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Pearland to hear an option to Metro Park & Ride service

By RAD SALLEE

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The Pearland City Council will hear a pitch today from an agency proposing to operate a Park & Ride service to the Texas Medical Center that Metro also is seeking to run.

Rick Beverlin of the Goodman Corp. said the company will propose that the city contract with Connect Transit, a public agency in Brazoria and Galveston counties, for the service.

In a letter to Pearland Mayor Tom Reid, Metropolitan Transit Authority Vice President John Sedlak expressed disappointment and surprise at the council's apparent reluctance to contract with Metro.

"We thought we understood you had a serious interest," the letter says. "Your area is in need of commuter transit and we welcome the opportunity to serve Pearland with this innovative approach."

Metro was willing to provide \$4.1 million worth of service for \$1.6 million a year from Pearland, the letter said, but residents there are already facing a \$162 million bond vote, with a 7.5 cent property tax increase, for streets, drainage, library and parks, and a new fire station.

There were also worries about who would pay to widen a street needed for the buses.

Beverlin said Connect, using federal air quality funding, could provide the service at lower cost than Metro.

"I think there's some interest in the City Council and the population," Pearland City Manager Bill Eisen said of the bus route proposals. "The challenge is finding something that is affordable."

Chronicle reporter Richard Stewart contributed to this story.

TALKING TRANSPORTATION

The Metropolitan Transit Authority and Texas Department of Transportation will discuss major projects at public meetings this week:

- **Metro**

University Light Rail

Western segment (Main to Hillcroft Transit Center):

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. today, Renaissance Hotel, 6 Greenway Plaza

Eastern segment (Main to Eastwood Transit Center):

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Hilton Hotel at the University of Houston, 4800 Calhoun

Information: Sylvia Medina, 713-739-4004 ; sm14@ridemetro.org.

- **TxDOT**

Texas 35 corridor

(Gulf Freeway in Houston to Texas 288 in Angleton):

5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Holiday Inn-Hobby Airport, 8611 Airport

5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Pearland High School, 3775 South Main, Pearland.

Information: Jim Heacock, 713-802-5265; jheacoc@dot.state.tx.us.

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