

6. PUBLIC AND AGENCY COORDINATION

This chapter describes the on-going community and stakeholder participation and coordination program conducted during the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.^{1,2} It also describes the public hearing and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) review process and presents the comments received during this process and responses to the comments. The comments were considered by the METRO Board of Directors in making a decision on the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Southeast Corridor.

The LPA provides for new bus rapid transit (BRT) service operating along a line extending from downtown Houston to a terminus on Griggs Road at Beekman Road east of Martin Luther King Boulevard, connecting downtown Houston with the universities area including Texas Southern University (TSU) and the University of Houston (UH), and the Palm Center. The service would operate in diamond lanes in downtown from Louisiana to Polk Street and in exclusive lanes along a fixed guideway alignment on Scott Street, Wheeler Street, Martin Luther King Boulevard, and Griggs Road to the terminus at Beekman Road. The fixed guideway would be constructed for future conversion to light rail transit when warranted by ridership.

During the course of the project, over 90 meetings ranging from scoping meetings to open houses and workshops were held in order to inform and obtain input from the participants. The results of these efforts have been documented and can be obtained from Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) upon request. Additionally, extensive media and public relations activities occurred, including maintaining a dedicated website, issuing press releases, providing interviews, and mailing printed informational material including newsletters.

6.1 Public Involvement Program

A program was developed at the initiation of the AA/EIS process to identify how the public and other stakeholders would be engaged throughout the duration of this project. That framework is defined in the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that was approved by METRO in 2004 and updated throughout the course of the process.

The PIP was used as a means of ensuring active involvement for the public, affected agencies, and others to become partners and interact effectively throughout the project. It was designed to be proactive and adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the requirements defined by Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Executive Order 12898 for Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice on Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (3

¹ Acronyms and abbreviations are defined at their first use in each chapter. A complete list of acronyms and abbreviations used in this FEIS is contained in Appendix A.

² This FEIS incorporates by reference all technical information, studies, and other public documents produced for the Southeast-Universities-Hobby Corridor Planning Study Alternatives (AA) and the *METRO Solutions Transit System Plan* that support the FEIS. These documents are considered part of the environmental compliance record and can be requested for review at the METRO offices.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 1994 Comp., p. 859), and the National Historic Preservation Act guidance (16 United States Code (USC) 470 et seq.). Below are a few of the strategic objectives and guiding principles that framed the public and stakeholder involvement for this project. The PIP includes the complete list.

6.1.1 Objectives

- Dissemination of information about the Southeast Corridor to the general public and to directly affected communities.
- Identification of stakeholder groups most affected by and interested in the Southeast Corridor and active solicitation of their input.
- Efforts to ensure adequate community understanding and maximum input through tactically planned communication forums and mechanisms.
- Production of an environmental document that is sensitive to and adequately addresses issues raised by the selection of the locally preferred investment strategy (LPIS) and the corridor's multiple stakeholders.

6.1.2 Guiding Principles

- Citizen participation will be solicited throughout the study.
- Efforts will be made to identify and reach out to all segments of the community.
- Two-way communication (i.e., the free exchange of information, ideas, and values between the project team and citizens) will be sought.
- Study status and findings will be reported regularly to the public using a variety of communication mechanisms.
- All reasonable and promising suggestions by the community will be given serious consideration by the project team.
- The project team will take proactive steps to establish and maintain a physical presence in the communities.
- The project team will promptly follow-up in response to citizen's inquiries.
- Public involvement activities and input will be documented and accessible to all interested parties.
- Public meetings will be informal and will present information in language geared to the lay public and in a bi-lingual format. These meetings will provide opportunities for the public to talk directly with project team members and comments will be documented to ensure project team consideration.
- A wide range of approaches for different groups will be employed.
- Multiple opportunities will be provided for citizen input.

6.2 Public Involvement Strategies and Activities

Throughout the project, it was important to reinforce the AA/EIS process and the role the public plays within that process. With this goal in mind, the project team has consistently attempted to keep the following objectives in mind when implementing the public involvement strategies:

- What kind of input is being sought?
- What will be done with that input?
- When can the public anticipate a response to their input?
- What is the next step?

To facilitate a smooth and effective public outreach process, project information was developed that clearly outlined the AA/EIS process and clarified the role of project participants within that process. Special care was taken to initiate public involvement strategies that kept the general public informed of the progress of the study on an on-going basis. Strategies best suited to this type of communication include working committees, individual and group stakeholder meetings, public meetings and hearings, project-specific links, and updates to the *ridemetro.org* public web site. At major milestones throughout the study process, opportunities were provided for interested individuals to congregate and discuss the overall project progress and findings to date. Public open houses were also augmented with smaller "issues forums" which focused on specific environmental elements such as alternatives analysis, traffic impacts, mobility, and social impacts.

The public involvement activities targeted affected audiences, including local, state and federal government offices, business owners, property owners and residents within the study area, elected officials, and the general public. These groups, and others identified over the course of the study, were integrated into the study process, informed on an on-going basis, and invited to participate in developing feasible alternatives.

Following is a discussion of the meetings held over the course of the project. The meetings consisted of scoping meetings, formal community stakeholder and public meetings, Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC) meetings, general public meetings, and community workshops and open houses.

6.2.1 Scoping Meetings

The official Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the *Federal Register* on January 9, 2002. Scoping is a study process designed to inform the public and involved agencies about the proposed project and to identify issues and concerns early in the review process. The scoping process helps to define the alternatives to be examined and the impacts to be considered, as well as to eliminate non-significant issues. Newspaper public notices and meeting notification mailers were the primary devices used to notify the public about the meetings. Public meeting announcements were mailed to everyone on the project mailing list, which at the time contained approximately 500 addresses. Additionally, the project team distributed

more than 2,000 flyers to local businesses, retail and transit centers, schools and churches throughout the corridor. Other meetings held in 2002 were also publicized via a project website.

Formal interagency and public scoping meetings were held on February 19, 2002 at the Jesse Jones High School and on February 21, 2002 at the Texas Southern University (TSU) School of Technology. These meetings were geared towards reviewing the study goals and objectives and identifying a preliminary list of potential alternatives. The purpose and need statement, initial alternatives, and an outline of the alternatives analysis was presented at these meetings. In addition to the two public scoping meetings, an agency scoping meeting was coordinated by METRO and focused on all three Advanced High Capacity Transit (AHCT) corridors. The agency scoping meeting was held at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) offices on February 25, 2002.

6.2.2 Community Stakeholder Meetings and Public Meetings

Formal community stakeholder meetings and public meetings were held with key stakeholders representing neighborhood groups, businesses, special interest groups, and political jurisdictions. The meetings were held to obtain input on community issues and to review alternatives. Initial stakeholder meetings were used to identify members of the community that represented the various constituencies in the corridor. Over the course of the study, the project team facilitated more than 70 stakeholder meetings. In addition, project team members have attended and made presentations to a variety of community and neighborhood organizations in the study area.

6.2.3 Community Involvement Committee

A CIC was established to obtain input from the community at large. The CIC met at regular intervals related to major project milestones. The CIC provided feedback on the public participation activities, assisted in identifying stakeholders, and served as a liaison to their respective constituencies.

The CIC consisted of approximately 30 members made up of special interests and economic development representatives, property owners, residents, business owners, neighborhood association representatives, school district and university representatives, and other stakeholder groups that were identified within the corridor throughout the study process. The CIC met to review and comment on the project purpose and need, goals and objectives, evaluation measures, and conceptual alternatives. The CIC met a total of eight times during the course of the AA/EIS. Following is a listing of the meetings and general topics discussed at each meeting:

- April 30, 2002 – The long list of alignment possibilities and their screening (including input from the CIC);
- May 28, 2002 – Transit-related economic development potential within the corridor; short list of route segments and their formulation into route alternatives;
- July 9, 2002 – Transit technology evaluation and conclusions, update on route alternatives, discussion of evaluation methodology;

- October 24, 2002 – Update on the short-list of route alternatives and review of the evaluation criteria;
- November 19, 2002 – Conceptual design of the short-listed route alternatives;
- February 18, 2003 – Initial findings regarding the route alternatives and corridor sectors; and
- February 23, 2006 – Discussion of the build alternatives and alignment options on Scott Street/Griggs Road and Wheeler Street/Martin Luther King Boulevard.
- May 23, 2006 – Discussion of the environmental impacts along both alignment options, Scott Street/Griggs Road and Wheeler Street/Martin Luther King Boulevard.

6.2.4 General Public Meetings

General public meetings were used to reach out to the general public, particularly area residents, business owners, and other stakeholders within the study area. A total of 12 general public meetings were held during the course of the AA/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Comments received during the AA phase were used in the development of goals and objectives for evaluation of alternatives. Community disruption seemed to be the primary concern regarding route location. Other concerns noted during the AA phase included the need for the selected route to support opportunities for revitalization, improved north-south connectivity, fear of gentrification, and the need for the project to be pedestrian-friendly and aesthetically pleasing.

During the DEIS phase of the project, comments were more focused on the potential impacts of the build alternatives under consideration and the alignment options. The following public meetings were held:

- Tuesday, March 30, 2004, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Pilgrim Community Center, 3118 Blodgett Street;
- Thursday, April 1, 2004, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Palm Center Business Technology Center, 5330 Griggs Road;
- Tuesday, February 28, 2006, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive; and
- Wednesday, March 1, 2006, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Palm Center Business Technology Center, 5330 Griggs Road.
- Thursday, August 17, 2006, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Palm Center Business Technology Center, 5330 Griggs Road.

