



SOUTHWEST
transitway

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Southwest Transitway Scoping Summary Report January 2009

EDEN PRAIRIE ■ MINNETONKA ■ EDINA ■ HOPKINS ■ ST. LOUIS PARK ■ MINNEAPOLIS

HENNEPIN COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY - SPONSOR



Southwest Transitway DEIS Scoping Summary Report

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This report summarizes the results of the Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Scoping Process conducted by Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) during the months of September, October and November 2008. The Scoping Summary Report serves as the Scoping Decision Document as defined in the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board rules. The Southwest Transitway project is proposed 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 HCRRA to partner with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as lead agencies to develop the Southwest Transitway as a major transit capital investment.

As the public agency responsible for completing the DEIS, HCRRA must comply with the requirements of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) pursuant to the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) (Minn. Stat. §116D.04 and 116D.045). The project will also pursue federal funding from the FTA. As a result, the FTA is required to undertake environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FTA, as the federal lead agency under NEPA, and HCRRA, as the state lead agency under MEPA, determined that the Southwest Transitway project may have significant environmental impacts. To satisfy both NEPA and MEPA requirements, the HCRRA and the FTA are preparing a DEIS for the Southwest Transitway project. This Scoping Summary Report is part of the DEIS process and complies with the requirements of NEPA and MEPA.

1.2 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Southwest Transitway Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being advanced in accordance with the project development process outlined by FTA for major transit capital investments and in compliance with NEPA and MEPA. The DEIS and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) compose the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and are considered to be the project planning phases.

A DEIS documents the potential social, economic and environmental benefits and impacts of a proposed project or action and proposed measures to mitigate any adverse impacts in compliance with NEPA. The DEIS is released to the public and interested agencies for review and comment.

Figure 1 presents the timeline for the Scoping Process and the DEIS.

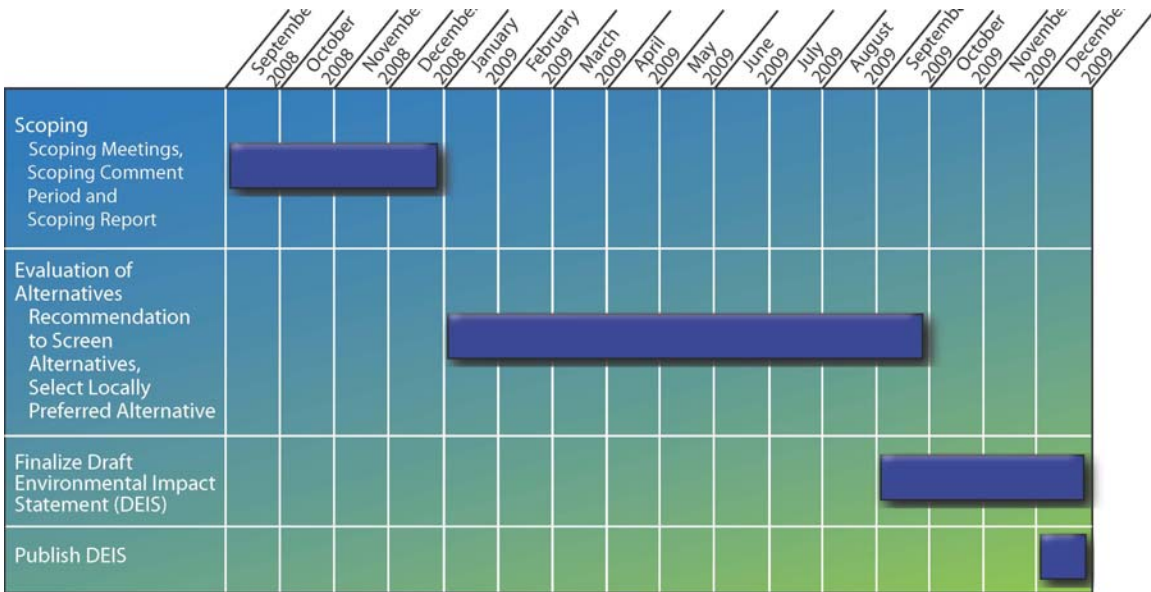


Figure 1: Project Development Process

Upon completion of the FEIS, it will be submitted to FTA for their consideration, and FTA will then issue a Record of Decision (ROD) that provides environmental clearance. The subsequent design, financing, and construction steps leading to operations are further delineated in Figure 2.

Project Development Process



Figure 2: Project Development Process

1.3 SCOPING PROCESS

Scoping is the first step in the NEPA process. Scoping is a two-way communication tool in which the proposed project provides information about the project and requests input from the public, interest groups, affected tribes, and government agencies. The Scoping Process includes opportunities for public input through public meetings, stakeholder

meetings, agency meetings, publication of notices and news articles, and acceptance and review of written and verbal comments.

The purpose of Scoping is to obtain public input on the project purpose and need, to identify appropriate alternatives for addressing the purpose and need, and to identify those environmental issues associated with the proposed project that require detailed analysis in the DEIS. The Scoping Process is also intended to eliminate detailed study of issues that are not significant and/or have been addressed by prior studies.

The Scoping Process included three (3) formal public meetings where verbal comments were recorded and forms for written comments were provided. Scoping Comments focused on the purpose and need for the project, the proposed alternatives, and the potentially significant environmental benefits and impacts to be analyzed in the DEIS. Scoping provided the public an early opportunity to communicate issues and concerns for development of alternatives, before considerable resources were expended. The Southwest Transitway DEIS process is illustrated in Figure 3.

