

# Bottineau LRT Corridor TAP

A ULI Minnesota Technical Assistance Panel  
for Bottineau Corridor Community Works

September 17-19, 2018



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Technical Assistance Panels</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Panel</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Panel's Charge</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>About the Study Area: Bottineau LRT Corridor</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Stakeholder Interviews</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Panel Questions</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Panel Response to Questions</b>	<b>7</b>
Corridor-Wide Key Findings	7
Mitigate Business and Resident Displacement	9
Station-Specific Recommendations	12
Van White Station, Minneapolis	12
42 <sup>nd</sup> Street Station, Robbinsdale	15
Bass Lake Road Station, Crystal	18
Brooklyn Boulevard Station, Brooklyn Park	20
Oak Grove Station, Brooklyn Park	22
<b>Conclusion and Next Steps</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Resources and Tools</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Panelist Bios</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ULI Minnesota</b>	<b>30</b>

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS (TAPS)

Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) are convened by ULI MN at the request of cities, counties or other public agencies. TAPs address specific development challenges such as site redevelopment options, downtown revitalization and environmental considerations.

TAPs convene development experts across disciplines who can offer recommendations based on the sponsor's questions. The goal is to generate ideas for realizing local, regional and state-wide aspirations. Panelists evaluate data, site conditions and future redevelopment readiness and provide specific recommendations to guide future land uses for each site, as well as future partnerships in the real estate industry.

In this instance, the Bottineau LRT Community Works Project invited a ULI MN Technical Assistance Panel to evaluate the private market potential along the 13-mile Metro Blue Line LRT Extension, and to provide a set of recommendations and implementation steps to maximize Transit Oriented Development opportunities along the corridor. The intended outcome of the TAP is to 1) identify key development opportunities, barriers, and strengths related to land use and station location, 2) identify critical links to amenities, neighborhoods, housing, jobs centers and services and 3) recommend how these public investments should be used to leverage private sector investment.

## THE PANEL

Panelists are ULI MN members and development experts who volunteer their time because of their commitment to the principles of redevelopment, planned growth, economic expansion and local and regional capacity-building.

### PANEL

Marilee Utter, *CitiVenture Associates, LLC (Chair)*  
Cecile Bedor, *CommonBond*  
Taylor Cooper, *THOR*  
Dave Higgins, *McGough Development, LLC*  
Matthew Leber, *Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)*  
Joseph Peris, *Ryan Companies, Inc.*  
Doug Pierce, *Perkins+Will*  
Jonathan Sage-Martinson, *SPEDCO*

### ULI MN STAFF

Caren Dewar  
Cathy Bennett  
Rachel Lieberman

## THE PANEL'S CHARGE

The first morning of this three-day TAP, panelists participated in a bus tour of the proposed Blue Line extension from the Brooklyn Park Oak Grove Station to the Minneapolis Van White Station. The tour stopped at the following sites: Van White (Minneapolis), Golden Valley Road (Golden Valley), 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Station (Robbinsdale), Bass Lake Road (Crystal), Brooklyn Blvd (Brooklyn Park), and Oak Grove (Brooklyn Park).



*Panel Bus Tour along the Bottineau LRT Corridor with presentations from cities and key project partners*

Representatives from Metro Transit provided a summary of the LRT Corridor, its alignment, key issues, and project status. Representatives from the cities of Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, Golden Valley, and Minneapolis joined the bus tour to provide a brief orientation of the station areas, community goals and key issues. After the bus tour, the panel conducted community stakeholder interviews with 14 public, private and non-profit representatives. These interviews allowed the panelist to understand the perspectives of residents, business owners, real estate interests and educational institutions along the corridor. At the end of day one, Panel Chair Marilee Utter presented to community and public policy leaders on key TOD drivers, market perspectives important to development along LRT corridors, and key principles that the cities should consider to position themselves for success.

On day two the panel heard from city staff, Hennepin County and Metro Transit project office staff regarding specific corridor and station area plans, goals for development, park and ride locations, and planning processes informing future land uses, parks improvements, development proposals, TOD zoning ordinances and community engagement. These conversations and background information helped to inform the panelists' final recommendations.



*Panel discussing recommendations at Brooklyn Park City Hall*

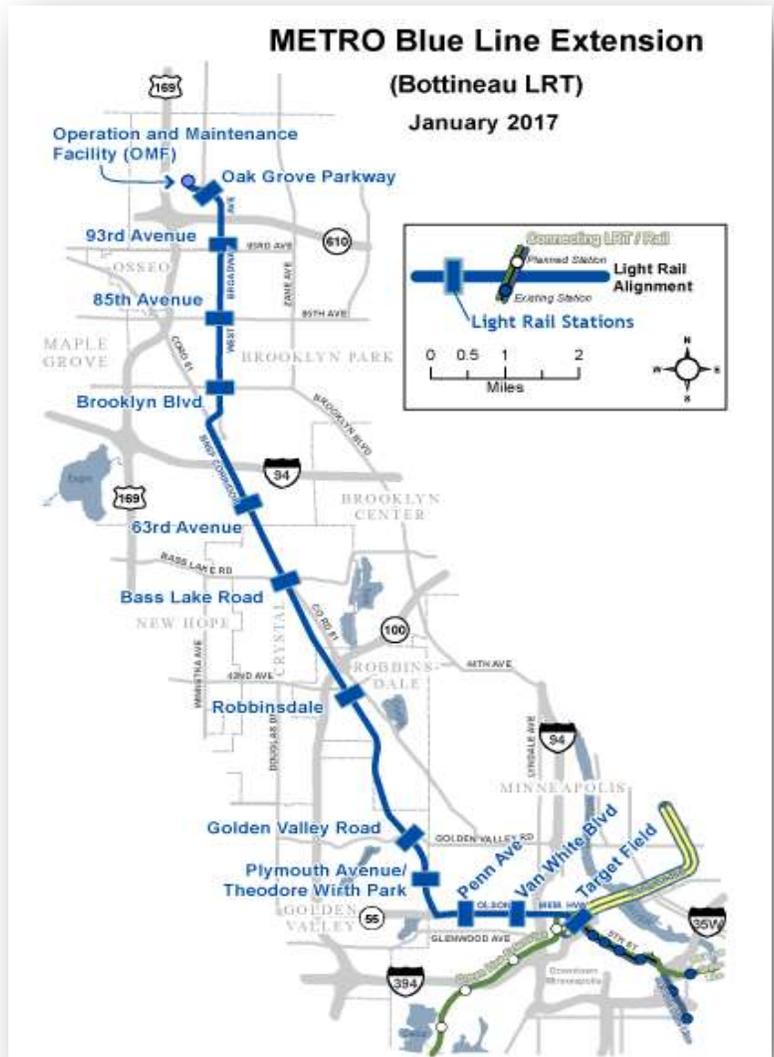
Over the course of the next day and a half the panelists worked together to distill the background information provided by the project partners and community stakeholders, and utilized their professional expertise to formulate key recommendations about the Bottineau LRT Corridor. On day three, the TAP concluded with a public presentation where the panelists presented their initial recommendations, followed by stakeholder questions and discussions.

# ABOUT THE STUDY AREA: BOTTINEAU LRT CORRIDOR

The Bottineau LRT line, also known as the METRO Blue Line Extension (LRT), will operate northwest from downtown Minneapolis through north Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park, ending just north of Minnesota Highway 610 at the Target Northwest Corporate Campus. The proposed alignment is primarily at-grade and will have 11 new stations in addition to Target Field Station situated along its 13.5 miles of double track. The line will interline with the METRO Blue Line and connect Minneapolis and the region's northwestern communities with existing LRT on the METRO Green Line, future LRT on the METRO Green Line Extension, bus rapid transit on the METRO Red Line, the Northstar commuter rail line and local and express bus routes.

Currently, the alignment is set, the design work is 90% complete, and Metro Transit is working to negotiate agreements with railroads that currently own land along the proposed corridor. They project a daily ridership of 27,000 in 2030. This is highly contingent on the current and proposed functioning park-and-rides.

The Hennepin County Bottineau LRT Community Works project was established in 2015 to leverage this important regional transit investment by partnering with cities along the Bottineau LRT (METRO Blue Line LRT Extension) to help plan for and implement, critical changes “beyond the rails.”

