KRM

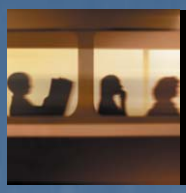
THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE COMMUTER LINK

PUBLIC HEARING

Tonight

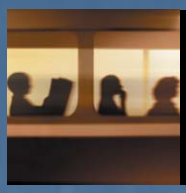
5:00 – 7:00 pm

Presentation at 5:45 pm



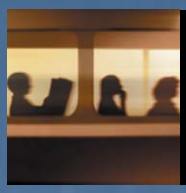
Why Consider a Major Public Transit Improvement in the KRM Corridor?

- To provide a necessary and desirable alternative to the automobile in a heavily traveled corridor
- To provide a high quality alternative to the automobile during IH 94/IH43 freeway system reconstruction over the next 20 years
- To support and promote higher density infill development and redevelopment, which results in efficiencies for public infrastructure and services, including transportation
- To contribute to efficiency in the transportation system, including reduced highway traffic and congestion, air pollution and energy consumption
- To meet the travel needs – access to jobs, education, and other – of the significant portion of the population (15% of households) without an automobile
- To enhance economic development by providing improved labor force accessibility
- To enhance quality of life by providing choice of travel mode and to permit the reduction in household expenditures on transportation, permitting greater savings, other expenditures, and a higher standard of living
- To better connect southeastern Wisconsin with northeastern Illinois
  - Improved connection should promote economic and population growth in the KRM corridor and southeastern Wisconsin
  - Improved job and labor force accessibility
  - Improve accessibility to and enhance GMIA; arts, culture, and entertainment venues; and colleges and universities



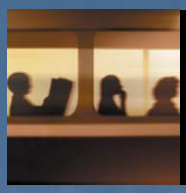
Intergovernmental Partnership

- Intergovernmental Partnership jointly created in March 2005 to complete further study of KRM commuter rail
  - County Executives of Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine Counties
  - Mayors of the Cities of Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine
  - Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation
  - Chairman of SEWRPC
- Purpose and role of Partnership
  - Conduct and complete the necessary technical studies – corridor "alternatives analysis" including environmental impact statement
    - To identify costs and benefits to permit KRM commuter rail to be considered for implementation locally
    - To permit the project to be eligible for Federal discretionary capital funding
    - Scheduled for completion in fall 2009
    - SEWRPC staff is project manager for KRM study
- KRM Steering Committee, appointed by each member of Partnership
    - Provides overall direction and oversight of the study
    - Together with "temporary" Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority, selected commuter rail alternative as preferred alternative



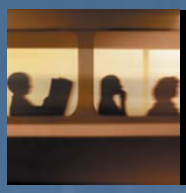
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority

- Created in 2005 - 2007 State budget
- Three Counties – Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine
- Seven member governing body
  - One each appointed by the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine County Executives
  - One each appointed by the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine City Mayors
  - One appointed by the Governor from the City of Milwaukee
- Regional Planning Commission acted as staff to Regional Transit Authority (RTA)
- RTA purpose was to make recommendations by November 2008 to State legislature and Governor for a permanent RTA
- As of September 1, 2009, this RTA was dissolved and will be replaced by the new permanent Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SERTA)



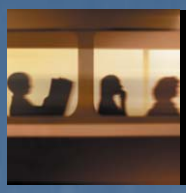
Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SERTA)

- Created in 2009 - 2011 State budget
- Replaces temporary Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority created in 2005 - 2007 State Budget
- Consists of Counties of Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee
- Nine Board Members:
  - Two from Milwaukee County (appointed by County Board Chair)
  - Two from City of Milwaukee (appointed by Mayor)
  - One from Racine County (appointed by County Board Chair)
  - One from City of Racine (appointed by Mayor)
  - One from Kenosha County (appointed by County Board Chair)
  - One from City of Kenosha (appointed by Mayor)
  - One from SERTA jurisdictional area (appointed by Governor)
- Given powers to create, construct, and manage a KRM commuter rail line, including:
  - Authority to enact up to an $18 vehicle rental fee (indexed to inflation)
  - Decision to apply to the Federal Transit Administration for approval to advance to preliminary engineering and potentially obtain a Federal discretionary capital grant



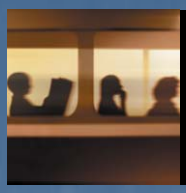
Commuter Rail Alternative

- Connect Milwaukee and Racine to existing Chicago-Kenosha commuter rail
- 33-mile route using existing Union Pacific Railroad (UP) and Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) freight lines
- 9 stations
  - Existing stations at Kenosha and Milwaukee
  - New Stations at Somers, Racine, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy-St. Francis, and Milwaukee South Side
- Level of service
  - Service provided during all time periods
  - 14 weekday trains in each direction
  - Operating speed – up to 59 mph
  - Average speed – 38 mph

