submission of Subtask 2.4 Approved Project Budget to FRA (Draft)	9/9/2025
FRA Review Period	10/9/2025

Activity	Due Date
Sponsor Implementation of Edits	10/23/2025
Submission of Subtask 2.4 Approved Project Budget to FRA (Final)	11/6/2025
Submission of Subtask 1.2 Final Performance Report to FRA (Draft)	11/18/2025
FRA Review Period	12/18/2025
Sponsor Implementation of Edits	1/8/2026
Submission of Subtask 1.2 Final Performance Report to FRA (Final)	1/22/2026

CONSULTANT SELECTION CRITERIA

The Consultant Selection Committee (CSC) will review all proposals and select a consultant it considers qualified to undertake the project. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Project Understanding | 25 percent |
| 2. Scope of Services | 25 percent |
| 3. Project Manager/Staff Qualifications | 20 percent |
| 4. Project Cost | 15 percent |
| 5. Firm Qualifications/Consultant References | 10 percent |
| 6. Project Schedule | 5 percent |

If the CSC determines that interviews will be required before a final decision can be made, the interviews will take place at the NCTCOG offices in Arlington, Texas; **the week of January 13, 2025**. Proposers should be willing and able to attend these interviews in person or via web conference, if necessary. Consultants who are invited to an interview will be notified by the close of business on **December 20, 2024**, that an interview has been scheduled. Costs for developing the proposal and costs attributed to interviews (and subsequent negotiations) are at the proposer's own expense and will not be reimbursed by NCTCOG.

CONTRACT AWARD

Following final negotiations of the work plan and costs satisfactory to NCTCOG, the consultant will be asked to execute a contract with NCTCOG. If applicable, a Notice to Proceed will be issued upon execution of the contract. NCTCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals,

to contract for any or all portions of the project with the selected consultant, or to hire multiple firms.

The successful responder(s) to this Request for Proposals is expected to provide qualified personnel to accomplish each portion of the work in this study. NCTCOG will maintain the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in its opinion, during the course of work on this project, to be unqualified to perform the work.

The Texas Legislature has adopted House Bill 1295. In short, the law states that a governmental entity or state agency may not enter into certain contracts with a business entity unless the business entity submits a disclosure of interested parties (Form 1295) to our agency at the time of a signed contract. As part of contract development, the Consultant will be asked to complete the disclosure of interested parties electronically and submit through the Texas Ethics Commission website. NCTCOG will provide a specific contract number associated with the award for inclusion in the submittal. Once submitted, the Consultant will be requested to return an e-mail confirmation of submittal to NCTCOG. For more information about the process, please visit the following website for Frequently Asked Questions:

https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/resources/FAQs/FAQ_Form1295.php.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIPATION

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation must meet the **32%** percentage goal identified for this type of procurement. Proposers should also include an Affirmative Action Plan is included in the proposal. Failure on the part of the majority contractor to meet this goal or show meaningful good faith efforts may be grounds for finding the proposal nonresponsive.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions regarding the RFP shall be directed in writing by e-mail to TransRFPs@nctcog.org by the close of business on **November 1, 2024**. A pre-proposal conference will be conducted at the NCTCOG offices, at 616 Six Flags Drive, CenterPoint Two, in Arlington, Texas on Thursday November 7, 2024, at 4:00 pm, in the Transportation Council Room, First Floor. The Pre-Proposal Conference is also accessible virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Pre-Proposal Conference

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 244 050 622 717

Dial in by phone

+1 903-508-4574,,338261124#

Phone conference ID: 338 261 124#

Attendance is not mandatory at the pre-proposal conference but is strongly encouraged to benefit potential proposers from the discussion and answers provided to questions. Questions submitted in advance of the pre-proposal conference will be answered at the pre-proposal conference. All questions and responses will be posted on the NCTCOG website at www.nctcog.org/rfp by the close of business on **November 8, 2024**. NCTCOG reserves the right to respond to inquiries as it deems necessary.

