

# Southwest Transitway DEIS Comments

Comments Received from the General Public

Part 2 of 5



transitway

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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form
Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.

Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012. To learn more about the hearings, please visit www.southwesttransitway.org

1 Please ensure appropriate safety associated with both train and station (21st St Kenwood). This extra traffic should be positive not negative!

2 Please make sure that homes do not lose value. We have worked hard + paid high taxes. If the environment becomes less safe or less attractive (green space etc) this is most unfair.

3 Vibration assessments are needed! Both for freight + light rail systems

Name:
Address:
City/State/Zip:
Telephone: Email:

Thank you!



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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# Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

## Southwest Transitway Project

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At the 21st Street station, mitigation must be developed to control noise levels from trains, station, and crossing alerts, bells, whistles, etc. so that noise levels at neighboring houses are maintained at current levels, especially at night.

Name: Roy Williams



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MINNEAPOLIS, MN 554  
04 DEC 2012 14 71



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300

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Comment #203

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility with when multiple crossing are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

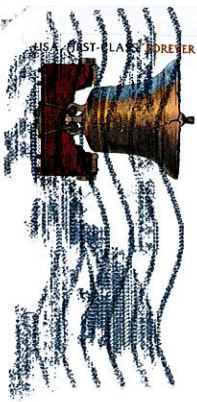
I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thank you,

Name: Donna O'Quinn

Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement for the proposed SWLRT project  
in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.5.1, The Transit  
System, and the SWLRT project, during normal  
five days a week, Monday-Friday, during normal  
hours, would introduce maintaining traffic and the  
no longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings,  
increase in the number of rail cars in this area,  
actively impact community health, cohesion of the  
neighborhood, and quality of life. In addition,  
these impacts include but are not limited to:  
decreased safety for transit users and residents,  
and a decrease in the quality of life.

SWLRT DBS. I believe it will create an unsafe and  
hazardous environment for our residents.



MINNEAPOLIS MN 55415  
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55415

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03 DEC 2012 PM 3:11

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DEC 05 2012  
BY:

Hennepin County - Housing, Comm Workers Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Ave South  
Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415169500







Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form
Southwest Transitway Project

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1.) PLEASE KEEP 43 HOOPS IN PLACE, MOVE/KEEP BLAKE ROAD STATION TO SOUTH SIDE OF CORRIDOR TO ALLOW 43 HOOPS TO STAY WHERE THEY ARE - THEY ARE AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE BENEFIT TO OUR COMMUNITY,

2.) PLEASE CONSIDER PEDESTRIAN SAFETY FOR BOTH CROSSING BLAKE ROAD (EAST & WEST) AND ALONG BLAKE ROAD, PARTICULARLY THE EAST SIDE, WHERE THERE IS NO BOULEVARD & MINIMAL SNOW REMOVAL @ THIS TIME - BOTH VEHICLE & PEDESTRIAN (AND BIKE) TRAFFIC IS EVER INCREASING AND CURRENTLY SOMEWHAT DANGEROUS.

Name: RACHEL SEURER

Thank you!

**SOUTH  
transit**



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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415



5541531843



12/3/2012

Comment #205

To Whom it May Concern,



Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the freight rail reroute described in the SWLRT DEIS.

Anyone whose driven a car knows that a  $\gamma$ 30 ft. ascent into a blind curve followed by a  $\gamma$ 30 ft. descent into a blind curve is dangerous. Add 2 more blind curves and consider a 22,000 ton, mile long train traveling 25mph through an area congested with school buses, pedestrians, and cars filled with teachers, parents, students, football fans, athletes, and commuters. Repeat  $\geq$  42 times per week. This train requires one mile to stop.

Our current  $\approx$  8 car trains travel on level ground through this route at 10 mph and require 100 feet to stop. Ten times per week. It travels even slower past the high school after leaving McDonald's where the train crew stops for a break.

Somehow, the DEIS authors missed the difference. They used current safety statistics to predict the future and reported that "jaywalkers" posed the sole safety ~~factor~~ hazard.

At a public meeting  $\approx$  1 year ago, Hennepin County officials verbally guaranteed they would put an "emergency plan in place" due to the increased risk of train derailment(s). If they have done so, there is no mention of it in the DEIS.

In fact, a mile long train will block the current emergency evacuation plan for the high school students, which is to go to Central Community Center (see attached map).

The DEIS fails to address slower medical response times. It ignores the impact of blocking traffic to Methodist Hospital coming from the east along Excelsior Blvd, which will occur when the proposed south link is established!

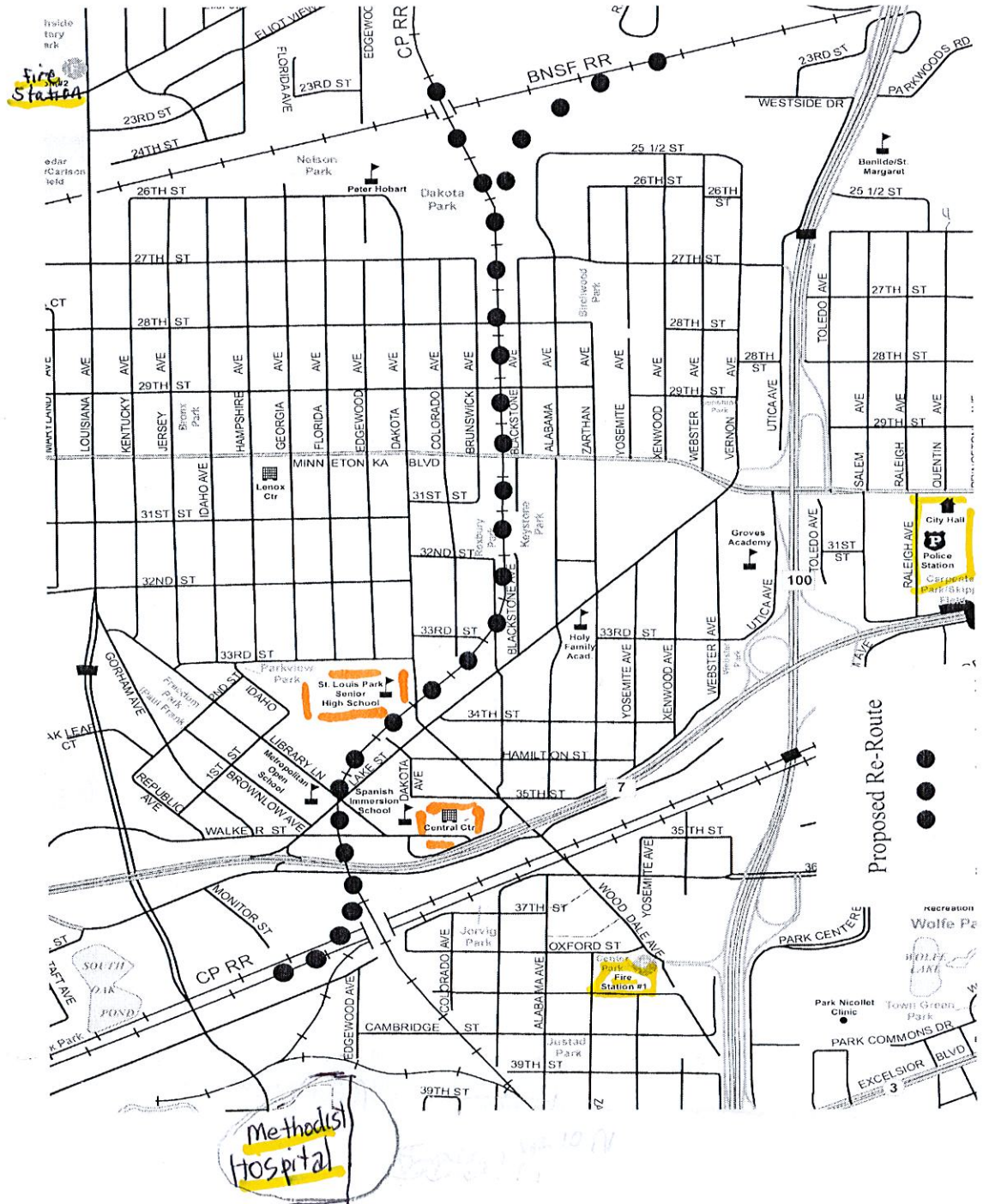
When our current trains travel past the High School, reaching temporarily comes to a stop, the situation will go from inconvenient to intolerable when adding  $\approx 32$  longer trains per week. Conductors say they will sound the horn when going by any school, regardless of a "quiet zone."

In health care we exercise a "pause for cause" and a "stop the line" to prevent errors before they happen. Please pause and look at this again. Lives are depending on you!

Sincerely,  
Marti Martin, R.N.

P.S. I do support light rail, I do not support the freight rail reroute!

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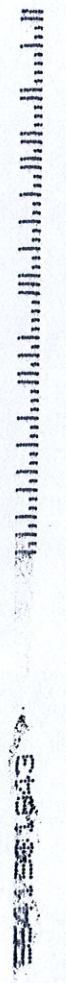
Hennepin County

~~Staff~~ housing, community works, + Transit

ATTN: Southwest Transit way  
701 4th Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis MN 55415

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554  
MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

04 DEC 2012 PM 5 L  
03 DEC 2012 PM 5 L





### Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form Southwest Transitway Project

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12/2/12

I am the owner of a condominium at the Lakes Citi homes. We are an association of 83 homes directly adjacent to the proposed <sup>West</sup> Lake Street station. My unit faces the tracks. As a result, I'm extremely concerned about:

- 1) signal noise generated by the trains
- 2) light pollution from the station
- 3) losing the trees & vegetation between our property & the tracks
- 4) losing access to the Greenway from our garden area
- 5) increased traffic in the area

What plans are being made to mitigate these issues?

Name: Tom Quandt - Lakes Citi homes

Quandt

MINNEAPOLIS MN 553

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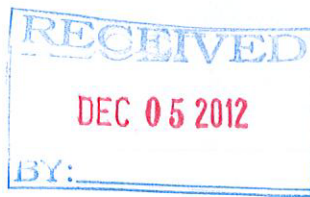
Hennepin County  
Housing Community Work + Transit  
ATTN: Southeast Transitway  
701 Fourth St. South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541531843



*[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten notes on the back of the envelope, including dates like 12/15/12 and phrases like 'Made to investigate']*





Comment #207

12-03-2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in DEIS Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3.

It becomes clearer every day that Hennepin County has had an unpublished agenda to reroute Freight Rail from the first day. The proof of this includes oral and published comments made by a Hennepin County Commissioner early in the process: "This is a done deal." The same commissioner is also quoted as saying, "Promises were made." (To Kenwood residents to reroute the freight traffic out of Kenwood.)

The railroad does not want the proposed freight rail reroute. The existing Kenilworth route is the shortest and straightest and most level route. It is clear that huge incentives to use the longer, more expensive reroute would have to be offered to the railroad, an additional tax payer expense. Hennepin County does not want to recognize or include this significant and continuing cost.

The proposed Hennepin County Flyover Bridge, to get freight traffic over HWY 7, is such a boondoggle that the railroad has stated they would not take ownership or be responsible for bridge or ramp maintenance. Again, tax payers would be stuck with this unrecognized cost.

Additional, noisier diesel power would be required to get freight trains up and over the proposed Hennepin County Flyover Bridge, increasing danger and noise.

Hennepin County has consistently downplayed and minimized safety, economic, environmental, and quality of life impacts to St. Louis Park.

Hennepin County is actively engaged in socio-economic discrimination, in trying to move freight rail from the Kenwood area to poorer neighborhoods.

Finally, in what appears to be another act of bad faith, another Hennepin County consultant 'typo' has been identified in the Strib, understating costs of the proposed reroute by 100 MILLION dollars. (11/28/2012)

Because of all the reasons stated above, I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS.

Co-location of freight and light rail through the Kenilworth Corridor is the only option that is economically feasible and practical.

This DEIS, the EAW, and every step of the process has been biased. (Hennepin County Commissioner statements, "It's a done deal," and "Promises were made.")

Because of prior comment filtering behavior, Hennepin County can not be trusted to include all comments, so this comment is being copied to Federal officials with a request to suspend any funding for any Freight reroute or SW Light Rail. Surely there are other more deserving and more honest requests for federal money.

Most sincerely,

  
Dale Stenseth

Happy Holidays



MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

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DEC 05 2012  
BY:

HENNEPIN COUNTY - HOUSING, COMMUNITY WORKS & TRANSIT  
ATTN: SOUTHWEST TRANSIT WAY  
701 FOURTH AVE S, SUITE 400  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55415-1843

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DEC 05 2012

Comment #208

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

### Southwest Transitway Project

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THE SW LIGHTRAIL WOULD SERVE MUCH BETTER, BOTH ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FINANCIALLY, WERE IT ROUTED ON ITS FINAL FEW MILES, THROUGH AN AREA WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE. THAT WOULD BE UPTOWN, WHICH BECOMES MORE DENSELY POPULATED EVERY DAY. SO RUN THE TRAIN ALONG THE 29 ST GREENWAY - WHICH WOULD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT SPACE & GRADE WITH LITTLE OR NO MITIGATION. THE NORTHWARD TURN TO DOWNTOWN COULD NICELY BE HANDLED BY SEVERAL MAJOR AVENUES. MOST MAJOR ROADWAYS IN GERMANY ACCOMMODATE BOTH RAIL AND AUTO TRAFFIC WITH NO PROBLEM.

HEMPSTEAD COUNTY MAINTAINS THAT A SURVEY SHOWED IDENTICAL RIDERSHIP - 29 ST VS KENILWORTH - BUT SOMEBODY HAD TO HAVE MADE A TYPO THERE, TOO. SO FEW KENWOOD SOULS USE BUSES THAT THERE ARE NOW JUST A FEW TO ACCOMMODATE THE SCANTY FEW RIDERS - HAS ANYONE CHECKED FIGURES ON THAT? ALSO, WHY DID OUR RAILROAD JUST THIS SUMMER REALLY UPGRADE RAILS ETC, IF THEY WILL SOON BE FORCED TO ST LOUIS PARK? P) ONLY ONE TO BE ROUTED THRU COMMUNITY FOUND CURRENT PLANS FOR KENILWORTH UNACCEPTABLE - MINNEAPOLIS - PERHAPS FOREGOING REASONING & CAUSED THAT STANCE -

Name: ROSEMARY H WALSH - 54 YEARS SAME HOUSE -

THANK YOU:



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

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Hennepin County

Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400

Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



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RECEIVED  
DEC 05 2012  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility with when multiple crossing are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thank you,

Name: *Ruth Danielson / Robert J Quinn*

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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the crossing are blocked simultaneously,  
rator, increase in diesel fumes from idling  
the community at large. These impacts include  
educational quality within St. Louis Park Schools.  
community health, cohesion of the  
traffic in the area. The lack of freight  
range, and impacts to local businesses will  
community, residents, and students will be exposed.  
The proposed action of re-routing freight  
right. The current freight occurs five days a week,  
high density urban, residential setting and  
located in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.3. The MNS

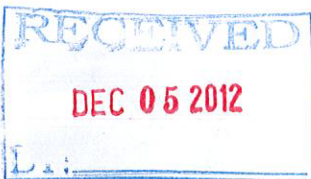


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04 DEC 2012 PM 3:1

*Hennepin County - Housing + Transit  
ATT. Southeast Transition  
701 410 Ave. South  
Suite 400  
Mpls, MN 55415*



55415164300



To whom it may concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments). NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must "encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment." This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue. Hennepin County did not "encourage and facilitate" public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 2008 Oct 7, 14, and 23 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 2010 May 18, 18 and 20 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT's major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route's connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings. Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 2011 April 17 and 28 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route. Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Thank You,

Name: Shirley D. Williams

Four horizontal lines for address or contact information.



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here

*Loyda Williams*



Hennepin County

Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400

Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415#1843 C089

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**Southwest Transitway Project**

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~~Not~~ I am opposed to moving the freight <sup>line</sup> into St. Louis Park. First, I am highly concerned about safety: derailments of dangerous cargo, safety for people running the gates as the train approaches, safety of the high school students and the curve right there. <sup>second</sup> The tracks are old. <sup>third</sup> The super high cost of upgrading the way. <sup>fourth</sup> That there are 5 schools and some hundreds of houses within a 100 feet of the tracks. <sup>fifth</sup> It will not be feasible to have a mile-long train blocking 6 crossings at one time. Minnesota Blvd will become jammed with traffic avoiding the blocked crossings.

lost property value

Mitigation has not been addressed - whether removing dozens & dozens of houses, upgrading the current spur, retrofitting houses due to damage from vibrations, traffic jams. As someone who lives 2 blocks downwind, I am concerned about derailments of ammonia; I want gas masks in my house. My insurance rates could even go up.

Overall, the extra \$23 million cost to re-route the freight trains is not justifiable. Take out 56 townhouses along the Kenwood greenway; creatively elevate the bike trail at the pinch point. Per route is dangerous and not worth the extra cost.

Name: Lee Ann Landstrom

Thank you!

transitway



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Work & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Ave. So., Suite 400  
Minneapolis MN 55415

5541581043



DEC 06 2012

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Thank you,

Name: Kelly Peterson



To Whom It May Concern:

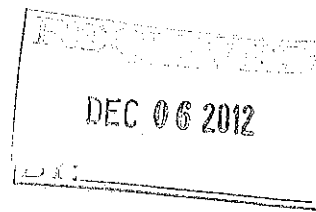
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Thank you,

Name: Sam Olson



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Thank you,

Name: Sodwia Olson

DEC 06 2012

BY:

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility with when multiple crossing are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

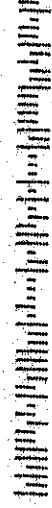
Thank you,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Jeff A. Olson

Peterson / Olson

Hennepin County Housing, Community works & Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 41st Ave S. Suit 400  
MPB. MN. 55415



RECEIVED  
DEC 06 2012  
BY:

Comment #217

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly-used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real-world impacts of this action on the affected area.

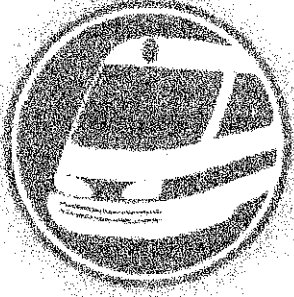
Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with the closing of the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossings (Chapter 3/p. 135) causes me the greatest concern. Residents from the Birchwood neighborhood requested on behalf of the Birchwood neighborhood that the grade crossing at 29<sup>th</sup> Street stay open. According to page 135 of the DEIS the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossing is being closed as a mitigation measure. However, the closing of the crossing will not benefit the neighborhood; it will, in fact, jeopardize residents because it will make emergency vehicle access difficult—if not impossible—during winter months due to narrowed streets.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

I am a freshman at the high school and some of my classes are close to the tracks. And when trains go by several kids turn to look out the window and count the cars and to see the graffiti on the cars and etc. The teachers have a hard time roping kids back to the lesson. It is hard w/ the whistle and rumbling of the cars going by so loudly. It is difficult to engage back into learning. IF it were to happen more often, it would really impact us in a negative way.

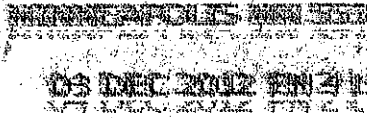
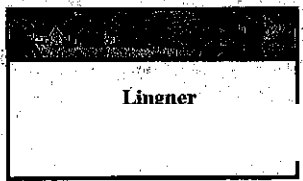
Name: Maggie Lingner





# SOUTHWEST transitway

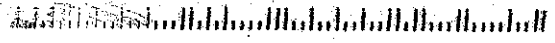
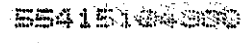
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Butte in early morning fog

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

Comment #218

Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.

Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012. To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

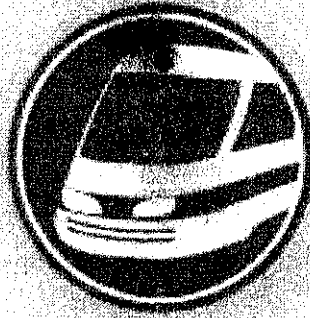
- ① Strongly disagree with choice of route since Kemlworth has so few people near it AND is one of the most pristine natural areas we have in the city. Cedar Lake is a gem.
- ② Bib concern about NOISE pollution in station areas. I chose this neighborhood 24 years ago because of proximity to NATURE and QUIET. Barms, trees and other NOISE mitigation is of UTMOST importance.
- ③ Cedar Lake Park has been the focus of decades of natural+wildlife/habitat preservation. Public transportation is great + needed BUT we need to protect what has been decades in the making. PLEASE NO Parking lots. WE NEED TO PRESERVE THIS NATURAL TREASURE, home to owls, fox, deer, hawks, etc.
- ④ AESTHETICS: WE must preserve the beauty of the area! Mitigate intrusion by employing GOOD, THOUGHTFUL landscape + hard-  
scape elements.
- ⑤ Environment: As you are aware - we live in a sensitive area w/  
regard to water table pollution. We must protect groundwater.
- ⑥ SAFETY: I am concerned about So Cedar Lake. Aways intersection

Name: Marian Moore

recommend a trenching ~~OR~~ NOT a bridge. Bridge idea INSANE.

Thank you!

Also concerned about foot traffic @ 21st. Already kinda crazy w/ bike traffic



# SOUTHWEST Transitway

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*Moore*

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

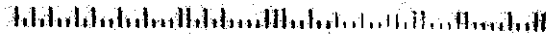
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**Bishop**  
ELIZABETH BISHOP | USA

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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**Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form**

**Comment #219**

**Southwest Transitway Project**

DEC 06 2012  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

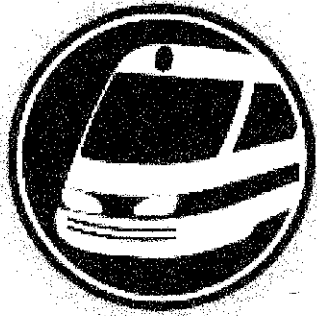
**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

I think an at-grade crossing at Cedar Lake Parkway should be built insted of elevating the track over the parkway. The Hiawatha Line crosses the following streets at-grade: 15<sup>th</sup> Ave S; 26<sup>th</sup> St. E; 32<sup>nd</sup> St. E; 35<sup>th</sup> St. E; 38<sup>th</sup> St. E; 42<sup>nd</sup> St. E; 46<sup>th</sup> St. E; 50<sup>th</sup> St. E; 54<sup>th</sup> St. E. Many of these are as busy as Cedar Lake Ave in my estimation. Save some money! If you want to build a bridge, elevate the Kenilworth bike trail over Cedar Lake Parkway. It would add much needed saftey for bicyclists and also decrease some significant traffic delays especially in the summer months.

Name: Martin Richmond

**Thank you!**

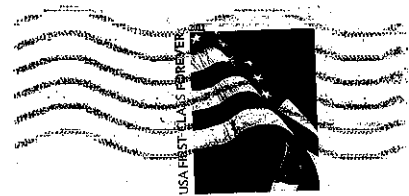


# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

05 DEC 2012 PM 1 T



Martin Richmond

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541501040

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DEC 06 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Riddled with phantom assumptions, unsubstantiated assertions, and inexplicable omissions, the DEIS is not a serious attempt to consider the effect of the proposed re-route.

Chapter 1 of the DEIS states that without the re-route the TC&W's only options for moving its freight will be to access the MN&S tracks by use of the notorious switching wye in St. Louis Park, or to transfer cargo from railcars to highway trucks. The unstated assumption behind this statement is that the current route used by the TC&W will be severed. Presenting the either/or assumption for the switching wye or highway trucks creates the illusion of a fait accompli, when in fact the TC&W's current route through the Kenilworth corridor is a viable alternative.

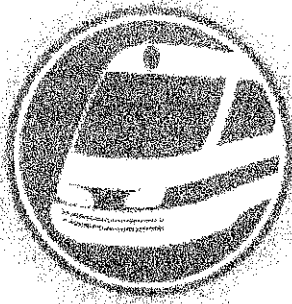
Unsubstantiated assertions include the depiction in the DEIS that the historical character of the Kenilworth corridor (Chapter 3, page 58) would be compromised by its continued use for freight train traffic. The Kenilworth corridor was the home to not just railroad tracks, but an entire railroad yard for over one hundred years, beginning long before the current homes in the area were built.

Inexplicably omitted from the DEIS is how the re-route would be funded (Chapters 5 and 8). The re-route must be considered as part of the SWLRT and even without mitigation construction of the interconnect and upgrading the tracks on the MN&S to handle the heavier traffic is estimated to cost \$125,000,000, money that was not originally included in the projected cost of the SWLRT, but the projected budget for the SWLRT has not been adjusted to recognize the added expense. Also, missing from the cost estimates are the costs for maintaining the interconnect structure after it is built.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Ton Gierde



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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Jon and Catherine Gjerde

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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RECEIVED  
DEC 06 2012  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments). NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must “encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment.” This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue. Hennepin County did not “encourage and facilitate” public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 2008 Oct 7, 14, and 23 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 2010 May 18, 18 and 20 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT’s major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route’s connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings. Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 2011 April 17 and 28 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route. Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Thank You,

Name:     Jon Gjerde    

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# SOUTHWEST transitway

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*Jon and Catherine Gierde*  
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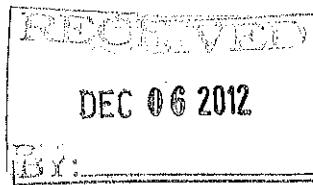


Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Comment #222

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

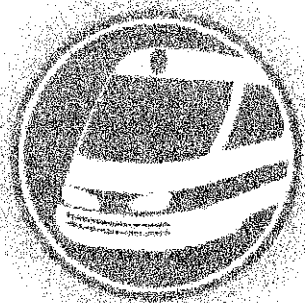
The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly-used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real-world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with the closing of the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossings (Chapter 3/p. 135) causes me the greatest concern. Residents from the Birchwood neighborhood requested on behalf of the Birchwood neighborhood that the grade crossing at 29<sup>th</sup> Street stay open. According to page 135 of the DEIS the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossing is being closed as a mitigation measure. However, the closing of the crossing will not benefit the neighborhood; it will, in fact, jeopardize residents because it will make emergency vehicle access difficult—if not impossible—during winter months due to narrowed streets.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tom Gredt



**SOUTHWEST**  
transitway

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

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Jon and Catherine Gjerde



Liberty  
FOREVER

Hennepin County

Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400

554 Minneapolis, MN 55415

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RECEIVED  
DEC 06 2012  
BY:

Comment #223

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In detail, the re-route will allow a 788% increase of rail cars traffic. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact the community health and cohesion of the neighbors adjacent to the tracks. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the school system and educational quality within St Louis Park, including the decreased safety of students at the High School.

Besides my general concerns about the freight rail re-route, the section of the SWLRT DEIS that describes the noise and vibration has flawed methods and conclusions. The vibration and the noise measurements were done with current MN&S traffic. It is important to note that the re-routed freight will be longer, more frequent, and include more locomotives per train.

Vibration, Chapter 4.8.4: The conclusion that vibration will have no significant impacts is incorrect. Vibration impacts will be longer in time and the total amount will increase with the heavier freight and additional locomotives.

Noise, Chapter 4.7.5:

Quiet zones: The DEIS fails to describe the real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. The quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts but it is a mitigation that is not supported by the neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

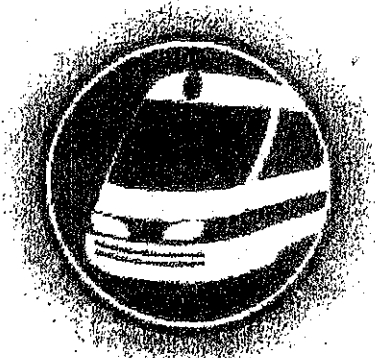
A quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection,
- c. trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic
- e. the amount of time exposed to the noise impacts of the stationary crossing bells will increase significantly due to increase in train numbers.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT DEIS does not adequately describe the impacts and as such, the freight reroute should not be given any further consideration as an option.

Name: Jon Gierde

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**SOUTHWEST**  
**TRANSITWAY**

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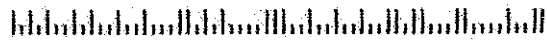
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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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RECEIVED  
DEC 06 2012

Comment #224

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with freight rail noise and safety at the High School (Chapters 3, 4, and 9) causes me the greatest concern. The unique noise and safety issues associated with locating main line freight within 35 feet of the High School parking lot and 75 feet from the building are not adequately discussed. When the High School is mentioned the information is dismissive. At no point in the SWLRT –DEIS are the negative impacts the extra freight trains will have on the learning environment and safety of the students at St. Louis Park High School. Before the proposed re-route should even be considered the cost of sufficiently mitigating the impact to St. Louis Park High School need to be evaluated.

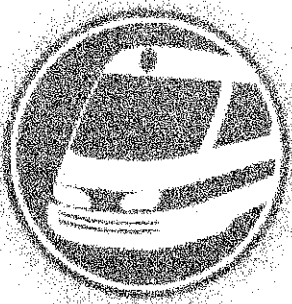
Examples of concerns include but are not limited to the following:

- A plan for emergency evacuation of the school should evacuation be necessary when a train is passing
- How will the many classrooms affected by train noise be sound proofed
- How will the students who want to use the new rail bridge to cross Hwy. 7 on their way to school be kept off the bridge.
- How will the added vibration of longer, heavier and more frequent trains be mitigated to the investment the school makes in technology is not lost.
- How will the safety hazards of blind crossings, curves and hundreds of teenagers in close proximity be eliminated
- How will a derailment be prevented so our children's lives are not at risk

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park or the St. Louis Park School Board on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: Jon Gierde

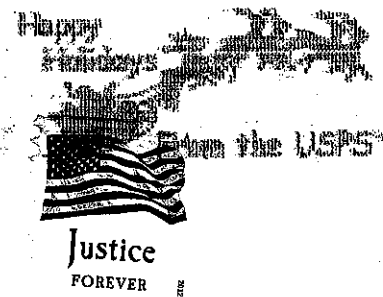
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# SOUTHWEST transitway

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\_\_\_\_\_  
~~Jon and Catherine Glorde~~  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



ere



Erin Cosgrove

12/06/2012 04:14 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) response

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, MN.

Let me clarify that I am in favor of the Southwest Light Rail Transit, along with most other SLP residents, however I find it greatly disturbing that freight re-route portion of the DEIS was, once again, thrown together without extensive study and answers to consistent concerns from the St. Louis Park City Council and the residents over the last year.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely **or a great deal more study must be done**. The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In detail, the re-route will allow a 250% increase in trains and a 650% increase of rail cars traffic. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact the community health and cohesion of the neighbors adjacent to the tracks. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the school system and educational quality within St Louis Park, including the decreased safety of students at the High School. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am concerned about the following portions within the SWLRT-DEIS:

1. The portion of the report dealing with loss of property value in the re-route area should be in Chapter 9: Indirect Impacts, but it is not, and this causes me concern.

The SWLRT-DEIS does not mention the impact of re-routed freight trains from a main line freight corridor to a bridge line on property values of the re-route area. Freight rail re-routes are not exclusive to Minnesota and the cost of the re-routes to residents has been documented. For example, according to an article in a 2001 issue of The Appraisal Journal, bringing additional freight rail traffic to an area will negatively affect properties 250 feet from the rail tracks by 5-7%. All of the properties along the MN&S are well within 250 feet. Based on this article one can conclude that property values along the MN&S will drop more than 7%.

Two major questions arise that are not addressed in the SWLRT-DEIS. First, what happens to the tax base of St. Louis Park when the drop in value is realized? Second, how are property



owners who lose value because of this government action going to be compensated for their loss? It is unreasonable for the Hennepin County to ask any resident to pay a higher price for the benefits of light rail than others.

2. The he portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses – many are closer than the length of a rail car!
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day
- Permeable soil under MN&S
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80)
- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

3. The section of the SWLRT DEIS that describes the noise and vibration has flawed methods and conclusions. The vibration and the noise measurements were done with current MN&S traffic. It is important to note that the re-routed freight will be longer, more frequent, and include more locomotives per train. I live within 375 feet of the tracks and I can feel the vibration standing in my kitchen.

Vibration, Chapter 4.8.4: The conclusion that vibration will have no insignificant impacts is incorrect. Vibration impacts will be longer in time and the total amount will increase with the heavier freight and additional locomotives.

Noise, Chapter 4.7.5:

Quiet zones: The DEIS fails to describe the real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. The quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts but it is a mitigation that is not supported by the neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

A quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection,
- c. trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic
- e. the amount of time exposed to the noise impacts of the stationary crossing bells

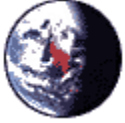
will increase significantly due to increase in train numbers.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT DEIS does not adequately describe the impacts and as such, the freight reroute should not be given any further consideration as an option.

Thank you,

Erin Cosgrove



"Morelli, Traci"

12/06/2012 04:53 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject 5701 E Glen Moor Rd, Minnetonka

Hello,

My clients have submitted a purchase agreement on 5701 E Glen Moor Rd, in Minnetonka. They just became aware of the proposed light rail line that would basically be out of their back door. Could you please verify whether or not this proposal is still being considered or was it voted against and is no longer a consideration?

If you could respond asap it would be greatly appreciated as this is a time sensitive matter.

Sincerely,  
Traci Morelli



"Elmer J. Otto"

12/06/2012 07:59 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT Line

December 6, 2012

Southwest Light Rail Line

Hello;

Now that Representative Mike Beard is no longer Chair of the House Transportation Committee, progress can be made. He is against trains, and was one of the 14 House members who got the bill passed that delayed engineering studies on this line for 3 years.

When I want to go downtown Minneapolis or St. Paul or to the Capitol, it is always by bus. With the Southwest LRT Line, we can take the train. Scott County will have Dial-a-Ride bus service to the Southwest Metro Station in Eden Prairie.

For us older people, I am 80, in this world of very high speed car traffic, we welcome any way to get away from it. Younger drivers cannot realize how it is.

Elmer Otto



"Gloria J. Murman"

12/06/2012 08:31 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject St. Louis Park Freight Rail Re-route

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility with when multiple crossing are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thank you,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gloria & Jeffrey Murman \_\_\_\_\_

Gloria & Jeffrey Murman



Todd and Sharon Duncan

>

12/06/2012 10:03 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Comments Re: SWLRT - DEIS for proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, MN

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regards to the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. I am a resident of St. Louis Park and live at 3249 Florida Ave. So. I have lived here 14 years. I am also the mother of 3 boys, ages 11, 8 and 4.

The proposed action of re-routing is described in Ch. 1, Sect. 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting. **It is a very narrow line that runs directly next to the St. Louis Park High School (75 ft. from the school and 35 ft. to the parking lot.** The train tracks run between the high school and the football field/stadium and splits them. It also runs very close to homes and along their small back yards. The current freight is light and usually approximately 5 trains/per day and these trains are on avg. 6 to 8 cars long. They go 10 mph currently. They blow their horn on both sides of the high school on Dakota Ave. and on Library Lane. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic with trains up to a mile long, and running 25mph during the days and evenings, and nights. **This will be up to a 788% increase in rail car traffic right next to the high school and literally in the parking lot. There are also 4 tight blind curves (2 next to the high school) from Hwy 7 to Dakota Ave.** What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, is the impact this would have on our children's safety and education, as well as the general public's safety. It would also dramatically effect our community.

I have many concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, especially the portion dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133). Only a small reference to safety is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS. Also, the portion of the report dealing with freight rail noise and safety at the High School (Ch. 3, 4 and 9). It causes me great concern to think that the MN&S may become a main rail line with it's proximity to the high school. Currently, the trains are approx. 6 to 8 cars long and go 10 mph. There is a McDonald's right across the street from the high school, where the students have to cross the railroad tracks to get there. I live a few blocks away and see students crossing early in the morning, at lunch, and many times in the afternoon. Not only must they cross the railroad track to get to McDonald's, they also have to cross to get to the football field/stadium. The students often have gym class on the field, not to mention sports after school. As it is now, if there is a train, it only lasts a few minutes and is going slow, so the students know they can wait and it won't last long. However, if there are trains that are a mile long, and going 25mph, instead of 10mph, the students may have to wait a long time to cross. 10-13 minutes. If they only have a few minutes to get back to class or go to McDonald's or Munchies (another place with sandwich's and soup), and they see a train approaching, they will likely try to beat the train, due to the potential long wait. What if they trip and fall? What if there car stalls? What if they dare each other (as teens do) to cross, walk along the track or to try to jump on? I see teens everyday walking along the railroad tracks by the high school. Teens and Trains are not a good match! Psychologist, and best selling author, David Walsh, author of No, Why Kids of All Ages Need to Hear It and Ways Parents Can Say It, talks about the prefrontal cortex (PFC) that is growing and rewiring itself. It is right behind the forehead and acts as the CEO of the brain, the part of the brain where we think ahead, consider consequences, and manage emotional impulses and urges. It is one of the last circuits of the brain to mature. **The PFC enters a major developmental period as boys and girls enter adolescence, which doesn't end until late teens or early twenties. Adolescents impulse-control center is under construction. When adolescents need it most, the PFC's ability to act rationally and think through problems and challenges is off-line. There are accidents involving adolescents and trains frequently. Why would we risk putting a main rail 75 ft. from the school and 35 ft. from the parking lot? It is an**

**accident waiting to happen!** According to the train engineer, with the tight blind curves, and the train moving 25 mph, if there were someone on the track or a stalled vehicle, the train would **not** be able to stop in time. Also, at the intersection of Library Lane and Lake St.(next to the H.S. and field), a car needs to go over the track, or sit on it in order to see if the intersection is clear due to the angle of the track. In addition to the high school, this line also goes right behind Peter Hobart Elementary School too, several parks, and along many houses, practically in their back yards. These photos show high school students on the track across the street from the high school. These were both taken on the same day at two different times during the day when I happen to be driving by. I pulled over to take a picture. One photo was taken around the lunch hour, and the other was at the end of the school day. You can also see one of the blind curves in the left photo. These were two different groups of kids in one day that were on the tracks when I happen to be driving by.

Another concern regarding safety, is the possibility of a derailment. We are talking about tight curves. For the first time, there would now be ethanol and other dangerous chemicals being carried by the trains next to the school. **Derailments do happen!** There was a small one on this line, last year, but it was just on the border of Mpls. and St. Louis Park. There have been a few in MN in the past 2 years. **What would happen if a derailment occurs where the tight curves are along the high school, with a train carrying dangerous chemicals?!! The train would for sure be in the parking lot of the high school, and potentially in the building as well.**

Another safety concern is emergency vehicles not being able to get through due to trains. If there is an emergency at the high school, the emergency vehicles may not be able to get to the school if a mile long train is blocking the roads on each side of the school. Or if they are at the school and a mile long train comes, they will be delayed getting to a hospital due to the trains. This rail line also crosses Excelsior Blvd. between Hwy. 100 and Methodist Hospital (6500 Excelsior Blvd.). Emergency vehicles, again, would be blocked by the trains, not being able to get to the hospital. What about all of the buses lined up at the school and traffic after school? It will be a mess, cause many traffic delays, bus delays, and again not a good mix with all of the students walking and driving to and from school.

Another concern, is how our children's education would be impacted by the freight rail noise. As it is now, even when a small train comes through, the teachers need to stop and wait for the trains to pass to continue talking. It is only a minute or two now, but imagine if the trains are 10 minutes long! It directly impacts the south end of the school where the math is currently being taught. This is not fair to our children. The railroads have already said they would not honor a quiet zone near a high school with blind curves. They will blow their horns regardless.

I have three boys, ages 11, 8 and 4. I am very concerned about the possibility of the main rail coming through by our schools. My middle child, is at Peter Hobart. He has Down Syndrome. He sometimes wanders and is still not safe crossing streets by himself. In addition to him, there are two other small children with Down Syndrome who live within one block of the high school. There are many students with special needs at the high school as well. All children are at risk. One of the main reasons we love this community is it is a "Children First Community". St. Louis Park has been voted one of the top 100 communities to live in the U.S. several times. If this relocation occurs, that will change drastically. Many will not even want to send their children to the high school due to safety issues, noise and traffic. There are also multiple grade level crossings.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, education, and community cohesion of the residents, students, and community. **Quite frankly, I can't even believe they would consider this as a viable option being 75 ft. next to a high school, and 35 ft. next to the parking lot, tight blind curves and dangerous chemicals next to the school! This is a disaster waiting to happen.** There is a much safer and better option, and much more cost effective, which would not involve schools. It is co-locating the freight where it currently is along the Kennilworth corridor. I am not opposed to light rail transit (LRT), but it has been shown that it would work to co-locate the two in the same corridor, which is



much wider, safer, and cheaper! None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of the residents is being considered in the DEIS. This would be necessary to maintain the safety of our children and community. Relocation to the MN&S should not even be considered an option. It will be only a matter of time before a serious accident occurs. Adolescents/teens and trains are not a good match together.

Sincerely,

Sharon Duncan

St. Louis Park Resident and Mother of 3 boys in the school system.



**Tricia Zeigle**

12/05/2012 09:05 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Support of SW LRT

Hello,

I am a resident of St. Louis Park and would like to voice my support of the proposed SW LRT and freight rail re-route. While some residents of St. Louis Park, mainly those living nearby the proposed freight rail re-route line, have formed a Safety in the Park group in attempt to slow this project, I would encourage our leaders to focus on the implementation of the project as planned.

Safety is clearly not the main issue at stake, but rather a slight increase in freight traffic and noise to the immediate neighborhood. As we live in a metropolitan area, noise and traffic from planes, trains, and automobiles is part of daily life.

Please continue to support this project and the proposed freight rail re-route. Bringing efficient public transportation to the metropolitan area and outlying cities should be paramount.

Sincerely,

Tricia Zeigle

SLP resident

*VIA CERTIFIED MAIL*

December 3, 2012



**Re: Comments to Southwest Light Rail Transit – Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard to the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known lightly-used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic through St. Louis Park.

