APPENDIX A

MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN

The mitigation measures and other project features that reduce adverse impacts, to which FTA and METRO committed in the SFEIS, are summarized in the following table. This summary table is provided in the Record of Decision (ROD) to facilitate the monitoring of the implementation of the mitigation measures. However, the SFEIS provides the full description of all mitigation measures that are included in the Project. METRO will establish a program for monitoring the implementation of the mitigation measures as part of its Project Management Plan.

METRO is prohibited from eliminating or altering any of the mitigation commitments identified in the SFEIS for the Project without express written approval by FTA. In addition, any change to the Project that may involve new or changed environmental or community impacts not considered in the SFEIS must be reviewed in accordance with FTA environmental procedures (23 CFR Part 771.130). METRO will immediately notify FTA of any change to the Project that differs in any way from what the SFEIS states. If a change is needed, the FTA will determine the appropriate level of environmental review (i.e., a written re-evaluation of the SFEIS, an environmental assessment of the change, or another supplemental environmental impact statement), and the NEPA process for this supplemental environmental review will conclude with a separate NEPA determination, or, if necessary, an amendment of this ROD.

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Street Modifications Closure of all existing median openings except at signalized intersections. Hardscape elements will be placed in the median to create a barrier to crossing traffic and pedestrians except at signalized intersections. See Section 4.2.3 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design
	Improvements at Intersections The level-of-service at the intersection of Fulton Street and Crosstimbers will be reduced. Add dual left-turn lanes in the northbound and southbound lanes on Fulton Street at Crosstimbers Street. See Section 4.2.4 of the SFEIS. Key intersections (intersections where left turns are permitted) will have signage, lighted pedestrian signals, new mast-arm electronic traffic signals and pavement markers (such as 'Stop Here on Red'). See Section 5.2.3.1 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design
	Parking The parking associated with 11 businesses and one religious structure will be reduced. Property owners would be compensated for loss of parking in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act. On neighborhood streets, parking is allowed but not designated. If on-street parking is eliminated, METRO will replace it. See Section 4.3.2 of the SFEIS.	A determination will be made by the appraisers and land planners as to whether or not the reduction of parking spaces will allow the business to remain viable. If it is determined that the business cannot remain in operation due to the reduction of parking spaces, the business will then be qualified as a displaced business and can be relocated as per the Uniform Act. On some business parcels, some buildings can be reconfigured to relocate the parking areas.	METRO	Final Design
	Bikeways Along Fulton Street between Boundary Street and Irvington Boulevard, additional right-of-way will be purchased to accommodate the existing bicycle lane. Existing bicycle lanes on Fulton Street between Irvington Boulevard and Crosstimbers Street will be relocated along Irvington Boulevard, a major north-south arterial, from Fulton Street to Crosstimbers Street. See Section 4.5.1 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Pedestrianways Existing signalized intersections and station locations will have traffic and pedestrian signals to facilitate traffic flow and safe pedestrian movements. See Section 4.2.3, 4.5.2, and 5.2.3.1 of the SFEIS.	The design includes a five to six-foot envelope on both sides of the street to accommodate sidewalks. Additionally, the *Northside Village Economic Revitalization Plan* calls for a pilot project that would add sidewalks on Fulton Street between Irvington Boulevard and Quitman Drive. The city intends to coordinate the sidewalk project with the design and construction of the North Corridor.	METRO, City of Houston	Final Design
	Freight Railroads The fixed guideway would be grade separated from the freight railroads. Construction will require agreements and/or leases with the UPRR and HB&T railroads to allow construction over the railroads. See Section 4.4.1 of the SFEIS.		METRO, HB&T, UPRR	Final Design, Construction
	Station Vicinity Land Use Station locations will be designed to be compatible with each specific location, being respectful of the primary land use in the surrounding area. In areas that are currently being planned for redevelopment and intensification, such as the Hardy Yard or Northline Mall, stations could be designed in conjunction with adjacent development. See Section 4.5.2 of the SFEIS.	METRO will also continue on-going coordination with local neighborhood and community groups regarding stations throughout the project.	METRO	Final Design
	Safety METRO will provide transit education programs, METRO Police Patrol Officers, bilingual warning and caution signs, speed restrictions, and proper operator training. METRO will implement safety/outreach initiatives targeted to each specific school and daycare facility along the corridor. See Section 5.2.3.1 of the SFEIS.	METRO has and will continue an overall safety campaign designed to educate school children and the public at large and promote safety awareness for walking, working, and driving in and around the fixed guideways. The campaign will include safety programs for school children and community members in general, and is being tailored individually for the schools in the North Corridor. METRO will also establish a staffed 'store front' in the corridor where community members can readily access information regarding the project. See Section 5.2.3.1 of the SFEIS.	METRO	Final Design, Construction, Operations

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Acquisitions and Displacements/Relocations The project will require acquisition from approximately 95 addresses and relocation of 16 businesses and 10 residential properties in the study area. Mitigation for property acquisition and relocation procedures for qualified displaced persons and businesses will be guided by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (49 CFR Part 24), as amended. METRO would be responsible at the local level for administering the Act, subject to oversight by FTA, FTA's Project Management Oversight contractors, and the U.S. DOT's Office of the Inspector General. See Section 5.3 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design
	Acquisitions and Displacements/Relocations METRO will identify and translate "vital documents" related to real property acquisition and relocation assistance into the appropriate language for any displaced person of limited English proficiency. "Vital documents" will include, at a minimum, information pamphlets about the rights of a displaced residence and business under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act and its implementing regulation (49 CFR Part 24), and all letters and communications associated with a particular relocation, displacement, or property acquisition.		METRO	Effective immediately upon FTA approval of this ROD

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Noise Impacts Noise from the project will impact 30 Category 2 receptors along the alignment (e.g., residences, hotels, and hospitals). There are no Category 3 receptors (e.g., schools, places of worship, parks, and medical offices) along the alignment that are expected to be impacted. Mitigation commitments include the construction of two noise barriers and the directional orientation of warning bells through shrouding or other means so that the area of noise impact is minimal. See Section 5.5.1 of the SFEIS.	The noise mitigation locations will be refined based on a more complete noise analysis with more detailed engineering information. Any change during final design must be approved by FTA in writing and must be in full accord with FTA's "Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment," May 2006.	METRO	Final Design
	Vibration Impacts Vibration from the project will impact one non-residential structure on Freeman Street at the curve at the south east corner of North Main Street and Boundary Street. If the property is verified to be vibration-sensitive, then a slab mat, which can reduce the vibration by 20 Hz, will be used to mitigate the vibration impact. See Section 5.5.2 of the SFEIS.	The mitigation for vibration will be refined based on a more complete analysis with more detailed engineering information. Any change during final design must be approved by FTA in writing and must be in full accord with FTA's "Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment," May 2006.	METRO	Final Design
	Visual/Aesthetic – Alignment Impacts Mitigation for visual impacts to adjacent sensitive receptors and assets will be mitigated through landscaping, where feasible, affordable, and consistent with safety requirements. Vegetation could be placed every 130 to 190 feet to break up views from the alignment in areas where existing screening is sparse, and particularly where the vertical distance of the alignment is higher than the residences. See Section 5.6.1.1 of the SFEIS.	METRO will work with property owners during final design to most effectively implement the mitigation measures.	METRO	Final Design