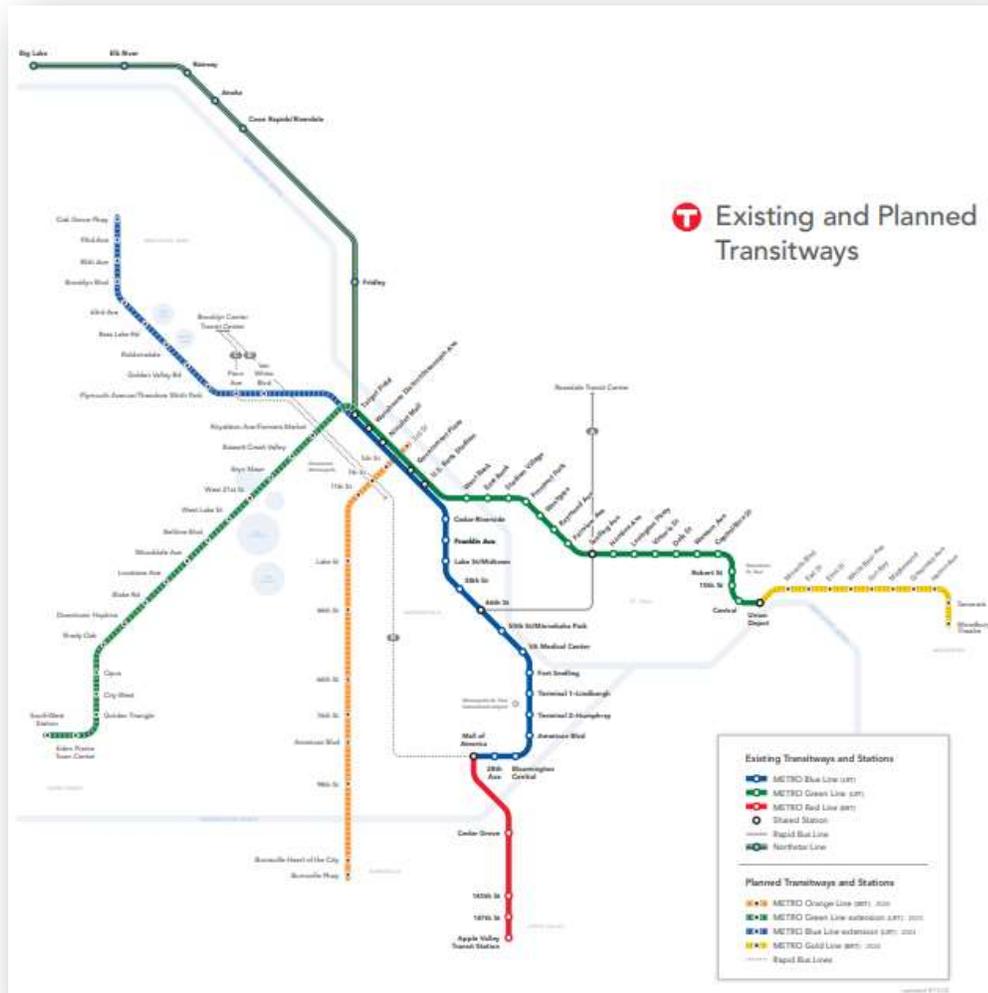


## Project Timeline

2014-2016	• Project Development
2016	• Environmental/Municipal Consent
2017-19	• Engineering
2020	• Full Funding Grant Agreement
2020-23	• Heavy Construction
2024	• Passenger Operations

## Initial goals of the Bottineau Community Works Program

- Re-envison the Bottineau Corridor as a multi-modal transit corridor that supports LRT, bus, pedestrian, and bicycle connections.
- Maximize and strategically align public and private investments in the corridor to support Transit Oriented Development (TOD) through catalytic investments in life-cycle housing, commercial development, and public infrastructure.
- Promote economic opportunity by improving access to jobs and supporting business recruitment and expansion along the corridor.
- Enhance livability in the corridor by improving public spaces, supporting the creation of healthy communities, and connecting people to key destinations, including employment centers, educational institutions, and regional amenities.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The panel conducted individual interviews of 14 community stakeholders identified by Hennepin County Community Works partners to provide background on key site development patterns, current conditions and perspectives on future renovation and redevelopment of the study area.

These stakeholders included representatives from: Maplebrook Townhomes, Metro Transit TOD Office, representatives from the Robbinsdale CDI Process, Crystal Gallery Mall, Target, North Hennepin Community College, Summit Academy, Golden Age Design, Twin Cities LISC, Blue Line Coalition, the Center for Economic Inclusion, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, African Career Education & Resources, Inc. (ACER) and The Steinhauser Group. Panelists heard from stakeholders about development potential, communication with community residents, the importance of equitable development and ways to improve equity, options for housing affordability, need to preserve existing housing and businesses, and job training. The input from these interviewees was taken into consideration by the panel when making their recommendations.



*Panel Members Interview Community Stakeholders*

Key information that emerged through the interviews included:

- Understanding of the need for park and ride locations relative to FTA scoring criteria and the need to maintain a bus hub for existing residents, mostly seniors and lower income households.
- Value of continued community engagement all along the corridor to ensure that equity is built into the process for development at station areas.
- Need to collaborate to preserve affordability of existing housing so that residents are not displaced but also the importance of support for new housing to help prove the market now and into the future.
- Importance of building a collaborative strategy around the key training and education opportunities along the corridor and ensuring that there is access to and from the LRT station stops to these institutions.
- Business owners are interested in how the LRT can improve their current investment and are primarily focused on operations rather than the future impacts of when and/if LRT is developed.

# PANEL QUESTIONS

The panel was asked by the cities to address the following questions:

1. What are the development and market opportunities along the corridor and at the key station areas? What are the barriers? What city and county tools and strategies are needed to implement development with the private sector?

Key Station Areas:

- Minneapolis – Van White Station
  - Robbinsdale – Robbinsdale Station
  - Crystal – Bass Lake Road Station
  - Brooklyn Park – Brooklyn Boulevard Station
  - Brooklyn Park – Oak Grove Station
2. What are the key public strategies that should be implemented now to help prevent resident and business displacement? How can these strategies ensure an equitable approach to benefit all communities along the Bottineau LRT Corridor? How do the cities create policies that balance the importance of a focused equitable approach with the need to increase private investment from outside of the corridor?
  3. What are the top two priorities cities should focus on now to maximize investment and spur TOD development in the future?
  4. What are the community implications of a “no action” strategy verses a proactive TOD approach to development along the corridor and at the station areas?

## PANEL RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

These findings are based on the panel's independent opinions and analyses as real estate, planning, design, finance and development professionals. While the panel considers these ideas and suggestions sound, they are not directives. There is no substitute for developers with motivation and vision and the cities are encouraged to review proposals that meet the project's goals.

## CORRIDOR-WIDE KEY FINDINGS

The cities along the proposed Bottineau LRT Corridor have tremendous assets to build on, regardless of the timing of the LRT project. Assets include the diverse communities, especially regarding the diversity of the available workforce. In addition, the available land for businesses looking to locate along the corridor, and the affordability of land even for small and entrepreneurial businesses is a key asset. These, combined with the affordable housing available for employees, were identified as a rare combination that offers enormous opportunity.

### **Brand Bottineau LRT Corridor as the “Opportunity Corridor” based upon these assets.**

The jobs, educational training, diversity of housing and residents all contribute to the opportunities. The cities and project partners should utilize these strengths to create a brand for Bottineau as the “Opportunity Corridor”. An example is [Cleveland's Healthline](#) BRT transit corridor which was branded early in the process by two major health care institutions. The strategic move provided the impetus to focus on health and healthy investments along the corridor and resulted in multiple collaborative health related initiatives.

It is a critical time for the public sector to own their role in setting the long-term vision for this corridor. A delay in the LRT project should not hinder the public sector from moving forward with development plans and visions.

**The development of LRT will encourage the real estate market, but cities have a lot to build on and build up even before LRT arrives.** Project partners should invest in the infrastructure, establish the leadership, make sure the communities agree on what they want and determine how, together, the partners can achieve that vision.

