

Tuesday, February 19, 2002

Euclid Corridor Project enters Final Design

CLEVELAND -- Today, the Board of Trustees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) approved these two major contracts for the Euclid Corridor Transportation Project.

Final Design: After a competitive selection process, the Board approved the selection of a design team lead by Wilbur Smith Associates as the prime consultant. The team includes 15 sub-consultants, including 10 Cleveland-area firms. Wilbur Smith Associates has a Cleveland office. Total contract: \$9.1 million, with 20.33 percent going to eight Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). Their design team continues the efforts in the earlier stage of Preliminary Engineering, concerning roadway, streetscape, signage, lighting and utility design, traffic engineering, bus stations, communications, public art coordination, environmental compliance, precision docking, public involvement and other areas.

Value Engineering: The Board awarded a contract to Gaddam & Associates of Westerville, and sub-consultant Burgess & Niple, with offices in Cleveland, Painesville and Columbus. Total contract: \$172,368, with 72.23 percent going to a DBE (Gaddam & Associates). The firms will review all engineering drawings and specifications, looking for ways to keep the project under budget. RTA officials believe the savings from these reviews will more than pay for the contract.

"This is really a great day for RTA," says CEO and General Manager Joe Calabrese. "This project, which has been discussed for years, is now approaching reality."

Board members saluted Calabrese and the RTA staff for moving the Project forward.

Board member Allan Krulak said, "This is an historical day in Cleveland." Board member Beverly Burtzloff said, "This Project has the potential to truly renovate a major area of Cleveland."

Calabrese noted that the Project is being largely funded with federal and state grants. RTA's portion is from the capital budget, which is separate from RTA's operating budget.

The \$220-million Euclid Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Project is a joint effort of FTA, the State of Ohio, the cities of Cleveland and East Cleveland, and RTA. The project is operating with a \$6 million federal earmark this year. President Bush recently recommended a \$4 million earmark in the federal budget that begins Oct. 1, 2002.

Coming events

March: RTA begins operating interim vehicles for the #6 Euclid Avenue route, and begins action to procure the final 60-foot articulated vehicles.

May-June: The RTA Board is expected to select consultants for construction management and real estate acquisition services.

July: The RTA Board will select a manufacturer for the final vehicle. Staff will submit an application to FTA for a Full-Funding Grant Agreement.

September: Project design reaches 60 percent completion, with the City of Cleveland Planning Commission design review and approval in November.

December: The FTA is expected to approve the Full Funding Grant Agreement.

A ground-breaking ceremony is set for late 2003 for the first of many construction projects that will continue to the end of 2006, when the project would be complete.

Cleveland is one of 10 cities selected by the FTA as a pilot for a new transportation concept called Bus Rapid Transit, or BRT. BRT systems combine the most attractive features of bus and rail.

For more information on the Euclid Corridor Transportation Project, call Project Officer Danielle Willis, 216-771-4144, or send e-mail to dwillis@gcrta.org.

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