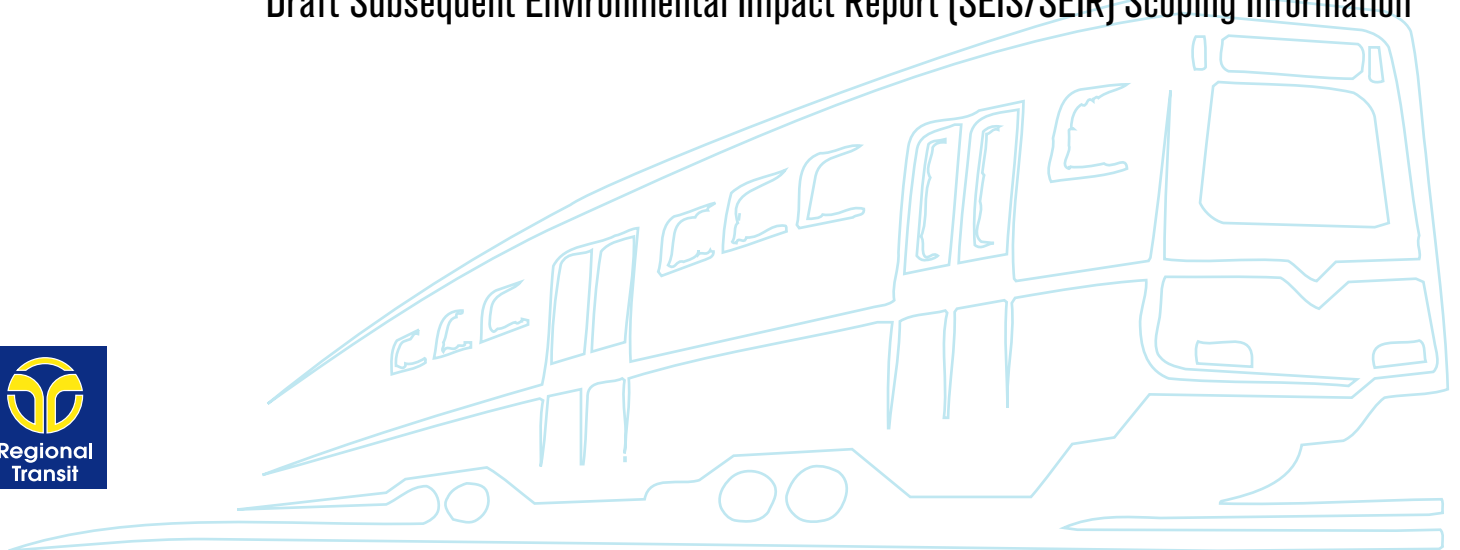


Sacramento Regional Transit District

SOUTH SACRAMENTO PHASE 2 CORRIDOR PROJECT

Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/
Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR) Scoping Information



INTRODUCTION

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT) is proposing to extend the South Line light rail system. The purpose of this extension is to improve public transit service in the congested South Corridor area by providing increased transit capacity and faster, convenient access throughout the Sacramento metropolitan region. RT and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR) that will evaluate the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the extension.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Federal and state laws require a formal review of projects that may affect the environment. For the South Line Phase 2 Project, the federal law, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The state law, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires preparation of a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). To fulfill both the federal and state requirements, an SEIS/SEIR will be prepared to identify short-term impacts related to project construction and long-term issues associated with the completed project.

A Supplemental EIS/Subsequent EIR allows projects to be modified in response to changed circumstances and new information without requiring that the environmental review process begin again completely anew. The SEIS/SEIR will build on the 1994 Alternative Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report (AA/DEIS/DEIR) completed and approved for a locally preferred alternative, which identified a light rail alignment beginning at downtown Sacramento and extending south to Calvine Road at Auberry Road (Calvine/Auberry).

The SEIS/SEIR will augment the previously certified EIS/EIR to the extent necessary to address new conditions and to examine mitigation and project alternatives accordingly. It will describe the alternatives, the existing environmental setting, the potential impacts from construction and operation of the alternatives, and mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts.

SCOPING

The process of determining the scope, focus and content during environmental review is known as “scoping.” Scoping meetings are a useful opportunity to obtain information from the public, interested parties, and governmental agencies. In particular, the scoping process asks agencies and interested parties to provide input on the proposed alternatives, the proposed topics of evaluation, and potential impacts and mitigation measures to be considered.



