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PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING:  
  
BOTTINEAU TRANSITWAY DRAFT  
  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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Taken May 7, 2014 By Paula Richter, RPR, CRR

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APPEARANCES :

HENNEPIN COUNTY COMMISSIONER: Ms. Linda Higgins

Mr. Joe Gladke - Hennepin County

Mr. Mike Freiberg - State Representative

Councilmembers:

Mr. Andy Snope - Golden Valley

Ms. Joanie Clausen - Golden Valley

Mr. Larry Fonnest - Golden Valley

Mr. Pat Backen - Robbinsdale

Mr. George Selman - Robbinsdale

Mr. Blong Yang - Minneapolis, Ward 5

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1 THE BOTTINEAU TRANSITWAY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL  
2 IMPACT STATEMENT PUBLIC HEARING, is taken on this  
3 7th day of May, 2014, at the Golden Valley City  
4 Hall, 7800 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN  
5 55427, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m.

6

7 MS. CLAUSEN: We want to welcome  
8 you tonight. I'm here to welcome you. Our  
9 mayor, Shep Harris, his mother has been  
10 diagnosed with a blood cancer and he had to  
11 leave to go to North Carolina and unable to  
12 be with us tonight, so I'm taking his place.

13

14 But we're so -- we really need the  
15 input from our residents and people  
16 interested in this, and we so much appreciate  
17 that you take your time and be part of this  
18 process.

18

19 And before we get started, we're  
20 going to have all the elected officials  
21 introduce themselves, and then I'm going to  
22 turn the meeting over to Joe Gladke and he'll  
23 take it from here.

23

24 So we'll start with Councilmember  
25 Andy Snope from Golden Valley.

25

MR. SNOPE: All right. Andy Snope

1 from Golden Valley.

2 MS. CLAUSEN: Joanie Clausen,  
3 Councilmember from Golden Valley.

4 MS. HIGGINS: Linda Higgins,  
5 Hennepin County Commissioner.

6 MR. FONNEST: Larry Fonnest, City  
7 of Golden Valley.

8 MR. BACKEN: Pat Backen, City  
9 Council, Robbinsdale.

10 MR. SELMAN: George Selman, City  
11 Council, Robbinsdale, Third Ward.

12 MR. YANG: Blong Yang, City  
13 Councilmember in Ward 5, Minneapolis.

14 MR. FREIBERG: Mike Freiberg,  
15 state representative for all or parts of  
16 Crystal, Golden Valley, New Hope and  
17 Robbinsdale.

18 MS. CLAUSEN: And now I'd like to  
19 introduce you to Joe Gladke from Hennepin  
20 County.

21 MR. GLADKE: Thank you very much.  
22 I am Joe Gladke with Hennepin County.

23 I just want to provide a brief  
24 update this evening. This update is really  
25 just to give some people communication

1 because I know, for many of you, I've seen at  
2 other meetings several times and some of you  
3 it might just be your first meeting, so I  
4 want to give a brief overview kind of where  
5 we've been, where we're at right now, where  
6 the project is going, and then we're going to  
7 open it up to you to hear what you have to  
8 say.

9 And I'm going to be located in the  
10 other room here right after I provide the  
11 presentation. I know I got a chance to talk  
12 with some of the folks. I don't know if some  
13 folks still had more questions, but there  
14 will be staff in the room across on the other  
15 side if you want to talk with staff, trying  
16 to get more questions answered. So with  
17 that, I'm just going to proceed briefly with  
18 the presentation.

19 The Bottineau Project has a  
20 variety of agencies that are involved with  
21 this project. The Federal Transit  
22 Administration is really the lead federal  
23 agency that has been overseeing our work  
24 regarding the DEIS and all the analysis that  
25 has gone into that.

1                   And Hennepin County as being the  
2                   lead agency regarding looking at the  
3                   specifics of what's known as the locally  
4                   preferred alternative and the Draft EIS. But  
5                   as the project advances into the FEIS and  
6                   into preliminary engineering, the  
7                   Metropolitan Council is going to be taking  
8                   the lead role with the project with that. So  
9                   we anticipate that the project will be  
10                  transitioning from Hennepin County to the  
11                  Metropolitan Council later on this summer.

12                  And all of the cities along the  
13                  corridor, they've certainly been partners as  
14                  well. They are the Land Use Authorities.  
15                  They control the zoning and the land uses  
16                  around the stations. And as part of the  
17                  municipal approval process, they do provide  
18                  input on the plans and the DEIS and the  
19                  impacts associated on the project as it  
20                  advances.

21                  You'll probably hear a lot about  
22                  the Bottineau LRT. As this project advances,  
23                  you're probably going to hear it referred to  
24                  as the Metro Blue Line Extension. On the map  
25                  here, this kind of shows the regional system

1 that's envisioned here. We already have the  
2 Hiawatha Line, which has been renamed the  
3 Metro Blue Line. And, again, this would be  
4 an extension of the Hiawatha Line.

5 So at Target Field in downtown  
6 Minneapolis, this would go from Target Field  
7 to the west along 55, head over towards the  
8 rail corridor and then up the rail corridor  
9 up through Brooklyn Park, and the last  
10 station would be up near 610 near the Target  
11 North campus.

12 As far as where we're at, we are  
13 currently here at the end of the Draft  
14 Environmental Impact Statement. And we put  
15 this slide up here to show that there are  
16 three kind of independent processes that are  
17 going on. Yet, all three of these processes  
18 are interrelated.

19 And so we're going to be moving  
20 into the project development phase we hope  
21 later on this summer and beginning the  
22 preliminary engineering work on this project.

23 We're wrapping up the DEIS right  
24 now. We'll be gathering the comments as part  
25 of the DEIS.

1           The FEIS will begin likely late in  
2           this year, and then that work will continue  
3           on again under the leadership of the  
4           Metropolitan Council. Hennepin County will  
5           still be a partner with the Metropolitan  
6           Council, along with the cities.

