Appendix D- Scoping Meeting Boards

SOUTHWEST transitway

green means go.

Welcome!
Southwest Transitway Scoping Meeting

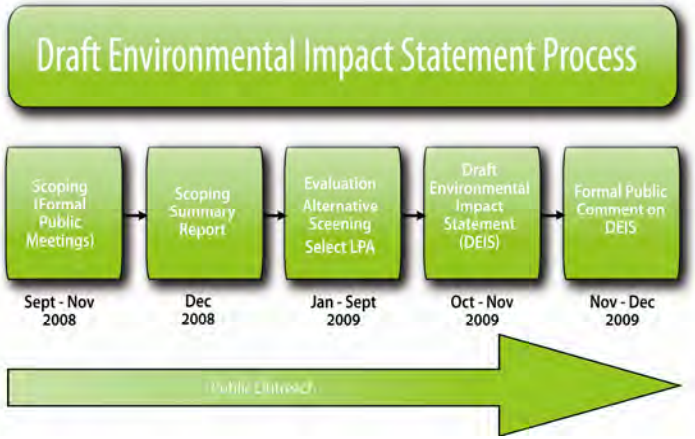
The Southwest Transitway is a proposed transit project intended to improve mobility in the southwest part of the Twin Cities metro area including the cities of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, Edina, St. Louis Park, and Minneapolis. It is the intent of the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) to partner with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as lead agencies to develop the Southwest Transitway as a major transit capital investment.

SOUTHWEST transitway

Where are we going?

Project Development Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.



A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) documents the potential social, economic and environmental benefits and impacts of a proposed project, and identifies a range of possible measures to mitigate any adverse impacts in compliance with NEPA.

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What is Scoping?

Scoping provides the opportunity for the public and agencies to comment on:

(1) the purpose and need for the project

(2) the alternatives under consideration

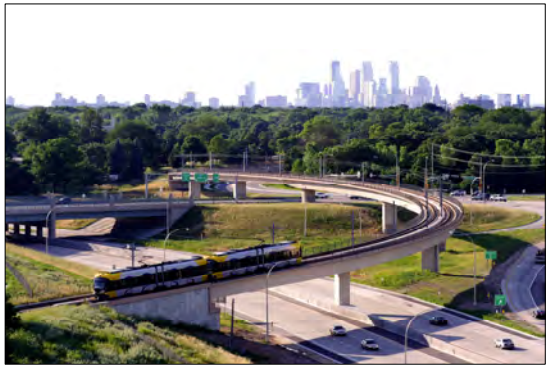
(3) the potentially significant issues to be studied

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) has made agencies take a hard look at the potential environmental consequences of their actions, and it has brought the public into the agency decision-making process like no other statute. NEPA gives a voice to the new national consensus to protect and improve the environment. NEPA charges all federal agencies with achieving "productive harmony" among our environmental, economic, and social objectives, and genuine opportunities for participation and collaboration in decision-making.

What is the Purpose and Need for the Southwest Transitway?

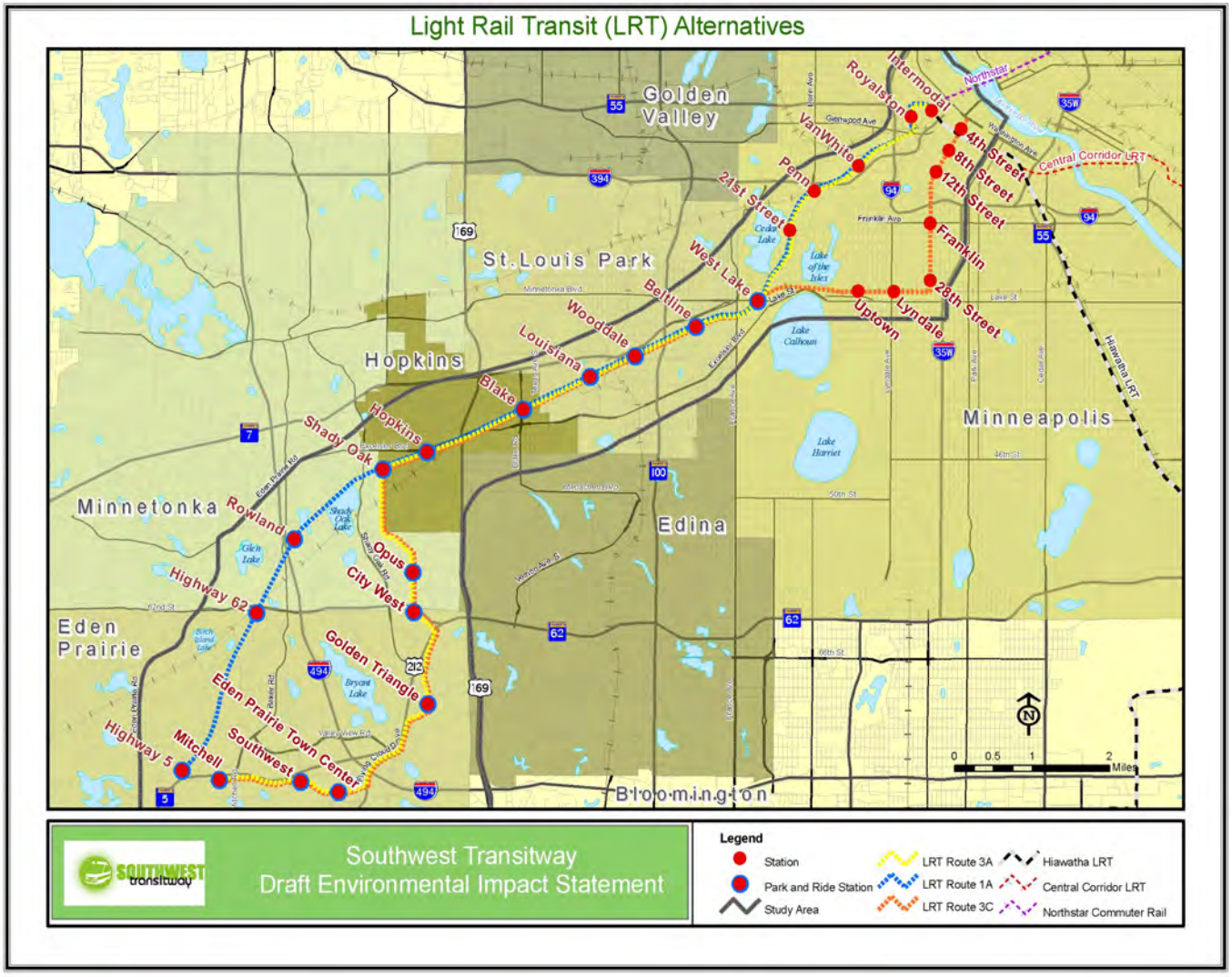
- **Improve Mobility.**
  - Travel to/from high employment and residential growth areas is outstripping the capacity of the existing and planned transportation system.
- **Provide a competitive, reliable transit option to attract choice riders and serve transit dependent persons.**
  - Transit operating on congested and circuitous roadway networks cannot provide travel times that are competitive.
  - Transit dependence by choice and necessity are increasing within the study area and need improved transit service.
- **Offer better reverse commute transit service.**
  - Reverse commute work trips from near-downtown neighborhoods to job centers in suburban locations are increasing, and these commuters are currently not served well by transit.

Downtown traffic



Hiawatha LRT

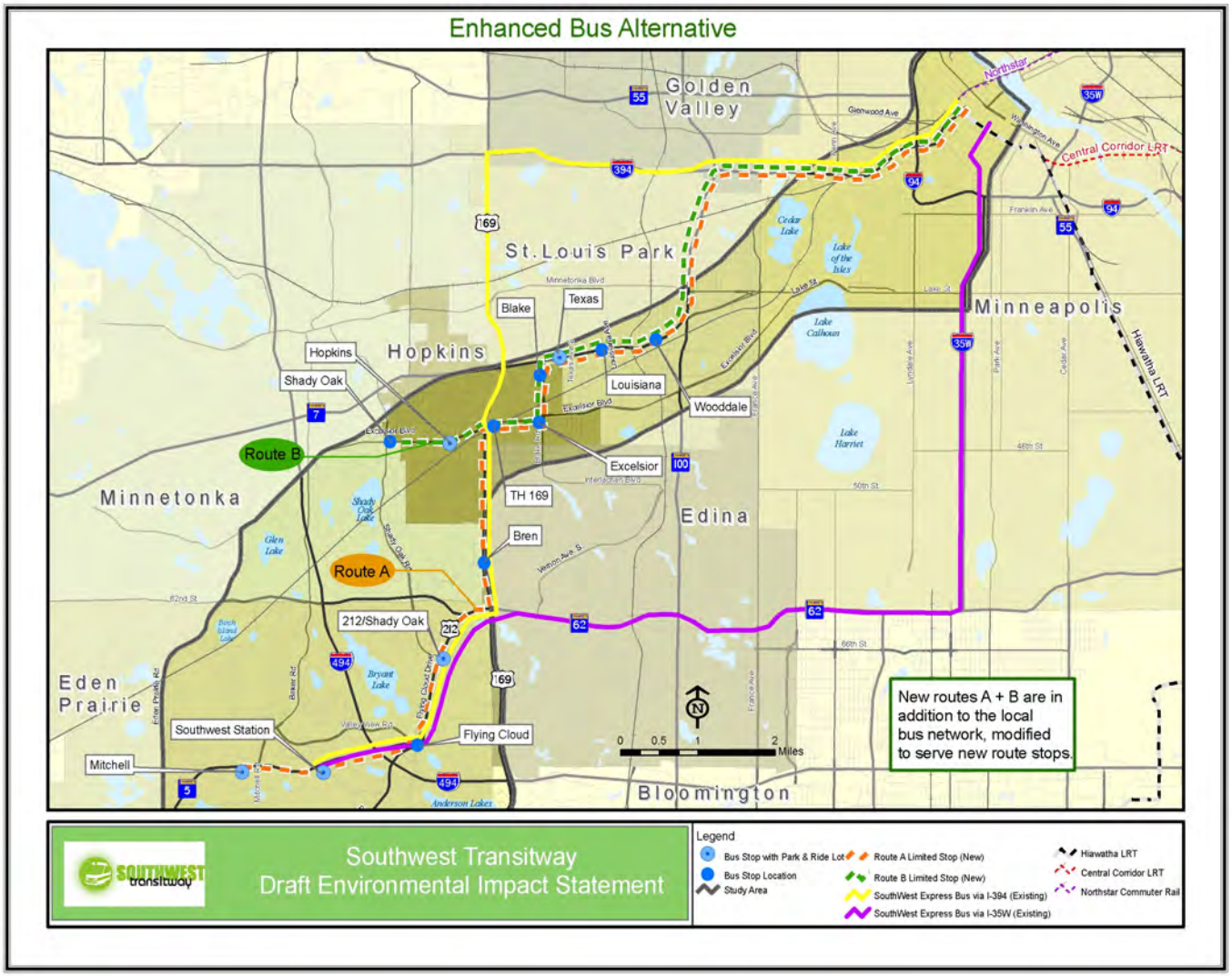
What alternatives (options) are being considered?



Characteristics	Alternative		
	LRT 3A	LRT 3C	LRT 1A
Miles	15.7	16.6	13.8
Stations	17	20	14
2030 Ridership	27,000	28,100	23,500
2030 New Riders	7,500	6,800	4,500
2015 Capital Cost	$1.2B	$1.4B	$865M
Capital Cost/Mile	$76.4M	$84.3M	$62.7M
2015 Operating Cost	$16M	$17M	$12M
Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI)	$26	$30	$30

SOUTHWEST transitway

What alternatives (options) are being considered?



Enhanced Bus

- Also known as the Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative, is designed to provide lower cost, operationally-oriented improvements to address the project's purpose and need as much as possible, without a major investment.
- Metro Transit and SouthWest Transit service would be augmented with two limited stop bus routes providing bi-directional service to Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park. These routes would begin by serving selected stops, then travel non-stop on the regional highways using bus shoulder lanes and/or the I-394 HOV lane into downtown Minneapolis. This would allow the limited stop services to offer more attractive travel times, and would increase options for commuters in the corridor.
- Minor modifications would be made existing express bus service and local service would be restructured to provide access to the two new limited stop routes.
- This alternative serves as the New Starts Baseline against which the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project will be measured. It includes improvements in the No-Build Alternative.

What alternatives (options) are being considered?

No-Build Alternative

- Includes all roadway and transit facility service improvements (other than the proposed project) planned, programmed and included in the 2030 financially constrained 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP).
- Includes minor transit service expansions and/or adjustments that reflect a continuation of existing service policies.
- Serves as the NEPA baseline to measure the potentially significant environmental benefits and impacts of other alternatives.

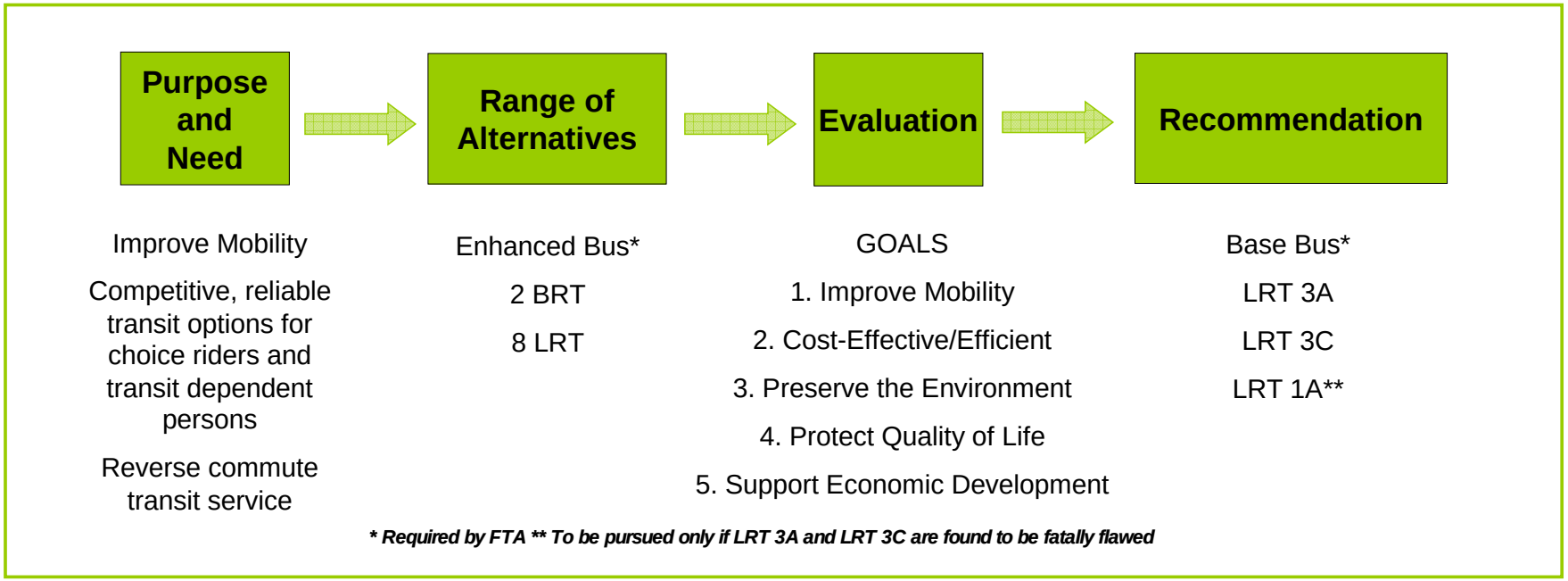
What environmental topic areas will be considered?

Topic areas to be addressed include:

- Ecosystems and natural resource including geology and soils, air quality, water resources including hydrology and water quality, noise, and vibration;
- Land use, zoning, and economic development;
- Demographics and socioeconomic factors;
- Displacements and relocations;
- Neighborhood compatibility, community facilities and services, and environmental justice;
- Visual quality and aesthetic characteristics;
- Cultural resources, including those related to historical and archaeological resources and parklands/recreation and 4(f) resources areas;
- Energy use;
- Construction effects;
- Transportation benefits and impacts (including transit, roads and highways, railroads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities); and
- Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate all adverse impacts will be identified and evaluated.

Alternatives Analysis 2007

The purpose of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis was to evaluate the benefits, costs and impacts of a broad range of transit alternatives in order to select a preferred course of action or alternative(s).



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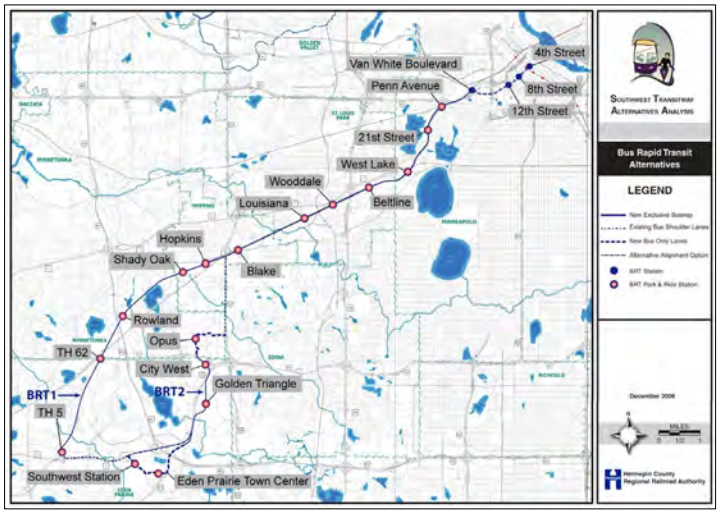
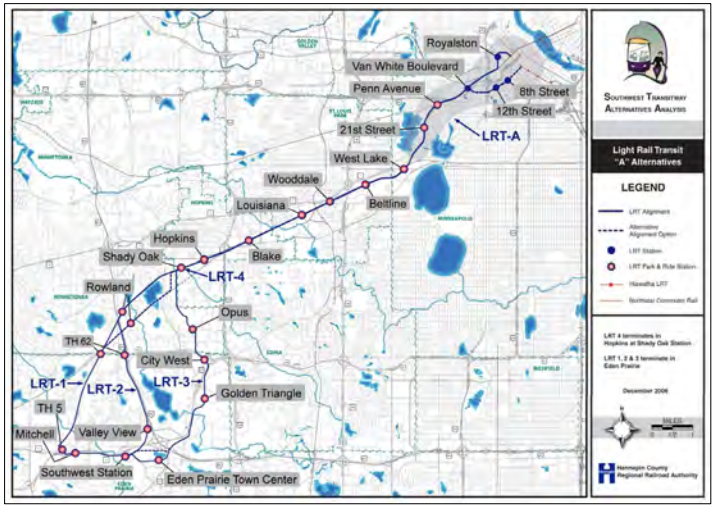
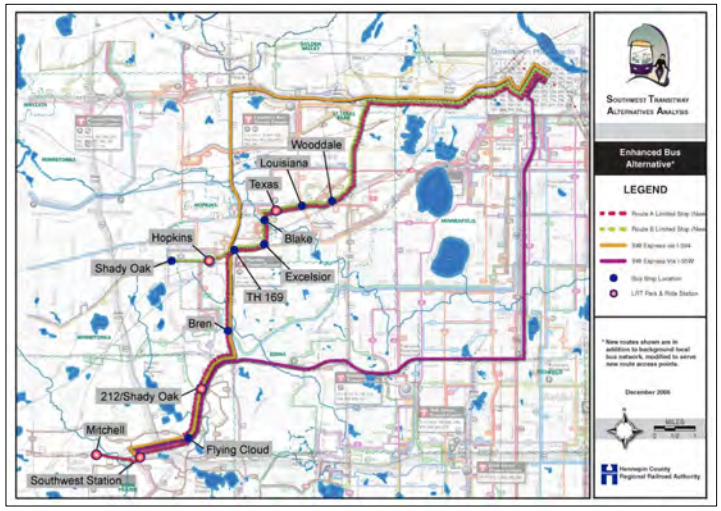
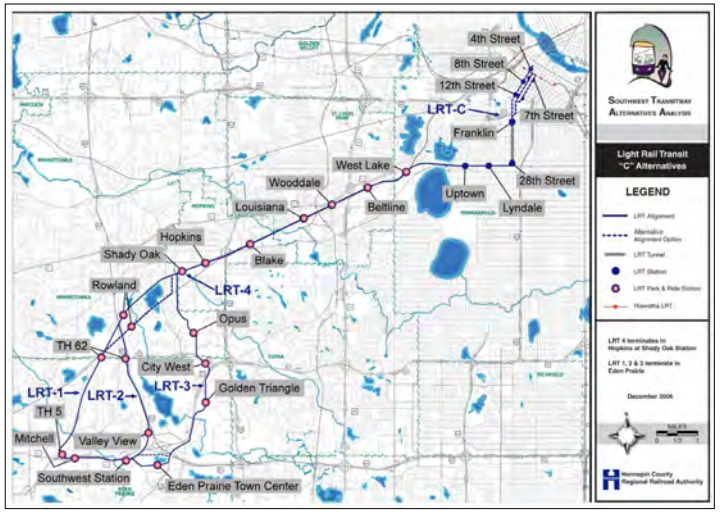
Alternatives Analysis 2007

Range of Alternatives









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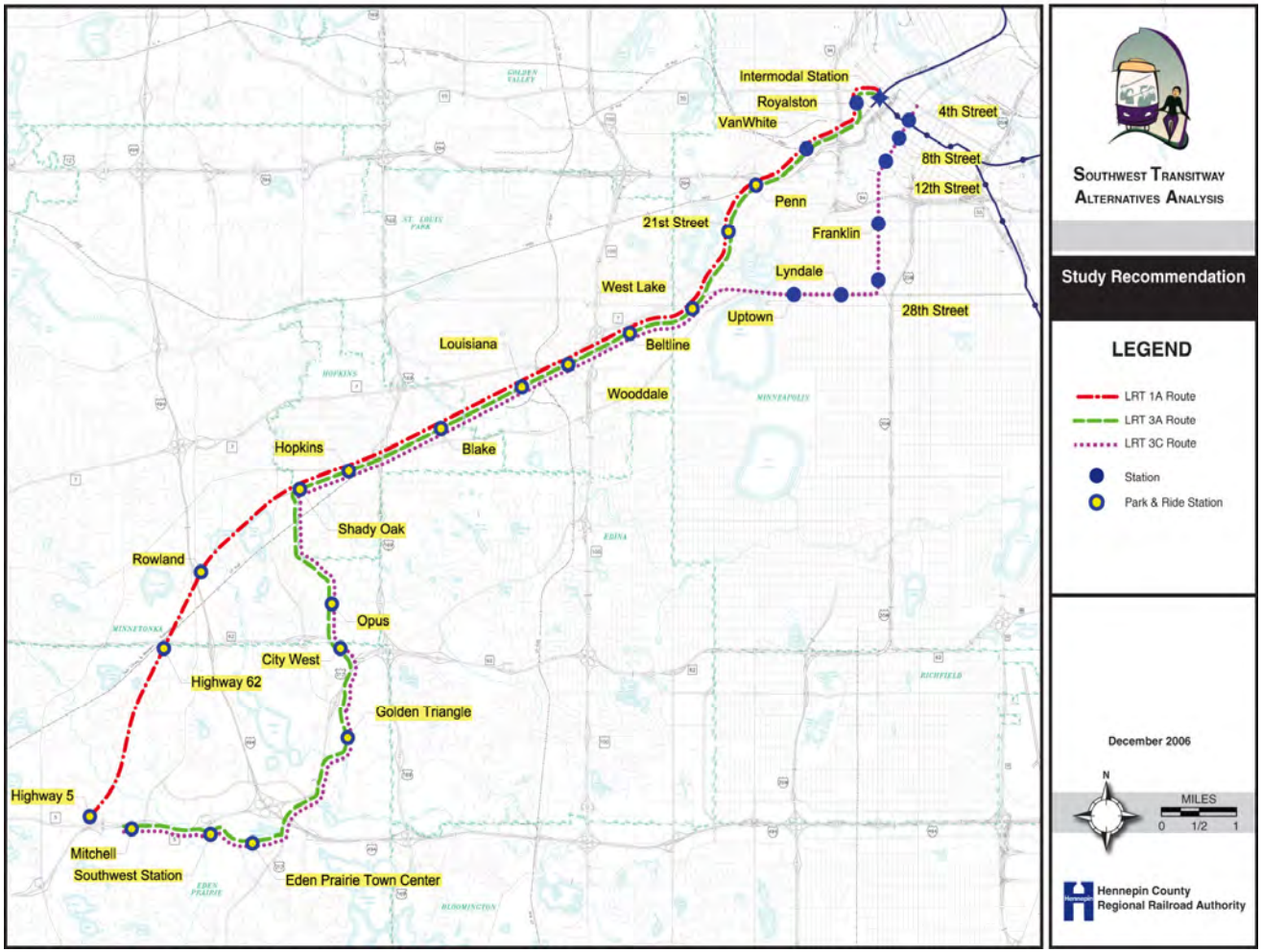
HENNEPIN COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY - SPONSOR

Hennepin

Alternatives Analysis 2007 Recommendation

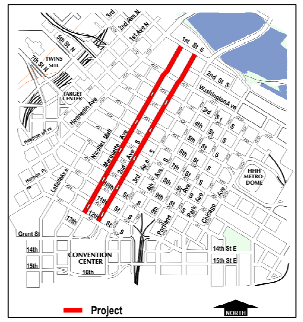


"…that the Southwest Policy Advisory Committee concurs with the preliminary recommendations of the Southwest Technical Advisory Committee to bring LRT Alternatives 1A, 3A, and 3C into a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process with the understanding that Alternative LRT 1A be retained for further study as an option only to be considered in the event that LRT 3A and LRT 3C are proved to be infeasibile."

After the Alternatives Analysis

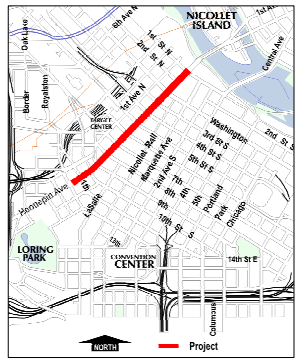
LRT 3C 2nd/Marquette loop downtown alternative

- Identified for dual bus lane implementation. Funded through the Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA) and programmed for 2009 construction.
- Recommended for exclusion from the Southwest Transitway DEIS.



LRT 3A/1A Hennepin Avenue downtown sub-alternative

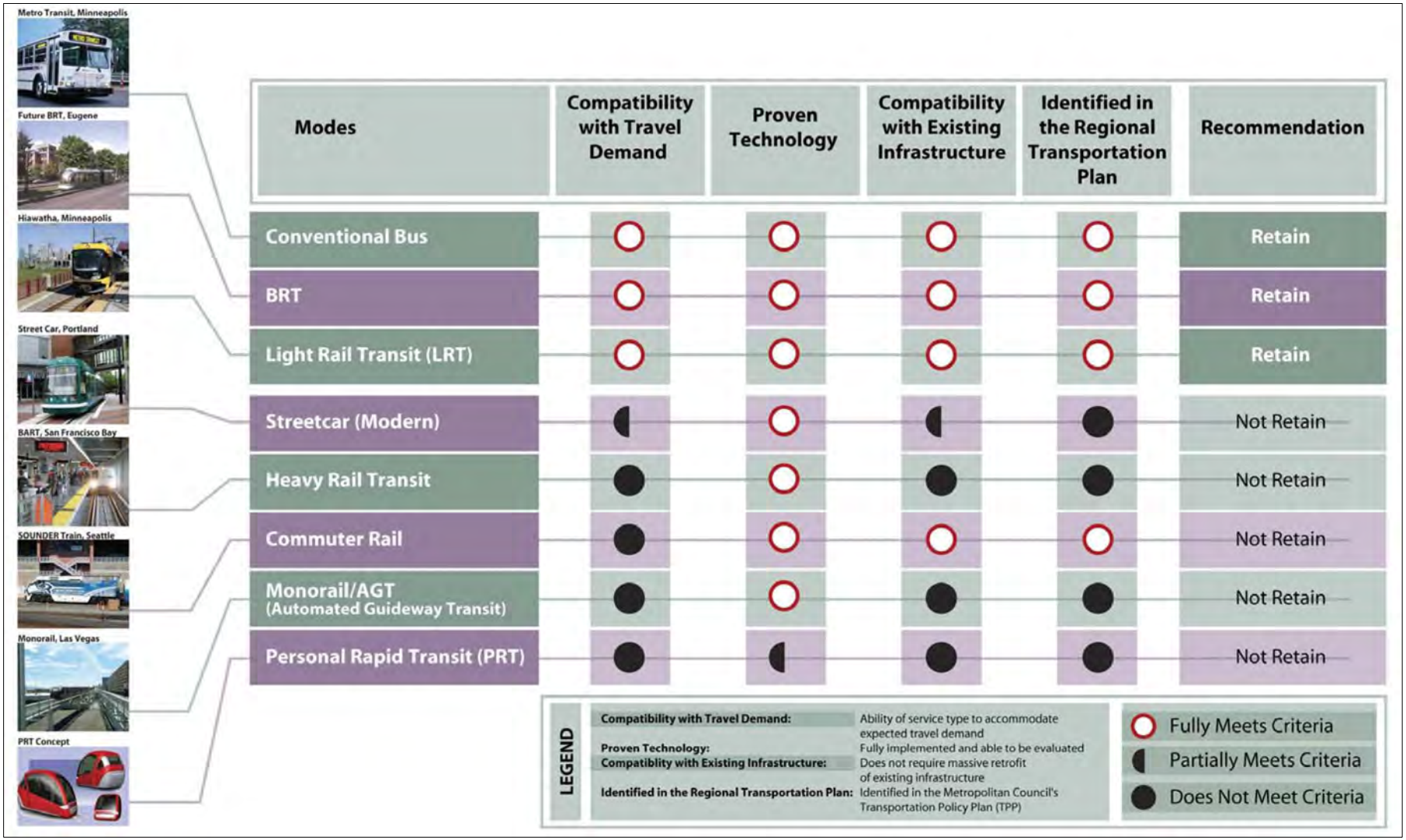
- Identified for conversion to a two-way street. Programmed in the Minneapolis Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Recommended for exclusion from the Southwest Transitway DEIS.



Park/Portland (LRT 3D)

- Analysis conducted as addendum to Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis (November 2007)
- Recommended for exclusion from the Southwest Transitway DEIS
- Not recommended for inclusion in the DEIS because it is not consistent with the Southwest Purpose and Need Statement, not consistent with regional and local planning, and has significant operational issues.

Alternatives Analysis
Transportation Technologies Studied



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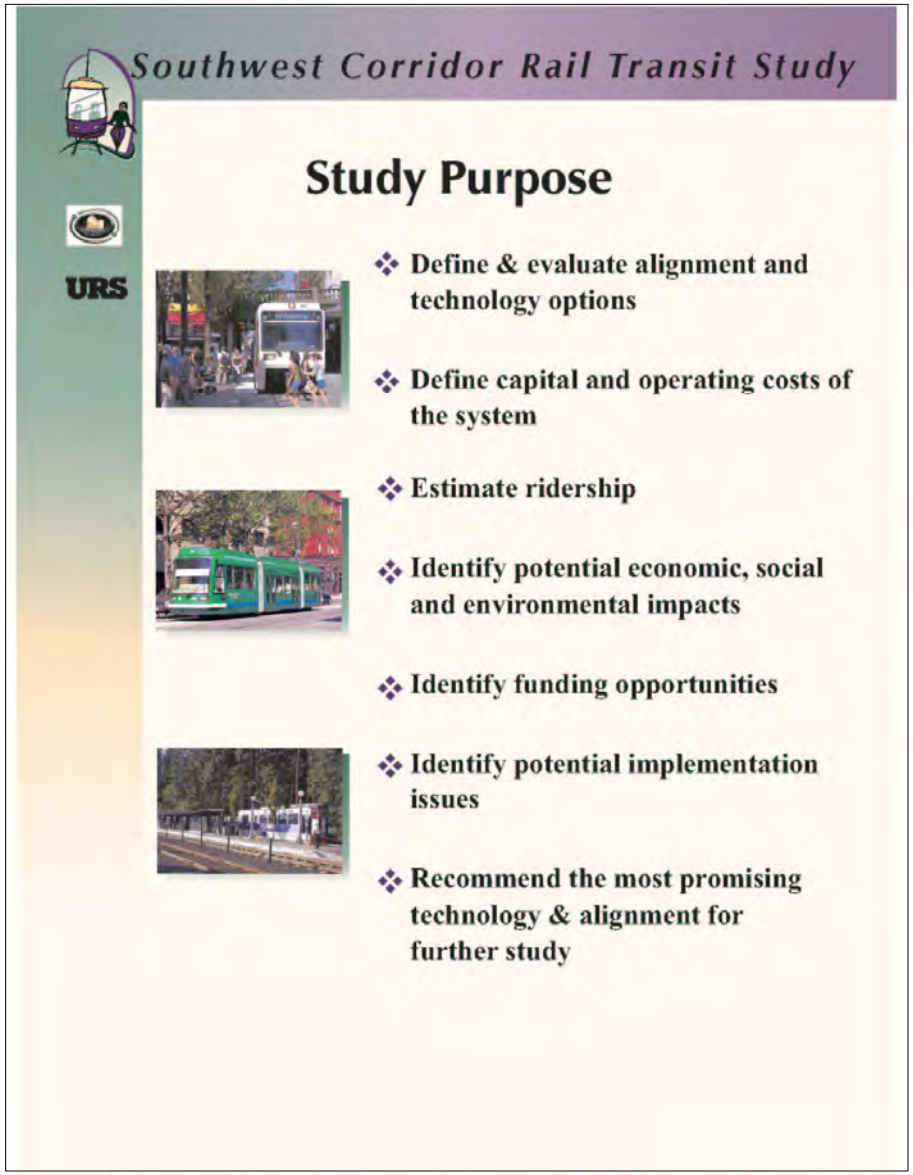
2003 Southwest Rail Transit Study



The Southwest PAC recommended that study continue on four light rail transit (LRT) alignment alternatives because they are the most likely to achieve the Southwest Transitway goals of improving mobility, providing a reliable travel choice, serving population and employment concentrations, providing for a seamless/integrated transit system, reasonable costs, enhancing the environment, enhancing the study area and region's quality of life, and promoting economic development and redevelopment.

The LRT alternatives recommended for further study include:

- LRT 1A: LRT from Highway 312/5 to downtown Minneapolis via HCRRA property & Kenilworth.
- LRT 2A: LRT from the Southwest Metro Station to downtown Minneapolis via I-494, the HCRRA property, & the Kenilworth Corridor.
- LRT 4A: LRT from downtown Hopkins to downtown Minneapolis via the HCRRA property and the Kenilworth Corridor.
- LRT 3A(modified): LRT from the Southwest Metro Station to downtown Minneapolis modified via the Eden Prairie Center Mall, the Golden Triangle, Opus, downtown Hopkins, the HCRRA property, and the Kenilworth Corridor.

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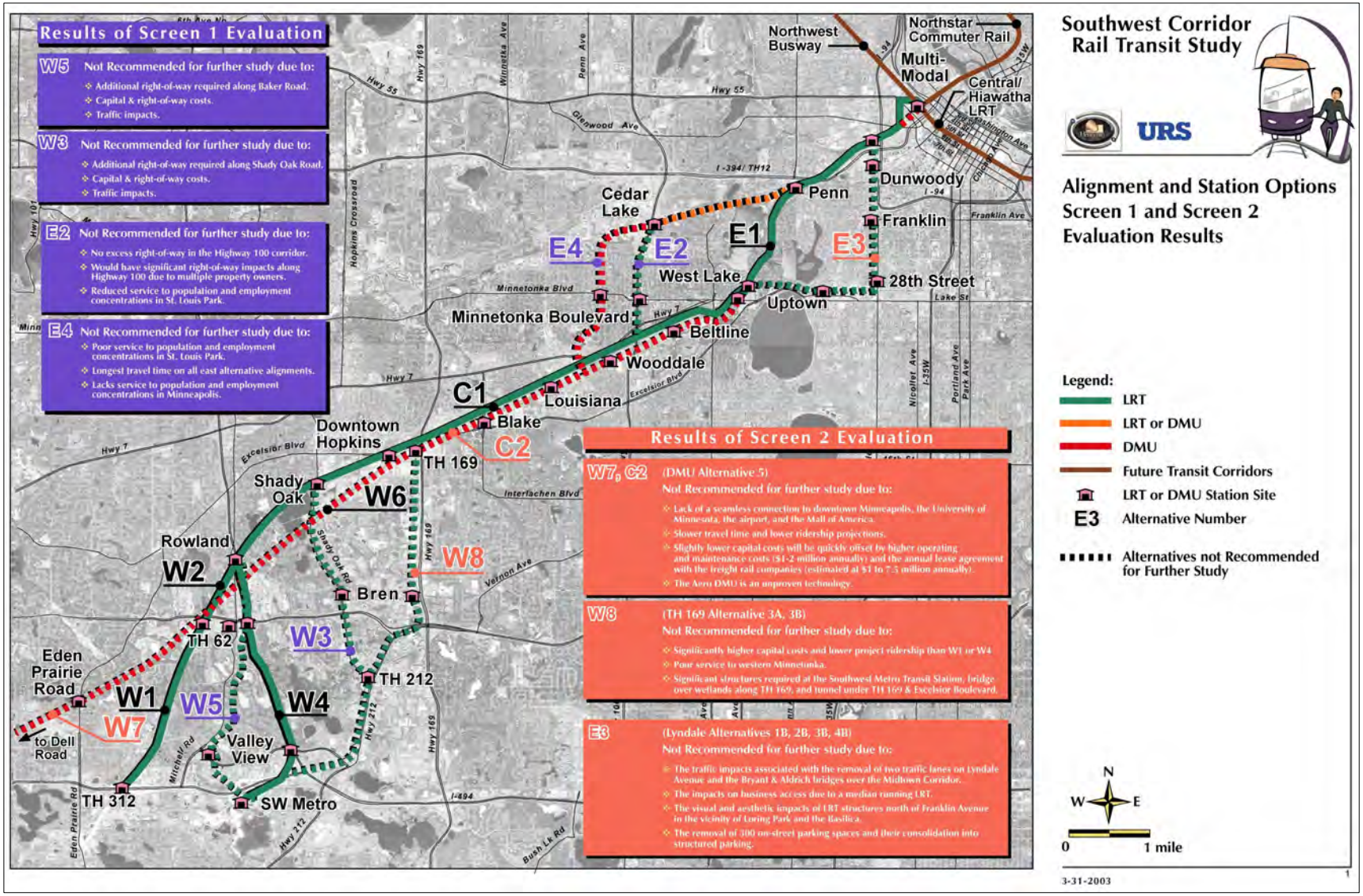
2003 Southwest Rail Transit Study



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HENNEPIN COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY - SPONSOR

Hennepin

What we've done… 1980 to 1989

1980- Central Business District (CBD) Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alignment Evaluation: Hiawatha

- Evaluated 6 downtown routes for Hiawatha: 6thStreet; 5th/6th Street loop, 3rd/6th Street loop, 3rd/4th Street loop, 3rd/9th Street loop, and fringe service loop.

1985- LRT Alternatives in Minneapolis CBD, Minneapolis Downtown Council

- Recommended LRT be in a tunnel in downtown on 7th Street.

1985- LRT Implementation Planning Program

- Planned Southwest LRT downtown Minneapolis to TH 101

1988- Comprehensive LRT System Plan for Hennepin County

- Evaluated Six Southwest LRT alignments: Kenilworth, Hennepin Avenue, LaSalle and 1st Avenue, Nicollet Avenue, I-35W, and Park/Portland Avenue

1988- Stage 1 LRT System Scoping Decision Document

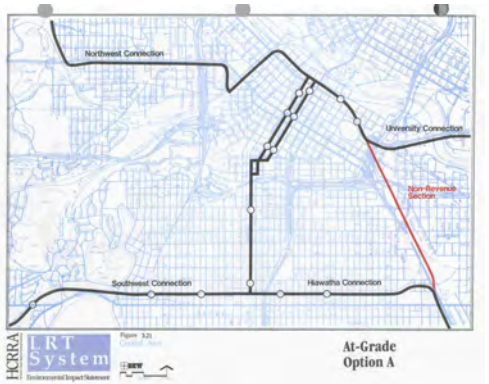
- Studied LRT options: A - tunnel from the Metrodome to 29th/Nicollet Avenue, B - tunnel in downtown Southwest LRT in Kenilworth, C - at-grade

1989- Change to the Stage 1 LRT System Scoping Decision Document

- Revised three options for Southwest entry to downtown Minneapolis: Nicollet Avenue (at-grade or tunnel), Kenilworth, and at-grade at 11th Street

1989- Draft Environmental Impact Statement Hennepin County LRT System

- Studied Southwest LRT from 5th Avenue in Hopkins to downtown Minneapolis
  - Options: Midtown to tunnel at Portland under I-35W then under 3rd Avenue to Marquette Avenue, Midtown to Nicollet Avenue at-grade, and Kenilworth to downtown
  - Preferred option was Midtown to shared tunnel at Portland under I-35W then under 3rd Avenue to Marquette Avenue



What we've done… 1990 to 1999

1990- Preliminary Design Plans for Stage 1 LRT System

1990- LRT Regional Coordination Plan, RTB

- Studied Southwest LRT to TH 169 in Hopkins 1993
- Included Downtown Transportation Management Plan
- Concluded LRT at-grade initially with tunnel in long-term

1995- Minneapolis Downtown LRT Advisory Committee

- Evaluated 3 downtown routes: Marquette Avenue, 3rd Avenue, and Marquette/2nd loop
- Recommended tunnel from Whitney Hotel on 2nd Street to the Convention Center

1998- Downtown LRT Route Recommendations

- Studied 6 routes: Nicollet Mall, Marquette Avenue, 5th Street, 7th Street, 5th/6th loop, and 6th Street
- Recommended route: 5th Street two-way to 3rd Avenue North

2000- 29th Street and Southwest Busway Feasibility

- Concluded busway is feasible in both 29th Street and Southwest corridors
- Concluded busway implementation does not preclude conversion to LRT in the future

2000- Twin Cities Exclusive Busway Study, Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)

- Recommended Southwest, Northwest, and Riverview corridors for busway implementation

2000- Transit 2020 Master Plan, Metropolitan Council

- Identified Southwest as a busway candidate