For CC members
For Comm Dev to notify those who attended the hearing

MBTA Planning

The Urban Ring

Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Agenda #13

June 2, 1997

The Urban Ring—An Invitation to Participation

This is an exciting era for public transportation in Massachusetts. The MBTA is engaged in the largest series of transit improvement projects in recent history. From the Old Colony Rail Project, to the South Boston Piers Transitway and connecting Silver Line service on Washington Street, the T is aggressively building and restoring critical transit links that will improve travel throughout our region. The T is also conducting studies of the North/South Station Rail Link, Green Line improvements, and access to Logan Airport.

One project with the unusual potential to better connect a large number of new and existing MBTA lines is the Urban Ring. Circling from Columbia Point in the south to Logan Airport in the northeast, the Urban Ring would pass through six municipalities: Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, and Somerville. The Urban Ring corridor includes areas with some of the heaviest travel demand in the entire Greater Boston region. We are currently studying options to provide more direct service around the city core—rather than through it.

We are requesting your participation because of your previously expressed interest in the Urban Ring and/or other transit projects. We are holding these meetings in neighborhoods around the Urban Ring to encourage the attendance of local residents and community leaders. The enclosed materials will assist you in selecting which meeting is most convenient for you.

I hope you will be able to attend one of these meetings. Perhaps more than other transportation projects underway today, the success of the Urban Ring depends on the active involvement of citizens. I look forward to your participation in this effort.

P Calcaterra

Peter C. Calcaterra
Project Manager
Urban Ring Major Investment Study

6/11/97 Copies distributed to City Council & City Mgr. CW

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
Urban Ring Major Investment Study

June 2, 1996

MBTA SEEKING PUBLIC INPUT FOR URBAN RING

The MBTA will hold three public meetings in June as part of planning for the Urban Ring, a study of circumferential transportation possibilities around metropolitan Boston. The T is studying opportunities to connect radial subway and commuter rail lines and improve access in a circular corridor that passes through Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, and Somerville. All six municipalities are participating in this planning effort, along with many education and medical institutions, businesses, and environmental and community groups.

The meeting schedule is as follows (maps are attached):

- **Boston** — June 11, 7:30 pm: Wentworth Institute of Technology, Auxiliary Auditorium, 550 Parker Street, Boston. The auditorium is accessible from the Green Line and the #39 bus on Huntington Avenue and the Orange Line Ruggles Station.

- **Somerville** — June 18, 7:30 pm: Holiday Inn, 30 Washington Street, Somerville. This location is accessible via the Orange Line Sullivan Square Station and the #86 and 91 buses.

- **Chelsea** — June 19, 7:30 pm: City Hall, 500 Broadway, Council Chambers. City Hall is near the Chelsea Center commuter rail station and is accessible via the #111, 112, 116, and 117 buses.

The purpose of the three evening meetings is to involve people who live and work around the Urban Ring corridor in the development of possible transportation options for routes and vehicles types. To maximize public convenience, these meetings will be held at locations around the Urban Ring corridor and will cover the same subjects: study purpose, goals, public involvement, and progress to date. Residents and community leaders are encouraged to participate and provide their views on transportation needs in the corridor.

Language translation and services for persons with hearing disabilities or visual impairment are available. Please call (617) 492-4996 for information and arrangements.

