

EDEN PRAIRIE | MINNETONKA | HOPKINS | ST. LOUIS PARK | MINNEAPOLIS



## SOUTHWEST LRT (METRO GREEN LINE EXTENSION)

# Guide to the Supplemental Draft EIS

The Southwest Light Rail Transit Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a supplement to the Southwest Transitway Draft EIS. This guide is intended to help locate information and submit comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS.

In response to public comments received on the Southwest Transitway Draft EIS, the Metropolitan Council made changes to the proposed design of the Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) Project. The Supplemental Draft EIS analyzes the potential adverse impacts of those changes.

This guide does not attempt to summarize every potential impact discussed in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Instead, it highlights key changes to the Project that could result in new adverse impacts since the publication of the Draft EIS.

The Executive Summary of the Supplemental Draft EIS provides additional information that can help you locate information and understand the potential impacts discussed in the Supplemental Draft EIS.

The public is encouraged to review and comment on the Supplemental Draft EIS during the public comment period, from May 22 to July 6, 2015. The Supplemental Draft EIS and the Draft EIS are available on the Southwest LRT Project website, [www.swlrt.org](http://www.swlrt.org), and the Supplemental Draft EIS is available in printed form at multiple locations in communities along the proposed LRT route during the public comment period. See page 17 for more information on obtaining a copy of the Supplemental Draft EIS and submitting comments.

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The Metropolitan Council will hold public hearings on the Supplemental Draft EIS in June 2015. See page 18 for hearing dates and locations.

If you have questions about the Southwest LRT Project or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), or if you need assistance accessing the Supplemental Draft EIS, please contact the Southwest LRT Community Outreach Coordinator for your area listed on page 19.

**This guide is intended for informational purposes only. Comments may only be made on the Supplemental Draft EIS, not this Guide. In the case of any differences between this guide and the Supplemental Draft EIS, rely upon the Supplemental Draft EIS as the official analysis.**

# ABOUT THE SOUTHWEST LRT PROJECT

The Southwest Light Rail Transit Project (METRO Green Line Extension) is a proposed transit line that would operate from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, passing in close proximity to Edina.

The proposed alignment would include 17 new stations and approximately 16 miles of double track. The line would connect major activity centers in the region including downtown Minneapolis, the Opus/Golden Triangle employment area in Minnetonka and Eden Prairie, Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park, the Eden Prairie Center Mall, and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

Southwest LRT would be an extension of the METRO Green Line (Central Corridor LRT), providing a one-seat ride to destinations such as the University of Minnesota, state Capitol and downtown St. Paul. It would be part of an integrated system of transitways, including connections to the METRO Blue Line, the Northstar Commuter Rail line, major bus routes, and proposed future transitways and rail lines. Local bus routes near the proposed LRT alignment would be reconfigured to connect stations with nearby residential, commercial and educational destinations.

The area where the Southwest LRT line would operate, known as the Southwest Corridor, includes major regional employment centers and growing residential communities. Travel on roadways in this area has increased over the past 25 years.

The Metropolitan Council's regional forecast indicates that population and employment in the Southwest Corridor will continue to grow, causing traffic congestion to increase further.

The proposed Southwest LRT line would add a reliable transit option that connects people with jobs throughout the Southwest Corridor. Light rail service would benefit "reverse commute" workers who live in Minneapolis or St. Paul and travel to work in Southwest Corridor

employment centers like the Golden Triangle in Eden Prairie.

Hennepin County and the cities of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Minneapolis are participating agencies in the Southwest LRT Project.

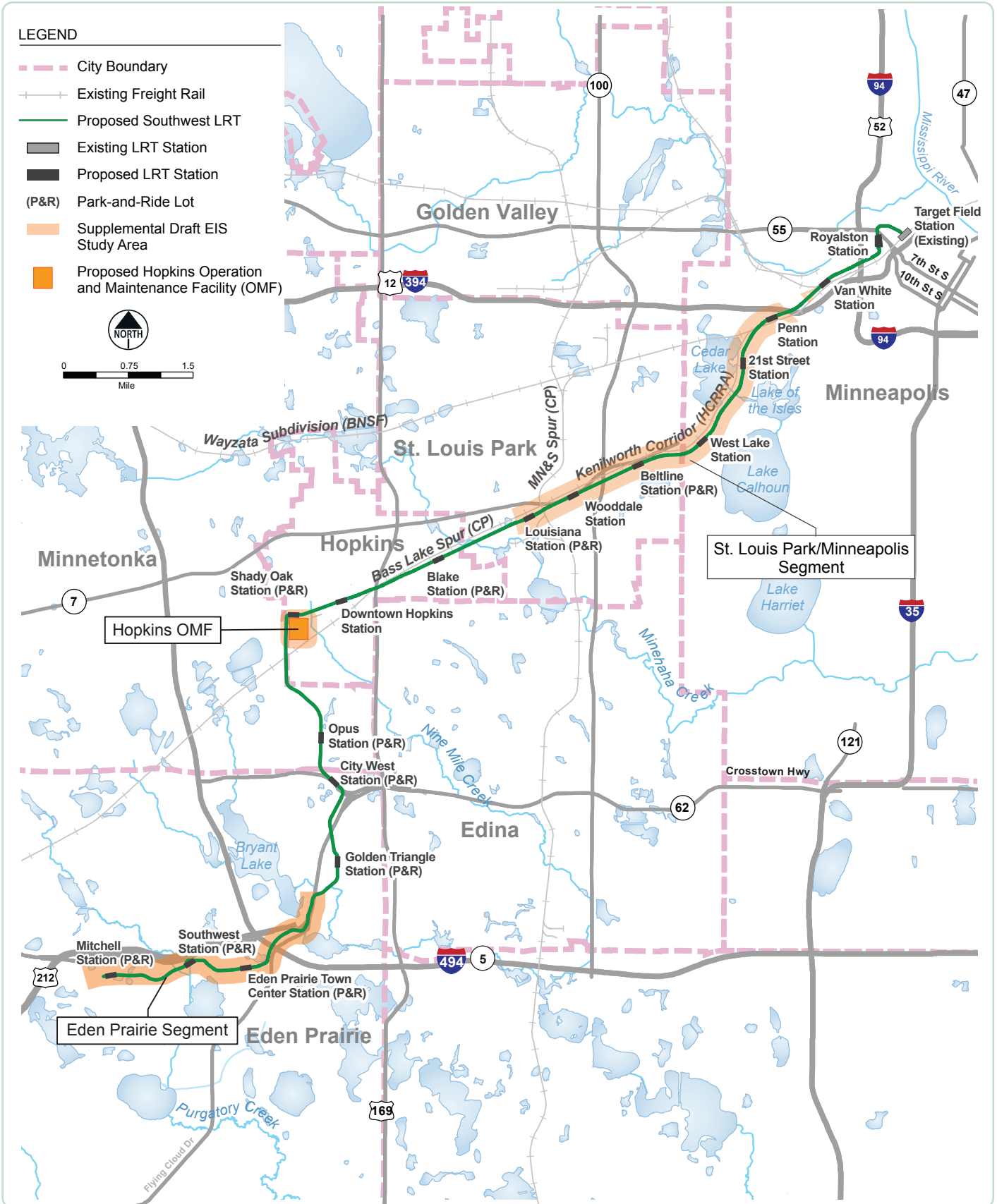
The total cost of designing and building the Southwest LRT Project would be approximately \$1.65 billion dollars.\* Funding would come from several sources.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) would provide half of the required funding, approximately \$827 million. The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) would provide approximately 30 percent of the required funding, or approximately \$496 million. The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) and the State of Minnesota would each provide approximately 10 percent of the total, or \$165 million dollars.

The Metropolitan Council is the local lead agency for the Southwest LRT Project and the grantee of federal funds. The FTA is the federal lead agency. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a cooperating agency for the Supplemental Draft EIS because of its responsibility for implementing federal environmental regulations. HCRRA served as the local lead agency during the development of the Draft EIS and public comment period, which ended in December 2012.

\* On April 27, 2015, the Council released a revised project cost estimate of approximately \$1.994 billion – an approximately \$341 million increase over the year-of-expenditure budget. The additional costs are primarily related to poor ground conditions along the Southwest LRT line, soil contamination in St. Louis Park and Hopkins, project delays due to additional studies, and property acquisitions and relocations. The funding strategy discussed in Chapter 5 of the Supplemental Draft EIS remains under discussion for the additional costs.

# The Southwest LRT Corridor and Supplemental Draft EIS Study Areas



# ABOUT THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS

The Supplemental Draft EIS examines three areas along the proposed Southwest LRT alignment where new adverse environmental impacts could occur due to design adjustments since the publication of the Draft EIS.

A Supplemental Draft EIS is needed because the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Metropolitan Council determined that design adjustments made to the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) after publication of the Draft EIS could result in new adverse environmental impacts that were not identified in the Draft EIS.

## Topics in the Supplemental Draft EIS

**Purpose and need:** Reasons for constructing the Southwest LRT project, including improving access and mobility, providing a cost-effective transit option and extending the region's transitway network.

**Project overview:** The route, stations and operation of the proposed Southwest LRT project.

**Design adjustments following the Draft EIS:** Potential design adjustments considered by the Metropolitan Council in response to comments on the Draft EIS; the process used to evaluate potential design adjustments; description of design adjustments evaluated in the Supplemental Draft EIS.

**Social effects:** Land use changes; property acquisition and displacement of residences and businesses; cultural resources such as historic buildings; effects on parklands, recreation areas and open spaces; visual quality and aesthetics.

**Environmental effects:** Potential impacts on the natural environment including noise and vibration; geology and groundwater; wetlands and floodplains; hazardous and contaminated materials.

**Economic effects:** Local economic impacts based on the cost of building and operating the project; potential commercial and residential development near proposed

stations; potential effects of changes in freight rail operations.

**Transportation effects:** Planned changes in public transit service; impacts on private vehicle traffic, freight rail service, bicycle and pedestrian networks, and parking; safety and security.

**Environmental Justice compliance:** The Environmental Justice analysis looks at the project's potential effects on minority and low-income populations.

**Draft Section 4(f) evaluation:** Documentation of the project's activities under the requirements of Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, a federal law that protects publicly owned parks, recreation areas and wildlife refuges as well as publicly and privately owned historic properties.

**Public and agency coordination:** An overview of coordination between public agencies involved in the project; the project's advisory committees; required permits; public meetings, events and outreach activities since the publication of the Draft EIS.

**Next steps and funding:** Project milestones anticipated after publication of the Supplemental Draft EIS; sources of funding for construction and operation of the Southwest LRT project.

**Appendices:** Several appendices to the Supplemental Draft EIS provide additional information, including:

- Lists of supporting documents and technical reports
- Agency correspondence
- Development and evaluation of design adjustments since publication of the Draft EIS
- Supplemental Draft EIS conceptual engineering drawings
- Noise and vibration memoranda
- Response to comments on Supplemental Draft EIS scope
- Lists of preparers and recipients
- Lists of sources and references
- Public notices
- Draft Section 4(f) Update supporting documentation
- Visual resources technical report

## The Design Adjustment Process

The process of developing the design adjustments that are analyzed in the Supplemental Draft EIS began with public comments received on the Southwest Transitway Draft EIS in 2012.

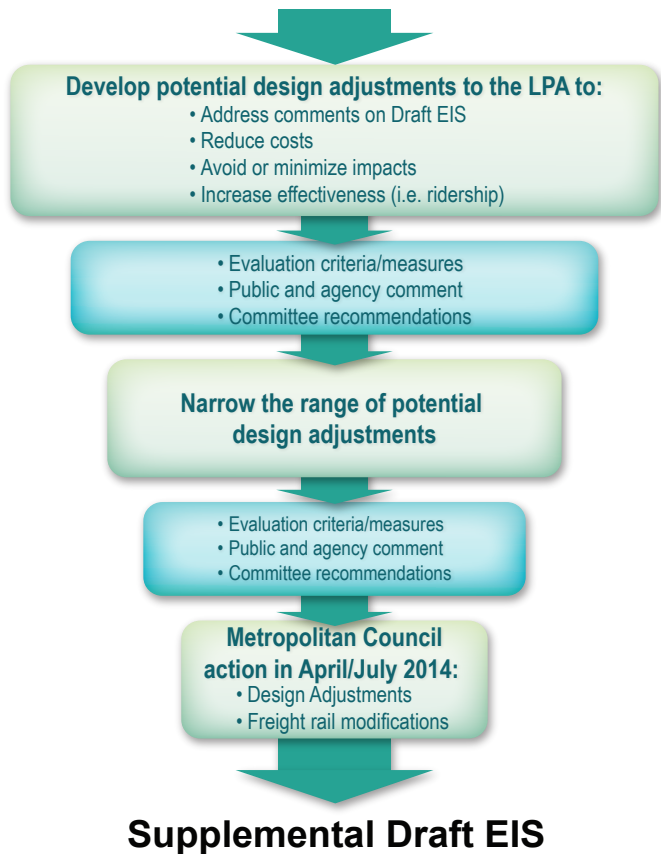
The Southwest Transitway Draft EIS evaluated several options for improving transit service in the Southwest Corridor area and identified light rail along a route designated as "LRT 3A" as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Publication of the Draft EIS was followed by a public comment period including public hearings. Local governments, public agencies, businesses, organizations and individuals submitted comments on the Draft EIS. Copies of all comments received on the Draft EIS are available on the Southwest LRT website.

Project staff worked with local governments and other project partners to develop potential design adjustments that addressed comments on the Draft EIS.

Some of these potential adjustments were incorporated into the proposed project scope and budget adopted by the Council in April and July 2014.

## Comments on Draft EIS



The diagram above shows the steps in the design adjustment process.

More information about the specific processes used to develop design adjustments in each of the Supplemental Draft EIS areas is included in Chapter 2 of the Supplemental Draft EIS.

## POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN EACH STUDY AREA

The following pages summarize potential environmental impacts in the three areas studied in the Supplemental Draft EIS: portions of Eden Prairie; the proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility in Hopkins; and portions of St. Louis Park and Minneapolis.

## EDEN PRAIRIE SEGMENT

The Eden Prairie segment extends from near the intersection of Technology Drive and Mitchell Road to near the intersection of Flying Cloud Drive and Valley View Road.

In this segment, the LRT route was adjusted to run south of the route that was studied in the Draft EIS, and the locations of two stations were changed. The purpose of these adjustments is to provide better connections to local activity centers including the Eden Prairie municipal offices and the Eden Prairie Center Mall. The Supplemental Draft EIS analyzes potential impacts associated with the adjusted route and station locations.

Section 2.3.1 of the Supplemental Draft EIS summarizes the design adjustments that were evaluated in the Eden Prairie segment, and describes how these adjustments were evaluated.

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### LAND USE, ACQUISITIONS AND DISPLACEMENTS

The project is compatible with land use plans adopted by Eden Prairie and with existing land use in the area. Approximately 22.3 acres of land would be converted to public transportation related uses in this segment, including the acquisition of two complete parcels and portions of 33 others. Up to nine businesses may be required to relocate. Property acquisition would reduce the city's annual property tax revenues by approximately \$34,600. Construction may cause temporary changes to property access.

- Section 3.2.1.1, "Land Use"
- Section 3.2.1.2, "Acquisitions and Displacements"

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### WATER RESOURCES

Approximately 4.7 acres of wetlands would be permanently filled in this segment, and 13.4 acres of fill would be placed within a floodplain. The Council would develop a Compensatory Mitigation Plan to address wetlands and floodplain loss. A new light rail crossing over Purgatory Creek is proposed.

- Section 3.2.2.2, "Water Resources"

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### HAZARDOUS AND CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

If permanent pumping of groundwater is necessary, contaminated groundwater could be encountered and enter the pumping system. Six potentially contaminated sites have been identified that could affect the Project during construction. Cleanup of contamination would begin before construction or when construction starts.

- Section 3.2.2.5, "Hazardous and Contaminated Materials"

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### NOISE AND VIBRATION

Two hotels in the Eden Prairie segment will experience noise impacts. No long-term vibration impacts were identified in Eden Prairie. Potential impacts at the Optum facility on Technology Drive will be assessed in the Final EIS.

- Section 3.2.2.3, "Noise"
- Section 3.2.2.4, "Vibration"

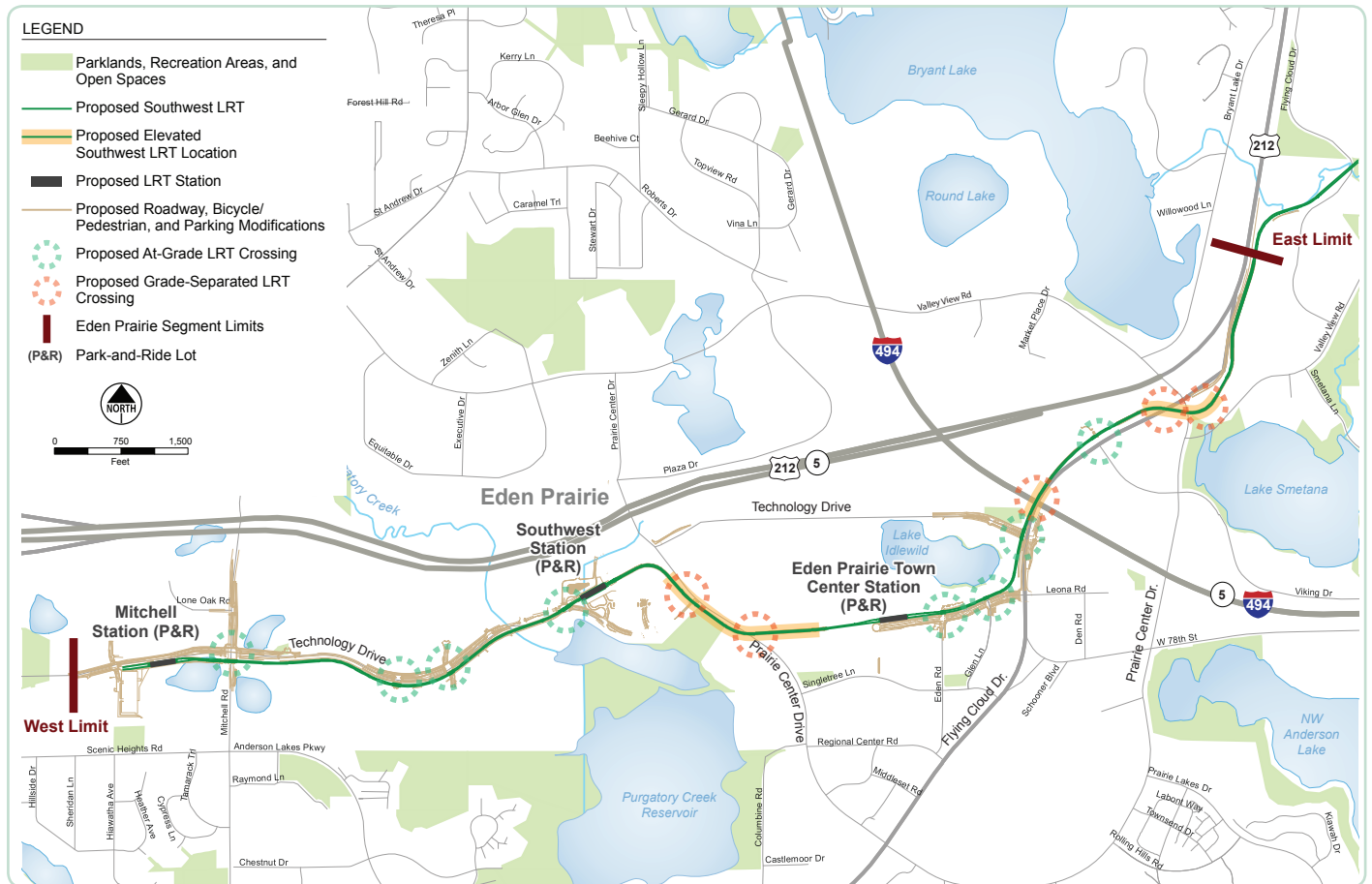
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### GEOLOGY AND GROUNDWATER

Peats and fat clays west of the proposed Eden Prairie Town Center Station, near the proposed Southwest Station, and along the alignment between the Southwest Station and the Mitchell Station would require remediation such as soil replacement and pile foundations.

- Section 3.2.2.1, "Geology and Groundwater"

## Overview of the Eden Prairie Segment



### PARKLANDS, RECREATION AREAS AND OPEN SPACES

Visitors to Purgatory Creek Park, located south of the light rail alignment within walking distance of the proposed Southwest Station, would be able to see light rail trains and structures from within the park. Existing bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular access to the park would be maintained. During construction, access to the park would be temporarily restricted.

- Section 3.2.1.4, "Parklands, Recreation Areas and Open Space"

### TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS

No trails would be removed in the Eden Prairie segment, and there would be no long-term change in trail connectivity. Several trails and sidewalks would be reconstructed. The trail connection to Purgatory Creek Park would be maintained, and a new sidewalk/trail

would be added along Technology Drive connecting West Mitchell Road to Mitchell Station.

- Section 3.2.4.4, "Bicycle and Pedestrian"

### VISUAL QUALITY AND AESTHETICS

The Supplemental Draft EIS analyzes visual impacts at 10 key viewpoints within the Eden Prairie segment using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) system for assessing visual impacts. The Southwest LRT Project would have a "substantial" visual impact at two viewpoints and a "not substantial" impact at eight others.

- Section 3.2.1.5, "Visual Quality and Aesthetics"
- Appendix J, "Visual Resources"

### ROADWAY AND TRAFFIC

Eight new at-grade crossings of light rail tracks would cause traffic delays at roadways or private driveways. During the morning peak traffic period, one intersection

in the segment would not meet Level of Service (LOS) standards without mitigation; during the evening peak traffic period, three intersections would not meet LOS standards without mitigation. Several existing roadways would be modified, and a new roadway would be constructed west from Eden Road to a cul-de-sac.

- Section 3.2.4.2, “Roadway and Traffic Operations”

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## PARKING

Thirty on-street parking spaces would be added along a new street segment, and approximately 250 private

off-street parking spaces that serve businesses would be displaced.

- Section 3.2.4.3, “Parking”

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## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMPLIANCE

The Council completed an Environmental Justice assessment for the Eden Prairie segment. No disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations were found.

- Section 3.2.5, “Environmental Justice Compliance”

# OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The proposed Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) would be located in Hopkins, southwest of the intersection of 5th Street South and 15th Avenue South.

The proposed OMF site (shown on the next page) consists of approximately 15 acres of land that is currently occupied by private businesses. The facility would be used for light maintenance activities, cleaning and storage of light rail vehicles, and would also house offices for administrative staff.

Section 2.3.2 of the Supplemental Draft EIS discusses the range of potential OMF sites that were evaluated and the process used to select the proposed site. The selection process involved four steps:

- In the first step, a preliminary site evaluation narrowed the number of potential sites from 30 (including the four sites evaluated in the Draft EIS) to 18.
- The second step used a detailed assessment to narrow the field from 18 to seven potential sites.
- The third step included an operational analysis, as well as input from the public and local jurisdictions, which were used to narrow the choices from seven to two potential sites.
- Finally, a detailed technical assessment, as well as public and jurisdictional review of the two remaining

sites, concluded with the selection of the proposed Hopkins site.

Approximately 160 jobs for light rail transit staff would be located at the Operations and Maintenance Facility. No freight rail lines, parks or bicycle/pedestrian facilities would be affected in the area.

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## LAND USE, ACQUISITIONS AND DISPLACEMENTS

The Project is compatible with land use plans adopted by Hopkins and with existing land use in the area. Approximately 18.2 acres would be converted to public transportation related use, including the acquisition of eight full parcels and a portion of one parcel. Up to five businesses may be required to relocate. Property acquisition would reduce the city’s annual property tax revenues by approximately \$99,200. Construction may cause temporary changes to property access.

- Section 3.3.1.1, “Land Use”
- Section 3.3.1.2, “Acquisitions and Displacements”

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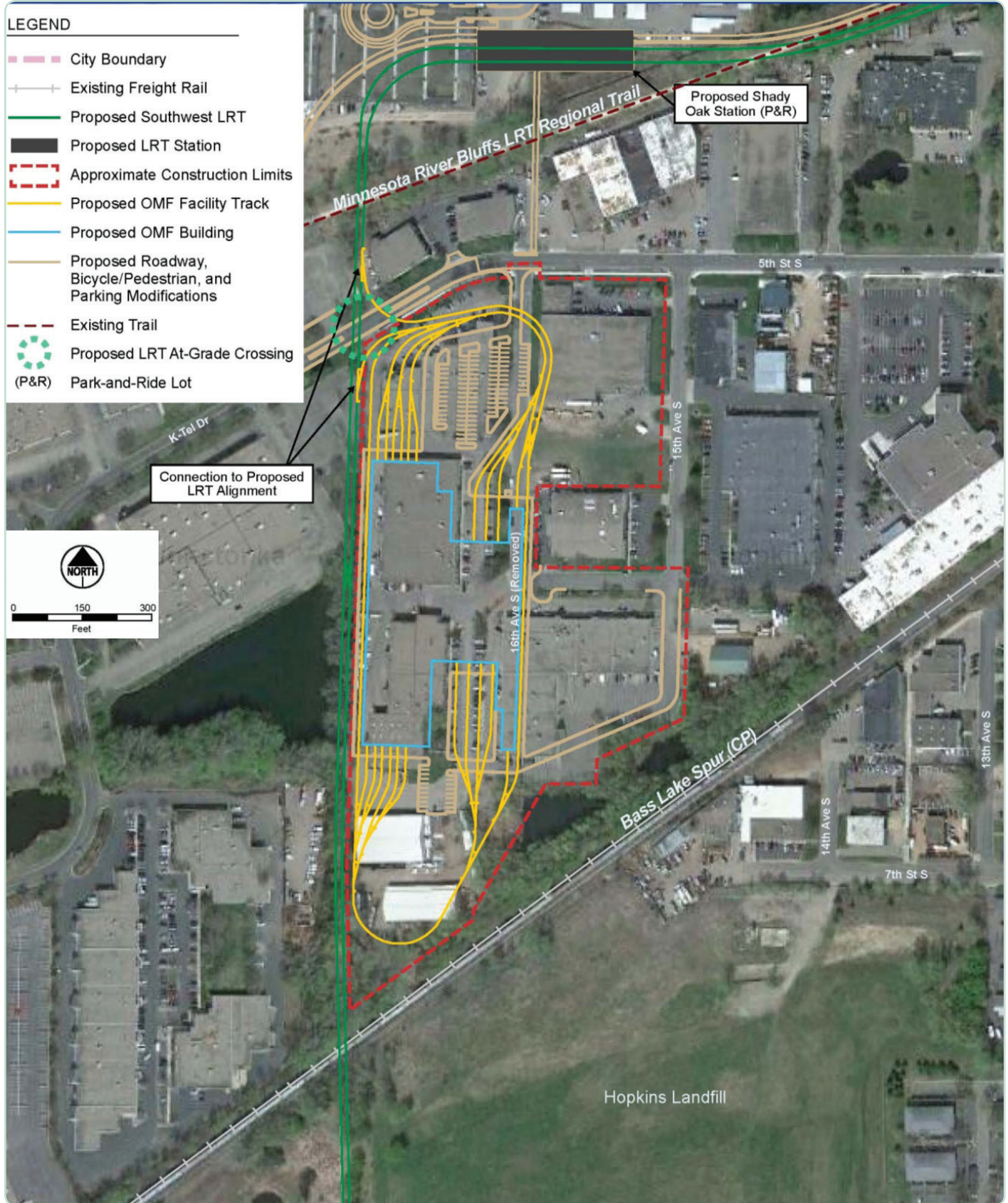
## WATER RESOURCES

Approximately 0.7 acres of wetlands would be permanently filled, and 0.6 acres of fill would be placed within a floodplain. The Council would develop a Compensatory Mitigation Plan to address wetlands and floodplain loss.

- Section 3.3.2.2, “Water Resources”



## Proposed Layout of the Operations and Maintenance Facility



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## HAZARDOUS AND CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

Four sites of concern have been identified: two within the OMF site and two adjacent to the site. The Project will investigate further to determine whether remediation is necessary. Cleanup of contamination would begin before construction or when construction starts.

- Section 3.3.2.3, “Hazardous and Contaminated Materials”
- Section 3.3.2.1, “Geology and Groundwater”



*Technicians service the electrical components on the roof of a light rail vehicle at the METRO Blue Line operations and maintenance facility.*

## ST. LOUIS PARK AND MINNEAPOLIS SEGMENT

The St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segment is a portion of the proposed LRT route that is generally between Louisiana Avenue in St. Louis Park and Penn Avenue in Minneapolis.

The proposed design adjustments continue freight rail operations through the St. Louis Park/Minneapolis segment. Light rail trains would run in a tunnel through a portion of this segment to allow enough space for freight rail and trails to remain on the surface.

The Supplemental Draft EIS analyzes three major design adjustments in this segment: keeping existing freight rail service in the Kenilworth Corridor; constructing a light rail tunnel south of the Kenilworth Channel in Minneapolis; and changing the location and capacity of proposed park-and-ride lots.

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## ROADWAY AND TRAFFIC

Sixteenth Avenue South between 5th and 6th Streets would be removed to accommodate the OMF. One new at-grade light rail road crossing would be added; this track would be used by light rail vehicles that are not in service and not carrying passengers.

- Section 3.3.4.1, “Roadway and Traffic”

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## PARKING

A total of 43 on-street parking spaces would be removed in the OMF area. The potential full acquisition of four properties would displace 310 off-street parking spaces. During construction, parking on 15th Avenue would be temporarily displaced.

- Section 3.3.4.2, “Parking”

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## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMPLIANCE

The Council completed an Environmental Justice assessment for the proposed OMF. No disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations were found.

- Section 3.3.5, “Environmental Justice Compliance”

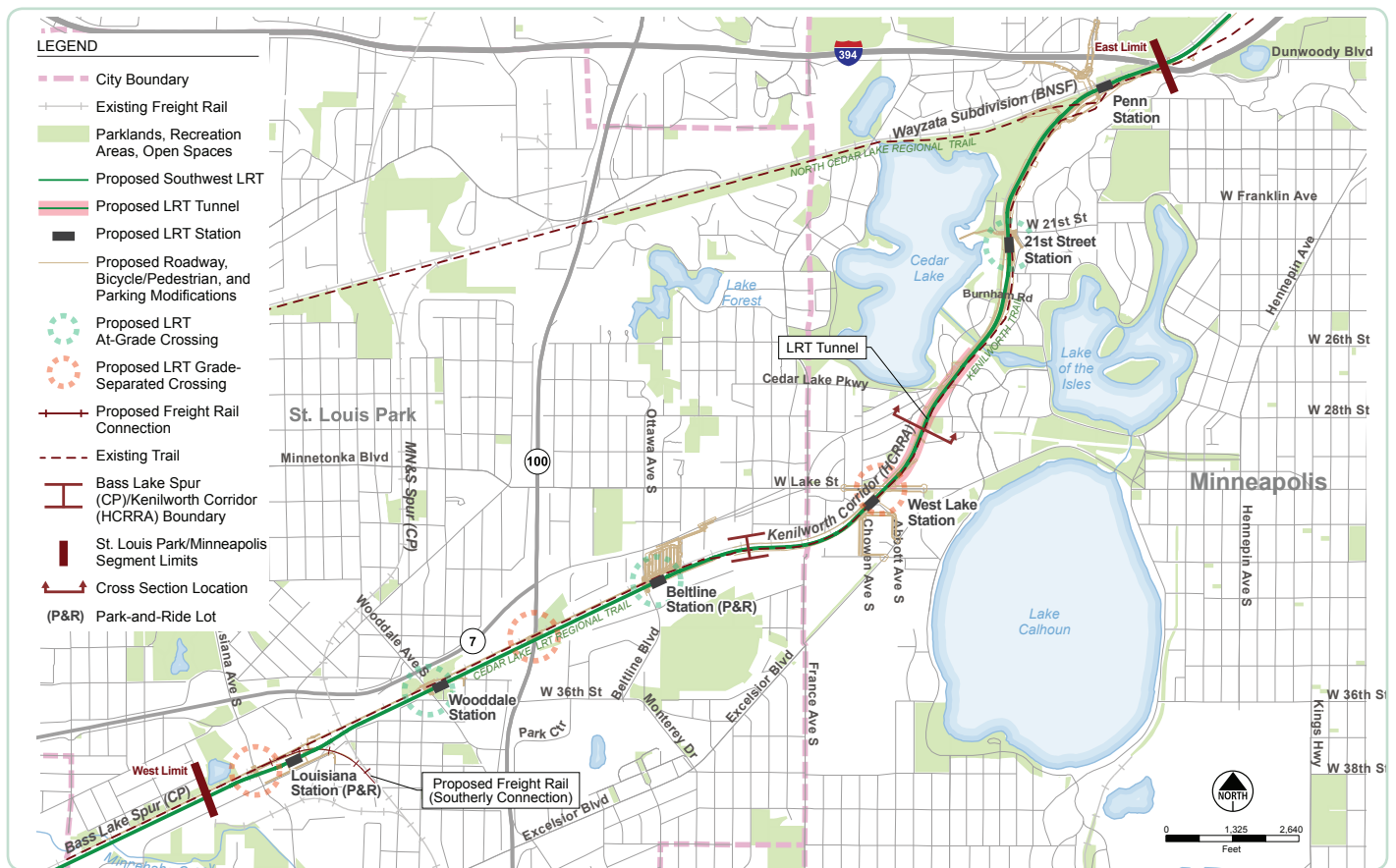
Section 2.3.3 of the Supplemental Draft EIS summarizes the design adjustments that were evaluated in this segment, and describes how these adjustments were evaluated.

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## FREIGHT RAIL AND KENILWORTH LIGHT RAIL TUNNEL

The process of developing design adjustments for the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment focused on the question of whether the project should include:

- the relocation of freight trains currently operating along the Bass Lake Spur freight tracks and in the Kenilworth Corridor to other freight tracks, or
- the continued operation of freight trains along the Bass Lake Spur and Kenilworth Corridor.



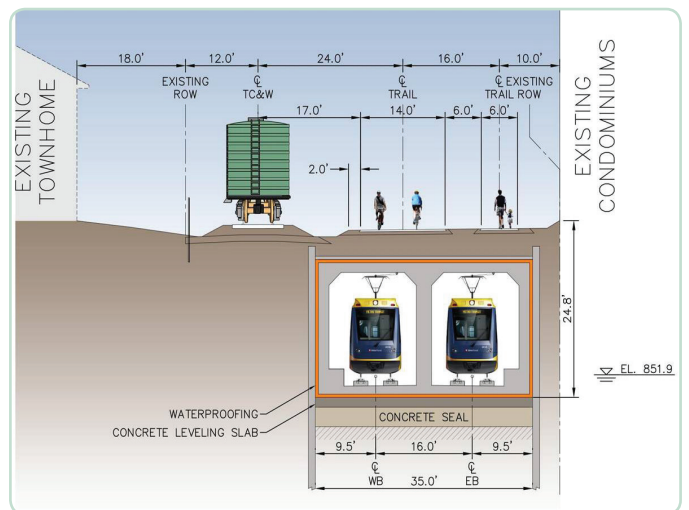
### The St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segment

Above: The St. Louis Park/Minneapolis segment evaluated in the Supplemental Draft EIS.

Right: Cross-sectional view of the proposed Kenilworth Corridor light rail tunnel, near the southern end of the tunnel.

Both relocation and co-location options for freight rail were revised during the design adjustment process to address comments on the Draft EIS.

Comments on the Draft EIS indicated that the design for freight rail relocation presented in the Draft EIS needed to be revised in order to meet the operational and safety requirements of freight rail operators. Project staff found that the necessary revisions would produce additional adverse impacts not included in the Draft EIS, such as: acquiring additional land, including residential properties; affecting the Park Spanish Immersion School in St. Louis Park; displacing more wetlands; and constructing tall berms and other freight rail structures near St. Louis Park High School and residences.



The design for co-location of freight rail and light rail was also revised to avoid or minimize the adverse effects identified in the original design. The largest change was the addition of a light rail tunnel south of the Kenilworth Channel. The design adjustment does not displace any residents or businesses in the Kenilworth Corridor area and preserves wetlands that would be displaced by freight rail relocation.

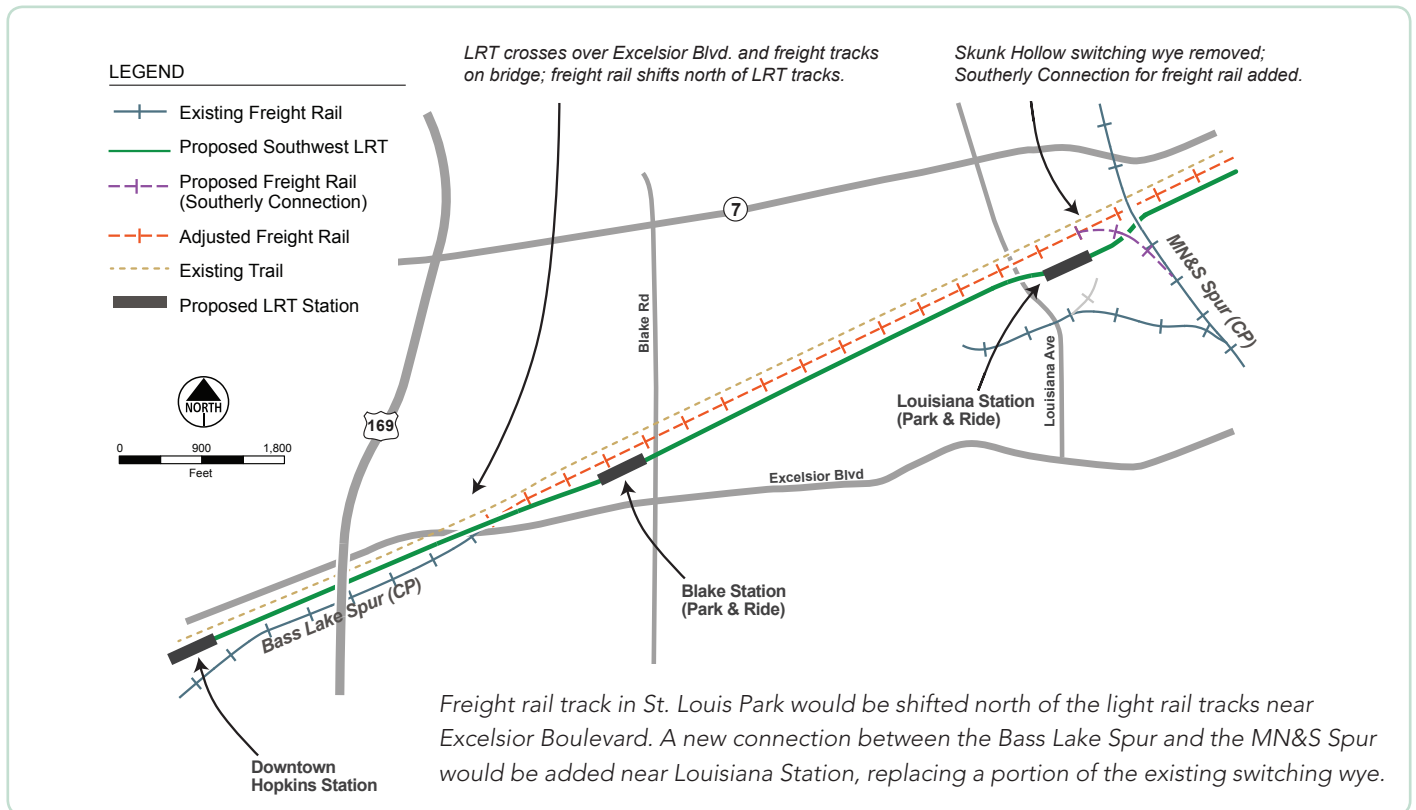
During the design adjustment process, which began after the publication of the Draft EIS, Project staff developed and evaluated several alternatives for both freight rail relocation and co-location. The Metropolitan Council also hired independent consultants to conduct an engineering analysis of the various freight rail relocation options and to evaluate the potential impacts of a light rail tunnel on water resources (groundwater and lakes) in the Kenilworth Corridor area.

The proposed LRT tunnel would allow light rail, freight rail and pedestrian/bicycle trails to pass through a section of the proposed alignment that is not wide enough to accommodate all of them side by side. The LRT tunnel would be located approximately between West Lake Street and the south side of the channel that connects Cedar Lake to Lake of the Isles (the Kenilworth Channel). The Project proposes to construct this tunnel by "cut-and-cover" – digging a trench, building the tunnel within it, and then covering the trench. The area above the tunnel would be landscaped and replanted with appropriate vegetation. Light rail trains would cross the Kenilworth Channel on a bridge and operate at ground level north of the Channel.

The design adjustments studied in the Supplemental Draft EIS include several modifications to the existing freight rail alignment in order to accommodate light rail in the Kenilworth Corridor:

- The freight rail tracks would be shifted north approximately 45 feet from near Excelsior Boulevard to near Beltline Boulevard. This would put the freight rail tracks north of the new light rail line.
- Where the MN&S Spur freight rail tracks cross over the Bass Lake Spur freight rail tracks, a portion of the Skunk Hollow switching wye would be removed (a wye is a set of freight rail tracks that resembles a letter "Y" lying on its side, used to switch freight trains between different tracks). The switching wye would be replaced with a new "Southerly Connection" between the two freight lines.
- The freight rail tracks between Beltline Boulevard and Cedar Lake Parkway would be reconstructed, with relatively minor adjustments.
- The freight rail tracks between Cedar Lake Parkway and the Burnham Road overpass would be shifted approximately 40 feet north.

### Realigned freight rail tracks and Southerly Connection



## The Kenilworth Channel and Lagoon



The Kenilworth Channel and Lagoon connect Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles. A pair of existing freight and trail bridges, shown above, would be replaced by new bridges carrying light rail, freight rail and trails.

Impacts around the Kenilworth Channel are evaluated in the Supplemental Draft EIS under several headings, including:

**Cultural Resources:** The Kenilworth Channel is located within the Grand Rounds Historic District, and is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. (Section 3.4.1.3)

### Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation

**Act:** A federal law that protects publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and historic sites. This evaluation is presented separately in Section 3.5 of the Supplemental Draft EIS.

**Visual and Aesthetic Impacts:** The Supplemental Draft EIS evaluates impacts on viewpoints around the Kenilworth Lagoon and Channel.

The Supplemental Draft EIS identifies several impacts around the Kenilworth Channel, including: replacement of the existing bridges; partial removal and alteration of the retaining walls, constructed by the Works Projects Administration, along the Channel; and removal of vegetation and portions of the Channel banks. Mitigation of these impacts would be included in an agreement as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The Council found that, compared to the other alternatives considered, keeping freight rail in the Kenilworth Corridor and constructing a tunnel for light rail south of the Kenilworth Channel provided the best balance of costs, benefits and environmental impacts. The Council adopted this design alternative as part of the project's scope and budget in April and July 2014.

- Section 2.3.3.2, "Design Adjustments Considered in the St. Louis Park/Minneapolis Segment"
- Section 3.4.3, "Economic Effects"
- Section 3.4.4.4, "Freight Rail"

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Southwest LRT alignment passes through several historic districts in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment.

Section 3.4.1.3 of the Supplemental Draft EIS describes the historic districts and properties located near the proposed LRT alignment.

The Kenilworth Channel and Kenilworth Lagoon connect Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles, and are within the Grand Rounds Historic District. The Channel is currently crossed by a pair of timber bridges carrying freight rail tracks and a bicycle/pedestrian trail. These bridges would be replaced by new bridges carrying light rail in addition to freight rail and the trail.

A preliminary determination of an adverse effect was made for two resources, the Grand Rounds Historic District and the Kenilworth Lagoon.

- Section 3.4.1.3, "Cultural Resources"
- Section 3.5, "Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation Update"

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## PARKLANDS, RECREATION AREAS AND OPEN SPACES

Parks, recreation areas and open spaces in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment include the Kenilworth Channel/Lagoon, Lake of the Isles Park, Cedar Lake Park, Bryn Mawr Meadows and several smaller parks. Multiple trails are located in the vicinity of the proposed LRT alignment.

As a result of design changes proposed since the publication of the Draft EIS, no existing parkland, recreation area or open space property would be permanently acquired.

- Section 3.4.1.4, "Parklands, Recreation Areas and Open Spaces"
- Section 3.5, "Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation Update"

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## WATER RESOURCES

The proposed Kenilworth LRT tunnel would be a shallow tunnel; however, it would extend into the groundwater table between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles. The tunnel would be designed as a closed, waterproof system to prevent groundwater from entering the tunnel.



*A technician inserts a ground water level indicator at one of several monitoring stations in the Kenilworth area.*

Some seepage of groundwater into the tunnel could occur over time. Any water that enters the tunnel would be treated, if necessary, and pumped to the adjacent sanitary sewer system. The tunnel is not expected to have any effect on lake levels.

Approximately one-half acre of wetlands would be permanently filled, and some temporary filling of wetlands would occur during construction. The Council would develop a Compensatory Mitigation Plan to address wetland loss.

Existing railroad and trail bridges crossing the Kenilworth Lagoon would be replaced with new light rail, freight rail and trail bridges.

- Section 3.4.2.2, "Water Resources"

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## HAZARDOUS AND CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

The Kenilworth LRT tunnel would be constructed to resist water infiltration. However, if contaminated groundwater does seep into the tunnel, it would have to be treated and removed. Six potentially contaminated sites have been identified that could affect the Project during construction. Cleanup of contamination would begin before construction or when construction starts.

Project staff will prepare a Groundwater Management Plan before beginning construction. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District will review and approve the plan.

- Section 3.4.2.1, "Geology and Groundwater"
- Section 3.4.2.5, "Hazardous and Contaminated Materials"

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## LAND USE, ACQUISITIONS AND DISPLACEMENTS

The Project is compatible with land use plans adopted by both cities and with existing land use in the area. Approximately 33.6 acres would be converted to public transportation related use in this segment, including the acquisition of 23 full parcels and portions of 29 others. This total includes full parcels and portions of parcels. Up to eight businesses may be required to relocate. Private property acquisition would reduce St. Louis Park annual property tax revenues by approximately \$36,000.

Construction may cause temporary changes to property access.

- Section 3.4.1.1, “Land Use”
- Section 3.4.1.2, “Acquisitions and Displacements”
- Section 3.4.3, “Economic Effects”

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## TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS

No trails would be removed in the St. Louis Park/Minneapolis segment, and there would be no long-term change in trail connectivity. There would be no long-term effects on the Cedar Lake Trail or the Kenilworth Trail within the segment. Changes in trail alignments would be made where the trails cross light rail tracks. During construction, temporary trail detours would be required. Plans for the Southwest LRT project include a variety of safety and access improvement for bicycles and pedestrians around the West Lake, 21st Street and Penn LRT stations.

- Section 3.4.1.4, “Parklands, Recreation Areas and Open Spaces”
- Section 3.4.4.5, “Bicycle and Pedestrian”

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## VISUAL QUALITY AND AESTHETICS

The Supplemental Draft EIS analyzes visual impacts at six key viewpoints within the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) process for assessing visual impacts. The Southwest LRT Project would have a “substantial” overall level of impact on three viewpoints and a “not substantial” level of impact at three viewpoints.

Mitigation measures for substantial adverse impacts resulting from the light rail elements will be identified during advanced engineering and could include measures such as landscaping, visual treatments and continuity with the elevated light rail structure design, lighting, and signage.

- Section 3.4.1.5, “Visual Quality and Aesthetics”
- Appendix J, “Visual Resources”

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## NOISE AND VIBRATION

Some businesses and residences will experience noise impacts. The Council would develop a noise mitigation plan to address long-term and short-term (construction) noise impacts, and document this plan in the Final EIS.



*Trails and freight rail tracks in the Kenilworth area of Minneapolis.*

The plan will include, as appropriate, recommendations for additional noise monitoring, evaluation of various measures, and identification of committed noise mitigation measures.

The proposed design of the Southwest LRT line will result in 67 moderate noise impacts and three severe noise impacts for residential uses in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment. Residential areas that would experience noise impacts include: Railroad Avenue east of the proposed Louisiana Station; the Hoigaard Village apartment complex on Camerata Way west of Highway 100; Burnham Road North to the west of the proposed alignment; Thomas Avenue South to the east of the proposed alignment; and South Upton Avenue to the west of the proposed alignment. A moderate non-residential noise impact would occur at the Kenilworth Channel.

A vibration study did not identify any vibration impacts in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment.

The Supplemental Draft EIS also evaluates the potential impact of ground-borne noise, which is noise generated by the vibration of a structure’s walls and ceilings. Without mitigation, 54 ground-borne noise impacts would occur in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment, including 36 residential units in the Calhoun Isles Condominiums. Other areas likely to experience ground-borne noise impacts are: St. Louis Avenue west

of the alignment; Dean Court, Xerxes Avenue South and Benton Boulevard east of the alignment.

- Section 3.4.2.3, "Noise"
- Section 3.4.2.4, "Vibration"

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### ROADWAY AND TRAFFIC

Three new at-grade crossings of light rail tracks would cause traffic delays at roadways in the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment. Existing roadways would be reconstructed or reconfigured at seven locations.

- Section 3.4.4.2, "Roadway and Traffic"

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### PARKING

A total of 118 on-street parking spaces would be displaced at five locations in this segment. The full acquisition of 10 properties would displace 297 off-street parking spaces.

- Section 3.4.4.3, "Parking"

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### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMPLIANCE

The Council completed an environmental justice assessment for the St. Louis Park and Minneapolis segment. No disproportionately high adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations were found.

- Section 3.4.5, "Environmental Justice Compliance"

#### **Alternative Formats**

To request documents in an alternative format, or if you need assistance to access the documents, please contact:

Dan Pfeiffer  
Southwest LRT Assistant Public Involvement Manager  
612-373-3897  
Daniel.Pfeiffer@metrotransit.org



# COMMENTING ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS

Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS will be accepted through July 6, 2015. Comments may be submitted by email, mail, or in person.

Public hearings and open houses on the Supplemental Draft EIS will be held in June 2015. To learn more about the hearings, see "Hearings on the Supplemental Draft EIS" on page 19.

Following the close of the comment period, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Metropolitan Council will consider all comments submitted and will provide responses to substantive comments in the Final EIS.

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## WAYS TO COMMENT

### Public hearings

Hearings will include opportunities for public testimony. Comment forms for submitting written comments will also be available.

### By email

Send written comments by email to:  
SWLRT@metrotransit.org

### By mail

Send written comments by mail to:

Nani Jacobson  
Assistant Director, Environmental and Agreements  
Metro Transit – Southwest LRT Project Office  
6465 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 500  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

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## REVIEWING THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS

The Supplemental Draft EIS and appendices are available from the Southwest LRT Project website at [www.swlрт.org](http://www.swlрт.org). Printed copies are available for review at several locations:

**Eden Prairie City Hall**, 8080 Mitchell Road, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

**Eden Prairie Public Library**, 565 Prairie Center Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

**Minnetonka City Hall**, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, MN 55345

**Minnetonka Public Library**, 17524 Excelsior Blvd., Minnetonka, MN 55345

**Hopkins City Hall**, 1010 First Street South, Hopkins, MN 55343

**Hopkins Public Library**, 22 Eleventh Avenue North, Hopkins, MN 55343

**Edina City Hall**, 4801 West 50th Street, Edina, MN 55424

**St. Louis Park City Hall**, 5005 Minnetonka Blvd., St. Louis Park, MN 55416

**St. Louis Park Public Library**, 3240 Library Lane, St. Louis Park, MN 55426

**Southwest LRT Project Office**, 6465 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 500 St. Louis Park, MN 55426

**Minneapolis City Hall**, City Engineer's Office, 350 South Fifth Street, Room 203, Minneapolis, MN 55415

**Minneapolis Central Library**, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55401

**Linden Hills Public Library**, 2900 West 43rd Street, Minneapolis, MN 55410

**Sumner Public Library**, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55411

**Franklin Public Library**, 1314 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404

**Metropolitan Council Library**, 390 Robert Street North, St. Paul, MN 55101

**MnDOT Transportation Library**, 395 John Ireland Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155

**Minn. Legislative Reference Library**, 645 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155

# HEARINGS ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS

The Metropolitan Council will hold three public hearings on the Supplemental Draft EIS. An open house will be held in conjunction with each public hearing.

The purpose of these hearings is to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the content of the Supplemental Draft EIS document; no action will be taken at the hearings.

Translation services for non-English speakers and ADA accommodations will be provided on request. To request translation or ADA accommodations, please contact Dan Pfeiffer, Southwest LRT Assistant Public Involvement Manager, at 612-373-3897 or [Daniel.Pfeiffer@metrotransit.org](mailto:Daniel.Pfeiffer@metrotransit.org) at least five days prior to the hearing.

## HOPKINS

**Tuesday, June 16, 2015**

Hopkins Center for the Arts  
1111 Mainstreet  
Hopkins

Open House: 5:00 P.M.  
Public Hearing: 6:00 P.M.

## EDEN PRAIRIE

**Wednesday, June 17, 2015**

Eden Prairie City Center  
8080 Mitchell Road  
Eden Prairie

Open House: 5:00 P.M.  
Public Hearing: 6:00 P.M.

## MINNEAPOLIS

**Thursday, June 18, 2015**

Dunwoody College of Technology  
818 Dunwoody Boulevard  
Minneapolis

Open House: 5:00 P.M.  
Public Hearing: 6:00 P.M.

# LOCALLY REQUESTED CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

The cities along the Southwest LRT route and Hennepin County have identified improvements they propose to be undertaken separate from, but contingent upon, implementation of the project.

Each of these proposed Locally Requested Capital Investments (LRCIs) that advance through the city and county decision making processes will undergo environmental review and impact evaluation, with results reported in the Final EIS. If a LRCI included in the Supplemental Draft EIS does not move forward following further coordination with the cities and Hennepin County, it will not be evaluated as part of the Final EIS.

These proposed activities are not needed to support the base function of the Southwest LRT project, nor do they represent mitigation for any impact of the Southwest

LRT project. These proposed activities may be implemented independently by the stakeholder cities at a future date, and are not conditions of the Southwest LRT project.

The items currently proposed are not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts.

Proposed investments include:

- Local Roadway Improvements
- Streetscape, Landscape and Aesthetic Improvements
- Local Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements
- Utility Activities
- Guideway Profile Adjustment

More information about Locally Requested Capital Improvements is included in Section 2.6 and Appendix F of the Supplemental Draft EIS.

## Community Outreach Coordinators

The Southwest LRT Community Outreach Coordinators are the first point of contact for members of the public, community organizations and corridor businesses. They are available to answer questions, receive input on the project, and help resolve issues.

Each of the Project's Community Outreach Coordinators is responsible for a segment of the Southwest LRT route.

### MINNEAPOLIS

**Sophia Ginis** 612.373.3895  
Sophia.Ginis@metrotransit.org

### ST. LOUIS PARK AND HOPKINS

**Nkongo Cigolo** 612.373.3825  
Nkongo.Cigolo@metrotransit.org

### MINNETONKA AND EDEN PRAIRIE

**James Mockovciak** 612.373.3894  
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Metro Transit is a service of the Metropolitan Council.



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