

## **Milwaukee Connector Study**

### **Executive Summary:**

**October 2008**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Milwaukee Connector Study is to evaluate transit options for metropolitan Milwaukee.

**Oversight:** The study is led by the Wisconsin Center District in partnership with the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC). Representatives from each of the four study sponsors make up the study Steering Committee which is chaired by the MMAC; each entity has one vote.

**Resources:** The current phase of the study will be funded through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration which requires a local match be provided through in-kind services and other financial support from the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is holding \$91.5 in capital funding for the project pending submittal of an approved Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The funding requires a 15% local match.

**Study Area:** The Steering Committee has modified the previous study area and directed the project study team to evaluate new transit corridors throughout Milwaukee County and focus on two vehicle technologies, Bus Rapid Transit, and Streetcar. (see attached map).

**Schedule and Scope:** Once initiated, the roughly twelve-month transit study will include a review of routes, vehicles, stations or stops, cost and financing; governance, and potential impacts on parking, traffic, land use and pedestrian circulation. The study will result in a Locally Preferred Alternative, FTA Small Starts Report and request to enter into Preliminary Engineering.

**Current Status:** In May 2008, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) agreed to release the previously authorized Milwaukee Connector study funds to conduct the alternatives analysis. In September 2008, the FTA approved the Wisconsin Center District study grant, allowing the project analysis to progress.

**Next Steps:** The study calls for extensive public involvement. With the expanded study area the study team will be expanding their outreach efforts beyond the City of Milwaukee to engage affected stakeholders. In the coming month, the study team will begin to meet with each impacted municipality, Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, Glendale, Greenfield, Franklin, Oak Creek, Shorewood, Whitefish Bay, and St. Francis. The study team will explain the vision, goals and objectives and project study area and, in turn hear from each municipality on how transit may or may not relate to its' development plans. Identifying any local issues or concerns early in the process will help guide the study.

In early 2009, the study team will be conducting public Scoping Meetings to present the project to the public. Meetings will be held in multiple study area locations and will solicit input regarding the study area boundaries, project technologies and potential routing options.

As the study progresses, more opportunities for public involvement will be developed including newsletters, preference surveys and presentations to community groups. The project website contains additional background on the project including archived newsletters, a current study area map and descriptions of technologies being considered. The website address is [www.milwaukeeconnector.com](http://www.milwaukeeconnector.com)