

6.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

A critical element of the Miami Streetcar Corridor Feasibility Study is the development and application of relevant evaluation criteria, or performance measures, which identify the factors necessary to achieve the following study objectives:

- Provide connections between the central business district (CBD) of Downtown Miami and redeveloping areas of Southeast Overtown/Park West, Omni, Wynwood, Edgewater, Midtown, Miami Design District and Buena Vista East Historic District, Buena Vista Heights, Little Haiti, and the Upper Eastside.
- Guide and sustain economic development activities.
- Identify the benefits and impacts on traffic flow, parking usage, business operations, and other corridor characteristics.

For this study, the comparative advantages and disadvantages of a streetcar service were assessed for the following roadways:

- North and South Miami Avenue, from the Miami River to NE 79th Street
- NE and SE 1st Avenue, from the Miami River to NE 17th Street
- NE and SE 2nd Avenue, from the Miami River to NE 79th Street
- Biscayne Boulevard (US 1), from the Miami River to NE 79th Street
- FEC Railway corridor, from Downtown Miami to NE 79th Street
- Downtown Miami area streets, from Biscayne Boulevard (US 1) to North Miami Avenue

- Major cross streets, from the Miami River to NE 79th Street

The evaluation criteria used to determine which of the corridors best meet these study objectives were:

- the consistency of a streetcar service with the plans and objectives for the study area
- the physical compatibility of the streetcar mode;
- policy and regulatory compatibility
- the positive impact on stakeholders directly affected by a significant transit investment

These four evaluation criteria have been used in multiple transit planning exercises as a means of organizing the advantages and disadvantages of corridors under examination. Each of these criteria has a number of components that are addressed herein.

6.1 Compatibility with Land Use, Economic Development, and Transportation Goals

The first evaluation criterion consists of the City of Miami's land use, economic development, and transportation goals, which are as follows:

- Fit with the planned character of the study area (i.e., compatibility with street function, streetscape, cultural resources, and pedestrian activity).
- Support existing and planned land uses, especially urban housing and storefront retail.
- Identify the scale of redevelopment that could be supported, accelerated, or catalyzed by new transit services. Address increased mobility needs for redeveloping areas.
- Be consistent with locally adopted land use regulations, zoning, and other land use objectives and requirements.
- Provide increased mobility for redeveloping areas.

- Provide connectivity and continuity within neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and major City destinations.
- Provide an additional modal option without significantly impacting the performance of already available modes.
- Ability to meet transit demands associated with 1) improved local connections; 2) unmet existing demand; and 3) demand from new traffic generators.

6.2 Physical Compatibility

The physical compatibility criteria consist of the following components:

- Available right-of-way and lane width to accommodate bus rapid transit, streetcar alignments, and increased bus volume
- Integration of modes and alignments with other transit services
- Effect on inventory and usage of on-street parking
- Effect on street function in terms of the potential to manage traffic flow and prioritize pedestrian movements
- Simplicity, convenience, and clarity of the route
- Adequate horizontal and vertical clearances for the streetcar trackway, catenary lines (overhead electrical power lines), and vehicle
- Adequate sidewalk width to accommodate passenger loadings at stops
- Adequate adjoining physical area to locate a maintenance facility
- Configuration of utilities to accommodate streetcar track construction
- Adequate physical area to provide continuous associated power and communications system infrastructure

6.3 Policy and Regulatory Compatibility

The policy and regulatory compatibility criteria consist of the following components:

- Project construction that avoids significant effect on the function of state or Federal transportation facilities
- Consistency with streetscape designs and anticipated reconstruction projects
- Safety in terms of little or no conflict with automobile and truck traffic as well as pedestrian and bicycle traffic

6.4 Stakeholder and Community Support

Stakeholder and community outreach was not formally conducted during Part I of this feasibility study; however, the corridor alternatives were presented to several private, non-profit, and public-sector stakeholders, including the City of Miami Commission and Administration, the Downtown Development Authority, study area developers, employers, business and community leaders, the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) staff. In addition, the project was described in the local news media (newspaper and television) and at public involvement meetings for other projects (such as Bay Link) as a forum to educate and inform the public about the feasibility study. Valuable input was gathered from these meetings and used in selecting or eliminating corridors for further evaluation (as discussed in Section 10.0). This analysis, and future analysis to be conducted, will be the subject of a thorough and proactive outreach process. Input from the many stakeholders is an important component of the planning process. Additional public involvement will occur during implementation of the project.