



Rochester-Twin Cities Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan



Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee

June 9, 2014



Project Sponsors



- Minnesota Department of Transportation – Passenger Rail Office
 - Dan Krom, Director
 - Praveena Pidaparathi, Planning Director
 - Garneth Peterson, Environmental Coordinator
- Olmsted County Regional Rail Authority
 - Ken Brown, Commissioner
 - Chuck Michael, Project Manager
- Project Web Site: www.goziprail.org



Technical Advisory Committee



- Minnesota Department of Transportation (Lead State Agency)
- Federal Railroad Administration (Lead Federal Agency)
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Metropolitan Council
- Metropolitan Airports Commission
- Rochester Airport Commission
- Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments
- Dakota County
- Dodge County
- Goodhue County
- Hennepin County
- Olmsted County
- Ramsey County
- Rice County
- City of Rochester
- City of Rosemount
- UMore Development, LLC/University of Minnesota
- Southeast Minnesota Rail Alliance
- Flint Hills Resources
- Canadian Pacific Railway
- Union Pacific Railroad

*** Additional Stakeholders will be added to the TAC during the Tier 1 EIS Scoping Process*



Development Schedule



- Service Development Plan and Tier 1 EIS
 - Began 2012 (Currently Underway)
 - Complete 2015
- Preliminary Engineering and Tier 2 Environmental Documentation
 - Begin 2015
 - Complete 2019



Service Development Plan (SDP)



- Business Case Justifying Federal or Private Investment
 - Purpose & Need
 - Capital & Operating Costs
 - Service & Operating Plan
 - Ridership and Benefits
 - Land Use Impacts
 - Implementation Plan



Environmental Process



- Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)
 - Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (MEQB)
 - Scoping Booklet
 - Scoping Decision Document
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - Tier 1 EIS
 - Record of Decision for Service NEPA



Purpose and Need



- Guides all alternatives evaluation efforts
- Purpose:
 - Provide intercity passenger rail service linking the regional economic center of Rochester and the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area economic hub
 - Provide options for the growing population and accessibility to population centers
 - Improve safety, convenience and time of travel
 - Complement the plans of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative and Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan



Purpose and Need

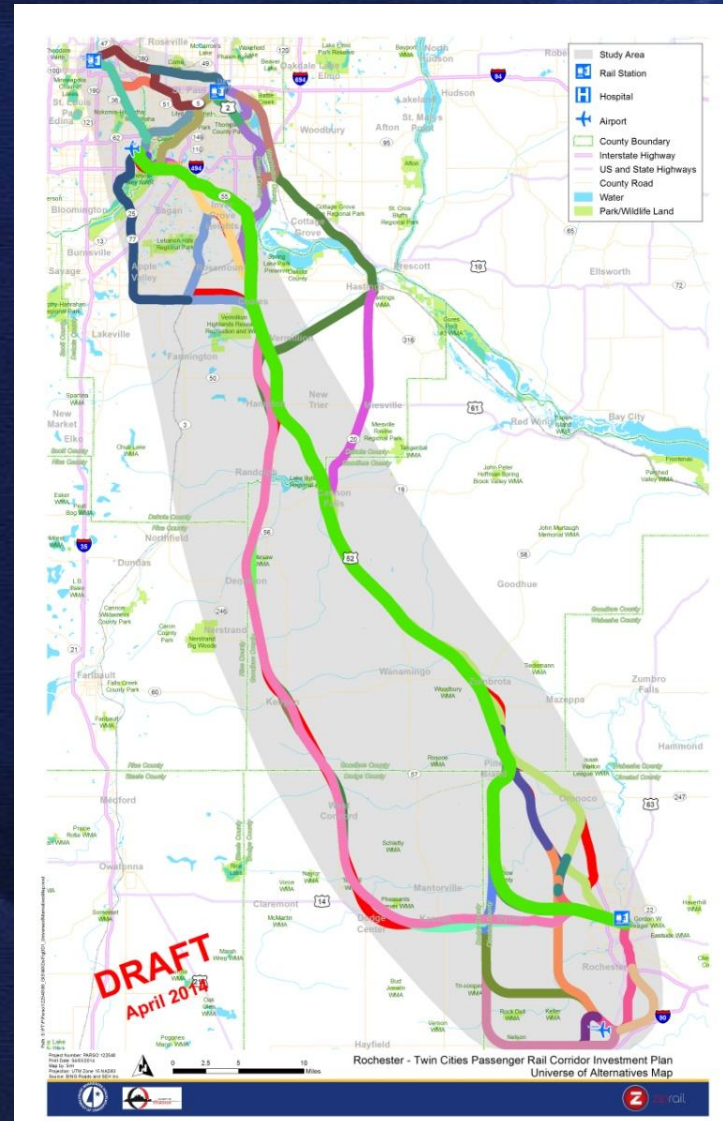


- Need:
 - Increase in population and employment in Rochester, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, and Southeast Minnesota
 - Future travel demand to accommodate growth in economic generators and attractions such as the Mayo Clinic, University of Minnesota as well as services and industries that will support those facilities
 - Limited direct and convenient connection opportunities for the corridor between Rochester and the Twin Cities



Universe of Alternatives

- Universe of Alternatives



Universe of Alternatives



- More than 1,200 possible combinations
- Segmented the corridor to facilitate the identification and evaluation of alignment options
- Northern segments between Target Field/Union Depot/MSP and Coates
- Southern segments between Coates and Downtown Rochester/RST Airport



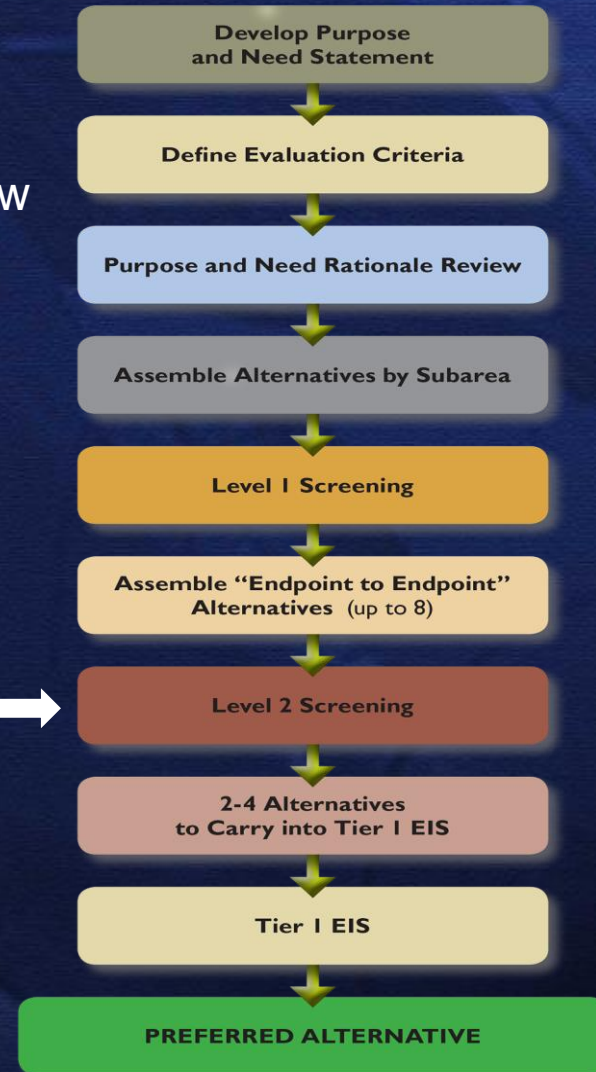
Alternatives Development/Evaluation



- Evaluation Process

- Purpose and Need Rationale Review
- Level 1 Screening
- Level 2 Screening
- Tier 1 EIS

We are here →



Level 1 Screening



- Level 1 Screening Criteria
 - Preliminary Travel Time (end to end)
 - Redundancy
 - Impacts to the Natural Environment
 - Impacts to the Built Environment



Level 1 Screening Results



- 15 Alternatives to be carried forward
 - Two potential routes Coates to MSP
 - Three potential routes Coates to Union Depot
 - Two potential routes Coates to Rochester



Level 2 Screening



- Level 2 Screening Criteria
 - Preliminary Travel Time (end to end)
 - Top Speed
 - Ridership
 - Consistency with Local Planning Efforts
 - Connectivity
 - Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts



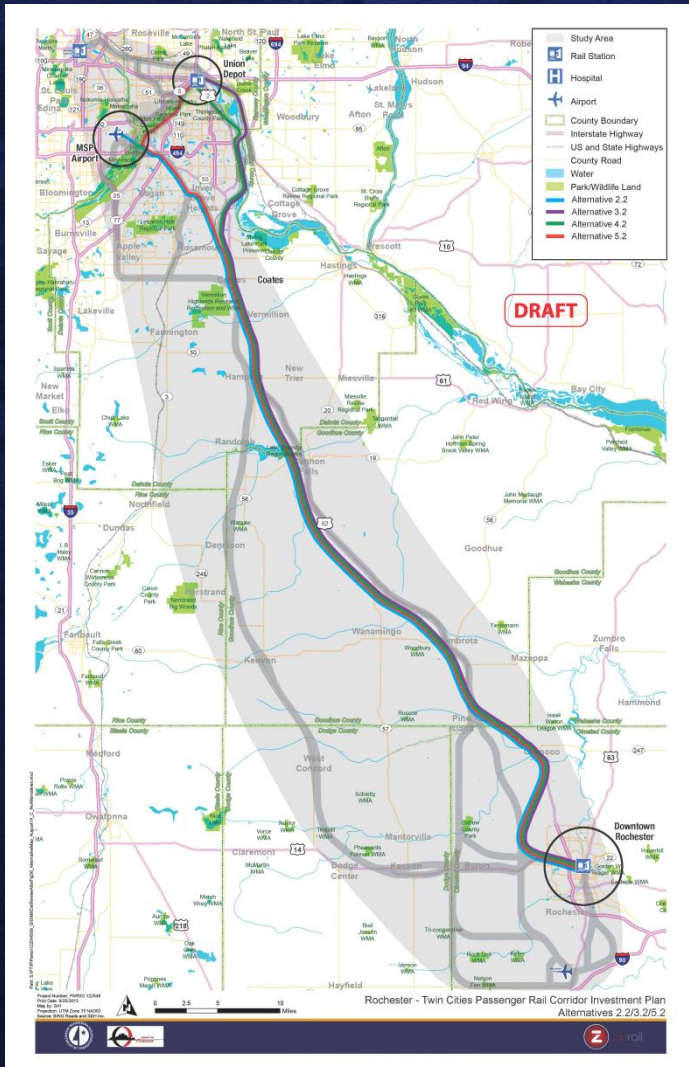
Additional Stakeholder Input



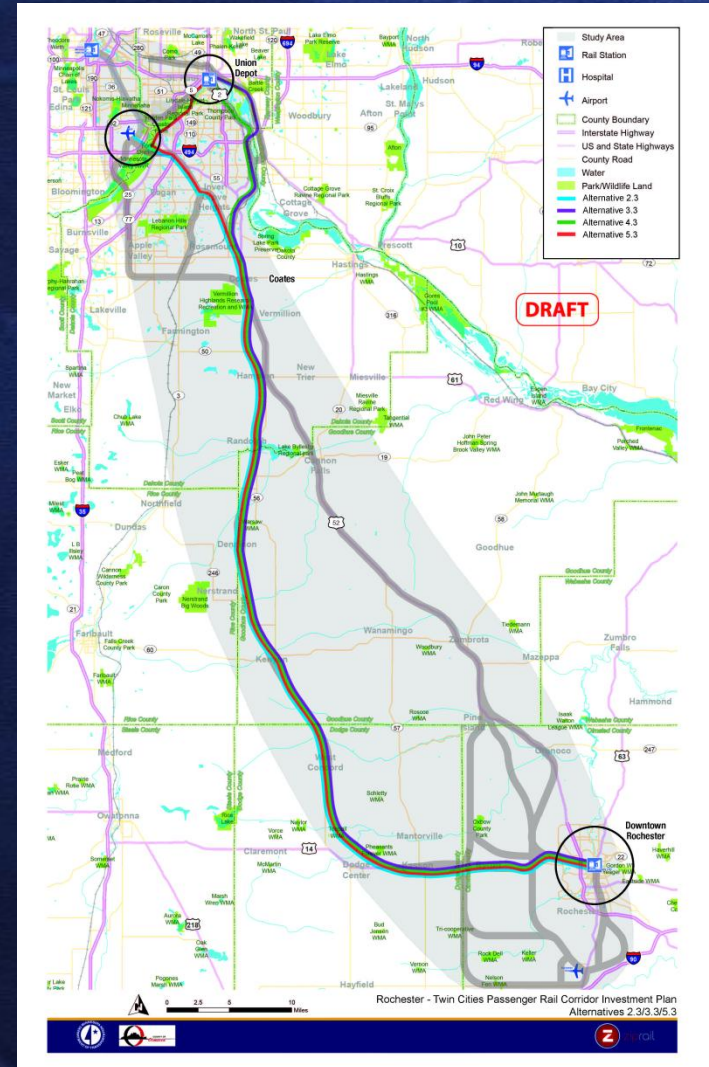
- Level 2 Alternatives evaluated based on input from:
 - Hennepin, Ramsey, Dodge, Goodhue, Olmsted and Dakota Counties
 - Metropolitan Council
 - FAA/Metropolitan Airports Commission
 - Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG)
 - UMore Park/University of Minnesota
 - Flint Hills Resources
 - Canadian Pacific Railway
 - Union Pacific Railroad



