

# Southwest Transitway DEIS Comments

Comments Received during the November 29, 2012 Public Hearing

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

PUBLIC HEARING OF THE  
HENNEPIN COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY  
EDEN PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA  
NOVEMBER 29, 2012  
6:00 p.m.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Good evening. I  
3 will call to order this hearing. I apologize for the  
4 technical difficulties here.

5 I'm Peter McLaughlin, and I'm Chair of  
6 Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority. I am  
7 pleased to welcome you here tonight to the last of three  
8 public hearings to receive comments on the Southwest  
9 Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or the  
10 DEIS as it is called. We're happy to see all of you here  
11 tonight. The attendance has been good at all of these  
12 hearings. It's important to have that participation as  
13 we explore the development on the Southwest line.

14 The Southwest line will be the region's  
15 third LRT line. It's a critical link in the regional  
16 transit system. It's estimated to serve 30,000 trips per  
17 day and to provide access to more than 270,000 jobs in  
18 this corridor in the relatively near future. That  
19 includes, as you all probably know, major corporations;  
20 Cargill and United Health just to name a few.

21 In addition, this line will provide a link  
22 to some of the greatest amenities within the region,  
23 whether it be the regional park system, the Walker Art  
24 Institute and Sculpture Garden, the Hopkins Center for  
25 the Arts, all the way to the University of Minnesota on a

1 single seat ride through Downtown, the Dunwoody  
2 Institute, Hennepin Technical College, as well as major  
3 sports facilities at the Metrodome, Target Center, and  
4 Target Field.

5 It's also going to allow residents of the  
6 Southwest Metro to connect easily and quickly to Downtown  
7 to Minneapolis, the Capitol in Downtown St. Paul, easy  
8 transfers to the airport and the Mall of America. At the  
9 same time, it will allow residents of North Minneapolis,  
10 St. Paul, and the rest of the region to access jobs out  
11 here along this corridor from the Southwest region.

12 So it's my pleasure to welcome you here  
13 today. I want to mention that in Chapter 8 of the Draft  
14 Environmental Impact Statement, published in October of  
15 this year, an error was made by the consulting firm,  
16 which incorrectly stated the cost estimate for the LRT  
17 3A-1 colocation alternative, which the cost was  
18 understated by \$100 million. This correction was caught  
19 by our staff, and the staff at the Metro Transit, and we  
20 wanted to make sure that as soon as we became aware that  
21 it actually had reappeared in the final version, that  
22 everyone was informed of the error that was made prior to  
23 the close of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
24 public comment period, which is scheduled to close on  
25 December 31st.

1           Public comments that were received prior to  
2           issuance of this correction will not be affected.  
3           They're still part of the public record. It won't be  
4           altered in any way and will be included fully in the  
5           record of comments that will be received by the  
6           Metropolitan Council and the Federal Transit  
7           Administration during the final environmental impact  
8           statement process.

9           So with that, I would turn to my colleague,  
10          who represents a portion of Eden Prairie and the  
11          Southwest line, Jan Callison.

12                 COMMISSIONER CALLISON: Good evening. I  
13          will speak as loudly as I can. I'm Jan Callison. I  
14          represent the northern third of Eden Prairie, as well as  
15          Hopkins and Edina, all cities that are either on the  
16          route or adjacent to the route, so I also want to welcome  
17          you here tonight.

18                 Planning for the Southwest project began  
19          many years ago by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad  
20          Authority, which was interested in improving transit and  
21          service for the growing Southwest Metro area. After many  
22          years of analysis and numerous studies, the Hennepin  
23          County Regional Rail Authority and the Partner Cities  
24          recommended that an LRT line brought through Kenilworth  
25          area of Minneapolis, through St. Louis Park and Hopkins,

1 through the Opus area of Minnetonka and the Golden  
2 Triangle area of Eden Prairie made sense.

3 This recommendation was sent to the  
4 Metropolitan Council -- I think it's on -- which then  
5 selected that route as what is called the locally  
6 preferred alternative in May of 2010. Now I'll have to  
7 speak more softly.

8 This was one of the first major milestones  
9 for the Southwest LRT project on its journey from an idea  
10 to reality. This was followed by approval in September  
11 2011 from the Federal Transit Administration, or FTA,  
12 that the project could enter the Federal New Starts  
13 Program and proceed with preliminary engineering.  
14 Southwest LRT is one of only 12 projects nationwide to  
15 achieve this status.

16 Recently the Obama Administration  
17 designated Southwest LRT as a project under their We  
18 Can't Wait Program, where projects are expedited through  
19 the permit and review process through early coordination  
20 and collaboration amongst agencies. And at the State  
21 level, the Southwest LRT project received \$2 million in  
22 DEED funds from the Government, which demonstrates the  
23 State commitment to this project.

24 In October, with the long-awaited release  
25 of the DEIS, the Southwest LRT project achieved another

1 milestone. This document is an important step in the  
2 development of the major infrastructure project like  
3 Southwest. The DEIS is intended to provided for the full  
4 and open disclosure of the potential impacts and  
5 potential mitigation for the proposed Southwest LRT  
6 project. Comments submitted on the DEIS will help to  
7 shape what is evaluated during the preliminary  
8 engineering process and the Final Environmental Impact  
9 Statement, or FEIS.

10 Hennepin County also established the  
11 Southwest LRT as a community works project as an  
12 innovative mechanism to coordinate implementation of LRT  
13 with land use and economic development. So this major  
14 regional transit investment will benefit residents,  
15 businesses, and communities and provide opportunities for  
16 us all.

17 I'll turn it back over to you.

18 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you,  
19 Commissioner Callison.

20 So the goal of the Environmental Impact  
21 Statement is to provide the public and public agencies,  
22 businesses, and the whole community with full disclosure  
23 of the potential impacts of this project and possible  
24 ways to mitigate those impacts. That's the purpose of  
25 the Environmental Impact Statement.

1           The FTA has chosen to extend the comment  
2 period until 5:00 p.m. on December 31st. And these  
3 comments are important because they help to shape the  
4 work of the Metropolitan Council on the -- which will be  
5 leading this project as we go forward during the  
6 preliminary engineering process, and they will be  
7 reflected in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

8           Tonight we're here as representatives of  
9 the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority to listen  
10 to your comments. The purpose of this hearing and the  
11 other two that occurred earlier is to provided the public  
12 with the opportunity to give verbal comments on the DEIS.  
13 In addition to providing verbal comments this evening,  
14 comments can also be submitted via e-mail at  
15 swcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us; wcooridor@cohennepin.mn.us;  
16 or via U.S. Mail to Hennepin County, 701 4th Avenue  
17 South, Suite 400, Minneapolis 55015.

18           Comments provided in writing receive the  
19 same weight as comments received during the public  
20 hearings, so there's no differentiation in terms of the  
21 weight afforded to the comments depending on the forum in  
22 which they're offered.

23           For this DEIS, Hennepin County is the state  
24 responsible governmental unit, or RGU; the Federal  
25 Transit Administration is the lead federal agency; and

1 the Metropolitan Council is the local project sponsor.  
2 Comments received during this public comment period,  
3 which extends through December 31st, are being collected  
4 by Hennepin County and will be provided to the  
5 Metropolitan Council and the FTA. All substantive  
6 comments received will be responded to during the  
7 preliminary engineering FEIS phases of project  
8 development. The County Railroad Authority will continue  
9 to be a strong partner as the project moves forward under  
10 the leadership of the FTA and the Metropolitan Council.

11 In terms of logistics for the evening, the  
12 rules are the same as the -- in our previous hearings.  
13 Each speaker will have three minutes to provide his or  
14 her comments. The speakers will be given a signal on  
15 timing to help them gauge the pace of their comments, a  
16 signal for two minutes remaining, and then a one-minute  
17 remaining signal. And then at the end of the three  
18 minutes, we'd ask you to wrap up your comments.

19 Comments are being transcribed for the  
20 formal record by a stenographer. Speakers should clearly  
21 state their name, address, and organization, if they  
22 represent one, if any. And the people should limit their  
23 comments to the Southwest Draft Environmental Impact  
24 Statement. Written statements, in addition to oral  
25 comments, are also very much welcome and will be added to

1 the formal record of oral comments received.

2 Speakers in the audience are asked to  
3 conduct themselves in a respectful manner. That's been  
4 the practice here over the last two hearings. We ask you  
5 to be courteous to all who have come here tonight to  
6 speak and share their comments; and, in that regard, we  
7 ask that there be no clapping, cheering, booing, or other  
8 actions that might disrupt. So that's -- those are the  
9 rules of the game, and we'd ask you to abide by those  
10 tonight.

11 So with that, I will -- I will take  
12 testimony here. We have a list of people who have signed  
13 up. The sign-up is continuing. You can sign up out  
14 front. And, frankly, at the end, if you haven't  
15 testified and wish to do so, we'll take hands at the end,  
16 as well, and people can approach the mic without having  
17 signed up. So again, we ask you to state your name and  
18 address; and if you represent an organization, to state  
19 that and try to abide by the three-minute warning.

20 The first speaker on my list who's signed  
21 up is Jason Wedel or Wedel -- Wedel. Okay -- from Allan  
22 Mechanical. Welcome, sir.

23 MR. WEDEL: Thank you, Commissioner.

24 We really appreciate the opportunity to  
25 provide our comments this evening. Again, I am Jason

1 Wedel. My address is 7875 Fuller Road in Eden Prairie.  
2 I'm representing Allan Mechanical, a business that is  
3 owned by my father and brother. We're commenting this  
4 evening about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

5 There are four proposed operation and  
6 maintenance facility locations. One of those locations  
7 would -- details acquiring our property, or acquiring our  
8 property to construct that; so we wanted to go on record  
9 as being opposed to the acquisition of our property for  
10 that operation and maintenance facility for a number of  
11 reasons. I've got five I'd like to go through quickly.