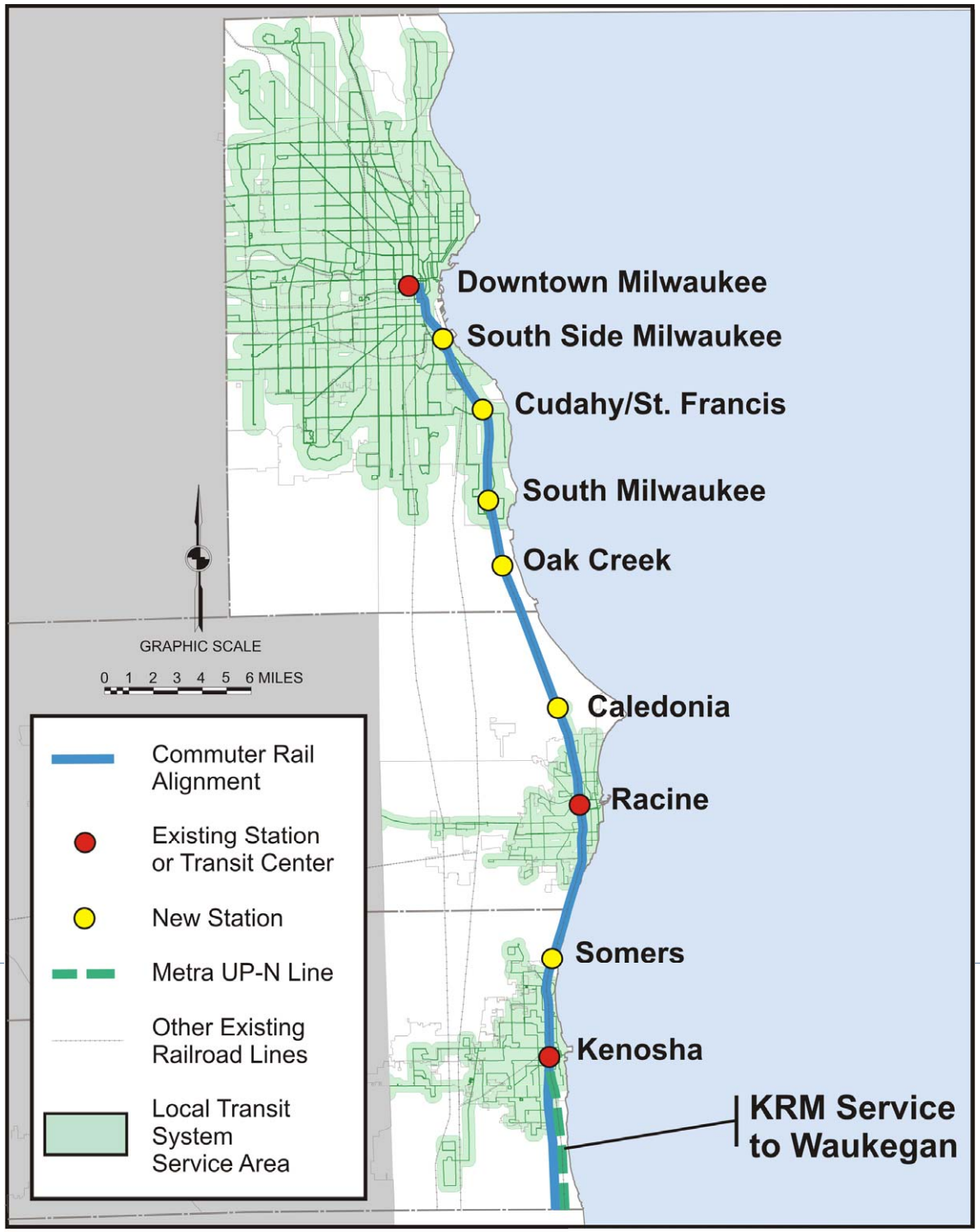


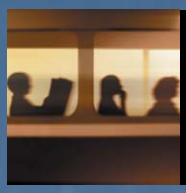
Commuter Rail Alternative

- Shuttle bus service
  - Dedicated service between Amtrak station and Milwaukee central business district
  - Dedicated service between General Mitchell International Airport and Cudahy-St. Francis station
- Train operation
  - Service provided by meeting existing Metra trains at either Kenosha or Waukegan
    - Contract with UP Railroad and provide timed-transfer (6 minutes) at Kenosha and Waukegan to Metra
  - Diesel-multiple-unit cars ("DMUs" or self-propelled coaches)



