

*Comments were typed verbatim from an audio recording of the community comment and question section of the agenda.*

**Panel:**

- Metropolitan Council Chair Sue Haigh
- Metropolitan Council Member Gary Cunningham
- Metropolitan Council Member Adam Duininck
- Metropolitan Council Member Jennifer Munt
- Della Young, Environmental Consultant, Burns & McDonnell
- Jeff Thuma, Hydro-Geologist, Burns & McDonnell
- Jim Terry, Freight Rail Consultant, TranSystems
- Jim Alexander, Director of Design and Engineering, Southwest LRT Project Office
- Mark Fuhrmann, Project Director, Southwest Project Office
- Dan Cramer, President of Engagement, Grassroots Solutions

**Verbal Comment 01**

Commenter: What happens with the phase two of the studies where you are worried about contamination? What happens if you do not have a way to mitigate those issues?

Jim Alexander: Part of our process, we would ordinarily go through an environmental site assessment, phase one. What that is a paper study to take a look what type of contaminants may be in the ground along the alignment and subsequent to that information will help inform a phase two, which will look at the soils themselves, we will do explorations to see the soils, so folks know what a phase one and two environmental site assessment will look like. Those are part of any project of this magnitude. And so if we go through a phase two and we find containments that helps inform us on the cost of the project as we get into construction so that we know what we are up against when we are digging into the ground. It also helps us understand how we deal with construction. If there are certain contaminants that we need to have special treatment for, or we need to have special disposal for those types of materials. It is to help us understand what type of risks we have as we move into the construction phase of the project.

**Verbal Comment 02**

Commenter: My questions relates to the recommendations. Are these, do these recommendations need to be satisfied before a decision is made on the route?

Jim Alexander: I would just point out that most, if not all of the recommendation that have been made, we are already looking to implement. Like for example, Della Young spoke of the 50 year flood design, we have already bumped that up to 100 year design as it is really inconsequential, just an incremental difference that doesn't really impact the project. So we are moving forward with the recommendations in our design.

**Verbal Comment 03**

Commenter: Thank for your presentation, Della. Could you say more about what these infiltration chambers are, and where they would be located and how many you would need along the tunnels?

Della Young: I will start with what an infiltration chamber is and Jim can address the rest, the design we looked at addressed placing infiltration chambers but not the specific locations because the phase two will help guide where those would go. But, an infiltration chamber is an underground box with sand and gravel and other course materials to help filter the water, so as the water comes in, it will go through the sand layer and then go into ground water

Jim Alexander: In terms of the location, we have not yet gotten to that stage of where they will be located and how large they will be. They will likely be close to the portals if we can but we need to look at the design as we move forward. Particularly on the southern section, it is a little tight in the Right of Way so we need to find opportunities to locate these.

#### **Verbal Comment 04**

Commenter: Thank you, I have questions and comments about, well more about the route. If...

Dan Cramer: We will have an opportunity to go on to more general question after the presentations of the reports if you could save your comments until then.

Commenter: Ok, kind of relates to the water but ok.

Dan Cramer: Well if it relates to the water, go ahead.

Commenter: Well, I just want to know why we are risking contaminating our water, how expensive is it going to be to deal with all of this and if we are looking at going in a tunnel, why put the tunnel by the water, there are so many other places in the city that we could put tunnels and then there won't be stations for people to ride in that section anyway. I don't understand why put the tunnels by the water and risk an unforeseen problem like that apartment did. That was unforeseen; they only anticipated doing that for a couple months. So my question, why tunnel and risk our water?

Jim Alexander: Maybe I could speak to the 1800 Lake situation that was mentioned. Maybe everyone doesn't know what the situation is there. Basically, it is a condominium that is northeast of Lake Calhoun and it is down into the ground water and there is about 180 gallons per minute being discharged with that construction now it is in operation. This project is anticipated to be on the order of maybe 10-15 gallons per minute of discharge into ground water, to give you an idea of the order of magnitude difference between the two. What we are designing this project to accommodate for the groundwater. The type of construction is not really out of the ordinary, we have seen this done in LA, done in St. Louis in Canada, Winnipeg, Austria. In fact, with these types of projects, we have two lines of defense to really prevent ground water from entering the tunnels; some of those projects only have one line of defense and are working successfully. So I am not sure if I have answered all of your questions, maybe you have more a philosophical question about tunneling.

Chair Haigh: I believe that the question you are asking is: "why are we doing a tunnel here?" The tunnel here is to accommodate both the existing condition on the trail and the freight rail that is already on the corridor and allow for continuation of the use of the trail for bike and pedestrian use. So the tunnel is to accommodate both of those uses in the area with this alignment.

**Verbal Comment 05**

Commenter: I am curious about how much additional study would be needed to evaluate the impact on ground water or lake water for putting a tunnel underneath the channel? As opposed to running freight and light rail above the channel.

Jim Alexander: We actually looked at a deep bore tunnel and many of you know that was one of our options. Essentially, we would have a deep tunnel along the full alignment as well as under the channel and that was brought to the Corridor Management Committee that was mentioned, in the September time frame and primarily, as I recall, due to the cost that option was voted to not proceed for the project.

Commenter: That wasn't my question.

Dan Cramer: Restate the question then.

Commenter: How much additional consulting work will be needed to evaluate, would be needed, to evaluate putting a tunnel underneath the channel.

Della Young: That is something we did not look at when we, our specific look was at the shallow tunnel option. If that was to be proposed there would need to be an additional look and what that would take. There are different professionals to look at the situation. We did not look at that.

Jim Alexander: I would just say going back the timeframe of the summer. Both of those options of the shallow tunnel and the deep bore tunnel were advanced equally as we looked at the options.

**Verbal Comment 06**

Commenter: I just wanted to understand the underground infiltration chambers and that you are doing a 100 year design versus a 50 year design and what the difference was?

Della Young: In looking at the analysis that was done for the project. It was statistically insignificant the difference. Something like .26 arches feet of volume versus .3. As it relates to design, the error factor it just lead itself to say, go with the higher event because if you rounded it up you would be at the same number for the small areas that are actually draining to the portal areas.

Commenter: You are just saying that there would be more draining in a 100 year event than a 50 and so you are just making more areas for them to go into?

Della Young: To some degree. So usually what is done for these projects is you look at the area that is draining to your device, so in this case you have a storm water infiltration chamber and there is an area going to it, so you simulate a rain coming from 50 year event and a 100 year event and you design for that volume. Given the difference in the numbers that they looked at, they were so close that it just made sense to go with the higher number.

**Verbal Comment 07**

Commenter: Thanks for the presentation. Could you go to the slide that says a "project understanding construction"? Yeah, I have a question about the actual construction of the shallow tunnel. When we talked to other engineers at public forums, there was mention that the shallow tunnel was above the

water table. But this suggests that during the excavation that there would be water coming in during construction. I am wondering what impact that would have on construction costs and the construction timetable? And then I have another question about where the egress emergency exits would be along the two tunnels and how that is mitigated for water entrance.

Della Young: If I understood the first question, it had to do with whether or not the shallow tunnel would be below the water table correct?

Commenter: Yes, you show a lot of water here, like a big bath tub.

Della Young: What is happening there is there are parts of the project that will be in the water table and what they are going to do is put sheet pile down and then they are going to seal the bottom. So there will be ground water around the tunnel but it won't be in the tunnel. So this picture is just what happens before the water in the cell is removed, before they go onto the next cell to complete the segment.

Commenter: So what do you do if the freight tracks are just a few feet away from that?

Della Young: The train tracks, if I understood correctly, are moved or nine feet or something like that.

Jim Alexander: Yes, in the southern section where there is a narrower Right of Way we move the freight rail tracks over about three feet to the west to accommodate construction, this is temporary.

Dan Cramer: I am going to move us on.

Commenter: But the other question about the emergency exits. Where would those be?

Jim Alexander: I can address that. Our current design looks at having portals between the west and east bound tracks but the actual exits for our patrons if that needs to be done, they would be coming out of the portals. Remember, there are two tunnels and there is about a 2,200 foot long tunnel on the southern section, south of the channel and north is about a 2,500 foot section.