12 First, our property is very unique in that  
13 the current zoning allows outdoor storage. That's  
14 critical for our business. We are a commercial heating  
15 and air-conditioning business. We get large equipment  
16 delivered to our property and stockpiled, and we store it  
17 outside. Anyone familiar with local city planning, it's  
18 very difficult to find locations where outdoor storage is  
19 available, so that's critical for us.

20 Secondly, we have immediate access to  
21 County Highway 5 where the road intersects County Highway  
22 5 where the highway turns into freeway. It works  
23 wonderful for us. We're able to service our clients  
24 throughout the entire Metro area.

25 Thirdly, we now have enough room on our

1 property when we purchased it because of that, so we have  
2 plans for an expansion. We've gone through the expense  
3 of doing some planning for our building and had talks  
4 with the Cities on how we can accommodate our growth in  
5 the future. Any relocation would prohibit that.

6 Fourthly, we do have a cell phone tower  
7 that currently leases property from us. That's a source  
8 of revenue for us; and if we were forced to relocate, we  
9 would lose that potential revenue stream.

10 Lastly, we have a lot of very expensive and  
11 specialized equipment that we use to construct duct  
12 working and other components that are critical to heating  
13 and air-conditioning systems, and so to have to relocate  
14 our business and move elsewhere would be very expensive.

15 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
16 much.

17 MR. WEDEL: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Randy Neis, and  
19 then Geoffrey Jarpe on deck after that.

20 How'd I do on your name?

21 MR. WILLIAMS: I am not Randy Neis.

22 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Okay.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: He's back there, and I'm  
24 speaking on behalf of our organization.

25 I am Steve Williams, on behalf of Bobby and

1 Steve's Auto World.

2 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Are you Steve?  
3 The Steve?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: There's two Steves. We  
5 happen to have both Steves in the meeting here tonight.

6 But also recognize that Steve Anderson and  
7 his wife Erin are here representing our organization.

8 And I am certain that you commissioners are  
9 going to hear a lot of opposition, and probably some in  
10 favor, depending on who's impacted and what alignment you  
11 ultimately choose.

12 What makes our situation a little bit  
13 different, we wanted to be here to go on the record as  
14 being opposed to, and it's not alignment that you've got  
15 drawn right now. Eden Prairie is actually looking at  
16 changing the alignment through the city here and getting  
17 it closer to the -- the mall, which would go down -- one  
18 of the proposals is down Singletree.

19 And what makes our situation really -- I  
20 hate to use this word -- criminal, but we just built this  
21 flagship store with the help of the city council of Eden  
22 Prairie, and nine months, 10 months after we build it,  
23 they come to us saying that there's a proposal of  
24 realigning the light rail down Singletree. Well, that's  
25 the entrance of our new flagship store in Eden Prairie.

1 And it was just an absolute shock that we would have such  
2 a close working relationship with Eden Prairie in  
3 building our facility across from the mall only to have  
4 them 10 months later tell us that they are looking at one  
5 of three options to realign the light rail.

6 And so I want to go on record as strongly  
7 opposing the light rail going down Singletree and the  
8 impact. Obviously, if you look at what happened to  
9 University businesses, it's a negative impact at any --  
10 any route that you take, I'm sure. But to all of a  
11 sudden have them promoting a Singletree alignment when  
12 they were promoting us 10 months earlier would be  
13 shameful.

14 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
15 much.

16 Geoffrey Jarpe, and Barbara Fleet on  
17 deck.

18 MR. JARPE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's  
19 Jarpe, Geoff Jarpe. I'm with the Minneapolis law firm  
20 Maslon Edelman Borman & Brand. We represent the owner of  
21 the building located at 11455 Viking Drive. That  
22 building is an office building that houses the branch of  
23 the BMO Bank, and that building had been there for quite  
24 a number of years. It's a real asset to the area. I  
25 want to speak against the locally preferred alternative

1 in one respect, insofar as it impacts in a very negative  
2 way the bank building.

3 A very large bridge is slated to be  
4 constructed over the highways in the immediate vicinity  
5 of the bank and right next to the bank. And I submitted  
6 a brief letter this past Monday in accordance with the  
7 Notice of Hearing and the criteria laid out in the DEIS.  
8 And I want to reiterate that we do not think, number one,  
9 that the negative impacts have been adequately addressed  
10 in the draft EIS insofar as this specific property is  
11 concerned.

12 And, secondly, we think that the  
13 alternatives to building that bridge have not been  
14 adequately considered and dealt with in this draft EIS.  
15 We think that they -- both of those issues need to be  
16 addressed. They need to be addressed specifically and in  
17 detail.

18 Now, having said all that, I want to state  
19 that on behalf of the owners we stand ready, willing, and  
20 able to sit down with the appropriate people, happy to do  
21 that, and see if we can work out something here and  
22 explain our concerns, which are very serious, in greater  
23 detail.

24 Thank you for the opportunity to be  
25 heard.

1 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: You did say you  
2 submitted some written comments?

3 MR. JARPE: Belt and suspenders, Mr.  
4 Chairman. The letter went in this past Monday, and I  
5 wanted to reiterate our concerns here this evening.

6 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Very good. Thank  
7 you.

8 Next we have Barbara Fleet, and Elaine  
9 Rothman after her.

10 Welcome.

11 MS. FLEET: Welcome. My name is Barbara  
12 Fleet. I live at the Southwest Station condos. It's  
13 13570 Technology Drive. And I am totally opposed to this  
14 light rail going from Southwest Metro station to Mitchell  
15 Road. It would be in between Highway 5 and the condos,  
16 within just a couple feet from our building.

17 First of all, I can't even believe they  
18 even thought of it. I mean, there's absolutely no room.  
19 And, also, I mean, I can think of all the reasons. The  
20 noise, it's a total -- it would be a total eyesore. The  
21 close proximity is a total invasion of our privacy.

22 There's 237 condo units that were just  
23 built six years ago with about 500 residents that this  
24 would affect. The vibration -- it's not just a train  
25 that is going through once an hour. It's every seven and

1 a half minutes. That's a lot. And the condos were built  
2 on the wetlands, and we already know from the Southwest  
3 Metro station that they've had horrific problems with the  
4 settlement of the pavement just in the last couple years.  
5 Well, this could do total structural damage to our  
6 building. That's 237 condos.

7           Also, I think about all aspects of this.  
8 You're talking about inner city people, some very  
9 undesirable people maybe coming out on the light rail to  
10 the number one city -- voted the number one city in the  
11 whole U.S. coming out. This could totally -- it could  
12 increase the crime, which could totally affect Eden  
13 Prairie forever. Let's see here...

14           If it does go through, I personally would  
15 think it should stop at the Eden Prairie Town Center and  
16 not even come into the Southwest hub because of the  
17 wetlands, should stop there and then be redirected  
18 somewhere else. But truly, in my heart, in this economy,  
19 I think it's -- the money could be better spent somewhere  
20 else.

21           I think that the buses -- I think they're  
22 wonderful buses, they're luxury buses, they move right  
23 along the express lane. I think they're doing -- it just  
24 does great. And it's almost really sinful to even think  
25 about spending this amount of -- obscene amount of money

1 on the light rail at this point in time in the economy.

2 That's it.

3 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
4 much.

5 Elaine Rothman, and then Mario Colloly.

6 MS. ROTHMAN: Hi. My name is Elaine  
7 Rothman. I live at 5305 Beachside Drive. And if you  
8 were to come to my townhouse, I live right on the  
9 railroad, Canadian Pacific Line, and the Twin City  
10 railroad that's using it.

11 We are constantly bombarded by the noise  
12 from the railroad, the vibration from the railroad. My  
13 unit seems to be the stopping point for the -- I'm told  
14 the Twin City line picks up all the cars in St. Paul and  
15 brings it all the way through, and then it comes to where  
16 I sit, and they stop, and you get the bang, bang, bang,  
17 bang, bang. And then they uncouple in Hopkins, and then  
18 they come back; and then they go forward, and then they  
19 come back; and it's constant.

20 Today it was all day. 8 to 10 at night,  
21 you cannot have the windows or the doors open in the  
22 summertime. It's very hard to hear. It's enormous  
23 noise. And I'm losing -- erosion, my yard is being  
24 eroded by these constant vibrations. And now you're  
25 going to bring those rail -- the light rail line in about

1 two blocks away. You're saying it goes right up over the  
2 blocking, and that's a -- I can't see that. If you take  
3 a look at the railroad and what it's doing up there, and  
4 then you're going to put the light rail station right  
5 there.

6 We also have the landfill issue right  
7 there, and I don't know if that's a -- but right now  
8 Hopkins landfill is building this huge, huge mountain in  
9 there, and that is going to sit right beside the light  
10 rail. But if you take the Twin City line out, I'll take  
11 the light rail; but both of them together, it's going to  
12 couple and double what we already experience. Thank  
13 you.

14 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
15 much.

16 Mario Colloly, and Brian Payne next.

17 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Welcome.

18 MR. COLLOLY: Good afternoon. My name is  
19 the Mario Colloly. I live at 3301 (inaudible) South in  
20 Minneapolis. I am a member of the Center of Workers  
21 United in Struggle that organizes low wage workers,  
22 mainly organizing with immigrant, Latino immigrants in  
23 the Twin Cities.

24 We have -- over the five years that we've  
25 existed, we've been able to recover over \$550,000 in

1 unpaid wages to workers. We've also been able to change  
2 policies at 20 companies that were in direct violation of  
3 the federal and state labor laws to be able to improve  
4 working conditions for over 2,000 low wage workers.

5 A lot of our members either live or work  
6 along the projected routes for the Southwest line. We  
7 know that the Southwest line is going to -- is a very  
8 positive thing for our community that's going to be able  
9 to allow for more opportunities for jobs. But we also  
10 feel there is a need for a deeper analysis in terms of  
11 the impact that it could have on low wage workers. We  
12 see that large employers are going to only benefit  
13 economically significantly from this project, but there's  
14 a need for a deeper study in terms of low wage workers  
15 who work along the route.

16 We see the example of the Hiawatha Line out  
17 of the Mall of America. A lot of the workers who are  
18 working at Mall of America are still earning poverty  
19 level wages, and often we've partnered with workers who  
20 aren't even paid minimum wage. At the same time the  
21 businesses at Mall of America benefited significantly by  
22 gaining more clients although the workers who were there  
23 didn't see an economic improvement, so we are proposing  
24 that there would be a study looking into the working  
25 conditions and wages for the workers who currently work

1 along the line and then a follow-up study after the line  
2 is done to see has there been a change. What is the  
3 impact on low wage workers.

4 Thank you for opening the time to be able  
5 to hear from us, and thank you for listening to us.

6 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
7 much.

8 Next we have Brian Payne, and then John Lee  
9 Brian.

10 MR. PAYNE: And so my name is Brian Payne.  
11 I also work at the same organization that Mario just  
12 mentioned. I live at 3508 Oakland Avenue South in  
13 Minneapolis. And, again, our organization represents a  
14 number of workers who live and work along the proposed  
15 routes, and that's why we're here tonight.

16 So we're about to see the Southwest Transit  
17 rail project take significant steps to engage the diverse  
18 populations who live in the areas that would be served by  
19 the project in a forum such as this. It's an important  
20 step towards engaging low income minority populations in  
21 the process of the development of the Southwest Transit  
22 project.

23 We'd like to bring up two other points that  
24 are missing particularly in this study in terms of more  
25 deeply understanding the economic effects on low income

1 minority populations. First, when we looked at the  
2 preparers, the list of preparers of the documents,  
3 they're mostly employees of two large private consulting  
4 firms. To my knowledge, there are no low income minority  
5 members of the community represented in that list of  
6 preparers. This means that both low income and minority  
7 populations didn't play a key role in researching and  
8 preparing the study about their own community, and that  
9 all of the funding that went towards researching  
10 preparing the study went to large private companies,  
11 rather than towards the low income minority populations  
12 who and/or work in the areas that would be effected by  
13 this project.

14 In fact, it appears that individuals who  
15 already have access to good jobs and who do not live and  
16 work in the areas that will be served by the project are  
17 paid to do research and prepare documents about the  
18 potential impacts on low income and minority populations  
19 who do work in the areas that will be served by the  
20 project. Then low income and minority members of the  
21 community are expected to volunteer their time to come to  
22 public forums while other people are paid to do it.

23 Low income and minority populations who  
24 live and work along proposed routes for public transit  
25 should be engaged directly in researching potential

1 economic effects of proposed transit routes on their  
2 communities and should benefit from resources invested in  
3 research.

4 To remedy the situation, we propose  
5 creating partnerships between the community organizations  
6 that represent low income and minority populations and  
7 the center for transportation studies or either similar  
8 organizations of the University of Minnesota where the  
9 organizations can hire and train members of the community  
10 to do surveys in the community, and academic partners can  
11 provide the scientific and statistical analysis for the  
12 information provided.

13 This project can go beyond just researching  
14 potential economic impacts. It will also provide  
15 information about workers rights and about organizations  
16 and the government agencies that defend those rights.  
17 This will be an important step towards ensuring that  
18 similar work in those organizations are not perpetuated  
19 along the Southwest line, as what was mentioned on the  
20 Hiawatha line.

21 Secondly, we're also looking at the  
22 accessibility to the construction jobs that are going to  
23 come out from this project. The counties in the  
24 surrounding Metro area say that 22 to 32 percent of those  
25 jobs are going to be construction jobs and should be

1 available to the minority community -- to minorities  
2 populations. That goal is very rarely met in the  
3 community and may lead to specific restrictions that  
4 prevent minority populations from doing those jobs; so we  
5 propose looking into what they are -- what those  
6 restrictions are and why they're in place.

7 Thank you very much for your time.

8 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: We have been  
9 joined by Jennifer Mundt from the Metropolitan Council  
10 over there and State Representative Elect Yvonne Selcer  
11 in the front row.

12 Congratulations on your election. As a  
13 former House member, I truly want to welcome you to the  
14 House of Representatives. It's a great experience, so  
15 thank you for representing those in the community here.

16 All right. Next we have John Lee, and then  
17 Cheryl Boldon.

18 Mr. Lee, welcome.

19 MR. LEE: Thank you. I'm John Lee. I live  
20 at 5281 Beachside Drive in Minnetonka. I want to address  
21 the issue of rail congestion that we will suffer from.

22 The current freight line, referred to as  
23 the Bass Lake Spur, the scourge of Minnetonka, runs  
24 through our neighborhood. Now, it was built a hundred  
25 years ago when Minnetonka and Hopkins were not densely

1 populated, and it made perfect sense.

2 Today that's not the case. It's a  
3 congested area. Our neighborhood is going to be at the  
4 confluence of the freight line currently leased by the  
5 TC&W and the light rail line. We're going to be hemmed  
6 by railroads. We're all willing to pay a price for  
7 progress, but I know you're having an issue with that  
8 freight line in St. Louis Park, as well; highly  
9 controversial, lawsuits threatened.

10 Has the Council -- in studying the rail  
11 lines, there is an option for relocating the freight west  
12 of the Twin Cities. So my question is has the Council  
13 considered that? They're currently proposing to move the  
14 freight line out of the Kenilworth corridor through St.  
15 Louis Park. Highly controversial. You've got to move it  
16 anyways. Why not look at going back a step. Let's back  
17 it up into rural Minnesota, western Minnesota -- that's  
18 the area it primarily serves -- and reroute it there, and  
19 then bring it into the Twin Cities, and see if they kill  
20 two birds with one stone. That's my reason for being  
21 here.

22 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
23 much for your comments.

24 Cheryl Boldon, and then -- the person who  
25 was taking the names couldn't read the last name -- James

1 from St. Paul from IBEW Local 160.

2 MS. BOLDON: Hi. My name is Cheryl Boldon,  
3 and I represent Southwest Station, L.L.C. and Southwest  
4 Station Management, L.L.C. Address is 12900 through  
5 13300 Technology Drive in Eden Prairie.

6 First, I'd just like to say the biggest  
7 issue that I have is the concern over the significant  
8 sinking that we have on our site. We have sunk as much  
9 as three feet. And with -- I have great concerns about  
10 the underground tunnel and the subsidence from disturbed  
11 subsoils for the underground tunnel and the temporary  
12 dewatering associated with the LRT construction and the  
13 possible permanent dewatering of the tunnel if the  
14 groundwater is at 8 feet at that point, then the proposed  
15 tunnel is going to be knocked down 26 feet.

16 I would suggest that the light rail cross  
17 abovegrade so as not to interfere with traffic crossing  
18 after it. Next it is apparent that the models used to  
19 assess the number of parking spaces needed to adequately  
20 handle the estimated ridership must be re-evaluated. We  
21 have a sprawling metro area, which if not the most  
22 sprawling of all the states is definitely in the top  
23 three. As such, carpooling and higher density housing  
24 models from across the country do not adequately  
25 illustrate the parking demands.

1           Just like the bus, Park and Ride and  
2 Southwest Station was built into obsolescence from the  
3 day it was constructed. This is -- the concern I have is  
4 that we're using the same similar flawed data. This  
5 miscalculation of much needed parking has put an unfair  
6 demand and a monitoring burden on the owners of the  
7 surface parking lots at Southwest Station. My concern is  
8 that this further erroneous assessment will create even  
9 greater hardships.

10           Then there is an error in the DEIS on page  
11 355 of Appendix H1. It shows 13000 Technology Drive and  
12 3E parcel as having 175 existing parking spaces. In  
13 reality that parcel has 49 spaces. Ruby Tuesday, located  
14 at 12900 Technology Drive, and Anchor Bank, located at  
15 12950 Technology Drive, combined have in excess of 175  
16 parking stalls. So I'm not clear what they're actually  
17 referring to in that.

18           And I also am concerned that there appears  
19 to be no consideration for businesses related to  
20 construction, staging, noise, and high level vibrations.  
21 It seems like a major omission of the DEIS. I had a  
22 national shopping center expert, Max Ramstead, came out  
23 and looked at the center, and he said the center will be  
24 destroyed. And you show a taking of Anchor Bank, but not  
25 a taking of Ruby Tuesday; but you are taking all of Ruby

1 Tuesday's parking.

2 So I do not understand how you can leave a  
3 building with no parking, so I'm losing my extra parking  
4 Santorini is losing all of their extra parking, and Ruby  
5 Tuesday's is losing a hundred percent of their parking,  
6 but yet their building remains. It just makes no logical  
7 sense. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
9 much.

10 James, you're next; and Wanda Prescott  
11 after that.

12 MR. SAMUELSON: My name's James Samuelson.  
13 I'm with the IBEW Local 160. I do the political  
14 coordinating work for our local. I've been very active  
15 in this light rail project. It employs a lot of our  
16 members throughout the whole system. Once it becomes a  
17 running line totally, we employ our members with the  
18 Metro Transit.

19 Also, in 2010 we had talked a lot about  
20 jobs, jobs, jobs. Well, these things have not gone away,  
21 talking about it; but with other cities moving forward,  
22 like Denver and Houston, we can't sit on the back burner  
23 in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and in the surrounding area and  
24 go in the back steps here like -- so this project will  
25 move our state into a major growth area.

