



City of Dallas

Dallas Streetcar Update

**City Council
October 18, 2023**

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City of Dallas

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Downtown Dallas Inc.

Presentation Purpose



Recap the history of the Dallas Streetcar System, discuss the challenges with moving the Central Link Streetcar forward, lessons learned, and the proposed next step.



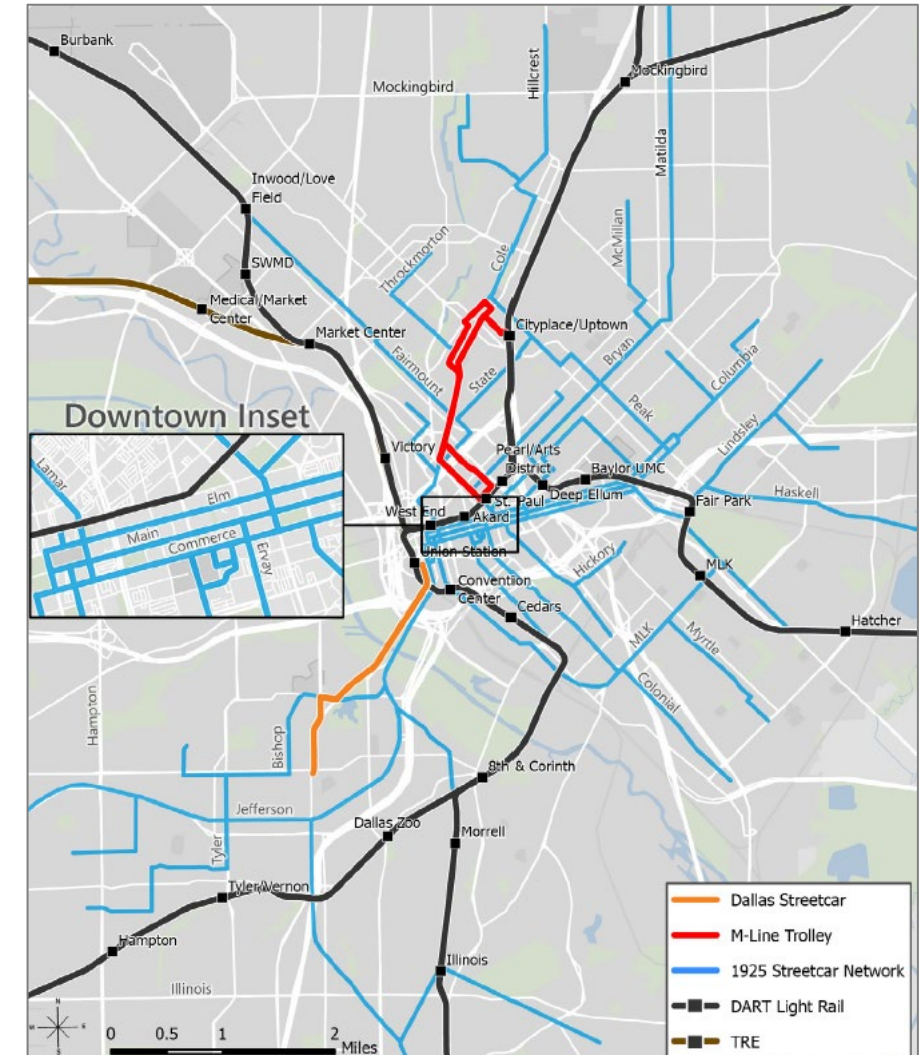
Presentation Overview



- Review of Streetcar Phases
- Background/History
- Moving Central Link Forward
- Challenges/Lessons Learned
- Proposed Next Steps

