

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Agenda

Monday, February 10, 2014, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Dayton's Bluff Community Center

800 Conway Street, St. Paul, MN 55106

1. Introductions

2. CAC Members and Vice-Chair

- *Process for appointing new members*
- *Process for electing a new Vice-Chair*

3. Scoping

- *Scoping Booklet*
- *Comment period March 3 – April 16, 2014*
- *Scoping Meetings: March 24, 25 and PAC on April 10*

4. D1/D2 Alignment Discussion

- *Potential station locations*
- *Potential transit alignments*
- *February 6 Open House*
- *Options for considerations*

5. Engineering Discussion

- *Guideway needs*
- *I-94 Right of Way analysis*
- *Options for "pinch points"*

6. Ridership Discussion

- *Inputs to ridership forecasts*
- *Using ridership to identify effective station locations*
- *Using ridership to make larger project decisions*

7. Next Steps & Upcoming Meetings

PAC Meeting (CAC Chair to attend) – February 13, 2:00 Woodbury City Hall

Scoping Meetings (Open House format) – March 24 and March 25

8. Public Comments (at least 15 minutes at the end of the meeting will be used to hear public comments/questions)

*Please note that these comments will be considered by the CAC and project staff in the project development; however, comments received at the CAC meeting are **not** considered formal comments in response to the Scoping Booklet or Scoping Decisions. Formal comments on Scoping will be accepted between March 3 and April 16, 2014. Instructions for submitting formal comments can be obtained by contacting project staff listed below.*

Note: Center closes at 8:00 pm

For more information contact: Lyssa Leitner, Washington County, Lyssa.leitner@co.washington.mn.us, 651-430-4314

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

MEETING SUMMARY
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014
6:00 – 8:00 PM
DAYTON'S BLUFF RECREATION CENTER – ST. PAUL

CAC Attendees

- Tabitha DeRango, St. Paul
- Gordon Westerberg, St. Paul
- Nick Heidenreich, St. Paul
- Michael Meyer, St. Paul
- Doug Swalboski, St. Paul
- Jacob Lambert, St. Paul
- Paul Sawyer, St. Paul
- Donald Gonser, Landfall
- Mikael Carlson, St. Paul
- Lisa Crain, Woodbury
- George Gorbatenko, At Large
- Robert Crawford, Washington County
- Mark Jenkins, Maplewood
- Linda Stanton, Woodbury
- Tom Giannetti, Landfall

Staff Attendees

- Lyssa Leitner, Washington County
- Jeanne Witzig, Kimley-Horn
- Beth Bartz, SRF
- Adele Hall, SRF
- Jim Gersema, SRF

CAC Members & Vice-Chair

Lyssa Leitner announced that two CAC members are leaving the committee: Elaine Santore, who represented Afton, and Tom Sorel, who was serving as an at-large member. As a process for filling the vacant positions, Lyssa proposed that since applications to serve on the CAC were submitted fairly recently, the elected officials that selected the members would take another look at the applications to see there are suitable replacements. If there are not, the Commission will use their own knowledge of the community and suggestions from the CAC for help with filling the role. Ideally, the new members would attend next month's meeting. CAC members agreed that the suggested process is a reasonable one.

Since Mr. Sorel was serving as vice-chair of the group, someone will need to fill that role as well. George Gorbatenko suggested that if Linda Stanton, whom the group had previously considered for the role, was still interested perhaps the group should reconsider her for the position. Linda stated that she was willing to be vice-chair and the group was in consensus on the appointment.

Draft EIS Scoping Process

Beth Bartz described the scoping comment period. Scoping will begin with publication of the scoping booklet on March 3 and last 45 days, ending April 16. The scoping booklet will be available on the web, at city halls and libraries, and each CAC member will receive a hard copy if they prefer. Scoping meetings will be held on March 24th at Guardian Angels Church and on March 25th at Conway Recreation Center. These locations were selected because they are accessible by transit and within the Gateway Corridor. The scoping meetings will be open house format and people can submit written and verbal comments to a court reporter that will attend the meetings. The PAC will also accept verbal and written comments at their meeting on April 10. A court reporter will be present at the PAC meeting as well. All of the meeting information is on the bookmarks and CAC members are encouraged to take as many of them as needed.

