



SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

connecting people to jobs, housing, shopping, and fun

Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Thursday, August 15, 2013

1:30-3:00 pm

Council Chambers, St. Louis Park City Hall

Agenda

- I. **Welcome & Introductions**

- II. **Approve July 2013 Meeting Minutes***
Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County

- III. **Presentation of New Starts Application Recommendations**
GB Arrington, GB Placemaking

- IV. **Approve Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles***
GB Arrington, GB Placemaking

- V. **Presentation of Engineering & Economic Development Integration**
Katie Walker, Hennepin County
Mark Koegler, HKGI

- VI. **Adjournment**

**enclosed*

The Steering Committee will meet next on **Thursday, September 19, 2013**, from 1:30-3:00 at the St. Louis Park City Hall.



Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 18, 2013

1:30 - 3:00 pm

St. Louis Park City Hall

Meeting Attendees

Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Member

Jan Callison, Hennepin County Member

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority Member

Anne Mavity, St. Louis Park Member

Nancy Tyra-Lukens, Eden Prairie Member

Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member

Terry Schneider, Minnetonka Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Jim Hovland, Edina Member

Kathy Nelson, Eden Prairie Member

Caren Dewar, Urban Land Institute—Mn Member

Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Chuck Darnell (Hennepin County), Kevin Locke (St. Louis Park), Julie Wischnack (Minnetonka), Janet Jeremiah (Eden Prairie), Meg McMonigal (St. Louis Park), Kathryn Hansen (SW Project Office), Meg Beekman (Hopkins), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Cathy Bennett (ULI), Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Jeff Peltola (Public Works for Public Good), Louis Smith (Smith Partners), Alene Tchourumoff (Hennepin), Karen Lyons (Met Council), Jeanette Colby (Kenwood Isles), Abou Amara (Council Member Samuels), Laeh Robertson (MMLA), Sean White (Kiewit), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting)

Guest Speakers

GB Arrington, GB Placemaking

Mariia Zimmerman, MZ Strategies

March Fuhrmann, Metro Transit

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Dorfman convened the meeting and asked members and attendees to introduce themselves.

II. June 20, 2013 meeting minutes

Chair Dorfman asked for approval of the meeting minutes from the June 20, 2013 meeting. Jan Callison identified a correction to the minutes and Chair Dorfman directed staff to correct the minutes. Revised meeting minutes were approved on a voice vote.

III. Southwest Land Use + Econ Development Rating

Chair Dorfman re-introduced GB Arrington, GB Placemaking to discuss how the SW LRT project stands in relation to competition for Federal New Starts funding. She also introduced Mariia Zimmerman, MZ Strategies. Ms. Zimmerman presented her analysis of projects seeking New Starts funding and how the SW LRT project compares to its peers. Things are changing as reflected by the fact that, for the first time in 20 years, there were no new projects proposed for New Starts funding, reflecting serious budget issues at the congressional level. Ms. Zimmerman reviewed that the FTA is about to finalize changes to New Starts rating criteria, focusing to a greater extent on economic development potential, environmental benefits of projects, extent to which affordable housing is part of a project, private sector commitments, and the financial rating. She indicated that these changes represent a more balanced set of criteria and that the Cost Effectiveness rating will no longer be a “make or break” measure. The SW LRT project rates fairly well, but does not stand out amongst its peers. Ms. Zimmerman made suggestions for how the SW LRT project could enhance its position in relation to other projects being considered for New Starts funding.

GB Arrington offered additional comments, stating that actions of local government are important to improve the land use and economic development ratings for the SW LRT project. A better land use rating can help justify higher project costs. He provided examples of projects that had been made more competitive by increasing their land use ratings. He stated that having legally binding plans and policies in place for transit oriented development helps increase a project’s land use rating. He said the SW LRT project is well positioned to take advantage of the revised criteria.

