

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE May 21, 2010

TO Members of the Transportation and Environment Committee:
Linda Koop (Chair), Sheffie Kadane (Vice Chair), Jerry R. Allen, Tennell Atkins,
Carolyn R. Davis, Delia Jasso, Pauline Medrano, Ron Natinsky,
Vonciel Jones Hill

SUBJECT Central City Long Range Transit Planning

Attached is the "Central City Long Range Transit Planning" briefing that will be presented to you on May 24, 2010. Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Jordan".

Jill A. Jordan, P.E.
Assistant City Manager

- c: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager
Thomas P. Perkins, Jr. City Attorney
Deborah Watkins, City Secretary
Craig Kinton, City Auditor
Judge C. Victor Lander, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager
A.C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager
Forest Turner, Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Edward Scott, Director, Controller's Office
Frank Libro, Public Information Office
Rick Galceran, P.E., Director, Public Works and Transportation
Theresa O'Donnell, Director, Sustainable Development and Construction
Helena Stevens-Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager – Council Office

Central City Long Range Transit Planning

Transportation and Environment
Committee

May 24, 2010



Purpose

- ❑ Brief Committee on current transportation planning and related projects
- ❑ Review a proposed approach to address emerging issues and to integrate planning efforts
- ❑ Discuss Next Steps

City Vitality Builds from the Center

- *“Dallas is a city with a Dynamic and Expanded Center-City Economy with a revived, dense residential downtown connected to thriving urban housing, office and retail developments throughout Central Dallas”*

Strategic Engagement: Dallas' Economic Development Plan, 2005

- *“Build on the strengths of Downtown Dallas... a thriving Downtown is the key to not only the city's success but the success of the entire North Central Texas region... downtown Dallas will be a central location for pedestrian and transit oriented development.”*

forwardDallas! Vision, 2006

Downtown Progress

- Public and private investments are dramatically changing downtown:
 - Arts District expansion
 - Omni Dallas Convention Center Hotel
 - New parks: Main Street Gardens and Woodall Rodgers Deck Park, Belo Gardens
 - D2 light rail alignment
 - Since 1989:
 - 25,068 housing units (CBD + 1 mile, existing, under construction or planned)
 - 3,146 hotel rooms (completed or under construction)
 - \$2.9 billion total investment (existing or planned) in three downtown TIF districts

A Challenge/Solution

- ❑ In spite of these major redevelopment efforts within distinct neighborhoods, the scale of downtown still leaves major development gaps that separate and isolate districts and prevent downtown from being perceived as cohesive, lively and pedestrian friendly
- ❑ Downtown is also separate and isolated from surrounding central city neighborhoods by freeway loop
- ❑ Reliable, predictable, and convenient transportation options can go a long way to address this issue
- ❑ Safe, attractive pedestrian-friendly streetscaping is an essential element to creating a 21st century central city

Some Transportation Goals

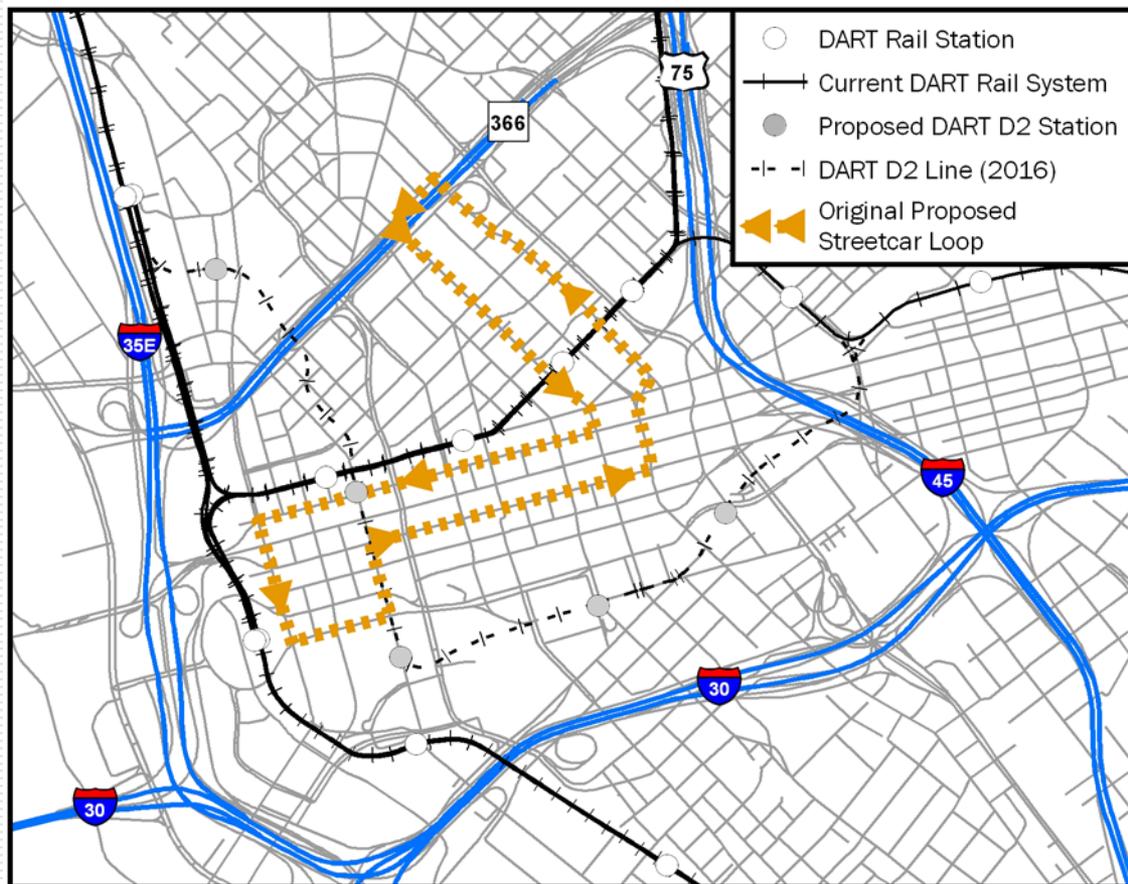
- ❑ Improve the central city transit system by creating integrated and predictable regional and local connectivity
- ❑ Link downtown to surrounding neighborhoods and serve areas outside downtown not currently served by rail transit
- ❑ Connect high density residential and commercial districts
- ❑ Support and enhance mixed use economic development
- ❑ Support other alternative modes of transportation – walking and bicycling within existing street system

Recent Transportation Study

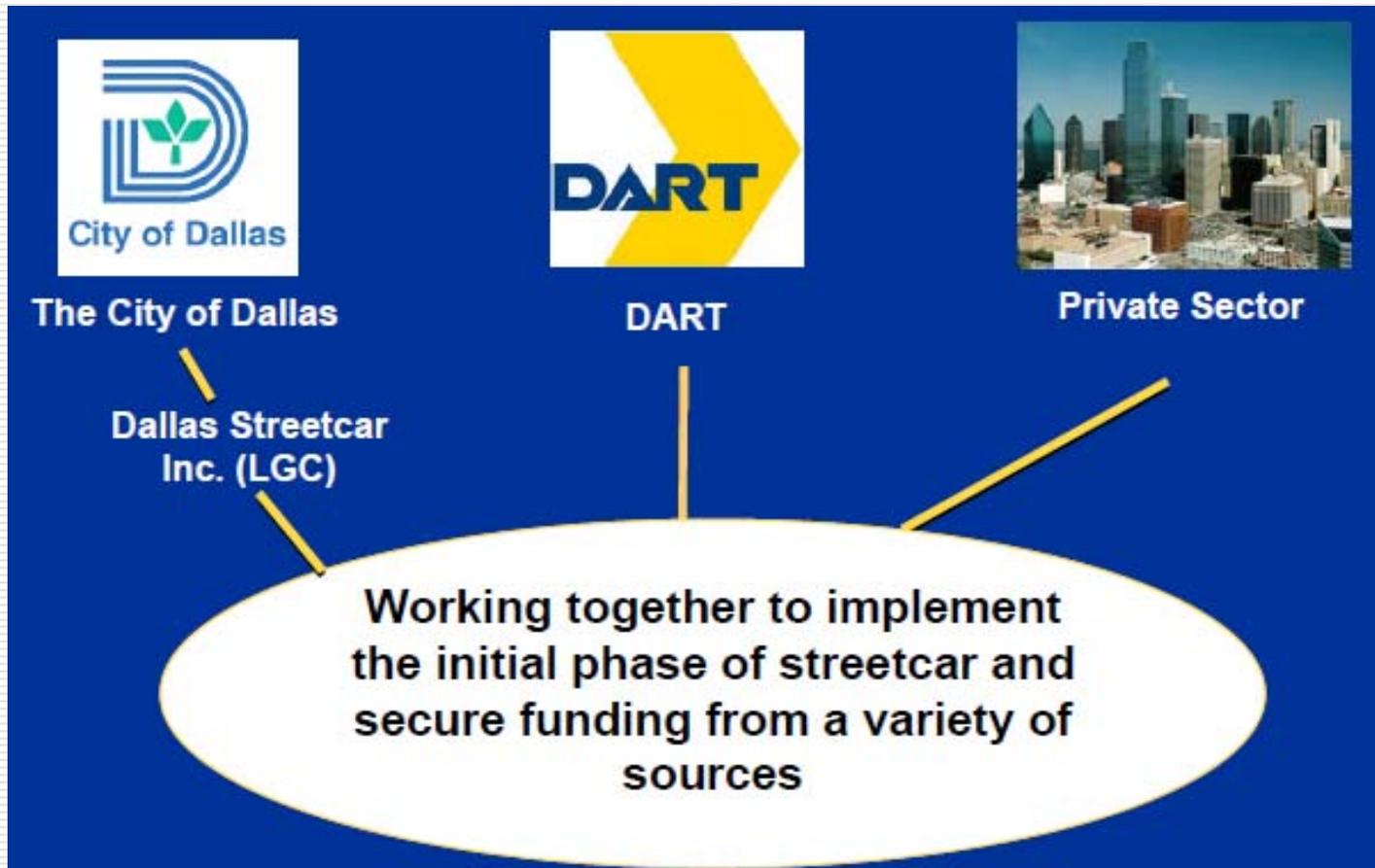
- ❑ Most recently, focus has been on downtown as a streetcar study grew out of the D2 alignment analysis
- ❑ DART provided funding to determine how streetcar improvements might work in conjunction with the downtown rail alignments
- ❑ Council directed staff to determine how a streetcar system could be developed quickly (without federal funds)
- ❑ Consultants were engaged to help develop:
 - Initial route alignment
 - Governance structure
 - Funding strategy

Original Proposed Streetcar Route

- Linking key downtown assets that enjoy or are expecting significant investment was the primary focus of the streetcar alignment planning:
 - Arts District
 - Main Street Core
 - Convention Center



