

SOUTHWEST

Green Line LRT Extension



Transportation Committee

Southwest Transitway

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

October 22, 2012





Environmental Process – Federal and State Requirements

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)
 - Scoping
 - Draft EIS (DEIS)
 - Public review and comment
 - Final EIS (FEIS) including responses to public comments
 - Record of Decision (ROD) by FTA
- Environmental review is a component of the federal grant application process
- 50% matching funds for LRT under the FTA's New Starts program



Agency responsibility

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
 - Federal lead agency under NEPA
- Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
 - Responsible for preparing Draft EIS (DEIS)
 - State lead agency under MEPA
[= Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU)]
- Metropolitan Council
 - Project sponsor & federal grantee
 - Responsible for preparing Final EIS (FEIS)
 - Southwest LRT Project Office is working with Hennepin County on DEIS



Primary Purposes of the DEIS

- Describe project alternatives and potential impacts in the context of existing and foreseeable future conditions
- Identify potential mitigation measures
- Assess project costs and institutional issues
- Provide information on transportation, community and environmental impacts to assist public and decision-makers
- Encourage comments by agencies and the general public during the review period



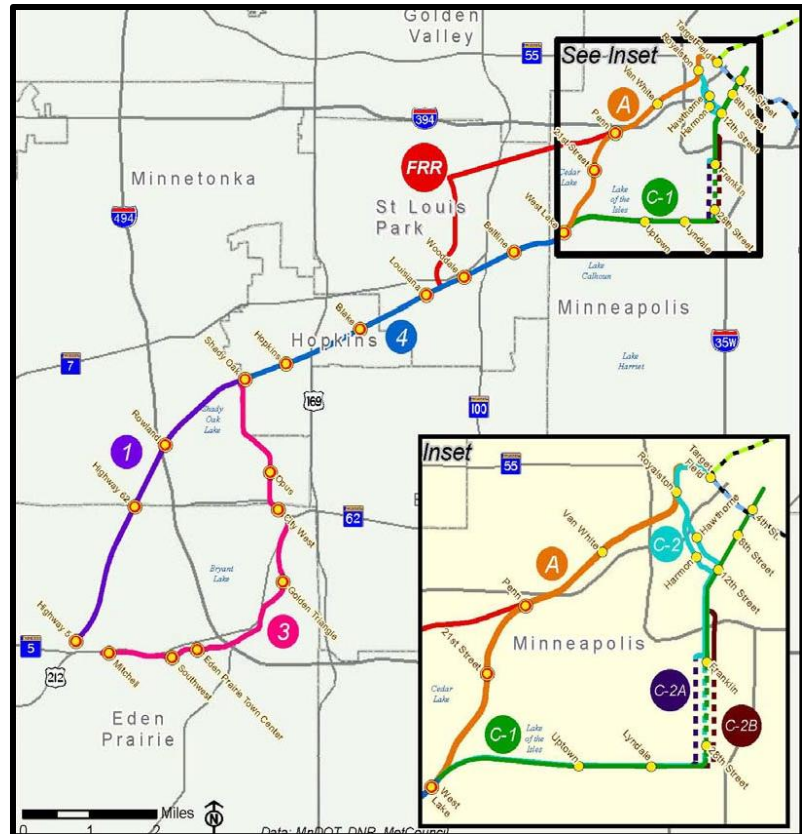
DEIS contents

- Executive Summary
 - 1. Purpose and Need for the Project
 - 2. Alternatives Considered
 - 3. Social Effects
 - 4. Environmental Effects
 - 5. Economic Effects
 - 6. Transportation Effects
 - 7. Public Parks and Recreation Lands
 - 8. Financial Analysis
 - 9. Indirect Effects and Cumulative Impacts
 - 10. Environmental Justice
 - 11. Evaluation of Alternatives
 - 12. Public Agency Coordination and Comments
- Appendices: Supplemental & Technical Materials



