Odessa – Kansas City (Corridor D)

Corridor Description
This corridor, identified in the previous report as Corridor D, extends east to Odessa paralleling the Missouri River and Interstate 70. Corridor features include the Independence Center Mall, the Independence Airport, Harry S. Truman Regional Airport and, beyond the initial projected commuter service area, the Higginsville Industrial Municipal Airport.

Most of the likely commuter rail route in this corridor is owned and operated by Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS). This 34.4-mile segment of the former Gateway Western Railway Subdivision No. 3 hosts five freight trains per day. The line consists of one main track, with no signal system and is controlled by Track Warrants (TWC), wherein movement of trains is governed by verbal authority of the dispatcher, conveyed by radio. There is no passenger service on the line. The maximum train speed is 40 mph. The preferred route for Corridor D commuter trains between Rock Creek Junction and KCUS would be via a 6.2-mile segment of the KCT Main Tracks that make a direct connection. This segment has multiple tracks and is governed by a Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) signal system. An alternate route that could be used would consist of UP trackage between Rock Creek Junction, Neff Yard and Union Avenue, KCT’s Bluff line between Union Avenue and Southwest Boulevard, and the KCT Main Tracks between Southwest Boulevard and KCUS. The alternate route would be almost three miles longer and could increase running time by nearly ten minutes as compared to the preferred route via the KCT Main Tracks. In addition, the alternate route passes the busy Neff Yard, with the potential for delays to passenger trains as freight trains slowly enter or depart yard tracks.

UP’s River Subdivision also serves the corridor, connecting Lexington, Missouri with Kansas City. However, this line does not serve the populated portions of the corridor nearly as well as the KCS line which was selected as the basis of this analysis.

Stations

Station Locations

Five stations are suggested for the corridor at Odessa, Oak Grove, Blue Springs, Independence – Little Blue and Independence – Crysler, as detailed below. Although specific potential locations and suggested station prototypes are identified, these locations and station types should receive careful consideration in implementation planning. Community input and participation is vital to this aspect of project development.
Odessa (4,818 2000 pop.) The proposed station would be located north of the city on North Johnson Road, just north of I-70. The site is presently being utilized for agricultural use with a fiber optic switching station within close proximity. Downtown Odessa is located to the south of I-70, while areas to the north are predominantly agricultural at this time. The existence of large vacant plots presents an excellent opportunity to provide a large Park and Ride facility. The Odessa Outlet Mall provides an existing destination point.

This station should be developed under the land use development guidelines discussed above as Prototype #2 - Fringe Area Park and Ride.
Oak Grove (5,535 2000 pop.) The proposed station is located on the east side of town, north of the railroad tracks at the southeast corner of SE 10th Street and SE Salem Street. This site is approximately six blocks from I-70 and two blocks from downtown. The subject parcels' existing land uses are a mixture of industrial and undeveloped. Future land use plans designate the site as industrial with residential development to the north and east, and a mixture of public uses and residential to the south and west. Currently there are large vacant tracts of land to the north and east of the proposed location.

At the discretion of the local government, this station could be developed either under Prototype #1 (Transit Oriented Development within Established Communities) or Prototype #2 (Fringe Area Park and Ride). No transit services are available at or near this location at present.
Blue Springs (48,080 2000 pop.) The proposed station is located in the center of the town, five blocks west of Highway 7, at the intersection of 12th and Knox Streets. The station would be less than one mile from either I-70 or US 40 Highway. The proposed location is currently vacant with a future land use designation of low intensity residential. The future land use map indicates that areas to the immediate south as Downtown mixed use, with low intensity residential uses to the west and southwest and north. Non-residential uses front along Highway 7, US 40 and I-70.

Due to its central location, the land use scenario for development of the area around the proposed Blue Springs commuter rail station should follow Prototype #1-Transit Oriented Development/Established Community.