During the 2004 public meetings, support for the build alternatives was positive from most of those in attendance at the meetings. Scott Street was identified as being a great opportunity for economic revitalization. Some attendees indicated a preference for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway route because it would be less

disruptive and provide the fastest travel time to downtown. Other recognized that the route would bypass TSU and the Third Ward community.

The primary concerns regarding the alignment on Scott Street focused on resident displacements and potential area gentrification, property encroachment, construction impacts, traffic flow impacts, and irreversible changes to the fabric of the Third Ward community. The location of stations was of particular interest to the attendees at the meetings. Station locations suggested for study included Scott Street at Elgin, Holman, Cleburne, Wheeler, Blodgett, and at Palm Center. Comments also were expressed about the need for a park-and-ride lot at the station in the vicinity of Palm Center or expanded parking at the Southeast Transit Center.

In June of 2005, a Town Hall meeting requested by Houston City Councilmember Ada Edwards led to a discussion about the potential impacts on Scott Street south of Wheeler Street. Following this meeting, a task force was appointed to examine the matter and provide a suggested alternative. On July 29, 2005, the task force met and provided the optional alignment of Wheeler Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard, and as a result, this option was added to the DEIS for evaluation.

During the 2006 public meetings, a preference for the light rail transit (LRT) Alternative or BRT Convertible Alternative was expressed. In addition, support was expressed for the Wheeler-MLK alignment option over the base alignment option. Access to properties along Scott Street south of Wheeler Street and displacement of residents were major concerns of the base alignment option.

6.2.5 Community Workshops and Open Houses

During 2004, METRO sponsored a series of area-specific workshops to obtain comments from residents, property owners, and business owners likely to be most directly affected by the project. METRO hosted a workshop for each of four segments of the study area – (1) downtown to Interstate Highway 45 (IH-45); (2) IH-45 to South MacGregor Parkway; (3) Old Spanish Trail/Griggs Road to Martin Luther King Boulevard; and (4) Palm Center to Wayside Drive. A total of eight community workshops and open houses were held during the AA/DEIS. At these workshops, attendees engaged in informal discussions on various topics relevant to their specific portion of the line. METRO and consultant team representatives were available to answer questions and address concerns. The meetings were conducted in an open house format. A summary of the comments received during each the four workshops are presented below.

6.2.5.1 Workshop 1: Downtown Area to IH-45

This workshop for the downtown to IH-45 segment was held on June 23, 2004. A total of 76 persons attended. Comments received at this workshop focused on the downtown alignment options, the alignment along Scott Street to IH-45, and station locations. The concerns expressed at the workshop included economic development in underdeveloped areas of downtown, traffic congestion, construction disruption, and safety at crossings.

Some participants expressed concern over increased traffic congestion associated with the recently opened LRT line in downtown. Avoidance of traffic congestion was identified as the one of the major reasons supporting the subway option. Other comments were that the subway option would be less obtrusive, less disruptive during construction, and safer for pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Safety was a major concern because the number of accidents on the existing METRORail Red Line. It was suggested that the vehicles should be brightly painted and horns used at intersections. Also safety railings should be installed especially around schools and residential areas. Residents of downtown indicated that noise levels during construction should be kept to a minimum.

The majority of participants preferred the at-grade alignment on Capitol in downtown and the proposal to maintain four lanes for traffic on Scott Street. Some of the downtown community near Chinatown suggested a station on Rusk as near Chartres as possible to maximize economic development in the commercial area of Chinatown. Participants preferred carefully and strategically planned transit-oriented development. A desire was expressed for wider sidewalks to encourage more pedestrian-friendly development. Because of the many areas of industrial, underdeveloped, and vacant land use in this segment of the corridor, economic development opportunities are more numerous. Most supported the goal of increasing residential and commercial land use in the area. Additional public consideration of alignment alternatives in downtown was conducted during the Downtown Connector Study, as described in Section 6.6.

6.2.5.2 Workshop 2: IH-45 to South MacGregor Parkway

This workshop was held on June 24, 2004, and was attended by 30 persons. The vast majority of the participants expressed support for the Scott Street alignment – indicating that it equally serves both UH and TSU communities. Because this area is primarily residential rather than commercial, the major concerns expressed at the workshop focused on traffic and community impacts.

Most participants voiced a preference for maintaining four lanes on Scott Street, as compared to reducing the street to two lanes, or one in each direction. Maintaining the existing number of lanes will improve traffic flow. Although residents indicated that the project team should be considerate of property encroachment; most thought that reducing the number of lanes would lead to congestion. There also was concern that the proposed traffic lane and sidewalk widths were too narrow. Wider sidewalks were indicated to be more pedestrian-friendly. Comments on the number of accidents along Main Street on the METRORail Red Line led to a discussion of additional pedestrian and vehicular safety measures. It was noted that guard rails may be necessary at cross-streets. Some expressed doubt that drivers would choose to travel around the block rather than make an illegal left-turn.

In general, the only station location receiving much comment was the Elgin Street station location. Some participants suggested that a Holman Street location would be a better location when considering ridership relative to students accessing the UH campus. Concerns regarding “gang activity” on and around that corner were also expressed. Most thought a station at McGowen Street was not a good location because of crime concerns.

6.2.5.3 Workshop 3: South MacGregor Parkway to Martin Luther King Boulevard

This workshop was held on June 28, 2004. A total of 51 persons attended the workshop. The majority of the residents and business owners expressed support for the alignment, but wanted to be assured that METRO provided the same quality of design and aesthetics to the Southeast Corridor as in other corridors. The majority of comments expressed at this workshop focused on encouraging community revitalization and transit-oriented development. The community seeks the same kind of beautification, revitalization, and sensitized concern that occurred on Main Street along the METRORail Red Line.

Most participants supported maintaining four lanes on Scott Street and Griggs Road. Business owners expressed concerns about how construction will hinder access to their businesses.

A key agenda item at this workshop was to provide participants the opportunity to comment on the base alignment option. Most participants felt the option that was least intrusive, most cost effective and attracted more economic growth and transit-oriented development would be best. The written comments received were more supportive of the base alignment option. A few participants indicated the Griggs Road option seemed less obtrusive and more convenient for passengers and for the potential addition of parking. The base alignment option was considered more favorable for traffic flow.

6.2.5.4 Workshop 4: Martin Luther King Boulevard to IH-610

This workshop was held on June 29, 2004, and was attended by 39 persons. Again, the vast majority of those in attendance supported the fixed-guideway alignment in their community, and expressed gratitude that their community was not being “by-passed.” Many felt the fixed guideway could revitalize their community as well as bring future generations of residents and retail back to this area.

A primary focus for hosting this fourth meeting with the area limits between Palm Center and Wayside Drive was to concentrate on engaging the residents and businesses in that area who have customarily been non-participants in the project development process. The demographics of the area indicate a diverse racial profile with high populations of both African-Americans and Hispanics. Despite extraordinary outreach efforts in the area specifically targeted to engage the Hispanic/Latino population and other residents/businesses east of Martin Luther King Boulevard, the majority of the participants represented interests near and west of Martin Luther King Boulevard along Old Spanish Trail and Griggs Road.

Similar to the prior three meetings, concerns were expressed regarding the need for revitalization of the community. Like the downtown segment, there is a substantial amount of underdeveloped and vacant land in the area. Upscale, sit-down restaurants, bowling alleys, movie theatres, retail, and commercial businesses that cater to the entire family both young and old are desired.

Participants repeatedly expressed a disdain for the inordinate number of industrial, stone, and concrete sites that currently occupy numerous sites in this area. Residents

indicated that they are noisy and unattractive and would prefer land uses more appropriate for residential communities.

6.3 Communications

The public involvement program for the AA/DEIS incorporated concentrated efforts in gathering information, encouraging community involvement as well as providing the public with information and education. At the same time, the public involvement team sought to:

- Build on the existing community partnerships and communication networks.
- Develop, distribute, and display high quality, innovative, user-friendly, and community appropriate information.
- Coordinate closely with local jurisdictions, community organizations, and neighborhood organizations.
- Respond in a timely manner to questions and concerns raised throughout the process.

Project-specific written and graphic materials were developed for targeted audiences. The project newsletter, "*For Public Record*" and Metrosoutheastplan.org and RideMetro.org websites were the primary vehicles for public updates and feedback.

From May to August 2006, meetings were held with several groups including the MacGregor Trail Civic Club, OST Coalition of Community Partnerships, Cuney Homes Residential Council, LaSalette-South Union Coalition of Civic Clubs, W. MacGregor Estates Civic Association, Friends of MacGregor Park, University Woods/Oak Manor Civic Association, Parkwood Drive Civic Association, and the S. MacGregor Super Neighborhood #83 Association.

6.3.1 Project Newsletter

From May 2002 through May 2003, three newsletters were distributed. The newsletters were developed to provide study updates and to keep people informed on the overall activities planned or underway. The newsletters also reflected remarks on *The Words We Heard* at other stakeholder meetings held throughout the corridor. Project newsletters were mass mailed to all database affiliates and placed at public locations within the corridor such as community and/or senior centers, churches, recreation centers, schools, and post offices.

- The first newsletter in May 2002 provided updates to key audiences and the general public with articles that described the status of the project, announced public participation and meeting opportunities, reported on relevant neighborhood and construction issues, provided the results of previous stakeholder meetings, and solicited feedback from the readers. The first newsletter was mailed to a database of over 2,000 stakeholders, interested citizens, and community leaders, and also was distributed at community meetings/presentations.

- The second newsletter in November 2002 provided updates on design issues, highlighted the long list of alternatives, explained the project development process, announced of the upcoming Public Meetings, and provided information about how to review and comment on the alternatives. The second newsletter was mailed to a database of over 2,000 stakeholders, interested citizens, and community leaders.
- The third newsletter in May 2003 provided a summary of the finding of the AA and highlighted the short-listed Alternative 2 (SL-2) as the recommended alternative for the Southeast Corridor LPIS. The third newsletter was mailed to a database of over 2,000 stakeholders, interested citizens, and community leaders.

Another newsletter was prepared in February 2006 to identify to the public that the Wheeler-MLK alignment option and BRT and BRT Convertible alternatives were being added to the alternatives under consideration in the AA/DEIS. The newsletter also announced the public workshops on February 28 and March 1, 2006. A special edition of the project newsletter entitled “DEIS Highlights” was published to provide a summary of the DEIS findings and to announce the locations where copies of the DEIS document were available for review. The newsletter also announced the upcoming public meeting on August 17, 2006 and the public hearing on August 29, 2006.

6.3.2 Project Web Site

The project team had a project-specific web site, which provided project information and updates that enabled users to provide written feedback and electronic mail to the public involvement staff. Via the website, users were able to view and comment on details regarding the study process, the alternatives and analysis, and receive information about past and upcoming public involvement opportunities. Information on the site was updated as the study progressed to reflect project progress and documentation of major milestones. The website content included:

- Project introduction, overview, and schedule;
- Summary of the public scoping meetings;
- Presentation of the long list of alternatives;
- Presentation of the short-listed alternatives and May 2002 public meetings;
- Presentation of the alternatives analysis findings and March 2003 public meetings;
- Introduction to the AA/DEIS process and summary of the March 2004 DEIS round of public meetings; and
- Summaries of the comments and input from the June 2004 round of DEIS community workshops and public workshops held in February and March 2006.
- After completion of the DEIS, the document was included on the website for public review.
- Announcements of the August 17 public meeting and the August 29 public hearing.

Information about the project is currently available on the *Ridemetro.org* website.

6.3.3 Informational Materials

Easily understood written and graphic materials were developed for targeted audiences. Informational materials were designed so that they could serve multiple purposes and be used for community meetings; staff, committee, and stakeholder briefings; as well as for public meetings; and open houses/public workshops. The informational materials prepared to aid public involvement communications included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Informational flyers and handouts;
- Project fact sheets;
- Stakeholder comment sheets;
- Stakeholder questionnaires;
- Promotional brochures, postcards, and invitations;
- Video simulations;
- Frequently asked questions sheets;
- Display boards, visuals, and aerial graphics;
- Electronic mail; and
- Telephone contacts.

These written and graphic materials were regularly distributed to local area residents, business owners, churches, schools, and project database participants to keep them apprised of project milestones and upcoming public involvement activities. Electronic mail and telephone contacts were employed when appropriate.

6.3.4 Project Database

A database/ mailing list that included local government agencies, community groups, corridor stakeholders, and interested parties was developed, maintained, and used in disseminating project information and responding to concerns. The database also served as a public interaction tracking mechanism and was periodically updated to reflect meetings, participation levels, issues of concern, and follow-up. At the time of the DEIS publication, the project databases contain just over 2,800 entries.

6.3.5 Documentation of Written Comments

Public interaction and resulting comments were documented in the form of meeting minutes, notes, and official records of public meetings and community workshops. Following the meetings, the purpose of the meeting and the input received was documented and provided to the project team members for consideration and response as necessary.

6.3.6 Media Outreach

Information about the project was disseminated through various local, regional, and national media outlets, including print publications, radio stations, and television stations. Inquiries from media outlets requesting information on the project were forwarded to an appropriate METRO representative for response. The following media outlets were used to carry public notices, news releases, news items, and/or interviews:

Newspapers

- *African Community News Digest*
- *African-American News & Issues*
- *El Dia*
- *El Mexica*
- *Forward Times*
- *Houston Business Journal*
- *Houston Defender*
- *Houston Newspages*
- *Houston Press*
- *La Informacion*
- *La Voce Italiana*
- *La Voz de Houston*
- *South Belt-Ellington Leader*
- *Southern Chinese Daily News*
- *The Daily Cougar*
- *The Dateline-- UH Downtown*
- *The Egalitarian-HCC*
- *The Houston Chronicle*
- *The TSU Herald*
- *Semana*
- *U.S. Asia News*
- *Voice of Asia*

Television Stations

- KHOU, Channel 11
- KHWB, Channel 39
- KRIV, Channel 26
- KTRK, Channel 13
- KXLN Channel 45

Radio Stations

- KBXX-FM (97.9)
- KCOH-AM (1430)
- KHCB-FM (105.7)/KHCB-AM (1400)
- KHJZ-FM (95.7)
- KHMV-FM (96.5)
- KIKK-AM (650) and FM (95.7)
- KILT-AM (610) and FM (100.3)
- KKBQ-AM (790) and FM (92.9)
- KKRW-FM (93.7)
- KLDE-FM (107.5)
- KLOL-FM (101.1)
- KLVV-AM
- KMJQ-FM (102.1)
- KODA-FM (99.1)
- KPFT-FM (90.1)
- KPRC, Channel 2
- KPRC-AM (950)
- KQQK-FM (107.9)
- KRBE-FM (104.1)
- KRTS-FM (92.1)
- KSEV-AM (700) The Voice
- KTHT-FM (97.1 and 106.9) The Point
- KTJM-FM (98.5)
- KTRH-AM (740)
- KTSU-FM (90.9)
- KUHF-FM (88.7)
- KXTJ
- KXYZ-AM (1320)
- KTBZ-FM (96.5) The Buzz

6.3.7 Additional Activities for Increased Community Involvement

The project team initiated, conducted, and participated in additional activities to gather information and to encourage public participation. Information tables, booths, and comment hubs were set up at community events as an additional component of our team's community involvement efforts. Public involvement team members were also available to respond to inquiries and to document suggestions. Some of the specific events attended include:

- East End Chamber of Commerce Luncheon – August 15, 2002
- Houston Bikeway Program – September 19, 2002
- Chocolate Bayou Community Festival – February, 2003
- Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo – March, 2003

6.4 Meetings with Elected Officials

The METRO Government Affairs department initiated and coordinated the exchange of information with elected officials within the Southeast corridor. As needed and requested by METRO, public involvement team members were available to clarify and give details on the project and respond to questions or comments. The objective was to coordinate closely with local public officials and give each the opportunity to share concerns and suggestions for progress.

The District D METRO Rail Taskforce was developed by Councilmember Ada Edwards and State Representative Garnet Coleman. This task force held multiple meetings to discuss the project with community members and develop a recommendation. Issues of particular concern to task force members included transit ridership, neighborhood preservation, economic development, environmental soundness, public safety, and hazard mitigation. The group expressed a preference for the Wheeler-MLK alignment option.

6.5 Agency Coordination

The project team requested input, comments, and recommendations from a diverse group of working committees comprised of multi-agency representatives, technical advisors, and local area stakeholders. METRO met with technical and project administration level staff and representatives of local government and private sector agencies throughout the region. The project team periodically met with the designated agency representatives regarding major milestones, public involvement activities, to review citizen input, and to solicit input on direction of the study.

6.5.1 METRO Solutions Interagency Steering Committee

METRO established the Interagency Steering Committee for the METRO Solutions Transit System Plan (METRO, 2003) in December 2002. The purpose of the committee was to provide a regional perspective on the planning studies being conducted in high priority travel corridors throughout the METRO service area. The committee was charged with providing feedback, comments, and suggestions on the planning process

and presentation of the results from the perspective of other implementing and regulating agencies. Members consisted of key staff from the following agencies:

- Federal Transit Administration, Region VI
- Federal Highway Administration, Texas Division
- Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Harris County Public Infrastructure
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Representative of the 14 Multi-Cities
- City of Houston, Planning and Development Department
- City of Houston Public Works Department
- Harris County Toll Road Authority
- Houston Airport System
- Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County

Meetings of the Interagency Steering Committee were scheduled to correspond with key milestones in the planning process. The committee met quarterly during the AA/DEIS process on the North-Hardy Corridor, Southeast Corridor, and Uptown-West Loop Corridor.

6.5.2 Additional Agency Meetings

In addition to the meetings indicated above, the project team facilitated a number of agency-related meetings over the course of the project. Contacts were made with several public agencies, including the City of Houston Public Works Department, City of Houston Aviation Department, Texas Department of Transportation, and H-GAC to coordinate efforts, to inform agencies of issues and aspects of the project, and to address agency concerns about the project. A meeting also was held with the Texas Historical Commission to review the results of the National Register of Historic Place (NRHP) determinations for the Southeast Corridor.

6.6 Public Involvement for Downtown Connector Study

A decision was made during the AA to further consider downtown alignment alternatives and refinements in a separate study from the remainder of the Southeast Corridor. In the spring 2004, METRO, working with an advisory group sponsored by the Downtown District, initiated the Downtown Connector Study (Connector Study) to develop downtown alignment alternatives that would provide the greatest system benefits with the fewest impacts to downtown Houston.

Nine meetings were held specifically related to the Downtown Connector study. The meetings were held as follows:

- Downtown Management District on Monday, January 5, 2004;
- Downtown Management District Steering Committee on Thursday, February 5, 2004;
- Downtown Management District on Friday, February 27, 2004;
- Downtown Management District meeting held on March 30, 2004;
- Downtown Management District meeting held on April 28, 2004
- East Downtown Management District meeting held on Wednesday, May 19, 2004;
- Downtown TIRZ meeting held on Thursday, May 27, 2004;
- Susan Williams at the Commerce Residential Towers on Monday, June 21, 2004;
and
- Downtown Midtown Residents Association at the Magnolia Hotel on Monday, June 28, 2004.

This study resulted in the identification of the downtown alignment options analyzed through the DEIS process, as described in Chapter 2.

6.7 Section 106 Coordination and Public Involvement

The PIP for the Southeast Corridor also included the public involvement activities required under the implementing regulations of Section 106 (36 CFR Part 800 “Protection of Historic Properties”). The program’s specific objective is to maintain open lines of communication, active engagement, and maximum participation of the public throughout the scoping, strategy screening, alternative evaluation, and impact analysis phases of the EIS process.

Opportunities for on-going public input on historic and archeological resource issues will continue throughout the remainder of the project development process. Historical and archeological resource studies were provided at one of the information stations at the Public Hearing in the DEIS. Members of the public were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the cultural resource surveys and determination of effects reports as part of the DEIS public hearing and public comment period.

In addition to input from the public as described above, Section 106 regulations require specific and formal consultation with a number of parties. In accordance with the regulations, consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the City of Houston Historic Preservation Officer has been on-going during the EIS process.

6.8 Public Hearing

In accordance with federal regulations, the DEIS was available for public comment for 45 days after the publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* (July 28, 2006 – September 11, 2006). Copies of the document were sent to affected and interested local, regional, state, and federal agencies. Parties with a known interest in the project were notified by direct mailing of the availability of the document and the public comment period.

The public hearing took place on August 29, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Third Ward Multi-Service Center at 3611 Ennis St., Houston, Texas 77004. The comments received during the circulation period for the DEIS and responses to the comments are contained in Section 6.9.

6.9 Comments Received on the DEIS

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) incorporates comments received on the DEIS during the 45-day comment period following publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register on July 28, 2006.

The following table summarizes the comments received during the public comment period on the DEIS that ended on September 11, 2006. The table identifies the name and address of the person, agency, or organization submitting the comment, the date the comment was received, how the comment was received, the response to the comment; and if the comment required text to be changed in the FEIS.

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
1.	Daniel R. Menendez, P.E. City of Houston, Transit Coordinator Engineering and Construction Division P.O. Box 1562, Houston, TX 77251	Traffic Impacts: The following issues and questions have been presented by the Traffic and Transportation Division and should be further considered and addressed within the EIS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate any loss of on street parking • Implement traffic management plans during construction • Address impacts of transit priority control on arterial progression of traffic signals • Coordinate street geometrics, mobility, safety, bike access, and pedestrian access with COH • Review City transportation improvements that may affect the corridor • Typical sections show narrow lane widths for safe travel • Diversion of traffic due to reduction of lanes – Capitol • Left turn prohibition along corridor • Closure or vacating of streets and traffic patterns as a result • Mid-block crossings on Wheeler option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-street parking would be removed in the blocks on Capitol and Rusk in downtown with stations. Spaces would be limited to areas for the station platform. Loss would be mitigated by enhancement of on-street parking along Capitol and Rusk between stations. • Traffic management will be implemented during construction and will maintain access to all properties during hours of operation. • Transit priority is addressed in the LOS impacts of the alternatives. • Coordination is ongoing with the COH and will continue throughout the project. • All improvements have been reviewed. • Lane width of 10 feet minimum will be maintained. • No reduction in number of lanes on Capitol under LPA. • Left turns are restricted to signalized intersections along fixed guideway and are addressed in LOS analysis. • No closure or vacating of streets will be required under the LPA. • Mid-block crossing on Wheeler St will be controlled by automatic gates or traffic signal. 	Y Section 4.4
2.		Sanitary Infrastructure: The proposed routes intersect numerous sanitary sewer lines that are 36" and larger ranging in depth of cover from shallow to very deep. Engineering concerns for these systems relate to the affect on the lines from vibration, access for maintenance/repair, and load distribution analysis. Some of the more prominent conflicts have been listed [within the letter].	Sanitary Infrastructure will be addressed in greater detail during final design.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
3.	Derek Satchell for F. Lawrence Oaks Texas Historical Commission State Historic Preservation Officer P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711	We concur that the proposed undertaking will have an ADVERSE EFFECT upon the NR listed, eligible, and contributing properties located within the APE, found in Table 5-12 of the DEIS. To ascertain the degree of the adverse effect upon each property and to identify the most appropriate mitigation measures, we will need to enter into a MOA that allows the project to proceed and outlines the requirements for mitigation.	METRO has developed a MOA in cooperation with the SHPO that documents the adverse effects and describes the agreed to mitigation.	Y Appendix F
4.		We concur with your anticipation that the proposed undertaking will have a NO ADVERSE EFFECT upon the NR listed, eligible, and contributing properties located within the APE, found in Table 5-12 of the DEIS, provided that the MOA document to be developed includes an appropriate design review process to ensure compatible design of new visual elements within the APE in order to avoid the potential for adversely affecting these historic properties.	The MOA includes the comment review process required by THC.	N
5.		We concur with your anticipation that the mitigation methods proposed in Table 7-1 of the DEIS may be sufficient once the preliminary engineering identifies the precise project alignment. The MOA to be developed will include the specific mitigation measures for each historic property adversely effected by the proposed undertaking.	The MOA includes the recommended mitigation received from THC.	N
6.		Consider conducting archival research for all parcels identified within the APE for acquisition to determine potential archeological deposits.	Assessment of effect to archeological resources is discussed in Section 5.9.3.	N
7.	Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee U.S. House of Representatives 1919 Smith St., Suite 1180, Houston, TX 77002	I am concerned that as proposed, the portion of the Southeast Corridor Rail Line that traverses Wheeler Road between Scott and Calhoun, appears to present a serious safety hazard to the residents in the area... located in this area are student parking facilities, a child care center, and a church campus. Taken together, this combination of an area with heavy pedestrian traffic and high speed light rail trains poses a substantial risk of serious injury or harm to area residents.	The LPA selected by the METRO Board is a BRT system rather than LRT. The project will include the appropriate traffic control devices such as traffic signals and signage to provide for the safety of area residents and the traveling public.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
8.		METRO should consider routing the rail line through a less heavily trafficked area than Wheeler Road between Scott and Calhoun Streets.	The METRO Board selected the Wheeler-MLK alignment as the LPA based on comments received on the DEIS. This alignment has lower traffic volumes than the alternative alignment on south Scott Street and Griggs Road.	N
9.		METRO's analysis indicate that no alternative route is superior to Wheeler Road, METRO should consider the feasibility of elevating the rail line along this portion of the route.	An elevated alignment was eliminated for reasons of cost.	N
10.		METRO should fully evaluate the feasibility of constructing several elevated cross-walks across Wheeler Road.	At-grade crosswalks are considered to be the most practical. Elevated crosswalks would be costly and difficult to justify based on safety benefits.	N
11.	Brant Kotch, President and Race Director Houston Marathon Committee, Inc. 720 N. Post Oak Rd., Suite 100, Houston, TX 77024	The Southeast Corridor's proposed Guided Rapid Transit (GRT) route on Rusk and Capitol Streets threatens to severely curtail or even eliminate the only remaining access that the Committee's races have to the George R. Brown Convention Center (GRBCC)... Without the GRBCC, the continued viability of the event will be in jeopardy.	The LPA will operate in diamond lanes along Rusk and Capitol Streets. No lane removal is anticipated, only restrictions on those lanes. The lanes are not to be used exclusively for the BRT vehicles, but will function similar to other diamond lanes in downtown Houston.	N
12.		The Chevron Houston Marathon and its sister races undoubtedly contribute to the high quality of life in the City of Houston. The Committee therefore respectfully requests that METRO reconsider the location of the proposed GRT route on Rusk and Capitol Streets.	The BRT operations in diamond lanes along Capitol and Rusk will have no major effect on the marathon and its sister races.	N
13.	Robert M. Eury, Executive Director Houston Downtown Management District 909 Fannin, Suite 1650, Houston, TX 77010	Our comments relate to the areas bounded by the terminus of the system at the west end of downtown and the Union Pacific Rail Corridor to the east. After reviewing the DEIS we generally feel [the] BRT solution would be a positive resource for the Southeast Corridor; however, the LRT fixed-guideway presents impacts to the connectivity to the downtown area, an area that should maintain the highest level of connectivity and access.	The BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
14.		The LRT as shown in the DEIS exhibits a... fixed-guideway in the center of Capitol, a one-way street leaving only two lanes, one on each side. Traffic impacts on a normal day and especially during major events in downtown may impose a very poor level of service. Access points and connectivity will be greatly impacted... Intersecting LRT with Main Street corridor may result in service interruptions and increased headways that may be undesirable during peak hours.	The BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
15.		Further exploration should be considered to reduce the transfer distance near Main Street. There is a range of two to four blocks of pedestrian travel distance that should be reduced to less than two block with both stations within the same viewshed.	Station locations are identified in Chapter 2. The proposed BRT station locations are within three blocks of the Main Street stations.	N
16.		To the east of Downtown, the alignment and station locations result in limited and unacceptable service for the critical centers. The transfers between the east/west bus routes and the transit system should be strengthened.	The LPA alignment and station locations to the east of downtown were selected after consideration of all reasonable alternatives and public comment. It is considered to be the most effective alternative for serving downtown and providing the connection between downtown and Scott Street.	N
17.	Rhonda M. Smith, Chief U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Planning and Coordination Region 6 1445 Ross Ave., Suite 1200, Dallas, TX 75202-2733	EPA agrees with the assessment that the LRT option would result in the most beneficial to the air quality in the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) nonattainment area. However, we understand the fiscal reality of the need to delay the preferred option pending planned growth in transit ridership which will make the project more financially sounds. If the option selected via the DEIS/EIS process is different from the BRT Convertible option described, the new MTP and new conformity determinations will be necessary prior to federal approval of this project.	The BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
18.		Please correct the error in Section 1.3.1.2 on p.1-13. Houston is described as being a severe nonattainment area for 1-hour ozone. EPA revoked the 1-hour standard on June 15, 2005. The HGB area is now classified as a moderate ozone nonattainment area under the 8-hour ozone NAAQS.	The text has been revised.	Y Section 1.3.1.2

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
19.		An error also exists in Table 3-15 on p.3-57. In this table, the 1-hour ozone standard is listed as 0.080 parts per million (ppm). The recently revoked 1-hour standard was 0.12 ppm. This reference should be corrected in the table.	The reference in the table has been corrected.	Y Table 3-15
20.	Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company (HB&T) Bill Mathis, General Manager 2425 Highway 146 North Texas City, TX 77590	It appears that the Southeast Corridor's base alignment plan between STA 195+00 to STA 209+00, as shown on the Drawing No. CA-07 of Volume Two of the DEIS, indicates that the land required by METRO for the right-of-way will conflict with existing right-of-way property owned by HB&T. We do not believe METRO has attempted to discuss this subject with either HB&T or with Union Pacific Railroad. The right-of-way... is presently being used by HB&T, UP, and BNSF for major freight rail operations and said right-of-way cannot be made available to METRO.	The proposed alignment has been revised under the LPA to avoid the property in question. In addition, the LPA alignment from St. Emanuel to Scott Street has been changed from fixed guideway to diamond lanes.	Y Section 2.4
21.	Leon H. Belcher, II, DPM Professional Foot Care Center 4928 Griggs Road, Houston, TX 77021	I am concerned that your plan will totally destroy my business [on Griggs Road] by making the accessibility to my business difficult or impossible during the construction phase.	The LPA will avoid the property in question.	N
22.		I depend on the high volume of automobile traffic [on] Griggs Road to visually see my business sign. I fear that your plan will significantly reduce the amount of automobile traffic on Griggs Road during and after construction.	The LPA will not affect traffic on Griggs Road in the vicinity of the property in question.	N
23.		I am in opposition to Plan A... I could live with Plan B which uses Wheeler to MLK to Griggs.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. The LPA is identified in Chapter 2, Section 2.4	N
24.	Carroll Robinson, Esq. Associate Dean of External Affairs Barbara Jordan – Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs Texas Southern University Christof Spieler Citizens' Transportation Coalition	Connections to the University and Harrisburg transit rail lines: Nowhere does the DEIS discuss that METRO is planning two other transit lines that would interface with the Southeast Line... the other lines raise integration issues that may affect the location and design of stations. METRO must study, and the public must be given an opportunity to comment on, how these lines will integrate into a system.	The text was revised to include a graphic and reference to the METRO Solutions Phase 2 plan,	Y Section 1.5

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
25.		<p>Downtown connections: The connection between the Southeast/East End lines and the existing Main Street line will be a significant link in Houston's transit system. Thus, it is crucial that this transfer be both convenient and easy to understand. The light rail alignment shown meets neither of the requirements... A 3 block walk to transfer is a considerable deterrent to potential transit riders. To make matters worse, each of these transfers involves two stations with different names... This is quite confusing, especially to first-time riders. The BRT alignment is no better. There are multiple alternatives that would address these issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The McKinney Subway alternate discussed on p.2-19 would require at most a 2-block walk and the stations on both lines could be named the same. ▪ It would be possible to add a station on the Main Street line at Capitol. ▪ It would be possible to build a new right-of-way diagonally across the... block bounded by Crawford, Walker, Rusk, and Avenida de Las Americas to create a McKinny surface alignment that would transition to Rusk just west of the George R. Brown Convention Center [GRBCC]. ▪ With BRT vehicles, it is possible to introduce turns to shift the alignment onto McKinney and Walker just west of the GRBCC. <p>No modern rail system in the United States has a transfer between lines as inconvenient as the Main Street Line – Southeast Line transfer described in this document. While some riders would undoubtedly put up with the inconvenience, others will not. We should do better.</p>	<p>During the AA/DEIS process, Capitol and Rusk were selected as the preferred alignment after a screening process of all reasonable alternatives.</p>	N
26.		<p>Connections to the North Line: There will surely be some riders transferring from this service [North Line] to the Southeast Line. Based on this document, such a trip might include 2 transfers: Southeast to LRT to North. This is obviously undesirable and should be addressed.</p>	<p>Travel between the Southeast Corridor and North Corridor was not found to be a major market for transit.</p>	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
27.		Bus connectivity: The most important transfer opportunities for the Southeast Line involve local bus routes. This interface is discussed only briefly in this document (i.e. section 4.1.1: "minor modifications would be made.") It deserves careful consideration and public comment.	Transfers were an important consideration in the development of alternatives and selection of station locations.	N
28.		Transit Center as Neighborhood Centers: Transit hubs are natural neighborhood centers, especially in transit-dependent areas like the Third Ward. METRO should consider transit centers as more than simply transit facilities. This is particularly true at the Palm Center, which already houses community services.	Section 5.1.5 describes land use adjacent the proposed stations, as well as identifies potential development options.	N
29.	Laverne Smith 3854 Palm Street, Houston, TX 77004	... my primary concerns regarding Alignment 1, the Scott-Griggs Alignment, lie in the fact that, based on the Impact Statements presented at the public hearing, more businesses and residential properties would be displaced than with the Alignment 2, Wheeler-MLK Alignment option... Scott Street would require an additional 15 feet in width to accommodate either the LRT or BRT vehicle. And if the LRT/BRT line continues down Scott street, additional property much be acquired because Scott Street narrows further past Wheeler Avenue. For residents along Scott, the inconvenience of property acquisitions coupled with not being able to make a left turn from Blodgett to Southmore Streets is a nuisance and could also be dangerous. Emergency vehicles would also be forced to alter their routes, and this could potentially delay life saving treatment.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA, in part because of the concerns identified.	N
30.		An additional concern regarding the Alignment 1 LRT/BRT line are the infrequent number of bus stops, just as it is for the existing METRO rail line. I seriously doubt that the community adjacent to the proposed Alignment 1 would appreciate having to walk 4 or more blocks ... Additionally, many of the residents... are older citizens, and thus could not possibly be expected to walk that far.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. Bus service will continue to be operated in the area for access between stations.	N
31.		The construction of Alignment 1... would be difficult in permitting residents to enter their respective cross street because there are dead end streets along Scott Street between Blodgett and Southmore streets.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. There will be no effect to these streets.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
32.		I know these communities will hear the noise of the LRT/BRT vehicles where they reside and will have to endure with increased traffic along their quiet streets (unless they close their community to restrict access).	The BRT vehicles are not expected to result in severe noise or vibration impacts.	N
33.		In reviewing the PowerPoint slides from the public hearing... Alignment 2 option had worse impact marks regarding its 'Development Potential,' 'Ridership,' and 'Parklands.' For Parklands, I doubt that METRO would acquire more acreage of land to build the LRT/BRT line than that which was purchased by the State of Texas to build Spur 5.	METRO will refine the alignment during preliminary engineering to attempt to reduce the effects on parklands.	N
34.		For the ridership concern, if METRO would build the Alignment 2 option and provide buses to transport passengers between the two areas, I strongly believe the METRORail ridership would increase.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
35.		And regarding the Development concern along Alignment 2, I believe that current and additional businesses would appreciate the LRT/BRT line on MLK and Griggs.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
36.		If METRO offers shuttle buses for transfer along Scott Street and the proposed Alignment 2 LRT/BRT line... businesses along both Scott and MK streets will benefit with increased patrons, and METRO would fulfill their overall objectives with increased ridership.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
37.	Edgar A. Smith, Jr. 3854 Palm Street Houston, TX 77004-6531	I support the "no build" alternative. I voted against the November 2003 METRO Solutions referendum. I think the light rail options and the bus rapid transit options are financially wasteful and divisive... I am against both of the Southeast Corridor build options. Undertaking with would... create too many disruptions for too little benefit, if any.	The costs and benefits of the No Build Alternative were weighed against the costs and benefits of the LPA. The No Build and Build Alternatives are evaluated in Ch. 7.	N
38.		The build options will cut off streets, making entry and exit more cumbersome and less convenient, and this could have serious consequences if emergency vehicles need quick access.	The LPA minimizes disruption to existing street patterns.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
39.		The build option will require the removal of home and businesses, and I am strongly against these potential displacements.	METRO, in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, will provide relocation and advisory assistance to all eligible individuals and businesses displaced by the LPA. Displacements will be minimized where possible.	N
40.		There are safety issues as well. The number of accidents on the existing Main Street line is well documented, and this line doesn't even traverse a residential area.	Between Louisiana Street in downtown Houston and Polk Street BRT vehicles would, for the most part, operate within exclusive diamond lanes for buses, high occupancy vehicles and right turning traffic. South of Polk, Scott Street would be modified to accommodate the fixed-guideway alignment and stations, the existing number of traffic lanes would be maintained. While this diversion of traffic is not anticipated to be substantial, the diverted traffic volumes have been accounted for in the analysis. Further information is provided in Section 4.2.3.	N
41.		<p>I think construction of a transit line on Scott Street will have a greatly negative affect on traffic, especially between Wheeler and I-45. With part of Cullen Boulevard set to close in the future, and with the UH growing enrollment, that stretch of Scott should at times become a traffic "nightmare."</p> <p>I am not convinced that enough study has been done on the impact a line would have at the intersection of Scott and I-45; there is not enough room for convenient auto and rail traffic there, considering the position of the freeway and ramp support structures.</p>	<p>The traffic analysis results indicate minimal impacts to Scott with the fixed guideway. The intersection at Cullen Blvd. will remain open under the LPA. If UH closes it in the future, that signalized intersection would need to be re-evaluated at that time.</p> <p>The cross sections for the fixed guideway are shown in Volume 2. The LPA was designed at IH 45 to accommodate the fixed guideway and provide turning lanes for traffic. Left-turns would share the lane with the BRT vehicles.</p>	N
42.	Jacqueline Gilliard docjack@sbcglobal.net 713-203-5185	Residents of OMUWCC do not support the proposed METRORail planned for Scott Street to Griggs; it will not contribute significantly to the physical development of our neighborhood. We do however favor the Scott Street to Wheeler Option. Please reconsider and do not bring the rail system down Scott Street to Griggs. Please find an alternative route.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
43.		Traffic – The reduced number of lanes and blockage of certain streets will cause overwhelming congestion on Scott and neighboring streets. It will interfere with transporting of school children, the elderly to critical medical appointments not to mention the receiving of emergency services by police, fire and medics.	The existing number of traffic lanes would be maintained under the LPA. The LPA would not adversely affect emergency services in the area, as discussed in Section 5.13.	N
44.		Noise - The increased noise level in a quiet residential area will destroy the serenity that now characterizes our community – unnecessary noise pollution. You would need to install noise reduction walls on side of street that will have the rail stops.	No noise impacts to residents (Category 2 Land Uses) are anticipated under the LPA.	N
45.		<p>Safety – [C]rime will more likely increase because people will be hanging out at the railway system stops and the stops also serve as points of crime – law enforcement cannot police the stops 24/7 and the neighborhood needs to have some sense of safety and privacy.</p> <p>The rail system would render hazardous conditions for our children walking to school, seniors engaging in health walks, joggers, bikers, and pedestrians using sidewalks to reach their destinations. Placing the rail system in a residential area will definitely result in an increased number of accidents – vehicle and pedestrian (children and seniors trying to cross the streets/tracks to catch the train).</p>	<p>METRO Police would continue to coordinate with state and local authorities on public safety and traffic within the corridor. Additionally, the fixed-guideway stations would be equipped with adequate lighting in waiting and transfer areas and parking lots. The incidence of crime occurring in and around transit properties would not be expected to change with the implementation of build alternatives or the LPA.</p> <p>The project will include the appropriate traffic control devices such as traffic signals and signage to provide for the safety of area residents and the traveling public.</p>	N
46.		Streets from Southmore to Blodgett are all dead-end streets (over 6 streets) and they are populated by over 65 age residents. The placement of a rail system will have a negative effect on all the families that live on these streets.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. The LPA avoids impacts to these streets.	N
47.		Please do not [take] homes from seniors and disable[d] whose homes are paid for and who are on a fixed income. They are not able to return to work to be able to pay a new mortgage. Please... think of the seniors and not bring rail down Scott to Griggs. Please choose the Scott to Wheeler route.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. The LPA avoids impacts to these homes the comment is referring to.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
48.		If land is taken, the amount of money that will be given to families, the appraised value, will not be enough to purchase an equally comparable home... Where will they be able to find another neighborhood that they will feel safe, as well as find a decent priced home?	METRO will provide relocation and advisory assistance to all eligible individuals and businesses displaced by the LPA for the purpose of locating suitable, affordable replacement property.	N
49.		The rail system will require more land than is available to widen Scott. We strongly oppose the acquisition of land from residential property or have corner homes removed. The rail will impact property taxes, cause traffic congestion, increase noise level, interfere with the drainage – dramatically increasing the possibility of street flooding, and render unsafe pedestrian and resident movement. More studies need to be conducted before the rail system is placed in residential areas.	During the final design of the project, efforts will be made to minimize impacts to individual parcels and the need for some of the relocations.	N
50.	Minister Robert Muhammad Muhammad Mosque No. 45 4443 Old Spanish Trail, Houston, TX	Effectiveness – There is little or no in-depth analysis of the quarter to half mile pedestrian sheds around the rail stations proposed in the DEIS. To be effective, transit stations should be evaluated in the light of their walkability and connectivity... Rail lines should replace viable bus lines only if they enhance overall connectivity.	None of the evaluated alternatives preclude the improvement of conditions for pedestrians in the corridor. Such projects may be undertaken as needed by local government.	N
51.		Impacts – An analysis that does not consider walkability or pedestrian access, fails to fully evaluate the environmental impacts of proposed alternatives. The condition of sidewalks, street widths, curb cuts, shade trees, lighting, and overall safety and aesthetics of streetscapes adjacent to rail stations could negatively affect ridership.	Sidwalks, curb cuts, and final landscaping will be included in the final design of the project. As mentioned in Section 5.6.1, the level of visual impact under the LPA would be minimal.	N
52.		Efficiency – The build alternatives being considered appear to be cost effective. An additional study to determine whether the built alternatives reduce the rate of increase of city street construction and repairs should have been included in the DEIS. A further analysis of how property tax revenues directly or indirectly fund street construction and repairs may reveal the degree to which property owners subsidize individual automobile use whether they own a car or not. To the extent the build alternatives can reduce automobile use, reduce street construction and repairs, and eliminate the property tax subsidy of individual automobile use, is the extent the build alternatives can reduce the time spent in travel.	No attempt was made to analyze the financing of local governmental functions by property taxes in this study. The impact on property taxes of conversion of private property to public property as a result of the LPA is provided in Section 5.2.2.3, Impacts on Property Taxes.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
53.		Financial Feasibility – Attention should be given to... the future value of dollars. Funding local methods of constructing and operating the built alternatives should be thoroughly explored.	As stated in the financial feasibility analysis in Chapter 7, the LPA accomplishes the goals of the METRO Solutions Phase 2, which would allow funding to be used for implementation.	N
54.		Equity – The most equitable alternative proposed in the DEIS is light rail. METRO’s June 2005 announcement that a BRT alternative was being considered... was met with disappointment and anger. Only METRO’s assurances that the same infrastructure that would accompany LRT would be constructed for BRT helped the process move forward. The community’s willingness to support BRT hinges upon it being converted to LRT when the ridership threshold is met. Therefore, the next most equitable alternative, given FTA funding formulas, would be BRT Convertible.	As stated in Chapter 2, the BRT Convertible technology was selected as the locally preferred technology option.	N
55.		The community urges METRO [to] acquire the necessary land during this phase to place the power stations for future LRT conversion. Future land cost to build power stations after the line is built will serve to hinder conversion to LRT.	The acquisition of land necessary for future facilities for conversion of the BRT to LRT is not precluded by the LPA.	N
56.		The routes under consideration are all viable. The most equitable route in terms of right-of-way acquisitions, reduced business and traffic disruption and cost is the Scott – Wheeler – MLK – Griggs route.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
57.		Ridership deficits can be corrected by constructing an additional transit center along the Wheeler – MLK- Griggs route.	At this time, the Southeast Transit Center will remain at its current location. The Palm Center Station will a bus transfer facility.	N
58.	Anonymous Letter	Please give the voters of 2003 a way out... Don’t think they knew what rail line entailed. Third Ward can survive without the Southeast Corridor. No route in this area is a <u>good route</u> . Let September 11 [the end of the comment period] bring closure and we can be relieved of stress and anticipation.	The costs and benefits of the No Build Alternative were compared to the costs and benefits of the LPA, and the net benefits of the Build Alternative outweighed the costs and benefits of No Build.	N
59.	A Concerned Citizen Anonymous Letter	Please do not put the Southeast Rail Line in the Third Ward Area. These citizens have sacrificed so long to purchase homes and set up a business to have it taken or bought in order that others may ride. Can you imagine the grief and hardship this project will cause the residents and especially the elderly?	METRO will provide relocation and advisory assistance to all eligible individuals and businesses displaced by the LPA for the purpose of locating suitable, affordable replacement property.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
60.	Ms. Daryl Brown 3727 Eagle St., Houston, TX 77004	I am a concerned citizen who will be affected by the construction of the METRORail for the Southeast Corridor. Scott Street is the one and only street that flows from IH 45 to IH 610, if the Rail is constructed and Scott Street is reduced to one lane of traffic flowing south and north on Scott, there is not another streets that can be utilized for driving to IH 610 other than Hwy 288, creating more freeway traffic. METRORail on Scott Street will cause traffic havoc for residents, when UH sponsors home football games and basketball game events, as well as the Houston Dynamo soccer game fans. What major thoroughfare (street, not expressway/freeway) other than Scott Street will be used... to divert traffic?	All existing lanes on Scott Street will be maintained. Capacity will not be reduced and no diversion of traffic would result from implementation of the LPA.	N
61.		It has been stated in the Houston Chronicle on Monday, September 4, 2006... that using Scott Street “will require buying or condemning at least 50 entire properties, 29 of them residential and relocating 19 businesses.” These properties should be identified. The average age of homeowners in the proposed area for the Southeast Corridor is 65 years of age, and most of these homeowners have fought for their rights to be able to live in their homes over 50 years ago, and now in their “golden years” you are proposing to “buy them out” or “move them out” in order for the construction of METRORail and for high costly developers to buy the property to build high-rise condos in the vicinity of this METRORail.	The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 requires that relocation and advisory assistance be provided to all eligible individuals and businesses displaced by a proposed project in accordance with the provisions of the act. Property acquisition will occur after the Record of Decision. Property owners will be paid fair market value for property acquired. Relocations will be accomplished either by providing compensation for moving residences and businesses back from the proposed right-of-way (where possible), or by providing assistance to locate and acquire available properties elsewhere.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
62.		Since the inception of the METRORail on Main Street, car accidents with METRORail are astronomical... The construction of the METRORail creates confusion for drivers, no left turns at certain intersections, no turns at certain intersections, but then in the Medical Center, cars can be in a turning land on the tracks. This is MASS CONFUSION!!! And this is what you are bringing to the Southeast Corridor with the average person who lives in the area to be 65 years of age. How many "Death with cars and METRORail" are going to happen on Scott Street with the construction of the Southeast Corridor [?]	METRO Police would continue to coordinate with state and local authorities on public safety and traffic within the corridor. The LPA will include the appropriate traffic control devices such as traffic signals and signage to provide for the safety of area residents and the traveling public.	N
63.	Bullfort Seafood 5851 Scott, Houston, TX 77021	My business is at [the] corner of Scott and Griggs. I am very concerned [that] my business will be moved.	The LPA will not affect the business in question	N
64.	Louis Macey 1717 St. James Pl. #118, Houston, TX 77056	[I am] concerned about one-way [traffic] for Capitol and Rusk. Capitol and Rusk should be two-way streets.	Capitol and Rusk are currently one way streets within downtown. The LPA does not change the operation of these streets.	N
65.	C. Thomas-Rhoades 5514 Griggs #2110, Houston, TX 77021	I have no problem with the rail system. My only concern is track and construction. How do we get this thing off the ground? I would prefer the Wheeler/MLK option.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
66.	Johnessa Letcher	I believe that the S.E. Corridor project will bring great value to this community in the long-term; however, METRO will get more support from the community if they take into consideration the historical value of this community. The primary goal should be minimum loss and negative implications to our community. I see minimum loss with the corridor going Wheeler/MLK route.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. During the final design of the project, efforts will be made to minimize impacts to individual parcels and the need for some of the relocations.	N
67.	Jerry P. Preston 3418 Nathaniel Brown, Houston, TX 77021	I am in favor of a Scott St.-Griggs Alignment that would best serve my immediate neighborhood and its major commercial center at OST/Scott St. The Scott-Griggs alignment would best serve the most riders in our community. If this alignment cannot be made, I think it's extremely important to connect the Texas Medical Center and Palm Center with a LRT line, as soon as possible. It would be a mistake for LRT to pass the commercial center at Scott/OST.	Connectivity to the Texas Medical Center and Palm Center are in accordance with the purpose and need for this project. This connection would be provided by the Signature Bus Service.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
68.	Robert P. Reid, CPA 5815 Lake Street, Houston, TX 77005	As currently conceived, the best choice for the Southeast corridor is the no build option. The Southeast BRT plan is a poorly thought out example of bureaucratic inertia... Much of the Southeast corridor's service area is now duplicated by the University corridor's service area. Building the BRT in the Southeast corridor would be a colossal waste of taxpayer dollars and a continual drain on MTA's resources.	As stated in Chapter 1, transportation improvements are needed in the Southeast Corridor and the LPA has been determined to meet purpose and need in a cost effective manner.	N
69.		The area between I-45 and the likely [University line] route down Alabama is mostly serviced by the University line. It also seems that ridership is overstated as the two corridors are being considered separately, but the ridership in the 3 rd Ward is being counted on both routes. Rather than the millions that will be spent, it would be much better to consider whether the University line could be extended from UH to Palm Center.	The University Corridor Alternatives Analysis is currently in the early stages of developing and evaluating alternative alignments. That study will be coordinated with the adopted LPA for the Southeast Corridor.	N
70.		Inertia also seems to describe MTA's preference for the Scott Street base route... The Southeast Transit Center is poorly situated to serve both UH and TSU and moving it to the Palm Center area makes more sense.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. The Southeast Transit Center will not be relocated to Palm Center under the LPA. Instead, a bus transfer facility and connecting bus service will be provided at Palm Center.	N
71.		There are also some errors in the DEIS. In two places it describes the base route as having the advantage of being shorter and impacting fewer intersections when the tables clearly show that it is longer and impacts more intersections. Ridership advantages for the base route are also questionable. It shows 1,670 riders at the Southeast Transit Center for the base route. Yet when the Southeast Transit Center is moved to Palm Center, only 115 of those riders are added at Palm Center and 370 at Cleburne and Scott. The other 71% disappear. That simply does not make sense as most of the bus routes would be altered to go to Palm Center... This difference accounts for almost all of the ridership advantage for the base route.	The base alignment was identified as being longer in length and impacting more non-signalized intersections than the Wheeler-MLK alignment. The net difference reported between the two alignment options was 1,900 boardings. The revised ridership forecasts with the LPA identify 1,700 boardings at Palm Center, without relocation of the Southeast Transit Center under the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
72.	Garnet Coleman, State Representative [Public Hearing]	We put together a process... to look at the challenges on the Southeast Line when it came to running the rail line down Scott south between Wheeler and OST and the impact that would have on residential... The taking of homes actually reduced by using the alternative that would go at Scott to Wheeler to MLK and then to Griggs...there's a proposal by METRO to use signature bus to move from that portion [on Griggs between Scott and MLK] over to the medical center with an express bus system. Because of the loss of those [economic] development opportunities, it would be nice to see that signature bus line upgraded to create that connection between the portions going towards Hobby Airport and the medical center... [which] can alleviate the problem of losing the opportunities on that commercial corridor.	The Signature Bus service would provide connections between the Southeast Corridor and the TMC.	N
73.	Norm Pegran East Downtown District East Downtown Houston Management District, Chairman of the Board 815 Live Oak [Public Hearing]	Since my involvement, firstly it is unclear that METRO ever presented information to the East Downtown Management District during the DEIS process. It is out understanding that the presentations were made to the East Downtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ). The TIRZ is a separate entity... it does not represent our district or its total constituency. If meetings were not held with the district board members, METRO cannot and should not conclude that our board was informed of this project.	METRO met with the East Downtown Management District on September 7, 2006. Discussion included the LPA through the East Downtown Management District.	N
74.		In regards to the line as it proceeds south from Capitol along the Southern Pacific Railroad east, it traverses through parcels of property with new major residential development which during the past two years our area has begun and will continue to transition from the old warehouse district to residential... The two stations down Leland do very little, if anything, to serve this new core residential development and business sections of our district.	The LPA requires no additional right-of-way in the area the comment identifies. The LPA includes the North Hutchins and South Hutchins Stations, which would serve the district in question.	N
75.		The district stations don't allow for any kind of interface with the bus system or the two METRO east-west routes that run through this area.	The LPA alignment and station locations were selected after consideration of all reasonable alternatives and public comment. It is considered to be the most effective alternative for providing connection between downtown and Scott Street.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
76.	Dan Nip East Downtown District East Downtown Houston Management District, Board Member East Downtown TIRZ, Chairman 815 Live Oak [Public Hearing]	I ask the question as to whether all interested groups along the corridor were given equal weight, attention and differences in the public involvement process where issues of alignment and station location were discussed and determined... The east Downtown Management District and the First Ward support METRO. We ask that the district board be provided an opportunity to meet with... METRO... to discuss the alignment and station issues.	See response to Comment 77.	
77.		It is clear that the alignment would need to be modified due to the impact to private property with significant acquisitions that would be necessary to construct the current alignment through the East Downtown Management District area... Certainly METRO would want the station and alignment to reach the highest patronage. If so, then alignment and station location would need to focus on the center of the core of the district where significant residential development is occurring. In reviewing past records for the district from... 2002 to 2006, we found that vacant or underutilized residential and commercial properties valued at \$1.8 million in 2002 are now valued in 2006 at \$31.5 million.	Property acquisition in the East Downtown Management District area is not required under the LPA.	N
78.	Jim Olive East Downtown Management District, Board Member 815 Live Oak [Public Hearing]	I will echo the concerns of my board regarding the minimum contact we have received from METRO through this multiyear DEIS process... At Chairman's Pegran's request, we are anticipating to meet with METRO.	See response to Comment 77.	N
79.		Currently, there are two east-west routes that traverse through the center of the district... neither station on the southeast alignment provides transfer opportunities for these routes.	See response to Comment 79.	N
80.		Our preference would be for METRO to examine an alignment that transitions south from Capitol on a street that is west of the current alignment where a station can be located near either McKinney or Polk before transitioning in an easterly direction to Scott and the Leland station.	The LPA includes a station at Hutchins, which is within the suggested bounds described in the comment.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
81.	Malcolm Wells 4301 Roseneath [Public Hearing]	So how do you calculate ridership? I reviewed a lot of your documents about purpose and need, and one of the things I still am not clear on is what determines your need to put anything in my area. I'm not disagreeing there is a need, but please elaborate on what need is present... the area I am specifically referring to is between Wheeler and Griggs... I don't see buses leaving people, because there's not enough room on them. So I don't understand what the need is to dig up and take homes and businesses and that sort of thing.	To calculate ridership, a model is used for travel forecasting, including estimating the number of person trips and trips by mode. The purpose and need for the project is presented in Chapter 1 of the FEIS. It documents the need for improved mobility in the area questioned. This area is also one of the highest existing bus ridership in the METRO service area.	N
82.		... According to your documents... you are supposed to be trying to address the University Corridor, UH and business in the Palm Center area... that does not mean that you need to come down Scott to Griggs in order to hit that.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. It connects all of the activity centers identified in the comment.	N
83.		[The] route that goes outside of the neighborhoods where you are displacing these homes that may not be historic by technical definition but have been a part of our district for a period of time... it is my suggestion that we take the route of the dotted line [Wheeler/MLK Option].	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
84.	Dr. Teddy McDavid, President OST Community Partnership [Public Hearing]	Scott Street is the only corridor that goes from one end of Houston to the other. Simply put, it is the corridor on which you should focus major redevelopment. We see light rail as one of the tools – and I know we're going to get the bus first... We've taken scientific surveys to tell us that the business owners are looking and hoping for that tool to help them market and revitalize and stimulate their own businesses. Change is... an inconvenience. We expect that kind of inconvenience if indeed we are going to preserve the integrity of the neighborhood as well as revitalize that area.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA.	N
85.	Gordon Dash 3830 Palm [Public Hearing]	Currently the way the plan has it now, there's going to be a large section of homes, particularly mine, from Blodgett all the way over to McGregor that's going to be severely impacted on how we access our homes. I didn't see anywhere in [the] DEIS how METRO is proposing that we mitigate these problems. So that's one issue that I wanted to see METRO provide.	The Wheeler-MLK Alignment Option was selected as the LPA. The acquisitions and relocations this comment refers to are not required under the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
86.		I do believe that we should put the light rail system in there. I've looked around at the bus system, and it didn't provide enough detail of what the bus system is going to be. Is it going to be the typical bus that you see on the street now?... So if they can provide more detail on the bus system and what effect that's going to have on that section of town, I would really appreciate that.	The BRT Convertible technology option was selected as the LPA. The vehicle resembles rail vehicles such as those used in the operation of the METRORail Red Line on Main Street.	N
87.	John M. Bell 2706 Wheeler [Public Hearing]	My experience with the rail that exists now, it has basically divided the city east and west. Streets that I used to have to... access to go from west to east are no longer there. They've been cut over 70 percent. And I see the alignment that you have coming down Scott almost doing the same thing, creating a separate little entity that has no room for economic development, and especially so if there is no real connection of the University Line to the Scott corridor. And I'm concerned that the fabric of our neighborhoods will be eroded... no likelihood for that economic development that we voted for during METRO's push [for] light rail. And at this point, I feel that we have been abandoned by this METRO Board when it comes to their plans to include and to be inclusive as to not disrupt our community but to make it so that we'll all benefit from it and not just a few.	See response to Comment 72.	N
88.	Diane M. Sheffield 3300 Alabama #2-C (Cuney Homes Housing Authority) [Public Hearing]	Cuney Homes is public housing... property under the umbrella of the housing authority, the Houston Housing Authority... I'm concerned about the safety and security of the neighborhood once we get it going, and yes, if you're going to do it, you might as well go on and do it.	The route and configuration of the University Line has not been determined. The LPA does not affect Cuney Homes.	N
89.	Richard C. Elben 3706 Charleston [Public Hearing]	I hope that the light rail or whatever becomes the rail comes down Scott... Scott is the street that is most traveled in that area. It also... goes through neighborhoods with the greatest population density. And I happen to work in elder services, and we focus on aging in place, and you can't age in place if you don't have transportation.... I hope we don't avoid population just because of the disruption it may cause.	The LPA is not adjacent to or traverse near the public housing development to which this comment refers.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
90.	Wallace Honeywell 3720 Parkwood Dr. [Public Hearing]	I favor building the light rail system down Scott Street, and the reasons are mostly supporting the economic development in the community... I see the momentum that's been built up by the recent development of... the economic center at Old Spanish Trail and Scott Street. I'd like to see this continue.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
91.		We also, in the neighborhood – we were promised – we voted for light rail. The ridership issue is a principal issue. The Scott Street alternative supports this issue, and I think it will bring us... more quickly to the light rail alternative, which we would like.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
92.	Janice Stanton Hines 3339 Charleston [Public Hearing]	... light rail, of course, would be helpful, but I don't think it should go [along Scott] from Wheeler all the way to Griggs. I think it would be too disruptive to the numerous homes there. I think your population density is right there at UH [and] TSU. So I think the best route would be Scott to Wheeler and Wheeler over to Griggs and Palm Center. I do not want METRO to disrupt the beautiful Riverside Terrace any further.	The Wheeler-MLK Option with BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
93.	Otis H. King 3732 Parkwood Dr. [Public Hearing]	I've looked at the material that's been presented, and to me it makes sense to go down Scott Street all the way to Griggs.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
94.	Nata Koerber 3110 Southmore [Public Hearing]	I am in favor of the Southeast Corridor route preferring light rail turning on Wheeler to MLK... the studies have shown that if rail goes straight down Scott [it will require 130 feet for the rail infrastructure]; Scott does not have 130 feet. I believe that by making that turn on Wheeler and MLK, there will not be a significant loss of ridership because of both UH and TSU and development that will be taking place down MLK. It will reduce the likelihood of disrupting the character of the community and the destruction of affordable housing and increasing taxes to residents by displacing current properties and residents and putting in \$300,000 town homes that many of the senior citizens will not be able to afford... I urge METRO to be mindful of the goal of reducing traffic on larger corridors such as OST or Elgin rather than being driven by developers who use METRO initiatives to acquire properties on narrow residential streets and displace homeowners for the wealthy in the name of progress.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
95.	Christyna Rice 6211 Culberson [Public Hearing]	We are – my household, the neighbors I've spoken with... are for light rail. Actually, they're for any kind of rapid bus transit that gets us downtown where our jobs are, preferring light rail. We prefer the Scott-Griggs alignment. It has the most impact on our community... but the impact can be a positive impact.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
96.	Juanita Outley Harris, Secretary Riverside Homeowners Civic Club 2419 Wichita [Public Hearing]	I support the idea of the light rail system, but I would like to completely delete the idea of the light rail traveling down Wheeler Avenue. As you can recall, Wheeler Avenue near TSU was closed years ago due to the tremendous dangers from the student body. It will be too noisy, also. Scott Street is unfavorable too... Scott Street will be unsafe [due to traffic volumes]. Scott Street is also too narrow for light rail. I would suggest that the light rail will go down Elgin to Calhoun and Calhoun to Griggs.	The Wheeler-MLK Option with BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
97.	Reverend Fana MacGregor Place Civic Club Operational Unity Network 5500 MLK [Public Hearing]	We look forward to rail, because we voted for rail, and we wanted rail to come down MLK. And the reason why is because of the size of MLK Blvd. We can put rail on MLK without taking anybody's house...The question of ridership is not a question that's significant because of this. We have development going on MLK that's going to bring new riders... We say why tear up the neighborhood on Scott Street.	The Wheeler-MLK Option with BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
98.	Olevia Randle 6023 Boldart [Public Hearing]	I'd like to go on the record of saying that I did not vote for the BRT busses... And also, I don't approve of a station being presented there at Palm Center. I do not think it should be right near a crush rock where they have the particles and things coming. So that means everyone that would get on the train on Griggs-MLK will get a dose of those particles [from Southern Crushed Concrete].	The Wheeler-MLK Option with BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA.	N
99.	Mrs. Louis C. Ray 2817 Wheeler [Public Hearing]	I'm only here to oppose rail for my benefit. I'm a graduate of TSU, and we closed TSU years ago because it created a poor environment for the students at the university. Secondly, I would not like to see the rail come down Wheeler Street. It would displace too many homeowners and then again create a poor environment for the students in the university.	The Wheeler-MLK Option with BRT Convertible technology was selected as the LPA. Fewer residential relocations was one of the reasons for selection of this option as the LPA.	N

Table 6-1. Comments Received on the DEIS (continued)

ID	Name and Address	Comment	Response	Change to EIS (Y/N)
100.	Barry Klein Houston Property Rights Association, President Northside Coalition, Member 1509 Everett [Public Hearing]	You already have the bus program. You're actually making things worse for yourself, because you're losing ridership by forcing the bus riders to go to train stations where they have to transfer. That causes them to leave the system if they have a car at home.	This alternative was selected in part because less residential and commercial relocation would be necessary, capital, operating, and maintenance costs would be lower, and the alignment would better serve the growing travel demand needs of UH.	N
101.		... You're hiding from people the fact that you're going to be building a terminal on the north side and forcing many of your riders to take additional time and go through two additional stops to transfer if they're headed downtown for part of this route.	The LPA will provide a direct connection to downtown. A connection to the planned Intermodal Terminal would be addressed by a future study.	N
102.	Dannie Simmons Oak Manor Civic Club, President 3841 Gertin Street [Public Hearing]	I'm asking that you be concerned and be compassionate about coming down Scott all the way to Griggs is because of the fact from Southmore to Ruth Street, those are all dead-end streets, and there is a lot of senior citizens... living in the area.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
103.		And if you think about coming down Scott, you're going to have to take some more area because it's going to be too narrow. If you take our homes on the front, you're also going to have to think about the back, too, because the back streets are all closed in. That means you're going to have to give us a way out – in and out.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
104.	Cleveland Broussard Brookhaven Civic Club, President 1113 Therea St, [Public Hearing]	I walked the route from Scott down Wheeler to MLK to Palm Center, and I looked and really believe that is not the best route. I do believe because the greatest benefit can be derived by going Scott to Griggs because of connectivity issues. I would have to opt. for Scott.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N
105.	Homer Aubrey Oak Manor/ University Woods Civic Club, Member [Public Hearing]	Our Civic Club endorses the alternate down Wheeler to MLK and not come down Scott to Griggs.	The Wheeler-MLK Option was selected as the LPA.	N

Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2006.



CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

