

SOUTHWEST

Green Line LRT Extension



Corridor Management Committee

June 1, 2016



Today's Topics

- Welcome/Approval of May 4 Meeting Minutes
- Chair's Update
- CAC/BAC Reports
- Final Environmental Impact Statement Update



Chair's Update

CAC/BAC Reports

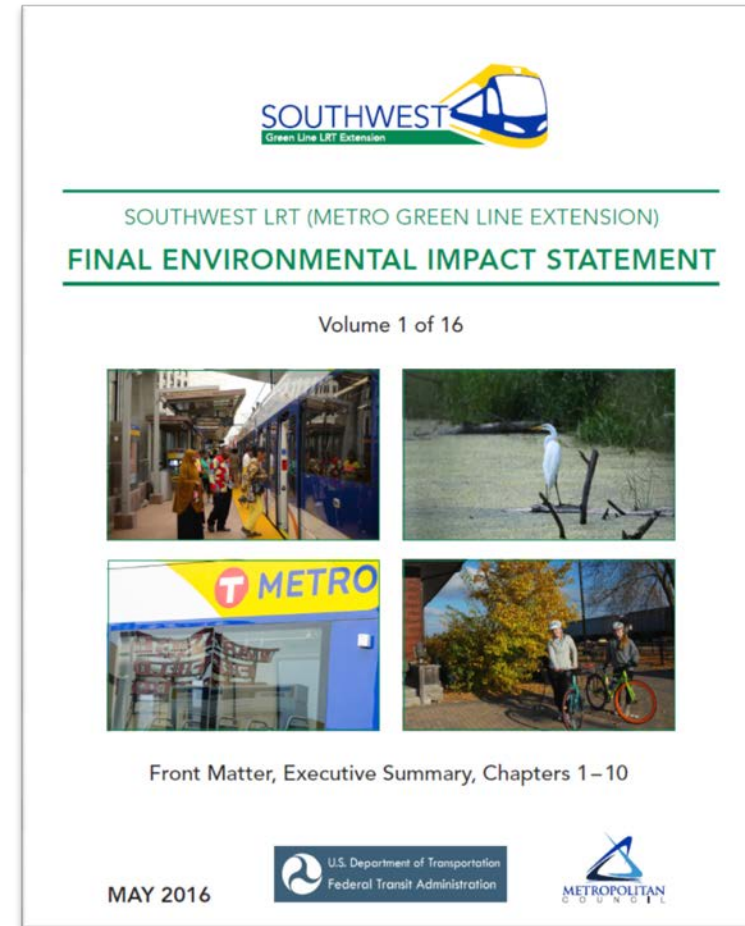
FEIS Update

Previous Studies

- **Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis** (2005-2007):
 - Identified several alternatives for further evaluation based on project goals
- **Scoping** (2008-2009):
 - Determined alternatives to be considered in DEIS
 - Concluded 5 LRT alternatives would be examined in DEIS
- **Draft Environmental Impact Statement** (2010-2012):
 - Evaluated 5 LRT, Enhanced Bus and No Build alternatives
 - Documented anticipated impacts, costs and benefits
- **Supplemental DEIS** (2015):
 - Evaluated adjustments made to project since publication of DEIS in portions of Eden Prairie, St. Louis Park, Minneapolis and the proposed OMF in Hopkins

FEIS Released May 13, 2016

- Purpose and need for the Project
- Alternatives considered
- Anticipated impacts from the Project, including avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures
- Description of the Project's public involvement and agency coordination
- Project's proposed finance plan
- Comments received during the Draft EIS, Supplemental Draft EIS, and Amended Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation
- Responses to comments



Project Purpose and Need

- Improve access/mobility to job and activity centers
- Provide a competitive, cost-effective travel option
- Be part of an efficient system of integrated regional transitway system serving the Twin Cities
- Primary factors that make project important for people who live and work in southwest metro area:
 - Declining mobility
 - Limited competitive, reliable transit options
 - Need to maintain a balanced and economically competitive multimodal freight system
 - Regional/local plans calling for investment in additional light rail projects in the region

FEIS Alternatives & Categories Evaluated

FEIS Alternatives Considered

- Southwest LRT Project
 - Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA): new double track along the Kenilworth-Opus-Golden Triangle alignment
 - Co-location of freight rail and light rail in the Kenilworth Corridor (LRT 3A-1)
- No Build Alternative
 - Future conditions with other planned transportation projects included in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, except for the Southwest LRT Project