1           So we need to move this to get jobs.  
2       There's a lot of factories down this way. I live  
3       Downtown St. Paul. I have -- I'm three blocks from the  
4       depot, which is having their grand opening this Saturday.  
5       I'm looking forward to someday getting on that line and  
6       travel anywhere I possibly can, so...

7           There was a gentleman here earlier talking  
8       about the industry for low income people to get around.  
9       With the cost of gas nowadays, a lot of those people  
10      can't even afford a car. You can put \$1.75 in the meter,  
11      and you're off to your job down here in one of these  
12      factories. So I'm looking forward to this line being  
13      built and keep our members in a living wage job. Thank  
14      you.

15                   COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
16      much.

17                   Wanda Prescott, followed by Steve  
18      Williams.

19                   Welcome.

20                   MS. PRESCOTT: Welcome. I'm Wanda from the  
21      Ridgedale Group in Omaha, Nebraska; and I represent the  
22      Claremont Apartments on Smetana Drive.

23                   We're very concerned in regards to the  
24      light rail going within 90 feet away from the backside of  
25      all five of our buildings. Right now there's an existing

1 trail and wooded area. People rent those apartments  
2 because of that serene environment, and to have a train  
3 come through 332 times a day would be very adverse for  
4 the residents there.

5           Due to the frequency, the visual noise, the  
6 vibration, and impact, we really feel like we would lose  
7 a lot of residents that currently pay a premium rate to  
8 have a trail view right now. Also the temporary impacts  
9 of construction disturbance, tree removal, and grading,  
10 soil compaction, again, would be a great disruption to  
11 our residents; also, the visual, the sight of trains  
12 frequently passing by their windows roughly 90 feet away  
13 where now, again, they have trees and quiet; the headlamp  
14 from the train sweeping by, and also the tenants'  
15 knowledge of hundreds of people passing by their window  
16 every night, again, within 90 feet; also, the noise, the  
17 sound of the trains going through.

18           We understand that Minnetonka has a quiet  
19 zone ordinance in effect right now, but the City doesn't  
20 know if the LRT project will comply with that because of  
21 the border on Hopkins; so again we're very concerned  
22 about the noise and the train horns, the warning bells,  
23 and also the vibration, the settling of our buildings.  
24 We are built on a wetland, so we're very concerned about  
25 the continual vibration.

1                   We have also submitted in writing from  
2 Jerry Van, from our development department, written  
3 concerns, as well. Thank you.

4                   COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
5 much.

6                   Steve Williams.

7                   UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He already spoke.

8                   COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Already spoke.  
9 That was okay.

10                  Jeff Strate, followed by John Nicklow.

11                  MR. STRATE: I guess you'll have to put the  
12 Jeff Strate filter on.

13                  My name is Jeff Strate. I live at 15020  
14 Summer Hill Drive, Eden Prairie. Tonight I represent  
15 myself. I've been an advocate for light rail transit for  
16 15, 16 years here and an advocate for trails. I'm only  
17 going to speak on a few things that I saw and suspect  
18 need more study for the Draft Environmental Statement.  
19 Some have been mentioned already, but I'll repeat them  
20 quickly.

21                  I still don't know if there is a need to  
22 extend light rail transit at this time or in the next 15  
23 years to Mitchell Road, and I parrot the concerns of  
24 about the wetlands in that area. They have caused  
25 problems with construction in that area ever since I've

1 lived here, which is about 19 years right now.

2 Also, I'm very concerned about the future  
3 of our Southwest Transit bus system. It's a wonderful  
4 commuter bus system, and I want to know more about how  
5 that's going to be integrated into the collaboration with  
6 the light rail transit. Will it become -- will it remain  
7 a commuter system to the U? I hope it does because we're  
8 going to need both. And I also hope it can expand its  
9 service westward to, say, Mall of America.

10 I'm also very concerned about the grade  
11 crossing at Valley View Road near Highway 112. That's an  
12 at-grade crossing. That is one of the most congested  
13 intersections in Eden Prairie, and I recommend seriously  
14 looking at tunneling underneath that intersection. It's  
15 difficult enough as it is to get through there every day,  
16 except after 9:00 at night.

17 I also wanted to see more future  
18 consideration for express service 20 years down the line  
19 between Hopkins and Downtown Minneapolis. I know you're  
20 having a difficult time right now figuring out all these  
21 challenges to the draft, but that should be thought of.  
22 I think we do have enough right-of-way to consider that,  
23 at least to get us thinking, because there are a lot of  
24 stops on this thing.

25 It's going to be slow to get into Downtown

1 Minneapolis from Eden Prairie, and I really believe that  
2 if a number of stops can be routed along those stations  
3 between St. Louis Park and Downtown Minneapolis, that  
4 that would really increase service for our commuters out  
5 here.

6 I'm also siding with the people in St.  
7 Louis Park that have concerns about additional railroad  
8 travel through there. I am delighted that this Southwest  
9 LRT is going to serve Opus in Minnetonka and Golden  
10 Triangle in Eden Prairie; not only for our businesses,  
11 but also for future affordable housing, and that's going  
12 to go both to seniors and people from other parts of the  
13 state. Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you.

15 John Nicklow, and then Patty Schmitz.

16 Welcome.

17 MR. NICKLOW: Thank you. Hello. My name  
18 is John Nicklow, and I'm representing my family's  
19 business at Santorini down the road at 13000 Technology  
20 Drive.

21 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: I think you're  
22 going to have to stand up. That mic is pretty hot.

23 MR. NICKLOW: Is it hot? Okay. Is here  
24 good?

25 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Yeah.

1 MR. NICKLOW: Our business currently  
2 depends on the parking lot surrounded by the Southwest  
3 Transit bus station. There are currently seven  
4 restaurants and one bank. So seven out of the eight  
5 businesses have the same peak hours.

6 The plan that is currently favored by the  
7 committee would put a second parking ramp, taking up a  
8 third of the current parking spots, basically making a --  
9 changing currently a stressed parking situation into a  
10 disaster. And my concerns go beyond the finish line and  
11 kind of peak with the construction and the disruption  
12 that would cause.

13 The ease at which our customers could come  
14 and visit our restaurant is a grave concern of ours. The  
15 restaurant industry is based on providing food and drink  
16 for the convenience of our customers. Take away the  
17 convenience, and the customers will respond by finding a  
18 more convenient location leaving us dead in the water.

19 My concern is to be able to keep our  
20 business at current levels or better and would like the  
21 opportunity to discuss this with you further beyond this  
22 meeting.

23 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you for  
24 your comments.

25 Patty Schmitz is next, and then Tom

1 Schuster.

2 Welcome.

3 MS. SCHMITZ: Thank you. My name is Patty  
4 Schmitz. I live at 2806 Dean Parkway, and I'm speaking  
5 on behalf of myself and my husband Alex Deitz.

6 First of all, I want to say that I am a big  
7 supporter of light rail transit. I lived in the  
8 Washington, D.C. area for four years, and I took -- I  
9 took the Metro to work three or four times a week; so I'm  
10 really pleased that the Twin Cities continue to move  
11 light rail forward. It's long overdue.

12 I do have some concerns about the DEIS, and  
13 I'd like to speak about the one that's most troubling to  
14 me. That item is the proposed new bridge over Cedar Lake  
15 Parkway. I know that Commissioner Dorfman is probably  
16 quite familiar with that particular section of the  
17 proposed LRT route. But where the bridge is proposed to  
18 be put is in a densely residential neighborhood. And if  
19 it's built, the length of the span would stretch from a  
20 small and quiet park a couple blocks west of the actual  
21 intersection and east of Lake of the Isles.

22 The rise of the bridge upwards of 30 feet  
23 plus the wires needed for the LRT would be in very close  
24 proximity to the beach at the south end of the lake and  
25 would be an eyesore for -- I think for hundreds of

1 residents who live nearby. Cedar Lake is arguably the  
2 most unique of the chain of lakes in Southwest  
3 Minneapolis. Unlike Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet,  
4 there's no commercial development on the lake. It's  
5 surrounded by bike paths, park paths, beaches, and some  
6 private homes and is honestly just such a tranquil place.

7 I know that we have light rail trains go  
8 by, and I support that because I really do like the  
9 notion of having this transit go by, but I do not want to  
10 look at a bridge on my way there, and I don't want to  
11 look at a bridge when I am there.

12 I've also reviewed the DEIS, and I saw the  
13 flyover, and I would say from looking at it almost every  
14 bridge is crossing interstate, highways, freeways, busy  
15 commercial thoroughfares, and nearby railroad tracks.  
16 And I realize that each situation is a little bit  
17 different, but this is a two-lane road.

18 The other thing I want to comment on  
19 briefly is the locally preferred alternative around the  
20 question of what to do with freight traffic that's  
21 currently on the LRT route. My understanding is that the  
22 DEIS generally does not support colocation that runs  
23 through our neighborhood for those freight trains. And  
24 while I'm sympathetic to those in St. Louis Park who are  
25 close to moving this freight train tracks that run

1 through St. Louis Park, having to live with this -- that  
2 freight traffic, it's not a lot of trains.

3 And so I would ask that we not be asked to  
4 give up Parkland and not be asked to take both the  
5 freight line, which was supposed to be between one and  
6 six years and has now been there for over 10. I ask that  
7 we not be asked to take both the freight line and the  
8 LRT. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
10 much.

11 Tom Schuster and Jeff Goto.

12 Mr. Schuster, how are you?

13 MR. SCHUSTER: Good. How are you?

14 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Welcome.

15 MR. SCHUSTER: My name's Tom Schuster, and  
16 I live at 5945 12th Avenue South in Minneapolis. I'm  
17 here representing 43 Hoops Basketball Academy in Hopkins.