PROJECT PURPOSE NEED & GOALS

The proposed South Sacramento Phase 2 Corridor Project would extend light rail approximately five miles from Meadowview Road to Calvine/Auberry. To date, five stations have been identified at Franklin Boulevard, Center Parkway (optional), Cosumnes River College/College Square, Power Inn Road (optional), and Calvine/Auberry. The proposed Phase 2 light rail extension would follow the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way south from Meadowview Road, turn east along the proposed extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard, follow the Boulevard to Bruceville Road, turn south to serve Cosumnes River College/College Square development, turn east to cross State Route 99, and terminate at a station at Calvine/Auberry.

The project's goals are to:

- Improve public transit service in Southern Sacramento City and County and the City of Elk Grove;
- Enhance regional connectivity through expanded, interconnected rapid transit services, including bus and express bus services;
- Accommodate future travel demand in the corridor by expanding modal options;
- Alleviate severe and ever-increasing traffic congestion on State Route 99;
- Improve regional air quality by reducing auto emissions;
- Improve mobility options to employment, education, medical, retail, and entertainment centers for corridor residents, in particular low income, youth, elderly, disabled, and ethnic minority populations; and
- Support local economic and land use plans and goals.

State Route 99 (SR 99) currently has reoccurring traffic congestion (Level of Service F) for one to two hours during both the morning and afternoon commute periods between Calvine and Florin Roads. Daily traffic volumes north of Mack Road are expected to increase by 20 to 25 percent over the next 20 years. Between Calvine and Mack Roads, a 40 to 50 percent increase is expected. During the 1990s, SR 99 was widened to accommodate High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes between Elk Grove Boulevard north to the Sacramento Central City. However, no additional improvements are planned for this section over the next 20 years. The projected increase in traffic volumes will cause congestion on SR 99 to expand to more hours of the day and extend southward to Elk Grove. This congestion is expected to cause traffic diversions to numerous parallel arterial roadways in the corridor, thereby adding to anticipated congestion levels along these roadways.



WHAT ALTERNATIVES WILL BE EVALUATED?

The SEIS/SEIR will evaluate a No-Action Alternative, a future “New Starts” Baseline Alternative (sometimes called the Transportation Systems Management alternative), and the Phase 2 light rail extension. The alternatives will be developed further during the preparation of the Draft SEIS/SEIR. A brief description of the alternatives is provided below.

NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

This alternative consists of highway and transit systems existing as of year 2000, plus programmed improvements to the year 2025. It includes future conditions against which the transportation, environmental, and community impacts of the other alternatives are compared under NEPA.

FUTURE “NEW STARTS” BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

The Baseline Alternative is best described as transit improvements lower in capital cost than the proposed “Build” (light rail) Alternative. This alternative is generally the “best that can be done” without building the rail project. By definition, this alternative must result in a better ratio of transit mobility measures compared to cost than the No-Action Alternative.

