

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: July 14, 2008

For Metropolitan Council Meeting: July 23, 2008

ADVISORY INFORMATION	
Date:	July 3, 2008
Subject:	Central Corridor Light Rail Transit – Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) Publication and Comment
District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Federal Title 23 CFR, Part 771, Minnesota Statutes 4410.3000
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Brian J. Lamb, General Manager 612-349-7510 Mark W. Fuhrmann, Deputy General Manager 651-602-1942 Rich Rovang, Deputy Project Director, 651-602-1941 Kathryn O’Brien, Principal Contract Administrator, 651-602-1927
Division/Department:	Metro Transit / Central Corridor Project Office

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council recognize the publication of the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) as approved by the FTA and approve 45-day public comment period including the scheduling of at least three (3) public hearings. Hearings have been scheduled for the following dates and times.

- Monday, August 4, Noon (12:00 p.m.), Wilder Foundation, 451 Lexington Parkway N., St. Paul
An open house will precede the hearing from 11:30 a.m. to noon
- Thursday, August 7, 6:00 p.m., Brian Coyle Center, 420 15th Ave. S., Minneapolis
An open house will precede the hearing from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday, August 9, 2:00 p.m., Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., St. Paul
An open house will precede the hearing from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Background

Business item 2007-391, passed by the Council on December 12, 2007, authorized the publication of a Notice of Intent to prepare an SDEIS for the Central Corridor LRT project. The scope of the document was limited to disclosing changes from the Locally Preferred Alternative as documented in the April 2006 DEIS with a specific focus on key elements including the following issues:

1. Hiawatha / Central Connection
2. University of Minnesota alignment (tunnel vs. at-grade and stations)
3. Potential Added Station at: Western, Victoria or Hamline
4. Capitol Area Alignment/Station Modifications
5. Downtown St. Paul Alignment/Station Modifications
6. Right-of-Way for Systems Components – traction power substations
7. Design for 2- or 3-Car Trains / Platforms
8. Maintenance and Storage Facility Needs

Subsequent to passage of this business item, the FTA required the addition of Washington Avenue Bridge modifications and/or improvements to the SDEIS. The SDEIS is now complete and has been approved for publication by the FTA with a scheduled publication date of July 11, 2008. A formal public comment period will commence upon publication to conclude on August 25, 2008.

Rationale

Holding a minimum of one public hearing is a requirement of state and federal environmental regulations. Holding three public hearings is desirable, as part of thoroughly gathering public input and providing reasonable opportunities for the public to attend.

Funding

There are no funding considerations associated with recognizing the publication of the SDEIS or authorizing conducting public hearings as part of the 45-day public comment period.

Known Support / Opposition

The Metropolitan Council and its Central Corridor Partners support this action. There is no known opposition.