

Downtown/Riverfront Streetcar Feasibility Study

Results from Workshops Held October 30-November 2, 2006

During the week of October 30, multiple workshops and presentations were held to gather information, insight and opinions on the possibility of a Streetcar connecting Downtown Sacramento and West Sacramento. Participants included the general public and specified interest groups, such as neighborhood associations, business and tourism experts, transit riders and developers. Additional workshops were conducted with technical staff, elected officials and commissioners from both sides of the Sacramento River.

A number of common themes emerged:

- Serve both sides of the Sacramento River with the initial segment.
- Use the Tower Bridge to cross the river.
- Share the existing light rail track with the streetcar line, wherever practicable.
- Identify private sector funding, as it is critical to financing the project.
- Devise a route that allows for future extensions.
- Phase the construction of the streetcar line, building on the initial success of a starter line for future extensions.
- Connect with all components of the regional transportation system, including Capitol Corridor trains.
- Serve a balance of existing development and planned new growth areas, such as the Triangle Specific Plan in West Sacramento and the Railyards Redevelopment in Sacramento.
- Provide service on West Capitol Avenue, as it is critical for West Sacramento.
- Deliver riders to downtown and midtown Sacramento, be it through the initial or extension segments.

No strong preferences for the type of vehicle were expressed, although participants agreed that vehicles and stations should be accessible and that a cost effective choice should be made.

Workshop participants were asked to identify desired destinations by placing dots on maps of the study area. In West Sacramento, the most frequently selected destinations included:

- City Hall/Transit Center/Community College
- Raley Field
- Triangle Area
- Southport
- Washington Neighborhood
- Ziggurat and CalSTRS buildings at Raley's Landing
- Ironworks

In Sacramento, popular destinations included:

- Amtrak Station/Intermodal Facility/Railyards Redevelopment Area
- Capitol Mall
- Old Sacramento
- R Street Corridor
- State Capitol/Capitol Park
- Sacramento Convention Center
- Midtown (west of 19th Street)
- Midtown (19th to 28th Street)
- Downtown Plaza
- City Hall
- K Street Mall
- Tower Theater
- Music Circus

With this valuable input, the consultants were able to identify several options for routing a streetcar line that would be cost effective, serve desired destinations, and achieve the goal of connecting both sides of the river. Although still very preliminary, and subject to further study and revision, the consultants suggested that they would examine the following possible routes:

- On the West Sacramento side, three possible alternatives involving West Capitol Avenue, Tower Bridge Gateway (the former State Route 275) and South River Road. All three alternatives terminate across from City Hall at the planned transit center at West Capitol and Merkley Avenues.
- On the Sacramento side, all of the alternatives were located between Capitol Mall and I Street, and included service on the K Street Mall. Key north/south corridors included Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, and 13th Streets. Heading as far east as possible toward Midtown was also a goal, although how far will be dependent upon funding.

These alternatives will be refined over the next few months to devise a preferred route.

The next step in the Feasibility Study will be the “fatal flaw” analysis, which will be completed in January. At that point, the consultants will report to staff and city council representatives whether they have encountered any conditions that would make the project impossible, such as engineering or cost constraints. A final report and recommendation on the Feasibility Study is scheduled for late spring of 2007.