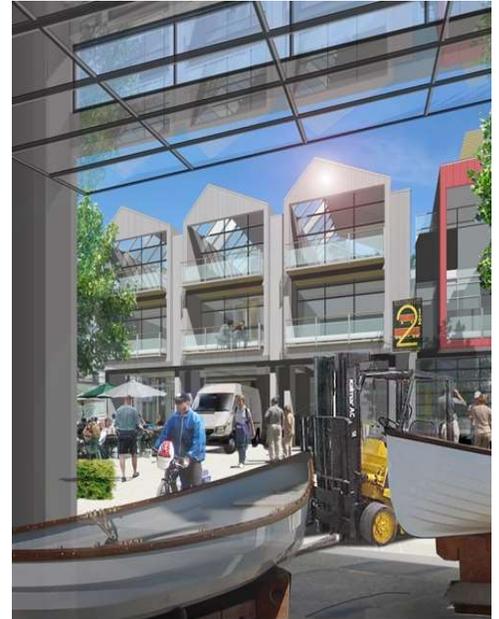
### **Prioritize three major areas:**

**Preserve:** Cities and project partners need to work collaboratively to **preserve affordable housing, local businesses, and social diversity**. It will be important for cities to embrace affordable housing as an asset, engage housing partners to optimize opportunities for housing supply and demand and provide options to build upon existing unique small businesses that contribute to the commercial base and retail industry. Cities should be proactive and utilize all the tools available to ensure that existing affordable commercial and residential market is preserved. The utilization of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) was highlighted as a critical tool that should be used to encourage demonstration projects around both commercial and residential real estate. Providing this assistance early can help to prove market types and rents, attract new projects and rehabilitate existing housing and retail.



*Existing Blue Line Train. Photo by Richard Sennott, taken from Star Tribune*

**Enhance:** Cities, County, educational institutions and other project partners need to work together to enhance jobs, training and equitable development along the corridor. With competitively priced land, ample educational institutions, a growing labor shortage but access to a larger network of worker, Bottineau LRT Corridor provides a great opportunity to be a **production-oriented job zone**. By working together as a corridor to create an economic development strategy focused on production industries there is a greater opportunity to maximize the corridor's potential and success as a **talent and business attractor**. This involves utilizing existing training facilities such as [North Hennepin Community College](#), [Hennepin Technical College](#), [Summit Academy OIC](#), and the Minneapolis Apprentice Training Center. Cities can do this by zoning for mixed-use, small production, and make-it spaces, and **creating a joint economic development strategy**. A joint economic development strategy may include a person who would work across all the communities to coordinate and focus attention for the corridor, capitalizing on the opportunity to connect people to jobs, create new job opportunities, maintain small businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship. Creating a joint economic development strategy with the long-term goal of collaborating on a shared position could pay large dividends for the communities, their residents and small entrepreneurial businesses.



*Image Courtesy of Perkins + Will*

**Be Adaptive:** It is important to be ready for social change, economic change, and climate change. The LRT is a positive force that cities should channel as an opportunity to stay engaged with current residents and businesses. With a tidal wave of change occurring in the retail market, it will be important for cities to support new and nontraditional uses within existing retail areas. Panel members who are experienced in the retail and commercial industries see large shopping centers nationwide starting to convert to mixed-use properties. This reflects the increased demand for online retail. As one panel member noted, “If cities start early, they can control their destinies. If they wait, the market will control them.” This includes allowing, by right, adaptable first floors that can be commercial, retail, or housing, as well as being flexible with parking requirements and future forward parking ramp designs. The panel specifically recommended that that Metro Transit initially construct surface lots or flat-floored parking ramps whenever possible, to be more adaptable to a future with fewer cars and more shared mobility.

## MITIGATE BUSINESS AND RESIDENT DISPLACEMENT

For locations with large infrastructure investments, displacement and gentrification concerns for existing residents and businesses are real. The panel encouraged cities to plan ahead for a future when affordable housing will be more difficult to come by and small affordable commercial spaces will be subject to redevelopment and increased rents. Cities should prepare for the increases in rent on commercial and residential properties as more people want to relocate along the transit corridor. The presumed rise in land costs will raise the barrier to entry for all real estate projects, disproportionately impacting projects that require public support like affordable housing and community facilities. This means having a plan in place for how to focus new investment in the corridor as well as but addressing the areas at risk of displacement where people are upgrading and trying to relocate closer to transit.

### Importance of Housing Affordability

According to the Bottineau Corridor Housing Gaps Analysis, the rental market is extremely tight everywhere with very few available units throughout the Corridor or the metro area. In 2016, the vacancy rate was low at 2.5%, in line with historical trends. The impact of persistent low vacancies is that many households that want to relocate to the area are unable to do so due to a lack of availability. It also means landlords are in a position to raise rents, sometimes excessively, which could displace existing residents. There will be increasing pressure on values, leading to issues such as over-leveraged properties, which creates risk for additional tenant displacement.

The data indicates that the majority of renters in several municipalities along this corridor are significantly rent-burdened when compared to other renters across in the County and the metro area.

Based upon national experience, the panelists believed that the number of residents currently paying more than 30% of their income on housing will likely grow with the anticipation of LRT and new private investment along the corridor. The affordability issues will be worst for the most vulnerable populations and those who are aging in place. In addition, companies who are relocating and expanding are increasingly looking for places that have housing that is affordable for their workforce. For cities to be competitive they should embrace and protect the existing affordable housing options that will meet growing workforce demand.



*Typical existing apartment complex along the corridor*

It will be increasingly important for cities to:

- Understand their housing stock.
- Understand what is currently affordable and target those projects that are at risk of losing their affordability.
- Know when regulatory agreements will be expiring and develop a strategy to maintain affordability.
- Develop a relationship with current owners, asset managers and developers of affordable housing.
- Facilitate public private partnerships, including funding partners, to address the needs of the most vulnerable residents.

- Consider local solutions to reduce resident displacement such as:
  - Eviction prevention/tenant protection ordinances
  - Notification of Sale/Right of First Refusal
  - Mixed Income Housing Policies

Many of these solutions have been the focus on a ULI MN/RCM Regional Housing Preservation Group which evaluated and shared local solutions to preserve housing affordability. A [best practice list](#) of tools and strategies can be found at ULI MN's website.

**The panel recommends developing a corridor-wide strategy** to maximize efficiencies, align funding sources, and set priorities. The [Southwest Corridor-wide Housing Strategy](#) is an example of a corridor-wide effort to collaboratively support tools and strategies in the production and preservation of housing choices. The strategy, adopted by each city, identified housing goals and ways to achieve those goals along the entire corridor. In addition, identification of competitive resources and non-competitive resources that can be utilized to help maintain affordability in housing will be critically important. Cities need to educate themselves on these resources now before they are in a crisis mode or faced with devastating displacement due to rising rents. Some of the key resources that should be explored include:

- Tax Exempt Bonds
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits – both 4% and 9% credits.
- Government Sponsored Enterprises such as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBs) that help bring capital to the housing markets. Their regulator is the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA).
- REITs – Real Estate Investment Trusts
- Non-Tax Credit Equity
- CDFI's - Certified Development Financial Institutions
- Financial institutions with CRA (Community Reinvestment Act) obligations
- Anchor institutions and large corporate citizens
- Foundations and other philanthropy
- Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) investment funds such as that provided by Greater Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

Information provided in <http://housingcounts.org/> will be helpful to Cities for finding resources associated with the preservation and production of affordable workforce housing.

## Protect Entrepreneurial Small Businesses

It will be critical for cities to help smaller businesses threatened by increasing rent and ownership costs. Assisting small and micro-enterprises in identifying technical assistance services and capital will enhance the local economy and help grow unique, authentic urban spaces. It is important to track new commercial development. As new spaces are occupied, older, underutilized and underinvested properties become available that can be repurposed as small business growth opportunities. Cities should look for ways to utilize 'vacant spaces', purchase vacant buildings as appropriate, focus municipal investments, and leverage capital with various public and private financial resources to maximize a properties highest and best use.

A local example is the [Central Corridor Business Mitigation Plan](#) which included loan programs, business resources, corridor-wide marketing and funding partners.

Ultimately a **corridor-wide housing and economic development strategy** that identifies resources and partners will be critical to reduce both commercial and residential displacement as new investment is attracted to the area and market dynamics change.