Commuter Rail Alternative



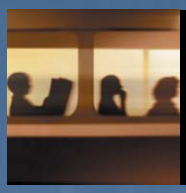


Bus/TSM Alternative

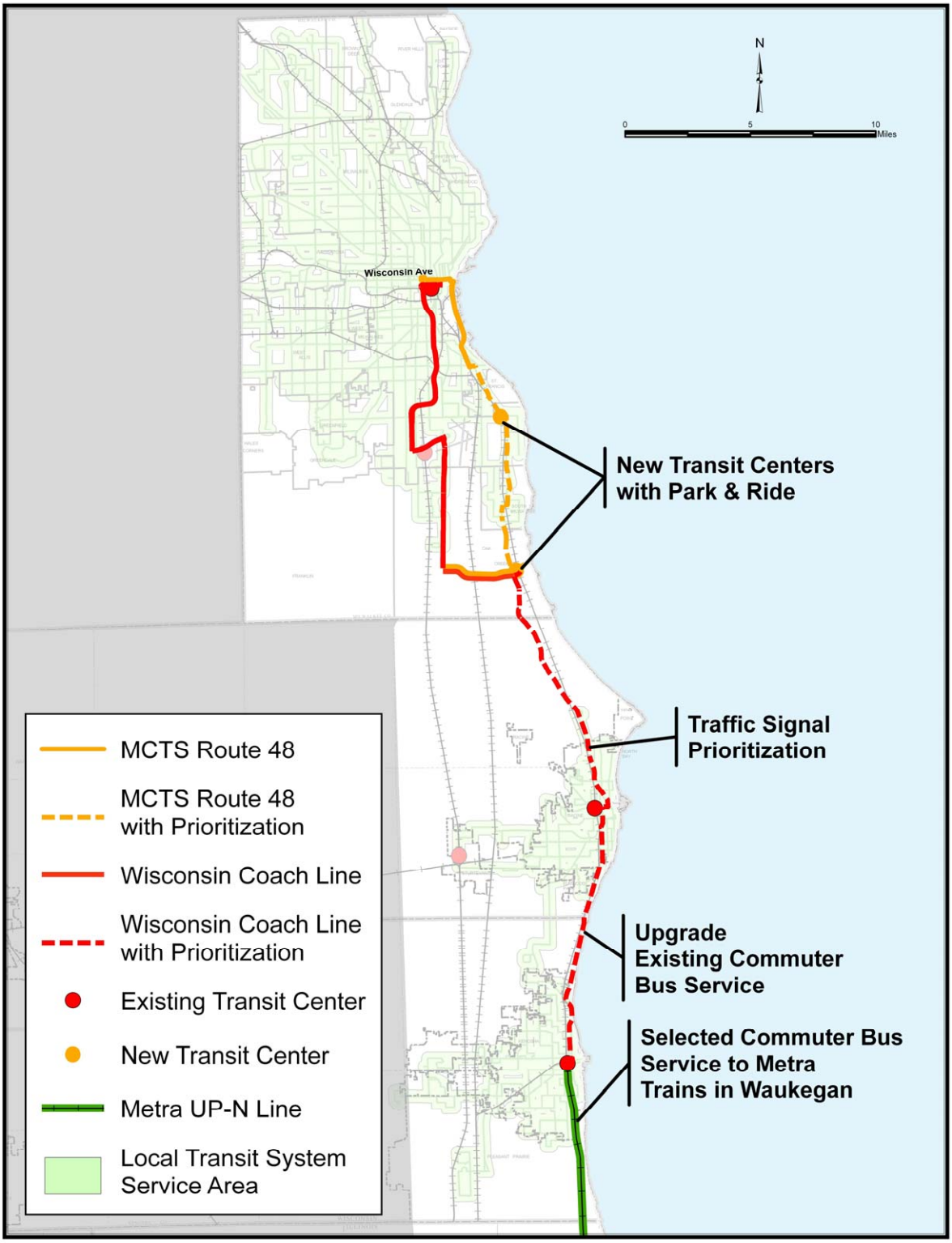
- The bus alternative is an improved and expanded bus service
  - The best that can be done to improve existing bus service, including:
    - Express stop spacing
    - Expanded schedules
    - Traffic signal prioritization
    - Passenger information systems at selected stations
  - Expansion and enhancement of the existing Wisconsin Coach Lines service and the MCTS Freeway Flyer Route 48 service
- South of Oak Creek, service routed primarily along STH 32
- North of Oak Creek, service splits into two routes
  - Via South Milwaukee, Cudahy, St. Francis and Milwaukee's South Side along Packard Avenue and Lake Parkway
  - Via Oak Creek and General Mitchell International Airport along STH 100 and IH 94

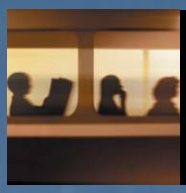
Bus/TSM Alternative

- 29 stations (park-rides) or stops
  - Existing transit stations at Kenosha and Racine
  - New transit stations at Oak Creek and Cudahy-St. Francis
- Level of Service
  - Service provided during all time periods
  - 14-17 weekday buses in each direction
  - Operating speed – same as street or highway being used (Average speed – 20 to 29 mph)
- Coordinated with Metra commuter train service at Kenosha or Waukegan
  - Two additional trains to Kenosha added to current Metra service (one northbound in morning, on southbound in afternoon)
- Motor coach vehicles with commuter bus amenities



Bus/TSM Alternative





Evaluation and Comparison of Commuter Rail & Bus Alternatives

Travel Time

- Commuter rail will be much faster than bus in connecting the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine areas to each other and with Northeastern Illinois.

	Milwaukee to Kenosha	
	Average Speed	**Average travel time**
Commuter Rail	38 mph	53 minutes
Bus	20 to 29 mph	83 to 108 minutes

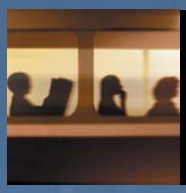
In comparison, a trip by automobile between Milwaukee and Kenosha during the peak traffic hours may be expected to require 54 minutes.

Reliability

- Unaffected by congestion, commuter rail would also provide the highest level of reliability, comfort and convenience.

Ridership

- Commuter rail may be expected to attract nearly three times the ridership of bus, annually attracting 1.88 million trips vs. 0.66 million for bus.
- Trips on commuter rail will also be longer than those on bus, so passenger miles on commuter rail will be about five times that of bus, 23.1 million passenger miles vs. 4.6 million for bus.



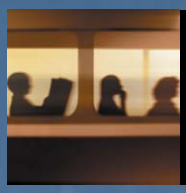
Evaluation and Comparison of Commuter Rail & Bus Alternatives

Impact on Highway System

- Commuter rail will have 3.5 times more reduction on highway system traffic and traffic congestion.
- Commuter rail will provide a far superior alternative mode of travel during IH 94 reconstruction.