After the close of the scoping review period on April 16, 2014, comments will be reviewed and a scoping decision document will be published. The scoping decision document won't decide what the project will be, but rather what will be studied in the Draft EIS, which in large part is determined by the comments received. There are some topics that are always covered in a Draft EIS, but if there are certain issues or locations that are not certain to be covered, people are urged to comment on them.

Adele Hall gave a synopsis of upcoming outreach efforts leading up to and during the Scoping period. There will be three pop-up sessions held the week of March 3 at a Metro Transit park and ride, in the downtown St. Paul skyway, and at Metropolitan State University. There will be scoping bookmarks and posters placed in locations suggested by the CAC throughout the corridor that encourage people to access document(s) on the project website and to attend the scoping meetings on March 24th and 25th. Throughout scoping there will be updates to the Gateway website, Facebook, and email blasts to the list, and efforts will be made to be covered in the mainstream media. The information presented at the scoping meetings will be the same each night.

Mikael Carlson noted that Eastside Prosperity Campaign will be holding a meeting at the end of the month regarding scoping, and Fostering an East Side Transit Equity Conversation (FESTEC) recently was awarded additional funding to organize people and get them to scoping meetings. Lyssa added that CAC members are encouraged to get the word out about the meetings any way they can, whether it's posting about it on social media, hosting a meeting, inviting project staff to meetings, or putting the information in regular communications. George asked if organizations have funds to help people get to the meetings. Tabitha responded that this is an issue that organizations across the region are working together on, and it's mostly a question of funding.

Jeanne Witzig noted that project staff are putting together a presentation/video that will be on the website and shown on a loop at the scoping meetings. The video will allow people to get a snapshot of the project and what the project is asking for with regard to scoping comments. There is an effort to make the video understandable for people who aren't familiar with the project, and to let people know where the project is in the planning process. The video can be

distributed on discs, as well as online. Mark Jenkins recommended sending the video to public access and local tv stations, as well.

CAC members are encouraged to attend the scoping meetings, pop-up sessions, or any other events, but it is not required. Project staff will provide specific times, dates, and locations of the pop-up meetings in case CAC members would like to attend.

Beth Bartz explained what happens to the comments that are received during scoping. All comments will be shared with the project committees, the TAC, CAC, and PAC. The scoping decision document will include a list of issues usually studied in a Draft EIS, and the issues that will specifically be studied in the Gateway Draft EIS. The scoping decision document will probably be issued in late May or early June, depending on how many comments are received during scoping. The PAC and WCRRA will be approving the document and looking to the CAC for their input. A Guide to Commenting was distributed to the committee.

Michael Meyer asked how far the project can advance with the current funding. Lyssa Leitner responded that the Draft EIS work, which will extend into 2015, is funded; the project is pursuing bonding funds for further engineering. The CAC will exist through the life of the project, though staff understands that not everyone may be able to stay on the committee for the whole time.

D1/D2 Alignment Discussion

During the Alternatives Analysis (AA) the decision was made to not run the transitway in the freeway. East of I-494/694, the transitway was planned south of I-94 where the development is today. After the AA was complete, Oakdale suggested that the project should consider stations and an alignment on the north side of I-94 to build on the Oaks Business Park and the Guardian Angels Park and Ride. George Gorbatenko mentioned that there is also a homeless shelter at Guardian Angels, the only one in Washington County.

There really isn't a firm proposal of where the stations and route should go east of 494/694. Woodbury has raised traffic concerns and recently stakeholders have asked if the project should cross I-94 at all. Metro Transit was in the process of acquiring land for a park and ride at Manning Avenue in Woodbury. Woodbury has asked Metro Transit to postpone their plans to build a park and ride at Manning Avenue so further study of an optimal location can be evaluated relative to the Gateway project. Every park and ride in Woodbury is over capacity.

Tabitha DeRango stated that one reason that people in St. Paul are interested and are buying into the Gateway Corridor is so that they can reach jobs in Woodbury. If the route to Woodbury does not go forward and there won't be the same access to jobs that is concerning. Beth Bartz acknowledged that there are plans to expand the Oaks Business Park and Lake Elmo is concentrating new development along I-94. However, few of these developments exist today. Tabitha noted that it is difficult to know what kinds of jobs and incomes would be located in the not-yet-existent development. People would need to use the system every day to get to work; a walkway across the freeway to jobs in Woodbury does not sound appealing, especially in the winter. Perhaps shuttles could operate between the stations and the bigger destinations.