Chair Dorfman invited the Committee to discuss comments made by Ms. Zimmerman and Mr. Arrington. She asked about specific actions local governments could take to improve the project’s standing. A range of actions were suggested, including doing a better job of “telling the story” about successes of the Hiawatha and Central Corridor projects, and describe where the development community is delivering projects. We should take credit for the fact that our local governmental units work closely together, and that the philanthropic community is engaged. Demonstrating that we have commitments in place as well as institutional structures to get things done is a good idea. For the SW LRT corridor, it’s better to show that we have a few strong, successful projects underway than to show less impactful efforts that cover the whole corridor. Peter McLaughlin asked about the importance of having funding streams in place; Ms. Zimmerman responded that this is very important to show. In summary, we need to demonstrate that we have in place leadership structure, funding streams, and legally binding land use plans and policies. Jan Callison asked for more specific suggestions to be prepared before the next meeting of the Steering Committee. Nancy Tyra-Lukens asked if local actions around other transit modes should be emphasized. Mr. Arrington responded in the affirmative. Anne Mavity asked about the timeline for telling the story. Chair Dorfman asked Mark Fuhrmann to respond to that question. Mr. Fuhrmann said that, assuming that the FTA comes through with final guidance on the new rules in the coming month or so, the SW LRT project would submit an update or “refresh” to the FTA this fall. He went on to explain the sequence of actions to move the project forward: the next action would be to secure municipal consent by the end of 2013, then secure the remainder of the State funding match during the 2014 legislative session, then complete the project financial plan with local funding lined up as well, then submit a request to move the project forward into final engineering in the spring 2014. Given that sequence, Ms. Mavity asked for verification that our first opportunity to demonstrate local actions to the FTA would be this fall. Mr. Fuhrmann responded in the affirmative. Ms. Mavity suggested additional contributions including our extensive work with the business community. She also talked about how to balance need for park and ride capacity vs. using land for new developments. The Committee discussed issues related to determining appropriate parking capacity with Mr. Arrington.

Terry Schneider noted three points: 1) the number of Fortune 500 major employers who embrace the benefits of rail transit for our region creates excitement about this project, 2) availability of tactical financing – this could be improved, and 3) eminent domain tools – use of these is quite restricted at this time. He talked about the potential for special legislation to improve availability of tactical financing and eminent domain authority.

Kathy Nelson asked if it's possible to show our linkages to the bus system and shuttles, and how that will positively impact ridership. Mr. Fuhrmann responded in the affirmative. She also discussed the difference between approved development plans and whether these can be taken into account in ridership projections.

Caren Dewar offered comments about parking as land banking, the regional indicators project, the potential for creating an 'equity pool' to spur development, and whether gains associated with a stronger land use and economic development rating could go back to cities for betterments.

Dick Miller offered a letter to the Chair about financing tools, stating that we have one of the best and most flexible tools in the country through the Hennepin County Community Works program. Given this tool, he stated that the 29th Street Greenway was able to leverage considerable private dollars. He advised that we should rely more heavily upon the Hennepin County Community Works principles since they've been shown to work.

Peter McLaughlin stated that we also need to give more attention to the project's environmental rating, which should be higher than a medium rating.

IV. Draft Guiding Principals

Chair Dorfman deferred discussion to August meeting. She asked member to review the draft document that was distributed and provide comments to staff, Katie Walker (Katie.walker@co.hennepin.mn.us).

V. Overview of City Activities around Land Use

Chair Dorfman introduced local community development staff who shared with the group the actions taken by their respective cities' since 2010 to prepare for LRT's arrival and associated economic development and community change. Steering Committee members expressed their appreciation for the considerable amount of work that has been undertaken to date and asked to be kept up to speed on city actions at future meetings.

VI. Updates and Announcements

Chair Dorfman reminded members about the Met Council sponsored public meeting scheduled for this evening on the topic of freight rail.

VII. Adjournment

Chair Dorfman adjourned the meeting. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.



Agenda Item 3: Southwest New Starts Rating – Land Use & Economic Development

Reviewed By:

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other _____

Steering Committee Action Requested:

Information

Background/Justification:

Staff were directed to work with GB Arrington, GB Placemaking, and Mariia Zimmerman, MZ Strategies, to develop recommendations for improving the land use and economic development ratings for the project from the FTA New Starts program. A background memorandum is enclosed in the packet and the initial consultant recommendation will be presented at the committee meeting.

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation: Information

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

- New Starts Rating background memorandum

Comments:





MEMORANDUM

Date: August 12, 2013

To: Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

From: Katie Walker, Southwest LRT Community Works Manager

RE: New Starts Land Use & Economic Development Ratings

Background

The Federal Transit Administration's discretionary New Starts program is the federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally planned, implemented, and operated major transit capital investments. The New Starts program funds new and extensions to existing fixed guideway transit systems defined as light rail, commuter rail, heavy rail, bus rapid transit, streetcars, and ferries.