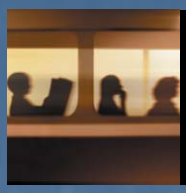
Impact on Air Pollutant Emissions and Energy Consumption

- Commuter rail will have 2.5 times the reduction in vehicle generated air pollutant emissions and vehicle energy consumption compared to the bus. Additional reductions in air pollutant emissions and energy consumption may be expected due to commuter rail's potential to encourage higher density development.



Development/Redevelopment Potential

- Commuter rail will have the potential to result in more efficient higher density land development around its stations and reduce urban sprawl
  - Encourage desirable needed and planned development/redevelopment in central cities of Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha and inner, older suburbs of Cudahy,
    St. Francis, and South Milwaukee
  - Encourage higher density, more efficient development in developing communities of Oak Creek, Caledonia, and Somers



Evaluation and Comparison of Commuter Rail & Bus Alternatives

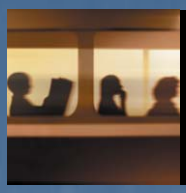
Accessibility to Jobs:

- Due to its higher average speeds and resulting lower travel times, commuter rail will provide greater accessibility to the significant number of jobs in the KRM / northeastern Illinois corridor.

Corridor Jobs (1 mile station radius—Year 2000)

Downtown Milwaukee	110,300
Milwaukee County	21,600
Kenosha and Racine Counties	28,200
Chicago North Shore Suburbs	95,100
Chicago North Side	58,500
Downtown Chicago	599,400

- An estimated 246,000, or 41 percent, of City of Milwaukee residents reside within 3 miles of the two proposed KRM train stations in the City, some within walking distance and others within a short connecting bus or shuttle ride or drive or drop-off by automobile. Of these City residents, 58 percent, or 143,000, are minorities, and 29% do not have access to an automobile.
- An estimated 108,000, or 57 percent, of Racine County residents reside within 3 miles of the two proposed KRM train stations in Racine County, some within walking distance and others within a short connecting bus or shuttle ride or drive or drop-off by automobile. Of these County residents, 30%, or 32,000, are minorities, and 11% do not have access to an automobile.
- An estimated 96,000, or 64 percent, of Kenosha County residents reside within 3 miles of the two proposed KRM train stations in Kenosha County, some within walking distance and others within a short connecting bus or shuttle ride or drive or drop-off by automobile. Of these County residents, 20 percent, or 19,000, are minorities, and 8 percent do not have access to an automobile.



Evaluation and Comparison of Commuter Rail & Bus Alternatives

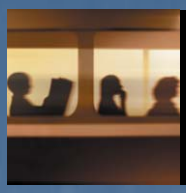
Corridor Economic Development & Growth:

- Due to its much higher average speeds and shorter travel times, commuter rail will do a significantly better job of more closely connecting Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee to each other and to northeastern Illinois and Chicago.
  - This improved linkage between southeastern Wisconsin and the mega-metropolitan area of northeastern Illinois may be expected to result in more economic and population growth in the KRM corridor and in southeastern Wisconsin.
  - The potential for future economic growth of southeastern Wisconsin through more closely linking to Northeastern Illinois is one of a few major economic development themes being advanced for southeastern Wisconsin by the Milwaukee 7.
    - Companies such as S.C. Johnson have cited the importance of this link to Northeastern Illinois to retaining and attracting qualified employees, and maintaining and expanding its presence in southeastern Wisconsin.

Capital and Annual Operating & Maintenance Costs

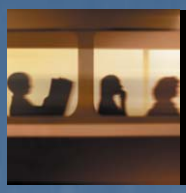
- Commuter rail would have higher capital costs and annual operating and maintenance (O&M) costs than bus *
  - Capital cost (2007 dollars) -- $206 million for commuter rail compared to $28 million for bus
  - Annual O&M cost (2007 dollars) -- $11.8 million for commuter rail compared to $3.2 million for bus
  - Annualized combined capital and total O&M cost -- $26.8 million for commuter rail compared to $4.3 million for bus
  - About 80 to 90 percent of capital and net operating and maintenance costs may be expected to be funded with Federal and State funds

* Under the previous study, commuter rail had an estimated $198 million capital cost (2006 dollars) and a $10.9 million annual O&M cost (2006 dollars).



Conclusions

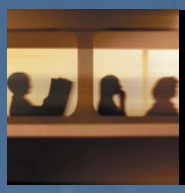
- Substantial benefits of commuter rail outweigh its increased costs
  - Faster average speeds and shorter travel times
  - Higher reliability, comfort, and convenience
  - Significantly higher ridership – total and new trips and trip length
  - Greater impact on highway traffic and congestion
  - Higher quality and more effective alternative during freeway reconstruction
  - Greater reduction in air pollutant emissions and energy consumption
  - Potential to support and encourage more efficient high density infill land development and redevelopment representing significant new housing, jobs, tax base, and retail sales
  - Provide accessibility to significant number of jobs in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois
  - Can contribute significantly to southeastern Wisconsin economic growth and development by more closely connecting northeastern Illinois with southeastern Wisconsin



