

Actions & Positions Regarding the Southwest Transitway
as of October 6, 2009

DRAFT

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City Resolutions Regarding the Southwest Transitway

DRAFT

City of Eden Prairie, 2006

CITY OF EDEN PRAIRIE RESOLUTION NO. 2006-138

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY

WHEREAS, transportation infrastructure forms the backbone of the region's economy as well as its quality of life, and has a direct impact on economic development; and

WHEREAS, a well designed and functional transportation system with multiple mode choices is essential to maintaining long-term mobility throughout the metropolitan region; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council's long-range transportation plan identifies a future fixed transitway corridor in the Southwest Metro through the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest Metro has experienced unprecedented population and employment growth over the last 20 years and has become a major employment destination for the metropolitan region; and

WHEREAS, a Light Rail Transit (LRT) line servicing the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie will accommodate projected growth and will help maintain a competitive business environment and high quality of life for the entire Southwest Region; and

WHEREAS, the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority is near completion of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis Study that compares the costs, benefits, and impacts of a range of transit alternatives for the Southwest Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest Transitway's Technical Advisory Committee has provided the preliminary recommendation that LRT Alternatives 1A, 3A, and 3C be retained for further consideration; and

WHEREAS, the recommended LRT alternatives have daily ridership projections between 23,500 and 28,100; and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3 Alternatives have higher daily ridership projections, more new transit riders, and better cost effectiveness indices than the LRT 1 Alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3 Alternatives that serve the Eden Prairie Major Center Area, the Golden Triangle, and Opus, better serve the employment and commercial centers of the Southwest Area than the LRT 1 Alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3 Alternatives provide better opportunities for development, redevelopment and economic development and better support the City's long-range planning

initiatives in the Major Center Area and the Golden Triangle Area than the LRT 1 Alternatives; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Eden Prairie City Council, that the City of Eden Prairie supports the preliminary recommendations of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Eden Prairie maintains a strong preference for the LRT 3 Alternatives that best serve the City's residents, businesses, and visitors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Eden Prairie strongly supports all efforts by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT, and the Federal Transit Administration to fund and construct in a timely manner, a LRT line through the Southwest Corridor, that it be considered a priority project for the region, and after the Central Corridor, become the next planned expansion of the Comprehensive Transit System for the metropolitan region.

ADOPTED by the Eden Prairie City Council this 4th day of December, 2006.

City of Eden Prairie, 2009

**CITY OF EDEN PRAIRIE
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-60

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST
TRANSITWAY'S TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE
RECOMMENDATION OF ROUTE 3A AT THE LOCALLY PREFERRED
ALTERNATIVE FOR THE SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY**

WHEREAS, the Eden Prairie City Council unanimously endorsed the selection of what is now known as Route 3A in City Council Resolution 2002-174 on October 15, 2002 and again in City Council Resolution 2006-138 on December 12, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest Transitway's Technical Advisory Committee has unanimously recommended the selection of Route 3A as the locally preferred alternative for the Southwest Transitway; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to reaffirm its support for the selection of Route 3A.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Eden Prairie City Council reaffirms its support and preference for Route 3A for the Southwest Transitway and recommends to the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority and the Metropolitan Council that Route 3A be selected as the Southwest Transitway's locally preferred alternative.

ADOPTED by the Eden Prairie City Council this 15th day of September, 2009.


Phil Young, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kathleen Porta, City Clerk

City of Minnetonka, 2006

CITY OF MINNETONKA

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota as follows:

Section 1. Background.

- 1.01. Transportation infrastructure forms the backbone of the region's economy as well as its quality of life, and has a direct impact on economic development.
- 1.02. A well designed and functional transportation system with multiple mode choices is essential to maintaining long-term mobility throughout the metropolitan region.
- 1.03. The Metropolitan Council's long-range transportation plan identifies a future fixed transitway corridor in the Southwest Metro through the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie.
- 1.04. The Southwest Metro has experienced unprecedented population and employment growth over the last 20 years and has become a major employment destination for the metropolitan region.
- 1.05. A Light Rail Transit (LRT) line servicing the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie will accommodate projected growth and will help maintain a competitive business environment and high quality of life for the entire Southwest Region.
- 1.06. The Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority is near completion of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis Study that compares the costs, benefits, and impacts of a range of transit alternatives for the Southwest Corridor.
- 1.07. The Southwest Transitway's Technical Advisory Committee has provided the preliminary recommendation that LRT Alternatives 1A, 3A, and 3C along with the Enhanced Bus Alternative, be retained for further consideration.
- 1.08. The recommended LRT alternatives have daily ridership projections in excess of 24,000.
- 1.09. The LRT 3 Alternatives have higher daily ridership projections, more new transit riders, and better cost effectiveness indexes than the LRT 1 Alternatives.
- 1.10. The LRT 3 Alternatives that service the Opus Business Park, the Golden Triangle, and Eden Prairie Center, better serve the employment and commercial centers of the Southwest Area than the LRT 1 Alternatives.
- 1.11. The LRT 3 Alternatives provide better opportunities for development, redevelopment and economic development and better support the cities long-range planning initiatives than the LRT 1 Alternatives.

Section 2. Council Action.

- 2.01. The Minnetonka City Council supports the preliminary recommendations of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis.
- 2.02. The City of Minnetonka maintains a strong preference for an LRT 3 Alternative that best serves the City's residents, businesses, and visitors.
- 2.03. The City of Minnetonka strongly supports all efforts by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT, and the Federal Transit Administration to fund and construct in a timely manner, a LRT line through the Southwest Corridor, that it be considered a

priority project for the region, and after the Central Corridor, become the next planned expansion of the Comprehensive Transit System for the metropolitan region.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota, on December 4, 2006.

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Minneapolis Neighborhood Associations' Actions Regarding the Southwest Transitway

DRAFT

Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association

Comments for Southwest Transitway DEIS scoping document

Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association

10/10/2008

Bryn Mawr supports the project and Kenilworth alignment.

Bryn Mawr residents have expressed their general support for LRT and welcome the potential reduction of vehicular traffic and pollution. The neighborhood would directly benefit by the expected reduction of vehicular noise and air pollution along I-394. The Kenilworth alignment and Penn Avenue station would also benefit the neighborhood by providing LRT access to downtown, the airport and points to the west.

On two occasions, the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association (BMNA) has taken a formal position in support of the Southwest Transitway project and the Kenilworth alignment.

On April 11, 2007, the BMNA passed the following resolution supporting the proposed project:

We, the BMNA, support LRT and the Kenilworth Alignment, including a Penn Avenue station. However, our continued support is contingent upon the results of an Environmental Impact Study and all further studies/reports on the subject.

Again, on July 9, 2008, the BMNA supported the project and Kenilworth alignment in the context of the following resolution on the Bassett Creek Valley plan:

The Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association expresses its strong support of Ryan Company being identified as the 'master developer' for work related to the Bassett Creek Valley plan. We have a long history of working toward and supporting development in this area and would like to see the plans executed. We further support the identification of the light-rail location through this development and recognize the economic significance of the Kenilworth Trail alignment of the light-rail as part of the development. [The BMNA has previously voted in support of the Kenilworth alignment of the SWLRT.]

This statement represents the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood. The BMNA is interested in this development being beneficial to both of the involved neighborhoods, Bryn Mawr and Harrison. The BMNA supports the development of public lands in Bassett Creek Valley, promoting the revitalization of the entire Bassett Creek Valley area, while mitigating racial and economic disparities.

As the EIS process begins, we recommend that certain issues be included as part of that review, based on Bryn Mawr neighborhood concerns for safety and access.

Current access to the Cedar Lake Trail must be maintained.

Many residents of Bryn Mawr currently use the Cedar Lake Trail on a regular basis and this access is very important to the neighborhood. We are concerned that this access be maintained during and after construction of the project.

Some residents access the Cedar Lake trail in a somewhat unorthodox manner by crossing the railroad tracks where they pass under I-394. One of the access points is from Bryn Mawr Meadows and the other is slightly to the west by the spiral coming down from the sidewalk along the I-394 ramp.

While there is trail access to the Cedar Lake trail at the far west and east reaches of the neighborhood, the direct access from the heart of the community is by means of the unofficial railroad crossing at the west end of Bryn Mawr Meadows. Judging from the well-worn paths under and near the freeway overpass, this appears to be a heavily used crossing. This route offers the only practical way to access the Kenilworth trail from much of Bryn Mawr.

There is no doubt that the present situation already raises questions of safety. However, the addition of the LRT line with increased rail traffic raises additional safety issues that will need to be evaluated.