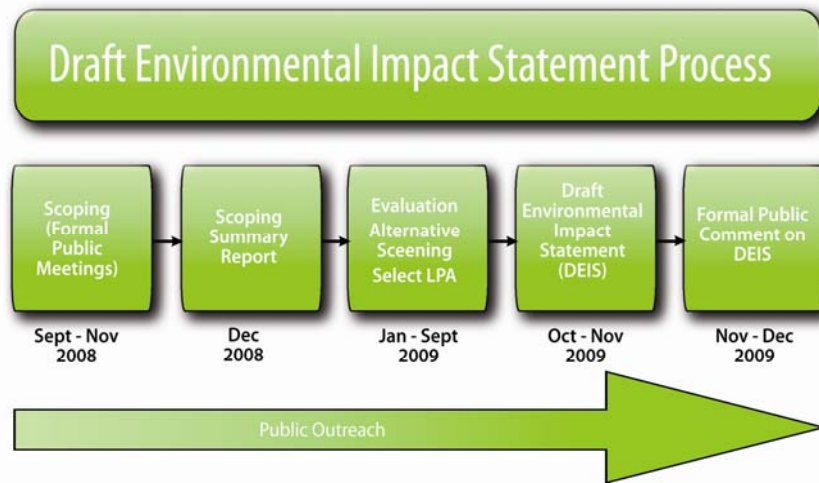


Figure 3: DEIS Process

2.0 ALTERNATIVES TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE DEIS

2.1 ALTERNATIVES PRESENTED DURING SCOPING

In 2007, the HCRRA completed a federally required study called an Alternatives Analysis, which was a continuation of the Southwest Rail Transit Study, 2003. The Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis (AA) compared the benefits, costs and impacts of a range of transit alternatives (modes and routes) to identify which alternative would best serve the needs of the communities as expressed in the Purpose and Need Statement.

The transit alternatives were evaluated to determine if they met the five project goals:

1. Improve mobility
2. Provide a cost-effective, efficient travel option
3. Protect the environment
4. Preserve and protect the quality of life in the study area and the region

5. Support economic development

In the AA, the alternatives for detailed evaluation included one bus alternative called the Enhanced Bus, two bus rapid transit (BRT) alternatives, and eight light rail transit (LRT) alternatives. It was concluded that three of the eight LRT routes could meet the five established goals. In addition, the enhanced bus alternative was retained to continue to evaluate the possibility of addressing the increasing mobility needs of the area through improved bus service rather than LRT.

The AA was the starting point for the DEIS and formed the basis for the Scoping Process. Based upon the AA, three LRT alternatives and the Enhanced Bus alternative were proposed for inclusion in the DEIS. The alternatives included proposed station locations, park-and-ride facilities, and routings between stations. An LRT maintenance and storage facility was assumed to be needed, but a location was not identified during the AA. Candidate locations for the LRT maintenance and storage facility will be identified in the DEIS.

The build alternatives presented for comment during the Scoping Process included LRT 1A, LRT 3A, LRT 3C, and the Enhanced Bus.

Light Rail Transit 1A: This alternative would operate from downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie terminating at Trunk Highway (TH) 5. The route would connect to the Hiawatha LRT tracks on 5th Street past the downtown Minneapolis Intermodal Station to Royalston Avenue to the Kenilworth Corridor through Minneapolis and the HCRRA property through St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie terminating at TH 5 and the HCRRA's property. Stations are proposed at Royalston Ave., Van White Blvd., Penn Ave., 21st St., West Lake St., Beltline Blvd., Wooddale Ave., Louisiana Ave., Blake Rd. downtown Hopkins, Shady Oak Rd., Rowland Rd., TH 62, and TH 5. Alternative 1A is shown in Figure 4.

Light Rail Transit 3A: This alternative would operate from downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie terminating at Mitchell Road/TH 5. via an extension of the Hiawatha LRT tracks on 5th Street past the downtown Minneapolis Intermodal Station to Royalston Avenue to the Kenilworth Corridor through Minneapolis, the HCRRA property in St. Louis Park and Hopkins, to new right-of-way through the Opus/Golden Triangle area, the Eden Prairie Town Center area terminating at TH 5 and Mitchell Road. Stations are proposed at Royalston Ave., Van White Blvd., Penn Ave., 21st St., West Lake St., Beltline Blvd. Wooddale Ave., Louisiana Ave., Blake Rd., downtown Hopkins, Shady Oak Rd., Opus, City West, Golden Triangle, Eden Prairie Town Center, SouthWest Station, and Mitchell Rd. Alternative 3A is shown in Figure 4.

Light Rail Transit 3C: This alternative would operate from downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie terminating at Mitchell Road/TH 5 via Nicollet Mall to Nicollet Avenue (tunnel from Franklin Avenue to 28th Street), the Midtown Corridor through Minneapolis, the HCRRA property in St. Louis Park and Hopkins, to new right-of-way through the Opus/Golden Triangle, the Eden Prairie Town Center area terminating at TH 5 and Mitchell Road. Stations are proposed at 4th St., 8th St., 12th St., Franklin Ave., 28th St., Lyndale Ave., Hennepin Ave.(Uptown), West Lake St., Beltline Blvd., Wooddale Ave., Louisiana Ave., Blake Rd., downtown Hopkins, Shady Oak Rd., Opus, City West, Golden Triangle, Eden Prairie Town Center, SouthWest Station, and Mitchell Rd. Alternative 3C is shown in Figure 4.

Enhanced Bus: The Enhanced Bus alternative, 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 transit investment. It includes minor modifications to the existing express service and would augment Metro Transit and SouthWest Transit service between Minneapolis and Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park. This alternative will serve as the New Starts Baseline against which the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project will be measured, and includes improvements identified in the No-Build Alternative. The Enhanced Bus Option is shown in Figure 5.

No-Build Alternative: The No-Build Alternative includes all roadway and transit facility and service improvements (other than the proposed project) that are planned, programmed and included in the Financially Constrained Regional Transportation Policy Plan to be implemented by the Year 2030. It includes minor transit service expansions and/or adjustments that reflect a continuation of existing service policies as identified by the Metropolitan Council. The No-Build Alternative serves as the NEPA baseline against which the potentially significant environmental benefits and impacts of other proposed alternatives, including the proposed project, will be measured.

2.2 ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED DURING SCOPING

During the NEPA/MEPA Scoping Period from September 8, 2008 through November 7, 2008 for the Southwest Transitway Project (the Project) DEIS), two new alignments in Minneapolis were proposed. The alternatives were labeled LRT 3C (11th/12th Sub-Alternative) and LRT 3E and were evaluated for their feasibility with regard to the project's goals identified in the Purpose and Need Statement and, to determine if they warranted inclusion in the Southwest Transitway DEIS. The technical memorandums and findings of both analyses are contained in Appendices L and M.

Under the LRT 3C (11th/ 12th Sub-Alternative) proposed by Minneapolis Councilmember Remington, the Southwest LRT line would operate from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis via the Opus/Golden Triangle area, the HCRRRA property through Hopkins and St. Louis Park, the Midtown Corridor to the vicinity of Nicollet Avenue. At this point the sub-alternative would use either Blaisdell/LaSalle Avenues or 1st Avenue in a cut-and-cover tunnel from the Midtown Corridor to Franklin Avenue. North of Franklin the sub-alternative would operate on street to the vicinity of 11th/12th Street where it would turn west operating as a one-way pair between Nicollet Mall and Royalston Avenue. At Royalston this sub-alternative would use the same routing as the LRT 1A and LRT 3A alternatives which interline with the Hiawatha LRT line on 5th Street through downtown Minneapolis. The original sub-alternative submitted by Councilmember Remington was refined through discussions and meetings between the HDR consulting team, Hennepin County staff, and City of Minneapolis staff.

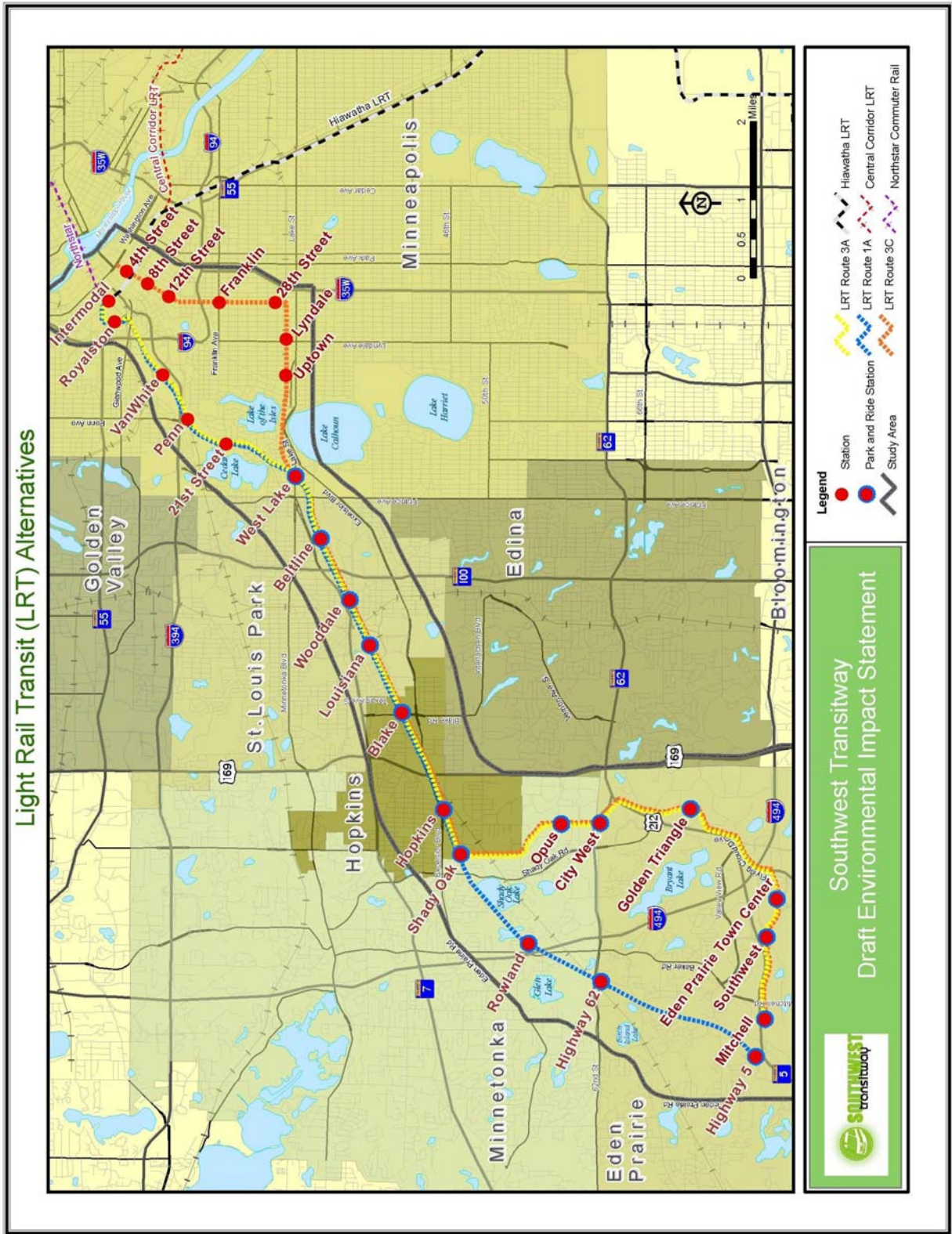


Figure 4: Map of LRT Alternatives

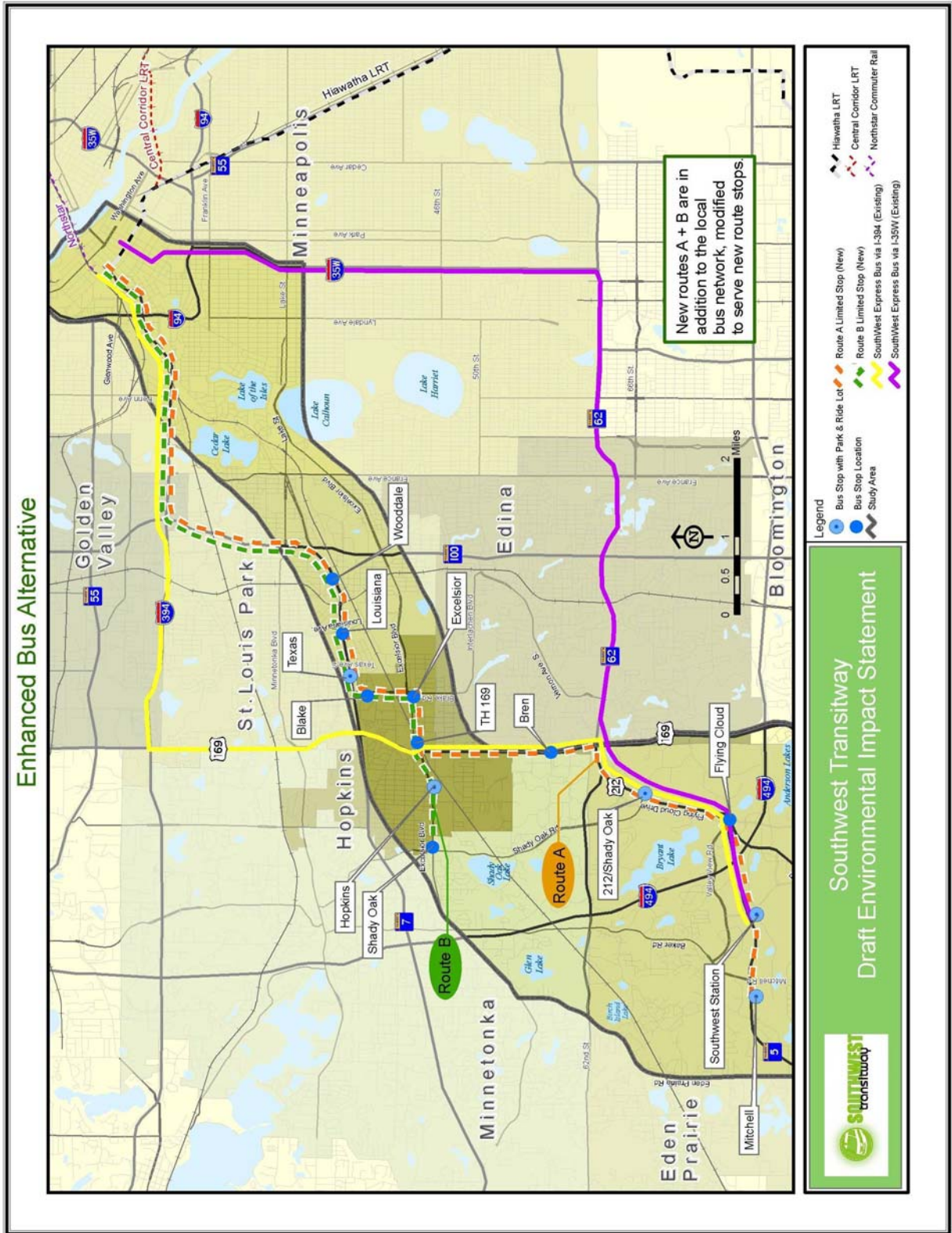


Figure 5: Map of Enhanced Bus Alternative

During Scoping, Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA) submitted multiple written descriptions of LRT 3E with variations, additions and deletions. HCRRA prepared a draft summary description and alignment plan based on the information received. HCRAA requested that CIDNA review and comment on the interpretation of the proposed alternative. CIDNA responded and comments were incorporated into the final description and map. CIDNA's primary concept for LRT 3E was an aerial (above grade) alignment along 10th Street. For the purpose of describing the general alignment and physical characteristics of the proposed route for LRT 3E it is divided into three segments; A, B and C. Southwest of the West Lake Station the remainder of the alternative was assumed to be consistent with LRT 3C.

2.2.1 EVALUATION

Federal regulations governing the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements for transit projects dictate that "The draft EIS (DEIS) shall evaluate all reasonable alternatives to the action and discuss the reason why other alternatives which may have been considered were eliminated from detailed study" (23 CFR 771.123). According to 40 CFR §1502.14, the DEIS "includes all reasonable alternatives which are rigorously explored and objectively evaluated, as well as those other alternatives, which are eliminated from detailed study with a brief discussion of the reasons for eliminating them" (See also 46 Fed. Reg. 18026, question 1a).

The test of 'reasonableness' for alternatives is one that is determined with respect to Purpose and Need of the project. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the federal commission responsible for coordinating federal environmental efforts, establishes regulations that state "(w)hat constitutes a reasonable range of alternatives depends on the nature of the proposal and the facts in the case" (46 Fed. Reg. 18026, question 1b). CEQ regulations further address reasonable alternatives as "those that are practical or feasible from the technical and economic standpoint and using common sense, rather than simply desirable from the standpoint of the applicant" (46 Fed. Reg. 18026, question 2b).

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) considers that an alternative is not feasible if it cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment, and an alternative is not prudent if:

- It compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed in light of its stated Purpose and Need;
- It results in severe safety or operation problems;
- After reasonable mitigation, it still causes severe social, economic, or environmental impacts, disruption to established communities, disproportionate impacts to minority or low income populations or severe impacts to environmental resources protected under other Federal statutes;
- It results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- It causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
- It involves multiple factors in paragraphs described above, that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude. (23 USC §771.135).

For purposes of the analysis, reasonable alternatives are those that:

- Are consistent with Regional and Local Planning
- Are based on sound engineering practices and are practical and feasible
- Perform as well or better than the LRT alternatives identified for inclusion in the Southwest Transitway DEIS
- Are consistent with the Purpose and Need for the Southwest Transitway

2.2.2 Results

Based on the technical analysis that was completed on the two proposed new alternatives, the Southwest Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on January 15, 2009 and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) met on January 21, 2009 the TAC and the PAC unanimously voted and recommended the LRT 3E Alternative should be excluded from further consideration and the LRT 3C Sub-Alternative (excluding Blaisdell Avenue north of Franklin Avenue) warrants more analysis to determine if it is of sound engineering and performance and therefore should be included in the Southwest DEIS. The LRT 3C Sub-Alternative is shown in Figure 6.

See Appendices L and M for the technical memoranda on both alternatives.

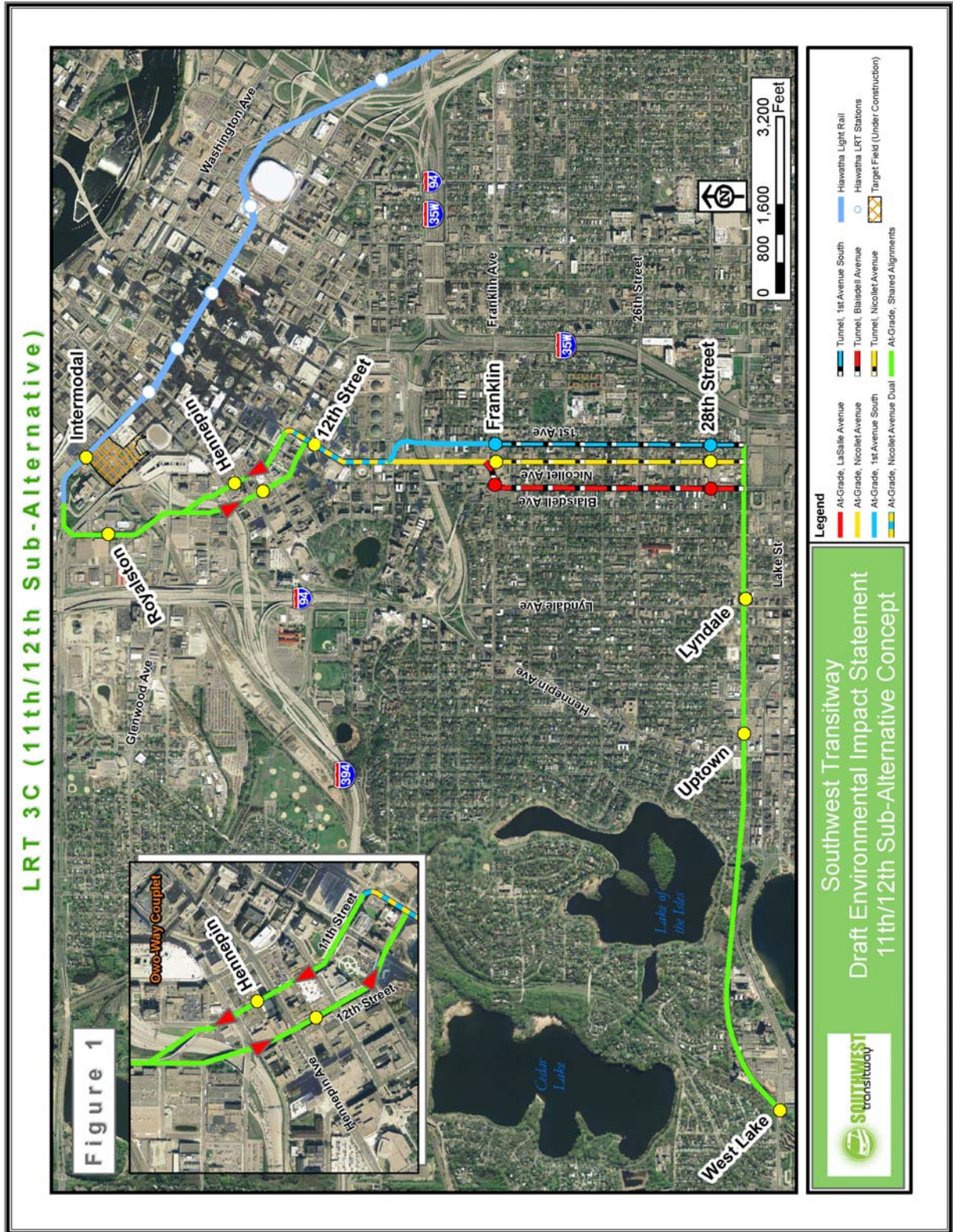


Figure 6: Map of the 11th/12th Sub-Alternative

3.0 SCOPING MEETINGS

3.1 OVERVIEW

The Scoping Process for the Southwest Transitway began with a notice in Finance and Commerce on August 23, 2008 and the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Monitor on September 8, 2008 and the Federal Register on September 23, 2008. These notices announced the beginning of the Scoping Comment Period, which extended from September 8, 2009, to November 7, 2009, and included the dates for three public Scoping Meetings/Hearings. Copies of the notices are included in Appendix A. The Public Scoping Meetings/Hearings were held on:

Tuesday, October 7, 2008
2:00 p.m. Open house
3:00 p.m. Public hearing
Hennepin County Government Center
300 South 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Tuesday, October 14, 2008
5:00 p.m. Open house
6:00 p.m. Public hearing
St. Louis Park City Hall
5005 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Thursday, October 23, 2008
5:00 p.m. Open house
6:00 p.m. Public hearing
Eden Prairie City Hall
8080 Mitchell Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

A *Scoping Information Booklet* was distributed to the public and agencies. This booklet was translated into three languages: Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The booklet answered questions and presented information on the following subjects:

- Introduction
- What is a draft environmental impact statement, and what is Scoping?
- Tell me more about the project; why is a Southwest Transitway needed?
- Overview of the purpose and need for the project
- Has the Southwest Transitway been studied before?
- Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis
- What alternatives are being considered?
- How can I be part of the process?
- When, where, and how can members of the public comment?
- How can I be involved after the Scoping Period?
- How will my comments affect the process?

- What government agencies are involved?
- What environmental topic areas will be considered?
- Project schedule.

Copies of the *Scoping Information Booklet* were available on the Southwest Web site southwesttransitway.org and at all of the Scoping Meetings. A copy of the booklet is included in Appendix B.

People with special needs were instructed to contact the HCRRA Project Manager for accommodations; all meetings were held at wheelchair-accessible and transit-accessible locations. Those who required language interpretation or special communication accommodations were also encouraged to contact the HCRRA Project Manager.

3.2 MEETING FORMAT

The Scoping Meetings began with an open house followed by a presentation and the formal testimony before the HCRRA. Eighteen informational display boards were set-up around the perimeter of the meeting rooms providing information about various elements of the project. Project and HCRRA Staff were available to answer questions from meeting participants. Copies of the display boards are included in Appendix D.

Following the open house, the HCRRA Project Manager gave a presentation explaining the purpose of the DEIS and the importance of public involvement in the overall process. A copy of the presentation is contained in Appendix E. A formal public hearing followed the presentation. Attendees were given three minutes to address the HCRRA and their comments were transcribed by a court reporter. The transcribed comments are included in Appendix J.

Several methods for submitting public comments were offered during the Scoping Period (comments were accepted September 8 through November 7, 2008). See Table 6.

Table 6: Scoping Period Comment Methods	
COMMENT METHOD	COMMENTS PROCESSING
Testimony at Scoping Hearings	Comments were transcribed (translation services for non-English speakers were offered to any who made the request)
Written Comments	Paper Comment Forms were distributed at a range of locations, including at Scoping Meetings, and were also included as part of the Scoping Information Booklet. Comment forms were accepted at Scoping Meetings, or could be mailed to the HCRRA Project Manager.
	E-mailed comments (e-mail address was posted on Web site and included in Scoping Booklet and other publications)
	Faxed comments (a fax number was included in Scoping Booklet and other publications)

3.2.1 PUBLIC MEETING ATTENDANCE

Sign-in sheets are contained in Appendix F.

Table 7: Scoping Meeting Attendance*			
MEETING DATE	MEETING LOCATION	NUMBER IN ATTENDANCE	NUMBER WHO GAVE TESTIMONY AT PUBLIC HEARING
October 7, 2008	Hennepin County Government Center	30	15
October 14, 2008	St. Louis Park City Hall	122	36
October 23, 2008	Eden Prairie City Hall	99	13

*Based on individuals' hand-written signatures on sign-in sheets.

3.3 AGENCY COORDINATION

An Agency Coordination Plan was completed and sent to Federal, State, Local and Regional agencies that may have an interest in the Southwest Transitway Project. The Southwest Transitway Agency Coordination Plan provides the structure for coordination between FTA, HCRRA, participating agencies, and the public during the process of preparing the DEIS to satisfy the requirements of NEPA and its implementing regulations, SAFETEA-LU and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), Chapter 4410 Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Environmental Review Program.

SAFETEA-LU was signed into law on August 10, 2005, refining the programmatic framework for Federal surface transportation projects. SAFETEA-LU includes several provisions intended to enhance the consideration of environmental issues and impacts within the transportation planning process including Section 6002 for Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision-making. Among the tools mandated by Section 6002, is the lead agency's development of a Coordination Plan, addressing how coordination and communication with agencies and the public will occur throughout the NEPA process. A copy of the Agency Coordination Plan is included in Appendix G.

HCRRA distributed invitations to 41 agencies to become participating agencies in the Southwest Transitway DEIS process. These invitations also invited agencies to an Agency Scoping Meeting. Copies of the letters sent to the various agencies are included in Appendix H. This meeting was held as follows:

Thursday, October 15, 2008
 Metro Counties Building
 2099 University Avenue W
 St. Paul, MN 55104

3.3.1 AGENCY SCOPING MEETING ATTENDANCE

A total of nine agency representatives attended the agency Scoping Meeting. An attendance sheet and minutes of the meeting are contained in Appendix I.

4.0 PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT SUMMARY

4.1 OVERVIEW

The Scoping Period extended from September 8, 2008 through November 7, 2008. There were numerous opportunities for interested parties to submit both written comments and/or verbal comments. During the Scoping Period a total of 340 documents were received from 295 individuals, groups and agencies. Comments were reviewed

and responded to individually. Refer to Appendix J for a copy of comments received and Appendix K for the responses.

All the comments were compiled, reviewed and analyzed to obtain public input on the project purpose and need, to identify appropriate alternatives for addressing the purpose and need, and to identify those environmental issues associated with the proposed project that require detailed analysis in the DEIS. The issues identified are summarized below, according to the following categories:

- Purpose and need for the project
- Alternatives
- Environmental benefits and impacts

4.1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Comments received did not impact the purpose and need as written in the AA.

4.1.2 ALTERNATIVES

Comments received on LRT 1A, LRT 3A, and LRT 3C included station locations, park and rides, routings between stations, and land uses around station locations. All comments received are included in the DEIS scope.

As noted in Section 2.0 of this report, requests for the inclusion of one new alternative, LRT 3E, and one new Sub-alternative, LRT 3C (11th/12th Sub-alternative) were received during the Scoping Process. LRT 3E has been excluded from the DEIS scope. The LRT 3C (11th/12th) Sub-alternative will be included as a Sub-alternative or “design option” to LRT 3C.

4.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND IMPACTS

Numerous comments were received on the environmental benefits and impacts of the proposed project. All comments received are included in the DEIS scope, which is provided below in Section 5.2 below.

5.0 SCOPING DECISION

5.1 ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED

Based upon the Scoping results, three LRT alternatives and the Enhanced Bus alternative are proposed for inclusion in the DEIS. The alternatives include proposed station locations, park-and-ride facilities at stations, and routings between stations. As described in Section 2 of this report, the following alternatives including a No-Build Alternative, will be evaluated in the DEIS.

- **Light Rail Transit 1A:** Alternative 1A is shown in Figure 4.
- **Light Rail Transit 3A:** Alternative 3A is shown in Figure 4.
- **Light Rail Transit 3C:** Alternative 3C is shown in Figure 4.
- **LRT 3C Sub-Alternative:** As described in Section 6 of this report, the Southwest Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on January 15, 2009 and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) met on January 21, 2009 to consider two new proposed alternatives. At these meetings, the TAC and the PAC unanimously

voted and recommended the LRT 3C Sub-Alternative (excluding Blaisdell Avenue north of Franklin Avenue) warrants more analysis to determine if it is of sound engineering and performance. This sub-alternative, therefore, will be included in the Southwest DEIS.

- **Enhanced Bus:** The Enhanced Bus Option is shown in Figure 5.
- **No-Build Alternative**

5.2 SCOPE OF THE DEIS

5.2.1 GENERAL

- Purpose and Need
- Regulatory requirements
- Alternatives screening process and results

5.2.2 PROPOSED ACTION

- An LRT maintenance and storage facility is likely to be needed. Candidate locations will be determined and disclosed in the DEIS.
- A Locally Preferred Alternative will be recommended.

5.2.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

For each alternative, potential impacts to biological resources and proposed mitigation will be discussed in the DEIS. At a minimum, the following topics will be included:

- Plant communities
- Wildlife and habitats
- Threatened and endangered species and species of concern
- Potential for disruption of critical habitat
- Potential discharges to the streams and rivers and the effect on wildlife and aquatic life
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.4 AIR QUALITY

For each alternative, the potential impacts to air quality and emissions including proposed mitigation will be evaluated in the DEIS. In addition, at a minimum, the following topics will be discussed:

- Potential climate effects
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.5 WATER RESOURCES

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act processes will be followed to determine the presence of and impacts to waters of the US and proposed mitigation for each alternative. Findings will be discussed in the DEIS. At a minimum, the analyses will include:

- Hydrology
- Potential impacts to water quality
- Potential impacts to wetlands
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

For each alternative, potential impacts to geology and soils will be discussed in the DEIS. At a minimum, the following topics will be included:

- Potential soil erosion
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.7 LAND USE AND SOCIOECONOMICS

For each alternative, the potential benefits and impacts to land use, neighborhoods, and socioeconomics will be evaluated in the DEIS and potential mitigation will be discussed. At a minimum, the following topics will be included:

- Compatibility with current zoning and local land use planning
- Potential impacts to neighborhoods, community facilities and services
- Demographic and socioeconomic factors
- Environmental justice
- Potential effects to existing land uses, housing, and property values
- Potential impacts to publicly held lands, open space and parklands, and off-road trails
- Impacts to and proposed mitigation to designated park, open space, sanctuaries, and other eligible properties under Section 4(f) and Section 6(f)
- The potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the stations, and potential mitigation for any adverse effects
- Impacts of LRT structures, facilities, power and substations, signal bridges, and proposed mitigation
- Potential displacements and relocations
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.8 VISUAL IMPACTS AND AESTHETICS

For each alternative, potential impacts of the project and proposed mitigation on the visual quality and aesthetic characteristics of the LRT corridor will be assessed in the DEIS.

5.2.9 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Determination of eligible historic properties, impacts, and mitigation will be assessed in the DEIS. At a minimum, the following topics will be included:

- The Section 106 process for determination of the area of potential effects, eligibility, adverse effects, and treatment (proposed mitigation)

- Properties eligible for protection under Section 4(f)
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

For each alternative, the location of known sites or potential sites containing hazardous or regulated materials, and the potential impacts and proposed mitigation of constructing the project on these sites will be assessed in the DEIS.

5.2.11 ENERGY

Energy use associated with constructing and operating project will be assessed in the DEIS.

5.2.12 SAFETY

Safety and security issues associated with each alternative for LRT, roadways, bicycles, pedestrians, station access, and proposed mitigation to avoid and reduce risks will be assessed in the DEIS.

Issues associated with the construction and operation of the project on police, fire, and medical emergency transport and proposed mitigation to avoid and reduce the effects will be assessed in the DEIS.

5.2.13 NOISE AND VIBRATION

For each alternative, noise and vibration impacts of the project and the proposed mitigation will be assessed in the DEIS pursuant to Federal Transit Administration guidance titled Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, May 2006.

5.2.14 TRANSPORTATION

At a minimum, the following transportation related topics will be assessed in the DEIS for each alternative:

- Potential effects and proposed mitigation to pedestrian and bicycle trails outside of public street rights of way.
- Potential impacts to roadways and traffic and proposed mitigation
- Potential impacts to existing bike and pedestrian facilities and proposed mitigation
- The relationships and alterations to existing and programmed public transit system(s)
- Impacts of park and ride facilities, parking, and associated traffic
- Impacts of the proposed project on transportation facilities and services, on-street parking, freight rail and trucking
- Potential construction impacts and mitigation

5.2.15 COSTS AND FUNDING

Capital funding strategies including cost estimates, funding secured to date, and the capital financing approach of the project for each alternative will be discussed in the DEIS.

5.3 ISSUES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE DRAFT EIS

The following topics will not be discussed in the DEIS:

- The impacts and proposed mitigation associated with the potential relocation of the freight line in St. Louis Park, which is an independent study being undertaken by Hennepin County
- Transit modes other than LRT and bus
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Coastal Zones

5.4 IDENTIFICATION OF PERMITS

The DEIS will include a list of permits that will be required for the applicants to construct the project. The following table presents a preliminary list.

Permit/Decision	Jurisdiction
Federal Approvals	
Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision	Federal Transit Authority
Environmental Impact Statement Adequacy Recommendation	Environmental Protection Agency
Section 4(f) Determination	Federal Transit Authority
Section 106 Consultation/Programmatic Agreement	Federal Transit Authority Advisory Council on Historic Preservation US Army Corps of Engineers
Section 404 Wetland Permit	US Army Corps of Engineers
Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act - Permit	US Army Corps of Engineers
Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act - Permit	US Coast Guard
Permit to Cross Federal Aid Highway	Federal Highway Administration
Minnesota State Approvals	
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act – Memorandum of Agreement	State Historic Preservation Office
Right-of-way Permit	Department of Transportation
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit	Pollution Control Agency
Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Pollution Control Agency
Public Waters Wetland Permit	Department of Natural Resources
Water Appropriation Permit	Department of Natural Resources
Hazardous Materials Management Plan	Pollution Control Agency
Noxious Weed Management Plan	Department of Agriculture
Local Approvals	

Southwest Transitway Scoping Summary Report

Permit/Decision	Jurisdiction
Road Crossing/Right-of-Way Permits	Hennepin County City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis
Utility Permits	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis
Building Permits	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis
Municipal Consent	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis
Driveway Access Permits	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis
Sediment and Erosion Control Permits	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina, City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Wetland Conservation Act Permit	City of Eden Prairie, City of Minnetonka, City of Hopkins, City of Edina,

Permit/Decision	Jurisdiction
	City of St. Louis Park City of Minneapolis Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

5.5 SCHEDULE

- January 2009 through September 2009 - Evaluation of Alternatives: Recommendation to Screen Alternatives, Selection Locally Preferred Alternative
- September 2009 through December 2009 – Finalize DEIS
- December 2009 – Publish DEIS

6.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A- Federal Register and Minnesota EQB Monitor Publications

**Appendix B - Scoping Information Booklets- English, Hmong, Somali,
Spanish**

Appendix C - Public Outreach

Appendix D - Scoping Meeting Boards

Appendix E - Presentation at Public Hearing

Appendix F - Scoping Meetings Sign-In Sheets

Appendix G - Agency Coordination Plan

Appendix H - Agency Invitation Letters

Appendix I - Agency Scoping Meeting

Appendix J - Scoping Comments

**Appendix K – Southwest Transitway Scoping Report
(Comments/Responses)**

Appendix L – Technical Memorandum 2: LRT 3E Alternative

Appendix M – Technical Memorandum 1: LRT 3C (11th/12th Sub-Alternative)