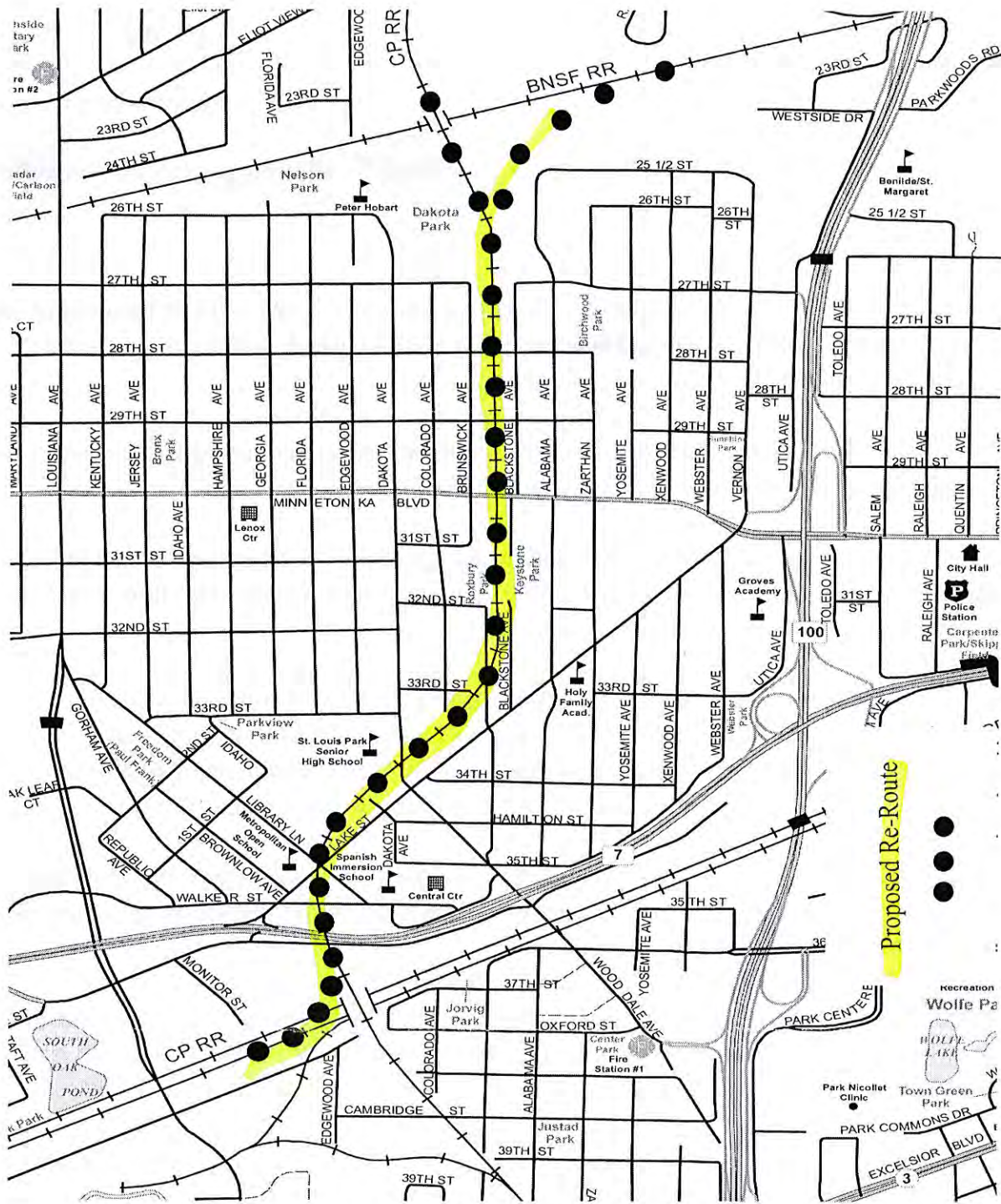
If you look at the map on the other side of this page, you can see how this proposed re-route will cut through a major swath of St. Louis Park and disrupt the daily lives and safety of homeowners, students, commuters and business owners. Moreover, this spur line was never designed to be used as a major freight corridor as is being proposed in the DEIS.

Common sense begs that a better option must be available. The good news is that there is; co-locating freight rail along the SWLRT line (within the Kenilworth Corridor) has shown to be a safe, viable and cheaper option.

Please carefully consider the negative impact this re-route of freight rail will permanently have on the city St. Louis Park and whether funding this re-route versus funding co-locating is the smartest use of taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

Helene Herbst



**Proposed Re-Route**



Recreation Wolfe Pa



Park Nicolle Clinic Town Green Park

PARK COMMONS DR

EXCELSIOR BLVD

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554  
06 DEC 2012 PM 2 1  
Equality  
FOREVER

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works + Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Ave. S., Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transit way  
701 Fourth Ave. S., Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT)-Draft Enrolment Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed reroute to the MN&S Spur tracks. As will be apparent, it is my opinion that the DEIS has not given adequate attention to various factors such as those set forth below.

I own my residence at St. Louis Park and have been residing there for 53 years. My home is approximately two blocks west of the MN&S Spur and I recall that many years ago of being aware of vibrations resulting from trains traveling along the MN&S Spur.

My wife (now deceased) and I had three sons who attended Central Junior High (now known as Park Spanish Immersion School) and St. Louis Park Senior High School (SLPHS) during the 1970's and early 1980's. During the past year in response to questions I have found out that two of my sons during those years hitch a ride on trains passing the SLPHS and one them when walking along Dakota Avenue from home to Central Junior High would dashed across the tracks when a train was coming rather than be late to class as result of waiting for the train to pass. Even though such behavior, riding of trains illegal and rushing across tracks when a train is coming, is to be condemned, recognition has to made of the age of high school students and younger, in many situations, are impulsive, and injuries or worse are more likely to occur with increased train tariff and longer trains passing the SLPHS. It is not much consolation to those injured or their parents to say it was their fault when such increased likelihood could be avoided by more mature adults making a decision avoiding the reroute to the MN&S Spur.

Many automobile racetracks have their curves sloped to counteract forces acting to cause racing cars to move off the tracks. In a relatively short distance (less than about six linear short blocks), due to the curvatures of the tracks, such forces act in one direction as train crosses lake street while such forces act in the opposite direction at the curvature of the tracks east of Dakota Ave. With trains traveling at higher speeds, there being more trains and longer trains would increase the noise and vibrations generated as the trains pass the high school.

Consideration should be given to the disruption in education in the high school class rooms most closely adjacent the tracks at the present time and the increase of noise and vibrations resulting from increase number of trains, weight of trains, length of trains and the speed of the trains passing SLPHS as a result of the proposed reroute. Does the increase rise linearly or exponentially? The DEIS does not adequate consider these factors.

Standing at the railroad crossing at Dakota Avenue, looking generally northeast, one can not see the track more than about three linear short blocks and when looking generally southeast, one can not see the track more than about two linear short blocks. This is a relatively short distance when considers a train traveling about 25 mph. This presents an adverse safety condition, particularly when considering the number of youth likely to dash across the tracks just before the lowering or the ducking under cross bars rather than waiting for the shorter trains and particularly for longer length trains, to pass. Much as one like to, one should not overlook human impulsive behavior. Even though anyone injured or killed would be at fault, it is believed morally the fault would be of those who do not take into consideration that such increase of traffic can clearly be avoided by not rerouting rail traffic from the line through the Kenilworth corridor.

The possible value of "quite zone" for trains passing the SLPHS to minimize nose from horns is greatly offset by the lack of warning to persons and vehicles at, for example, the Dakota Avenue crossing, and the lack of distance of visibility of approaching trains due to curvatures of tracks.

Adjacent to the intersection of an extension of 27<sup>th</sup> street with the spur, there is a well-worn path from people crossing the track. Even though such people are trespassers, unless physically prevented at this location there is a greater possibility of injury or death due the addition of a track for the reroute, and elsewhere along the proposed reroute due to increase in the number of trains.

Appropriate safety consideration should be given to the location where the spur would cross the North Cedar Lake Trail. I question whether a tunnel would be appropriate in view of the level of the water table, particularly during the spring of the year, and water drainage in such a tunnel after a heavy rain.

Adequate consideration has to be given to the amount of contaminated earth will be disturbed if footings are to be put for a ramp for rerouting from the TC&W to the MN&S track.

  
-----  
Clayton R. Johnson

CLAYTON R. JOHNSON

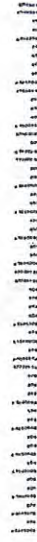
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55415

05 DEC 2012 PM 7 1



Hennepin County Housing,  
Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transit way  
701 Fourth Ave. S., Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300







December 5, 2012

Dear Hennepin County Commissioners,

I live at \_\_\_\_\_ My property lies along the Canadian Pacific  
railroad tracks that are leased by the TC&W Railroad Company.

I am writing to request you strongly reconsider the location of the train from the Shady Oak  
Station into Eden Prairie.

TC&W has used the tracks from Hopkins up to my property to block or decouple long chains of  
railroad cars for years. By that I mean, the rail line picks up an assortment of cars in the St. Paul  
yards and moves them through Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins and into Minnetonka. The  
process of blocking results in cars coming to a crashing halt at my property line, as the rail cars  
bang into each other. The train waits for a signal that comes from Hopkins and then starts  
pushing the cars back. The idling engines outside spew fumes into the air and the noise is  
piercing. Eventually, the engines push back the chain of cars into Hopkins and then return to do  
the same process over and over again. Usually there are several engines in use during this  
process.

During the summer, the daily pattern has been for the blocking of the cars to occur between  
8:00-10:00PM or later. The noise level is so loud and the smell so strong, I cannot have my  
windows or doors open.

We have gone through severe storms outside and the train is out there blocking.

We have experienced 24 hours of constant noise from the trains.

I have made appearances before the Minnetonka City Council, made personal calls to the city  
manager and council members. I have talked with our House of Representatives, US  
Representative, county commissions and neighbors. Several years ago, I was told the state put  
\$700,000.00 into the budget for one year on the condition the federal government would come  
up with 2 million so the blocking could be moved to Glencoe. The 2 million never came  
through. There was door to door knocking and a petition was signed and presented to city hall.  
The list goes on and on. I have talked with the general manager of TC&W rail on numerous  
occasions. We approached the state environment pollution agency that came out and tested  
the waters in Shady Oak Lake. The city of Minnetonka put \$10,000.00 to record the noise  
levels.

This daily process has eroded my land and cracked interior walls. The train vibrations daily  
shake this structure. My grandson was in the sun porch when the train started to block. The

porch shook so strongly, he felt we were experiencing an earthquake and was extremely frightened.

With all that said, now Hennepin County wants to introduce the LRT. I am told it is going to go up and over the Canadian Pacific rail line. So now we will have the fumes, the extremely strong vibrations, the loud train noise, the sight of the LRT in the air and the noise it will bring.

Sadly, the proposed line will clear out our natural landscape.

In addition, the line as currently placed, will run within feet of the #1 landfill concern of the MN Pollution Agency. Right now the Agency is working to reduce the number of acres at this landfill and the major concern of gases being emitted. Apartment buildings and townhomes surround this landfill.

Into this mix, the LRT is proposed.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the route the LRT will take from the Shady Oak Station to Eden Prairie.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elaine Rothman". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Elaine Rothman

Elaine Rothman



MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

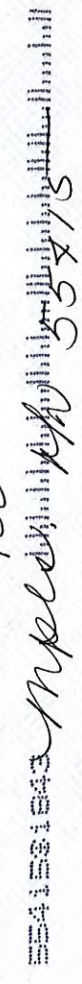
Happy Holidays

BREAST CANCER



06 DEC 2012 PM 5:11

Hennepin County Housing,  
Community Works and Transit  
701 Fowell Ave South  
Ste 400





Comment #241

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly-used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real-world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with the closing of the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossings (Chapter 3/p. 135) causes me the greatest concern. Residents from the Birchwood neighborhood requested on behalf of the Birchwood neighborhood that the grade crossing at 29<sup>th</sup> Street stay open. According to page 135 of the DEIS the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossing is being closed as a mitigation measure. However, the closing of the crossing will not benefit the neighborhood; it will, in fact, jeopardize residents because it will make emergency vehicle access difficult—if not impossible—during winter months due to narrowed streets.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: Denise Sargent



**SOUTHWEST**  
transitway

7011 2970 0000 2540 5063

PLACE STICKER AT TOP OF ENVELOPE TO THE RIGHT  
OF THE RETURN ADDRESS, FOLD AT DOTTED LINE  
**CERTIFIED MAIL**



7011 2970 0000 2540 5063

*Sergant*

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Fold here





"Gloria J. Murman"

12/09/2012 09:53 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS

Hennepin County,

We are so tired of hearing that this freight rail reroute is going to plow through our wonderful, quiet neighborhood and then pass right next to the SLP Senior High School. The cost to do this is so much more expensive and so much more troublesome to our wonderful Birchwood neighborhood in St. Louis Park than it would be if co-located through the Kenilworth Corridor of Mpls. St. Louis Park and our wonderful neighborhood would be ruined by this travesty! We chose to live in SLP 36 years ago and have stayed here even after moving into a larger home in 1985. We know how wonderful this city is for us, our children and our hopefully for our children's children and beyond.

I cross the tracks at 28<sup>th</sup> each and every day and multiple times many days. The homes next to these tracks will be a total loss and not able to be sold in the future. The tracks and crossings in SLP will be very dangerous and will cause me to probably be late to work many days.

Please know that you need to do the right thing which is co-location. Don't be swayed by the money coming from the wealthy Mpls neighborhoods! Please save our city and our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

[Gloria & Jeffrey Murman](#)



Judy Gavisser

12/09/2012 11:52 AM

Please respond to  
Judy Gavisser

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject

To Whom it may Concern:

I have a number of concerns regarding the proposed location of the Southwest Light Rail.

- Chief among these are increased noise levels (currently approximately 44 decibels) to an estimated 114 decibels and a change from that noise occurring two or three times every 24 hours to every 3.5 minutes
- A similar increase in the frequency of vibration, leading to the potential adverse effect of the concrete condo construction's stability
- Proximity of a children's playground as well as biking and walking trails. Safety is in question.
- Disruption of what is now a "park-like" environment for walkers and bikers, as well as nearby residents.

These concerns could be mitigated significantly by placing the railway line below ground, either through a tunnel or within a ditch with appropriate sound barriers. Both the line and the station should be enclosed in a similar way.

Our city needs to consider its history as an environmental model with pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. Please seriously consider the suggested alternatives.

Judy Gavisser



Adam Platt

12/09/2012 06:35 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Comments on DEIS

I would like to offer DEIS comments, as a resident of the Kenwood area the SW LRT will traverse.

**--Bridge over Cedar Lake Pkwy (Chapter 3, page 3-115):** This bridge, as proposed, is incompatible with the residential/recreational/natural character of the route. It is too massive and constructed of materials not in character with the neighborhood, and will disrupt the viewscape. It also seems unnecessary. The volumes of traffic on Cedar Lake Pkwy are not so great so that the disruption of a gated grade crossing would be impossible. If there were ways of trenching the line, it should be considered, but if cost considerations make that impossible, the line should be built at grade rather than on this large flyover which will degrade the ambience of the residential nbhd.

**--Station on 21st Street (chap 2, page 2-32):** I fully support a 21st St Station. It would be inconceivable if the residents of the nbhd are unable to benefit from the line. I use public transit every day to work and would be a regular user. It also will provide an opportunity for pedestrian or bike riders to access the Lake area recreation.

**--Park and Ride at 21st St. (chap 2, page 2-32):** Although I support a station for Kenwood, I do feel that a park and ride lot that is likely to attract commuters from outside the neighborhood is incompatible with the neighborhood's ability to handle increased traffic, especially if the lot requires drivers to drive through Kenwood. If such a lot is built, it must be small, well-landscaped, and unobtrusive.

Thanks for your interest,

Adam Platt





Christin Winkler

12/10/2012 05:46 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT DEIS public comment

December 6, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Vibration (4-117) causes me great concern, especially since our property is 15 feet from the tracks, and our front door is only 40 feet from the tracks. The DEIS neglects to address the documented existence of radon in our soil that leeches into our basements at a level above what is considered safe. Radon is a carcinogen that causes lung cancer. The US EPA has put it plainly, stating, "Any radon exposure has some risk of causing lung cancer. The lower the radon level in your home, the lower your family's risk of lung cancer." The average person receives a higher dose of radiation from the radon levels in their home than from their combined exposure to all other radiation sources, natural or man-made. Radon gas is a naturally-occurring byproduct of the radioactive decay of Uranium in the soil. Radon Act 51 passed by Congress set the natural outdoor level of radon gas (0.4 pCi/L) as the target radon level for indoor radon levels. Unfortunately, many of the homes in St. Louis Park have levels more than ten times that amount. Because radon is a gas, it can leak into homes through the basement or crawl space, cracks in concrete floors and walls, floor drains and sump holes, or through well water. Vibrations in and around the home drastically increase the amount of radon that can enter through these channels.

The assumption stated in the SWLRT-DEIS that the increase in vibration is insignificant is incorrect. Currently trains travel on the MN&S for approximately two hours a month. If the re-route occurs there will be a minimum of 6 hours and 39 minutes or a 232.5% increase in train related vibration will occur each a month. My family, therefore, will experience a drastic increase in radon exposure in our home as a result of this increased traffic and vibration. Not only will the duration of vibration increase, but also the amount of vibration will increase with longer, heavier trains.

Mitigation cannot reduce the impact of this increased radon exposure. This is a serious, documented issue which the SWLRT-DEIS fails to address, even though it is recognized at the federal level.

My source for information about radon comes from [www.epa.gov/iaq/radon](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon).

Christin Winkler



**Christin Winkler**

12/10/2012 05:47 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT DEIS public comment LPA

December 6, 2012

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments). NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must “encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment.” This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue. Hennepin County did not “encourage and facilitate” public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 2008 Oct 7, 14, and 23 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 2010 May 18, 18 and 20 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT’s major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route’s connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings. Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 2011 April 17 and 28 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route. Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Thank You,

Christin Winkler



Christin Winkler

12/10/2012 05:49 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT DEIS public comment (children)

December 6, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In detail, the re-route will allow a 250% increase in trains and a 650% increase of rail cars traffic.

Our front door is 40 feet from the raised tracks that run by our house. My children play in the yard that is between our house and the tracks. On weekdays, we go into the house twice a day, when the trains come, because of noise and safety issues. It is important to note that the re-routed freight will be longer, more frequent, and include more locomotives per train, making it practically impossible to enjoy a day in the yard with my children.

In addition, my children's bedroom windows receive the direct noise of the train whistle as it approaches the crossing by our house and the vibrations that last the length of the train. During the past year, there have been a few trains at night while portions of the track were undergoing routine maintenance. Each time a train passed in the night, my small children (currently 2-years old and 9-months old) were awoken in a frightened state. I believe that the increase in length and frequency would make it impossible for my children to get a good night sleep any night of the week. You must understand that this is a serious concern that has not been addressed by the DEIS.

In addition, the DEIS fails to describe the real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. The quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts but it is a mitigation that is not supported by the neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

A quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection,
- c. trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic
- e. the amount of time exposed to the noise impacts of the stationary crossing bells will increase significantly due to increase in train numbers.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT DEIS does not adequately describe the impacts and as such, the freight reroute should not be given any further consideration as a option.

Christin Winkler



"Steve Andersen"

>

12/10/2012 08:53 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Noise

As a near neighbor of the proposed West Lake station of the new line, I am concerned with the potential for noise in our neighborhood. The station will be a mere block from our home. Traveling the light rail as I have, I hear the horn of the train at crossings and wonder about the effect of that noise on the neighbors. What kind of research has been done on that effect and what attempts (if any) have been made to mitigate the noise for near neighbors of the new line?

Thank you.

Steve Andersen.

West Calhoun Neighborhood



Jeff Byers

12/10/2012 09:43 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT/Freight rail re-route

Hennepin County Commissioners  
Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the rerouting of freight rail traffic from the Kenilworth corridor to the MN&S line.

I am a Saint Louis Park resident. Since I do not live near the MN&S tracks, no longer have school-aged children and am a frequent user of the bike trail system and a proponent of mass transit and the light rail system, you might assume my concern would be to get the SWLRT built with as little impact on the bike paths as possible. That assumption would be wrong.

I do want the SWLRT line to be built but I believe Hennepin County is ignoring well founded concerns related to safety, vibration, noise, expense, mitigation etc., that will result from increasing freight rail traffic on the MN&S line. The question is why.

My understanding is that the freight rail reroute and the SWLRT routing are technically separate issues. It appears that when the rail line that ran through what is now the Greenway was severed in the 1990s for the construction of the Hiawatha Corridor, the plan to reroute those trains included using the MN&S line in Saint Louis Park. For some reason that plan was not able to be implemented at the time and the Kenilworth line was used as a "temporary" solution. I have no idea what went into that decision or what deals were struck to accomplish it.

For nearly 20 years there didn't appear to be any significant effort to move the freight trains from the "temporary" route. I believe this was because no reasonable person, looking at the situation objectively, could conclude that the MN&S line would be an upgrade to the Kenilworth line. MN&S drawbacks, including more at grade crossings, blind curves, narrow ROW, poor connections, and proximity to SLP High School all contribute to this reasonable conclusion.

However, the addition of the LRT line, together with the incorrect assumption that it is not feasible to co-locate freight and LRT in the Kenilworth Corridor, gave the folks in Minneapolis a flawed argument to try and get the freight rail line out of their backyards.

I believe the co-location option has been dismissed because at some point Hennepin County made a deal with the City of Minneapolis to remove the freight trains from the Kenilworth Corridor. Nothing else seems to explain Hennepin County's ignoring the significant problems involved with adding more and longer freight trains to the MN&S line.

I would be willing to move the bike path out of the Kenilworth Corridor in the area of the "pinch point" near the grain silo condos. And if the airport can figure out how to run a multi-car, two direction light rail system almost entirely on a single track, the designers of the SWLRT can figure out how to stagger the trains to make a quarter mile segment of single track workable. And the option of buying some of the townhomes across from the silo condos to widen the ROW would be much less expensive than buying all the homes along the MN&S line.



I understand that sometimes people in authority make decisions they truly feel are for the greater good. I don't believe that rerouting the freight traffic from the Kenilworth Corridor to the MN&s line is one of those decisions. But if the freight rail reroute must happen, for whatever reasons, you must not allow the citizens most directly effected by your decision to suffer while the rest of the population benefits. Extensive mitigation, including buying many, if not all, of the homes on either side of the MN&S line, must be agreed upon before any documents are signed. Waiting to determine appropriate mitigation measures until after the fact is not acceptable.

Thank you

Jeffrey J. Byers



12/10/2012 01:29 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS comments for Cedar Lake / Kenwood / 21st street area

Hello,

I live in the neighborhood area of 21st street and wanted to pass along my concerns of the light rail. My focus is on Chapters 2 Traffic, 3 Bridge at Cedar Lake, the traffic at this intersection and the overall public safety issues and Chapter 4 the Noise and Wildlife impact.

While I appreciate mass transit I don't think that many people will utilize it from 21st Street into Downtown Minneapolis. A parking lot in this area will potentially add problems to the public safety and neighborhood noise, whether its foot traffic or rail and light noise.

The intersection at Cedar Lake and Kenilworth Trail is very busy all day long, that needs to be taken into consideration for positive traffic flow and kept consistent for those that do travel by bike, foot etc.

There is an amazing amount of wildlife in the area which needs to be considered. Not only the noise and added activity but from a road kill stand point too.

Overall I'm concerned and don't want to see this well used and beautiful natural area get destroyed by rail activity.

Thank you,  
Jenny Kriha  
area resident



Madeleine Henry

12/10/2012 03:43 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Southwest Transitway and Kenilworth area comments

We have a condominium in the . We are very much in favor of the SW transitway and have no objections whatsoever to the proposed routing along Kenilworth Trail. However, due to the proximity of the right of way to our property, we are concerned about a number of issues in respect to the current plans. So, our remarks concern topics 3, 4, 7, 9, and 10 on the Topics page (social, environmental, parks, indirect effects/cumulative impact, environmental justice).

**Noise** could be excessive. The noise estimates in the DEIS documents do not take into account the proximity of our complex. This part of the track curves and will be on the approach to the Lake Street station and therefore likely to generate a lot of noise with slowing and stopping. In addition, if a bridge carries the LRT over Cedar Lake Road, there will be additional noise with the slowing down to level ground.

**Vibration** could cause long term damage to our structure. one of us lived in the part of south Minneapolis during and after the air traffic controllers' strike, with its subsequent rerouting of air traffic along a limited number of lanes. Many of my former neighbors are now enjoying brand new windows thanks to the damage caused by those vibrations. The LRT project should make every attempt to forestall a similar consequence--prevention is better than cure. And a more recent example of adverse effects of vibrational stress is the Sabo bridge -- again, a reason to consider the long-term effects of the current plan. One of us is an engineer who oversees the construction of large storage and shipping facilities. He does not consider the current plan to be within the best practices parameter.

The proximity to a park where many children play, as well as the exact future location of the biking and walking trails right in this area raises **safety** issues.

Lastly, we have an **environmental** concern.this part of the trail is on a migratory bird flight path. With exposed overhead wiring, there is a good likelihood that birds will be electrocuted. These feathered members of our community provide much pleasure and utility, eating insects and rodents. We have seen dozens of species of birds from our balcony both during migration and during their residence in our neighborhood.

The LRT is badly needed and will be well-utilized; so are **mitigations** to the above problems. We would be delighted to hear that a tunnel would accommodate the LRT along this portion of the trail. A ditch and sound-enclosing barrier might also work.

Dean Petersen and Madeleine Henry



cheryl devaal

12/10/2012 03:43 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Proposed Freight Reroute: SWLRT

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit

Attn: Southwest Transit way

701 Fourth Ave. S., Suite 400,

Minneapolis, MN 55415

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") published in regard to the proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit ("SWLRT") which includes a proposed freight rail reroute in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

Because it contains multiple erroneous assumptions, unsubstantiated assertions, and inexplicable omissions, the DEIS does not appear to be a serious attempt to consider the effects of the proposed freight re-route. The rerouting of freight traffic will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT-DEIS does not adequately describe or address those impacts and as such, the freight reroute should be given much more study and reevaluated. As this proposed reroute is described in the DEIS, it will construct a main freight rail line out of a little-known, lightly-used spur line, thereby greatly increasing rail car traffic with its attendant noise, vibration and the inherent potential dangers of derailment of freight cars next to people's homes, businesses and schools.

A so-called quiet zone is proposed, however, the DEIS fails to describe real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. This proposed quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts, but is not supported by the adjacent neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

Establishment of a quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment as described in the current DEIS fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve;
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection;
- c. trains traveling west will need to brake to maintain a slower speed going down grade and through curves;
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic; and
- e. stationary crossing bells will increase significantly due to the increase in train numbers.

The portions of the DEIS dealing with Noise (3-93 and 94) and Vibration (4-117) used flawed methods and has therefore arrived at erroneous conclusions. Vibration and noise measurements were done using current MN&S freight traffic. Longer, heavier trains translate into lengthened duration of vibrations and increased amounts of vibration. The assumption stated in the SWLRT-DEIS that the increase in vibration is insignificant strains credibility. The proposed rerouting of freight traffic would introduce mainline traffic into adjacent neighborhoods and expose the community, residents and students to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings and nights. In detail, the re-route will allow a 250% increase in trains and a 650% increase of rail cars traffic. Insignificant?

Only a passing reference is made to safety and the proposed re-route in the SWLRT-DEIS; however, there are many features about the MN&S line which make it undesirable as a main freight rail line. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings;
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses – many closer than the length of a rail car;
- Number of pedestrians who must traverse crossings daily;
- Permeable soil existing under the MN&S line;
- Medical emergency response is hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80);
- Tight curves--derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight tracks;
- Hazardous materials are carried on the rail line without a sufficiently wide right of way.

In the SWLRT-DEIS, we are told blocked crossings will not cause significant travel or safety issues. To the consultant sitting miles away in an office, the increase may seem insignificant, but to residents who daily need to get around in their own neighborhoods and also may need a quick response from emergency vehicles, the huge increase in time that crossings will be blocked simultaneously is unacceptable.

In addition, residents from the Birchwood neighborhood have requested that the grade crossing at 29<sup>th</sup> Street stay open. Despite this, according to page 135 of the DEIS, the 29<sup>th</sup> Street crossing is being closed as a mitigation measure. However, closing this crossing will not benefit that neighborhood but will, in fact, jeopardize Birchwood residents by impeding emergency vehicle access or making it downright impossible during winter months due to narrowed streets.

Inexplicably omitted from the DEIS is how the re-route would be funded (Chapters 5 and 8). The re-route must be considered as part of the SWLRT and even without mitigation, construction of the interconnect and upgrading the tracks on the MN&S to handle the heavier traffic is estimated to cost \$25,000,000, money not originally included in the projected cost of the SWLRT, but the projected budget for the SWLRT has not been adjusted to recognize the added expense. Also missing from the cost estimates are the costs for maintaining the interconnect structure after it is built.

However, none of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of its residents is being considered. This requested mitigation is not frivolous, but is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for residents of St. Louis Park.

The SWLRT-DEIS does not consider the impact of rerouted freight trains from a mainline freight corridor to a bridge line on the property values of those neighborhoods adjoining the re-route. Freight rail reroutes are not exclusive to Minnesota; the cost of freight reroutes to nearby residents has been documented. For example, according to an article in the 2001 issue of The Appraisal Journal, bringing additional freight rail traffic to an area will negatively affect all properties 250 feet from the rail tracks by five to seven percent. All properties along the MN&S line are located well within 250 feet. Based on this article, one can conclude that property values along the MN&S will drop more than seven percent. Two major questions arise that are not addressed in the SWLRT-DEIS. First, what happens to the tax base of St. Louis Park when decreases in values are realized? Second, how are property owners who have sustained losses in property value because of this government action going to be compensated for their losses? It is unreasonable for Hennepin County to ask any resident to pay a higher price for the benefits of light rail than others.

Chapter 1 of the DEIS states that without the re-route, TC&W's only option for moving its freight will be to access the MN&S tracks by use of the notorious switching wye in St. Louis Park, or to transfer cargo from railcars to highway trucks. The unstated assumption behind this statement is that the current route used by the TC&W will be severed. Presenting the either/or assumption for the

switching wye or highway trucks creates the illusion of a fait accompli, when in fact the TC&W's current route through the Kenilworth corridor is a viable alternative.

Unsubstantiated assertions include the depiction in the DEIS that the historical character of the Kenilworth corridor (Chapter 3, page 58) would be compromised by its continued use for freight train traffic. The Kenilworth corridor was the home to not just railroad tracks, but an entire railroad yard for over one hundred years, beginning long before the current homes in the area were built.

I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments) of the DEIS. NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must "encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment." This regulation was clearly ignored in regard to the potential freight rail reroute issue. Hennepin County did not "encourage and facilitate" public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the Oct 7, 14, and 23, 2008 scoping meetings and comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the May 18, 18 and 20, 2010 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight reroute issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT's major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight reroute because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail reroute was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight reroute's connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings.

Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the April 17 and 28, 2011 freight reroute listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. At those sessions, hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight reroute. Because



those opposed to the reroute have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail reroute issue needs to be dropped or significantly more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Sincerely,

Cheryl DeVaal



Phil Freshman

12/10/2012 04:56 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Regarding the Southwest Corridor Lightrail

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me the greatest concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight, rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses – many are closer than the length of a rail car
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day
- Permeable soil under MN&S
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80)
- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety,

livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

th

--

Phil Freshman  
Editor/Writer



"Rich Rinker"

12/10/2012 07:35 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Comments on Draft EIS

As a resident of Hopkins living one block from the intersection of Blake Rd. and Excelsior Blvd. my concern is for the proposed location of the LRT Terminal with access from 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NE off of Blake Rd. Blake Rd. is already congested and dangerous especially for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The proposed location will increase problems due to increased automobile traffic volume, more turning traffic, long queues and obstructions at the crossings. It would make more sense to move the station west to St. Louis St. and Jackson Ave. with the traffic access from Excelsior Blvd. The purpose of Light Rail is to speed up transit times, make us less dependent on cars, and improve our quality of life. The station, as proposed will have the opposite effect.



Celeste Gaspard

12/10/2012 09:32 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Collocate not relocate

Please reconsider the plan to relocate the freight rail line through St Louis Park. I feel this plan has been irresponsibly researched. The plan to relocate the freight line through St Loius Park ignores or minimizes many dangers to our community, especially to the students who attend the three schools along the proposed reroute. The cost to the taxpayers of Hennepin county has been grossly underestimated as well as misrepresented, not to mention the fact that the mitigation has not been researched completely. The DEIS ignores many of the concerns that have been brought to the attention of our representatives at Hennepin county. I feel the concerns and safety issues addressed by the residents of St Louis Park have been ignored or brushed aside as unimportant. Please revisit this issue before the safety of the students and residents in St Louis Park is compromised for ever.

My concerns include but are not limited to the following:

1. Taxpayers will pay the brunt of the cost for the relocation.
2. Schools will suffer and if our schools reduce in desirability, our tax base suffers, as well as home values.
3. Safety concerns for all residents along the proposed reroute as well as students and commuters.
4. Biased studies and ignoring of St Louis Park resident concerns.
5. Misrepresentation of mitigation costs for the future, haven't even been studied yet.
6. Risk of derailment due to insufficient rail infrastructure, incline, and curvature.

Sincerely,

Celeste Gaspard



Jan Benson

12/10/2012 09:44 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS comments

To Whom It May Concern,

I have some very serious concerns about the planned freight rail re-route through St. Louis Park. The process for choosing this option is seriously flawed; the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is not objective.

Everything I'm seeing points toward a few people with some major real estate development plans along the Kenilworth Corridor who are trying their damndest to skew all the data so that the corridor contains only an attractive bike trail and a useful commuter train, and not big, nasty freight trains. One would hope that these would-be developers who stand to make a bundle of money are not Hennepin County commissioners or their close friends and family, but—this whole thing has a bad smell to it, particularly the "discovery" of the \$125M "typo" which miraculously brings the price of relocation and co-location to almost equal numbers. What an absolutely AMAZING coincidence! Seriously, how does this NOT look like more lies on top of the original lousy data?

The Kenilworth corridor carried EIGHT sets of freight tracks in the 80's & 90's, when I lived on Brunswick Avenue near Jorvig Park. I am not convinced that there's just "no room" to co-locate the light rail and freight rail trains. By the way, I lived in the old Bye place, which was built in the 1890's; vibration from the trains, running about 100 yards away, had not damaged this historic structure in the 100-plus years it stood there; I'm sure the historic architecture in the Kenwood neighborhood will be able to withstand these conditions as well.

I won't go into the safety concerns, which have been discussed at numerous meetings, but they are myriad. Go take a look at that little track onto which they plan to divert all the freight traffic and then convince me how "safe" it will be. (I'd advise that you pack a big lunch.)

We need an OBJECTIVE, INDEPENDENT study of this matter, not one bought, paid for, and rigged to find a predetermined conclusion. This isn't freakin' Chicago; these sleazy, private deals do not belong in our planning system.

Fix it. Now.

Jan Benson



12/10/2012 10:03 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Draft Environment Impact Statement citizen comment

To the county in which I have resided for over 50 years,

I am shocked and disappointed with the DEIS, and am in opposition to the proposed re-routing of trains through Saint Louis Park residential and school neighborhoods. I feel anger and fear, knowing there is a possible outcome of modifying an ancilliary railroad spur to that of a main freight rail line--one which was not sighted, or designed to handle the length and speed of main-line traffic. I bring to your attention the following items pasted from the Study, well-written in its description of harmful fall-out and solutions of fantasy--without addressing the probable outcomes and devastating effects likely to occur. The perspective reads as if the Study was performed academically from afar, instead of actual experience in the affected areas.

If this reroute does occur, the consequences will likely be that of a permanent change for the worse, of the thriving, desirable, and valued community that we have known for the past 126 years.

**3.7.3.5 Freight Rail Relocation**

**Derailments**

The assessment of parcels indicated that two parcels have dwelling structures located within 50 feet of the rail centerline. These parcels are unique because they are situated parallel and not perpendicular to the railroad ROW. This situation results in dwelling structures located significantly closer than any other traditional lot that backs up to the ROW, as exists throughout the remainder of the corridor. These two unique parcels are located directly across the tracks from one another, along Minnetonka Boulevard. At this location, the slope of the rail embankment takes up the entire side yards of the properties. In the event of a derailment or spill in this location, these structures may have a higher likelihood of being impacted than other dwelling structures along the alignment.

The curvature of the bridge structures and grade on the bridge structures would be engineered and constructed to meet stringent railway engineering requirements to ensure safe operation. The required train control signalization measures to be designed and constructed would also improve the safety of train operations in this area. Train crew members operating such trains are all trained on how to operate trains safely on grades, curves and structures.

#### Chemical Spills

There is potential for freight cars to transport chemicals or other hazardous materials along this alignment. A relocation of freight traffic within the city of St. Louis Park would not change the fire department's current hazardous materials response plan, as the same steps would be carried out for any train derailment or hazardous material spill. In the event of a spill or release, the St. Louis Park Fire Department has a hazardous materials response plan, with the fire department as the principal response agency.<sup>4</sup>

#### Pedestrian Accessibility/Safety

Increased trains may increase the safety risk for students/staff/pedestrians crossing the tracks to access the football field on the other side of the tracks, or to travel between Roxbury and Keystone parks, or various features of the high school complex. Likewise, there may be a greater risk to residents living adjacent to the alignment that might trespass/enter on the railway ROW and tracks.

#### At-Grade Crossing Safety

An increased number of trains may increase the potential for rail/vehicle or rail/pedestrian accidents.

#### Chemical Spills

The St. Louis Park Fire Department and the State Chemical Assessment Teams within the Hopkins Fire Department and the St. Paul Fire Department have a protocol to respond to a spill of hazardous materials in the St. Louis Park Fire Department's hazardous materials response plan. The St. Louis Park Fire Department would handle any



evacuations that might be necessary.

#### Derailments

Because of their location in very close proximity to the existing MN&S line, the two additional residential parcels along the alignment would be at increased risk of damage associated with a derailment. There will be on going coordination with the

owners of the two residential properties to determine the most feasible mitigation

measures to address their safety concerns, given the unique location of their homes

relative to the railroad ROW. Mitigation could include the acquisition and relocation of

up to two residential properties. The property acquisition would total 10,480 square feet

or 0.24 acre. This is also addressed in the ROW/Relocation section.

#### Pedestrian Accessibility/Safety and At-Grade Crossing Safety

The Freight Rail Relocation Segment includes the closure of the existing 29<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing.

With the LRT 3A-1 (co-location) build alternative safety issues such as maintaining freight

train movement along with LRT and bicycle trail at stations would be part of preliminary

engineering and design of the stations. Crossings and station access would include

general safety considerations for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people needing ADA

accommodations. As noted above, System safety and security oversight for the project

would be achieved through implementation of safety and security plans by the Metropolitan Council to ensure safety and security when designing,

constructing, and

operating the project.

Under the Freight Rail Relocation Segment, Quiet Zone upgrades would be implemented at all remaining grade crossings between Walker and 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

The quiet zone design concept includes improved pedestrian safety at the study area

grade crossings, in the form of pedestrian gates at all existing and proposed sidewalk

locations. Fencing will be included at all quiet zone grade crossings to control pedestrian movements at/around crossing signal gates.

In addition to the quiet zone design, there will be consultation with the City of St. Louis

Park, St. Louis Park School Board, railroads, and other stakeholders regarding additional feasible and effective safety mitigation in the vicinity of the St. Louis Park High School. Additional mitigation could include a grade separated pedestrian crossing, High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (**HAWK**) signal, or overhead flashers to improve safety of pedestrians traveling between the high school and Park Spanish Immersion or the high school and the football field.

Wooddale Avenue should be extended south and east, implementing a new crossing. If the Southwest Corridor is developed for LRT, it will not likely co-exist with the freight rail that currently operates on the parallel CP Rail corridor. The existing freight rail would therefore be relocated. This would make current CP Rail right of way available for redevelopment or alternative uses between Dakota Avenue on the west and the municipal boundary of St. Louis Park on the east. This includes the portion of the CP Rail corridor within the Elmwood Study Area.

A very concerned citizen,  
Richard Dworsky



CHRIS GASPARD

12/10/2012 10:22 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Co-Locate, not re-route

To whom this may concern,

I am writing you because I am really disappointed in the process evaluating the best way for the southwest corridor to be formed. I have been involved in the process for a little over two years. I was at the meeting when Gail Dorfman said that we are going to have to have freight rail re-routed into our neighborhood. Had I know that this was an option, I would have been involved when the route of the SWLRT was decided upon. I do not think that the DEIS is a good representation of the what is really at stake. Quite honestly, the work that was done on behalf of the City of St. Louis Park or the meetings I was involved in are not even referenced. On top of that, the firm that was hired by the county was extremely bias and seemed directed in coming up with the results the Hennepin County board was hoping for. Only to get proved wrong and wrong again. I would like to share with you some of the points that I would like to point out for your evaluation.

**Safety:** The way that the re-route is proposed, the safety of the trains, drivers, people and students are of concern. First, the ramp that is being purposed is a steeper grade that the railroad wants or feel is efficient or maintainable. I have heard feedback that the need for additional engine might be needed just to pull the load up the ramp. More pollution to pull the heavy load. Once up the ramp the trains will take a left turn to cross over highway 7, then a quick left again, then to a tight right. Longer trains running through all these turns is dangerous. It doesn't get any better. After that it makes a blind right turn to go next to the St. Louis Park High School. Trains are to close to the school and the school property is separated by the train itself. Not to mention that McDonald's, a common place for all the high school kids to hang out, is across the tracks. The train then continues in close proximity to many houses all the way through this area. Kids tend to walk home on these tracks, because sometime it is the shortest way.

**Infrastructure:** We have a lot of congestion with cars and a grid that was designed for less traffic. We consistently have cars backed up in these neighborhoods as cars are trying to find short cuts in and out of Minneapolis. If the train were to pass through the neighborhood, it would dramatically effect the efficiency of emergency response vehicles. Due to the changes in elevation, the trains would take 20 minutes to go the 3 mile trip through our neighborhood. That will effect bus's for schools, parent pick ups and general traffic. We also have air traffic directly running over our neighborhood. Please stop the madness!

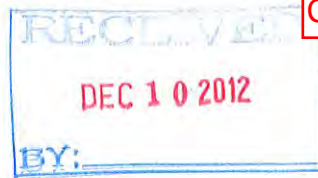
**Cost:** The estimate of the \$130 million dollars is short of the actual costs. Mitigation for our neighborhood needs to be significantly more. Even the consideration of re-route does not make sense. There is a straight, graded right of way that has been there for as long as I have owned my home. While there is a wide cleared path pre-created for the existing railway, the re-reroute goes directly through many backyards. There are many more homes in close proximity to the rails. In Minneapolis, the tighter spots are due to mitigation in which the city elected to build close to the rail line. Might I add that it goes directly to a rail yard that has been there for more the 80 years. I am also concerned for the future of our city if this goes though.

First, with a high school being interrupted by trains at multiple times a day will make the learning experience less than desirable. I understand the trains go by 3 different schools. That will really depreciate the value of everyone's home in St. Louis Park if we lose the quality of our schools. I as a tax payer feel that this is wasteful spending, when it is not necessary.

I don't understand the importance of this re-route when it adversely effects so many people. Also, it only separates for I believe 3 stops only in St. Louis Park. It is okay to co-locate the the rest of the line with exception to St. Louis Park. We don't want it above grade in through our neighborhood. We don't want to pay extra taxes, if not needed. Please co-locate, NEVER RE\_ROUTE!!!!

Thank you for your consideration,  
Chris Gaspard

December 7, 2012



Comment #262

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight re-route in St Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MP45 Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential area setting, and directly adjacent to the St. Louis Park Senior High School. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday - Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and student will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St. Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increase noise and vibration increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives,

Cont to page 2

Page 2

loss of mobility ~~in~~ when multiple crossings are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our schools, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thirty two years ago the long trains ~~in~~ vibrated the houses so much the pictures on the walls of my home would move - Please don't let that happen again!

Thank you,

Bonnie Lindgren

211 N. 1st Ave S. ....



Ms. Bonnie Lindgren



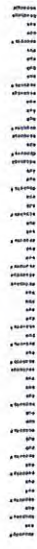
MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

07 DEC 2012 PM 7 L



Hennepin County - Housing, Community Work & Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 South Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415164300





## Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

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Name: ROBERT HOLT

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DEC 1 0 2012

I am probably quite biased when looking at the proposals for light rail through Minneapolis. It seems to me at the outset the planners had one goal in mind: move people from the suburbs into central Minneapolis at the cheapest possible cost and without any concern with the interests and needs of residents of Minneapolis. The route through Minneapolis follows one of the least densely populated areas of the city. Efficient transit systems enter areas of increased population density and of greater employment opportunities as they get closer to the central city. It's difficult to imagine anybody getting of the train at 21<sup>st</sup> street or Bryn Mar.

