

Posted: Oct. 1, 2010

## Transportation ideas get closer look at meeting

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A week after Detroit Mayor Dave Bing held a series of public forums to discuss the future of the city's land use, a much smaller group listened Thursday evening as he and others discussed the future of the city's infrastructure.

Leo Hanifin, dean of the University of Detroit Mercy's College of Engineering and Science, hosted the 2010 Designing Sustainable Detroit Symposium, titled "Riding Trucks, Trains, Boats and Planes to Urban Vitality."

The symposium, also presented by the School of Architecture, attracted more than 200 people to the Fountain Lounge on the university's McNichols Campus.

"We've got to reshape the city of Detroit, and we've got to be smart about it," Bing said, adding that previous administrations erred by not investing in the city's infrastructure -- especially transportation.

Bing was joined by Matthew Cullen, president of the board of M1 Rail, which plans to build a light-rail system running more than 9 miles along Woodward; Melissa Roy, senior director of transportation policy and government relations for the Detroit Regional Chamber, and Dave Tyler, deputy director of Wayne County's Economic Development Growth Engine.

Cullen said the light-rail project, now a joint private-public partnership with the federal government, will catalyze economic development in the city.

"It's egalitarian, because it creates opportunity for people at all income levels," Cullen said. He added that construction on the first 3-mile

phase of light rail on Woodward, from Hart Plaza to Grand Boulevard, is expected to begin at the end of 2011 and cost \$125 million.

Tyler, representing Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, discussed the county's Detroit Aerotropolis Initiative, a proposed business hub development around Detroit Metro and Willow Run airports.

Roy gave a presentation on the chamber's TranslinkeD Strategy, which identifies projects in southeast Michigan to serve as inland ports for global trade.

One supporter of the light-rail project -- Phil Cooley, owner of Slows Bar B Q in Detroit -- left the symposium more concerned about the Aerotropolis effort spurring development in the suburbs and not in the city.

"We need to have a strong urban core," Cooley said. "Until we address the population loss in the city ... it seems like the same direction we've gone in the past."

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