What's Next

- Environmental Impact Statement Next Steps
  - Obtain public comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) by October 5, 2009
  - Address public and agency comments and perform additional work necessary to complete Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
    - Conducted concurrently with Preliminary Engineering
  - Receive Record of Decision for the Final EIS from Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

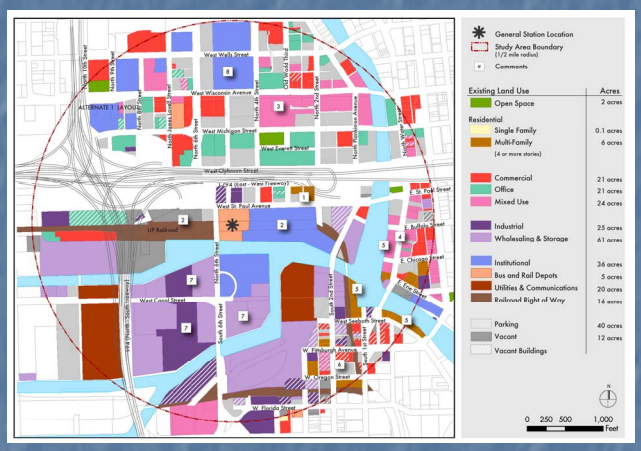
- Commuter Rail Project Next Steps
  - Submit "New Starts" application to FTA for consideration of discretionary Federal funding to enter next phase of project development – Preliminary Engineering
  - Receive FTA Decision on Entering Preliminary Engineering
  - Conduct Preliminary Engineering
  - Submit application to FTA for Final Engineering and Design funding
  - Receive FTA Decision on Entering Final Engineering and Design
  - Conduct Final Engineering and Design
  - Receive FTA Decision on Full Funding Grant Agreement
  - Construction
    - Procurement and construction
    - Training and testing
  - Service operations begin



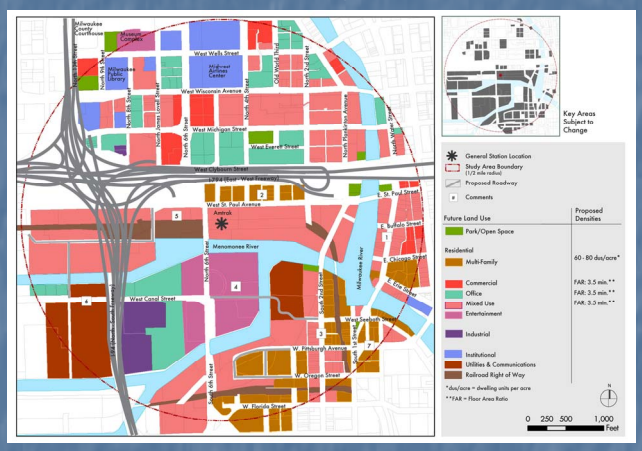
Downtown Milwaukee

Land Use

Existing



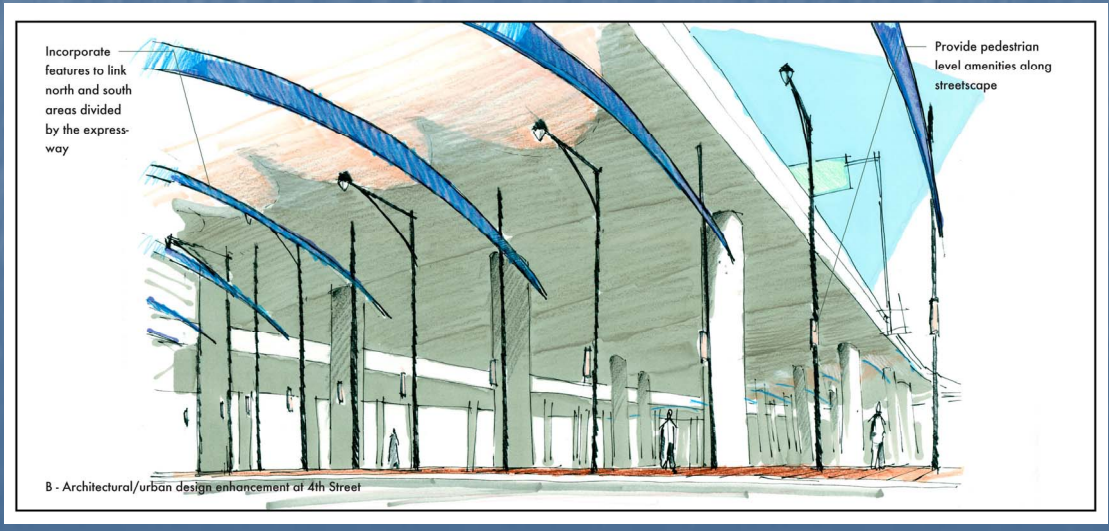
Preliminary Future



A - Streetscape along St. Paul Avenue

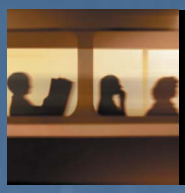
A - Existing conditions at St. Paul Avenue

B - Existing conditions at 3rd Street



B - Architectural/urban design enhancement at 4th Street

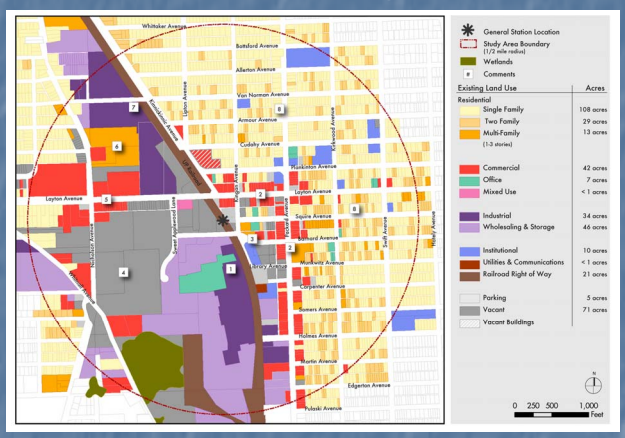
KRM Commuter Link



South Side Milwaukee

Land Use

Existing



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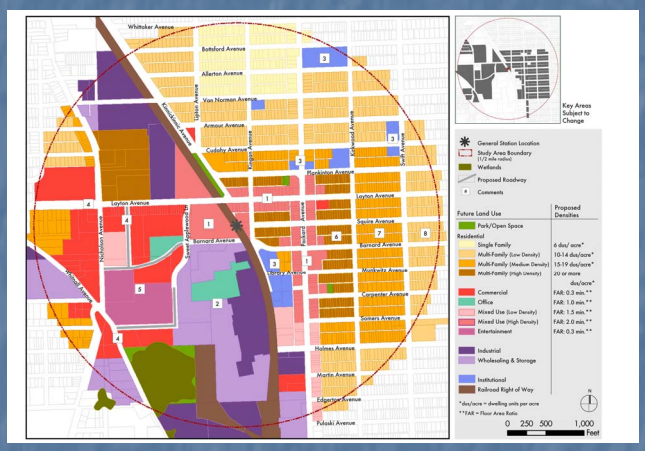
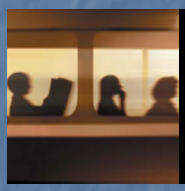
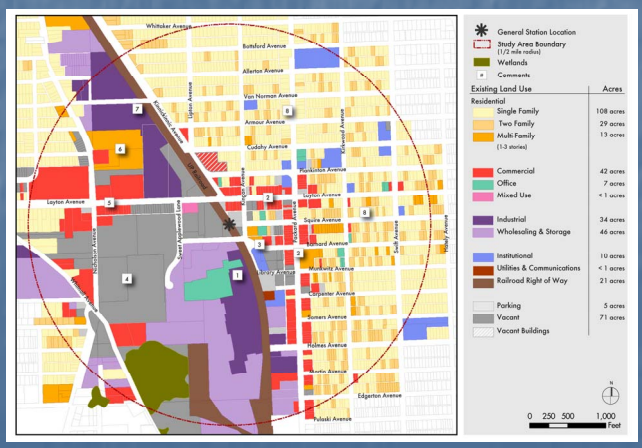




Cudahy – St. Francis

Land Use

Existing



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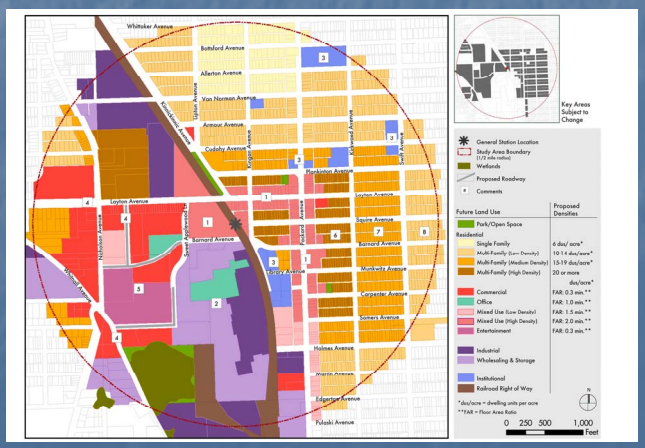
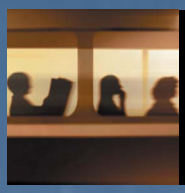
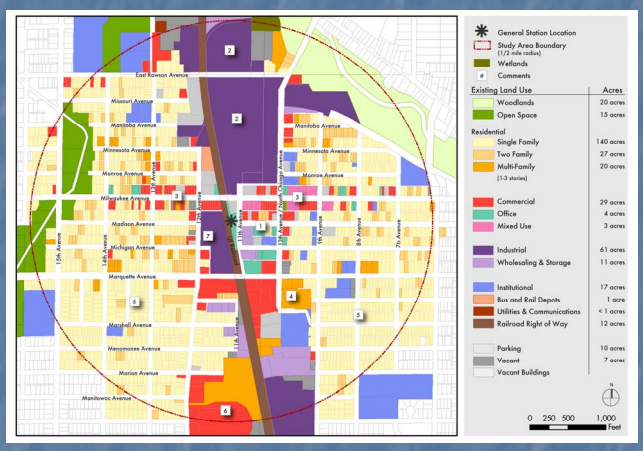




South Milwaukee

Land Use

Existing



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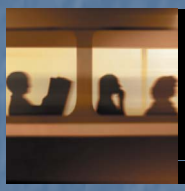
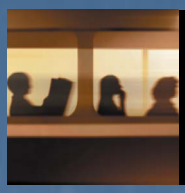