Environmental Categories Analyzed: Ch. 3

- Impacts associated with No Build Alternative and Project for the following areas:
 - Land Use
 - Economic Activity
 - Neighborhoods/Communities
 - Acquisitions/Displacements
 - Cultural Resources
 - Parks, Rec and Open Spaces
 - Visual Quality/Aesthetics
 - Geology/Groundwater Resources
 - Surface Water Resources
 - Ecosystems
 - Air Quality/Greenhouse Gases
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Hazardous/Contaminated Materials
 - Electromagnetic Interference/Utilities
 - Energy

Transportation: Ch. 4

- Impacts associated with No Build Alternative and Project for the following areas:
 - Transit
 - Roadway/Traffic
 - Parking
 - Freight Rail
 - Pedestrian/Bicycle
 - Safety/Security

Other Analysis

- Environmental Justice Compliance: Ch. 5
- Section 4(f) Evaluation: Ch. 6
- Section 106: App. H
- Financial Analysis: Ch. 7

Impacts, Commitments and Mitigation

- Identifies impacts
- Identifies mitigations and commitments
- Summarizes in a table, provides detail in FEIS sections



Hopkins Depot: Before



Hopkins Depot: After

Category	Long-term Direct Impacts	
	Long-term Indirect Impacts	
	Short-term Impacts	
	Commitments	
	Mitigation Measures	

Overview of Select Categories

Acquisition/Displacements

- Issues: Loss of local businesses, loss of taxbase
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts
 - Design refinements to avoid private property
 - Compensate property owners for property per state/federal laws
 - Provide relocation benefits for displaced businesses/non-profits per state/federal laws

Parks and Trails

- Issues: Visual impacts, trail location and condition, construction activities, safety
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts:
 - Design adjustments to reduce ROW impacts to parks
 - Restore parks altered or disturbed during construction to original conditions, or better
 - Continue coordination with park owners
 - Include way-finding, regulatory and warning signage
 - Provide trail markings at intersection to address conflicting movements at station areas
 - Provide signed detour routes during construction

Noise

- Issues: Noise from LRT operations (bells/horns), construction activities
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts:
 - Incorporate directional wayside bells
 - Intrusion detection incorporated at tunnel portals to eliminate train horns under normal operations
 - Construct tunnels and sound walls
 - Provide for quiet zones
 - Include wheel skirts on LRVs
 - Provide continuously welded rail
 - Provide parapet walls and rail dampers
 - Adjust construction activities and methods

Vibration

- Issues: Vibration from LRT operations, construction activities
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts:
 - Install resilient rail fasteners in Kenilworth tunnel
 - Conduct pre-construction surveys
 - Limit high-vibration construction activities

Traffic

- Issues: Additional congestion, intersection back-ups, lane closures/detours during construction
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts
 - Design project to avoid new or worsened traffic impacts at intersections, compared to No Build Alternative
 - Include roadway/intersection improvements as part of the project
 - Develop a Construction Communication Plan to address short-term impacts
 - Provide advance notice and communicate construction activities through a variety of platforms, outlets

Safety and Security

- Issues: At-grade crossings, emergency vehicle access, stations, LRT proximity to freight rail
- Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts
 - Implement appropriate crossing controls such as flashing lights with audible warnings and gates
 - Ensure continued access for emergency vehicles and coordinate with emergency service providers
 - Design stations with appropriate lighting, emergency equipment and security features
 - Implement corridor protection barriers and intrusion detection, where applicable
 - Implement *Safety and Security Management Plan* and *LRT Design Criteria* to provide and maintain safety

Environmental Justice Analysis

- Documents regulatory context and methodology
- Identifies and maps minority and low-income EJ populations
- Discusses public involvement
- Provides analysis for environmental categories that could potentially impact EJ populations
- Presents EJ finding:

“Taking into account adverse impacts on EJ populations, committed mitigation measures, and benefits to EJ populations, the Council and FTA have concluded that the Project as a whole would not result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts to EJ populations.”

Section 4(f) of the Dept. of Transportation Act

- Protects publically owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and/or waterfowl refuges, and public/private historic sites as part of transportation project development
- Summary of SWLRT Section 4(f) Evaluation:
 - Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation published in Draft EIS
 - Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation Update published in Supplemental Draft EIS: evaluated project adjustments and preliminary 4(f) determinations
 - Amended Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation published separately: evaluated two newly identified 4(f) properties in Minnetonka
 - Final Section 4(f) Evaluation published in Final EIS

