

**The Multi-State Coalition Efforts
to Make the I-20 Corridor
Long-Distance Passenger Rail
Connection a Reality**



**Presentation to the
Texas Rail Advocates
Southwestern Rail Conference**

by

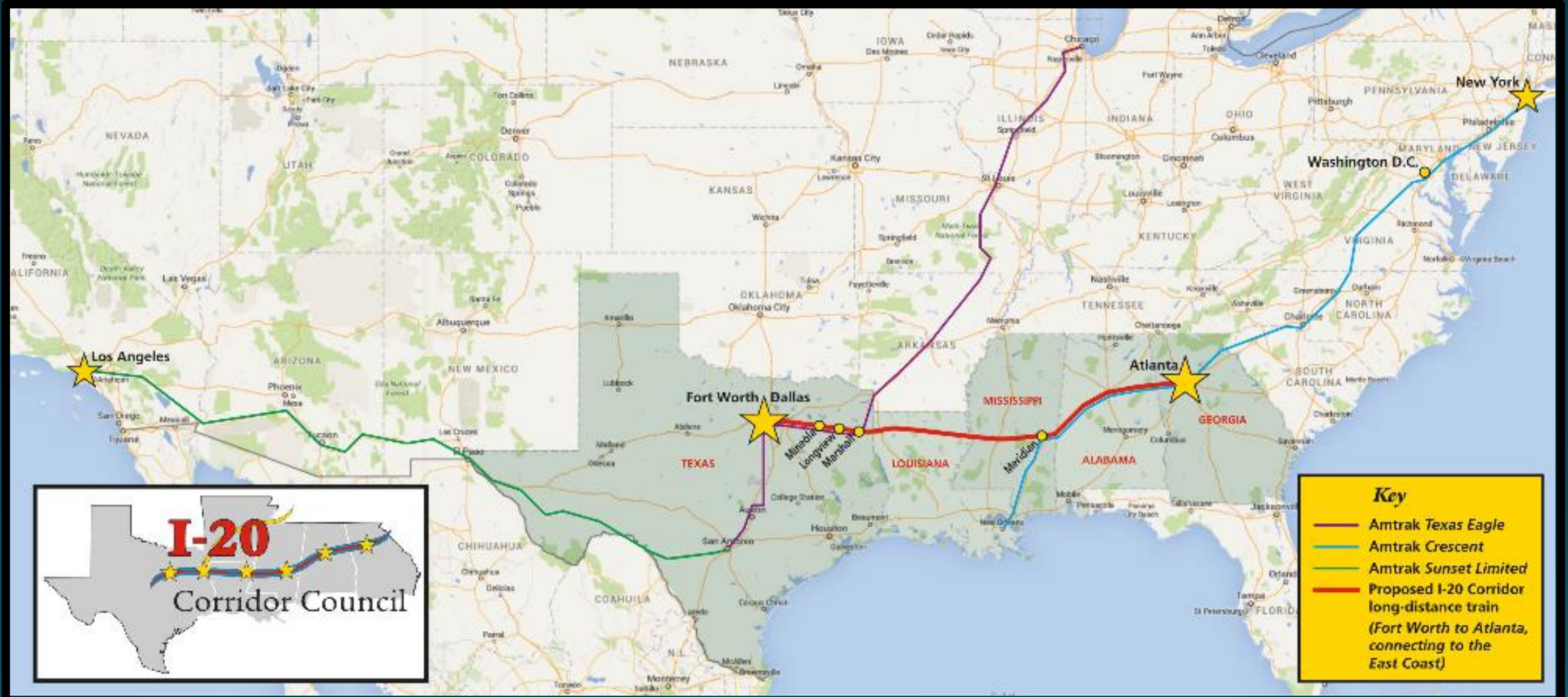
Richard Anderson

Chairman, I-20 Corridor Council

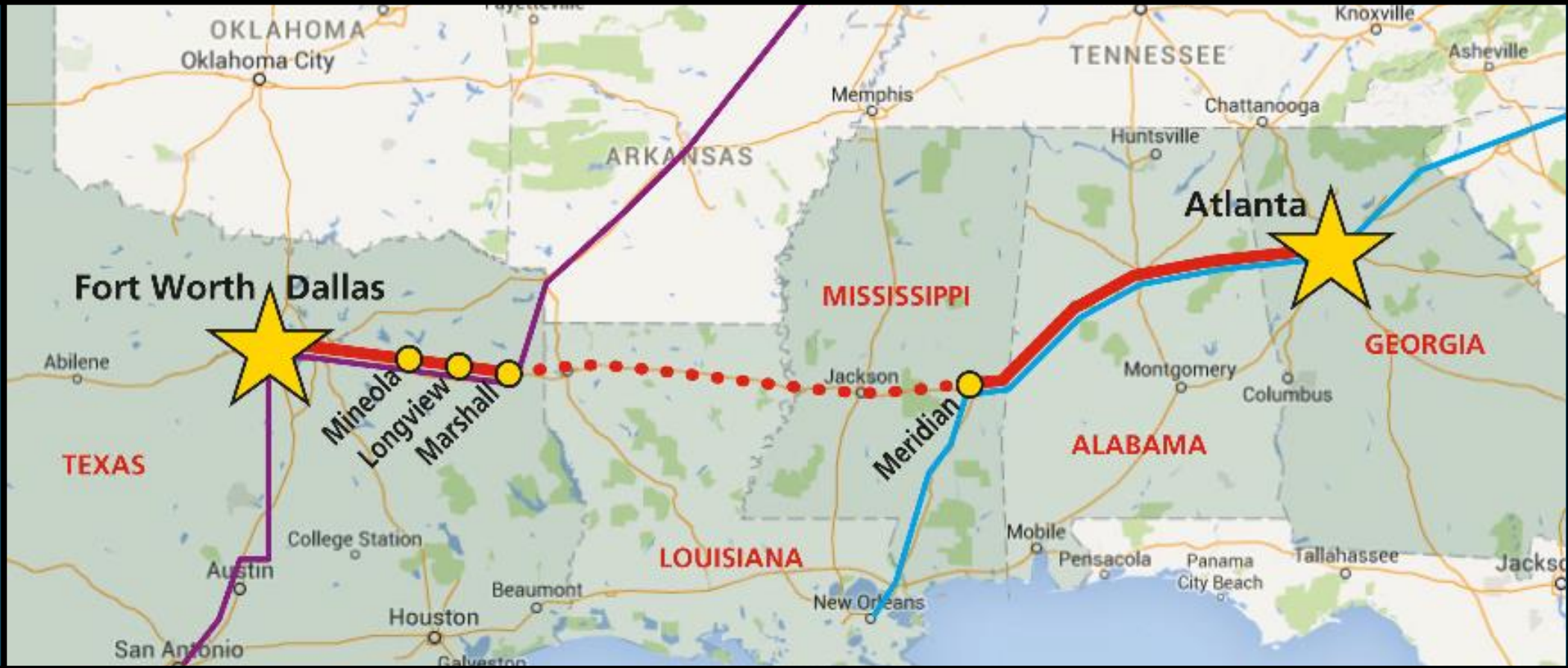
April 1, 2022

Proposed I-20 Corridor Long-Distance Train between Dallas/Fort Worth and Atlanta (connecting with the East Coast and New York City)

With the passage of the bi-partisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in November 2021, we believe **THE TIME IS NOW** to make this important I-20 Corridor passenger rail route a reality.



By “connecting the dots” on this route between **Marshall, Texas to Meridian, Mississippi** on existing track, through northern Louisiana, we create an East-West passenger rail connection across the South, connecting to the East Coast and New York City.



Connecting the mega-regions of greater Dallas/Fort Worth (7.5 million in population) and greater Atlanta (6 million), and all the smaller cities and communities in between.

So, why, at this point in time, are we in a favorable position of readiness to push this important I-20 Corridor long-distance passenger rail connection “over the goal line” and make it a reality?

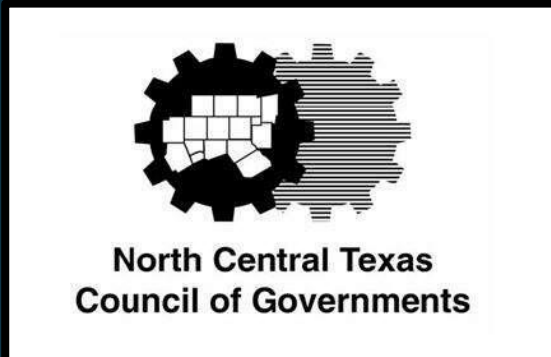
Strong grassroots, multi-state coalition of support built and sustained over many years

Feasibility and Capacity studies of I-20 Corridor route already completed

Passage of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), including \$66 billion for rail

Merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern currently underway



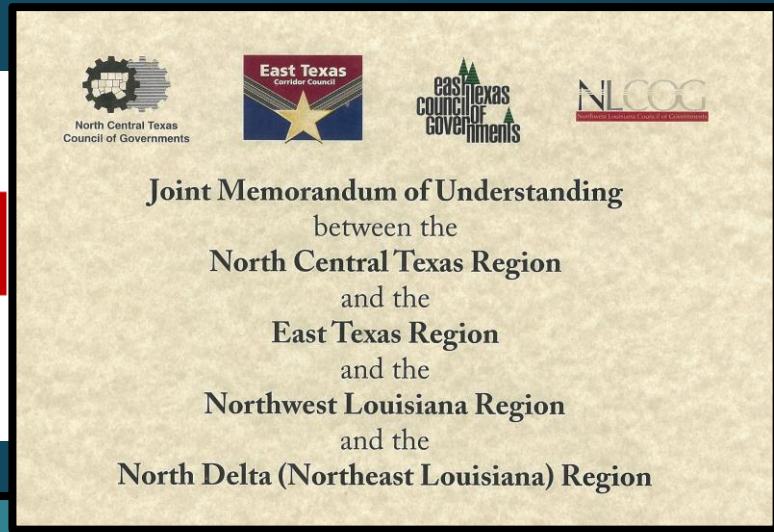


One reason we're in a favorable position is that, for more than a decade, we've built a strong, grassroots, collaborative, multi-state coalition of support for this rail route in Texas and Louisiana, as well as in Mississippi and reaching out to Alabama and Georgia--including mayors, judges, councils of governments, local, state, and federal officials, business and economic leaders, university and college presidents, and many other stakeholders along the route.

The I-20 Corridor Council, in northeast Texas, initiated and took the lead on the current multi-state efforts for this route in November 2006.

We also appreciate the bi-partisan support of Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy, Louisiana Secretary of Transportation Shawn Wilson, and Mississippi Senator Roger Wicker.

It's been a parallel strategy.



Throughout the many years of this process, it's been a parallel strategy of reaching out to and working with our colleagues to our East and West to build and sustain a strong multi-state coalition in support for this passenger rail connection and continually working to determine what will make the route economically viable, determine the cost on existing track, and determine that it won't impede freight traffic.



Another reason the I-20 Corridor rail route is in a favorable position of **readiness** at this time is that we already have two critical studies of the Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi portion of the route completed.

The Corridor Council obtained, a number of years ago, **\$738,000 in federal funding for the feasibility and capacity studies with the assistance of then-Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas.**

The Corridor Council was able to steward the capacity study so that it studied, not just the Texas portion of the route, which the funding had originally been designated to cover, but instead the entire Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi portion of the route, at no cost to Louisiana or Mississippi.

The **feasibility study, completed in 2015, determined** that the I-20 Corridor long-distance route is **economically viable, on existing track, without an ongoing annual expense.**

The **capacity study, completed in 2017,** reflects that, for the comparatively modest expenditure of some \$80 million, **additional siding could be installed so as not to impede freight traffic.**

Amtrak has stated that the **study is in the process of being updated,** to establish updated cost estimates for the route.

On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, providing a much-needed and unprecedented amount of funding for passenger rail.

With the assistance of Dallas Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, representatives from the I-20 Corridor Council met with Amtrak President Stephen Gardner on August 23, 2021.

Rep. Johnson, at Mr. Gardner's request, wrote a letter to Surface Transportation Board Chairman Martin Oberman to urge that CP/KCS negotiations provide for passenger rail service on I-20 route.



We honor and deeply appreciate Congresswoman Johnson's leadership and support for the I-20 Corridor route and for her extraordinary leadership for transportation and so many important issues for our region, state, and nation for 40 years!



Members of the Southern Rail Commission



Also, thank you to Texas Rail Advocates for your ongoing strong support for this route through the years!

To introduce my fellow speaker, Knox Ross, today, I'll share some background. In 2014, the Corridor Council, reached out to the **Southern Rail Commission (SRC)** and they signed on to a resolution of support for the I-20 Corridor passenger rail route.

The SRC's major efforts during the past 15 years have focused primarily on restoring Amtrak's Gulf Coast route and we appreciate their dedicated and effective work on that.

On February 23, 2022, SRC Chairman Ross and Amtrak representatives came to Bossier City to meet with some of the members of the Louisiana portion of the I-20 coalition and said that they would join us to assist with the ongoing I-20 Corridor efforts. We welcome and appreciate their support and collaboration.