18 We have a unique relationship with the Rail  
19 Authority, as you guys already own our property. So I'm  
20 speaking to you as my landlord. Thank you. You've been  
21 great partners. And also I'd like to say, overall, I'm  
22 pleased and delighted to see light rail. I think it's a  
23 good thing. Unfortunately for my business, it could be  
24 the end of my business.

25 We have looked at the Draft Environmental

1 Impact Study ourselves and people in our neighborhood and  
2 feel pretty strongly it really would make more sense to  
3 have the station on the south side of the track versus  
4 the north; so, for the record, we'd like to advocate for  
5 that. We -- and from a traffic flow standpoint, it just  
6 makes more sense to put it on the south side since you  
7 already own the property on the north side. I know we're  
8 fighting an uphill battle.

9           If the station does go at 100 62nd Street  
10 where 43 Hoops is located currently, I guess we'd ask  
11 that you consider leaving our business intact as much as  
12 possible. I think we can co-exist. We've got 150 stalls  
13 in our parking lot. I don't think that our property was  
14 designed to be a park-and-go station, but more of a  
15 drop-off-and-go station or a walk-and-go station; so I  
16 think that we could co-exist.

17           People have said, you know, we're facing a  
18 budget crisis, and we don't have the money. I know what  
19 you paid for our property. I think you got a good deal.  
20 And we helped you financially by contributing half a  
21 million dollars in rent since we moved in, and we'll pay  
22 another half million between now and when our lease  
23 expires. And I'd like to keep paying that every five  
24 years forever and continue to be good partners with the  
25 Rail Authority.

1 I'd also like to point out that we've been  
2 great partners with the City of Hopkins and the Hopkins  
3 School District, with the police, the Resource West Food  
4 Shelves. There isn't a community center in the Blake  
5 Road, but we basically provided our building as a  
6 community center. We hosted a hot lunch program for kids  
7 in the area this past summer. We've opened our doors to  
8 just about any civic group that asks, always at no  
9 charge.

10 We had 400 Muslims meet for their Holy Day  
11 a month ago. Pretty much our building is the community  
12 center for the Blake Road, and we'd love to continue to  
13 be able to do that. And if we can co-exist, we'd sure  
14 like to.

15 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: How many  
16 basketball courts?

17 MR. SCHUSTER: Two and a half.

18 I was going to say when you negotiated the  
19 lease, you said you used to sneak in any basketball court  
20 you could, and you're welcome to stop by any time.

21 Commissioner Callison has been there.

22 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Well, I have to  
23 say that some of us in Minneapolis wondered how Hopkins  
24 got to be good.

25 MR. SCHUSTER: My business partner is

1 coaching the Eden Prairie girls tonight, so we've done  
2 even more with them than Hopkins. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you.  
4 Jeff Goto from Costco, and then Matt  
5 Muyres.

6 Welcome.

7 MR. GOTO: Good evening, Commissioners.

8 My name is Jeff Goto. I'm the general  
9 manager of the Costco on 12011 Technology Drive. My  
10 purpose here is to convey a concern that we have with the  
11 light rail project.

12 I believe our corporate office has  
13 submitted a detailed written response. I'm just going to  
14 read it.

15 THE REPORTER: Can you speak up?

16 MR. GOTO: Okay.

17 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

18 MR. GOTO: Costco does not oppose the  
19 concept proposed with the Southwest Transitway. Costco  
20 also does not oppose the construction of the Southwest  
21 Transitway, with the exception of the area specific to  
22 our location on Technology Drive. One of the proposed  
23 plans calls for the Town Center Station and the  
24 accompanying light rail traffic to be constructed on the  
25 south side of Technology Drive.

1 Costco opposes any rail tracking and any  
2 rail station construction on the south side of Technology  
3 Drive for the following reasons. Construction of the  
4 railroad tracks on the south side of Technology Drive  
5 would require every vehicle entering our parking lot to  
6 cross over the tracks. Any disruption to the flow of  
7 traffic entering and exiting our facility would have an  
8 adverse effect on our business and inhibit our continuing  
9 growth.

10 To illustrate our concerns to you, please  
11 consider the following. In 2005, which was the first  
12 full calendar year we were open, we had approximately  
13 700,000 vehicles enter our facility. That comes to about  
14 58,000 vehicles a month. Now, three years later, in  
15 2008, the vehicle total was 1.29 million, which about is  
16 103,000 vehicles per month. This -- in 2012, and that's  
17 going August of 2011 to August of 2012, our vehicle  
18 traffic was 1.82 million, which was about 100,000  
19 vehicles a month. Those figures don't include the  
20 traffic from our 216 employees, nor do they include the  
21 traffic from the trucks and semis that deliver on average  
22 about \$3 million worth of freight to us each week.

23 To summarize our concerns, Costco simply  
24 cannot allow its current feature members, employees, and  
25 suppliers to be subjected to the delays, frustration, and

1 inconvenience that is sure to occur should the light rail  
2 tracks and the station be constructed on the south side  
3 of Technology Drive. For that reason, we ask that an  
4 alternative place be put in place so as not to disrupt  
5 our current business, and we continue to grow.

6 We should also let it be known that while  
7 Costco's prepared to use any and all resources necessary  
8 to protect the interests of our members, employees, and  
9 suppliers, we are hopeful that a resolution can be  
10 reached that will be mutually agreeable to all parties.

11 So thank you for your time.

12 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
13 much for being here.

14 Matt Muyres, and then Charlie Fink.

15 I don't see anybody moving toward the  
16 podium.

17 Charlie Fink, and then David Greene.

18 Charlie Fink?

19 Okay. Then David Greene, followed by  
20 Jeffrey Peltola.

21 MR. GREENE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
22 Commissioners.

23 My name is David Greene, and I live at 2724  
24 Emerson Avenue South in Minneapolis; and I'm here  
25 representing Isaiah, which is a coalition of 100 churches

1 in the Twin Cities, Metro, and St. Cloud areas that work  
2 for racial economic justice. We've been working closely  
3 with North Minneapolis communities on Southwest LRT,  
4 particularly the Harrison Neighborhood Association. And  
5 Harrison, just to give you an idea of the community, is a  
6 community of 80 percent minority, people of color.  
7 Population is 37 percent poverty rate, which is fairly  
8 typical for North Minneapolis neighbors.

9 So we have some detailed written comments  
10 that we'll be submitting, so tonight I want to focus on  
11 the big picture and why Southwest LRT is such an  
12 important project for our region. I summarize it like  
13 this: Southwest LRT is a racial and economic equity  
14 project. If we do this right, the project has the  
15 potential to be a transformative catalyst for our region.

16 Let's start with education. Minnesota has  
17 the worst achievement gap in the country. I've talked to  
18 some of the kids in Harrison who spend up to two hours  
19 each way on the bus to get to school along the Southwest  
20 corridor. I remember when I was a kid we complained  
21 about getting up early for a 20-minute carpool. These  
22 kids have extraordinary dedication to their education.  
23 We should make it easier for them to get to school, and  
24 Southwest LRT will provide improved connections, provide  
25 new connections and opportunities to these kids.

1 Minnesota also has one of the worst, if not  
2 the worst, wealth gaps in the country. There is simply  
3 not a reasonable transit connection today from North  
4 Minneapolis to jobs in the Southwest Corridor. In fact,  
5 Harrison did a job skills inventory of its residents and  
6 found that the skills residents already have match up  
7 very well with the needs of employers along the line.  
8 Southwest LRT is an opportunity gateway for thousands of  
9 people in North Minneapolis who have been cut off from  
10 opportunity for too long. The Van White and Penn Avenue  
11 Stations will be key connectors for communities that  
12 desperately need jobs.

13 Plus, Isaiah supports transportation goals  
14 in the -- Chapter 1 of the DEIS. Isaiah also supports  
15 the economic development goals in the DEIS. Harrison and  
16 the Bryn Mawr neighborhoods have worked over a decade to  
17 develop the Bassett Creek Valley master plan. These are  
18 communities working together to lift themselves out of  
19 poverty. As a vision, the BCV master plan would add over  
20 3,000 housing units, 40 acres of open green space, and  
21 5,000 to 6,000 jobs in the area. It would take a blight  
22 land in Linden Yards and turn it into productive engines  
23 of prosperity.

24 Currently the DEIS evaluation does not  
25 consider the effects of the BCV master plan on ridership

1 and other aspects of the project. The BCV master plan is  
2 part of the official comprehensive plan in Minneapolis  
3 and was approved -- that was approved by the Met Council.  
4 The DEIS should reflect the anticipated developments,  
5 include them in the project modeling, and emphasize the  
6 development potential at the Penn and Van White Stations.

7 I'll just close by saying again the  
8 Southwest LRT is a racial and economic equity project.  
9 Our region must close the education and opportunity gaps  
10 if they are to prosper. Southwest LRT is one way we can  
11 begin to do that. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
13 much.

14 Jeffrey Peltola, followed by Art  
15 Higinbotham.

16 Welcome.

17 MR. PELTOLA: I know Art.

18 Good evening. I'm Jeffrey Peltola. I live  
19 at 3131 Excelsior Boulevard, Number 913, Minneapolis,  
20 Minnesota 55416. Most of my remarks tonight will be  
21 about the west side station area and the surrounding  
22 area.

23 But first I'd like to say the philosophy  
24 for the entire Green Line Extension project, both the  
25 station planning and preliminary engineering, should be

1 what transit stations are intended to be, actual places,  
2 not merely modes -- between modes of transportation.  
3 Ridership, the number of LRT passengers isn't the only  
4 indicator of success. The number of pedestrian trips  
5 done in and around the station areas for me is even more  
6 important. They don't pay fares unless they board  
7 trains, but they are an integral part of the economic  
8 activity that's at the heart of the return on investment  
9 that we seeking with a project like this.

