Eastern Corridor Rail Transit Options

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED FOR THE EASTERN CORRIDOR?

There are two rail transit lines proposed for the Eastern Corridor, each of which could use somewhat different light rail transit technologies.

One route could use Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) light rail vehicles that require no overhead cables for power. This route, called the Oasis line, would extend from the Cincinnati riverfront to Milford/Miami Township. The 17-mile route would have between seven and nine stations with multi-modal access.

A second line, called the Wasson line, would extend eastward from Xavier University along Wasson Ave., possibly as far as Eastgate. This line could use light rail transit (LRT) vehicles with electric motors and overhead wire power systems and link into the light rail route proposed for the I-71 corridor.

Using two different forms of transit vehicles could allow the system to connect with light rail proposed for other areas of the region and provide a cost-effective way to improve transportation in the Eastern Corridor.

These initial recommendations for rail transit in the Eastern Corridor are currently being evaluated. Recommendations regarding if, how and where DMU and LRT vehicles should be used on the Oasis and Wasson lines will be further developed as the Eastern Corridor study progresses.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF EACH TYPE OF LIGHT RAIL VEHICLE?

Diesel Multiple Units, or DMUs, have been used throughout Europe for many years and have recently been put into service in Ottawa, Ontario. DMUs will come on-line in Southern New Jersey in 2003.

DMUs consist of two-to-three self-powered lightweight cars linked together, and are about the same size and scale of electrically-powered LRT systems. However, DMUs use diesel engines, do not require overhead contact electrical systems for power, and can run on existing rail track where freight volumes are low. This capability can reduce start-up and operating costs. The vehicles are modern and attractive in appearance and provide many amenities. The vehicles can be equipped to accommodate wheel-chairs and bicycles. They often have a two-level floor, with a lower level to facilitate boarding.

DMUs have physical, operational and geometric characteristics similar to electrically-powered light rail vehicles.

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Electrically-powered light rail vehicles, or LRT, is currently being used in fourteen cities throughout the United States and Canada, as well as other cities around the world. Some notable examples are Portland and St. Louis.

Electrified LRT typically consists of two-to-three lightweight cars linked together. However, LRT uses overhead cables and contact systems for power. LRT vehicles can run on existing rail tracks where freight volumes are low and electrification systems can be added. Like DMUs, the vehicles are modern, attractive in appearance and provide many amenities. LRT vehicles can come in various designs that can be configured to accommodate wheelchairs and bicycle storage. LRT vehicles also often have two floor heights to make boarding easier.

Electrically-powered LRT technology is proposed for the I-71 corridor rail transit line.

WHO WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION?

Public feedback gathered at meetings and through other methods will help the Eastern Corridor project team determine the final direction of rail transit in the Eastern Corridor. If you would like to participate or comment on rail transit for the Eastern Corridor please check the schedule of activities for an upcoming meeting or visit the feedback section of the Eastern Corridor Web site (www.easterncorridor.org).

The Eastern Corridor project is a study evaluating transportation improvements needed in the eastern sector of the Cincinnati metropolitan area. For more information, visit the Web site at www.easterncorridor.org, leave a message on the voice mail/fax at (513)271-3898 or write to Eastern Corridor Project Office, 4790 Red Bank Expressway, Suite 206/208, Cincinnati, OH 45227.