

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE TEXAS HIGH SPEED RAIL PROJECT BY TEXAS CENTRAL PARTNERS

The Greater Dallas Planning Council (GDPC) is the oldest Dallas area civic organization that focuses on issues shaping regional growth consistent with its published Mission “...to shape, promote and advocate a creative sustainable future for the Dallas Region”. Each GDPC Task Force addresses fundamental issues affecting the future vitality of the region, and according to the GDPC mission, issues should be viewed through the lens of sustainability.

GDPC strongly supports development of a North-South high speed rail line (HSR) between Dallas and Houston as currently proposed by Texas Central Partners, LLC.

The implementation of a privately funded high-speed rail system provides significant potential benefits throughout the Dallas-Houston corridor by reducing congestion on major highways; and by connecting businesses, individuals, families and communities between Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth, in a timely, efficient and safe manner.

The GDPC also recognizes the additional benefits associated with this project, including:

- Job creation and direct economic benefits of \$10 billion.
- Air quality improvement from reduced traffic on IH 45, one of the most congested highways in the state.
- An additional mobility option for individuals traveling to and from Dallas and Houston for business family or recreational reasons.

GDPC believes that the benefits of HSR will far outweigh any adverse impacts resulting from its construction. GDPC believes it is in the state's best interest that the HSR developer treat land owners affected by its construction and operation in an equitable and reasonable manner. This includes fair and adequate compensation for any property rights required; utilizing environmentally sensitive construction and operational techniques; and maintaining a continuous stakeholder involvement program to address local concerns.

The GDPC therefore:

- Opposes any legislation that would negatively impact development of the high-speed rail project.
- Encourages state and federal agencies to take steps to facilitate development of the project, while protecting the state's environmental resources and allowing sufficient stakeholder involvement.
- Supports efforts by the Cities of Dallas and Houston to assist the project's developers in identifying station sites that enable good transit-oriented design.
- Encourages the project developer to follow environmentally sensitive and sustainable principles and practices in the design and development of HSR facilities, facilitate adjoining transit-oriented development, employ complete streets design concepts and provide for community involvement in project design and implementation.

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