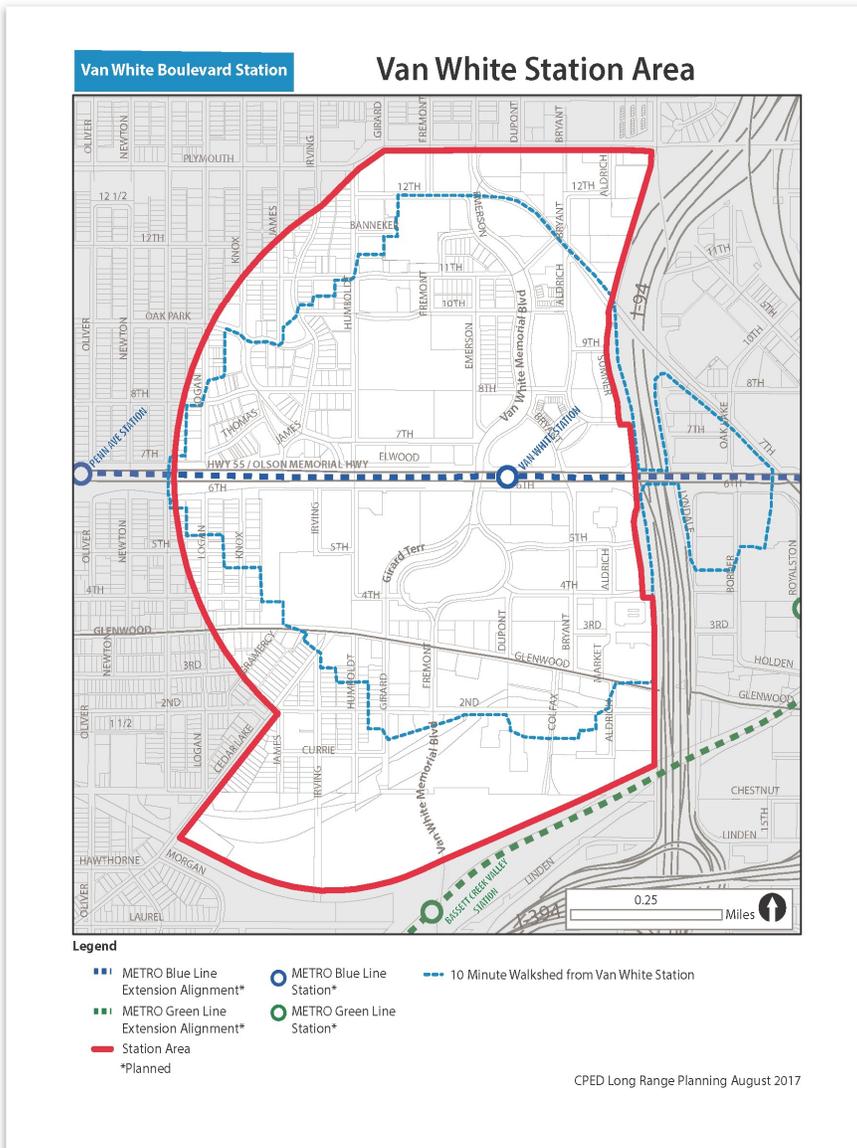
*Small businesses in Downtown Robbinsdale*

# STATION SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## Van White Station, Minneapolis

The Van White Station area is located in close proximity to two future Green Line Stations (Bassett Creek Valley and Royalston) and one other Blue Line Station (Penn). The development goal for the Van White Station, according to the station area plan, is for more mixed use housing, office, and commercial development in fairly large buildings. In this area, the City of Minneapolis has to contend with a higher water table and poor soil, as well as a large main sewer line under the site. The current station area plan was written before the draft Minneapolis 2040 comprehensive plan, which proposes to allow more density than currently allowed in the station area plan. By code, this area could see 17-story buildings. The City would like there to be retail at this station area and services for residents in this neighborhood. The majority of the land surrounding the station is owned by the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA). MPHA would like to see affordable housing next to the transit, balanced with some market rate housing as well. They are concerned with the possibility of gentrification and displacement in this area as housing prices are already rising significantly, The City would like to preserve some space for well-paying jobs and housing that serves those industries. The City is also concerned with preserving viewsheds to the Downtown that are important to current residents.

Many of the city station area plan recommendations align with the panelists' views of the area. This station area is ripe for becoming a new vibrant neighborhood with a mix of incomes around a multimodal community. Connecting residents to jobs and opportunity, public control of most of the land and support for increased density are all key factors to its future success. The large amount of available land should support future higher densities and bring in new amenities for existing residents as an asset. Though the panel heard concern about the potential obstruction of viewsheds for existing residents to the north, they encourage the City of Minneapolis and project partners to manage the viewshed through street corridors and to **prioritize dense development on the developable land.**



Van White Station Area Plan

There is opportunity to reconnect this neighborhood and create a sense of place in the area that has been historically cut up by highways. Encouraging development around this station to refocus on the people who currently live and work in the area, creating a better-defined pedestrian oriented place, rather than developing around and for automobile users will be critically important. This includes improving walkability, attracting a fresh food grocer and other neighborhood level retail, and attracting housing of diverse sizes and for a variety of incomes. In addition, the city should continue to focus on climate-adaptable design to address the poor soils and drainage issues as well as the relocation of the sewer line.

## Walkability

Although feasibility studies have concluded that Highway 55 would remain a six-lane highway, the City should continue to advocate for a four-lane reduction on Highway 55 that would prioritize pedestrian transit over commuter vehicle traffic. The current street design and proposed modification maintaining six lanes does a disservice to the residents living in the area. Highway 55 makes it difficult to navigate from both north and south, and would serve as a barrier for residents trying to use the new light rail. As an example, there is precedent for the four-lane design on Hwy 55 south of downtown Minneapolis. This design works well and provides a safer crossing for residents and cyclists. An amended street design would help to create a market for a mix of uses, a walkable neighborhood, and provide for a safer, more pleasant crossing from the northern to the southern portions of the area around the Van White Station.



*University Ave and Snelling, showing a 2-lane street design in each direction. Example for the suggested changes to Highway 55.*

## Grocery and Retail

**Currently, this neighborhood is in food desert**, defined as an area where little fresh produce is available for sale and in many cases areas where fast food chains and convenience stores dominate. The panel doubts the private market alone has the ability to fill that void and encourages the stakeholders in this area to push for a fresh food grocer and other small-scale neighborhood retail and service uses. They encourage stakeholders to review tools for attracting retailers, and pursue the opportunity to create a vibrant, mixed-use community that would be unique and still allow affordability for the residents currently in the area. See [this University of Minnesota Center for Urban & Regional Affairs article](#) on food justice in Brooklyn, NY's food desert. There may need to be a 'sexy and shiny' development in this area as well to draw people to this area. Potentially, this can be the grocery.

**Another opportunity for this station area is to be adaptable to allow production/creative oriented uses or light manufacturing such as arts and innovative product make-it spaces.** The Brooklyn Model is an example of ethnic food production at-scale. [See this example of niche factories in Brooklyn.](#)

minnesota.uli.org



*Example of dense, mixed use development recommended*

These could create opportunity for new jobs and could be located within multi use buildings where retail, production, office and living spaces could co-exist.

### **Design for Climate Adaptability**

New technologies are being developed every day to be more adaptable and resilient in response to major climate conditions. The development and design in this area should focus on climate adaptability. As many stakeholders are already aware, this area has a high-water table which has become problematic for some of the buildings units in the area. The city should be very proactive in utilizing innovative stormwater management to turn the potential negative of a wetland into a positive. This could entail a potential park or community space, creation of water features and/or other innovative water storage/drainage designed amenity spaces.

### **Implication of a 'No-Action Strategy'**

There are many factors that create real opportunity for development at this station area, including its location, training and educational uses, publicly controlled land and the future potential of greater multi-model options. These factors need to be carefully planned and primed to increase success for current and future residents. The panel considered the implications of a "no action" strategy with the following conclusions:

- The neighborhood will continue to function as an island wedged between two highways which will limit its access and opportunities for development.
- Lack of density and adaptability will hinder the goals to create a new multi-model neighborhood with a mixed of uses and residents of all incomes.
- The area will continue to be a retail and food desert that will attract more convenience and fast food establishments rather than fresh food operators.
- If Highway 55 is left with a six-lane highway design, it would limit development, usability, resident isolation, and success of transit ridership.

