

KRM

THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE COMMUTER LINK

Preliminary evaluation of the KRM Commuter Link alternatives has been completed, and preliminary recommendations to advance the implementation of commuter rail have been made. This newsletter highlights the differences between commuter rail and bus transit alternatives, outlines the reasons for recommending commuter rail, and provides the schedule for upcoming public informational meetings at which comments and feedback can be given. (See schedule on page 8.)

Earlier work has been summarized in the first two issues of the KRM Commuter Link newsletter. This work has included evaluating a wide variety of potentially feasible public transit modes, gathering and analyzing information on the travel markets served, and screening various alternatives to identify the most reasonable and best commuter rail and bus options. All three issues of the newsletter are available on the website at www.KRMonline.org.

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WHY CONSIDER A MAJOR PUBLIC TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT IN THE KRM CORRIDOR? HERE'S WHY:

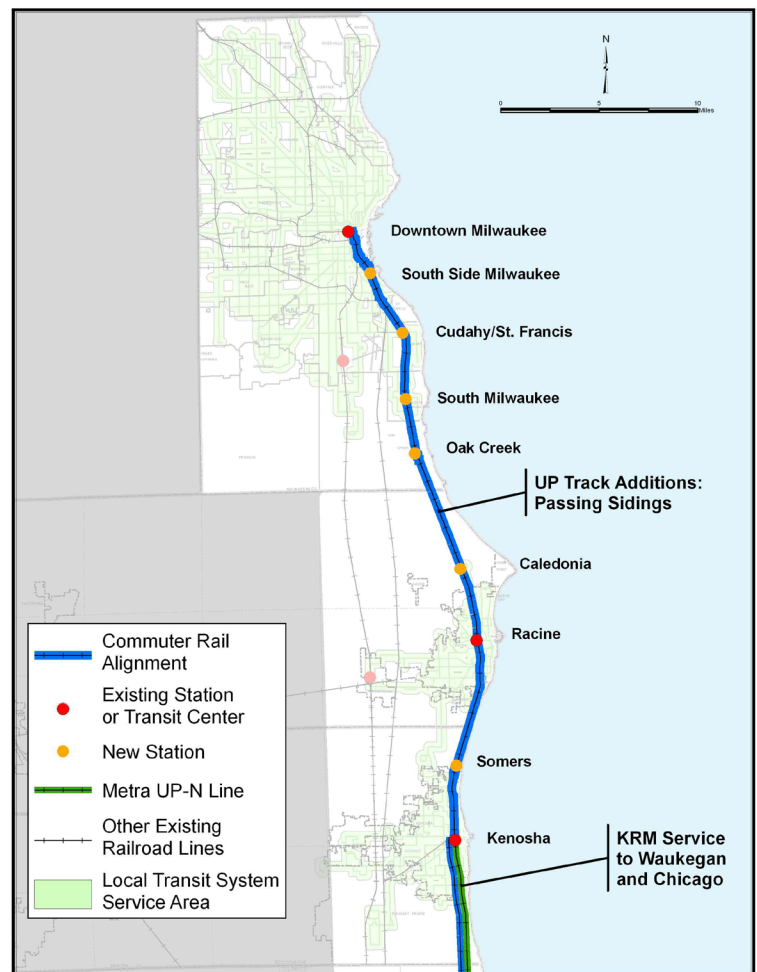
- To provide a necessary and desirable alternative to the automobile in a heavily traveled corridor
- To provide a high quality alternative to the automobile during freeway system reconstruction over the next 20 years
- To support and promote more efficient higher density infill development and redevelopment, which results in efficiencies for public infrastructure and services, including transportation
- To contribute to efficiency in the transportation system, including reduced highway traffic and congestion, air pollution and energy consumption
- To meet the travel needs – access to jobs, education, and other – of the significant portion of the population (15% of households) without an automobile
- To enhance economic development by providing improved labor force accessibility
- To enhance quality of life by providing choice of travel mode and to permit the reduction in household expenditures on transportation, permitting greater savings, other expenditures, and a higher standard of living
- To better connect southeastern Wisconsin with northeastern Illinois
 - Improved connection should promote economic and population growth in the KRM corridor and southeastern Wisconsin
 - Improved job and labor force accessibility
 - Improve accessibility to, and enhance, GMIA; arts, culture, and entertainment venues; and colleges and universities

