Scoping Booklet

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

FEBRUARY 2014

What is the purpose of this booklet?

You are invited to take part in the Twin Cities region's next exciting transit project – Gateway Corridor! This booklet has been prepared to provide an overview of the project, explain the process for environmental review, and outline ways you can get involved. This is your chance to tell decision-makers what is important to your community and what you think should be studied in the upcoming environmental document. There will be many other opportunities for input in the future, but now is your opportunity to help set the direction for the project. We hope to hear from you!

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Metropolitan Council, and the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) serving on behalf of the Gateway Corridor Commission (GCC) have initiated the environmental review process for the Gateway Corridor. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The Draft EIS provides an opportunity for the public and agencies to disclose and explore anticipated project impacts and compare impacts between alternatives. As a project seeking federal funding that may have significant environmental impacts, a Draft EIS is required to advance the Gateway Corridor. This Scoping Booklet is the first step in the Draft EIS process.

Within this booklet you will find information on what "Scoping" is and why it is important to the Gateway Corridor. You will learn what contents make up a Draft EIS and how to make comments that will help shape what is evaluated. You will have the opportunity to review the Scoping information and offer your comments in person at a Scoping meeting or in writing during the public comment period.

The Gateway Corridor Commission (GCC) was created in 2009 to advocate, study, and plan for improved transportation options along I-94. It is comprised of representatives from the Washington and Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authorities and cities along the Gateway Corridor.

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List of Acronyms

AA	Alternatives Analysis
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FIGs	Focused Issue Groups
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GCC	Gateway Corridor Commission
LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative
LRT	Light Rail Transit
MEPA	Minnesota Environmental Policy Act
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PAC	Policy Advisory Committee
RCRRA	Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
RRA	Regional Railroad Authority
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
WCRRA	Washington County Regional Railroad Authority

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit: www.thegatewaycorridor.com

Email: gatewaycorridor@co.washington.mn.us

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gatewaycorridor
Call: 651-430-4300

PLEASE JOIN US AT A FORMAL PUBLIC SCOPING OPEN HOUSE:

SCOPING OPEN HOUSE #1
March 24, 2014 from 4:30-6:30 pm
Guardian Angels Church, 8260 4th Street N.
Oakdale, MN 55128

SCOPING OPEN HOUSE #2
March 25, 2014 from 4:30-6:30 pm
Conway Recreation Center, 2090 Conway Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55119

The Gateway Corridor Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) will also accept comments during their April 10, 2014, meeting at 2:00 pm at Woodbury City Hall

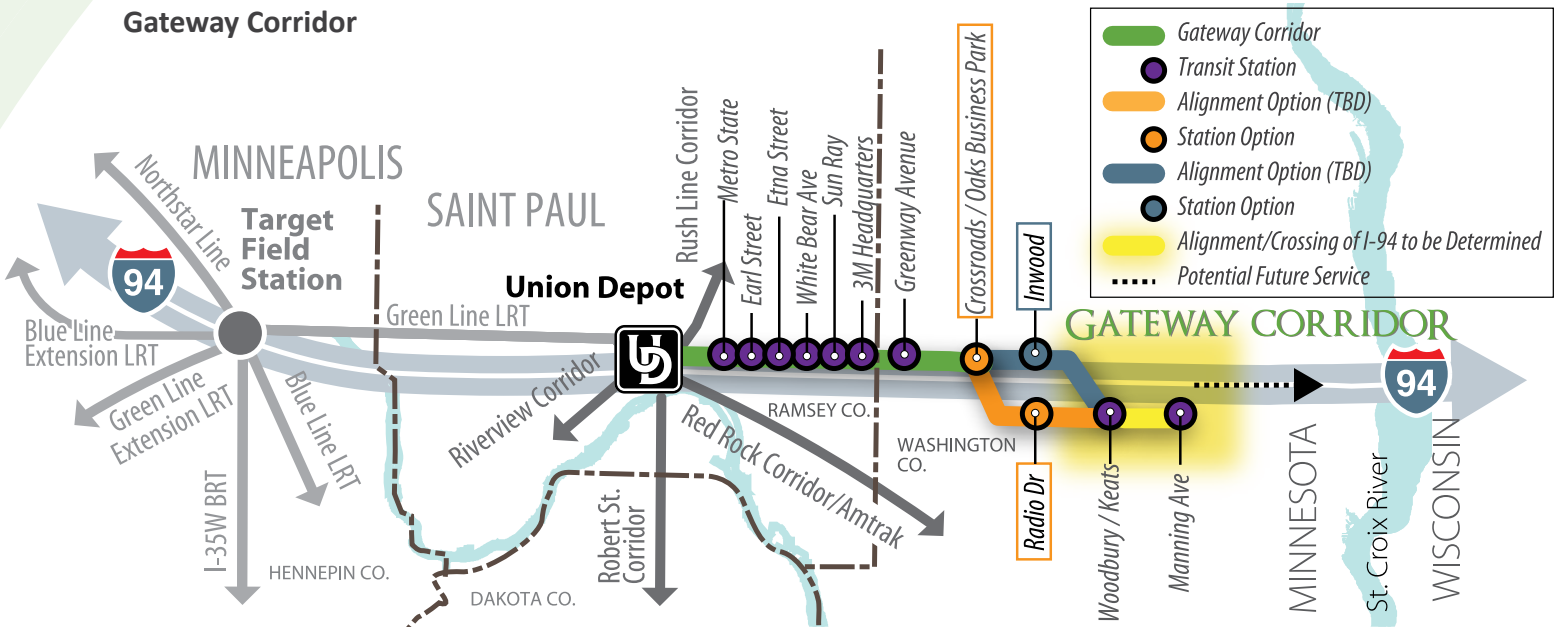
What is the Gateway Corridor?

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 corridor connects the east Twin Cities metro to the greater regional transit network via connections at the Union Depot multimodal hub in downtown Saint Paul.

Alternatives are different options—modes (types of service) and alignments (routes)—being considered for the Gateway Corridor. Mode alternatives under consideration include light rail transit (LRT) and bus rapid transit (BRT) with the majority of the system located within a dedicated guideway.

Dedicated guideway means the service is running in a separate facility or right-of-way from the road.

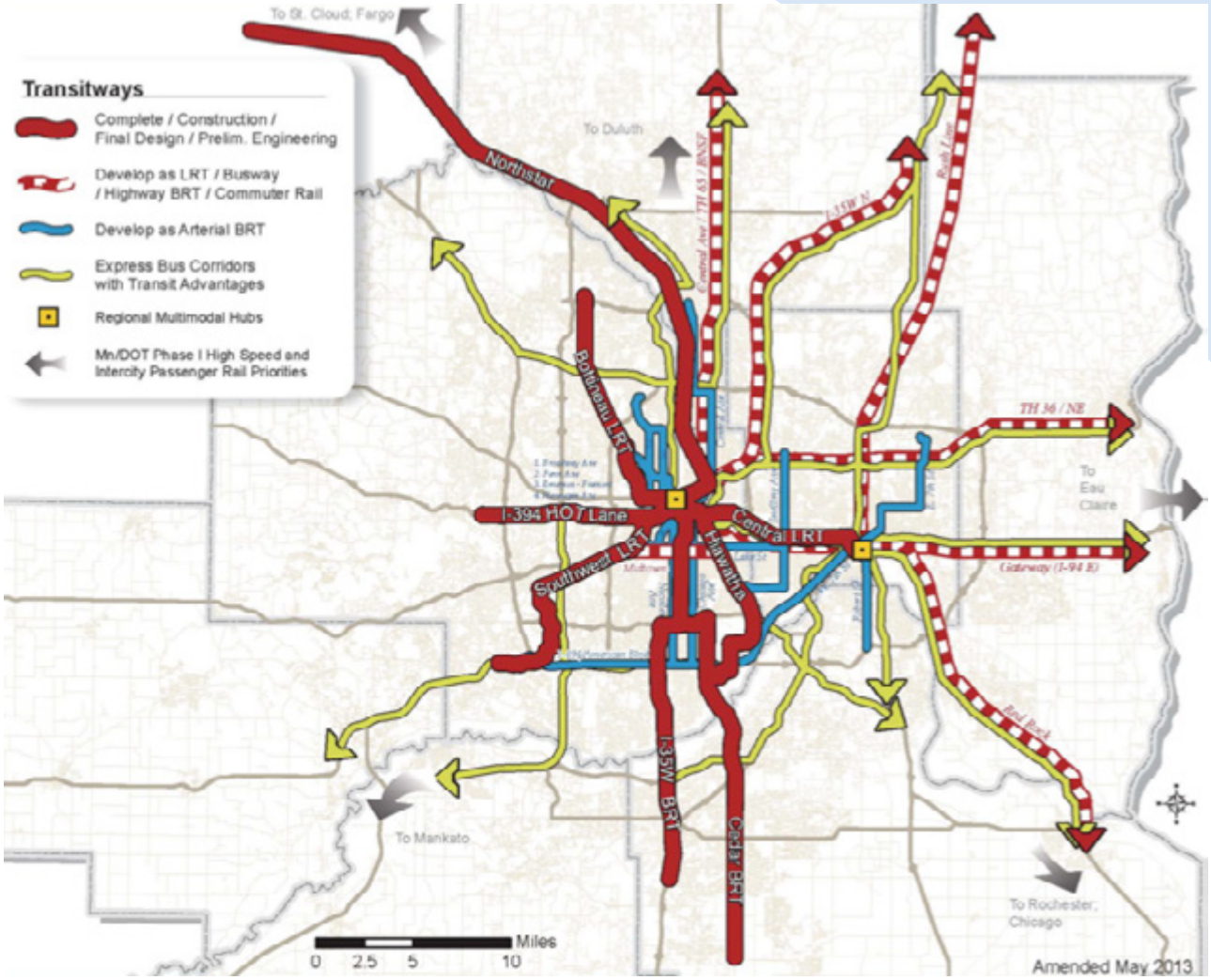
Gateway Corridor



How does the Gateway Corridor fit into the Regional System?

The region's current long-range transportation plan, the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (Metropolitan Council, amended May 2013), identifies the Gateway Corridor as one of seven corridors recommended to be developed as LRT, busway, highway BRT, or commuter rail by 2030.

Regional Transitways System Vision



Source: 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (Metropolitan Council, May 2013)

What is LRT?

LRT is a mode of transit that operates on a fixed rail guideway using multiple trains grouped together. LRT has been operating in the Twin Cities since the 2004 introduction of the METRO Blue Line between Target Field Station and the Mall of America.

Frequency:	Every 10 minutes
Runningway:	Dedicated Guideway
Typical system length:	10-15 miles
Station spacing:	Approximately every 1 mile
Vehicle:	Rail
Regional example:	METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha) and METRO Green Line (Central) opening in 2014

What is BRT?

BRT is a mode of transit that incorporates many features of LRT, such as level boarding, off-board payment, and shelters with more amenities (e.g., benches, bike racks) to provide a rail-like experience on a bus. Dedicated Guideway BRT is the form being studied for the majority of the Gateway Corridor, which refers to a BRT system that runs in a separate facility or right-of-way from the road.

Frequency:	Every 10 minutes
Runningway:	Dedicated Guideway
Typical system length:	10-15 miles
Station spacing:	Approximately every 1 mile
Vehicle:	BRT Bus
Regional example:	METRO Red Line (Cedar Ave)

What is Scoping? How does it affect the Draft EIS?

Scoping is the process of determining which transit alternatives and issues will be evaluated in the Draft EIS.

Scoping is an opportunity to:

- Confirm the purpose and need for the project
- Identify appropriate transit alternatives that address those needs
- Name significant issues that should be studied in the Draft EIS
- Eliminate issues that are not significant or have already been adequately addressed in earlier studies

Members of the public, including individuals, groups, representatives of affected Native American tribes, and local, state, and federal government agencies are invited to participate in the Scoping process for the Gateway Corridor Draft EIS.

Why build the Gateway Corridor? What benefits will it provide? (Purpose and Need)

The purpose of the Gateway Corridor project is to provide transit service to meet the existing and long-term regional mobility and local accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public within the project area.

Traffic congestion is expected to intensify in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area through 2030 and beyond, and it cannot be addressed by highway construction alone. The corridor's transportation network as currently planned and programmed will be inadequate to handle future conditions. A more sustainable, multimodal transportation network is needed to provide viable travel options for users and to achieve the diverse community land use visions, support economic development, and respond to changing corridor population characteristics.

Goal: Improve Mobility

Goal: Provide a cost-effective, economically viable transit option

Goal: Support economic development

LIMITED EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICE

Transit service in the Gateway Corridor project area today is concentrated in Saint Paul and at selected park-and-ride locations on the I-94 corridor. The project area and the I-94 corridor lack all-day transit service traveling in both directions, particularly east of Saint Paul and Maplewood. This limits the ability of people in the project area to use transit to meet their transportation needs.

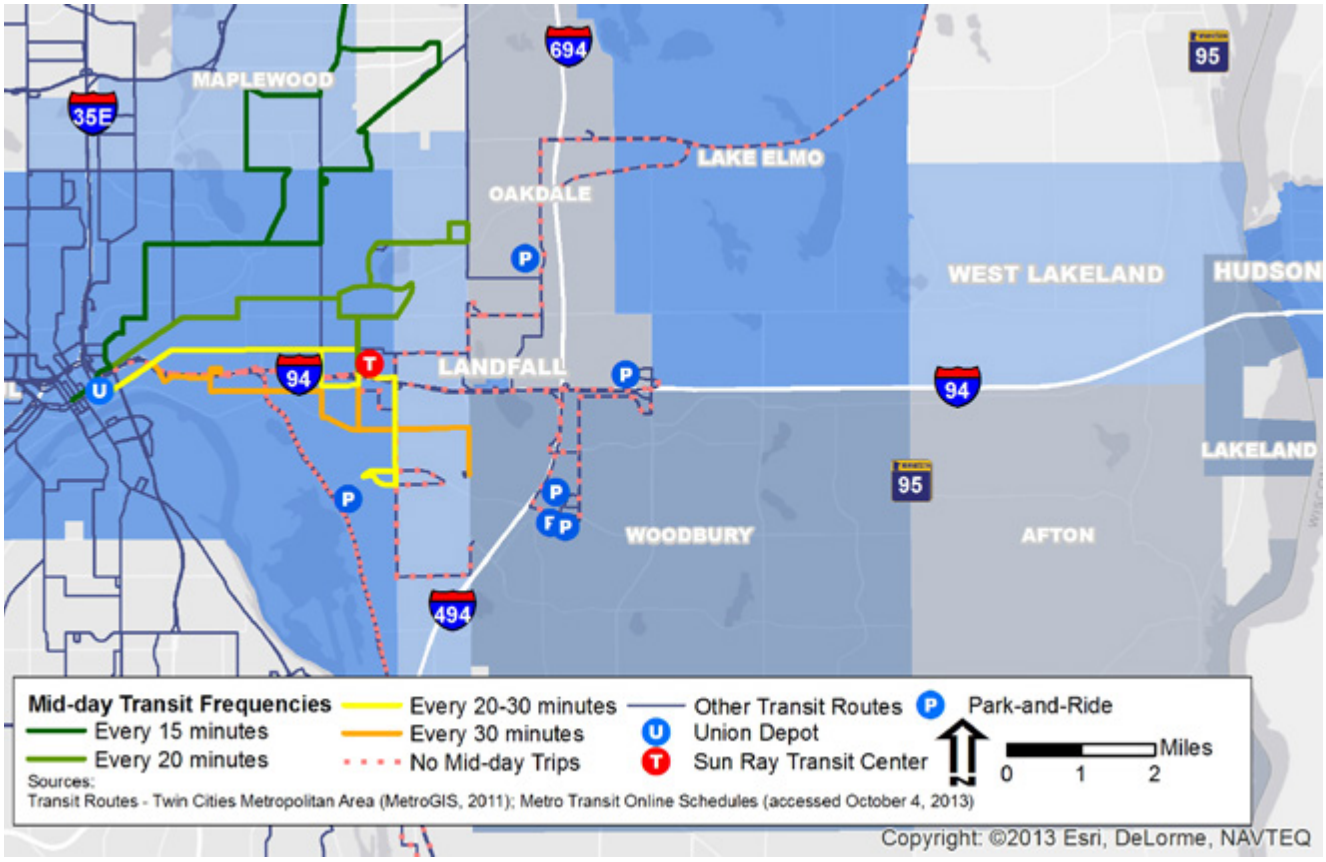
POLICY SHIFT TOWARD TRAVEL CHOICES AND MULTIMODAL INVESTMENTS

I-94 and local roadways in the project area are congested today during peak periods, and traffic volumes and congestion are expected to increase in the future. Funding for roadway projects will not be adequate to address the congestion problem. There are no regionally significant projects in the 2013-2017 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) nor MnDOT's 20-Year State Highway Investment Plan that would address projected congestion within the Gateway Corridor. At the same time, state and regional transportation policies are shifting to emphasize multiple modes and alternatives to traveling in congested conditions.

FIVE FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEED FOR THE GATEWAY CORRIDOR PROJECT:

- Limited existing transit service throughout the day and demand for more frequent service over a greater time span
- Policy shift toward travel choices and multi-modal investments
- Population and employment growth, increasing access needs and travel demand
- Needs of people who depend on transit
- Local and regional objectives for growth and prosperity

Existing Mid-day Transit Frequencies

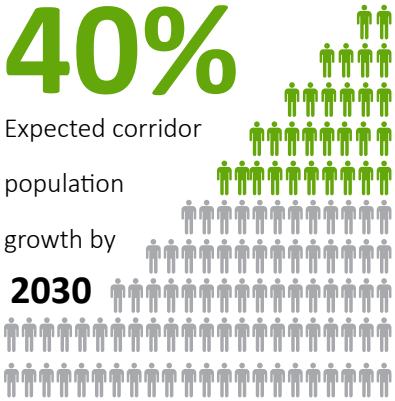


"The Metropolitan Council and its regional partners will promote and market transportation choices that allow travelers to avoid and help manage growth in congestion by riding transit, bicycling, walking, vanpooling and carpooling, or using managed lanes."

- Metropolitan Council's 2030 Transportation Policy Plan

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Approximately 64,600 people live within an approximate one mile radius (on either side of I-94, west of Union Depot and east of Manning Avenue) of the Gateway Corridor. By 2030, that population is expected to increase by nearly 40 percent, or 25,000 people. Employment within one mile of the Gateway Corridor is also projected to grow significantly, increasing from approximately 87,500 in 2010 to 149,000 in 2030, a growth rate of 70 percent. This population and employment growth will in turn increase access needs and travel demand, particularly in the I-94 corridor.



61,500

Jobs added by **2030**

NEEDS OF PEOPLE WHO DEPEND ON TRANSIT

The Gateway Corridor project area is home to a large number of people who depend on transit to meet their transportation needs. In absolute terms, there are approximately 32,000 people without a vehicle in the project area communities. This is over 1/5 of the "zero vehicle" population in the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. In the Gateway Corridor communities, the percentage of population without a vehicle and households without a vehicle are greater than the regional average. This is due to significantly higher than average numbers in Saint Paul, Maplewood, Oakdale, and Landfall. The current transit system provides limited options for people in the Gateway Corridor who depend on transit to access employment, shopping, education, and social activities.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR GROWTH

Local land use plans identify areas for compact growth along existing transit corridors, including I-94, and emphasize regional and local connections as critical to economic competitiveness. Without improved transit service, project area communities are limited in their ability to comply with local and regional policies that encourage multimodal transportation, transit, compact development, and environmental preservation.

What previous studies have been done?

Previous studies addressing transit in the Gateway Corridor date back to 1991 and include transit feasibility studies, park-and-ride plans, managed lane studies, and long-range transportation plans, among others. Links to these studies are posted on the project website at **www.thegatewaycorridor.com**.

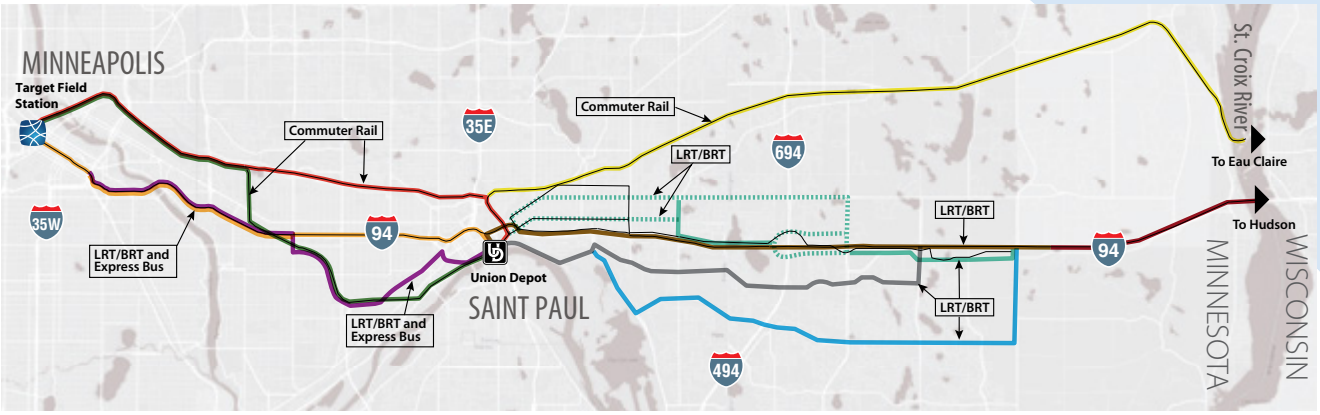
2008	2009	2010	2013
2030 Transit Master Study (Metropolitan Council)	2030 Transportation Policy Plan (Metropolitan Council)	2030 Transportation Policy Plan Update (Metropolitan Council)	Gateway Corridor Alternatives Analysis Final Report (GCC)
Transit Feasibility Study, St. Croix River Crossing (MnDOT)	I-94 Managed Lane Study (MnDOT)	2030 Park-and-Ride Plan (Metropolitan Council)	
	Union Depot Environmental Impact Study (RCRRA)	Draft Long-Distance Bus Route Study (Metropolitan Council)	
		Minnesota Statewide Passenger and Freight Rail Study (MnDOT)	
		Metro District 20-Year Highway Investment Plan 2011-2030 (MnDOT)	
		East Metro Railroad Capacity Analysis (RCRRA)	

GATEWAY CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS, FEBRUARY 2013

The most recent study was the Gateway Corridor Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study, completed by the GCC in February 2013. The AA Study evaluated a No-Build alternative and a range of Build alternatives. These included a transportation system management alternative (enhancements to facilities and bus service without major infrastructure additions), a commuter rail alternative, and numerous LRT and BRT alternatives on various alignments (see figure below).

Following a technical screening process, eight alternatives moved forward for detailed evaluation. At the end of the AA Study process, it was determined that both BRT and LRT alternatives adjacent to Hudson Road (AA Alternatives 3 and 5) best met the project's identified goals and should move forward for study in the Draft EIS. Both alternatives terminated at Union Depot on the west, relying on connecting routes for service to Minneapolis. The eastern terminus for the dedicated guideway was defined as Manning Avenue for both the BRT and LRT alternatives, with BRT service continuing to Hudson, Wisconsin under Alternative 3. The AA Study is posted on the project website at **www.thegatewaycorridor.com**. Following the AA, the BRT alternative eastern terminus was refined to Manning Avenue for operating efficiency and to be consistent with Metro Transit's operating authority.

Gateway Corridor Alternatives Studied



Connections at Union Depot to Green Line LRT and local and express buses

I-94 in Maplewood

Has additional analysis been done since the AA Study?

Yes. Based on input from corridor communities and community groups, alignment options for certain segments of the corridor have been considered in the early stages of Scoping.

ALIGNMENT OPTIONS BETWEEN MOUNDS BOULEVARD AND WHITE BEAR AVENUE

In the AA Study, two alignment options were considered for the area directly east of downtown Saint Paul, generally between Mounds Boulevard and White Bear Avenue. One alignment followed Mounds Boulevard, Hudson Road, and I-94 (Alignment B1), and the other followed Mounds Boulevard, East 7th Street, and White Bear Avenue before rejoining Hudson Road, north of I-94 (Alignment B2). The final recommendation from the AA included Alignment B1, but there was a community request for Alignment B2 to be evaluated further during the Draft EIS Scoping process.

Key factors reflective of project goals and objectives were evaluated for purposes of comparing the two alignment options. These key factors focused on items that differentiated the two alignments and included physical and operational impacts (right-of-way, accessibility, parking impacts, traffic impacts, and cultural resources), population served, ridership and travel time, cost, neighborhood concerns, and regional transit investments.

In consideration of these factors, Alignment B2 would be proximate to a larger population and employment base and would generate somewhat greater ridership. However, it was found that this advantage does not outweigh its substantial disadvantages of greater cost; longer travel time; extensive neighborhood, traffic, and property impacts; neighborhood concerns; and overlap with future East 7th Street arterial BRT service as planned in Metropolitan Council's adopted Transportation Policy Plan. After review of this comparative analysis, **the project's Technical, Community, and Policy Advisory Committees and the Gateway Corridor Commission have all recommended that the findings of the AA Study remain and alignment B2 not be advanced for further consideration based on its substantial physical and operational impacts compared to Alignment B1.**

Alignment Options Between Mounds Boulevard and White Bear Avenue

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

ALIGNMENT OPTIONS BETWEEN I-694 AND WOODBURY DRIVE/KEATS AVENUE NORTH

The AA Study included an alignment south of I-94 between I-694 and Woodbury Drive/Keats Avenue N (now called Alignment D1). Based on input from communities in the eastern portion of the corridor, there was a desire to consider an alternate alignment which serves areas north of I-94 and utilizes an existing park-and-ride facility at Guardian Angels Church. This alignment, called Alignment D2, generally follows 4th Street N north of I-94, and continues onto Hudson Boulevard. The alignment would either continue to Manning Avenue or potentially cross to the south side of I-94 on an aerial structure at a location to be determined. Through Scoping, WCRRA, serving on behalf of the GCC, is looking for public input on the alignment(s) to advance for further evaluation in the Draft EIS.

An open house meeting was held on February 6, 2014, to discuss possible station locations and routes for the corridor in Oakdale, Lake Elmo, and Woodbury, including the D1/D2 alignments. Meeting participants shared input about alignment and station location preferences. This feedback, along with comments received during Scoping, will help shape which alignments and station locations are evaluated in the Draft EIS. Meeting materials and a more detailed summary of comments received at the meeting are available on the Gateway Corridor website.

Alignment Options Between I-694 and Woodbury Drive/Keats Avenue N

What alternatives are being considered in Scoping, and where should I focus my comments?

The alternatives currently under consideration include several alignments that could be implemented as either BRT or LRT. We want to know – do you prefer BRT or LRT? Which alignments make the most sense for your community? **Please reflect on the following when considering your comments:**

NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The No-Build alternative serves as the NEPA baseline, which means the environmental effects of the Build alternatives will be measured against this alternative. "No-Build" is defined as the 2030 transportation network with only those improvements already planned and programmed. The No-Build alternative does not include the Gateway Corridor project.

LRT VS. BRT

Both the BRT and LRT alternatives would include several stations between Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul and Manning Avenue in Woodbury, for a length of approximately 12 miles. Both would generally travel parallel to I-94 to the west of I-694 and adjacent to Hudson Road to the east. LRT would generally travel in a double-track, exclusive right-of-way (guideway) and would include tracks, stations, and support facilities, as well as transit service for LRT and connecting bus routes.

BRT would generally include an exclusive, two-way busway in dedicated guideway for the majority of the corridor. It would include all facilities associated with the construction and operation of BRT, including right-of-way, travel lanes, stations, and support facilities, as well as transit service for BRT and connecting bus routes.

Alignments A, B, and C: Downtown Saint Paul to I-694

SPECIFIC ALIGNMENTS

The following alignments, for both BRT and LRT, are proposed for evaluation in the Draft EIS. In the western half of the corridor, Alignments A, B, and C are between Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul and the I-694 interchange with I-94. For these alignments, we are interested in the comparison between BRT and LRT, and the performance of each compared to the No-Build alternative.

In the eastern part of the corridor, Alignments D1 (south of I-94) and D2 (north of I-94) combine with a variety of potential E alignments between I-694 and a point east of Woodbury Drive/Keats Avenue. In addition to comparing BRT and LRT, we will also be comparing the D1 and D2 alignments, and comparing the various E alignments to determine an overall alignment that best fits the needs of the project. Depending on the E alignment, transit service may also need to cross I-94 from north to south. The alignment could extend to Manning Avenue, or stop at a point further west. The performance of these alternatives would again be compared against the No-Build.

Points to consider in your comments relating to

ALIGNMENTS A, B, AND C:

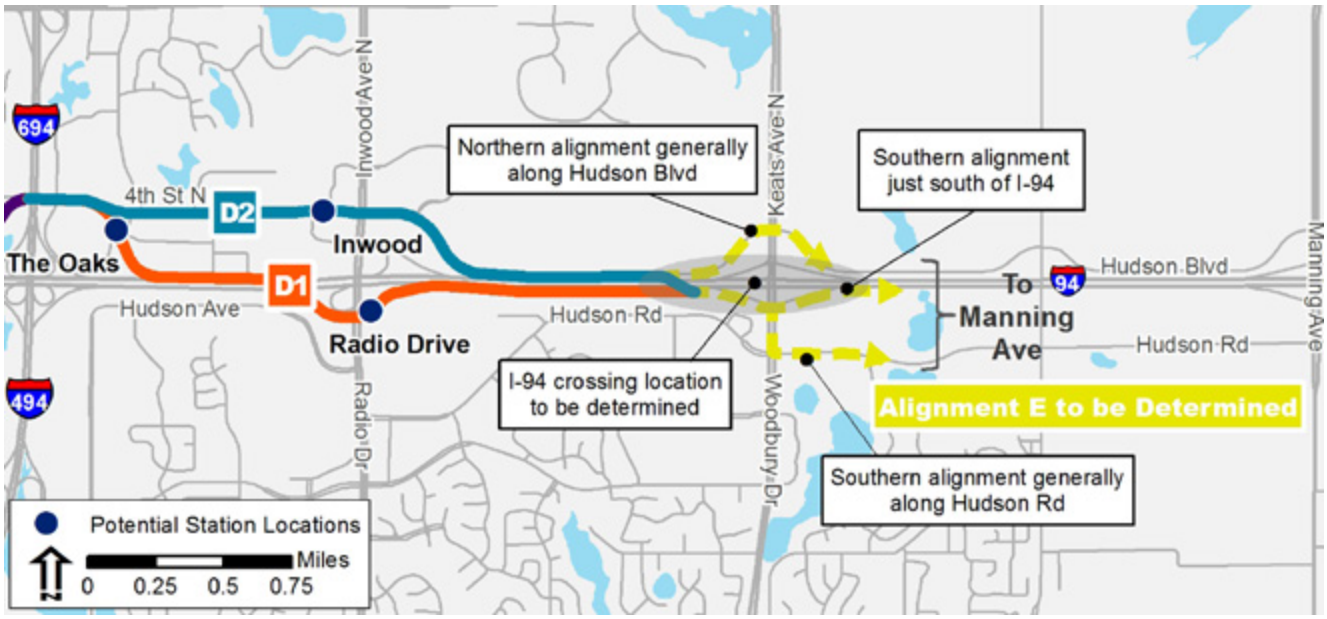
- **Do you prefer BRT or LRT?**
- **Do you have an opinion on station locations?**
- **Do you have particular concerns in these areas that should be studied in the Draft EIS?**

Points to consider in your comments relating to

ALIGNMENTS D AND E:

- **Which alignment(s) do you prefer?**
- **If the alignment needs to cross I-94, which destinations or activity centers should it access on the south side of I-94?**
- **Do you have an opinion on station locations?**
- **Do you have particular concerns in these areas that should be studied in the Draft EIS?**
- **Do you have an opinion on the eastern terminating point for the Gateway Corridor?**

Alignments D and E: I-694 to Woodbury/Lake Elmo



How will the alternatives be evaluated?

The goals and objectives below spell out the desired benefits of the proposed Gateway Corridor project and establish a foundation for the definition of evaluation measures. Specific measures include quantitative and qualitative criteria to be used in comparing the performance of the alternatives. Examples of these measures include population and employment within ½ mile of stations, number of new transit trips, cost of the project, acres of wetland impact, and number of intersection closures, among many others.

The goals below have been developed to serve as a framework to evaluate the alternatives under consideration for the Gateway Corridor. Goals 1 and 2 (Tier 1 goals) identify the minimum requirements that an alternative would be expected to meet to advance for further evaluation. Goals 3-5 (Tier 2 goals) reflect broader community goals and may be helpful in comparing alternatives that meet the all the Tier 1 goals. These goals, along with the identified project needs and specific evaluation measures, provide the basis for the analysis of alternatives discussed in the Draft EIS.

Goals and Objectives

Goals	Objectives	
Tier 1 Goals – Directly Addressing Primary Project Needs		
Goal 1: Improve Mobility	1	Maximize number of people served (future)
	2	Maximize transit ridership
	3	Maximize travel time savings
	4	Minimize traffic mobility impacts
Goal 2: Provide a Cost-Effective, Economically Viable Transit Option	5	Minimize costs and maximize cost-effectiveness
Tier 2 Goals – Reflecting Broader Community Goals		
Goal 3: Support Economic Development	6	Maximize number of people served (existing)
	7	Maximize future development opportunities
Goal 4: Protect the Natural Environmental Features of the Corridor	8	Minimize potential environmental impacts
Goal 5: Preserve and Protect Individual and Community Quality of Life	9	Maximize potential benefits to and minimize potential impacts on the community
	10	Minimize adverse parking, circulation, and safety impacts

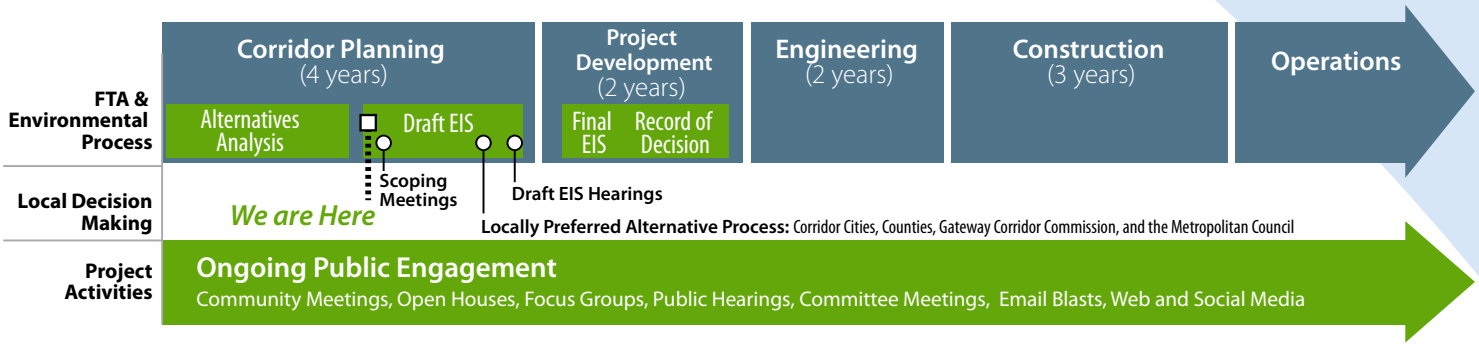
What is a Locally Preferred Alternative?

A locally preferred alternative (LPA) is a defined mode, route, and end points that will move through the project development process. The identification of an LPA allows the project to seek entry into initial phases of the federal transitway development process. Based on input and technical analysis completed during the Scoping process, and actions taken at the city and county level, an LPA recommendation will be made to the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council will then consider amending the region's long-range transportation plan, called the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP), to identify the Gateway Corridor LPA.

The selection of an LPA is entirely a local decision-making process, which informs future federal funding and project development, and is separate from the federal EIS process. The LPA selection process does not replace or override the requirement to fully examine alternatives and determine the adverse impacts that must be avoided or mitigated under the federal and state environmental review process. While the LPA may be identified in the Draft EIS, it does not mean the LPA will be the only "Build alternative" studied in the Draft EIS.

During the project development phase, each of the corridor cities along with Ramsey and Washington Counties will act on approving the physical design component of the preliminary design plans for the selected LPA.

Project Development Process



What types of issues will be addressed in the EIS?

The Draft EIS will evaluate existing conditions and the potential impacts of the No-Build and Build alternatives on the natural, social, and physical environments. Environmental effects to be analyzed in the Draft EIS will include:

- **Neighborhood and community resources:** Effects on neighborhoods, social groups, community facilities, and community cohesion in the project area
- **Environmental justice:** Effects of the proposed alternatives on minority and low-income populations and communities
- **Noise and vibration:** Effects of noise and vibration on sensitive properties
- **Historic and cultural resources (Section 106 process):** Effects on historic and cultural resources including historic districts, buildings, structures, and other objects included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places
- **Parks and public land (Section 4(f) and 6(f)):** Effects on publicly owned parks and recreation lands within the project area
- **Water resources, wetlands, and habitat:** Effects on water resources, including surface water resources, water quality, wetlands, floodplains, critical areas, and groundwater; it also considers effects on ecosystems and protected plant and animal species.
- **Air quality and climate change:** Effects on climate change and regional air quality
- **Right-of-way impacts:** Effects on and quantity of right-of-way needed for project purposes
- **Transportation:** Effects on transit, roads and highways, railroads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Other potential impacts to be addressed in the Draft EIS include:

- **Land use and zoning**
- **Consistency with local plans**
- **Economic development and redevelopment**
- **Visual and aesthetics**
- **Safety and security**
- **Hazardous material/contamination**
- **Soils and geologic resources**
- **Utilities**
- **Energy**
- **Secondary and cumulative effects**

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

Goal: Protect the natural environmental features of the corridor

Goal: Preserve and protect individual and community quality of life

How can I voice my opinion in the process?

All individuals interested in the Gateway Corridor are encouraged to participate in the Scoping process. Project planners would especially like your input on:

- Purpose and need for the project
- The alternatives proposed for study
- Project impacts or benefits that should be evaluated

There are many ways you can voice your opinion, including attending a Scoping meeting and/or submitting written comments. For your convenience, a public comment sheet is included in this booklet.

The comment form can also be found under the Transit Study tab at www.thegatewaycorridor.com

Please join us at a formal public Scoping Open House:

SCOPING OPEN HOUSE #1

March 24, 2014 from 4:30-6:30 pm at Guardian Angels Church, 8260 4th Street N, Oakdale, MN 55128

SCOPING OPEN HOUSE #2

March 25, 2014 from 4:30-6:30 pm at Conway Recreation Center, 2090 Conway Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55119

The Gateway Corridor PAC will also accept comments during their April 10, 2014, meeting at 2:00 pm at Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125.

A court reporter will be present at all three meeting to transcribe verbal comments.

The Scoping period closes on April 16, 2014. All comments must be received by that date.

Government agencies with an interest in the project will be invited to a separate interagency Scoping meeting to be held on:

Thursday, March 20, 2014, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

All Scoping meetings will be accessible to persons with disabilities. If special translation, signing services, or other accommodations are needed, please contact Andy Gitzlaff at the address below at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Project information outlining the project purpose and need and alternatives proposed for analysis will be available in the form of a Scoping information packet at the meetings and on the project website: **www.thegatewaycorridor.com**. Paper copies of the information may also be obtained from Andy Gitzlaff at the address provided below.

YOU CAN SUBMIT COMMENTS ONLINE, IN WRITING, BY U.S. MAIL, FAX, OR EMAIL, TO:

Andy Gitzlaff, Project Manager
Washington County Public Works Department
11660 Myeron Road North, Stillwater, MN 55082

Phone: (651) 430-4300
Fax : (651) 430-4350
Email: gatewaycorridor@co.washington.mn.us
Online: www.thegatewaycorridor.com

How will my comments be used? Will they make a difference?

Your comments will make a difference! Comments received during the Scoping period will be used to finalize the Gateway Corridor purpose and need, refine the proposed alternatives, and identify environmental topic areas to be analyzed in the Draft EIS. Following the Scoping period, you can find out how all comments were addressed by reviewing the Scoping Decision Document, which is a summary of the Scoping process, comments received, and responses to comments. This document will be made available to the public and interested agencies. Please refer to the figure on page 20 for further information regarding the Scoping Decision Document.

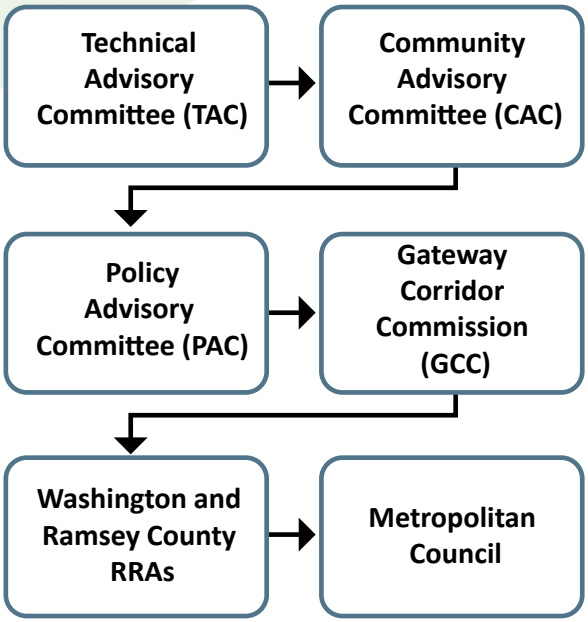
Who is involved in the process?

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The TAC is composed of technical staff (engineers and planners) from corridor communities within the study area as well as affected agencies. Key responsibilities of the TAC include providing technical input, reviewing study findings, and providing recommendations to the PAC.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The CAC will advise project development of the Gateway Corridor project by representing the diversity of residential and business interests in the corridor. The CAC will provide input on the methods of public engagement; identify issues or concerns to be addressed in the Draft EIS and concept design; provide information on potential social, economic, and community impacts and appropriate mitigation measures; advise on the development and topics for Focused Interest Groups (described below); and provide input on key project decisions for consideration by the PAC and the GCC. CAC members provide a conduit for integrating the values and perspectives of citizens, communities, businesses, and institutions into the study process.



Study Process

March 3, 2014 SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD BEGINS

Comment on the purpose and need for the project, the proposed transit alternatives, and the potential environmental benefits and impacts of the project. Comments help to define the issues studied in the Draft EIS.

February 12, 2014
Notice of intent to prepare a Draft EIS published in the Federal Register.

[COMMENT PERIOD]

March 3, 2014
EQB Monitor notice published & local media press release sent

March 3, 2014 SCOPING BOOKLET PUBLISHED
The Scoping Booklet will provide information on the intended scope of the Draft EIS. The Scoping Booklet will help to navigate stakeholders through the Scoping process and will be available at ***www.thegatewaycorridor.com*** and at libraries and city halls in the corridor.

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The PAC represents all Gateway Corridor Communities, key partnering agencies, and business and education interests along the corridor. The PAC reviews all TAC recommendations and input from the CAC and the public. This information helps guide the PAC in the decision-making process as progress is made toward identifying a locally preferred alternative.

GATEWAY CORRIDOR COMMISSION (GCC)

The GCC is a body formed by a joint powers agreement and is composed of the communities along the Gateway Corridor (Afton, Lake Elmo, Lakeland, Landfall, Maplewood, Oakdale, Saint Paul, West Lakeland, and Woodbury), Washington and Ramsey Counties, and ex-officio members representing other communities and businesses along the corridor. The GCC receives the recommendations of the PAC. The GCC's decisions and recommendations are then forwarded to WCRRA and the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA).

Washington and Ramsey County RRAs, as well as local municipalities, will formally act on the LPA selection process by making a recommendation to the Metropolitan Council for final approval.

What happens next? Can I still be involved?

The Scoping process is the first step of environmental review. There will be additional opportunities for involvement following the Scoping period, such as community meetings throughout the project and project materials available on the project website. In addition, interested parties may also participate in Focused Issue Groups (FIGs). FIGs are intended to provide short-term input on topics that are critical to project development but may be more limited in terms of geographical or topical interest, such as an East Saint Paul environmental justice FIG to focus on concerns of low-income and minority households in the area. Information on potential FIGs will be posted on the project website.

The study process is shown in the figure below. Once the Draft EIS is published (anticipated early 2015), another formal public comment period will collect input on the findings of the Draft EIS and recommended LPA.

March 3, 2014 - April 16, 2014

- Attend a public open house
  - Monday, March 24th Guardian Angels Church
  - Tuesday, March 25th Conway Recreation Center
- Attend PAC Meeting
  - Thursday, April 10 Woodbury City Hall
- Send an email
- Send a letter

Early 2015 DRAFT EIS PUBLISHED

April 16, 2014
SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD ENDS

Summer 2014 SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT PUBLISHED
This report will describe the transit alternatives and environmental issues that will be studied in the Draft EIS. Comments received during Scoping will be responded to in this report, which will be available at ***www.thegatewaycorridor.com*** and at libraries and city halls in the corridor.

Early 2015 DRAFT EIS COMMENT PERIOD BEGINS
Comment on the contents of the Draft EIS

- Attend a public hearing
- Send an email
- Send a letter

Gateway Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Please help us determine the alternatives and issues to be studied in the Gateway Corridor Draft EIS by providing comments on the areas outlined below.

The Scoping comment period closes on April 16, 2014.

All comments must be received by that date.

Mail your comment using the address on the reverse side or email your comment to: gatewaycorridor@co.washington.mn.us
Visit the project website: www.thegatewaycorridor.com

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Comment Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____ ☐ ***Add me to the Gateway Corridor email list***

Comments on the five factors that contribute to the need for the Gateway Corridor project (Pages 7-8 of the Scoping Booklet):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comments on transit alternatives proposed for study in the Draft EIS, such as BRT vs. LRT, routes, station locations (Pages 13-14 of the Scoping Booklet):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are there particular impacts or benefits from the Gateway Corridor project that you think need to be studied in the Draft EIS? (Page 17 of the Scoping Booklet):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you have any other comments on the Gateway Corridor?

_____

_____

_____

_____

GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Affix
Stamp
Here

Andy Gitzlaff, Project Manager
Washington County Public Works Department
11660 Myeron Road North
Stillwater, MN 55082