Canal Street Ferry Terminal  
May 29, 2019 Public Meeting  
Held at the Algiers Library from 6pm – 8pm

Note: RTA responses are in red.

Public Comments on Vehicle Ramps:

1. “We need to keep car ramp for emergency evacuation.”
2. “Keep car ramp.”
3. “Keep ramps (need for Emergency Response). Info boards with arrival and departure times. Emergency Response horn to alert passengers of any accidentally or (I hate to say it) active shooters.”
5. “Safety? Keep the car capacity.”
6. “Make sure there is automobile access in case of emergency evacuation.”
7. “I’m surprised that no bathroom facilities are available of the Canal Street Ferry. Also, bring back Vehicle Traffic.”
8. “Retaining vehicles in a space for pedestrians and cyclists is dangerous, there should be no cars on the ferry.”

History on why it was decided to remove the vehicle ramp

i. The Algiers Ferry, when under the control of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), received the majority of its ferry operations funding from the Crescent City Connection tolls.
ii. When the tolls were eliminated in early 2013, the DOTD decided to discontinue car-carrying services in order to fit operating costs within a significantly reduced budget.
iii. In late 2013, a state bill was passed to transfer the Algiers Ferry Operations over from the DOTD to RTA/Transdev, with the agreement that car-carrying services would not return due to the high operating costs.
iv. Since there would no longer be car-carrying services, it was decided the ramp would be removed in order to create a seamless walkway along the riverfront. This was an appealing concept to the FTA, while the RTA was applying for the Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project Grant.

Reasons why using the vehicle ramp during emergencies is not a practical option

i. The Ferry Operations Hurricane Preparedness Plan, which is required to be submitted and approved by the U.S. Coast Guard, requires a full shutdown of Ferry Operations two (2) days prior to any hurricane activity threatening the region, in order to lock down and secure assets.
ii. The current ferryboat fleet is past its useful life. The new ferries were designed to be pedestrian only.
iii. The current car ramp has complex mechanical hardware that would need to be replaced, due to its age. This would be very costly, especially considering the ramp would only be used in a case of emergencies. Additionally, the car ramp is currently adjusted daily (which is required) to accommodate the river’s height. This has increased RTA’s operating costs.
Public Comments on Covered Walkways:

1. “Covered walkway from ferry point of access to foot of Canal St.”
2. “Keep covered walkways and railing so children are safe.”
   a. We have noted that having a covered path is important to the community. Our plan is to provide a covered path for ferry riders, where possible and within our budget.
   b. Guardrail will be placed where required by local, state, and federal code.

Public Comments on Terminal Maintenance:

1. “Whatever resources are installed, please ensure that adequate resources are allocated to maintain them. We do not want the situation with the inoperable escalators to occur with the new facilities.”
2. “Considering the stairs of the escalators currently in place. I am concerned that if an elevator is installed, it will not be maintained and will suffer the same fate of sitting in disrepair for years or decades with no functionality.”
3. “Emphasis should be added to full ramp access and less reliance on motorized equipment such as escalators. Ramps can move large amounts of people when necessary and do not rely on extensive maintenance and available electricity.”
   a. Our plan is to have elevators and staircases on both ends of the pedestrian bridge.
   b. Ramps were considered. However, they are not deemed a feasible option, due to the length that will be required to keep the ramps ADA compliant and size restrictions at the site.
   c. We understand the concern about the non-working escalators. However, the RTA was not responsible for the existing conditions when it took over the Ferry Operations. Moving forward, the RTA will have experienced maintenance personnel available to service the elevators when needed and bring them quickly back in service, in case of a breakdown.