## **Robbinsdale Station, Robbinsdale**

Robbinsdale is a suburb that is fortunate to have an established historic downtown with a street grid that was built from the former historic street car route. In addition, the city has an established affordable housing stock, a strong business community, concentration of entrepreneurial businesses and is experiencing a regeneration of the population from older to younger residents. The panel heard from stakeholders in Robbinsdale and city staff that this station area is a great opportunity for artists, entrepreneurs, and businesses that need small spaces. The community supports local businesses with a strong allegiance to shopping, recreating and eating locally. There is a strong community attachment to the Hubbard Market Place, which is perceived as an art deco landmark that many residents want to see maintained. The station area plan calls for the creation of a pedestrian corridor from the Hubbard building and the new station area to West Broadway in the heart of downtown. The station plan also includes building a 400-space parking ramp wrapped with residential and retail uses just north of the Hubbard building and station area. Currently, the City limits building height on West Broadway in their downtown area to 2-stories, but would allow taller 4-6 stories closer to the station area and near Robbins Center.

Some of the stakeholders interviewed felt a lack of urgency to ensure that existing residents and businesses are not displaced despite the rising price of home ownership and rental properties. There was concern with resident safety and a desire to see pedestrian-oriented design which could require a modified orientation of the transit facility and wayfinding into the downtown area.

The station area is within one of the [Federal Designated Opportunity Zones](#) which will provide tax advantages for private investment. The [Federal Opportunity Zone regulations](#) were released on October 19, 2018 which outlines the specific regulations for utilization of the tax benefits. Cities within these zones should work to identify the role they can play in ensuring that the tax benefits to the private sector that invest in these areas will also benefit the local community and its residents. It will be important for the city to be strategic in understanding the potential benefits of an Opportunity Zones in their community that can create substantial increased returns for private investment. This also presents a further advantage the city can market to the investment / development community as a reason to invest in the community, particularly to long term investors who are the focus of the new tax zone benefits.

### **Re-examine/Reimagine the Hubbard Market Place**

The Hubbard Market Place building is currently owned by Metro Transit and is underutilized. The area serves as a transit hub where buses idle and wait for transfers. Metro Transit is marketing the building for commercial/office use with no success and is now utilizing the building only for staff restrooms, but no public access is currently provided for waiting transit users. Metro Transit proposes to move the transit hub to a newly constructed park and ride ramp with wrapped residential development all coupled together in one building. It is strongly recommended the city and Metro Transit rethink the three uses (parking, residential, and transit) within one building due to development costs, financing costs and marketing challenges.

From a private market perspective, the three proposed uses, particularly the transit hub, within one building would not be viable in terms of development and financing costs, complexity to project design and operations and project marketability. There would be added costs to provide sound attenuation, and marketing barriers for the residential portion of the development being near bus idling noise and exhaust. The atypical uses and project configuration would limit both equity and debt sources that will be necessary to invest in such a project.

Two uses would work together but all three, particularly the bus transfer portion, will make it difficult to market the building for any investment in residential housing of any income level. Rather, the panel recommended that the Hubbard Market Place Building remain as the location for the bus transfer station with enhanced interior uses as a community gathering space, public restrooms, complementary small retail vendors and office users. Once the transit station area is active with new residential tenants the Hubbard building will become a more desirable gathering space and a marketable lease option for commercial uses.



*Hubbard Street Market Place*

The unique architecture of the building should be leveraged and, at a minimum, activated for commuters. Over time the building will become a more desirable option for other tenants once density and activity increases due to LRT. This could mean adding internal seating, a grab-N-go coffee/retail kiosk, service vendors for the transit riders and community members, and the potential for utilization of the upper floor as a small business or startup incubator. This can serve as a feeder system to bolster the current main street business and cultivate future opportunities.

No matter what the final plan, the City should insist that electric buses be required in this area. The idling of diesel buses is a detriment for both commercial and residential users of the Hubbard building, as well as the proposed residential building that would be part of the park-and-ride structure.

### **Create Integrated Wayfinding:**

Walkability is a great asset in Robbinsdale. However, the City should continue to clearly define pedestrian corridors and gateways that channel pedestrian traffic between the transit station, through the established downtown and into the residential neighborhoods of the community. It presents a great opportunity to market the city's offerings while functionally and experientially knitting together the concentrations of commercial, housing, and recreational resources. It is recommended that a very strategic and compelling wayfinding plan be developed to clearly identify how people navigate back and forth between the defined community assets and areas of the city. An example is the [Crossroad Initiative](#) implemented in the City of Boston. While the Crossroads Initiative is a much larger, more complex plan, the goals of connecting key community assets through a theme of public spaces remains the same. This type of initiative, whether in Boston or Robbinsdale, serves to guide residents and visitors through designated wayfinding, community themed signage, public realm improvements (like a public art program), and a new public gathering/event hub. This can include new street

lighting, street trees and other landscaping, improved pedestrian accessibility with comfortable transitions, consistency of materials including pavement, crosswalks, and lighting as well as providing better vehicular access and signalization.



*Hubbard Street Marketplace Building entrance leads directly to Downtown Robbinsdale*

In addition, it will be critically important to safely navigate people across Hwy 81 at the street level. Evaluating unconventional crossing grids such as diagonal, lit or painted crosswalks, timed and pedestrian activated crossings or pavement markings could all create a more pedestrian friendly environment. These initiatives do not come without costs, so the city should explore partnerships with other public entities or the opportunity to capture funding in partnership with the private sector through establishment of business improvement district-like models.

### **Preserve and Support Local Businesses and Affordable Housing**

The greatest risk of doing nothing in this area would be losing two big Robbinsdale assets: affordable housing and the unique, strong small businesses. **A preservation/non-displacement strategy is imperative.** The City of Robbinsdale should be a resource for small businesses, by staying engaged and invested with them, and considering the creation of a business improvement district. This can also be achieved through a corridor economic development strategy. The city should also assess affordable housing based on household cost burden, not merely the percentage of area median income. Communities often react too late, and the city needs to go beyond celebrating the affordable housing stock that already exists and work to ensure that it can remain a part of the residential fabric in the future as new higher value investment occurs.

## **Bass Lake Road Station, Crystal**

The City of Crystal considers the station location, adjacent to the City's commercial center, as a positive for nearby retailers. They have been focusing on Bass Lake Road as a connection between the proposed station and the commercial area and looking at the station to be part of the heart of downtown Crystal. They are currently focused on the public realm in and around Becker Park and connections and improvements of the older commercial retail businesses on the north side of Bass Lake Road.



*Strip Mall on Sherburne Ave and Bass Lake Rd*

progressive Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance, and the attraction of a new medical office building and industrial jobs. It will be very important for the city to continue to complete the Becker Park redesign, market the city to developers, and plan for the opportunities that a new/revived commercial district will bring.

## **Becker Park Redesign**

Investment in public spaces is critically important in attracting residents and private investment. The city should pursue completing the [Becker Park redesign](#), including deliberate, visual, landscaped connections between the LRT station and the park, providing gathering spaces for community concerts/events and reserving space to add a small restaurant along Bass Lake Road within the park as an attraction for LRT riders as well as park users. A restaurant use could be privately owned or owned and leased by the City similar to restaurants that are located within Minneapolis parks. It will be important to include the same level of streetscaping across Bass Lake Road, with dedicated bike and pedestrian crossings. This will send a message to the market that the city is interested in the reinvestment of the commercial areas to the north. There is a real opportunity to make this area a beautiful gateway for the city.

In addition, having a strong TOD Zoning Ordinance with a bold vision will provide payback for the community over the long term. The city should also continue to do research on new practices to create a safe and inviting pedestrian crossing at Bottineau Blvd, perhaps adding traffic calming measures one mile north and south of the intersection.

Even though the city has participated in redevelopment of older dilapidated single-family homes, it was the understanding of the panel that the city did not currently have a policy or plan to provide financial assistance for business development related to TOD development.

The panel applauds the strategic steps the City Council has taken to update their plans and zoning ordinance, including the park master plan, a



## Capitalize on the Opportunity Zone

The city should determine how to capitalize on being located within a Federal Designated [Opportunity Zone](#). The [Federal Opportunity Zone regulations](#) were released on October 19, 2018 outlining the specific regulations for utilization of the tax benefits. Cities within these zones should work to identify the role they can play in ensuring that the tax benefits for the private sector also benefit the local community and its residents. There could be opportunities to redevelop or improve the northeast quadrant of Bass Lake Rd and the old strip mall through façade improvement programs or acquisition and redevelopment capitalized by being within an Opportunity Zone. By securing ownership of sites in this area, the city is in a positive position to work with the strip mall owner to either sell or redevelop based upon the potential of the LRT station and support for increased density and a mix of uses. An investor could be attracted for this type of redevelopment due to the tax benefits of an Opportunity Zone. Investors may defer tax on almost any capital gain up to Dec. 31, 2026 by making an appropriate investment in a zone, making an election after December 21, 2017, and meeting other requirements.

## Commercial and Industrial Uses

Being proactive in retaining the industrial jobs in the city is an important economic development strategy. Crystal should take a complete inventory of the industrial land to know what they have, what kind of development might be possible, and what issues might arise with repurposing the existing industrial land and/or buildings. Reaching out to Greater MSP will help to the city understand what businesses are looking for in the long-term. The City could help provide the infrastructure for industrial uses to be clustered or be located more efficiently than they are now and allowing industrial uses to be more adaptable in the future. This could open up land for uses that are more conducive to transit development.

Creating a master plan for a commercial district at Broadway & Bass Lake Road can also be a strategy that will set up the city for future investment. An example to review is the [Southdale parking lot redevelopment in Edina](#). While the scale may be different, the strategies and planning options are similar and an example of adaptable commercial redevelopment.

## Marketing Crystal

For a city the size of Crystal, being connected to a regional transportation system will open up new investment opportunities. The city needs to dream big and inspire private sector investment to realize their vision. They need to **be open to change but also demand beauty and quality design that fits with the vision for the area**. To more fully understand the development potential, staff and policy leaders of the city should continue to take tours of new TOD projects (both affordable and market rate housing, as well as newer commercial areas) and talk to other cities on how they positioned themselves, through policy and infrastructure investment, for quality private investment. An example would be TOD development in Saint Louis Park or Richfield.

Developers are looking to invest in areas with strong markets where local land use codes and policies are clean and consistent. A city that sets the stage for the private sector and is a partner to help achieve mutual goals will be better prepared to attract development that will increase their tax base. Competition for private investment is fierce, and the market data on Crystal is not as strong as other areas. The city will be well served to put their A game on, be strategic and seek development partnerships. Waiting for development to come to the city is not enough. Maximizing the opportunities that LRT presents is important. The alternative could be simply accommodating a train that passes through their city.

## Brooklyn Boulevard Station, Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Boulevard is considered the commercial heart of the City of Brooklyn Park with very stable commercial market activity. It is currently a very traditional suburban auto-oriented strip retail area with big boxes and car dealerships. As the retail market shifts, the city envisions a gradual redevelopment of the



*East side of Starlite Center strip mall*

current one-story commercial spaces with increased density and a mix of unique commercial and residential uses. This area of the city has a very diverse ethnic population and Brooklyn Boulevard includes opportunities to foster culturally-specific entrepreneurial businesses. The intent of the city is also to protect and maintain the single-family neighborhoods as these are existing affordable housing options for the residents. Given the current conditions, it is important to look at ways to improve pedestrian connections, especially for people walking along 76<sup>th</sup> Street to the Starlight Shopping Center.

Brooklyn Park should be commended for their planning work in this area and adopting TOD zoning with a focus on pedestrian connections for this area. There is great opportunity for the city to move forward incrementally in this area as there are large parcels with few property owners. Underutilized parking areas also provide readily available development sites.

It is recommended that the city not wait for transit to begin supporting and investing in a more densely developed and walkable commercial center. It is expected that redevelopment and densification in the area will require strong public/private partnership with zoning flexibility, financial assistance and some risk. However, supporting alternate uses in the area will likely pay dividends over the long term.

### **Start Development Now**

With or without the arrival of the LRT, the Brooklyn Boulevard Station Area is already a regional commercial draw. A first focus area should be to densify the **retail centers and support walkability before the LRT arrives**. The biggest opportunity area is between Shingle Creek, Revive Church, and the Fire Station at 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North which includes the large vacant site owned by Fine & Associates.

Creating walkable quadrants within community, not just to and from the proposed transit, will improve overall access to the retail center and encourage pedestrian and bicycle usage. A specific recommendation is to require small block sizes as the lots redevelop and/or densify. This is an incremental way to support walkability within an auto-oriented area. Eventually, as all of the areas are redeveloped into small blocks it is anticipated that a new neighborhood will emerge.

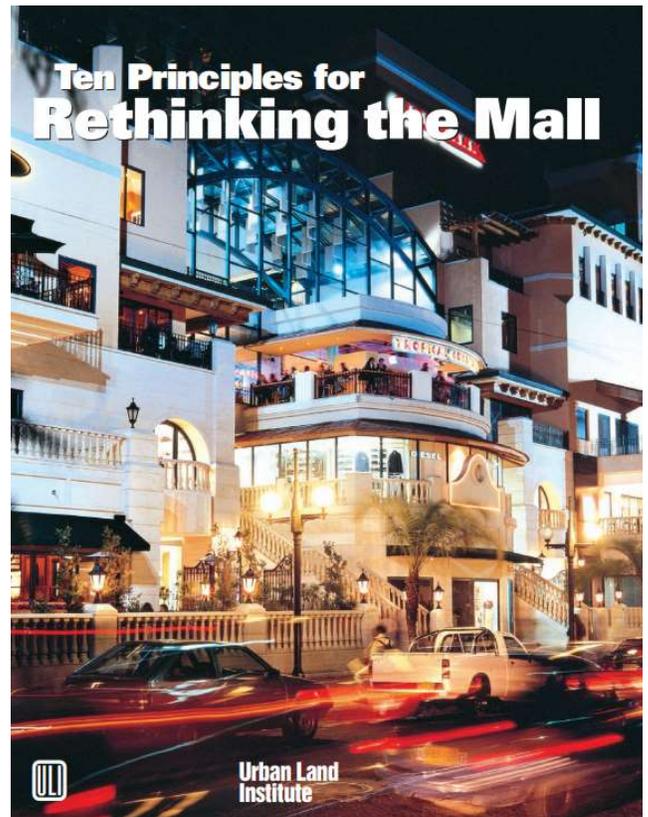


*Brooklyn Boulevard Station Area Plan*

## Focus on Walkable Quadrants and Prioritize a Corner

The city should first focus on creating walkable quadrants and prioritize, working closely with the property owners, the northwest corner of the shopping area just south of Shingle Creek Regional Trail. The first “corner” redevelopment should include all of the components with regards to more dense land uses and enhanced design to set the stage for future development in the area. Investing heavily in the first TOD development that includes a mix of uses and pedestrian improvements should be seen as positive return on investment. The city should utilize the new TOD zoning and public finance leverage to ensure that the first development is a demonstration for future development. Given that, be prepared to invest, be open to subsidizing the first TOD development to get it right, and be open to investing heavily in the public right-of-way. The city should begin to discuss the development opportunities with developers to better understand the market and what public investment will be needed to achieve the city goals.

A ULI publication, '[10 Principles for Rethinking the Mall](#)', especially sections 'Let the Market be Your Guide, Think Holistically Before Planning the Parts, and Deliver a Sense of Community' should be reviewed and utilized by the city. Examples of successful city-developer partnerships for the transformation of commercial areas are [Hi-Lake Shopping Center](#) along the Blue Line, [Midway Shopping Center](#) near the Green and A lines in St. Paul, Southdale in Edina and Ridgedale in Minnetonka.



## Oak Grove Station, Brooklyn Park

This station area includes approximately 24 acres of developable land. In addition, Target Corporation owns 340 acres of land abutting the station area of which 160 is entitled for future campus expansion and the main street area proposed for south of Oak Grove. In addition, the EDA owns a 22-acre development parcel in the southwest corner of the station area.

The LRT project includes the development of a park and ride lot and the station area plan calls for development wrapped around the park and ride and along Oak Grove Parkway within the Target Campus area.



*Target North Campus in Brooklyn Park, Photo from the City of Brooklyn Park*

The city has adopted TOD Zoning which allows for 8 and 10 stories of densely developed mix of uses. The city noted that they desire this area to be densely developed with a mix of residential along a commercial spine on Oak Grove Parkway. However, the code also allows lower density development on the edges of the station area if that is what the private market supports. The city considers Target to be a development partner and is encouraging the company to build out a development vision around their campus in partnership with the city.

### **Create a “Destination District” Brand**

There is huge potential for developing a miniature city from scratch at this site due to the amount of vacant land and single property owner control.

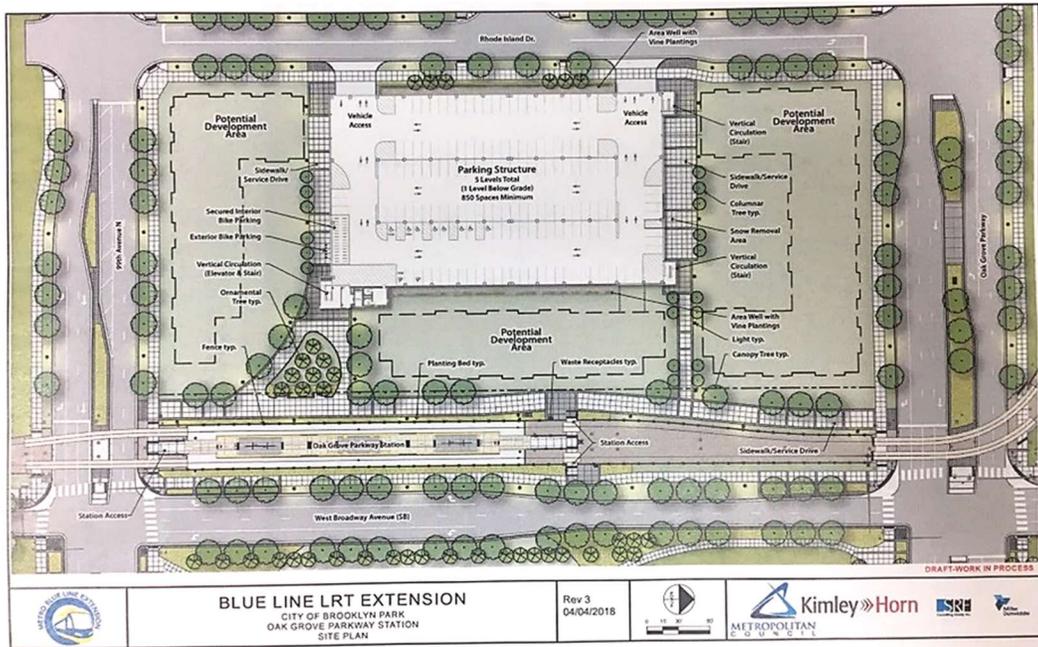
Rebranding the station area as the **City’s Destination District** can set this area apart from other station areas along the corridor. The city should allow a vast array of uses in this area including a mix of housing from luxury to affordable, rental and ownership, coffee shops/cafes, service retail including banks, fitness centers and medical offices, and large entertainment uses such as movie theater, virtual gaming halls, F1 racing, adult camp sites, film industry sites, spaces for cultural exhibitions, or STEM learning centers. These uses would be attractive to the employees at the Target Campus and provide an opportunity to attract people from across the metro area for entertainment not available anywhere else.



*Destination district examples*

## Prepare Now for Future Development

This station may not need to be the largest priority for the city as long as there is an agreement on disposition and/or development of the property with Target Corporation. The panel encourages the city to stay in close contact with key decision makers in the real estate division of Target Corporation and work toward developing a plan that makes it easy for Target to say yes. This includes creating an agreed upon development strategy and plan to act quickly when Target or the private market is ready to deliver on the plan. In addition, work toward a refined phasing plan so incremental demand is created, and density minimums are adopted as a tool to prevent sprawl and lower density options. There is no risk currently in holding out for a higher density, activated "Destination District".



Oak Grove Parkway Station Site Plan

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

## **Act Now**

There is enthusiasm about this corridor and the cities and community partners need to seize this opportunity now with the anticipation that LRT will serve the area in the future. Be mindful that future transit won't take care of everything, and the cost of doing nothing may be a loss of control, a loss of identity, deterioration or displacement, and an eroded quality of life. It should not only be about the train. It is about the market and the control that the cities and project partners have. **Now is the time to act!**

## **Collaborate on Housing and Economic Development**

The cities and community partners are encouraged to think of the Bottineau LRT Corridor as one neighborhood, with each station serving a different purpose and having a different personality. The stations should be complementary. The traffic should not only serve commuters going downtown to work in Minneapolis but rather, if cities and community partners plan intentionally and plan together; it can be a way for people to travel up and down the corridor to meet their needs without leaving the corridor.

The corridor **collaboration** is commended but it will be critically important to see the collaboration continue. Planning fatigue is bound to happen but continuing to plan for the future together and keeping educated on the market and innovation in transit-oriented development will be important. It is recommended that corridor staff and policy leaders continue to find the time and resources to attend nationally focused TOD conferences as a united corridor such as the annual [Railvolution Conference](#) which is the only national conference that solely focuses on the connection and complexities of land use and TOD.

In addition, the cities should create and adopt a **comprehensive economic development strategy and a shared housing strategy** to take advantage of the opportunities as the market evolves but also provide intentional shared tools to mitigate resident and business displacement. Eventually, the corridor would benefit from dedicating a shared staff person to implement both a corridor wide **housing and economic development strategy**.

## **Focus on Jobs**

There is great opportunity in taking advantage of the **educational institutions along the corridor**. In partnership with these institutions, the cities should develop a strategy to connect the trained talent to existing and future employers. This can also be part of the economic development strategy to attract companies with direct access to the existing, diverse, trained workforce. Historically, long-term sustainable communities have a very strong job base. The current corridor tends to be more retail focused, but the area will need jobs of all types and pay levels, to be sustainable and resilient. The best plan is to connect education and training to economic development which is right at the corridor's fingertips.

## **Set the Table and Take the Lead**

**Market change, community change and transportation change are occurring, and neighborhoods will evolve over time.** A “walk to a coffee” is the most valuable real estate of any kind and creating mixed-use places with services and activities now will pay dividends and will be enhanced when the train comes. Think about investing in demonstration projects that will push corridor development toward the tipping point. It can seem like nothing happens for a long time, until one thing happens, and then a ripple effect occurs. Set the table for this to happen and take the lead in making sure it happens **for the community rather than to the community.**

## **Tell Your Story as a United Front**

**Be aggressive on marketing and economic development as a collaborative team.** The Bottineau Corridor partners will benefit by bragging about their communities. Take the opportunity to sell your cities and tell your stories. Brand the corridor now as the **Opportunity Corridor** and make sure that the residents and businesses will be proud to call the area home.

# RESOURCES AND TOOLS

**Branding:** [Cleveland's Healthline](#) BRT transit corridor which was branded early in the process by two major health care institutions.

## **Housing:**

- Housing Preservation [best practice list](#) of tools and strategies.
- Corridor-Wide Housing Strategy - The [Southwest Corridor-wide Housing Strategy](#) is an example of a corridor-wide effort to collaboratively support tools and strategies in the production and preservation of housing choices.
- Information provided in <http://housingcounts.org/> will be helpful to Cities for finding resources associated with the preservation and production of affordable workforce housing

## **Small Business Mitigation:**

[Central Corridor Business Mitigation Plan](#) included loan programs, business resources, corridor-wide marketing and funding partners.

## **Healthy Food Access:**

[University of Minnesota Center for Urban & Regional Affairs article](#) on access to healthy foods Brooklyn Park

## **Land Use:**

**Production/creative oriented uses** - [See this example of niche factories in Brooklyn.](#)

Commercial/Retail center redevelopments:

- [Southdale parking lot redevelopment in Edina.](#)
- [Hi-Lake Shopping Center](#)
- [Midway Shopping Center](#)

A ULI publication, '[10 Principles for Rethinking the Mall](#)'

## **Opportunity Zones:**

The [Federal Designated Opportunity Zones](#) which will provide tax advantages for private investment. The [Federal Opportunity Zone regulations](#) were released on October 19, 2018 which outlines the specific regulations for utilization of the tax benefits.

