

Feasibility Study
Schriever Station Upgrades
Stage 0

Scope of Service

Prepared by the South Central Planning and Development Commission

July 11, 2017

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Project Description

The *Sunset Limited*, the longest named U.S. train currently in operation, runs a tri-weekly service between Los Angeles and New Orleans. There has been much local and national discussion in regard to expanding this service from New Orleans to Orlando and increasing this service to daily.

Any expansion to the service provides an opportunity for the Houma-Thibodaux Urbanized area in terms of economic development and intermodal connectivity. The Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducted an exercise with graduate students enrolled in the University of New Orleans' *Land Use and Transportation Planning* class in the spring of 2017 to examine the issue. The results of this exercise underscored the need for more rigorous analyses to assess current and future demand for the train at Schriever station, and focus on coordinated land-use and transportation planning around the station area focused on attracting more people and jobs, revitalizing the local economy, and improving quality of life. In addition, it was suggested that the MPO explore funding options for the preservation of the historic station, promote community engagement activities such as a flea/antique/farmers' market near the station, improve access and signage, and consider marketing strategies to generate interest and enthusiasm about the station.

Thus, the MPO desires to examine available options to developing an intermodal transportation facility at the existing station. The facility would, ideally, connect passenger rail, transit, and bicycle modes of transportation, as well as provide for a sense of place and community activity at the location. Also, opportunity exists for developing a park-and-ride lot that could facilitate van-pools and car-pools. This study would examine the feasibility of developing such a facility, explore various alternatives, and identify the various available funding sources.

Study Area

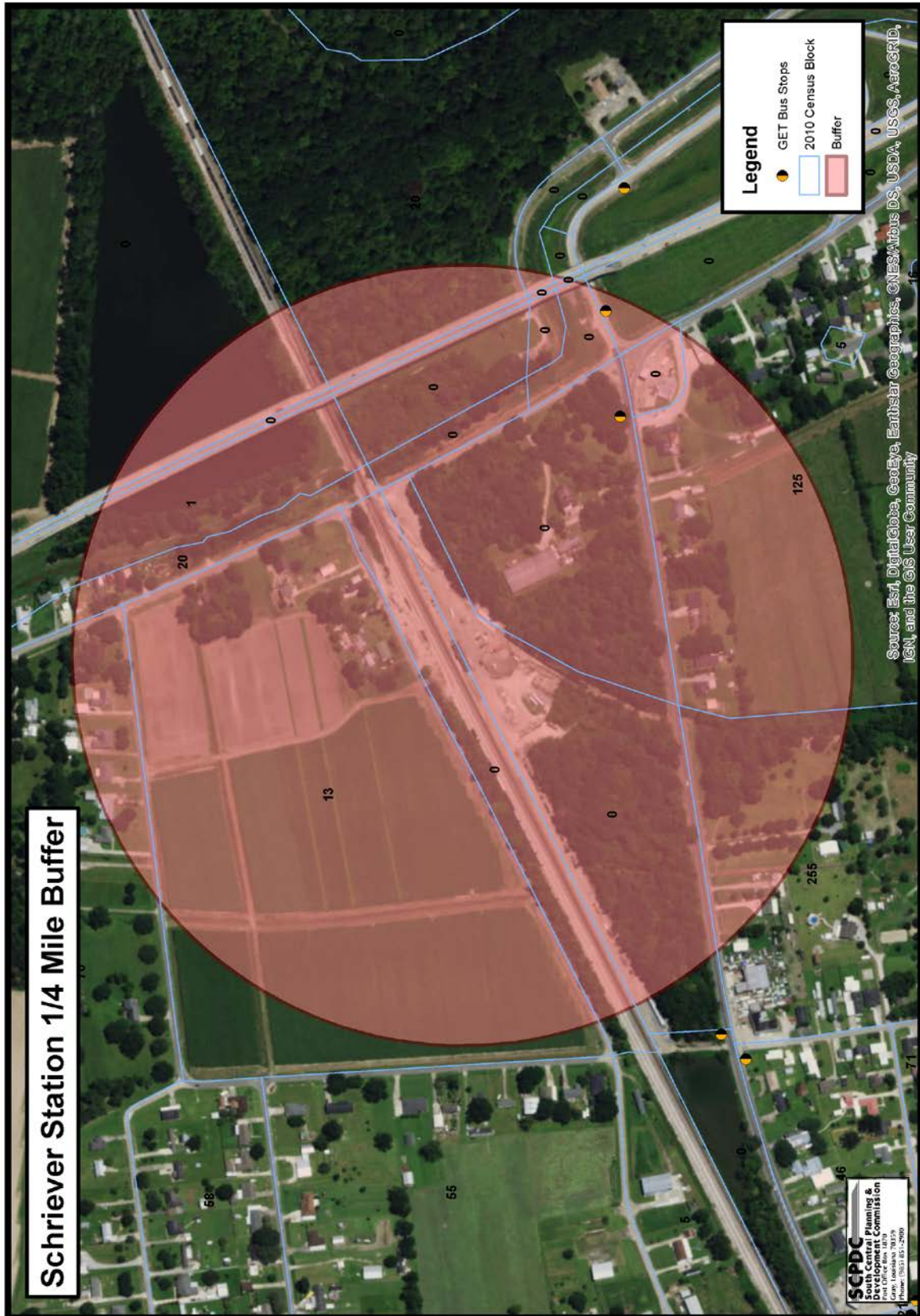
The study area is the Schriever Amtrak Station located at Burlington Ct. in Schriever, LA in Terrebonne Parish. The station is located approximately 4 miles south of downtown Thibodaux and approximately 13 miles north of downtown Houma. The station is located within walking distance of the local transit line and within close proximity to bicycle routes identified in the *South Central Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*. The study may consider possibilities within a quarter-mile radius of the existing station location.



Schriever Station

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July 11, 2017

Scope of Services

The technical Consultant will research existing reports and feasibility studies discussing the station and surrounding area; evaluate existing conditions; and discuss alternative for potential development. The Consultant will discuss needed infrastructure improvements, potential land use regulations, and economic development incentives that could be used in the area to spur development. The Consultant will identify potential funding sources, provide a financial assessment of proposed improvements, and identify what roles, if any, Amtrak and/or track owners would play. The Consultant will also fill out the “MPO Stage 0 Checklist” with all associated information.

Task 1: Project kickoff

The Consultant will coordinate a project initiation meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to obtain any required background information and to obtain views from various agencies. The Consultant will prepare a draft project schedule including major milestones (draft reviews, final report submission, presentations, etc.). Stakeholders can include the Consultant, representatives of Lafourche and Terrebonne Parish governments, representatives from the City of Thibodaux and local regional economic development and planning professionals. Other stakeholders will be invited as may be necessary. These identified stakeholders will make up the Project Management Committee (PMC).

Task 2: Review of Literature

The Consultant will research any published reports, studies, and findings already completed and summarize the findings.

Task 3: Site Investigation, Data Collection, and Analysis

The Consultant will be responsible for coordinating a site investigation throughout the study area in order to help document existing conditions. The site investigation should document land-uses, zoning regulations, general travel patterns, local transit access, station condition and amenities, and ADA compliance of the existing facility.

In addition, the investigation will include obtaining relevant transportation and land-use plans, including, but not limited to, the regional transportation plan, the parish and other municipality comprehensive master plans, appropriate ordinances and policies relating to zoning, economic development plans, and plans for other related passenger rail initiatives throughout the state.

The Consultant will gather data documenting the existing conditions of the station, including:

- Passenger boardings, transfers, and other trip characteristics;
- Service characteristics including ticket pricing, frequency, and schedule reliability;
- Population, socio-demographic, and economic characteristic of the surrounding area.

