

Appendix A: Study Newsletter

EASTERN CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

Transitional Analysis to Locally Preferred Alternatives 2006 Winter Newsletter

What is the Transitional Analysis?

The Eastern Corridor Transit Study Transitional Analysis to Locally Preferred Alternatives (ECTS-TA) is an extension of the previously completed Eastern Corridor Transit Study (ECTS). The ECTS considered public transit improvements in the area from the Golden Triangle to Westmoreland County between the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers.

The purpose of the ECTS-TA is to complete the Alternatives Analysis process that was begun in the ECTS so that the recommended alternatives can move toward implementation. The study will set the stage for the next steps of the Federal Project Development Process (shown to the right) by choosing Locally Preferred Alternatives from those recommended in the ECTS. This will allow them to be eligible for future Federal financial assistance.

What is a Locally Preferred Alternative?

A Locally Preferred Alternative, or LPA, is a reasonable transit alternative that is technically feasible and has the support and financial backing of local residents, stakeholders and elected officials. It is determined through technical evaluation and comments received through public outreach.

How can I get involved?

Join us at our first round of public outreach. You can attend any of the following three public briefings:

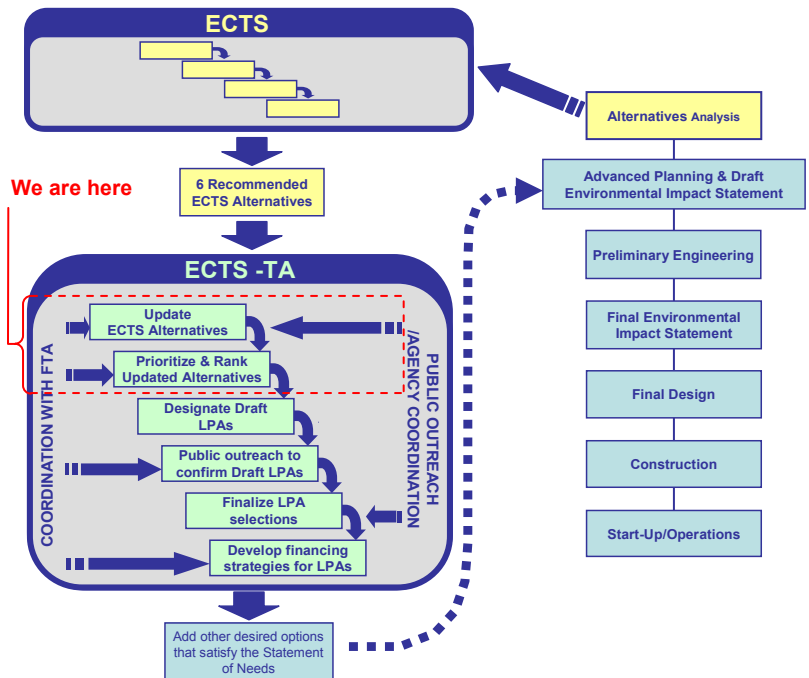
Thursday, March 2, 2006 12:00 – 1:30 pm Oakmont Borough Municipal Building Fifth Street at Virginia Avenue Oakmont, PA 15139	Thursday, March 2, 2006 6:00 – 7:30 pm Norwin Public Library 100 Caruthers Lane Irwin, PA 15642	Friday, March 3, 2006 12:30 – 2:00 pm University of Pittsburgh, Alumni Hall 4227 Fifth Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15260
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Each of these briefings will include a 45-minute presentation followed by a 45-minute question and answer session. The same information will be presented at each of the briefings. All locations are wheelchair accessible.

For information regarding transit services to the public meetings in Allegheny County, call Port Authority Customer Service at 412-442-2000 or access the trip planner on the Port Authority's website, at www.portauthority.org. For transit information in Westmoreland County, call Westmoreland County Transit Authority at 1-800-221-9282.

You can also stay up to date by visiting the project website at www.spcregion.org/ECTS

Federal Transit Project Development Process



Allegheny Valley – Commuter Rail: Arnold to downtown Pittsburgh



Commuter rail diesel locomotive and coach cars

This alternative would provide hourly commuter rail service in the peak and every 90 minutes in the off-peak on an 18.3-mile route between Arnold and Pittsburgh's Strip District. The service would be entirely along the Allegheny Valley Railroad, which parallels the Allegheny River. Stops would be in Arnold, New Kensington, Oakmont, Verona, Penn Hills and Pittsburgh. A bus shuttle would bring riders from the Strip District to the Golden Triangle.

