

Metra STAR Line Alternatives Analysis
Summary of Public Comments
July 10, 11, 20, 2006

Thank you to those who have provided comments on the proposed concepts for Metra's STAR Line. Public information meetings were held on July 10, 11, and 20, 2006 in Elgin, Arlington Heights and Naperville, respectively. Comments have been received both at the meetings and on the *Metra Connects* Web site (metraconnects.metrarail.com). Approximately 60 people attended the public meetings. Over 30 comments have been received to date.

On the comment form, one question asked whether one alternative was preferred over the others. Approximately 90 percent of the comments received favored the commuter rail alternative. This alternative was cited as being less vulnerable to highway delays and therefore more reliable. Several comments noted that the rail alternative is the only option that would not add vehicles to the already congested roadways. Many also expressed support for the rail alternative because of its potential connections to the existing and future rail network, and suburbanites' positive experience with existing Metra service.

The comment form also asked if one alternative was less desirable. In response, many comments addressed a dislike for any bus options largely due to congestion problems along IL-59. Other comments also cited buses as being less comfortable, less reliable, and unable to attract development. One commenter suggested using buses as a way to phase in the service.

Additional comments expressed hope for the success of the STAR Line project, and addressed the need for continued progress on the project so communities do not doubt its potential. Other participants expressed interest in extending the STAR Line beyond the study area and considering other locations for specific stations.

Based on public comment, alternatives are being refined and further evaluated. As a part of the public involvement process, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has recommended evaluation of a shorter alignment. In response to this, Metra has developed two refinements of the commuter rail alternative: Multimodal Alternative A (Tollway Rail / IL-59 Bus) & Multimodal Alternative B (Tollway Bus / EJ&E Rail). These alternatives and the other four alternatives that were proposed to be carried forward are briefly described below.

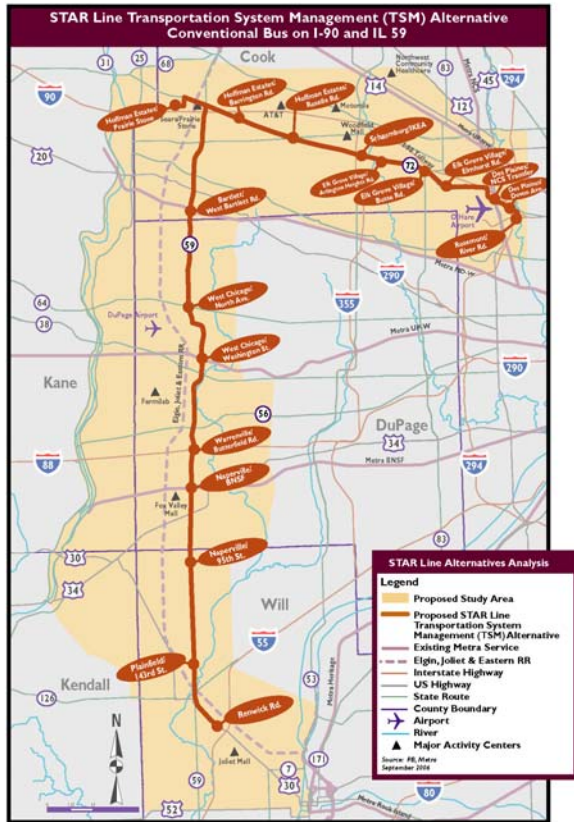
These six feasible alternatives are being carried forward into the next step of the Alternatives Analysis process which will forecast the potential future ridership and transportation benefits of each alternative. Again, thank you for your attendance at the public meetings, your review of the project on the *Metra Connects* Web site, and your comments. After screening of the feasible alternatives, we will conduct more public meetings in the corridor. We will seek further comments at that time. Note, however, that comments can be submitted any time during the study via the *Metra Connects* Web site. Your comments are appreciated.

Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

Vehicles: Conventional Buses

Routing: Buses will operate on existing lanes of IL-72 (Higgins Road) from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates and then on IL-59 from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road and US-30.

Stations: Pull-offs from existing lanes with shelters

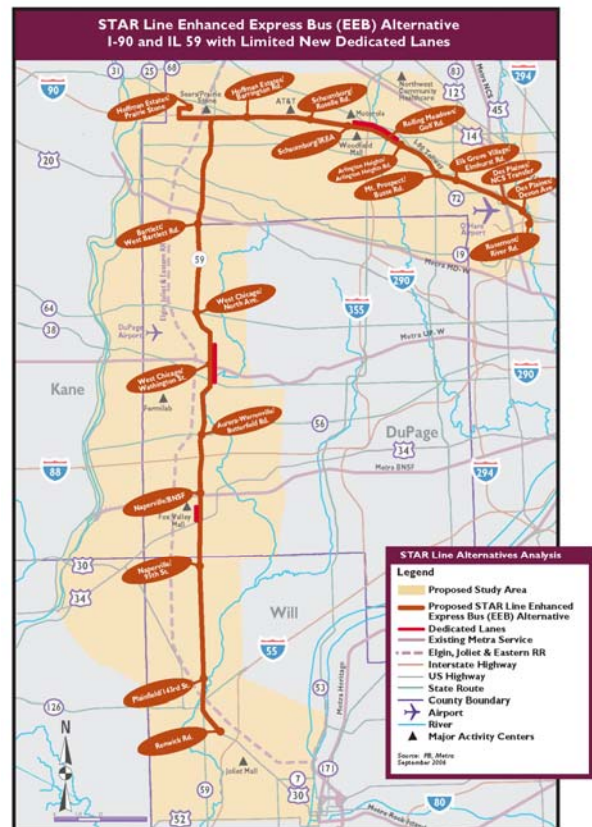


Enhanced Express Bus Alternative

Vehicles: Conventional Buses

Routing: Buses will operate on existing lanes of I-90 from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates and then on IL-59 from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road and US-30. A limited number of bus-only lanes will be constructed at key points of congestion along the corridor

Stations: Pull-offs from existing lanes with shelters





Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative

Vehicles: Low-Floor Articulated BRT vehicles

Routing: BRT vehicles will operate on new bus-only lanes in the median of I-90 from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates and then on new bus-only lanes in the median of IL-59 from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road and US-30.

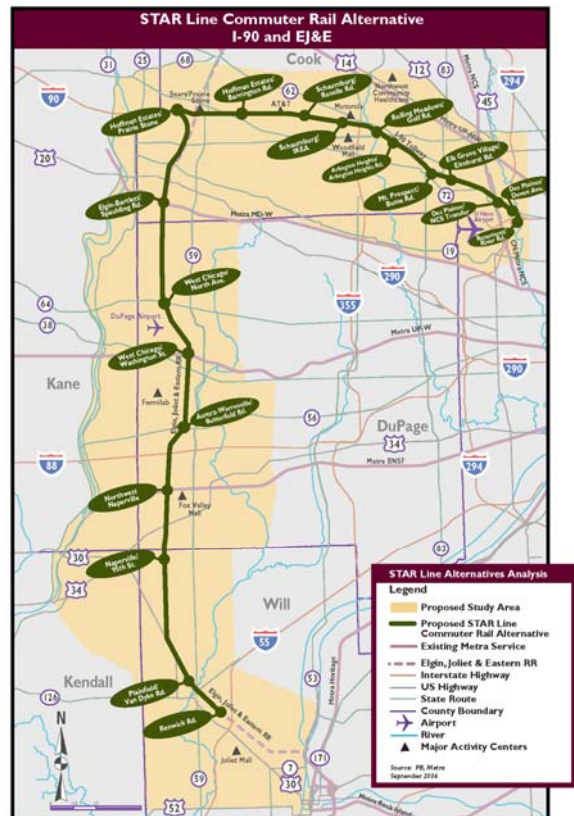
Stations: Rail-like station facilities in the highway median

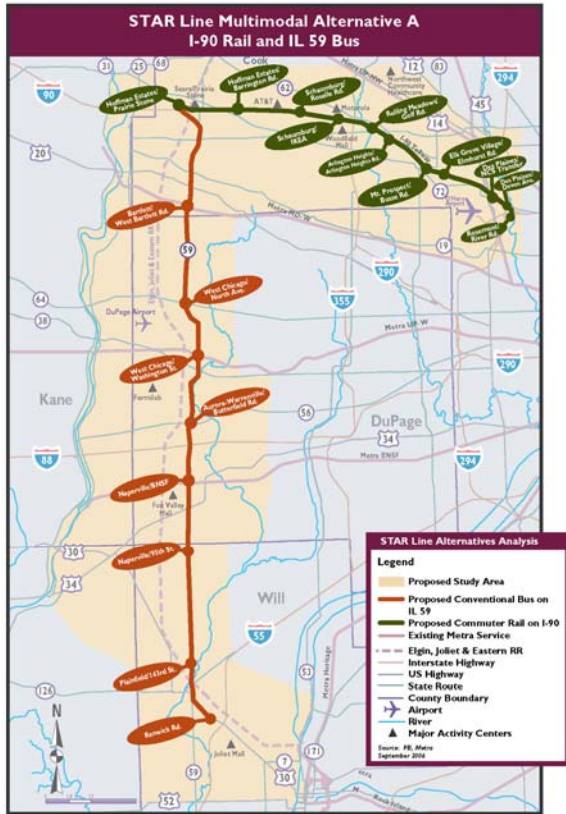
Commuter Rail Alternative

Vehicles: Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains

Routing: Trains will operate on a new passenger-only railroad in the median of I-90 from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates and on the upgraded EJ&E freight railroad from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road, near Joliet.

Stations: Rail stations in the median of I-90 and traditional commuter rail stations on EJ&E





Multimodal Alternative A (Tollway Rail/IL-59 Bus)

Vehicles: Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains on I-90 and Conventional Buses on IL-59

Routing: Trains will operate on a new passenger-only railroad in the median of I-90 from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates. Buses will operate on the existing lanes of IL-59 from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road and US-30.

Stations: Median rail stations on I-90 and bus pull-offs from existing lanes with shelters on IL-59

Multimodal Alternative B (Tollway Bus/EJ&E Rail)

Vehicles: Conventional Buses on I-90 and Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains on the EJ&E

Routing: Buses will operate on existing lanes of I-90 from the Rosemont CTA station to Prairie Stone in Hoffman Estates. Trains will operate on the upgraded EJ&E freight railroad from Hoffman Estates to Renwick Road, near Joliet.

Stations: Pull-offs from existing lanes with small shelters on I-90 and traditional commuter rail stations on EJ&E