7           You'll also see some meetings that  
8           are happening regarding the station area  
9           planning. Those have begun for the first  
10          four stations, the two in Minneapolis and the  
11          two stations that are being studied in Golden  
12          Valley. And later on this summer there will  
13          be another consultant that will be hired to  
14          look at the station area plan for the other  
15          stations along the line.

16          Early on in this process, there  
17          were really kind of five goals that were  
18          looked at regarding the Bottineau Project and  
19          what -- what are we trying to achieve with  
20          that project. Those five goals are to  
21          enhance the regional access to activity  
22          centers, enhance the effectiveness of transit  
23          service within the corridor, provide a cost  
24          effective and financially feasible transit  
25          system, promote sustainable development

1 patterns, and to support healthy communities  
2 and sound environmental practices. So those  
3 are really the goals that we started off with  
4 as the efforts had begun to look at a variety  
5 of these options.

6 Kind of where we've been, we've  
7 looked at a variety of options to the  
8 alternatives analysis study that happened.  
9 We've looked at numerous options on the north  
10 end, numerous options on the south end.

11 When we first began the DEIS work,  
12 we went through a scoping process where we  
13 had meetings in January of 2012. We got  
14 input as to what are some of the key issues  
15 that the citizens and the agencies thought  
16 needed to be studied as part of the DEIS. As  
17 you look through the DEIS, hopefully you will  
18 see those areas that you provided input on  
19 covered as part of the DEIS.

20 Later on after we began the  
21 scoping process, we got the scoping decision  
22 about what options are going to be studied in  
23 the DEIS. I'll get to that map momentarily.

24 We've also advanced efforts  
25 regarding the locally preferred alternative,

1 and the locally preferred alternative has  
2 been adopted by the Metropolitan Council as  
3 one of the necessary steps related to advance  
4 this project in the federal process as well.

5 So we have the DEIS, which has  
6 been released after 15 months of review by  
7 the federal government. They're very strict  
8 on review of these documents, so they want to  
9 make sure all the analysis is done  
10 appropriately before they allow that document  
11 to be released.

12 As far as what is the DEIS, it  
13 really assists decisionmakers in the  
14 assessment of the impacts associated with the  
15 project, it documents the purpose and the  
16 need, the alternatives that have been  
17 considered. It assesses transportation,  
18 social, environmental, historical, and  
19 numerous other impacts of the project. It  
20 defines potential mitigation measures, and it  
21 just defines those. It doesn't really  
22 prescribe what the mitigation may be.

23 I talked with several folks  
24 tonight that talked about noise impacts, and  
25 I'll be over there to talk about that some

1 more. Some of the areas, there are  
2 recommendations for this area should be  
3 considered potentially for a sound wall. And  
4 some people said, I don't want to look at an  
5 ugly sound wall. While that may be the  
6 potential mitigation, there are other things  
7 that could be considered as well and that  
8 will get studied in greater detail during the  
9 FEIS. They're still working with what  
10 dialogue happens far as what are the specific  
11 mitigation measures that are looked at.

12 As far as the DEIS, it does  
13 facilitate review by a variety of federal,  
14 state and local agencies as well, and review  
15 by the general public. It satisfies both  
16 federal and state requirements as far as  
17 environmental studies that need to be  
18 completed, and it provides a comparison of  
19 the alternatives and identifies the  
20 environmentally preferred alternative as part  
21 of that process.

22 In the DEIS, you will see four  
23 different build options that are studied.  
24 Two options on the north end. One going  
25 toward Maple Grove and one going toward

1 Brooklyn Park. And on the southern end  
2 you'll see the D1 and the D2. Those are  
3 studied as part of the DEIS -- those options.

4 I'll go back to the five goals  
5 that I talked about earlier. All of the  
6 build alternatives, plus both a no-build and  
7 a TSM alternative, which is basically what  
8 else could you do other than a substantial  
9 investment, we look at those 5 goals and  
10 how -- we had 22 different evaluation  
11 criteria as part of those 5 goals, and how do  
12 the various build alternatives reflect the  
13 goals that were initially identified.

14 And the preferred alternative is  
15 the alignment option BCD1. That's shown in  
16 the following map here. It begins on the  
17 north end in Brooklyn Park, proceeds south to  
18 the rail corridor, south along the rail  
19 corridor and stays within the rail corridor  
20 along D1 through Golden Valley and then heads  
21 east on 55 in toward Target Field Station.  
22 So that is both the locally preferred  
23 alternative as well as the environmentally  
24 preferred alternative.

25 As part of the input, we have a

1 series of open houses that we're going to be  
2 having. We're here tonight. We've got  
3 another meeting tomorrow night at UROC in  
4 Minneapolis. Next week will be in Brooklyn  
5 Park and Crystal as well.

6 And the City of Golden Valley is  
7 hosting another meeting on the 15th of May.  
8 It's going to be here at the City to get  
9 additional input. Again, that's going to be  
10 a city-led meeting.

11 As far as the comments that will  
12 be received, we're asking people when they  
13 have written comments, to try to provide  
14 e-mail addresses as well so we can  
15 acknowledge that we received your comments.

16 Your comments will be recorded  
17 here tonight by the comment recorder.  
18 There's a variety of ways that you can  
19 provide that. But we just want to let people  
20 know that we will be compiling the comments.  
21 We will be posting the comments that we  
22 receive on the project website. And we hope  
23 that during the FEIS, that those comments  
24 will be identified, but that's going to be a  
25 lengthy process.

1 Later on this fall is when the Met  
2 Council will likely secure a consultant, but  
3 it's going to be another year-plus worth of  
4 work before the FEIS is completed. So while  
5 you provide comments, it's going to be a  
6 while before those comments get addressed, so  
7 we just want to try to lay out the  
8 expectations of these projects. Like  
9 America, they don't get done quickly. They  
10 take a long amount of time. But those  
11 comments will then get incorporated into work  
12 that happens in the FEIS, as well as input  
13 into the preliminary engineering.

14 And with that, I'm going to turn  
15 it over to Commissioner Higgins, who's going  
16 to lead the hearing. Again, I'll be across  
17 the room on the other side. If folks have  
18 specific comments, they want to talk about  
19 things, come see the staff on the other side,  
20 and this area here is going to be reserved  
21 for verbal testimony.

