

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Eastern Corridor Riverfront Rail Transit - Public Meeting July 9th, 2007



The Eastern Corridor is a multi-modal transportation improvement program that will provide an effective and viable transportation network linking downtown Cincinnati in Hamilton County to the City's east suburbs in Clermont County. Components of the plan include new rail transit, expanded bus, local network improvements, and new highway. These various modes are being planned together and will be implemented in logical segments over time in a coordinated strategy consistent with the 2006 Eastern Corridor Tier 1 Record of Decision.

The proposed rail transit component of the Eastern Corridor, the Oasis Rail Transit corridor, will provide service from downtown Cincinnati to the I-275 outer belt at Milford. The proposed technology is Diesel Multiple Units (DMU), which consists of several cars that operate on diesel engines (do not require overhead electrical systems) and can run on existing track, thereby reducing start-up and operating costs.

The first segment of this Oasis rail corridor is the Eastern Corridor Riverfront Rail Transit. This potential connection will extend for about one mile between the existing Riverfront Transit Center (located under Second Street near the Freedom Center) and the Montgomery Inn Boathouse area. Various alternatives have been developed and a preliminary evaluation completed. The purpose of this public meeting is to present the Riverfront Rail Transit alternatives and other project information, and obtain your input on this important Eastern Corridor rail transit component.

RAIL TRANSIT GOALS

The Eastern Corridor multi-modal improvements will increase capacity, reduce congestion and delay, improve safety, provide more transportation options, and improve connections to the region's key transportation corridors and social and economic centers. Specific purposes for the rail transit component of the Eastern Corridor are to: connect people with jobs and recreational areas, increase accessibility by reaching areas not currently served by transit, provide future capacity beyond limits of the highway system, and improve overall transportation in the area by coordinating and linking with other travel modes.

The Riverfront Rail Transit segment of the Eastern Corridor plan specifically focuses on supporting the Cincinnati riverfront and downtown areas. Through stakeholder input and evaluation, five goals were identified:

- 1. Feasibility** - Establish a viable rail transit connection from the Boathouse to the Riverfront Transit Center.
- 2. Safety** - Establish a safe rail transit connection from the Boathouse to the Riverfront Transit Center.
- 3. Quality of Life** - Support and enhance existing and planned activities, major destinations, venues and events in and around downtown Cincinnati.

- 4. Economic Vitality** - Enhance the economic vitality and growth of the City of Cincinnati.

- 5. Fit** - Establish a rail transit connection that fits, enhances and is consistent with the intent of all relevant City and county plans, projects and agreements, such as the Central Riverfront Park, Sawyer Point, the Banks, the Riverfront Transit Center, and abandonment of the Riverfront Running Track.

RIVERFRONT RAIL ALTERNATIVES

During Tier 1 studies for the Eastern Corridor, two basic rail transit alternatives along the Cincinnati riverfront between the Riverfront Transit Center and the Boathouse were developed and evaluated. These alternatives were described in the Eastern Corridor Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and presented for public review and comment at the Eastern Corridor public hearing held December 9, 2004. These initial alternatives were further studied and refined after the Tier 1 DEIS, and three general corridors (with minor variations of each corridor for a total of nine alternatives) are presented today for public comment:

North Alternatives – These are double track alternatives that generally follow Pete Rose Way from the Boathouse and enter/exit the Riverfront Transit Center via the east portal. Three North options include N-1, N-2, and N-3, which differ slightly in the extent to which they parallel and where they cross Pete Rose Way. N-1 and N-3 generally parallel Pete Rose Way at grade, but differ slightly in where they cross, whereas N-2 includes an elevated section through Sawyer Point Park and over Pete Rose Way. N-1 and N-2 have three rail transit stations, including the Boathouse, Lytle Place and the Riverfront Transit Center. N-3 has stations at the Boathouse and Riverfront Transit Center only. Total track length for the North Alternatives is about 1.4 miles.

South Alternatives – These are double track alternatives that follow existing rail corridor through Sawyer Point and Yeatman’s Cove Park, past U.S. Bank Arena, then parallel Mehring Way before turning north to enter/exit the Riverfront Transit Center via the west portal. Two South options include S-1 and S-2, where S-1 is an “outer” alignment that turns north towards the Riverfront Transit Center between the Brent Spence and Clay Wade Bailey bridges, and S-2 is an “inner” alignment that turns north along Central Avenue just west of Paul Brown Stadium. S-1 and S-2 each have four rail stations, including the Boathouse, Great American Ball Park/U.S. Bank Arena, the Banks, and the Riverfront Transit Center. Total track length for the South Alternatives is about 2.7 miles.

Loop Alternatives – These are single track alternatives created by combining the North and South alternatives to form a rail transit “loop” through the riverfront area. Four Loop options include: L-1 and L-2 are “outer loops” that, from the Boathouse, head counterclockwise following N-1 or N-3, entering the Riverfront Transit Center through the east portal, exit through the west, then loop south and head east following S-1 along the riverfront back towards the Boathouse. L-3-1 and L-3-2 also follow a counterclockwise configuration, but differ in that they follow S-2 along the riverfront back to the Boathouse, forming an “inner loop”. L-1 and L-3-1 each have five rail stations, including the Boathouse, Lytle Place, the Riverfront Transit Center, the Banks, and Great American Ball Park/U.S. Bank Arena. L-2 and L-3-2 each have one less station, specifically the Lytle Place Station. Total track length for the Loop Alternatives is 3.2 to 3.7 miles.

STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP EVALUATION

A stakeholder implementation group of city, county, state, consultant team and other interested parties has been actively involved in identifying community goals and objectives for the riverfront (see first page), and developing performance metrics from which to evaluate how proposed alternatives supported identified goals. This evaluation effort included careful review of each alternative’s ability to meet purpose and need as developed in the Eastern Corridor Tier 1 work effort, careful analysis of needs and impacts to important activity centers in and around the riverfront, fit with existing and planned land uses, support of economic development, and minimization of impacts to environmental resources in the area. The evaluation process was accomplished through a series of stakeholder work group meetings held between 2004 and 2007.

YOUR COMMENTS ARE NEEDED

The goal of this Public Meeting is to provide you opportunity to review and comment on the Eastern Corridor Riverfront Rail Transit and give us your input on the alternatives presented. Please review the handouts and displays presented at this meeting and then fill out the attached comment sheet. Project team representatives are on hand to take your comments and answer your questions. You can submit your comment sheet by filling it out tonight and turning it in at the Comment Table, or by mailing it to the Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District, 10480 Burlington Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45231. **Please submit your comments by July 23, 2007.**

NEXT STEPS

Following this public meeting and consideration of the comments received, along with the studies and evaluation conducted to date, a recommended riverfront rail transit alternative will be identified. Detailed environmental evaluation and design studies will be conducted for the recommended alternative, including development of specific location, operation and configuration details, right-of-way requirements, impact assessment and mitigation. Environmental documentation will be completed according to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Results of this work will be presented at a future public meeting.