Public Comments on Terminal Operations and Information:

1. “Make the Ferry terminal a “transit hub” for New Orleans including streetcars, buses, and ferry.”
2. “Transit Hub for all buses, streetcars, and the ferry. – Historically rendered design. – Shelters from rain/sun – landscaping including but not exclusively palm trees.”
3. “Ramps. ‘No smoking allowed’ signage and enforcement”
5. – “Transit map (and regional) – Bus schedules – Bathrooms!”
6. “Signage identify when the next ferry is to arrive. Maps of the vicinity on either side of the river. - Security/Police presence; will there be? - Will it be during operating hours?”
7. “Public ____ ferry operations issue, expect to start again. Send alerts”
8. “Improve communications between the RTA and public.”
9. “We should have efficient means of notifying the public via app, phone, etc. of interruptions in ferry service and what alternative transit options are available.”
a. One of the project’s goals is to reshape the area into a transit hub. This includes construction of a new bus stop and placement of new streetcar tracks.
b. The New Terminal Building will have Security during operating hours.
c. Information Boards will be present in the New Building, and will provide information on the Ferries, Buses, and Streetcars.
d. Currently, service alerts for the ferry are provided via the GoMobile app, RTA website (RTAforward.org) and Social Media such as Twitter. The RTA will look into additional options to provide riders with real-time information as well as text-to notifications.

Public Comments on Terminal Amenities:

3. “If going to use an elevator for ADA compliance, we ought to have two in case one breaks down.”
4. “No elevator. – Revise plans to improve ramp access on riverside and use existing on downtown side.”
5. “Restrooms in the terminal”
6. “Security cameras”
7. “Bathrooms! (but only if there’s a sustainable plan to clean them)- Rotating art/space for farmer’s/art markets. – Water! Fountain or vending machines.”
8. “Small footprint at 3-4 kiosks for tickets. Scrolling information board. Refreshment machines.”
   a. The New Terminal Building will include indoor/outdoor lighting, indoor/outdoor security cameras, and will be air-conditioned and heated. We are still evaluating whether or not Restrooms will be included.
   b. Our plan is to have elevators and staircases on both ends of the pedestrian bridge. There will be no escalators.
   c. We will look into including ticket kiosks, water fountains, and vending machines.
   d. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) does not allow federally funded agencies to use space for stores and concession stands.

Public Comments on Bike Accommodations:

1. “How can bike riders transport their bikes seamlessly without stairs and not be outside the terminal?”
2. “Cover bike access”
3. “Prioritization of cycling and comfort for cyclists. – Any use of transit dollars in favor of vehicles is ludicrous, and the comments in favor of vehicles is ridiculous.”
4. “Restrooms. Cover bicycle access.”
   a. The terminal will have bike racks on-site.
   b. The RTA will explore allowing bikes on elevators.
   c. Scooters will not be allowed on the elevators.

Public Comments on Landscaping:

2. “Louisiana native landscape and emphasis on public space to enjoy river view.”
   a. Landscaping will be included in the design.

**Other Public Comments:**

1. “To be able to be close and visually connected to the water”
   a. The New Building location is dictated by the budget. The cost is significantly higher when constructing over water, compared to constructing over land.

   a. We do not believe breaking out the work packages is cost effective. It leads to additional management costs and risks transferred on to the owner. It would also require additional time to complete project.

3. “Gondola”
   a. This is not an option that is within the RTA’s scope of work, as specified in the grant.

4. “Include marine engineering/operations personnel in the design of the barge/dock that is local expertise e.g. that have experience 20+ years of river dynamics.”
   a. The RTA has engaged with local subject matter experts.

5. “Wheelchair access that permits loading to enclosed areas on all ferries. Include the Jefferson.”
   a. All ferries will have ADA compliant loading.

6. “Make sure doors are ADA accessible (have a button to open), it’s easy to reach. – no stairs for bikes if possible. – Please don’t use public transit dollars to prioritize cars.”
   a. The RTA will look into including door pushbuttons into the design.

7. “We need ferry transfer – its more money for me to ferry then street car, but much faster than I-10”
   a. At this time, the RTA provides integrated passes for purchase on its GoMobile app. Integrated passes allow commuters to ride any RTA vehicle without a transfer. One-Day integrated passes are $7; 5-day integrated passes are $30; and 31-day integrated passes are $105. The RTA is actively looking at fares and fare collections to make ridership easier.