22 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you, Joe.

23 First I want to thank everybody  
24 for coming tonight. As Joe said, this is one  
25 step in a very long process of determining

1           whether -- if, where, when, to build the  
2           Bottineau Line.

3                         Tonight this is not a  
4           question-and-answer period. This is for you  
5           to give your comments, your opinions. And  
6           then if you do have questions, Joe and some  
7           other staff people with a lot of knowledge  
8           about the work that's been done and the work  
9           that will still be done in the future will be  
10          across the hallway and you can ask away. Ask  
11          whatever you'd like.

12                        So tonight for taking the  
13          comments, your name will appear up in the  
14          screen. And when you see your name, please  
15          go ahead and sit in one of the three chairs  
16          marked here in the front row. Your time will  
17          be limited to three minutes. Start, please,  
18          by saying your name and address for the  
19          record, and then our comment recorder will  
20          record your comments.

21                        If you signed up when you came in  
22          this evening, you're already on the list.  
23          But if you haven't signed up yet, please just  
24          go on over and sign up so we can get your  
25          name on the list and get your comments as

1 we're proceeding tonight.

2 If you don't want to get up and  
3 talk to us, we can take your comments in  
4 writing. There are comment forms out at the  
5 table. Perhaps you picked one up on your way  
6 in. And then you can either give that back  
7 to us tonight or you can send it back by  
8 letter or by e-mail. The e-mail address is  
9 Bottineau@Hennepin.us. And there are comment  
10 forms also on the project website at  
11 www.BottineauTransitway.org, and the comments  
12 are being accepted through May 29th, so  
13 almost three more weeks.

14 So the first people who will  
15 speak, their names have appeared on the  
16 board. Constance Bonniwall, Sean Fahey,  
17 Cathy Wildung and Darlene Lamter are the  
18 first four speakers. So if Constance would  
19 come up and say hello and start with your  
20 name and address. And Sean, Cathy and  
21 Darlene, if you'd make your way to the chairs  
22 here so we can move expeditiously.

23 MR. ANDY GILLET: I'm the  
24 official timekeeper. So each person has  
25 three minutes to speak. I'll hold up the

1 green card when you can start. When you have  
2 30 seconds remaining, I'll have the yellow  
3 card. And then red is when your time is up.

4 MS. HIGGINS: Welcome. Thank you  
5 for coming.

6 MS. BONNIWALL: My name is  
7 Constance Bonniwall, and I live at 2812 -  
8 30th Avenue South in Minneapolis, but I grew  
9 up on 29th and France where my father bought  
10 a carpet property in 1960 and I grew up in  
11 that woods.

12 This is my statement. This is not  
13 the kind of environmental is that tells us  
14 how many trees this plan would have cut dead.  
15 It makes no mention of your intent to put LRT  
16 through 100-plus acres expanse of wildlife  
17 habitat, nor that this expanse is part of the  
18 wildlife corridor that starts on the south  
19 side of Bryn Mawr by the baseball field.  
20 This rare, quiet, inter-metro woods is only  
21 referred to as existing low-quality habitat.

22 Tell that to the turtles living in  
23 Turtle Pond, which you're trying to rename  
24 Grimes Pond. You say it's in a trench. We  
25 always thought it was a valley.

1                   Here's a quote about South Halifax  
2 Park: Noise effects confined to limited  
3 areas.

4                   Like it's entire four acres.

5                   Another: The recreational  
6 experience in this park resource may be  
7 lessened due to the effects of transitway  
8 operations.

9                   "Would be lessened" is more  
10 honest.

11                   I could tell from reading this  
12 that the writers had not a clue about the  
13 social factors in South Halifax Park. We in  
14 Robbinsdale are very pleased that there's so  
15 many neighborhood kids availing themselves of  
16 such a pretty little park. It is a crucial  
17 resource for them.

18                   On a Saturday when I have walked  
19 past it, I counted over 30 kids of all ages,  
20 and it wasn't that warm out. Every one of  
21 those kids were black. It's an area with  
22 exploitive rentals to black people. What  
23 would happen if those kids lost their healthy  
24 place to be outside and play basketball?

25                   What wildlife habitat is left in

1           Wirth would take a big hit under your plan,  
2           that's right along the parkway there by the  
3           bridge.

4                           Here's a quote about Sochacki  
5           Park: The natural setting of Sochacki Park  
6           may be somewhat diminished due to the  
7           proximity of park trails to the line at D1.

8                           The honest version: The quiet  
9           refuge that is Sochacki Park would be  
10          destroyed. Over 220 trains a day.

11                          The only mention that is made of  
12          all the concerned owners of wildlife habitat  
13          to the east of the BN line is this, and I  
14          quote: There are several informal illegal  
15          crossings of the BNSF railroad corridor with  
16          parkland between 36th Avenue and Golden  
17          Valley Road. Pedestrians who cross at these  
18          unmarked locations are illegally trespassing  
19          on BNSF property. During the scoping process  
20          it was learned that residents of this area  
21          east of the park cross the BNSF railroad  
22          corridor at these illegal crossings to access  
23          the trail and Sochacki Park.

24                          There's a real trust builder.

25                          And you, the representatives of

1 that area --

2 MS. HIGGINS: Constance --

3 MS. BONNIWALL: -- who represents  
4 the representatives in your area?

5 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

6 Sean Fahey?

7 MR. FAHEY: I'm Sean Fahey, 3941  
8 Bassett Creek Drive.

9 Basically, I am disappointed in  
10 the DEIS. Joe laid out his five goals, and  
11 the ecological environment is really only  
12 addressed in the last half of four and five,  
13 so I feel like there's a lot of space in the  
14 DEIS that has nothing to do with the  
15 ecological environment. A lot of it has to  
16 do with the human-built environment.