Final Section 4(f) Evaluation

Section 4(f) Property	Property Type	Official with Jurisdiction	Non- <i>de minimis</i> Use	<i>De minimis</i> Use	Temporary Occupancy: No Use
Purgatory Creek Park	Park	City of Eden Prairie			•
Unnamed Open Space B	Park	City of Minnetonka		•	
Opus Development Area Trail Network	Park	City of Minnetonka		•	
Minikahda Club	Historic	MnHPO			•
Cedar Lake Parkway/Grand Rounds Historic District	Historic	MnHPO			•
Kenilworth Lagoon/Grand Rounds Historic District	Historic	MnHPO	•		
Kenilworth Channel/Lagoon (as an element of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park)	Park	MPRB		•	
Cedar Lake Park	Park	MPRB			•
Bryn Mawr Meadows Park	Park	MPRB		•	
St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railroad Historic District	Historic	MnHPO		•	

Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

- Requires Federal agencies to take into account effects of “undertakings” on historic properties
- Council is local project sponsor and federal grantee, responsible for certain parts of Section 106 process including implementation of mitigation measures



Grand Rounds: Lake of the Isles Parkway

Draft Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

- Provides measures to avoid an adverse effect on 14 historic properties
- Provides mitigation measures for an adverse effect on five historic properties
 - Grand Rounds Historic District & Kenilworth Lagoon
 - Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad Dept
 - Two archaeological sites
- Required signatories: FTA and Minnesota Historic Preservation Office
- Invited signatories: Met Council and MnDOT
 - Assigns responsibility of carrying out terms of the agreement to the Met Council, with support from MnDOT CRU where needed
- Concurring party: Consulting parties

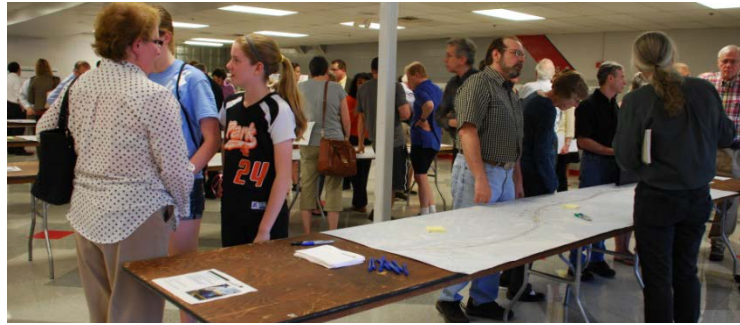
Example of Section 106 MOA Stipulations

- Grand Rounds Historic District (GRHD)/ Kenilworth Lagoon
 - Noise mitigation: parapet wall and rail dampers on LRT bridge
 - Continued consultation on final bridge design
 - Restoration/rehabilitation of portions of WPA wall
 - Prepare guidance for future preservation activities within the GRHD canal system



DEIS & SDEIS Comments

- FEIS responds to all comments submitted during the DEIS and SDEIS public comment periods:
 - DEIS: approx. 1,000 comments
 - SDEIS: approx. 225 comments
- Comments received:
 - From individuals, businesses, public interest groups, local governments/jurisdictions, state/federal agencies
 - Through public hearings, email, postal mail



Environmentally Preferred Alternative

- FEIS identifies the Locally Preferred Alternative, LRT 3A-1 (co-location), including Shallow LRT Tunnels – over Kenilworth Lagoon, as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative based on reduced impacts including, but not limited to:
 - Less harm to Section 4(f) properties
 - Minimizes reconstruction of freight tracks
 - Reduces displacement of residents and businesses
 - Displaces fewer wetlands

“As a result of the design adjustments that occurred after publication of the Draft EIS, the co-location of light rail and freight rail in the Kenilworth Corridor (LRT 3A-1) is the Project’s environmentally preferred alternative.”

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Comment period to receive comments on adequacy of FEIS under MEPA (Minn. Rule 4410.2800, subp. 4): May 13 – June 13, 2016
- FEIS is adequate if it:
 - Addresses the potentially significant issues and alternatives raised in scoping
 - Provides responses to the substantive comments received during the draft EIS review concerning issues raised in scoping
 - Was prepared in compliance with environmental rules (parts 4410.0200 to 4410.6500)

Next Steps (cont.)

- FTA issues Record of Decision (ROD)
 - Documents agency's decision and basis for decision
 - Itemizes and adopts mitigation commitments
 - Documents compliance with environmental review process, including:
 - Section 4(f)
 - Section 106
 - Clean Water Act
 - Clean Air Act
- Met Council issues Determination of Adequacy (MEPA)
- Obtain federal, state, local permits/approvals

More Information

Online:

www.SWLRT.org

Email:

SWLRT@metrotransit.org

Twitter:

www.twitter.com/southwestlrt



May 18, 2016

Speaker Daudt:

As mayor of the City of St. Louis Park, I want you to know that our elected officials and our community have supported the Green Line extension for years. We have committed extraordinary staff resources and time to planning for this transportation project, not to mention committing millions of dollars in city funding.