The safety evaluation, however, should not simply presume to prevent these unofficial crossings. That would eliminate access to the trail and would not be an acceptable solution. Reasonable access to Cedar Lake Trail must be maintained, and it is possible that another access will need to be created.

Something like the addition of a safety fence along the proposed tracks would be a great concern for the many residents who presently access the trail by crossing the tracks. An evaluation of the safety issues should not presume to eliminate the current access. Instead, alternatives to maintain access to Cedar Lake Trail should be evaluated.

Desired Station at Penn Avenue presents a safety challenge.

The neighborhood has encouraged the construction of a station at the interchange of Penn Avenue and I-394. The inclusion of such a station does mean that issues related to access and safety will need to be reviewed.

The current situation where Penn Avenue meets I-394 is already not favorable to pedestrian or bicycle traffic. The converging of ramps and streets create a situation that is difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to maneuver. There is no sidewalk beyond the overpass, and pedestrians are left to fend for themselves on a dirt trail. Visibility is limited because of the manner in which the intersection has been developed.

Motorists who attempt to avoid the back up caused by congestion on I-394 create a special safety problem. These motorists sometimes race up the eastbound ramp to Penn Avenue, bolt through the light at the intersection and triumphantly fly down the ramp on the other side. This is not a safe intersection for pedestrians or bicyclists.

The creation of a Penn Avenue Station is desirable, but it will cause an increase in foot and bike traffic as people access the Station. An evaluation needs to be made of how to resolve access and safety problems related to that increase in traffic.

The expression of these concerns should in no way be interpreted as a lack or reduction of support for the project. They are simply issues that we think need to be addressed in the DEIS and receive mitigation if possible. We hope to work with the County on these items as the project goes forward.

Calhoun Area Residents Action Group



Calhoun Area Residents Action Group

3612 Bryant Avenue S. Minneapolis, MN 55409
(612) 823-2520 www.carag.org

9 April 2009

Ms. Gail Dorfman
A-2400 Government Center
300 S. 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55487-0240

Dear Commissioner Dorfman:

I am writing you to communicate the support of the Calhoun Area Residents Action Group (CARAG) for the 3C alignment of the Southwest Transitway. A final resolution from our neighborhood is attached. This resolution passed at the March 17, 2009 CARAG meeting.

Sincerely,

Aaron Rubenstein

Aaron Rubenstein, President
CARAG

Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association
CIDNA Resolution In Support of the Southwest LRT Route
Serving the Largest Population

Whereas Mass Transit projects should, by definition, aspire to serve the greatest possible number of people, and...

Whereas Mass Transit projects in Europe and China have been demonstrated to return rapidly increasing benefits population densities of up to 50 people per acre, and...

Whereas the population density of Minneapolis is less than 10 people per acre, and...

Whereas the 2.5 mile stretch of Kenilworth Corridor and Cedar Lake Park (from Lake Street to north of 1-394) is among the least densely populated areas in the entire city (approaching zero people per acre north of Cedar Lake Parkway), and...

Whereas the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood is in the unique position of being impacted in roughly equal measure no matter which of the current Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit proposals is chosen, therefore...

Be it hereby resolved that the Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA) supports the selection of *one of the various "C" alternatives, being the* Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit routings that serve the greatest possible number of people, and

Be it further resolved that CIDNA *continues to* oppose the selection of "Alternative A" (also referred to as the "Kenilworth Alignment") because it is farthest from achieving that goal.

CEDAR-ISLES-DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
Resolution Regarding Southwest Area Alternatives PAC & TAC
September 5, 2006

TO: SOUTHWEST AREA ALTERNATIVES PAC
GAIL DORFMAN, CHAIR
FROM: CEDAR-ISLES-DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CHAD LARSEN, PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The CIDNA Board of Directors has approved the following list of issues that need consideration by the Southwest Area Alternatives PAC (and its Technical Committee) before it makes recommendations on preferred LRT routing within the city of Minneapolis:

For the Kenilworth alternative, these issues include:

1. AN LRT UNDERPASS AT CEDAR LAKE PARKWAY SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED; THE LRT SHOULD BE PLACED IN A CUT-AND-COVER TUNNEL FROM NORTH OF CEDAR LAKE PARKWAY TO THE LAKE STREET RAILROAD OVERPASS
2. THE LRT SHOULD NOT STOP AT 21ST STREET TO REDUCE THE TRANSIT TIME FROM THE LAKE ST. AND SUBURBAN STATIONS TO DOWNTOWN

For the Greenway/Nicollet alternative, these issues include:

1. SELECTION OF A DEAN PARKWAY STATION IN LIEU OF A STATION AT LAKE STREET SHOULD BE EVALUATED BASED ON UPDATED RIDERSHIP ESTIMATES
2. THE CAPITAL COSTS OF THE GREENWAY/NICOLLET ALTERNATIVE SHOULD INCLUDE THE COSTS OF REPLACING THE DEAN PARKWAY AND E. LAKE OF THE ISLES PARKWAY BRIDGES

For both the Kenilworth and Greenway/Nicollet options, these issues include:

1. IMPROVEMENTS IN ACCESS TO AND PARKING AT THE LAKE STREET STATION NEED TO BE MADE TO MAKE THIS STATION MORE EFFECTIVE IN SERVING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Your consideration of these issues before a route recommendation is made is important to the CIDNA neighborhood.

CEDAR-ISLES-DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

 9/5/06
Chad Larsen, President

East Calhoun Community Organization

February 20, 2009

Dear Ms. Walker,

At its February 5, 2009, meeting, the East Calhoun Community Organization (ECCO) voted unanimously to support any proposed alignment of the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit line that includes a Hennepin Avenue (Uptown) station. Including the Uptown area in this project makes sense for a number of reasons:

- **Alleviating congestion and reducing parking demand.**
Ever-increasing traffic congestion in Uptown diminishes air quality and endangers pedestrians in a highly urban community. Parking spilling over on to neighborhood streets hurts local businesses and burdens residents. LRT offers a safe, reliable, and environmentally friendly alternative to driving to, and parking in, Uptown.
- **Connecting Uptown to the region – and the region to Uptown.**
Uptown is a major regional destination, with a wealth of shopping and dining as well as the popular Chain of Lakes. LRT will better connect businesses to customers and visitors to destinations. It will link Uptown to other Minneapolis communities such as the Lyn-Lake and Eat Street districts, as well as Downtown Minneapolis, with every area benefiting. Growing job centers in the southwestern suburbs will also be much easier to reach for thousands of workers residing in East Calhoun and peer neighborhoods.
- **Offering a true ‘transit advantage’ to existing and choice riders.**
With separate right-of-way for much of its journey, LRT will attract many more riders than existing bus service. Traveling from Uptown to Downtown Minneapolis during rush hour often takes over twenty minutes by either bus or car. With LRT, passengers can count on that same trip taking less than ten minutes. In the growing Uptown area, such efficient service will certainly lead to more riders and a more successful project.

These are only a sampling of the benefits of bringing the Southwest Corridor LRT line through our community. ECCO passionately believes that this opportunity is too great to pass up. We call upon project planners to select an alternative that includes a Hennepin Ave station in Uptown.

Bringing LRT to Uptown is a worthwhile task, but a complex one. ECCO would like to see an ongoing commitment to communication between project planners and affected communities. We are extremely interested in hearing updates regarding the potential impacts of LRT on the Midtown Greenway trail as well as the integration of a Hennepin stop with the existing Uptown Transit Station. We also hope to hear more about important livability issues such as train noise, vibrations, and safety crossings. Attention to these details will be essential in making the Southwest Corridor LRT a success for residents and riders alike.

Thank you for taking the East Calhoun neighborhood’s recommendations and concerns into consideration. We are very excited about the Southwest Corridor LRT, and hope to be productive partners in this project as it moves forward. Please contact Nancy Ward, ECCO Board President, at president@eastcalhoun.org, with questions and updates.

Sincerely,

Anders Imboden
ECCO Board Member
On behalf of the East Calhoun Community Organization

CC: Minneapolis City Council Member Ralph Remington
Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak
Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman
State Senator D. Scott Dibble
State Representative Frank Hornstein

DRAFT

East Isles Residents' Association

MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Transitway Policy Advisory Committee
FROM: Nancy Johnston, President, East Isles Residents' Association
DATE: June 16, 2009
RE: Recommendation of the East Isles Residents' Association regarding the Southwest Transitway Corridor Route

The Board of Directors of the East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA) unanimously passed the following motion on June 2, 2009: "It is the EIRA Board's strong recommendation that the Southwest Transitway LRT route be through the Kenilworth Corridor."