10 Some of the biggest mistakes and missed  
11 opportunities of transit projects stem from losing sight  
12 of this. Think Fairfax County, Virginia and those stops  
13 versus Arlington County, Virginia, if you're familiar  
14 with that part of the Washington, D.C. area. Around West  
15 Lake where I live, I think it's fair to say there's a  
16 broad consensus when it comes to the issue of parking.  
17 More parking guests or park and ride adjacent to the  
18 station itself, no.

19 There's also a broad consensus that right  
20 now there are serious problems, and the bike/pedestrian  
21 environment is unpleasant and unsafe. Near the end of  
22 2010, at the conclusion of the previous Minneapolis  
23 station planning project, a number of us didn't like some  
24 things that were in the final document. We got together  
25 and submitted about a half dozen comments.

1           While doing so, it was obvious we didn't  
2 want to wait several years to make transportation  
3 improvements in our community. And so even before the  
4 Southwest project became recently an Obama We Can't Wait  
5 project, we were resolved to get on with it. So that led  
6 to one student project in the spring of 2011, two more in  
7 the fall of 2011, and two more right now. So far five  
8 projects, 19 students, and lots of community engagement.  
9 In fact, the projects this fall have the special benefit  
10 of the community input generated by the park board SHRT  
11 in that area, as well as the walkability workshop that  
12 Commissioner Dorfman helped organize.

13           So flowing out of this effort, I'm in the  
14 process of founding a new nonprofit called Public Works  
15 for Public Good. Check out ewpg.org. And all the work  
16 from this -- these projects is posted on the Lake Street  
17 and Excelsior Boulevard page. So the pace of work on  
18 this large LRT project in the complex West Lake Station  
19 will accelerate greatly in the coming months. It's  
20 essential that the various governmental entities, their  
21 leaders, staff, consultants elaborate effectively in a  
22 manner that's transparent to the public. I know a lot of  
23 other people are looking forward to being constructive  
24 partners.

25           COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very

1 much.

2 Art Higinbotham, followed by Fred  
3 Koppelman.

4 MR. HIGINBOTHAM: Good evening,  
5 Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity to address  
6 you.

7 I am Art Higinbotham, resident of 3431  
8 St. Louis Avenue, Minneapolis. I'm a graduate of Amherst  
9 College and have an engineering degree from MIT, and I'm  
10 a retired senior executive at 3M Companies.

11 I'd like to talk to you about the Southwest  
12 LRT capital accounts, which is covered in DEIS section  
13 8.0, if you want to follow through. I assume I have the  
14 leeway of plus or minus \$100 million because there was a  
15 slight typo in the DEIS.

16 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: We corrected that  
17 pretty fast.

18 MR. HIGINBOTHAM: In that section the \$218  
19 million is specified under track and web guide for 16.4  
20 miles of track, plus infrastructure. And as Mark  
21 Fuhrman, the project manager, has pointed out, the  
22 project director, that also includes infrastructure such  
23 as bridges, underpasses, overpasses, park and rides, and  
24 stations.

25 I've used as models the Martin Sabo foot

1 and bike bridge at Lake and Hiawatha, which is about \$5  
2 million, and the tunnel under the airport, which is a  
3 bore tunnel costing \$100 million.

4 First of all, I see a discrepancy between  
5 the \$218 million and the video, which was produced by  
6 Southwest Transitway, called a virtual ride from Eden  
7 Prairie to Target Field. I would invite you to view  
8 that, because all the infrastructure which I have made  
9 cost estimated here is shown in that video. \$50 million  
10 for a flyover 494. \$40 million for a flyover at Highway  
11 212. \$40 million for a flyover at Crosstown. \$30  
12 million for a 3,000 foot bridge over the Minnetonka  
13 wetlands. 20 million for a 169 underpass. 120 million  
14 for the freight relocation to St. Louis Park. 30 million  
15 for access to the West Lake Street station. 10 million  
16 for Cedar Lake Parkway tunnel, not an overpass. 5  
17 million in new bridges over the Cedar Lake, Lake of the  
18 Isles tunnel. And it goes on and on.

19 It includes the amount necessary for the  
20 track itself. 60 million for four park-and-rides at Eden  
21 Prairie, Hopkins, Wooddale, and Belt Line. \$150 million  
22 for new stations. \$100 million for safety fences,  
23 vegetation noise barriers, and so forth. And it totals  
24 up to \$750 million. Add a contingency of 75 million,  
25 825; not 218, and the project total cost will be 1

1 billion 881; not 1 billion 275.

2 Unless this is addressed, the place for  
3 this project is on federal new starts endowment. Thank  
4 you.

5 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you. Fred  
6 Koppelman, and then a Dave Van Hattum.

7 Fred Koppelman?

8 All right. Then Dave Van Hattum, followed  
9 by Todd Larson.

10 Welcome.

11 MR. VAN HATTUM: Good afternoon. My name  
12 is Dave Van Hattum. I live at 4120 Aldridge Avenue South  
13 in Minneapolis. I work for a Transit For Livable  
14 Communities. Transit For Livable Communities is a local  
15 nonprofit advocacy organization with over 10,000 members  
16 in the Twin Cities Metro.

17 Our mission is to advocate for expanded  
18 options for people to use the bus, the train, biking, and  
19 walking. Transit For Livable Communities, or TLC,  
20 strongly supports the Southwest LRT and the locally  
21 preferred alternative. The Southwest LRT line is a smart  
22 and cost-effective investment for our region. It's a key  
23 component of a regional transit system that will help  
24 attract employers and young people to our region, and it  
25 provides the right long-term transportation solution for

1 this corridor.

2 It also provides substantial environmental  
3 benefits. Currently on a per-mile basis, transit riders  
4 consume half the energy as cars, and a far smaller  
5 fraction of the pollution is produced by transit on a  
6 per-mile basis. And as we build this system by raising  
7 more riders, those numbers just look better and better.  
8 But more transit riders also reduces water pollution and  
9 helps protect open space, something we all believe in.

10 The Southwest LRT line will serve growing  
11 demand both for the commuters from the suburbs into  
12 Downtown, but also those reverse -- critical reverse  
13 commutes to Eden Prairie and other communities. Before  
14 my time at Transit For Livable Communities, I worked out  
15 here in Eden Prairie along 494 with the large employers,  
16 and I was probably in every lunch room in Eden Prairie,  
17 Minnetonka, et cetera; and I can tell you there's  
18 thousands of people that are really looking forward to  
19 this enhanced transit option and the connections with  
20 pedestrian and biking, as well.

21 No doubt there will be impacts from this  
22 project that will require well thought out mitigation,  
23 just as there are with all major transportation projects.  
24 Again, we support the locally preferred alternative  
25 because we are convinced it will provide the greatest

1 benefit with the least detrimental impacts. We have seen  
2 Hennepin County and our Metro come up with appropriate  
3 mitigation for both Hiawatha and the Central Corridor LRT  
4 now under construction, and we trust that the County and  
5 its partners will provide and refine as needed the  
6 necessary mitigations for the locally preferred  
7 alternative.

8 In summary, based on the many economic,  
9 environmental, and quality of life benefits, the TLC  
10 strongly supports the Southwest LRT project, and we  
11 believe strongly that we need to keep moving forward so  
12 we can all be riding the train in 2018. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
14 much.

15 Todd Larson, and then Susan Friske Pfaff.  
16 Welcome.

17 MR. LARSON: Thank you. My name is Todd  
18 Larson, and I live at 3020 Colorado Avenue South in St.  
19 Louis park, which is a block off the proposed bypass  
20 route.

21 I'm speaking in favor of the colocation  
22 alternative for a couple of different reasons, the first  
23 one being -- is strictly financial. If it's the cheaper  
24 route or the cheaper alternative and works, why shouldn't  
25 it be the one that is supported and selected.

1                   Secondly, if colocation is deemed  
2                   undesirable, that's a concept I don't understand. As in  
3                   my day job in city planning for Brooklyn Park, I'm quite  
4                   involved in the Bottineau Corridor where colocation along  
5                   the freight route corridor between Highway 55 through  
6                   Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park is seen as the  
7                   favorable -- favorable route; and that's from Hennepin  
8                   County staff and from the consultants that we're working  
9                   with. So I don't understand how one is favorable and one  
10                  is unfavorable. So in general, I do support the concept  
11                  of light rail through the region. Thank you.

12                   COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
13                  much.

14                   Susan Friske Pfaff, followed by Asad  
15                  Aliweyd.

16                   Welcome.

17                   MS. FRISKE PFAFF: Good evening. My name  
18                  is Susan Friske Pfaff. I'm the owner of one unit at  
19                  Southwest Station Condos, located at 13560 Technology  
20                  Drive. And currently I rent out that unit. I'm  
21                  representing myself this evening as a landlord.

22                   I have a very important question for all of  
23                  you in the audience this evening. Please raise your hand  
24                  if any of you would be in favor of light rail tracks  
25                  appearing 8 to 10 feet from the foundation of your house.

1 Well, that's wonderful news that none of you have to deal  
2 with the dilemma I have to deal with. For the record, no  
3 one raised their hand.

4 I'm strongly opposed to the light rail  
5 transit tracks that are proposed to run in front of two  
6 of the residential buildings on Southwest Station Condos,  
7 located between Highway 212 and Technology Drive. For  
8 the renters of my unit, I'm deeply worried about the  
9 potential vibrations and noise a track running within  
10 such close proximity to the building would cause.

11 It's my understanding this distance would  
12 be as close as 8 to 10 feet. Since the buildings are  
13 wood frame construction, not concrete, I'm also concerned  
14 about the structural integrity of the buildings being  
15 impacted. I hope the Railroad Authority will reconsider  
16 the proposed Metro light rail station in order to avoid  
17 the placement of the light rail tracks for running along  
18 Highway 212 and our condo community. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
20 much.

