
Appendix B

**Light Rail Transit
Related Terms**

Office of Planning, Department
of Natural Resources

Department of Health

Environmental Conservation
Library

U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency

Metropolitan Council

City of Minneapolis - Planning
Director

Mary Anderson
Mayor, City of Golden Valley

James Krautkremer
Mayor, City of Brooklyn Park

Steve Quam
Mayor, City of Richfield

Betty Herbes
Mayor, City of Crystal

City of Minneapolis
Director of Public Works

Pollution Control Agency

Department of Agriculture

Legislative Reference Library

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
St. Paul Field Office

Environmental Quality Board

Minneapolis Park and Recreation
Board

Mayor, City of Minneapolis

Mayor, City of Robbinsdale

City of Bloomington
Director of Public Works

City of Crystal
City Engineer

City of Richfield
Community Development Director

Department of Transportation

State Historic Preservation
Office

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Functions Branch

Metropolitan Waste Control
Commission

Board of Water & Soil Resources

City of Robbinsdale

City of St. Louis Park
Mayor

City of Hopkins
Mayor

City of Golden Valley
Director of Planning &
Development

City of Hopkins
City Manager

Leonard, Street and Deinard

**CHANGES TO
THE HENNEPIN COUNTY STAGE I
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM
SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT
DATED NOVEMBER 8, 1988**

Prepared by:

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With Assistance by:

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**Approved by the
Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority on:**

January 31, 1989

BACKGROUND

On November 8, 1988, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) issued the Hennepin County Stage I Light Rail Transit System Scoping Decision Document. The preparation of the Scoping Document was in conformance with Environmental Quality Board (EQB) regulations pertaining to Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) preparation. The light rail transit system which was identified in the Scoping Document for study in the EIS was generally based on the adopted Comprehensive LRT System Plan for Hennepin County - Stage I. The Stage I System includes LRT Service in the Hiawatha, Southwest, Northwest, University Connector and I-35W South Corridors. The I-35W South Corridor is not included in the LRT EIS because Mn/DOT and the Metropolitan Council are currently conducting a separate EIS for that corridor. All of the corridors proposed in the Hennepin County Comprehensive Plan - Stage I had previously been identified by the Metropolitan Council as candidate corridors for LRT service in the regional Transportation Policy Plan.

The scoping decision of November 8 reflected information prepared for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) on the proposed project, as it was then envisioned, as well as pertinent comments submitted during the scoping comment period. The information in the EAW was based on collected and evaluated data and public input received during the Comprehensive LRT System Plan planning process.

Two alternatives were identified in the Scoping Document dated November 8, 1988, to be further analyzed in the EIS:

- o Alternative 1: Build an LRT system generally based on the adopted Comprehensive LRT System Plan for Hennepin County - Stage I for the Hiawatha, University, Northwest and Southwest Corridors. The three Central Area Alignment options included:

Option A - A long, deep tunnel in the sandstone between the Metrodome and 29th/Nicollet, with a Northwest Corridor connection. The portal by the Metrodome served the Hiawatha and University Connector, the south

portal at 29th/Nicollet served the Southwest corridor and could serve a future I-35W corridor, and the north-west portal served the Northwest corridor.

Option B - A short east/west tunnel serving the University Connector, Hiawatha Corridor, Northwest Corridor, and Southwest Corridor. The Southwest Corridor would be aligned along the former Chicago and Northwestern railroad right-of-way through the Kenwood neighborhood. The connection to the I-35W South Corridor is not defined.

Option C - An at-grade option having the following characteristics:

- Located on the north/south streets of Nicollet, Marquette, and/or Second Avenues.
- The connection from the University Connector and the Hiawatha Alignment is located between 11th Avenue and Portland Avenue along the Soo Line railroad right-of-way to Second Street.
- The connection to the Southwest Corridor is located on 11th and 12th Streets and then south on Nicollet Avenue at-grade to 29th Street.
- The connection to the Northwest Corridor is located along 11th and 12th Streets to the west with an ultimate connection to the west on TH 55.
- The South Corridor alignments will be determined.

In addition, two extensions to alignments identified in the adopted Stage I plan were included in the scoping document: extension of the Northwest Corridor to 85th Avenue in all Alternative 1 options and extension of the Southwest Corridor to County Road 62 in all Alternative 1 options.

- o Alternative 2: No-build. The LRT system in Hennepin County will not be built.