#### **Verbal Comment 08**

Commenter: Thank you, Della. Two quick questions: What is the impact of the soil contaminants on the water, if you look at that when do the cut and cover tunnel? What does that do to the lakes? And then when is Phase Two done? Is it before construction, during construction, after construction?

Della Young: Phase Two is done before construction because it helps guide construction and for your question relating to soil contamination and things like that, that would come out of the Phase Two report and they would be able to address the situation so you are not having contaminated soil or water conditions. I will turn it over to Jim.

Jim Alexander: Yes, as we work on the project we will work with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, as well as the DNR, the Watershed District and the Park Board and the City, and so as we embark on our Phase Two, we are actually looking to go out on procurement this year to get that work done. We should have that wrapped up by the end of the year, well before construction so that it can help us with that construction phase.

**Verbal Comment 09**

Commenter: I just want to make sure I understand this. This is a cut and cover tunnel, you would be building the U first and then capping it? How deep is that cross section in the water level?

Della Young: It varies, as the proposed design was, that they are below the water table. But we didn't get to that, would it be 10 feet or 15 feet, Jim might have more information.

Jim Alexander: We have been showing a cross section in other open houses, where we have an excavation, I should say the tunnel is about 24 feet deep and so the ground water level about up to, about 1/3 of, that first 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom. Essentially what she is taking about with the cells, we would have sheet pile walls, a box that is about 130 or so feet and so we would have a series of boxes as we progress from one end to the other. Does that make sense?

**Verbal Comment 10**

Commenter: Well, first of all Jim and Mark thank you for all your hard work. I do appreciate it. I have two questions? One, how do you make a decision by March 14 or 15 or whenever it is, if we have all these unanswered questions and number two take the money out of the deep bore tunnel, which I don't agree with your numbers, and put it towards the shallow tunnel, would that solve many of the issues with the shallow tunnel that we are talking about tonight?

Chair Haigh: The first question was about how do we make a decision by the end of March based on comments we get today and the St. Louis Park meeting and discussions we have at the Corridor Management Committee. We hope to make that decision by the end of March.

Commenter: Phase Two is not going to be done by the end of March.

Chair Haigh: We would expect Phase Two to be done at that point that we would be making a decision. That would not be a normal process at all. That is something that would get done as we go further into engineering. We will absolutely do a Phase Two, but that it is not even appropriate to think that is would be done at this stage.

Dan Cramer: We can come back to the tunnels during our open section.

**Verbal Comment 11**

Commenter: This may be a question for the decision makers. Are there any conditions that would preclude going forward with this? Like could you hit a financial wall and say too much is too much?

Chair Haigh: I think right now, I don't think anyone has made up their mind about what they are going to do with this project. I think we are trying to get this information so we have good information to make a decision. So, yes, cost is important, safety is important, community impact is important. I am pleased that we have had this water resources report that provides additional information on the reports that we have. It is good news that we are hearing in this report

Dan Cramer: As a reminder for this section, if people could stay focused on the water reports. We will have plenty of time for all other topics.

**Verbal Comment 12**

Commenter: Thank you. I am trying to do some quick math here. You got about 4,700 feet of tunnel. This is a water question, and you have 150 foot sections and you have about 25 sections. I am trying to figure out, if you are drilling with eight feet of water, the bottom eight feet. I don't need to know all the technical answers, but then you need to connect those? What is the chance you get leakage, like the big dig in Boston? Where you have leakage at all of those joints and while you don't like the term dewatering, what does that do to the tunnel?

Della Young: As the project is proposed they have things in place to be able to address that specific question. They will have elements, like sealants in those areas and they are proposing a real way to look at the situation. We are not, as we looked at this project, the constructability concerns is where Jim and his team will look closer, but looking at how much water can actually get into this tunnel as proposed, it is not an active dewatering situation.

**Verbal Comment 13**

Commenter: The only amount of water I heard tonight was 15 gallons. I mean how expensive this is going, I think that is absurd. I just want to mention that there has been so much manipulation of ground water in this area. Cedar Lake used to drain northeast into Basset Creek. When 394 was built the two springs were killed, the Great Medicine Spring in Theodore Worth Park and Glenwood Spring into the sewer system, 2 and a half million gallons a day. I am looking at this and seeing water hit a wall and I am wondering where that water is going to go? Is it going to under, no because that is water pressure, what is that going to do to the surrounding areas? There are rain events that we can't even imagine, if we keep having the weather we have been having. This is a permitting meeting, we can mitigate anything, we can manage the water. I don't know, I think nature bats last.

Dan Cramer: I didn't hear a question in the statement so we will move on.

**Verbal Comment 14**

Commenter: This is a follow-up question to the Phase Two. How will Municipal Consent be handled since Phase Two is completed after the request for consent?

Jim Alexander: We again, our normal process, we did this on Central Corridor, we went through this preliminary phase of engineering, we went to municipal consent with the two cities and the County and the site assessment, came later, after that. The site assessment, the environmental site assessment is really to identify contaminants out there to understand what we will be up against when we construct. When we see contaminated materials we will have to deal with those and we have to understand how to dispose of those and how much will that cost. If we are going to own the property, eventually with the light rail, we need to understand what will be exposed to as an owner of that property with the contaminants. In terms in the Municipal Consent, it really doesn't play a part in that process.

**Verbal Comment 15**

Commenter: So the Met Council is going to be looking at a 100 year event instead of a 50 year event but I can't say I am terribly impressed because we are seeing 100 year drought and 100 year floods every couple years. What I am wondering is whether, if you are doing any more extreme scenario planning for, you know, a flood or some kind of other disaster that we might encounter.

Jim Alexander: I would say we are using the current state of practice. In fact, it has been using the Atlas 14, which might not mean a whole lot to folks, but that is a new standard that is being used for the 100 year flood design and we are using that. That is the current state of practice.

Dan Cramer: So we have about five more minutes for water.

**Verbal Comment 16**

Commenter: This may seem a little extreme but when I look at it and we are getting creative with ideas, it appears at one point, when I look at this, it is almost like a boat and is there a chance that the water level could actually physically raise the whole unit. I mean on, I just wonder.

Della Young: Jeff is my hydro-geologist.

Jeff Thuma: That is a good question. There is, would be some buoyancy effect, much like a boat and part of the design is to, with the concrete that will be at the base will be a weight so that it is not lifted and that goes into the design, I believe. Is that correct?

Jim Alexander: Yes, our design accounts for buoyancy. So if we have any part of the structure that is under the ground water, things would have a tendency to float, so it has to be heavy enough to keep it down in place. We don't want our structure to be moving.

**Verbal Comment 17**

Commenter: What was the new standard that you just mentioned?

Jim Alexander: It is called Atlas 14.

Commenter: Ok, so in the past, speaking to what this woman behind me spoke to. There have been so many occasions that we are caught by surprise, and so is Atlas 14 at the level of basic compliance or is actually thinking far enough out that it might consider an extraordinary event that we might have not seen so far?

Jim Alexander: That is a difficult question to answer the way you put it. I would say that we are following the current state of practice. The Atlas 14, I don't know, Della, when that came to play?

Della Young: Last year.

Jim Alexander: Just last year and so we are designing to the current state of practice. Just know, your question about the ground water, we have been working with the Park Board to get historical data, so that we understand where the ground water has been level wise, the database has at least 100 years, and we will continue to monitor the ground water as we go through design and get into construction. When we are in operations we will continue to monitor that to ensure things are at safe levels.

Dan Cramer: We have time for one more question on water.

**Verbal Comment 18**

Commenter: Thank you. Based on what happened to homes along 394, what impact will water displacement and dewatering during construction have on nearby homes given that this being built kind



of right next to foundations? And also who would be liable? What, my understanding is that homes in Bryn-Mawr were damaged, homes in Golden Valley were damaged and there was no liability held by MNDot and so what would be the liability and what did your studies find in terms of the homes where this water is being displaced to?

Della Young: Specifically to the evaluation of that was done, we were looking to see if there would be any blockages of flow and if the water can get to where it normally goes and based on course sand aquifer that is below the shallow tunnel, the water is going to be able to do what it has historically done. As it relates to the construction and liability, I will have to turn that over to Jim.

Mark Fuhrmann: Thank you. I would just add that, before we start construction on any of these big projects, we do a pre-construction survey of all the adjacent properties and that sets the baseline of the condition of those properties prior to construction so it is easier then to assess whether if there has been any impact to those adjacent and abutting structures throughout the course of construction.