Mark Jenkins asked if the project could serve both sides of I-94 with a loop configuration. Beth noted that we really have to be focused on the station locations since that is where people access the system. A loop would result in some riders having much longer travel times to reach their station. The commuter market is served by express bus service today; part of the reason we are doing this project is to serve the trips in the corridor that are all day long in both directions.

Linda Stanton noted that she has major traffic concerns and that investment in the north side makes sense so that development can be built around it. Michael Meyer added that we have to keep in mind that this project is being built for the next generation and millennials are far less likely to own cars.

George questioned whether the project was considering the role of the feeder buses too late in the planning of the line, and if the line will be put too far north or south without understanding of the planned bus service. Lyssa noted that once construction began, Metro Transit did an extensive study regarding the bus service along and serving Central Corridor. Beth added that the ridership model accounts for existing service, but it is difficult to plan for service that might not come to be. George noted that this seemed to be too late in planning and advocated for broadening the study beyond 94 to the secondary and tertiary roads.

Mikael asked if dedicated funding for transit development was allocated would it allow for consideration of bus routes earlier. Lyssa responded that there is a movement statewide to look at how all transportation is funded; it's called Move.MN. It could be a major change for transportation funding. Michael Meyer added that he attended the transportation joint senate-house hearing at the capitol. The model for paying for transportation has been tied to gas consumption. But we use less and less gas, just as we travel more and more. There will be a push to get something done in the legislature this year.

Robert Crawford noted that the Gateway stakeholders aren't just riders; they are also business people who benefit from people being able to get to work. He questioned whether the private sector can contribute to build these lines; the funds need to come from elsewhere, not just taxpayers. Nick Heidenreich commented that it could work for corporate sponsorship, but not for mom and pop businesses. Lyssa added that there is a lot of discussion about public private partnerships. Minnesota is behind on this effort, but there is precedent for this elsewhere.

The conversation turned back to the open house held on February 6 to discuss the D1 and D2 alternatives. Beth showed the maps of the D1 and D2 alternatives that people discussed at the meeting. Adele described an interactive station that was set up to facilitate discussion about station and alignment locations. Mark added that he was at the station for a while and thought it was a good opportunity for people to look at various options and have some insight into the decision-making processes.

Engineering Discussion

Jim Gersema showed a standard BRT and LRT footprint. The width is a standard driving lane with curb and gutter and some room on the shoulder for snow removal. The total guideway

width is between 28 and 32 feet, similar to a standard roadway. Lyssa Leitner added that the project typically interchanges LRT and BRT images because they have similar right of way needs. Jim noted that the engineering work right now is figuring out how the lines shown on the map relate to the dimensions needed for the right of way.

Part of the evaluation of alternatives is to understand where there is insufficient right of way. A graphic was shown indicating that there are three locations where MnDOT has said that they don't currently have enough right of way: at Earl Street, just east of Etna Street, and in the Landfall area. Adding a transit guideway to these areas will result in some property impacts. Additionally, the addition of a guideway will constrain some areas that are not constrained today. Project staff have identified those areas and are now working on how to reduce/design the right of way to fit the transitway into the limited space. Nick Heidenreich commented that the parking in the Earl area is very tight; people are parking several blocks away from their destinations. The businesses have been fighting for diagonal parking for years and it hasn't happened. Donald Gonser noted that there are buses today on Hudson Road through Landfall and asked if the transitway could be elevated above a noise wall there. Lyssa noted that anything can be engineered, but it comes at a cost. Comparatively, similar constraints would be present if a lane were added to I-94. Lyssa added that MnDOT does not have any plans to add general purpose lanes on this part of I-94. Everyone wants to get people through most efficiently. The question is how to do it most effectively. George Gorbatenko noted that maybe a segment of the transitway should be in the center of I-94 with stations on either side. Tom Giannetti noted that there is only room to do this outside of the beltway. There is no space west of I-694 without taking property. Jim reminded CAC members that space for stations and park and rides need to be accounted for, as well. LRT stations are 270 feet, BRT are 80 feet long, and platforms are about 12 feet wide. Knowing that there are right of way constraints, the project team is looking at all the ways to fit the transitway in, whether it is a dedicated guideway, a dedicated lane in existing roadway, or running buses in mixed traffic for a short time. That affects travel time and ridership, too, though so it's a balance to reduce impacts while maintaining ridership. These adjustments only work for BRT, however. LRT requires a dedicated guideway the whole way. With bus the flexible guideway can help to get around some of the issues. The pinch points are similar on the south side of the I-94 so the impacts cannot be avoided by shifting the transitway to the south side of the freeway. Ideally, MnDOT would position the guideway 20 feet from the freeway for snow storage. This won't be possible for much of the corridor and there will be snow removal and cost considerations regarding proximity to the freeway. Underground or elevated options, which haven't been entirely ruled out, are very expensive.