Let us look at the proposed 21<sup>st</sup> street station. If you draw a circle around that station with a radius of one-half mile you discover that most of the area with the circle in either under water or is public park land. The rest is largely single dwelling homes. The people who live on the West side of the proposed station are on the west side of Cedar Lake and would find it almost impossible to get to the 21<sup>st</sup> Street station. East of the station there is a very tiny population within the half mile circle. That is probably why there is a proposed parking lot for 200 cars at the 21<sup>st</sup> Street station. There is no significant population until you get the the 28<sup>th</sup> Street - 31<sup>st</sup> Street corridor from Lake Calhoun to past Nicollet. (Uptown and Lyn-Lake) But to drive from that area to the 21<sup>st</sup> Street station is a nightmare. The cars would all go through the residential streets East of Lake of the Isles, come to Franklin or 21st Street at the Parkway and then head West – right into Kenwood Elementary School at a time when about a dozen school buses are maneuvering to to get in place, hundreds of children aware crossing the streets near the school and the flag carrying children are helping to control. What kind of an urban planner would put a parking lot in a park at the end of a maze of residential streets that were neither designed to build to handle that kind of traffic and bring all the cars right next to an elementary school. (Parking lots belong at transit station that are adjacent to major highways in the suburbs.) Thank goodness the population that might possibly use the parking lot has great bus transportation to downtown Minneapolis in the Nicollet-3<sup>rd</sup> Street area where most of the downtown employment is. Who would take a miserable drive in order to ride a few stops to Target Field? Remember, one of the purposes of light rail is to get people out of their cars

That population of young couples and singles that live generally in or near uptown should be a transit planners delight. They love urban living but they love the good jobs in the suburbs. They are reverse commuters. The fare of a reverse commuter is almost 100% profit. So build a parking lot near the station that is by Calhoun Village and extend the Lake Street bus route a few blocks to get out there. You may nab some reverse commuters, you keep the traffic to the lot (if there is any) out of residential streets and away from elementary schools.

What about the 21<sup>st</sup> Street station? There are not enough residents within walking distance to justify it. A 200 lot parking lot would make a complete mess. Why not just eliminate the 21Street station and use the money to build a decent crossing at Cedar Lake Parkway?

There is still the question of the rail line. I understood that Minneapolis agreed to the present route under the condition that light rail and freight rail would not share the same right of way and that the trains would move to St Louis Park. We should stay with that, but if St. Louis Park doesn't like the trains, why not tear up their rail line and move the light rail to that route and put all the trains on the new rails that they are now installing on the old rail site?

I must admit that I always thought the preferred route would have been on the railroad trench to Nicollet and then underground into the city. A limited stop bus service could be provided that ran from Nicollet to the Hiawatha light rail on 28<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> Street. Both the Wells Fargo Mortgage Office and the Abbott-Northwestern Allina facilities provide significant employment opportunities on that route and

the housing concentration between Calhoun and Nicollet would become increasingly attractive to reverse commuters. This route for the light rail would generate many more riders. The increased annual cost when amortized over 30 to 50 years would not be great

Robert T. Holt



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here



\*\*\*\*\*  
**Mr. Robert Holt**  
\*\*\*\*\*



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Fold here

Frank B. Freedman



Two Pages

December 7, 2012

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit Authority  
Attention: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Subject: Comments for Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement

I request that this Statement be updated to include these concerns about the proposed re-routing:

1. Noise and Vibration: It simply does not seem appropriate to extrapolate data taken during use of the existing spur line and determine that noise and vibration won't be excessive with re-routing. Freight trains that use this spur line travel much slower and have far fewer cars than would re-routed freight trains. If these studies were conducted during warmer temperatures, then the accuracy of this extrapolation is still further reduced.
2. Safety: There is little margin of safety for higher speed freight trains to pass so close to our high school, through numerous blind intersections, within 34-50 feet of many houses. Making the track bed higher and/or carrying hazardous materials poses still further safety concerns that dangerous derailed freight cars will roll down into homes or into our high school. Freight train accidents happen, including one in St. Louis Park recently.
3. Traffic Flow: Cedar Lake Road is becoming congested during the morning (and evening) rush hours. A re-routed freight train of 100 cars or more could easily tie up this important east-west thoroughfare for 10 minutes or more, thereby backing up traffic for at least one mile. Any emergency vehicle stuck at this intersection would lose at least 5-7 minutes getting around this bottle-neck. At least one other key intersection in St. Louis Park would experience such traffic delays.
4. Mitigation: Other than the types of rails proposed for the re-routing, no budget, source of funding, plan or even mention of mitigation appears in this document.
5. Quality of Life: It's hard to imagine that the quality of life for those living in hundreds of homes near the proposed re-route wouldn't be anything but "miserable." Thousands of other St. Louis Park residents would merely be inconvenienced and disturbed about living in a "railroad town."
6. Property Values: I estimate a \$5,000,000 total loss of property values for homes located near the proposed re-route. Within a few years, I estimate the total loss of property value will be at least \$100,000,00 due to the re-route, when word gets out about how high school classes are disrupted and the inconvenience of travel in our city due to re-routing.
7. Fairness: The most troubling concern I have is about fairness, specifically a seemingly imbalance of factors considered in the Statement. The Statement noted that Kenwood residents were concerned about the how the "character of the Kenwood neighborhood..." might change due to co-location of freight and light rail trains. While removal of several dozen Kenwood homes might be needed, noise, vibration and safety were not raised as concerns. Hundreds of

Two Pages

St. Louis Park residents, city leaders and school officials were extremely concerned, since re-routing would directly and very adversely affect them. An alternative routing study and proposal offered by St. Louis Park was not accepted for consideration. No concern was deemed substantial enough to warrant any special attention in this Statement.

While this probably is not the intent, re-routing (versus co-location) simply means that a relatively large number of blue collar working folks will have to suck it up for the benefit of relatively few well-to-do Kenwood residents.

Please consider my concerns and provide a more balanced Statement, one recognizing all shortcomings of the first draft. Thank you kindly.

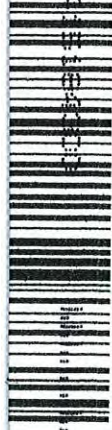
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank B. Freedman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Frank B. Freedman

C: Senator Amy Klobuchar  
Senator Al Franken  
Congressman Keith Ellison  
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin  
Commissioner Gail Dorfman  
Thom Miller, Safety In The Park  
City of St. Louis Park, Mayor and Council Members



Frank B Freedman



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HENNEPIN COUNTY HOUSING, COMMUNITY WORKS  
AND TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
701 FURTH AVENUE SOUTH, SUITE 400  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55415

ATTENTION: SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY



Comment #265

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within St Louis Park Schools. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility with when multiple crossing are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thank you,

Name: Tiera Rozman



December 6, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written to provide my opinions regarding the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and specifically pertaining to the proposed freight rail re-route through Saint Louis Park, MN.

I am against the re-routing of freight trains as proposed by the DEIS for numerous reasons.

Of greatest concern to me, is the significant increase in safety risks associated with the interaction these freight trains will have with human beings, including hundreds of children that cross this train line by necessity on a daily basis. If these freight trains are re-routed as proposed by the DEIS, it is not a question of "if", but rather "when" a neighborhood child will be severely injured, or killed by one of these trains. When that event happens, God forbid, that child's blood will be on your hands. If you have the ability to prevent this from happening, you must do so by not allowing these trains to be re-directed through this heavily populated area.


The freight trains should be kept where they presently are, and have been for many years, in the Kennilworth Corridor. The Kennilworth Corridor is designed specifically for freight line traffic, and ensures maximum safety for human beings that live near that area. The level of safety ensured by the Kennilworth Corridor is something that cannot be duplicated on the MN&S Spur. To get anything close to that level of safety on the MN&S Spur would cause disruption of peoples' lives to an extent that would simply be intolerable with regular invasive train horn soundings, vibrations from idling, and traffic back-ups caused by lengthy road crossings (another factor decreasing safety for the travel of ambulances, police cars etc.). I have also become aware that the cost of keeping freight rail in the Kennilworth Corridor, and co-locating it along with the new light rail traffic, is less expensive than ramming the freight rail through St. Louis Park on the MN&S Spur. Yet it does not appear as if co-location has really been seriously considered. Why?

I see very little (if any) funding allotted by the DEIS to pay the unfortunate people who live alongside the MN&S Spur whose home values will most certainly plummet from the freight rail re-route. The value of property all along the proposed re-route location will decline due to increased noise, vibration, and pollution caused by the increased freight rail traffic. Where is the compensation? In the event freight rail traffic is unfortunately re-routed through this neighborhood, funding must be provided for ALL property owners who will be negatively impacted by the re-route. As it stands now, the DEIS fails to adequately consider the full extent of negative impacts the re-routed freight rail traffic will cause along the MN&S Spur.



For safety reasons; for disruption to our community; for complete lack of mitigation to property owners; and because a common sense location for freight rail traffic already exists by co-locating it in the Kennilworth Corridor, I oppose the re-routing of freight rail through the MN&S Spur. The current re-route plan is seriously flawed. In my opinion, anyone who votes in favor of the DEIS in it's current form, without providing significant additional evidence to substantiate the re-route as the best option, is also seriously flawed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Rozman", written in a cursive style.

Michael A. Rozman

M. RAYMANI

CERTIFIED MAIL™

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BY:



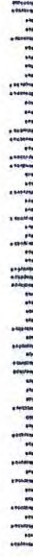
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Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY  
701 FOURTH AVE. S.  
MPLS., MN 55415

3541531043





December 5, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regards to the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. I am a resident of St. Louis Park, and have lived here for fourteen years. I am also a mother of 3 boys, ages 11, 8 and 4.

The proposed action of re-routing is described in Ch. 1, Sect. 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting. **It is a very narrow line that runs directly next to the St. Louis Park High School (75 ft. from the school and 35 ft. to the parking lot.** The train tracks run between the high school and the football field/stadium and splits them. It also runs very close to homes and along their small back yards. The current freight is light and usually approximately 5 trains/per day and these trains are on avg. 6 to 8 cars long. They go 10 mph currently. They blow their horn on both sides of the high school on Dakota Ave. and on Library Lane. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic with trains up to a mile long, and running 25mph during the days and evenings, and nights. **This will be up to a 788% increase in rail car traffic right next to the high school and literally in the parking lot. There are also 4 tight blind curves (2 next to the high school) from Hwy 7 to Dakota Ave.** What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, is the impact this would have on our children's safety and education, as well as the general public's safety. It would also dramatically effect our community.

I have many concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, especially the portion dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133). Only a small reference to safety is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS. Also, the portion of the report dealing with freight rail noise and safety at the High School (Ch. 3, 4 and 9). It causes me great concern to think that the MN&S may become a main rail line with it's proximity to the high school. Currently, the trains are approx. 8 cars long and go 10 mph. There is a McDonald's right across the street from the high school, where the students have to cross the railroad tracks to get there. I live a few blocks away and see students crossing early in the morning, at lunch, and many times in the afternoon as I am driving by. Not only must they cross the railroad track to get to McDonald's, they also have to cross to get to the football field/stadium. The students often have gym class on the field, not to mention sports after school. As it is now, if there is a train, it only lasts a few minutes and is going slow, so the students know they can wait and it won't last long. However, if there are trains that are a mile long, and going 25mph, instead of 10mph, the students may have to wait a long time to cross. 10-13 minutes. If they only have a few minutes to get back to class or go to McDonald's or Munchies (another place with sandwich's and soup), and they see a train approaching, they will likely try to beat the train, due to the potential long wait. What if they trip and fall? What if there car stalls? What if they dare each other (as teens do) to cross, walk along the track or to try to jump on? I see teens everyday walking along the railroad tracks by the high school. Teens and Trains are not a good match! Psychologist, and best selling author, David Walsh, author of No, Why Kids of All Ages Need to Hear It, and Ways Parents Can Say It, talks about the prefrontal cortex (PFC) that is growing and rewiring itself. "It is right behind the forehead and acts as the CEO of the brain, the part of the brain where we think ahead, consider consequences, and manage emotional impulses and urges. It is one of the last circuits of the brain to mature. **The PFC enters a major developmental period as boys and girls enter adolescence, which doesn't end until late teens or early twenties. Adolescents impulse-control center is under construction. When adolescents need it most, the PFC's ability to act rationally and think through problems and challenges is off-line.**" There are accidents involving adolescents and trains frequently. **Why would we risk putting a main rail 75 ft. from the school and 35 ft. from the parking lot? It is an accident waiting to happen!** According to the train engineer, with the tight blind curves, and the train moving 25 mph, if there were someone on the track or a stalled vehicle, the train would **not** be able to stop in time. Also, at the intersection of Library Lane and Lake St.(next to the H.S. and field), a car needs to go over the track, or sit on it in order to see if the intersection is clear due to the angle of the track. In addition to the high school, this line also goes right behind Peter Hobart Elementary School too, several parks, and along many houses, practically in their back yards.

Another concern regarding safety, is the possibility of a derailment. We are talking about tight curves. For the first time, there would now be ethanol and other dangerous chemicals being carried by the trains next to the school.

**Derailments do happen!** There was a small one on this line, last year, but it was just on the border of Mpls. and St. Louis Park. There have been a few in MN in the past 2 years. **What would happen if a derailment occurs where the tight curves are along the high school, with a train carrying dangerous chemicals?!!**

Another safety concern is emergency vehicles not being able to get through due to trains. If there is an emergency at the high school, the emergency vehicles may not be able to get to the school if a mile long train is blocking the roads on each side of the school. Also, if emergency vehicles are at the school and a mile long train comes, they will be delayed getting to a hospital due to the trains. This rail also crosses Excelsior Blvd. between Hwy. 100 and Methodist Hospital (6500 Excelsior Blvd.) Emergency vehicles, again, would be blocked by the trains, not being able to get to the hospital. What about all of the buses lined up at the school and traffic after school? It will be a mess, cause many traffic delays, bus delays, and again not a good mix with all of the students driving to/from school.

Another concern, is how our children's education would be impacted by the freight rail noise. As it is now, even when a small train comes through, the teachers need to stop and wait for the trains to pass to continue talking. It is only a minute or two now, but imagine if the trains are 10 minutes long! It directly impacts the south end of the school where the math is currently being taught. This is not fair to our children. The railroads have already said they would not honor a quiet zone near a high school with blind curves. They will blow their horns regardless due to the dangerous nature of the blind curves and children in the area.

I have three boys, ages 11, 8 and 4. I am very concerned about the possibility of the main rail coming through by our schools. My middle child, is at Peter Hobart. He has Down Syndrome. He sometimes wanders and is still not safe crossing streets by himself. In addition to him, there are two other small children with Down Syndrome who live within one block of the high school. There are many students with special needs at the high school as well. All children are at risk. One of the main reasons we love this community is that it is a "Children First Community". **St. Louis Park has been voted one of the top 100 communities in the U.S. for young people to live in for the past 6 consecutive years by America's Promise Alliance. If this relocation occurs, that will change drastically.** Many will not even want to send their children to the high school due to safety issues, noise and traffic. There are also multiple grade level crossings.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, education, and community cohesion of the residents, students, and community. **Quite frankly, I can't even believe they would consider this as a viable option being 75 ft. next to a high school, and 35 ft. next to the parking lot, tight blind curves and dangerous chemicals next to the school where lives would be in danger! This is a disaster waiting to happen. There is a much safer and better option, and has been shown to be much more cost effective, which would not involve schools. It is co-locating the freight where it currently is along the Kennilworth corridor.** I am not opposed to light rail transit, it would be nice to have, but it has been shown that it would work to co-locate the two in the same corridor, which is much wider, safer, and cheaper! **Also, none of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of the residents is being considered in the DEIS.** Relocation to the MN&S should not even be considered an option. It will be only a matter of time before a serious accident or death occurs. Would you like to send your child to a high school under these circumstances? Again, this is a wonderful, and "children first community". Adolescents/teens and trains are not a good match together.

Sincerely,



Sharon Duncan

St. Louis Park Resident and Mother of 3 boys in the school system.

One photo was taken around the lunch hour, and the other was at the end of the school day. You can also see one of the blind curves in the left photo. These were two different groups of kids in one day that were on the tracks when I happen to be driving by.



I took these photos of high school kids on the track across the street from the St. Louis Park High School. I was driving on Dakota Ave twice that day at two different times and saw kids both times so I stopped to take these photos.

Shawn Duncan

Sharon + Todd Duncan



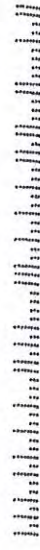
MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

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REC  
DEC 10 2012  
BY:

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works + Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 4th Ave. So., Suite 400  
Mpls. MN 55415

55415184300





Laura Anne Haynes

12/11/2012 09:55 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Relocation plan

Please reconsider the plan to relocate the freight rail line through St Louis Park. I feel this plan has been irresponsibly researched. The plan to relocate the freight line through St Loius Park ignores or minimizes many dangers to our community, especially to the students who attend the three schools along the proposed reroute. The cost to the taxpayers of Hennepin county has been grossly underestimated as well as misrepresented, not to mention the fact that the mitigation has not been researched completely. The DEIS ignores many of the concerns that have been brought to the attention of our representatives at Hennepin county. I feel the concerns and safety issues addressed by the residents of St Louis Park have been ignored or brushed aside as unimportant. Please revisit this issue before the safety of the students and residents in St Louis Park is compromised for ever.

My concerns include but are not limited to the following:

1. Taxpayers will pay the brunt of the cost for the relocation.
2. Schools will suffer and if our schools reduce in desirability, our tax base suffers, as well as home values.
3. Safety concerns for all residents along the proposed reroute as well as students and commuters.
4. Biased studies and ignoring of St Louis Park resident concerns.
5. Misrepresentation of mitigation costs for the future, haven't even been studied yet.
6. Risk of derailment due to insufficient rail infrastructure, incline, and curvature.

Sincerely,

Laura Haynes



12/11/2012 10:06 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Response to the DEIS

Project Manager,

I live at Calhoun Isles Condominiums in the \_\_\_\_\_ ) that is closest to the tracks. My home is at the most narrow section of the ROW north of West Lake Street Station and south of Cedar Lake Parkway. While I support the LRT project, I do have concerns about mitigations that are not included in DEIS. My concerns include noise from both the station and the train/tracks, vibrations, and visual impact.

There is only 60 feet between our building and the Cedar Lake Shores Condominiums on the other side of the tracks. Your drawings show 100 feet ROW which of course does not exist here. If you utilize 58 feet for tracks and trails, then either trains or users of the trails will be inches from my window and patio. There is no specific mitigation listed in the DEIS for either the lack of privacy or for addressing the severe impact of the noise and vibrations. The studies for noise listed in the DEIS identify noise impact at 50 feet from the tracks. Since we live approximately 30 feet or less from the proposed track, the severe impact of the noise will be even greater than you show in your data. Right now there is a lovely berm with full grown trees along our property adjacent to the ROW that provides privacy as well as a harbor for birds and other wildlife. I feel that since Calhoun Isles Condominiums will be so significantly impacted by the LRT, we should have a say in any measures that are taken to mitigate the extremely severe impacts of noise/vibrations and violations of privacy. It is impossible to comment on mitigations that have not yet been identified. I would ask that you consider tunneling or cut and cover trench as a method to mitigate the negative impacts. I would also ask that the Calhoun Isle Condominium Association be a party to developing mitigations.

I am also concerned about the proposed West Lake Street Station. The intersection of Excelsior Blvd and Lake Street is extremely busy on a daily basis with automobiles, walkers, bikers. I fear a station being added as a destination in this already grid locked intersection will result in chaos if proper study and planning is not done prior to the design and building of the station. I am requesting a more in-depth study of existing traffic as well as projected traffic of automobiles, walkers and bikers. I would also request that access to the station be clearly identified so that overflow does not result in congestion or trespassing in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The design you propose for the bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway is appalling. Even though you did not give an alternative to this bridge, I do hope you will reconsider that design and go with either tunneling or cut and cover trench with the Parkway going over the LRT at that crossing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to hearing your response.



Sincerely,  
Norma Adams



**Kathy A Grose**

12/11/2012 01:47 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Comment on the DEIS

Attached are my comments I wish to make for the Southwest Transitway Project. I understand the deadline is today, December 11th. Thank you.

Kathy Grose

---

Southwest Transitway Project

December 11, 2012

I spoke at the November 12, 2012 meeting in St. Louis Park but was not prepared to speak. I want to add additional thoughts and impressions I have about this study.

I am very concerned about a heavy industrialized train being re-routed through St. Louis Park from Kenilworth. I ran into a familiar situation back in 1982 when I moved into an apartment building next to a railroad track in Maplewood. I thought it was great because I like trains. What I didn't realize was the impact this train would make living so close to the tracks. I was woken up at 2 AM when the train came roaring through the neighborhood. The building was shaking violently for over 20 minutes and I thought it was an earthquake. This went on every night the year I lived there. I eventually moved.

Now I face this situation all over again as I live next to the railroad track in St. Louis Park. This time I am a homeowner and not just a renter. Because this impacts me so deeply, I would appreciate my opinion to be taken into account in this matter. Honestly I am concerned about this train being re-routed through St. Louis Park, impacting the area not only where I live, but also the high school and the intersection at Library Lane. Simply, our community is not set up to handle this level of train and traffic congestion through our community, especially along Dakota Avenue.

I am concerned that you are trying to push this railroad project through St. Louis Park without adequate input from the residents who live here. I support the light rail, but are we considering how best to do this without destroying communities the train is going through? I would ask that all considerations be taken into account before a final decision is made because communities impacted will have to live with these decisions once this project is finalized and approved.

If you do plan to go ahead with the re-route, I propose that the west side of Blackstone and east side of Brunswick Avenue homes be removed, the high school be rebuilt someplace else in St. Louis Park and homes taken out of Library Lane to accommodate for the noise, vibrations and visibility issues I mentioned previously.

Thank you.

Kathy Grose



Clark Gregor

12/11/2012 01:59 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT DEIS Comment

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

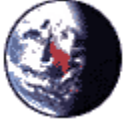
Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me the greatest concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight, rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses - many are closer than the length of a rail car
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day
- Permeable soil under MN&S
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80)
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Clark R. Gregor



12/11/2012 03:37 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Comment on the SWLRT-DEIS

To:

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transit way  
701 Fourth Ave. S., Suite 400,  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

Attached please find my Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) response. Please use the attached PDF version, though I have attached an MS Word version in the case that the PDF version is not suitable for your document formats.

Thank you for including my response.

Denise Zurn

From: Denise Zurn

11 December 2012

To: Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transit way  
701 Fourth Avenue S. – Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
[swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us)

**Regarding: Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 it is rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic.

What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area. I have several specific concerns, including:

**Noise and Vibration**

The portion of the report dealing with Noise (3-93 and 94) and Vibration (4-117) causes me great concern. The SWLRT-DEIS underestimates the effects of vibration for because it considers only the immediate traffic increase from the re-route and not additional traffic that is likely to occur. Currently trains travel on the MN&S for approximately two hours a month. If the re-route occurs there will be a minimum of 6 hours 39 minutes, a 232% increase, in train related vibration each month. Currently, all vibration and its negative impacts occur five days a week during regular business hours. In the future vibration will occur on weekends and nights as well as during business hours. Not only will the duration of vibration increase, but also the amount of vibration will increase with longer, heavier trains. The assumption stated in the SWLRT-DEIS that the increase in vibration is insignificant is incorrect. Listed below are reasons why the assumptions are incorrect:

A quiet zone is said to end all of the noise issues. This assumption is incorrect for the following reasons:

1. A quiet zone is not a sure thing.
  - a. Implementation could be denied by the school board because the building of a quiet zone will limit access to the Senior High School.

- b. Locomotive engineers are compelled to blow the horn if they perceive a dangerous situation. What kind of responsible person would drive a train through a series of blind crossings, past several schools without blowing the horn?
2. Quiet zones do not limit locomotive noise.
  - a. Multiple locomotives will be necessary for pulling a fully loaded train up the 0.86% grade of the new interconnect.
  - b. Multiple locomotives laboring with long trains will make more noise than the locomotives that currently use the MN&S.
3. Trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves.
4. Train wheels on curves squeal; the tighter the curve the greater the squeal.
5. Bells on crossing arms in a quiet zone will ring the entire time a train is in the crossing.
6. Because there are currently no trains at night, even one night train means diminished livability.

### **Safety**

The portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me great concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS. However, there are many features about the MN&S that make it undesirable as a freight rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings;
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses – many are closer than the length of a rail car;
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day;
- Permeable soil under MN&S;
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80);
- Tight curves - derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track;
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

### **Crossings**

The portion of the report dealing with freight rail trains blocking street crossings (6-38 and 39) causes me great concern. In the SWLRT-DEIS we are told the blocked crossings will not cause significant travel or safety issues. To the consultant sitting miles away the increase may seem insignificant, but to residents who must travel the area and rely on quick responses from emergency vehicles the 580% increase in blocked crossing time is unacceptable.

A supposed benefit of the proposed re-route is explained in chapter 1, pages 11 and 12 of the SWLRT-DEIS. According to the document Twin City and Western (TCW) freight trains will regularly travel north of St. Louis Park into Golden Valley, Crystal and New Hope. When the trains travel north they will have to cross Cedar Lake Road; however, no data is given for the impact of this blocked crossing.

Issues about blocked crossings not dealt with in the SWLRT-DEIS include, but are not limited to the following:

- Effects of multiple blocked crossings on residents' ability to move freely about their neighborhood;

- Amount of time it takes congestion to clear once a train has passed -
  - Making turns from one street to another with backed up traffic, and
  - Pedestrian safety as traffic clears;
- Possibility that trains will be going slower than the “worst case scenario” in the EAW, because trains often stop at McDonald’s for train crews to have a break and when they resume travel they will NOT be going 10 mph;
- Medical response times can be affected -
  - Narrow side streets will be blocked with waiting automobiles, and
  - Only one fire station has medical response;
- No plan to alleviate auto traffic congestion when train volumes increase.

### **Closing 29<sup>th</sup> Street**

The portion of the report dealing with the closing of the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossings (Chapter 3/p. 135) causes me great concern.

Residents from the Birchwood neighborhood requested on behalf of the Birchwood neighborhood that the grade crossing at 29<sup>th</sup> Street stay open.

- According to page 135 of the DEIS the 29<sup>th</sup> street crossing is being closed as a mitigation measure.
- However, the closing of the crossing will not benefit the neighborhood. It will, in fact, jeopardize residents because it will make emergency vehicle access difficult – if not impossible – during winter months due to narrowed streets.

It is inconsistent with good city planning practices to remove the 29<sup>th</sup> Street crossing from what is already a very limited street grid in this part of the community. Such a closing will push more traffic onto Minnetonka Boulevard, which is already a heavily-traveled roadway without the turn lanes and signals that manage public safety concerns. Yet, improvements to Minnetonka Blvd were ignored when this closing was included.

### **Property Values**

The portion of the report dealing with loss of property value in the re-route area should be in Chapter 9: Indirect Impacts, but it is not, and this causes me great concern.

If I owned a home on what are very short distances from this rail, I would feel compelled to sell it to manage safety concerns for my family. The rail sits almost literally on the other side of your back-yard picnic table from you.

Yet the SWLRT-DEIS does NOT mention the impact of re-routed freight trains from a main line freight corridor to a bridge line on property values of the re-route area.

Freight rail re-routes are not exclusive to Minnesota, and the cost of the re-routes to residents has been documented. For example, according to an article in a 2001 issue of The Appraisal Journal bringing additional freight rail traffic to an area will negatively affect properties 250 feet from the rail tracks by 5-7%. All of the properties along the MN&S are well within 250 feet. Based on this article, one can conclude that property values along the MN&S will drop more than 7%.



Two major questions arise that are not addressed in the SWLRT-DEIS.

- First, what happens to the tax base of St. Louis Park when the drop in value is realized?
- Second, how are property owners who lose value because of this government action going to be compensated for their loss?

It is unreasonable for the Hennepin County to ask any resident to pay a higher price for the benefits of light rail than others.

### **Safety at the High School**

The portion of the report dealing with freight rail noise and safety at the High School (Chapters 3, 4, and 9) causes me the *GREATEST* concern.

The unique noise and safety issues associated with locating main line freight within 35 feet of the High School parking lot and 75 feet from the building are not adequately discussed.

When the High School is mentioned the information is dismissive. At no point in the SWLRT –DEIS are the negative impacts the extra freight trains will have on the learning environment and safety of the students at St. Louis Park High School. Before the proposed re-route should even be considered, the cost of sufficiently mitigating the impact to St. Louis Park High School need to be evaluated.

Examples of concerns include but are not limited to the following:

- How the school will be evacuated should evacuation be necessary when a train is passing;
- How the many classrooms affected by train noise will be sound proofed;
- How the students who want to use the new rail bridge to cross Highway 7 on their way to school will be kept off the bridge;
- How the added vibration of longer, heavier, and more frequent trains will be mitigated so the investment the school makes in technology is not lost;
- How the safety hazards of blind crossings, curves, and hundreds of teenagers in close proximity will be eliminated;
- How a derailment will be prevented so our children's lives are not at risk.

As a parent of 4 students who recently attended St. Louis Park High School, I cannot stress enough the need for a thorough study of ALL mitigation options and costs to reduce or remove student exposure from the proposed high level of freight rail through the high school campus.

The head-in-the-sand approach taken to date with regard to severe safety issues is completely unacceptable. In my personal opinion, only complete grade separation of all roadways near the high school, from this proposed high level of freight rail, is likely to sufficiently mitigate the risks.

Further, as a property tax payer, I do not think it is reasonable to place the entire financial burden of future grade separation, or relocation of the St. Louis Park High School, on St. Louis Park residents. These future costs will hit the discussion table when – not if – serious student injury results from the proposed high volume of freight rail through the high school campus without appropriate mitigation.

If these changes do indeed benefit the entire region, then ALL mitigation options and costs should be part of the discussion, part of the study, and part of the project.

## **The DEIS is not Objective, nor is it Complete**

Riddled with phantom assumptions, unsubstantiated assertions, and inexplicable omissions, the DEIS is not a serious attempt to consider the effect of the proposed re-route.

Chapter 1 of the DEIS states that without the re-route the TC&W's only options for moving its freight will be to access the MN&S tracks by use of the notorious switching wye in St. Louis Park, or to transfer cargo from railcars to highway trucks. The unstated assumption behind this statement is that the current route used by the TC&W will be severed. Presenting the either/or assumption for the switching wye or highway trucks creates the illusion of a fait accompli, when in fact the TC&W's current route through the Kenilworth corridor is a viable alternative.

Unsubstantiated assertions include the depiction in the DEIS that the historical character of the Kenilworth corridor (Chapter 3, page 58) would be compromised by its continued use for freight train traffic. The Kenilworth corridor was the home to not just railroad tracks, but an *entire railroad yard* for over one hundred years, beginning long before the current homes in the area were built.

Inexplicably omitted from the DEIS is how the re-route would be funded (Chapters 5 and 8).

- The re-route must be considered as part of the SWLRT.
- Even without mitigation, construction of the interconnect and upgrading the tracks on the MN&S to handle the heavier traffic is estimated to cost \$125,000,000. This money was not originally included in the projected cost of the SWLRT, and the projected budget for the SWLRT has NOT been adjusted to recognize the added expense.
- Also missing from the cost estimates are the costs for maintaining the interconnect structure after it is built.

## **The Process to choose Locally Preferred Alternative was Flawed**

I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments).

NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must "encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment." This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue.

Hennepin County did not "encourage and facilitate" public involvement concerning this issue. In fact:

- Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2.
- Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 7, 14, and 23 OCT 2008 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1.
- Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 18 and 20 MAY 2010 open houses.
- Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1.

All public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT's major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts

caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS.

The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route's connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings.

Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 17 and 28 APR 2011 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route.

Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

### **Conclusion**

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents, and by St. Louis Park residents directly, is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability, and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

The re-routing of freight WILL negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of St. Louis Park residents and students. The SWLRT DEIS does NOT adequately describe the impacts.

Freight re-route should not be given any further consideration as an option.

Name: Denise Zurn



12/11/2012 06:56 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc delag002@umn.edu

bcc

Subject DEIS comment

I have comments on the following the areas of the DEIS:

- 1) freight rail move
- 2) impact to the bike trail
- 3) impact to access to Cedar lake from Kenwood
- 4) stop, and park & ride at 21st street

1) freight rail has been allowed to continue to go thru the kenwood area with the agreement that it would be moved to St Louis Park in the future. That future is now and it needs to move. The impact of a freight train accident to the fragile natural area beauty of Cedar lake is too large of a risk to continue. The lake is valuable asset of Minneapolis and kenwood year round. The area is parked for blocks during the summer for people to go to the beach. Having such a lovely swimming area, that the city recently added life guards, is a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect. There are very few locations in the city with this blending of young people, young families and neighbors. A freight train accident would takes years to repair in addition to clean up costs.

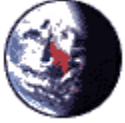
2) the bike trail allows me to travel without competing with cars for a safe and healthy way to downtown and along the mississippi river. This bike trail also allowed my kids to bike to their jobs near whole foods. While Minneapolis is often in the top position for city biking, putting a light rail along side would have a negative impact to the healthy and safe way to downtown. The existing LRT has places to bring your bike on board, there is no need for this from the stop at 21st street. In fact, having such an option will have negative health impacts as people opt to ride the LRT instead of giving their body a healthy work out. The risk of riding alongside the rail must be mitigated to prevent the LRT from the potential of striking the bikers.

3) the LRT at grade will cut off the access to Cedar lake at 21st street. The proposed bridge over the rail is not acceptable as people will try to walk around and it is not attractive in this neighborhood. I am recommend that we bury the LRT along Cedar lake and under the canal. This will minimize the impact of access to cedar lake and will allow the train to have a clear throughway also minimizing the impact to car travel on the south side of cedar lake.

4) We do not need a park and ride. Currently the area is minimally served by the 25L bus route, which most recently reduced the scheduled buses. In fact the most recent reduction, elimination of the 6am run, has made it difficult for me to arrive at work using this bus route. Given the lack of bus riders on the 25L, i do not see a need for a stop nor a park and ride at this location. This stop would not serve the neighborhood, nor minneapolis in general as proven by the reduction of bus service currently serving the area. I would suggest that by routing the LRT thru this area it would be eliminating the need for bus service, which is contrary to the goal of having LRT in the first place. LRT was not suppose to replace current public transit.

Thanks

Dave Schaezner



Shawn Smith

12/11/2012 07:50 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT

Dear HCRRA,

I am a resident of the Kenwood neighborhood in Minneapolis and would like to comment on the proposed LRT line through the Cedar Lake Corridor. While disappointed that this corridor location was selected due to the low number of users in our neighborhood vs other routes that could have boosted ridership, now that it is moving forward I believe the following are essential to having mitigation within our area

1. Freight line relocation is essential. The corridor is well used and an essential part of our bike and trailway system, which would not be possible if both freight and LRT are on the line.
2. Noise/vibration mitigation is essential. We have old homes and a quiet neighborhood, and the increased rail traffic threatens our property values and stability of our homes. Noise reducing berms, reduction of use of train horns, and reduced speeds are essential for co-existence in the neighborhood. We deserve considerable mitigation because of our low usage of the line and high exposure to its negative effects. Vibration assessments must be done immediately.
3. Cedar Lake is an important natural resource, and there are water, land, and prairie restoration issues that need to be considered to prevent damage to the fragile environment
4. I oppose the use of a parking lot due to the additional encroachment on our neighborhood open space.
5. There must not be an ugly, expensive bridge built at the junction of Cedar Lake Parkway and Kenilworth Trail. What an incredible albatross that would be.
6. We are open to a station at 21st St only if there is not a "Park and Ride" mentality, prohibited within the city, and only if studies are done on traffic impacts with input from KIAA.

In general, I am very upset that this train is coming. The portion of the route is unlikely to produce the same residential and commercial benefit of the more obvious choices such as the Hiawatha and University Ave corridor. And neither the federal, county, or state have the money for this project in the first place.

We deserve the best you can do from a mitigation standpoint. We already pay incredibly high property taxes in my neighborhood but recognize the enjoyment we have of our park-like setting; don't be the straw that breaks the camel's back for us that causes us to flee to the 1st Ring Suburbs where we can still have good driving access to downtown without the increasing detriments that taxes and trains are sure to cause on our peaceful neighborhood.

Sincerely,  
Shawn Smith

**Mike Pliner**

12/11/2012 10:08 PM

Please respond to  
Mike PlinerTo "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>  
cc "

bcc

Subject DEIS comment as part of the freight rail re-route

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my concern with regard to your locally preferred alternative and the re-routing of freight traffic through St Louis Park. When it gets down to the heart of the matter I think there are a few key questions to ask, and they are to assess if this the most cost effective option, and if this is the safest option. I think it is easy to say to both of those questions the answer is clearly no. Based on the information in the DEIS the cost to go with the LPA is 23 million more than the co-location option, assuming that the amended numbers are correct. In this era of fiscal responsibility it is hard to justify the increased cost when other options exist. This is a simple numbers argument, and numbers do not lie. The LPA is a more expensive option for the taxpayers of Hennepin county to bear.

The next question is with regard to safety. The question of safety should consider both the safety of the residents of St Louis Park, as well as the users of the existing trail space in the corridor in question. The co-location of freight traffic and light rail traffic would occur in a train corridor designed for train traffic. The contention of the DEIS is that this is not viable due to the fact that an existing bike trail would be compromised if co-location was implemented. Per my reading of the DEIS this is one of the main pillars for the argument to kill the co-location option. I would argue that if this is the main reason why freight rail must be moved from an existing train corridor to a more residential residential neighborhood setting then the concept of common sense makes no appearance anywhere within the DEIS. It is amazing to me that the main justification for the action of moving the freight train rests with the incompatibility of a bike path. If the measurement of safety bears any weight within this process one would have to ask whether having a bike path in close proximity to a light rail makes any sense at all. Anyone who has biked, run or skated on the system of trails in place can tell you that a significant percent of the trail users are effectively operating in that space without the benefit of their full hearing faculties due to the use headphones to listen to music. It would seem a better and safer option to remove bikers and pedestrians from close proximity to the trains in an effort to prevent avoidable accidents. If the option of moving the bike path to a different location is accommodated then the co-location option would then be viable and result in reduced cost for the project in addition to increased safety.

The question of safety is also a significant concern for the residents of St Louis Park. The freight traffic is to be routed through a residential neighborhood on what is not a train corridor, but rather a track that is elevated above many of the homes that are adjacent to it. In the event of a derailment in St Louis Park the proximity to the homes in question as well as the elevation above those homes will result in significant residential property damage at best, and at worst the needless loss of innocent lives. The trains that will be routed through the community will be operating on blind curves at speeds that will not allow a train operator to stop the locomotive in a reasonable or safe distance should there be an emergency. The stopping distance of these trains is again is a simple matter of mathematics and physics. Longer and heavier trains moving at

faster speeds take longer to slow down. This is a fact that cannot be refuted. The combination of the longer stopping distances, blind curves, close proximity to residences and schools increases the risks of injury and harm to the community in general. The existing train corridor that would be used in a co-location option is not elevated above residences, it does not have blind curves, and it does not run adjacent to schools. Keeping the trains in their existing space is clearly a safer choice.

I attended the hearing in St Louis Park with regard to the reroute and was appalled by a seemingly casual comment made by commissioner McLaughlin during the proceedings. The commissioner was asked if he had in fact seen the homes in St Louis Park that would be affected by this reroute and he indicated that he had biked some of the route. I am sure that he may have seen photographs of the area, etc. but I wonder how a person who is responsible for this process advocate for the LPA without even personally viewing the affected areas in St Louis Park. I appreciate his honest response to the question but I do believe if you are purporting this as the best option available the community at the very least deserves the measure of respect of the commissioner taking the time to view the affected areas from a perspective on the ground, eye level, feet on the ground. I hardly think this is too much to ask given that St Louis Park is no more than a 15 minute car ride from the commissioners office.

In summary the LPA as I see it is a more expensive option for the people of Hennepin County, a less safe option for the people of St Louis Park and an action that will if adopted compromise the livability and quality of life for residents in St Louis Park forever. I do not find many of the conclusions of the DEIS to be factual, so I am left to speculate with regard to why the LPA is the 'best' choice. The facts are that the LPA costs more, is less safe, and takes the trains out of an affluent area and relegates the unwanted freight traffic to a working class neighborhood. The rerouting of the freight traffic is definitely a 'not in my backyard' issue for both communities. I am saddened by the fact that once again the most affluent elements of our communities are provided with what would seem to be better representation within the political process. I appreciate your consideration in this matter, and am looking forward to your acknowledgement.

Michael Pliner



**Jake Beek**

12/11/2012 10:53 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject southwest transit system

Is there a EIS no action plan for the new light rail going through Golden Valley? is so were or how can find it?





To whom it may concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments). NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must “encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment.” This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue. Hennepin County did not “encourage and facilitate” public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 2008 Oct 7, 14, and 23 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 2010 May 18, 18 and 20 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT’s major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route’s connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings. Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 2011 April 17 and 28 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route. Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Thank You,

Name: ZINAIDA KECMAN and VLADO KECMAN



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here

Zinaida Kecman

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

10 DEC 2012 PM 7 L



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

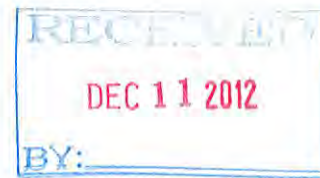
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December 6, 2012

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415



RE: Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement

We are 24 year residents of St. Louis Park. From our home we can hear the trains that use the tracks that go by St. Louis Park High School and that pass along Highway 7 (near Wooddale and Louisiana Avenues). Walking 3-4 blocks in either direction we can also see the trains. While no major train accidents have happened there is always a concern that they will happen, whether it is with freight rail or light rail.

Looking over the DEIS it does not appear that concerns from the residents of St. Louis Park have been taken into consideration when it comes to rerouting the freight rail. When one of our residents contacted one of the signers of the DEIS they did not even know St. Louis Park residents had major concerns about the freight reroute. We, along with other St. Louis Park residents, have addressed the concerns for many years only to be told that it was not the right time.

In the DEIS it is recommended that freight rail be rerouted onto the MN & S (Dan Patch) track. This track was originally planned as the Dan Patch Line by a private developer many years ago just for electric passenger trains. In addition to its many curves and crossings it is very near school buildings and resident homes. It is a track that was never intended for heavier, faster, coal or ethanol freight trains.

Have you ever visited the tracks or looked at a map that shows how close the tracks are to homes? If not, I highly recommend it. Also, picture yourself or your loved ones in one of these homes, your children or grandchildren playing in the yards and attending the schools. Picture the teenager who is late for an event at the high school and has chosen to take the chance to cross the tracks, slips and can't get back up. With the curves in the tracks the train conductor can't see them in time to slow down and/or stop. Blowing the horn is not going to help someone get up if they have hit their head or broken a leg. You have a heart attack and call for help. Help is delayed as there is a train blocking the quickest way and a detour has to be taken. Those few seconds and minutes matter. It hasn't happened yet, but the chances are always there and will increase with an increase in freight trains.

