

NORTH CORRIDOR

North Corridor Public Meeting

July 22, 2006

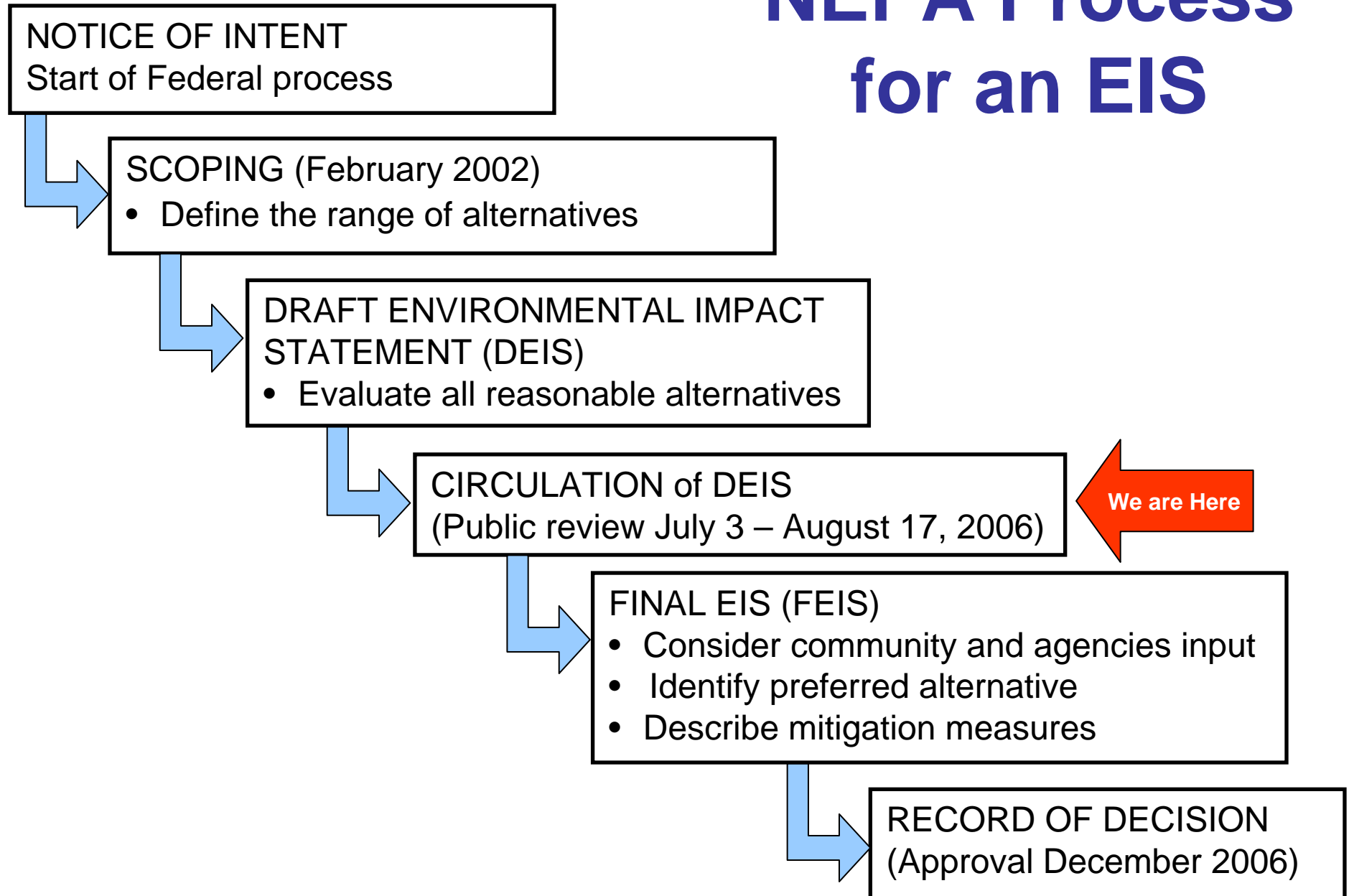
Jeff Davis High School
1101 Quitman Drive
Houston, Texas

Purpose of Today's Meeting

- ❖ Inform community of the status of the planning efforts and present evaluations based on studies performed to date
- ❖ Describe the alternatives under consideration
- ❖ Provide the community an opportunity to present their views and ask questions before the Public Hearing

NORTH CORRIDOR

NEPA Process for an EIS



Public and Agency Involvement

Continuous throughout the project

- ❖ Public Meetings (13 held to date)
- ❖ Newsletters (3 published)
- ❖ Formal Stakeholder Meetings (16 meetings)
- ❖ Small Group Presentations (103 presentations)
- ❖ Briefings to Elected Officials (20 briefings)
- ❖ Information on METRO Website

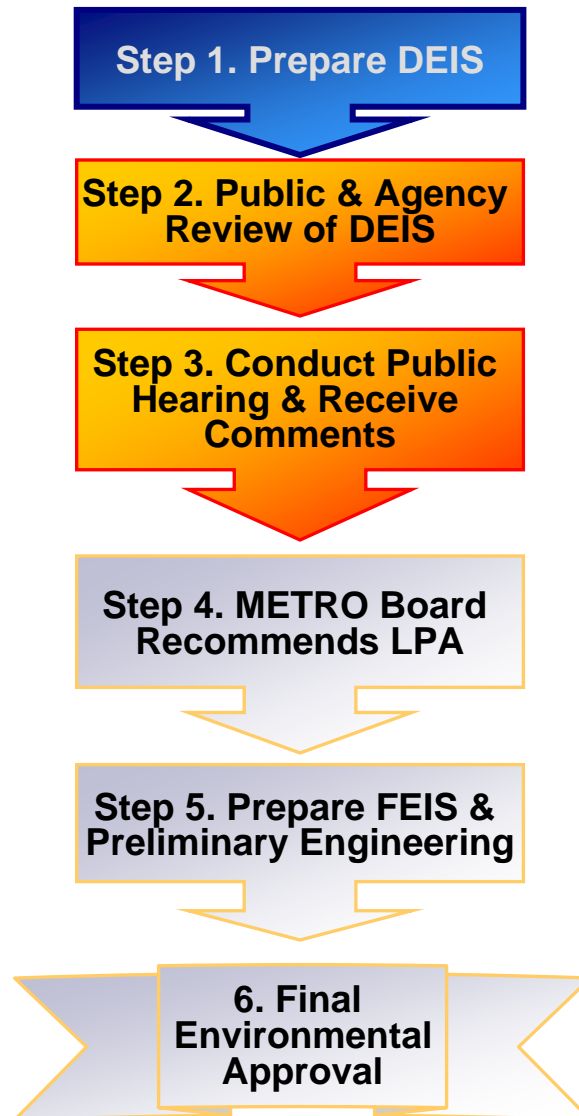
<http://metrosolutions.org/go/doc/1068/112135/>

Public and Agency Involvement

Continuous throughout the project



Steps to Recommending a Preferred Alternative



Tentative Project Schedule

(If a Build Alternative is selected)

- ❖ Environmental and schematic approval:
Fall/Winter 2006
- ❖ Acquire right-of-way: 2007 to 2008
- ❖ Final design and construction: 2007
- ❖ Open for service: 2010

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

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

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

“Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Enhance”

Draft EIS

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

- ❖ DEIS outline:
 - Summary
 - Purpose and Need
 - Alternatives Considered
 - Affected Environment
 - Future Transportation Conditions
 - Environmental Consequences
 - Public and Agency Coordination
 - Evaluation of Alternatives
 - Appendices including Section 4(f) Evaluation

Section 4(f)

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

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

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

NORTH CORRIDOR

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS
Evaluation of Alternatives