CAC members agreed that touring the pinch points to get a better idea of the corridor would be very helpful and asked that Jim attend to explain how things fit or don't fit.

Ridership Discussion

Beth Bartz gave a brief overview of the ridership model, noting that it is a complicated mathematical model that accounts for origins and destinations and the various modes of travel.

The model uses data collected through surveys to understand how people travel, the costs, and the time it takes. It also includes information on transfers, and demographics such as cars per household. Based on these data the model estimates how many people will be on various transportation facilities. Project staff are currently working on the model for the Draft EIS. Eventually the projected ridership will be compared to the cost of the project and used to make project decisions. George Gorbatenko pointed out that the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan calls for low income access to transitways, but does not specify how many people are going to ride. Beth agreed but reminded the group that project needs strong ridership to obtain funding.

Next Steps & Upcoming Meetings

The PAC meeting will be held on Thursday; they will hear similar information to that hear by CAC members tonight. The next TAC meeting is scheduled for March 19. Scoping meetings will be held on March 24th and 25th, and scoping comments will be heard at the April 10th PAC. The CAC will reconvene this group in early June after the project team has gone through all of the comments received during scoping.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public in attendance at the meeting.



GATEWAY CORRIDOR | Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Community Advisory Committee Meeting #4

February 10, 2014

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement 

Today's Agenda

- Election of Vice Chair
- Scoping Booklet publication and comment period
- D1/D2/E Alignment Discussion – Open House Feb 6
- Engineering Discussion
- Ridership Discussion
- Next Steps & Upcoming Meetings
- Public Comment Period

Draft EIS Scoping Process

- Scoping Booklet available March 3 – starts 45-day comment period
- Available on web and in hard copy at city offices and libraries
- Scoping meetings Mon March 24 (Guardian Angels) and Tues March 25 (Conway Rec Center)
- Comments accepted at April 10 PAC
- Comment period ends April 16

Draft EIS Scoping Process

- Scoping decision will outline what is studied in the Draft EIS
- Modes (BRT and/or LRT) and alignments in addition to No Build
- Issues to be studied in the Draft EIS (eg. traffic, noise, property to be acquired, etc...)
- Scoping meetings: Open House format, provide broad base of project information
- Comments can be submitted on line, in writing, to court reporter at scoping meetings, to PAC on April 10

Scoping Outreach

- Notices in City newsletters, newspapers
- E-blast to email list; organizations may share with their email lists
- Posters at Park and Rides, community gathering places
- “Pop-up” information sessions: Downtown skyway, 3M
- Presentation available for use
- Other?

Draft EIS Scoping Decision

- Comments received will be summarized and shared with the CAC as well as TAC and PAC
- Responses to substantive comments will be prepared
- Draft scoping decision (modes, alignments, issues to be studied) will be brought to CAC for input and shared with the PAC who will make a recommendation to the WCRRA