The KRM Commuter Link Alternatives

- A wide range of alternatives for a major transit improvement in the KRM corridor has been considered and has been progressively screened to the two “most promising” or “best” potential alternatives
 - Commuter rail
 - Improved bus service over existing streets and highways

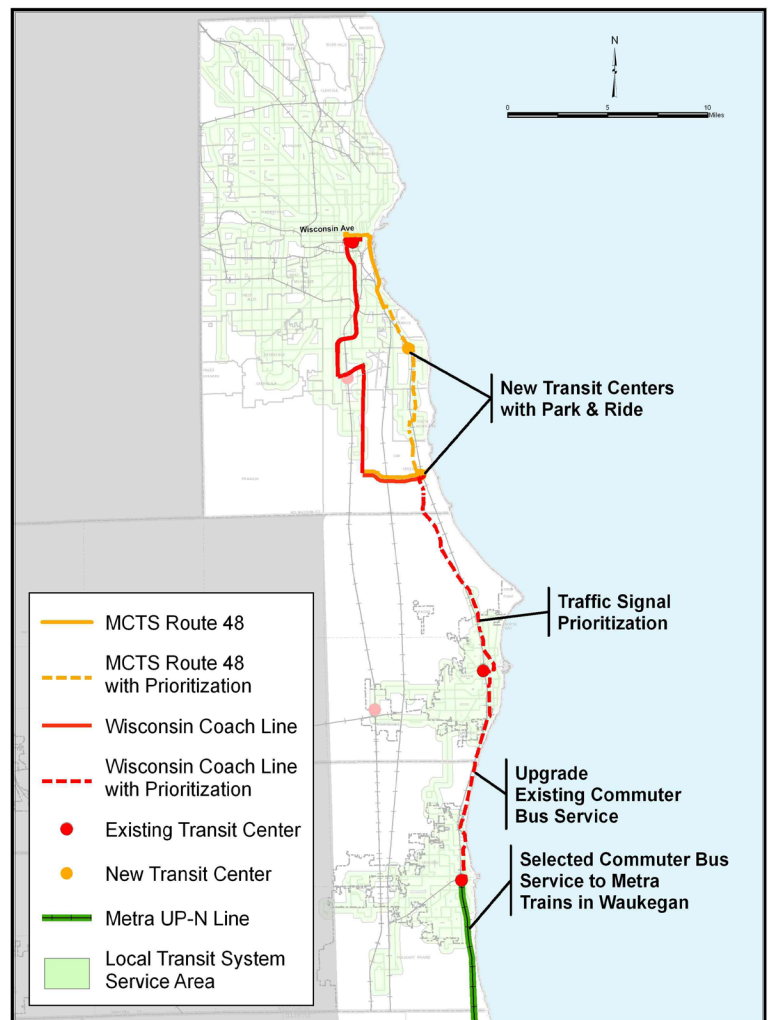
PROPOSED KRM COMMUTER RAIL ALTERNATIVE

- Would use commuter rail service to connect Milwaukee and Racine to the existing Chicago-Kenosha commuter rail service
 - 33-mile route using existing Union Pacific Railroad (UP) and Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) freight lines
- 9 stations
 - Existing stations at Kenosha and Milwaukee and new transit center at Racine
 - New stations at Somers, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy-St. Francis, and Milwaukee South Side
- Level of service
 - Service provided in both directions during all time periods
 - 14 weekday trains in each direction
 - Operating speed – up to 59 mph
 - Average speed – 38 mph
- Shuttle bus service
 - Dedicated service between Amtrak station and Milwaukee central business district
 - Dedicated service between General Mitchell International Airport and Cudahy-St. Francis station
- Train operation
 - Service provided by meeting existing Metra trains at either Kenosha or Waukegan
 - One new train between Milwaukee and Chicago (to Milwaukee in A.M. and to Chicago in P.M.)
 - Contract with UP Railroad and provide timed-transfer (6 minutes) at Kenosha and Waukegan to Metra
 - Diesel-multiple-unit cars (“DMUs” or self-propelled coaches)