As a result, we are already seeing the benefits of the expected station locations in our community through redevelopment and proposed redevelopment, all of which contributes to the economic vitality of St. Louis Park, the region, and the state.

As such, it's disappointing to see that those charged with leading our state into the future have presented a transportation proposal with no funding for transit, and that you would unilaterally presume that constituents aren't in support of this project. All along the line, we hear quite the opposite, and we know residents throughout the region have already contacted your office to voice their support for this project.

Further, I am concerned with the underlying assumptions of the argument that because "too few people use transit" it is not a wise investment. We cannot build enough roads to meet the coming demand in the region and so transit, including light rail, is a necessary component of a comprehensive transportation system. Additionally, passing a transportation bill including the Green Line extension results in taking cars off the roads and frees up dollars to be spent on roads and invests in transit in other areas of the state. If we were to play out the logic in your statement, that we should only build for existing and highest use, no roads would be built or repaired in greater Minnesota where traffic volumes are low. Instead we'd focus all our funds on high-volume metro roads like Hwy. 100, or I-35E, or the Crosstown. I simply don't agree with that philosophy. If applied to our transportation budget as a whole, the end result would be one that would be disastrous for the future of greater Minnesota.

My family grew up in Tracy, Minnesota, and I have spent a great deal of my work and leisure time throughout the state. I will tell you that I, and many of those who live in the Metro area, know that a strong greater Minnesota is good for the Metro area and a strong Metro area is good for greater Minnesota. This manifests itself directly in Local Government Aid and general fund dollars that are spent throughout the state to build road culverts, fire stations, and other needed infrastructure. It's a false assumption to think that any city in Minnesota can thrive when entire areas of the state are economically isolated from one another.

In closing, I am asking you to exercise your leadership on behalf of St. Louis Park, and Tracy, and Zimmerman, and yes, Minneapolis and St. Paul, as you enter these final days of the legislative session. All Minnesotans are counting on you and I'm confident you will do what is in all our best interests.

Regards,



Mayor Jake Spano
City of St. Louis Park

May 18, 2016

Governor Dayton:

As mayor of the City of St. Louis Park, I was disheartened to hear Speaker Daudt's recent overwhelmingly negative comments on the Southwest LRT project. In St. Louis Park, our elected officials and our community have supported the Southwest LRT project for years. We have committed extraordinary staff resources and time to planning for this transportation project, not to mention committing millions of dollars in city funding to the project and to surrounding improvements.

Already we are reaping the benefits of the expected Southwest LRT corridor, with redevelopment and development taking place around the planned station locations and rail line in St. Louis Park. The Southwest LRT is critical to St. Louis Park's continuing economic vitality and desirability as a place to live, work and play. On behalf of the City of St. Louis Park, thank you for your support to date of this project!

I've expressed my opinion to Speaker Daudt that it's disappointing to see that those charged with leading our state into the future have presented a transportation proposal with no funding for transit, and that he unilaterally presumes that constituents aren't in support of this project. All along the line, we hear quite the opposite, and we know residents throughout the region have already contacted Speaker Daudt's office to voice their support for this project.

As I'm sure you are, I am concerned with the underlying assumptions of the argument that because "too few people use transit" it is not a wise investment. We cannot build enough roads to meet the coming demand in the region and so transit, including light rail, is a necessary component of a comprehensive transportation system. Additionally, passing a transportation bill including the Green Line extension results in taking cars off the roads and frees up dollars to be spent on roads and invests in transit in other areas of the state. If we were to play out the logic in Speaker Daudt's statements – that we should only build for existing and highest use – no roads would be built or repaired in greater Minnesota where traffic volumes are low.

I believe a strong greater Minnesota is good for the Metro area and a strong Metro area is good for greater Minnesota. This manifests itself directly in Local Government Aid and general fund dollars that are spent throughout the state to build road culverts, fire stations, and other needed infrastructure. It's a false assumption to think that any city in Minnesota can thrive when entire areas of the state are economically isolated from one another.

We are excited to be a major part of making this historic public works project successful. We are asking our residents to contact Speaker Daudt's office to make their voices heard; and we are confident he will find that the 10:1 ratio against this project is not the norm. It's our hope that those with a broader vision for the future of the state and the metro area will prevail and that the Southwest LRT project will move ahead as planned.

Thank you for your time and for your support, and please stay the course in your support of "One Minnesota."

Regards,



Mayor Jake Spano
City of St. Louis Park