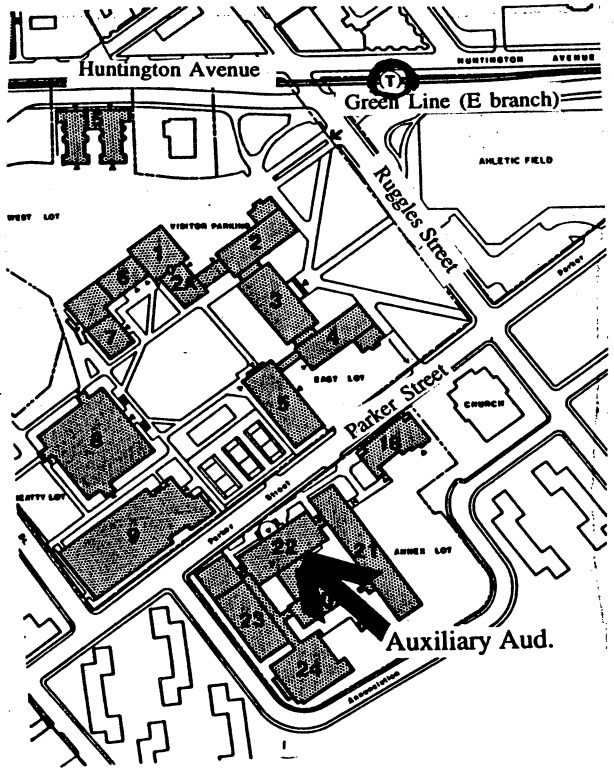
The Urban Ring

The Urban Ring

Public Meeting Locations

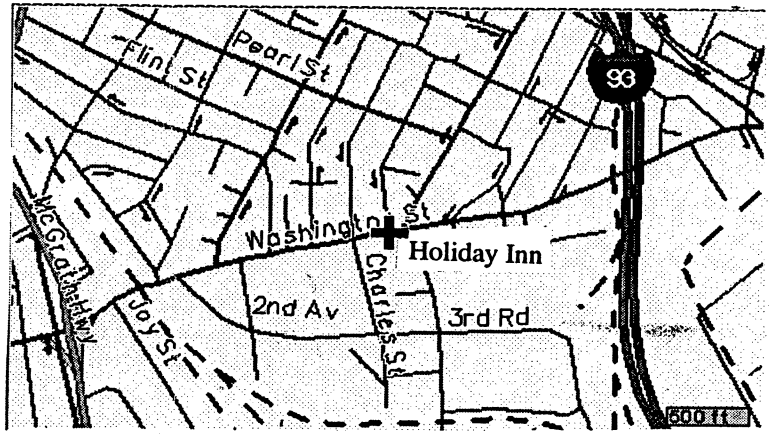
Boston
June 11

Wentworth Institute of Technology, Auxiliary Auditorium, 550 Parker Street.
Take the Green Line (stop: Museum of Fine Arts), the Orange Line (stop: Ruggles), or #39 bus on Huntington Avenue. Parking is available at meters and in lots on Parker and Ward Streets.



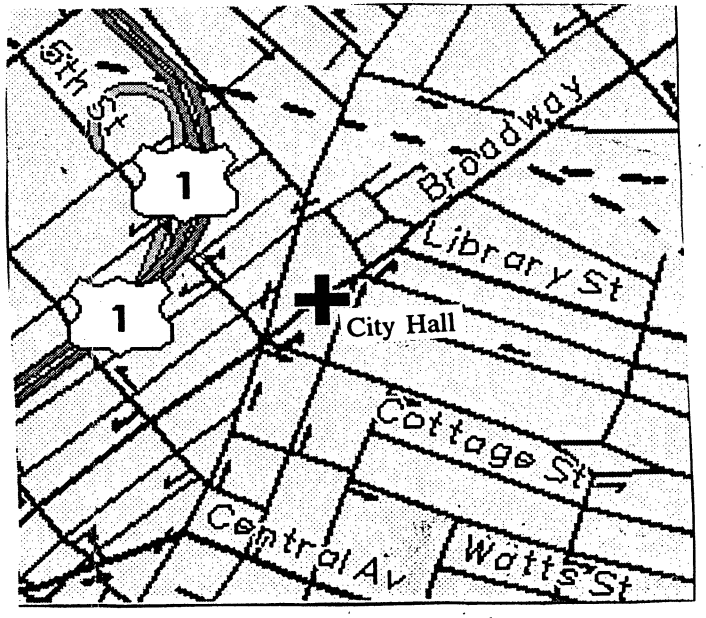
Somerville
June 18

Holiday Inn, 30 Washington Street.
Take the Orange Line (stop: Sullivan Square) and walk one block south on Mystic Avenue to Washington Street. This location is also accessible via the #86 and 91 buses. Parking is available at meters and in a lot at the intersection of Mystic and Washington.



Chelsea
June 19

Chelsea City Hall, 500 Broadway.
City Hall is accessible via the #111, 112, 116, and 117 buses, as well as the Chelsea Center commuter rail station. Parking is available at meters.



URBAN RING MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

FACT SHEET

What? The MBTA is currently studying ways to improve circumferential transit connections among radial subway and commuter rail lines in Greater Boston. Known as the Urban Ring Major Investment Study (MIS), this effort will identify ways to better serve MBTA customers and travelers from throughout the region by examining options for more direct service in this heavily traveled corridor.

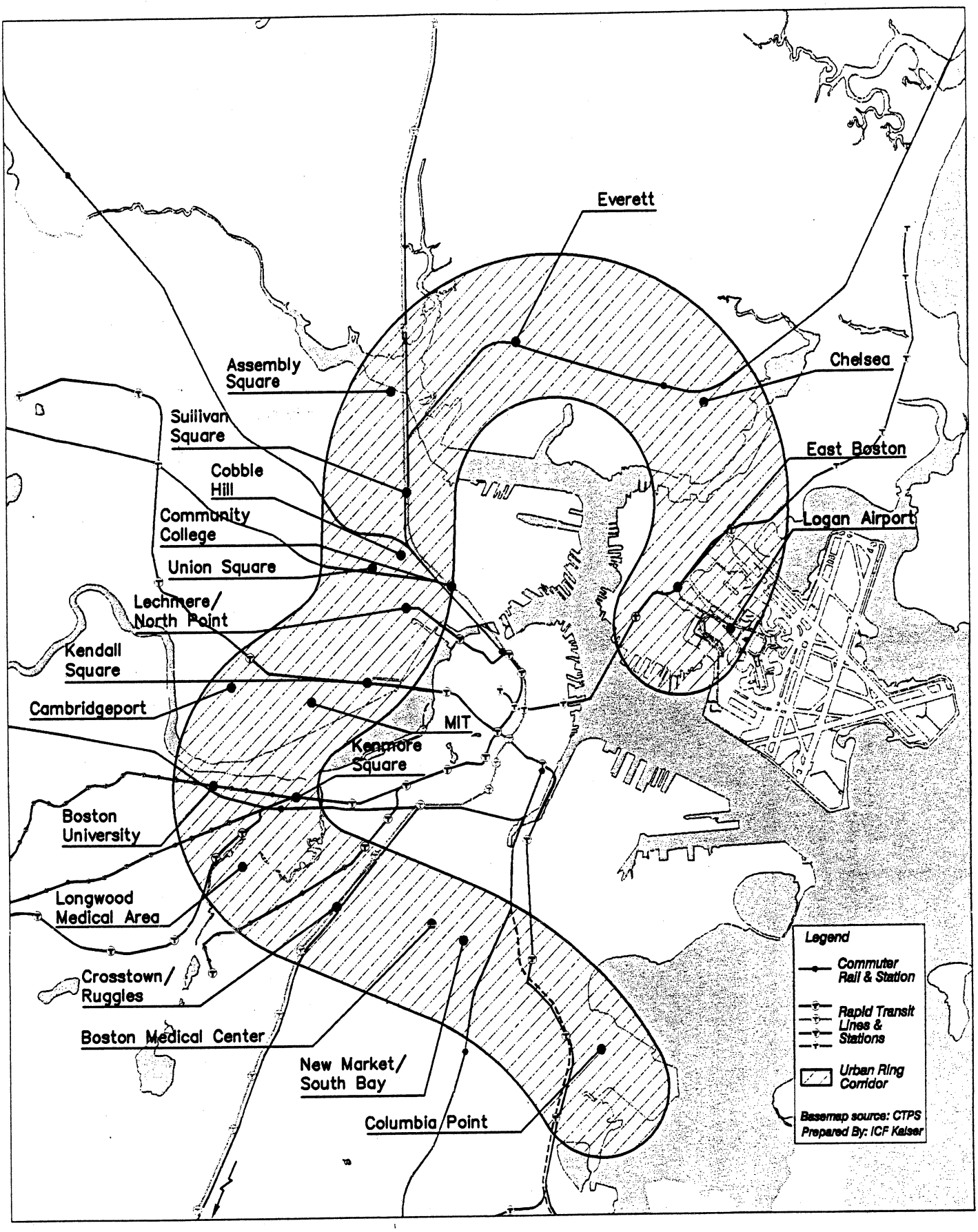
Where? The study corridor extends in a clockwise arc from Columbia Point in the south to Logan Airport in the northeast, passing through six municipalities—Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Somerville, Everett and Chelsea—as shown in the "Urban Ring Corridor Study Area" map.

Why? The Urban Ring study is asking citizens to identify unmet transportation needs in the corridor and suggest ways to address them. Though many destinations in the Urban Ring are quite close together, the existing radial system does not always provide direct connections. The study will examine options to reduce unnecessary travel into downtown and back out to reach destinations in the corridor. Better transit service in the Urban Ring would benefit residents and travelers from outside the corridor who currently drive along the ring for some portion of their trip. Improved access in the Urban Ring corridor would help relieve congestion in the central subway system, reduce auto emissions to improve the environment, support economic development, and increase the attractiveness of mass transit.

Who? The MBTA is managing the Urban Ring study with the input and assistance of a specially formed Working Committee whose members represent all six Urban Ring municipalities, as well as major educational and medical institutions, large employers in the corridor, environmental and citizens groups, and the Federal Transit Administration.

When? The Urban Ring study began in December 1996 and will conclude in the spring of 1998. The MBTA will hold public meetings in coming months and continue gathering comments. Later this summer, possible alignments and vehicle types will be presented for further study. Following the completion of the Major Investment Study, Urban Ring alternatives may be carried forward for evaluation in an Environmental Impact Statement.

For more information about the Urban Ring call (617) 492-4996.



Urban Ring Corridor

Study Area

May 1997

0 3000 6000 FT

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUSAN B. SCHLESINGER,
Assistant City Manager for Community Development

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

From: Susan Schlesinger, Assistant City Manager, Community Development Department

Date: June 3, 1997

Re: Council Order #060 5/12/97 Federal Transit Administration Grants for Livable Communities

Attached please find information about the Federal Transit Administration's Livable Communities Initiative. Congress has eliminated funding for this program, but funding is included in NEXTEA, which is the Clinton Administration's proposed successor to ISTEA, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Under ISTEA it has been possible to use federal funds for non-automotive transportation facilities. The reauthorization deadline for ISTEA is September 1997, but the future of NEXTEA, and therefore the Livable Cities Initiative, is still unclear. If the initiative is revived, we will explore funding options for Cambridge.

The concept of livable cities is growing rapidly in popularity as a result of a number of complementary concerns, including concerns about suburban sprawl and air pollution, the desire to return to neighborhood-based communities, and the desire to revitalize the nation's cities. Livable cities are seen as those that have mixed commercial and residential uses that make non-automobile travel feasible and are lively, safe communities with public amenities that meet the needs of residents of all ages and backgrounds. City staff keep track of livable city ideas and projects from elsewhere in the United States that may be useful for Cambridge.

City Hall Annex
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
617 349-4600
Fax: 617 349-4669

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

This brochure describes the Federal Transit Administration's Livable Communities Initiative including its background, objectives, eligible recipients and activities, sources of funding, statutory basis, and criteria for selection.

BACKGROUND

The technology advances of the 20th century have brought instant communication and increased ability to traverse short and long distances. These advances, together with the increase in automobile ownership and the construction of extensive roadway networks, have created urban sprawl, adverse environmental effects and the isolation of many individuals from their communities. As this century closes, transportation options have become increasingly limited for many in our communities who are unable to drive, prefer not to drive or lack an automobile. Together, urban sprawl that forces increasingly longer trips and traffic congestion are diminishing the quality of life and reducing the effectiveness of the automobile as a transportation mode. These negative factors have created renewed interest in compact communities with user-friendly transit linked to related development.