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Visual/Aesthetic – Station Area Impacts Station area lighting would comply with the City of Houston lighting standards. Lighting sources would be indirect, diffused, or covered by shielded type fixtures, installed to reduce glare and the consequent interference with adjacent properties. At the Quitman Station, visual screening and/or architectural treatments will be used to mitigate the visual/aesthetic impacts to the adjacent residential properties, if needed. See Section 5.6.1.2 of the SFEIS.	Per METRO's *Design Criteria Park and Ride and Transit Center Facilities*, lighting poles would not exceed 35 feet in height in parking areas, drop-off areas, ramps, entrances/exits, or 20 feet in height in bus loops; and stay within a 35 feet radius of passenger shelters. METRO will work with property owners during final design to most effectively implement the mitigation measures.	METRO	Final Design
	Visual/Aesthetic – Privacy Impacts Mitigation for visual intrusions to adjacent sensitive receptors and assets will be mitigated through landscaping or visual screening, where feasible, affordable, and consistent with safety requirements. See Section 5.6.1.3 of the SFEIS.	Based on maximum exposure time of two seconds, vegetation or visual screening could be placed every 130 to 190 feet (depending on speed) to break up views from the fixed guideway alignment in areas where existing screening is sparse, and particularly where the vertical distance of the rail alignment is higher than the residences. METRO will work with property owners during final design to most effectively implement the mitigation measures	METRO	Final Design
	Vegetation Mitigation measures for the loss of trees will be incorporated into the landscape design. This Tree Preservation Plan will comply with the City of Houston Tree and Shrub Ordinance (No. 1999-425) and will be reviewed by the City of Houston. See Section 5.7.2 of the SFEIS.	METRO will engage the services of an Urban Forester during the design phase to develop a Tree Preservation Plan. The plan will show the inventory of street trees with each tree's location and noted condition. The plan will indicate which trees are to be relocated, removed or saved. For trees that are not transplanted, additional trees shall be planted within the right-of-way to mitigate the loss of these particular street trees.	METRO	Final Design
	Surface Waters Storm water pipe sizes will be determined during final design to ensure no flooding impacts to adjacent properties due to the project. See Section 5.8.1 and 5.8.4 of the SFEIS.	A detailed hydraulic analysis will be performed when the details of the design are finalized.	METRO	Final Design

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Floodplains The project will require the placement of approximately 6,500 cubic yards of fill below the 100-year water surface elevation (WSE) near the confluence of White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou. To compensate for the impact caused by 6,500 cubic yards of fill occurring below the 100-year water surface, METRO will excavate an equivalent amount of earth from property that METRO owns along White Oak Bayou. The compensatory site is hydraulically connected to White Oak Bayou. See Section 5.8.3 of the SFEIS.	A detailed hydraulic analysis will be performed when the details of the design are finalized. If the analysis determines an impact to the flood elevation cannot be reasonably avoided or effectively mitigated, a conditional Letter of Map Revision will be obtained from FEMA.	METRO, FEMA	Final Design
	Wetlands Two existing bridge columns of the Main Street Viaduct will require reinforcement to bring the bridge up to current safety standards. The only permanent impact to the White Oak Bayou will be the larger footprints of the expanded columns. After construction is complete the area impacted will be restored to pre-construction conditions. See Section 5.8.1 and 5.8.4 of the SFEIS.	Detailed hydraulic and back water analyses will be conducted during the final design phase of the project to ensure that culverts, bridges, and storm sewers would be appropriately sized during final design to ensure no increase in water surface elevation would result from the project. This work will require a Nationwide Permit 25 - Structural Discharges and a Nationwide Permit 33 - Temporary Construction, Access, and Dewatering. Notification to the USACE and a restoration plan is required for Nationwide Permit 33. At the start of final design, METRO will submit plan documents to both the USACE and U.S. Coast Guard to allow for the necessary review of the design.	METRO, USACE, U.S. Coast Guard	Final Design
	Historic Resources Rehabilitation of the North Main Street Viaduct will be designed similarly to modifications at the southern end, and the design plan will be subject to SHPO review at three stages in accordance with Stipulation IV.D of the amended MOA. See Section 5.9.7 or Appendix G of the SFEIS and the Amended MOA in Appendix C of this document.		METRO	Final Design

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Historic Resources All project facilities including but not limited to stations, tracks, traction power system elements, and noise walls, will be designed to be compatible with affected historic properties and conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. Design plans will be developed in consultation with SHPO and will be subject to SHPO review at three stages in accordance with Stipulation IV.D of the amended MOA. See Section 5.9.7 or Appendix G of the SFEIS and the Amended MOA in Appendix C of this document.		METRO	Final Design
	Historic Resources METRO shall ensure that all activities carried out in fulfillment of the Amended MOA are performed by, or under the direct supervision and control of, a person or persons who meet the relevant professional qualification standards in the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation." See Section 5.9.7 or Appendix G of the SFEIS and the Amended MOA in Appendix C of this document.		METRO	Final Design
	Historic Resources METRO shall develop and conduct a Worker Education Program for construction personnel. The program must be designed to teach contractors and workers about the Federal requirements for the protection of historic properties and the appropriate action to take if unanticipated archaeological discoveries occur during construction. See Section 5.9.7 or Appendix G of the SFEIS and the Amended MOA in Appendix C of this document.		METRO	Final Design

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Hazardous/Regulated Material Sites Soil and groundwater contamination may be encountered during construction of the LPA. Any existing structures will be surveyed for the presence of hazardous/regulated materials such as asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, chemical storage, etc., prior to their demolition or modification. See Section 5.12.2 of the SFEIS.	The design and preparation of required monitoring and remediation plans will be coordinated with the TCEQ.	METRO, TCEQ	Final Design
	Transit Safety At two community facilities, the City of Houston Fire Station No. 9 and the Irvington Village Police Station, appropriate measures for traffic control will ensure that conflicts between vehicles responding to emergencies and LRT vehicles are avoided. METRO will have an external Fire and Life Safety Committee to coordinate communication and resources related to METRORail among various law enforcement and emergency medical agencies. Training will be provided to agencies concerning safety in and around METRORail. METRO will have an internal safety committee comprised of various departments to assure that general public safety concerns and measures were being addressed and implemented. See Section 5.13 of the SFEIS.	The transit safety program will also include community-wide safety programs to distribute various printed materials, including brochures with age appropriate messages targeting school age children. METRO will participate in community events where safety information will be distributed in advance of and during construction and also following the opening of the North Corridor. Stakeholder meetings will be conducted to address safety concerns. A community-based committee has been established and METRO has begun participating in committee meetings; this provides another venue for updates and safety information regarding the construction process to be distributed. METRO will acquire the services of a fire and life safety consultant to help address specific stakeholder concerns.	METRO	Final Design, Operation