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

D1/ D2/ E Alignment Discussion

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

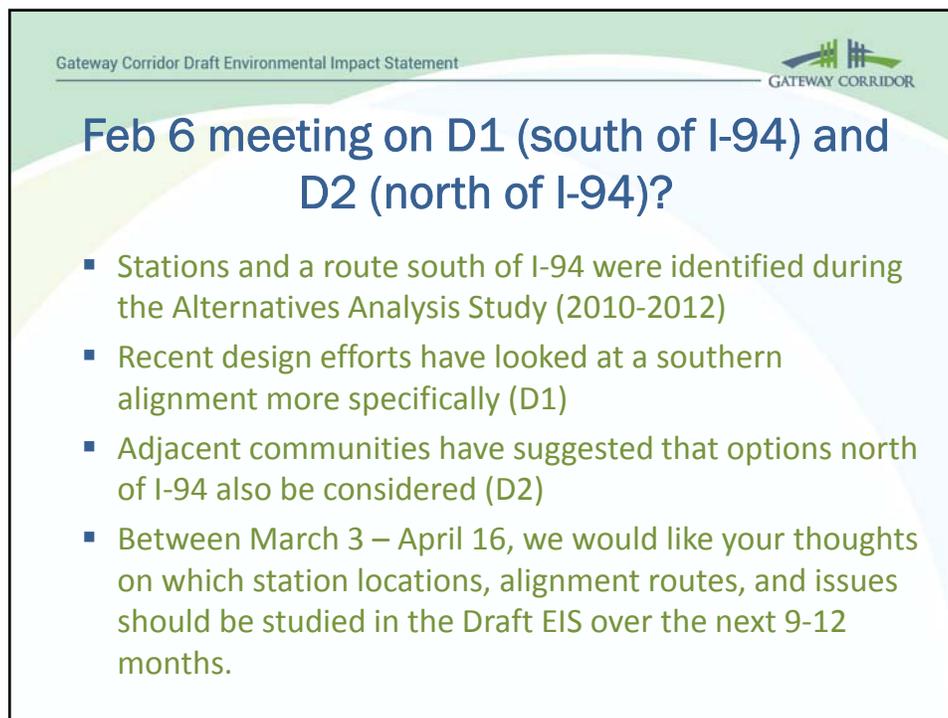
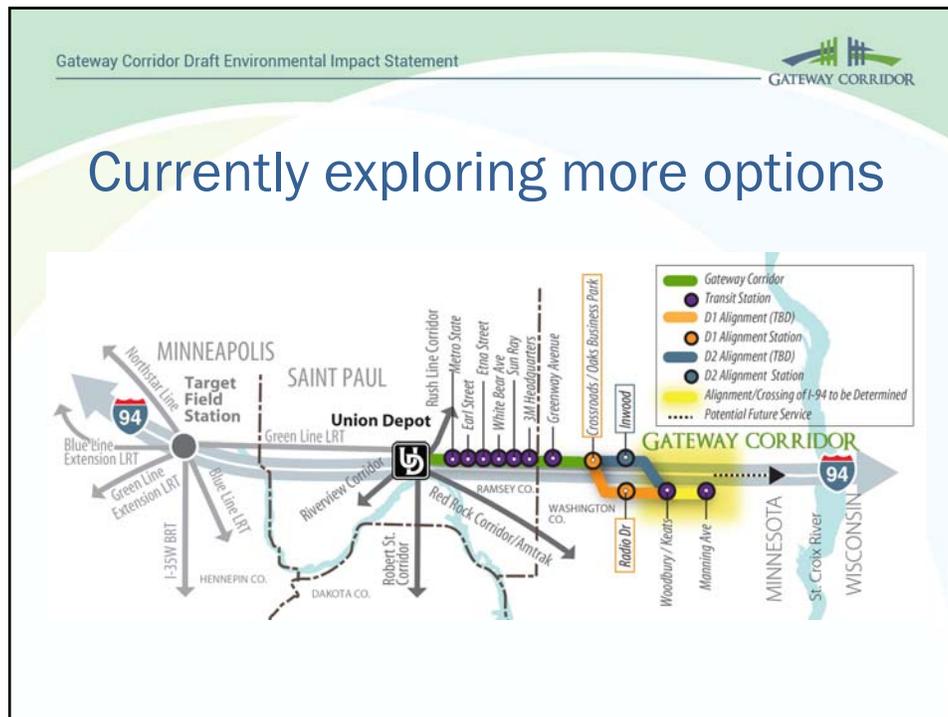
GATEWAY CORRIDOR

General alignment: AA recommendation

The map illustrates the proposed Gateway Corridor alignment, starting from Minneapolis and extending eastward towards Wisconsin. Key features include:

- Minneapolis:** The alignment begins at The Interchange, connecting to the Northeast Line, Southwest Transitway, and Hawatha Line.
- Saint Paul:** The alignment passes through the Central Corridor and Union Depot, connecting to the Rush Line Corridor and Robert St. Corridor.
- Transit Stations:** Several stations are marked along the route, including Mounds Blvd, Earl Street, White Bear Ave, Sun Ray, 3M, Landfall, Crossroads/Oak Business Park, Woodburn Drive/Keats Avenue, and Manning Ave.
- Geographic Features:** The map shows the Red Rock Corridor/Amtrak and the St. Croix River.
- Counties:** The alignment passes through Hennepin Co., Dakota Co., Ramsey Co., Washington Co., and Wabasha Co.
- Interstates:** The alignment crosses Interstate 94.

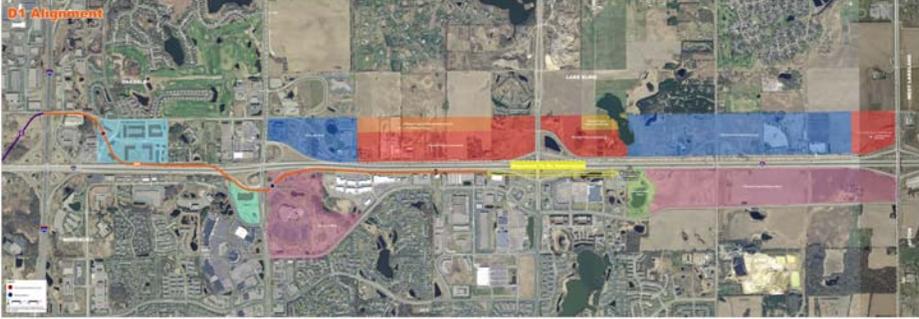




Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement



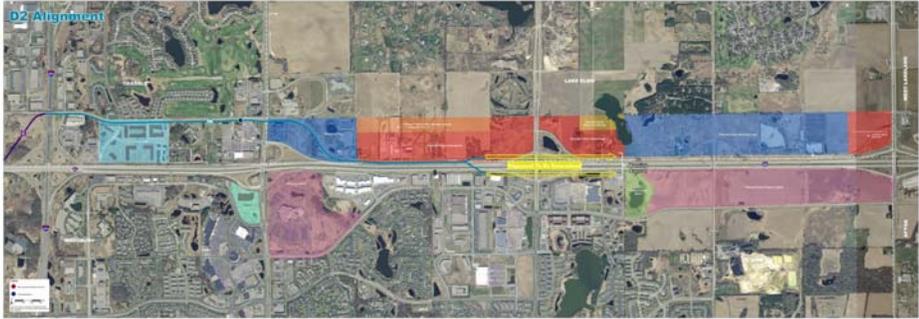
D1 Alignment (South of I-94)



Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement



D2 Alignment (North of I-94)



Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement 

Feb 6 Meeting Summary

- Over 75 people attended
- Good discussion, interaction
- 16 written comments received
 - About half currently use transit, majority said they would use it more if built
 - Bike connections, connections to shopping
 - Trains more desirable than bus
- Summary to be posted on web site