The discussion and vote on this recommendation followed a neighborhood meeting organized by the East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA) on May 19, 2009 for the purpose of informing neighbors and the public about the alternative routes for the Southwest Transitway Corridor. Ms. Katie Walker, Transit Project Manager for Hennepin County, spoke to the group about the planning, studies, and evaluations of alternatives. There was an extensive question and answer period. About 40 people attended the meeting, held at Grace Community Church in Minneapolis from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. This meeting was announced in the /Southwest Journal/, the /Hill & Lake Press/, and by about 500 flyers that were hand-delivered to most households in the EIRA district.

At its regular board meeting on June 2, the Board of Director of EIRA reviewed the neighborhood meeting in terms of the information presented and the audience questions and discussion. The recommendation that the Southwest Transitway LRT route be through the Kenilworth Corridor and not the Midtown Greenway Corridor was based on the following concerns:

1. Traffic and Safety: A route on the Midtown Greenway would cross the East Isles neighborhood at grade through intersections at James, Irving, and Humboldt Avenues, South. All of these intersections are heavily traveled with both automobiles on the avenues and bicycle traffic and pedestrian traffic along the Greenway. In addition to traffic safety concerns, the continual back-up of vehicle traffic waiting at the LRT crossings would increase the air pollution in this area, impacting the quality of life and imposing dangerous health conditions.
2. Noise and Vibration : Residential homes and apartments exist within feet of the proposed 3C (Greenway) route in the East Isles neighborhood. There would be detrimental impact from noise and vibration on those

nearby homes and apartments.

3. _Environmental Issues_: There would be negative impact on the Chain of Lakes park system, including Lake of the Isles, Lake Calhoun, the Lagoon, and the pedestrian mall (the Mall) adjacent to the Midtown Greenway Corridor. This could include an impact on water quality, vegetation, soil conditions, and wildlife. The Mall itself is a unique, historic, and important amenity for the East Isles neighborhood and the City of Minneapolis. The Mall serves as a buffer of green space between residential areas and the commercial areas of Lagoon Avenue, Lake Street and the Uptown core.

4. _Existing Transit along the Midtown Corridor_: The Uptown area, especially along Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue, is already well served by numerous bus routes. Those routes serving the Hennepin Avenue corridor are the most used and financially solvent in the entire bus system.

The EIRA Board understands that there are many issues to be evaluated as the decision for the Southwest Transitway Corridor is reached. It is believed that the impact on the East Isles neighborhood would be detrimental in many ways, including those specified above, and that efforts to mitigate these effects, if even possible, would be extremely costly.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the concerns of the East Isles Residents' Association. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nancy Johnston, EIRA President
612-870-1845,
njohnsto@umn.edu

Harrison Neighborhood Association

SWLRT: Support for Kenilworth Posted to Minneapolis Issues List

The Harrison Neighborhood Association along with other organizations have formally taken action and provided rationale for the Kenilworth alignment.

The Harrison Neighborhood Association represents approximately 4,200 people: 39% of the residents are African American, 27% are Southeast Asian, and 25% are White. The median household for a family is little more than \$21,000 placing 63% of neighborhood children in poverty. The following is HNA's rationale for supporting the Kenilworth 3A Alignment.

Nearly a century of urban policies and land use decisions have contributed to the environmental deterioration, social marginalization and economic decline of the area in and around Harrison and Near North Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis's urban policies and land use decisions led to a class action lawsuit by public housing residents resulting in the Hollman Consent Decree.

Harrison Neighborhood Association strongly supports the Kenilworth alignment. The support for this alignment is based in years of work to meaningfully connect to North and South Minneapolis, create needed housing and job opportunities for Harrison and Northside residents through the redevelopment of Bassett Creek Valley. HNA has engaged hundreds of residents, hosted culturally based focus groups and conducted surveys. Consistently, residents state the need for living wage jobs and quality affordable housing.

The Kenilworth 3A alignment is necessary to ensure a successful redevelopment that will provide living-wage jobs, quality affordable housing, increased businesses that serve the surrounding community, and an improved natural environment.

The widely accepted and respected Mind the Gap Report documented the entrenched racial, economic and spatial disparities in the metro area. The report further points out that these entrenched disparities put at risk the economic health and competitiveness of the entire region. These disparities are hyper-concentrated in a few communities, North Minneapolis being one of them. Therefore it should be the priority of public and private entities to use mass transit to mitigate racial and economic disparities by connecting people and commerce.

The following are a list of basic points to consider in evaluating proposed routes:

- Proposed development on Linden Yards and impound lot is likely to generate approximately 6,000 to 8,000 employees and 800-900 households upon completion of proposed development

- Increased opportunities for Northside residents at employment centers in Southwest metro area - Current commuteshed data indicates a large number of Northsiders employed along the Kenilworth 3A alignment

- Improved viability for affordable housing success in Bassett Creek Valley Area, by providing cost-effective and readily available transit options for lower income area residents that connect with regional employment centers

-- Increased 'value' placed on Bassett Creek Valley location by employers who value the labor force available in the Bassett Creek Valley area, and connections to potential employers in the Southwest metro area

-- Improved connections for area residents that have been historically isolated by past transit decisions

-- Reduce parking required in BCV Redevelopment

-- Improved Regional access to Bryn Mawr Meadows Athletic Facilities

-- Improved access to Bryn Mawr commons

-- 'Daylighted' Bassett Creek natural area

The Southwest Transit Corridor has the potential to build a strong and connected regional economy. The Kenilworth alignment is best situated to ensure that the public investment benefits the most people and especially those in need.

Larry Hiscock
Director/Lead Organizer

Kenwood Isles Area Association

September 8, 2008

Resolution supporting light rail transit for the long-term best interests of the City of Minneapolis.

Whereas the Kenwood Isles Area Association (KIAA) supports public transportation, including light rail, for the city of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan region; and

Whereas the proposed Southwest LRT ("LRT") represents a significant investment in public infrastructure that will serve the area for the next 50 to 100 years; and

Whereas KIAA believes that in addition to providing economic stimulus and transportation services for fast growing suburbs, such an investment should also consider in equal weight the usage and the long-term best interests of Minneapolis residents, neighborhoods, businesses, and regional amenities; and

Whereas KIAA believes that such benefits as interlining the LRT with the Hiawatha Line should not outweigh the benefits of serving the usage and long-term best interests of Minneapolis constituents; and

Whereas the LRT in the Kenilworth Corridor would have an adverse environmental impact on the unique urban green space along the Kenilworth Trail, currently used by recreational bikers, skaters, runners, walkers, bike commuters, children, families, domestic animals, and wildlife; and

Whereas many residences in the Kenwood-Isles Neighborhood abut or are located very close to the Kenilworth Corridor and the LRT would have an adverse environmental impact on these homes and negatively impact the quality of life in these homes; and

Whereas the LRT in the Kenilworth Corridor would have an adverse environmental impact to parts of Cedar Lake Park and its wildlife habitat, and would impede access to the Park by the public, including neighborhood residents; and

Whereas Cedar Lake Parkway, a National Scenic Byway, is an important traffic artery for area residents, and LRT in the Kenilworth Corridor would cause adverse traffic flow impacts at that intersection and through Kenwood streets; and

Whereas there is precedent in Minneapolis for mitigation of rail traffic impacts (e.g., a 22-foot deep trench crossed by 28 street bridges along a corridor now used as the Midtown Greenway, and a tunnel under the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport built for the Hiawatha LRT line); and

Whereas whichever alignment is chosen for the LRT, KIAA residents currently have limited access to public transportation and such needs must be addressed through more inclusive public transportation policies;

Therefore, be it resolved that the KIAA supports the thorough and balanced examination of the proposed LRT alignments 3C and Option E in view of serving Minneapolis residents, neighborhoods, employers, businesses, and regional amenities; and

Be it further resolved that KIAA supports an in-depth study, before the Southwest LRT alignment preference is chosen, to determine whether the needs of the proposed Basset Creek Valley Redevelopment District can be served by the proposed Bottineau Line currently under consideration by Hennepin County; and

Be it further resolved that if the Kenilworth Corridor alignment is selected for the LRT, KIAA expects to work closely with Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis to design plans that include real and substantial mitigation and betterments that will be acceptable to the Kenwood neighborhood. Until such plans have been developed, KIAA opposes the LRT in the Kenilworth Corridor; and

Be it further resolved that KIAA supports LRT design measures that enhance rather than degrade the neighborhoods, parks, and green spaces along any selected alignment, including alignments 3C or E; and

Be it further resolved that KIAA strongly urges Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis to take all possible measures to identify and secure funding to pay for design measures considered "betterments" by agencies outside of our community regardless of which alignment is chosen. Design measures significantly above the minimum required mitigation in certain areas are justified by the disproportional environmental impact to residential and green spaces compared to the more commercial areas along the line.

