



# eastern corridor travel

Volume 1 Issue 3

## background

### **What/where is the Eastern Corridor study area?**

Covering nearly 200 square miles in parts of Hamilton and Clermont counties in Ohio, and Campbell County in Kentucky, the study area extends east from the Cincinnati Business District to Milford, Batavia and Amelia and into Northern Kentucky along I-275 and I-471. Physical improvements will focus on Ohio study areas.

### **Mission**

To study transportation conditions in the Eastern Corridor geographic area and identify implementable transportation solutions that will provide the best balance of efficiency, effectiveness, cost, social and economic benefit and compatibility with environmental and quality-of-life goals.

### **Why?**

There is a lack of mobility in the Eastern Corridor and many of the roads are congested today. Problems will intensify as development continues. In the year 2020, population is expected to reach 196,000 compared to 161,000 in 1990; employment is expected to total 87,000, compared to 66,000 in 1990. Increases in population and employment have already congested Corridor roadways. Without improvements to the transportation system, continued growth will increase delays, hinder economic vitality and degrade the environment.

## **The Eastern Corridor Project Office is open!**



4790 Red Bank Expressway  
Suite 206/208  
Hours: 8-4 Tuesday-Thursday

Ask questions, make a comment or obtain more information about the project.

## **Little Miami Crossing** Bridge over river focus of debate



**P**erhaps the most widely-discussed aspect of the proposals for the Eastern Corridor project is the relocation of S.R. 32 from Eastgate to Red Bank Road, including a new crossing over the Little Miami River. The issue has been reported quite heavily in the news, and comments on both sides have been voiced at public meetings, on the Eastern Corridor Web site and through various surveys conducted in the region.

At issue is a proposed multi-lane bridge to accommodate automobile, bus or rail, bike and pedestrian traffic that would cross the Little Miami River somewhere in the "Horseshoe Bend" area south of Fairfax in Anderson Township.

The improvements to S.R. 32 will increase mobility and access to jobs, while reducing traffic congestion and vehicle emissions throughout the area. The relocated S.R. 32 will position the area for growth and accommodate future opportunities for public transit.

Preliminary environmental impact research indicates there could be some effect on the river, such as loss of animal habitat, loss of vegetation and noise

pollution during construction.

"Those impacts could be mitigated by maintaining existing greenspace, replanting vegetation and creating a taskforce to ensure environmental sensitivity throughout planning efforts," said Ted Hubbard, Hamilton County deputy engineer.

The Little Miami is a 105-mile long river that winds through five counties in southwest Ohio to the Ohio River. It supports a diverse ecosystem of various fish, bird and mammal species and is designated a National Scenic and Recreational River through the National Scenic and Wild Rivers program.

"It's extraordinary that this state and national scenic river runs through the boundaries of a major metropolitan area," according to a recent Ohio Department of Natural Resources report on the river. Despite urbanization, the Little Miami ranks in the top 10 percent of Ohio's river ecosystems and has been designated as an exceptional warm water habitat by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information on the relocation of S.R. 32 and the bridge crossing, visit the Eastern Corridor Web site: [www.easterncorridor.org](http://www.easterncorridor.org) or call 513.271.3898.

## Public Meetings

# Madisonville residents identify key issues



**M**adisonville residents discussed their ideas and concerns about the Eastern Corridor project at a community workshop and information exchange held in September. Overall, community leaders expressed excitement about the project and hope transportation improvements will help revitalize this urban community.

Ideas discussed include how the Eastern Corridor Project can spur development along Red Bank and Madison roads and improve access to jobs. The community also would like to see land use balanced with environmental and transportation needs. The community



wants to ensure new transportation options do not bypass the area.

Madisonville's input will be incorporated into the Eastern Corridor plan. Area residents who have ideas and

weren't able to attend the workshop should visit the Eastern Corridor Web site: [www.easterncorridor.org](http://www.easterncorridor.org) or call 513.271.3898.

## TSM | Improving roads today

**S**everal Transportation System Improvement (TSM) projects have been completed or are scheduled in the Eastern Corridor. Among these Eastern Corridor TSM projects is the recent improvement to the Wolfangel Road and Clough Pike intersection.

Because the intersection was offset and on a downhill grade, it had one of the highest accident rates relative to traffic volume in the county—approximately three times the state average. To make this intersection safer for motorists, The Hamilton County Engineers' Office realigned the junction, added left turn lanes and reduced the grade, eliminating poor sightlines.

Another TSM project that is in process is the Duck Creek Flood Control and Red Bank Road Widening Projects. These projects are efforts sponsored by the City of Cincinnati and the Village of Fairfax and will be completed through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Edwards and Kelcey (a planning and engineering firm) and Ahern & Associates (contractors).



The project will began in July with completion scheduled for 2004. Phase One includes flood walls and channel work in Duck Creek on the west side of Red Bank Road between Wooster Road and the U.S. 50 interchange. Phase Two includes installing an underground culvert on the west side of Red Bank Road between U.S. 50 and Fair Lane to re-route Duck Creek to eliminate flash flooding problems. The project also

includes widening Red Bank Road from two to four lanes of continuous traffic between U.S. 50 to north of Fair Lane.

