

CENTRAL TEXAS
Regional Mobility Authority

Regional Rail Feasibility Study





Mobility Authority and City of Round Rock funded a study to review the feasibility of a commuter rail line serving Williamson County

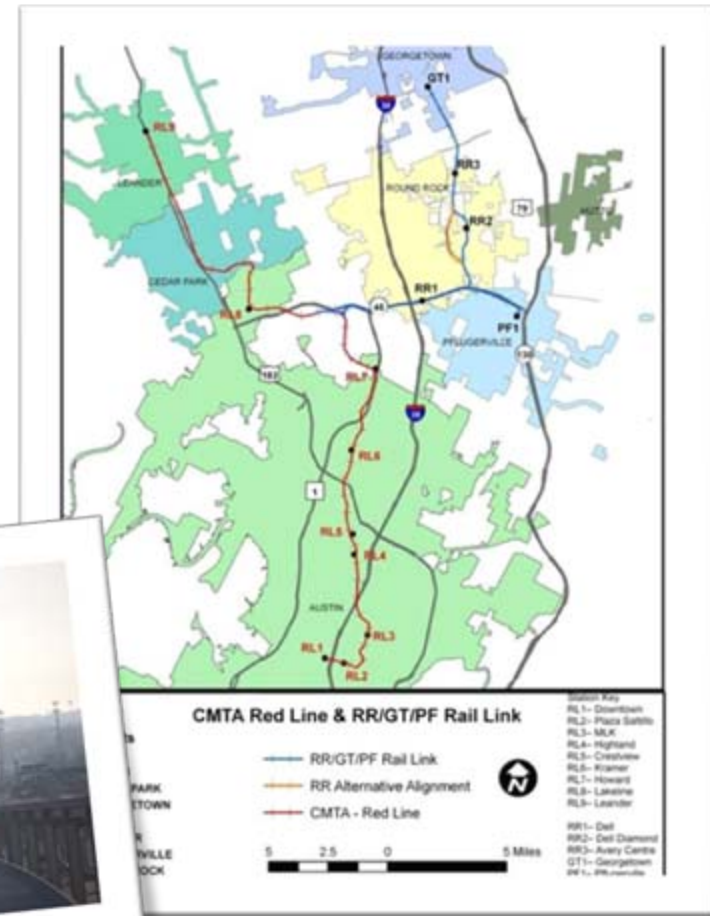
- The fatal flaw study reviewed
 - Preliminary ridership estimates
 - Estimated construction and operation expenses
 - Environmental constraints
 - Funding and governance options



Proposed Route



- 18.3 mile route would extend from Georgetown/Pflugerville/Round Rock to downtown Austin via a link with the Capital Metro Red Line near the Howard Lane station
- Route would follow Missouri/Kansas/Texas rail corridor and SH 45



Projected Ridership



- At least 2,900 passengers expected to ride the rail line each day in 2030



Estimated Cost



- Capital cost estimated at \$340 million or \$18.6 million per mile
- Operating cost is projected to be at up to \$10 million annually depending on the level of service





- Majority of route is located in previously developed corridor with limited environmental impact
- Planned route could impact Chaos and Beck Cave Preserves
 - Chaos and Beck Caves were set aside as preserves as part of SH 45 toll project
 - They are home to endangered species
 - Impacting these caves would require acquisition and establishment of an alternative preserve site





- 50% to 80% of capital cost could come from Federal Transit Administration “New Starts” program
- Under 50% scenario, local contribution would be an estimated \$170 million
 - Study concluded local governments have necessary bonding capacity
 - Bonding would require voter approval in several jurisdictions
 - Significant bonding capacity would be consumed by project
- Possibility of special transportation district enabled by the Legislature



