

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.

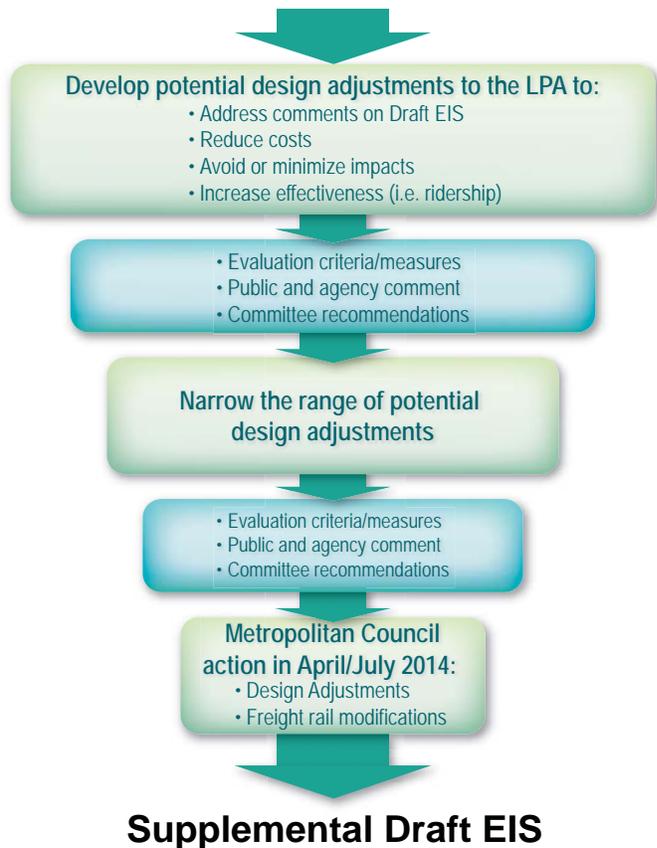
The Southwest Transitway Draft EIS evaluated several options for improving transit service in the Southwest Corridor area and identified light rail along a route designated as "LRT 3A" as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

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.