Possible Updates: This alternative could be modified to reach farther into downtown Pittsburgh in lieu of a bus shuttle. It could divert from the Allegheny Valley Railroad near Washington Boulevard/Route 8 and follow the Brilliant Branch and Norfolk Southern's Pittsburgh Line to Penn Station, at 11th Street and Liberty Avenue.

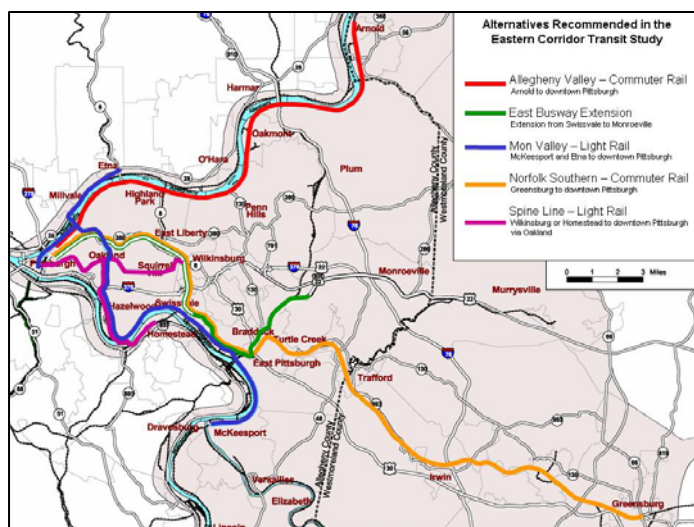
East Busway – Extension: Swissvale to Monroeville



Busway along existing freight railroad right-of-way

This alternative would be a 6.6-mile extension of the existing East Busway, which currently extends from downtown Pittsburgh to Swissvale, paralleling Norfolk Southern's Pittsburgh Line. This extension would allow public transit buses to travel on exclusive, bus-only roads as far east as Monroeville. New stops would be at Braddock, Keystone Commons and the Monroeville Mall. Service frequency for buses on the East Busway would be unchanged.

Possible Updates: This alternative could be modified to extend only as far as East Pittsburgh, at which point buses could leave the busway and enter the planned Mon-Fayette Expressway, the existing Tri-Boro Highway or other local roads.



Norfolk Southern – Commuter Rail: Greensburg to downtown Pittsburgh



Commuter rail diesel locomotive and coach cars

This alternative would provide hourly commuter rail service in the peak and every 90 minutes in the off-peak on a 30.9-mile route between Greensburg and downtown Pittsburgh via the Norfolk Southern Pittsburgh Line. Stops would be in Greensburg, Jeannette, Irwin, Trafford, East Pittsburgh, Wilkinsburg and Pittsburgh.

Possible Updates: This alternative could be modified to extend beyond Greensburg to Latrobe along the same Norfolk Southern right-of way.

Mon Valley – Light Rail: McKeesport and Etna to downtown Pittsburgh



Light rail at-grade

This alternative would provide light rail service every 10 minutes in the peak and every 20 minutes in the off-peak between McKeesport and Pittsburgh (17.5 miles) and Etna and Pittsburgh (5.3 miles) via Allegheny Valley Railroad and CSX rights-of-way. Stops would be in McKeesport, Braddock, Rankin, Glen Hazel, Hazelwood, Greenfield, Oakland, Etna, Millvale and downtown Pittsburgh. Connections with the South Hills light rail lines would be possible at the Steel Plaza T station.

Possible Updates: If the Convention Center Branch of the North Shore Connector remains deferred, this alternative would have to be modified to include construction of that branch for its connection from Steel Plaza to the Allegheny Valley Railroad near the Convention Center.

Spine Line – Light Rail: Homestead/Wilkinsburg to downtown Pittsburgh via Oakland



Light rail underground

This alternative would provide light rail service every 5 minutes in the peak and every 7½ minutes off-peak from the North Shore, through downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland to either Wilkinsburg or Homestead. The route would be entirely underground, except for the possible portion between Oakland and Homestead. Stops would be at the North Shore, Pittsburgh and Oakland and either Squirrel Hill and Wilkinsburg or Glen Hazel, Hazelwood, Greenfield and Homestead. Connections with the South Hills light rail lines would be possible in downtown Pittsburgh.

Possible Updates: This alternative could be modified to be at-grade for all or a portion of its length. Other routings or modes, such as Bus Rapid Transit, could also be considered.