

BROAD STREET RAPID TRANSIT STUDY

August 27, 2013 Public Meeting



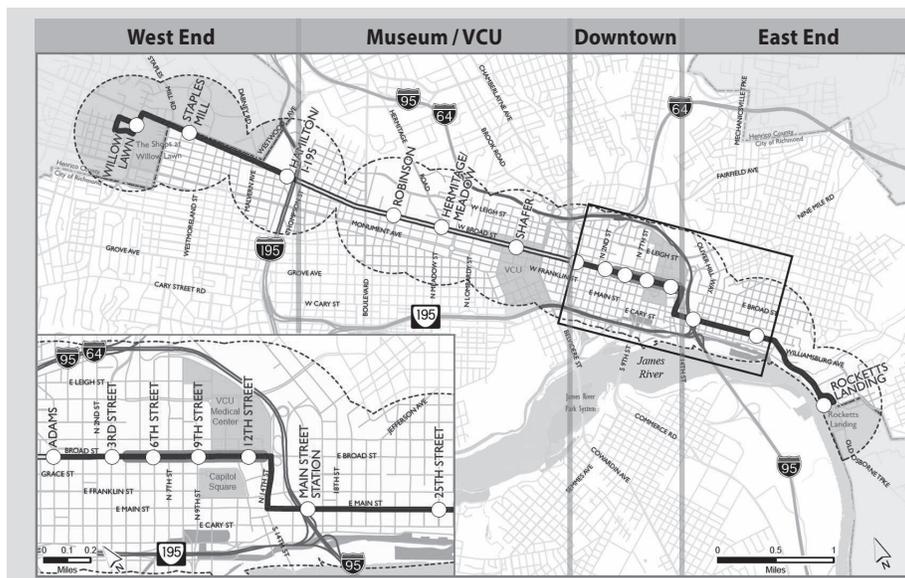
Study Background

Beginning in the fall 2009, GRTC Transit System and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Alternatives Analysis (AA) of the Broad Street Corridor to study rapid transit improvements from Willow Lawn to Rocketts Landing. Broad Street is central to the economic activity of the metropolitan area, linking the residential areas east and west of the corridor with government offices and commercial activities downtown, as well as the industrial land uses immediately north of the corridor. The study team evaluated different approaches to introducing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to Broad Street and developed a Build Alternative that was presented to the public in October 2010. Since that time, the study team has been working on a number of activities in order to reach consensus on a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to move forward in the transit planning process with the goal of securing federal funding for the project and

constructing it within the next several years. Currently, the study team is completing further evaluations of the two remaining alternatives, the No Build Alternative and Build Alternative 1. The map below provides details on Build Alternative 1.

What is BRT?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-quality, high-capacity rapid transit system that offers many of the advantages of rail transit but at a lower and more affordable cost. Instead of trains and tracks, BRT invests in improvements to vehicles, stations, operations, roadways, rights-of-way, intersections and traffic signals to speed up bus transit service. BRT is not a uniform, turn-key transit technology, but represents a spectrum of service enhancements. BRT systems are constructed by choosing and integrating among various BRT elements. The integration of elements improves system performance and the experience for customers, with the overall goal of making the BRT line accessible, attractive, reliable and, above all, rapid.



Build Alternative Features

Route Length: 7.6 Miles

Dedicated Bus Lanes:

- Thompson to Adams (Median Lanes)
- 4th to 14th (Curb Lanes Widened)

Travel Speeds: 65% Increase in Bus Speed

Local Bus Improvements:

- Improved Curb Lanes
- Consolidated Stops Downtown

Estimated Ridership*:

- Over 5,000 Daily Boardings
- About 1,600 New Daily Riders

Estimated Cost*:

- \$68.3 Million Capital
- \$4 Million Annual Operating

**From 2011 analysis, to be updated.*

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

2011

- Coordinated with stakeholder groups in the East End to resolve concerns regarding access to the BRT service.
- Delivered first draft of AA and EA documents to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- Held a series of meetings with City and County officials on costs and potential funding strategies. City requested an economic impact analysis as a result of these meetings.