Addendum

November 6, 2008

Be it further resolved that the KIAA strongly opposes the siting of any LRT car storage and/or maintenance facility in the area of Cedar Lake Park, the Kenilworth Trail, or the Cedar Lake Trail. This includes the Hennepin County owned land at the base of the Lowry Hill Bluff."

Citizens for a Loring Park Community

Citizens for a Loring Park Community
Land Use Committee
Monday, March 23, 2009 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

CLPC Background: previous presentations to the committee focused on three alternatives that did not include the latest proposal from Councilmember Remington to route trains down Nicollet and then divert along 11th/12th streets. Past CLPC action supported street cars along the Midtown Greenway and then down Nicollet Ave. rather than light rail along a similar route. Concerns included the number of stops and impact on Nicollet Avenue.

Project Background: There is considerable information on the project on the web site at <http://www.southwesttransitway.org>. However, this site does not have detail on the 3C sub-alternative that is the focus of tonight's meeting. See the ATTACHMENT #1 at the end of these minutes for a description of all alternatives and a brief history of the project.

NOTE: Routes 1A, 3A & 3C differ in alignments in the suburbs (Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, Edina, and St. Louis Park). 1A/3A splits from 3C (and the sub-alternatives) just west of Lake Calhoun. 1A/3A run through Kenilworth to the downtown intermodal station that will link the Hiawatha LRT and NorthStar lines. Routes 3C and 3C sub-alternatives run along the Midtown Greenway and then head north at Blaisdell/Nicollet/1st Avenue. 3C and the sub-alternative split at 11th/12th streets. The 3E alternative, proposed during the scoping comment period, has been dropped from consideration. This route would follow the Midtown Greenway to Park Avenue and then to the Intermodal Station via 10th and 7th streets and 6th Avenue.

Presentation: Mona is a consultant with HDR Engineering working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). She noted that Hennepin County completed the alternative analysis last year and briefly described the project. She is working on the Draft EIS, which is required for any large project such as this. The first step is scoping -- they go out to the communities to ensure that everything appropriate is included in the scope of the project. This led to two more alternatives: Option 3E (see above, it follows Park Avenue and city streets) and the 3C sub-alternative proposed by Councilmember Remington

(follows 3C until 12th/11th). See ATTACHMENT #2 for details on the LRT 3C sub-alternative. They analyzed LRT 3E and LRT 3C sub-alternative to determine if they were at least as good as the original alternatives. After analysis, LRT 3E was dropped due to higher costs and other impacts.

Mona distributed a map that clearly showed the possible alignments for LRT 3C and the LRT 3C sub-alternative. Both routes follow the Midtown Greenway corridor. At Nicollet (both routes) or Blaisdell or 1st Avenue (LRT 3C sub-alternative only), the routes go north in a tunnel. The tunnel ends At Franklin, then north on either Nicollet (both alternatives) or 1st Avenue (LRT 3C sub-alternative). At 12th Street LRT 3C continues north on Nicollet and ends north of a 4th Street station. It does not connect directly with Hiawatha LRT. The LRT 3C sub-alternative turns west on 11th Street and follows an alignment northwest to the intermodal station to connect with Hiawatha LRT and NorthStar. The sub-alternative returns on 12th Street to connect with Nicollet Avenue.

Discussion: Although outside the scope of this meeting, there was some discussion concerning the LRT 1A option – see ATTACHMENT #1 for more information. The sub-alternative runs through an area of the city that currently has good transit service. The LRT 1A option runs through a less populated area. This option might likely impact Cedar Lake Parkway and nearby natural areas although there is already freight moving on these rails.

As to impact on the Greenway: there are already tracks but LRT may require some cutting into the embankment which may be tricky as it touches on a historic district. Previous studies looked to connect to

Hiawatha at the other end of the Greenway but this is not part of the current project. Jana noted that the Greenway folks would like to have this connection via streetcar.

NEGATIVE features of the sub-alternative:

1.Potential problems running LRT at grade on Nicollet and the impact on businesses given the width of the road. It would likely narrow the road to two lanes without room for parking. LRT on Nicollet, tunnel or not, will change Nicollet.

2.No stop at all from where a tunnel would pop up on Franklin Ave., all the way to downtown, just a speeding train thru Loring Park.

3.Running the line through the “Meter Farm” from an area already lacking sufficient parking.

4.Distance between stations will be much farther than buses provide now. Is it fair to expect mobility-impaired to go an extra distance?

5.Possible right of way issues on 11th and 12th streets.

6.Close proximity on Nicollet and 11th /12th will impact both residential and commercial buildings.

Nicollet Avenue has the widest right-of-way at 80’st but there would be significant impacts there, even more on Blaisdell and 1 Avenue which are more residential than Nicollet. Mona suggested looking at the tech memos on the web site: see

7.Noise impact on residences from Franklin north and on 12th including several condo buildings.

8.The Loring Business Association has no official position but has heard from several with concerns.

There is no stop at 15th which would be beneficial.

9.Substantial impact on costs -- \$80 million more than LRT 3C. These funds could be better used to promote street cars on Nicollet, moving more people shorter distances. LRT is better for longer distances.

10.The LRT 3C sub-alt would make for a slower trip. This could discourage car users from using LRT

11.LRT in the corridor is likely to negatively impact existing transit. Concerns about the impact on existing transit service. Mona said that both LRT 3C and LRT 3C sub-alternative will negatively impact bus service in the corridor.

POSITIVE features of the sub-alternative:

1.By avoiding the LRT 1A alternative, protects the environmental features of the Kennelworth bike trail and the wilderness feel of it.

2.Allows interlining (connection into the existing system) such that trains could continue from the Southwest Corridor onto the Hiawatha line. Interlining is positive for options 1A, 3A, and 3C sub-alternative.

3.Might serve more folks who live in the area – but see comments about distance between stations.

4.Serves the convention center.

5.May have a positive impact on property values (reference to impacts in other cities).

Opposed LRT 3C and LRT 3C 11th /12th streets sub-alternative. (Motion Richard Anderson, second Gary Gliem).

Motion passed, two opposed (Puzak and Hinderager), two abstentions (McLaughlin and Cook)

Supported exploring other transit alternatives to serve Loring Park including streetcars. (Motion Mike McLaughlin, second John van Heel).Motion passed unanimously

Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association



November 7, 2008

Southwest Project Manager
417 North 5th Street, Suite 320
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Southwest Project Manager,

The Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association (LHNA) is the official citizen participation organization for the City of Minneapolis representing the Lowry Hill neighborhood located west of Downtown, enclosed by Interstate 394 on the north, Interstate 94/Hennepin Avenue on the east, 22nd Street on the south and Lake of the Isles Parkway, Logan Avenue and Morgan Avenue on the west.

Lowry Hill neighborhood is a major stakeholder in the proposed routing of the Southwest Transitway under options 1A and 3A as the route runs along the northern boundary of our neighborhood and will include a proposed stop in our neighborhood at Van White.

The LHNA Board of Directors passed the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association supports route options 1A and 3A as proposed by the Hennepin County Southwest Transitway assuming that:

- stops will be implemented as proposed at 21st, Penn and Van White stations;
- transit oriented development and structured parking be developed at Van White, and;
- noises produced by the train, such as bells and whistles, be eliminated or lessened to the fullest extent of the law.

Thank you for bringing transit to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Wilson".

Craig A. Wilson
President

North Loop Neighborhood Association



**NORTH
LOOP**
NEIGHBORHOOD

September 22, 2008

Ms. Katie Walker
Transit Project Manager
Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit
417 5th St N, Suite 320
Minneapolis, MN 55401-1362

RE: Southwest Transitway Alignment Endorsement

Dear Katie:

On July 30, 2008 the North Loop Neighborhood Association voted unanimously to endorse Southwest Transitway alignment (A). This alignment follows the Kenilworth corridor into the North Loop neighborhood, and it connects to the Intermodal Transit station in the North Loop neighborhood. The North Loop Neighborhood Association Board of Directors considers alignment (A) to be the superior alignment.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David R. Frank
North Loop Neighborhood Association

Whittier Alliance Community Issues Committee

Clarification of letter text:

"The Community Issues Committee moves, that in addition to the existing position of the Whittier Alliance in support of the Kenilworth Alignment (3A) and opposing the Nicollet Alignment (3C) ("Whittier Alliance Light Rail Transit Task Force Resolution" adopted May 2008), the Whittier Alliance does not support the LRT 3C (11th/12th) Sub-Alternative. **Motion carried at the Board**" (per letter from Marian Biehn dated April 6, 2009).