These and other TSM projects are part of the Eastern Corridor plan. The local dollars spent on these TSM projects will be positioned as "local match" when federal funding is sought for implementation of Eastern Corridor recommendations.

## Transit Focus

# Downtown bus stop to get face-lift

Interest in public transit is growing. The Eastern Corridor project is looking at ways to meet future travel needs. But SORTA and Metro are planning changes today to improve bus accessibility and efficiency.

One example is Cincinnati's aging Government Square transit hub, which has served Metro and TANK riders since the mid-1970s. The facility is slated for an \$8 million redesign that will make it more comfortable for users, safer for pedestrians and easier for bus drivers. The station serves nearly 1,000 bus trips a day.

Although still usable, Metro wants to improve the facility and bring it in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, the new design will improve safety and allow for better bus movement through the hub.

The new configuration calls for fewer bays (six instead of the current eight) and more room for buses to maneuver for quicker passenger drop-offs and pickups. Buses will stop at an angle that allows passengers to enter or exit the vehicles without stepping into traffic.



Riders will be able to get up-to-the-minute schedules with buses tracked by a global positioning satellite system. Aesthetic improvements will include more greenery, larger shelters and a new sidewalk on the north side of Fifth Street.

The redesign will bring the transit center into compliance with the ADA and be particularly more usable for

riders in wheelchairs.

The Eastern Corridor project supports SORTA/Metro's efforts to ensure current and future transit improvements, like the Government Square remodel. These improvements will be incorporated into the Eastern Corridor planning process. For more information on SORTA/Metro, visit the Web site at [www.sorta.com](http://www.sorta.com).

## Corridor News

### Let us hear from you

Visit the Eastern Corridor Web site ([www.easterncorridor.org](http://www.easterncorridor.org)) and take an online survey, make comments or ask questions about the plan.

### Field studies underway

Approximately 6,000 property owners in the Eastern Corridor project area have received notification of possible field studies on their property. The field studies will be conducted over the next six months to identify environmental conditions in the study area and their impacts on future transportation solutions.

Data collection will focus on natural areas, communities and developed areas, historic buildings, wetlands and

streams. The field studies will primarily consist of visual inspection and the photographing of building exteriors and ecological features.

While field personnel may place temporary flags in some locations to assist in mapping of information, there will be no damage to private property or public lands.

### HCRPC selected by EPA

The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission has been selected by the EPA as one of 16 commissions nationwide to test new Smart Growth INDEX software. The software is a sketch tool that uses indicators such as population density and proximity.

When the variables are set, they give planners a snapshot of what transportation will look like in the future and a better understanding of ramifications

from possible changes. The Red Bank Road/Fairfax area in the Eastern Corridor will be a focus area for the software.

### OKI to conduct land-use visioning

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) has formed a land use commission to study the interrelationship between transportation service and land that is used for homes, businesses, parks, and factories. The study, entitled "Where Do We Grow From Here?" will cover the eight counties in the OKI region to explore how the regional transportation plan can suit a metropolitan population that will grow to over two million by 2020. For more information visit [www.wheredowegrowfromhere.com](http://www.wheredowegrowfromhere.com)

# Citizen Spotlight



Every community needs citizens like Marquita McLean. Whether it's a community council meeting or the grand opening of a new community center, McLean is always there, doing

her part to help improve her Madisonville neighborhood.

McLean serves on the Madisonville Community Council and chairs the Madisonville Community Recreation Advisory Committee, which was instrumental in finding support to build the recently-opened Madisonville Recreation Center. She's been involved with community activities since her retirement and enjoys the dedication of area residents.

"We've got helpful neighbors who really care," McLean says. "Of course my husband, Cecil, shares my interest and

helps a great deal."

When members of the Eastern Corridor Project team asked McLean to be part of a community workshop in Madisonville, she jumped at the opportunity. Previous infrastructure improvement initiatives overlooked the needs and challenges faced by Madisonville, and have contributed to some problems in the neighborhood. She now serves on an advisory group assisting in implementing the Eastern Corridor Project.

"Madisonville is in the center of the study area," McLean says. "As we look at the priorities, we simply want our place."

McLean would like to see the rebirth of an active business community and an appreciation of the distinct quality of the neighborhood. She likes the idea of a town center along Madison Road, with a wider variety of retail offerings than are currently available. She also wants transportation improvements that will not

place Madisonville at a disadvantage. "I've seen Madison Road and Red Bank Road become pass-throughs to other areas," McLean says.

If the Eastern Corridor project can bring as many benefits to the community as the recently-completed community recreation center, it will be a success, she says.

"We see hundreds of people a day using the community center, and I have to wonder where those people were going before?" McLean says. "We think that project has contributed positively to the quality of life for Madisonville residents and hope the Eastern Corridor project will do the same."

McLean is retired from the Ohio EPA, where she was in charge of water quality programs. Before that, she worked at the University of Cincinnati. She lives in Madisonville with her husband.



The Eastern Corridor

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