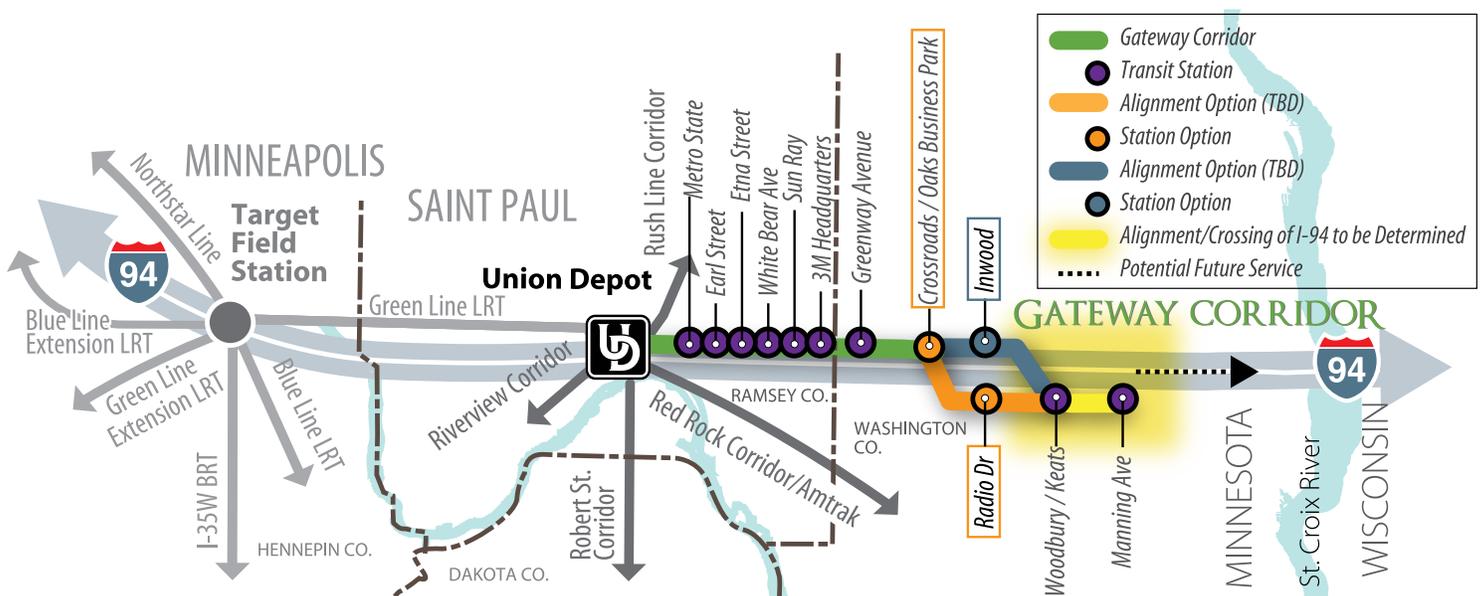


# GATEWAY CORRIDOR

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Where is the Gateway Corridor and what is the Gateway Corridor Project?

The Gateway Corridor is a planned approximately 12-mile transitway located in Ramsey and Washington Counties in Minnesota. The corridor runs generally parallel to I-94, connecting downtown Saint Paul with its East Side neighborhoods and the suburbs of Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, Lake Elmo, and Woodbury. The transitway will be either Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail Transit and will connect the east Twin Cities metro to the greater regional transit network via bus and rail connections at the Union Depot multimodal hub in downtown Saint Paul.



MAP TO BE UPDATED AS SCOPING DECISION PROCEEDS

## Why is the Gateway Corridor project needed?

Approximately 32,000 people living in the corridor cities do not own a car. The existing transit system provides few options for people who depend on or choose to travel using transit. There is limited service throughout the day and a need for more frequent service over a longer time period. The Gateway Corridor will improve access to jobs and housing in the corridor and improve residents' mobility around the region as a whole.