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement 

Discussion

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Engineering Discussion

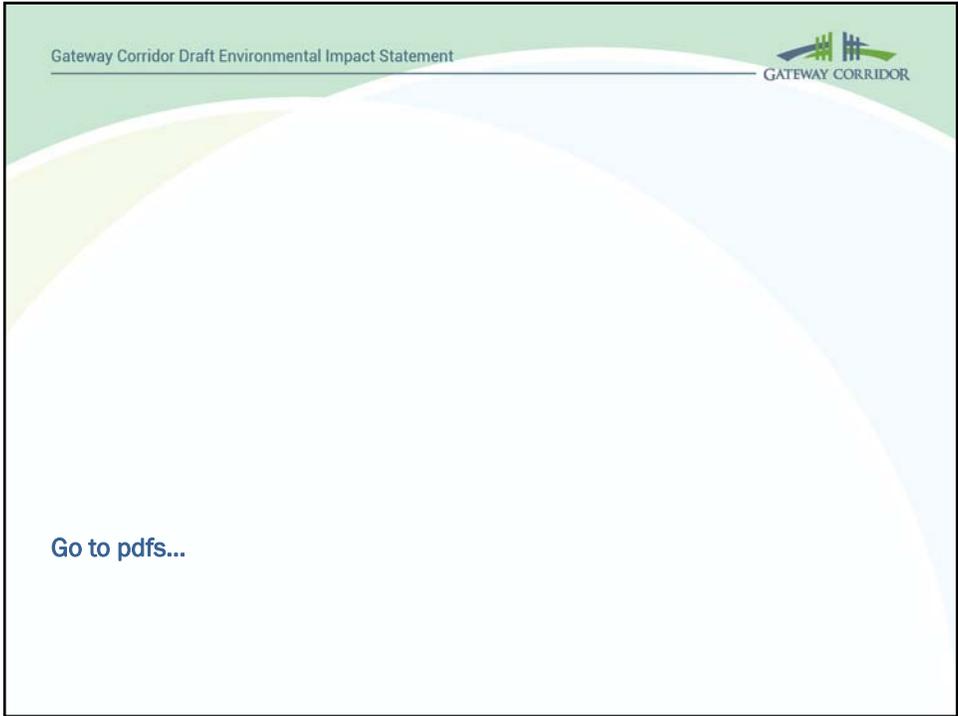
Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Currently in process of developing this alignment in greater detail

The map illustrates the Gateway Corridor transit alignment, starting in Minneapolis and extending eastward. Key features include:

- Minneapolis:** Target Field Station, Northstar Line, Blue Line Extension LRT, Green Line Extension LRT, Blue Line LRT, I-35W BRT, Hennepin Co.
- Saint Paul:** Union Depot, Green Line LRT, Riverview Corridor, Robert St. Corridor, Dakota Co.
- Between Saint Paul and Ramsey:** Red Rock Corridor/Amtrak, Rush Line Corridor, Metro State, Earl Street, Enns Street, White Bear Ave, Sun Ray, 3M Headquarters, Greenway Avenue.
- Gateway Corridor:** D1 Alignment (TBD) and D2 Alignment (TBD) running eastward, crossing I-94.
- Other Locations:** Crossroads / Oaks Business Park, Inwood, Radio Dr, Woodbury / Heats, Manning Ave, Washington Co., Ramsey Co.
- Legend:** Gateway Corridor (green line), Transit Station (purple circle), D1 Alignment (TBD) (orange line), D1 Alignment Station (orange circle), D2 Alignment (TBD) (blue line), D2 Alignment Station (blue circle), Alignment/Crossing of I-94 to be Determined (yellow shaded area), Potential Future Service (dotted line).

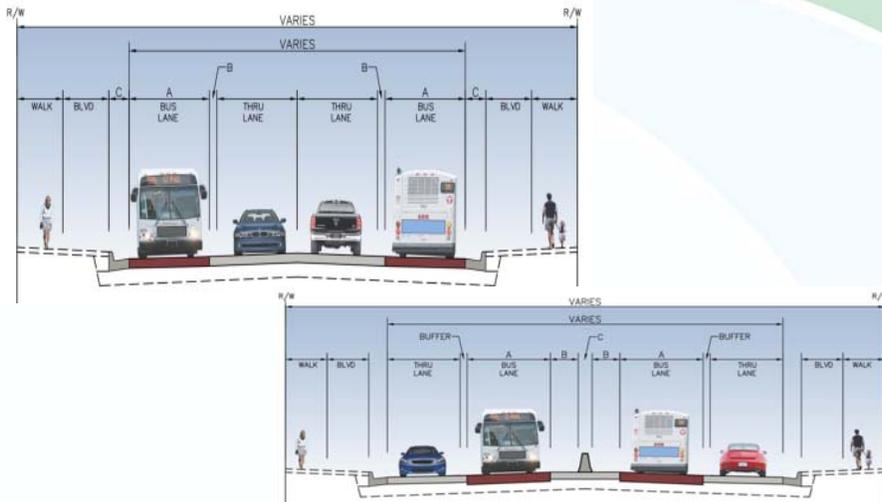


Park-and-Ride



Northstar Commuter Rail –
Elk River Station

Northstar Commuter Rail –
Anoka Station



What could we do in tight areas?