To make this area safer, mitigation would have to be done. Some of this would include: the purchase of homes along the rails, building over or under-passes for safe vehicle and pedestrian traffic so that there is a single grade level crossing per one mile of track, track enhancements, pollution control, and installation of landscaping barriers.

The DEIS does not address the topic of mitigation. Who is going to pay for it? Will it be guaranteed? What are the railroads comments on this?

The alternative is to co-locate the tracks in the Kenilworth Corridor. That area already has room and there would be much less mitigation. Have you visited the area? We believe that the only reason this area is not the recommended route is because many years ago the Minneapolis residents in Kenwood were promised that the rail traffic would be rerouted out of the Kenilworth Corridor.

Please take the time to read and listen to all the concerns of the St. Louis Park residents. Picture yourself in one of their homes. Include the costs of mitigation in the plan. Compare the costs, with mitigation in each of the areas. Add the recommendations of the railroad authority. Then look at the plan again, are you being fair and just to all?

Sandy Kline & Leslie Olson



Sandra Kline

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DEC 11 2012  
BY:



July 26, 1788 USA  
New York 25

Hennepin Co. Housing, Community Works + Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
Suite 400  
701 Fourth Ave S

Minneapolis, MN

55415



December 10, 2012

Hennepin County: Housing, Community, Works, and Transit  
**Attn. Southwest Transitway**  
701 Fourth Avenue South  
Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me the greatest concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight, rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses - many are closer than the length of a rail car
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day
- Permeable soil under MN&S
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked - only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80)
- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Freshman".

Phil Freshman

Phil and Wendy Freshman



10 DEC 2012 PM 2 L

RECEIVED  
DEC 11 2012  
BY:

Hennepin County: Housing, Community, Works, and Transit

ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South

Suite 400

Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



DEC 11 2012



To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Riddled with phantom assumptions, unsubstantiated assertions, and inexplicable omissions, the DEIS is not a serious attempt to consider the effect of the proposed re-route.

Chapter 1 of the DEIS states that without the re-route the TC&W's only options for moving its freight will be to access the MN&S tracks by use of the notorious switching wye in St. Louis Park, or to transfer cargo from railcars to highway trucks. The unstated assumption behind this statement is that the current route used by the TC&W will be severed. Presenting the either/or assumption for the switching wye or highway trucks creates the illusion of a fait accompli, when in fact the TC&W's current route through the Kenilworth corridor is a viable alternative.

Unsubstantiated assertions include the depiction in the DEIS that the historical character of the Kenilworth corridor (Chapter 3, page 58) would be compromised by its continued use for freight train traffic. The Kenilworth corridor was the home to not just railroad tracks, but an entire railroad yard for over one hundred years, beginning long before the current homes in the area were built.

Inexplicably omitted from the DEIS is how the re-route would be funded (Chapters 5 and 8). The re-route must be considered as part of the SWLRT and even without mitigation construction of the interconnect and upgrading the tracks on the MN&S to handle the heavier traffic is estimated to cost \$125,000,000, money that was not originally included in the projected cost of the SWLRT, but the projected budget for the SWLRT has not been adjusted to recognize the added expense. Also, missing from the cost estimates are the costs for maintaining the interconnect structure after it is built.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: ZEINAIDA KECHAN and VLADO KECHAN



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BY:

Hennepin County, Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

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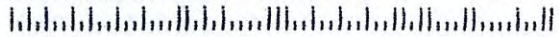
Zinaida Kecman



Equality  
FOREVER

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541531843 0089



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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me the greatest concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight, rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
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- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: FINAIDA KEEMAN and VLADO KEEMAN



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here

Zinaida Kecman



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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RECEIVED  
DEC 11 2012  
BY:

Comment #288

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with freight rail noise and safety at the High School (Chapters 3, 4, and 9) causes me the greatest concern. The unique noise and safety issues associated with locating main line freight within 35 feet of the High School parking lot and 75 feet from the building are not adequately discussed. When the High School is mentioned the information is dismissive. At no point in the SWLRT –DEIS are the negative impacts the extra freight trains will have on the learning environment and safety of the students at St. Louis Park High School. Before the proposed re-route should even be considered the cost of sufficiently mitigating the impact to St. Louis Park High School need to be evaluated. Examples of concerns include but are not limited to the following:

- A plan for emergency evacuation of the school should evacuation be necessary when a train is passing
- How will the many classrooms affected by train noise be sound proofed
- How will the students who want to use the new rail bridge to cross Hwy. 7 on their way to school be kept off the bridge.
- How will the added vibration of longer, heavier and more frequent trains be mitigated to the investment the school makes in technology is not lost.
- How will the safety hazards of blind crossings, curves and hundreds of teenagers in close proximity be eliminated
- How will a derailment be prevented so our children's lives are not at risk

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park or the St. Louis Park School Board on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: ZINAIDA KEČMAN and VLADO KEČMAN



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

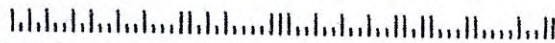
Zinaida Kecman

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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541581843 C089



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I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In detail, the re-route will allow a 788% increase of rail cars traffic. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact the community health and cohesion of the neighbors adjacent to the tracks. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the school system and educational quality within St Louis Park, including the decreased safety of students at the High School.

Besides my general concerns about the freight rail re-route, the section of the SWLRT DEIS that describes the noise and vibration has flawed methods and conclusions. The vibration and the noise measurements were done with current MN&S traffic. It is important to note that the re-routed freight will be longer, more frequent, and include more locomotives per train.

Vibration, Chapter 4.8.4: The conclusion that vibration will have no significant impacts is incorrect. Vibration impacts will be longer in time and the total amount will increase with the heavier freight and additional locomotives.

Noise, Chapter 4.7.5:

Quiet zones: The DEIS fails to describe the real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. The quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts but it is a mitigation that is not supported by the neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

A quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection,
- c. trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic
- e. the amount of time exposed to the noise impacts of the stationary crossing bells will increase significantly due to increase in train numbers.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT DEIS does not adequately describe the impacts and as such, the freight reroute should not be given any further consideration as an option.

Name: ZINAIDA KECMANI and MILO KECMANI



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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Zinaida Kecman

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

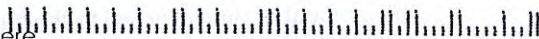
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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300

Fold here





**Nick Shuraleff**

12/12/2012 08:29 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Southwest Transitway

Dear Sirs;  
Attached is a letter voicing my concerns about the SW LRT.

Yours truly,  
Dr. Nicholas Shuraleff, II



December 11, 2012

Housing, Community Works, and Transit  
Att: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Sirs:

What does it take to slow an onrushing train?

The evidence for either putting the West Calhoun LRT station underground or in a trench below grade seems overwhelming. Whichever way you look at the issue, be it noise, safety, surface traffic flows, vibration damage to surrounding structures, or aesthetics, an elevated station leaves a permanent scar on a noble LRT venture.

On behalf of myself and especially future Minneapolitans, I beg you to rethink the design of the West Calhoun station and put it below grade.

Dr. Nicholas Shuraleff, II



**Mary Shuraleff**

12/12/2012 09:50 AM

Please respond to  
Mary Shuraleff

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Light Rail

The forward thinking of the Hennepin County Transit Department regarding public transportation is to be commended! The forward thinking of our park board, from the earliest of days, is also to be commended. It's crucial that Minneapolis maintain it's exemplary Kenilworth bike and walking trails. Please consider placing the LRT below grade level with a ditch and enclosed sound level. We can achive both – good light rail transportation and our much envied peaceful and pastoral section of the Minneapolis park system.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Mary Shuraleff



"Louise Delagran"

12/12/2012 12:52 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject: DEIS comment

Hello:

I have attempted to make sense of the DEIS, but it is not a user-friendly document. So I am commenting on some key points that I have about routing light-rail along the east side of Cedar Lake in Minneapolis.

- 1) Freight rail: from the beginning we have been told that the light rail would only go through our neighborhood if the freight rail moved. This is a fragile, beautiful natural area and having both will have a huge negative impact on the ecology and our enjoyment of it. It is completely unfair to ask one neighborhood to have to endure both simply because we don't have the same political pressure as the suburbs.
  - 2) The bike trail needs to stay. Biking is the most environmentally friendly travel option there is, and it is completely hypocritical and counterproductive to eliminate this option with light rail. Many people use this trail to commute to work.
  - 3) Bridges. These will have a negative impact on the neighborhood and our enjoyment of Cedar Lake. Instead, the LRT should be buried from just north of Lake street to 394. This will minimize traffic issues, allow for the bike and walking paths, enhance safety, and preserve our natural beauty.
  - 4) Park and ride. There should not be a lot at 21<sup>st</sup> under any circumstances. The city of Minneapolis told us we would not have a park and ride, as it was against city policy and against the whole point of a light rail—which is that people take it instead of drive their cars. People should walk to a stop at 21<sup>st</sup> street (or take the 25L bus), and we should not encourage driving to it in any way. What will happen with a lot is that people will drive in from the suburbs so they can get free or cheap parking and our neighborhood will not only suffer the impact of the light rail, but much increased traffic. We should also make sure that it is resident only parking for at least a mile around the light rail stop to prevent people parking on our streets.
  - 5) If one of the goals of light rail is to reduce pollution, then again, it would be completely hypocritical to pollute Cedar Lake and environment as a result of the light rail. No federal, state, or municipal environmental protection laws or guidelines should be broken or even bent for the sake of getting this light rail through.
- Louise Delagran



**Steven Goldsmith**

12/12/2012 05:52 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS

Attached please find an individual response to the DEIS

--

Steven R. Goldsmith, M.D.

## Response to the DEIS for the proposed SWLRT

DISCLAIMER: I am a 25 year resident of Kenwood but own no property whose value is likely to be affected by Route 3a for the SLWRT. I write this as a concerned citizen who believes the true “cost” to this project, as proposed, is too high given the impact it would have on our community.

The language used throughout the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to characterize the impact of the proposed route for the SWLRT as it passes from Lake St to Penn Ave in Minneapolis is very typical of this type of document. Repeatedly the document cites ‘visual impacts’, ‘noise’ and ‘vibration’ as likely negatives to surrounding properties and park users. While of course technically accurate, such dry, clinical language utterly fails to capture what the true ‘environmental impact’ of this route would be. The actual “environmental impact” of this plan would be to destroy this environment, or at least to degrade it to such a degree that it would no longer be a desirable place to live, commute on one’s bicycle, or simply enjoy nature in the midst of a major city.

Currently the area between Lake St and Penn Ave is a largely quiet residential area filled with homes ranging from the modest to the very expensive, combined with a lovely, pastoral strip of parkland running along the east border of Cedar Lake after passing across the Kenilworth Bridge connecting Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake. In the midst of this urban green oasis run critical segments of the Minneapolis Commuter Bike Trail System, the Kenilworth and Cedar Lake Trails, used by hundreds of commuters and recreational bikers every day for much of the year. This area has grown up for decades in relative harmony with the remnants of a once busier freight rail corridor. The current daily handful of slow diesel trains poses little real disturbance to the area since the total time in which train noise and vibration are present is perhaps an hour a day, at most. The infrastructure to support the freight line is minimal. This would all change radically if the SWLRT route is implemented as currently planned, either at grade, or with an enormous “fly-over” bridge through part of the area. The implementation of this route as currently envisioned would irrevocably shatter the entire character of this lovely neighborhood and park.

The infrastructure for an electrically powered LRT would permanently deface the entire corridor. This is not an industrial area, or one adjacent to a major highway or commuter route (like the Hiawatha and Central Corridor LRT routes) where such installations are less intrusive. This is an area of trees, grass and shrubs encompassing both a neighborhood and a park. Installing the infrastructure for LRT

would therefore permanently ruin the overall aesthetic of the area as it now exists. This is not a subjective matter – there is no doubt that masses of electrical overhead lines, support towers, safety barriers etc would be incompatible with the current, essentially park-like ambience. Mentioning this obvious and substantial harm should be very much within the purview of an environmental impact statement, but the sanitized language in the current DEIS does not even attempt to capture this first and basic problem with the proposed route.

Running more than 250 trains each day from before dawn until after midnight through this corridor at grade or in part over a huge, totally site-inappropriate fly-over bridge, would permanently diminish the desirability this area as a place to live. Property values would fall dramatically and tax revenue from the area would drop accordingly. Comparative studies showing that property values increase with LRT are not relevant to this project since for very good reasons LRT is not typically put in the midst of highly developed residential and recreational areas. The environmental impact of this line is therefore likely to be economically catastrophic for one of the loveliest established neighborhoods in the city of Minneapolis. Simply referring to noise and vibration and visual impact is hardly an accurate assessment of the true economic impact of this proposed route on those who live near it, nor to the city as a whole.

Running more than 200 trains a day alongside one of the critical links in the Commuter Bike Trail system is also likely to significantly diminish the use of this vital route for commuting and recreational bicyclists. There is little mention of this in the DEIS but certainly, confronted with the noise and vibration and even danger of frequent fast trains and the presence of ugly electrical infrastructure the Kenilworth and Cedar Lake Trails will become much less attractive places for cyclists. Ironically in the context of a mass transit project, many who use the Bike Trails for commuting might elect to drive instead, and those who use the area for recreation will simply go elsewhere. These again are legitimate concerns for a DEIS when analyzing the total impact of a new project on the current usage patterns of the area in question, as well as the more purely aesthetic and environmental factors, but not much is said about this.

A station at 21<sup>st</sup> street makes no sense at all since this is not an easy or convenient place to access, 'park and ride' lots are fortunately contrary to Minneapolis policy, local residents can currently get to town for work or play far more quickly and conveniently than they would by train, other than perhaps for Target Field and Target Arena. It is completely unclear why riders coming from the suburbs toward town would have any interest in getting off at 21<sup>st</sup> St. The projected daily use of this station is a pure fantasy. What is not a fantasy would be the extremely disruptive sound pollution to residential streets, Cedar Lake Park and bike paths from the more than 250 warning bells or horns each day, each in excess of 100db, which would be required as trains approached this station. Safety concerns dictate that this cannot be mitigated if the trains are at grade. This aspect alone of the 21<sup>st</sup> St Station renders is unacceptable and it should be stated as such.

Fundamentally, the relevant sections of this DEIS grossly understate the total impact of the proposed LRT Route on the area from Lake St. to Penn Ave. Words such as 'ruin', 'destroy', and 'irrevocably degrade' would be far more apt than clinical commentaries on 'likely noise, visual impacts and vibration'. In effect the DEIS looks at details, at the 'trees' -- and utterly misses the 'forest'. Because of this failure the relative benefits of the proposed line seem greater than they really are, or at least could be considered to be. (The complete failure of the Northstar Commuter line to meet its projected ridership should, independent of the environmental impact of the SWLRT, give considerable pause to the proposed cost-benefits of SWLRT). Add in the legitimate concerns of St. Louis Park due to required re-location of freight, and those germane to the businesses and traffic around a West Lake Street station and you have not just a series of minor, manageable problems, but rather a potentially catastrophic impact on a mature and highly desirable part of Hennepin County which encompasses homes, schools, businesses and parkland. This would be the true cost of the route as currently proposed. It is this cost and not what is stated so 'clinically' in the DEIS which should be weighed in the balance before deciding that this route has trade-offs which are acceptable.

There is a solution, or at least a partial solution. Trains must be significantly below grade from Lake St to Penn Ave. Elevating them is no solution – an enormous fly-over bridge would be completely foreign to the surroundings, and would actually magnify the visual intrusiveness and noise of the route itself. It is deeply disturbing that anyone with any knowledge of the area could seriously propose such a structure. Rather, the trains must be buried, preferably in a tunnel, or at least in a deep trench. This is the only way to at least attempt to preserve the essential aesthetic character of the corridor as it currently exists. A final EIS should insist that this be a cardinal feature of a final design, regardless of cost – and make it clear that the current proposal limited to at- or above-grade alternatives is simply unacceptable. SWLRT should serve the needs of the entire area, without significantly harming a large part of it. The final EIS should support what should be this obvious necessity. And if this goal cannot be met for either financial or logistical reasons, the alternative should not be to move ahead in spite of the problems, but rather to return to first principles and use a different route. This type of project, if it is pursued, will only happen once and the citizens of Hennepin County will live with the consequences for decades. The community as a whole deserves a design which benefits the entire region, without the degree of compromise inherent in what is currently proposed. And if the project is to be implemented as proposed, the community deserves fair warning of what will be sacrificed. The DEIS does not come remotely close to providing such warning.



Fran Schmit

12/12/2012 09:55 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Co-Location

Minneapolis (?) declares CO-Location to be Un-acceptable!

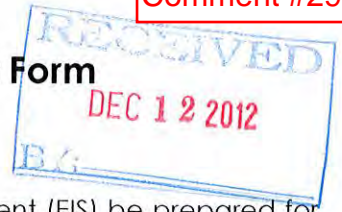
NO-NO!! It is not Mpls that is declaring against co-location, it is the folks who live in Kenilworth who are making that declaration. Guess what? These are the same privileged folks who originally invented the RE-LOCATion story. We are now back to ground zero. 'Kenilworth' declared the re-route 4 years ago and we have been holding up the STOP sign, declaring CO-LOCATE, since then. The only thing new is now they are saying the same thing along with a many-millions-of-dollars price tag .....to be paid by Hennepin County taxpayers. You'd think they could come up with a better story after four years of browbeating. The freight train that was there when they built "close to the tracks", will be there many years from now - - along with the co-located Light Rail tracks that we all want.

Let's get this CO-location bandwagon rolling and build the SouthWest Light Rail! Fran Schmit



# Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

## Southwest Transitway Project



Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

I live at 1730 Kenwood Pkwy. Any illumination or sound (dinging, trains at stops) would NOT BE ACCEPTABLE behind my house. It would TRANSFORM my tranquility to a scene OUT OF CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND with lights AND SOUND.

I do NOT mind the sound of the freight trains x A few times A DAY.

Name: Thas Patel

Thank you!



**SOUTHWEST**  
transitway

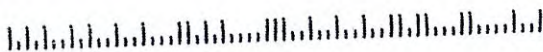
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Tom Randsaard



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail car traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with freight rail trains blocking street crossings (6-38 and 39) causes me the greatest concern. In the SWLRT-DEIS we are told the blocked crossings will not cause significant travel or safety issues. To the consultant sitting miles away the increase may seem insignificant, but to residents who must travel the area and rely on quick responses from emergency vehicles the 580% increase in blocked crossing time is unacceptable.

A supposed benefit of the proposed re-route is explained in chapter 1, pages 11 and 12 of the SWLRT-DEIS. According to the document Twin City and Western (TCW) freight trains will regularly travel north of St. Louis Park into Golden Valley, Crystal and New Hope. When the trains travel north they will have to cross Cedar Lake Road, however, no data is given for the impact of this blocked crossing.

Issues about blocked crossings not dealt with in the SWLRT-DEIS include, but are not limited to the following:

- Effects of multiple blocked crossings on residents' ability to move freely about their neighborhood
- Amount of time it takes congestion to clear once a train has passed.
  - Making turns from one street to another with backed up traffic
  - Pedestrian safety as traffic clears
- Possibility that trains will be going slower than the "worst case scenario" in the EAW - Trains often stop at McDonald's for train crews to have a break. When they resume travel they will NOT be going 10 mph.
- Medical response times can be affected
  - Narrow side streets will be blocked with waiting automobiles
  - Only one fire station has medical response
- When train volumes increase what will be done to alleviate auto traffic congestion

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Name: Corinne Egan



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 55415

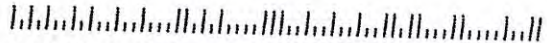


11 DEC 2012 PM 2 L

Corinne Egan

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415104300



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**Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form**  
**Southwest Transitway Project**

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

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It is time to reinforce the Minneapolis policy of "no park and rides within the city limits"; it is time to re-state the good policy of not allowing suburbanites to park their cars for free or low cost lots within the city to avoid costs of parking downtown. Park and ride at the West Lake LRT station will create traffic congestion far beyond current traffic levels on W. Lake St. and Excelsior Boulevard; it will add more air pollution within the city limits; it will strangle three thriving and livable Minneapolis neighborhoods.

Name: C. Dreher

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**Thank you!**

transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

11 DEC 2012 PM 7 L

Dreher



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

Southwest Transitway Project

DEC 12 2012

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- ① Relocate freight rail - supported
- ② chapter 3 p 3-115 - oppose bridge !!
- ③ chapter 4 p 4-84 - noise & train reduction essential
- ④ Chapter 3 p 3.34 - preserve existing farmland and citizen use of trails
- ⑤ Chapter 4 p 453 - protect wildlife
- ⑥ chapter 2 - p 2.32 - No Station !!!
- ⑦ chapter 2 - p 2.32 - No Park & Ride !!!
- ⑧ chapter 3 - p 3-115 - plan must include landscaping
- ⑨ chapter 3 - p 3.123 - No light pollution
- ⑩ Chapter 3 p 3.129-3.131 - hidden beach is a known problem - don't make it worse
- ⑪ Chapter 4 - p 4.19, 4.21, 4.29 - No pollution

Name: Sandra Dowd

A \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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SANDRA J. DOWER

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

11 DEC 2012 PM 5 L



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



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DEC 12 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done. As this action is proposed and described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3 as rebuilding a little known, lightly used spur line into a main freight rail line, which will initially allow a 788% increase of rail cars traffic. What the SWLRT-DEIS does not address, but should, are the real world impacts of this action on the affected area.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with loss of property value in the re-route area should be in Chapter 9: Indirect Impacts, but it is not, and this causes me great concern. The SWLRT-DEIS does not mention the impact of re-routed freight trains from a main line freight corridor to a bridge line on property values of the re-route area. Freight rail re-routes are not exclusive to Minnesota and the cost of the re-routes to residents has been documented. For example, according to an article in a 2001 issue of The Appraisal Journal bringing additional freight rail traffic to an area will negatively affect properties 250' feet from the rail tracks by 5-7%. All of the properties along the MN&S are well with in 250'. Based on this article one can conclude that property values along the MN&S will drop more than 7%. Two major questions arise that are not addressed in the SWLRT-DEIS. First, what happens to the tax base of St. Louis Park when the drop in value is realized? Second, how are property owners who lose value because of this government action going to be compensated for their loss? It is unreasonable for the Hennepin County to ask any resident to pay a higher price for the benefits of light rail than others.

Name: Brian Egan

1  
C  
7

55415184300

Minneapolis, MN 55415

701 4th Ave S, Suite 400

Attn: Southwest Transitway  
Housing, Community Works, & Transit  
Hennepin County



11 DEC 2012 14:41

Egan





Anne Lindell Selbyg

12/13/2012 09:01 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SWLRT-DEIS

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

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Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, the portion of the report dealing with Safety (3-132 and 133) causes me the greatest concern. Only a passing reference to safety and the proposed re-route is mentioned in the SWLRT-DEIS; however there are many features about the MN&S, which make it undesirable as a freight, rail main line. The reasons the MN&S is an unsafe main rail line include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple grade level crossings
- Proximity to St. Louis Park schools, homes and businesses – many are closer than the length of a rail car
- Number of pedestrians who transverse crossing every day
- Permeable soil under MN&S
- Medical emergency response hindered when crossings are blocked – only one fire station has emergency medical response (page 80)
- Tight Curves. Derailments are more likely to occur on curves than on straight track
- Hazardous materials are being carried on the rail line without sufficient right of way.

None of the mitigation requested by the City of St. Louis Park on behalf of her residents is being considered. This mitigation is not frivolous; it is necessary to maintain the safety, livability and property values for the residents of St. Louis Park.

Anne Selbyg





HENNEPIN COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER

Comment #302

Frank B. Freedman

DEC 11 REC'D

Peter McLaughlin

Two Pages

December 7, 2012

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit Authority  
Attention: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Subject: Comments for Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement

I request that this Statement be updated to include these concerns about the proposed re-routing:

1. Noise and Vibration: It simply does not seem appropriate to extrapolate data taken during use of the existing spur line and determine that noise and vibration won't be excessive with re-routing. Freight trains that use this spur line travel much slower and have far fewer cars than would re-routed freight trains. If these studies were conducted during warmer temperatures, then the accuracy of this extrapolation is still further reduced.
2. Safety: There is little margin of safety for higher speed freight trains to pass so close to our high school, through numerous blind intersections, within 34-50 feet of many houses. Making the track bed higher and/or carrying hazardous materials poses still further safety concerns that dangerous derailed freight cars will roll down into homes or into our high school. Freight train accidents happen, including one in St. Louis Park recently.
3. Traffic Flow: Cedar Lake Road is becoming congested during the morning (and evening) rush hours. A re-routed freight train of 100 cars or more could easily tie up this important east-west thoroughfare for 10 minutes or more, thereby backing up traffic for at least one mile. Any emergency vehicle stuck at this intersection would lose at least 5-7 minutes getting around this bottle-neck. At least one other key intersection in St. Louis Park would experience such traffic delays.
4. Mitigation: Other than the types of rails proposed for the re-routing, no budget, source of funding, plan or even mention of mitigation appears in this document.
5. Quality of Life: It's hard to imagine that the quality of life for those living in hundreds of homes near the proposed re-route wouldn't be anything but "miserable." Thousands of other St. Louis Park residents would merely be inconvenienced and disturbed about living in a "railroad town."
6. Property Values: I estimate a \$5,000,000 total loss of property values for homes located near the proposed re-route. Within a few years, I estimate the total loss of property value will be at least \$100,000,00 due to the re-route, when word gets out about how high school classes are disrupted and the inconvenience of travel in our city due to re-routing.
7. Fairness: The most troubling concern I have is about fairness, specifically a seemingly imbalance of factors considered in the Statement. The Statement noted that Kenwood residents were concerned are about the how the "character of the Kenwood neighborhood..." might change due to co-location of freight and light rail trains. While removal of several dozen Kenwood homes might be needed, noise, vibration and safety were not raised as concerns. Hundreds of

Frank B. Freedman

Two Pages

St. Louis Park residents, city leaders and school officials were extremely concerned, since re-routing would directly and very adversely affect them. An alternative routing study and proposal offered by St. Louis Park was not accepted for consideration. No concern was deemed substantial enough to warrant any special attention in this Statement.

While this probably is not the intent, re-routing (versus co-location) simply means that a relatively large number of blue collar working folks will have to suck it up for the benefit of relatively few well-to-do Kenwood residents.

Please consider my concerns and provide a more balanced Statement, one recognizing all shortcomings of the first draft. Thank you kindly.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank B. Freedman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Frank B. Freedman

C: Senator Amy Klobuchar  
Senator Al Franken  
Congressman Keith Ellison  
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin  
Commissioner Gail Dorfman  
Thom Miller, Safety In The Park  
City of St. Louis Park, Mayor and Council Members



I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN&S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the St Louis Park Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Monday- Friday, during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In detail, the re-route will allow a 788% increase of rail cars traffic. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact the community health and cohesion of the neighbors adjacent to the tracks. In addition, there will be negative impacts to the school system and educational quality within St Louis Park, including the decreased safety of students at the High School.

Besides my general concerns about the freight rail re-route, the section of the SWLRT DEIS that describes the noise and vibration has flawed methods and conclusions. The vibration and the noise measurements were done with current MN&S traffic. It is important to note that the re-routed freight will be longer, more frequent, and include more locomotives per train.

Vibration, Chapter 4.8.4: The conclusion that vibration will have no significant impacts is incorrect. Vibration impacts will be longer in time and the total amount will increase with the heavier freight and additional locomotives.

Noise, Chapter 4.7.5:

Quiet zones: The DEIS fails to describe the real world issues with the quiet zone. The SLP Senior High is both bookended by two blind curves and has athletic facilities on both sides of the tracks. The operating rail company, TC&W, has stated in a public document that it has safety concerns with a quiet zone due to the proximity of the tracks to schools, residents, and businesses. It will be impossible to design a quiet zone that will be both safe for the area while maintaining access for the adjacent Senior High school and local businesses. The quiet zone is listed as mitigation for noise impacts but it is a mitigation that is not supported by the neighborhoods, school board, or the operating rail companies.

A quiet zone will not eliminate all noise impacts and the assessment fails to measure other sources:

- a. the rail to wheel curve squeal from the tight interconnect curve
- b. the additional noise of the locomotives as it throttles up both the southern interconnect ramp and grade change at the northern connection,
- c. trains traveling west will need to use their brakes to maintain a slow speed going down grade and through curves
- d. diminished livability from the introduction of night freight traffic
- e. the amount of time exposed to the noise impacts of the stationary crossing bells will increase significantly due to increase in train numbers.

The re-routing of freight will negatively impact the safety, livability, and community cohesion of residents, students, and communities. The SWLRT DEIS does not adequately describe the impacts and as such, the freight reroute should not be given any further consideration as an option.

Name: RICHARD DUDORSKY



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 55401

12 DEC 2012 PM 7:12



Mr. Richard D. Dworsky

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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ED  
DEC 13 2012

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) - Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, MN.

The proposed action of re-routing freight is described in Ch. 1, Section 1.3.2.3. The MN'S Spur tracks are a lightly used spur line within a high density urban, residential setting and directly adjacent to the SLP Senior High. The current freight occurs five days a week, Mon.-Fri., during normal business hours. The proposed action of re-routing freight would introduce mainline traffic and the community, residents, and students will be exposed to longer, heavier trains during weekends, evenings, and nighttime. In fact, the re-route will allow a 788% increase in the number of rail car traffic in this area. The increase of freight exposure will directly and negatively impact community health, cohesion of the neighborhoods adjacent to the tracks and educational quality within all St. Louis Park schools. In addition,

Name: Lisa M. Yepes

cont. ->

Thank you!

Cont. from previous page...  
these will be negative impacts to the community at large. These impacts include but are not limited to, increased noise and vibration, increase in diesel fumes from laboring locomotives, loss of mobility when multiple crossings are blocked simultaneously, decreased safety for home owners and students at the High School, decreased access to small businesses and a decrease in tax base caused by lower property values in the affected area.

I oppose the freight rail re-route as outlined in the SWLRT DEIS. I believe it will create an unsafe and unlivable situation for our school children, our local businesses, and our residents.

Thank you,

Lisa M. Yepes



**SOUTHWEST**  
transitway

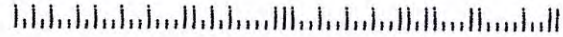
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Lisa Yepes



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541531843 0088



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## Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

## Southwest Transitway Project

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DEC 13 2012

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

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Chapter 2 page 2-32 Parking

I object to a large parking lot in the area around hidden beach. (21st st proposed station).

Environmental Impacts Chapter 4 pgs 4-19 4-21

Protect the trees + Parks + natural land

Minneapolis is a great city in part due to its unique green spaces. We need to preserve these priceless green spaces. If the rail must go thru the Cedar Lake Park/Kennilworth corridor, please let us protect the environment as much as possible. Seriously, I can't believe in this day + age, with access to nature so precious

Name: Angela M Erdrich

that we are endangering this area. All of the planners should be required to ~~drive~~ take a hike or paddle a canoe there before they do anything to ruin it.

Thank you!

Angela M. Erdrich  
P.O. Box 3002

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

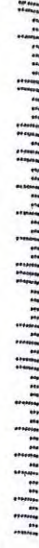
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DEC 13 2012  
11:00



Hennepin County  
Housing / Community Works + Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Ave S Suite 400  
Minneapolis MN 55415

55415104300



RECEIVED

DEC 13 2012

Comment #307

St. Louis Park 11/14/12

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form Southwest Transitway Project

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The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

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*In regard to the Draft Env. Impact Statement for the proposed freight rail reroute from the SW Transitway Project, I find no justification for moving an existing heavy freight traffic from an at-grade, mainline rail corridor with adequate width to a narrow, curving, elevated, above-grade spur line through residential areas and schools. There is no reason given for this expensive re-route of an existing rail corridor, which if carried out, would include construction of a new rail bridge ~~between~~ over Hwy 7. This proposed construction is not discussed nor are estimated costs & consequences given for such a large project.*

*There is no standard for widths of rail corridors, so the existing freight line corridor is more than wide enough for the addition of a light rail transit line. Nowhere is <sup>there</sup> given a reason for not putting the two rail lines together, in the wide, existing rail corridor. No reason is given, either, for rerouting freight trains in <sup>greater</sup> numbers, lengths, and speeds to a narrow rail spur ~~corridor~~ line not designed for them.*

Name: JAMES HEINTZMAN

Thank you!

transitway

Fold here



Mr. James J. Heintzman

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

12 DEC 2012 PM 7 L



Hennepin County

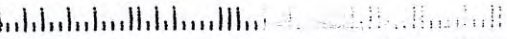
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400

Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541531843 0089

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing in response to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published in regard the SWLRT which includes the proposed freight rail re-route in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The current SWLRT-DEIS has significant flaws and the planned re-route idea either needs to be dropped completely or a great deal more study must be done.

Besides my general concerns about the SWLRT-DEIS, I am particularly concerned with Chapter 12 (Public and Agency Coordination and Comments). NEPA 1500.2(d) states that the leading agency must “encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the human environment.” This regulation was clearly ignored in regards to the potential freight rail re-route issue. Hennepin County did not “encourage and facilitate” public involvement concerning this issue. In fact, Hennepin County refused attempts for public comments and concerns regarding the freight rail issue at all of the outreach meetings listed in table 12.1-1 and all of the community events listed in table 12.1-2. Public comments regarding the freight issue were denied at the 2008 Oct 7, 14, and 23 scoping meetings and the comment period that followed as listed in section 12.1.3.1. Public comments regarding the freight issue were refused at the 2010 May 18, 18 and 20 open houses. Most importantly, public comments regarding the freight issue were denied during the entire LPA section process. This included all of public hearings listed in section 12.1.4.1. In summary, all public comments regarding the freight rail issue were denied at all of SWLRT’s major milestones leading up to the DEIS. Worse, the public was not made aware of the significant environmental impacts caused by SWLRT and the potential freight re-route because the freight issue was not discussed at any of the SWLRT meetings leading up to the DEIS. The only opportunity the public was given by Hennepin County to discuss the freight rail re-route was at the PMT meetings discussed in section 12.1.5. However, any discussion of possible alternatives to the re-route (co-location) or the freight re-route’s connection with SWLRT was strictly forbidden at these PMT meetings. Lastly, the DEIS fails to mention the 2011 April 17 and 28 freight re-route listening sessions that were held by the city of St. Louis Park. Hundreds of St. Louis Park residents voiced their opposition to the freight re-route. Because those opposed to the re-route have been denied comment during the entire SWLRT planning process leading up to the DEIS, the freight rail issue needs to be dropped or significant more work needs to be done on the alternative studies and public outreach.

Thank You,

Name: RICHARD DWORSKY

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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# SOUTHWEST transitway

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MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

12 DEC 2012 PM 4 L

Happy Holidays



Equality  
FOREVER



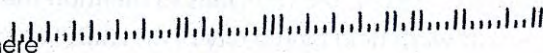
Mr. Richard D. Dworsky

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

554151

64300

Fold here





"Jim Smart"

12/14/2012 09:00 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject: Today's opinion in the Strib

Greetings,

While we don't consider ourselves "NIMBYs," and have tried to stay informed and optimistic about the new rail corridor, I'll have to say that Dr. Goldsmith's piece in today's Star Tribune makes a lot of sense. It really has been bothering us, of late, as we stroll that beautiful stretch between the Kenilworth Channel and 21st Street and think about the total disruption of that peaceful area. The idea of combining the existing freight rails along with the light rail is absurd, and we've been assuming that would not happen, but then we've not heard anything to the contrary. For certain, the bike and walking trails would be gone, or most certainly rendered unusable.

I think the overriding fact is that the people who really need a ride from their homes to work, whether it's in Eden Prairie or Downtown Minneapolis or St. Paul, are the folks who live along the areas adjoining the 29th Street Corridor. How strange that the route that was chosen, because it was cheaper, was the one that travels through the most unneeded neighborhood for transportation. I have often thought of that line from the Watergate era, "follow the money!"

Thank you,

Jim Smart

**P** Before printing this e-mail, think if it is necessary. Think Green.



Nathan Jorgenson

12/14/2012 12:23 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Alignment Concerns

Greetings,

I am excited as any for fulfilling the Twin Cities need for more and better transit alternatives. I personally cannot wait for the SW corridor to become a reality. I personally don't see, however, how using the Kenilworth trail can possibly benefit the Twin Cities in any way other than an initial cost savings. I cannot believe that a station at Van White and Penn (not far from future Bottineau stations) as well as the stations at 21st and Royalston could possibly outperform stations in uptown (so needing of better connections to DT), whittier, stevens community, near the convention center, MIA, and nicolet mall. Stations like Royalston have great potential but why cater to areas of the city that haven't proven themselves, or taken shape. South Minneapolis needs and deserves this connection. 10 years from now the cost per ride would definitely have paid for itself as a stop in uptown could probably out perform 21st and penn by itself. I don't think Minneapolis or The west metro needs their next light rail line to be a glorified electric commuter rail serving a rail corridor and major corps vying for stops. The people deserve better planing that is for the future and people not for the dollar. I implore that those of you working on the SW corridor to reconsider redirecting through the more populous and needing areas than the open and natural areas used so much for recreation, and lacking in population density. Much has changed in even the last few years since major planning has happened for this line, re-urbanization is happening, lets make sure the planning is done well so we can have the best possible line for the most potentials users. Thank you for all your hard work making our town on the prairie a great place.

Nathan Jorgenson  
Exterior Designer



Bob Sherman

12/14/2012 02:16 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Comment on the proposed route of the SW LRT

December 14, 2012

Dear People:

I have reviewed much of the planning material and the proposals for the SW LRT from the perspective of a forty-five-year resident of the Kenwood area of south Minneapolis. Although the material is voluminous, detailed, and shows evidence of careful professional consideration of alternatives, I disagree with their recommendation concerning the 1.5 mile routing of the LRT down the Kennilworth Corridor.

First of all, it is clear that the LRT-C route (down the depressed 29th Street rail line to Nicollet Avenue, then north down Nicollet on the surface) is the far superior route for its catchment area of potential riders (lower income and without cars) and business destinations. I do not think this route been properly considered. While the mile and a half Kenilworth Corridor might *appear* to be a cheaper route, it is almost barren of passenger prospects or destinations. The LRT-C route is almost solid with business and dense transit-needing population, and includes a mile of established rail-ready depressed right-of-way. I note in passing that this right-of-way also extends to Hiawatha, which might have future utility. I urge a careful re-review of the LRT-C choices.

Second, should the Kenilworth corridor be retained, a 21st street station is an unwanted and needless element. Its location would generate few users among Kenwood residents, and if it attracted many park-and-riders a highly valued quiet residential neighborhood would be degraded.

Finally, the Kennilworth Corridor route would have serious adverse impact on the beauty of the treasured green space near Cedar Lake, and the usability of the quiet walking and bicycle paths. If these are lost they are irretrievable. It also seems likely that frequent fast trains would create a safety issue, and this would probably result in barrier fences. The noise and visual distraction are easily imagined. Adequate mitigation of these problems seems unlikely.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Sherman



**Andrew Dipper**

12/14/2012 04:15 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject light rail

It would make more sense from a social engineering point of view to bring the light rail into Minneapolis via Chicago Avenue. This route would allow transport to local hospitals, the metro dome, etc and fuel redevelopment and boost tax revenue. It could use the existing cross town trench as a route. Anyone can see that the Cedar lake route was a bad idea from the start and only gets worse with analysis.

Andrew Dipper



12/14/2012 04:28 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Kennilworth LRT

To whom it may concern,

I am concerned about many things involving the LRT. First, that area is a beautiful peaceful place that people have enjoyed for years whether it be on a bike or just walking. The park and rec has done such an amazing job keeping it such a great place. Second, I am concerned about the traffic jam this LRT is going to create along Dean Parkway, especially during the summer months. It can be a nightmare to use during rush hour already. Let alone having to deal with a LRT going through. Imagine if you lived near there, you would never be able to get home. The small hill off of Dean Parkway going towards Cedar Lake can be very difficult during peak hours and when the weather conditions are tough, you slip and slide going up and down the hill. I know there are a lot of people who think this is a wonderful idea. But please consider the people who live near there and the impact it will have on them. Put it along France Avenue in St. Louis Park. It makes more sense to put it where cars already go not people.

Thank you,

K.



"Olaf Lukk"

12/14/2012 06:28 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject cedar lake corridor

I fully agree with the commentary in today's Star Tribune; "Light Rail Will Ruin a Quiet Area". I have lived near the west side of Cedar Lake for almost thirty years, and have taken full advantage of the trails (and the lake) for walking, biking, running and swimming. The NOISE POLLUTION ISSUE should trump the "convenience" of this route. Being subjected to day long bells and horns- with sounds of 100 decibel bells and horns carrying across the lakes- will cause irrevocable harm to the ambience of what is supposedly the crown jewel of the Minneapolis Park System: The Chain of Lakes. I have tried to keep current on this topic, and have been astounded by the lack of attention to this issue, which frankly, should be a dealbreaker. At the very least, eliminate the 21st St. station so that the only sound is the low rumble of the trains- not the bells and horns which will keep the entire neighborhood awake until midnight- and awake us again at 6:00 a.m.



**Mary Smith**

12/14/2012 08:48 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject SW corridor project

**To Whom It May Concern;**

I would like my voice to be heard in support of the SouthWest Corridor project. I am very excited about the possibility of such direct access to the city area without the need to drive. We need to minimize our reliance on individual cars and make living without a car a viable option for some suburban residents. A few years back a student at the U of M needed to come to our area to observe our schools. Figuring out public transportation to our area is EXTREMELY limited. We need more options. SW Transit Bus in not enough. It only works for commuters that work traditional hours. I believe strongly that once the corridor is in place, more people will take advantage of it than planned. Thanks for listening. Sincerely, Cathy Smith





Ritasjoberg

12/14/2012 09:02 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject southwest route lrt

Why aren't you building the route to run along I394? The route you are building won't get the ridership an I 394 route would produce. 394 is a parking lot at 5:00 every day and LRT would have been a welcome alternative.

I am also befuddled about why the ride between Mpls and St Paul will take 40 minutes. You'll get no working people to ride if takes that long.

I drive 394 to St Paul daily and was looking forward to LRT. I road the bus (two transfers) for a while but it is an hour fifteen to get to work and 1:45 home so I gave it up. Light rail looks to be a bust too so I am stuck driving.

It is a shame that my sister can get from her home in Brooklyn to New Jersey in half the time it takes me to get from St Louis Park to St Paul. We have one of the worst commutes in the country here and sad to say LRT is not helping because of poor routing.



David Buran

12/14/2012 09:37 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Impact on the Cedar Lake, Isles area by the proposed LRT

Greetings:

I bought my first home in this neighborhood in 1966. The question of a possible "Southwest Diagonal" was presented by my realtor at that time and now the issue is again front and center. The expansion of public transit in our community should be a priority, but it needs to be done very carefully with great attention to the side effects to the neighborhoods and citizens.

The negative impact on our immediate neighborhood could be immense.

Ridership from this area will not be significant as compared to the Uptown area. The traffic patterns very difficult unless the trains are routed through a tunnel or below grade passages.

Unless this is looked at carefully I think we will look back on the effects on a fine neighborhood with regret.

Cost is a factor, but was also a factor when the Park Board bought land around the lakes years ago, and how forward looking that decision was.

A concerned and loyal resident.

David Buran



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THE 260 LIGHT RAIL TRAINS WILL CREATE UNACCEPTABLE NOISE LEVELS AT MY HOUSE SINCE IT IS ON THE HILL ON KENWOOD PARKWAY. ALL EFFORTS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PROVIDE THE BEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE SOUND MITIGATION

THE RAILWAY SHOULD BE HELD TO THE SAME STANDARD

Name: LAWRENCE W. OLSON

Thank you!



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here

LARRY & BILLEE OLSON

POSTNET ZIP+4® 55415184300

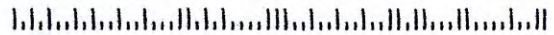
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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



Fold here



13 December 2012

Hennepin County, Community Works and Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 – Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Southwest Transitway Project:

I am writing as a citizen and homeowner in St. Louis Park with regard to the proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) line, which includes the planned freight rail re-route through St. Louis Park.

I wish to comment on the Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which has recently been made available for review and comment. This DEIS report grossly obfuscates the reality of the proposed Light Rail Transit line and its impact on St. Louis Park.

The DEIS report falsely leaves the reader with the impression that no one is raising serious objections to the proposed freight re-route through St. Louis Park, and that everyone who is knowledgeable about the freight proposed re-route through St. Louis Park supports it, and that there are no important or major safety concerns. But this is not true!

In fact, there are many big problems. There are huge safety concerns:

- The freight trains will run straight through the St. Louis Park High School campus and dangerously close to many homes and businesses
- The freight trains will block many City streets and pedestrian walkways everyday
- Medical emergency response teams, as well as police and fire emergency first responders will be hindered when crossings are blocked
- The proposed freight rail route includes tight curves in the RR track, where derailments are more likely than they would be on a straight RR track
- Hazardous materials can be carried on the rail line without sufficient right-of-way.

There are livability and property value concerns for the residents of St. Louis Park:

- Greatly increased noise levels
- Much more vibration-related community damage, which has *not* been studied along the freight re-route
- Freight trains that are re-routed through St. Louis Park can be a mile long and simultaneously block six road crossings, several times a day; it may take one train ten minutes or more to clear an intersection.

There are financial concerns:

- The proposed freight train re-route costs \$123 million more than co-location according to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)—or, was that a typo in the DEIS as some people are now saying?
- The DEIS does not include any mitigation for the people who live and work and play in St. Louis Park.

  
Richard Earle



Bill Lewis

12/15/2012 11:04 AM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT DEIS Feedback

Hello:

Our names are Bill Lewis & Lynda Borjesson. We've owned and lived at our home at \_\_\_\_\_ for 25+ years, and our property is directly adjacent to the Kenilworth Corridor. While we fully support the LRT project, we are writing to provide feedback and express our deep concerns regarding the Southwest LRT and the DEIS. Our key concerns are:

1. That the freight rail line must be relocated so that the Kenilworth Corridor and bike/walk trail are completely preserved and areas near the corridor are not compromised. This trail is a significant asset to the neighborhood and our city. We are strong bicycle advocates and commuters/riders, so the preservation of this critical trail is very important to us and many other citizens.
2. That LRT noise is mitigated very effectively. Our backyard is within 200 feet of the proposed LRT lines. With LRT trains passing through our neighborhood backyards 260 times per day, we are very concerned about the ambient noise of trains passing by and of the possibility of trains beginning to sound their horns near the Burnham Bridge as they approach a 21st LRT Street Station. We would request that train noise be mitigated as much as possible with natural methods such as berms, trenching, evergreens, etc. We would strongly urge that horn blowing be mitigated, or that only a LRT bell be used, at the 21st Street Station.
3. The Cedar Lake Park and the surrounding nature area is a critical piece of property and a significant asset to the neighborhood and all citizens who enjoy the quiet and beauty of this city property and lake. Measures must be taken to reduce impact and noise near this nature area when the LRT passes near the Cedar Lake Park and surrounding areas.
4. A creative, effective and low-impact solution must be developed where the LRT crosses Cedar Lake Road. The proposed LRT bridge over Cedar Lake Road does not fit with the character of the surrounding area.
5. There is a "unofficial" neighborhood park/play area and gardens on the east side of the Kenilworth Trail just south of the Burnham Bridge. Neighborhood children and adults frequently utilize this gathering space. Engineering plans which include retaining freight rail would destroy this long-standing neighborhood space. We would hope that impact and encroachment into this wonderful public space be mitigated.

Thanks for your attention...

Bill Lewis & Lynda Borjesson



Toni Dufour

12/15/2012 02:42 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Kenwood Resident concern regarding proposed Southwest Light Rail

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Kenwood homeowner whose property abuts the proposed light rail corridor, I would like to express my concerns about several issues related to the LRT.

First is my concern about the possibility of keeping both the current freight rail line and the proposed LRT running together in the Kenilworth Corridor. This would result in an unacceptable increase in noise level as well as loss of the existing trails, placing the trains mere feet from my backyard. I support relocating the existing freight lines to minimize the destruction of the greenway and to preserve as much of the green space as possible. I also strongly encourage trenching the LRT to mitigate the inevitable noise from 260 trains a day.

Second, I am strongly against the proposed bridge over the Cedar Lake Parkway/Kenilworth Trail intersection. This is an inappropriate and very unattractive solution.

Third, I feel that 21st Street is a poor location for a proposed Park-And-Ride. This will block access to a popular public beach on Cedar Lake and lead to traffic congestion in a neighborhood that is already difficult to get into and out of due to one-way traffic on the Burnham Road Bridge and around the lake.

Please consider how current plans for the LRT will impact the quality of life in this neighborhood.

Toni DuFour





**David Ruebeck**

12/15/2012 04:43 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS

Hello,

I would like to record my opposition to the freight/light rail co-location option. I also oppose an at-grade crossing at Cedar Lake Avenue as well as a fly-over bridge.

I would prefer a below-grade crossing such as a tunnel or deep trench.

I am concerned about noise, visual disruption, and traffic congestion.

Thank you,

David Ruebeck



William Ehrich

12/15/2012 06:07 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject LRT environmental impact

I grew up in Philadelphia where trolley cars, trams, were and are taken for granted. They are fast, safe, unobtrusive, and quiet in town and in residential suburbs. The Minneapolis St Paul LRT is pretentious, noisy, and disruptive with no apparent compensating advantages. It doesn't need to be. Simple express trams running in dedicated roadways can be just as fast.

All those bells and horns are useless noise which will continue to annoy long after people have become used to and ignore them.

The elaborate and too rare stations seem to serve no purpose beyond ticket sales and control.

Perhaps you could send someone to Philadelphia or Geneva etc to see how much nicer a simpler and much cheaper system can be.

-- William Ehrich  
Edina



louann lanning

12/16/2012 06:19 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Reconsider Southwest Light-rail Corridor between the Lakes

This is my public written comment for the proposed Southwest Light-rail route.

I am completely opposed to the plan as it stands because of the impact on the east side of Cedar Lake. The area between Lake Street and Penn Avenue begins as a quiet residential neighborhood on either side of the Kenilworth Channel between Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake. This gives way to parkland along the east side of Cedar Lake. In the middle of this urban oasis runs a critical segment of the Minneapolis system of bicycle trails, used by hundreds of commuters and recreational bikers every day for much of the year. The lake is also home to swimmers and city dwellers who seek the peace of this green space and water.

If the light rail is built as proposed the segment of the light-rail route on the east side of Cedar Lake will fundamentally and irrevocably alter the character of this beautiful, precious, and irreplaceable urban green space. The infrastructure for electrically powered light-rail transit will permanently deface the entire area. Running more than 250 trains through this corridor each day from dawn to midnight will significantly diminish its desirability as a place to live. Property values will fall; tax revenue will drop accordingly. Some studies do show increased property values in proximity to light-rail lines, but they are not relevant to this project. For good reasons, light rail is not typically put in the midst of highly developed residential and recreational areas.

The visual impact of the needed infrastructure, combined with the noise and even the danger of more than 250 fast trains per day, would also greatly erode the attractiveness of this part of the recreational and commuter bicycle trail system. Many who now commute by bicycle might well choose to drive instead (which would be an ironic consequence of a project designed in part to reduce traffic). Recreational bicyclists will simply go elsewhere.

The project includes a station at W. 21st Street, a placement that makes no sense. This is an isolated location along parkland, not close to any major streets. It would be inconvenient to access; parking is limited, and a park-and-ride lot there would be contrary to Minneapolis policy. Serious questions have been raised about the actual use of this station, since local residents don't need it, given their proximity to downtown, and the appeal to suburban riders heading toward town is not obvious.

But the sound pollution it would bring to residential streets, Cedar Lake Park and the bicycle trail would be considerable. Residents and visitors would hear more than 250 warning bells or horns per day as trains approached this station, each greater than 100 decibels. The peaceful soundscape of this largely silent space would be shattered.

There is a partial solution, though it would significantly increase the cost of the project. Trains

must travel below grade from Lake Street to Penn Avenue, and there should be no station at 21st Street unless it is also below grade. The alternative current proposal to alleviate surface congestion -- elevating trains using a massive, 42-foot-high "flyover" bridge on part of the route -- would actually magnify visual intrusiveness and noise. It is deeply disturbing that anyone with any knowledge of the area could seriously propose such a structure.

Rather, the trains must be buried, preferably in a tunnel, or at least in a deep trench. This is the only way to attempt to preserve the essential character of the area.

There are other major issues with this route, including the implications of relocating freight traffic within St. Louis Park, and the impact on an already congested area around Lake Street and Excelsior Boulevard. Perhaps solutions can be found to all of these problems, perhaps not. But if the Southwest line is deemed vital to the economic future of our community, the project should be done correctly. We will live with the consequences of building this route for decades.

If the cost of doing it correctly means that the plan is no longer economically feasible, it should be abandoned, or a new route should be chosen.

Sincerely,  
Louann Lanning

-



**Matthew Alspach**

12/16/2012 10:06 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Southwest corridor options

Hello

I wanted to voice my opinion on the preferred route. I don't live in the neighborhood, but know the area. I don't think the current preferred route makes sense.

The light rail should be connecting the commercial hubs of the metro area, of which the kenilworth trail is far from.

The area around kenilworth trail is better served by the current route 25 bus, whereas the uptown/lyndale area will be better served by light rail and hopefully take some strain off the many buses that ply the routes between uptown and downtown.

In addition, there is already an uptown transit hub situated right above the midtown corridor. What a perfect place to link the bus lines with the light rail. Besides downtown minneapolis, where else is there a concentration of transit options that makes more sense to locate together?

Regards,

Matt Alspach



Jane Willis

&gt;

12/16/2012 11:44 PM

Please respond to  
Jane WillisTo "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Cedar Lake is a beautiful place

Dear SW Corridor planners.

Cedar Lake is a much loved area of Minneapolis. People throughout the city come here to enjoy it's p

If you put a light rail bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway, it's going to degrade the character of the neighb  
wilderness bike trail. This area is an important and much used activity hub. A ground level crossing w  
area. It's going to be well worth the expense to preserve what we already have by running the train th

Furthermore, a train stop on the East side of Cedar Lake is ill-conceived. This is a quiet neighborhood  
the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes together. There is a quiet beach right near where you would put the s  
local people don't need a train stop. The area can't handle a park and ride lot, nor can it handle street  
an unnecessary stop on the East side of the Lake.

I live at 1449 Lakeview Avenue on the North side of the Lake. I am not directly affected by the SW Co  
I know the area well, having lived in the general area since 1980.

I ask you to listen to local residents so you don't wind up destroying some very positive things about o

Best,

Jane Willis



12/17/2012 08:39 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us,  
 Katie.Walker@co.hennepin.mn.us  
 cc gail.dorfman@co.hennepin.mn.us,  
 lisa.goodman@minneapolismn.gov  
 bcc

Subject: Response to SWLRT DEIS

Date: December 17, 2012

To: whom it may concern

Re: response to the SWLRT DEIS

From: Paul and Cheryl LaRue

First, we would like to acknowledge your reasoning for the need for LRT and we understand that the SWLRT is an integral part of Met Council's 2030 Transportation Policy Plan, Met Council's 2030 Regional Development Framework, Hennepin County Transportation Systems Plan, Hennepin County Sustainable Development Strategy 2011, as well as The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.

1) One of our concerns lies with the **environmental and socioeconomic impacts of a flyover bridge at Cedar Lake Pkwy**. We understand that a flyover bridge would address 'traffic congestion' at the intersection of LRT with Cedar Lake Pkwy. However, we support alternative means of addressing such issues. We support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing *OVER* LRT transit as presented by the Minneapolis Park and Rec Board and supported by the Joint Neighborhood Task Force consisting of CIDNA (Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association), KIAA (Kenwood Isles Area Association), WCNC (West Calhoun Neighborhood Council), CLSHA (Cedar Lake Shores Homeowners Association), CIHA (Calhoun Isles Condos Condo Association) and CLPA (Cedar Lake Park Association).

A flyover works against the goals of the 2030 Regional Development Framework. Per the DEIS Appendix H - Land Use Plans, The Metropolitan Council Plans and Studies, **2030 Regional Development Framework**, page 7 of 750, item #4: "The RDF addresses four primary policies...**4) Working with local and regional partners to reclaim, conserve, protect, and enhance** the region's vital natural resources".

Per 3.6.3 Long-Term Effects, 3.6.3.3 Build Alternatives, Segment 4, page 3-115: "Although the segment is located in an existing transportation corridor (Kenilworth Regional Trail), the project *would introduce new visual elements* --the fixed guideway, including track, catenary poles, and wires--into the area. Catenary poles and wires could have *substantial visual impacts on trail users* who would share the corridor with the fixed guideway" ... "The proposed alignment is on a *bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway* . *Visual impacts* on sensitive receptors *adjacent to the corridor in the multi-family residential parcel and Cedar Lake Parkway* could be *substantial* . *Visual intrusion and privacy impacts of the project elements on the residents in units with windows facing the alignment where it is bridged* structure could be *substantial* ."

A flyover bridge, infrastructure and supporting walls, poles, and catenary over Cedar Lake Pkwy are not compatible with current scenic views and would obstruct rather than "conserve, protect, and enhance" views in designated scenic areas at Cedar Lake and throughout Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail and the Grand Rounds as well as Park Siding Park. This drastic visual change would impact setting, integrity, and feeling of Cedar Lake and Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail, the Grand Rounds, and Park Siding Park. We support working with local partners (such as the Park Board), the residential community, and neighborhood associations to investigate alternative ways for LRT to cross at Cedar Lake Parkway. We support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing over transit.

An environmental concern with a flyover bridge at Cedar Lake Parkway would be the introduction of a NEW noise source(s) at Cedar Lake, throughout the Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail and Park Siding Park, and into the Grand Rounds. Per 4.7.3.4 Project Noise Levels: "The project team measured airborne noise from the Hiawatha LRT as the basis for the sound exposure levels used in the analysis". Per table 4.7.2 the Hiawatha LRT measurements were done 'at grade'. Measurements did not include airborne noise at the various elevations of a flyover\* at Cedar Lake Parkway. Recommend analysis for

noise and vibration at various heights of a flyover\*, taking into consideration the unique situations of Segment A, particularly between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. *Unique* situations include: A) close proximity of the flyover to Cedar Lake, a large body of water which would carry sound farther than over land or through trees, B) two 14-story high rise residential buildings with close proximity to the flyover which would reflect a new noise source throughout Park Siding Park, the Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail, and the Grand Rounds, C) most of the Xerxes Historic District multi-story residences would have an unobstructed view of the flyover, structure, catenary poles and wires, and trains; and would be directly affected by a new noise source introduced by a flyover. The Shoreland Overlay District Zoning requirements also need to be observed.

Per 3.6.5.3, Mitigation, Build Alternatives, page 3-123: "*Mitigation treatments ...would be developed...through discussion with affected communities, resource agencies, and stakeholders* . Measures would be taken to *ensure* the design and construction of the Build Alternative considers the context of the corridor and that sensitive receptors receive adequate mitigation. Possible mitigation measures could include: A) Landscaping vegetation such as shrubs and bushes to supplement *existing* vegetation buffers, B) Evergreen vegetation screening to supplement deciduous vegetation buffers in leaf-off conditions, C) Fencing, D) Tunneling ." Comment: Due to the *uniqueness* of the narrow rail corridor in the residential area between West Lake Stn. and Cedar Lake Parkway *existing* vegetation is minimal and supplementing it may be difficult as there is very little space to add a berm or mature landscaping. The DEIS suggestion of a tunnel as a means of mitigation needs to be studied as a viable means of mitigation. We do not support taking of any residential properties in Segment A north of West Lake Stn.

\*Per Appendix H-1, page 204, Table: Aweighted Sound Levels (FTA): Rail transit horn 89 dBA, rail transit on modern concrete aerial structure 84 dBA. These dBA corresponded on the same table to sounds similar to an outdoor concrete mixer and jack hammer. Comment: A flyover would introduce these NEW sounds, and these sounds would not "conserve and enhance" the region's vital natural resources. Therefore, we support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing *over* transit.

\*Per Appendix H-1, page 201, The FTA Transit and Noise Vibration Impact Assessment indicates, "Reflections off topographical features or buildings (structures) can sometimes result in higher noise levels...than would normally be expected. Temperature and wind conditions can also diffract and focus a sound wave to a location at considerable distance from the noise source. As a result of these factors, the existing noise environment can be highly variable depending on local conditions." Again, we support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing *over* transit.

2) Our second concern is regarding **mitigation for the Impacted Land** (Units) from LRT in **Segment A, in particular the residential area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn.** Of the LRT Segments in the preferred alignment 3A, Segment A *has the lowest ambient noise\** of Segments 3, 4, and A (per 4.7.3.5). Segment A *also has the highest percentage of Severe Land Impact\*\** (Units) (91.0% of the total for alignment 3A as per tables 4.7-3 and 4.7-8), in particular the area **between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. (87.6% of the total Severe Land Impact units for all of alignment 3A)** . Segment A consists mainly of residential/multi-family residential, whereas Segments 3 and 4 consist mainly of commercial properties (table 3.2-2). LRT Sound Exposure Levels (per table 4.7-2) would be in the HUD threshold for Unacceptable Housing Environment (Appendix H-1, "Odors, Noise, and Dust), above the MN Noise Pollution Control Limits (Appendix H-1, Table 9), and above Federal Noise Abatement Criteria\*\*\*. Given that the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. has 87.6% of the Severe Land Impact properties, mitigation by fencing or landscaping alone would have minimal mitigation effect. Additionally, on its own, barriers would not seem to provide adequate mitigation. Per Appendix H-1, Mitigation: "Noise barriers would not be as effective at reducing noise...since there are physical limitations on barriers which would only potentially reduce noise by a small amount...". Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel have *not* been addressed by the DEIS for Segment A; and should be thoroughly studied as a viable means for mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. A flyover bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway would NOT mitigate Severe Land Impact properties. A flyover would introduce NEW airborne noises. We support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing *over* transit. We support working with local partners, the residential community and neighborhood associations to investigate and coordinate ways to minimize the noise, vibration, and visual impacts of LRT rail cars, infrastructure and supporting walls, poles and catenary. We do not support taking of any residential properties in Segment A



north of West Lake Stn.

Data supporting the above is as follows:

As stated in Chapter 4, page 4-7 FTA Noise Impact Thresholds, as well as in Appendix H, Odors, Noise, and Dust: There are two levels of impact included in the FTA criteria...Moderate Impact and Severe Impact. Project-generated noise in the severe impact range can be expected to cause a significant percentage of people to be highly annoyed by the new noise and *represents the most compelling need for mitigation* ...

\*Per 4.7.3.5 Assessment. "Ambient noise is measured by what is present in existing conditions. Low ambient noise levels cause the impact threshold (the point at which there is an impact) to be lower. Ambient noise levels were as low as 55 dBA on an Leq basis and 56 dBA on an Ldn basis for Segment 3; 56 dBA on an Leq basis and 54 dBA on an Ldn basis for Segment 4; \*44 dBA on an Leq basis and 52 dBA on an Ldn basis for Segment A ; and 58 dBA on an Leq basis and 58 dBA on an Ldn basis for Segment C".

\*Appendix H-1, Southwest Transitway Ambient Noise Table, page 5, Segment A: "Site #31 (3427 St. Louis Ave.) for a 24-hour period the Leq was 59 dBA and Ldn 60 dBA (Footnote 'c' for that table notes that noise monitoring data for Site #31 *included* noise from existing freight train operations). *Natural sounds and recreational activities are the dominant noise sources* , with lesser noise contributions from Lake St. traffic. This location is representative of noise-sensitive land use at the south end of the Kenwood Neighborhood, within earshot of Lake St." Comment: Site #31, 3427 St. Louis Ave., is a residential property adjacent to the current TC&W rail line and located inbetween the West Lake St. Stn. and Cedar Lake Parkway. Given the Sound Exposure Levels in table 4.7-2 of LRT pass-bys 81-84 dBA, signal 106 dBA, warning signal 88 dBA, warning horns 99 dBA, LRT curve squeal 114 dBA, mitigation requirements need to include keeping the ambient noise levels (on a constant and frequent basis) consistent with current Leq and Ldn dBA...particularly at nighttime. Mitigation must preserve and maintain as dominant sounds of the portion of Segment A in between West Lake Stn. and Cedar Lake Parkway that of natural sounds and recreational activities . Fencing or landscaping alone would not achieve such mitigation. Barriers only reduce noise by a small amount (per Appendix H-1: Mitigation). Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel have not been addressed by the DEIS for Segment A; and should be thoroughly studied as a viable means of mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake St. Stn. and 21st St. Stn. Note: noise monitoring data for Site #31 was collected prior to the replacement of old, frequent weld TC&W rails with new continuous rails in September/October 2012 (per rail engineers, up to 1/3 quieter and less vibration).

\*\*In Segments 3 and 4 (the preferred alignment 3A) running from Mitchell Rd. to the West Lake Station the LRT touched almost ALL commercial properties (per engineering and conceptual designs from Appendix F as well as table 3.2-2 Summary of Neighborhood...Cohesion Impacts...Segment 3 "mostly commercial"). Per table 4.7-3, Noise Impact Summary Table, the preferred alignment 3A had a total of 201 (520) Severe Impact Land (Units) for Category 2 (residential). Per table 4.7-5, Noise Impacts Segment 3, Segment 3 had 18 Severe Impact Land (Units). Per table 4.7-6 Noise Impacts Segment 4, Segment 4 had no Severe Impact Land (Units). Per table 4.7-8 Impacts Segment A, Segment A had 183 (406) Severe Impacts Land (Units). In summary, *Segment A has 183 (406) of the total 201 (520) or 91.0% of the Severe Impact Land in alignment 3A...with 176 (399) between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. (table 4.7-8). In other words...176 (399) of the total 201 (520) or 87.6% of the total Severe Impact Land for alignment 3A were in the very small stretch between W. Lake and 21st St. Stations as compared to the miles and miles of LRT in Segment 3 and 4 which only had 18 of 201 (table 4.7-5) or 9.0%. Note: percentages are rounded. Note also: Segment A has a situation unique to Segments 3 and 4 and to Hiawatha LRT in that some of the residential/multi-family residential properties are located 20' or less from the rail tracks, including a 14 story high rise condominium with balconies facing the rail tracks.*

\*\*\*Table 4.7-2 LRT Sound Exposure Levels used in the Noise Analysis...LRT pass-by 81-84 dBA, signal 106 dBA, warning signal 88 dBA, warning horn 99 dBA, LRT curve squeal 114 dba.\*\*\*Appendix H-1, page 50 of the section addressing "Odors, Noise and Dust - Noise Basics, Exhibit 1, Outdoor Noise Exposure for a Residential Environment (according to U.S. Federal agency criteria) states the ambient close to Urban Transit is 85 Ldn. *The HUD threshold for Unacceptable Housing Environment is 75 dBA Ldn*, the HUD limit for normally acceptable housing environment is 65 dBA Ldn, and the EPA ideal residential goal is 55 dBA Ldn. This section also states Category 2 are residences and buildings where

people normally sleep. This category includes residences...where nighttime sensitivity is assumed to be of utmost importance.

\*\*\*Appendix H-1, Table 9, Minnesota Noise Pollution Control Limits, indicates that Chapter 7030 of the Minnesota Administrative Rules has set a series of noise limits that can be applied to projects such as...rail study. The limit for MN category 1 (residences, churches, schools, and other similar land uses) in the daytime is between 60-65 dBA and nighttime 50-55 dBA.

\*\*\*MnDOT for the Trunk Hwy 41 river crossing project, Chaska, indicates Federal Noise Abatement criteria for Category B (residential and recreational) is 70 dBA. For every increase of 10 dBA is heard twice as loud.

Appendix H-1, FTA Noise Impact Criteria, page 50: "Although higher rail noise levels are allowed in neighborhoods with high levels of existing, smaller increases in total noise exposure are allowed with increasing levels of existing noise".

3) Our third concern is regarding **mitigation** in Segment A, particularly the residential area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn., from the substantial increase in the **frequency of LRT pass-bys**. The DEIS considers **current TC&W pass-bys to be infrequent**, and that LRT will more than double the amount of train pass-by events\*. Current TC&W pass-bys are 21.5 per week daytime and .5 per week or less nighttime\*\*. LRT projected are 2326 per week with 420 in the nighttime\*\*\*. In other words LRT pass-bys would create a *drastic change* for Segment A from a periodic, infrequent heavy use corridor to a constant, frequent heavy use corridor. Noise, vibration, and visual impacts in Segment A, particularly in the residential area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. would **change from current periodic, infrequent noise, vibration, and visual impacts 21.5 times per week and .5 or less times per night to constant noise, vibration, and visual impacts 2326 times per week, with a disruptive increase at nighttime of 420 per night...from current 3 times per day and less than .5 nighttime per 'week' to LRT every 7.5 - 10 minutes per day and LRT every 30 minutes each night** (these daily LRT pass-bys are per the SWLRT website).

LRT would introduce a NEW *privacy impact* both in the *daytime and nighttime*. Per 3.6.3 Long-Term Effects, 3.6.3.3, "Visual intrusion and privacy impacts of the project elements on the residents in units with windows facing the alignment...could be substantial." Comment: The new privacy impacts would not only affect the residential properties, but persons using the Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail, Park Siding Park, and the Grand Rounds. These privacy impacts do not currently exist; therefore, mitigation needs to address respect of privacy resulting from LRT pass-bys. Mitigation by fencing or landscaping alone would have minimal and seasonal mitigation effect. Additionally, on its own, barriers may not provide adequate mitigation in screening privacy impacts, particularly at elevations of a flyover. Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel should be thoroughly studied as a viable means for mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. A flyover would not mitigate privacy impacts. A flyover would introduce additional new privacy impacts at a higher elevation.

Nighttime LRT pass-bys will also introduce a NEW *visual nighttime impact of LRT headlights as well as intrusion of lights from inside train cars which would be passing through 420 times per week as compared to current .5 or less headlight (only) light intrusion per week*. Fencing and landscaping will not mitigate the new nighttime visual light impacts. Barriers may mitigate the new nighttime headlight visual impact and partially mitigate light intrusion from inside train cars; however, would *not* be adequate to mitigate the *extreme increase in frequency* of visual light impacts resulting from more than double the amount of train pass-by events\*. Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel have not been addressed by the DEIS for Segment A, and should be studied as a viable means for mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. A flyover bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway would NOT mitigate the new increased frequency of daytime and nighttime visual impacts. A flyover bridge would introduce NEW visual impacts at an elevation higher than 'at grade'.

\*Comment: The DEIS statement 'more than double the amount of train pass-by events' is **extremely understated. Per the SWLRT website, train pass-bys would dramatically increase from the current 3 times in the daytime to LRT every 10 minutes during the daytime and early evenings--even more frequently during peak hours to LRT every 7.5 minutes. The nighttime pass-bys would be even more substantially increased from 'on occasion' .5 per 'week' to LRT every 30 minutes nighttime.**

The LRT pass-bys are constant 7 days per week, 20 hours per day. These LRT frequencies would change the residential corridor in Segment A between West Lake St. and 21st St. Stn. from 'dominant noise sources being that of natural sounds and recreational activities' to **constant new noise sources** from the LRT rail squeals and horn or bells (with noise decibals increasing from current ambient 59-60 dBA (Site #31) to between 81-114 dBA. Such **drastic changes to the environmental and socioeconomic** elements of the residential corridor warrant serious mitigation of noise as well as visual impacts. Fencing and landscaping alone would not mitigate the dramatic increase in *frequency* of noise nor the increase in noise decibals. Barriers would only reduce noise by a small amount (per Appendix H-1: Mitigation), and would not address the dramatic increase in *frequency* of noise. Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel have not been addressed by the DEIS for Segment A, and should be studied as a viable means for mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. A flyover would not mitigate *increased frequency* of noise. A flyover would introduce NEW as well as increased frequencies of noise carrying at an elevated level.

Data supporting the above is as follows:

\*Per Appendix H-1 as well as 4.8.2, Existing Conditions: "Existing rail operations in Segmnt 4 include approximately 3 freight pass-by events per day. *TC&W locomotive pass-by events* are less than 5 per day; therefore, *are considered infrequent ...The build alternatives will more than double the amount of train pass-by events ...*"

\*\*Per chapter 4, page 91, Segment A: West Lake Station to Intermodal Station. "Under Build Alternatives LRT 1A and LRT 3A existing TC&W traffic on the Kenilworth Corridor would be relocated to the MN&S Spur. (Freight rail traffic o the Spur would be the existing traffic in the Kenilworth Corridor with no change in train activity, consist, etc." Calculation of existing TC&W traffic on the Kenilworth Corridor per 4.7.5 MN&S Freight Rail Relocation is as follows:

One freight train with 2-4 locomotives and 50 cars operating six days/wk (1 train x 6 days = 6/wk)

One freight 2-4 locomotives and 20 cars operating 3-4 days/wk (1 train x 4 days = 4/wk)

One ethanol train with 2 locomoties and 80 cars operating once every 2 wks (1 x .5 = .5/wk)

One coal train with 4 locomotives an 120 cars operating once every 2 wks (1 x .5 = .5/wk)

Note: the coal train only operates one direction, all others round trip.

TOTAL TC&W freight train pass-bys per wk = 21.5 (6 + 4 + .5) x 2/round trip plus .5 x 1 direction

Note: All above trains were considered in section 4.7.5 to operate during the day. The exception being one coal train operating once every 2 weeks which *could* operate either night or day.

\*\*\*Calculation of operational assumptions of LRT per 4.7.3.4, Chapter 4, Environmental Effects, page 4-84:

198 trips during the day (198 x 7) (assumed) = 1386/wk\*\*\*\*

16 trips/hr between 6-9 am and 3-6:30 pm (16 x 6.5 x 5) (assumed 'peak hrs' means 5 days/wk) = 520/wk\*\*\*\*

60 trips during the night (60 x 7) = 420/wk\*\*\*\*

TOTAL LRT Pass-bys per week = approximately 2326\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*Note: There is no mention in the DEIS information if these are 'one direction' trips or 'round trips' and should, therefore, be multiplied by 2 as per the calculation of the existing TC&W.

You will note in Chapter 4, pages 4-92, Segment A...Under Build Alternatives...the DEIS states, "Airborne-noise impacts associated with Segment A (with freight rail relocation) were calculated based on existing noise exposure (including existing TC&W freight rail traffic) and account for the 'decrease' in sound level which would occur due to the absense of freight pass-by events". Comment: The DEIS calculations represents an 'average' of the LRT noise impacts for a 24-hour period. In actuality, the LRT will introduce noise impacts in the 81-114 dBA range 'extremely frequently and nearly constant' throughout the daytime and nighttime in Segment A. Whereas the current TC&W noise impacts have been very infrequent during the daytime and nearly non-existent in the nighttime. In addition, the DEIS has not measured the noise level of the TC&W with the new continuous rails installed September/October 2012 in Segment A, particularly the portion between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn.

4) Our fourth concern is regarding **mitigation for the (long-term) visual effects** of LRT for **Segment A**, in particular the residential area between West Lake Stn. and 21st. Stn. This section is *unique* to Segment 3, 4 and Hiawatha LRT given the close proximity of residential and high rise residential to the LRT as well as the close proximity of Cedar Lake, Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail, Park Siding Park, and the Xerxes Historic District multi-story residences to an *unobstructed visual* of LRT structure,

catenary and poles.

Per Chapter 3, Social Effects, 3.6.6, Summary, page 3-125, the DEIS points out a situation *unique* to Segment A in the 3A alignment: "Further, LRT 3A (LPA) would have possibly substantial effects on the visual quality of one of its three segments, which includes sensitive receptors in the residential land uses adjacent to the segment (A) where the alignment is on a bridge".

3.6.3 Long-Term Effects, 3.6.3.3 Build Alternatives Segment 4, page 3-115: "Visual impacts may be substantial where the alignment is not screened by vegetation. *Visual intrusion and privacy impacts of the project elements* on the sensitive receptors may be *substantial where views from the alignment into previously private spaces are created*. *Visual intrusion and privacy impacts on the outdoor living areas of residential properties could be substantial* where vegetation or landscape buffers do not exist". .... "The proposed alignment is on a *bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway*. *Visual impacts* on sensitive receptors adjacent to the *corridor in the multi-family residential parcel and Cedar Lake Parkway could be substantial*. *Visual intrusion and privacy impacts* of the project elements on the *residents in units with windows facing the alignment* where it is bridged structure could be substantial". Comments: Given the narrow space of the rail corridor between West Lake Stn. and Cedar Lake Parkway, fencing and immature landscaping alone would not mitigate the visual intrusion and privacy impacts, and would be a 'seasonal' mitigation. A barrier alone would introduce a NEW visual impact where there were prior unobstructed views of parks and trees and sense of 'open space'. A barrier would only mitigate a portion of the visual intrusion of rail cars. A barrier would not mitigate the visual intrusion of poles and catenary. Mitigation such as cut'n'cover or tunnel have not been addressed by the DEIS for Segment A, and should be studied as a viable means for mitigation, particularly in the area between West Lake Stn. and 21st St. Stn. A flyover bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway would not mitigate visual intrusion and privacy impacts. A flyover Cedar Lake Parkway would introduce NEW visual intrusions. We support Cedar Lake Parkway crossing over transit. We do not support taking of any residential properties in Segment A between West Lake Stn. and 21st. St. Station. We agree, per 3.6.5.3, Mitigation: "Mitigation treatments for visual impacts would be developed...through discussion with affected communities, resource agencies, and stakeholders."

4) An additional **socioeconomic and environmental** concern is the **preservation of the Kenilworth Trail as a pedestrian and bicycle trail, and insuring that the trail receives proper mitigation**. Per the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Community Advisory Committee, "the Kenilworth Trail received 617,000 visits in 2009, and use has only gone up since then". Per 3.6.6, Summary, page 3-125: "LRT 3A (LPA) would have the second highest effects on visual quality in the project area because of *substantial impacts on sensitive receptors located on trails*, which are present in three (4, A, and FRR) of the alignment's segments."

Per the DEIS Appendix H - Land Use Plans, 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan, page 7 of 750: "The Regional Parks Policy Plan lays out the goals for the expansion and management of the Twin Cities regional park system, and the strategies designed to meet those goals. Of particular note for Southwest Transitway is the policy on regional trails, new trails, or trail segments, that serve regional users are considered a significant priority for the regional parks system. The plan states that selection, development and operation of bicycle transportation arteries are covered as a component of the Council's transportation plan. Examples of existing regional trails that provide multiple benefits include...Southwest LRT Regional Trails, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, the Mississippi River Regional Trail..."

Per the Three Rivers Parks website, there are two regional bike paths passing by Cedar Lake...the North Cedar Lake Regional Trail and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. Both go from downtown to Hopkins and connect with other trails in the city and Western suburbs. The Cedar Lake Regional Trail follows through the Kenilworth corridor (the Kenilworth Trail), crosses the rail tracks at Cedar Lake, and continues to Hopkins. The North Cedar Lake Regional Trail splits from the Cedar Lake Regional Trail near Bryn Mawr, and travels past the Northern tip of Cedar Lake then proceeds West to Hopkins. Per the DEIS the freight rail tracks in Kenilworth are owned by Hennepin County; however, the Cedar Lake Regional Trail and Kenilworth Trail are maintained by the Parkboard and receive Federal and local funding (Appendix H-1, page 47). The Cedar Lake Regional Trail and Kenilworth Trail are the major *connective routes* to the Grand Rounds, Southwest LRT Regional Trails, and the Mississippi River Regional Trail. Both are located adjacent to LRT Segment A, and need to be preserved as viable pedestrian and bicycle routes. Mitigation for noise, vibration, visual, and privacy impacts as well as safety measures (including safety measures for those pedestrians and bicyclists using the trails at night) should include discussion and coordination with affected communities, resource agencies, and stakeholders.

5) Our final concern is that of **mitigation during construction**, particularly the residential area in Segment A between West Lake Stn. and 21st Stn. This rail corridor is *unique* to Segment 3, 4, and Hiawatha LRT due to the narrow width and close proximity of residential, high-rise residential, Xerxes Historic District properties, and Cedar Lake/Beach to LRT. Suggest construction mitigation treatments for visual, noise, and vibration impacts be developed through discussion and coordination with affected communities, resource agencies, and stakeholders and per implementatin of BMP's. In addition, in Segment A north of West Lake Stn. there are multiply entries to Cedar Lake Regional Trail/Kenilworth Trail (which connect the area to the Grand Rounds, Southwest LRT Regional Trails, and the Mississippi River Regional Trail) and Park Siding Park. Mitigation measures need to insure continued and safe entry to these trails and parks during construction (both daytime and nighttime).

In summary, the **OUTCOMES** we would like to see achieved, in particular Segment A between West Lake Stn. and 21st St., are: A) Mitigation that maintains the current ambient noise levels close to existing 59-60 dBA (Site #31) and that maintains the current ambience of 'natural sounds and recreational activities', quiet, and tranquility for the residential areas, bicycle/pedestrian trails, and parkland adjacent to LRT. B) Mitigation to drastically minimize the new and constant noise, vibration, visual, and privacy impacts that LRT will introduce to the current infrequent rail use corridor. This includes supporting MPRB's presentation of LRT going under Cedar Lake Pkwy. C) Mitigation that maintains the current 'unobstructed views' and 'sense of open space' for the residential areas, bicycle/pedestrian trails, and parkland adjacent to LRT.

Additionally, we agree with the Minneapolis Park and Rec Board (MPRB) DEIS response as follows: A) We do not support freight co-location. B) We support further study of Cedar Lake Parkway crossing over LRT. C) We support maintaining bike and pedestrian paths' 'park-like setting' and 'sense of open space'. D) We support bike and pedestrian paths free from obstructions and adequate buffer on each side of all trails so that park users are not subject to LRT noise levels that exceed standards set for category 1. E) We support bike and pedestrian trails remaining the same or better quality and width as current trails. E) We support Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park and adjacent parkland remaining quiet, tranquil, and a natural setting.

We hope you take serious consideration of the facts and comments above, and look forward to your response.

Cheryl and Paul LaRue  
CIDNA homeowners  
LRT riders and bicyclists



"Gaines, Jason L"

12/17/2012 11:47 AM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>  
cc "'Jason Gaines'

bcc

Subject Southwest Corridor Opposition

The proposed SW light rail route, passing through Theodore Wirth Park, and other Minneapolis green space, should be reconsidered. If you can step back from this decision-making process, and carefully scrutinize the end goal of this project, a clarity exists that cannot be denied. If this project intends to alleviate the environmental impact caused by Minneapolis area commuters, please recognize the irony in permanently damaging the ecosystem of the city's most significant park to achieve this. I simply ask that economic considerations not be the primary variable considered for this decision. If we cannot afford to locate the light rail in an area where it makes the most sense, then the process should be delayed.

Thank you.

Jason Gaines

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**Molly Gaines**

12/17/2012 12:37 PM

Please respond to  
Molly GainesTo "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Opposition to lightrail through Theo Wirth

To Whom This May Concern:

I am writing to voice strong opposition to running the lightrail line down what is sure to be the cheapest, but the worst possible route for Golden Valley and, in particular, North Minneapolis. First, this line all but circumvents the people of north Minneapolis who most need public transportation. This is a huge point. It is not within walking distance for these residents. It is not convenient, and it is a lightly populated area that is very residential. There is no chance for surrounding businesses in north Minneapolis to prosper as there are virtually none in the area. This decision would leave north Minneapolis, once again, disconnected from the rest of the city. Secondly, it will destroy the peace and quiet of one of our city's most important outdoor areas: Wirth Park. It would be loud, with constant whistling, and scare away the area wildlife, as well as people who use the park. Wirth is prime -- if not already -- to become the city's top silent sports destinations. Hard to imagine how light rail would not completely destroy the beauty of this incredible area.

The choice of this route is simply bizarre. Other than financial, there are no good reasons for choosing a route that runs through our city's most precious park land, skirting around the areas that are most densely populated and most reliant on public transportation.

Sincerely,  
Molly Gaines



"Paul Krawczyk"

12/17/2012 12:39 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject I oppose the route through Theo Wirth Park vs. other possible options for the route

Good Day,

As a north Minneapolis resident, avid Wirth Park user and public transit user, I am oppose the proposed light rail route, passing through Theodore Wirth Park. If this project intends to alleviate the environmental impact caused by Minneapolis area commuters, it seems less than well thought out to me to damage the ecosystem of the city's most significant park to achieve this goal. In addition to the impact on the park, the more obvious fact that public transit is designed and invested in to help move the masses, it seems avoiding North Minneapolis is unfortunate. North Minneapolis would be losing out on transportation and commerce associated with a project like this. In my opinion the research has been solely economically driven as opposed to what our city really needs to make a positive transportation impact. Running the transit through the park and avoiding the north residences is a waste of money to the tax payers and avoids the majority of the potential users.

Paul Krawczyk





12/17/2012 03:24 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Southwest LRT DEIS

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a resident of the Kenwood neighborhood, my husband and I attended every meeting about Southwest LRT in our community; I do not feel our concerns were heard. We now have several concerns about the DEIS. Overall, **we support the response from the Kenwood Isles Area Association (KIAA)**. We live along the Kenilworth bike trail/existing railroad tracks.

Specifically, the following are our concerns:

**Noise:** Ours is a beautiful and very quiet neighborhood. I do not feel the noise mitigation proposed is adequate; we deserve the best mitigation possible. (chapter 4, page 4 – 84).

**Vibration:** We insist that detailed vibration assessments be done as early as possible to determine adequate mitigation measures (chapter 4, page 4 -118).

**Relocation of Freight Rail:** If the light rail is to go through the Kenilworth Corridor, the DEIS supports moving the freight trains that use the corridor now. We also support freight rail relocation. Co-location would mean the destruction of 60 homes, the taking of parkland, the elimination of trails and other adverse impacts.

**Station at 21<sup>st</sup> Street:** We need a study of traffic impacts and problems should be addressed to neighborhood satisfaction (chapter 2 page 2 -32).

**Park and Ride:** The DEIS projects a surface parking lot for 100 cars at 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Consistent with City of Minneapolis policy and KIAA, we oppose this park and ride (chapter 2, page 2 -32). This is not needed and will significantly deteriorate our neighborhood.

**Bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway:** The DEIS proposes a large cement bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway where the Kenilworth Trail crosses it. We think a bridge like this would be ugly, noisy and totally inappropriate for the area KIAA is requesting a feasibility study of trenching or tunneling the LRT at this intersection (chapter 3, page 3 – 115).

**Preservation of Cedar Lake Park and the Kenilworth Trail.** These are highly used, vibrant and valuable regional assets. We oppose land use changes beyond what is necessary for the LRT; existing park, trail and open green space should be preserved to the greatest extent possible (chapter 3, page 3 – 34).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia E. Marsh, PH.D.

Wendell Vandersluis

Confidentiality Notice: All information in this communication, including any files or attachments, is intended for the sole use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is confidential, proprietary and/or trade secret information entitled to protection and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender by return email and delete this communication from your system. Thank you for your cooperation.



12/17/2012 04:56 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Proposed Light Rail: not a fan

As a resident who lives a block away from the Kenilworth Trail, and as someone who moved from Linden Hills to Kenwood in order to get away from airplane noise, this plan to plop an LRT right next door to me is not pleasing. The draft environmental-impact statement for this route notes many problems with this segment, yet concludes that the tradeoffs make them acceptable. Well, they may be acceptable to people who don't live here, but they're not acceptable to me. I can't see a high demand for light rail in this neighborhood: wouldn't it be more sensible to locate it in a denser neighborhood? Just because there's a freight rail there already isn't really a great reason to put the LRT there.

If built as proposed the segment of the light-rail route in this corridor would destroy the quiet of this beautiful urban green space.

Why ruin one of the only remaining quiet areas on our Lakes? Must we always sacrifice the peace and quiet of neighborhoods so that people going through have a more convenient time of it? I live here: I work here. I need quiet to do my work here. If this light rail deal goes through, I hope my property values don't plummet. I have a lot of money invested in the house we live in here, and I pay hefty taxes, which I'm happy to do. But I'm not happy to sacrifice the quality of my life for "modest" benefits to air quality. I really hope this LRT doesn't happen this way, because it's a bad idea all around. Put it where people need it now: don't build it on the existing rail corridor for some future people.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Coe

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David Howd

12/17/2012 05:23 PM

To Southwest Corridor <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Suggested new alternate for St. Louis Park

Hello

My name is David Howd and I attended the public hearing held on November 14th.

Attached are 3 small pdf files with a very rough proposal for the route of the freight line through St. Louis park that was a point of concern at the meeting.

My proposal is to lower the line from Minnetonka Blvd to Hiway 7 into a sunken rail bed similar to what was in the location of the Midtown Greenway.

I do not consider it a comment on the DEIS but a suggested concept I developed based on the conditions of the relocation that I summarize below.

Please excuse me if you have already looked at this idea in some form or another. As an architect I did considerable site planning design work using images from Google Earth that are scaleable. The drawings may be somewhat difficult to read due to the very small scale used to make letter sized plots. I have done this as a planning graphic exercise but feel it perhaps may be of real value if not previously considered.

#### LOGIC FOR LOWERED TRACK IN ST. LOUIS PARK

The reason sated for needing to relocate the freight line from the current Kenilworth location mentions that the original freight line was cut off at Hiawatha Ave.

I think a more informative description would be " the freight line that originally ran on the sunken rail bed that extends east to west at approximately 29th street was re-routed around downtown Minneapolis in order to create the Midtown Greenway which would provide a bike path un-interrupted by crossing streets."

Essentially the VALUE of the lowered rail line to the street level traffic was given to the bikeway. The BURDEN of the rail line crossing streets and being adjacent to residential was put onto the Kenilworth line area.

Now for the Southwest Corridor to be built the BURDEN of the rail line crossing streets and being adjacent to residential is being transferred to the folks in St. Louis Park.

My proposal is to mitigate the BURDEN of the rail line crossing streets and being adjacent to residential by creating a VALUE of having the freight line running in a sunken rail bed through the south portion of the line in St. Louis Park particularly near the high school.

The proposed plan is very rough and may be deemed impractical by technical clearances and design factors of railroad lines and streets. It does have some details worked out if you study the small drawings closely, such as having Highway 7 go over the rail lines.

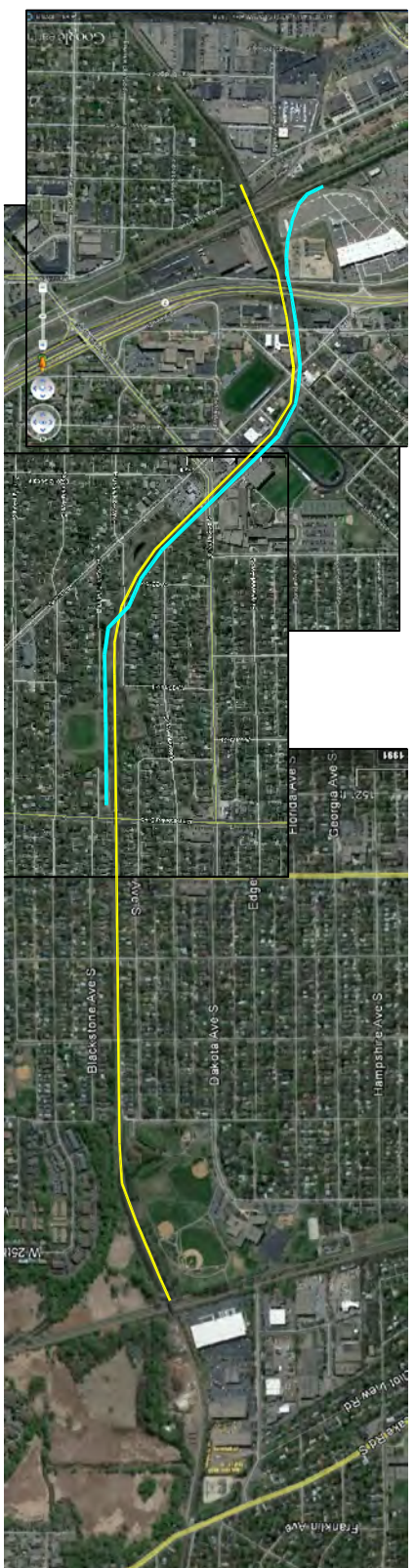
Thank you and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

I do not request any compensation for this planning. Please feel free to use these drawings in the best interests of the Southwest Corridor and Hennipen County.

David Howd

Length of MN&S rail line from south to north between connecting rail lines: 9,400 ft

Proposed length of MN&S line to be sunken to allow streets to pass over: 4,900 ft



**Partial plan of St. Louis Park  
(rotated with west to left)**      North →

Length of Midtown Greenway between Lake of the Asiles and Hiawatha Ave: 16,670 ft

Existing length of Midtown Greenway that is sunken to allow streets to pass over: 13,350 ft



**Partial plan of Minneapolis**      North ↑

**STUDY TO LOWER THE MN&S RAIL LINE  
BELOW STREET LEVEL IN ST. LOUIS PARK**  
Suggested proposal by David Howd

1 Mile

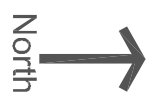
Date: December 17, 2012



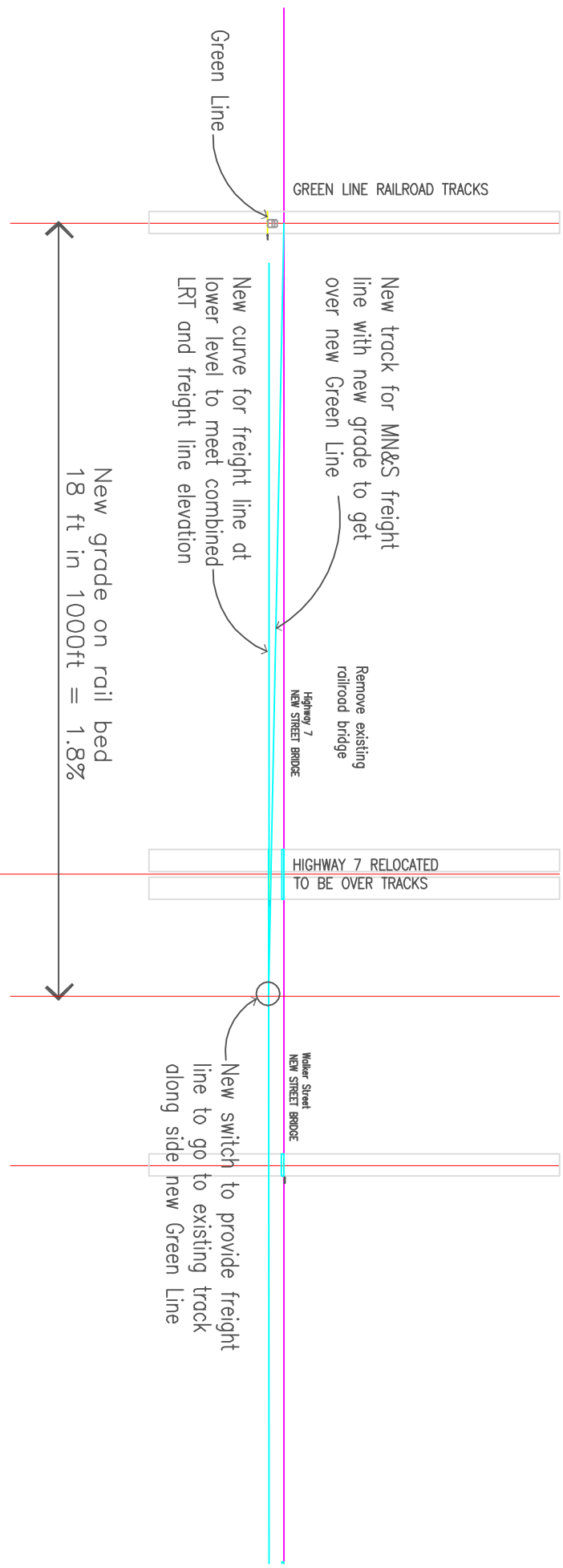
STUDY TO LOWER THE MN&S RAIL LINE  
 BELOW STREET LEVEL IN ST. LOUIS PARK  
 Suggested proposal by David Howd

# PLAN AT HIGH SCHOOL

Date: December 17, 2012



New entrances to HW 7 to increase distance for grade over lowered tracks with new HW 7 bridge over tracks with 800 ft ramp with 2.5% grade



STUDY TO LOWER THE MN&S RAIL LINE  
BELOW STREET LEVEL IN ST. LOUIS PARK  
Suggested proposal by David Howd

### SECTION AT HIGHWAY #7

Date: December 17, 2012



12/17/2012 08:21 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SW light rail comment

My name is Marcia E. Urban, I am a 20 year resident of this neighborhood and have lived in two home where either my back yard was the Kenilworth trail/train way or my front door.

Currently, the front door of my home faces the SW transit corridor. Trains will be running approximately two car lengths from my home. I will be greatly impacted by how the transit way will be developed.

I am a mass transit user as I take the bus to work downtown and I really appreciate the light rail to take to the airport which I do for both business and pleasure by making the connection from bus to rail. I look forward to a city with lots of options in transit, but I wish to comment on how the current proposal negatively impacts my life and my home.

First, the plan to have a fly over bridge will have the train running at my second level of my home where my bedrooms are located. There will be significant noise at this point as there is a curve in the transit way right before the bridge. This noise will severely impact my quality of life and sleep. A way to mitigate this would be to have a tunnel through this area or at least a covered trench of some sort. In addition, the vibration from the trains running every 3-1/2 to 5 minutes will impact the construction of my brick and stucco home.

I also will be very close to where the electric wires will be above the train. This is of course because my home will be approximately 2 car lengths from the transit way. These wires will be at the level of my second story or just above the roof line due to the rise of the bridge at approximately my home.

This bridge will also cut the Cedar/Dean/Isles neighborhood into two pieces. Currently we have a bike path that runs along the track and that crosses this transit way a few blocks south of my home and just about a block north of my home. There are children in our neighborhood who bike and run from their homes to the Park Siding Park and this above ground train track will impact the safety of getting to and from homes to the park and cedar lake.

I would like to see the Met council mitigate the safety, noise and visual concerns by considering a tunnel or a trench through this very, very narrow area of the transit way not cut our neighborhood in two with a bridge in the park system.

I look forward to hearing more on how you plan to address these concerns.  
Marcia urban



**Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form**  
 Southwest Transitway Project

RECEIVED  
 DEC 17 2012  
 BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

The Problem at the Cedar Lake Park / Kenilworth Trail crossing has been an insurmountable problem from the beginning. The available land simply isn't wide enough to accommodate 2 train tracks and the bike trail. Tunneling is not an option due to the water table. A large long concrete bridge will destroy the aesthetics and the property values.

This was a known problem that everyone (especially Gail Dorfman) chose to ignore! The proper decision was to route the trail east to Lyndale then north on Lyndale - (They're going to need a "spur" there anyway and the aggregate costs are the same. Instead they chose to "cost" the present route and not include the spur to Lyndale. This entire portion of the route should be revisited.

Don't the people along Lyndale deserve train service? Or is this just for people who chose to live in Eden Prairie. Why should mpls give up a nice park and property values for them?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: Mike Fadlovich \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you!**



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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Fadlovich/d'Autremont

MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

15 DEC 2012 PM 5 L



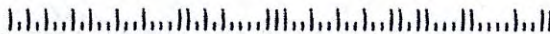
Hennepin County

Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400

Minneapolis, MN 55415

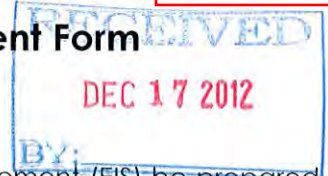
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# Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

## Southwest Transitway Project



Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS disc  
these altern

mpacts of

Comments  
date. Please

ed by that

Public hear  
[www.southv](http://www.southv)

lease visit

The area between Lake Street and Penn Avenue begins as a quiet residential neighborhood on either side of the Kenilworth Channel between Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake. This gives way to parkland along the east side of Cedar Lake. In the middle of this urban oasis runs a critical segment of the Minneapolis system of bicycle trails, used by hundreds of commuters and recreational bikers every day for much of the year.

This area has coexisted for decades in relative harmony with the remnants of a once-busier freight-rail corridor. The current daily handful of slow diesel trains poses little real disturbance. If built as proposed, however, the segment of the light-rail route in this corridor would fundamentally and irrevocably alter the character of this beautiful urban green space.

The infrastructure for electrically powered light-rail transit would permanently deface the entire area. Running more than 250 trains through this corridor each day from dawn to midnight would significantly diminish its desirability as a place to live. Property values would fall; tax revenue would drop accordingly. Some studies do show increased property values in proximity to light-rail lines, but they are not relevant to this project. For good reasons, light rail is not typically put in the midst of highly developed residential and recreational areas.

The visual impact of the needed infrastructure, combined with the noise and even the danger of more than 250 fast trains per day, would also greatly erode the attractiveness of this part of the recreational and commuter bicycle trail system. Many who now commute by bicycle might well choose to drive instead (which would be an ironic consequence of a project designed in part to reduce traffic). Recreational bicyclists will simply go elsewhere.

The project includes a station at W. 21st Street, a placement that makes no sense. This is an isolated location along parkland, not close to any major streets. It would be inconvenient to access; parking is limited, and a park-and-ride lot there would be contrary to Minneapolis policy. Serious questions have been raised about the actual use of this station, since local residents don't need it, given their proximity to downtown, and the appeal to suburban riders heading toward town is not obvious.

Name:

Barbara Lundgren

Thank you!



# SOUTHWEST transitway

Fold here

Lundgren

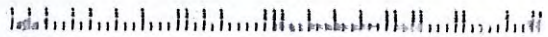
MINNEAPOLIS MN 554

15 DEC 2012 PM 5 L



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



Fold here



Kolean Pitner

12/18/2012 10:34 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT DEIS

Hello,

**I want to let you know that I wholeheartedly support the Kenwood Isles Area Association's response to the DEIS.** Relocation of the freight rail; a feasibility study of trenching or tunneling of the LRT at Cedar Lake Parkway; effective noise mitigation; preservation of green space; adverse visual impact mitigation; and study of traffic impact, light pollution, vibration and public safety are absolutely necessary for the successful implementation of this project.

I implore you to work with the KIAA to solve these issues in a positive and productive way.

Sincerely,  
Kolean Pitner

---

Kolean Pitner



"Hagen, James"

12/18/2012 10:52 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Business Owner

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm the President/Owner of American Dental Accessories in Saint Louis Park, MN. I wholeheartedly support the Southwest LRT train for myself, the office, and community. As a former resident of NYC, I fully realize the benefits of efficient public transportation, and given the climate in Minnesota we cannot rely on the current options, biking (as many of our employees do in the warmer months) and buses.

I'm looking forward to following the development of this project. Please let me know how I can help.

Kind regards,

James Hagen



**Susan Sanger**

12/18/2012 05:13 PM

To Katie Walker <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>,

cc

bcc

Subject DEIS comments -

Attached are comments responsive to the DEIS issued for the SWLRT project.  
Susan Sanger

swlrt

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES WITH SWLRT DEIS

**Current status:** The Draft Environmental Impact Statement recommends route 3A as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and route 3A-1 is the only other option receiving any consideration. Both options use the same route for SWLRT; the primary difference is that 3A requires rerouting of freight rail traffic from existing Kenilworth corridor in Minneapolis to the MNS route in St. Louis Park, while 3A-1 co-locates freight rail within the Kenilworth corridor, parallel to the LRT tracks. MNS is not a mainline freight track, but rather an old electric passenger corridor that runs among four residential neighborhoods.

**Major issues:** I am a strong supporter of SWLRT. However, the DEIS arbitrarily selects route 3A without addressing numerous issues, which, if analyzed, would lead to the selection of route 3A-1, the co-location route. Specifically:

- 1. The DEIS concludes that the preferred route 3-A will cost approximately \$23M more to construct than route 3A-1, yet provides no explanation of why such excess expenditure should be considered acceptable to taxpayers. (Ch 8, as revised, DEIS). This estimate also understates the costs associated with route 3A – see paragraphs 3 and 4, below. This is not fiscally responsible.**
- 2. The DEIS contains only minimal review of route 3A-1.** It contains no analysis of a study prepared for St. Louis Park that demonstrates how co-location can be constructed within the Kenilworth corridor, at a savings of many millions of dollars. The DEIS contains no analysis of how co-location may be accomplished by the rerouting of a half mile of bike trail currently within the Kenilworth corridor, although it is obvious that moving a short stretch of bike trail will be much cheaper and easier than moving freight rail operations - which entails, among other identified costs, the construction of a new railroad trestle bridge over one mile long with the trains running 50+ft. high in the air, the construction of another rail interconnect, and the rebuilding of several miles of additional tracks. The DEIS appears to base its' route recommendation on a conclusion that co-location would require the use of .81 acre of parkland, which it deems unacceptable per 49 USC 303 and 23 USC 138 – even though the railroad currently uses tracks in that parkland, and has for many years. However, the DEIS fails to contain the required analysis to establish why route 3A-1 would be a “feasible and prudent” alternative, as those statutes require. In fact, the statutory standards specifically include consideration of economic/financial impacts among the factors that may justify use of parkland for transportation purposes.
- 3. The DEIS fails to include analysis of mitigating measures that would be necessary if freight rail is rerouted to the MNS route.** The only mitigating measure suggested is the establishment of Whistle Quiet Zones at at-grade roadway intersections, as a purported method to control the noise of railroad horns. However, since these intersections are closely spaced among several blind curves of track, railroad managers have already publicly stated (in their EAW comments and at a public meeting) that they would have to blow their horns for safety reasons, thus negating any possible noise mitigation benefit. No other



mitigating measures are proposed to deal with adverse impacts from noise or vibration, for traffic difficulties at at-grade rail crossings (longer trains would simultaneously block four crossings), for safety concerns such as potential derailments of trains carrying hazardous substances or trespassers on tracks, for interruptions of classes at St. Louis Park High School (where the track is just a few feet from classrooms and snakes between the school and its' athletic field), or to create a buffer strip between the tracks and nearby homes (the tracks are adjacent to the back yards of many dozens of homes, some as close as 34 ft.) The city of St. Louis Park has provided a list of necessary mitigation measures and estimated their cost to be greater than \$50M, **thus bringing the cost of route 3A-1 to be at least \$73M more than the selected route 3-A. The cost of some needed mitigation measures has not yet been estimated – for example, the means of mitigating the high trestle bridge described above has not been determined, so these costs are currently unknown. The DEIS ignores or dismisses these requirements.**

4. **The DEIS fails to consider and analyze freight railroad operational issues.** For example, if freight rail is rerouted on the MNS tracks through St. Louis Park, it would have to merge onto the busy tracks owned by another railroad (BNSF) in order to reach its' current destinations. Railroad management has already stated this is quite problematic and will cause delays. The DEIS fails to identify any practical way the trains would be able to turn south onto the MNS tracks to reach the port at Savage. The views and preferences of the railroads are not reflected in the DEIS, making it difficult to assess whether rerouted freight traffic (as part of route 3A) is feasible, practical, and desired by railroad management. **The DEIS omits any analysis of whether any of the affected railroads have agreed to these arrangements, the costs of doing so, and whether any unit of government will reimburse the railroads for these costs – thus potentially raising the cost of route 3A even higher.**
5. **The DEIS lacks objectivity.** (a) The DEIS proposes taking/demolishing many homes in the Kenilworth corridor but does not commit to taking any homes along the MNS tracks, even though many homes along the MNS route are much closer to the tracks than those in Kenilworth. (b) Many subjective assessments and conclusions are made without specifying the relevant criteria, and with contradictory results. For example, disruptions to community cohesion are deemed significant in the Kenilworth corridor, due to trains dividing neighborhoods, but if the same trains are moved to the MNS route, no such disruption is predicted for the adjacent neighborhoods in St. Louis Park. No reason for this discrepancy, or many other similar comparisons, is provided.
6. **The DEIS bases its conclusions on incorrect and incomplete data comparisons which overstate the adverse land use impacts of 3A-1 (co-location) and understate the negative impacts of 3A (reroute).** For example, in comparing land uses, including number of homes adjacent to the tracks, data for route 3A (reroute) is supplied for land uses along the north-south MNS tracks but omits data for land uses adjacent to the BNSF tracks east of the Iron Triangle, onto which the trains would merge from the MNS tracks. Conversely, land use data supplied for route 3A-1 (co-location) actually includes data not only for the

Kenilworth corridor but also data for land uses adjacent to the BNSF tracks north and east of that corridor, stretching into downtown Minneapolis – a track segment which is common to both the 3A and 3A-1 routes.

7. **The DEIS appears to be tainted by socioeconomic/political considerations.** It describes the homes along the Kenilworth corridor as “high income” but fails to address the economic justice issues presented along the 3A route. For example, it omits mention of the number of affordable housing units and the food shelf along the MNS tracks and high proportion of students at the adjacent high school who are eligible for free/reduced lunch.
8. **Hennepin County has provided inadequate public process – apparently designed to ignore the freight rail issue:** (a) The DEIS is very similar, and in places verbatim copied, from the Environmental Assessment Worksheet prepared earlier for SWLRT. The DEIS contains no analysis or response to the numerous public comments about freight rail which were submitted before the EAW was vacated, including but not limited to many comments which explained that 3A-1 (co-location) would be feasible, cheaper, and safer to construct and operate. (b) The DEIS includes a policy goal of facilitating smooth freight rail traffic within the metro area – a goal that was not included in any prior policy discussions or documents regarding SWLRT. This goal appears to have been inserted to “justify” moving freight rail traffic from the Kenilworth corridor, even though both routes permit through traffic. (c) The SWLRT Policy Advisory Committee, which selected the Locally Preferred Alternative route through the Kenilworth corridor, was prohibited by its’ chair from any discussion of freight rail issues. Committee members were informed that this decision had been made by FTA staff, though no documentation was provided; thus, committee members did not have the opportunity to consider the issues noted herein in selecting among route options, several of which did not have any freight rail implications. Similarly, until recently community “open houses” about SWLRT did not contain any mention of freight rail issues, thus limiting public input. (d) The DEIS acknowledges that Hennepin County decided in the mid-1990’s that freight trains would be rerouted to the MNS tracks, but fails to acknowledge that this decision was made without any known economic, environmental, or engineering studies and without any consultation with the city of St. Louis Park and its’ residents.

**Requested Action:** In a September, 2011 letter, the FTA authorized preliminary engineering for SWLRT, specifically requiring DEIS analysis of the co-location route. As shown above, the DEIS includes almost no analysis of that route, thus appearing to violate the order. Due to the above and many other concerns, there is widespread public distrust of Hennepin County and its’ DEIS preparation process, and several lawsuits have been threatened and appear imminent, which would have the unfortunate effect of delaying or preventing construction of SWLRT. I suggest that the FTA or Metropolitan Council order either (a) reopening of the LPA route selection process or (b) re-analysis and modification of the DEIS by independent experts, not previously involved in DEIS preparation, followed by another public comment period.



**BrimGroup@aol.com**  
12/18/2012 05:35 PM

To  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: DEIS comments - .us

Is this the city position or what??

jb

In a message dated 12/18/2012 5:13:41 P.M. Central Standard Time, [suesanger@comcast.net](mailto:suesanger@comcast.net) writes:

Attached are comments responsive to the DEIS issued for the SWLRT project.  
Susan Sanger

swlrt



Susan Sanger

12/18/2012 07:08 PM

To: Katie Walker <[swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us)>,

cc

bcc

Subject: Fwd: DEIS comments - clarification

In case there is any confusion: these are my personal comments, not those of the City of St. Louis Park.

Sue Sanger

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Susan Sanger

**Subject:** DEIS comments -

**Date:** December 18, 2012 5:13:37 PM CST

**To:** Katie Walker <[swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us)>, Jim & Pam Brimeyer <[brimgroup@aol.com](mailto:brimgroup@aol.com)>, [steve.elkins@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:steve.elkins@metc.state.mn.us)

Attached are comments responsive to the DEIS issued for the SWLRT project.  
Susan Sanger

swlrt



Kate christianson

12/18/2012 07:33 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Kenwood Resident Weighs In

I'm all for streamlined access to downtown, but not at the expense the peacefulness and relaxation of the bike trail--which, in and of itself, is a major draw from throughout the metro area. I am opposed to any large-scale development project that travels through a neighborhood well-loved for its history, quiet and peacefulness.

Be very, very careful not to destroy the integrity of Minneapolis' most revered neighborhood. If there has to be light rail there, by all means find a way to have the trains run underground.

Thank you.



**James & Maru Schwebel**

December 17, 2012

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. #400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Sir/Madam:

My wife and I reside at \_\_\_\_\_ in Minneapolis.

We certainly feel that as much as possible the light rail should be buried, or put in deep trench. The entire area which is now the Midtown Greenway was originally a deep trench constructed for trains passing through Minneapolis around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

To the extent that tunneling or trenching is not accomplished I would hope consideration would be given to state of the art acoustical barriers and berming.

Yours sincerely,

James R. Schwebel

James R. Schwebel

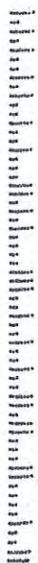


Hasler

012H16208038  
\$00.450  
Mailed From 55402  
12/17/2012  
US POSTAGE

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
Attn: Southwest Transitway  
701 4th Avenue S, #400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541581843 0083





"Jeff Roy, Summit Hill  
Association"

12/19/2012 01:19 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Letter from SLP residents re DEIS

December 19, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing in response to the *Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)* . We whole-heartedly support the SWLRT as a system, but have many concerns regarding the proposed freight rail re-route plan in St. Louis Park. We support the co-location of freight and the SWLRT in the Kenilworth Corridor.

We have long been active residents in the St. Louis Park Lenox Neighborhood and in the Lenox Neighborhood Association (LNA) – recognized by the City as the citizen participation organization representing residents and businesses within our neighborhood boundaries. Jeff was the LNA President 1993 to 1998, and was deeply involved in discussions with former Mayor Gail Dorfman and city staff in the mid to late 1990's when the City was studying the proposed freight rail re-route issue. LNA was opposed to the re-route. The City Council eventually voted to oppose a proposed re-route of freight from the current Kenilworth Corridor to the MS&S spur line unless it was found unfeasible to keep it in the Kenilworth. Today, the LNA still opposes the re-route of freight rail onto the MN&S spur line and made that again official in a resolution in 2011.

The data used in the creation of the *Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)* to evaluate the proposed freight re-route does not include the studies conducted by the City of St. Louis Park or those by the citizen group Safety in the Park. These studies show that the co-location of the SWLRT and freight traffic in the Kenilworth would be the cheapest and safest alternative; and the least disruptive to the most residents and small businesses. In addition, the TC&W railroad that currently carries the freight in the Kenilworth has indicated that it does not want the re-route of freight traffic onto the MN&S. This is because the Kenilworth route is the shortest, straightest and most level route. It is clear that huge financial incentives would need to be offered to the TC&W in order for it to use the longer, more capital expensive route...and all at additional tax payer expense!

The proposed re-route of freight rail traffic from the Kenilworth Corridor to the MN&S line makes no sense fiscally, environmentally, nor for the safety of homeowners, children, small businesses and motorists who would be impacted. But specifically, we here share are concerns about safety as follows:

- There are five schools within a half-mile of the re-route (with the SLP High School building within 75 feet of the tracks!); while there are no schools along what would be the co-location route in the Kenilworth.



· The allowable speed limit for re-routed freight traffic on the MN&S would increase from current 10 mph to 25 mph. As it is, trains cannot stop on a dime for emergencies; and with the longer – up to mile-long trains that would be re-routed to this spur line, we understand it would take at least a mile to make an emergency stop (please read child or car on tracks).

· With longer mile-long trains, the re-routed freight cars would simultaneously block six crossings several times a day – taking 10 minutes or more for trains to clear an intersection. Given the curves and grades along the MS&S line, these re-routed trains would not be able to safely travel at 25 mph – thereby potentially increasing the blocking of traffic for more than 20 minutes and 10 times a day! There are four blind curves within a mile of each other on the MN&S line which adds to the potential for future train derailments – as we have seen only too much nationally – increasing with increased speed.

· The safety of thousands of school children and staff at the SLP High School are at risk with this proposed re-route and longer & more frequent trains. The track is between the High School and a McDonald's franchise, and the school's athletic field – posing a serious threat to student safety even with improved crossing arms. It is unreasonable to expect no pedestrian accidents in this area - particularly since youth can be more impulsive and risk taking.

The proposed freight re-route is a very unwise proposal. It is costly to tax payers, unsafe, and totally unnecessary as the current traffic can stay in the Kenilworth Corridor and be co-located with the proposed SWLRT traffic.

Sincerely,

Jeff Roy and Jeanne Stevens

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--- the forwarded message follows ---

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**To** <sw@co.hennepin.mn.us>,

gm

December 19, 2012

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The proposed freight re-route is a very unwise proposal. It is costly to tax payers, unsafe, and totally unnecessary as the current traffic can stay in the Kenilworth Corridor and be co-located with the proposed SWLRT traffic.

Sincerely,

Jeff Roy and Jeanne Stevens

--



"PAUL LEUTGEB"

T.NET>

12/19/2012 05:05 PM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject Southwest Light Rail

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am enclosing my comment on the EIS by attachment which contains my letterhead including full name and address and telephone number.

Let us hope that this massively expensive and ill conceived disaster can somehow be averted.

Sincerely yours,

Paul F. Leutgeb

**PAUL F. LEUTGEB  
DIANE J. CAMP, M.D.**

December 19, 2012

[SWCORRIDOR@CO.HENNEPIN.MN.US](mailto:SWCORRIDOR@CO.HENNEPIN.MN.US)

Re: Environmental Impact Statement for Southwest Rail

Dear Sir/Madam:

The exceptional article by Dr. Goldsmith in the Star Tribune last Friday was perfectly on point in stating that the environmental impact of running the proposed light rail trains about 100 yards from our home will be to destroy our neighborhood. Dr. Goldsmith's larger concern was that the trains would destroy the wilderness area as a recreational site enjoyed by so many for walking and bicycling between our home near Cedar Lake and downtown Minneapolis.

My major concern is that by running the proposed rail line through a nature preserve, the fundamental purpose of light rail, which is to provide mass transportation, is completely vitiated. Building an expensive rail station in the woods where no one will get on or off the train is an exercise in utter lunacy. It simply mystifies me to learn that the train will be run where no passengers will have any need or opportunity to get on or off as they will be riding in the beautiful and picturesque setting of a nature preserve. Would it not make more sense to run the trains down the 29<sup>th</sup> street rail corridor, through the uptown area and into downtown on Hennepin or Nicollet or some other major street where thousands of potential passengers would have access to mass transportation? I have heard the laughably dismissive argument that those potential passengers can ride the bus for mass transit. *Now the same issues are coming up in Golden Valley with another proposed light rail line that planners want to run through a nature preserve rather than route the trains through north Minneapolis where passengers would have access and ability to use mass transit.*

I understand that the fundamental flaw in planning projects like southwest light rail is that the vast majority of the money comes from the federal government and is viewed as "free money," by the planners. It makes it possible to ignore common sense principles like running the trains where a maximum number of potential passengers can have access to mass transportation. Instead, the trains get run where the suburban passengers can have a picturesque trip and the fundamental purpose of light rail, to provide mass transportation, is completely ignored and totally avoided while the "free money," from our federal government gets shamefully wasted. None of this touches on principles of common sense and good judgment and ignores long established practical experience which confirms that not one of these light rail lines is capable of producing sufficient revenue from rider fees to be self supporting. Every one of the lines has to be subsidized by the taxpayers on an annual basis forever. Running the trains through the woods just makes the revenue picture even more dismal than it would otherwise be.

Sincerely yours,

Paul F. Leutgeb



"Bob Brockway"

12/20/2012 10:56 AM

To <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT Comments

Dear Sir:

I live in the Calhoun Isles condo complex which is just east/north of the future West Lake Street LRT station. I believe the SW LRT should be constructed, but **only if it is done right** and that means not destroying the Kenilworth bike trail, path and park environment. This also means not subjecting the people who live near the proposed route to even moderate impact.

CONCERNS:

1. My major concern is that the LRT designers will use the excuse that the project can not afford doing it right. If such is the case, then let's build only the length that can be afforded and do the rest when more money is available. Make it a show piece that you can be proud of, not a horrible eye sore and a destroyer of neighborhoods.
2. The space between the Calhoun Isles condos and the Cedar Shore town house condos is too narrow for two LRT tracks, the Kenilworth bike and walking trail, and at the same time, avoid significantly impacting those people living in those condos. The only way to do this is to place the LRT in a ditch with an enclosed sound barrier.
3. Grade crossings at Cedar Lake Pkwy and at the Belt Line Blvd will produce huge bottlenecks for traffic. That's OK for passengers living in Eden Prairie, but not for the locals.
  - 3.1 Sunset Blvd and Cedar Lake Pkwy converge to cross the LRT tracks at the south east corner of Cedar Lake. These two streets have always relieved pressure on West Lake Street. A grade crossing would significantly reduce traffic flow. The option of placing a LRT bridge over this intersection is a giant step backward. What a terrible thing that would be for the park and the South Cedar Lake bathing beach environment. The LRT must go under the road. Even New York City doesn't put their trains across Central Park.
  - 3.2 Belt Line Blvd is the only north south street available to cross the proposed LRT tracks between Highway 100 and Lake Calhoun. That's a distance of over a mile. With gates going down every three to four minutes, traffic will be backed up to Highway 7/5 which is only a few hundred yards north. At the time a RR right-a-way was granted, I'm sure Belt Line was not a heavily traveled four lane road.
4. The bell noise from the LRT, when entering the West Lake Street station, is a concern. An enclosed sound barrier is critical to prevent this bell noise from being amplified to the high floors in the Calhoun Isles towers.

I hope that you give these thoughts proper consideration. It's the residents and park visitors of Minneapolis who are being told to accept the down sides of an LRT planned through their parks and neighborhoods. The Met Council's own studies show that, in the future, the city will grow much more than the suburbs so these parks, beaches, and neighborhoods must be preserved now or they will be forever lost.

Robert M. Brockway



**Beth Swedberg**

12/20/2012 02:39 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject SW LRT crossing at Cedar Lake Parkway

To whom it may concern,

I have been a resident at 33 Park Lane in Mpls for 17 years. I support the development of light rail for the metro area. I am opposed to an at grade or above grade crossing at Cedar Lake Parkway. Please seriously consider a trench option for the LRT and trails with the auto traffic crossing slightly above grade. This area is extremely busy all year round with overload levels of auto, pedestrian and bike traffic spring/summer/fall as one would expect of the "Grand Rounds" route. Please do not add the additional burden of 250 to 350 trains per day at grade and for goodness sake please do not elevate the train. The noise and lights and overall impact will seriously affect the quality of life, property values (and subsequent tax revenue) as well as safety at this important intersection.

Thank you,

Beth Swedberg



"Kirkham, James MD"

12/20/2012 08:21 PM

To "swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us"  
<swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject: Light rail

From: James Kirkham

Dear Decision maker,

The area from along the Kennilworth Corridor is unique. This is a very quiet but heavily used natural area.

A beach is at the south end of Cedar Lake and another quiet beach on Cedar Lake just west of 21<sup>st</sup> street. A bike trail accompanies the current freight rail line.

There is a connection via a channel between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles with very heavy use by canoes/kayaks and paddleboards in the summer and skiers and pedestrians in the winter on the ice when the channel is frozen.

Currently it has a feel of being in the country—not a urban feel—very quiet.

In addition this area has the intersection of Cedar lake Rd and the bike trail/rail line with the grand rounds bike trail. The Grand Rounds are a candidate for the national Register of Historic Places.

The current preferred option would cause much harm in excessive noise/vibration and visually harmfully impact the Park Like feeling.

The proposed 'fly over' bridge is unacceptable as the noise and negative visual affect would destroy much of the unique character in this area. Putting a structure the size of that bridge and its' pilings in that area would destroy a precious jewel along the Grand Rounds. Thousands of pedestrians and bikers would have to deal with that change as well as the autos and the persons living and visiting the area.

Ideally a tunnel from north of 21<sup>st</sup> to Lake would be constructed that courses under the Kennilworth channel between Lake of the Isles and Cedar.

If that is not feasible, the Minneapolis Park Board has put forth a proposal to trench the light rail line from Kennilworth Channel to south of the Cedar Lake Road intersection with Burnham Road and the bike trails. One of their trenching options should be adapted if tunneling is not possible.

Some of the options put forth by the Park Board that envision trenching add safety separating the bike crossing from the rail and automobile traffic.

Safety should be of concern to you with the final result improving safety—certainly not putting and at grade crossing where two major bike trails intersect with automobile traffic and nearly 200 train crossings a day many after dark.

I would ask you to also consider trenching/tunneling under 21<sup>st</sup> to mitigate noise and impact. If 21<sup>st</sup> were trenched/tunneled then the adjacent beach and parks would not have the negative additional impact of noise with crossing signals/horns.

#### Summary

1. Very unique quiet area in proposed route of LRT
2. Tunnel or trench at Cedar Lake Road intersection because
  - a. Decrease noise of crossing signals/train



- b. Increase safety by separate bike and rail/auto traffic.
  - c. Markedly decreased negative visual/noise impact of a fly over bridge
- 3. Consider trench option at 21<sup>st</sup> because
  - a. Decrease noise of crossing signals/train
  - b. Increase safety by separate bike and rail/auto traffic.
- 4. A tunnel would be the only option that would preserve the 'out of the city' feel of canoeing/paddle boarding/kayaking/biking/skiing thru the channel and bike trails that is currently present. Please determine the cost and plausibly engineering options for such a tunnel.

Thank you,  
James Kirkham

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Privacy Notice:

The information transmitted in this e-mail is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material, including "protected health information". If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, retransmission, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this message is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please destroy and delete this message from any computer and contact us immediately by return e-mail.



## Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

### Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

I have been in support of the SW LRT through the Kenwood neighborhood since I first heard about the possibility in 2005. And, I'm really excited about having a station at W. 21<sup>st</sup> St. -- 2 blocks from my house.

My main concern is safety -- especially at the street crossings. Secondly, I'm concerned about the noise -- especially after 10pm. I'm against co-location of the freight trains and light rail both traveling in the same corridor (Kenilworth).

In general, I'm in support of public transportation for its environmental and economic benefits and look forward to riding the SW LRT in both directions -- to downtown Minneapolis, the Mall of America, the airport, Hopkins, and Eden Prairie. Our neighborhood has very limited access to public transportation -- only during rush hours, Mon-Fri.

I'd like to help make the Kenilworth route and the 21<sup>st</sup> St. station a reality by working with my neighbors and appropriate agencies.

Name: Kathy Williams

Thank you!

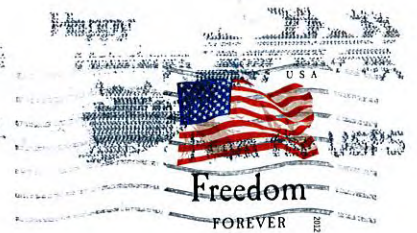


# SOUTHWEST transitway

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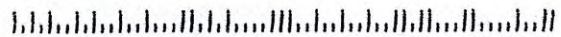


Mr. and Mrs. Roy S. Williams



Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5541581843 0089



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## Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Form

### Southwest Transitway Project

Federal and state environmental rules require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for the proposed Southwest Transitway project. The EIS process includes the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which must be made available for public review and comment.

The DEIS discusses: (1) the purpose and need for the project; (2) the alternatives considered; (3) the impacts of these alternatives; and (4) the agencies and persons consulted.

**Comments on the DEIS will be accepted through December 11, 2012. All comments must be received by that date. Please include a return mailing address with all comments.**

**Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012.** To learn more about the hearings, please visit [www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

- Have main parking lot by Whole Foods for Park + Ride and no parking lot at 21<sup>st</sup> St, as this would destroy the quiet residential character of the area.
- Have a tunnel and not a bridge crossing the tracks on Cedar Lake ~~Parkway~~. Again, a bridge is visually very unfitting for the area and too large.
- Regular freight trains should not be routed through Kenilworth
- Environmental impact study is very important due to close by lakes
- Trenches for noise reduction + to increase safety by discenting crossing outside of planned redaction crossings.

Name: Stephanie Lauenstein + William Mullen

Thank you!



# SOUTHWEST transitway

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Mullien

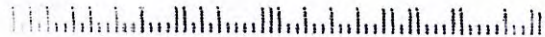
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Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

55415184300



Fold here



Jennifer Hicks  
12/21/2012 11:34 AM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Kenilworth Neighborhood Concerns

Hello,

As a recent home owner along the Southwest Corridor that is being considered for the new light rail route, I have some concerns regarding how the project will impact the community.

My house is a Platinum LEED certified home (the third in MN) and one of my greatest pleasures is the ability to have my windows and skylights open from May through October for the fresh air and "climate control" it provides my home without me having to use the artificial services of an air conditioner. The health benefits of the fresh air, the economic benefits of "free temperature control" and the environmental benefits of not using energy or artificial coolant are all significant advantages of my home, which I chose to build in the quiet and serene, yet populated, area of Minneapolis.

All of these benefits would be *significantly* reduced - if not completely eliminated - by poor noise and route planning on the part of the SW Transit Authority. This would essentially reduce the functionality as an environmentally responsible and forward-thinking property. LEED certification is an effort to improve the community, environment, and lifestyle of the owners - having approximately 250 high-speed trains within 30' of my home essentially ruins all my good efforts.

The "flyover bridge" will also conspicuously alter the feel and livability of the community, creating for major changes in the traffic patterns, lifestyles and community activities that take place along that area. The beach at Cedar Lake is a vital component to the community, allowing for families to play, children to learn and grow, and people to gather. Creating a higher-speed thoroughfare alongside the parks and beach will remove those options from the lives of the residents, lessening the reasons people would chose the neighborhood. Residential areas create themselves in the look, feel and attitude appropriate to the region and the lifestyles of the residents. Imposing such an eyesore as well as incompatible functioning interchange will hurt the community, have a negative impact on people's lives as well as property values, and severely harm the beauty of the Kenwood area.

Due to the frequency and rapid speed of the trains, I am greatly concerned for the noise in what is considered one of the most peaceful and family-friendly neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. Many families that live along the corridor have play spaces in their backyards that would be compromised by the loss of safety and the increase of noise - parents would be unable to hear children play, children would not hear parents calling for them, and everyone would have to live with windows shut and doors closed in order to live without the noise and increased dust and debris in their homes.

While the residents of the area have been largely ignored in the interest of what the Transit Authority is pushing upon up, I do sincerely hope our concerns will be considered while the project is being developed in a part of the city where it is completely inappropriate, unnecessary and undesired.

Thank you for your consideration. I do hope these comments will be read and discussed. Many

people have lives and families that have grown up and settled in the Kenwood, Dean, CIDNA and associated neighborhoods for reasons, and this light rail will remove that option for future families.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer I Hicks



12/21/2012 01:46 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc mmcmonigal@stlouispark.org

bcc

Subject SWLRT-DEIS - comment from Marc Berg, St. Louis Park

Attached as a PDF is my comment on the SWLRT-DEIS.

Please let me know that you have received this.

Thanks,

Marc M. Berg



**Marc M. Berg**

December 21, 2012

**VIA EMAIL ONLY** ([swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us))

Hennepin County  
Housing, Community Works & Transit  
ATTN: Southwest Transitway  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Southwest Light Rail Transit Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“SWLRT-DEIS”)

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have lived in St. Louis Park for 19 years, and in the Birchwood neighborhood for almost 17 years. I served at the Birchwood neighborhood alternate to the Project Management Team (the “PMT”) that studied and discussed the impact of the proposed freight rail re-route under consideration as part of the Southwest Light Rail Transit (“SWLRT”) project. I am submitting this comment to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (the “DEIS”) for the SWLRT, which I understand to be open for public comment through December 31, 2012.

Like other residents of St. Louis Park, I have serious concerns about the negative impact that the proposed re-route of freight rail traffic along the MN&S line will have on the city. Over the past few years that I have followed this issue, I have been unable to understand why the government officials planning the SWLRT have apparently pre-judged the re-route as a preferred alternative to co-locating the new SWLRT with the existing freight rail in the Kenilworth corridor (the “co-location” alternative), or why they have concluded that co-location is either impossible, or so undesirable that opting for co-location would kill the SWLRT project itself. I have always seen the re-route as ***a horrendously bad idea, on many levels***, and I have struggled to understand why the re-route is treated as a precondition to moving forward with SWLRT. The DEIS, unfortunately, fails to provide any satisfactory reasons as to why the SWLRT cannot be built without the re-route.

I have reviewed the DEIS and I believe that the authors have incorrectly concluded that federal law would ***prohibit*** co-location as a viable alternative. Chapter 11, page 12 (“Page 11-12”) of the DEIS states that because co-location would require the acquisition of .81 acre of Cedar Laker Park, and because other alternatives (i.e., the LPA/re-route alternative) would not, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation would be legally prohibited from approving co-location under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, 49 U.S.C. § 303 and 23 U.S.C. § 138 (hereinafter “Section 4(f)” or “the statute”). The DEIS’s discussion the facts relating to a Section 4(f) analysis,

and the rationale as to why Section 4(f) is implicated, is set forth in Chapter 7 of the DEIS (“Section 4(f) Evaluation”).<sup>1</sup>

I believe that the DEIS concludes that co-location would be “prohibited” because the authors of the DEIS have deliberately misconstrued the statute. Page 11-12 of the DEIS states that “[t]he use of park property is significant,” because Section 4(f) “prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving a project that requires the use of publicly owned land of a public park . . . of . . . local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction over the resource), unless the agency can demonstrate that: [t]here is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land; and [t]he action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.” The DEIS continues to state that the acquisition of less than an acre of Cedar Lake Park is a Section 4(f) use – presumably, because Cedar Lake Park has been designated as “of local significance” by officials having jurisdiction – and that “[b]ecause this Draft EIS has presented other feasible and prudent alternatives to LRT 3A-1 (co-location alternative), this alternative cannot be recommended as the environmentally preferred alternative.” This passage at page 11-12 appears to be the legal “linchpin” of the DEIS’s rationale for rejecting co-location as a viable option.

The language of Section 4(f) itself, however, appears to give the U.S. Department of Transportation far greater flexibility in approving projects involving the use of public parks, recreation areas, etc. than what the authors of the DEIS would have us believe. The pertinent language of Section 4(f) is as follows:

**Approval of Programs and Projects.** Subject to subsection (d), the Secretary may approve a transportation program or project (other than any project for a park road or parkway under section [204](#) of title [23](#)) requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if—

- (1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and
- (2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.

See 49 U.S.C. § 303(c).

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<sup>1</sup> My comments below assume, for the sake of discussion, that the acquisition of .81 acres of park land is a Section 4(f) use. See, for example, DEIS, at Page 7-5 (“At this time, these publicly owned properties are assumed to qualify for Section 4(f) protection based on the criteria set forth in 23 C.F.R. § 774”). Recently, another St. Louis Park resident, Mr. Ryan Edstrom, made a presentation to the St. Louis Park City Council in which he argued that the DEIS is incorrect when it states that co-location would impact .81 acres of park land – and, therefore, Section 4(f) is not implicated. I understand that Mr. Edstrom is an engineer by training, and I would encourage you to review his written comments on the DEIS as well. Obviously, if Mr. Edstrom is correct, there is no need for any analysis under Section 4(f), and the co-location alternative cannot be rejected for the reasons argued at Page 11-12 of the DEIS.

Thus, Section 4(f) does not – as the DEIS suggests – state that the Secretary is “prohibited” from approving a project that would involve the acquisition of locally-significant park property “unless” there is no feasible and prudent alternative to using the land. Instead, Section 4(f) states that the Secretary “may” approve the project “only if” there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using the land. The DEIS has attempted to characterize Section 4(f) as being far more restrictive than it actually is.

More importantly, however, the DEIS contains no explanation whatsoever as to how its authors concluded that re-route was a “prudent” alternative. As outlined in Section 4(f), a rejection of co-location in favor of re-route would necessarily require a finding that re-route is both “feasible” and “prudent.” The terms “feasible” and “prudent” as used in Section 4(f) are defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, at 23 CFR § 774.17 (“*Feasible and prudent avoidance alternative*”). Under Section 774.17, an alternative is “not feasible if it cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment.” Whether an alternative is ***prudent***, however, requires a more thorough and careful evaluation of a number of factors listed under subpart 3 of the definition of “feasible and prudent avoidance alternative” in Section 774.17. Under 23 C.F.R. § 774.17, an alternative is not prudent if:

- (i) It compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need;
- (ii) It results in unacceptable safety or operational problems;
- (iii) After reasonable mitigation, it still causes:
  - (A) Severe social, economic, or environmental impacts;
  - (B) Severe disruption to established communities;
  - (C) Severe disproportionate impacts to minority or low income populations; or
  - (D) Severe impacts to environmental resources protected under other Federal statutes;
- (iv) It results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- (v) It causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
- (vi) It involves multiple factors in paragraphs (3)(i) through (3)(v) of this definition, that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

**No where does the DEIS contain any explanation or analysis as to how or why it concluded, based upon the factors listed above, that the re-route fits the definition of a “prudent” alternative within the meaning of Sections 4(f) and 27 C.F.R. § 774.17.** Furthermore, I believe that if the DEIS took an honest look at the detrimental impact that the re-route will have on St. Louis Park, it would conclude that re-route is **not** a “prudent” alternative – and, thus, co-location is **not** barred by Section 4(f).

You are likely to receive numerous written comments regarding the negative impact that the re-route will have on St. Louis Park. These impacts include safety concerns, hazardous materials concerns, traffic congestion concerns, emergency vehicle access concerns, as well as increased noise, increased vibrations, interruptions to school operations, increase in the overall project cost, and decrease in homeowner values. Many of these concerns were explained in the PMT process, and at the public hearing on November 14, 2012. Curiously, the DEIS dismisses the expected ***800 percent increase in rail traffic*** on the MN&S line, and the accompanying noise, to be ***“slight”*** impacts (see DEIS, at Page 11-10), there should be no question that the re-route will have a negative impact on St. Louis

Park. If the data is evaluated honestly, the DEIS *should* conclude that the re-route will result in unacceptable safety problems for people who live, work, or attend school near the MN&S. The DEIS *should* conclude that the re-route will result in unacceptable operational problems to both the railroad and the city. The social, economic, and environmental impacts *should* be viewed as severe. The disruption to the established community that lives along the planned re-route *should* be seen as severe. In short, the DEIS should view these concerns in a serious, non-dismissive fashion, and conclude – based upon the factors listed above – that re-route is not a “prudent” alternative.

The required analysis under 23 C.F.R. § 774.17 is missing from the DEIS, which is a critical flaw in this process. The impact on the .81 acre of Cedar Lake Park property is not the “deal-breaker” for co-location that the DEIS makes it out to be. There is no reason that DEIS should not conclude that co-location is the preferred alternative. First, a serious analysis needs to be undertaken as to whether the re-route is “prudent;” and, second, that analysis needs to be clearly explained in the final EIS.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these public comments.

**Marc M. Berg**



12/21/2012 07:57 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us  
cc  
bcc  
Subject DEIS Comment

**Comments for DEIS**

*From:*

*Edward Ferlauto*

[om](#)

612-929-1004

This is a list of concerns that lead to a suggestion of additional alternatives to be considered in the 3A (LPA) Alternative for the SWLRT Kenilworth corridor. The summary is followed with specific comments to achieve an outcome of a better aesthetic environment and improved noise and vibration qualities along the Kenilworth Trail particularly with regard to residential dwellings in close proximity to the corridor.

**Summary**

This comment proposes consideration of alternatives in the 3A (LPA) plan in addition to the aerial bridge overpass at Cedar Lake Parkway proposed in the DEIS. These alternatives include a tunnel or trench in the path from the Lake Street Bridge to beyond Cedar Lake Parkway. The outcome of these proposals is to eliminate implementation of negative aesthetic effects of the aerial bridge as well as elimination or minimization of the noise and vibration aspects that are listed as severe in the DEIS and require mitigation according to FTA rules. Although cost may be a major factor in the application of alternatives to an aerial bridge it is respectfully requested that these proposals be considered to preserve the neighborhood within the Chain of Lakes. The segment under consideration will be a destination area along the SWLRT and this should act as an overriding factor to cost in the proposals listed.

**Sections 3 Social Effects and 4 Environmental Effects**

The section on the Kenilworth Trail between the Lake Street Bridge on TH 7 and

Cedar Lake Parkway and extending to the canal linking Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake is deemed to be impacted according to the alternative 3A (LPA). The long term effects as stated on pg 3-108 states moderate to high impact on single dwellings and high rise residences. The impacts include visual and aesthetic effects as indicated in Table 3.6-3 on pg 3-100 and noise and vibration effects as indicated on pages 4-79, 4-82, 4-84, 4-86 and 4-93.

#### **Section 4 Environmental Effects/ Aerial Bridge and Noise Impact**

The 3A (LPA) alternative considered in the DEIS provides for an aerial bridge over Cedar Lake Parkway. The impacted area, which is estimated to be affected by increased noise and vibration as quoted in Table in 4.7-2 and includes sources identified as the LRT curve squeal at 114 dBA and a ringing bell every 5 seconds as the train approaches the station platform (West Lake St. Station; see pg 4-84 Table 4.2-2). This is in close proximity to the high rise (Calhoun Isles) and single dwelling townhomes (Calhoun Isles and Cedar Lake Shores homes). These dwellings are in the vicinity of the narrowest part of the Kenilworth Corridor and in close proximity to the curve in the track section where the noise is highest. It must also be noted that the sites where noise measurements have been made (pg 4-82 fig 4.7-1) are not at the most vulnerable sites listed above and do not represent the actual noise experienced.

The frequency of noise incident to the area would have greater impact than cited in the DEIS. LRT trains passing through the corridor every 2.75 minutes during rush hours will have a major impact on the peace and tranquility for not only residents, but for bicycle and pedestrian users of the Kenilworth trail between the Lake Street viaduct and the Cedar Lake trail to where it separates from the LRT just southwest of Target Field. Additional areas that would be impacted include the Midtown Greenway from E. Lake of the Isles Parkway west to the city line, and the Cedar Lake trail around Cedar Lake, and for boaters on the Cedar Lake/Lake of the Isles channel. These are noise impacts within the city of Minneapolis; there will be additional noise impacts in the southwest suburbs.

The facts as stated in the DEIS in combination with the number and frequency of trains passing through the area (198 trips from 7 am-10 pm, 60 trips 10 pm – 7 am and 16 trips all peak hours 6 -9 am and 5 -6:30 pm) poses a cumulative impact higher than any one factor individually considered. An additional concern is the amplification of sound at higher elevations. This has a significant impact on the noise factor for the Calhoun Isles high rise apartments.

In addition to noise measurements at the junction of the Kenilworth corridor and the Greenway (site 31) and at the Cedar Lake Parkway overpass (site 30)

measurements should be made at grade level and at several elevations of high rise towers adjoining the corridor. These locations include most notably Calhoun Isles Condominiums. Other high rise residences within 900 feet of the corridor, which would include the Calhoun Beach Club buildings, Lake Pointe Condominiums should be included in such measurements.

#### **Section 4 Aerial Bridge Visual Effects**

The impacted section is adjacent to the Park Siding Park as well as some park property adjacent to the aerial bridge. The Kenilworth Corridor pedestrian and bike path is to be preserved since it is Park property. Passage of the Kenilworth Trail across Cedar Lake Parkway requires redesign either using the aerial bridge or a series of ramps elevated above or tunneled below Cedar Lake Parkway. Another alternative is to leave the trail at grade level. In any case, this issue requires some additional consideration for the pedestrian and bike trail design.

Based on the diagram in Appendix F pg 54 the overall height of the aerial bridge is estimated to be about 40 ft (based on the height in the diagram plus an estimated 18 ft total required for the car and electrical structure). The visual impacts of an overpass will be visible to residents of CIDNA and KIAA, as well as residents in East Isles, West Calhoun and ECCO. The visual impacts also include the more immediate blockage of visibility of those who live along the ramps to and from the overpass.

The anticipation of a slope necessary for the Kenilworth Trail using ramps or an aerial bridge suggests that a serious inconvenience would exist in such cases for elderly people and physically challenged people who use the trail for pleasure and exercise. The Star Tribune stated (Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> Business Section pg. D6 entitled *A Revised look into the future* ) that the Twin Cities region will have 900,000 more people (30 years out) with twice as many elderly. It is to be noted that there is no consideration for accommodation of physically challenged people in the DEIS which seems to be contrary with most Federal regulations for these citizens. In addition, the presence of an aerial bridge would severely affect in a negative way the aesthetic quality of this area. It has been discussed in the Station Planning citizen meetings that the West Lake Street Station is intended to be a destination for the Chain of Lakes region and therefore should be sensitive to use by the elderly and disabled citizens.

#### **Section 4 Environmental Effects/Vegetation and Bird Stopover**

The corridor adjacent to Dean Court from the Calhoun Isles high rise building to 28<sup>th</sup> St. and along the Park Siding Park contains a berm which houses a number of large evergreen plants (estimated 15 to 20 ft high) and mature trees (estimated

30 to 40 ft high) which will possibly be removed to accommodate the width of the planned LRT and trail system (see attached photos). This berm, which is contiguous with the planned corridor route, also acts as a stopover for birds during the spring migration period. This is evident by virtue of the bird sounds during morning hours from approximately 6 am to 8 am during the months of about April through June. Possible elimination of this berm area should be assessed for A, B, and C viewers and have high ratings for visual quality and visual sensitivity.

The Hennepin County Park list published by the United States Geological Survey of United States Bird Checklists contains 280 bird species observed within the Park Reserve since 1968. The habitat codes shown for designation "S" (shrubs, small trees-fencerows, forest edges, overgrown fields) during the spring season shows 16 species that are abundant or common in all the Hennepin County Parks. These species exist within the Chain of Lakes corridor and constitute a rich natural entity that merits preservation in this environment.

### **Sections 2 and 11 Alternatives**

The impacted section referred to above is a neighborhood area that connects the Chain of Lakes (Lake Calhoun, Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles). It is between designated park lands that are part of the 4f system. Therefore, it seems appropriate to consider alternatives to the proposed aerial bridge. It is also to be noted that alternatives to the aerial bridge have not been considered in the published DEIS. There are three alternatives which should be considered.

One is to tunnel the SWLRT path from the vicinity of the proposed Lake Street Station past the Cedar Lake Parkway and extending to under the canal linking Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake. This will preserve the visual, aesthetic and natural environment of the neighborhood and minimize the anticipated noise and vibration problems. The concern which has been offered in discussions about a tunnel has included the argument that the water table is too high (presumably assumed to be at 4 feet). Metropolitan Council's Adam Gordon, Project Manager for the Hopkins Sewer Upgrade project which he supervises, has acknowledged that the water table is 28 feet below grade at the Cedar Lake Parkway intersection and will easily accommodate an LRT tunnel.

A second alternative would be to use a trench for the LRT which passes beneath Cedar Lake Parkway. The trench would start in the vicinity of the proposed West Lake Street Station and extend to north of Cedar Lake Parkway. There is precedent for this proposal that resulted from a Charrette study conducted in November of 2010 sponsored by the Cedar Lake Park Association. The opinion of



the group of professional landscapers made such a proposal which is contained in the final report of that exercise.

A trench for the LRT at the Cedar Lake Parkway instead of an overpass will only resolve a small fraction of these noise issues. A tunnel under Cedar Lake Parkway commencing in the vicinity of the West Lake Street Station Lake Street viaduct and extending north to the Burnham Bridge will address more of the LRT noise issues.

The trench alternative does not seem preferable because of the following reasons: 1). it will not eliminate noise and only reduce visibility issues, whereas a tunnel would; 2). it will not eliminate visual impacts to near neighbors to the corridor, such as residents in Calhoun Isles area, the condos between Depot Street and the parkway, residences north of Cedar Lake Parkway, and CLSHA townhomes. A tunnel will restore the Kenilworth corridor to its original natural environment and recreational uses.

A third alternative to cross Cedar Lake Parkway at grade level would entail serious traffic flow problems and introduce safety issues (children crossing to Park Siding Park as well as potential vehicle crashes). It would also be intrusive to the Grand Rounds that is part of the Cedar Lake Parkway.

## **Section 2 Alternatives Considered**

### **LRT 3A-1 (Co-location Alternative) Pg. 2-41**

The DEIS considered the co-location alternative as indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.1 Alternatives Considered and is described in detail on pg. 2-41 LRT 3A-1 (Co-location Alternative). It is concluded in the final paragraph of 11.2.5 Evaluation of Alternatives that this alternative does not meet the project's purpose and need and is not a practicable alternative. It is not recommended as the environmentally preferred alternative.

I agree with this conclusion and offer reasons to reject the 3A-1 Co-location Alternative. The Segment A in the 3A-1 Co-location Alternative between the West Lake Street Bridge and Cedar Lake Parkway is undesirable because of a number of factors. First, it currently has potential noise problems attributable to wheel squeal (114 db) and bell noise approaching the West Lake Station ((90 db) approaching the narrowest portion of the Kenilworth trail. This condition would be exacerbated with the introduction of freight trains (estimated 4 to 8 per day) and LRT (on a high frequency schedule) and is not tolerable to the many residential dwellings in close proximity to the Kenilworth trail.

In addition, reference is made to the R.L. Banks & Associates report of December 2010 which cited that there is insufficient space within the existing ROW to accommodate both freight and LRT at grade level. In consideration of seven different scenarios reviewed in that document, one option would require acquisition of between 33 and 57 housing units and disruption of an entire townhouse community. Another option considered re-routing the Kenilworth Trail outside the Kenilworth Corridor eliminates a link in the commuter bicycle trail and would require the acquisition of up to 117 housing units.

It is evident from these reviews that the conclusion recorded in 11.2.5 that the 3A-1 Co-location is rejection is proper.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Ferlauto



Marcie Piets

12/21/2012 08:43 PM

To swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us

cc

bcc

Subject Comments on SWLRT-DEIS

To Hennepin County SWLRT,

I live at 4121 Xenwood Ave. South, St. Louis Park. I am pro LRT but **strongly opposed to re-routing freight trains through St. Louis Park**. I am pro Co-Location of LRT & Freight. I write on behalf of many of my neighbors, roughly fifty with whom I have spoken on this topic.

I believe the most careful use of taxpayer dollars AND the safest option for the citizens of St. Louis Park and Minneapolis is to change the bike path near Cedar Lake, keeping the freight trains on the straight, unobstructed path they are now on in the Kenilworth Corridor. The bike path needs improvement, fortification or a fly-over bridge anyway, if LRT will be rolling through from early morning hours through midnight each day and if biker & pedestrian safety is valued.

I am attaching a letter with the informed view of 30-year railroad veteran, Steven Horn. Among the most salient of his viewpoints (in the attached document) is his assessment that "As for the Dan Patch (MS&N) freight relocation, it is agreed by TCW management, by your study, and by me that heavy freight such as coal trains over a mile long and weighing 14,000 tons would require an engineering effort and rebuild of the tracks that would be astronomical in cost and almost impossible from a railroad operating view."

Thank you,  
Marcie Piets

Sunday, December 16, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to weigh in on the proposed St. Louis Park Freight Rail Re-Route issue. My opinions come as a result of having 30 years of experience in railroading, driving the very tracks now in question.

As for my background, I started working as a trainman for the Chicago & North Western Railroad in October 1970. I worked out of Cedar Lake Yard (**Kenilworth**) until it was closed about 1982. Later, from 1991 to 1993, I worked for the Twin Cities & Western Railroad, St. Paul to Milbank, SD. In both instances I worked through St. Louis Park and Hopkins on a daily or nightly basis, both as a conductor and as a locomotive engineer.

I also worked through "the Park" on the Dan Patch Line for the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern and for the Twin Cities & Western. So I'm very familiar with all of the trackage, the neighborhoods, the schools, etc.

Last week my friend, a resident of St. Louis Park, requested that I look into your situation, or conflict, with regard to what you are being told (or not told). Since then I've spoken to many individuals about both the logistical and political sides of this issue.

---

Your background information on the Dan Patch Line is basically correct.

**The M&StL was purchased by the Chicago & North Western in 1960, and the tracks (from Minneapolis to Chaska) were abandoned and sold to Hennepin County in around 1983.** The Milwaukee Road was taken over by the Soo Line in 1987 and by CPRail (Canadian Pacific) in the 1990s. CPRail in turn, gave TCW rights to use the tracks in the Twin Cities terminal.

Ever since the millionaires built their mansions in the vicinity of the Kenilworth Corridor at the turn of the last century, the locals have complained about the noise and air pollution **in spite of the fact that the railroads were there first.**

In my professional experience, I operated anywhere from 6 to 100-car freight trains through "the Park" on the CNW, TCW and Dan Patch lines at speeds from 10 mph to 30mph. Yes, there were accidents, or as professional transportation people refer to them, "incidents," involving everything from trespassing humans of all ages to vehicles to other trains.

In the past four days I've spoken personally to Bob Suko, general manager of the TCW, to the St. Louis County director of transportation, to 8<sup>th</sup> District Congressman-elect Richard Nolan, and to other experts who are well aware of your situation.

**As for the Dan Patch freight relocation, it is agreed by TCW management, by your study, and by me that heavy freight such as coal trains over a mile long and**

Sunday, December 16, 2012

**weighing 14,000 tons would require an engineering effort and rebuild of the tracks that would be astronomical in cost and almost impossible from a railroad operating view.**

**The vision I have, not just for your community but for many others in the state and the nation as well, is light rail and freight rail in the same corridor but physically separated by barriers (walls), sound barriers of green, natural materials (trees, shrubs, etc.), and grade crossings heavily guarded by gates, lights and bells or eliminated altogether by the construction of bridges or tunnels.**

**As for the Dan Patch line, I see it as a north-south light rail route.** There are still a number of industries that rely upon freight service on the line now, but time may change that. I have in the past switched freight cars at Skippy Peanut Butter, Merchants Cold Storage, Minneapolis-Moline and Red Owl warehouse, all located in St. Louis Park or Hopkins in the 1970s. Time may also bring increased property values, as it has on the Hiawatha Corridor, and will bring on the University Avenue Green Line. In the future, if I live long enough, I'll be able to board a fast passenger train in Duluth, ride 2 1/2 hours to Minneapolis, take the light rail to St. Paul, St. Louis Park or even Chaska, on the railroad right of way I first worked on in 1970.

Respectfully,

Steven R. Horn  
Retired Railroad Engineer

Attached:

Steven R. Horn Letter of Recommendation written by Kenneth Ray, Trainmaster,  
TC&W Railroad Company

Sunday, December 16, 2012

**T&W**

TWIN CITIES & WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY

---

723 Eleventh Street East  
Glencoe, MN 55336  
(612) 864-5121  
FAX (612) 864-6726

April 14, 1993

**RE: STEVE HORN**

TO Whom It May Concern:

Mr. Steven Horn has been employed by Twin Cities & Western Railroad Company for the past 1-3/4 years under my direct supervision. We began in July, 1991 as a start-up company and were fortunate enough to have chosen Steve for one of the initial employees. He has demonstrated over and over again his leadership skills and exceptional ability to deal with peers, supervisors, customers and the general public.

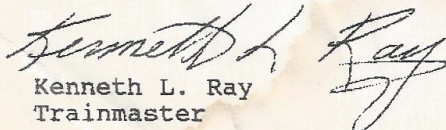
Steve was initially hired as a Conductor but was quickly promoted to Engineer and remains as one of the top qualified Engineers. During the past year, Steve has served as Employee Representative for the Transportation Department. This position has required alot of Steve's time and efforts, and he has served well in this function. During Steve's time with our Railroad, he has also been a key person in developing customer relations, implementing more efficient schedules, and simply improving train operations for everyone involved.

I am very reluctant to let Steve leave the Twin Cities & Western Railroad; however, a person must always strive for growth and I believe this may be an excellent growth opportunity.

Please feel free to call if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

TWIN CITIES & WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY

  
Kenneth L. Ray  
Trainmaster



arthur higinbotham

12/22/2012 12:15 PM

To swcorridor <swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us>

cc

bcc

Subject FW: SWLRT Station Profiles

This is a response to the SWLRT DEIS with respect to station locations. The attached document from the SW Community Works Committee shows the latest detail on station locations.

The following comments are based primarily on the maps shown for stations within Minneapolis and St. Louis Park:

1. The Royalston station eliminates all on-street parking for the businesses along that street; no provision is suggested to replace it with off-street parking.
2. The Van White station sits in an area with parkland to the south and west, a concrete crushing facility to the west, the Minneapolis Impound Lot to the east, and a light industrial area to the north with no residences within four blocks (up to Glenwood Av.). There are no approved plans for commercial or residential development near the station nor any plans to relocate the crushing facility or Impound Lot.
3. The Penn Av. station is located in a ravine and is not accessible by road from any direction, connected only by a long pedestrian bridge and elevator to Penn Av. at I394. There is no access to the Lowry Hill bluff on the south side. The cost of the station with bridge and elevator but without vehicle access has been estimated at \$15 million.
4. The 21st St. station is located with an exclusively resident neighborhood on the east side and primarily access to Cedar Lake Park on the west, except for a few homes on the west side on a dead end road, which would be cut off from emergency service vehicles when LRT trains are passing.
5. The West Lake St. station has no direct access from the north side of the LRT and requires vehicles on W. Lake St. coming from the west to turn right on Market Plaza (which also has curb cuts to a fire station and Calhoun Commons mall in a 100 foot length), then right on Excelsior Boulevard, then right on Abbott Av. to the station. A University of Minnesota Civil Engineering Capstone Study shows traffic already at saturation on Excelsior Boulevard, with 2.75 minutes already required to move from Market Plaza through the Dean Parkway/W. Calhoun Boulevard intersection.
6. The Belt Line parkway station in St. Louis Park will be adjacent to a major grade crossing, which means that traffic will be stopped at the grade crossing while LRT trains are in the station. Furthermore, there are no residential buildings within 500 feet on the west side of the grade crossing.
7. The Louisiana station in St. Louis Park is located in an area that has no residences within 500 feet of the station; the area is purely light industrial and commercial. It is within 500 feet of Methodist hospital, meaning that train horn and bells will have an impact on patients in the hospital.

Arthur E. Higinbotham

---

Monica:

This is the brochure circulated at the Community Works Committee on Thurs. Dec. 20th that presents the description of the proposed SWLRT stations. Perhaps you could e-mail the pages that describe the West Lake Street Station to the Board members for the January 9th meeting.

Thanks,

Ed

---

From: Adele.Hall@co.hennepin.mn.us  
To:  
Sent: 12/21/2012 1:07:23 P.M. Central Standard Time  
Subj: SWLRT Station Profiles

Hi Ed,  
Attached per your request are the station profiles that were distributed at the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting yesterday.  
Best,  
Adele  
(See attached file: SWLRT\_profiles\_singlepgs.pdf)

Adele Hall  
Senior Transit Planner | Hennepin County Department of Housing, Community Works & Transit  
701 Fourth Avenue South – Suite 400 | Minneapolis, MN 55415 | MC L608  
Office 612.543.1094 | Mobile 612.250.2004 | adele.hall@co.hennepin.mn.us

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# Experience the Southwest Corridor



## Light-Rail Station Area Profiles





# Southwest Light Rail Transit



## METRO Green Line extension

Imagine getting on the train outside your office in Eden Prairie, and being able to travel all the way to St. Paul for a morning meeting, or gathering up the family and heading out of downtown Minneapolis to Minnetonka for an afternoon trip to the beach. The Southwest Light Rail Transit Line will make this possible when it opens in 2018.

Southwest LRT is a proposed 15-mile high-frequency light rail line that will serve the rapidly growing southwest metropolitan area with 17 stations in Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Minneapolis. Southwest LRT is the next addition to the transit system in the Twin Cities region, which includes the METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha), Northstar Commuter Rail and a vast network of bus routes, and the METRO Green Line (Central Corridor) opening in 2014.



*Hiawatha, the region's first light-rail line, will connect with Southwest LRT, providing a link to multiple employment centers along the route.*

### Fast facts

Population	60,000
Households	31,000
Employment	210,000

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





# Moving through the Corridor

The Southwest Light Rail Transit Line weaves through the southwestern suburbs of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins and St. Louis Park to downtown Minneapolis. Passengers will even have the option of traveling on to downtown St. Paul.

The proposed stations are:

- Mitchell, Southwest, Eden Prairie Town Center, Golden Triangle and City West in Eden Prairie.
- Opus in Minnetonka.
- Shady Oak, Hopkins and Blake in Hopkins.
- Louisiana, Wooddale and Beltline in St. Louis Park.
- West Lake, 21st Street, Penn, Van White and Royalston in Minneapolis.

## Southwest LRT Community Works

The Southwest LRT Community Works Project is a collaborative effort to capitalize on the opportunities light rail has to offer the region. The project partners are working together to address economic competitiveness and job growth; housing choices; quality neighborhoods; and critical connections along the light-rail route.

Project partners include: Hennepin County, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, Edina, St. Louis Park, Minneapolis, Metropolitan Council, ULI-Minnesota, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and SouthWest Transit.

Southwest LRT is also part of the Corridors of Opportunity Initiative, which is changing the way transitway projects are developed in the Twin Cities in order to realize the greatest possible economic and environmental benefits for the region.

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Grab a beer, a beet or baseball

Royalston Station brings you to the edge of everything downtown has to offer.

The station is located within walking distance of the Minneapolis Farmer's Market, Target Field and Fulton Brewery, as well as the Hennepin Theater District.

The surrounding area includes various government facilities and educational campuses, including Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Metropolitan State University. The sprawling mixed-income neighborhood Heritage Park is also nearby.

Future development makes this a prime location for downtown-style residential and commercial developments with an industrial backdrop.



Target Field, home of the Minnesota Twins, is a new civic landmark totaling one million square feet, with seating for approximately 40,000.

### Fast facts

Population	4,500
Households	2,094
Employment	20,004

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.

For more information, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

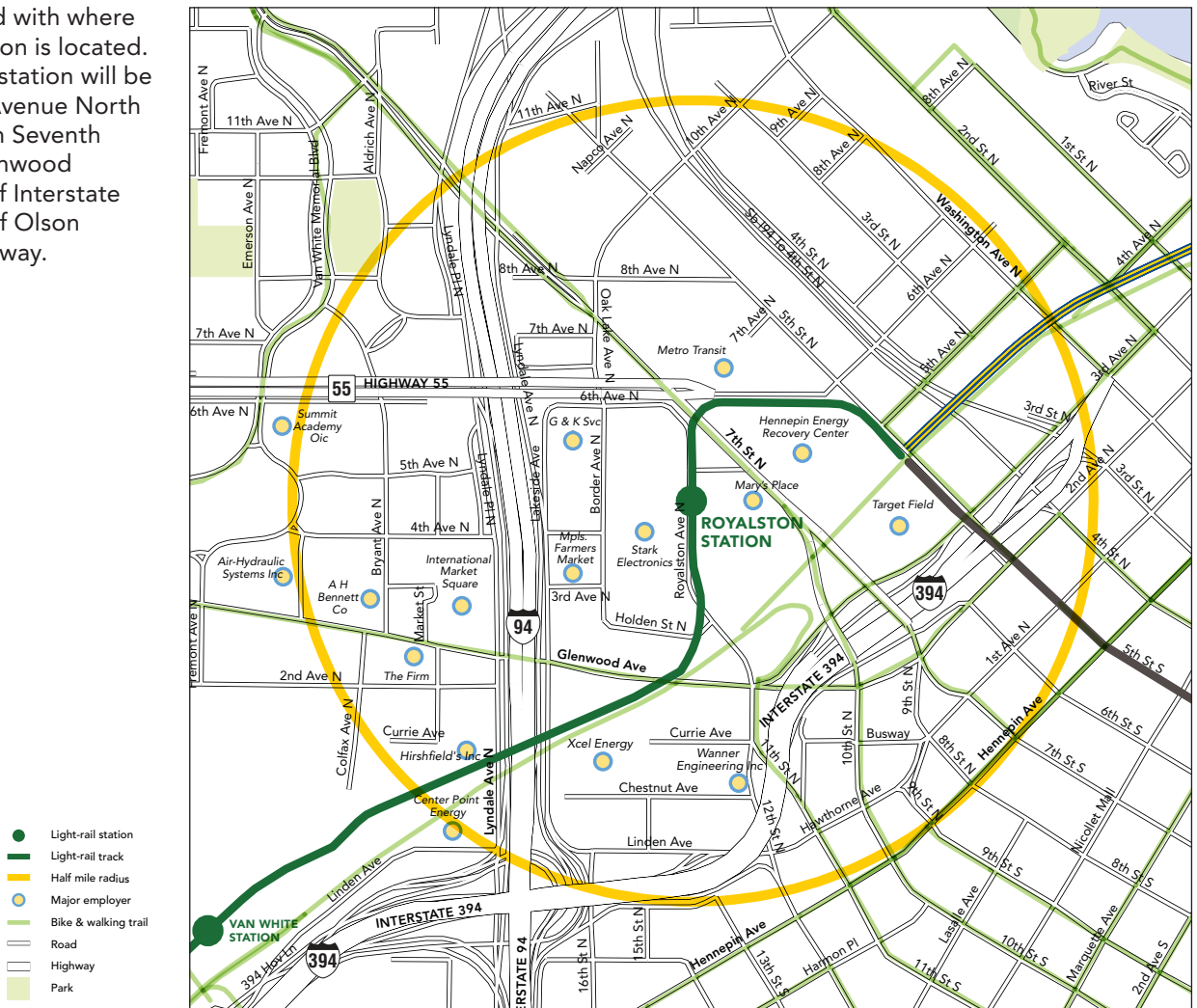


# Royalston Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Royalston Station is located. The proposed station will be on Royalston Avenue North between North Seventh Street and Glenwood Avenue, east of Interstate 94 and south of Olson Memorial Highway.



The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Accessing the potential

Van White Station is prime for urban redevelopment.

The station is located within 75 acres of undeveloped property owned by the City of Minneapolis, as well as the Parade Athletic Fields, Parade Ice Garden and the Bryn Mawr Meadows.

The surrounding area includes the Dunwoody College of Technology, Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, Walker Art Center and the Bassett Creek Valley, and the Minneapolis neighborhoods of Bryn Mawr, Harrison, Lowry Hill and Kenwood.

Future development will combine high-density office and multi-family residential uses.

### Fast facts

Population	1,105
Households	679
Employment	5,028

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*Dunwoody College of Technology is the only non-profit, technical college in the Upper Midwest and one of only three nationwide. Photo from Dunwoody College of Technology*

For more information, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





# Van White Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Van White Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of Interstate 394 and Interstate 94, just east of Bryn Mawr Meadows Park.



The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
- METRO Green Line (LRT): 2014
- METRO Green Line extension
- Regional Multimodal Station
- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Travel to, or through, our valley

Penn Station is a valley amidst the concrete.

The station is located in a scenic valley within easy access to the Bryn Mawr neighborhood and the Chain of Lakes.

The surrounding area includes Cedar Lake Park; employers along Wayzata Boulevard; and retail services clustered around the intersection of Penn Avenue and Cedar Lake Road.

Future access to the station will be via a bridge from the northern bluff, where mid- to high-density development is expected. Strong bicycle and pedestrian connections will encourage station use from the Bryn Mawr neighborhood on both sides of Interstate 394.



*The Cedar Lake Bike Trail is a multi-use paved trail stretching nearly five miles, from Hopkins to downtown Minneapolis.*

### Fast facts

Population	2,540
Households	1,073
Employment	891

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.

For more information, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Penn Station

Get acquainted with where Penn Station is located. The proposed station will be north of the intersection of Penn Avenue and Kenwood Parkway, south of Interstate 394.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Stroll along the Isles

21st Street Station lets you escape to the Chain of Lakes and Grand Rounds.

The station is located between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles, in a historic neighborhood.

The surrounding area includes Kenwood Park, East Cedar Beach and Kenwood Elementary school.

Future development is not envisioned around this station; rather, the focus will be on creating a neighborhood walk-up station.

### Fast facts

Population	1,529
Households	608
Employment	143

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



Minnesota is known for its lakes, and Cedar Lake Beach is the perfect spot to spread out your towel and relax with a book, or splash in the water.

For more information, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

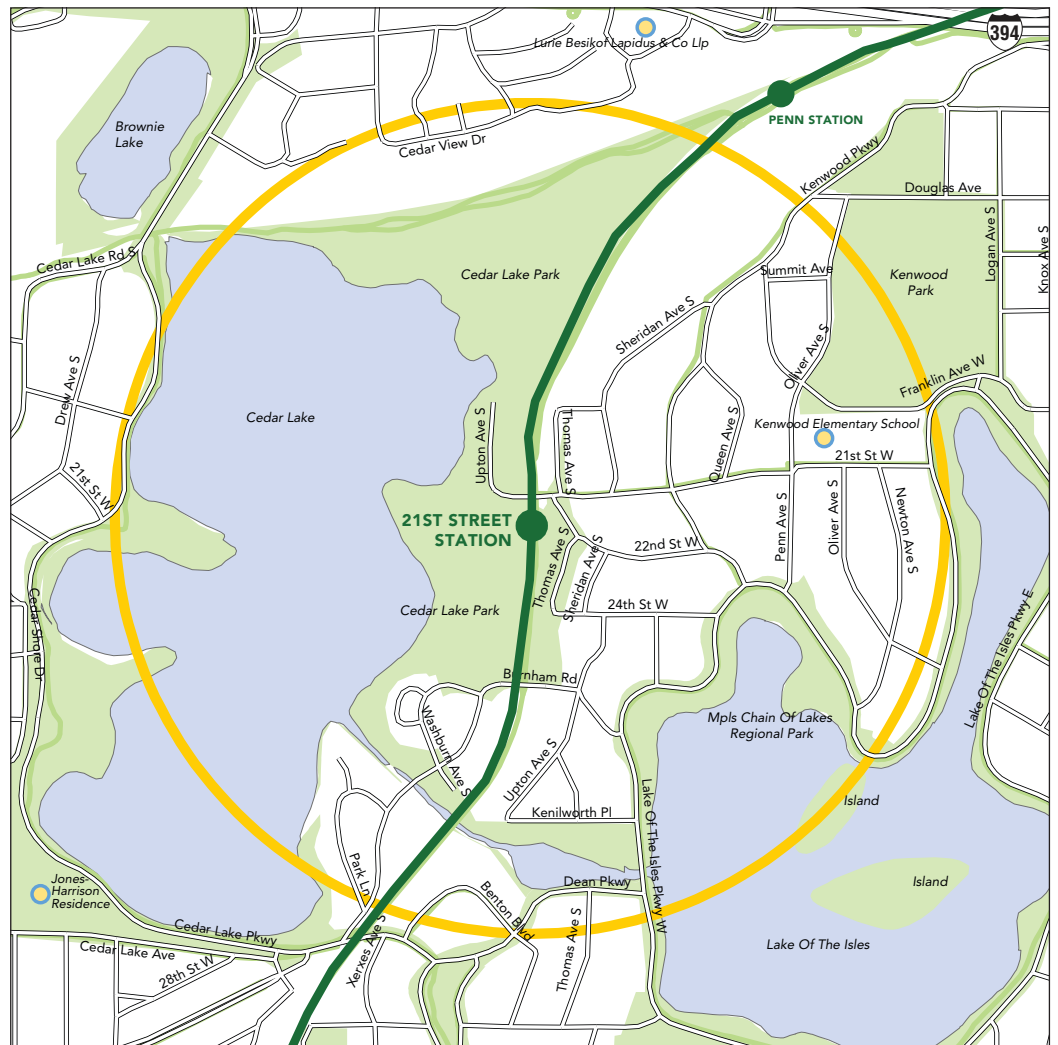


# 21st Street Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where 21st Street Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of South Upton Avenue and West 21st Street.



The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Seat yourself with us

West Lake Station will accent a bustling corner of restaurants, stores and offices.

The station is located at Calhoun Commons and Calhoun Village, home to Rustica, Punch Pizza, Burger Jones and other popular restaurants, as well as small shops and a fitness center.

The surrounding area is home to several office buildings, including Lake Calhoun Executive Center, Lake Pointe Corporate Center and the Fairview Uptown Clinic.

Future development will expand the current mixed-use, urban environment with infill residential and mixed-use opportunities. Enhanced transit service on the Midtown Greenway or Lake Street will provide a connection between here and the Lake Street Station on the METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha).