**Water section concluded. TranSystems Consultant presented draft freight rail routing report.**

**Verbal Comment 19**

Commenter: It is not clear from your map which is new, what is new rail, new track and what is existing track?

Jim Terry: Any particular area you are talking about?

Commenter: The map you showed. I assume all that you showed on that map is new track and everything else is existing?

Jim Terry: Are we talking about the Kenilworth Corridor or St. Louis Park?

Commenter: St. Louis Park

Jim Terry: It is a complete rebuild on the Canadian Pacific portion. By the time I have an elevation getting on the railroad.

Commenter: How much built is not an existing corridor?

Jim Alexander: Hey Jim, you may want to turn to slide 56 and show the map that he is referring to.

Jim Terry: Well that does not show all of it. How much of it is on new corridor? Ok, so let's take a look, I break off of this switch by the football field, from here to here is not on current railroad Right of Way. Now on the north end of this connection there is another good third of a mile where a railroad connection was, the iron triangle, and it has been removed. So, depending on new build and what you consider new build, less than a mile.

Commenter: And how many additional trains per day will go through this?

Jim Terry: Right now the Twin Cities & Western runs two interchange trains a day and an interchange train goes to St. Paul and comes back so you could count that as two and they do twice a day, so that is



four trains, in addition they normally have a shuttle train, every day on average. I see that business growing so that is five, in addition, today the Canadian Pacific runs two short trains, 15 cars a piece. So that would be total of seven trains a day.

**Verbal Comment 20**

Commenter: Thank you for explaining all of that to us. Quick question, you outlined the safety enhancement for St. Louis Park, if Minneapolis is forced to co-locate both Southwest LRT and freight, are you recommending those same safety enhancements?

Jim Terry: Thank you for asking that question. You are 100% correct. It needs to be done to upgrade the rail system, period. Yes.

**Verbal Comment 21**

Commenter: Thank you, I just wanted to follow-up on a comment you made about the housing units and I think we were all surprised that were more housing units affected in Minneapolis but when you talked about St. Louis Park, I think you said that a portion of the housing was in the 150 feet and the reason I am asking is because I saw some maps, early on that look like, maybe you are talking about backyard garage structures, are you talking about actual housing?

Jim Terry: In St. Louis Parking, I am talking about housing. I did it off an aerial, could I have mistaken a garage for a house, yeah, and that is kind of what I am saying. I am saying about 140 houses, which may be a little high. I was trying to error on the high side.

Commenter: Then I have a follow-up question. So much of the safety considerations, I am trying, I suppose you are talking about, the possible of derailment and then you also addressing proximity to houses but I am wondering, is anybody addressing the fact that if you do have the co-location in Kenilworth, you got proximity not only to houses but to bicycles and pedestrians and even where the two trains, the freight and the light rail would cross the channel, you have got even boaters underneath so?

Jim Terry: In my study, I did not look at the effect of, as we said, of tunnels or anything like that. But, having listened to what I heard at the Town Hall meetings, it is one of the reasons that safety should be brought over here, let's face it, we got bicycles pretty close to the railroad, we need to make sure that don't have the interference between the trains and the bicycles on the Kenilworth. Again, I did not look at the tunnel and I did not look at deep tunnel, shallow tunnel or moving the trail.

Dan Cramer: Jim did you have something to add to that? No, ok.

**Verbal Comment 22**

Commenter: Question to relocate the rail, is it also to relocate the light rail or is it to keep the light rail in Kenilworth and separate from the freight train?

Jim Terry: Well...

Dan Cramer: I am going to have Jim Alexander take that question.

Jim Terry: Okey doke. I will answer for you my part of it after the meeting if you like.

Jim Alexander: Yes, the focus on the study with Jim was to look at if there are any areas that have been studied in the past or anything new for where the freight rail could be located, so it is really a freight rail question.

**Verbal Comment 23**

Commenter: This might be a policy question related to the rail and also to the water study. Shouldn't some of these questions, like the safety, well all kinds of questions, be a part of the Environmental Impact Study and are we undergoing a supplemental or a Supplemental Draft Environmental Study and if so, if this stuff is suppose to be a part of that, when does that happen and when does it need to be completed?

Mark Fuhrmann: The FTA has requested of Met Council to undertake a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Study and that is underway in terms of drafting that document. In terms of timing, that is looking to be provided to FTA for their review and comment here as we speak. I would guess, I cannot speak for FTA, but that I would guess we would be looking at a summer 2014 publication of the Supplemental DEIS.

Commenter: (Inaudible)

Mark Fuhrmann: Did everyone hear that question? Could you please Jeanette?

Commenter: I am asking if the report that is being drafted now, will that address some of the questions about safety, if the rail is relocated, safety if the rail is co-located, and other environmental impacts on the various areas where the rail, where the freight rail and tunnels would be located and so forth.

Mark Fuhrmann: The question focuses on the Supplemental DEIS?

Commenter: Do these options needed to be included in the SDEIS?

Mark Fuhrmann: The answer to what is included in the SDEIS and what is not is partially informed by what Met Council ultimately decides is the final resting place for the freight rail and what kind of configuration, and if light rail, which is approved for the Kenilworth Corridor, how light rail resides in the Kenilworth Corridor. So we have more exchanges with the public and that will help inform the Council's deliberations in the coming weeks.

**Verbal Comment 24**

Commenter: As we are talking about safety with the heavy rail, specifically at the pinch point in the Kenilworth Corridor, but throughout the area, as you add fencing and security walls or whatever, how do you do it in such a narrow spot because the train right now is practically outside the townhouse windows. Where do you add any kind of security without destroying the whole look either at the housing or at the trail?

Jim Alexander: That is why we are purposing the LRT tunnel. The tight space she is referring to is to the southern section, south of Cedar Lake Parkway where the Right of Way gets down to about 59 feet. And so as we have been looking at the design, I don't know if you were with us last summer, but we had various designs and in some of those designs we were taking a lot of homes, and we were trying to find

something that wasn't so impactful to homes and we came up with the shallow LRT tunnel and it would fit the freight rail safely with the LRT in tunnel and the pedestrian trail up on top.

Commenter: But as a follow-up, knowing all of that and seeing where the train is right now, is there enough room to create the safety areas on either side of the train and the walls that you would need and the fencing because all you have to do is stand in one of the townhouses right there and see that there is no room and that it is being at the other side, it is being built at the base of the grain elevators. So how do we accomplish all of that?

Jim Alexander: Well ma'am, that is just part of our process in the engineering phase, as we have done survey to understand how much space we have, we have had engineering look at how much space we need and how much space we have and we have done designs to make sure that we fit through the area.

#### **Verbal Comment 25**

Commenter: This is probably really stupid question, but here it comes, you got about seven trains running on the heavy rail, when a train comes through, cars wait until the train goes through. Can you use the same track for the light rail and just delay in the schedule? Is there too much variation in the schedule, would this never work, have you look at it all?

Jim Terry: That was not a bad question by any stretching of the imagination. Congratulations for asking a good question, generally speaking the light rail as you know will have an electrical canopy above it. There are times when it will conflict with the height of the freight rail so that makes it problematic. Physically the track, same track, 4 foot 8 and a half gage, same ties, that type of thing, could be the same rail. If it works for freight it would work for light rail, similar in size, shape, description, just they don't mix well, ok. Diesel power versus electrical power is the issues. Good question.

Jim Alexander: I would just add to that, with our schedules both the freight and the light rail, it just doesn't mix. Freight has any chance that any time during the day that they will need to run those unit trains for example. As the residents know, as I know, I live close to this area, I hear trains in the middle of the night, they come at 2:00 a.m., they could come at 10 a.m. Our schedules require that we stick to a schedule and make sure our trains run on-time with our entire system. It would just not be practical.

#### **Verbal Comment 26**

Commenter: Hi, I have a question sort of in the dumb question category. Has anybody looked at, at the alternative of the Midtown Corridor, taking the light rail, down the Midtown Corridor and then having it stop somewhere, Lyndale or somewhere and uses buses or trolley cars to get people downtown? Because even if you take the light rail downtown, you will still need to get on a bus to get to a lot of the downtown offices.