Existing and Historic Streetcars in Dallas

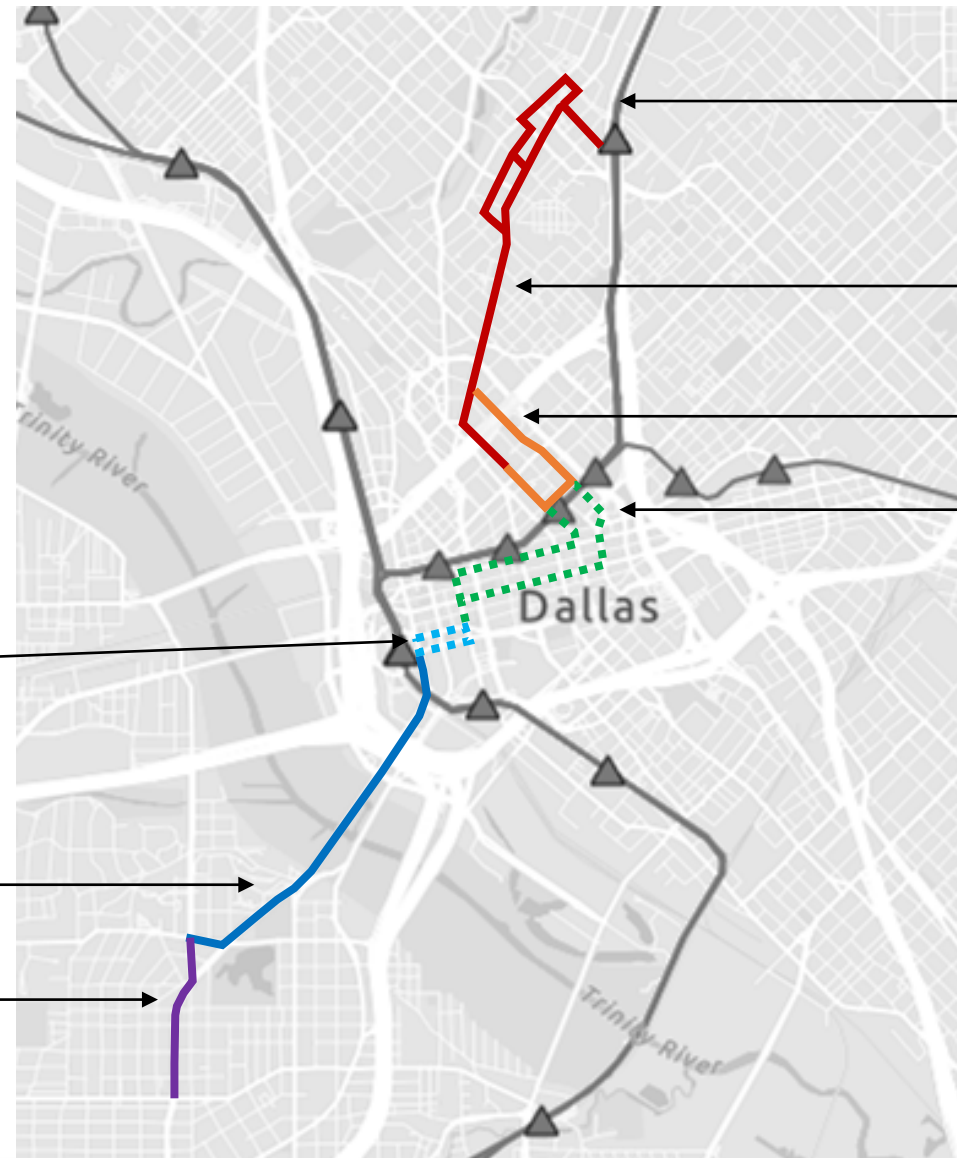
Source: DART Service Area Streetcar Feasibility Study, 2022



Background/History



Review of Streetcar Phases



DART Light Rail Lines

M-Line Trolley (1989)

M-Line Trolley Extension (2015)

Proposed Central Link
Locally Preferred Alignment

Proposed Omni Convention
Center Loop

Streetcar Starter Line / Oak Cliff
TIGER Project (2015)

Extension to Bishop Arts (2016)



Background/History



Developing a connected streetcar system has been a focus of City planning efforts for nearly two decades.

- **2005:** Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the Dallas Central Business District recommended a Downtown streetcar circulation system. Focus should be on extending the McKinney Trolley into Downtown.
- **2009:** Briefing to the Transportation & Environment Committee:
 - Proposed goals for downtown streetcar:
 - Improve livability of downtown Dallas,
 - Provide predictable circulation between buildings and attractions,
 - Serve as a feeder and distributor of light rail trips within downtown, and
 - Serve as a base route for future streetcar line expansion to other districts.



Background/History



- **2009:** Briefing to the Transportation & Environment Committee (cont.):
 - Proposed streetcar alignment screening criteria:
 - Transit connectivity, connections to major attractions,
 - Economic development potential, capital cost, operating cost, ridership.
 - Proposed governance structure and roles and responsibilities:
 - City-owned, operated by DART by agreement.
 - City would own and maintain right-of-way; provide funding for infrastructure, vehicles, and operations; and provide oversight.
 - DART (by agreement and funding from the City) would design the system, procure the vehicles, contract for construction, operate and maintain the streetcar system.



