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Interactive Online Software Expands Reach for Oasis Rail Transit Public Involvement

*Now through January 10, residents can provide feedback on travel priorities and preferences
for commuter rail stations in minutes*

CINCINNATI (December 12, 2013) – Want to help shape commuter rail in Cincinnati, but didn’t make this week’s Oasis Rail Transit public meetings? The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is using an internet-based feedback program to give the public more opportunity to engage in the planning and development of Oasis—Greater Cincinnati’s first commuter rail line. Available at www.EasternCorridor.org, this simple-to-use, online tool gives the public a chance to weigh in on topics ranging from priorities for travel to desired amenities at rail stations—all from the comfort of their own homes.

“Public meetings are an essential part of the project planning process. However, they are also limited in their reach and we want to go further,” said Steve Mary, Deputy Director of ODOT, District 8. “This software allows us to go where the people are – online. People can view the information we shared at the Oasis rail meetings, then tell us what’s important to them using this interactive platform. The more input we have from the public, the better we can develop a project that best meets the needs and desires of local communities.”

A core element of the Eastern Corridor Program, Oasis Rail Transit introduces a new public transportation option to the region and would serve communities extending east from downtown Cincinnati, through Hamilton County, and into western Clermont County. The interactive feedback tool, known as MetroQuest, was launched on December 10 during the first public involvement meeting and will remain available to the public through January 10.

The program consists of five interactive screens:

- 1) **WELCOME:**
This screen provides an introduction to the Oasis project with maps that can be enlarged
- 2) **MOVING INTO THE FUTURE - Priorities for Travel:**
Respondents are asked to rank their top three priorities for travel by dragging and dropping options above a preference line.

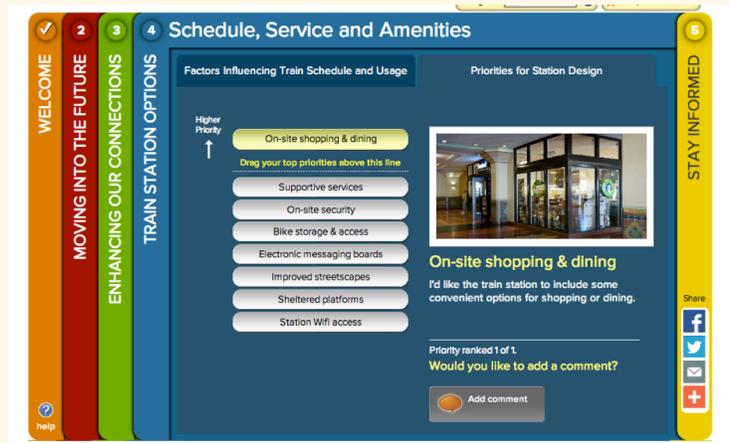


Eastern Corridor Implementation Partners

Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District • Clermont County Transportation Improvement District • City of Cincinnati
Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments • Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority • Ohio Department of Transportation

The Eastern Corridor Program is administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation in cooperation with the

- 3) **ENHANCING OUR CONNECTIONS - Travel Needs And Suggested Improvements:**
This screen offers participants the opportunity to identify their typical travel destinations on a map (home, work, daycare, etc.) and then make suggestions for improvements along their travel routes (streetscapes, bike connections, new crosswalks, etc.)
- 4) **TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS - Factors Influencing Train Usage And Priorities For Station Design:**
This screen allows users to rate the degree to which various factors would influence their usage of commuter rail (such as: frequency of service, weekend service, fares, etc.), as well as rank priorities for transit station design such as shopping amenities, Wi-Fi access, bike storage and access, etc.
- 5) **STAY INFORMED:**
Here, users are asked to answer a few questions related to age, ethnicity and zip code, as well as to provide information about how they might use rail transit.



“The Oasis rail line will provide significant, tangible benefits to our region, from reducing polluting emissions to growing our economy,” said Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune. Mr. Portune also serves as president of the Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District and chairs the board of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). “This online tool is an excellent way to go beyond the confines of a single meeting space and give voice to the broader public about what matters most to them.”

The public can access MetroQuest directly at www.EasternCorridor.org. Results and responses to comments received will be provided in the Oasis Rail Transit public meeting report, expected out in mid-February. More information is available at www.EasternCorridor.org or by calling the Eastern Corridor hotline at 513-888-7625.

About Oasis

A core element of the Eastern Corridor Program, the 17-mile Oasis Rail Transit line will introduce a new transportation choice to the Eastern Corridor region, moving residents, workers and visitors between downtown Cincinnati, the City of Milford and the communities in between. Much of its track alignment would use publicly-owned rail right-of-way and potentially share existing tracks in collaboration with freight operators. In other places, new tracks would be built to complete necessary connections. For planning purposes, the Oasis corridor is divided into four segments which will be constructed in phases:

Segment 1: Riverfront Transit Center to the Boathouse (1 mile)

Segment 2: Boathouse to US 50 in Fairfax (7 miles)

Segment 3: US 50 in Fairfax to Ancor area, slightly northeast of Newtown (4 miles)

Segment 4: Ancor area to Milford (5 miles)

For more about Oasis, visit: <http://easterncorridor.org/projects/oasis-rail-transit/oasis-rail-transit-project-overview/>.

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About MetroQuest

Envision Sustainability Tools Inc. (Envision) is a Vancouver, Canada-based private company that develops and delivers digital engagement software and supporting services to government agencies and planning, engineering and architecture firms in North America. Envision's proprietary software, MetroQuest, is provided to its customers using a Software as a Service (SaaS) monthly subscription model. MetroQuest is digital engagement software. It provides organizations with a powerful, flexible, cost effective tool for engaging a broad and diverse set of stakeholders. From gathering priorities to rating scenario alternatives, MetroQuest makes it easy to generate meaningful input on for a wide range of planning projects.

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The Eastern Corridor is a program of integrated, multi-modal transportation investments that, together, will provide essential east-west connectivity for the Greater Cincinnati region. Currently in its second phase of study, the Program will address critical congestion issues and mobility challenges expected to worsen by 2030. Planned enhancements will improve travel and connections between central Cincinnati and the communities extending east through Hamilton County into western Clermont County. Program elements include improvements to existing road networks, new and expanded roadways, rail transit, expanded bus routes and improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Eastern Corridor Program is administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Eastern Corridor Implementation Partners: Hamilton County Transportation Improvement District (HCTID), Clermont County Transportation Improvement District (CCTID), City of Cincinnati, Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) and the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA). More information about Eastern Corridor is available at www.EasternCorridor.org.

