



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
SAINT LOUIS COUNTY
41 SOUTH CENTRAL AVENUE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63105

STEVEN V. STENGER
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

(314) 615-7016

June 15, 2016

Mr. Benjamin Owen
Office of Planning & Environment
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Owen:

I am writing in regard to Bi-State Development's recent submission of a grant application for FTA's Pilot Program for Transit Oriented Development Planning. Included with the application was a statement of principles in support of the Northside-Southside MetroLink light rail line, which would extend north and south through the City of St. Louis. The letter originated from the Office of the Mayor in the City of St. Louis.

Language in the statement of principles states that the signers of that document "are working towards entering Project Development" and "that we have a moral and economic imperative to make it a reality".

As the chief elected officer of the largest county in Missouri with more than one million citizens, it is my responsibility to make our residents' voices heard. St. Louis County provided \$137 million to Bi-State Development in 2015 in support of Bi-State's transit system, and we are the agency's largest funder.


St. Louis County has not endorsed the Northside-Southside MetroLink alignment as the next light rail project for our region, nor has the East-West Gateway Council of Governments, our region's MPO, voted to make this project our next regional priority. St. Louis County is about to proceed with feasibility studies for other potential alignments which are also already included in the region's long-range transportation plan.

The Northside-Southside route is the most expensive of the four light rail alternatives included in our region's long-range transportation plan, *Connected2045*. The current cost estimate for the Northside-Southside project is \$2.2 billion. Each of the other three routes is about half or less the cost of Northside-Southside.

The proposed Northside-Southside light rail cannot be directly integrated into the existing MetroLink because it would run in the street, not a separate right-of-way. The Northside Study states that for all light rail alternatives, low-floor light rail vehicles would be used, enabling the use of low platforms in all locations. Northside-Southside cannot directly connect to the existing MetroLink system because it would use a different technology.

Transportation should not divide us. A light rail decision that would further fragment our region is not in our best interests. A selective approach to regionalism will alienate St. Louis County from our partner governments in the region. We stand in opposition to Bi-State Development's request to make the Northside-Southside alignment St. Louis region's transit priority until a thorough analysis of all possible routes is completed.

Sincerely,



Steven V. Stenger
County Executive

cc: Mayor Francis G. Slay, City of St. Louis
John Nations, Bi-State Development
Jim Wild, East-West Gateway Council of Governments
Sheila Sweeney, St. Louis Economic Development Partnership
Erica Henderson, St. Louis Promise Zone
Honorable Claire McCaskill, U.S. Senate
Honorable Roy Blunt, U.S. Senate
Congressman Lacy Clay, 1st Congressional District
Honorable Jay Nixon, Governor of Missouri
Joe Reagan, St. Louis Regional Chamber
Kathy Osborn, Regional Business Council
Thomas J. Irwin, Civic Progress
Rich McClure, Ferguson Commission
Rev. Starsky Wilson, Ferguson Commission
Otis Williams, St. Louis Development Corporation
✓ Don Roe, Planning & Urban Design Agency