Gary Cunningham: Ok, that wasn't a dumb question at all, in fact we are now in the process of conducting an alternatives analysis to determine whether streetcars could go along the Greenway that would connect to Southwest and connect to Hiawatha line and in doing that it would serve all of the folks in Uptown area, in the Phillips area, all the way over to Hiawatha. Now we haven't, a final decision hasn't been made, but the analysis is near complete and in the next few weeks we will, the community policy group that has been meeting will be voting and moving that forward for consideration, both by Metropolitan Council as well as the Cities and the County.

Commenter: Would that make the light rail not go through Kenilworth? (Inaudible)

Gary Cunningham: This is the streetcar, it is a different thing but it does connect up to both of those systems.

Commenter: But I am saying, can't we just cut the light rail off and not have it go through Kenilworth or downtown and have the light rail go down the midtown Greenway and pick up with alternative ways to get people downtown from there.

Gary Cunningham: That is not what we were considering when we were considering the alternatives, so it was not part of the studies.

Commenter: Would it be a good idea to look at so we would need to put light rail through the Kenilworth trail?

Gary Cunningham: I would say we are going to look at all of the options and make some decisions about what is best for everyone in the region and not just a particular section of the region.

Dan Cramer: I would say, let's stay focus on freight rail. Any other questions that come up we will talk about in our last section.

#### **Verbal Comment 27**

Commenter: I just want to make sure I understand this. The freight train is not going to be running over the tunnels, the tunnels are going to be separate? Is the freight train going to be running above the light rail tunnel?

Jim Alexander: Under the shallow LRT tunnel, the freight rail would be essentially where it is today, specifically on the south segment, south of Cedar Lake Parkway. Next to that there would be a tunnel with two LRT tracks and on top of that the trail would exist.

Commenter: Ok, is it because you just said a couple minutes ago, which prompted the question, there is not enough room, there is 59 feet and you are saying for all three modes but there is room for two modes essentially.

Jim Alexander: Essentially, we had an option out last summer, where all options were at-grade. In order to do that we would need to acquire townhomes or condo silos to the east and so the shallow LRT tunnel option does not take any home through there so that is the options that we had recommended to move forward.

Commenter: So there is room to have the freight rail and the tunnels side by side in the 59 feet?

Jim Alexander: That is correct, with the trail on top.

#### **Verbal Comment 28**

Commenter: Have the, has this area considered what Washington DC does, which is to prohibit the worse type of freight going through the downtown but route it on more miles on existing track around the city? The second question is, as I understood what he presented, even to make safety, make the

tracks safe, it is less expensive to route it through St. Louis Park then the present route through Kenilworth. Is my understanding of what you said correct?

Jim Terry: In my \$112 million dollar number that I put up there, I better make sure everyone understands that that is without property and there are property takes that are needed to make what I am proposing work. I don't know the value of property is here, I could tell you for Kansas, so it is north of the 112. Your second question was, has anyone considered what to do with what they do in Washington DC, the Twin Cities & Western really only has one connection right now and that is all is proposed to have one connection. Now they don't carry a lot of what you would call prohibited traffic, they are agricultural based, grain etc, no but I don't see how that would be practical in this particular case.

Commenter: So just to clarify, the number you gave for the present alignment of the train was higher than the number then you gave for the St. Louis Park?

Jim Terry: The number I gave for Kenilworth was based on the numbers I heard that included the deep tunnel, the shallow tunnel; I did not look at the cost of the Kenilworth. I do have a \$20 million number in there to cover the safety improvements that I am going to recommend for the Kenilworth, either way that is where that number came from. But I, you could ask me what the tunnel, the shallow tunnel would cost, I heard it at the last meeting.

Commenter: What I am asking you, I thought I saw, improvements to the rail road which are necessary through the Kenilworth Corridor to make it safe would cost, that is was even higher than the St. Louis Park number.

Tim Terry: No ma'am it shouldn't have been. We can talk about it more after the meeting. It would be less expensive.

Chair Haigh: I think it would be helpful, I am going to ask the project staff to respond to the cost number because one of the pieces of work that will have to go on now is to take the information that we have from the concept report that Jim has referred to and add to it the property acquisitions, make sure we are doing the same analysis for this new alternatives on cost as we have for the rest of the project. So that is the step that needs to happen now and hopefully we will get that sometime in the next week, two weeks, within two weeks for sure. So we ensure that we are using the same methodology, which is required by us by our federal funding partners as we put together these project cost.

Dan Cramer: Jim, Mark, anything to add. Ok, moving on.

#### **Verbal Comment 29**

Commenter: Would you please address the freight rail issue between 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Cedar Lake Parkway? After talking to the engineers at one of the other meetings, it was explained to me that freight rail would be relocated to the west 10 feet and up to 40 feet to the west permanently to allow for the corridor to handle co-location and the bike trail. Additionally, please discuss the 88 foot wide bridge over the channel to accommodate freight rail, light rail and the bicycles.

Jim Alexander: I will tackle the first one, if my memory serves me correctly, might not be exact on the number because it has been a while since I looked at it. At the south section, the freight rail is going to

be in about the same location once everything is constructed, as we head further north, by the time we get to the bridge as we cross the channel, the freight rail is going to be about 40 feet over to the west from where it is located today. There is a swath of property that runs along the Kenilworth Corridor that is owned by BNSF that we would look to acquire for that purpose. As we continue up further to the north, I don't know exactly where they spot is precisely, but between Burnham and 21<sup>st</sup> we are getting back to the where the rail road is today and so as you progress further up to the Cedar junction, it is essentially untouched. Do I have that right Paul? Yes. And so your second question, you might have to remind me.

Commenter: The 88 foot wide bridge over the Kenilworth Channel. Supposed to have a six foot gap in the center and how will that affect the experience of the park? I know that is not your prerogative but do you anticipate that that would create a problem and if you would answer that?

Jim Alexander: What he is speaking of, when we cross the tunnel with the shallow LRT tunnel configuration, currently today there is a bridge that carries the freight and a bridge that carries the trail and that is on the order, if I remember correctly it is about 45 feet in width. If we were to build the shallow LRT tunnel it would end-up being about 85 feet all told. I don't remember the gap necessarily. There is the freight bridge and then there is a LRT and trail bridge. In terms of the experience that would be part of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement to identify impacts from that particular design assuming that design does move forward.

Commenter: If I could follow-up on that 40 foot number, you mentioned that the freight rail would have to be moved 40 feet to the west. To accommodate that you would have to bulldoze quite a bit of vegetation, vegetation canopy, woods and forest through there and put the freight rail 40 feet to the west and yet you can't re-vegetate because of the 25 foot set-back from the centerline and so all the talk of re-vegetating the corridor when actually it is too narrow between the two shallow tunnels to re-vegetate and as we have talked about the 59 ½ foot choke points the reason it is that narrow because when Hennepin County bought the corridor for transit and rail banked it, that is your term, they immediately went off and sold a portion of the corridor to allow for the construction of the red townhomes, the St. Louis townhomes or whatever they are called. We have the pinch point because Hennepin County made the decision to sell off the land long before a bicycle trail went in, that is why we have the pinch point. If you could address how you would re-vegetate after moving the freight trail 40 feet to the west.

Jim Alexander: In terms of what the vegetation would look like that would be the next set. We have already done an inventory. We have that report in the back. There are 480 or so, what is classified as a significant tree by Minneapolis code, which is essentially 12 inches or more in diameter. If we move forward with the shallow LRT tunnel design, we will work with the local community to the Park Board and the City to understand what that design would look like in terms of, where we can have vegetation, what type of vegetation that could be and move from there with the design.

### **Verbal Comment 30**

Commenter: I have a follow-up question about the lines as they run by the townhomes. You have mentioned that the space fits for the freight as well as the shallow tunnels, at the same time the safety enhancements are new information. Have you re-looked at the fit with the new information of the safety enhancements and will you be able to do that and will you be looking at design considerations that will allow for livability for the homes on both sides of that part of the corridor?



Jim Alexander: Yes, in terms of the safety aspect that Mr. Terry has spoken of, we don't see that would impact the width requirements, most of those elements would be accommodated within the Right of Way we have today.

Commenter: The design and the part of the question that had to do with design consideration with the aesthetics with the safety enhancements?

