

Questions & Answers – Regional Rail and Mass Transit in KC Region

Are there any preliminary plans for the locations of the stops?

The locations for various stops are in the study phase right now. Some municipalities have identified where they would like stops in their communities as part of their long range plans. These include Independence, Blue Springs, Lee’s Summit, Grandview and Raytown. Chances are excellent there would be a stop at the Truman Sports Complex. How a regional rail system would work in Kansas City is complex and several options are being explored. The desire is to connect it to the downtown streetcar line.

What is the projected cost of fare for the rail?

Fare policy has not been established at this point. In most cities with rail systems, the fare for use of rail is slightly higher than the current bus fare.

Will those citizens in counties that put it on the ballot and vote “yes” be granted reduced fare similar to the zoo tax proposed and the stadium which offers priority to Jackson County tax payers for ticket purchases?

Fare policy has not been established at this point. However, no city in the United States charges different fares for taxpayers.

Are reduced fares available for seniors, students and those with disabilities?

Fare policy has not been set, but since the current KCATA fare policy has reduced fares for elderly, students and disabled, it is likely the same would be true with regional rail.

Are our professional sports franchises being asked to finance the campaign?

KCRTA has hired Pelofsky and Associates to assist with the fundraising for the education campaign. A number of entities will be solicited for help in the funding.

What infrastructure improvements will be associated with rail such as improved streetscapes, lighting, and crosswalks?

Those specific improvements will be considered during the preliminary engineering phase of the project. That comes after the Alternatives Analysis is complete and we know where the alignment will go, the mode of transit, potential stops and preliminary costs to build. The Alternatives Analysis is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2012.

What is the economic development potential around rail stops?

We think there is tremendous potential in Jackson County. Developers are calling the County Executive’s office each week inquiring about development opportunities. We are in the process of finding a feasible and affordable approach to quantify the potential. One thing we do know is

on a national level development occurs around rail. There have been several studies in other cities indicating this. One was done by North Texas State University for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit and another for the Portland Streetcar.

The 45-mile Green, Orange and Blue Line DART Rail expansion is projected to generate more than \$4 billion in economic activity between 2009 and 2014, according to a new study by economists at the University of North Texas. Including prior Green Line expenditures, the total economic activity is more than \$5.6 billion.

<http://www.dart.org/about/economicimpact.asp>

In Portland

- ***\$3.5 billion has been invested within two blocks of the streetcar alignment.***
- ***10,212 new housing units and 5.4 million square feet of office,***
- ***institutional, retail and hotel construction have been constructed within two blocks of the alignment.***
- ***55% of all CBD development since 1997 has occurred within 1-block of the streetcar and properties located closest to the streetcar line more***
- ***closely approach the zoned density potential than properties situated farther away.***

http://www.tucsonstreetcar.com/pdf/portland_report.pdf

What is a transit education program?

A transit education program informs the public about the benefits of transit – including rail – for them and their community, addresses confusion on the topic, builds excitement for public transit, and informs the public about a specific transit plan.

Why have a transit education program in the Kansas City region?

Kansas City has a history of transit initiatives that have not resulted in a plan that had voter supporter or could be implemented. Citizens have questions. Citizens are confused. A transit education program addresses those issues. Kansas City does not have rail transit and therefore citizens may not know the personal, economic, and quality of life benefits. A transit education program can provide that information.

What is the purpose of the KCRTA Jackson County Regional Rail Coalition?

The Coalition is a group of organizations and people who support the idea of regional rail and expansion of mass transit options in the Kansas City area. The Coalition encourages citizen participation in the process to expand transit, distributes information and addresses misinformation, advises, and works toward implementation of regional rail and mass transit.

Is riding on a train safe? Will there be somebody checking tickets to make sure only those who are supposed to be on the train are actually on it?

Riding a rail transit vehicle is safer than riding in your car. Most transit systems have their own security force as well as partnering with local law enforcement agencies. Fare enforcement is handled by fare inspectors who check riders for tickets. Usually it is a proof of payment system just like a parking meter is used to prove someone paid to use the space.

Will this lead to a population or job increase in the area?

Developers have been in touch with Jackson County leaders about the prospect of developing around stations. The County plans to work with local municipalities so that development occurs in an orderly fashion that maximizes the potential that each station has.

How will this affect relations with other counties and/or will Jackson County be collaborating with them?

Should Jackson County move forward with a rail system, other counties could connect to the Jackson County system by funding a rail system within its boundaries.

How will travel times compare depending on the mode selected, or is it too early to know?

Too early in the planning process to know at this time. When we know, we will provide the information.

Will the trains be available to run on weekends and holidays?

While an operating plan has not been developed, most rail systems operate 15 to 20 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Will the trains be able to run in snowy weather?

Yes.

Will monthly pass holders receive priority when trying to get on the train, such as at the stadiums?

Most likely not. The idea is for people to get on and off the train as quickly as possible to keep the average speed of the train up. Monthly pass holders receive a benefit of a discounted fare.