

Bottineau Transitway

Draft Environmental Impact Statement



Hennepin County
Regional Railroad Authority
Minnesota



FEDERAL TRANSIT
ADMINISTRATION



March 2014

BOTTINEAU TRANSITWAY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Prepared by:
United State Department of Transportation (US DOT)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

And

Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, Minnesota

Metropolitan Council, Minnesota

In cooperation with
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

Pursuant to:

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 4321 *et seq.*; Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 C.F.R. Section 1500 *et seq.*, Implementing NEPA; Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act; A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Pub. L. No. 109-59 (Aug. 10, 2005); Federal Transit Laws, 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53; Environmental Impact and Related Procedures, 23 C.F.R. Part 771, a joint regulation of the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration implementing NEPA and CEQ regulations; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 16 U.S.C. Section 470(f); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, 49 U.S.C. Section 303; Section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 16 U.S.C. Section 4601 - 4 *et seq.*; Clean Air Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 7401 *et seq.*; Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 4601 *et seq.*; Executive Order No. 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations); Executive Order No. 13166 (Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency); Executive Order No. 11988 (Floodplain Management); other applicable Federal laws and procedures; and all relevant laws and procedures of the State of Minnesota.

FTA will issue a single Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision document pursuant to Pub. L. 112-141, 126 Stat. 405, Section 1319(b) unless FTA determines statutory criteria or practicability considerations preclude issue of the combined document pursuant to Section 1319.

3-24-2014

Date of Approval



Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
Region V

3/25/14

Date of Approval



Executive Director
Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority

3-25-2014

Date of Approval



Director, Metropolitan Transportation Services
Metropolitan Council

ABSTRACT

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) describes the transportation and environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of a light rail transit (LRT) project to improve transit service in the Bottineau Transitway Corridor in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The study area is bounded roughly by MN 55 to the south, TH 610 to the north, I-94 to the northwest and Bottineau Boulevard (County Road 81) to the west, and West Broadway Avenue (County Road 103) to the east. The effects of the No-Build Alternative, Enhanced Bus/Transportation Systems Management Alternative, and LRT Alternatives are evaluated and compared across a range of subject areas related to both natural and man-made environments. All potentially significant environmental, social, economic, and transportation benefits and impacts of the proposed alternatives are evaluated including transportation systems, land use, socio-economic conditions, air quality, noise, vibration, visual, ecosystems, water resources, historic resources, archeological resources, parklands, geology, hazardous/regulated materials, safety/security, public involvement, financial analysis, and indirect and cumulative effects.

The proposed Bottineau Transitway Project is a 13-mile corridor of transportation improvements that extends from downtown Minneapolis to the northwest, serving north Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, New Hope, Osseo, Brooklyn Park, and Maple Grove. The Transitway is anticipated to also serve a broader area to the northwest, including the communities of Dayton, Rogers, and Hassan Township. It will integrate with the region's system of transitways, including the existing Blue Line (Hiawatha) LRT, the Green Line (Central Corridor and the planned Southwest line) LRT, bus rapid transit (BRT) on the Red Line (Cedar Avenue) and Orange Line (I-35W South), the Northstar Commuter Rail, and express bus routes.

The primary transportation needs of the community that the Bottineau Transitway project addresses include: 1) growing travel demand, 2) increasing traffic congestion, 3) people who depend on transit, 4) limited transit service to suburban destinations and time-efficient transit options, 5) regional objectives for growth.

The purpose of the Bottineau Transitway is to provide transit service which will satisfy the long-term regional mobility and accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public.

Transportation and land use studies along the Bottineau Corridor date back to the late 1980s. Previous studies include regional system studies, corridor studies, and site-specific studies. The Bottineau Transitway has consistently been included in regional transportation system plans. Many different alignments and modes, including BRT, LRT, and commuter rail have been considered and evaluated in corridor-specific plans and studies. The region's current long-range transportation plan, the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)* (adopted November 2010) identifies the Bottineau Transitway as one of the corridors to be developed by 2030 as LRT, Busway, Highway BRT or Commuter Rail. The recommendation for the Bottineau Transitway is based on findings from the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Transit Master Study* (August 2008), and reinforces the transit travel demand in the Bottineau Transitway, consistently identified in previous regional transportation system plans. These include the *Regional Transit Board LRT Plan* (1990), the *Transit 2020 Master Plan* (February 2000), the *2025 Transportation Policy Plan* (adopted January 2001, amended January 2002), and the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* (adopted December 2004).

Comments on this document may be submitted in writing or made verbally at public hearings for the project. The public is encouraged to submit comments during the public review period from April 11 through May 29, 2014. Public Hearings will be held at the following locations:

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

Golden Valley City Hall
6:00 – 7:00 PM Public Open House
7:00 PM Formal Public Hearing

Thursday, May 8, 2014

University of Minnesota Urban Research and
Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)
4:30 – 5:30 PM Public Open House
5:30 PM Formal Public Hearing

Tuesday, May 13, 2014

Brooklyn Park City Hall
4:30 – 5:30 PM Public Open House
5:30 PM Formal Public Hearing

Wednesday, May 14, 2014

Crystal Community Center
5:00 – 6:00 PM Public Open House
6:00 PM Formal Public Hearing

The address to which written comments should be sent is:

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Figure 8.6-1. Sochacki Park: Areas of Potential Temporary Occupancy

Figure 8.6-2. Mary Hills Nature Area: Areas of Potential Temporary Occupancy

Figure 8.6-3. Theodore Wirth Regional Park: Areas of Potential Temporary Occupancy

Figure 9.1-1. Bottineau Transitway Project Website