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BUSINESS

FW railway lands right to buy in Logistics Hub BNSF is considering new facility but won't abandon Alliance

By Brendan M. Case

The developer of the Dallas Logistics Hub has reached an agreement with a unit of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. that gives the Fort Worth-based railroad the right to buy land within the transportation development in southern Dallas County.

BNSF said it is still evaluating whether to develop an intermodal facility at the logistics hub being developed by The Allen Group, a San Diego-based developer.

The railroad also underlined its commitment to its existing intermodal operation in Fort Worth's Alliance development.

"BNSF believes metroplex growth patterns and geography may warrant its participation in the Alliance and Dallas facilities in order to best serve its customers," the company said.

Backers say the 6,000-acre Dallas Logistics Hub is a huge growth opportunity for North Texas, as soaring trade with Asian countries and just-in-time supply chain management spur demand for transportation services.

The hub is in southern Dallas County, with easy access to Interstates 20, 35E and 45. Union Pacific Corp. opened a terminal there in 2005.

"If BNSF uses its option and constructs an intermodal facility here, it would be the first logistics park in North America to house two intermodal facilities operated by the two largest U.S. freight rail carriers," said Edward Romanov, president and chief operating officer of The Allen Group.

Competition between the Dallas Logistics Hub and the 11,600-acre Alliance development is expected to increase, analysts said. But if trade grows as quickly as expected, the two rivals could both prosper.

"Naturally there's going to be competition," said Terry Pohlen, director of the Center for Logistics Education and Research at the University of North Texas. "However, when you really look at the amount of growth that's projected for the region, you need the capabilities. Overall, it's going to mean more business."

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