17 My biggest concern is the effects  
18 on wetlands. So this training will go  
19 through three different ponds -- four ponds  
20 possibly, yeah. At least in Golden Valley it  
21 will go through three different ponds. We're  
22 going to have to create two new tracks to go  
23 next to the existing track, and it may even  
24 be needed that we will have to take out a  
25 track and just rebuild three new tracks going

1 through these wetlands. So the DEIS says we  
2 will lose about ten acres of wetland. We'll  
3 have ten acres of wetland. And to me, that's  
4 unacceptable.

5 The only other thing I want to say  
6 is that we haven't had very much time to even  
7 read through the DEIS. We didn't get very  
8 much time to like look into it. It just came  
9 out April 1st. And for people that have jobs  
10 and they don't have a technical background,  
11 it's hard to read it, get organized, talk to  
12 their neighbors in this short amount of time.

13 Thanks.

14 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

15 Cathy Wildung.

16 MS. WILDUNG: Hi. I'm Cathy  
17 Wildung, 2801 Kyle Avenue North.

18 And I'm only a block away from the  
19 park. I guess it's Sochacki, and then the  
20 other side is -- the Golden Valley side is a  
21 different name. But anyway, I'm concerned  
22 about the environmental impacts, of course,  
23 and the -- I enjoy the trails and walking my  
24 dog back there.

25 But to me, my number one concern

1 is the sound, if it's going to affect me in  
2 my house because I'm so close. It's really  
3 only a block or so away. I'd really like to  
4 see some kind of a sound barrier if they  
5 decide to do this, but I'm wondering if it's  
6 still going to affect me. I'm a very light  
7 sleeper.

8 And, you know, the fact that these  
9 trains are going to be running early morning  
10 from 4:00 to 6:00 a.m., 20 -- every 20 to  
11 30 minutes. Rush hour probably isn't going  
12 to bother me too much. But peak periods,  
13 6:00 to 9:00 a.m., that's pretty early, every  
14 seven and a half minutes.

15 Midday, evening, I'm okay with  
16 that.

17 Late evening, 10:00 p.m. to  
18 2:00 a.m., I'm sleeping. Every 30 minutes?  
19 What if I hear those trains running? I'm  
20 going to have to move. I'm sorry. And I'm  
21 wondering how many other people feel the same  
22 way.

23 I hope it doesn't bother me, but  
24 I'm afraid it's going to. I'm worried about  
25 the bells and the whistles on the places

1 where the train stations are going to be  
2 because they sound like they're going to be  
3 sounded every 20 -- oh, I see, the train  
4 horns will sound 20 seconds before they  
5 arrive. The crossings, wayside bells will  
6 sound a total duration of 30 seconds. I  
7 don't know. That's my main concern.

8 Another concern I had, of course,  
9 was the wetlands also. And I'm just  
10 wondering, that area floods. We get a lot of  
11 flooding. Especially like with the heavy  
12 rains we've had, we've had problems with  
13 that. Is that going to affect our existing  
14 water situations when they are messing with  
15 those wetlands?

16 And the statement -- the  
17 Environmental Impact Statement was talking  
18 about how this area is over private wells and  
19 water that's used for the residents in the  
20 city. And how is all that going to be  
21 affected? I guess I'm concerned about that.

22 And the other thing is that  
23 there's 790 recorded way sites in this  
24 preferred alternative area, BCD1, and are  
25 they going to be uncovering hazardous wastes

1 material and what's going to happen when they  
2 uncover that material?

3 So I guess I have a number of  
4 concerns, and I just hope they're all, you  
5 know, addressed if they go with this.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

8 Darlene Lamter and followed by  
9 Kasia McMahon and Vicki Coifman.

10 MS. LAMTER: Hi. I just decided  
11 to speak when I came here tonight, and I  
12 truly --

13 MS. HIGGINS: May I interrupt you?  
14 If you'd give your address, please.

15 MS. LAMTER: Oh, I'm sorry. 2650  
16 Kyle Avenue North. And I'm one of the homes  
17 that right now I can already hear the train  
18 when it goes through when our doors and  
19 windows are closed, so our house is right  
20 there.

21 And I guess I'd like to start out  
22 by just saying real quick that I'm very  
23 disappointed that one vote has changed our  
24 lives so, as well as the track already there  
25 and it's the cheapest way to build this.

1 It's just really -- it's shocking that  
2 because of those three reasons we have to go  
3 through all this.

4 And I'd like to share the fact  
5 that I walk -- I have for 20 years walked  
6 there four out of five mornings, and I still  
7 do. I was there this morning with many, many  
8 other people. And the environment in the  
9 wetland -- I mean, I just can't imagine how  
10 you can mitigate anything like that and have  
11 it anywhere near what's necessary.

12 Now, I believe in transit and I  
13 have to share with you why. I work in the  
14 Minneapolis schools and so even today I was  
15 over by the Hiawatha Line. And I've seen  
16 that Hiawatha Line go from the Vets to the  
17 Mall of America, with people who come in  
18 everywhere, who come to the Vets, for people  
19 who are working, or back and forth. And it's  
20 wonderful when it's used like that with that  
21 many people.

22 Now, today, just today alone, as  
23 I'm waiting at the stoplight, the bells and  
24 whistles are -- my windows are closed -- as  
25 loud as can be. I rolled down the window and

1 the train left, and I can't tell you the  
2 noise it makes. It's just unbelievable.

3 So I can't imagine taking that  
4 beautiful, wonderful place that Golden Valley  
5 has that's so special and changing it like  
6 you are.

7 My alternative would be anything  
8 else. And my greatest alternative would be  
9 hopefully we can put this off for two years  
10 and the Feds won't give us the money.

11 I'd like to see the -- yeah. I'd  
12 like to see an alternative route. And the  
13 students and families in north Minneapolis  
14 are the ones that could really benefit if we  
15 did this the right way. But why can't we do  
16 something other than take out all those  
17 houses if we took the other route?

18 I just -- I know the  
19 environment -- I think the environmental -- I  
20 haven't even read it all so -- I have to say  
21 that, but I think environmentally, I can't  
22 imagine something like this would pass. I  
23 just can't imagine.

24 But thank you.

25 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

1 Kasia McMahan.

2 MS. McMAHON: Hi. My name is  
3 Kasia McMahan. I live at 3941 Bassett Creek  
4 Drive.

5 I just wanted to discuss that --  
6 or I just wanted to talk about how this  
7 project shares a lot of similarities with the  
8 Southwest LRT project, which if anybody has  
9 been following that disaster, it's very  
10 similar. It's using a quiet, urban  
11 neighborhood as a, you know, commuter  
12 pass-through for, you know, excerpts and that  
13 the design of that was made using Bush-era  
14 criteria for, you know, these New Star  
15 projects and under the new criteria, this  
16 type of project I don't think would ever be  
17 designed in this way.

18 And unfortunately, you know, our  
19 city didn't really stand up for the -- didn't  
20 really represent Golden Valley in the way  
21 that it should have because clearly Golden  
22 Valley doesn't get anything from this  
23 project. I mean, we have two optional  
24 stations that may or may not be built. One  
25 of them may be built, and it -- it serves so

1           few people.

2                       I mean, I live extremely close to  
3           the Golden Valley Road Station -- the  
4           potential station there, and it's still a  
5           half a mile walk from my house. And I can  
6           tell you that -- as a, you know, a transit  
7           user, that's -- that's an extreme distance to  
8           use every day. It's not very practical.

9                       And it's -- to say that that route  
10          is comparable to D2, which would serve  
11          Broadway in Minneapolis, is completely  
12          ludicrous because I know for a fact that the  
13          14 bus which serves Golden Valley now is --  
14          I'm like the only person that rides it in the  
15          morning and in the evening. I actually can't  
16          imagine that that station would be used by  
17          more than a handful of people during rush  
18          hour. It's not likely. I mean, the DEIS  
19          claims that the ridership numbers between D1  
20          and D2 are comparable, but I just honestly  
21          can't see how that is possible.

22                      So I -- I just would really hope  
23          that Golden Valley -- representatives in  
24          Golden Valley would stand up for what makes  
25          sense for us because I don't think that

1 necessarily is selfish at all. I think when  
2 you stand up for the people in your small  
3 local area, you're standing up for common  
4 sense on a larger scale.

5 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

6 MS. COIFMAN: My name is Vicki  
7 Coifman. I am from -- I live at 1217  
8 Washburn Avenue North on the Minneapolis side  
9 of this, just south of Plymouth Avenue.

10 And I had no intention of  
11 speaking. I came to listen tonight to see  
12 what people on this side of the LR --  
13 proposed LRT are saying. But three things  
14 have happened within the last week, which is  
15 why I signed up to be on this -- to say the  
16 three minutes' worth of things.

17 First of all, three things  
18 happened in the last week. We had the  
19 rainfall. I want to say this. I've lived at  
20 my home at 1217 since 1969. Forever. And  
21 I'm on the parkway a lot, and right now  
22 almost daily. In the last -- three things in  
23 the last week have come to my attention, and  
24 I wasn't even thinking LRT, particularly.

25 First was the weather -- the

1           rainfall. I had not seen the golf course,  
2           the land between Golden Valley Road and  
3           Highway 55, as wet as it has been in the last  
4           week.

5                        I personally anticipate that  
6           that's going to get worse, given the report  
7           on global warming for -- for people that came  
8           out a couple of days ago, and there was  
9           discussion of local Minnesota impacts of  
10          these changes. I am assuming the rainfall  
11          incidents are not going to get better.  
12          They're going to get worse. I live in one of  
13          those houses that was hit by the tornado, et  
14          cetera.

15                       And thirdly, when I looked at part  
16          of the drawings tonight, I saw the -- I  
17          looked at the -- the electrical transmitter  
18          tower is proposed to remain in place on  
19          concrete, followed by more concrete, followed  
20          by two railroad tracks or three, which leads  
21          me to ask this simple question: Has the  
22          impact of the LRT on the floodplain been  
23          considered from the perspective of this very  
24          new situation of the last five years maybe --  
25          visible in the last five years, and which is

1 getting worse? Have those -- has that impact  
2 of wilder, wetter changes in the local  
3 climate -- how is that going to impact what  
4 looks to me like a floodplain. The bottom of  
5 a former lake. I don't know. But my house  
6 is way up high from way down there, and  
7 something was way down there in the past.  
8 I'm very much concerned.

9 Also, not to bead a dead horse,  
10 when we were talking about the preferred  
11 options for this line, we had two pretty  
12 crummy options in north Minneapolis: Penn  
13 Avenue and the one that is the preferred one.  
14 So I -- again, the major population who needs  
15 the LRT is where the line is not going.

16 And I'm not against LRT. I'm for  
17 it, actually.

18 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you very much.  
19 Richard Adair, followed by  
20 Ms. Lehman and Bernie Milstein.

21 MR. ADAIR: Hi. My name is Dick  
22 Adair. I live at 200 Upton Avenue South in  
23 Minneapolis in the Bryn Mawr neighborhood.  
24 And I came here tonight because I also lived  
25 in Golden Valley for 23 years before that, so

1 I've lived on each side of Wirth Park for --  
2 I don't want to say how many years, but a  
3 long time.

4 I golf in it. I swim in it. I  
5 cross-country ski in it. I look at birds in  
6 it. I do all the things that my fellow  
7 testifiers here have talked about. But  
8 you're going to hear a slightly different  
9 slant on this from me.

10 I'm asking you to look at a 30- to  
11 50-year time frame, rather than what happens  
12 to me today. There are 3 million people in  
13 the Twin Cities. It's projected that very  
14 soon there will be 4 million people in the  
15 Twin Cities. Our freeways are clogged.

16 Our economy has been pretty darn  
17 good, but I am not looking forward to a  
18 situation where we can't move around. And  
19 I'm not looking for a situation -- looking  
20 forward to a situation where we have isolated  
21 pockets of poverty where people don't have  
22 access to transit, and this includes areas  
23 like the Frogtown area of St. Paul and north  
24 Minneapolis.

25 I lived in Cleveland, Ohio when it

1 was a thriving, wonderful city the size of  
2 Minneapolis, roughly. And they made the  
3 mistake of not giving everybody a fair crack  
4 at getting to where they needed to go: To  
5 school, to work, to whatever. And the whole  
6 thing blew up in 1967 with race riots, and it  
7 was really miserable.

8 So I'm asking you to look at the  
9 long run and to recognize that light rail  
10 transit is the key to knitting together our  
11 metropolitan area and making sure that it  
12 thrives in the future.

13 I also hope that you listen to  
14 every single one of the concerns that have  
15 been voiced by the speakers before me. These  
16 are very legitimate concerns. And I would  
17 say that if I were sitting in these chairs,  
18 that my job would not be to decide whether to  
19 do this or not, but how to do it in such a  
20 way as to pay the most attention to everybody  
21 who's impacted by it.

22 And regarding putting it down Penn  
23 Avenue, we have to listen to the people who  
24 live nearby. If there's one thing we've  
25 learned from the Southwest discussions is,

1 for heaven's sake, let's listen to the people  
2 who live nearby. And as I understand it,  
3 they do not want to remove houses on Penn in  
4 order to make room for it.

5 Thank you for listening.

6 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

7 Again, if you haven't signed up  
8 yet and as you were listening, you decided  
9 you had something you wanted to say, please  
10 make your way over to Denise and she'll get  
11 you on the list. It looks like we're coming  
12 to the end of the list here fairly quickly,  
13 so if you want to add anything, now would be  
14 the time to wander on over there.

15 Our next speaker is Karen Lehman.

16 MS. LEHMAN: I'm Karen Lehman. I  
17 live at -- well, I split my time at 1806  
18 Zephyr Place. I split my time. I live in  
19 Chicago most of the time. And in Chicago I  
20 don't own a car, and I am a transit -- public  
21 transit proponent.

22 But the reason it works is that I  
23 have an express bus to Duluth outside my  
24 door. I have a train three blocks away. I  
25 have an hour car I can rent from my building.

1 I have a rental car office four blocks away.  
2 I have a bike path next to me, and I can  
3 walk. And I can take cabs by putting a cab  
4 light on the building and the cab comes.

5 There I use the hour car in a  
6 particular way. I use the hour car when I  
7 have to take public transit to a station that  
8 is isolated, where there aren't very many  
9 eyes on the street. And what I fear about  
10 the transit, the stops that we have in Golden  
11 Valley, is that we will have the worst of all  
12 possible worlds, where we will have isolated  
13 stops.

14 You know, I -- like I say, I don't  
15 own a car in Chicago because I don't have to.  
16 I wish I had better bus transit here. I wish  
17 I had an hour car I could rent. I wish I  
18 could have these multiple options. What I  
19 don't want is an isolated station that's  
20 not -- that doesn't have security staff so  
21 that I don't feel like I can use it.

22 I also have one of those houses  
23 that is hanging out over the rail line, right  
24 there at the end of Zephyr Place. I'm  
25 concerned about the noise. I'm concerned

1 about the light. It is dark, which is  
2 wonderful. It is quiet, which is wonderful.  
3 And I like the fact that the animals can go  
4 wherever they want to go.

5 So when the mitigation members,  
6 you know, measure sound like sound walls,  
7 fencing, you know, lighting for security, I  
8 just say, well, okay, I live in Chicago. I'm  
9 moving back to Chicago. I mean, I have my  
10 house here because I want to live here. My  
11 work is in Chicago. I wanted to spend the  
12 rest of my life here, but the quality of life  
13 will be greatly changed.

14 So I think there are things you  
15 can do. You can really look at that wildlife  
16 corridor and take it seriously as a wildlife  
17 corridor and figure out, how are you going to  
18 protect Golden Valley? Because what I'm  
19 afraid of is the uniqueness of Golden Valley  
20 gets eroded.

21 The reason that people are going  
22 to have those stops there, then we're going  
23 to bring people in to use those transit  
24 stops. The parking is going to become an  
25 issue.

1 Other people have been much more  
2 on point than I can be about the special  
3 quality of Golden Valley and the natural  
4 resources that it represents, but I think  
5 that those voices are hard to hear sometimes  
6 because they can't speak, so we have to speak  
7 for them.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

10 Bernie Milstein, followed by  
11 Gillian Rosenquist.

12 MR. MILSTEIN: Hi. I'm Bernie  
13 Milstein. I live at 1835 Noble Drive in  
14 Golden Valley in the area called Heathbrooke.  
15 It's not far from that station that's going  
16 to ostensibly be made for the light rail.

17 I have not been in favor of light  
18 rail in that area and for a couple reasons.  
19 Number one, it's going to impact the  
20 environment. It's going to be dirty, dusty.  
21 You're going to cause more traffic on Golden  
22 Valley Road than is necessary.

23 That remote area over by Margaret  
24 Mary Church and the fire station is a remote  
25 area for Golden Valley. If we use Golden

1 Valley for a square, that's over in the  
2 corner. The greater population of Golden  
3 Valley over on this side, Wesley Park and  
4 some of those other parks, is a vaster --  
5 Golden Valley is a pretty -- it's a nice  
6 community, but it's -- it's not as tight over  
7 there as it is in other areas.

8 If you were to put in a light rail  
9 and divert it from where it is and bring it  
10 into downtown where we have train tracks --  
11 just reroute this thing and put it into  
12 downtown where there is the light rail --  
13 where there is train tracks, you'll have a  
14 greater population that will be for the  
15 greater good of Golden Valley than that  
16 isolated station over there.

17 So they're not thinking straight.  
18 I mean, they're trying to railroad our  
19 community from the north and for that area  
20 and railroad it through us. And when I say  
21 "railroad," I'm not talking about the  
22 railroad. I'm talking about they're trying  
23 to boondoggle us and ride over us. I'm  
24 trying to protect Golden Valley.

25 Now, the population that's around

1 here is concerned about the environment by  
2 Theodore Wirth Golf Course, about the  
3 wetlands and all the animals that we have  
4 running around.

5 But also it's a very quiet area.  
6 Very quiet. Very peaceful. That's what I  
7 love about Golden Valley. Golden Valley.  
8 It's a golden area to live. So you're going  
9 to cause more disruption.

