

H. COORDINATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Agency coordination and public outreach are essential to any project that results in community impacts. The planning for the PATCO Philadelphia Waterfront Transit Expansion Alternatives Analysis involved extensive coordination with the public, local agencies, and other project stakeholders. The coordination and outreach process was developed to ensure compliance with the FTA's Metropolitan and Statewide Planning process. The outreach effort was directed to make certain that the project team identified and evaluated alternatives in light of their engineering feasibility, environmental and social impacts, and likelihood of implementation, financial feasibility and other factors of concern to the community and stakeholders.

H.1. TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The PATCO Philadelphia Waterfront Transit Expansion Alternatives Analysis Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provided specific guidance to the DRPA/PATCO project team and consultants throughout the project. The TAC convened twice during the course of the project. In addition, the DRPA/PATCO project team met individually with selected members of the TAC to discuss shared issues of importance and opportunities to coordinate planning and design efforts.

Invited members of the TAC included:

- Federal Transit Administration
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- City of Philadelphia
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- PennPraxis
- Center City District
- Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

H.1.1. TAC Meeting #1

The first TAC meeting was held February 19, 2008, at the DRPA. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the TAC members to the DRPA/PATCO project team and consultants and discuss the roles and expectations of the TAC. The DRPA/PATCO project team and consultants gave an overview of the project, reviewed the scope and schedule, and discussed the project's goals and objectives. This meeting also included a dialogue about the project's purpose and need, alignment screening methodology, initial alternatives to be considered, and a question-and-answer period.

H.1.2. TAC Meeting #2

The second TAC meeting was held on October 5, 2009 at the DRPA. The purpose of the meeting was to present a detailed comparison of the three candidate alternatives based on the evaluation criteria

presented at TAC Meeting #1. The September 2009 open house results were reviewed, as were next steps. The TAC members provided comments on the results of the analysis and next steps.

H.2. AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

Individual briefings of both TAC members and other organizations were conducted throughout the course of the project. The list below identifies and describes some of the agency and stakeholder outreach sessions completed during the study process:

- DVRPC Board
- DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee
- SEPTA Citizen's Advisory Committee
- Delaware River Waterfront Corporation Planning Committee
- Old City Civic Association
- Philadelphia Regional Port Authority
- Philadelphia Beltline Railroad
- East of Broad Improvement Association
- FTA
- Philadelphia Tribune

H.3. PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public participation is important to developing sound recommendations and selecting transit alternatives that are supported by the community. DRPA's commitment at the beginning of this project was to proactively involve the public so that decisions could be made based on goals and objectives of the people who live, work, and travel in the study area. Throughout this process, the project team has kept the public informed, incorporated their feedback, and helped identify issues and develop solutions to improve transportation in the corridor. During the course of the AA process, four public meetings were conducted in the form of public open houses.

Notifications about the open houses were done using the following means:

- Letters to government and elected officials
- Letters to civic associations
- Meeting information on the project website
- Meeting information on DRPA's website
- Twitter message on PATCO account
- News release in:
 - *Daily News*
 - *Philly Tribune*
- Bulk email distribution to religious institution, community/civic organizations, and gathering places

H.3.1. Public Open House 1

The first set of Philadelphia Waterfront Transit Expansion Alternatives open houses was held on January 22 and 24, 2008. 126 people attended those open houses with the majority (75 percent) providing written feedback on the alternatives presented. Most of the people attending both the first and second set of open houses lived close to the Waterfront. Unequivocally, attendees believed that access to the Waterfront is key (92%).

At the first set of open houses, most people found Alternative PA-1 Extended as the most plausible alternative (41%) followed by Alternative PA-2 (34%). Participants believed that increasing system connectivity and encouraging economic development were the most important considerations for this project. During this set of open houses, many participants suggested changing the northern terminus of the alignments from Penn Treaty Park to Girard Avenue and Front Street, thus allowing additional connections to Market-Frankford Line and the Girard Avenue Route 15 Trolley. These only further enhance the concept of system connectivity. The project team made the modification to the alignment based on this input.

H.3.2. Public Open House 2

The second set of open houses was conducted on September 22 and September 30, 2009. These meetings were also well attended with 98 attendees. 62% of the attendees filled out the comment cards provided.

At this set of Open Houses, attendees overwhelmingly supported Alternative PA-2 over the other alternatives: 56% supported Alternative PA-2, while only 21% supported the next preferred Alternative PA-1. Participants suggested that better access to Center City and the Waterfront, ridership, and connectivity with other systems were the main reasons why they picked Alternative PA-2.

Operationally, 56% believed that frequency of service would be the most important factor once Alternative PA-2 is in service.