2012 and Early 2013

- Prepared and presented economic impact analysis to City and County.
- Coordinated with Federal Transit Administration regarding changes to project development process and evaluation criteria resulting from new federal regulations.
- Initiated new effort to update AA and EA documents to address new FTA criteria and update with new information.

STUDY SCHEDULE

Summer 2013

(We Are Here)

- Public Meeting (August 27, 2013)
- Completing Operational Analysis (Summer, 2013)

Fall 2013 - Early 2014

- Prepare Updated and Combined AA/EA
 - FTA Review, Agency and Public Review Follow
 - Public Meeting

Spring 2014

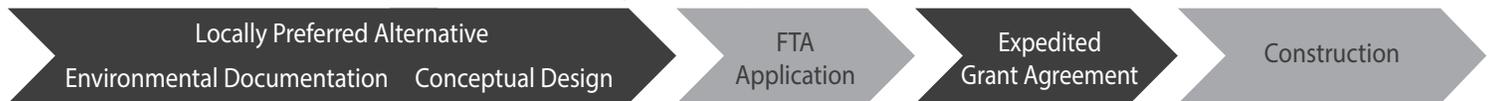
- Official LPA Selection and Completed AA/EA Anticipated

FTA Regulation Changes

In 2012, Congress passed and the President signed the federal surface transportation funding and policy bill called Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has begun implementing these changes along with other changes in FTA's criteria for project evaluation. The new regulations affect the Broad Street Rapid Transit Study in a number of ways including:

- The cost effectiveness criterion is dramatically different; instead of a focus on time savings for all transit riders relative to the overall costs, it will now focus on just the federal share of the cost per trip using the service.
- FTA no longer requires a Baseline Alternative and it has eliminated from this study since it does not meet the project purpose and need.
- Projects that will require a sizable increase in the overall operating expenses for the sponsoring transit agency now require substantial additional financial scrutiny.
- The project study team will now analyze different operating options for the Build Alternative. Specifically the team will analyze longer intervals between buses such as 10 minutes in the peak period and 15 in the off-peak period to better balance ridership and operating costs.
- These changes in regulations will require updates of the previously drafted Alternatives Analysis and Environmental Assessment.

Project Development Process



Economic Analysis Study

At the request of the City of Richmond, the study team completed an economic impact analysis to quantify, as much as possible, the likely economic benefits that BRT might provide. The analysis used the example of the Euclid Corridor BRT improvements made in Cleveland, Ohio as a basis for assessing the likely benefits to property values in the city and county. The analysis also noted qualitative features that help to capture economic values from BRT investments, such as appropriate land use policies. The study also estimated the employment and wage benefits of constructing and operating the Broad Street BRT. The analysis concluded that construction of the BRT would result in modest economic benefits. Long term results would include increases in the average annual property tax revenue of about \$4 million, about the same amount it would cost to operate the proposed BRT service. In general, the analysis concluded that the BRT would be a catalyst for additional development, would help spur continued conversion of office space to residential, and that these impacts should eventually help stimulate additional retail development in the corridor.

How Can I Get Involved?

We invite your input in this study and invite you to comment on any of the issues noted above. Comments can be submitted in one of three ways:

- Provide written comments at a citizen information meeting.
- Provide written comments at any time using the electronic comment form at <http://study.ridegrtc.com>
- Mail written comments to Larry Hagin, Director of Planning GRTC Transit System, 301 East Belt Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23224.

What's Next?

The study team will conduct the following activities with the goal of reaching a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by Spring of 2014.

- Reassess operational characteristics of the Build Alternative to determine the most cost effective operating plan.
- Update and reassess the Alternatives Analysis and Environmental Assessment due to new federal criteria and regulations.
- Continue public and stakeholder outreach to educate the public and to solicit feedback on the proposed alternatives. The next public meeting is expected in early 2014.