10 I was just talking to one of the  
11 gentlemen outside who's been involved in this  
12 whole consternation, and the -- the light  
13 rail is going to bring in -- every seven  
14 minutes you're going to have, during peak  
15 times, you're going to have traffic coming  
16 in. During unpeak times, if that's a good  
17 word, they're going to come by every ten  
18 minutes.

19 Now, for those of us that live in  
20 the area, if we go out and grill, we go out  
21 into our yards, and we're going to hear that  
22 stuff. Things that we never heard before.  
23 It's going to cause disruption.

24 Property values are going to be  
25 dramatically affected. You have some of the

1 best property values in Golden Valley over in  
2 Hidden Lakes and Heathbrooke. You think that  
3 people are going to want to stay in those  
4 properties when they hear noise every seven  
5 minutes and every ten minutes? What this  
6 community needs is rapid bus service, not  
7 rapid train service.

8 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

9 Gillian Rosenquist.

10 MS. ROSENQUIST: Gillian  
11 Rosenquist, 2321 Kyle Avenue North, which is  
12 pretty close.

13 When I was reading the draft DEIS,  
14 one of the things I was really thinking about  
15 is this process seems to be a little  
16 disjointed. Having gone to the Three Rivers  
17 meeting recently and thinking about the plans  
18 that Three Rivers has for Sochacki and Mary  
19 Hills. Also being involved in the bike  
20 trails. I'm not reading about -- it seems to  
21 be like this is a very focused plan and  
22 they're not thinking about how the whole  
23 metro area is envisioning using these natural  
24 areas.

25 So I would ask that there be

1 better coordination, looking at not just  
2 environmental impacts right now, but  
3 environmental impacts in terms of -- in terms  
4 of planning uses and in terms of future.  
5 And -- because I know Three Rivers has ideas  
6 and plans, and so do the neighbors, for  
7 changes to this area. So we need to think  
8 about what goes in as far as floodplain  
9 mitigation and things like that in terms of  
10 what they want to do and what we want to do  
11 with those areas too. Not just how they are  
12 right now.

13 I mean, some of the things that I  
14 saw were that the areas they were looking for  
15 floodplain mitigation are significantly south  
16 of the stations. And as one of the other  
17 people noted, we've had a lot of rain. It's  
18 a very wet area. And our trails and usage  
19 are impacted. And if we don't have kind of  
20 that addressed on the northern end, we are  
21 going to have reduced use in those areas for  
22 recreation, for programming, things like  
23 that.

24 Let's see. I mean, one of the  
25 quotes from page 20 of the floodplain

1 replacement was the size of the floodplain  
2 mitigation is anticipated to be small,  
3 ranging from an eighth to a quarter acre, and  
4 that does seem insufficient, especially in  
5 light of the water we've had.

6 There also seems to be a little  
7 bit of confusion about who runs those areas.  
8 I mean, I saw Park Board. I saw Golden  
9 Valley. And they were talking about the same  
10 areas, so I think that needs to be cleared up  
11 in this plan so we know kind of who we're  
12 dealing with, and the Met Council and the  
13 county and the federal government also know  
14 who we're dealing with.

15 Thank you very much. I would just  
16 ask you look at it in a future way and very  
17 wholistically.

18 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

19 Bill Linder.

20 MR. LINDER: Yes. Bill Linder,  
21 2640 Kyle Avenue North.

22 I don't want to re-go over many of  
23 the statements that have been made. I'm in  
24 agreement with many of them.

25 I also have to apologize because I

1 haven't fully read the 800 pages that have  
2 been given to us and so --

3 MS. HIGGINS: I'd say shame on  
4 you, but --

5 MR. LINDER: A couple of the  
6 issues that I'd like to at least get on the  
7 list here is property values. All along that  
8 corridor people live here, you've listened to  
9 it, because of its uniqueness. And people  
10 buy their homes there and they pay the prices  
11 for those homes because of its unique nature.  
12 That will ultimately change, even though we  
13 are not a noise dot on your noise map. Noise  
14 in Golden Valley is not the same thing as  
15 noise next to other facilities. This is a  
16 pristine, well-liked area.

17 Taxes. Oh, I'm sure this is going  
18 to benefit the heck out of Golden Valley, so  
19 obviously our tax rates will be increased too  
20 because of this wonderful opportunity we have  
21 to ride light rail, which in practice, won't  
22 be very helpful to our community.

23 I haven't heard anything about  
24 compensation for any of these issues, okay?  
25 Who wants to pay for this? These are costs

1 that everybody along this corridor will be  
2 paying for.

3 And just ownership of the park. I  
4 have a lot of personal ownership in that  
5 park. I've lived there nearly 30 years and  
6 have picked up and cleaned up. And you go  
7 out there, show me the litter. I challenge  
8 any of you to. That's because myself and  
9 many others in the community take care of  
10 that park.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

13 Margaret Wall-Romana.

14 MS. WALL-ROMANA: Hi. My name is  
15 Margaret Wall-Romana, and I am one of the  
16 newest residents of Golden Valley. My  
17 husband and I just moved here from south  
18 Minneapolis and we closed on our house six  
19 weeks ago.

20 MS. HIGGINS: And the address?

21 MS. WALL-ROMANA: Oh, I'm sorry.  
22 2912 Kyle Avenue.

23 I just met my neighbor, Bill, the  
24 previous speaker, who lives down the way, and  
25 I noted that there are many other speakers

1 who live on Kyle Avenue.

2 My husband and I did not do our  
3 due diligence on this issue, and I do not  
4 know if I would be standing here tonight if  
5 we had done so. When we -- I'll give you a  
6 little bit of background.

7 When we bought our house that  
8 we're now selling in south Minneapolis, our  
9 neighbor next door, between the time we  
10 bought our house and took possession of our  
11 house, built an addition to his house ten  
12 feet away from our house. Blocked all of our  
13 light; made a big, ugly expansion; completely  
14 changed the house that we had purchased, so  
15 we were never able to live in the house we  
16 purchased. It was a completely different  
17 house when we took possession.

