

Southeast Corridor

February 2006

As part of its area-wide METRO Solutions transportation program, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) is working to complete environmental studies on the Southeast Corridor.

STUDY UPDATE

In 2002, METRO initiated a study to identify transit improvements in the corridor southeast of Downtown Houston. Several public workshops and meetings with civic associations and neighborhood groups were held to obtain comments on alternative transit routes and modes for improving transit in the corridor.

After studying the impacts and benefits of the alternatives, METRO held public workshops in June 2004 and presented a preferred transit alignment extending southeast from Downtown along Scott Street to the Southeast Transit Center and east along Griggs Road/Long Drive to a point ending just before Loop 610 South. Approximately 200 people attended these meetings and provided comments.

Study activities were limited while METRO sought federal approval and funding of the proposed METRO Solutions program. In the interim, local elected officials continued to solicit input from the public. Based on concerns raised in Town Hall meetings about impacts to residential areas and businesses along Scott, community leaders asked METRO to study an alignment variation that would avoid Scott south of Wheeler. This variation would turn east from Scott and run along Wheeler and south on Martin Luther King Boulevard to Griggs Road and east to a terminus at Palm Center. This new alignment variation for the Southeast Corridor is currently under study. In addition, as part of the federal funding approval process, METRO has introduced a variation in the type of technology to be used in the Southeast Corridor (and other METRO Solutions Corridors) called Bus Rapid Transit. This technology uses rubber-tired vehicles and offers the same transit service characteristics and quality as rail transit.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The new Wheeler/MLK alignment variation along with the Southeast Transit Center alignment and the Bus Rapid Transit Technology variation will be

presented to the public for comments in workshops to be held:

Tuesday, February 28

6 – 8 p.m.

**Judson W. Robinson Jr.
Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive**

Wednesday, March 1

6 – 8 p.m.

**Palm Center Business
Technology Center
5330 Griggs Road**

METRO and consultant team members will be available to discuss the analysis being performed and solicit your comments. Your input is extremely important in developing the most appropriate transit improvement for the Southeast Corridor, and in turn shaping the future of your community.

All meetings are being held in wheelchair-accessible locations. Any person requiring language translation or other special communication accommodations should contact 713.739.6049 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate these needs. For bus route information, call 713.635.4000 or visit www.ridemetro.org.

NEXT STEPS

After the February/March workshops, the team will complete the necessary technical analyses of the new transit alignment and prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for submission to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for review. The DEIS will address the impacts of the proposed Build Alternative and alignment variations on neighborhoods and businesses, economic development, the natural environment, traffic, transit ridership and capital and operating costs. The document will be circulated for public and agency review and comment. A public hearing will be held in late spring or early summer 2006. All comments will be incorporated into the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which will be completed in conjunction with Preliminary Engineering for the corridor.

To keep up to date on the Southeast Corridor, visit www.ridemetro.org and click METRO Solutions or e-mail questions and comments to metrosolutions@ridemetro.org or call 713.739-6049.

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