New Starts projects must undergo evaluation by the FTA throughout the entire project development process as information concerning costs, benefits, and impacts is refined. Projects are evaluated according to a set of criteria are rating on a scale from high to low. The FTA uses these evaluations to make decisions about which projects to progress through the project development process and ultimately which ones receive the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) or funding from the federal government.

To assign overall project ratings to each proposed New Starts project, FTA considers the individual ratings for each of the project justification and local financial commitment measures. FTA combines this information into an overall project rating.

In January 2013, the US Federal Transit Administration (FTA) set a new regulatory framework for the evaluation and rating of New Starts projects. The new approach aims to get critical transit projects under construction more quickly without compromising a stringent project review process. The new framework also includes a stronger focus on land use and economic development.



SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

Southwest LRT

In 2010, after the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) was approved by the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council partnered to develop the initial New Starts Application for entry into Preliminary Engineering (PE). The application was submitted in August of 2010 and on September 2, 2011 the FTA authorized the Southwest LRT project to enter Preliminary Engineering.

The Southwest LRT project’s overall rating in 2011 was medium. The following are the individual ratings:

Land Use	Medium
Economic Development	Medium-High
Environmental Benefits	Medium
Mobility	Medium-Low
Cost-Effectiveness	Medium-Low
Local Financial	Medium

The Metropolitan Council plans to submit a New Starts Application in late May/early June of 2014 for entry into Engineering, formerly referred to as Final Design. This is an important and critical step in the project development process for the Southwest LRT project. It also provides an opportunity for the Southwest LRT project to improve its rating and to move closer to securing federal funding.

Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee Action

At the June 20, 2013, Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting, GB Arrington, GB Placemaking and Mariia Zimmerman, MZ Strategies, were invited to discuss with the committee their viewpoints on the changing landscape for New Starts project ratings and provide general recommendation for how the Southwest LRT project could position itself to raise its rating for land use and economic development which would contribute positively to the overall rating for the project.

Ms. Zimmerman presented her analysis of how the Southwest LRT project compares to other projects around the country, particularly six other projects that are in the same project development phase. She said that she detected no fatal flaws for the Southwest LRT project but also sees no compelling case for funding. She asserted that the challenge for the Southwest LRT project is to make a compelling case, backing the message up with data. She indicated that the New Starts program had recently incurred funding cuts and at present, there are no recommendations to fund any new projects through New Starts. Ms. Zimmerman explained that the evaluation process for New Starts projects is such that potential projects must meet higher hurdles as they advance through





SOUTHWEST LRT

community works

green means go.

the project development phases of engineering and design. In comparing Southwest ratings with other projects, she noted that our land-use policy ratings are not as high as others. The 2014 New Starts submission will be critical for the Southwest project to raise its rating and progress into the next stage of project development.

GB Arrington, GB Placemaking, has worked for more than 30 years on Transit Oriented Development (TOD) along fixed guideway rail projects across the country, including significant work done for Trimet in Portland. GB stated that he has worked for five of the six peer projects Ms. Zimmerman included in her research. He reinforced Ms. Zimmerman statements regarding the new playing field that exists for New Starts projects, and indicated that past ratings aren't meaningful in this new environment. He stated that higher ratings on the land use and economic development criteria are important to make a project more competitive. Mr. Arrington provided an overview of his perspective on what the Federal Transit Administration cares most about and how they score projects. He talked about strategies such as joint development tools and showing real progress on getting transit supportive development underway. Mr. Arrington stressed that it is more advantageous to do a very good job in a few places along a proposed line than a mediocre job everywhere along the line.

After the presentations by Ms. Zimmerman and Mr. Arrington, the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee directed staff to continue to confer with experts including Mr. Arrington and Ms. Zimmerman to find ways to support the competitiveness of the Southwest LRT project in the New Starts process focusing on the land use and economic development rating.



SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

Agenda Item 4: Southwest Corridor Principles and Strategies

Reviewed By:

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other _____

Steering Committee Action Requested:

Information

Background/Justification:

Staff were directed to work with GB Arrington, GB Placemaking, to draft a set of guiding principles and strategies to achieve the Southwest LRT Community Works vision and goals. The work to date will be presented and discussed at the meeting.

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation: Approval

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

- Draft Guiding Principles and Strategies

Comments:





SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

Southwest LRT Community Works Vision

Adopted by the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee on April 21, 2011

The Southwest LRT corridor: connecting people to jobs, housing, shopping, and fun.