Jim Alexander: In terms of the safety enhancements, I don't think I can mix those with how people perceive or relate to rail. We would again be working with the community, with the Park Board, with the City to come up with a design that would hopefully meet the needs of the folks through there. We still have freight rail under that design, we would have LTR in a tunnel and the trails up on top.

**Verbal Comment 31**

Commenter: I have a question about the St. Louis Park freight rail line. The orange is further south, is the existing and the one right above the proposed?

Jim Terry: Correct.

Commenter: What kind of guidelines do you use to decide which homes and properties are removed or which need to be removed for there to be enough space for that relocation?

Jim Terry: Ok, I went through there and made an estimate and that estimate I told everybody was seven homes and a similar number of businesses that would be impacted that would have to be relocated.

Commenter: Is there like a certain amount of feet on either side of the rail line is kind of standard?

Jim Terry: You find some railroads are narrow as 66 feet, but you are really looking for 100 foot, 50 foot on either side of the railroad, kind of what I thought we would have. Once you get up on a bridge structure, it gets much narrower and you don't need that much, single track 25 feet, it is going to vary through there.

**Verbal Comment 32**

Commenter: Regarding the proposal for the St. Louis Park option, at what point does TC&W weigh in on that? Will that happen before a decision is made on where freight is going to end up?

Jim Terry: I can't speak for the TC&W but I would say they are certainly studying that to take a look. I kind of thought that they would be getting back to us pretty quick to be honest with you.

Jim Alexander: Part of our process, what the project office did last year, we worked with the railroads to find what would be acceptable to them. If you look at where freight would be relocated to somewhere else, that freight rail company needs to endorse that plan to petition the Surface Transportation Board to make that change to abandon that track, so the railroad needs to weigh in on whatever relocation design is going to be considered.



**Verbal Comment 33**

Commenter: I don't know if this a follow-up or not, but I was wondering who besides TC&W, who has to make a decision, and does TC&W in effect make a decision about whether they would accept this new proposal in St. Louis Park?

Mark Fuhrmann: The two directly impacted freight rail road operations are TC&W and Canadian Pacific.

Commenter: Does that mean that both would need to agree before a reroute would be accepted?

Mark Fuhrmann: As we understand it, yes.

Jim Terry: Na', I agree with that.

**Verbal Comment 34**

Commenter: The first question in the orange viable line you are proposing that is a relocation outside of the Kenilworth Corridor, correct?

Jim Terry: Correct.

Commenter: Then the next question goes to the engineers at the tables. What happens then in the Kenilworth Corridor? Is there a shallow tunnel or are you back to co-location at the ground level?

Jim Alexander: We would have to go back to where we were with the LPA, the LRT would be at-grade through the Kenilworth Corridor.

**Verbal Comment 35**

Commenter: He sort of asked my question which is that, it would be very nice if the freight rail was relocated to St. Louis Park so that the Kenilworth Corridor could still have the light rail at least in a shallow tunnel, if not a deep tunnel, so you could maintain having a park-like area. To destroy the Kenilworth Corridor and put 220 trains a day going through at-grade is hardly an improvement even if you move the freight; it is destroying a beautiful area.

**Verbal Comment 36**

Commenter: I am Peter Wagenius from Mayor Hodges' Office, my friend Davis asked a question earlier and I don't know why it wasn't answered, so I am going to answer it. Friend you asked about walls, fences in that events that there is co-location of both freight and LRT within the Kenilworth Corridor and what I want to make sure people understand is that if that were to occur, if both freight and LRT were located in the corridor and the LRT was in a pair of two shallow tunnel that would require significant walls in order to make that work, at each of the portals and each of the shallow tunnels has portals has two portals, each of those four portals would be 270 linear feet and this can be corrected if someone else has better information. But we have been told those four portals together equals 1080 feet of crash wall or retaining walls. I am talking about one portal at the south end and two and three to the north and to the south of the channel and a fourth at the far north end, so that is four walls, 270, and we are told those would be six feet high, perhaps on a two foot berm and four of them together we consider them to be a significant thing to be accommodating into what is currently a park like setting. I also have to state for the record. The city does not agree with Jim Alexander's characterization with, that the approval of both railroads is required. We would like to work with the railroads, absolutely. We want a

design that works for them because a design that works for them is more likely to get approval from the Surface Transportation Board but the Surface Transportation Board is the decider, not the railroads, but the Surface Transportation Board is the decider. If the City of Minneapolis had been told that the railroads would have veto power the City would, never would have agreed to support the Kenilworth alignment.

**Verbal Comment 37**

Commenter: This is really a process question, when the Governor asked the Met Council last fall to reevaluate some of these options and thank you for the reevaluation that has been done. But, can I ask you why I was told that you already looked earlier, you already look at the tunnel underneath the channel and had rejected it last summer. Well the Governor did not tell you to reject it when he asked you to stop the process and look at it again. Why haven't you looked at it again, given what the Governor has asked you to do?

Chair Haigh: The proposal before us is really, I think you are asking, why haven't we in fact looked again at the deep tunnel is that?

Commenter: (Inaudible)

Chair Haigh: The proposal to not look further at the deep tunnel was eliminated as it presented to us by the Corridor Management Committee and ultimately to the Council because of the extreme cost and its impact in its design and construction. During that period of time, rebuilding the West Lake Street Bridge and a verity of factors were considered by all the elected officials that serve on the Corridor Management Committee. It is very expensive and not a good option for the impact from construction in that corridor. That was really it.

Dan Cramer: We have about five more minutes left in our rail segment. Then we are going to open it up.

**Verbal Comment 38**

Commenter: I will try to be quick. The first part of my, it is not really a question; it is sort of a warning. I would suggest that you have, if you haven't had already, have a title search done on the strip of land that the BNSF thinks they own. The County is showing it as Park Board Land and my experience in the City where I used to work, BN did not know what they owned. They once sold a piece of their main line. The other question I have is that if you shift, if you shift physically, if you shift the freight line 40 feet west, will you still clear the west abutment of the Burnham road bridge?

Jim Alexander: I will tackle the first question. In terms of doing a title search that is a normal part of the process that we do along the whole project. In terms of a title search for that property, we did see a discrepancy of that ownership. We have confirmed that it is owned by BNSF. I am not quit clear what you are asking on the second question.

Commenter: There is, the freight rail would be shifted west 40 feet in the area immediately, in the area north of the Kenilworth.

Jim Alexander: At the channel.

Commenter: At the channel, would it return to its current alignment before the Burnham road bridge, or because?

Jim Alexander: It returns to the alignment before the Burnham road bridge that goes over the corridor.

Commenter: Right but there is enough room?

Jim Alexander: Yes, a lot of survey out there and we have a pretty good handle on what is out there and we do believe that it will work.

### **Verbal Comment 39**

Commenter: Thank you, is it Jim, Jim this would be for you. In regards to the trains, will the length of the trains increase, will the speed increase and will the usage multiple, right now seven times a day, can it increase to 40 times a day? Will the length of the train be longer and the speed, because I guess if you increase the track age, make it stronger, it can go to 10 miles an hour to 25 miles an hour?

Jim Terry: Your observations are correct. We are designing it for an increase speed 25 miles an hour, it is kind of what the Twin Cities and Western tracks are design for. They have some 25 some 30 and a little bit of 40, so you are correct, we are looking at this at 25 miles an hour. The other questions is could there be more trains, yes. I think you will see the shuttle trains growing in length. There is a practical limit to how long a train actually can be and we are kind of approaching the limits on that now. But the answer to your question, the rail road industry is growing. Well, oh, hypothetically anything is possible, the Royals may win the World Series this year but you know there are, hypotheticals are hard to answer but I will say this to you. As the shuttle and unit trains become more prevalent you will see the interchange trains kind of dropping in size. You know it today, if Twin City and Western they run 75 and a 75 and then a 100 car train, you could see some of that 75 get reduced because that business, that grain, is going to go to the shuttle trains.

Dan Cramer: So if we can thank Jim for his presentation. He will remain here if there are additional freight rail questions.

### **Verbal Comment 40**

Dan Cramer: I am going to use the facilitator's privilege and start with the most frequently asked question at the last meeting, the Minneapolis meeting, which has been alluded to in other questions today. Why given all the challenges with this, why can't another route all together be considered at this point in the process? I will let Council Members respond to that because it came up a lot at the last meeting.