PROPOSED KRM BUS ALTERNATIVE

- Would use improved and expanded bus service to connect Milwaukee and Racine to the existing Chicago-Kenosha commuter rail service
 - Expansion and enhancement of the existing Wisconsin Coach Lines service and the MCTS Freeway Flyer Route 48 service
 - The best that can be done with improved and expanded bus service over existing streets and highways to provide a similar service as commuter rail, while maintaining the unique advantages of bus service
 - South of Oak Creek, service routed primarily along STH 32
 - North of Oak Creek, service splits into two routes
 - Via South Milwaukee, Cudahy, St. Francis and Milwaukee's South Side along Packard Avenue and Lake Parkway
 - Via Oak Creek and General Mitchell International Airport along STH 100 and IH 94
- 29 stations or stops
 - Existing station at Kenosha and new transit center at Racine
 - New transit stations at Oak Creek and Cudahy-St. Francis
 - Passenger information systems at selected stations and stops
- Level of Service
 - Service provided in both directions along corridor during all time periods
 - 14-17 weekday buses in each direction
 - Traffic signal prioritization
 - Operating speed – same as street or highway being used
 - Average speed – 20 to 29 mph
- Local area service
 - All buses travel the length of the Milwaukee central business district to provide local distribution and collection
- Direct service to and from General Mitchell International Airport for buses that do not serve South Milwaukee and Cudahy-St. Francis stations
- Coordinated with Metra commuter train service
 - Service provided by meeting existing Metra trains at either Kenosha or Waukegan
 - Timed-transfer connections at Kenosha and Waukegan with Metra and at Oak Creek with service operating via South Milwaukee and Cudahy-St. Francis
- Motor coach vehicles with commuter bus amenities



EVALUATION AND COMPARISON OF COMMUTER RAIL AND BUS ALTERNATIVES

The evaluation included a detailed analysis and comparison of the costs and benefits of the commuter rail and bus alternatives. The principal differences between the commuter rail and the bus alternatives are highlighted here.

Travel Time and Speed – Commuter rail will be much faster than bus in connecting the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine areas to each other and with northeastern Illinois.

Example: Milwaukee to Kenosha		
	Average Speed	Avg. travel time
Commuter Rail	38 mph	52 minutes
Bus	20 to 29 mph	83 to 108 minutes

In comparison, an automobile may be expected to make the same trip during peak traffic hours in about 54 minutes.

Travel Reliability – Commuter rail would provide the highest level of reliability

- Operating over a separate non-highway right-of-way, it would not be affected by the unpredictable nature of rush-hour automobile and truck traffic
- It would have priority over street and highway traffic at crossings and over freight traffic on railroads
- Inclement weather would have little impact, this being especially important during the winter season

Comfort and Convenience – Commuter rail would provide the highest level of comfort, convenience, and overall attractiveness

- It can provide a smoother and more consistent ride due to the vehicles operating on a dedicated route alignment that doesn't have interference from other traffic
- Its route simplicity, dedicated route, and larger stations and equipment make it more visible and therefore easier to use

Ridership – Commuter rail may be expected to attract more than twice the ridership than bus

- On an average weekday, commuter rail will attract 6,700 trips vs. 2,600 for bus
- Annually, commuter rail will attract 1.72 million trips vs. 0.66 million for bus

Passenger-Miles – Passenger-miles from commuter rail ridership represent four times the passenger-miles from bus (as a result of attracting longer trips)

- On an average weekday, commuter rail will attract 98,700 passenger-miles vs. 24,200 for bus
- Annually, commuter rail will generate 25.2 million passenger-miles vs. 6.2 million for bus