April 6, 2009

Katie Doty and Kathie Walker
Southwest Transit way
417 North 5th Street #320
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Kate and Kathie,

I am writing to update you of action taken at the March 9 Community Issues Committee Meeting and forwarded to the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors Meeting on March 26.

Motion: The Community Issues Committee moves, that in addition to the existing position of the Whittier Alliance in support of the Kenilworth Alignment (3A) and opposing the Nicollet Alignment (3C) ("Whittier Alliance Light Rail Transit Task Force Resolution" adopted May 2008), the Whittier Alliance does not support the LRT 3C (11th/12th) Sub-Alternative. **Motion Carried at the Board.**

I believe you have a copy of the May 2008 resolution but I have emailed you the information for your convenience. Please use the motion above as the official statement from the Whittier Alliance regarding the Sub Alternate route. Our process is that all motions from committee get forwarded to the Whittier Alliance board for final action.

Please add the following items to the impact list to be studied in the EIS:

- 1st Ave is a very narrow street, staging construction for any rail line either on the surface or underground would destroy the homes that line the street. There are very shallow front yards and many apartment buildings are on the street lot line
- The noise from construction will exceed noise decibels and damage the hearing of many young children who live along the street
- 1st Ave is in the Washburn Fair Oaks Historic District
- Haisdell Ave also has home that are "contributing" to the historic fabric of the Whittier neighborhood
- 2214 Haisdell Ave has professional recording studio
- Hennepin County Medical Center is currently breaking ground for a new Family Clinic on Nicollet between 28th & 29th St rendering a turn to go north on Nicollet difficult
- The proposed 3C at Nicollet or 1st Ave renders the reopening of Nicollet Ave impossible. The reopening of Nicollet is a stated goal in the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Creation Audio, a nationally known recording studio, is at 2543 Nicollet
- 2315 Nicollet Ave - 1st Minneapolis 7th Day Adventist Church is part of the Washburn Fair Oaks Historic District

Sincerely,

Marian Biehn
Executive Director

cc Councilmember Robert Lilligren, 6th Ward

Whittier Alliance Light Rail Transit Task Force

Whittier Alliance Light Rail Transit Task Force Resolution -- May 5, 2008

The Whittier Alliance (representing the residents, businesses, and property owners of the Whittier neighborhood) has given significant consideration to the alternate routes of the proposed Southwest LRT. The Nicollet Alignment (3C) was extensively considered, as its selection would have major impacts on the neighborhood. Based upon robust public discussions of the alternatives with a wide range of stakeholders, The Whittier Alliance has reached the following findings:

The Whittier Alliance supports the Kenilworth Alignment (3A).

The Whittier Alliance recognizes that the Nicollet Alignment (3C) could provide meaningful benefits for the neighborhood.

- Improved transit speed, reliability, frequency and connectivity
- Access to increased customer and investment base
- The possibility of minimized traffic congestion through grade separation

The Whittier Alliance has significant concerns about the Nicollet Alignment (3C) for the following reasons:

- The reduced likelihood of a Midtown Greenway Streetcar serving all of the Midtown neighborhoods and connecting between Southwest and Hiawatha LRT, with the potential to extend to the river and beyond
- The preclusion of a future Nicollet Avenue Streetcar, whose more frequent stops might better serve our dense, near-downtown neighborhood
- The likelihood of reduced, rerouted or eliminated bus service currently serving the area
- The proposed line and station locations poorly serve the commercial nodes at 26th & Nicollet and Lake & Nicollet
- Vehicular traffic currently along Nicollet may be forced on to the residential streets
- The physical and technical requirements of the Nicollet Avenue tunnel, and specifically it's entry portals near the Midtown Greenway and Franklin Avenue, may have the following undesirable impacts:
 - Render Nicollet Ave useless as a through street
 - Render reopening of Nicollet at Kmart infeasible
 - Isolate and render nearly useless the area between Cecil Newman (29th St) and Kmart
 - Eliminate Nicollet Ave parking
 - In the short term and likely in the long term, be detrimental to the commercial and retail business along Nicollet Ave
 - Be disruptive of the urban fabric of Nicollet Ave, the Greenway and the neighborhood
- Even without factoring in the immediate (and possible long term) negative economic impacts to the Nicollet commercial corridor, the projected cost of construction for the trench and cut-and-cover tunnel doesn't appear to provide for the well executed system that The Whittier Alliance would expect in order to truly benefit the neighborhood. Given recent experience with the Central Corridor planning, The Whittier Alliance fears that should such amenities and mitigation efforts not be fully accounted for and explicitly included at an early stage, they may disappear from the plan during later budget cuts.

Based on the currently presented alternatives and for the above reasons, **The Whittier Alliance does not support the Nicollet Alignment (3C), and supports the Kenilworth Alignment (3A), supplemented by a Nicollet Ave Streetcar and a Midtown Greenway Streetcar, as the best option for the neighborhood.**

**Community Organizations & Company Positions Regarding
the Southwest Transitway**

DRAFT

Bassett Creek Redevelopment Oversight Committee

Katie Walker
Southwest Corridor
Hennepin County Transit
417 North 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Ms. Walker;

The Redevelopment Oversight Committee (ROC) has been overseeing the Master Planning Process in the Bassett Creek Valley for the past several years. As you may know, the ROC is a unique group made up of two very different neighborhoods, Harrison and Bryn Mawr, as well as local businesses, elected representatives, and a developer, Ryan Companies, who all came together to create a common vision for the future in the Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan. The ROC uses the Master Plan and its Guiding Principles to make recommendations on development in this area.

The ROC strongly reiterates our support for the Kenilworth Alignment for the Southwest LRT. This alignment will benefit an area of North Minneapolis which has been historically underserved by city planning and transportation opportunities. Moreover, redevelopment of this area already underway will create a synergy beneficial to the success of both projects. Lastly, the master planning process that the ROC has participated in with Ryan Companies exemplifies an uncommonly high level of public-private collaboration which resulted in clearly articulated goals for redevelopment. The Kenilworth alignment is an essential pre-requisite for the first phase of redevelopment and a linchpin to the rest of our vision.

While seeking development in the Valley, decreasing racial and economic disparities has been one of the themes throughout the process of envisioning a successful redevelopment project which positively impacts the people who live and work in these neighborhoods. Adequate public transit is a key factor in successful development and successful communities. The Kenilworth Alignment is both socially and economically the right path to for the Southwest Transit authority to pursue.

We trust that you will take our recommendation for the Kenilworth Alignment into consideration as you discuss which route offers the most benefit at the least cost to the residents of Minneapolis and its Western Suburbs.

Best regards,

Bassett Creek Valley ROC

Attachment: Guiding Principles

Cc: TAC Committee members

Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce

EDEN PRAIRIE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

RESOLUTION REGARDING SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

WHEREAS, Hennepin County is nearing completion of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis to determine whether light rail transit service is feasible and desirable in the southwest corridor, which encompasses portions of the Cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Alternatives Analysis is to identify and compare the benefits, cost, and impacts of a range of transit alternatives (mode and route) in order to determine a preferred alternative, and

WHEREAS, The Technical Advisory Committee has recommended that three light rail transit alternatives (LRT 1A, LRT 3A, and LRT 3C) be retained for further analysis in the next phase of the Federal process to develop a transit facility (Environmental Impact Statement), and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3A alternative will provide much more benefit to Eden Prairie residents and business than LRT 1A because it serves higher density areas and provides five stations in Eden Prairie, instead of just two stations under LRT 1A, and

WHEREAS, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce believes that the LRT 3A alternative will have substantially more riders than the LRT 1A alternative, because it serves higher density areas and will also will accommodate reverse commute trips, and

WHEREAS, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce believes that the LRT 3A alternative is far superior to the LRT 1A alternative in terms of meeting the following objectives established for the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis:

- Goal 1: Improve Mobility. *Objective: Provide a travel option that serves population and employment concentrations.*
- Goal 1: Improve Mobility. *Objective: Provide a travel option that serves people who depend on transit.*
- Goal 3: Protect the Environment. *Objective: Provide a travel option that supports efficient, compact land use that facilitates accessibility.*
- Goal 4: Preserve and Protect the Quality of Life in the Study Area and the Region. *Objective: Provide a travel option that contributes to the economic health of the study area and region through improving mobility and access.*
- Goal 4: Preserve and Protect the Quality of Life in the Study Area and the Region. *Objective: Provide a travel option that enhances the image and use of transit services in the region.*

WHEREAS, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce believes that the LRT 3A alternative strongly meets Goal 5 (Support Economic Development) of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis and that the LRT 1A alternative fails to meet this goal, and

WHEREAS, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce believes that the LRT 3A alternative is superior to the LRT 3C alternative because it provides the opportunity for continuous service between this route and the Hiawatha LRT route, without requiring a transfer.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce strongly supports all efforts by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, the Metropolitan Council, Mn/DOT, and the Federal Transit Administration to fund and construct in a timely manner a LRT line through the Southwest Corridor, that it be considered a priority project for the region, and after the Central Corridor, become the

next planned expansion of the Comprehensive Transit System for the metropolitan region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce requests that the Southwest Transitway Policy Advisory Committee supports the recommendation of the Technical Advisory Committee to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for development of light rail transit in the southwest corridor, with the following two conditions:

- The LRT 1A alternative should be deleted from further study since it is inferior to the LRT 3A alternative relative to multiple project goals and objectives.
- Specific reference should be made that the LRT 3A alternative is superior to the LRT 3C alternative in terms of providing opportunity for continuous service with the Hiawatha LRT route.

