

Public Open House

Tuesday, August 23, 2011 from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. CST

Union Station's Grand Hall

30 W. Pershing Road

Kansas City, Mo. 64105

A public open house was held to discuss the Downtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis (AA) on August 23, 2011 from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Hall of Union Station (30 W. Pershing Road) in Kansas City, Mo. No formal presentations were given. The Regional Transit Alliance (RTA) hosted a Streetcar Party from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Union Station on the same day to give the public a "sneak peak" at the type of streetcar and bus alternatives currently under consideration through the Downtown Corridor AA.

The purpose of the open house was to provide targeted stakeholder groups and the general public and media with an overview of the Downtown Corridor AA as well as to:

- Share information about the:
 - Purpose and need for the AA.
 - How the AA differs from other efforts.
 - Planning process and schedule for the AA.
 - Differences between transit modes, such as the modern street car and circulator bus.
 - Tier 1 evaluation of alignment alternatives for a potential, fixed-guideway starter line.
 - Tier 2 evaluation of the Grand Boulevard and Main Street alignment alternatives.
 - Development of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and general financing strategies for it.
- Gather feedback on:
 - Tier 2 evaluation factors that should be considered.
 - General comments.

Approximately 900 people participated in the Streetcar Party including the nearly 280 who signed in to attend the open house, 300 who toured the Kinkisharyo ameriTRAM, 160 RTA raffle participants, and 150 registrants for Quixotic Fusion's transportation inspired musical performance. Attendees included local public officials and staff, downtown residents, business representatives, neighborhood groups, umbrella agencies, advocacy groups, and media. Notice was provided via press releases, www.smartmoves.org, email blasts, Facebook,

and stakeholder meeting announcements. An overview of the information presented at the meeting, general comments, comment card responses, and other comments are included below.

Handouts and Exhibits

Handouts provided to meeting participants included:

- Meeting overview handout
- Project comment form
- Meeting evaluation form

Meeting participants were encouraged to review the following exhibits:

- **Welcome:** Relevant meeting information
- **Overview:** Project description
- **Process and Schedule:** General project details
- **Project Purpose and Need:** Purpose and need statement
- **Modes of Transit:** Circulator bus and modern streetcar comparison
- **June Alignment Alternatives:** Maps of the seven alternatives
- **Tier 1 Evaluation:** Evaluation criteria and results of the process to narrow the seven alignment alternatives to two
- **August Alignment Alternatives:** Grand Boulevard and Main Street
- **How to Pay for It:** Guiding principles and potential sources of funding
- **Next Steps:** Project schedule
- **Stay Informed:** www.smartmoves.org

General Summary of Comments

Forty-five (45) hardcopy project comment cards and 24 meeting evaluation forms were returned to the project team during the weeks that followed the open house. Generally, the feedback received related to:

- **Factors that should be considered during Tier 2 evaluation**
 - Potential for starter line expansion to:
 - Country Club Plaza
 - 18th and Vine
 - Waldo area
 - North of the river, e.g. KCI Airport
 - Johnson County
 - East

- Simplicity of alignment, e.g. straight as possible, especially at the ends
 - Ability of working population to access the starter line for work, food/grocery, and other transit connections, e.g. Main Street MAX, potential Main Street light rail
 - Streetcar operational factors may impact the MAX
 - Ridership generated from working populations
 - Begin starter line farther out (in multiple directions) and where other transit connections can be made
 - Bicycle accommodations:
 - Bikes on streetcars via “bike zone”
 - Possibility of bringing bikes on streetcars
 - Bike racks at stops and on cars
 - Impacts of streetcar on bike lanes
 - Interior streetcar design:
 - Materials used for and position of seats
 - Amount of seating
 - Opportunity for bike zone
 - New development opportunities within the streetcar corridor and beyond, e.g. Berkley Riverfront Park
 - Energy efficiency, e.g. air quality and carbon dioxide impacts
 - Emergency procedures
 - Ease of construction
 - ADA requirements
 - Park-and-ride potential
 - Advertising ability
 - Tourism
- **Funding**
 - How much will the project cost?
 - What are the funding sources, e.g. federal, state, or county (Jackson and/or Johnson County), residents and businesses?
 - To whom will assessments be applied?
 - What benefit will assessed properties receive?

- Will incentives be offered to businesses?
- **Grand Boulevard alignment** impacts Sprint Center but also:
 - Serves all of the centers
 - Connects jobs
 - Relates to the Making Grand Boulevard Grand project
 - Is straighter
- **Main Street alignment** impacts Main Street MAX bus but also:
 - Connects to grocery, entertainment, residential, and work locations
 - Is central to downtown
 - Has parking impacts
- **Logistics**
 - Where and how to pay for tickets
 - Hours of operations, e.g. late night hours, given likely riders (workers, tourists) and their ages and income ranges
 - Trip length - Avoid alignments and stop selections that create longer trips
 - City Market connections and alignments
- **Other**
 - Like light rail from Waldo to the KCI Airport
 - Coordinating and informing the rental population about the project

Verbatim Comments from Comment Cards

The comment forms provided to meeting participants during the meeting and included the two questions below and resulted in the answers included with each.

- **Through September 2011 the study team will conduct a Tier 2 evaluation of the alignment and mode alternatives on display today. Tier 1 evaluation factors are included with the detailed Tier 2 analysis. Such factors include stakeholder input, potential ridership, construction and operating costs, economic development potential, traffic and land use impacts, right-of-way issues, community issues, and impacts to environmental and historic resources. What other evaluation factors should the team consider? Why?**
 - Potential future expansion of the streetcar to the Plaza, 18th and Vine, and beyond when considering choice of Main Street and Grand. Perception of a

streetcar over a MAX bus to tourists and conventioners. More recognizable and pleasant appearance.

- Simplicity of alignment – It is important to me that the alignment be as straight as possible and that it takes into consideration future expansion of the lines. I believe this has been done everywhere but at the south end. It is unnecessary to turn the alignment and go one full block, just to stop right in from of an “attraction”. It is much simpler and more cost effective to stop the line without turning the corner. People are able to walk the one block to Crown Center or the Union Station; plus we already have the skywalk. These unnecessary turns slow travel time north to south and prevent commuters from using the mass transit. I am concerned about this because I live 3 blocks from the Main Street MAX bus.
- Job access/food access/transit access for urban core residents – particularly those who likely do not have personal transportation. The commuter lines that would run east/west would help, granted they make frequent enough stops.
- Realistic plans for traditional light rail should be taken into consideration. Such plans often have light rail on Main south of the downtown loop. If modern streetcar is built on the same alignment it could become an obstacle to light rail unless the track is built to traditional light rail standards.
- My interest is in this route serving the stadiums to the Power and Light District before we look at River Market to Crown Center as the MAX serves that market today.
- Open house focus is only on the downtown loop which, when judged on its own, implies a convenient mid-town trip for those already downtown. I'd like to see how this plays with the MAX, the Jo, and the current or planned routes.
- The sooner the better we need a good mass transit in the Kansas City Metro area. I feel it should serve all of Kansas City not just Kansas City, Mo. The cost should be absorbed by all the resident whether it be in from of sales tax in all communities it serves.
- I think one consideration should be how many people might be riding the streetcar or rapid bus option to their job. For me at times it can be difficult getting to work because ATA bus service ends about midnight. I believe that the hours of operation of a streetcar line or expanded bus/bus rapid transit should be carefully looked at. I work the 12:00 AM to 8:00 AM shift and depend on the bus right now to get me there. I work downtown. I know there are not as many people working at night or overnight as during the day. But there is a few of us who do.
- Expansion capability.
- Is the downtown corridor the wisest place to begin improving transit? Will the proposed streetcar services give us the greatest impact per dollar in reducing

transportation carbon dioxide emissions and oil use? Are streetcars sufficiently more appealing than MAX bus service such that ridership will increase enough to justify the investment? Are streetcars significantly more energy efficient than MAX buses? How much would a downtown corridor streetcar system improve air quality over MAX buses?

- Consider the use of daily life for citizens who live in the urban core. Main seems to be a more viable option for residents with connection to grocery, entertainment, residential and work space. As a downtown residents for almost 5 years – it is incredible to finally have this discussion in great detail.
- Route – I would vote for the Main Street route at this point, mostly because it is more centrally located than Grand. I would prefer that you extend it all the way to Waldo...some day...
- Cars – Add more hand rails for standing passengers. Create a “bike zone” in part of the car for biking passengers. Also, consider a smooth plastic or vinyl seat rather than fabric. Fabric can conceal wetness, gum, dirt, etc and nobody needs that.
- We need a dedicated right-of-way as much as possible for the streetcar to get the train to move fast and efficiently. Electricity’s the best option for power. We need an expandable system to reach the suburbs later ___ using standard gauge.
- I’m in favor of the whole project. Would love to have the streetcars, probably on Main would be my choice. Wish we could have the light rail all the way from Waldo to the airport – think it would be a big plus for the city. Really like the streetcar itself.
- It will help ecology, the traffic and save time for many in many ways. Full speed ahead!!
- I like the concept of Tier 1 findings. Please start ASAP to get this city moving towards an up-to-date transit system.
- Connecting important city parts, ease of construction, development opportunities – new development as opposed to developing what is already reasonably _____. Grand is way better route than Main!
- The route should be Grand Avenue! It goes to the right places, serves all of the centers, and has the proper worth.
- Also consider operational impacts the proposed alignment would have on both the streetcar and any realigned bus/BRT routes.
- The defects of this streetcar.
- What to do in case of emergency?
- How much does this cost and how will it affect tax payers?

- Is this streetcar really necessary with respect to all of the other transportation involved?
- I would just like to voice my support for two concepts: 1) The Main corridor alignment is the best. Please select that plan. 2) Please take effort to decouple the movement to build downtown streetcar from the regional commuter rail. They are fundamentally different projects. The streetcar is locally funded, bottom up development whereas the commuter rail, regional system will require massive state and federal subsidy. Although I want both efforts to succeed, one is not and should not be dependent on the other. Please be sure to separate the two so that failure of the regional system will not prevent development of the streetcar system.
- Consider – All crucial to be successful: handicapped access, ticket enforcements, security/safety, affordability, seasonal changes = traffic/weather, preferred all day access, cheaper on M-TH thru F-SU, safety to pedestrians. All make experience easy and worry free to all users: citizens of city, tourist, low income, older, handicap – too expensive nobody will ride.
- I still choose Grand Boulevard.
- ADA compliancy.
- Sprint Center management could be a source of problems on Grand.
- I would favor routes where development potential is greater – Illustrate how transit can create improved property vitalization/values/tax base.
- I would encourage the team to consider development parcels on the river (by Berkley Park) as part of the study area, and a potential route for the streetcar to connect the MO River with the rest of downtown. This could be considered regardless of a Main or Grand route.
- Park and ride potential to downtown employees.
- My name is _____ and I am really for the city getting a streetcar or light rail. I currently live here and was born and raised here in KCMO. After going to college in Chicago and living in St. Louis for awhile I think we are behind the 8 ball and our city stinks since we have bad public transportation and one way to make KCMO a great city like Chicago or St. Louis is to bring a better transit system like streetcar or light rail then that way more jobs will come here, more people will move to the city and more entertainment will come here a lot more often.
- What impact will the streetcar have on bike lanes along the routes?
- How can bikes (and riders) be accommodated on the streetcar? Is it possible to bring the bike onto the streetcar?

- People who rent apartments along the route are also likely users and supporters. How are they being included in the discussion?
 - Use streetcar, not another bus.
 - How to incorporate bike riders into the streetcar use. Will there be bike racks at street stop locations and/or will there be ways to transport bikes on the streetcars themselves?
 - How are you notifying the renters in the community since they are likely users?
 - What impact will streetcar have on street thinking of adding bike lanes? Will bike riders be able to take a bike on the streetcar?
 - Just do it!
 - Since Sept. 2009 I been disabled. My right side does not work right. Talking with these folks it sounds good for disabled people.
 - Wheelchair bus – Level floor ___ with level platform are fast and preferred.
 - Tickets to be bought on platform, not cars would be better.
 - For airport expansion, does any alignment get to a bridge (Broadway, _____, ASB) or _____ that can be used to cross the river?
 - Critical to consider connecting with other modes. This should improve ridership and make seamless travel possible without a car.
 - The idea of public transportation in the form of light rail is an exciting one. However, the proposed idea of the starter line starting at Union Station and running to the River Market is short sighted. I agree that the starter line has to start somewhere. I would like it to encompass the areas that working people come from. In other words it should go east, west and south but at a point that connects with buses.
 - What about advertising?
 - I like the Main Street concept.
 - How will we build tracks for light rail? Is light rail where we're heading?
 - How long will it take to complete???
 - What areas of the city will have access?
 - How is trackage done? Middle of the street, or to the side?
 - How many and how often will it stop to take on or discharge passengers?
 - How will the turnaround work at each end?
- **What other comments or questions do you have?**

- Love the streetcar! This is long overdue in KC! It is great for residents in downtown, but also an enhancement for tourism and conventions. It is a “must have” for a city our size.
- Rapid Transit Lines. However I cannot justify using the bus due to its departures from the main thoroughfares. These departures cause the trip to take about 35 minutes by bus from 59th and Brookside Blvd to 13th and Wyandotte. This same ‘community trip’ takes me 12 minutes by car. I know of myself and several neighbors who do not ride for this reason. I wrote this because I am pro streetcar and do not want commuter ridership to decrease because travel time went up just so the station was at a location’s front door instead of one block away. Thank you for your earnest consideration of all comment.
- Having the line enter the City Market seems like an inefficient model, especially for those of us who live and shop in the River Market area.
- Forget about running commuter rail on Truman Road. The idea is ridiculous. There is no track there and demolishing Truman Road to put one in makes no sense and likely would be prohibitively expensive. It would be better to send commuter rail to Union Station and then implement an efficient and convenient connection to downtown.
- I am in favor of this. I feel it would help some of the bus/Metro overcrowding especially rush hour. I also think it will be good for our economy.
- Get moving! Let’s build something that makes sense for providing KC options for transportation.
- If we’re going to make a major investment in transit, it needs to get people out of their cars who would otherwise drive, and not just a few people. It’s not enough to give those who already use transit a better transit mode. Much higher oil prices are in the foreseeable future, and the climate crisis is upon us.
- It about long overdue. It would be ____ into KCMO. I love it from living 25 years in San Francisco/Oakland, CA.
- Grand terminating in Crown Center is ____ more ____ terminus for the streetcar.
- Consider both how the proposed route serves existing users and destinations, but also how will it would serve future, built-out/redeveloped areas. What is the best route for tomorrow and today?
- I will support either alignment if it means getting something built.
- How sufficient will this be for every individual to afford this new endeavor?
- How is the streetcar being paid for?

- Great presentation: Maybe tax payers pay as little as possible. Don't rely on fed aid unless it's guaranteed. Priority No. 1 continue mass transit drive after completed.
- If Main Street is chosen will Main Street MAX be put on Grand Boulevard?
- Will you take away parking from Main Street downtown?
- Will this cost too much?
- Will the developers and city officials use the system?
- Will this last 30 years or more?
- Are there plans to extend south past 75th Street?
- Will this run in the evening?
- I would favor the Grand Avenue route because it would be a better connector to and from jobs, and the projected Grand Avenue redevelopment could be tied in with the streetcar.
- I think this is a very well thought out plan and I fully support it. I only hope that this includes plans for further expansion throughout the city. KC is so far behind other cities of comparable size. I say let's get this done.
- What is your long term funding for this project? Will it be state, federal, or just Jackson County? Would it be a joint venture with Johnson?
- Good to see real transit solutions come to downtown. PLEASE make this happen!
- I prefer the Grand Boulevard alignment. It's straighter and more right-of-way is available.
- Main route is preferable due to closures of Grand at 14th for events (Big 12 tourn, etc), proximity to hotels, convention center and city tourists. What is the plan to address the Main Street line at 5th Street near the city market? Weekends make any vehicular traffic along that street near impossible. Would a turn down Independence make more sense? Walk to 5th and Walnut on a Saturday to see example.
- The Main Street route seems more centralized between the convention district and entertainment district and is in better proximity to the hotels. I think this is the best option!
- I would question how to deal with City Market traffic, especially on Saturdays and along 5th Street. Would it be possible to look at 3rd and/or Delaware routes?
- I have concerns with the Grand option because of proximity to convention center and hotels and having to deal with the frequent closing of Grand due to Sprint Center activities.

- I prefer a modern streetcar option. I prefer the route on Main Street. I feel it is more central and would provide good access to both residents and tourists. I think a Main Street route could be easier to expand. Careful consideration should be given to the routing through the river market. Could the south bound route in the River Market go on 3rd and down Delaware?
- Is it possible to offer incentives for affecting businesses during construction?
- Spend the money for the working people on the Plaza, downtown, and out south (perhaps Ward Parkway or Red Bridge and also 119th in Johnson County). Start with considering working people.
- I like Main/Grand – Don't see it as confusing.
- What about public comments and survey?
- Love the modern streetcar!
- The MAX hybrid was awesome.
- Excited about light rail!
- I live in the corridor proposed and I am opposed to a special assessment unless we get some other benefit.

Comments from Evaluation Forms

Specific project-related comments included on the meeting evaluation forms are listed below.

- Consideration should be given to potential expansion to the airport (via commuter or light rail).
- More advertising to let people know it's here. Invite other companies to show their streetcars. Future bidders – So we can check them out.
- Main Street alignment preferred.
- The trolley car system is great! The battery powered streetcar would be fantastic alternative to power lines.
- I like Main over Grand. I support streetcar over bus.
- Need to straighten out MAX.
- Need more seating on streetcar/longer car. Seating should face forward.
- Bring in an articulated bus (higher capacity) for comparison.
- Need off-board fare collection.
- This will function as "just" a circulator at first but the line needs to be designed with expansion (at least to Plaza/UMKC) in mind.

- Love the idea of a streetcar type system. Dislike leaving out midtown residents/plaza. Based on the current route(s) I would rarely take the streetcar. I don't frequent P & L or River Market and would have to go 2 miles to get ___ first car. I might as well drive. Lots of midtowners probably agree.
- Would like to also be involved in discussions re: way to connect the downtown corridor with other areas of the city.
- This is something that KC needs. We vote for light rail and nothing has been done. I would ride if it was available.
- I still think it should be a circulator route within downtown to expand development potential at the 1/2-mile radius for transit-oriented development. While I prefer Main and Walnut why not now consider Main and Grand since these were your ten choices in the first place. In the future it could go north/south on Main south of Crown Center and then head north on Grand at 27th Street and then around at the River Market (3rd Street) then back up Main. This would only put one – three blocks between the lines, expand and connect what is "downtown" and set the stage for future rail loops in downtown that radiate east-west, for example.
- If I had to pick one, it would be Main Street.