

Section 4:

Citizen's Guide to SDEIS


 mobility
Easing
congestionStrengthening
our communities

Central Corridor Light Rail Transit

Citizens' Guide to the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

State and federal law requires the Metropolitan Council to prepare the Central Corridor LRT Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and hold hearings to receive public comment on the document. The SDEIS discloses changes from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the impacts of those changes.

See inside pages for more detail on the topics covered

In August 2008 the Metropolitan Council will hold three public hearings on the Central Corridor LRT Project as well as seek public comments via email and a comment line. Copies of the SDEIS are available for public review at the following locations:

In St. Paul

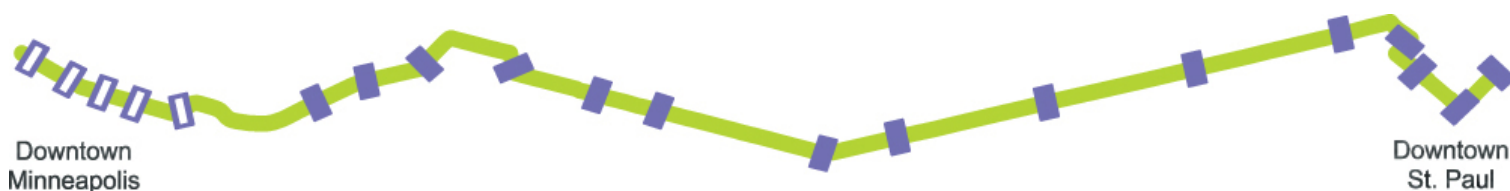
- Metropolitan Council library, 390 N. Robert Street
- Central Corridor Project Office, 540 Fairview Avenue North, Ste 200
- MnDOT's Transportation Building Library, 395 John Ireland Boulevard
- Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Avenue
- Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Avenue
- Rice Street Library, 1011 Rice Street
- Rondo Community Library, 461 North Dale Street
- St. Paul Central Library, 90 West 4th Street
- St. Anthony Park Branch Library, 2245 W. Como Avenue
- Central Corridor Resource Center, 1080 University Avenue

In Minneapolis

- Franklin Library, 1314 E. Franklin Avenue
- Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall
- Southeast Library, 1222 4th Street SE

Requests for alternative formats and assistance reading the SDEIS may be directed to the Central Corridor LRT Project office. Please contact Dana Dellis at 651-602-1954 or dana.dellis@metc.state.mn.us.

An electronic copy is also available in a PDF format at www.centralcorridor.org under Hot Topics.



Project Background

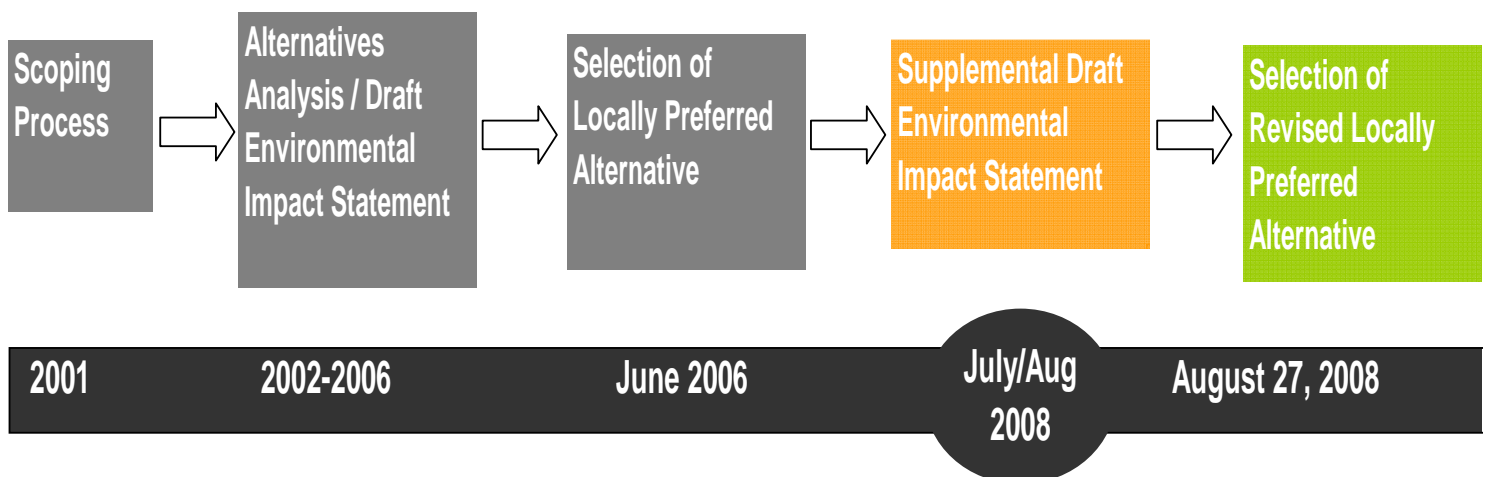
The Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority initiated the scoping process in 2001, conducted the alternatives analysis and DEIS over the following four years. RCRRA's role as project lead ended in 2006 with a series of public hearings and the selection of the locally preferred alternative, light rail transit operating on University and Washington avenues. Since 2006, when the Metropolitan Council became the project lead, the Central Corridor Project Office identified several issues that resulted in changes to the alignment and required additional analysis and disclosure of potential impacts. The Metropolitan Council will hold three public hearings prior to taking formal action to revise the locally preferred alternative on August 27, 2008. Public and agency comments on the DEIS and the SDEIS will be responded to in the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement later this year.

