

SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR HOUSTON, TEXAS SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Responsible Agencies

Lead Agencies: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Department of Transportation, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO).

Abstract

This Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) describes and summarizes the potential transportation impacts, environmental impacts, and costs of the transit and supporting facilities being considered for the Southeast Corridor in Houston, Texas. METRO intends to seek a federal transit grant to assist in the funding of this project.

Alternatives considered in this document are a No Build Alternative and the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The No Build Alternative consists of existing transportation facilities and services plus those improvements included in the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) *2035 Regional Transportation Plan* (2007) and the METRO transit services programmed through 2007. The LPA provides for implementation of Light Rail Transit (LRT). The new LRT services would be provided along a line extending from downtown Houston southeast to a terminus on Griggs Road at Beekman Road east of Martin Luther King Boulevard, serving downtown Houston and the universities area, i.e., Texas Southern University (TSU) and University of Houston (UH). This SFEIS defines the alternatives considered, identifies the associated operating and capital costs for the LPA, and describes the potential transportation and environmental impacts for the LPA.

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was circulated for public review and comment and a public hearing was held on August 19, 2006. After review of comments on the DEIS and analysis of potential environmental impacts, the METRO Board of Directors selected the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Convertible Alternative with the Wheeler-MLK alignment option described in the DEIS as the LPA on September 21, 2006. The previous LPA was chosen based on its effectiveness in meeting the purpose and need of the project and because it would result in fewer negative impacts to the community. A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was prepared to document that decision and respond to comments received during the comment period for the DEIS. FTA issued environmental approval for the project through a Record of Decision on February 6, 2007.

The BRT Convertible Alternative was identified as an interim transit mode until demonstrated ridership, costs, and overall benefits could support conversion to LRT. In October 2007, following further analysis of forecasted ridership and costs, the METRO Board of Directors selected LRT as the initial technology for the Southeast Corridor.

Comments on the SFEIS

There is a minimum 30-day public review period for this SFEIS that begins on May 9, 2008 and concludes on June 11, 2008. One public hearing will be held at the following location:

Wednesday, May 28, 2008
Open House 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Public Hearing begins at 6:30 p.m.

Texas Southern University,
Science and Technology Building
3100 Cleburne St., Houston, TX 77004

Comments must be received no later than June 11, 2008 for inclusion in the Record of Decision. Comments may be submitted at the Public Hearings in written or oral form. The following persons should be contacted for additional information or questions concerning this document:

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