Level 2 Screening Results



East Alternatives

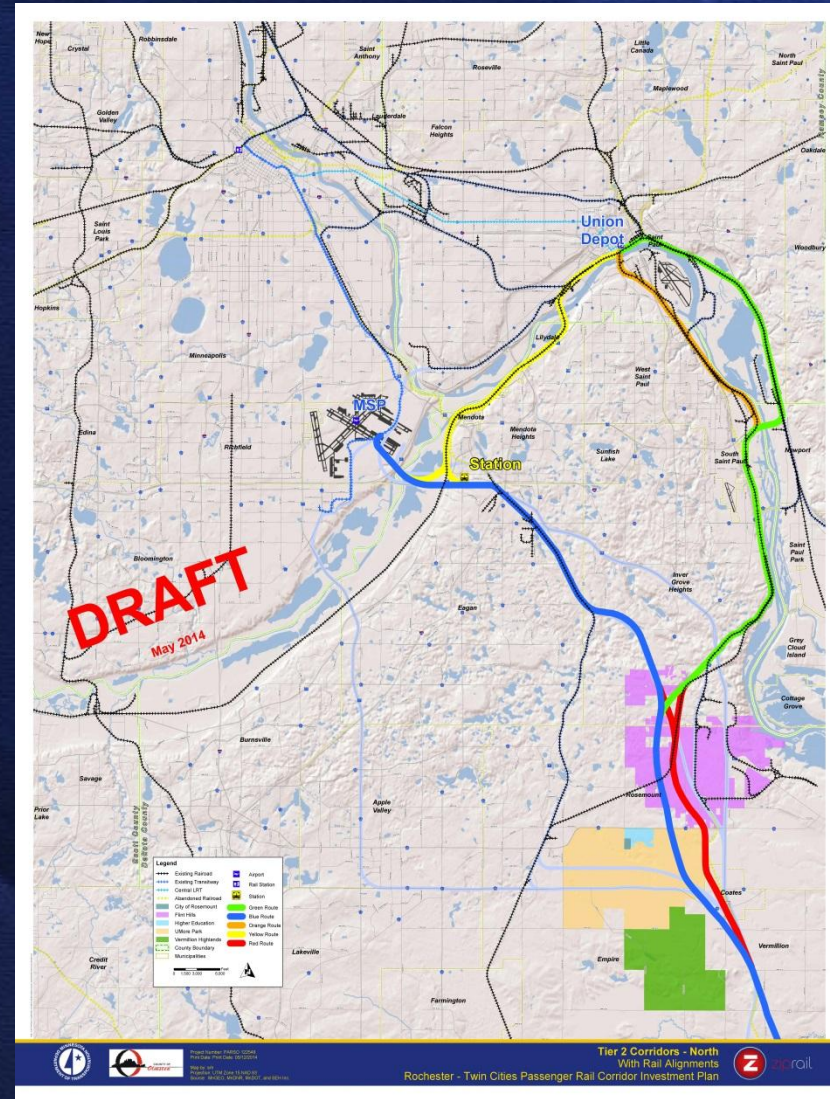


West Alternatives

Level 2 Screening Results



- Metro Area corridor alternatives to MSP and Union Depot



Level 2 Screening Results



- Key decisions to be made in the Tier 1 EIS:
 - Primary Terminal Points
 - Locate Mississippi and Minnesota River crossing(s)
 - Corridor north of Coates
 - Corridor south of Coates



Additional Stakeholder Input



Upcoming City Coordination to be Scheduled with:

- Minneapolis
- St. Paul
- Bloomington
- Richfield
- Eagan
- Inver Grove Heights
- Northfield
- South St. Paul
- West St. Paul
- Mendota Heights
- Kasson
- Byron
- Cannon Falls
- Pine Island
- Zumbrota
- Dodge Center
- Kenyon
- Oronoco
- West Concord
- Lilydale
- Hampton
- Sunfish Lake
- Dennison
- Coates



Next Steps



- State Environmental Scoping Booklet
- Coordination with Cities along corridors
- Second Round of Public Meetings
 - Summer 2014
- Alternatives Evaluation Report
- Kick off Tier-1 NEPA Document



Project Contacts



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