Adopted by the Government Committee of the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce, this 12th day of December, 2006.

DRAFT

Greater Minneapolis Building Owners and Managers Association

GREATER MINNEAPOLIS BUILDING OWNERS AND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION (BOMA)

Position on Southwest Corridor LRT Route Options For Entering Downtown Minneapolis

Greater Minneapolis BOMA supports the Kenilworth Corridor option for entering downtown Minneapolis because it would:

- Provide the most direct transit service to downtown for the heavy commuter ridership expected from southwest suburban area;
- Promote major economic development projects planned for the Bassett Creek Valley and Target Field ballpark/ "Twinsville" area
- Connect at North Loop Transit Hub allowing for easy transfer to and/ or through-service to Hiawatha and Central Corridor LRT and North Star Commuter Rail;
- Allow use of existing infrastructure at Transit Hub, 5th Street rail corridor and Hiawatha maintenance facility.

We specifically oppose Southwest Corridor entering downtown Minneapolis on Nicollet Mall for the following additional reasons.

- Downtown street capacity is under stress. This route takes down an important additional street for rail service while capacity to handle it exists on 5th Street.
- Rail service on Nicollet Mall would only have three downtown stops – at 12th, 8th and 4th streets – and be counterproductive to the longstanding goal of providing high quality circulator service on the Mall.
- Service would dead-end at 4th Street with no opportunity for through routing to other lines or access to the existing maintenance facility.
- After rebuilding Marquette and 2nd Avenue with double bus lanes, 1/3 of busses now on Nicollet (all rush hour express) will be relocated to those streets and, according to the *Access Minneapolis* plan, those remaining will provide circulator quality service (i.e. clean, quiet Hybrids, carefully timed intervals and a free ride within downtown). If replaced by LRT, this amenity is lost and the remaining 2/3 of those busses would be shifted to other congested streets.
- Minneapolis has studied feasibility of Streetcars to replace local bus service on key arterial routes including those entering downtown on Nicollet Mall, and that would be precluded under this concept.

Kent D. Warden, RPA
Executive Director
612-338-8627
kw@bomampls.org
October 2008

GREATER MINNEAPOLIS BUILDING OWNERS AND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION (BOMA)

Support for Southwest Corridor LRT Route Alternative 3A

Greater Minneapolis BOMA supports the earliest possible approval and construction of Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit route alignment alternative 3A, specifically following the Kenilworth Corridor to downtown Minneapolis, because it would:

- Provide a high level of ridership with optimum travel time and meet cost effectiveness criteria to qualify for federal matching funds;
- Promote major economic development projects planned for the Bassett Creek Valley and Target Field ballpark/ "Twinsville" area
- Connect at North Loop Transit Hub allowing for easy transfer to and/ or through-service to Hiawatha and Central Corridor LRT and North Star Commuter Rail.

We specifically oppose either variation of route alignment alternative 3C for entering downtown Minneapolis, as follows:

- We previously detailed our objections to 3C-1 (Nicollet Mall to 4th Street) and those objections still stand.
- We also oppose alternative 3C-2 due to its serious conflict with the *Access Minneapolis Plan* downtown street strategies, where 11th and 12th streets are identified as critical corridors for automobile and express bus access to Interstate 394 and 35W, and diverting LRT onto those streets is unacceptable.
- The technical analysis of alternates has shown that operating and capital cost for either of the 3C variations would be significantly higher than 3A with no gain in ridership and would not meet cost effectiveness criteria to qualify for federal funding, without which this project will not be built.

Kent D. Warden, RPA
Executive Director
612-338-8627
kw@bomampls.org

September 2009

ISALAH

Southwest Light Rail Transit ISALAH Supports Kenilworth 3A Alignment

Background

The Southwest Light Rail Transit (SW LRT) line will connect Minneapolis to the suburban communities of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins and St. Louis Park. In addition to serving commuters from the suburbs into the city, SW LRT will be an important connector for “reverse commuters” traveling from Minneapolis to the job centers in the southwest suburbs.

Later this year, the Southwest Transitway Policy Advisory Committee and the Hennepin County board will vote for one of two routes through Minneapolis. The first (3C) would route along the Midtown Greenway and turn north on Nicollet Avenue while the second (3A) would route through the existing Kenilworth corridor leading to the Target Field ballpark. The 3C route also has a “subalternative” (3C-2) that would route along 10th/11th streets downtown back around to Target Field.

ISALAH Supports the Kenilworth 3A Route

ISALAH strongly supports the **3A route** because it best serves our goal of racial equity in transportation.

- 3A connects North Minneapolis neighborhoods to opportunity. Previous transportation decisions cut off North Minneapolis residents from jobs in the southwest metro. The 3A route restores that connection.
- Stations at Penn, Van White and Royalston are key connectors for transit-dependent residents of North Minneapolis.
- The 3A route costs at least \$500 million less than the other options. It is the only route that currently qualifies for federal funding, a necessary prerequisite for the project.
- The 3A route ensures redevelopment of the Bassett Creek Valley, a key strategy for stakeholders in North Minneapolis to create jobs for residents.



How to get Involved

Join ISALAH's transit equity campaign! Contact David Greene (612-747-1982 or greened@obligato.org) for more information.

Attend the SW LRT **public hearing** on Sep. 17th at 6:30pm at the Hopkins Eisenhower Community Center (1001 Highway 7, Hopkins) and testify in support of route 3A!

Midtown Community Works Partnership

Midtown Community Works Partnership RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MIDTOWN GREENWAY – LAKE STREET CORRIDOR STREETCAR PLANNING

WHEREAS, the Midtown Community Works Partnership has since 2003 supported the long-term goal of streetcar transit in the Midtown Greenway, and reaffirmed this goal annually since 2003;

WHEREAS, the Partnership organized a study tour of the streetcar system in Portland, Oregon from September 7-9, 2006, and the Partnership's delegation reported the following Findings:

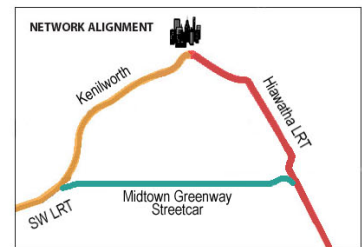
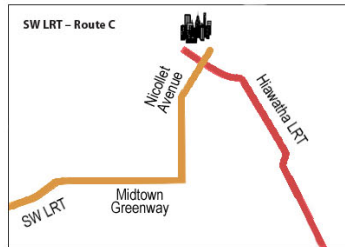
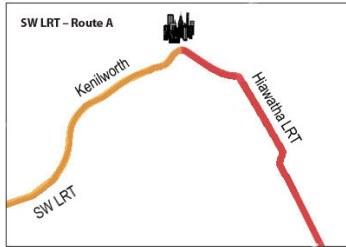
Findings

1. The Portland Streetcar has been extraordinarily successful in leveraging transit-oriented development: \$2.5 billion and over 7,000 housing units;
2. Portland's streetcar project was promoted, constructed, and now is operated by Portland Streetcar, Inc., a non-profit corporation with a board of directors comprised primarily of property owners and developers along the line;
3. Portland leaders believe that their public private partnership approach was critical to project success, and specifically influenced project design, construction, and funding decisions;
4. Portland leaders strongly recommend against pursuing federal FTA funding for streetcars because of the attendant process delays and cost inflation;
5. The Portland Streetcar system is now operated in partnership with the region's transit agency, Tri-Met, but was developed primarily through the City's leadership.
6. The primary purpose and focus of Portland's Streetcar has been to leverage residential development in the urban core and to provide an intra-city connector service; it does not claim a time advantage for regional commuters;

WHEREAS, the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority is currently analyzing two configurations for the northern portion of the Southwest LRT Corridor: LRT A, which runs through the Kenilworth Corridor, and (2) LRT C, which runs east through the Midtown Greenway to Nicollet Avenue, where it turns north and enters a tunnel for access to downtown Minneapolis;

WHEREAS, the Midtown Community Works Partnership believes that the superior configuration would be a Network Alignment, which combines LRT A with a streetcar line in the Midtown Greenway that links the SW LRT with the Hiawatha LRT, based on the following reasons:

1. A Network Alignment would provide a key link in the regional transit system.
2. A Network Alignment would serve the transit-dependent Greenway neighborhoods east of Nicollet, including one of the largest employment hubs in Minnesota (consisting of Lake Street, the Midtown Exchange, Abbott Northwestern Hospital, and Wells Fargo) while also serving as an important transfer point with Bus Rapid Transit on I-35W;
3. A Network Alignment alternative that includes a streetcar line in the Midtown Greenway would be significantly less expensive than LRT C, and generate significantly higher ridership;



WHEREAS, a “starter” streetcar line between Hiawatha and Uptown could be built much more quickly by relying on state and local funding, thereby avoiding the cumbersome FTA approval process; and

WHEREAS, the sooner it is built, the sooner a streetcar line will energize and propel transit-oriented development along the Midtown Greenway;

WHEREAS, state and local funding for a streetcar line may serve as a match for later federal funding for LRT;

WHEREAS, a streetcar line would sustain the vision for the Midtown Greenway by minimizing the impact on the bicycle and pedestrian trails while providing the potential to green the corridor with grass planted between and alongside the tracks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Midtown Community Works Partnership adopts the following concepts to guide its planning and policy in support of the Midtown Greenway – Lake Street Corridor streetcar:

1. Acknowledge that streetcar development is appropriately lead by the City of Minneapolis (in cooperation with Hennepin County, Metro Transit, and other agency partners), given that the primary purposes of streetcar lines are to serve as intra-city connectors, and to promote transit-oriented development, and a streetcar system is not currently included in the Region’s 2030 Transportation Policy Plan;
2. Acknowledge that it is critical to study aggressively and creatively to develop a viable, sustainable model of financial feasibility to assure that a streetcar project can be funded through a method that cultivates and maintains maximum stakeholder support;
3. Acknowledge that federal and state funding may not be a priority for Midtown streetcar development, and streetcar advocates should focus primarily on local sources of revenue, while remaining open to possible federal and state funding opportunities so long as they do not jeopardize other local and regional transportation priorities;
4. Acknowledge that the private sector, developers, business owners, employers, and others who would benefit from a streetcar should play an active role in project financial analysis, advocacy, design, construction, and operation;
5. Acknowledge that a ‘public private partnership’ approach is critical to project success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Midtown Community Works Partnership supports the following actions to promote streetcar development in the Midtown Greenway – Lake Street Corridor:

- a. Recruit new partners to the Partnership who have a development interest in the Corridor and are interested in promotion of a streetcar project;
- b. Direct counsel to monitor and participate in the City’s Streetcar Study, and provide the City’s consultants with information to promote the Midtown Corridor as a priority streetcar line that connects the Southwest and Hiawatha Regional transit corridors while also promotes intra-city transit and related development;

- c. Participate in general outreach to promote the public understanding of the benefits of a streetcar system in Minneapolis;
- d. Gather existing information and estimates of development potential in the Corridor over the next ten years;
- e. Research initial models of local streetcar funding, including a special services district; explore private sector, property owner feedback; and develop an understanding of the implications of each funding alternative in the context of our overall tax system;
- f. Participate in the Southwest Corridor alignment discussion, and:
 - i. Promote the “network alignment” option for LRT – Streetcar alignment; and
 - ii. Promote a “streetcar ASAP” approach that seeks to build a Midtown Streetcar line earlier and independent from the SW LRT timetable but is compatible with the SW LRT alignment decision.



Attest:

Nate Garvis, Chair
Midtown Community Works Partnership

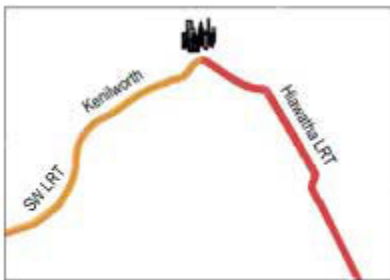
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November 21, 2006

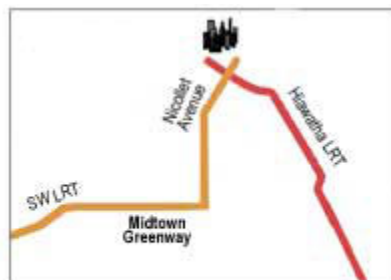
Midtown Greenway Coalition

A Resolution Supporting a Southwest LRT Alignment through the Kenilworth Corridor in conjunction with a Streetcar Line in the Midtown Greenway

(Adopted by the Midtown Greenway Coalition board on October 26, 2006)



3A - Kenilworth



3C - Nicollet



Network Alignment

Note: cost and ridership data cited herein are estimates taken from publicly available studies or revised estimates based on those studies.

WHEREAS the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority is currently analyzing two configurations for the northern portion of the SW LRT Corridor: LRT A which runs through the Kenilworth Corridor and LRT C which occupies the Midtown Greenway as far east as Nicollet Avenue where it enters a tunnel for access to downtown Minneapolis, and

WHEREAS the Midtown Greenway Coalition believes that a superior configuration would be a Network Alignment combining the Kenilworth alignment for LRT with a streetcar line in the Midtown Greenway connecting the Hiawatha and SW LRT corridors, and

WHEREAS LRT C would add 1,100 riders a day above LRT A ridership while a Network Alignment would add 9,000, and

WHEREAS LRT C would cost an additional \$200 million above LRT A costs while a Network Alignment would cost an additional \$80 million, and

WHEREAS LRT C would provide a 4% increase in riders for a 23% increase in cost when compared to LRT A while a Network Alignment would provide a 33% increase in riders for a 9% increase in cost, and

WHEREAS LRT C would require an additional \$100 million in state/local funding above that required by LRT A while a Network Alignment would require an additional \$80 million in state/local funding, and

WHEREAS state/local funding for a streetcar line may count as a local match for later LRT funding, and

WHEREAS a streetcar line could be built much more quickly and begin shaping development much sooner, and

WHEREAS a streetcar line would serve all neighborhoods along the Greenway equally and enable and encourage transit oriented development throughout a cohesive Midtown Greenway/Lake Street corridor from Uptown east to Hiawatha Avenue, and

WHEREAS a streetcar line would best respect the vision for a green Greenway by having the potential to green the corridor with grass planted between and alongside the tracks and also avoid the need for tracks to cross the cycling and walking trails at Nicollet Avenue, and

WHEREAS a Network Alignment serves more transit dependent neighborhoods, a number of large Midtown employers including the Midtown Exchange, Abbott Northwestern, and Wells Fargo, and all commercial nodes between Hiawatha and Uptown, and

WHEREAS a streetcar line would serve an important transfer point with the proposed BRT on 35W, and

WHEREAS the local community along the Kenilworth corridor has concerns about the impact of LRT on that corridor,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Midtown Greenway Coalition favors a configuration for the SW LRT corridor that utilizes the Kenilworth Corridor alignment to provide access to downtown Minneapolis in conjunction with a streetcar line in the Midtown Greenway connecting the SW and Hiawatha LRT corridors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that transit planners should work with stakeholders along the Kenilworth corridor to plan and secure funding for adequate mitigation measures, especially between Lake Street and Franklin Avenue.

Transit for Livable Communities



South West Corridor Light Rail Transit TLC Official Position Statement

Transit for Livable Communities is eager to see development of the Southwest LRT as part of our growing regional transit system. SWLRT will be the high speed, high frequency transit connector for the southwest portion of the Twin Cities metropolitan region, linking four suburban cities with downtown Minneapolis (and beyond). This corridor is part of a system that will ensure greater access for residents throughout the region to opportunities, employment, and education via LRT, commuter rail, streetcars, and expanded bus service. In conjunction with feeder bus service and bike/walk linkages, SW LRT will connect urban residents to the growing number of jobs in the southwest suburbs and connect suburban residents with jobs, parks, and entertainment venues in Minneapolis and St. Paul. It will also help address traffic congestion, air and noise pollution and promote compact, pedestrian-friendly development.

TLC recommends the following policies for the Southwest Corridor based on current information.

1. **Alignment and stops:** The Southwest Corridor LRT line should use alignment 3A which connects activity centers on the south end including Southwest Transit Station and follows the Kenilworth alignment within the City of Minneapolis. The 3A alignment provides similar ridership as the other potential Minneapolis alignments at a substantially reduced capital and annual operating cost¹. The reasons TLC supports alignment 3A include:
 - Maximizing the likelihood of securing federal New Starts funding given current funding criteria and competition for federal funding as well as maximizing the likelihood of securing state and local funding
 - Improving service and connections to the north and west side of Minneapolis
 - Enabling SWLRT trains to continue on to St. Paul via the Central Corridor or the Mall of America via the Hiawatha Corridor (without a transfer) which would be more difficult and costly with the Nicollet/Midtown alignments.
 - Maximizing the potential of integrating LRT with proposed future streetcar service including the Midtown Greenway (between Hiawatha LRT and SWLRT) and Nicollet Avenue

The Mitchell Road station (one of five stations in Eden Prairie) should be considered for elimination (est. cost of \$60 million) and the current park-and-ride facilities at Southwest Station expanded. The proposed Mitchell Road station area has low housing and commercial density and is less than ¾ of a mile by highway from the Southwest Station.

The substantial cost savings from adopting a 3A alignment and the elimination of the Mitchell Road station would ensure money for other transit projects such as a streetcar on the Midtown Greenway Corridor that would connect to Uptown and the Hiawatha Corridor LRT line, expanded bus service, and an east metro transitway project.



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Transit for Livable Communities is a regional, nonpartisan organization working to reform Minnesota's transportation system. Through advocacy, organizing, and research, we promote a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, biking, and thoughtful development.

TWIN WEST GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SOUTHWEST TRANSITWAY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY**

WHEREAS, transportation infrastructure forms the backbone of the region's economy as well as its quality of life, and has a direct impact on economic development; and

WHEREAS, a well designed and functional transportation system with multiple mode choices is essential to maintaining long-term mobility throughout the metropolitan region for both commuters and products; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council's long-range transportation plan identifies a future fixed transitway corridor in the Southwest Metro through the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest Metro has experienced unprecedented population and employment growth over the last 20 years and has become a major employment destination for the metropolitan region; and

WHEREAS, a Light Rail Transit (LRT) line servicing the cities of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie will accommodate projected growth and will help maintain a competitive business environment and high quality of life for the entire Southwest Region; and

WHEREAS, the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority is near completion of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis Study that compares the costs, benefits, and impacts of a range of transit alternatives for the Southwest Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest Transitway's Technical Advisory Committee has provided the preliminary recommendation that LRT Alternatives 1A, 3A, and 3C be retained for further consideration; and

WHEREAS, the recommended LRT alternatives have daily ridership projections between 23,500 and 28,100; and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3 Alternatives have higher daily ridership projections, more new transit riders, and better cost effectiveness indices than the LRT 1 Alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the LRT 3 Alternatives provide better opportunities for development, redevelopment and economic growth and better support long-range planning initiatives in the Major Center Area, the Golden Triangle, and Opus than the LRT 1 Alternatives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce, that the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce supports the preliminary recommendations of the Southwest Transitway Alternatives Analysis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce maintains a strong preference for the LRT 3 Alternatives that best serve the regions residents, businesses, economic development interests; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce strongly supports efforts by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Federal Transit Administration to fund and construct in a timely and fiscally responsible manner an LRT line through the Southwest Corridor, that it be considered a priority project for the region, and after the Central Corridor, become the next planned expansion of the Comprehensive Transit System for the metropolitan region.

Adopted by the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee, this 17th Day of January, 2007.

Dannette Coleman
Chair, TwinWest Government Affairs Committee

Uptown Association

October 21, 2008

Dear Ms. Walker,

The Uptown Association's Board of Directors voted unanimously on October 21, 2008 to support alignments for the Southwest LRT Corridor that include a station at Hennepin Avenue in Uptown, Minneapolis. The Board of Directors feels that it is critical to Uptown's future to be included in this major regional transportation investment, as the project:

- 1. Addresses parking issues and traffic congestion in Uptown.** The Uptown community has been a major regional attraction, place of business, and residential community since the late 1800s. Our customers, employees, and visitors come from all over the Twin Cities. With hundreds of businesses, including multiple theaters and restaurants, Uptown experiences high levels of traffic and parking congestion. These issues could be reduced if a direct connection to the region is provided through the inclusion of an Uptown station on the Southwest LRT line.
- 2. Improves the regional competitiveness of Uptown.** Southwest LRT will provide increased access to Uptown by providing a quick, reliable, frequent transit connection from the southwest suburbs, Eat Street, Lyn-Lake, the Convention Center, the south Nicollet Mall hotel corridor, and Downtown Minneapolis. The transit connection will help Uptown remain competitive as a retail district and improve Uptown's ability to recruit and retain office tenants.
- 3. Provides transit benefit for transit users.** Transit users on Route 6 already experience a 22+ minute bus ride between the Uptown Transit Center and 4th Street in Downtown Minneapolis. This same ride on LRT would take 9 minutes, which is a significant travel time savings. LRT would provide Uptown the fastest connection to much of Downtown Minneapolis.
- 4. Encourages a more walkable community in Uptown.** A quick, frequent transit connection to the region would encourage transit users to walk and frequent more Uptown businesses. Instead of taking a longer ride to a bus stop closer to their home, LRT users would ride to a central Uptown station and then walk to their nearby home. While they are at the Uptown station, they may choose to complete errands that they may have done at stores outside of the community. As Uptown becomes more walkable, businesses will take advantage of a more captive audience by offering more conveniences to transit users, which will lead to an even more walkable community.

It is critical for project planners and members of the public to understand the very real issues that the Uptown community faces as an urban mixed-use district. These issues include a lack of daytime population, a real and perceived lack of available parking for district visitors and employees that affects the surrounding residential neighborhoods, traffic congestion that discourages visitors, and long travel times for bus riders.

The Uptown Association recognizes that there are significant details of the Nicollet segment of the 3C alignment that need to be better understood and defined before a complete evaluation can be made. In addition to these details, the Uptown Association wants to better understand the physical connections between the proposed Uptown station, the Uptown Transit Center, and Hennepin Avenue.

The Southwest LRT project will provide significant benefits to the southwest suburban metropolitan area and the City of Minneapolis. The Uptown Association supports transit and is looking forward to

continuing our conversation with the project as the decision on the final Minneapolis alignment takes shape. Please feel free to contact me at (612) 924-6411 with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,
Thatcher Imboden
Uptown Association, President

DRAFT

Xcel Energy

Sep. 23. 2009 11:07AM Xcel Energy Edina Service Center

No. 0518 P. 1



5309 West 70th Street
Edina, MN 55401

September 23, 2009

Ms. Katie Walker
Transit Project Manager
Hennepin County
417 North 4th Street - Suite 320
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Ms Walker:

Enclosed are Xcel Energy's comments regarding the route alternatives proposed for the Southwest Light Rail Transit line. Xcel Energy is supportive of light rail, and recognizes that any route selected will impact Xcel Energy, its facilities, and its ratepayers. However, we have serious concerns about alternative 3C.

Xcel Energy understands that three route options are being considered for the Southwest Light Rail Transit line. The routes under consideration are 1A, 3A, and 3C, with alternate concepts as identified on the Southwest Light Rail Transit web site. At this time, we recommend choosing route 1A or 3A. Route 3C would have significant impacts to our system. Generally speaking, Xcel Energy has extensive underground transmission and distribution facilities on Route 3C along Nicollet Mall. These facilities would be difficult, if not impossible, to relocate because the area is highly congested with underground utility facilities. It would also be very expensive to relocate these facilities. If Route 3C is selected, preliminary estimates to relocate distribution facilities alone on Nicollet Mall would likely exceed \$30 million. The most difficult area on Route 3C from Xcel Energy's perspective is in the downtown area on Nicollet Mall from Grant Street to Washington Avenue. The number of facilities that would be impacted on this section of Nicollet Mall exceed the number of facilities impacted and the complexities experienced on Fifth Street during the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit project.

Xcel Energy is happy to meet with light rail planners to discuss in greater detail the impacts to our system resulting from any or all of the routes currently being evaluated. Further, we would be able to share in greater detail the facilities we have in this area and potential costs to relocate such facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Southwest Light Rail Transit route alternatives. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patrick Cline'.

Patrick Cline
Director, Community Relations
Xcel Energy