

Contact: Cindy Baker, ATA Director of Marketing
(816) 346-0209

KCATA TAKES NEXT STEP IN LIGHT RAIL PLANNING Board Approves Alternatives Analysis Contract

(Kansas City, Mo. – June 20, 2007) The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) Board of Commissioners gave the green light today to begin Alternatives Analysis (AA) study on the proposed the light rail system. A contract was awarded to HNTB Corporation and a team of other consultants. The AA will examine the transportation corridor from the airport to the zoo, the voter-approved light rail plan passed in last November's election, and other options for light rail within this corridor.

"Today is an exciting day for transportation in Kansas City," said Tom Rule, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. "This is the first step toward creating a practical light rail plan that is worthy of local and federal funds. We are on a fast track to complete the AA in an expedited process."

AA is the first study phase, which examines the transportation corridor in detail, focusing on the effects of alternative solutions to the corridor's transportation challenges. Information on the costs, benefits and impacts of each alternative transportation solution is developed to provide a sound technical basis for project decision-making.

KCATA staff will conduct the study in conjunction with the HNTB-led team. The team brings expertise in financial analysis, light rail planning and engineering, environmental impact analysis and public involvement.

The goal of the AA's first phase is to develop a reasonable plan for implementing light rail, while also maintaining funding for the existing bus system. In later phases, the study will provide details on a specific option which may become the locally preferred transportation alternative for the corridor.

The study will also address the critical funding issues surrounding light rail and the redirection of the 3/8-cent sales tax that is currently used by KCATA to provide bus service. The tax currently provides approximately \$22.8 million annually to the KCATA. The approved November 2006 ballot initiative extended the tax for 25 years but requires that it be dedicated to light rail, an aerial tram and electric shuttles starting in April 2009.

“Kansas City is on its way to creating a transportation network that works for Kansas Citians that will include light rail,” said Mark Huffer, KCATA General Manager. “The team HNTB has assembled brings to the table the expertise needed to solve the many challenges that lie ahead of us.”

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The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority is the largest of the three public transportation agencies serving the Greater Kansas City metropolitan region. Created in 1965 through special state legislative action in both Missouri and Kansas, the ATA today operates a fleet of more than 270 Metro buses providing more than 55,000 customer trips per weekday.

“Customer-Driven . . . Every Minute . . . Every Mile!”