



# Why Conventional Hi-Speed Rail Can't Solve Texas Traffic Problems



**18th Century Technology Poor Fit to Current Problem**



**Analysis by**

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## Past Rail Studies

### Hi-speed passenger rail

- Federal / corridor identification studies
- Texas T-Bone studies

### Emphasis on commuter & airport passengers

- These groups are low percentage of inter-city traffic
- Major traffic & road impacts of heavy trucks ignored

### Links to airports – Major H-S rail emphasis

**Emphasis only on small part of real problem!**

# The **Impossible** Hi-speed Rail Dream

## European high-speed train influence

- Americans see (and ride) high-speed trains  
( Most of the expensive right-of-ways – acquired in WWII era )
- Many dream that U.S. could & should have such systems

## The practical high-speed rail dream busters

- Dual, high-quality, **wide-gauge** railways – **ROW very costly!**  
( U.S. railroads do not meet these standards )
- **Fares can not even cover O&M costs!** – High subsidies!
- **Exclusive**, grade-separated track and very wide curves

**Lack of transport at each end deters users!**

## Some Texas Rail Hard Truths!

### Current railways can not accept hi-speed trains

- Need costly upgrades – even for Accela-type trains
- Rails now near capacity with freight train service
- Dual or tripple-tracking & grade separation essential
- railroads indemnification required!

### Many curves too sharp for even 150-mph trains

### Politics will limit effective travel speeds

- Local pressures tend to force many local town stops
- Local, en-route stops take time and reduce overall speed

### Simple economics make local-stop trains impractical

**Current railways and high speed are Incompatible**

## Other Major Rail Problems!

### Hi-speed passenger trains don't solve truck problem

- Trains not designed for truck-type cargo handling
- Cargo handling or special trains would impede schedules
- **Truck traffic impacts, noise levels and pollution not solved**

### Most users need cars at both ends of trip

- Won't park at station & then rent car at destination
- **Effective public transit in most areas – Woefully lacking!**

### Commuter traffic is short-range, low-speed traffic

- Public transit – home – work – train stations – **usually poor!**
- **Not worth two or more mode changes & lost time!**

**Rail Studies not working on total problems**

## Almost Inescapable Conclusions!

### Trains unlikely to serve many destinations

- Unable to serve many points – **Can't provide enough lines**
- Ridership requires many stops – Effective speed reduced

### Trains unlikely to attract large number of users

- Few commuters find them attractive – Schedule problems
- People starting by car – Likely to continue by car

### Very high cost with only minor traffic impacts

**Probably not a viable and affordable approach!**

# The High-speed Rail Cost Problem!

**Typical system cost – \$70 to \$100M per mile!**

**Cost in urban areas – Far more!**

- Added ROW & construction costs in urban areas
- **Costs for railway, upgrades and maintenance – Very high**

**Operating revenue never covers O&M costs**

**Current U.S. H-S rail plans – Can never fund it!**

**Any conventional high-speed rail project – likely DOA**

## Likely Results **with** H-S Rail!

### Worse traffic

- Even more cars
- More trucks

### Problems still exist

- More new studies
- More promises

### Higher tax burden

- **Paying for H-S rail**



**Even higher highway maintenance costs**



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