### Fast facts

Population	4,493
Households	2,720
Employment	2,709

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*The West Lake station area has all the small shops and amenities you're looking for in the heart of Minneapolis.*

For more information, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# West Lake Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where West Lake Station is located. The proposed station will be just south of where West Lake Street crosses the Midtown Greenway, east of France Avenue, north and west of Excelsior Boulevard.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
- METRO Green Line (LRT): 2014
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- Regional Multimodal Station
- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



**SOUTHWEST LRT**  
community works



## Mixing up more than Bundt cake

Beltline Station has all the right ingredients.

The station is located in a successful business park, including Nordic Ware, producers of the world-famous Bundt pan.

The station area is home to more than 10,000 jobs, the St. Louis Park municipal campus, the Melrose Institute and Excelsior & Grand with its many shops and restaurants. Multiple recreational facilities and amenities are also nearby, including Carpenter Park, Skippy Field, Wolfe Park, St. Louis Park Recreation Center and the 60-acre wetland complex Bass Lake Preserve.

Future development will include business-oriented redevelopment, mixed-use development and mid- to high-density housing near the parks.

### Fast facts

Population	3,728
Households	2,271
Employment	2,714

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



Nordic Ware, the family-owned, American manufacturer of kitchenware products, was established in 1946.

For more information, visit [www.stlouispark.org](http://www.stlouispark.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





# Beltline Station

Get acquainted with where Beltline Station is located. The proposed station will be northeast of the intersection of Beltline Boulevard and Park Glen Road, east of State Highway 100 and south of County Road 25.



The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
- METRO Green Line (LRT): 2014
- METRO Green Line extension
- Regional Multimodal Station
- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Transforming the surroundings

Wooddale Station has spent the last decade transforming into a hip transit village.

The station is located among more than 750 condos, apartments and senior housing units, as well as 45,000 square feet of retail space.

The surrounding area includes St. Louis Park High School, Park Spanish Immersion Elementary School and the Central Community Center. The nearby Depot Coffee House is located in the Milwaukee Road Depot, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Future development will include prioritizing public art around the station area, connecting the arts corridor of 36th Street West from the station to Bass Lake Preserve on the east.



*TowerLight on Wooddale Avenue is an innovatively designed senior living community located in the heart of St. Louis Park.*

### Fast facts

Population	2,469
Households	1,252
Employment	3,168

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.

For more information, visit [www.stlouispark.org](http://www.stlouispark.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

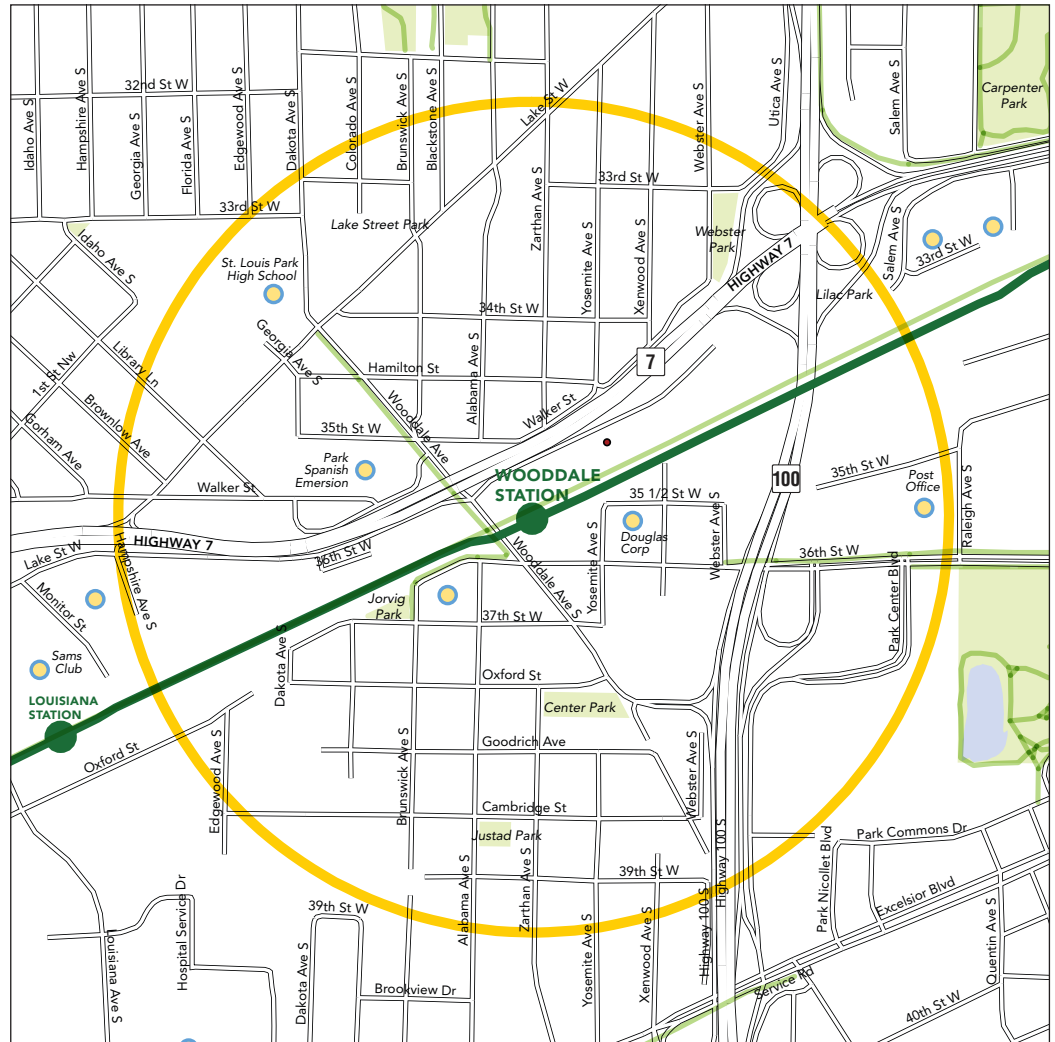


# Wooddale Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Wooddale Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of Wooddale Avenue South and State Highway 7, west of State Highway 100 and north of Excelsior Boulevard.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



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- METRO Green Line (LRT): 2014
- METRO Green Line extension
- Regional Multimodal Station
- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Taking care of the community

Louisiana Station is home to the regional medical center Park Nicollet-Methodist Hospital. Thousands of people are employed at the hospital, and thousands more benefit from their care.

The station is located in a center of light industrial and big-box retail uses, such as Japs-Olson and the corporate headquarters of Construction Materials, Inc.

The surrounding area includes single and multi-family residential areas, including Meadowbrook Apartments. You can even access the trails and canoe or fish at nearby Minnehaha Creek.

Future development will be driven by the station's proximity to the hospital, including healthcare, offices and possibly hotels. New, moderate-density residential development is also envisioned.

### Fast facts

Population	2,316
Households	1,145
Employment	7,263

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*Meadowbrook, a large apartment complex along Excelsior Boulevard, was built around 1950. When constructed, it was the largest multi-family complex in the Midwest.*

For more information, visit [www.stlouispark.org](http://www.stlouispark.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

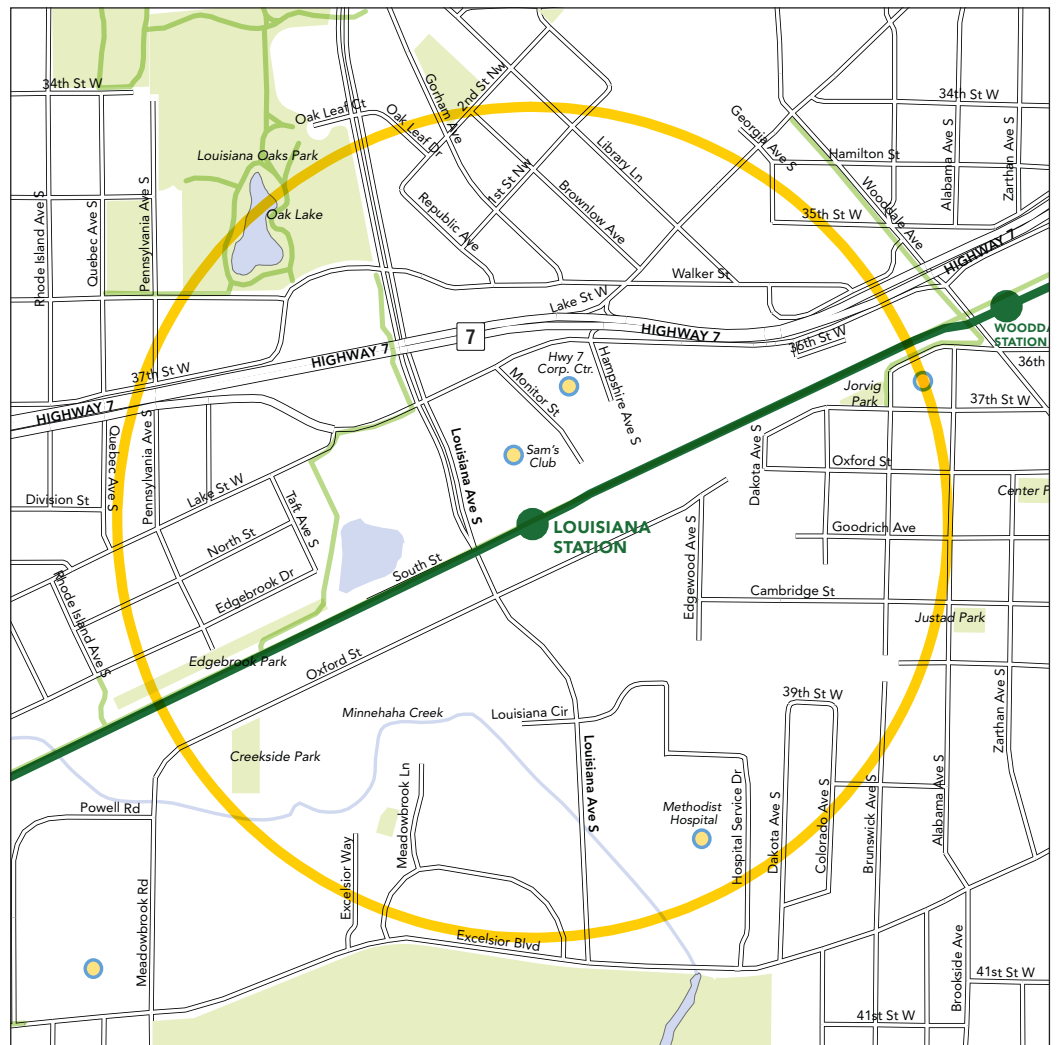


# Louisiana Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Louisiana Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of Louisiana Avenue and Oxford Street, south of State Highway 7 and north of Excelsior Boulevard.



The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
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- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Blake Station

METRO Green Line extension



## Diverse and always evolving

Blake Road station is situated in an urban corridor made up of diverse residents, natural amenities, and development opportunities.

The station is located within a corridor that has 90 percent rental housing with large immigrant population clusters.

The surrounding area includes parks, The Blake School, Jacobs Trading, EDCO, destination businesses like Pizza Luce, 43 Hoops Basketball Academy and Fastenal, as well as a 17-acre parcel ready for redevelopment.

Future development is already underway, with a major park redesign and expansion taking place just north of the station. South of the station lies a collection of one-story commercial strip centers and industrial buildings.

### Fast facts

Population	5,395
Households	2,443
Employment	2,093

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*Minnehaha Creek first appeared on a map in 1823. Plans are underway to restore a 3,000-foot stretch of the creek from Louisiana Avenue to Meadowbrook Road.*

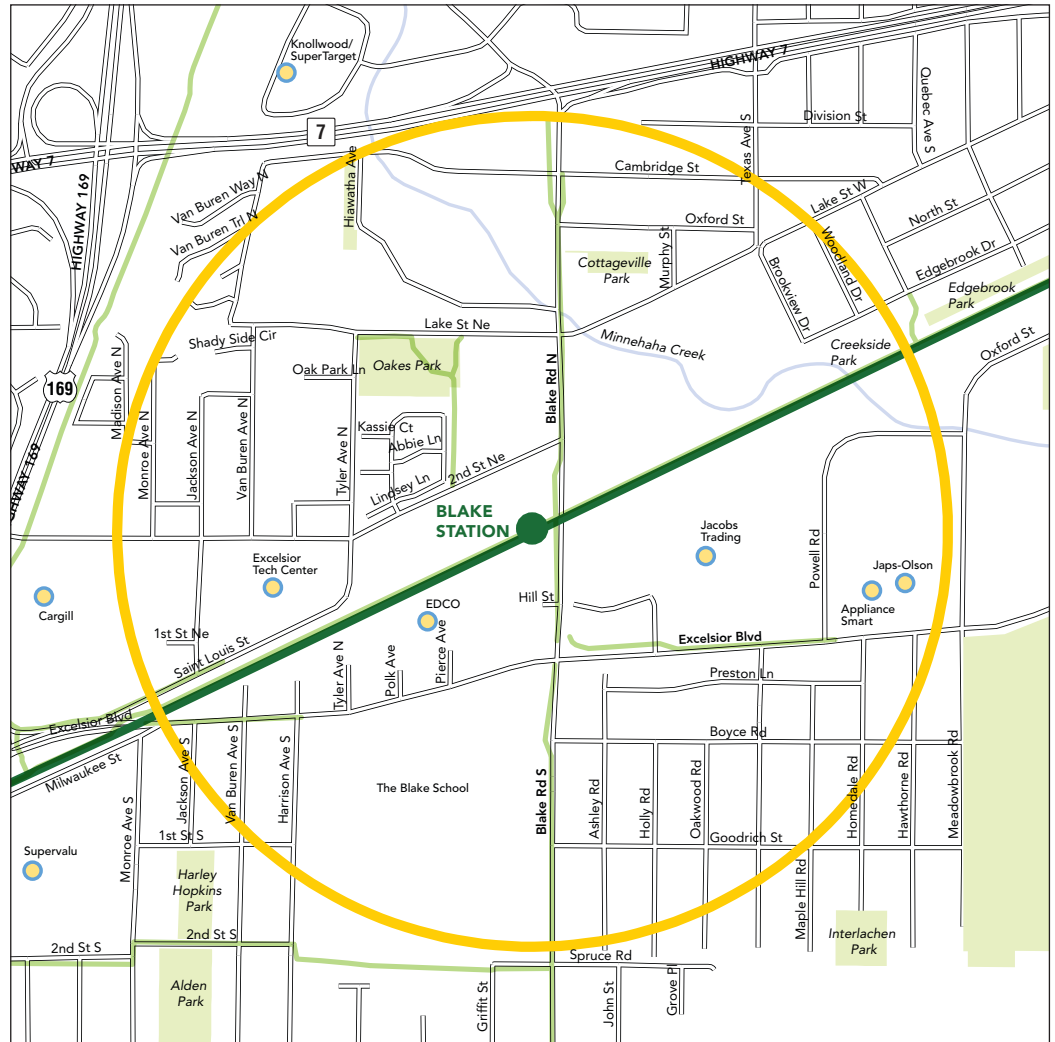
For more information, visit [www.hopkinsmn.com](http://www.hopkinsmn.com)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Blake Station

Get acquainted with where Blake Station is located. The proposed station will be north of the intersection of Blake Road and Excelsior Boulevard.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Mainstreet charm in the urban backyard

Hopkins Station offers small town charm along Mainstreet while metropolitan amenities remain nearby.

The station is located in a city grid with multiple redevelopment opportunities for transit oriented development, and plans for improved connections to the adjacent regional trails, pedestrian amenities and public place-making. Larger employers include the City of Hopkins, Hopkins Honda and Supervalu.

The surrounding area includes the ARTery, a two-block stretch of Eighth Avenue, with destinations like the Hopkins Center for the Arts. Walkable, bikeable, and infused with art, downtown Hopkins is a central neighborhood combining the business district with restaurants, shops and various types of housing.

### Fast facts

Population	3,293
Households	1,730
Employment	5,194

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*Hopkins Center for the Arts is a focal point for culture and entertainment, within walking distance of several restaurants, antique and other shops and a movie theater complex.*

For more information, visit [www.hopkinsmn.com](http://www.hopkinsmn.com)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





# Hopkins Station

Get acquainted with where Hopkins Station is located. The proposed station will be south of the intersection of Excelsior Boulevard and Eighth Avenue (west of Highway 169).



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

The METRO Green Line Extension is a 15-mile light-rail line consisting of 17 stations running from Eden Prairie to downtown Minneapolis. Scheduled to open in 2018, this light-rail line is projected to serve 30,000 riders daily by 2030, and is the next step in building out a regional transportation system that will connect you wherever you want to go.



For more information, visit [www.stlouispark.org](http://www.stlouispark.org)

- METRO Blue Line (LRT): Open
- METRO Green Line (LRT): 2014
- METRO Green Line extension
- Regional Multimodal Station
- Northstar Line (commuter rail)



[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)





## Seasonal destination

Shady Oak Station is positioned on the border of Hopkins and Minnetonka.

The station is located among large light-industrial parcels and surface parking areas which are landlocked, providing the opportunity to create new streets, sidewalks and trails.

The surrounding area includes the popular Shady Oak Beach Park, an 85-acre recreational area and beach in Minnetonka. Hopkins Pavilion and Central Park are also close.

Future development will gradually turn aging industrial uses to new residential and office developments, bringing better connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles.



Shady Oak Beach Park offers year-round activities for the entire family.

## Fast facts

Population	887
Households	490
Employment	2,909

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.

For more information, visit:  
[www.hopkinsmn.com](http://www.hopkinsmn.com) and [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Shady Oak Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Shady Oak Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of 16th Avenue South and Fifth Street South, southeast of the intersection of Excelsior Boulevard and Shady Oak Road.



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## Step from the meeting room to meeting nature

Opus Station at Opus Business Park will connect to more than six miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails that are completely separated from the roadway, providing a park-like setting for local businesses.

The station is located at the center of a major employment center that is home to more than 12,000 jobs from the real estate, health care, medical device and technology industries. Opus, UnitedHealth Group, American Medical Systems and Comcast are some of the many corporations who have chosen to have offices here.

The surrounding area also includes multifamily apartments and condominiums in residential communities.

### Fast facts

Population	1,105
Households	679
Employment	5,028

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



The metropolitan region is home to 19 Fortune 500 companies including UnitedHealth Group, whose corporate offices are located in Minnetonka.

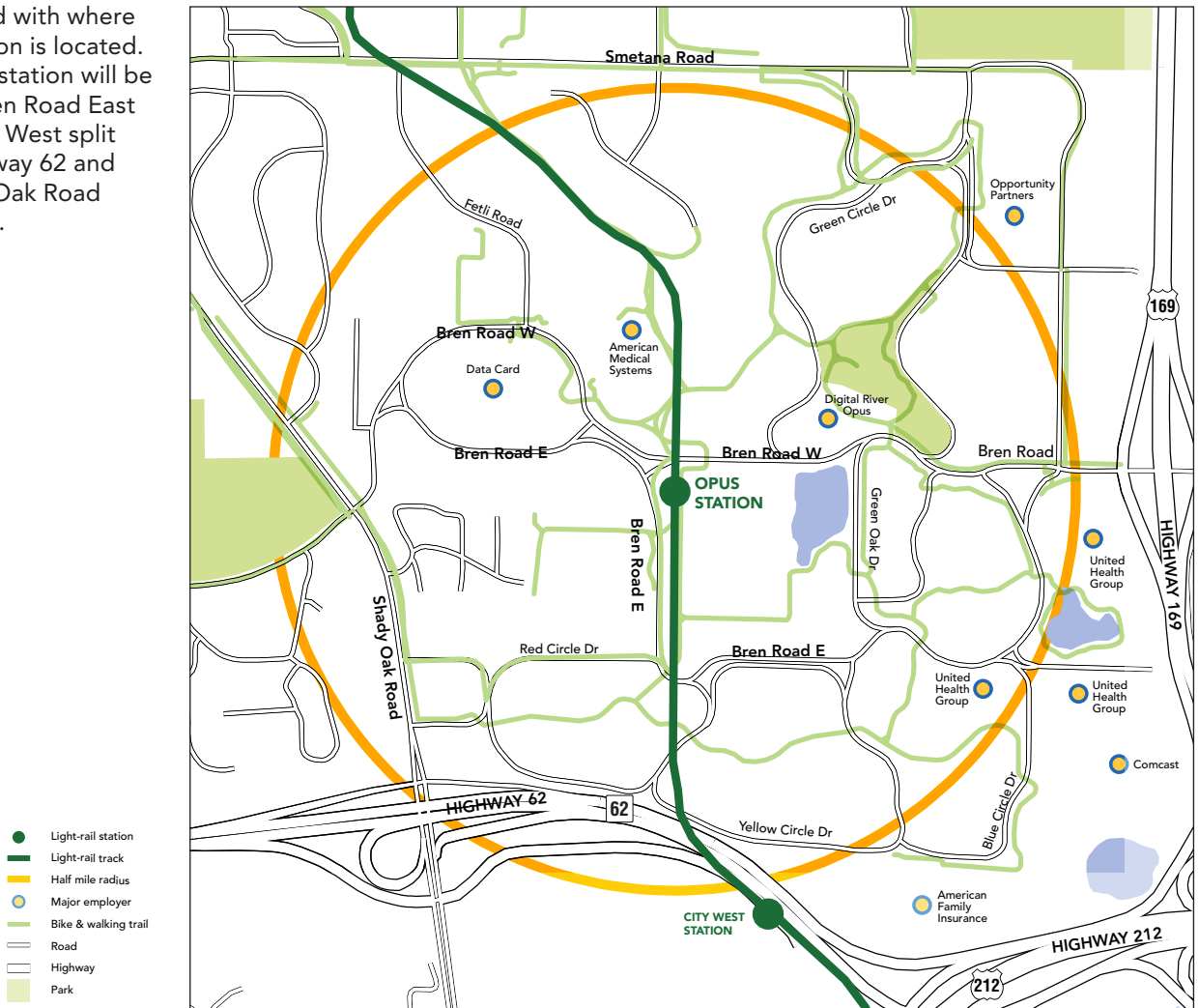
For more information, visit [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Opus Station

Get acquainted with where the Opus Station is located. The proposed station will be near where Bren Road East and Bren Road West split (north of Highway 62 and east of Shady Oak Road in Minnetonka).



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# City West Station

METRO Green Line extension



## Coverage you can count on

City West Station has you covered.

The station is located at the site of UnitedHealth Group's new corporate campus, as well as office development including American Family Insurance, Travel Leaders Group and LSS Data systems.

The surrounding area includes retail and restaurants within walking distance, as well as numerous wetland and natural areas.

Future development will include improvements to the street, trails and sidewalks, that will provide convenient and walkable access to the station for commuters and nearby residential and commercial developments. Retail and restaurant opportunities will likely be enhanced to serve the workforce.

### Fast facts

Population	783
Households	374
Employment	5,515

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*The development taking shape in the area will only enhance this employment center.*

For more information, visit [www.edenprairie.org](http://www.edenprairie.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

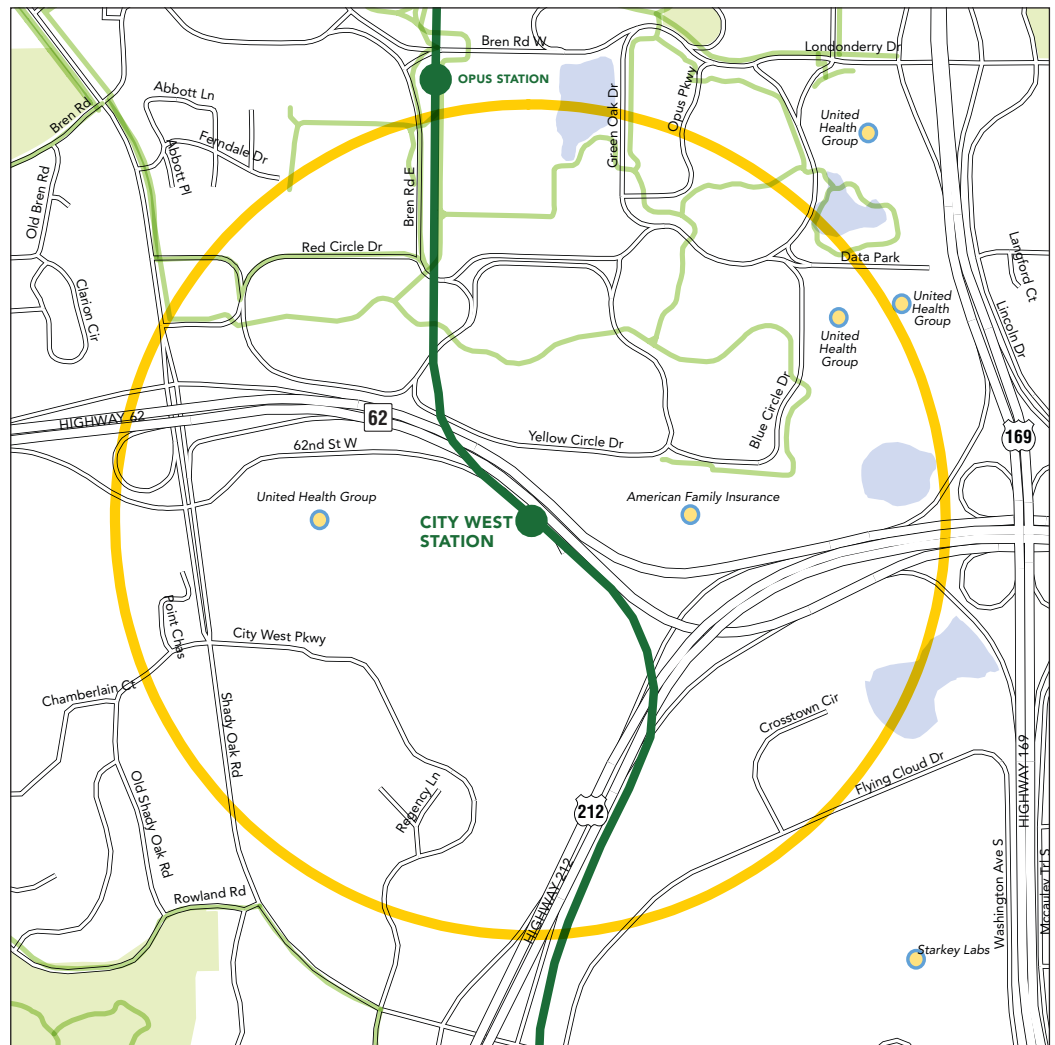


# City West Station

METRO Green Line extension

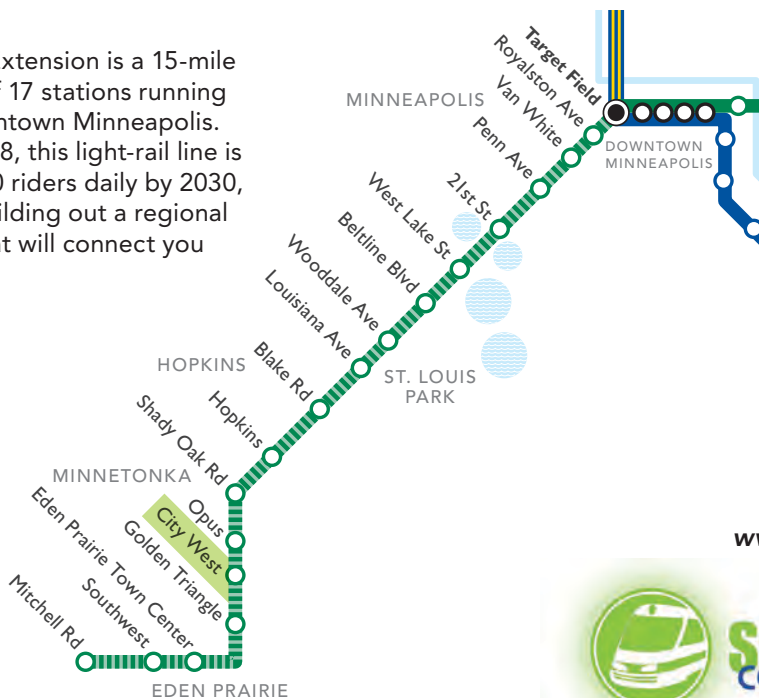
December 2012

Get acquainted with where City West Station is located. The proposed station will be west of the intersection of US Highway 212 and State Highway 62, east of Shady Oak Road and west of US Highway 169.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Golden Triangle Station

METRO Green Line extension



## Perfectly proportioned to serve the region

Golden Triangle Station is a major regional employment center with more than 20,000 jobs.

The station is located in 9.8 million square feet of industrial and office space for Supervalu Foods, Starkey Labs, Cigna and the Minnesota Vikings.

The surrounding area includes Nine Mile Creek and its scenic bluffs, trails and parks, including an off-leash dog area. The area is predominantly warehouse/distribution and manufacturing, with some multi-family residential buildings.

Future development is envisioned for the 200 acres of land adjacent to the proposed station, including housing, retail and office development, as well as preserving the natural beauty of Nine Mile Creek.

### Fast facts

Population	421
Households	234
Employment	3,235

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



Fortune 500 company Supervalu calls the region home.

For more information, visit [www.edenpaire.org](http://www.edenpaire.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



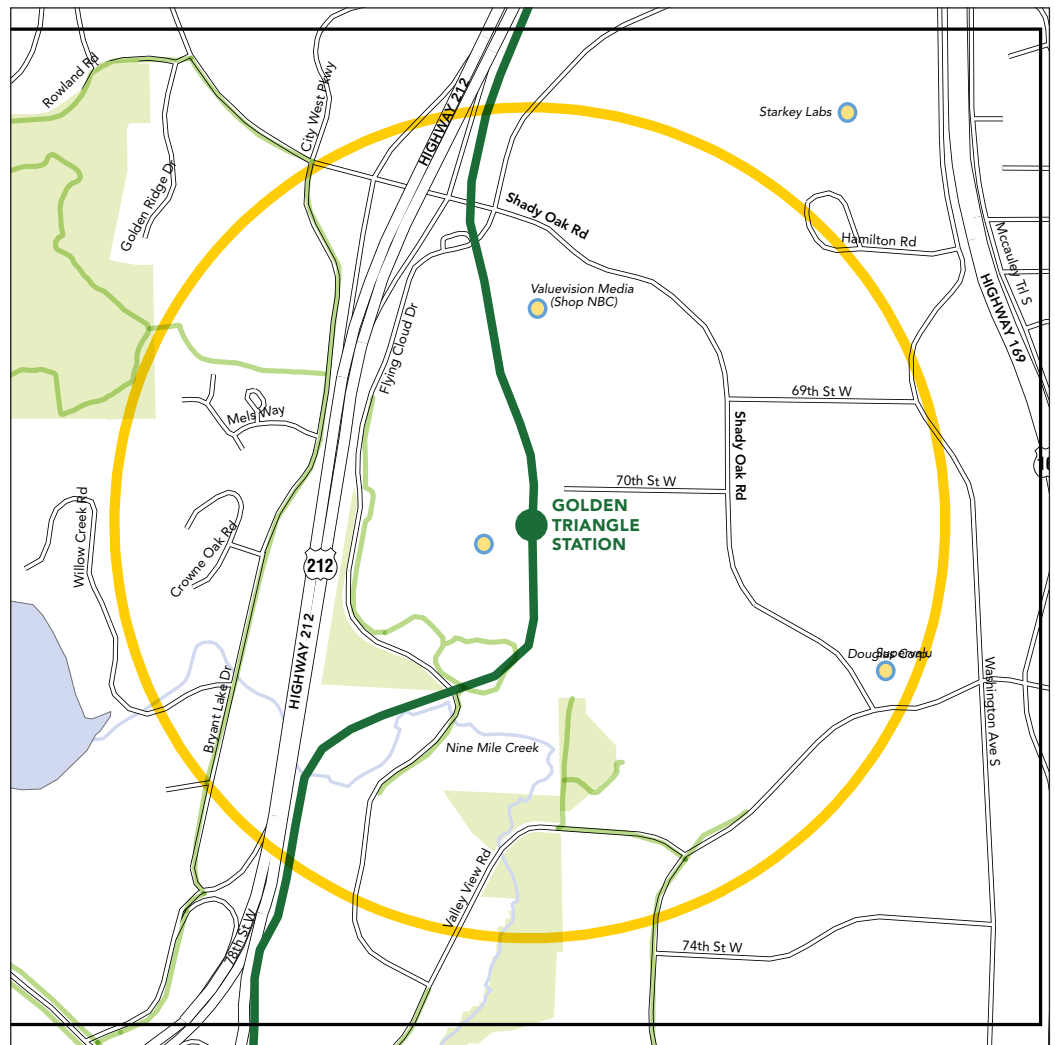


# Golden Triangle Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Golden Triangle Station is located. The proposed station will be between Flying Cloud Drive and Shady Oak Road, west of Valley View Road and east of US Highway 212.



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## Town Center Station is where people gather

Town Center Station is where retail, restaurant, apartments and offices meet. Emerson Process Management has expanded to more than 1,000 employees at this location, and there are more than 3,000 medical office jobs.

The surrounding area includes Eden Prairie Shopping Center, Costco, Gander Mountain and Walmart. Various restaurants, including Old Chicago, Kona Grill and Santorini's are also within walking distance.

Future development will be focused on the 120 acre Town Center area, creating a concentrated pedestrian and transit-oriented community with a mix of high-density residential, commercial, office, entertainment and open space within a 10 minute walk of the station.

### Fast facts

Population	727
Households	404
Employment	4,639

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



Stop by a shop or grab a bite while you wait for the train.

For more information, visit [www.edenprairie.org](http://www.edenprairie.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

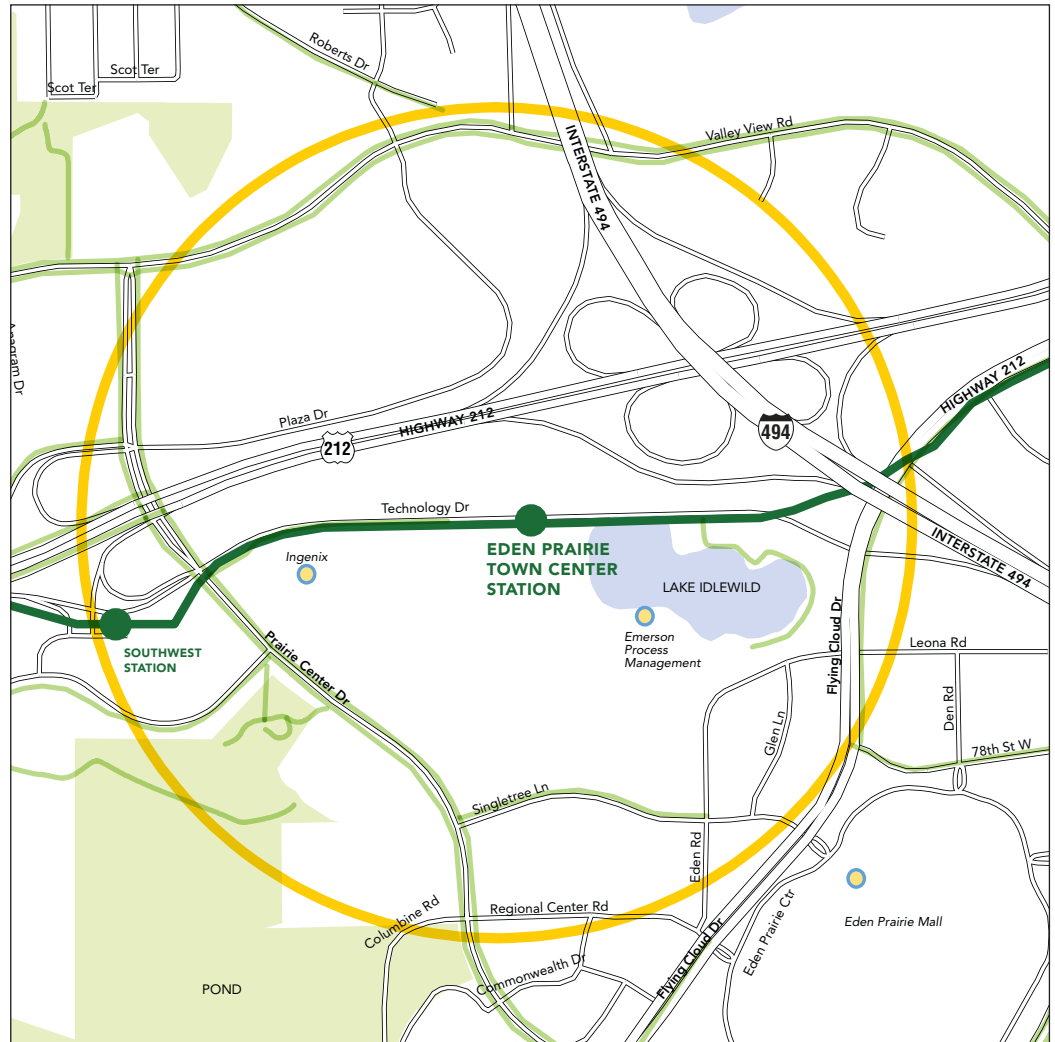


# Eden Prairie Town Center Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Town Center Station is located. The proposed station will be between Highway 169, I-494 and Highway 212, between Shady Oak and Flying Cloud Drive.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

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[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



**SOUTHWEST LRT**  
community works



## Expressly for you

Southwest Station will unite light-rail and the SouthWest Transit Station, to residents' benefit.

The station is located adjacent to the major express bus park-and-ride development, as well as 6,000 square feet of office space and 45,000 square feet of restaurant uses. Major employers Ingenix, MTS, Optum and Wells Fargo also have offices here.

The surrounding area includes Purgatory Creek Conservation Area, a 200-acre wetland area with a seven-acre park and 2.5 miles of walking trails.

Future development will maintain and enhance the existing mix of residential and commercial uses within a 10-minute walk of the station. Approximately 600,000 additional square feet of office space is expected to develop on nearby vacant land.

### Fast facts

Population	1,224
Households	680
Employment	2,924

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*SouthWest Transit has been serving the communities of Eden Prairie, Chaska and Chanhassen since 1986.*

For more information, visit [www.edenprairie.org](http://www.edenprairie.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)



# Southwest Station

Get acquainted with where Southwest Station is located. The proposed station will be near the intersection of Prairie Center Drive and Technology Drive, adjacent to the existing SouthWest Transit Station.



- Light-rail station
- Light-rail track
- Half mile radius
- Major employer
- Bike & walking trail
- Road
- Highway
- Park

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## Go to—and from—the West

Mitchell Station is the westernmost station of the light-rail line. The station is located at what will become a major park-and-ride facility.

The surrounding area includes Eaton Hydraulics Corporate Campus, the City of Eden Prairie municipal campus and other buildings, Eden Prairie Schools, and additional office buildings and neighborhood retail, restaurant and bank uses.

Future development will involve creating a more compact, walkable, mixed-use environment for the many businesses and residential uses already calling the area home.

### Fast facts

Population	253
Households	169
Employment	5,615

Population, Household, and Employment figures are within a half mile of the station stop.



*Lone Oak Center offers a mix of retail and office spaces near a natural wetland and walking trails.*

For more information, visit [www.edenprairie.org](http://www.edenprairie.org)

[www.southwesttransitway.org](http://www.southwesttransitway.org)

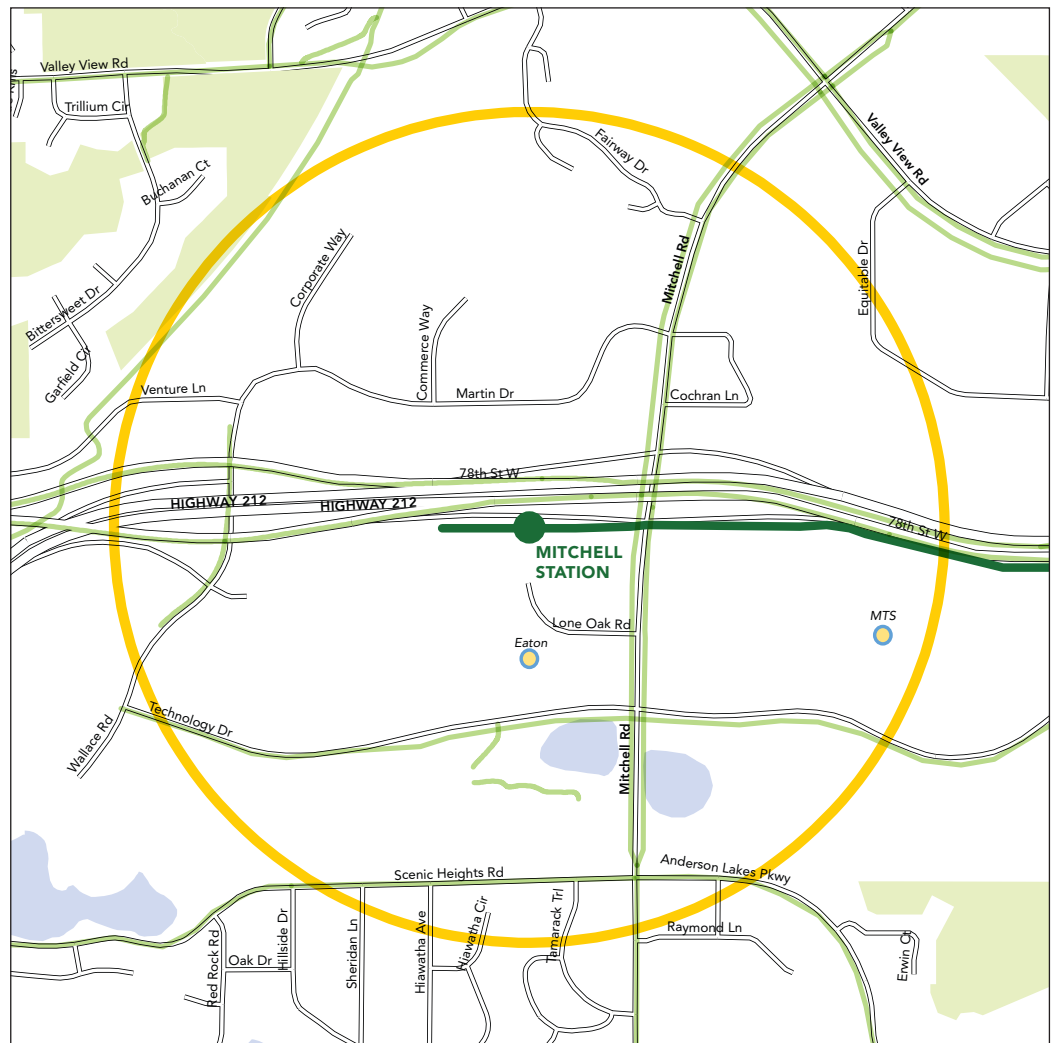


# Mitchell Station

METRO Green Line extension

December 2012

Get acquainted with where Mitchell Station is located. The proposed station will be west of the intersection of State Highway 6 and Mitchell Road.



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**SOUTHWEST LRT**  
community works

## Southwest Corridor Light-Rail Station Area Profiles

Compiled by the Southwest LRT Community Works Project

### Project Partners

*Hennepin County*

*Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority*

*Eden Prairie*

*Minnetonka*

*Hopkins*

*Edina*

*St. Louis Park*

*Minneapolis*

*Metropolitan Council*

*ULL-Minnesota*

*Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board*

*Minnehaha Creek Watershed District*

*SouthWest Transit*

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