The Southwest Community Works Initiative collaborates with citizens, businesses, and government to align land use and transit planning so that the Southwest LRT Corridor is a premiere destination that is

· *accessible* · *livable* · *vibrant*

Economic competitiveness and job growth

Promoting opportunities for business and employment growth

Housing choices

Positioning the Southwest LRT communities as a place for all to live

Quality neighborhoods

Creating unique, vibrant, safe, beautiful, and walkable station areas

Critical connections

Improving affordable regional mobility for all users



The Southwest LRT Corridor now and in the future is a:

Jobs corridor:

- Within 1/2 mile: 210,000 jobs now; 270,000 by 2030
- 1,000 construction jobs per year (2014-2016)

Housing corridor:

- Within 1/2 mile: 31,000 housing units now; over 40,000 by 2030

Growth corridor:

- Within 1/2 mile: 60,000 population now; 75,000 by 2030

Commuter corridor:

- Nearly 30,000 daily trips by 2030
- High reverse commute ridership; over 7,000 daily trips by 2030

Southwest LRT Community Works Adopted Vision Statement

The Southwest LRT Community Works Initiative collaborates with citizens, businesses and government to align land use and transit planning so that the Southwest LRT Corridor is a premiere destination that is accessible, livable and vibrant.

Guiding Principles

These Guiding Principles are a reflection of the cooperative efforts underway between the jurisdictions in the Southwest LRT Corridor to guide land use and economic development in and around station areas in a transit-supportive manner.

1. Partner to Leverage Resources and Maximize Investment

Maximize the return on investment from the Southwest LRT line by promoting public and private partnerships to implement each community's vision.

Potential Strategies:

- Utilize the existing Community Works structure to guide the implementation of the Southwest Corridor Development Framework.
- Continue collaboration with the Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit to ensure the integration of LRT engineering with land use /economic development to achieve a development-oriented transit design.
- Actively engage the Southwest Business Investment Partnership in TOD planning and to capitalize on the synergy between the public and private sector investments in the Southwest Corridor.

2. Realize Diverse, Compact Transit Oriented Development Surrounding Transit Facilities

Continue to promote and encourage Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the Southwest Corridor consistent with TOD principles: - a mix of land uses (new and existing), higher and more compact densities, high quality pedestrian and bicycle environment, an active defined center and limited and/or managed parking and auto oriented uses.

Potential Strategies:

- Review, evaluate, and consider the Metropolitan Council Transit Oriented Development Strategic Action Plan and determine what Southwest cities can do in their own plans, zoning codes, policies and capital investments to further that agenda.
- Evaluate existing city zoning codes, steps that have been taken to achieve TOD, and develop targeted recommendations for how to strengthen TOD implementation in each city.

- Prioritize development opportunity sites and pursue site assembly as part of a coordinated strategy.
- Explore the benefits of developing a coordinated environmental process (clearance and permitting) within a ¼ or ½ mile radius of stations along the corridor
- Continue to work with Metro Transit, Hennepin County and others on Joint Development opportunities, process, and implementation.
- Coordinate with engineering on the siting of LRT facilities and infrastructure so that they do not impede future potential development opportunities.

3. Accelerate Economic Competitiveness and Job Growth

Promote opportunities for business and employment growth to accelerate economic competitiveness of the SW Corridor.

Potential Strategies:

- Evaluate the establishment of a Corridor Wide Development Authority to increase economic competitiveness of the corridor.
- Align and strategically target Hennepin County and other funding agencies' TOD programs to focus on the Southwest Corridor.
- Establish interdisciplinary teams to coordinate funding, infrastructure investments and development activities for specific stations and projects.
- Work with Greater MSP and similar organizations to continue to support existing jobs and educate commercial real estate brokers about SW LRT opportunities.
- Promote transit accessible job creation by providing pedestrian and bike connections from LRT stops to key employers along the corridor; allowing increased and equitable access to job opportunities without the use of a vehicle.
- Coordinate with the Southwest Project Office to develop a specific marketing and branding plan to distribute to organizations to attract prospective businesses.
- Develop an alliance and promote partnerships with the Southwest Business Investment Partnership.
- Continue to support small business and stimulate entrepreneurship particularly among new American populations by partnering with organizations like Open to Business and the Neighborhood Development Group.

4. Provide a Full Range of Housing Choices

Position the Southwest LRT communities as a place for all to live and thrive.

Potential Strategies:

- Develop, adopt and implement a corridor wide housing strategy with joint policies, tools and financing strategies to achieve a full range of housing choices (types/sizes/styles/values) to meet different needs, stages of life and income levels within walking distance of LRT stations
- Integrate the corridor wide housing strategy within the Corridor Development Framework to ensure market reality, financial feasibility and equitable access to employment, education and amenities
- Encourage cities to adopt policies to preserve existing safe, well-maintained housing that is affordable to existing residents and workers.
- Encourage cities to support new housing projects that increase housing density around the station areas; increasing transit access, reducing dependence upon automobiles, and improving the Affordable Housing + Transportation Index.
- Support policies to ensure that new housing developments will include units affordable to a full range of incomes.
- Consider strategies to retain existing market rate affordable housing including investigating putting in place plans and policies that identify and address the specific housing affordability needs along the corridor, including income target levels, tenure, and unit types.

5. Create Great Quality Places Around Transit Facilities and Key Destinations

Create unique, vibrant, safe, beautiful, and walkable station areas.

Potential Strategies:

- Create walkable “destinations” that are vibrant and vital with a mix of uses. Ensure safety and accessibility for all people to/from LRT stations and within station areas.
- Encourage new development to provide “eyes of the LRT and streets” and natural surveillance of public spaces and parks. Follow Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines – open sight lines, adequate lighting and clear entries/exits. Create a balance between the natural and built environments.

- Encourage open spaces to be well-designed, accessible by foot and bike and accommodate diverse users.
- Promote new methods and creative ideas to enhance main pedestrian routes, key public spaces and private development with landscaping.
- Develop a coordinated public art program for station platforms and station areas (defined as approximately ¼ mile around stations)

6. Strengthen Connections Between LRT and the Surrounding Areas - Critical Connections

Improve affordable regional mobility for all users.

Potential Strategies:

- Tailor public infrastructure investments to the station typologies and timing of development.
- Align the capital improvement programs (CIPs) of the partner agencies and with planned private sector infrastructure investments.
- Complete the “last mile” of critical bicycle and pedestrian connections.
- Where appropriate, transform existing roadways that serve stations into complete streets.
- Develop a station hierarchy for users related to station typologies that will guide modal investment priorities.
- Provide convenient, user-friendly, bicycle parking (including secure short- and long-term) and related facilities.



SOUTHWEST LRT

community works

green means go.

Agenda Item 5: Southwest Engineering & Economic Development Integration

Reviewed By:

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other _____

Steering Committee Action Requested:

Information

Background/Justification:

A presentation on the integration effort between the LRT engineering and land use/economic development will be given. The Southwest LRT project is intended to be a national model for the early, systemic integration of engineering with land use/economic development to maximize the long-term potential of the light rail project. Mark Koegler, HKGI, will highlight a few examples of where the Transitional Station Area Action Plan process has influenced the engineering of the LRT line.

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation: Information

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

-

Comments:





SOUTHWEST LRT
community works

green means go.

Updates

- Railvolution Conference, Seattle, October 20-23
(www.railvolution.org)
- Corridors of Opportunity
- Southwest LRT Project Office

Announcements

The next **Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board Meeting** is **Wednesday, September 25th, 12:30–2:30pm** in the **Metropolitan Council Chambers**.

Many Corridors of Opportunity projects are starting to finish their work – check out the incoming final reports and studies on the [Project-Focused Resources Page](#).

[Roundtables on Bottineau Transitway](#) are being held for community members to learn more about the project and provide input about community needs and other issues. [August 15 in Golden Valley](#) and [August 20 in Minneapolis](#).

HUD is proposing [new rules on affirmatively furthering fair housing](#) for grantees. **The public comment period lasts for 60 days starting on Friday July 19th.**

HUD has released a new web-based tool, the [Sustainable Communities HotReport](#), for community members to determine how well their community is performing on a variety of sustainability indicators, including transportation, housing, economic development, income, and equity. **Learn more at the webinar on August 21 from noon-1p CST.**

News Spotlight: [New](#) video highlights Corridors of Opportunity work

The Metropolitan Council recently produced a new video that highlights some of the work of Corridors of Opportunity's projects, partners, and residents across the region.



[Read more about the new video on the Corridors of Opportunity blog...](#)

Capacity Building & Learning Opportunities

→ **Webinar: Unlocking MPO Funding Tools to Support Sustainability Plans**
Wednesday, August 14 - 1:00 to 2:30pm CST

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are critical sustainability partners and play an important role in planning and programming federal and state transportation funds. Current federal surface transportation projects such as transit-oriented development (TOD), bicycling and pedestrian trails, joint development, placemaking, and complete streets policies, among other investments. This webinar will explore provisions within federal transportation funding that regions can use now to begin implementing their sustainability plans. The mysteries behind acronyms such as CMAQ, STPP, TIP and TAP will be revealed, including how these can each be used to support sustainability investments. Examples of MPOs utilizing the authority and flexibility will be shared, together with examples of how state & local funding are also being tapped to create additional resources for planning and implementation. In this webinar, Mariia Zimmerman from MZ Strategies, LLC will also present some findings from a forthcoming report by Enterprise Community Partners on using MAP-21 to support equitable TOD.

Recent Corridors of Opportunity News

UNDERSTANDING THE RED LINE

Cedar Ave's new BRT system offers exciting new opportunities. 7/19/13



Picture METRO Red Line bus rapid transit vehicle.

IMPROVING TRANSIT SERVICE WITH PARTNERSHIP: TRUSTED ADVOCATE PILOT PROJECT

District Council's Collaborative is partnering with government agencies to engage in new ways. 7/16/13



Picture of Trusted Advocates from District Council's Collaborative.

MAKING STRIDES TOWARDS A MORE WALKABLE AND LIVABLE EAST DOWNTOWN

The City of Minneapolis takes a look at the parking lots. 7/5/13

CONNECTING CENTRAL CORRIDOR SMALL BUSINESSES WITH ENERGY & RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Ramsey County and NDC are partnering to provide outreach to commercial businesses along University Ave in St. Paul. 6/24/13

Speakers:

- **Mariia Zimmerman**, MZ Strategies, LLC, Arlington, VA
- **Dan Reuter**, Atlanta Regional Commission, GA
- **James Cromar**, Broward County MPO, FL (invited)

RSVP: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/622462801>

→ HUD Summer Smarts Series Webinars: #6 - Integrated Engagement of Persons with Disabilities

Wednesday, August 14, 2013: 1:00-2:30pm EDT

Representatives from HUD's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC) and the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) bring you this sixth session in the Summer Smarts Series, which will highlight how Sustainable Communities Initiative grantees can more effectively engage persons with disabilities throughout the planning and implementation process. This session will highlight local and federal compliance standards and best practices for actively engaging persons with disabilities, as well as universal design standards, visitability, and provide a grantee's perspective on engaging persons with disabilities at the regional level.

Featured speakers will include:

- **Brian Peters**, Housing Committee Chair, National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)
- **Dara Baldwin**, ADA Compliance Specialist, Executive Office of the Mayor, DC Office of Disability Rights
- **Kathy Sykes**, Senior Advisor for Aging and Sustainability, Office of Research and Development, Environmental Protection Agency
- **David Wilson**, Senior Manager, East-West Gateway Council of Governments (St. Louis, MO)

Webinar link: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/fcb6ogzt19vn&eom>

Moderator: Lynnette McRae (HUD-OSHC)

→ Event: Vacant Properties Conference - Water Sessions

September 9 – 11, 2013 in Philadelphia, PA

The Center for Community Progress is hosting its 5th annual Vacant Properties Conference Sept. 9 – 11 in Philadelphia. Themed "Investing in the Future: Unlocking Hidden Values," this year's event will address how communities can recognize and capitalize on the value of their vacant and distressed properties in order to reduce costs, increase revenues, return equity to individuals and create a stable foundation for future prosperity. Learn more about the event here:

<http://www.communityprogress.net/about-pages-370.php>

→ Event: Smart Growth and Economic Success

September 18, 2013 in Atlanta, GA

This webinar will explore how smart growth strategies at the regional, city, and neighborhood level can maximize economic advantages while creating attractive, healthy communities that help protect the environment. EPA's Melissa Kramer will discuss the report, [Smart Growth and Economic Success: Benefits for Real Estate Developers, Investors, Businesses, and Local Government](#), and speakers from Lehigh Valley, PA, Champaign, IL, and Phoenix, AZ will discuss how smart growth is helping their communities prosper.

Webinar link: <https://epa.connectsolutions.com/epasmartgrowth>

NEXUS COMMUNITY PARTNERS STARTS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

New program supports community members and leaders from communities of color and other underrepresented communities to serve on decision-making bodies throughout the Twin Cities. 6/14/13

TAKING A REGIONAL LOOK AT FAIR HOUSING, EQUITY, AND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

The Metropolitan Council is incorporating equity and access to opportunity into their long-range regional planning process. 6/10/13



Participants discuss the West Lake station along Southwest at the Minneapolis Station Areas Open House in May 2013.

SOUTHWEST LRT COMMUNITIES GET PUBLIC INPUT ON STATION AREAS

Public meetings were held in April and May in Minneapolis, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, and Eden Prairie. 6/6/13

→ **Event: Solutions 2013 Conference**

September 16 – 18, 2013 in Atlanta, GA

The National Housing Conference and Center for Housing Policy are hosting [Solutions 2013: National Conference on State and Local Housing Policy](#) from September 16-18, 2013 in Atlanta, GA. Solutions 2013 will draw practitioners, advocates, policymakers, and program administrators from around the country who are interested in deepening their knowledge of how localities and states can work collaboratively and creatively to address residents' housing challenges and develop inclusive, resilient and sustainable communities. This year's conference delivers three action-packed days of learning and networking opportunities focused around four tracks:

- **Solutions for Inclusive Communities** will explore local, regional and state approaches to expanding and sustaining affordable housing opportunity in communities of opportunity.
- **Restoring Neighborhoods** will highlight strategies that communities can use for preventing foreclosures, stabilizing neighborhoods and creating a more resilient housing system.
- **How Housing Matters** will explore the many ways in which stable, affordable housing helps to support other important social outcomes such as health, education and economic prosperity.
- **Housing Communications** will focus on promising communications strategies for expanding awareness of the benefits of affordable housing and building support for affordable housing policies and development.

Contact [Kallen Hayes](#) for more information on upcoming webinars.

The Corridors of Opportunity Monthly Newsletter is brought to you by Corridors of Opportunity Staff. Corridors of Opportunity is supported by funding from [two national initiatives](#) as well as local sources and is governed by a [24-member policy board](#) made up of top leadership from government, philanthropy, non-profit and private sector interests. Visit the Corridors of Opportunity website at www.corridorsofopportunity.org for more information on the initiative.

For more information on any newsletter items or to be removed from the newsletter list, email Kallen Hayes at kallen.hayes@metc.state.mn.us.



Date: August 10, 2013

To: Southwest Community Works Steering Committee

From: Chris Weyer, Southwest LRT Project Director

Re: Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension) progress report through July 2013

Project Development

- SPO released cost estimates for project technical issues in the corridor.
- Work on resolving Project Development technical issues continued in July.
- SPO held Issue Resolution Team (IRT) meetings with project stakeholders.

Environmental Program

- The noise and vibration consultant began monitoring existing conditions the week of July 15; monitoring and is scheduled to conclude in mid-August.
- The wetlands consultant began wetlands delineation; fieldwork is anticipated to be complete in August, followed by field validation with permitting agencies.
- The 4(f) evaluation consultant initiated a review of potential 4(f) properties in the corridor.
- The Council authorized award of a contract for a Phase II Archaeological Survey to 10,000 Lakes Archaeology LLC and issued a Notice to Proceed. Fieldwork is anticipated to begin in August.
- Contractor SEH continued work on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment.
- A Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Draft EIS was published in the Federal Register and the Minnesota EQB Monitor.

Advisory Committees

- The SWLRT Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) held a joint meeting on July 25 to review and discuss the revised project scope and cost estimates.
- The Communications Steering Committee met July 17 to discuss electronic outreach and to review the upcoming events that SPO staff will attend.

Other Outreach and Communication Activities

During July 2013, SPO staff engaged in the following outreach activities:

- Held two open houses/community meetings July 17 & 18 on freight rail design options for co-location and relocation. Approximately 800 people attended these events, and more than 300 comments were received.
- Responded to approximately 120 calls and emails from the general public with questions about the status of the project or potential impacts to their properties.
- Published the second issue of the project newsletter, Extending Tracks.
- Issued a press release detailing the cost estimates and the primary drivers for each of the eight engineering concepts.
- Updated the swlrt.org website to include information about upcoming open houses on freight rail design and stations, and posted BAC, CAC and Corridor Management Committee agendas, minutes and presentations.