Changes disclosed

The SDEIS discloses changes from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the impacts of those changes. Key changes that the SDEIS discloses include:

1. Revised connection of the Central Corridor to the Hiawatha LRT in Minneapolis.
2. Transit/pedestrian mall at the University of Minnesota with LRT running on Washington Avenue.
3. Potential additional stations at Hamline Avenue, Victoria Street or Western Avenue in St. Paul.
4. Changes to the LRT alignment and location of stations within the Capitol area.
5. Changes to the LRT alignment and location of stations in downtown St. Paul, including a diagonal alignment through the 4th and Cedar streets block and the consolidation of two stations into one on that block.
6. Preliminary locations for traction power substations needed to power the LRT trains.
7. Impact of potential three-car train operations on the Central Corridor.
8. Need for and impacts of constructing a storage and maintenance facility in downtown St. Paul.
9. Need for and impacts of modifications and/or improvements required to the Washington Avenue Bridge for LRT purposes.

Timeline



Topics covered

Topics prescribed by state and federal environmental regulations are covered in 11 chapters and appendices, with text, charts, photographs, drawings and other informational exhibits. This includes a 20-page executive summary. Subjects discussed in detail include:

- Project purpose and need
- Alternatives considered
- Social effects
- Environmental effects
- Economic effects
- Transportation
- Section 4(f) Evaluation (parks and cultural resources)
- Financial Analysis
- Indirect and cumulative impacts
- Evaluation of alternatives
- Public and agency coordination and comments



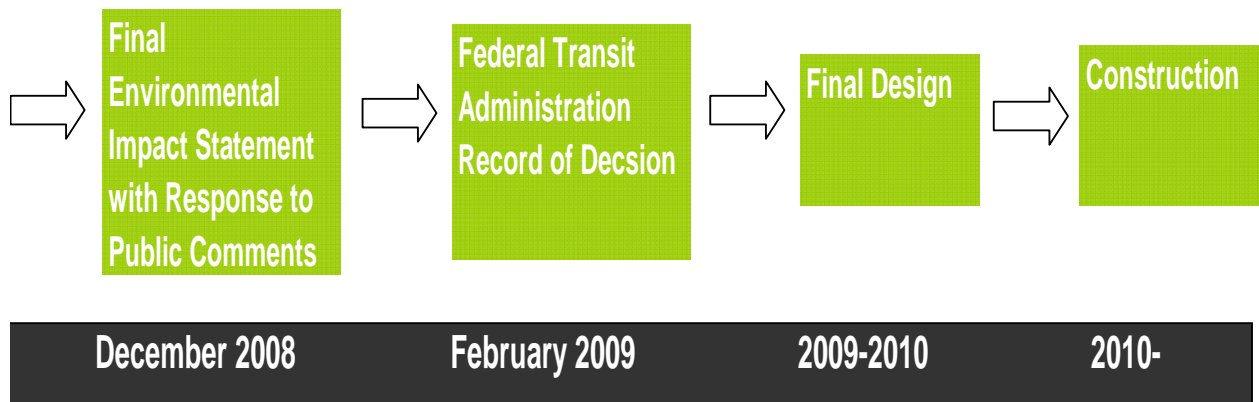
Traction power substation



State Capitol area

Additional relevant information is provided in the appendices including:

- List of preparers
- List of recipients
- List of acronyms
- List of references
- Agency correspondence
- Public outreach efforts
- Northern Alignment Feasibility Study
- Programmatic Agreement



Public hearing schedule

The Metropolitan Council will hold three public hearings before they take action on the document in late August. The public will be able to ask questions and get answers informally from project staff at open houses before each hearing. A brief overview of the SDEIS will be presented by project staff before each hearing. These hearings will deal only with the content of the SDEIS; no action will be taken at these hearings. Future decisions regarding issues such as public art, station design and streetscape will be the focus of future meetings.

- **Monday, August 4, Noon** (12:00 p.m.), Wilder Foundation, 451 Lexington Parkway N., St. Paul. An open house will precede the hearing from 11:30 a.m. to noon
- **Thursday, August 7, 6:00 p.m.**, Brian Coyle Center, 420 15th Avenue S., Minneapolis. An open house will precede the hearing from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, August 9, 2:00 p.m.**, Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Avenue N., St. Paul. An open house will precede the hearing from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

People wishing to speak at the hearing can sign up at during the open house. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes. Speakers representing a group may speak for up to five minutes.

How to comment

Comments on the SDEIS will be accepted through August 25, 2008 by:

- Speaking in person at one of the public hearings.
- Calling the Central Corridor LRT Project Office and leaving a message on the comment line at 651-602-1645.
- Emailing comments to Kathryn O’Brien at kathryn.obrien@metc.state.mn.us or
- Mailing comments to:

Kathryn O’Brien
 Central Corridor LRT Project Office
 540 Fairview Avenue N., Ste. 200
 St. Paul, MN 55104

Central Corridor LRT Project Overview

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project linking downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis via Washington and University avenues would be the fourth in a planned network of rail and bus “transitways” in the Twin Cities. Construction would begin in 2010 on the planned 11-mile Central Corridor line, with service beginning in 2014. The line would connect with the Hiawatha LRT line at the Metrodome station in Minneapolis and the Northstar commuter rail line, which will begin operation in late 2009, at the new Downtown Minneapolis multimodal station. The Metropolitan Council would be the grantee of federal funds. The regional government agency is charged with leading the design and building of the line in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The Central Corridor Management Committee, which includes the mayors of St. Paul and Minneapolis and commissioners from Ramsey and Hennepin counties, provides advice and oversight. The Central Corridor LRT Project Website is www.centralcorridor.org