



TWIN CITIES & WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY

TC&W's POSITION ON THE SLRT PROJECT

Twin Cities and Western Railroad (TC&W) supports the concept of the Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SLRT) *as long as it is implemented in a way that preserves our ability to provide our customers with safe and efficient service at the same costs they now pay.* The design presented in the Hennepin County/Metropolitan Council's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) does not meet those tests.

The proposed reroute of TC&W traffic to accommodate the SLRT project is unacceptable to TC&W in four areas:

- **Safety**

The proposed reroute design includes steep grades, sharp curves and insufficient clearances which violate accepted railroad engineering standards and increase the risk of derailments and accidents;

- **Efficiency**

The proposed reroute will reduce train speeds, increase fuel consumption, eliminate access to vital car sorting and switching facilities, and require a service "outage" making it impossible for us to service our customers for an undetermined period of time;

- **Cost**

The proposed reroute will increase operating costs due to limits on train speed, adding cost for additional crew time, fuel and equipment; and increase costs for track and tie maintenance due to the increased wear on tracks and ties created by sharp curves and steep grades.

- **Environment**

The proposed reroute will reduce fuel efficiency, increase fuel consumption, and generate significant noise and vibration in areas where none has been experienced previously.

Our freight railroad is a key player in the economic health of western Minnesota and eastern South Dakota. We provide our customers with vital connections to national and international markets, moving their products greater distances at less cost and using less fuel than would be the case using over-the-road trucks. They recognize us as their "Gateway to the World Markets."

Federal rail policy requires that the interests of freight rail operators and shippers be considered in the development of passenger rail service. Under federal rules, TC&W must agree to relinquish its rights to its existing route in order for SLRT to utilize that route as proposed. Until an acceptable reroute design is adopted, we will not be able to do so.

We are prepared to work diligently and constructively with Hennepin County and the Met Council to help develop a better plan that accommodates light rail while preserving rural Minnesota's access to safe, efficient and cost-effective freight rail service.

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