The three primary functions of transit are to provide an alternative means of personal mobility, increase capacity when needed and contribute to the quality of life in communities. In the context of these functions, the Federal Transit Administration initiated the Livable Communities Initiative to strengthen the link between transit and communities. Transit facilities and services that promote more livable communities are ones which are customer-friendly, community-oriented and well designed resulting from a planning and design process with active community involvement.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Initiative are to improve mobility and the quality of services available to residents of neighborhoods by:

- strengthening the link between transit planning and community planning, including land use policies and urban design supporting the use of transit and ultimately providing physical assets that better meet community needs
- stimulating increased participation by community organizations and residents, minority and low-income residents, small and minority businesses, persons with disabilities and the elderly in the planning and design process
- increasing access to employment, education facilities and other community destinations through high quality, community-oriented, technologically innovative transit services and facilities
- leveraging resources available through other Federal, State and local programs

CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Characteristics of Livable Communities include:

1. full community participation in the decision-making process by residents, neighborhood organizations and the business community including small and minority businesses
2. well planned and designed neighborhoods where housing, schools and parks are within easy walking distance of user-friendly transit and link residents to job opportunities and social services
3. transit, pedestrian and bicycle access that is compatible with land use, zoning and urban design to reduce dependence on the automobile
4. mixed-use neighborhoods that complement residential areas with commercial, recreational, educational, health and other social services
5. transit services and facilities which provide safety, security and accessibility for all passengers, including disabled persons and elderly members of the community
6. sound environmental practices including careful parking and traffic management techniques to reduce auto trips, conserve space, encourage green areas, avoid gridlock and improve air quality.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Eligible recipients are transit operators, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county governments, states, planning agencies and other public bodies with the authority to plan or construct transit projects. Non-profit, community and civic organizations are encouraged to participate in project planning and development as partners with eligible recipients. Eligible project planning activities include:

1. the preparation of implementation plans and designs incorporating Livable Communities elements,
2. the assessment of environmental, social, economic, land use and urban design impacts of projects,
3. feasibility studies, 4) technical assistance,
4. participation by community organizations, and the business community, including small and minority owned businesses, and persons with disabilities,
5. the evaluation of best practices, and
6. the development of innovative urban design, land use and zoning practices.

Metropolitan and other planning organizations that receive FTA planning funds are expected to incorporate Livable Communities elements into their regular planning work programs. Eligible capital activities or capital project enhancements of demonstration projects include:

1. property acquisition, restoration or demolition of existing structures, site preparation, utilities, building foundations, walkways, and open space that are physically and functionally related to mass transportation facilities,
2. the purchase of buses, enhancements to transit stations, park-and-ride lots and transfer facilities incorporating community services such as day care, health care and public safety,
3. safety elements such as lighting, surveillance and community police and security services,
4. site design improvements including sidewalks, aerial walkways and bus access and kiss-and-ride facilities,
5. operational enhancements such as transit marketing and pass programs, customer information services, and advanced vehicle locating, dispatch and information systems.

STATUTORY BASIS AND FUNDING

The statutory basis for the Initiative is found at 49 U.S.C. Section 5309(a)(5) and (7) (formerly Sections 3(a)(1)(D) and (F) of the Federal Transit Act). These provisions authorize projects that:

1. enhance the effectiveness of mass transportation projects to which they are physically or functionally related, and
2. provide non-vehicular, capital improvements in fixed-guideway corridors.

The flexible funding provisions of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) strengthens the funding opportunities for transit investments that meet the needs of communities. The FTA Livable Communities Initiative is thus firmly grounded in law. The essential purpose of the Federal transit laws is not simply to fund the capital and operating costs of transit systems; more generally, the purpose is to improve the quality of life in urban and rural communities through the use of transit systems, recognizing them as the lifeblood of livable communities.

The sources of Federal funds for projects reflecting the Livable Communities Initiative principles are: the transit capital Discretionary Grant or Loan Program, the transit formula assistance Block Grants, the Planning and Research Program, the Planning and Design of Mass Transportation Facilities to Meet Special Needs of Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities, the rural transit assistance Formula Grant Program for Areas Other Than Urbanized Areas, the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. In addition, limited funding will be available for technical assistance and demonstration project implementation, planning, capital projects, model planning, urban design and community involvement techniques.

PROGRAM GUIDANCE

PROJECT SELECTION FACTORS

Threshold Factors.

Threshold factors will include evidence that the project:

1. resulted from a community planning process and contains community endorsement,
2. increases access to jobs, educational opportunities, or social services,
3. incorporates community services or other transit and pedestrian-oriented mixed use developments, and
4. provides opportunities for small or disadvantaged business participation in the planning, design, and implementation phases of the project.