Oak Creek

Land Use

Existing

Preliminary Future

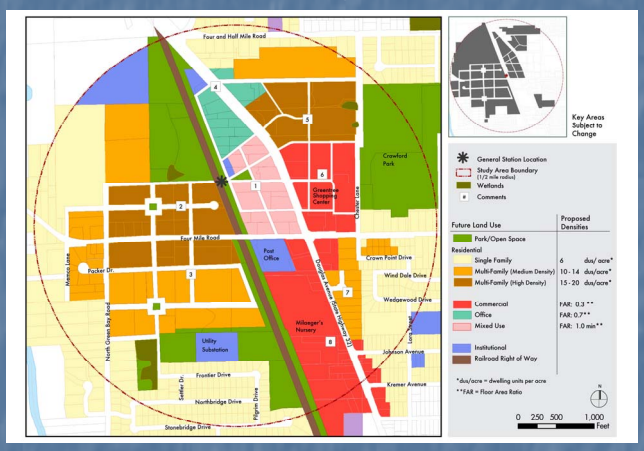


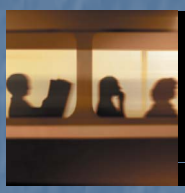
Caledonia

Land Use

Existing

Preliminary Future



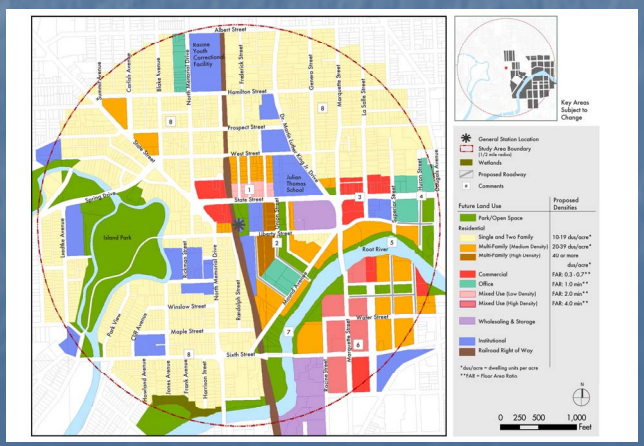


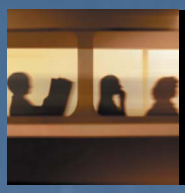
Racine

Land Use

Existing

Preliminary Future



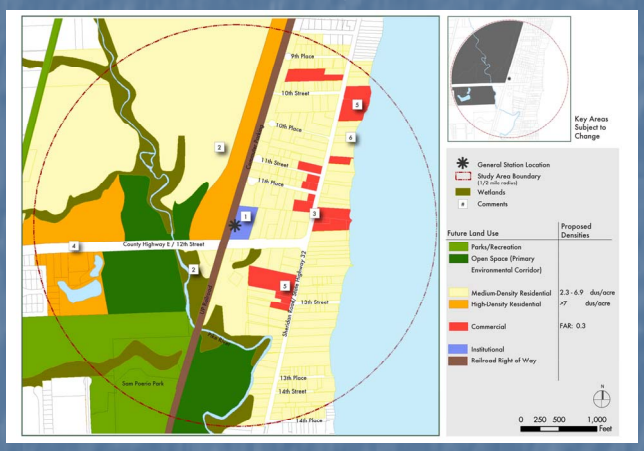


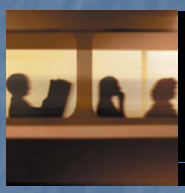
Somers

Land Use

Existing

Preliminary Future

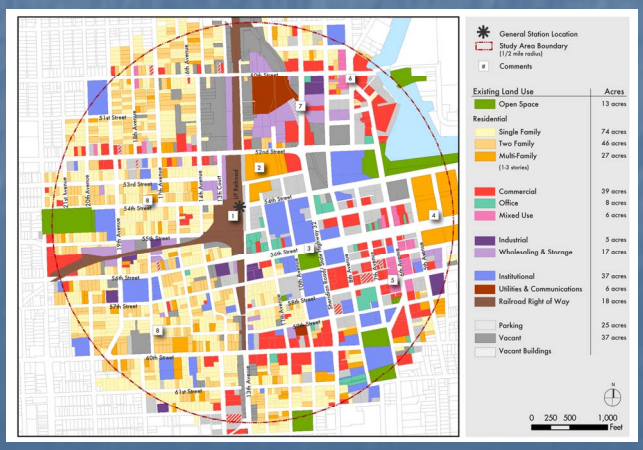




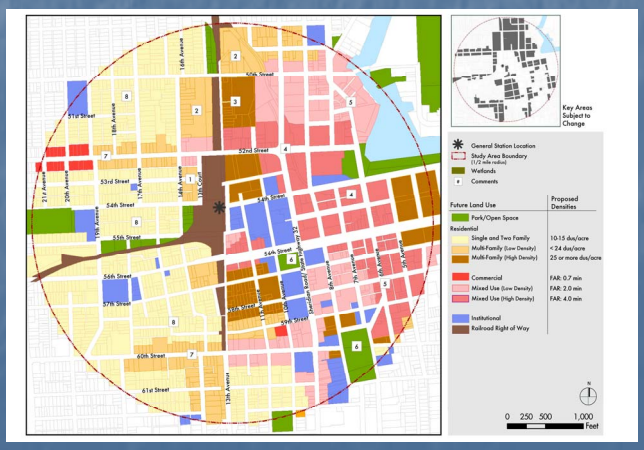
Kenosha

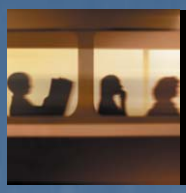
Land Use

Existing



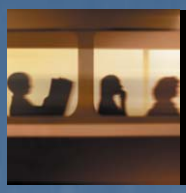
Preliminary Future





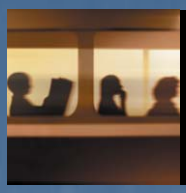
Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Prepared and filed in July 2009
- Public Comment Period open until October 5, 2009
- Describes KRM alternatives analysis process and costs and financial analysis of alternatives
- Focuses on environment potentially affected by KRM commuter rail implementation
- Addresses potential environmental impacts and consequences of KRM commuter rail implementation
- Potential impacts studied include:
  - Land Use and Socioeconomic Development
  - Transportation
  - Displacement/Relocation of Existing Uses
  - Neighborhoods
  - Visual and Aesthetic Qualities
  - Air Quality
  - Noise
  - Vibration
  - Ecosystems
  - Water Resources
  - Energy
  - Hazardous Materials Contamination
  - Archaeological and Historical
  - Environmental Justice
  - Public Use Lands
  - Impacts During Construction
- Public comments will be incorporated into Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



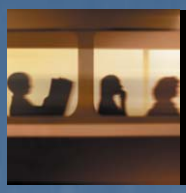
Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Potential Impacts of Commuter Rail
  - Land Use and Socioeconomic Development
    - Commuter rail station areas studied
    - Transit-oriented development will likely result in high-density, more efficient land uses, and overall positive effect
    - Increases to employment and housing units will likely occur around each station
  - Transportation
    - Minimal impact on operation of roadways containing railroad crossings due to additional auto wait times at crossings
    - Minimal traffic-volume impacts due to additional traffic on roadways accessing park and ride locations
    - Further traffic studies needed to determine if intersection improvements are needed near specific stations
    - Potential conflicts between commuter rail and other freight and passenger rail activities mitigated by changing commuter rail time-table or improving rail infrastructure
  - Displacement/Relocation of Existing Uses
    - No residential relocations required
    - Two businesses, one each at the proposed Caledonia and South Milwaukee stations, may potentially need to be relocated
  - Neighborhoods in Corridor
    - Increased transportation opportunities resulting in more access to jobs in the KRM Corridor
    - New community services likely to open in station areas
    - More connections between neighborhoods and communities
  - Visual and Aesthetic Qualities
    - Visual impacts, mostly positive, will principally occur in station areas, where new stations and parking are to be constructed
    - Pedestrian streetscape enhancements are recommended, including sidewalks, lighting, public art, and street trees
    - Gateway features at key entryway points into each station area are also recommended at most station locations



Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Potential Impacts of Commuter Rail (continued)