21 Asad Aliweyd and Blair Moe.

22 Welcome.

23 MR. ALIWEYD: Good evening, Council. My  
24 name is Asad Aliweyd. I am with New American Academy. I  
25 work with the Somali community in Eden Prairie. New

1 American Academy, on behalf of the community, we support  
2 the TA local alignment from the Southwest Transit because  
3 it provides our community with access to a transit  
4 system. It provides our community with economic  
5 development opportunities. It provides the opportunity  
6 to increase affordable housing in the five stations in  
7 Eden Prairie and also another 10 stations in the  
8 southwest area, opportunities.

9 As you know, a large number of immigrants  
10 work and commute to communities in the southwest area,  
11 all the way to South Minneapolis, Hopkins, and St. Louis  
12 Park. A lot of need is for transit. Accessible transit  
13 is very important to us. So we estimate about 500  
14 Somalis at a minimum, they don't have a car to travel to  
15 Minneapolis.

16 Economic development is another thing that  
17 we support in this project, because Southwest LRT can  
18 provide (unintelligible) to Eden Prairie for economic  
19 development opportunities with this five station area.  
20 We are very glad to give us a bus tour where we may have  
21 a business opportunity. We start business ownership  
22 training, and that won't be happening without the  
23 Southwest LRT project. So we tried to have a business  
24 established in this area of opportunities.

25 It will also bring opportunity for

1 employment and the businesses stations area. It will  
2 bring affordable housing, and for -- for this -- for this  
3 area of the Twin Cities. Affordable housing -- well, one  
4 concern we have is Southwest LRT is a place -- a priority  
5 for where the affordable housing is going to be. It's  
6 not very clear to us.

7 And we would like to thank those who  
8 support this. We call accessible transit a human rights  
9 issue. So everyone should have a -- well, affordable  
10 housing is something that everybody should have. For  
11 example, the transit, if you have five kids and you're an  
12 immigrant and your five kids go to (unintelligible) --

13 THE REPORTER: Sir, you're going to have to  
14 turn this way. I can't hear you.

15 MR. ALIWEYD: -- and you don't have a car  
16 and you live this far from the city, how are your kids  
17 going to be able to go to education.

18 So it's -- it's a faster way to travel to  
19 Twin Cities. It's safer. It is cheaper. That's why we  
20 support it -- this, and that's why we would like to have  
21 the Southwest LRT to be successful in the coming years  
22 and months. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you. Very  
24 much.

25 Next is Blair Moe, and followed by Steve

1 Chelesnik.

2 Mr. Moe, welcome.

3 MR. MOE: Thank you. My name is Blair Moe,  
4 and I'm from -- I reside at 2944 Blackstone Avenue in  
5 St. Louis Park. And my only concern -- I'm speaking for  
6 myself and the \$100 million typo that was in the DEIS for  
7 the colocation.

8 I'm just a little bit concerned about that.  
9 I've been in the IT industry for a large corporation for  
10 over 20 years. I push around reports like that all the  
11 time, and I'm just concerned about how that number could  
12 have gotten through. The fact it was a typo doesn't wash  
13 with me because those numbers should be checked,  
14 calculated, and double-checked. And it makes me wonder  
15 about other numbers in the DEIS and what happens if, you  
16 know, once all the contracts are signed and the project  
17 is underway, we find out that there are more errors and  
18 more problems.

19 So I just wanted to say that we need to  
20 really be sure about all numbers. I am in favor of light  
21 rail. I'm also in favor of colocation. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
23 much.

24 Steve Chelesnik, and then Jack Perry.

25 Welcome.

1 MR. CHELESNIK: Good evening, Commissioners  
2 Steve Chelesnik. I am an Eden Prairie resident and also  
3 general counsel for Emerson Process Management. One of  
4 the companies we own is Rosemount, which is located on  
5 Technology Drive and is one of the -- one of the oldest  
6 corporate citizens in Eden Prairie. I think we've been  
7 here for quite a long time, and we supply quite a few  
8 high-tech jobs as a corporate citizen.

9 We've worked closely with the City as the  
10 Southwest rail project has moved along, and we're very  
11 supportive of the project generally. We think it will  
12 bring a lot of benefits to the community, and we also  
13 support Commissioner Callison. And we're supportive of  
14 the preferred option with the exception of the Technology  
15 Drive alignment for a variety of reasons, but we can get  
16 into those reasons in written comments what I will submit  
17 later.

18 What I would like to say, I guess, is that  
19 this is a huge public investment. It's a 50- or 75- or  
20 100-year investment, and it needs to be done right. And  
21 it needs to -- all the decisions need to be carefully  
22 thought through. The present location of the Town Center  
23 Station is not a particularly well thought out decision.  
24 It was moved there as an option because there were  
25 problems with the originally preferred routes, and I

1 think it's one that needs to be revisited.

2 And we support the City's desire to have  
3 alternatives to Technology Drive alignment investigated.  
4 During the DEIS phase and during preliminary engineering  
5 when it's early enough to do something, so we can  
6 understand what the options are. I think there are much  
7 better options that better serve both the State purposes  
8 of the light rail and also City's to create a station  
9 with sufficient areas of parking. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
11 much.

12 Jack Perry.

13 Mr. Perry, welcome.

14 MR. PERRY: Thank you. Jack Perry from the  
15 Briggs and Morgan Law Firm, and I'm here on behalf of  
16 Costco, and Costco spoke earlier. I just want to make a  
17 couple very, very quick comments.

18 And the first is Steve and I have been  
19 working with Rick and other members of the City to make  
20 sure that our concerns with the current location on  
21 Technology Drive have been heard and understood, and  
22 there's two comments I need to make.

23 First is the comment by one of the earlier  
24 speakers about the City changing its mind. And if you go  
25 back and look at the history of this project, as early

1 as -- my date's May 18, 2010, the Eden Prairie City  
2 Council went on record opposed to this portion of the  
3 route, the Technology route, with the Town Center Station  
4 being on Costco property. They reiterated that same  
5 position as a Council on February 21, 2012; and then just  
6 more recently on November 20, they said the same thing.

7 And my understanding is they'll send a  
8 letter tomorrow reiterating that while they, like Costco  
9 and Emerson are in favor of this project, this portion of  
10 the route doesn't make sense. In real simplistic terms,  
11 the reason it doesn't make sense is this Costco is a big  
12 box retail store. It's not a -- it's not a place where  
13 you -- where you have a Town Center. If you want a  
14 another park and ride, it's a great spot. That's not  
15 what all the plans say it's supposed to be. It's not  
16 what -- what was envisioned in the City documents.

17 The additional point I wanted to make is --  
18 is that -- there was a comment made by Steve  
19 (unintelligible) about the implication of -- cost  
20 implications. And one of the things that Costco will  
21 submit with its written comments, like some of your  
22 (unintelligible), is the cost implications for this Town  
23 Center location is they will be uniquely -- uniquely  
24 hurt. And it's ironic that you brought up -- one of your  
25 first comments, Commissioner McLaughlin, was about a \$100

1 million error.

2           Because my analysis of the application of  
3 the 2006 condemnation laws that legislation passed  
4 through, the one that's 117.186, there's a revision in  
5 the law, and the net effect of this is that if you  
6 destroy a business, which is what would happen with the  
7 Costco facility if you put the Town Center Station right  
8 next to the gas station, which would end the gas station,  
9 which would end the Costco location, the price tag on  
10 that is somewhere slightly north of a \$100 million.

11           And we have not said that to the City as a  
12 threat. We've talked about it and explained it to them,  
13 but as a rationale -- one more rationale for why this is  
14 a bad location and why it should be located further north  
15 closer to the mall. Thank you very much.

16           COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
17 much.

18           Any other people who have signed up?

19           No one else signed up.

20           Is there anyone else who wishes to speak?

21 They're welcome to come forward at this time.

22           Anybody else wishing to speak?

23           You've spoken already.

24           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, I've already  
25 spoken, but I just wanted to make a comment.

1 Earlier when you mentioned the comment  
2 period --

3 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Yes.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- you said it went  
5 to December 31st. And I believe it goes to December  
6 11th, unless it's been changed.

7 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: It's been  
8 changed.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It has been changed.  
10 Okay. Thanks I just wanted to make sure.

11 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: That is correct,  
12 December 31st, the end of the year. Thank you for the  
13 question and comments.

14 Anybody else?

15 Yes, sir? You want to speak? Go ahead.

16 MR. ENDBLOM: Jeff said you wanted to hear  
17 from a local Swede.

18 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Is that your  
19 organization?

20 MR. ENDBLOM: No. My name is Dan Endblom,  
21 and I live at 106 Valley View Road in Eden Prairie. And  
22 my grandfather, a Swede, bought 27 acres of land near  
23 Nine Mile Creek, and now where Flying Cloud Drive is.

24 And I'm here as a tree hugger, I guess,  
25 because there is a stand of Burr Oak and Red Oak trees

1 that are just north of Flying Cloud Drive, and I'd like  
2 consideration to be made to move the line to preserve  
3 that, as my grandfather wanted that land to be preserved.  
4 He donated 12 acres of his original 27 acre purchase to  
5 be preserved by the then Village of Eden Prairie. And we  
6 also put our land in Minnesota Land Trust so that part of  
7 Eden Prairie is going to be preserved forever. And I  
8 speak on behalf of 150-year-old oak trees and their value  
9 to our community. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Can I just -- is  
11 the staff clear of where this is?

12 If not, could you just give us a little bit  
13 more for the record so that we know precisely what you're  
14 talking about?

15 MR. ENDBLOM: Sure. Where the line crosses  
16 Nine Mile Creek at Valley -- or at Flying Cloud Drive,  
17 which is right by the dog park and Eagle Ridge Academy.  
18 On the other side of -- on the north side of Flying  
19 Cloud, that's the glacial escrow that I'm referring to  
20 that is a real little treasure in all of these other  
21 amazing stories I've heard tonight, so...