Rating Factors.

In addition to the threshold factors, there are a number of specific measures worthy of consideration in developing projects. They are as follows:

1. evidence of community involvement in the planning, design and implementation of the project,
2. evidence that the transit project is a product of coordinated transit and community planning,
3. degree to which transit ridership is increased and single occupant automobile trips are reduced,
4. degree to which the project responds to community needs through the inclusion of community services and customer conveniences,
5. level of funding pledged by local and State agencies and other Federal programs,
6. degree to which the enhancements improve the physical environment of the community, including safety and security,
7. degree to which the project stimulates commercial and housing development around the subject transit facility,
8. degree to which the project generates jobs for unemployed community residents,
9. evidence of local ordinances reflecting supportive land use policies and business development initiatives,
10. market feasibility of the relevant project elements, and
11. reasonableness of the financial plan to cover the local share of the capital costs and long term operations and maintenance costs of the relevant project elements.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS

The project development elements to be considered when developing a Livable Communities project are:

- physical or functional relationship to transit must be evident
- community participation in the planning and design of the project
- coordination of the site functional plans, particularly in relationship to transit facility operation and maintenance procedures
- integrated design of transit with community service and customer convenience components
- environmental and other Federal cross-cutting requirements including American Disabilities Act, Davis Bacon, Buy America, third party contracting and 13(c) must be addressed
- the market and financial feasibility of the community services and customer conveniences should be evident
- applicable zoning and land use policies such as higher density considerations, mixed-use guidelines, parking management, and pedestrian/bicycle transit oriented design standards
- property leasing arrangements
- disposition of project real property
- inclusion in an approved Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES EXAMPLES

GREATER CLEVELAND PASSENGER ACCESSWAY

The Cleveland Passenger Accessway is a vital element of the redevelopment of downtown Cleveland. The 1,050 foot accessway links the Tower City Center rapid transit station with the Gateway Sports Complex which contains a 42,000 seat stadium and a 21,000 seat arena. The passenger accessway includes a number of customer conveniences.

1. Pedestrian walkway overlooks scenic Cuyahoga River, is climate controlled and contains closed circuit television cameras.
2. The heavy utilization of the Passenger Accessway has resulted in minimal traffic congestion on event days.
3. Due to the high volume of rapid transit ridership resulting from the use of this facility, RTA has added a large amount of additional service to accommodate event crowds.
4. Over 60% of Gateway Stadium attendees utilized the accessway for events, over 25% of the event crowds utilized the public transit system and a majority of the transit trips use the RTA's rapid transit system.
5. The community participated in planning and designing the facilities.
6. The facility is totally grade-separated so that users do not have to cross downtown arterials to gain access to the facility.
7. The project qualified for a Categorical Exclusion from Environmental Assessment.
8. Market and financial feasibility studies were conducted by RTA and its consultants to estimate passenger utilization, flow-rates and to determine the size of the accessway.
9. Project financing occurred in the form of an 80% grant from CMAQ funds under ISTEA flexible funding. Private sector financed 100% of conceptual design, 50% of preliminary engineering and provided in-kind contributions valued at nearly $2.0 million toward the accessway.

CEDAR RAPIDS GROUND TRANSPORTATION CENTER

The Ground Transportation Center at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is a multi-use facility located in the downtown CBD. The Center was designed to centralize local and intercity bus transportation modes, as well as to provide convenient access for taxis and special services for the elderly and disabled.

1. The Center incorporates a split bus terminal with separate facilities for city buses and intercity buses.
2. Approximately 3,000 to 4,000 bus passengers use the Center daily.
3. Incorporated and integrated the designs of the bus terminals with other joint-development components.
4. Emphasizes strong relationships between the bus transit and pedestrian activities.
5. Pedestrian circulation design includes both internal and external walkways with multiple access points to transit terminals, office towers, and other buildings in the area.
6. Project conceptualization and planning involved developers, downtown businesses and city officials.
7. Numerous public hearings were held due to the project's proximity to a 100-year Flood Plain.
8. Iowa's Department of Natural Resources participated in the approval process.
9. An Environmental Assessment was conducted and found no significant impact.
10. Market and financial feasibility studies were conducted.
11. The Federal share of the total project cost was 80 % and included land acquisition.

