



SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION

SOUTHWESTERN RAIL CONFERENCE

April 2024 | Texas Rail Advocates

Y'ALL ABOARD.



WHO WE ARE

The Southern Rail Commission is a champion for passenger rail restoration efforts throughout the South.

The multi-state commission, created by Congress in 1982, includes commissioners from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama who work collaboratively to engage and inform public and private rail interests to support and influence Southeast rail initiatives.

OUR GOALS

- 1 Provide transportation choices for the people we serve
- 2 Promote the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of people and goods to enhance economic development along rail corridors
- 3 Engage federal, state and local decision makers
- 4 Facilitate emergency evacuation routes
- 5 Pursue funding for train station planning and implementation
- 6 Support state departments of transportation



WHAT WE DO:



Public engagement



Communications



Policy and legislative advocacy



Partnerships and coalition building



Seek funding for priority projects



Convenings and meetings

PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY





I-20 CORRIDOR:

\$500,000

*FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program
(December 2023)*

\$400,000

FRA Interstate Rail Compacts Grant (March 2024)
Supports administrative capacity, operations, and initiatives to expand passenger rail operations across the South

An Economic Impact Study by Rail Passengers Association finds the service could generate \$50.7 million* in new economic benefits to communities along the route, and an additional \$207 million for Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas annually.

*2023 DOLLARS





NEW ORLEANS TO MOBILE:

\$1 MILLION

SRC Station Planning Grants (2016)

Awarded to the Cities of Anniston, Birmingham, Mobile, Pascagoula, Biloxi, Gulfport, Bay St. Louis, Baton Rouge, and Gonzales and St. John Parish

\$1.3 MILLION

SRC Station Construction Grants (September 2021)

Awarded to the Cities of Gulfport, Bay St. Louis, Pascagoula, and Birmingham

\$33 MILLION

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI) (June 2019)

Awarded to the Cities of Gulfport, Bay St. Louis, Pascagoula, and Birmingham

\$5.45 MILLION

Restoration and Enhancement Program (R&E) (May 2019)

Funds operating expenses for the first and second years of service



Federal grants leverage matching commitments from the States of Louisiana and Mississippi and the City of Mobile.



NEW ORLEANS TO MOBILE:

\$178,435,333

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (September 2023)

Appropriated by Sen. Wicker to restore Gulf Coast Rail Service

\$400,000

FRA Interstate Rail Compacts Grant (March 2024)

Supports administrative capacity, operations, and initiatives to expand passenger rail operations across the South

\$500,000

FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program (December 2023)

Amtrak and the City of Mobile are finalizing the details for the station platform and layover track. These projects are the final pieces of infrastructure needed before the operation can begin.





NEW ORLEANS TO BATON ROUGE:

\$750,000

SRC Station Planning Grants (2016)

Awarded to St. John Parish and the Cities of Baton Rouge and Gonzales

\$20 MILLION

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant (RAISE) (August 2022)

Awarded to the Cities of Baton Rouge and Gonzales for real estate acquisition, station design, and construction for train stations



In 2022, LA DOTD started the environmental review process along the corridor and submitted a grant application for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program funding to support the replacement of the Bonnet Carré bridge. Although not successful, FRA encouraged LA DOTD to re-submit in the subsequent round.



NEW ORLEANS TO BATON ROUGE:

\$500,000

*FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program
(December 2023)*

\$400,000

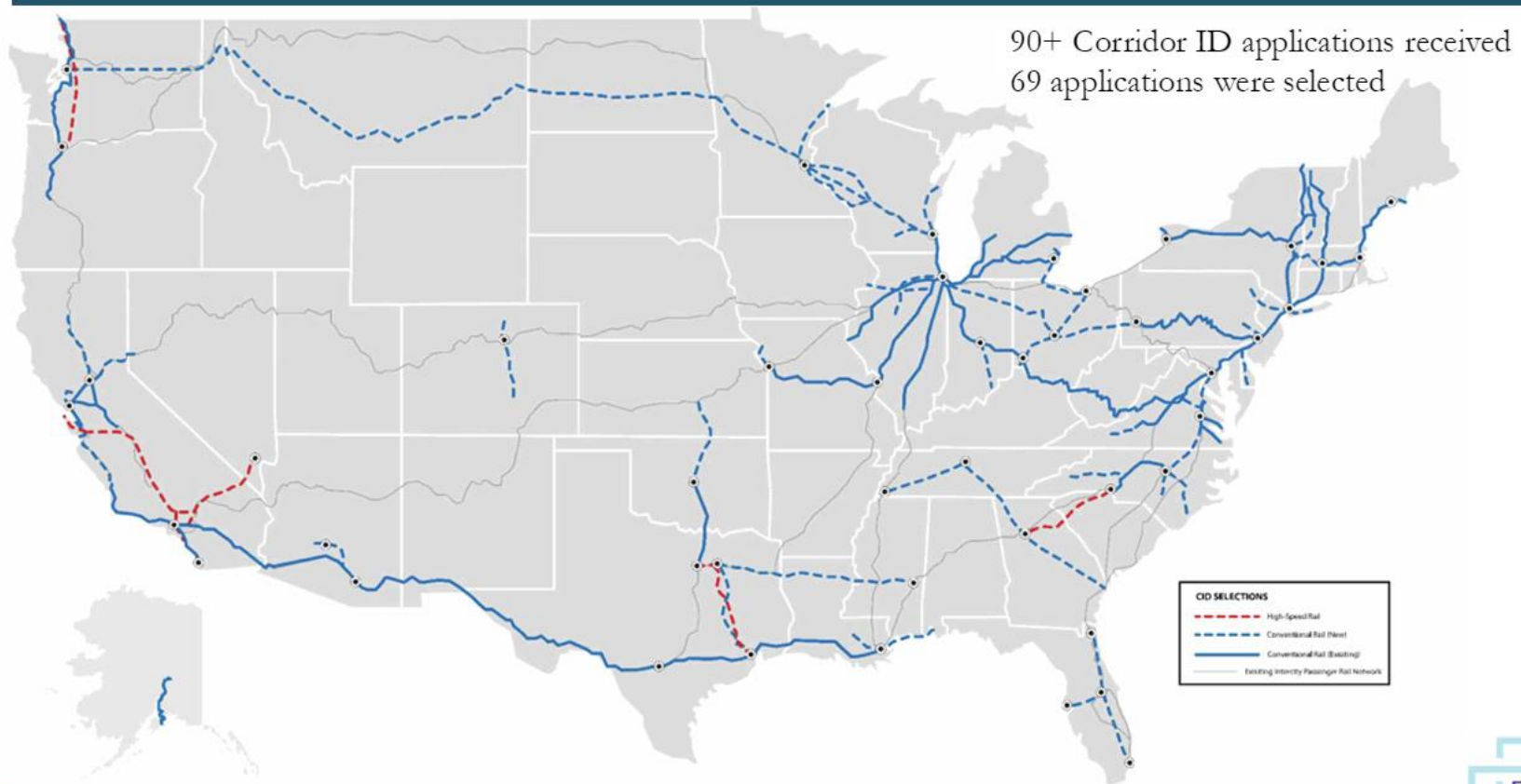
FRA Interstate Rail Compacts Grant (March 2024)
Supports administrative capacity, operations, and initiatives to expand passenger rail operations across the South



The 2014 feasibility study was updated in October 2023 to include current projections for operating costs and ridership.



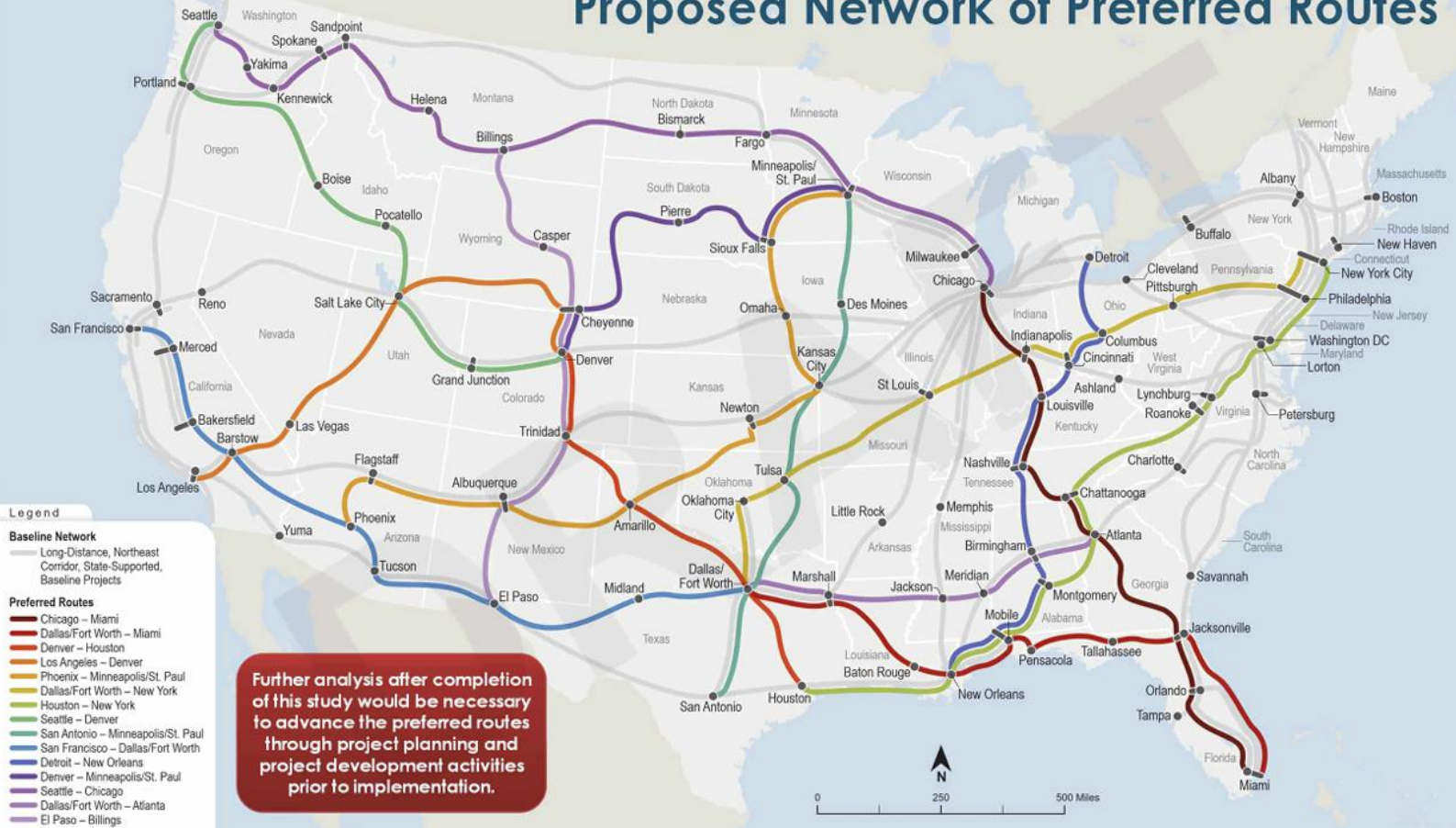
FY 22 Corridor ID Selections



PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Proposed Network of Preferred Routes



PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Dallas/Fort Worth – Miami Selected Proposed Preferred Route and Optional Alignments Considered

Further analysis after completion of this study would be necessary to advance the preferred routes through project planning and project development activities prior to implementation.

