

Rail Trolley Extension

Galveston, Texas
(November 2002)

Description

The City of Galveston, Texas, through its transit operator Island Transit, has proposed a 1.5-mile extension of the existing fixed rail trolley from downtown to the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) and farther to Stewart Beach on the Gulf of Mexico. The City has identified two phases for construction purposes. The first phase is a 0.80-mile Minimum Operable Segment (MOS) that is a single-track extension with passing track. Phase 2, 0.69 miles in length, completes the extension to Stewart Beach. The proposal incorporates transit-oriented pedestrian and Americans with Disabilities Act improvements to Magnolia Homes, a public housing project for low-income persons along the corridor, and to the UTMB campus. Specific improvements at Magnolia Homes include sidewalks, security lighting and handicap ramping. Improvements within the UTMB campus include wayfinding signage and ADA pedestrian access improvements. These improvements will greatly enhance transit patron access to the trolley. The City of Galveston has completed Preliminary Engineering for the project.

The project is estimated to cost \$9.4 million in 2002 dollars, with a proposed Section 5309 New Starts share of \$8.3 million. Because the proposed New Starts share is less than \$25 million, the project is exempt from the New Starts criteria, and is thus not subject to FTA's evaluation and rating (49 USC 5309(e)(8)(A)).

Summary Description	
Proposed Project:	Fixed Rail Trolley Extension 1.5 Miles
Total Capital Cost (\$2002):	\$9.4 Million
Section 5309 New Starts Share (\$2002):	\$8.3 Million (80%) *
Annual Operating Cost (\$YOE):	N/A
Ridership Forecast:	N/A

* Accounts for State toll revenue credits.

Status

The City of Galveston completed a Feasibility Analysis (Modified Major Investment Study) for extending its trolley system from the downtown area to UTMB and farther to the Gulf of Mexico. The Locally Preferred Alternative was adopted by the Houston-Galveston Area Council on July 27, 2001, and is included in the regional Transportation Improvement Program for fiscal years 1999-2001. Preliminary Engineering has been completed. FTA issued a Categorical Exclusion dated August 2001 on the basis of an Environmental Assessment prepared by the City. Prior to the completion of Final Design, Galveston will need to identify firm commitments of all non-Section 5309 New Starts funds required to construct and operate the project.

TEA-21 Section 3030 (a)(28) authorizes the “Galveston – Trolley Extension” for Final Design and construction. Through FY 2002, \$4.95 million in Section 5309 New Starts funding has been appropriated for the Galveston Trolley Extension.

Locally Proposed Financial Plan		
<u>Proposed Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funding (million)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Federal:		
Section 5309 New Starts	\$ 8.30	80.0 %
Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant	\$ 0.53	5.1 %
State:		
Toll Revenue Credits	\$ 0.93	9.0 %
Local:		
UTMB	\$ 0.25	2.4 %
Unspecified	\$ 0.36	3.5 %
Total: **	\$ 10.37 [\$ 0.93] \$ 9.44	100.0 %

NOTE: Funding proposal reflects assumptions made by project sponsors, and are not DOT or FTA assumptions. Total may not add due to rounding.

** The statutory grant maximum is calculated based on the sum of the project cost and toll revenue credits; however, actual project costs do include toll revenue credits.

Project Cost + Toll Revenue Credits = Cost basis for Grant Match Requirement = \$10.37 million.

Statutory Grant Maximum = 80% of \$10.37 million = \$8.30 million Section 5309 New Starts funding.

Actual Total Project Costs = Grant Cost Basis – Toll Revenue Credits = \$10.37 million - \$0.93 million = \$9.44 million.

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