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Ridership Discussion

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Improving mobility

- Bi-directional
- Station to Station
- All day service

The map illustrates the Gateway Corridor transit system connecting Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and the Gateway Corridor. Key features include:

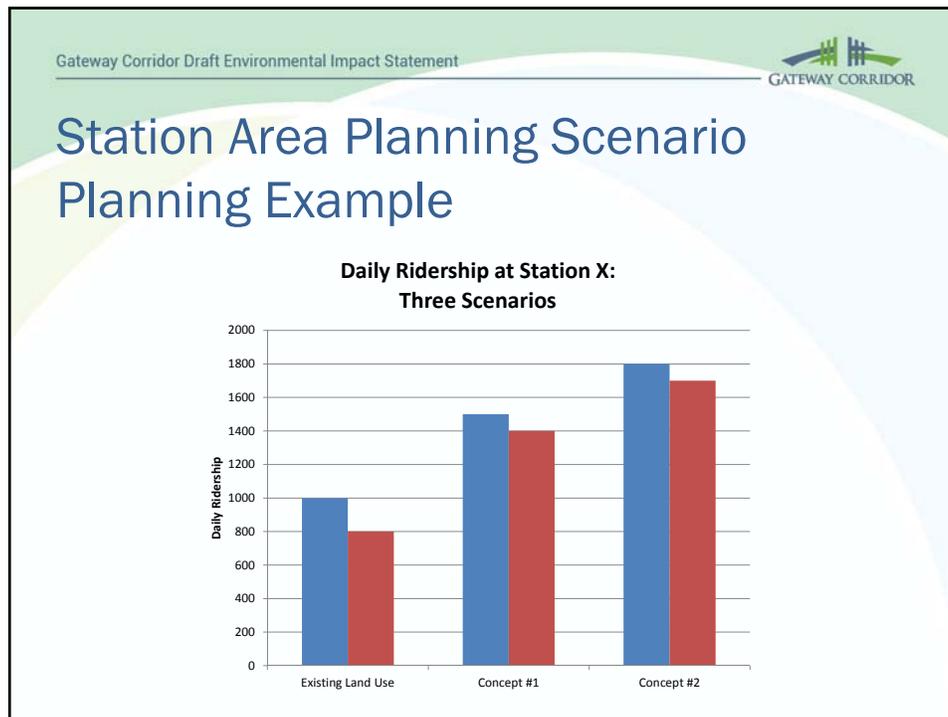
- Minneapolis:** Target Field Station, Union Depot, and various transit lines (Blue Line Extension LRT, Green Line Extension LRT, I-35W BRT, Hennepin Co., Dakota Co., Robert St. Corridor).
- Saint Paul:** Union Depot, Green Line LRT, and various transit lines (Rush Line Corridor, Metro State, Earl Street, Erno Street, White Bear Ave, Sun Ray, 3M Headquarters, Greenway Avenue).
- Gateway Corridor:** Crossroads / Oaks Business Park, Inwood, Radio Dr, Woodbury / Keate, Manning Ave, and the St. Croix River crossing into Wisconsin.
- Legend:** Gateway Corridor (green line), Transit Station (purple dot), D1 Alignment (TBD) (orange line), D1 Alignment Station (orange dot), D2 Alignment (TBD) (blue line), D2 Alignment Station (blue dot), Alignment/Crossing of I-94 to be Determined (yellow line), and Potential Future Service (dotted line).

Ridership forecast model

- Identifies future origins (residences)
- Identifies future destinations (work places, schools, shopping, etc.)
- Identifies mode options (drive, transit, walk/bike)
- Based on travel behavior (cost, time, transfer penalty, cars in household) identifies how people will travel

DEIS Ridership

- Currently updating
- When compared against project costs, key factors in determining competitiveness for funding
- Land use planning is key to success



Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Upcoming Meetings

- Policy Advisory Committee – Feb 13
- Technical Advisory Committee – March 19
- Scoping Meeting – March 24
- Scoping Meeting – March 25
- Policy Advisory Committee – April 10
- CAC discussion of preliminary Scoping Decision – first week of June

Thank you!

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