Alternatives considered

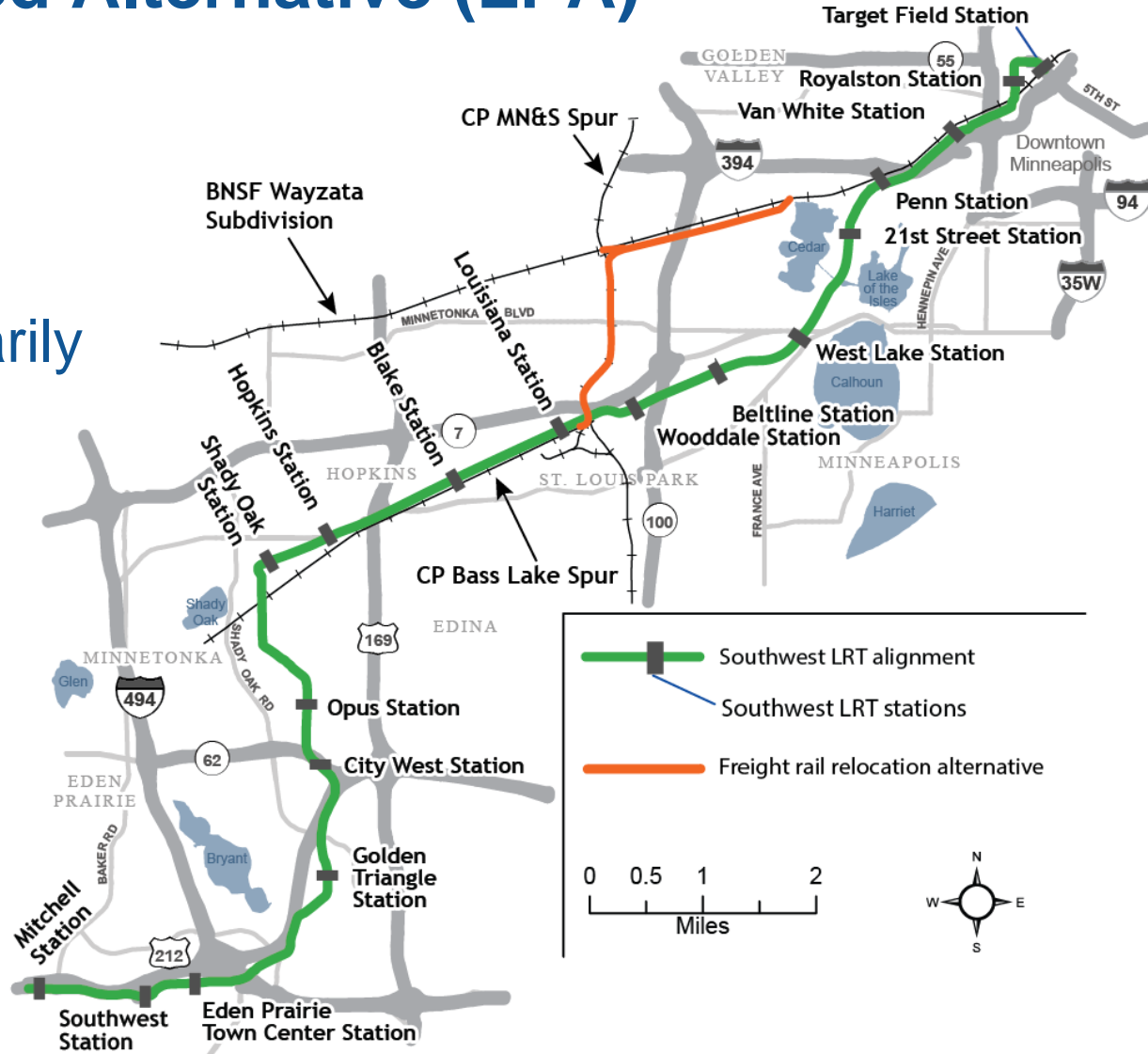
- 9/25/2012: HCRRA amended Scoping Report to include impacts of relocating freight rail to the build alternatives and include a co-location alternative.
- No-build alternative (required)
- Enhanced bus service
- 5 LRT alternatives:
 - 1A
 - 3A (LPA)
 - 3A-1 (Co-location)
 - 3C-1
 - 3C-2





Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

- Light Rail Transit
- Constructed primarily at grade
- 17 new stations
- 15 miles of track





Agencies and persons consulted

- Public involvement
 - Outreach program to community members and interested parties
 - Advisory Committees: Community, Business, Technical
 - Public meetings
 - Print and web materials
 - Media outreach
- 41 agencies invited to participate by HCRRA
 - Early agency coordination and scoping
 - City and county governments
 - State and federal agencies
 - Tribal communities



Public Review and Comment

- Comment period required by NEPA/MEPA
- Minimum 45-day comment period, extended to 60 days, ending Dec. 11, 2012.
- Printed copies available in libraries, city halls & project offices
- Electronic copies available on Hennepin Co. website
- Public hearings & open houses
- Intended for public and public agencies



Guide to Commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

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. Comments on the DEIS may be submitted through email, mail, or in person at one of the public hearings that will be held specifically for that purpose. To learn more about ways to comment on the DEIS, see "How to Comment on the DEIS."

Public hearings on the DEIS will be held in November 2012. To learn more about the hearings, see "Public Hearings."

Obtaining a Copy of the DEIS

The DEIS is available from Hennepin County's Southwest Transitway website at: <http://www.southwesttransitway.org>.

Printed copies of the DEIS are available for public review at several locations:

Hennepin County Housing, Community Works & Transit

701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400
Minneapolis

City Halls

Minneapolis: 350 South Fifth Street
St. Louis Park: 5005 Minnetonka Boulevard
Hopkins: 1010 First Street South
Edina: 4801 West 50th Street
Minnetonka: 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard
Eden Prairie: 8080 Mitchell Road

Southwest LRT Project Office

6465 Wayzata Boulevard, Suite 500
St. Louis Park

Libraries

Central: 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis
Eden Prairie: 565 Prairie Center Drive
Edina: 5280 Grandview Square
Franklin: 1314 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis
Hopkins: 22 Eleventh Avenue North
Minnetonka: 17524 Excelsior Boulevard
Sumner: 611 Van White Memorial Blvd., Minneapolis
St. Louis Park: 3240 Library Lane
Max Shapiro Memorial Library: 5224 West 26th Street, St. Louis Park

To request the DEIS document in an alternative format, please contact the Hennepin County Housing, Community Works & Transit Department, 701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400 Minneapolis, MN 55415, tel: 612.348.9260, email: svcorridor@co.hennepin.mn.us.



DEIS Public Hearing

- **Dates and locations:**

- 11/13/12, Hennepin County Government Center, A-2400
4:00 to 5:00 PM, public open house (Public Service Level)
4:30 PM, Formal Public Hearing
- 11/14/12, St. Louis Park City Hall, 5005 Minnetonka Blvd
5:00 to 6:00 PM, public open house
6:00 PM, Formal Public Hearing
- 11/29/12, Eden Prairie City Hall, 8080 Mitchell Road
5:00 to 6:00 PM, public open house
6:00 PM, Formal Public Hearing



Next steps

- Hennepin County is lead agency through DEIS public comment period; collects comments for transmittal to Met Council
- Transfer RGU status (MEPA) from Hennepin County to the Metropolitan Council at end of DEIS comment period
- Met Council develops FEIS
 - Include responses to substantive comments received on DEIS
- Prepare Record of Decision (ROD)



More information

www.southwesttransitway.org

(Hennepin County Housing, Community Works & Transit)

- DEIS download
- Executive Summary
- Commenting guide
- Comment form

Southwest Transitway - Home - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.southwesttransitway.org/home.html

Southwest Transitway - Home

SOUTHWEST corridor
green means go.

- Home
- Southwest LRT Maps
- Project Info & Background
- Meetings & Events
- Community Works
- Station Area Planning
- Frequently Asked Questions
- News
- Links
- Contact Us

Southwest LRT Maps...

quick facts

In an average week, all vehicle miles traveled in the metro area total more than **three times the distance to the sun**, 93 million miles away.
source: Metropolitan Council
[see more facts](#)

The proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) line is a high-frequency train serving the rapidly growing southwest metro area - Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Edina, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Minneapolis Neighborhoods, and downtown Minneapolis.

The Southwest LRT line will connect to other rail lines (Hiawatha, Central, and Northstar) and high-frequency bus routes in downtown Minneapolis, providing access to the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport, Mall of America, the State Capitol, and downtown St. Paul.

Metro business groups promote Southwest Light Rail
(March 2012 newsclip from KARE 11)

frequently asked questions

If LRT is built what will happen to the trails?

