

APPENDIX C

MEDIA COVERAGE

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Media Coverage

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OASIS COMMUTER RAIL

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ODOT STUDIES COMMUTER RAIL TO IMPROVE MOBILITY BETWEEN EASTERN CINCINNATI REGION, DOWNTOWN

Community Open Houses Scheduled for Public Input on Proposed Project

CINCINNATI (March 28, 2011) – The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is exploring the feasibility of using commuter rail to improve mobility between downtown Cincinnati and communities in the eastern half of the Greater Cincinnati region. Originally proposed as part of the Eastern Corridor Study, the Oasis Commuter Rail corridor is approximately 17 miles in length and extends between the Riverfront Transit Center in downtown Cincinnati and the I-275/US 50 interchange in Milford. The line would be served by multiple stations.

“Our goal right now is to take an in-depth look at the commuter rail option and determine its feasibility in terms of function, constructability and affordability,” said ODOT project manager Andy Fluegemann. “We will examine possible alignments and station locations, and evaluate which rail technologies would best meet the region’s needs. We also will be looking at estimated costs and the projected return on investment for the region.”

Fluegemann went on to say that as part of the Oasis Commuter Rail corridor study, alternatives under consideration will be refined through detailed engineering, environmental analyses and comparative impact evaluation. The study will conclude in early 2012 with the identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the rail line or a recommendation to not pursue the commuter rail option any further.

As evaluation of project elements begins, the project team is seeking input from the general public.

“People living in communities to be served by the Oasis Commuter Rail line have an on-the-ground knowledge of the areas we are studying and may have valuable information that should be considered during the evaluation process,” said Fluegemann. To facilitate public input into the project, ODOT is hosting three community open houses at different locations along the project corridor:

Tuesday, April 5

LeBlond Recreation Center
2335 Riverside Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45202

5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

(An Open Comment / Q&A Session
begins at 7:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, April 6

R.G. Cribbet Center
(Fairfax Recreation Center)
5903 Hawthorne Avenue
Fairfax, OH 45227

5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

(An Open Comment / Q&A Session
begins at 7:00 p.m.)

Thursday, April 7

Milford High School, Cafeteria
1 Eagles Way
Milford, OH 45150

5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

(An Open Comment / Q&A Session
begins at 7:00 p.m.)

Information stations located around the meeting space will highlight various project elements and project team members will be available to answer questions and receive comments. A formal Open Comment/Question and Answer session will follow a brief presentation at 7:00 p.m. Individuals needing special assistance at the meetings (such as language interpreters) should contact Nancy Bunn, Saybrook Marketing Communications at (513) 386-9947 prior to the meetings. All meeting locations are ADA accessible.

ODOT will accept comments on the information presented at the open house meetings until Friday, April 22, 2011. Comments can be shared either verbally or in writing at the meetings, or submitted online on the Eastern Corridor project website, www.easterncorridor.org.

The Oasis Commuter Rail line was advanced for further study by the Eastern Corridor Study's Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision (ROD), issued in June 2006. The Eastern Corridor Study was a detailed examination of mobility and connectivity challenges between the urban core of downtown Cincinnati and the city's eastern suburbs. The study established that a multi-modal transportation program should be implemented to increase capacity, reduce congestion and delay, improve safety, and provide transportation options and connectivity to the region's key transportation corridors and social and economic centers.

In addition to commuter rail, three other multi-modal components were also advanced for further study: expanded bus transit, new highway capacity, and various Transportation Systems Management (TSM) options, including minor local transportation network improvements and new bikeways.

The Oasis Rail Corridor study is managed by the ODOT. Additional project partners include the Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District (HCTID), Clermont County Transportation Improvement District (CCTID), City of Cincinnati, and the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA)/Metro.

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Spanning nearly 165 square miles of both urban and suburban communities, the Eastern Corridor extends east from downtown Cincinnati to the I-275 corridor in Clermont County, and includes the City of Milford to the north, Batavia Township to the east, and Amelia Village to the south. Mobility and connectivity within the Eastern Corridor is problematic. According to the Eastern Corridor Study's Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision, transportation routes already exceed their designed capacity, and average daily traffic volumes on the interstates and most main roadways in the area are projected to increase up to 81% over current conditions by 2030. This is expected to lead to increased road congestion, with potential negative effects to efficient movement of goods, services and people.

Offering a rail-based transportation alternative, the Oasis Commuter Rail line is one of four long-term solutions being considered to address mobility and connectivity challenges within Greater Cincinnati's Eastern Corridor. More information about the Oasis Commuter Rail study and the Eastern Corridor project is available at www.easterncorridor.org.