Background/History



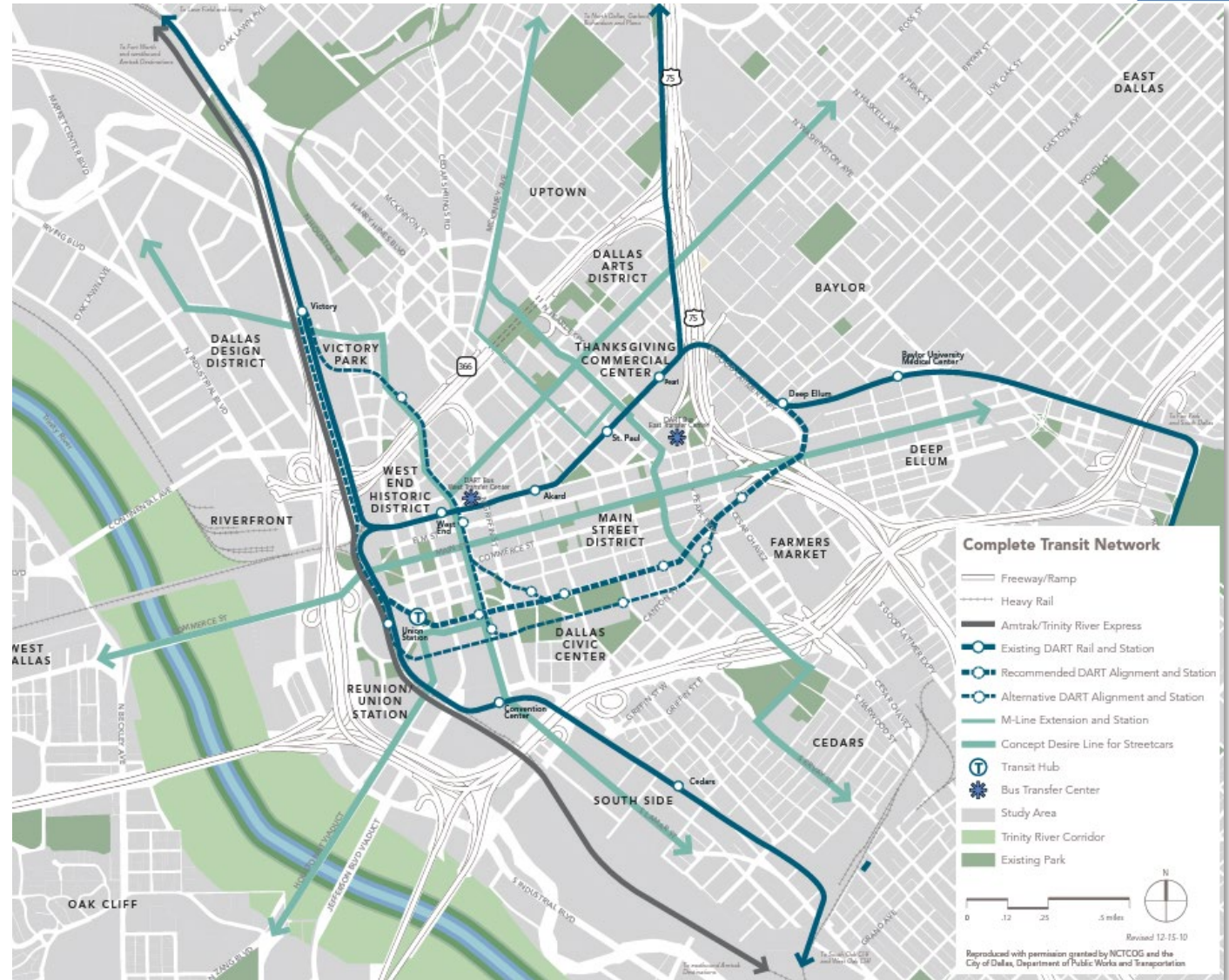
- **2009:** Federal grant applications submitted for two streetcar projects: streetcar linking Downtown Main Street Garden to Oak Cliff Methodist Hospital via Union Station, and MATA M-Line Extension.
- **2010:** NCTCOG was awarded a TIGER grant on behalf of City to construct a scaled back Streetcar Starter Line from Union Station to Oak Cliff. DART was awarded a grant to construct the MATA M-Line Extension.
- **2011:** Initial ILA between DART, City of Dallas, and NCTCOG was executed.