OVERALL PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

This RFP shall be used to accept, review, and score proposals based on the following schedule with the intent of awarding a Cost Plus Fixed Fee/ Cost Reimbursement contract. The following represents the schedule of procurement activities leading to contract award:

Issue Request for Proposals	October 25, 2024
Last Day to Submit Questions	November 1, 2024
Pre-Proposal Conference	November 7, 2024
NCTCOG Q&A Posted to Website	November 8, 2024
Proposals Due & Proposal Public Opening	December 6, 2024
Consultant Selection Committee	week of December 16, 2024
Interviews (if needed)	week of January 13, 2025
NCTCOG Committee Approval	February 27, 2025
Execute Contracts	March 2025

NCTCOG reserves the right to make changes to the above-mentioned schedule. All such changes shall be made by an amendment to the RFP and shall be posted on NCTCOG's website at www.nctcog.org/rfp. It is the responsibility of the consultant to frequently check this website for information concerning amendments to the RFP.

*Public opening of the proposals will be done via Microsoft Teams on **December 6, 2024**, at 5:05 pm. A link to the Microsoft Teams meeting is below. Microsoft Teams is integrated with audio so you will only need to use the conference call number (below) if you are unable to access the Microsoft Teams App. The Teams App is available for download [HERE](#).

Public Opening of Proposals via Microsoft Teams:

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 211 249 867 204

Dial in by phone

+1 903-508-4574,,88356719#

Phone conference ID: 883 567 19#

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSALS

PLANNING SERVICES

The Sample Contract provided with this Request for Proposals contains federal requirements which must be included with Proposals. Appendices C through H contain compliance requirements and certification forms which must accompany the Proposals. **Failure to comply with the requirements may result in finding the proposal to be nonresponsive.**

Additional information is provided below:

1. Proposers may submit one hard copy or one flash drive of the proposal to **Brendon Wheeler, Program Manager**, North Central Texas Council of Governments, 616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, Texas 76011. **Proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 6, 2024.** Proposals received after that time will not be considered and will be returned to the proposer unopened. Proposals containing original signatures and notary seals should be labeled "Original." The in-hand submittal will count as the official submittal. In addition to the in-hand submittal, NCTCOG is requesting electronic submission of proposal documents to TransRFPs@nctcog.org. Electronic submissions only will **not** be evaluated.
2. The proposal should address the criteria identified in the Request for Proposals that will be used for consultant selection. Proposals should include, at a minimum, the following information.
 - **Proposal Formatting** – Proposals should be printed double-sided and include a footer containing consultant firm name, page number, and total pages in the proposal. (e.g., Planning firm 1 of 20).
 - **Cover Letter** -- A brief summary of the key points of the proposal and approach to accomplishing the work. Name and address of the firm, as well as the contact person's name, phone number, and email address should also be included.
 - **Project Understanding** - A general description of the approach to be used in accomplishing the work, including the project organization and management plan. Senior personnel who will work on the project, including subcontractor personnel, should be identified by name and by role in the project; e.g., project manager, principal in charge, project advisor, etc. The project manager in particular must be specified and a clear indication given as to his/her involvement in the project. If more than one firm will be involved, the proposal should clearly delineate the work to be accomplished by each firm and how the work will be coordinated and managed. Any special requirements or coordination needs should be clearly identified.

