

IN THE LOOP

ISSUE 3

The Official Newsletter of the Central Area Loop Study

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The Southbank Shuttle was recommended for expansion as part of the Transportation System Management alternatives.

CENTRAL AREA LOOP STUDY

Final Recommendations

More than 200,000 residents in the Tri-State area work in or commute through downtown Cincinnati, Covington and Newport daily, in addition to approximately five million people who visit the areas' entertainment facilities and attractions each year. As a result, travel between these three cities can be time-consuming and frustrating. After 18 months of analysis, the Central Area Loop Study Advisory Committee has developed recommendations designed to decrease traffic congestion and improve mobility to downtown Cincinnati, Covington and Newport. The recommendations address concerns for a loop circulator, improvements on Fourth and Fifth streets in Covington and the viability of a Newport Light Rail spur. On November 8, 2001, the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) Board of Trustees approved these recommendations.

Loop Circulator: Transportation System Management

The Advisory Committee recommends Transportation System Management (TSM) alternatives to enhance existing services offered by TANK and SORTA in order to increase their use and effectiveness. TANK and SORTA will work together to respond to the traffic needs in the three cities. In addition:

- The Southbank Shuttle route will be revised to increase ridership and improve service frequency.
- Measures such as dedicated transit lanes and transit signal prioritization will be considered to increase the mobility of public transportation.
- Public transportation routes serving the cities of Cincinnati, Covington and Newport will continue to be evaluated to increase ridership and improve effectiveness.

Streetcar

The Advisory Committee also recognizes the public's interest and support of possible surface rail alternatives to improve mobility and enhance economic opportunities within the region. It recommends that modern street rail service in downtown Cincinnati, Covington and Newport be examined further and incorporated into an overall Regional Rail Strategy. The surface rail car route will differ from the route analyzed as a part of the Central Area Loop Study to best serve both the resident and workday populations while optimizing ridership and efficiency.

Personal Rapid Transit

Due to the uncertainty of the technology and costs, Personal Rapid Transit (Taxi 2000) is not recommended as preferred technology for the loop circulator. The Committee encourages Taxi 2000 to continue to develop the design and construct a full-scale test track to address critical questions regarding engineering design, operational feasibility and cost.

Fourth and Fifth Streets in Covington and Newport

The Advisory Committee recommends numerous changes to decrease congestion and improve mobility through Covington. Further traffic analysis will be conducted as part of the Route 9 Newport Corridor Study. The improvements may include:

- Traffic signal modification
- Lane striping changes
- Addition of left-turn lanes
- Additional signage
- Construction of right-turn lane at the Clay Wade Bailey Bridge



The modern streetcar was recommended for further study as part of an overall Regional Rail Strategy.



THE CENTRAL AREA LOOP STUDY

Advisory Committee members include:

- Wally Pagan, Chair
- Robert Alpern, Eagle Realty Group
- Paul Baker Jr., Citizen Representative
- Alan Bernstein, BB Riverboats/
Southbank Partners
- Neil Blunt, Corporex
- Ian Budd, Citizen Representative
- Ed Buechel, Northern Kentucky Chamber
of Commerce
- Phil Ciafardini, City of Newport
- John Deatrick, Department of
Transportation and Engineering,
City of Cincinnati
- Pat DeWine, Cincinnati City Council
- Mark Donaghy, Transit Authority of
Northern Kentucky
- Tom Dunn, Cincinnati Street Railways
- Tony Durso, Newport Neighbors
- Tom Ewing, Greater Cincinnati
Chamber of Commerce
- Dan Fay, Embassy Suites
- Beth Fennell, City of Newport
- Danny Fore, Tri-ED
- Hubert Guest, African American
Chamber of Commerce
- Bob Hill, KYTC-District 6
- Barry House, KYTC-Frankfort
- Terry Hughes, City of Covington
- Greg Jarvis, City of Covington
- Hans Jindal, ODOT-District 8
- William Johnson, Heinz/Star-Kist
- Joan Kaup, Greater Cincinnati Convention
& Visitors Bureau
- Pat McCaffrey, Cincinnati Reds
- Pamela Mullins, The Procter & Gamble Co.
- Richard Murgatroyd, Kenton County
Judge Executive
- Tom Neyer, Jr., Hamilton County Board
of Commissioners
- John Nienaber, Fifth-Third Bank
- Steve Pendery, Campbell County
Judge Executive
- Susan Redman-Rengstorf, Underground
RR Freedom Center
- Tim Reynolds, SORTA/Metro
- Libby Rushley, ODOT-Central Office
- Bill Scheyer, Forward Quest
- John Schneider, DCI
- Mike Schuster, DCI
- Chip Tappan, Forward Quest
- John Tighe, Newport Aquarium
- Bob Yoder, Citizen Representative
- Jim Wagner, Powder Kote Industries
- Carolyn Zink, Covington Business Council



Covington and Newport will work together to determine the best solution for the Veterans Memorial Bridge.

CENTRAL AREA LOOP STUDY

Final Recommendations (continued)

Veterans Memorial Bridge

The Advisory Committee recognizes that the Veterans Memorial Bridge, connecting Covington and Newport, should be widened and may need to be replaced. The cities of Covington and Newport will continue to work together to determine the best solution, and future studies of the bridge may be conducted.

Newport Light Rail Spur

The proposed Newport Light Rail spur will be examined in further detail as part of the Southeast Corridor Study to be initiated by OKI in early 2002.

The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed Newport Light Rail spur cross the Ohio River using the L&N Bridge or the Taylor-Southgate Bridge. The Newport Light Rail spur is planned to connect with the proposed I-71 Light Rail line along Second and Third streets in Cincinnati and run through Newport along Saratoga Street. Three station locations will serve central Newport, the Newport Transit Center and Aquarium and the Cincinnati riverfront with a terminal near Eleventh Street in Newport. The line could be extended south to serve Northern Kentucky University.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



As the Central Area Loop Study draws to a close, I want to thank the stakeholders, Advisory Committee members, consultants and citizens of Cincinnati, Covington and Newport for their cooperation and participation during this process. Due to everyone's contributions, the Advisory Committee has developed recommendations to improve accessibility between the three cities and decrease traffic congestion while remaining cognizant of the possible effects on the environment and on our historic neighborhoods. I am excited about these recommendations and look forward to seeing the traffic improvements in our cities.

Regards,
Wally Pagan
Chairman
Central Area Loop Study