July 11, 2017

Task 4: Identification of Alternatives for Development of a Multimodal Facility

The Consultant will identify necessary infrastructure improvements necessary for the development of a Multimodal Facility connecting passenger rail, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and van-pool and car-pool. Infrastructure improvements may include station/shelter renovations, improving sidewalks, bike paths, and access to transit service, improvements to parking facilities, lighting, wayfinding, safety and security improvements, and ADA compliance. The Consultant should prioritize the most pressing needs.

The Consultant will make recommendations for developing a sense of place or destination. This could include the historic preservation of the station, promotion of community engagement activities such as a flea/antique/farmers' market near the station, and potential marketing strategies to generate interest and enthusiasm for the station.

Task 5: Environmental and Stage 0 Documentation

The Consultant will research all potential environmental “show stopping” constraints or issues that influence early determinations of the projects feasibility, timing, and cost to both the natural and human environment. The Consultant will identify any major community issues impacted by the project during construction and operational phases of the project. LADOTD’s Stage 0 Environmental Checklist will be utilized to document the results of the preliminary environmental review. The Consultant will assess any potential mitigation cost that could possibly be incurred in future stages of the development of the project for each project conception studied in the report. All field investigations to assess environmental issues or impacts shall be accomplished by conducting a windshield survey and researching internet websites.

The Consultant will fill out the “MPO Stage 0 Checklist” with all associated information.

Task 6: Financial Analysis

The Consultant will develop a preliminary cost estimate for identified infrastructure improvements. The project costs will include an estimate for right-of-way for all land and improvements situated within the proposed right-of-way (all alternatives considered). The project costs will also include potential commercial and/or residential relocation costs. The estimated relocation cost would include but not be limited to replacement housing payments, moving cost for businesses and/or residences, incidental expenses, etc. in compliance with the Uniform Act. Utility relocations costs, construction costs, environmental (i.e. document, mitigation, etc.) costs, and design engineering costs are also to be considered and addressed in the conceptual cost estimate.

The Consultant will utilize recent LADOTD unit bid price averages for major construction items to be anticipated in future stages. All minor construction items can be estimated by using contingency factors. The Consultant will note on each construction estimate that all costs are based upon current year estimates for planning purposes.

The Consultant will also prepare and include preliminary cost estimates for all new intersection improvements, temporary traffic control, etc.

July 11, 2017

The Consultant will estimate anticipated right-of-way land and improvement acquisition costs by obtaining current real estate prices on a per acre, per square feet or whatever unit is appropriate for each type (i.e. commercial, residential, etc.) of property to be acquired. This will include both vacant and improved properties of the various property types, if applicable.

The Consultant will develop a cost-benefit analysis for the implementation of infrastructure improvements.

The Consultant will identify potential funding sources for infrastructure improvements including but not limited to state and federal sources, value capture, and tax increment financing.

Task 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the analysis conducted for the study, the Consultant will provide a series of recommendations and next steps for local and regional planning agencies within the study area.

Task 8: Presentation of Findings

The Consultant will present the findings to the PMC identified in Task 1. The Consultant will also make project updates at the MPO Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meetings throughout the course of the study.

Task 9: Report Documentation

I. Draft Report

A digital draft and ten (10) hard copies of the report with documentation of all the above tasks will be submitted to the PMC for review by, at the latest, 75% of project completion. The report will include the conceptual layout of each analysis section. The report text will briefly describe the purpose and need for the project and include preliminary findings from the site analysis and case studies.

II. Final Draft Report

Upon review of the draft report by the PMC, the Consultant will address all items/questions identified during the review process and submit a revised digital report identified as "Final Draft."

III. Final Report

Following review and approval of the draft submission, the Consultant will provide the PMC with a digital copy and ten (10) hard copies of the Final Report, documenting the information and analysis described in the various tasks above. All maps and visualizations will also be submitted by the Consultant to the PMC. Any GIS files created during the process should also be submitted in ESRI's shapefile or geodatabase format.