

Regular Meeting Public Hearing Action Item Consent Item Resolution Ordinance
 Presentation Other:
EDA Meeting Action Item Resolution Other:
Study Session Discussion Item Written Report Other:

TITLE:

Draft MN&S EAW Comments and Mitigation Measures.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discuss suggested mitigation measures for MNS EAW and other EAW comments

POLICY CONSIDERATION:

Does the City Council wish to submit a list of proposed mitigation measures with the MNS EAW comments?

BACKGROUND:

On May 16, 2011 the MN&S Freight Rail Study EAW was released for public review. The 30-day official comment period extends through June 15, 2011. The City Council has expressed concerns in relation to the proposed mitigation measures, and has discussed providing comments on the EAW to address in particular the inadequacy of the proposed mitigation in the EAW and identify additional mitigation measures the City believes is necessary.

Mitigation

At the May 16, 2011 Study Session the City Council discussed mitigation for both potential rail routes. Attached is an updated list of proposed mitigation items for the MN&S route. A list for the Kenilworth Corridor is also being created. These lists would be the basis for comments on the MNS EAW stating the rail mitigation the City believes is necessary in St. Louis Park.

MNS EAW

At the May 31, 2011 meeting, a draft set of comments on the MNS EAW will be handed out for the Council's review and discussion. These comments, along with the proposed mitigation measures, would compose the comments formally submitted from the city.

What is the schedule after the May 31st meeting?

May 31st Review draft EAW Comments
June 6th Special Study Session
 Discussion of proposed comments on the MN&S EAW
June 8th MN&S EAW Open House at the Rec Center
June 15th Deadline for submittal of comments on the MN&S EAW

FINANCIAL OR BUDGET CONSIDERATION:

Not applicable.

VISION CONSIDERATION:

This item is linked to the City's Vision Strategic Direction that St. Louis Park is committed to being a connected and engaged community. It is also related to the broader Vision elements about the variety of transportation modes, sidewalk & trails and environmental stewardship.

Attachments: Draft MNS Mitigation Measures List

Prepared by: Kevin Locke, Community Development Director; and,
Meg J. McMonigal, Planning and Zoning Supervisor.

Approved by: Tom Harmening, City Manager

MNS Mitigation Measures

Track improvements

- Replace and upgrade the MN&S track with 136# seamless tracks reducing noise and vibrations
- Install rail lubricators
- Concrete ties to reduce the vibration

Mandatory environmental requirements such as wetland, floodplain, hazardous materials handling, wildlife habitat, etc.

Whistle Quiet Zones to upgrade rail crossings safety measures to eliminate the need to blow whistles or horns as trains approach intersections.

Better fencing and signing of the railroad r-o-w to ensure it is in place where appropriate to discourage people intruding unsafely on the MN&S tracks.

Create grade separated frontage road on north side of Hwy 7 by lengthening the MN&S bridge over Hwy 7 to provide space to create a frontage road on the north side.

Build a pedestrian overpass near High School and Dakota Avenue to connect the High School to the Lake Street area and football field.

Create pedestrian and non-vehicle access under MN&S tracks at Dakota Park by building an under pass at 27th St. to connect to the N. Cedar Lake regional trail from the east.

Expansion of MN&S r-o-w in residential area by acquiring homes immediately east of MN&S tracks north of approximately the intersection of MN&S tracks with Brunswick Avenue.

Reroute coal trains west of metro area.

Build a southern connection to MNS.

Elimination of sidings as well as through tracks east of Wooddale on Bass Lake spur to eliminate the possibility of cars being stored in this area or trains blocking Wooddale or Beltline.

Switching Wye – remove the Oxford industrial area switching wye

Funding and construction of Louisiana & Hwy 7 Interchange.

Structure Improvement Program – Create a loan and/or grant program to provide technical assistance and financial help for property owners to make noise and/or vibration mitigation improvements.

Sound and vibration mitigation improvements at the High School.

Pedestrian bridge over Hwy 7 close to the MN&S bridge to provide access for pedestrians.

Other Potential Mitigation Measures

Removal of north arm of the switching wye so CP trains could continue to serve the existing customer by using the south arm of the switching wye.

Housing Buyout program - Create a program to purchase homes on the west side of the MN&S tracks from willing sellers and remove, remodel or resell them.

Place MN&S tracks on overhead structure from Walker to Brunswick.

Draft