

Ann Arbor – Detroit Regional Rail Project Update January 2010

There is less than a year to go and the project team continues to make progress on critical activities that will allow some service to start in October 2010. Below are some of the major activities that have taken place since the last update.

Project Funding

A \$3.5M earmark in the 2010 federal budget has been approved for the AA-Detroit Regional Rail project. A 20% match will be required. The awards for the ARRA High Speed rail funding applications will be announced in early 2010. These improvements will improve the quality of commuter service within the project area. SEMCOG will set up a meeting with FHWA to discuss the status of the AA-Detroit project and the progress of federal funding approval.

Federal Railroad Administration

The project team met with the Federal Railroad Administration to discuss safety requirements and other project specifics to ensure that the commuter service will be in compliance with all federal laws.

Railroad Agreements

Memoranda of Understanding and other business issues are being negotiated with the railroad owners.

Locomotive RFPs

MDOT will use an RFP procedure for the purchase/lease of locomotives. An RFP is anticipated to be out in the next several weeks.

Woodside Capacity Analysis

The Woodside Consulting Group using a model to optimize the actual service schedules for the commuter trains. These schedules should be available in April 2010. At that time, feeder bus schedules will be developed to meet all commuter trains and deliver passengers to their final destinations.

Environmental Clearance

Any federally funded projects will require NEPA compliance. Categorical Exclusions are desired for all projects in the AA-Detroit corridor to expedite service implementation. SEMCOG will meet with MDOT Environmental Section staff to advance the environmental work and will contact FHWA to confirm agency signatory roles.

Stations

The project team plans to utilize design-build contracts to expedite construction of stations. The strategy will be to develop a 'core' station design paid for by MDOT/SEMCOG with the station

communities contributing funds for any additional amenities. Core items mentioned include platform, shelter, and lighting.

Cab Car/ Coach Refurbishment

MDOT continues to negotiate with the Great Lakes Central Railroad on specific lease and buy out costs for the train cars. The first train set is scheduled for delivery in May 2010.