Originally Proposed Governance Structure



Original Proposed Funding

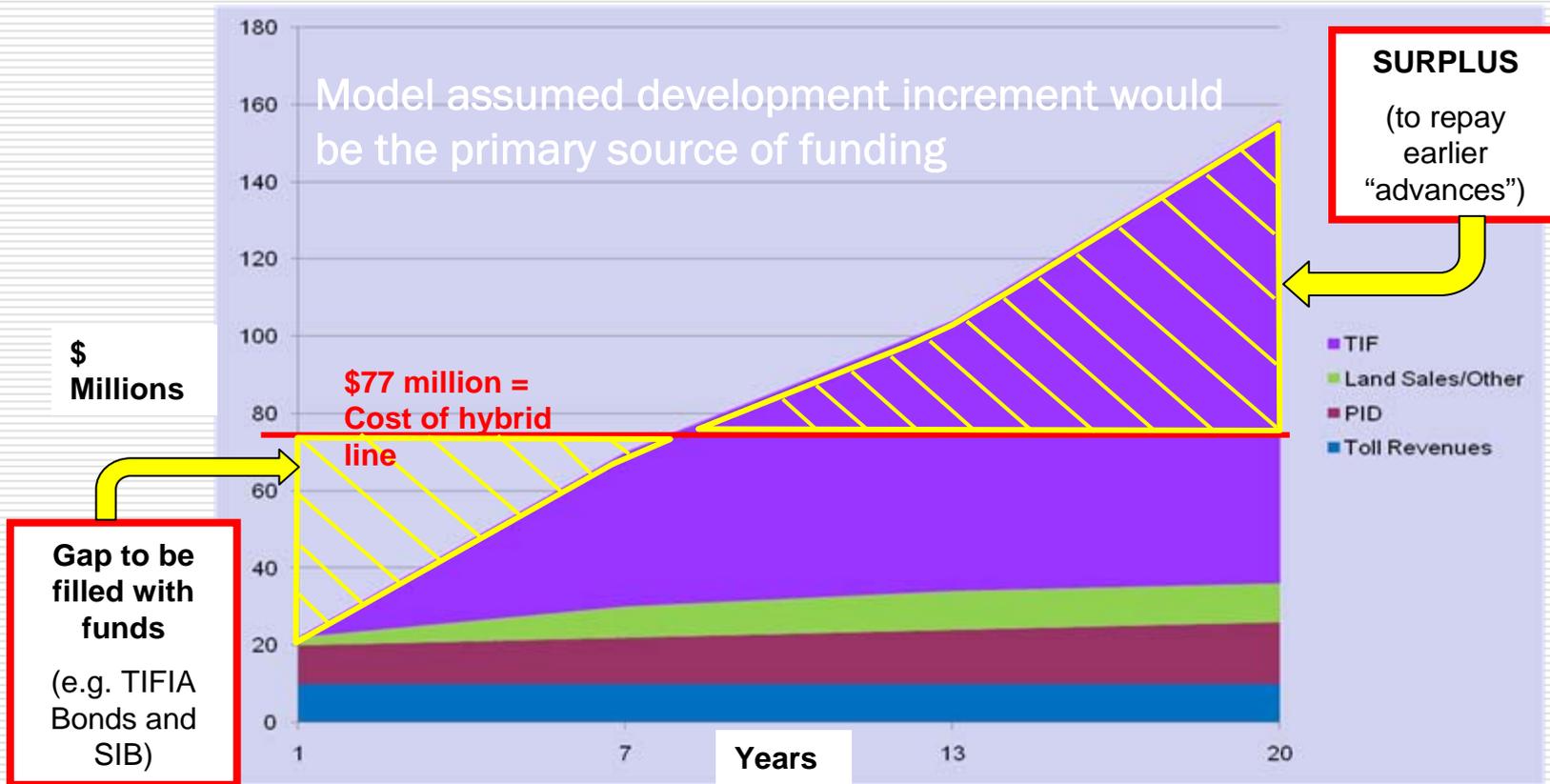
□ Focused on local funding for construction and operation:

- TIF district revenue bonds
- Downtown parking fees
- Downtown improvement district special assessment

□ Estimated cost:

- Capital - \$88 million
- Annual operation - \$3 million

Originally Proposed Funding Structure



Preliminary Streetcar Study

□ Major Findings:

- First: Contrary to initial thoughts, funding of a streetcar system will require local AND state/federal resources
- Second: Streetcar planning should be integrated with other transportation-related planning efforts
- Third: New funding opportunities have emerged to facilitate streetcar implementation
 - Urban Circulator Grant
 - TIGER Grant

Major Findings

First: Streetcar Funding Challenge

- ❑ Question is to what extent a streetcar system would generate property value increment sufficient to pay for a significant portion of system cost **PLUS** provide subsidy to assist development when gap financing is required
 - ❑ City will need to secure additional, detailed analysis of development potential including site-specific project assessments to meet underwriting standards
 - ❑ In the absence of this work, the City's full faith and credit would become necessary to insure financial feasibility
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Major Findings

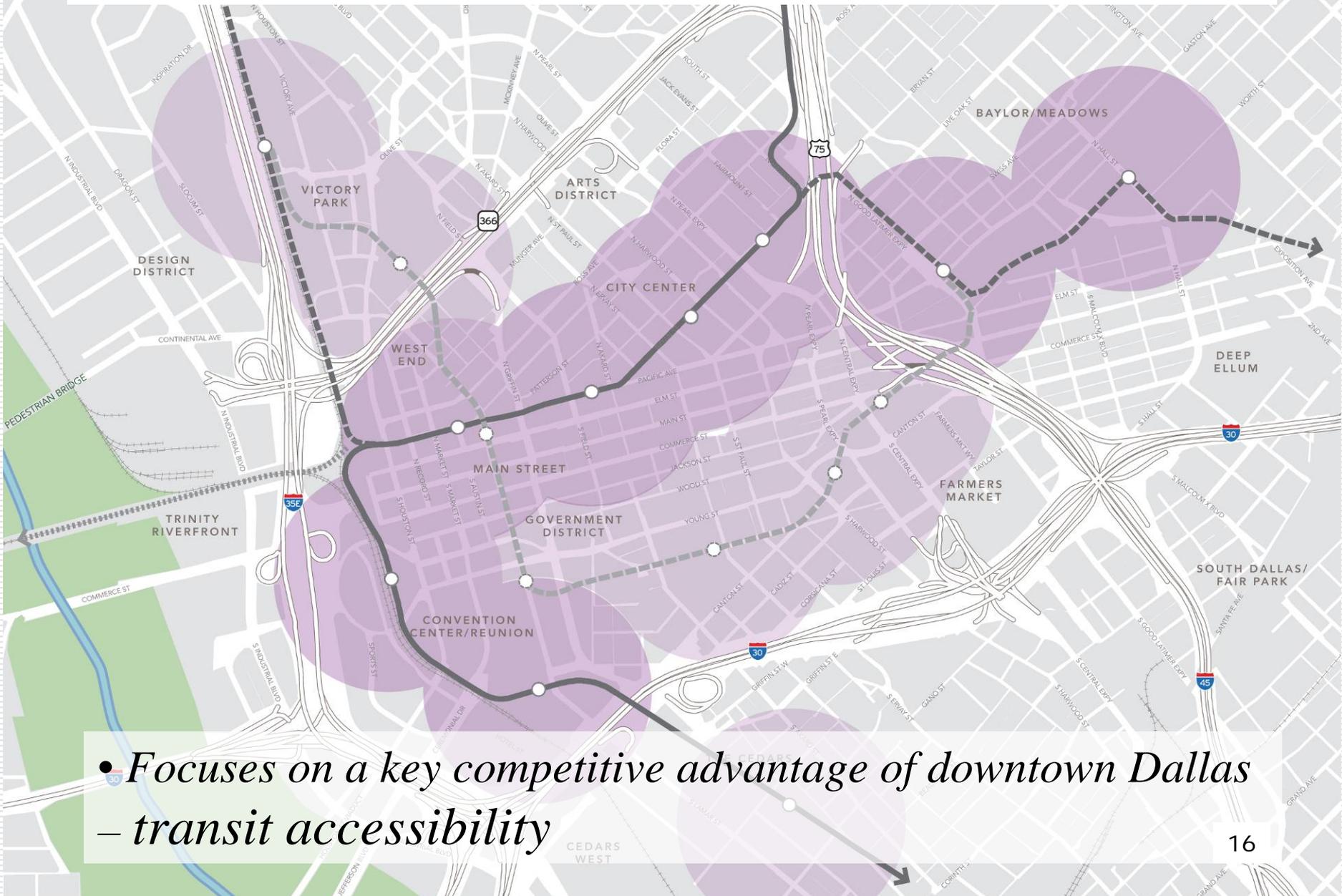
Second: Planning Initiatives

- Numerous transportation-related planning initiatives are currently underway or being pursued
 - Downtown Area Plan
 - Citywide Bike Plan Update
 - Citywide Complete Streets Initiative
 - West Dallas – North Oak Cliff Integrated Transportation System Study

Downtown Area Plan

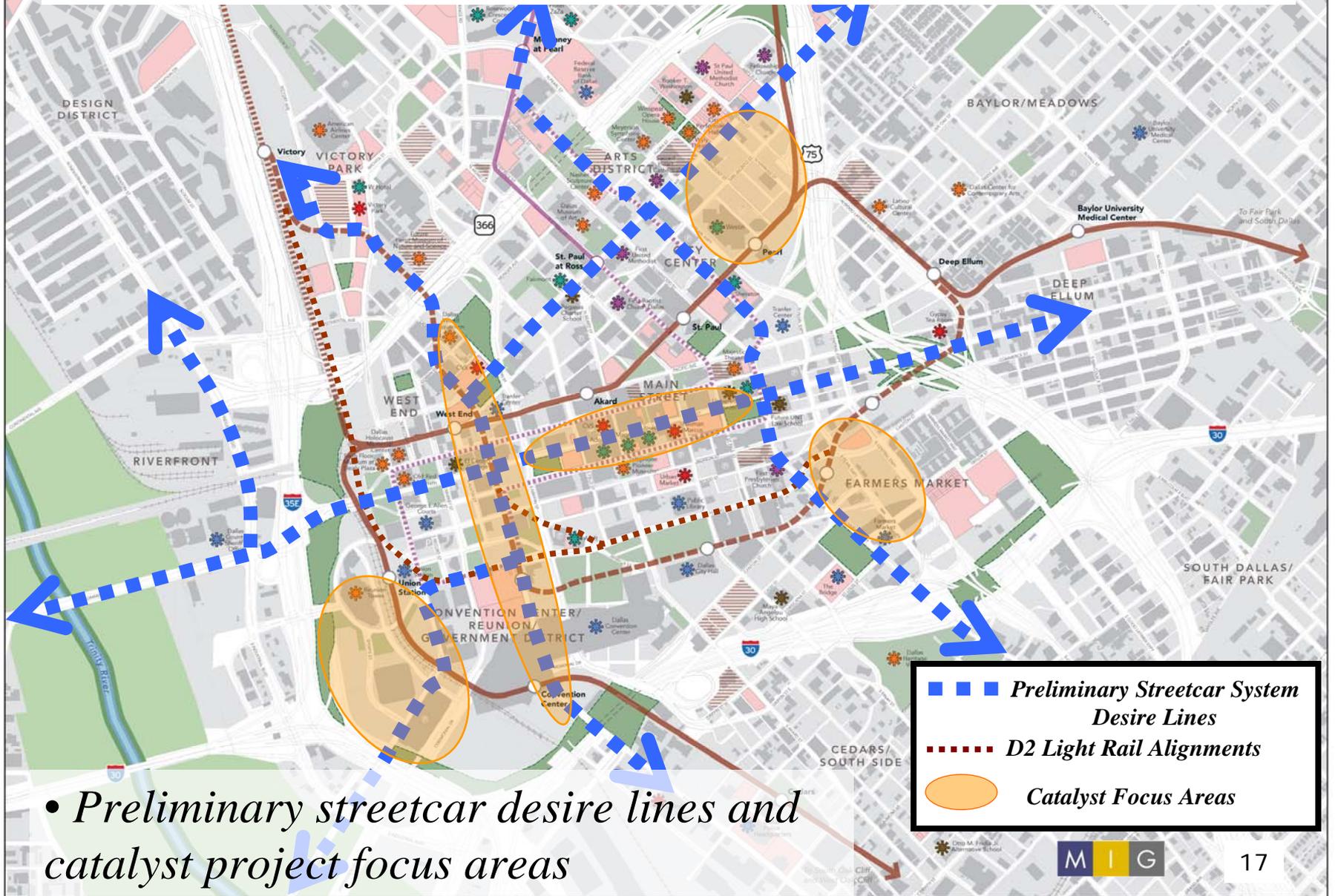
- ❑ Called Downtown Dallas 360 (DTP)
- ❑ Task is to prioritize among the multiple downtown initiatives by integrating existing plans
- ❑ Focus is on transformative strategies:
 - Expand transit and realize TOD potential
 - Create vibrant streets and public spaces
 - Ensure great urban design
 - Diversify and grow housing
 - Reform the approach to parking

Downtown Dallas 360 Plan



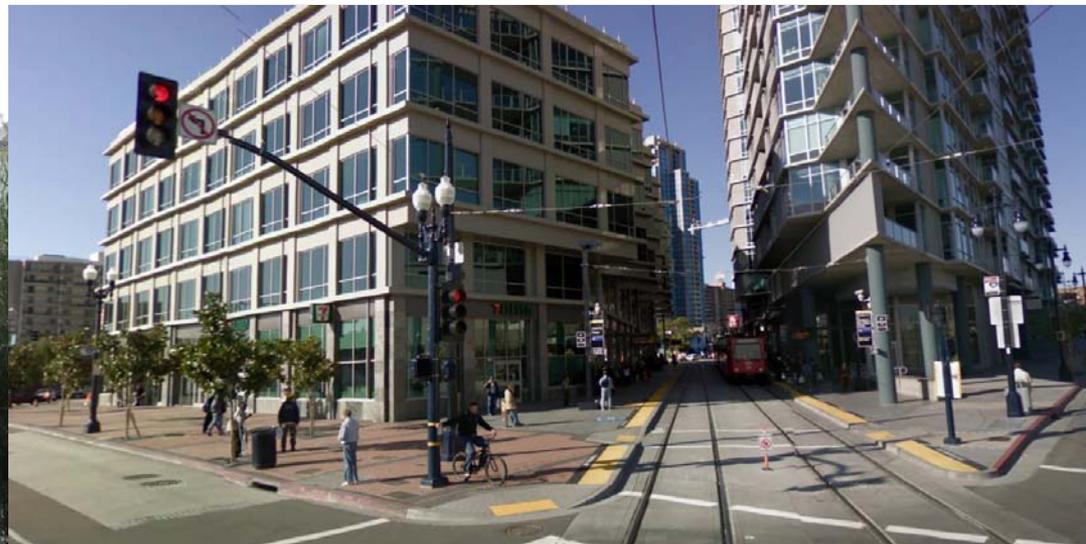
• *Focuses on a key competitive advantage of downtown Dallas – transit accessibility*

Downtown Dallas 360 Plan



DTP/Streetcar Nexus

- Recent DTP work revealed opportunities to coordinate transportation and economic development policy with streetcar deployment
- Preliminary streetcar alignment was developed outside of the context of broader downtown planning initiatives and could fail to capitalize on some transportation and economic development opportunities
- Portland is the best recent example of streetcar economic development impact
 - took place in the context of a long-standing set of policies to achieve dense, pedestrian environments



Bike Plan Update

- NCTCOG funded an update to the 1985 Bike Plan, which will establish an expanded and enhanced citywide network of bikeway routes & facilities
- Initiated in March 2010 and scheduled to be completed by March 2011
- Goals:
 - Define a citywide network of on-street and off-street bikeway facilities
 - Establish design standards for a range of on-street bikeway facility types
 - Develop implementation strategies and prioritize on-street bike facilities for potential inclusion in the next bond program

Complete Streets Initiative

- ❑ Plan development to facilitate a citywide approach to better roadway design to accommodate all modes of transportation
- ❑ Goals:
 - Establish a vision map for the citywide roadway network
 - Integrate the citywide bike plan and transit plans
 - Develop a design manual based on *forwardDallas!* guidelines with a “complete streets” or “context-sensitive” focus to provide the template for future roadway planning, design and capital improvement budgeting
 - Apply complete street standards to demonstration projects to be included in the next bond program
- ❑ This project was planned to be handled in-house with limited staffing
- ❑ Estimated cost: \$400,000

West Dallas-North Oak Cliff Transportation Study

- Several planning activities underway in the area:
 - 3 new TIF District Plans
 - West Davis Rezoning
 - Oak Cliff Gateway Plan
 - Oak Cliff NIP Plan
 - City Design Center's West Dallas Plan
 - Major CIP roadway improvement projects
- Comprehensive study of the transportation network to explore alternative approaches to mobility and roadway design

West Dallas-North Oak Cliff Transportation Study

- Goals:
 - Test implications of an alternative mixed-use development vision, future streetcar system and bikeway network on transportation choices and thoroughfare capacity needs
 - Recommend alternative design standards for key thoroughfares in the area
- This project is partially funded through a \$125,000 NCTCOG sustainable development grant
- Currently working with West Dallas stakeholders to determine recommendation for appropriate scope of the study as there is overlap here with the complete streets initiative
- Estimated cost is \$500,000
- Recent MOU with NCTCOG could provide \$400,000

Streetcar Planning Initiatives

- As part of streetcar development, several system studies need funding and coordination:
 - **System Plan** – to establish a long range streetcar network plan serving a 3 mile radius around Union Station to provide the basis for phased implementation as future funding is pursued and becomes available
 - **Alternatives Analysis / Environmental Study** – to study alternatives and identify a locally preferred alternative as required by FTA
 - **Economic and Financial Feasibility Study** – to conduct detailed assessment of alternative revenue generation options and governance structures to finance construction and operation
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Third: Federal Opportunities

- **Recent changes in federal programs make funding more attractive**
 - Relaxed cost-effectiveness criteria
 - Greater emphasis on community, economic development and environmental criteria
- **New federal guidelines point to integrating streetcar planning into overall development and transportation planning**
- **Federal funding success will require:**
 - Careful examination of emerging federal criteria
 - Completing an alternatives analysis which assesses development impact of project – detailed by alignment options
 - The willingness to rethink streetcar routes and timing
- **However**
 - Pursuing federal funds delays starter line deployment by two years or more
 - No guarantees of being awarded federal grants

Third: Federal Opportunities

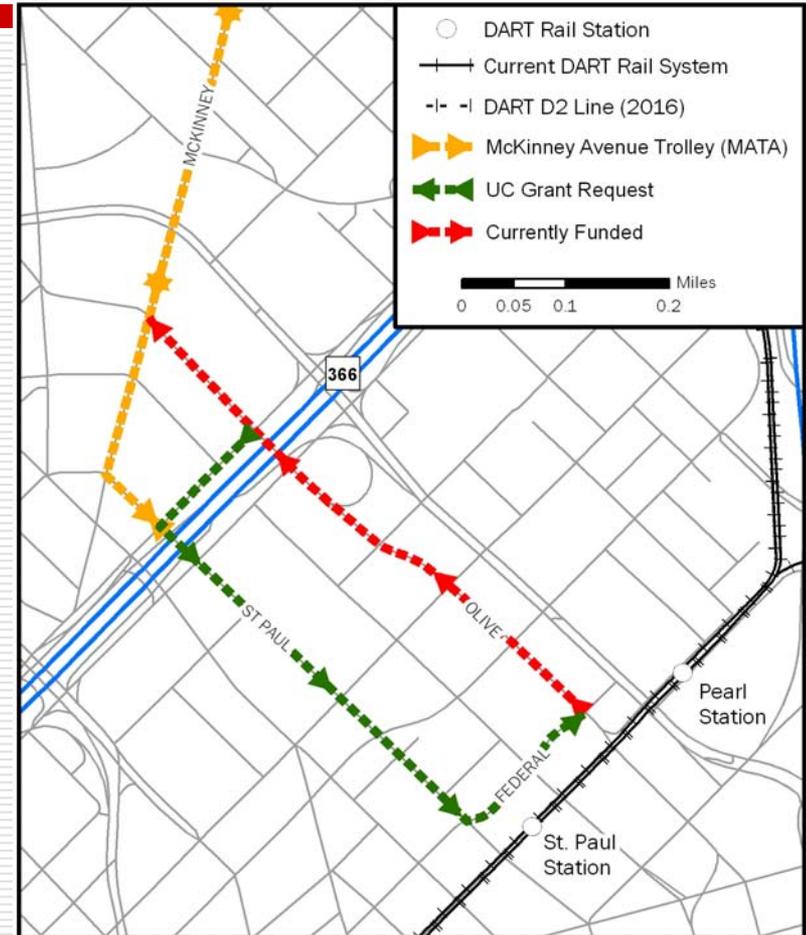
- Urban Circulator Grant
- TIGER Grant

Urban Circulator Grant

- ❑ Joint U.S. DOT, EPA and HUD Livability grant program
- ❑ Eligible projects must:
 - Request a maximum of \$25 million with a 50% local match
 - Have preliminary planning and environmental engineering complete
- ❑ City submitted application through DART in April, 2010 for extension of McKinney Avenue Trolley line to the Pearl Street DART station

Urban Circulator Grant

- Urban Circulator Grant application submitted by DART in April 2010:
 - Upgrade/construct existing southbound St. Paul, Woodall Rodgers and Federal Street segments to modern streetcar standards
 - Line would run heritage trolleys until future modern streetcar system is deployed
 - \$10 million grant request with \$5 million local match to be provided by NCTCOG
- Grant has not been awarded yet



TIGER Grant

- ❑ Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)
- ❑ Part of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
- ❑ NCTCOG was approached by Oak Cliff stakeholders with a streetcar project proposal connecting existing destinations to proposed housing developments within Oak Cliff
- ❑ North Central Texas Council of Governments submitted a joint Dallas / Fort Worth application

TIGER Grant

- ❑ Dallas asked for \$49 million toward a system linking the Main Street Gardens downtown to Methodist Hospital in Oak Cliff via Union Station
- ❑ NCTCOG committed \$10 million of Regional Toll Revenue (RTR) local funding

TIGER Grant

- ❑ TIGER grant provided only \$23 million towards the originally proposed \$150 million streetcar line
- ❑ Given constraints on local funding availability, a scaled back streetcar starter segment will be necessary

TIGER Grant Implementation

Michael Morris comments

- Recognized Urban Circulator Grant match need
 - Agreed to find \$5M match
- Recognized Planning efforts' funding need
 - Agreed to use \$3.8M RTR funds for identified studies
- Recognized TIGER system need
 - Agreed to:
 - Be official grant recipient with COD and DART as partners
 - Use \$4M RTR funds for working capital
 - Allocate \$2.2M RTR funds for project construction
 - Find sufficient funding for a viable project which would connect North Oak Cliff somewhere, go over Trinity somewhere, go into downtown via Union Station and go as far as possible

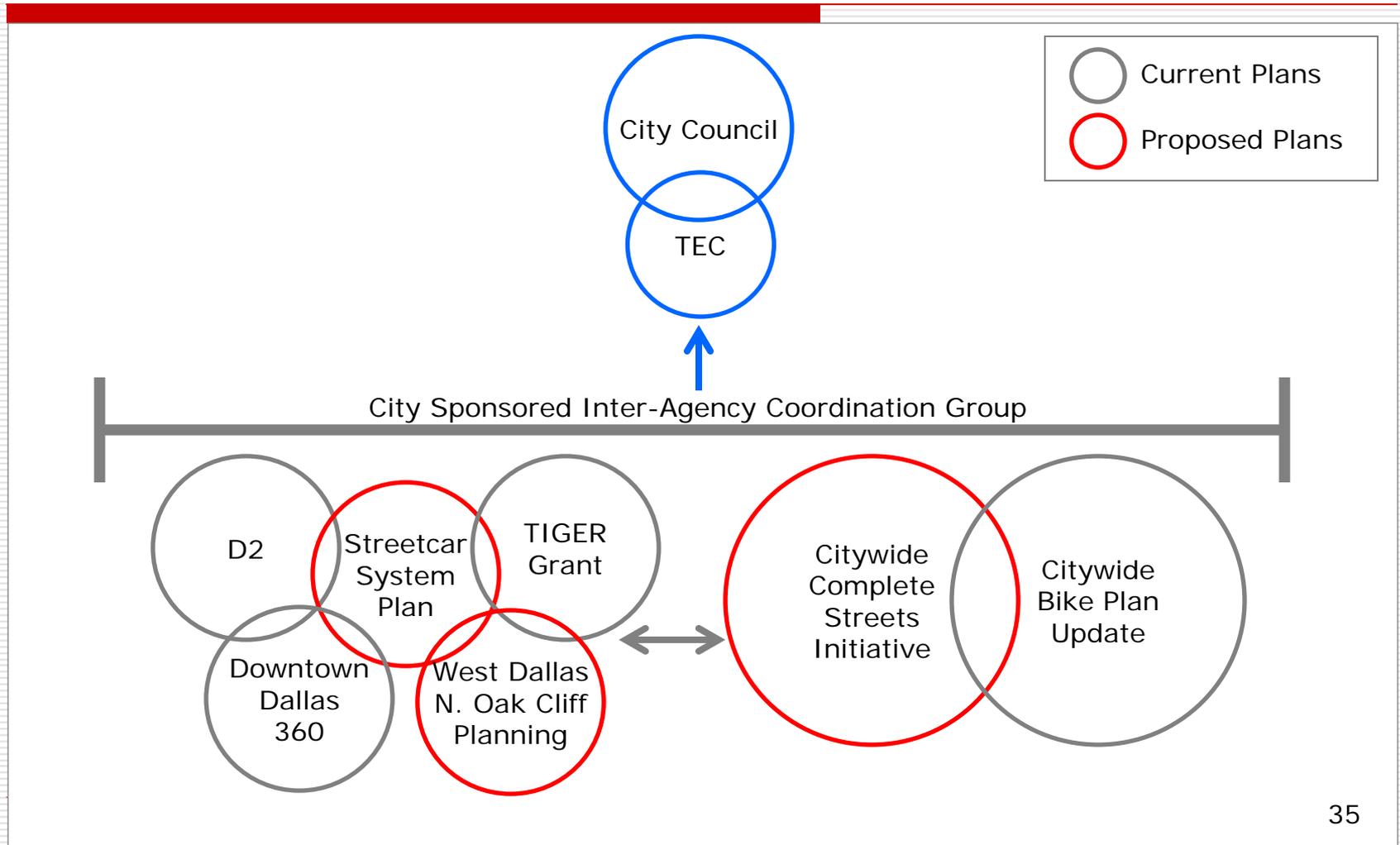
TIGER Grant Proposed Project Approach

- Proceed with TIGER grant planning and implementation in close coordination with overall streetcar system planning and other related planning efforts
 - Streetcar system planning effort to be initiated within 3 to 4 months
- Formalize a project definition to fit funding constraints and meet FTA requirements

Project Coordination & Stakeholder Committees

- ❑ Establish a process to ensure stakeholders and inter-agency coordination on all related projects
- ❑ Establish stakeholder committees and work in coordination with related planning efforts
- ❑ Report to the Council Transportation Committee on progress

Project Coordination & Stakeholder Committees



DTP/Light Rail Nexus

- The Downtown Dallas 360 Plan has focused on aligning transportation and economic development goals
- D2 alignment options have been reviewed relative to catalyst development opportunities and future streetcar options

Second Downtown LRT line (D2)

- DART's primary objective for D2 has been to accommodate new Green and Orange Line service through downtown
- DART's existing light rail transit mall on Pacific and Bryan is approaching capacity with Red and Blue Line service
- DART has prepared an Alternatives Analysis and Draft Environmental Impact Statement and is currently poised to make recommendations for a locally preferred alignment

Second Downtown LRT line (D2)

- ❑ DART previously committed to completing D2 construction by 2016
- ❑ DART revenue decline has led to recent announcement of delay in availability of funding for implementation of D2 for at least twenty years
- ❑ Changed financial circumstances and schedule offers an opportunity for further project review to ensure that Dallas' goals are comprehensively addressed

Second Downtown LRT line (D2)

- ❑ Dallas City Council has stated that Dallas Convention Center (DCC) Hotel is a high priority destination for the new Orange Line from DFW and Love Field Airports
- ❑ The DCC Hotel development occurred during advanced stages of D2 planning

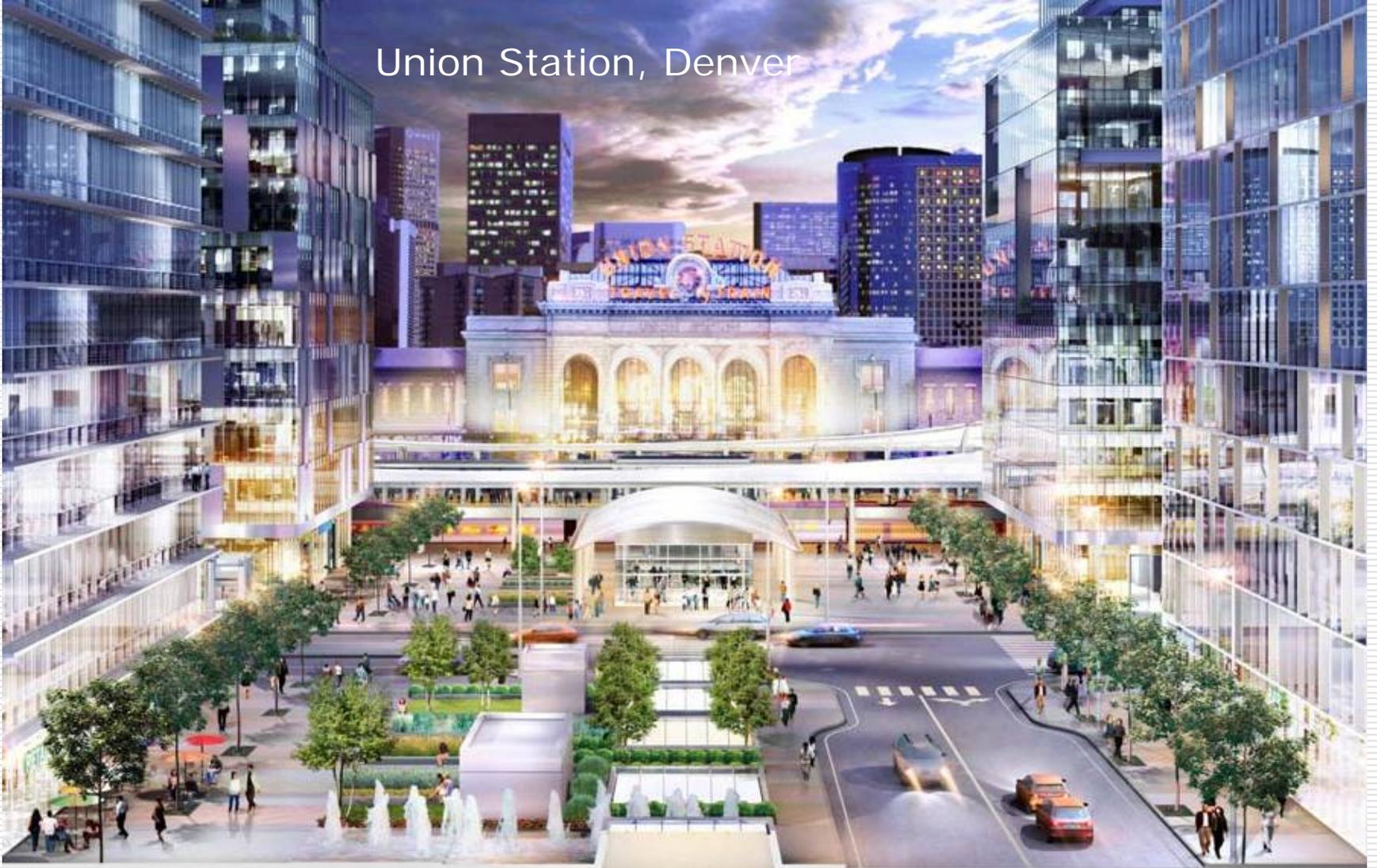
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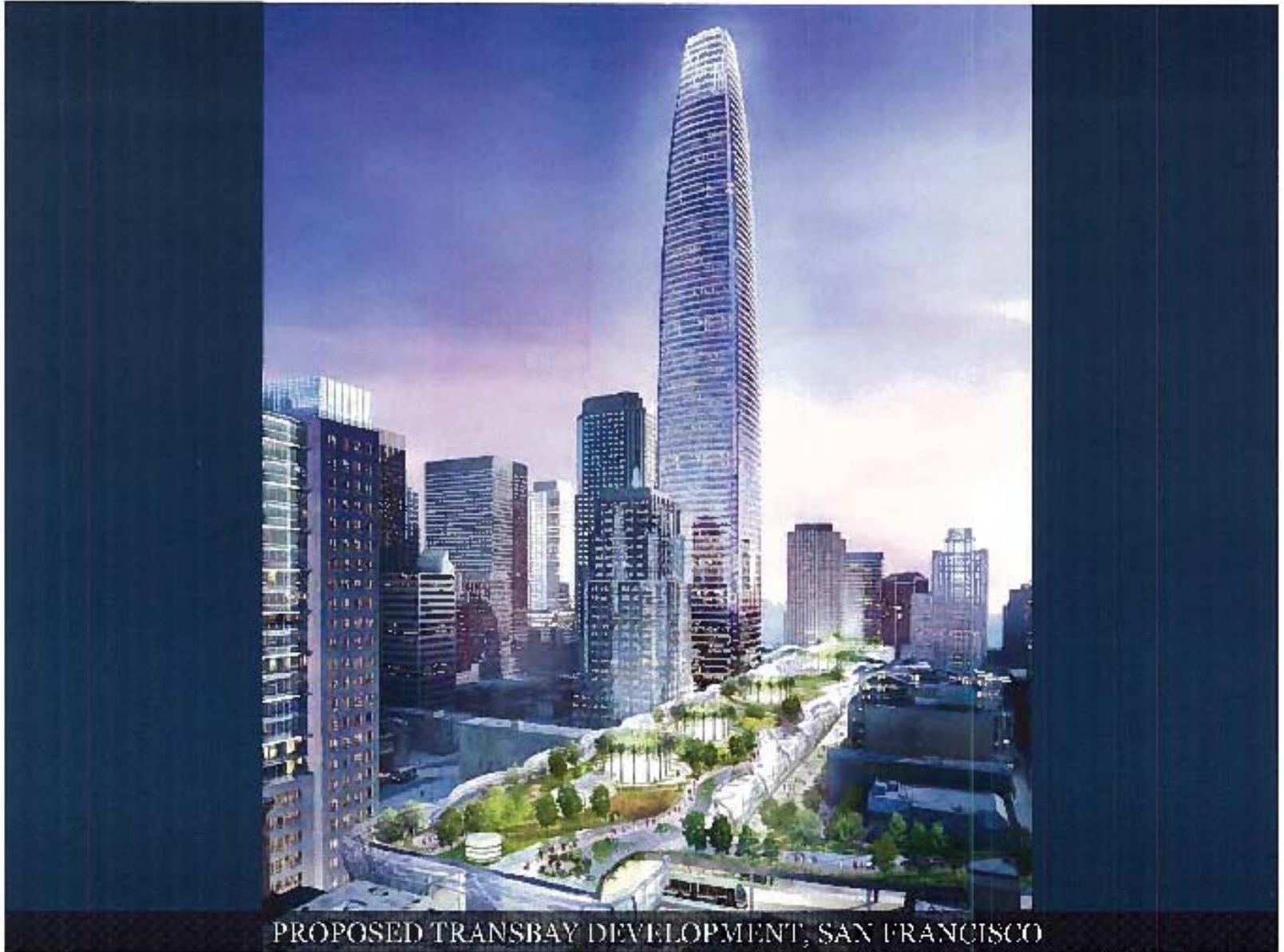
- The Downtown Dallas 360 Plan process has led to a revisiting of D2 light rail alignment alternatives
 - Specifically the Union Station Alternative – extending along Young Street to the Convention Center Hotel and Union Station
- This alternative was looked at early in the DART screening process prior to emergence of the Convention Center Hotel development
- Alternatives should also be considered in relation to street car alignments and flexible routing of Red/Blue and Green/Orange service on D1 and D2

Union Station Alternative Benefits

- Provides a station at Convention Center Hotel site
- Provides for a stop at Union Station
 - Central Hub
 - Direct access to regional TRE service, Red/Blue and Green/Orange light rail service
 - Provides additional development potential for the facility
- Enhance potential for future inter-city high (or higher) speed rail access in Downtown Dallas
- Adjacent real estate under consolidated ownership
- Will likely cost less than the “Council Preferred Option”
 - Further analysis will be needed to clarify this
 - \$470M versus \$380M or \$670M

Union Station, Denver





PROPOSED TRANSBAY DEVELOPMENT, SAN FRANCISCO

Future Streetcar Options

- Downtown Dallas 360 proposed streetcar desire lines include a route along the Lamar Street corridor connecting Cedars to Victory via the Convention Center Hotel, West End and the Perot Museum
 - Potential economic benefits will likely exceed those offered by the D2 light rail alternative
 - Could be designed as a more convenient and effective transit circulator than light rail for travel to and from destinations within and adjacent to downtown

Next steps

- ❑ Coordinate with DART on further D2 analysis
- ❑ RFP for Streetcar System Plan
- ❑ Coordinate with NCTCOG and DART on TIGER Grant implementation
- ❑ Further develop Complete Streets Initiative scope
- ❑ Coordinate with North Oak Cliff and West Dallas stakeholders on planning objectives

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