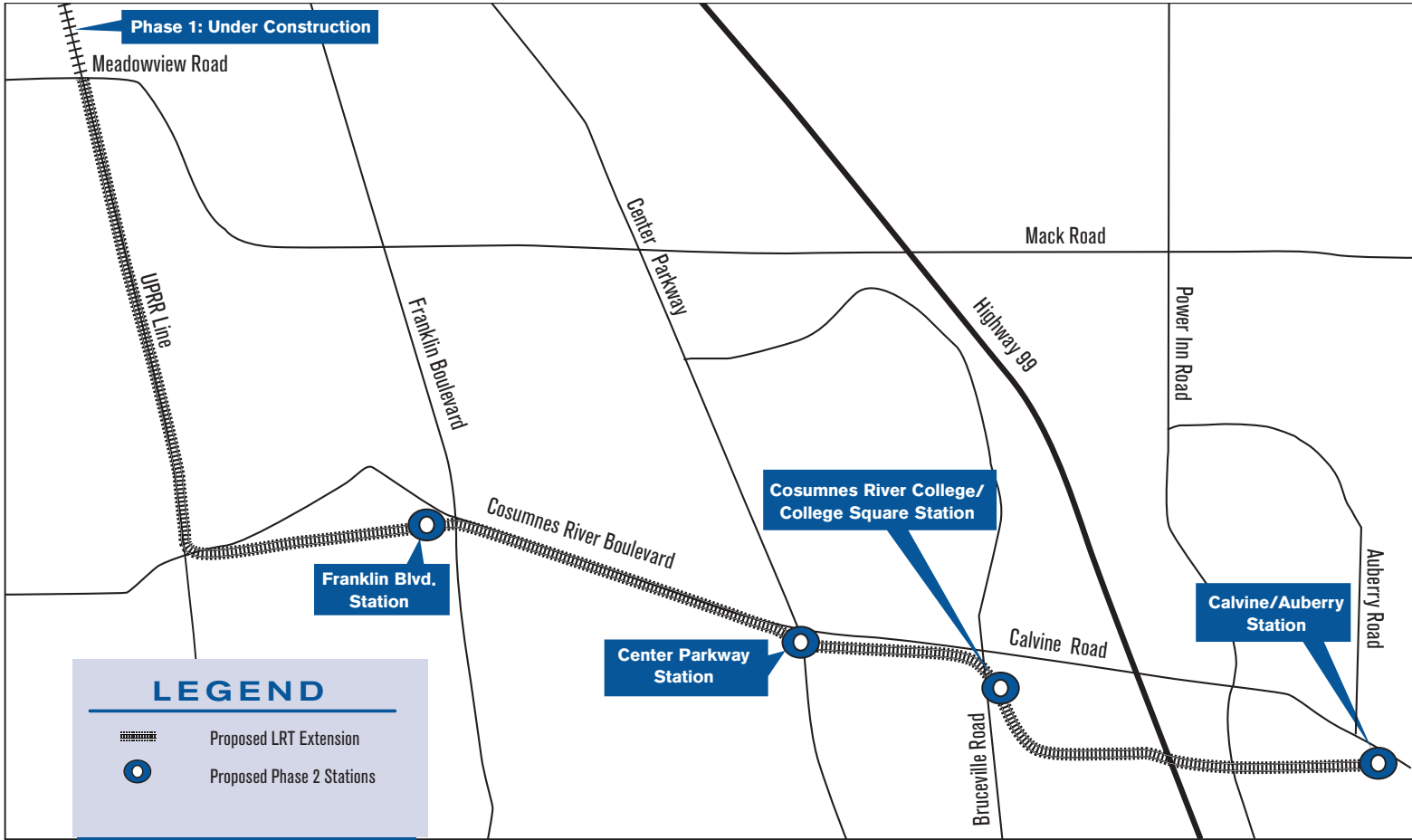
The purpose of the Baseline Alternative is to isolate costs and benefits of the proposed major transit investment. At a minimum, the Baseline alternative must include in the project corridor all reasonable cost-effective transit improvements short of investment in the light rail project. The New Starts Program is a federal program that provides funds for qualifying bus, rail and other transit-related projects.

LIGHT RAIL ALTERNATIVE

This alternative consists of the construction of a five-mile extension of the light rail system from Meadowview Road to Calvine/Auberry and a supporting feeder bus system. To date, five stations have been identified at Franklin Boulevard, Center Parkway (optional), Cosumnes River College/ College Square, Power Inn Road (optional), and Calvine/Auberry. The proposed extension would follow the UPRR right-of-way south from Meadowview Road, turn east along the proposed extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard, follow the Boulevard to Bruceville Road, turn south to serve Cosumnes River College/College Square development, turn east to cross State Route 99, and terminate at a station at Calvine/Auberry. Due to funding constraints, the light rail extension may need to be constructed in phases to one of two possible temporary terminal stations: Franklin Boulevard or Cosumnes River College/College Square. It is assumed that these temporary terminal stations would be served by bus, express bus, and/or bus rapid transit routes, including park-and-ride facilities.



SOUTH SACRAMENTO PHASE 2 CORRIDOR PROJECT



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The purpose of the SEIS/SEIR is to fully disclose, in advance of any decisions to commit substantial financial or other resources, the environmental consequences of building and operating a major capital investment in the South Corridor. The SEIS/SEIR will explore the extent to which study alternatives and design options result in environmental impacts and will discuss actions to reduce or eliminate such impacts.

Environmental issues to be examined in the SEIS/SEIR include: potential changes to the physical environment (natural resources, air quality, noise/vibration, water quality, floodplains, geology, visual); changes in the social environment (land use, development, business and neighborhood disruptions); changes in traffic and pedestrian circulation; changes in transit service and patronage; associated changes in traffic congestion; and impacts on parklands and historic sites. Impacts will be identified both for the construction period and for the long-term operation of the alternatives. The proposed evaluation criteria include transportation, social, economic, and financial measures, as required by current federal (NEPA) and state (CEQA) environmental laws and the implementing regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality and of FTA.

The relationship of the alternatives to other major corridor projects will be evaluated in the SEIS/SEIR. Examples include:

- Cosumnes River Boulevard extension;
- Roadway widenings - Cosumnes River Boulevard and Bruceville Road;
- Floodplain/drainage/levee/floodwall improvements;
- Existing and proposed utilities in the corridor - major sewer interceptors, possible Freeport Diversion pipeline;
- Land use developments - College Square, City redevelopment areas, Cosumnes River College plans and improvements;
- UPRR capacity improvements; and
- Master Plan for the County Sanitation District Bufferlands.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action will be addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the SEIS/SEIR should be directed to the RT Program Manager as noted on page 9.



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To ensure that the issues most important to Sacramento residents, public agencies, and other involved parties are addressed in this review, the Sacramento Regional Transit District is hosting several scoping meetings to collect public input. The input gathered from the scoping meetings will help shape the scope of the study, its design efforts and the assessment criteria used in evaluating improvement options. This review process will meet the requirements of the NEPA and CEQA, which were enacted to help provide information to reduce damage to the human and natural environment that might arise from publicly funded projects.

At the scoping meetings, planners will explain the environmental review process and the alternatives that are being considered for the South Sacramento Phase 2 Corridor Project.

The SEIS/SEIR will evaluate a No-Action Alternative, a future “New Starts” Baseline Alternative, the Phase 2 Light Rail Extension Alternative, and additional alternatives that emerge from the scoping process. Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence and discussions with interested persons; organizations; federal, state and local agencies; and through public meetings.



SCOPING MEETINGS

During the upcoming scoping meetings, we will explain how the public can participate in the environmental review process and how information about the study will be made available to interested citizens. Two general public meetings will be held after normal work hours in two different locations (one in the northern area of the proposed corridor and another in the southern part of the corridor). A third meeting will be held during normal work hours for resource agencies. The same information will be presented at each scoping meeting, therefore, you need to attend only one of the meetings. We welcome your participation.

MEETING DATES	MEETING LOCATIONS	OPEN HOUSE/PUBLIC MEETINGS
Monday March 25, 2002	Cosumnes River College <i>Recital Hall</i> 8401 Center Parkway Sacramento	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House begins at 5:30 p.m. • Brief Presentation at 6:30 p.m. • Question & Answer Session between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m.
Thursday April 11, 2002	Pannell Meadowview Community Center <i>Auditorium</i> 2450 Meadowview Road Sacramento	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House begins at 5:30 p.m. • Brief Presentation at 6:30 p.m. • Question & Answer Session between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m.

The formal scoping meetings will be preceded by an open house (5:30 to 6:30 p.m.), allowing for the public to discuss the proposed work scope and study options with project staff. A brief presentation will be given at 6:30 p.m., beginning the formal scoping meeting. Graphic presentations and scoping materials will be provided to assist the public in understanding the proposed project. The presentation will focus on the project purposes and alternatives and will be followed by a question and answer period, which will be recorded and transcribed. The open house will then resume until 8:00 p.m. Interested organizations and the general public are invited to attend.

Opportunities will be offered during the scoping meetings for comments to be provided either orally during the question and answer period or in writing during the entire scoping comment period.

Written comments on the scope of alternatives and impacts to be considered in the SEIS/SEIR should be submitted by May 15, 2002, and should be sent to RT at the address indicated on page 9.



OVERALL ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

MARCH/APRIL/MAY 2002

Scoping

MARCH/APRIL/MAY 2002

Conceptual Engineering/ Project Description

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2002

Draft SEIS/SEIR

SEPTEMBER 2002/MARCH 2003

Preliminary Engineering

MARCH 2003

Final SEIS/SEIR

MAY 2003

Record of Decision

2003-2006

Final Design/Construction/Revenue Service



COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

To REQUEST A SCOPING INFORMATION PACKET:

To request a scoping information packet, the Sacramento Regional Transit District, P.O. Box 2110, Sacramento, California 95812-2110. Info-Line: (916) 491-5003. Or check RT's web site at www.sacrt.com

WRITTEN COMMENTS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

Mail:

Sacramento Regional Transit District, South Sacramento Phase 2 Project, P.O. Box 2110, Sacramento, California 95812-2110. Phone: (916) 491-5003. Fax: (916) 444-2156.

Email:

Direct your questions or comments for the project team to: southlinephase2@hotmail.com

To be Added to the Mailing List Contact:

Ms. Susan Willson, The Hoyt Company, 660 J Street, Suite 444, Sacramento, California 95814, (916) 448-2440, e-mail address: swillson@thehoytco.com. Please specify the mailing list for the South Sacramento Phase 2 Corridor SEIS/SEIR. People with special needs such as sign language interpretation also should contact Susan Willson, as indicated above. The dates and addresses of the scoping meetings are given on Page 7. All locations are accessible to people with disabilities.



