

**SOUTHWEST LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT
(METRO GREEN LINE EXTENSION)**

SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Prepared by:

United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

and

Metropolitan Council, Minnesota (Council)

In cooperation with

United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Submitted pursuant to:

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 4332 *et seq.*; Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 CFR Section 1500 *et seq.*, Implementing NEPA; Federal Transit Laws, 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53; Environmental Impact and Related Procedures, 23 CFR 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, 54 U.S.C. Section 306108; 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.

After publication of the FEIS, the Council will issue an Adequacy Determination for the Final EIS in accordance with Minnesota environmental law.

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.

5-11-2015

Date of Approval



Marisol Simon
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
Region V

5.11.2015

Date of Approval



Mark Fuhrmann
Program Director, Rail New Starts
Metropolitan Council

Abstract

The Metropolitan Council (Council) proposes to construct and operate the approximately 16-mile Southwest Light Rail Transit (METRO Green Line Extension) project (Southwest LRT) as an extension of the Central Corridor LRT (METRO Green Line) to provide transportation improvements in the southwest metropolitan region. The Southwest LRT would extend from Eden Prairie, Minnesota, through the cities of Minnetonka, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park, to downtown Minneapolis, passing in close proximity to Edina, and connecting to the METRO Green Line, which began revenue service in June 2014. The identified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is a light rail line alignment constructed and operating on the Kenilworth-Opus-Golden Triangle alignment, reflecting adjustments to the LPA made subsequent to publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In addition to the proposed light rail alignment, stations, park-and-ride lots, and ancillary facilities, including a proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF), the LPA includes proposed related bus, roadway, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and freight rail modifications.

This Supplemental Draft EIS restates the project's Purpose and Need Statement from the Draft EIS and provides a description of the proposed action (that is, the LPA), focusing on three areas that are evaluated within the Supplemental Draft EIS. It also includes a description of the process and analyses used to identify adjustments to the LPA in those three areas. The three areas analyzed in this limited-scope Supplemental Draft EIS are: (1) adjustments to the proposed light rail alignment and station improvements in a segment in Eden Prairie, generally between the intersections of Technology Drive and Mitchell Road and of Flying Cloud Drive and Valley View Road; (2) the location of a proposed OMF in Hopkins; and (3) adjustments to proposed light rail and freight rail alignments and LRT stations in a segment in St. Louis Park and Minneapolis, generally between Louisiana Avenue South and Penn Avenue South. This Supplemental Draft EIS augments the information and analyses provided in the Draft EIS focusing on changes that may result in significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project since publication of the Draft EIS in October 2012. This Supplemental Draft EIS also includes additional preliminary Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact findings not included in the Draft EIS.

Comments on this document may be submitted in writing to the contacts below or made verbally at the following public hearings, which will be conducted in conjunction with informational open houses.

Date	Hearing Time	Open House Time	Location
Tuesday, June 16, 2015	6:00 PM	5:00 PM	Hopkins Center for the Arts 1111 Mainstreet Hopkins, MN 55343
Wednesday, June 17, 2015	6:00 PM	5:00 PM	Eden Prairie City Hall 8080 Mitchell Road Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Thursday, June 18, 2015	6:00 PM	5:00 PM	Dunwoody College of Technology 818 Dunwoody Blvd Minneapolis, MN 55403

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Introduction to the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

This Introduction provides a general overview of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which updates information provided in the Draft EIS, as published in October 2012. This Introduction includes a general description of the project, its current status relative to federal and state environmental processes, and an overall description of the purpose of the Supplemental Draft EIS. The information provided in this Introduction is only intended to provide a general orientation to the Supplemental Draft EIS, which should be referred to for more detailed information.

Project Description

The project's Purpose and Need Statement is provided in Chapter 1 of the Draft EIS and this Supplemental Draft EIS. The proposed project, the Southwest Light Rail Transit (METRO Green Line Extension) Project (referred to herein as Southwest LRT or the project), will operate between downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, passing in close proximity to the City of Edina. The proposed alignment will be primarily at-grade and will include up to 17 new stations and approximately 16 miles of double track. The alignment will connect major activity centers in the region, including downtown Minneapolis, Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park, the Opus/Golden Triangle employment area in Minnetonka and Eden Prairie, and the Eden Prairie Town Center. The project will interline with the Central Corridor LRT (METRO Green Line), which will provide a one-seat ride to destinations such as the University of Minnesota, the State Capitol, and downtown St. Paul. The proposed Southwest LRT will be part of an integrated system of transitways, including connections to the METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha LRT), the Northstar Commuter Rail line, the METRO Red Line (Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit), a variety of major bus routes along the alignment, and several proposed future transitways and rail lines.

National Environmental Policy Act/Minnesota Environmental Policy Act Background and Project Progress Since Publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Federal Transit Authority (FTA), as the project's lead federal agency, will ensure that the project completes its environmental review process and documentation in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requires that where federal laws have environmental document requirements in addition to but not in conflict with those in Minnesota Statutes, Section 116D.04, governmental units cooperate in fulfilling these requirements as well as those of state laws so that one document can comply with all applicable laws.

FTA issued its *Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement* for the Southwest Transitway Project in September 2008 and authorized the project to advance into Preliminary Engineering (now termed Project Development) in September 2011. The Southwest Transitway Draft EIS was published by FTA, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA), and the Metropolitan Council, (Council) in October 2012. The public comment period for the Draft EIS concluded on December 31, 2012. The Draft EIS evaluated seven alternatives, including the No Build and Enhanced Bus alternatives and five light rail alternatives. The five light rail alternatives also included proposed locations for freight rail currently operating on the Bass Lake Spur and Cedar Lake Junction, commonly known as the Kenilworth Corridor, rail lines. Four of the light rail alternatives included relocation of freight rail from the Bass Lake Spur and Kenilworth Corridor to the Minneapolis, Northfield, and Southern Railway (MN&S) Spur near Louisiana Avenue South and the Wayzata Subdivision (LRT 1A, LRT 3A, LRT 3C-1, and LRT 3C-2). The remaining alternative was a variation of LRT 3A, consisting of the same LRT alignment, but with freight rail remaining in its current location, co-located with light rail in the Bass Lake Spur and Kenilworth Corridor (LRT 3A-1). The Draft EIS also identified the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), the LRT route included as part of LRT 3A and LRT 3A-1, which was adopted into the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan by the Council in May 2010. Within the Draft EIS, LRT 3A and LRT 3A-1 generally differ only in the location of freight rail within the St. Louis Park/Minneapolis segment of the corridor.

Following the end of the Draft EIS public comment period on December 31, 2012, local lead agency authority for completion of the environmental process transferred from HCRRA to the Council. At that time, the project's name was changed from Southwest Transitway to Southwest LRT.

Based on comments submitted on the Draft EIS, the Council continued the Project Development process by identifying and evaluating adjustments to the LPA's light rail and related improvements, as defined in the Draft EIS. The Council also developed and evaluated adjustments to the design of the two sets of freight rail modifications evaluated in the Draft EIS (termed "freight rail relocation" and "co-location") and identified the freight rail modifications to be included within the LPA. As Project Development activities continued in coordination with the project's advisory committees, stakeholders, and host cities and county, the FTA and the Council identified three areas requiring further environmental consideration based on the potential for new significant environmental impacts from the proposed project not addressed in the Draft EIS. These three areas are the focus of this Supplemental Draft EIS (see Document Purpose below).

Document Purpose

The FTA and the Council prepared this Supplemental Draft EIS to provide information and comment opportunities to agencies and the public because design of the proposed Southwest LRT has advanced since publication of the Draft EIS. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a federal Cooperating Agency for this project under NEPA. Impacts to waters of the United States associated with the Southwest LRT project will require an Individual Permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; this permit program is administered by the USACE. This Supplemental Draft EIS reflects coordination to date between FTA and USACE on the NEPA/Section 404 merger process which has led to the USACE making a preliminary determination that the LPA as described in this Supplemental Draft EIS is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA) for the Southwest LRT project.

The general objectives of the Supplemental Draft EIS are to:

- Inform the public, resource agencies, and local governments of proposed design adjustments made since publication of the Draft EIS to the LPA in the three study areas described below
- Identify any new potential significant adverse impacts associated with those design adjustments not addressed in the Draft EIS
- Invite public and agency comment on the various design adjustments evaluated within this Supplemental Draft EIS

Adjustments to the LPA evolved as a result of Project Development activities that addressed public and agency input on the Draft EIS. In reviewing the design adjustments made since publication of the Draft EIS, FTA and the Council determined that there are potential new significant environmental impacts associated with the LPA in the following three areas, which are addressed in this Supplemental Draft EIS (see maps in the Executive Summary):

- Eden Prairie Segment (generally between the intersections of Technology Drive and Mitchell Road and of Flying Cloud Drive and Valley View Road)
- The location of a new light rail Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) in the City of Hopkins
- St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segment (generally between Louisiana Avenue South in St. Louis Park and Penn Avenue South in Minneapolis)

For these project areas, this Supplemental Draft EIS addresses the following items:

- The project's Purpose and Need Statement from the Draft EIS (see Chapter 1)
- An updated description of the LPA reflecting design adjustments since publication of the Draft EIS, including adjustments to the light rail alignment, stations, and park-and-ride lots in the Eden Prairie Segment (such as related bus, roadway, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements); a proposed site for an OMF in the City of Hopkins; and adjustments to the light rail alignment, stations, and park-and-ride lots

within the St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segment (such as related bus, roadway, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements and freight rail modifications) (see Chapter 2)

- An updated analysis and documentation of the substantial social, environmental, economic, and transportation impacts associated with the current design of the LPA that have changed since publication of the Draft EIS, including changes in methodologies and identification of additional measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts, as well as an update to the project's Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation that was included in the Draft EIS (see Chapter 3)
- A summary of agency coordination and community outreach activities since publication of the Draft EIS and known governmental permits and approvals (see Chapter 4)
- A description of the next steps, funding, and actions under NEPA and MEPA (see Chapter 5)

The following list briefly describes the contents of the appendices to the Supplemental Draft EIS:

- A list of recipients of the Supplemental Draft EIS (see Appendix A)
- A list of project team members who helped prepare the Supplemental Draft EIS (see Appendix B)
- A list of the supporting documents and technical reports to the Supplemental Draft EIS that are incorporated by reference, including information on how to obtain copies of the documents (see Appendix C)
- A list of sources and references that are cited within the Supplemental Draft EIS (see Appendix D)
- Copies of resource agency coordination letters received since the close of the Draft EIS public comment period (see Appendix E)
- A description of the process and evaluation measures used in the alignment adjustment process (see Appendix F)
- Conceptual engineering drawings showing the current LPA in the Eden Prairie and St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segments and the conceptual layout of the Hopkins OMF (see Appendix G)
- Memoranda providing additional detail on the noise and vibration analysis included in Chapter 3 of this Supplemental Draft EIS (see Appendix H)
- Summaries of and responses to comments received on the Supplemental Draft EIS scope (see Appendix I)
- Supporting documentation for the visual resources analysis included in Chapter 3 of this Supplemental Draft EIS (see Appendix J)
- Public notices since publication of the Draft EIS (see Appendix K)
- Supporting documentation for the Draft 4(f) Evaluation Update (see Appendix L)

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	alternatives analysis
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APE	area of potential effect
BAC	Business Advisory Committee
BMP	best management practice
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CCP	construction contingency plan
Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit	METRO Red Line
Central Corridor LRT	METRO Green Line
CERCLIS	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System
CET	Corridors of Opportunity's Community Engagement Team
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIG	capital investment grant
CMC	Corridor Management Committee
Council	Metropolitan Council
CP	Canadian Pacific Railway
CPIP	<i>Communication and Public Involvement Plan</i>
CPT	cone penetrometer test
CRU	Cultural Resources Unit
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	Decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DEED	Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
DNR	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
DOT	Department of Transportation
EB	eastbound
ECCO	East Calhoun Community Organization
EIS	environmental impact statement
EO	executive order
EQB	Environmental Quality Board
ESA	environmental site assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Final EIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GBN	ground-borne noise
GIS	geographic information system
HCRRA	Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
Hiawatha LRT	METRO Blue Line

I-394	Interstate 394
I-494	Interstate 494
L _{dn}	24-hour, time-averaged, A-weighted sound level (day-night)
LEDPA	Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative
L _{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
LOS	level of service
LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative
LRCI	Locally Request Capital Investments
LRT	light-rail transit
LRV	light-rail vehicle
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MDA	Minnesota Department of Agriculture
MDED	Minnesota Department of Economic Development
merger process	FTA and USACE are implementing a merger process between the NEPA and CWA Section 404 permitting processes
MEPA	Minnesota Environmental Policy Act
METRO Blue Line	Hiawatha LRT
METRO Green Line	Central Corridor LRT
METRO Red Line	Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit
MN&S	Minneapolis, Northfield, and Southern Railway
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
Mod	Moderate
MPCA	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
MPRB	Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board
NA	not available
NB	Northbound
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NEPA/404 merger process	FTA and USACE are implementing a merger process between the NEPA and CWA Section 404 permitting processes
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
OMF	Operations and Maintenance Facility
PAHs	polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons
PCBs	polychlorinated biphenyls
PD	Project Development
PEC	Preliminary Engineering Consultant
PGIS	pollutant-generating impervious surface
PIN	property identification number
project	Southwest Light Rail Transit (METRO Green Line Extension) Project
RAMP	Real Estate Acquisition and Management Plan
RAP	remedial action plan
RGU	Regional Governmental Unit
ROD	Record of Decision

SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act; A Legacy for Users
SB	Southbound
SCC	standard cost category
Supplemental Draft EIS	Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Sev	Severe
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SLPM	St. Louis Park/Minneapolis
Southwest LRT	Southwest Light Rail Transit (METRO Green Line Extension) Project
SPO	Southwest LRT Project Office
SQG	small quantity generator
STB	Surface Transportation Board
Stn	Station
TC&W	Twin Cities and Western Railway Company
TEP	Technical Evaluation Panel
TPAC	Technical Project Advisory Committee
TSAAP	transitional station area action plan
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
U.S.C.	United States Code
U.S. Census	United States Census Bureau
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
VdB	vibration decibel
VIC	voluntary investigation and cleanup
VPN	viewpoint number
WB	Westbound
WMO	Water Management Organizations
WHPP	Wellhead Protection Plan