## **Placemaking:**

City of Boston's [Crossroad Initiative](#). This type of initiative serves to guide residents and visitors through designated wayfinding, community themed signage, public realm improvements (like a public art program), and a new public gathering/event hub.

## PANELIST BIOS

### MARILEE UTTER

### TAP CHAIR

---

#### **PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER**

#### **CITIVENTURE ASSOCIATES, LLC**



Marilee Utter is President and founder of Citiventure Associates, LLC, a real estate advisory firm focused on development strategy, and offering particular expertise in Public-Private Partnerships (P3s), Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD), and transformational real estate. Previously, she was Executive Vice President of the Urban Land Institute. Prior to that, Marilee's experience included Managing Partner for P3 West LLC, Regional Vice President with Trillium Corporation managing the land development revitalization of Denver's Central Platte Valley rail yards, Mayoral-appointed Director of the Office of Asset Management for the City and County of Denver, first manager of Department of Transit-Oriented Development for the (Denver) Regional Transit District, Vice President with (now) Wells Fargo

Bank, and secondary math teacher. Marilee has become a nationally known speaker, writer, and advisor on innovative approaches to community redevelopment and urban issues.

### CECILE BEDOR

---

#### **EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF REAL ESTATE**

#### **COMMONBOND**



Cecile Bedor joined CommonBond as Executive Vice President of Real Estate in April 2018. She is responsible for all aspects of the purchase and development of real estate; property asset management to ensure financial sustainability; and reporting to project funders and investors. Cecile served as the Executive Vice President of GREATER MSP from 2014-2018. Prior to GREATER MSP, she served as the City of Saint Paul's Director of Planning and Economic Development (PED) from 2006-2014. During that time, she also served as the Executive Director of the City's Housing & Redevelopment Authority. Prior, she was the Director of Partnerships and Development for the Minneapolis Public Library system. Cecile

has also held positions with the National Equity Fund, the Metropolitan Council, and Aeon. She has two adult children and lives in south Minneapolis.

### TAYLOR COOPER

---

#### **DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, DEVELOPMENT OPERATION LEADER**

#### **THOR**



Taylor Cooper is a THOR Development Manager and Development's division Operation Leader. Internally she organizes all development managers, analysts and interns under the direction of Vice President of Development. Additionally, she focuses on the pre-development phase and liaising within THOR Companies and to external partners, leveraging her back in architecture and commercial banking operations. Her passion is real estate development that not only satiates investors, but truly uplifts end users from all walks of life. Taylor is a Maryland native, who within six weeks of deciding, took a calculated risk and drove across country to Minneapolis. She believes in the city's potential to become a world-class city. Since

arriving, Taylor has found a real estate community just as passionate and has joined several boards to keep busy working toward this goal. Taylor holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Northeastern University and a Master of Real Estate Development from the University of Maryland.

## DAVE HIGGINS

### VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT

### MCGOUGH DEVELOPMENT, LLC



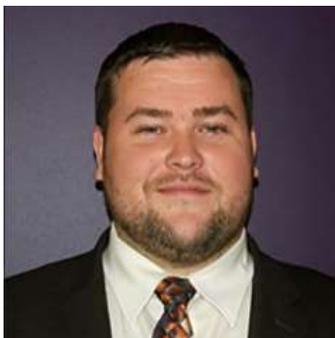
Dave Higgins serves as Vice President of Development, leading housing development for McGough Development, LCC (an operating unit of McGough Companies) and contributes to the McGough's "P3" (public-private partnership) development initiatives. In addition to his current work at McGough, Dave gives his time serving on ULI's MN Housing Council, representing McGough on the Minneapolis Downtown Council, and serves as Board Chair and a Director for the City of Lakes Community Land Trust Board of Directors the Minneapolis based affordable housing non-profit. Dave's past roles include executive and attorney capacities in private development working on national transactions and large-scale

urban development. Prior to McGough, Dave held positions with the Director's office of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the real estate group of global law firm DLA Piper, served as COO & General Counsel for an NYC-based tech infrastructure firm, and most recently, as Vice President of Development for MN-based Roers Investments LLC.

## MATTHEW LEBER

### SENIOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENT OFFICER

### LISC



Matthew Leber provides strategic guidance, technical assistance and development expertise to LISC's local office network, affordable housing developers, government entities and community-based organizations across the country. Prior to joining the National Housing Team, Matt worked for the New York City and Buffalo local LISC programs, with a strategic focus on LISC NYC's New Market Tax Credit program, lending, statewide affordable housing preservation programs and homeownership/ foreclosure issues. Previously, Matt held a variety of roles at HSBC Bank USA including community development finance, capital markets syndications, operations and business loan servicing. Matthew lives in Buffalo, N.Y.

and is happy to tell you why it's the best.

## JOSEPH PERIS

### REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

### RYAN COMPANIES US, INC.



In his role on Ryan's mixed-use development team, Joseph focuses primarily on office and multifamily in urban-infill locations throughout the Twin Cities. Joseph is responsible for leading multi-disciplinary teams through all aspects of the development process from site selection, through due diligence, project financing, acquisition, government approvals, design and construction coordination, and lease/sale negotiations. Joseph is a passionate urbanist and views his role in real estate development as an opportunity to make a positive and tangible impact on communities. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame and a Master's in Business Administration from the Kellogg School of

Management at Northwestern University. He serves on the Board of Green Minneapolis and is a member of the ULI Minnesota Housing Council.

## DOUG PIERCE

AIA, LEED FELLOW

PERKINS+WILL



With nearly 20 years of architectural experience spanning both corporate and institutional arenas, Doug Pierce contributes diverse planning, technical, and compliance expertise as well as innovative sustainable design ideas to every project. He is deeply passionate about preserving our environmental assets and values opportunities to collaborate with clients on conservation strategies, Energy Design Assistance, and related services.

## JONATHAN SAGE-MARTINSON

CEO

SPEDCO



Jonathan is the CEO of SPEDCO, a non-profit certified development company whose mission is to promote economic development throughout the state of Minnesota and nine counties in western Wisconsin. Founded in 1981, SPEDCO has originated over 870 loans totaling over \$383 million, creating or preserving more than 24,000 jobs. Prior to joining SPEDCO, Jonathan served as the Director of the Department of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Saint Paul. He also held leadership roles with the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, a group of 12 funders dedicated to working with others to insure the robust and equitable development of the Green Line transit corridor in Saint Paul

and Minneapolis. He has also served as Executive Director of Sparc, a neighborhood-based community development corporation, and as Associate Director of the Green Institute, a neighborhood-based environmental enterprise. Jonathan also served as a community development volunteer with the Peace Corps, including serving in the first Crisis Corps (now Peace Corps Response) mission. Jonathan has a BA in Political Science and German from the University of Minnesota and a Masters of Public Affairs in Nonprofit Management and Community Economic Development from the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.

# ULI MINNESOTA

## ABOUT US

ULI Minnesota is a District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members and sponsors. Founded in 1936, ULI now has more than 40,000 members worldwide representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, including developers, builders, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics and students.

As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

## REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MAYORS

Supported by ULI Minnesota, the nationally recognized Regional Council of Mayors (RCM) was formed in 2004 and represents Minneapolis, Saint Paul and 52 municipalities in the developed and developing suburbs and Greater Minnesota. This collaborative partnership provides a nonpartisan platform that engages mayors in candid dialogue and peer-to-peer support with a commitment towards building awareness and action focused on housing, sustainability, transportation and job growth.

## ADVISORY SERVICES

ULI has a long history of providing unbiased, market-based solutions and best-practice advice on land use and building resilient and competitive communities through Advisory Services. At ULI MN, three advisory service options are offered to policy leaders. Each option, including the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), engages ULI MN real estate professionals who volunteer their time and talent to contribute their wisdom and expertise.

For more information, visit [minnesota.uli.org](http://minnesota.uli.org).

“ULI brings together diverse practitioners with real world, local experience and a fresh eye. ULI Minnesota has a tremendous record of helping cities realize their potential, and their work on the Bottineau Corridor Blue Line Extension is another excellent contribution.”

- Marilee Utter, CitiVenture Associates, LLC



# Urban Land Institute

## Minnesota

81 South 9th Street, Suite 310

Minneapolis, MN 55402

[minnesota.uli.org](http://minnesota.uli.org)