- **Scope of Services and Schedule** - This section should respond to the Request for Proposals task descriptions for the project by describing clearly in detail what and how work in each task will be accomplished, the technical methodology to be used, and the planned work flow and schedule. A description should be included concerning quality control and how this will be maintained and accomplished during the course of this project.
- **Consultant Qualifications** - This section should identify the background and experience of the consulting firm(s) and individuals in similar types of work and the results of that experience, along with up-to-date references (name, current affiliation, and phone number), should be included. Knowledge of the Dallas-Fort Worth area should be specifically indicated.
- **Compliance Requirements** - Appendices C through J of the Sample Contract contain compliance requirements and other certification forms which must accompany the Proposal.
- **Affirmative Action Plan** - NCTCOG is required, under Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 21 to request from all contractors an Affirmative Action Plan for the contracting entity. Such a plan will be reviewed by NCTCOG to determine compliance with federal Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. You are requested, then, to submit a plan which should include, at a minimum, a policy statement and utilization analysis of your workforce. An indication of the number and percent of your employees who would be classified as minorities, including both women and ethnic minorities, should be provided. An indication of the number and percent in professional versus nonprofessional positions, or administration versus clerical positions, should also be provided.
- **Entities that Boycott Israel (House Bill 89)**
 - If proposers are required to make a certification pursuant to Section 2271.002 of the Texas Government Code, proposers should include a certification statement that they do not and will not boycott Israel during the term of the contract resulting from this solicitation. If the proposer does not make that certification, proposer must indicate that in its response and state why the certification is not required.
- **Prohibition on Firearm and Ammunition Industry Discrimination (S.B. 19)**
 - Pursuant to Chapter 2274, Government Code, as enacted by S.B. 19, 87th Legislature, NCTCOG is prohibited from using public funds to contract with entities who discriminate against firearm and ammunition industries. By signing this contract, the Consultant agrees that it does not have a practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association and will not discriminate during the term of the Contract.

disadvantaged persons and in which at least 51 percent of the voting interest and 51 percent of the beneficial ownership interests legitimately are held by disadvantaged persons. Such persons include individuals who are Women, Black, Hispanic, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Asian-Indian Americans, or any other minorities or individuals found to be disadvantaged by the Small Business Administration pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act. **D/M/WBE Certificates issued through the Texas Unified Certification Program are required.**

- c. The contractor shall maintain for three years such records as are necessary to determine compliance with their DBE obligations and shall submit regular reports to enable the North Central Texas Council of Governments to monitor this compliance.
5. The NCTCOG Executive Board encourages the use of local firms. However, all proposals, regardless of firm locale, will be evaluated using the consultant selection criteria contained in the Request for Proposals.
6. A consultant selection committee will review the proposals and select a firm it considers qualified to undertake the project. The selection of the proposal will be based on the technical proposal and/or interviews but will be subject to negotiation of conditions of cost satisfactory to NCTCOG. NCTCOG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to contract for any or all portions of the project with the selected consultant.
7. As part of the proposal, consultants should summarize the budget for the project on the excel form provided. The overall project budget should include the cost of personnel, fringe benefits, overhead supplies, printing, and travel. The budget shall detail out separately the tasks by prime and sub-consultant, and profit. If needed, additional tabs should be added for sub-consultants working on the project.
8. Procurement information shall be a public record to the extent provided by the Texas Open Records Act and the Freedom of Information Act and shall be available to the public as provided therein. If a proposal contains information that the proposer considers proprietary and does not want disclosed to the public or used for any purpose other than the evaluation of the offer, all such information must be indicated with the following suggested language:

The information contained on pages _____ shall not be duplicated used in whole or in part, for any purpose other than to evaluate the proposal; provided that if a contract is awarded to this office as a result of or in

connection with the submission of such information, NCTCOG has the right to duplicate, use or disclose this information to the extent provided in the contract.

9. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Requirement

Pursuant to Chapter 176 of the Local Government Code, any person or agent of a person who contracts or seeks to contract for the sale or purchase of property, goods, or services with a local governmental entity (i.e. NCTCOG) must disclose in the Questionnaire Form CIQ (“Questionnaire”) the person’s affiliation or business relationship that might cause a conflict of interest with the local governmental entity. By law, the Questionnaire must be filed with NCTCOG no later than seven days after the date the person begins contract discussions or negotiations with the NCTCOG, or submits an application or response to a request for proposals or bids, correspondence or another writing related to a potential agreement with the NCTCOG.

Updated Questionnaires must be filed in conformance with Chapter 176.

A copy of the Questionnaire Form CIQ is enclosed with the submittal documents. The form is also available at <https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/forms/conflict/CIQ.pdf>

If you have any questions about compliance, please consult your own legal counsel. Compliance is the individual responsibility of each person or agent of a person who is subject to the filing requirement. An offense under Chapter 176 is a Class C misdemeanor.