Background/History



- **2011:** Downtown Dallas 360 adopted. Provided a preliminary framework for a streetcar system plan.



Background/History



- **2013:** NCTCOG awarded the City a grant for the Bishop Arts Streetcar Extension and for conceptual design for the Omni Loop. City committed to identifying the operations and maintenance (O&M) funding, and for the funding to be available prior to revenue service beginning.
- **2014:** ILA executed between DART and City of Dallas for O&M of the Starter Streetcar Line. Established the methodology for calculating the O&M costs that the City would owe to DART, and a schedule for determining and approving those costs each year.
- **2015:** Streetcar Starter Line to Oak Cliff and the M-Line Extension were completed.
- **2016/2017:** Extension to Bishop Arts was completed. ILA with DART for O&M was amended to include the Bishop Arts Extension.



Background/History



- **2016:** Dallas City Council resolution stated that determining alignments for D2 and the Central Link Streetcar were priorities.
- **2017:** DART finalized an alternatives analysis for the Central Link alignment. Focused on four short-listed alignments: Main Street, Commerce/Elm, Young Street, and Ross/San Jacinto.
 - Downtown Dallas Inc. also funded an Economic Benefits Assessment for the various alignments.

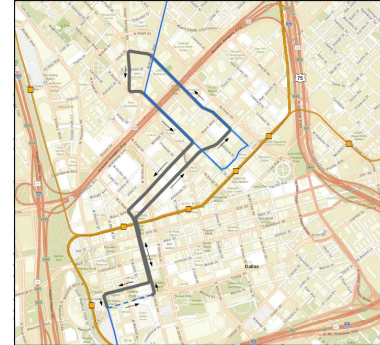
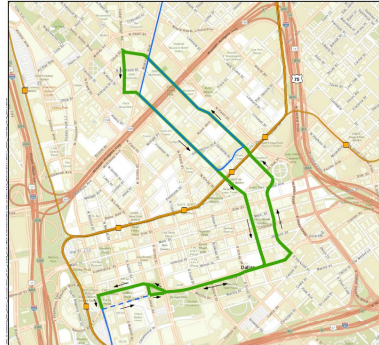
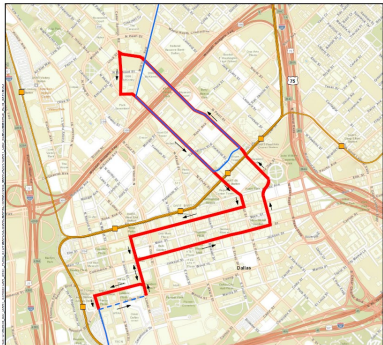
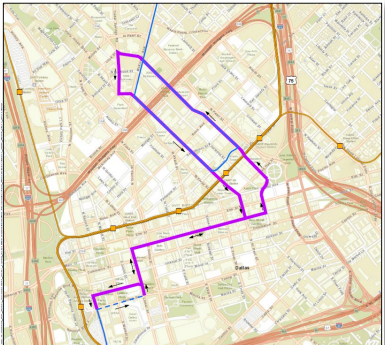


Table 5-9. Small Starts Potential Evaluation

Category	Criteria	Main St.	Elm/Commerce	Young St.	Ross/San Jacinto
Route Information	Route Length in Track Miles	2.38	2.39	2.51	1.95
	Capital Cost (2017 dollars in millions)	\$90.2	\$97.36	\$100.0	\$87.4
	Annual O&M Costs (in millions)	\$4.93	\$4.94	\$4.95	\$4.74
	Average Weekday Ridership (2040 City)	3,500	3,500	1,600	4,200
Purpose and Need	Serve Downtown Markets and Neighborhoods	●	●	●	●
	Efficiently Connect Central Link	●	●	●	●
	Improve Integration with Downtown Rail and Bus Services	●	●	●	●
	Support Economic Development	●	●	●	●
Performance and Impacts	Ridership	●	●	●	●
	Capital and Operating Costs	●	●	●	●
	Cost Effectiveness Indicators	●	●	●	●
	Traffic, Parking, Transit and Pedestrian Impacts	●	●	●	●
	Community and Environmental Impacts	●	●	●	●
	Constructability and Operability	●	●	●	●
Economic Development	Tourism/Entertainment (Potential Spending)	●	●	●	●
	Real Estate Premiums (Office)	●	●	●	●
	Real Estate Development (Residential)	●	●	●	●
FTA Small Starts Criteria	Rating Potential	●	●	●	●
SUMMARY RATING		●	●	●	●

● Good ● Fair ● Poor ● Not acceptable

Supplemental Alternatives Analysis - Final

January 2018 | 62



Background/History



- **2017:** Dallas City Council passed a resolution endorsing Elm/Commerce as the locally preferred alternative for Central Link but also recommending additional analysis of the Main Street and Young Street alternatives.
 - Next steps: enter FTA Project Development process for a Small Starts Grant. Bring alternatives back to City Council for approval once project development phase is complete.
 - FTA requires acceptable degree of local financial commitment including 20-year financial plan and evidence of stable and dependable financing sources
- **2018-2020:** City focus shifted to finding funding mechanisms for the existing downtown to Bishop Arts streetcar, and design of the Omni Loop Extension.



Background/History



- **2019:** Previous ILAs were consolidated into a Master ILA agreement.

CITY RESPONSIBILITIES	DART RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streetcar System Owner• Project Scope• Planning Funding• Grant Management (unless DART is grantee)• Design and Construction Funding• Utility Relocations• O&M Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical Advisor/Owner Representative• Planning, Environmental, and Preliminary Design• Final Design, Procurement, and Construction• Operations and Maintenance• System Safety• Fare Collection



Background/History



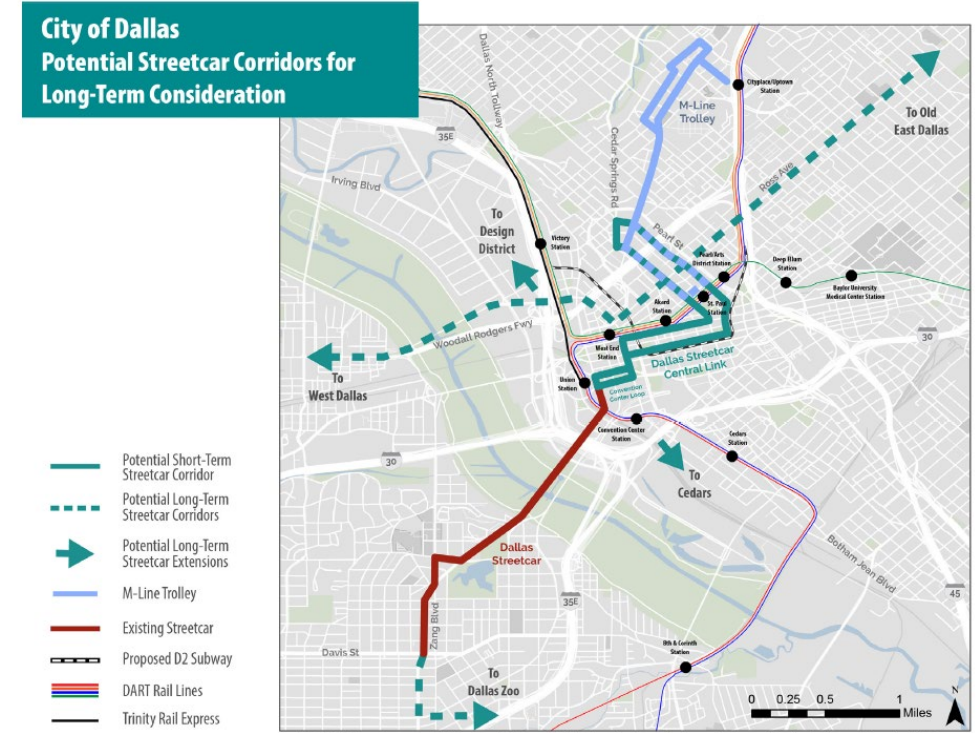
- **2022:** Dallas City Council passed a resolution for D2, with the following statement:
 - “SECTION 3. That if at the 30 percent design milestone of the revised D2 alignment, or by the end of calendar year 2024, whichever is earlier, the City Council determines that the construction of the D2 project will be deferred, there will be discussions with the City and DART regarding their future potential increased contributions to the Dallas Streetcar program, other DART transportations programs, and other transit services improvements, that may result in future interlocal agreement(s).”



Background/History



- **2020-2022:** DART prepared a Service Area Streetcar Feasibility Study.
 - It provided a high-level assessment of feasibility, costs, and benefits for different routes, to help cities determine whether to move forward with more detailed studies.
 - In Dallas, routes that were evaluated included Central Link, Knox-Henderson Extension, Southern Gateway Extension, Ross Avenue Extension, Gaston Avenue Extension, and West Dallas Extension.



Potential Streetcar Corridor	Track Miles	Capital Cost (2020\$)	Annual O&M Cost (2020\$)	Ridership Potential
Central Link	2.7	\$108.4 M	\$5,430,000	Moderate
Modern M-Line	3.4	\$121.4 M	\$2,943,000	Moderate
Knox Henderson Extension	2.8	\$90.2 M	\$1,687,000	Low
Southern Gateway Extension	2.5	\$76.9 M	\$474,000	Fair
Ross Avenue Corridor	5.6	\$175.1 M	\$5,527,000	Moderate
Gaston Avenue Corridor	5.4	\$167.6 M	\$5,490,000	Moderate
West Dallas Corridor	6.2	\$191.0 M	\$5,998,000	Fair



Background/History



- Recommended next steps identified in the feasibility study:
 - ☒ Co-host Governance and Funding Workshop
 - ☐ Authorize Financial Feasibility Assessment of O&M Funding Options
 - ☐ Establish O&M funding mechanisms and/or alternative governance structure
 - ☐ Confirm Central Link alignment
 - ☐ Initiate Central Link Project Development for FTA grant program
 - ☐ Explore additional grant opportunities for construction
 - ☐ Discuss the vision beyond Central Link



Moving Central Link Forward



- Connecting the existing incomplete system is critical to realizing the full economic impact.
- Discussions about Central Link are impacted by:
 - Desire to expand the streetcar outside of the Central Business District
 - Refinement of the alignment of Central Link
 - How operations and maintenance will be funded



Moving Central Link Forward



- **Desire to expand the streetcar outside of the Central Business District**
 - *Many expansion routes have been evaluated, but cannot proceed until Central Link alignment and broader O&M question are solved.*
- **Refinement of the alignment of Central Link**
 - *Discussions continue about preferred alignment adjustments.*
- **How operations and maintenance will be funded**
 - *Long-term, sustainable solution have not been solidified.*



Downtown Dallas Inc. Perspective



- DDI has committed to leveraging the DDI Mobility Committee as a stakeholder representative to forward the initiatives proposed by City staff.
- In the intervening years since the 2017 Council vote identifying a City of Dallas locally preferred alternative (LPA) alignment DDI has stayed engaged with stakeholders and the Transportation Department on an ongoing basis.
- Much of planning for this work has already begun in partnership with the staff and stakeholders



Challenges/Lessons Learned



- Staff turnover
- Need sustainable O&M funding source(s) that increases with inflation and does not rely majorly on General Funds
- Funding mechanisms/commitments for O&M need to be in place before detailed design and construction begin.



Proposed Next Steps



- Conduct a comprehensive and sustainable financial feasibility assessment of O&M funding options corresponding to existing and planned future expansion plans.
- Evaluate expansion options with system linkages.
- Evaluate current operational management options.
- Continue discussions with stakeholders on next steps and corresponding schedule of implementation.
- Continue conversation with council on next steps.



Questions and Answers



- Thank You





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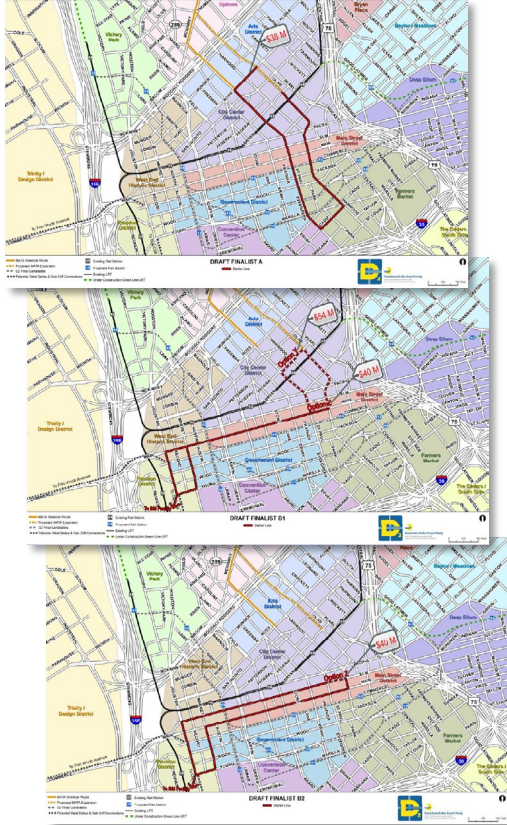
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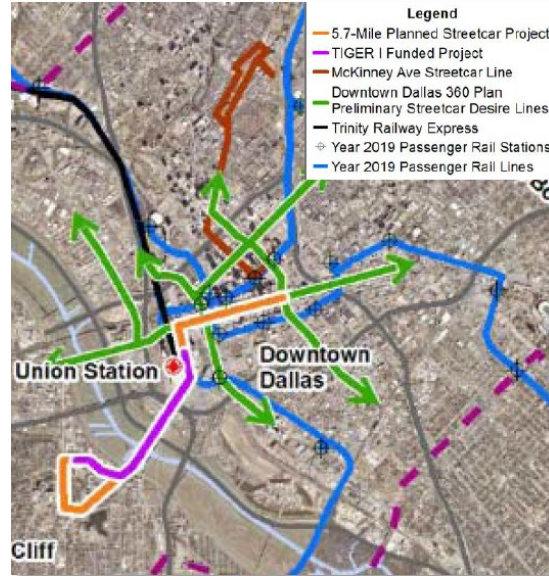
Alignments Considered Over the Years



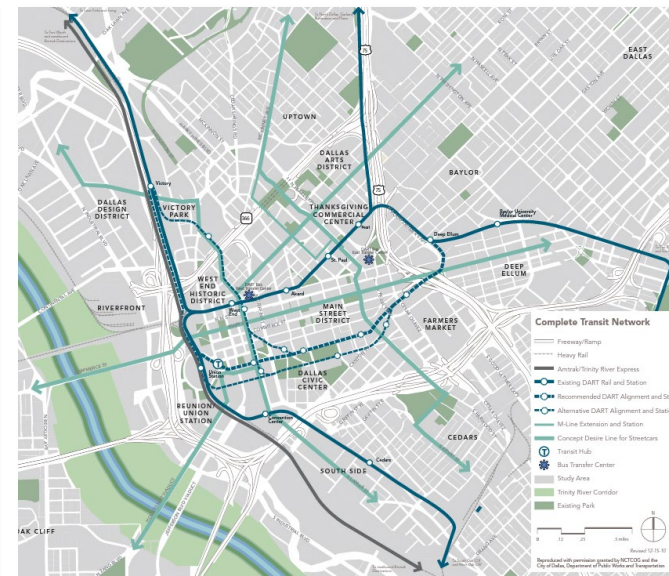
2009 Briefing to Transportation & Environment Committee



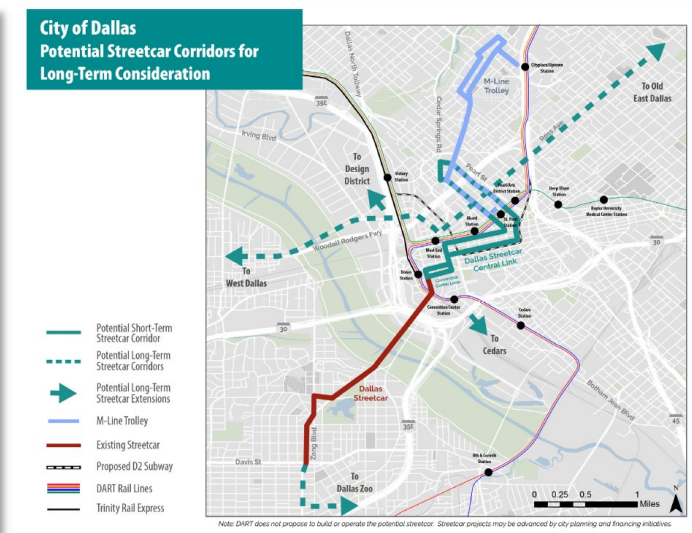
2010 Briefing to Transportation & Environment Committee



2011 Downtown Dallas 360 Plan



2022 DART Service Area Streetcar Feasibility Study



2017 DART Central Link Alternatives Analysis