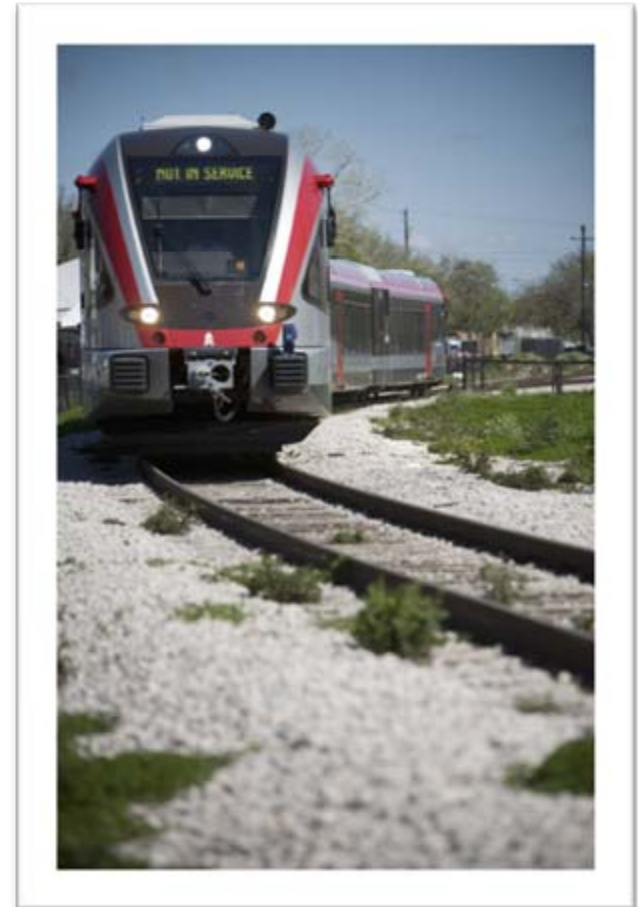
- Project development would require agreements between numerous public agencies including:

- TxDOT
- Williamson County
- Travis County
- Round Rock, Pflugerville, Georgetown, Austin
- Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority



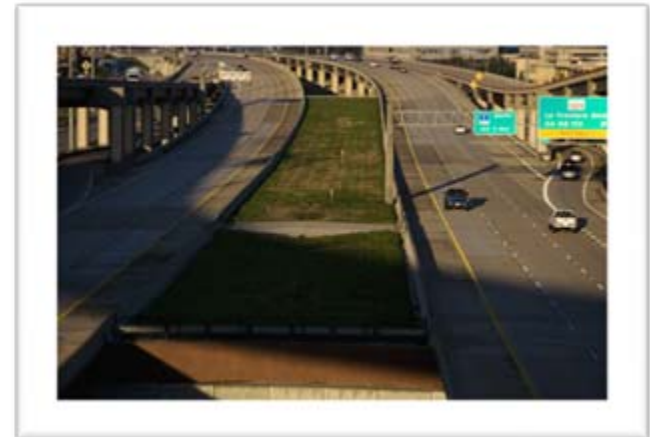


- When Capital Metro Red Line was developed, Williamson County line had not been contemplated
 - The Red Line was not designed to handle the volume of passenger traffic projected to originate from the Williamson County line
- Options to address capacity constraint
 - Higher capacity rail cars; compatibility with existing Red Line cars
 - More cars per train/larger stations
 - Double/triple track





- Placing proposed rail line along or in the median of SH 45 would:
 - Require TxDOT concurrence
 - Limit options to add future roadway capacity to include Express Lanes and/or Bus Rapid Transit
 - Coordination during construction of direct connect ramps at IH 35
- Annual O&M expenses
 - Fare box collections will not cover O&M
 - Who pays the difference?



Recommendations



- Project challenges should be studied more closely to determine potential solutions
- Corridor could be used for other mobility options such as Express Lanes and Bus Rapid Transit
- Additional study as part of a regional mobility strategy is recommended





- Decisions and issues that must be addressed before any additional work is undertaken
 - Round Rock decision on pursuit of project
 - Resolution of various challenges
 - Funding sources for initial capital outlay and O&M expenses
 - Capacity constraints
 - Right-of-way issues
 - Infrastructure issues on Red Line
 - Phase two of the study process could be alternatives analysis that includes all transportation modes



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