Impact on Highway System – Commuter rail will have a substantially greater impact on highway system traffic and traffic congestion

- Commuter rail ridership will be 2.6 times that of bus, and passenger-miles will be 4.1 times that of bus

Alternative During IH 94 Reconstruction – Commuter rail will provide a far superior alternative mode of travel during IH 94 reconstruction over the next 20 years compared to a bus alternative

- Commuter rail will be able to attract significantly more traffic from IH 94 which will be limited in capacity during reconstruction.
- Commuter rail will offer an alternative which will be competitive with automobile travel time and will be unaffected by increased IH 94 freeway and corridor traffic congestion.

Air Pollutant Emissions and Energy Consumption

– Commuter rail would contribute to a greater reduction in vehicle generated air pollutant emissions and vehicle energy consumption in proportion to its potential to attract greater transit ridership, longer trips by transit, and new transit trips

- Additional reductions in air pollutant emissions and energy consumption may be expected due to commuter rail's potential to encourage more efficient higher density infill development and redevelopment

More Efficient Development and Redevelopment –

Commuter rail will have the potential to result in more efficient higher density land development and redevelopment around its stations in the corridor and reduce urban sprawl

- Encourage desirable needed and planned development in central cities of Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha and inner, older suburbs of Cudahy, St. Francis, and South Milwaukee
- Encourage higher density more efficient development in developing communities of Oak Creek, Caledonia, and Somers
- Commuter rail may be expected to support, and assist in bringing about, planned development around its 9 stations of up to:
 - 23,000 residential units
 - 71,000 jobs
 - 7.6 million square feet of retail space
 - 4.7 million square feet of office space
- Some of the above development and redevelopment may be specifically attributed to the implementation of commuter rail:
 - 12,800 residential units
 - 17,100 jobs

Economic Impact of Development and Redevelopment

– Economic impact of potential development around the 9 commuter rail stations totals:

- Increase in assessed valuation of \$7.9 billion
- Increase in annual retail sales of \$750 million
- This does not include the spillover of development and redevelopment, and increased land and property values which will occur in neighborhoods adjacent to the immediate station areas

Accessibility to Jobs – Due to its higher average speeds and resulting lower travel times, commuter rail will provide greater accessibility to the significant number of jobs in the KRM / northeastern Illinois corridor

Corridor Jobs (1 mile station radius—Year 2000)

Downtown Milwaukee	110,300
Milwaukee County	21,600
Kenosha and Racine Counties	28,200
Chicago North Shore Suburbs	95,100
Chicago North Side	58,500
Downtown Chicago	599,400

This corridor provides access to far more jobs than any other potential southeastern Wisconsin transit corridor, for example, compared to a Milwaukee – Oconomowoc commuter rail or Milwaukee – Waukesha express bus corridor:

- More than 4 times more jobs
- More than 50 percent more jobs (if Downtown Chicago jobs not included)

The KRM commuter rail provides this job access to central city residents, and in particular minority populations, low income populations, and those without an automobile and dependent upon public transit

- For example, an estimated 245,900 or 41% of City of Milwaukee residents reside within 3 miles of the two proposed KRM train stations in the City of Milwaukee, some within walking distance and others within a short connecting bus or shuttle ride or drive or drop off by automobile. Of these city residents, about 30%, or 71,500 do not own an automobile; and 58% or 143,000 are minorities (slightly higher than the city as a whole) including 72,000 African Americans and 57,900 Hispanics.
- The number of jobs accessible to these City of Milwaukee residents (not including downtown Milwaukee) by KRM commuter rail totals over 800,000 jobs in total, 200,000 jobs not including downtown Chicago, and 140,000 jobs not including the Downtown and North Side of Chicago. This can be compared to Milwaukee – Oconomowoc commuter rail and Milwaukee – Waukesha express bus at 80,000 and 100,000 jobs, respectively (also not including downtown Milwaukee).