Chair Haigh: I will take a stab at that and see if any my colleagues want to join me. We have been at this process for well over a decade trying to pick this alignment and through a long process of study we have been eliminating various alternatives that had too much impact on communities, that were too costly, that were ridership was not as good and after a long period of study on this work we have come up with this particular alignment. Of course because it is already in a rail corridor it makes it a good choice for light rail in this corridor. It is flat, it goes right into the city and when you are trying to build a project of this magnitude and scope to last for many, many years, it really is a challenge to build a project in a fully built, in a dense community like Minneapolis, like St. Louis Park, so that is really some of the considerations we looked at. We looked at many, many alternatives. I know on the Corridor

Management Committee over the last two year feel this is really the best alignment for LRT. We have this one remaining issues that we need to resolve in this project before we can get it going. I think that this alignment for this mode is the right one. There might be other corridors that are really important for streetcar, for BRT, for just plain old bus and those are good too. But really our task is always trying to pick the right mode, the right corridor, the right cost at the right time.

Dan Cramer: Any other Council Members want to add to that?

Adam Duinick: I will add to that, about the Chair's comments about the right mode in the right corridor. We have had many conversations with policy makers with the City and the County that are interested in seeing streetcar and arterial bus being built out. We think those modes match those corridors much better. Nicollet corridor, Midtown has been alluded to. One study is complete, one study is about to be complete. There are a couple other corridors that we talk about but they fit better for arterial bus or streetcar.

#### **Verbal Comment 41**

Commenter: I got a three minute comment. I have been working on a transit revolution plan and I am advocating that we demand transit revolution. This whole thing started when we were invading Iraq and Afghanistan, we thought we were going to have an empire, we thought we were going to get oil out of Iran. Ridiculous. We now have a trillion dollar deficits. We are in a much different environment. We are dealing with situations where China is competing with us, we can't create jobs. Let me just lay out a few points about this transit revolution and then lay out some alternative plans for Southwest Rail. We need to have Metro Mobility size vehicles running every five minutes, when you have vehicles running every 10 minutes that's a transit tax, you drive people away from transit. We need to have more people working, let's hire drivers at 17 dollars an hour, part time and provide 5 minute service. We need to also take a look at the route. I have got a plan were we can use the existing route up to West Lake, Calhoun and then let's go down the Greenway, lets pave it, grade it and use it. Get buses running in these Metro Mobility sized every five minutes, let's go to Uptown Station. There are three roads that cross north/south. We will go under those with light rail. We can run on existing route from St. Louis Park, Highway 100 to I-35W and we are talking about building a transit like 46<sup>th</sup> Street, so let's build one at I-35W with a ramp going up and the buses can go up that ramp and they can go right downtown on the MnPASS route which is already guaranteed congestion free. From Shady Oak Road, let's run it down Shady Oak Road and have about 11 or 12 stops, including four stops in the Golden Triangle. We need to, to rethink where we are going with transit. Our challenge in the future is how we are going to figure in automotive driving that is going to be coming in. How do we provide faster service? How are we going to provide transit service so people don't need to use cars? One challenge that I have run into is, and I use the bus a lot, is how do you shop using the bus? You can't get a shopping cart on. We accommodate buses; let's figure out a way to let people shop when they are using buses. We need to rethink this whole thing. I think what we are doing right now it is very questionable in terms of the commitment about eight hundred million dollars between the State and the County. In terms of my proposal would cost about 100 million dollars and it will be a system that we can implement elsewhere, again at low capital costs. Let's put people to work driving. Let's rethink this whole approach. Let's use the Greenway path and connect this to the main stops in Minneapolis, instead of going down a wilderness in the Kenilworth Trail.

**Verbal Comment 42**

Commenter: I hope I will be much shorter, but I so appreciate what you said and he said a lot of the things that are on my mind. So my question is: if this has been 10 years in the process and I really just got involved in this maybe about four years ago, which was around the time the decision was made to go through Kenilworth? I don't know. I am wondering how old the information is that informs this decision and is this going to be obsolete before it even gets going? I am asking the six of you, is there any point or any information that you would be willing to entertain a different route and say I know we have put a lot of work into this, I know it means starting back at square one or square two but, is there anything that would, that you would be open to considering something else or are you absolutely stuck on this route because I also agree this is going through a nature area? We see deer all the time there. It, Cedar Lake, is the most natural lake of the City lakes left. It just sickens me to think we are going to ruin it and with light rail going through, I don't care if it is in tunnel or on ground level, but it is going to drastically change that whole environment. So I am just wondering how the decision was made, with 10-year old information is any option to consider another route? Thank you.

Chair Haigh: I will jump in. I do not favor looking for another route for LRT in this corridor. I think this is really been studied a lot by a lot of people that have worked very, very hard at it. I understand that if this is the decision that we end up making that there will people that disagree and will say if they were the policy maker they would choose to make a different decision. I think this problem we are trying to solve here though, is a very important one and I think we have made good progress getting additional information. I look forward to getting to hearing that we are going to have at St. Louis Park as well as this week, to hear what community members have to say about this other alternative concept for relocation of freight rail.

Jennifer Munt: I concur with Chair Haigh. I am not looking for a different route, but I am looking for resolution to freight location. I like to acknowledge some people in the audience. They are the members of our Southwest LRT Community Advisory Committee. I have been going to meetings constantly for the last three years. Many of them have spent an entire decade trying to pick the correct route. If you folks serve on the committee would stand, I value the service that you put in. Dan, I think it is important to say we haven't made a decision yet. We felt that is was really important to do both of these studies, to give assurances that if the shallow tunnels are chosen it won't harm our lakes. We now know that it doesn't. We also needed to make sure some of the alternatives for freight were not overlooked. We found that one was, now what we need to do is, we need to go back and take a look at the costs and the impacts and we need to hear from the community members that were here about how that is going to affect you. At the end of the day, what we are looking for is a solution that's going to stand the test of time. We are looking for a solution that the community will embrace because we don't build these lines to humor ourselves. We build them so people will ride. Now, I am somebody that views the Southwest line as an equity train, as an opportunity train. It is a one seat ride that will connect from Eden Prairie to Minneapolis and all the way to St. Paul. All of the decision that we are making is about what maximizes opportunity along this light rail line.

**Verbal Comment 43**

Commenter: Hi. I still haven't heard a good answer on the deep tunnel. It feels like this Locally Preferred Alternative is quite the misnomer. Light rail coming through our park system is akin to running a trail, a train at-grade through Central Park. Minneapolis Park System, your park system is being destroyed. So, and not only that, the people that love the parks and many of them live around them are here, are fighting for the park, your parks, and were not even given a station on this train. We are not even given

a station. We can't even use this thing, ok. So why don't you call it a commuter rail for the Eden Prairie folks and put it in a deep tunnel and everyone is happy. St. Louis Park is happy, we are happy, we don't get a station anyway so the money thing, my understanding is that Eden Prairie spent a whole lot of money or you guys spent a lot of money to reroute around a sensitive park land around there but we are not getting the same consideration. I just think we feel that, Minneapolis residents feel that we are not being taken seriously. We are at the end of this process when everything is all decided and now it is going to be literally railroaded through our neighborhood and our parks, our world famous parks.

Adam Duinick: I'll respond. The main obstacle for the deep tunnel frankly is the funding. Both from a capital from an, not as much operating, but from a capital perspective looking at the total budget of the project, we need to figure out who is going to pay the state share, the County share, HCRRA and CTIB and match it with the 50% Federal match. Doing something like the deep tunnel drove up the project budget that wasn't comfortable for people, not just in Minneapolis and St. Louis Park but people in Ramsey, Dakota and Anoka County. That is just the reality. I sympathize with folks that want us to look closer at the deep tunnel but it just wasn't a reality.

Commenter: 300 million dollars.

#### **Verbal Comment 44**

Commenter: I guess I am here to represent young professionals of Minneapolis. I know that certainly the light rail is a commuter served for suburban commuters, what I am interested in knowing is how the Metropolitan Council will make that up to residents to Minneapolis, lifelong residents that are interested in transit reliance? Specifically speaking, how will the at-grade LRT or the shallow tunnel LRT affect the Midtown Corridor Streetcar and then what commitments can you make to those streetcar investments so that we can have an equitable transit system for people that chose to be transit reliant?