22 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
23 much for coming forward.

24 Is there anybody else who wishes to make  
25 comments tonight?

1 Yes, sir.

2 Introduce yourself for the tape.

3 MR. MUYERS: Yeah. Mat Muyers. I live in  
4 Richland, Minnesota.

5 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Oh, we missed you  
6 earlier. Okay. Great.

7 MR. MUYERS: Yeah, yeah. I am -- I stepped  
8 out. The gentleman makes a great point. I'm glad he  
9 made it, otherwise I probably wouldn't have been up here.

10 But there's a nine-minute video that  
11 somebody made that has a flyover of the entire route. It  
12 goes really slow, and there's a woman's voice and  
13 everything sounds so nice. And I'm watching it, and it  
14 seems like a Walt Disney ride or something. There's  
15 tunnels and there's overpasses and there's wetlands, and  
16 everything seems so pretty.

17 And then, all of a sudden -- you have to  
18 keep in mind there's a -- there's going to be a 30- or  
19 35-foot wide swathe through this 16-mile route. So as  
20 you watch this nine-minute video and it's going through  
21 LRT and through Opus, and I'm envisioning this  
22 35-foot-wide -- and there's this stand of trees by  
23 Smetana Road, just to the -- just to the south. Smetana,  
24 kind of by Feltl.

25 And the route -- whoever picked this route

1 goes right through approximately 300 feet of woods, and  
2 it's a larger section of woods. It's not that small, but  
3 it's large enough to make a note. It's behind the  
4 apartment complex that have the red roofs there. And  
5 then there's a 3,000-foot bridge over wetlands.

6 I guess let's reconsider the route from the  
7 Shady Oak Station to Highway 212; because that whole  
8 section, there's no natural route for the railroad --  
9 rail line. It's all envisioned by we'll go here; and  
10 then we'll go here; we'll go over wetlands; and then go  
11 through these trees; and then over here. So that whole  
12 section from Shady Oak to, more or less, 212 needs to be  
13 reconsidered; there's no question, because it's all  
14 natural earth; and Eden Prairie City Council has already  
15 destroyed their fair share, so -- Council with their  
16 Highway 212 project, and let's just reconsider that  
17 section at least.

18 Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you very  
20 much.

21 Anyone else?

22 Yes, sir.

23 Hey, how are you?

24 Welcome.

25 MR. LAUX: Thank you, Commissioner.

1 My name is Jeff Laux, L-A-U-X; and I reside  
2 with my wife Brenda at 2812 Eden Prairie Parkway, so long  
3 as she says so; and I only have a couple of meaningful  
4 comments and one more unmeaningful comment.

5 First of all, thank you very much,  
6 Commissioner Dorfman. I remember when you were mayor and  
7 we started talking about these important topics, and to  
8 look at -- I think that Mark Andrews was the  
9 commissioner, so a lot has changed in those times.

10 Commissioner McLaughlin, the work that  
11 you've done to advance the concept of light rail in our  
12 community through the Hennepin County Regional Rail  
13 Authority is -- is incredible. And -- and all of you --  
14 Commissioner Callison, I don't know you, but I'm glad  
15 you're on the Regional Rail Authority, and you keep  
16 working on this project. It's a thankless job.

17 There's nothing that everybody can't find  
18 not to like. But -- but light rail is something that is  
19 going to serve our greater community for a long, long  
20 time in the future, and it's going to be way too  
21 expensive now, but 50 years from now it won't be; so keep  
22 pressing forward. It's incredibly important to do so.

23 I remember when, as a resident of the  
24 Calhoun Isles, we discovered that our property line  
25 wasn't where we thought it was when the Regional Rail

1 Authority was putting in the bicycle pathways. I  
2 remember there were some people that thought that some  
3 undesirable people were going to come to the lakes area  
4 on their bikes, and they were going to steal everything  
5 from all of our houses; and I just want to say two things  
6 about that. I'm one of the undesirable people from  
7 Minneapolis. I promise not to go anyplace and do  
8 anything bad. Secondly, people didn't come and take  
9 things out of our garages. That's not what happened.

10 Now, on a serious note, everybody has to  
11 make sacrifices for a regional project to work, and those  
12 sacrifices are great. I think it's real important to try  
13 to thank in advance those folks in St. Louis Park who are  
14 not going to press for colocation because this is a  
15 regional project for which everyone has to make a  
16 sacrifice. Colocation does not work. It will kill the  
17 project. We cannot have colocation.

18 The second thing that I want to say is one  
19 of the ways to make sure the people let go of the tunnel  
20 is to propose a bridge, so maybe we need to go back and  
21 look at at-grade crossing at Cedar Lake because the  
22 comments that were made earlier are spot on. That is not  
23 the solution for a safe crossing, and so please do a lot  
24 of studying on that. Thank you very much.

25 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, sir.

1 Anybody else?

2 Anybody else?

3 Going twice. Third time. Anybody else?

4 Well, with that, then I -- we will conclude  
5 this hearing. I appreciate everyone's participation.

6 That is a -- I've been through a few of  
7 these projects, and it's a long march; and the comments  
8 that you made tonight will be a part of that process and  
9 will help make this project a better project. And we  
10 will take them into account as we move into the next  
11 stages of the project, as there's a design consideration  
12 mitigation and the like.

13 We appreciate your participation here  
14 tonight, wish you well, and ask you to drive home safely.

15 Any other comments from my colleagues?

16 COMMISSIONER CALLISON: Thank you all for  
17 taking the time to be here.

18 COMMISSIONER McLAUGHLIN: With that, we  
19 stand adjourned. Thank you very much.

20 (Proceedings adjourned at 7:47 p.m.)

21

22

23

24

25



# 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)

why Not — Alternative 3C-2

+ Leave the freight going through Kenwood!

Name: Shelly Silverman  
Address: 9944 Blackstone Ave  
City/State/Zip: SLP MN 55416  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you!**

transitway

Fold here

---

---

---

---

Place  
Stamp  
Here

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

Fold here

---

## 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)

Please consider <sup>the following when</sup> routing the line as it crosses Nine Mile Creek at Flying Cloud Drive:

- Preserve the stand of oak (bur + red) trees that live on a glacial esker North of Flying Cloud and West of Nine Mile.

- Adjacent land <sup>(27 acres)</sup> was purchased by my Grandparents over 70 years ago. 12 acres of woods & creek were donated to Eden Prairie to be forever a natural area. 5 acres are held by Minnesota DNR trust. The remainder was sold & is now the bluff @ 9 mile.

- The 150+ old trees provide a beautiful visual buffer for Eagle Ridge Academy.
- I am the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation living & caring for the family "FARM".

Thanks to Tom Hillstrom for visiting with me & the commission for the opportunity to speak.

Name: **DAN ENBLOM**

Address: **10610 VALLEY VIEW RD**

City/State/Zip: **EDEN PRAIRIE MN 55344**

Telephone: **952.212.3263**

Email: **dpenblom@yahoo.com**

**Thank you!**

transitway

Fold here

---

---

---

---

Place  
Stamp  
Here

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

Fold here

---

My name is Fred Koppelman and I live in Eden Prairie

I'm here to call your attention to one of biggest money wasting schemes that we've seen in a long time.

There is a group of unelected bureaucrats who seem to think that we need to construct parallel, steel rails from here to downtown upon which to run expensive locomotives pulling shiny, new coaches to transport people. *AT A COST OF \$1.25 BILLION*

Well, we already have a transportation system called Southwest Metro Transit that does an adequate job of accomplishing that task. And buses can be added as the need requires and if transportation needs take a new direction, those busses have steering wheels that can go wherever that need is. However, there is a disturbing fact that most people may not even realize about Southwest Metro Transit and that is that ridership pays for about 30% of the cost of operation. That means that 70 cents of every dollar spent has to be made up by us taxpayers!

Let's fix Southwest Metro Transit before we even THINK about a light rail system. I can only imagine how much of a taxpayer subsidy will be needed with a light rail system----maybe 80 or 90%??? Do we really want to put our grandchildren and even our great grandchildren into hock for a system that we do not need? I think not!

Neither the Transportation Board, nor the Metropolitan Council which controls it, need to answer to any voters, they are appointed and can spend as much of our money as they want. All they have to do is convince us that we NEED what they are proposing. Well, it's time that that madness stops! And that time is NOW!

Thank you

## 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 am interested in knowing more about the proposed locations of operation + maintenance facilities. I own business property in Eden Prairie and was told earlier in the process that the area surrounding (or perhaps including some of my land) was a potential site. Such a decision would obviously have a huge impact on my business, ranging from disruption of business due to traffic access to possible relocation of the business.

Name: Glenniece Kutsch  
Address: 7980 Wallace Rd  
City/State/Zip: Eden Prairie, MN 55344  
Telephone: 952-941-8516 Email: glenniece@autosourcemn.com

**Thank you!**

transitway

Fold here

---

G. Kutsch  
7980 Wallace Rd  
Eden Prairie MN 55344

Place  
Stamp  
Here

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

Fold here

---

# 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)

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO LOGIC OR REASON  
TO THE PROPOSED FREIGHT RAIL RE ROUTE  
THAN ST LOUIS PARK

~~LEAVE FREIGHT TRAFFIC CO-LOCATED  
WITH LRT~~

CO-LOCATE LRT + LEAVE  
FREIGHT WHERE IT HAS ALWAYS  
BSSN.

Name: LYN WIK  
Address: 3965 QUENTIN  
City/State/Zip: 55416  
Telephone: 952 2702020 Email:

**Thank you!**

transitway

Fold here

---

---

---

---

Place  
Stamp  
Here

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

Fold here

---