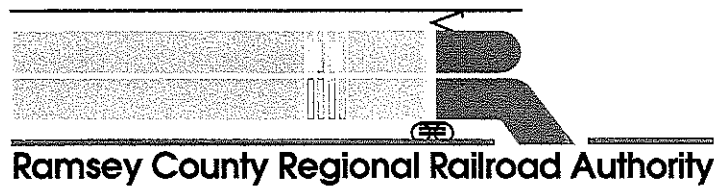
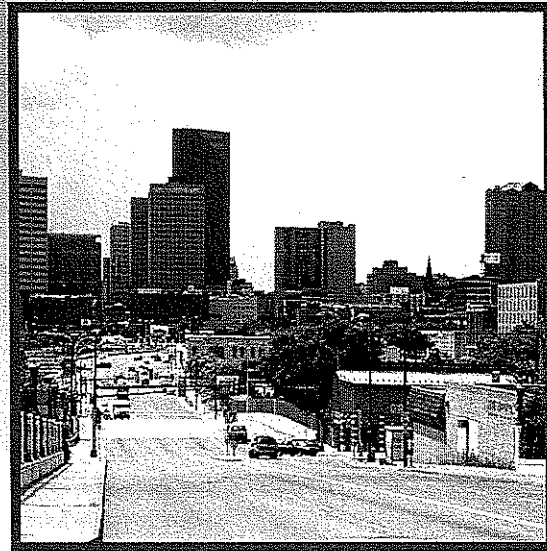
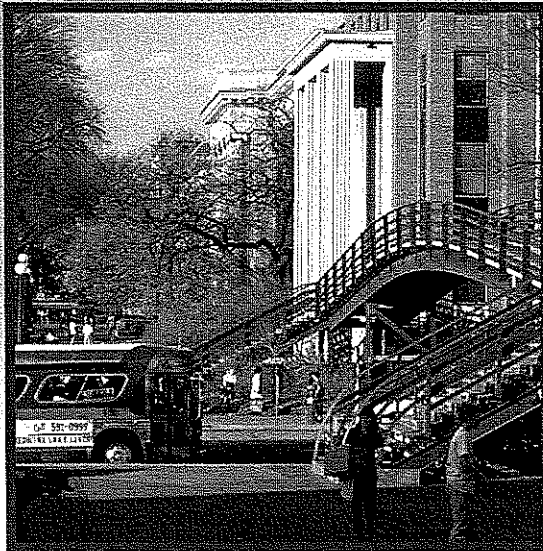
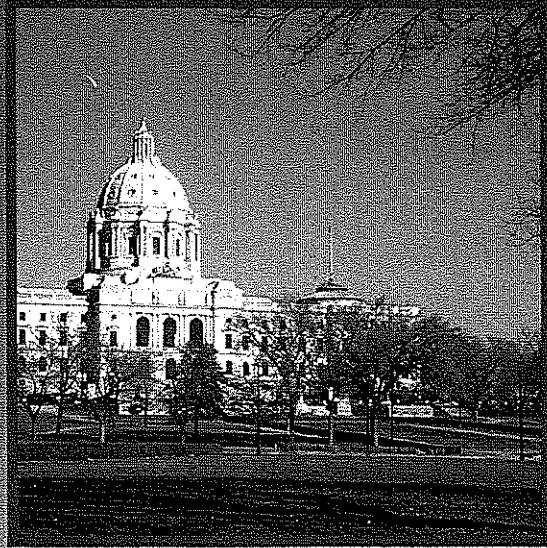


# Scoping Summary Report



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### 1.0 MEETING NOTICES

- Notice of Intent in Federal Register
- Notice of Availability in EQB Monitor
- Newspaper Legal Notices
- Press Release
- Press Clippings
- Elected Officials Letter of Invitation and Invitation List
- Agency Letter of Invitation and Invitation List

### 2.0 MEETING HANDOUTS

- Sign-In Sheets
- Agenda
- Comment Sheet
- Scoping Booklet

### 3.0 WRITTEN COMMENTS

### 4.0 TRANSCRIPTS OF SCOPING MEETINGS

- June 26, 2001 St. Paul – Sheraton Midway
- June 26, 2001 Interagency – Sheraton Midway
- June 26, 2001 St. Paul – Lifetrack Resources Job Search Center
- June 27, 2001 Minneapolis – Radisson Metrodome

# 1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Process is to identify the transportation alternatives that will be evaluated in the EIS, to describe the environmental issue areas that will be assessed, and to outline the public/community involvement process proposed for this project. The specifics of these three elements of the process were initially drafted in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet* in May 2001 and have been reviewed at four scoping meetings. The elements, along with the public review and comments during the scoping period between June 11, 2001 to July 20, 2001 are included herein. This process is summarized below and reported fully in this Scoping Summary Report.

## 1.1 SCOPING INFORMATION BOOKLET

In May 2001, the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet* was produced and included the following five major areas:

- **Purpose and Need for the Project:** The goals and objectives of the project were identified along with a brief description of the project purpose.
- **Study Goals and Objectives:** To address the need for transit improvements in the Corridor, the following goals and objectives were developed to serve as the framework for the Central Corridor Transit Study:
  - Economic Opportunity and Investment
  - Communities and Environment
  - Transportation and Mobility
- **EIS Process:** The EIS phase of the transportation planning process allows for careful consideration of the design, costs and benefits of the transportation alternatives, while also addressing potential traffic and transportation management, social, economic and environmental impacts that may result. This section of the scoping booklet identified environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIS and outlined the analysis to be completed.
- **Public Involvement:** The need for public and agency involvement is defined, the proposed public participation program elements are described and the scoping meeting times and locations are identified.
- **Alternatives:** Alternative transportation solutions for the Central Corridor were evaluated in a tiered screening process from Summer 2000 to Spring 2001. During this screening process LRT and BRT emerged as the preferred modes and I-94 and University Avenue emerged as the preferred alignments. This section of the scoping booklet reported on the alternative screening process, which was completed, documented and the alternatives proposed to be analyzed further in the environmental documentation process. The four transportation alternatives currently proposed for consideration for the Central Corridor Draft EIS include:
  - No-Build Alternative – No change to transportation services or facilities in the Central Corridor beyond already committed projects. This includes only those roadway and transit improvements defined in the appropriate agencies' Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and Transit Development Plans for which funding has been committed.

- Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative – Low cost transportation infrastructure and bus transit improvements for the Central Corridor. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Travel Demand Management (TDM), bus operations and other TSM improvements will be included in this alternative.
- Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative – Service on exclusive right-of-way between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul on University Avenue.
- Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternatives – Service between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul on either University Avenue or I-94.

Although two commuter rail options were being considered during preliminary phases of the Central Corridor Transit Study, based on regional commuter rail connections and system planning, funding and operating agency responsibility; the evaluation of the commuter rail options will be deferred to a separate environmental document.

## 1.2 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

The content of the scoping booklet was discussed at three public scoping meetings and one interagency scoping meeting. The scoping meetings were held to gain public input on the alternatives and the issues to be addressed in the EIS. The scoping booklet was mailed to approximately 800 people on the Central Corridor mailing list, distributed at meetings and regional libraries. Letters of invitation with the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet* were mailed to elected officials, agencies, organizations and businesses in the affected area. In addition, advertisements were placed in local newspapers and spot ads sent to local television and radio stations. Table 1-1 shows meeting places/dates, number of attendees, and number of speakers who provided verbal comments at each meeting.

## 1.3 PUBLIC COMMENTS

In addition to commenting verbally, the public had the opportunity to comment in writing on the scope of the alternatives and the impact areas to be evaluated in the EIS during the official scoping comment period between June 5, 2001 and July 20, 2001. Written comments were sent to Steve Morris, Project Manager, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA), 50 West Kellogg Boulevard, Suite 665, St. Paul, MN 55102. The project's e-mail address, fax and phone numbers were announced at all meetings and printed in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*. A total of 102 comments were received. All comments received during this period are provided in the *Scoping Summary Report Appendix* (under separate cover). The names and addresses of all those who commented have been included on the Central Corridor mailing list for future communications. Upcoming mailings will include: public meeting and station area planning workshop notices, project newsletters, monthly project updates, and a notice of the Draft EIS availability.

## 1.4 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

During the scoping review period for the Central Corridor project, 102 verbal and written comments were received from the respondents. Section 7 provides details for each of the 102 comments and responses individually. Table 1-2 provides a summary of the number of positive, neutral and negative comments

received that were specific to each of the alternatives under consideration. General LRT or BRT comments that were not specific to the University Avenue or I-94 alternatives have not been added to the comment totals for the alternatives, but have been included separately under LRT – General or BRT – General.

**Table 1-1. Scoping Meeting Participation**

PLACE	DATE	TIME	# OF ATTENDEES	# OF SPEAKERS
Public Meeting: Sheraton Midway 400 North Hamline Avenue St. Paul	June 26, 2001	8:00 to 9:30 AM	35	7
Public Meeting: Liftrack Resources Job Search Center 709 University Avenue West St. Paul	June 26, 2001	5:00 to 8:00 PM	24	11
Public Meeting: Radisson Metrodome 615 Washington Avenue SE Minneapolis	June 27, 2001	5:00 to 8:00 PM	23	6
Interagency Meeting: Sheraton Midway 400 North Hamline Avenue St. Paul	June 26, 2001	2:00 to 4:00 PM	10	2
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>92</b>	<b>26</b>

**Table 1-2. Comment Totals**

Option	Total Number of Comments	Positive Comments	Neutral Comments	Negative Comments
No – Build	2	2		
TSM	6	6		
LRT – University Ave.	22	18	1	3
LRT – I-94	5	2		3
LRT – General	15	12		3
BRT – University Ave.	4	3		1
BRT – General	5	3	1	1

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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Scoping Summary Report has been prepared to identify the transportation alternatives that will be evaluated in the EIS; describe the social, economic and environmental factors that will be addressed in the EIS; and outline the public involvement and agency coordination process proposed for the Central Corridor Project. This chapter briefly reviews the major transit capital investment planning process, local project development planning, the Central Corridor EIS, and the schedule for completion of the EIS.

### 2.1 OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

This Scoping Summary Report is one step in the EIS process for major transit capital investments and responds to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines and regulations. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the lead agency for the EIS. RCRRA will be designated as the FTA grantee for project funding. Policy direction for the study is provided by the Central Corridor Coordinating Committee (Coordinating Committee), the Project Management Team (PMT) serves as a technical advisory group and the Working Group Team (WGT) monitors project progress and work products.

Citizens and policy makers throughout the Twin Cities have long recognized the need for strong transit service and investment in the Central Corridor, the heart of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the spine of the region's transit service. Previous studies, including the *Regional Blueprint*, the *Twin Cities Metropolitan Long Range Transportation Plan* (the 2020 Transportation Policy Plan), the Comprehensive Plans for Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the *St. Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* each describe the importance of transit in the region's core. Two previous studies, the *Midway Corridor Light Rail Transit Draft Environmental Impact Statement* and the *Central Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement* specifically identified Light Rail Transit as the preferred transportation improvement for the Central Corridor. Given the importance of the corridor and the number of transit modes and alignment options, the Coordinating Committee initiated the Central Corridor Transit Study to determine the preferred transit option for the corridor.

The Central Corridor Transit Study included a review of previous studies and documentation from which the goals, objectives and definition of the universe of options for the corridor were determined. The Central Corridor Transit Study then initiated a tiered screening process to refine the definitions of the universe of options and to provide a fatal flaw analysis to reduce the universe of options to a recommendation for the three viable transit options to be advanced into the EIS process.

The tiered screening process concluded with the selection of three transit alternatives to be advanced into the EIS process. The three alternatives selected for advancement by the Coordinating Committee are:

- University Avenue/ Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- University Avenue/ Busway-Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- I-94/ Light Rail Transit (LRT)

## **2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) PROCESS**

The Coordinating Committee initiated the EIS process to further refine the alternatives recommended in the planning process and to determine the social, economic and environmental impacts of the proposed transit project. The Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2001. The Notice of Availability of the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet* was published in the *Minnesota EQB Monitor* on June 11, 2001. The comment period closed on July 20, 2001.

Each of the major activities to be completed as part of the EIS step is summarized below.

### **Scoping**

The Scoping Process defines the project alternatives that will be assessed in the EIS. The EIS Scoping Process outlines social, economic, and environmental factors to be evaluated, identifies the criteria that will be used for the evaluation of alternatives, and provides the public and agencies the opportunity to comment on the issues to be addressed during the EIS.

### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DRAFT EIS)**

The Draft EIS documents the technical analyses regarding the social, economic, and environmental impacts of each alternative under consideration in the project area. The Draft EIS is made available to the public. The public and agencies are given the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS at formal public hearings and during a 45-day comment period.

### **Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS)**

The Final EIS addresses all comments received on the Draft EIS and reports any additional technical analyses completed, as well as mitigation measures to offset unavoidable adverse environmental impacts and the results of agency and public coordination on the project. The FTA completes the EIS process and finalizes the Final EIS by issuing a Record of Decision (ROD), which identifies environmental findings and mitigation actions. In compliance with Minnesota environmental regulations, an Adequacy Determination will also be made on the proposed action.

### **Conceptual Engineering**

The following activities are included in conceptual engineering: topographic mapping, geotechnical surveys, design criteria, conceptual architectural and engineering drawings and specifications for the track and vehicle storage and maintenance facility, station area planning, ridership forecasts, operations plan, capital cost estimates, operating and maintenance costs, and financial plan.

### **Public Outreach and Agency Coordination**

Throughout this planning process, opportunities for public review and comment will be afforded. The specific elements of the program are outlined in this document.

## **2.3 CENTRAL CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)**

The alternatives under consideration in the EIS include the No-Build Alternative, the Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative, the Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative and the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternatives. The No-Build Alternative is used as a baseline for comparison of environmental impacts, while the TSM Alternative is included for comparison of the cost effectiveness of the build alternatives. These conceptual alternatives were developed during Screen I and II of the Central

Corridor Transit Study and further refined during the EIS Scoping Process. All four alternatives will be advanced for consideration in the EIS.

- **No-Build Alternative** – The No-Build Alternative includes roadway and bus system improvements along the University Avenue and I-94 corridors as specified in the appropriate agency Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) and Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) for which funding has been committed. The current transportation and transit facilities and services, with minimal modifications or expansions, form the baseline for this Alternative.
- **Transportation Systems Management (TSM)** – Low capital cost infrastructure and bus transit improvements for the Central Corridor include bus operations, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) techniques, Travel Demand Management (TDM), and other system improvements. Bus operation strategies provide connectivity within the corridor that build upon existing transit services and facilities. ITS is an approach to use the latest technology for building better transportation systems. TDM strategies help reduce congestion by the use of alternative modes of transportation to driving alone.
- **University Avenue Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative** - This Alternative provides Busway/BRT service between the downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive guideway in the center of University Avenue. It includes all facilities associated with the construction and operation of a Busway/BRT system, including right-of-way, structures and stations. Both Busway/BRT and bus operating plans will be developed for this Alternative. Up to 18 station locations exclusive to the Central Corridor and the cumulative effects to five stations shared with Hiawatha LRT and the Northstar commuter rail will be analyzed. The Busway/BRT Alternative will also incorporate elements of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives, and will include feeder bus improvements to provide access from local and regional travel destinations to the Busway/BRT system.
- **University Avenue Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative** – This Alternative provides LRT service between the downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive lanes in the center of University Avenue. It includes all facilities associated with the construction and operation of light rail transit, including right-of-way, structures, tracks and stations. Both light rail and bus operating plans will be developed for this Alternative. Up to 18 station locations exclusive to the Central Corridor and the cumulative effects to five stations shared with Hiawatha LRT and the Northstar commuter rail will be analyzed. The Busway/BRT Alternative will also incorporate elements of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives, and will include feeder bus improvements to provide access from local and regional land uses to the proposed LRT system.
- **I-94 Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative** – This Alternative would provide LRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in barrier-separated exclusive lanes in the median of I-94. It includes all facilities associated with the construction and operation of a light rail transit system, including right-of-way, structures, tracks and stations. Both light rail and bus operating plans would be developed for this Alternative. Up to 17 station locations exclusive to the Central Corridor Project and cumulative effects to five stations shared with Hiawatha LRT and the Northstar commuter rail would be included. The LRT Alternative will also incorporate elements of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives, and will include feeder bus improvements to provide access from local and regional land uses to the proposed LRT system.

## 2.4 SCHEDULE AND CONTACTS

### Schedule

The project milestones and schedule for completion of the EIS for the Central Corridor Transit Project are outlined in Table 2-1.

**Table 2-1. Project Milestones**

Activity	Date
Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS	June 5, 2001
Notice of Availability of Scoping Booklet and Scoping Meetings in <i>EQB Monitor</i>	June 11, 2001
Interagency Scoping Meeting	June 26, 2001
Public Scoping Meetings (3)	June 26, 2001 – 8:00 AM June 26, 2001 – 5:00 PM June 27, 2001 – 5:00 PM
Close of Scoping Comment Period	July 20, 2001
Scoping Decision	October 11, 2001
Preliminary Draft EIS Distribution	April 1, 2002
FTA Review Preliminary Draft EIS (1-month)	May 1, 2002
Revise Preliminary Draft EIS (2 weeks)	May 15, 2002
Public Hearing on Draft EIS	June 15, 2002
Draft EIS Review, FTA Signature, Production/ Distribution (30-days)	August 1, 2002
Respond to Comments, Recommend LPA (1-month)	September 1, 2002
Preliminary Final EIS for FTA Review (1-month)	October 1, 2002
Draft Final EIS for FTA Review/ Signature (1-month)	November 1, 2002
Final EIS Review Period (30-days)	December 1, 2002
FTA Record of Decision	December 1, 2002
Minnesota Adequacy Determination (1-month)	January 1, 2003

### Contacts

The contact people for the FTA and the RCRRA are listed below.

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Federal Transit Administration, Region 5  
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Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA)  
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Telephone: (651) 266-2784  
Fax: (651) 266-2761  
E-mail: [steve.morris@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:steve.morris@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
TDD: 1 (800) 627-3529

## 3.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

### 3.1 PROJECT PURPOSE

The Central Corridor study area is bound on the east and west by the two Central Business Districts (CBDs) of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Mainline borders the corridor to the north and the Canadian Pacific Rail (CP Rail) to the south. This corridor has been the historical connection between the two downtown districts, linked by Interstate 94 (I-94) and University Avenue, the two primary east-west travel routes in the heart of the Twin Cities.

The Central Corridor has local, regional, and national significance as a primary route for automobile, truck, waterway, and rail travel. As the connection between the two downtowns, this corridor serves people commuting to and from work and people traveling to other destinations in and out of the corridor. However, the corridor is more than a connection between these two CBDs, as it is a common destination itself because of its size and attractions. This area is home to national corporate offices and industrial areas, along with a variety of retail shops, residential housing, senior citizen housing, schools, as well as cultural and historic districts.

This corridor is the core of the metropolitan area and is experiencing growing transportation problems, such as increased traffic congestion, growth in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), parking shortages, population and employment growth, and rapid new development. Concerns about the corridor are high, as these existing and potential problems can affect the vitality of the local community, inhibit economic development, and encourage sprawled growth in the Twin Cities. Analysis of the transportation situation by the Metropolitan Council has revealed that the social and economic constraints are too high to expand the existing roadway infrastructure. With growing traffic problems and constraints to expansion of the roadways, operating improvements, congestion reduction, and other transportation improvements must come from investments in alternative modes of transportation.

Although population growth is predicted to occur throughout the metropolitan area, rapid growth is projected in concentrations for downtown Minneapolis, Downtown St. Paul, the Midway area, and other portions of the study area. However, this corridor is already one of the densest in population and households in the metropolitan area. Employment growth is also projected to increase in substantial amounts, including 31 percent in the Minneapolis CBD and 19 percent in the St. Paul CBD between 2000 and 2020. In addition, according to multiple local and regional plans, multiple commercial and residential developments are being proposed along the corridor.

These new commercial and residential developments, specifically in downtown St. Paul, have caused concerns because of a lack of available parking. Recent development has taken away many surface parking lots, causing the need for expensive parking structures. When properties in the corridor are used for surface parking, the economic return would be less than may be anticipated for other developed uses. These issues have contributed to an increase in demand for public transit alternatives that are reliable, convenient, and offer better services than that which currently exist.

Transit has also become an important link to the "Smart Growth Initiative" in the Twin Cities. Investment in the Central Corridor will be directed towards transit services as they foster economic development; provide access to jobs, health care, and other destinations; promote more livable and sustainable land use practices, and strengthen the vitality of the urban core. Also, improving the cost effectiveness of transit services is a priority. The Central Corridor would be the third link of an intermodal

triangle when combined with the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit (LRT) line and the Riverview Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor. These three transit projects create a triangle connecting the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America, downtown St. Paul, and downtown Minneapolis. A triangle of efficient and reliable transit services is important to the regional connectivity of the entire metropolitan area.

## **3.2 MAJOR NEEDS IN THE CENTRAL CORRIDOR**

The Central Corridor has been a priority focus for bus transit service and investments for the last 20 years, as this area is the base of the existing transit system and the heart of the metropolitan area. This area connects some of the largest traffic generators in the Twin Cities, including the downtown CBDs of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the University of Minnesota, and the Midway area. The neighborhoods in this corridor are some of the strongest in the metropolitan area.

The Central Corridor, the core of the Twin Cities, is experiencing multiple transportation problems that are limiting the success of the metropolitan area. Increasing population and employment in the metropolitan area combined with decreasing vehicle occupancy has increased traffic congestion in the corridor. New developments in the CBDs have reduced the number of surface parking lots, causing the need for expensive parking structures.

## **3.3 PROJECT GOALS**

To address the need for transit improvements in the Central Corridor, eight statements were developed to serve as the framework for this project:

- Support investments in infrastructure, business, and community that sustain the heart of the region.
- Promote a reliable transit system that allows an efficient, effective land use development pattern in major activity centers which minimizes parking demand, facilitates the highest and best use of adjacent properties, and gives employers confidence that employees can travel to/from work.
- Facilitate the preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods in the Central Corridor.
- Acknowledge the individual character and aspirations of each place served, and of the region as a whole.
- Support regional goals for: cleaner air and water, more efficient energy use, and a safer and healthier environment.
- Create transportation improvements that add people carrying capacity, minimize operating costs, improve operating efficiency, provide high quality modal alternatives, and reinforce the region's transportation system.
- Expand opportunities for all users to move freely to, through, and within the Central Corridor.
- Enhance the existing transportation infrastructure to serve the high number of transit dependent persons in the Central Corridor.

## 4.0 ALTERNATIVES

### 4.1 PRELIMINARY TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY ALTERNATIVES

During Phase I of the Central Corridor Transit Study, conceptual mode alternatives were identified as well as the evaluation process used to screen them. The transportation solutions and recommendations developed during this first phase of the transit study process were evaluated using a screening methodology as shown in Figure 4-1. The two steps in the screening methodology applied increasingly detailed and more comprehensive measures of effectiveness to a decreasing number of multi-modal transportation strategies. In Phase II of the transit study, additional screening was completed for the multi-modal transportation strategies carried forward. The initial screening resulted in a refinement of the most optimal solutions with respect to study area needs and community priorities into multi-modal transportation investment strategies. The purpose of the evaluation process was to differentiate among possible solutions rather than to serve as a comprehensive assessment of the impacts associated with the individual alternative elements and multi-modal strategies.

A universe of transit and roadway options was evaluated as to how well each element met the project goals.

The transportation investment corridor that was identified for consideration by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) is the 11-mile corridor extending between Minneapolis and St. Paul on the west and east and bounded by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Northern Mainline on the north and the Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway Shortline Railroad on the south. Since the 1980s, the Central Corridor area has been identified as a priority corridor for a major fixed guideway transit investment to serve both local and regional travel needs. The Central Corridor study area is shown in Figure 4-2.

#### 4.1.1 Universe of Transit Technologies

As indicated above, the Central Corridor Transit Study first considered the universe of transit technologies available, then utilized a screening methodology to determine the effectiveness of each technology in meeting the project goals. The universe of technologies that were considered included:

##### **Bus Transit**

*Conventional* – bus transit is comprised of manually-operated rubber-tired vehicles. Nearly all types of bus transit operate in mixed traffic on ordinary roadways, and all are self-propelled by an on board engine and power source. Stops are as frequent as every one to two blocks, or every one-eighth mile. Few stops and average speeds characterize express or limited service. The majority of buses in operation are diesel powered.

*Electric Trolley Bus* – is a subtype of a standard bus and receives power from overhead wires. This technology was originally implemented as an alternative to the streetcar. The electric trolley bus differs from actual or replicas of vintage streetcars, which are commonly referred to as “Trolleys.” Electric trolley buses are distinguished from other buses by electric propulsion only; otherwise they are identical in size to diesel buses and can operate in the same environment, provided that the overhead power source is available. Because they require an overhead electric wire (catenary) for the power source, electric trolley buses have less route flexibility than the standard transit buses. Some models have battery-backup

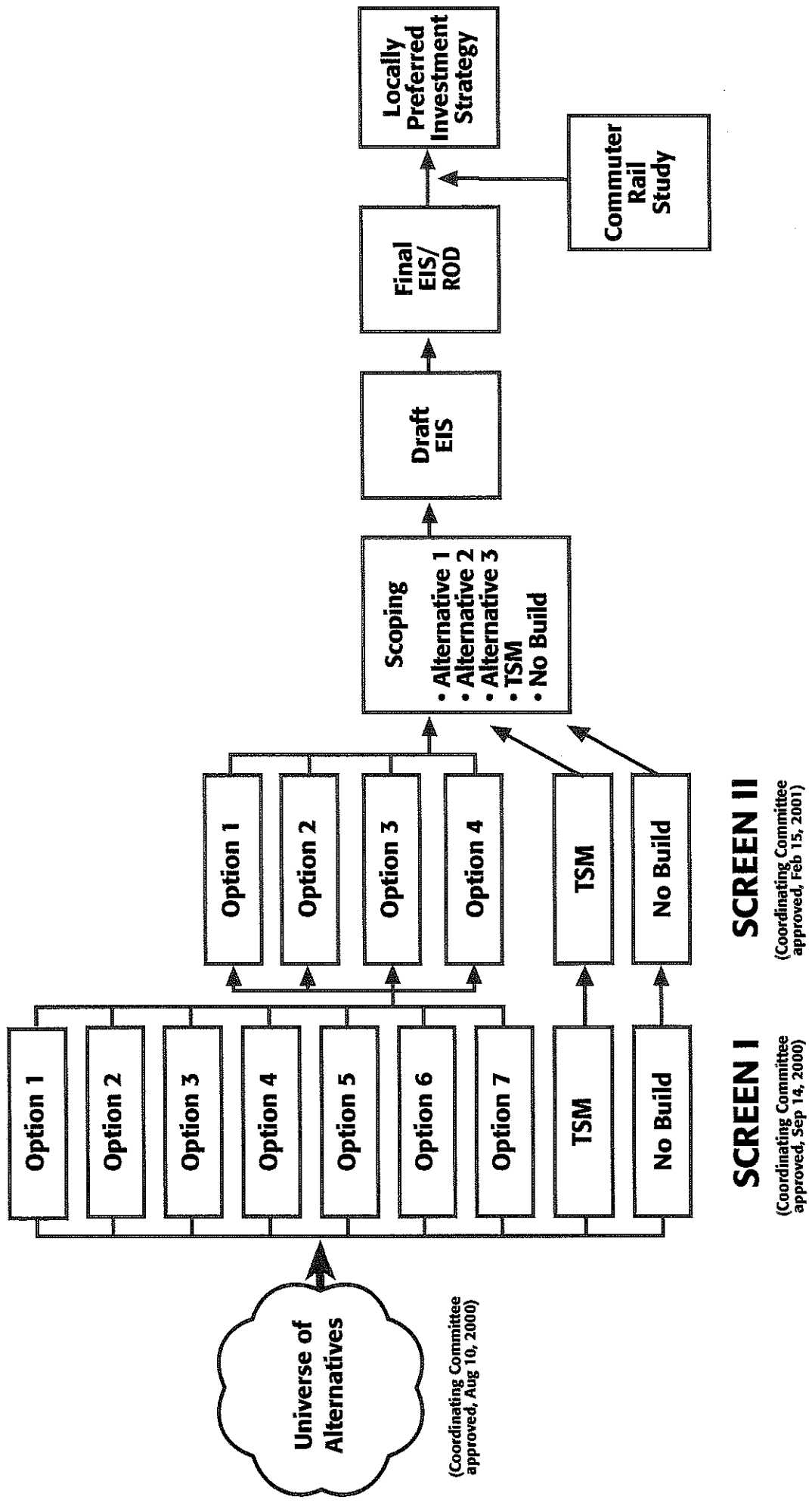


Figure 4-1 **BRW**

**SCREEN I**  
 (Coordinating Committee approved, Sep 14, 2000)

**SCREEN II**  
 (Coordinating Committee approved, Feb 15, 2001)



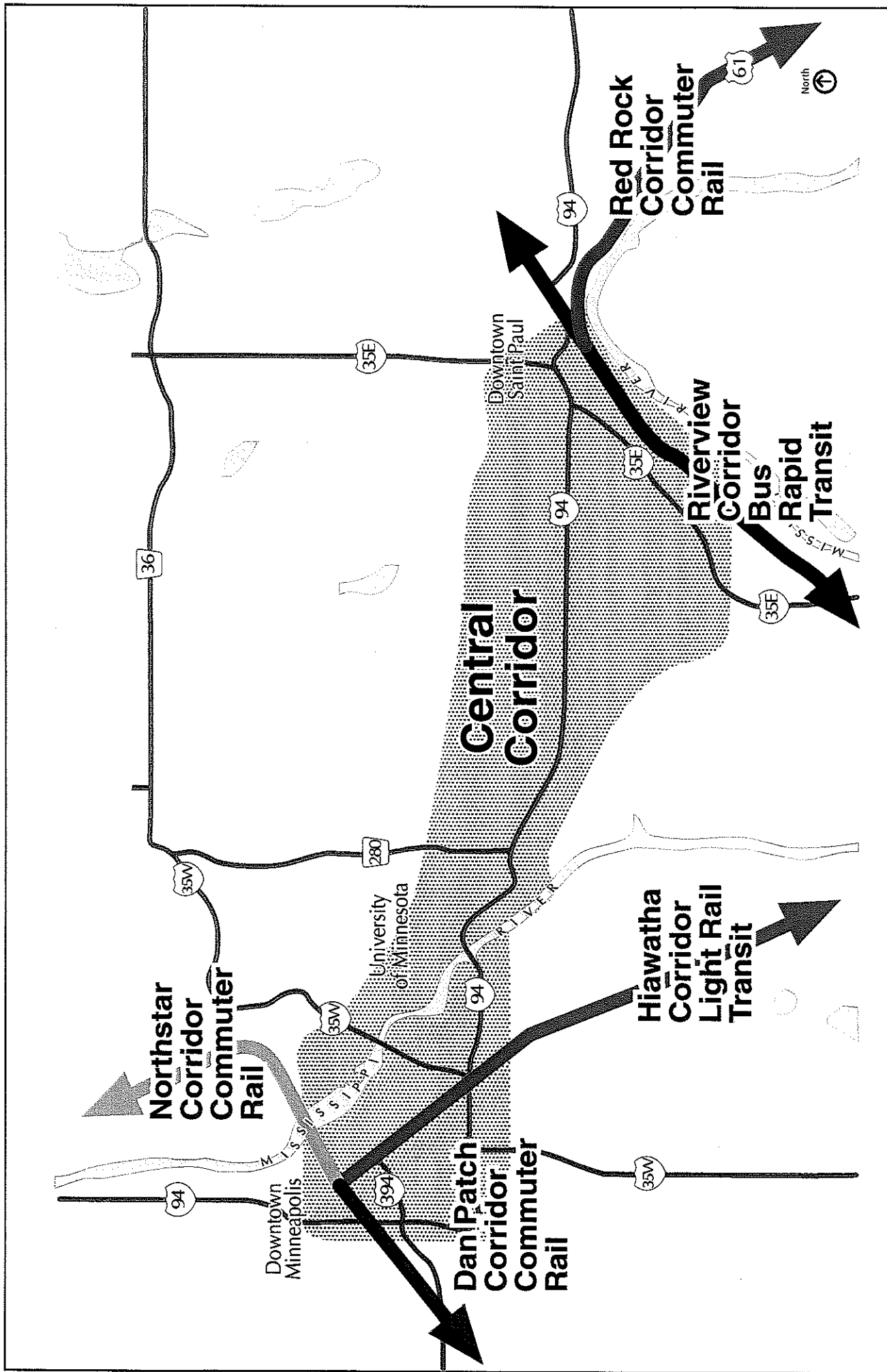


Figure 4-2 **BRW**

or small diesel engine capabilities, allowing for short off-wire trips. The design of these buses provides for virtually pollution-free operations, with efficient loading and unloading in areas with frequent stops.

### **Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**

*Conventional* – is designed to operate in environments with heavy to very heavy passenger volumes, on medium-distance trips. These vehicles have three to four doors along their length and utilize a barrier-free fare collection system, which increases the efficiency of passenger boarding and alighting. The propulsion system may be conventional diesel engines or overhead electric catenary. BRT was originally designed as a low-cost alternative to LRT. Vehicles typically require 11- to 12-foot lane widths and priority treatment in mixed traffic. Complete separation from other vehicular traffic is preferred. Busways that provide a high level of service and high passenger capacities are typically grade-separated from cross streets. Low volume busways are characterized by at-grade intersections with cross street. Stops along the busway are made only at stations, typically spaced every one-half to one mile. Buses may operate non-stop along the busway or make selected stops based on passenger demand. Buses may also exit the busway and operate along streets to provide local area service. Additionally, BRT vehicles can be used on high-occupancy vehicle facilities.

*Guided Bus* – is a subtype of BRT and consists of a specialized fixed guideway and vehicles retrofitted with lateral guide wheels. This technology can be adapted to any bus size and propulsion type, and the guideway can be implemented in confined rights-of-way. The guideway requires that this technology be grade-separated from cross streets.

### **Light Rail Transit (LRT)**

LRT includes electrically powered vehicles in short trains of up to four cars, using an overhead electric wire (catenary) as the power source. Light rail is versatile and can be operated in railroad, highway or street right-of-way, at-grade or elevated, with the electric power provided to the vehicles via overhead wires. LRT operates primarily in a semi-exclusive right-of-way with total corridor lengths generally not exceeding 15 to 20 miles. In addition to operating at-grade, an LRT system may be grade-separated by operating in a tunnel or on an elevated structure. Stops along the LRT system are made only at stations, typically spaced at one-quarter mile to one mile intervals.

### **Streetcar**

Streetcar transit can be characterized as a single-car rail system with an overhead electrical power source. Streetcars operate primarily in mixed traffic, similar to conventional buses and electric trolley buses, with stations or stops generally spaced one-eighth to one-quarter mile apart. Streetcar systems are often appealing from an aesthetic standpoint; in addition to providing mobility, they can be viewed as enhancements to the character of an area because of their distinctive design.

### **Magnetic Levitation (MagLev)**

MagLev technology uses the repulsion forces of electromagnets to elevate the vehicle above the guideway and to provide propulsion. MagLev is under development in Japan and Germany. The application of MagLev technology is for high-speed intercity travel with station spacing 50 to 150 miles apart.

### **Commuter Rail**

Conventional passenger rail, or commuter rail, consists of one or more unpowered passenger cars pushed or pulled by a locomotive. The propulsion system is typically a diesel-mechanical motor or diesel-electric motor, although overhead electrification can be used as well. Commuter rail systems generally have stations spaced five or more miles apart, with corridor lengths of 20 to 100 miles. Commuter rail equipment is compatible with (may share track with) active freight railroad operations.

### **Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU)**

The DMU technology is a subtype of commuter rail consisting of one or two vehicles semi-permanently coupled. DMU service is more appropriate for corridors with less freight railroad usage, lower passenger demand or constrained station sites. DMU service can operate on existing railroad tracks, as there are now Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) compliant DMUs that can jointly operate with railroad freight traffic in the United States.

### **Heavy Rail**

Heavy rail is a fully grade-separated rail mode with electrically powered vehicles. In most cases power is received from an electrified third rail. The alignment is required to be in exclusive right-of-way and may be elevated, in tunnel or at-grade. Station spacing can be as close as one-third mile in activity centers, but typically ranges between one to two miles or more in other areas. Trains vary in length between two and ten cars. Heavy rail transit is implemented when very high passenger capacity is required.

### **Monorail**

Monorail is a variation of rapid transit that employs a single, relatively narrow beam that supports the vehicles and contains the power source. Vehicles may either straddle the beam or be suspended from it; vehicles may travel as single units or be linked together in trains of one to six vehicles. Station spacing is comparable to light rail or heavy rail: one-third to one-half mile in activity centers and one-half to one-mile or more in other areas. Monorail systems must be fully grade-separated.

### **Automated Guideway Transit (AGT)**

The AGT technology includes steel-wheel, steel-rail or rubber tired vehicles that operate under automated control on an exclusive guideway, grade-separated from vehicular traffic. AGT may utilize conventional, or alternative propulsion types such as magnetic levitation or linear induction. Other transit technologies such as monorails and personal rapid transit (PRT) operating without driver are classified as AGT. Station spacing is also comparable to light or heavy rail, one-quarter to one mile in activity centers and one to two miles or more in other areas. Trains vary between one and six vehicles.

### **Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)**

PRT provides private party point-to-point transportation along a grade-separated guideway in an automated mode. Service could be operated on demand, with vehicles being summoned to a stop by the passenger. This technology is envisioned to compete with the automobile by providing a direct non-stop trip between origin and destination in private vehicles for up to three passengers. As this technology is still under development, no operating systems are in place.

## **4.1.2 Preliminary Screening of Transit Technologies**

A preliminary screening was completed on the eleven transit technologies included in the universe of transit technologies. The parameters used placed the transit technologies under the same level of scrutiny so as to have an unbiased evaluation. Transit technologies were reviewed based on a number of evaluation parameters, which included:

- Capital cost per mile
- Typical vehicle capacity
- Average trip length
- Running Surface
- Speed
- Power Supply
- Proven technology with operation in a line-haul mode

- Operating environment (urban, suburban, or activity center)
- At-grade station access
- Typical stops/station spacing
- Environmental impacts (emissions, noise, right-of-way, visual)
- Implementation feasibility
- Applicability to corridor

Based on the results of the screening analysis, the following transit technologies were recommended for further study:

- Conventional Bus
- Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Commuter Rail

### 4.1.3 Preliminary Screening of Universe of Alternatives

A preliminary screening was completed on the nineteen build alternatives included in the universe of alternatives. The parameters used placed the build alternatives under the same level of scrutiny so as to have an unbiased evaluation. The build alternatives were reviewed based on four evaluation parameters, which included:

- Mobility and Accessibility
- Economic Development
- Community and Environment
- Financial Consideration

The Screen I Evaluation identified the following seven build alternatives for consideration under the subsequent Screen II Evaluation.

- **BNSF South/Commuter Rail Option**  
The BNSF/South option would provide commuter rail service between downtown Minneapolis/Northeast Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul on existing railroad tracks. This alignment would interface with the Northstar Corridor which is proposed to provide commuter rail service between the St. Cloud area and downtown Minneapolis.
- **CP Rail/Commuter Rail Option**  
The CP Rail option would provide commuter rail service between downtown Minneapolis/Northeast Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul on existing railroad tracks. This alignment would interface with the Northstar Corridor which is proposed to provide commuter rail service between the St. Cloud area and downtown Minneapolis.
- **University Avenue/LRT A Option**  
This option would provide LRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive lanes in the center of University Avenue.
- **University Avenue/LRT B Option**  
This option would provide LRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive lanes in the center of University Avenue. However, this option has more station locations than the LRT A option.

- **I-94/LRT Option**  
This option would provide LRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota primarily in barrier separated exclusive lanes in the median of I-94.
- **I-94 Busway/BRT Option**  
This option would provide BRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota primarily in barrier separated exclusive guideway in the median of I-94.
- **University Avenue Busway/BRT Option**  
This option would provide BRT service between the two downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive guideway in the center of University Avenue.

The Screen II Evaluation then applied the same evaluation parameters, with an increased level of detail, to the seven build alternatives retained from Screen I. Screen II resulted in a decision to retain the following three build alternatives and advance these into the EIS process.

- **University Avenue/LRT Option**  
This option is a hybrid of the LRT A and LRT B options, and achieved the highest rankings for the Mobility and Accessibility and the Communities and Environment goals. The option shared the highest rankings for the Economic Development goal and the Overall Performance Rating.
- **University Avenue Busway/BRT Option**  
The option achieved the highest ranking for the Financial Considerations goal and shared the highest rankings for the Economic Development goal and the Overall Performance Rating.
- **I-94/LRT Option**  
The option did not achieve the highest ranking for any of the established goals. However, the PMT determined that an alternate for the University Avenue LRT Option and the University Avenue Busway/BRT Option should be retained in the event that it is determined that University Avenue is not a viable transit location for a fixed guideway system.

#### **4.1.4 Alternatives Carried Forward for Analysis in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

In addition to the build alternatives described above, NEPA requires that the No-Build and TSM Alternatives be included in the environmental documentation to serve as a basis of comparison for the build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative generally includes funded projects that are currently programmed in the regional TIP for the fiscal years of 2001-2004. The TSM Alternative includes those projects or activities that maximize the efficiency of the present transportation system, including all funded improvements defined in the No-Build Alternative and reasonable enhancements to the existing transportation system included in the regional long-range transportation plans, without investing in a fixed guideway transit project.

The transportation alternatives proposed for consideration for the Central Corridor Draft EIS include:

- No-Build
- TSM
- University Avenue Busway/BRT
- University Avenue LRT
- I-94 LRT

## 4.2 DEVELOPMENT OF STATION AREA ALTERNATIVES

A tiered screening process evaluated transit technologies and alignment alternatives, which were reduced to three alignments and numerous station sites, some of which were common to the LRT, and BRT alternatives along the University Avenue alignment. The analysis included evaluation of criteria relating to specific station sites:

- Service to Major Travel Markets
- Intermodal Connectivity
- Major Employment Centers Served
- Residential Population Served
- Consistency with Land Use Patterns
- Proximity to Planned Development
- Proximity to Developable and Redevelopable Land
- Potential to Support Smart Growth
- Compatibility with Community Character

The station evaluation process resulted in the selection of 18 potential station locations for the LRT and BRT options some of which are common to other transit facilities. The consideration included recognition of significant areas of service overlap given the half-mile station spacing, without land-use intensity to justify such stops in some areas, and the necessity to reduce overall travel times by reducing the number of stations.

During the EIS Scoping Process I-94 was eliminated from further consideration. The remaining University Avenue alignment includes the hybrid station sites generated during the Screen II Evaluation. The station sites carried into the Draft EIS process include:

- |                   |                                |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| ▪ Downtown East   | ▪ Raymond Avenue               | ▪ Regions Hospital |
| ▪ West Bank       | ▪ Fairview Avenue              | ▪ Cedar Avenue     |
| ▪ East Bank       | ▪ Snelling Avenue              | ▪ Fourth Street    |
| ▪ Stadium Village | ▪ Lexington Avenue             | ▪ Lowertown        |
| ▪ 27th Ave SE     | ▪ Dale Street                  | ▪ Union Depot      |
| ▪ Westgate        | ▪ Rice Street or State Capitol | ▪ Rice Park        |

Evaluation of station sites in downtown St. Paul was started during a workshop of committee members, consultants, and agency staff. This led to the Cedar Street to Fourth Street alignment and Jackson to Fourth Street alignment. A concern exists between the desire to serve the downtown office core, provide front door service to the Union Depot, and its potential as an intermodal facility, and the growing entertainment center on the west side of downtown. Both alignments and associated station sites were carried into the Draft EIS process.

## 4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) ALTERNATIVES

### 4.3.1 University Avenue Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative incorporates elements of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives and includes feeder bus improvements to provide access from the local and regional land used to the Busway/BRT connection.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would provide BRT service between the downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in dedicated lanes in the center of University Avenue.

In downtown Minneapolis from the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Transit Station, the proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would operate in mixed traffic, primarily on 4<sup>th</sup> Street (westbound buses would operate in a reverse flow bus lane on 4<sup>th</sup> Street) and on TH 122, until it reaches the West Bank Station. The Alternative would then continue as diamond lanes in the median of TH 122 across the Mississippi River until it reaches the proposed East Bank Station.

From the East Bank Station, the option would follow Washington Avenue through the University of Minnesota campus. On this segment of Washington Avenue the busway would operate at-grade on Washington Avenue through the campus.

From Oak Street, the proposed busway would cross University Avenue and Huron Boulevard and would enter the University of Minnesota Transitway near 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Southeast. The busway would then follow the Transitway east to the vicinity of Bedford Street and reconnect with University Avenue.

The busway would then proceed eastbound at-grade in an exclusive guideway in the center of University Avenue to Rice Street in St. Paul.

The proposed busway would operate in mixed traffic in the downtown St. Paul area. East of Rice Street, the busway would turn from University Avenue onto Constitution Avenue and serve Constitution Avenue to Cedar Street. In the downtown core area, the busway would operate on Cedar Street (southbound), on Minnesota Street (northbound) and briefly on Kellogg Boulevard between Cedar Avenue and Robert Street. The busway would then cross the Mississippi River using Robert Street to Fillmore Avenue East.

### Potential Station Locations

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would be comprised of a total of eleven stations. Potential Busway/BRT station locations are listed in Table 4-1.

**Table 4-1. Proposed Station Locations – University Avenue Busway/BRT**

NAME	LOCATION
West Bank	TH 122 and east of 19 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
East Bank	TH 122 and Church Street
Stadium Village	TH 122 between Ontario Street and Huron Boulevard
27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue S.E.	University Avenue and 27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
Westgate	University Avenue and Bedford Street
Raymond Avenue	University and Raymond Avenues
Fairview Avenue	University and Fairview Avenues
Snelling Avenue	University and Snelling Avenues
Lexington Avenue	University and Lexington Avenues
Dale Street	University Avenue and Dale Street
Rice Street	University Avenue and Rice Street

Note: In downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul there are no provisions for Busway/BRT stations; however, on-demand service would be provided.

## 4.3.2 University Avenue Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative incorporates elements of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives and includes feeder bus improvements to provide access from the local and regional land uses to the light rail line connection.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would provide LRT service between the downtowns and to the University of Minnesota, primarily in exclusive lanes in the center of University Avenue between the University of Minnesota campus and Rice Street in St. Paul.

In downtown Minneapolis, the proposed LRT would run at-grade in exclusive lanes on 5<sup>th</sup> Street with signal-controlled, at-grade crossings. This portion of the alignment would be shared with the Hiawatha line currently under construction.

Proceeding east from downtown Minneapolis, the alignment would cross the Mississippi River on TH 122 (Washington Avenue Bridge). The LRT would then follow Washington Avenue through the University of Minnesota campus in a tunnel. After emerging out of the tunnel at Oak Street, the LRT would then proceed eastbound at-grade in an exclusive lane in the center of University Avenue to Rice Street in St. Paul.

In downtown St. Paul, the LRT would continue along University Avenue behind the Capitol, turning southbound onto Robert Street. The LRT would then turn westbound onto Columbus Street, to Cedar Street, where it would turn southbound to 5th Street. At 5th Street the LRT alignment would cut to the east, diagonally across one city block to 4th Street, where it would travel eastbound to the St. Paul Union Depot.

### Potential Station Locations

The LRT Alternative includes 16 station sites. Potential LRT station locations from west to east are listed in Table 4-2. Proposed stations would be walk-up stations designed for pedestrian and bicycle circulation. The stations would not have provisions for park-and-ride spaces.

### LRT Maintenance Facility

The proposed Central Corridor LRT line would share the maintenance facility currently under construction for the Hiawatha LRT line. The maintenance facility is located in Minneapolis just east of TH 55 between I-94 and East Franklin Avenue. The maintenance facility would be used for the cleaning, maintenance and storage of light rail vehicles. Cumulative environmental effects with the operation of the Central Corridor LRT Line will be evaluated in the Central Corridor Draft EIS.



**Table 4-2. Proposed Station Locations – University Avenue LRT**

NAME	LOCATION
Downtown Multimodal Station <sup>1</sup>	BNSF/Northstar Corridor and North 7 <sup>th</sup> Street
Warehouse District <sup>2</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Street between 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue North and Hennepin Avenue
Nicollet Mall <sup>2</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Street between Nicollet and Marquette Avenues
Government Center <sup>2</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Street between 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenues
Downtown East <sup>2</sup>	Between 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Streets and Park and Chicago Avenues
West Bank	TH 122 and east of 19 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
East Bank	TH 122 and Church Street
Stadium Village	TH 122 between Ontario Street and Huron Boulevard
27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue S.E.	University Avenue and 27 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SE
Westgate	University Avenue and Bedford Street
Raymond Avenue	University and Raymond Avenues
Fairview Avenue	University and Fairview Avenues
Snelling Avenue	University and Snelling Avenues
Lexington Avenue	University and Lexington Avenues
Dale Street	University Avenue and Dale Street
Rice Street	University Avenue and Rice Street
Downtown St. Paul	Exact Station Locations to be Determined

<sup>1</sup>This station is proposed under the Northstar Corridor line and would serve as a multimodal station for the proposed Northstar Corridor Commuter Rail, the Hiawatha LRT line and the proposed Central Corridor LRT line.

<sup>2</sup>These four stations are proposed under the Hiawatha LRT line, which is currently under construction, and would also serve the proposed Central Corridor LRT line.

### 4.3.3 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative for the Central Corridor consists of a variety of planned and programmed improvements to the transportation and transit network, in addition to considering the existing transportation system. This Alternative includes all projects that are currently programmed in the regional TIP for the fiscal years of 2001-2004, including recently completed improvements. This multi-modal program of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and transportation enhancement projects receives federal funding along with local matching funds. Some of the major roadways committed in the TIPs for the Twin Cities include the following projects.

