

This email is being sent to everyone who attended the Open House for the SE LRT Study on April 8, 2003 and provided their electronic contact information in order to receive updated project information. In addition, the several people who emailed me following the Open House and the Stakeholder Representatives for this project are also on the circulation list. If you have any further questions or comments, please direct them to: Gale Simpson, Public Consultation Coordinator: gwhiz@telus.net. Thanks.

Subject: SE LRT - 11 Street Proposal

A number of written comments and emails have been submitted regarding the option to have the proposed Southeast LRT line go along the west side of 11 Street SE, between 21 Avenue and the mainline CPR tracks.

In response to this feedback, I offer the following comments:

During the course of studies such as this, alternatives and options are developed based on constraints, opportunities and input that is provided by a variety of stakeholders during the course of the study. For this study there is stakeholder team of community and business representatives that has met twice to review options and provide input. As well, two community open houses have been held to seek input from all interested parties. These open houses have been well advertised and reasonably well attended. Other stakeholders have provided input outside of the community groups. These stakeholders include local property owners, the two railways, City of Calgary technical and planning staff.

In any long range study such as this, the ability to examine different options, at any point in the process is important since the purpose of the process is to come up with a design that most effectively meets the needs of the large variety of stakeholders at the most reasonable cost. The time frame for construction of this LRT line is beyond the 20 year horizon. The reason for doing the study now is so that land can be acquired in an orderly fashion and other long term planning decisions can be made with the proposed LRT line in mind. The long lead time also allows complementary development to occur to support the LRT stations when they are built.

The 11 Street alternative was developed to address a number of stakeholder issues raised during the review of the proposed LRT alignment. Some of these issues have come to light only recently and have included:

- * The negative impact of the at-grade CPR crossing of 11 Street on local traffic circulation. The at-grade CPR crossing disrupts traffic on 11 Street causing traffic to seek alternate routes, often through the community. This concern was raised by local residents, businesses, and the railway.
- * Minimize construction costs. The first option developed involves a considerable length of elevated track and bridges to carry the LRT line over 26 Ave, the CNR and CPR tracks, and 11 Street (twice). The project team was asked to explore a lower cost solution.
- * A local land owner asked if an alternative could be developed that would avoid a property that is subject to a current development application.

The 11 Street option was developed to address these issues just prior to the April 8 open house. A special meeting was held on April 7 to discuss the 11 Street option with the Ramsay and Inglewood community stakeholder team representatives. During this meeting, the community representatives asked the project team fine tune the option to minimize the impact of this option on the homes and businesses along 11 Street and to show how this option could be integrated into the community.

When it was drafted, the 11 Street option, particularly with the station located on 11 Street, was viewed as having the potential for positive community benefits. A station located on 11 Street would be more accessible and would be located in a more pedestrian friendly environment than having the station located next to the CPR mainline and shunting tracks. As well, the City's technical team felt that this option would provide a buffer between the community and the adjacent industrial area to the east.

To date, comments submitted by community residents do not support the 11 Street option. Objections are generally related to removal of several homes and businesses, reduced access to 11 Street, increased traffic on 19 Avenue and loss of potential commercial development along the west side of 11 Street.

It is noted that concerns similar to these were heard from Sunnyside, Lions Park and Banff Trail during the planning for NW LRT . However, LRT has had a very positive influence on these communities. LRT stations were successfully integrated into the community and the LRT tracks do provide an effective buffer between residential and commercial activities.

It is recognized that the 11 Street option would require the acquisition of a number of commercial and residential properties along 11 Street and that this could have a long term 'unsettling' influence on development and redevelopment in the surrounding area for the 20 (or more) years prior to LRT construction. As well, it is acknowledged that the 11 Street option would require closure of 3 current road connections along the west side of 11 Street.

It has been agreed not to recommend the 11 Street option for the following reasons:

- * marginally higher construction cost of the 11 Street option
- * higher property acquisition cost
- * loss of a potential station at the Cross Roads Market site
- * reduced community access to 11 Street
- * reduced potential for community oriented commercial development along 11 Street
- * the realignment of 11 Street with a CPR underpass can be incorporated into the base option.

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