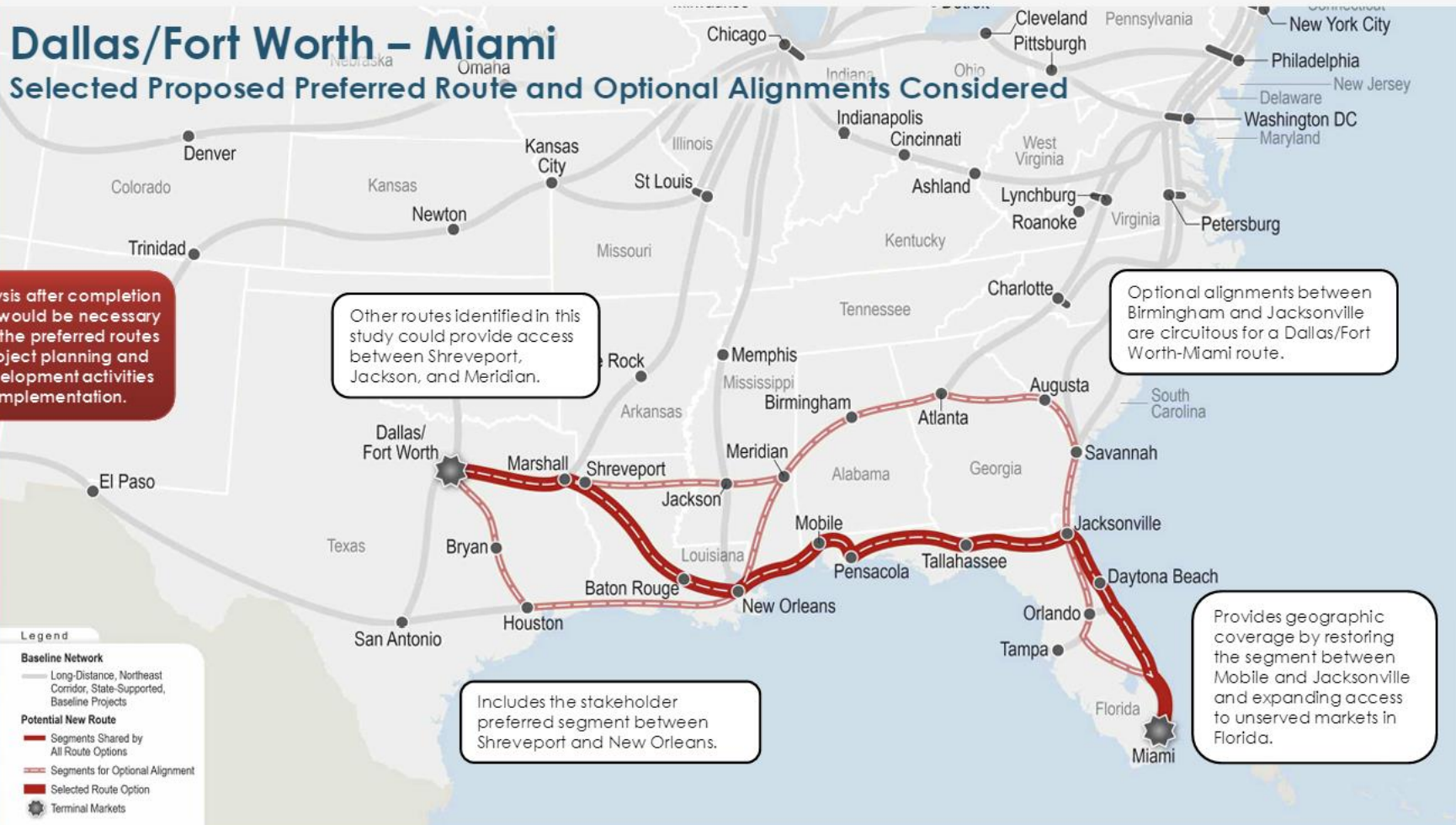
Other routes identified in this study could provide access between Shreveport, Jackson, and Meridian.

Optional alignments between Birmingham and Jacksonville are circuitous for a Dallas/Fort Worth-Miami route.

Includes the stakeholder preferred segment between Shreveport and New Orleans.

Provides geographic coverage by restoring the segment between Mobile and Jacksonville and expanding access to unserved markets in Florida.

- Legend**
- Baseline Network**
 - Long-Distance, Northeast Corridor, State-Supported, Baseline Projects
 - Potential New Route**
 - Segments Shared by All Route Options
 - Segments for Optional Alignment
 - Selected Route Option
 - Terminal Markets



PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Dallas/Fort Worth – Miami Selected Proposed Preferred Route and Evaluation Criteria

Access to MSAs Unserviced by Passenger Rail	Number of MSAs	6
	Population of MSAs (millions)	1.30
Discontinued Routes	% of total route track miles	41%
Stakeholder Input	Top comments supporting route	Yes

Travel Demand	Annual trips per mile (thousands)	139
Transportation Disadvantaged	Rural population per mile	1,501
Population on Tribal Lands	Population per mile	205
Higher Education	Number of institutions	229
Medical Centers	Number of medical centers	52
NPS Lands	Number of parks	9

Further analysis after completion of this study would be necessary to advance the preferred routes through project planning and project development activities prior to implementation.

Legend

Baseline Network

- Long-Distance, Northeast Corridor, State-Supported, Baseline Projects

Potential New Route

- Selected Route Option
- Terminal Markets



PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Detroit – New Orleans Selected Proposed Preferred Route

Further analysis after completion of this study would be necessary to advance the preferred routes through project planning and project development activities prior to implementation.

Provides geographic coverage by restoring access to markets between Louisville and Mobile.

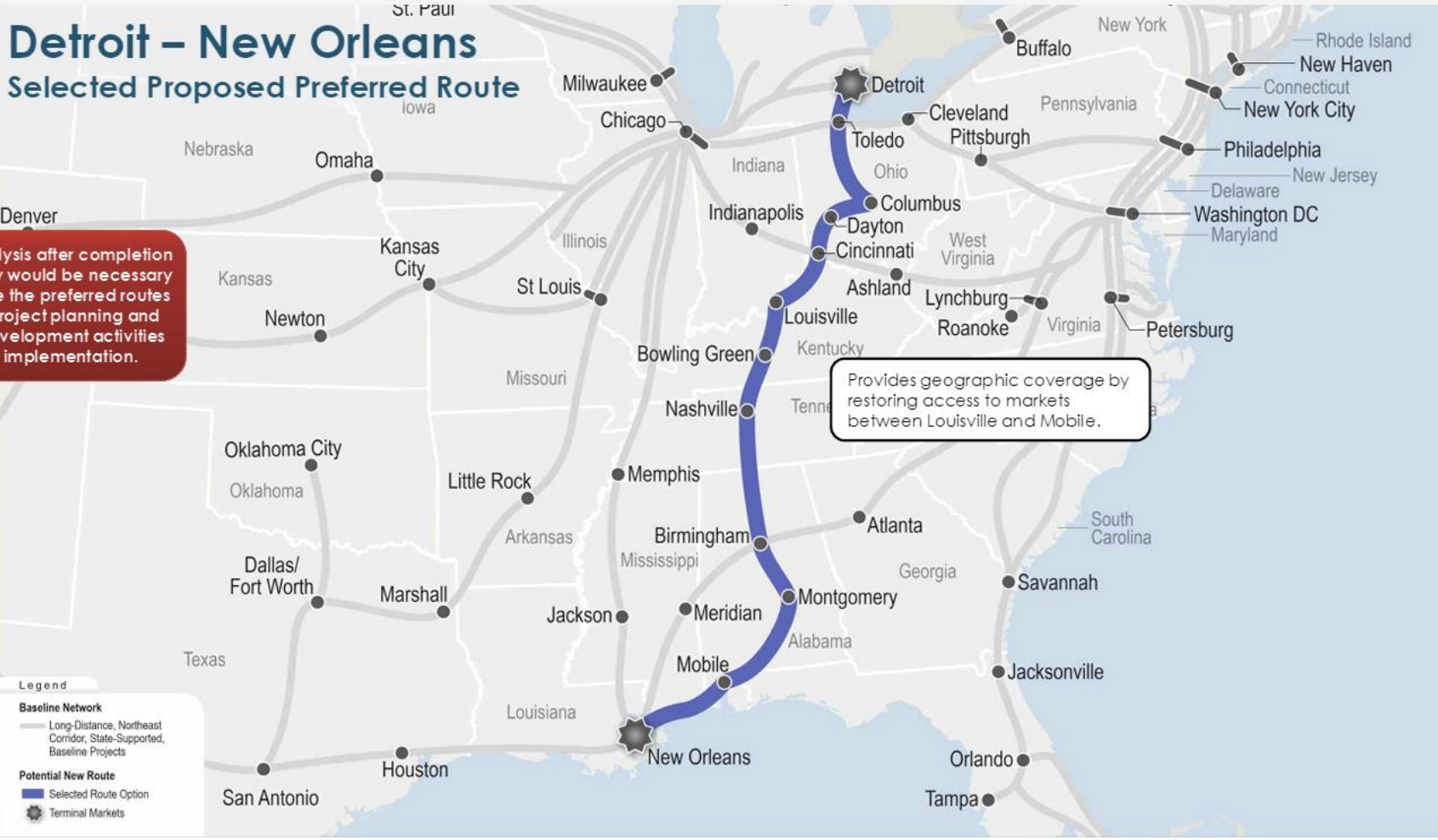
Legend

Baseline Network

- Long-Distance, Northeast Corridor, State-Supported, Baseline Projects

Potential New Route

- Selected Route Option
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PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Detroit – New Orleans Selected Proposed Preferred Route and Evaluation Criteria

Further analysis after completion of this study would be necessary to advance the preferred routes through project planning and project development activities prior to implementation.

Travel Demand	Annual trips per mile (thousands)	81
Transportation Disadvantaged	Rural population per mile	1,195
Population on Tribal Lands	Population per mile	47
Higher Education	Number of institutions	195
Medical Centers	Number of medical centers	44
NPS Lands	Number of parks	8

Access to MSAs Unserved by Passenger Rail	Number of MSAs	9
	Population of MSAs (millions)	6.68
Discontinued Routes	% of total route track miles	80%
Stakeholder Input	Top comments supporting route	Yes



Legend
Baseline Network
 - Long-Distance, Northeast Corridor, State-Supported, Baseline Projects
Potential New Route
 - Selected Route Option
 - Terminal Markets

PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY



Dallas/Fort Worth – Atlanta Selected Proposed Preferred Route and Evaluation Criteria

Further analysis after completion of this study would be necessary to advance the preferred routes through project planning and project development activities prior to implementation.

Access to MSAs Unserved by Passenger Rail	Number of MSAs	2
	Population of MSAs (millions)	0.36
Discontinued Routes	% of total route track miles	0%
Stakeholder Input	Top comments supporting route	Yes

Travel Demand	Annual trips per mile (thousands)	59
Transportation Disadvantaged	Rural population per mile	1,377
Population on Tribal Lands	Population per mile	10
Higher Education	Number of institutions	131
Medical Centers	Number of medical centers	25
NPS Lands	Number of parks	6

- Legend**
- Baseline Network**
 - Long-Distance, Northeast Corridor, State-Supported, Baseline Projects
 - Potential New Route**
 - Segments Shared by All Route Options
 - Selected Route Option
 - Terminal Markets



SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION

THANK YOU!



SouthernRailCommission.org



Info@southernrailcommission.org

Y'ALL ABOARD.