	No Build Alternative	Build Alternatives															
		UH-Downtown to Quitman				Quitman to Fulton Street/Irvington Boulevard				Fulton Street/Irvington Boulevard to IH-610				IH-610 to Northline Mall			
		Alignment Option A		Alignment Option B		Alignment Option C		Alignment Option D		Alignment Option E		Alignment Option F		Alignment Option G		Alignment Option H	
Transportation																	
Transit Ridership	None	Increases		Increases		Increases		Increases		Increases		Increases		Increase		Increases	
Intersection LOS (2025 Traffic)	Varies	Loss of 2 Levels (1)*		N/A		Loss of 1 Level (1)*		No Loss		Loss of 2 Levels (1)*		Loss of 1 Level (1)*		Loss of 2 Levels (1)*		Loss of 2 Levels (1)*	
Parking	None	None		None		None		None		None		None		None		None	
Freight Movement	None	None		None		None		None		American Freightways		None		None		None	
Bicycle/Pedestrian Movements	None	None		None		Relocate Bike Lane		Relocate Bike Lane		None		Relocate Bike Lane		Relocate Bike Lane		Relocate Bike Lane	
Land Use																	
Compatible with Local Plans	No	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Acres of Land Needed for Right-of-Way	None	0.39 acres		0.39 acres		5.17 acres		7.82 acres		3.79 acres		7.90 acres		7.71 acres		0.11 acres	
Property Acquisition (Number of Parcels)																	
Businesses	0	7		7		7		8		18		34		22		15	
Residential	0	0		0		15		36		17		13		7		4	
Other (i.e., government, religious, vacant)	0	6		6		6		8		12		19		12		6	
Total	0	13		13		28		52		47		66		41		25	
Number of Displacements																	
Businesses	0	0		0		5		6		4		17		14		0	
Residential	0	0		0		13		34		15		11		3		0	
Other (i.e., government, religious)	0	0		0		1		1		0		2		1		0	
Total	0	0		0		19		41		19		30		18		0	
Air Quality	Negative	Positive		Positive		Positive		Positive		Positive		Positive		Positive		Positive	
Noise		<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>
Residential Impacts	None	10	0	10	0	28	0	30	6	13	0	26	0	10	0	30	0
Vibration		<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>
Residential Impacts	None	7	0	0	0	14	0	11	0	2	0	20	0	0	0	0	0
Visual/Aesthetics		<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>	<u>LRT</u>	<u>BRT</u>
Sensitive Receptor/Assets Impacted	0	4	3	2	2	2	0	2	0	1	0	4	3	2	2	3	3
Ecosystems	None	None		None		None		None		Removes 77 large trees		Removes 2 large trees		None		None	
Water Resources																	
Floodplain Crossings	0	1		1		0		0		0		0		1		1	
Wetlands and Riverine Crossings	0	1		1		0		0		0		0		0		0	
Historic and Archeological Resources																	
Potential Historical Sites Adversely Affected	0	0		0		8		17		1		2		1		1	
Potential Archeological Sites Adversely Affected	0	0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0	
Parklands and Other Section 4(f) Properties	None	None		None		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Geology and Soils	None	None		None		None		None		None		None		None		None	
Hazardous/Regulated Materials																	
Potential Contaminated Sites	0	2		2		0		0		3		0		1		1	
Safety and Security																	
Sites Requiring Mitigation Measures	0	3		3		3		3		2		2		0		0	
Construction Impacts	None	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Secondary and Cumulative Impacts	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	

- In performing the trade-off analysis, the evaluation factors used were:
- Effectiveness
 - Environmental Consequences
 - Cost
 - Transit Ridership
 - Financial Feasibility
 - Equity



- The Major Key Unresolved Issues that will be addressed Prior to the Final Environmental Impact Statement include:
- Preferred Alternative
 - Preferred Alignment, if Build Alternative is Selected
 - Whether or not the alignment is on the Northline Mall Property or in the adjacent Fulton Street Right-of-way, if a Build Alternative is Selected

If a Build Alternative is recommended, mitigation will be documented in the FEIS

Mitigation could include...

- ❖ Noise walls
- ❖ Landscaping/vegetation and/or screening walls
- ❖ Interpretive exhibits of historical properties and photographic documentation
- ❖ Grade separated crossings
- ❖ Station locations designed to be compatible with local area
- ❖ Fencing to protect local schools
- ❖ Use of sound insulation in structures
- ❖ Use of special trackwork at crossovers
- ❖ Installation of ballast mats to deter vibration
- ❖ Relocation

Acquisition & Relocation

- ❖ Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance & Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended (49 CFR Part 24)
 - Comply with Uniform Act
 - Conduct independent appraisals for fair market value
 - Acquire properties
 - Assist in relocating impacted property owners and tenants

Submission of Comments

❖ On-line <http://www.ridemetro.org/contact/comment.asp>

❖ Submit comment form or letter to:

Ms. Rhonda Boyer

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County

P.O. Box 61429

Houston, Texas 77208-1429

**Comments must be postmarked by
August 17, 2006**

Thank You for Your
Attendance &
Comments!