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BNSF buys 198 acres at Dallas Logistics Hub

A unit of Fort Worth-based Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. has purchased 198 acres at the Dallas Logistics Hub in a move that could jump-start investment in southern Dallas County, hub developer Allen Group said Monday.

BNSF Railway Co., the nation's second-largest railroad, confirmed the deal but declined to discuss its plans for the land, which sprawls into Dallas and Lancaster.

The price and terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

Analysts speculate that BNSF will eventually build an intermodal terminal where freight containers could be moved on and off trains. Union Pacific Railroad, the nation's largest railroad, already has such an operation near the Dallas Logistics Hub.

The deal "sure sends a signal that South Dallas is for real," said Terry Pohlen, director of the Center for Logistics Education and Research at the University of North Texas. "In the near future, we will hear that several other firms are locating there. I think a lot of people were waiting to see if Burlington Northern went in or not."

Dan McAuliffe, president of Allen Group's Texas operations, called it "the final seal of approval that this is the location to do business."

But Patrick Hiatte, a BNSF spokesman, said it would be "inappropriate" to assume the company will build an intermodal facility on the property.

The railroad already has such an operation at AllianceTexas, a competing development in Fort Worth.

"Burlington Northern Santa Fe put tens of millions of dollars of improvements into the [Alliance] intermodal yard in the past year," said David Pelletier, a spokesman for Hillwood, Alliance's developer. "They've made a commitment to the Alliance facility."

Still, Vann Cunningham, BNSF's vice president for economic development, said earlier this year that adding an intermodal facility in southern Dallas County would complement the railroad's operations at Alliance.

BNSF's property at the Dallas Logistics Hub has more than 9,000 feet of rail frontage.

The company has had the land under option for more than a year with the San Diego-based Allen Group and has an option to buy an additional 164 acres.

The 6,000-acre Logistics Hub also has easy access to three interstate highways: I-35, I-45 and I-20.

www.allengroup.com