  - Air Quality
    - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has stated that the project will have an insignificant adverse air quality impact, in fact commuter rail is expected to decrease pollutant emissions
  - Noise
    - Potential significant noise impacts are limited to horn-blowing by commuter rail diesel multiple units (DMUs) at street crossings
  - Vibration
    - Commuter rail DMUs unlikely to impact residential and institutional land uses near proposed track alignment as they pass by
    - More detailed analysis will be needed to determine if vibrations will impact buildings containing vibration-sensitive equipment
  - Ecosystems
    - Most stations are proposed in developed areas, with no wildlife-supporting habitat
    - A relatively small amount of wildlife habitat may be impacted at the proposed Caledonia and Oak Creek stations
    - No impacts to environmental corridors or natural resource areas are expected
    - No impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected
  - Water Resources
    - Potential soil erosion near area streams and rivers would be minimized by control measures during construction
    - Potential impacts during operation would be minimized through stormwater management, erosion control, and proper engineering
    - No adverse impacts to groundwater are expected
    - No floodplains would be impacted
    - Potential wetland impacts would be avoided to extent possible and minimized by wetland replacement, erosion control, construction/silt fencing, and/or special construction techniques
    - Potential stormwater quality impacts at each station would be mitigated, as necessary



Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Potential Impacts of Commuter Rail (continued)
  - Energy
    - Regional energy consumption is expected to decrease by over 1 billion British Thermal Units (BTUs) as a result of commuter rail
  - Hazardous Materials Contamination
    - Sites of potential concern within ¼ mile of each of the proposed stations were documented, with detailed mitigation measures to be developed in preliminary engineering/final EIS, if necessary
  - Archaeological and Historical
    - Along the rail corridor, all archaeological sites would be avoided
    - Additional investigations at three proposed station sites are recommended during preliminary engineering/final EIS
    - Potential effects on historic properties identified as being within the vicinity of the project area will be determined and reported in final EIS
  - Environmental Justice
    - Public involvement process has been inclusive of all residents and population groups, including outreach activities to identify and address their effects, needs, and concerns to extent possible
    - Increased access to regional transit service would benefit many population groups, including minority and low-income groups
    - Environmental impacts are not expected to disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations
  - Public Use Lands
    - Only park or recreation land potentially impacted is MRK Trail
    - Preferred station location in Caledonia would provide positive long-term effects to MRK Trail
  - Impacts During Construction
    - Construction could potentially result in temporary air, noise, vibration, water quality, visual, aesthetic, and access impacts
    - All environmental impacts studied and minimized for commuter rail implementation will also be minimized to extent possible during construction