18 I feel like the same thing is  
19 happening to us again. It's our fault that  
20 we didn't do this due diligence. But we  
21 absolutely fell in love with this house on  
22 Kyle Avenue, which is magnificent. It's so  
23 not Minneapolis. It is so special. I go out  
24 in the morning and all I hear is birdsong.  
25 And I love the birds and I love the animals.

1 And we have half an acre that looks out to,  
2 is it Sochacki Park?

3 MS. CLAUSEN: Sochacki.

4 MS. WALL-ROMANA: Sochacki. Thank  
5 you.

6 It's magnificent. It's special.  
7 It should be preserved. Not just for me  
8 because I want it but because, honestly, it's  
9 not Minneapolis. It's not any of the other  
10 places around here. It is a very special,  
11 particular place that is lovely and is unique  
12 to Golden Valley.

13 And I do not understand why the  
14 city council of Golden Valley did not do what  
15 should have been done to protect the unique  
16 qualities of Golden Valley. I mean, there --  
17 there are other places that the line could  
18 run. Better yet, there should be better bus  
19 service, which would do much more for the  
20 entire area with far fewer impacts.

21 And also I'd like to say one more  
22 thing, which is that one of the -- one of the  
23 things that really struck me in the EIR is  
24 that at some point somebody discussed a  
25 waterway as though it was a trash-strewn, you

1 know, nothing. And I have not found that to  
2 be the case.

3 And I already want to adopt things  
4 like I'm seeing everyone else do here. And  
5 anyway, it's a shame.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

8 Dan Steinberg.

9 MR. STEINBERG: Hi. Good evening.

10 Dan Steinberg, 1033 Sumter Avenue South in  
11 Golden Valley. My in-laws live over on that  
12 side, so that's why I'm a little bit  
13 concerned about this project that's  
14 happening.

15 I have read the Draft EIS, and  
16 I'll just retain my questions to that  
17 document since that's our purpose of being  
18 here tonight.

19 I know many of my neighbors and  
20 friends have addressed the issue of  
21 jurisdiction over that area concerning the  
22 Minneapolis Park Board property, to the City  
23 of Minneapolis property, to the Golden Valley  
24 property, obviously, that's involved, where  
25 the stations are being planned and where the

1 route is going through. So I do thank them  
2 for addressing those issues.

3 Concerning -- concerning  
4 Chapter 6-3, Table 5 of the noise mention --  
5 of noise area with the dots, there's no  
6 mention of Kewanee Way. There is no mention  
7 of Kewanee Way on the noise -- on noise on  
8 Table 5. And I'm a little bit in shock -- in  
9 shock by that from the document that I read,  
10 considering that that street is right next to  
11 the rail line, if you've traveled down there  
12 and been down there.

13 Around page 105 of the document it  
14 talks about the change of bus routing on  
15 there, considering a new bus route, the  
16 possibility of changes and especially to the  
17 City of Golden Valley bus system, along with  
18 rerouting of Route 14 which runs through the  
19 north Minneapolis area.

20 So I'd like to see -- I'd like to  
21 see from Met Council representatives that are  
22 here tonight, and staff -- I see many of them  
23 in the room -- to address new bus routes --  
24 or tentative plans for bus routing going  
25 through or what their idea of a plan would be

1 like for that draft, because it did talk it  
2 may have changes to the bus system going  
3 through, so obviously that area is going to  
4 have a lot of changes. So I do thank you for  
5 mentioning those past bus sites in there.  
6 And so those are pretty much what are my  
7 questions to that.

8 All right. Then I think I'm  
9 around page 400. There was no mention of  
10 St. Margaret Mary as being a historic or  
11 looked at from a cultural standpoint. Yet,  
12 the Floyd -- yet, Governor Floyd Olson's  
13 statue at the corner of Penn and Olsen  
14 Highway is mentioned in there before  
15 St. Margaret Mary. I'm a little bit dismayed  
16 by whoever -- whoever decided that the statue  
17 and St. Margaret Mary do not fall into same  
18 category with that historic preservation.

19 I thank you for your time, once  
20 again, to all of you.

21 MS. HIGGINS: Thank you.

22 Well, that completes the people  
23 who have wanted an opportunity to comment  
24 tonight.

25 Once again, if you want to use the

1 comment form, you can do so either by mail or  
2 e-mail. The comment forms are out in the  
3 hallway. Pick one up or get one from  
4 the project website at  
5 BottineauTransitway.org.

6 On the table next to the cookies  
7 out in the hallway you will find some various  
8 documents that you might find interesting.  
9 Feel free to take those if you'd like.

10 I also brought a whole collection  
11 of Hennepin County bicycle maps and feel free  
12 to take those. It is finally bicycling  
13 season, except for people who bicycle all  
14 winter.

15 So thank you all for coming  
16 tonight. And with that, we are adjourned.  
17 Good night.

18 (Whereupon, the foregoing  
19 deposition was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.)  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 STATE OF MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE

2 COUNTY OF RAMSEY

3

4 I, PAULA K. RICHTER, Registered Professional  
Reporter, hereby certify that I reported the  
5 BOTTINEAU TRANSITWAY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT PUBLIC HEARING, on the 7th day of May,  
2014, in Golden Valley, Minnesota;

6 That I was then and there a Notary Public in  
and for the County of Ramsey, State of Minnesota;

7 That the foregoing transcript is a true and  
correct transcript of my stenographic notes in said  
8 matter, transcribed under my direction and control;

9 That the cost of the original has been  
charged to the party who noticed the hearing, and  
that all parties who ordered copies have been  
10 charged at the same rate for such copies;

11 That I am not related to nor an employee of  
any of the attorneys or parties hereto, nor a  
relative or employee of any attorney or counsel  
12 employed by the parties hereto, nor financially  
interested in the outcome of the action and have no  
13 contract with the parties, attorneys or persons with  
an interest in the action that affect or has a  
14 substantial tendency to affect my impartiality;

15 WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 12th day of  
May, 2014.

16

17

18

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Paula K. Richter  
Registered Professional Reporter  
Notary Public  
Ramsey County, Minnesota

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