Chair Haigh: I am going to defer a little bit to my colleagues that have been working a lot on the Midtown Corridor. I do think the Southwest LRT project is an essential component for an effective community, or travel or transit in the Midtown Corridor. I see them as being very, very linked. I am going to send it over to people spending a lot of time on that.

Gary Cunningham: I am defiantly committed to streetcars as a mode of transportation, as well as light rail within our area. You know, people that travel to other cities, they see these other cities making these major investments in transit and transportation. Part of why they are doing it and why we need to do it is because we are investing in 50 years from now, 100 years from now, for what this city and what this place will be. We won't be able to compete unless we have a robust transit system in this area, so I am very committed. But with the streetcars I think we are going to face the same situation with the tunnel and this is that there are going to be some folks that will say that the streetcars are not something they want to support. So for me, all this to work, I think I need some commitments from people that we are going to build the whole system out and not just pieces of the system. As we move forward with this, I am concerned that at the end of the day we won't be able to build out the streetcar system like we want to. We need to ensure that not only is this line in Southwest going from Eden Prairie to Minneapolis that it is also going the reverse direction too and there are jobs and opportunities for people that are going that direction as well. I just want to put that on the table as we think about this. I want to be clear; I have not made a decision. No decision has been made from me on this and that I am listening and hearing all the opinions as we go through this so that when do get to a decision, everybody's voice is at the table.



**Verbal Comment 45**

Dan Cramer: I have a written question that was given to me to read that I think relates to the question that was just asked. I will try to do it justice, it says: Municipal Consent is being asked for from communities all along the Southwest light rail route. Why is the Met Council positioning a negotiated buy of the critical consent from the City of Minneapolis in exchange for Met Council paying for another Minneapolis project such as the trolley down the Midtown Greenway? In a sense, are those being traded against each other?

Chair Haigh: Those are defiantly not being traded against each other. What is important though, as we have tried to work on this process, both with our local Issue Resolution Teams involving all the professional staff among the cities and counties and local elected officials, we would like every city along this line to support this project. This is a very, very important investment for the region. So we would like to get every City's support and we are gratified they have actually supported this alignment for LRT. We have resolution of support from all the cities and we still have this remaining issue that we need to try to get resolved and that is the process that we are in today. How to pay for streetcar going forward, tough issue. Got to get a new source of funding for transit and transportation to be able to fund streetcar going forward. We cannot do it with the existing resources that we have in the system. So it will be really important challenge for all of us, working together, particularly as we think about this future and how important this is to the younger transit users that really find it an attractive mode for livability in this community.

Adam Duinick: I just want to clarify my last comment too because this question speaks to it more. The transit coalition, the transportation coalition in the region is fragile, so we have to be moving forward in a way so that everyone feels like something is happening in their part of the region. To the question about whether it is being traded. It is not being traded against but the fragility of the transit coalition in the region, if something happens with Southwest because one community digs in against another or vice versa. We just need to be really aware of that. Everyone appears a transit advocate. Many of you are. Many of the policy makers that we have been meeting about Southwest in general, have started from a place of: solve this project because we need to keep the momentum of the region going forward so that we are building the regional system.

**Verbal Comment 46**

Commenter: I would just like to ask us all to take a step back and look at this in the really big picture. The Metropolitan Council, you people, are the only ones that really can adjust, weigh, balance the views of everybody. I go to the St. Louis Park meetings, they think we are nuts, they think we are selfish. I ride my bike in the Kenilworth Corridor and I ski and I walk every day. The Met Council is the one body that can weigh everything including for the deep tunnel people, the willingness of Republican Legislators to fund this stuff. I appreciate what you do. No one is going to get everything that they want. My personal benchmark is if I get 80% I think we should grab it and go. I am going to use my gray hair a cautionary tail. 40 something years I lived in a metropolitan area of 3 million people that was, had a, was prosperous, vibrant, progressive, beautiful park system. It had one of the best orchestras, maybe the best orchestra in the world. Sound familiar? This was Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland allowed, or circumstances caused a huge gap between the haves and the have-nots in Cleveland and one fine day in 1967 Cleveland exploded, rioting, gun fire within the City. It was really tragic what happened in Cleveland. It has come back since then. What does transit have to do with it? An integrated transit system gives everybody a sense that we are in the game. You can get to work, you can get to school



within a reasonable period of time and get back and still take care of your kids. It is essential that we build this. I think we all have to say, if I get 80% of what I wanted that is good enough for me.

**Verbal Comment 47**

Commenter: Just wondering if we have a map any place that will cover from say Hopkins to downtown? I lived in Minneapolis, surrounding areas for over 70 years and it took me 15-20 minutes to figure out which way this map was situated. I am used to having north at the top. But, it would help me, I know, to figure just where the lines are, where they are planned. All of that kind of stuff, just to be able to connect the dots between Hopkins and Twins Stadium. Just that far, it would really, really help.

Dan Cramer: Mark, Jim resources that would be available to answer questions like that.

Mark Fuhrmann: A great resource for everyone to check on is our website [swlrt.org](http://swlrt.org) and there we have many maps and your specific area of interest is the eight most eastern miles of the Southwest alignment, so I would encourage everyone to go to [swlrt.org](http://swlrt.org) and lookup many maps that we have posted on the website.

**Verbal Comment 48**

Commenter: I have been at a few of these meeting where someone in the audience has said Eden Prairie got 300 million dollars to change their route so that it didn't affect their trails and no one ever responds. I want to know if it is true. How did that decision get made and did someone at the Met Council sit down and say Eden Prairie should have 300 million for that, but Minneapolis should not have 300 million for what we need?

Chair Haigh: No, it is not true. The issue that I think that you are addressing is a change in alignment, in deciding on the alignment during the AA. The decision that was made on the route was really to connect it to jobs, to riders in Eden Prairie. It was not mitigating an issues regarding parks or park usage. I think that is really an inaccurate piece of information that has been floating around so I want to answer that definitively for you, no. There is not.

Commenter: You mentioned jobs; my understanding is that the route isn't even going to Eden Prairie Mall where the jobs are.

Chair Haigh: The job centers on this corridor are in many, many locations, certainly in the Opus area and the United Health Campus. There are 200,000 jobs along this corridor and that is expected to grow 60,000. So these are not just jobs in retail centers. They are jobs, are well paying and that are really important for the economic prosperity of the region.

**Verbal Comment 49**

Commenter: I want to thank everyone that has worked on this for the last 10 years as you say. I feel a little cheated by these documents. I think you owe us a little more than these draft documents. I suspect that there is a lot more cost in each of these options then is addressed in these documents. That is the first thing. The second thing is that it seems obvious that the light rail in the long term should go where people live. The Uptown was rejected 10 years ago, but look at how it has changed. How many units? Maybe this is what you should do, study the number of new residential units that have been built along the Greenway in the past 10 years and how many are going to open up and how many along the Kenilworth Corridor. I know it is a challenge and an ugly process to go through to find a route through

the City of Minneapolis. But it really should be done. You owe it to us because this alignment, the Kenilworth was devised based on faulty information and a faulty process and I hope you admit that. This shouldn't have happened, this debacle so to speak. The Kenilworth Corridor is precious; it has become more precious over the last 10 years. When it was a rail corridor that is what it was, but those that use it on a regular basis appreciate it as a significant part of the Minneapolis Park System. It is sort of like closing off Nicolet Avenue for the K-Mart. This is the kind of planning decision that this will lead to. You will look back in 20 year and say what where we thinking. When the option, challenging those it may be, costly as it may be, we are going to build tunnels, how closely. We are going to realign freight rail through St. Louis Park possibly. Why put the money into those costs when you divert those costs and put it towards something much more meaningful and create a transportation system that carries more people.

#### **Verbal Comment 50**

Commenter: You have said that the Met Council is going to make a decision on freight rail at the end of March. After that, you need to finish preparing and finishing a Supplemental DEIS, have a public involvement period then finish, then finish a final EIS, have a public involvement period. Prepare and finish a Record of Decision, corresponding state document, possibility withstand a legal challenge the loser of that Met Council decision and then you need to get a Full Funding Grant. So when are you going to be getting a Full Funding Grant Agreement from the FTA and Municipal Consent from the cities?

Mark Fuhrmann: To the two-part question, let me take the nearest process first, which is Municipal Consent. Once Met Council makes that decision, currently targeted for late March, then Jim and his design team will distribute the Municipal Consent plans to the five cities and Hennepin County for their review an approval and that is about a two and a half month processes through May and early June. To your second questions about a Federal Full Funding Grant Agreement, right now we have that targeted for the tail end of 2015.

#### **Verbal Comment 51**

Commenter: At every one of these, either Chairman Sue Haigh or Jennifer Munt or somebody gets up and says we want community input and at every single meeting the community input has been that the alignment is wrong. We do not feel heard, you are not listening. You just said in your remarks, Sue, that you want to get community input but that you have decided on the alignment, that you were not going to change our mind, so we are all wasting our time and it is too bad.

Adam Duinick: I do want to respond. We are here tonight because we responded. We could have made a move last summer, late last summer. I was one of the people on the Council that took a lot of heat for standing up and saying we need to look at some other things. I just want to be clear that there is a response, from my colleagues, from the staff and the Project Office. The comments do not go unnoticed, the feedback gets listened to. We are listening. And the question of alignment, the reason that has not changed is the federal requirements with the FTA and other decision that have been made leading to this process. There were pieces that we could look at. The LPA decision has already been made. To undo that would be going to the end of the line at the federal queue.

#### **Verbal Comment 52**

Commenter: I would just like to say that I am from Bryn Mawr and I am over 65 and a good many people have left Bryn Mawr that are over 65 because they do not have transit. Secondly, we are the stop on the Penn Avenue, is open way for the north side to get out to the jobs in Eden Prairie. The people on the

north side need access to Eden Prairie to get jobs that allows them money, it allows them opportunity, it allows them education. The north side needs this. The elderly in Bryn Mawr need this so that we do not need to move out to another area. So we appreciate that it is going through. Thank you.

**Verbal Comment 53**

Commenter: Is there a place on your website where we can see budget data and data the projections are based on, like we are looking at a real business?

Mark Fuhrmann: I'll start and maybe Jim can expand to say that on our website we have our summary level budget data that we did share with the Corridor Management Committee last September and October, where we quantified what the estimated cost would be for shallow tunnel, for Brunswick Central freight rail relocation and other options that were also considered through last summer and fall.

Commenter: But is it structured like an actual business, like a real business budget?

Mark Fuhrmann: The question was- is it structured like a real business budget? It is structure on a summary level for people who are not so familiar with this large infrastructure projects. It does not have the line item by line item breakdown by specific construction cost, contingency costs, design costs, property costs. We do keep it at a summary level.

Commenter: Inaudible

Mark Fuhrmann: Project Office and some of the folks in the room tonight have been asked to come and talk with Project Staff about the more detailed line itemized budget and we would be happy to do that with anybody that is interested in that level of detail.

**Verbal Comment 54**

Commenter: Thank you. Prior to 2006, the Southwest LRT line, route 1A, had a budget of 864 million, you can go to southwestlrt.org and find that, subsequently that route 1A went through Bear Path, a single family community in Eden Prairie and there was no political support for light rail what so ever in the southwest suburbs until Bear Path said in their residential neighborhood, we don't want it and what happened? It dogged lagged to the west and south for an additional 300 million dollars and that route is 3A, the one we are looking at right now. Additionally, it went from 864 million or 900 million and then to 1.2 billion in 2006 and that is the project that the Met Council inherited, that is why you are hearing the Met Council not knowing of any of the details prior to 2006 and they just recently took it over in the last couple of years. Now in addition, in the Corridor Management Committee process the last couple years, Eden Prairie is being allocated an additional 70 million dollars, it used to be 150 million but when the Eden Prairie Mayor was out of town it was cut back 80 million to add 70 million dollars for their enhancements along their route, so that is an addition 370 million dollars for Eden Prairie. That is all factual you can look it up at southwestlrt.org and all the minutes of the Corridor Management Committee, distinguishably chaired by Mrs. Haigh. Additionally, the railroads will receive 200 or more million dollars to satisfy their needs somewhere. We should leave the freight rail where it is for now and build the deep tunnel underneath the channel and maybe if feasible, a shallow tunnel to the north. That would be a win, win situation for Minneapolis and St. Louis Park and it would prevent the stacking and shifting of trains in the Hopkins area, which the Council Member, I am not sure of her name was so concerned about at the last Corridor Management Committee Meeting. With the St. Louis Park freight rail alignment there will be shifting in Hopkins to their dissatisfaction.

Dan Cramer: I don't think I heard a question.

**Verbal Comment 55**

Commenter: But in terms of the last word on funding, I mean we can push, I mean, you could push for a shallow tunnel or a deep tunnel but my understanding is that if you don't get the funding then we are stuck with two trains right? I mean we still have the alignment. If you decide to push for shallow tunnel and the legislators will not fund it?

Dan Cramer: Can we clarify the funding process for this?

Chair Haigh: Well, we are still in the process of, we do have a commitment from CTIB, County Transit Improvement Board, for the 30% share for the Southwest LRT project and 10% from the Hennepin County Rail Regional Authority. That is 40% of the cost. We have another 47 million dollars from the State towards their 120 or about 115 million and we are working on a plan to secure the additional revenue of the State's share until the transit sales tax gets past.

**Verbal Comment 56**

Commenter: I am going to be talking about community impact and kind of a cultural or historical perspective here. Across the way from us is the Walker Art Center and Mr. Walker, this is like the late 1800s, he saw that Minneapolis was a very hard working city. It was industrial engine and he thought that there should be a cultural and artistic oasis and he was one of the founders of St. Louis Park. We have that Walker Street that was named after him and so, and that was the original downtown. St. Louis Park, everybody is always asking where is the downtown in St. Louis Park and that is it, Walker Street, and so it, the true downtown. We already have a rail line that is crossing it but to have another one is just chopping up that historic street. They would be taking away seven homes and seven businesses in that area so I think it is a community impact that isn't good. I think both communities should get together. I kind of don't like us apart but I bet that as humans getting together, we could come to some compromise. I think you would be surprised.

**Verbal Comment 57**

Commenter: So, at one of the most recent community meetings I was at, a comment came up that, concerning the shallow tunnel and the feasibility of it going through the Kenwood Corridor. The comment was along the lines that we should be very skeptical that there is any support in the Minnesota State Legislature to pay for the shallow tunnel. My question is: how do you see this? Is it really feasible politically, regardless of what the Met Council decides?

Chair Haigh: Well, I am not going to answer for the legislators and many are in the room tonight. They are always trying to balance many competing demands for resources and we continue to think this is a really important resource, in that it is important for the region and our economy. We will continue to bring that argument forward as we work with our legislative leaders and we have gotten a lot of support from the Legislators along this corridor to get this issue resolved so we can move forward.

**Verbal Comment 58**

Commenter: Thanks, point of clarification. Given that freight rail would be relocated to St. Louis Park and you talk about the LRT at-grade, can you talk about grade separation at Cedar Lake Parkway Crossing?

Jim Alexander: Yes, that is something that we explored with the Park Board and the City. We have a design that if freight rail was not located in the Kenilworth Corridor, we would essentially build a lid for Cedar Lake Parkway to go over the LRT at that roadway. It would be essentially be at-grade elsewhere through the Kenilworth Corridor.

Commenter: And that was a done deal and in the budget?

Jim Alexander: Yes, if that is in the budget, if it is a done deal. As we progressed on the project, the Project Office moved towards a recommendation of the shallow LRT with freight staying in the corridor, so it did not carry forward. As pointed out by the Council Members, no decision has been made on that scope.

Commenter: Is it either or?

Jim Alexander: Presuming if there is a way to move freight rail outside of the Kenilworth Corridor, I would presume that we would go back to our design that we suggested to have LRT at-grade, except for Cedar Lake Parkway. That would certainly need to be brought forward for consideration.

Dan Cramer: So, I know there are other questions but we are now at the end of the three hour meetings.

Closing remarks given by Dan Cramer:

- Evaluations of meeting and comment cards pointed out to attendees.
- Comments and final reports will be posted online shortly. People can submit comments until March 3 also at the project website.