

Economic Development Current Issue

August

Streamlined Project Delivery—Tower 55 Projects

Tower 55 is the busiest at-grade railroad intersection in the country, and it is located below the I.H. 30/I.H. 35W interchange between downtown and the Near Southside. Tower 55 is an at-grade intersection of several major railroads. Each day 100 to 120 freight trains pass through this location. An additional 70 commuter/passenger trains per weekday pass by on the adjacent Trinity Railway Express. Due to the volume of trains, each train must come to a complete stop prior to crossing. The average wait time is 15 minutes, with 90-minute delays during peak period. Long responsible for several negative impacts to the region. The purpose of the Tower 55 projects is to improve the movement of trains, within and around the current rail infrastructure, that converge on Tower 55.



The Proposed East-West Trench

One proposal that would have a major impact on the Near Southside is a 9,000-foot-long trench along Vickery Blvd. To make room for the trench, at least six streets would have to be rebuilt, including four underpasses connecting to downtown. Fort Worth-area elected leaders oppose it because of the impact on property owners and motorists. Attend the August 3rd meetings to learn more and share your thoughts.

Why Modern Streetcars Here & Now

Mass transit modes come in many forms. There are buses and demand response vehicles (like The T's MITS vans); there are heavy rail commuter systems like in New York and Boston; and there are systems that fall in the category of light rail.

Light rail comes in different forms. The lines DART designs travel on dedicated rights-of-way that go underground and along highways, but the vehicles also run on downtown streets. Smaller light rail systems, sometimes called 'ultra light rail', like Portland's new "modern streetcar" system, use overhead electrical lines and run on rail built into city streets.

This collection of different transit modes is like a toolbox. Cities with successful mass transit systems use a variety of tools, employing different modes in different areas. Buses are efficient in some corridors; heavy rail is good for commuters. "Ultra Light Rail" or the modern streetcar can be very efficient for moving people shorter distances throughout a city.



What's In It For All Of Us?

- They generally attract at least 15-20 percent more riders than bus routes.
- They attract private funding.
- They are designed to serve neighborhoods, not just move people through them.
- They serve both local users as well as visitors and tourists.
- They are catalysts for urban infill development.

Mixed-Used Development

The City of Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan designates mixed-use growth centers as areas where compact, pedestrian-scaled, mixed-use neighborhoods and commercial districts should be developed. Within these growth centers, and in other appropriate areas, such as designated urban villages, mixed-use zoning helps provide a desirable combination of compatible residential, office, retail, and selected light industrial uses. Vibrant, compact, mixed-use districts:

- Help to reduce the frequency and distance of car trips;
- Foster safe, active pedestrian environments;
- Provide residential and employment density to support public transportation and neighborhood businesses; and
- Attract residents and employers looking for urban amenities

What are the mixed-use zoning classifications?

MU-1 Low Intensity Mixed-Use District — Provides areas in which a variety of housing types may exist among neighborhood-serving commercial and institutional uses.

MU-1G Greenfield Low Intensity Mixed-Use District* — Promotes low intensity mixed-use development in undeveloped mixed-use growth centers.

MU-2 High Intensity Mixed-Use District — Provides areas in which a variety of higher density housing types may exist among commercial, institutional, and selected light industrial uses.

MU-2G Greenfield High Intensity Mixed-Use District* — Promotes high intensity mixed-use development in undeveloped mixed-use growth centers.

*The greenfield zoning classifications are limited to sites of at least 100 acres.

Are single-use projects allowed in mixed-use zoning districts?

Single-use projects that are smaller than three acres are allowed. Projects that are three acres in size or larger require a mix of uses, with exceptions for single-use projects that are within walking distance (1,000 feet) of other uses and that help create a larger mixed-use area.



MU-1: *Low intensity mixed-use development.*



MU-2: *High intensity mixed-use development.*