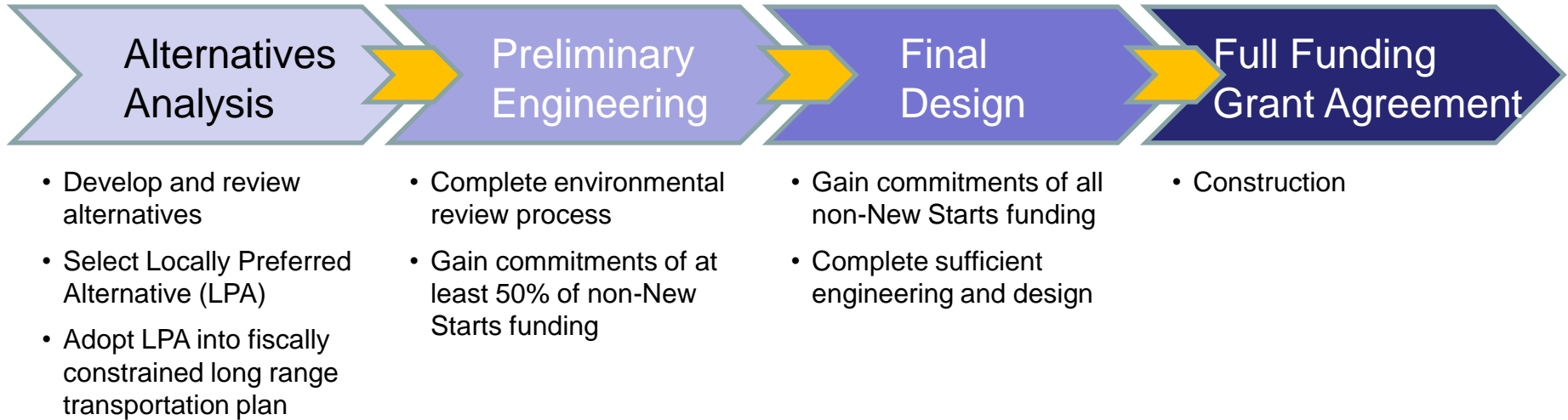
Hennepin County and its partners are committed to ensuring that a connected system of trails is retained throughout the southwest metro area. Currently, there are four trails that may be affected by a Southwest LRT line....
[\(more\)](#) | [read all](#)

Southwest LRT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Public Hearings Set
September 25, 2012

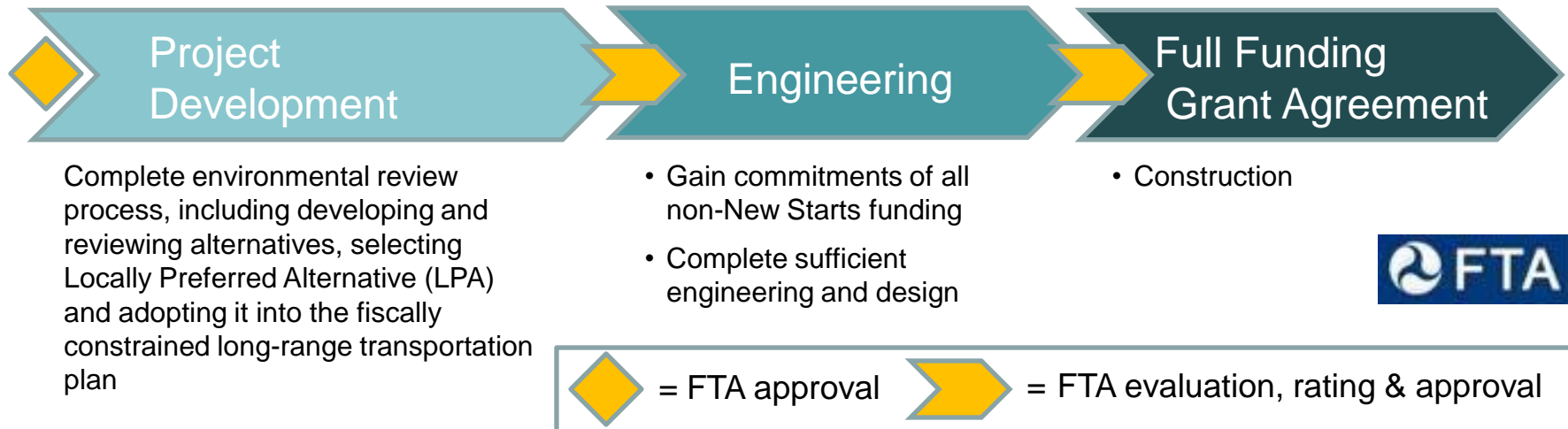




New Starts Project Development Process

Under SAFETEA-LU



Under MAP-21



 = FTA approval
  = FTA evaluation, rating & approval



White House “We Can’t Wait” Initiative

- Executive Order 13604: Improving Performance of Federal Permitting & Review of Infrastructure Projects
- SWLRT selected as a nationally and regionally significant transit project
- Streamline schedule and implement best practices for permitting and other review processes



SWLRT Project Schedule