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area is committed to growing in a way that uses our existing infrastructure effectively, creates economic growth, preserves our natural spaces, and perpetuates the high quality of life that residents enjoy. Implementation of the Gateway Corridor will provide an efficient mode of travel, allow people to access jobs, services, and housing that were previously unreachable without a car, and bring an amenity to the east metro that will attract economic growth and residents.

## What studies have been done on the Gateway Corridor?

The Gateway Alternatives Analysis completed in 2013 compared the benefits, costs, and impacts of a range of light rail transit (LRT), commuter rail, bus rapid transit (BRT), and express bus alternatives in the Gateway Corridor. The Alternatives Analysis identified two transitway alternatives to be carried forward for study in the Draft EIS: Alternative 3 – BRT on I-94 and Hudson Road, and Alternative 5 – LRT on I-94 and Hudson Road.

## What is happening on the Gateway project right now?

The Draft EIS was initiated in 2013. Preparation of a Draft EIS begins with Scoping, which is when the project solicits comments from partner agencies, corridor cities and counties, and members of the community regarding alternatives and topics to be studied in the Draft EIS. The Scoping review period ended in mid-April and all of the comments received, as well as technical information about the alternatives, are currently being assembled into a Scoping Decision Document. Similar to other project decisions, the TAC and CAC will provide recommendations to the PAC regarding alternatives to be studied in the Draft EIS. After the Scoping Decision is made this summer, preparation of the Draft EIS will begin.

## Gateway Corridor Project Goals

### Tier 1 Goals: Directly Addressing Primary Project Needs

**Goal 1:** Improve Mobility

**Goal 2:** Provide a Cost-Effective, Economically Viable Transit Option

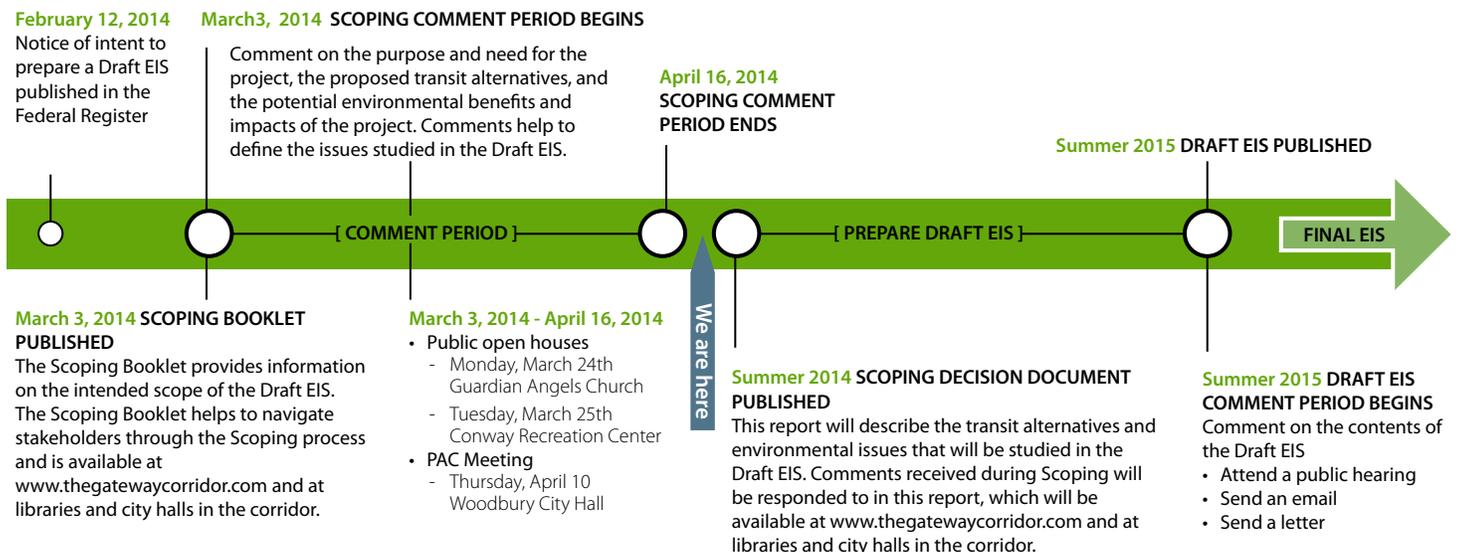
### Tier 2 Goals: Reflecting Broader Community Goals

**Goal 3:** Support Economic Development

**Goal 4:** Protect the Natural Environmental Features of the Corridor

**Goal 5:** Preserve and Protect Individual and Community Quality of Life

## Study Process



## What additional work is needed before the Gateway Corridor can be built?

Large capital-intensive projects with a likelihood of significant environmental impacts, like the Gateway Corridor project, must complete a **Draft EIS**. The Gateway Corridor Draft EIS (currently underway) will disclose the impacts and benefits of various alternatives considered for the transitway. Throughout the planning and design of the project, **environmental justice** (impacts to low-income and minority residents) will be central to the assessment of project impacts and benefits.

In tandem with preparation of the Draft EIS, the project will progress with **conceptual engineering and design**, and gather enough information about the various alternatives to facilitate a **locally preferred alternative decision** where the cities, counties, and Metropolitan Council officially identify the route and mode of transit for Gateway.

When the Draft EIS is complete, preparation of a Final EIS will begin. The **Final EIS** and the subsequent **Record of Decision** will commit the project to a range of actions and physical elements that mitigate its negative impacts.

**Project Development** will proceed along with preparation of the Final EIS, furthering engineering, making design decisions, and defining the physical elements of the project more and more specifically. When Project Development is complete, engineers will further design the transitway to create construction documents that a contractor can use to build it. The **design** and **construction** of the transitway will incorporate all of the mitigation measures specified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision.

## What is the project timeline?

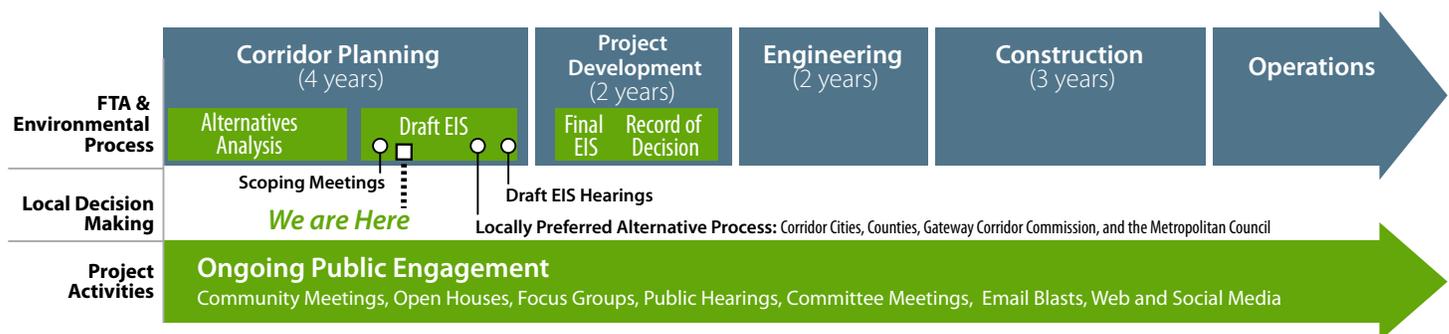
Because local residents, cities, counties, the Metropolitan Council, the State of Minnesota, the Federal Transit Administration, and Gateway Corridor Cooperating Agencies have a say in project design, each of these steps takes time. Though the process is lengthy, its intent is to create a financially feasible project that delivers mobility, accessibility, environmental, economic development, and quality of life benefits while imposing few negative impacts to the people and land around it.

## What issues will be studied in the Draft EIS?

- Neighborhood and community resources
- Environmental justice
- Noise and vibration
- Historic and cultural resources
- Parks and public land
- Water resources, wetlands, and habitat
- Air quality and climate change
- Right-of-way
- Transportation
- Land use
- Economic development
- Visual and aesthetics
- Safety and security
- Hazardous materials and contamination
- Solis
- Utilities
- Energy
- Secondary and cumulative effects

*During the Draft EIS process, refined capital cost estimates will be prepared along with operating and maintenance cost estimates and ridership forecasts.*

## Transitway Development Process



## Who is leading the Gateway Corridor project?

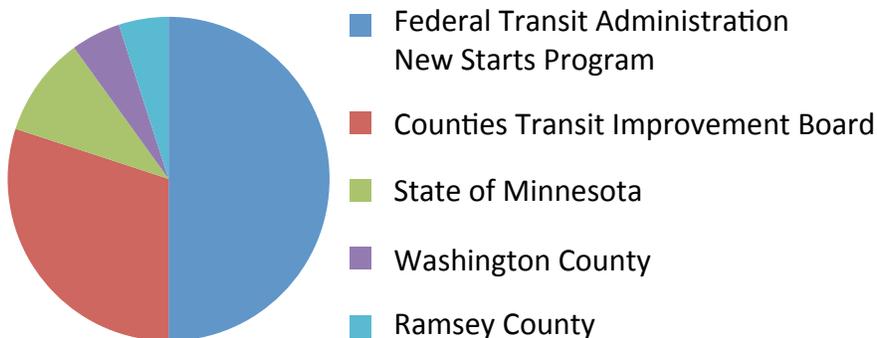
The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority is leading the Draft EIS in partnership with the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Metropolitan Council. Project decisions will be made by local policy-makers from the corridor cities and counties, as well as the Metropolitan Council, with input from community members living and working in the corridor.

## Who is paying for the Draft EIS? Who is paying for construction of the transitway?

As the local project sponsors, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and Washington County Regional Railroad Authority are paying for the Draft EIS through a grant from the Counties Transit Improvement Board.

The Gateway Corridor intends to apply for federal funding. If the Corridor is a recipient of federal funds, the Federal Transit Administration would fund 50%, the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) would fund 30%, the State of Minnesota would fund 10%, and Washington and Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authorities would together fund 10% of the capital cost of the project. After its construction, Metro Transit will operate and maintain the Gateway Corridor. Operating costs not offset by farebox and other revenue would be split: 50% would be funded by CTIB; 50% would be funded by Metro Transit.

### Proposed Gateway Funding Partners



## How has the public been engaged in the decision-making process?

During the project's Alternatives Analysis in 2012-2013, comments and input from residents and business owners helped project planners and local elected officials identify the most important characteristics of the project. Most recently, nearly 100 people commented on various aspects of the project during the Gateway Draft EIS Scoping review period. These comments will be used to decide what topics and which transit routes and modes will be studied in the Gateway Draft EIS this year.

## How can I provide input or obtain additional project information?

Residents, business owners, and anyone else interested in the project are encouraged to submit comments or questions about the project any time. Staff are also available to attend community, business, civic, or other organizations' meetings to present information and discuss the project.

Please email [gatewaycorridor@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:gatewaycorridor@co.washington.mn.us) or call the Washington County Public Works Department at 651-430-4300. A Community Advisory Committee comprised of residents and business owners in the corridor, and a Policy Advisory Committee comprised of elected officials and policy-makers in the corridor, meet regularly. Public hearings, open houses, focus groups, and other informational meetings will be held as the project proceeds, as well. All of these meetings are public and interested people are encouraged to attend. Please sign up for the Gateway Corridor email list or visit the project website [www.thegatewaycorridor.com](http://www.thegatewaycorridor.com) for meeting times, dates, and locations.