Since the publication of the November 8, 1988, Scoping Decision Document, preliminary engineering and design studies have continued. Selected areas of the study that have influenced the definition of alternatives include: soil borings, soil boring analysis, station location and design analysis which includes initial planning/layout, identification of and communication with selected major property owners that could potentially be affected by the light rail,

field analysis of the LRT corridors to identify potential opportunities and constraints, LRT track layout, and operational analysis. In addition, meetings were held in cities and communities involved in the light rail transit planning process, as well as the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC), to further discuss issues surrounding the alignment of the Hennepin County light rail corridors.

The proposed amendments to the November 8, 1988, Scoping Decision Document are in direct response to three specific factors which were generated during further discussions with various cities, communities and the IAC, and from information developed during the preliminary engineering and design study. This information revealed the need to study and potentially include alternative LRT tunnel options which have more desirable geological conditions than those proposed in the November 8 document. The factors include:

- o Requests from the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the City of Bloomington to extend the Hiawatha Corridor line in the EIS beyond 46th Street to the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America site at 24th Avenue and 81st Street.
- o Request from the City of Minnetonka to eliminate the extension of the Southwest Corridor line from County Road 18 to County Road 62 in the EIS.
- o The development of a new north/south tunnel alternative that has the following planning and construction characteristics:
 - Locates the tunnel under a suitable limestone shelf needed for inexpensive tunnel construction.
 - Complements the City of Minneapolis' north/south development plan.
 - Provides transfer-free service between all Minneapolis CBD stations and all corridors.
 - Provides direct service to the Mills District in downtown Minneapolis.

ADDITIONAL LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE EIS

The factors listed above have led to the development of additional alternatives to be considered in the Hennepin County Light Rail Transit Environmental Impact Statement (Figure 1).

Additional Tunnel Option (Figure 2) - A north/south tunnel alignment with portals located at First Avenue North and West River Parkway and on the 29th Street corridor at a point between Portland and Nicollet Avenue South. The north portal serves the Northwest Corridor, the University Corridor, and the potential Northeast Corridor. The south portal serves the Southwest Corridor, the Hiawatha Corridor, and a potential I-35W South Corridor. The stations would be located to reinforce the north/south existing and planned development of the downtown and to interconnect with the planned Nicollet Mall shuttle terminals. A potential locational conflict is in the area of the proposed expanded Post Office, the West River Parkway, and the University Connector LRT line. In case this conflict cannot be resolved, a surface alternative between the Metrodome and Hennepin Avenue is included between 2nd and 4th Streets. A transfer from this surface line to the tunnel would be required for connecting passengers.

Hiawatha Corridor - Realignment of the Hiawatha Corridor line at Hiawatha and 29th/Lake to the 29th Street Soo Line Railway Corridor where it would connect with the tunnel in the vicinity of Portland/Nicollet. A non-revenue section of the line would be constructed north of 29th Street to the University Corridor, paralleling Hiawatha Avenue, which would provide access to the Yards and Shops site.

Hiawatha Corridor - Extension of the Hiawatha Corridor to the Minneapolis - Saint Paul International Airport and to the Mall of America site at 24th Avenue and 81st Street in Bloomington.

Southwest Corridor - Reduction of the Southwest Corridor from County Road 62 to County Road 18 (Hopkins).

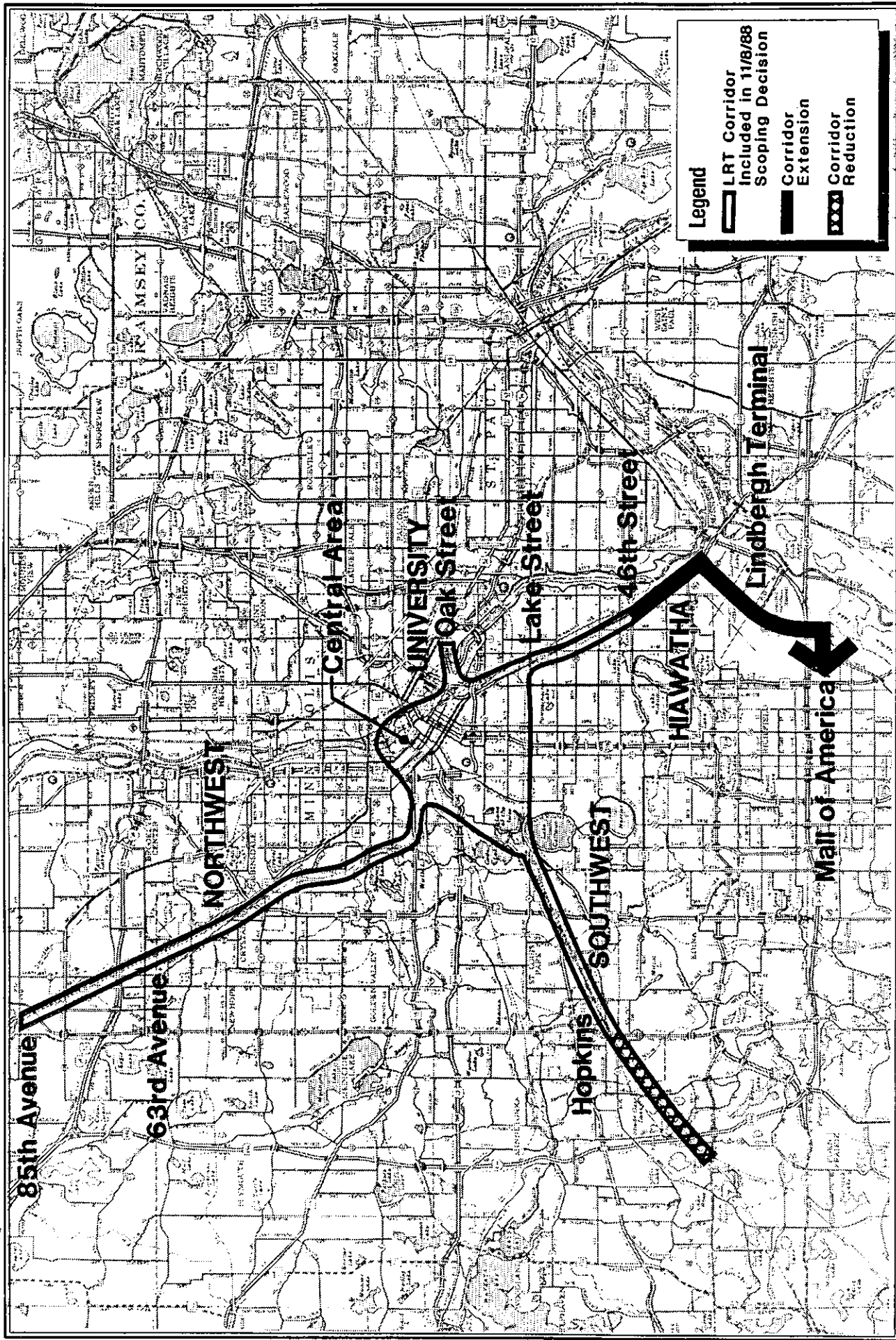


Figure 1
 Changes to Corridors for
 Inclusion in EIS

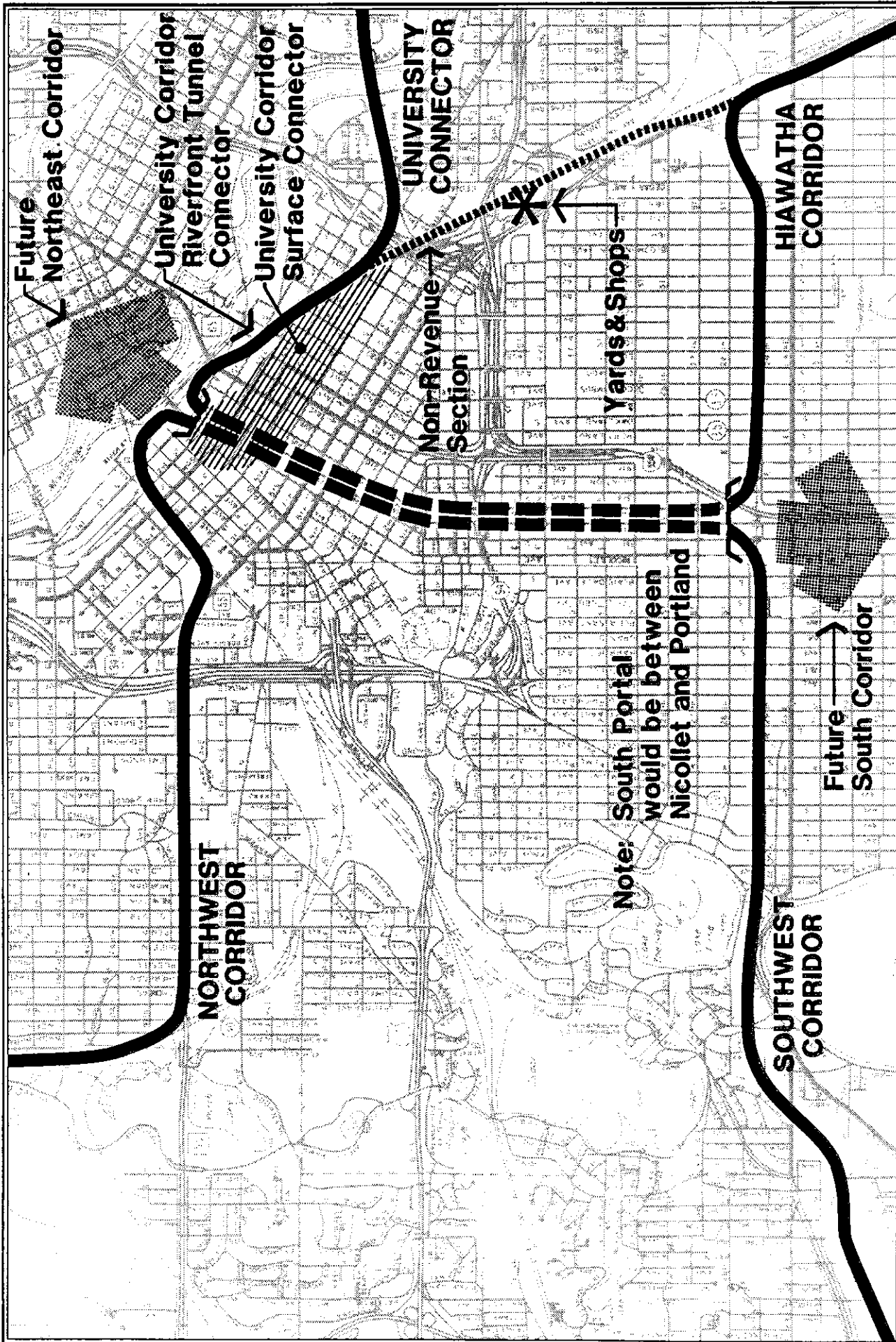


Figure 2
The North/South Tunnel
Alternative

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES TO BE STUDIED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The following section summarizes the light rail transit alternatives which were identified in the November 8, 1988 Scoping Decision Document and the proposed additional alternatives to be included for study in the Environmental Impact Statement.

ALTERNATIVE 1: Build an LRT system generally based on the adopted Comprehensive LRT System Plan for Hennepin County - Stage I for the Hiawatha, University, Northwest and Southwest Corridors.

ALTERNATIVE 2: No build. The LRT system in Hennepin County will not be built.

After environmental analysis of each of the specific alignment options of Alternative 1, the preferred option selected by the HCRRA might be composed of a combination of system links identified in the alignment options. After initial environmental analysis, it is possible that selected LRT options will be dropped from further consideration in the EIS.

Specific corridor alignment option descriptions include:

Central Area Alignment

Option A - A long, deep tunnel in the sandstone between the Metrodome and 29th/Nicollet, with a Northwest Corridor connection. The Northeast Corridor alignment will be determined after the completion of the Northeast Corridor Study currently being conducted by the HCRRA and the Anoka County Regional Railroad Authority (ACRRA). The South Corridor alignment will be determined after the completion of the I-35W EIS currently being conducted by Mn/DOT.

Option B - A short east/west tunnel serving the University Connector, Hiawatha Corridor, Northwest Corridor, and Southwest Corridor. The Southwest Corridor would be aligned along the former Chicago and Northwestern railroad right-of-way through Kenwood. The Northeast Corridor and the South Corridor alignments will be determined.

Option C - A north/south tunnel alignment with portals located at First Avenue North and West River Road, and on the 29th Street corridor at a point between Portland and Nicollet Avenue South. This tunnel option could potentially service all corridor lines.

Option D - An at-grade option having the following characteristics:

- o Located on the north/south streets of Nicollet, Marquette, and/or Second Avenues
- o The connection from the University Connector and the Hiawatha Alignment is located between 11th Avenue and Portland Avenue along the Soo Line railroad right-of-way to Second Street
- o The connection to the Southwest Corridor is located on 11th and 12th Street and then south on Nicollet Avenue at-grade to 29th Street
- o The connection to the Northwest Corridor is located along 11th and 12th Streets to the west with an ultimate connection to the west on TH 55
- o The Northeast Corridor and the South Corridor alignments will be determined

Individual street alignments identified above could change during the planning process.

Hiawatha Corridor Alignment

The Hiawatha Corridor line would run from the proposed Fashion Mall of America in Bloomington, through the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, to 29th Street where two central alignment connection options will be considered.

Option A: The Hiawatha line would continue to run north of 29th Street on Hiawatha, until it reaches its connection with the University line in the vicinity of the Metrodome. This option would connect with downtown Options A, B and D.

Option B: At 29th Street, the Hiawatha Line would be aligned on the existing Soo Line Railway. The Hiawatha Corridor would connect with Option A, C and D. A non-revenue section of track would be constructed north of 29th Street which would provide access to the Yards and Shops.

Southwest Corridor Alignment

The Southwest Corridor line will run from near County Road 18 on the HCRRA (former Chicago and Northwestern) railroad right-of-way, to approximately 500 feet from the Minneapolis - St. Louis Park border. Several central alignment/southwest corridor connection options will be studied in the Environmental Impact Statement, including:

Option A: Continuation of the southwest line in the depressed Soo Line/29th Street corridor, until it reaches Nicollet Avenue, where it will proceed at-grade into the downtown area.

Option B: Continuation of the southwest line in the depressed Soo Line/29th Street corridor, until it reaches the north/south tunnel portal in the Nicollet/Portland area.

Option C: At the West Lake Station site (Lake Street and Chowen Avenue) the southwest line would travel in a northeast direction on the HCRRA rail right-of-way, through Kenwood and connect to the east/west tunnel in the northwest section of the City.

Option D: At the West Lake Station site (Lake Street and Chowen Avenue) the southwest line would travel in a northeast direction on the HCRRA rail right-of-way, through Kenwood, with an at-grade downtown connection at 11th Street.

Northwest Corridor Alignment

The Northwest Corridor line will run south from 85th Avenue along the Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way until it reaches Olson Memorial Highway, where it will travel east to Bryant. The northwest alignment from Bryant and TH 55 will be determined by the selected central area alignment option. The northwest/central area alignment connection options to be considered include:

Option A: The northwest line would continue in a eastward direction to 7th Street, where it would travel southeast to the Burlington Northern track right-of-way, turn and travel northeast and hook into the north/south tunnel connection at the First Avenue and River Road portal.

Option B: The northwest line would connect with the east/west tunnel portal at either the 3rd or 6th Street portal locations.

Table 3 (continued)

Route	Segment	Length (miles)	Comment	Cost
TH 36	• From I-35W east to I-35E	5.0	Meter, bypass ramps, add HOV lane	\$ 35
	• From I-35E east to I-694	7.0	Meter, bypass ramps, add HOV lane	45
TH 55	• From I-94 southeast to I-494	7.0	Build 4-lane expressway, reconstruct Mendota Bridge	\$ 100
TH 77	• From CSAH 62 south to TH 13	8.0	Meter, bypass ramps	16
TH 100	• From I-94 south to I-494	15.0	Meter, bypass ramps	30
TH 101	• From TH 169 east to TH 13	8.0	Build 4-lane freeway (significant portion programmed; cost adjusted)	20
TH 169	• From Anoka/Hennepin line south to Osseo	3.0	Add lanes	10
TH 212	• From TH 41 east to I-494	11.0	Build 4-lane freeway	85
TH 280	• From I-35W south to I-94	3.5	Spot improvements, reconstruct	40
Th 610	• From I-94 east to TH 169	6.0	Reserve right-of-way	--
	• From TH 169 east to TH 252	6.0	Build 4-lane freeway according to EIS	60
CSAH 18	• From I-94 south to I-494	16.0	Meter, bypass ramps	32
	• From I-494 to TH 101	9.0	Build bridge and 4-lane expressway according to EIS	85
CSAH32	• From TH 13 east to TH 52	8.0	Complete 2-lane arterial to Th 52, select lane additions	20
CSAH 62	• From I-494 east to I-35W	7.0	Meter, bypass ramps, select lane addition	100
	• From I-35 east to TH 77	1.5	Meter, bypass ramps, select lane addition	
	• From TH 77 east to TH 55	2.5	Meter, bypass ramps, select lane addition	
Shepard Road	• Randolph to I-35E	<u>6.0</u>	Build 4-lane expressway	<u>40</u>
Total		216.5 miles		\$2,132,000,000

Note: "CSAH" means County State Aid Highways. "TH" means Trunk Highway. "HOV" means high-occupancy vehicle. "EIS" means environmental impact statement.

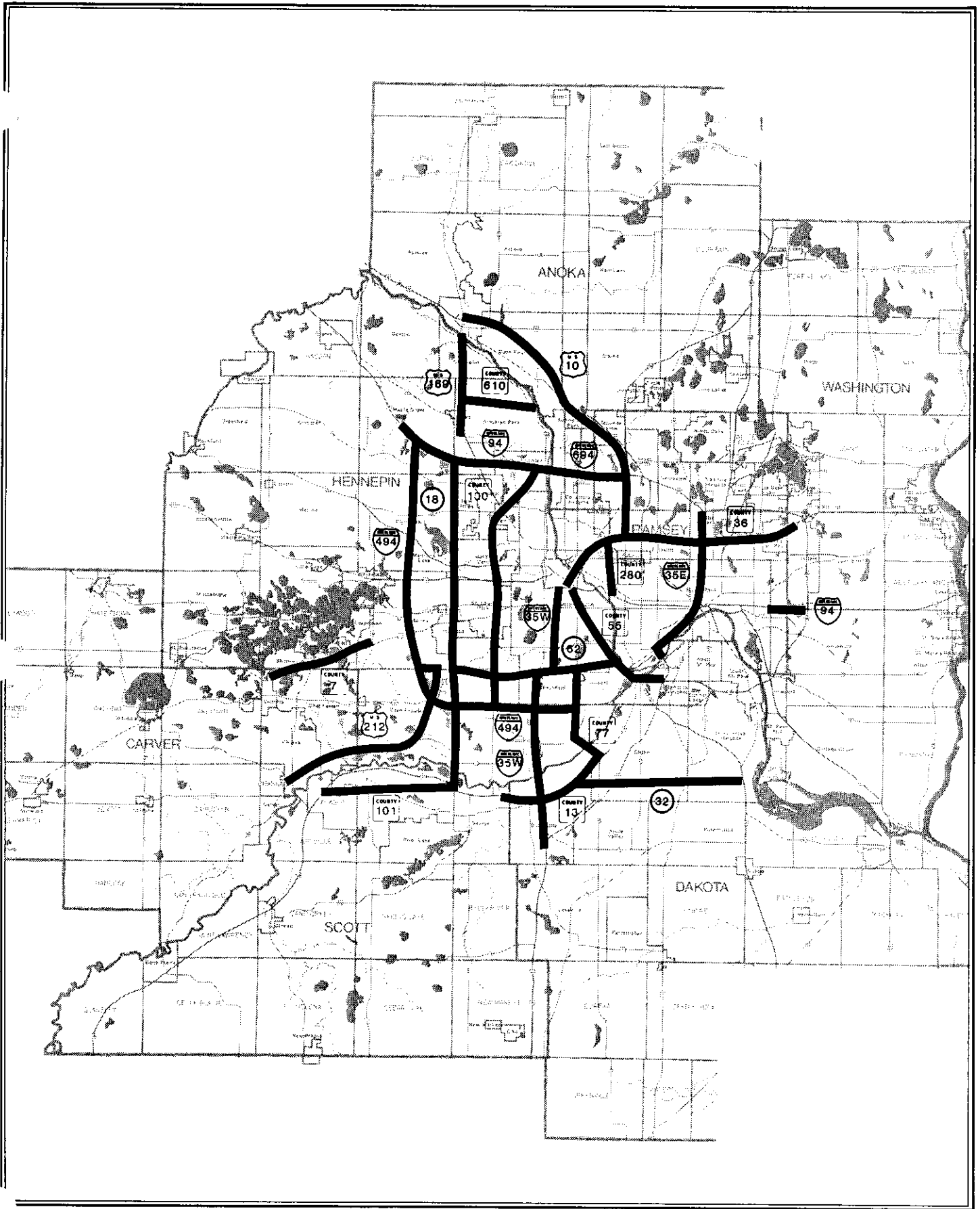


Figure 9.1

Metro Highway System Improvements Required Through 2010