**Table 4-3. Major Planned Roadway Improvements (2001-2004 TIP)**

Roadway	From	To	TIP Year	Description
I-35 East	I-94	I-694	--	Add one lane in each direction
I-35 West	66th Street South	46th Street South	2000-2001	Add HOV lane
I-35 East	I-94	Maryland Avenue	2004	Add one lane in each direction
I-94	Weaver Lake Road	Humboldt Avenue	2005	Addition of a third lane
TH 100	29th Avenue North	50th Avenue North	2000-2003	Construct 4-lane freeway

Approximately \$1,750 million has been included in the TIP for 2001-2004 for projects for highway, transit, enhancement projects, as well as bicycle and pedestrian projects. One of the major projects included in the TIP is the construction and future operation of the Hiawatha LRT line. In addition, numerous transit

station developments and purchasing plans for new buses are programmed in the TIP. All projects considered in this Alternative are fiscally feasible and are consistent with federal funds and local matching funds.

#### 4.3.4 Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative

The TSM Alternative for the Central Corridor includes all programmed improvements defined in the No-Build Alternative and reasonable enhancements to the existing transportation system included in the regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Typically, these plans are not financially constrained. This Alternative does consider relatively low capital cost improvements to the existing transportation infrastructure and significant operational improvements to the transit system without investing in a fixed guideway transit project. This Alternative would include modest enhancements and expansion of the current bus system, upgrades to the existing bus operations, practical traffic engineering improvements, and reasonable capital improvements including reserved bus lanes, park-and-ride facilities, and transit stations.

According to the *Transit 2020 Plan* from the Metropolitan Council, the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, significant transit improvements are planned throughout the corridor and metropolitan area. This plan is directed at improving access and mobility throughout the entire metropolitan area to serve the forecasted growth in population and employment and to limit the amount of congestion. The five main strategies that were outlined in the plan include:

- Develop the transit system to meet the unique transit market needs.
- Double the capacity of the existing bus system.
- Double the transit passengers and support facilities.
- Develop a network of dedicated transit corridors.
- Promote “smart growth” initiatives along dedicated transit corridors.

Specifically, there are plans to expand and diversify the existing bus fleet, as it will remain the backbone of the transit system. Riders will benefit from increased service frequency, lengthened service hours, and extended geographic coverage. In addition, expansion of the bus transit network will include:

- Implementation of sufficient park-and-ride facilities.
- Development of new transit hubs and stations to facilitate and attract new riders.
- Provide passenger shelters at high demand bus stops.
- Improvements to the downtown infrastructure such as new bus lanes to accommodate the high bus volumes.

The development of dedicated transitways is also a priority, as they provide a higher level of service and typically attract more riders than the existing system. In addition, transitways provide more potential for transit-oriented development and redevelopment, which is important for meeting the regional goals for “smart growth”. The dedicated transitways being considered for the TSM Alternative are listed in Table 4-4.

**Table 4-4. Dedicated Transit Ways**

<b>Corridor</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Potential Infrastructure</b>
Riverview	Mall of America	Earl Street (Downtown St. Paul)	LRT/BRT
Minneapolis Southwest	Minneapolis CBD	Eden Prairie	LRT/BRT
Minneapolis 29th St	West Lake Street	Hiawatha Avenue	LRT/BRT
Minneapolis Northwest	Minneapolis CBD	Maple Grove	LRT/BRT
Minneapolis East to White Bear	Minneapolis CBD	White Bear	LRT/BRT
St. Paul Northeast	St. Paul CBD	White Bear	LRT/BRT
Cedar Avenue Transitway	Mall of America	Apple Valley Transit Station	LRT/BRT
Northstar	Minneapolis CBD	St. Cloud	Commuter Rail
Red Rock	Minneapolis CBD	Hastings	Commuter Rail
Dan Patch	Minneapolis CBD	Lakeville	Commuter Rail
I-494 (multiple corridors)	TH 77 (Cedar Avenue)	TH 61 and I-35E	Bus Shoulder
I-94	Minneapolis CBD	St. Paul CBD	Bus Shoulder
I-35W	County Road I	95th Avenue	Bus Shoulder
I-35E	St. Paul (TH 36)	White Bear (TH 96)	Bus Shoulder



## 5.0 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

These issues have been identified based on typical issues that are addressed in environmental analyses for similar projects, requirements of federal, state, local environmental laws, and issues identified by participants in the EIS Scoping Process. The issues are organized under five main issue areas: Social Factors, Environmental Factors, Transportation Factors, Construction Impacts, and Financial Analysis.

### Social and Economic Factors

- Land Use/Population/Employment
- Community Facilities and Neighborhood Cohesion
- Displacements and Relocation
- Archaeological and Historic Resources
- Parkland Impacts
- Section 4(f)
- Visual and Aesthetics
- Farmlands
- Personal Safety and Security
- Environmental Justice and Title VI Compliance
- Public Support for the Improvements

### Environmental Factors

- Wetlands
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Water Resources
  - Water Quality and Storm Water Management
  - Floodplains
  - Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Hazardous Materials and Contamination
- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Energy

### Transportation Factors

- Transit Ridership
- Transit Travel Times
- Impact to Daily Automobile Trips
- Regional Vehicle Miles of Travel
- Travel Operations at Key Intersections
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections
- Rail Crossing Safety
- Parking

### Construction Impacts

### Financial Analysis

- Capital Costs
- Operating and Maintenance Costs

## **5.1 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

The following social factors for No-Build, Transportation Systems Management (TSM) and the three build alternatives will be addressed in the EIS.

### **5.1.1 Land Use/Population/Employment**

Land use along the 11-mile corridor consists of a variety of uses including residential, institutional, commercial, industrial and recreational. All land use data for the study area will be collected from information available from all counties and cities affected by the proposed project and verified by field surveys. Appropriate local planning agencies will be contacted for information on local zoning regulations, area growth trends, proposed new developments, and future land use plans. Data collected will be sufficient to prepare existing and future land use maps delineating residential, commercial, industrial, public, agricultural, and undeveloped areas adjacent to the proposed station locations.

Land uses within the corridor will be reviewed to determine whether the alternatives evaluated in the EIS are consistent with existing and planned future patterns. The project alternatives will be assessed for consistency with Comprehensive Plans, Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), and growth management policies for the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Analysis of socioeconomic impacts associated with each of the alternatives will follow the FTA process and requirements. The analysis will evaluate both positive and negative impacts to the corridor, the community and site specific areas that include station areas and areas designated for future joint development. Land use changes will be analyzed, such as, opportunity for development, and zoning modifications that may result from the configuration or operation of the proposed alternatives. The socioeconomic impacts that may result from such land use changes will be evaluated and documented. Potential impacts from the standpoint of short-term and permanent employment created from construction and operation of the proposed facility will be assessed and quantified.

### **5.1.2 Community Facilities and Neighborhood Cohesion**

Alternatives will be evaluated in terms of potential effects on community facilities such as schools, churches, recreational areas, police and fire facilities, libraries and hospitals. An inventory of these facilities will be completed through aerial mapping, field observations, local comprehensive plans, contact with local officials, and research of available records. Local public service organizations will be contacted for information on their operational procedures and any comments they may have on the proposed alternatives. Potential benefits, direct impacts, and impacts to the accessibility of these facilities will be assessed. Design modifications and mitigation measures necessary to offset potential adverse impacts will be identified.

### **5.1.3 Displacements and Relocation**

The total number of potential displacements of residential, commercial, institutional and public lands will be identified for each of the alternatives. This assessment will be based on reviews of existing aerial photos and property maps showing parcels and structures and through conducting windshield surveys along the proposed alternative alignments. The estimated cost to acquire the property and relocate impacted residential or business structures will be calculated. Design modifications and mitigation measures necessary to offset potential adverse impacts will be identified. The mitigation section will

include a summary of the relocation payments and services as required under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, and as required by state law.

## **5.1.4 Archaeological and Historic Resources**

### **Archaeological Site Impacts**

A literature search and field review will be conducted to determine the locations of any historic properties that are listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places within the defined Area of Potential Effect (APE). Staff will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO), and any federally recognized Native American tribes that attach religious and cultural significance to any historic properties within the affected area. Areas of potential archaeological sensitivity will be mapped and surveyed to determine the presence of potential archaeological sites, the potential for effects, and if effects are adverse, mitigation measures that are required. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 4(f) of the U. S. Department of Transportation Act.

### **Historic Site and Building Impacts**

A literature search and field review will be conducted to determine the locations of buildings and districts listed on or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places within the APE for the proposed stations and guideway or track construction. Staff will consult with SHPO, THPO, and any federally recognized Native American tribes that attach religious and cultural significance to any historic properties within the affected area. Existing historic districts and designated buildings will be identified and mapped. The assessment will determine potential effects on historic buildings, and if effects are adverse, mitigation measures that are required. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act.

## **5.1.5 Visual and Aesthetics**

Existing visual character and aesthetic resources adjacent to the alternatives will be inventoried. The fit of the proposed facilities into the visual character of the corridor and the view of the alternatives from adjacent locations will be assessed.

During the evaluation, the potential impacts that the alternatives evaluated may have on the visual and aesthetic character of the adjacent areas will be determined. Design modifications and mitigation measures necessary to offset potential adverse impacts will be identified.

## **5.1.6 Farmlands**

In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1984, coordination with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) will be undertaken to determine if farmlands that are either bordering the corridor, or directly impacted (e.g., station locations) are of prime, unique statewide, or local importance. While conducting the field review for this portion of the data collection process, information will be gathered so that Form AD-1006 can be completed.

### **5.1.7 Section 4(f)**

Properties will be evaluated to determine if any lands will be affected by the project that are protected under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, including historic and archaeological sites, parks, and recreation, wildlife and water fowl areas.

### **5.1.8 Parkland Impacts**

An inventory of existing parks within the project corridor will be conducted through a review of aerial photography, GIS databases, County and City maps, coordination with local planners and field verification. The area, the types of amenities and services offered at these parks, as well as their significance to nearby neighborhoods, will be documented. During impact assessment, the proximity of the parks to the proposed alignment and stations will be identified to determine the extent of impacts, if any, or affects on lands protected under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. Alternatives, design modifications, or mitigation measures will be identified that are necessary to avoid or to minimize the potential impacts to properties protected under Section 4(f).

### **5.1.9 Personal Safety and Security**

Each of the proposed alternatives will be evaluated relative to personal safety and security of patrons using the system. This evaluation also considers the proximity of the alignment to schools, playgrounds, and other places that attract school age children and other persons of special concern relative to safety and security. The analysis will also consider the ability of the alternatives to incorporate adequate lighting, security personnel, video monitoring, and other measures to increase personal safety and security at the proposed stations.

### **5.1.10 Environmental Justice and Title VI Compliance**

Each proposed alternative will be assessed as to whether minority and/or low income populations will bear a disproportionate share of the impacts associated with the alternatives and the extent to which these groups will share in the benefits of the project. This will be based on a review of the demographic information within the corridor study area to assess the benefits and impacts to these areas. Service and impacts to the transit dependent population will also be considered. Mitigation measures to avoid disproportionate impacts to minority and/or low income populations will be identified, if necessary. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with U.S. DOT and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice and will include meaningful public involvement.

### **5.1.11 Public Support for the Improvements**

Based on information gathered as a result of public outreach and agency coordination, comments on various alternatives will be identified and documented. A variety of public outreach techniques will be used. These will include informal and formal presentations and meetings, workshops, interactive displays and handouts, website, e-mail, surveys, etc. Documentation of comments, telephone and conversation logs will be maintained. The types of responses gathered from the public will be assessed as being either supportive, neutral or opposed to the alternatives, and will be used to propose modifications to the alternatives to be responsive to community needs and agency concerns.



## 5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The following environmental issues for No-Build, TSM and the three build alternatives will be addressed in the EIS.

### 5.2.1 Wetlands

Wetlands that are likely to be affected by the proposed project will be identified and impacts to those wetlands will be analyzed. Wetland data to be collected will include vegetation types; observations of fauna inhabiting that area; morphology of each wetland; an evaluation of wetland function; quality and value; and potential project impacts and mitigation.

Wetlands within the study area will be identified using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, local soil surveys and aerial photography. The wetland locations and limits will then be field verified. These field verifications will utilize methodologies identified in the *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, January 1987*. Each of the alternatives will be evaluated based on the acreage and type of wetland impact. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with the Federal Pollution Control Act 404(b)(1) and U.S. DOT Order EO 11990 regarding protection of wetlands.

#### Permit Conditions

Permit-related information about wetland sites that may require dredge and fill/water quality permits or storm water discharge permits will be obtained. This information will subsequently be organized into a permit coordination package for distribution to the various jurisdictional agencies. Permit and permit review agencies include, at minimum, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

### 5.2.2 Vegetation and Wildlife

Information on vegetation and wildlife communities will be compiled from field reviews, existing literature, and environmental and regulatory agencies. General plant communities and their associated wildlife habitat along the corridor will be identified and described.

### 5.2.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

Potential habitat for federal and state species listed as endangered, threatened, or species of special concern within the project study area will be identified. Wildlife corridors and significant upland communities will also be identified. Each of the proposed alternatives will be evaluated based on potential impacts to these communities in coordination with federal, state, and local agencies and organized interest groups. The analysis will be conducted in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

### 5.2.4 Water Resources (Floodplains, Critical Areas, Storm Water Management)

#### Floodplains

Based upon review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapping, portions of the study area that lie within the floodplain will be identified. Data will be compiled through direct field

observations, coordination with applicable agencies, and as necessary, field reviews involving those agencies. On-going agency coordination will ensure the use of current accepted data and provide long-term agreement on baseline conditions and the potential course of action.

An analysis of potential floodplain impacts of each proposed alternative will be conducted in accordance with Executive Order 5650.2 and U.S. DOT Order 11988 regarding the protection of floodplains.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers and Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area/Mississippi National River and Recreation Area**

The EIS will assess the direct and potential indirect impacts to the Mississippi River through the metropolitan area, a state classified critical area. This area is not classified as a Wild and Scenic River District; however, it is identified as the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA).

### **Water Quality**

A Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE) will be conducted for the proposed project. The objective of the project will be to identify and document water quality issues relating to compliance with the Clean Water Act, and other federal, state and local regulations.

### **5.2.5 Hazardous Materials and Contamination**

A Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER) will be prepared in accordance with the procedures outlined in NEPA. Potential hazardous materials and petroleum contamination sites will be identified based on a review of public records and field inspections. Sites identified will be ranked in accordance with potential contamination impacts. Recommendations will be developed for further Preliminary Contamination Assessments (PCA) for any sites ranked as medium or high-risk contamination sites.

### **5.2.6 Air Quality**

Existing air quality in the vicinity of the project will be characterized using available air quality monitoring data and climatological and local meteorological conditions affecting air quality in the study area.

A regional mesoscale analysis will document the change in regional emissions of air pollutants resulting from the implementation of each proposed alternative. This analysis will be based on estimates of regional vehicle miles of travel and MOBILE5a emission rates for hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide.

A microscale intersection analysis will estimate existing and future concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) at those intersections near the proposed project that will experience an impact due to project generated traffic and are forecast to operate at level of service D or less, at up to six intersections. The analysis will be performed with and without the proposed project for both the project's first year of operation and its design year.

Future air quality levels estimated for the build alternatives (for each of the two analysis years) will be compared with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and predicted No-Build Alternative levels to determine the effects of each proposed alternative. Assessments will be made of the potential air

quality impacts associated with park-and-ride facilities, if proposed, using Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-approved methodologies.

The analysis will include a discussion of possible traffic control measures and physical improvements that may be necessary for each proposed alternative to attain air quality standards as specified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Potential air pollution mitigation measures will be evaluated for sites where exceedances are estimated.

The emission burden estimated for each proposed alternative will be compared with the No-Build Alternative and base year results in order to determine the consistency of each alternative with the applicable portions of the SIP.

### **5.2.7 Noise and Vibration**

Potential noise and vibration impacts, including train whistle blowing, to residential, parkland, and other sensitive land uses associated with the proposed alternatives will be evaluated using the FTA's guidance, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (April 1995). Maps and aerial photographs that show land uses within 500 feet of the project limits will be used to identify such sites. The FTA noise impact criteria are based on the existing measured noise levels along the project corridor. The noise criteria are defined by two curves, which allow increased project noise levels as existing ambient noise increases up to a point, beyond which impact is determined, based on project noise alone. These criteria incorporate both absolute noise level limits, which consider impacts caused by the build alternatives alone and relative noise increase, which considers annoyance due to the change in the noise environment, caused by the build alternatives.

Estimates of anticipated vibration levels will be made based on typical levels associated with the operations of the alternatives evaluated. Vibration-sensitive structures will include historic structures, hospital surgical wards, and structures housing sensitive equipment or processes. Impacted land uses will be identified based on potential exceedances of FTA's vibration criteria levels.

### **5.2.8 Energy**

An energy analysis to quantify and compare energy needed to construct and operate the proposed alternatives will be conducted. This will include comparing operational and construction energy requirements for each alternative.

## **5.3 TRANSPORTATION FACTORS**

The following transportation issues for the No-Build, TSM and the three build alternatives will be addressed in the EIS.

### **5.3.1 Transit Ridership**

Transit ridership forecasts will be prepared to measure the impact of each of the proposed alternatives under consideration. Ridership forecasts will be prepared using the adopted Metropolitan Council model for the Year 2020. This model was developed for the year 2020 regional model and is used as a basis for all transportation planning in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

For the EIS, forecasts of Year 2020 transit boarding (unlinked trips) will be identified for each of the alternatives, including the No-Build, TSM, and build alternatives. These forecasts will also be used to

determine the number of “new” transit trips attracted to the proposed transit system by comparing the ridership for the TSM and build alternatives with the transit ridership for the No-Build Alternative.

### **5.3.2 Transit Travel Time**

Transit travel time between major activity centers will be determined for each proposed alternative. Transit travel time will be obtained from the regional model for the Year 2020. These travel times are based in part on the operating plans developed for the build alternatives. These operating plans consider the distance between stations, Light Rail Transit (LRT) or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) acceleration and deceleration rates, station dwell times, and maximum safe operating speeds for the LRT or BRT vehicles and the types of areas that the transit system passes through. The bus travel times are based on average operating speeds for bus vehicles and forecasted delay due to congestion from the regional model.

### **5.3.3 Impact to Daily Automobile Trips**

The potential reduction in automobile trips will be determined based on a comparison of the forecasted transit ridership and the average automobile occupancy for each of the TSM and build alternatives compared to the No-Build Alternative. The transit ridership forecasts will be based on the number of linked trips for each proposed alternative. The trip forecasts will be obtained from the regional model results.

### **5.3.4 Regional Vehicle Miles of Travel**

The regional model also has the ability to estimate the regional vehicle miles of travel for each proposed alternative. This measure sums all of the miles traveled for all of the vehicle trips in the region. This allows for trip lengths as well as the number of trips to be considered when assessing the impacts of planned improvements and for comparing alternatives.

### **5.3.5 Traffic Operations at Key Intersections**

The impact of the proposed alignment alternatives on traffic operations, especially at key intersections is also an issue of concern. Major intersections that are located along the alignment will be analyzed to identify potential impacts. Intersection operations are evaluated by estimating the operational “Level of Service.” Levels of Service (LOS) range from A through F, with A representing free-flow travel conditions with little to no delay and F representing intersection failure and a breakdown of the operations of the intersection. Intersection LOS for the existing condition and Year 2020 conditions for each of the alternatives will be estimated and reported.

In addition, there are a few specific locations that have been of concern because of the potential impacts of the proposed alternatives on the coordinated system that already have high traffic volumes. These areas would not be adequately addressed by the individual intersection LOS analyses. For these detailed areas, a traffic simulation analysis will be used to evaluate the operations of the transportation network in these specific locations. This analysis will utilize the Vissim simulation software to evaluate the potential impacts of the Year 2020 build alternatives compared to the impacts to traffic operations simulated for the existing conditions, 2020 No-Build, and 2020 TSM Alternatives.

The analysis will also consider the potential traffic impacts to the area directly adjacent to the stations. This includes an assessment of traffic impacts at station access points, increased traffic volumes on neighborhood streets adjacent to the station, and the potential for neighborhood cut-through traffic.

### **5.3.6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections**

Analysis will be completed on the major pedestrian/bicycle access routes for the station locations. The relationship of the proposed alternatives evaluated in the EIS to bicycle and pedestrian connections will be assessed. Identification of existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be obtained using the County and City Master Plans and Bicycle/Pedestrian Maps and through coordination with local planning staff. Potential connections to county trails, on- and off-road bike lanes and sidewalks will be identified. Coordination with planning staff will also be a key element in identifying opportunities and obstructions for bicycle and pedestrian connections. Obstructions could include non-pedestrian friendly roadway crossings and heavy truck traffic.

### **5.3.7 Rail Crossing Safety**

The proposed rail crossing of the major arterial surface streets will be evaluated in the EIS for the LRT Alternative. The rail crossing analysis will be based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) grade-separation analysis methodology that has been established for rail crossings of arterial streets. The analysis determines whether the rail crossing can operate safely and efficiently at-grade or whether a grade-separated crossing is required. The analysis considers the forecast traffic volumes, capacity of the arterial street, the light rail vehicle speed and proposed operating headways.

The EIS will also identify where safety and operational upgrades, such as crossing gates and signals, will be provided for the proposed light rail system to ensure automobile and transit safety for at-grade crossings.

### **5.3.8 Parking**

The EIS will address the impacts to parking for each of the proposed alternatives. This includes the impacts to the parking supply or any existing parking spaces that are eliminated by the proposed improvements.

## **5.4 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS**

Short-term construction impacts of the proposed project to the surrounding environment will be evaluated and include: traffic and circulation disruption, business and economic disruption, neighborhood disruption, construction equipment noise and ground-borne vibration, dust dispersal, storm water discharge, erosion and sedimentation, utility relocations and disruptions, and public health and safety factors. Construction methods for the project will be described. Mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts will be formulated and included in the EIS.

## **5.5 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

### **5.5.1 Capital Costs**

Capital cost estimates will be prepared for engineering, design, right-of-way acquisition, stations and guideway, environmental mitigation, and the purchase of transit vehicles.

## 5.5.2 Operating and Maintenance Costs

The annual cost to operate and maintain the proposed alternatives will also be estimated. Operating costs for bus system components include labor costs for bus operations, maintenance of vehicles, and system administration costs. Components of the build alternatives include the labor costs to operate the vehicles, costs to maintain the vehicles, right-of-way, stations, and administrative costs. Comparisons between operating costs and ridership ratios will be made for each of the proposed alternatives.

## 6.0 PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

This chapter describes the Environment Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Process, the role of the Coordinating Committee, the public involvement, and agency coordination process that will be used for completion of the EIS. The Appendix contains examples of the materials used to support this process.

### 6.1 SCOPING MEETINGS

The initiation of the EIS for the Central Corridor project began with a formal Scoping Process. The EIS Scoping Process is used to publicly announce the alternatives being considered for inclusion in the Draft EIS and to seek out additional options which could be examined. The purpose of scoping is to determine the scope and significance of social, economic, and environmental issues associated with the potential alternatives and the proposed action. The process provides opportunities to inform the public, government agencies, elected officials, organizations and businesses that the EIS process is commencing and to hear about issues of concern to them. In addition to initiating dialogue on the alternatives, scoping is instrumental in identifying issues to be considered and/or resolved during the EIS.

The NOI to prepare an EIS on the project was published in the Federal Register on June 5, 2001. In addition, the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet* and announcements of the Scoping Meetings were published in the *Minnesota EQB Monitor* on June 11, 2001 which began the scoping period. The formal scoping comment period extended from June 11 to July 20, 2001. The Coordinating Committee distributed over 800 scoping booklets to federal, state and local agencies having jurisdiction in the project, all interested parties on the Coordinating Committee mailing list, elected officials, neighborhood organizations and civic groups. The scoping booklet included descriptions of the project, alternatives, and issues identified for consideration in the EIS.

Four scoping meetings were held to review the background materials distributed in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*:

- Public Scoping Meeting  
June 26, 2001  
8:00 to 9:30 AM  
Sheraton Midway – St. Paul
- Public Scoping Meeting  
June 26, 2001  
5:00 to 8:00 PM  
Lifetrack Resources Job Search Center – St. Paul
- Public Scoping Meeting  
June 27, 2001  
5:00 to 8:00 PM  
Radisson Metrodome - Minneapolis
- Interagency Meeting  
June 26, 2001  
2:00 to 4:00  
Sheraton Midway – St. Paul

Each of the scoping meetings included a presentation of the results of the tiered screening process for the Central Corridor, the alternatives recommended to be considered for inclusion in the EIS, the issues to be considered in the EIS, the schedule for EIS completion, and the public and agency involvement program to support EIS activities. Information packets were distributed at the meetings and included an agenda, comment sheet, and *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*. Display boards of the EIS process and preliminary alternatives were available for viewing before, during, and after the presentation.

In addition to appearing in the June 5, 2001 Federal Register and the June 11, 2001 *Minnesota EQB Monitor*, public notices were placed in the following newspapers on the following dates:

- Star Tribune June 11, 2001
- St. Paul Pioneer Press June 11, 2001
- Asian American Press May/June 2001
- The Bulletin May/June 2001
- Frogtown Times May/June 2001
- Grand Gazette May/June 2001
- Highland Villager May/June 2001
- Merriam Park Post May/June 2001
- North End News May/June 2001
- Seward Profile May/June 2001
- Southeast Angle May/June 2001
- Spokesman-Recorder May/June 2001

In addition to the notices in local newspapers, the public was given notice of the scoping meetings in the following ways:

- Letters of invitation to the scoping meetings were sent to federal, state, local agencies, and elected officials involved in the proposed Central Corridor project.
- Scoping booklets with meeting notices were mailed to approximately 800 people on the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) mailing list which includes federal, state and local agencies having jurisdiction in the project, all interested parties, elected officials, neighborhood organizations and civic groups.

**Table 6-1. Scoping Meeting Participation**

PLACE	DATE	TIME	# OF ATTENDEES	# OF SPEAKERS
Sheraton Midway 400 North Hamline Avenue St. Paul	June 26, 2001	8:00 to 9:30 AM	35	7
Lifetrack Resources Job Search Center 709 University Avenue West St. Paul	June 26, 2001	5:00 to 8:00 PM	24	12
Radisson Metrodome 615 Washington Avenue SE Minneapolis	June 27, 2001	5:00 to 8:00 PM	23	6
Interagency Meeting: Sheraton Midway 400 North Hamline Avenue St. Paul	June 26, 2001	2:00 to 4:00 PM	10	0
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>92</b>	<b>25</b>



Verbal questions and comments were solicited from both public and agency scoping meeting participants. Written comments were encouraged through the use of formal comment sheets, which were available at the meetings, verbal comments were transcribed by a court reporter. Table 6-1 shows the meeting place/date, number of attendees, and number of speakers who provided verbal comments at each meeting.

All written and verbal comments received at the formal public scoping meetings, by mail, or via the web page during the scoping period are recorded and addressed in Section 7.0, Scoping Comments and Responses. Comments made during the EIS Scoping Process were incorporated into the selection of the proposed alternatives for inclusion in the EIS and into the design of the impact assessment criteria to be used in evaluating the alternatives. In addition, comments received were used to help define the social, economic, and environmental factors to be addressed in the EIS, and the types of technical analyses to be completed.

## **6.2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM for the CENTRAL CORRIDOR PROJECT**

The scoping period activities are one component of the overall public outreach and agency coordination process for the proposed Central Corridor Project. The Coordinating Committee is integral to the overall Public Participation Program to be followed during the EIS process.

### **6.2.1 Central Corridor Coordinating Committee (Coordinating Committee)**

The role of the Coordinating Committee is to provide policy direction for the Central Corridor Transit Study and this EIS. Its composition is defined by state statute and its members are appointed by the agencies identified in the statute. It includes representatives from the following organizations:

- The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)
- Metropolitan Council
- Ramsey County
- Hennepin County
- City of St. Paul
- City of Minneapolis
- University of Minnesota
- Red Rock Corridor (representative votes only on commuter rail issues)
- Northstar Corridor (representative is a non-voting member)

### **6.2.2 Public Participation Process Developed for the Central Corridor**

The purpose of the public participation process is to support decision-making efforts and encourage an open, collaborative approach regarding a balanced transportation system. The key is to actively involve the community to create enthusiasm for the transit within the corridor and sustainable development along the corridor. The Central Corridor public participation process approach is to:

- Communicate with and involve local residents in refining the proposed alternatives
- Communicate with and educate the public, neighborhoods, and agencies along the corridor study area on the opportunities and impacts the project presents for their community and/or area of interest

- Involve local residents in the decision-making process thereby creating a sense of public ownership of the project
- Gain insights into issues of greatest concern or interest to the public and municipalities of the corridor study area and incorporate them into decision making factors
- Meet or exceed the requirements and intent of federal, state, and local public involvement policies in a manner that is consistent with the federal NEPA process

During the initial stages of the Central Corridor Transit Study the public was invited to participate in public information meetings, telephone surveys, and door-to-door surveys.

Regularly scheduled meetings and their purpose are as follows:

- *Coordinating Committee*, comprised of all members, meets monthly to review and approve technical analysis and set policy.
- *Project Management Team (PMT)*, consisting of senior staff of the counties and railroad authorities in the corridor and representatives from Mn/DOT, the Metropolitan Council, and Metro Transit agencies, meets once a month to review and comment on environmental and technical analysis and makes recommendations to the Coordinating Committee.
- *Working Group Team (WGT)*, includes RCRR staff, the consultant, and a public relations firm. The WGT meets twice a month to discuss project progress, schedule, and work products.

In addition, station area planning coordination will continue to take place with all municipalities along the corridor.

## 6.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH TECHNIQUES

### 6.3.1 Outreach Techniques

The following outreach techniques will be utilized throughout the proposed project to communicate with and educate the public, in addition to regularly scheduled meetings, workshops and briefings:

- Web Site – continuously updated with Central Corridor information
- Newsletters –published quarterly
- Project Update – monthly one page fact news sheet
- PowerPoint Presentation – for public presentations
- Media Alerts and News Releases – to generate interest in and educate the public on Central Corridor progress
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Survey of residents along the Central Corridor
- Presentations at meetings of neighborhood and other groups along the corridor

### 6.3.2 Public Hearings

Formal public hearings on the EIS are planned as required to meet federal, state, and local requirements. These hearings are scheduled to occur during circulation of the Draft EIS. At the hearings, the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS is provided, following a presentation of key Draft EIS findings. The comments received on the Draft EIS will be taken into consideration and addressed in the Final EIS.

## 7.0 SCOPING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This section contains the summary of responses to key issues, a list of those who commented, and a summary of written and verbal comments and responses. There was a total of 102 people/agencies who commented on the scope of the proposed project and impacts to be studied.

### 7.1 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Outlined below is a summary of the key issues raised during the EIS Scoping Process review period for the proposed Central Corridor Project, as indicated in the verbal and written comments received from 102 respondents.

#### Support for LRT

There were 29 comments supportive of LRT and the need for LRT in the Central Corridor. Of those that specified support for LRT, the majority preferred the University Avenue LRT Alternative. Three respondents favored the I-94 Alternative, and six out of the total number of respondents were specifically against the I-94 Alternative. The respondents favoring LRT commented that LRT would provide favorable economic development, travel time saving, comfort and convenience for transit within the Central Corridor. These respondents also commented that LRT would reduce automobile congestion while improving air quality and reducing noise.

#### Support for Busway/BRT

There were six comments specifically supporting the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative and the need for Busway/BRT in the Central Corridor. These respondents commented, in part, that Busway/BRT would provide a flexible and cost-effective system for transit within the Central Corridor. These respondents also commented that the University Avenue Busway/BRT would reduce the potential adverse impacts to neighborhoods and businesses that might be anticipated with the other alternatives considered.

#### Support for No-Build and TSM

There were ten comments specifically supporting the No-Build and TSM Alternatives, including improvements to the existing conventional bus system. These respondents commented, in part, that No-Build and TSM Alternatives would provide a less costly system requiring less disruption, yet providing sufficient transit flexibility. These respondents also commented that the No-Build and TSM Alternatives would reduce potential adverse impacts to neighborhoods and businesses that might be anticipated with the other alternatives considered.

#### Multi-modal Connectivity

There were a total of 37 comments addressing multi-modal connections as an important aspect of an integrated transportation system, regardless of the preferred transit mode. Of these comments, ten specifically mentioned conventional bus connections, nine noted pedestrian connections, nine addressed bicycle routes and six addressed commuter rail connections.

#### Station Alternatives

There were a total of ten comments addressing the station locations presented. These were about evenly divided between moving stations closer together in order to more conveniently serve more riders, and moving stations further apart to increase travel time saving. There was not a great deal of comment concerning the location of any of the specific station locations presented.

## 7.2 LIST OF INDIVIDUALS/ORGANIZATIONS WHO SUBMITTED COMMENTS

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
<b>Verbal Comments</b>		
Midway area resident – phone message	June 10, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supports LRT in Central Corridor</li> <li>▪ Public transit vs. mass transit</li> </ul>
Jack Rossbach SPURT Individual	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposed to LRT and BRT</li> <li>▪ Supports No-Build</li> <li>▪ Station locations</li> <li>▪ Safety</li> <li>▪ Pollution</li> <li>▪ Capital cost</li> <li>▪ Economic development</li> <li>▪ Construction impacts</li> </ul>
David Gagne Hamline Midway Coalition	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small business impacts</li> <li>▪ Parking</li> <li>▪ Bus service</li> <li>▪ LRT safety</li> </ul>
Mat Hollinshead Midway TMO	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transit money dedicated to transit projects</li> <li>▪ Economic development</li> </ul>
Lisa Lee St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposed to LRT on I-94</li> <li>▪ Opposed to LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Opposed to BRT</li> <li>▪ Support TSM</li> <li>▪ LRT safety</li> <li>▪ LRT speed</li> <li>▪ LRT capacity</li> <li>▪ LRT maneuverability</li> <li>▪ LRT operating costs</li> <li>▪ Economic development</li> <li>▪ Construction impacts</li> <li>▪ LRT capital costs</li> <li>▪ Modal transfers</li> <li>▪ LRT noise</li> </ul>
Paula Mccabee Businesses on University	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need multimodal transit system</li> <li>▪ Bus service</li> <li>▪ Pollution</li> <li>▪ Opposed to LRT on I-94</li> <li>▪ Some support for LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Some support for BRT</li> <li>▪ Construction impacts</li> </ul>
Eddie Maddox Frogtown Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public involvement</li> <li>▪ Economic development</li> <li>▪ Logistics management</li> <li>▪ Support for Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)</li> </ul>
Margaret Martin Midway Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transit expenditures need to result in definite improvement</li> <li>▪ Traffic management</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Virginia Laszewski U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scoping document</li> <li>▪ Clear Purpose and Need</li> <li>▪ Need to identify the underlying problem</li> <li>▪ Look at master transit plan</li> <li>▪ Need measurable objectives</li> <li>▪ Alternatives that were dismissed and reasons for dismissing them need to be in document</li> <li>▪ Environmental Justice</li> <li>▪ Why was Commuter Rail deferred to a separate environmental document?</li> <li>▪ Historic resources</li> <li>▪ Bus service with LRT</li> </ul>
Jack Rossbach St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public health</li> <li>▪ Environmental Justice</li> </ul>
Bruce Gaarder St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cost justification</li> <li>▪ Ridership</li> <li>▪ BRT vs. LRT</li> </ul>
Eddie Maddox Frogtown Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal Rapid Transit</li> <li>▪ TSM – Logistics System Management</li> <li>▪ Intelligent Transportation (Logistics) Systems</li> </ul>
Jack Rossbach	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public health/safety hazards</li> <li>▪ High cost of LRT</li> <li>▪ Scoping meeting notification</li> <li>▪ Community contact</li> </ul>
Lisa Lee St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mode/route comparison</li> <li>▪ Cost-benefit</li> <li>▪ LRT will duplicate existing service, not add new routes</li> <li>▪ LRT not as convenient as buses</li> <li>▪ Support for TSM</li> <li>▪ LRT will cause congestion and negative neighborhood impacts</li> <li>▪ Purchase of new buses</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> </ul>
Bonita Warms St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposes LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ North-south travel routes</li> <li>▪ Accommodation for bicycles</li> <li>▪ Spend money to enhance bus system</li> </ul>
Mat Hollinshead	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information on MTMO</li> <li>▪ Bicycling</li> <li>▪ Costs vs. Benefits</li> <li>▪ Fare collection system</li> <li>▪ Loss of lanes and traffic impacts</li> </ul>
Chip Welling St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian-friendly development</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Paul Chramosta MN Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multimodal transit</li> <li>▪ Support BRT or LRT on University</li> <li>▪ Bike/pedestrian facilities</li> </ul>
Daniel Kelley St. Paul Resident	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LRT would duplicate existing bus service</li> <li>▪ Transit expanded to suburban areas</li> </ul>
Corey Plath District 6 (not representing them)	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilize existing infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Opposition to LRT</li> <li>▪ Ridership changes</li> <li>▪ Natural resources</li> <li>▪ Utilities</li> <li>▪ Social issues/change</li> </ul>
Don Ludemann Snelling/Hamline Comm. Council Capital City Traffic Counting Alliance	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep community informed</li> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Multi-modal use</li> <li>▪ Future considerations</li> </ul>
Jack Rossbach	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mode selection criteria</li> <li>▪ Reduced headway</li> </ul>
Dean Lund Prospect Park	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bus service</li> <li>▪ Tunnel through the University of Minnesota</li> <li>▪ Future employment centers</li> <li>▪ LRT and Commuter Rail connection</li> <li>▪ Ridership</li> </ul>
Joe Ring Prospect Park	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accuracy of presentation</li> <li>▪ Length of scoping period</li> </ul>
Barb Thoman Transit for Livable Communities	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University Avenue</li> </ul>
Paul Zerby Prospect Park	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parking</li> </ul>
Matt Clark Minneapolis Resident & Wells Fargo	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue alignment through the University of Minnesota</li> <li>▪ Make transit attractive</li> <li>▪ Support for tunnel through the University of Minnesota</li> </ul>
Matt Hollinshead Midway TMO	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue alignment through the University of Minnesota</li> <li>▪ Support for tunnel through the University of Minnesota</li> </ul>
<b>Written Comments</b>		
Bill Kahn	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scoping should not serve to narrow alternatives</li> </ul>
Wt - 1	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for TSM</li> <li>▪ Support for bus service not on fixed system</li> <li>▪ LRT will negatively impact businesses</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Lisa Lee	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for No-Build or TSM</li> <li>▪ Public meeting logistics</li> </ul>
Paula Maccabee	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All alternatives should be further analyzed</li> <li>▪ Multi-modal system</li> <li>▪ Cleaner buses</li> <li>▪ Station planning</li> <li>▪ Plans for redevelopment</li> <li>▪ Public meeting logistics</li> </ul>
Dave Gagne Hamline Midway Coalition	June 26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for BRT on I-94, but concerned about cost</li> <li>▪ Parking at stations</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood involvement</li> <li>▪ Creation of small business task force</li> <li>▪ Public meeting logistics</li> </ul>
Lisa Lee	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LRT speed estimates</li> <li>▪ Information</li> <li>▪ Routes should be consistent between modes to allow for fair comparison</li> </ul>
Joseph Ring	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Favors LRT north of Prospect Park along University</li> </ul>
Bill Hoffmann	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT along University</li> <li>▪ Consider routes to Hennepin to connect St. Anthony Main area</li> </ul>
Ruthann Ovenshire	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT along University</li> </ul>
Doreen Bower 7 Corners area resident	July 18, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to Bridge #9 route</li> <li>▪ Environmental justice</li> </ul>
Wt - 2 870 Como Avenue	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT between Minneapolis and St. Paul</li> <li>▪ Concerns about public involvement process</li> </ul>
Colette Lund Riverview Tower resident	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to Bridge #9 route</li> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue bridge route</li> </ul>
David J. Wee	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to Bridge #9 route</li> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue bridge route</li> </ul>
Chip Welling Merriam Park resident	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT along University</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood issues</li> <li>▪ Natural resources</li> <li>▪ Emphasize transit over automobile</li> </ul>
Robert L. Wicker	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alternative route</li> <li>▪ Impacts of LRT on University Ave.</li> </ul>
Wt - 3	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)</li> </ul>
Wt - 4	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for BRT</li> <li>▪ Opposition to LRT</li> </ul>
Wt - 5	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for TSM</li> <li>▪ Support for Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)</li> <li>▪ Opposition to Build Alternatives</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Paul Mohrbacher	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Station locations</li> <li>▪ Utility issues</li> <li>▪ Intermodal connections</li> </ul>
Mike	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Station locations</li> </ul>
Thomas W. Balcöm – Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	July 24, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Natural Resources</li> <li>▪ Energy</li> </ul>
University of Minnesota Board of Regents	July 17, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for modified BRT</li> <li>▪ Support for northern LRT alignment</li> <li>▪ Campus considerations</li> </ul>
David J. Sonnenberg – Department of Public Works	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue alignment</li> <li>▪ Support for LRT below grade</li> </ul>
Gladys Morton – City of St. Paul	July 13, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Station location issues</li> </ul>
Mukhtar Thakur – Minnesota Department of Transportation	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-modal connections/regional connectivity</li> <li>▪ Accurate cost estimates</li> <li>▪ Impacts on multi-modal stations and other facilities</li> <li>▪ Aggressive public involvement</li> </ul>
Derek A. Crider – MetroTransit	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue alignment</li> </ul>
Ellen Watters – Midway Chamber of Commerce	June 28, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT along University</li> <li>▪ Impacts to existing businesses</li> <li>▪ Plan for economic and housing development</li> </ul>
Tony Garmers – Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association	July 16, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Support for study of 2 alignments</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood considerations</li> <li>▪ Public involvement</li> </ul>
Riverview Tower Board of Directors – Riverview Tower	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue Bridge route</li> <li>▪ Bridge #9 route concerns</li> </ul>
Merriam Park Community Council, Inc.	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dedicated right of way for existing buses</li> <li>▪ Transit improvements</li> <li>▪ I-94 and University Avenue alignments (LRT)</li> <li>▪ CP Rail “short route”</li> </ul>
Leslie Davis – Earth Protector	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to LRT on University</li> <li>▪ Opposition to I-94 option</li> <li>▪ Environmental Justice issues</li> <li>▪ Environmental concerns</li> </ul>
John Hulkonen – West Bank Community Development Corporation	July 16, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue alignment</li> <li>▪ Station locations</li> <li>▪ Opposition to the northern route</li> </ul>



INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Salvatore Franco Riverview Tower resident	July 18, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to Bridge #9 route</li> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue route</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood concerns</li> <li>▪ Widen Washington Avenue bridge for LRT</li> </ul>
Ivan Maiden	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University</li> <li>▪ Station location</li> </ul>
Steven Hauser	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bicycle component</li> </ul>
Saint Paul Vision Advisory Task Force	July 2, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for a Regional Transportation System</li> <li>▪ Transit Master Plan</li> <li>▪ Transit Planning Should Include: Land Use and Urban Design</li> <li>▪ Dedicated Source Funding for Transit</li> <li>▪ Federal Funding Opportunities</li> <li>▪ Support for Multi-Modal Transit</li> <li>▪ Support for the "Transit Triangle"</li> <li>▪ Public Communication of Need for Transit</li> </ul>
Mike Madden	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Transit</li> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University</li> </ul>
David & Kay Erickson	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on I-94</li> </ul>
Corey Plath	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to LRT on University and I-94</li> </ul>
Gary Erickson – Hennepin County Administration	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for Washington Avenue Alignment</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian Safety</li> <li>▪ Travel Times</li> <li>▪ Support for Tunnel Alternative</li> <li>▪ Opposition to Right-of-Way University Avenue/4<sup>th</sup> Street Alternative</li> </ul>
Norm Coleman – City of Saint Paul	July 19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LRT stations in Downtown St. Paul</li> <li>▪ Traffic</li> <li>▪ Parking</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian Access to Visitor Venues</li> </ul>
Myra Peterson – Red Rock Corridor Commission	June 29, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-Modal Connectivity</li> <li>▪ Committee Coordination</li> </ul>
Mathew Hollinshead	July 22, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pollution</li> <li>▪ Light Rail Tunnel Alternative</li> <li>▪ Grade Separation at Intersections</li> <li>▪ Coordination of Regional Transit Environmental Documents</li> <li>▪ Grade-Separated I-94 Alternative</li> <li>▪ Capital Costs</li> </ul>
Scott Heiderich	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grade-Separated Intersections</li> <li>▪ Support for Commuter Rail</li> <li>▪ LRT and BRT Evaluated Separately from Commuter Rail</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Eddie Maddox	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for TSM</li> </ul>
Jack Rossback	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bus Safety</li> <li>▪ Bus Pollution</li> <li>▪ Cost Benefit Analysis</li> <li>▪ Support for TSM</li> <li>▪ Public Health</li> <li>▪ Support for PRT</li> <li>▪ Opposition to LRT</li> </ul>
N.J. Plath – Riverbluff Co-op	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Superfund Clean up Site</li> <li>▪ Public Involvement</li> <li>▪ Noise and Safety</li> <li>▪ Displacement of Co-op Members</li> </ul>
Brad Mateer – Stadium Village Commercial Association	July 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposition to the Washington Avenue Alignment</li> <li>▪ Construction Impacts</li> <li>▪ Parking</li> <li>▪ Traffic</li> <li>▪ Support for Bridge 9 Option</li> </ul>
Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization	Not indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Support for Multi-Modal Transit</li> </ul>
<b>Website Comments</b>		
Wb – 1	June 13, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> </ul>
Wb – 2	June 15, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT</li> <li>▪ Extension of Red Rock line</li> <li>▪ Snelling good candidate for north/south commuter rail route</li> </ul>
Wb – 3	June 17, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for LRT Option B on University Avenue</li> <li>▪ Support for commuter rail</li> <li>▪ Station spacing</li> <li>▪ Commuter rail for downtown-to-downtown express service</li> </ul>
Wb – 4	June 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LRT or commuter rail along line that passes over I-94 and over Pelam</li> <li>▪ Station location</li> </ul>
Wb – 5	June 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support commuter rail to eliminate traffic congestion that could tie up rail lines</li> </ul>
Wb – 6	June 20, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better mass transit would reduce air pollution and traffic</li> <li>▪ Alternate route</li> </ul>
Wb – 7	June 22, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support LRT on University</li> <li>▪ Bike/pedestrian use and transit-oriented development</li> </ul>
Jon Tupy	June 21, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information</li> </ul>
Wb – 9	June 23, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for better transit</li> </ul>
Wb – 10	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for BRT</li> </ul>
Wb – 11	June 27, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transit doesn't improve a neighborhood</li> </ul>

INDIVIDUAL/REPRESENTING	DATE	TOPIC AREA(S)
Byron Johnson	June 27, 2001	▪ Information
Wb - 13	June 28, 2001	▪ Support for LRT
Wb - 14	June 28, 2001	▪ Support for LRT
Wb - 15	June 28, 2001	▪ Loss of housing
Wb - 16	June 28, 2001	▪ Project will help prevent economic breakdown
Wb - 17	June 28, 2001	▪ (repeat of 16)
Wb - 18	June 28, 2001	▪ Support for trains
Steve Cross	July 3, 2001	▪ Concerns about the public involvement process and scoping deadline
Wb - 20	July 5, 2001	▪ Suburban traffic
Wb - 21	July 10, 2001	▪ Support for LRT
Wb - 22	July 18, 2001	▪ Support for Personal Rapid Transit
Wb - 23	July 19, 2001	▪ Support for commuter rail ▪ Bike lanes
Wb - 24	July 19, 2001	▪ Support for commuter rail
Wb - 25	July 19, 2001	▪ Information

Note: Wt - indicates written comments received without respondent's identification  
Wb - indicates website comments received without respondent's identification

## 7.3 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

### 1. Midway area resident (phone message, June 10, 2001)

*Support for LRT, public transit vs. mass transit*

**Comments:**

- a. Supports LRT in Central Corridor and hopes it is implemented.
- b. Thinks "public transit" might be a better term than "mass transit."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT.
- b. Thank you for your comment.

### 2. Jack Rossbach, SPURT Individual (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Opposed to LRT and BRT, supports No-Build, station locations, safety, pollution, capital cost, economic development, construction impacts*

**Comments:**

- a. Opposes any build alternative and supports No-Build, because light rail is too costly and does not spur development.
- b. LRT stations would be too far apart and make accessibility difficult for people with disabilities.
- c. LRT poses safety risks and accident rates are much higher than for automobiles or buses.
- d. LRT will not reduce pollution.
- e. Construction would be unsightly and pose problems for utilities.
- f. Wishes the public were brought into the process sooner.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will compare the relative costs to the benefits for the No-Build and TSM Alternatives as well as the Build Alternatives.
- b. The number of persons with disabilities within a ¼-mile radius of the proposed station locations has been a key element in the preliminary locations for the transit stations. The station area planning process will continue to refine station locations, with service to persons with disabilities as an important criterion. All transit station locations will be designed for accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- c. The EIS will address safety issues regarding pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles. Accident rates for rail transit are significantly lower than accident rates for motorized vehicles in comparable geographic areas of operation.
- d. The EIS will determine the impacts to air quality (pollution) for the No-Build, TSM and all Build Alternatives, including LRT.
- e. Visual and aesthetic impacts for each of the alternatives will be determined during the EIS. Impacts to utilities, with respect to construction as well as aesthetics, will be determined during the EIS.
- f. The public participation process is mandated by NEPA and all rules were followed for this public EIS Scoping Process.

**3. David Gagne, Hamline Midway Coalition (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Small business impacts, parking, bus service, LRT safety*

**Comments:**

- a. Concerns for small and medium-sized businesses in terms of construction, parking, and other impacts on customers trying to get to their businesses.
- b. Thinks a small business task force should be set up to bring businesses into the process early.
- c. Concerns about riders waiting to interlink between modes, and thinks parking and bus stops need to be dealt with.
- d. Fears LRT will worsen University Avenue for bicyclists.

**Responses:**

- a. Impacts to small and medium businesses will be determined during the EIS. These may include impacts due to parking, noise, vibration, aesthetics, displacements, station location, as well as other impacts during the construction period and following construction.
- b. Business organizations, Downtown Partnerships and Chambers of Commerce have been directly involved in planning for the Central Corridor, and their input will continue to be solicited during the EIS. In the event that a Build Alternative is selected as part of the Locally Preferred Investment Strategy (LPIS), small businesses will be involved in the earliest stages of project design to minimize potential impacts.
- c. The EIS will determine travel timesaving, including intermodal linked trips. The EIS will also address parking and station location issues.
- d. The EIS will address the safety issues and intermodal connection issues with regard to pedestrians and bicyclists.

**4. Mat Hollinshead, Midway TMO** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Transit money dedicated to transit projects, economic development, funding*

**Comments:**

- a. Introduced missions of the Midway TMO, including dissemination of funds and addressing of congestion and pollution issues.
- b. Transportation money is dedicated to transportation and would not benefit social or other programs if not used here.
- c. Experience in other cities shows that transit is a factor in attracting new development near stations
- d. Speakers at public meetings should have time limits

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for addressing and supporting transportation issues in the Central Corridor.
- b. The federal funding available to the Central Corridor project via grant from the Federal Transit Administration is dedicated to transit projects, and would not be available to fund other social programs if not used here.
- c. Fixed facility transit improvements have resulted in increased economic development throughout the country when implemented in conjunction with transit supportive policies.
- d. To provide opportunity for all that wish to speak, we have asked all speakers to limit their comments to five minutes.

**5. Lisa Lee, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Opposed to LRT on I-94 and University, opposed to BRT, supports TSM, LRT speed, safety, capacity, maneuverability, and operating costs; economic development, construction impacts, LRT capital costs, modal transfers, LRT noise*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT on I-94 would cause demolition or takings by widening lanes and moving ramps.
- b. LRT on University would worsen traffic congestion by taking out two lanes.
- c. BRT would have some of the same problems as LRT and would have fewer stops than the current buses
- d. Buses offer much more maneuverability than LRT, because they are not on a fixed system. Buses can turn, stop frequently, and swerve to avoid pedestrians or other automobiles, and rail cannot.
- e. Could use money spent on LRT construction and utility relocation to buy more buses.
- f. Buses running on I-94 run much faster than LRT would run.
- g. Buses have lower operating cost than LRT.
- h. Economic development would occur anyway without LRT, and tax increment financing is planned to be used to encourage new development at light rail nodes. "So we are paying for these developments with our taxes."
- i. Investing in bus technology would spur the Minnesota economy, as Minnesota is the largest bus-manufacturing state in the nation, and it would provide jobs for people as drivers.
- j. LRT construction will disrupt small business operations.
- k. Implementing LRT would end up sacrificing the bus system.
- l. People don't want to go "multimodal" and have to switch modes and have more trips.

- m. "They will have soundproofing of the walls which indicates to me light rail may not be all that quiet if they need soundproofing of the walls."
- n. LRT running near Capitol will cause "massive" disruption to the geography of that area due to sloping characteristics of the land

**Responses:**

- a. Impacts due to LRT on I-94 will be determined during the EIS.
- b. Traffic impacts due to LRT on University Avenue will be determined during the EIS.
- c. Traffic impacts due to BRT on University Avenue will be determined during the EIS. Bus stops and ridership will be determined during the EIS.
- d. Bus maneuverability and pedestrian safety with LRT will be determined during the EIS.
- e. The EIS will include an economic comparison between the transit modes under consideration.
- f. Travel timesaving between the transit modes under consideration will be determined in the EIS.
- g. The EIS will include an economic comparison between the transit modes under consideration.
- h. The EIS will determine the economic benefit and costs for each of the transit modes under consideration.
- i. The EIS will determine the economic benefit for each of the transit modes under consideration.
- j. The EIS will determine construction impacts for each of the transit modes under consideration.
- k. The bus system would contribute ridership to the LRT Alternatives. LRT is not intended to replace the bus system, but to integrate with it to form a more efficient multi-modal transit system. The EIS will determine ridership for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- l. The EIS will determine ridership forecasts, including modal transfers.
- m. The impact of noise and vibration adjacent to the LRT alignment will be determined during the EIS.
- n. The environmental impacts, i.e.: natural environment, cutting and filling, changes to surface water flow, etc. will be fully determined during the EIS.

**6. Paula McCabe, Businesses on University (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Multimodal transit system, bus service, pollution, opposed to LRT on I-94, some support for LRT on University, some support for BRT, construction impacts*

**Comments:**

- a. The area used to have streetcar system that worked well and that was not taken away by policy but for people's personal gain.
- b. The EIS should be more systematic, and focus on a multimodal system.
- c. Local bus service should be maintained to compliment LRT.
- d. Buses should have bicycle racks so people can ride their bikes to stops.
- e. "If we're going to have buses, our buses in Minnesota are not clean enough...we do not have hybrid buses; we do not use biodiesel fuels; and we do not use compressed natural gas."
- f. EIS should consider LRT as well as how to make local bus service cleaner and better.
- g. Some support for buses and LRT on University, as currently buses allow employees to reach work and allow customers to see the businesses and housing.
- h. LRT on 94 is a bad idea, as it does not bring people to the areas, which have been invested in economically already.
- i. Environmental process should address differential impact of various construction schedules.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. The EIS will determine the impacts within the context of a multi-modal system.
- c. Local bus service would contribute ridership to the LRT Alternatives. LRT is not intended to replace the bus system, but to integrate with it to form a more efficient multi-modal transit system. The EIS will determine ridership for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- d. Inter-modal connections and methods to enhance ridership will be considered in the development of operating plans for the various alternatives under consideration.
- e. The EIS will consider the impacts to air quality due to busses, and recommend mitigation, i.e.: compressed natural gas, or other clean fuel technology.
- f. Thank you for your comment supporting the LRT Alternative. The feeder bus system is important in the generation of ridership for the transit alternatives, and will be developed and included in the capital and operating costs for the proposed system within the EIS.
- g. The EIS will evaluate the alternatives on University Avenue as well as I-94, and determine the impacts, including visibility of adjacent businesses and residences.
- h. The EIS will evaluate the alternatives on University Avenue as well as I-94, and determine relative ridership, land use and resulting economic development.
- i. Differential impacts will be determined in the EIS for each of the transit modes under consideration.

**7. Eddie Maddox, Frogtown Resident (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Public involvement, economic development, logistics management, support for PRT*

**Comments:**

- a. Concerned that public was not brought into the process sooner, and that decisions were made and screening done without public input.
- b. Promoting economic development as a result of transit does not generate revenue for the public, but for proprietors.
- c. Desires a more clear purpose and need – “is the purpose for just promoting more business, more development, or is the purpose to manage the logistics of us getting around to do our errands and for the goods that we have to purchase and use, to get to stores and the like?”
- d. Requests more of a focus on logistics management of a transit system
- e. Logistics models show that “if you want the most cost-effective logistics management technology then you need a configuration that is completely different than these options that have been preselected.”
- f. Personal Rapid Transit will address these needs.

**Responses:**

- a. The public participation process is mandated by NEPA and all rules were followed for this public EIS Scoping Process.
- b. The EIS will determine and fully disclose both the costs and the economic benefits to the community at-large.
- c. The Central Corridor Coordinating Committee determined the following goals and objectives for the Central Corridor Transit Study: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.
- d. The EIS will determine operations, management and “logistics” for each of the transit modes under consideration.
- e. “Logistics management” has been considered in the elements addressed in goals for the Central Corridor Transit Study. The alternatives retained for further consideration in the Draft

EIS were not "pre-selected," but represent those alternatives that best meet the goals for the corridor.

- f. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.

**8. Margaret Martin** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 8:00 AM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Transit expenditures should result in definite improvements, traffic management*

**Comments:**

- a. To justify costs of transportation improvements, we need to be sure they will be better than what we have now, and the bus system we have now works well.
- b. Would like to see more traffic management options studied because they can reduce congestion

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will determine the economic benefit for each of the transit modes under consideration, as well as the improvement to the system in terms of ridership and travel timesaving.
- b. The EIS will include an analysis of roadway improvement options such as Intelligent Transportation Systems, Travel Demand Management, bus operations and other traffic management methods.

**9. Virginia Laszewski, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** (Verbal comment, 2:00 PM June 26, 2001, Interagency Scoping Meeting)

*Scoping document, purpose and need, identify underlying problem, master transit plan, measurable objectives, dismissed alternatives and justification should be in document, environmental justice, commuter rail in separate document, historic resources, bus service with LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. Create a good purpose and need statement
- b. Identify relationship of this corridor to the metropolitan region plans
- c. "Each need or underlying problem need for action that you have should have associated measurable objectives and purposes, and your goal is then the need for action and its associated measurable objectives."
- d. Document should identify alternatives already dismissed and the substantiation for their dismissal.
- e. Make sure environmental justice communities are involved in the process.
- f. Why are only two locations being looked at for LRT, and why was this study area picked?
- g. Why is the commuter rail project being deferred to a separate Environmental Impact Statement?
- h. Consider connectivity with other modes (commuter rail).
- i. Consider possible historic significance of bridges
- j. Will TSM aspects also be incorporated into the LRT Alternative?

**Responses:**

- a. The Central Corridor Transit Study used previous studies performed for the Central Corridor, including the *Regional Blueprint*, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Long Range Transportation Plan (the *2020 Transportation Policy Plan*), the Comprehensive Plans for Minneapolis and



St. Paul, and the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* to develop the goals for the corridor. These goals were incorporated into a Purpose and Need Statement for the corridor, and the Purpose and Need Statement used for the evaluation of the potential alternatives to serve the corridor goals. During the EIS analysis, the Purpose and Need Statement will continue to be consulted as a basis for the evaluation of the alternatives under consideration.

- b. As indicated in response (a), the goals of the Central Corridor are include with those goals included with metropolitan and regional plans.
- c. The Central Corridor Transit Study determined the goals for the corridor as well as specific evaluation criteria and measures of effectiveness (MOEs) for each of the goals. These were then used to “measure” the performance of each alternative considered relative to the MOEs, advancing those alternatives that best addressed the problems or needs within the corridor.
- d. The EIS will provide a description of the retained alternatives as well as the alternatives eliminated, including the reason for elimination relative to the goals for the corridor.
- e. Environmental Justice will be included in the EIS in accordance with E.O. 12898.
- f. The two LRT alignments under consideration are the result of the analysis performed during the Central Corridor Transit Study, which eliminated, from the universe of alternatives, those alternatives which performed poorly or less well in meeting the goals for the corridor. The study area was selected as the 11-mile corridor from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul. It is bound on the north by the existing Burlington Northern Santa Fe facilities and on the south by the Canadian Pacific Railroad Shortline.
- g. Two commuter rail options were considered, however, neither performed well against the other options relative to the Central Corridor Transit Study goals. In addition, the preliminary and comparative ridership analyses indicated that the commuter rail options would not attract a significant amount of the Central Corridor travel market served by the other options considered. Given the poor relative performance of the commuter rail options relative to the established goals, the Central Corridor Project Management Team determined that the commuter rail options, BNSF South/ Commuter Rail and CP Rail/Commuter Rail, would not be retained for further consideration in the Central Corridor EIS.  
Although the two commuter rail options would not be included in the EIS, the options could be considered to have separate utility and it was decided to defer the environmental analysis of these options until the overall Commuter Rail strategy for the region is more clearly defined. Technical analysis for commuter rail would continue separately, as it will assist in the development and formulation of a more comprehensive commuter rail plan for the region. Upon advancement of the regional commuter rail plan, environmental analysis of the commuter rail options would be considered.
- h. Intermodal connections from the Central Corridor to Northstar Commuter Rail, Red Rock Commuter Rail, Hiawatha LRT, and Riverview Corridor were considered in the evaluation of the Central Corridor alternatives.
- i. The EIS will include a determination of the potential impact to historic structures, including bridges.
- k. As required under the National Environmental Policy Act, the impacts due to the TSM Alternative will be determined in the EIS and included in each of the Build Alternatives.

**10. Jack Rossbach, Ramsey County Public Health Advisory Board (Verbal comment, 2:00 PM June 26, 2001, Interagency Scoping Meeting)**

*Public health, environmental justice*

**Comments:**

- a. A separate category should be addressed called “public health assessment,” and special consideration should be given to equal justice/environmental justice issues in this context.

**Responses:**

- a. As required by E.O. 12898, Environmental Justice will be analyzed in the EIS relative to social, economic, environmental and transportation issues, and any disproportionate impact to minority or low income communities will be determined.

**11. Bruce Gaarder, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Cost justification, ridership, BRT vs. LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. "...given that the Met Council in their 2020 plan had said that if they spend \$440 million bus ridership goes up by 41 percent, we, therefore, have the official Met Council baseline that says you should get ... a ridership increase of 1,000 people per day for every \$4.4 million you spend...if this is a 15-mile stretch at...40 million a mile, we should therefore be about a hundred thousand, I believe, in extra ridership. I don't think we're going to see it."
- b. "I think we need to go with just running more buses and serve the transit riders rather than trying to get some mythical increases in land use due to the stations."
- c. There is no objective research study that a BRT system will not be treated equally in preference by riders to an LRT.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will model ridership and determine the cost per rider for each of the alternatives considered.
- b. The EIS will determine the bus ridership associated with all of the alternatives under consideration. The EIS will determine the relative level of service provided by each of the alternatives, and the anticipated ridership due to the station locations.
- c. BRT and LRT systems will be modeled in the EIS to determine the alternative with the best performance relative to the mobility goals of the Central Corridor.

**12. Eddie Maddox, Frogtown Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*PRT, TSM-Logistics System Management, Intelligent Transportation (Logistics) Systems*

**Comments:**

- a. Encourages people to consider Personal Rapid Transit
- b. No-Build is not an option – we need something.
- c. TSM should be "Logistics Systems Management" because transportation is just one part of the piece of logistics management.
- d. Intelligent Transportation Systems (Logistics Systems) should also be another element, incorporating old, current, and forthcoming technology. Personal Rapid Transit is ripe for building as an Intelligent Logistics System.

**Responses:**

- a. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.

- b. The No-Build and TSM Alternatives will be evaluated in the EIS as required by NEPA to serve as a basis of comparison for the Build Alternatives.
- c. As indicated in response (b), the TSM Alternative will be evaluated in the EIS.
- d. Intelligent Transportation Systems will be considered in the EIS as required by NEPA. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.

**13. Jack Rossbach, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Public health/safety hazards, high cost of LRT, scoping meeting notification, community contact*

**Comments:**

- a. University Avenue is already tough for bicycles and pedestrians without adding LRT or BRT, which would create a further public health hazard.
- b. The cost of building LRT is high and the construction impacts are many.
- c. The community should have been enjoined in the process earlier and better efforts should be made to engage the public in meetings such as the scoping meetings.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will evaluate safety for bicyclists and pedestrians along all of the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The EIS will determine the construction costs and disruption during construction for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- c. The public participation process is mandated by NEPA and all rules were followed for this public EIS Scoping Process.

**14. Lisa Lee, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Mode/route comparison, cost/benefit, LRT will duplicate existing service, LRT less convenient than buses, support for TSM, LRT will cause congestion and neighborhood impacts, purchase of new buses, funding*

**Comments:**

- a. BRT is along different route than LRT, and this cannot be a fair comparison.
- b. Would like more information on what the No-Build and TSM Alternatives involve.
- c. Cost should have some benefit commensurate with the cost.
- d. LRT would duplicate existing bus routes, while funding the bus system would add more service and new routes.
- e. Bus has more frequent stops, which are more accessible than the limited stops with LRT or BRT would be.
- f. Favors TSM Alternative to have more frequent, versatile service with less impacts on neighborhoods and small businesses.
- g. Taking out lanes would create more congestion and air pollution. Try putting up barriers on the middle two lanes and test out what will happen to the traffic patterns before doing any construction.
- h. Has criticisms of the self-service fare collection and the monitoring system.
- i. Stimulate the Minnesota economy by buying buses manufactured here, which include some compressed natural gas and hybrid electric buses.

**Responses:**

- a. The TSM Alternative includes those projects or activities that maximize the efficiency of the present transportation system, including all funded improvements defined in the No-Build Alternative and reasonable enhancements to the existing transportation system included in the regional long-range transportation plans, without investing in a fixed guideway transit project. The EIS will define and analyze the TSM, No-Build and "build" Alternatives under consideration.
- b. The No-Build Alternative includes all committed highway and transit facilities and service of the existing transportation system.  
The TSM Alternative represents a lower cost approach to expanded highway and transit services and facilities in the Central Corridor.
- c. The EIS will determine both capital cost and operating cost for the alternatives under consideration and compare the cost of the alternatives to the incremental ridership served.
- d. The EIS will include the adjustments to the feeder bus routes associated with the LRT and BRT Alternatives.
- e. Enhancements to the existing bus system and the LRT Alternative were both considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study. Bus system enhancements, as a stand-alone alternative, will be included in the EIS under the TSM Alternative. The LRT Alternative was retained because it did support the goals of the Transit Study.
- f. The EIS will consider the service frequency and versatility, and impacts to neighborhoods and small businesses with the TSM Alternative.
- g. Thank you for your comment regarding the testing of traffic patterns. The EIS will evaluate traffic congestion and air pollution for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- h. The self-service fare collection and monitoring has proven to be an effective method to reduce the boarding time at each of the station locations. The actual operating methodology for the selected alternative will be determined as the project progresses.
- i. The EIS will evaluate the alternatives under consideration, including impacts to air quality. Methods to mitigate reductions in air quality may consider compressed natural gas and hybrid electric buses.

**15. Bonita Warms, St. Paul Resident (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Opposes LRT on University Avenue, north-south travel routes, accommodation for bicycles, spend money to enhance bus system*

**Comments:**

- a. University Avenue needs localized transportation that can make frequent stops and move people quickly to and from where they need to go.
- b. Doesn't see how bus service can be maintained on University Avenue if there is LRT.
- c. LRT will make north-south transportation routes more difficult.
- d. LRT on University will create a barrier in the neighborhood.
- e. Make sure that whatever is built, bicycles are considered and should have access at all times.
- f. Money would be better spent enhancing the existing bus system.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will determine the relative mobility and travel timesaving for potential riders along University Avenue, and all alternatives under consideration.
- b. Bus service on University Avenue will be maintained and enhanced to complement the LRT system. No local and/or regional buses will be lost and will continue to be located on the side

of the road, as it operates today. The LRT system is not a replacement to buses, just an additional alternative.

- c. A feeder bus system running north/ south is a very important element for the success of the LRT and BRT Alternatives and will be identified in the EIS.
- d. The EIS will determine impacts to neighborhood cohesion.
- e. The EIS will consider impacts to bicyclists for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- f. Enhancements to the existing bus system were considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study. Bus system enhancements, as a stand-alone alternative, will be included in the EIS under the TSM Alternative.

**16. Mat Hollinshead, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Information on MTMO, bicycling, costs/benefits, fare collection system, loss of lanes and traffic impacts*

**Comments:**

- a. Offered information for involvement in the Midway Transportation Management Organization (MTMO)
- b. There are opportunity costs to offset the cost of LRT, and the following should be considered: road capacity that would not need to be built when high-capacity transit is built, the environmental and health costs of not changing our paradigm from an exclusive reliance on vehicles that use roads.
- c. Buses are high pollution, and we may get better fuel sources, but there are climate considerations with that.
- d. Self-service fare collection helps avoid lengthy delays in boarding and makes the system work faster.
- e. Reducing road capacity and narrowing roads actually can reduce the total traffic volume in many cases. Volume off University will go to I-94, because that is what I-94 was built for.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for addressing and supporting transportation issues in the Central Corridor.
- b. The EIS will determine "opportunity costs," and other benefits including capacity reductions to roadways and reduced environmental and health costs associated with an offset in the number of single-occupancy vehicles, for all the alternatives under consideration.
- c. The EIS will determine the air quality impacts with each of the alternatives under consideration.
- d. Thank you for your support of self-service fare collection. This will be included in the EIS, and a policy determination regarding payment will be made later in the process.
- e. The EIS will include a determination of the traffic volume and the level of congestion associated with each of the alternatives under consideration.

**17. Chip Welling, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Support for LRT, pedestrian-friendly development*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT is faster than the bus, because of the self-self service fare collection, more doors for quicker loading and unloading, and quicker vehicle acceleration.

- b. LRT would attract more riders because it is quieter, does not generate smelly diesel exhaust, and provides a smoother ride.
- c. LRT would promote more pedestrian-friendly development.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT.
- b. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT.
- c. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT.

**18. Paul Chramosta, MN Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Multimodal transit, support BRT or LRT on University, bike/pedestrian facilities*

**Comments:**

- a. Supports BRT or LRT on University with "full implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities both along and accessible to the corridor" except on I-94.
- b. Concentrate on the transit improvements and not on continuing with the current automobile use on the street

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your support of BRT or LRT on University Avenue, along with bicycle and pedestrian intermodal accessibility.
- b. The EIS will determine the most effective transit alternative for the Central Corridor. Thank you for your support of the EIS process.

**19. Daniel Kelley, St. Paul Resident** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*LRT would duplicate existing bus service, transit should expand to suburban areas*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT will duplicate existing service, would be better to expand existing bus service to new areas.
- b. Interested in more transit to areas such as Eden Prairie where there is a lot of job expansion.

**Responses:**

- a. Enhancements to the existing bus system and the LRT Alternative were both considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study. Bus system enhancements, as a stand-alone alternative, will be included in the EIS under the TSM Alternative. The LRT Alternative was retained because it did support the goals of the Transit Study.
- b. The study area for the Central Corridor does not include Eden Prairie, however this Corridor will have regional significance to the travel patterns in the entire metropolitan area. It is the goal of the Metropolitan Council to build a regional system of fixed guideway transit systems and in the future this suburban community will be considered.

**20. Corey Plath, District 6** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Utilize existing infrastructure, opposition to LRT, ridership changes, natural resources, utilities, social issues/change*

**Comments:**

- a. Supports utilizing existing infrastructure with busways or commuter rail.
- b. LRT has lots of opposition in the community and has been problematic (Hiawatha) but it still gets provided as an option.
- c. Met Council has changed routes to reflect the ridership – with LRT that can't be done.
- d. Does not agree that transit could be a building block for smart growth.
- e. Concerned about natural resource impacts of LRT, such as water and runoff issues.
- f. Concerned about utility impacts.
- g. LRT will not bring about social change because transit users are in the minority and people like the freedom of their cars.

**Responses:**

- a. Two Commuter Rail Alternatives and Busway/BRT along University Avenue were considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study. The Transit Study retained and eliminated alternatives based on the goals of the study: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations. On this basis, Commuter Rail was eliminated and Busway/BRT along University Avenue was retained for further consideration.
- b. LRT has been sustained as a viable alternative relative to the goals of the Central Corridor Transit Study. There will be many more opportunities during the public involvement process for the public to voice their opposition or support for LRT.
- c. Metro Transit can alter bus routes to complement the LRT service, which will create higher ridership of the LRT system. The LRT alignment was chosen in this corridor because of its established high transit ridership. It is the goal to create a more efficient means of transportation in this corridor and provide more transportation alternatives.
- d. The EIS will determine land use changes, station area development and smart growth enhancements for all of the alternatives under consideration.
- e. The EIS will determine the impacts to natural resources, including water quality and storm water runoff.
- f. District Energy has been involved in the planning process for this project, and utility impacts will be addressed in the EIS. The aesthetic impacts of the overhead power supply will be considered during the EIS.
- g. Social and economic impacts will be evaluated in the EIS.

**21. Don Ludemann, Snelling/Hamline CC** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Keep community informed, support for LRT, multimodal use, future considerations*

**Comments:**

- a. Make sure all documents and materials are available in multiple languages.
- b. Favors LRT along University Avenue, and keeping the community and all constituencies along University informed is critical.
- c. Right-of-way in the Corridor is valuable public space and should be opened up to a variety of modes of transportation.
- d. We need to prepare for the future, and “people who are going to be riding light rail or riding on the bus 10, 20 years from now aren't even here yet. They're coming in the future...”

**Responses:**

- a. Information sheets about the project are available in five languages (Amharic, Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese).
- b. Thank you for your comments in support of LRT along University Avenue. The public involvement process is essential to the EIS process, and there will be many more opportunities in the EIS to provide information to the public and to solicit public input from the University Avenue community as well as other affected communities for the alternatives under consideration.
- c. The EIS will determine impacts to the right-of-way for all of the alternatives under consideration. Potential impacts include social, economic, environmental and transportation issues.
- d. For planning purposes, the EIS will consider population and transportation issues through Year 2020.

**22. Jack Rossbach** (Verbal comment, June 26, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Mode selection criteria, reduced headway*

**Comments:**

- a. Would like to see the order and methodology for the criteria used in reducing the number of modes selected.
- b. Requested a definition of "reduced headway."

**Responses:**

- a. The Central Corridor Transit Study established the goals for the Central Corridor: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations. Beginning with the universe of alternatives, transit modes were eliminated on the basis of these goals, yielding the retained modes currently under consideration. The Screening reports detailing the reduction of alignments and technologies are available.
- b. "Headway" is defined as the time duration between vehicles providing transit service. "Reduced headway" indicates a reduction of the time between vehicles, and more frequent service to each of the station locations for the alternative under consideration.

**23. Dean Lund, Prospect Park** (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Bus service, tunnel through University of Minnesota, future employment centers, LRT and commuter rail connection, ridership*

**Comments:**

- a. "As you plan this system, have you considered the fact that many people will want to use a local bus either in combination with the LRT or in lieu of the LRT, and to what extent does your system really plan to continue this service?"
- b. "Has tunneling through the sandstone that lies under the University been considered as an option?" This would not interfere with surface activity.
- c. "...have you considered the possibility that the southeast industrial area which is now largely undeveloped and somewhat polluted may become a major employment center in the future and, therefore, it might be wise at this juncture to consider how your stops relate to that industrial area?"
- d. "Have you considered the possible connection between the LRT and the commuter rail line that may come, let's say, from generally northwest and along the BN line and have a station



in the industrial area?" Most designs he has seen show stations for each mode three or four blocks away.

- e. "...have you delineated between the ridership that is projected to use a local bus system as distinct from LRT?"

**Responses:**

- a. The desires of the current transit users are an important element for consideration in the EIS. The EIS will consider ridership in terms of trips linked between travel modes and the total timesaving for trips between destinations in the Central Corridor.
- b. Tunneling under the University at Washington Avenue is one of the design options that will be considered in the EIS.
- c. Station location planning took many factors into account, including employment centers.
- d. Connectivity with the commuter rail has been considered during the study.
- e. Enhancements to the existing bus system will be considered in the TSM Alternative for meeting the goals of the Central Corridor using the same population and employment for determining the suitability of the LRT Alternative. The LRT Alternative was retained because it did support the goals of the Transit Study.

**24. Joe Ring, Prospect Park** (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Accuracy of presentation, length of scoping period*

**Comments:**

- a. Is concerned regarding the accuracy of information presented.
- b. Confusion over the length of time represented for the public Scoping period.

**Responses:**

- a. All information presented during the meetings was accurate to the best of the consultants ability.
- b. As stated in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*, the comment period closed on July 20, 2001. The bottom of pages 4 and 5 is a broad timeline for the entire project schedule, and we apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

**25. Barb Thoman, Transit for Livable Communities** (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Support for LRT on University Avenue*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT on University Avenue.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue LRT. The EIS will analyze the alternatives under consideration.

**26. Paul Zerby, Prospect Park** (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)

*Parking*

**Comments:**

- a. Would like hard data on parking.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will determine the impacts to parking for the alternatives under consideration. These data will be made available to the public.

**27. Matt Clark, Minneapolis Resident & Wells Fargo (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Support for LRT, support for Washington Avenue alignment through University of Minnesota, make transit attractive, support for tunnel through University of Minnesota*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT on Washington Avenue.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT on Washington Avenue through the University of Minnesota.

**28. Mat Hollinshead, Midway TMO (Verbal comment, June 27, 2001, 5:00 PM Public Scoping Meeting)**

*Support for LRT, support for Washington Avenue alignment through University of Minnesota, support for tunnel through University of Minnesota*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT.
- b. Support for Washington alignment and tunnel.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue LRT Alternative. The EIS will analyze the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The EIS will include an analysis of an at-grade and/or a below grade option at Washington Avenue for the University Avenue LRT Alternative.

**29. Bill Kahn (Written comment, June 26, 2001)**

*Scoping should not serve to narrow alternatives*

**Comments:**

- a. Considers the narrowing of alternatives for mode and alignment analyzed in scoping "not only unwise, but illegal."
- b. Would like a copy of the consultant's "screening report."

**Responses:**

- a. As required under NEPA, the purpose of the EIS Scoping Process is to involve the public and regulatory agencies in the decision-making process, responding to their concerns and defining the issues and alternatives that will be examined in detail in the EIS.
- b. The Screening reports detailing the reduction of alignments and technologies are available by contacting the Central Corridor Coordinating Committee.

30. Wt – 1 (Written comment, June 26, 2001)

*Support for TSM, support for bus service not on fixed system, LRT will negatively impact businesses*

**Comments:**

- a. TSM should be implemented ASAP.
- b. LRT on University Avenue will negatively impact businesses and transit service.
- c. BRT is less costly, but “would like to see a blend of bus service that is not on fixed system.”
- d. “Considering current state funding issues establish improve(d) bus service and streetscape improvements.”

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the TSM Alternative. The No-Build, TSM and the LRT and Busway/BRT Build Alternatives will be considered in the EIS.
- b. The EIS will determine the impacts on businesses and transit services along University Avenue for all alternatives under consideration.
- c. The EIS will consider the relative construction and operating costs for all of the alternatives under consideration. Conventional busses will be considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study, as part of the TSM Alternative. “Fixed-guideway busses” will also be considered as part of the BRT Alternative, which met the goals for the corridor and have been retained for consideration in the EIS.
- d. Funding issues, including state funding, are an important consideration in the impacts to be determined in the EIS. Conventional bus system improvements are considered in the EIS as a part of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives.

31. Lisa Lee (Written Comment, June 26, 2001)

*Support for No-Build or TSM, public meeting logistics*

**Comments:**

- a. No-Build or TSM is best, as LRT on University will take over two lanes and cause congestion; LRT on I-94 will require widening to the equivalent of 4 lanes and cause demolition of property; and it is better to run more limited stop buses than take over 2 lanes for BRT.
- b. If a time limit is put on speakers, they should be allowed to speak again at the end of the meeting if there is time.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment in support of the No-Build and TSM Alternatives. The EIS will consider No-Build, TSM and the Build Alternatives. The EIS will determine the traffic impacts associated with LRT on University Avenue, the impacts due to demolition of property along I-94, and bus service impacts and a proposed feeder bus plan.
- b. After all speakers were given five minutes to state their comments, additional time was provided at the end of the scoping meeting for those speakers who requested additional time.

32. Paula Maccabee (Written comment. June 26, 2001)

*All alternatives should be further analyzed, multi-modal system, cleaner buses, station planning, plans for redevelopment, public meeting logistics*

**Comments:**

- a. The No-Build should be included in the analysis, and TSM should be part of any alternative, including fares and north/south routes.

- b. LRT on University Avenue should be analyzed under different construction schedules and with the retention of local 16 bus services.
- c. LRT on I-94 would draw riders off University and would undermine ridership and development.
- d. Stations should be analyzed as part of development, not in isolation. They should be close enough together to foster development, not just to provide a throughway to downtown.
- e. "Look at cleaner buses – CNG, biodiesel, hybrid engines."
- f. Public should be permitted to speak sooner at public meetings – presentations are long and offer little time for input
- g. Be sure to take redevelopment plans and increasing density into account
- h. Look at what a multimodal system looks like and plan for integrated bus, LRT, bike – decide what overall plan would work and how to create public interest in using it.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will include an analysis of the No-Build Alternative, which will serve as a baseline of comparison of effects and impacts. The EIS will include an analysis of TSM Alternative, which includes the improvements included in the No-Build Alternative.
- b. The EIS will consider the impacts during construction over the time period determined for each of the alternatives and will address a feeder bus plan.
- c. The EIS will provide an inter-dependent analysis of ridership, land use and development potential for all the alternatives under consideration.
- d. Your comments have been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams. The EIS will determine the impact on land use and development for each of the stations for the alternatives under consideration.
- e. Air quality is an important consideration for the EIS. The EIS will determine the air quality impacts for each of the alternatives under consideration and recommend appropriate mitigation, which may include less-polluting busses.
- f. Thank you for your constructive comments relating to the length of the presentation. The public participation process is mandated by NEPA and all rules were followed for this public EIS Scoping Process. The scoping meetings provide an opportunity to describe the proposed project and to receive public comments. Thank you for coming to the scoping meeting and for sharing your comments.
- g. The EIS will determine the impacts to planned redevelopment and the potential increased population density for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- h. The EIS will analyze bicycle and other intermodal methods for the purpose of determining a fully integrated transportation system that will be endorsed and used by the public.

**33. Dave Gagne (Written comment, June 26, 2001)**

*Support BRT on I-94 (cost concerns), parking at stations, neighborhoods, creation of small business task force, public meeting logistics*

**Comments:**

- a. Feels LRT on I-94 is best option, but too expensive.
- b. LRT on University is not ideal because of worsening traffic volumes and problems with bus stops near businesses.
- c. In regard to stations, parking and neighborhood involvement is crucial.
- d. Public meetings should start on time, not 15 minutes behind schedule, to show the public's time is respected.
- e. A small business task force should be set up to ensure that better information gets out, rumors get dealt with, and information on construction impacts is available to small businesses.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the I-94 LRT Alternative. The EIS will determine the capital and operating costs for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The EIS will determine the traffic volume and analyze other traffic-related issues such as congestion and parking for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- c. The EIS will determine station location and parking impacts. The station area planning process will provide more opportunities for neighborhood and public involvement.
- d. Thank you for your constructive comment about the scoping meeting schedule. The schedule for the scoping meeting was designed to allow 15-minutes for the public to review the project displays and allow for late comers to arrive before the start of the formal presentation.
- e. The EIS will determine impacts during construction, including impacts to small businesses. A major purpose of the public information plan is to disseminate correct and timely project information, and avoid rumors.

**34. Lisa Lee (Written comments, June 27, 2001)**

*LRT speed estimates, information, consistent routes*

**Comments:**

- a. Speed estimate of 25mph is too high and needs to be recalculated. "Hiawatha LRT is 32 min. over 11.6 miles or 21.75mph and it has stops farther apart than the ¼ to ½ mile listed for Central Corridor. Central Corridor also has more intersections to cross."
- b. Would like a copy of the comments from the Scoping meetings, Central Corridor newsletter, and copies of all the information on the posters and visuals of the presentation from the meetings.
- c. To be fairly compared with LRT, No-Build, TSM, and busway should be modeled to go east on 4<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown St. Paul. The busway should also take the same route through the University as LRT, instead of going through Dinkytown.

**Responses:**

- a. The LRT operating plan developed in the EIS will provide information as to running times and average speed for this mode.
- b. Copies of scoping meeting comments, newsletters and informational posters and visuals were provided.
- c. To be most effective, the BRT will operate on Cedar and Minnesota Avenues consistent with current bus routing patterns in Downtown St. Paul. The BRT will operate on the same alignment as the LRT through the University of Minnesota.

**35. Joseph Ring (Written comment, June 27, 2001)**

*LRT North of Prospect Park along University*

**Comments:**

- a. "LRT should go to the north of Prospect Park along the University transit way."
- b. "The Scoping booklet states on page 4 that the period for scoping will be open until August and on Page 5 it says July 20?"

**Responses:**

- a. Alternative alignments were evaluated during an earlier phase of this project. The alignments presented during scoping (University Avenue and I-94) were the best alignments.

- b. As stated in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*, the comment period closed on July 20, 2001. The bottom of pages 4 and 5 is a broad timeline for the entire project schedule, and we apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

**36. Bill Hoffman** (Written Comment, June 27, 2001)

*Support for LRT along University, alternate route*

**Comments:**

- a. University Avenue is the best route because it is pedestrian and business-oriented.
- b. "Please consider routes to Hennepin Ave. along 4<sup>th</sup> and along University Ave. This route would connect Old St. Anthony-St. Anthony Main area, then across river to downtown."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments in support of the LRT and Busway/BRT Alternatives along University Avenue. The EIS will determine the impacts to pedestrians and businesses for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Alternative alignments were evaluated during an earlier phase of this project. The alignments presented during scoping (University Avenue and I-94) were the best alignments.

**37. Ruthann Ovenshire** (Written Comment, June 27, 2001)

*Support for LRT along University*

**Comments:**

- a. Prefers LRT on University Avenue, but "if it is to serve residents of Prospect Park, the 27<sup>th</sup> Street station should be moved further east – perhaps to Malcolm."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting University Avenue LRT. The EIS will determine the station locations on the basis of ridership and service. There will be many more opportunities during the public involvement process for the public to provide input on station locations.

**38. Doreen Bower** (Written Comment, July 18, 2001)

*Opposition to Bridge #9 route, environmental justice*

**Comments:**

- a. Bridge #9 route would endanger the safety of children in Riverbluff Townhomes. "Children are from economically disadvantaged families and most are of color. An argument could well be made for environmental justice."

**Responses:**

- a. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time. Safety is an important consideration that will be determined in the EIS. Disproportionate impacts for all of the alternatives under consideration will be determined in the EIS in accordance with Environmental Justice requirements under E.O. 12898.

**39. Wt - 2 (Written Comment)**

*Support LRT between cities, concerns about public involvement process*

**Comments:**

- a. Believes it is vital for the long-term transportation solution of the Metro area to have LRT between Minneapolis and St. Paul, therefore supports LRT. Has too many questions about whether the I-94 or University route would be best, so will leave it to the experts.
- b. "It is important that some local service be placed on University."
- c. Criticizes Metro Transit for not honoring their own public involvement process.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT. The EIS will determine the impacts for all alternatives currently under consideration for University Avenue and I-94.
- b. The EIS will include a determination of the feeder busses to be placed on University Avenue to provide an integrated transportation system.
- c. The public participation process is mandated by NEPA and all requirements were followed by the Central Corridor Coordinating Committee for this public EIS Scoping Process.

**40. Colette Lund (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Opposition to Bridge #9 route, support for Washington Avenue Bridge route*

**Comments:**

- a. Favors rapid transit, but opposes use of Bridge #9 because of environmental, accessibility, noise, and obstruction issues. Also fears it will destroy one of the few walkway/bicycle links between the East and West Banks.
- b. Considerations such as underground rail, under the bridge rail, or widening the bridge should be the area of concentration for the Washington Avenue Bridge.
- c. "Number 9 Bridge might be used as a Mini-Bus link (without obstructing the bridge and minimum amount of noise) to connect with the Light Rail Transit systems and the East and West Bank of the University of Minnesota."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment in support of rapid transit for the Central Corridor. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration at this time. Environmental impacts, accessibility, noise, aesthetics (obstruction) and preservation and enhancement to the existing bicycle and pedestrian routes are important considerations that will be determined in the EIS.
- b. No modifications to the Washington Avenue Bridge are necessary to accommodate LRT.
- c. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration at this time. The EIS will determine impacts due to all the alternatives under consideration, including aesthetics (obstruction), noise and vibration and intermodal connections.

**41. David J. Wee (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Opposition to Bridge #9 route, support for Washington Avenue Bridge route*

**Comments:**

- a. Opposes Bridge #9 being used to support LRT or any other mass transit system.
- b. Transit should cross the river via Washington Avenue Bridge to serve the U of M community and connect with Hiawatha Corridor.

**Responses:**

- a. The Bridge #9 Alignment is not under consideration at this time.
- b. The EIS will determine impacts due to all the alternatives under consideration, including the Washington Avenue Bridge, service to the University of Minnesota and intermodal connections including the Hiawatha LRT.

**42. Chip Welling (Written Comment July 20, 2001)**

*Support for LRT along University, neighborhood issues, natural resources, emphasize transit over automobile*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT would provide faster transit service in the Corridor for many, if not most, of the people who currently ride the bus, and would provide a more appealing service that would attract new riders. LRT also has potential to promote a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- b. LRT on University gives better transit service to larger numbers of people who currently use bus service than LRT on I-94. Supports longer station spacing (scheme B) for a quicker trip.
- c. Opposes BRT because of limitations of the bus in comparison with LRT. If the preferred alternative is bus, then supports more service on existing routes rather than an expensive BRT project.
- d. In relation to statements made about enhancing neighborhoods in the Corridor, thinks statement should be made to say that "livability increases as the number and percentage of trips made by transit, walking, and to a lesser degree bicycling, increase, and the number of trips by car decrease."
- e. Thinks it should be emphasized that reducing noise created by auto, truck, and bus traffic is a key component of a safer and healthier environment.
- f. Feels "transportation improvements" should be defined as "transit improvements" in project literature. Focus should not be on minimizing operating costs, but on attracting more riders, promoting economic development, and creating pedestrian-friendly environments.
- g. Takes issues with the scoping booklet statement "expand opportunities for all users to move freely to, through, and within the Central Corridor. Feels that this includes automobile drivers, and that we should not expand highway or road capacity in the corridor.
- h. "...the evaluation of possible improvements to transit service in the Central Corridor needs to include a comprehensive comparison of car vs. transit" (i.e. present traffic volumes, but also ridership numbers).
- i. Evaluation of corridor should include consideration of costs and environmental effects of parking and road capacity increases.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT for the Central Corridor and for your focus on the important aspects of aesthetics, new ridership and promotion of a pedestrian-friendly environment, which will be determined in the EIS for all alternatives under consideration.
- b. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue LRT. The EIS will address the transit service to riders, travel timesaving and related station spacing for all of the alternatives under consideration.
- c. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT over BRT. Conventional busses must be considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study as part of a TSM Alternative consistent with Federal Planning Regulations. "Fixed-guideway busses" (BRT) did meet the goals for the corridor and have been retained for consideration in the EIS.
- d. Livability and neighborhood enhancements are important elements that will be determined in the EIS for all of the alternatives under consideration.



- e. Noise and vibration due to auto, trucks and busses, safety and a healthier environment are important elements that will be determined in the EIS for all of the alternatives under consideration.
- f. The EIS will address proposed transit improvements for the Central Corridor in the context of the integrated transportation system. The EIS will address the issues of capital and operating costs, ridership, economic development and pedestrian-friendly facilities for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- g. Although the EIS will address proposed transit improvements for the Central Corridor in the context of the integrated transportation system, the Build Alternatives under consideration are limited to LRT and Busway/BRT.
- h. Traffic and ridership will be evaluated in the EIS.
- i. The EIS will determine the impacts to the environment, parking and road capacity issues including traffic volume, congestion and level of service.

**43. Robert L. Wicker (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Alternate route, impacts of LRT on University*

**Comments:**

- a. Not in favor of I-94 alignment.
- b. LRT should connect to other modes of transportation and serve the entire Metro area, should be built where it can serve long term development, and must be a visible and faster transit alternative.
- c. Requests ideas for North Slope of the freeway be considered, as well as other variations:
  - "LRT west on University from the Capitol to about Dale, then south to the I-94 corridor.
  - LRT leaving the I-94/Soo Line just west of Prior, heading north over Short Line tracks over University Avenue with a stop at the AMTRAK station.
  - LRT proceeding north from either the AMTRAK station, or from the I-94/Soo Line corridor at Fairview, Transfer Road, Raymond Avenue, or Hwy. 280 north to the U of M busway soon to be built north of the BN main line.
  - LRT following the existing BN tracks (stopping at the University of Minnesota – Mpls., Main Campus at University Ave. S.E. and 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.E.), which would enter downtown Minneapolis via the stone arch bridge."
- d. Requests a more in-depth study of the downside to LRT construction and operation on University Avenue, specifically changes to area transit users, business owners, employees, residents, and shoppers.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment relative to the I-94 LRT alignment.
- b. Intermodal connections, service within the Metro area, travel timesaving and development are important issues that will be addressed in the EIS.
- c. Insufficient right-of-way exists in railroad corridors to construct double-track LRT. The only advantage of operating on these right-of-ways is the ability to share trackage with freight rail. This is not permissible with LRT due to FRA safety regulations, but will be evaluated as part of a separate commuter rail analysis.
- d. The EIS will determine the impacts (downside), including the period of construction and system operations, changes to bus schedules and impacts to other transit modes, and impacts to businesses, employees, residents and shoppers for each of the alternatives under consideration.

**44. Wt – 3 (Written Comment)**

*Support for Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)*

**Comments:**

- a. "The Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) circulator is the best option. It would pollute the least, use the least land, and be the safest and most convenient source of transportation."

**Responses:**

- a. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.

**45. Wt – 4 (Written Comment)**

*Support for BRT, Opposition to LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT options would be too expensive and there aren't enough riders.
- b. Prefers BRT.

**Responses:**

- a. Capital and operating costs as well as ridership are important considerations that will be determined in the EIS for each of the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative.

**46. Wt – 5 (Written Comment)**

*Support for TSM, support for Personal Rapid Transit (PRT), opposition to Build Alternatives*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT or BRT will not help current situations; accepts No-Build but prefers TSM.
- b. We should try PRT.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting TSM and acceptance of the No-Build Alternative. The EIS will address all of the alternatives under consideration, including No-Build, TSM and the LRT and Busway/BRT Build Alternatives.
- b. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations.

**47. Paul Mohrbacher (Written Comment)**

*Support for LRT, station locations, utility issues, intermodal connections*

**Comments:**

- a. Prefers LRT on University Avenue, with consistent neighborhood involvement as part of the EIS process.
- b. Should [LRT] stations be at major intersections or near them? Consider congestion and safety issues.
- c. A station is needed at Union Depot, not near it.
- d. St. Paul Union Depot should be an intermodal center for transit.

- e. Supports the Jackson/Sibley LRT alignment into downtown.
- f. "4<sup>th</sup> Street utilities moved must be worked out with nonprofit District Energy.
- g. A terminus in the Rice Park area should be in coordination with the Rice Park Association.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting University Avenue LRT. The public involvement process is essential to the EIS process, and there will be many more opportunities in the EIS to provide information to the public and to solicit public input from the University Avenue community as well as other affected communities for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The proposed LRT stations have been positioned at intersections to take advantage of traffic lights, crosswalks, and modal transfer areas. The EIS will determine traffic congestion and safety issues associated with each of the alternatives under consideration.
- c. Thank you for your comment, it has been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams and will be addressed in the EIS.
- d. Connections to intermodal facilities, including St. Paul Union Depot, are an important consideration that will be addressed in the EIS for all of the alternatives under consideration.
- e. Thank you for your comment concerning the alignment in St. Paul.
- f. District Energy has been involved in the planning process for this project, and utility impacts will be addressed in the EIS.
- g. The City of St. Paul has been involved in the planning process for this project and Rice Park as well as other parks included under Section 4(f) will coordinate the taking of parklands with all appropriate interests.

**48. Mike (Written Comment)**

*Support for LRT on University Avenue, station locations*

**Comments:**

- a. The No-Build is not feasible and shows not enough political commitment to transit.
- b. TSM will not remain effective over time.
- c. LRT along University is more convenient than LRT on I-94. Stations on University should not be too closely spaced.
- d. BRT has the advantage of crossing the river to the St. Paul River Flats area.
- e. Seems to be too many stations, and stations on east side of the University seem close together.
- f. "U of M alignment should not follow rail tracks after crossing the river. Even with a shuttle bus, it is too far from campus. I think a subway type set up, while it may cost more, will be the best fit for the University area.

**Responses:**

- a. NEPA requires the EIS to consider the No-Build Alternative as a baseline for comparison of effects and impacts.
- b. Thank you for your comment relative to TSM. NEPA requires the EIS to analyze TSM Alternative, which includes the improvements included in the No-Build Alternative and relatively low capital cost improvements that can improve capacity and operations of the existing transportation system.
- c. Thank you for your comment supporting University Avenue LRT over I-94 LRT. Your comment regarding station spacing on University Avenue will be forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams and will be addressed in the EIS.
- d. BRT follows existing roadways and could easily cross the river to serve areas south of the river.

- e. Station locations have been selected, in part, to balance ridership with travel timesaving in the corridor.
- f. U of M alignments, which follow the railroad right-of-way are no longer being considered in the EIS. At-grade and subway alternatives through the U of M are being considered and may be advanced through the environmental process.

**49. Thomas W. Balcom, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Written Comment, July 24, 2001)**

*Natural resources, energy*

**Comments:**

- a. "No-build Alternative encourages the continually growing use of individual automobiles that are polluting and energy inefficient."
- b. "This study should discuss an alternative or parts of an alternative that significantly reduces the pollutant load to the river."
- c. Complete a Natural Heritage database search for the study area.
- d. Landscaping plans should consider wildlife habitat and native plants.

**Responses:**

- a. NEPA requires the EIS to consider the No-Build Alternative as a baseline for comparison of effects and impacts.
- b. Water quality is an important consideration that will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- c. The identification of state and federally listed threatened and endangered flora and fauna species and their habitat is an important consideration that will be included in the EIS, including a Natural Heritage database search for the study area.
- d. Thank you for your comment that has been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams and will be addressed in the EIS.

**50. University of Minnesota Board of Regents (Written Comment, July 17, 2001)**

*Support for modified BRT, support for northern LRT alignment, campus considerations*

**Comments:**

- a. Recommends 2 alternatives to be evaluated:  
  - "A feasible northerly Light Rail Transit alignment over the existing #9 railroad bridge that provides for excellent connectivity with University intra-campus shuttle bus service and future developments" and; "A modified Bus Rapid Transit alignment on Washington Avenue that provides improved bus service to the University, with East and West Bank stations, and with no exclusive bus transit lanes through campus."
- b. If LRT is studied, it should be below grade in a tunnel.
- c. If a section of "the Avenue" is closed to auto traffic, that section should be vacated and the land become a part of the campus, and the University would grant the necessary easements necessary to accommodate transit.

**Responses:**

- a. The northerly LRT Alignment over Bridge 9 is not under consideration because it did not adequately support the goals and mobility, accessibility, economic, development, community and environment, and financial considerations. The BRT Alternative will be analyzed in the EIS in a configuration operation in mixed traffic through the U of M.
- b. A below grade LRT Alternative will be considered through the U of M.

- c. The redesignation and reuse of public right-of-way is a matter to be decided by local officials and is beyond the scope of this EIS.

**51. David J. Sonnenberg, Department of Public Works (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for Washington Avenue alignment, support for LRT below grade*

**Comments:**

- a. A Washington Avenue alignment is preferred based on high-density areas, high potential ridership, convenient connections to other transit, and operating cost efficiencies.
- b. Many routes could be replaced by LRT or BRT, therefore reducing bus traffic.
- c. The Bridge #9 or University Avenue alignments would not serve the University core directly, and would eliminate the proposed U of M bicycle trail on Bridge #9.
- d. The Bridge #9 alignments would incur significant right-of-way acquisition and traffic and development impacts.
- e. The University/4<sup>th</sup> alignment may impact businesses and future development of the Dinkytown bypass. Avoiding or minimizing property acquisition may incur extensive bridge or intersection work.
- f. "While an exclusive right-of-way is desirable, all measures to facilitate reliable LRT operation along Washington Avenue should be examined. All traffic engineering solutions should be examined to safely accommodate turn lanes and pedestrians, as well as mixed-flow operations with other transit vehicles or with general traffic."
- g. "If an at-grade Washington Avenue alignment is deemed infeasible, then a tunnel alignment should be examined in the Environmental Process."

**Responses:**

- a. Population density as it affects projected ridership, intermodal connections and operating costs are important considerations that will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Thank you for your comment relative to traffic reduction aspects of the transit alternatives under consideration.
- c. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time. Service to the public and preservation and enhancement of bicycle trails are important considerations that will be determined in the EIS.
- d. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time. Right-of-way acquisition costs, traffic impacts and development impacts are important considerations that will be determined in the EIS.
- e. Business impacts, property acquisitions and the costs associated with re-routing or relocation will be determined during the EIS.
- f. The EIS will analyze measures to facilitate reliable LRT along Washington Avenue, including traffic engineering solutions to safely accommodate the mixed flow of pedestrians, automobiles and transit vehicles.
- g. The Central Corridor Transit Study will examine both the at-grade and tunnel options at Washington Avenue.

**52. Gladys Morton, City of St. Paul (Written Comment, July 13, 2001)**

*Support for LRT on University Avenue, station location issues*

**Comments:**

- a. Approves array of transit alternatives in the Midway portion, and recommends proceeding to the Draft EIS with that array.

- b. Proposes three downtown station location/routing options that warrant further analysis:
  - A- "University Avenue behind Capitol to Lafayette Road, turning south and adjacent to the mainline railroad tracks, south and west on unused siding behind Diamond Products, west on Prince Street and jogging at Broadway to 4<sup>th</sup> Street, then west to the Rice Park area."
  - B- "University Avenue to Rice Street diagonally south to Constitution, south on John Ireland Boulevard diagonally across a parking lot to 12<sup>th</sup> Street to St. Peter Street, then south to 4<sup>th</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> to the Union Depot then eastward from Union Depot on 4<sup>th</sup> Street, jogging to Prince Street at Broadway, connecting to the unused railroad spur east of Diamond Products, paralleling the main tracks northward, veering northwest to the east end of University Avenue at Lafayette Road, then westward on University Avenue to Jackson Street. South of 7<sup>th</sup> Place some combination of Washington Avenue, Market and St. Peter streets should be investigated as potential one-way pairs."
  - C- "University Avenue to Robert Street south to 4<sup>th</sup>, then west terminating just west of Rice Park."
- c. Consideration should be given to providing stations within walking distance of entertainment centers, major employment centers, and shuttle services to attractions (if not directly served by stations).
- d. Alignment should avoid impacting major street connections to the Interstate and Shepard/Warner Road and at difficult intersections.
- e. Alignment should avoid major traffic streets and those carrying the bulk of bus routes.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments. The Draft EIS has been started as the alternatives from Rice Street to downtown St. Paul are being refined.
- b. These alternatives will be examined in conjunction with City of St. Paul representatives to determine how they fulfill study goals and objectives and how they perform when compared to other St. Paul CBD alternatives.
- c. The proximity of station locations to population, employment centers, attractions and other major travel destinations is an important consideration that will be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- d. The impacts of the potential alignments on traffic flow to I-94, turning movements and congestion at intersections is an important consideration that will be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- e. Traffic impacts, including impacts to bus routes is an important consideration that will be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

**53. Mukhtar Thakur, Minnesota Department of Transportation (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Multi-modal connections/regional connectivity, accurate cost estimates, impacts on multi-modal stations and facilities, aggressive public involvement*

**Comments:**

- a. Project should enhance regional mobility through multi-modal connections.
- b. Cost estimates should be reflective of today's transportation environment and should include mitigation measures and utility relocation.
- c. Impacts to the operations of multi-modal stations and other support facilities should be documented.
- d. Mn/DOT encourages strong interaction with residents, business owners and other public entities throughout the study process.

**Responses:**

- a. The goals of the Central Corridor include the regional mobility and multi-modal connection goals. The EIS will determine travel timesaving, including inter-modal linked trips to form an integrated and more efficient multi-modal transit system.
- b. Capital and operating costs are an important consideration that will be determined during the EIS. Cost estimates will be based on national data for similar systems, yet inclusive of existing conditions, mitigation requirements and utility interference specific to the existing conditions within the corridor.
- c. As required under NEPA, impacts to related facilities that are secondary or cumulative to the proposed action will be determined in the EIS.
- d. The Central Corridor Coordinating Committee agrees that effective public involvement is essential to the EIS process and there will be many more opportunities in the EIS to provide information to the public and to solicit public input from the affected communities for the alternatives under consideration.

**54. Derek A. Crider, Metro Transit (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for Washington Avenue alignment*

**Comments:**

- a. Metro Transit recommends that LRT and BRT Alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) along Washington Avenue advance into environmental analysis, because it provides direct access to University and regional destinations, allows convenient connections to other transit routes, and would allow for "increased passenger capacity with fewer trips."
- b. "Transit time reliability, pedestrian safety, and traffic are key concerns for the Washington Avenue alignment."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting the University Avenue LRT and the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternatives. These have been advanced into the EIS process and the EIS will provide analysis, including the ridership issues indicated, for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Travel timesaving (reliability), pedestrian safety and traffic issues are important issues that will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

**55. Ellen Watters, Midway Chamber of Commerce (Written Comment, June 28, 2001)**

*Support for LRT along University Avenue, impacts to businesses, plan for economic and housing development*

**Comments:**

- a. The Midway Chamber of Commerce prefers LRT on University Avenue, because "locating LRT on busy and important commercial streets allows for the greatest positive economic development impact and serves the greatest transit need."
- b. "The impact of constructing the line on existing University Avenue businesses must be carefully and aggressively managed." Commentor suggests that the City prepare a small business support plan to assist especially vulnerable businesses, and also suggests that new LRT technologies (LRT light) be considered to minimize the impact of construction on existing businesses.

- c. "University Avenue LRT should include a \$50 million dedicated economic development fund for University Avenue..."
- d. "The design of LRT on University Avenue should make the street more pedestrian-friendly and enhance the streetscape..."
- e. In addition to implementation of LRT, "bus service on University Avenue must be re-designed to retain high quality local service and service on north/south streets must be expanded."
- f. The next regional priority for LRT investment should be University Avenue, as it has strongest potential ridership and economic development benefits.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your support of the University Avenue LRT Alternative. The EIS will provide analysis, including those related to economic development issues, for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Business organizations, Downtown Partnerships and Chambers of Commerce have been directly involved in planning for the Central Corridor, and their input will continue to be solicited during the EIS. The EIS will determine impacts to businesses, including small businesses, during the construction period and recommend appropriate mitigation to limit the impacts.
- c. Outside of the Federal but could be included as part of state or local improvement.
- d. Pedestrian, bicycle and other multi-modal usage will be considered as part of the EIS.
- e. The feeder bus system is important in the generation of ridership for the transit alternatives, and plans will be developed to enhance feeder bus connections and included in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- f. Regional and local economic benefits and ridership potential are important considerations that will be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

**56. Tony Garmers, Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association**  
(Written Comment, July 16, 2001)

*Support for LRT, support for study of 2 alignments, neighborhood considerations, public involvement*  
**Comments:**

- a. The Committee supports "LRT in the Midway Corridor as part of a system benefiting the entire metropolitan area."
- b. Believe there are two possible routes through their neighborhood, and that both should be kept open for further consideration:
  - 1- turning north of University Avenue just west of Highway 280, either returning to Washington Avenue near Oak Street or proceeding north of the University campus to "Bridge 9"
  - 2- along University Avenue to Washington Avenue and across the Washington Avenue bridge
- c. Urge the planning process to focus on the needs of their neighborhood, including community involvement, protection of small businesses, minimum noise, traffic and other disruptions, maintenance of the 16B bus line, attractive landscaping and an easily accessible LRT stop.
- d. "If a route is selected going north of University Avenue, it should turn north immediately west of Highway 280, e.g. Berry Street, NOT further west at, as the maps suggest, at 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.E."



**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting the LRT Alternatives.
- b. The University Avenue LRT Alternative via Washington Avenue Alignment is currently under consideration in the EIS. The northern alignment via Bridge 9 is no longer being considered.
- c. Impacts to neighborhoods, business and small business, noise and vibration, traffic and congestion, feeder bus service and station accessibility are important considerations to be determined in the EIS. Recommendations for landscaping and accessibility have been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams and will be addressed in the EIS.
- d. Northern alignments are no longer being considered.

**57. Riverview Tower Board of Directors, Riverview Tower (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for Washington Avenue bridge route, Bridge #9 route concerns*

**Comments:**

- a. Prefer Washington Avenue Bridge route, as it would better serve the campus and Fairview-University Medical Center.
- b. Believe Bridge #9 route would have significant environmental effects and would affect the quality of life of residents of the Riverview Tower Condominium and River Bluff Townhomes.
- c. Bridge #9 route would also increase crime and compromise safety of the area.

**Responses:**

- a. The University Avenue LRT and Busway/BRT Alternatives are included in the EIS analysis.
- b. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time. As noted, the environmental effects, issues affecting quality of life and crime and safety will be addressed in the EIS.
- c. See response 57b.

**58. Merriam Park Community Council, Inc. (Written Comment, July 21, 2001)**

*Dedicated right of way for existing buses, transit improvements, I-94 and University Avenue alignments (LRT), CP Rail "short route"*

**Comments:**

- a. Special efforts should be made to secure dedicated right-of-way for existing bus lines.
- b. A pilot project of fare prepayment should be initiated to explore its feasibility for buses, and public and private groups should work together to identify how to improve the safety and efficacy of transfers between bus lines in Merriam Park.
- c. "...any transit improvements in the Central Corridor should accommodate capacity and attract ridership at least at the level of a good light rail transit system. If light rail is the only system that does this, then light rail should be the recommendation of the Central Coordinating Committee."
- d. "Both the I-94 and University Avenue alignments, using light rail technology, should be retained for further study."
- e. The commuter rail Canadian Pacific "short line" route option should also be retained as an alternative for further study.

**Responses:**

- a. The University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative currently under consideration in the EIS includes dedicated bus lanes.
- b. Self service fare collection and monitoring has proven to be an effective method to reduce the boarding time at each of the station locations for other systems. The actual operating methodology for the selected alternative will be determined as the project progresses, and may include a pilot project. The public involvement process is essential to the EIS process, and there will be many more opportunities in the EIS to provide information to the public and to solicit public input from the Merriam Park community as well as other affected communities for the alternatives under consideration. Safety and transfers between transportation modes will be addressed in the EIS.
- c. Potential ridership and transit capacities are important considerations in the impacts to be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- d. Thank you for your comments supporting the I-94 and University Avenue LRT alternatives. They are being considered in the EIS.
- e. The CP Rail Commuter Rail Alternative and other commuter rail options will be considered under separate environmental documentation.

**59. Leslie Davis, Earth Protector (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Opposition to LRT on University, opposition to I-94 option, environmental justice, environmental concerns*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT on University would worsen the traffic situation and divide the community.
- b. Consider corridors that exist near Pierce Butler Road and the commercial rail lines, which would be quicker and less costly construction.
- c. "Transportation should always be available along University in a form that presently exists...except with clean fuel buses."
- d. Environmental review should consider noise, parking and air pollution from traffic build-up due to LRT, as well as emissions from the production of electricity used for LRT.
- e. Social impacts of LRT on University should be reviewed and effects on minority populations should be given emphasis.

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will determine traffic congestion and neighborhood cohesion issues associated with each of the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Alternative alignments were evaluated in an earlier phase of this study. The alignments presented during scoping (University Avenue and I-94) were the best alternatives evaluated.
- c. Thank you for your comments supporting the No-Build and TSM Alternatives. The EIS will analyze the impacts with the No-Build, TSM and "build" Alternatives under consideration relative to air quality and recommend mitigation for busses, i.e.: compressed natural gas, or other clean fuel technology.
- d. Noise and vibration, parking impacts and air quality, including emissions from utility generating plants, are important considerations in the impacts to be determined in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- e. Environmental Justice will be included in the EIS analysis in accordance with E.O. 12898, including any disproportionate social impacts to minority populations along University Avenue.

**60. John Hulkonen** (Written Comment, July 16, 2001)

*Support for Washington Avenue alignment, station locations, opposition to the northern route*

**Comments:**

- a. "...mass transit between the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul is critical to an area wide transit system."
- b. Favors transit route on Washington Avenue as it traverses the West Bank Neighborhood, and will serve the dense populations that live, work, and study there.
- c. "Care in planning a station should be made to make a Washington Avenue station user friendly to riders so the grade differential does not pose as a barrier to use."
- d. "The northern route is not favored because it skirts the neighborhood on its northern extremities and would fail at making the transit system accessible and convenient."
- e. "Expeditious construction of a system should not overshadow good design. If we don't have time to build it right the first time we surely won't have time to build it right a second time...this is a looong ?? term infrastructure."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting transit in the Central Corridor.
- b. Thank you for your comments supporting the University Avenue LRT and Busway/BRT Alternatives on Washington Avenue, these are being considered in the EIS.
- c. Your comment regarding the Washington Avenue station has been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams. The EIS will determine the impacts due to the grade differential as it relates to accessibility to disabled persons for the alternatives under consideration.
- d. Thank you for your comment regarding a northern alignment.
- e. The Central Corridor Coordinating Committee agrees that a transit facility is a long-term infrastructure. The EIS will determine the impacts during construction and will recommend mitigation, but not at the expense of a quality design.

**61. Salvatore Franco** (Written Comment, July 18, 2001)

*Opposition to Bridge #9 route, support for Washington Avenue route, neighborhood concerns, widen Washington Avenue bridge for LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. The Bridge #9 route would be the most inconvenient, because it is at the extreme north of the West Bank neighborhood and people would have to walk from transit to common destinations.
- b. Transit along Washington Avenue would be more convenient for the West Bank neighborhood and for riders going to or coming from the East Bank campus.
- c. Proposed LRT on Bridge #9 would create noise, vibration, and safety issues for West Bank housing residents.
- d. Proposes widening the Washington Avenue Bridge for LRT, as it would minimize impact of LRT on auto traffic on the bridge and would be less expensive than a tunnel.

**Responses:**

- a. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time.
- b. The EIS will consider the University Avenue LRT and University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternatives along Washington Avenue, addressing the issues of ridership indicated.

- c. The Bridge #9 alignment is not under consideration for the Central Corridor at this time. The noise and vibration and safety issues are important considerations that will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- d. The Washington Avenue Bridge has sufficient capacity to accommodate vehicular traffic and LRT. No modifications to expand capacity are necessary.

**62. Ivan Maiden (Written Comment)**

*Support for LRT on University, station location*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT on University Avenue would be the most useful.
- b. "Station location is critical. Too many stations and travel time is too slow. Too few [sic] stations and walking distance may discourage potential rides."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue LRT Alternative.
- b. Station locations have been selected, in part, to balance ridership with travel timesaving in the corridor. Your comment has been forwarded to the station area planning and project review teams and will be addressed in the EIS.

**63. Steven Hauser (Written Comment)**

*Bicycle component*

**Comments:**

- a. Central Corridor should contain a bicycle component. Striping Ayd Mill Road now for bicycles will keep it from becoming a four-lane road and will preserve transit options for that Corridor.

**Responses:**

- a. The goals of the Central Corridor include mobility related to multi-modal connections, including bicycle routes. Preservation and enhancement of bicycle routes are an important consideration that will be determined in the EIS.

**64. St. Paul Transit Vision Advisory Task Force (Written Comment, July 2, 2001)**

*Regional transit system, transit master plan, funding, multi-modal transit, "transit triangle"*

**Comments:**

- a. Regional Transit is Essential
- b. Transit priorities need to be part of a master plan.
- c. Transit, land use and urban design need to go hand in hand.
- d. Transit needs a dedicated source of stable funding in addition to property tax revenues.
- e. There are exceptional opportunities for Federal funding for this region.
- f. The region needs a transit system that includes bus and rail.
- g. The commitment to transit needs to be substantially increased.
- h. Investment in rail components as part of a regional transit system must be initiated now.
- i. St. Paul, Ramsey County and the region need to affirm priorities for transit investments here.
- j. The priority for a major investment in transit in the region should be the triangle that encompasses the Hiawatha, Central and Riverview transit corridors.

- k. The optimum transit solution should be sought for each corridor.
- l. Transit enhancements, in addition to major investments, need to occur now.
- m. The benefits of transit and the need for transit must be communicated.
- n. A complementary balance must be found among transportation modes.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. The transit priorities, purpose and need for the Central Corridor were developed as a "master plan," in concert with regional transportation plans, including the "2020 Transit Master Plan" and municipal comprehensive plans, and include interconnection to other existing and planned transportation modes.
- c. The EIS will determine the potential for transit oriented development in the vicinity of proposed station locations, giving consideration to the land use and urban design that currently exists.
- d. Thank you for your comment. A detailed financial plan, considering all funding options will be developed in subsequent project phases.
- e. Every opportunity will be made to include federal funding sources for the proposed project.
- f. Thank you for your comment.
- g. Thank you for your comment.
- h. Thank you for your comment.
- i. Thank you for your comment.
- j. The "transit triangle" is part of the "2020 Transit Master Plan" and has been considered during the evaluation stages of this project.
- k. The EIS for all corridors, including this Central Corridor, will separately consider No-Build, Transportation System Management, and various Build Alternatives to individually determine the optimum transit solution.
- l. Thank you for your comment.
- m. Thank you for your comment.
- n. Thank you for your comment.

**65. Mike Madden (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for transit, support for LRT on University*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT on University Avenue.
- b. Support for Transit Improvements.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. Thank you for your comment.

**66. David & Kay Erickson (Written Comment)**

*Support for LRT on I-94*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT on I-94, because it has a minimal impact to the University Businesses.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.

**67. Corey Plath (Written Comment)**

*Opposition to LRT on University and I-94*

**Comments:**

- a. Opposition to LRT on University and I-94, tearing up existing infrastructure.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.

**68. Gary Erickson, Hennepin County Administration (Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for Washington Avenue alignment, pedestrian safety, travel times, support for tunnel alternative, opposition to right-of-way University/4<sup>th</sup> Street alternative*

**Comments:**

- a. Washington Avenue alignment is preferred.
- b. Would like pedestrian safety and transit travel time reliability be maintained.
- c. The Washington Avenue tunnel alternative is preferred.
- d. A railroad right-of-way or University Avenue/4<sup>th</sup> Street Alternative is not preferred.
- e. Hennepin County recommends further study of the Washington Avenue Alternatives.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. The EIS will evaluate pedestrian, travel times and safety.
- c. Thank you for your comment.
- d. Thank you for your comment.
- e. The Washington Avenue Alignment has been selected by the PMT and Coordinating Committee to be advanced through the EIS study process.

**69. Norm Coleman, City of Saint Paul (Written Comment, July, 19, 2001)**

*LRT stations in downtown St. Paul, traffic, parking, pedestrian access to visitor venues*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT stations must directly serve the key downtown service areas (RiverCenter Entertainment District, Central Business District and the Union Depot).
- b. LRT must not compromise traffic capacities on critical streets and intersections downtown.
- c. Access to parking ramps must be maintained.
- d. LRT must not compromise pedestrian access to key visitor venues.

**Responses:**

- a. Station locations in downtown St. Paul will be determined using travel time, service need, physical limitations and other key factors.
- b. Traffic Impacts will be evaluated in the EIS.
- c. Parking Impacts will be evaluated in the EIS.
- d. The EIS will evaluate pedestrian, travel times and safety.

**70. Myra Peterson, Red Rock Corridor Commission (Written Comment, June 29, 2001)**

*Multi-modal connectivity, committee coordination*

**Comments:**

- a. Red Rock Corridor would like to coordinate with the Central Corridor to address commuter rail as a regional system.
- b. Fast and convenient connections between all modes of transit must be provided.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. Thank you for your comment.

**71. Scott Heiderich (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Grade-separated intersections, support for commuter rail, LRT and BRT evaluated separately from commuter rail*

**Comments:**

- a. Recommend the grade separation at University Avenue and Snelling Street be separated with the introduction of either LRT or a dedicated busway.
- b. Allow for thorough study of all possible means of operating trains.
- c. The commuter rail alternative should be considered as one of the alternatives along with LRT and busways.

**Responses:**

- a. Grade separation at University and Snelling is not under consideration, however, safety and traffic congestion issues will be addressed in the Draft EIS.
- b. Commuter rail options in the Central Corridor are being under a separate environmental process.
- c. During the screening phases of this study commuter rail did not perform well against LRT and BRT, but was still considered a viable transit option for the corridor. It was therefore removed as part of this evaluation and moved to a separate environmental process.

**72. Mathew Hollinshead (Written Comment, July 22, 2001)**

*Pollution, light rail tunnel alternative, grade separation at intersections, coordination of regional transit environmental documents, grade-separated I-94 alternative, capital costs*

**Comments:**

- a. Pollution concerns
- b. Study the option of a light rail subway underneath Washington Avenue through the heart of the University campus and perhaps in selected other areas as well.
- c. Include in the study the idea of separating streets at busy intersections such as Snelling and University.
- d. Commuter rail EIS should be closely linked with the light rail recommendations.
- e. Retain the I-94 light rail alternative only if it can be built on stilts one level above I-94 street overpasses such as Snelling, Pascal, Lexington, Victoria and Dale.
- f. Since capital and operating costs are to be rigorously quantified criteria of the benefit/cost analysis of transit alternatives they must also be rigorously quantified for the road and motor vehicle system that provides non-transit trips and private vehicle storage such as structured parking.

**Responses:**

- a. Air quality and environmental pollution will be addressed in the Draft EIS.
- b. Thank you for your comment.
- c. Thank you for your comment.
- d. Commuter rail environmental documentation will be handled as a separate document, however, linkage with the Central Corridor preferred alternative will be included as part of that document.
- e. Thank you for your comment.
- f. The Draft EIS will include a benefit/cost analysis for all Build Alternatives as well as the No-Build Alternative (roadway improvements) and the improvements included in the TSM Alternative.

**73. Eddie Maddox (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Support for TSM*

**Comments:**

- a. Prefers TSM with Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) included, the most cost effective alternative.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.

**74. Jack Rossback (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Grade-separated intersections, support for commuter rail, LRT and BRT evaluated separately from commuter rail*

**Comments:**

- a. Concerns regarding public safety on buses, pollution, and public health.
- b. A serious cost benefit study needs to be done.
- c. Support for TSM including implementation of PRT.
- d. Opposition to LRT on University Avenue.

**Responses:**

- a. Public safety and pollution will be addressed in the EIS.
- b. The Draft EIS will include a benefit/cost analysis for all Build Alternatives as well as the No-Build Alternative (roadway improvements) and the improvements included in the TSM Alternative.
- c. Thank you for your comment.
- d. Thank you for your comment.

**75. N.J. Plath, Riverbluff Co-op (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Superfund clean up site, public involvement, noise and safety, displacement of Co-op members*

**Comments:**

- a. Concerns regarding Community Action Committee restrictions on this superfund clean up site, recommendations based on underground pollution that remains in this area.
- b. Noise and safety issues involved with placing a LRT line and station near housing.
- c. Possible displacement of Co-op members.



**Responses:**

- a. The recommended alternative through the University of Minnesota campus is Washington Avenue. The 4<sup>th</sup> Street option is not recommended for further study.
- b. Noise and safety will be addressed in the EIS.
- c. Displacement "Environmental Justice" will be addressed in the EIS.

**76. Brad Mateer, Stadium Village Commercial Association (Written Comment, July 20, 2001)**

*Opposition to the Washington Avenue alignment, construction impacts, parking, traffic, support for Bridge 9 option*

**Comments:**

- a. Opposition to Washington Avenue alignment as proposed.
- b. Concerns regarding extended disruptions during construction.
- c. Concerns regarding the effects of loss of on-street parking and traffic-handling capacity would have on small retail and commercial businesses.
- d. Urge consideration of a University Avenue alignment through the University area linking up to the Hiawatha Line via Bridge 9.
- e. Support the vision of a transit line through the University area.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. Construction impacts will be addressed in the EIS.
- c. Traffic and parking impacts will be addressed in the EIS.
- d. Thank you for your comment.
- e. Thank you for your comment.

**77. Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization (Written Comment)**

*Support for LRT on University Avenue, support for multi-modal transit*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for LRT on University
- b. Support for a mix of public transit systems in St. Paul.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment.
- b. Thank you for your comment.

**78. Wb- 1 (Website/Written Comment, June 13, 2001)**

*Support for LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. LRT makes living in the city more convenient and affordable.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT in the Central Corridor. The EIS will determine the social issues, including travel convenience and affordability.

79. Wb – 2 (Website/Written Comment, June 15, 2001)

*Support for LRT, extension of Red Rock line, Snelling good candidate for north/south commuter rail route*

**Comments:**

- a. The corridor should be served by light rail.
- b. "...the Red Rock commuter line should extend to downtown Minneapolis via the proposed southern commuter rail route. I think this would give commuters the maximum flexibility in choosing a ride."
- c. "Snelling Ave. would be a good candidate for a north-south LRT alignment because of the myriad of attractions (colleges, fair grounds, etc.) along it."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT in the Central Corridor.
- b. Issues related to the Red Rock facility are included in separate environmental documentation. The EIS for Central Corridor will address issues related to inter-modal connections, including Red Rock.
- c. The EIS will include a determination of the feeder busses to be placed on University Avenue to provide an integrated transportation system. Although Snelling Avenue is not being considered for LRT in the EIS, the EIS will consider north/ south feeder bus connections along the corridor, including Snelling Avenue.

80. Wb – 3 (Website/Written Comment, June 17, 2001)

*Support for LRT Option B on University Avenue, station spacing, commuter rail for downtown-to-downtown express service*

**Comments:**

- a. Supports LRT Option B on University Avenue, as University is ripe for the development that LRT would bring.
- b. "Stations less than one mile apart slow down service too much, no better than a bus line."
- c. Commuter rail should provide express service between the downtowns, and connect to a future high-speed rail terminal in St. Paul.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue LRT. The EIS will determine the economic and development issues for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Station locations have been selected, in part, to balance ridership with travel timesaving in the corridor. The EIS will determine optimal station locations.
- c. Commuter rail options will be considered under separate environmental documentation.

81. Wb – 4 (Website/Written Comment, June 20, 2001)

*LRT or commuter rail along line that passes over I-94 and under Pelham, station location*

**Comments:**

- a. "I would like to see light rail or commuter rail along the line that passes over I-94 and under Pelam at the Overnight Express trucking company. It would be a good station location and would tie in one block from the 16A and 50 bus routes."

**Responses:**

- a. Alternative alignments were evaluated in an earlier phase of this study. The alignments presented during scoping (University Avenue and I-94) were the best alternatives evaluated.

**82. Wb – 5** (Website/Written Comment, June 20, 2001)

*Support commuter rail*

**Comments:**

- a. Prefer commuter rail option, because it would eliminate traffic congestion hassles that will tie up the light rail lines operating on the same roads as automobiles. An accident or bad weather could affect the LRT in this scenario.

**Responses:**

- a. Commuter rail options will be considered under separate environmental documentation. The Central Corridor EIS will address potential traffic congestion due to the alternatives under consideration, including the conditions involving accidents and inclement weather.

**83. Wb – 6** (Website/Written Comment, June 20, 2001)

*Better mass transit would reduce air pollution and traffic, alternate route*

**Comments:**

- a. "Improved mass transit would hopefully reduce air pollution and traffic."
- b. "I would suggest running it from Minneapolis to Woodbury, to pick up the influx of employees driving inbound to Minneapolis in the morning and outbound at night. If it could save time and there was a park and ride lot at the station, you could have a large number of riders."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting mass transit for the Central Corridor. The Central Corridor EIS will address air quality and traffic impacts for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The EIS will analyze the alternatives under consideration. Woodbury is outside the Central Corridor study area.

**84. Wb – 7** (Website/Written Comment, June 22, 2001)

*Support LRT on University, Bike/pedestrian use and transit-oriented development*

**Comments:**

- a. Favors "LRT on University built with a focus on bicycle and pedestrian use, along with mixed-use transit oriented development."
- b. "21<sup>st</sup> century transit corridors cannot be designed to accommodate current levels of auto use – you are going to need to remove most on-street parking to allow for movement of people and goods – on foot, on the train, on bikes, on wheelchairs...not cars. Sustainability is not an option when you are spending this kind of \$\$\$."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comments supporting LRT on University Avenue. Transit oriented development and bicycle and pedestrian usage will be considered as part of the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

- b. The Central Corridor Coordinating Committee agrees that additional automobile infrastructure is not a viable long-term solution for the transportation issues in the Central Corridor and has advanced mass-transit alternatives. The Central Corridor EIS will determine impacts to on-street parking and the movement of people and goods, multi-modal connections, accessibility to handicapped persons and capital and operating costs for the alternatives under consideration.

**85. Jon Tupy (Website/Written Comment, June 21, 2001)**

*Information*

**Comments:**

- a. Please include in informational mailings.

**Responses:**

- a. Your name will be added to our contact list.

**86. Wb – 9 (Website/Written Comment, June 23, 2001)**

*Support for better transit*

**Comments:**

- a. “We need better transit...please keep up the good fight.”

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment of support for mass transit for the Central Corridor.

**87. Wb – 10 (Website/Written Comment, June 27, 2001)**

*Support for BRT*

**Comments:**

- a. BRT is more practical, and routes can change if ridership changes.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative for the Central Corridor.

**88. Wb – 11 (Website/Written Comment, June 27, 2001)**

*Transit doesn't improve a neighborhood*

**Comments:**

- a. Improved transit would not help the health of a neighborhood, because “health of a neighborhood is based purely on social and economic matters not on a bus ride.”

**Responses:**

- a. The EIS will determine transit impacts for the alternatives under consideration as they are related to the social and economic considerations in the Central Corridor.

**89. Byron Johnson (Website/Written Comment, June 27, 2001)**

*Information*

**Comments:**

- a. Would like to keep abreast of any and all pertinent issues

**Responses:**

- a. Your name will be added to our contact list.

**90. Wb – 13 (Website/Written Comment, June 28, 2001)**

*Support for LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. Take advantage of our natural land and resources and make the light rail vision a reality

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting mass transit as a means of protecting natural resources.

**91. Wb – 14 (Website/Written Comment, June 28, 2001)**

*Support for LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. Favors LRT because it will get people out of their cars.
- b. Bus is bad idea, people who already ride it don't like the service.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT for the Central Corridor as a means of reducing concerns associated with automobile usage.
- b. Conventional busses will be considered during the Central Corridor Transit Study, as part of a TSM Alternative. "Fixed-guideway busses" (BRT) did meet the goals for the corridor and have been retained for consideration in the EIS.

**92. Wb – 15 (Website/Written Comment, June 28, 2001)**

*Loss of housing*

**Comments:**

- a. Does not favor any route if it involves the loss of housing.

**Responses:**

- a. Impacts to housing will be addressed in the EIS or the mass-transit alternatives under consideration.

**93. Wb – 16 (Website/Written Comment June 28, 2001)**

*Project will help prevent economic breakdown*

**Comments:**

- a. "The Central Corridor is a great idea and we should go through with it if we don't want to have an economic breakdown in the metro area, as I fear may happen in the next 25 years if nothing is done."

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting mass-transit for the Central Corridor. Economic benefits will be further addressed in the EIS for the mass-transit alternatives under consideration.

**94. Wb – 17 (Website/Written Comment, June 28,, 2001)**

*(Repeat of 16)*

**Comments:**

- a. (Repeat of Comment 92, Wb – 15)

**Responses:**

- a. Impacts to housing will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

**95. Wb – 18 (Website/Written Comment, June 28, 2001)**

*Support for trains*

**Comments:**

- a. Support for trains, let's advance like other major cities, buses don't get it done.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting rail transit for the Central Corridor. The EIS will consider the University Avenue LRT and I-94 LRT Alternatives. Commuter Rail will be addressed separately.

**96. Steve Cross (Website/Written Comment, July 3, 2001)**

*Concerns about public involvement process and scoping deadline*

**Comments:**

- a. Concerned that a new alternative has been introduced (4<sup>th</sup> Street) and the public comment period has been "advanced" to July 20. Protests change and requests restoration of the original deadline of August 31.
- b. Concerned about staff conversations with members of the public.

**Responses:**

- a. The 4<sup>th</sup> Street alignment you refer to was considered in the past. It is being reconsidered at this time. The EIS will determine impacts for this alignment as well as impacts for all the other alternatives under consideration. The comment period end date was clearly marked as July 20, 2001 in two places in the *Central Corridor Scoping Booklet*. The referenced August date came from the general timeline showing the public meetings, comment period and scoping report taking place June – August.
- b. The schedule for the scoping meeting was designed to allow 15-minutes for the public to review the project displays, and to question Central Corridor Coordinating Committee about the project. The formal presentation and question and answer period followed and allowed opportunity for all questions and concerns to be entered into the public record.

97. Wb – 20 (Website/Written Comment, July 5, 2001)

*Suburban traffic*

**Comments:**

- a. "What % of automobile traffic on I-94 between the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis belong to residents of these two cities?"
- b. "How will Central Corridor changes eliminate the thousands of cars streaming into the twincities[sic] from 35E and 35W? If we eliminated the suburban traffic there would be no central city congestion."

**Responses:**

- a. Ridership studies will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. The Central Corridor Coordinating Committee agrees that automobile traffic is problematic for transportation in the Central Corridor. Traffic issues and congestion will be addressed in the EIS for the alternatives under consideration.

98. Wb – 21 (Website/Written Comment, July 10, 2001)

*Support for LRT*

**Comments:**

- a. Support LRT.

**Responses:**

- a. Thank you for your comment supporting LRT for the Central Corridor.

99. Wb – 22 (Website/Written Comment, July 18, 2001)

*Support for PRT*

**Comments:**

- a. "Why is Personal Rapid Transit not one of the options? It will offer the conveniences of a car, at a price that doesn't have to be subsidized, and won't have the emissions of a bus or car. A complete list of alternatives should include Personal Rapid Transit."

**Responses:**

- a. Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated during the Central Corridor Transit Study because it did not adequately support the goals: mobility and accessibility, economic development, community and environment, and financial considerations. The Central Corridor EIS will address mobility issues, capital and operating costs and air quality for the alternatives under consideration.

100. Wb – 23 (Website/Written Comment, July 19, 2001)

*Support for commuter rail, bike lanes*

**Comments:**

- a. Favors commuter rail, as "the Midway neighborhood is currently landlocked and it would make good use of the rail lines."
- b. "What about biking through the corridor? Getting to the River Road is dangerous from Midway. An obvious solution would be to make a bike lane on Snelling that leads down to

Energy Park Drive and give Energy Park a bike lane so commuters are not competing with truck traffic.”

**Responses:**

- a. The commuter rail options will be considered under separate environmental documentation. The Central Corridor EIS will consider mobility impacts to neighborhoods, including the Midway neighborhood, for the alternatives under consideration.
- b. Bicycle as well as pedestrian usage, including safety, will be considered as part of the EIS. Plans will be consistent with Metropolitan Area Bike Master Plans.

**101. Wb – 24 (Website/Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Support for commuter rail*

**Comments:**

- a. Supports commuter rail, as “the primary usage[sic] of the Central Corridor is for transit between Minneapolis and St Paul, and not nesessary[sic] for transportation to businesses between the two.” Commuter rail will move more passengers faster.

**Responses:**

- a. Commuter rail options will be considered under separate environmental documentation. The Central Corridor EIS will consider travel to businesses located in the two downtowns as well as businesses within the corridor and travel timesaving for transit riders for the alternatives under consideration.

**102. Wb – 25 (Website/Written Comment, July 19, 2001)**

*Information*

**Comments:**

- a. Request to receive *The Sentinel*

**Responses:**

- a. You have been added to the mailing list.



# **8.0 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) OUTLINE**

The following is the draft outline for the Central Corridor Project EIS, based on the determinations of the EIS Scoping Process and required federal protocol.

## **Central Corridor Environmental Impact Statement**

### **S.0 SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED**

##### **1.1 Introduction**

##### **1.2 Need for transportation improvements**

- 1.2.1 Background
- 1.2.2 Central Corridor Transit Study
- 1.2.3 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan
- 1.2.4 Demographics and Land Use in the Study Area
- 1.2.5 Specific Transportation Problems and Needs in the Study Area
- 1.2.6 Summary of Transportation Needs to be Addressed

##### **1.3 Goals and Objectives of the Central Corridor Transit Study**

##### **1.4 Project Planning Process**

- 1.4.1 Planning Context
- 1.4.2 Planned Transportation Improvements
- 1.4.3 Public Involvement Program
- 1.4.4 Role of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in Project Development
- 1.4.5 Decision at Hand

#### **2.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

##### **2.1 Alternatives Considered in the Transit Study**

- 2.1.1 Transit Study Process
- 2.1.2 Transit Study Locally Preferred Strategy
- 2.1.3 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- 2.1.4 Concept for Preliminary Engineering/ Environmental Impact Statement (PE/EIS)

##### **2.2 Alternatives Refined During the Scoping Process**

- 2.2.1 Alternatives and Design Options Presented During Scoping
- 2.2.2 Alternatives and Design Option Revised During Scoping

- 2.3 EIS Alternatives Definition**
  - 2.3.1 No-Build Alternative
  - 2.3.2 Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative
  - 2.3.3 University Avenue/ Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative
  - 2.3.4 University Avenue/ Busway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative
  - 2.3.5 Design Options And Station Locations
  
- 2.4 Capital Costs**
  - 2.4.1 Methodology
  - 2.4.2 Capital Cost Estimates
  
- 2.5 Operating and Maintenance Costs**
  - 2.5.1 Methodology
  - 2.5.2 Operating and Maintenance Costs Estimate Results
  
- 3.0 SOCIAL AND LAND USE**
  - 3.1 Demographic Overview**
  
  - 3.2 Land Use**
    - 3.2.1 Existing and Planned Land Use
    - 3.2.2 Impacts Related to Land Use
    - 3.2.3 Mitigation Measures Related to Land Use
  
  - 3.3 Neighborhoods, Community Facilities and Community Cohesion**
    - 3.3.1 Neighborhood Characteristics
    - 3.3.2 Impacts Related to Neighborhoods
    - 3.3.3 Impacts related to Construction
    - 3.3.4 Potential Mitigation Measures
  
  - 3.4 Parklands**
    - 3.4.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
    - 3.4.2 Park and Recreation Resources Inventory
    - 3.4.3 Impacts Related to Parklands
    - 3.4.4 Section 4(f) Properties
    - 3.4.5 Impacts Related to Construction
  
  - 3.5 Displacements and Partial Property Acquisition**
    - 3.5.1 Impacts Related to Displacements and Partial Property Acquisition
    - 3.5.2 Mitigation Measures Related to Displacements and Partial
    - 3.5.3 Property Acquisition
  
  - 3.6 Visual and Aesthetic Conditions**
    - 3.6.1 Visual Environment
    - 3.6.2 Impacts Related to Visual/ Aesthetic Conditions
    - 3.6.3 Impacts Related to Construction
    - 3.6.4 Potential Mitigation

- 3.7 Cultural Resources**
  - 3.7.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
  - 3.7.2 Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Resources
  - 3.7.3 Impacts Related to Historic and Archaeological Resources
  - 3.7.4 Section 4(f) Evaluation of Cultural Resources
  - 3.7.5 Mitigation Measures Related to Historic and Archaeological Resources
  - 3.7.6 Impacts Related to Construction
  
- 3.8 Safety and Security**
  - 3.8.1 Personal Safety and Property
    - 3.8.1.1 Existing Conditions
    - 3.8.1.2 Impacts Related to Personal Safety and Property
    - 3.8.1.3 Impacts Related to Construction
    - 3.8.1.4 Mitigation Measures Related to Personal Safety and Property
  - 3.8.2 Pedestrian and Vehicular Safety
    - 3.8.2.1 Existing Conditions
    - 3.8.2.2 Impacts Related to Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety
    - 3.8.2.3 Mitigation Measures Related to Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety
  
- 3.9 Environmental Justice**
  - 3.9.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
  - 3.9.2 Community Characteristics
  - 3.9.3 Impacts Related to Environmental Justice for Social Factors
  - 3.9.4 Mitigation Measures Related to Environmental Justice for Social Factors

## **4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

- 4.1 Soils, Geology and Topology**
  - 4.1.1 Soils
  - 4.1.2 Surficial Geology
  - 4.1.3 Bedrock Geology
  - 4.1.4 Topography
  - 4.1.5 Environmental Impacts
  - 4.1.6 Mitigation Measures
  
- 4.2 Hazardous Materials Contamination**
  - 4.2.1 Methodology
  - 4.2.2 Impacts
  - 4.2.3 Mitigation Measures
  
- 4.3 Air Quality**
  - 4.3.1 Existing Conditions
  - 4.3.2 Air Quality Trends
  - 4.3.3 Air Quality Analysis
  
- 4.4 Noise and Vibration**
  - 4.4.1 Noise
  - 4.4.2 Vibration Impact Assessment

- 4.5 Ecology and Habitat**
  - 4.5.1 Upland Habitat
    - 4.5.1.1 Regulations
    - 4.5.1.2 Historical Resources
    - 4.5.1.3 Existing Conditions
      - Field Investigation
    - 4.5.1.4 Impacts and Mitigation
  - 4.5.2 Aquatic Habitat
    - 4.5.2.1 Regulations
    - 4.5.2.2 Historic Resources
    - 4.5.2.3 Existing Conditions
      - Field Investigation
    - 4.5.2.4 Impacts and Mitigation
  - 4.5.3 Wetlands
    - 4.5.3.1 Regulations
    - 4.5.3.2 Existing Conditions
      - National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Maps
      - Field Investigation
    - 4.5.3.3 Impacts and Mitigation
  - 4.5.4 Rare, Threatened and Endangered Flora and Fauna Species
    - 4.5.4.1 Regulations
    - 4.5.4.2 Existing Conditions
      - State Listed Species
      - Federally Listed Species
    - 4.5.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation
- 4.6 Water Quality and Floodplains**
  - 4.6.1 General Description of the Mississippi River Basin
  - 4.6.2 Surface Water Quality in Study Area
    - 4.6.2.1 Regulations
    - 4.6.2.2 Existing Conditions
      - General Watersheds
      - Rivers
      - Lakes
    - 4.6.2.3 Impacts and Mitigation
  - 4.6.3 Floodplains and Floodways
    - 4.6.3.1 Regulations
    - 4.6.3.2 Existing Conditions
    - 4.6.3.3 Impacts and Mitigation
  - 4.6.4 Groundwater Resources
  - 4.6.5 Critical Areas
  - 4.6.6 Water Resource Impacts
- 4.7 Energy**
  - 4.7.1 Operating Energy Consumption
  - 4.7.2 Methodology
  - 4.7.3 Energy Impacts

#### **4.8 Environmental Justice**

- 4.8.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
- 4.8.2 Community Characteristics
- 4.8.3 Environmental Justice Analysis for Environmental Factors
- 4.8.4 Summary and Potential Mitigation

### **5.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

#### **5.1 Economic Conditions**

- 5.1.1 Existing Economic Activities and Developments
- 5.1.2 Population, Housing and Employment
- 5.1.3 Regional Economic Effects
- 5.1.4 Conclusions Related to Economic Effects

#### **5.2 Station Area Development**

- 5.2.1 Station Location Selection and Analysis
  - 5.2.1.1 Land Use, Community Nodes and Major Activity Centers
  - 5.2.1.2 Urban Environment
  - 5.2.1.3 Station Options
- 5.2.2 Station Area Impact Assessment
  - 5.2.2.1 Station Site Plans
  - 5.2.2.2 Station Function
  - 5.2.2.3 Station Area Economic Impacts
- 5.2.3 Mitigation Measures for Station Areas

#### **5.3 Environmental Justice**

- 5.3.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
- 5.3.2 Community Characteristics
- 5.3.3 Environmental Justice Analysis for Economic Factors
- 5.3.4 Summary and Potential Mitigation

### **6.0 TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS**

#### **6.1 Roadway Operations**

- 6.1.1 Existing Roadways
- 6.1.2 Planned Roadway System
- 6.1.3 Existing Traffic Conditions and Levels of Service (LOS)
- 6.1.4 Year 2020 Roadway Segment and Intersection Levels of Service
- 6.1.5 Grade Separated Crossings of the Surface Street System
- 6.1.6 Assessment of Traffic Impacts at Station Locations
- 6.1.7 System Safety

#### **6.2 Bus Transit Operations**

- 6.2.1 Existing Bus Transit Services
- 6.2.2 Planned Bus Transit Services
- 6.2.3 Projected Bus Transit Operations

#### **6.3 Rail Transit Ridership and Operating Costs**

- 6.3.1 Rail Transit Operating Plans
- 6.3.2 Ridership
- 6.3.3 Operating Costs

- 6.4 Regional Travel Demand Summary**
  - 6.4.1 Total Daily Transit Boarding
  - 6.4.2 Total Daily Automobile Person Trips
  - 6.4.3 Total Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel
  - 6.4.4 Transit Travel Times
  
- 6.5 Parking**
  - 6.5.1 Existing Parking
  - 6.5.2 Parking Impacts
  
- 6.6 Railroad Facilities and Services – St. Paul Union Depot**
  - 6.6.1 Existing and Future Railroad Facilities and Services
  - 6.6.2 Railroad Facilities and Services Impacts
  
- 6.7 Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment**
  - 6.7.1 Existing Conditions
  - 6.7.2 Impacts
  - 6.7.3 Potential Mitigation
  
- 6.8 Utilities**
  - 6.8.1 Existing Utilities
  - 6.8.2 Utility Impacts
  
- 6.9 Effects Due to Construction**
  - 6.9.1 Construction Noise
  - 6.9.2 Construction Vibration
  - 6.9.3 Access and Distribution of Traffic
  - 6.9.4 Excavations, Fill Material, Debris and Spoil
  - 6.9.5 Construction Staging Areas
  
- 6.10 Environmental Justice**
  - 6.10.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
  - 6.10.2 Community Characteristics
  - 6.10.3 Environmental Justice Analysis for Transportation Factors
  - 6.10.4 Summary and Potential Mitigation
  
- 7.0 EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES**
  - 7.1 Evaluation Methodology**
    - 7.1.1 Project Goals and Objectives
    - 7.1.2 Evaluation Measures
  
  - 7.2 Evaluation Against the Goals and Objectives of the Central Corridor Transit Study**
    - 7.2.1 Goal 1 – Mobility and Accessibility
    - 7.2.2 Goal 2 – Economic Development
    - 7.2.3 Goal 3 – Community and the Environment
    - 7.2.4 Goal 4 – Financial Consideration
    - 7.2.5 Summary of Alternatives Evaluation

- 7.3 Equity Consideration**
  - 7.3.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements
  - 7.3.2 Community Characteristics
  - 7.3.3 Environmental Justice Conclusions
  
- 7.4 Section 5309 New Starts Criteria**
  - 7.4.1 Purpose
  - 7.4.2 Methodology
  - 7.4.3 New Starts Criteria Submittal for the Central Corridor Project
  
- 7.5 Financial Analysis**
  - 7.5.1 Overview of Financial Planning Process and Structure
  - 7.5.2 Analysis Structure
  - 7.5.3 Sources and Uses of Funds Analysis

## **8.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

- 8.1 Introduction**
  
- 8.2 Outreach Techniques**
  
- 8.3 Project Scoping**
  - 8.3.1 Distribution of Scoping Meetings Notice
  - 8.3.2 Notice of Scoping Meetings in Newspapers
  - 8.3.3 Agency Scoping Meeting
  - 8.3.4 Public Scoping Meetings
  - 8.3.5 Distribution of Scoping Booklets
  - 8.3.6 Station Area Planning Open Houses
  
- 8.4 Committees**
  - 8.4.1 Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)
  - 8.4.2 Twin Cities Metropolitan Council
  - 8.4.3 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
  - 8.4.4 Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
  - 8.4.5 Central Corridor Coordinating Committee
  - 8.4.6 Project Management Team
  - 8.4.7 Working Group Team
  - 8.4.8 Local Jurisdictions and Boards
  - 8.4.9 Citizen Groups
  
- 8.5 Station Area Planning Workshops**
  
- 8.6 Other Outreach Activities**
  - 8.6.1 Other Meetings/Events
  - 8.6.2 Speakers Bureau and Business Briefings
  
- 8.7 Public Comments and Coordination**
  
- 8.8 Public Notification**
  
- 8.9 Project Office**

**8.10 Contacts**

**8.11 Recipients of DEIS and Correspondence**

**9.0 APPENDICES**

- A. LIST OF PREPARERS
- B. DISTRIBUTION LIST
- C. LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS
- D. DATA SOURCES
- E. AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT SUPPORTING MATERIAL
- F. CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING LISTED SPECIES
- G. WATER QUALITY IMPACT EVALUATION CRITERIA
- H. FLOODPLAIN MAPS
- I. FINANCIAL PLAN SPREDSHEETS
- J. GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS
- K. COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE