University Corridor
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Public Meetings/Open Houses

August 13, 2007
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Holiday Inn Select- Greenway*
Windsor Ballroom
2712 Southwest Freeway
Houston, TX  77098

August 14, 2007
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall
3826 Wheeler Avenue
Houston, TX  77004

* Garage parking (only) will be validated

Public Hearing

August 27, 2007
1:00 pm Open House (Fellowship Hall)
2:00 pm Public Hearing (Sanctuary)
South Main Baptist Church
4100 Main Street
Houston, Texas  77002
University Corridor
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Public Hearing
August 27, 2007
1:00 pm Open House (Fellowship Hall)
2:00 pm Public Hearing (Sanctuary)
South Main Baptist Church
4100 Main Street
Houston, Texas  77002
Purpose of Today’s Meeting

- Inform community of the findings of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Describe the alternatives under consideration
- Provide the community and public agencies an opportunity to present their views and ask questions before the Public Hearing
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NEPA Process for an EIS

NOTICE OF INTENT   May 2006
Start of Federal Process

SCOPING       June – July 2006
• Define the Range of Alternatives

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS)  Aug 2006 - July 2007
• Evaluate all reasonable alternatives

CIRCULATION of DEIS  Aug 3 – Sept 17, 2007

FINAL EIS (FEIS)  October 2007 – May 2008
• Identify Preferred Alternative
• Describe Mitigation Measures

RECORD OF DECISION  June 2008

We are Here
NEPA Process for an EIS

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NOTICE OF INTENT
Start of Federal Process

SCOPING
• Define the Range of Alternatives

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS)
• Evaluate all reasonable alternatives

CIRCULATION of DEIS

FINAL EIS (FEIS)
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RECORD OF DECISION

We are Here
Public and Agency Involvement
Continuous throughout the project

- Scoping & Public Meetings (7 held to date)
- Newsletters (1 published)
- Stakeholder/Community Meetings (20 meetings)
- Small Group Presentations
- Briefings to Elected Officials
- Information on METRO Website

www.metrosolutions.org
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Public and Agency Involvement
Continuous throughout the project
Steps to Recommending a Preferred Alternative

Step 1. Prepare DEIS

Step 2. Public & Agency Review of DEIS

Step 3. Conduct Public Hearing & Receive Comments

Step 4. METRO Board Recommends LPA

Step 5. Prepare FEIS & Preliminary Engineering

Step 6. Final Environmental Approval (Record of Decision)
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Tentative Project Schedule
(If a Build Alternative is selected)

- Environmental approval: Summer 2008
- Acquire right-of-way: 2009
- Final design and construction: 2008 - 2012
- Open for service: 2012
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

To meet the goals of the NEPA process and comply with laws, regulations and policies, projects need to consider:

- Avoiding adverse (negative) impacts.
- Where adverse impacts cannot be avoided, they should be minimized.
- Unavoidable adverse impacts should be mitigated.
- Environmental enhancements should be developed as appropriate.
- Mitigation and enhancement measures are eligible for Federal funding.

“Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Enhance”
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

- Discusses the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed alternatives

- DEIS outline:
  - Executive Summary
  - Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action
  - Alternatives Considered
  - Social Effects
  - Environmental Effects
  - Economic Effects
  - Transportation Effects
  - Section 4(f) Evaluation
  - Financial Analysis
  - Secondary and Cumulative Impacts
  - Evaluation of Alternatives Carried Forward
  - Public Coordination and Comments
Section 4(f)

“IT IS NATIONAL POLICY: that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, & historic sites.”

In the USDOT Act of 1966, a special provision was included to provide protection to these resources. It is known as Section 4(f). It stipulates that the Secretary of Transportation will not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any land from an historic site of national, state, or local significance unless:

There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use, and All possible planning to minimize harm resulting from such use is included.
## Summary of Evaluation of Alternatives

### Segment I
(Hillcroft Transit Center to Weslayan Street)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>No Build</th>
<th>TSM Baseline</th>
<th>Richmond/ Westpark (Cummins)</th>
<th>Richmond/ Westpark (Greenway Plaza)</th>
<th>Richmond/ U.S. 59/ Westpark (Kirby)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compatible with Local Plans</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of Land Needed for Right-of-Way</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property Acquisition (Number of Parcels)</td>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (i.e., government, religious, vacant)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Displacements</td>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Residential</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (i.e., government, religious)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic and Archeological Resources</td>
<td>Historical Sites Adversely Affected</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potential Historic Districts/Contributing Structures</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adversely Affected</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Quality/2030 Annual Emission</td>
<td>CO (tons per year)</td>
<td>141,798</td>
<td>141,798</td>
<td>141,798</td>
<td>141,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOx (tons per year)</td>
<td>9,171</td>
<td>9,215</td>
<td>9,215</td>
<td>9,215</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC (tons per year)</td>
<td>9,601</td>
<td>9,599</td>
<td>9,599</td>
<td>9,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PM10 (tons per year)</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>1,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction in CO2 from No Build*** (tons per million BTUs)</td>
<td>-6,277.7</td>
<td>-6,277.7</td>
<td>-6,277.7</td>
<td>-6,277.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>Residential Impacts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vibration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous/Regulated Materials</td>
<td>Potential Contaminated Sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation***</td>
<td>Level of Service (LOS) Traffic (2030), # of Intersections at:</td>
<td>LOS A-B (a.m./p.m.)</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>3/0</td>
<td>3/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOS C-D (a.m./p.m.)</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>3/0</td>
<td>3/0</td>
<td>3/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOS E-F (a.m./p.m.)</td>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>8/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction Impacts</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Source: Carter & Burgess, April 2007
Notes: * Primary sensitive receptors include users of adjacent parks and residential areas facing or immediately adjacent to the proposed alternative alignments. Museums and historic structures are visual resources generally with high visual quality. Visual and aesthetic assets include historic structures, parklands, and undeveloped open space/natural areas; ** Biota includes animals, plants, etc., of a region; *** Change in emission from No Build vs. BRT-Convertible and vs. LRT; **** Level of Service (LOS). See Table 6-27, 2030 Traffic Delay and Level of Service, p. 6-42 in DEIS.
### 2030 Total Daily Boardings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment Combination</th>
<th>Build Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Richmond/Westpark (Cummins) and Alabama (U.S. 59/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>40,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Richmond/Westpark (Cummins) and Wheeler (Ennis/Elgin/Eastwood Transit Center)</td>
<td>43,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Richmond/Westpark (Cummins) and Wheeler (Ennis/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>40,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Richmond/Westpark (Greenway) and Alabama (U.S. 59/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>39,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Richmond/Westpark (Greenway) and Wheeler (Ennis/Elgin/Eastwood Transit Center)</td>
<td>43,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Richmond/Westpark (Greenway) and Wheeler (Ennis/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>40,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Richmond/U.S. 59/Westpark (Kirby) and Wheeler (U.S. 59/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>27,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Richmond/U.S. 59/Westpark (Kirby) and Alabama (Ennis/Elgin/Eastwood Transit Center)</td>
<td>31,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Richmond/U.S. 59/Westpark (Kirby) and Wheeler (Ennis/Alabama/UH)</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: METRO, April 2007
If a Build Alternative is recommended, mitigation will be documented in the FEIS

Mitigation could include…

- Noise walls
- Landscaping/vegetation and/or screening walls
- Interpretive exhibits of historical properties and photographic documentation
- Grade separated crossings
- Station locations designed to be compatible with local area
- Fencing to protect local schools
- Use of sound insulation in structures
- Use of special trackwork at crossovers
- Track treatments to reduce vibration
- Relocation of impacted property owners and tenants
Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment

- Followed procedures established by Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Measured existing noise levels and vibration propagation conditions
- Projected noise and vibration from transit operations and facilities
  - LRT Option
  - BRT Convertible Option
- Assessed potential impacts
  - FTA Noise Criteria
  - FTA Vibration Criteria
- Assessed short term impacts from construction activities
- Mitigation Examples
  - Track treatments
  - Crossing bells re-directed to avoid residences
Acquisition & Relocation

  - Comply with Uniform Act
  - Conduct independent appraisals for fair market value
  - Acquire properties
  - Assist in relocating impacted property owners and tenants
Submission of Comments

• On-line at
  http://www.ridemetro.org/contact/comment.asp

• During the open houses and the public hearing

• Submit comment form or letter to:
  Ms. Rhonda Boyer
  Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County
  P.O. Box 61429
  Houston, Texas  77208-1429

  Comments must be postmarked by
  September 17, 2007
Historic Preservation

**Primary Federal Law:** National Historic Places Act of 1966

- Federal agencies must consider a project’s effects on historic properties

- Identify properties included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places. Potential properties include:
  - Buildings (places of worship, houses, gas stations, schools, train stations)
  - Structures (bridges, canals, dams, highways, lighthouses, aircraft)
  - Objects (fountains, monuments, statuary)
  - Non-archeological properties (battlefields, cemeteries, designed landscapes)
  - Districts (public squares, residential neighborhoods, transportation corridors)

- Criteria for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - 50 years old or older at the time on construction
  - Associated with events of historic significance
  - Associated with a person of historic significance
  - Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of Construction

- Consult with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

- Identify potential for adverse effects on historic properties including:
  - Physical destruction or damage to all or part of the property
  - Change of the character of the property
  - Introduction of visual, atmospheric or audible elements
Thank You for Your Attendance & Comments!