

**SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT
IN DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS**

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
and
SECTION 4(f) STATEMENT**

prepared by

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

and

DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Pursuant to:

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Section 102(2)(c), 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c); National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 106, 16 U.S.C. 470. et seq; Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands); Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice for Low-Income and Minority Populations); Federal Transit Act, 53 U.S.C. Section 5323(b), Section 5309(e)(2) – (7), 5301(e), and 5324(b)(1) – (3); Title 49 U.S.C. Section 303, formerly Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f).

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Cover Sheet

Abstract

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) describes the transportation and environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of Light Rail Transit (LRT) project to improve transit service in the Southeast Corridor of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) service area. An analysis of a No-Build Alternative is done to provide a baseline comparison for the LRT Alternative. The effects of the No-Build and LRT Alternative are evaluated and compared across a range of subject areas related to both natural and man-made environments. These include transportation systems, land use, neighborhoods, air quality, noise and vibration, ecosystems, water resources, floodplains, historic resources, parklands, regulated materials, and safety and security.

The No-Build Alternative includes the highway and transit facilities in the Southeast Corridor that already exist and assumes no major investments in transportation improvements within the existing corridor beyond those that have already been programmed and funded by the City of Dallas, Dallas County, DART, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), or Federal entities by the year 2025. No-Build improvements are included in the approved Metropolitan Transportation Plan (North Central Texas Council of Governments Mobility 2025 Plan Update, May 2001), Capital Improvement Plans for the City of Dallas, Dallas County, and the *2002 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*. The LRT Alternative consists of an approximate 10.2 mile extension of LRT service connecting downtown Dallas with the communities of Deep Ellum, Baylor, South Dallas, Fair Park, and Pleasant Grove. Connections to other elements of the DART Transit System Plan are also included in the project. The LRT Alternative will provide a reliable travel time for transit patrons in the Southeast Corridor and provide an alternative to the single occupant vehicle. Additionally, the LRT Alternative would contribute to an improvement in the region's air quality, and would provide dependable access to employment opportunities in the corridor.

Public Comments

A 45-day public review period was provided for the Draft EIS. During that time, three public hearings were held in the corridor to facilitate public input on the Draft EIS. A summary of the comments received during the review period are presented along with responses in Chapter 6.0 of this Final EIS.

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FOREWORD

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Southeast Corridor LRT Extension has been prepared in accordance with regulations developed by the Council on Environmental Quality for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This document is consistent with guidance detailed in the October 28, 1993, Federal Register, 23 CFR part 450, Statewide Planning; Metropolitan Planning Rule for Major Investment Studies. The structure of this document is as follows:

Executive Summary: Provides a summary of the first six chapters of the document.

Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need: Presents a discussion of local and regional transportation goals. Specific transportation problems are presented along with a discussion of the purpose and need for transportation improvements in the Southeast Corridor of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) service area.

Chapter 2 – Alternatives Considered: Provides an overview of the screening process and a description of the alternatives that have been considered during the course of the Southeast Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) leading up to the alternatives examined in this FEIS.

Chapter 3 – Affected Environment: Describes the existing social and natural environmental conditions in the study area. The discussion provides an understanding of the environment in which the project would take place and describes the significant resources in the study area.

Chapter 4 – Transportation Impacts: Presents both transit and highway impacts resulting from the No-Build and the Build Alternative.

Chapter 5 – Environmental Consequences: Discusses potential impacts of the alternatives being evaluated on the built and natural environments. Potential mitigation measures to address impacts are defined where appropriate.

Chapter 6 – Comments and Responses: Presents a summary of substantive comments received during the review period for the Southeast Corridor Draft EIS and Revised Section 4(f)

Statement. Responses to comments are also provided. This chapter represents a formal method of addressing issues raised by agencies and the public.

This document also contains eight appendices.

Appendix A provides a List of Recipients.

Appendix B is a List of Preparers.

Appendix C provides a discussion of public and agency coordination and consultation efforts.

Appendix D is a separately bound volume containing Plans and Profiles for the Light Rail Transit (LRT) alternative that is under consideration.

Appendix E provides a copy of the Section 4(f) Evaluation as set forth in Section 4(f) of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966 (Pub.L. 89-670) amended and revised, and as codified at Title 49 USC 303.

Appendix F contains a list of hazardous/regulated material databases researched for this project.

Appendix G contains the Memorandum of Agreement between the Federal Transit Administration and the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer regarding this project.

Appendix H provides a list of acronyms and abbreviations used in this document and their definitions.