

BEST: WOODWARD AVENUE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY | OCTOBER 7, 2015 | 1:30PM

IN ATTENDANCE

See attached sign-in sheet.

MEETING MINUTES

Project Background

- 27-mile corridor
- Study area includes 11 municipalities in 2 counties
- Study area currently served by SMART and DDOT service – travel time is not competitive with the automobile
- Public involvement included 18 public meetings and ongoing community/stakeholder meetings
- Evaluation of mode, alignment, stations, and cross sections focused on ridership, cost, economic development, social equity, intermodal connections, and legibility
- Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) included 27 mile of bus rapid transit (BRT) service with 26 stations

Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

- Reverse BRT flow within downtown Detroit
 - Inbound on John R.
 - Outbound on Cass Avenue
- Benefits of modified LPA include:
 - Right hand access at key stations (Amtrak and Rosa Parks Transit Center)
 - Eliminates need for conversion of John R. street to two-way and is better suited for exclusive transit lane
 - Far-side stations at Temple, Mack, Warren, and Grand Circus Park
 - Potential for new downtown station near Campus Martius
 - Potential for paired stations at Grand Circus Park (potentially shared with M-1 Rail)
 - Facilitates off-board payment at all new stations
- Costs/Considerations of modified LPA include:
 - Deviation from current LPA
 - Near-side station at Cass/Temple without acquisition of existing structures
 - Requires verification that BRT can cross streetcar tracks on Woodward Avenue
- Modified LPA was supported by FTA during recent visit
- **Comment: intermodal connections to DPM at Grand Circus Park should be considered (C. Henry)**
- **Comment: additional analysis to ensure “speed” is not impacted (C. Henry)**
- **Comment: impacts to potential bike facilities on Cass and John R. should be considered (L. Nuskowski)**
- **Comment: any assumptions that DDOT/SMART service would cease in downtown due to congestion? (R. Cramer)**
 - LPA and modified LPA assume BRT would be overlay service, but further analysis will be conducted as part of BEST: Woodward and the Regional Master Transit Plan

Section 106

- Section 106 process will include:
 - Determination of federal undertaking
 - Coordination with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
 - Identification of consulting parties
 - Includes groups with demonstrated interest in historic properties within study area
 - Definition of Area of Potential Effects (APE)
 - Area within which a project may impact historic properties
 - Direct (i.e. demolition) and indirect (i.e. visual, noise) effects will be considered
 - Identification of historic properties within APE
 - Prior documentation in Woodward LRT and M-1 Rail Streetcar projects will be included
 - Assessment of effects to historic properties
 - Includes no effect, no adverse effect, and adverse effect
 - Resolution of adverse effects
 - Includes resolution through avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation

- **Comment: could project assist in determination of local historic properties? (M. Piana)**
 - Project could trigger NRHP nomination if new properties are determine NRHP-eligible

Traffic Analysis

- Traffic analysis will include:
 - LPA, modified LPA, and all-Woodward options
 - Diversions in Royal Oak and Pontiac
 - Bi-directional BRT transitions in Detroit/Highland Park (100' ROW)
 - Median-center vs. median-edge options
- **Comment: what criteria are included in the traffic analysis and how are they weighted? (L. Nuskowski)**
 - Criteria will be weighted through ongoing coordination with committee and communities

Public Involvement

- Two (2) series of public meetings will be held in January (preliminary impacts/analysis) and March/April (findings and mitigation) 2016
 - Four (4) meetings in each series
- **Comment: was public involvement mandated by FTA? (J. Ecker)**
 - Joint decision by FTA/RTA to address ongoing comments and maintain inclusive process
- **Comment: suggestion to hold meetings each month until project completion (J. Ecker)**

General Comments

- **Comment: will project analyze costs? (M. Van Fossen)**
 - BEST: Woodward Avenue and RMTP will analyze costs and be available/presented in January
- **Comment: what is the extent of station design? (A. Vansen)**
 - Station design will include platform, access, and surrounding areas
- **Comment: what is the final product that can be used to build support in communities (M. Piana)**
 - CE document is technical/formulaic in nature, but will include specific routes, specific station locations, and station designs
- **Comment: how does BEST: Woodward Avenue align with MDOT resurfacing project (D. Delacrout)**
 - Ongoing communication between RTA and MDOT will ensure projects are aligned
- **Comment: how does traffic impact Woodward Complete Streets recommendations (J. Breuckman)**
 - Traffic analysis will include all components of both transit and complete streets projects
- **Comment: how can transit and complete streets projects be combined? (M. Piana)**
 - Design and analysis can be coordinated
 - Funding strategies will need to be developed as FTA/RTA funding will be primarily invested in transit-specific elements