ORLANDO PARK AND PLAY GARAGE CHILD CARE CENTER

The Orlando Park and Play Garage is a 515 parking space facility that incorporates a child care center, restaurant and branch offices of the City's Parking System.

1. The City provides free shuttle bus service to downtown employment centers.
2. The shuttle buses serve approximately 1,000 people daily from two parking garages which have a combined total of 1,127 parking spaces.
3. The project site was designated for community service development. Public hearings considered options and recommended a multi-use facility.
4. The City incorporated a child care center component into the project.
5. The child care center design was integrated with the design of the parking garage.
6. Covered walkways connect the child care center, the Performing Arts Center and the parking garages.
7. For the purposes of environmental requirements, a categorical exclusion was issued.
8. The child care center was financed with funds from the city's parking revenues.
9. The City leased the child care center to a private operator. Fees are returned to the City's parking fund.
10. FTA funded 80 % of the parking garage costs and the costs of the land for the child care center.

HEALTH STATION AT ROXBURY CROSSING

The Whittier Street Neighborhood Health Center opened the Health Station at Roxbury Crossing at a Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) station. It is the first known health center to be located at a public transit terminal. The Health Station, located in the Roxbury section of Boston, provides very accessible health care, health promotion and health education services to an area with heavy pedestrian traffic.

1. Roxbury Crossing Station has approximately 3,000 passenger boardings daily and also serves as a bus stop for 10 bus lines.
2. The Health Station is located at street level adjacent to the entrance of the MBTA station.
3. An extensive community participation program was carried out in the planning and designs of all Orange Line stations.
4. The community recommended projects incorporating minimum parking, retail businesses, and community based services.
5. The Health Station leases 4,670 sq. feet of space from MBTA through a master leaser contracted by MBTA. The master leaser put in electrical services as part of the lease agreement.
6. As a notable spin-off, the master leaser is negotiating a lease at another Orange Line station for a "challenged adult" center.
7. The Health Station offers a range of health care services including maternal and child health care services.
8. FTA participated in the funding of the station.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM GUIDANCE

- Livable Communities Initiative Program Description
- Livable Communities Initiative Brochure
- Planning Emphasis Area
- Community Involvement Guidance
- FTA Grant Program Circulars
- Regional Conferences/ Workshops

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Best Practice Guidelines
- National Seminars
- Town Meetings
- On-Site Assistance
- Local Implementation Demonstrations
- Model Urban Design Standards
- Best Practices in Community Outreach
- Local Service Innovations

CAPITAL PROJECT DEMONSTRATIONS

- Selection of Projects
- Project Management
- Project Evaluation

CORE PROGRAM INSINUATION

- Planning Assistance Including Coordination with FHWA
- Discretionary Bus Program
- Formula Assistance Program
- New Starts Criteria
- Rail Modernization Program

RELATED DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS

- Advanced Public Transit Systems
- Clean Air
- Job Links
- Innovative Financing
- Safety and Security
- Transit Accessibility
- Transit Ambassadors
- Turnkey (Design/Build) Delivery

PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Development of Evaluation Methodology
- Assessment of Baseline Conditions
- Assessment of Post-operational Results

FTA REGIONAL OFFICES

Potential applicants are encouraged to initially contact the FTA Regional Offices. The Regional Offices will work with potential applicants in developing project proposals and will seek Headquarters technical assistance and procedural guidance as needed. Information on the FTA Regional Offices is listed below:

Federal Transit Administration (617) 494-2055
Region I
Transportation Systems Center
55 Broadway, Suite 920
Cambridge, MA 02142-1093

Federal Transit Administration (212) 264-8162

13.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

June 9, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 14, regarding a report on Federal Transportation Administration Grant for livable communities, received from Assistant City Manager for Community Development Susan Schlesinger.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #13

S-355

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number Fourteen, regarding a report on Federal Transportation Administration Grant for livable communities.

In City Council June 9, 1997

PLACED ON FILE