Encouraging Corridor Economic Development and Growth in the Corridor

– Due to its much higher average speeds and shorter travel times, commuter rail will do a significantly better job of more closely connecting Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee to each other and to northeastern Illinois and Chicago

- This improved linkage between southeastern Wisconsin and the mega-metropolitan area of northeastern Illinois may be expected to result in more economic and population growth in the KRM corridor and in southeastern Wisconsin.
- The potential for future economic growth of southeastern Wisconsin through more closely linking to northeastern Illinois is one of a few major economic development themes being advanced for southeastern Wisconsin by the Milwaukee 7.
- Companies such as S.C. Johnson, one of the largest employers in southeastern Wisconsin and in the State of Wisconsin, have cited the importance of this link to northeastern Illinois to retaining and attracting qualified employees, and maintaining and expanding their presence in southeastern Wisconsin.

Benefits for General Mitchell International Airport (GMIA)

– Commuter rail through its faster speeds and shorter travel times should have greater potential to increase use of GMIA by northeastern Illinois residents

- A schedule of 14 round trip trains per day will well connect GMIA and northeastern Illinois, and connecting train stations exist in the heart of every North Shore suburb of Chicago as well as the Chicago north side and downtown
- Increased use of GMIA will ultimately result in improved airline service, including more cities served, more non-stop flights, and improved service frequency, all important factors in promoting southeastern Wisconsin economic development.

Accessibility to Arts, Culture, and Entertainment

Commuter rail through its faster speeds and shorter travel times should have greater potential to increase accessibility to arts, culture, and entertainment

- More northeastern Illinois visitors can be expected at Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine attractions
- Southeastern Wisconsin residents will have improved accessibility to northeastern Illinois attractions

Accessibility to Colleges and Universities – Commuter rail through its faster speeds and shorter travel times should have greater potential to increase accessibility to colleges and universities

- Southeastern Wisconsin – University of Wisconsin – Parkside, Marquette University, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, and Carthage College
- Northeastern Illinois – Northwestern University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola University, and De Paul University among others

Capital and Operating Costs – Commuter rail would have higher capital costs and annual operating and maintenance (O&M) costs (in 2006 dollars) than bus

- Capital cost -- \$198 million for commuter rail compared to \$27 million for bus
- Annual O&M cost -- \$10.9 million total and \$6.3 million net (less passenger fares) for commuter rail compared to \$3.2 million total and \$1.9 net for bus
- Annualized combined capital and total O&M cost – \$25.9 million for commuter rail compared to \$4.2 for bus (Note: Under the previous study, commuter rail with 15 round trips had an estimated \$225 million capital cost and a \$27 million annual total O&M cost in 2003 dollars.)

What is the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority (RTA) ?

The RTA was created by the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor in July 2005 to serve Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine counties. The RTA would be the sponsor and operator of the KRM commuter rail and is responsible for recommending to the State Legislature and Governor a permanent, dedicated funding source for the local share of capital and operating costs for commuter rail. For more information, see www.sewisrta.org.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

is undertaking this phase of the project on behalf of an Intergovernmental Partnership of the counties and cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and the Regional Planning Commission. The Partnership has appointed a Steering Committee to provide overall direction and oversight of this work. A consulting team has been hired to perform much of the technical work. Additional information about this project – along with reports as they become available – is available on the project website at www.KRMonline.org.

For Additional Information, contact:

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Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
(262) 547-6721

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UW-Extension working with SEWRPC
(262) 547-6721

CONCLUSIONS

The project Steering Committee appointed by the Intergovernmental Partnership and the Regional Planning Commission staff carefully considered all of the findings and conclusions regarding the potential costs, benefits, and impacts of the alternatives. It was concluded that the substantial benefits of commuter rail outweigh its increased costs over the bus alternative for the following reasons:

- Faster average speeds and shorter travel times
- Higher reliability, comfort, and convenience
- Significantly greater transit ridership – more trips and longer trip length
- Greater impact on highway traffic and congestion
- Higher quality and more effective alternative during freeway reconstruction
- Greater reduction in air pollutant emissions and energy consumption
- Potential to support and encourage more efficient high density infill land development and redevelopment representing significant new housing, jobs, tax base, and retail sales
- Provide accessibility to significant number of jobs in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois – significantly more jobs than any other potential transit corridor
- Provide accessibility to a significant population and labor force, particularly minority and low income populations, and those without an automobile and dependent on public transit
- Can contribute significantly to southeastern Wisconsin economic growth and development by more closely connecting northeastern Illinois with southeastern Wisconsin
- By better connecting and attracting northeastern Illinois residents to GMIA, could improve GMIA airline flight service and promote southeastern Wisconsin economic growth
- May be expected to assist in attracting more northeastern Illinois visitors to southeastern Wisconsin arts, culture, and entertainment, and make attractions in northeastern Illinois more accessible to southeastern Wisconsin residents
- Will increase accessibility to both southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois colleges and universities

Accordingly, the Commission staff and Steering Committee preliminarily recommended that commuter rail



A diesel-multiple-unit car, also known as a DMU or self propelled coach.

be considered for implementation and for advancement to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration as the locally preferred alternative. In doing this, it was recommended that the next set of public informational meetings be held in February, 2007; commuter rail as a preferred alternative should be given consideration by the Intergovernmental Partnership and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority (RTA); the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this project should be completed and a public hearing on the DEIS should be conducted in early 2007; and an application would be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in mid-2007 for consideration of discretionary Federal funding to permit entry of the project into the next phase of development, called Preliminary Engineering.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The preliminary recommendation by the Steering Committee paves the way for the Regional Planning Commission, the Intergovernmental Partnership, and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) to develop a financial plan for the proposed commuter rail, complete and publish a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public comment, and apply to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for Federal discretionary funding required to advance the project to the next phase of project development. It is anticipated that the DEIS document will be published and distributed for public comment during February 2007, after which a public hearing will be held. The RTA is expected to develop funding recommendations for the preferred alternative, finalizing those in early 2007 and to adopt commuter rail as the locally preferred alternative. An application to enter Preliminary Engineering will be submitted to FTA in June 2007.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Let us know what you think of these alternatives and the preliminary recommendation to proceed toward implementation of commuter rail in the KRM corridor. Attend one of the meetings and give us your feedback or send us your written comments by mail, fax, or electronically on the KRM website. While you can give us comments at any time during the project, we would like to have your comments concerning the alternatives, their potential benefits, costs, and impacts, and the preliminary recommendation for a locally preferred alternative by February 23, 2007.

Comments may be submitted by:
U.S. Mail: KRM Commuter Link, P.O. Box 1607,
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607
Website: www.KRMonline.org
E-mail: KRMonline@sewrpc.org
Fax: (262) 547-1103

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING OPEN HOUSES

Three public information meeting open houses have been scheduled throughout the KRM corridor to present information, answer questions, and get feedback concerning the planning for this project. The dates, times, and locations of

the meetings are given below. The meetings will be conducted in an "open house" format to provide visitors an opportunity to look at display materials, to meet one-on-one or in small groups with project staff to ask questions, and provide input and feedback. A short presentation will be given at 6 p.m. and again at 7 p.m. The meeting locations are handicapped accessible. Persons with special needs are asked to contact the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission office at (262) 547-6721 a minimum of 72 hours in advance of the meeting dates so that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding access or mobility, review or interpretation of materials, active participation, or submission of comments.

Schedule of Public Informational Meetings:

Monday, February 5, 2007 | 5:30 - 8:00 pm
presentations: 6 & 7 pm | Theatre, Racine Building
Racine Gateway Technical College
901 Pershing Drive, Racine

Wednesday, February 7, 2007 | 5:30-8:00 pm
presentations: 6 & 7 pm | Madrigrano Auditorium,
Conference Center | Kenosha Gateway Technical College
3320 30th Avenue, Kenosha

Thursday, February 8, 2007 | 5:30-8:00 pm
presentations: 6 & 7 pm | Harbor Lights Room
Milwaukee Downtown Transit Center
909 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee