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Safety and Construction Impacts METRO will identify and translate "vital documents" related to school and pedestrian safety and to construction impacts into the languages determined appropriate. Documents deemed vital will depend upon the importance of the information, encounter, or service involved, and the consequence to the person of limited English proficiency if the information in question is not provided in an understandable and timely manner. METRO will continue to improve on its public involvement strategies during final design, construction, and start-up in the areas of construction impacts and safety using, at METRO's discretion, strategies to engage populations of limited English proficiency including using return receipt letters, signage on buses and shelters, notices to community-based organizations serving populations of limited English proficiency within the project area, and oral translators.		METRO	Final Design, Construction, and Project Start-up Period.
	Construction Impacts (Access and Circulation) In the construction documents, provisions could be included for maximum number of lanes closed during peak traffic hours, maintenance and removal of traffic control devices, efficient traffic rerouting measures, and scheduling of construction activities within the roadways for times other than during peak traffic periods. See Section 5.14.1 of the SFEIS.	The contractor will comply with appropriate state and local requirements concerning the closing of roadways as stated in both the *Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction* and *Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Construction documents and mitigation measures must be approved by local traffic engineering authorities prior to initiation of construction.	METRO, City of Houston, TxDOT	Final Design, Construction

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Construction Impacts (Businesses and Residences) The mitigation measures required by the city for roadway access and traffic control also apply to disruption of area businesses. Permits will be acquired by project contractors from the appropriate city offices for roadway disruptions and blockages. Notification of roadway disruptions will be provided to neighboring property owners/operators. In cases of roadway blockages, neighboring property owners/operators will be notified and provided with descriptions of alternative routes. See Section 5.14.2 of the SFEIS.	The contractor will comply with appropriate state and local requirements concerning the closing of roadways as stated in both the *Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction* and *Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Construction documents and mitigation measures must be approved by local traffic engineering authorities prior to initiation of construction. Provisions in project specification plans will require the construction contractors to make reasonable effort to minimize construction activities within the roadways during peak traffic periods.	METRO	Final Design, Construction
	Construction Impacts (Utilities) Construction documents will provide terms for the identification and appropriate mitigation of any utility lines encountered during project construction. Prior to construction, affected area utility companies and utility agencies will be contacted and requested to provide line location measures and approval of the proposed alternation of utility lines. See Section 5.14.3 of the SFEIS.	Contractors will be required to consider the following items in their construction documents for mitigation of utilities: • Businesses and residences affected by utility disruptions would be notified of the disruptions at least two weeks in advance. • Down periods for businesses would occur during off-business hours and never exceed a 24-hour period. • Businesses such as restaurants, grocery stores, or food preparation/manufacturing facilities would be accommodated to protect food preparation and storage mechanisms. Should utilities be discovered during construction that were not identified prior to construction, work could be discontinued and appropriate utility companies and agencies will be contacted to identify the line(s). The discovered line could not be disrupted until businesses and residences are notified and the utility owner/operator has approved the proposed alteration.	METRO	Final Design, Construction

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Construction (Air Quality) METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate Federal, state, and local regulations concerning the generation of dust from construction activities. Typically, activities to minimize air quality impacts during construction include covering or treating disturbed areas with dust suppressors, using tarpaulins on loaded trucks, and sprinkling water on dust generating surfaces such as roads and other areas where construction equipment is in operation. To minimize the amount of emissions generated, reasonable efforts will be made during the construction phase to limit disruption to traffic, especially during peak travel periods. See Section 5.14.4 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design, Construction

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Construction Impacts (Noise) METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate Federal, state, and local regulations concerning the noise. See Section 5.14.5 of the SFEIS.	Depending on construction phasing, noise control measures that could be applied include: • Minimizing nighttime construction in residential neighborhoods. • Using specially quieted equipment with enclosed engines and/or high performance mufflers. • Locating stationary construction equipment as far as possible from noise sensitive sites. • Construction noise barriers, such as temporary walls or piles of excavated material between noisy activities and noise-sensitive receivers. • Re-routing construction-related truck traffic along roadways that will cause the least disturbance to residents. • Avoiding impact pile driving near noise-sensitive areas, where possible. Drilled piles or the use of a sonic or vibratory pile driver are quieter alternatives where the geological conditions permit their use. If impact pile drivers must be used, their use will be limited to periods between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. To provide added assurance, the contractor could implement a complaint resolution procedure will also be put in place to address any noise problems that may develop during construction.	METRO	Final Design, Construction
	Construction Impacts (Vibration) Vibration impacts during construction could be avoided through numeric limits and monitoring requirements that could be developed during final design and included in the construction documents for the project. See Section 5.14.6 of the SFEIS.	Measures that will be considered as requirement to meet the vibration limits include the use of alternative equipment or processes, such as the use of drilled piles in place of impact pile driving and avoiding the use of vibratory compactors near vibration-sensitive areas.	METRO	Final Design, Construction

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Construction Impacts (Visual) METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate Federal, state, and local regulations concerning the removal of existing vegetation. See Section 5.14.7 of the SFEIS.	Prior to construction, a plan for protecting existing trees and vegetation that could be injured during construction activity will be developed. METRO could also assess the need for additional landscaping in this area to mitigate potential visual intrusion/privacy impacts following clearing and grubbing activities during construction.	METRO	Final Design, Construction
	Construction Impacts (Excavation, Fill Materials, Debris, and Spoil) METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate Federal, state, and local regulations for the disposal of debris and spoil generated during construction. Only "clean" fill material will be used for construction of the fixed guideway. See Section 5.14.8 of the SFEIS.	The contractor will establish haul routes on roads other than established truck routes. Any hazardous waste encountered by construction of the project will be disposed of by a licensed hazardous waste contractor.	METRO	Final Design, Construction
	Construction Impacts (Water Quality and Runoff) METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate Federal, state, and local regulations the disposal of debris and spoil generate during construction. A Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities will be acquired. The contractor will develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWP3) and submit a NOI to the TCEQ at least 48 hours before commencing construction activities. See Section 5.14.9 of the SFEIS.	The SW3P will define and ensure the implementation of practices that will be used to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges associated with construction activity at the construction site, and assure compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit. If unanticipated sources of hazardous or regulated materials were encountered during construction activities, the construction manager or designee will immediately notify METRO. Specific mitigation activities, which address the type, level, and quantity of contamination encountered, will be immediately implemented. The handling, treatment, and disposal of any hazardous materials will occur in full compliance with Federal, state, and local requirements.	METRO, TCEQ	Final Design, Construction

Mitigation ID Number	Impact/Mitigation Measure	Implementation & Monitoring	Responsible Party	Timing
	Construction Impacts (Construction Staging Areas). The contractor will use best management practices to prevent storm water runoff of construction materials and equipment such as covering materials and equipment of awnings, roofs, or tarps; storing materials and asphalt or concrete pads; surrounding material stockpiling areas with diversion dikes or curbs; and using secondary containment measures such as dikes or berms around fueling areas. The contractor will also mulch and reseed disturbed areas to prevent air and waster erosion on the site after termination of construction operations. See Section 5.14.10 of the SFEIS.		METRO	Final Design, Construction
	Construction Impacts (Safety and Security) The contractor will be required to be familiar with and comply with applicable Federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, and regulations regarding safety and security during construction. Some construction will require temporary detours or reduced roadway capacity. Traffic safety maintenance measures will be employed to minimize this risk. See Section 5.14.11 of the SFEIS.	Standard construction safety practices, as established by government regulations and codes, as well as METRO specifications, will minimize the potential for accidents and other safety problems.	METRO	Final Design, Construction

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE APRIL 2008 SFEIS

Comments from approximately 25 individuals were received on the April 2008 SFEIS during the circulation period. The comments were related to safety, access, impacts during construction, property impacts, historic preservation, noise, vibration, connections, parking, bus service, station locations, light pollution, effects to transportation, construction costs, and funding. Table B-1 lists the persons that submitted comments during the circulation period and the corresponding response numbers.

Table B-1
Summary of Written and Verbal Comments Received on the SFEIS

Commentor/ Comment Type	Organization/Address	Response Number
Rebecca Reyna (Verbal)	Greater Northside Management District 6219 Irvington, Suite B, Houston, TX 77022	1
Ed Reyes (Verbal)	Greater Northside Management District and Lindale Park Civic Club 218 Joyce Street, Houston, TX 77009	1
Wayne Fowkes (Verbal)	Lindale Park Civic Club 515 Eleanor, Houston, TX 77009	1
Armando Bermudez (Verbal)	Near Northside BOND Organization 405 James Street, Houston, TX 77009	4
Gene Goins (Verbal & Written)	3410 Robertson Street, Houston, TX 77009	1, 3
Ron Robles (Verbal)	2324 North Main Street, Houston, TX 77009	2, 3
Connie Hernandez (Verbal & Written)	5119 Gano, Houston, TX 77009	7
Pat Spencer (Verbal & Written)	3901 Billingsley, Houston, TX 77009	1, 8, 45
Debbie Allen (Verbal)	Pleasantville Environmental Coalition P.O. Box 24322, Houston, TX 77229	6
Mario Umanzor (Verbal)	2622 North Main Street, Houston, TX 77009	2, 9
Lynnett Tello (Verbal)	Silverdale Civic Club 4409 Baden, Houston, TX 77009	1
Ramon Garcia (Verbal)	5426 Fulton Street, Houston, TX 77009	5, 10
Anonymous (001) (Written)		11
Hector Lopez (Written)	202 Deboll, Houston, TX 77022	1
Richard Leal (Written)	4314 Nordling, Houston, TX 77076	1
Anonymous (002) (Written)		12, 13
Caroline Bowles (Written)	3502 Moore, Houston, TX 77009	14

Commentor/ Comment Type	Organization/Address	Response Number
Adalberto Lopez (Written)	202 Deboll, Houston, TX 77022	1
The Honorable Melissa Noriega (Written)	Houston City Council, 900 Bagby, First Floor, Houston, TX 77002	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21,22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
Daniel R. Menendez (Written)	City of Houston, Transit Coordinator Engineering and Construction Division P.O. Box 1562, Houston, Texas 77251-1562	32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 51
Annie Quiroz [Written (web)]	apquiroz@epco.com	37, 38, 39
Joan Hess [Written (web)]	craniforu@yahoo.com	40
Chris Burke [Written (web)]	cpburke19@hotmail.com	41
Neal Meyer (Written)	Mobility Coalition, 2822 Briarhurst #54, Houston, TX 77057	42, 43, 44
Anonymous (003) (Written)		44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50
Gary Parks (Written)	2000 Bering Drive, Suite 380, Houston, TX 77057	52

Comment 1: Supportive of the project.
Response 1: The LPA selected is consistent with and supports the transportation goals and objectives of the North Corridor. The LPA will improve the transportation system by providing the North Corridor with more travel choices and faster travel times between residential areas, major destinations, and employment centers. It will also contribute positively to the achievement of the North Corridor economic development goals and their associated benefits.

Comment 2: Not supportive of the project.
Response 2: The LPA selected is consistent with and supports the transportation goals and objectives of the North Corridor. The LPA will improve the transportation system by providing the North Corridor with more travel choices and faster travel times between residential areas, major destinations, and employment centers. It will also contribute positively to the achievement of the North Corridor economic development goals and their associated benefits.

Comment 3: Concerned about vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the rail line. Concerned about the safety of children going to school, parks, and in the neighborhood.
Response 3: Safety near schools is discussed in Section 5.2.3.1 and Section 5.13 of this SFEIS. A full traffic analysis, in accordance with City of Houston criteria, has been conducted to ascertain the vehicular and pedestrian interfaces along the light rail alignment corridor. Proper vehicular control devices, such as specific additional signage and traffic control lights, will be installed during construction of the LPA. METRO has learned many lessons and techniques from the initial 7.5 mile Downtown to Astrodome operating segment that will applied to all future corridor extensions.

For the LPA, hardscape elements in the median will create a barrier to crossing traffic and pedestrians except at signalized intersections. This street modification will provide for the safe

interface between fixed guideway vehicles and vehicular/pedestrian traffic that would cross the guideway. In addition to existing signalized intersections, additional traffic and pedestrian signals will be installed to facilitate traffic flow and safe pedestrian movements.

While implementation of the LPA (LRT) will not create an inherently unsafe condition, METRO has conducted traffic and pedestrian analyses as part of Preliminary Engineering to determine what safety measures are warranted. As a result of these analyses, all key intersections (intersections where left turns are permitted) will have signage, lighted pedestrian signals, new mast-arm electronic traffic signals and pavement markers (such as 'Stop Here on Red') to help reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. Because some of these intersections occur within the vicinity of elementary schools along the corridor, school children will benefit from these safety measures when crossing the alignment. Pedestrians in general will also benefit from a safer crossing environment at these locations.

METRO is highly sensitive to and extremely focused on the issue of safety of the children along the alignment. Techniques to protect the safety of children are addressed in the design, construction, and future operation of the project and are explained in further detail in Section 5.2.3.1 of this SFEIS. These include the safety awareness education program where METRO staff will be visiting the surrounding schools teaching the children on how to act near the project. In addition, easy to read signage will be installed warning children not to enter an area of transit operations.

Safety outreach to schools in the North Corridor community has already begun, in advance of construction. Materials and presentations targeted at the students within the corridor are a key element of the outreach effort and are already under development. Several coordination meetings with HISD officials have taken place, as well as meetings with the principal and the Parent Teacher Organization for T.R. Roosevelt Elementary School. On-going coordination is being scheduled with all other schools along the alignment, including Jefferson Elementary, Adele Looscan Elementary, Clemente Martinez Elementary, and James L. Ketelsen Elementary.

METRO Police will make presentations to schools one-quarter of a mile on either side of the corridor. METRO Police will also assist with the crossing of school children in the early opening phase of the North Corridor as the public familiarizes themselves to the project. General Fire/Safety Drill training will be provided for school staff. METRO will also assess drill procedures at each school and make recommendations as needed. Once the North Corridor is operating, students will be taken on tours of the facility to help promote safety on the platforms and at pedestrian crossings.

The transit safety program will also include community-wide safety programs by distributing various printed materials, including brochures with age appropriate messages targeting school age children. Community presentations targeted at key organizations and corporations to educate and distribute safety information will be held. METRO will participate in community events where safety information will be distributed in advance of and during construction and also following the opening of the North Corridor. Stakeholder meetings will be conducted to address safety concerns.

Comment 4: Concerned about access of emergency vehicles to medical clinics along the corridor.
Response 4: As with the Main Street LRT line, emergency vehicles will be able to drive on the alignment. Additionally, emergency vehicles will have priority over transit at the signalized

intersections so response times would be unaffected. All the traffic signals along the fixed guideway will be equipped with Opticom detectors per city standards which detect Opticom activation on emergency vehicles and preempt the signal to provide green for the emergency vehicle (includes fire, police, and ambulances). Emergency preemption overrules transit priority, so there would be no impact on emergency vehicles. In addition, the guideway can be used by emergency vehicle to pass a stalled vehicle.

Comment 5: Concerned about impacts to businesses during construction
Response 5: METRO will require the contractor to comply with appropriate state and local requirements concerning the closing of roadways. The City of Houston requires notification of construction activities that will disrupt or block traffic flow. The mitigation measures required by the city for roadway access and traffic control also apply to disruption of area businesses. Permits will be acquired by project contractors from the appropriate city offices for roadway disruptions and blockages. As a courtesy, notification of roadway disruptions should be provided in advance to neighboring property owners/operators. In cases of roadway blockages, neighboring property owners/operators will be notified and provided with descriptions of alternative routes. Provisions in project specification plans could require the construction contractors to make reasonable effort to minimize construction activities within the roadways during peak traffic periods.

METRO staff has conducted over 100 one-on-one meetings with business owners and managers throughout the North Corridor. Business owners were also given a survey (in both Spanish and English). The objective of these meetings and surveys was to understand their business profiles including details related to location, access, parking, delivery schedules, and the level of customer activity at various times of the day and year and be aware of their specific needs during construction. This information was gathered to begin preparing a plan with the goal of pro-actively mitigating any potential business interruptions caused by construction activities.

Comment 6: What environmental enhancements are included with the project.
Response 6: METRO has been coordinating with the local community by seeking input from residents and stakeholders concerning station design and other possible hardscape and landscape improvements in the areas adjacent to the LPA (LRT) guideway. In addition, METRO does have an Arts in Transit Program.

Comment 7: Will my property at 0 Fulton (at the corner of Milwaukee Street and Fulton Street) be acquired?
Response 7: No property at the corner of Milwaukee Street and Fulton Street will be acquired.

Comment 8: Will the TPSSs be underground or above ground? Will they be landscaped?
Response 8: The TPSSs will be located at ground level. All TPSS locations will be located within a fenced area to help mitigate any visual impacts. Mitigation treatments will also include vegetation or visual screening in areas adjacent to residential housing.

Comment 9: There has been a lack of communication between METRO and the people of the neighborhood.
Response 9: METRO considers public and agency involvement critical to the success of any project with the potential to affect the community. There has been an extensive public outreach process for the North Corridor. Public information activities through public meetings, presentations, and other meetings have been undertaken to inform residents and provide the opportunity for participation in project evaluation, project planning, alternative development,

station locations, development actions, and environmental issues. The process has informed the affected residents of the relative impacts among options (alignment routes, vertical and horizontal alignments, station locations, etc.). Public presentations have been given to community groups, civic organizations, municipal officials, and regional, state, and Federal agencies. Community outreach included 23 formal stakeholder meetings, 10 public meetings, two public hearings, and over 200 small group and one-on-one meetings.

In addition, METRO opened a corridor office in January 2008. This office, on Fulton Street near the location of the proposed Boundary Station, has information and updates on different aspects of the North Corridor project and provides a more visible presence in the North Corridor community. As the North Corridor project proceeds through development and construction, it is anticipated that this office would provide easier access for the community to obtain updates and provide comments regarding the project's development.

Comment 10: Concerned about rising property taxes with the implementation of the project.
Response 10: METRO does not set property tax rates. Property taxes are assessed by the Harris County Appraisal District based on the appraised value of the property on the date the property is inspected and appraised. The governing body (city council, school board, county commissioners) of each taxing entity sets the rates for their jurisdiction.

Comment 11: Concerned about historic preservation.
Response 11: A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed in December 2006 for the BRT-Convertible Alternative and amended in June 2008 for the LRT Alternative that is the subject of this ROD, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Amended MOA establishes measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects to historic properties with concurrence and consultation among METRO, FTA, and SHPO. METRO must continue its commitment to avoid and minimize impacts to historic properties throughout the development of the project, as detailed in the Amended MOA, which is included as Appendix C of this ROD.

Comment 12: What affect will noise level have on existing properties?
Response 12: Noise impact has been assessed according FTA criteria which takes into account increases in existing noise levels due to the project (see Section 5.5.1 of the SFEIS). An assessment of noise impact on Category 2 receptors along the alignment (e.g., residences, hotels, and hospitals) showed 30 residents will be impacted by noise. There are no Category 3 receptors (e.g., schools, places of worship, parks, and medical offices) along the alignment that are expected to be impacted. Based on the results of the noise assessment, mitigation measures (including noise barriers and bell orientation) and locations have been identified in the SFEIS and are now included in the project. During final design, the noise mitigation may be refined, with FTA's written concurrence, if more detailed analysis shows that neither moderate nor severe noise impacts, as defined in FTA's noise guidance, would occur as a result of the change in mitigation. Conversely, if the more detailed analysis indicates that additional mitigation is warranted, it will have to be considered.

Comment 13: Will new sewer lines be constructed where stations are built? What about new plumbing affecting existing properties and establishments?
Response 13: Only those sewer lines being impacted by the construction of the LPA (LRT) guideway will be reconstructed. All existing plumbing leads and utilities will be reconnected.

Comment 14: Would like more bike racks on buses.

Response 14: With the exception of articulated buses, bicycles can be transportation on all buses in the fleet. Furthermore, each of the new 100 hybrid buses that are ordered each year to replace current buses will arrive equipped with bicycle racks.

Comment 15: Are there any plans or provisions made to connect commuters from the northern reaches of the community to the Northline Transit Center?
Response 15: In Phase 3 of METROSolutions (METRO's long-term Transit Plan), there are plans to extend the Northline LPA all the way to IAH.

Comment 16: Will connections to the North Shepherd Park and Ride be available from the LPA?
Response 16: Bus Route 79 will provide a connection from the North Shepherd Park and Ride to the LRT.

Comment 17: How is the LPA expected to impact the I-45 North HOV Lane, particularly within the service corridor from Northline Transit Center to the Central Business District?
Response 17: The impact on I-45 North HOV Lane will be negligible.

Comment 18: Will there be any parking available at the Northline Transit Center?
Response 18: A METRO-operated parking facility is not part of the LPA (LRT) project. However, METRO's plans do not preclude the construction of a garage by other entities.

Comment 19: What bus routes will connect to the LPA at the Northline Transit Center?
Response 19: Bus Routes 15, 23, 79, 24, 9 and 44. As the project enters final design, more bus interface connections will be explored.

Comment 20: Will the West Tidwell Quickline bus service connect to the LPA? If not, are there provisions for those riders to access the light rail system elsewhere?
Response 20: Yes, the Tidwell Quickline bus will provide a connection to the LPA.

Comment 21: What is the purpose of the elevated station at Hardy Yards?
Response 21: The LRT station being located over the Union Pacific Railroad ties into the development of the Intermodal Terminal and future transit modes, including commuter rail, light rail, and bus.

Comment 22: Are there any plans for a potential station at Collingsworth Street?
Response 22: There are no plans for a station at Collingsworth Street. The Moody Park Station is located within 1,100 feet north of Collingsworth Street.

Comment 23: Please define a "kiss and ride."
Response 23: A kiss-and-ride area is a very short-term parking location near or at a transit station where an auto driver can safely drop off his or her passenger(s), so they can take transit to their final destination, and then immediately drives away.

Comment 24: If the Quitman "kiss and ride" meets ridership goals, are there any plans or allowances for these types of stations elsewhere in the corridor?
Response 24: At some transit stops, there will be a few informal Kiss and Ride trips (curb side dropping). If the demand exists, Kiss and Ride locations would be considered.

Comment 25: How will the expected reconstruction of I-45 by TxDOT in the next few years impact the LPA?
Response 25: No adverse impacts are expected. There is a strong possibility that the LPA will be operational before TxDOT begins construction on I-45.

Comment 26: How will the expected construction of the Hardy Toll Road between Downtown and Loop 610 impact the LPA?
Response 26: Construction of the Hardy Toll Road extension into Downtown is not expected to have any adverse impacts on the LPA.

Comment 27: What measures are being taken to reduce light pollution?
Response 27: Station area lighting will comply with the City of Houston lighting standards. Spillage of light to areas adjacent to METRO facilities will be prevented. Lighting may include shielded fixtures with cut-off shields at the perimeter of residential adjacencies. Lighting sources will be indirect, diffused, or covered by shielded type fixtures installed to reduce glare and the consequent interference with adjacent properties.

Comment 28: What will be the value assessed to a parking spot that is acquired for right-of-way?
Response 28: Value accessed for right of way will be based on fair market value, as determined by acertified appraiser in accordance with appraisal industry methods and standards.

Comment 29: What is the expected amount of "temporary reductions" in property tax revenues? Why is no mitigation required, since local governments will potentially lose revenues?
Response 29: Property values (and in turn tax revenues) are affected by a variety of market conditions. Short-term impacts of an LRT project, either positively or negatively, on property values are difficult to assess conclusively.

Evidence suggests that LRT transit around the country has resulted in facilitating increased property values long-term, particularly near stations.

Comment 30: What is the process for recompensing property owners?
Response 30: METRO will strictly adhere to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (49 CFR Part 24), as amended. Property owners will be offered full fair market value as determined by independent appraisers for property acquired.

Comment 31: Please give more information about the proposed relocation and advisory project.
Response 31: METRO will strictly adhere to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (49 CFR Part 24), as amended. Property owners will be offered full fair market value as determined by independent appraisers for property acquired.

METRO's Real Estate Relocation Program specifies comprehensive policies and procedures and will provide persons being displaced by the project a relocation consultant who will guide them through the relocation process and ensure that all persons to be relocated will receive all benefits for which they qualify. Assistance will be provided as needed to find replacement properties, provide for moving of personal items, and assist in filing claims for payment of qualified benefits. Advisory services will be provided for all persons affected by the project. The

Relocation Plan sets forth procedures for the fair, uniform, and equitable treatment of persons and businesses displaced from their dwellings.

The relocation process will begin when a parcel is identified as having a displacee(s). Advisory services are provided to all citizens or Nationals of the U.S., or to persons lawfully present in the United States. The relocation agent will accompany the appraiser on the inspection of the property being acquired. At this "first contact" the relocation agent will schedule an appointment with the owner to discuss the relocation program. If the property is occupied by tenants, the agent will ask the property owner for tenant contact information to meet with the tenants and explain their benefits to them. The agent will then contact the tenants and schedule an appointment with them to explain the relocation program. At the meeting with the owner/tenant the agent will explain the relocation program, gather information that will help determine the benefits that they may qualify for and provide them a relocation brochure.

If the displacee is a person of limited English proficiency, the advisory services described here will be provided by a qualified advisor who speaks the displacee's primary language, or by a qualified advisor with the assistance of a qualified translator who speaks the primary language of the displacee.

For residential relocations, Federal law requires that comparable replacement dwellings be available before residential displacements occur. Local real estate professionals will determine if comparable replacement housing would be available. Moving expenses will be reimbursed for actual and related costs incurred in moving. This assistance is available to persons renting or leasing a residence that will be acquired. The following outlines the relocation process for residential relocations.

- Search and prepare for the displacee available replacement housing and gather information for relocating property owners. Compile a list showing cost, number of bedrooms, number of baths, square feet, and features such as fireplaces and handicap ramps.
- Calculate replacement housing supplemental benefit based on comparable properties currently available in the local real estate market.
- Provide the delivery date and explain the "90 day notice to vacate" with delivery of the benefit package.
- Prepare a sketch and take photos of the new dwelling and send a report to METRO that a new dwelling is decent, safe, and sanitary by verifying that air conditioning, heat and all appliances are operable, the windows open, the doors lock, there are no infestations and there are no gas or water leaks.
- Prepare and route check request for moving expenses.
- Issue the 30-day notice when the property is acquired. If the property is not acquired through negotiations, the notice is given after the title is secured by condemnation.
- Arrange for property to be secured until demolition (fencing, boarding up).
- Maintain detailed relocation logs for each visit and note everything discussed with the displacee.
- The relocation agent will be available to METRO for all appeals and hearings for their expert testimony and to verify the content of their discussions with the property owner.

Efforts are made to provide both comparable replacement housing and suitable replacement sites for businesses and residents. METRO has acquired right-of-way from 26 addressed properties for the North Corridor project. METRO has been very successful in finding comparable replacement housing and suitable replacement sites.

For businesses and non-profit organizations, moving expenses will be reimbursed for actual and related costs incurred in moving. In cases where relocation will be necessary for right-of-way acquisition, a decision on relocation will be reviewed with each business owner to ensure that they are aware of all of the opportunities. Suitable facilities for relocation existing in the general area will be sought. The following outlines the relocation process for businesses and non-profit organizations relocations.

- Take business survey to determine needs in a replacement site.
- Search market for available business sites.
- Prepare and send Letter of Eligibility advising displacee of relocation assistance and rights.
- Send 90-day letter.
- Take inventory of business property for moving estimates.
- Obtain moving bids, if displacee chooses a commercial move.
- Prepare claim forms for displacee's signature.
- Have claim forms signed by displace.
- Send 30 day Letter to Vacate.
- Prepare and route check request for moving expenses.
- Arrange for property to be secured until demolition (fencing, boarding up).

Comment 32: Connectivity must be continuous; therefore relocation of bikeways must be completed prior to existing bikeways being taken out of service.
Response 32: The construction staging will be coordinated with the City of Houston to ensure the relocated bike lanes are continuous throughout the construction phases.

Comment 33: Sanitary Access: Direct access will need to be retained for maintenance and operation of the existing facilities along the corridor.
Response 33: This will be worked out with the City of Houston during final design.

Comment 34: It is mentioned that the update of the Master Plan will be available in 2008 (pg 3-15). The update to the HPARD Master Plan is in HPARD's website at www.houstontx.gov/parks/pdfs/2007masterplan-final.pdf.
Response 34: Comment noted.

Comment 35: There is mention of T.R. Roosevelt Elementary/SPARK Park where the LRT is elevated. The following statement is made about the SPARK Park: *Access to the SPARK, though it may be altered by the elevated structure, will be maintained* (p. *5-66).* Need clarification of this statement.
Response 35: The elevated LRT structure will be located on the east side of Fulton Street, while the T.R. Roosevelt Elementary/SPARK Park is located on the west side of Fulton Street. Therefore, the existing access to the T.R. Roosevelt Elementary/SPARK Park will not change.

Comment 36: The report does not specifically address whether the art piece in Moody Park, *Vaquero* by Luis Jimenez, will be affected by vibration or not. This issue needs to be acknowledged.
Response 36: A vibration analysis was conducted as part of the SFEIS. As stated in Section 5.5.2, due to the low speeds of the trains, only one impact to a vibration-sensitive location was determined at 606 Boundary Street. The art piece will not be affected.

Comment 37: I noticed that some of the houses around me are considered "historic." If I'm between these houses, how can I go about making my home historic? My home was built back in the 1940s.
Response 37: METRO conducted a historic properties survey in accordance with requirements established by the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Many of the properties in the corridor were not considered historic [i.e., eligible of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)] as individual properties but part of a potential historic district eligible for listing on the NRHP. To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, historical buildings, sites, structures, and objects must be at least 50 years old and be significant under one or more NRHP criteria and have sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey that historical significance. The following are some of the criteria for historical significance:

- Criterion A: site of or association with a nationally, statewide, or locally significant historical event or pattern of history.
- Criterion B: site of or association with a nationally, statewide, or locally significant personage.
- Criterion C: representative of or significant example of nationally, statewide, or locally distinguished architecture or architect.
- Criterion D: thought to hold the promise of important information about prehistorical or historical processes, lifeways, or events.

Comment 38: The corner home on my street (202 English) has been purchased by METRO and relocated the resident elsewhere. What is going to happen to the house now that its boarded up and empty?
Response 38: METRO intends to demolish the building once the FTA approves.

Comment 39: I see that on Graceland there is going to be a LRT station but what about on Fulton Street/English Street? Are they going to demolish the house? What will that property be used for?
Response 39: To accommodate the fixed guideway and Graceland Station, the house at 202 English Street will be purchased and demolished.

Comment 40: Please consider at station at Main Street and Hogan Street. There are many new homes built and to be built in the future here (residents who work downtown and the medical center).
Response 40: This area will be served by both the Burnett Station and the Quitman Station. The Burnett Station will be approximately 1,800 feet south and Quitman Station will be approximately 1,900 feet north of the Main Street and Hogan Street intersection.

Comment 41: I love the Graceland Station addition.
Response 41: Such sentiments support the need for this station.

Comment 42: What are transportation conditions along the corridor now? What are the METRO's transit conditions along the corridor now? What might those conditions be like in the future and what would it take to cause travel conditions to fall to the levels envisioned my METRO? METRO is planning on reducing travel lanes on North Main Street, Boundary Street, and Fulton Street to increase congestion in the corridor to justify LRT. The SFEIS does not show the corridor will suffer traffic congestion and that riders will save 25 minutes in 2030.
Response 42: Table 4-16 of the December 2006 FEIS shows the 2004 traffic intersection delay and level-of-service (LOS) in the North Corridor. Tables 4-8 and 4-9 in the April 2008 SFEIS shows the 2010 base traffic condition intersection delay and LOS and future traffic

(2025) intersection delay and LOS, respectively. Some reduction in travel lanes is proposed to accommodate stations and minimize impacts to existing properties and structures.

H-GAC forecasts that daily person trips in the region will grow by 61 percent between 2007 and 2030. During the same period, daily person trips in the North Corridor are projected to increase by 53 percent. The increase in travel demand will cause spillover from the freeway system onto North Corridor streets, thereby impeding METRO's bus operations and affecting METRO's ability to serve a growing ridership. As traffic congestion increases in the corridor, existing bus speeds could decrease resulting in a negative impact on transit ridership. The Build Alternatives could increase system-wide, unlinked transit trips by as many as 18,850 daily trips as compared to the No Build Alternative. The fixed guideway would reduce transit travel times and provide additional connections to the regional transit system, thereby, enhancing mobility as compared to the No Build Alternative.

As stated in Section 1.3.2, the purposes for implementing a fixed guideway transit service in the North Corridor include: enhancing the quality and reliability of the transportation system by decreasing delay; Providing more travel choices from residential areas to major destinations in Downtown Houston, especially for transit-dependent populations; enhancing travel to major employment centers such as Downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center; improving interregional connections to the existing METRORail system; and changing modes of travel and reducing the existing dependence on the automobile thereby helping improve air quality.

Comment 43: The aerial structure and 10-foot wide lanes on Fulton Street at the HB&T Railroad will affect existing freight trucking operations in that area. Large trucks will not be able to turn or maneuver into their businesses.
Response 43: Near the HB&T Railroad, the existing number and width of lanes on Fulton Street in the southbound direction remain the same. In the northbound direction on Fulton there will be a left turn lane provided for turns onto Stokes Street but only one 11-foot wide lane for through traffic. Ingress and egress issues will be addressed during the final engineering design phase for large trucks along the entire corridor.

Comment 44: Concerned about rising cost of construction and METRO's ability to fund and operate the North Corridor and maintain bus service.
Response 44: Chapter 8 of the SFEIS discloses METRO's capital and operating plans at both the project and agency levels as well as the assumptions used. The capital plan (Section 8.4) addresses detailed estimates of annual construction costs and includes contingencies for cost increases per industry standard. Chapter 8 also identifies the financial resources required to fund the capital and operations and maintenance costs associated with the North Corridor LPA in the context of the existing LRT line and bus service. It also demonstrates to the FTA the financial capacity of METRO to build, operate, and maintain the North Corridor LPA while continuing to operate and expand their existing base transit system and complete the other components of the METRO Solutions plan.

Comment 45: Please use attractive, hardy and easy to maintain landscaping around the eight stations and the five power sources.
Response 45: Station will be designed to be compatible with each specific location, being respectful of the primary land use in the surrounding area. METRO will continue on-going coordination with local neighborhood and community groups regarding stations throughout the project. All TPSS locations will be located within a fenced area to help mitigate any visual impacts.

Comment 46: There are no aerial engineering drawings showing property owners the alignment as it would be laid out in the street. METRO has included engineering drawings but it is impossible to tell what is happening.
Response 46: Comment noted. The engineering drawings did indicate where right-of-way would be acquired for the project.

Comment 47: At the SFEIS North Public Hearing, METRO claimed verbally and on their power point presentation that there were no adverse affects or mitigating damages. This is incorrect and the SFEIS states there are damages.
Response 47: During the formal presentation, it was stated that there are no anticipated adverse effects to social, air quality, parkland, geology, soils, hazardous and regulated materials sites, parking, freight rail, or trucking. The adverse impacts on land use, noise, vibration, visual, ecosystems, hydrology, water quality, historic resources, safety and security, highways/roadways, and bike and pedestrian were discussed, as well as mitigation measures.

Comment 48: The North Side meeting had no information on the Intermodal terminal effect on streets/adjoining property on the Northside. The North side has an incomplete picture of the Intermodal and the North alignment.
Response 48: The Intermodal Terminal is an independent project and was studied under a separate Environmental Assessment. The SFEIS does reference the Intermodal Terminal.

Comment 49: The minority neighborhoods with Hispanic businesses will be severely affected. Since this is a minority area -- job loss and business loss will be severely felt. A big concern is the loss of current street lanes as well as median cuts which will devastate all existing business on the North side.
Response 49: The project will require acquisition of private properties and relocation of businesses and persons residing in the immediate project area. The alignment was developed to minimize acquisition and displacement of homes and businesses by constructing the fixed guideway primarily in existing street right-of-way. However, the project will still require acquisition and displacement of 10 residences and 16 businesses. These displacements will not disproportionately affect low-income or minority populations.

There is a higher percentage of minority and lower income households in this corridor compared to Harris County. Failure to invest major capital in transit infrastructure and transit service may have a disproportionately adverse impact on these residents in comparison to other corridors in the METRO service area. The No Build Alternative will not impose additional barriers to access of community facilities, social interaction, or community functions by residents within the North Corridor, nor would it enhance the mobility of the minority communities served by the planned LRT.

The project will result in a major transit investment in the North Corridor that will lead to higher levels of transit service and accessibility to employment/activity centers (such as Downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center). The analysis concluded that implementing the project will not have a disproportionately adverse affect on any racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group. With appropriate planning, incentives, and/or controls, development under the project could be concentrated at station areas versus a diffuse pattern of development that will be more likely under the No Build Alternative. Access for transit dependent residents to community facilities will be improved by implementation of the project. With respect to community cohesion, the project will not introduce a boundary between neighborhoods due to its mostly street-running configuration.

Comment 50: North side property takings have been decreased by 150 in the SFEIS versus the FEIS. LRT alignments cause more takings, not less.
Response 50: The alignment was developed to minimize acquisition and displacement of homes and businesses by constructing the fixed guideway primarily in existing street right-of-way. Approximately 5.2 acres of property will be acquired for the project from 95 addresses. The typical sections in the December 2006 FEIS showed a 27-foot guideway with one 18-foot traffic lane in each direction and eight-foot (minimum) parkways. During Preliminary Engineering, the typical section has been revised to a 26-foot guideway with one 10 to 17-foot traffic lane in each direction and six to 10-foot parkways to reduce displacements and property impacts while still maintaining the traffic level-of-service.

Comment 51: With the tight radius of the rail line at Main Street and Boundary Street mitigation may be required to avoid noise from the track wheels as the traction slips along the radius, especially if this noise is in conflict with the city's Noise Ordinance.
Response 51: A noise analysis was conducted as part of the SFEIS. As stated in Section 5.5.1, two residences on either side of Boundary Street are projected to have moderate noise impact from LRT operations at the turn from North Main Street to Boundary Street. The noise impact is due to the proximity of the tracks to the residences and the audible warning devices (bells and whistles) at the grade crossing at North Main Street and Boundary Street. Based on the results of the noise assessment, mitigation in the form of bell orientation has been adopted at this location.

Comment 52: The property at 1125 East Freeway should have been designated as a historic resource. It appears to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A and D. It also appears to be located in the National Register eligible Warehouse District. It appears that the property was either omitted from the contributing resources analysis and the analysis was improperly made regarding the property. We request METRO re-evaluate this property and apply necessary changes to the project.
Response 52: The property is not within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the North Corridor, as established by METRO and the THC (see Section 3.9.3 of the SFEIS). However, the project is included in the APE of the Intermodal Project. An extensive historic structures survey was conducted for Intermodal Terminal and the building was assessed as part of this survey and found to be a contributing element to NRHP-eligible Warehouse Historic District, only and not eligible for individual listing; THC concurred with this finding.

APPENDIX C

AMENDED MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
DEVELOPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 106 OF
THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT